

Game Movements, TEK, and Archaeological Site Locations

By Lindsay Melsen

Most of the archaeological sites found along the Greybull River drainage system in northwestern Wyoming are prehistoric lithic scatters. Given the site settings are at elevations ranging from 2400-3400m, it is probable that many of these sites are related to hunting related activities rather than the exploitation of plants. Supposing that game animals have roughly similar movements now as they have prehistorically, it is possible to find out where hunting activities may have taken place in the past based on information from current game animal movement. A wide variety of data, including informal interviews with present-day hunters, game harvest records, and documentation of contemporary hunting camp locations have been collected to evaluate the correlation between present day and prehistoric hunting-related sites. These data are valuable to understanding human behavior patterns and human movement patterns concerning hunting activities of both the past and present. Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) of present-day hunters is key to this study because present-day hunters understand both game animal movement patterns and the logic involved with game hunting, both of which are useful pieces of information in analyzing behavior patterns of prehistoric peoples.



Introduction:

This study is an attempt to understand the land-use patterns over time of the people residing in and around the Greybull watershed. The study's design came about while researching the place names of many of the landmarks in and near the study area. In researching the landscape, there were many informal conversations with the local land stewards in regards to their history in the area and their relationship with the land. This led to the interest in how prehistoric cultures related to the same land. One way to study the possibilities of past land use is by researching land-use patterns throughout the different stages of occupation to see if there are any correlations between groups. Currently, the occupants are farmers, ranchers, and hunters, who live intimately with the land. They may hold valuable information in understanding the land-use patterns over time.

•Can archaeology benefit from the TEK of local land stewards?



Jack Creek Trailhead: This trailhead serves as one of the high population density modern-day hunting camps and as a recreational campground. It also has a very nice site on it!



An example of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) being passed from one generation to another. Frison makes reference to his own experience with this in his most recent book, *Survival By Hunting* (2004).

This is a site that has a prehistoric lithic scatter and evidence of a historical shepherd camp.

Ethnoarchaeology / Archaeology
 •Spans all variables of change
 •Different types of information from each

VARIABLES

Fast (yearly)
 •Recreation
 •Hunting
 •Ranching
 (Current land-use patterns)

Medium
 •Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)
 •Historic documents
 •Cultural Geography (Historic land-use patterns)

Slow/Long Term
 •Land use over time
 •Prehistory
 •Landscape Changes (Prehistoric land-use patterns)

Application / Methodology
 •Resource Management
 •Include cultural studies
 •Build Social capital
 •Protect archaeological record

Knowledge
 •Land-use patterns over time
 •How culture affects land use
 •Interaction of people with landscape
 •Archaeological interpretation

Theory
 •Interpretation based on land-use patterns
 •Multi-disciplinary approach
 •Link non-human variables to human behavior

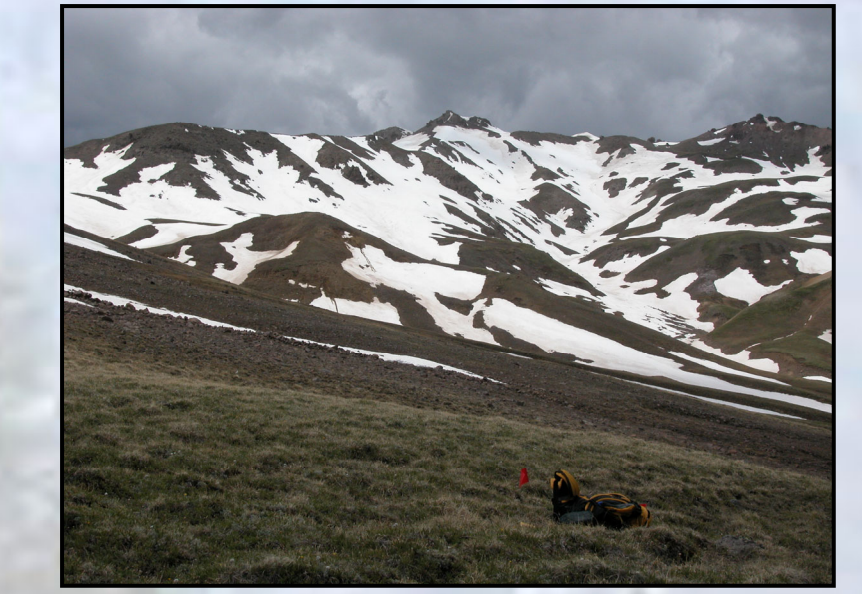
Figure 2



Conclusions:

