

COMPLETING THE CIRCLE: THE ROLE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Public education programs about our nation's cultural resources are mandated by federal law and carried out by CRM professionals around the country. Education initiatives and nationwide programs, along with some innovative programs developed specifically for Alaska audiences, have flourished over the last 15 years and are described in this paper. Although a variety of audiences are now being reached, it is argued that an effort should be made to reach other segments of the population. Fresh voices, creative approaches, and strong partnerships are needed to effectively communicate new and interesting CRM stories, and thus complete the circle of funding by the public to education for the public.

KEYWORDS: federal and state agencies, public education audiences and programs, conservation education

INTRODUCTION

Sitka's Castle Hill may be the perfect place to provide the public with what they deserve in terms of public archaeology. As a national historic landmark, where Alexander Baranov constructed his "castle" during the Russian-American era and also where the American flag was raised for the first time in Alaska in 1867, the site contains many elements important in state and local history within a single, confined location. In 1995 and 1997–98, the public got a close-up look at an exciting project with well-informed archaeologists as guides to understanding the excavation process and the artifacts recovered. Dave McMahan of Alaska's Office of History and Archaeology,¹ made the most of this unique site and location in his research design for archaeologi-

cal testing before renovations for improved public access at Castle Hill. By including local museums and historical societies, government agencies, Alaska Native groups, and universities as participants, he enabled local people to become involved in the project. Tourists learned about the site during visits to the excavations and public lectures in Sitka (Fig. 1), while people around the state and country learned about it in the newspaper or on the radio (McMahan 2002). The Castle Hill Project exemplifies the concept that education is not something to be tacked onto the end of a project but something that should be interwoven into the whole process, completing the circle of funding *from the public* to interpretation *for the public*.

1 Archaeology is spelled "archeology" when citing federal government publications and programs.



Figure 1. Visitors learn about Alaska history and archaeology while visiting the Castle Hill site excavations in Sitka (photo courtesy of Dave McMahan).

Although educational programs are legislated as one of the many activities integral to cultural resource management (CRM), there are few guidelines that specify exactly what form these programs should take. Depending on an agency's emphasis, the specific job description, and the CRM staff's individual interests and inclinations, education can be interpreted to mean anything from simply making the results of a CRM report available to the public to establishing a nationwide program for school-age children and their teachers. This very broad definition of what public education actually encompasses provides an opportunity for some innovative approaches. This paper will highlight the variety of approaches used by state and federal agencies nationally and in Alaska. Some fundamental questions in planning and implementing these programs are also addressed. Who are the appropriate audiences for public education programs? How do we measure the success of these programs, and are they effective in bringing about changes in public perception of the value of our cultural resources?

THE LEGAL MANDATE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Within the language of a multitude of laws and regulations pertaining to historic preservation and cultural resource management are some very clear directives about public education, beginning with the Historic Sites Act of 1935.² In Section I, the act declares that "it is a national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States" (16 U.S.C. 461). The secretary of the interior, through the National Park Service (NPS), is charged with the responsibility of carrying out this policy, which includes several duties and functions, including to "develop an educational program and service for the purpose of making available to the public facts and information pertaining to American historic and archaeological sites, buildings, and properties of national significance" (U.S.C. 462(j)).

² The federal laws referred to in this section are published in the United States Code (U.S.C.).

The responsibilities for historic preservation were expanded from primarily the National Park Service to its partners in other federal agencies; state, local, and tribal governments; and private organizations with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in 1966, amended in 1980 and 1992. Included within the activities defining “historic preservation” in Section 301 of the act are those of interpretation, education, and training (U.S.C. 470w). However, it was not until the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA) that a real mandate was made for all land-managing agencies to institute public education programs. Section 10(c) of ARPA reads: “Each Federal land manager shall establish a program to increase public awareness of the significance of the archaeological resources located on public lands and Indian lands and the need to protect such resources” (U.S.C. 470ii(c)).

In more recent years, the push for incorporating public education programs more consistently throughout all cultural resource management programs has accelerated, particularly in federal agencies under the Department of the Interior. In 1999, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt reissued the National Strategy for Federal Archeology, a policy originally set forth a decade earlier by his predecessor, Manuel Lujan. Among the four general areas of emphasis in the strategy was the incorporation of public outreach activities in archaeological projects. Specifically the policy states that outreach and participation are to be increased by (1) establishing education programs as a regular agency function, (2) interpreting archaeological research for the public in a way that is accurate and understandable, (3) considering the views of diverse cultural groups when interpreting the past, and (4) engaging the public in archaeology through professionally directed volunteer programs (National Park Service 2005a).

