**PAPER ABSTRACTS**  
*4th Annual Keeler Conference on Inyo-Mono Archaeology*  
*July 30-Aug 1, 2010*

**Basgall, M. E.** *(Archaeological Research Center, California State University, Sacramento)*

**Of Pavements, Bifaces, and Gypsum Period Villages in the Northern Mojave Desert**

A recent paper by Byrd, Young, and McGuire (2009) offers a creative assessment of toolstone use in the northern Mojave Desert based on geomorphic dating of alluvial surfaces containing raw material sources. The authors argue that exploitation of pavements containing CCS reduction features dates mainly to the Gypsum period, when regional populations were logistically targeting stone-bearing hinterlands to both acquire large game and obtain materials needed for biface-dominated hunting activities. They suggest that centralized residential sites marked by prolonged, stable occupations served as the hubs of this system which was characterized by limited residential mobility. While intriguing and surely consistent with some other recent attempts to explain Middle Archaic adaptations in other sectors of California and the Great Basin, this model has numerous empirical contradictions and fails to account for much of the Mojave Desert archaeological record. Some of these problems are considered in this presentation.

**Delacorte, M.** *(Archaeological Research Center, California State University, Sacramento)*

**Deep Springs Revisited**

On the twentieth anniversary of the Deep Springs Archaeological Project, much of what was proposed remains true. This includes a change from wide-ranging to geographically localized settlement between the Newberry and later time periods, and the limited role of environment on adaptive responses across the region. More recent work in other parts of the eastern Sierra and evolving theoretical perspectives call other of the Deep Springs conclusions into question. The most significant of these is the amount of late prehistoric (post-600 A.D.) adaptive variability between valleys. Once substantial differences in settlement, mobility, and social organization seem now less pronounced, with most or all of the Mono-speaking area sharing a similar pattern. If true, this reassessment has potentially significant implications for our understanding of Great Basin and broader evolutionary trends in forager societies.

**Giambastiani, M. A.** *(ASM Affiliates, Inc.)*

**A Discussion of Fluted/Stemmed Point Sites Along Darwin/X-3 Road, NAWS China Lake, California.**

A recent inventory paralleling the 2200-foot contour along the north edge of China Lake has identified a large number of fluted/stemmed point sites in apparent association with an ancient shoreline of pluvial Lake China. The spatial distributions, assemblage characteristics, potential ages, and technological affinity of these sites, along with data from other fluted and stemmed point sites in the region, are the subject of this presentation.

**Haverstock, G.** *(Bureau of Land Management, Bishop Field Office)*

**The Role of High Elevation Resources in Prehistoric Human Behavior of the Eastern Sierra**

In spite of decades of modern archaeological research in the Owens Valley region, some substantial aspects of prehistoric human behavior have been neglected. One such category, high elevation resource
procurement, represents a significant, yet poorly understood portion of prehistoric human adaptation. In this paper, the high elevation prehistoric utilization of the Inyo Mountains is compared with that found in the adjoining White Mountains. Differences in chronology, site function, distribution, and obsidian procurement will be discussed. Additionally, these patterns will be assessed in light of regional diachronic changes that apparently occurred late in prehistory. Although the two research areas detailed share many similar attributes, substantial differences in the material record and researcher interpretation exist.

James, B. (Archaeological Research Center, California State University, Sacramento)

Early Newberry Activity in the Owens Valley Based on Surface Data from Existing Collections

As part of the inception of an M.A. thesis project, this paper focuses on the Early Newberry period, a fairly underrepresented slice of time in the Owens Valley. The Newberry period as a whole comprises a large fraction of the Middle Archaic period, 3500-1350 BP (Bettinger and Taylor 1974). However, prior to 2000 BP it is apparent that a markedly different behavioral pattern is in place that does not conform to the well-documented late Newberry pattern of seasonally mobile habitation sites (i.e., Basgall and McGuire 1988). In an effort to obtain insight into this time period, extant data will be compiled on certain projectile point types that may be diagnostic to this period throughout the valley. Based on the dispersion of such markers, assumptions about occupation, mobility, and subsistence activities will be tested against previously unexamined regional collections. With the intention of using obsidian sourcing data along with obsidian hydration of certain materials from these collections, this study will try and establish regional occupation patterns in the Owens Valley prior to 2000 BP and offer a higher resolution data set for future research.

Kerwin, W. (Bureau of Land Management, Bishop Field Office)

Eastern Sierra Cultural Resource Management

Federal Agency cultural resource management in the Eastern Sierra has been perpetuated by administrative and permitted development on public lands. Preservation and protection strategies of cultural resources since the 1970’s have left us a legacy of data, but also inherent challenges regarding management of cultural resources in a contemporary environment. This paper will examine management strategies over the past 30 years on public lands located in the local Eastern Sierra and how this continues to affect management strategies today, in this region of the Western Great Basin.

Laylander, D. (ASM Affiliates, Inc.)

