

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Building Common Ground: the Bighorn Canyon NRA Tribal Field School Program.

Discipline: Cultural
Type of Project: Education/Technical Assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Wyoming, Northwest College
Effective Dates: 5/1/2010 - 12/31/2015
Funding Amount: \$35,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: In FY2011 Bighorn Canyon NRA will join with Northwest College and the University of Wyoming to establish an accredited six week archaeological field school tailored to fit the needs of American Indian students. The project objective is to provide \$10,000 to pay for tuition/field fees for Crow and Northern Cheyenne tribal students for the next two years (2012-2013). Since 2005, the park has hosted an accredited archaeological field school to focus on survey and documentation of the park cultural resources. This program also results in logging over 5,000 hours annually to the parks V.I.P. program. The park is currently conducting an extensive class III inventory of park lands focusing on documentation of Cultural Resources. The opportunity to create a field school exclusively for American Indian Tribal students will serve multiple purposes:

1. Help Bighorn Canyon NRA complete the inventory of undocumented cultural resources in the park.
2. Help participating tribes establish their own tribal archaeology program with training recognized by Federal Agencies, State and local Governments, and business interests.
3. Help tribes protect, preserve and interpret cultural resources in the park and ultimately, on their reservations.
4. Create jobs to stimulate the reservation economy during construction, and energy development projects.
5. Establish a better working relationship and create an invaluable element of trust and understanding between American Indian Tribes and the NPS.
6. Serve as a transferable pilot program for other parks.
7. Increase the number of V.I.P hours logged annually by the park.

The University of Wyoming will partner with Northwest College in a sub-agreement to access students at Little Bighorn College (Crow Tribe) and Dull Knife College (Northern Cheyenne Tribe). Participants will complete 3 ten day sessions (300 hours) conducting Class III surveys in the park, learning to identify sites, analyze cultural material, and map and document sites. Participants will receive 6 hours of college credit, and a nationally recognized certificate of training from Northwest College. The Park Archaeologist/Cultural Resource Manager will participate in this program as a full time instructor for three ten-day sessions.

Outcomes with Completion Dates: April 30, 2012

Keywords: archaeological field school, tribal students, Bighorn Canyon NRA, University of Wyoming, Northwest College

