



Adaptations in the Northern Jornada Mogollon: Four Sites on US 54, Carrizozo, New Mexico.

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ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

In 2009 and 2010, at the request of the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Office of Archaeological Studies (OAS) completed an archaeological testing program at four sites along US 54 between Carrizozo and Three Rivers, in Lincoln and Otero Counties, in the state of New Mexico. The NMDOT, in conjunction with the FHWA, proposed to widen the shoulders and lanes of US 54 between Milepost 107 and Milepost 119.

Originally, three sites (LA 114462, LA 120972, and LA 120973) out of four were recommended for further archaeological excavation, and a data recovery plan was submitted to the NMDOT and the State Historic Preservation Division in 2009. An additional site, LA 130331, on Bureau of Land Management land, was found to require archaeological testing following completion of the Data Recovery Plan. OAS carried out testing at LA 130331 between September 8 and September 11, 2009.

Data recovery at the four eligible sites took place between 2009 and 2010 under Archaeological Excavation Permit No. SE-288, which expired Oct. 19, 2010. LA 114462, LA 120972, and LA 120973 were within the highway right-of-way, on land acquired from private sources. Excavations at LA 130331 took place on Bureau of Land Management (BLM Roswell Field Office) property and were completed under BLM Cultural Resource Use Permit No. 21-8152-10-18, which expired Oct. 13, 2010.

Principal investigator was Robert Dello-Russo. Yvonne R. Oakes and Dorothy A. Zamora served as project directors. About 580.1 cu m of soil were excavated, and 12,212 artifacts and other cultural materials were recovered. A brief description of the the four excavated sites follows.

LA 114462, also known as Oscura Siding, was a historic stop for the Southern Pacific railroad from the late 1880s to the early 1900s. Few remnants at the site were found in the right-of-way; those that were found included several foundations and trash deposits.

LA 120972, or Willow Draw, was one of three prehistoric sites examined. Several pits and a pithouse were uncovered. These features produced a mean calibrated ¹⁴C date of AD 890, with evidence of subsequent use of the site around AD 980.

LA 120973, or Carrizozo Flats, contained nineteen pits, four pithouses, and two surface hearths. The site yielded a primary ¹⁴C date of AD 880, with minor use also occurring around AD 1000. An outlying pit at the site dated between AD 1670 and 1780 and may have indicated use by the Mescalero Apaches. Several earlier dates were obtained from the other pits and suggested early use of the area for the cultivation of maize and squash and the harvesting of a variety of wild plants.

LA 130331 was a small, Archaic campsite with two hearths in the highway right-of-way. These hearths were radiocarbon dated to 1415 BC.

After completing the data recovery project, three of the project sites (LA 114462, LA 120972, and LA 120973) were determined eligible for the *National Register of Historic Places* under Criterion D. LA 130331 was not eligible.

NMCRIS Activity No. 118953

NMDOT Project No. AC-GRIP-BR-(NH)-054-2 (380107), CN G3a 12

MNM Project No. 41.894 (Carrizozo)

NM Archaeological Excavation Permit No. SE-288

BLM Cultural Resource Use Permit No. 21-8152-10-18