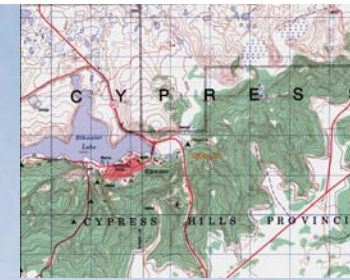
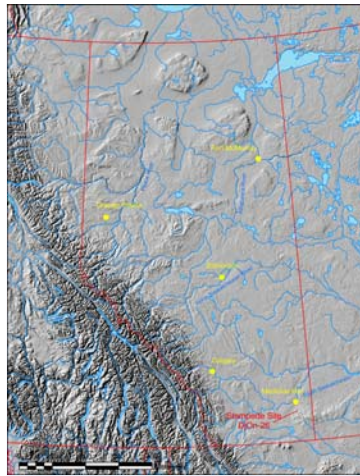


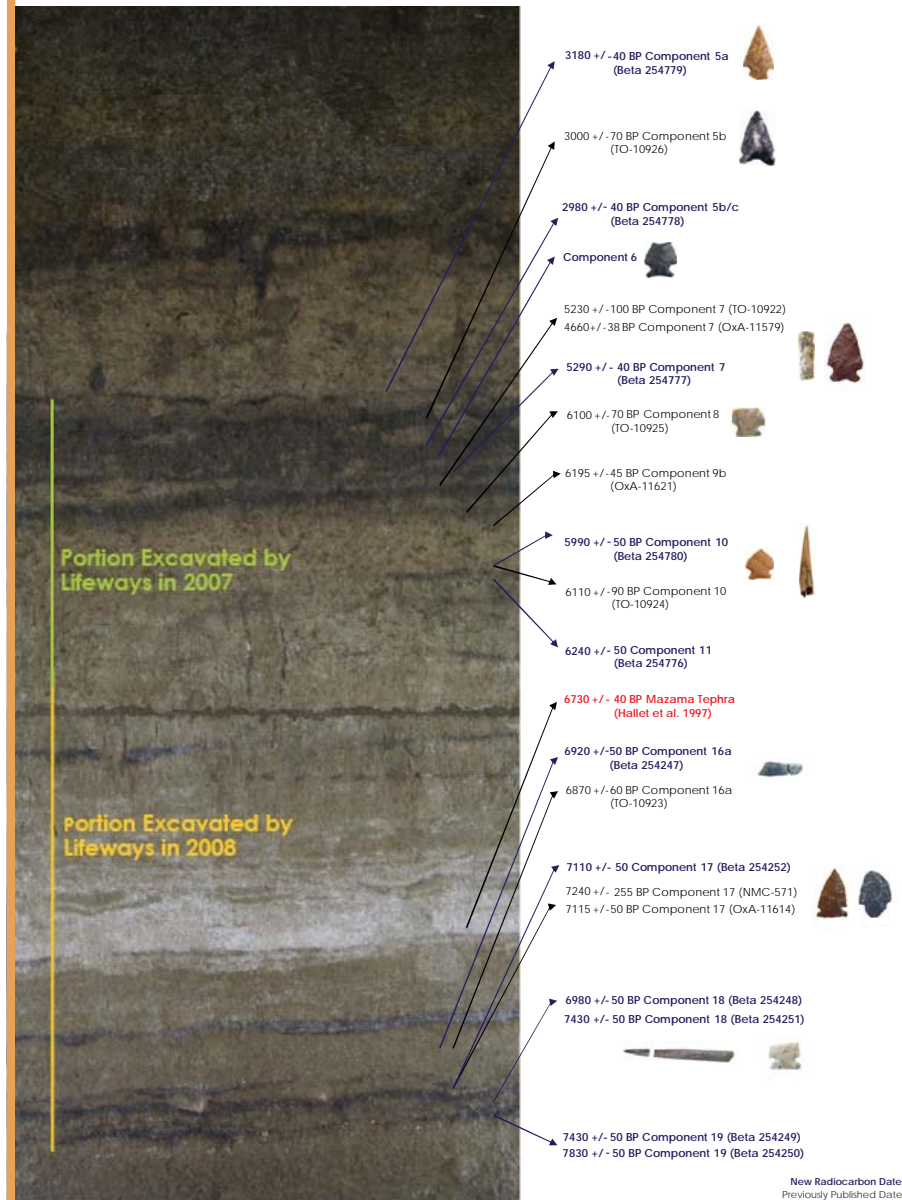
# The 2007 and 2008 Excavation Programs at the Stampede Site, Cypress Hills, Alberta

by  
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The Stampede Site (DjOn-26) is a large, open-air, deeply stratified, multi-component campsite located near the southeastern end of Elkwater Lake on the north side of the Cypress Hills. In 1971 Eugene Gryba excavated test pits to assess the site, and returned in 1972 to undertake more extensive excavations. These excavations were taken down to 3.5 m below the surface, just above the water table. In total Gryba identified 14 cultural layers. Cultural materials recovered from these excavations included butchered and worked bone and a rich assemblage of lithic artifacts. A radiocarbon date of 7,245 +/- 255 y.b.p was reported for a hearth feature in Layer 12A establishing the Stampede Site as one of the oldest, most deeply stratified sites in Alberta. Several smaller investigations were undertaken in 1978 by Norman Catto and again in 1980 by Ethos Consultants. The results of this work indicated that the site extends considerably further to the southeast and southwest than originally believed. In 2000, the site became the focus of a five year research program under the direction of Dr. G. Oetelaar of the University of Calgary. Oetelaar initiated additional excavations at the site expanding on Gryba's work. The resulting excavation block measured 8 x 9 m and reached 6 m deep. Oetelaar defined 32 paleosols from top to bottom. Diagnostic projectile points recovered and radiocarbon dates obtained from the site clearly established the age of the occupational sequence between 3,000 and 8,000 years ago. In 2007 and 2008 Lifeways continued excavations at DjOn-26 on behalf of the Alberta Government. Overall, the Lifeways excavations recovered over 6,300 items of cultural material including stone tools, debitage, and faunal remains. Over the two year program an additional 11 radiocarbon dates were obtained that, in conjunction with the projectile points and other diagnostic materials, help establish the Stampede Site as one of the most significant archaeological sites in Alberta and western North America.

