

EXCITING NEW DISCOVERIES ON RASPACULO RIVER



While undertaking field investigations on the rare Scarlet Macaw along the Upper Macal and Raspaculo Rivers, Greg Sho of Maya Center and co-investigator for the Belize-based Wildlife Trust Scarlet Macaw study, located an active nest within 15 meters of the Raspaculo River. On his way to check the nest, he also found the remains of a Maya Ruin.

"I was fortunate to be in the right place and the right time. The parents had returned to feed their chicks and I saw them fly into the nest hole as I kayaked by." Greg Sho was quick to note that both the new nest site and the Maya Ruin were located well within the flood zone of the proposed Chalillo Dam.

"This would be a terrible loss", said Sho. It is both our natural and cultural heritage at risk here. Both would be drowned".

Sharon Matola, principal investigator for the project, recently traveled to New FoundLand by invitation from two Canada based NGOs, and worked to inform people in that area about the Chalillo Dam project. "It was a surprise for me to learn that Fortis, Inc, the power company pushing to develop the Chalillo Dam, which would flood this exquisite environment in Belize, is actually forbidden to develop hydro-projects of similar profile in their home territory. This smacks of "We can't do a bad project in our own country, so let's deliver the goods somewhere else."

Greg Sho insists that the river valley is a vital part of the Belizean heritage. "I have been all over this country. There is no place like the Raspaculo River. We must save it."

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