



Archeology Program

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



May 2015 Archeology E-Gram

NPS NEWS

Wayne Prokopetz To Head Big Thicket National Preserve

Wayne Prokopetz, a 40-year veteran of Federal government service, has been named superintendent of Big Thicket National Preserve. Prokopetz's Federal government career includes 24 years with the NPS. He comes to Big Thicket from Dinosaur National Monument, where he served as chief of research and resources management, and cultural resources program manager.

Prokopetz's previous positions with the NPS include archeologist in the former Pacific Northwest Region Office, the former Southwest Region Office, and the Southeast Archeological Center. Prokopetz's other Federal government positions include regional archeologist for the BOR Upper Colorado Region and USFS archeologist in Florida.

Prokopetz received his BA and MA in anthropology from Florida State University and completed coursework for a PhD in history at the University of Utah.

As superintendent of Big Thicket, Prokopetz will oversee a workforce of 22 employees and an annual operating budget of more than \$2.4 million. Prokopetz begins his new assignment effective immediately.

By Patricia Turley



Student Citizen Scientists Find Their Park At Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

On May 14, 2015, 10th grade students from Martinsburg High School in Martinsburg, West Virginia, participated in a service learning project at Harpers Ferry NHP. They picked up trash along the Maryland Heights trail and at the summit photographed modern graffiti, some on archeological resources, and documented the GPS coordinates of the markings.

The event was part of the "Park Stewards Program Grant" sponsored by the National Park Foundation. Harpers Ferry Education Specialist Stan McGee received an \$18,000 grant to develop curriculum and service-learning activities that meet state education standards while fostering an interest in parks in the younger student population. The program specifically focused on the Potomac River/Chesapeake Bay Watershed area and how local agriculture has come to impact this important water source.

This information will be handed over to park law enforcement and park volunteers who are part of the new Park Watch program at Harpers Ferry NHP.

By Caitlin Kostic

Award Given to National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom

On April 18, 2015, the Organization of American Historians (OAH) presented the prestigious Stanton-Horton Award for Excellence in National Park Service History to Diane Miller, national manager of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (Network to Freedom). The OAH considers the

Network to Freedom to epitomize the best in American historical scholarship and promotion of active and sustained civic engagement.

NPS archeologists check results of ground penetrating radar to search for slave dwellings on Best Farm, Monocacy NB.



The Stanton-Horton Award recognized three components of Network to Freedom program:

- Criteria for Network to Freedom significance, based on primary documents, were established through a long collaborative process to give credibility to supposedly undocumentable or mythic stories about the Underground Railroad. The accumulation of rigorous demonstrable evidence, including archeological data, has substantially enlarged a crucial area of American historical scholarship. Network to Freedom sites include the L'Hermitage archeological site at Monocacy National Battlefield.
- The Network to Freedom engages people in a nationwide network of collaboration and scholarship. It has stimulated and coordinated an array of nonprofit organizations and government agencies in education, preservation, and commemoration related to the Underground Railroad.
- The Network to Freedom, like the Underground Railroad, crosses boundaries of race, ethnicity, religion, geography, and approaches to history. It brings together a spectrum from grassroots activists to professional scholars to further preservation, education, and commemoration of Underground Railroad activities and sites at local, regional, and national levels.

Created by Congress in 1998, the Network to Freedom is still growing. It has 550 members in 36 states and the District of Columbia. It includes historic sites and markers, educational and interpretive programs, and facilities such as archives and museums. Among its members are 33 National Park units significant for their educational programs on the Underground Railroad or for their Underground Railroad history.

The Organization of American Historians, with over 7,800 members, is the world's largest professional association dedicated to American historical scholarship. The Stanton-Horton Award was named for Robert G. Stanton, former NPS director, and James O. Horton, the Benjamin Banneker Professor of American Studies and History at George Washington University, Historian Emeritus of the National Museum of American History, and longtime collaborator with NPS.

By Jenny Masur

National Park Service Approves \$11.28 Million to Renovate Fort Vancouver National Historic Park

An \$11.28 million project to rehabilitate historic buildings at Fort Vancouver NHP will also result in moving the Gifford Pinchot National Forest headquarters to the site. This project is a step toward making the Vancouver Barracks a public service campus that involves the public in multiple ways while preserving the nationally significant historic barracks structures, landscapes, archeological features, collections and histories.

The work is expected to begin later this spring and be completed in late 2016.

