

DOLORES ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRAM TECHNICAL REPORTS

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Site 5MT2857

by

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ANASAZI HERITAGE CENTER
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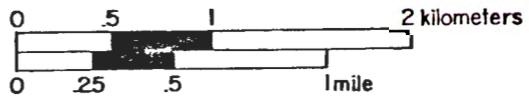
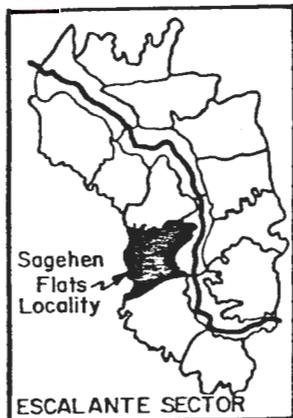
ABSTRACT

Site 5MT2857 is an Anasazi limited activity site located approximately 8 km northwest of Dolores, Colorado. The site was tested during the 1979 field season as part of the Dolores Project Cultural Resources Mitigation Project. Field operations, limited to surface collection and removal of the plow zone, were conducted during September of 1979 by a University of Colorado crew. No cultural features were identified at the site, hence it was designated a locus of limited activities. Since the artifactual remains recovered were sparse it is not possible to determine what specific activities took place at the site. Ceramics recovered from the site indicate an occupation between A.D. 600-900 (Sagehen Phase and Early McPhee Phase). Nearby hamlets have been dated to the Sagehen Phase, so it is presumed that Site 5MT2857 was utilized by members of the surrounding community. This community has been defined as the Milhoan Community in Dolores Archaeological Program Spatial Systematics.

INTRODUCTION

Site 5MT2857 is a limited activity site situated on a low ridge line with shallow drainages on both sides. The site (Figure 13.9.1) is located in the Northwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Sec 30, T38N, R15W. The Universal Transverse Mercator Grid coordinates for this location are 716380 mE, 4156200 mN, Zone 12. The specific reference to the area is the Trimble Point Quadrangle, Colorado, U.S.G.S. 7.5 Minute Series 1965 Topographic Map.

The site was described in an early survey report (Kane [1]) as a small, concentrated artifact scatter with no apparent architectural features. At the time it was thought that the site was either a small habitation or field house because of the presence of burned adobe on the surface; no adobe was found during field operations. The artifact collection from survey operations indicates a Basketmaker III and/or Pueblo I occupation.



INTERMITTENT DRAINAGE - - - - -

MARSH 

Figure 13.9.1 Location of Site 5MT2857. Other sites discussed in text are also depicted.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Located within the Sagehen Locality, Site 5MT2857 is situated 350 m southeast of Windy Wheat Hamlet (Site 5MT4644), 250 m northwest of Apricot Hamlet (Site 5MT2858), and 470 m southeast of Aldea Sierritas (Site 5MT2854). Currently all four sites are located in modern agricultural fields and share the same local environment. The modern fields are surrounded by stands of pinyon (Pinus edulis) and juniper (Juniperus osteosperma), squawbush (Rhus trilobata), serviceberry (Amelanchier utahensis), and other underlying shrubs and forbs; for a detailed description of the surrounding environment see the environmental section of the Sagehen Locality Report (Greenwald [2]).

SURFACE EVIDENCE

Surface Collection

Surface indications of prehistoric occupation at Site 5MT2857 were scant. Sherds and flakes were sparsely scattered on the crest of the ridge and down the east slope into one of the drainages. This artifact scatter covered an area approximately 40 by 40 m. Depressions suggesting subsurface structures were absent and rubble or other indications of surface architectural features were virtually nonexistent.

A grid system consisting of 100 4 m squares was established over the entire surface scatter. Alternate squares were collected yielding a 50 percent surface assemblage. Unshaped fragments of sandstone were weighed and recorded but not collected.

When the surface collection was completed, a self-loading scraper was employed to remove the plow zone. The result was the removal of about 30 cm of overburden across the artifact scatter area. The scraper enables features and structures to be readily exposed. However, several scrutinizing examinations of the scraped surface failed to reveal any subsurface cultural phenomena.

Magnetometer Survey

A magnetometer test survey of Site 5MT2857 was conducted (prior to testing) over 1000 m² of the densest artifact scatter. Although several anomalies were recorded the following interpretation was expounded by magnetic-reconnaissance consultant R. Huggins (personal communication): "In general the anomalies . . . do not show any of the classic characteristics of typical archaeological anomalies. It is possible that

[anomaly] 1a indicates a pitstructure but it is unlikely." In short, the magnetometer test survey indicated that no cultural features would be discovered, and this conjecture was verified by the blading operations.

Material Culture

The systematic surface collection resulted in a sparse assemblage of artifacts including 8 sherds, 4 nonflaked lithic artifacts, and 10 flaked lithic artifacts; frequencies are provided in Table 13.9.1. None of the artifacts can be used as conclusive evidence for site function or for temporal placement. The small ceramic collection indicates only that the site was used between A.D. 600-900. One Moccasin Gray sherd, dating to about A.D. 775, was found and may be used to better date the site.

Table 13.9.1 Artifacts from Surface Collection at Site 5MT2857

Material Type	Morphological Use or Type	Frequency	Percent
Ceramic	Early Pueblo Gray	7	87.5
	Moccasin Gray	1	12.5
Flaked Lithic	Debitage	7	70
	Utilized flake	2	20
	Uniface	1	10
Nonflaked Lithic	Curated fossil	1	25
	Mano	1	25
	Polishing stone	1	25
	Shaped debitage	1	25
Bone	Nonidentifiable	1	100

The presence of a mano, a polishing stone, a uniface, and two utilized flakes from the plow zone seems to indicate that a variety of activities including food processing and ceramic manufacture may have occurred. However, the small size of the collection precludes any definite conclusions.

CONCLUSIONS

Since no cultural features were defined there, it is likely that Site 5MT2857 was a limited activity site of unknown function. A relationship to Site 5MT4644, Site 5MT2858, and Site 5MT2854 is suggested because of the proximity and similar artifact assemblages among all these sites. The presence of Early Pueblo Gray Ware sherds dates Site 5MT2857 to A.D. 600-900. Habitation sites in the Milhoan Community were occupied between A.D. 600-825 and one can presume that Site 5MT2857 was utilized during this time span by members of the Milhoan Community.

REFERENCES CITED

- [1] Kane, Allen E. 1977. Archaeological resources of the Dolores River Project: report of 1976 operations. University of Colorado Archaeological Research Center, Mesa Verde National Park, Colorado.
- [2] Greenwald, David H. 1979. Sagehen locality report. In Field investigations, Sagehen Flats Locality: 1979. Dolores Archaeological Program Technical Report V(13.9). Final report submitted to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Upper Colo. Region, Salt Lake City, in compliance with Contract No. 8-07-40-S0562.