

National Park Service Project Accomplishment Report

Project Name or Title: Workshop to Promote Understanding of American Indian Connections to Devils Tower.

Cooperative Agreement Number: H120004001

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Park or Trail: Devils Tower National Monument, National Park Service (DETO/NPS)

Project Goals and Scope of Work:

This project, according to the project agreement, seeks to promote staff understanding of American Indian connections with Devils Tower National Monument, National Park Service. Raising cultural awareness will help park staff, including seasonal staff employees interact more positively with American Indian partners. It will also aid park employees to better communicate the cultural importance of the Tower to visitors.

The Scope of Work detailed the topical issues to be presented by Dr. Gregory R. Campbell during the one-day workshop. In addition to facilitating the workshop, Dr. Campbell gave presentations on several American Indian/Tower topics, including:

- 1) Ethnohistorical and Ethnological Summary of Tribal Nations;
- 2) Overview of Northern Plains Spirituality;
- 3) Overview of Northern Plains Religious Practices;
- 4) Devils Tower as a Cultural and Sacred Landscape/Site and;
- 5) Native American Religious Issues: Laws and Mandates.

To assist in achieving the desired workshop goals, the National Park Service will be “closely involved throughout workshop development and production.” This included:

- 1) Working with The University of Montana regarding the design, structure and agenda of the workshop;
- 2) Identifying and arranging for tribal representatives to attend the workshop;
- 3) Inviting owners of gateway businesses to attend;

- 4) Providing logistics for the workshop, including arranging meeting room and needed supplies; and
- 5) Providing copies of handouts (prepared by The University of Montana) for Workshop attendees.

Project Accomplishments and Summary:

Devils Tower is the nation's first national monument. According to the National Park Service, over twenty tribes have potential cultural affiliation with Devils Tower National Monument. Of these Tribal Nations, the Arapaho, Crow, Lakota, Cheyenne, Shoshone, and Kiowa historically have direct, documented geographical and cultural ties to the site. Representatives of these Tribal Nations continue to have an intimate spiritual and cultural association with Devils Tower. As indigenous nations re-assert their sovereign rights to utilize sites on federal lands, it is imperative to have educational training for NPS staff to better understand and interpret indigenous concerns. To this end, DETO/NPS funded a training workshop to raise cultural awareness and promote understanding about indigenous issues.

The workshop was held, with the approval of the DETO NPS staff, at Devils Tower National Monument 27 May 2005. In attendance were approximately 25 to 40 permanent and seasonal staff employees. The primary goal of the workshop and training session was "...to promote staff understanding of American Indian connections with Devils Tower." To that end the workshop facilitator, in consultation with Christine Czazasty, DETO Interpreter, developed an approved training itinerary for the workshop (see Attachment A). The approved itinerary targeted all of the specific issues identified by NPS officials for training their workforce about indigenous issues.

After an introduction by Superintendent Lisa E. Eckert, the morning session was divided into three basic, but interrelated educational sections. The first session was specifically designed to address the "Ethnohistorical and Ethnological Summary of Tribal Nations." The presentation introduced the various historical Tribal Nations that resided in the vicinity of Devils Tower. The discussion was designed to provide a concise overview of regional tribal affiliations with the Black Hills, of which Devils Tower is an integral part of that cultural landscape.

As part of the presentation, the workshop facilitator discussed the archaeological record as well as the major historical factors that shaped the region's cultural landscape. The reason for providing a summary of the archaeological record was to emphasize that indigenous peoples have a long cultural association with Devils Tower and the surrounding landscape. It also breaks down the stereotype that Native Americans were recent interlopers in the region and their current concerns about Devils Tower do not have a rooted time depth.

A discussion of the construction of the historical cultural landscape was necessary to emphasize that the current Tribal Nations came into the region, pushing other indigenous societies out, but each society, once they encountered a sacred location, incorporated it into

their cultural and religious frameworks. It also allowed the workshop audience to grasp how some indigenous societies, like the Kiowa, Plains Apache, and Shoshone to name a few, can be separated today geographically from the site, but still maintain an intimate cultural and spiritual association with Devils Tower.

