Dittert Site Tour

A Foundation sponsored tour to the Dittert site, a small Chacoan outlier located adjacent the El Malpais Wilderness Area near Grants, New Mexico was held on September 25, 2010. The tour was led by Site Watch Board of Directors member Charles Kaplan, his wife, Rhonda Backinoff and BLM Park Ranger Paul Yoder. Attendees visited the Dittert room block, as well as several large unexcavated room blocks in the vicinity. It is believed that the Dittert room block structure of about 30-35 rooms was occupied between approximately A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1350. The room block also contains an attached small round room that may have been a kiva. The structure was constructed in the Chacoan style of pecked sandstone. Several of the structure’s walls and the round kiva are plainly visible today. Adjacent to the main L-shaped structure are several outlier structures, as well as several known field houses to the south, and larger unexcavated multi-story room block units to the west and north. The tour group also visited the great kiva and impressive petroglyphs approximately one mile east of the Dittert room block in alignment with each other and the Dittert room block. Since 1958, this land and the surrounding area have been part of the El Malpais National Conservation Area, administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The Dittert site is part of a network of over 60 known sites in the immediate area indicating a very large community in this region during A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1350.

Left to right standing: Paul Yoder, BLM Park Ranger and Charles Kaplan.
Photo by Nancy Cella.