

Short Term Details to Guatemala

Specialists are needed in the following areas:

Land Use and Protected Areas Planning
Tourism Services and Management
Facilitation, Conflict Resolution and Organizational Strengthening
Environmental Education and Visitor Interpretation
Civil Engineering
Law Enforcement
Fire Management
Information Technology
Economics

OPPORTUNITY: The U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOI) International Technical Assistance Program (ITAP) is seeking multiple experts to provide technical assistance in Guatemala. Spanish fluency is desirable.

BACKGROUND: ITAP provides assistance to other countries on subjects of Departmental expertise, on a reimbursable basis. The program is currently operating in seventeen countries with support from organizations such as the U.S. Agency for International Development, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank.

Mirador National Park, in the Petén region of northern Guatemala, was established by Guatemala in 1990 as a core zone within the Mayan Biosphere Reserve to protect its significant biological and cultural resources. ITAP is providing technical assistance to strengthen the management and protection of this park and increase opportunities for sustainable tourism. ITAP is to help improve the administration of Mirador National Park, ensure that surrounding communities derive economic benefits from the park and design its assistance programs so they can be applied to other protected areas and communities in Guatemala.

Currently, Guatemala's most popular tourist attraction is the Classic Maya ruin in Tikal National Park, located 50 kilometers south of Mirador National Park, which receives 200,000 visitors each year. Guatemala wants to expand tourism to the Petén to entice tourists to extend their stay in the region by adding other sites of interest to the most common one-day tour of Tikal.

The Preclassic Maya ruins of El Mirador and Nakbe, both located in Mirador National Park, are two of several sites in the region with an enormous potential for attracting tourists and, thus, generating greater opportunities for economic development. El Mirador potentially could draw far more visitors than Tikal due to its significantly greater size and antiquity. El Mirador contains the two largest structures in the Maya world

including the Danta pyramid, which is believed to be the largest structure ever built anywhere in the ancient world. In fact, the footprint of La Danta is larger than the entire central acropolis of Tikal.

At present, there is no road into Mirador National Park and the park offers essentially no visitor infrastructure or service. To visit the park, visitors either must travel by helicopter or walk 60 kilometers along unimproved trails. Nonetheless, visitation to El Mirador is increasing due to the National Geographic Society program *Dawn of the Maya* and other documentaries. Tourism to the Park, if properly developed, could significantly augment the economies of “gateway” communities that surround the park as well as the Guatemalan economy. With these benefits in mind, Guatemala asked ITAP to help it address the management needs for Mirador National Park.

ASSIGNMENT: ITAP is assembling teams of experts to provide technical assistance in Guatemala for up to 4 years, beginning in August 2006. Applications are welcome from candidates with expertise in one or more of the following targeted areas:

Land Use and Protected Areas Planning

- Lead DOI efforts to guide the development of a new 5-year master plan or operational plan for Mirador National Park and evaluate access to the park. Help the economist evaluate opportunities for private concessions.
- Lead DOI efforts to help identify essential staff, training and equipment needs for Mirador National Park.
- Lead DOI efforts to help establish systems in Mirador National Park to monitor and protect cultural and biological resources.
- Help coordinate work by other DOI specialists to establish systems in Mirador National Park to manage information, promote community involvement, identify and administer private concessions, establish and administer visitor entry/use fees and concessionaire use/administration fees, provide visitor information and interpretation, and manage and protect visitors.

Tourism Services and Management

- Lead DOI efforts to help develop an ecotourism plan for Mirador National Park; with the economist, explore the collection and allocation of user fees.
- Lead DOI efforts to foster collaboration between communities and professional tour operators; work with the organizational development specialist to help communities become more competitive and collaborative with professional tour operators.
- Help the organizational development specialist improve the abilities of communities to provide visitor services; identify equipment and information needs.
- Work with the landscape architect to identify, design and locate tourism infrastructure in Mirador National Park and along the Carmelita-El Mirador trail; work with the organizational development specialist to facilitate work by community members to construct and manage that infrastructure.
- Help the protected areas planner guide the development of a new 5-year master plan or operational plan for Mirador National Park and evaluate access to the park.

- Work with the economist and protected area planner to identify and administer private concessions in Mirador National Park.

Facilitation, Conflict Resolution and Organizational Strengthening

- Lead DOI efforts to improve the functional capabilities of communities to plan and accomplish tasks with respect to providing tourism services; address the control and distribution of committee funds and income; help committees become eligible for INGUAT recognition.
- Lead DOI efforts to help community tourism committees organize the construction and management of tourism infrastructure.
- Working with the protected area planner, lead DOI efforts to promote community involvement in the operation of Mirador National Park.
- Help the protected areas planner guide the development of a new 5-year master plan or operational plan for Mirador National Park.
- Help the tourism specialist develop an ecotourism plan for Mirador National Park.
- Help the tourism specialist foster collaboration between communities and professional tour operators.

Environmental Education and Visitor Interpretation

- Lead DOI efforts to design and create interpretive materials and structures for Mirador National Park.
- Lead DOI efforts to Improve the interpretative skills of guides and guards.
- Working with the protected area planner, lead DOI efforts to promote visitor information and interpretation in Mirador National Park.
- Help the tourism specialist develop an ecotourism plan for Mirador National Park.

