

Already listed 10/15/66

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

1/14/87

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument

AND/OR COMMON

same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Silver City

☒ VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

STATE

New Mexico

CODE

35

COUNTY

Catron

CODE

003

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☒ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED☒ N/A**STATUS**☐ OCCUPIED☒ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☒ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

National Park Service

AND: United States Forest Service,

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 728

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Southwest Regional Office

CITY, TOWN

Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

517 Gold Ave.

STATE

VICINITY OF Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

U.S. Department of Interior, NPS, Southwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 728

CITY, TOWN

Santa Fe

STATE

New Mexico 87504

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE "A Preliminary Report of a Survey of Gila Cliff Dwellings National
Monument and a Portion of the Gila National Forest, New Mexico"

DATE

1968

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Laboratory of Anthropology

CITY, TOWN

Santa Fe

STATE

New Mexico

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☒ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

SECTION 7: DESCRIPTION (D. Traylor)

District Boundaries

The nominated archeological district includes one historic aboriginal and 32 prehistoric sites, with the boundaries of the district coterminous with those of Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument. Recorded sites within the district span the cultural development of the Mimbres Branch of the Mogollon culture from its late Archaic beginnings (circa 300 B.C.) through the early and late Pithouse periods (to A.D. 1000) to the Classic and Post-Classic occupations (A.D. 1000-1300). To date, only a single site within the district has been excavated.

District Description

[REDACTED]

contains 20 of the archeological sites within the proposed district. Here, basaltic volcanic flows are sandwiched between layers of Gila Conglomerate. It is in the softer conglomerate that wind and water erosion have carved many niches and caves which aboriginal populations sought out for shelter and storage. Permanent water sources, including several fresh and hot water springs, alluvial soils and a variety of gatherable food sources (Huckell and Adams 1985; McKusick 1985) point to a diverse past and present environment. A riparian plant community is found along the river and stream beds, while pinon/juniper dominate the slopes and ridges. Douglas fir and Ponderosa pine are found at lower elevations on moisture-retaining north slopes and at elevations of about 6500 ft. in the transition zone.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
☒ PREHISTORIC	☒ ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	☐ COMMUNITY PLANNING	☐ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	☐ RELIGION
☐ 1400-1499	☐ ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	☐ CONSERVATION	☐ LAW	☐ SCIENCE
☐ 1500-1599	☐ AGRICULTURE	☐ ECONOMICS	☐ LITERATURE	☐ SCULPTURE
☐ 1600-1699	☐ ARCHITECTURE	☐ EDUCATION	☐ MILITARY	☐ SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
☐ 1700-1799	☐ ART	☐ ENGINEERING	☐ MUSIC	☐ THEATER
☐ 1800-1899	☐ COMMERCE	☐ EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	☐ PHILOSOPHY	☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ 1900-	☐ COMMUNICATIONS	☐ INDUSTRY	☐ POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☐ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		☐ INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 3000 B.C. - A.D. 1300 BUILDER/ARCHITECT N/A

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SECTION 8: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (C. Scheick)

Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument lies at the center of the Mogollon culture area, whose known boundaries occupy a large portion of southwestern New Mexico and extend into southeastern Arizona, west Texas, and northern Mexico. The Monument's location along the upper reaches of the Gila River places it on the periphery of Mimbres/Mogollon cultural development and within reach of other developments to the north in the Reserve area. Recent survey work in the Gila-Cliff Valley and in surrounding areas has not only documented the cultural integrity of the Valley but has set it slightly apart from accepted Mimbres cultural configuration and development (Lekson 1978; Fitting, Hemphill and Abbe 1982; Chapman, Gossett, and Gossett 1985). The 33 prehistoric sites within the Monument represent an unbroken sequence of cultural development and are considered significant in the context of criteria (c) and (d) of the National Register of Historic places because they embody distinctive characteristics of a type; represent a developmental sequence, unique phase and a cultural entity; and have scientific value. Physical, cultural, and archeological significance is indicated because 1) site preservation is good to excellent in light of the rapid destruction of Mimbres sites outside the Monument, 2) the sites constitute a physically unique and culturally representative sample of Mimbres sites in the Gila-Cliff Valley, and 3) future study of the sites is likely to yield data on the development and evolution of Mimbres culture within the Gila-Cliff Valley; specifically, the nature of the relationships between Mogollon subcultures.

Supporting Data

Preservation/Conservation

The potential for scientific investigation and interpretation is determined in part by the condition of the cultural resources. Within the National Monument, potentials are enhanced by the excellent preservation of cultural materials and architectural structures. Although surface

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuations sheets.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

UTM REFERENCES

See continuation sheet for UTM References.

A

ZONE EASTING

NORTHING

B

ZONE EASTING

NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE N/A

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE N/A

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Diane Traylor, Archeologist, and Cherie L. Scheick, Archeologist

ORGANIZATION

Southwest Archaeological Consultants, Inc.

