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"Historical and Applied Perspectives on Prehistoric Land Use in Eastern North America"

Peacock, Evan

Peacock, Evan. "Historical and Applied Perspectives on Prehistoric Land Use in Eastern North America." *Environment and History* 4, no. 1, (Feb., 1998): 1–29. doi:10.3197/096734098779555727 . Despite mounting evidence to the contrary, many scientists continue to ignore prehistoric human impact as a factor in the development of ecosystems in eastern North America. One result is the promulgation of an 'Indian as natural conservationist' mythos in the popular media. Archaeological evidence demonstrates that prehistoric human activities caused significant environmental alteration in many parts of the region. The location, timing, and severity of such alteration varied greatly, suggesting that scientists must become familiar with the archaeological record on human/land interaction at the local level. Misinformation can lead to naive justifications for conservation or other land management activities. It is argued that archaeological data pertain to current theoretical concerns in ecology, such as establishing greater temporal depth in ecosystem studies and investigating the evolution of mosaic-type landscapes. Archaeology can also be used in raising the public environmental consciousness. All rights reserved. © 1998 The White Horse Press

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