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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Five Travelers’ Philanthropy Workshops  
Offered in Osa Peninsula  
May 2-6, 2011**

A series of half-day workshops on travelers’ philanthropy will be presented at different locations throughout the Osa Peninsula during the first week in May. The workshops are open to tourism businesses, non-profit and community organizations, government and park officials, academics, and other interested Osa residents. The workshops are free, but pre-registration is requested.

The workshops are being organized by Fundacion Corcovado and the US-based Center for Responsible Travel (CREST), in collaboration with CATUOSA. The workshops are part of project funded by CRUSA that is designed to strengthen travelers’ philanthropy initiatives in the Osa Peninsula.

<u>Workshop Schedule</u>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Time</b>
Monday, May 2	Hotel Cooperativo Palmar (Cenecoop), Palmar Sur.	8:30 am a 12:30 pm
Tuesday, May 3	Salón Comunal, Bahía Drake.	8:30 am a 12:30 pm
Wednesdasy, May 4	Iguana Lodge, Puerto Jiménez.	8:30 am a 12:30 pm
Thursday, May 5	Lapa Ríos Ecolodge, Matapalo.	8:30 am a 12:30 pm
Friday, May 6	Hotel Sierra, Golfito.	8:30 am a 12:30 pm

“In these workshops, we will cover the definition, importance, and growth of travelers’ philanthropy,” says Mauricio Solano, Sustainable Tourism Director at Fundacion Corcovado. “And we will discuss how tourism businesses can help visitors to learn about and contribute ‘time, talent or treasure’ to support organizations in the Osa. Done well, travelers’ philanthropy can help to enrich the tourist experience while increasing support for local projects.” The workshops will also feature a 30-minute documentary, “Donating Time, Talent, and Treasure” about travelers’ philanthropy in Costa Rica and East Africa.

In addition, Fundacion Corcovado and CREST, together with tourism students at the University of Costa Rica in Golfito, are currently conducting surveys with hotel managers in the Osa to collect information about their community engagement programs and their interest in travelers' philanthropy. The preliminary findings reveal that several hotels already have well developed programs that support a range of social and environmental projects; however, most hotels do not, and few actively involve their guests.

A recently released CREST study on ecotourism in the Osa Peninsula found most tourists expressed an interest in contributing to local projects: 58% of tourists surveyed said that they are willing to contribute an average of \$68 more to support community and conservation projects in the Osa. Further, 80% of tourists surveyed said it is important to them that their hotel be socially and environmentally responsible. This indicates that, with better organization, the Osa Peninsula could be capturing more tourism dollars, through expanded travelers' philanthropy programs. (The study, along with CREST's new *Travelers' Philanthropy Handbook*, are available at: [www.responsibletravel.org](http://www.responsibletravel.org))

CREST, together with the Monteverde Institute, is hosting the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Travelers' Philanthropy Conference, July 20-23, in San Jose and Monteverde. "One purpose of these workshops is to help build interest among Osa businesses and NGOs in participating in this important international gathering," states CREST Coordinator David Krantz. For details about the conference see: [www.travelersphilanthropy.org/conference](http://www.travelersphilanthropy.org/conference).

"We also want to discuss at the workshops the idea of creating a destination-wide travelers' philanthropy fund in the Osa," explains Krantz. "This would enable tourism businesses to work collectively to raise contributions for projects designated as priorities in the Osa," says Krantz. The Monteverde Institute is spearheading a similar pilot project aimed at creating a destination-wide travelers' philanthropy fund in Monteverde.

Travelers' philanthropy is a relatively new concept, but it is rapidly growing into a worldwide movement and becoming part of the definition of responsible travel. At its core, travelers' philanthropy is about tourism businesses and travelers 'giving back' to tourism destinations by providing financial support, volunteer expertise, and material contributions to local projects and community initiatives.

To register to attend the workshop or for more information contact: Mauricio Solano, email: [mauricio@corcovadofoundation.org](mailto:mauricio@corcovadofoundation.org) or phone 2297-3013. For information on the International Travelers' Philanthropy Conference, contacted David Krantz, email: [dkrantz@responsibletravel.org](mailto:dkrantz@responsibletravel.org) or phone: +1 202-347-9203 x417.

#### **Fundación Corcovado**

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**Center for Responsible Travel (CREST) has offices in Washington, DC and at Stanford University**

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