The chronological overview logically led to the reservation era and a discussion of the evolving policies to suppress indigenous religious beliefs and practices. Briefly, the goal of this presentation point was to illuminate how and why most Native American societies became divorced from many sacred locations during the forced assimilation reservation era. The workshop facilitator highlighted the outlawing of indigenous religious practices, the inability of Native people to leave the reservation without a reservation pass, and a brief discussion of how the oppression of indigenous religions continues into the twenty-first century. Of course, moving the dialogue into the contemporary era sets the stage for discussion of contemporary controversies surrounding Devils Tower and the laws and mandates, two topics addressed in the afternoon sessions.

The second session, titled “Northern Plains Spirituality and Religious Practices,” opened with a lecture about the cultural similarities and differences among Northern Plains indigenous societies. The societies that the workshop facilitator chose to emphasize are the Tribal Nations that currently maintain a direct, contemporary association with Devils Tower. The societies included the Crow, Eastern Shoshone, Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Teton Dakota. Emphasis was placed on how these various Tribal Nations rooted their beliefs and worldview in the land or landforms.

This session covered three crucial topics. The first is cross-cultural similarities and distinctions between five Tribal Nations. Second, how various tribes construct and conceive of sacred landscapes and sites. Finally that all indigenous religions are religions of place and not exclusively practice.

To illustrate the above point, the Cheyenne worldview and religious practices were described as a case study. The lecture was specifically designed to illustrate the depth and complexity of religious beliefs and practices. For example, the workshop facilitator pointed out that cottonwood trees are used as the center pole in the Cheyenne sun dance because it transcends various levels of the Cheyenne universe. While some may argue that such detail is confusing, if not unnecessary, it is imperative for the trainees to have a cursory understanding of the complexity of indigenous religious philosophies and practices.

Finally, Devils Tower was discussed as a cultural and sacred site. As part of that discussion, Devils Tower was placed into the larger context of the Black Hills. The goal was for the participants to understand that as a sacred location, Devils Tower cannot be separated from the larger Black Hills cultural/spiritual landscape.

The above training materials, the instructor believes, laid the necessary groundwork for listening to representatives from four Tribal Nations who relayed their beliefs and concerns surrounding Devils Tower as a sacred landscape. Tribal representatives from the Crow, Northern Cheyenne, Teton Dakota, and Eastern Shoshone held an open forum.

DETO/NPS officials chose the consultants for this portion of the workshop. Because NPS representatives selected the elders, the workshop facilitator assumed that each person to speak was briefed on the workshop goals, time frame for their discussion, as well as the issues about Devils Tower.

The Elders each spoke in the open forum. The discussions ranged widely among each representative. Dr. Medicine Crow, for example, spoke directly about the sacredness of Devils Tower, the commonality of reverence to sacred sites, and addressed the insensitivity of climbing. In contrast, however, the Teton Dakota Elder told the audience about her travels to Germany. While each Elder spoke on wide ranging topics that on the surface may not seem relevant to Devils Tower for the listening participants, several central themes emerged.

First, is the recognition that Devils Tower is recognized as a sacred landscape by numerous tribes as they encountered it in their various cultural and historical experiences. This is a point emphasized in the morning sessions by the workshop facilitator. Second is the cross-cultural relevance the site should hold for everyone, including Anglo Americans. Third is the need to practice elements of indigenous religions at a specific location to maintain a vital relationship with that location. The workshop facilitator also brought these major points forth in earlier sessions.

However, problems arose during this portion of the session with respect to time and facilitation. Tribal Elders, in presentation and in speech, often speak at length about their concerns. While a post-workshop NPS commentary advocated that the facilitator should have taken “charge,” in working with 21 Tribal Nations, it is considered to be culturally insensitive and rude to interrupt, correct, or directly question Elders to keep them on the topic of discussion. Knowing the cultural rules, I admittedly did show a degree of deference as it is considered to be respectful. Of course, allowing the Elders to openly express their concerns did cause an overrun into other sessions.

After the tribal representative forum, the workshop facilitator presented two major themes, “Understanding and Respecting Cultural Differences,” and “The Cultural Differences of Place.” The major goal was to point out the major arenas of contention between indigenous and non-indigenous uses of Devils Tower. Having noted, however, that the audience did not ask very many questions to the tribal Elders, the instructor wove their statements into the session, hoping that the audience would digest the relevance of what the Elders attempted to convey to them. The topics addressed included offerings, gathering resources, differences in perception of place and its effect on use, and religious solitude to name a few.

