



DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS
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April 26, 2002

Dr. Michael W. Hager
Executive Director
San Diego Natural History Museum
1788 El Prado, Balboa Park
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Dr. Hager:

I don't know if you have had the opportunity to attend one of the environmental education workshops conducted by PROBEA, but I observed one this week and I would like to tell you about it. The workshop was on using the "Ocean Oasis" film as a resource at the primary education level, and was given at Colegio Ingles in Playas de Tijuana. This school, one of the best in the Tijuana area, was so pleased with its previous PROBEA workshops that it devoted the day to the workshop, with more than thirty of its faculty in attendance.

I am a cultural anthropologist who is working informally with the group that is planning the interactive CD about the Tijuana River Watershed that the Museum is administering. I attended the PROBEA workshop in part to see how PROBEA's activities can be integrated into the CD project.

I am writing you because I was deeply impressed by the quality of the workshop on a number of levels. One was the great creativity that went into thinking about ways in which the film and its information could be used in the classroom, not only for learning about biology, but also mathematics and language. The exercises in the workshop ranged from an experiment in convection and marine currents to creating a menu from the food chain of the peninsula. The teachers were given an instruction manual that not only provided ideas and directions, but a detailed chart of how each unit fit into the curriculum of the various grade levels.

Not only the material, but the structure of the workshop was well done. The pacing was great, with a mixture of careful scientific explanations mixed with fast-paced fun exercises that had the faculty in stitches.

As a teacher who uses films in my courses, I am aware that students often watch videos very passively. I came away from the workshop with a greater sense of the wide possibilities for engaging students actively in using films as resources.

After the workshop I thought, "I've got to tell someone about this," and then thought that there was no better person to tell than you. I think you should be very proud of the work of PROBEA and the Museum in your binational environmental education program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frederick J. Conway". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Frederick J. Conway. Ph.D.