



# Archeology Program

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



## April 2020 Archeology E-Gram Print edition

### Stephen Potter Receives Holmes-Gardner Medal

Stephen Potter, NPS National Capital Regional Archeologist (retired), received the Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference's inaugural Holmes-Gardner Medal. The Medal recognizes excellence in Middle Atlantic archeological scholarship by archeologists who have made enduring contributions to research and practice in the region. It is named after two foundational figures in Eastern North American archeology, the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Smithsonian archeologist, William Henry Holmes; and the late-20th century Catholic University Professor, William Gardner, a founding member of the Conference in 1970.

Potter's continuing research interests include the archeology of Native American cultures, historical archaeology of the eastern United States, and the archaeology and history of the American Civil War. As the NPS Regional Archeologist, Potter was directly responsible for managing archeological resources across 88,000 acres that crosscut geological, environmental and political boundaries in 14 separate NPS parks within Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. He developed a multi-decade research plan for detailed historic and prehistoric contexts for parks in his region that served as park management tools and as frameworks for understanding the past across space and through time.



Potter was previously a recipient of the NPS's highest honor for an individual archeologist, the John L. Cotter Award for Excellence in National Park Service Archeology.

### Archeologist is Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument Superintendent

Brenda Todd as the superintendent of Grand Canyon-Parashant NM. Todd is currently the Superintendent at Knife River Indian Villages NHS in North Dakota.



In her current role, she manages all aspects of park operations, including overseeing the implementation of a new Archeological Resources Management Plan, an award-winning interpretive program and a robust natural resource program. She also filled leadership roles at Fort Union Trading Post NHS and Theodore Roosevelt NP, both in North Dakota.

Todd began her career with the NPS in 2006 as a student employee in the Intermountain Office of Indian Affairs and American Culture. In 2012, she transitioned to the Denver Service Center Planning Division where she was a Cultural Resource Specialist and then a Project Manager, working with parks to resolve complex natural and cultural resource management issues

In addition to her public service, Todd has worked for the Colorado Historic Society (now History Colorado), University of Colorado Boulder, Colorado State University and as the CEO and owner of her own consulting firm. She holds a Ph.D. in anthropology with a specialization in archeology from University of Colorado Boulder.

### **Try Parkeology Activities for Kids at Home!**

National parks have created online, at-home activities for kids in quarantine because of the corona virus. Learn about archeology at a park or a skill used by archeologists.

Aztec Ruins: <https://www.nps.gov/features/azru/>

People of the Plains: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/people-of-the-plains.htm>

How to Read a Photograph: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/how-to-read-a-photograph.htm>

Hopewell Earthworks: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/hopewell-earthworks.htm>

Travel or Trade?: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/travel-or-trade.htm>

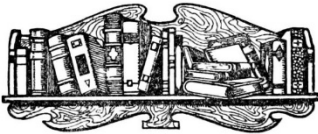
The Primarily Me Challenge: <https://www.nps.gov/articles/primarily-me-week-0.htm>

Peanut Butter and Jelly Archeology: <https://www.nps.gov/media/video/view.htm?id=AFEC6BA3-D6F4-794A-1EE0DF27CC5778E4>

### **New Guidance Available for Permits for Archeological Investigations**

The NPS Archeology Program has revised guidance about applying for and issuing Permits for Archeological Investigations in the Archeology Guide (the NPS archeology resource manual). The updated guidance discusses commercial applications and benefits sharing; permits for investigation of sunken military craft; and the need for precautions when there is the possibility of encountering UXOs.

