

# **The Use of Cave Inventory Systems as a Cave Management Tool: An Overview**

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## **Abstract**

Cave inventory systems have been developed by a number of different groups, including cave survey and exploration projects, privately owned caves, and state/federal land management agencies. The diversity of the inventory systems developed reflects the diversity of the groups conducting cave inventories. However, two basic inventory styles are in use throughout the United States in a basic inventory of caves and detailed resource inventories. Cave inventories are an incredibly valuable tool to aid in management of cave resources. This paper examines two case studies in cave inventory systems: the cave inventory of Lava Beds National Monument and the detailed resource inventory of Wind Cave National Park. Each offers insight into the benefits of inventory systems to cave managers and the value of well-designed data management systems. In addition, a brief discussion of other cave inventory systems currently in place throughout the U.S. is presented.