



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Cultural Heritage Program Highlights

BLM Colorado 2022



Bureau of Land Management Colorado Cultural Heritage Program Highlights 2022

Browns Canyon National Monument Ethnographic Study Royal Gorge Field Office

The Browns Canyon National Monument (BCNM) Ethnographic Study aims to strengthen government-to-government relationships in the understanding of tribal connections with the Browns Canyon National Monument. The project strategic goals are to:

- 1) Provide information relevant to the management of cultural and natural resources within the monument boundary through ethnographic research with traditionally associated tribal communities;
- 2) Provide opportunities for elders and cultural experts from associated tribal communities to participate in onsite field research to preliminarily identify natural and cultural resources of cultural significance;
- 3) Serve as a pilot study that will solicit tribal input regarding future and in depth ethnographic, traditional cultural property, ethnobotanical, traditional use and/or cultural landscape studies; and
- 4) Generate tribe-approved educational and public outreach material to be used both in tribal communities and with the public at BCNM.

This year, the Royal Gorge Field Office conducted two additional site visits at BCNM with tribal representatives and elders and hosted an archaeology training day for the Ute interns with Living Heritage Research Council.



Figure 1. RGFO interns attending a visit to BCNM with Mr. Terry Knight (Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Historic Preservation Officer)

Rough Canyon Service Day Grand Junction Field Office

Rough Canyon Service Day is a project that was started at the Grand Junction Field Office (GJFO) in 2017. The project takes place in Rough and Ladder Canyons within the Bangs Canyon Special Recreation Management Area. In its fourth iteration in 2022, the event brought 30 eighth grade students from Mount Garfield Middle School (MGMS) onto BLM-administered land to learn about natural resources, cultural heritage, and cultural sensitivity and to perform a service project benefiting public land. To be selected for the event, students had to apply by submitting an essay about why they wanted to participate and why they think the project is important. During the morning, students rotated in groups of ten through three educational stations: one station focusing on the web of life; one station focusing on archaeology, including a mock archaeology site exercise modeled after activities provided in Project Archaeology curricula; and a cultural sensitivity station where Betsy Chappoose and Daniel Chappoose of the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation discussed Ute ties to the land, past and present, and practicing cultural sensitivity. In the afternoon, each group of 10 students participated in three separate service activities: with the assistance of GJFO Recreation staff, one group hiked to the historic Ladder Canyon Mica Mine to disperse small burn piles left behind from a previous vegetation treatment. Dispersing the burn piles removed charcoal that would be easily available for unscrupulous individuals to use to create graffiti on the walls of the mine (unfortunately a common occurrence).



Figure 2. Mount Garfield Middle School students work together to move a large branch to obscure an unwanted social trail to obscure an unwanted social trail to a rock art site



Figure 3. Mount Garfield Middle School students listen to Betsy Chappoose and Daniel Chappoose discuss Ute ties to the land and cultural sensitivity

With the assistance of GJFO archaeologists, one group of students used water backpacks and soft brushes to remove charcoal graffiti from canyons walls where no archaeological sites are present. These locations had been cleaned by MGMS students in previous years, but new graffiti had been created since. Finally, with the assistance of a GJFO archaeologist and recreation staff, one group of students installed new trail signage and worked on

obscuring unwanted social trails to a rock art site by cooperatively moving and strategically placing large branches and rocks over the trail.

The project serves to connect local youth to the public land right in their backyards while also learning about the natural and cultural history of those lands in a place-based educational setting. The students also benefit from the remarkable opportunity to learn firsthand, from Ute Tribal Representatives, why the land is still important to Tribal Members today, fostering mindfulness that translates into heightened cultural empathy and good stewardship of cultural resources. Ultimately, projects like Rough Canyon Service Day foster the protection of cultural resources by teaching awareness, appreciation, and good site etiquette. The project also provides Tribal Representatives the opportunity to connect with their ancestral lands and share their stories in their own words.

NCPE Intern – 1200 hours CANM Curation Work Accomplishments Canyons of the Ancients National Monument

BLM Headquarters funded one intern through the National Council for Preservation Education (NCPE) for a six-month/1200-hour internship in the CANM Curation Program. Intern Sarahii Jimenez worked on many projects including conducting 100 percent inventory and database updates for the entire ceramic whole vessel collection, numbering over 3,000 complete or reconstructed ceramic vessels. This inventory was necessary following the packing and unpacking of the ceramic vessel collection in conjunction with the installation of new compactor storage units in 2017. Inventories of this nature are necessary to assure all artifacts are accounted for following a project of this nature. Over 10 different people worked to pack and unpack the collection and update locations in the museum collections database. A final inventory to confirm all vessels are accounted for and located properly is a keystone of accountability for the collections BLM curated for the public and tribes.

