
WILLIAMS CANYON PROJECT, NSS

Spring Meeting

Cave of the Winds,
April 1, 1995
9:30 a.m. -- 3:30 p.m.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Narrows Cave Dig: Walt Rubeck + Fred Luiszer

On March 18, after 12 years of digging by dozens of cavers, a breakthrough at Narrows Cave discovered up to 400 feet of new passage. The following weekend, on March 25, cavers completed a climb in the Inquisition Dome to an upper level chamber ending in a windy fissure. Narrows Cave now has an estimated 700 feet of passage, making it the sixth longest known cave in the canyon (after the Cave of the Winds/Manitou Grand System, Breezeway, Huccacove, Grieving Widows and Manitou caves).

With the new passage -- and the promise of much more yet to be discovered -- gating of Narrows is now a priority, both a security gate at the entrance to keep out unwanted visitors and an environmental gate to protect the inner cave from drying winds (presumably from an upper entrance to the system).

Discussion: Gating, removal of the dumping chute, surveying, future dig projects.

Manitou Cave Update: Jon Barker + Marc Hament

Continued work within Manitou Cave during the 1994-95 season has resulted in the discovery of an southern extension to the C Survey in the Deepwater Section. This new passage is the deepest in the system and also the new southern boundary. Little else down within the system this season, owing to the commercialization preparations.

Since the beginning of January, Marc Hament has been at work preparing the cave for visitation by paying tours. Among these preparations is the shoring of loose rock and debris at the northern end of the eastern parallel in Pedro's and the installation of a safety cargo net in the cave's entrance series.

Discussion: Continued exploration efforts

Cave of the Winds Resurvey Project: Paul Burger + Steve Reames

Since January, much effort has gone into the resurvey project at the Cave of the Winds. Survey teams have placed a baseline complete with permanent stations through the main east-west access of the cave and begun surveying the many side passages. Initial survey data indicates the new survey will give a very accurate portrayal of the system, including profiles and floor detail. Projected completion of the project is still in 1996, in time for the NSS Convention.

Discussion: Current status of the survey, conclusion of project for summer season

Caver Access & Policy: Rick Rhinehart, Grant Carey + Tom Dotter

Grant Carey has proposed a revision of current caver access policies and procedures. New policies could include a limit of the number of authorized trip leaders to 25 maximum -- leaders would be required to lead at least three trips a year to keep their access valid. Trip leaders would be set yearly at the October meeting. Breezeway Cave trip leaders would remain at 15.

The Cave of the Winds management has also requested that trip guidelines from November 1987 be revised to meet current practices. A WCP committee should review old guidelines and prepare new paperwork this spring.

At the January meeting, Tom Dotter provided copies of a proposed safety/trip leader guidelines for WCP trips into canyon caves. Should these guidelines be adapted for the upcoming season?

Breezeway Cave Update: Rick Rhinehart + Fred Luiszer

During the 1994-95 season, trips into Breezeway have concentrated on several projects: the Holy Waters Bypass/Bridge; the Never Ending Crawl Dig; High Plains Exploration + Conservation; Re-boot Room Dig.

Holy Waters: Given the delicacy of the Holy Waters area, much effort has gone into finding a possible bypass to the passage. Fred Luiszer and Randy Reck directed a dig project that excavated a trench on the east side of the chamber that provides easier access, along with protecting the pools from further contamination by mud. An effort to connect the area to a dig off the Never Ending Crawl ended in failure when the lower level crawl simply ended. Fred now proposes the building of a PVC pipe bridge across the pools to provide easy access and protect the formations of the room.

Never Ending Crawl Dig: Two days were spent working at the southern end of this major north/south passage. The Gemini dig leading southeast has some promise but is reached only through a tight rock squeeze. More effort is needed.

High Plains: Don Doucette led a climb into a dome north of the Lake of the Inverted Question Mark in the High Plains region of the cave. Unfortunately, no significant passage was discovered by the climb. Paul Burger and Steve Reames cleaned much of the flowstone in this section and removed the fixed rope in early March. This region should now be considered closed to further visitation, excepting specifically authorized trips who have a skilled lead climber who can rig a rope.

Re-boot Room: Donald Davis has led two trips to the Re-boot Room at the southern end of the lower level. A dig off this room was worked on, but may not be the key to discovering further passage. Surveying of the dome in the room was also accomplished.

Other Topics For Discussion

1996 NSS Convention: Guidebook material; Special NSS Tour/Reception? Post convention trips to canyon caves (including Breezeway)?

Other Proposed Dig Projects: Hackleman's, Huccacove Guide's Room, Isis Project

End of Season Set

October Meeting Date