

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: TRADITIONAL PLANT USE STUDY: BENT'S OLD FORT NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE AND SAND CREEK MASSACRE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Type of Project: Research
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Montana
Effective Dates: 9/1/2004 - 12/31/2007
Funding Amount: \$37,238

Investigators and Agency Representative:

NPS Contact: Alexa Roberts, Superintendent, Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site
P. O. Box 249, Eads, CO 81036. (719) 438-5916, alexa_roberts@nps.gov

Investigator: Greg Campbell, Department of Anthropology, University of Montana,
Missoula, MT 59812-1001, (406)-243-2478, gregory.campbell@mso.unt.edu

Project Abstract:

Bent's Old Fort NHS and Sand Creek Massacre NHS will fund a cultural anthropologist (or an anthropology graduate student) from University of Montana to conduct a traditional use study for native prairie vegetation by the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, Ute, and Comanche tribes. All of these tribes are known to have played a role in the history of Bent's Old Fort and the Cheyenne and Arapaho are the affiliated tribes at Sand Creek Massacre NHS.

The study will include:

- 1) A review of available literature pertaining to the ethnobotany of the above listed tribes;
- 2) A literature review of historic and ethnographic works pertaining to the tribes listed above. Special attention will be given to tribal use of the prairie ecosystem and its importance to the tribal culture and way of life; and
- 3) Oral history interviews with knowledgeable tribal members. Audio and/or video taping will be incorporated into the project design for purposes of documentation (given tribal and individual permission), but also for (also with tribal permission) public education and interpretive purposes, and 4) field work to take place in May 2005.

The emphasis in this project will be on: a) the documentation of traditional (and contemporary traditional) plant use data (for medicinal, religious [as appropriate], food, and utilitarian purposes) by members of the subject American Indian tribes, and b) the significance of individual plant species and interrelationships of plant and animal communities for use in the parks' prairie restoration efforts and interpretive programming.

The written study report will be distributed to relevant NPS sites and tribal offices and will provide valuable data for planning at both Bent's Old Fort NHS and Sand Creek Massacre NHS, which are 90 miles apart and have common ecosystems and affiliated groups.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

Series of Progress reports documenting research meetings (throughout project timeframe).
Completion of Draft report (Due: July 1, 2007)
Completion of Final report (Due: December 31, 2007)

Keywords: native plants, traditional use, ethnobotany, Bent's Old Fort NHS, Sand Creek Massacre NHS, University of Montana, prairie restoration