



PNWAS NEWS BULLETIN 140

WELCOME TO WINTER-SPRING PNWAS AND 2019!!!!

We had a wonderful December PNWAS talk by Dr. Ben Fitzhugh on his work in Pacific Russian Kuril Islands. 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 please join for 2019 programs—We are beginning plans for our August 23-25 Hoko Campout and Makah Day Celebration Weekend—please reserve on your calendars—Thank you for your support

March 1st, 2019

(Note title Change: ☺)

Lost Asian Treasure: The Manila Galleon Wrecks of North America

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

For 250 years, Spanish galleons plied the north Pacific taking the luxury goods of Asia to the European markets of New Spain in Mexico and South America. It was the longest and most arduous ocean trade route in the world, and each year only one or two ships made the voyage.

Many of these galleons were wrecked in the storms and on the reefs of the western Pacific in the treacherous waters around the Philippines, the Marianas, and Japan, but three came to rest on the west coast of North

America. Scott Williams will discuss the history of the trade and the 12-year effort to locate the remains of one of these galleons, known as the Beeswax Wreck, in Oregon.

Based on extensive archaeological, geological, and archival investigations, the wreck has been identified as the *Santo Cristo de Burgos*, which left Manila in 1693. At least some of her crew survived and lived with the Nehalem Indians on the Oregon coast for a time, becoming the first Europeans that Northwest Coast peoples interacted with.



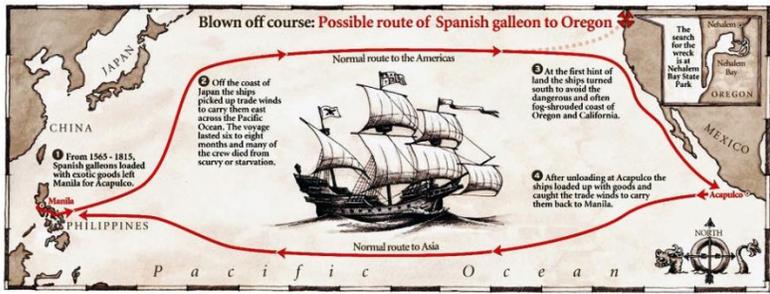
Our speaker, Scott Williams, holds a piece of beeswax that washed up on the Oregon Coast from the Beeswax Shipwreck. For more than a decade, Scott has led a team of volunteers passionate about the detective work of finding the wreck. “It’s almost like a case or a criminal investigation, because we’re pulling together all these bits and clues and trying to sort them and weigh them,” he says (Photo by Kristina Wunsch).



Block of beeswax found on beach near Nehalem, Oregon.

“It’s called the ‘beeswax wreck’ because the ship was carrying tons of beeswax. That beeswax, some chunks as big as pillows, has been washing up on the Oregon coast for 200 years, along with pieces of Chinese porcelain. My job was to figure out what ship it’s coming from and find the wreckage.”

“The only nation that shipped beeswax around the Pacific in that quantity was Spain—they needed it for candles for Catholic churches in the New World [and probably as important for lighting in the silver mines!]. But a lot of people didn’t know about the Spanish shipping empire, and other archaeologists have been convinced the wreck is a Chinese junk, a Portuguese merchant ship, or a Dutch pirate ship.”



Some ceramics found that may be from Beeswax shipwreck.



(Upper) possible routes of Spanish Galleon to Oregon, (lower) "El Galeon" is a modern reconstruction of a Manila galleon.

“We gathered all the information we could from historical archives—journal entries from fur traders, Native American oral histories, newspaper articles—and came up with a plan of how and where we were going to look for the ship. We looked at the Spanish records to see which ships had gone missing along that trade route: there were two in the 1500s and one in 1705. We also analyzed 1,500 pieces of porcelain collected by a beachcomber over 15 years and dated them to their manufacturing period, which was 1680 to 1700. This suggested the wreck was the 1705 ship, but we needed more evidence.”



Using an underwater magnetometer to find iron or steel objects; it does not work to find gold, silver or bronze. Unfortunately the galleon's cannons are almost certainly bronze, not iron....

“The past few years, we’ve been diving and using remote sensing sonar and underwater metal detectors, but we’ve only been able to get out about a dozen times because we need days when there’s very little swell and no fog or high winds. Underwater archaeology is tough because the ocean is unforgiving, especially in the Pacific Northwest.”

“I always tell people, I’m personally 100 percent sure it’s the 1693 galleon, but as an archaeologist, since we



Historic Newspaper article found in research.

haven't found the physical wreck, I'm 99 percent sure. My hope is after a big storm, a beachcomber is going to find a cannon or the ship's going to reappear, and we can say, 'Look, there's the wreck, and it's a Spanish galleon.'" (excerpts from 2019 Hakai Magazine: <https://www.hakaimagazine.com/article-short/coastal-job-maritime-archaeologist/>).



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 *zʔlu'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 through 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.

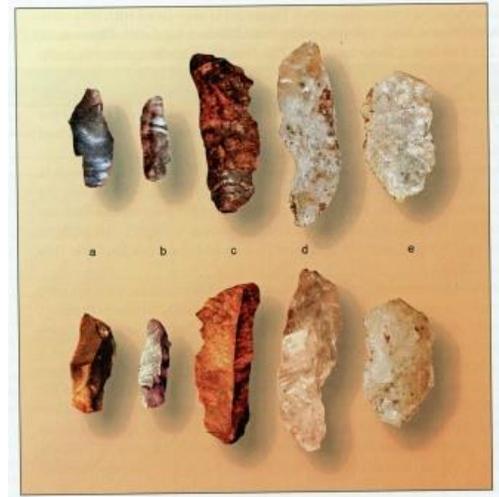
In response to overuse from the burgeoning popularity of camping in the Pass meadows, the eroded soils of the early 1970s have been largely returned to native meadow plants. Beginning in 2005, Park archaeologists conducted limited excavations to gather baseline data and determine the significance of 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).



Posthole Probe of Cascade Pass site area for initial determination of stratigraphy, artifact content and site boundaries (9-5-2005)

This presentation 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.



Microblades from Cascade Pass (45CH221) (ventral, top row, dorsal, bottom row) made of chert (a,b,c) and quartz crystal (d,e).

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>



Image similar to Beeswax Spanish Galleon off Oregon Coast



Scott Williams (left) discusses beeswax found with researcher

Join us Friday March 1st, 2019 for

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