Condition Assessment and Significance Evaluation for Cultural Resources between the Glen Canyon Dam and Paria Riffle, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
Or, Up and Down the Colorado River in a Banana Boat doing Archaeology

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Project Objectives

• Reassess 53 previously documented archaeological sites in the Glen Canyon Reach
• Produce a total station map for each site tied to a GPS datum
• Assess current condition and potential natural and cultural impacts for each site
• Evaluate each site for NRHP eligibility
• Propose treatment plans for eligible sites
Summary of Cultural Resources in Glen Canyon Reach

• Prehistoric sites
  – Archaic and Anasazi petroglyphs
Summary of Cultural Resources in Glen Canyon Reach

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  – Lithic procurement areas
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  – Roads
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• Historic sites
  – Roads
  – Inscriptions
DEC 4 1878 THIS ROCK
SENTINEL TO PASSING
WAGONS OF FIRST MESA
COMPANY UNDER THE
COMMAND OF HYRUM
SMITH PHELPS
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  – Navajo sites
Site Eligibility Evaluation

- 34 sites recommended eligible for nomination
  - 2 under Criterion A
  - 5 under Criterion C
  - 22 under Criterion D
  - 5 under more than one criteria
- 14 sites recommended not eligible
- 5 sites recommended potentially eligible but require testing to make a determination
Site Condition Assessment

• 3 sites are in excellent condition
• 24 sites are in good condition
• 16 sites are in fair condition
• 10 sites are in poor condition
Types of Impacts

• Natural erosion
  – slopewash
  – mass wasting
  – exfoliation of rock faces
  – alluvial erosion/gullies
Types of Impacts

• Natural erosion
  – slopewash, mass wasting, exfoliation, alluvial erosion

• Visitor impacts
  – vandalism, esp. of petroglyphs
  – visitor infrastructure
Types of Impacts

• Natural erosion
  – slopewash, mass wasting, exfoliation, alluvial erosion
• Visitor impacts
  – vandalism, infrastructure
• Combined natural/cultural impacts
  – trails that become drainages
  – infrastructure that promotes erosion
  – probable river-based/dam-related erosion
Possible Treatment Options

• No treatment
• Stabilization
• Additional documentation
• Test excavation to determine significance or extent of cultural deposits
• Complete excavation to mitigate adverse impacts
What We Learned

• Archaeological sites in the Glen Canyon Reach have good data potential and can be grouped into several interesting historic research contexts
• The majority of sites are in stable geomorphic settings and are not in imminent danger
• Impacts to sites often reflect both natural and cultural forces
• Some sites can be stabilized but others will require active treatment (stabilization or mitigation)
What Else We Learned

• Never try to go upstream with a 15 hp motor
• …you’d be better off paddling!