

Proposal Title

Highland Hunters: Prehistoric Resource Use in the Yukon-Tanana Uplands

Name of Principle Investigator

Gerad M. Smith

Abstract

The Yukon Tanana Uplands remain inadequately explored and studied from an archaeological perspective. The purpose of this study was to first conduct explorations and excavations throughout the White Mountain and Steese Conservation areas during the summer field seasons of 2010 and 2011. An analysis of the lithic artifacts from five site excavations (the Big Bend, Bachelor Creek, Bear Creek, US Creek and Cripple Creek) was then undertaken. These assemblages were then examined and modeled using risk-assessments, optimal resource use, and behavior processes in order to explore the interdependence of environment, ecology, and material culture that drove prehistoric subsistence cycles in this area. This archaeological research will supplement ethnographies to indicate patterns of change in landscape value, trade networks, and local economic strategies.