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February/March 2006

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A Costa Rican experience

By YuWei Gao

On January 10, 2006, Jeff Stanhope, Industry Liaison and Spectrum Officer in Whitehorse, embarked on a journey to Costa Rica. His goal was to participate in a Canadian-led project to erect communication towers in the rugged lands of Costa Rica. This project will support Costa Rica's efforts to sustain and professionally manage their ecosystem by supplying them with the right tools and knowledge.

YuWei: So Jeff, what was this trip really about?

Jeff: Basically I wanted to be able to travel, but also to use some of my skills and interests so that I might make a tiny difference in the world. We have all heard about international habitat protection activities, well, this is my contribution. The main goal is to help the Costa Rican government come into the 21st century in terms of its administrative field practices around biodiversity protection.

YuWei: Why Costa Rica?

Jeff: I have been visiting a friend there for the last several years.

YuWei: What did you take away from this experience?

Jeff: Basically I went down with my semi-arrogant western attitudes that our "good old Canadian know-how" will solve their communications problems in the field. I found out that it was a lot more complex, yet in some ways, similar to our situation here. But I also gained a lot of knowledge and satisfaction. I hope to return next year for what has become "Phase Two" of the project, and I would like to see it ratcheted-up a bit in terms of official involvement.

The following first-hand report details Jeff's Costa Rica experience in his own words. Jeff's great sense of humour comes through in his descriptions of the landscape, culture, and non-human inhabitants (think howling monkeys and army ants). And, of course, Jeff provides lots of pictures, just in case we don't believe him.

Happy trails: [A Costa Rican Experience](#) 