

# Goat Camp Ruin Interpretive Development Project

## Progress Report

Season 1 Operations from 10/21/201 through 9/8/2013

Arizona State Museum Permit 2012-107ps 7/17/2012

Deil Lundin, Principal Investigator

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Prepared by

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### Fieldwork

The Goat Camp Ruin Interpretive Development Project, a volunteer effort on behalf of the Town of Payson, Arizona, by the Rim Country Chapter of the Arizona Archaeological Society directed by Deil Lundin, Principal Investigator and J. Scott Wood, Project Director with assistance from Doug Mitchell, Project Director, initiated its first season of fieldwork on October 21, 2012, with the surface collection of the site, as called for in the approved Excavation and Stabilization Plan of 2012 (Wood 2012). Using volunteer members of the Rim Country Chapter of the Arizona Archaeological Society (RCCAAS) under the direct supervision of Principal Investigator (PI) Lundin and Project Director (PD) Wood, we established eleven 5m. diameter “dog leash” surface collection units (SCU) with GPS-located permanent steel datum spike center points and collected all artifacts located within them. Six of the SCUs, as described in the Excavation and Stabilization Plan, were located within Feature (F) 18 and F33, the primary middens adjacent to the surface architectural portion of the site. Two were located within the suspected subsurface pithouse locus identified as F27. Three others were proposed in the Excavation and Stabilization Plan, one each around the roasting pit features F23, F24, and F26. Upon inspection while laying out the SCUs, we determined that these latter three proposed units did not actually contain a significant number of surface artifacts. Substitute sample units were therefor judgmentally placed in strong, diverse- surface concentrations near F11 and F13 and in an area of eroding buried organic material and dense artifact concentration near the location where the proposed interpretive trail will access the architectural locus near F10.

In the course of locating the substitute SCUs, three possible additional features were discovered around the edges of the architectural locus – two partial rock outlines of buried oval pitrooms and another masonry retaining wall. These will be further characterized, plotted, and added to the final site plan. We do not expect to propose any of them for testing or data recovery at this time.

Following completion of the surface collections, in order to prepare for beginning the data recovery excavations, the PI and PDs excavated a 1m. x 1m. stratigraphic test unit in the south corner of the room F8 adjacent to the walls and to an area of prior disturbance. The excavation

was taken down in arbitrary 10 cm. levels following the direction in the Excavation and Stabilization Plan, in an attempt to characterize the interior stratigraphy of room fill on the site. The test unit clearly demonstrated that there was only mixed fill with very few artifacts and no discernible stratification above the roof fall. Excavation also revealed substantial depth. This information will facilitate a more efficient strategy for further investigations within F8 and other habitation features.

Data Recovery excavations began April 6, 2013, using two teams of RCCAAS volunteers and volunteers from other AAS chapters under the direct supervision of PI Lundin and PD Wood. Following the implementation schedule established in the Excavation and Stabilization Plan, rooms F1 and F15 were selected for the initial investigation. Again following the procedures in the Excavation and Stabilization Plan, each room was quartered into four Excavation Units (EU), all of which were to be excavated completely down to the floor. In response to the findings from the test excavation in F8, excavation levels for both rooms were changed to 20 cm. rather than the 10 cm. units originally proposed. This turned out to be a prudent decision as the fill in both rooms turned out to be non-stratified and undifferentiated down to the burnt roof fall.

Five day-long excavation sessions ending on 5/5/2013 were devoted to the interiors of these two rooms before closing down for the summer. During that time, all four units in room F1 were opened up. By end of season, two of them were through the roof fall and on or just above the floor; the other two had not reached the roof fall level when the units were closed for the summer. Two units were opened in room F15, neither of which was completed by the end of the season, though one appeared to be nearing a roof fall layer similar to that encountered in rooms F1 and F8. Of the two rooms, F1 proceeded more quickly, having much less masonry wall fall in it to contend with.

Prior to sealing the rooms with plastic sheeting for the monsoon season, both rooms produced multiple pieces of broken metates and both whole and broken manos. In addition, F1 produced several crushed and displaced but probably whole reconstructable redware vessels, one of which appeared to be sitting directly on the floor, and a significant amount of charcoal in the roof fall layer; several samples of that material were taken for later analysis if funding can be secured. Other materials recovered included large quantities of ceramics and lithics, shell bracelet fragments, beads, faunal bone fragments, and several projectile points, all of which were located in the fill. Given the quantities of artifacts and the early dates of most of the decorated pottery recovered (see below), it would appear that the rooms were filled with sediments derived from earlier trash deposits from the crest of the ridge. Excavations of both rooms will be completed this Fall.

