

Site Structure and Hearth Centered Activities of the Late Prehistoric Shoshoni

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Abstract

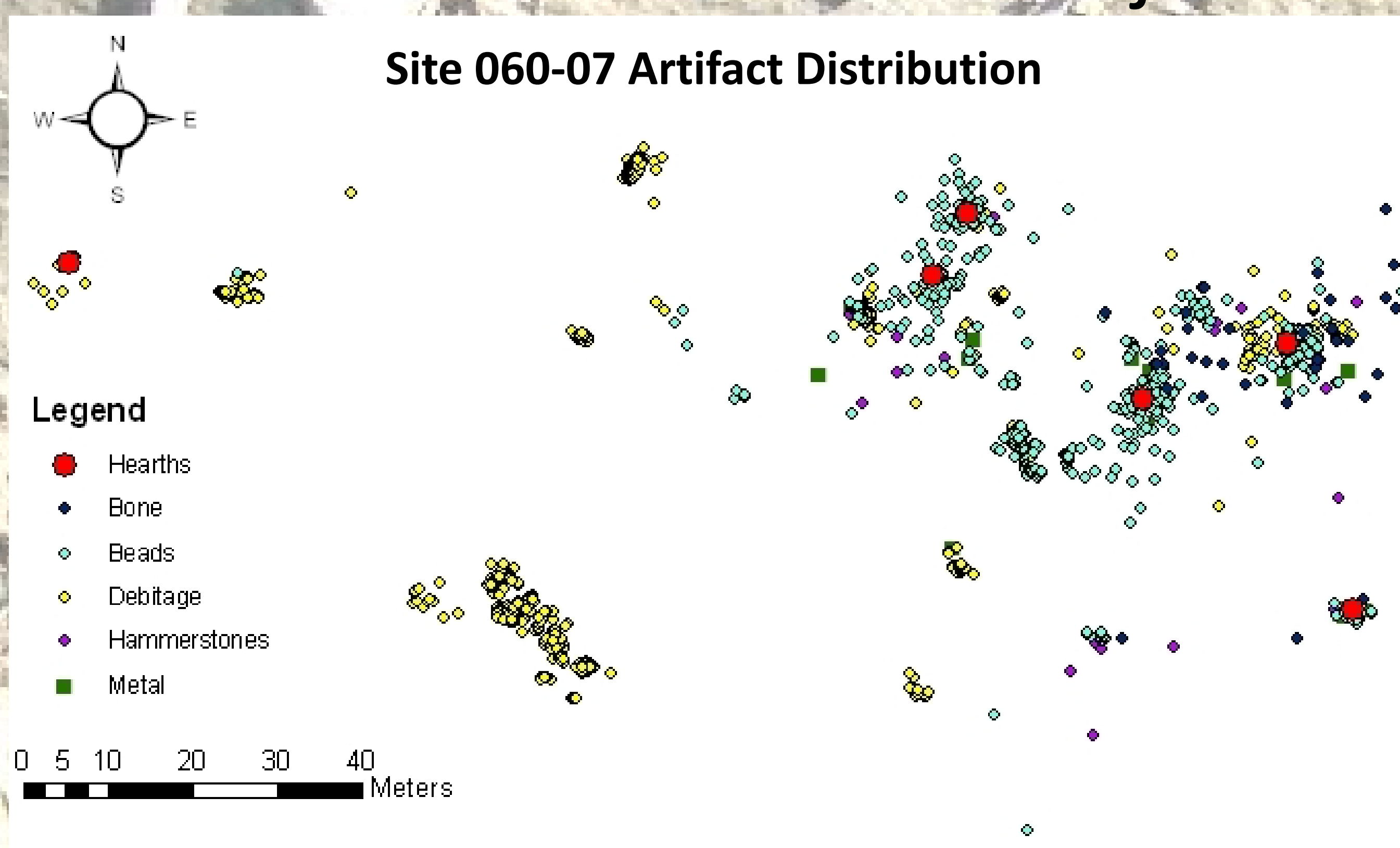
Prehistoric sites recorded by the GRSLE project capture changes in spatiotemporal scales. The research presented focuses on artifact assemblages around Contact period hearths in northwestern Wyoming. Examination of site-specific hearths yielded many diagnostic items: lithics, amorphous metal pieces, metal projectile points, glass trade beads, hammer stones, and calcined bone scatters. Studying artifact assemblages allows observations of division of labor in procurement of food. Diverse activities (tool working, beading, and food processing) within specific locations indicate specialized roles and marked social differentiation between genders.

-What patterns of hearth use are seen at site 060-07?

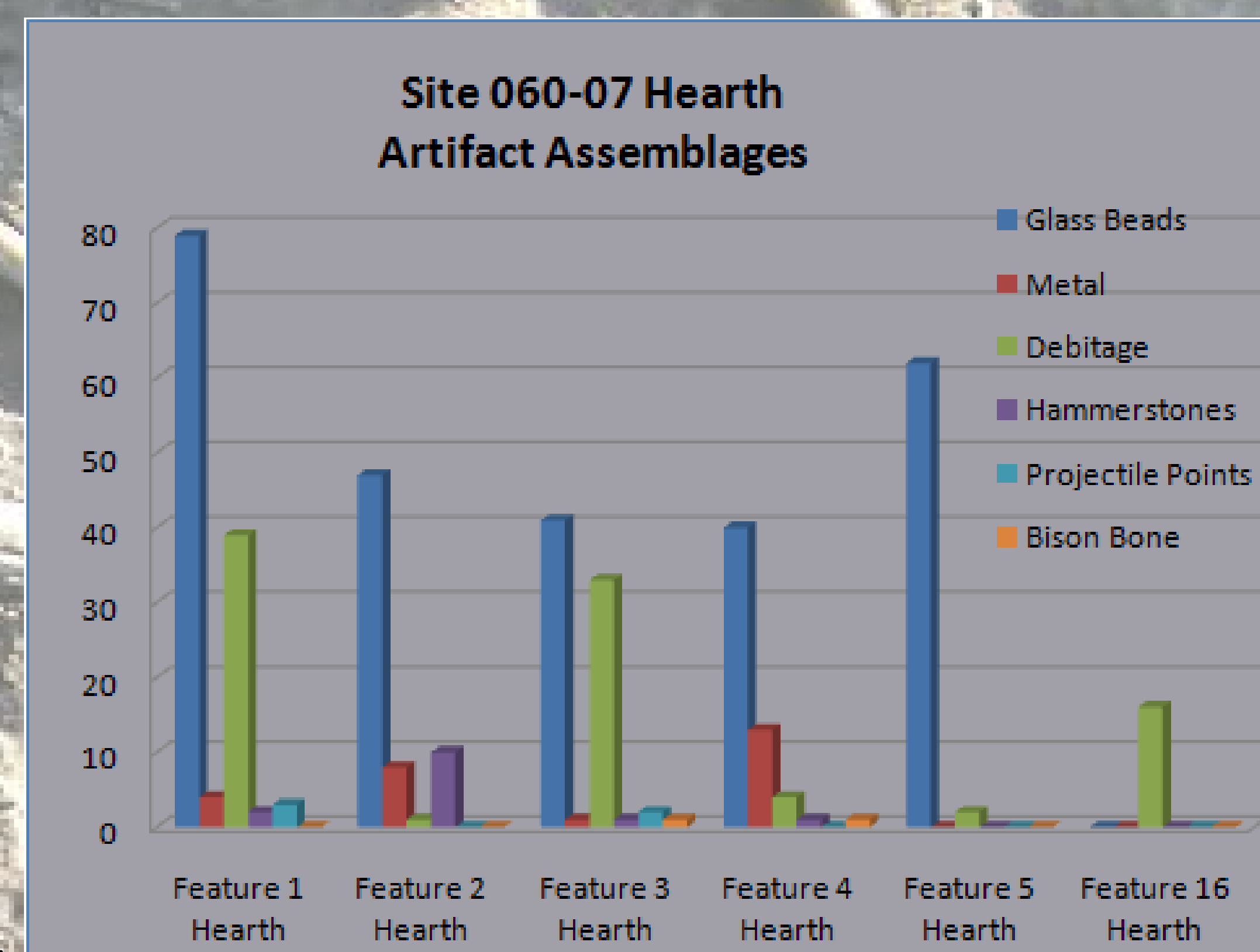
-By examining ethnographic material in addition to patterns of hearth use, what can be said about gendered use of space on 060-07?

