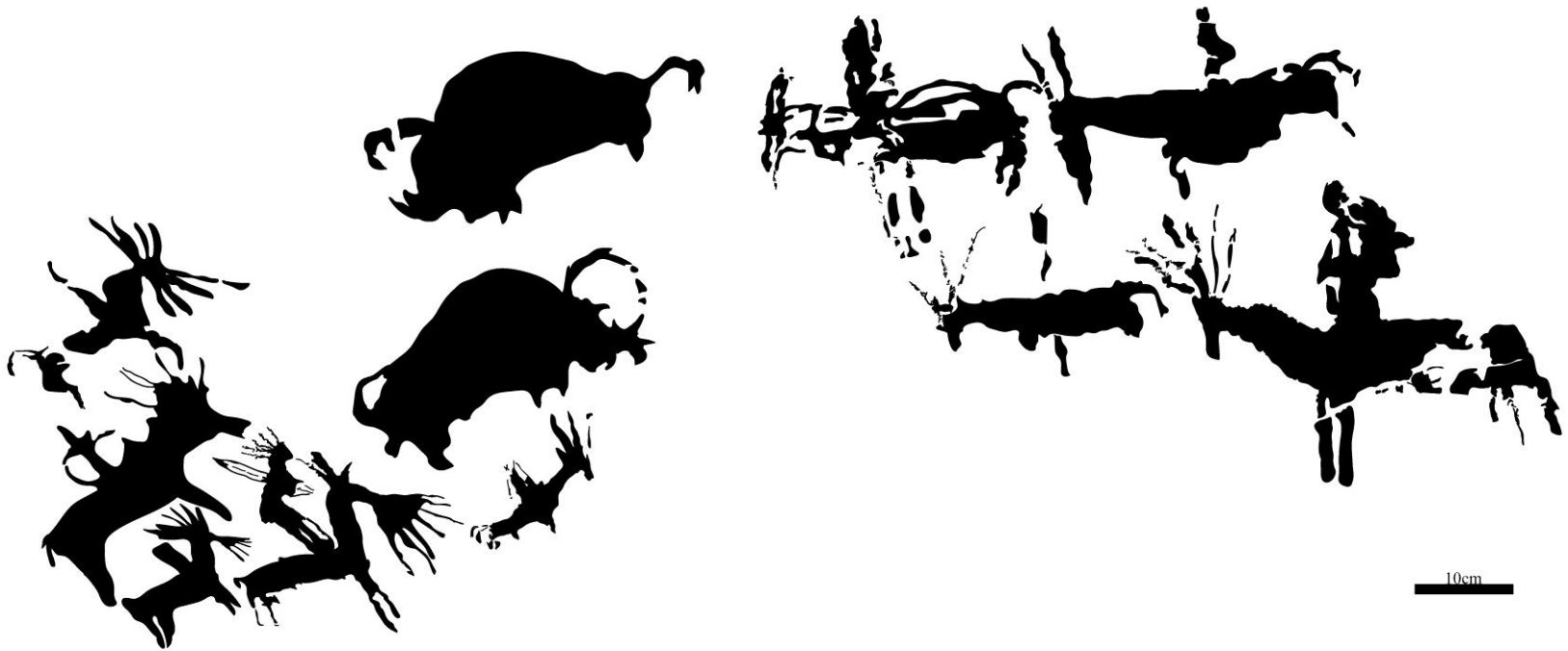


Ute Trails Project Update



Ute Trails in Mesa and Eagle Counties

Funding for these projects have been received from:

Colorado Historical Society State Historical Fund
Bureau of Land Management

- Grand Junction Field Office
- Colorado River Valley Field Office

This and other Ute Trails projects have been conducted in association with:

Betsy Chapoose, Cultural Rights and Protection Director for the Ute Tribe of
the Uintah and Ouray Reservation

Terry G. Knight, Sr., Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
and NAGPRA Liaison

