



PROPOSED PROJECT HONDURAS

Save a Critical Wild Cat Corridor in Honduras

As Wild cats both large and small need room to roam. In the Americas, an age-old Jaguar corridor extends from Mexico to Argentina that, historically, was blanketed by virgin terrain. Today, human settlements, agriculture, and cattle grazing have fragmented this corridor to a serious degree. One of the most vulnerable areas is found in northwestern Honduras along the border with Guatemala.

Deforestation is an ongoing threat in the area, mostly for coffee and cardamom plantations and cattle ranching. Poaching also impacts wildlife populations, with much of it practiced for recreational purposes rather than subsistence.

Our partner, Panthera, has identified a 75,000-acre area of this corridor in the Merendon Mountain range that connects another Rainforest Trust project, the 46,681-acre Sierra Caral Amphibian Reserve in Guatemala, with the 54,910-acre Cusuco National Park in Honduras. We seek \$1,090,000 to support the designation of this area as a new national protected area, the Guanales Wildlife Reserve, in the department of Santa Barbara. The proposed Guanales Wildlife Refuge will result in a continuous block of more than 176,000 acres of protected habitat.

SAFEGUARD A HOTSPOT FOR ENDEMIC AMPHIBIANS

Cusuco National Park has been acknowledged by scientists as the greatest hotspot for threatened endemic amphibian species in Honduras. Given the proximity to the park and similarities in habitat types, it is anticipated that Guanales could also host a rich diversity of reptiles and amphibians yet to be documented. Biological surveys conducted during this project will confirm the species present in the area.

A number of threatened frogs are present in the proposed reserve area, including the Critically Endangered Honduras Spikethumb Frog and the Endangered Copan Brook Frog, a beautiful frog that is considered a flagship species of the Merendon Mountains.

PROTECT A VULNERABLE WILD CAT LANDSCAPE

Northwestern Honduras, where Guanales is located, has been suggested to be one of the most vulnerable sections of the Jaguar corridor that extends from Mexico to Argentina. Ocelot and Jaguarundi are among the species frequently recorded within the neighboring Cusuco National Park and Guanales will provide suitable habitat for large cats to move beyond the boundaries of the existing park.



