



E - N E W S

Edition: March 2010



Team member spotlight

Since Paso Pacifico began working with the coastal community of El Ostional in 2007, the young and energetic Salvador Sanchez has been an important supporter. When he completed his term as an elected community leader in 2008, Salvador joined Paso Pacifico to work as Coordinator for Community-Based Turtle Conservation programs. As a natural born leader, Salvador's positive influence has helped convince many turtle poachers to abandon their trade and begin protecting sea turtle nests, where they receive a performance payment for every baby sea turtle successfully hatched. Salvador also helped Paso Pacifico identify and recruit the community tour guides, who now lead the area's most exclusive nature tours.

Conservation in ACTION

Paso Pacifico relies on the most cutting-edge conservation science to design its programs. Wildlife biologist [Suzanne Hagell](#) of Northern Arizona University was in the field last month, following the elusive and endangered [Black-handed Spider Monkey \(Ateles geoffroyi\)](#) and collecting fecal material as it dropped to the forest floor. Hagell is now extracting the DNA from these droppings in order to analyze how genes are shared across the landscape. This will allow Hagell to identify sites where spider monkeys are literally stuck within forest islands, as well as locations where spider monkeys are able to connect with neighboring groups through bridges in the forest canopy. Spider monkeys are particularly sensitive to forest degradation; since they are strictly tree dwelling primates, the pathways between core habitat areas must include tall and connected trees.

Paso Pacifico will use Hagell's research to identify sites where forests must be rebuilt and to prioritize the existing forest corridors for conservation. These efforts are supported by [Primate Conservation, Inc.](#), The Primate Action Fund, and generous donors like you.

ACT NOW!

Paso Pacifico in the News

Paso Pacifico made [headlines](#) recently when the organization was honored by acclaimed artist and designer Maya Lin's [What is Missing? \(WIM\) Foundation](#) at the Support REDD+ Gala in Copenhagen during the UN Climate Change Conference. Paso Pacifico's Return to Forest was one of six projects selected from around the world as an



exemplary model of forestry-based climate change mitigation and received a generous donation from the WIM Foundation to support the project and explore the opportunity for including [REDD](#)-generated offsets. At the event, Maya Lin also debuted her newest media piece, [Unchopping a Tree](#), a short yet moving film, meant to inform, inspire, and draw attention to the fact that deforestation is responsible for 20% of global emissions.

Paso Pacifico and its partners such as [Domitila](#) and [Las Fincas](#) Reserves are literally achieving Maya Lin's goals of "Unchopping a Tree." Through the Return to Forest project, begun in 2007, Paso Pacifico and its partners planted over a quarter of a million native trees and will reduce the emissions of over 170,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases during the life of the project. Return to Forest is unique in that it helps to combat climate change, while also protecting threatened forest species and advancing the well-being of local communities. It was the third forestry-based carbon project in the world to be validated at the Gold Level under the [Climate, Community, and Biodiversity \(CCB\) Standard](#). Phase II of Return to Forest will begin within the next year, restoring more forest, protecting more land area, and providing more local jobs.

Partnerships make it possible

Paso Pacifico places high value on building strong partnerships, both in the local communities where we work, as well as with the higher-level institutions and organizations that help make this work possible. Over the past three years, Paso Pacifico has built a strong partnership with the U.S. Forestry Service's [International Institute of Tropical Forestry \(IITF\)](#). IITF's focus on strengthening forest management and biodiversity conservation is so aligned with Paso Pacifico's mission that this partnership has led to many high-impact projects.

The [USAID](#)-funded Sustainable Tourism and Conservation in Critical Watersheds of Nicaragua project was implemented by IITF over the past three years. It was through this USAID project that IITF was able to provide support to Paso Pacifico to get its community-based eco-tourism program off the ground, helping to fund interpretive materials for eco-tourism and providing capacity training to over twenty local community tour guides. This project also helped to establish new private reserves and to support conservation training workshops for Nicaraguan students and young professionals (i.e. wildlife monitoring and techniques in bat conservation). The IITF has been unwavering in its support for our young organization, providing much needed expertise in interpretive design, sustainable eco-tourism planning, and the development of other field-based projects.

Paso Pacifico continues to raise awareness in Nicaragua about the pressing need to stop the illegal trade in wildlife. Please support Paso Pacifico by watching our most recent video on [You Tube](#), by commenting on the video, and sharing it with friends via email or [Facebook](#).

IN GRATITUDE



Paso Pacifico wants to recognize and express our gratitude to outgoing Board Member and Treasurer, Claudia Belli, for her four outstanding years of service. Claudia is a leading figure in private lands conservation in Nicaragua and brought invaluable in-country expertise on private reserves. She is the founder of the [Montibelli Reserva Silvestre Privada](#), an ecological reserve she created on her family-owned land, and is the former President of the Nicaraguan non-profit, [Red de Reservas Silvestres Privadas](#), an organization seeking to strengthen the private reserve network in Nicaragua. We are grateful for Claudia's service, and we wish her the best as she continues to promote conservation in Nicaragua.

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