

OCTOBER LECTURE

Wednesday, October 19th, 2016

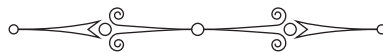
University of Calgary

Tom Oliver Room, ES 162, 7:30pm

Nunataks and Valley Glaciers: the Icy Corridor

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Dr. Marcel Kornfeld (University of Wyoming)**

ABSTRACT - The historic debate of the first peopling of the Americas has focused on two alternate routes of entry: a coastal route versus an ice-free corridor. The timing of this entry is generally regarded to coincide with Late Wisconsin glaciation, which at the very least left continental ice that still covered most of the north half of North America. The former option requires much of the west coast to be ice free, with boats used to navigate areas impossible to traverse by foot. The alternate option has the precondition of ice recession between the Cordilleran and Laurentide ice sheets, providing a terrestrial route of access along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains for both humans and herbivores. While the pendulum has swung towards the coastal route, no smoking gun exists that will deliver a champion in this controversy. With this paper we would like to present a third option that requires neither the precondition of boats nor full glacial retreat: the Icy Corridor. In this model we question that the waning glacial conditions in the Late Wisconsin were an insurmountable obstacle for travel. It is not our intent to champion a new "earliest" route, but rather demonstrate the viability of this glacial landscape as a transportation corridor that had hitherto been characterized as a barrier.



BIOGRAPHY – Bob is a graduate of the University of Alberta and has been employed by the Alberta Government as an archaeologist for 37 years at the Archaeological Survey of Alberta and the Royal Alberta Museum. He has extensive historic and pre-contact fieldwork in Alberta including such sites as Fort George, Fort Vermillion, Lille, Boss Hill, Head-Smashed-In, James Pass, Bezya, and Writing-On-Stone. He has also done consulting and volunteer work across the arctic and sub-arctic notably the north slopes of Alaska, Banks Island, the Mackenzie Mountains, the Melville Peninsula, and Baffin Island. Recently, Bob served on the board and as president (2011) of the Plains Anthropological Society.