



## **PROJECT REPORT**

### **MACHU PICCHU SANCTUARY VOLUNTEER TRIP**

November 2 - 11, 2015

#### **Executive Summary**

Conservation Volunteers International Program (ConservationVIP) organized and led a volunteer trip to the Historical Sanctuary of Machu Picchu in November 2015, in collaboration with Peru's Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Environment (National Service for Protected Area Management, SERNANP). The project was authorized by architect Ricardo Ruiz Caro Villagarcía, Regional Director, Ministry of Culture-Cusco, and by engineer José Carlos Nieto Navarrete, Director of the Historical Sanctuary of Machu Picchu for SERNANP. The projects were discussed with anthropologist Dr. Fernando Astete Victoria, Director of the Historical Sanctuary of Machu Picchu.

Seventeen volunteers plus three trip leaders: Chris Braunlich, Chief Executive officer and Member of the Board of Directors of ConservationVIP; Richard B. Tobin, ConservationVIP volunteer trip leader; and local guide Santiago Carrasco Bellota, performed 472 hours of volunteer work related to the following projects:

1. Volunteers removed lichen and plants from 3,404.5 square feet (316 square meters) of rock walls, windows, niches, steps, altar, fountains and water channel within the Chachabamba archaeological site at Km. 104, under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Culture staff. This work was performed on November 6 and 7, 2015.
2. Volunteers carried 213 young trees from the native plant nursery on the north side of the Chachabamba Archaeological site to a site approximately one and a half miles (2.4 kilometers) up the Inca trail. SERNANP plans to plant the trees to reforest an area which burned three years earlier. This work was performed on November 6 and 7, 2015 under the supervision of SERNANP staff.
3. Volunteers worked in the Botanical Garden next to the Manuel Chavez Ballon Museum at Machu Picchu on November 8, 2015. They removed plants growing on an estimated 4,558 square feet (424 square meters) of terrace walls and cleaned 48 flying steps (sarunas) connecting the different terraces in the garden. They removed dead vegetation and invasive plants from an estimated 4,875

square feet (453 square meters) of planted garden area, and cleaned an estimated 4,260 square feet (396 square meters) of walkways in the garden

4. Volunteers donated to Miguel Zamora Salas, Coordinador de Gestion of Parque Arqueologico Natural Machupicchu, Ministry of Culture, one dynamic 60 meter x 10.2 mm climbing rope, one Petzl locking carabiner, one Black Diamond Super 8 and one Black Diamond Climbing Harness.
5. Donated to Jose Carlos Niete Navarette, Jefe Del Santuario Historico de Machupicchu, SERNANP, one dynamic 60 meter x 10.2 mm climbing rope, one Petzl locking carabiner, one Black Diamond Super 8 and one Black Diamond Climbing Harness.

Trip leaders will provide this report to architect Ricardo Ruiz Caro Villagarcía, Regional Director, Ministry of Culture-Cusco; engineer José Carlos Nieto Navarrete, Director of the Historical Sanctuary of Machu Picchu for SERNANP; and anthropologist Dr. Fernando Astete, Archaeologist for the Machu Picchu Sanctuary.

### **Detailed Trip Report**

On November 4, 2015, volunteers traveled from Cusco by bus to Ollantaytambo, then by train to Machu Picchu Pueblo (Aguas Calientes). On November 5, 2015, the volunteers toured the Sacred City of Machu Picchu, as part of a program of familiarization to better understand the context and significance of the volunteer program. Trip leaders picked up tools and brushes at the SERNANP office in Machu Picchu Pueblo and purchased additional brushes. The tools and brushes at SERNANP were previously donated by ConservationVIP. The tools were used by the volunteers at Chachabamba in order to perform the assigned tasks.

### **Chachabamba Archaeological Site Volunteer Project Description**

On November 6 and 7, 2015, the volunteers traveled at 0800 hour by Inka Rail from Machu Picchu Pueblo to km.104. The Ministry of Culture had authorized ConservationVIP's volunteers to assist in removal of lichen and plant material from the walls, pillars, windows, niches, and fountains of the Inka site at Chachabamba.

Upon arrival at Chachabamba, the volunteers received an orientation from Ministry of Culture and SERNANP staff. In the morning of November 6, 2015 the majority of volunteers carried 120 young alder (alico), yanay (nectandra) and coral (pisonay) trees weighing approximately 1 kilo each, from the native plant nursery on the north side of the Chachabamba archaeological site approximately 1- 1/2 miles up the Inka trail to an area to be reforested. This work was carried out under the direction of SERNANP staff.



