

SOUTH PARK SITE STEWARDS



A site stewardship program thrives due to the dedication and hard work of its volunteers. Each volunteer brings unique skills and experiences to SPSS, contributing to the broader narrative of human history. We volunteer to make a difference by monitoring sites for changes caused by human and natural factors. Every site visit offers an opportunity to learn something new and be outdoors with friends and like minded volunteers.



2024

MONITORING

Page 2

EDUCATION

Community Outreach

Take the Pledge

Steward Training

Pages 3 - 6

PRESERVATION

Page 7

STEWARD PROFILES

Page 8 - 9

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Page 10

2025 PLANS

Page 11

MONITORING Site Visits



Artifacts are photographed and digitally recorded on GIS maps



Our retired geologists assessing a stone core.



We were disheartened to find damage to a prehistoric site that SPSS has been diligently monitoring for over a decade. The destruction of the cairn and the placement of a geocache container not only destroys the site's integrity but also risks attracting more visitors which could lead to further harm to its archaeological and cultural resources.

EDUCATION

Community Outreach



ARCHAEOLOGY DAY IN FAIRPLAY

Our Archaeology Day Experience



Cultural heritage education connects us to our past and preserves our shared history. Over 350 attendees participated in interactive exhibits that included flintknapping, atlatl spear throwing, and painting with reed brushes. By understanding our history, we can create stronger and more resilient communities.



MORE Community Outreach

INTERNATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGY DAY AT RED ROCKS



Despite the cold weather, over 1,000 attendees enthusiastically participated in this significant educational and interactive event. Learning about their own cultural heritage helps students and adults appreciate and respect the cultural heritage of others.

WILKERSON PASS VISITOR CENTER



The visitor center at the summit of Wilkerson Pass offers a warm welcome to travelers and vacationers. It provided an excellent opportunity for Stewards to discuss the archaeological history of South Park, allowing visitors to envision the lives of ancient people who traversed this high mountain meadow.

EDUCATION

Pledge to Protect



I PLEDGE TO PROTECT THE PAST

Name: _____

Artifacts are things made and used by early Indigenous peoples and left behind as they lived and traveled in South Park.

Your actions help preserve these artifacts for study by archaeologists and continue to build the story of past generations.



Enjoy what you discovered and please leave it as you found it.



Taking artifacts destroys context, the story of how they connect with other artifacts and how and where they were used.



Rock cairns may have been ancient hunting blinds, spiritual rings, or directional markers. Please don't change their story by climbing on, moving or creating new rock piles.



Old cabins and mines tell another story.



I PLEDGE.....

- To protect the past for other people who enjoy cultural sites.
- To enjoy artifacts I may find and will leave them as I found them.
- To respect the culture and people that came before us.

"Pledge to Protect the Past" is a new initiative aimed at raising awareness about the importance of preserving artifacts as cultural resources. These artifacts are vital links to our history and hold significant value for Indigenous communities. They should be left undisturbed and not removed. The misconception that "if I don't take it, someone else will" is not a responsible approach. This program initially targets children, encouraging them to proudly display their new pledge cards.

EDUCATION

Steward Training



Training in the field



Line dance or survey training



**CPR and First Aid training by
Fairplay Emergency Services**

Webinars

**SPSS on line
classroom**

**History
Colorado
PAAC**

**Special field
projects with
research
organizations**

PRESERVATION

Technology in Archaeology



The work SPSS volunteer steward, Craig Banister, is doing with Coal Creek Research and the Projectile Point Project is incredibly valuable for preserving and studying artifacts. Scanning artifacts in the South Park Repository, as well as in the field, and adding them to a Colorado State database helps ensure that these important pieces of history are documented and accessible for future research.



Without preservation, archaeological and cultural resources, along with the story of humankind, are gradually destroyed.

Each loss is akin to removing pages from a book. Advances in technology continually enhance our ability to discover and preserve these invaluable pieces of our shared history.

Making molds of artifacts directly in the field ensures that the original artifacts remain undisturbed in their context, which is crucial for maintaining the integrity of the site and the information it holds.



Drones have revolutionized the field of archaeology and historical research! Detailed high-resolution photographs create digital maps and 3D models used to aid in ongoing preservation and data longevity.



STEWARD PROFILE

MEET LINDA RULLI

In 2024, I began my second year as a South Park Site Steward, a role that has deepened my connection to the rich history and natural beauty of South Park. My interest in volunteering was sparked by my good friends, Kathy Reeves and Joan Iniguez, whose passionate stories about their experiences as Site Stewards inspired me to join.

As a Colorado native, my journey to South Park began in 1972 when I visited friends and instantly fell in love with the area. This initial visit turned into a 12-year stay, during which I lived in Como, Alma, and Fairplay. I worked as a writer and photographer for the historic Park County Republican and Fairplay Flume when it was based in Fairplay. This wonderful job allowed me to travel extensively throughout the county, capturing and writing about various people, places, and events. Although I moved away in 1984, the friendships I formed and my love for hiking, skiing, and the high country lifestyle drew me back to retire here in 2012.

