

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Complete Ethnographic Overview & Assessment Study for Little Bighorn Battlefield

Type of Project: Research
Discipline: Cultural Resources
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Montana
Effective Dates: 7/1/2012 - 12/30/2015
Funding Amount: \$45,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: This ethnographic study and associated consultations will document ethnographic resources and uses, physical boundaries and preferred treatments, traditionally associated people (beyond the 17 tribes listed above; like Eastern Shoshone, Wyoming and the Shoshone/Bannock out of Idaho) and other affected groups, and cultural affiliations to park resources. The study will identify ethnographic resource data for inclusion in the park Ethnographic Resources Inventory, interpretive uses, and resources with National Register potential as traditional cultural properties. Additionally, it will provide the park with an annotated bibliography of park-related ethnographic works and identify gaps in the available data. Through consultations with traditional users, this study will identify measures they believe appropriate for safeguarding ethnographic resources, which will allow park management to identify differences between traditional user preferences and NPS practices and to negotiate those differences.

Ethnographic resources are variations of natural resources and standard cultural resource types. They are subsistence and ceremonial locales and sites, structures, objects, and rural and urban landscapes assigned cultural significance by traditional users. Ethnographic studies can provide data on cultural affiliation of contemporary Native American and ethnic groups to prehistoric and historic archeological resources on park lands. (For example, what is the cultural affiliation of the Eastern Shoshone and Shoshone/Bannock tribes to park resources?) They also can provide data on the cultural significance of those resources to such groups. Ethnographic studies make it possible to ensure that culturally affiliated groups are consulted about archeological research and permitting activities, management approaches for culturally sensitive archeological resources, and treatments and disposition of culturally sensitive materials in archeological collections.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

- First draft Ethnographic Overview and Assessment submitted by February 28, 2015
- NPS and consulting parties draft plan review completed by April 30, 2015 (60 days from submission)
- Final Ethnographic Overview and Assessment and abstract submitted by November 30, 2015

Keywords: ethnographic study, tribal consultations, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, University of Montana