



AMAZON CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL REPORT 2013



FROM THE ANDES TO THE AMAZON: CONSERVING THE HEADWATERS OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST WATERSHED



Dear Friend of Amazon Conservation,

When we think of the Amazon, we envision a vast verdant region teeming with wildlife, an area so important that it influences global climate patterns. Yet when we think of preserving the Amazon, the task may seem daunting. But there are solutions, and we are finding them.

The Amazon Conservation Association works with partners in southern Peru and northern Bolivia where the Andes meet the Amazon—the most biodiverse region on the planet. We employ four major strategies to conserve the astonishing variety of life found there:

- First, we establish protected areas. The more habitat we can protect, the more we can preserve for future generations. In 2013, we supported the first dedicated staff position to develop a master plan for Choquequirao, Cusco's first regional protected area (the Peruvian equivalent of a state park). Just 30 miles from Machu Picchu, Choquequirao spans more than 250,000 acres—precious space for threatened species like the spectacled bear. And we're working to establish many more new protected areas throughout the region.
- Second, we analyze threats to the Amazon in order to better understand them and develop appropriate policy solutions. In 2013, monitoring key threats—mining, logging, palm oil plantations, dams, roads, and oil and gas extraction—became a significant organizational focus. Such monitoring lays the groundwork for finding effective solutions.
- Third, we assist communities in achieving economic self-sufficiency while keeping forests intact. As one example, we helped the Queros Wachiperi community build an eco-lodge in 2013, income that supports the world's first indigenous ecological reserve. Another example is our ongoing commitment to indigenous Brazil nut harvesters in Peru and Bolivia.
- Finally, we rely on science to inform our work and train the next generation of conservationists. 2013 saw over 660 students experience the Peruvian Amazon at our three biological stations. We are expanding our capacity to lodge more—we began building a new 32-student dorm at our cloud forest research station, Wayqecha.

Join us to preserve biodiversity and keep the Amazon's forests standing. Together, we are the solution for conserving the Amazon and those who call it home.

Sincerely,

Jeff Woodman

CONTENTS



| | |
|--|----|
| What We Do | 2 |
| Where We Work | 3 |
| Protecting Habitat | 4 |
| Identifying Threats and Proposing Solutions..... | 8 |
| Sustainable Livelihoods | 11 |
| Science and Education | 16 |
| Financials | 23 |
| Who We Are | 24 |

The amethyst-throated sunangel, Heliangelus amethysticollis



WHAT WE DO

The Amazon Conservation Association (ACA) works to conserve the biological diversity of the Amazon basin. Since 1999, we have directed our efforts where the rainforest meets the Andes in southeastern Peru and northern Bolivia. This area has long been recognized as one of the most biologically rich regions on Earth.

We currently work with more than 60 communities in the Andes-Amazon; we protect more than 2.2 million acres of Amazonian rainforest through conservation concessions (learn more on page 7), biological research stations, and sustainable livelihood and reforestation projects.

Using cutting-edge science and innovative conservation tools, ACA is creating models for others to follow. We are committed to protecting habitat; we established the world's first conservation concession and assisted in forming the world's first indigenous conservation concession. We form personal relationships in local communities, working together to help them earn forest-friendly incomes. We manage some of the best research stations in the tropics. We monitor diverse threats to the Andes-Amazon in real time and are able to directly address deforestation. We consider all stewards of this region's forests important partners in our work.

