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Re-evaluation of the Main Ridge Site and Adjacent Areas: Quarterly Progress Report, Period Ending March 31, 2006

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QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Period Ending March 31, 2006

Cooperative Agreement Number H8R07010001

Task Agreement Number J8R07050006

Re-evaluation of the Main Ridge Site and Adjacent Areas

Executive Summary

- UNLV graduate student has initiated Lost City archival research and completed visits to four repositories.
- Fall 2006 field school advertised.
- Initiated required consultations with Native American tribes.

Program Activities

Archival Research

The archival research was initiated January 15, 2006, by Leilani Espinda, a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology & Ethnic Studies hired for this project. During the past quarter, Ms. Espinda received training on Microsoft Access database software and read all background reports previously generated on the Lost City project. Additionally, she has visited the following repositories to compile data relating to the Lost City Project:

- UNLV Special Collections (Lied Library)
- National Park Service Lake Mead National Recreation Area headquarters
- Southwest Museum in Los Angeles
- National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Espinda is currently conducting field work (unrelated to this project) in Europe; upon her return in late July she will resume work on this project.

Field Work

Dr. Karen Harry (Principal Investigator), Department of Anthropology and Ethic Studies, has begun to work on the logistical issues to ensure that the field work will be completed as planned in the Fall of 2006. Specifically, she has:

- Advertised the fall field school among UNLV students (*see attached*).

- Initiated consultations with the relevant Native American tribes as required by federal law. Contact has been made with members of the following tribes (*see attached*):
 - Hopi
 - Fort Mohave
 - Hualapai
 - Kaibab
 - Las Vegas Paiute
 - Moapa Band of Paiute Indians
 - Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah

- In response to a request by members of the Hopi Tribe, Dr. Harry has arranged to travel to the Hopi Mesa (along with representatives from Lake Mead NRA) to attend an informational meeting on April 26, 2006.

Submitted by:

Margaret N. Rees, Project Administrator

March 31, 2006
Date

Field School Flier

UNLV Fall 2006

Weekend Archaeological Field School

The Lost City Site

The Department of Anthropology & Ethnic Studies will offer a four-credit weekend field school during the 2006 fall semester. Field investigations will focus on mapping, survey, and test excavations within and around the Main Ridge Site, a Pueblo II (A.D. 1050-1150) habitation site associated with the Virgin Anasazi culture. Students will learn the fundamentals of archaeological excavation and survey techniques, mapping, record-keeping, and material processing and identification.

PROJECT SETTING

The project area is located near the town of Overton, about 65 miles north of Las Vegas. The field school will be conducted over the course of five, 3-day weekends (Friday through Sunday). In addition to attending the field school, students will also spend some time in the classroom and laboratory. We will carpool to the project area from campus, leaving Friday mornings and returning Sunday evenings. Students will stay in a hotel in Overton on Friday and Saturday nights. Lodging will be provided.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Main Ridge site is part of a larger archaeological site complex known as Pueblo Grande de Nevada or Lost City. The site was first investigated by Mark Harrington in the 1920s and 1930s. His excavations, which focused on the interior of house structures, ended with the filling of Lake Mead and the beginning of World War II. Additional field investigations were conducted in the late 1970s and early 1980s by Dr. Margaret Lyneis of UNLV, whose work included detailed mapping of house features, surface collection, and an evaluation of the effect of Lake Mead on the site. She concluded that the high water levels of Lake Mead were causing severe erosion to the site's features.

PROJECT GOALS

Archaeological research will focus on three activities. First, test excavations will be conducted between rooms to recover botanical and other samples. Second, the site will be mapped and its current condition assessed. Finally, additional survey will be conducted in selected areas of the Main Ridge vicinity.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For further information, contact Dr. Karen Harry, Department of Anthropology & Ethnic Studies, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Box 455003, Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-5003. Phone: 702-895-2534, e-mail Karen.harry@unlv.edu.

Letter to Tribes

February 23, 2006

Mr. Wayne Taylor, Jr., Chairman
Hopi Tribal Council
P.O. Box 123
Kykotsmovi, Arizona 86039

Dear Mr. Taylor:

I am writing to inform you of two archaeological projects that the Department of Anthropology & Ethnic Studies at the University of Nevada Las Vegas proposes to conduct on National Park Service (NPS) Lands. The purpose of this letter is to introduce you to the projects and to seek feedback on the proposed methods. Both projects would be conducted under my direction, and carried out by students receiving college credit for participating in the archaeological field course.

The first project is located on lands administered by the NPS, within the boundaries of both the Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LAME) and the Parashant National Monument (PARA). The attached Figures 1 and 2 show the approximate location of this project area. As a part of this project, we propose to conduct archaeological field work within and adjacent to a fourteen room pueblo (AZ A:14:50 ASM) located approximately two miles east of Mt. Dellanbaugh. Field work would consist of a combination of archaeological survey and excavation, and the analyses of the local sediments and clays. This area was selected for research for two reasons. First, the region is likely to yield answers concerning the research questions that we have posed (see Attachment 1: Research Design and Proposed Plan of Work for the LAME/PARA project). Second, this pueblo and sites in the immediate vicinity are facing increasing threats due to their proximity to the road and to the Waring Ranch (a National Register property that receives regular visitation), and due to increasing visitation to the region. A looter's hole is present at AZ A:14:50, indicating that some damage has already been done. The research questions we wish to address as well as our proposed methodology are presented in Attachment 1. As stated in that research design, we do not anticipate encountering any human remains, as our proposed excavations would be limited to AZ A:14:50 (which contains relatively shallow [10-50 cm deep] deposits of soil) and to non-habitation sites. Should human remains nonetheless be encountered, however, we propose to immediately rebury any exposed human remains and stop excavating in that area.

The second project is also located on National Park Service lands, adjacent to modern-day Lake Mead (see Figure 3). This project is being initiated at the request of the National Park Service, in response to concerns that the Main Ridge Site is being increasingly damaged by erosion. The field work is being undertaken to assess the condition of the site, determine whether the site is continuing to erode, to identify and locate any archaeological features that may exist around the site, and to determine whether any intact subsurface remains exist at the site. This site was excavated in the 1920s and 1930s by Mark Harrington and, later, members of the Civilian Conservation Corps. At that time, all of the identified structures at the site were excavated. However no excavations were conducted in the plazas and other outdoor areas between the structures. Thus, we propose to map the site, assess its condition, survey the lands adjacent to the site, and conduct limited subsurface test excavations in between the rooms. As with the previous project, we do not anticipate encountering any human remains, but should any be encountered, we propose to leave them in place, rebury them, and immediately cease excavations within that area. Our methods are described in Attachment 2: Proposed Scope of Work for Re-Evaluation of the Main Ridge Site and Adjacent Areas.

Please let me know if you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or concerns regarding either or both of these projects. I will be happy to discuss any aspects of these projects with you, either by telephone or in person. I can be reached by e-mail at Karen.harry@nevada.edu, or by phone at 702-895-2534. Alternatively, you may contact Rosie Pepito (702-293-8959) at the National Park Service with questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Karen G. Harry, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor

cc: Rosie Pepito, National Park Service
Leigh Kuwanwisiwma, Hopi Office of Cultural Preservation