

## Investigations at the Hot Tubb Folsom Site (41CR10), Crane County, Texas

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Field investigations were recently carried out at the Hot Tubb site, located in the sandhills east of Crane, Texas. In the early 1980s, three Folsom points were found eroding from a large interdunal blowout. The projectile points were in apparent association with many complete bison bones. The site was reported to Michael Collins, who visited the locale in 1985. With several others, Collins hypothesized that Hot Tubb contained intact evidence of a Folsom-age bison kill (State Site File, Texas Archaeological Research Laboratory).

SMU-QUEST initiated fieldwork at Hot Tubb in 2002, which continued in 2003. Because artifacts and bones are eroding onto the floor of an active dune, we undertook a series of “surface skims,” whereby the surficial mantle of eolian blowsand was shovel-skimmed and screened (through 1/8-inch mesh) and all archaeological remains were collected. A total area of 364 contiguous m<sup>2</sup> of the blowout and surrounding dunes was skimmed. Additionally, a number of test excavation units were excavated. This brief report documents primarily those remains recovered through the surface skims.

Hot Tubb is known primarily as a Folsom site, yet not all the collected remains are referable to the Paleoindian period. Our work, however, did yield eight Folsom and Midland points, primarily fragments. Between the time of the site’s discovery and the present day, avocationalists collected an additional four point fragments. The total number of Folsom/Midland projectiles known from Hot Tubb is 15. A large number of bone elements and fragments that probably represent Folsom-age bison (Byerly and Seebach 2004) were also recovered.

Approximately 57 kg of bone (497 g are burned) and 18,903 flakes were collected from the surface skims. The majority of the faunal remains are fragmentary and not indicative of specific elements, much less species. However, a number of specimens, predominantly the densest elements in the skeleton (e.g., sesamoids, tarsals, carpals), are assigned to *Bison* sp. Preliminary examination of the faunal collection has also identified various portions of bison cranial, axial, and long bone elements. In addition to these, a concentration of bone was uncovered during excavation. Among the bones uncovered were a complete proximal femur and a complete radius. Both are attributable to *Bison*.

Despite evidence for mixing of the archaeological materials at Hot Tubb, the surface skim data indicate the distribution of artifacts and faunal remains is nonrandom. The majority of lithic debris is found directly to the north of the bone distribution, which extends in an arc for approximately 5–7 m. All

the burned bone is highly localized to the east of the non-burned bone. Furthermore, the area rich in burned bone from surface contexts generally corresponds to the subsurface concentration of bone, some of which is burned as well. All the diagnostic Folsom artifacts, including those collected avocationally, have been found to the north and west of the area yielding the greatest amount of bone. Relative to the projectile bases, a number of Folsom ear fragments have been found closer to the bone area. The clustering of these remains, unexpected in such an active sand dune setting, may suggest that erosion has not been so severe as to completely mask prior spatial patterning.

The current data from Hot Tubb therefore suggest the possible presence of discrete occupational loci during the Folsom occupation. That the majority of bones have been found well away from the locations of the Folsom basal fragments suggests a retooling location away from a kill/butchery locale. Four projectile ear fragments found closer to the bone distribution may represent pieces that were lost during a kill episode. Ongoing geoarchaeological analyses of the sediments at Hot Tubb will aid in assessing the integrity of the Folsom materials at the site.

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### References Cited

Byerly, R. M., and J. D. Seebach 2004 Metric Analysis of a Complete Bison Radius from the Hot Tubb Folsom Site, Crane County, Texas. This issue.