Methods

The site was originally discovered through non-systematic survey, and the artifacts found on-site were also found through non-systematic survey. The GRSLE project promotes a non-collection archaeological process, so the artifacts found were discovered on the exposed surface and no excavation was done. The artifacts and features on the site were recorded using an EDM, and their recorded locations have 2mm accuracy. The data was mapped using GIS to allow observation of spatial patterning, and closer analysis of artifact assemblages at each hearth. Artifacts within 2m of the center of the hearth were considered a part of the artifact assemblage. As the site is a contact period site, it provides researchers with a unique opportunity to examine the archaeological record alongside the ethnographic record. Using ethnographic material concerning gender activities of the late prehistoric Shoshoni a gendered use of space within the site can be examined.



-Site 060-07 had a very wide variety of artifacts associated with it, including bone, projectile points, glass trade beads, hammerstones, metal, and lithic debitage.
 -Within the site 17 features were identified, 6 of which consisted of a hearth and the artifacts associated with the hearth.
 -In this study the artifact assemblages within 2 meters of the center of each of the hearths are examined.
 -The hearths were all widely varied in the artifacts associated with them, suggesting differing uses during the site's occupation.



Discussion

Feature 16 shows evidence of tool making as the only activity taking place around the hearth. Hunting and tool working activities were generally undertaken by men (Loendorf, 2006). The flake debitage found around the hearth would have been produced in tool manufacturing or repair. Feature 5 has a wide scattering of glass trade beads around the hearth, and practically no evidence of tool working. In addition to the beads one piece of incised bone or shell was found as well. These bead working activities were likely being performed either as a part of clothing production or as jewelry production, tasks generally prescribed to women (Halprin, 1980). Feature 2 also had little evidence of tool working, as very little lithic debitage was found within the artifact assemblage. There were glass trade beads, but the concentration of them was not as high as it was at feature 5. Additionally, there were ten hammerstones found near the hearth as well as a large amount of broken and calcined bone. Food processing was likely the main activity taking place at the hearth. Food processing was a task generally undertaken by women, as was beading (Loendorf, 2006). Features 1, 3, and 4 show a much more varied artifact assemblage, and the activities taking place there were likely highly varied as well.

