



**NATIONAL  
CONSERVATION  
LANDS**

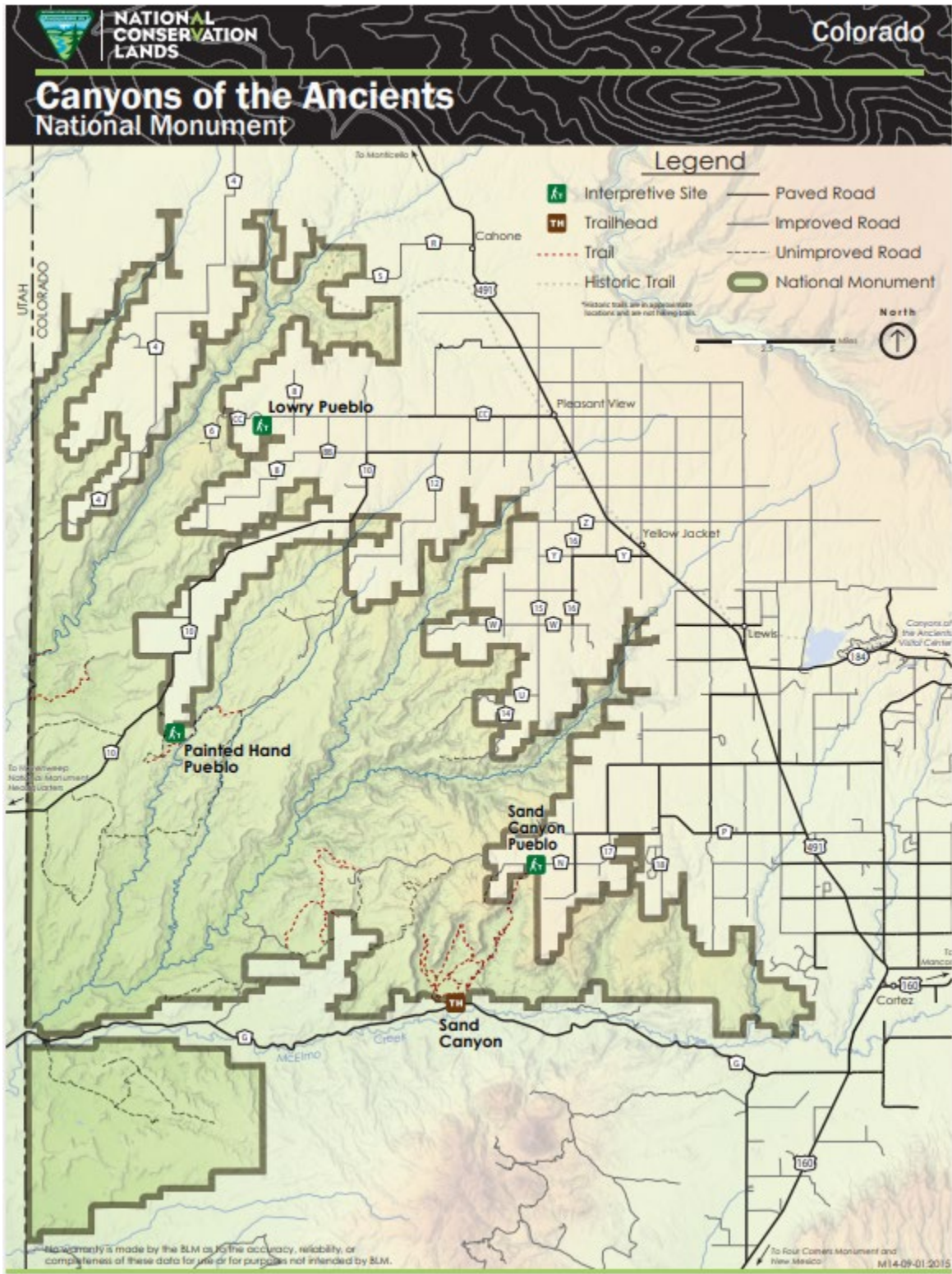
**Colorado**  
2022: Annual Manager's Report

# Canyons of the Ancients

National Monument



# Map



# Accomplishments

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**Curation.** The Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (CANM) Curation Program houses many significant collections of cultural materials from permitted archaeological investigations, including artifacts from Sand Canyon Pueblo and other important sites on the Monument. Increasing access to these collections is a central objective of the Department of Interior Museum Program. As of 2022, all archaeological collections from sites on the Monument are at least partially cataloged and searchable within the Interior Collections Management System (ICMS) database. This benchmark contributes to our central goals of preservation, documentation, discoverability, and access to museum collections for traditionally associated Tribes and Pueblos, scientific researchers, and the American public. We look forward to fully cataloging Monument collections as our program capacity increases and additional projects can be prioritized.

