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LEAVE NO TRACE

Outdoor Ethics for Heritage Sites

Historic, archaeological and fossil sites are special places that tell the story of our past. These fragile irreplaceable heritage resources may not be readily visible so be aware and practice Leave No Trace principles.

PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- Know the rules and regulations for the area you'll visit.
- Check to be sure the site is open and find out if you need a permit.
- Plan to keep pets and pack animals restrained and away from sites.
- Visit in small groups. Assure supervision of youth groups.

TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel and dry grasses.
- Stay on designated roads and trails; soil disturbance can cause significant and irreversible impacts to heritage sites.
- Climbing, sitting or walking on walls and other constructed features weakens them. Walls that are stressed may suddenly collapse.
- Avoid walking on artifacts and middens. Middens are trash dumps that are usually soft dark soil areas near heritage sites.
- Where allowed, camp at least 200 yards from heritage sites.

DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- Pack it in, pack it out. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
- Never dig catholes for human waste disposal near heritage sites. Walk at least 200 yards from these sites.

LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- Artifacts and fossils left where they are help tell the story of the past. Rearranging them limits their scientific value and the experience of future visitors.
- It is illegal to dig, remove or collect artifacts and vertebrate fossils without a permit.
- Leave historic and prehistoric structures intact.
- Take photographs or make a drawing of the rock art or gravestones you visit. Touching, chalking and making rubbings and latex molds cause damage.

In cooperation with:



MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

- Campfires cause lasting impacts. Use a light-weight stove for cooking.
- Where fires are permitted, use existing fire rings, a fire pan or build a mound fire.
- Collect only dead and downed wood that is clearly not from heritage sites. Collect wood and build fires at least 200 yards away from sites.

RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Never feed animals. It changes their natural behaviors and food left behind may alter the heritage site.
- Control pets at all times.

BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS

- **Respect the Past** - Heritage sites hold clues to what life was like long ago.
- Educate others never to dig at sites or collect artifacts.
- Graffiti is vandalism - it damages rock art, ruins, cliff walls, trees and historic structures. Attempting to remove graffiti can cause further damage.
- Many Native Americans consider their ancestral land sacred.

REPORT VANDALISM

If you see people vandalizing sites, report it as soon as possible by contacting the local law enforcement agency or land management office. Never confront or approach vandals or do anything to endanger your safety. From a distance, observe and report their physical description, activities, license plate numbers, time and location.

Sites on federal land are protected by federal laws. These laws provide for prosecution, forfeiture, imprisonment and fines. Many states have similar law.

For more information and materials:
1.800.337.4100, or www.lnt.org
To report vandalism:
1.800.242.2772

