

CASSP newsletter

Volume 1, Number 1, January 2002

CASSP Celebrates Third Anniversary

by Beth and Chris Padon

The California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program (CASSP) began in a meeting in January, 1999, at the Sacramento office of Russ Kaldenberg, State Archaeologist for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Everyone had heard stories about more people visiting archaeological sites on public lands and about the damage that resulted, both accidental and deliberate. But there was little hard data. From this meeting, the idea developed to recruit volunteers from the public to regularly visit and monitor archaeological sites on public lands and then report their condition to agency archaeologists.

The Society for California Archaeology (SCA) has the mission and expertise for this type of project. With assistance and guidance from the BLM, the SCA formed a new committee for site stewardship to oversee the California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program.

Since 1999, seven teams of CASSP volunteers have been formed; at least seven more teams will be trained this year. CASSP is providing valuable assistance to land managers and rewarding experiences to all participants.

Happy anniversary, CASSP.



BLM archaeologist Judyth Reed answers a question about local archaeology during lunch break at the volunteer site steward field training near Jawbone Canyon. (Top and bottom photos by Chris Padon.)



CASSP coordinator Beth Padon, with Herb Dallas and Kathleen Franklin, California State Parks, discuss safety issues at the Tehachapi workshop.

In this issue

Report from the Field: Site stewardship at the Lake Oroville State Recreation Area demonstrates the effectiveness of volunteer monitors.

Report from the SCA: The Society for California Archaeology (SCA) supports and directs CASSP. The 36th SCA Annual Meeting, held in San Diego, will include CASSP participation.

Site Steward Report: The "reverse archaeology" project at the BLM Ridgecrest Field Office on Labor Day weekend, 2001.

Sponsors: The California Office of the Bureau of Land Management and the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division of California State Parks are important partners in CASSP.

Calendar: The latest workshop schedules for BLM Field Offices for the year 2002 are announced.

Report from the Field

Tribal People Protecting Tribal Heritage at Lake Oroville

By Janet P. Eidsness

Before the Oroville Dam flooded the lower reaches of the Feather River in the 1960s, Enterprise was a small, predominately Indian town. Born in 1944, Konkow Maidu descendent Bruce Steidl remembers the old swimming holes, fishing places, the one-room school attended by successive generations, the gathering place called Big Kate's by the bridge, and the old trees along the river. When Bruce was 16, the town was flooded beneath the waters of Lake Oroville, and the community was displaced and dispersed. Gone was a way of life. As he matured, served in Vietnam and resettled in the Lake Oroville area with his wife, Leslie, Bruce witnessed the horrible destruction and desecration of the age-old Maidu cultural sites around Lake Oroville by looters, grave robbers, and artifact collectors.

Leslie Steidl, archaeologist for the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) at the Lake Oroville State Recreation Area (LOSRA), read about the Site Stewardship Program in the Society for California Archaeology (SCA) Newsletter. For her, the concept of tying into this program was a "no brainer," knowing that DPR did not have the manpower or funds to actively manage and protect the many Native American sites within the unit. When risks to cultural resources in DPR units across the state were analyzed in 1986, the record showed that LOSRA sites outside the reservoir pool were the most threatened and vandalized of all. Particularly at risk were the cultural sites in a uniquely preserved, approximately 1000-acre portion of LOSRA in the Sierra foothills dominated by native oaks and grasslands and containing two ethnographic Maidu villages, multiple cupule boulders, and two Indian cemeteries still in use by the local people.

This area of LOSRA was selected as the target area for monitoring by trained site stewards, because of its history of vandalism, remote location, end-of-the-road isolation, and high cultural value to Maidu people, especially members of the Enterprise Rancheria. Before this portion of LOSRA was acquired by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for the Lake Oroville Dam and Reservoir Project, it was home to Maidu families who owned the land outright. While DWR owns the lands within LOSRA, land management was and has been under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Parks and Recreation. An early proposal to develop this area

Suppose you travel to the redwoods and are awed—as all are—by the trees soaring up into the clouds.