Staff report, The Olympian

Virgin Islands National Park Hosts Research on the Atlantic Slave Trade

This last month Virgin Islands NP combined the work of archeology interns, Danish graduate student history interns, CyArk, and Trimble into a single project focusing on the Atlantic slave trade and virtual preservation. The research at the park focused on an area where hundreds of people were enslaved and where repeated attempts to gain freedom were made, as attested to by the remains of guardhouses, the large number of houses for the enslaved, and archival records. The overall result will give a greater understanding of this chapter of the island's history and make research results available to the public.

National Park Service Special Agents Recover Folsom Point

After four years of work, NPS Special Agents recently recovered a Folsom point in excellent condition. The point was stolen from a city park in Iowa in 2003 and sold for \$19,000 in an interstate transaction in 2009. Shortly thereafter, the point was resold for \$21,000 in another interstate transaction. The point was safely housed in the city's museum.

Lake Clark National Park & Preserve Holds Archeology Program in Alaska Village

Lake Clark National Park & Preserve staff spent a week in Nondalton village for Culture Week at the school delivering hands-on programs about archeology. The ancestral homeland of the Dena'ina village residents includes Lake Clark and surrounding land. Park staff members have participated in Culture Week for several years in order to foster collaboration and share information that Park's cultural resource program has learned through archeological and ethnographic investigation.

This year students conducted a mock-archeological survey, threw atlatl spears like those found in nearby archeological surveys, boiled water in birch bark baskets according to methods described in oral history interviews, and created a personal storytelling map of their home.



Nondalton students walk an archeological survey line on Six Mile Lake, AK. (NPS Photo)

Culture week is a wonderful opportunity to teach students, learn from elders, and build stronger relationships between the park and village residents. The park says *chin'an* (thank you) for a great week!

By Megan Richotte

Former Superintendent Files Suit Against National Park Service

A former NPS official contends she was unfairly fired over illegal construction projects that damaged an American Indian mound site. In an age discrimination lawsuit filed last week, former Effigy Mounds NM superintendent Phyllis Ewing contends the agency made her a "scapegoat" to appease interest groups and protect other officials' reputations. After being removed as superintendent in 2010 and transferred to a regional office, Ewing claims she worked for 3½ years with barely any official duties.

A Federal investigation made public last year found that Ewing and a subordinate repeatedly violated laws that required archeological studies and input from tribes before they built boardwalks, trails and a maintenance shed. The projects, costing \$3 million over a decade, removed stone artifacts and impacted scenic views at the site, which contains burial and ceremonial mounds affiliated with 12 tribes.

Ewing's superiors at the regional office uncovered violations of the National Historic Preservation Act in 2009 during construction of a boardwalk. Federal prosecutors declined to file charges in 2012 after a two-year criminal investigation. The NPS fired Ewing in November 2013, saying she failed to perform her duties and follow guidelines while superintendent. The lawsuit, which seeks compensation for lost wages and benefits and additional damages, claims those allegations were a pretext for age discrimination.

FEDERAL NEWS

Death of Sarah Bridges

Sarah T. Bridges, long-time Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) employee, died on March 31, 2015, following a brief illness. Bridges, an archeologist, was with the Federal government for over 31 years and served much of that time as the NRCS' National Cultural Resources Specialist and Federal Preservation Officer. Her duties involved mentoring staff in state offices, interaction and consultations with the National Historic Preservation Office, State Historic Preservation Officers, Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, American Indian Tribes, and local governments. She worked tirelessly to ensure that NRCS programs and activities protected historic properties. Her contributions have significantly impacted the preservation of our cultural treasures.

Environmental groups sue BLM over drilling near Chaco Culture National Historical Park

A coalition of environmental groups has sought an injunction against a BLM permit for hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling activity near the park. The suit argues that the Federal government is putting the environment, public health and the region's cultural resources at risk.

In December 2014, the BLM said it would defer issuing new leases on 2,803 acres within a 10-mile radius around Chaco Culture NHP in response to a protest filed by environmental groups that demanded the agency suspend fracking on public lands near the park. But groups sued again in March, arguing that the BLM had not yet completed a thorough study of the impacts that horizontal drilling poses to public health, the environment and cultural resources around the park.

The BLM's Farmington Field Office is expected to release in Fall 2015 a draft of its amended resource management plan and accompanying environmental impact statement. The last plan the BLM issued was in 2003, before much of the latest technologies used in horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing became as commonplace as it is today.