Alden Naranjo, NAGPRA Coordinator for the Southern Ute Tribe

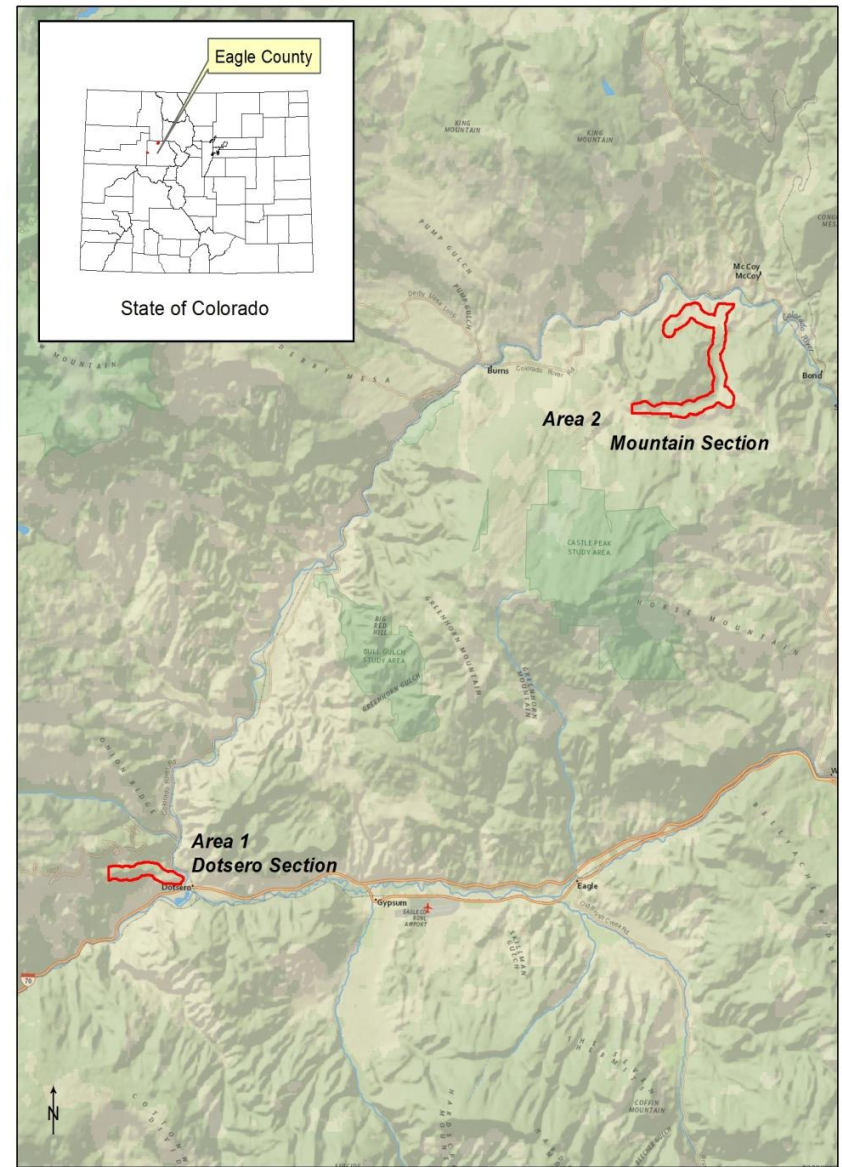
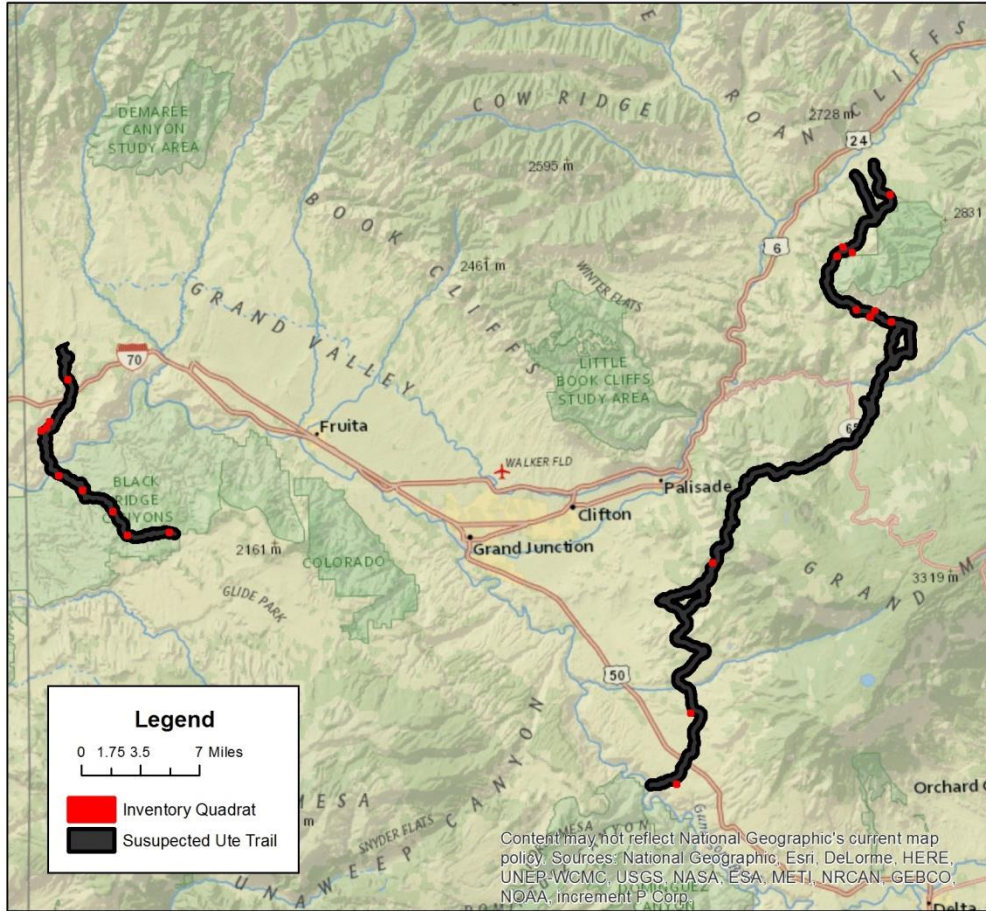


The trails projects examine prehistoric and historic sites associated with aboriginal trail routes, with the intended results of providing tribal and agency cultural resource managers with landscape scale archaeological baseline data.

The importance of trails depends on the mobility of a society. They are characteristically used for trade between resource differentiated regions, for seasonal movements, inter-group ceremonies, and sacred journeys. Aboriginal hunter-gatherers for example have extensive seasonal movements for changing food resources, but their choice of foot or horse affected the ways and modifications of the routes used. Important contrasts can be drawn between those created by aboriginal foot traffic and those utilized by horse traffic – especially in mountainous regions.

Probably the most important evidence of trails and their objective destination localities are the previously recorded distributions of sites and isolated finds. Accordingly, one of our methods of identifying areas of interest is to look for linear spreads of such resources in the records of BLM and History Colorado. Through our focused documentation of newly recorded and revisited sites in those areas, we hope to enhance the understanding of prehistoric and historic trail use in western Colorado.

General locations of the four trails.

