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# PERMIAN QUARTERLY

Permian Basin Programmatic Agreement Quarterly Newsletter

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Tipis erected by Mescalero Apache people are seen in front of “El Capitan” in Guadalupe Mountains National Park, where people were gathered for a blessing ceremony. Read more about contemporary Mescalero Apache ceremonies inside this newsletter.

## Introduction to the Permian Basin Programmatic Agreement (PA)

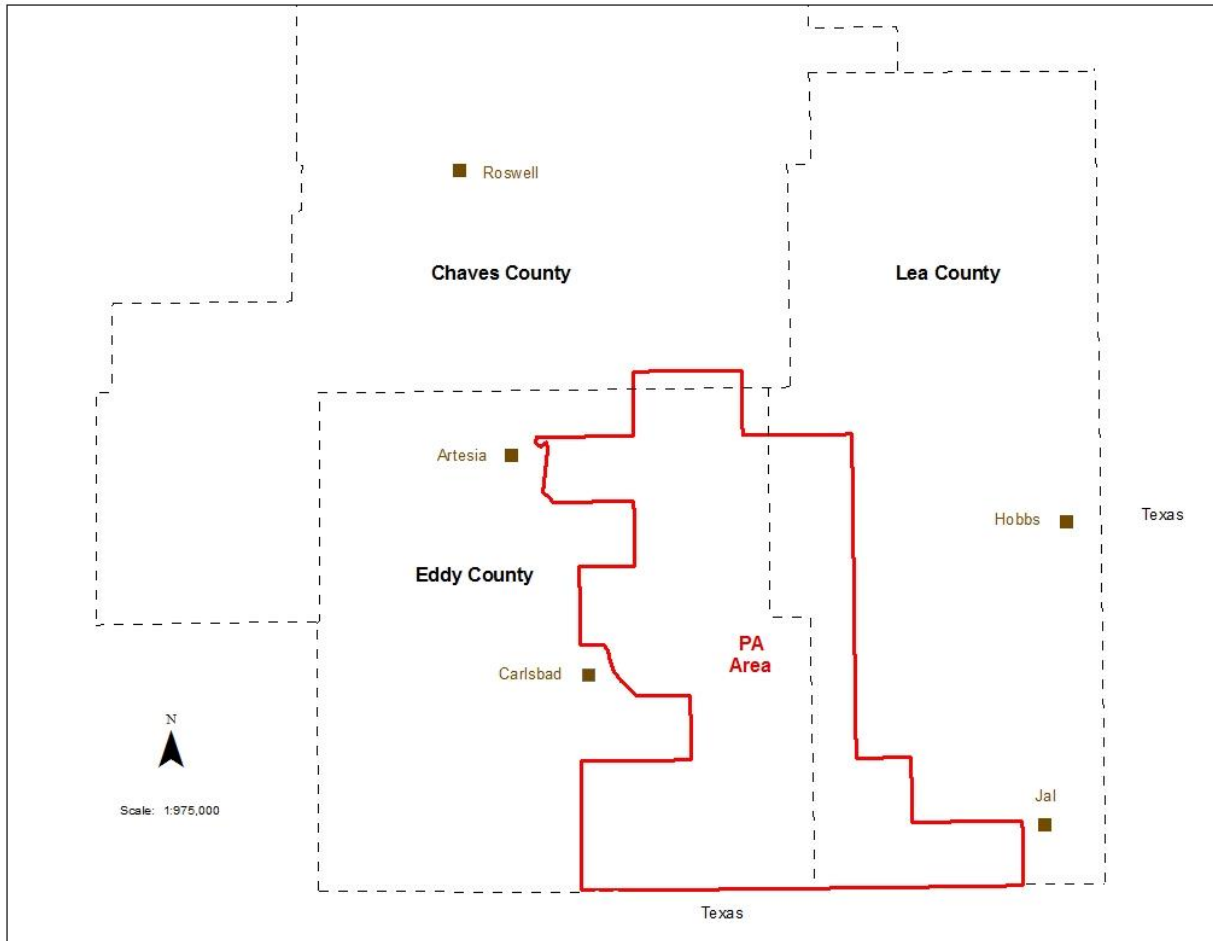


Figure 1. Map showing the Permian Basin PA Area.

