Documenting Indigenous Ties to the Texas Panhandle: The Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument and Lake Meredith National Recreation Area Ethnographic Overview and Traditional Use Study

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Abstract
This article summarizes the results of a multi-year ethnographic research study commissioned by the National Park Service (NPS). The goal of the project was to gain a better understanding of Native American connections to Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument and Lake Meredith National Recreation Area, jointly administered units of the (US) national park system located in the Texas Panhandle. This paper presents, albeit in abbreviated form, the findings contained in the project technical report. Researchers identified eight federally acknowledged American Indian tribes with ties to the park units. In addition, the study documented ethnographic resources present within the project area and reconstructed traditional patterns of resource use. During the project, Indigenous community members shared both concerns, as well as recommendations, regarding the interpretation of their tribes’ histories. The report concludes by proposing ways in which the NPS might collaborate with the traditionally associated tribes in the development of interpretive and educational programming that acknowledges Indigenous people’s historic ties to the parklands, as well as the continued vitality of their cultures.

Keywords
applied anthropology; cultural heritage; cultural conservation; ethnology; national parks; traditional ecological knowledge.

Competing Interests
The authors declare no competing interests.

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[Introduction]

Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument (ALFL) was established in 1965 to “provide for the preservation, protection, interpretation, and scientific study of Alibates flint deposits” and their use by Native American people (National Park Service 2014, 6–7). This report provides a summary of a multi-year ethnographic research project commissioned by the National Park Service (NPS) to explore Native American tribes’ historic ties to the National Monument. Michael Jordan served as the Principal Investigator (PI) for the study, which was conducted between July 2015...
and August 2021.² The publication of this article is intended to make the results of the research available to a broader audience than that expected for the technical report produced for the NPS and participating tribes (Jordan et. al. 2021). One of the study’s major contributions was the identification of eight federally recognized American Indian tribes with ties to the project area and the report presents a summary of the evidence supporting the identification of these tribes as traditionally associated peoples.

The research has significantly added to our understanding of the Native American presence in the Texas Panhandle during the proto-historic and historic periods. Native American oral history and the writings of nineteenth century Euro-American explorers point to a sustained Indigenous presence in the region that lasted until the late 1870s. These accounts are all the more valuable given the lack of documented Native American archaeological sites from these periods in the project area. Archaeological surveys of the parklands have not identified any historic period Native American sites and have succeeded in identifying only one proto-historic site. Our findings highlight the importance of the Canadian River valley to tribes during the historic period and present a picture of Indigenous land use that stands in stark contrast to one based solely on the archaeological evidence.

Furthermore, the research has practical implications for the NPS’s educational and interpretive programming at ALFL. Perhaps due to the abundance of archaeological material at ALFL associated with the Antelope Creek phase (1150–1450 CE), interpretation at the monument has focused almost exclusively on this earlier time period. However, as our research demonstrates, Native Americans continued to utilize the project area long after the Antelope Creek phase people migrated out of the region. Our findings can serve as the basis for the development of new interpretive and educational materials, including museum exhibits, that address the diversity of tribes who lived in the region during the historic period. Indeed, this is something that the tribal members with whom we worked long to see.

Acknowledging the historic presence of Native American tribes in the project area ultimately forces one to recognize the role that settler colonial policies played in denying Indigenous people access to the region. In the mid to late nineteenth century, the United States conducted military campaigns, including the 1874–1875 Red River War, with the intent of forcing the tribes onto reservations located in Indian Territory and New Mexico (Cruse 2008; Levy 2001, 916–17; Tiller 1983, 450–51). Confining to reservations, the tribes found their access to the Texas Panhandle curtailed. Privatization of the lands within the project area soon followed. Ranches were established, including the LX Ranch, which was formed in 1877. By the time that ALFL was established in 1965, almost a century had passed since Native Americans had enjoyed access to the project area and its resources (Raab 2007, 5–4).

Given this history, it is not surprising that our interviews did not yield evidence of contemporary tribal members visiting the monument to collect resources, conduct religious ceremonies, or engage in commemorative activities. Our research therefore focused on understanding the tribes’ historical ties to the parklands. However, participation in the study seems to have rekindled the tribes’ interest in the project area. During the project, tribal representatives visited the monument. These visits allowed these individuals the opportunity to reconnect with the landscape and to explore the potential for harvesting botanical resources on their ancestral homelands. As outlined later in this paper, a new era may be dawning in the relationship between the participating federally recognized tribes and the lands now administered by the NPS.
Located in Potter County, Texas, ALFL preserves numerous archaeological sites (Figure 1). Approximately 700 quarry pits, excavated to access deposits of Alibates flint, are located within the boundaries of ALFL and NPS conducts daily ranger-guided tours of the quarries (National Park Service 2014). While frequently referred to as “Alibates flint” or “Alibates chert” in the literature, the material is technically silicified dolomite (Bauman 1974, 32). It possesses a rather striking appearance (Figure 2). It is often described as exhibiting “distinctive alternating red and white banding,” but, as James Shaeffer (1957, 190) notes, the material occurs in a “range of colors.”

Between 1150 and 1450 CE the project area was inhabited by Plains Villagers, whom archaeologists have assigned to the Antelope Creek phase. As Holly Rabb (2007; 4–6) notes, the Plains Village tradition refers to “a number of distinct semi-sedentary groups that share fundamentally similar lifeways and adaptive strategies” who occupied the Southern Plains between 800 and 1500 CE. Archaeologists divide the Plains Village tradition into regional variants, including the Upper Canark variant, which encompasses portions of the Texas Panhandle, western Oklahoma, southwestern Kansas, southeastern Colorado, and eastern New Mexico. The Upper Canark variant is further subdivided into four phases or complexes defined on the basis of their archaeological assemblages. The Antelope Creek phase is one of these four subdivisions (Rabb 2007, 4–6, 4–8).
Antelope Creek phase sites have been documented in the Texas Panhandle, as well as in the Oklahoma Panhandle and western Oklahoma. However, the densest concentration of sites is located along the Canadian River near the Alibates flint quarries (Lintz 1984, 325). Archaeologists have posited that the lithic material served as an important trade item for the Antelope Creek people and that the dense concentration of sites surrounding the quarries reflects an attempt to control access to the resource (Lintz 1986, 246; Rabb 2007, 4–7).

Antelope Creek phase people practiced a mixed economy that embraced both hunting and horticulture (Boyd 2008). This is reflected in the presence of bison scapula hoes and tibia digging sticks in Antelope Creek archaeological assemblages (Rabb 2007, 4–7). One of the defining characteristics of Antelope Creek phase architecture is the use of stone slab foundations and walls (Figure 3), which were employed in the construction of both free-standing structures and contiguous room blocks (Lintz 1986, 112). Numerous Antelope Creek phase sites have been documented within the project area and ALFL contains “the only protected, and best remaining type-site” for the Antelope Creek phase, Alibates 28 (41PT11) (National Park Service 2014, 9).

Attempts to identify the descendants of the Antelope Creek people, i.e. to trace connections between the Antelope Creek phase and historically documented tribes, have proved challenging. Initially, the use of stone slab construction at Antelope Creek sites led some archaeologists to posit a connection between the inhabitants of the sites and
the Puebloan peoples of the American Southwest (Lintz 1984, 326, 340). In 1931, Warren Moorehead posited that the sites in the Texas Panhandle predated those in the Southwest and that their inhabitants represented the ancestors of the Puebloan people (Bausman 1974, 19). Similarly, Floyd Studer argued that the inhabitants of the sites possessed ties to the Pueblo cultures of the Southwest and utilized the terms Post Basketmaker Culture and Texas Panhandle Pueblo Culture to refer to what is now defined as the Antelope Creek phase (Lintz 1984, 326).

