

Lithic procurement strategies through time: A study of obsidian source utilization in Washington County, Utah

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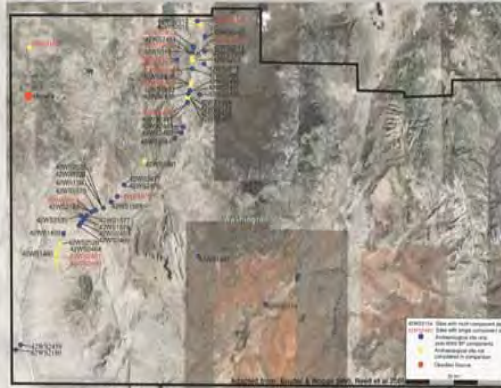
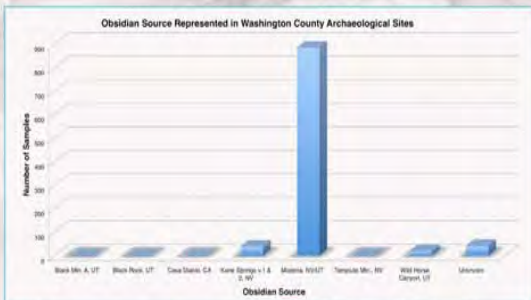
Abstract

A study of obsidian procurement in Washington County, Utah allows an examination of mobility and cultural interaction on the fringes of the Great Basin. Presented here are XRF data from 58 pre-contact archaeological sites ranging from the early Archaic to ca. 600 B.P. This wide temporal range provides an excellent opportunity to evaluate shifting obsidian procurement strategies through time. Source provenance data show great similarity to assemblages from elsewhere in the eastern Great Basin, but distant sources in these assemblages may help to illustrate this area's connections to other parts of the region.



Methods

- XRF data from 58 sites was examined to determine the most commonly used obsidian sources within Washington County
- XRF data from 48 sites with no component older than 6,000 BP was compared with data from 14 other eastern Great Basin sites (Haarklau et al 2004)
- XRF data from 1 multi-component and 14 single component sites was considered to further illustrate differences in obsidian procurement during 5 major cultural phases



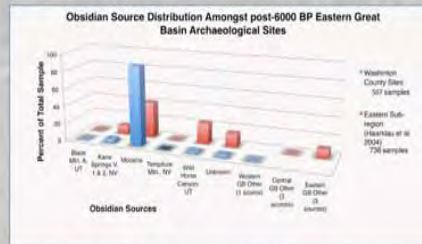
Results

All Assemblages

- Modena dominates assemblages with ≥ 5 samples
- Unknown obsidian persists through time

Comparison with other Eastern Great Basin Sites

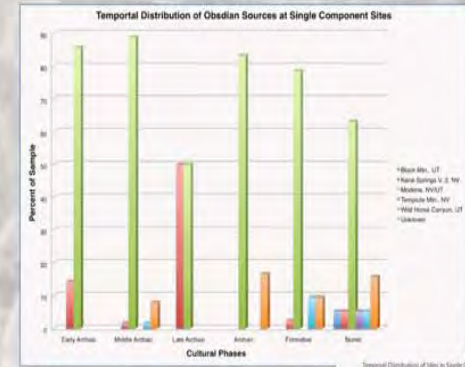
- Modena is twice as common among Washington County sites as those in Haarklau et al (2004)
- Washington County sites showed less variation
- Haarklau et al (2004) shows higher frequency of unknown sources



Results cont.

Single Component Sites

- Modena dominates all single component sites
- Except Late Archaic sites each temporal phase is dominated Modena
- Numic phase sites show a greater diversity of obsidian sources



Conclusions

- Stable procurement from the Early Archaic to the Formative focusing on local sources supplemented by secondary sources
- Continual contact with distant groups
- Occupants during the Numic phase appear to have had more intensive contact with distant groups
- A larger sample from each time period is need to better understand shifting procurement



References cited

- Bruder, J. Simon, and A. E. Rogge 1990 *Kern River Pipeline Cultural Resources Inventory Report: Utah Segment.*
- Haarklau, Lynn, Lynn Johnson & David Wagner 2005 *Fingerprints in the Great Basin: The Nellis Airforce Base Region Obsidian Sourcing Study.*
- Reed, Alan D., Mathew T. Seddon & Heather K. Stettler 2005 *Kern River 2003 Expansion Project: Cultural Resources Mitigation Report.*

Acknowledgements

Thank you to: **Craig Skinner** (NROSL), **Arie Leeflang** (Utah State History – Antiquities Section), **Dr. Heather Stettler** (SWCA), **Dr. Kevin Jones** (Utah State History – Antiquities Section), **Christian J. Miss** (NWAA), **Jody Patterson** (Montgomery Archaeological Consultants, Inc.), **Barbara Walling-Frank** (SUU Field School)