



# American Citizen Services

## U.S. Embassy • Quito, Ecuador

ISSUE IX

OCTOBER 18, 2012

### ECUADOR BY THE NUMBERS:

Conservation International considers Ecuador one of 17 megadiverse countries. A look at some of the numbers shows why...

**Plants: 25,000**  
Compare this to 17,000 in all of North America

**Birds: 1600**  
More than double the number found in Europe.

**Reptiles: More than 300**  
106 are endemic, living only in Ecuador.

**Amphibians: 400**  
138 are endemic.

**Butterflies: More than 6000** species.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**Town Hall in Esmeraldas 2**

**Don't Forget to Vote 3**

**Looking for Wardens 4**

**Contact Us 4**

## A Message to U.S. Citizens From New Consul Charles Smith

Dear American Citizen,

Summer is traditionally a time of change at American embassies and consulates around the world, with new personnel arriving and others moving on to new assignments. This summer was no exception at our embassy here in Quito. A number of new officers, myself included, have joined the embassy's Consular Section to help provide consular services to Americans and Ecuadorians alike.

In our July issue, Ambassador Adam Namm sent you his regards and expressed his optimism over augmenting the

strong bonds that exist between Ecuador and the United States. He also reiterated his support for the work we do in helping Americans who visit or live in Ecuador. One aspect of that work is providing information to assist American citizens who live abroad in exercising their right to vote.

With federal elections looming in November, many of you have contacted our section for voting information and assistance. In this issue of our newsletter, we'll talk more about voting and how you can get the information you need to exercise this fundamental right, even from overseas.



Please let me say how happy I am to be in this beautiful country, and how proud to be part of our embassy team. I hope that over the course of the next few years I have the opportunity to meet many of you. Until then...

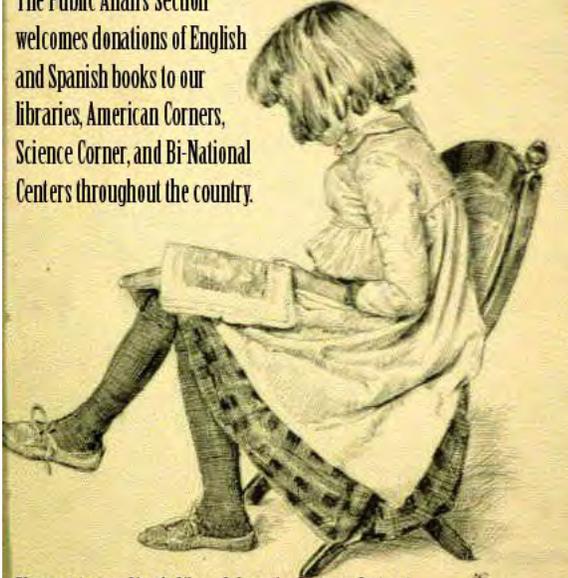
Highest Regards,  
Charles S. Smith  
Consul General  
U.S. Embassy, Quito

## ACS Handbook Available Online

The American Citizen Services unit has completed a new handbook for U.S. citizens traveling or living in Ecuador. It has information on the laws of Ecuador, what to do if you are the victim of crime, how to handle Ecuadorian visa issues and more. We will soon have printed copies available, but you can access it now online. As always, we appreciate your feedback.

Access the new ACS Handbook:  
<http://ecuador.usembassy.gov/security-and-safety/american-citizen-services-handbook.html>

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Please contact our Lincoln Library Information Resource Center at [centrolincolnquito@gmail.com](mailto:centrolincolnquito@gmail.com) or 593-2-398-5282 or 593-2-398-5148.

# U.S. EMBASSY TOWN HALL



EMBAJADA DE LOS EE.UU.

The Embassy of the United States of America is pleased to invite you to a Town Hall meeting on Wednesday, October 24 from 6:00-7:00PM at Pontífica Universidad Católica del Ecuador - Sede Esmeraldas, at Calle Espejo y Santa Cruz in Esmeraldas.

