

Ames' comments.
 Kennewick Affiliation Scope/Archaeology
 11/8/99

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To: Frank McManamon, NPS
 From: Kenneth M. Ames, Portland State University
 Date: 8 November, 1999
 Re: Draft Scope of Work: Cultural Affiliation Study for the Kennewick Human Remains, Review of Archaeological Evidence.

Frank:

Sorry the Faxing didn't work on Friday. What follows is pretty much what I hand wrote on the plane on Thursday, responding to the scope of work, though I'm sure as I copy my notes, things will occur to me.

General Comments:

When I spoke to you on the phone the other day, I said that this was "doable." I meant that in the sense that the study could be done within the time constraints, though it will not be as good a study as it could be if more time were available. I did not intend to suggest that I thought a cultural affiliation, as defined in the scope of work, could (or could not) be established. That remains to be seen.

I think in general, one will need to carefully distinguish between cultural traits that are analogies and homologies. The plateau was occupied by hunter-gatherers for at least 11,000 years. It imposes some constraints on what people can do (and presents them with opportunities) that have been more or less consistent across that span. For example, salmon are a productive resource, and so people will exploit them, regardless of culture tradition. Nets are the most effective way to take them, so people are most likely to use nets, and so forth. On the other hand, different ways to knot nets may be functionally equivalent, so continuities there would reflect homologies. Of course, we have no wet site data.

Questions about cultural continuity, migrations, etc. have never been a major focus of archaeological research on the Columbia Plateau, as they have been, for example, in the Great Basin, where the Shoshonean expansion has been an abiding issue. Thus, there is no literature. This has to be done almost from scratch. The data (some of it) are there, but some, at least, will need to be reorganized for this. What little interest there has been (i.e. Leonhardy and Rice 1970) has been as post hoc explanations for changes in the record, but not really as research questions. Most of these have focused on lithics and the spread of pithouses into the plateau.

On the other hand, a lot of archaeology has been done. Most of it is in project reports, dissertations and theses. Many (most) reports are gray literature reports. There is no tradition, as there is in the southeast, for example, of edited, multi-author, topical volumes on Plateau prehistory.

Given this and the time constraints: it will be necessary to:

1. Sample the literature, stratifying, perhaps, by region, project scale, etc. However, this leaves open the possibility that something will be missed.
2. Review the literature with a set expectations about what continuity /discontinuity might look like (a somewhat deductive approach), although being very open to serendipity. One source of such expectations would be a literature review of areas, such as the Great Basin, and the Pacific, where movement, migration, displacement, are issues.

The time constraints will make it hard to be recursive, i.e. something clicks reading the 101st report, and one realizes that the previous 100 need rechecking.

Specific Comments and Queries: (follows outline of scope of work)

I. General Considerations:

IA, IB My basic question here is with whom is affiliation to be established. The wording in the charge at the top of page 2 states that linkage is between "members of a present-day Indian tribe ... and an identifiable earlier group." Leaving the latter aside, this leads to three subsidiary questions:

- a. Is the present-day tribe the Umatilla?
- b. Or, any one of the tribes claiming affiliation, or
- c. All of the tribes jointly?

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d. Or someone else?

In the scope of work, it implies testing for continuity with just Mid-Columbia (and perhaps Lower Snake River) groups. My understanding of the law is that it requires linkage with a specific 19th century/20th century tribe.

- IA, First bullet. Kennewick is contemporaneous with the Windust Phase of Columbia Plateau culture history. The phase spans the period between c. 10,800 bp and 8500 bp. It may be possible to narrow that down a bit (the time span given in the scope starts at 9500. I think that's too late). Windust is the regional variant of a widespread tradition in the west that's immediately post-Clovis (or maybe contemporary). In any way, its relations to Clovis may be germane here.
- IA, second bullet: These are all reasonable, as I mentioned in our phone conversation. I would also look at literature from elsewhere to generate expectations and other lines of evidence.
- IA, second bullet: Plateau prehistory is marked by broad, general changes in all of these. There is debate for some over their gradualness or swiftness. With two exceptions, explanations emphasize environmental changes. The exceptions are: in 1970. Leonhardy and Rice (1970) suggested that changes in lithic technology c. 4500 bp suggested a population change. This suggestion, to my knowledge, has never fostered any research. Some workers in the 1960s suggested that appearance of pithouses (then dated to 2500 bp) indicated migration by Salish speakers (e.g. Nelson 1969). I don't think anyone presently holds that kind of view. There is no documented, highly visible, wide spread (geographically) "abrupt" technological change on the US plateau similar to that on the Canadian plateau (disappearing microblades) that might point to population replacement. There have been changes that could indicate slow or gradual changes, however. Most Plateau archaeologists probably assume a broad continuity between the American Plateaus earliest inhabitants and its historic peoples. This continuity is broadly conceived, however.

II: Scope of Work

II.A.1 Implies continuity only with 19th and 20th century Mid-Columbia groups, NOT all claimants.

II.A. Unpublished data: if someone gives access to their unpublished data, do the restrictions on circulation of this report apply to that material until this report released?

II.A.4. Are these requirements? I must find someone, or suggestions. Must I consult? I probably will - it makes sense to do so. I'm just trying to be sure I understand everything. Point 4 in the report specifications suggests this is a suggestion (though a strong one).

Budget:

I reviewed my salary and the government's salary schedule, and think the GS 13, step 1 hourly rate (\$37.93) is appropriate. I would add 20% to that to help cover taxes, for a final rate of \$45.53.

Would it be possible to add in money for a student assistant for the contract's duration? It would be cheaper, for example, to hire a student at 10.00 or 12.00/hour to photocopy reports than me. Additionally, as I mentioned on the phone, a budget line for photocopying would be useful. I could send the student to SHPO offices, they could copy reports, and the offices bill me.

This it for now. I hope this is useful

Ken

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