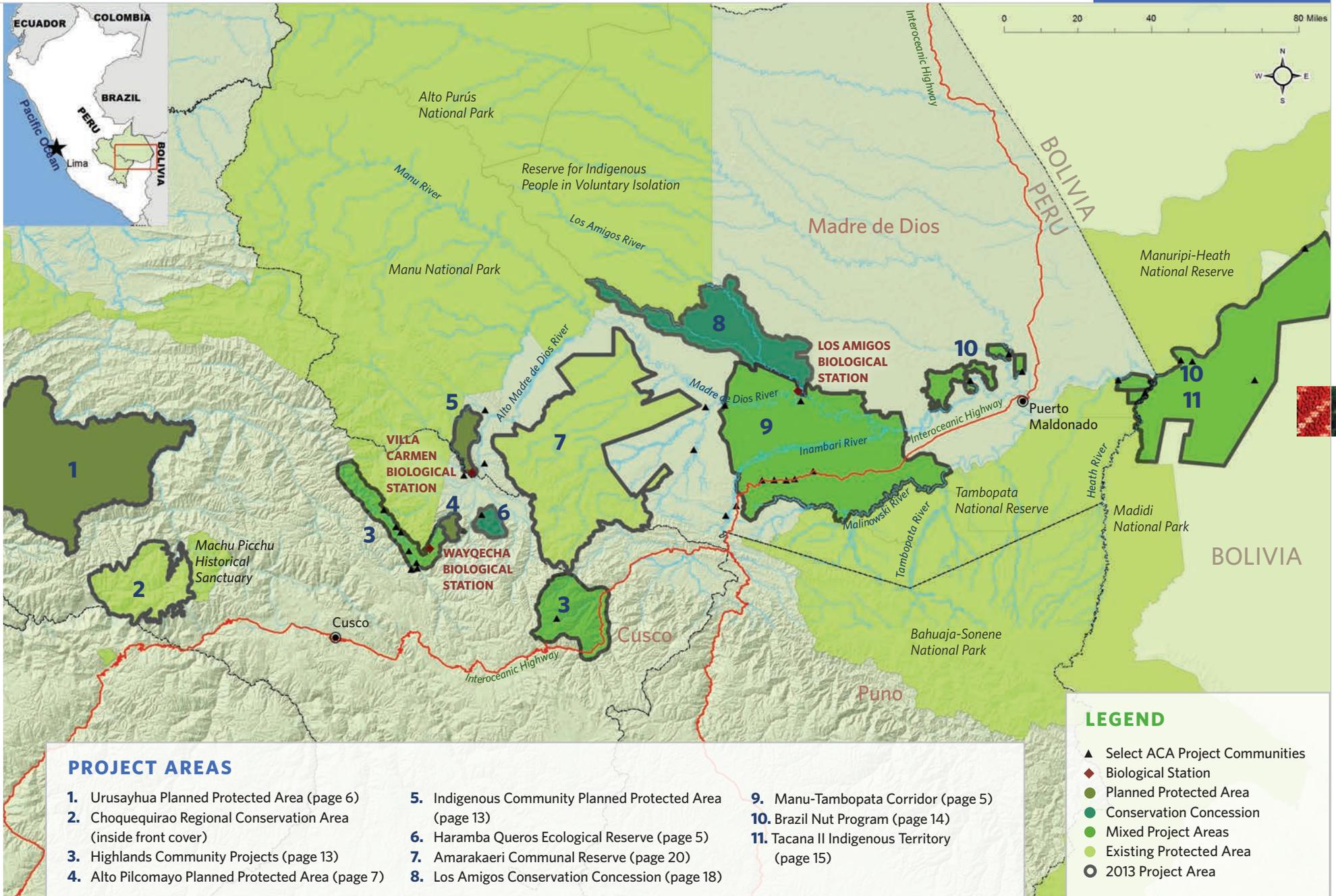
Closely allied with two main partner organizations, *Conservación Amazónica-Asociación para la Conservación de la Cuenca Amazónica* (ACCA) in Peru and the *Asociación para la Investigación y Conservación de Ecosistemas Andino-Amazónicos* (ACEAA) in Bolivia, we concentrate our resources where they have the most profound impact: on the ground.

Birdwatchers observe a fruiteater from a trail at Wayqecha Cloud Forest Biological Station.

ACA'S STRATEGIC AREAS

- Protecting Habitat
- Identifying Threats and Proposing Solutions
- Sustainable Livelihoods
- Science and Education





PROJECT AREAS

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>1. Urusayhua Planned Protected Area (page 6)</p> <p>2. Choquequirao Regional Conservation Area (inside front cover)</p> <p>3. Highlands Community Projects (page 13)</p> <p>4. Alto Pilcomayo Planned Protected Area (page 7)</p> | <p>5. Indigenous Community Planned Protected Area (page 13)</p> <p>6. Haramba Queros Ecological Reserve (page 5)</p> <p>7. Amara kaeri Communal Reserve (page 20)</p> <p>8. Los Amigos Conservation Concession (page 18)</p> | <p>9. Manu-Tambopata Corridor (page 5)</p> <p>10. Brazil Nut Program (page 14)</p> <p>11. Tacana II Indigenous Territory (page 15)</p> |
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LEGEND

- ▲ Select ACA Project Communities
- ◆ Biological Station
- Planned Protected Area
- Conservation Concession
- Mixed Project Areas
- Existing Protected Area
- 2013 Project Area



"No other organization is as committed to the conservation of this critical geography, its people, and its ecosystems...in fact, I'd say ACA is the best organization that I have worked with in my 40 years in conservation, including my time as Secretary of the Interior."

BRUCE BABBITT

This stream, and other crucial waterways, are preserved through the Haramba Queros Ecological Reserve, which ACA helped establish in 2008.

World-record biodiversity doesn't stop at the borders of Peru's Manu National Park, so land conservation around Manu is central to what we do. In 2001, we helped Conservación Amazónica-ACCA establish the world's first private conservation concession at Los Amigos, a concept that extends forest protection to more than 360,000 acres adjacent to Manu National Park. Since then, we have continued expanding the network of protected lands in southeastern Peru. We helped establish the 17,238-acre Haramba Queros Ecological Reserve (the world's first conservation concession managed by an indigenous group), plus four private conservation areas totaling nearly 47,000 acres.

