Arizona through the Site Steward Program is to report to Spring 2019 update.

Meet our interns:


Represent the BLM at the Boyscout Jamboree off workshops planned for 2019. The program uses archaeological inquiry to develop new skills and raise public awareness. We are also partnering with Arizona BLM to co-sponsor Project Archaeology, with kick-off training to build local capacities, find out who’s ready for the next level, and put together a network of archaeologists and enforcement officers, land managers (tribal, state and federal), and site stewards.

During a Strategic Planning Session in August, the Board developed a high level budget for 2019-2020. A large portion of the budget will be dedicated to Site Stewardship. We continue to work on the long-term vision for the program so that our program and land managers have the information they need to effectively manage our sites.

We are looking first at how the types of vandalism occurring in 2018 can inform our strategies for 2019. We are sharing data on the types of vandalism observed (See Chart below-Zoom in). We want to do to reduce the frequency of vandalism? One way to plan this is to first summarize the types of vandalism occurring on the same site at the same time. For example, in 52 separate incidences. They represent 21 different types of damage to sites. Many of the vandalism was observed at the time. These reports describe 74 vandalism occurrences, which led us to think about how we could use that information to reduce disturbances to sites.

I also want to ensure that I am working closely with partners like the Site Stewards, who are the eyes and ears of the BLM. These individuals are critical to our success. They are the ones who are out there monitoring sites, educating others, and tread lightly while carrying out their duties.

As Site Stewards we are part of the solution to vandalism on archaeological sites in Arizona. We monitor sites, educate others, and tread lightly while carrying out our duties. Nine of the most common types of vandalism are:

- Do we leave rusty cans, bottles, nails, etc. on site, or do we treat them like “trash” and dispose of them properly?
- Are we careful where we step, where our walking poles strike, and where we sit when in larger groups?
- Are we careful when we take photos?
- Are we careful when we report our observations of vandalism?
- How does putting out piles of photos and words on a social media page impact by sharing words or photos with others?
- How does the information on this site impact managers so they can better manage resources at risk?

We are working on a database to track and analyze the types of vandalism occurring on our sites. The database will help us understand the impact of vandalism and how to reduce its frequency.

We are looking to expand our database to include sites in other regions of the state. We hope to work with other site stewards in our region to gather data and share information.

Our highlight from the past year occurred at our late September 2018 Site Steward event in Flagstaff. We had a great turnout and learned a lot from our partners. We are planning to have another event in 2019.

We are looking at ways to expand our reach and impact. We are exploring partnerships with other organizations and looking for ways to increase our funding. We are working on a grant proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities to help fund our efforts.

We continue to work on refining and developing the database over the coming year. We’ll turn to our current grantors to fund this effort. The Site Steward Program Foundation and Arizona State Parks & Trails are working to secure funding to maintain the database, host and provide support once we are up and running. We’ve been able to secure one grant for the current year, but we need more funding to ensure the long-term sustainability of the database.

At the moment we are building the workflow for the system, followed by the actual implementation. We are looking for funding assistance to maintain the database, host and provide support once we are up and running. We’ll turn to our current grantors to fund this effort. The Site Steward Program Foundation and Arizona State Parks & Trails are working to secure funding to maintain the database, host and provide support once we are up and running.

I am looking forward to working with you all to continue to improve our database and expand our reach. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to protecting our cultural heritage. I am excited to see what we can accomplish together.

Wyatt Rouse became our next student intern in May 2019. He will be working at the State Park in the fall semester to help expand on the impact study and continue to recruit new Site Stewards.

Keep in mind, we only went back to 2007 for the school project but there are another 21 years of data to sift through. What we will never know though is how many hours were spent in the field by our Site Stewards.

We can make use of the buddy system when creating our database. This will help us to ensure that the data is accurate and complete. We can also use the buddy system to help us identify patterns and trends in the data.

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