



# MCP Overview for 2020 - 2021

- 1) Obviously, Covid-19 has decimated the caving activities carried out by the expeditions and other visits.
- 2) However, Spanish groups and Pete Smith and a small number of the usual suspects have been active so this has meant that the website and resources have been updated in a regular fashion to keep the archives up-to-date and keep locked-down people informed.
  - a) La Cambera
    - i) Overlap (Ribamontán al Monte) with our permit area to the west of the Solórzano valley, around Monte Llusa. They have been active on the surface and have informed me through blogs and occasional emails with grid references. Biggest find is Torca Escarlata (5067) in Garzón. This is over 500m long and 120m deep. They have sent a report to the Federación and us so this information has also been put into the database and website. Last weekend they were out Saturday and Sunday digging out and starting to explore a draughting site.
    - ii) La Cambera also overlap around Alisas – they've rediscovered old holes of ours and found some new ones. All info on the web site.
    - iii) In total, 47 sites have been documented by them. I've treated the information the same as if it had come from expedition people, that is – they are part of the Matienzo Caves Project. So each site has a Matienzo code and is published on the web site, maps, Google Earth, etc.
  - b) ECT – the Tortosa group. Early in 2021, they hatched a grand plan to push on at the end of Cueva Vallina. This was after coming to a formal agreement with Phil and me about exploration zones and swapping information. According to various social media pages, after sending out a prospectus, the ECT brought together "the best" from 10 caving clubs. In total, 32 people participated with sponsorship from 6 companies including Decathlon. Over 11 days in the summer, with an underground camp, 2 routes were pushed and surveyed in the extreme north of Vallina 2. A total of 434m of new passage was surveyed, none of which seemed to have any prospect of heading towards the South Vega System. But there are other leads and some of the Catalans are returning for a few days this December.
- 3) Web site updated.
  - a) mainly cosmetic, but it is now easy to search by code or name for any site.
  - b) Old document references. These older books and magazines are being scanned and put online so that people can see the original publications. I've taken the view that, if people are happy to see text and photos published on the Matienzo website, then they won't have problems with the same material shown in documents, e.g. Caves & Caving. The original Cuadernos is also online. The documents can be viewed through the Bibliography on the website where more links will be added.
  - c) Old Spanish newspaper articles are also online.
- 4) Book sales were dampened by the lack of Hidden Earth and Brexit bring in Customs charges when shipping to Spain. There are now books in Spain and a number of people in England have been agents during the lockdowns – thanks to them.
- 5) Wind farms – Parque Eólicos.
  - a) The principle I'm working to is: "Wind farms are good but not on karst". Karst has the hidden, downward dimension. This has the potential for (possibly unintended) consequences many kilometres away, as well ruining some of the best scenery, especially around the Asón and Matienzo.
  - b) The Cantabrian Caving Federation (FCE) is coordinating responses from caving groups that are directly affected by plans. There are current plans to erect 150m tall wind generators with all the associated pylons and ground works on South Vega, El Naso and Muela / Mullir.
  - c) One potential site (with detailed plans) is down the east side of Solórzano with 4 generators. I sent in a response using our maps and detailing the caves and groundwater that could be affected, directly and indirectly. Pete Smith along with people from the FCE appeared on Cantabrian and national TV explaining how winds farms such as these could be a disaster for the underground as well as the surface.
  - d) I'm waiting for detailed plans to be published for the other sites and will send a response to the FCE.
- 6) Thanks are due to Steve and Sue for dealing with the tackle and finances, and to Phil for major report writing, dealing with the permits and trying to unravel insurance and rescue protocols.

Juan Corrin 1/4/2021