

Cave containing earliest human DNA dubbed historic

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A cave in Oregon's high desert where archaeologists have found the earliest DNA evidence of human habitation in North America has been added to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Paisley Five Mile Point Caves are part of a lava formation outside the community of Paisley in south-central Oregon.

University of Oregon archaeologist Dennis Jenkins led excavations that turned up fossilized human feces—known as coprolites—that were radiocarbon dated to 14,300 years ago.

That is 1,000 years before the oldest stone points of the Clovis culture, which for much of the 20th century was believed to represent the first people in North America.

Jenkins says the site has provided significant new information about the timing and spread of the first settlers in the Americas.

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