



Summer 2016 Newsletter

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Global Water Stewardship resolves sanitation issues in the developing world by educating people and engineering sustainable centralized solutions that keep waterways clean and communities healthy.

Message from the Chair

Since the last Newsletter in May, an amazing amount of progress has been achieved. The new Board of Directors has fueled forward work on all fronts, while GWS has continued to gain support and interest.

New Chair positions have been established to create a foundation which will more efficiently utilize volunteers helping to expand GWS. These Chair positions come with new committees aimed at specific goals such as marketing and fundraising, where new volunteers can easily integrate their talents. As a blossoming organization, GWS is still looking for passionate people to make these committees strong and successful.

On the design front, members assisted the 2016 student team in creating a wastewater treatment facility design for Bahia Ballena, Costa Rica. Students and members traveled to Costa Rica to visit and meet with the communities GWS has been working with over the past 3 years. GWS has also increased fundraising efforts to assist those communities in their efforts towards proper sanitation.

Over these summer months, I have been most impressed by the dedication from our student design team and our young professionals. These members have extreme passion for the work GWS is doing in Costa Rica, and are bringing new perspectives to every situation. While the summer sun was high, these individuals put hours of personal time into GWS. I would like to thank them all for providing new light to GWS which has allowed us to reach new heights and will help us provide sanitation to developing communities all over the world.

Student Design Team – Bahia Ballena

The student design teams that won the competition this past spring (MSOE and UW-Platteville) have been working closely with GWS members to create a system that will provide wastewater collection and treatment to Bahia Ballena. Since May, the students have increased pipe sizes, rerouted the collection system to avoid easements, and received news of a complete treatment plant site relocation.

While their initial design has changed several times, the students have continued their efforts to ensure Bahia Ballena receives proper sanitation. When the news of the relocation of the treatment plant reached the team, I saw all of their shoulders sag, but only for a second. After no more than a heartbeat, they all agreed they were going to see the project through to completion. As Chair, I could not have asked for more dedicated individuals to work on the project for Bahia Ballena.

Not only were the students working on a wastewater treatment system for Bahia Ballena, but also preparing to present an original solution to the issues in Bahia Ballena at WEFTEC 2016 in New Orleans. This includes a presentation and a detailed report to be submitted prior to the WEFTEC Presentation. The students are preparing to present and compete with students from across the country on environmental systems. We wish them the best of luck, and once again thank them for all of the work they have put towards the sanitation solution for Bahia Ballena.



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August Trip to Costa Rica

The group finished off the summer season with the annual August trip to Costa Rica to work with our communities. We visited Piedras Blancas, spent a few days in Bahia Ballena and Dominical, as well as traveled to San Isidro to visit their existing wastewater treatment plant.

In keeping with our mission, GWS made several school visits in Bahia Ballena and Dominical to discuss the importance of wastewater and wastewater treatment. Our members interacted with students from kindergarten through high school; the enthusiasm from each group was outstanding. Activities showing the spread of germs and how wastewater treatment will protect the oceans were well received and were a great way to connect with the children. Handouts and stickers were given out to reinforce this information when GWS is away, as well as to spread the knowledge to parents and other community members that we did not have the opportunity to interact with. Education is an imperative part of GWS, and we look forward to continuing our presentations during future visits to the communities.

The trip also included several meetings with local community members and organizations. These meetings are one of the most significant aspects of these trips, because buy-in and understanding of the community must be strong in order to have sustainable, lasting solutions. Our goal is that the local organizations will support us in assisting the communities with constructing, operating, and maintaining a wastewater treatment system. On each trip, we have encountered positive attitudes and many that are willing to strive for these sanitation improvements and care for them when we are not in-country. The community members were passionate about our work and are excited to have proper sanitation for their families.

Last Word

With each trip to the communities we serve, new challenges and a fresh task list await us upon our return home. But with the constantly growing efforts of the GWS organization, the outlook is bright for providing these communities with sanitation and a healthier way of life and environment. Communities are enthusiastic and the dedication of our volunteers is steady.

However, to make even a small dent in the 2.4 billion people that lack access to proper sanitation, GWS is still in great need of more volunteers for our continually growing work load, as well as financial assistance in the form of donations to get these projects off of paper. Contact chair@globalwaterstewardship.org to find out how you can help!