

## Exploring the Deep Caves of Tony Grove, Utah

### *Introduction to the Tony Grove Project*



**Ryan Shurtz in Main Drain Cave at the 400 foot level**

Tony Grove is an area found at the upper reaches of Logan Canyon just outside of Logan City in northern Utah. The area has been long known by locals for having many great deep pits. However, much confusion existed due to the maze of entrances dampening the efforts of discovery.

In 2003, the task of organizing a unified effort to inventory, map, and explore the caves of Tony Grove started. Peter Hartley boosted the project by spending hours sweeping the area for cave entrances. Jon Jasper using available GPS and GIS technologies established formats to record the findings. Polygamy, Polygamys End, and Lucifer Lair caves were mapped to depths of 384 ft, 460 ft, and 305 ft respectively. At the end of the first summer, 68 cave locations were documented and 3,520 ft of cave were surveyed.

The second summer started completing the mapping of the known caves in the area. The surveying of the unexplored caves started. A newly discovered cave with an expressive 260-ft entrance drop was one of the first to be tackled. In July 2004, Ryan Schurtz free-climbed a 40-ft exposed chimney to make a significant breakthrough. Hard exploration continued and by the end of the year, this Main Drain Cave broke the state's depth record reaching the depth of 1174 ft! The unbelievable had been found.

The future of Tony Grove Caves looks great! Main Drain Cave still has many great leads and a depth potential of 3,000 ft. Dozens of uncheck caves still exist. There still remains 57 more caves to explore. With 9,543 ft surveyed, who knows where the limits are?

### *Need & Use of the Grant*

Exploration projects have many expenses. At present these costs have been shared by various NSS members from the Timpanogos Grotto, Wasatch Grotto, Bear River Grotto, and Color Country Grotto. The Tony Grove Cave Survey would use this grant to help supply these resources such as survey gear, rigging hardware, and rope.

### *Measurable Results*

Having the new Utah depth record, a NSS article is being prepared and a presentation is planned for the Huntsville, AL NSS Convention. The project's progress including 3D lineplots and maps are routinely updated on the Timpanogos Grotto website ([www.caves.org/grotto/timpgrotto/](http://www.caves.org/grotto/timpgrotto/)).

