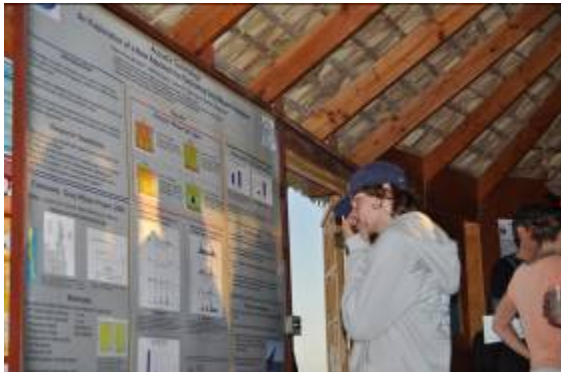


LSIESP 2010 Community Outreach and Education

Local School Outreach and Classroom Presentations: In February LSIESP researchers and Jordan Bailey of the NGO Philanthropiece met with the school teachers at the Ejido Luis Echeverria School to plan classroom presentations about Laguna San Ignacio's marine life and, the importance of conserving the lagoon habitat, and the natural history of gray whales. LSIESP researchers gave 8 presentations to primary, secondary, and middle-school students. The following week LSIESP researchers collaborated with the Eco-Tour Companies, the natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), The Ocean Foundation (TOF), the International Community Foundation (ICF), and Philanthropiece to organize a whale-watching field trip for 105 of the students and their instructors, many of which had never seen a whale before.



10-year Anniversary Celebration of Sustainable Development at Laguna San Ignacio: On February 28 LSIESP researchers collaborated with the Association Rural de Interés Colectivo (ARIC), Philanthropiece, the International Community Foundation (ICF), The Ocean Foundation (TOF) and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) to host a symposium and community celebration of the 10-year anniversary of the March 2nd 2000 decision by the Mexican government to cancel the proposed development of a solar salt production facility at Laguna San Ignacio. The celebration showcased local economic and social achievements during the past decade, and provided a forum to share ideas and hopes for future sustainable development and conservation of the Laguna San Ignacio. Presentations included: Local Economic Development in Ejido Luis Echeverria; Eco-Tourism Development by ARIC; Laguna San Ignacio Conservation Plan by Pronatura; the Ecosystem Science and Research program (LSIESP); and educational programs by Ecology Programs International (EPI). A panel of NGO, local business and civic representatives discussed topical local issues and concerns of the community. The symposium/celebration was attended by more than 100 guests that represented the local community, businesses, scientists, writers, conservationists, students, and interested visitors.



Ecology Program International (EPI) Pilot: LSIESP researchers worked with EPI's field directors to conduct a three day pilot study (March 27-29, 2010) for high school students to learn about research on gray whales at the lagoon, including photo-identification techniques used to identify individual gray whales. LSIESP researchers mentored 12 students in basic photo-identification methods and analysis. This pilot was very successful and LSIESP directors will work with EPI staff to develop additional programs for Mexican and US high school students in 2011.

Public Relations and Outreach: The LSIESP researchers participated in interviewed with television and media teams from Mexico, the United States (San Diego Channel 8 News), Australia, and the United Kingdom (BBC World News). LSIESP researchers also provided lectures on lagoon ecology and gray whales to several visiting Eco-Tourism groups that visited the lagoon. Following the winter field season, LSIESP researchers participated in academic and professional scientific meetings by making presentations and providing informational posters. Meetings included: the Mexican Marine Mammal Society (SOMEMMA in May 2010), The Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (May 2010), and The Society for Marine Mammalogy (November 2009). To improve the LSIESP's outreach capability, we are updating our internet web-site (www.lsiecosystem.org) with new pages and many new interactive functions. The new website will serve as the primary source for LSIESP research reports, news and coming events. The new website will be available in August .

LSIESP Supported Students and Graduates: LSIESP researcher Ana Liria Del Monte M. (UABCS) began working in 2009 as a natural history educator for a whale-watching company in Cabo San Lucas, Baja California Sur while she continues with her Master's studies at UABCS. Anaid Lopez U. (UNAM) will defend her Master's Thesis on gray whale vocalizations and lagoon acoustics in September 2010. Jessica Isordia (UABCS) completed her first season as a member of the LSIESP gray whale research team and she began studying for her Master's degree at UABCS. Former LSIESP researchers and UABCS graduates Benjamin Troyo V. and Sergio Gonzalez C. continue their careers in marine conservation and education. Benjamin is working for Ecology Projects International (www.ecologyprojectinternational.org) in Costa Rica, and Sergio serves as a staff naturalist and environmental educator at Cabo Pulmo National Marine Park (www.cabopulmopark.com).