

# SAN JUAN BASIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Chapter of Colorado Archaeological Society



## FIELD TRIP REPORT

Date: **April 16, 2011**

Destination: **Chacoan Outliers on the Great North Road**

Leader: **Bob Estes**

Number of Participants: **7**

Seven intrepid explorers toured two Chacoan outliers on the Great North Road. The first stop was at Halfway House, a P-III ruin in the Gallegos Wash drainage, several miles west of Huerfano Mountain. This is an unimposing six-to-eight room structure situated on a small rise adjacent to the western edge of a swale representing the Great North Road. Most of the ruin is buried in Aeolian sand, with only intermittent wall outlines visible. There appears to be no kiva associated with the ruin. A sparse midden lies to the south and southwest. The minimal excavation here indicates that cultural material lies about 40 centimeters below the surface. Halfway House is located (guess what) about half way along the road between Chaco Canyon and Salmon Ruin and is assumed to be a way station on the road.

The group lunched at the Twin Angels overlook near the head of Kutz Canyon. It is here that the North Road plunges down a purported stairway into Kutz Canyon and its spectacular badland terrain. No traces of the road have been discovered in the Canyon, but it is assumed that the road passes down the canyon, which enters the San Juan River across from Salmon Ruins.

The next goal was the Twin Angels ruin, a P-III site located on a spectacular, defensible, steep-sided finger of stone that overlooks the western edge of Kutz Canyon. This site was partially excavated by Earl Morris in 1915 and his excavations remained open until the late 1980s. Presently, portions of several walls and half a kiva remain visible, displaying several materials and masonry styles. Two of the rooms appear to have fallen off the eroded cliff at the eastern point of the site. A 1966 report prepared by Roy Carlson, based upon Morris' unpublished notes, gives a good description of the site. An intact sweat lodge near the entrance of the ruin may have been constructed for purification by Morris' Navajo workers. The group enjoyed a cool, sunny day with manageable wind.

- Prepared by Rich Robinson

Participants: Bob Estes, Don Weinig, Irene Wanner, Jim Shadell, Linda and Richard Robinson, and Robert Powell