DATE

April 8, 1986

STREET & NUMBER

624 Agua Fria St.

TELEPHONE

505-984-1151

CITY OR TOWN

Santa Fe,

STATE

New Mexico

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES _____

NO _____

NONE _____

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ☒ National ☐ State ☐ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Edward T. Beards

TITLE

Chaco P. Indian

DATE

June 8, 1987

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

8/2/87

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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Gila Cliff Dwellings National Park is administered under a cooperative agreement between the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service, signed in 1975. The Forest Service administers the monument under a district ranger whose address is:

Route 11, Box 100
Silver City, NM 88061

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The monument derives its name from the single excavated site (LA 13658), a 42-room cliff dwelling situated in a series of five, [REDACTED]. Ceramic and tree-ring dates indicate the site was constructed and occupied from the late A.D. 1270s to the 1280s (Anderson 1985) during the Tularosa phase, a problematic phase designation for the general Gila-Cliff area. Presumably, the Tularosa phase postdates the Classic Mimbres period, the most widely documented, local era. Few of the 19 smaller cavate units that share the canyon retain surface artifacts. Although two of these sites (LA 10049 and 10048) have masonry walls architecturally similar to the Tularosa cliff dwellings, the rest appear to be chronologically unrelated. Habitation rooms are defined by the presence of smoke-blackened ceilings; the others are identified as work or storage units. One shelter located at the cliff base contains possible pit structures and plainware ceramics suggestive of the earlier Georgetown pithouse phase. The best dendrochronological dates for this little-documented period are from the Harris site (located outside the monument) and extend from A.D. 582 to circa 624 (Gossett 1985). A later use of the conglomeritic caves was for an Apache burial on a pole structure. Apaches were probably not in the Gila River valley until the sixteenth or seventeenth century. Little other evidence for their use of the proposed district has been recorded, although evidence does exist for Apache presence in the broader geographic area.

In addition to the sites in Cliff Dweller Canyon, there are other sites [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]. The lithic, and lithic and sherd scatters occurring in those locations are presently of unknown cultural association, but one (LA 10082) is described as possibly Archaic in survey records. There are pithouse depressions and cists at two [REDACTED] LA 10042 and 10043) with diagnostic ceramics of the Georgetown and Three Circle pithouse phases, respectively. The former phase is characterized by round or D-shaped pithouses [REDACTED] and by the presence of Alma Neck-banded and increased numbers of San Francisco Red ceramics (Stuart and Gauthier 1981). Most sites of this period are known from the Mimbres Valley and Reserve area (Fitting, Hemphill, and Abbe 1982). The Three Circle phase is generally characterized by rectangular, straight-sided pithouses, an increase in the number of pithouses per village, and increased settlement along secondary drainages. Mangus Black-on-white as well as Three Circle Red-on-white ceramics are present. Widely accepted dates for the Three Circle phase are A.D. 750-1000 (Stuart and Gauthier 1981; Fitting, Hemphill, and Abbe 1982).

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[REDACTED]
continued to be utilized in later Puebloan periods. LA 10041 [REDACTED]
10045 [REDACTED] 10055 [REDACTED], and 10081 [REDACTED] are small, masonry
pueblos identified as black-on-white ceramic period sites. Surface
diagnostic artifacts are sparse, but the sites probably belong to the
post-pithouse period when the expanded population utilized smaller
habitation and field houses, in addition to 100-room pueblos (Anyon,
Gilman, and LeBlanc 1981). A single 100-room site, the TJ Ruin (LA
54955), is [REDACTED]
and is thought to be one of the few remaining undisturbed Mimbres sites
in the area.

A small pictograph panel downstream from LA 10049 and a series
of check dams in a small drainage are undoubtedly associated with Puebloan
activity in the canyon. They complete the assemblage of sites represented
in the district. (See also the list of Prehistoric unexcavated sites.)

Historical Context

The Mogollon are thought to have descended from hunter-gatherer
populations of the San Pedro Cochise, a late Archaic seminomadic culture
that developed in southern Arizona and southwest New Mexico. The early
pithouses of the Mogollon are thought to have evolved from the shallow
pithouses and camps of their predecessors. Around 300 B.C. changes
occurred in the material culture and subsistence; plainware ceramics
were added to the assemblage, and maize was added to diets. Overall,
the general subsistence patterns changed very little. Sites that can
be assigned to the early periods are as elusive as early ceramic sites
elsewhere in the Southwest, but there is mounting evidence that the
Gila-Cliff Valley area may contain a number of these sites and that
their appearance may be earlier than in other areas of the Mimbres.

Two sites (LA 5779 and LA 5793) excavated during [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] in 1966 had what were thought to be
San Pedro phase components (pits and pithouses) in conjunction with
later Mogollon structures (Hammack, Bussey, and Ice 1966). There is
also new evidence of aceramic or preceramic pithouses in the Gila-Cliff
Valley area [REDACTED]
(Gossett 1985). Sites contain either one or a very few units and are
difficult to detect on the ground surface. Gossett believes the one-room
structures to be special-use sites, not necessarily habitations. A
chronology for these early sites has not been established. Early pithouse
sites were once thought to be located only at higher elevations (Martin
1940, 1943), but the Gila-Cliff survey (Chapman, Gosset, and Gosset
1985) and the excavations at the SU (Martin and Rinaldo 1947) and Cliff
sites (Hammack, Bussey, and Ice 1966) reflect a more diversified settlement.

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Accola (1981) suggests that sites located in diverse ecozones reflect a seasonal hunting-gathering subsistence base rather than a population shift. Work by Fitting (Fitting, Hemphill, and Abbe 1982) at the Winn Canyon Site suggest that the shift to the Early Pithouse period may have been earlier in the Gila-Cliff Valley area.

Two sites in the district fall within the Georgetown phase, the first well-defined Mogollon period. Dates for the period are variable, ranging from A.D. 400-700. Village sites are generally [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and consist of rounded or D-shaped pitstructures with lateral inclined entrances, a central roof support system, and a hearth located near the entrance. Construction timbers are most often riverine species; as a result tree-ring dates for the period are scarce. The period is believed to be one of population increase resulting from internal growth. East of Gila Cliff Dwellings, ten Georgetown phase pithouses were excavated in 1966 by the Museum of New Mexico as part of a highway salvage project (Hammack 1966).

[REDACTED] LA 6538 was one of three sites in the locale associated with Mogollon and historic components. Excavations at the Winn Canyon site date the Georgetown and subsequent phases earlier in the Gila-Cliff Valley area (Fitting, Hemphill, and Abbe 1982) than in surrounding areas. Survey in the Gila-Cliff area supports the increased presence of early sites in the valley (Chapman, Gossett, and Gossett 1985).

The succeeding San Francisco phase is not represented in the nominated district or in the Gila-Cliff Valley. During this phase, a dramatic change in the earlier relatively stable pithouse period occurred and is marked by changes in architectural styles (rectangular subterranean houses with plastered walls and centrally aligned roof supports) and in new ceramic types; new types include Mogollon Red-on-brown (Haury 1936), Three Circle Red-on-white and Mimbres Boldface (Mangus), while higher densities of Alma Plain and San Francisco Redware are reported (Gossett 1985). Concomitant with those changes, an increase in population is postulated and new species of corn (Harinoso de ocho, supposedly hardy at higher elevations), squash, and beans occurred. The innovations increased the available environmental range of habitation locations when climatic conditions were favorable (Stuart and Gauthier 1981). The return to the use of pine for roofing timbers provides dates for the Mogollon and Harris Villages, the Starkweather Ruin, and several others. Anyon's dendrochronological dates range between A.D. 625 and 755, while Graybill's dates of A.D. 650 to 850 may represent longer trait durability (Anyon, Gilman, and LeBlanc 1981).

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The Three Circle phase is the terminating phase for the Late Pithouse period. The number of pithouses per village increased as did the numbers of habitations in secondary drainages. Most of these sites represent later components at earlier pithouse sites. Semisubterranean rectangular houses are supported by four or six pole systems and have plastered or stonelined interiors. Many of the features occur superimposed over earlier structures, making their definition difficult. Ceremonial structures at sites are noticeably lacking. Almost all written sources provide dates of A.D. 900-1000 for the period, although Anyon, Gilman, and LeBlanc (1981) and Graybill (1975) would extend the phase several hundred years earlier, and again more recent data in the Gila-Cliff Valley area suggests even earlier dates there (Fitting, Hemphill, and Abbe 1982). Greater variability in ceramic types and greater numbers of Three Circle Red-on-black, Mimbres Boldface Black-on-white and others are documented. The dramatic increase in population at A.D. 850 to 900 in the Mogollon, Chaco, and Mesa Verde areas not only involved a wider distribution of populations but greater trade between areas. In the Mogollon area, intramural burials and the appearance of turquoise and Macaw feathers provide evidence for trade networks. Three Circle phase sites are not well represented in the monument but are present within the larger valley (Chapman, Gossett, and Gossett 1985) in small numbers. The occupation was short-lived. Within the district, only one site (LA 10044) is assigned to the period; Three Circle phase structures [redacted] (Ice 1968) and are possibly represented by a component at LA 5779, a pithouse village [redacted] (Hammack, Bussey, and Ice 1966). Pitstructure depressions at the TJ Ruin, the Mimbres site in the monument's detached unit, are believed to date earlier than the surface architecture (J. Bradford, personal communication) and could potentially be associated with the Three Circle phase.

Toward the end of the Three Circle phase, the lines between indigenous Mogollon and border cultures begin to blur. Haury's earlier work (1936) had established the Mogollon sequence up to A.D. 1000, and that sequence was applied to all of the various branches recognized by the Gladwins (Gladwin and Gladwin 1934) and later defined by Wheat (1955). By A.D. 1000 major changes had occurred in Mogollon cultural development, thereby underscoring and intensifying the cultural regionalization first noted by Gladwin for earlier portions of the cultural sequence. Those changes in the cultural configuration of the Mogollon have led many researchers to refer to later developments by names other than Mogollon.

The imposition of cultural traits by trade or immigration is not always clear. There seems to be a rapid transition among ceramics to black-on-white styles culminating in the Classic Mimbres black-on-white,

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along with an eventual architectural shift to surface masonry pueblos. The transitional period corresponds to the Gladwins' Mangus phase, named in 1934 after completion of their excavation of small pueblo sites with early Mimbres ceramics. The phase corresponds to a short period in time when rapid ceramic changes occurred in conjunction with architectural shifts to above-ground structures. Several Mangus phase pueblos in the Gila area demonstrate that surface dwellings never completely replaced pithouses during the period (Chapman, Gossett, and Gossett 1985); LA 8675 (Ice 1968), and 5779 and 6783 (Hammack, Bussey, and Ice 1966) all contain subsurface and surface structural units. Several researchers would prefer to delete the Mangus phase altogether (Anyon, Gilman, and LeBlanc 1981), while others suggest it was a local development from within the Gila-Cliff Valley area (Fitting, Hemphill, and Abbe 1982).

The period between A.D. 1000 and 1400 was marked by rapid changes in architecture, material culture, social organization, and settlement patterns. The coalition of populations into larger pueblos with associated small sites took place around A.D. 1000 in the Mimbres Valley and somewhat earlier in the Gila-Cliff Valley area. The abrupt change to surface architecture was coupled with increases in the numbers of both small and large sites, and increasing reliance on agriculture. Sites fall into three size categories in the Mimbres area: 100-plus rooms, 70 to 75, and 10 to 15. Within the Gila-Cliff Valley area, 'Classic' Mimbres sites tend to be small and suggest a light occupation of short use (Fitting, Hemphill, and Abbe 1982); cave sites are also known for the period. There seems to be some speculation that Classic Mimbres in the Gila Valley may have been intrusive, with the most substantial occupation of the area belonging to the Mangus phase. Many researchers believe that true 'Classic' Mimbres was a local phenomenon in the Mimbres area (Anyon, Gilman, and LeBlanc 1982; Stuart and Gauthier 1981). Large pueblos of the period are rectangular and form linear roomblocks with multiple plazas, kivas, and storage rooms. Smaller sites are usually located along the secondary drainages of the major watercourses. Outside the area, changes are thought to have been more gradual. To the north and west, the period between A.D. 1000 and 1250 is defined by the Reserve and Tularosa phases.

