

**“BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN THE
BIOSPHERE OF THE SIERRA GORDA
RESERVE” QUARTERLY BULLETIN**

Fourth trimester 2004



- In order to follow-up the working relationship with the Pacific Northwest Region of the United States Forest Service and Wolfree Inc., which was established in 2001, an interdisciplinary group of scientists visited the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve from the 6th to the 14th of November. This had the purpose to verify and finish the on-site visits for watershed analysis (vegetation cover, soils, erosion critical areas, and vegetation fragmentation) in company of our staff carried out along the Chuveje and Escanela rivers. The intense work in the field and in the office produced a document that will become an invaluable tool. Furthermore, the areas detected for restoration works by this study coincide with our current working objectives with the Fundacion Gonzalo Rio Arronte. As a result of this visit, there exists a preliminary characterization of the most important watersheds and currents within the Reserve. The Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda would like to thank these organizations for their cooperation.
- With the invitation and support of Wolfree Inc. and the USDA Forest Service of the United States, two promoters of our Environmental Education Program participated in an exchange and training program in Oregon and Washington, U.S.A., from the 9th to the 18th of October. Marina Rendon y Leni Sanchez visited a variety of projects and education and restoration experiences, thus learning new educational techniques and training tools that will be applied for the development of our activities. Techniques in water quality monitoring and biological diversity of pluvial currents interest us to be carried out with the students in Sierra Gorda.
- From the kiosk in the central plaza of Jalpan de Serra, the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve transmitted the first Radio Marathon on October 3rd with the support of *Radio Felicidad*, the regional radio station that reaches out to the five counties of the Reserve and those in the buffer zones in San Luis Potosi State. Transmission lasted for five continuous hours, during which members of the public and several community citizens that have collaborated for several years with the Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda and the Directorate of the Reserve participated. Homemakers, producers, reforesters, teachers and local authorities talked about their experiences in restoration, training, protection and recycling activities. Municipal presidents and local deputies also gave their opinion and cooperation during this event. The Grupo Ecológico thanks all those who have supported them all along, and commit to keep working in favour of the Earth.
- We were pleased to receive a group of donors from Mexico City who generously participated during the event *Tierras para la Conservación* (Lands for Conservation), carried out last year in the Casa Lamm Cultural Center, Mexico City. This event was organized by Grupo BIMBO through their NGO, *Reforestamos México A.C.*, and the Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda I.A.P. The visit included one of the properties purchased for perpetual conservation within the Joya del Hielo core protected area. Afterwards, they visited the ecotourism project at San Juan de los Durán, where the commemorative plaque at the site was unveiled. The Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda gives their recognition to the donors and Grupo BIMBO, for their altruism and philanthropy which make the protection of 470 hectares of cloud forests and diverse flora and fauna species possible.

- From the 17th to the 25th of November, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) celebrated in Bangkok, Thailand, the 3rd World Nature Congress. This event gathered almost 5000 movers and shakers in themes related to nature conservation from around the world. Themes included ecosystem management, environmental services, health, poverty, biodiversity conservation, and extinction of species, markets, businesses and the environment. Grupo Ecologico Sierra Gorda received special attention as the 1000th member of the IUCN. Martha Isabel Ruiz Corzo, co-founder of GESG and currently the Director of the Reserve, participated on stage during the plenary inauguration panel, along with personalities such as Bjorn Stigson the director of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, as well as the general director of the Swiss Office of World Wildlife Fund, Dr. Claude Martin. She sang "We belong to the Earth" by Magpie, acapella to the delight of 4500 IUCN delegates. Likewise, Laura Perez Arce carried out two Knowledge Marketplace sessions to present and discuss the Sierra Gorda project experience, establishing valuable contacts and learning from other experiences. And finally, the project "Biodiversity Conservation of the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve" is included in the recent publication by the Education and Communication Commission of the IUCN, "Communicating Protected Areas".
- From the neighbour state of Guanajuato, eight Municipal Presidents and their cabinets visited on the 10th of November and the 3rd of December. There has been wide interest from their part to know and replicate the conservation, recycling, training and sustainable development activities that are being developed in Sierra Gorda. They also expressed their interest to obtain a federal natural protected area decree for their municipalities. Without a doubt, this kind of initiative constitutes an important incentive for us, demonstrating the interest has awakened within society to rescue and protect their natural heritage.
- During this trimester a young Brazilian graduate from EARTH University (School of Agriculture for Humid Tropical Regions), came as a volunteer to collaborate in the elaboration of Forest Management Programs with Bosque Sustentable A.C. This was the first exchange of its kind, as we hope that in a near future other students and graduates from the same University can attend the Sustainability Training Centre "Roberto Ruiz Obregón", which will represent an enriching experience for both parties.
- New video! A new 10 minute video in Spanish with English subtitles on the project "Biodiversity Conservation in the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve" was produced by FHP Producciones. Please contact the office if you would like a copy.
- Several events in Queretaro City provided stands for the Sierra Gorda project to raise awareness and interest among the general public in the state capitol. The rural products offered by cooperatives and communities and the Sierra Gorda were on display and for sale under the registered trademark Sierra Gorda Products. Three weeks in the International Fair in Santiago de Querétaro, provided the greatest outreach, thanks to the kind generosity of Mrs. Marcela Torre de Garrido, the State Governor's wife. The Grupo Ecológico publicly recognizes her valuable support.
