

# CASSP newsletter

Volume 5, Issue 2, August 2009

## Thank you, OHMVR Division of California State Parks and BLM California State Office

In July, the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division of California State Parks announced the final awards for the 2008/2009 Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program. The awards included funding for CASSP activities with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the US Forest Service.

The grant application was written by Jim Keeler and Gina Jorgenson of the California State Office, BLM, and they did a great job. In addition, several SCA members, CASSP volunteers, and members of the general public independently submitted letters of support directly to the OHMVR Division.

This grant provides funds for volunteer training workshops and advanced training workshops, the CASSP newsletter, and other volunteer support efforts. Funds are matched by BLM and US Forest Service support in hosting the workshops and supervising the volunteers, by SCA support for the workshops and volunteers, and by the many volunteer site stewardship hours given by public participants in CASSP.

This grant reinforces the partnership between two important Federal agencies, OHMVR Division of State Parks, the Society for California Archaeology, and the general public to protect cultural resources on our public lands. The growth and success of site stewardship in California is due in large part to the support from the OHMVR Division and the California State Office of the BLM. We thank them very much. We look forward to another productive year for CASSP. ◇

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## SCA Archaeology Month poster features CASSP volunteers

The Society for California Archaeology (SCA) promotes greater awareness and protection of cultural resources by sponsoring several programs. One is California Archaeology Month, when many schools, libraries, museums, and other public offices offer special displays and speakers on California prehistory and history. Every year, the SCA creates a poster to help publicize archaeology month. This year, the SCA celebrates the 10-year anniversary of CASSP by showing site stewards during a training workshop at a site in northern California. ◇

## FIELD REPORT

## Site stabilization at Los Angeles District of State Parks

In June and July, Barbara Tejada, who is the archaeologist for the Angeles District of State Parks, recruited over a dozen volunteers to help repair damage to an archaeological site in the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Many of these people were site stewards who monitor sites for Barbara.

The site covers several acres in the interior of the park. In between visits by site stewards, vandals dug several ramps and jumps and created a banked turn for bicycles along one part of the site. Because the site is watched by stewards, the damage was reported shortly after it occurred. Barbara created a work plan that used volunteer labor from trained site stewards to stabilize the site, and she quickly received authorization.

We all agreed that it would have been best if the bike path had not been built within the prehistoric site, but the restoration project gave the volunteers the opportunity to learn about the local archaeology, to recover the artifacts in the disturbed soils, to help repair and protect this site, and to have a rewarding and enjoyable time.

Barbara and the team of volunteers collected about 50 bags of artifacts from the work, the most extensive collection from the site thus far. The collection includes several diagnostic projectile points and beads, stone bowl fragment, ground stone fragments and handstones as well as obsidian and steatite/schist samples that can be used for sourcing. Barbara is now organizing volunteers to help sort and catalog of all of these materials. ◇



Volunteers screened all of the disturbed soils before filling the damaged areas.



Barbara Tejada supervised the work. She is holding an artifact bag.



The recovered artifacts included several points. (Scale in millimeters.)

## CALENDAR

## CASSP training workshops

### Advanced workshops

Advanced training workshops are available for current CASSP volunteers. These focused workshops train CASSP volunteers in a topic that will help them become better site monitors. The advanced training workshops last one to two days, and they are offered at least once a year at a northern California location and at a southern California location. There is no registration cost for advanced training workshops; however only CASSP volunteers can participate in these workshops. Registration is required for advanced workshops. Usually space is limited, so please register as soon as you can. The last day to register is the Monday before the weekend in which the workshop will be held.

On October 17–18, an advanced training workshop in GPS and GIS for site stewards will be held at the Bishop BLM Field Office (351 Pacu Lane, Suite 100, Bishop, CA 93514).

Kirk Halford, archaeologist at the Bishop BLM Field Office, will host the October workshop. The two-day workshop agenda includes: review of archaeological site mapping techniques, use of hand-held GPS unit, field practice with the GPS unit, and a demonstration on how the data collected in the field will generate a computer map using BLM GIS programs.

