

Annual Report 2017



*Monteverde Conservation League
Children's Eternal Rainforest*



**BOSQUE ETERNO
DE LOS NIÑOS**
CHILDREN'S ETERNAL
RAINFOREST

**AGENDA FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
MONTEVERDE CONSERVATION LEAGUE
BAJO DEL TIGRE, MONTEVERDE
FEBRUARY 3, 2018**

- 8:30 a.m. First Roll Call
9:00 a.m. Second Roll Call; Minute of Silence; Welcome; Approval of Agenda
9:05 a.m. President's Report
9:20 a.m. Treasurer's Report
9:30 a.m. Fiscal Reports
9:40 a.m. Executive Director's Report
10:10 a.m. Questions and Answers
10:50 a.m. Motion to approve President's & Treasurer's Reports
10:55 a.m. Nominating Committee Report
11:00 a.m. Election of Board of Directors and Fiscal
- Election of Vice President for the period March 1, 2018 to February 29, 2020
 - Election of Treasurer for the period March 1, 2018 to February 29, 2020
 - Election of Vocal 2 for the period March 1, 2018 to February 29, 2020
 - Election of Fiscal 2 for the period March 1, 2018 to February 29, 2020
- 11:40 a.m. Election of Nominating Committee
11:55 a.m. Other topics
12:15 p.m. Motion to formalize agreements taken during the Assembly
Motion to formalize the minutes
12:30 p.m. Lunch



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INTRODUCTION

Monteverde, Puntarenas
January 31, 2018

One year ago in these pages, I identified our most important immediate priorities as repairing and reopening Pocosol, following up on changes in the laws related to environmental service payments, increasing visitation at Bajo del Tigre, following up on legal cases, and fundraising. In general, we have made solid progress toward these goals, while also tackling other challenges that have arisen along the way.

I am delighted to report that Pocosol is well on its way to reopening. In an overwhelming act of solidarity, Friends of the Rainforest raised the full \$60,000 necessary to complete repairs to the slope and building itself. Repairs began in January 2018, and we hope to have the station open for visitation in May 2018.

The situation with the government's Payment for Environmental Services (PES) program has taken a turn for the better. In September 2017, a new Executive Order was issued, creating an exception to the Forestry Law for "nongovernmental, non-profit organizations that make important efforts in the conservation and care of forested areas in especially biodiverse and fragile areas". This most recent modification to the Forestry Law sets a limit of 300 hectares per organization, per conservation area, per type of PES, per year. In practice, this likely means that the MCL will be able to maintain its current rate of PES, thereby securing (at least for now) this important economic resource.

We have gotten one legal case off our plate: on December 11, 2017, we reached a settlement with CONELECTRICAS. During an 8-month stay in the arbitration process, we came up with a creative solution by which CONELECTRICAS can meet up to 100% of its annual financial commitment to the MCL via a special contract with FONAFIFO, using money it already pays to the Costa Rican government for the water tax (*canon de aguas*). Under the new agreement, the MCL should receive \$47,800 per year for the next 28 years. This sum includes the full amount CONELECTRICAS was due to pay the MCL for the remainder of the previous contract, plus more than \$250,000 that CONELECTRICAS owed the MCL as a result of incomplete payments over the past 10 years.

While we are thrilled with the positive outcome in this particular case, legal cases in general threaten the conservation of the Children's Eternal Rainforest (BEN) and represent a significant drain on our human and economic resources. Reducing our legal load continues to be a major, immediate goal for the organization.

With respect to visitation, daytime visits to Bajo del Tigre increased by about 20% in 2017. Unfortunately, this was counterbalanced by a slight decrease in night walks, so we clearly still have some work to do in this arena. Visitation at San Gerardo grew by leaps and bounds in 2017, and we look forward to maintaining this level of occupancy at San Gerardo while also opening and filling Pocosol.

We have expanded our efforts to stay in touch with donors and supporters, including the resurrection of Tapir Tracks, the League's newsletter, which will be published three times per year in electronic form. In partnership with Engage Globally, we successfully raised the money needed to fund our 2018 Environmental Education Program. Identifying and following up with major donors (especially for the endowment fund) remains an important and unmet objective, as does increasing member involvement in maintenance, fundraising, education, and other aspects of our operations.

Of the unexpected challenges faced in 2017, most notable were personnel changes and Tropical Storm Nate. This year we bid farewell to Marianella Muñoz (Accounting Assistant), Walter Bonilla (Accountant), and Eduin Méndez (Maintenance), all of whom worked for the MCL for many years, as well as two staff members, Roberto Sánchez (Pocosol) and Miguel Fernández (Protection), who were laid off for budgetary reasons related to the closure of Pocosol. The silver lining of these transitions has been the opportunity to restructure, streamline operations, and increase teamwork across the board. We celebrate the addition of new staff members Dunia Picado (Accounting/Human Resources) and Armando Villalobos (Maintenance), both of whom bring important knowledge and experience in their respective fields.

In October 2017, Tropical Storm Nate left much of Costa Rica reeling in its aftermath. In Monteverde we were incredibly fortunate that no lives were lost; however, roads and bridges were destroyed and several homes were lost as Monteverde received about 17% of its average annual rainfall in just 2 days. Of the areas of the BEN open to the public, the road to San Gerardo was the hardest hit, although damage was likely minimized thanks to preventative measures taken following a workshop on Adaptation to Climate Change in early 2017. We have yet to visit and assess damage in many of the remote areas of the BEN; we know that there were major landslides in Peñas Blancas, Veracruz, and Arancibia, which likely affected property boundaries and access routes in these areas. We are waiting until dry season so that our staff can safely enter these areas.

With the immediate crisis of Environmental Service Payments behind us and the repairs at Pocosol underway, our priorities for the coming year are: (1) increase sales at Bajo del Tigre; (2) reestablish visitation at Pocosol while also maintaining occupancy at San Gerardo; (3) continue working to reduce the League's load of legal cases; (4) identify and follow up with donors, particularly for the endowment fund and environmental education program; (5) complete implementation of new accounting system and procedures; and (6) continue to identify and deal with risks related to climate change and extreme weather events that may affect the BEN.

Last week I dreamed that I was hiking to Eladio's Refuge in the Peñas Blancas Valley. In my dream (or nightmare, rather), the walk took me through the middle of a brand new housing development along the Peñas Blancas River. Fortunately, thanks to the enduring efforts of the League and others, the reality is much different.

The reality is that last week I received the results of camera trap efforts in Peñas Blancas and another remote area of the BEN. The cameras turned up the photos featured in this report: puma, ocelot, collared peccary, and tapir. It's easy to get bogged down in the bureaucracy and the details of conservation. But the reality is that our efforts are bearing fruit, and many of the species we are striving to conserve are out there, thriving, in the Children's Eternal Rainforest.

Congratulations, and thank you.

Sincerely,

Lindsay Stallcup
Executive Director

REPORTS FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President's Report

Welcome to MCL's annual assembly, we very much appreciate your attendance and interest. In a few days we will be celebrating our 32nd anniversary. Our membership is composed of 74 active members, 24 contributing members and 10 honorary members. There are people who have been here since day one, others have just joined this past year, and those of us who have joined in that interval. All of us in one way or another have done our part to ensure the continuity of this very important mission.

The board met on average once a month from March 2017 to February 2018, with the exception of October when the board meeting was cancelled due to the damage produced in Monteverde and surrounding areas by Tropical Storm Nate. This year I took a leave of absence for 2 months for personal reasons, and as it should be, the other board members continued with our work with no problem. The diversity and mutual respect on the board continues to be one of its strongest qualities year after year.

One of the board's projects this year was to analyze and update our membership. Some of our members had been moved to inactive status some time ago for not complying with the minimum requirements of our statutes, and had to be disaffiliated. Others members had to be declared inactive according to our statutes, primarily so as not to affect quorum, but also to determine who continues to have a real interest in forming part of the organization. We contacted the members to be inactivated personally on several occasions, and during the December 2017 meeting 6 people were unaffiliated and 5 were inactivated, and in January 2018, 2 additional members were declared inactive. To the remaining Active members, I ask that you pay your yearly dues on time and attend the Annual Assembly or send your proxy form, I consider this to be a small effort in order to continue to be a part of this organization.

Achievements

After more than 2 years since making the difficult decision to make a change in the Executive Director position, and also creating the position of Director of Territorial Affairs, we are completely convinced that this was the correct decision, and that it has contributed to improving various aspects of our organization. The decision was difficult simply because of the financial consideration of having to finance another salary. We have an excellent working relationship with Lindsay, and her leadership and efficiency in her administrative role as Executive Director has led the MCL down a very positive road. We feel that now we not only identify problems and challenges, but also resolve them. We have made important strides in many aspects. During our December meeting, Mark Wainwright observed "I feel there is a change in our spending, now there are investments and we are proactive, not only reactive. Previously we were always just putting out fires; this year I see budget for investments. The improvements I see as a customer are very apparent in San Gerardo, for example. You can really see the difference".

Yúber Rodríguez's work as Director of Territorial Affairs and as coordinator of the Legal Affairs Committee has been vital this year in the resolution and follow-up of important conflicts, as well as challenges related to Environmental Service Payments (ESP), which are very important to MCL's finances. The importance of Yuber's job is easily seen when you take a look at the income for 2016-2017: of the total 292,764,315 colones, 135,948,274 colones are from ESP. Another important source of income is from Services (stations, trails, talks to groups), which is the responsibility of the Executive Director and generated 111,978,540 colones. So between the both of them they generated 84% of our income.

The fact that MCL generates this money and that donations, which were 41,186,785, represented just 13% of our income, is an important evolution in our finances and sustainability. I do not underrate or underestimate the importance of these and other individual donations, as they play a very important role and are of great help in funding some projects and needs that we otherwise could not finance. We are very grateful to Friends of the Rainforest and Engage Globally from the U.S., Kinderregenwald from Germany, Children's Tropical Forests U.K., and other donors for their generosity. Our needs and priorities for donors are well defined and have not changed: endowment fund, environmental education, research, and land purchase and protection. Our endowment fund unfortunately has not increased substantially, and we have not had success in motivating donors to give to this fund.

Our main goal is to increase these self-generated funds and to have a greater degree of economic stability. This is of the utmost importance, because everything we do or want to do is money dependent. This is something we have been aware of for decades but it has been very difficult to achieve.

I am very happy to inform you that several conflicts and problems that we were dealing with last year have been resolved favorably for the MCL. As you may recall, in 2017 I reported that CONELECTRICAS wanted to rescind the contract for environmental services it has had with the MCL since 2009, citing "irregularities" and that they had signed under "intimidation". In addition to asking for the contract to be declared null, they also asked that the money they had paid be refunded, with interest! Since early 2017 until December 2017, we participated in a long process of negotiations between CONELECTRICAS and MCL, represented by our executive director, who was advised and supported by the board and Legal Affairs Committee. We also felt it was important to hire as our attorneys for this case Raquel Salazar, who has ample experience in Environmental Law and Sustainability, and Abraham Balzer, whose expertise is in conflict resolution, from the law firm Batalla Salto Luna (San Jose). They were of great help in this process. The result was a new agreement by which CONELECTRICAS will continue to pay MCL for environmental services, plus the legal fees related to the arbitration process. We will also get a refund of the initial deposit of 4.5 million colones that we made in order to participate in this arbitration process.

We also received a partially positive resolution in the INMAN case; INMAN was also seeking to annul its contract for environmental service payments with the MCL. In this case, the judges upheld the parts of the contract related to ESP, meaning that INMAN will have to continue to pay MCL. However, it was determined that the property in dispute does not belong to MCL. We were willing to accept this ruling and not present an appeal, since the most important consideration was that the MCL would continue to receive ESP. Unfortunately, both INMAN and the government have presented appeals in this case.

Another wonderful development was Executive Order No. 40625 from the President of the Republic and the Ministry of Environment and Energy, which basically reverted a modification that was made in 2016 to Article 39, section f of the Forestry Law, determining how the environmental service payments for forest protection are allotted, giving priority to small land owners and putting a limit of 600 hectares for each applicant. This would have had a significant, negative impact on MCL's income, since these payments our largest source of income. As you may recall, last year we contacted MINAE to explain how this modification would impact nonprofit NGO's dedicated to conservation (such as the MCL). We had several meetings, and in July 2017 the Deputy Minister of MINAE made an official visit to the Pocosol Station, where we once again expressed our concerns. In November we received with great joy and relief the new of the official publication of the presidential decree which says:

There are non-profit, non-governmental organizations that make important efforts in the conservation and care of forested areas located in especially biodiverse and fragile areas, and that the current maximum limit established for payment for environmental services is not enough for them to maintain these conservation efforts. Because of this, it is necessary to establish a system of specific limits for these organizations.

Therefore, We Decree:

“Modification to the Reform of the Regulation to the Forestry Law, Executive Decree No. 25721-MINAE from 17 October 1996 and its modifications to be read as follows:

f) Maximum Limits of Area for Environmental Service Payment Projects

ii. Non-profit, non-governmental organizations and organizations of social economy, can access the program of environmental services, forest protection category, up to a maximum of 300 hectares per year, per Conservation Area, as long as they are the owners of these forests and comply with the established priorities for PES.