It is within that cultural framework that the TJ Ruin was occupied. The large pueblo was constructed on an horticulturally favorable location [redacted] and remains intact; surface artifacts are largely uncollected, although somewhat broken and disturbed from use of the area as a pasture. The ruin was probably associated with many of the small pueblo units found in the district, most of which [redacted]

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Following the abrupt end of the Classic Mimbres phase, a more dispersed settlement pattern was adopted by populations. Reasons for the increase in population movement throughout the general region are attributed to resource limitations and population pressure from within and outside the area, and from abandonment of the northern highland areas. It is believed that sometime during the 1200s the Gila Cliff Dwellings and other smaller settlements were established in the Gila Valley by a group of people from the northwest, across the Mogollon Mountains. Other evidence for Tularosa phase populations also exists in the monument. A possible Tularosa phase component is thought to occur at the TJ Ruin and [REDACTED]. Tularosa phase ceramics are not known from any other sites in the Monument (Anderson et al. 1985), but Classic Mimbres ceramics continue to be present on sites in the Gila-Cliff Valley area well after their disappearance from the Mimbres Valley (Chapman, Gossett, and Gossett 1985). There, the numbers of Animas phase sites, identified by changes in ceramics, architecture and organization, indicate a population increase in the Mimbres area over the preceding Classic Mimbres. The origins of these people are not known, but they may be from the south (Stuart and Gauthier 1981).

Many of the traits associated with sites of that period are considered heavily influenced by populations outside the Mogollon cultural area. Influences have been attributed to the western Cibolan populations, whose stone surface dwellings include rectangular ceremonial rooms, and from Saladoans, whose pueblos consist of several house units in a compound, a cremation area, and a large ceremonial structure. A Salado-style pueblo was excavated [REDACTED] during a salvage operation (Hammack 1966b). At that time, the ceremonial room was the only one of its kind known in southeastern Arizona and western New Mexico. Salado sites are found in various environmental settings, but are predominantly represented in areas surrounding major riverine systems. These sites are not well represented in the Mimbres Valley, but their numbers in the Gila Valley demonstrate a major occupation of that area between 1300 and 1500. Influences are also postulated from northern Mexico and are discussed in detail in the following description of Gila Cliff Dwellings. It is not known whether new traits were adopted as an assemblage or whether they were obtained individually from trade with the post-Classic Animas or Salado groups. Many researchers view the Salado as a continuation of the Animas, while others view it as a migration from the southwest and west. The Salado phase is a major focus of disagreement among researchers, and some question its validity in New Mexico. Nelson and LeBlanc (1986) have recently stated that the changes between Classic Mimbres and subsequent cultural developments are indicative of profound reorganization and cultural replacement, if not replacement of population.

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Previous Research in the District

The Gila Cliff Dwellings have been well known in the area for over 150 years. Although the area may have been visited or noted by fur trappers in the 1830s, it was first documented in Army files from Ft. Bayard, New Mexico (Sands 1957). In 1877 H.B. Ailman of Silver City wrote of his expeditions [REDACTED], mentioning the cliff dwellings, an infant burial his party found, and a general lack of surface artifacts on sites (Area Survey 3, Morris 1985). In 1884 visits were made by rancher James McKenna (McKenna 1936) and noted explorer and archeologist Adolph Bandelier, who noticed the same paucity of artifacts and additionally reported evidence of vandalism (Lange and Riley 1970). It was Bandelier who made the first scientific observations and sketches of the dwellings currently included in the monument.

In 1907 with the establishment of the monument, Gila Cliff Dwellings came under the protection of the federal government. At that time, no other sites within the monument had been officially documented, although many were known locally. These sites were identified in a cultural resource inventory requested by the superintendent of the monument in 1968 and carried out by Don Morris. The survey included all of the monument property plus an area included [REDACTED].

Gila Cliff Dwellings ruin, the monument's namesake, is found in a series of caves [REDACTED] (see enclosed site maps). Three of the six caves (3, 4 and 5) connect, while the others are accessible from a trail across the talus (modern construction). Room construction incorporated fallen boulders from the cave roof. Wall masonry consists of thin conglomerate slabs laid in copious amounts of mortar. More than 40 percent of the walls retain their original plaster, and 10 walls still support remnants of their original pole roofing superstructure; 15 rooms were apparently unroofed. Some of the rooms have prepared floors, while others utilized the bedrock or the original ground surface of the alcove. Rooms are generally inferred to have been used for either habitation (8) or storage (14), and two rooms may have served a communal or ceremonial function. The virtual lack of multiple floor levels and the near absence of remodeling, along with the short span of tree-ring dates, indicate a brief period of habitation. Constructed during a purported population movement and resettlement period associated with a long drought (middle to late 1200s), it is thought to have been built by a group of 40-60 people who coalesced to form a single settlement near a permanent water source (Anderson 1985).

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Archeological investigations at Gila Cliff Dwellings have resulted from stabilization projects and a major excavation in 1963 by Gordon Vivian and Dee Dodgen. Charlie Steen stabilized walls in caves 2 and 3 in 1943 and dug two trenches to sample the material culture. Roland Richert supervised a larger-scale stabilization in 1955 but did not conduct any excavation. His crew installed a steel plate and turnbuckle in room 27 to stabilize a cracked and leaning corner and rerouted the visitor trail through room 9 from room 10. In 1963 Custodian Dawson "Doc" Campbell built a retaining wall between the west wall of room 31 and the cave overhang to hold a large rock slab in place. Before constructing the wall, he dug a trench for the footing and recovered some cultural remains.

