

Cultural Resources Overview

Lake Andes National Wildlife Refuge – Southeast South Dakota

Barry Gwin Williams January 2012



Humans have occupied central North America for more than 12,000 years and have left a diverse cultural material legacy on the landscape. Several researchers have summarized our understanding of the prehistory and history of the Northeastern Plains (DeMallie, R. J. 2001, Jackson and Toom 1999, Lehmer, D. J. 1971, Schneider, M. J. 2002, Wedel 1961, Winham and Hannus 1989; Wood 1998), and only a brief review will be provided here as adapted from Michael A. Jackson and Dennis Toom (1999).

The cultural chronology can be divided into six basic periods:

1. Paleoindian (ca. 9500–5500 B.C.)
2. Plains Archaic (ca. 5500–500 B.C.)
3. Plains Woodland (ca. 500 B.C.–A.D. 1000)
4. Plains Village (ca. A.D. 1000–1780)
5. Protohistoric and Early Historic Period (ca. A.D. 1780-1880)
6. Modern Historic (ca. A.D. 1880–) Not covered.

The first three periods refer to prehistoric nomadic and seminomadic cultural traditions with the fourth period defined by the semisedentary, horticultural, Plains Village tradition's which extends into early historic times. Next the Protohistoric and Early Historic period encompasses the decline of the Plains Village tradition for many peoples and the rise of the Plains Equestrian tradition, which developed as a consequence of the introduction of the domestic horse and European manufactured trade goods. Later in the Historic period, at the end of the Plains Equestrian tradition at ca. A.D. 1880, the modern Euro-American tradition becomes dominant.

Within the Lake Andes WMD are included portions of five archeological regions, Big Bend, Fort Randall, Lower James, Vermillion Basin, and the Lower Big Sioux and the Yankton region in its entirety. These regions, based on drainage units, are defined in the '*South Dakota State Plan for*

Archeological Resources: Introduction and Overview to Study Units and Archeological Management Regions (Winham and Hannus 1989). The plan identifies, with more specificity, information about the known archeological resources, cultures, and gaps in our current (1989) understanding of the past of the resources within the WMD than this report. An updated plan is soon to be released.

PALEOINDIAN PERIOD (9500–5500 B.C.)

The Paleoindian period has been provisionally dated to approximately 9500–5500 years B.C. The age range of this period is based mainly on Paleoindian finds elsewhere in the Great Plains because the Paleoindian artifacts identified in Southeast South Dakota have been surface finds. This period began with the initial entry of humans into the Northeastern Plains following the retreat of the last Pleistocene glaciers. These Paleoindian peoples exhibited nomadic settlement patterns and subsistence economies based on hunting and gathering that were adapted to late Pleistocene and early Holocene climates, animals, and plants.

PLAINS ARCHAIC PERIOD (5500–500 B.C.)

The Plains Archaic period followed the Paleoindian period from approximately 5500 B.C. to 500 B.C. Relatively few Plains Archaic sites have been identified in the Lake Andes area, and even fewer have been extensively investigated. This period is characterized as an extension of the nomadic hunting and gathering adaptation from the preceding period, but it was adapted to essentially modern (Holocene) climate, fauna, and flora. Bison remained the principal quarry of these people, although deer and elk were exploited along the prairie/woodland transition. There is also evidence of intensified seed and plant gathering and processing during the Plains Archaic period. Other changes included the adoption of the atlatl and dart, and an overall decline in the quality of flint knapping.

PLAINS WOODLAND PERIOD (500 B.C.–A.D. 1000)

Plains Woodland lifeways are thought to have shared many similarities with those of the Plains Archaic period, particularly subsistence economies based on hunting and gathering. However, the practice of mound burial, possibly indicative of more complex ceremonialism; the production and use of ceramic vessels; and the first use of the bow and arrow all appear to have been developments that distinguish the Plains Woodland period. It is also possible that horticulture made its first appearance during Plains Woodland times, but direct evidence of this is lacking in the Northern Plains. It also has been suggested that Plains Woodland peoples enjoyed a somewhat more settled lifeway, shifting from the fully nomadic settlement pattern of the Plains Archaic period to a seminomadic pattern.

Artifact assemblages of the Plains Woodland tradition reflect the introduction of ceramic technology and the acquisition of exotic trade materials. Late in the tradition, the transition from dart or spear points to arrow points can be seen in weapons technology. The lifeway is characterized by increased sedentism, population growth, and the construction of earthen burial mounds. The appearance of the Plains Woodland tradition is an extension of the general Woodland lifeway that flourished throughout the Midwest (to the east and southeast) during this period. Again, adaptation to the plains/prairie environment resulted in a distinctive subsistence pattern that relied heavily on bison hunting. Plains Woodland campsites are generally identified where river and stream valleys extended into the Plains proper, affording a riparian setting for the establishment of base camps.