Employing the use of Traditional Ecological Knowledge of local land occupants is useful and practical because:

- The ecological knowledge of the area is helpful in finding sites and understanding game movement patterns.
- The local land stewards can help researchers by sharing their knowledge of the landscape throughout the entire year. This is helpful because researchers may not be in the area long enough to know seasonal variation of the area.
- It creates Social Capital by creating good relations between researchers and the people who live in the research area as well as good relations with the researchers from other disciplines. Getting out into the (Scheffer et. al. 2003: 237). This approach can be put to use in many other fields of study as well; it is not limited to archaeology.
- This approach allows for more informed recording because it accounts for the way a people lived on a land by finding some possible "whys" and "hows" through ethnoarchaeology.
- A useful way to integrate this approach is by using cultural anthropological methods to interact with local land stewards to expose their Traditional Ecological Knowledge.
- The traditional knowledge can also be functional in implementing multi-disciplinary approach in resource management.



Anderson Lodge: Built by A. A. Anderson on Anderson Creek. This picture shows the rewards of a successful hunt.



This site marks the end of the dirt road that runs along the Wood River. It was home to a historic mining town and now is a popular recreational area. The modern bear panner can be seen in the background.

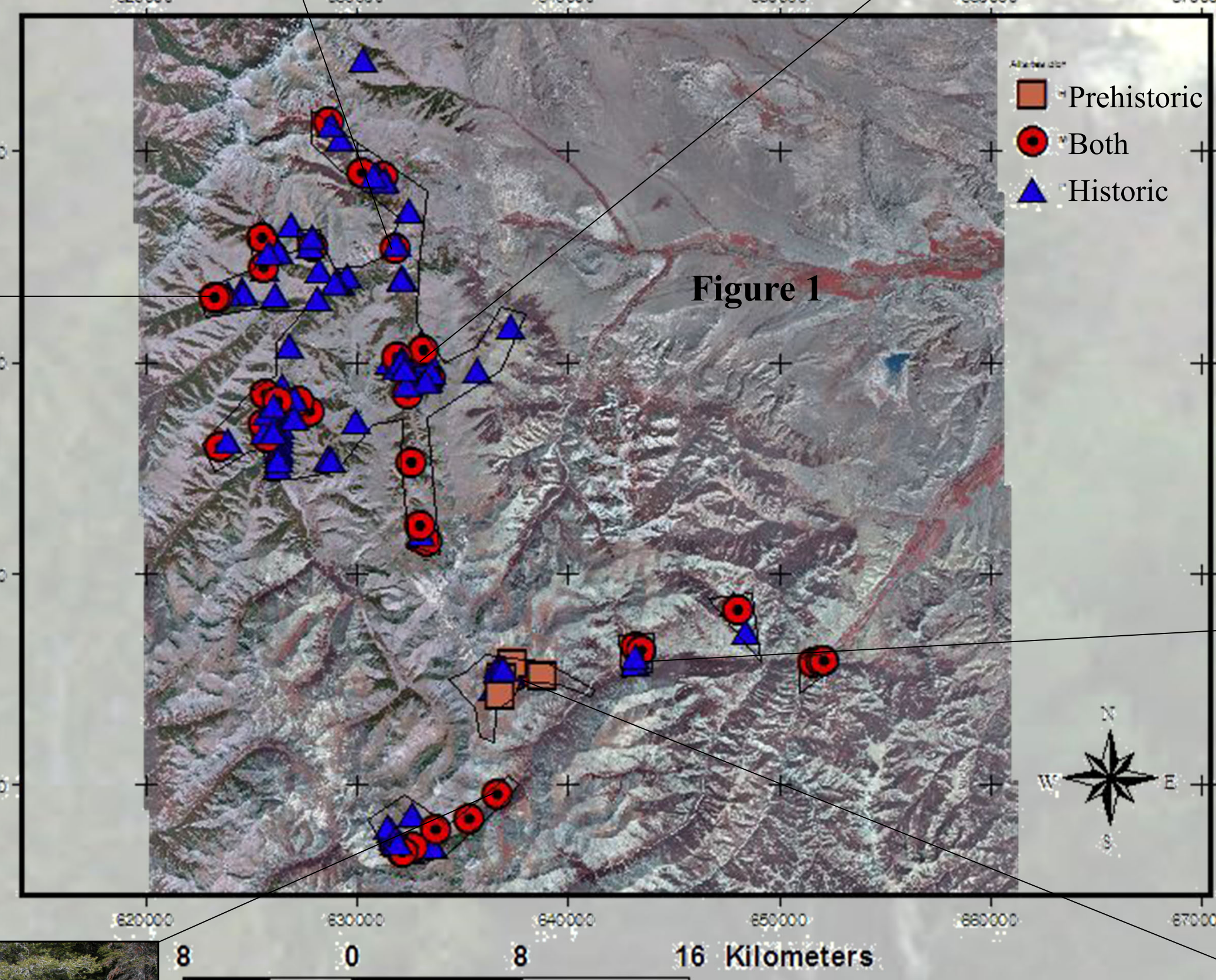


Figure 1. Map of the Greybull Watershed. Sites shown are Prehistoric, Historic and Both. This map shows the overlap of Historic and Prehistoric sites, confirming that humans of all cultures and time periods are attracted to somewhat of the same land use patterns in a given area. This is especially true in mountain or high elevation systems because of the difficulty in terrain and weather conditions, where people are attracted to. Many of our sites were found as a result of building social capital with the area's citizens. Many people either told us where they had seen artifacts or where the popular modern-day hunting camps were. We surveyed some of the modern-day hunting camps as a result and found more prehistoric sites.



This is a historic photo of a successful hunting party on their way home. Horses are many times used to get the meat from the kill site to the storage site in modern-day hunting.



The horse hitching posts are literally right on top of this lithic scatter.

