
Margaret N. Rees
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, peg.rees@unlv.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/pli_cultural_stewardship

Part of the Archaeological Anthropology Commons, Civic and Community Engagement Commons, Community-Based Learning Commons, Cultural Resource Management and Policy Analysis Commons, and the Historic Preservation and Conservation Commons

Repository Citation
Available at: https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/pli_cultural_stewardship/9

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Public Lands Institute at Digital Scholarship@UNLV. It has been accepted for inclusion in Cultural Site Stewardship Program by an authorized administrator of Digital Scholarship@UNLV. For more information, please contact digitalscholarship@unlv.edu.
Executive Summary

- The Cultural Site Stewardship Program maintained 230 active site stewards, an increase of 674% since program inception.
- One optional training class was held this quarter focusing on GPS use and navigation.
- Site Stewards reported 51 significant impacts during the 12-month period compared to 25 impacts during the same period last year.

Summary of Attachments

- Team agendas and meetings notes
- Donor proposal for integrated database system
- Site impact article from Las Vegas Review-Journal
- Regional Coordinators meeting agenda
- Site steward survey instrument

Collaboration with Interagency Team

The Clark County Heritage Resources Team (CCoHRT) met on August 18, 2006 (see attached agenda and meeting notes). Agenda items included a plan for implementing a hybrid database system to increase reporting quality to land managers. The plan is complete and a $25,000 funding source has been tentatively identified through UNLV's GIS group. A senior computer manager will oversee the project, and a programmer and assistant have been identified. The project will commence once the approved funding has cleared the formal approval process through the federal agencies. Should that funding not materialize, Cultural Site Stewardship (CSSP) Project Manager George Phillips plans to seek private funding (see attached donor proposal).

Site Steward Certification Program

Information on a proposed steward certification program was presented to CCoHRT members by George Phillips. The program would provide classroom and field instruction in 12 areas of archaeology at a higher academic level than currently available outside the university. Proposed classes include surveying, lithic identification, pottery identification, and rock art recording.
Those who pass nine of the twelve classes could be certified, a designation for recognition purposes only. Certified stewards would then be available for use by agencies or contract archaeologists for special projects. CCoHRT member Eva Jensen, Curator of the Lost City Museum, suggested that the certification process begin in southern Nevada but should ultimately be made available throughout the state. Similar programs have originated in southern Nevada in the past but failed because the teaching processes were unsustainable. Interest and enthusiasm are short-lived and require agency support, a sustainable infrastructure, and reliable funding. The program manager will continue to research avenues for long-term funding and sustainability and will report results to CCoHRT.

Training
A classroom training date is set for October 7, 2006, to train 20 new site stewards. In cooperation with Sali Underwood, Site Steward Manager for the Nevada State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO), the newly-trained stewards will not only be assigned to monitor cultural sites on federal land in Clark County, but eight of these stewards will also be assigned sites in Little Red Rock area under the authority of the SHPO office. Little Red Rock is a section of privately owned land containing five significant cultural sites with no management oversight by federal agencies. Twelve additional stewards who are trained and active in the Cultural Site Stewardship Program (CSSP) will assist with monitoring the Little Red Rock sites. Sali Underwood is a non-voting member of CCoHRT and has participated in two previous CSSP classroom training sessions. As statewide coordinator, she has adopted aspects of the CSSP training agenda and aides for statewide use and has contributed valuable information and assistance.

An optional half-day class on GPS navigation was given by Dr. Jim Watson and George Phillips on July 15, 2006. Eighteen stewards participated and learned the concept of Global Positioning Systems. Practical navigation applications were conducted on a grid outlined throughout the campus.

Site Steward Survey
A survey of CSSP site stewards was sent on September 8, 2006 (see attached). The survey was approved by CCoHRT and submitted to UNLV’s Internal Review Board for compliance with human-subjects policies. The surveys were sent and collected by the Public Lands Institute office to maintain confidentiality. A 23.6% response rate is confirmed to date. Results and comments will be compiled beginning October 1.

Monitoring Activities
As expected for areas in Clark County, summer heat restrained public site visitation. Monitoring activities continued throughout the summer at a modified level.

Red Rock Canyon NCA
CSSP stewards reported two major impacts to moderately remote resources in the Red Rock Canyon NCA. In one case, a severe vandalism attack on a highly-prized pictograph site elicited an official ARPA investigation by the BLM archaeologist and rangers. A reporter and photographer from the Las Vegas Review-Journal were escorted to the shelter by the NCA archaeologist for a regional story highlighting the destruction (see attached article).

