

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Phase I of Visitor Center National Register Archeology: Remote Sensing

Type of Project: Technical Assistance
Discipline: Cultural Resources
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Montana
Effective Dates: 5/5/2012 - 12/31/2014
Funding Amount: \$10,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site (GRKO) is scoping the best location for a planned visitor contact station. There is potential for archeological materials below the surface in an approximately 4-acre area that appears to be the best location for the visitor center. In particular, the area of the Stuart-Menard homesite and out-structures, removed by original ranch owners, may hold archeological materials below the ground surface. Grant-Kohrs Ranch is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic Landmark District, but the Stuart-Menard homesite is not listed as a contributing element.

In order to determine whether the Stuart-Menard homesite is an appropriate location for the new visitor center, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires the NPS to determine if the construction will affect it as an historic property that is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places. One element that contributes to NR eligibility of a site (particularly Criterion D, its scientific value) is its archeological condition. Part of the archeological condition is the sub-surface integrity, including the presence and preservation of artifacts, features, and other archeological materials or characteristics.

In order to evaluate sub-surface integrity, test units may be excavated. To maximize the efficiency of test unit excavation, remote sensing techniques can identify anomalies in subsurface sediments that are more likely to yield archeological materials. It is the objective of this task agreement for the University of Montana as a project partner to assist with magnetometer and, if needed, ground penetrating radar (GPR) remote sensing survey in the Stuart-Menard homesite area and identify sub-surface anomalies for future test excavations, and ultimately the determination of eligibility of the Stuart-Menard homesite.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

Draft Report to Park: March 1, 2013
Draft Report Comments from Park: March 15, 2013
Final Report and Associated Materials submitted: May 15, 2013

Keywords: archeological materials, remote sensing, visitor center, Stuart-Menard homesite, Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site (GRKO), University of Montana, Division of Biological Sciences