Since the 1960s, archaeological theories have tended to focus on possible connections between the Antelope Creek people and the Wichita and Pawnee tribes (Bausman 1974, 20; Lintz 1984, 340). However, Christopher Lintz (1984:340) notes that while cultural similarities exist between the Antelope Creek people and the historic Wichita and Pawnee, there are also noticeable differences. He observes that, “none of the archaeologically or historically documented cultures on the Plains area after the sixteenth century lived in stone-slab houses, used many of the forms of stone and bone tools, or decorated their pottery as did the Antelope Creek peoples” and concludes that “cultural continuity has been difficult to trace” (Lintz 1984, 340). Our study sought to synthesize the archaeological evidence for cultural associations between the Antelope Creek people and the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes and the Pawnee Nation and to document Indigenous perspectives on this relationship.

The ethnographic study had two primary goals. First, the researchers were to conduct an ethnographic overview, identifying federally recognized tribes with ties to ALFL. Second, they were to carry out a traditional use study, identifying ethnographic
resources, including, but not limited to floral and faunal resources, utilized by the associated tribes. Initially, the project focused exclusively on ALFL. However, in November 2016, Jordan observed that the findings of the literature review and ethnographic research concerned the tribes' ties to the broader region and not only the 1,371 acres that comprise ALFL. As the results of the ongoing research were equally applicable to the lands located within the adjacent Lake Meredith National Recreational Area (LAMR), which are managed by the same staff as ALFL, the task agreement was modified to broaden the geographic scope of the project to encompass both LAMR and ALFL.

Eight federally recognized tribes or nations chose to participate in the research study. These eight tribes are the: Apache Tribe of Oklahoma (Anadarko, Oklahoma), Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes (Concho, Oklahoma), Comanche Nation (Lawton, Oklahoma), Jicarilla Apache Nation (Dulce, New Mexico), Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma (Carnegie, Oklahoma), Mescalero Apache Tribe (Mescalero, New Mexico), Pawnee Nation (Pawnee, Oklahoma), and the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes (Anadarko, Oklahoma). Three additional tribes were invited to participate but chose not to do so. These were the Delaware Nation (Anadarko, Oklahoma), Caddo Indian Tribe of Oklahoma (Binger, Oklahoma), and the Fort Sill Apache Tribe (Apache, Oklahoma). The Fort Sill Apache Tribe chose to defer to the Mescalero Apache Tribe. The Delaware Nation and the Caddo Indian Tribe of Oklahoma indicated that the project area was located outside their traditional territory.

The project consisted of two distinct phases. In Phase I, the researchers conducted ethnographic interviews with members of the participating tribes. During this phase, the researchers travelled to reservations/Tribal Jurisdictional Statistical Areas in New Mexico and Oklahoma to conduct interviews. Phase II featured on-site interviews conducted at the parks. Researchers invited tribal representatives to travel to ALFL and LAMR to visit archaeological sites, view ethnographic resources and interpretive exhibits, and participate in on-site interviews.

While the vast majority of the Phase I interviews were completed before the Phase II site visits were initiated, there was a brief period in which both phases were pursued simultaneously. This was necessitated, in part, by the need to conduct follow up interviews with research participants to clarify points raised during their initial interviews. In addition, in cases where less than five tribal members had been interviewed during the initial round of interviews, the researchers continued their efforts to recruit participants. These efforts continued until the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) or other tribal official indicated that recruitment efforts had exhausted the pool of knowledgeable and willing research participants. When possible, both male and female participants were included in the study to access unique knowledge held by the sexes.

In May 2019, the project was modified to incorporate work for the Cultural Resources Inventory System-Ethnographic Resources (CRIS-ER) database. The researchers entered information on ethnographic resources collected during the interviews into spreadsheet templates provided by the NPS for later input into the agency’s CRIS-ER database. This data was augmented with information gleaned from published sources and archival interviews. The spreadsheets were then submitted to the tribes for review and tribal officials were asked to identify culturally sensitive information that should be redacted.
Research Methodology

Throughout the project, the researchers employed a holistic research strategy that embraced both Indigenous knowledge and western science. Western social science methods of literature review, semi-structured interviews, site visits, and linguistic analysis were used to prompt the sharing of Indigenous knowledge. Such a holistic approach was crucial to the success of the project. During the preliminary literature review, the researchers consulted Euro-American historical accounts and the results of archaeological investigations to help identify tribes with ties to the project area. It soon became apparent that these records could provide only a fragmentary view of the historic Native American presence.

First, the explorers and military personnel who passed through the region traversed the project area in the span of a few days. Their accounts provide only a brief snapshot of the tribes who were active in the area at the time. From these accounts we learn nothing of the tribes who inhabited the region during the years that passed between their expeditions. Furthermore, the fact that no historic period Native American archaeological sites have been identified in the project area may be attributable to the methodologies employed in past archaeological surveys and should not be interpreted as evidence that such sites do not exist (Cruse 2003).

In contrast, Native American oral history provides a robust view of tribes’ ties to the project area. In their ethnographic interviews, participants discussed their tribes’ ties to the flint quarries, the Canadian River, and nearby sites, including Palo Duro Canyon and Adobe Walls. In addition, the interviews provide a sense of the emotional resonance of the location. They bring out the significance that the place holds for tribal members. For example, while visiting the parks, Travis Chavez (2017) of the Jicarilla Apache Nation observed how meaningful it was to return to “our original homeland” and the “domain of our original, ancestral Jicarilla.”

Indigenous knowledge and western science can, at times, prove to be complementary. Consider Lt. William Abert’s account of his journey through the project area and adjacent lands. Writing on September 11, 1845, Abert ([1846] 1999, 64), a member of the U.S. Corps of Topographical Engineers who led a reconnaissance of the Canadian River, made the following observation, “We noticed several trees in a state of petrification, which were covered with sparkling masses of clear rock crystal, and the ligneous fibre had in some places been supplied by the pink-colored agate, which, shining through, gave to the whole a brilliant rosy hue, resembling rose quartz. The sides of the hills are covered with quartz, in fragments, and an abundance of coarse agates.” Zelda Yazza (2016), a member of the Mescalero Apache Tribe, related her grandfather’s story of Apache people travelling to the quarries to collect rocks that were used by “medicine people,” i.e., people who possessed spiritual power. She noted that, “The medicine [that] was brought from the quarry was like a clear pink or red because red was very significant to them. Quartz, I guess you would say. They would travel miles and miles for it” (Yazza 2016).

Phase I

Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs) and other tribal cultural resources staff assisted with participant recruitment during Phase I. These representatives identified individuals within their tribes who possessed knowledge relevant to the project. In certain instances, as with the Jicarilla Apache Nation and Comanche Nation, the THPOs arranged for the PI to meet with tribal elders and make a brief presentation.
regarding the project. These meetings provided an opportunity for the researchers to identify individuals interested in participating in interviews.

As noted above, the researchers adopted western social science methodologies to access Indigenous knowledge and place the western science in context. From the outset of the project, it was clear that tribal oral histories would play a crucial role in establishing which tribes possessed ties to the project area, as well as in reconstructing patterns of resource use. The researchers conducted individual semi-structured interviews with research participants. These interviews employed an interview script or set of questions; however, the participants were given the flexibility to discuss topics that interested them and were not required to answer every question.

