

The Rufford Small Grants Foundation Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs, please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to jane@rufford.org.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Roberto Lindig Cisneros
Project title	Biodiversity conservation and ecological restoration at the Mintzita wetland complex, Michoacan
RSG reference	32.11.06
Reporting period	April 2007-March 2008
Amount of grant	£4928
Your email address	rlindig@oikos.unam.mx
Date of this report	

1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Work with local landowners to create awareness about conservation needs		X		This objective was partially achieved because work with local landowners has been slow. Considerable work was done with the community of the Ejido de San Nicolas Obispo, who owns the land adjacent to the main springs and wetlands. They have agreed in a community assembly to allocate these lands to conservation and sustainable uses. However, work with other landowners has not been as fruitful.
Mounting of demonstrative plots for alternative management practices			X	The demonstrative plots were set-up and were instrumental in convincing the people of San Nicolás Obispo about the need to preserve and change management practices. In particular the need to control fires and cattle has been acknowledged.
Start an environmental education program with local schools			X	This was probably the most challenging objective and was achieved successfully. To date, more than 15 schools have been visited and also field trips to the Mintzita were organized. This effort has allowed us to create an awareness among the population of the city of Morelia, and to gain access to the local media (television and newspapers).
Contribute to create a natural protected area		X		Our efforts have helped to promote the wetlands as a Ramsar site. To declare the area as a natural protected site, we have been able to approach the State's Secretary of the Environment through the Director of the Research and Development Center of the State of Michoacán. Talks are under way to declare the area as protected and also to pay the community of San Nicolás Obispo for environmental services.

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

During the project local and state elections were held, this created a series of difficulties when contacting government officials. These changes affected the environmental education program because of difficulties contacting relevant officials of the education district. When possible, schools were contacted directly, but this limited the number of schools we were able to visit.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

First, that awareness among the owners of the most sensitive areas was raised and that, as a community, they agreed to conserve the lands adjacent to the wetlands and the wetlands themselves. The agreement was signed by all community members with the right to vote. Second, that through the environmental education program the people of the city of Morelia, the main beneficiaries of the Minztita springs and wetlands, are starting to realize its importance. Third, that the Minztita wetlands complex became part of the environmental agenda of several groups including some government officials.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project (if relevant).

The community of the Ejido de San Nicolás Obispo has been involved with the project since the beginning. Since the community owns the most sensitive and biodiverse areas of the wetland system their involvement has been very important. Workshops with the inhabitants of the Ejido and meetings with community officials were held.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Work will continue to achieve three main goals. First, with the Ejido de San Nicolas Obispo, a pilot conservation effort will be started to protect the most sensitive wetlands and to implement a program of guided visits for schools and other groups from the city of Morelia. Second, work to support initiatives to declare the wetlands a Ramsar site and a natural protected area will continue. Finally, the environmental education program will continue because it has fostered an interest in, and awareness about the importance of the Minztita wetland complex for the region and also about the relevance of protecting water resources in general.

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

The results of this work will be and are being shared with others through the Extension Department of the Centro de Investigaciones en Ecosistemas and also in several forums on collaborative research and environmental issues.

7. Timescale: Over what period was the RSG used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

The grant was used during an 9-month period because of administrative problems within the University, work was started at soon as the grant was awarded by starting contact with landowners but other aspects of the project suffered a temporary delay.

8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
2 Projects assistants	2266.00	3444.75	1178.75	Project assistants were hired for an extra period to help with delivery of posters to local schools, talks and workshops with the community of San Nicolás Obispo.
Materials and tools for demonstration plots	850	389.64	-460.86	Materials were obtained through donations that helped reduced costs
Creation and printing of educational materials	729.00	1039.72	310.72	Because of the demand for materials about the Mintzita more posters and other educational materials were produced
Minor equipment for monitoring	262.00	0	-262.00	Equipment was obtained from other sources allowing for reallocation of resources to other items
Administrative costs	821.00	53.92	-767.08	The University waived the overhead and most of the administrative costs, allowing for reallocation to other items
TOTAL	4928.00			The local exchange at the time the money was deposited was \$20.9 Mexican pesos to 1 £ sterling

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

Star work with the community of San Nicolás Obispo to effectively protect the most sensitive areas by controlling fires and excluding cattle. Implement a project of guided visits to the site to continue the effort of environmental education and also to provide a source of income to finance specific conservation measures. Contribute to efforts to declare the area as a natural protected area.

10. Did you use the RSGF logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

The RSGF logo was used in educational materials including posters that were distributed in the 1200 primary schools of the city of Morelia. Also, RSGF's involvement was acknowledged in a television program about the Minzita wetlands that was broadcasted by Michoacán's Public Television.