By James Fenton, The Daily Times

USGS Offers New Way to View Historical Maps

It just got easier to search and browse the USGS collection of historical topographic maps, thanks to [a new online map viewer](#). The maps—more than 178,000 of them—date back to 1880, and cover the entire country. They're free to everyone. You can type or zoom in on a particular place, limit your search to maps of a particular scale or from a particular range of dates. You can download them in a variety of formats, from JPGs (fine for printing out a nice map to put on your wall), to KMZ files (to import into Google Earth), to GeoTIFFs (for the power users who wants to import maps into GIS software). There's even a [YouTube tutorial](#) that teaches you some handy tricks (pro tip: hold the shift key and drag the mouse to highlight an area to zoom in on).

Jury Convicts Two, Acquits Two in ATV Protest Ride

A jury convicted Utah county San Juan County Commissioner Phil Lyman and Monte Wells and Shane Marian and Franklin "Trent" Holliday of knowingly breaking Federal laws during an ATV protest ride last year. The ride was through a canyon home to Native American cliff dwellings. Lyman and Wells were found guilty of misdemeanor charges of illegal use of ATVs and conspiracy. Each carries a potential penalty of up to a year in jail and a fine of \$100,000. Sentencing is set for July 15, 2015.

The ride was done to protest what the participants considered government overreach. Residents in the area say they have used the ATV trail for generations, and that the BLM had no right to close the trail in 2007 to motorized vehicles.

"Today's verdict underscores the importance of protecting the nation's irreplaceable archaeological treasures. These ancient dwellings and artifacts are essential for understanding the story of the earliest inhabitants of the American Southwest," BLM spokesman Tom Gorey said in a statement. "As Congress has directed, the BLM will continue to protect these resources while managing the public lands for multiple-use and sustained yield on behalf of all Americans."

By Brady McCombs, Associated Press

Fire Archaeology and Resource Advising Facebook Pages

The fire archaeology community has a Facebook page for members to share information about fire assignments, lessons learned, and happenings in the field. The Wildland fire resource advising community has also formed a Facebook Group. These groups are forums to share thoughts and to network about Fire, Cultural Resources, and Wildland Fire Resource Advising (READ).

These are unofficial pages, created as an informal community of those interested in fire, cultural resources, and wildland fire resource advising. The views and opinions expressed on these pages are those of the individual expressing them and not their employers.

Log into Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/FireArchaeology>
You can join this group at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/wildlandfireREAD/>

Fire and Drone Exposes Prehistoric Rock Formations

Cutting-edge archeological work using a drone and prescribed fire has unearthed new information about a unique Native American archeological site in northeastern Montana. After a prescribed fire to clear vegetation from the stone formations, a 21/2-foot-tall drone buzzed over the site at 300 feet, taking pictures and creating a three-dimensional map. It was the first time the Bureau of Land Management used an unmanned aircraft to document cultural resources on the northern plains.

The fire cleared vegetation that obscured areas, revealing rock formations with both anthropomorphic and zoomorphic features; multiple medicine wheels; and drive lines to herd bison to the kill site. The site dates to the Avonlea period, making it many thousands of years old.

Staff from the Missoula Fire Sciences Laboratory placed temperature sensors on replica bone and stone cultural artifacts within the burn area to measure how hot the fire burned and the effects of the heat on the objects. Most of the current knowledge of how fire interacts with cultural resources is based on heavy fuel, high temperature and long duration fires associated big timber forest fires. Prairie fires burn fast, and at lower temperatures. The prescribed fire has given managers new insights on how prairie fire reacts with cultural sites that will now be available for state and Federal land managers to gauge potential threats of wildfires to cultural sites in other locations.

From story by Karl Puckett, Great Falls Tribune

Recent Proposed Cultural Resource Legislation

H.R. 135-Military Land Act of 2015

Status-pending before the House Natural Resources Committee

Last year, the House included this bill as a provision of its version of the defense authorization legislation. It would have amended the National Historic Preservation Act to: 1) require the Secretary of the Interior to notify certain congressional committees if Federal property is being considered for the National Register of Historic Places, or for designation as a National Historic Landmark, or for inclusion on the World Heritage List; 2) allow managers of Federal lands containing historic resources to object to their inclusion in the National Register or designation as National Historic Landmarks on national security grounds; and 3) create a process by which Federal lands managers could de-list properties from the Register. Historic preservation groups succeeded in excluding the language from the final defense legislation. H.R. 135 was proposed for inclusion in this year's House defense authorization bill (H.R. 1735). On April 29, by a vote of 35 to 27, the text of H.R. 135 was added to the House defense bill.

