

Obsidian Haskett Spear Point From Warren, Idaho Has Been Geochemically Sourced

March 2009

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In 1992 a seasonal resident of Warren, Idaho found a portion of a black obsidian Haskett spear point. This artifact was found about one mile northwest of the Warren town-site in the dredge tailing gravels north and adjacent to the bridge over Warren Creek. Haskett Points are rarely found in the area of the Payette National Forest in west-central Idaho.

Haskett points are generally large, have long blades with collateral flaking and ground basal edges. They differ from most lanceolate points in that the widest and thickest part of the point is located at two-thirds of the length from the base, resulting in a short narrow tip and a narrow base. The shape of this point was probably a function of resharpening the tip. The base is usually straight to slightly convex. It is probable that the large base section was needed for hafting and lashing and used as a hunting spear to thrust with as opposed to throwing the spear. An ancient hunter used a variety of different stone materials in fashioning Haskett points and includes: obsidian, ignimbrite, crypto-crystalline silicates, quartzite, and rhyolite (Sargeant 1973:84-85).

This broken Haskett point has two hinge fractures, one on the base and one on the mid-section of the blade. The obsidian is a dense jet black in color. However, the thinner edges are partially semi-translucent. Surface water abrasion is visible on the flaking scars probably from being in Warren Creek for a long time. The basal edges are ground smooth for hafting.

Obsidian does not naturally occur on the Payette National Forest. In October 2008 the author borrowed this artifact from Jan Monson of Warren, Idaho and mailed it to Richard E. Hughes, Ph.D., Director of the Geochemical Research Laboratory in Portola, California. A request was made to have this obsidian artifact analyzed using energy dispersive x-ray fluorescence to generate a geochemical signature for determining the source for the obsidian.

The results suggest that the geochemical type of this artifact has a trace element composition congruent with geological samples from the Timber Butte source near Emmett, Idaho (Hughes, Letter Report 2008-100). The distance as measured in a straight line from Warren to Emmett, Idaho is about 100 miles. Haskett lanceolate projectile points from Red Fish Overhang, located southeast of Stanley, Idaho were associated with a radiometric date of $10,000 \pm 300$ years before present (WSU 13960), (Sargeant 1973:63), and (Butler 1978:64-65).

Butler, B. Robert

1978 A Guide to Understanding Idaho Archaeology (Third Edition): The Upper Snake and Salmon River Country, Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho.

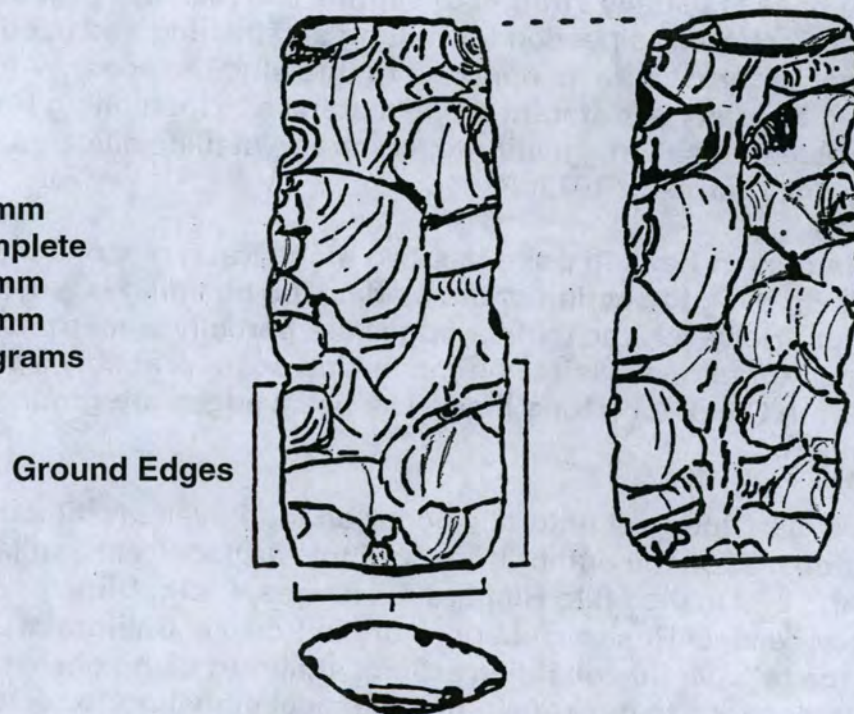
Hughes, Richard E.

2008 Geochemical Research Laboratory, Letter Report 2008-100, Portola Valley, California.

Sargeant, Kathryn E.

1973 Haskett Tradition: A View from Redfish Overhang, Master's Thesis in Anthropology, Idaho State University, Pocatello, Idaho.

Length: 71.6 mm
Width: Incomplete
Thickness: 29.8 mm
Weight: 35.9 grams



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