As part of the interview, the researchers asked participants to examine color photographs of petroglyphs from site 41PT193, an archaeological site located at ALFL (Figure 4). Participants were asked to identify any images or symbols that they identified as culturally meaningful to their tribe. This line of questioning was included in the Phase I ethnographic interviews, as not all tribal members would be able to participate in the site visits during Phase II.

Figure 4. Petroglyph of a turtle located at site 41PT193. This is one of two turtle petroglyphs located at the site. Photograph by Michael Paul Jordan.
The ethnographic interviews were recorded using digital audio recorders. Frequently, two recorders were employed in case one malfunctioned. Following the interviews, the audio files were transcribed. Researchers asked each participant to review their transcript for accuracy and to ensure that the transcript did not contain any information which they deemed too culturally sensitive to include in the technical report.

Phase II
During Phase II of the project the researchers conducted on site interviews at ALFL and LAMR with representatives of the eight participating federally recognized tribes. During the planning for Phase II, the PI worked closely with Arlene Wimer, former Chief of Resources for ALFL and LAMR, and John Lysaught, former Biological Sciences Technician, to identify archaeological sites and locations to be included in the site visits.

In addition, the researchers reviewed the archaeological literature to determine if any protohistoric or historic Native American sites had been identified within the park lands. The goal in this was to identify sites that might be associated with tribes whose presence within the project area postdates the Antelope Creek phase. No historic Native American sites have been documented within ALFL and LAMR. Only one protohistoric site (41PT353) has been identified (Raab 2003, 7–13). This site yielded a single sherd of micaceous pottery. Since micaceous pottery is typically associated with Apachean groups and several participants from the Jicarilla Nation had discussed the production of micaceous pottery during their Phase I interviews, this site was included in the list of sites to be visited by representatives of the Jicarilla Nation during Phase II.

Each of the eight participating federally recognized tribes took part in a Phase II site visit. Given the distinct histories of the Red and White clans of the Jicarilla Apache Nation, the PI requested and received permission to conduct separate site visits for the representatives of each clan. Tribal representatives, THPOs, and other cultural resource staff, selected the individuals who would participate in the Phase II site visits. Tribes typically sent from one to three representatives. Site visits were conducted on nine separate dates ranging from May to October 2017. Considering the pressing demands of the THPO and tribal representatives’ duties, multiday site visits were deemed unfeasible. Indeed, several individuals opted to drive home after completing their site visit rather than spend the night in Amarillo, Texas and return home the following day.

The Phase II site visits followed a set pattern. A preliminary, morning meeting was conducted at the ALFL/ LAMR offices in Fritch, Texas. Following introductions, Superintendent Robert J. Maguire would formally welcome the tribal delegations to the parks. Tribes were given an opportunity to conduct traditional tribal openings. The researchers would then invite the tribal representatives to discuss their tribe’s ties to the parks and what they hoped to achieve during their visit.

Following the initial meeting at the headquarters, tribal representatives travelled to ALFL and LAMR. Site visits included Alibates 28 (41PT11), the above-mentioned petroglyph site (41PT193), and the quarry pits (Figure 5). Discussions at 41PT11 tended to focus on possible cultural associations with the Antelope Creek phase. At site 41PT193, the researchers would point out the different petroglyphs. Tribal representatives were asked if they believed the petroglyphs were created by members of their tribe. In response, they frequently commented on specific symbols, explaining whether the motifs possessed cultural meaning for their tribe.
Figure 5. The late Ernest Toppah (1936–2020), Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma, during a visit to AL-FL-LAMR on October 11, 2017. The NPS sometimes utilized all-terrain vehicles to access remote sites during the Phase II site visits. Photograph by Michael Paul Jordan.
Summary of Findings Regarding Tribal Ties to ALFL and LAMR

The following sub-sections summarize each of the participating tribe’s ties to the project area. They provide a synthesis of the archaeological, ethnohistoric, and ethnographic data for each tribe as they relate to the Texas Panhandle, albeit in abbreviated form given the limitations of space associated with an article. These findings are discussed in greater detail in the technical report prepared for the NPS (Jordan, Richburg, and Armstrong 2021). Readers interested in a more detailed discussion of the tribes and their relationship to ALFL and LAMR are encouraged to consult the technical report.

Wichita and Affiliated Tribes

The Wichita and Affiliated Tribes is the only tribe to claim cultural affiliation with the Antelope Creek phase. The Wichita view themselves as the descendants of the Antelope Creek people. Gary McAdams, a Wichita elder, noted that the Antelope Creek phase is part of a larger Plains Village culture that practiced a mixed economy that combined horticulture and bison hunting. Discussing the Plains Villagers, including the Antelope Creek people, Mr. McAdams (2017a) explained “And, it’s also pretty certain that modern Wichita people, those were their ancestors.” He further emphasized that the Wichita are descended from the Antelope Creek people who inhabited the Texas Panhandle, including archaeological sites in the project area, noting “Certainly, we believe that . . . We think that all those people are our ancestors (2017a).”

Archaeological reconstructions of the culture history of the Southern Plains furnish evidence of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes association with the Antelope Creek phase. For example, archaeologist Timothy Baugh (2009, 17) argues that a portion of the Antelope Creek phase people were ancestral to the Wichita, referring to “towns associated with the Antelope Creek phase” as “settlements of the Wichita.” In addition, the Turkey Creek phase (1250–1450 CE) and the Antelope Creek phase share a common origin, both having developed out of the earlier Custer phase (800–1250 CE) (Wyckoff 1982, 39; Drass 1999, 121–22, 137). A connection between the Turkey Creek phase and the historic Wichita can be traced through the Wheeler phase (1400–1725 CE), which is recognized as protohistoric Kirikiri’s (Drass and Baugh 1997, 189, 198, 200; Baugh 2009, 32). If, as Don Wyckoff (1982, 39) and other archaeologists have argued, both the Turkey Creek phase and Antelope Creek phase developed out of the Custer phase, this would indicate that the people of the Antelope Creek phase and a subset of the historic Wichita share a common origin.

Between 1300 and 1500 CE the climate in the Texas Panhandle grew dryer and droughts during this period may have eventually led the Antelope Creek phase people to migrate out of the area (Lintz 1984, 340, 1986). Archaeologists argue that at a portion of the Antelope Creek population was absorbed by the inhabitants of the Wheeler phase (1450–1750 CE) villages located to the east. For example, Richard Drass and Baugh (1997, 201) recognize that, “the Wheeler phase appears to derive from the previous Late Prehistoric groups, probably the Washita River and Turkey Creek phase people or a coalescence of these groups and Antelope Creek phase groups in western Oklahoma.” Similarly, Lintz (1984, 340) acknowledges that “Another possibility suggests that Antelope Creek peoples coalesced with other western Oklahoma Plains Village groups and moved toward the east.” According to these reconstructions, after abandoning their villages in the Texas Panhandle, the Antelope Creek people relocated to the east, taking up residence in Turkey Creek and Washita River phase villages in western Oklahoma. This coalescence of peoples then developed into the Wheeler phase. A merger of former Antelope Creek phase and Turkey Creek
and Washita River phase peoples seems highly plausible given that the protohistoric period on the Southern Plains is marked by the emergence of new social units that developed through processes of fission and fusion (Baugh 2009, 15).

During their site visit on May 11, 2017, representatives of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes provided additional evidence in support of a connection between the Wichita and Antelope Creek phase. While viewing Alibates Ruins 28, an Antelope Creek phase village site, Mr. McAdams (2017b) noted that the village’s location reflected Wichita settlement strategies, noting that historic Wichita villages are similarly situated on terraces near water sources. During their visit to petroglyph site (41PT193), both President Terri Parton (2017), Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, and Mr. McAdams (2017b) noted that the cupules at the site resemble ones found at a Wichita site near Arkansas City, Kansas. In addition, they noted that the anthropomorphic figure at site 41PT193 is similar to figures found at Wichita sites in Kansas, including the one near Arkansas City.