In Alaska, cultural resource managers are given additional responsibilities for assistance programs, including interpretation, displays, and training through the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). However, in ANILCA, unlike previous legislation that refers in the most general terms to the “public,” the intended audience for this assistance—Native Corporations and Native groups—is specified in Section 1318 of the act.

[T]he Secretary may, upon the application of a Native Corporation or Native Group, provide advice, assistance, and technical expertise to the applicant in the preservation, display, and interpretation of cultural resources, without regard as

to whether title to such resources is in the United States. Such assistance may include making available personnel to assist in the planning, design, and operation of buildings, facilities, and interpretive displays for the public and personnel to train individuals in the identification, recovery, preservation, demonstration, and management of cultural resources. (16 U.S.C 3206; 461)

In many cases, federal agency public education programs designed specifically for village audiences in Alaska take their mandate from Section 1318 of ANILCA.

PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS ON A NATIONAL LEVEL

It took several years after the passage of ARPA for public education programs to gradually come into focus as an important aspect of CRM. William Lipe (1977:21–25) recognized the value of such programs in the late 1970s, when he stated that public education and its objective, public support, were crucial to the conservation of archaeological sites, but very little of the work was being done at that time. Arizona archaeologists took the lead on public education programs in the mid-1980s because they recognized that the “cops and robbers” approach of site protection was not a positive long-range tactic. The Arizona Archaeological Council organized the Archaeology for the Schools Committee in 1985, with the goal of enhancing appreciation of archaeological resources among the state’s younger citizens (Rogge and Bell 1989). They promoted archaeological awareness to teachers as a supplement to the curriculum rather than another in a long list of mandatory topics to be covered during the school year, and cast their materials in the lesson plan format familiar to teachers. Their pilot presentation to teachers was made during the spring 1987 celebration of Arizona Archaeology Week. The concept of Archaeology Week, initiated in Arizona in 1983 with overwhelming public approval, has now been adopted by nearly every state in the union.

In 1988, the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) got on the public education bandwagon by developing the Save the Past for the Future Project. SAA archaeologists enlisted the aid of federal agencies, along with state and private organizations, to understand why site looting and vandalism occur and provide opportunities for public education (Reinburg 1991). After the SAA 1989 Anti-Looting Working Conference in Taos, New Mexico, there was a consensus from the conference participants that

public education would be the most effective long-range and broadly based solution to the problem of site destruction. By 1990, a growing contingent of the membership established the SAA Committee on Public Education (Society for American Archaeology, Committee on Public Education 1990). The SAA Public Education Committee has been very active over the last 15 years, producing newsletters (printed and electronic), teaching modules, and a traveling exhibit and establishing a network of state and provincial archaeology education coordinators. In 2000, SAA published *The Archaeology Education Handbook: Sharing the Past with Kids* (Smardz and Smith 2000), an edited volume of articles that deal primarily with the interface between archaeologists and educators.

In 2002, a special issue of the *SAA Archaeological Record*, the main newsletter of this nationwide organization, was devoted to public outreach. Among the contributors to the issue was Brian Fagan, professor at the University of California Santa Barbara and author of several books that make reading about archaeology interesting for just about anyone. His short article concludes with these remarks:

Public outreach is one of the most fundamental issues facing archaeology today. In recognizing this, we should be aware that innovative approaches both in the classroom and in the wider public area are long overdue, expanded use of interactive teaching methods and the Web being among them. And, above all, we have to realize that the best archaeology is written in fluent, jargon-free prose that makes people *want* to learn about the past, not avoid it because it is incomprehensible. (Fagan 2002:7)

Also in this special issue of the *SAA Archaeological Record* is an article by Barbara Little, who provides a resource guide to the variety of programs sponsored by federal agencies (Little 2002). In it she lists programs developed by the Forest Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Fish and Wildlife Service, Minerals Management Service, National Park Service, Army, Army Corps of Engineers, Navy, Smithsonian Institution, and the Department of Transportation. Much of the information about individual programs is available on line by accessing the home page of each of the agencies listed above. What is important to recognize in discussing the programs of these various federal agencies is that their programs were not developed in isolation. Although each agency has a unique spin on how to market and implement their own heritage programs,

it is clear that forging partnerships between cultural resource managers; educators; state, local, and tribal governments; and private preservation and funding organizations has been fundamental to making the programs viable and effective in terms of public outreach.

