



## Abstract

Central Wyoming College archaeology students have discovered a series of prehistoric sites along most of the trail leading to Gannett Peak and the Dinwoody Glacier. These sites provide evidence that people lived and foraged for food at elevations up to 12,500 feet above sea level in the Wind River Mountains. The oldest identified so far was part of the Goshen Culture, over 11,000 years ago and only recently arrived from Berengia at the end of the Pleistocene Ice Age. That site was identified by the type of spear recovered there. Other projectile points are used to date sites through the entire span of human presence in North America perhaps to the middle 1800s at the end of the Little Ice Age. This poster describes and discusses the various types of weapons that human hunters have used to obtain food and defend themselves in the high alpine of northwest Wyoming.

# Upper Dinwoody Projectile Points: Killing Tools From the Pleistocene to the Little Ice Age

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## Methodology

Artifacts were collected in one of two methods; surface recovery as result of surveying the area or as a collection from site testing. Provenience of the points would be collected via Trimble GPS unit in UTM coordinates. Recovery of the points was only performed after surveying of the surrounding area was completed to ensure that all artifacts were located. Once the points were collected and in the lab, they underwent cross-comparative analysis with established typologies to infer their age and cultural association.

## Results/Conclusion

Analysis of the artifacts indicate that the Wind River Range was occupied by humans during various periods of time. Figure 7 indicating a presence 8,000-6,000- years BC as the point yields traits associated with the Cody Complex and Figure 8 suggesting an occupation 9,000-8,000 BC as it yields traits found in the Goshen complex. Figures 1-4 contain traits associated with Archaic complexes and would suggest a presence between 6,000-1,000 years BC. Figures 5-6 are artifacts that are found in every complex which makes dating them difficult but supports the notion a longer occupation as they are associated with butchery sites.

## Discussion

The presence of these artifacts supports the notion that the Wind River Range was occupied by people over various periods of time. The amount of earlier artifacts over later artifacts does not necessarily suggest that the area was rarely utilized by Paleoindian people as it is possible that their remnants were destroyed over time due to various factors such as exposure to fire, other natural elements, and decomposition. Tools made of organic materials would have decomposed long ago, leaving behind lithic tools. Additionally there is also the possibility that despite our extensive surveying, we did not see an artifact due to natural lighting, reduced ground visibility from vegetation, and the artifact simply not being exposed. Further surveying and collection is needed to provide a more comprehensive data set to establish what culture complexes occupied the Wind River Range. GPS recordation of sites would also be beneficial to establish the boundaries and extend of cultural complexes in the area.

## References

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## Introduction

CWC anthropology students have been part of the Interdisciplinary Climate Change Expedition (ICCE) with the objective to locate and record any archaeological materials encountered in order to develop a greater understanding the relationship of prehistoric people and the Wind River Range. Over the course of three seasons, a substantial number of lithic artifacts of varying ages were recovered along the hiking trail. These artifacts are made from a variety of materials and the collection provides insight in how long the Wind River Range has been occupied.

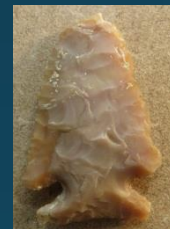


Figure 1. Projectile Point



Figure 3. Fragmented Projectile Point



Figure 5. Scraper



Figure 7. Projectile Point



Figure 2. Projectile Point



Figure 4. Projectile Point Base Fragment

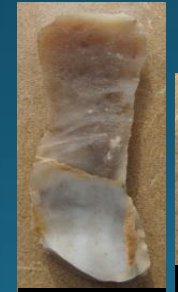


Figure 6. Blade

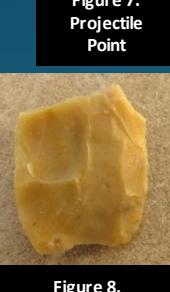


Figure 8. Projectile Point Base Fragment

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