

Lessons in Progress

Sarapiquí Conservation Learning Center

***Centro de Aprendizaje para la
Conservación en Sarapiquí***



Dec 3-5, 2008

Travelers' Philanthropy
Conference

By Andrea Holbrook

Lessons Learning in 3 Parts



Asociación Centro de Aprendizaje
para la Conservación en Sarapiquí



**HOLBROOK
TRAVEL**

Dec 3-5, 2008

Travelers' Philanthropy
Conference

Learning Center Lessons

1. Lack of community involvement

1. Census Project

2. Awareness / Documentation

2. Cultural Differences

3. Board participation

3. Poor management practices

Community Involvement & Commitment



Bertha Carter

co-Founder Giovanna Holbrook, Co-founder

SCLC History: 1993 – 2008

- 1993 building complete
- 1995 Non-profit status established
- 2001-2004 growth in programs & budget
- 2005 Board Established
- 2004-8 Community Census & Building ties with other non-profits

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Board of Directors

President

Polly Hunt Mendoza

Vice President

Yahaira Rojas

Secretary

Andrea Holbrook

Treasurer

Giselle Monge

First / Vocal Uno

Rodolfo Alvarado

Second/ Vocal Dos

Christa Dillabaugh

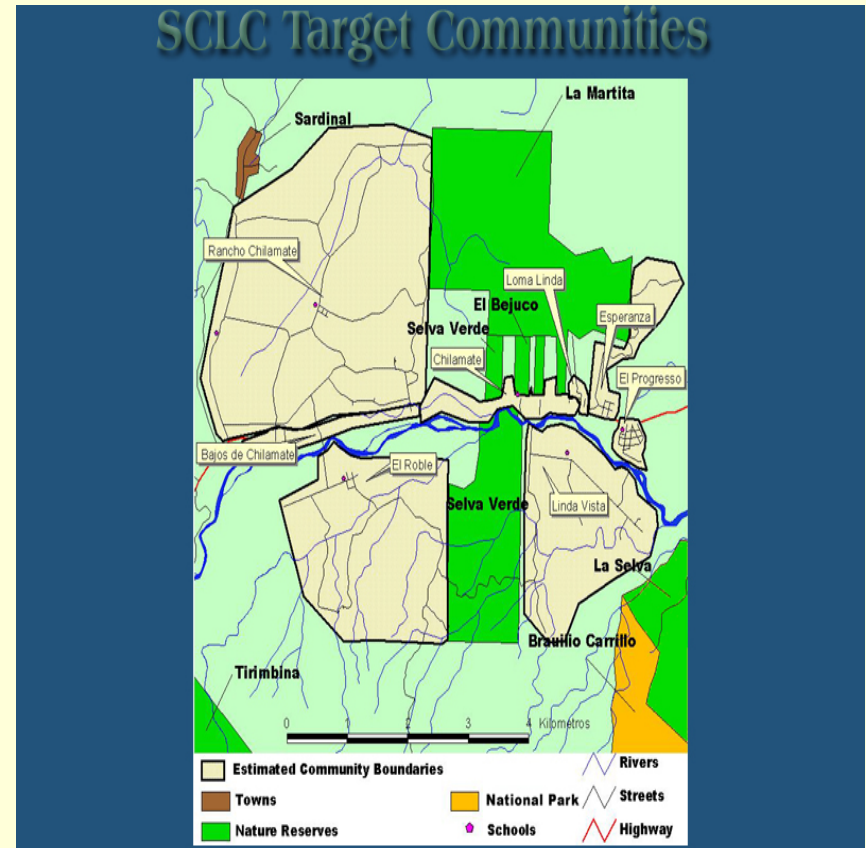
Fiscal

Amos Bien

4 CR & 3 US

Census led to greater links within communities

- Representatives from each community to meet monthly at the Center
- Census data & GIS mapping can be utilized by community for measuring & monitoring issues
- Community needs correlate better with tourism opportunities



Tourism meeting the needs of communities



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January 2008

Cultural Differences



- Traditions & customs
- Values
- Standard of living



Poor management practices

- No functioning Board of Directors 1993-2004
 - Extremely high turnover in Executive Directorship roles (1 year or less) & volunteer positions (3 months or less)
 - Lack of funding
 - Programming (ESL, After-School, Env. Education) poor quality
 - Even creating a negative (“partying”) reputation in the community

Holbrook Travel, Inc & Selva Verde Lodge; Lessons in working with SCLC

- Lack of shared vision and goals between for profit & not for profit leads to conflict
- Dependency on tourism = Lack of other funding = high turn-over
- Tourism gone wild
- Establishing working agreements
- Partnering with local organizations
- Policies for tourism and the purpose of tourism activities

Lack of shared vision and goals between for profit & not for profit leads to conflict

Acuerdo entre CECOS y Selva Verde
21 de Octubre, 2008

Participantes:
Gabriel Gonzalez
Graziano Marengo
Andrea Holbrook
Andrew Rothman
Polly Mendoza