It is important to note that the Wichita maintained ties to the project area during the protohistoric period. As noted above, the Wheeler phase is recognized as protohistoric Wichita (Drass and Baugh 1997, 189, 198, 200; Baugh 2009, 32). Excavations conducted at Wheeler phase sites in western Oklahoma have yielded Alibates flint. Baugh (1986, 173) notes that at the westernmost Wheeler phase sites, “Alibates chert comprises 39% or more of the chipped stone artifacts and debris.” Indeed, at the Edwards I (34BK2) site, located in western Oklahoma, Alibates flint accounts for 62.5% of the lithic material (Baugh 1982, 111). The Alibates flint recovered from these sites appears to have been obtained either through quarrying activities or trade (Baugh 1986, 173). It is possible that the Wheeler phase people travelled to the flint quarries in the project area to procure the material. This seems likely since the emergence of the Wheeler phase coincided with the abandonment of Antelope Creek phase sites, meaning that the Antelope Creek people no longer controlled access to the quarries. If, as suggested above, Antelope Creek phase migrants comprised part of the Wheeler phase population, these individuals would have possessed valuable knowledge of the quarries.

In addition, the Wheeler phase people utilized the Canadian River as a trade route, travelling along the river to reach Puebloan groups in eastern New Mexico (Baugh 1982, 202, 214). These trade relationships are preserved in Wichita oral history. Jimmy Reeder (2017), a member of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, reported that Wichita traders would have passed through the park lands on trading expeditions.

Following the end of the Wheeler Phase in 1750 CE, the Wichita appear to have shifted their activities further east. Mr. McAdams (2017a) noted that during the nineteenth century the Antelope Hills, located in western Oklahoma, marked the western extent of Wichita territory. Thus, the project area is located outside the territory claimed by the nineteenth century Wichita. The Wichita were present and active in the project area for approximately 500 years, from the beginning of the Antelope Creek phase in 1250 CE until the end of the Wheeler phase in 1750 CE.

Pawnee Nation

While representatives of the Pawnee Nation stopped short of stating unequivocally that the tribe is culturally associated with the Antelope Creek phase, they recognized the possibility of such a connection and noted the need for further investigation (Reed 2017b; Rice 2017). Several lines of evidence point to ties between the Pawnee Nation and the Antelope Creek phase people.
Pawnee oral history includes narratives that place the tribe’s origin in the southwest. In addition, one narrative indicates that during their time in the southwest the Pawnee resided in in houses made of stone. Both Matt Reed (2017a, 2017b), Pawnee Nation THPO, and Meghan Rice (2017) recognize a possible connection between the “houses made of stone” mentioned in Pawnee oral history and the stone slab foundations and masonry walls of Antelope Creek phase architecture.

In addition, Pawnee representatives pointed out similarities between historic Pawnee and Antelope Creek phase material culture. For example, Mr. Reed (2017b) and Ms. Rice (2017) noted parallels between Pawnee earth lodges and certain Antelope Creek phase structures. Mr. Reed (2017b) also commented on similarities between Antelope Creek phase pottery displayed at the Panhandle Plains Museum in Canyon, Texas, and ceramics recovered from Pawnee sites in Nebraska and Kansas.

Archaeologists have also posited a connection between the Pawnee and the Antelope Creek phase people who abandoned the Texas and Oklahoma panhandles around 1450 CE. One plausible scenario has the Antelope Creek people making their way northeast and being incorporated by other Caddoan-speaking Plains Villagers, like the Pawnee or Wichita (Hughes 1968; Lintz 2010). It should be noted that this scenario is compatible with David Wishart’s (1979, 382) theory regarding Pawnee origins, which holds that Caddoan speaking immigrants from the Southern Plains augmented an indigenous Pawnee population, which had developed in situ along the Platte, Loup, and Republican rivers.

Mescalero Apache Tribe

Mescalero and Lipan oral history document the tribes’ historic ties to the Texas Panhandle. Arden Comanche (2017) referred to the project area as part of the Apache “homeland.” Similarly, James Kunestsis (2016) described it as part of the tribes’ traditional territory. It is remembered as a region where the tribes hunted game and engaged in trade with other tribes. In addition, both Lipan and Mescalero historical narratives reference the Canadian River, which flows through the project area (Houghten 2017; Kaydahzinne 2016; Kunestsis 2016). The Mescalero Apache Tribe is the only tribe whose oral history mentions the flint quarries. Ms. Yazza (2016), who is of Lipan and Mescalero descent, related a historic Lipan account regarding the cultural significance of the site, as well as Lipan efforts to maintain control of the region.

Spanish historical documents furnish further evidence of the Apache presence in the Texas Panhandle. Spanish expeditions during the sixteenth century encountered nomadic, bison hunters living in the Texas Panhandle. These people, who resided between the Canadian and Red rivers, are variously referred to in Spanish records as the Querechos or Vaqueros. They are widely recognized as having been Apache speakers (Gunnerson and Gunnerson 1988, 2–3; Habicht-Mauche 1992, 254; Tiller 1983, 447). Some scholars have identified the Querechos or Vaqueros as the ancestors of the Lipan Apache (Britten 2009, 51–52; Newcomb 1988, 106; Haskell 1987, 77). Regardless of their origins, the Lipan inhabited the Texas Panhandle during the early eighteenth century. However, by the mid-eighteenth century, the Lipan had shifted the focus of their activities further south (Minor 2009, 3).

Judith Habicht-Mauche (1992, 254) argues that the Querechos or Vaqueros were the ancestors of the Faraone Apache, who were eventually incorporated into the Mescalero Apache tribe (Gunnerson and Gunnerson 1988, 3, 5; Habicht-Mauche 1992, 254; Opler 1983, 420). Spanish documents indicate that during the late seventeenth
and early eighteenth century the Faraone lived along the Canadian River in the central Texas Panhandle, placing them within the immediate vicinity of the project area (Kenner 1969, 21, 23; Habicht-Mauche 1992, 254). By the early nineteenth century, the Mescalero had shifted their focus south of the Texas Panhandle (Mooney 1979, 163, 165).

Jicarilla Apache Nation

The Jicarilla Apache Nation is clearly associated with ALFL-LAMR. The parklands are located within the Jicarilla’s historic territory. During his visit to the parks, Mr. Chavez (2017), a Jicarilla elder, described the region as “our original homeland” and the “domain of our original, ancestral Jicarilla.” Archaeological and historical evidence support his statements.

In 1541, the Coronado expedition encountered nomadic bison hunters in the project area. Spanish records refer to these people as Querechos and the Querechos are widely recognized as Apaches (Habicht-Mauche 1992, 254). Veronica Tiller (1983, 447) argues that the Querechos are the ancestors of the Jicarilla Red Clan or Llanero. The Querechos are the people whom archaeologists have identified as the Tierra Blanca Complex. Tierra Blanca Complex sites have been discovered between the Red and Canadian rivers and date to between 1400 and 1650 CE (Habicht-Mauche 1987, 176). Thus, the archaeological evidence supports Jicarilla oral history, which holds that the tribe was in the project area before 1500 CE.

