The state vs. museums in ownership of fossils & artifacts

If private collectors are willing to pay tens of thousands of dollars for a first-rate dinosaur fossil, should Utah officials sell off its dinosaur bones to the highest bidder? That is the dilemma facing CEU Museum director Don Burge, State Paleontologist David Gillette, and others involved in preserving the state's fossil and cultural heritage.

The Division of State Lands policy integration manager, Karl Kappe, said, "We have to consider the sale of fossil resources, just as we have to consider the sale of cultural artifacts. Where a market exists for a resource located on trust lands, we have to consider the potential to market those resources for the benefit of trust beneficiaries."

Burge has more than a personal interest in the dilemma since he received a letter from the State Lands chastising him for not paying $200 for a right-of-entry permit for a recent excavation on state lands and implying the school trust fund must be compensated for fossils removed by the College of Eastern Utah Prehistoric Museum personnel.

According to an article in the Deseret News, Kappe said that this was a correct implication concerning the sale of fossil resources. "There is a market out there for those fossils; that's something that has to be looked at."

Paying for specimens

The letter to Burge states that if the division decided the display of the specimen was to benefit schoolchildren, "you may not be required to pay for the specimen itself."

In the case of Burge's fossil discovery, the sale of the fossils would mean the loss of a one-of-a-kind dinosaur.

Burge felt the State Land policy will violate the American Association of Museums' Code of Ethics which states, "Museums collections and exhibition materials represent the world's natural and cultural common wealth. As stewards of that wealth, museums are compelled to advance an understanding of all natural forms and the human experience. It is incumbent on museums to be resources for humankind and in all their activities to foster an informed appreciation of the rich and diverse world we have inherited. It is also incumbent upon them to preserve that inheritance for the future."

"Museums in the United States are grounded in the tradition of public service. Museums and those responsible for them must do more than avoid legal liability. They must act ethically. The Code of Ethics for Museums outlines ethical standards that exceed legal minimums. Ethics transcend the law and museums are accountable to society at large. Where conflicts of interest arise -- actual, potential or perceived -- the public good must supersede self-interest."

Burge replied, "As an accredited museum, we have a commitment to live up to an ethical code. Every nation in the world has outlawed the selling of artifacts and fossils. It's like selling our heritage. I can't believe this is even an issue."

This issue affects more than one rare dinosaur. Scientists say it pits underfunded scientific researchers against wealthy foreign collectors in an unwinnable bidding war. Unwinnable for scientists, Burge feels.

Closing the door to academic research

Gillette felt that it closes the door to academic research on state lands in Eastern Utah, one of the richest paleontological areas in the world. "Not only will research institutions be unable to bid for those specimens, but under every professional ethical standard it would be wrong for them to do so."

However, professional researchers will likely never get into a bidding war for fossils or archaeological artifacts because of the serious moral and ethical problems such purchases entail.

The problem strikes at the heart of an issue that for months has pitted the Division of State History against the Division of State Lands. One is charged with protecting the state's fossil and cultural heritage, while the other has a mandate to maximize the economic return from lands given the state by the federal government for the benefit of Utah schoolchildren.

Both sides have been negotiating rules whereby the resources can be protected and the economic return to the school trust still maximized. But the one issue scientists will never agree to is the outright (Continued on page 2)

Museum accredited by national AAM

Another accolade was bestowed upon the College of Eastern Utah Prehistoric Museum when it received notification of accreditation from the American Association of Museums in Washington D.C.

CEU's Museum is now one of four in Utah accredited in the state. The others include the Hansen Planetarium, the University of Utah's Museum of Natural History and the U of U's Museum of Fine Arts.

Don Burge, CEU Museum director, is elated over the recognition. He said that accreditation is a prestigious status given only to museums meeting the highest standards of excellence. Only about 10 percent of the museums in the nation receive this recognition while CEU's Museum is the only one outside of the Salt Lake area to receive this distinction.

Bringing the museum up to par with AAM's strict standards was a monumental task, Burge added. "Museum accreditation certifies that your institution has undergone the rigorous, professional examination established by the AAM through the completion of the detailed self-study and review of the museum's operations by a visiting committee of the AAM Accrediting Commission."

