



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Borderlands Restoration Network Field Studies courses are intensive and immersive practical training courses guided by a diverse set of subject experts that focuses on holistic approaches to the ecological and social challenges of the southern Arizona and northern Sonora borderlands designed to inspire the next generation of environmental leaders. Curriculum is targeted to undergraduate and graduate students, working professionals, and adults.

2021 Sonoran Field Course

Although BRN Field Courses have been offered since 2017, the week-long 2021 Sonoran Field Course (SFC) is the first taught entirely in Mexico, mostly in Spanish, taking place in and around Agua Prieta at BRN partner organization Cuenca Los Ojos Rancho San Bernardino.



34 applicants from across Mexico applied to the program with eight being selected.

Participants included college students and young professionals from the University of Sonora, Technological Institute of Sonora, Sonora State University, and associations such as Caminantes del Desierto and Nature & Culture International.

Facilitated by BRN's Sonoran interns, Anays Blanco & Jorge Chacón, the course included an introduction to migration, humanitarian aid, and the practical implementation of a restorative economy with guest speakers from Frontera de Cristo, DouglPrieta Trabaja and Café Justo in Agua Prieta.

Hosted by Cuenca Los Ojos throughout the week, participants learned about the concepts and practices of watershed restoration, native plant propagation, seed collection, sustainable grazing, grassland management, permaculture, arts and ecology, and cross-border collaboration. Program participants returned to Agua Prieta to partner with Border Arts Corridor for the installation of a native plant mural designed by local artists and christened by the Mayor and the Director of Casa de la Cultura. Each participant presented their detailed plans to apply the skills gained during the course in their home communities by creating their own ecological restoration community project.

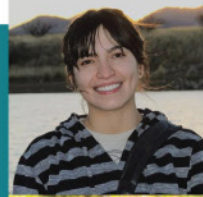
Above all, I want to help inspire my generation to build a society more worthy of this planet and everything it has for us, from the fascinating plants to the vast ecological interactions.

Jorge Chacón, BRN Sonoran Intern & 2021 SFC Facilitator



Creating Pathways

A cornerstone of BRN's educational efforts includes creating pathways for further learning and opportunity by offering continuing engagement through internships to participants. Four interns were selected from the Sonoran Field Course that are working on designing the SFC for 2022, as well as creating an alumni program for graduates. BRN is also supporting the graduates in the implementation of their restoration projects from the class, including the creation of community pollinator gardens, educational workshops, permaculture gardens, and providing technical assistance to protect endangered agaves to name a few.



Anays Blanco,
BRN Sonoran Intern



Jorge Chacón,
BRN Sonoran Intern



Clarissa Moreno,
BRN Sonoran Intern



Sofía Vargas,
BRN Sonoran Intern

HOW CAN I SUPPORT THE PROGRAM?

We welcome corporate sponsorships, donations from individuals, and grants. We also work with other nonprofits, businesses, government agencies and organizations.

To make a donation, visit borderlandsrestoration.org/field-studies and click the link to donate, or contact Juliet Jivanti, Education Coordinator at jjivanti@borderlandsrestoration.org



RESTORATION IMPACTS



2

media luna
erosion control
structures built



I believe the key to generating a shift to a more sustainable society is by transmitting knowledge and sharing successful practices for more responsible management and accessible ecological restoration alternatives. BRN has demonstrated a commitment to providing tools to communities and young conservation leaders to make this change possible, transcending political boundaries, raising awareness, and fostering care and appreciation for our shared environment.

Anays Blanco, BRN Sonoran Intern & 2021 SFC Facilitator





Transplanted

311

agave plants



Collected over

6

pounds of
native seed

What I liked the most was the BRN's willingness to train and educate Mexicans interested in nature conservation and restoration. The enormous impact of the organizations and people we met, such as Café Justo, Frontera de Cristo, Cuenca Los Ojos A. C., the BRN Native Plant Program, Douglaprieta Works and Border Arts Corridor was impressive. It exceeded my expectations.

David Gastélum, 2021 SFC Graduate, Biologist, Campo Luna Agave Farm

David Gastélum, SFC graduate

David's project focuses on the bacanora spirit agave fields where he works in ejido El Seguro in the municipality of Ures. Commercial crops of *Agave angustifolia* will be grown using regenerative cultivation methods that promote conservation and restoration. This includes allowing some agaves to bloom and go to seed, using permaculture techniques and vermicomposting, as well as water harvesting and optimization, erosion control, and moisture retention practices. In addition, all parts of the agave will be used during harvesting for bacanora. Stalks will be used to make textile fibers, the saite (remains of the fermented piña) will be used to light fires for cooking or campfires.



Miranda Díaz, SFC graduate

Miranda's plans to design and develop permaculture gardens in marginalized communities. This includes training the community, especially children and senior citizens, to manage and maintain them, as well as provide environmental education workshops and integrating a space for vermicomposting and native plant production for reforestation. This project will take place in Ejido La Yesca, within the municipality of Hermosillo, possibly utilizing space at an abandoned elementary school.

What I appreciated most was the integration of the participants, the socio-cultural aspect and learning about the problems that marginal border communities face and how they have created associations or groups to address these difficulties.

