

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Ethnohistory of the Cache la Poudre River National Heritage Area
Discipline: Cultural
Type of Project: Research
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Colorado State University
Effective Dates: 7/1/2005 - 9/30/2006
Funding Amount: \$26,988.00

Investigators and Agency Representative:

NPS Contact: Susan Calafate Boyle, 1201 Oakridge Dr., Fort Collins CO 80525, (970) 225-3565, susan_boyle@NPS.gov

Investigator: Lawrence Todd, 346 GSB, Department of Anthropology, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523 (970) 491-5110, Lawrence.Todd@ColoState.edu

Project Abstract:

Congress designated the Cache la Poudre River Corridor on October 19, 1996. The bill authorizes the development of an interpretive plan focusing on the cultural and historical lands, waterways, and structures within the National Heritage Area, with particular emphasis on the role of the Cache la Poudre River in the development of Western water law and a highly complex water delivery system. Previous studies have inventoried water and agricultural structures along the river, assessed the evolution of the landscape that is the core of the corridor designated by Congress, and explored the development of the water delivery system along the Poudre. These studies have shown that the role of the Cache la Poudre River in the history and development of Northern Colorado is quite important, yet very limited knowledge exists about the native people who resided in the vicinity of the Heritage Area in Larimer and Weld Counties after 1500 AD. This project will try to answer some basic questions about the culture and life-style of these early residents of the lands that are now a National Heritage Area.

The investigator will prepare an ethnohistory of the areas of Larimer and Weld Counties in northeastern Colorado adjacent to the Cache la Poudre River National Heritage Area. The end product will be a narrative that describes and analyzes continuity and change in native groups' patterns of resource use, demography, and ceremonial life. It will also aim to place these elements in relation to variables such as neighbors, resource boundaries, and economic, environmental, and political climates as they shifted over time. This narrative is essential for a thorough understanding of the historical development of the area. It will supplement previous studies on water and agricultural structures and the landscape of the Corridor and will allow for interpretive and educational programs that incorporate the contributions that Native Americans have made to the history of northeastern Colorado.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

- 1) final report of approximately 100 pp., including title page, text, chapters, notes, maps and other illustrations, and bibliography
- 2) final payment (10%) will be made upon receipt by the RMCESU and the key official of two hard copies and one electronic version of the final report.

Keywords: ethnohistory, Cache la Poudre River Corridor, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado State University, National Heritage area, Native Americans

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Date Annual Report Received:
Date Final Report Received:
Publications, etc. on file: