

The Conservation Trust of
Puerto Rico launches a call to action...



¡ToDos!

para la
Naturaleza

2013 • Annual Report

We can only achieve our full potential –both individually and collectively– if we can sustain the ecosystem services of the islands of Puerto Rico and respect all forms of life with which we share our natural environment.

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Donors

Leadership

Our Mission: To secure functional and healthy ecological systems for the islands of Puerto Rico and to inspire its people to be stewards of nature so that we may together reach our shared social, economic and quality-of-life goals.



A message from the chairman and the executive director

Time is running and our islands' ecosystems continue to be left behind as a “nice to have” item in a quest to attain growth without sustainable principles. As the race continues, our basic ecological services that sustain our development and our existence continue to erode.

Time has come to take direct action to transform our way of thinking. A sustainable change can only come if citizens from all social levels, from every region of the island and from each community group get involved and take conservation into their own hands.

To accomplish this task, the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico created Para la Naturaleza, a new operational unit focusing on making people direct stewards of nature. For the first time, we have set a goal for conservation: to protect 33% of our ecosystems by 2033. From corporations, to government, universities, community groups, families and individuals, we want everyone to join in achieving this goal: 33 x 2033.

People are responding. In 2013 a private individual and his family established a conservation easement at Finca María Luisa in Lajas. With a record-breaking 777 acres, this private initiative is not only the largest conservation easement in Puerto Rico, but also a model for others to follow. Yabucoños pro Calidad de Vida, a community-based group, is developing organic farming and receiving training from our staff to develop tours in Punta Yeguas. Casa Pueblo has expanded its reach by creating a Model Forest in the island's central region. More than ten tree nurseries, known as Biocomisos, are now in full production in

Puerto Rico's public schools. The Scuba Dogs Society continues to expand its International Beach Cleaning event with over 8,000 volunteers during 2013 and will incorporate citizen science activities in the coming years. Para la Naturaleza's Volunteer Program reached over 13,000 volunteer actions with a total of 44,362 volunteer hours in 2013. Furthermore, Para la Naturaleza social media has grown to over 31,000 friends and subscribers, more than twice the amount of our previous digital platform in only six months.

People are at the heart of everything we do, so under our new unit Para la Naturaleza we are not only dedicated to continue setting the bar for conservation, but also to spreading our mission well beyond the previous limits of our organization.

Thousands of volunteers and supporters are already taking action for nature, one day at a time. They are donating their time as volunteers, donating funds, establishing easements and even donating their lands.

We welcome you in joining this movement and are counting on your help to take us closer to our common goal: 33 x 2033.

Sincerely,

Dennis Rivera
Chair, Board of Trustees

Fernando Lloveras-San Miguel
Executive Director



Making history: a family takes the lead as stewards of nature

Nothing was going to put a damper on this historic day, not even heavy rain in a dry forest. Since 1981 Humberto Escabí and his family had been using their 777-acre property in Lajas' Sierra Bermeja for agriculture and cattle farming. The Escabís' beloved Finca María Luisa sits on the oldest geological formations in the Caribbean, an area of extraordinary biodiversity value.

Yet he was concerned about the future of the family's property, fearing the ever-present push for development would destroy his treasured landscape, and with it the 16 well-preserved ecosystems it comprises. Turning his concern into decisive action, Escabí turned to the Conservation Trust for guidance. The result was the establishment of Puerto Rico's largest conservation easement, preserving the land's integrity in perpetuity and giving hope to the 300+ species it harbors, some of them threatened with extinction.

"The Trust and our family, we all wanted the same thing: to conserve this land. It's always been my intention to retain the property in our family and ensure that no harm ever come to this place", said Escabí. Praising the family's generosity, renowned conservationist Dr. Frank H. Wadsworth was glad to see "so much love for the land, and Puerto Ricans who are truly committed to nature."

So the rainfall was simply an unexpected celebration that came from high above.

