New Discoveries at Upward Sun River (Xaasaa Na’)

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New Discoveries at Upward Sun River

Known early human remains

Key
- Exposed continental shelf 11,500 years ago
- Exposed continental shelf 14,000 years ago
- Sites with human remains (10,200-14,000 years ago)

Map courtesy of Ben Potter, University of Alaska Fairbanks
Previous Work: 2005 Model

Eielson AFB

Little Delta dunes

Delta Junction

Legend
MODEL
High: 36
Low: -16

Kilometers

0
8
Upward Sun River: 2010

above Feature 5

below Feature 5

above Feature 5

surface
Upward Sun River: 2010

- cranial fragments
- chalcedony flake
- lower left perm. 1st molar
Upward Sun River: 2010

Main Excavation

C4 (10,000 yrs)

C3 (11,500 yrs)

C2 (11,850 yrs)

C1 (13,200 yrs)

Block H
Component 1 (~13,200 cal BP)

Feature 2 hearth
Component 3 (~11,500 cal BP)

Feature 1 hearth

Feature 3 hearth
Component 3 (~11,500 cal BP)

Feature 1 hearth
Component 3 cremation
Component 3 cremation

- northwest
- northeast
- house boundary
- southwest
- southeast

Scale: 1 meter
Component 3 fauna

- Ursus americanus
  - Black bear
- Mammuthus primigenius
  - Mammoth
- Equus sp. (lambei)?
  - Pleistocene horse
- Bison priscus/bison
  - Steppe bison
- Saiga tataricus
  - Saiga antelope
- Cervus elaphus
  - Wapiti
Component 3 lithics

Illustration by Eric Carlson

Gerstle River
(~10,800-10,100 cal BP)
Conditioning factors for assemb. variability

Gerstle River Component 3

Outdoor activity areas:
- Large game: primary butchery
- Large game: marrow extraction
- Microblade production/composite tool maintenance
Consultation in the Field
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Ushki 1, Level 6 Houses and Burials

Adapted from Dikov 1977 and Goebel and Slobodin 1999

**Feature 3**
- Central stone-lined hearth
- Burial pit of human child

**Feature 10**
- Central stone-lined hearth
- Several small posthole molds in floor around hearth
- Undescribed human burial pit (like that found in feature 3)

**Feature 2 (lower level)**
- Central stone-lined hearth
- Several small postholes around hearth
- Burial pit with remains of dog in flexed position;
- Possible human burial pit
- Charred mat of dried grass