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Christopher R. Moore

University of South Carolina - Columbia, moorecr@mailbox.sc.edu

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Stone Quarries and Sourcing in the South Carolina Slate Belt

By Christopher R. Moore



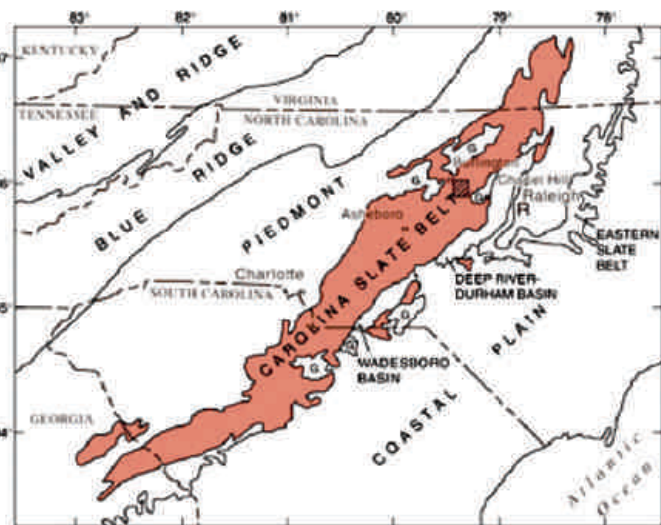
Quarry site with dense flake debris in Sumter National Forest. (Photo by Christopher Moore)

The Savannah River Archaeological Research Program (SRARP) is seeking information from local landowners and avocational archaeologists on the location of prehistoric metavolcanic and metasedimentary (also known as rhyolite and argillite) stone quarries in the South Carolina Slate Belt region. We are particularly interested in possible quarry sites in Saluda, Newberry, Lexington,

Fairfield, Richland, Chester, Kershaw, and Lancaster Counties. These sites often appear as dense scatters of large flakes and bifacial preforms in association with natural outcrops of rhyolitic flows, tuffs, breccias, and/or argillite or metamudstone. Finished projectile points at quarry sites are uncommon. With landowner permission,

samples of the material will be collected for geochemical analysis.

The purpose of this study is to determine the geological provenance and chemical signature of stone quarries for sourcing prehistoric artifacts to stone sources



Geologic map of the Slate Belt. (From Williams and Kover 1978)



Examples of quarry debris from Sumter National Forest. (Photo by Christopher Moore)

throughout the Slate Belt. This work will compliment the research conducted on stone quarries in the North Carolina Slate Belt by Steponaitis et al. (2006) (<http://rla.unc.edu/Publications/pdf/ResRep25/>) and will enhance our understanding of hunter-gatherer settlement systems and technological organization in the South Carolina Piedmont and beyond.

If anyone has information on possible quarry sites, please contact Dr. Christopher R. Moore, cmoore@srarp.org, office: (803) 725-5227. This research is partially funded through the USC Educational Foundation. For more information, please contact Nena Powell Rice, ricen@mailbox.sc.edu, office: (803) 576-6573, cell: (803) 331-3431.

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