**Dominguez, Escalante, and Painted Hand Pueblos Preservation and Stabilization.**

As three of the 13 sites within CANM allocated specifically for development and public interpretation, Escalante, Dominguez, and Painted Hand Pueblos each play a critical role in the Monument’s and the BLM’s mission to preserve cultural resources and to educate the public about their significance and sensitivity. After extensive digital documentation efforts were conducted, CANM partnered with preservation experts from Mesa Verde National Park to stabilize standing prehistoric Ancestral Puebloan architecture at the sites. Specifically, the crew of four archaeologist/masons repointed the mortar and re-laid existing stone to both preserve the structures and to improve visitor safety. The previous stabilization efforts at the site were conducted by the BLM over 20 years ago, and the new efforts should also help maintain these important educational and cultural resource for the coming decades.



*Escalante Pueblo*

# Challenges

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**Trespass Livestock.** In the fall of 2022, Monument and Tres Rios Field Office staff conducted a survey of trespass horses on Monument lands by foot and vehicle. 123 animals were observed. Because of the limitations of the survey technique, staff estimate that the total number of horses is higher, approximately 150 to 200 animals. While a variety of BLM specialists have documented trespass livestock, particularly horses, continually using the Monument for many decades, this was the first effort to quantify their numbers in recent years. Staff have concerns with the effects of the horses on vegetation, wildlife, cultural resources, and riparian areas. Most of the horses likely originated from adjacent Navajo and Ute Mountain Reservations with the occasional abandoned horse from other sources. Few, if any of the horses are branded, so determining ownership is difficult. Staff are working towards resolving the issue and have begun talks with the tribes to determine co-stewardship opportunities.



*Trespass horse herd in the Flodine Park area of the Monument.*

**Yellow Jacket/Flodine Park Grazing Allotments.** The Yellow Jacket and Flodine Park grazing allotments have been vacant since 2005. A 2015 decision to re-issue the grazing permits was appealed. Over the last two years, Monument and Tres Rios Field Office staff have worked with the State Historic Preservation office and the National Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to develop a programmatic agreement which will allow the grazing permits to be re-issued while at the same time reducing risk of damage to cultural sites. The process is being closely watched by affiliated tribes, environmental groups, and the ranching community. BLM staff have developed a method to identify those areas where sensitive cultural sites are likely to occur, those areas where livestock are likely to concentrate, and the areas where the two parameters overlap. The process provides the opportunity to significantly reduce both risk to cultural resources as well as the need for additional archeological surveys. Language for the first major phase of the agreement will be released to interested parties in the spring of 2023 for comment and staff will continue to work through the additional steps required to complete the programmatic agreement as well as NEPA requirements.

## Visitors

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- Number of Visitors to Canyons of the Ancients National Monument: 167,296.
- Number of Visitors to Canyons of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum: 26,447.
- K-12 Curriculum-based education programs in partnership with San Juan Mountains Association: 125 programs reaching 1,288 youth.
- Interpretive Programming at Visitor Center and Museum including movies shown: 1,737 programs reaching 3,915 participants.
- Museum Events: 198 events reaching 2,334 participants.
- Curation Tours: 28 reaching 196 visitors.
- Hosted Researchers at CANM Curation Program: 28.

## Partnerships

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**Volunteer of the Year.** Longtime curation volunteer Larry Keller was the recipient of BLM Colorado's 2022 Volunteer of the Year Award. Larry has a passion for regional archaeology and is skilled at analyzing projectile points. He has generously contributed more than 3,100 hours to CANM since he began volunteering in 2010. Mr. Keller's contributions help support both the Department's and the BLM's Museum program goals, ensuring that important artifacts and specimens are properly cared for and preserved in a manner consistent with federal policy. The award is presented annually to a volunteer in Colorado who goes above and beyond to support the BLM's mission. The BLM works with thousands of volunteers who offer their time, skills, and service to help care for the nation's natural and cultural resources. At his award ceremony, Larry said, "I knew I wanted to spend my retirement giving back to the community, and I believe in the BLM's mission."



