The View from Here…. *By Norm Nelson*

...is one of continued growth in our ranks, interest in the program from overseas, upcoming trainings, an alliance with other western states with similar programs, a lecture for the UNM law school, and site steward success in the field!

We finally have a chapter in the northeast corner (see article on page 3)! This completes the original mapping out of the state and provides state-wide coverage. We now have 277 active members, making our state program the third largest in the western United States. Arizona has the largest at 800, followed by Nevada at 300 and then N.M.!

Interest in the program also continues from Europe, now from Spain (see Phil Young’s article for details). This makes for 18 countries worldwide that have received information about the structure of our program. The request from Spain was a little different in that they asked for the training power points as well. These will be used as a template as the program is developed.

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**Aldo Leopold High School is On the Job in 2014!**

News from our younger stewards in the southwestern part of the state is inspiring! Six Aldo Leopold High School Youth Conservation Corps Students became Junior Site Stewards during the 1st quarter of 2014 and monitored sites on the Gila National Forest (Dragonfly Petroglyph Site and other sites on the Fort Bayard Game Refuge, and Pictograph Canyon)

Other activities included the ALHS YCC Archaeology and Preservation Education during the Spring Semester of this year. Working with the Gila Conservation Education Center (GCEC), Gila National Forest, Grant County Archaeological Society, and area schools, the ALHS students gave over 30 archaeology and preservation education presentations to area school groups from Jan 24 to May 16, 2014 and presented a poster at the Archaeological Society of NM Annual Meeting held in Silver City in April.
SiteWatch was invited to the National Council on Public History (NCPH) last March in Monterey, California. New Mexico’s SiteWatch served as facilitator for a roundtable discussion of volunteers and site steward programs. The northwest chapter of SiteWatch also sent a representative. Other states in the west were invited with Arizona, California, Idaho, and Oregon sending representatives. Montana, Nevada and Wyoming were invited but couldn’t attend. The discussion was well attended by undergraduate and graduate students, state and federal agency representatives (historians and interpreters) and academic professionals. Of interest to the western programs is the move to create an alliance of western state programs to share information, ideas, and help establish new programs with advice on structure and funding. A website will be created along with a mission statement and a list of program contacts. Colorado will join in with the above mentioned states as well. More on this as it develops.

Trainings have been proposed for both Silver City and for Albuquerque. Details will be sent out with the weekly newsletter or by separate e-mail SOON! If there is interest in other parts of the state let me know and let’s set something up for fall (after the fire season).

The UNM law school offers a class in Preservation Law every two years. The Historic Preservation Division sends many of its people as guest lecturers as part of the class. Since SiteWatch is seen as a practical application of preservation law SiteWatch is invited to make a presentation. I’ve adapted one of our power point presentations from basic training to inform these students of the of the structure of the program, the size and nature of the global black market, and where we as SiteWatch members fit into the global picture. As one of the last lectures presented in the course, it pulls together the application of law, preservation ethics, efforts of volunteers, and presents some of the cases that are highlighted in our training efforts here in N.M. Last but not least are the efforts of SiteWatch volunteers! Thanks to the efforts of our stewards in the Chimayo area the BLM set up a sting. Law enforcement made an arrest and at least report one individual was in jail and two others were being investigated. A second report (eyewitness account plus photos) out of the Ojo Caliente area has also lead to the development of a case, again with the BLM. KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK!!

Norm Nelson, NM State SiteWatch Coordinator

Mission Statement

SiteWatch is a statewide volunteer program coordinated by the State Historic Preservation Division (HPD) and funded by public and private partnerships. SiteWatch is founded upon the belief that the preservation of New Mexico’s cultural heritage is essential to our state and nation’s knowledge and quality of life. SiteWatch seeks to conserve and protect cultural properties by coordinating the efforts of New Mexico’s citizens and landowners as they serve as stewards and educational docents of their own cultural resources. By reducing the degradation of cultural treasures due to vandalism, theft, and natural processes through monitoring and education, SiteWatch ensures that irreplaceable heritage resources can be appreciated by current and future generations of New Mexicans.

