PNWAS NEWS BULLETIN 153

WELCOME TO PNWAS ZOOM AND A PROMISING 2021-2022!!!!

Hope everyone is doing ok and staying safe. We believe 2021-2022 will be a Promising New Year and with vaccinations we may be able to return to field trips, campouts and workshops!

PLEASE Renew for 2022 to allow PNWAS to continue to provide ongoing presentations on current archaeology of our region. We have purchased a PRO ZOOM account, so we can continue to bring our membership together. AND if you missed past PNWAS ZOOM YouTubes we have set up a PNWAS ZOOM Channel at: https://www.youtube.com/user/SeattlePNWAS . The sixth program is the most recent PNWAS ZOOM presentations and first in the series. See Dr. Dale Croes discuss recent Neandertal cordage finds and his imitation of how Neandertals would speak:

May 6th, 2021:
Ancient Northwest Coast Cordage and Knots—a New Book
By Dr. Dale R. Croes, PNWAS/WSU

If a current member (2021 or 2022, see PWNAS schedule/membership form attached), you will get an invitation to join the ZOOM meeting through an e-mail shortly before the talks (e-mail dcroes444@gmail.com to see if you are current for 2021, thanks).

NEXT and WINTER (XMAS) PNWAS ZOOM, Featuring a talk in line with our Chehalis River Hypothesis theme on First Peoples in the Americas by a new Anthropology faculty at Washington State University; welcome him to the Northwest. He also worked at Paisley Cave in Oregon which was featured in an earlier PNWAS ZOOM presentation.

Please Put on your Calendar:

Late-Glacial Hunter-Gatherers in the Central Alaska Range and the Role of Upland Ecosystems in the Peopling of Alaska

Lithic tools from Susitna River, central Alaska. Top row: hafted bifacial knife, hafted bifacial point bases, finished biface tip; middle row: retouched flake, retouched flake; bottom row: retouched flake, end scraper.

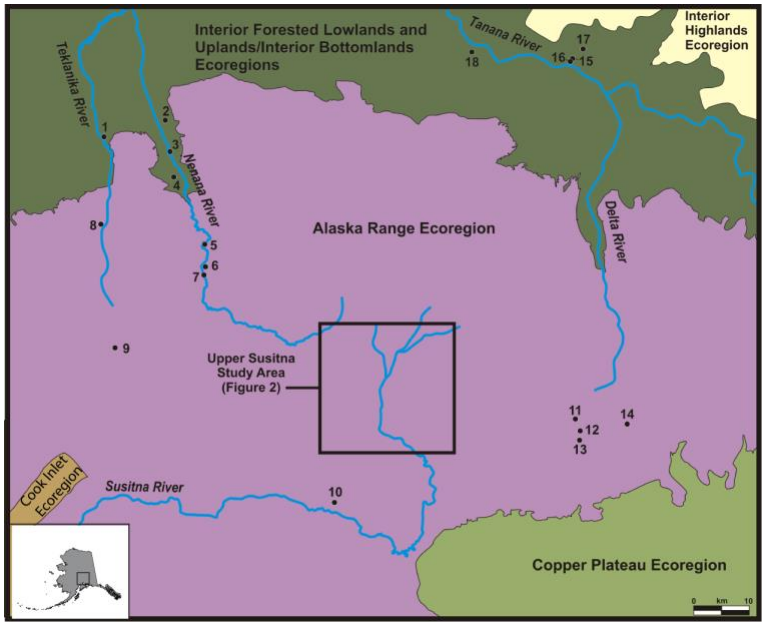
By Dr. John C. Blong, Washington State University

THURSDAY, December 9th, 2021 on ZOOM starting at 6:30 with presentation at 7:00pm

Upland central Alaskan ecosystems are typically thought of as less productive and more challenging for humans to live in than lowland ecosystems. It can also be difficult to conduct archaeological research in high-elevation locations. Because of these issues, archaeological research often prioritizes investigations in the lowlands. However, Alaskan upland ecosystems can provide novel resources that attract human activity.