The guidance is available at <https://cms.nps.gov/articles/series.htm?id=9134C004-C368-AC8B-8937EB530966B49C>



**The Federal Archeologist's Bookshelf: Archaeology, Climate, and Global Change, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Vol. 117(15) Special Feature (Free Online), April 15, 2020**

We live in an age characterized by increasing environmental, social, economic, and political uncertainty. Human societies face challenges ranging from climate change to food security, biodiversity declines and extinction, and political instability. Underrecognized among these challenges is the disappearing record of past environmental change, which can be key to surviving the future. Historical sciences can access the past to provide long-term perspectives on past human ecodynamics: the interaction between human social and cultural systems and climate and environment. Such studies shed light on how we arrived at the present day and help us search for sustainable trajectories toward the future.

In this issue, contributions are highlighted from archaeology to interdisciplinary research programs designed to evaluate current social and environmental challenges and contribute to solutions for the future. The past is a multimillennial experiment in human ecodynamics, and, together with our transdisciplinary colleagues, archaeology is well positioned to uncover the lessons of that experiment.

#### ***Archaeology, climate, and global change in the Age of Humans***

Torben C. Rick and Daniel H. Sandweiss

#### ***Archaeology, environmental justice and climate change in islands of the Caribbean and southwestern Indian Ocean***

Kristina Douglass and Jago Cooper

#### ***Archaeological climate proxies and the complexities of reconstructing Holocene El Nino in coastal Peru***

Daniel H. Sandweiss, C. Fred T. Andrus, Alice R. Kelley, Kirk A. Maasch, Elizabeth J. Reitz, and Paul B. Roscoe

*Coastal heritage, global climate change, public engagement, and citizen science*

Tom Dawson, Joanna Hambly, Alice Kelley, William Lees, and Sarah Miller

*Leveraging legacy archaeological collections as proxies for climate and environmental research*

Frankie St. Amand, S. Terry Childs, Elizabeth J. Reitz, Sky Heller, Bonnie Newsom, Torben C. Rick, Daniel H. Sandweiss, and Ryan Wheeler

*Expanding use of archaeology in climate change response by changing its social environment*

Marcy Rockman and Carrie Hritz

All articles are available at <https://www.pnas.org/content/117/15>

**Archaeology Channel Film Festival Offered Online!**

Despite the coronavirus pandemic—indeed, BECAUSE of it—films selected for *The Archaeology Channel* International Film Festival competition will be available for online viewing everywhere. If you haven't seen TAC Festival films before, you likely will be amazed at the quality and incredible range of these productions, which are among the best in the cultural-heritage world of 2020.

TAC Festival promotes the development of cultural heritage media in the US and worldwide. For this, the 17th season, there are 103 film entries from 26 countries. They cover topics from around the globe: places as far apart as Singapore and Peru and across the human timeline from hundreds of thousands of years ago in the Neanderthal era to the Japanese bombing of Oregon in World War II.

The cost is \$5 for a virtual ticket to watch any of the films within the Festival period, May 13-17, 2020. You can see the list of titles, get more information about the films, and watch the trailers right now.

The sign-up link is available at <http://bit.ly/TACIFF>

**A New E-Gram Feature: Climate Change**

The ongoing pandemic has discouraged archeological fieldwork and research, as people assess ways to work while social distancing. To offset a lack of news, the Archeology E-Gram staff is launching a new feature – Climate Change. Every month, we plan to bring to our readers' attention news about cultural resource climate change activities inside and outside the NPS. You can help by sending us information about climate change-related activities at your park, center, region, and with partners.

This month, the Environmental and Energy Study Institute hosted two talks that addressed cultural resources and climate change in the NPS, as part of a recorded week-long “mini-conference.” You can view them in the safety of your home office!