Stabilization has generally included repairing holes in existing walls, capping wall tops, and replacing loose or eroding mortar. Alterations to the site other than those noted above are presented below. Most of these were done to facilitate the flow of visitors through the site. The dates of these projects are not known. They are as follows:

1. The ruins stabilization unit constructed a wall across the south side of room 1.
2. A wooden stair was built across the west wall of room 19 to provide visitor access through cave 3.
3. The beams across room 26 (a storage room) were replaced.
4. The bin in room 27 was reconstructed.
5. An opening was created in room 34 to provide visitor access.

In 1963 Vivian and Dodgen excavated 33 rooms in caves 2, 3, 4, and 5, and sampled deposits in cave 6. The resulting unpublished information established a firm chronology for the pueblo as well as providing well-preserved remnants of the material culture of its inhabitants. The diversity of remains point to year-round occupation by a self-sufficient population.

Ceramic types recovered represent a variety of utility and decorated wares dominated by Tularosa Filet Rim and Tularosa Black-on-white, thus the Tularosa phase designation. The presence of a small number of Boldface and Classic Mimbres black-on-white, Alma Plain, and San Francisco Red may indicate an earlier occupation or carry-over trend. Anderson thinks there may have been a slightly greater connection with the Mimbres/Animas area rather than the San Francisco River drainage, because of the presence of polished corrugated and Cloverdale Incised

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wares. However, because of the lack of stratigraphic provenience data, this cannot be substantiated.

Abundant raw material was available for chipped and groundstone manufacture, and its use is documented by the archeological record. Chert and chalcedony were most commonly chosen for chipping followed by rhyolite, obsidian, and quartzite. Basalt and other fine-grained metamorphic rock constitute most of the groundstone materials. Sources for all of the raw materials can be found within a 40-mile radius of the site (Teague 1985).

With few exceptions, bone, shell, fiber, feather, and wood artifacts compare with Tularosa phase collections elsewhere. (There were more and varied shell artifacts, and the feathers and skeleton of a Scarlet Macaw suggesting contact with Casas Grandes, Mexico.) Of particular note are the preponderance of Archaic projectile points, indicating a much earlier occupation of the cave. Other evidence substantiating an earlier use of the cave are the fragments of an atlatl, two dart foreshafts, a bunt, gourd container fragments, wickerwork and multiple warp sandals, and several "Mogollon Red" pictographs on the cave walls. Artifact locations and spatial association cannot be determined since the artifacts lack stratigraphic provenience.

During prestabilization excavation of rooms in cave 1 in 1968, Don Morris' crew located a slab-lined cist, use-hardened surface, and cultural deposits that appeared to predate the masonry construction of the pueblo. They also constructed a trail leading from cave 4 and a trail from the cliff dwelling to the mouth of the canyon.

The most recent excavation connected with the cliff dwelling was of a burial found in 1970 by a monument visitor. It was exhumed by Pamela and Ronald Everhart and was believed to be from the Pueblo period.

Physical Condition

The 1968 survey conducted in the Monument recorded eight sites showing varying degrees of pothunting or other more minor vandalism. While surface artifacts have been removed over the years, the overall area has not been stripped bare of cultural material and most subsurface deposits remain relatively intact. Gila Cliff Dwellings was probably the most visited and pothunted site in the district, yet excavations there revealed a rich array of subsurface cultural debris. While most of the site has been excavated, unexcavated intact deposits are believed to still exist from the puebloan occupation in cave 2 and isolated deposits of possibly earlier material in cave 5 (Anderson et al. 1985).

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Prehistoric Unexcavated Site List in Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument

Lab of Anthro #	Field #	Description
LA 10041	DPM 1	Small masonry pueblo [REDACTED]: small sherds and chipped stone assoc.
LA 10042	DPM 2	Possible Georgetown pithouses [REDACTED] [REDACTED] plainware sherds and flakes assoc.
LA 10044	DPM 4	Three Circle pithouses [REDACTED] black-on-white and corrugated sherds and chipped stone assoc.
LA 10045	DPM 5	Masonry roomblock [REDACTED] manos and slab metate assoc.
LA 4913	M 34	Two cliff shelters--one with masonry wall, one with pictograph. No artifacts.
LA 54955	TJ Ruin	100-room pueblo [REDACTED] Relatively undisturbed Mimbres/Post Classic site.
LA 10046		Cliff shelter--habitation. No artifacts.
LA 10047		Cliff storage unit--section of masonry wall. No artifacts.
LA 10048		Apache burial on pole structure in cliff shelter.
LA 10049		Pueblo masonry room in cliff shelter. Masonry similar to Gila Cliff Dwellings. No artifacts.
LA 10050		Pictographs--three birds above stepped pyramids.
LA 10052		Lithic concentration [REDACTED] utilized flakes, blades and debitage. Two Alma plain sherds may be from LA 10055.
LA 10053		Series of masonry and unstructured check dams on [REDACTED]
LA 10055		Seven adjoining rooms with court [REDACTED] [REDACTED] sherds and chipped stone present. Shows signs of pothunting.