1,592

total acres preserved in 2013, an increase from 1,013.49 acres in 2012

1,400

 acres

land conservation goal for 2013

\$7,052,000

value of land donations and conservation easements received in 2013



1993

Year in which the first Nature Immersion Workshop was held at Cabezas de San Juan Nature Reserve in Fajardo

45

Number of teenage environmental leaders heading the camp in 2013

2 leaders and 1 participant have become Trust employees

Over 1,200 participants since 1993

Developing young leaders

He expected this summer camp to be like all the others –sometimes fun, sometimes boring, walking amongst nature, some learning, surely some new friends. After just five days at the Trust’s Nature Immersion Program, Benjamin left with a new awareness of nature: its language, the careful balance of its ecosystems, how species can be managed, and his own important role as a leader for nature. For 20 years the Trust’s landmark program has been helping youths connect with nature in a profound way, teaching them leadership skills that last a lifetime.

“I liked to hear the waves crashing on the rocks, the wind, the birds, and the sounds and echoes inside the cave. I liked to feel the wind, the rain that came in the heat of the day, the ocean water and the cold river inside the cave...This week I learned so many things...I learned about the complicated process of managing species, and how important it is for the ecosystem because each species plays a vital role. I can help preserve nature not only by caring for it myself but also by telling others what I have learned. I can also join other groups like this so I can help the ecosystem in my own community.”
Ben Williams, age 16



**Acres for America
launches its first
project in Puerto Rico**

23

endangered species to be protected through the proposal

830,000

amount of acres protected by the Acres for America Program in the U.S. through 2013

When the opportunity arose to purchase lands of high conservation value near natural protected areas along Puerto Rico’s eastern coast and the Karst region, we thought it was an ideal project for the Acres for America program. This joint initiative between Walmart and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation seeks to purchase and preserve one acre of wildlife habitat in the U.S. for every acre of land developed by the company. But there was one caveat: the program focuses on large expanses of land unavailable in Puerto Rico.

At roughly 100 x 35 miles in size, Puerto Rico is rather small. So small, that many are surprised to know of the island’s extraordinary biodiversity: Puerto Rico has half the land surface of Hawaii, but holds 50% more native plants. In Puerto Rico’s small archipelago of islands you find an impressive array of plants and animals species, of which 243 plants, 16 birds, 35 reptiles and 18 amphibians are endemic.

Yet Puerto Rico’s ecosystems are threatened by human impact: deforestation, an accelerating pattern of development, unsustainable agricultural and tourism practices. That’s why increasing the percentage of land conservation is vital to the survival of our ecosystems –and of ourselves– one purchased parcel of land at a time.

We knew that what Puerto Rico lacks in size is compensated many times over in its exceptional biodiversity, and they agreed.

The first grant ever from Acres for America in Puerto Rico will allow the purchase of 333 acres: 120 acres of land lie next to the Humacao Nature Reserve’s Pterocarpus Forest, an area of high biological diversity with unique habitats that provide a nesting area for marine turtles and protect the endangered Puerto Rican Whistling duck (*Dendrocygna arborea*) and the Brown pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*). An additional 213 acres in the northern Karst region provides a mosaic of habitats to 45 species endemic to Puerto Rico, including some species identified as endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – like the Puerto Rican broad-winged hawk (*Buteo platypterus brunnescens*) and the Puerto Rican boa (*Chilabothrus inornatus*).

The Conservation Trust is matching these generous grants with the purchase of an additional three parcels, meaning that a total of 769 acres will be conserved in perpetuity, which will help to reduce fragmented ecosystems and protect over 550 animal and plant species living in the targeted areas. Proof that good things do come in small packages.

Insects become friends at the Feria Para la Naturaleza

They help regenerate the forest, assist in producing medicines, and pollinate flowers. They provide us food and have a positive impact on the economy. Far from being a creepy nuisance, insects provide a whole host of benefits to our ecosystems, to our health, and to our society. So it was about time someone returned the favor by paying them some attention.

And it happened in June at the Feria Para la Naturaleza, the Trust's massive yearly event held in the heart of San Juan. Dedicated to the renowned tropical forest management expert Dr. Frank H. Wadsworth, the fair featured exhibitions of live insects in their habitats –butterflies, bees, beetles, dragonflies, cockroaches, scarabs, bedbugs– and modules highlighting their services and benefits. Over 2,400 people had the opportunity to take tours on urban biodiversity, insect identification, bird watching, learn about planting and compost, purchase fresh products at an agricultural market, and even learn techniques to illustrate insects, among a myriad of activities.

