

EL PAHUMA ORCHID RESERVE:

Sustainable tourism project

Description: Assist the owners of the El Pahuma Orchid Reserve with trail construction and maintenance, building additional facilities, and receiving and guiding groups of tourists.

Project Background: El Pahuma is a 375 hectare (925 acre) cloud forest that provides a home to over 300 species of orchids, Spectacled Bears (*Tremarctos ornatus*), Plate-billed Mountain Toucans (*Andigena laminirostris*), and a uniquely diverse group of stunning montane forest species. The reserve is located just an hour from Quito and is the first conservation easement in Ecuador. Students interested in participating in an internship here will help the Lima Family (owners of the reserve) develop a new touristic area. The main activities will consist in designing and building a camping area, bridge, bathrooms, kitchen, and social areas. Another activity is designing a method for getting water to the camp. Also, the intern will help with the reconstruction, re-routing, and designing of trails (approximately 4 km of trails). When there are tourist groups at the reserve, the intern will also help the family receive and guide the groups through the trails, orchid garden, and education center.

What will you learn?

- How to develop a sustainable touristic operation in rural areas
- Management of a reserve
- History of the first Ecuadorian conservation easement
- Ecology of the cloud forest
- Communication techniques for public education

What do we seek?

The preferred minimum length of time for this project is one month. Interns must be fluent in Spanish and have some GPS knowledge. Carpentry and design skills are preferable. We seek enthusiastic and self-motivated individuals. Interns must also be willing to hike long distances and work in rugged conditions.