

## **One Day Training Course in Conducting Archaeological Condition Assessments At Petroglyph National Monument**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this one-day (8 hour) training class will be to instruct attendees on the importance of conducting detailed and comparable site condition assessments for data management and treatment purposes, and to provide them with methodological tools to achieve those goals. The course will consist of two parts: part one will consist of a morning class session of the presentation of condition assessment concepts, methods and examples for archaeological sites and petroglyph sites; part two will consist of an afternoon field application of the condition assessment methodology a group of petroglyph panels. In order for archaeologists and site managers (be they federal, state, local or private) to make the most informed recommendations, they require field data that addresses site significance, site integrity and site conditions. These three components are intertwined in that they inform management decisions about site treatment. Ideally, managing sites (and their preservation/protection, National register eligibility, and research potential) should be a cyclical process of recording, assessing conditions, site evaluation, site treatment and re-evaluation over time. While synchronic site evaluations are useful, they can quickly become outdated in the face of the dynamic quality of archaeological site formation and petroglyph "life history." Minimally, one should have good baseline site data from which longitudinal re-evaluations can be set into the site records.

### **Need**

Archaeologists and cultural resources practitioners are heavily invested in the protection and preservation of our cultural and historical heritage. Since historical properties are always subject to natural or cultural impacts that cause deterioration and damage, this can be quite challenging. In order to preserve sites for public use, visitation, heritage-related activities or research, it is incumbent upon CRM practitioners to have best practices and up-to-date, accurate data that can inform their evaluation and treatment decisions. The three components of data are site recording (content and context), site conditions (natural and cultural impacts), and site evaluation (either informally or as a specific requirement for state or national register eligibility).

Some federal and state agencies often have large databases that have obsolete information on the conditions of their sites. Even the data they do have may be haphazard, qualitative and non-comparable for addressing risk levels and risk characteristics. Due to the lack of up-to-date comparable data, it is difficult for them to propose priorities in site monitoring or treatment. Sites and petroglyphs are fragile and dynamic resources, and their conditions should ideally be defined and updated through time, especially those at high risk to cultural or natural damage. A standard and easily applied condition assessment would be a good aid to augment their survey record data and allow more informed decisions. A condition assessment tool would also be of value to site steward programs as stewards usually have local proximity to sites and are in a position to monitor sites and update conditions periodically. Avocational organizations could

also make use of this tool in order to better protect and preserve sites in their respective regions.

### **What Attendees can Expect to Learn**

- The interrelated components of archaeological condition assessments
- Risk factors that impact archaeological sites and petroglyphs/pictographs
- Types of natural and human-caused damage to sites and petroglyphs/pictographs
- A field methodology for assessing petroglyph conditions
- Field exercise implanting petroglyph condition assessment procedures.

### **Course Schedule**

#### **Morning: 9:00-12:00**

9:00 AM- Introductions

Part 1 (classroom): Background

- A. Statutory authorities
- B. Components of site management
- C. Petroglyph condition assessment
- D. Risk factors

10: 15 Break

- E. Impact types: natural damage
- F. Impact types: human damage
- G. Field techniques
- H. Data production
- I. Conclusion

**Lunch** 12:00-1:15

#### **Afternoon**

1:15- 1:30 field exercise prep.  
1:30- 3:00 field exercise  
3:00 return to training site/adjourn