

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of International Conservation
Wildlife Without Borders-Central America Program FY 2016
Summary of Projects**

In FY 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) awarded nine projects from the Wildlife Without Borders-Central America program, totaling \$599,999, which was matched by \$472,415 in additional leveraged funds. Field projects in six countries of Central America (in order from north to south below), including regional projects, will be supported.

BELIZE

CA 1610

Grant # F16AP00767

Monitoring and reducing expansion of the agricultural frontier in the Chiquibul-Maya Mountains. In partnership with Friends for Conservation and Development. The purpose of this project is to support a conservation effort in Belize's Chiquibul National Park, Vaca Forest Reserve, and Columbia River Forest Reserve by strengthening law enforcement efforts and community forest management. The project is intended to conserve one of Central America's largest intact blocks of tropical forest that harbors emblematic species such as jaguars, scarlet macaws, and tapirs as well as hundreds of plants and endangered animal species by addressing agricultural encroachment and illegal natural resource extraction. Specific activities include: (1) air and ground monitoring and patrolling in urgent hotspots for illegal forest clearing, poaching, and gold panning; (2) training rangers on effective forest patrols; (3) instituting a community-to-community exchange program between the Vaca Forest Reserve and the Guatemala Maya Biosphere on community forest concession management; (4) supporting the Friends of the Vaca community group to test and implement a pilot sustainable non-timber forest product project; and (5) strengthening bi-national coordination with Guatemalan counterparts.

USFWS: \$99,948

Leveraged Funds: \$93,220

CA 1621

Grant # F16AP00778

Combating wildlife crime and improving wildlife security throughout Belize. In partnership with Wildtracks. The purpose of this project is to improve wildlife security throughout Belize by strengthening national wildlife law enforcement and launching a national public campaign to fight wildlife crime. The project is intended to conserve priority wildlife species including the Central American river turtle, yellow headed parrot, great curassow, white-lipped peccary, scarlet macaw, Geoffroy's spider monkey, Yucatan black howler monkey, and jaguar by reducing the illegal and unsustainable harvesting and trafficking of wildlife. Specific activities include: (1) revising and disseminating a National Threatened Species List; (2) creating a National Wildlife Law Enforcement Network across multiple enforcement agencies to respond to wildlife crimes; (3) training wildlife law enforcement officers of the Forest Department, non-governmental organization (NGO) protected area co-managers, and multi-agency enforcement

personnel in wildlife law enforcement; (4) adopting a National Wildlife Awareness Strategy and associated communications plan; and (5) implementing a public campaign on wildlife crime including outreach at 12 national and regional events and at schools in communities within high wildlife crime areas, targeted engagement of hunting communities, dealers, and restaurants, and dissemination of media packages for radio broadcasts.

USFWS: \$54,845

Leveraged Funds: \$46,702

CA 1623

Grant # F16AP00784

Conserving threatened jaguar populations through improved management of human-jaguar conflicts within the Southern Belize Biological Corridor. In partnership with Ya'axché Conservation Trust. The purpose of this project is to reduce human-jaguar conflict throughout the Southern Belize Biological Corridor. This project is intended to conserve jaguars, which are classified as Near Threatened by the IUCN, by addressing the threats of direct persecution and retaliatory killings by humans. Specific activities include: (1) developing and implementing a system to monitor human-jaguar conflicts locally and to support national monitoring efforts; (2) recruitment of interested livestock farmers in the buffer zone around the corridor to implement jaguar conflict mitigation measures within their farms; (3) developing and carrying out a public campaign focused on communities in the buffer zone to encourage the protection of jaguars and increase the number of reports of human-jaguar conflicts to relevant authorities.

USFWS: \$59,948

Leveraged Funds: \$31,957

GUATEMALA

CA 1624

Grant # F16AP00760

Strengthening the security of threatened wildlife and their habitat through local stewardship in the Ancestral Rainforests Landscape of the Maya Forest, Guatemala. In partnership with *Organización para la Conservación de la Naturaleza y Desarrollo Comunitario*. The purpose of this project is to secure long-term conservation of the Ancestral Rainforests Landscape of the Guatemalan Maya Forest and its rich wildlife by supporting local Maya-Q'eqchis in community wildlife and forest management. This work is intended to strengthen indigenous stewardship of wildlife and habitats across a landscape at risk from megaprojects, expansion of monoculture, and illegal wildlife trade. Specific activities include: (1) in-depth consultations and workshops with over 100 local and regional authorities from 33 communities in Ixcán on the rules and regulations related to hunting, consumption, and commerce of endangered wildlife to empower them to establish community-based conservation agreements that prohibit illegal wildlife harvest and trade as well as sale of land for African Palm monoculture, large-scale cattle ranches, and megaprojects; (2) education and empowerment of local Maya Q'eqchi youth as conservation champions through hands-on training in sustainable natural resource management practices and culturally relevant leadership skills; (3) training of park guards to carry out biological monitoring of key mammalian indicator species within Laguna Lachua National Park; and (4) evaluation of impact by monitoring ecological and social indicators in the study region.

