



2010 Final Report

CONAPAC Solidifies Its Position in the Amazon Region

As one of the longest standing Iquitos-based NGOs, CONAPAC continues to take the lead as a knowledgeable and committed partner to the people living along the Amazon and Napo Rivers. CONAPAC is there working in schools and with community leaders, placing clean water treatment plants and handling training and oversight, facilitating other NGO teams with logistics and introductions, running teacher workshops, and assisting volunteers to achieve their goal of service to others. CONAPAC continues to be a clearinghouse for information, assistance, and real-life experience in the Amazon Rainforest of Perú. This year was CONAPAC's 20th anniversary. CONAPAC has strong ties to Amazon Explorama Lodges. Together, they continue to do good work in this region of the rainforest, along with other donor partners such as The Detroit Zoo, International Expeditions, SAGA Charitable Trust, Environmental Expeditions, business, school and church groups, and individual donors from around the world.

ADOPT-A-SCHOOL~ZOO EXPEDITION 2010 (AAS) WEEKS 1 & 2

Once again in 2010, the Adopt-A-School (AAS) program was executed during the month of April (4/17-5/3). Packets and supplies were prepared for approximately 4500 students and teachers. During the delivery, there was a noticeable drop in students (especially high school age) who participated, but a significant increase in teachers. We had plenty of supplies for students, but will plan for more teachers in 2011.

For the first week, we had 13 volunteers who assisted with the deliveries along with our CONAPAC team, representatives of the Peruvian Department of Education, and Explorama guides. This was accomplished in the course of five days, running five boat teams each day. The last of the school supplies were delivered during the Week #2 expedition. For this second group, we had eight volunteers. Besides handling the balance of AAS deliveries, the group worked in the village of Ramon Castilla, assisting in the construction of a community water plant. The group also painted houses, planted palm and camu camu trees, and helped with three different art projects for Kindergarten and primary school children.

In May, CONAPAC staff hosted the annual three-day teacher workshops in four villages—Las Palmas, Manati I Zona, San Pedro de Mangua, and Tamanco. Attendance was lower this year due to a conflict of meetings. The Peruvian government and Department of Education hosted mandatory workshops for teachers in Iquitos at the same time as our first scheduled workshop. Our participation rate this year was 79%, down from 86% last year. For 2011 we intend to avoid these scheduling conflicts and increase participation to previous levels. We ended the year providing the necessary items for seven Christmas parties for the winning schools that made the best drawings for the AAS donor packets and conducting our year-end school evaluations by individually visiting each community. This year evaluations included more review of those villages which currently have clean water systems and a survey of the residents on the subject of domestic animals in the community. CONAPAC is partnering with *AmazonCares*, a local NGO that spays and neuters street dogs and cats. They also treat them for infections and other illnesses with the help of volunteer veterinarians who visit. *AmazonCares* works principally in Iquitos but together with CONAPAC we hope to offer this service to rainforest communities in the near future. Also, during evaluations, more information was shared with

villagers who do not yet have access to clean water but do have an interest in the options CONAPAC has to offer.

The volunteer program for Adopt-A-School continues to function well. This year a detailed survey was sent to all volunteers in May. The majority answered the questions, and feedback was 100% positive with few suggestions for changes or additions to the program. Sintia continues to take over more of the yearly responsibilities while Pamela remains in a position of support and detail-oversight where needed.

MINI-WATER TREATMENT PLANTS & EDUCATION

This year we completed the construction of seven new water plants. At this point, we have 14 water plants in place. We continue to host the clean water education workshops for the community as each water plant comes on line. The water workshops are refined each time as we observe the type of information that seems most valuable. Also, construction materials and design have improved with each project, and there is more focus on safety and long-term sustainability.

In June, a group of students from the University of Colorado came to Iquitos to facilitate an independent review of the systems. They partnered with students from the local university in Iquitos (UNAP), and carried out a variety of village visits, interviews with community members, and water tests. Although the review only covered seven projects, the students provided a range of informative reports. These reports showed that the usage and pay rates are far from where they need to be to truly have sustainable clean water systems in remote river communities. In addition, we need to do much more education, training, and oversight to help in the success of these water plants. A new set of goals has been developed for 2011 to begin partnering with communities on a deeper financial level, thus raising the odds of better accountability and long-term success. James followed up with his own individual review of each village. Each community has its own challenges, and he has been working with the authorities to try to improve the current status.

