



## LAS June 2014 Headlines:

### **Preserving an archaeological gem on Tenderfoot Mountain**

Western State Colorado University, October 23, 2013

A broad ranging group of people, including representatives from Western State Colorado University, archaeologists, local TV and radio stations and telecommunications companies, reached an important agreement this month to preserve one of Colorado's most important archaeological sites while preserving access for organizations that maintain equipment on the site.

Tenderfoot Mountain, otherwise known as "W Mountain," towers above Gunnison just 2 miles from downtown. Its iconic W symbol is the largest collegiate symbol in the world. But atop this 8,625 foot peak is a rare and precious window back to life in the Gunnison Country more than 10,000 years ago, when prehistoric hunter-gatherers perched high above what is now the city of Gunnison.

The entire summit of Tenderfoot Mountain is closed to the general public. The property, which is owned by the State of Colorado and managed by Western State Colorado University, comprises a delicate cultural resource that archaeologists refer to as the "Mountaineer Site." Researchers from Western and elsewhere continue to uncover information and artifacts that have dramatically changed the way archaeologists understand life during what is called the Folsom period.

"The significance here is that the site represents one of the oldest structures ever recorded in North America," says Thomas Carr, Staff Archaeologist in the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation with History Colorado. Archaeologists, led by Western State Colorado University professor Dr. Mark Stiger, have uncovered the remains of 8 structures buried just beneath the surface of Tenderfoot Mountain's summit. The discoveries on the mountain were so significant that they have made headlines in the archaeology community.

Tenderfoot's summit is also the site of several telecommunications and radio towers. Over the decades, workers who have needed to access the towers risked damaging delicate archaeological sites. Because these sites are difficult to see until they have been uncovered by researchers, the university has struggled with how to balance access to the site by telecommunications workers with the need to protect precious cultural artifacts buried just below the surface. Furthermore, the Mountaineer Site is protected under both Federal and State law and the university is required to take action to protect the property. "Sites like this need to be protected and they're not always well understood," Carr says. Many of the artifacts that have been uncovered were located just centimeters beneath the surface, which means they're vulnerable to being disturbed or broken. "There's so much more to learn, only a fraction of it is excavated," Carr says.



Archaeologists, led by Western State Colorado University professor Dr. Mark Stiger, have uncovered the remains of eight structures buried just beneath the surface of the summit of Gunnison's Tenderfoot Mountain at the "Mountaineer Site." Researchers from Western and elsewhere continue to uncover information and artifacts related to life during the Folsom period at the site [Credit: Western State Colorado University]



## Loveland Archaeological Society, Inc.

A Colorado Non-Profit Corporation

During the summer, representatives from Western, telecommunications firms, radio stations and the state archaeologist met to create a Cultural Resource Management Plan to protect the Mountaineer Site. The plan is designed to ensure that Western and the State of Colorado comply with state and federal laws requiring protection of the archaeological resources. The plan also strives to provide appropriate access to the site for the operators of telecommunications and radio towers on the property. The plan was approved by the state last week.

The Cultural Resource Management Plan will restrict access by telecommunications firms to designated roads and parking areas. Along with FCC and other regulatory agencies, the plan sets guidelines for how roads to the property should be gated, how tower construction and maintenance will be approved, and how the university should lease property for telecommunications and radio towers.

“The completion of the cultural resource management plan is a fantastic example of a diverse group of stakeholders getting together and agreeing to a set of guidelines that protects this priceless cultural landmark,” says Western State Colorado University Interim President Brad Baca. “This type of cooperation is commendable and will ensure that Tenderfoot Mountain will continue to be a place of archaeological discovery for years to come.”

“History Colorado applauds Western and the rest of the stakeholders involved for taking these vital steps to protect an archaeological landmark,” says History Colorado archaeologist Thomas Carr. “The Cultural Resource Management Plan is a great example of best practices for maintaining sites of historic cultural importance.”

Western State Colorado University provides scheduled tours of the site during the summer months. For information on upcoming opportunities to visit the Mountaineer Site, look for announcements on [western.edu](http://western.edu).

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### LAS Summer 2014 Happenings:



Public tours of the Lamb Spring Archaeological Preserve are offered each year May through October. Tours begin at 9:30 a.m. at the Roxborough Library and generally conclude by noon with an on-site tour of the Preserve. The following dates are scheduled for 2014:

- **Saturday July 19**
- **Saturday August 2**
- **Saturday September 6**
- **Saturday October 4**

Pre-registration is required. If you are interested in one of these tour dates please email Ms. Laura Aker, Administrative Coordinator, at [Laker@metcalfarchaeology.com](mailto:Laker@metcalfarchaeology.com). Lamb Spring public website address is <http://lambspring.org/>



## LAS Find of the Month, June 2014:

Members can bring an artifact to be entered into the competition at the monthly meeting, which will be judged based on the following rules:

1. Must be a member of LAS in good standing.
2. The artifact must be a personal find.
3. It must have been found within the specified time frame, i.e., within the month prior to the meeting.
4. The artifact doesn't have to be a Colorado find—all that matters is that it was found in the last month.

The Find of the Month for June 2014 was made by Steve Campbell

Type: Fetish Animal Bead

Material: Unknown

Location: Northern New Mexico



## LAS News and Upcoming Events:

- Speakers Needed!** We need speakers for our 2014 meetings. If you would like to give a presentation or know of someone who would give a great program please contact Andy Coca, Jean Steinhoff or Kevin Zeeck. No experience is necessary. All that is needed is a passion for our hobby and a willingness to share that passion. Thanks!
- July 1, 2014** July meeting. Program: Tools Seminar. All members are asked to bring in examples of the following tools: side scrapers, end scrapers, knives, choppers, axes, utilized flakes, drills, mortars and pestles, manos and mutates. We will have a group discussion of various uses, lithics, typology, and conjecture. Boxing gloves will be provided. All kidding aside, bring in those tools and be ready to participate!
- July – August 2014** Hell Gap site excavation. Dr. Marcel Kornfeld has extended an invitation to all LAS members to come by and visit the site, or even volunteer to help with the dig. If you are interested see the website at <http://www.uwyo.edu/pirl/summer%20schedule.html>.
- August 5, 2014** August meeting. Program: Annual picnic/potluck. This will be discussed at the July meeting, and more information will be sent in the July newsletter. Sharon Lundt's home suffered severe flood damage recently, so we will probably be in the Pulliam for the potluck this year.
- September 2, 2014** September meeting. Plan your presentation and give me a call today!
- September 27 & 28, 2014** 2014 Loveland Stone Age Fair. More information will be provided in the coming months. Put the dates on your calendar, and plan now to attend!

- Sponsor of the Annual Loveland Stone Age Fair -

[www.stoneagefair.com](http://www.stoneagefair.com)