With this, we predict that our income from environmental service payments will at least stay at historical levels, and will not decrease significantly as we feared last year. This decree will not only benefit the MCL but also other NGO's dedicated to conservation. This was an enormous achievement. I would like to point that, that during that visit to Pocosol, both the Deputy Minister of MINAE and the Director of FONAFIFO commented on the League's good name and reputation with MINAE and FONAFIFO, and the good working relationship that Yuber has established in the regional offices where he presents ESP applications.

Both Lindsay and Yuber continue to work closely with the Legal Affairs Committee, which has been instrumental in analyzing and making recommendations with regard to the 25 legal cases we are involved in.

A year after closing Pocosol, Friends of the Rainforest informed us in November that their fundraising campaign for repairs at Pocosol was successful. This enabled us to begin slope stabilization work in January 2018. This phase will take approximately a month to complete, followed by work on the building itself during March. We expect that by May 2018 we will be able to reopen the lodge at Pocosol.

A few weeks ago, we also got the news that, thanks to many important donors, we were able to raise the \$21,000 necessary for our Environmental Education Program for 2018. Thank you very much for your collaboration for this very important program.

Sometimes we lose sight of “Why are we here? Why did we become members?” For me, every time I have the opportunity to go to Pocosol or San Gerardo, and I see the forest I am filled with joy and pride by what we have accomplished. I invite you to visit our field stations in the BEN, where one can truly appreciate the marvelous biodiversity it beholds.

We deeply appreciate the immense effort our personnel put in every day in their different duties, above and beyond what is expected of them. The photos from the camera traps is a very positive stimulus for our work. Mr. Walter Bonilla retired in December after 17 years working as our accountant, we are grateful and hope he enjoys a well-deserved retirement.

Lastly, I wish to thank my colleagues on the board and *fiscalía* for their commitment, capacity to analyze and discuss different subjects in a respectful manner, patience, and good humor.

Julia Matamoros A.

President

Treasurer's Report

We are finally in a position that will allow us to achieve the economic, environmental, and social advances that we have sought for many years. Although our economic gains this year were modest, they have been invested in projects that will potentially give greater dividends next year and in the following years. Thanks to the generous donations made through Friends of the Rainforest, and individual direct donations, we are strengthening the foundations of the Pocosol Station, remodeling the San Gerardo Station, advancing the Environmental Education Program, and improving the roads going into San Gerardo and Pocosol. The trail systems have been made better by building bridges across difficult areas.

The government has decided not to reduce the area of our land that can receive Environmental Service Payments for protection of the forest, so that source of income is more secure.

We have reached an agreement with CONELECTRICAS in which they will pay \$47,800 each year for the next 28 years. This amount will help pay the salaries of the Maintenance and Protection employees, who will be helping guarantee a clean water supply to run their generators.

We feel that the new accounting system and personal will allow us to make more timely decisions regarding the necessity to save or allow us to invest in activities that will generate more income for better protection and maintenance programs and allow us to develop investigation programs. Our new accountant is in the process of integrating the results of the old accounting system into the new system, which will allow us to know our situation every month.

Now, the Administration, Board of Directors, and membership must work together to make our areas more attractive and comfortable for visitors by supplying information about the plants and animals, and by training guides to explain with enthusiasm, the beauty and relationships found in the forest. Many people have contributed to improving our infrastructure, but we must do our part in making a visitor feel at home, reasonably comfortable, and well informed. For instance, our website should contain a section about recent sightings and information about some of the plants and animals one can expect to see. Each station should contain up to date information about the area.

Our Environmental Education Program has the potential of greatly improving the lives of those living on the edge of the Children's Eternal Rainforest. As the population grows there is an increased need for clean water. By teaching the children about the necessity for conserving the forest, eliminating pollution, and reducing the usage of water, we will improve the lives of the population as well as maintaining the biodiversity of the planet.

Thank you for your help,

Bob Law
Treasurer

Report from Fiscal I

Assembly Members
Monteverde Conservation League

Good morning, distinguished President, distinguished members of the Board of Directors, and all those present here today. The following is my annual report as Fiscal I of the Monteverde Conservation League, regarding the following topics:

Costa Rica Social Security (CCSS). With respect to the MCL's obligations with respect to the CCSS, a report from the CCSS system indicates that we are up to date.

National Institute of Insurance (INS). The MCL is up to date on workers' compensation insurance; payments are made every six months, and the next payment is due in April 2018. In addition, the civil liability policy for the Bajo del Tigre Reserve was paid on August 16, 2017, and is valid for one year.

Accounting. Salaries are adjusted on an annual basis according to the Ministry of Labor, with the last adjustment made on January 1, 2018. With respect to public utility, the MCL has retained its status as a non-profit association of interest to the Costa Rican state (*utilidad pública para los intereses del estado costarricense*). The procedures required to maintain this status happen between February and March, so we are also up to date.

Legal Issues. During 2017, the Legal Affairs Committee had a heavy work load. In total, the Committee held seven meetings at Finca Steller in La Tigra de San Carlos. The main cases were:

1. Arbitration process with CONELECTRICAS
2. Modification of Article 39, paragraph f, of the Forestry Law
3. INMan-Banco IMPROSA
4. Monteverde Inn / Valle Escondido
5. Banco Nacional de Costa Rica, in Burrito de La Fortuna
6. Bekom (MCL vs. Badilla-Navarro and Canet-Zamora families)
7. Mario Rodríguez / Wilson Badilla

This committee also followed up on other legal cases related to land tenure, including: strategies for the legal registration of the lands of the BEN; the process of legal title for properties of Olman Castro, José Manuel (Pipe) Cruz, and Roy Campos Solís; follow-up related to the purchase of properties belonging to Cesar Santamaría and Olger Badilla; and other legal issues related to the administration of the Children's Eternal Rainforest. The committee also dealt with issues related to the protection of natural resources, including hunting, illegal entry in the protected area, firearms, and attempted aggression against our protection staff.

I would like to highlight important achievements obtained in the first three cases mentioned above: the finalization of arbitration process with CONELECTRICAS, which ended with a new Contract for Payment of Environmental Services; the modification of Article 39 of the Forestry Law; and the important ruling of the Court in the INMan-Banco Improsa case, where the court upheld the contract for payment of environmental services (although the resolution of the appeals process is still pending in this case). For more details of each case handled by the Legal Affairs Committee, please see the Legal Affairs section of this report (page 14).

Sincerely,

Marcos A. Méndez
Fiscal I

Report from Fiscal II

As Fiscal II, and as established in Articles 45 and 46 of our statutes, I inform you of the following:

Minutes #48 of the Extraordinary Assembly and Minutes #49 of the General Assembly of February 2017 have been protocolized and registered in the legal books of the MCL and in the National Registry.

The Board of Directors met 11 times between March 2017 and February 2018, completing Minutes #458 (March 7, 2017) to #468 (February 2, 2018). The only Board meeting that was canceled was in October 2017 due to Tropical Storm Nate.

The minutes have been reviewed and approved until session 465, and registered in the legal books of the MCL until session 465.

As in previous years, this year the participation of board members has been very good, and no meetings were canceled due to lack of quorum. Nine of the eleven meetings have been in Bajo del Tigre, for which we thank our board members who come all the way from San Carlos for the meetings.

As Fiscal II, I have not seen any anomalies in compliance with the Law of Associations, the Statutes and regulations of the Association, as well as the agreements of the General Assembly and the Board of Directors. I have not received complaints from associates nor have I known of irregularities in associative activities and programs.

Sofía Arce

Fiscal II

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Economic and Financial Situation

Our main source of income continues to be Payments for Environmental Services (PES), which represented 57.7% of our net income for the 2016-2017 fiscal period. This figure includes contracts with FONAFIFO (35%) and private contracts with CONELECTRICAS and INMAN (22.7%).

Following PES were donations (20.9%), visitation to stations and trails (19.6%), and souvenir sales (1.8%; Figure 1). Within the category of visitation to stations and trails, Bajo del Tigre and San Gerardo each generated about half of the net income. Although we had some visitation in Pocosal prior to closing the station, and later in the form of day visits and camping, the closure of the Pocosal resulted in a net loss for this sector in 2016-17. Interest from our endowment fund (about 6.5 million colones) for this period was reinvested.

This year brought personnel changes in the Accounting Department. Our accounting assistant, Marianella Muñoz, resigned in June 2017, and our accountant, Walter Bonilla, retired in December 2017. Both Walter and Marianella worked for the MCL for more than 17 years and we are most grateful for their contributions. Dunia Picado began work in the new position of Accounting Assistant & Coordinator of Human Resources and Procurement in August 2017. We also contracted the professional services of Jose Mora Marín to handle our accounting; adopted the Enlace program for accounting and payroll; and are implementing other changes that will streamline the accounting and human resources procedures of the organization.

Figure 1. Net income by category, October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017. The net amount was reached by deducting direct expenses and personnel expenses for each category. This estimate does not contemplate time spent by other departments in support of each category (for example, Maintenance program time at field stations or in support of PSA applications). This year the interest earned on investments was reinvested in the Endowment Fund.

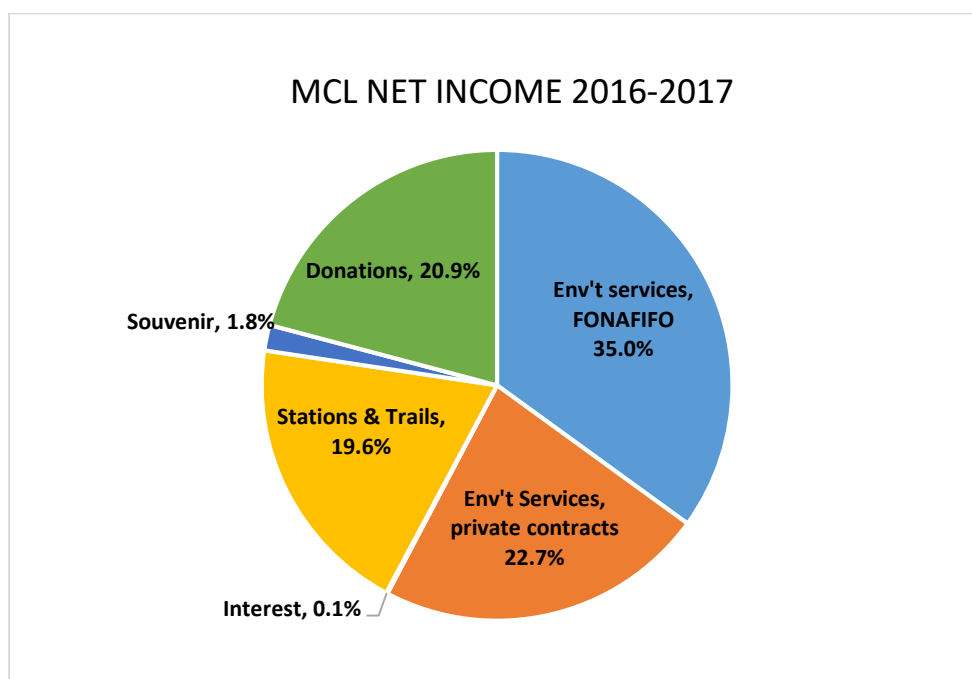


Table 1. Results from 2016-2017 fiscal year (October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017) and projected operational budget projection for the 2017-2018 fiscal year (October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018). Amounts expressed in Costa Rican colones.

MONTEVERDE CONSERVATION LEAGUE				
SUMMARY OF 2016-2017 FISCAL YEAR AND PROJECTED BUDGET FOR 2017-2018				
INCOME IN COLONES	2017 Projected	2017 Real	%	2018 Projected
ACCOUNT				
SOUVENIR SALES	2,935,000	3,461,793	117.95	4,000,000
SERVICES (STATIONS/TRAILS)	123,500,000	111,978,540	90.67	125,800,000
PAYMENT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	123,000,000	135,949,274	110.53	139,500,000
PROJECTS AND DONATIONS	50,200,000	41,186,785	82.05	47,500,000
ASSET SALES	9,200,000	0		9,200,000
INTEREST ON INVESTMENTS	5,500,000	6,689,945	121.64	3,000,000
LOANS	0	0		0
TOTAL INCOME	314,335,000	299,266,337	95.21	329,000,000
EXPENSES IN COLONES				
ACCOUNT				
SALARIES AND RELATED EXPENSES	217,821,555	190,503,196	87.46	212,103,000
MATERIALS AND BASIC SERVICES	29,205,000	33,610,492	115.08	38,740,000
STATIONS AND TRAILS	43,500,000	35,200,818	80.92	37,800,000
INTEREST	6,900,000	13,628,051	197.51	7,100,000
PROJECTS	16,200,000	20,706,793	127.82	31,650,000
ASSET PURCHASES	600,000	2,374,955	395.83	1,500,000
DEBT	0	0		0
TOTAL EXPENSES	314,226,555	296,024,305	94.21	328,893,000
BALANCE				
	2017 Projected	2017 Real		2018 Projected
	108,444.88	3,242,032.00		107,000.00

Table 2. Balance, October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017, in Costa Rican colones.