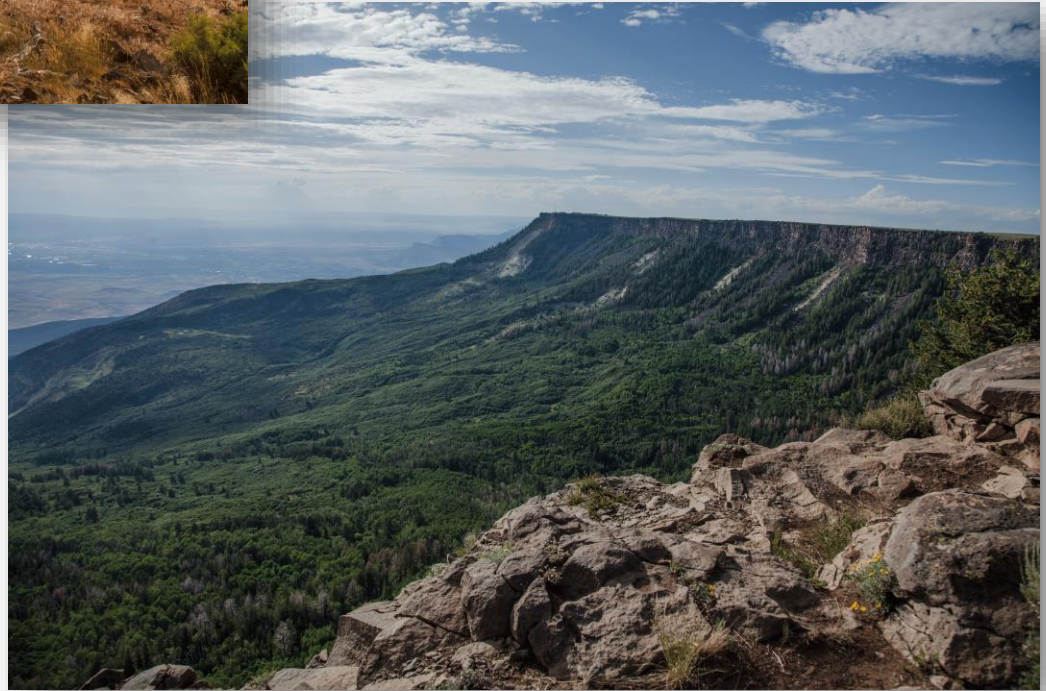


Trails are historically significant to the living descendants of the Utes that traveled them, and to the diverse professional and public communities that value and study Ute heritage and western Colorado's prehistory and written history.



In Mesa County, the areas to search for suspected trails were selected for their environmental diversity --

from lower elevation canyonlands to higher elevation mountain slopes.





In Eagle County, the study areas were restricted to the Upper Sonoran and lower Transitional Zone with elevations between 6000 to 8000 feet. This was done to inspect for wickiup occurrence in the pinyon-juniper woodlands, and to compare the differences between a high impact area related to the Dotsero recreation trail and an area where there is very limited such exposure.

MESA COUNTY TRAILS

The project in Mesa County of two suspected trail locals resulted in revisiting and reevaluating 34 previously recorded sites. Of these, 11 were rock art sites -- most of which were photographed and analyzed by Sally Cole.

In addition, twenty 20-acre blocks were randomly selected within trail corridors to be intensively surveyed. As a result of the inventory of those 400 acres, an additional 15 sites and 84 isolates were newly recorded. Temporal diagnostics included rock art, ceramics, and projectile points.



The photographs of rock art were often enhanced using Photoshop and/or D-stretch programs to bring out images otherwise unclear. This panel located along the West Trail has an image of a Ute horse-rider.

There are several distinctive, traceable motifs. The first, which Sally Cole has identified as belonging to the Abstract-Geometric style, is also a type she classifies as the oldest of two that represent the Archaic. It contains wheel-like forms with spokes, net-like forms and other linear motifs (Cole 1990, 2009).



Keyser and Klassen (2001:148-150) indicate the anti-structural nature of the similar Northwest Plains Pecked Abstract type of rock art fits well into the transitional and trans-formational state of a shaman's vision quest or trance experiences. They believe this tradition was widespread during the Archaic period and extended across North America from northern Mexico into the Great Basin and Great Plains regions.

The rock art may be depicting a calendric "medicine" wheel that the immigrants from the south may have introduced to tribes in North America. A comparative panel from north of Dotsero has a "wheel" glyph associated with two figures taking flight "in shamanic transformation" (as discussed by Hedges 1985:86-89).





Sally Cole (in Conner et al. 2016) indicates the Uncompahgre style, which she post-dates the Abstract-Geometric during the Archaic, include “representations of paw and hand-print motifs; linear motifs; bird-track forms; slender human forms with raised arms; snakes; and quadrupeds shown individually and in rows and groups” as in 5ME164.

Bear Dreamers

Incorporated in many of the Uncompahgre, Fremont, Late Prehistoric, and Historic style rock art panels are bear paw tracks and images of the bear. As Keyser and Klassen (2001:174) relate in their book *Plains Indian Rock Art*: “no stronger magic could be found on the Northwestern Plains than that of Grizzly Bear, whose supernatural powers embodied both the warrior’s ideal and the healer’s arts.” They describe the warrior society called Bear Dreamer: “a fraternity for those warriors brave enough to have obtained bear power in their visions.” Many tribes had a Bear Dreamers Society made up of warriors who by vision quest obtained bear power to become Grizzly Bear Warriors, and shaman who obtained bear medicine to cure disease and sickness. The Blackfeet are mentioned by Keyser and Klassen (ibid.) as conducting a two-week ritual marked by strenuous ordeals prior to a transfer of a bear knife bundle.

Shamanic fraternities are clearly indicated in Fremont rock art. A dynamic Fremont panel occurs in a large alcove overhang situated along the West Trail at site 5ME529 (Cole photograph in Conner et al. 2016).

