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"Human Impact on the Environment in the Annecy Petit Lac Catchment, Haute-Savoie: A Documentary Approach"

Crook, D. S., D. J. Siddle, J. A. Dearing, and R. Thompson

Crook, D. S., D. J. Siddle, J. A. Dearing, and R. Thompson. "Human Impact on the Environment in the Annecy Petit Lac Catchment, Haute-Savoie: A Documentary Approach." *Environment and History* 10, no. 3 (Aug., 2004): 247–84. doi:10.3197/0967340041794312 . It is axiomatic that mountain environments are particularly vulnerable to changes in patterns of human use, over both long and medium terms, but also over quite short periods of critical activity. This paper uses archaeological and documentary records to look at the human impact on one such montane environment, the pre-alps of Savoy, over the long-term, from pre-history up to the pre-modern period. The use and modification of landscape is estimated at the level of the Annecy Petit Lac hydrological catchment taking into account spatial differences in land use in the uplands, mid-slope and plain. Land use patterns and nutrient balance are reconstructed for specific periods in time between 1561 and 1892. Results from this study demonstrate that seven main phases of human activity have left their traces in the environmental record during the historical period through to the pre-modern period. Of these the 1730–1770s and 1840–1860s stand out as two discernible periods of heightened environmental pressures at higher altitudes, which manifest themselves as discernable lowland environmental problems, such as flooding, increased erosion and declining soil fertility. All rights reserved. © 2004 The White Horse Press

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