Monteverde Conservation League
Balance in Costa Rican Colones
Period: October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017

	Sep-17	Sep-16
ASSETS	¢	
Banks and petty cash	30,604,080	30,260,422
Short-term investments	57,672,552	58,194,915
Total Activo Corriente	¢ 88,276,632	88,455,337
Property and Equipment	1,052,276,229	1,047,204,252
Accumulated Depreciation	(202,231,577)	(194,017,959)
Propiedad Planta y Equipo Neto	850,044,652	853,186,293
Other Assets		
Endowment Fund \$344,025.00	205,305,615	187,951,178
Souvenir inventory (Endowment Fund)	11,210,939	11,884,688
Total Activos	¢ 1,154,837,838	1,141,477,496
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	2,472,467	1,404,457
Accrued expenses	47,618,380	46,418,380
Withholdings payable	2,561,104	4,353,360
Projects	8,355,306	17,665,606
Total pasivo corriente	¢ 61,007,257	69,841,803
Equity		
Endowment Fund \$344,025	205,305,741	187,951,178
Donated Lands	846,214,339	846,214,339
Equity Ownership	39,068,469	33,751,785
Surplus	3,242,032	3,718,391
Total Patrimony	¢ 1,093,830,581	1,071,635,693
Total Liabilities and Equity	¢ 1,154,837,838	1,141,477,496

Table 3. Results from fiscal year 2016-2017 (October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017) as compared to the previous fiscal year. Amounts expressed in Costa Rican colones.

Income	Sep-17	Sep-16
Field stations	58,301,128	80,727,035
Visitation to trails	53,677,412	46,873,393
Environmental service payments	135,949,274	102,004,653
Donations	18,599,240	29,982,561
Interest on investments	187,923	236,814
Souvenirs	3,461,793	2,872,907
Total self-generated income:	¢ 270,176,770	262,697,363
Income, projects	22,587,545	78,861,287
Income, asset sales	-	3,779,782
Total income:	¢ 292,764,315	345,338,432
Expenses		
Operations	188,876,229	222,863,348
Administration	28,921,474	34,125,716
Cost of field stations & trails	48,844,161	57,633,368
Financial	7,114,476	6,900,000
Specific projects	15,765,943	20,097,609
Total expenses:	¢ 289,522,283	341,620,041
Difference:	3,242,032	3,718,391

Legal Affairs

Director of Land Affairs: Yuber Rodríguez

2017 was a dynamic year for legal issues involving the MCL and its properties. Responsibility for this important subject falls to the Legal Affairs Committee, which is made up of members of the General Assembly, Board members, and employees. Its members are: Julia Matamoros, Jorge Maroto, Ricaute Jiménez, Gerardo Céspedes, Lindsay Stallcup, Hernán Chacón, Luis Solano, and Yúber Rodríguez.

The committee held a total of seven meetings during 2017, in addition to more than 25 other activities (meetings, field visits, etc.) related to legal cases. The members of the Legal Affairs Committee demonstrate an enormous commitment and willingness to participate in search of the best solutions and alternatives for the MCL.

Here is a brief summary of the main judicial and legal processes of the 2017 period. In addition to these primary legal topics, the MCL is involved in a number of cases related to land tenure and forest protection, which are listed separately below.

Primary legal cases

- 1. Arbitration process with CONELECTRICAS.** Legal representatives: Raquel Salazar & Abraham Balzer, Batalla Salto Luna, San José. This case was filed by CONELECTRICAS over a contract for environmental service payments between CONELECTRICAS and MCL. This lawsuit began and thankfully also concluded in 2017. The MCL had to recommend a lawyer for the Arbitration Court in the Federated College of Engineers and Architects, pay the corresponding fee for the arbitration process, as well as carry out an exhaustive follow-up process to try to reach a conciliatory agreement with CONELECTRICAS (and thereby avoid the development of an expensive and compromising arbitration process). In total, more than twelve follow-up meetings were held with CONELECTRICAS, FONAFIFO, and with our legal advisors. As a result, a new agreement for payment of environmental services was reached. The new contract is more specific, more organized, and allows CONELECTRICAS to fulfill up to 100% of its payments for environmental services to the MCL by way of deductions from the payment of the water tax by way of a special contract between CONELECTRICAS and FONAFIFO. In this way, CONELECTRICAS, with the proper follow-through, can simultaneously cover its monetary commitments to the Water Department and to the MCL. Rather than being signed by the two parties, the new contract was ratified as the "sentence" of the arbitration process and signed by the members of the Tribunal, thus ending the arbitration process. The final step in this process is to solicit the refund of the deposit made by the MCL to the Arbitration Court; as part of the agreement, CONELECTRICAS pays process fees for this case.
- 2. Modification of Article 39, paragraph f, of the Regulations to the Forestry Law.** In 2016 an executive order modified Article 39 of the Forestry Law, establishing a maximum limit of 600 hectares for any person or organization in the Environmental Service Payment (PES) program under the category of Forest Protection. Immediately after learning of this change, the MCL began to follow up with leaders of the PES program in hopes of achieving a modification to the law that would be less detrimental to the MCL. We had several meetings with the Deputy Minister of the Environment, Patricia Madrigal, and the Executive Director of FONAFIFO, Jorge Mario Rodríguez. In addition, we had the pleasure of hosting Patricia Madrigal, Jorge Mario Rodríguez, and Oscar Sánchez (Director of PES, FONAFIFO) at Pocosol in July 2017. Our efforts proved successful with the publication of Executive Order 40625, in which the President of the Republic and the Minister of Environment and Energy specifically recognize the importance of non-profit, non-governmental organizations in the

conservation of forested areas and biodiversity, and which were negatively affected by the 600-hectare limit. The new law establishes an exception for these organizations, setting a maximum of 300 hectares per year, per Conservation Area, per category of PES. This important modification of the forestry law was achieved in part thanks to our efforts this year.

- 3. INMAN-Banco IMPROSA vs. MCL.** Legal representative: Ricaute Jiménez. In 2017, the court (*Tribunal Contencioso Administrativo y de Hacienda*) held trial, reviewed evidence, received testimonies, and made a site visit to the La Esperanza Hydroelectric Project. The Court issued a sentence in September 2017 which, in spite of technically being contrary to the interests of the MCL, in reality did not significantly harm our interests. The Court ruled that that the property in question (4,000 square meters) belongs to Banco Improsa/INMan, because INMan has property title (whereas the MCL only has possession rights). However, the court did **not** uphold the other claims made by INMan, specifically, the annulment of the contract for PES between INMan and MCL, and the reimbursement of INMan of all payments received by MCL as a result of this contract over the past 19 years. These claims would have presented significant economic damage to the MCL. After the sentence, there is a period for appeals to be filed; in this case, two appeals were filed in the Supreme Court (*Sala Primera*): one by INMan and the other by the State (*Procuradería General del Estado*). The admissibility of both appeals still being determined by the court.
- 4. MCL vs. Monteverde Inn/Valle Escondido.** Legal representative: Ricaute Jiménez. Case regarding access to the MCL's former offices in Cerro Plano, in which the MCL sued Monteverde Inn (Instituto de Vida Sostenible ECOFE Limitada) after they blocked access to our property. As part of the process, the MCL had requested an injunction that would allow the MCL access to the property, which had been blocked by the owners of Monteverde Inn with several large boulders. The judge visited the property and subsequently authorized MCL's access to the property. In 2017, the hearing for this case was scheduled and then postponed on three separate occasions, one of them due to the closure of the main road of Monteverde by Tropical Storm Nate. This trial is now scheduled for the end of February 2018.
- 5. Banco Nacional de Costa Rica vs. MCL,** in Burrito de La Fortuna. Legal Representative: Ricaute Jiménez. Court: *Juzgado Contencioso Administrativo y de Hacienda*. Banco Nacional sued the MCL and Mr. Joaquín Araya (whose property borders the MCL's), and requested the Court to grant them possession of an area belonging to MCL and Mr. Araya, because according to a topographic study carried out by Banco Nacional, this area is part of a property that was repossessed by the bank (foreclosure). A preliminary hearing was held, in which the conditions of the legal process were established. At the end of 2017, a surveyor was appointed to carry out a topographical survey, of which we are currently awaiting the results.
- 6. Bekom case (MCL vs. Badilla Navarro & Canet Zamora).** Legal representative: Marco V. Retana. This case has received a number of sentences from the Court, and was in the final stage of appeals (*Casación*) in the Agrarian Court when the MCL received an order to include the Costa Rican state (*Procuraduría General de la República*) in the lawsuit; to the contrary, the suit would be shelved. The MCL proceeded to present the papers to include the state in the lawsuit. The State has provided the required response; however, the appropriate venue and judges responsible for the case are still being discussed at the Judicial level. Related to this same case, every year the MCL presents opposition to FONAFIFO and SINAC so that Roy Canet and Esmeralda Zamora cannot place the properties in question in PES. Mr. Canet's applications to FONAFIFO have apparently included the falsification of legal documents of SINAC and a number of other irregularities.
- 7. MCL vs. Mario Rodríguez (Wilson Badilla).** Legal representative: Marco V. Retana. This process began with the MCL's opposition to the titling of a property by Mr. Mario Rodríguez,

who had allegedly bought the property from Wilson Badilla. Mr. Badilla had also sold that same property twenty years ago to the MCL. However, the plan that Mr. Badilla gave to the MCL did not coincide with the property “on the ground”, so Mr. Badilla tried to sell this land (which was and continues to be in possession by the MCL) under a new plan that does correspond to the terrain on the ground. This problem is largely the result of poor plans and surveying by the topographer Francisco Reyes. In this case, the judge has already visited the property in question, but the hearing, including presentation of evidence and testimony by witnesses, has not yet occurred.

8. **Veracruz road (road within protected area).** In collaboration with the Tropical Science Center (TSC), the MCL has been reviewing the conditions under which roads within the protected area can and should be used, in this case specifically the road from San Luis to Amapala and Veracruz. The MCL and TSC have attempted to coordinate with the Municipality in Puntarenas to determine the existence and location of a public road in this sector, since some neighbors appear to be using “roads” at their convenience in different parts of our properties; however, we have not yet received a response from the local government. In this same area, the MCL and TSC presented a formal complaint to SINAC after herbicide was sprayed (approximate width of 2.30 meters, for a distance of 4 kilometers) during Semana Santa 2017, resulting in a great loss of biodiversity within the affected area. Since the site is located within the Arenal-Monteverde Protected Area (ZPAM), the complaint required a visit by officials from SINAC (Arenal-Tempisque Conservation Area) for inspection and assessment of the environmental damage.
9. **Legal registration (title) of MCL properties.** We continue to analyze different and varied strategies to seek title for the MCL’s properties, from political approaches to collaboration with other institutions. In the short term, we are considering a meeting with the Attorney General of the Republic, Mr. Julio Jurado, to discuss greater support from the State in the defense of natural resources. Ideally either the Deputy Minister of the Environment, Patricia Madrigal, or the Director of the Arenal-Tempisque Conservation Area, Alexander León, will participate in this meeting as well.

Land tenure cases

1. **Olman Castro (Elidieth Vindas).** This case involves the MCL’s opposition to plans for which Mr. Castro is attempting to gain title; the plans in question overlap with a property belonging to the MCL. They also overlap with property belonging to Mr. Olger Badilla; the MCL has a contract for the purchase of Mr. Badilla’s property. (One of the requisites for the purchase of Mr. Badilla’s property is that he obtain legal title, which he is unable to do if his farm overlaps with the Castro farm.) At present, the Court, at the request of the State (*Procuradería*), has called for the petitioners to correct the plan.
2. **Contract to purchase the farm of Olger Badilla.** Mr. Olger Badilla is in the process of obtaining the title to his farm, after which the MCL will be able to complete the purchase of the property. Marco V. Retana is responsible for this process as the legal representative of Mr. Badilla.
3. **Contract to purchase the farm of Cesar Santamaría.** Mr. Cesar Santamaría Hidalgo is in the process of obtaining the title to his farm, after which the MCL will be able to complete the purchase of the property. Marco V. Retana is responsible for this process as the legal representative of Mr. Santamaria.
4. **Approval of property boundaries (*conformidad de colindancias*) with Hugo Rojas, Agua Gata, Peñas Blancas.** We received a request to provide a sworn affidavit of property

boundary compliance to Mr. Hugo Rojas Herrera, so that he can receive PES for his property. After reviewing the relevant information, including GIS data, we have determined the location of this property to be between the Arenal Volcano National Park and the Zona Protectora Arenal Monteverde, in an area where the land belongs either to the government or to the MCL. For this reason, we made the decision NOT to provide the requested affidavit. We agreed to carry out a field inspection with Mr. Rojas (and/or his representatives) to determine where they believe their farm is located and to confirm that it does not overlap with the MCL land. To date, this field visit has been scheduled twice; both times it was cancelled by the Rojas family the day before the visit.