It is probably fair to say that, given the mandate established by the 1935 Historic Sites Act, the NPS has taken a leading role in developing educational programs for the public in history, anthropology, and archaeology. One of the functions of the Washington, D.C., office of NPS is to administer the National Register of Historic Places, established by the NHPA in 1966. The national register is familiar in the CRM context because prehistoric and historic sites, districts, or structures must pass muster with national register criteria of significance in order to be considered in the preservation process. National historic landmarks are at the pinnacle of all properties listed on the national register. In the context of public education, the national register is also a valuable tool, which is often overlooked as a source of excellent research and interpretive materials. Historic context, the narrative in each nomination that serves to anchor the property in time, place, and theme, are useful in historical publications, tourist pamphlets, walking tour notes, and educational manuals directed at elementary and secondary school students. These nominations are in fact used in a well-established national register program, known as Teaching with Historic Places, which integrates information from the nomination with the history curriculum for grades 5 through 12. It currently includes more than 115 classroom-ready lesson plans, categorized by United States History Standards, available on the web. Among these units is a lesson about Attu, one of Alaska's national historic landmarks, which is important for understanding the effects of World War II at home (History Standard 3C) and how the Allies prevailed (History Standard 3B) (National Park Service 2005b).

Other National Park Service programs, publications, and web sites have been developed since the great push of the late-1980s to improve the role of public education in CRM. For example, the NPS took an active role in compiling and distributing information about existing activities and programs through a publication known as LEAP (Listing of Education in Archaeological Programs) and through an administrative branch known as the Archeological Assistance Branch (Smith and McManamon 1991). The drive behind these programs continues today through the efforts of the NPS Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC) in Tallahassee, Florida. SEAC spearhead-

ed a public interpretation initiative designed to foster an exchange of ideas between archaeologists and education professionals. Activities resulting from this initiative include academic symposia, workshops, and training sessions presented in both national and international forums (Jameson 1997:11). One of the products of this initiative is a book entitled *Presenting Archaeology to the Public* (Jameson 1997), which focuses on interpreting archaeology in cities, museums, parks, and sites.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, and the Department of Defense also initiated some very successful nationwide programs during the late 1980s. Adventures in the Past, a BLM program created in 1989, evolved into a far-reaching Heritage Education Program which includes Project Archaeology. It was designed in Utah by the BLM and an interagency task force on cultural resources to help combat vandalism of archaeological resources by teaching young citizens to value and protect the past. The program includes three components: curriculum materials compiled in *Intrigue of the Past: A Teacher's Activity Guide for Fourth through Seventh Grades* (Smith et al. 1996), a delivery system of teacher training workshops, and ongoing teacher support. In addition, several states with active Project Archaeology programs developed state-specific handbooks; Alaska's is called *Intrigue of the Past: Discovering Archaeology in Alaska* (Laubenstein and King 1996).

The Forest Service initiated another variation of heritage preservation in Windows on the Past, which fostered an exciting program called Passport in Time (PIT). PIT offers volunteers the opportunity to participate in cultural resources projects such as test excavations, inventories, historic building restorations, architectural documentations, and rock art recordings in programs throughout the country. Not to be overlooked is the Department of Defense Legacy Resource Management Program, in which millions of dollars have been spent for a wide range of cultural resource projects, including brochures, reports, videotapes, and public awareness programs about military lands (Haas 1995:44–46).

PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ALASKA

Public education programs in Alaska are many and varied, some stemming from national initiatives and some developed on a local level for a local audience. Project Archaeology, Passport in Time (PIT), Teaching with Historic Places, and Archaeology Week/Month, all na-

tional programs described above, have been successfully implemented in Alaska. Perhaps the most visible of these programs has been Alaska Archaeology Month. Beginning as Archaeology Week in 1990, the program was expanded to a month-long celebration to accommodate the schedules of local organizers throughout the state, many of whom are employed in CRM and represent various agencies. They plan evening public lectures, hands-on activities for kids (Fig. 2), museum displays, and special programs such as the atlatl (spear-thrower) competitions. These competitions have been organized for the last eight years by archaeologist Richard VanderHoek in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Dutch Harbor. Highlighting Archaeology Month is an annual poster, colorfully depicting some aspect of Alaska anthropology or archaeology and mailed to every school, museum, public land information center, tribal government, and Native corporation in the state.

