

Save the La Flor Bridge

MHA decided to broaden its outreach beyond its immediate community to help with an international project—rebuilding a badly deteriorated suspension bridge in the remote mountains of Nicaragua. Through relationships in Charlotte, Rick Moore and Louis Hackney learned that a small, mobile team was being formed to travel to the village of La Flor in the central highlands. The village of La Flor was being supported by a mission group, Just Hope. Just Hope's local coordinator had alerted the organization that the suspension bridge connecting La Flor to the world had deteriorated to the point where it was a safety risk for the many adults and children who used it daily to get to jobs, school and markets. Without it, the residents of La Flor would be forced to cross a river, waterfall and rapids.



The La Flor Bridge prior to repairs.



Residents of La Flor, Nicaragua.

MHA intended to lend its engineering expertise—and possibly design a new bridge, after an initial site visit was made to assess the conditions and make emergency repairs.

On May 9, 2014 seven men departed from Charlotte, including Rick, to assess/repair the bridge before the onset of the rainy season. Upon arriving at the village, the team discovered the bridge was in much worse condition than recent photos and videos had indicated. The bridge needed to be substantially rebuilt right then—not after the rainy season.



Rick Moore during reconstruction of the bridge.

Working non-stop for 3 long days and into the dark using headlamps and climbing harnesses for safety, the team used available materials to replace worn and corroded aircraft cables, steel piping and clamps, and wood stringers and decking. The local indigenous wood was so dense and heavy that nothing could be nailed—it all had to be drilled and fastened with stainless steel screws.

At the completion of the project, the bridge had been re-leveled and substantially rebuilt making it safe and usable for years to come. The villagers came down the mountain to celebrate and ask blessing on the repaired structure, singing songs and asking prayers. Dozens of children came, too, to sing and celebrate.

MHA is looking for additional ways to support the village of La Flor and its friendly inhabitants.