



# United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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EMS TRANSMISSION **SEP 24 2014**  
Memorandum

To: Assistant Director, Renewable Resources and Planning (WO200)  
Attention: Division Chief (WO240)

From: Raul Morales *Michael J. Herder*  
Deputy State Director *Acting*

Subject: Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Heritage Programs and National Landscape Conservation System  
Annual Report

In response to Instruction Memorandum No. 2014-103, I appreciate the opportunity to report Nevada's accomplishments in heritage resources management for fiscal year 2014. Various highlights are presented below, while Attachments 1-5 contain numerical summaries of accomplishments and updates related to partnerships, historic structures, museum collections, and NAGPRA inventories.

## State Highlights

### Hidden Cave (Carson City District Office)

On April 9, 2014, a team of five BLM archaeologists – Kristin Bowen, Rachel Crews, Mike Cook and Jason Wright from the Carson City District Office (CCDO), and Bryan Hockett from the Nevada State Office – successfully repaired the vandalism damage to Hidden Cave, a Nationally-Registered prehistoric site. Along with the aid of five Student Conservation Association (SCA) interns and members of the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, the team repaired the internal damage to the site by carefully scraping the spray-painted graffiti from the sidewalls and cave wall interior. An SCA crew sanded the graffiti from the wood-plank boardwalk and wood railings. The interior spotlights that were damaged were replaced as well. All interpretive signs outside the cave were replaced.



Figure 1. BLM archaeologist Mike Cook repairs a sidewall in Hidden Cave.

### **Black Point Petroglyph Return (Carson City District Office)**

On February 6, 2014, in coordination with Marlin Thompson, Yerington Paiute Tribe, Bryan Hockett and Jason Wright traveled to the Hearst Museum Repository at the University of California, Berkeley to retrieve over 20 petroglyph boulders that were taken from a significant site on CCDO known as Black Point. On April 20, 2014, the petroglyphs were returned to their approximate original location.



Figure 2. Before and after pictures of a repaired petroglyph boulder prior to return.



Figure 3. BLM volunteers Evan Pellegrini and Kevin Hockett return petroglyphs to Black Point

### **Recordation of an Historic Cabin – Archaeological Internships (Ely District Office)**

The Schell field office hosted two students for an 11 weeks internship as part of the partnership program with Mobilize Green and the BLM. The students were technically volunteers for the BLM and both students each contributed 450 hours during their term. At the end of their internship they will become eligible for the BLM's Direct Hiring Authority. The interns' focus was providing intensive recording and evaluation of an historic cabin. Their work on the cabin included test pits, document/archival research, report compilation resulting in a section 110 cultural inventory and architectural report amendment. The interns presented a public lecture utilizing power-point and question/answer session. As part of their project they were required to coordinate with outside partners, provide documentation and coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office. The site was considered eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion c and d.

### **Paleontology – (Battle Mountain, Winnemucca and Ely District Offices)**

From March 10th to March 15th, Dr. Joshua Bonde, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Professor of Paleontology, conducted a field school to a rich paleontological area known as 'The Sump' in order to excavate a reported Proboscidean fossil located by an avocational paleontologist in late 2013. Dr. Bonde's crew consisted of five student researchers. The specimen was excavated, casted, and transported to UNLV for further research. The specimen will be turned over to the Nevada State Museum at the conclusion of their research. In addition to the excavation of the proboscidean find, the crew also engaged in surface collection of fossilized vertebrates located in five regionalized areas of The Sump. The most abundant of these fossil collections were several different taxa of beaver, and included the 'giant beaver' from the Miocene Epoch. Other taxa located include rodents, camels, horse, chalicotheres, and yet un-identified carnivores.

An international team of paleontologists completed ichthyosaur excavations in the Winnemucca District Office. One of the specimens is a pregnant ichthyosaur. The paleontologists gave presentations to BLM employees and the general public on the results of past fossil finds of marine reptiles in the Winnemucca District. These exciting scientific discoveries include *Thalattoarchon Saurophageist*—"The Lizard Eating Sovereign of the Seas"—featured in National Geographic Magazine. Work has begun on an exhibit which will interpret the results of these past marine reptile fossil finds at the Humboldt Museum in Winnemucca. In addition to the new ichthyosaur exhibit, the existing Black Rock mammoth exhibit at the Humboldt Museum will be enhanced.



Figure 4. Preparator Olaf Dülfer of the University of Bonn stabilizes the curving backbone of a large Ichthyosaur.

