

THE TRANSITION FROM "SALVAGE" TO "RESEARCH" ARCHAEOLOGY
ON THE NATIONAL FORESTS IN CALIFORNIA

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Under the general rubric of "Salvage Archaeology" one may list at least three sub-divisions based on the nature of the activity that jeopardizes the existence of archaeological data: (1) Highway Salvage, (2) River Basin or Reservoir Salvage, and (3) Urban Salvage. As we all know, the Federal Government has been instrumental in providing the funds and the legal sanctions to perform most salvage operations in the United States. With the possible exception of River Basin Salvage, the Federal government has had little to do with research credibility of the archaeological examinations associated with Salvage Archaeology programs. There are reasons for this, some of which will be the subject of this paper.

I will restrict this paper to my own experiences with the California Region of the U.S. Forest Service. I must caution the reader that what I say may not apply to other Federal agencies, and it would be a misinterpretation to draw such an impression.

As you enter any of the 17 National Forests in California you will probably see a sign giving the Forest's name. Under that name you will read: "Land of Many Uses." To the Forest Service this motto translates: "balanced management." From

the 82 Ranger Districts on the 17 National Forests in California, balanced management is the prime working philosophy.

We may isolate two major components of the Forest Services' balanced management program: (1) use-management and (2) protective-management, both of which vary to the degree of emphasis an existing or anticipated situation may have on a given resource. These components are part of a management system and, thus, are not mutually exclusive. Cross-cutting these management components is a management planning dimension which may be labeled from immediate (or short-term) to long-term planning.

This simplified model of forest service management provides us with an opportunity to view the significance of Salvage Archaeology from within Forest Service bureaucracy. Salvage Archaeology is most often associated with protective-management on an immediate planning basis. As such, it is a protective-management response to a use-management situation that has probably been in the planning for a long period of time. What this means is that Salvage Archaeology is a type of archaeology that is completely in the service of other forest uses, such as timber sales, recreation developments, engineering construction, and land exchanges. From a management point of view, Salvage Archaeology has little impact on the total management system.

Archaeologists in California have, in the past, tended to perpetuate this limited function for Archaeology. Their bread

and butter tended to come from Salvage Archaeology programs. The often elaborate research rationales necessary for foundation funds simply were not necessary for receiving contracts to do Salvage Archaeology. Qualitative and quantitative selective factors were made to conform with the "worlds" of salvage and research archaeology: in a word, if you wanted to do research NSF funding was sought; if you wanted to train or save sites (I could add to the various rationales for salvage) you kept your eyes on Division of Highways proposed routing maps.

Now it seems to me that what current trends in archaeology are demanding is that archaeology is no longer in a position to be in the service of any other discipline or function. What this means to the Forest Service is that in order to accomodate the expanding research interests of American Archaeology, archaeology has to become one of the uses in the motto "Land of Many Uses." Once it becomes totally integrated throughout the management system, it will function much more efficiently than at present.

In an attempt to make archaeology a part of use-management and long-range planning, we have encouraged several universities and colleges in California and other States to consider directing their research interests to the National Forests of California. We are presently working on a proposal from Michigan State University which outlines a research/training project along fifty miles of the Klamath River drainage in

northwestern California. That proposal calls for three major functions within the overall research/training design as follows: Professional Training (50%), Recovery of data for Scientific Research (30%), and the Recovery of data for use by public lands administrators (20%). Another example of directions we are taking is an agreement of understanding between the Forest Service and Long Beach State University. Through the supervision of Dr. Margaret Weide, two graduate students, Shirley Kirkberg and Clyde Kuhn, have designed a long-range research program for the entire Trabuco Ranger District of the Cleveland National Forest. This means that much of the University's research and training sophistication will be developed within one large geographic area over about a five year period. The professional services of the Forest Service will be available, logistics will be considered on an ongoing basis, and, in a sense, the archaeologist will become "resident." The University will provide data well in advance as a means of avoiding salvage situations; but where salvage becomes necessary they will have generated the expertise to conduct such work under contract within the context of a continuously developing research program. Similar agreements are being made with other universities and colleges.

What is happening in California is that we are putting Salvage Archaeology in its place -- merely one component of

the total archaeological research system and merely one component of the Forest Service-management system.

For those who may feel that this is drawing archaeologists' interests away from "Critical Salvage Projects," let me indicate some of the emergencies in the "pristine forests."

Of the total amount of commercial timber in the National Forests in California about 70% has already been affected by logging operations. One figure estimates that about 60% of the total has occurred since W.W. II. This relates to archaeology in a very special way. Logging equipment landings, skid trails, and equipment servicing areas are invariably placed on locations where prehistoric habitation and other uses occurred. Thus, it is probably not too surprising to predict that a great number of archaeological sites have been damaged or destroyed on the National Forests in California. Further, I would predict that the greatest amount of that damage took place prior to the establishment of the National Forest system in 1905. A sampling of campgrounds and administrative sites suggests that the majority of them are located on or immediately adjacent to archaeological sites.

The interesting history of archaeological research in California reveals another situation. Of the more than 20,000 known archaeological sites in the various files of the University of California, less than 10% are within National Forest boundaries. If you consider life-zones

instead of Forest boundaries, that figure is considerably less within each zone.

It is my hope that this paper, with the vigorous support of the other papers of this symposium, will let American archaeologists know that there IS a crisis in American Archaeology. It is a crisis that can be responded to by the kind of research thinking being generated in current archaeological circles. It can also receive solution-directed support from the federal land managing agencies if archaeologists think of themselves as "users" of public lands on a long-term basis, rather than as protectionists on a short-term basis.

Thus, the title of this paper suggests that Salvage Archaeology should gradually blend into Research Archaeology until it becomes nothing more than an historical phase within our professional development.