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Prehistoric Unexcavated Sites, cont.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| LA 10056 | Cliff shelter--storage. Remnants of dry-laid masonry wall. No artifacts. |
| LA 10057 | Cliff shelter--habitation. Possible storage cists. Some ceramics. Shows signs of pothunting. |
| LA 10058 | Pueblo masonry rooms in cliff shelter. Masonry similar to Gila Cliff Dwellings. No artifacts. Pot holes present. |
| LA 10059 | Cliff shelter--habitation. Pot holes present. No artifacts. |
| LA 10060 | Georgetown pithouses and cists in cliff-base shelter: plainware ceramics associated. Pot holes present. |
| LA 10061 | Cliff shelter--storage unit. Remnant of dry-laid masonry wall. No artifacts. |
| LA 10062 | Cliff shelter--habitation. No artifacts. |
| LA 10063 | Rincon cliff shelter--habitation. No artifacts. |
| LA 10064 | Cliff shelter--habitation. No artifacts. |
| LA 10065 | Cliff shelter--storage unit. Wood impressed adobe fragments found. |
| LA 10066 | Cliff shelter. No artifacts. |
| LA 10067 | Cliff shelter--work unit with associated pictographs. Fourteen axe sharpening grooves and pecked holes. Modern names carved in shelter roof. |
| LA 10068 | Cliff shelter--work unit with associated pictograph. Two pecked, oval depressions. No artifacts. Shows signs of pothunting. |
| LA 10069 | Cliff shelter--habitation unit. Few sherds, adobe fragments and vegetal remains. Extensively pothunted. |

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Prehistoric Unexcavated Sites, cont.

LA 10081	One-room masonry structure [REDACTED] black-on-white ceramics associated.
LA 10082	Chipping site on [REDACTED] Possibly Archaic.
LA 10083	Chipped stone and sherd scatter [REDACTED] Possibly associated with LA 10045.
LA 10085	Cliff shelter. May be modern campsite. No artifacts.

All descriptions of the surveyed sites were taken from the 1968 survey records and descriptions in the draft report on the archeology of the Gila Cliff Dwellings (Anderson et al. 1985). As noted, few of the sites contained diagnostic surface artifacts, and detailed descriptions are not available.

Site maps were adapted from the draft report on Gila Cliff Dwellings by Anderson et al., 1985. They were drafted by Lyndi Hubbell of Santa Fe, NM.

*The list of sites with the addition of Gila Cliff Dwellings forms the list of contributing sites to the Register nomination.

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collections (at Gila Cliff Dwellings and TJ Ruin) and excavations (Gila Cliff Dwellings) have been conducted, substantial amounts of material remain undisturbed. Excavations at Gila Cliff Dwellings have confirmed the presence of stratified deposits, artifactual and botanical remains, chronometric data, faunal assemblages, and mortuary remains. The structural integrity of the cliff dwellings is also excellent; all of which suggest that other less exposed sites within the Monument will hold comparable scientific materials. Additionally, the size of the uninvestigated area at Gila Cliff Dwellings indicates that the site's full research potential remains to be realized. Information that has been and can potentially be derived from the 33 sites can be used to address questions of settlement and subsistence, social organization, population movement, cultural interaction, and climatic change. Many of the small sites can yield information on site function, daily activities, craft specialization, and economic patterns.

Successfully addressing these concerns is being jeopardized by the lack of published material and by the ever-increasing incidence of unauthorized digging in archeological sites. Most of the large Mimbres sites outside the Monument have been vandalized to the point of destruction. Stuart and Gauthier (1981) report that up to 95 percent of Mimbres sites in the surrounding areas have been subjected to systematic pot hunting. These disturbances affect not only the physical but the contextual integrity of the sites. Therefore, the importance of the Monument's nomination as a district assures the protection and preservation of a group of sites that are not well understood. Register Placement will safeguard a body of data associated with one of the major prehistoric cultures in the southwestern United States.

Uniqueness/Representativeness

The undisturbed nature of most of the sites within the Monument boundaries is unique in the Mimbres area. Classic Mimbres phase sites are well known for their finely crafted black-on-white ceramics with zoomorphic and naturalistic designs. Black market trafficking in these ceramics has created an increased demand for prehistoric artifacts in the Southwest that is being supplied through the illicit excavation and/or complete destruction of archeological sites for profit. The lucrative trade in artifacts has placed Mimbres sites on an 'endangered species' list for cultural resources. Consequently, the 33 sites within the Monument boundaries constitute a sample of a fast disappearing resource.

The sites within the Monument form a sample that embodies characteristics distinct to the Gila Valley and represent time periods

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that are undocumented elsewhere in the Mimbres area. The sites form a unique, intact sample of multiple and single component sites ranging from pithouses to pueblos to artifact scatters; these contain data regarding the relationship between phases and subcultures of the Mogollon (see Section 7, description).

Gila Cliff Dwelling National Monument is the only National Monument to contain Mimbres sites, with sites ranging from the Archaic through Early and Late Pit House, and Classic periods. In fact, some of the earliest and latest sites known in the area are present within the Monument. The Monument also contains sites that have not yet been assigned a cultural/temporal designation, and as a result the potential exists for all phases of area development to be present within the boundaries. This potential is supported by survey data from the surrounding area (Chapman, Gossett, and Gossett 1985; Morris 1985). The pithouses and pueblos found within the Monument were part of a larger cultural system focused along major and secondary river drainages and in highland locations. The way of life represented evolved from horticulture and semipermanent habitations into a multifaceted, complex society with multiple spheres of influence. Sites within the Monument exemplify a wide range of these activities.

The collective body of prehistoric sites within the Monument is unique because it includes the earliest occurrences of cultural innovations and changes in the Mogollon area (Fitting, Hemphill and Abbe 1982). In almost all instances, cultural/temporal phases, used to designate periods of culture change, occur consistently earlier in the Gila Valley than in any other area. Because of this, the potential exists for understanding the origins and spread of cultural innovations and the processes of cultural change.