The on-site inspection and the self-study, which was hundreds of pages long, covered areas such as administration, staff, volunteers, finances, exhibitions and programs.

Museum staff have spent the past five years preparing to qualify for accreditation. Some of the recent improvements include a new $2 million building, nearly quadrupling the museum's space, and many more new exhibitions including newly found dinosaur skeletons.

Now that CEU's Museum has received accreditation, it will have to continue to work to keep it. Burge said that the AAM reviews accredited museums to follow up on committee suggestions and to ensure high standards are maintained. Almost half of accredited museums do not have their accreditation renewed, but CEU's director plans to keep expanding to eventually have it become world renowned.
*Fossils and artifacts*

(Continued from page 1)

He hopes people will write their legislators opposing the pending changes in rules and regulations affecting the Division of State Lands and the Division of State History. Others to write include Richard J. Mitchell, director, and Kappe, Division of State Lands, 355 West North Temple, 3 Triad Center, Suite 400, Salt Lake City, Utah 84180; Roger Peart, chairman, Board of State Lands and Forestry (same address); and John Harpja, Governor’s Office, State Capitol, SLC, Utah 84114.

Gillette requests that copies of the letters be sent to him at the Division of State History, 300 Rio Grande, SLC, Utah 84112.

**Goals presented to state by CEU curator**

College of Eastern Utah Museum’s Director, Don Burge, met with representatives of the Utah Museum Development Strategy Committee, a joint planning effort between state officials and the Utah Museum Association, December 16 to outline goals for the future growth of the CEU Museum.

"CEU’s Museum is a nonprofit organization, organized for educational purposes and operated by an act of the Board of Trustees of the college," he said.

**Purpose of CEU’s Museum**

"Our purpose is to establish and maintain exhibits of fossils, Indian artifacts, gems and minerals, and similar objects pertaining to Eastern Utah; to participate in the acquisition of fossils, minerals, artifacts and other materials consistent with the museum’s mission; to preserve prehistoric sites in Eastern Utah; to serve as a center of education for CEU students and others interested in geology, archaeology, paleontology, anthropology and related sciences; and to provide tourists with a center of cultural and educational enrichment relating to Eastern Utah.

**New facilities opened**

He told representatives about the new two-story, 25,000 square foot building completed last summer and the 10,000 foot storage area and lab to be completed on the CEU campus in early 1992. "We do not have any plans for expansion of new facilities at this time but will direct our energy toward equipping the lab and the storage facilities.

"We must increase our collections so that we can rotate exhibits with new items and hope to expand our modest library so that it can become a research center for the archaeology and paleontology in the area. We would like to become a state and federal depository for paleontological and archaeological specimens from Eastern Utah."

**Administrative obstacles**

Burge said the museum has a strong commitment in the areas of archaeology and paleontology and spend a significant amount of time working with public agencies. "Most of the land in Eastern Utah is under the control of the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the Utah Division of Lands and Forestry. Our museum has been active in field work on these lands for over 30 years. For the most part, the relationship with the federal agencies has been positive. However, difficulties have occurred relative to permits and curation agreements in paleontology because those involved in the decision making process are not a part of the public.

"Our museum is accredited by the American Association of Museums. Utah should consider developing a code of ethics patterned after it."

He hopes people will write their legislators opposing the pending changes in rules and regulations affecting the Division of State Lands and the Division of State History. Others to write include Richard J. Mitchell, director, and Kappe, Division of State Lands, 355 West North Temple, 3 Triad Center, Suite 400, Salt Lake City, Utah 84180; Roger Peart, chairman, Board of State Lands and Forestry (same address); and John Harpja, Governor's Office, State Capitol, SLC, Utah 84114.

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**Coordination between state’s museums and museum service agencies**

In discussing the efficient and effective cooperation and coordination between the state’s museums and museum service agencies, Burge said that we must have a group of museum representatives that can spend time to gain a strong insight in both political and legal issues. "As a group we must receive counsel from both lawyers and politicians. The Utah Museum Association officers should be included in this group."