## PROGRAM

- Presentation on American Citizen Services
- Questions and Answers

Following the presentations, fee services including passports, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, and notarial services will be provided. In addition, Embassy representatives will be available to answer questions concerning federal benefits, crisis preparedness and security. Payments for consular services must be in cash, please bring exact change.

If you would like to attend, or have questions, please e-mail us to: [ACSQuito@state.gov](mailto:ACSQuito@state.gov)



## Don't Forget to Vote!

**Have a say in our country's future.** One of our most treasured values is the right and the privilege to vote – to participate actively in our country's democratic process. This November, U.S. citizens will elect a President, a Vice President, one-third of the Senate, and the entire House of Representatives. The U.S. Embassy in Ecuador encourages all U.S. citizens to participate in this year's elections, and stands ready to help you vote.

**Almost all overseas U.S. citizens can vote.** Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia now allow adult children who have never resided in the United States to vote using their parents' state of voting residence. Details are available on the FVAP website at <http://www.fvap.gov/reference/nvr-res.html>.

**Register and request a ballot.** To vote, new laws require you to complete and submit a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) this calendar year. The FPCA allows you to register to vote and request an absentee ballot. If you haven't yet done so, we urge you to do so now. The easiest way to complete it is online at [www.FVAP.gov](http://www.FVAP.gov). Depending on your State's rules, you then send it to your local election officials electronically or by mail.

**Make your vote count!** Follow your State's absentee voting procedures carefully. Send in your FPCA before the registration deadline. When you get your ballot, vote and mail it promptly so it reaches local election officials by your State's absentee ballot receipt deadline.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** New absentee voting laws are in effect for the 2012 elections. You may no longer automatically receive ballots based on a previous absentee ballot request. All U.S. citizens outside the United States who want to vote by absentee ballot in U.S. elections should complete a new Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) every year. States are now required to send out ballots 45 days before an election. No matter what State you vote in, you can now ask your local election officials to provide your blank ballots to you electronically (by email, internet download, or fax, depending on your State). You can now also confirm your registration and ballot delivery online. Be sure to include your email address on the form to take advantage of the electronic ballot delivery option. This is the fastest and most reliable way to receive your ballot on time, and we strongly recommend every voter take advantage of it. Learn more at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website at [www.FVAP.gov](http://www.FVAP.gov).

# Embassy Quito is Looking for Wardens

*Wardens are currently needed in the following provinces:  
Bolivar, Orellana, Santo Domingo, and Sucumbios*

A warden is a private U.S. citizen who volunteers to assist the American Citizen Services unit by communicating with Americans in Ecuador, preparing for disasters and alerting Americans to emergency situations. Wardens provide updates on ongoing events to Americans in their district and assist in the enrollment of newcomers in the Department of State's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\) program](#). In emergencies, wardens may be called upon to help locate missing Americans, or visit an American citizen in a jail or hospital.

**If you are interested in becoming a warden, please contact us at [ACSQuito@state.gov](mailto:ACSQuito@state.gov).**

Other Warden responsibilities include:

Preparing, updating and maintaining a list of phone numbers and addresses (including email addresses) of U.S. citizens residing in the warden's area.

Assisting the American Citizens Services unit of the U.S. Embassy in selecting assembly areas and routes for use in the event of an evacuation in the warden's area.

As local residents, some Wardens may have useful contacts that they can call on for information and/or assistance in their areas. They can provide advice or information on local conditions to the Consular Office or perform specific services, such as taking possession of a deceased's American's belongings.

## Contact Us



**Bureau of Consular Affairs: Secure Borders, Open Doors"**

Embassy website: <http://ecuador.usembassy.gov>



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The telephone number for American Citizen Service inquiries is **(011 593-2) 398-5300**.

Public call-in hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. For after-hours emergencies, call **(011 593-2) 398-5200**.

**ADDRESS:** Avigiras E12-170 y Eloy Alfaro

**EMAIL:** [ACSQuito@state.gov](mailto:ACSQuito@state.gov)