PLAINS VILLAGE PERIOD (A.D. 1000–1780)

In the Northern Plains, a semisedentary, horticultural way of life, the Plains Village tradition, is best known from its many village sites that have been found along the Missouri River trench in the Dakotas. The Plains Village tradition first appeared in the Middle Missouri at about A.D. 1000. It flourished there throughout most of the late prehistoric period and persisted in attenuated form well into historic times. The period is brought to a close at A.D. 1780 following the decimation of the Plains Village population base along the Missouri River by a smallpox epidemic that originated in the American Southwest.

Plains Village culture was distinctly different from its Plains Woodland antecedent. It was characterized by the construction of substantial, permanent dwellings, known as earthlodges, that were arranged into often fortified villages along major streams with broad valley floors for gardening. Subsistence was based on a mixed strategy of horticulture, or garden agriculture, including the cultivation of maize, beans, squash, and sunflowers; bison hunting; and general hunting and gathering, or foraging. Continued elaboration and sophistication in ceramic manufacture also typify the period, with well-made, globular-shaped and shouldered pots exhibiting a wide variety of stylistic variability typifying most village collections.

The Plains Village settlement pattern is interpreted as semi-sedentary, with people residing in their villages at various times of the year, especially during times of important horticultural activity, and leaving their villages at other times to go on extended hunts. A key element in the Plains Village adaptation was the production of a dependable, storable, surplus food supply. This surplus consisted of both meat and garden produce that was usually stored in subterranean storage pits, commonly called cache pits, another identifying attribute of the tradition. Considerable archeological and ethnohistorical evidence indicates direct connections between the prehistoric Plains Village tradition; the related Coalescent Tradition in the Northern Plains; and the historically known Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, and Cheyenne peoples.

PROTOHISTORIC AND EARLY HISTORIC PERIOD (A.D. 1780–1890)

The Plains Equestrian tradition, also referred to as the Equestrian Nomadic tradition, evolved during protohistoric and early historic times following the introduction of the domestic horse via trade networks extending into the Spanish Southwest. In the Northern Plains, acquisition of the horse by Native American peoples was well underway by about A.D. 1750. The Plains Equestrian tradition represents the well-known nomadic bison hunters of early historic times who spent much of the year in tipi camps. During this period, there was greater cultural interaction among native groups as a consequence of improved transportation (i.e., the horse) and ever increasing Euro-American influence.

“Protohistoric” refers to the time of initial Euro-American cultural impact on native cultures prior to actual contact. European cultural influence may have come as early as A.D. 1650 with the introduction of trade goods filtering into the area from the north via native trade networks. As mentioned above, horses were introduced from the south by the mid-1700s. By the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of early historic times, fur trade expansionism had profoundly influenced Native American lifeways in the Dakotas. Participation in the trading system brought changes in material culture and subsistence practices as interaction with Euro-Americans intensified.

When Lewis and Clark traveled through the Lake Andes area in the summer of 1804 they were met by the Yankton Sioux. Further upstream on the Missouri were the Dakota and Lakota and downstream were the Ponca (South Dakota Archeological Research Center 1977). By 1858, the

Yankton were confined to a four hundred thousand acre reservation which is now the Yankton Sioux Reservation (Schneider 2002).

By about A.D. 1880, Euro-American domination of what was to become North and South Dakota was complete. Permanent non-Indian settlement of the States came about with the construction of railroads and the security of military protection. Military occupation of the Dakotas accelerated in response to the 1862 Sioux Uprising in Minnesota. The establishment of permanent forts in the Dakota Territory prepared the way for settlement. In addition to the military complement and their families, a civilian population was employed to supply goods and services to the army. Railroads penetrated the territory in the 1870s, and homesteaders immigrated to the area partly because transportation and military protection were assured. Settlers acquired land from the railroads or from the government through the Homestead, Pre-emption, and Timber Culture acts in the 1870s and 1880s. Agricultural settlement followed a cyclical pattern of boom and decline, especially in the eastern part of the State. Settlement spread generally from east to west, and in 1889 the Dakotas achieved statehood.

ARCHEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS

Approximately sixteen archeological linear surveys have crossed Service lands within the Lake Andes WMD. The surveys followed the path of proposed telephone lines, power lines, water pipelines and road and bridge projects (SD Archaeological Research Center 2011). Many small block surveys have been conducted on the WMD and NWR by Service and contracted archeologists. Two major surveys were for the Lake Andes-Wagner Irrigation Project and the survey of the headquarters and residence at Lake Andes NWR and Karl E. NWR (Church, McCallister, and Williams 1984; Zimmerman, Werner, Park, and Tudehope 1978). Additionally, the Broken Arrow WPA was surveyed in 1985 (Winham 1985).

Reporting of sites from the archeological surveys has been disappointing with only eight sites being reported. Four isolated finds, two artifact scatters, and two historic farmsteads have been recorded. The isolate finds include stone flakes, choppers, and knife fragments. The two artifacts scatters of undated antiquity are prehistoric campsites.

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