
WILLIAMS CANYON PROJECT NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Autumn Meeting

Cave of the Winds

September 27, 2003 — 9:30 a.m.

A G E N D A

WELCOME

? Any general announcements or news.

WCP APRIL MEETING MINUTES

Discussion: Rene Neely

Minutes of the last meeting from our Project Secretary.

WCP TREASURY REPORT

Discussion: Bob Stucklen

Update on project finances from Treasurer Bob Stucklen.

GEORGE SNIDER GRAVESTONE

Discussion: Carolyn Cronk

With funding from the Colorado, Front Range, Northern Colorado and Southern Colorado Mountain Grottos, the Williams Canyon Project and the Cave of the Winds, a tombstone for Cave of the Winds developer and Grand Caverns discoverer George W. Snider was installed and dedicated on Saturday, September 6. Carolyn Cronk and Mark Maslyn coordinated this project, working closely with Dick Wilhelm at Wilhelm Monuments to be certain the stone was distinctive. The granite stone features a cameo engraving of George Snider from the 1880s and is the largest monument in the Snider plot. Cost for the monument was \$940.00.

Media coverage of the short afternoon ceremony included Channel 13 in Colorado Springs and the *Colorado Springs Gazette*. About 20 cavers participated in the ceremony, which featured short speeches by Mark Maslyn, Donald G. Davis and Jeremy Stiles of the Cave of the Winds.

Afterwards, the Cave of the Winds hosted a dinner at their pavilion, followed by a presentation of Laser Canyon.

? *Discussion:* Cave of the Winds fronted the money for the monument; the grottos and the project will repay half the total cost. Does the project want to become involved with the repairs and/or replacement of the damaged 1879 gravestone for the Reverend Pickett? His death in a stagecoach accident on Weston Pass near Leadville indirectly led the Reverend Cross to bring the Pickett boys to the Cave of the Winds in June, 1880.

APPROVAL OF NEW TRIP LEADERS FOR 2003/04

Discussion: Rick Rhinehart

The September meeting is the meeting in which the project board and membership consider trip leader applications for the 2003/04 season.

As a reminder, the trip leader Trustee level is limited to no more than 28 persons. Breezeway Cave trip leaders are limited to 16 persons. New trip leaders must submit applications accompanied by two letters of recommendation.

? *Discussion:* Review of applications and approval of trip leaders by the full membership. Are there any recommendations for new Partners in the project?

VICE CHAIR POSITION FINAL CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL

Discussion: Carl Bern

At the Spring meeting of the Project, the board postponed final approval of the new Vice Chair position until the Autumn meeting. This position was added to the Project officers in January 2003.

? *Discussion:* Should the position be added permanently? If so, does the Vice Chair position automatically lead to the Chair position?

SWIRLING MISTS: DISCOVERY, EXPLORATION, PROTECTION

Discussion: Gerry Estes

In June, Charles Lindsey and Tomas Dawson successfully dug their way into Cave of the Swirling Mists in upper Williams Canyon. The cave was quickly explored and surveyed and has 1771 feet of passage. There are several digs within the cave, as well as ancient bones. Given the cave's vulnerability, a sturdy jack gate was constructed and installed in the cave, protecting it for now.

Tomas Dawson was later injured in a dig collapse in large breakdown near the breakthrough point. He self-rescued, hiking out to his vehicle on his own. Owing to the accident, Jeremy Stiles and Gerry Estes brought an insurance representative from the corporate insurer to the cave in late June. Tom has largely recovered from his injuries and is again caving.

Since the cave is gated and has significant features, a separate check-off for trip leaders is required.

? *Discussion:* Shall a steel barrel gate be placed on the cave's entrance? What about seeding of the large tailings pile below the entrance?

BREEZEWAY CAVE INNER GATE PROPOSAL

Discussion: Dan Sullivan

Last spring, Dan Sullivan suggested to the Board that a security gate be installed in the "Toilet Bowl" climb in Breezeway Cave to provide an additional line of defense in the event of unauthorized entry. The gate can be installed with a minimum of difficulty and inexpensively, with Cave of the Winds covering costs.

The gate would be in addition to the stainless steel entrance gate and an electronic alarm system currently in place. The location of the gating would protect inner Breezeway (Heaven's Gate, Stone River, High Plains and the lower level beyond Rattlesnake Canyon) but leave vulnerable everything through the Little Mountain/Elkhorn Chambers area.

? *Discussion:* Shall this gate be approved and installed this autumn?

SEALING OF GEORGE WHITE TUNNEL

Discussion: Jeremy Stiles

The discovery of the long-forgotten George White Tunnel in lower Williams Canyon in October 2000 helped resolve a historical mystery. The excavated mine tunnel, located near Manitou Cave, was an operating "mine" and visitor attraction in the early 20th century, prior to the opening of Manitou Cave as an attraction.

Recently, visitors to the canyon continue to dig open the buried entrance. The Cave of the Winds would like to block the tunnel once again with rocks and cement. There is currently access to the tunnel through an obscure route from the Centipede Section of Manitou Cave.

? *Discussion:* Shall the George White Tunnel be sealed again?

WILLIAMS CANYON PROJECT SURVEY SECTION

Update: Paul Burger

Recent surveying and cave inventory activities in the canyon. Continued surveying of Cave of the Swirling Mists in the upper canyon, including overland surveys to nearby surface features. Unfortunately, the cave has not yet been tied into the canyon grid.

? *Discussion:* CD-Rom expected this autumn of the Williams Canyon cave maps from Paul Burger.

CONSERVATION

Cave Restoration: Al Collier

Update on recent and planned restoration in the caves of the canyon, including hardware removal in Cave of the Winds and graffiti removal in Huccacove Cave. As always, cavers are invited to participate in these activities over the winter months.

Seeding and Restoration of Surface Digs: Dan Sullivan

Dan Sullivan has proposed that seeding and restoration of surface digs be made a priority following the conclusion of the dig effort.

? *Discussion:* Other conservation projects.

CAVE PROJECTS

Cave of the Swirling Mists Dig: Gerry Estes

Continued digging in the Cave of the Swirling Mists, located near the Temple of Isis in upper Williams Canyon. Several dig possibilities have been found, including prospects leading southeast into the mountain and away from the canyon wall and known cave. Efforts will continue in hope of finding a major extension.

? *Discussion:* Dig logistics.

Longview Cave Dig: Dan Sullivan and Mike Frazier

A new dig project in Longview Cave, located in upper Williams Canyon north of the Manitou Grand Caverns and Sipapu Cave. The cave was originally excavated a few years ago, but enthusiasm dropped when no major open extensions were found. This new dig will continue these efforts.

? *Discussion:* Dig logistics.

Manitou Whirlpool Dome Dig: Rick Rhinehart

In the February through April 2003 period, several dig trips were taken to the Yukon Trail in the Manitou Grand Caverns. Two sites were excavated – Site A is a continuation of the main northeastern-leading joint from the Grand Concert Hall originally excavated in 1989. Site B is a shaft at the south end of the Yukon Trail. Neither site proved to be particularly promising and so the dig was closed for the season in mid-April.

? *Discussion:* Dig logistics.

Additional Digs

Other dig projects can be discussed.

CAVE OF THE WINDS TOPICS

Discussion: Jeremy Stiles

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

OTHER TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

? Topics from the Floor

? Date for next meeting: January 24 or January 31, 2004 (last Saturday)?