

# Archaeology in Newberry Crater

The native people living in the area we know as Central Oregon visited Newberry Crater for at least 10,000 years. They came for many of the same reasons people come today and also to quarry obsidian glass, an important material used to craft tools and projectile points. Throughout this time, Newberry Volcano was very active. Explosive eruptions of ash, pumice and other volcanic products were often followed by the comparatively quiet flow of lava. New obsidian sources were created at about 6700 years (Interlake and Gamehut flows), 3500 years (East Lake flows) and 1300 years (Big Obsidian flow). These eruptions and the eruption of Mt. Mazama (which formed Crater Lake in the Cascade Range about 6800 years ago) periodically buried existing landscapes, including traces of native encampments and quarry sites, under tons of volcanic ash and debris. These ancient buried camps are now archaeological sites which could reveal volumes about the lives and culture of the humans who visited the crater for thousands of years.

Plans to reconstruct the highway within Newberry Crater (1993 through 1994) will affect a significant number of archaeological sites. During August of this year, you might see archaeologists excavating at selected places along the highway corridor. The archaeologists are working under contract to the Federal Highway Administration. They may be able to answer some of your questions but will be unable to tell you about specific finds because of the need to protect the resource from illegal activities. Please be considerate of their time - they still have lots of work to do. Also remember that the record of the past recorded in an archaeological site is fragile and irreplaceable; please do your part to help preserve and protect the archaeological resources in Newberry National Volcanic Monument.

