



# NEWS FROM HONDURAS

## Honduras Community Support Corporation

HELPING RURAL HONDURANS TO LIVE BETTER ON THE LAND  
AND TO PROTECT THE LAND THEY LIVE ON

### A BIG YEAR FOR FECOVESO

December, 2014

It has been an exciting year for FECOVESO (Fundacion Eco Verde Sostenible), the local Honduran organization that was organized with HCSC support both to provide local stewardship of watershed lands acquired with HCSC monies and to allow local control of the allocation of HCSC funding for a variety of other local projects.

In its stewardship role, FECOVESO now owns 17 parcels of watershed land, totaling 357.19 acres, and protecting water sources for 16 communities including two parcels added this year (see page 2).

In its role as a local grant-maker this year, FECOVESO has allocated a total of \$7,810 (provided by HCSC as a block grant) for a wide variety of small but critically needed projects in 11 communities. Like HCSC, FECOVESO considers only requests which will benefit the whole community and for which the community will provide the necessary labor while FECOVESO provides materials. A majority of the projects described in this newsletter were funded by FECOVESO, either entirely or in conjunction with additional funding from HCSC.

FECOVESO's work is carried out by a dedicated corps of part-time-staff members. Site visits and consultations with the communities requesting assistance are carried out by Nestor, who also oversees the office and keeps the books, and his assistant Victor (many of the site visits entail extended hikes into the mountains). Chayo, who, with her husband Felix, lives in and caretakes the building that houses the office, provides an every-day presence for the organization. Attorney Marivel Reyes now provides ongoing financial oversight as well as legal services. FECOVESO grant requests are reviewed and acted upon by a committee consisting of Nestor, Victor, Chayo, Chepe, Marivel (and Nola when she is in the country).

Another landmark event for FECOVESO this year was the receipt of title to the property that includes the office and extends from the highway to the beach, assuring not only continued use of the office building but also continued access to the beach for local people.



Some of the more than 80 people attending the Asamblea General in April

*(Communities supporting communities!)*

The property was donated and subdivided from the property where Nola lives when in Honduras.

As FECOVESO has become increasingly important in the area as both a land steward and a grantmaker, its visibility and popularity have increased. This year's annual membership meeting was attended by 80 men women and children from the member communities. Highlighting the event was the distribution of new t-shirts designed by HCSC-supporter Bonnie Acker. The shirts were received as a gift from HCSC, but the FECOVESO members voted to request a modest amount (about \$2.50) to those receiving them, as a way of raising some additional money for FECOVESO projects.



Marivel & Nestor chat on the office porch



## Watersheds

In July, 16.38 acres (9.5 Manzanas) were acquired to protect the water source for **Monte Sinai** – a small community, with just 27 houses, high in the mountains – a 3-hour walk from the highway. There is not yet a full-scale water system, but the Municipality (the regional government) has put in a dam and piped water from the impoundment to a central tank. The community is now seeking funding from FECOVESO to bring water to individual houses. Both Nestor and Victor have visited more than once and are recommending approval of Monte Sinai's request for materials.



Acquisition of several parcels of land has been completed this year (as projected at the end of last year) to protect the water source for **Los Mejias**, another high mountain community. The community is working at reforesting the land, and FECOVESO granted \$408 for the purchase of barbed wire to keep cattle and other traffic out of the watershed.

The mountain communities of **Nueva Vida, Rio Indio, and Cerro Negro** were granted \$225 to repair the suspension bridge that residents must use to get out to and back from the highway during high water.

## Other

**Betannia** was granted \$516 for a culvert to deal with a washed-out section of the road from the high-



way to the community. We had granted them some funds several years ago to help build the road.

**Altos de El Paraiso**, a newly developed community on the lower edge of the mountains, across the road from the oceanside community of El Paraiso, was granted \$810 for some posts to bring electricity into the community. (see page 3 for a story on El Paraiso's health clinic.)



## Tag Sale

With many friends and supporters, HCSC Directors held the annual tag sale in August in the village of Cambridge. We always seem to be too preoccupied to take pictures on that busy day, but this year we broke \$1000 in sales! Many thanks to our Main Street hosts, John & Katie, to our donations leader, David, delicious Baleada maker, Bliss, and to all the donors and workers who made it another special day!



## Schools

The community of **Milla Cinco** has been working for several years to build a new school for elementary children so they will not have to walk along the dangerous highway to a school several miles away. The process has been supported by several grants from HCSC and FECOVESO for land and materials. With a final grant from FECOVESO this year the school is nearing completion.

The high mountain community of **San Francisco** was granted \$420 for a new roof for its school.

In the mountain community of **La Mota** the earth was giving way under one side of the school. A \$511 grant made possible the construction of a retaining wall to solve the problem.



Claudio, a Milla Cinco student, inspecting his (almost) new home...



Victor and residents inspect the erosion at the school

**Jalisco**, at the end of a rough road into the mountains has a clinic with two resident nurses serving Jalisco residents and several mountain communities. They are seeking to hire a full-time doctor and expand their facility. A grant for \$2,650 will pay for an addition that will nearly double the capacity of the building.



Jalisco

## Health Clinics

Aside from taking some donated tools and medicines from the States, we have not had requests from the Health Clinics (Centros de Salud) until this year. They are supposedly supported by the government, but in reality it is the communities that keep them going.

**El Paraiso**, on the highway, has a clinic, with a full-time nurse, providing services for people living in the nearby mountains as well as for its immediate residents. However the building housing the clinic lacked a consulting room for an additional medical worker. A FECOVESO grant will provide materials to build walls and add doors and provide electricity.

El Paraiso





## Water systems

A FECOVESO grant of \$940 went to **Tierra Santa**, a small community of 30 homes high above Corinto, for their water system (mangera & accessories).



**Work begins in Colonia Anexo del Barrio Las Vegas San Antonio, (for short, Anexo Las Vegas)** which was granted from HCSC \$880 to build their water distribution system. Water is provided from the Omoa system — but only to 4 faucets for the 57 homes. (See photo below)

Our generous donors over the past year 2013-2014... *Thanks!*

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Drawing water for the family — Anexo Las Vegas



## IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP...

We are an all-volunteer organization, and we operate with very low overhead. We put your tax-deductible donations to work directly for the people of Honduras – and we depend completely on those donations to support our work. You can find more information, including past editions of this newsletter, at our website

[www.hcsc-honduras.org](http://www.hcsc-honduras.org)

Your contributions can be sent to...

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