75,000
ACRES

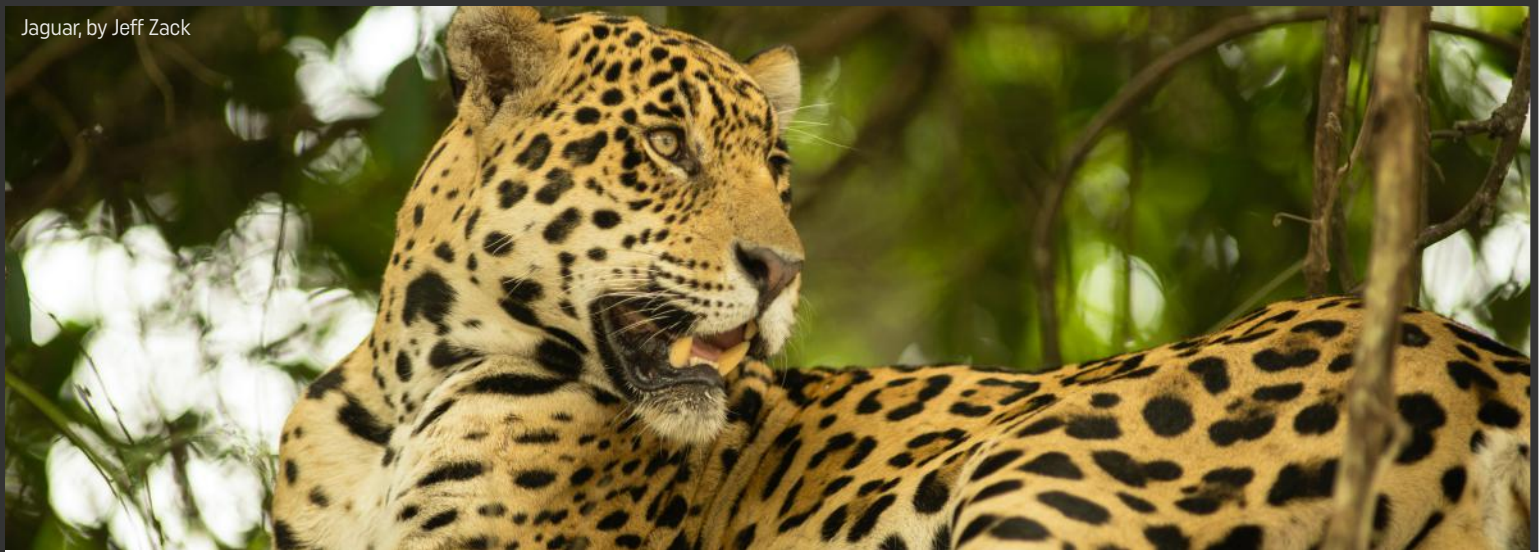
\$1,090,000
PROJECT COST

\$14.53
COST PER ACRE

8,319,615 mT
CO₂ EQUIVALENTS
STORED

KEY SPECIES:

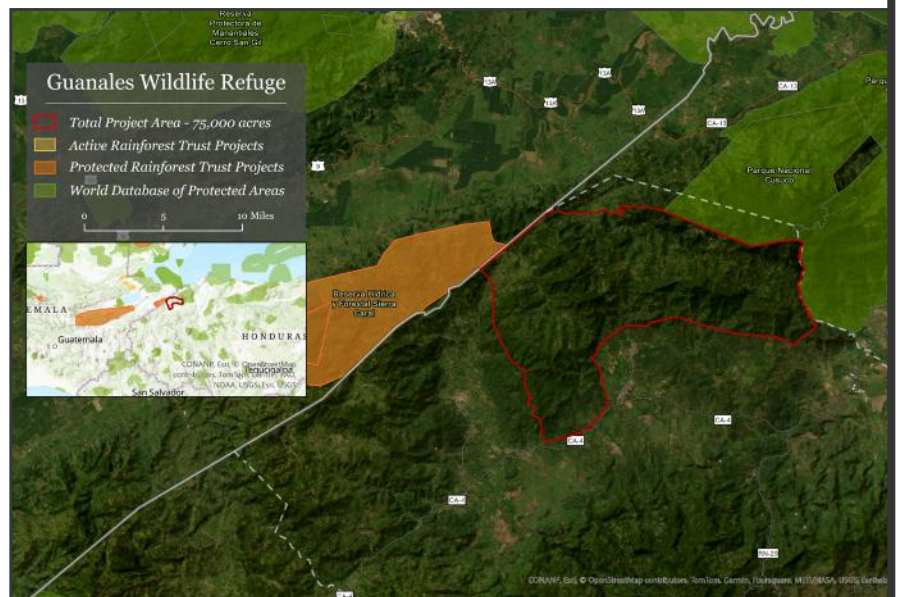
Copan Brook Frog (EN),
Ocelot (LC),
Jaguarundi (LC)



Our partner has extensive experience developing and implementing global strategies for big cats and, recently, they have expanded their mission to include protecting historically under-studied small cats.

ZONING AND COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT/OVERSIGHT

Communities will participate in management activities through their local organizations to oversee existing farming and legal forestry activities to prevent further fragmentation of the landscape. Community members will be hired and trained as park guards, will participate in forestry fire prevention and fire control, as local field guides for biological surveys, tourist guides and, most importantly, as decision makers through Advisory Councils (Consejos Consultivos).



The new reserve will have both a strict protection zone where productive activities will be restricted and a multiple-use zone where some productive activities like small-scale agriculture will be allowed. A new bill passed in early 2024 strictly forbids all mining activity in protected areas in Honduras.

As part of our larger strategy in the region, a 46,681-acre national protected area in Guatemala, adjacent to the proposed Guanales Wildlife Reserve, was created in 2014 with Rainforest Trust support to safeguard five critically endangered amphibians in this binational amphibian hotspot.

Village and forest in Guanales, courtesy Panthera