Meanwhile, the remainder of the volunteers began removing lichen and plants from the walls and steps in the archaeological site, under the direction of the Ministry of Culture staff. In the afternoon, all the volunteers worked on removing lichen and plants from the structures in the site. The volunteers working at the archaeological site used only nylon brushes and wooden sticks to clean walls, niches, windows, and fountains. Work continued until 1700 hours, at which time the volunteers prepared to leave to take the train back to Machu Picchu Pueblo.







On the morning of November 7th, volunteers carried an additional 93 trees to the site to be reforested by SERNANP. After depositing the seedlings in a shady area, the volunteers enjoyed the view from a nearby rest area on the trail.



Some volunteers spent the morning of November 7<sup>th</sup> working in the archaeological site, and in the afternoon all the volunteers removed lichen and plants on the archaeological site.

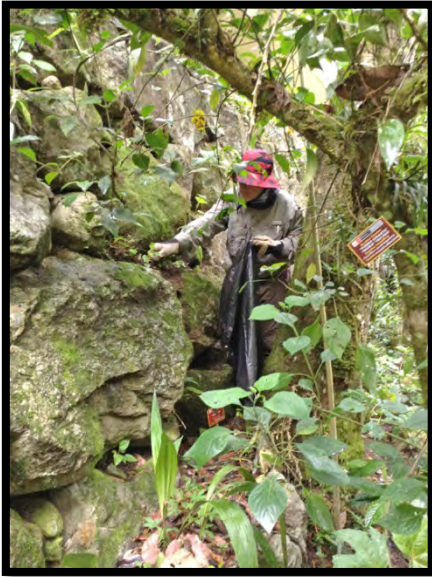
In total, during the two days, volunteers cleaned 1,639 square feet (152 square meters) on eight fountains on the east side of the site, and some of the water channels leading to the fountains. After the fountains were cleaned, Ministry of Culture staff poured some water into the channels leading to the fountains, so volunteers could enjoy seeing how the fountains functioned, including seeing the water draining from the fountains.



### Botanical garden

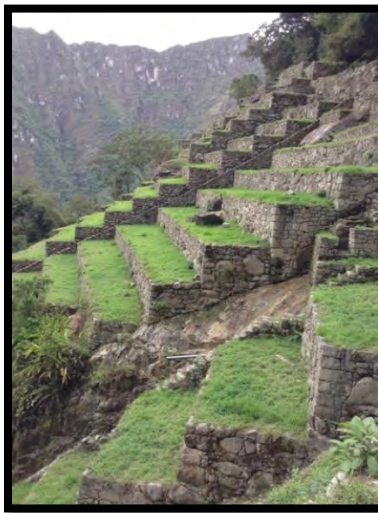
With the approval of biólogo Julio Ochoa of the Ministry of Culture, on November 8th, the volunteers worked in the Botanical Garden next to the Manuel Chavez Ballon Museum at Machu Picchu. Volunteers performed a variety of tasks, including removing plants which were growing on an estimated 4,558 square feet (424 square meters) of terrace walls and cleaned 48 flying steps connecting the different terraces in the garden. They removed dead vegetation and invasive plants from an estimated 4,875 square feet (453 square meters) of planted garden area, and cleaned an estimated 4,260 square feet (396 square meters) of walkways in the garden.



