

# Chile Forestry Study Tour 2008

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On March 2, 2008 fourteen NCSU students, faculty and staff members disappeared into the temperate rainforests of south-central Chile. This is their story...



## VALDIVIA

Founded in 1552, Valdivia was named for Spanish conquistador Pedro de Valdivia and served as our base camp on this trip. In 2007, the city became the capital of the Región de Los Ríos. Our guide to the region was Professor Pablo Donoso, who teaches silviculture at the Universidad Austral de Chile in Valdivia. While here we enjoyed an afternoon river boat ride, shopping in the fluvial market with the sea lions, a visit to the university's botanical gardens, a sunset along the Pacific coast, and many excellent restaurants.



## LAS PALMAS

The 4000-hectare experimental plantations at Las Palmas, north of Valdivia, were established in 1967 by the Universidad Austral for the dual purpose of research and revenue. Native tree plantations of fast-growing coihue, rauli, ulmo, olivillo, canelo, and avellano make up 75% of the area. In addition to providing timber and pulp, avellano trees annually produce 10-15 tons of nuts per hectare and ulmo is a prized species for firewood, which is the predominant source of heat in the region. Exotic species make up the remainder of the plantations, composed of redwoods (20%), two species of eucalyptus (35%), radiata pine (30%), and Douglas-fir (15%).



## LLANCAHUE

Llancahue is a 1300-hectare watershed by the Chilean government in 1930s to protect the city of Valdivia's water supply. Llancahue means "green place" in the Mapuche language and the remnant old growth siempreverde forest gives good reason for the name. The temperate rainforests here served as the site of NCSU Forestry PhD student Scott Sink's research. The property is in the process of being transferred to the Universidad Austral, which plans to restore degraded areas of the forest by integrating the local campesinos into the management. The goals of the restoration are to increase water yield, improve the conservation status of the forest, and encourage more ecotourism activities.



### Study Tour Members

Leaders:  
 Pablo Donoso  
 Doug Frederick  
 Susan Moore

Participants:  
 Greg Allen  
 Jeff Boothby  
 Bryan Davis  
 Jamie Harris  
 Cormac O'Doherty  
 Anjali Orlando  
 Jodi Riedel  
 Jasmine Shaw  
 Rachel Shellabarger  
 Scott Sink  
 Sarah Slover  
 Renee Strnad

## SAN PABLO DETREGUA

Nestled between two lakes in the foothills of the Andes, San Pablo de Tregua is a school forest of the Universidad Austral, where forestry students go for summer camp. The 2600 hectares were donated to the university due to unstable political climate in the 1970s. During our overnight stay, we enjoyed a hike through swamps with cipres de las Guaitecas trees, a friendly international game of soccer, a Chilean style barbeque, and a visit to El Presidente – a hollow 800-year-old coihue with a 186-inch DBH.



## MAPU LAHUAL

On our final day in Chile, we visited Mapu Lahual, part of Parque Pichi Mallay, an initiative of conservation and ecotourism started in 2001 by the Huilliche people. The Huilliche are a group of Mapuche, the indigenous inhabitants of Southern Chile and Argentina. The 1367-hectare preserve is designed to protect the rich coastal ecosystem, maintain traditional knowledge, and generate employment and revenue alternatives for the communities. The forests of the coast are dominated by olivillo and canelo, without the presence of the widespread coihue trees.



## PUYEHUE

Parque Nacional Puyehue protects 107,000 hectares of temperate rainforest along the Argentina border. Due to the volcanic activity in this region, landslides are a major disturbance factor in these forests dominated by coihue, ulmo, and tino. During our visit, we enjoyed hiking through the forest and soaking in the Termas Puyehue (hot springs).

