Cultural Site Stewardship Program
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Executive Summary

- The Cultural Site Stewardship Program has now enrolled 369 site stewards
- Three training classes were held adding 49 new volunteer stewards, an increase of 15% during the fiscal year 2008.
- Site Stewards reported 72 site impacts 2008 YTD compared with 50 during the same period last year.

Project 1 – Recruitment, Training, and Retention of Volunteer Site Stewards

TASK 1 – Site Stewardship Database

The Cultural Site Stewardship Program (CSSP) relational database is operational and is used in place of Volgistics. Testing and fine tuning continues and will be completed by the end of the first week in July of this year. History and documentation for all 369 site stewards have been entered and each Site Monitoring Report for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008 is current. Additional historic data submitted by stewards prior to October 1, 2007, has been inputted. Programmers are testing the querying functions that produce detailed agency reports of hours submitted, sites visited and impacts reported. The Volgistics database that served CSSP for more than three years was restructured to facilitate communication between all volunteers and the Interagency Volunteer Program Coordinators. Volunteer hours donated by cultural site stewards will be added to the Volgistics database at the end of each quarter.

Task 2 – Recruit additional volunteer cultural site stewards.

Word of mouth was the primary source of new volunteers this quarter. In the past, OHV associations, hiking clubs, and the Southern Nevada Grotto Association were solicited to achieve specific monitoring
goals in areas where off-road conditions were prevalent or dedicated hiking was required. As gasoline prices change, we are focused on assigning qualified volunteers to sites of closest proximity. Likewise, Regional Coordinators are chosen to assist in those areas in which they reside.

During this quarter, 21 new volunteers were trained. During the 2008 fiscal year, 49 volunteers have been recruited for a 15% increase. This number exceeds a 10% required stewardship increase outlined in the CSSP task agreement.

**Task 3 – Deliver, evaluate, and refine basic training classes for volunteer cultural site stewards.**

The basic training format is updated periodically to reflect changes of personnel and procedures as advised by ICSST. The curriculum is somewhat modified to accommodate personal strengths of each ICSST archaeologist who assists with training. The CSSP volunteer growth is reflected in the figure 1 below:

![Annual Stewardship Growth](image)

**Fig. 1 shows growth in the number of stewar ds in June of each year.**

**Task 4 – Deliver, evaluate, and refine optional educational training for volunteer cultural site stewards.**

In response to CSSP inquiries, site stewards overwhelmingly requested instruction on GPS navigation. Sara Cox Hill, a Ph.D. candidate from UNLV’s Anthropology Department presented a class on May 3 on the UNLV campus. Twenty-eight stewards attended the 3 ½ hour presentation. Due to the large turnout, additional help from the Anthropology Department of UNLV assisted to cover basic operations of the GPS. This activity has become the most frequent topic requested by new volunteers, and we continue to receive a large response.
Task 5 – Obtain and evaluate feedback from volunteer cultural site stewards about the program and incorporate into program improvements.

Since the Cultural Site Stewardship Program began, surveys have been requested from participants at the end of each basic training class and the feedback evaluated. Adjustments made to the class format include the style of presenting archaeological laws. Content was modified in effort not to overwhelm participants with unnecessary detail. Additionally, more time was alotted to discuss safety procedures and artifact awareness. As mentioned in the previous Progress Report, an annual questionnaire will be produced and distributed during the summer months. The questionnaire and summary results will be presented in the September 30 Progress Report. All operating procedures are regularly updated and training materials are reviewed for accuracy.

Task 6 – Plan and implement volunteer recognition initiatives and events.

Plans were approved by the Interagency Cultural Site Steward Team (ICSST) to integrate the annual Recognition Event with the Interagency Volunteer Program (IVP). Details are being addressed by the CSSP Regional Coordinators, and Manager George Phillips will coordinate activities with the IVP team.

Project 2: Monitoring of Cultural Resource Sites and Reporting Results

Task 1 – Assign, monitor, supervise, and evaluate volunteer site stewards to protect cultural sites on public lands.

All site stewards have been assigned. Greater care is being taken to accommodate the abilities and wishes of stewards regarding their site assignments. As could be expected, the cost of fuel is beginning to affect the frequency of site visits. Driving distance is taking on a greater importance. With the advent of summer, heat also affects the frequency of site visits. Through Regional Coordinators, the CSSP will informally contact each steward to ensure sites assigned continue to conform to the volunteer’s circumstance as much as possible. Adjustments will be made for those whom expenses are becoming unsupportable.

Evaluations of stewards continue informally and as mentioned in the previous Progress Report, vary according to the conditions allowing site visitation (heat, snow, etc.). For the Sloan Region, construction of retention basins has restricted access for those stewards who normally hike into the site. Ingress extends several miles farther by vehicle and will continue for at least another year. Specific sites in the Red Rock Canyon NCA are likewise affected. A single route recently opened after having been blocked by residential construction security fences.

Task 2 – Report incidents to appropriate agencies.

All incident reports have been submitted to the appropriate agencies. A majority of those occur on BLM managed land and may affect the value of cultural sites without directly impacting the site itself. For example, OHV activity may create damage on land adjacent to a cultural site without directly impacting it.
Fig. 2 shows recorded impacts to cultural sites annually

**Task 3 – Collect, maintain, and provide longitudinal statistics to federal land managing agencies and create and maintain a central database containing site steward and cultural site monitoring information and statistics from all five agencies.**

Information is being stored on the CSSP relational database and will include photographs showing “before and after” damages that occur. A photographic record created by the site steward is being generated for each site and stored in the database. This should have a long-term benefit to agencies for detailed site management.

Significant impacts as a percentage of the total damages for this quarter are itemized below:

- Digging and Potting 1%
- Bullet Holes 1%
- Vandalism 18%
- Fire Pits in habitation shelters 4%
- Excessive trash 16%
- Human waste on or in a site 8%
- Graffiti 14%
- OHV related 17%
- Collectors’ Piles 2%
- Miscellaneous visitation damage 8%
• Signs destroyed 8 %
• Other 3 %

Of damages creating greatest concern, it is no surprise that off-road vehicle damage remains among the top reasons for concern.

Subtler reasons for concern are emerging. Federal land is being targeted for internet users who publish site locations with directions and/or gps coordinates to confidential sites. Recently, one user published a list of discrete sites with photographs and directions on Google Earth stimulating interest and visitation verified by CSSP in four instances. It is assumed that the visitation numbers are considerably higher.

**Project 3: Community Outreach and Education**

*Task 1 – Inform the community about the Cultural Site Stewardship Program and their opportunity to get personally involved in protecting public lands.*

CSSP Manager Phillips has attended all monthly meetings for Friends of Sloan, Friends of Gold Butte, Southern Nevada Rock Art Association and all but one meeting for the Archaeo-Nevada Society. On May 17, CSSP constructed a display booth for the Southern Nevada Cultural History Fair describing the work of site stewardship.

*Task 2 – Educate the public about the need to protect cultural sites, increase public awareness of the significance and value of heritage resources, and educate the public about proper site etiquette in accordance with existing state and federal laws enacted for historical preservation.*

A 1 ½ hour class on stewardship in Clark County was presented by George Phillips and advertised by members of the Interagency Volunteer Program on June 18. Twelve people attended, and five expressed interest in participating in the Cultural Site Stewardship Program.

Phillips was elected to the Board of Directors for the Nevada Archaeological Association in May. A primary goal of the organization is to promote stewardship throughout the state of Nevada. In addition to Phillips, four members of ICSST are also members dedicated to the preservation of cultural sites.

Submitted by:

Margaret N. Rees, Project Administrator 06/30/2008 Date