One area of particular concern has been Santa Teresa. The original group of authorities has dissolved and no one has stepped up to fill the void. Both James and Marcos talked to the residents at length over several visits to ascertain the problems and facilitate solutions. A decision was made to remove the water plant and place it elsewhere if Santa Teresa could not begin to use and maintain the water plant. It appears that Santa Teresa is no longer interested in maintaining the water plant, so next year CONAPAC will remove it and place it in a more interested community.

For all of the water plants, regular visits will continue to be made within our budget allowances and staff availability. As donor interest continues to remain high, we anticipate further growth for CONAPAC in this area of community development. Where donors are willing to contribute more to provide support and training, CONAPAC will use this money accordingly.

LAS MALVINAS TEACHING GARDEN

This year has been a full one for the only urban project that CONAPAC oversees. Sintia, Jaime, and Alberto continue to make weekly visits to the garden to review progress, answer questions, and arrange needs. Most of the high school students participate in the garden in one form or another—either with the vegetable garden, the fish farm, the nursery, or general clean up and maintenance. Also, a variety of classes, from math to religion, are regularly held in the garden gazebo.

The vegetable garden was planted three times, and the profits saved in a separate school bank account for a variety of purchases in the garden. The fish farm was a great success this year. We harvested fish three times, the last during the beginning of November. It was a grand event that the whole school came out to watch. All the fish were quickly sold and profits tucked away in the fish farm account. There were enough profits remaining at the end of the year to give the senior class S/300 for a special graduation party. The balance of the profits will be used to purchase baby fish and fish food for next year.

The turtle pond is thriving. The students have been regularly clearing away overgrown water hyacinth, giving the turtles more room to grow. They also regularly cross over to the fishpond and seem to especially enjoy feeding time. The students built a small box with sand and added a fence enclosure where 234 turtle eggs were buried. Two months later, almost 200 hatched, providing an

opportunity to teach about the advantages of preservation of local turtles. A large number were released in a lake near the Napo River, while the balance stayed in the turtle pond at the garden.

Las Malvinas has had a few visiting tourist groups. All have been duly impressed by the garden and always have great questions. Alberto Vela, CONAPAC's education specialist, has been spending more time at Las Malvinas. Normally his duties revolve around the Adopt-A-School program, but his expertise is invaluable for the garden, too. He has been working with the administrator and individual teachers to generate project ideas. If funding can be made available for 2011, we'd like to host a couple of teacher workshops specifically for those teachers interested in expanding their classroom time and lesson plans around the garden. Alberto is also looking at the idea of lining up more guest speakers for the students so they can broaden their interest and understanding of the importance of the rainforest.

Some informational signage has been added by the students and more is planned. Hopefully, with profits from the vegetable garden, additional materials can be bought and utilized by various age groups next year. Both our gardeners, Gilvert Mozombite and Javerth Torres, continue in their work in the garden and with the students. Gilbert, in particular, has turned out to be so much more than a gardener. He has an easy rapport with the students and is often the one organizing the student projects. He is extremely competent, trustworthy, and reliable. We hope he chooses to continue with us for some time. Javerth, although part time, also adds a great deal to the technical side of the garden, often bringing new experimental ideas from his work at INIA (Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Extensión Agraria). In addition, he works at keeping the teachers and administrators informed of the needs and issues that arise in the garden. The Las Malvinas School APAFA parents group (or PTO) also regularly help with the clean up in the garden and maintain oversight of various projects, especially the fish farm.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

This was another busy year for Marcos who coordinated service projects with Explorama. This year, 24 different groups participated in these service projects. In addition, we hosted three additional groups who helped build water treatment plants. For 2010, our total volunteer count for the year was almost 500. Offering service projects continues to be popular with Explorama's customer base and it is a great way to continue hosting opportunities for cross-cultural learning and providing manpower for needed community improvements. Marcos, in particular, loves service projects and is a great leader who relates well to both the village residents and our visiting volunteer teams. The partnership between CONAPAC and Explorama continues to make this possible and all parties are satisfied with the arrangement.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Despite CONAPAC's goal of narrowing its focus to a handful of larger activities (AAS, water plants and community service projects), we continue to field requests for a variety of other projects. Although not actively encouraged, these are donor requests that come from long-standing past donors and volunteers. We have implemented them to the best of our ability and incorporated them with other projects when appropriate. These projects include: the purchase and distribution of \$4000 in soap, toothpaste, and towels; a new blackboard at Santa Maria de Fatima; a new fish farm at Santa Lucia; tools for the carpentry shop in Iquique; food for the dorm students in Tamanco; high school scholarships for two students from San Alejandro; camu camu tree plantings in Llachapa and Ramon Castilla; latrines in Trigrillo; and additional support for the bakery in Timicuro Grande. CONAPAC also organizes medical visits to communities in the Napo area and health education workshops in villages near Iquitos with groups from Centura Health of Denver, Colorado. This year we also hosted the infamous Pachita, AKA Nancy Kopf. Nancy is our biggest AAS fundraiser and each year she spends more and more of her time spreading the word of Adopt-A-School, CONAPAC, and the needs of rainforest residents. Normally, Pachita comes once a year to spread her special brand of joy and love as she delivers our extra school supplies. She is joined by several of her friends from the States who assist her. This year, Pachita was able to come three times—during AAS weeks in April, in June, and in December to bring some extra special Christmas joy.

