

Fort Stanton Cave Study Project Newsletter #9 June 4, 2011

Hi all!

Full Resolution April Expedition Report Available

Note that the April Expedition Report that was attached to the e-mail notification for this message was very low resolution. The full resolution report for the April expedition is available now at <http://FSCSP.org/Private/docs/reports/index.html>.

Fort Stanton-Snowy River NCA draft Management Plan available for review

As has been mentioned before, the BLM has released the draft management plan for the Fort Stanton-Snowy River National Conservation Area. The plan is available for review on-line at http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/fo/Roswell_Field_Office/fort_stanton_snowy.html. Again, I encourage everyone to take a look at the document and make comments to BLM about the plan. Comments go to nmrfo_comments@blm.gov. **The 45 day comment period ends June 9 – this Thursday!**

June-July Expedition Activities

We have sent the proposal to the BLM for the June-July expedition (June 25 – July 4) and the WNS committee met this past Thursday to discuss the proposal. We have heard, unofficially, the decisions of the committee, but the official announcement should come next week from Deputy State Director Bill Merhege. Here's what was proposed, and planned for the June-July expedition:

- 1) Snowy River South exploration. Two teams, one on each weekend of the expedition.
- 2) Sandy River dig. One or more trips to dig in this significant side lead off of Snowy River
- 3) Final clean-up of the Conrad's Branch and the Main Corridor. Removing all remaining tools, wood, wood chips, etc. from the cave.
- 4) Continuing the Bear Cave Dig. This continues to look very promising – more on that below.
- 5) Resuming the Dig at Cactus Cave. Cactus Cave was dug by different groups in the '70s and '80s. It shows significant promise.
- 6) Initiating a dig in Bat Cave Hollow. The anomaly that we're looking for here has been called the Stagecoach Anomaly, and the resistivity studies indicate it is very shallow. This dig will be a little different because there is no cave or crack to start with – only a shallow depression.

It is our understanding of the committee's recommendations, that activities 3) through 6) were approved, but not 1) and 2). We are of course, disappointed, but at this time, there's not a whole lot we can do about it. If there is any change when we get the official announcement, we will let you know.

- In addition, we will be monitoring data loggers in various locations, and we'd like to work on the Idaho's Gift dig. However, this is dependent upon approval of that proposal by the Forest Service and reopening of the Lincoln National Forest. Currently the LNF is closed due to the extreme fire danger
- There have been discussions on doing more work on the surface to look for the source of Snowy River. We may be taking harder looks at Eagle Creek, Little Creek and/or Rio Bonito for potential insurgence points.

Science and Special Reports Section on the Web Page

The directors have been discussing the inclusion of a separate type of report from the expedition reports. The expedition reports are “trip report” in nature, and do not lend themselves to analytical work that is done separate from the expedition. We are proposing to call these “Special Reports” and they are included on the web site in a separate section from the expedition reports. Depending upon the nature of the report, they may get sent as attachments in a message to participants, or referenced in a newsletter. The first new “Special Report” is a document prepared by Pete Lindsley concerning the results of the analysis of the data logger that we left at Turtle Junction. It is a very interesting discussion of what we are seeing concerning the water flow. We are also including other reports that have been previously written, but don't necessarily fit in other locations. I recommend that everyone take a look at the reports. The reports are available at <http://www.fscsp.org/Private/science/index.html>.