The final session was an overview of the laws, Executive Orders, and mandates that drive cultural resource management policies. Again, time did not permit a complete discussion of the cultural and historical preservation laws, orders, and mandates that dictate NPS management policy. The project facilitator, in the brief discussion, did hand out a summary sheet with the major laws for reference (see Attachment B). At the end of this session, the superintendent stated that the employees already received training on historical

preservation laws, so my presentation was adequate reinforcement. The training session concluded with a brief discussion of issues and controversies that may arise

Summary and Recommendations:

Given the brief time frame the workshop facilitator had in preparing for the workshop, all the major goals set forth by DETO/NPS officials were met. This is the first workshop that DETO/NPS held about promoting a greater understanding of indigenous issues. The workshop facilitator commends them for their initiative and foresight. Although all the goals of the workshop were addressed and accomplished, there are several recommendations that would improve the workshop. They are:

- 1) The development of a straightforward power point presentation that explicitly outlines each session's goals for the audience. This will eliminate, as the submitted commentary pointed out, any confusion about the educational outcomes for each session.
- 2) The development of a workbook to accompany the above presentation, which will provide the DETO employees a training manual that they can use in their daily activities interacting with indigenous and non-indigenous visitors.
- 3) A reorganization of the session structure into two days. One day was not sufficient to sufficiently cover the topics.
- 4) Greater cooperation and communication with the workshop facilitator, explicitly outlining role expectations and;
- 5) Funding of a cultural landscape study of Devils Tower, which not only provide detailed information for future training workshops, but also be an asset in interpretation and management planning.

Thank you for opportunity to work with the DETO/NPS staff, particularly Christine Czazasty. I look forward to refining the workshop and conducting the cultural landscape research.

Cc: Kathy Tonnesson, Research Coordinator, National Park Service, CESU
Christine Whitacre, Cultural Resource Specialist, National Park Service, CESU
Gregory R. Campbell, Chair, Department of Anthropology, The University of Montana
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Attachment A
Employee Training Workshop
Devils Tower National Monument
National Park Service
May 27, 2005

- 8:00 AM – 8:15 AM** **Welcome and Introduction**
- 8:15 AM – 9:30 AM** **Northern Plains Tribal Associations with the Black Hills**
--Ethnohistorical and Ethnological Summary of Tribal Nations
-- Governmental Policies and Native American Religious Oppression
- 9:30 AM – 9:45 AM** **Break**
- 9:45 AM – 11:00 AM** **Northern Plains Spirituality and Religious Practices**
--Overview of Northern Plains Spirituality
--Overview of Northern Plains Religious Practices: Commonalities and Distinctions
- 11:00 AM – Noon** **Cultural and Sacred Landscapes**
--Constructing and Conceiving Sacred Landscapes/Sites
--Worldview: A Cheyenne Example
--Devils Tower as a Cultural and Sacred Landscape/Site
- Noon – 1:00 PM** **Lunch Break**
- 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM** **Devils Tower as a Sacred Landscape: Open Forum with Tribal Representatives**
--Opening Prayer and Introductions
--Indigenous perspectives/presentation of their history and religious connection to Devils Tower/Black Hills
--Open Question Period
- 2:30 PM – 2:45 PM** **Break**
- 2:45 PM – 3:30 PM** **Understanding and Respecting Cultural Differences**
--Aspects of Cultural Context
--The Cultural Differences of Place
- 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM** **Native American Religious Issues: Laws and Mandates**
--Overview of Laws. Mandates the Guide Management Policies
--Issues, Controversies, and Questions

Attachment B
Native American Religious Issues: Laws and Mandates

Authorities that Pertain to Cultural Resources

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
Executive Order 12898
Executive Order 12072

Historic Preservation Authorities

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)
The Historic Sites Act (HSA) of 1935
Executive Order 11593
Executive Order 13006
Executive Order 13287
Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act
The Federal Tax Code

Archaeological Authorities

The Antiquities Act of 1906
The Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA)
The Archaeological Data Preservation Act of 1974
The Abandoned Shipwreck Act (ASA)
The Curation Regulations (36 CFR 79)

Native American Cultural Resource Authorities

The American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA)
Executive Order 13007
The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriations Act (NAGPRA)
Indigenous Treaties
Indigenous Reserved Rights
Federal Trust Responsibility

Historical Documents Authorities

The Federal Records Act (FRA)
Section 112 of NHPA (Cited from King 2004:365-371)