For kids it was an adventure, as they searched for insects inside a compost heap, experimented how insects see and communicate, explored their “superpowers” in relation to their bodies, and learned about insect anatomy by putting together their own unique insect versions.

The Feria Para la Naturaleza is Puerto Rico's largest conservation fair, and we love sharing the platform: 23 non-profit and community-based organizations participated with informational booths.

1,576

hours of work contributed by 220 volunteers during the event

3,740

trees given away at the fair

Supporting Organizations:

*Comité Pro Desarrollo de Maunabo
Sea Grant
Basura Cero
Capítulo Estudiantil Sociedad Ambiente Marino
Comité Yabucoños Pro-Calidad de Vida
San Juan Bay Estuary Program
Organización Madre Tierra Atabey
Proyecto de Atlantea Tulita
Mariposario Aula Verde
Puerto Rican Ornithological Society
Environmental Quality Board
Department of Natural and Environmental Resources
Grupos Ambientales Interdisciplinarios Aliados (GAIA)
International Institute of Tropical Forestry – U.S. Forest Service
Clínica de Diagnóstico de Enfermedades y Plagas en Plantas (University of Puerto Rico's Agricultural Extension)
Videoteca de la Fauna de Puerto Rico– Universidad del Turabo
San Juan ULTRA
Center for Applied Tropical Ecology and Conservation (University of Puerto Rico)
Solid Waste Authority
Scuba Dogs Society
Proyecto ENLACE del Caño Martín Peña
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
The Sierra Club*



Protecting darkness: An international award from MAPFRE and the Queen of Spain

Light pollution may not elicit the same urgency as water or air pollution, but it is detrimental in many aspects. The very light that we use to see and feel safe at night alters habitats and the biological cycles of the organisms living there. For the endangered Leatherback Sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), which nests along the coastline, it presents a life or death situation, as the light interferes with nesting and disorients both mother and hatchlings away from the sea. It takes its toll on humans too, posing health risks and depriving us of seeing and enjoying the bioluminescence and the night sky. It is, ironically, an invisible problem, difficult to see and to convey.

The east coast of Puerto Rico is unique in many respects. The bioluminescent lagoon at Cabezas de San Juan Nature Reserve is one of only a few bodies of water worldwide that experiences this spectacular nocturnal phenomenon year round. The natural area surrounding the lagoon provides an important habitat to many species, yet the area is also highly populated and is being impacted by excessive artificial light, a problem that is all too common.

In response, the Conservation Trust launched in 2006

the Puerto Rico Shines Naturally Program at Cabezas de San Juan Nature Reserve to design and implement a control strategy to reduce light pollution and its negative impact on natural habitats and on endangered species. An educational campaign produced a myriad of TV, radio and print ads, creating awareness of the problem and providing strategies for individuals, businesses and the government to use light more effectively and reduce its use when unnecessary. In just four years, the program successfully reduced by 50% the amount of inadequate or misdirected light in the Cabezas de San Juan area, an achievement that continues still.

Such success didn't go unnoticed. After a competitive process that evaluated nearly 300 international applications, Spanish-based MAPFRE Foundation awarded the Puerto Rico Shines Naturally Program with its 2012 Best Environmental Management Prize. The 30,000-euro award given by Queen Sofia in May recognizes projects or actions by institutions that have made a significant contribution to the preservation of the environment. The Trust and Para la Naturaleza are extremely honored by this international recognition.

A person is kneeling on a dark, wet surface, likely a riverbank, using a yellow measuring tape. The person is wearing khaki pants and green sneakers. In the background, other people's legs and feet are visible, suggesting a group activity. The overall scene is outdoors and appears to be a field research or conservation activity.