Civil Engineering

- Lead DOI efforts to identify and stabilize the best access route(s) from Carmelita to El Mirador.
- Lead DOI efforts to provide drinking water and electricity in Mirador National Park and along the Carmelita-El Mirador trail.
- Help the landscape architect identify and locate essential infrastructure in Mirador National Park and along the Carmelita-El Mirador trail.

Law Enforcement

- Lead DOI efforts to teach guards basic law enforcement, visitor management and emergency response, including communication with visitors, coordination with regional law enforcement officers and emergency responses.
- Lead DOI efforts to instruct guards on the uses of basic equipment.
- Lead DOI efforts to identify the equipment and material needs of guards.
- Working with the protected area planner, lead DOI efforts to manage and protect visitors in Mirador National Park; identify essential security staff, training and equipment needs.

Fire Management

- Lead DOI efforts to evaluate fire management procedures in Mirador National Park and along the Carmelita-El Mirador trail.
- Lead DOI efforts to identify training and equipment needs for fire managers, and to provide that training and equipment.
- Help the protected area planner identify essential fire management staff, training and equipment needs for Mirador National Park.

Information Technology

- Lead DOI efforts to establish an information management system for Mirador National Park for simple, yet critical, data for park managers.
- Lead DOI efforts to identify, acquire and set up essential IT equipment and materials, and train park staff in their uses.

Economics

- Lead DOI efforts to improve financial management processes by local tourism committees.
- Working with the protected area planner and tourism specialist, lead DOI efforts to identify and administer private concessions, and establish and administer visitor entry/use fee and concessionaire use/administration fees, in Mirador National Park.

SCHEDULE: ITAP is assembling 2 to 4-person teams for multiple assignments. These assignments typically range from 2 to 3 weeks in duration. The technical assistance will be provided in Guatemala. Generally, DOI specialists will make 1 or 2 trips per year for up to 4 years and spend an additional 2 to 4 weeks per year completing follow-up work at their home office.

PRE- AND POST-TRIP DUTIES: All travel and in-country logistics will be handled by ITAP. Background material will be provided to the selected individuals prior to departure. The selected individuals will be expected to work in collaboration with the ITAP manager, team colleagues and in-country counterparts both before and after travel to the region. Selected individuals will communicate both over the phone and through e-mail on the preparation and follow-up for the technical assistance.

Within 3 weeks of the completion of the trip, each team will provide the ITAP manager a brief draft report of the trip events, evaluations made, and recommendations for future related training and technical assistance.

COSTS: ITAP will cover all travel costs associated with this assignment (round-trip airfare, lodging, meals, immunizations, etc.). The salaries of the team members, however, must be paid by their employing DOI agency for the duration of the international assignment, including pre- and post-trip obligations.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Persons wishing to be considered for this assignment:

- Must have demonstrated experience in one of the technical specialties detailed above;
- Must be willing to live and work in extremely remote locations with extremely “rustic” conditions during this assignment (some positions require multiple-day hikes);
- Must follow required procedures to protect against diseases, insects and poisonous snakes and;
- Must have demonstrated ability to work with and adapt to the needs and abilities of agencies and professionals of different ethnic or cultural groups.

Highly desirable qualifications include:

- Previous international experience, particularly experience with protected area systems in other countries;
- Previous experience with indigenous cultures; and
- Spanish language proficiency.

Upon selection, candidates must submit a current physician-signed letter or medical review form indicating fitness for duty.

Candidates that reach the interview stage of the selection process must obtain supervisory approval for their participation in this program.

HOW TO APPLY

Persons interested in being considered for this international assignment should send a resume and/or letter of interest detailing relevant work experience. **Specifically highlight the technical specialty requested in this recruitment that you possess.** Please ensure that you include with your application materials the following administrative information; home and work address, phone/fax numbers, supervisor name and contact details (phone number and e-mail), whether you have a valid personal and/or official passport, date of birth, and grade/step. Please refer to the DOI-ITAP website, <http://www.doi.gov/intl/itap/> for additional information about our program, other short-term opportunity announcements, and our travel guidelines.

Submit applications (electronically is preferred) to:

Cynthia Perera,
U.S. Department of the Interior, International Affairs
1849 C Street, NW, Room 4444,
Washington, DC 20240

Tel: 202-219-0537, Fax: 202-501-6381
Email: cynthia_perera@ios.doi.gov

Applications will be reviewed as received on a rolling-basis. Positions will be filled as soon as a suitable candidate is selected. Applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.

All NPS applicants should copy their applications to Rudy D'Alessandro in the NPS Office of International Affairs: email rudy_dalessandro@nps.gov or fax 202-371-1446.

Any questions regarding the details of these assignments can be directed to Eric Greenquist (tel. 541-683-6114, e-mail eric_greenquist@or.blm.gov).

Selection Process

A short list of candidates will be interviewed by telephone. The entire selection process may take a few months. All candidates will be notified of the results of the selection process, notification may be by telephone, email or letter.