

# *Sarapiquí Conservation Learning Center (SCLC)*

Centro de Aprendizaje para la Conservación de  
Sarapiquí (CECOS)

“Linking Community-based Tourism Services  
to Travelers’ Philanthropy”



# *The Mission of CECOS*

“Linking communities and conservation through education and tourism”



# *The Center's Story*

- **Opened in 1993**
- **It started as a library**
- **Providing opportunities and courses for the local community**
- **San Juan-La Selva Biological Corridor's local office**



# The relationship between Operators, Selva Verde and CECOS

Holbrook



**CECOS**

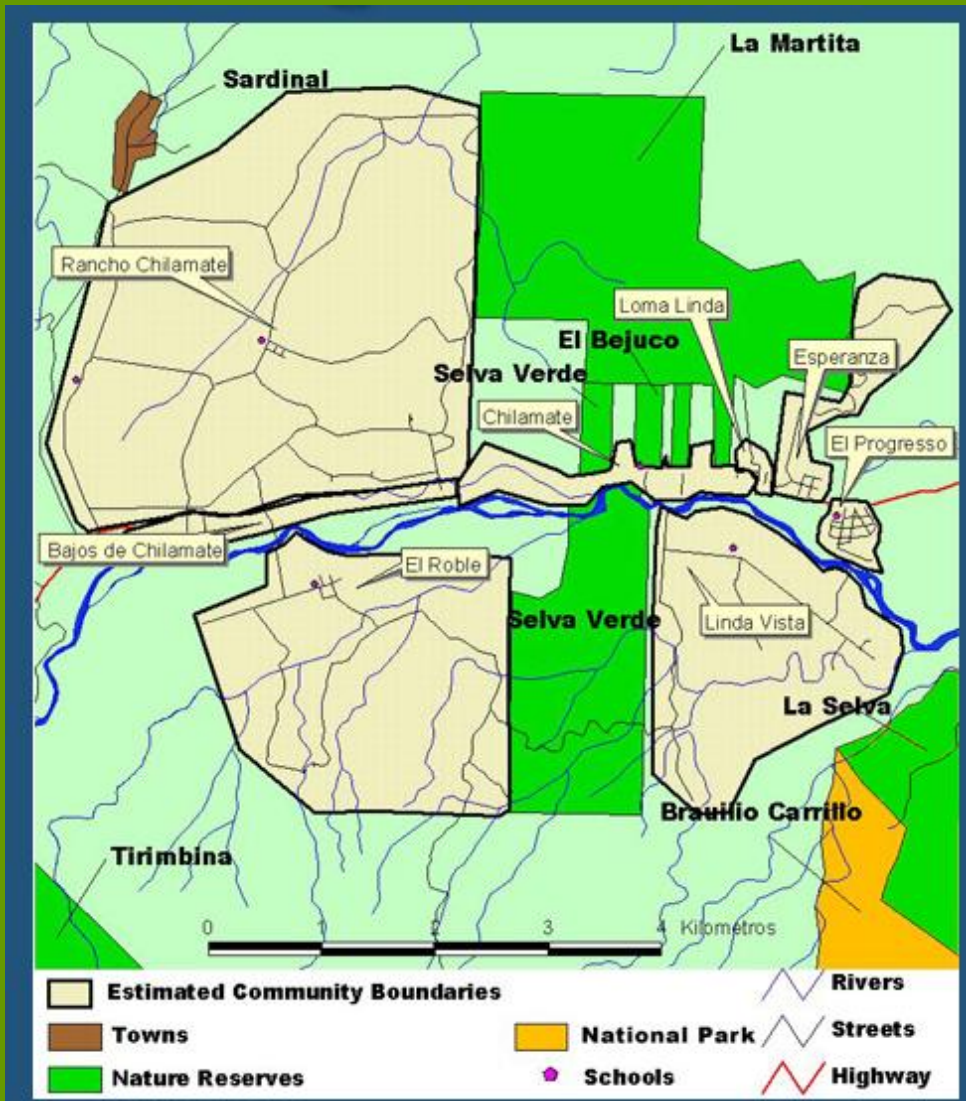
**Selva Verde**



# Sarapiquí / Tapon Chilamate



# SCLC Community Focus



- Chilamate
- El Roble
- Linda Vista
- Rancho Chilamate
- Bajos de Chilamate
- Esperanza
- Loma Linda
- El Progreso
- Calle La Lucha

# *Our programs*

## Education:

- Environmental Education
- Bird Club
- English Classes
- After School Program
- Scholarship Program



## Community Development

- Rural Community  
Tourism



# *Education*



1. Environmental Education:
  - \* 5 elementary schools
  - \* 250 + students
  - \* Biodiversity, contamination, use of unwanted material

2. English classes:
  - \* nearly 120 students/year
  - \* 5 levels
  - \* classes at night

3. Bird Club:
  - \* training future guides

4. After-school programme
  - extra studies



# Scholarship Program



• 28 students

• \$350 / yr

• 5 or 6 years

• Monthly meetings

# Community Development

## Rural Community Tourism

- Dance classes
- Cooking classes
- Talks by local people
- Art classes
- School visits
- Farm visits
- Homestays



### Annual Numbers:

- 200 cultural activities
- More than \$30,000 returned to people in the communities
- 20+ families involved in tourism

# Community Development

- **Service projects:**
  - **Local schools**
  - **Community projects**

**Ex:**

**Side walk**

**Signage**

**Painting**

**Community Centers**

**Bus stops**

**Classroom  
improvements**

## Annual Numbers:

- 60 – 70 projects / year
  - 7 communities
  - Nearly 1000 people involved



# Community Development



- Reforestation
- Private Properties
- Native trees species
- In to the CBSS

- Annual Numbers:
- 3500 + trees planted
  - 14 properties

# Community Development

- *Art Gallery*
- ❖ *More than 20 local artisans*
- ❖ *The Center offers workshops and trainings*
- ❖ *The Center provide space to exhibit and sell products*



# *CECOS Tourism Revenue*

	2009	2010
Gross Revenue	\$ 83,665.00	\$ 109,171.00
Tourism Revenue	\$ 45,245.00	\$ 56,448.00
Tourism as a % of the Total	54.08%	51.71%

# *Impacts of Rural Community Tourism*

- Benefits to the local community
- Enhanced experience and learning for the traveler
- Support for the Center's mission and funding

# *Concern with Rural Community Tourism*

- Volatility
- Alignment to Mission
  - Why are we engaged in this tourism?
  - Authenticity at risk?
  - How to ensure relevance & continuity?
- Community Participation
  - Collective versus individual benefit
  - How to ensure equal opportunity?
- Competition
  - low barriers to entry

# *Be part of the change?*

- **Become a Member:**
  1. **Be a Scholarship donor**  
(Be part of the difference in our community)
  2. **Material Donations**  
(to be used in the schools That we work with)
- **Visit the Center:**
  1. **Get to know it**
  2. **Leave your contact information**
  3. **Become a local member**

