



P.O. Box 68, Moab UT 84532  
800-860-5262 • 435-259-7750  
cfmoab.org • info@cfmoab.org

**Connecting People and Nature: History, Education and Adventure**

## **Eastern Book Cliffs – Deep History Field Seminar**

### **Two Nights Camping with Truck Support**

#### **Program Outline & Schedule**

This field seminar explores a lesser known section of the Book Cliffs and Cisco Desert from Thompson, Utah out towards the Utah-Colorado state line. The graceful sweep and pastel colors of the geological formations here – which are younger than much of the Colorado Plateau – set the stage for our exploration. There is evidence of human activity from Paleo-Indian up until the modern day. Spectacular rock art from Archaic, Fremont, and Ute cultures, as well as, early French trappers and cowboy inscriptions indicate occupation and seasonal travel over thousands of years.

Archaeological research in this section of the Book Cliffs in the 1930-50's was instrumental in further defining what we now call "Fremont" Culture. Westwater Creek – a perennial stream that begins in Hay Canyon and later joins the Colorado River – served to connect the Uintah Basin with the Colorado Plateau, and was known as the Trappers Trail, associated with a northern arm of the Old Spanish Trail. Biological communities that we visit vary greatly from salt desert scrub, cottonwood oases, pinyon and juniper forest, to oak, aspen and pine tree groves. The Cisco Desert and Book Cliffs are critical wildlife habitat for a variety of birds and mammals including antelope, bear, deer, elk, mountain lion, bighorn sheep, spotted owls, bald eagles, and bison.

Tucked into what many would consider a stark environment, the area has seen its share of human drama and controversies. Rough – often impassable when wet – roads and flash floods challenged travelers then and now. Early day Anglo settlers included hardscrabble homesteaders followed by cattle and sheep ranchers were often at odds until federal grazing regulations were established. Cretaceous and Tertiary geologic formations attracted early day oil exploration, and more recently natural gas, helium, proposed tar sand, and transportation corridor.

Our trip begins and ends in Moab at our CFI office. Guest faculty John Weisheit will be with us the whole time, and Michael 'Red' Wolfe will join one day to share his vast knowledge of the area. We travel in CFI vehicles and camp two nights with truck support for kitchen and personal gear.

#### **TRIP OBJECTIVES**

1. Gain a basic understanding of Colorado Plateau geologic history.
2. Overview prehistoric occupation in the Eastern Book Cliffs and Cisco Desert area with a focus on Archaic Barrier Canyon, Fremont, and Ute material cultures.
3. Learn about the fascinating career and research of H. M. Wormington, one of a handful of women working in anthropology in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century.
4. Overview Anglo exploration and settlement with a focus on the "Trappers Trail", establishment of railroads, ranching, mineral exploration, and current land ownership issues.
5. Learn about the diverse vegetation and wildlife that we see at various elevations.



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## SCHEDULE

### Day 1

- 8:30 am Meet at CFI office, 1320 S. Hwy 191, Moab, Utah. Meet guest faculty and participants; repack personal gear into CFI “dry bags” unless you bring your gear already in water and dust proof duffels. A short orientation and review of our route follows.
- Park personal vehicles at CFI and load into CFI vehicles. *As per our insurance private vehicles cannot be taken.*
- 9:00 am Depart. Travel north to Thompson and canyons beyond. Our learning begins with an introduction to geological features including the “Thompson bench”.
- Next we will shift focus onto humans from prehistoric and historic times. We will start at the world famous Se-go rock art panels and lesser known shield figures. Then we move onto the Se-go ghost town to introduce mining and railroad history.
- Mid-day Continue on back roads east we rejoin I-70 and head up Nash Wash to visit Cunningham Ranch managed by the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. Picnic lunch midday. As we travel, we watch for desert wildflowers and Pronghorn Antelope.
- Afternoon We head to Cottonwood Canyon, with permission of private landowner. Learn about early archaeological research in the “Northern Periphery” of the Colorado Plateau including theories around differentiating the Fremont Culture from other Ancestral Puebloan groups to the south. We explore up Diamond Creek, small tributary nearby to see a beautiful Owl pictograph.
- Evening Make camp and dinner. Staff will share a short presentation about ground breaking work and career of the late Hannah Marie Wormington, who served as Curator of Anthropology, Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