Miranda Díaz, 2021 SFC graduate, BRN Sonoran Intern, University of Sonora Alumni

We are excited to continue to support this binational collaborative course which brings deeper understanding to border issues and highlights the importance of arts and ecology as part of the process of healing our environment and communities. I was re-inspired this year as our two talented artists, Ashley and Stephany, worked with the participants to create a stunning mural which was commemorated by our mayor upon completion.

Martina Rendón, Board Member, Border Arts Corridor

THANK YOU

Faculty, Partners & Supporters

Arizona Community Foundation of Cochise

Border Arts Corridor - Martina Rendón, Stephany Zamarripa Castillo & Ashley Dahlke

Yunghi Choi

Cuenca Los Ojos A.C. - Director, José Manuel Pérez Cantú, Oscar Enrique López Bujanda & Gerardo Lagarda

Café Justo - Daniel Cifuentes, Carmina Sánchez, Adrian González

Frontera de Cristo - Coordinator, Rosario Jocabed Gallegos & Mark Adams

Douglaprieta Trabaja - Rosalinda Sagaste, Founder

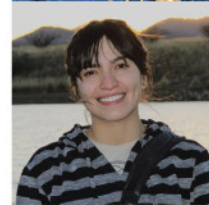
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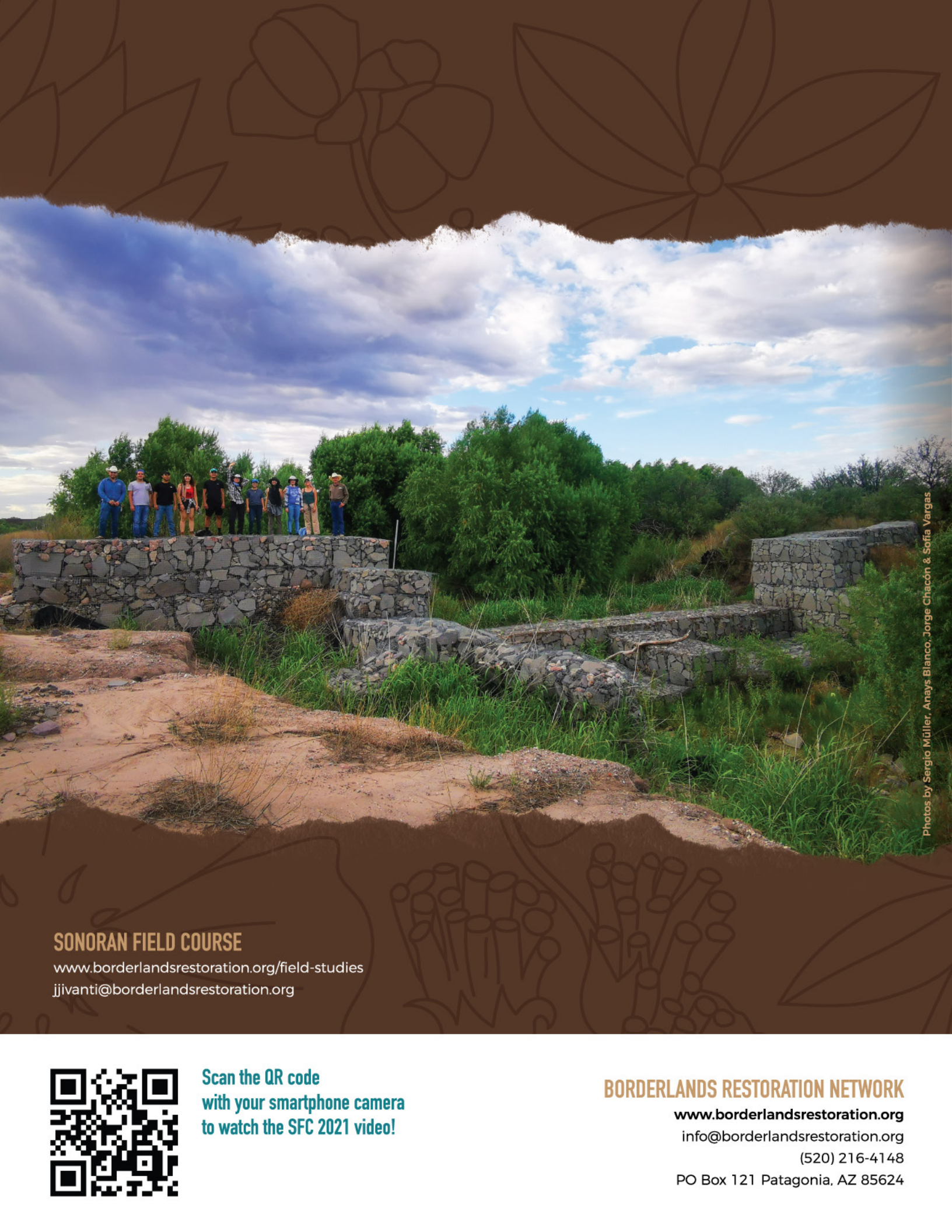


Francesca Claverie,
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Photos by Sergio Müller, Anays Blanco, Jorge Chacón & Sofía Vargas

SONORAN FIELD COURSE

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Scan the QR code
with your smartphone camera
to watch the SFC 2021 video!

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