



2014 FINAL REPORT

CONAPAC (Conservación de la Naturaleza Amazónica del Perú, A.C.) completed its 24th year of serving rainforest residents. As a community partner, rather than a charity, we look for interested rainforest residents who wish to improve their lives through the expertise and support CONAPAC offers. We work to empower our partner communities, rather than create dependency. Only in emergency situations is direct help considered, otherwise community leaders must come to CONAPAC with a plan that we can develop together in the areas of education, clean water, and productive projects. By brainstorming solutions and offering knowledgeable expertise, we help to create independent thriving communities in the rainforest of Perú. This year provided a wealth of opportunities for CONAPAC (through its donor base) to bring ongoing improvements in everyday life for communities along the Amazon and Napo rivers.

ADOPT-A-SCHOOL DETROIT ZOO EXPEDITION 2014 (AAS)

Week #1: Adopt-A-School Delivery Week started on Saturday, March 29th. We hosted 14 volunteers, along with two staff members from the Detroit Zoo, 12 representatives from CONAPAC, Explorama, and the Peruvian department of education, and Explorama boat drivers and jungle guides. In all, we visited 51 communities and delivered to 101 schools—books, student school supplies, classroom materials and Sawyer PointONE water filters and buckets. (*More on this topic follows.*) This year's water levels held steady, so we had no problems making deliveries in a timely manner. The week ended with the assembly of 250 donor *thank-you* packets with personalized photos for each community and hand drawings with letters from students at all grade levels. Many new friendships were formed and shared experiences that, once again, made participation in the Adopt-A-School delivery process a memorable and valuable experience.

Week #2: Our Service Project week started on the heels of AAS deliveries as a new group of volunteers arrived in Iquitos. For week #2 we welcomed 12 new volunteers with Zoo and CONAPAC staff continuing along with the new group. We started the week finishing the deliveries of school supplies and Sawyer water systems to the last four communities on the schedule. Once this was completed, we began the service project aspect of the week, arriving at the community of Pucallpa on the Amazon River. There we spent three days working with about 100 people from the village.

The Kindergarten building was completely repainted inside and out. Many new bookcases and storage shelves were added. Villagers and volunteers built these together. An old gazebo was rebuilt so community members can once again enjoy a cool breeze off the river, watching clouds and boats go by. All primary-aged students were treated to a series of craft projects, games, prizes, face painting, beauty shop, and songs and music throughout the course of three days. Community trash stations were constructed with small roofs to protect against rain, and one of the CONAPAC boats (the *Evan Summers*) was nicely repainted and a slatted wood deck added for ease of use. This year our team had members from around the world—the US, Canada, Mexico, and Australia—along with our many new Peruvian friends and partners.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Due to lower than expected donations for 2013-14, it was decided that teacher and community workshops (historically held immediately after Adopt A School deliveries) would be suspended for one year. Instead, extra time and a small amount of funds were used to regularly visit communities, so we could get feedback and ideas for next year. New topics and suggestions from teachers and community leaders have led to refreshed ideas and enhanced opportunities for growth for those living and working in rural rainforest communities. In order to share more information, we started a semi-annual newspaper to keep communities up-to-date on CONAPAC news and projects. A helpful tips section is included. Fernando Saavedra (from our Amazon Library) is the editor. The newspaper has been well received by the residents. The first edition was delivered to communities during Adopt-A-School deliveries and the second one during the evaluation process, thus everyone in all our communities received copies of this new form of communication.

EVALUATIONS-TBD

This year's evaluations took place the weeks of November 17th and 24th. Overall, 23 Peruvian and American volunteers assisted in this effort. Staff members of CONAPAC led the way, while local educators helped to execute the detailed surveys. This year we covered issues such as classroom performance, productive projects in the communities, proper trash disposal, and review of the Sawyer classroom water filter systems, plus a general population review and count. In total, 56 communities were visited (55 currently in the program and one proposed new village for 2015). Ranking totals as follows:

EXCELLENT	8
GOOD	41
DEFICIENT	6
TOTAL	55

Those that rated excellent were: Capironal, Jorge Chavez, Leon Isla, Nuevo San Juan del Amazonas, Santa Victoria, Timicuro, Yanamono I, and Yana Yacu.