Ely District hosted the Sierra College (Rocklin, California) paleontology field school in addition to the UNLV geology field school once again. The paleo group, led by Richard Hilton, had a successful trip finding a bit more dinosaur material as well as some possible older bone material in the Diamond Peak

Formation. They also collected sediment to screen for micro material but results are pending. The paleontology group also began searching for new areas to return to next summer. The geology group, led by Dr. Josh Bonde, had a very successful field mapping class. It is anticipated that both groups will be on the district again next field season.

#### **Site Stewardship (Carson City and Ely District Offices)**

Ely's site stewardship program continues with 21 stewards holding active volunteer agreements. Overall there have been 28 different sites monitored resulting in 251 hours of volunteer time along with 2,844 miles expended by those volunteers in Ely District. The Carson City District Office saw 31 volunteers logging nearly 300 hours monitoring 34 sites through their site stewardship program.



Figure 5. Site stewards at Grimes Point Petroglyph Site, western Nevada.

#### **National Historic Trails (Southern Nevada and Winnemucca District Offices)**

On March 29, 2014, Southern Nevada District archaeologist Stan Plum partnered with the Nevada Chapter of the Old Spanish Trail Association (OSTA) to begin replacing and re-marking aging Old Spanish Trail markers that have been damaged or broken across the District. Members of the Nevada Trail Riders Association, Blue Diamond History Committee, West Career & Technology School Future Farmers of America, Boy Scouts, and public volunteers will join in the effort.



Figure 6. (left to right): Nicole Marie Dominguez (President, Nevada Chapter of OSTA), Stan Plum (BLM Southern Nevada District Office archaeologist) and Ashley Hall (OSTA President) standing next to OST Marker # 22

In June, members of the Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA) and Trails West assisted the Winnemucca District Office to identify a section of the Nobles Route emigrant trail near Granite Creek Station, just outside of Gerlach, Nevada. Volunteers assisted the BLM with a metal detector survey.

Although no artifacts dating to the period of use of the Nobles Route were found, many surface and subsurface artifacts were documented along what appears to be a segment of a later route known as the Humboldt Wagon Road. Many of these artifacts included parts from wagons that could be dated to the 1870s or 1880s, as well as rust smears on rocks, rock alignments along the trail, and ceramic dishware. Additionally, BLM, OCTA and Trails West assisted the University of Nevada with test excavations in and around the remains of rock structures that were once part of the Granite Creek Station. The purpose of the excavations was to better identify the functions of these buildings. Granite Creek Station was originally a camp site along the Nobles Route, and later was a stage stop and military camp. Cast iron fragments that were believed to be part of a stove were found as well as fragments of lead shot. The latter artifacts may have been remnants of a battle with Native Americans which reportedly occurred at the site.



Figure 7. Dr. Carolyn White University of Nevada, Reno (right) oversees OCTA/Trails West/BLM excavation at Granite Creek Station.

#### **Tribal Consultation (Elko District Office)**

The Elko District Office (ELDO) has created, and is in the process of implementing, a set of programs aimed at a more proactive and inclusive form of Tribal consultation within both the Section 106 and NEPA processes. In collaboration first with the Te-Moak Tribe of Shoshone Indians of Nevada and the constituent Bands, ELDO began an active Tribal Monitoring program. The program was created to formalize the ELDO notification process which includes the Tribal governments authorizing specific individuals or groups to represent tribal interests during project activities. While archaeological issues are always a key part of the Tribal monitoring program, ELDO has taken a more ‘landscape’ approach by emphasizing the Tribal monitor’s ability to meet a fuller understanding of “cultural landscape.” This includes any and all issues identified by the Tribal community through the Tribal governments’ authorized representative in relation to the continuation of cultural lifeways on aboriginal territories currently managed by the ELDO.

#### **Museum Collections Management (Nevada State Office)**

BLM Nevada State Office continues to support the assistance agreement with the Nevada State Museum (NSM), Carson City with funding to configure and procure shelving and equipment to expand storage space. NSM purchased a new walkie-stacker that will allow shelving to be placed closer together, thereby enhancing curation space. In addition, NSM agreed to take the Harry Reid Center (HRC) collection that was housed on the grounds of UNLV. After UNLV ceased its support in curating the collection, nearly 1,000 boxes of curated artifacts were left “homeless.” Despite NSM’s already cramped facilities, they agreed to curate the collection as a result of BLM-NSM’s long-standing curation partnership. It is hoped that the HRC collection will find its way back to southern Nevada in the near future.

If you have any questions, please contact Bryan Hockett at 775-861-6546.

Attachments