The Swansea Site and the Equinox Question: Issues of Plausibility and Proof

The Swansea Site (INY-432) is one of a dozen sites in the California deserts that have been reported as containing prehistoric equinox markers. The plausibility of these proposals and the adequacy of the evidence that has been offered in support of them are challenged. This also raises more general issues concerning hypothesis testing and the standards of verification that we apply to various issues in regional archaeology.
Miller, C.  *(Bureau of Land Management, Bishop Field Office)*

**Revitalizing Historic Resources: Recent Stabilization and Restoration Projects Completed by the BLM Bishop Field Office**

Over the last decade, the Bureau of Land Management Bishop Field Office has undertaken many stabilization and restoration projects on National Register eligible historic resources. These efforts aided in the protection of unique historic structures, discouraged vandalism, and promoted public awareness of Owens Valley heritage. The first large scale preservation project was completed at the Saline Valley Salt Tram in the Inyo Mountains in 1999, followed by the restoration of the Golden Gate Stamp Mill in the Bodie Hills in 2005. Varying complexities of stabilization requirements have led to involvement with the Youth Conservation Corps and the National Park Service’s preservation team in addition to BLM staff. This paper will highlight a few of the diverse projects including a recent restoration of an outbuilding at Conway Ranch, an ongoing stabilization project of a stage coach stop building at River Springs, and a vandalism restoration project on a petroglyph site near Fish Springs.

Noble, M. D., and W. E. Larson  *(Archaeological Research Center, CSU, Sacramento)*

**Some Thoughts on Owens Valley Ground Stone...**

Some researchers have argued that as intensification of a particular resource increases, the investment in the tools used to acquire and process these resources will also increase. It has been demonstrated, however, that within the Owens Valley, ground stone technology does not follow this trajectory. This paper presents a brief overview of some ground stone technologies within the Owens Valley. It discusses how patterns in ground stone relate to optimal foraging models, with particular emphasis on investment in technology and intensification of resources.

Pohl, A.  *(Archaeological Research Center, California State University, Sacramento)*

**Obsidian Bifaces from the Inyo-Mono Region of California: Groundwork for an In-Depth Use-wear Study**

Bifaces are often assumed to be knives and/or butchering tools whose presence at a site is argued to show a hunting focus. Alternatively, they may be heavy-duty processing tools, portable cores, projectile point blanks, projectile point forms that lack diagnostic hafting elements, or other tools intended for hafting. Traditional macroscopic use-wear analysis sometimes distinguishes between these options, but the results are often so ambiguous that numerous competing explanations are equally plausible. Moreover, there are comparatively few experimental studies of use-wear formation on obsidian artifacts relative to other raw materials. “Biface” is, therefore, little more than a catch-all category for unidentifiable and/or broken tools that are flaked on both sides, regardless of their other attributes. A plan of study is presented that the author hopes will elucidate these issues. This approach includes macroscopic and microscopic examination of experimental obsidian tools examining variables that include worked material, utilized edge angle, severity and type of use-related damage present, organic residue, and tool stone transport behavior.

Polson, N.  *(US Army Corps of Engineers)*

**Anodonta and Ceramics: Two Hallmarks of the Marana Period in Owens Valley**

The appearance and widespread use of ceramics and Anodonta shell in Owens Valley have been firmly dated to the Marana period. A simple presence or absence survey of both these artifact classes at
sites throughout the valley will be conducted to evaluate where and when these resources were used. Their significance in various regions of the valley, relationship to other artifact classes, and co-occurrence at sites may reveal important patterns in late prehistoric resource and land use patterns.

Rogers, A. K. (Maturango Museum)

The Borden Collection and the Insights it Provides on Ancient Lifeways in Rose Valley, Eastern California

Rose Valley, in southern Inyo County, was traversed by the glacial Owens River in the late Pleistocene, draining Lake Owens into Lake Chico; the river created extensive braided channels and marshes in Rose Valley, which persisted into the early Holocene. Archaeological research has been conducted in the area in support of geothermal exploitation, and Paleoindian artifacts have been reported from the area by avocationalists. One such group, Ferris Borden and colleagues of the ASA, surveyed the ancient river channel and its associated marshes intensively in the late 1960’s. However, after his death his collection vanished until 2008, when it was suddenly delivered to the Maturango Museum for cataloging and curation. Only rough cataloging has been completed, but it clear that it contains one of the largest extant assemblages of Paleoindian tools from eastern California. The bulk of the collection seems to come from the disused CalTrans gravel pit just north of the Gill Station Road, and was probably a salvage operation by Borden. The quantity and variety of tools suggest intensive hunting and processing of faunal resources in the area. This paper will present a summary of the collection, describe the results of a brief geological field survey in 2009, and suggest a possible interpretation of some of the artifacts.

Wall, B. R. (Archaeological Research Center, California State University, Sacramento)

19th Century Obsidian Use in Owens Valley

A recent study by Silliman (2005) examines the potential of obsidian hydration to refine our understanding of Native American tool use during the historic era. Although stone artifacts were generally abandoned in favor of metal implements, small micron values suggest that obsidian continued to be used into the historic period. This paper examines the prevalence of small hydration readings in assemblages from Owens Valley, focusing on obsidian from the Fish Springs and Coso obsidian sources. Possible explanations for the persistence of obsidian use are also offered.

West, C. (Inyo National Forest)

The “Ridge Place”: Prehistoric Use of the Eastern Sierra Escarpment

Recent research and archaeological surveys on the Inyo National Forest has led to new information about prehistoric use of the steep ridgelines of the eastern Sierra Nevada above the Owens Valley. The discovery of a new site along a narrow ridgeline may be the ethnographic village site that Julian Steward (1938) refers to as the “Ridge Place.” This paper discusses new findings about prehistoric habitation sites located along precipitous ridgelines on the Sierra Escarpment and formulates ideas about the function and purpose of these sites.