Several communities placed on probation from 2013 showed marked improvement. However, three did not improve and were cut: San Pedro de Mangua, Puinahua, and Nuevo Triunfo. Probation alerts were given to the following communities for this year: Nuñez Cocha, Puerto Rico, and San Antonio de Miraflores.

This year we had four American observers participating in the process: Cynthia Smith Snyder, CONAPAC administrator, Claire Lannoye-Hall and Adam Dewey from the Detroit Zoological Society—both of whom are actively involved in the Adopt-A-School program from the Zoo, and Ron Rossi, founder of EKOAmazon, a US based 501c (3) non-profit that raises money and awareness for the work at CONAPAC. The opportunity to see behind the scenes of Adopt-A-School helped everyone to better understand the challenges and rewards of working in rainforest communities.

CONAPAC AMAZON LIBRARY

This year brought changes to the library with the departure of Megan Thomas de Rioja, our library administrator during the last three years, for maternity leave. Fernando Saavedra, our computer teacher at the library and second in command, has taken over leadership of both libraries. Our regular reading programs have continued, along with computer and music classes. Through the Peruvian government, we've received 30 XO mini laptop computers. They are used for basic training and checked out by students for home study.

The library hosted a number of volunteers through the year, a birding workshop from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology presented by educators from the United States, and two field trips to the library by area Adopt-A-School communities. In

addition, we started the first steps in a Yagua language and culture preservation project. IFED, an NGO in the US, gave us seed money and made a gift of a high quality video camera. Work was started in communities to discuss documentation of Yagua language, songs, stories, memories, legends, dance, etc. Going into 2015, additional donations will allow us to continue what was started this year.

The Department of Education posted a regular teacher at the Palmeras II branch of the library. Her main duties are to encourage children in their reading. In addition, she has taken over some of the computer classes so that more children can be accommodated. The Sapo Playa branch continues to function, and it too offers help with additional reading support and after school programs. An additional Peruvian teacher was assigned part-time to this location. Although just a couple of months remained in the school year, our new teacher was able to add a level of professionalism that our small local staff could not.

We received a donation from students at St. Ignatius College Prep in Chicago, Illinois to continue to improve and update technology at both library branches. The donation was used to replace the inverter and batteries at Sapo Playa to purchase a new computer for Sapo Playa. A possible new computer for the main branch will be added as funds allow. We also received support from REACH 4Books for gas in order to transport students to the library during high water season. Without this additional support we would have had to close the library while trails to the library were flooded.

We hosted two library volunteers this year—Allison Callahan and Jane Claud. These women gave 100% of themselves to the library, not just during their stays, but prior to arriving, both gathered quality donations and carried them to the library. By staying with Explorama Lodges, their fee added much needed dollars to the library's budget for this year. Explorama donated back to CONAPAC 75% of their volunteer fee.

Our most impressive accomplishment this year was the successful completion of application for Andrea Asipali, our Rotary Exchange Scholar. Megan spent many hours looking for appropriate donations to support Andrea's scholarship and working on the extensive paperwork process. Andrea is the rare Rotary scholar who has few family resources or advocates helping her along in the process. This scholarship has life-changing possibilities, as she will now spend one year in the United States, going to high school and living with American families from local Rotary clubs. Over the previous years, Andrea always took advantage of the library to learn everything she could after her regular day at school. She learned English sufficiently enough to settle in quickly to her new environment in the US and joined the girls' volleyball team. There will be countless extra activities through Rotary and other families during her stay in Fremont, Michigan. Andrea will return to her home community of Palmeras II with a much larger worldview. This is a perfect example of what the Library and Adopt-A-School can do to change lives.

CONAPAC WATER PROGRAM

Through a generous donation from the SAGA Charitable Trust, CONAPAC was able to put in place its first official monitoring program. With money enough to hire an extra monitoring person, water-testing kits, funding for another round of operator training workshops, gasoline for regular visits to each community, and improvements to our CONAPAC boats, we were able to take a big step forward. We were better able to support our existing water plants, the operators, and the communities in which they serve. Over the summer, two graduate students (Amanda Connell and Anne Wrobetz) from the University of Colorado-Boulder came to Iquitos to spend three weeks in the jungle doing community surveys and testing water. The process measured a variety of factors, including operator knowledge and water quality, by comparing communities with more training and support than others. *The full report is posted online at:*
http://www.conapac.org/2014_water_audit_report_10-11-14.pdf

