

## October 2007 CRMP Research Update Campsite Atlas

During the month of October Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center and Grand Canyon National Park took part in a cooperative resource trip, in part focused on collecting data for a forthcoming campsite atlas.

The campsite atlas program originated from a research attempt to map physical boundaries of current and past campsites using remote sensing techniques. An outgrowth of this experiment was the identification of further informational needs on Colorado River camps and the realization that technological advances were at hand that could improve upon previous studies. Additionally, an evaluation of the Protocol Evaluation Panel (PEP) on the recreation monitoring program of GCMRC conducted in July 2005, identified information gaps that could be addressed through the creation of a campsite atlas. These information gaps also overlapped with National Park Service needs related to the implementation of the Colorado River Management Plan. The campsite atlas is now a part of the Park Service's Research, Monitoring, Mitigation and Education CRMP program.

The campsite atlas is a GIS-powered application that spatially maps current and historic campsites and their related attributes for informational, educational, and long-term monitoring purposes. The atlas will serve as an updated campsite inventory, campsite location and photodocumentation repository, and will catalog campsite attribute data. The final product will be available on-line and will provide a comprehensive view of past and current campsite conditions in Grand Canyon.

Thanks to the auspices of the sandbar mapping team at Northern Arizona University this project was able to devote two teams to data collection during the October 13 - 29 river trip. Throughout 16 days data was collected at 202 current and former campsites and 47 photos from the first campsite inventory by Weeden and Boredan in 1974 were identified and rephotographed. Currently the campsite atlas database contains more than 425 separate records of current or former campsites between Lees Ferry and Diamond Creek. It is estimated that only 80 sites remain for evaluation, after which the atlas will be complete.

The National Park Service is proud to be a partner in science with GCMRC and have the opportunity to collaborate on mutual beneficial projects such as the campsite atlas. Upon its completion the campsite atlas will serve as an information resource for a wide variety of audiences: for those planning their first trip down the Colorado River through Grand Canyon, to established researchers and scientists to agency planners. It will be a valuable tool for years to come.