In general, Mogollon sites are underrepresented on the National Register, and those sites listed are biased toward particular phases and site types; specifically, large, Classic phase villages. Thus the data preserved by Register inclusion is limited in scope, and information potentials are also limited. Broad patterns and questions of cultural process in Mogollon culture development will be difficult to recognize or address if a more representative sample of sites is not conserved as a future data base. Small sites as well as the large and dramatic must be included in the Register. Southwestern New Mexico has not and probably will never be the subject of intense archeological investigations that have fostered our understandings of Anasazi and Hohokam culture elsewhere in the Southwest; much of the land in southwestern New Mexico is privately owned, and no large scale development has or is occurring which would

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foster such investigations. The knowledge we have has resulted from 'salvage' work on sites already disturbed.

Gila Cliff Dwellings (LA 13658) is singularly unique in that it is the only known Tularosa phase site in the Gila Valley and simultaneously represents one of the earliest as well as latest site occupations known in that area. Tularosa phase sites are common to the north in the Reserve area, but are considered rare elsewhere in the Mogollon area as are cave occupations. Although the use of caves for storage or temporary shelters is common in the Southwest, use as habitations is not. With the exception of Gila Cliff Dwellings, sites in the surrounding areas contain only small numbers of Tularosa phase ceramics, and none of these sites exhibit characteristics suggesting actual habitation. Closer examination of the culturally unassigned sites within the Monument boundaries may result in the identification of small, limited activity sites associated with the Tularosa phase occupation at Gila Cliff Dwellings. The early use of the cave site by a group of Archaic hunter-gatherers, and the latest use during the first 25 years of the post-Classic period contributes to this site's value.

Thus, the Mogollon occupation of the upper reaches of the Gila River Valley is remarkable because of its temporal span, cultural representativeness, and cultural integrity. The Gila-Cliff Valley was a focal point in the cultural development of a larger area, and sites within the Valley correlate with periods of change in that larger area. Coupled with these general characteristics, the sample of sites contained within the boundaries of the National Monument are relatively undisturbed, and the potential to yield data concerning the development and evolution of Mogollon culture is extremely high. Location along a major, permanent watercourse and between two recognized branches of Mogollon subculture provides an opportunity to clarify the relationships between these branches as well as define the nature and degree of interaction between them.

Scientific Value/Research Potential

The period prior to A.D. 1000 was marked by similarities in cultural development throughout the Mogollon area, what is problematic are characterizations of settlement and subsistence patterns, the time of the introduction of maize, and the relationships between high and low elevation and large and small sites. After A.D. 1000 and up to circa A.D. 1400, the Mogollon area was characterized by rapid change - e.g., substantial population growth, in situ village growth, increased reliance on agriculture, and a shift to above ground structures. In the Gila,

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patterns of cultural development accelerated with the most intensive period of occupation during the Mangus phase (A.D. 800-1000). The reasons for those changes are still unclear, and theories are open to argument. Changes may have been in part due to innovations seeping in from surrounding cultures and to increased efficiency in agricultural techniques. In the later periods, Mogollon cultural configurations reflected both the old and new. Not only was there diversity between subcultures, but much diversity was exhibited within subcultures; the 'Classic' Mimbres may in actuality have been 'Classic' only in the Mimbres Valley. Social organization varied between valleys, new integrative mechanisms occurred, and architectural and material culture differed sharply between areas. In addition, new populations immigrated to certain areas while apparently rejecting other areas for reasons not yet understood.

The physical characteristics of sites within the Monument suggest the potential to illuminate some of these problems. Chronology, settlement and subsistence, social organization, demography, and the Animas, Salado, and Tularosa phases are concerns that could be addressed. They are examined in the accompanying table in detail.

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RESEARCH POTENTIALS ON NOMINATED SITES

PROBLEM DOMAIN

DISCUSSION

Chronology

Introduction of Ceramics

Validity of the cave deposit stratigraphy question. Absence of datable materials; posited dates range from 200 B.C. (Wheat 1955) to A.D. 200 (Anyon, Gilman, and LeBlanc 1980). Martin and Plog (1973) push it back to 600 B.C.

Georgetown Phase Dates

Wide range of beginning and ending dates; Gila River Valley produces the earliest known dates.

San Francisco Phase Dates

Wide range of beginning and ending dates, complicated by the introduction of black-on-white ceramics. Most investigators think phase too short for rapid ceramic developments characteristic of the period.

Classic Mimbres Phase

Unbroken stylistic ceramic sequence occurs between end of Three Circle and middle Classic, but there is 150 year gap in construction dates. By end of period, complete breakdown of Mogollon culture, and shift to a non-Mogollon Animas tradition. Debate centers on validity of 'Classic' phase outside Mimbres Valley, ceramic specialization and exchange, population movement, and validity of a Mangus phase.

Mangus Phase

Validity of the phase questioned; some areas is considered transitional to the Classic, in others phase is rejected. Anyon, Gilman, and LeBlanc (1980) suggest small (Mangus) sites part of a larger Classic phase settlement system, thus site differences are of function. The Gila

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RESEARCH POTENTIALS (cont'd.)

PROBLEM DOMAIN

DISCUSSION

Sample Bias

Valley survey (Chapman, Gossett, and Gossett 1985) validates presence of the phase in that area.

Most of absolute dates for phases obtained from large, habitation sites; tree-ring dates are probably reflective of construction episodes only.

Settlement and Subsistence
Pre-Georgetown Patterns

Problems occur in nature of relationships between elevated villages and valley floor artifact scatters, site function, and size of occupant population. Shift from single short-term occupation to remodeling and long-term and sequential use not understood. Debate focuses on seasonal use of sites versus semipermanent to permanent occupation of villages with agricultural dependence.

