
WILLIAMS CANYON PROJECT

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Autumn Meeting

Cave of the Winds

September 30, 2000 — 10:00 a.m.

9:30 a.m. Closed Board Meeting

AGENDA

WELCOME

? Any general announcements or news.

NEW TRUSTEES FOR 2000-2001 SEASON

? All Trustees must submit paperwork at this September meeting for approval by the project and the Cave. Several cavers failed to submit paperwork by last year's meeting as required by project rules.

? Approval of trip leaders and report of closed meeting of the Board.

? *Discussion:* Should the number of trip leaders be expanded from the current 26 to 30 or 35? Should the number of Breezeway Cave trip leaders be expanded from 15?

WCP PROJECT REPORT

Discussion: Mark Maslyn

Continuing efforts for a Williams Canyon Project book of history and project accomplishments since 1981. Through the efforts of Rob Kolstad, Mark Maslyn, Rick Rhinehart and other members of the Williams Canyon Project, the long promised "Caves of Williams Canyon" book is near completion. Rob Kolstad has prepared a 244 page proof version of the book for review by the board and project members. A few articles remain to be placed in the publication and proofing completed, but a publishing date in the next few months is anticipated.

? *Discussion:* Latest developments, pricing discussion, funding, updated project timeline.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Discussion: Dan Sullivan, Rick Rhinehart

Cave Of The Winds Gates: Several new environmental/security gates have been installed in the Cave of the Winds in the last year under the coordination of Dan Sullivan. New plastic barrel gates are now in place in Yukon Trail, Heavenly Hall and at the Four Fingers Junction on the way to Silent Splendor. This year, the Four Fingers gate will see some improvement, as many cavers find it difficult to pass through, particularly after a trip to Silent Splendor. The gate to Snider's Hall will also be replaced this year since the original is now rusty.

Breezeway Cave: This last spring, Dan Sullivan coordinated the excavation of loose rock in the entrance series of Breezeway Cave. Numerous cavers participated in the project, which over several weekends cleared blocked passageways and allowed the cave to be reopened. This year, Dan is interested in installing a steel ladder at Hallowed Ground, bypassing the "Upside Down Staircase" chimney. Such a ladder would bring additional safety to trips, as well as allow restoration of the room

Huccacove Cave Gate: In late June, it was discovered that unknown persons had broken through the concrete and rock plug above the entrance barrel gate to Huccacove Cave. Through the efforts of cavers from throughout the Front Range (and two cavers from Connecticut), the hole was quickly plugged with welded steel rebar and cement. The rebar is particularly strong

as holes in the rock and cement were drilled immediately prior to welding. One more day of work is necessary to finish the project, completing the cement work. (Note: Randy Reck purchased cement and other materials for the project and needs reimbursement by the Cave of the Winds.)

? *Discussion:* Any additional capital improvements anticipated this season?

CONSERVATION

Cave of the Winds Restoration: Jeremy Stiles

Last winter, Jeremy Stiles of the Cave of the Winds coordinated the installation of new lighting along the Discovery Tour route. Prior to the busy summer season, 1974 era lights in the Temple of Silence, the Valley of Dreams, Oriental Garden and the Adventure Room were replaced with an attractive new scheme. This lighting project will continue into this winter season as other sections of the tour route are redesigned and relit. As a part of this ongoing process, cavers of the WCP might participate in accompanying restoration projects along the commercial tour route this fall. Many rooms, such as the Temple of Silence, have flowstone that can be manually cleaned with brushes to present a more favorable appearance. Old lighting fixtures can be dismantled and removed (i.e., at the Temple of Silence and at the Painted Curtain). Al Collier led a few restoration trips in the cave during the spring and is eager to begin efforts this fall.

? *Discussion:* Project logistics. Any overnight stays?

Formation Repair and Restoration: Al Collier

Al Collier has coordinated a variety of conservation and restoration efforts in the caves of the canyon over the last few years, including repairing of many broken formations. Additional work is necessary to restore areas in the Cave of the Winds, Breezeway and Huccacove caves.

? *Discussion:* Project logistics.

