Leafwater and Tsama Tour

Our first Site Steward Foundation sponsored archaeological tour on Saturday, April 11, 2009, was a fascinating look at two sites owned by The Archaeological Conservancy. Both sites are located in the Rio Chama valley and overlook the river. Mike Bremer very generously offered and led our group of stewards, along with the help of Ann Baldwin.


We started our day at Leafwater Pueblo – This pueblo was occupied from around 1250 to 1350 AD. It contains approximately 400 rooms constructed of adobe and coursed masonry. There is evidence of numerous garden plots surrounding the pueblo. There has been some limited excavation at the site and the San Juan Pueblo claims ancestral affiliation with the site.

The next site we visited was Tsama, or “Wrestling Pueblo Ruin”. The site was built and occupied over the longer time span of 1250 to 1550 AD. The pueblo contains approximately 1200 rooms of adobe and coursed masonry construction. There has been several excavations at the site revealing numerous grid garden plots surrounding the pueblo. The name of the site refers to two possible platforms in the plaza area where wrestling matches may have taken place.
Site locations overlook the Chama River. Photo by Beth Parisi.