Can you imagine being so moved by the sight that you'd pull a chain saw out of your car to cut a tree down and take it home with you?

Can you imagine justifying such an act as a show of respect for the forest?

Of course not. And yet that's exactly what happens with many visitors to archaeological sites around the state.

From *Chico Enterprise Record* Editorial, April 24, 2001

into a campground was squashed and, over time, active management and patrolling by DPR became a low priority within this more remote area of LOSRA. Since the land came into DPR's management, vegetation has become brushier due to cessation of traditional Indian burning practices.

In the late 1980s and through the 1990s, nearly a third of the target monitoring area has systematically surveyed for archaeological sites by DPR archaeologists Betty Rivers and later, Leslie Steidl, among others. Betty's field observations, compared to earlier site records, led DPR to place large boulders to block vehicular access where sites were being extensively dug into (in some instances it appeared that midden was being shoveled into pickups and hauled away for gardens). In 1991, this effort won DPR statewide recognition for successful cultural resources management. However, Leslie's record of monitoring and photodocumenting sites over the past ten years shows that looting and vandalism still continue at a high rate.

Beth and Chris Padon of Discovery Works, in partnership with SCA, DPR, and the Enterprise Rancheria conducted a CASSP training program for LOSRA in March, 2001. By all accounts, this is a real success story and the first of its kind for DPR and for a California Indian Tribe. Since trained stewards began monitoring the initially targeted 11 sites in 2001, there has been no apparent incident of illicit excavation at the target LOSRA area. However, on the first day of monitoring, a looter was caught excavating with a hoe and collecting artifacts at an unrecorded LOSRA midden site, outside of the target area. Since then about a dozen others have been cited, and several have been prosecuted.

All stewards are Maidu descendents affiliated with Enterprise Rancheria, and each is hugely committed to monitoring site conditions at least once a week throughout the year. One of the stewards is a traditional healer, who gathers native plants on

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Site Stewardship and the Society for California Archaeology

by Sannie Osborn

It is my pleasure, as President of the Society for California Archaeology (SCA), to have this opportunity to discuss the preservation of California's non-renewable archaeological resources and the role of SCA's Site Stewardship Committee which sponsors the California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program (CASSP). The SCA is a nonprofit scientific and educational organization dedicated to research, understanding, interpretation and conservation of California's heritage. The SCA seeks to increase public appreciation and support for archaeology in California by encouraging the conservation of prehistoric and historic archaeological resources for future research and interpretation and by discouraging vandalism and commercial exploitation of these archaeological resources. I would especially like to thank those of you who voluntarily take on this responsibility by participating in CASSP.

The SCA has several committees, each chaired by one of our members and represented by an SCA Executive Board member. The Site Stewardship Committee is one of our most active committees, supervising CASSP, forming conservation partnerships with federal and state land managing agencies, and developing training initiatives to local citizens interested in participating in archaeological site conservation. This committee

reports regularly to the SCA Executive Board and since 1999 in partnership with CASSP has been instrumental in training over 100 site stewards statewide. Eight additional workshops are scheduled for 2002. Through its SCA sponsorship, CASSP has been working closely with California State Parks, Bureau of Land Management, and the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission to develop and host training opportunities. CASSP is also working closely with the SCA Native American Programs Committee to coordinate their efforts.

You can join other archaeologists and members of the public in archaeological site stewardship activities throughout the state through both CASSP, the SCA's annual Archaeology Month events each May, the Avocational Society and Education committees, Native American Programs. I encourage you to become a member of SCA and attend our regional and statewide meetings (we are meeting April 4-7 in San Diego this year). Our one thousand members include professional and avocational archaeologists, historians, teachers, Native Americans, museum specialists, as well as interested members of the public. The SCA appreciates the efforts of the many volunteer site stewards who spend their own time and money to take training, monitor sites, and prepare reports. You are making important contributions to SCA's goals of encouraging respect, appreciation and a better understanding of California's diverse cultural heritage. The results of CASSP are impressive, immediate, and tangible. SCA is offering a special discounted membership invitation to active CASSP volunteers. Among the many membership benefits are the quarterly newsletter, the annual proceedings, and reduced registration fees at the annual meeting.

