



°climate
change
needs
behavior
change



**watershed
protection:**
a participatory,
climate smart solution



a social approach to water resource management

Since 2009, Rare has worked with local organizations and partners in Central and South America to protect key biodiversity habitats linked to water resources, while supporting community livelihoods. Rare's community mobilization and behavioral science expertise unites people around proven, participatory and measurable solutions that help people and nature thrive. Now, Rare aims to extend its impact beyond individual communities to take a more expansive regional and ultimately national approach through replication of its proven community solutions. The first thrust of this movement will focus on Colombia.

In 2015, 29 local leaders across South America worked with Rare to build community support for cloud forest and alpine grassland protection, critical to sustaining regional fresh water sources. These leaders, called Rare Fellows, ran Rare's signature Pride marketing campaigns to engage community members—from schoolchildren to cattle ranchers—to take pride in their regions' natural resources. Fellows use grassroots marketing methodology with targeted media to inspire change in local behaviors toward the environment. While Fellows build Pride, the watershed program creates innovative reciprocal agreements between upstream and downstream villages to maintain water production and quality for more than half a million people.

this is a story of water, the impact of community mobilization and life in the Andes



“You have to earn things. I am fully committed. I spend all my time in La Cumbre. This is how people start believing and commit too.”

inspiring community mobilization around clean fresh water

For Ramiro Palma, a Rare Fellow managing the Bitaco ARA Pride Campaign in Colombia, relating to people on a one-on-one basis is essential in inspiring changes in community members' relationship with local nature. "Enjoy a good cup of coffee with them, listen to people, accompany them while they work, don't expect them to stop working to listen to you," says Ramiro.

Ramiro joined Rare as a Fellow in late 2013. He knows the community of Bitaco well, as Ramiro himself is a landowner in the area and a land-use expert within Corporación Autónoma Regional del Valle del Cauca (CVC), the regional environmental authority and one of Rare's local partners in Colombia.

Ramiro has more than 20 years of experience improving environmental services by working closely with communities. As a Fellow, Ramiro now works to motivate the community to take up more sustainable behavior toward their watershed, in such forms as ARAs.

Despite facing initial difficulties inherent to changing behaviors, Ramiro dedicated himself to the process. The community's response to Ramiro's campaign has been overwhelming: Currently, more than 30 producers in La Cumbre are on a waiting list to sign reciprocal water agreements, fueled by a desire to protect the local forest.



451
reciprocal water agreement contracts signed with upstream producers



9,737
hectares of private land under conservation, equal to 28.5 New York Central Parks



31,121
hectares of Municipal Protected Areas promoted and protected during watershed Pride campaigns, equal to 3.5 Manhattans



800
yellow-eared parrots are now present in Roncesvalles, Colombia; a population once at 80 birds upon its rediscovery in 1998. They are now better protected in part due to the implementation of a local Pride campaign.



\$300,000
generated in water funds by local communities for conservation



Andean culture honors a tradition of reciprocity

Under reciprocal water agreements, landowners, water users and local authorities work together on a simple, climate-smart local solution to conserve forests and other ecosystems that regulate water provision in key watersheds. Proven Pride social marketing campaigns accelerate its adoption. There are four key elements:



Downstream Fund

Downstream water users pay into a fund that finances incentives for upstream farmers to conserve and restore water-producing forest and vegetation.



Upstream Behavior Adoption

Incentives offer upstream farmers alternative land management and production resources like water troughs or barbed wire to keep cattle out of rivers and protect riparian forests.



Formal Agreements

Upstream farmers sign agreements that exchange conservation efforts—protecting forests and grasslands that harbor endangered species and regulate water—for tangible ways to improve their livelihoods.



Impact Monitoring and Evaluation

Agreements sustain a cleaner and more reliable water supply for consumers throughout the Andes, as both upstream and downstream communities monitor progress.

Looking Ahead: 2015 to 2020

Through 2020, Rare will concentrate its efforts on taking climate smart watershed protection to national scale in Colombia. With help from its partners, Rare will continue to use its social science expertise to help people and nature thrive through sustainable watershed management in South America.

rare inspires
change so people
and nature thrive

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