Georgetown Settlement Pattern

No explanation exists for shift from inaccessible bluffs to accessible riverine environments; degree of agricultural reliance by populations remains speculative.

San Francisco Settlement Size

Number of pithouses increases markedly as does the total size of the site; use of first terraces increases; multicomponent sites become common. Reasons for changes unclear.

Three Circle Phase Site
Expansion

Villages increase in size; occur in

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RESEARCH POTENTIALS (cont'd.)

PROBLEM DOMAIN

DISCUSSION

Mangus and Classic Mimbres
Patterns

new and different locations along
secondary drainages. Reasons have not
been examined in detail.

Numbers of sites increase, especially
at higher elevations; shift to
above-ground architecture. Evidence
for non-Mogollon influence, decreased
dependence on agriculture, and overall
change in diet. None of changes
explained.

Social Organization
Intrasite organization

Differences between large and small
pithouses not investigated. Large
houses viewed as communal
redistributive centers somehow related
to lineage or clan organization.
Others feel small pithouses occupied
by extended families, communal
structures transcended lineages.

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RESEARCH POTENTIALS (cont'd.)

PROBLEM DOMAIN

DISCUSSION

San Francisco Phase Site
Variability

Some areas tend toward smaller communities, while numbers of large sites decrease in lower elevations; fewer kivas occur at sites overall; evidence of social relationships shifting between areas. None explained.

Classic Period Site Diversity

Wide range of site types and size, reasons why problematic. Hierarchical relationships postulated as explanation. Site aggregation also unexplained. Mangus/Classic site dichotomy thought to be similar to Hosta Butte/Bonito phase site relationship. All questions of social organization have yet to be understood.

Demography

Population Increase and
Decreases Estimates

Areas of uncertainty concern data indicating possible and unexpected regional population decline; rearrangement of settlement during the Georgetown phase, and rapid population increase during Three Circle phase in combination with changing material culture. Latter indicates outside influences. During Classic, two episodes population dispersal and decline postulated at large sites; then collapse.

Animas and Salado Population
Movement

Conflicting ideas as to an explanation for introduction of material culture traits characteristics of these cultures. Ideas focus on population intrusion from outside Mogollon or an in situ development. Debate due to paucity of

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RESEARCH POTENTIALS (cont'd.)

PROBLEM DOMAIN

DISCUSSION

Animas Phase

firm dates; has led to speculations about temporal assignment of phase and appearance of outside ceramic types in area's archeological record.

Generally agreed Animas sites closely related to Casa Grandes; nature of the relationship is unclear. Theories are questionable. Some see Animas occupation of Mimbres area as part of economic system centered at Casa Grandes whereby the area was exploited for its resources; their intrusion may have caused abandonment of Mimbres area. However, Mimbres not Animas ceramic characteristics of sites in the Gila during that period. Others suggest shift in location of the Mimbres population due to changing climatic conditions; there is a gap in the archeological record until reoccupation of the Mimbres Valley by the Animas (?). Questions focus on nature of remains, actual population emigration, and development of trade networks.

Salado Phase

Period marked by changes in material culture, social organization, and settlement and subsistence. Phase posited as outgrowth of preceding Animas or migratory groups [REDACTED] Little data exists to clarify. Any new information concerning occupation constitute significant contribution toward understanding demographic, settlement, and chronological features of Salado adaptation. Potential for

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RESEARCH POTENTIALS (cont'd.)

PROBLEM DOMAIN

DISCUSSION

Tularosa Phase

Salado remains in Monument good.
Phase is controversial; chronological
relationships between it and previous
Mimbres and Animas unclear.

Gila Cliff Dwellings represents best
evidence Tularosa occupation in
southwestern New Mexico; one other
small site known, and possible
component at third. Major Tularosa
occupation to north. Cliff Dwellings
contemporaneous with those of Mesa
Verde and Gallina; numerically are
rare sites that represent special
adaptations. Combination of Tularosa
occupation and this construction type
is anomaly; not been adequately
addressed.

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RESEARCH POTENTIALS (cont'd.)

SITE/PROBLEM CORRELATES

Gila Cliff Dwelling National Monument Sites that potentially will contribute information on problems in:

1. Pre-Ceramic periods. LA 1005 and 10081
 2. Georgetown Phase. LA 10042, 10045(?), 10060 and 10083.
 3. San Francisco Phase. LA 10045(?) and TJ Ruin(?).
 4. Three Circle Phase. LA 10044, TJ Ruin(?) and LA 10045(?)
 5. Mangus Phase.
- Chronology LA 10041, 10045, 10055, 10057, 10058, LA 10062, and 10069.
- Settlement and Subsistence LA 10041, 10045, 4913, 10046, 10047, LA 10049, 10053, 10055, 10056, 10057, LA 10058, 10059, 100611, 10062, 10063, LA 10064, 10065, 10066, 10067, 10068, LA 10069, 10081, and 10085.
- Social Organization LA 10041, 10045, 10046, 10049, 10055, LA 10057, 10058, 10059, 10062, 10064, LA 10069, and 10081.
- Demography Same as Social Organization.
6. Classic Mimbres. The same sites are included as under Mangus because from surface ceramics it is impossible to tell which sites are affiliated with which phase. Except for the TJ Ruin, which is a Classic Mimbres Phase Site.
 7. Animas Phase. TJ Ruin (LA 54955) and Gila Cliff (LA 13658).
 8. Salado Phase. Gila Cliff Dwellings (LA 13658), TJ Ruin (LA 54955).
 9. Tularosa Phase. Gila Cliff Dwellings (LA 13658), TJ Ruin (LA 54955).

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