### Day 2

- All day Wake up, hot drinks, breakfast, and optional stretching. Overview and make lunches for the day. Head to Westwater Creek and look for traces of the narrow gauge railroad and old homesteads indicating agricultural endeavors starting in the 1880’s. Once in Hay Canyon, we stop for impressive prehistoric rock art (using binoculars or via a short walk). Later on, a highlight will be finding a lesser known inscription of French trapper Denis Julien from who traveled here in early 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Evening We make another comfy truck supported camp. Evening is open for questions and stories, and a look at the night sky.



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### Day 3

- Morning** Wake up, hot drinks, breakfast, and optional stretching. Make lunches for the day. Travel along the Divide Road on the crest of the Book Cliffs, more geology highlights and beautiful views. Learn about past and recently proposed energy projects in this region.
- Mid-day** We make a loop and return down East Canyon, stopping for another great rock art site, to learn about black cowboy Charlie Glass and local range wars. We begin our route home via Cisco Pump Station/boat ramp. Hear stories about this infamous town over time, see historic inscriptions, and enjoy shade and lunch.
- By 4:30 pm** Arrive back at CFI and our field seminar ends.

### WHAT TO BRING AND HOW TO PACK

Please see the CFI Personal Gear List enclosed with your trip packet for overnight camping trips. Please note for this trip, you do not need a swimming suit or other gear that would be for river trips only. For spring and fall trips, keep in mind weather can change suddenly and include cold to hot temperatures, wind and rain. Please bring long underwear and rain gear just in case.

Please provide your own sleeping bag, sleeping pad, and tent. These items can be rented from CFI with advance notice. We will be at higher elevations so you will want a very warm sleeping bag or extra blanket.

At our meeting place, CFI will provide waterproof “dry bags” that we use on river trips for storage of your overnight gear during the day. Bring a fanny pack or small day pack for items needed in the vehicle and on short walks. We will not be doing extensive hiking as part of the seminar program. Light walking shoes or hiking boots (closed toe) are needed for some of the short hikes. We will also walk through sagebrush at times so long pants are recommended.

### CFI PROVIDES

CFI will provide all food, camp, and kitchen gear. This includes camp chairs, propane stoves, utensils, and cups. Our delicious meals can accommodate vegetarian eaters (please note any dietary allergies on registration forms.) If you have a more restrictive diet, you are welcome to bring supplemental food. We will have a small ice cooler for drinks if you wish to bring them. CFI will provide water, juice, coffee, and tea at breakfast and dinner. Your fee includes permit fees to the State of Utah and Bureau of Land Management and round trip transportation.



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## **ACTIVITY LEVEL AND PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS**

The Eastern Book Cliffs trip is rated “moderate” in the CFI activity scale. This means walking over uneven ground, possible short talus slopes, very shallow creek crossings, hikes up to one mile in length round trip and ability to get in and out of truck or vans several times a day. You are always welcome to “sit out” a particular site; we are never too far or too long from a vehicle. Those who wish to hike more may do so from camps on their own with notice to our guides. Elevations on this trip range from 4000 feet in Moab to 8000 feet on the Divide Road on the top of Book Cliffs. Please inquire with your doctor if you have medical conditions or concerns. Pregnant women are not allowed on CFI backcountry/overnight trips as per our Medical Advisor.

## **ROAD CONDITIONS**

We schedule our trips during typically “good months” but you never know about the weather. We will travel on both paved, gravel, and dirt roads. In case of heavy rain, some roads will be impassable and we will alter routes and stops.