Ample evidence points to a continued Jicarilla presence in the project area during the eighteenth century. Jicarilla oral history records that the tribe made frequent forays into the Texas Panhandle to conduct bison hunts (Chavez 2016, 2017). Spanish documents also note Jicarilla ties to the project area. In 1723, Governor Bustamante reported that Comanche and Ute raids on Jicarilla settlements in New Mexico had prompted part of the tribe to move east and seek safety in the Texas Panhandle, which he referred to as “the extensive Plains of Los Cibolos” (Kenner 1969, 32–33). In 1752, Governor Velez noted that the Jicarilla routinely ventured out on the Plains to hunt, reporting that they sometimes ventured up to 250 miles east of Pecos Pueblo (Thomas 1974, 126).

In addition, archaeological excavations have recovered Alibates flint at Jicarilla settlements in northeastern New Mexico dating to the first half of the eighteenth century (Gunnerson 1969, 27, 34–35). The presence of Alibates flint at these sites suggests that the Jicarilla were procuring the material from the project area, possibly during their hunting forays. Admittedly, the Jicarilla could have obtained the lithic material in trade, but this seems unlikely. By the eighteenth century, the Jicarilla had established themselves as traders, providing resources from the Plains, especially bison products, to their Pueblo neighbors (Gunnerson and Gunnerson 1988, 3; Tiller 1983, 440). Given this pattern, it seems more likely that the Jicarilla were procuring Alibates flint straight from the source rather than through intermediaries.

Jicarilla oral history records that the tribe continued to hunt in the project area during the nineteenth century. In addition, the Jicarilla are associated with two historical events, both of which occurred approximately thirty-seven miles northeast of the ALFL visitors center (Map 4). In the late 1830s, the Jicarilla reportedly raided a trading post established by William Bent (Grinnell 1971, 308–309). The trading post, known as Adobe Walls, was located on the north bank of the Canadian River in present Hutchinson County. In 1864, Jicarilla warriors accompanied a military expedition
into the Texas Panhandle commanded by Col. Christopher Carson. The Jicarilla were likely recruited because of their familiarity with the region. On November 25, 1864, the Jicarilla warriors participated in an attack on a Kiowa village located near the ruins of the Adobe Walls trading post (Goddard 1911, 250; Mooney 1979, 315).

Jicarilla ties to the project area extend over a period of more than 400 years. The earliest evidence of their occupation comes from archaeological sites associated with the Tierra Blanca Complex, some of which date back to 1400 CE. Both Jicarilla oral history and Spanish documents describe Jicarilla expeditions into the area in the eighteenth century to conduct bison hunts (Chavez 2016, 2017; Thomas 1974, 126). In addition, Alibates flint recovered from early eighteenth-century Jicarilla archaeological sites located in northeastern New Mexico underscores Jicarilla ties to the project area (Gunnerson 1969, 27, 34–35). The Jicarilla continued to make forays into the project area in the nineteenth century to conduct hunts and wage war both on Euro-Americans and intertribal enemies.

Comanche Nation

The Comanche began their migration onto the Southern Plains in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century (Comanche Nation 2020; Wallace and Hoebel 1986, 6). The first mention of the tribe in Spanish documents appears in 1706 (Kavanaugh 2001, 886). The Comanche were likely active within the Texas Panhandle by the early decades of the 1700s. The project area would remain part of the Comancheria (the Comanche homeland) through the 1870s (Minthorn 2017; Cruse 2008, 15).

The report of Lt. Abert documents Comanche ties to the project area. Abert’s expedition met with members of the Kotsoteka or Buffalo Eaters Comanche division on two occasions. The first encounter took place west of the project area, while the second likely occurred within the boundaries of LAMR. Kotsoteka representatives visited Abert’s camp on September 9, 1845. This camp was located on the north side of the Canadian River, approximately thirty-six miles west of the LAMR boundary. Following the council, the Kotsoteka left for their village, which may have been located downstream, as this was the direction in which the party rode. Two days later, Abert’s expedition encountered another Kotsoteka party. While it is impossible to pinpoint the exact location of this council, based on Abert’s description of the terrain, it appears to have occurred near the base of a bluff that juts into the Canadian River floodplain on the north side of the river between the mouths of Bonita and Rosita creeks (Aber [1846] 1999, 60–61, 60 n.183, 63, 64 n.190). Thus, the second Kotsoteka party was likely encountered within the modern boundaries of LAMR. Abert encountered the Comanche less than a day’s ride from the quarries and the mouth of Alibates Creek.

Additional evidence concerning Comanche ties to the Canadian River come from the 1853 Whipple Expedition. In September 1853, shortly after entering the Texas Panhandle, the expedition encountered two Comanche individuals while travelling on the Canadian River. The two men reported that a sizeable Comanche village was located approximately two miles away (Sherburne 1988 [1853], 80–81, Hoig 1998, 260). Whipple subsequently encountered a party of comancheros and Pueblo Indians from New Mexico who were searching for Comanche with whom to trade. That the traders expected to find the Comanche camped along the Canadian River suggests that the area served as a well-established rendezvous point. The expedition later discovered a large, abandoned camp site, which the Pueblo Indian traders identified as the likely remains of a Comanche village (Sherburne 1988 [1853], 90–91, 266). This aban-
doned village was located near Shady Creek, north of Amarillo, and in the vicinity of the project area.

The Comanche were also active in the broader region. Four of the Comanche Nation tribal members interviewed for the project identified Adobe Walls as a significant location. During the latter half of the nineteenth century the Comanche participated in two battles at the site (Lynn 2014; Cruse 2008, 15). On November 25, 1864, forces under Col. Christopher Carson attacked a Kiowa village situated on the north bank of the Canadian River in Hutchinson County. The Kiowa were reinforced by warriors from a Comanche village located on the north bank of the Canadian River, a few miles east of the ruins of the Adobe Walls trading post (Lynn 2014, 3, 7, 9, 68–69, 74–75). That the Comanche were camped at this location in late November suggests that the area was utilized as a winter campsite.

On June 27, 1874, the Comanche participated in the Second Battle of Adobe Walls, attacking white buffalo hunters who had established a base of operations near the ruins of the trading post (Cruse 2008, 15). This engagement holds a prominent place in the historical consciousness of the Comanche people and is commemorated in a Comanche song that is frequently sung at tribal gatherings (Parker 2016; Isaac 2016; Craig 2016; Minthorn 2017).

The Comanche were also familiar with Palo Duro Canyon, the upper reaches of which are located approximately 45 miles south of the ALFL visitor center. As Martina Minthorn (2017), Comanche Nation THPO, noted “We do have strong ties to Palo Duro.” Tribal members explained that their ancestors viewed Palo Duro Canyon as a safe haven, a place where they could avoid military patrols (Parker 2016). During the Red River War in 1874, at least one Comanche band sought shelter within the canyon, camping near the confluence of Cita Creek and the Prairie Dog Town Fork of the Red River (Cruse 2008, 105–106). Indeed, William Pekah (2016), a Comanche elder, described Palo Duro Canyon as “a sacred place.”

As Ms. Minthorn pointed out, the project area is situated between two important Comanche historic sites. She explained that “Adobe Walls is up north [and] Palo Duro [Canyon] is south, so [we were] definitely [in] this area” (Minthorn 2017). Comanche oral history combined with Euro-American documentary sources clearly establish the Comanche Nation’s ties to the project area.

Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma

The Kiowa entered the Southern Plains after the Comanche, likely sometime in the eighteenth century. Intertribal warfare ensued. However, the two tribes established a peace treaty in either 1790 or 1806 (DuPoint 2017; Levy 2001, 908; Mooney 1979, 163; Poolaw 2016; Wallace and Hoebel 1986, 276). The Kiowa would remain active in the project area until the 1870s.