The target audiences for many Alaska Archaeology Month events are school children and the museum-going segment of the adult population, because many of the events are held in museums such as the Anchorage Museum of History and Art and the Alutiiq Museum in Kodiak. In 1998, a special interest group—the Boy Scouts—became the target audience for many of the Archaeology Month activities in Anchorage. Archaeologist Robert Shaw contacted sponsors from state and federal agencies, the professional archaeological community, University of Alaska Anchorage, Anchorage School District, the Native village of Eklutna, and the Traditional Archers of Alaska in organizing a series of events that would satisfy the requirements for the newly instituted



Figure 2. Two boys play the “Alaska Board Game” at an Archaeology Month event at the Alaska Native Heritage Center in Anchorage (photo courtesy of Susan Bender).

Boy Scout merit badge in archaeology (Fig. 3). The program was a resounding success and demonstrated that cooperation among various interest groups results in better programs and greater audience participation.

The Public Education Group of the Alaska Anthropological Association now provides statewide sponsorship for Alaska Archaeology Month. Composed mostly of federal and state archaeologists, the group banded together in 2000 and petitioned the Alaska Anthropological Association for affiliation as a special interest group. The rationale was that by working together, the group could increase the quality, creativity, and attendance levels for a variety of programs, including Archaeology Month, regardless of agency affiliation. There are two co-chairs who lead the Public Education Group, one of whom is designated to serve as the Alaska coordinator on the national SAA network of state and provincial archaeology education coordinators.



Figure 3. Chuck Mobley helps an Anchorage Boy Scout earn his merit badge in archaeology during Alaska Archaeology Month, 1998 (photo courtesy National Park Service).

Besides Archaeology Month, the Public Education Group also plans and organizes a public lecture series, underwritten by the Alaska Anthropological Association. The concept of the series is to bring anthropologists from “Outside” who have the knowledge and skills to present thought-provoking lectures to both urban and rural audiences. The first lecturer in the series was Dr. Claire Smith, who is the head of the Archaeology Department at Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia, and president of the World Archaeological Congress. With Public Education Group member Karlene Leeper as her Alaska guide, Dr. Smith traveled to Skagway, Ketchikan, Anchorage, and Kodiak in 2004.

Beginning in 2006, the Public Education Group will also be working toward compiling lesson plans developed over the years by archaeologists in Anchorage and in southeast Alaska who spend time visiting classrooms. Some of these lesson plans, such as the ever-popular “Layer upon Layer” exercise, a hands-on activity that teaches children about stratigraphy and changes in artifact types over time, will be available on the web at <http://www.nps.gov/akso/CR/AKRCultural/index.htm> in 2006. Also to be available on this web page is the *Archaeological Resource Guide for Alaska Elementary School Teachers* (Carpenter et al. 1999).

In order to learn more about the variety of public education programs sponsored by CRM programs throughout the state, I sent out an informal questionnaire to 32 individuals, including members of the Public Education Group and other cultural resource managers who have been involved in some capacity with educational programs. It consisted of three questions: (1) What is an estimate of the amount of time on the job that you spend in doing public education programs or creating products (pamphlets, newsletters, etc.) that pertain to public education? (2) What type of programs and educational products have you worked on? (3) What are your thoughts about how public education programs could be made more effective?

According to the responses received (38%), it appears that the on-the-job time spent working on public education programs varies widely. The answers to Question 1 ranged from 0 % to 35% of time spent on these programs. Table 1, which compiles the answers from Question 2, lists the types of programs and the target audiences. Table 2 presents a sample of the wide variety of products, ranging from pamphlets and booklets, to posters, videos, and web sites, that have been produced in Alaska.

