



PNWAS NEWS BULLETIN 139

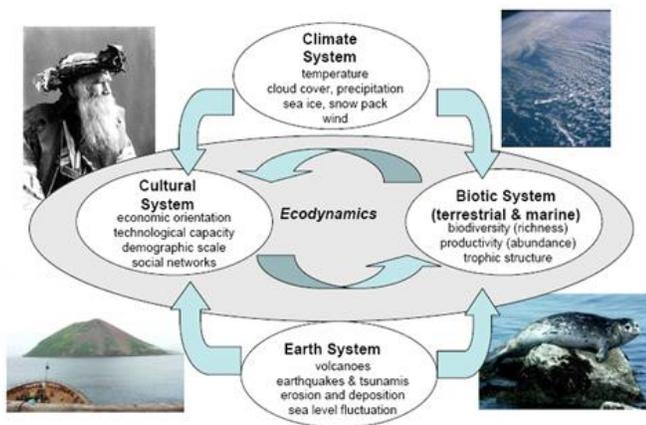
WELCOME TO WINTER PNWAS 2018!!!!

We had a wonderful October PNWAS talk by long-time member Dr. David G. Rice. Below is the exciting line-up of talks with a new one added on the high country archaeology at Cascade Pass, Northern Cascade Range, Washington by Robert R. Mierendorf and Franklin F. Foit, Jr., May 17th. Please be sure you are current for PNWAS and join for 2019 programs—Thank you for your support

December 7th, 2018

Archaeology of the Kuril Island, Russian Northwest Pacific

*By Dr. Ben Fitzhugh, Professor,
U.W., and Director, Quaternary Research
Center at U.W.*



The Kuril Biocomplexity Project is a National Science Foundation-funded research project led by the University of Washington and being conducted by a team of American, Japanese and Russian scholars and students who are examining a 5000-year history of human-environmental interactions along the Kuril Island chain in the northwest Pacific Ocean.

The Kuril Islands stretch from northern Japan to the Kamchatka Peninsula, over 1000 km of volcanic peaks piercing the remote Northwest Pacific Ocean and serving as gateway to the Sea of Okhotsk and Russian Far East. Like their cousins, the Aleutian Islands, most of the Kurils are hard to get to and devoid of human settlements ... today!



The Kuril Islands, between northern Japan and Kamchatka Peninsula in Russia.

This was not always the case. Archaeological research over the past 15 years tells us that the islands were home to hundreds or thousands of people at different times in the four millennia prior to the 20th century. Settled first by maritime hunting and gathering people of the Jomon tradition and ultimately by their descendants the Ainu, the islands supported rugged communities with sea mammals, fish, sea birds and migratory waterfowl, roots, berries and shellfish.



Dr. Ben Fitzhugh and crew excavating an Kuril Island sites.

Archaeological reconstructions of population fluctuation argue for major shifts and even abandonment at times over the past 2000 years. Residents contended with occasionally devastating volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and climate fluctuations that could have altered the ecological foundations of their subsistence lifestyles.



Boat inside volcanic caldera on Kuril Islands

But it may have been the expansion of commodities trade that tipped the scales and undermined the resilience of remote Kuril islanders as elites in central Japan, Manchuria and mainland China sought profitable trade routes through and access to marine products of the Sea of Okhotsk.



Drying ceramic artifacts from Kuril Islands

Our interdisciplinary research in the Kurils provides a portrait of changing Kuril settlement history that can be compared to that of maritime cultures around the North Pacific Rim, including those of the coasts of the Pacific Northwest. While North Pacific cultures from Japan to Oregon share many similarities in subsistence and lifestyle, the differences are also instructive. I will finish with some thoughts on how these comparisons may be relevant to issues of contemporary resource management and cultural resilience.



Fox on Kuril Islands

DATE: *Friday, December 7th, 2018*

TIME: 7 pm to 9 pm

PLACE: *Mountaineers Seattle Program Center, 7700 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115 in the Cascade Room*

COST: FREE to members, \$10.00 to non-members, \$5.00 for Students (*please renew membership for 2019 and these programs at <http://www.pnwas.org> and now through [PayPal](#)*) Refreshments provided (Please bring cookies/snacks to share with the beverages).

March 1st, 2019

The Beeswax Wreck of Nehalem, Oregon: The Lost Manila Galleon “Santo Cristo de Burgos” of 1693

By Scott S. Williams, Cultural Resources Program Manager, WSDOT

The Beeswax Wreck, so called because of the tons of beeswax it was carrying in the form of large blocks and candles, was first recorded by fur traders in 1813.