Lt. Abert’s report of his 1845 reconnaissance of the Canadian River documents Kiowa ties to the project area, as well as the tribe’s use of Alibates flint. On the morning of September 12, 1845, a party of Kiowa visited Abert’s camp. This campsite was located on the north bank of the Canadian River downstream from the bend where the river turns north. The Kiowa escorted Abert’s expedition to their village and the party camped approximately half a mile east of the village (Abert [1846] 1999, 65–66). Based on an analysis of the map that accompanied Abert’s report, which depicts the location of the expedition’s campsite on the night of September 12, the Kiowa village
was located on South Plum Creek in southern Moore County, Texas, less than ten miles outside the LAMR boundary.

While visiting the Kiowa village, Abert showed his hosts samples of the Alibates flint that he had collected the preceding day. The Kiowa indicated that they were familiar with the material and utilized it to make flint and steel fires. Abert noted that the Kiowa referred to a nearby stream as “Flint River” (Abert [1846] 1999, 68). Abert’s report is the only historical document that records a tribe’s use of Alibates flint.

Ample evidence also exists to demonstrate that the Kiowa were familiar with broader region and regarded the Texas Panhandle as part of their territory. The Kiowa possess place names for both the Canadian River and the Red Bluffs (Poolaw 2016; Mooney 1979, 275). The tribe frequently established camps at the latter location, which is located on the north side of the Canadian River in Hutchison County, Texas. The Kiowa conducted a Sun Dance at this location in 1840 (Mooney 1979, 275). The 1853 Whipple Expedition noted a Kiowa village located on the south side of the Canadian River, not far from the Red Bluffs (Foreman 1941, 81). In 1864, the Kiowa established a winter camp near the Red Bluffs (Lynn 2014, 65, 67, 69; Mooney 1979, 315). Thus, for over two decades, the Kiowa camped at the Red Bluffs, utilizing the location in both the summer and winter. These village locations are approximately thirty-two to thirty-eight miles northeast of the ALFL visitor center. The Kiowa also participated in the Second Battle of Adobe Walls (Figure 6), fighting alongside the Comanche and Southern Cheyenne (Cruse 2008, 15).

Figure 6. Phil R. Dupoint, Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma Historian, pauses at a monument commemorating Native American warriors who lost their lives during the Second Battle of Adobe Walls on June 27, 1874. The site is located approximately thirty-six miles northeast of the ALFL visitors center. Representatives of both the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma and the Comanche Nation chose to visit the site after completing their Phase II site visits. Photograph by Michael Paul Jordan.
In addition, the Kiowa were also active south of the project area. The tribe utilized Palo Duro Canyon as a winter campsite and Kiowa parties evaded enemies by seeking shelter in the canyon (Dupoint 2017; Poolaw 2016; Silverhorn 2017; Toppah 2017). Given that the Kiowa utilized sites both south and northeast of the project, they likely travelled between these locations, possibly passing through the project area in the process.

During the approximately one hundred years that the Kiowa were active in the Texas Panhandle, the tribe made extensive use of the project area. Both Kiowa oral history and Euro-American historical documents record the presence of Kiowa villages in the vicinity of the project area. At least one of these villages was located less than ten miles outside the parklands. In addition, the Kiowa were familiar with Alibates flint and were utilizing the resource as late as the mid-nineteenth century.

Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
Both Plains Apache oral history and Euro-American historical documents indicate that the tribe was familiar with the broader region surrounding the project area. Historically, the Plains Apache camped along the Canadian River (Cisco 2016b) and they are documented as having camped at the Red Bluffs (Mooney 1979, 314–316). The Plains Apache were also familiar with Palo Duro Canyon, which they utilized as a refuge during the 1800s (Cisco 2016a, 2016b; Lightfoot 2016; Strong 2016; N. Tselee 2016). Given that the Plains Apache were active both northeast and south of the parks during the nineteenth century, it is likely that they also visited the project area.

In 1820, the Stephen Long Expedition encountered the Plains Apache on the Canadian River. Sources indicate that this encounter occurred north of Amarillo, Texas, suggesting that it took place either within the boundaries of LAMR or in the vicinity of the park. The Plains Apache were travelling to the headwaters of the Canadian River, where they planned to rendezvous with New Mexican traders (Hoig 1998, 106; James [1823] 1966, 105). Thus, the Canadian River may have served as a trade route along which the Plains Apache travelled.

Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes
While acknowledging the Comanche Nation and Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma’s ties to the project area, members of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes reported that their ancestors had also been active in the region (Figure 7). The Cheyenne and Arapaho were the last of the Southern Plains tribes to enter the Texas Panhandle, arriving in the region in the nineteenth century (Levi 2016, 2017; Littlehawk-Sills 2016; Orange 2016). During the first decades of the nineteenth century, Cheyenne and Arapaho warriors penetrated the Texas Panhandle to raid their intertribal enemies, the Kiowa, Comanche, and Plains Apache (Levi 2016; Grinnell 1971, 48; Mooney 1979, 272).

In 1840, the Cheyenne and Arapaho established a peace treaty with their former enemies, after which they enjoyed unfettered access to the Texas Panhandle. From this point on, they travelled freely through the region to trade in New Mexico and to raid intertribal enemies, including the Jicarilla, Mescalero, and Navajo. The Cheyenne and Arapaho also hunted bison and pronghorn in the Texas Panhandle (Grinnell 1971, 69; Levi 2017; Orange 2016). According to Max Bear (2019), Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes THPO, during this period, the Southern Cheyenne and Southern Arapaho visited and utilized Alibates flint quarries.
Southern Cheyenne and Southern Arapaho activity in the Texas Panhandle intensified during the Red River War. On June 27, 1874, members of both the Southern Cheyenne and the Southern Arapaho participated in the Second Battle of Adobe Walls, which took place in Hutchinson County, approximately thirty-six miles northeast of the ALFL visitors center. Southern Cheyenne bands were also encamped in Palo Duro Canyon when Col. Ranald McKenzie’s force attacked the allied tribes’ villages on September 28, 1874 (Bear 2017; Grinnell 1971, 324; Levi 2016; Littlehawk-Sills 2016; Lynn 2014, xxvi; Orange 2016; A. Sutton 2016; Sweezy 2016).

However, the strongest evidence tying the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes to ALFL and LAMR is the presence of a Southern Cheyenne camp near the head of Bonita Creek in Potter County, approximately ten miles from the LAMR boundary. The camp was likely established by individuals who had fled Palo Duro Canyon following McKenzie’s attack. On November 29, 1874, Captain C.A. Hartwell and a detachment of the Eighth Cavalry attacked the camp on Bonita Creek, which contained forty to fifty Southern Cheyenne people (Cruse 2008, 146). It is possible that when the camp was attacked, its inhabitants fled down Bonita Creek and through the project area.

While the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribe’s arrival in the Texas Panhandle postdates that of the other tribes considered in this report, the tribe nonetheless possesses ties to ALFL and LAMR. For approximately seventy-five years, the Southern Cheyenne and Southern Arapaho traversed the region, hunting game and traveling to conduct trade or engage in warfare. After 1840, the tribe enjoyed access to the quarries and procured Alibates flint. In 1874, Southern Arapaho and Southern Cheyenne activity in the Texas Panhandle intensified, beginning with the Second Battle of Adobe Walls.
and culminating in the Battle of Palo Duro Canyon. By mid-1875, all the bands had surrendered, marking the end of the tribes’ historic use of the region.