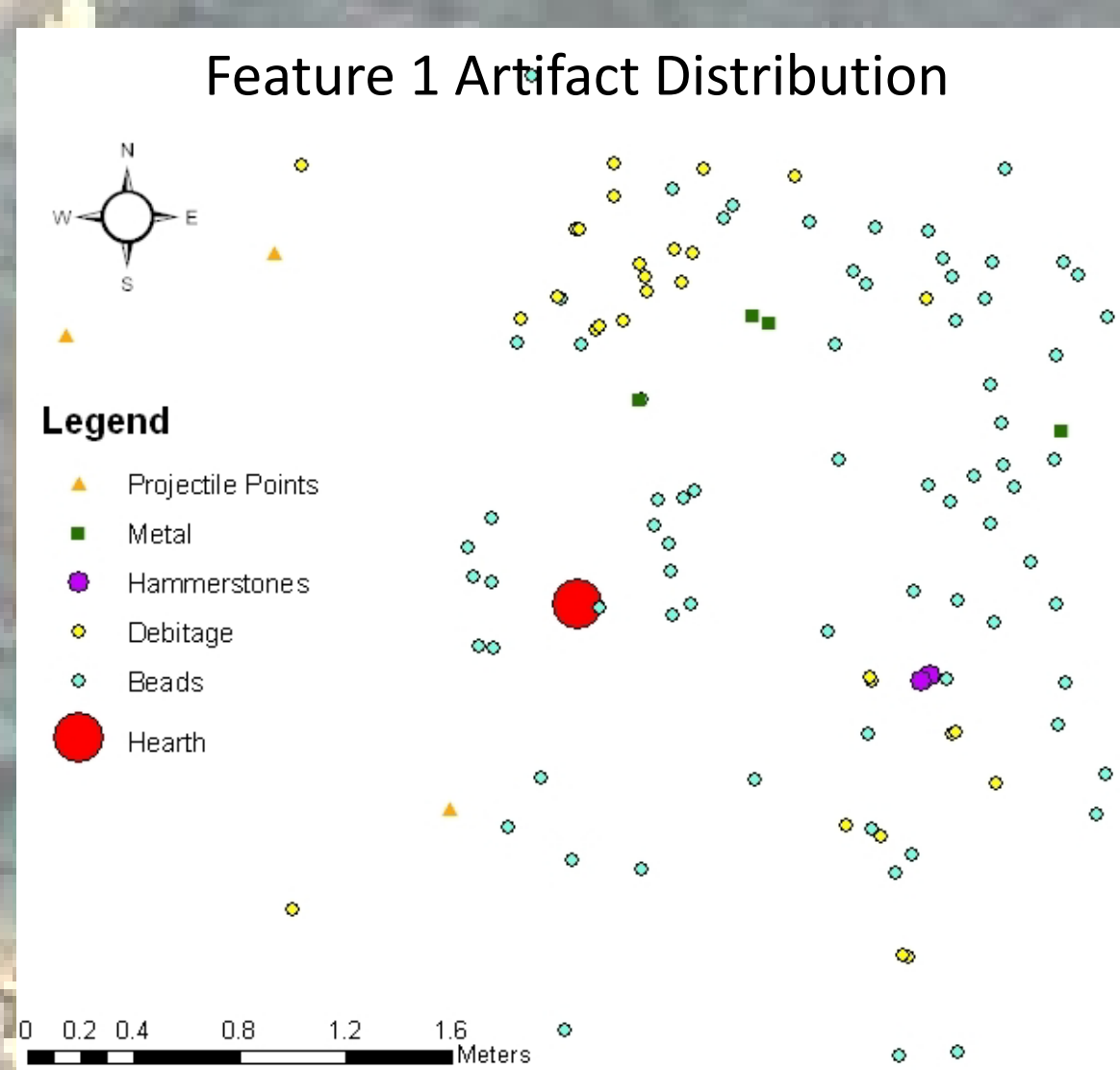
Conclusions

The hearths at features 1, 3, and 4 have artifact assemblages which are widely varied, consisting of many different classifications of artifacts as well as varying frequencies of the artifacts. It is likely that at these locations with site 060-07 as a whole a wide variety of tasks were taking place including food processing, bead working, and tool working. As food processing and bead work are often tasks associated with women and tool working is a task associated with men, these hearths were used by both genders. Feature 5 has an artifact assemblage consisting almost entirely of glass trade beads and feature 2 has an artifact assemblage consisting of glass beads as well as a large number of hammerstones for food processing. Both of these are tasks generally carried out by women, and it can be suggested that these areas were gathering places for women within the site. Feature 16 demonstrates the other end of the spectrum, as the artifact assemblage consists entirely of lithic debitage produced during tool manufacturing. This male activity suggests that feature 16 was an area used mainly by men.