Snider Quarry Reactivation: Rick Rhinehart

The Snider Quarry is again active, with blasting resuming this summer. According to reliable sources, the owning Castle Concrete will greatly expand quarrying over the next few years, increasing blasting and potentially damaging nearby Breezeway Cave. Last spring's publicity brought considerable concern to the managers of the quarry, who depend on permits for their mining efforts. Bad publicity means public opposition and political pressure to close down the operation. It is reported that the homeowners association for the adjacent Cedar Heights housing subdivision is interested in talking with the project about potential damage to Breezeway Cave. Cedar Heights has the money and the political connections and experience to challenge the quarry, but they need reliable information from cavers. There are dangers to fighting Castle Concrete and challenging their permit: already, at least two cavers have received threatening letters from company lawyers promising legal action if opposition arises. Additionally, bringing Breezeway Cave to common public knowledge may bring pressure upon the cave and its stainless steel gate from the curious and the adventurous. However, the proximity of Breezeway to the extensive blasting at the quarry may permanently damage or destroy many of the world-class helictites found in places like Heaven's Gate, the Elkhorn Chambers, the Celestial City and Vanity Fair.

? *Discussion:* Photographic documentation project; logistics of meeting with Cedar Heights.

CAVE PROJECTS

Breezeway Cave: Dan Sullivan, Pat Malone, Mike Frazier

There is interest in resuming the Little Mountain Room dig in central Breezeway. The dig has excellent potential for major extensions to the south, provided a way can be found around the massive breakdown and debris pile that forms the chamber's southern wall. Randy Reck originally coordinated the dig, which tried routes along both the chamber's eastern and western walls.

? *Discussion:* Dig logistics.

Longview Cave: Daniel Laos, Mike Frazier

Longview Cave could prove to be a northern entrance to the Cave of the Winds, provided the new extension to Majestic Hall can be followed to new regions north of the known system. Many area cavers helped excavate Longview in the winter of 1999-2000, which surveys later showed is leading to the southwest, not far from Snider's Cave. Additional excavation with large crews might be able to dig into open rooms and chambers under the ridge between Cavern Gulch and Williams Canyon.

? *Discussion:* Dig logistics.

Cave of the Boards: Mike Frazier

Cave of the Boards has been known for many years. Located in upper Cavern Gulch, the cave has seen on and off digging since the early 1980s. In the summer of 2000, however, Mike Frazier and others excavated an extension to the cave. Interestingly, the cave has good air – suggesting it may lead into passages and chambers under the main ridge.
? *Discussion:* Dig logistics.

Millenium Project: Fred Luiszer, Mike Frazier

Throughout the summer months, cavers worked on the Big Alcove dig in upper Williams Canyon. Surveying has identified this shelter to be the northern extension of Small Change Passage in the Cave of the Winds. If the cave can be opened, and a connection to the Northeast Extension made, the passage might eventually become a part of the proposed Cliffhanger Tour Route for visitors.

Inside the Cave of the Winds, there is interest in digging at the northern terminous of Majestic Hall. One of the most northern points currently known in the Cave of the Winds system, the passage has significant airflow and excellent potential to break into the theoretic cave system between Snider's and Longview. If such a breakthrough is made, Cave of the Winds may extend north some distance.
? *Discussion:* Dig logistics.

Other Canyon Dig Projects

Cavers may return to digs at the Temple of Isis, Dilation and Octagon caves this season. Each have potential of interesting and extensive discoveries.
? *Discussion:* Dig logistics.

WILLIAMS CANYON PROJECT SURVEY SECTION

Update: Paul Burger, Tom Dotter

This spring, the laser theodolite survey was completed. Tom Dotter coordinated the survey, which established permanent survey points throughout the Williams Canyon area. Cavers can now tie caves into these permanent stations so the long-awaited quadrangle series of maps can be prepared. Thanks to Rob Kolstad, who provided funding for this survey.

The Survey Section was busy in the last year, preparing several maps for the WCP book. New for this year will be the beginning of a cave inventory project for the major caves of the canyon. Paul Burger is interested in managing a one-day training session for interested cavers in November and another after the first of January. Throughout the season, work trips to caves to inventory mineralogical and geological features will be held.
? *Discussion:* Project weekends; available maps.

CAVE OF THE WINDS TOPICS

Discussion: Jeremy Stiles, Grant Carey

Cave of the Winds staff may have some topics for review and consideration by the Board and Project Trustees.

OTHER TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- ? Project Rules Review: should WCP establish annual reviews for trip leaders like the Fairy Caves Project?
- ? Metal Detector Survey of Grand Caverns building site (Marc Hament coordinating)
- ? Historic Snider and Turner books may be republished in 2001
- ? Topics from the Floor
- ? Upcoming Meeting – late January 2001?