*Colorado Volunteer of the Year Larry Keller*

**Cultural Site Stewardship Program.** The Monument Cultural Site Stewardship Program (MSSP), administered by the BLM and the Southwest Colorado Canyons Alliance, includes 114 prehistoric, historic, and dual-component sites. The program includes sixty-three (63) Site Stewards each of whom mostly monitor more than one site. These volunteers contributed 1,153 hours of time and drove 13,065 miles. At an estimated BLM volunteer value of \$29.95/hour and \$0.14/mile, this equates to a total of \$36,361.45 for donated labor and mileage. Additionally, Site Stewards have participated in 933 hours of training, lectures, and volunteer work during the year, helping them all better understand the sites and landscape for which they volunteer. This level of effort is unsurpassed as a federal volunteer program, and the benefit of 63 advocates for public lands management in the local community is incalculable.



## **SOUTHWEST COLORADO CANYONS ALLIANCE**

*Friends of Canyons of the Ancients National Monument*



*Cultural Site Stewardship Program volunteers on a training field trip in East Rock Canyon*

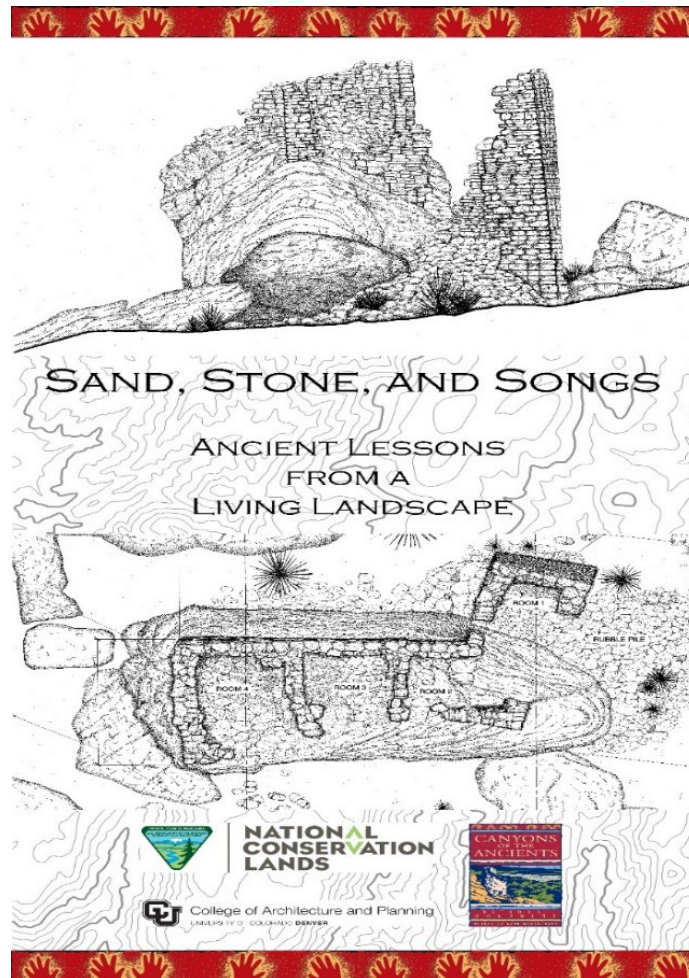
### **Sand, Stone, and Songs: Ancient Lessons from a Living Landscape (Special Exhibit)**

Recent technological developments, such as LiDAR, photogrammetry, and reflectance transformation imaging finally offer the precision and detail necessary for preserving and understanding these reservoirs of indigenous knowledge. For the past 15 years, the BLM and the Center of Preservation Research at the University of Colorado Denver have worked in partnership to apply these modern techniques to our preservation and understanding of these ancient resources.

Our documentation approach strives to preserve structures and cultural landscapes through observation and data gathering at a specific point in time and with a wide range of tools and strategies. Accurate digital and analog records of these vital cultural places

are critical to their future interpretation and preservation. The documentation process helps us to explore these resources' prehistoric, historic, spatial, and environmental contexts. Finally, it increases our awareness of the essential importance of these resources to modern lives and communities.