## Cultural Stratigraphy



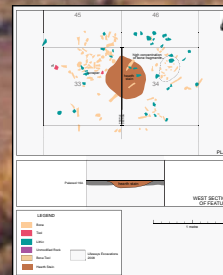
## Public Program



The 2008 work included a public involvement program. Over the 19 days of excavation, over 400 people visited the site and were treated to informal tours, or more formal tours integrated into other Park interpretive programs. Volunteers from the Archaeological Society of Alberta were also given the opportunity to help excavate the site.

## Features

Although the excavations were restricted to a relatively narrow data "doughnut" on the outside of the excavation block, the Stampede Site is so feature rich that the 2007-2008 excavations generated 8 features. These features consisted of hearths, boiling pits, lithic workshop areas, and refuse dumps.



Feature 16a-1 is a large, roughly circular processing feature filled with dark black soil, and much fragmentary burnt and unburnt bone.



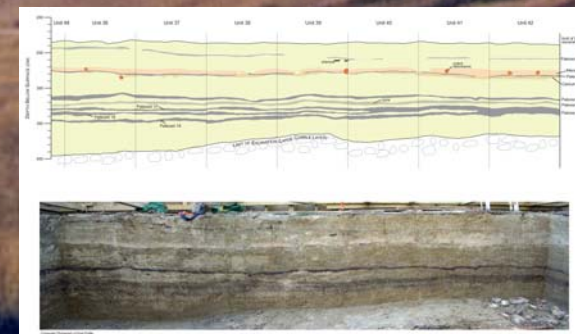
Feature 1 in Paleosol 19b is a good example of a shallow hearth pit with excellent definition. Very little cultural material was recovered from within the pit but just to the south was a discrete concentration of bird bones.



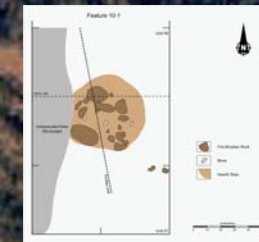
Feature 5bc-1 consists of a crushed bison skull overlying a shallow pit or depression. This type of find is relatively uncommon at a campsite. Given the low nutritional value typically associated with this element, it likely represents some form of symbolic activity at the site.



## The Goals of DjOn-26 Work



Previous excavations at the Stampede Site had left the main excavation open and subject to slumping and collapse. The goals of the work in 2007 and 2008 were to excavate the two outermost tiers or rings in the main block, then to heavily stabilize the walls. The stabilization was completed by professional carpenters using pressure treated lumber. The stabilization will allow the pit to remain open for some time, and allow future exploration of the deepest, most poorly understood deposits at the site in a safe and effective manner.

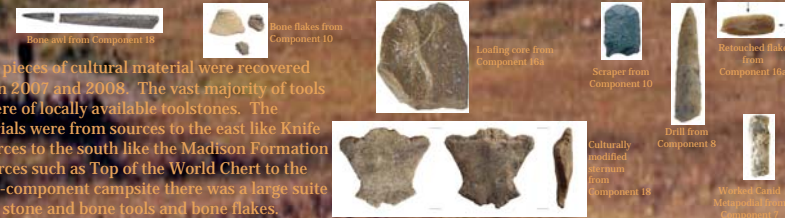


Feature 10-1 is a clearly defined pit feature characterized by a circular shape 51 cm in diameter and 12 cm deep. This basin

was packed with fire-broken rock and several pieces of burnt bone and was clearly demarcated from the surrounding sediment by the dark stained soil fill. No charcoal was noted. In total, 94 pieces of FCR and 8 bone fragments were recovered from this feature. This feature is thought to be a boiling pit even though little burnt or calcined bone was found in association with it. Its association with a Mummy Cave component makes this an early example of such a feature for Alberta.

## Tools

A total of 6,300 pieces of cultural material were recovered from DjOn-26 in 2007 and 2008. The vast majority of tools and debitage were of locally available toolstones. The non-local materials were from sources to the east like Knife River Flint, sources to the south like the Madison Formation Cherts, and sources such as Top of the World Chert to the west. As a multi-component campsite there was a large suite of other formed stone and bone tools and bone flakes.



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- Volunteers including Matt Allen, Courtney Flaig, James Marshall, Lorine Marshall, Jim McMurchy, Terry Quinn, and Shirley Rose

For more information on Lifeways work at DjOn-26 see:  
Meyer, D., B. Vivian, J. Blakey and J. Roe, 2008, Stampede Site (DjOn-26) Archaeological Excavations, 2008 Phase 2 Investigations Final Report, Permit 2008-257, Consultant's report on file, Archaeological Survey of Alberta (Edmonton).  
Vivian, B., D. Meyer, J. Roe, and J. Blakey, 2008, 2007 Historical Resources Excavation at the Stampede Site (DjOn-26) Final Report, Permit 2007-382, Consultant's report on file, Archaeological Survey of Alberta, Edmonton.