One of the most active areas of the state in terms of public education is southeast Alaska, where the Alaska

Region of the Forest Service has a growing cultural resource education program. Archaeologists work with educators at many levels to improve the public appreciation of historic places and ultimately to enlist the public in the stewardship and protection of archaeological and historic places. High on their list of rewarding activities are visits to elementary school classrooms (Fig. 4). Forest Service archaeologists have created several products for use by educators, such as the “Passages” brochure (U.S. Forest Service 1993). Beginning as a timeline of human occupation in southeast Alaska and containing illustrations of scenes from the lives of past inhabitants, the brochure takes the reader from the earliest southeast Alaska residents to the beginnings of the 20th century. Another product is the “Alaska Region Rock Art” brochure (U.S. Forest Service 2001), showing images of petroglyphs and pictographs. It attempts to instill a conservation ethic in the reader by stressing noninvasive enjoyment of rock art, such as photography. In the Chugach National Forest, archaeologists have sponsored Passport in Time programs, such as one focused on the history and archaeology of an

historic cabin, and testing at prehistoric sites with youth of the Kenaitze Indian Tribe (Heritage Programs of the Tongass and Chugach National Forests 2002).



Figure 4. Terry Fifield demonstrates flint-knapping techniques to an elementary school class in Craig (photo courtesy of Terry Fifield).

Table 1. Target Audiences for CRM Public Education Programs in Alaska

| Audiences | Programs |
|--|--|
| Elementary School Classrooms | Visits and programs by teacher request; Archaeology Month; BLM Outdoor Week; Fairbanks BLM Outdoor Days; mock dig site at BLM Campbell Creek Tract |
| Middle, High School Classrooms | Visits and programs by teacher request; Alaska History program in Sitka; National History Day in Alaska; electronic field trip on totem poles; career days; culture camps; field and lab opportunities in Barrow |
| Colleges and Universities | Visits and presentations by request; opportunities for internships and mentoring programs; Western Arctic National Parklands archaeological research lab at UAA |
| Educators | Project Archaeology; Alaska Humanities Forum Teacher Institutes for Alaska Studies; resource guides for Alaska teachers |
| Visitors to Parks, Museums, Recreation Areas | Field trips to local sites; Castle Hill site interpretation; ranger-led programs in Sitka Historic Park; volunteer archaeology at old Knik townsite |
| Special Interest Groups | Boy Scout merit badge and Boy Scout Jamboree; volunteer programs such as Passport in Time; Alaska National Resource and Outdoor Education presentation; presentations to lodges and businesses |
| Rural Alaska (Villages) | Presentations in NPS-affiliated villages, Archaeological Mentorship Program; CRM program in Village Management Institute; Public Education Group lecture series; testing program involving Kenaitze youth |
| General Public | NPS, BLM, FS web sites; Archaeology Month presentations; various brochures, pamphlets, books distributed free of charge to the public; interpretive signs and on-site programs; public service announcements in Barrow |

Table 2. Educational Materials Produced by CRM Programs in Alaska^a

| Pamphlets |
|---|
| Alaska's Mesa Site (BLM) |
| Alaska Region Rock Art Brochure (FS) |
| Fossil Collecting and Artifact Hunting in Alaska (BLM) |
| Kodiak Naval Operating Base National Historic Landmark (U.S. Coast Guard) |
| Ladd Field National Historic Landmark (U.S. Army) |
| Passages (FS) |
| Save Alaska's Past (NPS); Save Alaska's Heritage (NPS) |
| Booklets |
| <i>Alaska Goldrush National Historic Landmarks, The Stampede North</i> (NPS) |
| <i>Witness, Firsthand Accounts of the Largest Volcanic Eruption in the Twentieth Century</i> (NPS, Lake Clark–Katmai Studies Center) |
| <i>World War II National Historic Landmarks: The Aleutian Campaign</i> (NPS) |
| Newsletters |
| <i>Cultural Ties</i> (NPS) |
| <i>Heritage Newsletter</i> (electronic) (OHA) |
| <i>History Day in Alaska</i> (NPS) |
| <i>Sitka Historical Park Archaeological Survey Project</i> (NPS) |
| Resource Guides and Curriculum Materials |
| <i>Archaeological Resource Guide for Alaska Elementary School Teachers</i> (NPS/OHA) |
| <i>Intrigue of the Past, Discovering Archaeology in Alaska</i> (BLM) |
| <i>World War II in Alaska, A Resource Guide for Teachers and Students</i> (NPS) |
| Posters |
| Alaska Archaeology Week/Month posters 1990–2006 (Public Education Group) |
| Videos and CDs |
| Siulipta Paitaat: <i>Our Ancestor's Heritage</i> (NPS) |
| <i>The Quest for Gold: National Park Service Historic Mining Sites on the Last Frontier</i> (NPS) |
| <i>Science in Our Lives</i> (NPS, Western Arctic National Parklands/AK Dept. Fish & Game) |
| Web Pages |
| http://www.alaskaanthropology.org/public-ed.html |
| http://www.nps.gov/akso/CR/AKRCultural/index.htm |
| http://www.blm.gov/education/LearningLandscapes/menu/states/alaska.html |
| http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/forest_facts/resources/heritage/heritage |

^a The materials listed here do not include a multitude of published CRM reports and books, which are available to the general public but are usually intended more specifically for professional and resource management audiences. Acronyms include BLM (Bureau of Land Management); FS (USDA Forest Service); NPS (National Park Service); OHA (Office of History and Archaeology).