2010 MAJOR PURCHASES

After many years of making do and getting by with little or no equipment specifically purchased for CONAPAC, it was time to augment the tools necessary to complete CONAPAC's work more effectively and efficiently. Major purchases included a generator, power saw, power drill, hand tools, shovels, post hole diggers, and tool boxes to use in the building water plants, a projector and sound system for PowerPoint presentations during CONAPAC workshops, an upgraded CPU for Sintia, a new computer printer for the CONAPAC office, personal supplies for James to begin his work on the river, including mosquito netting, lifejackets, rain poncho, and flashlight, and a new 25 HP Yamaha outboard motor for the Evan Summers (CONAPAC boat number two). The old motor was in constant need of repair and underpowered for the work it needs to accomplish. An undesignated donation of \$5000 from the Detroit Zoo made these important purchases possible.

STAFFING

In January of 2010, Sintia became an official employee of CONAPAC and is no longer a volunteer. Her commitment to CONAPAC will continue until the end of 2011, at which point all parties will decide on future arrangements. She has attained Peruvian residency to live and work in the country until 2014. James Pasmíño was added in April of this year, through a donation by International Expeditions for his salary and the gasoline he needs to do his work. He is working out well, has blended with existing staff, and seems to enjoy the work and its challenges. We have two gardeners on payroll for Las Malvinas (Gilbert, full time and Javerth, part time). Marcos continues on full time and Alberto part time. Amner, Jaime, and Aly the bookkeeper, are quarter time. Although Pamela is not paid staff, she continues to play a large role by providing insight and ideas from her past experience and expertise in all things CONAPAC.

Though small, our staff continues to achieve big things. Each member plays a pivotal role that allows CONAPAC to do more with less. The following is a list of our present staff.

Amner is from the river community of Tamanco. He has been with CONAPAC since its beginning and is our greatest promoter of the importance of improving rural education and environmental consciousness in the villages. He attends and participates in all workshops, school evaluations, and deliveries of books and school supplies.

Marcos is a native of Perú and a biologist who graduated from the University in Iquitos. Marcos organizes our service projects, oversees construction of our water plants and community improvement projects, and participates in all our rural workshops.

Alberto, from Iquitos, is our education specialist. Alberto has worked as a teacher in rural schools, as a teacher-educator, as a member of the Board of Education in Iquitos, and as the administrator of the Ministry of Education's Office for Rural Education in Iquitos. As our educational program coordinator, Alberto is responsible for CONAPAC's teacher and community leader workshops and our yearly community evaluations. This year he created our new water workshop outline and facilitated all seven workshops.

Sintia (or Cindy) has now been with CONAPAC for over a year. A previous Adopt-A-School volunteer, Sintia is from the United States. She coordinates the AAS program, as well as special projects with the CONAPAC staff. She also maintains close contact with our worldwide donor base and makes regular visits to community projects.

Pamela is our fearless leader and all around expert. She started the AAS program 18 years ago, and has nurtured and watched it grow ever since. Her background as a science teacher and experience living in Iquitos for almost 25 years have proven invaluable to CONAPAC on all levels.

Jaime is the president of CONAPAC and a principal at Explorama Lodges. This year Jaime took on the oversight of our latest project, the environmental teaching garden at Las Malvinas School in the City of Iquitos. His construction and project management background is his strength and an asset to CONAPAC—along with his invaluable translation services to Sintia!

James is our newest addition to the team. Funded by International Expeditions, James regularly visits river communities, offering support, assistance, training, and general oversight of the Adopt A School

program, and performing monitoring of the clean water treatment plants. James is an accredited teacher with more than six years experience living and working in the rainforest community of Nuñez Cocha.