Handbook: The most recent copy of the handbook is posted with our SiteWatch forms (and this newsletter) at: http://www.nmhistoricpreservation.org/documents/128.DOCUMENT.pdf

SiteWatch Chapters and Areas

Central New Mexico (Albuquerque)
Chaco Culture National Historical Park
East/Northeast (Portales)
Elephant Butte/Caballo (Truth or Consequences)
Jemez Mountains (Los Alamos)
Lincoln County (Lincoln NF)
Middle Rio Grande / El Camino Real (Socorro)
North Central (Taos)
Northwest (Farmington)
Quemado ( Reserve District, USFS)
Santa Fe/Galisteo Basin & Pecos NHP
Southeast (Carlsbad/Hobbs)
Southwest ( Silver City)
South Central (Las Cruces)
Torrance County (Torrance County Arch. Soc.)
Valencia County Chapter

See Chapter Coordinators list at: http://www.abqarchaeology.org/nmsw.shtml
Annual Conference Highlights
Chocolate, Remote Sensing, and Volcanic Glass

SiteWatch stewards from around the state congregated at the Stuart Udall Center of the Museum of New Mexico for the annual conference on Sunday, February 16, 2014. A full program of speakers was highlighted, along with reports from chapter coordinators and the annual business meeting of the Site Steward Foundation. The silent auction benefiting SiteWatch and made up of items donated by site stewards and other supporters brought in over $900.00!

Following welcoming remarks by State Coordinator Norm Nelson, Deputy SHPO Jan Biella and Dr. Jeff Pappas, the NM SHPO, stewards were treated to a review of the obsidian artifacts of the Valles Caldera, one of the state’s premier sources of obsidian. Dr. Ana Steffen, who heads the archaeology program at Valles Caldera, provided insights into the effects of recent forest fires on these volcanic glass artifacts and described recent archaeological surveys and excavations that have enhanced our understanding of resource acquisition and landscape use in the Caldera.

Charles Haecker of the National Park Service described the intensive remote sensing surveys he has been executing around Pecos Pueblo. The ongoing project has opened archaeologists’ eyes regarding the cycle of raiding and trading that is a hallmark of Pecos Pueblo history. Comanche and Apache raids are coming into focus as a result of the discovery of artifacts that show how hostile forces arrayed themselves against the Pueblo. Items that can be securely attributed to the Coronado Expedition have been found, as well as unexpected items relating to the American Civil War.

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May 27, 2014 was a great day to start a river trip. It was sunny and warm as three crew (Jen, Ed and Charlie) and eighteen others gathered on the shore of the San Juan River outside Bluff, Utah. It took about an hour for everyone to get their gear stored in dry sacks and loaded onto the rafts. We were all fitted for life jackets or PFDs (personal flotation devices) and we climbed onto three rafts and four “duckies”. Off we went into the muddy waters of the river.

We floated for a short time and stopped across from a rock art panel that was at the confluence of Butler wash and the San Juan. The pictographs and petroglyphs were from the Archaic and Basketmaker periods. After lunch we stopped to explore a cliff dwelling which was a short hike from the river. It was perched on a rock ledge under a wide overhang. It is called River House and occupied by Ancestral Puebloans between A.D. 700 and 1300. It has 14 rectangular rooms and two round kivas. We saw rock art on the overhang and in several areas throughout. There were grinding slicks, pottery sherds, lithics, and burned corn scattered in and around the site. After some time, we drifted down to our first camping spot on the river. Before dinner some horses from the Navajo reservation crossed the river right into our camp.

Next morning, we went down to Chinle wash. We hiked up the canyon to look at rock art, mostly human, animal, and geometric motifs. Along the way we saw a number of cliff dwellings that were high up on the cliffs on the other side of the canyon. Then we headed back to our rafts to get ready for the wildest part of our trip!
As the river narrowed, our guides prepared us for the class I – II rapids we were soon to encounter. We did the four-foot rapid and then eight-foot rapid. Most of us got wet, particularly folks in the “duckies”. We pulled over almost immediately to our Sunday night camping spot. We set up our tents while the guides prepared our dinner. After dinner, our guide, Charlie, took those interested on a hike to look at fossils.