We need to develop training centers and workshops for both museum staff and volunteers, he continued. The certification programs being developed in archaeology and paleontology need to be expanded into other areas, such as collections management, conservation and cataloging. Plus we need a state-wide program advertising our museums.

Most museums lack professional staff and we should therefore share our staff more than we do. Also, the proper storage of articles is very expensive so we need to divide the responsibilities of storage and maintenance by interest, location and type of articles.

His last suggestion was to meet often with state and federal officials to discuss common concerns and assist each other to develop solutions.
Ancient ground sloth discovered in Orem

The bones of a prehistoric ground sloth were discovered in Orem, Utah last summer. The bones were found on a trail that had been cut into the hillside by motorcycle riders. Orem resident, Ron Robison, saw the bones and showed them to his brother, a geologist, who then called state paleontologist, Dave Gillette.

Gillette examined the bones and determined that they were from a Megalonyx jeffersonii ground sloth. This species of sloth was discovered by Thomas Jefferson who found some of the bones in a cave in Virginia. Jefferson had hoped that he had discovered a large lion when he unearthed the claws.

The sloth lived on the edge of prehistoric Lake Bonneville during the Pleistocene Epoch. It shared space with some very famous mammals including the sabertoothed cat, dire wolf and mastodons.

The sloth was about the size of a modern grizzly bear measuring about 12-feet-tall but weighed in about one ton. It had club feet due to the length of its claws and walked on its little toes. Its long hair was probably covered with algae and insects due to the fact that, like the modern sloth, it had a very slow metabolism.

CEU Museum's bone preparator, Carl Limone, helped with the excavation in Orem. For more information about the dig see staff projects on page 4.

Museum visitation numbers up 9%

Visitation at the College of Eastern Utah's Museum has continued its upward spiral. The first eight months of 1991 saw 29,045 visitors tour the museum. The same period in 1990 saw 26,340 visitors for an increase of 2,705 visitors or a nine percent increase.

June is traditionally the month with (Continued on page 4)

Utah State Society of Paleontology formed

A state-wide meeting to form an organization with paleontology at its roots, was hosted by the CEU Museum in September.

The group, called the Utah Friends of Paleontology, established its goals at the meeting. The first was to involve the public with the professional paleontological community by providing training and opportunities to assist in field excavation and opportunities to assist in field excavation and laboratory preparation of fossils.

The second is to redirect "fossil collecting" energy toward constructive activities that will assist professional research and improve museum collections. The group also wants to become involved with a Prehistory Week (an expansion of Archaeology Week), participate in a Junior History Newsletter and function as a lobby group to support paleontological legislation.

Regional chapters will be organized in Salt Lake, Provo/Orem, Vernal, Carbon/Emery and other areas of the state.

Officer elected include Paul Smith, president; Candy Wignall, vice president; Carol Sue Martinez, secretary and Jan Dunn, treasurer. Meetings will be held on one Wednesday a month at 7 p.m. at the museum. For more information call the museum.

Nodosaurus skeleton assembled for new exhibit

An armored dinosaur, called the Nodosaurus, was discovered in the Moab area and will be excavated for display at the College of Eastern Utah Museum.

Museum bone preparators are preparing half of a sacral shield with fused armor plating that covers the ancient dinosaur.

The Nodosaurus lived during the Cretaceous Period about 90 million years ago. The unusual name refers to the fact that the bones in the skin of these animals tend to be fused together into great shield-like pieces of armor plating. The plating seemed to have consisted of broad bands of alternately large and small rounded nodules. It is possible that the margins of the armor were fringed with tall spines.

The armor plating was so extensive that large slabs of bone were even welded onto the head, giving them quite a grotesque appearance. However this would have conferred upon the animal both considerable strength and flexibility.

The hind legs are pillar-like in order to support the heavy body, and the feet are naturally short and broad. Large leg muscles were attached to the underside of the ilium while the jaws end in a toothless, horn-covered beak.

The nicosaurus were the tanks of the dinosaur era. Because of the protective plates covering its back and sides, it could crouch down to cover and guard its belly during an attack.