FUNDING PARTNERS

INDIVIDUAL DONORS: These donors continue to make up the majority of our budget. We had individuals who gave \$350 (or more) to adopt 199 schools, and we had smaller donations (under \$350) by 64 individuals. We also had a variety of special project donations that were channeled through the Detroit Zoo. Contributions were made by 18 individuals, and the Academy for Humane Education made a \$5000 donation for AAS notebooks.

DETROIT ZOO: The Zoo continues to be a very supportive partner and seems to understand our funding shortfalls by sending additional assistance. The Zoo's commitment has increased each year, not only with administrative and logistical support for the AAS program, but also with undesignated cash donations. This year, on top of all they do for us without charging fees or taking a percentage, they sent CONAPAC a \$5000 donation. In general, we used this to update equipment both in the office and in the field and to cover salary shortfalls.

VOLUNTEERS: Volunteer fees continue to be our core source of funding for salaries. This year we set a goal of 30 paying volunteers. However, our actual count was 21. It's important to us to fill these spots, and CONAPAC has encouraged the Detroit Zoo to do all they can to help meet this goal for 2011. The Zoo will continue as the primary recruiter and manager of volunteers. Their willingness to handle marketing, advertising, and coordination of volunteers has been invaluable.

INTERNATIONAL EXPEDITIONS: IE continues to maintain its commitment to CONAPAC. In 2009, approximately \$36,000 was transferred to CONAPAC. However, the projects this donation represented were not complete until this year. IE sent no money this year for general projects, but when contacted about this year's shortage of funds to purchase classroom textbooks, IE saved the day by transferring \$12,000 to cover these costs. IE requested CONAPAC's funding needs for 2011, and thus far has approved \$30,000.

SAGA CHARITABLE TRUST: SAGA continues to be a strong corporate partner, donating \$25,000 in 2010 for three water plants, seven workshops, and general salary and gasoline support. The SAGA Trust continues to raise awareness of its many programs around the world through its magazine, mailings, and the Internet, our water projects being one of them. SAGA has agreed to fund four water plants and four workshops for 2011 for a total donation of \$24,000.

AMAZON AMIGOS: Frances Gatz started Amazon Amigos specifically to raise money for CONAPAC through her business connections and clients. Amazon Amigos is the non-profit segment of her business, Environmental Expeditions. In the past, projects for which she raised money were a broad range from the carpentry shop to agouti farms. In the last year, through our encouragement, she has narrowed that focus to water plants, workshops, and the garden at Las Malvinas. She continues to raise money through a variety of ways for diverse projects. Most fall in the category of special projects that we execute or incorporate into other related programs. We expect Frances to continue her commitment to CONAPAC in one way or another. In the last year, Amazon Amigos has donated over \$9,000.

EXPLORAMA LODGES: Previously, CONAPAC salaries were partially funded by Explorama through a \$600 a month contribution. Due to the downturn in the economy, this support came to an end in mid-2010 and CONAPAC needed to look for alternative funding sources. This has been accomplished through a patchwork of miscellaneous donations, but it remains to be seen how this will work for 2011. For the first time in 20 years, CONAPAC has been completely funded by outside donations and will end the year in the black. Explorama continues to offer important logistical support to CONAPAC during the AAS expedition weeks by donating boats, guides, drivers, and room and board. Explorama also accommodates CONAPAC staff and guests on their boats when space is available. Explorama covers room and board, when necessary, to CONAPAC staff and provides office space, utilities, and IT support at no cost to the NGO. This year, almost 400 bed nights with meals were given to CONAPAC staff members, representing a fair market value of over \$40,000. There is no doubt CONAPAC could not continue to exist without the support and partnership with Explorama Lodges and its owners.

MARKETING

This year our website continued to evolve and improve. We added segments that profiled our corporate partners, with website links, and our individual donors and volunteers. We also added pages that feature all of the AAS villages. Along with photos, there is information about population totals and longevity in the program. Through our partner, the Detroit Zoo, we were able to add a "Donate Online" service so that donors may make immediate donations by credit card. We continue to send out a quarterly newsletter to update donors about the AAS program and our water plants. In 2011 we plan to create a CONAPAC Facebook page and a new PowerPoint presentation that interested parties may use for presentations in the States. AAS postcards were sent to donors, along with their Thank You donor packets. We encouraged our donors to share the cards with their family and friends.

Once again, final thanks to all donors, volunteers, and owners and staff at Explorama, and to our many friends around the world. We could not do this work without your support and the encouragement that strengthens us for each new challenge.