In January, CONAPAC signed an agreement with the local municipal district of Indiana, where about a 1/3 of our partner communities are located. The idea behind the agreement is a cooperative arrangement with local government to provide clean water. The municipality will bring real money to the table to build (or re-build) concrete water towers, while CONAPAC will handle the installation of the systems, training of operators, and formation of local community governance. Two communities were identified as needing new concrete towers—San Luis and Santa Victoria. Both of these communities have a CONAPAC community water treatment plant but they are made of wood. San Luis was rebuilt in December with all

new filters and tubes, while tanks and other parts were salvaged for reuse. In January work will begin at Santa Victoria, using the same approach of partnering with the municipality of Indiana.

Though capital construction donations for water treatment plants were generally down, we were still able to build a community water plant in the community of Jorge Chavez, located on a large island in the Amazon River. *Adopt A Village International*, from Colorado Springs, CO, funded this effort and worked in partnership with CONAPAC and the community at large. The water education workshop was hosted in August and intense operator training was held at the same time. Jorge Chavez is now enjoying regular clean water for all community members. CONAPAC currently oversees or monitors 28 community water treatment plants.

As we move into 2015, we have identified five remaining CONAPAC partner communities that are good candidates for a centralized community water treatment plant. We continue to seek funds as we strive toward our goal of providing access to clean water for all our partner communities by the end of 2015. Other communities in need of clean water, but too small or remote, will be part of our Sawyer Family Project next year.

2014 SAWYER CLASSROOM PROJECT

In 2013 CONAPAC executed a pilot project using the Sawyer PointONE water filter by placing units in individual homes in three jungle communities. These families were asked to use the water filtration system for six months with no obligation. After the trial period they could return the system or pay S/50 per family (about \$20) to keep it. During this time we hosted the University of Colorado-Boulder student water auditing team for their annual review of our water program, including an aspect of the audit that studied use of the Sawyer systems. The team's findings were positive and almost 100% of families chose to keep their water filters.

With these great results in mind, we moved forward to find partners to assist in our next effort—the *Sawyer Classroom Project 2014*. With a generous donation from *Mr. James Humphrey* and additional help from *Amazon Amigos* and *LifeSoure Fellowship Church*, we were able to purchase enough filters, buckets, supplies, and wooden water stands for 200 systems. During the course of the annual Adopt-A-School deliveries, volunteers and staff helped to assemble and deliver set-ups to all 179 classrooms in our Adopt-A-School program. It was a great effort and wonderfully received by the schools. They are now benefiting from clean water in classrooms for every child, every day. Results by the end of the year were positive, with many teachers using and demonstrating the system on a regular basis. However, more education and encouragement is required if this is to be a long-term, sustainable program.

Throughout the year, our water monitoring team continued to help teachers and students with follow-up training, support, and encouragement so that this vital resource could be used wisely and regularly. As the number of school classrooms increases, CONAPAC will continue to provide each classroom with its own Sawyer PointONE filter and bucket system.

LAS MALVINAS TEACHING GARDEN

This year we tried to increase teacher participation at the garden by offering a workshop and funding for a small project. The workshop focused on incorporating the garden into lesson plans across the curriculum and project planning. The teachers submitted project ideas after the workshop for CONAPAC's approval. The selected proposal was a project to prepare *biol* (an organic fertilizer and pesticide) and compost by activating efficient microorganisms through two elaborate recipes. The project was executed with three teachers and a total of 85 students. They produced 25 liters of *biol* and 1092 kilograms of compost. The *biol* and compost were used to improve soil quality and plant growth during the remainder of the 2014 school year and into 2015.

Apart from this CONAPAC funded project, teachers developed a few projects this year in addition to the usual vegetable garden production. One teacher grew peppers with his students to sell. Another teacher used recycled soda bottles and PVC pipe to make a type of hanging garden to demonstrate to other students that little space is needed to grow plants and

to demonstrate a way to reuse bottles that more commonly are thrown away. They grew green onions, cilantro, and a regional lettuce in their recycled structure. Another teacher ran a project to produce and sell highly profitable aloe plants. They established a good number of plants this year and hope to produce more for 2015. This project is hoped to be developed further in 2015 by selling aloe leaves and entire plants to the local community.

