

# MEMO

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21 June 2000

W48(2275)

Memorandum

To: Tribal Representatives, Department of the Interior Staff, and Other Agency Staff

From: Departmental Consulting Archeologist 

Subject: Transmittal of Experts' Reports on Cultural Affiliation Topics

We have enclosed the cultural affiliation studies relating to the Kennewick remains prepared by Drs. Kenneth Ames, Daniel Boxberger, Steven Hackenberger, and Eugene Hunn for your information and use in further consultation with the Department of the Interior concerning the cultural affiliation of the Kennewick human remains.

We are scheduling a meeting with representatives of the tribes for 7 July in Spokane, Washington. The meeting is intended to provide further opportunity for consultation about the cultural affiliation of the Kennewick human remains. We are interested in any additional information or interpretations that the tribes would like to provide on this topic. The enclosed reports, and any other information provided by the tribes, are some of the sources of information that we shall use in making our determination about the cultural affiliation of the Kennewick remains.

All of the studies are considered to be final reports except that of Dr. Hackenberger, which represents a final draft version. Please note that we have not enclosed new versions of Sections II and IV from the Hackenberger study as these are essentially unchanged from the earlier versions that were sent to you in February.

All of the authors responded to comments of content and format that were provided by the Department of the Interior following our review of the draft reports. Drs. Ames and Hackenberger have provided additional sections. We have received and considered earlier comments from several of the tribes. We would be happy to review any additional material that you may wish to submit on this topic. Thank you for taking the time to read and consider this material.

On an administrative note, we are not planning to release these reports to the public until the Department of the Interior has made its decisions and recommendations in this matter. With this memo, I am distributing a limited number of these reports, essentially one to each tribe and departmental office involved with us in the case. You may need to make additional copies for review within your office and organization. If you do, I ask that you be careful in your distribution of the reports. They should not be circulated beyond the officials and office that are involved in developing or reviewing your organization's position in this matter.

If you have questions or comments, you can send them to me at the address on the letterhead, or call me, Jason Roberts, or Brooke Blades at 202-343-4101.

DOI 08695

Distribution: Armand Mathorn, Umatilla  
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2251-Robbins  
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2275-FPMcManamon, VCanouts, JRoberts, BBlades  
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Privileged Document

E-mail from FPM to C. Mattix re: cultural affiliation questions to ask 5 claimant tribes -  
DRAFT.

DOI 08697 - DOI 08702

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# Human culture in the Central Columbia Plateau, 9500-9000 BP and Links to Present-day Tribes

## Topics Related to Cultural Affiliation of the Kennewick Remains

30 June 2000

[Prepared for discussion with tribal representatives, 7 July 2000, Spokane, WA]

This is a list of topics and questions that additional discussion and information might help to make clearer. We have focused upon topics for which there appears to be a change indicated in the physical, written, or oral record. The challenge is to interpret correctly what the change means. Is it due to biological, cultural, or social discontinuity, such as a population shift, or it is due to a developing *in situ* culture, adapting to a changing natural or social environment.

The topics are developed from the four major information summaries that examine cultural affiliation, as well as the written materials that have been received from interested Native American tribes and other relevant sources. Attention will be directed to areas where tribal representatives may be able to supply additional information to address perceived discontinuities or gaps in the anthropological record.

### 1. Mobility and Settlement Pattern

**Topics for discussion:** This pattern of settlement and population movement differs from later periods of occupation. What connections can be drawn with the subsequent periods? What differences may indicate cultural discontinuity?

### 2. Raw Materials and Trade or Exchange--Lithics

**Topics for discussion:** A change in obsidian usage may reflect a similar discontinuity in procurement and settlement systems. The lack of provenience information related to chert procurement represents a major gap in prehistoric studies on the Plateau.

### 3. Raw Materials and Trade or Exchange--Marine Shell

**Topics for discussion:** A change in shell procurement, probably indicative of changing exchange/trade patterns, may be noted in the appearance of dentalium shells after ca. 3000 BP. What about this change might indicate cultural continuity or discontinuity.

### 4. Technology--Projectile Points

**Topics for discussion:** Projectile point styles change over time. Is this an indication of cultural changes, technological developments, change in functions, or another factor? Increasing diversity of projectile point forms is noted during Period III, in association

with Pithouse II. One possible explanation for diversity in forms may be restricted mobility and limited intergroup contact.

## **5. Technology--Overall lithic technology**

**Topics for discussion:** Did lithic technical methods change over time in a way that would reflect cultural differences, rather than changes in function, technical developments, or other factors?

## **6. Types and patterns of dwellings**

**Topics for discussion:** The earliest archeological evidence of a dwelling in the Columbia Plateau region predates the Kennewick remains by 2000-3000 years. The dwelling is interpreted as a small hut or windbreak as part of a residential camp. There are several features interpreted as structures dated c.7500 BP. These are small (<11 square meters) circles of stones with trampled interiors. The oldest pit houses appear on the southern Plateau by 6000 BP and shortly afterward at various sites. A gap in construction of pit houses has been identified ca. 3800 BP, although the existence of this gap is debated. Pit houses occur again and widespread across the Plateau. The size of groupings of houses, in association with cemeteries, increases after 1500 BP. These changes in dwelling type may indicate cultural discontinuities or functional shifts. Do these variations reflect cultural differences, rather than changes in function, technical developments, or other factors?

## **7. Subsistence—Variety of Foods**

**Topics for discussion:** Changes in subsistence technology do not necessarily indicate cultural discontinuity. It seems clear, however, that a shift in subsistence resources was associated with increasing sedentism during Periods II and particularly III. Gaps exist in the nature of faunal and floral data recovered and in more detailed studies relating to topics such as seasonality.

## **8. Burial Patterns**

**Topics for discussion:** Hackenberger (2000) describes temporal gaps in the mortuary record from 7000-5000 BP, and from 5000-3000 BP. Burials have been found during these periods but in limited quantities and geographic distributions. Rock cairn burials covering cremated remains are found along portions of the Columbia River from between 5000-3000 BP, but not at other times. The gaps in the mortuary record correspond to gaps in settlement sites and might indicate abandonment of the area by human populations subsequent to the occupation by the Kennewick earlier group.

## **9. Linguistic evidence**

**Topics for discussion:** Present-day terms for some animals such as bison, which were hunted since the earliest occupations on the Plateau, have been incorporated from

neighboring languages. Many Sahaptin terms for plants and animals indicate a close association with the present-day natural environment of the region. However, since 9500 B.P. there have been substantial variation in the natural environment due to fluctuation between wet and dry climatic conditions. These long-term changes in the natural environment do not seem to be reflected in the Sahaptin vocabulary.

## 10. Traditional histories

**Topics for discussion:** In evaluating modern day oral traditions, Boxberger (2000) infers considerable, but unspecifiable, time depth for various traditional stories that mention natural events, for example, floods. Are there additional oral traditions related to specific natural events that might be identified and dated independently?

Other stories, such as the pre-human “myth people” who lived in villages (Boxberger 2000:12) are more difficult to interpret. Village settlement pattern did not appear in the region until age life was not a factor of settlement patterns on the Plateau until well after the appearance of the earliest human hunters and gatherers.

Boxberger (2000:52) concluded the various oral traditions established the following: lack of evidence of migration; environmental relationship in traditions; time depth relating traditions to post-glacial events; fundamental dependence upon Columbia River as symbolized in importance of salmon.

FPMNOTE—30 June 2000—Draft attachment for further discussion of information for cultural affiliation consideration, Kennewick remains  
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