Data Logger Files

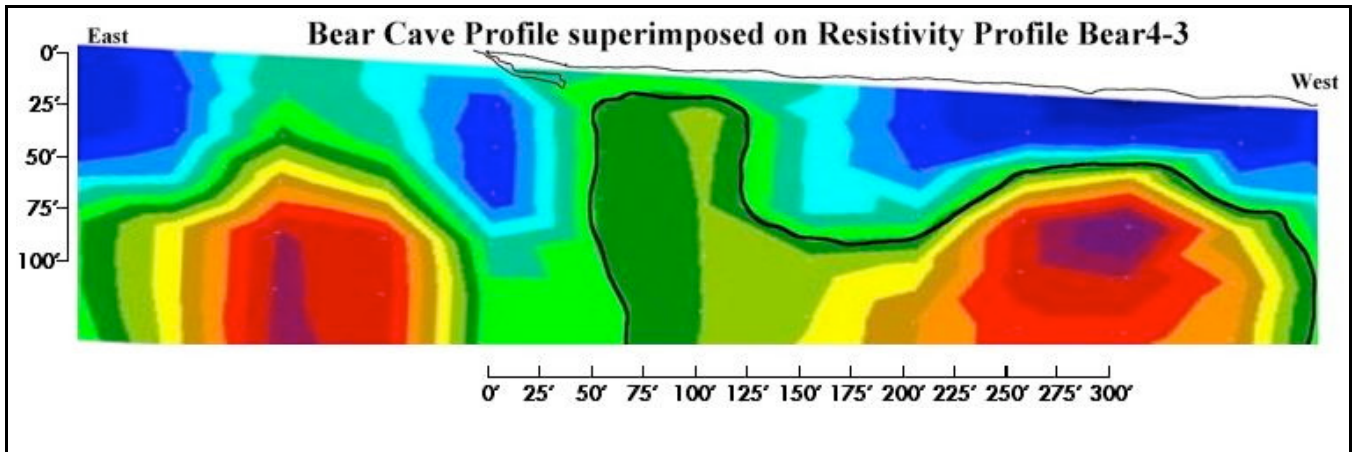
We are collecting a significant amount of data logger information and we want it to be available to everyone for analysis. To that end, we have been in discussion with BLM about setting up a section on our website to host the files. Some of the files will come from loggers provided by BLM, some by FSCSP, and still others that belong to individuals. BLM is planning on storing the files on their servers as well, as a backup.

Strategic Planning Workshop

We had scheduled a workshop to work with a consultant during mid-May to work on the strategic plan for the Fort Stanton Cave Study Project, but unforeseen issues forced us to postpone this activity. We are now planning on conducting this workshop on Thursday, June 23 and Friday, June 24 just before the June-July expedition. It will likely be possible for other interested participants to be involved with the strategic planning process as well. Let us know if you are interested in this.

Additional Discussion of the Bear Cave Dig

Below is a picture of the profile of Bear Cave superimposed on a resistivity line that John McLean did directly over the cave, and lining up with the trend of the cave.



The thin black line beginning under the word “profile” is a very crude representation of Bear Cave and the surface. The thick black line in the profile shows the boundary of the 2000 ohm-meter value which we have found to be the cut-off point for probably void space. Note the horizontal and vertical scales, in feet. What should be apparent from this profile is that the distance from the dig (at the bottom right of the cave profile) to probable void space, is only on the order of 15' or so! And the digging is fairly easy. It is entirely possible that we could accomplish this distance during this upcoming expedition!

On-Line Survey

We've had quite a few people respond to the survey we've designed to help us prepare for our strategic plan. The responses so far have been very useful and enlightening. If you haven't taken the time to respond to it yet, I encourage you to do so. The anonymous survey is at <http://fscsp.org/survey/> Note that there is not a link to this page on the FSCSP web site. You have to type in the address, copy and paste it into your browser or just click on the link above. The survey consists of 25 statements that you can respond to by clicking on buttons for Disagree Strongly, Disagree Somewhat, No Opinion, Agree Somewhat or Agree Strongly. You can also add comments regarding any of the statements if you wish. When you click on the submit button, your responses and comments are sent to the board of directors for compilation. I encourage everyone to take some time over the next several weeks to take the survey. It will really help us to make our plans for the future. Be aware that your responses and comments will become part of the strategic plan and that we will be sharing the results of this survey with everyone at some point.

Communal Meals

As always, we anticipate having several communal meals during the expedition. Some issues have developed. It is likely that one of our major cooks, Dorothy Corcoran, will be unable to come until later in the week. The other cook, Kathy Peerman, speleobabe@comcast.net, is looking for help with cooking in Dorothy's absence. If you'd like to help, let her know.

If you have any questions, let me know.

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Steve Peerman, Project Director
gypcaver@comcast.net