

# CASSP newsletter

Volume 1, Number 3, July 2002

## First Advanced Workshop Features Sketch Mapping

By Chris and Beth Padon

On a warm July Saturday in Bishop, CASSP held its first advanced training workshop for current volunteers. Thirteen site stewards came from all over California to take a comprehensive, one-day class in sketch mapping. Stephen Horne, archaeologist at the BLM State Office, taught the class. Janine McFarland worked with Steve to organize the class and prepare the handouts, and Kirk Halford assisted with on-site prepara-

tions. SCA Northern Vice-President Rick Fitzgerald attended and welcomed everyone on behalf of the SCA. Kirk, Rick, and Beth and Chris Padon assisted Steve with the field exercises.

Workshop topics included reading maps, measuring horizontal and vertical angles, measuring distance, creating a map, and final drafting. Unexpected temperatures in the 90s did not stop us from taking our new skills outdoors. We divided into small

teams to take compass readings, pace distances, and create sketch maps of the outside exhibit area at the Paiute-Shoshone Indian Cultural Center.

Participants enjoyed learning from Steve and meeting other site stewards. Two more advanced workshops for CASSP volunteers will be held in the next twelve months. Potential workshop topics include sketch mapping 2, recording rock art, photography, and lab techniques. Please send your ideas for future workshops to the editors (address on back page).



*Clockwise from top left: (a) workshop participants watch Stephen Horne use a USGS topo map; (b) site stewards Dave and Freida Branson study their compass and map; (c) everyone measured their pace; (d) Rick Fitzgerald and Nichelle Serrano take a compass reading in the field.*

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# New Alliance—Off Highway Vehicle Users Join CASSP

By Janet P. Eidsness, and Beth and Chris Padon

More than any other state, California has millions of off-highway vehicle (OHV) enthusiasts, and their activities generate more than \$3 billion per year and support 43,000 jobs for the state's economy.

Local, state and nationwide organizations abound, supporting a growing community of "off-road warriors," as described by CASSP volunteer Ohl Olsen. Club names are often playful or outlawish, like Olsen's Faunky Bronco's, or the Black Sheep 4x4 Club, or Rat Pack--several of many northern California based groups.

"Enthusiastic" doesn't quite describe their love of taking the roads less traveled. "Zealous" might better characterize their dedication to OHV recreating. The thrill of bone-jarring bumps and the challenges of climbing vertical slopes, being suspended in space, and conquering gravity with your machine are not for the faint of heart.

Members of the OHV community also are involved in site stewardship efforts. Some, like Ohl, have attended CASSP training workshops and have volunteered to monitor sites and publicize CASSP. In addition, the OHV community supports site stewardship financially. In 2001, the California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Commission awarded the BLM a matching grant earmarked for CASSP (see the article in March, 2002, *SCA Newsletter*, 36(1):14). Some of these funds were used to hold a CASSP training class for OHV enthusiasts last year at California City in the Mojave Desert. Last year, Beth Padon represented CASSP at the annual California Off-Road Vehicle Association (CORVA) convention in Sacramento, where the program attracted many potential new site stewards, such as Ohl Olsen.

BLM State Archaeologist Russ Kaldenberg sees many benefits of this new partnership. He hopes that many OHV users will actively monitor cultural heritage sites as CASSP volunteers. He also hopes that awareness for archaeological protection will grow. OHV CASSP volunteers help identify and

protect sensitive areas, learn more about the land they visit, and have a great time.

Olsen observed, "People need access to places to lose their stress and anxieties, like backcountry roads." Each year, millions of Californians do just that in their OHVs. And now some are helping archaeologists access remote sites—like the Gear Grinders Club of Ridgecrest. They recently transported BLM staff to a rock art and a wickiup site in the Panamint Mountains, and then they helped record this fragile site. Without the contributions of time, expertise, and equipment of the Gear Grinders Club, this work would not have been accomplished, and the site could have weathered away before it could be recorded.

The California OHV program was born in 1971 out of the critical need to better manage growing demands of OHV users, while at the same time foster respect for private property rights and protect California's natural and cultural resources. This program is managed by the OHMVR Division of California State Parks. It is largely funded by those who drive off paved roads for recreation. The OHV program is partly funded by "Green Sticker" fees, amounting to \$2.1 million in fiscal year 1999/2000, and by the \$29.8 million share of motor vehicle fuel taxes attributable to vehicles that travel off-road for a variety of purposes.