### **Artifact Processing and Analysis**

Due to a variety of scheduling issues no further work was done on the site or its collections until August 17 and 18, when a small group of RCCAAS volunteers and volunteers from other AAS chapters under the direct supervision of PI Lundin and PD Wood washed and re-bagged all of the artifacts from the surface collection, testing, and excavation done in Season 1. This was followed by another two-day lab session, directed by PD Wood, which accomplished a rough sort of all the 5,400+ recovered ceramics into three basic categories: plain (4,903 sherds), red (441 sherds), and decorated (62 sherds). The plainwares all appeared to be local varieties of Tonto Plain with a small portion of imported Gila Plain. The redwares likewise appeared to be mostly local varieties of Tonto Red with a small portion of imported Gila Red. Both the plain and red wares will be

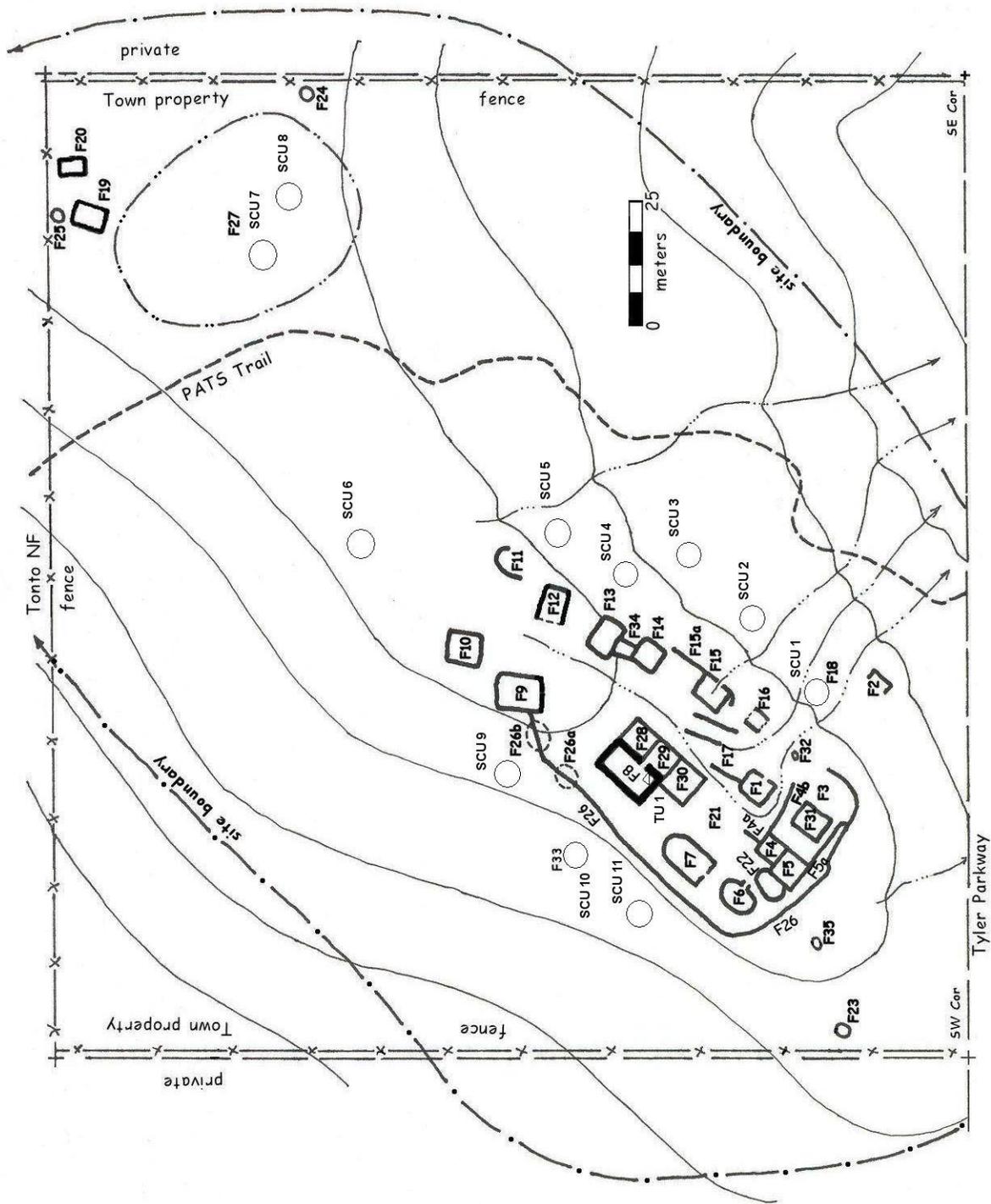


Fig. 1. Showing the final locations of the Surface Collection Units (SCU) and the Test Unit (TU) in room F8. Excavations were carried out in rooms F1 and F15.