Ms. Jimenez also conducted 100 percent inventory of the BLM archives to identify the wide variety of media types and develop a plan to prioritize media migration from original formats to current, modern formats to keep the data contained in these formats accessible. 213 items in a wide variety of media formats (for example mini disk; 5-inch floppy disk, Betamax tape) were identified. Next steps involve identifying GSA-approved companies that can migrate these media, preserving important cultural resources information curated from BLM projects since the late 1970s.



Figure 4. CANM NCPE intern Sarahii Jimenez conducts inventory of CANM's collections



Figure 5. CANM NCPE intern Sarahii Jimenez puts final touches on custom mount for a bow from the Cerberus collection

Additionally, Ms. Jimenez created storage mounts for a wide variety of newly curated artifacts. Mounts provide safe, long-term storage and ease of handling for thousands of fragile artifacts and ceramic vessels curated at CANM. Mounts for ceramic vessels, bows, arrows, and other fragile artifacts curated at CANM by the BLM Utah State Office Cerberus collection was the focus of Ms. Jimenez's mount making activity.

CRVFO Cultural Resource Records Digitization Colorado River Valley Field Office

This year, the Colorado River Valley Field Office (CRVFO), in coordination with the Northwest District field offices, began the process of digitizing our cultural resource records. This effort has been in the works for over a year now through contracting, coordinating files transfer, reviewing initial sample scans, and providing feedback. It is estimated to have a final deliverable in late 2022. The CRVFO had 38 boxes of files to be digitized, which included cultural resource inventory reports, cultural resource site forms, and other reference material. Having these files digitized will be extremely valuable to the field office and the cultural resources program. Through this digitization process, the field office will be able to:

- Provide contractors copies of reports or site forms before future inventory projects to aid in the literature search process;
- Provide a digital archive copy of files in the event of catastrophic data loss (i.e. Fire, water damage, etc.);
- Provide access to cultural files while teleworking; and
- Work towards syncing ArcGIS data with records data to streamline any type of data query needed.

Overall, this effort will support the cultural resources program to better serve internal and external partners and contractors with digital data, provide ease of access to cultural resource data for field office archaeologists, and archive the cultural resources records that date back to the early 1970s.

Ancestral Lands Internship Program Canyons of the Ancients National Monument

BLM Colorado and Tres Rios Field Office (TRFO)/ Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (CANM) funded two 15-week Ancestral Lands Internships through the state agreement with Conservation CO Youth Corps Association in the CANM Visitor Services Program. Intern Emerson McDaniel stayed on to complete two internships during their service and worked on many projects including a new interactive microscope exhibit for the museum gallery and a new loom program and instruction manual for visitors to the Visitors Center who want to try the guided loom activity while at the museum. The interns also updated two early education scavenger hunts for youth exploring the museum, reviewed CANM education curriculum, and provided input on more culturally sensitive activities and lessons. In addition, they created one special interpretive program they delivered for visitors at the CANM Visitor Center and Museum.



Figure 6. CANM Ancestral Lands intern Emerson McDaniel conducts an interpretive program that they designed to share the history of the tribes in this area to visitors at the CANM Visitors Center and Museum

Uravan Mineral Belt Multiple Property Listing and Bachelor Mine National Register Nomination Grand Junction, Uncompahgre, and Tres Rios Field Offices

The Uravan Mineral Belt, in southwestern Colorado, ranks among the more important mining regions in the United States, and was particularly rich with rare forms of uranium and vanadium ore, cropping out amid the sedimentary mesas of the northeastern Colorado Plateau. Western Montrose and San Miguel counties were at the core of the Mineral Belt and participated in a long list of important events, trends, and themes. Currently, a legacy of historic period resources represents the fascinating and important mining industry of the Mineral Belt.

In order to better protect these important resources, a National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) was developed that contains the historic context(s) and background archival, geographical, and archaeological information about historic mining properties in the Uravan Mineral Belt. The MPDF will be instrumental in National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 compliance for Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) mine closure and reclamation projects, while allowing for better preservation of the remaining historic mining resources. Furthermore, the MPDF will help establish consistency across the BLM's western slope in terms how the BLM evaluates historic mining resources to the National Register of Historic Places.



Figure 7. Overview of the Bachelor Mine in San Miguel County

The Bachelor Mine submission demonstrates and serves as an example of a National Register Nomination under the MPDF. The Bachelor Mine is being nominated to the National Register as a unique and excellent example of a uranium mine, complete with a standing shaft headframe, hoist house, and ore bin. Specifically, the Bachelor Mine was developed in 1955 by the Four Corners Exploration Company when the Cold War demand for uranium stimulated exploration and mining in San Miguel and Montrose Counties in Colorado.