An advanced workshop on site relocation and mapping techniques will be held on November 7–8, at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park, on Clear Lake.

Leslie Steidl, archaeologist at the Northern Buttes District, California State Parks, will host the November workshop. The two-day workshop agenda includes:

a review of archaeological survey techniques, field relocation of recorded archaeological sites within Anderson Marsh, update prior documentation for these sites, and a demonstration on how to complete the DPR 523 site record forms.

### Volunteer training workshops

An initial training workshop for new volunteers will be held on December 5–6 in the Sacramento area. The Saturday classroom session will be held at the California State Office of the BLM (2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento 95825), and the Sunday field trip will be held at the Carnegie SVRA, on Corral Hollow Road/Tesla Road, between Tracy and Livermore.

You may register by contacting Beth or Chris Padon by phone at (562) 431-0300 or by e-mail to bpadon@discoveryworks.com. The workshop fee of \$25 will be collected at the door. ◇

## FIELD REPORT

## Should I pick up debris around my site?

In a 2002 publication, the EPA reported that on average, 4.5 pounds of solid waste is created every year for every person in the US. Some of that solid waste ends up as litter on our public lands. It attracts more trash because people think that litter is permitted or that a couple more pieces won't make things any worse. But littering along roads and trails is not acceptable, and many site stewards automatically want to remove trash when they visit their archaeological or historical sites.

We know that individual efforts at cleaning up can make a difference (see page 7). For example, tens of thousands of people visit Disneyland every day and they buy many thousands of drinks and snacks, but there's no litter on the ground. Disneyland personnel keep the park so clean that people are embarrassed to throw anything on the ground.

But site stewards have to be careful about the kinds of debris that they remove from their sites. At many sites, we find old



rusted cans and pieces of metal, fragments of glass bottles or plates, or pieces of brick, and they can reveal important historical information. They should be recorded and left in the field.

Consider the fragment of ceramic plate in the photo above. It was found at a new site after a brush fire cleared the grasses. From the shape of the fragment, and the painted cartoon image of a pig, we were able to find an example of the whole dish, shown just below.



This chrome and porcelain, 3-part, infant's hot water feeding dish dates to the 1930s. This is a luxury item and not a necessity; the original owners probably had more disposable income than most families at that time. This suggests that the nearby house site may have been occupied by the landowner rather than a temporary tenant farmer—an hypothesis to test with other archival data and field evidence.

Site stewards have to be careful before they remove trash or clean up a site. Unless you are positive that the debris is modern trash, like a plastic water bottle, it is better to leave the items behind until you have contacted your supervising archaeologist to verify that it can be removed. ◇

## FIELD REPORT

## Federal Protection Extended to Vertebrate Fossils

On March 30, 2009, the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (PRPA) became law when President Barack Obama signed the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act (OPLA) of 2009, Public Law 111-011. As CASSP volunteers, it is important to be aware of this change in the policies of Federal land managing

agencies. It is no longer legal to collect vertebrate fossils from Federal lands without a permit.

This law, like the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) for archaeological resources, requires the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to manage and protect paleontological resources (vertebrate fossils) on Federal land using scientific principles and expertise. The law also includes criminal and civil penalties for fossil theft and vandalism. For more detailed information, please review the following web sites.

<[www.blm.gov/wo/.../paleontology/paleontological\\_laws.html](http://www.blm.gov/wo/.../paleontology/paleontological_laws.html)>

<[www.vertpaleo.org/education/government.cfm](http://www.vertpaleo.org/education/government.cfm)> ◇

FIELD REPORT

# Archaeological Site Stewardship in Mojave National Preserve 2003-2006: A Case Study

By Brian Birdsall

## Introduction

I first visited Mojave National Preserve in December of 2002 and was immediately inspired by the desert landscape. After visiting Mitchell Caverns, I went for a hike in Wild Horse Canyon and began wondering how to learn more about the area and perhaps become a volunteer in the park. My first idea was to help with marking Wilderness boundaries—I had seen a photo of ranger Tim Duncan installing boundary signs and understood the importance of what he was doing. At Hole-in-the-Wall visitor center, however, another opportunity presented itself. There a poster announced that training for the California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program would be held at the Barstow BLM office on a Saturday in February. Ruby Newton, the ranger on duty at Hole-in-the-Wall, encouraged me to sign up.