## **MEETING LOCATION AND PARKING**

Meet at CFI headquarters, 1320 S. Hwy 191 which is south of Moab, UT. You will park your personal vehicle here. If you are staying in Moab without transportation, please contact our office ahead of time and we can arrange to pick you up a little earlier and bring you to CFI for the orientation. Likewise, we can get you back to your lodging after the trip.

## **PRE AND POST ACCOMMODATIONS**

Spring and fall are “high season” in Moab and motels and campgrounds fill early. Please visit the Travel Council website [www.discovermoab.com](http://www.discovermoab.com) for options.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Please see the enclosed Additional Information Sheet regarding weather, risk management, cancellation policies and other information. Please note CFI operates on nature’s terms by choice and cell coverage is limited. We encourage you to put cell phones on “retreat” mode (i.e. airplane mode) during this trip, especially when we are together as a group. The CFI trip leader will have a cellphone, spot tracker, or satellite phone for communication in case of an emergency situation.



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## RESOURCES

### MUSEUMS

**The College of Eastern Utah Prehistoric Museum**, 155 E. 100 North, Price, UT (435) 613-5060 or (800) 817-9949, [www.museum.ceu.edu/](http://www.museum.ceu.edu/)

**John Wesley Powell Museum**, 885 E. Main, Green River, UT (435) 564-3427

Open May-October 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. [www.jwprhm.com](http://www.jwprhm.com)

**Museum of Moab**, 118 E. Center, Moab, UT 84532. (435) 259-7985, [www.museumofmoab.org](http://www.museumofmoab.org)

**Museum of Western Colorado**, 550 Jurassic Ct. Fruita, CO (970) 858-7282

<https://www.museumofwesternco.com/>

**Ute Indian Museum**, 17253 Chipeta Drive, Montrose, CO (970) 249-3098

<http://www.historycolorado.org/museums/ute-indian-museum-0>

### BOOKS

Childs, Craig. *Finders Keepers*. Little, Brown and Company, 2010.

Cole, Sally J. *Legacy on Stone: Rock Art of the Colorado Plateau*. Johnson Books, 2009.

Madsen, David B. *Exploring the Fremont*. Utah Museum of Natural History, 1989.

Patterson, Carol. *Concepts of Spirit in Prehistoric Art According to Clifford Duncan, Ute Spiritual Elder*. Smith Publishers

Patterson, Carol. *Ute Rock Art Maps*, International Federation of Rock Art Organizations, 2013, Albuquerque, NM

Schaafsma, Polly. *The Rock Art of Utah*. University of Utah Press, 1971.

Simms, Steven R. *Traces of Fremont: Society and Rock Art in Ancient Utah*. University of Utah Press, 2010.

### ARTICLES/Web Resources

Knipmeyer, James H.. *The Old Trappers' Trail Through Eastern Utah*, *Canyon Legacy*, No. 9, Spring 1 Museum of Moab, 1991,.

McDaniel, Josh. 2010. *Ancient Conversations*, *High Country News*. Pg 6.

Nash, Stephen E. *Hannah Marie Wormington: Woman, Myth, Legend*, *KIVA: The Journal of Southwestern Anthropology and History*, Vol 78, No. 3, Spring 2013.

Stewart, Tamara. *Who Were the Fremont?* *American Archaeology*, Volume 10, Number 4, Winter 2006-07.

Weisheit, John. *The Topography and Morphology of the Book Cliffs*. *Canyon Legacy*, Museum of Moab, Volume 29, Summer, 1997.

Wormington, H. J. *A Reappraisal of the Fremont Culture*, Proceedings, No 1. May 1, 1955, The Denver Museum of Natural History.

See [www.livingrivers.org](http://www.livingrivers.org) and [www.moabtimes.com](http://www.moabtimes.com), [www.slctrib.com](http://www.slctrib.com) for articles on energy and water issues.

*Note that several of these readings and additional field guides will be available on the trip in our CFI library.*