

# The Colorado Desert Archaeology

February/March 2025

Society Bulletin

## LAND

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Kumeyaay, Cahuilla, Cupeño, and Payómkawichum/Luiseño are the Original peoples of the Anza-Borrego Desert, Palomar Mountain, and Cuyamaca Rancho state parks. These traditional homelands in the Colorado Desert District are rich with their heritage and cultural tradition. The Colorado Desert Archaeology Society acknowledges these places as the Peoples' homelands and offers gratitude for their stewardship of these lands from time immemorial through the present and into the future.

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## NOTES FROM THE PARK

Hayley Elskén

Associate State Archaeologist and CDD Tribal Liaison

I hope you all had a wonderful December and January. As we move into 2025, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible work accomplished by CDAS in 2024. I am truly proud of everything we've achieved together. Many thanks to everyone who continues to show up for Archaeology Day, and to everyone who fulfills their site stewardship responsibilities. Thanks also to all who participate in surveys. I honestly couldn't do this job without all of you!



As many of you know, the Palisades Fire was one of the major fires in Southern California during the January Santa Ana events, and it burned through several state parks in the Angeles District.

*Continued on page 2*



*The Palisades Fire burning in Topanga State Park*

## CALENDAR

### COVID UPDATE

The mask mandate has been lifted.

### LAB DAY

Every Tuesday,  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

### LIBRARY

Tuesdays, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Thursdays, 9 a.m. to noon

### CDAS ADVISORY GROUP MEETINGS

Third Thursday of the Month:  
3 p.m., Virtual, via Zoom  
Upcoming meetings:

**2/20/25, 4/17/25**

### SAVE THE DATE!

**MEDICINAL NATIVE PLANT WALK  
AND  
POTLUCK & AWARDS SOCIAL**

**MARCH 8, 2025**

PLANT WALK BEGINS AT  
10:00 A.M.

POTLUCK/AWARDS WILL START  
AROUND NOON

**SEE FLYER ON PAGE 5**

## NOTES FROM THE PARK--CONTINUED

The District called for the assistance of fireline-trained Resource Advisors (READs/REAFs), and I had the opportunity to complete two deployments to the fire.

Resource Advisors work closely with fire suppression agencies to ensure the protection of cultural and natural resources while also safeguarding lives and property. During my first deployment, the fire was still spreading, and we were preparing for further Santa Ana winds which could send embers up to 1 to 1 ½ miles from the fire's edge. Our role was to help firefighting teams establish contingency lines that would protect life and property in the event of fire spread, and to avoid archaeological sites, sensitive habitats, and trails whenever possible.

On my second deployment, I assisted with the repair of these contingency lines. This involved surveying dozer and handlines, and working with crews and machinery to restore the lines—knocking down burned areas, covering them with vegetation, and installing water-diverting systems. The archaeology READs, along with the Chumash Fire Department, found four sites that had never been recorded before.

Looking ahead, we are excited to welcome a new group of Arch Technicians to CDAS at the end of February! This year we are trying a new format with three full-day lectures, followed by participation in discovery surveys in March and April. I'm eager to see how this approach works and how it enhances the training experience for our new class.

Thank you again for your continued dedication and hard work.

*Please Note: For additional information, Barbara Tejada, Cultural Resource Supervisor at the Angeles District, spoke with NPR's *All Things Considered* about the loss of historic structures at Will Rogers State Park during the fire. <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/17/nx-s1-5260235/whats-left-of-will-rogers-historic-ranch-after-the-palisades-fire>*



*Angeles District employee rewetting gel on state park building during the Palisades Fire.*

### CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS AND RECREATION



The Colorado Desert District includes Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and Palomar Mountain State Park.

### COLORADO DESERT ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY



The mission of CDAS is to assist Park staff with the documentation, preservation and protection of the district's prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

#### ★ HAYLEY ELSKEN

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COLORADO DESERT DISTRICT  
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### CDAS Advisory Group

The CDAS Advisory Group meets once a month during the season. Meetings are on the third Thursday of the month from 3 to 4 p. m. They are held via Zoom and are open to all members. If you have any comments or suggestions and cannot attend a meeting, please contact:

Advisory Group Coordinator and Arch Tech  
Coordinator: Pam Wiedenkeller  
[pwiedenkeller@gmail.com](mailto:pwiedenkeller@gmail.com)

Secretary/Treasurer: Brenda Wills  
[Brenda.s.wills@gmail.com](mailto:Brenda.s.wills@gmail.com)

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COVER BANNER: HARPER CANYON AREA,  
NOVEMBER 2018  
PHOTO BY BARBARA BARNES

## FROM THE ADVISORY GROUP COORDINATOR

### Finding Inspiration in Those Who Came Before Us

Although I never had the opportunity to get to know Virginia Perrine, her life and dedication to both her community and archaeology inspire me. Virginia was a pillar of service, giving her time and energy to countless causes, including CDAS. As a Site Steward, she had a keen eye for artifacts and features on the landscape, ensuring that nothing was overlooked. Her passion for preservation and education helped shape the archaeological community in Borrego Springs for more than two decades.