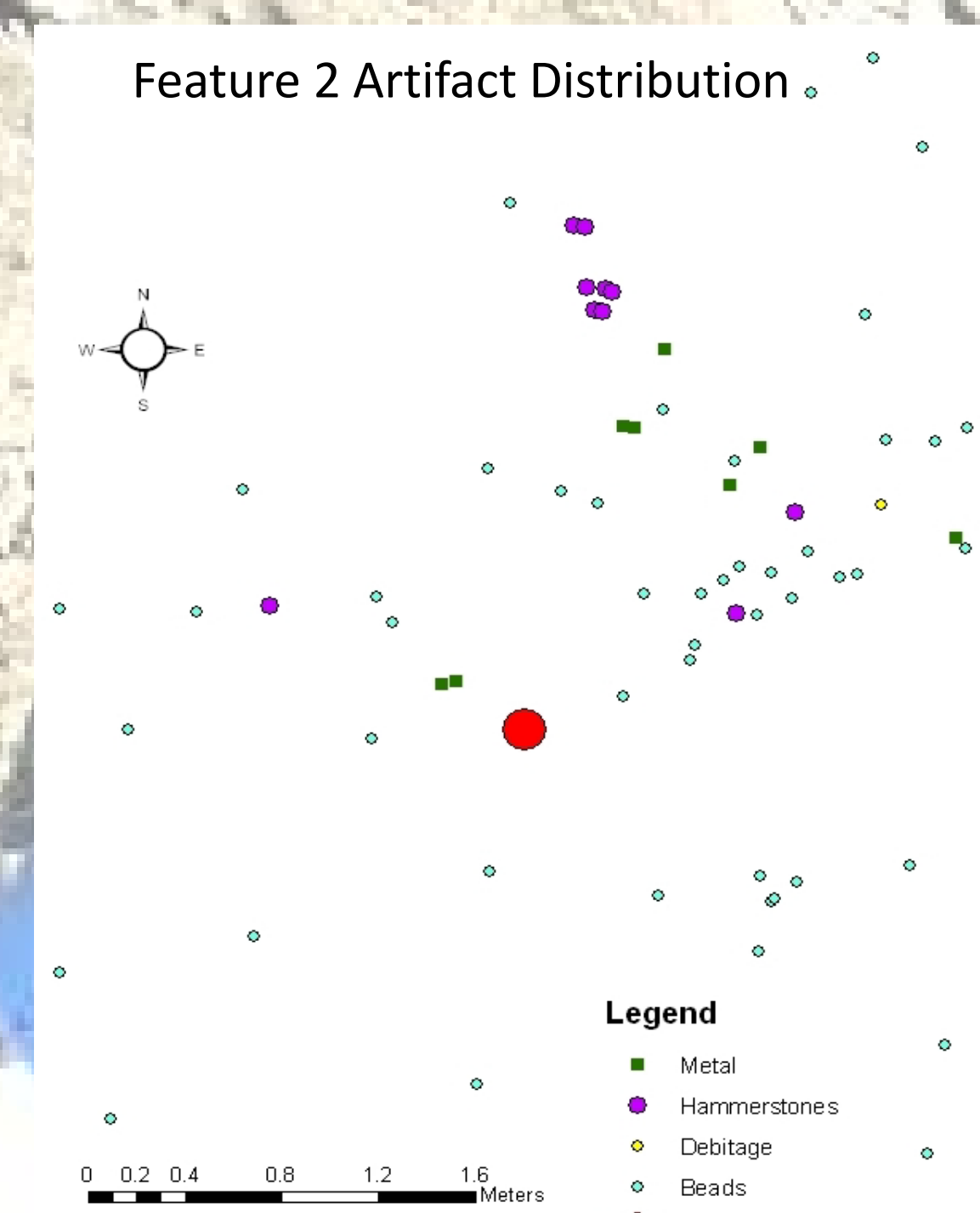
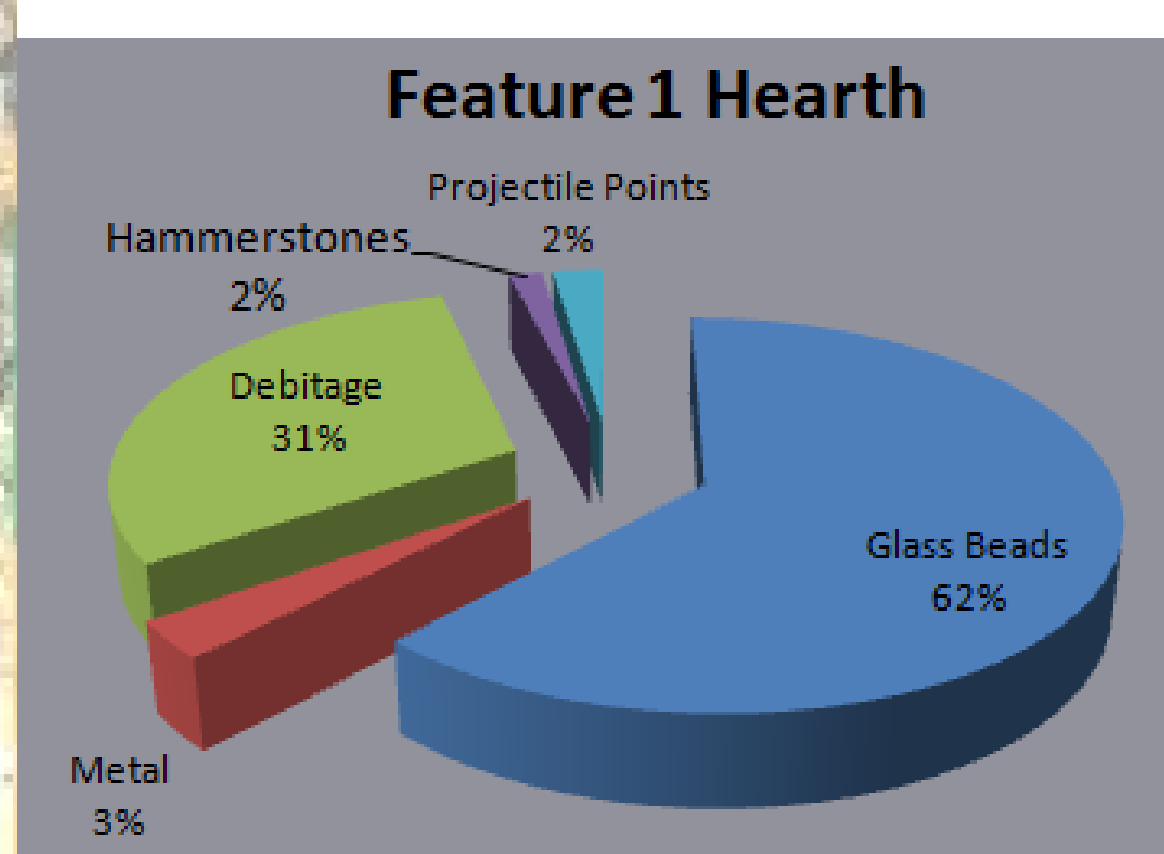
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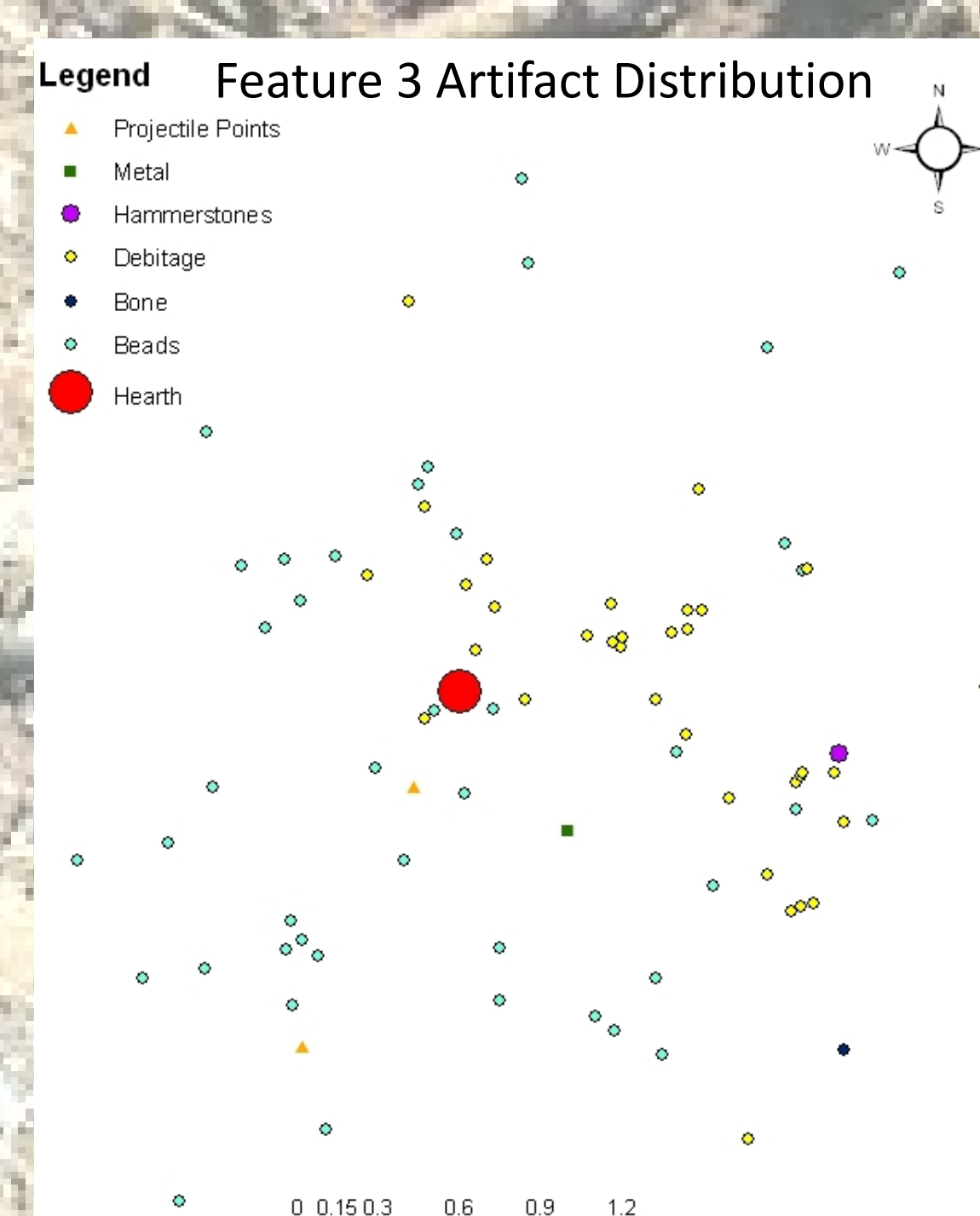
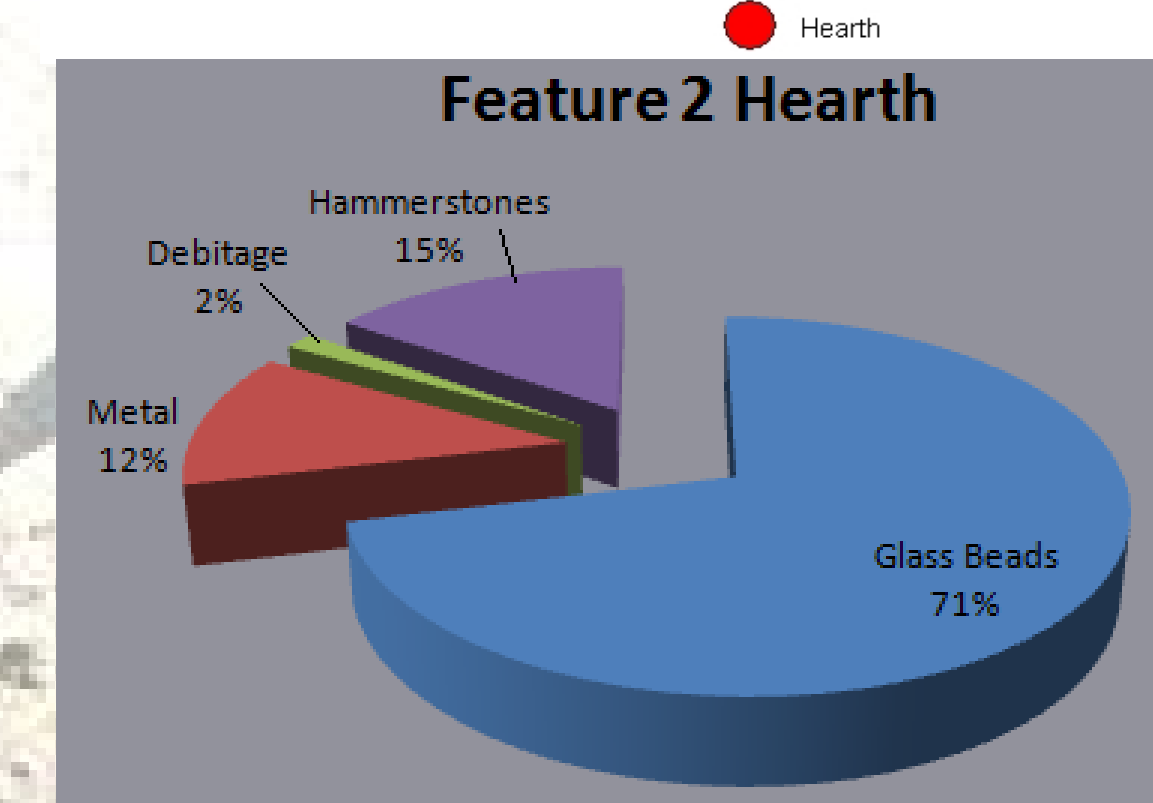