***Assessing National Park Asset Flood Risk: Retreat, Adapt, Fortify?***

Dr. Rob Young, Director of Western Carolina University's Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines  
The National Park Service owns thousands of buildings and other infrastructure at risk from coastal flooding and sea level rise. Young led a project to map and evaluate the vulnerability of each coastal NPS asset—from the Statue of Liberty to remote roads in Alaska—in order to help park managers decide what should be protected, what should be abandoned, and what should be moved further inland.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02u2IaKLue8>

### ***Cultural Heritage and Climate Change***

Dr. Marcy Rockman, ICOMOS-IPCC Scientific Coordinator for the Climate Change and Heritage Working Group

Rockman speaks about the intersection of cultural heritage and climate change. Based on her new Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences article on historical and cultural heritage, she shared recommendations on how agencies could better incorporate historical and cultural considerations into the U.S. response to climate change, with attention to the need to better compile and use relevant data.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gey1YnyB6LI>

Founded in 1984 by a bipartisan group of members of Congress to inform the debate and decision-making on energy and environmental policies, the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to promoting sustainable societies.

To explore more briefings from EESI, go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/eesionline>

## **GRANTS AND TRAINING**

### **Preserving Cultural & Wilderness Resources: Achieving Common Ground**

There is a perceived conflict between cultural and wilderness laws, and stewardship. To help address this longstanding perception, the interagency Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center and the National Park Service Western Center for Historic Preservation partnered to develop and host *Preserving Cultural and Wilderness Resources: Achieving Common Ground*.

Taught workshop-style, the course presents an overview of law and policy, illuminates the historical context for the pertinent court cases, showcases traditional skills often required to execute historic preservation projects in wilderness, and provides an opportunity for robust discussions. With a focus on applying the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation and using the Minimum Requirements Analysis, participants work through field-based scenarios. The course encourages participants to challenge their views on stewardship, and identify the common ground between cultural resources and wilderness.

This year's 3 day course will be held October 20-22, 2020, at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, HI

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### **SLIGHTLY OFF TOPIC: Archeologist Weaves Turkey Feather Blanket**

From story by Alexa Henry, New Mexico Wildlife

In 2018, Mary Weahkee, an archeologist with the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, was asked to try her hand at weaving a turkey feather blanket. Weahkee taught herself the technique, the process of winding each feather around yucca cord, by examining ancient blankets housed at museums around the western United States. Calling the weaving method "a simple technology," Weahkee said it took her about a day to teach herself how to weave with feathers and yucca cord. She had tried the technique twice before, producing two one by one-foot samples a few years ago for the Chaco Culture NHP museum, and the Aztec Monument museum, but this blanket would be bigger – two by three feet.

Producing the blanket took 18 months, using 17,000 feathers from 68 turkeys. Tracking down that number of body feathers from so many turkeys required help. She reached out to the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and was put in touch with Storm Usrey, conservation education manager



with the Department. Usrey, a turkey hunter himself, gave Weahkee the pelts from turkeys he harvested. He also asked friends and family members who he knew harvested birds to offer the body feathers to Mary as well.

Feather robes originated during the Pithouse phase, when people began to explore agriculture, around 700 AD. This is also when people started to keep turkeys as livestock, raising them specifically for harvesting their feathers. “They weren’t keeping them entirely for meat but for the feathers, similar to keeping sheep for wool,” said Jack Young, archeologist and tribal liaison with the Department of Game and Fish.

Turkey-feather robes were found in Anasazi burials—in particular, what was interpreted as high-status burials as well as cases of some child burials. Eventually, turkey feathers were no longer the preferred material; cotton replaced turkey feathers for producing warm textiles.

While there are a handful of other small samples in a few western museums, Weahkee’s is the largest known blanket ever made in modern times. “I looked at how the ancestors were creative and patient,” said Weahkee, who is of Comanche and Santa Clara descent. “It’s a labor of love.”

*Archeology E-Gram*, distributed via e-mail on a regular basis, includes announcements about news, new publications, training opportunities, national and regional meetings, and other important goings-on related to public archeology in the NPS and other public agencies. Recipients are encouraged to forward *Archeology E-Grams* to colleagues and relevant mailing lists. The *Archeology E-Gram* is available on the *News and Links* page at [www.nps.gov/archeology/public/news.htm](http://www.nps.gov/archeology/public/news.htm) on the NPS Archeology Program website.

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