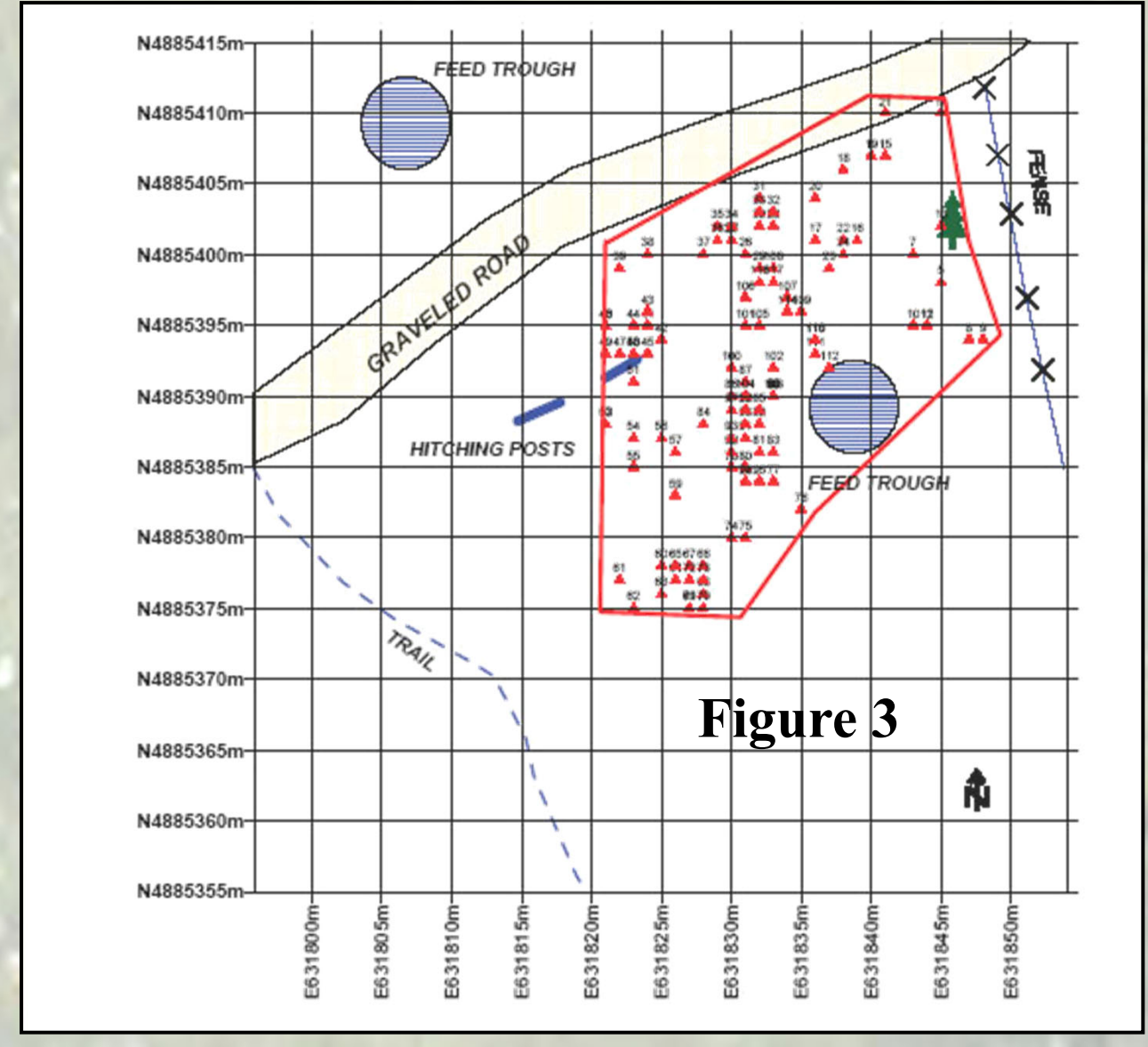


Figure 3



Close-up of a feed trough. There is one large feed trough within the site boundary and one more just adjacent to the site.



Close-up of horse hitching posts



General site overview



This photo shows a modern recreational hearth in very close proximity to the prehistoric site.



Partaking in participant observation and building social capital. The GRSLE 2004 field crew assisted in a cattle-branding in which 350 calves were branded and vaccinated. This was a great opportunity to meet the main informants



Bear poles are evidence of modern camps. The use of bear poles has increasingly become popular in the last ten years.

