

# Study Abroad Course

4 credits

on the

## Worldwide Evolution of Protected Areas Seen in Costa Rica



Students watch wildlife from the hanging bridges of Mistico Park.

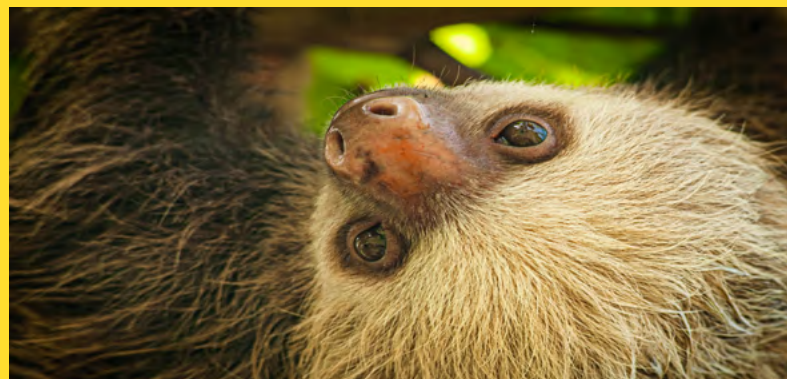
**PUP Global Heritage Consortium &  
University of Montana • 3-14 January 2024**

Throughout the ages from ancient Indian sacred forests to European royal hunting grounds to contemporary landscape- and community-based consensus decision-making, protected area management has evolved through waves of emerging values along with the rest of society. When seen through a holistic-Integral lens, we can discern patterns, such as worldviews, previously invisible and underappreciated and can project where protected area and wildlife management may evolve.

There may be no better place than Costa Rica to both glimpse protected area evolution throughout the world as well as hold a foreign study program on this topic given the variety of protected area management regimes in such a small, easily accessible, tourist-friendly country with a storied park history.

This **12-day, 8-site, 4-credit course** (transferable to most universities) is co-led by Jon Kohl, executive director of the PUP Global Heritage Consortium, and Dr. Jennifer Thomsen, Director of the Parks, Tourism, and Recreation Management Program at the University of Montana. It is open to undergrad and graduate students from any university.

You will learn about diverse protected area models around the world and how they evolved as we visit cloud forest, Caribbean lowland rainforest, coastal, and Pacific dry forest habitats across Costa Rica.



Two- (shown) and three-toed sloths have recently been named Costa Rica's 15<sup>th</sup> national symbol. You may see them during this course.

# Where we go

## Main Sites

### Tirimbina Biological Reserve

Tirimbina is one of the oldest private reserves, found on the Caribbean slope of Costa Rica. Financed completely by ecotourism, the reserve has robust research and education programs. It is an institutional member of the PUP Consortium.

### Mistico Park and the Wellness Park

In La Fortuna, Arenal Volcano casts its shadow over these two important parks. Both are family-run for-profit conservation projects with very different focuses. Mistico boasts the largest assemblage of hanging bridges in Costa Rica while the new Wellness Park integrates human wellbeing with nature conservation. The second is an institutional member of the PUP Consortium.

### Punta Islita Wild Macaw Reserve

Owned and managed by the Macaw Recovery Network, the reserve is the principal breeding and conservation area of wild parrots in the dry forest on the Pacific coast. Our own course naturalist is the bird program coordinator for the Network and thus we will get an insider view of the Network's wildlife management efforts. After our tour, we will visit one of Costa Rica's beautiful Pacific beaches.

### Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve

Monteverde is one of the world's most famous protected areas and the first in Costa Rica, owned and managed by the country's oldest conservation organization. The reserve is famous for its innovative approaches to protected area management including a new form of park zoning, developed with the PUP Consortium with whom the reserve is an institutional member.

### Santa Rosa and Rincón de la Vieja National Parks

Within the World Heritage Guanacaste Conservation Area, we stay at the dry forest Santa Rosa National Park research quarters from which we later visit Rincón de la Vieja National Park which contains one of Costa Rica's most active volcanoes. Both parks are part of Costa Rica's pioneering conservation area system.



Howlers, one of four monkey species in Costa Rica



Tirimbina offers a variety of ecotourism activities



Typical view of the cloud forest in Monteverde



Arenal Volcano crowns Costa Rica's principal adventure tourism region in La Fortuna

## About PUP

The PUP Global Heritage Consortium is a 501(c)3 tax-deductible non-profit incorporated in Colorado and whose mission is to support communities in protecting and managing natural and cultural heritage through our action learning network and evolving Integral tools. It has offices in the USA, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Colombia. Visit [www.pupconsortium.net](http://www.pupconsortium.net).

## Course details

The course has 3 faculty and up to 15 students. The PUP Consortium operates the course in collaboration with the University of Montana which will transfer credits to universities. Students must do background reading, keep a daily journal, participate in dialogues, give a final presentation applying values that drive



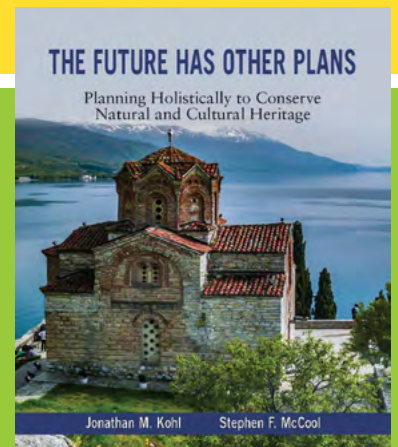
protected area evolution to any site of choice in the world, and deliver a paper 3 weeks after returning. The **course fee includes all in-country transport, food, lodging, entrance fees, student travel insurance, and a credit transfer fee**. No visa is necessary for Americans.

## Trip Leaders

### Jon Kohl



**Jon** is founding director of the **PUP Consortium**. Since 1997 he and PUP have a long history in innovating holistic approaches to heritage planning, visitor or public use management in protected areas, and heritage interpretation in particular. He co-authored with Dr. Stephen McCool PUP's foundational book that applies Integral Theory to heritage planning. He has many years of experience in heritage interpretation and tourism management in protected areas as well as being a writer on these topics (see his ResearchGate profile). He earned his degrees at Dartmouth College and the Yale University School of the Environment. Jon is also a dual citizen in the US and Costa Rica where he lives with his family and teaches at the University of Costa Rica.



### Dr. Jennifer Thomsen



**Jenn** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Society and Conservation at the **University of Montana** and serves as the Director of the Parks, Tourism, and Recreation Management Program. Her main research focus is on protected area management, sustainable tourism, outdoor recreation, and large landscape conservation. Jenn has worked on many projects in the Crown of the Continent including visitor use management for Glacier National Park, Flathead River System, and Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail. She has also worked on stakeholder collaboration for transboundary conservation and hopes to expand her work in the Crown of the Continent.



Foreign study students from the Associated Colleges of the Midwest observe a controlled burn at an experimental plot in Santa Rosa National Park (left). A rainbow guides visitors to the entrance of Rincón de la Vieja National Park (middle), while a PUP member and professor at Kansas State poses before the park sign.

## For more information

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[Download Complete Course Syllabus](#)

All course materials: [www.pupconsortium.net/fsp-costarica](http://www.pupconsortium.net/fsp-costarica)