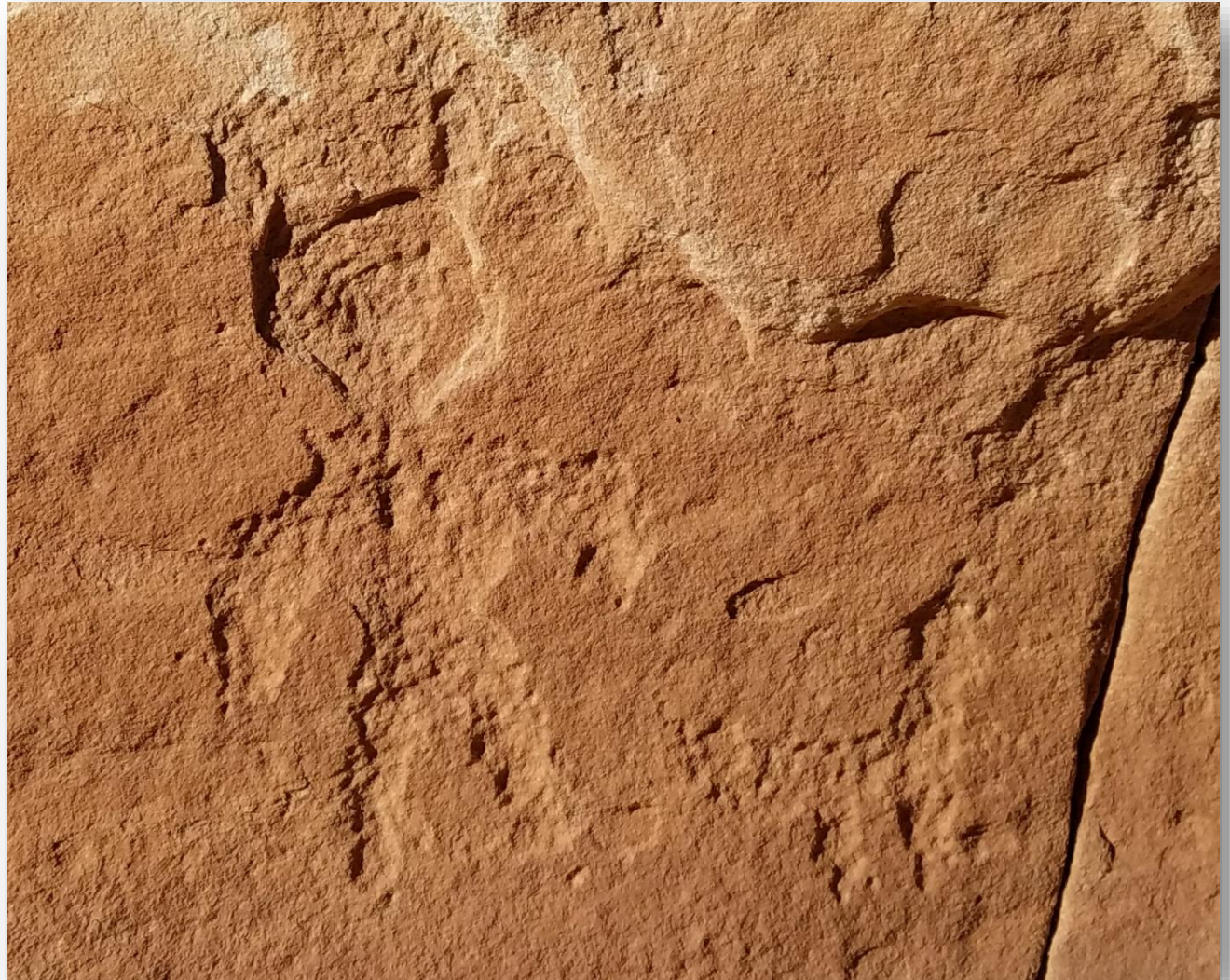




A series of bear track petroglyphs “walk” across roof-fall boulders to this white painted image of a bear shaman. A faded white image of a Fremont anthropomorph with a feather headdress and hair-bobs or ear plugs is visible to the left. (Photo by Sally Cole.)

This Bear Shaman panel found along the West Trail is small (about 20cm square). Among many groups, these shamans were thought to transform themselves into bears to cure illness or conduct raids on enemies, and when a bear attacked or killed a person, the obvious conclusion was that the bear was, in fact, a transformed shaman from an enemy group” (Keyser and Klassen 2001:174).

Note the animal spirit helper for the shaman in lower right. It is a coyote or a wolf, and the dots issuing out of its mouth probably represent its howling.



At site 5RB5848 in the Piceance Basin, is a panel of scratch art that depicts teepee-shaped elements, and an anthropomorph of the Grizzly Bear warrior society. In this panel, the Bear Shaman and teepee motifs are typical of a Northwest Plains style. Keyser associates similar rock art with the Eastern Shoshone occupation of the region and assigns relative dates of AD 1300-1700 (Keyser 1975, 1977, 1987).



This shaman wears a bear mask and claws. The mask exhibits the tear streaks of the Grizzly Bear.



Examples of point types documented during the inventory, temporally sorted:

Late Prehistoric to Historic periods (ca. AD 1300-1840)

- L-R: Cottonwood, and (3) Desert Side-notched

Late Formative (ca. AD 1000-1300)

- L-R: Bear River Side-notched (Fremont), Uinta Side-notched (Fremont) or Late Avonlea (Athabascan) , and Eclectic (Plains?)

Early-Middle Formative (ca. AD 300-900)

- L-R: Rose Spring Corner-notched, and Anasazi stemmed

Late Archaic - ca. 1000 BC- AD 300)

- L-R: UC Horse Fly Phase, UC Dry Creek phase, Pelican Lake, UC Horse Fly Phase

Middle Archaic ca. 3000 - 1000 BC

- L-R: Oxbow, UC Shavano Phase, UC Roubideau Phase (illustration, not to exact scale)

Early Archaic ca. 7000 - 3000 BC

- Top: Early Plains Archaic,
- Bottom: Narrow Point Series or Mt. Albion, ca. 6000-4700 BC

Late Paleoindian ca. 9600-6000 BC

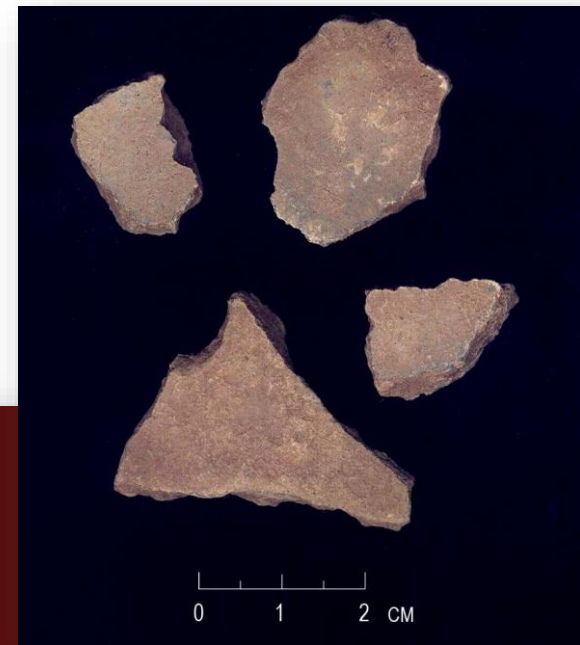
- L-R: Foothill Mountain, and (2) Prior Stemmed

Early Paleoindian: ca. 11,000 BC

- Goshen (pre-Folsom)