Native American Concerns

Members of the six federally recognized tribes whose ties to the project area postdate the Antelope Creek phase repeatedly expressed their desire to have the NPS acknowledge their historic presence within the region. Indeed, this was a recurring theme in the ethnographic interviews. Individuals lamented that the public was unaware of their tribes’ historic ties to the area and expressed their hope that ALFL and LAMR might highlight these connections in future interpretive materials. For example, George Levi (2016), a member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, commented that, “And, when I look at the Texas Panhandle, you don’t see anything about Cheyennes or hear very much about Indians there, but for a while we did range through there.” In the same vein, Allen Sutton (2016), another member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, indicated that he would like to see the Southern Arapaho tribe’s ties to the region acknowledged in ALFL and LAMR’s interpretive materials.

As an example, the “History & Culture” page of the ALFL website focuses on the Antelope Creek phase. It notes that “Between 1150 and 1450, people identified as Plains Village Indians, possible ancestors of the Caddo, Pawnee and Wichita lived here” (NPS 2020b). While the text notes that the use of Alibates Flint “dates from 13,000 years ago to about 1870,” none of the tribes who lived in the project area after 1450 are identified by name. They are mentioned in passing in a section discussing the abandonment of the Antelope Creek phase sites, which observes that environmental conditions “coupled with encroachment from neighboring tribes to the West likely drove these Indians out of the region by the end of the 15th century.” The project report recommended that an additional section be added to the page, identifying, and discussing those tribes that inhabited the region from the fifteenth century through the late nineteenth century.

In addition to expressing a desire to see their ties to the project area recognized, members of several tribes expressed more specific concerns. For example, members of the Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, emphasized their unique culture, noting that the public often confuses the tribe with other Apache groups. Furthermore, members of the tribe cautioned against the use of the label “Kiowa Apache,” which they feel obscures the tribe’s unique culture and history (N. Tselee 2016; Schweinfurth 2002, xvii).

Finally, representatives of several tribes suggested that interpretive materials should challenge the public’s perception that Native Americans are relics of the historic past. For example, Billie Sutton (2016), a member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes explained, “It needs to be known that we’re still around. I think they think of us as . . . we’re in the past. Native Americans are something in the past. We’re not, we’re still here.”

Recommendations for Interpretation

In addition to identifying concerns expressed by the participating tribes, the report offered recommendations regarding how the NPS might address these concerns. For example, ALFL hosts Flint Fest, an annual educational event held during Archaeology Awareness Month. The NPS has already taken the initiative to bolster Native American involvement in this event. Since 2014, the parks have invited Native American presenters
to participate in Flint Fest and members of both the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes and the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma have been involved in the event. The report recommended collaborating with additional tribes to develop programming for this annual event and noted that the park might invite Native American flint knappers to conduct demonstrations. Individuals from both the Jicarilla Apache Nation and Comanche Nation noted that there are members of their communities who flint knap and make bows (Pekah 2016; Vigil 2016). Mr. Pekah, a member of the Comanche Nation, crafts bows and has presented demonstrations of traditional archery skills for the public (Pekah 2016).

The tribes boast many talented artists. For example, Mr. Levi, a member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes who participated in the current research project, is a visual artist who creates works inspired by nineteenth century ledger drawings. He organized and participated in the “One November Morning” exhibition, an art exhibit that commemorated the 150th anniversary of the Sand Creek Massacre. ALFL and LAMR might consider implementing an artist-in-residence program, like those hosted at other NPS sites, including Bandelier National Monument and Capulin Volcano National Monument (NPS 2017). An artist-in-residence program geared toward members of tribes associated with ALFL and LAMR could simultaneously raise awareness of Native American ties to the parks and highlight the continued vitality of these communities.

In addition, information on these tribes could be incorporated into interpretive materials that focus on natural resources. Members of several tribes expressed interest in sharing their ancestors’ ethnobotanical knowledge. Information on the ways in which the tribes utilized botanical resources could be incorporated into brochures and information sheets that focus on native plants. In addition, including Indigenous names for plants would also serve to acknowledge the tribes’ ties to the parks. Jennifer Byers (2016), a member of the Mescalero Apache Tribe, suggested, “Making pamphlets for your visitors center that show the various tribes and how they used the site. And, for the Mescalero you could identify those plants and the uses of those plants and maybe give a little bit of information about the Mescalero and the Lipan tribes that have utilized the area.” The report noted that NPS staff at Washita Battlefield National Historic Site carried out a similar project, working closely with the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes Language Program to establish a garden containing plants utilized by the tribes and to develop related interpretive materials (NPS 2015).

The visitors center at ALFL includes a small giftshop and some of the participants’ comments concerned the merchandise offered for sale there. For example, one consultant noted the absence of Native American made merchandise and encouraged the NPS to carry works by Native American artists and craftspeople, particularly items made by members of tribes with ties to ALFL and LAMR. By featuring works by contemporary artists, the giftshop could play an active role in combating stereotypes that relegate Native Americans to the past.

The report also highlighted possible concerns related to the commercialization of rock art imagery. Tribal representatives who visited petroglyph site 41PT193 repeatedly commented on the site’s significance. Even individuals who did not believe that their tribe was responsible for creating the petroglyphs made a point of noting that the imagery was likely associated with ritual activities and that, therefore, they consider the site to be sacred. While none of the participants raised specific concerns regarding the sale of postcards and other merchandise featuring imagery from the site, given the characterization of 41PT193 as a “sacred site,” the NPS may wish to enter into consultation with the tribes regarding the use of the imagery.
Documentation of Ethnobotanical Knowledge

Shortly after the start of the project, the NPS revised its policies governing the harvesting of plants in parks. On July 12, 2016, the NPS promulgated a new rule, Gathering of Certain Plants or Plant Parts by Federally Recognized Indian Tribes for Traditional Purposes (36 CFR 2.6), which set forth a process by which enrolled members of federally recognized tribes could obtain permits to collect plants in parks. Consequently, the documentation of Indigenous ethnobotanical knowledge formed an important component of the traditional use study.

From the outset, it was clear that the project had implications for the implementation of the new rule at ALFL and LAMR. First, the right to gather plants in a park is limited to Indian Tribes who are traditionally associated with those parklands. Information collected during the ethnographic overview could be utilized by tribes to demonstrate their ties to the lands now administered by the NPS. Furthermore, the rule stipulates that “The plant gathering must meet a traditional purpose that is a customary activity and practice rooted in the history of the tribe and is important for the continuation of the tribe’s distinct culture” (Federal Register 2016). Therefore, the documentation of both historic and contemporary patterns of plant use became a focus of the literature review and ethnographic interviews.

To elicit ethnobotanical information, the PI designed a free listing exercise. Consultants were asked to list plants utilized by members of their tribes. The utility of free listing tasks as an initial exploratory tool for defining cultural domains is well established in the literature on anthropological methods (Johnson and Weller 2002; Weller 1998; Weller and Romney 1988). In this instance, the researchers sought to define the domain of culturally salient plant species.

The results of the free listing exercises were explored in greater detail in the semi-structured interviews. Referencing the list of plants generated during the free listing exercise, participants were asked to describe how each plant was utilized, to identify the portion of the plant that was employed, and to discuss how the resource was processed. Participants were also asked to provide the plant’s indigenous name. Often it was necessary to pose follow up questions to assist in the identification of the plant species. These questions typically focused on the appearance or morphology of the plant. For example, some English common names used by tribal members are unique to their culture. As a case in point we note that several members of the Jicarilla Apache Nation identified a plant that they called “Bone Medicine” (Julian 2016; Tafoya 2017; J. Velarde 2016; Vicenti 2016). This common name is not employed by non-Native individuals. Utilizing the consultants’ description of the plant, researchers were able to identify it as Bush Morning Glory (*Ipomoea leptophylla* Torr).