The training was organized by Chris and Beth Padon of Discovery Works, and there were about 36 people in attendance, including the speakers and organizers. Beth Padon began with an introduction to CASSP and described how volunteers would work with BLM or NPS archaeologists to monitor important sites in the Mojave Desert. Bob Bryson and Amy Lawrence then gave an overview of the area's prehistory and what the archaeology reveals to us. Researchers Don Christensen and David Lee discussed site recording and described some of their work in the East Mojave. After lunch we studied the laws which protect cultural resources, including the Antiquities Act of 1906, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, ARPA, and NAGPRA. This was followed by an overview of law enforcement presented by Barry Nelson, a ranger for the BLM. The classroom training concluded with some practical examples and exercises, after which attendees had the opportunity to sign up as volunteer site stewards. The necessary forms included an Individual Volunteer Services Agreement and an Agreement of Confidentiality. Those of us who completed the classroom training and signed the forms were invited to spend the next day at Mojave National Preserve for field training.



*These pictographs are found at Willow-K site (at Willow Spring Basin).*

Field training began with a presentation by Bob Bryson on stone tools and lithic reduction. We learned about the different types of material used for tools, and how to recognize flakes on the ground. After this, our group visited an archaeological area near Hole-in-the-Wall and discussed some practical aspects of monitoring a site. Thus began my involvement with archaeological site stewardship in Mojave Preserve, and it has continued since that time. This document briefly summarizes some of the lessons learned and issues encountered during the past four years.

## Site Stewardship Process

The basic stewardship process is simple. The initial site visit is accompanied by a park archaeologist (or other experienced steward) who explains the site record and points out important features. Photographs and notes are taken to establish a baseline condition for the site, and a site monitoring form is completed to summarize the visit. On subsequent visits, the steward looks for evidence of human activity or intervention at the site and in the immediate vicinity. Changes since the last visit are noted and documented in a new site monitoring report. Reports are submitted to the park archaeologist or stewardship coordinator. They may also be sent to the San Bernardino County Museum to be archived along with the official site record at the Archaeological Information Center.

Comments: For me, the most difficult part of site stewardship is completing the site monitoring reports. The report can be a simple one-page handwritten sheet, but I decided to create a Word document, covering the same information, which allows digital photographs to be included. High-resolution photos may be saved separately for later comparison or use, while a lower-resolution version of the photo is pasted into the report. The fun part of site stewardship is hiking to the site, taking photos, and looking



*Brian Birdsall on a site stewardship trip at the Mojave National Preserve.*



*These petroglyphs are found at the Dead Jay site (at Cottonwood Basin).*



Typical site in the Mojave; this group of boulders contains rock art.

around. The more difficult part is organizing the information and documenting the visit once you get home. Having the discipline to complete the monitoring reports and submit them is essential to good site stewardship.

### Costs of Site Stewardship

Site stewards currently pay their own expenses for site monitoring visits to Mojave Preserve, so there is minimal cost to the National Park Service. Rewards for the volunteer steward include the opportunity to work with professional archaeologists and land managers, as well as the respect of peers who are involved in similar pursuits. Site monitoring trips can often be combined with other enjoyable activities like camping, hiking, and sightseeing. There is some precedent in Nevada and Arizona for giving site stewards a per diem or reimbursing some of their expenses.

Comments: For me, the main expense of site stewardship is the fuel cost associated with each visit. The round-trip from Los Angeles is about 500 miles, plus any miles driven inside the Preserve, and my typical cost for fuel has been between \$75 and \$100 per trip over the past four years.