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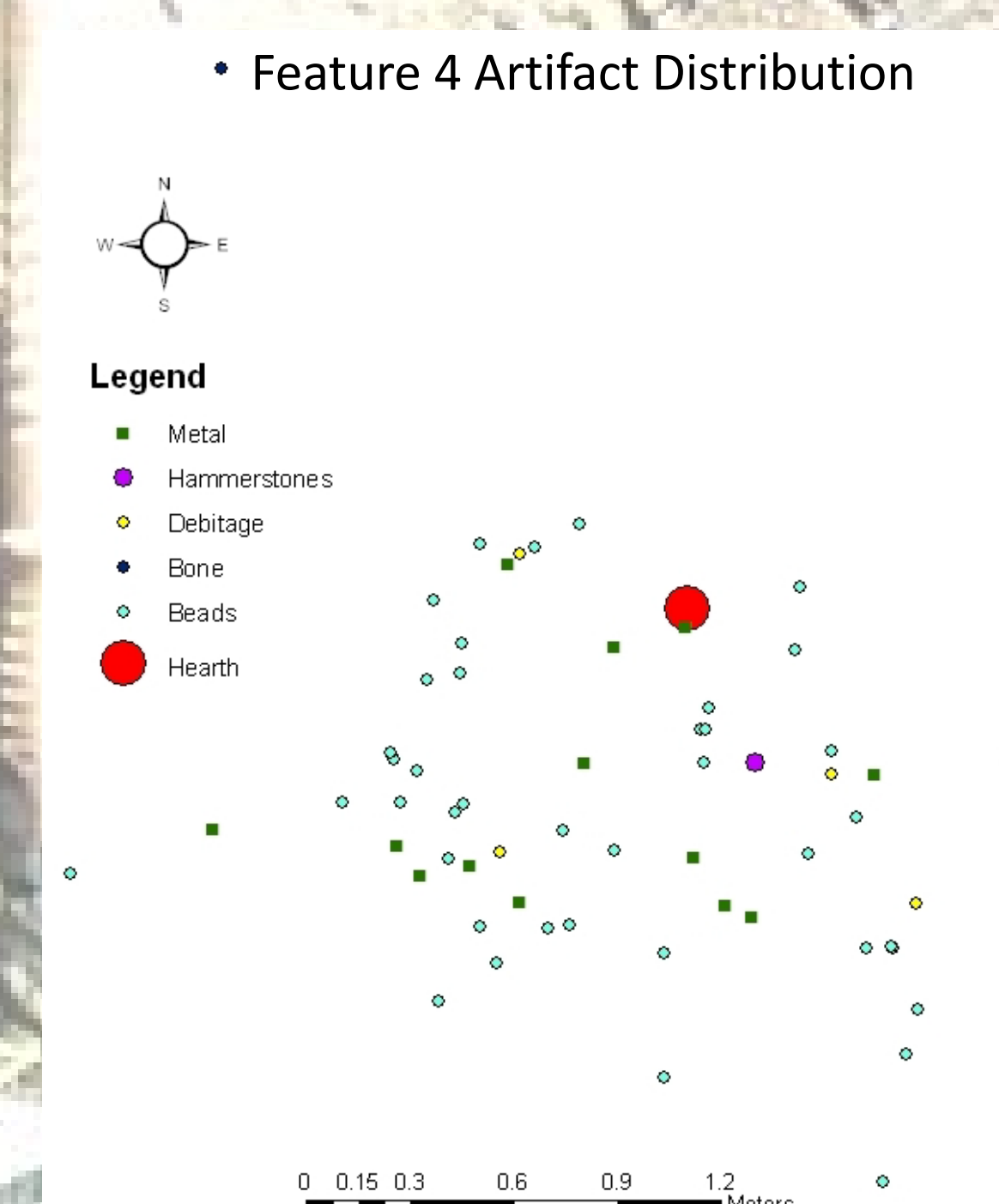
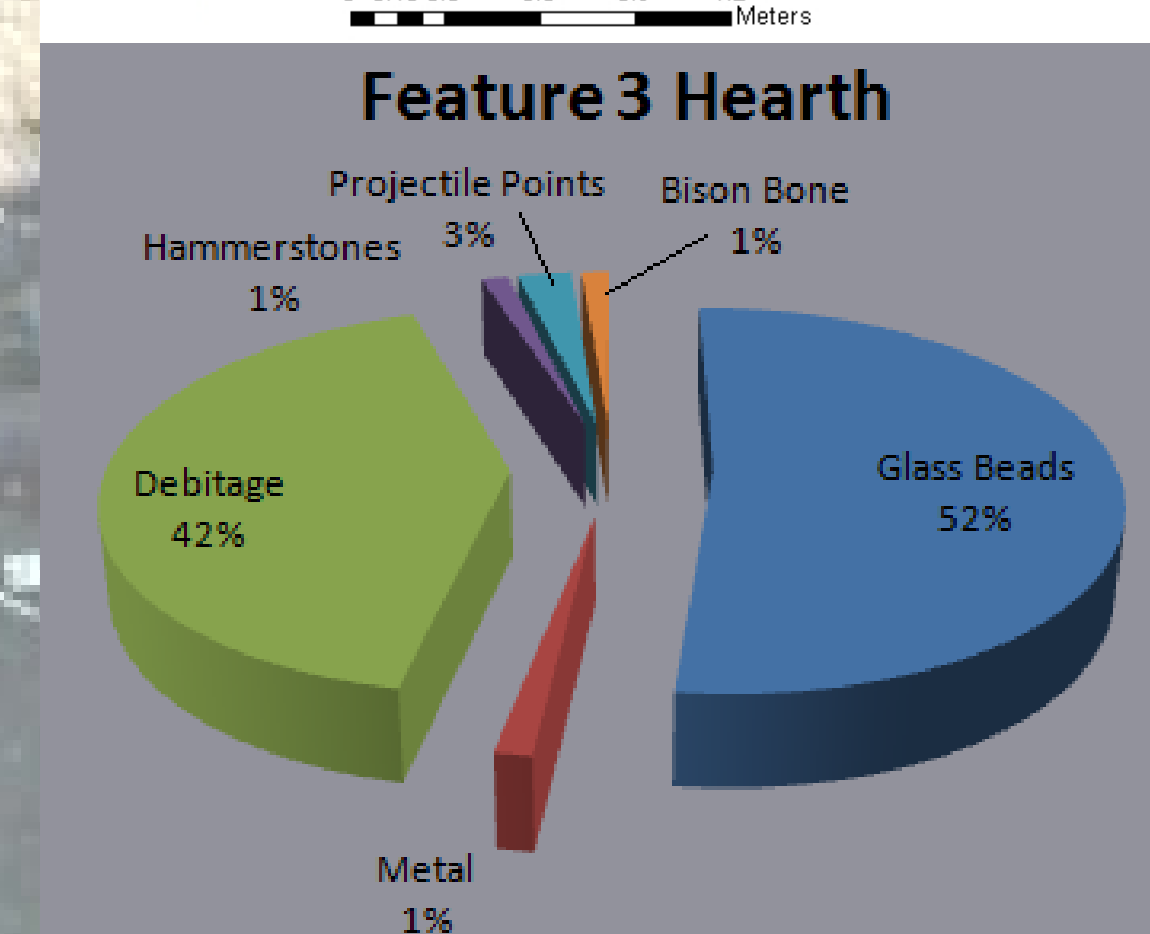
-Feature 1 contains a wide variety of artifacts.
 -Projectile points, amorphous metal pieces, and lithic debitage suggest tool working activities.
 -The two hammerstones and scatters of unidentifiable calcined bone suggest food processing activities.
 -The largest percentage of artifacts at the feature are glass trade beads, suggesting bead working or clothing making activities.