5. **Oldemar Guillen y Vianey Santamaría Case, Rancho Alegre.** This is a situation of conflicting property boundaries between two landowners, Oldemar Guillen and Vianey Santamaria, in the Rancho Alegre. There has been no change in the situation this year.
6. **Tom Dixon.** Related to approval (*catastro*) of plans for properties belonging to Tom Dixon, the Tropical Science Center, and the MCL in the Peñas Blancas valley. In process.
7. **Properties of Rodrigo Valverde and Jerónimo Vargas Montero.** The plans for Mr. Rodrigo Valverde's properties have not yet been approved, mainly because of the request of MCL and TSC to carry out a field visit in order to ensure that the properties in question do not overlap with our reserves in the area near the TV towers (Cerro Amigos).

Forest Protection

1. **Hunters in Bekom (Fiscalía).** This case began as a hunting/wildlife case, but ended up with the defendant, Mr. Miguel Jiménez of La Tigra de San Carlos, being charged with aggression and attempted murder against MCL employees Alonso Sánchez and Hernán Chacón. The original case was resolved in favor of Mr. Jiménez; however, the Attorney General (*Fiscalía*) intervened and appealed the ruling. Hearings have been scheduled to review the case again, but so far they have been suspended and are expected to continue in June 2018. Ricaute Jiménez is providing support in this process; however, the case is being handled by the *Fiscalía*.
2. **Trinidad Madrigal (first case; SINAC/Fiscalía).** Awaiting resolution. The charges against Mr. Madrigal are illegal possession of firearms and resisting arrest; charges related to wildlife were dismissed.
3. **Trinidad Madrigal (second case; SINAC).** In this case the issue of recidivism was considered related to hunting, invasion of a protected area (BEN), harassment of wildlife, resisting arrest, and attempted aggression against SINAC and MCL officials. We continue to follow the case, which remains unresolved.
4. **Richard Araya Muñoz and Victor Manuel Zamora Jiménez (SINAC).** The charges are related to illegal hunting, invasion of a protected area, and resisting arrest, and attempted aggression against MCL personnel in the Aguas Gatas area of the BEN. There are no developments in this case.
5. **José Isabel Aragón Olivares (Juzgado Penal).** Mr. Aragón was detained in MCL property by our staff in 2017 under suspicious conditions. He carried a firearm and also had no legal documentation; for this reason, the case was directly to the *Juzgado de Flagrancia*. Apparently Mr. Aragón was going to be deported to Nicaragua immediately for immigration violations; the weapon he carried had apparently been involved in a homicide.

6. **Ahías González López, Mainor Bolaños Molina and another person (Juzgado Penal).** Arrest of three individuals in possession of firearms and other hunting paraphernalia near Pocosol in 2017. Although they appeared to be hunting in a protected area, in the end, charges will be related to illegal possession of firearms.

Payment for Environmental Services (PES)

Director of Land Affairs: Yuber Rodríguez

In last year's report, we mentioned that a 2016 modification to the Forestry Law represented a major limitation for the MCL in terms of our future participation in the government's Environmental Services Payment Program (PES). This modification aimed to regulate the participation of beneficiaries by establishing a maximum limit of 600 hectares in PES for forest protection, and 800 hectares for reforestation. Since the change was first presented for public consultation, the MCL began efforts to demonstrate the negative effect the new law would have on non-profit organizations dedicated to conservation. Our efforts paid off in September 2017, when the President of the Republic and the Minister of Environment and Energy issued a modification to clause f of Article 39 of Forestry Law, indicating that:

There are non-profit, non-governmental organizations that make important efforts in the conservation and care of forested areas located in especially biodiverse and fragile areas, and that the current maximum limit established for payment for environmental services is not enough for them to maintain these conservation efforts. Because of this, it is necessary to establish a system of specific limits for these organizations. (Translation by L. Stallcup)

The 2017 modification sets a new limit under the forest protection category of 300 hectares per year, per Conservation Area, for non-profit, non-governmental organizations, provided that the forests are their own property and comply with the established priorities for PES.

As a result of this positive change to the national regulations, the ceiling of 600 hectares is eliminated for the MCL and other non-profit organizations, which will now be able to place up to 300 hectares per year, per Conservation Area, per category of PES. We are extremely pleased to see our efforts reflected at the national political level.

In spite of this good news, in 2017 we had to work under the reforms of 2016. As a result, the MCL could only place up to 124.10 hectares in forest protection (since the other 475.9 hectares had already been placed in 2016). Despite this, we did manage to qualify 6 properties through the use of alternative strategies, primarily, the leasing of properties for conservation. Thanks to this strategy, the MCL was able to place a total of 681.6 hectares of the Children's Eternal Rainforest in PES.

Generally, the MCL works with three regional offices: San José Occidental, San Carlos and Cañas. However, the Cañas office mainly serves areas located in the Guanacaste province; few of the League's lands are located in this jurisdiction. For this reason, we believe that beginning in 2018, we will be able to place about 600 hectares in PES under the Forest Protection category (representing 300 hectares in the San Jose and San Carlos offices, respectively).

Including 2017, a total of 3,482.1 hectares of the BEN are receiving PES, representing 50 separate properties. The total placement in 2017 represents the MCL's second highest historical placement in the PES program, second only to 2010 (Figure 2). It is important to note that 2017 and 2018 are irregular in that they are not affected by the expiration of previous contracts, since PES contracts signed in 2012 and 2013 are ten-year contracts (the rest are 5 year contracts).

For the 2017 period, 46.4% of the MCL's gross income came from environmental service payments: 31.1% from government PES and 15.3% from private PES contracts with hydroelectric projects. 2017 is the period with the highest historic income from PES (Figure 3). This is the result of two situations: first, the higher value of the dollar with respect to the colón, and second, because FONAFIFO provided the option of receiving advance payment on 2015 PES contracts. In our specific case, only 50% of the possible advance amount was received (approximately 18 million colones). This advance will affect the last payment of the contracts, which for the case of 2015 contracts, corresponds to the 2020 period. The properties registered in PES during 2017 guarantee an annual income of 24.2 million colones for the next 5 years.

Figure 2. History of the MCL's participation in the Payment for Environmental Services program (not including private contracts). (Vigencia de contrato = period of future contract validity; Colocación anual = annual placement; Área sometida = area from previous years' contracts)

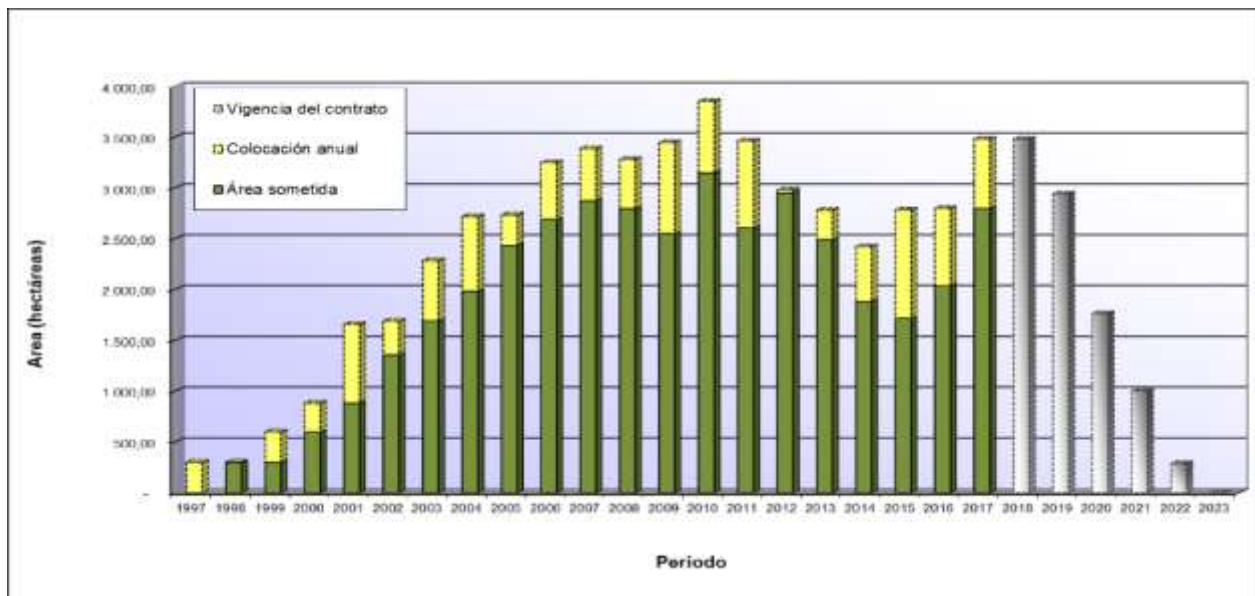
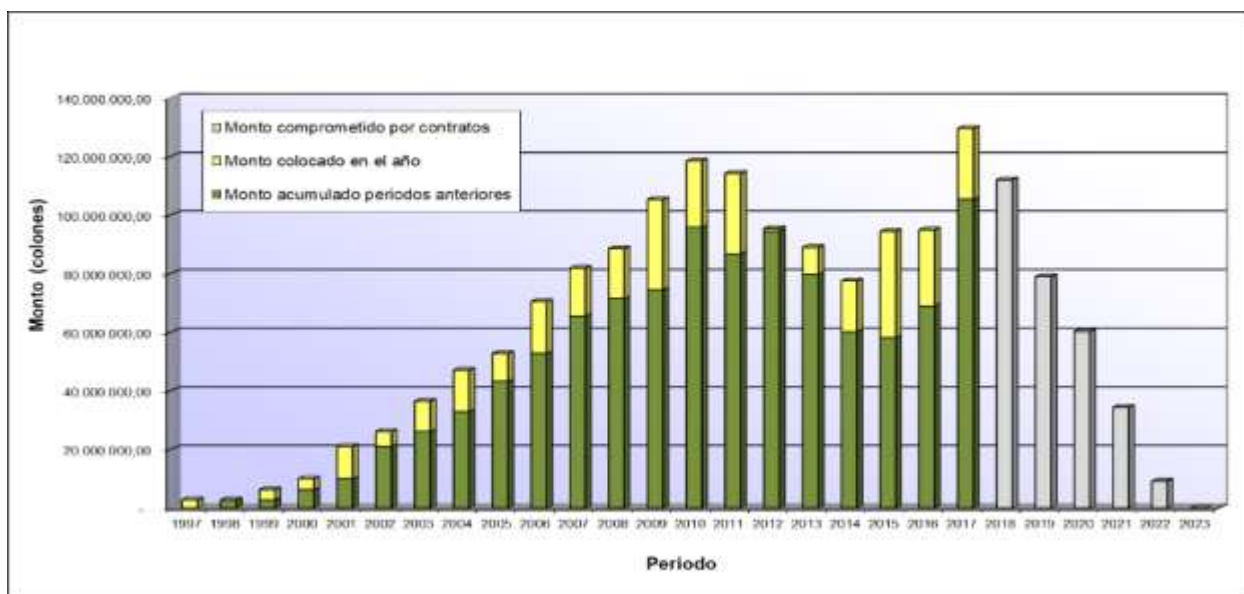


Figure 3. Income from Payment for Environmental Services (not including private contracts).



It is worth highlighting the enormous effort made by MCL staff in order to achieve these annual placements in PES with FONAFIFO. Through these efforts, as well as our compliance with the conditions and regulations of the PES program, we have been able to achieve the inclusion of 22 properties without title in this program, which usually restricts the inclusion of properties “in possession”. To better visualize the work done by MCL staff in the placement of BEN properties in PES, see Map 1.

Despite our success in achieving important modifications to the forestry law, this represents just one part of the work to be done. The League must also continue with to comply with all of the regulations related to PES in order to ensure our future income from this program.

Neighboring farms

Thanks to a 2013 agreement between the MCL and FONAFIFO, the MCL acts as a facilitator in the process of incorporating neighboring farms in the PES program. This allows the League to involve communities and neighbors in conservation of natural resources, while also promoting good relations with our neighbors.

Over the past five years, the MCL has presented 119 applications to place neighboring farms in PES, with the approval of 41 projects (properties) representing a total of 1,868.60 hectares. In 2017, 11 neighboring properties were placed in PES, representing a total of 596.60 hectares and an approval rate of 37.14% (Table 4).

Table 4. Private farms placed in PES to date. (Año = year. Fincas = properties. Area = land areas in hectares. “Gestión” represents the applications presented for placement in PES; “Colocado” is the number of properties actually placed in PES.)