AB 723 (Juan Vargas, D-San Diego), which was signed into law this summer, guarantees that California's off-highway vehicle recreation program will continue to 2007. This legislation provides for the second extension of the Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Act of 1988 and the \$8 special "Green Sticker" fee collected to register each off-highway vehicle. The intent of the program is to provide effectively managed areas for off-highway recreation, and provide conservation and enforcement for ecologically balanced recreation. AB 723 is the result of unprecedented collaboration among environmental, law enforcement and OHV organizations. "Mr. Vargas' bill gives us time to see if recent

reforms to the state's off-road vehicle program will reduce vehicle damage and user conflicts on our National Forest and Bureau of Land Management lands," observed Karen Schambach, President of

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*The following was downloaded on July 30, 2002, from the OHMVR Division web site (at <http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/>).*

*"Choosing the Road Less Traveled..."*

by Dave Widell, OHMVR Deputy Director

A dusty pickup filled with excited young riders leaves the Los Angeles suburbs at sunrise, heading east toward the desert. There are no signs, no fences, and no other people - just empty land and only one plan: Ride. The radio plays "Hotel California," gas costs 61-cents a gallon, and California's population is 22 million. The year is 1976.

By 2001, all that remains the same is "Hotel California" on the radio. The state's population has grown by 55 percent to more than 34 million people. While much of the desert is now off limits to OHV use, hundreds of thousands of riders flock to the remaining areas every weekend. Closer to home, subdivisions and strip malls have replaced local riding areas. Rural development brings riders in conflict with homeowners. The number of acres available for off-highway vehicle recreation has decreased by 6.5 million acres in the California Desert alone, while the number of registered off-highway vehicles has increased statewide by more than 80 percent. Riders contend with Green Stickers, Red Stickers, spark arresters, and fences. The world has changed, and so has off-highway motor vehicle recreation.

Today's enthusiasts have changed as well. In addition to snowmobiles, trail bikes, dune buggies, sand rails, ATVs, mountain bikes, and other non-motorized vehicles, Californians have also embraced the sport utility vehicle (SUV). Millions of Californians enjoy some form of OHV activity and annually generate more than \$3 billion for the state's economy from their participation in the sport. Yet more and more people looking to recreate on public lands are creating new challenges for a sport that requires a lot of space and prefers few neighbors...

Focus on Volunteers

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Site Stewards at BLM Palm Springs-South Coast Resource Area

entire site area, documenting new artifacts clusters and features as well as evidence of OHV damage.

The remaining graduates from the Palm Springs CASSP training are eagerly awaiting assignment of their sites. Weather (it's over 100 here right now) and time permitting, Wanda plans to get them all squared away in the next few months.



Fig. 5. Cuco contemplates the huge area he has adopted.



Fig. 6. Sue and Ginger exploring their site.

Report from the SCA

Call for CASSP Presentations at the 2003 SCA Annual Meeting

In April, 2003, the Society for California Archaeology will hold its annual meeting in Sacramento. Approximately 800 to 1,000 professional and avocational archaeologists will attend to hear three days of papers and presentations about all aspects of California archaeology.

A symposium about CASSP will focus upon the program's activities and

achievements. The symposium may include formal papers, panel discussions, and slide presentations by site stewards about the sites they monitor. We know that most CASSP volunteers take dozens of pictures (or more) of their sites. Please consider sharing 10 to 15 of them in a brief presentation at the CASSP symposium. Or if you do not want to speak in

front of a group, you can mount photos and captions on a poster board to be displayed in the symposium room during the presentations.

For more information about the CASSP symposium, please contact Beth Padon at bpadon@discoveryworks.com or at (562) 492-6770. Additional details will appear in future newsletter issues.

Sponsor Report

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New Alliance—Off Highway Vehicle Users Join CASSP

the Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation and member of the OHV Stakeholders Roundtable. Many OHV users consider themselves environmentalists who adhere to the motto "tread lightly."

In order to better meet its responsibilities concerning cultural resources, the OHMVR Division includes a full-time archaeologist, Phil Hines. Currently Phil is busy re-surveying and assessing changes in site conditions at the six state OHV recreation areas since they were first inventoried in 1978. Management actions have already been implemented to better protect several highly sensitive

archaeological sites in high-use areas. For example, OHV trails have been diverted from sensitive areas, and Native American consultant Carmen Lucas and archaeologist Jay von Werlhof have been contracted to regularly monitor conditions at the 68,000 acre Ocotillo Wells State Vehicle Recreation Area. Northern Chumash consultant Leilyn Odom is monitoring site conditions at Oceano State Vehicle Recreation Area.

