



MESA PRIETA PETROGLYPH PROJECT

PO Box 407, Velarde, New Mexico 87582

May 2023 Archaeological Society of New Mexico Update

Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project (MPPP) continues to work diligently on the protection and preservation of archaeological features of the Mesa Prieta region, *Tsikwaye*. We estimate there are over 100,000 petroglyphs at the Mesa that expand a vast timeline from Archaic periods through Spanish contact and 20th century influences. In addition to ancestral petroglyphs, Mesa Prieta includes numerous archaeological features such as grid gardens and historic trails. There are three primary components that MPPP has focused on this last year which include recording of petroglyphs, education outreach to K-12 schools and communities, and the promotion of heritage stewardship at the site.

This spring docents and volunteers teamed up to work on the trails by installing erosion wattles. This work is ongoing and we appreciate the support and dedication of our tireless volunteers. In addition, we offered docent training at Los Luceros Historic Site. Included in training materials were introductions to Tewa histories and a cultural context that serve as a foundational backdrop for docents, educators, and visitors. We would like to expand this work with other nonprofits and education stakeholders vested in collaborations with tribes and Indigenous histories that deepen further understandings of stewarding sacred sites. Last summer MPPP held our annual summer youth program that provided hands on STEM experience for high school students. The summer program is integral to MPPP's mission as we work with students to record critical archaeological features on the site. Students spend time learning basic mapping skills and further expand their understandings on local histories. We are in the midst of recruiting a new summer youth cohort that will take place the first two weeks of June. Selected participants are eligible to receive dual credit from Northern New Mexico College and a small stipend for their time.

In January Dr. Matthew Martinez (Ohkay Owingeh) was hired full-time as the Executive Director. Dr. Martinez brings a range of experience working in cultural preservation efforts, education, and tribal relations. Previously he was the Deputy Director at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture overseeing operations and programming and served as First Lieutenant Governor of Ohkay Owingeh. One of the exciting events for the upcoming year is planning for a celebration and symposium honoring the 25 years of Mesa Prieta to be held Fall 2024. A formal Call for Presenters will be issued by the end of the year to invite scholars, community members and tribal leaders to share their work and stories honoring the project and collaborations in site stewardship.

To continue this critical work in education, preservation, and stewardship, MPPP continues to seek funding to support initiatives. We welcome the opportunity to strategically partner with aligned organizations and foundations that are vested in the protection of archaeological sites and educational outreach to communities. Please visit [Mesa Prieta Petroglyph Project](https://www.mesaprietapetroglyphs.org) for updates and to sign up for our newsletter. Contact: Dr. Matthew Martinez, director@mesaprietapetroglyphs.org or 505-699-2705.