Conserving land around and between protected areas effectively extends their protective benefits; it provides additional defense against encroaching threats, safeguards critical waterways and watersheds, and expands the habitat available to roaming wildlife. We protect landscapes with an eye toward the big picture of linking protected areas over time, magnifying our impact for biodiversity conservation.

HOW DO CONSERVATION CORRIDORS PROTECT BIODIVERSITY?

Preserving continuous stretches of southwestern Amazonian forest is essential for the long-term survival of species that need large territories, such as jaguars, macaws, and white-lipped peccaries. In 2009, ACA developed the Manu-Tambopata (MAT) Corridor to maintain forest cover over a large expanse threatened by the paving of the Interoceanic Highway—destructive activities including illegal logging, gold mining, and forest clearing for agriculture typically follow new road development. This initiative connects Manu National Park with Tambopata National Reserve via a network of protected areas, indigenous territories, and the Los Amigos Conservation Concession. The corridor includes a mosaic of land uses, including protected areas and areas zoned for economic activity. Covering 519,000 acres, the MAT Corridor remains the Amazon's most ambitious biological corridor initiative to date.

“By conserving the Pumataki Forest we can leave a legacy to our children and whoever comes later...we are conserving an entire forest so that no one can come in and grow crops in it or cut down trees.”

JOSE LUIS PEÑA, PRESIDENT OF PILLCO GRANDE COMMUNITY

Cloud forest in an ACA project area, home to lush habitats and rich biodiversity

PROTECTING HABITAT

Creating protected areas is a multi-step, multi-year process involving partnerships between ACA, regional governments, and local communities. First, we conduct baseline technical, biological, and social surveys, which are used in the official application for consideration of protected areas. With our partners, once a protected area is declared, we develop effective management plans, provide training, and offer ongoing technical support.

In 2013, we furthered the process of creating:

- two new expanded indigenous territories adjacent to Manu, totaling more than 45,000 acres
- a new conservation concession on public land covering just over 12,000 acres
- three to five new regional conservation areas in the region of Cusco covering as many as 1.8 million acres

We are also committed to rehabilitating degraded forest. In 2013, 38,000 tree seedlings were grown and cared for in ACA-sponsored community tree nurseries, up in the highlands of Peru's Cusco region. They will be used to reforest degraded areas within communal territories in early 2014, bringing the total number of trees we have planted for highlands reforestation to nearly 219,000.

*ACA's projects preserve a wide variety of flora and fauna, from vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*) in the Andean highlands (left) to diverse plant species in cloud forest ecosystems, such as those in the planned protected area of Urusayhua (right).*



UNDERSTANDING PROTECTED AREA DESIGNATIONS

National parks are a familiar cornerstone of conservation, but ACA employs other types of protected areas in its biodiversity protection strategies—particularly across landscapes with diverse ecosystems, communities, and political dynamics. Below are some other forms of protected areas:

Regional protected area: Peru's equivalent to a U.S. state park, often to protect areas that have a significant regional ecological importance. This is a fairly new segment of the protected area system with great potential for growth. In Bolivia, this is known as a departmental protected area.

Conservation concession: a contractual partnership between the Peruvian government and a private organization, community, or individual in which the government entrusts long-term protection of publicly owned land to the partner in exchange for investments in conservation (patrolling, scientific research, etc.). This allows Peruvian organizations like Conservación Amazónica-ACCA to assist the government in achieving its national biodiversity conservation goals.

Private conservation area: forested land owned privately by an individual or a community that is legally designated by the landowner for conservation purposes. These areas are officially recognized by the Peruvian government as part of the country's protected area system and must fulfill certain requirements to ensure their protection.

Communal reserve: an area designated for the conservation of wildlife to benefit nearby rural communities that participate in reserve management with the Peruvian National Park Service. Within these reserves, communities can use natural resources—they can hunt, fish, or selectively log, for example—as long as they follow a strict management plan that ensures the long-term continuity of the resource and doesn't threaten the reserve's biodiversity.

Indigenous territory: ancestral territories belonging to indigenous groups that are communally owned and managed. Research in the Amazon has shown the forest conservation impact of indigenous territories to be similar to that of protected areas, making these areas a key part of conserving biodiversity across large landscapes.

NOTE FROM THE FIELD



Alto Pilcomayo

For the past two years, ACA has been assisting a group of young conservationists from Alto Pilcomayo—children of loggers who moved near Manu National Park's Andean slope decades ago—to create a new 12,040-acre conservation concession.



Led by Mario Ocsa, the young conservationists plan to call this new reserve *Qosilloq Ilaqta qchahuanan*—"land of the gray woolly monkeys" in Quechua. ACA research begun in 2013 is documenting that gray woolly monkeys (*Lagothrix cana*) are moving higher into the mountains to escape overhunting and habitat loss. As fruit eaters, these monkeys play a little-known but important role in the seed dispersal of canopy-level tree species—significant as trees need to migrate upslope in response to climate change. We are already training the Alto Pilcomayo community to patrol the future concession, prevent access by hunters, and closely monitor the woolly monkey populations living there. In 2014, we plan to complete the process of officially establishing Alto Pilcomayo's concession, one of numerous new protected areas we are working to create in the greater Manu landscape.



