

# **Evidence of Bison in Adams County, Idaho USDA Payette National Forest**

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In March 2001, a sample of stone tools from an American Indian occupation (10-AM-399) located east of Indian Valley on the Payette National Forest (PNF) was sent to Archaeological Investigations Northwest, Inc. for testing ancient blood residue proteins. The action was part of mitigation results from an Archaeological Resource Protection Act (ARPA) violation. Five obsidian tools yielded positive results for having bovine anti-serum. This was the first scientific evidence suggesting the presence of bison on the PNF.

At another ARPA investigated American Indian occupation (10-AM-266) located adjacent to Crooked River, a tributary of the Snake River Canyon, Eastern Washington University (EWU) in October 2001 uncovered what they thought were domestic cow bones. The bones were found in buried archaeological context directly associated with several late period arrowpoints and other stone tools. EWU archaeologist Stan Gough suspected that the bones were bison, and had one bone radiocarbon dated in March 2003. The bone dated to 335 +/- 35 before present (BP) or 300 to 370 calibrated years BP or 1580 to 1650 A.D. The Indians at this time did not have horses, and hunted bison on foot. The horse did not appear among the Nez Perce Indians until circa 1740. This is the first time bison bones have ever been found in a dated archaeological context on the PNF.

Analysis of ancient blood proteins and radiometric dating are indispensable archaeological techniques in demonstrating that bison were once present on the PNF. Civil penalties under ARPA provided or encouraged the funding for mitigating damage to these archaeological sites.



## Bound Books

- "The Homestead Records of David Lewis, 1921," August 1998
- "The Cascade Phase, an Archaic Period: Archaeological Manifestation on the Payette National Forest, Idaho," by Lawrence A. Kingsbury, Steven E. Stoddard, and Jill Frye. January 1997
- "A Projectile Point Typology for the Payette National Forest, Idaho," by Steve E. Stoddard. June 1996
- "Search for the Downed," by John P. Ferguson. 1996
- "American Indian Archaeological & Cultural History Related to the Frank Church – River of No Return Wilderness (Payette Unit)," July 30, 2007
- "The Analysis of a Late Holocene Bison Skull From Fawn Creek, Lemhi County, Idaho, and Its Implications for Understanding the History and Ecology of Bison in the Intermountain West," by Kenneth P. Cannon.
- "Archaeological Site Testing at Indian Creek (10VY492/PY-584), Krassel Work Center, Payette National Forest: A National Register Property," by Lawrence A. Kingsbury. April 1994
- "Archaeological Site Testing at Lake Creek (10IH2561/PY-1331), New Meadows Ranger District, Payette National Forest, Idaho," by Lawrence A. Kingsbury. April 1997
- "Archaeological Investigations at Waterfall Village and Big Creek Cave," September 1998
- "The Sheepeaters," by David Dominick. 1964
- "Some Ecological Clues to Proto-Numic Homelands," by Catherine S. Fowler. 1972
- "Shoshone-Bannock Subsistence and Society," Robert F. Murphy and Yolanda Murphy. 1960
- "Shadows in the Wilderness," by Sheila D. Reddy. December 1995
- "Lemhi Shoshone-Bannock Reliance on Anadromous and Other Fish Resources," by Deward E. Walker, Jr. April 1994