We are very pleased that Phil and Lowell Landowski, Associate Park and Recreation Specialist at the OHMVR Division, attended the June, 2001,

CASSP workshop at California City. Subsequent CASSP workshops have found more and more people who use off-highway vehicles for recreation, and for volunteer activities such as site stewardship. CASSP hopes to increase the numbers of OHV club members who become site stewards, making archaeological site monitoring another reason to travel the backcountry.

Additional information about the OHMVR Division of State Parks can be found at their web site at: <http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/>



# Site Stewards at BLM Palm Springs/South Coast Resource Area

By Wanda Raschkow

The Palm Springs-South Coast site stewards have been quite busy! Pat and Mike Barger (Fig. 1), Nuvea Santos, and Joel Briggs accompanied BLM archaeologist Wanda Raschkow out to their "site" in Red Cloud Canyon. Red Cloud actually contains a number of important sites and the CASSP team performed a bit of survey to find and update records for some of the sites. Along a section of prehistoric trail Joel Briggs discovered a previously unrecorded trail marker: a boulder with petroglyphs on it (Fig. 2). The crew of four stewards are working as two teams to monitor the canyon and its resources (Fig. 3).

Linda Otero adopted two sites in the Mule Mountains. One site consists of a trail and "dance circle" while the other site is a petroglyph site currently being proposed for listing on the National Register. On her first solo visit to her sites, Linda discovered a suspicious-looking ammo box. She backed away from it and reported it to the BLM office. Follow-up by BLM

law enforcement personnel revealed that the box was a "geocache" and completely harmless. But Linda's actions demonstrate the importance of good observation skills and the wisdom of being cautious (Fig. 4).

Cuco Lepe has taken on a real challenge: he has an entire river corridor to explore and protect (Fig. 5). The area is known to be of significance to local Native American groups and is reported to contain a Cahuilla village site. However, no inventory has been completed in this area so the location of the village is unknown. Cuco has committed himself to exploring the canyon and gathering important baseline data. The area is threatened by unauthorized cattle grazing and public visitation.

Ginger Ridgway and Sue Meyers recently were introduced to their site (Fig. 6). The site is a Cahuilla village or seasonal camp and has been impacted by OHV traffic and collecting; artifacts reported in the original site record are no longer present on the site. Ginger and Sue assisted Wanda in a reconnaissance of the

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Fig. 1. Mike examines a prehistoric trail segment.



Fig. 2. The "trail marker" discovered by Joel.



Fig. 3. Joel at Red Cloud rock art site.



Fig. 4. A recently vandalized sign at Mule Mtns. site.

## Report from Site Stewards

# Site Monitoring Helps Protect an Ancient Spoked Circle Alignment in the Southern California Desert

By Jeff LaFave

On January 1, 1994, recreational hikers discovered a magnificent example of Native American stone art—a 7-spoked circle alignment (Fig. 1). The circle was found on a narrow ridge, adjacent to an ancient trail, in the Yuha desert of Imperial County. The circle was recorded by Jay von Werlhof. While no other examples of this specific type of art have ever been found in this part of the U.S., the site has been attributed to the Kumeyaay who inhabited this area throughout the last millennia. The alignment bears some resemblance to “medicine wheels” of the Great Plains cultures, though no one suggests that it was created because of local contact with Plains culture. At the time the circle was constructed, ancient Lake Cahuilla was still in existence, and the circle would have offered a view of at least part of the Lake. The circle is “unfinished” and “missing” one spoke, which suggests that it was constructed over time, possibly one spoke at a time.

Unfortunately, the spoked circle alignment has been vandalized and remains severely threatened. The circle is on public lands, near a major highway, and groups of off-road vehicle (“ORV”) users routinely camp in the wash just below the site. ORV tracks and used gun shells have been found within 100 yards of the circle, but luckily most of the ORV users do not seem to have discovered the circle. However, a recently created 4WD “road” leading to a “parking pull-off” along the ancient trail and more and more footprints evidence that the circle is receiving increasing visitation. Also, ORV users are disregarding signs posted to prevent riding up the wash and near the circle, and the tracks continue to get closer to the site. Even worse, the site has been vandalized on at least four occasions (Fig. 2).

The first vandalism occurred shortly after the circle was recorded. The vandalism included rearrangement of

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Fig. 1. Jay von Werlhof, recording the spoked circle.



Fig. 2. Vandals added stone designs to the spoked circle.



# Bedrock Spring Reverse Archaeological Project

By Peter Ruddock

*Editor's note. Several CASSP volunteers participated in this BLM project in September, 2001. (See the first issue of this newsletter.) We are pleased to share this report, and we hope that readers will consider volunteering for future projects of this nature. This article is reprinted by permission from The Survivor, the quarterly journal of Desert Survivors.*

Why would 70 people spend two and a half days digging holes in the desert, only to spend the next two hours filling them in? As 70 people did southeast of Ridgecrest last Labor Day weekend?