The fish farm suffered losses again this year due to low fish production. The starter fish were bigger than last year, but due to a fish food shortage in Iquitos and a lack of commitment from students to feed the fish on weekends and holidays, the fish did not grow big enough to make a profit. We shared with the teachers in charge of the project some ideas to increase sales. Some of our suggestions were used, but with the small size of the fish, there was little interest from the school community to buy them. One teacher bought the fish herself and then sold them grilled with salad and potatoes and was able to make a profit from this barbecue activity. The senior class was able to benefit from the barbecue sale, however the fish farm account was still in the red at the end of the year. A decision to continue or end this program will be made before the new school year begins in March.

The students from the *Environmental Protectors Club* elected to continue in their roles again for 2014. They were eco-hall monitors, making sure the other students took good care of the natural areas around the school. They also participated in educational activities around Iquitos with other *Environmental Protectors* from different schools.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

This year we hosted 21 community workshops with both student and adult tourist groups, representing almost 600 people in total. To a one, participants said this was the best part of their time in the jungle. In these rural communities, we painted schools, classrooms, and houses. Countless desks and chairs were sanded and refinished. Several gazebos were rebuilt, community trash bins and waste holes were created, environmentally friendly signage was created for posting around the communities, and small repair projects were completed for fencing and soccer bleachers. We also hosted many craft projects, which are always a hit. Additionally, through various other partners, health education and animal care workshops were held in some of the communities.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Centura Health: This year CONAPAC took on the management of four *Centura Health* volunteer clinics. *Centura Health* is a group of hospitals in Colorado who regularly do mission work around the world. They provide doctors, surgeons, nurses, and other healthcare professionals as volunteers in Iquitos, Peru. We handled village coordination with the med techs who work there, the doctors in Indiana and Anna Stahl Clinic, plus translators and other on the ground logistics.

Irlanda food relief: Donor Beverly Len, a longtime supporter of the community of Irlanda, stepped forward to offer her help with a food shortage crisis. Due to high water and other climate changes, regular crop rotations were gravely affected this year. Over the summer—June/August/October—food was delivered to each family in Irlanda. This included rice, canned milk, dried beans, oil, sugar, and other staples. With luck, this will not be necessary again next year.

Tamanco: Donor Susan Galliher, although currently serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Georgia (in Eastern Europe), has not forgotten her concern for the community of Tamanco. Twice this year, Susan funded food for the students who board there while attending high school.

Rotary Scholarship: As mentioned above, we facilitated the process of procuring funding and taking care of paperwork for a Rotary Exchange scholar from the rainforest, Andrea Asipali. We hope that this will be the first of many Rotary Exchange Scholarships that CONAPAC can provide.

University scholarships: Through funding from James Thompson, two students (Luis del Aguila and Ariana Perez) were both able to continue with their higher education courses. In fact, Ariana graduated this year after completing a three-year course of study in tourism—an obviously growing career in Peru.

Cedro Isla: In partnership with *International Expeditions*, a travel company from the US and regular CONAPAC donor, our team was able to deliver and install 49 Sawyer clean water systems. In May a small group from CONAPAC arrived, along with several IE passengers, to bring this important asset to the community of Cedro Isla. Further projects, such as this one,

are in the planning stages as IE continues its commitment to improving lives up and down the Amazon River and its tributaries.

2014 MAJOR PURCHASES & IMPROVEMENTS

Several new desks and chairs were added to the CONAPAC office, along with a fresh coat of paint and large white boards for our project planning needs. A new storeroom space was also allotted to CONAPAC at Explorama's home office. New and extensive shelving was added to serve our growing projects and inventory.

The IE Amigo, our small boat, was completely refurbished. A new aluminum roof has replaced the old vinyl one. New roll up windows, lights, safety feature were added, and she received a motor overhaul and a fresh coat of paint. The Evan Summers also got a new wooden deck and a fresh coat of paint, too.