Ceramic types were recorded at sites within the bounds of the study areas include: Emery Gray, Mancos Corrugated, and Uncompahgre Brown Ware. Emery Gray is a Fremont Culture San Rafael Variant diagnostic that was identified based on descriptions by Madsen (1977:31) and Watkins (2006:8). The regional distribution of this variant extends into west-central Colorado and the temporal association is ca. AD 700-1200 (Brunswick et al. 1995:92). Mancos Corrugated, an Anasazi type is relatively tightly dated ca. AD 850 - 975 (Wilson and Blinman 1995: 42, 69). Uncompahgre Brown Ware is a early Numic diagnostic that has been reported in western and central Colorado and eastern Utah (Buckles 1971; Reed and Metcalf 1999) and dates to as early as ca. AD 1350. Uncompahgre Brown Ware sherds in Mesa, Garfield and Rio Blanco Counties have been luminescent dated: 5ME4970, AD 1508-1644; 5ME16097, AD 1400-1520; 5GF620, AD 1450-1528; 5RB144, AD 1510-1590.

Emery Gray

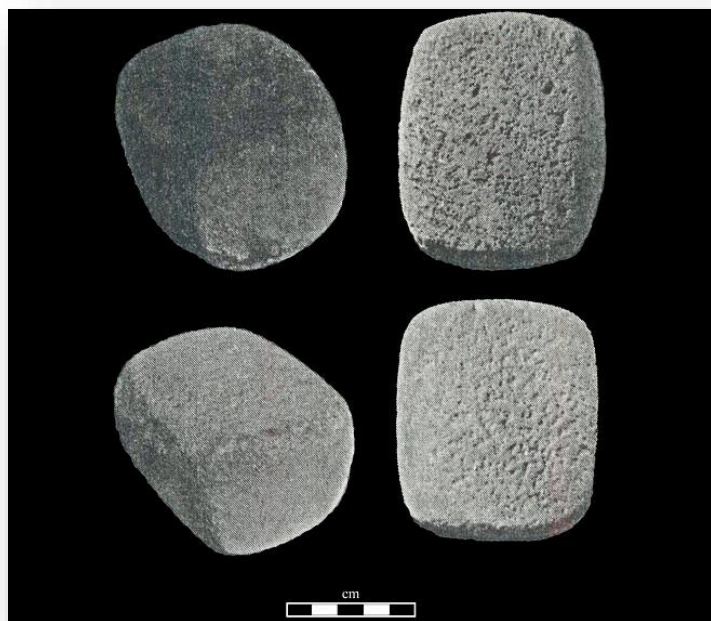


Mancos Corrugated

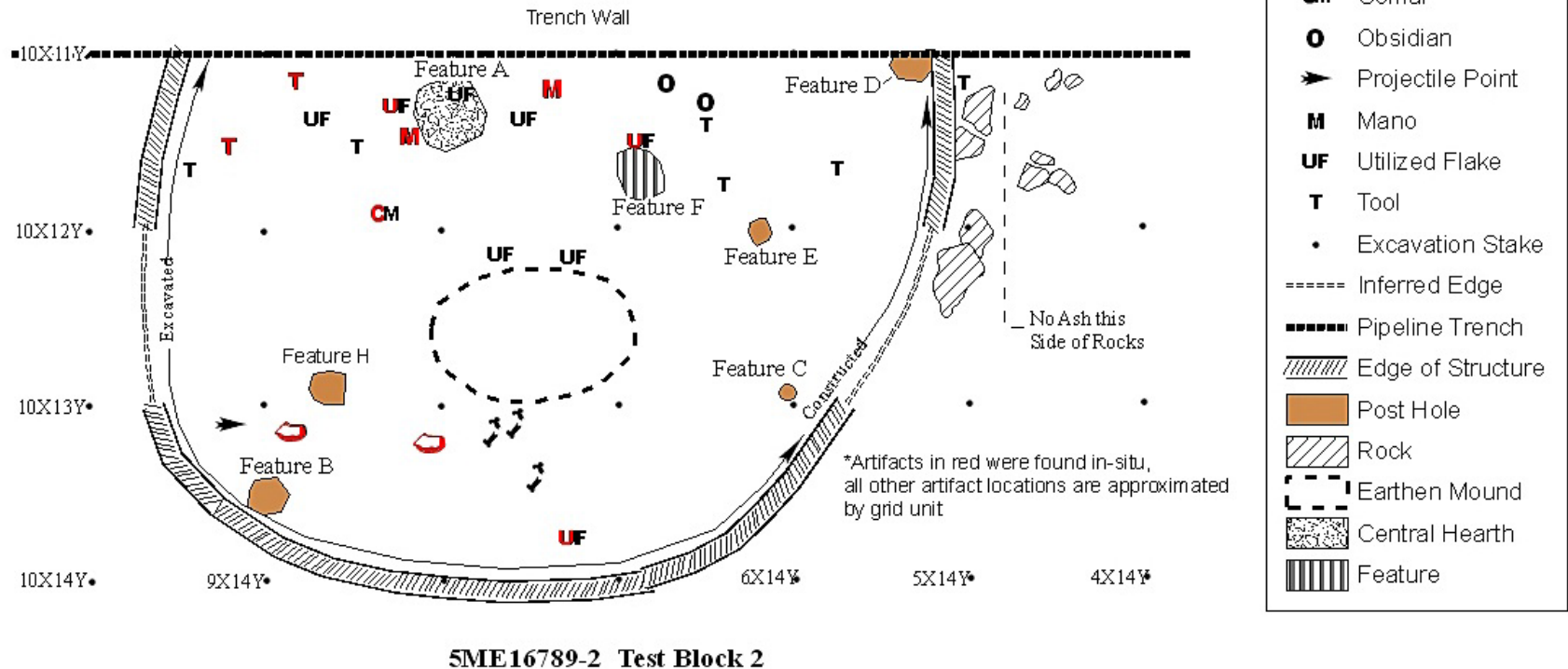
Uncompahgre Brown Ware



Late Archaic diagnostic ground stone and projectile points recovered from the pithouse at Battlement Mesa and from the pithouse found in the pipeline trench.



Plan view of the pithouse (Component 5) showing interior feature and floor artifacts.