SCA Annual Meeting in San Diego, April 4-7, 2002

The 36th Annual Meeting of the Society for California Archaeology will be held at the Doubletree Hotel-Mission Valley in San Diego from Thursday, April 4, through Sunday, April 7.

A plenary session titled *Teaching Archaeology in the 21st Century* will open the meetings on Thursday morning. Organized symposia and general sessions will begin Thursday afternoon and continue throughout the meetings. An opening reception will be held Thursday evening on the ferry boat *Berkeley*. The Binational Reception and Silent Auction will be held Friday evening in the new wing of the San Diego Natural History Museum. The awards dinner, featuring a special guest speaker, will be held on Saturday evening, with dancing afterward.

During the meetings, information about CASSP, including photos from site stewards, notebooks from past training workshops, will be on display at the book room. CASSP volunteers will be available to share their experiences and answer questions.

SCA members will receive registration materials by mail. Registration, and membership, information also is available at the Society's web site, www.scanet.org.



THE SOCIETY FOR CALIFORNIA ARCHAEOLOGY

Report from the Field (continued)

Tribal People Protecting Tribal Heritage at Lake Oroville

her field outings to share with housebound elders. Another expressed his gratitude for being able to do something to actively protect his heritage and mentioned, off the cuff, that he clocked 300 hours of volunteer time last year. With great delight and pride, he noted how awestruck his grandchildren were when they first accompanied him on his rounds, seeing firsthand their Maidu heritage in the landscape and cultural sites.

But to make a lasting impact on site protection at LOSRA, more is being done and pursued by DPR and Enterprise Rancheria. A second CASSP workshop is hoped for in 2002, to involve additional Tribal members and to monitor sites being impacted by off-road-vehicles and looting of exposed middens, artifacts and features in the reservoir fluctuation zone. Public awareness of cultural resources protection, the law, and Native American cultural values is being promoted on a regular basis through frequent reports and programs presented on local television and radio shows and in the newspapers. Future plans include an interpretive program on Maidu culture and heritage, with Maidu descendants leading walking tours and participating in local school outdoor education programs.

Leslie is tireless in her efforts to introduce DPR staff, who are often new or mobile within the State Parks system, to the nearly forgotten and long overlooked cultural and natural resource legacies of the area. Tribal people involved in the LOSRA site stewardship program are talking to each other, within and across Tribal boundaries, encouraging and promoting the benefits of Indian participation in site stewardship programs. When I asked one steward how he felt about participating in a site stewardship program, he said that actively protecting sites is important to him because he has direct, spiritual, and personal ties to the ancestors that such places represent.

To be successful in the long-term, Bruce and Leslie Steidl and the LOSRA site stewards unanimously agree that public education is crucial—inform people about the laws protecting cultural resources, about the inappropriateness of collecting artifacts and desecrating sites so cherished by a People, about Maidu culture and human values, past and present. Bruce and others still reflect on the old river town of their youth, but with pride and action they cherish being empowered to help preserve Maidu cultural sites for future generations.

Pointing to a meadow of purple lupine flowers, Rosalie Angle recalls playing baseball there as a young adult in 1962, watching looters dig for American Indian artifacts nearby.

"I didn't pay attention then," she said. "Now it makes me mad."

Now Angle has a chance to do something about it.

From *Record Searchlight*, Redding, 6/4/2001, "Parks focus on artifact looting."



This photo shows a CASSP volunteer standing in the reservoir fluctuation zone. Often, archaeology sites are exposed to erosion and vandals in this zone. (Top and bottom photos by Leslie Steidl.)