H.R. 749-Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act of 2015

Status-passed full House March 4; pending before Senate Commerce Committee

This legislation would reauthorize and reform Amtrak. Section 402 of the bill would require the Department of Transportation to develop program alternatives for railroad and rail-related properties for the purposes of compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. At present, there is no Senate counterpart to the bill. The motives behind the language appear to be to give railroads similar treatment under the NHPA currently enjoyed by highways, such as the exclusion from the statute of most maintenance and repair projects for the interstate highway system.

H.R. 1077-Casa Grande Ruins National Monument Boundary Modification Act

Status-pending before House Natural Resources Committee

This bill would expand the Casa Grande Ruins NM by transferring two parcels of federally-owned land containing important Hohokam cultural resources to the NPS, to be managed as part of the existing monument. It would also authorize NPS to acquire, from willing donors or sellers, several tracts of private land near the monument that also hold substantial Hohokam archeological materials.

H.R. 1493-Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act

Status-approved by House Foreign Affairs Committee, pending before full House

This bill would make a number of important and beneficial changes to how the U.S. prevents the looting and destruction of cultural resources overseas. It would grant the President the authority to impose emergency restrictions on the importation of Syrian cultural materials, and establish the position of U.S. Coordinator for International Cultural Property Protection at the State Department to oversee and develop a unified approach to the international cultural property protection activities of numerous Federal agencies.

H.R. 1541-PRISM Act

Status-pending before the House Natural Resources Committee

The Preservation Research at Institutions Serving Minorities (PRISM) Act would amend the NHPA to give colleges and universities with large numbers of Hispanic students the ability to tap into a grant program that provides students with opportunities to participate in historic and cultural resources preservation projects. The new grants would be for institutions, where Hispanic students make up 25% or more of the school's full-time undergraduate enrollment. A Senate companion bill (S. 805) is pending before that chamber's Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

S. 199-Gold Butte National Conservation Area Act

Status-pending before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

The measure would establish a conservation area of nearly 350,000 acres of BLM land in Clark County, Nevada, to "conserve, protect, and enhance the cultural, archaeological, natural, wilderness, scientific, geological, historical, biological, wildlife, educational, and scenic resources of the area" and to facilitate the designation of wilderness areas therein. A House companion bill, H.R. 856, is pending before the House Natural Resources Committee.

H.R. 488, H.R. 900, S. 228, S. 232, S. 437, and H.R. 2258

A number of bills have been introduced in the 114th Congress that would, to varying degrees, limit the President's ability to establish National Monuments. The 1906 Antiquities Act allows the President to set aside lands from development that are owned by the U.S. A new Subcommittee of the Interior within the House Committee on Government Oversight and Reform will investigate the current administration's use of the Antiquities Act.

H.R. 1806-America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2015

In spite of strong opposition from nearly every scientific organization (including the Society for American Archaeology) and research university in the country, the House passed a National Science Foundation reauthorization bill that will make a drastic 45% cut to the NSF's research funding for the social sciences. The legislation was adopted by a vote of 217-205. The bill now goes to the Senate.

SLIGHTLY OFF-TOPIC: Archeology and Reality Television

Check out the March Issue of Society for American Archaeology's (SAA) *The Archaeological Record – Archaeological Practice on Reality Television*. A series of articles look at ways that archeological practice has been recently portrayed on reality TV, including *Diggers*, *Time Team America*, *American Digger*, *Dig Wars*, *Diggin' History* and *Digfellas*. (Who knew there were so many?) The articles are written from a variety of perspectives by people who have protested the programs, to people who have made them. Altogether, they provide much food for thought.

Consider this statistic: between February and June 2014, more than 40 million viewers watched a reality TV show about archeology (Altschul 2015). That is **our** audience, the people that want to learn about archeology and history. The American public really, sincerely, is interested in the past and how we learn

about the past. And yet, we leave the representation of our profession to an ex-professional wrestler and his messy friends.

Our professional societies have worked hard to introduce professionalism into the programs, as several of the articles outline (Altschul, and French). Executive committee members have met repeatedly with the shows' producers, and have reviewed and offered comments on the rough cuts of the footage. We owe them our thanks for the progress that has been made to alter the flavor of the programs.

