

Archaeological Flotation Analysis at the Etzanoa site (14CO3): Preliminary Artifactual and Geoarchaeological Insights from a Single Profile Column

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The archaeological site known as Etzanoa also known as site 14CO3, is an ancestral Wichita village site located along the Walnut River in Cowley County, Kansas. Occupied most heavily during the Great Bend Aspect (approximately AD 1425-1700). In its peak, Etzanoa had a population of 25,000 people. Dr. Donald Blakeslee recently rediscovered the site in 2013. The Wichita State Archaeological Field School has been doing excavations at the site for the last several years. In those regular excavations, all sediments were screened with ¼ inch mesh, leaving smaller artifacts unrecovered. The present research presents the preliminary results of a targeted sampling regime collected in 2022, in which total sediments of a 1.2 meter vertical section of the excavation were processed for flotation. In previous excavations, the soil would go through a quarter inch sieve and anything smaller would get lost. Flotation allows us to recover the microartifacts that would have been lost. The resulting eleven samples underwent archaeological flotation to recover microartifacts (such as lithic debris, pottery, and charcoal) and pertinent geoarchaeological data in the way of sand grading, to better understand the depositional history of the locale. With an 87 to 98% recovery rate, 106 microartifacts were recovered within the depths of surface to 50 cmbd. No microartifacts were recovered below 50 cmbd. This is only one baulk wall of the site, there are other baulk wall and features to analyze.