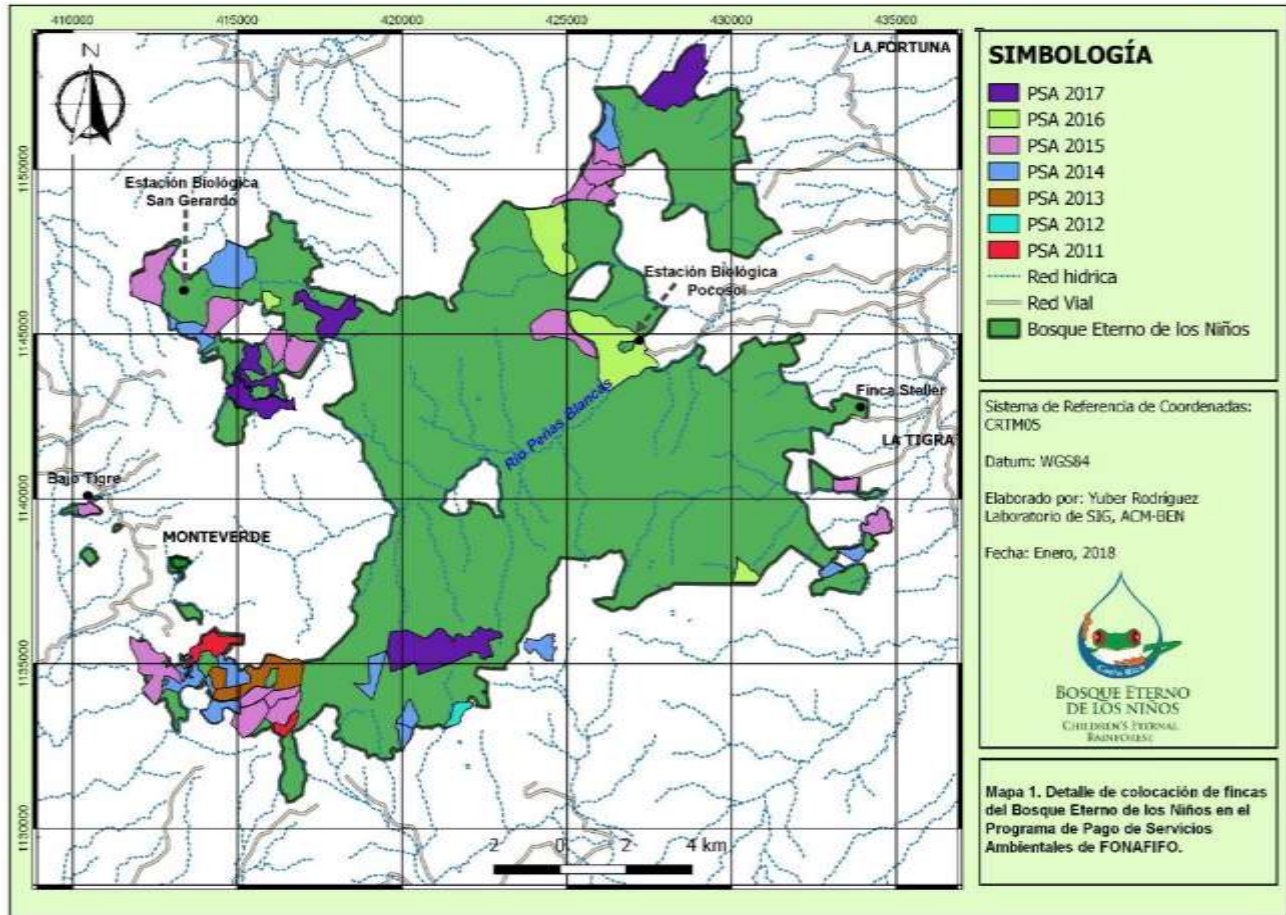
Año	Gestión		Colocado		
	Fincas	Área (has)	Fincas	Área (has)	% colocación
2013	24	1.228,00	7	131,00	10,67
2014	24	1.309,00	8	245,50	18,75
2015	22	1.742,00	9	355,20	20,39
2016	25	1.526,37	6	540,00	35,38
2017	24	1.607,00	11	596,90	37,14
Total	119,00	7.412,37	41	1.868,60	24,47

Private contracts

As mentioned above, 15.3% of gross revenues for the period correspond to private contracts with two hydroelectric companies, Inversiones La Manguera (INMan) and CONELECTRICAS. The contract with INMan (now owned by Cooperativa de Electrificación Rural de la Zona de San Carlos, or COOPELESCA) specifies two payments per year, in February and August. The contract with CONELECTRICAS specified one annual payment in July.

The contract with CONELECTRICAS was part of an arbitration process in 2017, which resulted in a new agreement for the payment of environmental services. For more details, see the “Legal Affairs” section of this report.

Map 1. MCL properties currently in Payment for Environmental Services.



Stations and Trails

Bajo del Tigre

This year we built a new bodega in Bajo del Tigre, which serves as a workshop and storage area and replaces the old bodega at the League’s former offices in Cerro Plano. We have also continued with important routine and preventative maintenance, including trail repairs and painting the bathrooms and classroom. With the help of MCL Board Member Carla Willoughby, CIEE and CTPSE interns, volunteers, and donors, we are in the process of revamping the Children’s House (Casita de los Niños), replacing the interior walls, roof and ceiling, and also adding new educational activities. We also redid the trail map, thanks to intern Amalie Ausland-Bjerkely (Lake Forest College/Monteverde Institute).

Tropical Storm Nate caused substantial damage to the Jaguar trail, which remains closed for the time being. The rest of the trails fortunately did not suffer major damage.

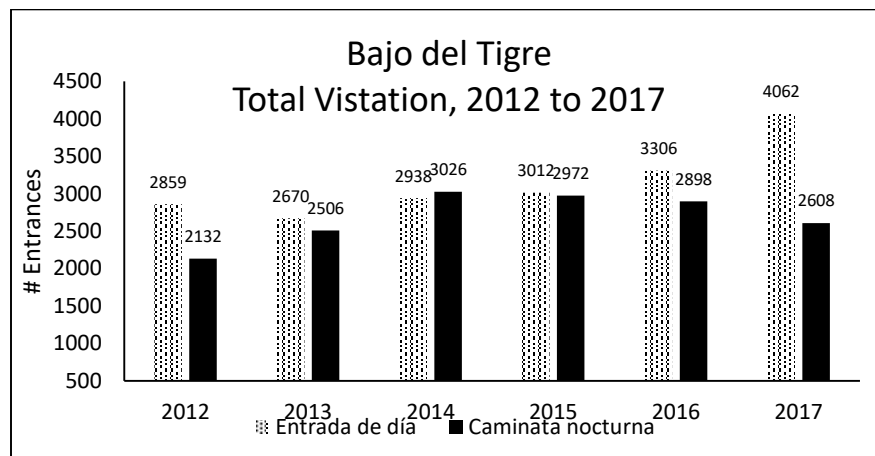
Visitation

We saw an upward trend in daytime entrances (“entrada de día”) at Bajo del Tigre; 2017 had approximately 23% more paid daytime entrances than 2016, and more than a 50% increase since 2013 (Figure 4). This still represents quite modest visitation, and increasing daytime visitation represents our biggest opportunity for economic growth at Bajo de Tigre. Night walk visitation (caminata nocturna) dropped by about 10% in 2017. This is due in part to strong competition among night hikes in Monteverde; we counted more than 10 night hikes (several of which offer steep commissions), not including a number of hotels that offer their own night tour.

Despite this challenge, we have taken the following new steps to strengthen both day and night walks at Bajo del Tigre: (1) contracted a new transportation provider in order to provide better customer service; (2) offer customers the opportunity to pre-pay their reservation online; (3) made improvements to signage, infrastructure, and trail maps at Bajo del Tigre; and (4) continued to educate potential visitors about the fate of their entrance fees (the conservation of Costa Rica’s largest private reserve – not the profit of private individuals!)

In 2018, we will continue to reach out to and strengthen relations with travel agencies. We are also working with the Monteverde Community Fund and Chamber of Tourism to feature Bajo del Tigre on the “Huellas de Monteverde” walking tour.

Figure 4. Visitation at Bajo del Tigre from 2012 to 2017. Day entrances show paid daytime entrances only; they do not include Monteverde locals or children ages 5 and under.



San Gerardo

The San Gerardo field station received some much-needed TLC in 2017. Thanks to donations from Children's Tropical Forests UK, Lincoln School, and three donations in memory of Kyle Wainwright, we were able to complete the following critical repairs and improvements at San Gerardo:

- Replace the entire roof
- Remodel first floor bathroom
- Repair second floor bathrooms
- Cover the water pipes in the "classroom" area
- Replace the entire wall of the station facing Lake Arenal, including windows
- Replace the upstairs balcony floor with recycled plastic ("madera plástica")
- Replace the upstairs balcony safety railing with a new steel railing
- Replace the downstairs balcony floor
- Install new rain gutters (materials purchased; installation pending)
- Paint trail signs
- Construct a roof over a formerly open storage area, using recycled zinc from station

Tropical Storm Nate

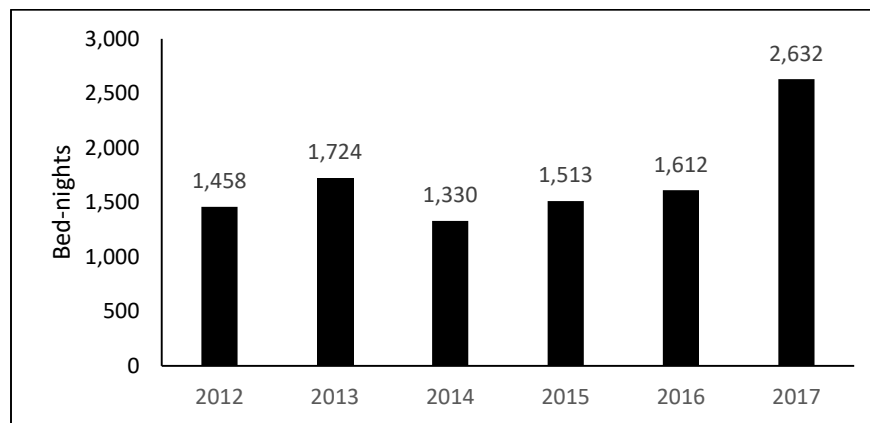
Of the areas open to visitation by the public, San Gerardo was the area hardest hit by Tropical Storm Nate (October 4-6, 2017). The main damage occurred on the road to San Gerardo, although trails also suffered significant tree/branch falls and in some cases landslides. Fortunately, in 2017 we were proactive with respect to creation and maintenance of drainage ditches, cleaning culverts, trimming trees and branches near buildings, and trimming branches of trees along the main road ("descuaje"). This likely helped prevent more severe damage from occurring during the storm.

Even so, we spent more than \$4,000 – including more than 500 hours of manual labor by MCL staff – in order to restore access to San Gerardo and repair the trails during the first two weeks after the storm. We estimate that during the 2018 dry season, an additional investment of about \$4,000 (not including staff time) will be needed in order to complete road repairs and add concrete structures to stabilize the culverts. At some point, it will also likely be necessary to construct a bridge at the last stream crossing prior to reaching the station.

Visitation

San Gerardo showed more than a 60% increase in bed-nights in 2017 (Figure 5). This was due in part to the closure of the Pocosol Station; some of the groups that otherwise would have stayed at Pocosol were able to change their itineraries and stay at San Gerardo instead. In fact, the total combined bed-nights at San Gerardo and Pocosol were nearly equal in 2016 and 2017 (2,763 vs. 2,731, respectively). In other words, in 2017 San Gerardo helped make up for the lost revenue caused by the closure of Pocosol.

We also had new groups at San Gerardo this year, including a 2-week reservation in October 2017 by Colorado College/CIEE (more than 300 bed-nights), and two EAP groups in November 2017. We are optimistic that these groups will continue to visit San Gerardo in the future and that we can maintain high occupancy at San Gerardo even after the reopening of Pocosol.

Figure 5. San Gerardo Station, annual occupancy (bed-nights), 2012 to 2017.

Pocosol

In 2017 we took advantage of the downtime at Pocosol to complete the following projects:

- Painted roof of station and dining room
- Construction of new bridges on trails: 1 metal bridge on the Sendero Principal, 3 metal bridges on the Sendero Fumarolas, 1 metal bridge on the Sendero Oropendula, 1 metal bridge on the Sendero Lagunas, 1 bridge on the Sendero Zamia, 1 bridge on the Sendero Miradores, 1 culvert on the Sendero Laguna, and 2 culverts on the Sendero Principal
- Improvements to the Sendero Fumarolas: new safety railing, improved drainage
- Built and installed a new solar system for the internet at Pocosol
- General trail maintenance

In January 2018, Ingeotec S.A. (San Jose) began the repairs to the slope behind the station at Pocosol. Specifically, Ingeotec is constructing a mooring beam with micropiles and passive anchors in order to eliminate settling and transversal movements that have occurred in this part of the building. Ingeotec's work is expected to be complete by the end of January; after this, we will proceed with the work on the station itself using a separate contractor. We expect the station to be open by May 2018.

Finca Steller

In addition to being the MCL's base of operations in La Tigra de San Carlos, Finca Steller is home to our Environmental Education Program and Reforestation Nursery. This year the Casita de los Niños (Children's House) at Finca Steller got a much-needed facelift when employees from Arenal Springs Resort & Spa donated the materials and helped paint the roof and walls.

Reforestation (*Marcelino Rodríguez Jiménez*)

The Finca Steller nursery produces 21 species of native trees, with a current stock of 2,781 trees. In 2017 we sold 527 seedlings and donated 1,330 seedlings, for a total of 1,857 trees. The donated trees (as well as some native seeds) went to schools and reforestation projects, including reforestation within the BEN (140 trees) as part of our Environmental Education Program, and restoration of riparian areas near Upala as part of the Hurricane Otto recovery effort (225 trees).



