
WILLIAMS CANYON PROJECT, NSS

Winter Meeting

*Cave of the Winds,
February 1, 1997
10:00 a.m.*

A G E N D A

WELCOME + SEATING OF NEW DIRECTORS

? Thanks to Walt Rubeck for his years of service to the project.

? Upcoming Board retirements: Fred Luiszer (to retire following February meeting) and Mark Maslyn (to retire following May meeting). New appointed Cave of the Winds representatives introduced.

REVIEW OF NEW TRIP LEADER CANDIDATES

? Vote by board and current trip leaders on new and reinstated candidates.

CAVE UPDATES

Narrows Cave: Jon Barker

Excavation efforts in Narrows Cave have returned to the Millie's Office region in the Inquisition Dome section of the cave. Extensive digging has required the re-installment of the dirt chute to the Williams Canyon floor. Digs from Millie's Office have good airflow and exceptional promise – perhaps the route to Cave of the Winds?

? *Discussion:* Millie's Office dig; timetable, personnel.

Cave of the Golden Duck: Jon Barker

Update on the dig at the Cave of the Golden Duck in Cavern Gulch. With Narrows Cave taking most of the attention, there has been seemingly little effort at the Duck in recent months.

? *Discussion:* project logistics; timetable, personnel.

Breezeway Cave: Randy Reck

Little Mountain Room Dig: Randy Reck has coordinated continuing dig efforts in this sizable chamber, excavating a crawlway around a huge debris pile. Good airflow suggests a major extension to the south-- any discoveries would undoubtedly be well decorated with calcite and aragonite.

? *Discussion:* project logistics; timetable, personnel.

East Wall Project: Rick Rhinehart

Continuing interest by cavers in nearby Narrows Cave has delayed the start of this interesting dig project. Hopefully, some time can be spent later this spring excavating this potential cave southeast of the Huccacove parking lot in lower Williams Canyon.

? *Discussion:* project logistics, timetable, personnel.

WILLIAMS CANYON PROJECT SURVEY SECTION

Update: Paul Burger

Recent survey projects in the canyon have included additional survey in Narrows Cave and surveys of smaller caves.

? *Discussion:* Current projects; available maps.

REPORT BY THE AD-HOC COMMITTEE

Discussion: Rick Rhinehart, Fred Luiszer and Mark Maslyn

An ad-hoc committee of the Williams Canyon Project met on December 15 to discuss several topics of concern to the project and the Cave of the Winds. The committee consisted of the Cave of the Winds-appointed directors: Rick Rhinehart, Mark Maslyn, and Fred Luiszer. Topics discussed included safety considerations at Narrows Cave and other canyon caves; trip leader qualifications and procedures; criteria for projects within the Williams Canyon Project; the roles and procedures for Project Board Members; and future negotiations by the project for a long-term working agreement with the Cave (a Memorandum of Understanding). On January 11, the full board and representatives of the Cave of the Winds met at the cave in special session to receive the report.

TOPICS

? **Narrows Cave.** There is interest in installing a rebar ladder in the Idiot's Paradise Chimney to the upper-level Prison Section of the cave. It is possible the US Air Force Academy might be able to provide assistance through their engineering class, much as they have done in the past. Such a ladder resolves the issue of rope safety and caver vertical training and certification for Williams Canyon. But, is a ladder really necessary? Do we not trust our trip leaders to allow only qualified vertical cavers with their own equipment to visit this section of the cave? This is a key question for all caves in the canyon and liability concerns by the cave management.

? **Trip Leaders.** It is recommended that trip leaders be considered "Trustees" of the project as they are responsible for the well-being of both the natural and historic features of the property as well as the trip participants. In other NSS Projects, including one at Sequoia National Park, trip leaders are given this higher responsibility. Current and potential trip leaders must also follow established WCP procedures, including:

? **Pre-qualification of Trustees.** Paperwork must be fully completed and submitted to the Board prior to the Autumn meeting. New Trustees will be approved by both the Board members and all Trustees present at the meeting. Cave of the Winds and Trustees will have paperwork available for new candidates – it is suggested that a Trustee packet be developed by the project during the first half of 1997 including cave procedures, Trustee forms and trip leader requirements. Trustees may also be required to attend an annual orientation meeting where policies and procedures are reviewed –perhaps immediately following the Autumn Board meeting or the weekend after.

? **Minimum number of Trips.** Trustees must participate in a minimum of three trips in the canyon each year and lead one of the three trips. If a Trustee does not meet this minimum, the position will be declared open. Trustees who fail to make the minimum will have to reapply for Trustee status.

Cave of the Winds will also maintain a current Trustee data base and statistical information on trips into the canyon. This data base may eventually be improved to track additional information such as hours spent, visits to caves, etc.

? **WCP Projects.** The project should retain some focus toward specific goals, i.e., the connection of Cave of the Winds to Narrows Cave. There should be some discipline in the projects – more planning, less randomness. Written proposals for large new projects should be submitted to the board for consideration at a regularly-scheduled meeting.

? **Board Members.** The Williams Canyon Project Board does not have to maintain the current balance of power between Cave of the Winds-appointed representatives and NSS grotto-elected reps. New grottos can apply by sending a letter or verbal communication to the board of their interest and their qualifications; a majority vote of all the member grottos will determine if a new grotto is accepted into the project. Appointed board members can resign at any time – potential new candidates will be recommended to the Cave of the Winds by the WCP board.

? **Formal Agreement.** There is interest for developing a Memorandum of Agreement between the Cave of the Winds and the WCP. Such an agreement can help in establishing project and cave management roles and duties.

WILLIAMS CANYON PROJECT WEEKENDS

Discussion: Rick Rhinehart

Beginning in February of this year, the project will begin formal monthly project weekends in which open, pre-scheduled trips and projects will occur. This weekend will be the third weekend of each month from October through April. Trips could occur on either Saturday or Sunday and should have pre-registration.

Upcoming Weekends:

FEBRUARY 21 WEEKEND. Conservation in the Cave of the Winds: removal of trail construction debris from

ANNUAL REPORT

Discussion: Rick Rhinehart, Mark Maslyn, Paul Burger

The Williams Canyon Project will publish a Gypkap-type annual report in 1998. This report will include documentation of the project's activities over the last 17 years, including maps, exploration and historical articles on caves, scientific studies, etc. This book will be sold to the caving market – including caving booksellers such as Speleobooks, the NSS Bookstore and Inner Realm Books. A special version of the book may be developed for sale to the general public through the Cave of the Winds gift shop. It is hoped that such a report can appear every 2 - 5 years thereafter.

CAVE OF THE WINDS TOPICS

Discussion: Gail Bedrowski, Grant Carey

The management of the Cave of the Winds may have topics for discussion and consideration by the board and project personnel.

OTHER TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

? Topics from the Floor

? Upcoming Meetings – first Saturday of May, October, February 1998.