

## Renewal of Nevado de Colima's Environmental Education Center

Towering 2,000 meters above the city of Ciudad Guzmán, National Park Volcano Nevado de Colima is home to endemic and endangered species, cloud forests, the seventh tallest peak in Mexico, and one of the most active volcanoes in Mexico. Despite such natural wonders only an hour away, few residents have visited the national park or understand its importance. In order to enhance the community's awareness, a mural about the biodiversity of the national park was completed in the Environmental Education Center between July 2014 and July 2015, with 38 volunteer painters from the Patronato del Nevado de Colima, National Park, Peace Corps, Scouts de México, University of Guadalajara, and various communities in Jalisco.



After over a year of painting, designing, constructing, and installing the mural and interactive exhibits for the Biodiversity Room of the Environmental Education Center (CEA), the space was completed. All told, the mural covers over 1,000 square feet of wall space and features 39 different species and 2 major landforms that are found within the national park. In addition to the mural, the space has 8 informational panels, 9 reusable search-and-find activity books, and an interactive staircase, where visitors can attempt to identify natural objects using only their sense of touch. The activities were designed to address a variety of ages and learning styles.



We inaugurated the Biodiversity Room on July 11, 2015 together with the celebration of Arbor Day in the park. About 80 people were present for the inauguration ceremony and participated in not only the interactive exhibits of the Environmental Education Center but also in a national park hike and tree planting. Visitors were excited to participate in all of the activities that we had planned for the day. The park received many complements on the mural and interactive exhibits, and the discussion of the park's biodiversity continued even after the official event had ended. During their remaining time in the park and on the drive down, visitors tried to spot the plants and animals that they had seen in the mural and discussed what they had learned.



In addition to the mural, this grant helped fund a workshop on environmental education/interpretation and produce a documentary about the national park and its many natural resources. The workshop took place on March 9-10, 2015 in Ciudad Guzmán. Sixteen participants from the national park and other agencies benefited from the training and materials presented over the 2-day workshop. In terms of the documentary, the space and all of the elements required to project it in the national park have been installed, but the documentary itself is still a work in progress. We have finished the script and are currently in the process of filming. The documentary's projected completion date is November 15th, 2015.