

Selections from
“Interpreting for Conservation:
a Manual for Training Local Nature Guides”



In 1994, RARE developed the Nature Guide Training Program (NGTP) in collaboration with Latin American protected area managers, tour operators, and WorldTeach volunteers. Together, they launched the first course that year in Costa Rica, as a means through which men and women could enter careers in sustainable tourism. The course includes three rigorous months of training, which covers conversational English, natural history, and interpretation—skills that are necessary for careers as nature guides.

To date, RARE has implemented a total of 16 courses, training nearly 270 guides, in Costa Rica, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and South Africa. Future courses are being planned for Indonesia and Central America. RARE has collaborated with The Nature Conservancy partners on several of these courses, including those in Parks in Peril sites.

Results of the Course

NGTP offers men and women in threatened regions a career alternative that is both sustainable and profitable. Graduates leave with a heightened awareness of the value of conservation, as well as the opportunity to increase their income. On average, they earn 92% more in their monthly salaries than they had before the course. But not only the graduates of the course benefit: the new nature guides spread their knowledge of conservation both within their communities and through the tourists they reach.

Materials provided on this CD

The materials on this CD was collected from “Interpreting For Conservation: A Manual For Training Local Nature Guides.” This is a comprehensive handbook for designing and running a Nature Guide Training course developed by RARE with the support of The Nature Conservancy, The David K Hardin Generativity Trust, and The Compton Foundation, Inc.

In this CD, you’ll find documents that are intended to introduce you to both the spirit and the format of the Nature Guide Training course. There are sample curriculums, lesson plans, and schedules, and a detailed description of the history and results of the course thus far. There is also a photo gallery containing pictures of course participants and graduates.

Though it is not the full Nature Guide Training manual, this CD should give you enough information to familiarize yourself with the program and the type of training necessary to prepare individuals to earn their livelihoods through nature guiding.

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