Camera trap studies in the BEN, including a study by Dr. Matthew Moran (Hendrix College, USA) and cameras installed in collaboration with SINAC (MAPCOBIO/JICA Project), turned up numerous mammals and birds, including the ones seen above. Clockwise from top left: Mountain lion (puma), Great Curassow, puma track, ocelots, puma, Baird's tapir, and collared peccaries.



Clockwise from top left: Replacing the roof at San Gerardo; Marcelo Rodríguez cuts a new trail at Finca Steller; cross-departmental teamwork in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Nate; repairs to the hydroelectric plant at San Gerardo; weapons confiscated in a Protection operative; volunteers helped out with repairs at San Gerardo; road repairs in San Gerardo following Tropical Storm Nate.

DEPARTMENTS AND PROGRAMS

Environmental Education

Coordinator: María Fernanda Rojas

ACTIVE SCHOOLS: We have a total of **17 active schools** in and around La Tigra de San Carlos – one more than in 2016, with the addition this year of the Pueblo Nuevo school. These schools received a total of 51 talks and 10 workshops on a variety of topics. The subject matter was determined according to our program objectives as well as the teachers' requests.

FIELD TRIPS: In 2017 we carried out **31 field trips**, bringing a total of 621 students and 143 adults to the BEN. A typical field trip consists of a talk about the BEN, followed by a walk through the forest during which children learn about the natural history of the flora and fauna. Field trips are done in groups of approximately 20 children and 5 adults (teachers and accompanying parents). The transportation for field trips during 2016 and 2017 was financed by a donation from Friends of the Rainforest.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH/PROJECTION: In addition to working directly in schools, the Environmental Education Program represented the MCL in various activities in the communities surrounding of the BEN. In this way, more than 2,500 people participated in some way in the Environmental Education Program (talk, workshop, festival, fairs) during 2017. Examples of community activities included:

- Eco-cultural Festival, 4 March 2017, in San Isidro de Peñas Blancas, with the participation of about 600 people.
- Environmental Festival, Escuela de La Tigra, April 21 to 23, 2017. Information stand, talks and activities.
- Arbor Day, June 15, 2017, with ASUACOM (ASADA of Valle Azul and Los Criques, San Ramón). Activity open to the public with a talk about the BEN, information stand, and tree planting, and participation of the general public by around 200 people.
- Santa Clara Agricultural High School Bingo: Information stand and souvenir sales.
- National Parks Day, August 23 & 24, 2017. Information stand (Ciudad Quesada).
- Talks about the BEN for employees of local hotels (Arenal Springs, Hotel Villa Blanca)

PROJECTION FOR 2018: During the first half of 2018, Maria Fernanda will be working on the new project "**Protecting water resources through environmental education in the Peñas Blancas watershed**", thanks to a grant from Bosqueterno S.A. (BESA.). The main objective of this project is to raise awareness about the conservation of water resources and aquatic ecosystems in communities along the Eastern edge of the BEN.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN MONTEVERDE: In Monteverde, the MCL is an active member of the Commission on Environmental Education (CEAM). In addition to participation in monthly meetings (Leslie Corrales, Giselle Rodríguez), the following community-wide activities were carried out in 2017:

- Mobile Environmental Fair: Visits to 5 schools in Monteverde, total of approximately 200 students, focus on recycling and global warming (María Fernanda Rojas, Leslie Corrales).
- Vacation Camp: 3 days (total of 12 hours), with participation by more than 100 children per day, focus on specific issues related to the environment (e.g., reduce, reuse, recycle). (Leslie Corrales, Giselle Rodríguez)

Control and Protection

Coordinator: Hernán Chacón

Since the closure of Pocosol Station in late 2016, we have experienced increased problems with hunting and other illicit activities near Pocosol. Consequently, this year the Protection staff spent more time than usual at Pocosol, also helping to cover the station during the station manager's days off.

We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations who support the protection and conservation of the BEN, including MINAE/SINAC, law enforcement, firefighters, Red Cross, OIJ, COVIRENAS, volunteers, informants, donors, wildlife rescue centers, and others. Our participation in the Inter-Institutional Committee (along with MINAE/SINAC, law enforcement, firefighters, Red Cross, OIJ, and COVIRENAS) allows us to cover greater areas of the BEN, and with proper legal authority to deal with issues on the ground.

In 2017 we carried out **9 operatives in collaboration with other organizations**. In 2017, the following items were confiscated as a result of operatives in collaboration with SINAC and/or police: (1) two .22 caliber rifles, 3 flashlights, 2 machetes, and 2 butcher knives, belonging to 3 known individuals from Angeles de La Tigra, near Pocosol; and (2) one .40 pistol, 9 bullets, 1 machete, belonging to a previously unknown individual, in the area known as Hernán Zúñiga.

Hunting dogs present an ongoing problem, requiring our time and attention. Most of these dogs are found after having been abandoned by their owners, who flee the scene in order to avoid being caught themselves. In 2017, **a total of 22 dogs were removed from diverse areas of the BEN** by MCL staff. On one occasion, a dog was encountered along with 5 flashlights, 1 butcher knife, 2 machetes, a pry bar (*macana*), and several hunters, who denied ownership of all of the above items, upon which Protection staff proceeded to collect the abandoned items. On another occasion, Protection staff encountered a magazine for a .45 pistol along with bullets; these abandoned items were also collected.

Voluntary surrender: Neighbors sometimes contact us in cases where animals are found – or are problematic – in which case we assist in taking the appropriate action. In 2017 we received the following animals through this process: one white-faced capuchin monkey, two baby sloths, one injured baby collared peccary, one coyote, and one boa constrictor.

Felines: We continue to collaborate with SINAC, Pantera, and the National University's *Unidad de Atención a Conflictos con Felinos* (UACFEL) to attend cases where felines (jaguar or puma) have attacked domestic animals in farms bordering the BEN.

Maintenance and Operations

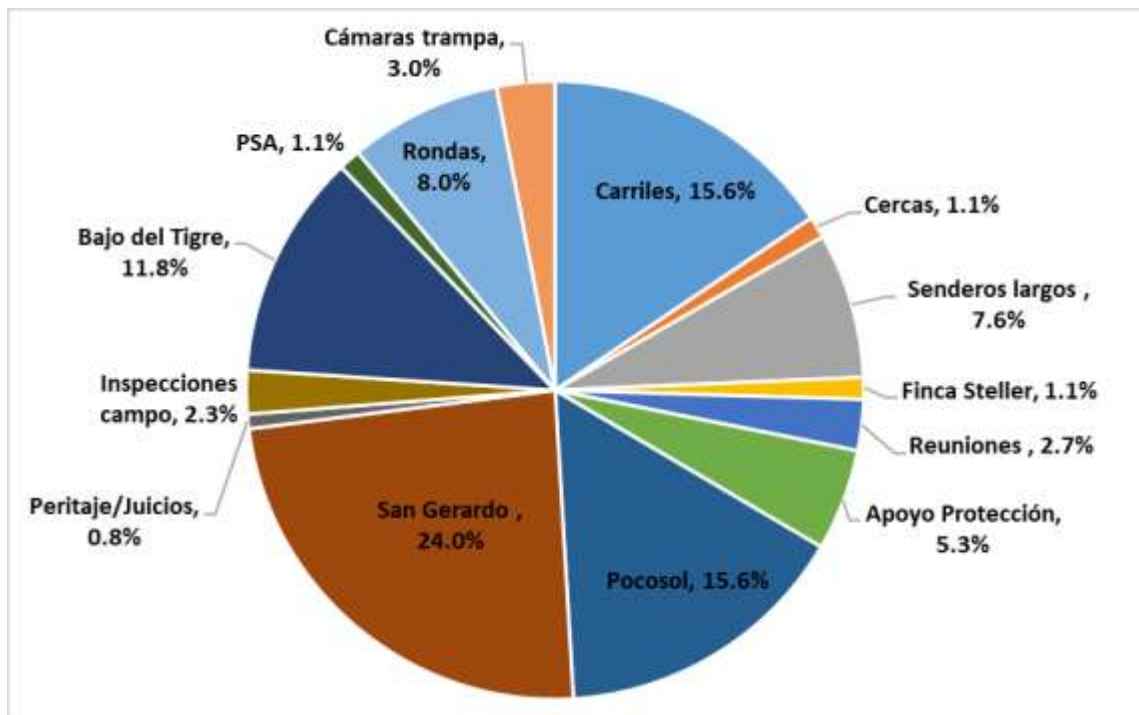
Coordinator: Luis Solano

In 2017, the Maintenance and Operations program was composed of five staff members: four based in La Tigra and one in Monteverde. The activities of this program are essential for the conservation and protection of BEN, especially in terms of maintaining limits with neighboring properties by clearing property lines and making or repairing fences. Maintenance staff work throughout the BEN, performing various tasks including but not limited to:

- Inspection of BEN property boundaries, including the maintenance (and reestablishment) of boundaries with neighboring properties
- Maintenance of property boundaries, including fences and other divisions between BEN and neighboring properties
- Maintenance and improvements to roads to field stations
- Trail maintenance and improvement at visitation centers
- Major improvements to infrastructure at San Gerardo, Bajo del Tigre
- Support in legal processes and payment for environmental services
- Support in topographic measurements and attainment of plans
- Support of Protection, Environmental Education, and other programs

In addition to the important improvements at field stations and visitation centers (which are described in each respective section), some of the principal achievements of the Maintenance and Operations program in 2017 included maintenance of long trails in the BEN (important access routes for BEN personnel and in case of emergency) and maintenance of property boundaries.

Figure 6. Summary of Maintenance Program work in 2017 (% days dedicated to each area).



RESEARCH

We are pleased to see a number of faculty and graduate student research projects added to the list this year. We are grateful to CIEE, EAP and the Monteverde Institute for their support of research in the BEN.

Table 5. Summary of research carried out in the BEN, 2017.

Researcher(s)	Project	Institution	Sector
Graduate and faculty research			
Zachary K. Alexander & Dr. Daniel Mennill	Duet behaviors in tropical wrens	University of Windsor, Canada	Bajo del Tigre
Sarah Amundrud & Dr. Diane Srivastava	Effects of climate and elevation gradients on bromeliad fauna	University of British Columbia, Canada	Pocosol, San Gerardo
Katie Brownson	From incentives to impact: An evaluation of the socio-ecological impacts of Payment for Ecosystem Services programs in the Bellbird Biological Corridor, Costa Rica	University of Georgia, USA	Bellbird Biological Corridor
Cody Cox	Examining landscape effects on avian occupancy and movement patterns in the upper Bellbird Biological Corridor	University of Georgia, USA	Bellbird Biological Corridor
Drew E. Hart	<i>Tillandsia juncea</i> & <i>Catopsis nutans</i> , epiphytes in the Bromeliaceae family.	Univ. California Berkeley, USA	Bajo del Tigre
Dr. Matthew Moran	Baseline study of mammal populations in the BEN and surrounding protected areas, using camera traps	Hendrix College, USA	Various
Kathryn Powlen	Evaluation of reforestation projects and their community and ecological benefits within the Bellbird Biological Corridor	Colorado State University, USA	Bellbird Biological Corridor
Dr. David Ribble	Status of small (non-flying) mammals in the Monteverde area for indications of distribution, diversity, population status, and trends	Trinity College, USA	San Gerardo, Calandria (Los Llanos)
Undergraduate & short-term research projects			
Alex Desales	Fungus species present on the bodies of amphibian species	Univ. of California Education Abroad Program (EAP)	Bajo del Tigre
Emma Didier	Behavior of the white-nosed coati <i>Nasua narica</i> (Procyonidae) near ecotourism in Monteverde, Costa Rica	University of Puget Sound (CIEE)	Bajo del Tigre
Peter Efstratiou, Hannah Emes, Hannah Pollock, David Williamson	Distribution & abundance of beetles in <i>Cecropia</i> petioles	Exeter (CIEE)	Bajo del Tigre
Enso Films	Audiovisual material for the Project "Learning while I travel", a documentary for children		Bajo del Tigre
Liora Huebner	Euglossine biodiversity across altitudinal gradient.	EAP	Bajo del Tigre
Megan Kruse	The tail-wag display of the Lesson's Motmot (<i>Momotus lessonii</i>) as a signal of territoriality	University of Wisconsin (CIEE)	Bajo del Tigre

Emma Ordemann	Antibiotic resistant soil bacteria in cattle/pig farmland and nearby cloud forest	University of Wisconsin (CIEE)	Bajo del Tigre
Melisa Rodriguez	Neighbor-Stranger discrimination in lekking sites of Long-tailed Manakins (<i>Chiroxiphia linearis</i>) during the display season	CIEE	Bajo del Tigre
Stephanie Rosas	Frequency matching as an honest signal of secondary sexual characteristics in long-tailed manakins (<i>Chiroxiphia linearis</i>).	EAP	Bajo del Tigre
Yesenia Jimenez	Diet analysis of felids using scat	EAP	Sendero Pacífico & Bajo del Tigre
Julius van Ijperen	Recording sounds in the Children's Eternal Rainforest	University of Arts, Utrecht, The Netherlands	San Gerardo
Patrick Wallin	Arthropod prey diversity following predation by army ants (<i>Eciton burchellii</i>) in cloud forest ants	University of Puget Sound (CIEE)	Bajo del Tigre

VOLUNTEERS AND INTERNS

Volunteers and interns assist the MCL with a variety of projects and organizational needs. This year we revamped our volunteer program, including options for language study through CPI. Information about volunteer options is now available on the [MCL's website](#).