### Frequency of Monitoring

Many of the archaeology sites in Mojave Preserve are somewhat remote and not well known, so a goal of two monitoring visits per year to each site seems reasonable. Sites with more frequent public visitation would require more frequent monitoring.

Comments: It takes quite a bit of discipline to monitor remote sites at consistent intervals. In Willow Spring Basin, my goal was to monitor the area every March and November. This worked fine in 2003 and 2004, but in 2005 other obligations prevented me from visiting at all, and in 2006 I visited three times, but not in March or November. Having a consistent schedule over time makes the monitoring data more valuable.

### Number of Sites to Monitor

How many sites to monitor is typically worked out between the volunteer site steward and the archaeologist or stewardship coordinator. Some site stewards might monitor just one or two sites, while others might monitor a dozen or more.

Comments: I started with a few sites and added more over time as I learned about the monitoring process. I'm currently monitoring 17 sites around the Granite and Providence Mountains, but I would have no trouble handing some of these sites off to a new steward if one became available. It is important to have sites in a group or along a particular route so that more sites can

be monitored on each visit. The following table shows my current sites and how often they have been monitored over the past four years. The table illustrates that I have not yet achieved my goal of consistent monitoring intervals.

### Conclusion

Archaeological site stewardship can provide a valuable supplement to the work of NPS archaeologists in Mojave National Preserve. Site stewards provide additional eyes and ears to monitor important sites and perhaps help to prevent damage or destruction of cultural resources. Proper training is essential to ensure that volunteer stewards understand the laws and the confidential nature of archaeological site records. ◇

### Record of site visits.

Site number	Site name	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Willow Spring Basin						
CA-SBR-9328	Willow-F	2	2	0	2	6
CA-SBR-9332	Willow-K	2	2	0	3	7
CA-SBR-9330	Willow-H	2	2	0	3	7
CA-SBR-8269	Willow-B	0	2	0	1	3
Cottonwood Basin						
CA-SBR-1973	Cottonwood Spring	1	1	1	1	4
CA-SBR-9342	Dead Jay	1	1	1	1	4
CA-SBR-3792	Kaboose Rock	2	0	1	0	3
CA-SBR-9336	Acacia Flats	1	0	0	0	1
CA-SBR-3793	West Cottonwood Spring	1	0	0	0	1
Providence Mountains						
CA-SBR-8247	Arrowweed Spring	1	0	1	1	3
CA-SBR-3041	The Pyramid	1	0	1	1	3
CA-SBR-1805	Pine Tree Ranch	1	0	1	1	3
CA-SBR-9826	Quail Basin Camp	0	0	0	1	1
CA-SBR-9827	Quail Basin Pass	0	0	0	1	1
Other Granite Mountains						
CA-SBR-544	Snake Spring	0	0	1	1	2
CA-SBR-1756	Coyote Spring #1	0	0	0	1	1
CA-SBR-1757	Coyote Spring #2	0	0	0	1	1
Total		15	10	7	19	51



West Cottonwood Spring site (at Cottonwood Basin) features petroglyphs inside a rock shelter.

(Editor's note: Budget constraints prevented earlier presentation of Brian's 2007 report in the CASSP newsletter. We are pleased to share it now; it's an excellent example of what many of the site stewards are doing for archaeology.)