“When someone asks me, ‘Why do you work on conservation in Peru?’ my answer is because nonprofits like ACA give me hope and motivation that things in my country can change.”

**CARLA MERE, VOLUNTEER AND MASTERS CANDIDATE
AT GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

Protecting the health of the Amazon requires understanding the larger forces at work in the region, identifying trends, and following threats as they emerge and develop. In 2013, ACA expanded its capacity to collect and analyze data on threats to Amazonian forests. We combined the use of cutting-edge remote sensing technologies (such as analysis of satellite imagery) with on-the-ground fieldwork to paint a comprehensive picture of threats to the Amazon, including:

- starting up a new program to monitor, map, and better address large-scale threats to the Amazon's forests—mining, logging, dams, industrial agriculture (especially oil palm), oil and gas development, and road construction
- providing free legal support to small farmers suffering illegal invasions by gold miners
- mapping real time deforestation from the expansion of informal and illegal gold mining in the Madre de Dios region of Peru
- supporting our research partners as they conduct fieldwork to learn what factors influence Andean communities to either conserve or clear forests
- researching how fires spread in the Andean highlands, to better understand their impact on greenhouse gas emissions
- mapping historical deforestation in Peru's Cusco region, as well as creating a model to predict future deforestation patterns (and resulting greenhouse gas emissions) there. This will help forest owners and authorities evaluate projects designed to compensate land users for forest conservation.

Analyzing the large-scale trends we see allows us to develop best practices and innovative (but pragmatic) conservation policy—solutions we can promote locally, nationally, and internationally.



The construction of new roads, like this one, opens forest to the threat of deforestation.

IDENTIFYING THREATS AND PROPOSING SOLUTIONS

Dr. Matt Finan, ACA Research Specialist

In 2003, Matt Finan took his first trip to the Amazon. What was supposed to be a month-long vacation to Ecuador turned into nearly a year exploring that country, Bolivia, and Peru (including, coincidentally, visiting our Los Amigos Biological Station).

"While in Ecuador, a couple friends and I started a campaign to stop construction of a new oil access road into Yasuni National Park," he says. "We formed a network of scientists to build a technical case against this type of development."

For Matt, this experience (and this approach) was completely transformational. It taught him the power of mapping and remote sensing as tools to conserve the Amazon. The rest is history. "Ever since that first trip, I've been totally focused on conservation in the Andes-Amazon and trying to use data to build stronger cases for/against certain projects."

In 2013, ACA created a position focused exclusively on threats data and analysis throughout the larger Amazon—a way to understand deforestation trends across the region and better inform our conservation work in Peru and Bolivia. Matt was a natural fit. "I

am obsessed with the Amazon, science, and conservation," he says, "and ACA is arguably the best organization around which combines all of these things."

STAFF PROFILE

In 2013, we:

- worked with partners to support formation of the Regional Environmental Authority in Madre de Dios—a new office of regional government created to better regulate environmental and land use issues
- provided technical support for the governmental processes regulating the informal and illegal small- and medium-scale gold mining in Madre de Dios
- helped two rural municipalities in Cusco create environmental management offices to improve local forest governance, fostering stronger connections between local, regional, and national-level agencies and their resources. The municipalities have absorbed these offices into their annual budgets, providing long-term financing to environmental management at the local level.
- promoted best practices for development projects in the Amazon, so as to reduce environmental impacts

Illegal gold mining has deforested over 123,000 acres of rainforest in the region of Madre de Dios.





A Queros man fashions an arrow using scissors. The arrows will be used for hunting and archery demonstrations in the community's new ecotourism project.



Women in Challabamba earn extra income by preparing and selling dishes made with tarwi, a bean harvested through an ACA sustainable agriculture project.

Facing page: Community members transport tree saplings grown in nurseries to plant them for reforestation and agroforestry initiatives.

Community forest management and land use are important not only for forest conservation, but also for people's well-being throughout the Andes-Amazon. For example, communal indigenous territories cover 15 percent of Peru's Amazon region—an estimated 25 million acres—and the forests they contain provide spiritual, nutritional, and economic benefits that indigenous households depend on. As threats to forests grow in southern Peru and northern Bolivia, protecting them becomes more and more critical, and this in turn contributes to the long-term survival of these cultures.