BLM archaeologist, Eric Ritter, and a CASSP volunteer examine the damage to bedrock mortars. Note that someone vandalized the site by trying to excavate the boulder in the foreground.

Reverse Archaeology at Work

by Shannon Kelley-Clark

A reverse archaeology project was undertaken over Labor Day weekend in the Lava Mountains north of the Randsburg/Johannesburg town sites. Miles off the beaten path and deep in one of the many canyons, thirty to forty Boy Scouts and volunteers teamed with amateur and professional archaeologists, along with Bureau of Land Management personnel, to repair some of the damage caused by illegal pot hunters and scavengers.

The group put in 10 units under windswept tarps and the blistering desert sun to assess the amount of damage done by vandals and to recover the remaining artifacts. Two of the units in an outlying area were excavated to 40 centimeters (cm) in depth, with little cultural material recovered. A nearby rock art site with petroglyphs of geometric designs, a snake and a long horn sheep or goat was thankfully not vandalized. The remaining 8 units were located near what may have been an ancient cave site before collapsing. The deepest of these were excavated to 140 cm and were still producing artifacts, most unusual for California desert sites. The upper layers of the units were, for the most part, badly damaged by the previous unauthorized excavation. The lower layers appeared to be relatively intact.

The site appears to have been occupied through at least two millennia, possibly more, by prehistoric Native Americans. Charcoal that was found in abundance on the bottom levels of a

couple of the units has been sent to be radiocarbon dated. Some of the charcoal collected is in the form of identifiable wood chunks, which will be professionally identified before it goes to be dated. A large variety of other faunal material was also collected and has been sent out for analysis.

Recovered artifacts included projectile points from various cultural periods, cores, flaked stone, milling tools and a few beads. The stone artifacts were made up of a wide variety of materials; rhyolite, quartz, chalcedony, chert and obsidian. "There are some big differences in quality and quantity of materials from the upper disturbed levels and the deeper apparently undisturbed levels," stated Judyth Reed out of the Ridgecrest office of the BLM, "I hope that we'll be able to quantify those differences or somehow graphically represent what we lost when the site was vandalized."

The reverse part of the archaeology project began Sunday afternoon. What was left of the thinned-out group began shoveling the massive amount of screened dirt back into the units. In slightly less than two hours, all the dirt was back in the holes, the area raked and loose vegetation thrown about to give the appearance of a natural undisturbed desert landscape. Footprints and truck tire tracks were raked out behind the group as they departed the canyon for a couple of miles. Hopefully, the efforts of the dedicated professionals and volunteers who worked hard over the holiday weekend will deter any further damage to the area. Only after the radiocarbon dating has been completed will we fully learn the importance of this site toward the record of the desert's earliest inhabitants.



1. Units are excavated in ten centimeter increments, and the soil is removed in buckets. (All three photos taken at Bedrock Spring by Bill Wight, CASSP volunteer.)



2. Each bucket is sifted through wire screen, one-eighth inch mesh. The screen is assigned to just one excavation unit.



3. When the soils sift through the mesh, then rocks, pebbles, pieces of roots, and sometimes artifacts are left behind in the screen. Artifacts are bagged and labeled.

Sponsor Interview

California State Parks OHMVR Division and CASSP

The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division of the California State Parks operates six vehicle recreation areas—Carnegie, Hollister Hills, Hungry Valley, Oceano Dunes, Ocotillo Wells, and Prairie City. The OHMVR Division also has made grants worth millions of dollars, from registration and user fees paid by off-highway vehicle users. These grants promote safe and enjoyable recreation experiences while balancing the need to protect natural and cultural resources. The person most directly responsible for cultural resources within the Division is archaeologist Phil Hines. The Newsletter editors recently talked with Phil about his work and about site stewardship. A condensed version of that conversation follows.

CASSP Newsletter (CN): What do you do as an archaeologist for the OHMVR Division?

