

# Klamath Bird Observatory

Advancing bird and habitat conservation through science, education, and partnerships

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## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release:

### **Rotary Grant Awarded for Sustainability and Bird Conservation in Mexico**

The Rotary Foundation and Rotary District 5110 of Oregon and northern California have awarded a Humanitarian Grant of \$12,000 to fund an international capacity building project to be implemented in partnership with San Pancho Bird Observatory in Mexico and Ashland-based Klamath Bird Observatory. The Rotary Club of Ashland, collaborating with the Jaltemba Bay Rotary Club of Mexico and supported by Shasta Valley, Bend High Desert, and Cottage Grove Rotary Clubs of District 5110, initially promoted this project and provided the funding required to receive matching awards from Rotary District 5110 and The Rotary Foundation.

This grant will allow the implementation and completion of a project focused on bird conservation and sustainable community development in western Mexico. This project builds on Klamath Bird Observatory's successful model of developing professional, economic, educational, and conservation capacities in Latin American and Caribbean countries through a grassroots science-based approach to international migratory bird conservation.

A growing tourism industry along the Nayarit coast in Mexico offers low-paying employment that draws Mexican youth out of rural communities where there are fewer career options. Away from their families, these youth become easy recruits into prostitution and drug mafias, leading to the disintegration of social structure. Furthermore, existing tourism projects cause habitat loss that can result in population declines of resident and migratory birds. San Pancho Bird Observatory will use grant funds to build local capacity for careers in science and ecotourism that can benefit communities, maintain social structure, and protect natural resources of global significance.

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With support from Klamath Bird Observatory, San Pancho Bird Observatory will train 20 Mexican participants on the science of monitoring bird populations during a two-week workshop in the Pacific State of Nayarit. Workshop participants will then return to their respective communities and develop bird monitoring programs that collectively track the health of Mexican bird populations in the region. Additionally, San Pancho Bird Observatory will offer community education programs in at least six coastal villages to inspire an appreciation for birds and build capacity for birdwatching-based tourism. San Pancho Bird Observatory will also strengthen the connections among coastal Nayarit communities to create networks for support and information exchange related to sustainable development.

This project applies principles of sustainability and recognizes the links between ecosystem conservation, social equity, and economic development. The project meets an international bird conservation priority by building science capacity for Mexican conservation leaders, and also meets economic and community development goals of The Rotary Foundation. Dr. John Alexander, Klamath Bird Observatory's Executive Director, calls the awarding of this grant "a significant event with regard to sustainability and the links between ecological well-being, economic well-being, and human well-being."

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**Klamath Bird Observatory's** work focuses in the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion of southern Oregon and northern California, and extends throughout the western United States and beyond to impact conservation across the Americas. Sound science, with an emphasis on bird monitoring and applied research, forms the core of our programs. Central to our approach are collaborations among scientists, decision makers, and educators that enhance the use of bird monitoring within the adaptive management framework by assuring scientific results target and inform the specific decisions natural resource managers face. Also, recognizing that conservation occurs across many fronts, we nurture an environmental ethic in our communities and the next generation through our outreach activities and educational programs. Learn more on our website, [www.KlamathBird.org](http://www.KlamathBird.org).