



Cultural resources program

2002

Preservation through cooperation

While studying Yucca Mountain, Nevada, as a potential spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste repository, the U.S. Department of Energy works to protect important cultural resources at the site. Department scientists strive to protect these valuable resources through the Yucca Mountain Project's Cultural Resources Program. The program meets the Nuclear Waste Policy Act requirement that important resources at Yucca Mountain be protected during site characterization. The program complies with numerous federal laws addressing Native American issues and cultural resources including the American Indian Religious Freedom Act and the National Historic Preservation Act.

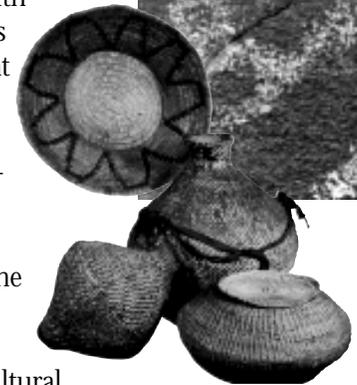
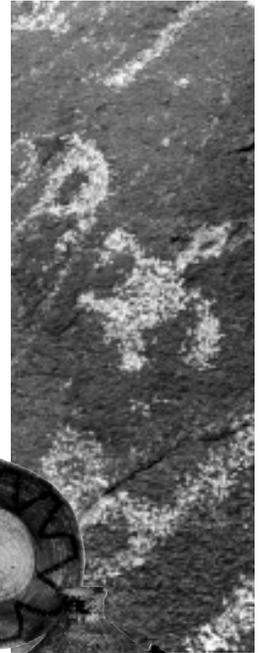
involved tribes to gather cultural data for the program. These meetings provide valuable insight into Native American cultural and religious values and beliefs as they relate to Yucca Mountain.

Program strives to protect cultural resources

Consultations with Native Americans play an important role in the U.S. Department of Energy's commitment to address Native American concerns about the protection of archaeological, botanical, and cultural resources in the Yucca Mountain area.

The archaeology studies focus on physical evidence of past human presence in the Yucca Mountain region. Many archaeological sites have been identified in the area, and these archaeological resources show the various ways people adapted to the arid environment during the past 12,000 years.

Working with Native Americans to gather cultural data about the area has produced valuable information and helped Project scientists to record Native American knowledge about native plants. Tribal representatives have



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The Cultural Resources Program focuses on Native American interactions and archaeology. Its objective is to consult with Native Americans to identify significant cultural and historic areas and to mitigate potential impacts to these areas.

Extensive ethnographic studies in the southern Nevada area, including a detailed literature review, identified several Indian tribes and one organization with traditional ties to the Yucca Mountain area. These studies have identified the Southern Paiute, Western Shoshone, and Owens Valley Paiute/Shoshone people from Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and California as Indian tribes who have ties to the Yucca Mountain region. As part of the Cultural Resources Program, delegates from the Project meet with tribal leaders and designated representatives from the

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1. Benton Paiute Tribe
2. Bishop Paiute Tribe
3. Big Pine Paiute Tribe of the Owens Valley
4. Fort Independence Paiute Tribe
5. Lone Pine Paiute/Shoshone Tribe
6. Timbisha Shoshone Tribe
7. Yomba Shoshone Tribe
8. Duckwater Shoshone Tribe
9. Ely Shoshone Tribe
10. Pahrump Paiute Tribe
11. Las Vegas Paiute Indian Colony
12. Las Vegas Indian Center
13. Moapa Paiute Tribe
14. Chemehuevi Tribe
15. Colorado River Indian Tribes
16. Kaibab Paiute Tribe
17. Paiute Indian Tribes of Utah
 - 17a. Shivwits Paiute Tribe
 - 17b. Cedar City Paiute Tribe
 - 17c. Indian Peaks Paiute Tribe
 - 17d. Kanosh Paiute Tribe
 - 17e. Koosharem Paiute Tribe

identified and discussed traditional and current uses of plants found in the study area.

As a result of working with tribal representatives, the Cultural Resources Program has produced reports on the development of the Native American culture. Studies performed in the area have collected scattered early written accounts about the region.

Exhibits for the public

An exhibit containing information about artifacts used by the Native Americans is located at the Yucca Mountain science centers. The exhibits also provide information about native plants and their uses. Samples of the native plants are key parts of the exhibit. The display also includes information about animals and their significance to the Native Americans of the region.

The science centers also sponsor lectures facilitated by knowledgeable Native Americans who are recognized as experts in their fields. These programs are free to the public. For details, call (702) 295-1312.



U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management

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