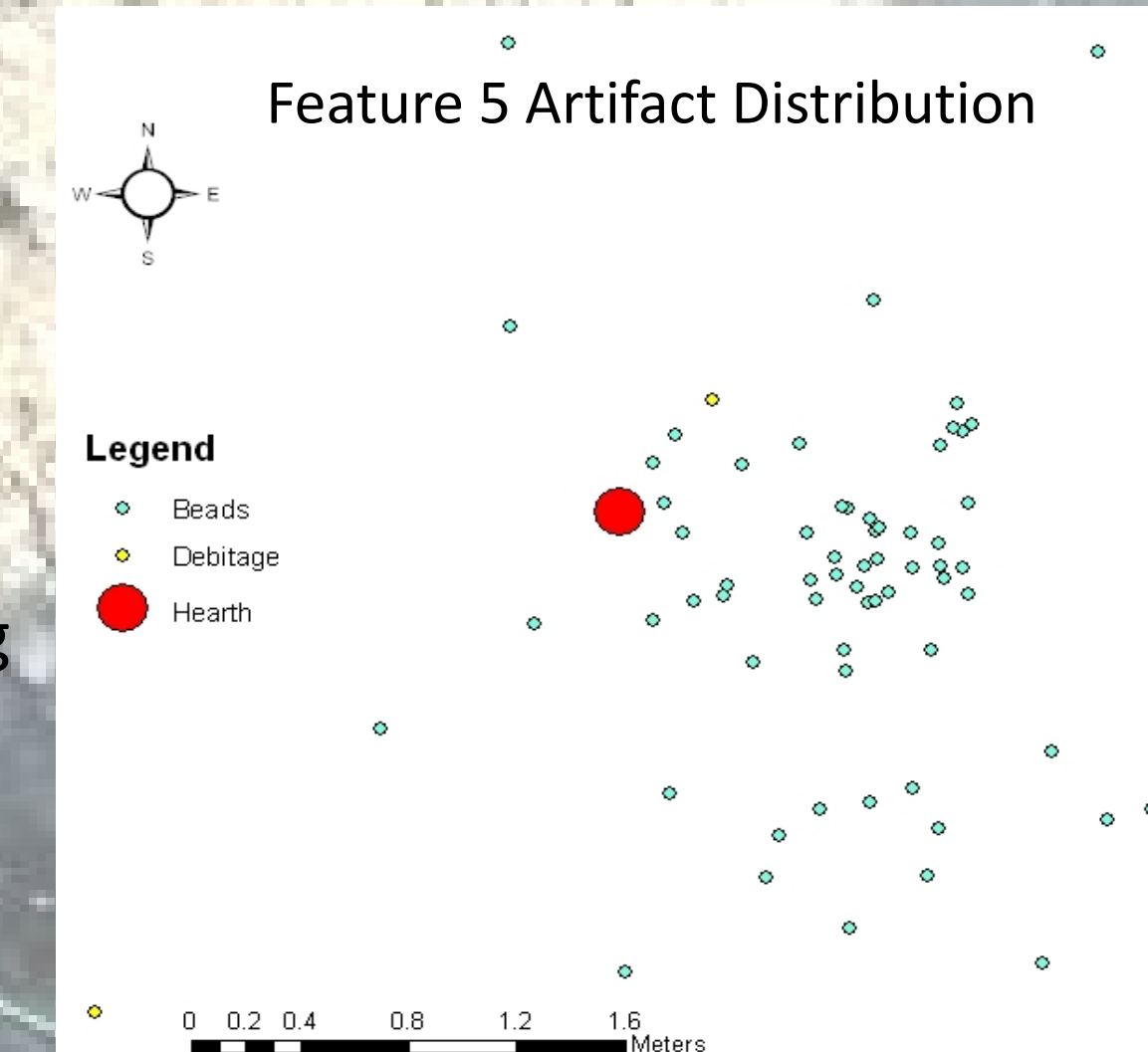
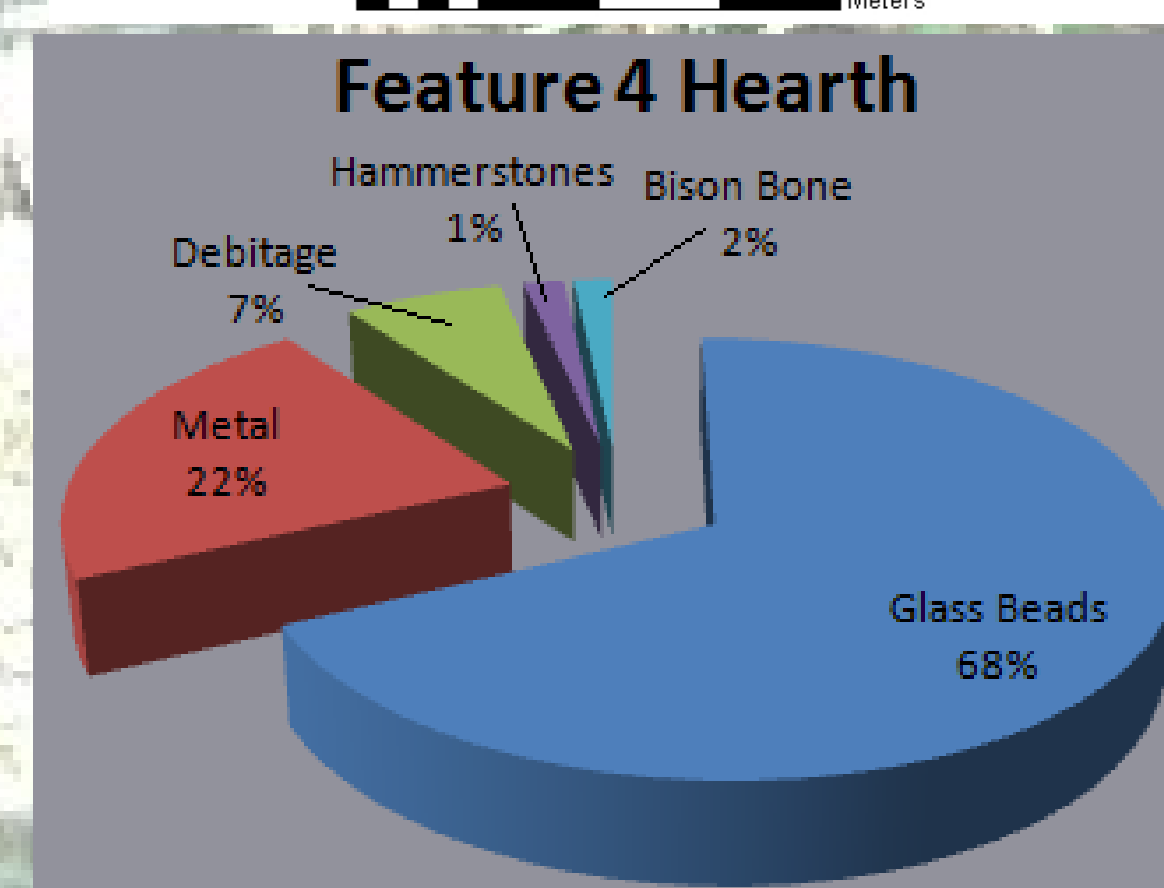
-The artifact assemblage at feature 2 is less varied than at feature-1.
 -A large percentage of the artifacts are amorphous metal pieces (15%), however there is only 1 piece of lithic debitage, suggesting very specific tool working activities.
 -A very high number of hammerstones (10) and a large amount of unidentifiable calcined bone scatter suggest this location was used heavily for food processing.
 -A very high percentage of glass trade beads (71%) suggests bead working activities.