We partner with a variety of communities in Peru and Bolivia—from the high Andes to low-elevation river valleys—and we work together to identify and support initiatives that enable them to secure sustainable incomes while protecting their forests. Here is a snapshot of our work in 2013:

- In Cusco's highlands, we helped two indigenous communities develop tourism plans for their private conservation areas, which were created with ACA support in 2012. This offers a sustainable way for them to finance the protection of a combined 46,000 acres, which is now patrolled by community park rangers.
- We also created conservation-friendly economic options for local communities along the Manu-Tambopata Corridor. In 2013, we planted over 46,000 trees for 220 local farmers, bringing the project total to 90,000 trees on 180 acres, installed 29 new native fish ponds, bringing the project total to 62, and supported local ecotourism initiatives.
- In the Andean highlands, we assisted over 40 small farmers as they grew organic tarwi, a protein-rich bean. We provided both seeds and technical support for the crop, which grows well at high altitudes, boasts a strong regional market, and replenishes soil nutrients depleted by poor agricultural practices like slashing and burning. In 2013, 36 acres of tarwi were planted, and, to date, farmers have produced over 24,000 pounds of tarwi thanks to ACA support. As a result of our trainings, they are also reducing their environmental impact by fencing livestock (like cattle) that harms forests, creating compost systems for livestock waste, and reincorporating traditional practices such as terracing to reduce erosion.

- In 2013, ACA began a new project to develop forest-friendly livelihood options for seven indigenous lowland communities in southern Peru. This will improve the lives of over a thousand families and the more than 260,000 acres in their care. We worked cooperatively with the communities to develop territorial management plans following their collective visions for their land and future. These plans are a key first step, and lay the groundwork for how the communities can earn a living without risking their forests. Their ideas include ecotourism, agroforestry (agriculture incorporating the cultivation and conservation of trees), harvesting Brazil nuts and other non-timber items from the forest, and fish farming. In fact, with our technical support, one of these seven communities, Santa Rosa de Huacaria, has already begun breeding native river fish to sell; these hatchlings will soon represent a major source of protein (and future income) for the area.





Conserving Brazil Nut Forests

Since 1999, ACA's "Conserving Brazil Nut Forests" program has supported more than 500 harvester families in the protection of nearly two million acres of rainforest. Native to the Amazon basin, Brazil nut trees are some of the largest in the rainforest; they grow up to 165 feet tall and have a lifespan of several hundred years. Because these trees produce selenium-rich nuts only when growing in a healthy rainforest, the earnings from harvesting nuts (more than half the yearly income for these families) serves as an incentive for forest protection. Today, our work is focused on preserving forests and improving the livelihoods of indigenous Brazil nut harvesters in Peru and Bolivia.

A Brazil nut harvester (known in Spanish as a castañero) gathers nuts during the rainy season, which stretches from November to March. The nuts are gathered immediately after they fall in order to minimize insect and fungal damage.

In 2013, ACA assisted Brazil nut harvesters by:

- helping an indigenous forestry association in Peru apply for Fair Trade certification as well as organic certification. These certifications help the harvesters obtain better prices while ensuring good practices for the forests and harvesters
- training more than 200 indigenous Brazil nut harvesters how to survey and map their Brazil nut stands, how to complete management and annual operating plans, and how to achieve and maintain their certifications (all of which are requirements according to Peruvian law)
- submitting five annual operating plans to Peruvian authorities on behalf of 141 families that are sustainably managing 66,200 acres of forest
- in Bolivia, through joint work with ACEAA, training 200 indigenous Tacana Brazil nut harvesters in best practices, organization, and negotiation, and securing funding for the construction of 72 drying sheds to prevent Brazil nut spoilage (see more below)
- creating a direct link between the Tacana and a major international exporter, helping the harvesters sell 85 tons at a price 30 percent higher than they ever received through a middleman



Drying Sheds for the Tacana

The Bolivian Tacana people harvest Brazil nuts as a primary source of income every year. However, their territory is so extensive that some nuts, collected from the most distant trees, must be stored for weeks or months at a time before they are sold to processors along the river—and poor storage and drying conditions can lead to mold and contamination. In years past, the Tacana would lose approximately 15 percent of the harvest to spoilage every year, representing a loss of about \$130,000 in annual revenue.

In 2013, ACA and partners helped the Tacana construct 72 *payoles*, or Brazil nut drying sheds, to store their harvest while waiting for river transport. These simple drying and storage buildings provide an alternative to storing nuts on the ground and keep spoilage to a minimum. But there's even better news: by sharing tools and working together to build each payol, the Tacana were able to construct more than originally planned in less time than expected. In 2014, the Tacana would like to build 56 more payoles so that every Brazil nut harvester has access to a drying shed.



Brazil nuts laid out to dry inside of a payol, or drying shed



Local schoolchildren learning at Wayqecha Cloud Forest Biological Station

Researchers, students, volunteers, and travelers from around the world journey to our three biological stations in Peru to witness their rich wildlife and see conservation in action. Spanning an altitudinal gradient from 750 to 11,500 feet above sea level along the eastern border of Manu National Park, one of the world's most important biodiversity hotspots, our stations are active learning centers and serve as a base for ACA's on-the-ground work. The stations offer diverse accommodation options for individuals and groups, lab and classroom space, access to over 100 miles of trails, rivers, and waterfalls, and delicious Peruvian cuisine made with locally sourced ingredients. ACA biological stations host an average of 25 research projects and 15 field courses each year, attracting researchers who have catalogued over 6,900 species and published more than 340 research articles to date.

