

## **Project Summary**

### **Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit**

**Project Title:** Oral History Project for Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, phase 1

**Discipline:** Cultural  
**Type of Project:** Research  
**Funding Agency:** National Park Service  
**Other Partners/Cooperators:** Colorado State University  
**Effective Dates:** 4/1/2011 - 4/30/2013  
**Funding Amount:** \$10,000

**Investigators and Agency Representative:**

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**Project Abstract:** This project will result in the organization and preservation of all existing oral history research and the acquisition of new vital research. This would further result in knowledge about the early scientific studies and land use history that is relevant to the all divisions within the park as well as to park management.

Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument (FLFO) has a limited amount of oral history records - none of which have been the result of an organized, professional project. What exists is scattered and there is a critical need to inventory, organize, digitize and curate these existing recordings, documents and other records. In addition, there are gaps of information regarding the history and land use of the monument. There are many individuals in the area that have valuable information, but these sources are disappearing at a fast rate. This project would target and prioritize those individuals who possess the information that would fill in the critical information gaps and those in failing health and of an advanced age.

Top priorities for interview candidates would include Estella Leopold, daughter of Aldo Leopold and fundamentally instrumental in the establishment of FLFO as an NPS area, Victor Yannacone, attorney for the Defenders of Florissant group who fought for the establishment of the National Monument, Defenders organizer Roger Hansen, local landowner and fossil quarry owner Toni Clare, paleontologist Ariel Cross, and others.

Residents of the local region will be interviewed in person. Those persons outside of day trip distance for interviews will be interviewed via telephone.

The project will consist of:

- A. Documentary search: With the guidance of the key official and other knowledgeable park staff, the principal investigator will conduct a search of all existing previously compiled oral histories performed for Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument.
- B. Information synthesis: From these recordings and documentary investigations, the principal investigator will work collaboratively with key advisors and park staff to analyze and synthesize the recordings, transcripts, and other information into an organized outline. PI will then develop a list of gaps in the oral histories of the monument and prioritize additional oral history interviews and recordings.
- C. The PI will then begin collecting those top priority oral histories.
- D. A list of recordings without transcripts will be identified for transcription. As remaining time and resources allow within the phase 1 budget, begin digitizing and transcribing existing oral histories.
- E. Report writing. The principal investigator will produce a well-written and annotated report for park staff, as well as a blueprint for continuation of this project in future years and phases of the project.

**Outcomes with Completion Dates:**

The final technical report is due on Feb. 28, 2013.

**Keywords:** oral history, Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, Colorado State University