Lo que cada entidad necesita

CECOS/SCLC	Selva Verde
Un aumento en clientes que visitan a CECOS y se apuntan para actividades	Ayuda con la CST
Que los recepcionistas de SVL den una explicacion de CECOS con cada hoesped	Mas programas, y una diferenciacion del mercado en programas que se ofrecen a los turistas
Dar charlas en SVL sobre los programas de CECOS	Prolongar la estadia de los hoespedes por ofrecer mas actividades
Mantenimiento del edificio segun el contrato hecho	Tener una lista de actividades que un hoesped puede apuntarse en el ultimo momento
Prestamos de equipo en el caso extremo de que el equipo de CECOS esta dañado	Uniformidad en lo que el SCLC pone en SVL y que sea profesional y uniforme con el material de SVL

Acciones que cada entidad tiene que tomar

CECOS	SVL
Ir a SVL para ver las operaciones	Ir a unas actividades de turismo rural de CECOS
Ir juntos al CST para entender bien el sistema de juzgamiento para conseguir hojas	Ir juntos al CST para entender bien el sistema de juzgamiento para conseguir hojas
Tener reuniones mensuales con SVL para revisar las actividades	Tener reuniones mensuales con CECOS para revisar las actividades
Entrenar a los recepcionistas sobre CECOS	Seguir con la lista de trabajos de mantenimiento para CECOS
Mejorar la "esquina verde" para que sea uniforme con el material de SVL	
Hacer cartas mensuales de las donaciones "In-kind" que le brinde SVL a CECOS	

- Clear written agreements with benefits spelled out



Dependency on tourism = Lack of other funding = high turn-over



Corredor Biológico
San Juan-La Selva

- Partnering with local organizations
 - Grants that incorporate a number of organizations may be more effective
 - Resources can be shared



Tourism gone wild



SARAPIQUI CONSERVATION LEARNING CENTER
Linking Community and Conservation through Education and Ecotourism

Tourism Activities Available at SCLC 2008-2009 (until further notice)

The SCLC is a non-profit organization working to link communities and conservation through education and ecotourism in the Sarapiquí region of Costa Rica's northern lowlands. The SCLC focuses its efforts in four areas — environmental education, community development, conservation, and tourism — in order to help form future environmental leaders, raise the organizational capacity of local communities, promote sustainable land use, and connect tourists to the local community and environment. The activities listed below have been carefully chosen so that tourism helps the SCLC to fulfill its mission. By booking tourism activities with the SCLC, you will be contributing to environmental conservation, promoting the well-being of local communities, and producing sustainable economic benefits for the SCLC and the local community.

All activities include a free English translation from a SCLC representative

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

NEW!! Latin Dance Show

Price: Popular Dance Show \$90 with 8 dancers, Folkloric Dance Show \$105 with 8 dancers

Recommended time: 7:30pm Monday - Sunday

1 hour

Dancing is a central part of Costa Rican culture. Come and hear Latin music and enjoy dances performed by a local dance group. See either traditional folkloric dances or a popular combination of meringue, salsa, and cumbia. Listen, watch, and see if you can manage to sit still!

Latin Dance Class

Price: \$10 p/p for groups 10 to 25 pax, if group is larger please contact SCLC directly for pricing.

Recommended time: 7:30pm Monday - Sunday

1 hour

Ever wanted to learn Latin dancing? Then this is the class for you! You will learn 3 styles: Merengue, Salsa, and Cumbia. Local dancers will first demonstrate and then lead the group step by step. You will also practice with a partner and everyone will also take turns dancing in a circle, showing off their new dance moves. This activity is great fun, perfect for group's kick off or tour ending, but also for families and friends.

Cooking Class

Price: \$10 p/p, 5 to 25 pax, \$ 17 p/p for groups < 5 pax

*Monday - Friday, Saturdays and Sundays flexible

1 ½ - 2 hours

This class will offer you the opportunity to learn how to make traditional Costa Rican dishes. The classes are led by a local community member, and everyone participates in the cooking process. You will learn about the history, botanical names, and cultivation of each fresh ingredient. The menu consists of *guacamole* (a dip made with avocados), *batidos* (milkshakes), *empanadas* (turnovers), *torillas* (flat bread), and *patacones* (fried green plantains). Enjoy trying all of your culinary creations at the end of the class!

Desserts Class

Price: \$10/p, \$100 minimum (low season \$50 minimum), 25 person maximum

* Flexible, perfect for a midday snack

1 ½ hours

This might possibly be the most scrumptious educational activity around! A local cook will teach you how to prepare three traditional "postres" (desserts): *chorreada* (a pancake-like postre made of corn), *plátanos maduros a la gloria* (plantains in a cinnamon and clove mixture), and *miel de piña y coco* (a compote made of pineapple and coconut). As pineapples and plantains abound in the area, participants can be assured that the majority of the ingredients are locally grown. This hands-on activity not only allows participants to create, but best of all, to eat their creations!

**We are always happy to accommodate special needs. So if your group exceeds 25 people or if you would like a certain menu or a more in-depth session to experience everything from the initial grocery shopping in a local tienda to the making of the food, just contact us and we will be happy to create something special for you*

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- Heavy dependence on tourism leads can lead to dilemmas
 - Quality & Expectations
 - Commission
 - Competition



ave
Conference

Origami activity with guests
at the Selva Verde Lodge