

# TAPIR TRACKS

The newsletter of the Monteverde Conservation League & Children's Eternal Rainforest

VOL. 1, ISSUE 2

## News from the Bosque Eterno de los Niños (BEN)



December has finally arrived, and with it the wind and mist of the Monteverde “rainbow season”. Please take a few minutes to scroll through and check out what’s new in the BEN—including great news about repairs at the Pocosol Station, payment for environmental services, and a new grant from Bosqueterno S.A. (BESA) for our environmental education program.

On behalf of everyone here at the BEN, may your holidays be filled with peace, light, and biodiversity! —[Lindsay Stallcup](#), Executive Director

## CONELECTRICAS to Continue Paying for Watershed Protection



Hot off the press, we share the news of a new contract between the MCL and CONELECTRICAS, a private hydroelectric company on the eastern border of the BEN. Through this contract, the MCL will continue to receive annual environmental services payments in **exchange for protecting the forests that ensure clean and abundant water** for CONELECTRICAS’s hydropower project near Pocosol. The new contract thankfully also represents the end to an unwanted legal dispute between MCL and CONELECTRICAS over environmental service payments... one more thing to be grateful for as the holidays approach.

## Tropical Storm Nate Affects Monteverde



In early October, we were hit hard by Tropical Storm Nate, which 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, the road to our San Gerardo Station was the hardest hit. Thanks to the quick response of our Maintenance team, we were able to restore provisional access quickly, but several longer-term solutions—including road repairs and bridge construction—remain to be completed.

## Pocosol Repairs on the Horizon!



**We are delighted to report that repairs at Pocosol will begin in early 2018!**

Nestled in the heart of the BEN, Pocosol is a true rainforest paradise, offering 10 km of trails, boiling mud pits, a lake, a spectacular waterfall, unforgettable views of the Peñas Blancas Valley, and incredible biodiversity. The lodge itself provides accommodations for up to 36 guests. Unfortunately we had to close Pocosol Station at the end of 2016 due to problems involving the slope below the station.

We are grateful to Friends of the Rainforest for raising the funds that will permit these important repairs and allow us to get Pocosol up and running again!

## Meet Our Staff: Maria Fernanda Rojas



Did you know that the Children’s Eternal Rainforest has a full time environmental educator? **Maria Fernanda Rojas**, a native of San Carlos, works with students in nearly 20 elementary schools along the eastern border of the BEN. She combines classroom instruction with interactive field trips to create an exciting educational experience for students. Maria Fernanda’s enthusiasm is contagious, and the students—some of whom have never visited the rainforest prior to this program!—come away with a new appreciation for the natural world.

Our Environmental Education Program is funded entirely by donations. In addition to having raised a large part of the salary for 2018, we are thrilled to announce that our grant proposal for **“Protecting water resources through environmental education in the Peñas Blancas watershed”** has been funded by Bosqueterno S.A. (“BESA”). This grant will allow us to provide local students with a hands-on learning experience about watersheds and aquatic ecosystems, including field trips to local streams. Thanks to BESA and all of the donors who continue to make this program possible!

## Volunteers & Interns



We love our volunteers and interns! This fall, we had four great student interns from the local Santa Elena High School (CTPSE): Carlos Daniel Pérez, Jose Alejandro Hernández, Vanessa Brenes, and Mary Ellen Alfaro. Sophia Brooks, an intern from University of Redlands, came to us via CIEE’s Sustainability and the Environment Program. With supervision from MCL board member Carla Willoughby, Sophia designed a new educational activity for the Children’s House (Casita de Niños) at Bajo del Tigre and helped with repairs to the Casita itself. Finally, we welcome Marie Osterloh, a volunteer from our German sister organization, Kinderregenwald. Marie will be with us for 3 months.

Want to find out more about volunteering in the BEN? Visit [www.acmcr.org](http://www.acmcr.org) or contact us at [info@acmcr.org](mailto:info@acmcr.org).

## Species Spotlight



The **ocelot** (*Leopardus pardalis*) is one of Costa Rica’s six species of wild felines, all of which are found in the Children’s Eternal Rainforest. The ocelot is the third largest cat; at an average of 24 pounds (11 kg), it’s smaller than the jaguar and mountain lion, but larger than the jaguarundi, margay and oncilla.

Through research, we can start to better understand, and therefore better protect, wild feline populations. One way to study terrestrial mammals is by using motion sensor cameras, or “camera traps.” The picture at left is the result of a recent collaboration with the nonprofit group Panthera and the Costa Rican government (SINAC). The study also captured photos of mountain lion, jaguarundi, collared peccary, coatimundi, and the endangered Baird’s tapir. We look forward to learning more about all of the BEN’s terrestrial mammals as our camera trap research database grows!

## Support the BEN!



Looking to make a difference this holiday season? 100% of your donation supports conservation, protection, and environmental education efforts in the Children’s Eternal Rainforest. You can [donate directly](#) via our online payment system, or make a U.S. tax-deductible donation through one of our partner organizations: [Engage Globally](#) or [Friends of the Rainforest](#). Be sure to specify that your donation is for the Children’s Eternal Rainforest! For information on making a tax-deductible donation from other countries, [contact us](#).