

Project Update: July 2016

The first farmers' meeting was held in April 2016, in which general aspects of the project and proposed work schedule for the year were discussed. Leaders of the two communities (Alicahue and Paihuen), Agricultural and Livestock Services (SAG), and researchers from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and the University of La Serena were present (photo 1); the meeting resulted in a preliminary outline of farmers' expectations of the project. Adjustments were made to initial project timeframes according to the availability of farmers as and representatives of SAG, thereby maximising opportunities for all stakeholders to participate in project activities.



Photo 1 Reunión con ambas comunidades ganaderas (Abril)

In June 2016, three environmental education workshops were conducted in the two rural primary schools nearest the communities: the La Frontera de Alicahue and Ester Silva Somarriva Bartolillo schools; workshops involved a total of 130 primary school students (photos 2-4 below). Also in June 2016, accompanied by leaders from both communities and representatives of SAG, fieldwork was performed in an attempt to record animals descending from altitude due to snow. High river levels prevented us from ascending above 1600 m asl, however. Several groups, one of which was particularly large ($N > 400$) (photos 5 and 6), were nevertheless recorded close to an altitude of 1600 m.



Photos 2-4: 2. Taller en escuela Básica La Ester Silva Somarriva Bartolillo frontera de Alicahue, 3. Y 4. Taller con Escuela Ester Silva Somarriva Bartolillo, diferentes niveles.



Photos 5 y 6: Grupos de Lama guanicoe avistados durante el mes de Junio 2016

Another visit to the study area was undertaken in July 2016 but high river levels again prevented progress beyond 1600 m asl. Four groups were observed on this occasion, and given the closer proximity of the animals this time, we were able to count a total of 629 guanacos (photos 7 and 8).



Photos 7 y 8: Grupos de Lama guanicoe avistados durante el mes de julio 2016

The first workshop with the Paihuén farming community was also conducted this month with a positive turnout (20 of 27 members) (photos 9), and involved active participation and discussion of project related issues by all members over the two hour period. The Alicahue community postponed the workshop on this occasion due to internal reasons.





Photo 9: First workshop with the Paihuén farming community (July)