

Matienzo Caves Expedition Planning Meeting 16 March 2014 – Clapham

About 25 members were present – Phil Papard (PP) in Chair

1. Change in Area

PP explained that the permit was put in as usual, except that it was submitted in early December due to changes in the application process and some dispute in Spain (the Cultura originally asked for ten years of reports, we could comply but the Spanish clubs asked for a delay until a solution was found).

The reply came to Peter Smith in early February. The Cantabrian Federation had requests from many clubs for areas, and it seems they decided to allocate as far as possible to municipalities with the need to cut down on the larger areas of some groups (including us). The permit now covers the area of Ruesga north of the ridge From Alisas to Cruz de Uzano, plus all of Solórzano, Entrambasaguas and Cueva Vallina. We lost the western part of Voto (Llueva and Secadura) and the east part of Riotuerto (Moncobe etc). However PP emailed the Federation chair (Juan Colina) asking for access to explore and complete surveys in the part of Voto that connects, or could connect, to the Four Valleys System. Also to complete work in the Riotuerto area (Moncobe area).

Juan Colina replied (in Spanish, Carolina translated the email) saying we can continue to explore and survey the caves we have found and that the clubs involved know about this. Juan Colina asked that we contact the clubs concerned to let them know our intention, but Juan Colina did not say we have to ask their permission.

The meeting agreed that we should treat this agreement with respect and concentrate on significant caves and invite the Spanish clubs concerned to join us if they are available. With surface digs we should discuss this first with the clubs concerned and only proceed if they have no objections, we should ask them if they would like to join in the work. A copy of the letter from Juan Colina is attached. It was agreed that it could be a good idea to meet with the clubs concerned. (Following the meeting it was agreed that John Southworth and Phil Goodwin would liaise on behalf of the Expedition with G.E.Pistruellos cavers who have the Riotuerto area, PP will liaise with the Colindres cavers.)

2. Objectives and key areas of work for 2014:

2.1 Easter

- Four Valleys System: to continue the re-survey; in Cueva de Carcavuezo (81) to open up the entrance after recent floods; to look to see if the entrance series can connect to “Afternoon Stroll” (Terry W) and push the Western Series. If time allows look to see if we can get a safe route to Trident. It is also important that we stabilise and open up tight section below pitches in the Giant Panda entrance.

- Moncobe area (John Southworth et al) incl Casa Vieja and diving (Jim Lister and Steve Martin) and aven (Dan) in El Cubillón.
- Entrambasaguas area – explore part new to the expedition (Si, Di, JC, JS et al), Espada and area around (Pete E, Ali)
- Solórzano - Diving at sites identified in 2013 (JL) including site 3910 near Cave of the Virgins (RS). Look at rest of area not previously in our area, including north of Fresnedo (PP, JC et al)
- Vaca 2889– open up new entrance and push/survey (PP et al)
- South Vega/Vallina area to west where the Club de Espeleología Viana is looking to see where water may go from sumps in Tejuelo (behind Bustablado) - may be summer work?
Diving to find main tunnel in Comellantes.
- North Vega – look above Regaton for possible new way in etc (Pete E) – Lastrillia drop new pitch in 2012 extension (PP)
- Dig above Lenny’s Cave – Steve Martin
- Maze Cave, Barrio de los Urros, continue surveying and pushing (Si and Di)
- Voto – Llueva – digging in “Edge of Darkness” (Dan) – possible diving down stream if divers have time
- Tom Thompson is out at Easter doing his “bug” work – may need some assistance – members are asked to help if needed.

2.2 Summer/other possible objectives

These will be discussed further at a meeting prior to the Summer expedition.

In addition to above that were not looked at during Easter

- Four Valleys – Trident area
- Fresnedo 2 (841) – continue work from 2013
- Torca del Mostajo (71) – continue work
- Picón (75) – MUSC and PE .
- South Vega – end of Renada and Vallina II (looking for passages to the west.
- Torcon de la Calleja Rebollo (Toad - 258) – Some work may be done near entrance (contact Terry W) but main push at far end.
- Cueva-Cubio del Llanio 3234 – push lower eastern area (TR)
- Sumidero de Cobadal 1930 – continue up good drafting choke above end – needs snappers (PP).
- Torca de Corcada 780 – slot to drop over calcite needs enlarging (capping)
- Cueva del Arenal 35 – seeing if progress can be made to west below “Foam Dome” in drafting boulders.

- Cueva de Suviejo 122 – to see if blockage at end of “quick trip” passage draughts and can be dug (caps or snappers) PP after agreement with Colindres caving group.
- Water tracing using optical brightener (need to check at Easter what is available)

3. **Logistics**

New maps are now available and use ETRS 89 (**NOT Europe 79**) – so GPS and other devices need to be moved to this system if using these maps. Note if ETRS 89 is not available on your device WGS84 is almost the same and the error is small enough not to be too significant. The new maps (Orux Maps etc, available on the Website to download) – if you use the wrong system (i.e. Europe 79) there will be an error of 102m in W-E direction and 209m in N-S a combined error of 232m!

