

Nine Mile Canyon Coalition News

Spring 2007

ninemilecanyoncoalition.org

"You cannot
escape the
responsibility
of tomorrow



by evading it
today."

Abraham
Lincoln

Board Chair's Message, by Pam Miller

Dear Coalition Members:

Spring is here and most of us are making plans to visit Nine Mile Canyon or have been there recently. If you are going, be prepared for changes. Carbon County has been working on sections of the road through the canyon. Please let us know what you think of the improvements.

Board members have been busy this winter. Steve Hansen and Steve Tanner visited with the Hopi Tribe; read a report of that visit in this newsletter. Steve Tanner and Coalition member Ivan White presented their research on the road dust in Nine Mile Canyon at the Undergraduate Anthropology Conference at Salt Lake Community College and again at the monthly meeting of the Castle Valley Chapter of the Utah Statewide Archaeological Society, both in March. Their photographs are eye-opening and disturbing.

Those of you on our email contact list have received an action alert for the Questar EA, a project to build a gas transmission line from the mouth of Soldier Creek Canyon to Duchesne. Instead of paralleling the existing pipeline through Nine Mile Canyon, Questar will be using the BLM proposed utility corridor on the Tavaputs, enter Nine Mile parallel to BBC's pipeline on the Nutter Ranch, and then travel the bottom of the Canyon for a few miles before exiting at Water Canyon. Various Coalition Board Members have met with Questar and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission representatives on several occasions over the course of developing the EA and we express our appreciation for being included in the process. Even though the final plan is not exactly what we wanted or hoped for, we feel we were listened to with respect and efforts were made to accommodate our concerns.

Price Field Office BLM will be issuing a supplement to their draft resource management plan. We will issue another action alert when that comes up for public comment, and we hope you will take the time to read the sections which interest you and submit comments.

Plans are being made for our annual Spring Clean-up on April 21st, and a new fundraising event to be held in Salt Lake City.

This brings me to my final point: there are many opportunities to become involved in the protection and preservation of Nine Mile Canyon. Joining together builds unity and satisfaction, and the reward of knowing we are working for the benefit of Nine Mile Canyon and its great and unique resources. This newsletter is filled with news of many opportunities to become involved. You may choose your level of participation and commitment, but please join us!

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Coalition Meets With Hopi Tribe

by Steve Hansen

An invitation to meet with the Hopi Cultural Resources Advisory Task Team (CRATT or Task Team) regarding issues affecting Nine Mile Canyon was enthusiastically accepted by the Nine Mile Canyon Coalition. CRATT is made up of many tribal elders who are interested and engaged in preserving and protecting the canyon – a region previously determined to be a significant archive of the migration patterns and life ways of their ancestors.

At 9:00am on Thursday February 22nd, 2007 Coalition Board members, Steve Tanner and Steve Hansen, met with this distinguished tribal committee and the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office staff in the village of Kykotsmovi, at the foot of Third Mesa in northern Arizona. The purpose of the meeting was to review activities impacting the cultural record within Nine Mile Canyon. Leigh Kuwanwisiwma, Director, Hopi Cultural Preservation Office conducted the meeting, and stated that the Cultural Preservation Office is involved with the BLM on the basis of threats to Hopi ancestral sites.

After introductions, Legal Researcher, Terry Morgart, gave a brief overview of some of their findings in recent trips to the area. He stated that upon close inspection, the Task Team found where Ute markings had been placed over rock writing left by their ancestors, Hisatsenom, or People of Long Ago, known to archaeologists as the Ancestral Puebloan. Various clan symbols indicating

periods of their occupancy were identified, as well as other images significant to the Hopi people. We presented a slide show entitled “Nine Mile Canyon – An Endangered Cultural Treasure.” Then we reviewed the status of the nomination of the canyon to the National Register of Historic Places, including boundary proposals. Copies of the current draft nomination were left for review with comments welcomed.

The slide show presented photographs of rock writings, pithouses, granaries and other cultural treasures in the canyon. Many Task Team members commented on the significance and meaning of certain glyphics. Clan rock writing was a mandate for many millennia and as a result the Hopi can identify clan migration patterns, lifestyles and stories.

The slideshow also demonstrates the seriousness of the impact due to industry in the canyon. Images of dust-covered petroglyphs, pictographs and prehistoric structures were shown. Caravans of heavy industrial traffic creating dust plumes presents irrefutable evidence that industry activities are altering the environment, thus affecting the prehistoric record. CRATT members expressed deep concern that the nation’s energy policies and thirst for oil and natural gas are compromising the integrity and condition of the prehistoric record. They are also deeply concerned about the effects of the industry on the region’s plants and wildlife.

