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# WILLIAMS CANYON PROJECT, NSS

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## Autumn Meeting

*Cave of the Winds,  
October 5, 1996  
4:00 p.m.*

### DISCUSSION TOPICS

#### **Narrows Cave:** Dan Sullivan + Jon Barker

Narrows Cave continues to astound and amaze following two major breakthroughs in the late spring and summer of 1996. Following the discovery of over 1,000 feet of passage on April 27, a second dig on June 29 led to several thousands of feet of passage, sizable rooms and corridors and extensive vertical relief. With over 4,000 feet of known passage and three major levels, Narrows could eventually prove to be the link between the Cave of the Winds system and Manitou Cave. Efforts are currently concentrated in the new sections of the cave, searching for the next big breakthrough.

*Discussion:* 1996-97 dig projects; safety within the cave; current survey status.

#### **Manitou Cave:** Marc Hament

With all the attention Narrows Cave has received in the last year, digging and exploration within Manitou Cave has been nearly forgotten. This season, Marc Hament is proposing a new dig project to search for the lost 1912 tourist trail, which may or may not be the legendary "Hackleman's Cave" of the early 1960s. Through careful study of the cave and the surrounding terrain, Marc believes the lost section lies to the northeast of the Centipede Section of the cave. Through excavation of a short spur passage leading northeast from the Eastern Parallel in the Pedro's Section, it may be possible to reach this projected extension. Another possibility is surface excavation of plugged cave entrances on the eastern side of the Williams Canyon road. The potential is great: if historical records and stories of Hackleman's Cave are to be believed, the new section of Manitou could contain thousands of feet of passage, large chambers and the underground Williams Canyon stream.

*Discussion:* project logistics; timetable, personnel.

#### **Golden Duck Cave:** Dan Sullivan + Mike Frazier

Following the conclusion of the unsuccessful summer Roadside Dig on the Cavern Gulch road below the Manitou Grand Cavern, Mike Frazier and Dan Sullivan visited a small shelter cave to the northwest of the former commercial cave. Digging in the back of the lower-Manitou cave, they were successful in opening two new small rooms. Considering the significant airflow from the hillside below the Grand Cavern, the Golden Duck may prove to be the safest method of entering the projected system.

*Discussion:* project logistics, timetable, personnel.

## **Breezeway Cave: Randy Reck + Tom Dotter**

**Little Mountain Room Dig:** Randy Reck has coordinated efforts in this sizable chamber, attempting to dig 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.

**Antelope Freeway Environmental Gate:** As a project for a Scouting program, Tom Dotter's son constructed and installed an airflow environmental gate in the Antelope Freeway. This non-locking gate will help restrict airflow through this region of the cave to pre-excavation levels. Hopefully, nearby pools and decorated areas will regain previous moisture and humidity with less wind.

**Conservation/Cave Preservation:** It has been reported that a number of trip leaders have been leading recreational trips into Breezeway Cave during the last six months. Some reports suggest the cave has suffered from the increased traffic. Suggestions, comments?

**Inventory Project:** Harvey Duchene of the Colorado Grotto has offered to help develop an Inventory Program for Breezeway Cave and Williams Canyon based on successful programs already in place in Wind Cave and Carlsbad Caverns National Parks. Such programs can computerize data and assist in scientific studies of the caves. Inventory trips will provide greater knowledge of the caves of the canyon plus allow cavers an opportunity to see the caves.

## **East Wall Project: Rick Rhinehart**

Each year, the project establishes a dig project suitable for beginner-level cavers and newcomers. In recent years, Narrows, Manitou and Snider's caves have served this purpose. The East Wall Project, proposed last April, is an easy dig along the lower Williams Canyon Road that can welcome all participants regardless of caving ability and experience. As proposed last spring, the project will dig into the eastern wall of Williams Canyon just to the south of the Huccacove Cave parking area. Scientific studies by Fred Luiszer indicate the Williams Canyon stream flows to the southeast under this wall, presumably into extensive cave passageways. This could lead to the lost Hackleman's Cave or even the Manitou Cave tour route.

*Discussion:* project logistics, timetable, personnel.

## **Williams Canyon Project Survey Section Update: Paul Burger**

With the Cave of the Winds survey completed, attention is turning to the development of the long-awaited quad system of maps for the canyon. Quadrangles will allow for greater understanding of the relationship of the various canyon caves plus increase the possibility of eventual connections. A laser theodolite will be used to begin tying all major cave entrances onto a grid.

*Discussion:* Current project status; Cave of the Winds map sales.

## **NSS Convention Post Convention Camp Recap: Rick Rhinehart**

**Post Convention Trips:** Trips were limited during the weekend and were fewer and less populated than expected. Two photography trips were taken into Breezeway Cave, allowing California, Swiss and British cave photographers an opportunity to photograph the cave. One large trip with two trip leaders visited Silent Splendor and the Manitou Grand Caverns on Saturday and one digging trip (including British cavers) was taken into Narrows Cave. On the Friday and Saturday preceding the convention, a cave biologist from Virginia was taken to the Lower Cave section of the Cave of the Winds, Narrows Cave and Manitou Cave. The biologist discovered large numbers of cave life in both the Thieves' Canyon area of Cave of the Winds and the Pedro's Section of Manitou Cave, including several probable new species.

## **Cave of the Winds Topics: 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.

## **WCP Treasury: Rick Rhinehart**

Continuing exploration and study in the caves of Williams Canyon caves has brought suggestions that the project establish a treasury. This treasury, presumably funded through dues and sales of project materials (i.e., tee-shirts, publications, maps, etc.), could pay for fixed ropes in Narrows and Breezeway Caves, survey materials, rescue caches, flagging, inventory materials, etc.

Do we want to consider this topic more fully? Should a committee be established to explore a treasury? Should the project incorporate as a non-profit entity?

### **Trip Leader Review/Additions: Rick Rhinehart**

At each Autumn meeting of the Williams Canyon Project, the board and Cave of the Winds management will consider new trip leaders for the upcoming year.

The Cave of the Winds management would like to discuss qualifications for trip leaders plus establish basic annual requirements to maintain active status. Also, all current trip leaders must complete new 1996-97 trip leader forms.

*Discussion:* New trip leaders; review of inactive trip leaders; increasing quantity of trip leaders.

### **Other Topics For Discussion**

**Topics from the Floor**  
**January Meeting Date**