Block of beeswax found on beach near Nehalem, Oregon.

Since that time, explorers, traders, and settlers have wondered about the origin of the ship: where did it come from, where was it going, and why was it carrying so much beeswax? Scott Williams, Principal Investigator for the Maritime Archaeological Society's Beeswax Wreck Research Project, will present the findings of the Society's twelve-year effort to locate and identify the Beeswax Wreck, and will discuss the historical materials that indicate the vessel was the Spanish Manila galleon "Santo Cristo de Burgos", which left Manila in 1693 for the annual voyage to Acapulco and was lost with all hands.



Some ceramics found that may be from Beeswax shipwreck.



Reconstructed scene of Spanish Galleon washing ashore

DATE: *Friday, March 1st, 2019*

TIME: 7 pm to 9 pm

PLACE: *Mountaineers Seattle Program Center, 7700 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115 in the Cascade Room*

COST: FREE to members, \$10.00 to non-members, \$5.00 for Students (*please renew membership for 2019 and these programs at <http://www.pnwas.org> and now through PayPal*)

Refreshments provided (Please bring cookies/snacks to share with the beverages).

May 17th, 2019

Holocene Geochronology and Archaeology at Cascade Pass, Northern Cascade Range, WA

By Robert R. Mierendorf, National Park Service and Franklin F. Foit, Jr., WSU

Indigenous uses of Cascade Pass began by about 9,600 years ago and continues through the present. Cascade Pass is one of many on the northern Cascade Range divide that separates east-flowing from west-flowing rivers (to the Columbia River and Salish Sea, respectively). In the Lushootseed language of Skagit people, Cascade Pass is *z?lu's* which translates as "over the mountain". Cascade Pass' traditional importance is further recorded in ethnographic and historic accounts of Salish elders from villages on both sides of the range (Northwest Coast and Plateau culture areas). It became one of the first trans-Cascade routes explored in the contact period and later the area attracted prospectors, photographers, road planners, hikers and campers, and climbers. Cascade Pass is administered as part of North Cascades National Park (Park) and the Stephen Mather Wilderness. The Pass (1646 m [5398 ft] elevation) remains one of the most visited parts of the Park's wilderness and is accessed by a maintained trail though old-growth forest, across avalanche slopes, leading to alpine meadows, often accompanied in summer by the sounds of cracking glaciers and cascading meltwater.



Oblique aerial photograph of Cascade Pass facing south.

In response to overuse from the burgeoning popularity of camping in the Pass meadows, the eroded soils of the early 1970s have been largely returned to native meadow plants. Beginning in 2005, Park archaeologists conducted limited excavations to gather baseline data and determine the significance of the archaeological remains recorded in 1977 as archaeological site 45CH221. Seeking to maximize information with a minimum of disturbance to vegetation and soils, a series of ground probes (auger and posthole) yielded data on site boundaries and several locations of well stratified archaeological and geological layers. In two of these locations (located 22 m apart), three 1x0.5 m rectangles (test units) were excavated down to glacial boulders, a depth of about 0.9 m (2.9 ft). A total assemblage of 527 flaked stone artifacts was retrieved from 1.3 m³ of excavated site deposits (artifact density = 439/m³). This memoir describes the technical results of the excavations and more generally, the way these contribute to understanding how the site formed (site formation processes) and its state of preservation (taphonomy), how it was used for over nine millennia, and what this new data means in light of current understandings of Pacific Northwest peoples' traditional occupation of alpine areas in the larger region, and to broader research and conservation issues.



Close-up showing tephra and sampling locations (where sample number is present).

The results of this study are pertinent to those with interest in management and research of large tracts of Wilderness and other protected lands in the Cascade Range, including federal and state agency levels, Tribal and First Nation governments, researchers, and the public.

Book signing and sales by authors to follow program



Pacific Northwest Archaeological Society

1219 Irving Street SW Tumwater WA 98512

Join at <http://www.pnwas.org>



UW Crew transferring between Kuril Island sites, Russia



Stone tool artifacts from Kuril Islands, Russia

Join us Friday December 7th, 2018 for

Archaeology of the Kuril Island, Russian Northwest Pacific

By Dr. Ben Fitzhugh, Professor, and Director, Quaternary Research Center, U.W.