

FOREST SPOTLIGHT

Modoc NF – Pacific Southwest Region

225 W. 8th St. Alturas, CA 96101

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/modoc>

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PIT projects provide data, experience and connections

Through a sea of brightly colored “pin flags” and old gnarled juniper within the vast sagebrush, a visitor may see a small group of Passport in Time (PIT) volunteers of all ages and backgrounds.

Value of Giving Back

“This is one project that takes everybody to accomplish,” said Volunteer, David Loera of Sacramento.

“We couldn’t do this archeological inventory without the help of PIT volunteers,” Forest Archeologist, Gerry Gates agreed. “They help make the work more cost effective, and help provide insight and knowledge about Heritage resources and the history of the tribes in the area.”



Volunteers catalogue obsidian flakes and other artifacts



Ray Hanson of Myrtle Creek, Ore. holds an obsidian flake to the light to determine its origin.

Value of the Opportunity

“If you like the outdoors and want to see the beauty of America, Passport in Time gives volunteers an opportunity to help preserve the cultural heritage I think is important,” said Ray Hanson, Myrtle Creek, Ore.

“I do a lot of rafting and you’re always moving,” shared Loera. “PIT allows me to move slower and take the time to see many things I might miss during my other outdoor pursuits.”

“All of the Archeology and Heritage employees I have worked with here and all over the country are really competent public servants,” Hanson added. “I’ve not met a fumbler or a bumbler in the bunch!”

Value to Educations

“My education and future career path requires field school, which can be expensive. PIT is a good opportunity to get field experience without paying thousands of dollars,” said UC Santa Cruz Biology and Anthropology major, Rebecca Rottenborn. “This is a great opportunity to gain experience in my own state where we are studying history that hits much closer to home.”

Madison Henley recently graduated

from Western Washington University in Anthropology with an archeological concentration and has also been to field school. “I have found it hard to find opportunities to gain experience on the West Coast,” she said. “These projects are a really good way to get experience and make valuable contacts at the same time.”

Rottenborn and Henley agree on the value of getting to know people in the archeological community on the West Coast. Many have participated in other PIT projects around the country, and every project is organized by people extremely knowledgeable in the discipline, “Archaeology is a close-knit community,” Henley added. “It’s good to get to know as many people as possible.”

“Part of our Heritage Program on the Modoc National Forest has been to provide field opportunities for college and university students,” explained Gates. “On our first PIT project in June this year, we also had two American Student Volunteers.”

Brooke Harder from CSU-Chico and Scott Jones from Bakersfield Community College assisted the Modoc Archeological Crew with instructing PIT volunteers in archeological field methods during their six-week volunteer placement provided by the Modoc National Forest Heritage Program.

The information gathered from this PIT project will be available for graduate students to use as subjects for master’s thesis topics. Over the years, the Modoc Heritage Program has supported more than a dozen theses and one PHD dissertation.

These studies help us all better understand the nature of our non-renewable archeological resources, as well as help in improving management methods and exploring new opportunities.

“We have been hosting PIT projects on the Modoc since 1991, and hope to continue in the future. It is a program that helps the Forest to achieve a ‘Heritage Program managed to standard’,” Gates added.” And it’s just plain fun!”

Learn more about Passport in Time (PIT) and how to get involved at: <http://www.passportintime.com/>.

Or hear directly from more volunteers on Facebook [@PassportinTime Volunteers](#).



Gerry Gates explains the origin of a rare material to UC Santa Cruz Biology and Anthropology major, Rebecca Rottenborn.



Modoc Heritage Program Manager, Gerry Gates explains the significance of a projectile point found at the project site.

