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# Protecting our forest



As part of several actions directed towards the protection of the forest bordering the Darien National Park, CONAMAR Foundation arranged a training course for 8 park rangers that permanently patrol the reserved area of Piñas Bay, with the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI). This training was carried out during the last week of February at STRI facilities in the Barro Colorado Nature Monument located in the Panama Canal Watershed, and included theory instruction complemented with field exercises.

## BARRO COLORADO NATURE MONUMENT



The park rangers were trained in land navigation (map and compass sessions), report presentation, and were exposed to intensive field sessions in order to develop strategies for follow up and protection.

They also studied Systematic and Economic Botany, Ecology, conservation of renewable natural resources and bird identification.

The group visited the reforestation work that the firm Ecoforest is carrying out and observed the impact on the community; they also visited the Ecologic Police Station in Gamboa.



The group had the opportunity to learn about basics aspects of the Barro Colorado Nature Monument, their forest guards and also about the duties and obligations of a park ranger in a protected area.



Back to the city the park rangers visited the Marine Educational Project at Culebra Point to have a better understanding of the marine species and environment, since the Piñas Bay Reserve includes coastal marine ecosystems of great importance.



During the closing ceremony February 28, the participants expressed their satisfaction with the experience gained and their commitment to put in practice their knowledge and become multiplying factors within the community.

All the participants completed the objectives of the training course and received their respective certificate: Prisciliano Conchavé, Pedro Concepción (front line); Daniel Panezo, Mateo Sanapi, José Cortez, Justino Catupa, Casildo Martínez and Iván Tuñón (back line).



Representing STRI at the closing ceremony were Alejandro Arze, Director of Protection and Security, and Alejandro Hernández, Forest Guards Supervisor. For CONAMAR Foundation were present Dalva H. Arosemena, Executive Secretary of the Foundation and Iván Tuñón, Chief of Park Rangers.

CONAMAR Foundation and Smithsonian have scheduled a second phase of the park ranger training course on site in Darien in order to include a greater number of participants.