Phil Hines (PH): I spend most of my time in the management and preservation of cultural resources within the State's six vehicle recreation areas. We recently conducted fieldwork at Ocotillo Wells with the help of Margaret Hangan from BLM and Carmen Lucas a local Native American. The project focused on reviewing condition of sites considered sacred by the local Native Americans and sites that are potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The State and BLM will be fencing off a temporary prehistoric camp where human cremations and significant cultural features such as work

areas are being impacted by ohv activity. The fencing will enclose 5 acres of the 80,000 acres open to ohv enthusiasts at Ocotillo Wells SVRA.

In January, the Off Highway Vehicle Division of State Parks will conduct a field survey of cultural resources at Oceano Dunes to update site records and assess their conditions. This area was inhabited by the Northern Chumash Indians and later by "free spirited" writers and artists known as the Dunites. The Dunites lived in the dunes at Oceano beginning after the Spanish American War in 1898 as some of the war veterans took a liking to the area and mild climate. The report will update the condition of the sites recorded during the cultural resource inventory completed in 1979. This update is needed because sand dunes have shifted exposing previously covered cultural materials.

CN: Your work appears to involve a lot of stewardship.

PH: Exactly. We try to protect and preserve cultural resources. Of course, I never have enough time in the field; paperwork keeps me indoors at my desk. But even if I could spend all of my time in the field, I would not be able to monitor all of the sites that I'm responsible for. That's why a program like CASSP is so important. It puts trained volunteer site stewards in the field, who act like extra eyes for the archaeologists in the agencies responsible for managing huge areas of land. Reports from site stewards bring attention to potential problems before they become bigger problems. Site stewards are very important.

CN: Do you have any advice for volunteer site stewards?

PH: I want to remind site stewards, and other researchers, to be careful about creating new paths or trails when they visit archaeological sites. Sometimes a new path can be formed after just a couple of visits, especially in the desert. This may encourage others to follow, who are less careful of fragile cultural resources. Sometimes, the best protective measures are the remoteness or obscurity of a site. This can also be its biggest problem. It is through the site steward program that agency archaeologists are able to monitor sites that might require to much time for us to visit.

I want to thank the volunteers for all of their hard work protecting archaeological and historical resources.

Contributors to this issue:

Janet Eidsness serves as Chair of the SCA Native American Programs Committee. She works as an independent consultant in Heritage Resources Management.

Phil Hines is the archaeologist for the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division of the California State Parks. He attended the volunteer site steward training workshop in California City last year.

Russell Kaldenberg is a past president of the SCA and a contributing editor to the SCA Newsletter. He serves as State Archaeologist for the California Office of the Bureau of Land Management.

Shannon Kelley-Clark is an archaeologist in Rosamond. She is a CASSP volunteer and she participated in the BLM Archaeological and Cultural Awareness Program at Bedrock Spring in September, 2001.

Sannie Osborn is President of the Society for California Archaeology. She works for the Presidio Trust in San Francisco.

Beth and Chris Padon are chairpersons of the SCA Site Stewardship Committee. They own Discovery Works, Inc., a cultural resources management firm in Long Beach.

Sponsor

The BLM and You and CASSP

by Russell L. Kaldenberg

Visions of saving our heritage dance through my mind when I think of the potentials of a long lasting partnership between the OHV, Native American, Interested Citizen, and Archaeological (Scientific) communities. Our heritage means just that, a shared history going back to the first discovery of our continent during our period of unwritten history to recent events such as the crash of the Flying Wing or abandoned military buildings associated with Cold War History. From spearpoints, to petroglyphs, to villages sites, mining camps,

and bomb shelters—all of these are found on the public lands and all are going away. They disappear because they rot away, they are removed, or they are vandalized. I encourage you to become a California Site Steward so that you, as a citizen of this state, can help with a watchful eye, the vestiges of our past and can report them, take notes and photographs of them, and help in the effort to make them last just a little bit longer.