Monday morning, our final day on the river, brought sunny skies. After loading up the rafts, we headed out for a leisurely float the last eleven miles of our trip. We encountered a few small rapids, but it was an easy float. We stopped briefly at a spot where there was an old stone cabin built for a John Wayne movie titled, “She Wore a Yellow Ribbon”. We passed the Mexican Hat sandstone formation for which the nearby town was named, and at one spot we could see the tops of sandstone formations in Monument Valley. All too soon the trip was over!

Our Moab Rafting and Canoe Co. crew were superb! They made the trip safe and fun. Our group of eighteen rafters had a great time despite the rain. We saw wonderful archeology and I overheard someone say that the trip exceeded their expectations. We want to give a big thanks to Beth Parisi for organizing the trip.
What do you envision when you hear the term El Camino Real? Some of us see carts loaded with goods, accompanied by a cross-section of La Frontera personalities: farmers, cooks, priests and soldiers. I also see “ideas” accompanying these personal voyages-of-discovery: both north- and southbound. El Camino Real was a conveyor of thoughts, beliefs and perceptions. Today, it seems the “super information highway” is the heir to the Camino.

Recently, former State and SF-Galisteo Basin Chapter Coordinator Phil Young was contacted “off-list” (New Mexico Archeological Council’s List-serve) by a “Lady in Spain”, Natalia Diaz. After participating in heritage projects in the “Land of Enchantment” and Guatemala, she was involved with efforts to protect objects of antiquity near her home in Cifuentes, Guadalajara, Spain. It seems that since a Spanish-TV equivalent of our TV show “Diggers” had aired, where folks with metal detectors had been scouring her homeland for loot. Sound familiar?

Cifuentes is a small village, capital of the La Alcarria region, located in the province of Guadalajara (Castilla, La Mancha, Spain). It is an area of enormous historical and archaeological richness for many time periods & cultures: Neolithic, Celto-Iberian (Bronze and Iron Age), Roman, Visigoth, Arab, Jewish, Medieval, modern and contemporary. Just as we have been doing here, some of the local residents have been working to stem the tide of looters taking objects from Bronze Age and Roman era occupation sites, even sometimes disturbing Upper Paleolithic and Neolithic cultural deposits.

Phil & Natalia exchanged e-mails about New Mexico SiteWatch and site steward programs; Phil posted a blog piece about the value of site stewards and our efforts: http://travelranger87508.blogspot.com/2014/03/community-based-heritage-resource.html.

In short order, our Introduction & Orientation PowerPoint programs were sent to Spain electronically and a CD was air-mailed to Cifuentes. Included were materials from the Heritage Resource Investigations course recently taught to archaeological & law enforcement professionals. Yes, it’s lot of material to absorb! Yet the initial response from Spain was one of gracias por todos, which we want to pass-along-to-you.: THANK YOU for ALL your efforts…http://patrimonio CIFUENTES.blogspot.com.es/2014/03/de-cifuentes-gargoles-de-abajo.html
Rounding out the presentations was Dr. Patricia Crown, who described the use of chocolate (cacao) and macaws as ritual and elite exchange items throughout Mesoamerica and later into Europe after the Spanish invasion. Both macaws and chocolate traveled far from their tropical origins to enhance the material cultures of societies as widely separated as Chaco Canyon Puebloans and aristocratic Europeans. Dr. Crown’s ongoing research continues to delve into the multiple cultural meanings of these two trade items.

State Coordinator Norm Nelson presented some special gifts to Torrance County Chapter Coordinator Bill Simms and Assistant State Coordinator Rebecca Procter as “thank-you’s” for their service. Ms. Marsha Carra received her gift of recognition later at the Portales training. Happy site stewards wended their ways home with auction items and renewed commitment!