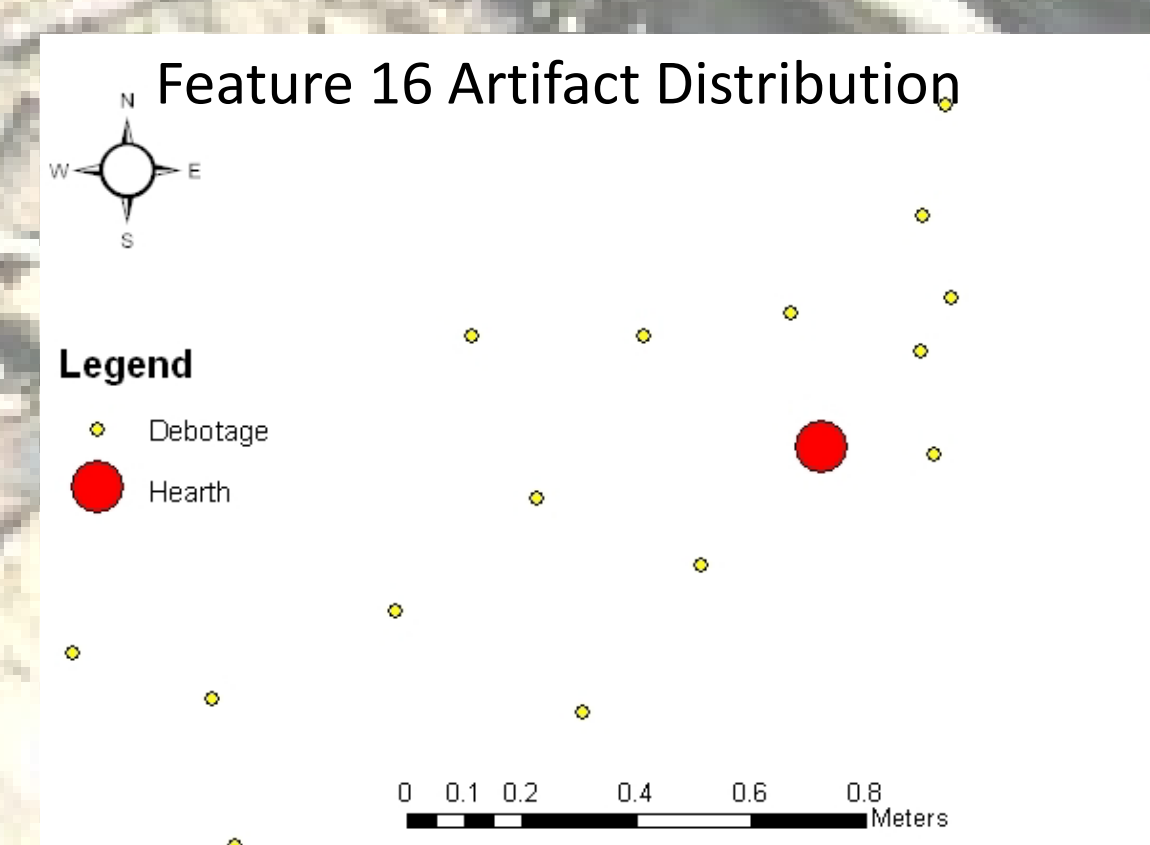
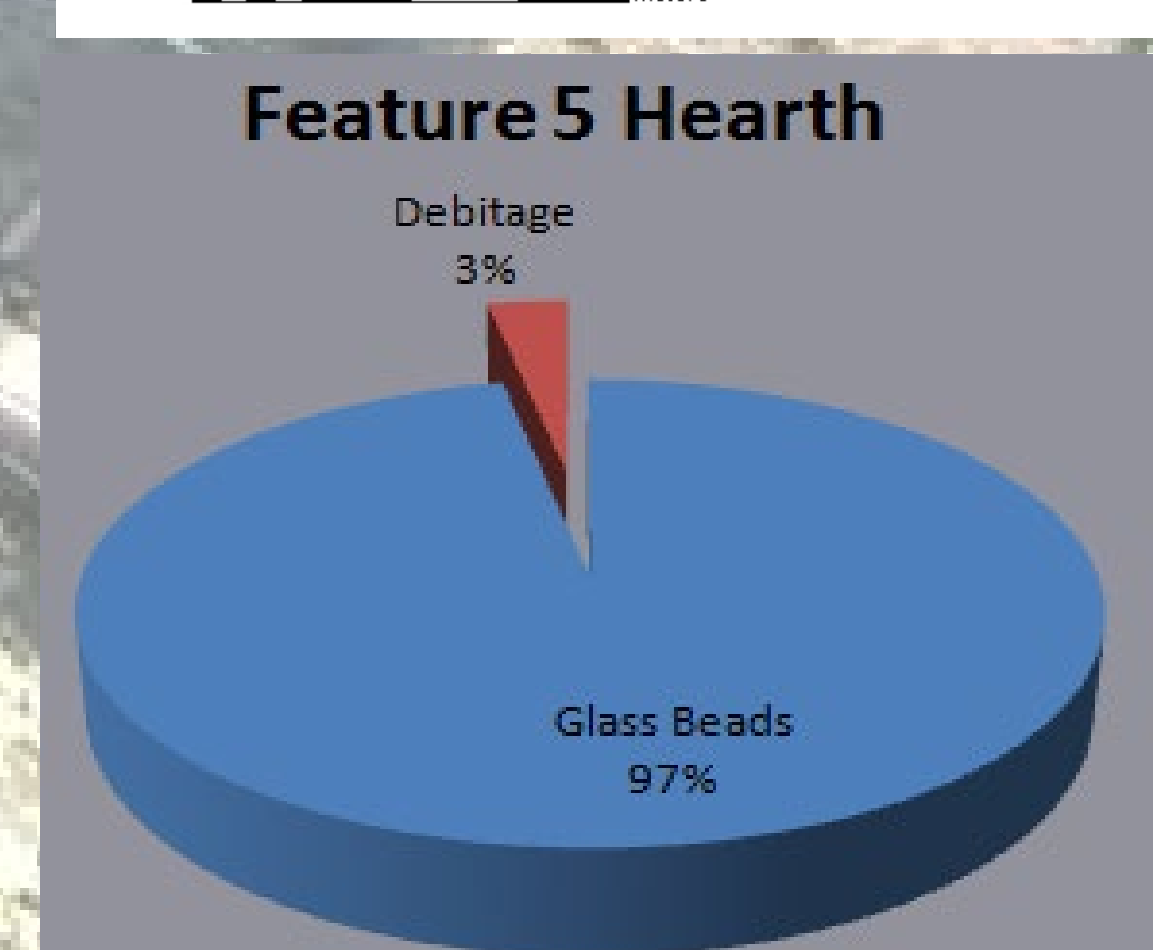
-Feature 3 also has a wide variety of artifacts associated with it.
 -Projectile points and amorphous metal pieces, along with a large amount of lithic debitage, suggest tool working activities.
 -One hammer stone as well as broken and calcined bison bone suggest some amount of food processing taking place.
 -A large number of glass trade beads suggests bead working or clothing production.



-Feature 4 has a somewhat limited artifact assemblage.
 -The lack of projectile points and the very small amount of lithic debitage (7%) suggest little tool working taking place.
 -The hammerstone at this feature had cones of percussion on it, possibly created by striking a chisel during metal working, a possibility supported by the large amount of amorphous metal pieces present (22%).
 -The large amount of glass beads suggests bead working taking place.



-Feature 5 has a very specific artifact assemblage associated with it.
 -Other than a few pieces of chipped stone lithic debitage the feature is composed of glass trade beads.
 -This incredibly high percentage of glass trade beads at this feature (97%) demonstrates that a very specific activity was taking place here, most likely bead work or clothing production.



-Feature 16 is unique from the other features within this study as it is the only hearth with an artifact assemblage composed entirely of one type of artifact.
 -The chipped stone lithic debitage associated with this feature suggest tool working taking place.
 -Although the percentage of this type of artifact is 100%, there were only 16 pieces of debitage.
 -Within the debitage there was little variation in material or feature element.