The Permian Basin Programmatic Agreement (PA) is an alternate form of compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, that is offered to the oil and gas industry, potash mining companies, and for other industrial projects located in southeastern New Mexico. The PA can be used for federal projects located on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land or BLM sponsored projects located on private property. Originally begun as a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), it was extended for a period of three years in April 2013 as a Programmatic Agreement (PA) and the PA was further extended for a period of 10 years beginning in May 2016. The PA area is located partially in Chaves, Eddy, and Lea counties. Proponents of projects within the PA area may contribute to a dedicated archeological research fund in lieu of contracting for project specific archeological surveys, provided their proposed projects avoid recorded archeological sites. This dedicated fund is used to study the archeology and history of southeastern New Mexico.

## Current PA News

### Research Update

Currently two projects are underway, a rock art recording project and an evaluation of sites in the SW Slopes Physiographic region. Interim reports have been received describing progress made on these two projects.

Seven rock art sites have been completely recorded, including a large site with 29 panels in Robinson Draw, while three sites have been partly recorded. Heavy rains in the Carlsbad vicinity during the first session of the recording project caused road closures due to flooded low water crossings. This hampered the crew since access to many of the sites was difficult or impossible.



Figure 2. Mark Willis photographs a figure at the Robinson Draw Site. This large site has numerous rock art elements both painted on the rock surface and incised or pecked into the rock. Blue tacky tape marks individual panels for recording purposes, but does not damage them.

Fieldwork for the SW Slopes site evaluation project has been completed. Forty-two sites were resurveyed using the Transect Recording Unit method, wherein each site has an electronic grid of 10 meter square units placed over it. Each 10 meter cell is examined by an archeological surveyor using an electronic device to determine his or her location within the grid. A 50 meter buffer around each site was also examined to confirm and further refine each site's recorded boundaries.



Figure 3. Crewmembers set a datum prior to creating profiles of tested features.

In total 117 prehistoric and two historic features were recorded, but only 10 percent of the documented features included observable charcoal necessary for a macrobotanical analysis and subsequent radiocarbon dating. Almost a quarter of the features had sufficient deposits to facilitate the collection of a sample for phytolith and starch analysis and off-site control samples were additionally collected from those sites. The macrobotanical, phytolith, and starch samples will be potentially important for identifying plants used or present in the prehistoric period.

The low number of features with intact charred remains can be explained partly by the widespread extent of eroded shallow soils and exposed bedrock within the SW Slopes region and partly by the design of the project, which purposely included a number of sites that were already known to be located in areas of extensive erosion. These eroded sites were included as components to be evaluated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places on values other than that of good physical integrity, which is most often cited in initial field evaluations. Two sites located in areas of deeper soils were examined by the project geomorphologist as part of a larger regional study. Another survey activity was to search for outcrops of sandstone in site vicinities that might have provided raw material for manos and metates used as grinding tools and an outcrop of Salado or Rustler Formation limestone with observable veins of sandstone was identified at site LA 183664.

*Permian Quarterly* readers can anticipate more information about these two projects once they are completed.

## Other News from the Permian Basin

### Student Intern Reports on Carlsbad Field Office Experience

*Editor's Note: Ruzel Ednalino, a graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley, was one of nine student interns at the Carlsbad Field Office this past summer. He volunteered for the Archeology Department, but he also had an opportunity to learn about other BLM careers. He has written this article describing his summer experience in the Carlsbad Field Office. After his internship was completed Ruzel further broadened his knowledge by participating in an archeological excavation in Israel.*



Before I begin my graduate program at UC Berkeley for the upcoming fall semester, I'm glad to say that I've experienced a fulfilling summer internship with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Learning how government archaeologists work and their responsibilities around managing public lands was an unforgettable experience over such a short period of time and I couldn't have asked for a more engaged field office to work at than the Carlsbad Field Office. Prior to this internship my previous jobs involved my interests in geospatial sciences and remote sensing, as well as the countless hours of volunteering at an anthropology museum. This transition to interning for the BLM from my undergraduate career was much more rewarding than I ever could expect.