PHOTO BY SAM WEBB

*In 2019, Virginia Perrine was awarded the inaugural Archy Award for her continued support and countless contributions to the ABDSP archaeology community.*

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Beyond her work in archaeology, Virginia's impact rippled through every part of her community. From fundraising walks for breast cancer and multiple sclerosis to organizing auctions and local events, she was always finding ways to contribute. She embodied a spirit of volunteerism and dedication that is truly remarkable.

Virginia's story reminds us that inspiration is all around us—in the people we meet, the landscapes we explore, and the history we strive to protect. I encourage each of you to find someone or something that fuels your passion, just as Virginia's dedication continues to inspire me. Whether it's a mentor, a historical figure, or the thrill of discovery in the field, let that inspiration guide you in your work and service.

As we continue our mission at CDAS, let's carry forward the same commitment and enthusiasm that Virginia brought to everything she did. May we all strive to leave as meaningful a legacy as she did.

*Pam Wiedenkiller  
Advisory Group Coordinator*



**CDAS DECALS  
AVAILABLE!**



**TO GET YOURS, EMAIL SCOTT McCLINTOCK:**

**PalomarTowers@gmail.com**

*A \$5 DONATION IS APPRECIATED*



# March 8, 2025

## Medicinal Native Plant Walk Potluck & Awards Social

### Member Annual Potluck and Membership Awards Event

All CDAS members are invited.

The potluck starts around Noon (after the plant walk).  
Bring a potluck dish to share.  
Drinks will be provided.

John and Pat Downing are hosting us at their Valley Center home.  
28881 Sunset Rd, Valley Center

Please join your CDAS colleagues for this fun event whether or not  
you go on the Medicinal Plant Walk!!

*Directions: Downing home is 10 minutes from the plant walk start location. Look for the CDAS sign on the mailbox as you come up Sunset. If you need further directions please call Pat (714) 321-3955.*

### Medicinal Native Plant Walk with Ami Admire, Payómkawichum, Rincon Band

Ami will teach us about native plants and their traditional medicinal uses while exploring the native habitat of the Rincon Reservation.

**WHEN** - Saturday, Mar 8. 10:00 - 11:35 am (1.5-2 hours)

**WHERE** - Rincon Reservation. Check Better Impact for meetup location.

**WHAT** - The plant walk is about 1.5 miles, moderate difficulty, with some incline.

**WHO** - CDAS Members, 25 people maximum. Sign up on Better Impact. This CE program is sponsored by CDAS and FREE OF CHARGE to CDAS members.



Ami Admire

Ami teaches the Payómkawichum traditions of storytelling and using native plants as medicine.

She is Executive Director of 'ataaxum Pomkwaan, For the People. Their mission is to provide community resources centered around healing and improved mental health for California's Native and Indigenous peoples: their languages, customs, and histories.

# SITE STEWARD REPORT

**C**ongratulations, CDAS Site Stewards! As a group, for the calendar year 2024, you completed 96 site visits. This was not an easy task with weather, closed roads, locked gates, injuries, and surgeries.

For 2025 I am working on updating some of our instructions for our website. The first document is the Substitute Site Steward list. This list is to help you find a partner to visit your site with you when your partner is not available. If you are a steward who would be willing to assist other stewards, please send me an email with your preferred contact information, email and phone. This might be a great opportunity to visit a site other than your own.



2024 site stewards Heidi Rodarmer and Ken Schuup view their new stewarding site

PHOTO BY PAM WIEDENKELLER

Ready to take on another site? We've had some members retire, move, change sites and we've added some new sites. We currently have six sites needing stewards. If you have an interest, please send me an email and we can see if there is a good fit for you.

Thanks for all you do!

— Pat Downing  
pdsnewmail@gmail.com



## FROM THE FIELD

*Left:* At the Roadrunner Club this winter, palm trees frame a spectacular rainbow. Here's hoping for more rain and rainbows before the season ends! Thanks to Pam Wiedenkeller for sharing this image.

*Right:* This has to be the best idea of the month (year?). On a recent survey Tom Teske suggested there should be a compass on the north arrow. And all it took was a little Elmer's glue!



PHOTO BY PAM WIEDENKELLER

## FROM THE ARCH TECH COORDINATOR

### Arch Techs —Join a Discovery Survey—Help Make History!

**H**ave you ever wanted to be part of something truly lasting? Discovery Surveys give you the opportunity to do just that! These surveys take us into areas already identified as having cultural resources, and our mission is to officially document these discoveries. The records we create will be a lasting contribution to archaeology—ensuring that what we find today will be known and studied for generations to come.

**Why Join?** Besides spending time with a fantastic group of people and experiencing archaeology firsthand, the best part (in my opinion!) is you'll be making history. The records we create aren't just for today—they'll inform future researchers and might even inspire someone just like you years from now!