Yellow Creek Schoolhouse Colorado State Register of Historic Properties Listing White River Field Office

The tin-sided, single-room Yellow Creek Schoolhouse located along State Highway 64 halfway between Meeker and Rangely, Colorado served the surrounding area for almost 40 years before being used as a dance hall prior to its abandonment by the 1960s. As of September 28, 2022, this schoolhouse is now listed in the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties. This listing resulted



from the collaboration between BLM White River Field Office and historic architecture contractors, History Colorado, community members, and the Rio Blanco County Historical Society. With this State Register listing and BLM's 25 percent cash match already allocated for this project to begin on Phase 1 (of 3) of this schoolhouse's restoration in 2023, the Yellow Creek Schoolhouse now qualifies for consideration of State Historic Fund (SHF) grants to apply for the remaining 75 percent funding needed to fully restore this rural school building for future education opportunities on the history of Rio Blanco County.

Figure 8. Yellow Creek Schoolhouse in 1989. Taken by Robert B. Watson for the BLM White River Field Office

BLM and Project Archaeology Workshop McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area

The BLM McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area (MCNCA) hosted a Project Archaeology Workshop for 15 teachers in June 2022. The workshop was funded by the BLM Colorado State Office through a cooperative agreement with the Institute of Heritage Education and focused on hands-on professional development for teachers in archaeological education, specifically Project Archaeology's Investigating Shelter curriculum. The workshop included a classroom day at the Museum of the West in Grand Junction, Colorado, as well as field day visiting the historic Skinner Cabin and a prehistoric sheltered campsite in MCNCA that has been in use for at least 8,000 years. At the sites, lesson plans included ways of thinking about how and why shelters are located where they are, and what other information that can provide. Not only does the Workshop provide archaeological curriculum but also teaches cultural understanding, civic responsibility, and stewardship.



Figure 9. BLM archaeologist Natasha Krasnow presents to attendees during the Project Archaeology Workshop hosted by McInnis Canyons NCA

BLM-CO Travel Management Plans Programmatic Agreement Tres Rios Field Office



Figure 10. View of site 5SM101 revisited and re-recorded for TRFO TAP 2

Under the BLM Colorado Travel Management Programmatic Agreement (PA), Tres Rios Field Office archaeologists revisited 20 sites, of which eight sites required full rerecording to bring documentation up to current reporting standards. The fieldwork completed not only helped satisfied the stipulations under the PA but also captured data significant to regional archaeology.

BLM Colorado Tribal Consultation & Section 106 Mitigation White River and Little Snake Field Offices

The GWS Transmission Line Project is actively being constructed through northwest Colorado, and, as a result, is visually impacting a tribally important landscape and the cultural/natural resources it comprises. Given that analysis of the line circa 2008 did not identify this tribal concern and as such was not avoided by project design, BLM and the Ute Tribes collaborated to identify a means to minimize these adverse visual effects, codified in the Historic Properties Treatment Plan (HPTP) for GWS.



Figure 11. BLM NOC Geospatial Specialists preparing to capture imagery of the 'pre-construction landscape' of Ute Tribal importance ahead of GWS transmission line construction

In 2022, BLM coordinated with the Ute Tribes and the proponent company (PacifiCorp) to minimize the adverse visual effects of GWS to the tribally important landscape. These are being addressed through ethnographic and photogrammetry fieldwork methodologies described in the HPTP developed in consultation with the Ute Tribes. The Ute Tribes are also directly involved in the implementation of this effort to minimize adverse effects to historic properties as well as document learning lessons and management recommendations for BLM to consider on future undertakings. Such efforts have included or will continue to include field visits, cultural site interpretation and cultural landscape documentation,

historic and ethnographic data procurement for the ethnographic context, draft report and photogrammetry data reviews, recommendations for cultural resource management at the site-specific level (e.g., instances where hearth features are identified or exposed in existing road cuts), and a pending review of the final outcomes described in the HPTP.

Resulting benefits will include a better-documented tribally important landscape that overlaps with the White River (WRFO) and Little Snake (LSFO) Field Offices, which will benefit BLM's relationship with the Ute Tribes and BLM's future land-management objectives for any undertaking overlapping with this Tribally-important landscape. As a result of this ethnography, the Ute Tribes have also shared landscape and site-specific management recommendations, to be accounted for in the pending ethnographic report, to further facilitate BLM's effective and responsible management of tribally important landscapes ahead of any future renewable energy project and other undertakings.