COMMUNITY SURF PROJECT

Education programs connecting surfing and sustainable development through:
W-a-ter  A-d-venture  V-o-luntourism  E-duca-tion  S-us-tainabil-ity
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Thank you for showing interest in participating in a WAVES for Development (WAVES) project. This Info Pack is intended to answer as many questions as possible regarding our current programs, project history, location, volunteer activities, living conditions, travel, food and other logistics, health and safety, how you can contribute, dates, costs etc. We’ve thought about this project a lot and there’s lots going on with it – this is your introduction to the details.

An “Application Form” is also available for completion to register your interest in attending one of our programs. We believe your life will be better because of it. No joke.

The information in this pack is meant to expand on the information presented on the WAVES for Development website www.WAVESfordevelopment.org.

Mission

WAVES for Development creates life enriching experiences in coastal communities through Education programs that develop youth into healthy & empowered adults and Surf Voluntourism programs that engage travelers & transform their views of the world and themselves. Our community-based programs promote:

- Cultural Exchange & Understanding
- Environmental Conservation
- Life Skills & Healthy Living
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Sustainable Tourism
A Brief History

Lobitos is the first location for WAVES in Peru. WAVES launched its first pilot project in Lobitos in February of 2008. The pilot project’s aim was to learn more about what could work in terms of Education programming for local youth and Surf Voluntourism programming for visiting travelers. The success of the pilot project and positive response from the community led to ongoing programming organized by local leaders and a second group of Surf Voluntourists participating in 2 weeks of intensive Education programming during the school vacation in July of ’08. After the first pilot, WAVES hired a local staff member to continue coordinating limited activities for the youth. WAVES teamed up with the local school in Lobitos to begin offering ongoing educational and volunteer opportunities in October ’08. 2009 was a breakthrough year in terms of participation and impact. 2010 was also a year of growth and stabilization of the Surf, English and Environmental education classes and included the filming of a short documentary about our endeavors – CAPTURE: A WAVES Documentary. 2011 marked the release and further growth of the organization and impact. Program language was consolidated into Community Outreach, Environmental Health and Entrepreneurship Empowerment in 2012. 2013 is the launch of the WAVES Corps.

Where is Lobitos?

Lobitos is a remote fishing community in Northern Peru, 65KM (40 miles) south of the well-known resort town of Mancora, two hours North-West of Piura and half an hour drive along a dusty road from the oil-industry city of Talara. It is a very unique place; the town’s approximately 1500 residents live among an army base, active oil extraction, the presence of Peruvian and international surfers and the remnants of a booming oil economy from the 1950’s.

Dozens of abandoned buildings, such as the old officers casino right on the beach, are evidence of when Lobitos had both a large military population and the oil company had a large workforce living there. Today, Lobitos is most famous for its classic surf spots, with four quality breaks (some world class) within a 20- minute walk along the beach.
With limited economic opportunity, the youth from the Lobitos tend to follow their families into fishing. A fleet of small boats is active in the community. These boats cast off at 3:00am daily. They return mid morning after fishing familiar waters offshore among the dozens of oil rigs that dot the view to the horizon. A recent survey estimated that 90% of the Lobitos population (~180 families) derive some income from the fishing industry, with the average income well below the poverty line.

Additionally, education is not given priority. National statistics (www.inei.gob.pe) report that less than half of the youth graduate high school. As surfers, we believe we can make a difference in the lives of youth through education.

The limited opportunities impact on other members of the community also. Maria Luisa Saavedrah, President of the government funded food program in Lobitos, mentioned that there were 24 single mothers identified living in Lobitos who were “struggling” to meet the needs of their children. “Single mothers in Lobitos have a difficult time managing child care responsibilities, doing whatever work becomes available, usually food preparation or weaving. They often have to be taken in as ‘charity’ by families.”

In 2006 the Lobitos Municipality released their "Plan De Desarrollo 2006-2018" (Plan for Development). In the report, surf tourism is recognized as a key area of development and its promotion repeatedly endorsed throughout the document. Tourism in Lobitos is based almost entirely around surfing and kite-boarding, is concentrated in small areas closest to the beach, and does not stretch to the inland parts of Lobitos where the majority of the local population resides.