Additional efforts to document plant use took place during the Phase II site visits. Prior to leaving the park headquarters, the PI would remind the tribal representatives that one of the goals of the visit was to collect information on the tribe’s historic and contemporary use of plants. Tribal representatives were encouraged to point out any resources that they identified (Figure 8). Similar reminders were provided throughout the day as the party traversed the landscape. In addition, during each site visit, time was set aside to pose questions regarding the utilization of both plants and animals.
Figure 8. Darrin Cisco, Apache Tribe of Oklahoma Cultural Resources Specialist, examines a soapweed yucca (Yucca glauca Nutt.) plant during a visit to ALFL-LAMR on May 9, 2017. One of the goals of the Phase II site visits was the documentation of ethnobotanical knowledge. Photograph by Michael Paul Jordan.
The project documented the use of 161 plant species that occur at ALFL and LAMR. Many of the plants identified in the interviews are edible or possess medicinal qualities; others play a role in the religious or spiritual lives of tribal members. A few species identified by community members serve more utilitarian purposes and are used in the construction of arbors or employed as firewood. Many of the plants identified during the project possess multiple uses.

Tribal interest in the recently promulgated regulations stems, at least in part, from concerns regarding the use of herbicides and pesticides and their impact on the harvesting of traditional plant species. Darrin Cisco, Cultural Resources Specialist for the Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, discussed the challenges facing members of the Apache Tribe of Oklahoma, explaining, “Well, also what we look at, some of us that still use plants, is that whenever it does grow around here, but it grows around too many [agricultural] fields. [Because of the] spray and stuff we don’t want to use it. Because it’s not . . . We don’t know . . . What if it’s [passing] through the ground or the air? So, if we can find it in a more open area, to us it works better” (Cisco 2016b). For Mr. Cisco and others, parklands administered by the NPS appear to offer a safer environment in which to harvest plants.

It remains to be seen if any of the participating tribes will pursue the opportunity to harvest culturally meaningful plants within ALFL and LAMR. However, should they choose to do so, they will be able to cite the information contained in the technical report in support of their requests.

Conclusion

The Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument and Lake Meredith National Recreation Area Ethnographic Overview and Traditional Use Study succeeded in identifying eight federally acknowledged tribes with ties to ALFL and LAMR. One of these tribes, the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, is culturally associated with the Antelope Creek phase people who occupied the project area between 1150 and 1450 CE. While the Pawnee Nation stopped short of asserting an association with the Antelope Creek phase, tribal representatives, citing oral history that places the tribe’s origins in the southwest and similarities between Antelope Creek and Pawnee material culture, indicated that the topic merits further investigation.

One of the study’s main contributions was the documentation of a sustained Native American presence in the Texas Panhandle during the proto-historic and historic periods. While the NPS’s interpretation at ALFL focuses almost exclusively on the Antelope Creek phase, Native American tribes inhabited the region into the mid-1870s. By highlighting Jicarilla, Mescalero, Lipan, Comanche, Kiowa, Plains Apache, and Cheyenne and Arapaho ties to the project area, the research has provided a starting point for reinterpreting the area’s Indigenous history. The study provides a foundation for the development of NPS exhibits and interpretive materials that acknowledge these tribes’ connections to the land.

The project also succeeded in cataloging ethnographic resources present at ALFL and LAMR. While the availability of Alibates flint drew people to the project area, the results of the traditional use study reveal that the tribes also made extensive use of the region’s plants and animals. The draft CRIS-ER database prepared by the researchers contained a total of 1,289 entries. The vast majority of which refer to faunal and
botanical resources. The information on plant use could prove particularly important should any of the participating tribes decide to avail themselves of the new regulations contained in 36 CFR 2.6 and pursue their right to harvest plants at ALFL or LAMR.

Finally, through site visits, the project has also served to strengthen ties between tribal representatives and the NPS. It is evident that the participating tribes wish to see their historical ties to the region acknowledged in the parks’ interpretive materials. Indeed, tribal representatives and community members are eager to work with NPS personnel to tell a more complete and more inclusive story of the Native American presence in the Texas Panhandle. Thus, a foundation for future collaborations has been lain, one that promises to prove mutually beneficial for all stakeholders.

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First and foremost, the authors would like to thank the members of the eight federally acknowledged tribes who generously shared their knowledge of tribal history and culture with the researchers. In addition, the following tribal representatives made contributions critical to the success of the project: Darrin Cisco, Cultural Resources Specialist Apache Tribe of Oklahoma; Max Bear, THPO Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes; Martina Minthorn, THPO Comanche Nation; Jeffrey Blythe, THPO Jicarilla Apache Nation; Phil R. Dupoint, Historian Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma, Holly Houghton, THPO Mescalero Apache Tribe; Joseph Reed, THPO Pawnee Nation; and Gary McAdams, Cultural Program Planner Wichita and Affiliated Tribes. The project would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of colleagues at the NPS. Kim Greenwood, Regional Cultural Anthropologist, served as the agency technical representative for the project and provided invaluable guidance throughout the study. Members of the ALFL-LAMR staff played an active role in facilitating the Phase II site visits. Robert J. Maguire, former Superintendent, proved a gracious host during the tribes’ visits. Arlene Wimer, former Chief of Resources, and John Lysaught, former Biological Sciences Technician, handled logistics for the tribal visits and shared their intimate knowledge of the parklands. Eric R. Smith, Superintendent of ALFL-LAMR, oversaw the completion of the study. He reviewed the project technical report, provided feedback, and graciously arranged for the PI to share his findings with the parks’ staff.

**Contributor Roles**

Michael Paul Jordan is the corresponding author for this paper. Drawing upon the Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CRediT), the following contributor statement is provided (Allen, O’Connell, and Kiermer 2019).

Michael Paul Jordan: Conceptualization, Funding Acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project Administration, Supervision, Writing-Original Draft, Writing-Review and Editing. Emma Richburg: Investigation, Data Curation, Writing-Original Draft, Writing-Review and Editing. F. Blair Armstrong: Investigation, Data Curation, Writing-Review and Editing. The co-authors together assume responsibility for this article.
Notes

1. That this article appears in a special issue of Museum Anthropology Review honoring Daniel C. Swan is fitting. While he is perhaps best known for his work as a museum anthropologist, he is also an accomplished ethnohistorian. Throughout his career, Swan has employed an approach that skillfully blends the methodologies of ethnohistory and ethnology. Indeed, his work with members of the Osage Nation demonstrates the vital role of ethnographic interviews in documenting and preserving Indigenous histories (Swan 1990; Swan and Cooley 2016, 2019). Another obvious connection lies in Swan’s interest in the ethnobotany of the Plains, exemplified in both his research on Osage ethnobotanical knowledge and the Native American Church (Swan 2008, Swan 2010; Swan and Simons 2014).

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2. Coauthors Emma Richburg and F. Blair Armstrong both worked on the project as MA students in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work at Texas Tech University.

3. There is some debate in the literature regarding the dates for the Antelope Creek phase. Lintz, citing a “substantial suite of radiocarbon and archaeomagnetic dates,” assigns a date range of 1200–1500 CE.

4. Specific visitation dates are as follows, with the consulting delegations listed alphabetically: Apache Tribe of Oklahoma (May 9, 2017), Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes (May 1, 2017), Comanche Nation (September 19, 2017), Jicarilla Apache Nation (Red Clan) (September 20, 2017), Jicarilla Apache Nation (White Clan) (September 21, 2017), Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma (October 11, 2017), Mescalero Apache Tribe (September 22, 2017), Pawnee Nation (September 9, 2017), and Wichita and Affiliated Tribes (May 11, 2017).

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