

**Kennewick Man**

Cultural Affiliation Report

**Chapter 1**

Section 1

**Background and Scope for the Cultural  
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The interagency agreement between the Department of the Army (DOA) and the Department of the Interior (DOI) delegated responsibilities from the former to the latter for certain decisions related to the set of human remains inadvertently discovered near Columbia Park, Kennewick, Washington. The agreement called for DOI to investigate and resolve two basic issues. First, DOI was responsible for determining whether or not the human remains meet the definition of "Native American" for the purpose of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). It was determined in January 2000, based upon radiometric and other data, that the remains are in fact "Native American."

The second issue for which DOI had responsibility was a determination of the disposition of the human remains under the requirements of NAGPRA. Since the issue of disposition was at least in part related to whether the remains could be culturally affiliated under the terms of NAGPRA, four studies by experts in anthropological, archeological, cultural, and historical topics relevant to this determination were undertaken by the DOI. These studies, which constitute the remaining four chapters of this portion of the Kennewick documentation, were prepared by: Dr. Kenneth Ames, Portland State University, Portland, Oregon (archeological information); Dr. Daniel Boxberger, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington (traditional historical and ethnographic information); Dr. Steven Hackenberger, Central Washington University, Ellensburg, Washington (bio-archeological information); Dr. Eugene Hunn, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington (linguistic information). Each of these individuals is an expert in the subject matter he was responsible for summarizing.

The studies were prepared during the period from December 1999 through March 2000; in some cases revisions were made in June 2000. It is important to recognize that each study represents the scholarly opinions of the individual authors, not necessarily of DOI. The studies were reviewed for content and composition by DOI staff, but data interpretations and summaries were prepared by and reflect the opinions of the authors. These studies, along with other information, some of it provided by the Indian tribes that have claimed the remains, other information found by DOI experts in relevant published sources, were used by DOI officials in making the determination of cultural affiliation summarized by the Secretary of the Interior's letter to the Secretary of the Army, dated September 21, 2000 on this topic.

Each author prepared his study according to the terms of scopes of work from DOI that determined the general parameters of the research. These scopes of work shared common elements in many cases; in others the scopes were tailored to the

characteristics of each subject area. Common elements were reflected in the general considerations that guided research. Each author was asked to consider how an "earlier group" with which the Kennewick human remains were associated could be identified within the context of the subject matter he was summarizing. Due to the recovery of the Kennewick human remains in a disturbed context, it was critical to obtain strong chronological information for the purpose of distinguishing a specific time period or archeological culture with which the "earlier group" could be identified. For the purposes of all of the scopes of work, the approximate date of 9,500 years ago was taken to be the beginning of the time frame for this study.

Each study was to consider the possible cultural affiliation of the Kennewick remains in relationship to all present-day Indian tribes. However, heightened scrutiny was to be applied to the interested present-day Indian tribes that have either claimed cultural affiliation with the Kennewick human remains or participated in on-going consultation efforts concerning their treatment. These tribes include: the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Washington; Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation, Oregon; Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Indian Nation of the Yakama Reservation, Washington; Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho; and the Wanapum Band, a non-Federally recognized Indian group.

The historical record indicates that since at least 1805, when the Lewis and Clark expedition reported on the activities and villages of Native peoples in the Mid-Columbia region, the ancestors of the interested present-day Indian tribes resided within the general area. With regard to the cultural affiliation assessment between the Indian groups resident in the Mid-Columbia region at the beginning of the 19th century and the interested present-day tribes, therefore, it was not considered necessary to scrutinize in detail the links between the present-day tribes and the historical bands, groups, and tribes reported at the beginning of the 19th century. Following this line of reasoning, it was only necessary to anchor the existence of the ancestors of the interested present-day Indian tribes within the general area of the Mid-Columbia region through historically documented accounts.

The focus of each study was to be on acquiring and investigating evidence for continuity ("existence of shared group identity") between the Native American Indian tribes inhabiting the Mid-Columbia region in the early 19th century and the ancient group, represented by the Kennewick human remains, which likely resided within the same region 9,500 years ago. Evidence of discontinuities also were to be identified and described, as well as gaps in the record resulting from insufficient data or information.

Thus, all four studies were to focus upon the roughly 10,000-year time period between 9,500 and the early 19th century on the portion of the Columbia Plateau containing the Mid-Columbia and lower Snake rivers. However, data from throughout the Plateau and across the Pacific Northwest were utilized by the authors in differing contexts. Within his particular data set, each author was requested to review and synthesize relevant published, non-published, and archival reports, books, articles, and other sources that related to the indigenous peoples within the time frame and geographic area in question. The identification of continuities, discontinuities, and gaps in the data was intended to be a critical element within each report.

The archaeological study by Dr. Ames was specifically intended to focus on aspects of material culture, site components, regional settlement patterns, and broader social and economic interpretations derived from these data. The data to be examined included:

- a. Artifact types and styles;

- b. Artifact manufacture techniques;
- c. Trade and other social networks;
- d. Dwelling styles and manufacture;
- e. Community and settlement patterns; and,
- f. Economic and subsistence patterns.

The traditional historical and ethnographic study by Dr. Boxberger was intended to examine the extent to which the recorded ethnographic record on the Plateau, which began to be compiled in the 19th century, may be related to earlier peoples in the region. The data to be examined included:

- a. Traditional histories, including origin stories;
- b. Kinship, patterns of residence, and other social characteristics;
- c. Trade, social networks, and interaction;
- d. Artifact types, dwelling styles, and manufacture;
- e. Community and settlement patterns; and
- f. Economic and subsistence patterns.

Dr. Hackenberger, in preparing the bio-archeological study, was requested to examine archeological and physical anthropological reports, books, articles, and other sources of relevance. The data to be summarized and synthesized by Dr. Hackenberger were grouped within two general categories:

#### Mortuary Practices

- a. Burial settings (islands, talus slopes, house floors, caves, etc.);
- b. Mode of disposal (primary burial, secondary burial, cremation, charnel house);
- c. Orientation and positioning of burials, human remains, and funerary objects;
- d. Funerary objects and cultural modification of treatment of human remains; and
- e. Variations in the above according to age and sex.

#### Skeletal Variables

- a. Skeletal morphology;
- b. Dentition;
- c. Culturally induced skeletal modifications;
- d. Skeletal nutrition indicators;
- e. Skeletal disease indicators;
- f. Taphonomy.

The linguistic study that was compiled by Dr. Hunn focused upon the linguistic component of the ethnographic record. Dr. Hunn was requested to focus upon language terms and place names, while paying particular attention to any such terms or names that may be reasonably linked to actual dated events and geographical places in the Mid-Columbia region. Specific areas of inquiry were to include the following:

- a. Continuity and discontinuity of language distribution, development, and relationships;
- b. Chronological indicators of language origin and development;
- c. Chronological indicators of language form, words, and place names.

It is therefore important to bear in mind both the general similarities between and the specific analytical foci of the four studies. These four studies provided fundamental data summaries that DOI personnel utilized in evaluating the question of cultural affiliation for the Kennewick remains and making a determination in this matter.

The cultural affiliation reports, with their extensive bibliographies, illustrations, tables, and appendices are included as chapters in this overall summary report.

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