Actually, it all started a few years ago when the BLM decided to try to get people in California involved in projects as volunteers, in particular in archaeological projects. These projects, which occur annually throughout the state, have proven quite popular, and in 2001 one finally came to the desert, specifically to Bedrock Spring.

I heard about the project through the Desert Survivors 'listserv'. For those of you who do not know, this is an on-line forum that all Survivors can join, where you can find more information about desert issues and activities, among other things. The project was posted on the listserv by one of our members, who heard about it as a member of the Maturango Museum in Ridgecrest. The Maturango Museum, a wonderful little institution dedicated to the history, cultural and natural, of the Mojave Desert around Ridgecrest, naturally works closely with the BLM archaeologist based in Ridgecrest, thus finally closing the loop.

This was not a Desert Survivors project. It was sponsored directly by the BLM. However, at least 4 of the volunteers were Survivors. There were also at least 15 professional archaeologists, from other BLM districts, the U.S. Forest Service, Caltrans and various universities. It seems that they spend most of their time in offices, and jump at the opportunity to actually dig in the dirt. There were two boy scout troops, whose

members were attempting to earn their archaeology badges, numerous residents of Ridgecrest, and a number of other people who seem to have been just randomly attracted.

Bedrock Spring lies on the northern edge of the Golden Valley Wilderness. It is a site with a long history of occupation. The spring today does not produce much water, but apparently in wetter times it made for a good habitation site. The occupants were the ancestors of the modern Kawaiisu people, some of whom still live in the Ridgecrest area. They were made aware of the project and invited to join in the activities. Although no representative of the Kawaiisu joined us, they did give their blessing to the project.

The site had previously been disturbed. As long ago as 1920, pot hunters had dug on the site. Despite this activity, the archaeologists were certain that there were still things to be learned from the site. But they wanted to move quickly, as they feared that with the increase in recreational activity in the desert, a new generation of pot hunters would beat them to it, and make the site useless for study.

We dug a number of holes, each one under the supervision of a professional archaeologist. The holes were rigorously measured and methodically dug. Layers were pulled out of the holes 10 centimeters at a time. Small items were documented as to layer, while larger items were also carefully located within the layer. Actually, there were not too many large items, although a hearth was uncovered. The most exciting small items were some arrowheads and scrapers made from obsidian, jasper and chert, some of which may have been 1500 years old. (These may make their way to the Maturango Museum after their study is completed.) However, the majority of what was discovered could be considered the debris of the inhabitants of the site: animal bones, chips from broken points, charcoal. Not terribly exciting to the layman, but enough to get an archaeologist's attention.

Despite the attention to detail, and the 98 degree temperature, the site was very loose and the volunteers had a lot of fun. By the end, I was perhaps the dirtiest that I have ever been, which actually just added to the fun.

So, why did we fill in the holes at the end of the third day? Well, this is a remote site, which cannot be guarded. So, it was put back the way it was, with the surface shaped to look like it had never been disturbed, in order to disguise it from those who might take advantage of an obvious site and go pot hunting. The archaeologists know where it is.

While this wasn't a Desert Survivors outing, it is possible that we might be able to have some service trip(s) with the BLM archaeologists in the future. This would seem to fit in well with our motto of Experiencing, Sharing and Protecting the desert.

And if not, the BLM plans to have a follow-up project at Bedrock Spring some time in the fall of 2002. If you're interested, stay tuned to the listserv, where notice of this certainly will be posted.

Desert Survivors is a desert conservation group, currently based in Oakland. More than 800 people belong to this non-profit, volunteer organization, which began over twenty years ago. They participate in field trips, meetings, and volunteer projects. For more information, please visit the Desert Survivors web site at: [www.desert-survivors.org](http://www.desert-survivors.org).

The Archaeological and Cultural Awareness Program (ACAP) is sponsored by the California Bureau of Land Management. ACAP projects offer volunteers a chance to learn about local archaeological and natural resources by participating in fieldwork with professional archaeologists. CASSP does not contribute money for ACAP, but we encourage people to volunteer for these very rewarding projects. Additional information about BLM volunteer projects is available at their web site at: <http://ca.blm.gov>

Calendar

## Updated Schedule for New Volunteer Training Workshops

A training workshop for new CASSP volunteers will be offered by the BLM El Centro Field Office on September 21–22. Margaret Hangan, archaeologist at the El Centro office, will serve as the coordinating archaeologist for this team.