Two other programs, both in southeast Alaska, serve as excellent models for incorporating education into CRM projects. The first, in Coffman Cove on Prince of Wales Island, is sponsored by the Tongass National Forest in cooperation with the City of Coffman Cove, the Wrangell Cooperative Association (Tribe), the Southeast Island School District, and the State of Alaska Office of History and Archaeology, among others. Upcoming archaeological excavations of midden sites in the community will incorporate local volunteers, and a professional design team will prepare on-site interpretation, brochures, signage, and displays in 2006. A Project Archaeology teacher workshop³ was provided for teachers in Coffman Cove in 2005 (Terry Fifield 2005, personal communication).

The second exemplary series of programs takes place at Sitka National Historical Park, where NPS historians, archaeologists, and interpreters, and educational specialists team up for a number of programs. One of them involved students at a local alternative high school, who helped the park monitor a ground-disturbing activity at a known historic site. The park developed and provided an overview of archaeology and hosted site visits. Then, under close supervision, the students excavated the area to be disturbed (Fig. 5) and will develop a public exhibit in 2006 (Kristen Griffin 2005, personal communication).

The audiences for public education programs are different in the urban Anchorage area than in the small communities of southeast Alaska. Much of the public outreach in Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough involves classroom visits to elementary, middle, and high school classrooms. One innovative year-long program, sponsored by the Office of History and Archaeology and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, provided fifth and sixth grade students at Chinook Elementary in Anchorage with the opportunity to learn the fundamentals about archaeology and to participate in a real archaeological testing project on the Russian River. At school, the kids learned how to analyze artifacts and write reports; while in the field, they learned how to use a compass (Fig. 6) and to dig small test pits, coached by a cadre of state and federal archaeologists. OHA is also the Alaska sponsor of Project Archaeology and is involved in organizing teacher workshops throughout the state. The BLM in Anchorage takes advantage of its large tract of wooded acreage at the Campbell Creek facility by hosting an annual Outdoor Week, which in-



Figure 5. Pacific High School students studying Alaska history examine artifacts during an archaeological excavation at the Russian Bishop's House National Historic Landmark in Sitka (photo courtesy of Kristen Griffin).

cludes archaeological activities, for Anchorage sixth grade students. BLM archaeologists and others from the Public Education Group are currently working on a permanent “mock dig” site at this facility that can be used in educational programs for Campbell Creek Science Center and Trailside Discovery camps held at the center every summer.

Another type of educational program developed by CRM archaeologists is village outreach. A good example of such a program is one sponsored by the Air Force (611th Civil Engineering Squadron at Elmendorf Air Force Base). It involved archaeologists working on a National Science Foundation–funded project at Uivvaq on Cape Lisburne and provided the community of Point Hope with a chance to participate in the research and testing of a site in 2000. The educational component of the project included stu-

³ Several other Project Archaeology workshops have been conducted in Alaska, including ones held in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Bethel, Barrow, Klawock, and Wrangell.

dent interns from Point Hope, who assisted with the site excavation, and elders, who shared their knowledge of the site with the archaeologists (Karlene Leeper 2005, personal communication). Village outreach is one aspect of the archaeological program of the NPS Lake Clark–Katmai Study Center, located in Anchorage. Archaeologists travel to villages in the Lake Clark–Katmai region for public presentations during Archaeology Month in April, and special attention is provided to villages, such as Newhalen,



Figure 6. Joan Dale shows a sixth grader from Chinook Elementary School in Anchorage how to read a compass at a site on the Russian River (photo by Diane Hanson).

in their requests for more intensive cultural resources assistance and student training.

