

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Evaluation of Historical and Archeological Documentation

Discipline: Cultural
Type of Project: Technical Assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Utah State University
Effective Dates: 5/20/2010 - 5/10/2012
Funding Amount: \$11,700

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: Multiple lines of evidence have supported various interpretations of the locations of specific events during the Sand Creek Massacre from November 29 to December 1, 1864. For example, the location of the Cheyenne and Arapaho encampment has been interpreted in various places by various scholars and descendants within about a two mile stretch of Big Sandy Creek, depending upon which line of evidence is given more weight. The result is that no conclusive map of the massacre site has been developed and in turn, interpretation at the site is lacking. To address this situation, the NPS is hosting a Mapping Workshop which will bring together about 40 scholars, tribal descendants and park managers to evaluate existing and new information, produce a map of agreed upon site feature locations, and provide a basis for new and expanded interpretation at the national historic site. An additional outcome of the workshop is preparation of a research design for future archeological research to investigate gaps in existing knowledge. The Principal Investigator will assist with coordination of the workshop, collect, collate, and analyze pertinent data, summarize workshop and data results in a report and visual/map form, and make recommendations for archeological follow-up work in a research design. Qualitative or ethnographic recommendations may also be included in the research design, as they pertain to effective archeological research.

Outcomes with Completion Dates: Due Date for Final 2010 Products: September 30, 2011

1. The PIs (and appropriate team members) will assist in the preparation of, and attend, the "Mapping Workshop" at Sand Creek Massacre NHS. The dates are set for September 14-16, 2010.
2. The PIs will prepare a report following the workshop that includes
 - a. Agenda and minutes of the workshop, including
 - A summary of what is currently known about the geographic layout of the massacre site from multiple sources and lines of evidence, including historical, oral historical, archaeological, tribal traditional methods, and others;
 - A summary of the findings from new research that has been conducted since the Site Location study in 2000;
 - A graphic representation of consensus opinions, derived from workshop discussions, about the locations of events and features within the massacre site boundaries;
 - An explanation of data gaps - what gaps in knowledge might be filled in with additional archaeological research
 - b. A Draft and Final research design for future archeological investigations to address the identified data gaps (including field methods, curation procedures [including archival material generated as a result of the new archaeological research], involvement of tribal representatives and students, etc.)
 - c. Geographic Information System (GIS) maps derived from existing NPS GIS data layers (provided by NPS) plus new information that can be used by NPS for interpretation, planning, site management and so forth. New metadata will be provided to NPS.

Keywords: massacre site, Mapping Workshop, interpretation of national historic site, Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, Utah State University