8%

current percentage of land conservation in Puerto Rico

44

volunteer leaders guided groups in conducting Map of Life protocols in 2013

512

number of volunteers who helped collect data using different protocols

111

amount of protocol activities conducted in 2013

Mapping Life: Citizens turned volunteer leaders with support from Pfizer

Sampling the river's water quality, measuring coastal erosion, recording bird and tree species... It's all part of a massive effort to upload critical data of our biodiversity richness, a Map of Life. And amazingly, this work is increasingly being carried out by volunteers who quickly become fascinated with the teachings of nature. By collecting this information we can draw a living map of a site that allows us to assess its ecological and natural assets and provide the groundwork of information needed to make responsible decisions on land use and ecosystem conservation in the area.

Now picture this in 39 hexagonal sites covering an area 24,000-acres wide. We've cast a wide net for our Map of Life project. From bird counts to coastal profiling, from measuring water quality to identifying trees, every scientific protocol completed sheds light on the conservation value of Puerto Rico's lands –plot by plot– and takes us ever closer to our guiding goal: conserving 33% of Puerto Rico's land by 2033. We're even sharing the information with the Puerto Rico Planning Board to help in the development of the island-wide Land Use Plan.

With the generous support of Pfizer Pharmaceuticals and AT&T Foundation, we've been able to recruit and train 44 volunteer leaders and significantly increase the amount of groups going out in the field to collect information. Pfizer's own employees are enthusiastic about the program: three have become group leaders at Hacienda La Esperanza, and an additional 40 employees are working in forest protocols at Hacienda Buena Vista in November.

The project is also having a transformative effect on participants, as this experience provides lasting impact that inspires further commitment and empowers them to take action for nature beyond our borders.

"Participating in Map of Life field activities has shown my wife and I how we can contribute to improving the environment in which we live. The things we have learned in the field and in the lab have helped us understand how to explain to others the importance of what we do and encourage them to join us in this great experience. Map of Life is more than volunteering; this is our weekend family event! We look forward to breaking from our daily routines by participating in field activities, seeing how young participants become enthralled by the world around them, and meeting other people like us, committed to contributing to a better Puerto Rico for our children and grandchildren. Thanks, Map of Life!"

Luis Vélez, Pfizer employee and Volunteer Leader



20,933.4

pounds of garbage and debris
collected in Puerto Rico during the
2013 International Beach and Coastal
Cleanup Day

Bengie joins in to rescue Río Piedras in river cleanup

When four-year-old Bengie went to the river that September morning –his first time ever– he expected to see lots of fish, because, naturally, that’s where the fish live. So he was understandably confused by the car tire and other debris occupying the space of the fish. A number of tires, along with other car parts and garbage had been thrown into the Río Piedras near San Juan’s historic waterworks. So Bengie worked assiduously in the shallow water, putting all his effort into loosening the heavy tire until, with help from other volunteers, they could free it from the mud.

Bengie, his mom and his dad were three of the 8,170 volunteers who joined the Trust and longtime partner Scuba Dogs Society for the International Beach and Coastal Cleanup Day. The Río Piedras was just one of 235 areas cleaned.

At the end of the day, the pile of garbage at the Río Piedras river site alone contained 7 tires, a scaffold, construction debris, PVC pipes, a fence, a mattress, clothing and shoes, garden hoses, glass bottles, soda cans, and all types of plastic. For Bengie it was an eye opener –there is something he can do to help the fish swim freely in the river!



Citizens become scientists with second NSF grant

It was 6:30 AM on a cool Sunday in September and, while most Puerto Ricans were still sleeping, David was already knee deep in the Río Encantado looking for shrimp. David Fontáñez Meléndez, a translator and proud Citizen Scientist, was monitoring the river's water quality as part of an ongoing research initiative that seeks a better understanding of life in the Río Grande de Manatí and the effects of urban growth in the municipalities of the river's watershed.

David is one of 430 volunteers working with six scientists and researchers on the Trust's second Citizen Science project, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF). The three-year initiative begun in 2013 seeks to broaden the impact of Puerto Rico's first large-scale Citizen Science project carried out between 2008 and 2011, also with NSF Funding.