In 2017, we were pleased to partner with the Santa Elena public high school (CTPSE), CIEE, Lehigh University, Hendrix College, and the Monteverde Institute on a number of internships, all of which yielded valuable products for the MCL. We especially thank Don Morris (Lehigh University), Matt Moran (Hendrix College), and Karen Masters (CIEE) for their support and confidence, and MCL members Orlando Calvo, Carla Willoughby, and Randy Chinchilla for their valuable supervision of interns.

Table 6. Summary of volunteers and interns in 2017.

Name	Origin/Organization	Length	Project(s) / Areas
Interns			
Mariah Matias	Lehigh University, USA	5 weeks	Information center customer service, social media content, Bajo del Tigre promotional video
Natalee Castillo	Lehigh University, USA	1 month	Information center customer service, social media content, Bajo del Tigre promotional video
Vanessa Brenes	Sta Elena high school (CPTSE) 12 th grade	8 weeks	Bajo del Tigre: customer service, building & trail maintenance
Mary Ellen Alfaro	CTPSE 12 th grade	8 weeks	Bajo del Tigre: customer service, building & trail maintenance
Carlos Daniel Pérez	CTPSE 11 th grade	1 week	Bajo del Tigre: customer service, building & trail maintenance
José Alejandro Hernández	CTPSE 11 th grade	1 week	Bajo del Tigre: customer service, building & trail maintenance

Sophia Brooks	CIEE (Fall 2017)	1 month	Environmental education & Casita de los Niños, Bajo del Tigre. Supervised by Carla Willoughby.
Kaylee Grunseth	CIEE (Spring 2017)	1 month	Internship in ecotourism marketing. Supervised by Orlando Calvo.
Roseangela Hartford	CIEE (Spring 2017)	1 month	Internship in arts-based environmental education for the MCL & the Cloud Forest School. Supervised by Carla Willoughby.
Ben Zamzow	Hendrix College	2 months	Camera trap research project, trail and building maintenance at Bajo del Tigre & San Gerardo
Sarah Nieman	Hendrix College	2 months	Camera trap research project, trail and building maintenance at Bajo del Tigre & San Gerardo
Amalie Ausland-Bjerkely	Lake Forest College / Monteverde Institute	1 month	Updated Bajo del Tigre trail map (GIS). Supervised by Randy Chinchilla.
Volunteers			
Adrien Taylor	Monteverde Friends School, "gap year" student	4 months (0.5 day/week)	Bajo del Tigre: trail and building maintenance
Oswaldo Araya Céspedes	Universidad Técnica Nacional		"TCU" community service, Finca Steller & Pocosol. Trail and building maintenance, environmental education, photography for promotion & social media.
Agathe Lacombe, Manon Maisang, Juliette Thiébault, Martha Clément	Scouts of the World Award program: Development, Peace Environment (France)	3 weeks	San Gerardo, Finca Steller
Knut Midttun	Norway	1 day	San Gerardo
Marie Osterloh	Germany	2.5 months	Bajo del Tigre, San Gerardo
Rodrigo De Sousa	Venezuela	1 week	San Gerardo
Banco Nacional (5 employees)	Banco Nacional de Costa Rica, Santa Elena Branch	1 day	Bajo del Tigre
33 high school students	Colegio Europeo, San Jose	1 day	San Gerardo
Obras Globales (2 groups of ~15 pax)	Crisley Céspedes	2 groups, 1 day ea.	Finca Steller
Hotel Arenal Springs Resort & Spa (12 employees)		1 day	Finca Steller (Casita de los Niños)
Monteverde Friends School (~15 students)	Monteverde	1 day	Bajo del Tigre

TRAINING, WORKSHOPS, AND CONFERENCES

Table 7. Summary of staff training and workshops in 2017.

Topic	Sponsor/Location	Participants	Date
Adaptation to Climate Change	Guillermo Vargas, GIZ (Monteverde)	Luis Solano, Bob Law, Eladio Cruz, Yuber Rodríguez, Lindsay Stallcup	Dec. 5, 2016, Jan. 16, 2017, Feb 3, 2017, Mar. 2, 2017
Scope and challenges of Labor Reform (Reforma Procesal Laboral)	Consortium Litigation & Labor, Monteverde Institute	Lindsay Stallcup	April 21, 2017
COVIRENAS (Comités de Vigilancia de Recursos Naturales) training	Monteverde Reserve	Luis Solano, Jorge Ramírez, Erick Barquero, Luis Arana, Armando Villalobos, Geovany González, Yuber Rodríguez, Lindsay Stallcup	May 2, 2017
COVIRENAS training	Finca Steller	Hernán Chacón, Alonso Sánchez, Alberto Zúñiga, Freddy Campos, Marcelo Rodríguez, Alexander Herrera, Fabiola Peralta, María Fernanda Rojas	May 4, 2017
COVIRENAS training with special focus on wetlands, RAMSAR	Rio Naranjo de Bagaces, Guanacaste	Hernán Chacón & Alonso Sánchez	May 17-18, 2017
COVIRENAS training	Pocosol	Hernán Chacón, Alonso Sánchez, Alberto Zúñiga, Freddy Campos, Marcelo Rodríguez, Luis Solano, Jorge Ramírez, Erick Barquero, Luis Arana, Armando Villalobos, Geovany González, Alexander Herrera, Fabiola Peralta, María Fernanda Rojas, Yuber Rodríguez, Lindsay Stallcup	Jun. 20-21, 2017
Emergency Protocol review: Protocol, snakebite	MCL (San Luis)	All	Sept. 13, 2017
Plant identification workshop	Dr. Diana Lieberman (San Luis)	All	Sept. 13, 2017
Code of Conduct	Giselle Rodríguez, Leslie Corrales	All	September 13, 2017
Millennium accounting system	San Jose	Lindsay Stallcup, Dunia Picado, Walter Bonilla	Sept. 20, 2017
Management of forest species in cases of risk (Manejo de especies forestales en casos de riesgos o amenaza)	Local Emergency Commission & Alexander Leon, SINAC-ACAT	Lindsay Stallcup, Giselle Rodríguez	Sept. 21, 2017
Methodologies & techniques for the development of env't education projects (Network of Environmental Educators of Costa Rica)	Santa Rosa Naitonal Park (SINAC)	María Fernanda Rojas	Sept. 21-22, 2017

Emergency Protocol review: Severe allergic reactions	MCL (by sector)	All (by sector)	Oct. 2017
Accounting for nonprofits	Colegio Contadores Privados, San José	Lindsay Stallcup, Dunia Picado, Jose Mora	Nov. 2, 2017
Emergency Protocol review: Cardiac Arrest	MCL (by sector)	All (by sector)	Nov. 2017
Code of Conduct for the protection of children & adolescents against sexual exploitation associated with travel and tourism	Costa Rican Institute for Tourism (Monteverde)	Giselle Rodríguez, Leslie Corrales	Nov. 8, 2017
Systematization of Education Processes and Environmental Management (Network of Environmental Educators of Costa Rica)	SINAC	María Fernanda Rojas	Nov. 22-24, 2017
Forum on nonprofits in the conservation of biodiversity in Costa Rica	SINAC/MACOBIO (San Jose)	María Fernanda Rojas	Nov. 28, 2017
Emergency Protocol review: CPR	MCL (Arenal NP)	All	Dec. 13, 2017
Code of Conduct	Giselle Rodríguez, Leslie Corrales (Arenal NP)	All	Dec. 13, 2017
Arenal Volcano National Park: talk about history and current challenges	Angie Sánchez, Arenal NP	All	Dec. 13, 2017
Course on Incident Command Systems	Regional Disaster Assistance Program, Arenal Volcano National Park	Alonso Sánchez, Alberto Zúñiga	Dec. 20-21, 2017

DONATIONS

In 2017 we were pleased to have the ongoing support of four of our international sister organizations. Kinderregenwald (Germany) continues to raise important funds for Land Purchase and Protection, and sent more than 9,700 Euros in 2017. Children's Tropical Forests U.K. raised nearly \$5,000 for critical repairs at the San Gerardo Station. Friends of the Rainforest raised the \$60,000 necessary for repairs at Pocosal, and continues to work toward funds for the purchase of a replacement pickup truck for Protection and a replacement ATV for San Gerardo. Finally, we have partnered with Engage Globally to successfully raise money for our 2018 Environmental Education Program.

In 2017 we began several new fundraising partnerships, which we hope will be fruitful for years to come. We began working with GreaterGood.com, which has raised modest funds for Land Purchase and Protection. In addition, we received contributions from the Lincoln School (Costa Rica), elementary schools in the USA, UK, and France, as well as several students from the CIEE and EAP programs who have done their own fundraising on behalf of the BEN. We also continue to nourish relationships with long-time supporters such as the American School of Madrid, Westfield State College, Luna Nueva Lodge, and Volcano Lodge.

In early 2017, we received an unexpected bequest of more than \$17,000 for forest protection from the late Leo Mark Marett of Berkeley, California. This donation demonstrates the importance of encouraging our long-time supporters to consider a legacy gift for the BEN.

We thank all those individuals and organizations that have supported the MCL in 2017. Without the generous support of our donors, the conservation of the Children's Eternal Rainforest would not be possible.

Table 8. Donations in US dollars, January 1 – December 31, 2017.

Donor	Amount (US \$)	Purpose
Cristina Riani	10.00	General
Jack Balcer	10.00	General
Matt Moran	10.00	General
Alexandria Friberg-Landon	20.00	General
Michael Baral	20.00	General
Susanna Straat	20.00	Land Purchase & Protection
In honor of Ethan & Aidan Hu	50.00	General
Judy Nelson	50.00	General
In honor of Julia Ranney	50.00	General
Sprouting Seeds School	50.00	General
David M. Rose	60.00	General
In honor of Kailani & Kamaya	60.00	General
Bruce Young	64.00	General
In honor of Dorothee Hagenbeck & Alexander Busold	75.00	Forest Protection
Donation boxes, Bajo Tigre & Info Center	99.00	General
Denise Wilder	100.00	General
Desafio S.A.	100.00	Protection, Semana Santa operatives
Desafio S.A.	100.00	Protection, August 2017 operatives
Lawrence Kirkendall	100.00	General
Emma & Anna Paul	120.00	General

Finca Luna Nueva Lodge	150.00	Protection, Semana Santa operatives
Abigail Enrici	160.00	Land Purchase & Protection
Knut Midttun	180.00	Research
Wilhelmina Tax	200.00	General
Greater Good	253.00	Land Purchase and Protection
Greater Good	286.00	Land Purchase and Protection
In honor of Olivia Miller's 10 th birthday	290.00	General
University School of Milwaukee, First Grad	431.00	Research (Camera traps)
Gonzalo Fernández (In memory of Kyle Wainwright)	500.00	Infrastructure/Repairs at San Gerardo
Jim Crisp (In memory of Sue Memhard)	500.00	General, and plaque in memory of MCL founders & contributors 1986-1991
Westfield State College (In memory of Kyle Wainwright)	500.00	Infrastructure/Repairs at San Gerardo
Willow Zuchowski & Bill Haber	500.00	Environmental Education 2018
Willow Zuchowski & Bill Haber	500.00	Endowment Fund
Natalee Castillo & Mariah Matias	983.00	Environmental Education ("Go Fund Me")
Jerre Ann Stallcup (In honor of Lindsay Stallcup)	1,000.00	General
Tom & Terry Newmark	1,000.00	Tropical Storm Nate recovery, San Gerardo
Children's Tropical Forests U.K. (Robert Muir-Wood and Elizabeth Loudon, in memory of Kyle Wainwright)	1,183.00	Infrastructure/Repairs at San Gerardo
Engage Globally	2,800.00	Environmental Education salary 2018
Children's Tropical Forests U.K.	3,793.87	Infrastructure/Repairs, San Gerardo
Anonymous	8,794.92	Environmental Education salary 2017
Leo Mark Marett (Bequest)	17,227.87	General
Friends of the Rainforest	60,000.00	Slope and building repairs at Pocosol Station

Table 9. Donations in Costa Rican colones, January 1 – December 31, 2017.

Donor	Amount (¢)	Purpose
María Esther Brenes	10,000	General
María Esther Brenes	25,000	General
Asoc. Adm. Acueducto Rural de La Fortuna de San Carlos	50,000	Protection, Semana Santa operatives
Hotel Fortuna	50,000	Protection, Semana Santa operatives
Donation boxes, Bajo Tigre & Info Center	92,375	General
Anonymous	100,000	Materials for Casita de los Niños, Bajo del Tigre
Rancho Margot	100,000	Protection, August 2017 operatives
Anonymous	120,000	Material for trail repair, Bajo del Tigre
Finca Luna Nueva	150,000	Protection, August 2017 operatives
Maria Elena Bertrand	200,000	Tropical Storm Nate recovery, repairs of road to San Gerardo
Anonymous	240,000	Material for trail repair, Bajo del Tigre
Inversiones Turisticas La Palma de La Fortuna (Volcano Lodge)	300,000	Protection, Semana Santa operatives
Lincoln School Generation 2024	619,733	Infrastructure/Repairs, San Gerardo
Frank Joyce	300,000	Repairs for ATV, Monteverde

Table 10. Donations in Euros, January 1 – December 31, 2017.