Also found with the Nodosaurus was a tooth of an Iguanodon, unknown claws and a 12-inch claw from a Deinonychus.

The Deinonychus, or "terrible claw", had a claw on the second toe of the hind foot and was used as an offensive weapon. Its distinctive characteristics include a large skull with backwardly curved teeth, long and powerful arms, and the extraordinary sickle-like second toe. The "terrible claw" was raised off the ground to protect the sharp point of the claw. Once the unusual nature of the feet of deinonychus was appreciated, it is possible to draw comparisons with other predatory dinosaurs.

To date several partial skeletons of the Deinonychus have been found.
Exhibits expanding in museum

A new Southwest pottery exhibit is on display in the museum's Hall of Archaeology. It shows locotions of prehistoric pottery-making cultures in the Southwest in relationship to the current Native American cultures.

Another exhibit set for display in 92 is the mysteries of archaeology. It will showcase archaeological finds with unknown purposes.

Museum staff projects

Ground Sloth

Carl Limone, a CEU sophomore and museum bone preparator, spent the weekend of Aug. 29 through Sept. 1 in Orem excavating the ground sloth that was found buried beside a road.

He worked with State Paleontologist, David Gillette on the project that received national media attention.

Limone said he learned new excavation techniques and liked working with other professionals. He is used to digging in hard rock for dinosaur bones and it was a new experience digging in gravels from the ancient sediments of Lake Bonneville for the ground sloth's remains. "Both methods have advantages and disadvantages," he said.

Other projects he is working on include the extraction of a Camarasaurus in the Mussentuchit Quarry in Southeastern Utah.

*Visitors (Cont. from page 3)*

The highest visitors touring the museum. However, June 1991, a visitation record was set with 6,874 visitors touring the museum.

Tour groups account for increased visitation with over 3,000 visiting in 1991.

Nine Mile Canyon

Pam Miller, museum archaeologist and Channel Atwood, assistant archaeologist, worked with members of the Castle Valley Chapter of the Utah State Archaeology Society on the 1991 Survey of Nine Mile Canyon.

The two are working in conjunction with Brigham Young University Professor Ray Matheny, Ph.D., and his wife, Deanne Matheny, Ph.D.

The archaeological teams spent five weekends in September and October surveying and recording cultural resources. The teams recorded 33 sites during this period.

The Castle Valley Chapter of the Utah State Archaeology Society is all-volunteer. The organizers of the canyon survey acknowledge the time commitment of those who participated and want to thank them for their assistance.

Cleveland-Lloyd Quarry

Although the Cleveland-Lloyd is closed for the season, record attendance was achieved this past year with over 6,000 people visiting the quarry from Memorial Weekend through Labor Day Weekend. The quarry is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 1993.

Tracking happenings

Young Museum Associates

The CEU Young Museum Associates were honored this past summer for their service by taking a field trip to the John Wesley Powell Museum in Green River, Utah.

Volunteers Doug Lavanger, Karl McKenzie, Erin Dick, Lizanell Neffler and Christopher Maxwell were taken to the museum and treated to some of Green River's famous watermelon.

Children's Room

A new attraction in the Children's Room focuses on the Hopi Culture. Drawings and photos show different aspects of life of the Hopi Indians including pueblos, pottery designs and Kachina dolls.

A new reading area where children can stretch out in bean bag chairs and read about dinosaurs and Indians has been designed. According to Lori Perez, collection manager, "It's a great way for kids to spend an afternoon of learning."

Research Library

Part of the new museum's plan was the creation of a community research library. Now complete, community members can use the library to do research on prehistoric life, geology or archaeology. For appointments call Sue Ann Martell at the museum.

Dr. Dorman's 1991 Safari

Dr. J. Eldon "Doc" Dorman's annual Rock Art Jeep Safari in September attracted 54 first time participants from throughout the state to see some of Southeastern Utah's famous Indian rock art.

With cameras, binoculars and full tanks of gas, the group traveled to Cedar Mountain area, Buckhorn Flat, Buckhorn Draw, Head of Sinbad and the Dry Wash on the Moore cutoff.