

SAN JUAN BASIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Chapter of Colorado Archaeological Society



FIELD TRIP REPORT

Date: **October 20 – 22, 2014**

Destination: **Cedar Mesa**

Leader: **Lyle Hancock**

Number of Participants: **12**

We applied for a BLM special recreation use permit to comply with regulations for the Cedar Mesa special management area. As it turns out, we did not need a permit or letter of authorization because of the noncommercial nature of our trip, but we were required to pay the \$2 per person per day user fees for hiking in the canyons of Cedar Mesa. Those who venture over to Cedar Mesa on a regular basis may be interested in purchasing a \$20 annual pass that covers all the passengers in your vehicle for a whole year.



Our group of 12 (maximum number allowed by BLM) camped at the BLM campsite in Comb Wash just off Utah Highway 95. This is a semi-developed camping area with pit toilets and a few picnic tables. We set up camp, ate lunch, and spent the afternoon hiking about six miles roundtrip to visit well-known ancestral Puebloan sites in the South Fork of Mule Canyon. The fall colors and warm temperatures made for a pleasant hike. We enjoyed sharing hors d'oeuvres at happy hour and a beautiful evening sitting around the campfire swapping tales.

On Tuesday, we formed carpools with three 4WD/HC vehicles and drove as far as we dared to a remote canyon where we hiked along the rim to view several spectacular ancestral Puebloan cliff dwellings and numerous granaries. Hiking along the sandstone canyon rim was a real treat, as the views into the canyon were incredible and there were numerous bonsai gardens of pinyon pine, juniper and sage, and huge water-filled potholes to explore. The group did an admirable job avoiding the well-formed desert soil crust. On our last day we traveled to a Todie Canyon, a side canyon to Grand Gulch, where we hiked along the rim and viewed more ancestral Puebloan cliff dwellings and granaries. The scenery was spectacular and we enjoyed lunch on the canyon rim overlooking Grand Gulch. Everyone from Durango made it home before dark.

- Prepared by: Lyle Hancock

Participants: Barb and Lyle Hancock, Tish and Pete Varney, Irene Wanner, Susan Whitfield, Kristen Johnson, Randy Waslien, Cathy Callahan, Sherry Suenram, Dianne Donovan, Joe Griffith