AZSITE Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Report
October 2021
Prepared by Daniel Garcia, AHAC Chair

Meetings

AHAC has met once following the last AZSITE Executive Board Meeting in July 2021. Our September 16, 2021 committee meeting was again held via zoom. The meeting focused on discussions with Gabe McGowan and input from the advisors about proposed modifications to the AZSITE webmap as well as the AZSITE user agreement. The call also provided updates on three specific initiatives identified during the April board meeting as well as one new issue involving proposed AZSITE training.

Committee Members

Since the committee has been in service for one year, the position of Chair was up for nomination and vote. The committee nominated and voted to have Dan Garcia continue as chair for an additional year.

Advisor Ryan Arp announced that his employer EPG was acquired by Terracon and is no longer a small CRM firm, so we need to replace Ryan on the committee. Recently, Margaret Hangan has also asked to be replaced with another federal archaeologist, and we suspect other committee members may wish to step down. We request direction from the board on how to go about replacing Ryan – will the board issue a call for committee members or should the committee solicit and appoint new members?

Changes to the Webmap

Gabe McGowan and Ayan Mitra from ASU presented proposed changes to the webmap that would accommodate revised topographic, aerial, and other basemap imagery and could introduce some minor performance lags, imprecision, and UTM tool issues for the webmap user. Advisors expressed concern that an upgraded webmap, like that proposed by the committee for a Public/CLG version of AZSITE, would be a better solution than patching the existing antiquated version we have now.

AZSITE User Agreement

Gabe McGowan asked the committee if they had any concerns about the current AZSITE use agreement. He proposes to revise the agreement in October in advance of 2022 applications. Advisors provided some suggestions to streamline the agreement and improve the review and approval of new user qualifications.

AZSITE Land Ownership/Jurisdiction Data Improvements

AHAC Advisor Ian Milliken reported on some ongoing research and some of the complexities and caveats of an improved data set. That said, additional research and work needs to be done before any solid recommendations are made.

Adding well-known archaeological sites not already in AZSITE.

No update.

Updating prehistoric and historic canal information in AZSITE

The Arizona Archaeological Council/City of Phoenix Canal Symposium last month was successful, and conversations that followed suggested some avenues to revise the prehistoric canal data for inclusion in

AZSITE. While we had hoped to have revised data by the end of 2021, it is more likely that this would not be able to happen until 2022. Pueblo Grande Museum has a GIS volunteer who may be able to assist with this effort, and ASU's Research Apprentice Program may be another option to get the work done, but Dan Garcia needs to meet with Chris Caseldine and Laurene Montero, possibly with others, to work out the details of revising the data and determine how to maintain and update that data. Regarding historic canal data, coordination with Bureau of Reclamation has been only preliminary. Reclamation supports revision of data but has no data or resources to contribute. We still need to work out how to address the historic canal data.

AZSITE Training

Advisor Reylynne Williams asked if AZSITE Board or Committee could work on a training program regarding the importance of data protection. The training is needed because some AZSITE users are not qualified archaeologists and should better understand the data and why it needs to be kept secure and not shared with non-professionals. She suggested this should be a condition of getting access to AZSITE data if the individual does not meet personnel qualification standards. The training could also include aspects of cultural orientation so that it is clear that these data are not just data but real places important to living people. We request discussion from the board about the possibility of developing a training requirements for new AZSITE users.

Recommendations

AHAC will continue to focus on the land ownership and improvements to site and canal data going forward. We recommend that the Board consider the need for training. AHAC is available to assist with this effort, as appropriate.

Cordially,

Daniel Garcia, M.A., RPA
Chair, AZSITE Ad Hoc Advisory Committee