A Community Organization For Watershed Protection of the Drinking Water Source For Steadfast Village, Stann Creek Valley, Belize

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Steadfast Tourism and Conservation Association (STACA)
Billy Barquedier National Park

• Falls:  http://www.youtube.com/user/ThomasSUA#p/u/4/AXj9YXi9Ey
• Jump:   http://www.youtube.com/user/ThomasSUA#p/u/0/ebxsIUFa22k
• CNN  
  http://www.cnn.com/video/?/video/living/2011/05/03/hummingbird.highway.belize.cnn#video/living/2011/05/03/hummingbird.highway.belize.cnn
Figure 5. Areas with a stricter conservation mandate
Activities

• Watershed protection and management workshops.
• Water quality monitoring.
• Wildlife surveys.
  – Theses: bats, slime molds, snakes
• Water filtration system.
• Trail maintenance and boundary management.
• Acquisition of grants
  – UNDP, PACT
Threats

• Agriculture: citrus, milpa
  – Pesticides, herbicides, erosion
• Government taking park fees
• Road to Manatee forestry concession.
Stann Creek Valley residents defend Billy Barquedier National Park

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Author: Aaron Humes

Ahead of a planned public consultation to be held on Sunday, October 24, in Alta Vista, Stann Creek District, concerning an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) submitted by New River Enterprises Limited of Orange Walk Town for an upgrade to 4.5 kilometers (almost 2.8 miles) of road beginning just outside and leading into the Billy Barquedier National Park, reportedly for access to a logging concession owned by New River in the area, residents of Steadfast village in Stann Creek yesterday, Wednesday, publicly protested the “invasion” of the park by outside interests.

The Steadfast Tourism and Conservation Association (STACA), joined by members of the Steadfast Village Council and residents of the village, has charged that it was not properly consulted by New River and that it has grave concerns with the proposal if it goes through.

STACA, managed by Steadfast resident Hyacinth Ysaguirre (a Belizean who previously lived in the United States), has co-managed the park along with the Forestry
• Note: protecting watershed protects water supply and water supply protects watershed.
  – Steadfast folks think if they switch to another water system, they’ll lose protection of the park.

• Also financial issues.

• They understand relationship between water quality, watershed protection, agricultural production, wilderness preservation, and sustainability.
An Ecosystem Services Approach to Water and Food Security
Lessons Learned
(copied from Hyacinth presentation to Belize managers)

• Importance of a dedicated core group
• Learning by doing
  – Fund raising and other revenue generating skills are a profession.
  – Competition for funding is fierce, and parks that generate tourism dollars take precedence over parks that provide environmental services.
• Importance of membership in a national umbrella organization
  – Facilitates access to capacity building training
  – Association of Protected Area Managers Organization (APAMO)
• Threats are ongoing
  – Be prepared for “the long haul”.
  – Be prepared to yield to lumber concessions that will generate needed revenue for the GOB, threatening the park’s reason for being, two major watersheds, and valuable citrus lands of the Stann Creek Valley.
Congratulations

• Hyacinth Ysaguirre is the recipient of the 2011 Belize Audubon Society’s James A. Waight Award, the country’s top conservation award.