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Dr. Spencer Pelton, Wyoming State

Archaeologist

THE POWARS II SITE

The Powars II site is the oldest of only five prehistoric hematite quarries known from the western hemisphere. Previous salvage excavations demonstrated a remarkable quantity of Paleoindian artifacts, but until recently it was unknown if the site contained intact archaeological deposits. Excavations conducted during the last several years demonstrate the presence of intact quarry features and associated artifacts dating to ca. 11,600 to 12,700 BP. Most use occurred between ca. 12,100 and 12,600 years BP by early Paleoindian foragers using a diversity of Younger Dryas-aged spear point styles. This presentation will summarize the status of major findings at this important early American site. The Powars II site is the oldest of only five prehistoric hematite quarries known from the western hemisphere. Previous salvage excavations demonstrated a remarkable quantity of Paleoindian artifacts, but until recently it was unknown if the site contained intact archaeological deposits. Excavations conducted during the last several years demonstrate the presence of intact quarry features and associated artifacts dating to ca. 11,600 to 12,700 BP. Most use occurred between ca. 12,100 and 12,600 years BP by early Paleoindian foragers using a diversity of Younger Dryas-aged spear point styles. This presentation will summarize the status of major findings at this important early American site.

Spencer Pelton received his PhD from the University of Wyoming in 2018 and became the Wyoming State Archaeologist in November, 2019. Spencer primarily researches the early Prehistory of the High Plains and Rocky Mountains, but also maintains interests in global human dispersal and the peopling of the Americas. Spencer conducts excavations at several Paleoindian sites in Wyoming, most recently at the Powars II red ocher quarry, the La Prele Clovis site, and the Sisters Hill site. Spencer lives in Laramie, WY with his wife Hallie and their dog Cashew.



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