Surfers, by nature, wish to reside and eat meals in close proximity to the ocean so as to reduce travel to and from the surf breaks. This concentration of tourism has resulted in a small number of individuals benefiting from tourist spending in Lobitos, but it has had little impact on improving employment opportunities or living standards of the majority of the local Lobitos population.

Numerous tourism services are run by wealthy Peruvians from other areas who offer few employment opportunities for locals or reinvest their money back into the community. The theme of "foreign" or non-local control over tourism in Lobitos was continually mentioned by the Lobitos Municipality and local residents as being a primary concern for the town’s development. This “Plan de Desarrollo Local Concientado” mentions the issues, but unfortunately fails to outline any plan for how to achieve a more equal distribution of tourist spending. By offering opportunities to youth in the surf tourism space, we believe a surfing can be a tool or means for a holistic sustainable surf tourism solution.
Why We Do What We Do

The idea for the NGO (non-governmental organizations) grew from a group of traveling surfers who wanted to offer local Lobitos youth the chance to surf perfect waves at their beach, waves which travelers enjoy everyday. With no surfboards, wetsuits, nor the ability to swim, the challenges seemed great. However, following emails to a number of surf companies around the world, Global Surf Industries responded and eventually made a generous donation of 400 surfboards for the WAVES projects. Working feverishly from many countries around the world and within Peru, the original group of surfers was joined by dozens of supporters resulting in the two successful “pilot” projects in Lobitos in February and July 2008 (as mentioned earlier). In November ‘08 ongoing volunteer programs began.

During the summer school break WAVES staff and volunteers offer Swimming, Surfing, and Environmental Education classes and activities such as beach cleanups with a strategic focus on education. Volunteers have also helped build the capacity of the WAVES-sponsored English and Environmental Education teachers at the local school and assisted in their classes. On occasion WAVES makes English and Social Entrepreneurship instruction available to interested community members and organizations such as the fisherman’s union.

WAVES Surf Voluntourism programs have introduced an innovative form of tourism to Lobitos that directly addresses educational and economic needs of the community. By integrating into the community, those who participate with WAVES enjoy some of the trust we’ve built up over the years. As much as possible we look to support local families and restaurants through the presence of volunteers. For those of you who come for a short period of time, the focus may be to learn about the area and our development efforts, financially contribute to their sustainability. And have fun surfing.

Not only do you, as travelers, contribute to educational activities that empower local youth, you also create direct economic activity for businesses and families while living and serving in Lobitos. In addition to these impacts, the cultural exchange, friendship, and understanding created between you and the community members of Lobitos the lives of all involved are enriched.
Join Us in Lobitos

Programs Begin the First and Third Saturday of Each Month in Talara

WAVES is currently offering volunteer opportunities for Surf Voluntourists beginning the first and third Saturday of each month. You’ll arrive in Talara / Lobitos on Saturday for a weekend orientation before beginning service as assistants in WAVES education programs with local youth and families. The minimum commitment is 2 weeks to explore and better understand the issues facing the community and what we, as an organization are doing about them. You can extend your involvement by increments of 1 week. See below for information about costs, food and housing. One thing we constantly hear from volunteers: they wish they could have stayed longer. We encourage you to consider a month-long stay in Lobitos after which you will qualify to apply for a reduced rate internship.

Ideas on What You’ll Do

Based on your skills, experience and interest, there are opportunities to contribute to the ongoing programs in the following ways:

- Teach or assist in Swimming and Surfing classes for Lobitos youth (ages 8 – 25).
- Teach or assist in English classes during and after school in and around Lobitos.
- Teach or assist in Environmental Education classes and activities.
- Help strengthen or develop lesson plans.
- Teach, take and compile photos and video as part of a new film / photography program
- Help coordinate sports activities for the kids during and after school hours.
- Work with the “social entrepreneurship” team to help youth use feasibility studies to research, evaluate and ultimately implement business ideas (such as surfboard repair in Lobitos).
- Micro-credit program implementation through floor installation with Environmental Health program.