After receiving feedback from members of the communities along the watershed, an innovative project was developed that addresses their interest in acquiring the knowledge they need to participate more actively in the area's land use decisions. Five different research studies are collecting and analyzing data on the watershed area. A sixth research will assess the informal science education process between scientists and volunteers to create a template for citizen science projects in Hispanic communities.

Promoting long-term commitment from volunteers is a cornerstone of the project, as it encourages participants to actively collaborate with scientists in performing preliminary analysis and providing training to other volunteers. As they become more knowledgeable, participants will even be able to co-create their own research projects.

In the end, the project seeks to have more people from rural and underrepresented areas become citizen scientists like David.

"I'm a proud friend of Para la Naturaleza and a proud Citizen Scientist. This educational initiative gives us regular folk the opportunity to work directly with scientists and know more about our biodiversity. Last September I had the incredible chance to participate in the river monitoring and shrimp capture workshop at Río Encantado in Frontón, Ciales. It was a fascinating experience, intense in both learning and fun. Looking forward to more activities like these!"

David Fontáñez Meléndez



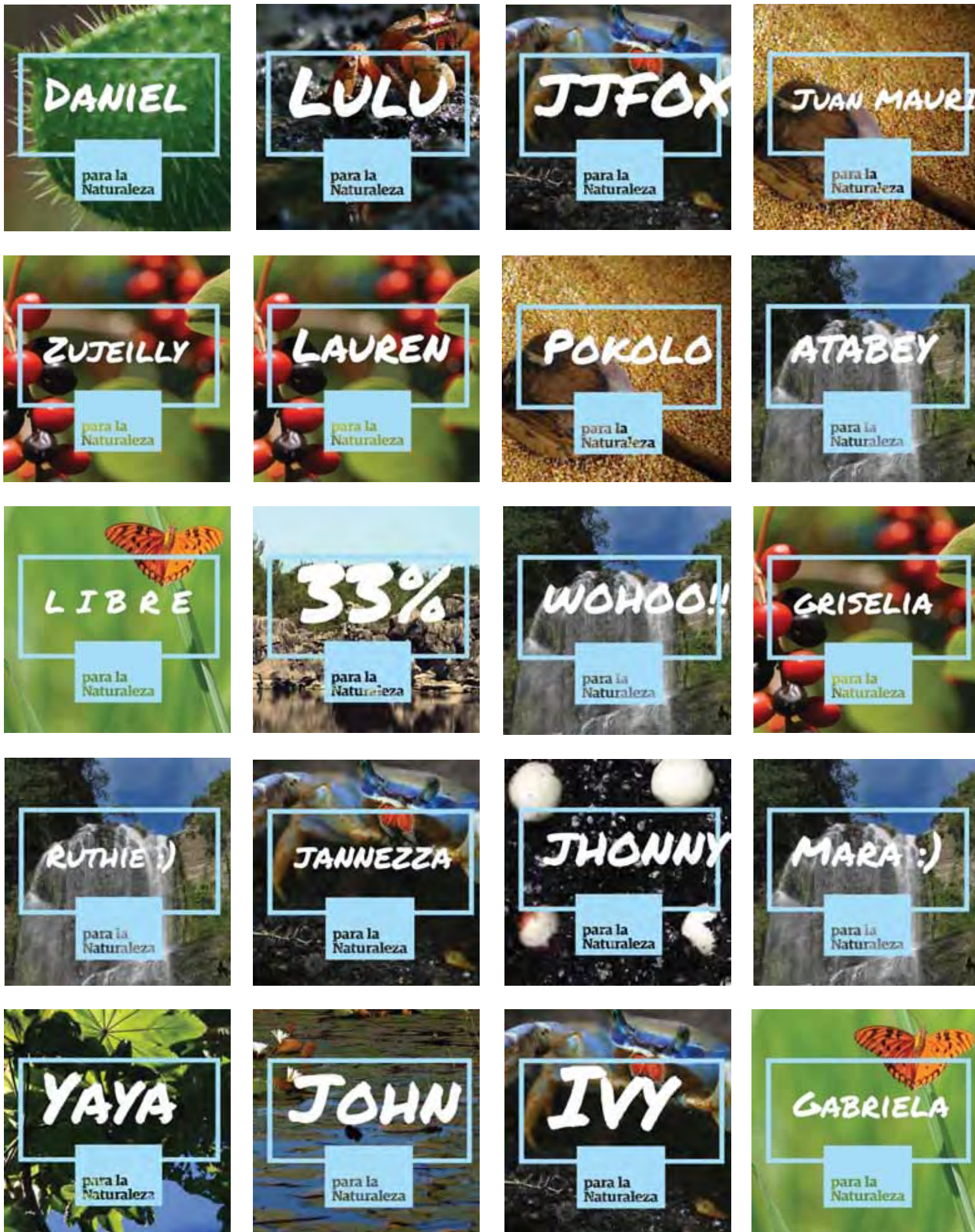
Communities taking the lead: Yabucoeños support Nature Reserve in Punta Yeguas