As the BLM State Archaeologist, I can attest that those in the program have made a difference in the longevity of sites and I think I can safely say that the Site Stewardship program has made a difference in their lives also, opening a new chapter of each life and making it even more meaningful. So, don't hesitate, get aboard the stewardship program, take the training, adopt a site, and boast about

how you are helping save California's precious, delicate, nonrenewable cultural heritage.

I am proud to be a part of saving our heritage and even prouder to be a part of this inaugural newsletter which I hope will reach the appropriate segment of our citizens and help build the site stewardship program into even a more dynamic program than we ever "en Visioned." Thank you Beth and Chris Padon, all of the site stewards and their field mentors, the OHV Commission for their funding support, and the visions of several BLM managers, who without their support, this would never have happened.



Calendar

2002 Schedule of Volunteer Training Workshops

BLM field offices throughout the state are hosting volunteer site steward training workshops during 2001 and 2002. These workshops are open to all members of the public, and especially to users of off-highway vehicles. No prior experience in archaeology is required, but you must be over 18 to become a site steward. A fee of \$25 per person is charged to help cover workshop expenses such as training materials and lunch. Workshops last two days, usually over a weekend. The first day consists of classroom training in local archaeology, history, Native American views, safety, and legal issues. On the second day, we make a field trip

to some of the archaeology sites which will be monitored.

In 2001, training workshops were held at California City for the Ridgecrest Field Office, where Judyth Reed is the coordinating archaeologist, and at the Redding Field Office, where Eric Ritter is the coordinating archaeologist.

The first workshop of 2002 was held on January 26-27, at the Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office, with Wanda Raschkow serving as the local coordinating archaeologist.

For the rest of 2002, workshops are scheduled at the following BLM Field Offices:

- April 20-21, Alturas Field Office and Surprise Field Office (joint workshop, at Alturas or Cedarville).
- June, Hollister Field Office (exact date and location will be announced).
- October, Eagle Lake Field Office (date and location will be announced).

- November, Clear Lake-Ukiah Field Office (date and location to be announced).
- Two additional workshops will be scheduled, one for the Arcata Field Office and one for the Barstow Field Office and the Needles Field Office (joint workshop).



BLM Field Offices which will have CASSP teams by the end of 2002.

The CASSP Newsletter Solicits Your Questions and Comments

Greater understanding often requires just asking the right question. One of the advantages enjoyed by CASSP volunteers is the opportunity to talk with archaeologists on a one-to-one basis. We cannot duplicate this experience in this newsletter, but we will try to approximate it, with your help.

Have you ever wondered why archaeologists do some of the things they do? Are you bothered by some archaeological term or convention? For example, what does C-14 mean and why is it important? Why does obsidian make such beautiful stone tools? When archaeologists talk about “integrity,” are they talking about the personal behavior of their associates?

There is a lot of knowledge and talent in the SCA which we can tap. Submit your archaeological questions and puzzles to the CASSP Newsletter, and we will do our best to find an answer. We will print questions and responses so that they can be shared. Cogent observations about the state of archaeology, including your experiences with CASSP, also will be printed. We look forward to hearing from you.

CASSP newsletter

The **CASSP Newsletter** is a quarterly publication of the Society for California Archaeology Site Stewardship Committee. Newsletter editors are Beth Padon, Chris Padon, and Janet Eidsness. President of the Society for California Archaeology is Sannie Osborn.

Submissions

We welcome submissions to the Newsletter; however, articles will be edited for length and content, and all submitted materials become property of the Society for California Archaeology.

Subscriptions

The Newsletter is provided at no cost to CASSP volunteers and other interested parties. To receive the Newsletter by mail, or by email in *Adobe Acrobat Reader* PDF format, or to submit items for publication, please contact:

CASSP Newsletter
c/o Discovery Works Inc.
P O Box 91236
Long Beach CA 90809
or send an email message to newsletter@cassp.org.

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California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program
c/o Discovery Works, Inc.
P O Box 91236
Long Beach, CA 90809-1236