PP will lead on expedition with Juan leading on the overall Matienzo Caves project. The normal office will be in the Bar Germán with two laptops loaded with Corel Draw and the normal Matienzo Caves data etc. **Trip Board** for logging planned trip, time out and check back in will be in the office area at Bar Germán. Important that this is filled in and logged back when team is out of the cave. Contact numbers can be put on the board as appropriate. **Log Book** – will be in the Bar and should, as normal, be filled in after the trip (i.e. evening after trip or next morning if out of cave late, or details sent to PP (papard@easynet.co.uk) if not staying in Matienzo). Sheets to fill in for new caves will be available as well as maps etc.

Tackle book will be kept in tackle store and must be filled in with person responsible for trip/tackle noted. People taking tackle should see that it is recovered, cleaned and put back in store, or that another person agrees to take over this work.

Expectations of what members should do with regard to recording and surveying etc have already been issued – not repeated here, but most important point is to take surveys to final stage (e.g. using Coral Draw or Inkscape) for smaller finds. For larger ongoing caves the day's finds should be drawn up to a good hand drawn level, with all passage details shown etc. Also it is important that new people to Matienzo are made welcome and encouraged to join into trips, etc.

4. **Surveying**

The training event did not take place due to lack of numbers. Meeting felt it would be useful to hold an event after Easter. MUSC and others were keen to be involved and it was agreed this would be arranged (surveying, drawing up etc) – PP and SM will liaise with Carolina after the Easter expedition to arrange. Coaching will be given at Easter as needed.

5. Tackle

Tackle list given out, plenty of rope now available, thanks to DAN – (400m some to be used as lifeline rope), 40 maillons and hangers have been purchased, agreed to order 40 more of each.

Molephones will be out at Easter and summer for location. Ron Obvious is making some new sets. Matienzo Caves Project will purchase either these or the new Nicola sets when either is available and working – unlikely to be in 2014.

Ladders are getting old and new ones are needed – agreed to arrange a ladder making session prior to the Summer Expedition (SM and PP to arrange) about 5 people will be needed to help on a week-end.

6. Finance and Matienzo Fees

6.1. Ghar Parau Foundation grant application

This was applied for at the end of January 2014. This late date was due to the system of applications changing and the on-line process was not available until then. The closing date for applications for early in the year (Easter etc) was moved to the end of February and a decision on these applications is still pending. I would expect to hear about the grant in the next few weeks.

6.2 Fees

Option of paying in Matienzo, or in advance on-line, or to Susie. The system has changed a little from 2013 in that a fee for the year of £35 or £25 for unwaged is available rather than this for each trip. If 60 cavers pay fees it is expected to bring in a similar amount to last year. If not, the arrangement will be reviewed for 2015. If needed, a fundraising event will be held (at the Matienzo Dinner or similar).

The issue of “non-waged” was discussed and a debate took place with some suggestion that all should just pay the £35 or per day if only caving for a few days. It was also suggested that we need to encourage younger cavers etc, so the £25 amount should be for people of 25 or under. Members are asked to consider and this will be discussed at the next meeting after Easter. (Views by email to Phil Papard, Susie or Juan are welcome)

7. BCRA Conference – A lecture should take place if we make significant finds. However, an important conference based around the 100km caves and similar prospects, will be held in Cantabria (Arredondo?) at same time and the Matienzo Caves Project has been asked to take part. This is an important event and we will need to plan how and who can attend etc. Will discuss at next meeting.

8. Date and time of next meeting – not decided. Will correspond by email; likely to be in June 2014 at a date to fit in with most people.

Hola Phil:

Si es cierto, hay que reducir las zonas de los grupos que tenían grandes extensiones de territorio para dar cabida a muchos de los nuevos.

Sin embargo no se les impide completar en las antiguas cavidades o sistemas ya explorados por ustedes (Cueva Llueva y Los Boyones).

Se agradecería comunicar al grupo (ADEMCO) que explora en ese Ayuntamiento su presencia en esos días al email de José Luis Sierra:

chanicolindres33@hotmail.com

En el Ayuntamiento de Riotuerto la misma opción el email del grupo PISTRUELLOS (busca en la página de la FCE Grupos Cántabros)

Ambos grupos están enterados de dicha situación y no se negaran en nada.

Por último reconocer la gran labor del colectivo de Británicos en las exploraciones espeleológicas en nuestra región.

Un saludo

Juan Colina
Presidente de la FCE