

Oral presentation

Paiute-Shoshoni resources and settlement patterns in Banner Ridge, California

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Introduction. Banner Ridge is in the Inyo National Forest. It can be described as a unique cultural region. It lies between the Sierra Mountains Paiute traditional lands to the west, the White Mountains and Shoshoni traditional lands to the east. It is a shared-resource area today for gathering of traditional foods.

Objectives. The purpose of the survey is to describe the archaeological resources that are clearly located in relation to natural resources, including food plants. Pinyon trees and juniper trees cover the ridge. The pinyon groves remain a utilized resource for the Paiute and Shoshoni people today. Primary food grasses grow on the ridge with ethnographic documentation of their use 'rice grass' *Achnatherum hymenoides*, and *Elymus condensatus* 'giant rye grass'.

Methods. Three year survey of over 1,500 km of off-road trails, recording archaeological sites. Documentation maintained at the Inyo National Forest, Bishop, CA.

Results. The survey recovered a very dense distribution of sites over the ridge, in spite of the fact that there has been no permanent water on the ridge; snow fall provides temporary spring water.

Conclusion. Grass seed did provide in past generations, large amounts of grain. The two species rice grass and giant rye grass are a primary food source in other arid lands such as northern Australia, as the author's research has shown.

Keywords: Paiute, Shoshoni, pinyon, rice grass, giant rye grass,

Selected References

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