

“Santa Clara River Archaeology”

**By
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Dr. Allison began working along the Santa Clara River in 1987 and has continued his field work through 2007 in what is now the Santa Clara River Reserve.

During this talk, Dr. Allison takes us on a virtual tour of the various sites on the flat land in the “Anasazi Valley” and then up and to the top of Anasazi Ridge.

There are four main sites in Anasazi Valley on the flat land along the river to the north west of the trail head to Anasazi Ridge. These sites are currently on private land.

Three Mile Ruin

This site sits at the end of 3 Mile Road (a private road) and was first excavated in 1962 by researchers from the University of Utah. The site has a number of rooms with low walls and flagstone floors with clay on top. There were both storage rooms and habitation rooms with hearths. Corrugated pottery was found (after 1050 AD). Dr. Allison dates the site to the 1200's AD based on the type of pottery found. This is thought, by Dr. Allison, to be the latest site in the Santa Clara River Reserve area.

Anasazi Valley Sites

Dr. Allison excavated two sites that lie on the South side of the Santa Clara River in 1987 (sites 2187 and 2188). These sites date to the 1200's AD, again based on ceramics. They had very shallow rooms with flagstone floors with clay topping.

The main artifacts were corn and wheat that date to the 1700-1800's. These are in addition to other Paiute artifacts. Dr. Allison believes that this data indicates that the Paiutes of the area were farming wheat prior to contact with the Spaniards in 1776.

A third site (1345) lies just south of the 3 mile ruin site. This site dates to the 1100's AD.

Up the Trail on Anasazi Ridge

Shortly after the start of the trail head up to Anasazi Ridge are two small rock art sites and a rock used as a grinding stone. Site 1344 is a small room structure.

Further up the trail is site 1342. This site seems to have multiple use periods. The west part of the site had corrugated pottery that date to the late 1000's AD. The east part of the site had two layers of rooms on top of each other. The top layer of rooms was dated to the early 1000's with no evidence of corrugated pottery. The lower level of rooms date to the 800's AD.

Site 1931 was excavated in 2006-07 by Dr. Allison and is currently protected by the BLM with fencing. The construction here was different from the sites in the valley. The walls were made using big stone. The site had both storage rooms and perhaps two habitation rooms. The sites dates to the around 800 AD. The significant artifact found was an abalone shell pendent with the shell coming from the Pacific Coast.

At the apex of the ridge (past the rock art area) is site S195 that was first studied in 1962. Again the walls were stone slabs with the floor being bedrock. This site is the earliest in the area and dates to the late 600's to early 700's AD.

The Rock Art Site (S210)

Dr. Allison mapped the rock art site in the 2006-07. During this phase of their work, they discovered a rock shelter with a wall. The pottery at the site dates the site to the 1000's AD. The pottery was classified as Moapa Gray and White ware.

The general observations made by Dr. Allison based on his work and other published reports were:

- There are numerous sites along both the top of Anasazi Ridge and in the valley along the length of the Santa Clara River Reserve with the densest population of site being along the river. While there are many sites, they were not all continuously occupied.
- The sites at the top of the ridge are the earliest sites in the area. There are no sites on the ridge that date later than the 1000's AD.
- The sites along the river are generally later than 900's AD.
- The latest sites are at the north and west end of the canyon in the Anasazi Valley area that date to the 1200's AD.
- There is evidence of Paiute occupation dating to the 1700's in the Anasazi Valley sites.