We presented photos of the barrier on the interpretive trail at “The Great Hunt” panel. Photos of the corrected project were also viewed and discussed. The Tribe expressed gratitude that errors had been corrected by dismantling the massive fence pillars and re-seeding of the area around the panel.

Following our meeting with the Task Team, we were asked to attend the scoping meeting addressing ethnographic research stemming from the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) relating to the West Tavaputs Plateau Natural Gas Project. Ethnographic and Archaeological Consultant, Dr. John Fritz, has been contracted to complete the ethnographic research. He has done much field research spanning over 25 years including on Hopi Tribal Lands. Though his work in Nine Mile Canyon is being funded by the project proponent, the Bill Barrett Corporation, he is trusted as an unbiased consultant by the Tribe. Dr. Fritz presented his plans, including the scope of the research to be accomplished and an estimated timeline to complete the work. We felt confident following the meeting that the ethnographic research of the region will be carried out in a thorough and professional manner.

The Coalition is grateful and honored to be partners with the Hopi Cultural Preservation Office in preserving and protecting Nine Mile Canyon.



Coalition Board Members Steve Hansen and Steve Tanner with members of the Hopi Cultural Resources Advisory Task Team and Cultural Preservation Office staff. Kykotsmovi, Arizona



Spring Clean-Up 2007, Saturday April 21st

Ahhh, it's Spring at last. And after a long, cold winter there are few things more enjoyable than spending a day out in the fresh air stretching our legs and soaking up a little sun. Please join us on **Saturday April 21st** for our annual Spring Clean-up. It's a wonderful way to meet other people who love Nine Mile and an immensely gratifying opportunity to show your support for the Coalition's mission of preserving and protecting Nine Mile Canyon.

This year we're meeting at 9AM at the Canyon Glen picnic area in the upper canyon (milepost 27.2). We'll spend the next few hours cleaning the roadside as far as possible in both directions and return in time for a 1 PM combination pot-luck and informal board meeting. The rest of the afternoon is a prime opportunity to mingle with new friends or spend time exploring the canyon.

So please join us, and remember to pack your sun screen, hat, gloves, plenty of water and a pot-luck contribution. We hope to see you there!

National Register Nomination Update

by Bill Walsh

The Nomination of Nine Mile Canyon to the National Register of Historic Places keeps moving along, but delays seem to be the norm. Here's the latest update.

Shelly Smith of the State BLM Office chaired a meeting in Price on December 14, 2006, called to get everyone on the same page. Two Duchesne County and one Carbon County Commissioners were in attendance, as well as representatives from almost all of the interested parties. Shelly gave a brief history of the Nomination effort and credited Jerry Spangler for writing a very professional narrative to accompany the Nomination.

Next was the boundary discussion, the ongoing sticking point. Shelly distributed a map saying it represented the historic district that BLM will submit. It outlined one kilometer on either side of the creek and disregarded the rim-to-rim boundary proposed by the Coalition Board and agreed to by the BLM after public hearings in 2001. The Commissioners favored the smaller, BLM boundaries. The meeting ended with assignments to finish the mapping and cataloguing of recorded sites - not known sites - with a timeline goal of submitting a near-final Nomination to the Utah Division of State History by the end of February 2007. All Nomination materials had to be submitted by the end of February to allow Division staff to provide public notice, get in touch with private property owners, and follow all the federal regulations, so that the State Board of History could review the Nomination at their

April meeting.

At the Coalition Board meeting of January 27, 2007 the Board determined to support the NRHP Nomination that BLM will submit to the State Board of History, but also draft a statement indicating our involvement in this process, including raising \$14,000 to finally get the Nomination written, expressing our displeasure with the proposed boundary.

At the end of February 2007, Architectural Historian for the Division of State History and the person most closely associated with the Nomination, Cory Jensen and Wilson Martin, State Historic Preservation Officer, determined that they would need more time to properly prepare this Nomination. Cory and Wilson notified all parties that the Nomination would not be presented at the April State Board of History meeting, rather the presentation would be the September 2007 meeting. They maintain that the Nine Mile Canyon Nomination as an Archeological District is a precedent-setter - others are waiting in the wings - and has to be done strictly "by the book," following federal regulations in every detail. There will therefore be two review periods, one for the public and one that the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) performs.