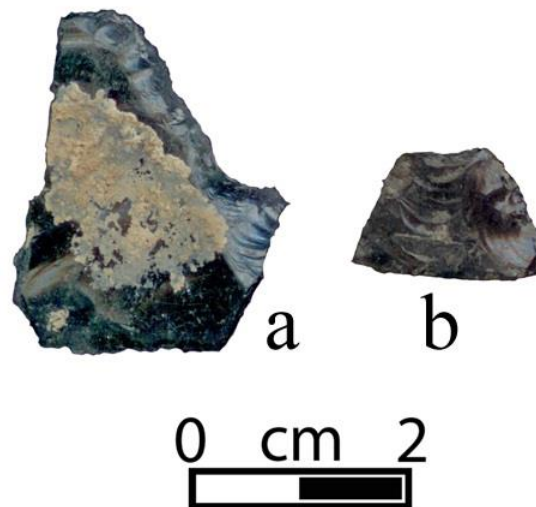


At site 5ME16789, an even older pit structure was identified in the pipeline trench that dated 4610±40BP.

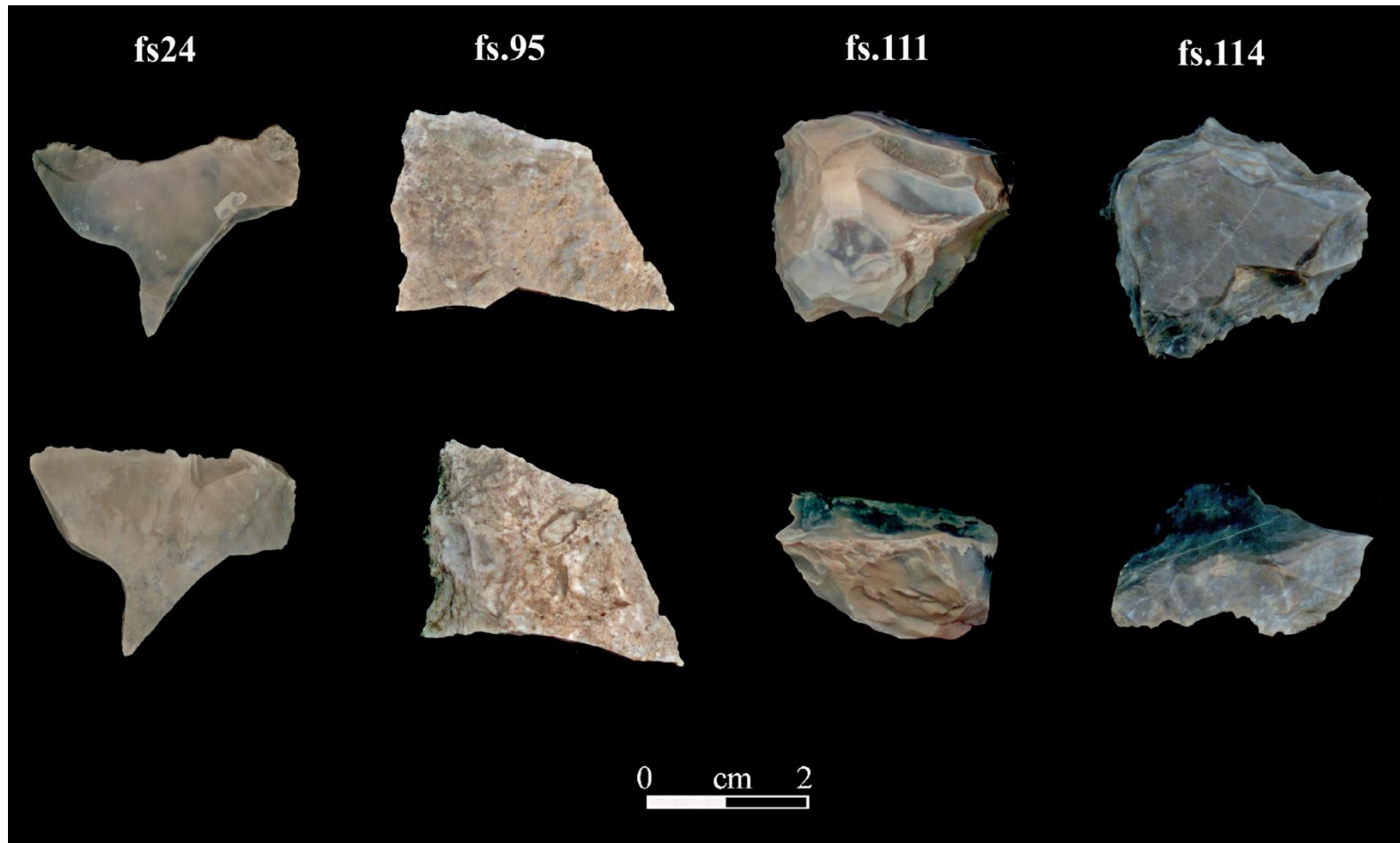


An incomplete projectile point (5ME16789-2.fs36, Plate 5.11-6, left) consisting of one half of the blade and serrated edge, shoulder and corner notched barb, was recovered from the eastern edge of the structure. The point compares well with Elko Corner-notched and Eared types that Holmer indicates occur in the Middle-Late Archaic groups, dating ca. 3000-1000BC or 5000-3000BP, that were occupying the eastern Great Basin and western Colorado Plateau (Holmer 1986:102, Figure 12).

Two obsidian artifacts – a projectile point midsection (.fs68) and a wood- and/or bone-working tool (.fs96) found on the pithouse floor – were sent to Northwest Research Obsidian Studies Laboratory for sourcing. Two New Mexico one located in the Valle Caldera and the other located in the Jemez Mountains.



Small wood and/or bone working tools that exhibit graver tips and planing edges for shaping that were found on the pithouse floor.





Three-sided lean-to structure characterized as a “double lean-to” that was utilized at Havasupai and depicted in the Handbook of North American Indians, Southwest, Vol. II (Schwartz 1983, Figure 42).

Only a small percentage of the expedient Native American wooden architectural features remain intact in archaeological contexts. Of those that do in Colorado, a majority can be irrefutably interpreted as being of Ute construction, but they are rapidly disappearing.