We’re interested in other personal skills and experience that you can bring to the program. For those of you staying for three weeks or more, we’d like to discuss utilizing your skills for ‘personal projects’. Past participants have developed personal projects including dancing, video production, editing, yoga, singing and trust building programs.
And the Cost?

We ask that all WAVES travelers make a minimum tax-deductible Volunteer Contribution that ensures the financial sustainability of the organization. A diagram of how this money is spent can be found here. A weekly Program Fee that covers expenses related to the logistics of your involvement; 100% of which is spent in the community.

Volunteer Contribution: $495/person minimum. WAVES encourages volunteers to organize campaigns and activities to raise the money while spreading the word about WAVES. WAVES is registered as not-for-profits in Peru, the USA and Switzerland. All donations made from the US are tax deductible as WAVES is a 501(c)3 public charity as determined by the IRS. WAVES has profiles on a variety of online platforms such as StayClassy, FirstGiving, and Razoo and we encourage you to use the online peer to peer platform that best suits your style.

Program Fee: $295 per week for each week. The Program Fee covers the following:

1. Pre-project preparation and briefings, email and phone support.
2. Transportation to Lobitos from the Northern Peruvian city of Talara.
3. Accommodation in the house of a local family with WAVES volunteers (and where our Volunteer Coordinator lives).
5. Financial support of the project to ensure its ongoing success.
6. Project management from local and international staff.
7. Access to WAVES' wide selection of surfboards during your project.
8. The employment and training of local staff to run the projects after your departure.
9. 24 hour emergency support.

Payment Details    Volunteer Contributions may be made via Credit Card or Paypal through any of the "Donate" buttons on the WAVES website. Checks may be made out to WAVES for Development and sent to: WAVES for Development International, Inc., 1016 Mtn River Dr, Lebanon, OR 97355. A thank-you note will be sent for all Volunteer Contributions as a receipt for tax deductibility purposes.

The Program Fee can and should be paid via Paypal or Personal Check at least two weeks before arrival.
Logistics

Following the initial projects in Lobitos, WAVES has built a strong relationship with a local family, Raul and Meche Tinoco, who provide lodging in their house. It has affectionately become known as the WAVES House because of their strong support of the programs (their grandchildren and nephew are actively involved). Located directly opposite the school, and a five-minute walk to the beach and primary surf break, it is ideally situated for the project. The relationship is a win-win situation, with the family receiving the financial benefit of housing volunteers and WAVES having a great set-up in a prime location.

The WAVES house includes:
- Running water (council dependent, but quite reliable)
- Flushing toilets (if it’s yellow let it mellow, brown flush is down)
- Shared rooms 2, 3 and 4 beds (one w/ private bath)
- Bedding
- Three toilets, three showers
- Designated kitchen and common area
- Fully secure lockable rooms and house
- Newly launched ‘Community Surf Centre’ with internet, surf photography base and small shop.

Food

Three meals per day are included in the Program Fee. Emphasis is placed on making meals nutritious, balanced, and delicious with available local ingredients. Meals range from local specialties (fresh fish and rice, chicken and rice) to volunteers' favorite foods from around the world. Vegetarian options are available upon request. As a volunteer, you will be part of a team that rotates shopping and cooking responsibilities. The majority of ingredients are purchased in Talara, while some foods, such as varied fresh seafood, are available in Lobitos. Breakfast is buffet style. Most lunches are prepared local families / family restaurants.

Transport

The program begins and ends in Talara, a 30 minute drive from Lobitos. To get to Talara, it’s possible to take an overnight bus from Lima (17 hrs, ExcluCiva and Cruz del Sur are reliable options) or from Ecuador in the North (also the border crossing is a bit tenuous). Internal flights are regularly available on LAN, Taca, and Peruvian Airlines from Lima to Piura, two hours from Talara in bus.

You will be met at the bus station at pre-arranged times. Buses travel regularly between the main cities and are safe, inexpensive and reliable, with many offering “cama” (bed-like) seats. “Combi” taxis travel to and from Talara half a dozen times a day for the equivalent of $1.00. This provides volunteers with access to shops, banks and other facilities including internet. There is limited internet in Lobitos at the moment.