Our visitors are our partners in conservation, and play an active role in furthering the stations' mission of contributing to the understanding and protection of the greater Manu landscape. In 2013, we invested in new facilities, renovated existing buildings, and added new staff to ensure that we can keep up with the diverse needs of visitors seeking to experience the greatest forests on Earth.

"The primary attraction to our students will always be the Peruvian Amazon and the safe and wonderful space provided by ACCA in which they can learn from experienced researchers."

DR. MRINALINI WATSA, FOUNDER OF PRIMATESPERU



A Peruvian researcher bands a bird she has caught in a mist net, part of a study on highland bird diversity.



Los Amigos Biological Station and Conservation Concession

▲ Lowland Amazonian Forest
▲ Elevation: 755 to 886 feet above sea level

Established in 2000, Los Amigos Biological Station was built on the conviction that the greatest forest on Earth deserves one of the best research centers in the world. The station is immediately adjacent to the 360,000-acre Los Amigos Conservation Concession (LACC) managed by Conservación Amazónica-ACCA. With more than 60 miles of trails to explore between the concession and the station, its landscape is a mosaic of habitats including palm swamps, bamboo thickets, oxbow lakes, and forests nestled in a floodplain.

ACA established LACC in 2001 as the world’s first conservation concession (see page 7). It borders Manu National Park and serves as a buffer to over 800,000 acres of forest home to uncontacted indigenous tribes. Work at the concession focuses on forest protection, research, and conservation education. In 2013 two new guards joined LACC’s patrol team, helping us better monitor potential threats like illegal logging and hunting. The guards also collect valuable data about mammal and bird populations and conduct ongoing studies of 310 tree species.

Laura Samaniego, Biological Stations Manager

Behind the scenes of our biological stations is a team of dedicated staff maintaining buildings, cooking meals, clearing trails, transporting passengers and goods, helping with reservations, readying laboratories, and generally tending to visitor needs—all in sometimes challenging conditions and rural locations.

At the helm of this incredible team is Laura Samaniego, who previously worked on a successful community-based ecotourism initiative as part of ACA’s Manu-Tambopata Corridor project. She admits that managing three remote biological stations—“each with its own particulars and identity”—to best serve the needs of different types of visitors can be tough, but believes it’s more than necessary to show sustainability at work. It’s a way for visitors to see conservation in action and get involved themselves. “We want to make the biological stations a place where visitors have a complete experience: enjoyment, relaxation, learning, and personal commitment.”



Villa Carmen Biological Station

 **Andean Foothills**
Elevation: 1,700 to 3,940 feet above sea level

Established in 2010, Villa Carmen Biological Station integrates biodiversity conservation, research, education, sustainable agriculture, and ecotourism into a single campus. The 7,600-acre station boasts over 25 miles of trails spanning a wide variety of habitats, including old-growth rainforest, lower montane forest, secondary forest, and former and current agricultural fields, streams, rivers, and waterfalls.

Since 2011, our sustainable agriculture program has grown to include 60 varieties of garden vegetables and other crops, meeting a quarter of its produce needs to feed station visitors and staff. A new two-acre pond, added in 2013, triples the station's previous native fish farming capacity. And following successful pilot research, in 2013 a new biochar program with research partner Wake Forest University was approved for the station. Biochar is a form of very porous charcoal produced by cooking down plant material in the absence of oxygen, ideal for the growth of beneficial microbes. When introduced to tropical soils, biochar not only stores carbon for thousands of years, but also improves soil texture and aeration, retains fertilizer and nutrients, and boosts plant yields by as much as 40 percent.

Additionally, Villa Carmen serves as a center for biodiversity education. The California Academy of Sciences brought an international field course on ants to the station in 2013. And ACA awarded nine scholarships to students at the local technical school to take part in our sustainable agriculture research projects.

Villa Carmen is unique for its proximity to two indigenous communities that, with ACA's help, are expanding into ecotourism to earn a living from conserving their natural resources. Station visitors can immerse themselves in traditional culture, crafts, and flavors with trips to nearby Santa Rosa de Huacaria and Queros. At Huacaria, visitors will see the ACA-supported fish farming program, which has already bred nearly 5,000 native paco fish. Over a homecooked lunch in the community, visitors will even have the opportunity to taste fresh paco

for themselves. Queros is home to the Haramba Queros Wachiperi Ecological Reserve, the first conservation concession in Peru run by an indigenous community, established with assistance from ACA (see page 5).





Cabins at Wayqecha. In 2013, ACA began building a new 32-person dorm at the station.