Donor	Amount (€)	Purpose
Kinderregenwald Donation #83	1,365.21	Land Purchase & Protection
Kinderregenwald Donation #84	715.46	Land Purchase & Protection
Kinderregenwald Donation #86	555.85	Land Purchase & Protection
Kinderregenwald Donation #87	1236.03	Land Purchase & Protection
Kinderregenwald Donation #88	387.08	Land Purchase & Protection
Kinderregenwald Donation #89	987.03	Land Purchase & Protection
Kinderregenwald Donation #90	2,987.11	Land Purchase & Protection
Kinderregenwald Donation #92	1,487.37	Land Purchase & Protection

Table 11. In-kind donations, January 1 – December 31, 2017.

Donor	Description
Anonymous	Social media post promotion, estimated value \$40
CONELÉCTRICAS (Planta Hidroeléctrica Sigfredo Solís Solís)	150 L of diesel, trash cans, signage for Semana Santa operatives
Dr. Diana Lieberman	Plant workshop, estimated value \$150
Drs. Diana & Milton Lieberman	Books for San Gerardo Station library
Lindsay Stallcup	Two kitchen knives, estimated value 20,000 colones
Miguel Angel Salazar Badilla	Semana Santa operatives, donation of labor (2 workers for 2 days)
Juan Castro / Rancho Don Juan, Jaurí	18 lunches for Semana Santa operatives
Santa Elena Cloud Forest Reserve	8 x 24" cement culverts. Estimated value 200,000 colones.
Ricaute Jiménez Araya	Professional legal services related to registration of brand name "Bosque Eterno de los Niños". Estimated value 75,000 colones
Robert Rojas Vásquez	1 kg. coffee, General Assembly 2017. Estimated value: \$10
Robert Rojas Vásquez	1 week of manual labor in San Gerardo, Tropical Storm Nate recovery. Estimated value 100,000 colones (50 hours x 2,000 per hour)
Tabacón Thermal Resort & Spa	Sheets, pillows, and other articles for field stations
José E. Mora Marín	Professional accounting services related to transition to new accounting software. Estimated value \$600 (20 hours x \$30)
Melody Guindon & Family	Trail maintenance, Danta trail ("Sendero Wilford")
David Soto Segura	Welding of Bajo del Tigre signs. Estimated value \$40
Hotel Arenal Springs Resort & Spa	Paint for Casita de los Niños, Finca Steller, and solar panel for internet at Pocosol
Hotel Belmar	"Pack for a Purpose" Program; school supplies

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The MCL thanks the following individuals, businesses, and organizations for their collaboration and support during 2017:

Acueducto Chachagua
Acueducto La Fortuna de San Carlos
Asoc. de Desarrollo Integral La Fortuna
Asoc. de Desarrollo Integral de San Luis
Manuel Alfaro Alpizar (SINAC)
José Manuel Alvarado Arias
Geiner Alvarado Huertas
Maudín Alberto Arguedas Jiménez
Gilberto Araya Ruiz (COVIRENA)
Hernán Arroyo Guerrero
Edgar Campos (Comisariato Chachagua)
Wilber Campos (Comisariato Chachagua)
Filadelfo Cárdenas
Asdrúbal Castro (Volcano Lodge)
Juan Castro (Rancho don Juan)
Centro Soltis (Texas A&M)
Gerardo Céspedes
Ignacio Chacón Castro
COVIRENAS San Ramón
Minor Cordero (SENASA)
Álvaro y Jaime del Castillo (Proyecto Asís)
Steven Farrell (Finca Luna Nueva Lodge)
Miguel Fernández Vásquez
Raúl Furnier
Fuerza Pública de Bajo Rodríguez
Fuerza Pública de La Tigra
Fuerza Pública de San Isidro Peñas Blancas
Katia González
Ronald González (Súper Los Ángeles)
Rubén González Rojas
Sergio Herrera
Claudia Jiménez Araya
Ricaute Jiménez Araya
Roy Jiménez Araya
Sergio Lara (CONELECTRICAS)
Christine Larson (Desafío Tours)
Esteban Maroto
Jorge Mora
José E. Mora Marín
Susie Newswanger
Alfonso Oses (COVIRENA)
Anita Pacheco
Policía de Tránsito de La Fortuna
Víctor Porras
Frank Quesada

Mayling Quirós
José Ramos Garita
Nuria Ramírez
Jean Carlo Rigioni
Jorge Rodríguez
Miguel Ángel Salazar Badilla
Marcelino Rodríguez Santamaría
Raquel Salazar
José Ángel Soro
Juan Sostheim (Rancho Margot)
David Soto Segura
Marco Ugalde (CONELECTRICAS)
Guillermo Vargas Prendas
Víctor Vargas Vargas
Ligia Villegas Trejos
J. Alonso Vindas Angulo (SINAC)

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Board of Directors

Julia Matamoros, President
Jorge Maroto, Vice President
Carla Willoughby, Secretary
Bob Law, Treasurer
Orlando Calvo, Vocal I
Eladio Cruz, Vocal II
Mark Wainwright, Vocal III

Nominating Committee

Freddy Cruz
Fern Perkins
Bob Law
Jose Soto
Mark Wainwright

Fiscal

Marcos Méndez, Fiscal I
Sofía Arce, Fiscal II

Staff

Main Office, Monteverde

Lindsay Stallcup, Executive Director
Yúber Rodríguez, Director of Land Affairs
Giselle Rodríguez, Executive Secretary
Walter Bonilla, Accounting and Finance Coordinator (until Dec. 13, 2017)
Dunia Picado, Accounting Assistant, Coordinator of Human Resources & Procurement
Leslie Corrales, Information Center and Bajo del Tigre
Rosibel Fallas, Miscellaneous

Finca Steller

Fabiola Peralta, Administrative Assistant
María Fernanda Rojas, Environmental Education
Marcelo Rodríguez, Finca Steller and Nursery
Luisa Retana, Miscellaneous

Bajo del Tigre

Jose Soto, Coordinator
Rafael Vargas, Receptionist

San Gerardo Station

Geovany González, Station Manager
Ivannia Hernández, Cook

Pocosol Station

Alexander Herrera, Station Manager

Maintenance

Luis Solano, Coordinator
Jorge Ramírez
Erick Barquero
Luis Arana
Armando Villalobos (Monteverde)

Protection

Hernán Chacón, Coordinator
A. Alonso Sánchez
Alberto Zúñiga
Freddy Campos

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

First, we would like to welcome 4 new members to the MCL this year: Asdrúbal Castro Miranda, Mario Oscar Fennell Araya, Vinicio Miranda Sánchez, and Minor Castro Murillo. All of them have supported the MCL in different ways since before becoming members and we are very happy they have formalized their friendship with the BEN.

Regarding nominations for the board of directors, all positions are two-year terms and each year half of them expire. The following list details the status of positions on the current board; positions that expire at this General Assembly are marked in bold.

President (Julia Matamoros) 2017-2019
Vicepresident (Jorge Maroto) 2016-2018
Treasurer (Bob Law) 2016-2018
 Secretary (Carla Willoughby) 2017-2019
 First Vocal (Orlando Calvo) 2017-2019
Second Vocal (Eladio Cruz) 2016-2018
 Third Vocal (Mark Wainwright) 2017-2019
 First Fiscal (Marcos Méndez) 2017-2019
Second Fiscal (Sofía Arce) 2016-2018

All current board members are willing to continue serving, either in their current positions or in new ones, if there are no additional nominations elected in the General Assembly. The nominating committee therefore proposes the following candidates for the positions up for election this year:

For Vice President, the nominating committee proposes Jorge Maroto to continue in this position, for the period of March 2018 to February 2020.

For Treasurer, the nominating committee proposes Sofía Arce, for the period of March 2018 to February 2020.

For Second Vocal, the nominating committee proposes Eladio Cruz to continue in this position, for the period of March 2018 to February 2020.

For Second Fiscal, the nominating committee proposes Bob Law, for the period of March 2018 to February 2020.

The nominating committee wishes the MCL board members much energy and success in their efforts on behalf of the BEN.

José Soto, Bob Law, Mark Wainwright, Fern Perkins y Freddy Cruz
 Nominating Committee

LIST OF MEMBERS

Honorary Members:

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Gerardo Céspedes | 5. Eha Kern | 9. George Powell |
| 2. Michael Fogden | 6. Sharon Kinsman | 10. Marco V. Retana |
| 3. Patricia Fogden | 7. Bob Law | |
| 4. Adrian Forsyth | 8. Harriet McCurdy | |

Contributing Members:

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|-------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Carlos Aburto | 10. Alexander Kopper | 19. Ree Sheck |
| 2. Michael Besancon | 11. Marcy Lawton | 20. Matilde Steiner |
| 3. Leslie Burlingame | 12. Alan Masters | 21. Robert M. Timm |
| 4. Omar Coto Loría | 13. Gregory Murray Kevin | 22. Nathaniel T. Wheelwright |
| 5. James E. Crisp McGowan | 14. Tom Newmark | 23. Kathy Winnett-Murray |
| 6. Cynthia Echeverría López | 15. Gordon Patty | 24. Jorge Vargas Culle |
| 7. Lisa Ellis | 16. Roland Paul | |
| 8. Mauricio García Cambroneró | 17. Alan Pounds | |
| 9. Carlos Guindon Standing | 18. Tahnee Robertson | |

Active Members:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Geiner Alvarado Huertas | 27. Francis John Joyce | 53. Luis A. Solano Morales |
| 2. Osvaldo Araya Céspedes | 28. Richard LaVal Bugg | 54. Manuel Solís |
| 3. Sofía Arce Flores | 29. Bob Law | 55. Maricella Solís González |
| 4. José Edgardo Arévalo H. | 30. Marlene Leitón Campbell | 56. Jose Alfredo Soto Segura |
| 5. Selena Avedaño Leadem | 31. John Thomas Longino | 57. Lindsay Stallcup |
| 6. Walter Bonilla Vásquez | 32. Jorge Maroto Puga | 58. Alexa Stickel |
| 7. Orlando Calvo Carballo | 33. Karen L. Masters | 59. Joseph D. Stuckey |
| 8. Jorge Gabriel Campos | 34. Julia Matamoros Alvarado | 60. Mills Tandy |
| 9. Asdrubal Castro Miranda | 35. Gabriela McAdam Montiel | 61. Jorge Arturo Torres Ortega |
| 10. Minor Castro Murillo | 36. Marcos A. Méndez Sibaja | 62. Emilia Triana Cambroneró |
| 11. Gerardo Céspedes R. | 37. Vinicio Miranda Sánchez | 63. Suzanne Leseur Trostle |
| 12. Hernán Chacón Castro | 38. Carlos Luis Muñoz | 64. Katherine VanDusen |
| 13. Lilliana Chavarría V. | 39. Nalini Nadkarni Moreshwar | 65. María A. Vargas Chacón |
| 14. Marvin Chaverri Sandoval | 40. Susie Newswanger | 66. Guillermo Vargas Leitón |
| 15. Randy Chinchilla | 41. Priscilla Palavicini Carmona | 67. José L. Vargas Leitón |
| 16. Juan Carlos Corrales Arce | 42. Fabiola Peralta Ramos | 68. Mauricio Vargas Salazar |
| 17. Eladio Cruz Leitón | 43. Fern Perkins | 69. Oscar M. Vargas Solís |
| 18. Freddy Cruz Méndez | 44. John Porras | 70. Mark D. Wainwright |
| 19. Wim De Backer | 45. Jorge Ramírez Vargas | 71. Justin C. Welch |
| 20. Mercedes Días Herrera | 46. Evelyn A. Rockwell Solano | 72. Jannelle Wilkins |
| 21. M. Oscar Fennell Araya | 47. Yúber Rodríguez Santamaría | 73. Carla Willoughby |
| 22. William A. Haber | 48. Ma. Fernanda Rojas Murillo | 74. James A. Wolfe |
| 23. Debra Hamilton | 49. Robert Rojas Vásquez | 75. Bruce E. Young |
| 24. Marvin Hidalgo Montero | 50. Giuliano Salazar Gigli | 76. Willow Zuchowski Pushkin |
| 25. Ricaute Jiménez Araya | 51. Martha Iris Salazar Méndez | |
| 26. John Devereax Joslin | 52. Noelia Solano Guindon | |



Environmental Education. In 2017, 621 students and 143 adults participated in a total of 31 field trips to the BEN. In addition to working directly with local schools, the EE program represented the MCL in different activities in the communities surrounding the BEN. In this way, more than 2,500 people participated in some kind of EE with the League (talks, workshops, festivals, environmental fairs).



Clockwise from top: Plant identification workshop; the MCL received the Ecological Blue Flag with 5 stars for 2016; Staff retreat & workshop at Arenal Volcano National Park; protection operative in Arenal Volcano National Park; Armando and Geovany win an intra-staff competition, December 2017.