

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: First People's Buffalo Jump NHL Processing of Archaeological Materials for Curation

Discipline: Cultural

Type of Project: Technical Assistance

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Other Partners/Cooperators: Montana State University

Student Involvement: Yes, student intern

Effective Dates: 07/01/2016 - 03/31/2018

Funding Amount: \$12,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Investigator: John W. Fisher, Jr., Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Montana State University, jfisher@montana.edu, 406-994-5250

Project Abstract: Designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) in 2015, First Peoples Buffalo Jump is one of the largest bison procurement and processing sites in North America. Archeological features (e.g., tipi rings), subsurface cultural deposits (e.g., bone middens), and artifacts are temporally diagnostic of multiple cultural groups that utilized this site for thousands of years. Phase 1 of this project will prepare, house, assess and process half of the First Peoples Buffalo Jump NHL collection, currently in the possession of Montana State University (MSU). The NPS and MSU will train a student intern to conduct the work according to defined curatorial standards, under the direct supervision of the Principal Investigator. In addition to providing much needed curation of the extensive collection and making it more accessible to researchers, this project provides an outstanding opportunity for a university student to learn more about faunal analysis, gain "real world" hands-on professional experience outside of the classroom, and learn about the National Historic Landmarks (NHL) program's technical assistance efforts. The project promotes greater public and private participation in historic preservation programs and activities among our most nationally significant sites. The project also builds resource stewardship and preservation ethics in its participants.

Keywords: First Peoples Buffalo Jump NHL, Montana State University, student intern, archaeological materials, curation