Overview of WP633 peat core sampling location facing south from the Denali Highway, central Alaska.

With increased research focus in recent years, archaeologists are pushing back the earliest evidence for human activity in upland ecosystems around the world. This is also the case in central Alaska, where there is growing evidence that the earliest humans to settle eastern Beringia during the late-glacial period made use of subsistence and lithic resources in the central Alaska Range.



Map of central Alaska Range showing Alaska Range Ecoregion, upper Susitna study area, and locations of sites discussed in talk.

Upper Susitna study area and sites mentioned in presentation: 1, Butte Lake; 2, Nutella Lake; 3, Ratekin; 4, Swampbuggy Lake.

Photograph of the upper Susitna basin study area, showing an alpine tundra landscape in the Alpine Creek valley, Clearwater Mountains, central Alaska. [no doubt similar to our Salish Sea region in post-glacial times]

Lithic tools from Susitna River 3, central Alaska. Top row: bifaces; middle row: retouched flake, retouched flake, endscraper, retouched flakes; bottom row: endscraper, endscraper, knife.

In this presentation I review the late glacial paleo-ecological and archaeological record of the central Alaska Range, highlighting its role in hunter-gatherer land use during the initial settlement of eastern Beringia. The early use of upland landscapes in Alaska suggests variability in land-use patterns during the initial settlement of North America and has significant implications for our understanding the process of the first peopling of the Americas.

PNWAS Late Winter ZOOM Meeting, Thursday February 10th, 2022

COMBINING PALEOECOLOGY, GEOLOGY, AND ARCHAEOLOGY: What Interdisciplinary Research can Teach Us About Holocene Human-Landscape Interactions in the Pacific Northwest

By Dr. Megan Walsh, Central Washington University (CWU)

Dr. Megan Walsh and husband Kevan Ferrier preparing to sample a surface sediment core while staying at the Hoko River campground, that was taken from Beaver Lake, Clallam County, WA.

Understanding the role fire played in maintaining ecosystems prior to Euro-American settlement is key to restoring landscape resiliency and viability in the Pacific Northwest. To do this, site-specific fire histories that illustrate changes on centennial to millennial-length timescales are needed. More important, perhaps, is developing a better understanding of the past relationships that existed between fire activity and the factors that influenced its occurrence, frequency, and severity. This is especially true if fire history records are to be used to project how fire activity might change in light of future climate change.

While fairly straightforward methods exist to assess fire history within the context of past climatic variability, it is less clear how to evaluate these within the context of past human activity. Presented here are sediment core-based fire and vegetation histories, along with a synthesis of existing archaeological records, from three areas of the Pacific Northwest: the Willamette Valley (OR), Mount Rainier National Park (WA), and the eastern Cascades (WA). These case studies illustrate the complicated relationships that exist between fire, vegetation, climate, and humans in the Pacific Northwest, particularly during the late Holocene. The results support the idea that humans favored fire-modified environments, and in some cases significantly influenced landscape patterns as a source of fire ignitions.

CWU students struggling to core through the tephra layers in Sunrise Lake, Mt. Rainier National Park, July 2011

The goal of presenting this research is to encourage researchers to use an interdisciplinary approach when investigating human-environment interactions in the Pacific Northwest, which will likely require developing novel methodologies for combining paleoecological, geological, archaeological, and additional sources of information.

Pacific Northwest Archaeological Society

1219 Irving Street SW Tumwater WA 98512

Join at http://www.pnwas.org

Join us on ZOOM Thursday, December 9th at 6:30 pm for

Late-Glacial Hunter-Gatherers in the Central Alaska Range and the Role of Upland Ecosystems in the Peopling of Alaska

By Dr. John C. Blong, WSU

Lithic tools from Susitna River assemblage, central Alaska. Top row: burin, endscraper, burin, burin; second row from top: burin spalls; third row from top: retouched bladelets; bottom row: retouched flakes.