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Subject: Year End Newsletter

Happy Holidays Everyone! We hope that this year-end newsletter finds everyone safe, happy, and warm. It has been an interesting and pivotal year for our group. We are growing, gaining positive recognition, and are now a formal organization. Here is a quick overview of our accomplishments for 2018 and a little about what is in store for 2019.

Due to the tireless efforts of Linda and Beth, we were granted 501(C)(3) status for a Non-Profit organization from the IRS. This allows us to:

Accept contributions and donations that are tax-deductible to the donor

Apply for grants and other public or private allocations that are only available to IRS-recognized 501(C)(3) organizations

And most importantly it gives us the public legitimacy of an organization recognized by the IRS

This year we added three new members, Rebecca, Bill, and Dan. This brings our membership to 23 stewards! Additionally Tom Lincoln joined us as an Archeology Consultant. Dr. Susan Bender came out in the fall to visit a private site; the Tom Williams Ranch (more on this later) and complete work in the lab.

On the administrative side of things we formed several groups to help us move along more efficiently. The groups are:

Social/Outreach

Technology

Additionally a Board of Directors was formed.

We did have a few setbacks. A little conflagration called the Weston Pass fire prevented us from visiting the Willow Creek site. On the up side it created an opportunity for us to help the Forest Service survey the area impacted by the fire. This was moved from October to next year due to an early and very welcome snow. Additionally we were not able to visit the Salt Works Ranch Site due to ownership issues.

Despite all of the obstacles we did 22 site visits, logged 1,606 hours monitoring sites, 530 hours traveling, and 16,211 miles traveling. Wow!!! We may have to rename the group the Traveling South Park Site Stewards.

We also acquired two new sites, VVN Ranch and White Cliffs.

A big thanks to the following members for their donations to help SPSS.

Susan Bender	\$100
Kathy Reeves	\$25
Linda and John Carr	\$500
Isabel Carvalhal	\$35
Tom Lincoln	\$100
Bill Haddock	\$200

Activities

Several stewards attended an authentic Native American Pow Wow, including sampling of Taos Lighting. Many stewards attended a lesson in tipi construction, artifact meanings, ceremonies, and cultural stories in an authentic Tipi at Mary and Bruce's Hacienda.

Thanks to Jo and Mary for arranging a hike on the Tie Hack trail which was led by Jennie Andrusin. The purpose of the hike was to view and debate a potential CMT. Jo also arranged for a CMT lecture and visit on Windy Ridge. Over 50 CMTs were viewed along the ridge. Steven Veach gave an excellent presentation on the Paris mill. The presentation was followed by a tour of the Paris Mill site and an angry wasp stinging Emma.

Cat Kamke, the San Isabel National Forest Archeologist, led a hike to the Trout Creek Chert Quarry. The amount of chert in the area is astonishing.

A presentation on prehistoric sites in Portugal was given by Beth and Isabell.

Bob Hickey from Colorado Parks and Wildlife gave an invigorating presentation on Geology in the South Park area. Bob is very passionate about geology. Good thing there was not a test after the presentation, my brain hurt for a week after his talk.

Thanks to Lori for reaching out to Doug Hamilton to give a talk about the Cline Ranch site. Doug grew up on the ranch. He talked about life on the ranch, farm/ranch life trials and tribulations, how the rooms and buildings were used, blinding blizzards, skunk attacks, etc. Thanks to John for getting us access to the site and recording Doug's oral history.

A site visit was conducted at Mosquito Pass including setting up a geomorphology study. Hopefully the markers will not disappear! We also found a possible stone blind or wall on our way out. It is interesting to note that there is a site at this remote high altitude location.

Kathy led many expeditions to the Magnolia Mill where bottles were found hanging in the structure connecting the two buildings.

At the Chick site a possible new cairn was found. When visiting sites I have to remind myself to be on the lookout for possible cairns, CMTs, hunting blinds, etc.

At the Buffalo Peaks site several heat treated lithics and some obsidian were found. As much as the group has been there it is interesting to see that new artifacts are being found. And at White Cliffs 12 artifacts including a diagnostic hafted biface and a biface fragment were found. This will be an exciting area to explore next year.

The lab

Thanks to Kathy, Jo, Cindy, & Berta; all of the documents and books in the lab have been logged and cataloged. This was a large and long overdue effort. The upside to this is we can all check out and read this valuable information. At Beth's brilliant suggestion a small fine and beating will be administered for overdue books. We also have a new modern laptop, a printer that works, a locking storage cabinet, new field equipment, and first aid supplies.

Michael Troyer, the BLM archeologist, gave a demonstration, to Linda, Kathy, Cindy, Lori, Diane, Laura Aker (USFS), and me, of a new system to log and report site information. The system simplifies logging information, including pictures, GPS coordinates and data into a handheld device. Then the information is automatically uploaded to a database. Goodbye Dropbox!

New task force was formed to determine if we can implement this system.

Future

Next year promises to be interesting with new activities, training, and new sites.

Michael Troyer from the BLM has asked us to survey the White Cliffs site. We will also conduct a survey of the Tom Williams ranch site. Both of these new areas have a ton of promise. Thanks to Linda we have a backdoor approach to the Salt Works Site; the approach itself has many sites.

We will have the opportunity to help survey the Weston Pass burn area; this is a chance in a lifetime event. Often after a fire the underbrush and grasses are cleared which reveals objects that were previously hidden.

We will also have training on formal surveying and lithics identification. During my training Jo and Mary told me that I could just identify everything as Trout Creek Chert and I would probably be correct. No more identifying everything as Trout Creek Chert!

To insure that we have a stable source of funding for our group, we will be seeking additional outside funding, this will allow us to embrace new technology, provide more training, etc.

Finis

So why is our group important? At one time archaic sites in high alpine areas were viewed as limited with transient human presence. Most archaeologists believed ancient peoples lived in the lowly lowlands. With Dr. Susan Benders and a few others work it has been proven that the high country was a thriving prehistoric area.

Our mission is to help preserve and protect prehistoric and historic sites in South Park. And to have fun!

Yes the group has grown in size and we are getting a little more formal, but we are a great happy productive group and you have all contributed to our success!

On behalf of Linda, Beth, and the Board of Directors we wish you a safe and happy holiday season!