The review by the State Board of History at their September public meeting will provide an opportunity for any private property owner in Nine Mile Canyon to object to the Nomination if they wish to do so. Neither the State Board nor

private property owners actually vote on the Nomination. If 51% of the private property owners submit objections to the Nomination, Nine Mile Canyon cannot be listed on the National Register, but it will be forwarded to the Keeper of the National Register and, if approved, it would be determined eligible. If, on the other hand, the objections fall short of a majority, SHPO sends the Nomination to the Federal Project Officer, a person at the BLM National Office, who then submits the Nomination to the National Park Service and the Keeper of the National Register. If everything is in order, the Keeper then lists Nine Mile Canyon on the National Register of Historic Places. Touchdown!

No doubt many readers of this newsletter are weary of hearing about more setbacks to the nomination of Nine Mile Canyon to the National Register. The Coalition Board has spent many hours discussing the prospects as the string of disappointments has grown longer. But the Board believes that Nine Mile Canyon deserves this honor and recognition, that resources for preservation and protection will accompany a successful Nomination, and has learned all too well that good things do not come easy. The Board appreciates member support and the support of the many allies in this quest. The Board is determined to see this effort through to the end, so you will be reading yet more articles on this subject in newsletters to come.

Finding Big Feet in Nine Mile Canyon

by Margene Hackney

While working on the Castle Valley Archaeological Survey of Nine Mile Canyon, I have had the pleasure of helping to record many panels of pictographs and petroglyphs left behind by the very early inhabitants of the canyon. I have several special memories of some incidents that have occurred during these surveys.

One of my favorite adventures was the time I found a petroglyph while working with Dr. Ray Matheny and some BYU students during their field school in the early 1990's. That particular day we were finding several panels of rock art and the recording was very time consuming. Recording involves filling out IMAC forms, figuring the aspect, sketching the figures, measuring the site and taking photos. Other work is also involved. Some times the working conditions are pleasant and sometimes it can be hot and tedious.

By late afternoon we were getting weary and it was nearly the time for our work to stop for the day. The team was finishing up a site when Dr. Matheny asked me to walk ahead and see if there was a small site we could record before finishing for the day. I did as he asked and after a little exploring was excited to find one large petroglyph. It was a pecked outline of a peculiar figure that had a very small head, a round body, short legs and two huge feet with five toes on each foot.

I called back to Dr. Matheny and told him of my find. He asked me to start recording it and he and the other team members would be shortly along to help. I am not fond of sketching rock art but I did start to record some information and

decided to name the site "Big Feet." I also sketched the figure to the best of my ability (shown in background). I then came to a stopping place because I needed the rock art photographed and also needed someone to help me measure the whole area. So I went back to get the other team members.

The reason I remember this episode so well is that while I was leading the team back to the site, I must have been so excited that I stepped over a rattle snake that was poised to strike and I never even saw the snake or heard its rattle. The girl that followed me saw everything and screamed to warn the others. I was not bitten-only a little bit shaken up. I have been lucky in the area of live rattle snake sightings.

It is true that during all of my years of doing survey, I have never seen a live rattle snake in that canyon. Others have seen several, but I suppose that I am both blind and deaf to their existence and probably think they will not harm me.

After the snake incident and the excitement died down, we continued on to the site. Dr. Matheny took photos and after we finished the recording, we looked for other rock art sites that may have been around the area. Finding none we left for the day.

When we got back to camp, stories were exchanged with the other teams. Our team members told about the snake occurrence and I bragged about finding "Big Feet." Some wanted to see the site, and some did not want to because of a possible encounter with snakes. So those who wanted to see Big Feet were invited to join our team the next day.

