

PRELIMINARY CULTURAL SEQUENCE AND PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL RECONSTRUCTION OF THE INDIAN HOUSE REGION, NOUVEAU-QUEBEC*

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ABSTRACT

Archaeological investigations since 1973 at Indian House Lake near the northern limits of the boreal forest reveal a long but sporadic history of interior adapted caribou hunters. Although sites are noted for their limited assemblages, surface locations and lack of organic material for radiocarbon dating, the culture history of this area has been reconstructed on the basis of a beach ridge chronology and regional comparisons. The sequence has been divided into four temporal, but not necessarily cultural, historical periods: the Early, Middle and Late Prehistoric Manifestations and the Mushuau Nipian Phase. The clearest cultural relations exist between the Early

Prehistoric and the Maritime Archaic, and the Mushuau Nipian Phase, which represent the historic ancestors of the Naskopi. The sequence is dominated by Indian groups, while evidence for Eskimo exploitation of Indian House Lake is extremely limited.

A palaeoenvironmental framework is also presented based on two pollen cores from the Indian House Lake region. Pollen taxa indicate that the boreal forest spread into the region about 3800 BP, climaxed about 3000 BP and thinned out about 2500 BP in response to a period of climatic cooling. Possible cultural adaptive responses to these changes are suggested.