Punta Yeguas, in the eastern town of Yabucoa, is one of those places you never forget. Its 281 acres sit on one of Puerto Rico's most beautiful landscapes, providing amazing views of the Atlantic Ocean as it meets the Caribbean Sea. Years ago the area was saved from development by the establishment of the Doña Inés María Mendoza Nature Reserve at Punta Yeguas, one of the Trust's first. As the outlying impoverished community sought to improve their circumstances, their leaders have become stewards of this nature reserve.

It all started with Lydia Díaz's simple request a few years ago; searching for activities that Yabucoa's high school students could perform to complete their 40-hour volunteer requirement. We welcomed them at the Doña Inés María Mendoza Nature Reserve where they have been providing maintenance to the reserve's forest of endangered endemic Ortegon trees (*Coccoloba rugosa* Desf.) So when Lydia and the Comité Yabucoeños Pro Calidad de Vida approached the Trust with another educational project, we were enthusiastic.

The idea was threefold: allow local residents to enjoy the unparalleled views at the reserve, raise awareness of the importance of conserving their local treasure, and provide training on nature interpretation to a member of the community to continue offering tours. In April, Trust interpreters began giving monthly, two-hour long free tours for residents in order to develop an interpretive blueprint for the area. Residents provided valuable feedback that the Trust used to train a local resident. The project had additional benefits: as residents learned more about their land, they've taken a role in helping out at the reserve repairing fences, providing maintenance, cleaning up the beach and even participating in bird counts.

As we continue working together and welcoming participation from local residents, we can further a sense of belonging and integrate social, economic and quality of life goals in harmony with the conservation of our shared ecosystems.



A call to action

In its 43-year history the Conservation Trust has protected 26,000 acres, over 1% of Puerto Rico's territory, and has engaged over 60,000 visitors a year at its five visitor centers. Yet, in spite of the Trust's considerable successes in land conservation and environmental education, it became evident that we needed to do more and that we must engage everybody if we are to increase the rate of conserved lands and ensure a sustainable future for the islands of Puerto Rico.

But how could we refocus the work of the foremost private conservation organization on the island?

Such a big challenge required out-of-the box thinking and strategies. It made us rethink our goals, our programs and our operational platform to establish a bold new strategy. Paramount to our new vision is setting a goal that can take us in a sustainable path, that is: increasing the percentage of conserved lands to 33% by 2033 from the current and unacceptable 8%. Another component is to engage thousands of citizens in hands-on participatory experiences, because it is people and not a specific organization that can change our conservation destiny. Finally, we want to build a new way for people to engage, a place where people become the leading force for conservation. Thus a new unit, Para la Naturaleza, was designed and created. The name itself is a descriptive call to work for nature, it is a powerful platform for people to join and take action.

The results have been outstanding: in only 80 days, nearly 1,120,000 people were reached. Encouraged to take conservation into their own hands, people began sharing on social media their nature experiences, posting their photos and taking pride in putting their own name next to "Para la Naturaleza" – committing to working for nature. Still, the impact of this new path is yet to come.

We are putting forth a mission for all Puerto Ricans. And we believe they will respond!