My daily tasks in the office involved working with ArcMap to manipulate shapefiles and documents for the Permian Basin Programmatic Agreement, as well as the occasional task of surveying with experienced BLM archaeologists. Their knowledge and expertise in the archaeology of the area was amazing to take in and even a mile trekking through thorny mesquite bushes while being scorched by the hot New Mexico sun was enjoyable when not working in the office! From the weeks where I was writing up a site report for an eligible site consisting of various ring-midden features to the early National Environmental Policy Act meetings I participated in, there wasn't a day where the Archaeology Department wasn't putting me to work.



Figure 4. Ruzel Ednalino photographs an area identified in a LiDAR survey northwest of Carlsbad.

My main assignment while interning for the Bureau of Land Management involved a LiDAR study conducted in the area, where a pulsed laser from an airplane was used to find surface variations across the landscape. After processing the LiDAR data and analyzing possible ring-midden features near Carlsbad, a defined area with 30 identified ring-midden shapes were produced as hillshade maps. The final results

of this assigned project involved groundtruthing the many possible ring-midden features of that area with Archeologist, Martin Stein, which revealed how many of the thirty “identified” features were actually ring-middens. When there was downtime in the Archaeology department, other departments offered tasks for the interns to participate in. From spelunking in a watery cave for cave and karst resources, being given a tour of a potash mine, surveying fences for range projects, and setting up sample plots for the Wildlife Department: there was always work to be done at the Carlsbad Field Office.

Not to mention the work of public outreach! My fondest memory from the internship was being invited to a Mescalero Apache puberty ceremony with Stephanie Bergman, another BLM Archaeologist. That moment of experiencing the public aspect of archaeological outreach and engaging with the Native American community was gratifying and heartfelt. Towards the end of my internship, I was asked to demonstrate flint knapping at the Living Desert Zoo and Gardens in Carlsbad. To my surprise the audience was a room full of energetic, curious children intrigued by the lithics and ceramics that the BLM provided. This opportunity of working with the BLM Carlsbad Field Office has been tremendously busy but worthwhile. Looking back now, I can’t help but miss the exciting work I’ve done over the summer and can’t thank the Carlsbad Field Office Archaeology Department enough for all that they’ve taught me during my time there. – Ruzel Ednalino



Figure 5. Ruzel Ednalino excavating at the site of Kiriath-Jearim near Jerusalem.

#### CFO Staff Archeologist Attends Mescalero Apache Ceremony

by

Stephanie Bergman

The Permian Basin PA, and in its original Memorandum of Agreement format, includes consultation with Indian Tribes and Pueblos as a central tenet. The seven tribes that have ancestral ties to the area in which



the PA is located were asked to participate in its formulation and they are asked to review its operation through comments on individual contracts issued through the PA. The Mescalero Apache Tribal Historic Preservation Office is a member of the PA Workgroup and currently Mescalero Apache and Hopi tribal members are part of a rock art recording crew. The PA supported a Traditional Cultural Property survey with the Mescalero Apache tribe to identify areas that are of cultural importance so that the BLM can ensure their preservation. Consultation and feedback for PA projects with the Mescalero Apache continues to deepen our understanding of the rich Tribal resources in the region.

During the PA Workgroup's 2017 annual meeting, held at the Carlsbad Field Office during May 23-24, the Mescalero Apache Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Holly Houghton, invited staff archaeologists to attend a four day "Rite of Passage" ceremony that marks the transition from girlhood to womanhood and is held at the reservation. Formally established on May 27, 1873, by Executive Order of President Ulysses S. Grant, the Mescalero reservation was at first located near Fort Stanton. The present reservation, established in 1883, is located almost entirely in Otero County. The 463,000-acre reservation lies on the eastern flank of the Sacramento Mountains and borders the Lincoln National Forest. The Mescalero opened their reservation to other Apache bands throughout the early twentieth century, such as to the Chiricahua Apache that were held prisoner at Fort Sill, Oklahoma after the capture of the famed Apache leader Geronimo in 1886. Survivors of the Lipan Apache, who suffered heavily during the Texas wars, also joined the reservation. All became recognized members of the Mescalero Apache Tribe when it was reorganized in 1936 under the provisions of the Indian Reorganization Act.



