



## Center for Responsible Travel (CREST) Newsletter October - December 2019 | Volume 6, Issue 4

### From the Executive Director

As we reflect on 2019, we at CREST are moved and inspired by the connections we've made through travel. On behalf of the whole team, I'd like to thank you for your vital support of our mission over the past year, and I look forward to all that we will accomplish together in 2020. CREST's final newsletter of 2019 discusses key issues facing the tourism industry and shares updates on our work to protect our world's special places and help local communities thrive.

As a nonprofit, CREST's programming is made possible by people like you. We hope you will select CREST as a worthy organization to support as this year comes to a close. [Make your tax-deductible donation today](#) to invest in our work to address tourism in a changing climate and develop sustainable solutions for tourism destinations, businesses, and travelers. In this moment of crisis for our planet and its people, responsible travel is more important than ever.

Wishing you a happy holiday season and all the best in the new year.

Yours in responsible travel,



Gregory Miller, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

**Impact Tourism: New CREST Resources Share Best Practices for  
Giving Time, Talent, & Treasure**



Following our third annual World Tourism Day Forum in Washington, DC, CREST released our latest report, [\*The Case for Responsible Travel: Trends & Statistics 2019\*](#). This landmark study includes a special focus on impact tourism, providing cutting-edge examples of how tourism businesses, travelers, and organizations are making strategic contributions of time, talent, and treasure to social and environmental projects in destinations. Prepared in collaboration with more than 30 leading tourism organizations and institutions, *Trends & Statistics 2019* finds that when done responsibly, impact tourism is a vital tool for fostering community development and promoting conservation.

CREST has also released the [video footage](#) of our 2019 World Tourism Day Forum, “Impact Tourism: Giving Time, Talent, & Treasure. Visit [WorldTourismDayForum.com](#) to view the event’s insightful and thought-provoking presentations.

Want to help continue the conversation on how the tourism industry can responsibly give back to the places we love? In 2020, CREST looks forward to releasing an Impact Tourism Handbook, featuring how-to case studies from many of the World Tourism Day Forum speakers, along with other best-practice leaders. To discuss opportunities to support this project, [contact Samantha Bray](#).

### **Project Spotlight: Developing Sustainable Indigenous Tourism in Chihuahua, Mexico**





In Chihuahua, Mexico, the CREST team has been working with two indigenous communities located near the rim of the spectacular Copper Canyon to offer authentic indigenous tourism experiences. Designed to help the communities benefit economically from tourism and preserve their land and culture, this unique project offers tourists the opportunity to participate in women-run cooking and handicraft demonstrations and take a variety of hiking and storytelling tours in the Canyon led by licensed guides.

In November, CREST Program Manager Ellen Rugh traveled to Chihuahua to visit the “Rarámuri Experiences” project and meet with local stakeholders, and we recently welcomed José Gardea to our project team as a Chihuahua-based Field Consultant. Visit [ExperienciasRaramuri.com](https://www.experienciasraramuri.com) to learn about the cooking, weaving, and guided hiking experiences and get to know the communities of Bacajipare and Huetosachi.

### **Proposed Port in the Cayman Islands Presents Threat to Coral Reefs**

CREST is concerned about a looming cruise and cargo port development in the Cayman Islands and its potential ecological impacts. The proposed project would require the dredging of coral reefs in order to accommodate much larger next generation ships that cruise lines say won't use tenders to ferry passengers ashore.

The plans involve Verdant Isle, a consortium led by Royal Caribbean and Carnival Corporation, building and maintaining the \$250 million facility. In return, Verdant Isle will receive part of the tax that tourists pay to visit the Cayman Islands for 25 years. As the [BBC](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-55555555) details, the berthing project is expected

to destroy at least 10 acres of coral reef – a vital resource that local tourism activities rely on.

The consortium, along with local government officials, say that the project will increase cruise passenger spending while minimizing environmental risk. However, cruise passengers made up nearly 81% of annual tourists on the islands last year, but just 22% of tourism revenue. The majority of tourism revenue came from overnight passengers, who often come to admire the pristine reefs and seascape of the island.

Caymanians will vote on the proposal in a referendum expected in early 2020. Learn more from the [The Caribbean Council](#), [BBC](#), and [Travel Weekly](#).

## **Holiday Auction Supports Responsible Travel Initiatives**

CREST's annual Holiday Travel Auction was held December 3 – 17, featuring packages from [15 responsible travel leaders](#). We are so grateful to these generous and motivating companies who work daily to ensure travel is a force for good.

Did you miss the Holiday Travel Auction but want to find the perfect gift from the one you love? Mark your calendar for CREST's Valentine's Day Travel Auction, January 28 – February 11, 2020.

## **Examining the Sustainability of Backpacking**

CREST Program & Research Intern Cassie McCabe spent years traveling around the world before pursuing her Master's degree from the University of South Florida's Patel College of Global Sustainability. In [this essay](#), Cassie examines the sustainability of backpacking and shares her own experiences as a backpacker in Europe, Southeast Asia, and Latin America.

## **CARE for the Cape and Islands Presents its 2019 Stewardship Awards**

A fiscally sponsored project of CREST, CARE for the Cape and Islands recently held its third Summit, "CARE about a Clean Cape & Islands: Protecting Our Environment from Plastic Pollution and Litter," at the Cape & Islands Realtors Association Conference Center. CARE's two annual awards, the Stewardship Award and the Youth Stewardship Award, are presented at the Summit to organizations or groups that have adopted day-to-day practices to preserve and enhance the natural environment of Cape Cod and the Islands. [Read about](#) this

year's Stewardship Award recipient, Cape Abilities, and Youth Stewardship Award recipient, Plastic Free MV.

## Support CREST During Your Stay at the Inn at Horn Point

The [Inn at Horn Point](#) in Annapolis, Maryland, is a Maryland Green Registry 2019 Leadership Award Winner. Located downtown and one block from Restaurant Row, the INN practices a variety of methods to reduce their impact on the environment, including composting, electric vehicle charging stations, and specialized rainwater landscaping.

The Inn at Horn Point is now offering the opportunity to support CREST during your stay in Annapolis. To confirm your reservation, call (410) 268-1126 and mention the offer code **CREST2019**, and 15% of your stay's proceeds will support CREST's work to transform the way the world travels.

## Two Alaskan Companies Join CREST as Platinum Sponsors

[Alaska Wildland Adventures](#) and [Diamond M Ranch Resorts](#) are the newest inductees into CREST's Platinum Sponsor program. [Get to know these inspiring companies](#) that are committed to responsible travel within their own operations and through their support of CREST.

## CREST Shares Our Experience



In addition to our field work and research, CREST makes it a priority to get out there and exchange knowledge to advance responsible travel. We recently had the opportunity to share our expertise at institutions and organizations including Washington University in St. Louis, Dalhousie University, and the

East-West Center. [Learn more.](#)

## CREST in the News

CREST has engaged in robust media outreach throughout 2019, sharing our expertise on topics including tourism and climate change, overtourism, U.S. travel to Cuba, impact tourism, and how to be a responsible traveler. Over the past three months, we have been featured in outlets including CNN, *The Washington Post*, *Travel Weekly*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. [Check out](#) our recent media appearances.

## FOLLOW US



The Center for Responsible Travel (CREST) is a 501(c)3 non-profit research institute, based in Washington, DC. Founded in 2003, our mission is to promote responsible tourism policies and practices globally so that local communities may thrive and steward their cultural resources and biodiversity. [Support our work here.](#)

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