11,900

Facebook likes of the Conservation Trust's page before June 2013

29,602

Facebook likes on the Para la Naturaleza page between June and December 2013

627

Twitter followers of Para la Naturaleza in 2013

695

Instagram followers of Para la Naturaleza in 2013

12,842

views on YouTube in 2013

Financial Information

(\$ in thousands)
For the year ended December 31, 2013,
with comparative totals for 2012

Revenue Sources



Income from Notes and Preferred Securities			Income from Portfolio*			Grants and other Income			Total		
2012	2013	⬇	2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆
4,179	3,808	-9%	18,726	18,884	1%	4,149	8,681	109%	27,054	31,372	16%

*including realized and unrealized gains

Operating Expenses



Finance & Development			Land Acquisition			Management and Support			Education, Science & Public Policy		
2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆
1,142	1,334	17%	372	462	24%	2,844	3,421	20%	512	590	15%
Outreach & Communications			Natural Protected Areas			Total					
2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆			
1,139	2,012	77%	8,151	9,010	11%	14,160	16,828	19%			

Capital Expenditures



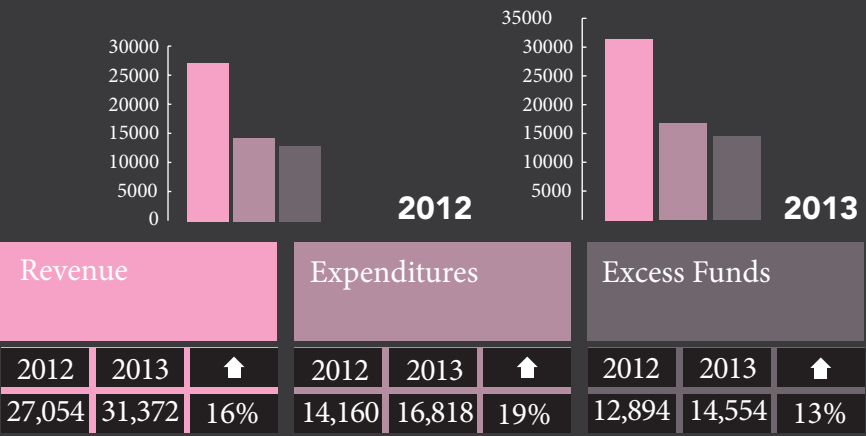
Land Acquisition			Furniture & Equipment			Site Development & Improvements			Total		
2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆
1,867	2,069	11%	609	666	9%	1,369	2,585	89%	3,846	5,320	38%

Total expenses



Operating Expenses			Capital Expenditures			Total		
2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆	2012	2013	⬆
14,160	16,818	19%	3,846	5,320	38%	18,006	22,138	23%

Allocation of Revenue Sources



Thank you!

We are grateful to the following individuals and organizations for their commitment and support during 2013, through their cash & in-kind donations.

\$1,000-\$4,999

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BDO Puerto Rico, P.S.C.
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Nydia Velázquez
Popular Auto
Pro-Pave
The Merck Company Foundation
UBS Financial Services
Universal Insurance Company
V. Suárez & Company, Inc.

\$5,000-\$9,999

Axiomática, Inc.
Ford Motor Company
Industrial Fittings & Valves
Joaquín B. Viso
Millercoors, LLC
Model Offset Printing
Plaza Provision Co.

\$10,000-\$24,999

Fundación Banco Popular
Iván Alonso, Esq.
SC Johnson de Puerto Rico, Inc.
Sears Roebuck de Puerto Rico, Inc.

\$25,000-\$49,999

El Nuevo Día
Fundación MAPFRE
Fundación Plaza Del Caribe
Oficina de Asuntos de la Juventud

\$50,000-\$99,000

Fundación Angel Ramos
Google
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

\$100,000 and over

Brenda Ledesma & Ralph Ledesma
FJR Properties, Inc.
Humberto Escabí Trabal & Irma Pagán Beauchamp
Iván Garriga & Sandra Mejía
Las Villas Real Estate Development Corp.
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
National Science Foundation
Pfizer Pharmaceuticals
Rafael Benítez
Salesforce Foundation

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