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Final Account for Lighthouse Foundation

11 July, 2017

Project Title: Whales of Guerrero Research Project

Grant Period: 16 December 2016–11 July 2017

Grant Amount: \$3000 USD

Lighthouse Foundation Funded Project Description Summary: The long-term goal of our project is to cultivate an ethos of stewardship toward the ocean in Guerrero, Mexico through community-driven marine mammal-focused research, education, ecotourism and capacity building.

Summary of Accomplishments: We completed a 300-hour marine mammal survey in partnership with the local community, using only local staff and resources in Barra de Potosí, Guerrero, SW Pacific Mexico. We trained 43 tour guides and fishermen, conducted targeted community outreach, collaborated with community leaders, provided school programs to 12 schools, weekly after-school workshops and a 3-month US-Mexico cultural exchange program, printed publications and maps for tourists and community members and conducted global outreach. Our seasonal data was analyzed and results shared with 44 Mexican and international agencies, institutions and organizations.

Objective 1: Residents are educated about and invested in their local whales and marine biodiversity

- Action:**
1. Weekly after school workshops and school programs ran from January 2, 2017-March 18, 2017.
 2. Conduct whale naming and adoption ceremony.
 3. Hold safe whale watch workshop for 56 individuals on January 22-23, 2017.
 4. Strengthen citizen science and guide whale-spotting network.
 5. Facilitate cross-cultural science exchange program between US and

Mexico high school students.

- Evaluation:**
1. 90% of 785 students correctly answered 80-100% of quiz questions upon completion of program.
 2. 20 whales were named/adopted on March 10, 2017.
 3. Post survey demonstrated high levels of safe whale watch workshop attendee satisfaction and there will be 43 trained whale watch guides in the region.
 4. Whale-spotting network is robust. Increased participation by 70% between January 6–March 18, 2017.
 5. 100% increase in identification skills via high school fluke matching competition which runs from January 2017-June 2017. Cross-cultural relationships developed between 2 bilingual classrooms (75 students total)

Objective 2: Data collected is useful and improves worldwide understanding and ecological initiatives to protect whales

- Action:**
1. Conduct public 300-hour humpback whale research study in collaboration with local community.
 2. Compile all study data
 3. Submit data to government, academic and research agencies
 4. Present data at Society for Marine Mammalogy Conference in October 2017 and to the Society for Conservation Biology, American Cetacean Society and Important Protected Marine Mammal Areas conferences in 2017 & 2018.

- Evaluation:**
1. Completed fourth year of study and provision of education/information
 2. Study data has been compiled and corrected.
 3. Data submitted to 44 agencies
 4. Data was presented at Important Protected Marine Mammal Area conference in November 2017. Three abstracts have been accepted for presentation at the Society for Marine Mammalogy Conference in October 2017 and three team members will attend and present.

Objective 3: Tourists and non-residents are educated about, and invested in local marine wildlife

- Action:**
1. Display public sighting maps and information and update social media daily
 2. Print and design outreach and educational materials by January 15, 2017 and distribute between January 2-March 17, 2017.

3. Share data with a minimum of 44 international government agencies, nonprofits, media contacts, universities, research and science institutions.
1. Public sighting maps and information was displayed in 4 ports and central meeting places and social media was updated daily.
2. Outreach and educational materials were designed, printed and distributed by intended deadlines. Over 500,000 individuals received information via radio, TV, print media, social media, and other broadcasting. Over 200,000 tourists, community members, and students learned directly through engagement with the programming that ran from January 2-March 17, 2017.
3. Data was shared with a minimum of 44 international government agencies, nonprofits, media contacts, universities, research and science institutions.

Evaluation: