

## **Highlights of the May 21, 2003 PACRAT Meeting, MOJA HQ Barstow**

The following are salient points of the May 21st meeting attended by 25 persons representing state, federal, and other partners in the Mojave Desert region. Managers JT Reynolds, Larry Whalon, Greg Thomson, John Hamill, Robert Wood, and Clarence Everly were present to offer their collective support. Many thanks for attending.....

### **“Operation Indian Rocks”:**

LAME Chief Ranger Dale Antonich briefed the group on case development and status for this highly significant interagency/interdisciplinary ARPA/NAGPRA suite of prosecutions. Initiated late in 2001, this interagency effort will result in the largest ARPA case ever to be prosecuted in the United States. It was recommended that the same briefing be given to DMG in near future.

### **Millenium Conference Proceedings:**

Editing is nearly complete; negotiations with a printing firm are in progress. The volume will be 'perfect bound' and will contain about 40 papers with illustrations, etc. that will take up around 480 pages. An initial run of 1000 copies of the Proceedings will be produced and ready for distribution around the end of the summer. Judyth Reed and Mark Allen have worked long and hard to produce this lasting volume on Mojave cultural topics and their volunteer efforts are to be commended.

### **CHRIS Project:**

Eric Allison (CA Office of Historic Preservation) reported that a 3 month contract may be issued to a firm to fold newer CR data into the database and to deal with a number of other issues. There was considerable discussion about the quality and distribution of CHRIS/MDHR CDs to DMG member agencies. The issue of making seamless cultural data from across the entire desert available to all partners was once again raised and it was concluded that a Jan. 15, 2004 due date for distribution of new CDs could be met by OHP. Eric will continue to work with users and offer short training sessions. Given the current State of California funding crisis and its impact on the Office of Historic Preservation, the question was raised as to whether the CHRIS system would be financially self-supporting in the future, assuming all of the problems it now faces can be overcome. In other words, would the investment made in the system by the DMG be safe. Eric noted that at present, the OHP was not planning on financially supporting the system and that it would have to operate on funds generated by user fees. At the suggestion of Bob Wood (Edwards AFB), a committee was formed to consider possible funding sources from outside the State of California to support the long term operation of the CHRIS.

### **Site Stewardship Program:**

Bob Bryson noted that Mojave NP and the Barstow office of the BLM enrolled 20 persons in its new Site Stewardship program and BLM offices continue to utilize their local programs for site monitoring.

### **ARPA training:**

Advanced ARPA training “Archaeological Damage Assessment” (40 hrs w/mock trial) will be sponsored by the BLM National Training Center and held at the China Lake NAWS, Jan 24-30, 2004. Designed for archaeologists alone, participants should have already had basic ARPA training or possess considerable experience in the law and related issues. The cost for non-BLM participants

will be \$600 with on-base lodging available. Russ Kaldenberg (760/939-1350) has early enrollment info.

**DMG March Meeting:**

John Hamill's meeting minutes indicate that PACRAT was encouraged to continue its activities and would be directly supported by DMG members JT Reynolds (NPS) and Bob Wood (Edwards AFB) in addition to Greg Thomson, who summarized recommendations from the DMG to the PACRAT.

**Paleontology:**

Issues related to this field were reported by Ted Weasma and Bob Reynolds: A revised 'Paleontology Protection Act' has been re-introduced in this Congress. At the recent NPS/George Wright Society interdisciplinary conference an NPS regional paleontology repository and skills inventory was discussed by western US NPS paleontologists. The Western Vertebrate Paleontologist Assoc. will meet at Occidental College, Feb. 2004. Paleontology research in proposed or designated Wilderness Areas was discussed and recommended as agenda item for the October 7-8 DMG meeting. It was also noted that goals regarding paleontological resources have been included in DOI's 'GPRA' revisions.

**New Initiatives/Opportunities:**

JT Reynolds suggested that PACRAT consider preparing a 'partnership agreement' or protocol for sharing of critical CRM and paleontology skills among installation/field unit staff. This might assist in effective cooperative work in emergencies or unusual incidents such as Operation Indian Rocks.

**PACRAT leadership:**

While Russ Kaldenberg expressed his desire to continue as Co-Chair for a while longer, Roger Kelly will be replaced as Co-Chair by Bob Bryson, NPS-MOJA.

**Next Meeting:**

Scheduled for BLM Office in Palm Springs, October 22, 2002.

(Notes submitted by Roger Kelly and Bob Bryson)