



E - N E W S

Edition: Feb 2011



Team member spotlight

We are fortunate to have the leadership of [Dr. Kim Williams-Guillén](#). As Director of Conservation Science, Kim oversees our long-term biodiversity monitoring program, leads studies on bats, primates and small mammals, and also coordinates research programs with collaborating institutions such as the USFS-International Institute for Tropical Forestry and the [Museo Entomológico de Leon](#).

Kim's scientific interests focus on the rich biodiversity within human-dominated landscapes, such as that found in the tropical dry forests of Nicaragua. Kim is also an Acting Assistant Professor at the University of Washington, Bothell.

Conservation in ACTION

Paso Pacífico's [Environmental Learning, Leadership, Adventure, and Stewardship Initiative](#), (ELLAS) works to create a globally important geotourism destination in Nicaragua by supporting the Nicaraguan people in protecting the forests and coasts near the La Flor Wildlife Refuge. By empowering women to become environmental entrepreneurs and [strengthening community values](#), this program will create a sustainable tourism industry and encourage economic development at the local level.

ELLAS recognizes that to protect the biodiversity, ecology, and culture of Nicaragua, we must start by supporting the initiative of the local people. Women have not traditionally held a leading role in eco-tourism businesses, but their values and social concerns make them perfect candidates to lead the country in developing nature and place-based tourism. This program will strengthen women-owned tourism and conservation enterprises, such as hostels and native tree nurseries.

Children also show promise as environmental leaders, and Paso Pacífico will expand its [education](#) program to strengthen the next generation of stewards. Also, by integrating new technology such as [Project Noah](#) into its natural resource management efforts, this program will empower local people as citizen scientists.

The ELLAS initiative will help to develop a more community-centered eco-tourism industry on the coast of Nicaragua and will prepare local communities for the changes to come with it.

ACT NOW!



Thanks to YOU, Paso Pacífico's ELLAS Program has been

# Paso Pacífico in the News

The Nicaraguan media did not hesitate to [express its support](#) for Paso Pacífico last month when our Environmental Learning, Leadership, Adventure, and Stewardship Initiative ([ELLAS](#)) was announced as a finalist in Ashoka Changemaker's 2010 Geotourism Challenge.

Local news sources [encouraged the public to vote](#) for the program with slogans such as "¡Votà Por Ellas!" These articles featured both local women who have already benefited from our efforts to empower female entrepreneurs and our team members in Nicaragua who are working hard to promote sustainable tourism in coastal communities.

Last week, with help from this publicity and support from our online community and local Nicaraguans, Paso Pacífico received enough votes to be [chosen as a winner](#) of the international competition! This award is a huge honor to Paso Pacífico and the Nicaraguans people.

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## Partnerships make it possible

[SEetheWILD](#) is a new organization launched to make conservation the next trend in travel. By making it possible for travelers to select destinations based on the animals they would like to save, SEetheWILD is helping travelers to become conservation activists.

SEetheWILD was born from the successful initiative [SEE Turtles](#), which links environmentally conscious travelers and volunteers with community-based sea turtle conservation projects. SEetheWILD has expanded this model of sustainable tourism to many new species of wildlife including bears, whales, and jaguars.

SEetheWILD in partnership with [Reefs to Rockies](#), is now offering a [trip to Nicaragua](#)! During this ten-day adventure, travelers will experience this culturally and geographically rich country up close, while knowing that their experience will directly benefit Paso Pacífico's field-based conservation programs. Reefs to Rockies and SEetheWILD have committed to making a direct contribution to our programs on behalf of every traveler. We are so grateful for this support and we encourage you to consider booking a trip with them soon. SEetheWILD's innovative travel offerings will strengthen conservation efforts around the globe. Congratulations to their team!

selected a winner of the Ashoka Changemakers and National Geographic [Geotourism Challenge 2010!](#)

This month, you can continue to support Paso Pacífico by sharing news of our work with others. Please forward this e-newsletter and encourage your friends to [SIGN UP](#) for our monthly update.

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## IN GRATITUDE



Paso Pacífico would like to recognize [Dr. Laurie Goldstein](#) who has generously supported our efforts to protect Nicaragua's wildlife. Laurie is passionate about animal conservation and welfare. She has been a catalyst to the establishment of the [Catskill Animal Sanctuary](#) and has made it possible for us to strengthen our sea turtle conservation program. She also cares deeply for Nicaragua, the country where she served as a physician to the indigenous communities of the Caribbean coast. Laurie resides in New York City where she works as a caring Obstetrician in that urban jungle. We thank you Laurie!

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