

Press Release for Immediate Release:

October 7, 2013

**Whales of Potosi Research Project Meets with Deep Blue Conservancy  
*Whale Study and Safe Whale Watch Training Plans in Place***

Katherina Audley, Founder and Director of the Whales of Potosi Research Project traveled to Puerto Vallarta on September 27, 2013 to meet with Keith May and Oscar Frey of Deep Blue Conservancy.

Deep Blue Conservancy, an advisor and supporter of the Whales of Potosi Research Project, provided the project with a fluke identification catalog listing 991 catalogued unique humpback whale fluke identification shots. During the visit in Puerto Vallarta, May and Frey reviewed the study area to be covered during the first season of the project and based on underwater topography and other factors made suggestions regarding the study area for the 2014 season and in future years. May and Frey also shared their previous data and strategies both for obtaining humpback whale fluke identifications and for successfully cultivating a predominant ethos of responsible, informed whale watching in small Mexican fishing villages.

Oscar Frey and Keith May also introduced Katherina Audley to a whale watch guide from the fishing village of Punta Mita, located 1.5 hours north of Puerto Vallarta and the group discussed the potential for an interchange between whale watch guides in Barra de Potosi and surrounding villages to work with whale watch guides from small fishing villages around Puerto Vallarta to share their experiences, serve as role models and instruct each other on how to succeed as safe, responsible, informed whale watch companies.

Plans are in place for Frey, May and local whale watch guides from Punta Mita to come to Barra de Potosi in early January 2014 for one week to teach boat operators on the Whales of Potosi Research Project and others with an interest in how to approach whales optimally while doing scientific research and as a guide service.

In other news, Katherina Audley, co-founder and director of the Whales of Potosi Research Project will be traveling to Barra de Potosi on October 8, 2013 to present the project to people in the community, along with ecotourism operators and other members of the business community in Zihuatanejo and Ixtapa.

A grant proposal was submitted to the US Department of Fish and Wildlife's Wildlife Without Borders – Mexico program on October 1, 2013 seeking funding for the project to carry it through the second year.

As of October 3, 2013, \$12,000 has been received in donations out of the \$17,020 total pledged to the project.

Jen Kilcoyne Design has donated graphic design talents to the project by designing a 'Just a Fluke Thing' sticker and certificates of appreciation for the project.

Those who have pledged to support the project and not yet donate, along with those who would like to make tax-deductible charitable contributions to the project are invited to do so by visiting the Oceanic Society's Whales of Potosi Research Project web page: <http://www.oceanicsociety.org/potosi-whales>. All donations will be dedicated entirely to the continued success of the project.

The Whales of Potosi Research Project has been designed to be a five-year program, which will include five seasons of humpback whale study and data collection, continued assistance with supporting a sustainable, responsibly run whale watch guide service and ongoing study and promotion of the Bahia de Potosi, Playa Blanca and the surrounding terrestrial habitat as a unique ecological hot spot worthy of visiting and protecting.

Please visit the project website, <http://www.whalesinmexico.com> to find more about the project.

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