

Media

Miriam Cardenas

(951) 277-5112

Mcarden4@wm.com

University, Conservation Agency and Landfill Unite to Offer Environmental Sciences Program to Visiting International Students

UCR Tohoku University students learn beyond classroom walls during hands-on learning program led by Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency and Waste Management El Sobrante Landfill staff

Riverside County, Calif.—March 18, 2014— This month, the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency (RCHCA) and Waste Management El Sobrante Landfill teamed up with the International Education Programs (IEP) at the University of California, Riverside (UCR) Extension to offer visiting students a learning program specific to Riverside County's environmental needs.

The program, offered through the Tohoku University Center at UCR Extension, engaged the international students from Sendai, Japan in conservation projects and gave them a firsthand look at California's waste management system.

Tohoku University is one of UCR's strongest international partners and is located in Sendai, Japan, one of Riverside's sister cities. In February 2013, Tohoku University and UCR established the Tohoku University Center at UCR Extension in an endeavor to develop international education techniques for both universities. For the second year in a row, UCR Extension IEP, RCHCA and the Waste Management El Sobrante Landfill collaborated to offer the students learning projects that uncovered Riverside County's unique environment and local biodiversity.

A portion of the program took place on RCHCA and Waste Management preserve lands, which are located within the 11,243 acre Lake Mathews-Estelle Mountain Core Reserve. The students, most of whom had never experienced a desert like environment, received guided tours and learned about special habitats such as Riversidian Sage Scrub and Vernal Pools, a highly threatened habitat that holds water seasonally.

The students also partook in conservation work that aligned with RCHCA and Waste Management's joint effort to preserve threatened habitats and species and made Burrowing Owl homes and planted cactus on closed sections of the landfill. El Sobrante is one of the only landfills that restores its filled disposal areas back to nature as it progresses versus at once when it reaches the end of its lifespan.

Additionally, the students toured the landfill and learned about the site's environmental protective measures, seagull abatement program and onsite renewable energy program that converts landfill gas into energy.

To learn more about UCR IEP, one of the oldest and largest international programs in the nation serving 5,000 students from 65 counties, please visit their website at www.iep.ucr.edu.

About Waste Management El Sobrante Landfill and Wildlife Preserve:

Waste Management's El Sobrante Landfill is located in the unincorporated area of Riverside County. The landfill serves more than one million Inland Empire residents and is a critical component of Riverside County and the greater Los Angeles region's infrastructure. The site has more than 650 acres in permanent preservation and is a critical component of preserving open space in Riverside County. For more information on the landfill, please go to www.keepinginlandempireclean.com

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