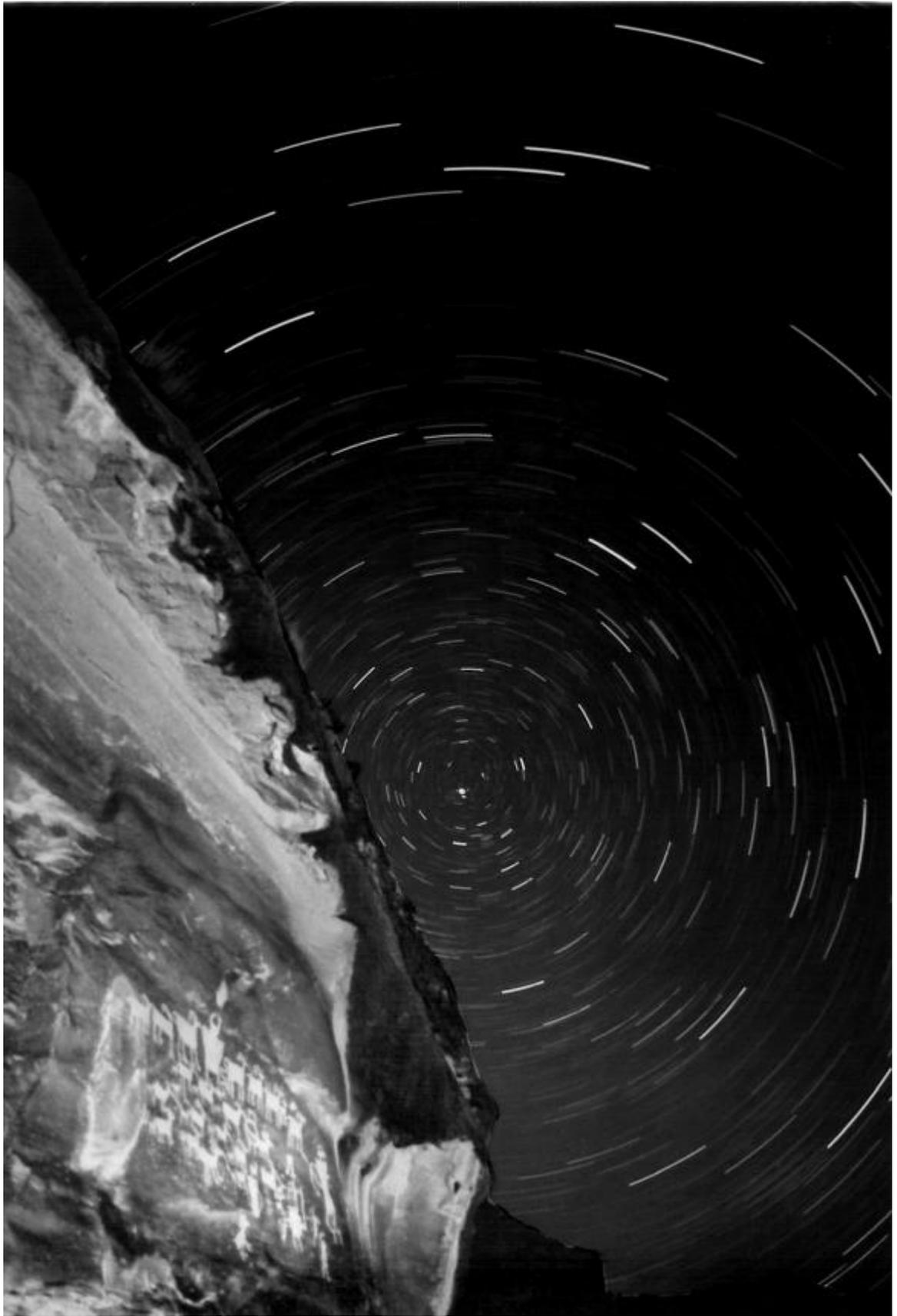
We left early the next morning and we all cautiously watched out for any signs of snakes in the area. When we reached the site a big surprise was in store for us. There was no sign of the Big Feet petroglyph. The others kept asking us if we had the right place and we assured them that we did. It was a big mystery to the entire survey group. Where had it gone? Why did it disappear? As we looked around the site, Dr. Don Miller found another panel of rock art on the same cliff where Big Feet was the day before.

It was then that Dr. Matheny informed us that he could see a very light outline of the disappearing Big Feet. We then began to document the new site and as we continued to record it, that site very slowly started to disappear as the sun began to shine and light up the area. As the sun rose higher Big Feet began to come into full view.

Nine Mile Canyon has many mysteries, but one was solved that day. Sunlight and shadows have a bearing on the rock art. So after that day we started putting the time of day on all the recordings. Now we understand that rock art can disappear but will eventually reappear when the lighting is just right. It was a lesson well learned. Especially when photographing.

I have been told that there are several big foot petroglyphs in the canyon. What these figures represent we will probably never know but to this day Big Feet is one of my favorite petroglyphs; maybe it is because I found him all by myself. Or maybe it is because I learned a valuable lesson about the canyon that day.

PHOTO CONTEST WINNER



This beautiful time-lapse photo of *The Great Hunt* panel and the North Star submitted by Coalition member Craig Allen was taken by his son Jeff. Thank you for sharing! We invite everyone to share your favorite photos, poetry and stories.

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Thank you for your support!



Mission Statement

The Nine Mile Canyon Coalition exists to preserve and protect Nine Mile Canyon, in partnership with land holders, user groups, federal, state and local agencies, and Native American organizations. To that end, the Nine Mile Canyon Coalition will foster educational and interpretive programs which include but are not limited to: assisting in the coordination of canyon interests; promoting programs of scientific research in the canyon; helping with inventory of cultural and natural resources; raising funds, from earnings or gifts, for research, education, interpretive or preservation programs, as such funds become available.



Take part in an
age old tradition....

Nine Mile Canyon
Spring Clean-Up
Saturday April 21, 2007