examined further to identify specific varieties. The decorated material was typed during the initial sorting. Most of it was Hohokam buffware: Snaketown Red-on-buff (R/b), Gila Butte R/b, Santa Cruz R/b, and Sacaton R/b, the last being the most common. The rest of the decorated assemblage was dominated by Tusayan Whiteware, most of the identifiable sherds being Kana'a Black-on-white (B/w) and Black Mesa B/w. There were also several examples of Walnut B/w and some Cibola Whiteware, including a piece of White Mound B/w. Prior characterization of the site identified the early Preclassic Hohokam component dating between AD 750 and 1150 as being primarily located away from the surface architectural locus at F27 with the surface architectural area being primarily Early Classic Period, AD 1150 -1280. The recovery of so many examples of earlier pottery from the excavated masonry rooms indicates that there was also a substantial Preclassic component to the site in the same area as the surface architecture. While an exciting development – this site has now become one of the largest Preclassic Hohokam sites in the Payson Basin – the Excavation and Stabilization Plan as currently approved does not include excavations to explore this component other than as it is incidentally encountered during the masonry room excavations and stabilization activities.

Further laboratory work will be undertaken this Winter to further characterize the ceramics and begin processing the other recovered material.

### **Time and Value**

To date, a total of 13 days have been spent on the project, not counting miscellaneous administrative activities by the PI and PDs. Eight of those days were given over to fieldwork with five spent in the lab processing the material recovered from the field. A total of 773 hours have been contributed by the volunteer staff and crew, not counting travel for those who are not full time Payson residents. At a conservative in-kind valuation of \$20 per hour of volunteer labor, the Arizona Archaeological Society and in particular the Rim Country Chapter, has contributed the equivalent of \$15,460 to the project on behalf of the Town of Payson over the last year.

### **Assessment of the Excavation and Stabilization Plan**

As the project developed over its first season, it became necessary to deviate from the approved Excavation and Stabilization Plan in several areas. As discussed above, the location of several SCUs had to be moved to accommodate perceived changes in condition (nothing to collect at the originally proposed sample locations). Likewise, the excavation level was increased from 10 cm. to 20 cm. to more efficiently process the undifferentiated, non-stratified fill within rooms F1 and F15. In such fill, finer units serve no useful purpose. This change will likely be permanent, though depending on changes we may see in other rooms, we may opt to use 10 cm. levels again if warranted.

We also propose to finalize the tentative schedule of operations proposed in the Excavation and Stabilization Plan to better fit the situation of the site and improve logistical efficiency. The new schedule will be as follows:

1. Site preparation, to consist of: clearing vegetation from walls and interiors of rooms to be treated, clearing dead and down wood from PATS trail work and previous clearing and mapping attempts, and removing “coathangers” from poorly trimmed trees also left behind from the previous mapping attempt. (partially completed in 2012 prior to commencing fieldwork; will be ongoing throughout the project)

2. Conduct surface collections. (completed 2012)
3. Carry out excavation, wall clearing & definition, and stabilization treatment of rooms F1 and F15. (partially completed 2012-13)
4. Carry out excavation, wall clearing & definition, and stabilization and treatment of rooms F6, F7, and F22.
5. Carry out excavation, wall clearing & definition, and stabilization and treatment of room F31 and walls F4b and F5a.
6. Carry out excavation, wall clearing & definition, and stabilization and treatment of rooms F8, F28, F29, and F30.
7. Carry out excavation of F24 and F32.
8. Carry out all other excavations and stabilization treatments, including backfilling potholes in rooms with no further identified treatment.
9. Excavate test units for kiosk and wayside installations
10. Lay out and construct interpretive loop trail for project access and on-site interpretation of work in progress. Begin erosion control work (ongoing).
11. Install permanent exhibits.
12. Produce comprehensive summary report of all excavation and development activities conducted on site.

Depending on the availability and scheduling of our stabilization specialist, AAS member Jim Britton, further refinement of the schedule may be required as stabilization treatment may or may not be able to immediately follow or work in conjunction with excavations. In those cases where stabilization will be delayed, features will be protected from weathering until the work can be performed.

## **Season 2: 2013-2014**

It is anticipated that Season 2 will see the completion of excavations within rooms F1 and F15 and the exposure of wall construction and the establishment of an original ground surface for those two rooms. We plan to also excavate rooms F6, F7, and F22 as described in the Excavation and Stabilization Plan and to initiate or complete the stabilization treatments determined for each of these five rooms. During the winter layover between field sessions, we will process new artifact collections, expand our analysis of the pottery, and initiate analyses of the lithics, ground stone, shell, and other material recovered to date. This effort will likely continue during the summer of 2014 after the close of the Spring field session. If funding becomes available, we will contract radiocarbon analyses for samples taken from room F1.

## References

Wood, J. Scott

2012 *Excavation and Stabilization Plan for Goat Camp Ruin, Payson, Gila County, Arizona.* Rim Country Chapter, Arizona Archaeological Society, For the Town of Payson Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Department, Tonto National Forest Cultural Resources Report 2008-12-58a