Additional volunteer training workshops will be offered in Fall, 2002. A training workshop for Adopt-a-Cabin participants is scheduled for October 26–

27. The BLM Clear Lake/Ukiah Field Office will host a workshop in November. And we hope to hold a workshop at the BLM Barstow Field Office or at the BLM Folsom Field Office before the end of the year, but dates have yet to be determined.

Each workshop features classroom sessions on Saturday, and exercises in the field on Sunday. Study materials and

Saturday lunch are provided. The fee is \$25 per person, payable to the Society for California Archaeology. Space is limited and reservations are required.

If you want more information, or if you are interested in attending a volunteer training workshop, then please send an email to [info@cassp.org](mailto:info@cassp.org) or contact Beth or Chris Padon at Discovery Works, P O Box 91236, Long Beach, CA 90809, (562) 492-6770.

Report from Site Stewards

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### Site Monitoring Helps Protect an Ancient Spoked Circle Alignment

stones, forming a new inner circle, a central pile of crystal, and an arrow (Fig. 2). The site was then put back in its original arrangement and “cleansed” by a Kumeyaay elder, though she confirmed that the spirit power that was a part of the site had been destroyed forever. The site was vandalized again, about a year later.

In October 1999, I became a CASSP site monitor and started monitoring the spoked circle alignment in November of 1999. Since then, the site has only been slightly disturbed on two occasions. The first time I noticed vandalism, I reported it immediately to the supervising archae-

ologist and BLM authorities. This time the vandalism was much more subtle, involving the rearrangement of only a few stones, including putting one rock in the center of the circle. Several months later, an unknown person removed the rock from the middle of the circle. Since then, the circle has remained relatively unchanged (Fig. 3).

Hopefully, the continued monitoring of the site is deterring additional vandalism to this important part of our heritage. At a minimum, monitoring provides information to the land manager and supervising archaeologist regarding

changes taking place at the site. I have also been urging that additional protections, including access closures, be taken to protect this extremely important and fragile site. Such protections should be implemented before additional vandalism occurs.



Fig. 3. The spoked circle rock alignment at a recent monitoring visit.

Contributors to this issue:

Janet Eidsness serves as Chair of the SCA Native American Programs Committee. She works as an independent consultant in Heritage Resources Management.

Jeff LaFave began participating in CASSP in its first year, 1999. In addition to monitoring rock alignment sites, he has studied and visited rock art sites in other states and other countries.

Beth and Chris Padon are chairpersons of the SCA Site Stewardship Committee. They own Discovery Works, Inc., a cultural resources management firm in Long Beach.

Wanda Raschkow is the BLM archaeologist at the Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office. She is the coordinating archaeologist for a large team of CASSP volunteers who were trained in January, 2002.

Peter Ruddock is a site steward who is working with the Hollister team led by local coordinating archaeologist Erik Zaborsky. Peter's outdoor interests are wide-ranging, and include returning to Bedrock Spring for another BLM Archaeological and Cultural Awareness Program.

## Congratulations

We congratulate Cheri Stanton, who was randomly chosen from the correct responses to last issue's quiz. The quiz asked readers to identify the State Mineral (gold) and the State Prehistoric Artifact (chipped stone bear). Cheri wins a \$20 gift certificate for Starbucks, compliments of Discovery Works. She was very happy to learn that she was a winner; the only thing that she had ever won before was a turkey.

Also, we send congratulations to site stewards Al and Joan Woodman, for showing exceptional alertness. On a recent monitoring visit, their sharp eyes led to an interesting discovery. They found a 3.5 inch computer diskette in the desert near their site. The diskette proved that someone had been around the site. Even though the diskette had been exposed to the elements, it appeared to be in good shape. It looked like it had been used to save files from a digital camera. Perhaps it still contained images—images which may record vandals or other nefarious characters. Al and Joan delivered the diskette to their supervising archaeologist, Judyth Reed, for further investigation.

Judyth immediately recognized the diskette as hers. She had used it with her camera several weeks earlier, when she accompanied Al and Joan during one of their monitoring trips to take pictures of them!

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## CASSP newsletter

The **CASSP Newsletter** is a quarterly publication of the Society for California Archaeology Site Stewardship Committee. Newsletter editors are Beth Padon, Chris Padon, and Janet Eidsness. The President of the Society for California Archaeology is Dana McGowan.

### **Submissions**

We welcome submissions to the Newsletter; however, articles will be edited for length and content, and all submitted materials become property of the Society for California Archaeology.

### **Subscriptions**

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