

Project Summary
Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Conduct an Archeological Inventory Survey of Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument

Discipline: Cultural
Type of Project: Technical Assistance/Education
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Utah State University
Student Involvement: Yes, graduate and undergraduate students
Effective Dates: 9/1/2016 - 9/31/2019
Funding Amount: \$164,881

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Investigator: Investigator: Judson Finley, Assistant Professor, Utah State University, Address - USU Logan Campus, OM 245F, 0730 Old Main Hill, Logan UT 84322-0730, Phone - (435) 797-9621; judson.finley@usu.edu

Project Abstract: This primary objective of this project is to complete an archeological inventory of FLFO while enabling a practical, hands-on education and skills development for graduate and undergraduate students at Utah State University (USU). NPS will oversee and specify the standards for reporting and field work for archeological resources through the NPS permitting process and through approval of proposed activities. Under that oversight and authority, our joint intent for the training through this agreement is to provide career development consistent with the mission of the USU Department of Sociology, Social Work, and Anthropology undergraduate and graduate tracks for archaeology in cultural resource management.

This project will cover 5000 ac of FLFO that lack adequate NPS inventory. Earlier surveys include a 1974 inventory much out of date and inaccurate, and only two surveys providing 1000 ac and 81 sites that meet standards. Yet 87 percent of FLFO does not meet requirements of NHPA Sec. 110. With the known site density, 405 archeological sites may exist that are unaccounted for, undocumented, unassessed for condition, and unknown to park managers leaving them lacking in their job to manage archeological resources in FLFO.

FLFO contains forested ridges divided by open grasslands. Western climate change models predict larger, more catastrophic wildfires (such fires in central Colorado have destroyed homes and human lives and caused the evacuation of FLFO), and this project will assist FLFO in addressing this trend by providing both Sec. 110 and Sec.106 compliance information needed to plan/implement fuel reduction loads.

Fieldwork and documentation will meet current CO SHPO standards/definitions and include all required fields for ASMIS. It will improve FLFOs GIS resources layers and the Park Atlas maintained in IMRO by providing accurate site locations, boundaries, features, and artifacts relative to larger landscape features. The project will also provide information and recommendations on site NRHP eligibility for DOE determinations.

The project will produce a research report on survey results, and a more complete picture of human use of the region, including prehistoric peoples; historic ranchers, miners, and paleontologists; and by associated tribes. Copies of the final report will be provided to FLFO staff, IMRO Cultural Resources, culturally associated tribes, professional researchers, and educational institutions.

Keywords: Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, Utah State University, Archeological Inventory