

# island resources

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## *Join Us for Our 25th Anniversary*

This 1996 annual report is a little different, taking the form of a letter rather than our customary newsletter format. This is because we anticipate distributing a special **25th Anniversary** report early in 1997 to commemorate **Island Resources Foundation's** two-and-a-half decades of institutional leadership and support for island communities, island environments, and island development.

Although the Foundation has been a major contributor to global initiatives that enhance the development options of small islands, our central focus has been the Caribbean, where we helped nurture an "environmental literacy" which was only in its infancy back in the early 1970s. Many of you may remember our first conservation program — a series of research expeditions to Aves Island, a primary nesting site for the endangered green sea turtle. For many of our supporters that species-protection program was their first contact with the Foundation, and, with their donations, over twelve-hundred turtles were tagged and monitored during those early years.

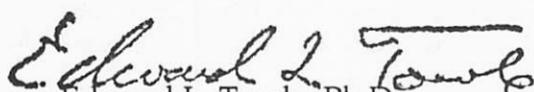
The environmental concerns and requirements of the Caribbean have changed substantially since then, as have the interests and objectives of the donor community working in the region. **Where once "the environment" was a side issue in the development process, it is now a central concern for island leaders.** In this, we believe, Island Resources Foundation has made a substantial contribution.

I foresee that the Foundation will continue to refine and extend what have long been our priorities and interests — *encouraging* an insular-based environmental ethic, *conserving* lands and resources for public use, *promoting* environmental sustainability, and *supporting* partnerships between public and private sector interests.

But now, before I tell too much of the story to be found in our 25th anniversary publication, let me briefly review some of the highlights of 1996 (a summary is printed on the back of this letter).

We hope that you will join us in supporting the mission of Island Resources Foundation as we look forward to the next quarter century of commitment to islands. **Please help us ensure the Foundation's continued success** by completing the membership and donation form enclosed. This year we have included additional incentives for those who respond to this 25th anniversary appeal.

Sincerely,

  
Edward L. Towle, Ph.D.  
President

*Only an island is a shoreline that never ends.*

# The Year In Review: Highlights

## Donor Support

- 1996 marked the 24th consecutive year of support by *American Airlines*, with donations reaching a total of \$100,000. American's first donation in 1972 provided start-up funding for the Foundation.
- *The Moriah Fund* approved a fifth year of support for the Foundation's Eastern Caribbean Biodiversity Program, with grants now totaling \$200,000.

## Training Activities

- *Cultural heritage teachers seminar* in St. Thomas to immerse educators in the history, cultural evolution and legacy of Caribbean indigenous peoples (support from VI Humanities Council).
- *Land stewardship workshop* in St. Lucia, 36 participants from 15 Caribbean countries (co-sponsored with the St. Lucia National Trust, Atlantic Center for the Environment and The Nature Conservancy).
- Workshop in St. Thomas on *metadata collection* to permit the cataloguing of key environmental data for wider access and use by planners, managers, researchers, and librarians (support from US Geological Survey).

## Publications

- The UN Environment Programme has published two Foundation publications (order from: UNEP/CAR-RCU, 14-20 Port Royal Street, Kingston, Jamaica). The first, *Guidelines for Sediment Control Practices In The Insular Caribbean*, was prepared by Foundation program associate Donald Anderson; the author of the second, *Guidelines for Integrated Planning and Management of Coastal and Marine Areas in the Wider Caribbean Region*, is Foundation president Edward Towle.

## Staff

- Congratulations to *Kevel Lindsay*, biodiversity program associate at our Antigua office. In June Kevel was awarded a US\$10,000 scholarship by the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture for professional studies abroad.

## Environmental Leadership Award

- Beginning in 1997 the Foundation's annual \$1,000 *McFarlane Award* for Caribbean environmental leadership will be announced in the pages of *ISLANDS Magazine* as we link our award for individual excellence to *ISLANDS's* annual Ecotourism Award for Caribbean projects promoting tourism and environmental protection. McFarlane nominees will now be selected by organizations receiving *ISLANDS's* Ecotourism Award.

## Biodiversity and Protected Area Programs

- The focus of Foundation-supported biodiversity activities in Antigua is *Great Bird Island* off the northeastern coast where Foundation personnel are working with Antiguan and UK researchers to protect this last surviving refuge of one of the world's rarest snakes, the Antiguan racer *Alsophis antiguae*.

Bird Island has been proposed as a *marine reserve and wildlife sanctuary*. During the year, with funding from the Organization of American States, Island Resources Foundation has worked with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda and with public and private sector interests in the Parham Harbor area to move forward the establishment of this protected area. A management plan and guidelines for the marine reserve were prepared by the Foundation's Antigua staff.

- In *Montserrat*, the Foundation, working with local planners and scientists from the UK-based World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), helped to initiate a users needs assessment for development of a biodiversity database. This has been a particularly challenging exercise since the island has been under siege for more than a year from an active volcano. One of its most spectacular eruptions occurred in late July when Ed Towle and WCMC researchers were on island.

## Tourism and the Environment

- With funding provided by the US Government under the Coral Reef Initiative, Foundation vice president Bruce Potter prepared two case studies focusing on the *environmental impacts of coastal tourism in the Wider Caribbean* — the first concentrating on the extent of coastal degradation attributable to tourism development and the second outlining best management practices to reduce the impact of coastal tourism in the Caribbean.
- Foundation president Edward Towle provided insights on *"beaches and the tourism industry — best management practices"* at a regional forum in Puerto Rico examining the management of beach resources in smaller Caribbean islands.

## Virgin Islands Resource Management Cooperative

- Under the leadership of Island Resources Foundation, institutions participating in the *VI Resource Management Cooperative* (VIRMC): carried out research on the island of St. John to reduce sedimentation impacts resulting from destructive land use practices; reported on research results at community forums; experimented with new pollution indicators to improve water monitoring programs; continued a decade-long forest regeneration and monitoring program in St. John; developed a draft framework for a unique beach monitoring collaboration between the public and private sectors in the British Virgin Islands; supported a Users Group for Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in the American and British Virgin Islands; and supported production of a video about the marine environment of the VI National Park.

## Island-based Use of the Internet

- Island Resources Foundation has been an early leader in supporting uses of the Internet in advancing sustainable development for small island states. We are a charter member of the *Island Web Consortium*, a worldwide network of island-based internet and world wide web service providers.
- The Foundation's home page is over a year old, and we continue to expand the information available at this site. If you have access to the World Wide Web, be sure to visit us at:

<http://www.irf.org>