

Project Update: May 2015

On 15th May 2015, we held a training workshop with two ATV and the local Mexican community. The Mexican community, a group of fishermen and their families without electricity or running water, formed an ejido (community with land rights). When the five groups of ATV companies arrived, they began paying an "entrance fee" to pass through the ejido road to the beach. The groups shortly after that stopped paying, but continued to charge a fee to tourists "Ecological preservation fee". Yet, funds were never realized for any type of ecological preservation, rather, just the opposite. Thanks to Rufford funding, Carla Sanchez (Project Manager for ProFaunaBaja) brought the groups together at the beach, gave a short presentation, and initiated positive conversation, the first in over 10 years for this area.

The workshop attendees included two ATV companies trying to do right by impacting less and cleaning the beach, five members of the ejido, and a new sea turtle nest monitoring group, "Eco-Plan". After the workshop, we proceeded to train interested attendees how to record coordinates of nests, how to mark nests, and how to make a beach profile. The workshop is in an area of heavy ATV traffic, much of it illegal according to Mexican law, and within sea turtle nesting habitat. We are working with Eco-Plan and ATV companies to develop best practices for nest protection and conservation tourism with the ejido, the municipal government of Los Cabos, and the large network of nest monitoring groups spanning the elite hotel region of Los Cabos, **where the Rufford Conference was held in February 2015.



A small group of ATV passing while we were in process of making a beach profile.



Mexican community members, University students, and ProFaunaBaja staff making a beach profile with very simple, basic, and inexpensive materials that the community can replicate and take ownership of monitoring over time to measure changes and improvements from the project.