If you have time and the funds, a good option is to join the WAVES project before or after completing a "Surfari" with Olas Peru Surf Travel out of Lima. WAVES has done a trip with them and can arrange for you to be well looked after, including surfing remote uncrowded waves from Lima to Lobitos. Ask us for more details.
A Typical Day

Volunteers contribute to the WAVES Education Program, and also develop and implement a Personal Project during their time in Lobitos. There are also opportunities to assist in community projects, and program administration tasks.

With such perfect waves in Lobitos, we recognize the importance of providing plenty of free surfing time to enjoy the surf and the surrounding area. As a result, we ensure every morning is free surfing time, and most afternoons. The program is designed to provide an effective balance between work and play.

Typical Daily Schedule:
- 6-9am   Morning surf and breakfast
- 9am-12pm Education Activity (group or individual); Personal or Program Project
- 12:30-2:30pm Lunch with local family / local restaurant / free time
- 2:30-5:30pm Education program (surfboard repair or surf class, volunteer-led activity)
- 5:30-7pm Surf
- 7pm Dinner, debrief, free time

Your Health

WAVES has extensive Health and Safety procedures in place. We have undertaken thorough risk assessments which we will share with you before you commence your travel to Peru - thereby reducing the risk of travel on your way to the project meeting point. We also have extensive risk management procedures in Lobitos, including Emergency Action Plans, First Aid trained staff, emergency communications equipment, a complete first aid kit, access to 24 hour medical services in Talara, and emergency vehicles available in the unlikely event of a severe medical incident. Proof of travel insurance is required (we recommend the Volunteer Card for all volunteers who are not covered) and you will be asked to sign a liability release waiver.
The Surf

With near constant offshore winds and few crowds, northern Peru really is a surfer's paradise. The months from November to February see the peak of the Northern hemisphere swells that line up mechanically on their march through the North Pacific past Central America to Peru. The southern hemisphere winter months of April to October send long period swells lining up from the south to connect with the long left hand points from Lima to Lobitos. Lobitos is uniquely positioned to receive swells from both directions, is rarely flat, and often pumping.

With options to surf heavy barrels at el Hueco, the Point sucking and peeling for hundreds of meters, and additional quality lefts at Muelles and Piscinas, there are uncrowded options for everyone. It is the sort of place where you can get surfed out every day!

For beginners, the protected inside of the Lobitos point has mellow waves offering ideal learning conditions. Peeling waves provide ideal opportunities to improve your surfing.

The water temperature ranges from 16 degrees C, 61F in July up to a balmy 24C, 75F in February, with your wetsuit needs varying from a full length 3/2 steamer to board shorts.

Other Cool Things To Do

Surfing Lessons
For beginner surfers and those who want to improve their surfing, you can participate in the weekly Volunteers’ Surfing Class with our surf instructor – including in the program. Additional personal surfing lessons can be arranged as often as you like for a nominal fee.

Spanish Lessons
Learning to communicate in the local language is an ideal way to increase your interaction with the local community. Group Spanish lessons are available with a local qualified teacher.

Local Tourism
Each fortnight you will participate in a one-day tourism activity. These may include visiting local caves, fishing with local fishermen, learning to cook Peruvian cuisine with a local family, and viewing the seals at the oil platforms. These activities are another source of income generation for local families.
Internships

Volunteers that complete 4 weeks of WAVES programs are eligible to apply for a limited number of competitive internships. Interns support WAVES staff in developing, planning and delivering programs. Internship opportunities are based on programming needs and the strategic direction of the organization. They may be located in Lobitos where you served or another community where WAVES is conducting community consultations for future programs. Internships are generally unpaid, but include reduced rate living/housing (covered in some instances) options. WAVES will work with educational institutions of interns who wish to seek academic credit for their work.

What’s Next?
- Fill out and submit the Volunteer Application Form.
- You may attach a copy of your current Résumé/CV (not required)
- Make a $200 contribution to confirm your interest. The remaining $295 contribution should be made prior to your arrival in Peru. Payment details are on page 6.
- The $295 weekly Program Fee can be contributed in Lobitos with prior arrangement
- Where possible, applications should be received well in advance of the commencement of the project to enable us to effectively coordinate your involvement.

Space is limited; get your application in today!

**WAVES for Development International, Inc.**
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