Several sites in the vicinity of the East Trail have standing or collapsed wickiups.



Brock Chapoose of the Northern Ute Tribe stands beside a partially intact “leaner” style wickiup located east of the East Trail corridor.

EAGLE COUNTY TRAILS

This project included portions of two main trail systems – the Mountain segment is part of the Sawatch Mountains Trail and the Dotsero segment is part of the White River Plateau Trails system. They, like those in Mesa County, were important corridors linking key river crossings and seasonal destination locales for the aboriginal inhabitants in central Colorado. Overall 33 sites and 71 isolated finds were documented. Five of these were previously recorded sites that were relocated and reevaluated. The inventory for sites along the Mountain segment was aided by volunteers from History Colorado's Program for Avocational Archaeological Certification (PAAC).



Wickiup Feature 12A and hearth within circular brush enclosure Feature 12C, looking north-northeast.

Wickiup Feature 16 looking north. The orange golf tee and trowel disturbance indicate where three metal projectile points were located.



The Mountain segment was selected because of the presence of a previously recorded wickiup village, 5EA2740, consisting of 28 wooden features and sub-features. Other wickiup camps were suspected in the area.



Metal projectile points and tools. From left to right FSs 33, 34, 35 (found together at Feature 16), 55, and 18.



Modern brass hawk bells



Top: bit jingle, rein chain link, and pick or awl,
Bottom: hawk bell, concho or decorative saddle
tack, and metal disk or washer.

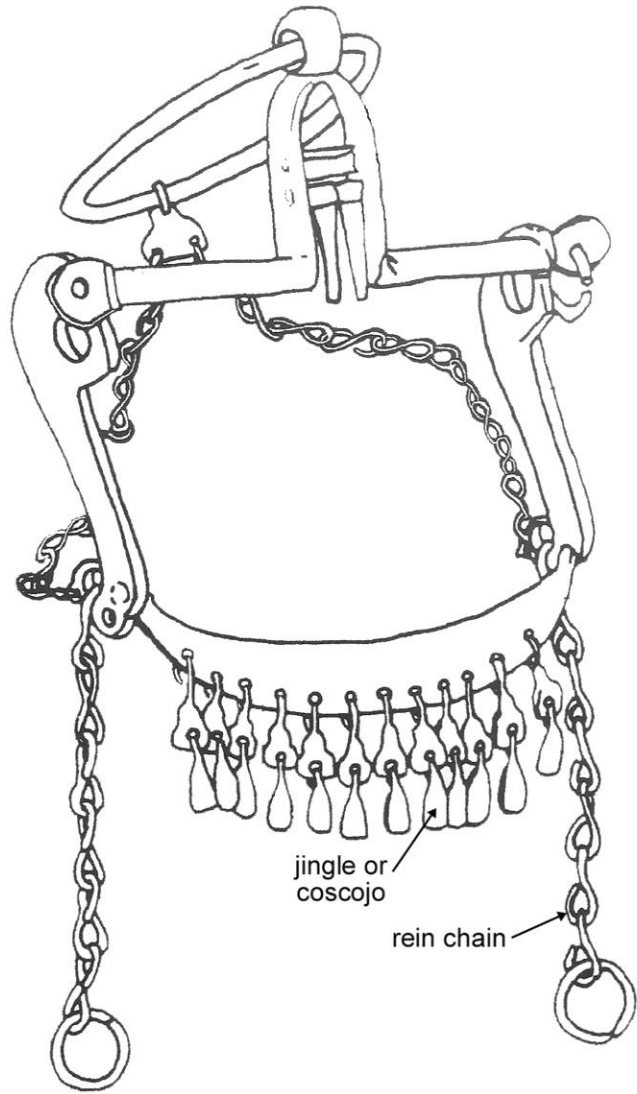


Illustration of a Spanish or Mexican-style Horse Headstall (after Cruse 2008:177). Note the rein chain and jingles similar to those in previous slide of fragments from 5EA2740.

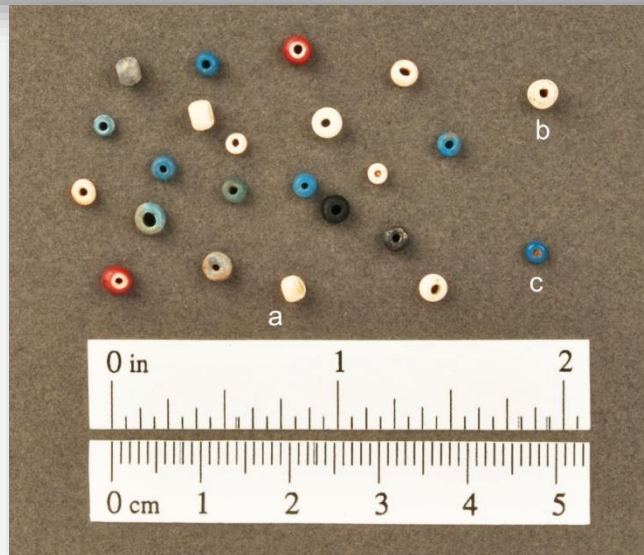


Tinklers and a tinkler blank from Feature 17.



Tinklers and beads are in common use today.

Glass seed beads.