The bottom line, however, is that we, as archeologists, do not do a great job of selling ourselves. As former SAA president Jeff Altschul points out, unless we communicate why the research that we do is in the public interest, we run the real risk of having research funds shut off and the regulations protecting archeological resources lifted or eviscerated. Think that this won't ever happen? Take a look at the proposed NSF budget for the social sciences. Take a look at the Congressional bills that have been introduced to curtail use of the Antiquities Act. Sure, some of the attacks are about curtailing presidential power, but it is also about the ability to protect our cultural heritage.

I was offended by an e-mail request from a representative of one of the reality TV programs (that will remain nameless), asking whether I could recommend any young, male NPS archeologists who would be available for a season of filming. I declined to admit that I knew any charismatic, handsome male archeologists, but I could see her point. Television is a visual medium, and archeologists tend to use visual media mostly for charts, graphs, and site maps. Anyone recognize themselves in this quote from a *Diggers* fan? "How boring would [the program be] with two guys who only spouted facts and dug holes?"

Randy Olson, marine biologist turned film director, gave two pieces of advice to his colleagues who were struggling to communicate about climate change: 1.) take journalism classes – your prose is boring; and 2.) take acting classes – your presentations are boring. How many of us have taken that advice? How many of us are giving that advice to our students? And how many of us recognize that our papers, full of data though they are, are boring, and the messages are not packaged in ways that the public can readily unpack? Do we enlist the aid of our public affairs officers when crafting news items? Not very many, because we already know how to write, right? We wrote honors theses, master's theses, and dissertations, didn't we? We don't need help in writing for the public. Well, the fact is, we do, as Olson points out.

There are many things that we can do to educate the public about archeology by tapping into reality TV and social media. How about an archeological *Mythbusters* or *Dirty Jobs*? Does deer meat really preserve well if staked to the bottom of a pond? How *do* you make flax? How did Roman women keep their elaborate hairstyles in place? Our introductory classes watch films of ethnoarcheological experiments so that we can attend conferences, but maybe it is time to bring them to prime time TV.

A number of successful programs already on TV could be adapted to an archeological theme. How about an archeological *Finding Your Roots*? Articles by Hess, Pagan, Watters, Hanson, and Pettigrew demonstrate that reality TV is all about audience and money, and the producers would be just as happy with accurate content that shows professional archeology in a good light, as long as the audience is there. We should be able to provide that, but lack connections to the world of television, or rebuff the overtures of reality TV staff.

Television is one of the most powerful ways of engaging a large audience and when utilized effectively, it can serve as a gateway for more nuanced information and analysis. Our challenge is to take ownership of

our stories and communicate the importance of archeology and our findings in an ethical and entertaining way that serves the public responsibly.

We need to start thinking *inside* the reality TV and social media boxes in more creative ways, and we look to our professional associations to lead the way. There are lots of awards for research and writing, not so many for good communication. Richard Pettigrew points out that *The Archaeology Channel's* International Film and Video Festival is the only juried international film competition for archeology in the Western Hemisphere. Peebles and Reeves discuss ways that archeologists and metal detectorists have worked together on projects that have educated members of the public about a specific historical problem *and* ethical research. They demonstrate that there would be an audience for good archeological films.

The MAP (Making Archaeology Public) Project is another effort to foster good communication about archeology. The basic idea of the *Making Archaeology Public* or *MAP Project* is that archeologists within each state will work together to answer the question: What are some important insights into life in the past that we have gained from CRM archeology? The task for each state's work group is to select one or more things about life in the past that will be engaging to the public. The end product of the *MAP Project* will be series of videos, approximately 12-15 minutes long. All of the videos will be linked through an interactive map of the United States.

What might have happened if I had given the producer the name of my young friend, a gifted teacher of infectious enthusiasm, well-trained, knowledgeable, with great peccs? There might have been a new reality TV program that attracted a whole other demographic. We need to create and seize those opportunities.

To read the Archaeological Record March 2015 issue go to <http://www.saa.org/Portals/0/SAA/Publications/thesaaarchrec/March2015.pdf>

By Karen Mudar, NPS

Archeology E-Gram, distributed via e-mail on a regular basis, includes announcements about news, new publications, training opportunities, national and regional meetings, and other important goings-on related to public archeology in the NPS and other public agencies. Recipients are encouraged to forward *Archeology E-Grams* to colleagues and relevant mailing lists. The *Archeology E-Gram* is available on the *News and Links* page www.nps.gov/archeology/public/news.htm on the NPS Archeology Program website.

Contact: Karen Mudar at dca@nps.gov to contribute news items, stories for *Projects in Parks*, and to subscribe.