Wayqecha Cloud Forest Biological Station



Andean Cloud Forest

Elevation: 6,500 to 9,875 feet above sea level

In 2005, ACA created Peru’s only permanent field research center focused on cloud forest ecology and management. This 1,400-acre research center, called Wayqecha (“little brother” in Quechua), serves as a protective buffer for Manu National Park where the Andean grasslands transition into lush cloud forests and montane forests below. It is home to more than nine miles of trails crossing these habitats, which sustain myriad species like the Andean cock-of-the-rock and the spectacled bear. These trails include a 1.5-mile orchid walk that showcases the over 200 orchid species found at the station, and, high above the trees, the world’s first high-elevation cloud forest canopy walkway. Ranging from 65 to 144 feet above the forest floor, the walkway provides an unparalleled view of life at the canopy level as well as of the forest below.

In 2013, we began construction of a new dorm that will provide needed accommodations for more researchers and students to visit the station. Our newly renovated cabins already provide spectacular views of the valley for tourists and birdwatchers.

20

Participatory Fish Monitoring in an Indigenous Reserve

In 2013, ACA started a three-year research project on fish and aquatic ecosystems within the Amarakaeri Communal Reserve in Madre de Dios. The reserve is co-managed by the Peruvian National Park Service and surrounding indigenous communities. These communities requested ACA’s support to assess and monitor the health of fish populations in their rivers—significant as new potential threats arise from infrastructure and mining nearby.



Fish are important in local diets, so the project aims to better understand fish populations within the reserve’s rivers and to empower communities to conduct monitoring activities and interpret the data collected. Community members trained in biological sampling techniques and ACA technical staff work side by side to document each river’s water quality and survey its aquatic life (identify fish species present and analyze fish for heavy metals, for example). The data they record will serve as an environmental baseline, so that communities and scientists can understand how conditions change as development occurs, and in turn develop solutions to maintain healthy rivers.

NOTE FROM THE FIELD



Giant river otters (*Pteronura brasiliensis*) at Los Amigos Biological Station

Our commitment to research and education extends beyond our biological stations. In 2013, we also:

- helped Andean highlands communities fill gaps in their scientific knowledge about how deforestation impacts local ecosystems
- broadcast more than 70 episodes of a radio show in Madre de Dios with information on conservation, sustainable enterprise, and civic engagement; we also trained eight community correspondents to create content for the show
- trained teachers to integrate environmental topics into curricula in all 13 schools along the Manu-Tambopata Corridor, providing environmental education programs to more than 1,035 local schoolchildren in Madre de Dios
- provided technical assistance to better manage forests within more than 140,000 acres of timber concessions
- improved understanding of the Manu-Tambopata Corridor region through research on biodiversity, forest connectivity, deforestation, and the effects of mercury pollution from gold mining

“Los Amigos is one of the finest research stations I have ever visited...what a difference you are making in the lives of students and researchers as well as the advancement of scientific knowledge.”

RACHELLE M. M. ADAMS, PHD CANDIDATE AT UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Hosting Critical Climate Change Research

About two years ago, a group of scientists focusing their attention in and around Wayqecha noticed that the cloud forest's tree species were slowly creeping up the Andean mountainside, moving at an average rate of 8 to 12 vertical feet per year. Why were the trees heading uphill? As the weather heats up due to global climate change, trees must migrate upslope toward cooler, more hospitable temperatures. As the trees move, so does the wildlife they support.

But while individual tree species can move up, they face a barrier when they come to the tree line. In a paper published in September 2013, authors including Dr. Miles Silman, an ACA board member and one of the world's leading authorities on the impacts of climate change on tropical mountains, found that forests above 6,500 feet are hardly moving—barely half a foot upslope each year, or nearly 100 times slower than needed to keep pace with climate change. Silman is a member of a 70-person research consortium called the Andes Biodiversity and Ecosystems Research Group (ABERG) studying biodiversity and ecosystem function on the eastern slope of the Andes. Cloud forests are essential to life in the entire Amazon basin; they regulate water quality and quantity for human communities and wildlife in the lowlands below.

ACA has been collaborating closely with ABERG scientists and using their research findings to improve the impact of our conservation projects in Peru. Grassland fires (set by local communities to create more farmland or grazing pasture for cattle) often blaze out of control and spread into the cloud forests, lowering the treeline and preventing trees at the top from further movement upslope. Unmanaged cattle, left to wander in grasslands, also eat young tree seedlings trying to establish themselves along the forest edges. That is why ACA has been focusing its efforts on helping the trees have room to move. By working with local communities in 2013, ACA helped improve cattle management and agricultural practices while training the communities to prevent and fight forest fires.



"This was quite probably one of the most enthralling days birding I have experienced in my life."

