

Final Project Evaluation Report

We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to gauge the success of your project. This must be sent in **MS Word and not PDF format**. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Complete the form in English and be as concise as you can. Note that the information may be edited before posting on our website.

Please email this report to jane@rufford.org.

Your Details	
Full Name	Marc W. Ward
Project Title	Punta Pargos Marine Turtle Conservation Project 2016-17
Application ID	21119-B
Grant Amount	£9,997
Email Address	staff@seaturtlesforever.org or akwildguide@yahoo.com
Date of this Report	3 February 2018

1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Continue project fundraising, staff recruitment and training, volunteer recruitment, website and media updates, field purchases, and project planning and management.				All facets were achieved, including raising sufficient additional funds to continue anti- poaching patrols with adequate supplies for the entire main nesting/hatching season from late October 2016 to mid-May 2017. One new patroller was trained, a volunteer biologist recruited, outreach updates completed, and related planning and management done.
Provide four education programs at local elementary schools prior to Summer vacation.				Because grant funds were not received until December 2016 (during school vacation), and all grant funds were used to support patrols December-May, there was no funding left for this activity in the fall of 2017. This activity has been rescheduled for October 2018. Three local students were invited to accompany our patrollers one night to learn about sea turtle conservation (see photo).
Contract local residents (including former poachers) for night-time beach patrols.				Four patrollers were re-hired and one new patroller hired. The son of a patroller (a former poacher) was hired as our field data entry manager (see photo).
Conduct training, and pair experienced patrollers with new recruits and volunteers.				Completed. See photo.
Conduct nightly patrols on 10 km of beaches.				Nightly patrols were completed from October 29, 2016 through May 14, 2017 (except for a few nights when weather, full moon, tide cycle, or lack of personnel prevented them). A total of 5,191 eggs were saved

				during the entire season, with an estimated hatch rate of 89% (based on a 25% sampling). GPS locations were recorded for 65 original and moved (hidden) nests. Fifteen nesting females were tagged with unique letter/number flipper tags. Two previously-tagged turtles returned for their third nesting season (tagged since 2009 and 2010). Nesting activity was low throughout the region, attributed to warm ocean temperatures (El Nino) possibly interfering with female nutrition (publication in prep.).
Community beach clean-ups will be advertised and coordinated during the nesting season.				A beach clean-up was conducted with nine community volunteers. An estimated 600 pounds of trash was removed from nesting beaches, including remnants from the heavy rain deposits prior to the grant period (see below 2a).

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

- a) Heavy rainfall in October and November 2016 led to huge deposits of trash and woody debris on the nesting beaches. This required paying staff and others for major clean-ups in November 2016 at additional expense to allow turtles to nest.
- b) Keeping field equipment clean and in good working order is always a challenge, impacting our ability to collect field data at times.
- c) There was increased poaching pressure on some beaches, due to influx of squatters on unoccupied adjacent land, with lack of law enforcement. Patrollers had to be extra vigilant, and be willing to confront them.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

- a) Saving 5,191 endangered sea turtle eggs from being stolen by poachers and sold illegally as "aphrodisiacs."
- b) Raising community awareness of the presence and importance of sea turtles to local fishing and the tourism economy.
- c) Documentation of the deleterious effects of El Nino (ocean warming) on nesting sea turtles. Our data will be included in a scientific paper being prepared by Dr. Pilar Santidrian Tomillo (The Leatherback Trust).

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.

Local tourism companies organise tours with our patrollers. This benefits them economically, and raises awareness that a healthy sea turtle population is valuable.

Some community residents have participated in and many more benefitted from our beach clean-ups.

More than 20 local businesses and community leaders signed a petition to support renewal of our federal permit. One tourism business owner accompanied us to a meeting with the federal regulatory agency to voice support for our project (which was approved). Many local leaders recognize the environmental and economic benefits of our project.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, we are actively patrolling for the 2017-18 nesting season through April 2018 (if funds permit).

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

We share results with the public via our Facebook and web pages. We attended the International Sea Turtle Symposium and shared data with participants. We submitted a report to the Costa Rican federal permit agency in September 2017, and informally share results and data with others that observe our tagged turtles (and vice versa) along the Pacific coast (e.g., CREMA, The Leatherback Trust, and Parque Nacional Marina de las Baulas).

7. Timescale: Over what period was the grant used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

From December 22, 2016 to August 2, 2017.

Most of the funds were used during the grant period primarily to help fund the peak field season (December through May), some personnel payments were made following the field season (August 2017).

8. Budget: Provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Program Director	£0	£0	£0	Volunteer time only
Field Operations Directors	£1,930	£816	-£1,114	Remaining funds used for data managers and patrollers
Field Op. Dir. Payroll fringes	£0	£31	£31	
Data Managers	£0	£1,057	£1,057	
Patrol Leader	£1,929	£2,052	£123	
Patrol Assistant #1	£1,415	£1,379	-£36	
Patrol Assistant #2	£965	£1,150	£185	
Patrol Assistant #3	£965	£955	-£10	
Patrol Assistant #4	£771	£849	£78	
Airfare (OR-CR for prog dir)	£0	£0	£0	Other funds used
Housing rental	£0	£0	£0	Other funds used
Patrol vehicle rent	£1,688	£1,372	-£316	Excess used for patrollers
Gasoline	£ 161	£103	-£58	
Field equipment/supplies	£ 137	£197	£60	
Staff patrol shirts	£0	£0	£0	Other funds used
Educational coloring books	£0	£0	£0	Not funded
Field Office supplies	£24	£23	-£1	
Website fees	£0	£0	£0	Other funds used
Bank wire transfer	£12	£13	£1	Foreign exchange rate
Field permit fee	£0	£0	£0	Other funds used
TOTALS	£9,997	£9,998	£1	Rounding difference

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

Obtaining adequate funding to continue patrols, and finding some sustainable sources.

Obtaining funding to reprint and produce new educational materials for local classroom and community use.

Continue important connections to scientists at Parque Nacional Marino de las Baulas for publication of our data.

Working with local and national government for habitat protection of and law enforcement in this important but unprotected endangered sea turtle nesting area.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes, the Rufford logo was used prominently on our Facebook and web posts. We did not produce any outreach materials during the grant period.

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

Name	Position	Description
Marc Ward	Field Operations Manager, 2016, STF Founder, President, and Program Director	Oversees all aspects of the project, including planning, fundraising, field management, and data and report oversight
Nancy Tankersley	Field Operations Manager, Jan-Feb, 2017, Biologist, Permit Coordinator, and Outreach/Grant Coordinator	
Chris Elkins	Database Manager and Treasurer	
Alex Gómez	Field Data Entry Manager	
Yerson Zúñiga Angulo	Patrol Assistant	
Felix Martin Gómez Compos	Patrol Assistant	
Wilver Ordóñez Jaen	Patrol Assistant	
Carlos Arroyo Maynor	Patrol Assistant	
William Zúñiga Aguilar	Patrol Assistant	
Vanessa Bauman	Webmaster	
Eddie N. Bennett	Field biologist	
Todd Lippold	Board of Directors, Technical Director, Field Patrol Assistant	
Wallace J Nichols	Marine Turtle Expert on STF Board of Directors	Provided scientific oversight

12. Any other comments?

We greatly appreciate the Rufford Foundation funds that provided major support for continuing this small but important sea turtle conservation project. You have made a critical difference in the survival of this sub-population of the endangered eastern Pacific green sea turtle.