To this end, CANM and Center of Preservation Research at the University of Colorado Denver developed an exhibit displaying many of the products of their 15-year partnership. The exhibit displayed many of the Historic American Buildings Surveys created for standing prehistoric architectural sites by the program. It also details the advanced digital and manual techniques utilized by CoPR staff and graduate students and seeks to provide a deeper context for the public to understand the significance of these resources to living Native American cultures. The exhibit opened to the public on February 5th, 2022, and was on display through the end of the calendar year.



*Promotional poster for the “Sand, Stone, and Songs: Ancient Lessons from a Living Landscape” exhibition at Canyons of the Ancients National Monument Visitor Center and Museum, February-December 2022.*



# Science

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## **Hovenweep Debris Field: Citizen Science and Land Stewardship**

This past Spring, a trained group of 14 devoted avocational archaeologists spent 195 hours assisting the BLM in recording a trash dump in preparation for an important clean-up project on the National Monument. Six different trash piles, dating between the early 1880's and 1980s, were located and thoroughly recorded. Trash types ranged from cans and bottles to tires and automobiles parts. Shoes, clothing, household goods, and construction materials were also present. The secondary nature of these cultural deposits and the absence of additional information potential preclude the site's listing on the National Register of Historic Places, allowing for the Agency's future cleanup of this uniquely beautiful location on Southwest Colorado's BLM lands.



*Volunteers recording a historic and modern trash dump on the rim of Hovenweep Canyon*

# Social and Environmental Justice

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## Preservation Partnership with Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps from Acoma Pueblo

Canyons of the Ancients National Monument conducted stabilization on a small 13th Century Ancestral Puebloan cliff dwelling (Site 5MT132) in collaboration with members of the Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps from Acoma Pueblo in New Mexico. Experienced professionals from the conservation corps spent two weeks on the site, repointing centuries-old sandstone masonry along one of the Monument's key education and interpretation trails. The partnership leveraged funds from multiple entities to help preserve the structure, while at the same time providing a unique opportunity for tribal members to develop a direct relationship with and help preserve the globally significant resources of their ancestors.



*Members of Acoma Pueblo helped preserve Site 5MT132 along the Sand Canyon Trail. This unique cliff dwelling was constructed in the 13th century by their ancestors within what is now Canyons of the Ancients National Monument.*

# Events

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**Project Archeology Workshop.** Over three days in June 2022, instructors from CANM and the San Juan Mountains Association taught Project Archaeology to a group of formal and informal educators including: K-12 teachers, a Tribal School educator, BLM archaeologists, museum educators and non-profit partners.

The diverse group of workshop participants had the unique opportunity to investigate an ancient Puebloan shelter and learned first-hand how to teach lessons about cultural understanding and protecting archaeological resources. The national office hosted 2 BLM employees to cross train and learn this special program to share at their unique sites.

The Project Archaeology lessons and educational activities can be accomplished in the classroom, on any landscape, or by visiting cultural sites. The curriculum highlights the cultural and natural resources found on public lands and demonstrates how to be effective stewards. Ultimately, teachers help students understand how archaeology is a way to connect the past with today.



*Project Archeology Workshop*

## **Staff Topic of Choice – Painted Mountain Tour**

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Canyons of the Ancients National Monument participated in BLM’s Artist-in-Residence Program’s Painted Mountains Tour that connected new audiences to five National Conservation Lands sites in 2022. BLM employees at Canyons of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum conceived, planned, and successfully coordinated the tour.

The tour was the first of its kind for the BLM and creatively forged new relationships with tribes and communities through a nontraditional medium for a federal agency – music. The tour, featuring Native American jazz trumpeter Delbert Anderson and his ensemble D'DAT, visited Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, Bears Ears National Monument, Lower Deschutes Wild and Scenic River, King Range National Conservation Area, and Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument.

At each location, Anderson and D'DAT drew inspiration for new musical compositions by researching Indigenous land stories and music, meeting with local tribal leaders, and gaining a hands-on experience exploring public lands. Audience-centered public workshops, facilitated by Anderson and D'DAT at each location, engaged attendees as co-creators of new music and poetry that created new connections to public lands. Anderson and D'DAT concluded each visit with a public performance to celebrate and foster deeper connections to America’s public lands through music and tribal stories.



*Delbert Anderson and D'Dat performing at Canyons of the Ancients*



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## Canyons of the Ancients National Monument

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