FIELD REPORT

# Workshops at Death Valley National Park and Ocotillo Wells SVRA

In early Spring, CASSP volunteer training workshops were held at Death Valley National Park for the Barstow BLM Field Office and at Ocotillo Wells State Vehicle Recreation Area. The weather was cool, and the enthusiasm was high. Leah Bonstead and Jim

Shearer led the archaeology discussions at Death Valley National Park. Margaret Kress presented an overview of the local archaeology and Vic Herrick talked about law enforcement and safety at Ocotillo Wells SVRA. ◇



*Death Valley National Park Superintendent, Sarah Craighead greeted workshop participants at the Timbisha Community Center.*



*At Ocotillo Wells workshop, Penny Tappeiner talked about her experiences as a site steward for the Palm Springs BLM Field Office.*



*Park Protection Ranger, Ed Derobertis, talked about safety concerns for the volunteers.*



*Pat Hadel, a CASSP volunteer from San Diego, talked with other participants at the Ocotillo Wells workshop.*



*During the field trip on the second day, Timbisha elder, Pauline Esteves, shared some personal memories.*



*State Parks Ranger Vic Herrick answered questions during the field trip on the second day.*



*Leah Bonstead received a new file box to store the site reports that she would be receiving from her volunteers.*



*Margaret Kress received a new file box to store the site reports that she would be receiving from her volunteers.*

FIELD REPORT

# Site stewards attack trash

Many site stewards do more than observe and report changes at their sites. For example, the following cases show site stewards addressing problems of trash dumping before they became worse.

### *Making a difference at an urban site*

Stephanie Manning and Perry Matlock, site stewards in the Bay area, and some friends to the initiative to clean up a prehistoric Ohlone burial site in West Berkeley.

Stephanie wrote in her e-mail message:

“Wow, what a ton of garbage! The site is adjacent to the Amtrak tracks and quite filled with homeless folks’ stuff. We trashed the trash and folded up the many blankets for the person. Amazing to think that down under the building are 5,000 year old remains of the ancient Ohlone people (CA-ALA-307). We even had an Ohlone, Corrina Gould, with us. Tears burst out of my eyes as we did this; it was so meaningful, and the many Mexican day laborers waiting to be picked up for work (on a Sunday!) thanked us for our efforts.”



*Site stewards Stephanie Manning and Perry Matlock and friends, and some bags of trash from cleaning up the area around CA-ALA-307.*



*This second photo shows the other member of the work party.*

### *Illegal dumping and quick action*

In early February, 2009, site stewards Ann and Ray Vincent and State Parks (Angeles District) archaeologist Barbara Tejada found a recently dumped trash within Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. They immediately sent an e-mail message to the Park’s maintenance and law enforcement staff. Because the site stewards provided a photograph and details on the location, the Park staff easily identified the location and quickly arranged to remove the trash.

Without the details from the site stewards, the trash probably would have gone unnoticed which would have attracted more de-

bris to this spot. Thanks to Ann and Ray, and Barbara their report brought the illegal dump to the staff’s attention before it became a bigger problem. Thanks, too, to the Park staff: Lee Hawkins, Abel Diaz, and Paul Caldera, who responded quickly to the site stewards’ report. ◇



*Finding the recently-deposited trash at Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. View from the side of the trail.*



*View of the trash deposit at Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park from across the drainage. State Parks truck at the trail.*



*View from across the drainage after the trash was picked up.*



*Afterwards, large rocks were placed on the trail to discourage people from further dumping.*

BACK PAGE

## Historical artifact?

Between 1903 and 1911, about 70 million bricks were produced at Carnegie, a subsidiary of John Treadwell's Tesla coal mining operation in Coral Hollow, between Tracy and Livermore. This broken brick, found lying in the ground at the site of the old plant, is an historical artifact, not a piece of trash. The history of Tesla and Carnegie is presented in, *History of Tesla, A California Coal Mining Town*, by Dan Mosier, <<http://teslacoalmines.netfirms.com/teslabook.html>>. ◇



## CASSPnewsletter

*CASSPnewsletter* is a publication of the Society for California Archaeology (SCA), Site Stewardship Committee. Newsletter editors are Beth and Chris Padon. The President of the Society for California Archaeology is C. Kristina Roper. Current issues can be downloaded in PDF format from <[www.cassp.org](http://www.cassp.org)>.

### Submissions

We welcome submissions to the Newsletter; however, articles may 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 e-mail in Adobe Acrobat Reader PDF format, or to submit items for publication, please contact:

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