USFWS: \$104,390

Leveraged Funds: \$118,225

COSTA RICA

CA 1612

Grant # F16AP00763

Community-based management of jaguars by means of incentives for coexistence: Pilot test in Costa Rica. In partnership with *Asociación Confraternidad Guanacasteca*. The purpose of this project is to enhance peaceful co-existence between big cats and humans in seven communities across Costa Rica. The project is intended to conserve jaguars and pumas by converting them into a valuable asset for local communities and thereby reducing retaliatory killings of big cats. Specific activities include: (1) formal establishment of a national organization of ranching communities; (2) development of dialogue mechanisms between ranchers using different media, such as social meetings, bulletins, and social networks; (3) community-based technical assistance for ranchers affected by jaguar predation, where locals are involved in the implementation and evaluation of preventive practices to reduce livestock vulnerability; (4) distinction of local products with a green label representing big cat conservation for presentation at local and national fairs; and (5) a pilot payment for production of biodiversity program, using community-based camera-trapping and tracking for regulation and measurement.

USFWS: \$68,200

Leveraged Funds: \$93,140

MULTIPLE COUNTRIES – MEXICO, GUATEMALA, BELIZE, HONDURAS, COSTA RICA, NICARAGUA, AND PANAMA

CA1622

Grant # F16AP00780

Multi-organizational collaboration to integrate data and survey methods for large mammal indicator species at the Mesoamerica regional scale. In partnership with Washington State University. The purpose of the project is to produce Mesoamerican-wide (southern Yucatan through Panama) range and population status assessments for four large mammal species likely to be impacted by anthropogenic threats in Central America – jaguar, white-lipped peccary, collared peccary, and Baird’s tapir. This project is intended to aid in the conservation of these species by producing large-scale information on their past, current, and predicted future distribution, and on how they are responding to current human alterations of landscapes. Specific activities include: (1) literature review to increase regional knowledge of species and identify data sources; (2) data compilation and standardization across multiple sites, with a focus on existing camera trapping data; (3) species distribution modeling to map current and future distribution patterns and identify key drivers of regional occupancy; (4) workshop in Guatemala to confirm models, train local scientists, and develop future region-wide standardized monitoring guidelines for at least two of the focal species; and (5) dissemination of results in English and Spanish to local stakeholders, including presentation of mapping results to all protected area agencies in Central America.

USFWS: \$52,668

Leveraged Funds: \$0

MULTIPLE COUNTRIES – GUATEMALA, BELIZE, HONDURAS, COSTA RICA, NICARAGUA, AND PANAMA

CA 1617

Grant # F16AC00602

Mongabay Reporting Network: Cattle & Central American forests. In partnership with Mongabay. The purpose of this project is to create a series of in-depth stories on the intersection of cattle ranching and environmental protection in Mesoamerica within the context of food security and human health, economic production, ecosystem services, and climate change. This project is intended to foster a better understanding of the scale, scope, and impact of cattle production on Central America's forests and wildlife. Specific activities include: (1) development of questions that need to be explored under this topic; (2) fielding proposals and commissioning stories from journalists across the globe; (3) publishing ten articles on the topic in both Spanish and English on Mongabay.com; and (4) encouraging republishing in major media outlets in Central America and across the globe via a Creative Commons license.

USFWS: \$40,000

Leveraged Funds: \$33,823

Amendments to Existing Projects

GUATEMALA

LAC 1439

Grant # F14AP00778

Empowering regional authorities to reduce the illegal commerce and consumption of endangered wildlife induced by the Franja Transversal del Norte highway in the Cynergetic Region II of Guatemala. In partnership with *Organización para la Conservación de la Naturaleza y Desarrollo Comunitario* (ORCONDECO). The purpose of this work is to secure long-term conservation of the Ancestral Rainforests Landscape of the Guatemalan Maya Forest and its rich wildlife by supporting a green schools initiative as part of the existing Environmental-Cultural Education School Program (PEACE in Spanish) for Maya-Q'eqchi youth. The work is intended to strengthen indigenous stewardship of wildlife and their habitat in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. Specific activities include: (1) identification of 15 strategic schools to participate in the pilot program and appropriate activities for implementation; (2) development of materials for teachers and incentives under an Ecological Flag system; (3) garnering support from Guatemala's Ministry of Education; and (4) operationalizing the program and measuring and sharing its impacts.

USFWS: \$20,000

Leveraged Funds: \$0

MULTIPLE COUNTRIES – GUATEMALA, BELIZE, HONDURAS, NICARAGUA, COSTA RICA, AND PANAMA

LAC 1543

Grant # F15AC00990

Five-year cooperative agreement for the conservation of Mesoamerica's last wild places. In partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society. The purpose of this project is to secure protection of Mesoamerica's five largest wild places by 2020, including viable populations of

wide-ranging species such as the jaguar, Baird's tapir, white-lipped peccary, and macaws. Through a five-year cooperative agreement, project activities will reduce threats to the Maya Forest, Moskitia, Indio-Maiz-Tortugero, La Amistad, and Darien Gap and ensure regional connectivity and protection of the core wildlife strongholds within the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. Key objectives of this project relate to the development of a coordinated approach to conservation among Mesoamerican partners, elaborating a regional conservation vision, strengthening the management and protection of core sites, and building the capacity of relevant local stakeholders. Specific activities planned for the second year of the five-year cooperative agreement include: (1) completion and dissemination of results of the Human Footprint and Cow's Hoofprint in Mesoamerica analysis; (2) continuation of activities to increase law enforcement monitoring capacity for Mesoamerica's most threatened wild places; (3) continuation of assistance to develop increased capacities to improve governance in Rio Plátano Biosphere Reserve, Honduras; and (4) continuation of the scaling-up of human-jaguar conflict mitigation through jaguar-friendly ranch management techniques in the Maya Biosphere Reserve Buffer Zone and beyond.

USFWS: \$100,000

Leveraged Funds: \$55,348