STAFFING

- Our regular staff of **Alberto Vela** and **James Pasmiño** has remained the same, with minor additions for the water-monitoring program filled by contract workers. Alberto is our education specialist and James our water expert.
- **Megan Thomas de Rioja** departed as our library administrator mid-year for maternity leave. She returned in October to finish out her contract. However, her contract was not immediately renewed due to lack of designated funding for 2015. If possible, she will return to CONAPAC in 2015 to handle yet to be defined responsibilities.
- **Cynthia Smith Snyder** renewed her work contract until March 2017. In addition, she was able to reinstate her Peruvian residency and work permission in Peru for five more years. She will continue as CONAPAC administrator, working closely with Pamela Bucur, general manager of Explorama Lodges. Cynthia will spend nine months a year in Peru with travel outside the country to continue the promotion of CONAPAC and its needs to existing and prospective donors.
- **Fernando Saavedra** stepped in as library administrator when Megan departed. He also taught computer classes in the library, managed the music program, student scholarships in the city of Iquitos and regular library maintenance at both branches. In addition, Fernando initiated our Yagua language and culture preservation project, carrying out Phase I and developing the additional steps necessary to complete this project in the coming years.
- **Gilbert Mozembite and Javerth Torres**, the full- and part-time gardeners at Las Malvinas respectively, continued in their roles this year, providing continuous direction of projects in the garden with teachers and students, as well as regular maintenance and upkeep.

WEBSITE & NEWSLETTERS

Nancy Cowal continues to be our webmistress in the USA. She handles all changes and updates on a regular basis. Periodically Nancy and Cynthia post informative items and comments on the CONAPAC Facebook Fan Page. We currently have over 400 Likes but always strive for more.

This year Nancy and Cynthia started a monthly CONAPAC email newsletter. These consistent snapshots of our activities have helped keep our donors, volunteers, and other interested parties regularly informed of goals and accomplishments. Periodically the Detroit Zoo puts out its own newsletter, sharing with its donors and partners the role they play in conservation in Peru with the assistance of CONAPAC.

We also collaborated this year with *Pack for a Purpose*. This online clearinghouse connects prospective travelers with local NGOs on the ground. *Pack for a Purpose* has a linkable logo that is on our website, our email communication, and the Explorama website. Our various projects are listed and travelers can see ahead of time what is needed before they depart for Peru. Careful records are kept (by weight) of supplies donated and *Pack for a Purpose* tracks it on the website. We started our association mid-year and collected about 60K (or 132lb) of school and library supplies.

FUNDING PARTNERS

The following list is a summary of our major donors in order of giving:

- The Detroit Zoo
- Amazon Explorama Lodges
- International Expeditions
- SAGA Charitable Trust
- Adopt A Village International
- James Humphrey
- Beverly Len
- Pauline Freberg
- James Thompson
- Amazon Amigos
- EKOAmazon
- IFED-International Fund for Educational Development
- Centura Health
- Approximately 250 individual donors throughout the year

In addition, we had over 175 individual donors who adopted a school and countless others that gave smaller amounts, either for the Adopt-A-School Program, clean water, or the Library. Some donors have faithfully been with CONAPAC for years and we always appreciate their continued support. CONAPAC takes a small fee from each community service project that is added to the budget for general expenses.

SUMMARY

CONAPAC now commences its 25th year, working on multiple fronts to protect and preserve rain forest resources. This year we continued to increase visibility, mostly in the area of increased and improved communication with partner communities. More and more villages and/or community leaders have regular access to cell phone service. This has been a tremendous time and money saver for the small staff at CONAPAC. The technology is allowing us to provide more timely and precise information for upcoming events and activities. In the future, as more villages are connected, whether by phone or Internet, CONAPAC will play a crucial role of providing advice and guidance for rainforest river communities.

The combination of a basic education, clean water, and good health are simply tools--but their importance is invaluable to the greater possibilities inherently resting inside each of us. The resource of human knowledge and innovation is tapped when people know how to access information and do it with good health, while maintaining one's cultural identity and history. Who knows what direction future generations will take in the life of the rainforest, one of the most important ecosystems on earth. CONAPAC can influence the conversation by providing the tools. The rest lies in the hands of our stewards, the people who live along the Amazon and Napo Rivers.

Avenida La Marina 340, Iquitos, Perú Telephone: 51-65-25-3301 www.CONAPAC.org

CONAPAC is a Peruvian non-profit organization whose mission is to promote conservation of the rainforest through education of its stewards, the people who live along the Amazon and Napo Rivers. Our centerpiece project is the Adopt-A-School program; which is strengthened by education workshops and complemented by service and sustainable projects in river communities.