

Here is a summary from their work in the Ossipee Watershed in 2000—with exciting finds!

SCRAP Fieldschool 2000: A Brief Summary of Survey in the Ossipee Watershed
Sarah Ward Dunham, New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources

The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources and State Conservation and Rescue Archaeology Program (SCRAP) Prehistoric Archaeology Fieldschool was held from June 19 to July 28, 2000 in the Ossipee Mountain Region of New Hampshire. Approximately 45 volunteers and students, including many locals of the Ossipee area, gained SCRAP field and laboratory experience and certification under the direction of Deputy State Archaeologist, Dick Boisvert, Field Supervisor Ann Pilkovsky, and Lab Manager Sarah Dunham.

The primary goal of the fieldschool was to locate the bedrock source of hornfels, a workable stone used predominantly for prehistoric tools at archaeological sites in the area. Hornfels is produced by the contact metamorphism of volcanic ash by subsequent intrusions of igneous material. Based on the density of hornfels in the area, archaeologists have suspected that the source lies in the ring dike which forms distinct circular shape of the Ossipee Mountains. With that goal in mind, the fieldschool focused on several sites that lie in the shadow of the Ossipee Mountains, both on the slopes and along the banks of the Bearcamp River to the north. The fieldschool began with an emergency salvage operation already underway at the construction site of the Tamworth Transfer Station at the base of Mount Whittier. Discovered by Ann Pilkovsky in late May, the site was already heavily disturbed by construction by the time she and Dick Boisvert were able to return to do further testing. Due to further disturbance and construction deadlines, the fieldschool crew was only able to put in one day of fieldwork. The site yielded many hornfels flakes and several biface fragments.

The crew then pursued sites in the Pine River State Forest in cooperation with the Green Mountain Conservation Club and State agencies. Though landforms around the Lost Ponds area of the State Forest had a great deal of potential for a site, no definitive evidence was found for prehistoric occupation.

In the second week focus was shifted to the property of Thad and Amy Berrier along the Bearcamp River in Tamworth. The Berrier's seven-year-old son discovered the site when he produced a large unfinished tool from the eroding slope next to the circular driveway. Later, inspired by the SCRAP archaeologists, his five-year-old brother excavated a complete quartz projectile point from under his swing set! The fieldschool spent a total of four days at the site and excavated a total of 31 shovel test pits. Artifacts recovered include tool fragments and waste flakes from the stone tool manufacturing process.

The fourth area tested was the Berrier II Site (27-CA-137), a hornfels workshop in Tamworth. The Berrier family, on whose property the Berrier I Site (27-CA-135) is situated, brought the site to the attention of the NHDHR. Berrier II, originally surveyed by Dick Boisvert, Kurt Masters, and Ann Pilkovsky, sits on a sloping esker or ancient landslide-like landform and is characterized by an extremely dense flake concentration such that there was little to no matrix in the shovel test pits. In only three days of testing (June 29, 30 and July 7) the crew recovered nearly 1000 pounds (454 kg) of artifacts (mostly waste flakes from all stages of manufacture) from the six test pits excavated at the site. Having never

before encountered such a mass of flakes, the lab crew was obligated to develop new strategies for processing them, including sieving flakes by size for cataloging.

In the second session of fieldschool, the small crew of ten returned to Berrier I and Pine River State Forest, finishing work at the former and beginning work on another area of the latter, to no avail. The crew then spent time on a hiking survey within the Ossipee Mountains searching for sites and hornfels outcrops. The second session crew spent their last day identifying surface finds and laying transects at a second hornfels workshop (Berrier III, 27-CA-136) in Tamworth. In the final session of fieldschool, the crew, consisting primarily of "old-time" SCRAPpers, finished survey within the ring dike and returned to the Berrier III hornfels workshop (27-CA-136). Only 500 meters from Berrier II (27-CA-137), and now believed to be continuous, Amy's Workshop (named after Amy Berrier), extends the known boundaries of the massive hornfels workshop in the Ossipee Mountains. The fieldschool ended with the success of finding an outcrop of hornfels, as well as several exploited hornfels exposures.

The crew was fortunate to have Rick Van de Poll of the Lakes Region Conservation Trust give an evening lecture on the ecology of the area. In his slide show, Rick introduced us to the flora, fauna, and environmental issues of the Ossipee Mountains in the vicinity of our sites. The lecture helped us build an awareness for the larger issues concerning the environment of the sites and the factors which may threaten them.

The lab experience is an integral part of a SCRAP participant's fieldschool. Consequently, the field lab at Camp Wakuta operated five days a week for the duration of the fieldschool and each participant spent a minimum of one day per week in the lab. Lab priorities included organizing bags of artifacts from the field, then washing, cataloging, and preparing artifacts for long-term storage, processes crucial to the stability of the artifacts for study and site interpretation in the future.

The 2000 State Conservation and Rescue Archaeology Program Fieldschool accomplished its goals of finding the long sought-after bedrock hornfels as well as identifying several new sites in the Ossipee Mountain region. Though more physically demanding than previous years, the survey-oriented nature of the fieldschool was a timely change of pace and extremely beneficial to participants who may wish to go on to work in a CRM environment. The body of data gathered during fieldschool will greatly improve our understanding of the prehistory of the Ossipee Mountain region. We look forward to the winter's laboratory work and further site analysis.

NOTE:

If you would like more information about the NH State Conservation and Rescue Archaeology Program (SCRAP), please contact the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, P.O. Box 2043, Concord, NH 03302-2043. Phone: (603) 271-6433 or e-mail: scrap@nhdhr.state.nh.us.

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