SAM WOODS, PROFESSIONAL BIRD GUIDE, ON BIRDING AT VILLA CARMEN

*Villa Carmen Biological Station is one of the most concentrated sites for viewing or studying bird diversity in the world, with over 500 species known in the immediate area (in comparison, all of North America has only slightly more than 700 known bird species). The Andean cock-of-the-rock (*Rupicola peruvianus*) is the national bird of Peru.*

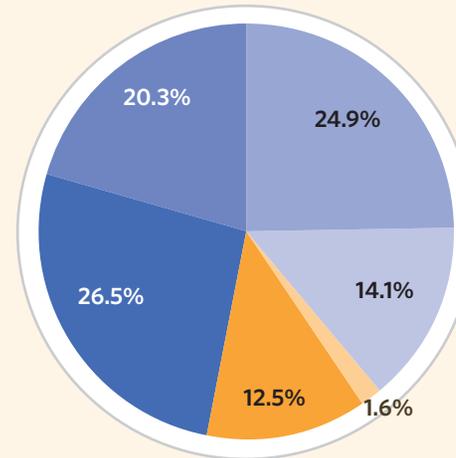
REVENUE AND SUPPORT

| | | |
|---|--------------------|-------|
| Grants and donations from organizations | \$3,149,062 | 68.9% |
| Contributions from individuals | 981,103 | 21.5% |
| Research station income | 288,661 | 6.3% |
| In-kind contributions | 107,250 | 2.3% |
| Other income | 44,958 | 1.0% |
| Total Income ACA 2013 | \$4,571,034 | |

EXPENSES

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| <i>Program services</i> | | |
| Conservation | \$887,081 | 26.5% |
| Research | 680,351 | 20.3% |
| Sustainable livelihoods | 835,626 | 24.9% |
| Education and training | 473,584 | 14.1% |
| <i>Total program services</i> | <i>\$2,876,642</i> | <i>85.9%</i> |
| <i>Support services</i> | | |
| Fundraising | \$53,779 | 1.6% |
| Management and general | 420,226 | 12.5% |
| <i>Total support services</i> | <i>\$474,005</i> | <i>14.1%</i> |
| Total Expenses ACA 2013 | \$3,350,647 | |

ACA EXPENSES 2013



- Conservation
- Research
- Sustainable livelihoods
- Education and training
- Fundraising
- Management and general



ACA has a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, the leading charity evaluator in America.

Our Thanks

We would like to thank the many generous individuals and institutions whose contributions made our work possible in 2013. Institutions providing us with substantial support included: American Bird Conservancy, Andrew Sabin Family Foundation, blue moon fund, DermaTend, ENVIRON Foundation, Erol Foundation, Fondo de las Américas (FONDAM), Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, HJW Foundation, Jeff and Connie Woodman Foundation, Inter-American Development Bank: Multilateral Investment Fund, International Conservation Fund of Canada, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Margot Marsh Biodiversity Foundation, Mitsubishi Corporation Foundation for the Americas, Morrison & Foerster, Norad (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation), Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, PROFONANPE (Peruvian Trust Fund for National Parks and Protected Areas), and USAID via Wildlife Conservation Society.



Please note: At the time of printing, ACA's 2013 financial audit was not yet complete. For updated audited financial statements, please see our webpage at <http://www.amazonconservation.org/about/financials.html>. All information on this page refers to ACA's 2013 fiscal year ending December 31, 2013.

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Achilles blue morpho butterfly (Morpho achilles)

Staff

Executive Director: Jeff Woodman

Total staff: 85 (ACA, ACEAA, and Conservación Amazónica-ACCA)

Offices:

Washington, D.C., USA (ACA) 8 staff
Lima, Peru (Conservación Amazónica-ACAA) 3 staff
Cusco, Peru (Conservación Amazónica-ACCA)
(includes Wayqecha & Villa Carmen)..... 43 staff
Madre de Dios, Peru (Conservación Amazónica-ACCA)
(includes Los Amigos) 25 staff
Bolivian partner in La Paz (ACEAA)..... 6 staff

All positions current as of December 31, 2013

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Jennifer Paul Design



**“An incredibly effective, practical,
science-based organization—key to
the future of the western Amazon.”**

DR. THOMAS LOVEJOY



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Two conservation promoters (guards) from the Queros Wachiperi indigenous group review a map of their conservation concession while deciding where to create new trails.



Amazon Conservation Association (ACA)
1822 R Street NW, 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20009
Phone: (202) 234-2356
E-mail: info@amazonconservation.org
www.amazonconservation.org



ACCA

Peruvian Partner: Conservación Amazónica —
Asociación para la Conservación de la Cuenca
Amazónica (ACCA)
Jiron Dos De Mayo 237
Barranco, Lima, Peru
Phone: 011 + (511) 251-4513
www.acca.org.pe



Bolivian Partner: Asociación para la Conservación e Investigación
de Ecosistemas Andino Amazónicos (ACEAA)
Av. 16 de Julio Nro. 1642 oficina 203
Zona Central, La Paz, Bolivia
Phone: 011 + (591) 2-212-4987
E-mail: info@conservacionamazonica.org.bo
www.conservacionamazonica.org.bo