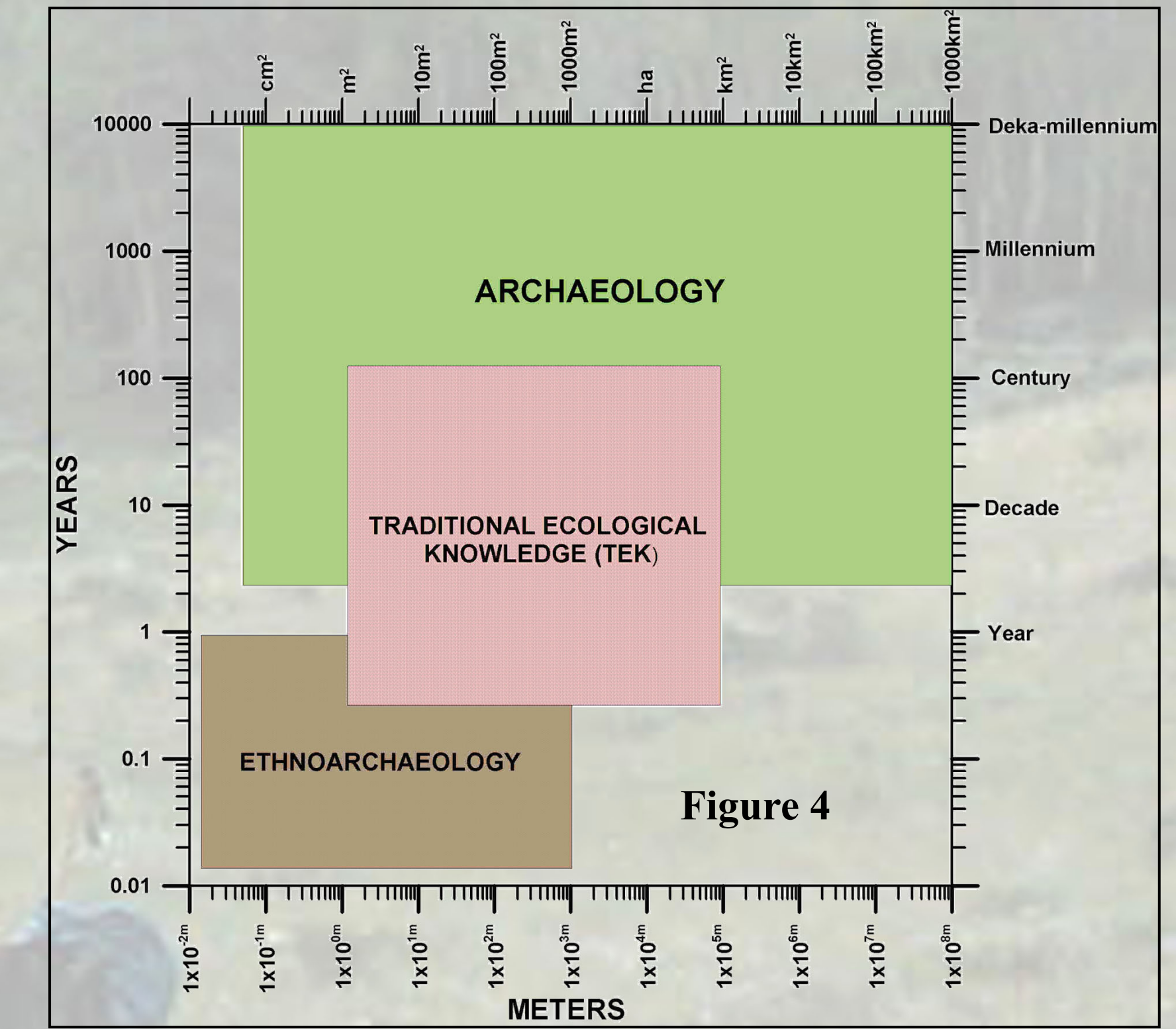


Figure 4. This figure shows the overlap of archaeology, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), and ethnoarchaeology. It shows the logarithmic relationship (in order to account for the large numbers) between meters on the x-axis and years on the y-axis. Because ethnoarchaeology and TEK can be measured in up to about 100 years, they can be seen in the top layers of the archaeological record. Ethnoarchaeology can be confirmed via the actual archaeological record.

References:

Scheffer, Marten, Frances Westley, William A. Brock, and Milena Holmgren. 2003 "Dynamic Interactions of Societies and Ecosystems – Linking Theories from Ecology, Economy, and Sociology" In *Panarchy*, edited by Lance H. Gunderson and C.S. Holling. Island Press, Washington.

Frison, George C. 2004 *Survival by Hunting: Prehistoric Human Predators and Animal Prey*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Acknowledgements:

Dr. Larry Todd for many of the graphics and the tremendous amount of support; The GRSLE 2004 field crew and fellow researchers for their contributions; The Colorado State University Anthropology Department and Faculty; All the good people of the Meeteetse, WY area for sharing their knowledge and a few beers; Dr. Annie Ross, Dr. John Brett, Liz Jackson & my fellow computer lab junkies