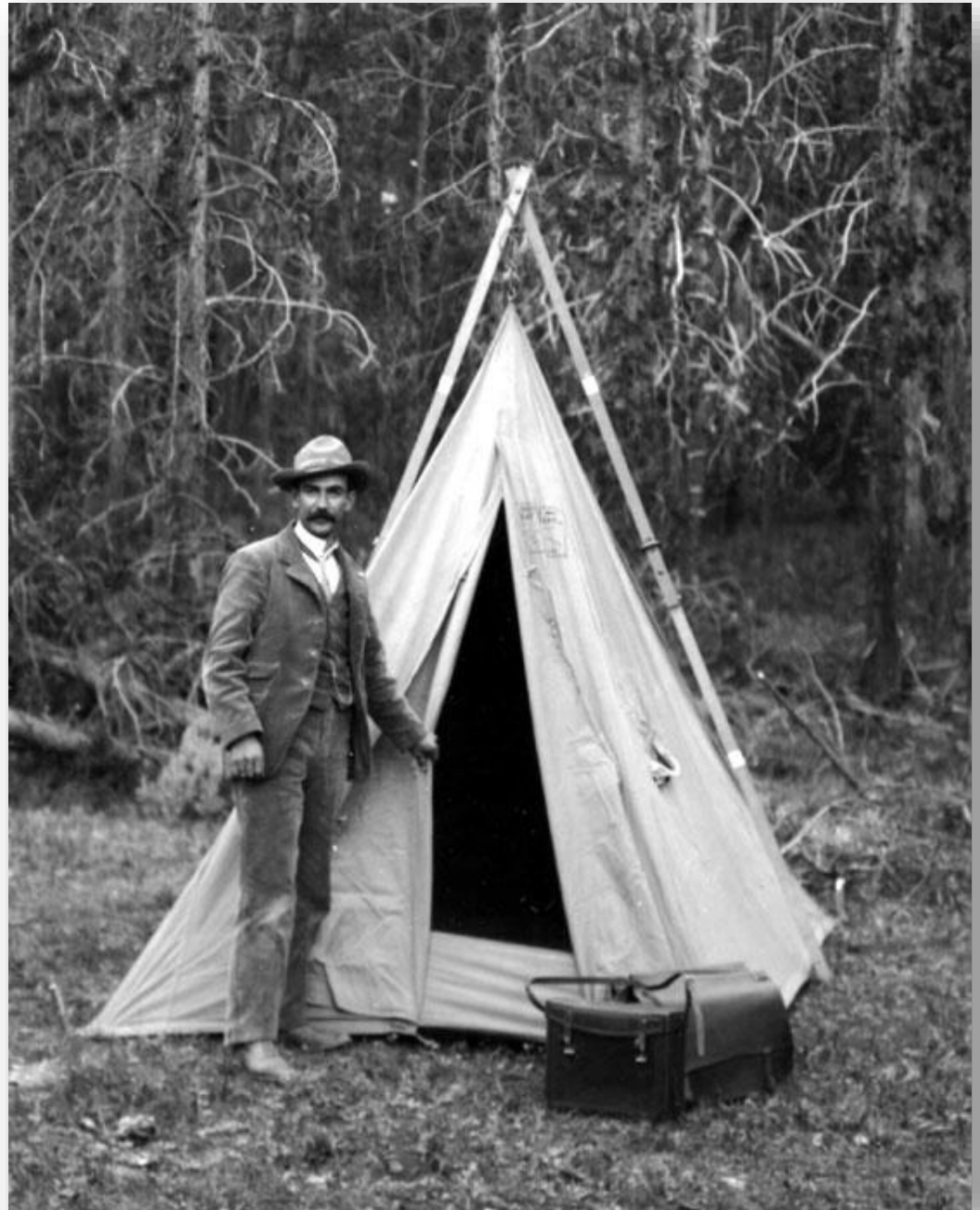


One of the poles was found leaning against the juniper support tree and the two others lay on the ground.



As expected, another open architectural site was encountered near the previously recorded. 5EA3232, consists of a cache of wooden poles, two of which have holes drilled near one end.

Research into the cache turned up similar poles for a pyramidal canvas tent called a Biddle or “range” type that was used during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

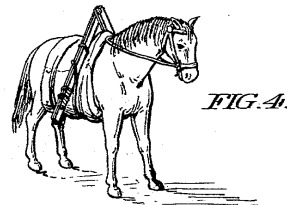
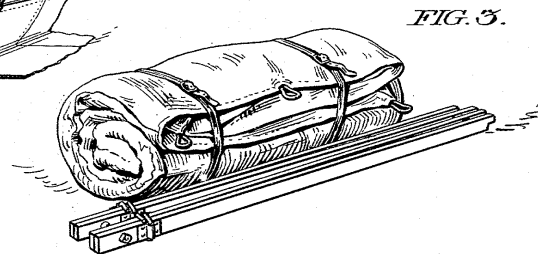
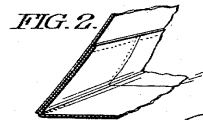
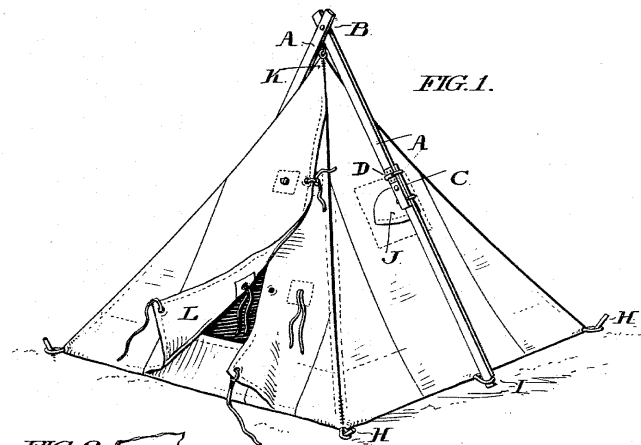


(No Model.)

S. F. B. BIDDLE.
TENT.

No. 548,425.

Patented Oct. 22, 1895.



WITNESSES:

Wm. H. Biddle
Wm. H. Biddle

INVENTOR:

Spencer F. B. Biddle

Biddle tents were patented in 1895 by Spencer F. B. Biddle as a lightweight shelter -- akin to modern backpacking tents -- and easily packed on horseback (Rawitzer 1912).

5EA3218.s1



g

5EA3289.s1



h

5EA2150.s1



i

5EA3228.s1



j

From a few of the other sites recorded during the inventory are Cottonwood (unnotched) and tri-notched points indicative of the Late Prehistoric. Far right is an eclectic type that may have been a Thunderbird rendition.

At right are points found in some of the open camps representing the Late, Middle, and Early Archaic time periods.

5EA3233.s2



k

5EA3220.s1



l

5EA3226.s1



m

5EA3215.s1



n

5EA3215.s2



o

5EA3228.s2



p

5EA3213.s1



q

The Mountain Section is still remote and access is limited. There the impacts are primarily from cattle grazing and trampling, especially near the springs. It stands in contrast to the Dotsero Section where access is a designated BLM hiking trail. There the impacts are from recreational camping and surface collection, which has occurred over many years.

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