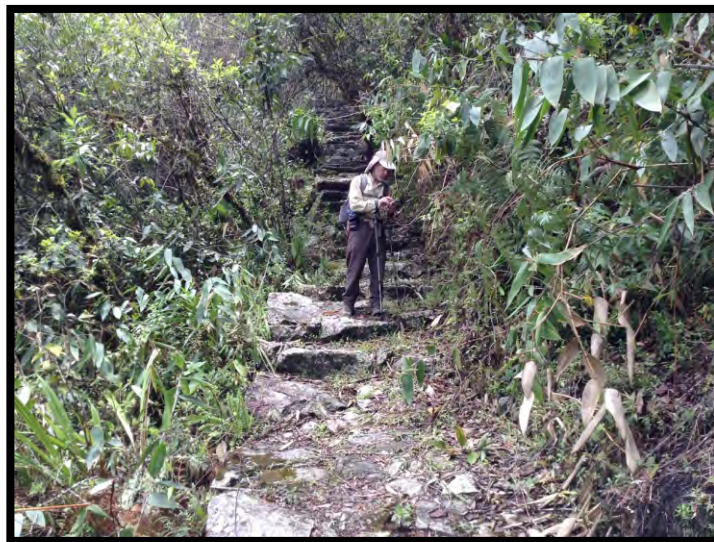


### Trail to the lower terraces, Machu Picchu Sanctuary

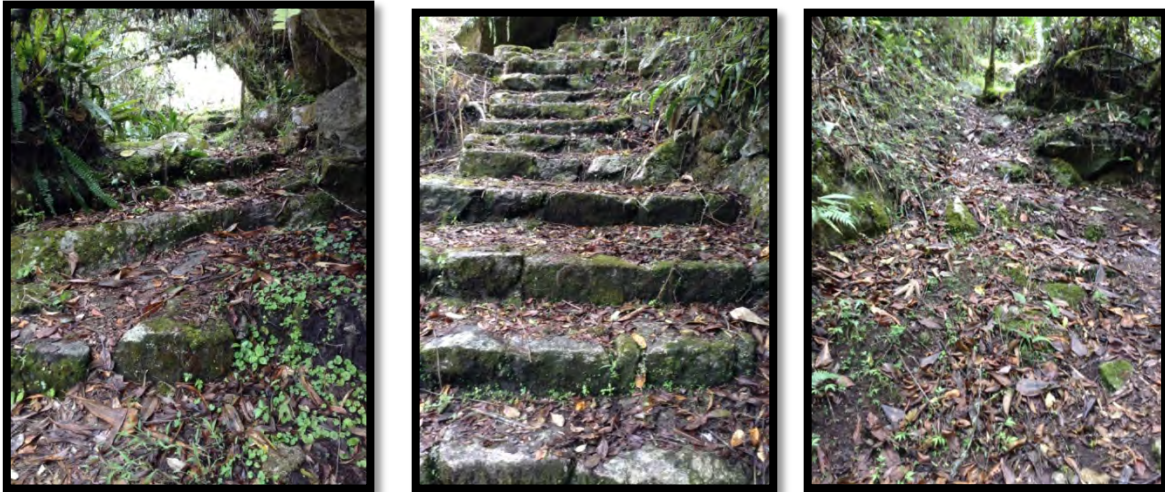
Below the Sacred City area of Machu Picchu Sanctuary, the Ministry of Culture has been uncovering and restoring the many Incan terraces and fountains which can be found in this eastern sector. The lower area contains extensive terraces, flying steps, and some beautiful fountains running with water.



Trip leaders Chris Braunlich and Rich Tobin, and local guide Santiago Carrasco were honored to be invited to hike the trail leading to the lower terraces on November 9, 2015, accompanied by two Ministry of Culture staff rangers, Antonio Sinchiroca and Santiago. The trail was between 4 and 6 feet wide for much of its length, and has significant vegetation growing on and around it. However, with some intensive initial maintenance and repair in a few places, it appeared that it could be an excellent alternative hike within the sanctuary for future visitors. ConservationVIP trip leaders expressed an interest in buying the tools necessary for this repair and, if the Ministry of Culture would allow, working to do the initial maintenance to facilitate opening of the trail in 2016. Rich Tobin agreed to submit a more detailed report on the work which would be required.







### **Visit to Machu Picchu Sacred City**

All of the volunteers visited the Machu Picchu Sacred City on November 5, 2015. Admission to the Sacred City was paid for by ConservationVIP. During the visit to the Sacred City, local guide Santiago Carrasco Bellota briefed the volunteers about the Inka culture and preservation issues related to visitation. The volunteers visited the Sun Gate, the Inka Bridge, Huayna Picchu, the Temple of the Moon, and all of the ruins in the Sacred City.

Prior to traveling to Machu Picchu, the volunteers visited the Machu Picchu Museum in Cusco on November 3, 2015. At the Museum, Santiago Carrasco Bellota explained to the volunteers how the Peruvian government struggled to have the artifacts returned to Peru from Yale University. This provided a historical context for the volunteers to understand how the Peruvian government has worked diligently under difficult circumstances to protect the patrimony of Peru.

### **Acknowledgements**

Conservation Volunteers International Program acknowledges and thanks the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Environment/SERNANP (National Service for Protected Area Management) and the community of Machu Picchu Pueblo for the privilege of volunteering in Peru.

We also thank Sr. Juan Carlos Castillo Rendon, Gerente General, CONSETTUR Machu Picchu, for assistance with bus tickets to Machu Picchu.



Many thanks to Inka Rail for arranging to stop at Km. 104 to enable our volunteers to travel to the Chachabamba archaeological site to perform the work described in this report.

We appreciate the help of our local travel agency, Viracocha, and their representative Jorge Garcia. Special thanks are reserved for our local guide Santiago Carrasco Bellota, who provided extensive historical and environmental information. He also worked alongside our volunteers at Chachabamba and the Botanical Garden. His assistance in obtaining permits from the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Environment/SERNANP was invaluable.

Chris Braunlich, Director and Chief Executive Officer  
Richard Tobin, Volunteer Trip Leader  
Conservation Volunteers International Program