Another example of village outreach programs is the Archeology Mentorship Program, sponsored by the NPS Shared Beringian Heritage Program and Alaska Regional Office. This three-year program provides training and archaeological fieldwork opportunities for young people from villages in northwest Alaska. In 2004 and 2005, village youth 16 to 22 years old from Noatak, Kiana, and Point Hope were employed in the program and had the opportunity to work with NPS archaeologists at the Tuktu-Naiyuk site, near Anaktuvuk Pass (Fig. 7), the Knik historic site in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and at Agiak Lake in Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve (Fig. 8). The Ukpeagvik Inupiat Corporation also sponsors ongoing programs for the residents of Barrow in the form of field schools, presentations in schools and for the public, radio shows, pamphlets, site signage, and science center displays (Anne Jensen, 2005, written communication).

MEASURING AND IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The success of educational programs can be measured in many different ways. In theory, we might measure success by estimating the total number of people who benefit



Figure 7. The 2004 field crew at the Tuktu-Naiyuk site included students from the villages of Noatak and Anaktuvuk Pass (photo courtesy of Bob Gal).

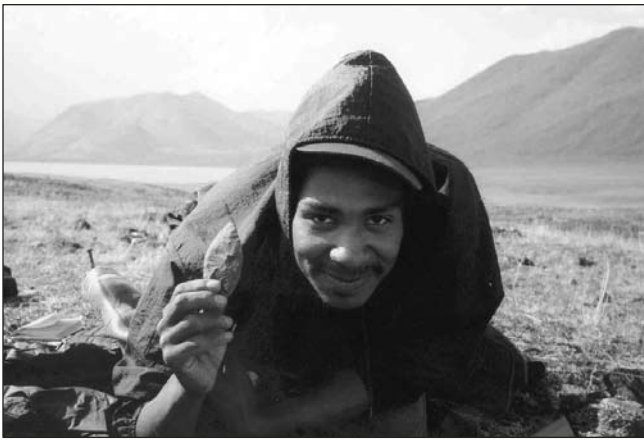


Figure 8. L. Johnson of Point Hope proudly displays an artifact he excavated at a tent-ring site at Agiak Lake, Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve (photo courtesy National Park Service).

from the programs. Considering the variety of audiences and many forms of public outreach, this would be a difficult task. From my own vantage point as a member of the Alaska Anthropological Association Public Education Group, active in educational outreach in the Anchorage School District, I can conservatively say that our group talks to 500 to 1,000 students every year during classroom presentations and special events, such as the BLM Outdoor Week, in Anchorage alone. However, success is not just about quantity, but also about the quality and effectiveness of the programs. Sometimes, small successes can be chalked up when a class of fourth-graders each writes a personal letter (often with a hand-drawn picture) to express thanks for an interesting presentation or when a student brings an artifact found on the beach to his teacher, who in turn calls it to the attention of an agency archaeologist. The hope is that we make a positive impact on most of these students, even if they only learn that there really are archaeological sites in their home state and not just in far-away places shown on television programs.

To the best of my knowledge, there have only been a handful of studies on the effectiveness of CRM public education programs. One of them, published in the *Common Ground*, a CRM magazine published by the NPS Archeology and Ethnography program, provides the results of an evaluation of the Project Archaeology curriculum sent to 550 educators who had attended the training workshops. Although the percentage of respondents was fairly low (15%), evaluation results showed that the program was largely successful educationally but may not have changed attitudes about site protection for a small

percentage of students in Utah and Colorado whose families have “collected artifacts from public lands for several generations” (Moe and Letts 1998:28).

In her doctoral dissertation, Barbara Bundy (2005:161) reports the results of interviews she sent to 34 archaeologists in the Pacific Northwest about site looting. Education scored highest (in comparison to site monitoring and law enforcement) as a preventative measure to combating vandalism. The interviewees believed that multidimensional programs—in comparison to presentations to adults and to children, publications and displays, informal contacts, and signage—were the most successful type of educational elements in a looting-prevention strategy. McCallum (1998) also got very positive results about the value of educational programs for instilling a resource stewardship ethic in his questionnaire for visitors to the Sandy Beach archaeological site near Petersburg, Alaska, in 1998. Most of the respondents (N=56) expressed strong values and support for heritage resource preservation and protection. He also found that they preferred personal contact and interaction, such as site tours, museums, and lectures, as activities for learning about cultural resources.

