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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Crow Canyon Archaeologist Shanna Diederichs to Discuss Progress on New Research Project

CORTEZ, CO (August 8, 2011)—On August 19, 2011, Crow Canyon Archaeological Center supervisory archaeologist Shanna Diederichs will present “The Basketmaker Communities Project” as part of the Four Corners Lecture Series. The presentation will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Crow Canyon Archaeological Center and is free and open to the public.

Most people are aware of the dramatic cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde National Park and of the mysteries surrounding the depopulation of the entire region in the thirteenth century A.D. What most people don’t realize is that the way in which this society formed many centuries earlier is an even bigger mystery.

In her presentation, Diederichs will discuss the Basketmaker III period (A.D. 500 to 750), a time marked by a rapid increase in population in the central Mesa Verde area. Where did these people come from, how many people migrated here and what was the nature of the communities they formed?

These are questions that Crow Canyon archaeologists are hoping to answer with the Center’s current excavation project, the Basketmaker Communities Project. Diederichs will introduce the project, discuss its research design and update Crow Canyon’s progress in the field.

Diederichs earned her bachelor’s degree from the University of Colorado, Boulder. Her past experience includes work with Mesa Verde National Park, Aztec Ruins National Monument, Cortez-based Woods Canyon Archaeological Consultants, and the Animas–La Plata Project near Durango. Just before coming to Crow Canyon, she took part in excavations in Egypt.

Organized by a consortium of area organizations, the Four Corners Lecture Series features presentations by guest speakers from around the Southwest. This year’s theme is “Gifts from the Ancestors.” All lectures are free. The location of the lectures rotates among the sponsoring organizations.

This year’s sponsors are the Anasazi Heritage Center, ARAMARK, the Bureau of Land Management, the Colorado Archaeological Society – Hisatsinom Chapter, the Cortez Cultural Center, Crow Canyon Archaeological Center, KSJD, Mesa Verde National Park, the Mesa Verde Institute, the Mesa Verde Museum Association, and the Office of the President and Department of Anthropology – Fort Lewis College.

For more information, call 970-565-8975 or 800-422-8975.

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