Volunteering as a Site Steward does not require a degree or formal education in archaeology. Stewardship orientation, site training with professional archaeologists, and a curiosity to learn about the area's ancient inhabitants are all that's required. As Site Stewards, our primary responsibility is to monitor and preserve state-designated archaeological sites. This involves regular inspections to ensure that features and artifacts remain undisturbed by human or natural causes. Each site I've visited has fascinated me with its unique story and historical significance. Getting to know my fellow Site Stewards is icing on the cake. As I eagerly anticipate the 2025 season, I look forward to continuing this amazing journey of friendship, discovery, and cultural heritage.

STEWARD PROFILE

AN INTERVIEW WITH JO BECKWITH



Barb: Let's start from the beginning. How did you end up in Guffey?

Jo: Well, it was quite serendipitous! I was on vacation in 1984 and stumbled into Guffey. I had a lovely chat with the folks at the General Store, and before I knew it, I bought property that very day. The following year, I bought the General Store itself. It was a lot of fun but also a lot of work. After 2.5 years I sold the store and moved on and worked 22 years with the Rocky Mountain Nature Association selling educational items to State Park and Forest Service Visitor Centers. It was a fulfilling job, connecting people with nature and history.

Barb: Your journey into archaeology seems fascinating. How did you get involved as a volunteer with the South Park Archaeology Project (SPArP)?

Jo: I attended a talk by Dr. Susan Bender about the Archaeology of South Park at the Florissant Fossil Beds Center. Later that day, I visited the Three Mile site with Susan and the following year, I started volunteering with SPArP. When SPArP ended, the volunteers, including myself, didn't want to stop our work. Susan helped us form the South Park Site Stewards so we could continue monitoring and protecting the sites.

Barb: It sounds like archaeology has been a passion of yours for a long time. How did it all start?

Jo: When I was 8 years old, I read a book about archaeological discoveries and became fascinated with the field. Later, as a Girl Scout leader, I created a special interest project with a grad student from San Diego State to teach the scouts about archaeology. We even did a little excavation. It was very well received, and one of the girls went on to become an archaeologist.

Barb: That's amazing! What's your favorite part of being involved with SPSS?

Jo: It's hard to pick just one thing. I love being out on the land, going on site visits, monitoring and protecting the sites. The camaraderie of the group is wonderful. Contributing to scientific knowledge and understanding what happened thousands of years ago is incredibly rewarding. When I'm in the field and hold an artifact, I feel a connection and wonder about the person who made it and what their life was like.

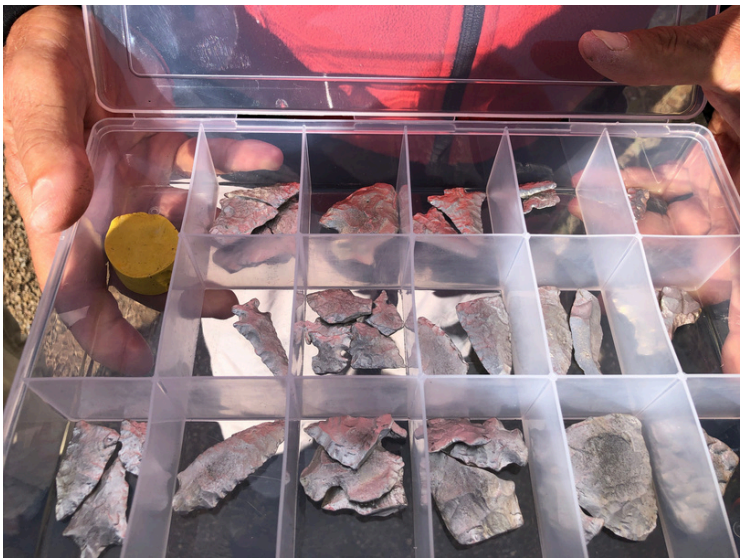
Barb: Thank you so much for sharing your story, Jo.

Jo: Thank you! It's been great to share my experiences.

HIGHLIGHTS from 2024



Ice cream is the perfect end to a day in the field. Thanks Mitch & Cindy!



Pewter castings of projectile points



End of Season Wild Food Dinner



First Aid Training

Archaeological sites are frequently situated in remote areas, necessitating stewards to navigate uneven and steep terrain. Therefore, knowledge of backcountry emergency procedures and first aid is crucial. The CPR and Stop the Bleed course provided by the Fairplay Fire Department and Emergency Services was highly beneficial. They have graciously agreed to offer a second course for all stewards before the next field season begins.

PLANS FOR 2025

More training in the field



More site visits

More special projects



MORE COLLABORATIONS



Community Connections LLC



Crow Canyon Archaeological Center

MORE FUN AND FRIENDSHIPS



The mission of SPSS, Inc. is to aid in the conservation, preservation, monitoring, education and research of prehistoric and historical archaeological as well as paleontological resources in the state of Colorado.



South Park Site Stewards

<http://southparkstewards.org>

Thank You

Our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for your dedication, hard work, contributions and friendship. It has been an amazing year and we could not have done it without you.

Get ready for 2025!!!

Beth & Barb