Given the results discussed above, it appears that there is a high return on the dollar in terms of public understanding and appreciation, i.e., “customer satisfaction,” for some of the existing educational programs. CRM professionals involved in public education get frequent confirmation about the value of their programs in the form of positive feedback from teachers, students, and the recipients of educational products distributed free to the public. Jane Smith, one of the Forest Service archaeologists from Petersburg, had these remarks to make on Question 3 of the informal questionnaire: “To me effectiveness is revealed in the comments I get around town, small town—lots of people know me... It’s always positive and the community wants more. Public attendance is key. Every time it seems like we pack the room” (Jane Smith, 2005, written communication).

For some segments of the public, messages about the value of cultural resources and the need to protect them for future generations are being heard loud and clear, but in all likelihood, these people are ones already sympathetic to preservationist messages. The challenge for the future will be to reach out to more diverse segments of the population and to design even more effective ways for communicating the concept that cultural resources are worthy of study and protection. In other words, the “preaching to the choir” method of public education needs to be broadened to include harder-to-reach audiences.

The answers received from Question 3 of my informal questionnaire provided some good insights about problems in communicating about cultural resources and how to overcome them in the future. Many of the responses focused on the importance of establishing good communication with teachers, particularly by designing standards-based lessons that are easily incorporated into the classroom. The value of personal contact with the public (rather than being isolated by federal agency security systems) was stressed by one respondent, and one said that she believes we need more “glossy books” to get our messages across. Another respondent said that we need to provide more volunteer opportunities for children to become personally involved in testing sites. From the perspective of living and working in a predominantly Alaska Native community, one respondent said that public education should focus on the buyers of artifacts as souvenirs and that we should promote modern arts and crafts instead of pillaging the past.

From a personal point of view, I believe we need to turn to people with other voices, such as interpreters, educational specialists, and journalists to help disseminate information to the public. A new web site was recently developed to provide NPS interpreters with the basics about archaeology to guide them in developing their own programs (National Park Service 2005c). Television and popular magazines are all under-used as media for spreading the word about our cultural resources. An SAA Harris poll conducted on public perceptions and attitudes about archaeology indicated that television scored highest (56%) as the source of information most people relied upon to learn about archaeology, with books and magazines tying for second place. Public lectures scored only 1% as a source of information (Ramos and Duganne 2000).

Secondly, I believe that more CRM professionals need to become involved in public outreach. Peter Young (2003), editor in chief of *Archaeology* magazine, urges us to become storytellers in order to make archaeology accessible to the general public. Ten tips of writing for the public and presented at the Public Benefits of Archaeology Conference in Santa Fe in 1995 bear repeating here: (1) find a hook, (2) tell a story, (3) include yourself, (4) avoid jargon, (5) talk to a single reader, (6) names are important, (7) determine the data you need, (8) present the data visually, (9) emphasize theory and methods, and (10) always think audience (Allen 2002:248).

For those who are not storytellers by nature or shy away from the rowdy world of elementary school classes, there are other alternatives. Partnerships are a key element in forging ways to get information out to the public. One simple step to take in spreading the word is to team up with others who have professional communication skills or a wide network of contacts in the community or with the media.

CONCLUSIONS

Over the last two decades, there has been a nationwide surge in the number of CRM education programs. National heritage education initiatives spearheaded by the Society for American Archaeology, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and USDA Forest Service, among others, have paved the way for state programs such as we have in Alaska. CRM and the public have benefited from these consciousness-raising efforts, and there are now a tremendous number of educational products, including pamphlets, brochures, newsletters, videos, and web pages, to draw upon. One lesson CRM professionals have learned over the years is that partnerships are essential to the success and effectiveness of educational programs. Partnerships need to involve not only state and federal agencies but also local and village governments and organizations, educators, and special interest groups to have the best chance of success in reaching a large audience and effectively communicating a preservation message. Ultimately, public education must be a concern for all CRM practitioners, who have many options and resources now available to use in fashioning programs to meet the needs of their own agencies and organizations or of particular interest groups or target audiences. We all have the obligation to complete the circle by making sure that the stories and images of exciting discoveries get back to the people who are paying the bills.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank several colleagues who took the time to answer my informal questionnaire and provide me with some great examples of their own public education programs in Alaska. Thanks go to Anne Jensen, Robert King, Donna Redding, Jane Smith, Jeanne Schaaf, Jeff Rasic, Joan Dale, Kristen Griffin, Margan Grover, Mark McCallum, Richard VanderHoek, and Terry Fifield.

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