

2016 UPAC Winter Meeting
Ethics Bowl Questions
March 4th, 2016 @ Wasatch Brewery

Case Study #1

You are the owner of a modest contract archaeology firm. Lately you have been struggling to win job bids making it difficult to continue to run your business and pay your employees. You have noticed that many of the archaeological firms surrounding you make bids that are substantially lower than you do. In some cases these low bids are awarded, and the contractor goes back to ask for more money in order to complete the original scope of work. This issue of under-valuing archaeology impacts both the resource and the well-being of employees, many of whom are ridiculously underpaid for positions that require graduate degrees. But, do you write the proposal knowing your budget will be significantly more than your competitors and make you less likely to get the work, or do you keep your rates artificially low to get the work knowing you can't pay your people well or pay for all of the required analyses/curation just to get the contract award.

Case Study #2

Bre, an archaeologist for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), annually consults with the Native American tribes that are culturally affiliated with the heritage sites that she manages. This year, the BLM is proposing to conduct a 20,000 acre vegetation management project that would include thinning trees, commercial sale of timber, and meadow restoration. The project is located in a mountainous area that is used by native peoples for traditional and ceremonial purposes. Survey within the project area has identified prehistoric and historic cultural resources that are affiliated with multiple Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

During consultation with the Pueblo of Acoma, several tribal members express concern with the project, citing traditional cultural properties within the 20,000 acre area, as well as disruptions in their traditional use of the land. They ask the BLM to conduct a public meeting for all of the Acoma people during the early phases of the Environmental Impact Statement. They also specifically ask Bre to bring maps of the archaeological sites within the project area so that the tribal members can describe the relationship between those sites and traditional uses of the area. Bre explains that the BLM would be happy to organize a public meeting for the Pueblo but that she is hesitant to bring site location maps to a public meeting. She reminds the governing tribal members that site location is protected by federal law and cannot be disclosed to the general public. The governor appears visibly upset and says "But these are our sites. We are the descendants of the people who lived in them and our people have a right to know where they are."