Sloan Canyon NCA
During a meeting on September 19, 2006, with the CSSP Coordinator for Sloan Canyon NCA and 5 assistants, a modification to Sloan Canyon procedures was discussed. Assistant BLM Field Manager Bob Taylor and Sloan archaeologist Mark Boatwright asked the stewards to assume a
Manager Bob Taylor and Sloan archaeologist Mark Boatwright asked the stewards to assume a more active role in talking with visitors and assisting them in the Sloan wilderness area. Stewards will not act as docents but will present a friendly presence and emphasize the value of the area. It is hoped that the increased visibility will help prevent thoughtless destruction in the main petroglyph canyon. The BLM will provide T-shirts with the BLM logo to help identify stewards.

Gypsum Cave
The BLM requested a “high intensity” stewardship of Gypsum Cave following requests from various interested citizen groups. Defacing activities and commercial trash is affecting the area that reflects both paleontological and early human habitation history of southern Nevada. Stewards are currently being chosen to monitor the area to accommodate this request.

Site Impacts

As shown in the graph below, there has been a relatively steady increase in significant cultural site impacts this year reported by quarter. Reports of significant impacts have more than doubled over those during the same period last year. Although targeted vandalism, mostly in the form of rock art graffiti and unauthorized site potting (digging) this year are the most destructive forms, a majority of impacts occur through thoughtlessness or careless actions. Proactive planning by the land managing agency as spelled out in a site management plan would be a big step toward intervening to save high profile cultural sites for future use while following a concept of minimum intervention to the resource.

Reports of major impacts this year are itemized below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact Type</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digging/potting</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graffiti</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullet holes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATV related</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pernicious destruction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firepits in shelters</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collectors’ piles</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water damage (Natural)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trash – excessive</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitation damage</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs destroyed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witness illegal activity</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graffiti and off-road vehicle activity resulting in cultural site impacts continue to affect the greatest numbers of cultural sites. Pernicious destruction includes one pictograph panel where substantial destruction was purposely inflicted. In another case, flammable liquids were poured down a sandstone face, destroying numerous petroglyphs.

Stewards also reported a marked increase of invasive weeds in numerous cultural sites. Salt Cedar, non-native grasses, and varieties of thistle are both acting as a barrier of protection from excess visitation and posing a real danger from fire. In many cases, lightning fires have created spalling in Aztec sandstone inU.S. Forest Service petroglyph sites, burned brush oak protecting historic arrastres (rocks for pulverizing gold ore) in Gold Butte, and exposed roasting pits and lithic sites in innumerable areas throughout the county. The reports are noted by the federal agencies, but destruction from human activity remains the highest concern.
The escalation noted in impacts during the quarter ending June 2006 is a reflection of intensified outdoor activity due to milder weather. During the three months of summer ending September 30, 2006, this activity declined as anticipated.

Public Relations, Outreach, and Partnerships

Clark County site coordinators and the CSSP Project Manager attended a quarterly site steward meeting of the Nevada Archaeological Association (NAA) held at the Lost City Museum in Overton on July 14, 2006. Training manuals used statewide and those for the CSSP were updated with contact information for new agency and law enforcement personnel. A concept of using NAA-endorsed archaeological advisors was discussed for benefit of rural areas of Nevada.

A CSSP Regional Coordinators meeting was held at the Lost City Museum on August 29, 2006, to organize an annual recognition picnic for site stewards on November 5, 2006 (see agenda attached). The agenda included discussions about maintaining effective communication with stewards, information related to the proposed relational database, the proposed certification program, and current numbers of impacts were relayed.

On August 25, 2006, George Phillips attended a meeting of the Board of Directors for Citizens for Active Management (CAM), a non-profit organization in support of BLM projects for Gypsum Cave and the Great Unconformity geological site. George gave a presentation about Clark County's Site Stewardship Program and offered assistance through the Public Lands Institute to aid in clean-up of the area through the Take Pride In America Program.
George Phillips attended a National Park Service sponsored workshop on Rock Art Research given in Boulder City, Nevada, on September 6, 2006. Rock art management issues confronting federal agencies were discussed by leading archaeologists and managers in the western United States. Questions about how rock art should be protected and at what cost are of concern to each management area. Discussions among rock art specialists, conservators, and managers disclosed specific trial-and-error methods for protection. It was agreed that repeated monitoring with as little intervention as possible is among the best approaches to preserving rock art.

A presentation on site stewardship in Southern Nevada was presented to the first monthly Archaeo-Nevada Society meeting on September 14, 2006. George Phillips spoke about the development of CSSP, the current status of the program, and the positive impact it is having. Sali Underwood presented the SHPO structure being developed for the statewide stewardship program. Members of the Archaeo-Nevada Society endorsed the proposed CSSP certification program and are eager to support its development.

Submitted by:

Margaret N. Rees, Principal Investigator

September 30, 2006

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- CCoHRT Meeting Agenda and Meeting Notes for August 18, 2006
- Donor proposal for integrated database system
- Newspaper story about stewards discovering Red Rock Canyon NCA pictograph destruction
- CSSP Regional Coordinators Meeting Agenda for August 29, 2006
- Survey for Site Stewards