



Summer Environmental Conservation in Thailand

Kut Chang Area

Sub district Kut Chang is an extensively mountainous and rural area inhabited by Karen, Lahu, Lisu, Akha and other hilltribe groups. The area is overwhelming poor and underdeveloped, however the lives of the villagers have been affected by limited tourism in the area. Tourists visit the area while, trekking, bamboo rafting or riding elephants. All of these activities have affected the local environment, both the elephants and the rafting have lead to large amounts of bamboo forest being destroyed by the local people and businesses as they seek to feed the elephants and build rafts for tourists.

Over the last ten years this deforestation has been unsustainable and many villages are now without any bamboo forest. In the past, bamboo forests provided the villagers with a source of food, water and materials to build their homes and additional income. Furthermore, the areas are not supported effectively by government budgets, leaving many areas under-developed or ignored. Currently many villagers have to travel significant distance everyday to collect water for their daily lives and schools in the area have insufficient resources and space for all the students, leaving many unable to study.

School Dormitory for Baan Ba Khao Lam

This large Karen village in a mountainous area several hours drive from Chiang Mai has a school currently serving almost 200 Karen, Lahu and Lisu students from surrounding villages. The school is run by volunteers and supported by donations alone. In this remote area inside a national park many villages are located a significant distance from the school, this requires many students to sleep in the dormitory at the school during the week and only return home on weekends. However, due to the large numbers of young students wanting to attend the school the dorms are both over full. 90 students are currently housed in small rooms. An additional 50 students in the surrounding area are therefore unable to attend school and receive no formal education. The local district Chief has asked ProWorld to support him to fund and construct a dormitory for 50 more students at the school. Once the dorm has been built he will find the funds necessary to support staff to look after the extra children. Enabling all these children to receive a formal education will make a massive difference in their future.