Topic: Capturing and managing land ownership data
Date: 2025 May 22
Time: 12 PM Eastern

In Attendance

Alex Lawrence, NMNH	Erica Krimmel	Talia Karim, UCM
Martha Hayden, UGS	Lindsay Walker, Symbiota	Natalia Lopez Carranza, KU
Roger Burkhalter, Sam Noble Museum Invert Paleo, Retired	Suzanne Mills, Carnegie	Maria Lopez Rojas
Nicole McGee, UCM	Jacob Van Veldhuizen, UCM	Carrie Levitt-Bussian, UMNH
Jess Utrup, YPM	Sarah Davis, Carnegie	
Jessie Nakano, NMNH	Maricela Abarca, Stanford	
Amanda Millhouse, NMNH	Holly Little, NMNH	
Georgia Knauss, BLM	Janaki Krishna, UMNH	

Resources

- Paleo Data Working Group Google Folder
- CUMNH-Verifying Landownership Status
- BLM National Surface Management Agency on ArcGIS Online
- USGS National Map
- BLM General Land Office Records
- Tribal Directory Assessment Tool = TDAT
- Sanborn Fire Maps at LOC

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- onX Hunt - app (iOS and Android, website) current land ownership - paid subscription (~$120/year) (https://www.onxmaps.com/)

Agenda

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Action Items

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Notes

- **Determining current ownership**

    - Jacob uses the BLM's National Surface Management Agency's Tile Layer
    - ArcGIS online
    - Open in Map Viewer → colors = federal or state land ownership
    - Click on the layers to find out current land ownership
- **Determining historical ownership** (=mostly western US—does not apply to Texas or original 13 colonies/eastern seaboard)
    - BLM GLO Records
        - You need TRS coordinates (PLSS) to figure out
        - Jacob recommends the National Map Viewer layer
        - Use this info to go back to the GLO resource
            - Enter state, township & range (no preceding zeroes)
        - Look for relevant land patents
            - Aliquot = land on patent
            - Click link in Accession and this will give you more info
                - If the Accession value is italicized, BLM hasn't verified if it's correct → proceed with caution
            - Check issue date against collection dates
            - Federal/state records rare to find this way—better to figure out when the park was founded to figure out of a specimen is NPS (etc.) or not
            - If no patent, most likely a federal (e.g. BLM) locality / patent not digitized
    - County assessor's office more useful for state/county ownership but it's tricky
- BLM has a website that helps convert lat/long to PLSS coordinates
    - Jacob says the National Map can be easier to use
    - GeoLocate can also parse this
- **Example: How does NMNH record this information in EMu?**
    - They record this information in a "Transactors" box, where the "transactor" is the collector/permit holder
    - Issue: acknowledging items that were collected on private land with permission and then donated by the collector.
    - Land Owner/Jurisdiction is a field in the catalog module (linked at the specimen level)
        - Include a verification value to document source of information
            - Legacy (unverified) associations
            - Confirmed or Permitted
            - Pre-dates current designation but associated
    - Changing management and legacy issues in trying to go back and verify

Discussion:

- NMNH tries to collect this information at the time of accession
- Janaki: NHMU does this at the site level for anthro and paleo in EMu
- Cleaning legacy expedition records is another challenge
- Jess: At YPM this backtracking has been project-specific and tied to georeferencing

- Jacob: Arctos has a “land holder” field; plans to ask developers to change location to the collection event module.
    - Example: https://arctos.database.museum/place.cfm?action=detail&locality_id=12302669
- Jess: Other Parties field could be used to note land owner (YPM doesn’t use the Other Parties table in this way)
- Jesse recommends getting this data from donors BEFORE they drop anything off
- Distinguishing ownership vs. who is leasing the land matters (lease = NOT ownership)
    - Ex: road cuts can be complicated where ownership differs on different sides of the road
    - Ex: Public lands leased by oil companies
- Jess: where to expend the energy in tracking ownership/what are people searching for/where to start?
    - Roger recommends starting with PRPA-relevant fossils (DOI)
    - What agencies you often work with (may provide funding for this work?)
        - BLM
        - NPS
    - BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) could be a good project before its required as a good faith effort
    - Talia recommends thinking in terms of reporting—what do you need to be able to query quickly?
    - Georgia: BLM has resources to support determining unclear ownership; no promises but please reach out
- Localities collected before the land was designated as national park
    - Not NPS specimens
    - Flagged as separate from the park service
        - YPM did not associate specimens with the national park if it was collected before that was established
- Dam projects that were initially designated as BOR ownership but with NAGPRA they have determined that permission should come from ?[those that owned the land before]

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