Figure 6. Male members of the Mescalero Apache Tribe raise the ritual teepee at sunrise for the Coming of Age ceremony, while women, to the left in the image, sing ceremonial songs. The Mescalero have intimate knowledge of the skies and time important ceremonies by the stars.

As an archaeologist that came to New Mexico from Virginia two years ago, I was thrilled to be able to visit the Mescalero Apache during a Coming of Age ceremony. Along with Ruzel Ednalino from northern California, who worked as a student intern at the Carlsbad Field Office over the summer, we packed a few belongings and headed out to witness what is considered one of the most important

traditions of the Tribe. Attending the ceremony allowed us both an important opportunity to become more knowledgeable, and appreciative, of the rich Native cultural heritage that continues to thrive here.

A young girl celebrates her coming of age with family-prepared feasts, dancing, blessings, and rituals established hundreds of years ago. The sacred ceremony strengthens the unity of the Mescalero Apache by instilling important cultural values and traditions. It is a major commitment to the girls' families, with preparations beginning as much as a year in advance with the gathering of roasted mescal heart and other sacred plants. A medicine man and a medicine woman perform rites for each of the girls, and dancers and singers are arranged for each ceremony. Several dozen ceremonies take place throughout the summer, with a celebration on July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend allowing visitors from the public to catch glimpses of the important dances and rituals. During the initial ceremony I felt overcome with emotion to see all these people in a community gather and support these young girls in preparation of their transition to adulthood.



Figure 7. One of three girls performs a ritual to become the White Painted Woman for the remainder of the ceremony. It is important for the girl's family to obtain a traditional buckskin puberty dress from one worn during a previous ceremony or to make a new one. The beautiful, but heavy and hot, dress must be worn for the following eight days.

One of the most significant part of the girls' families' obligation for the ceremony is to prepare a feast and to share the traditional dishes with all who attend. As guests of the ceremony Ruzel and I were both impressed with the delicious food that was prepared onsite for several hundred people, three times a day, for four days that week! Before dawn I was able to find our host, Mescalero Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Holly Houghton, and several other women kneading dough, slicing fruits and vegetables, and preparing stews for the great feast to celebrate her own granddaughter's Coming of Age. During our first feast meal the line for roasted mescal, stewed meats, fry bread, and beans was long with hundreds of people in attendance. Waiting we overheard a small child in front of us



murmur, “Mama, I don’t want to go back to Ruidoso, I want to stay right here in Mescalero!” Ruzel and I both exchanged a look of shared sentiment before we piled our plates with the hearty feast foods.

Ruzel and I were soon introduced to two fellow archaeologists also visiting the extravagant ceremonies. They came to Mescalero as they received a grant from the National Park Service to better interpret Fort Bowie National Historic Site, a nineteenth century outpost of the US Army located in southeastern Arizona. For more than 30 years Fort Bowie was the focal point of military operations including the violent Battle of Apache Pass in July 1862, and eventually culminating in the surrender of Geronimo in 1886 and the imprisonment of the Chiricahuas in Florida and Alabama.

Nicholas Laluk, a post-doctoral researcher from Brown University, and of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, visited Mescalero to conduct oral history interviews with elders of the Tribe. Ruzel and I were fortunate enough to listen to the interviewees as each told a familiar story of tragedy and triumph. The thin division of time between the archaeological past and the ethnographic present seemed to disappear altogether as these men’s living memories of family members being captured and imprisoned by the government, of being dispossessed, relocated, and reunited were solemnly spoken. We were especially reminded of the BLM’s responsibilities to affected American Indian Tribes. Since the inception of the PA there have been more opportunities for meaningful tribal participation in the BLM’s efforts to identify resources the CFO cultural program is entrusted to protect. We look forward to continue working with the Mescalero Apache Tribe in the next ten years of the PA and thank Holly Houghton of the Tribal Historic Preservation Office for allowing us to visit the recent Coming of Age ceremony.

#### Newsletter Contact Information

Questions or comments about this newsletter or the Permian Basin PA may be directed to Martin Stein, Permian Basin PA Coordinator, BLM Las Cruces District Office, 1800 Marquess Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001. Phone: (575) 525-4309; E-mail address: [cstein@blm.gov](mailto:cstein@blm.gov). Unless otherwise attributed all newsletter content was written by Martin Stein.