

## Grant Progress Report Alex C. Walker Foundation



### Prepared by:

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Monteverde Conservation League

**Date:** July 6, 2026

**Project name:** Symbiosis: A forest that creates markets; markets that safeguard the forest

**Project description:** The Children's Eternal Rainforest, owned by the Costa Rican nonprofit Monteverde Conservation League, provides diverse and massive benefits to people on local, national, and international scales. To date, however, recognition of those services – particularly in the financial realm – has been inadequate. This project creates a new staff position, the exclusive purpose of which is to (a) reach out to diverse stakeholders and stimulate reflection about why they are stakeholders, (b) explore and implement mechanisms through which stakeholders are incentivized to contribute reciprocal financial support, and (c) produce a publication that summarizes the lessons obtained from this initiative as a useful reference for others. In 2025, the Monteverde Conservation League received a grant from the Alex C. Walker Foundation for the amount of \$52,752, to cover two years of salary for the new staff position.

### Project budget:

\$73,423 total

Walker Foundation: \$52,752 for 2-year period (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027)

MCL counterpart: \$20,671

### Project update:

Claire Hassler, who has a journalism and photography background, and is bilingual and bicultural, began work on February 2, 2026 as our Communications and Strategic Alliance Coordinator. Since then, Claire has immersed herself in the operations and mission of MCL, getting to know the staff and the different areas of the BEN. She has made important progress in the following areas:

#### Cultivate donations by visitors to the CER's field stations and trails

- Reactivated the CER's newsletter, Tapir Tracks
- Learned to use the crowdfunding / fundraising platform to develop specific campaigns
- Learned to use the Mail Chimp site for newsletter and donor / contact management

#### Develop strategies and materials for fundraising by students

- Developed original materials for CER "student ambassadors", including:
  - o Guidelines for Ambassadors and how to get involved
  - o Digital media, including photos that can be used in social media, education, and fundraisers; logos; and QR codes for donations
  - o Educational materials, including lesson plans on camera traps, epiphytes, and mammals
- Piloted the first Ambassador activity with a group of students from the US who visited the CER

#### Establish effective alliances with for-profit stakeholders toward the well-being of the CER

- Carried out an information session with guides from the travel agency Jacamar, in La Fortuna, to increase awareness of the CER and promote day- and overnight visitation to Pocosol and Finca Steller
- Planning with ally Finca Luna Nueva Lodge for a campaign by which guests at their ecolodge may visit, and /or become direct donors to the CER, via signage at FLNL's reception area and information sessions for receptionists and other staff. FLNL is hopeful that their participation will be the "spark" that encourages other lodges around the CER to participate in similar initiatives.

### **Increase visitation to and awareness about the CER through improved marketing**

- Worked closely with reservations staff to understand how reservations work for the CER's 4 visitors' centers
- Developed materials and talking points for a Fam Trip to directly promote the CER with 40 travel agencies who visited Monteverde
- Taken over our Facebook and Instagram accounts, with regular, high-quality publications
- Reactivated our YouTube channel
- Worked extensively with reservations and environmental education staff on planning 40 anniversary activities, targeted at the broader communities near the CER
- Wrote a full-page spread with photos in the quarterly newsletter of the Santa Elena ASADA

### **Moving forward**

Claire and Lindsay will meet in late July to revise the timeline for the rest of 2026 and the beginning of 2027, with specific target products and dates for each of the proposed objectives. Claire will present to MCL's board in August and we are excited to share this presentation with the Alex C. Walker Foundation as well.

We are sincerely grateful to the Alex C. Walker Foundation for its generous support and for the opportunity to advance this initiative. Your investment is helping us strengthen relationships with the many people and organizations that benefit from the Children's Eternal Rainforest, while building new, sustainable models of support for its long-term conservation. We appreciate your partnership and confidence in our work, and we look forward to sharing the continued progress and lessons learned as we move forward!

### **See some of Claire's work**

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/childrenseternalrainforest>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/ChildrensEternalRainForest>

YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/@childrenseternalrainforest/videos>

360 photographs: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8VQqWkgL8M>



childrenseternalrainforest and felinoslibres

childrenseternalrainforest ¿Los seis felinos silvestres de Costa Rica grabados en cámaras trampa dentro del Bosque Eterno de los Niños? Eso sí es algo para celebrar 🎉 ¡Feliz Día Nacional del Felino Silvestre! 🐾

¿Querés aprender más sobre los felinos silvestres? Celebrá mañana en el Festival de Felinos en Piedades Sur, San Ramón. Habrá caminatas guiadas, charlas educativas, juegos, gastronomía, emprendimientos locales, y más. Este evento gratuito es de 9am a 6pm en la Plaza de Deportes, Piedades Sur.

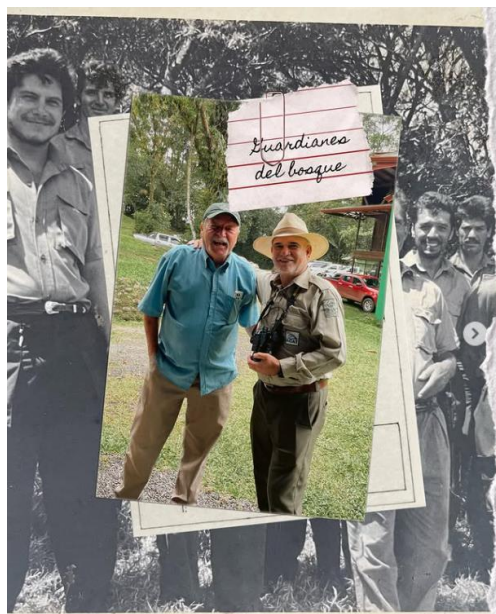
All six of Costa Rica's wild cats caught on camera in the Children's Eternal Rainforest? Now THAT is something to celebrate 🎉 Happy National Wild Cat Day in Costa Rica! 🐾

Costa Rica's wild cats are: The jaguar, the largest of Costa Rica's wild cats. The puma, which is distributed from western Canada all the way to southern Argentina and Chile. The jaguarundi, which

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childrenseternalrainforest Children's Eternal Rainforest, Monteverde

childrenseternalrainforest 🌿🌿 Guardianes del Bosque Eterno de los Niños 🌿🌿

El pasado 13 y 14 de junio vivimos un encuentro muy especial en la Estación Pocosol: el primer Encuentro de Guardianes del Bosque Eterno de los Niños, realizado en el marco del 40 aniversario de la Asociación Conservacionista de Monteverde.

La actividad reunió a algunas de las personas que, desde distintos momentos de la historia del BEN, han dedicado su trabajo, compromiso y cariño a la protección de este bosque único. Guardabosques y amigos del bosque compartieron historias, anécdotas y recuerdos que nos recuerdan que la conservación es, ante todo, una labor colectiva. Fue también una oportunidad para honrar a quienes ya no están, celebrar los logros alcanzados y fortalecer los lazos que unen a esta comunidad de guardianes que ha cuidado uno de los tesoros naturales más importantes de Costa Rica durante los últimos 40 años.

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