

Rocky Mountain

The Beaver Creek Shelter (39CU779) is a north facing rock shelter in Wind Cave NP. Excavations were conducted by the South Dakota (SD) School of Mines and Technology in 1985 and again by that institution and the SD Archaeological Research Center in 1985 and 1987. This work penetrated 4.77m of vertical rock shelter sediments. The excavations defined 22 stratigraphic horizons, many of which contain archeological materials, and produced a sequence of 12 radiocarbon dates covering most of the Holocene.

The archeological specimens, the stratification, and the radiocarbon dates indicate the shelter has the potential of providing information on the transition from Early to Middle Archaic periods, a poorly known interval in the northern Great Plains, and of elucidating the interrelationship between climatic trends and human prehistory throughout the Holocene.

A report on the archeological remains of the Beaver Creek Shelter has been completed by Lynn Alex. In addition to the archeology, the shelter is important for its nearly complete paleoenvironmental sequence for the Holocene in the Black Hills. The paleofauna, soils, snails, and other environmental indicators have been partially reported in a number of papers and masters' theses.