*From left: Tony Delorenzo, Ingrid Bairstow, Rick Huls, Brenda Uekert and Tom Teske endured less than ideal weather conditions on a recent discovery survey, but they still were able to find something to smile about!*



*Indian Hill Survey, finally! The Yellow Team completed their transect on a perfect weather day.  
From left: Mohamad Yassin, Pam Wiedenkiller, Cole Metzger, Brenda Uekert and Tom Teske.*

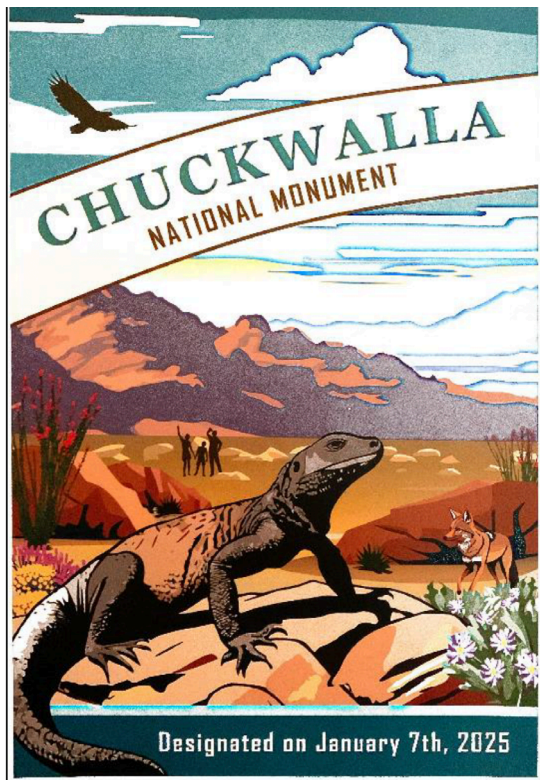
**—Pam Wiedenkiller  
Arch Tech Coordinator**

# CHUCKWALLA NATIONAL MONUMENT

After several years of garnering support from many constituencies, and working hard to gather data as well as political support, a coalition of Native American tribes and organizations, environmental organizations, politicians, and federal agencies focused on the Colorado Desert celebrated the creation of Chuckwalla National Monument on January 7, 2025. The new monument was designated by President Joe Biden using his powers under the 1906 Antiquities Act. Incorporating nearly 644,000 acres, Chuckwalla National Monument will increase the level of protection of both natural and cultural resources in the Colorado Desert. It will also prevent the expansion of large renewable energy projects into the area south of the I-10 Freeway. Areas north of the Freeway already have many very large solar-energy projects that are within the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan focus area (DRECP), designated by the federal government.



*Chuckwalla National Monument (outlined in green), ABDSP's new neighbor in the Colorado Desert*



*Chuckwalla National Monument logo*

What is unique about Chuckwalla National Monument is that, while BLM has management responsibilities, Chuckwalla will be co-managed by Tribes! Already, the Tribes in the coalition are organizing to ensure that they will have their input into developing the management plan for Chuckwalla. The Tribes will also be partners in the implementation of that plan. We may be looking at Tribal Rangers and the whole range of jobs, both paid and volunteer.

In the effort to create Chuckwalla, objections from Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV), mining, and utility interests were overcome. A portion of the lands that border Joshua Tree National Park will eventually be returned to Joshua Tree (they were removed during the World War II period for national defense purposes).

ABDSP now has a new neighbor in the Colorado Desert!

—Joan S. Schneider  
Tribal Archaeologist, Morongo Band of Mission Indians  
Associate State Archaeologist, Colorado Desert District,  
California State Parks (retired)

# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ARCHAEOLOGY

Several organizations offer programs that may be of interest to CDAS members. Please check the websites below for upcoming events. If you know of other programs that CDAS members might enjoy, we would love to share the information in future bulletins—please send us the details!

**AGUA CALIENTE CULTURAL MUSEUM**  
<https://www.accmuseum.org>

**San Diego Archaeological Center**  
<https://sandiegoarchaeology.org>

**MALKI MUSEUM**  
<https://malkimuseum.org>

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY  
SOCIETY**  
<https://sdcas.org>



PHOTO FROM WEBSITE

COURTESY SD ARCHAEOLOGICAL CENTER

**CALIFORNIA ROCK ART FOUNDATION**  
<https://www.carockart.org>

**BARONA CULTURAL CENTER AND  
MUSEUM**  
<https://www.baronamuseum.com>

**IMPERIAL VALLEY DESERT MUSEUM**  
<https://www.ivdesertmuseum.org>

**SAN DIEGO ROCK ART ASSOCIATION**  
<https://www.sandiegorockart.org>

**SOCIETY FOR CALIFORNIA  
ARCHAEOLOGY**  
<https://scahome.org>

## EDITORS' NOTE: WE WELCOME YOUR ACTIVITIES!

THE CDAS BULLETIN IS PUBLISHED ONLINE IN FIVE ISSUES,  
SEPTEMBER THROUGH MAY.

ALL CDAS MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SHARE NEWS,  
STORIES, AND PHOTOS. PLEASE SEND ITEMS TO

SALLY BICKERTON AT:

[SALLYBIC@COX.NET](mailto:SALLYBIC@COX.NET)