Conservation Internship – Ecotourism Guiding with CRACYP for Progreso Verde ("Green Progress")

2012

Introduction

This document should be read in conjunction with the Internship Information Pack available at www.progresoverde.org/internship.html

In order to expand the local economy and help stem rural-urban migration in the region, CRACYP is developing an eco-tourism project. Infrastructure will consist of several cabañas constructed on different farms throughout the little village of Jilimbí, which is a farming community at the edge of forested Andean foothills. Two of the main attractions will be exploring the ecosystem via guided hikes, and experiencing the local culture through visits to sugarcane cultivators who make organic, fair trade alcohol. CRACYP will provide education and job training for members of the local community so that they can eventually assume control of all levels of the business.

Objectives

We need conservation or ecotourism interns with experience in guiding to create a training program for the project. The intern should create a very basic program for how participants should guide their guests in local forests for birdwatching or nature walks and within the community to present the organic sugarcane and alcohol distillation, keeping in mind that the vast majority of them have never been tourists themselves and no-one can speak English. You should include some very basic English language lessons and also focus on communication across the language barrier. You should also create workshops that help participants learn about the cultural differences and expectations that they are likely to encounter when guiding guests, so that they know what to expect – this will help enhance the experience for guests and hosts alike. Depending on your time and Spanish speaking ability, you will also ideally implement the training program by holding workshops for community members who are interested in participating in this aspect of the ecotourism business. You may have the opportunity to work on trailmapping/building or species identification, as well, depending on your skills and the timing of your internship.

Location

You will be based in the picturesque little village of Jilimbí in Bolívar Province, close to the border with Cotopaxi Province. The nearest town you might find on a map is Moraspungo, about an hour's journey up into the mountains from the main road between Quevedo and Ventanas. Your work will be almost exclusively with community members in Jilimbí, but you may also travel to other villages and towns if you need to use the internet or do research on relevant local nature or cultural information.

Requirements

Interns will need to either be fairly independent or else have access to advice by email from their university or other sources (e.g. former employer), if needed. CRACYP's Volunteer Coordinator can offer support with translation and community contacts. Spanish language skills to at least intermediate level are essential, and experience in teaching or workshop development and presentation will be very useful. You should also be reasonably physically fit, since much of the work will take place outdoors.

How to Apply

Read the Internship Information Pack for details of how to apply.