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PVN OP 414 Excavation Report

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Site 414

Site 414 is situated within a narrow fissure cut by a seasonal tributary of the Quebrada La Guasma on the southwest margin of the Naco valley. The settlement is spread out across the relatively level summit of a high terrace on the south bank of the aforementioned watercourse. The channel is ca. 75m to the north while the lower, steep ascents of the Cerro de Montura (part of the Cordillera de Merendon) crowd around the site on the west and south. Site 414 occupies, in essence, a small cul de sac bordered by hills. The easiest means of passage between this pocket and the rest of the Naco valley is from the southeast, following the valley of the pass cut by the La Guasma tributary. The closest recorded settlements are Sites 415 and 492 in the Naco valley, approximately 750m and 850m to the south and on the other side of the Cerro de Montura.

The 14 constructions comprising Site 414 are dispersed in a northwest-southeast trending line generally paralleling the terrace margin. Structures 414-1/5, 11, and RC.4 comprise a nucleated aggregate on the northwest settlement margin. Five of these diminutive buildings (all less than 1m high) surround a patio open to the northeast while Str. 414-4 and RC.4 are in close proximity immediately to the southeast. Structures 414-6/10 and RC.1/3 occupy the site's center. These platforms are extensive (covering 250m² to 880m² basally) but rise to varying heights above the surrounding terrain; from the 0.45m of Str. 414-6 to 1.66m for Str. 414-7. Structures 414-7, 414-8, and 414-10 define a patio open to the southeast, Str. 414-6 and 414-9 being outliers to the northwest and south-southeast respectively. The latter is built into the hillslope on the terrace's southern boundary, its summit elevation undergoing a marked diminution from northeast to southwest towards the escarpment. Rock concentrations 2 and 3 together may be the remnants of a construction sandwiched in between Str. 414-9, 414-10, and the southern hills while RC.1 is a small cluster of presumed building debris (ca. 4m in diameter) indicating the former presence of a small edifice 9m northwest of Str. 414-6. Structures 414-12/14 occupy a low rise on the site's southeast margin. There is no clear patio focus here, the platforms being raised above the west, east, and south sides of the eminence. Each of these buildings was placed so as to take advantage of the natural rise, their downslope flanks being much higher than their upslope margins (Str. 414-14, in fact, has no apparent elevation on its northern, uphill, side).

The field containing Site 414 was devoted to cattle pasture in 1996, as was the case when the settlement was first visited by project members in 1991. Construction of a cattle corral and a water tank on the southeast site margins may well have disturbed prehispanic deposits. Plowing around the remaining structures has contributed to the damage as evidenced by the heavily disturbed remnants of at least three buildings glossed as RC. 1-4. Erosion down the steep face of the terrace supporting Site 414 has almost certainly added to the settlement's deterioration as artifacts were noted in the few exposed portions of this heavily overgrown ascent. How extensive these dislocations have been remains unknown.

Fully 130 person days were expended in clearing 43m² on and around Str. 414-6/8 during late June through early July, 1996. The work was overseen by A. McCoy, L. Sering, and J. Solmeto.

Structure 414-6

Structure 414-6 is 24m southwest of Str. 414-7 and 63m southeast of Str. 414-4 in the

approximate center of the site. This 0.45m-high eminence is not incorporated within a patio group but seems to be an outlier of the Str. 414-7/8, 414-10 aggregate which lies immediately to the southeast. There were no signs of looting on Str. 414-6 but the edifice appears to have been plowed within the year prior to excavation in 1996. Excavations here were limited to a 1x1m trench (Subop. 414B, oriented 26 degrees; supervised by J. Solometo), of which 9m were excavated to maximum depths of 1.35m below current ground surface outside presumed construction and 1.5m below surface beneath the building's approximate center. Suboperation 414B bisected Str. 414-6's northeast face, extending from just outside the platform's margin to the near the summit's center. Lots in Subop. 414B's northeastern-most square meter were screened through 1/4" mesh while those in the immediate vicinity of Bu.1 were processed through 1/8" mesh. No unambiguous architecture was detected in these excavations; Str. 414-6 may not be a platform but a trash deposit that accumulated over a significant span. Recovery of bajareque fragments from levels associated with almost time spans (save TS.1, and, because of disturbance, the evidence for TS.4 is equivocal) suggests that ephemeral buildings existed nearby throughout most of the exposed sequence.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.1	-	-
2	-	-	S.2-6	-	MPrecl
3	-	-	S.7-8	-	MPrecl
4	-	-	-	Bu.1	LCLI
5	-	-	S.9	-	HIST

Time Span 1

Stratum 1, a strong brown (7.5YR-4/2), very compact, clayey silt, was exposed to maximum thicknesses of 0.18m and 0.06m on the northeast and southwest extremes of Subop. 414B (the stratum's base was not encountered in either area). This level appears to be culturally sterile and may represent the naturally deposited soil upon which human occupation of the area was established.

Time Span 2

This interval witnesses a considerable build-up of earth containing significant quantities of cultural material. Stratum 2, a strong brown (10YR-4/3), compact silt containing angular stones, covers S.1 in the northeastern portion of the trench by 0.02-0.13m. Stratum 4 is another strong brown (10YR-4/3) silt but which is loosely compacted and generally lacks stones. Strata 2 and 4 are at about the same level directly overlying S.1 and, though separated by 8m of

unexcavated earth, may be segments of the same deposit. Strata 5 and 6 are two adjoining levels that bury S.4 on the southwest by 0.17-0.27m. Both elements are silts that vary in color from yellowish brown (10YR-5/4, S.5) to brown (10YR-5/3, S.6) and from hard to loosely compacted (S.5 and 6 respectively). These minor differences, coupled with the location of the two layers at the same depth, suggest that S.5 and 6 are portions of what had originally been a single level the continuity of which was disrupted by post-depositional activities. The primary cause of this subtle disjunction was the intrusion of Bu.1 into S.6 during TS.4. No deposits comparable to S.5 and 6 were recorded on the northeast.

Covering S.2, 4, 5, and 6 is S.3, a deposit of dark yellowish brown (10YR-4/4), compact silt with a moderate amount of small rock inclusions found throughout Subop. 414B. Stratum 3's undulating surface rises 0.14m for 6m northeast-to-southwest before being disrupted by the apparent intrusion of S.7, 8, and 10. Activities associated with the introduction of the above layers seem to have truncated S.3's uppermost portion, the latter preserved to something approximating its original height over the southwestern-most excavated meter. *If* this interpretation is correct, then S. 3 ascended 0.52m over 11m northeast-southwest by the end of TS.2. Stratum 3's base also rises 0.4m over this distance. This soil level, therefore, was apparently deposited at roughly equivalent thicknesses across an earlier rise comprised, in part of S.5 and 6 (underlying S.1, 2, and 4 ascend only 0.06m over 10m northeast-southwest, implying that the rise in question postdates the introduction of the earliest uncovered levels). The undulations in S.3's summit hint at the level's prolonged exposure to the elements and human action following TS.2.

Strata 2-6, therefore, seem to be represent gradual soil accumulation occurring over a protracted interval. The inclusion of considerable quantities of cultural material within the five layers points to a substantial human occupation in the immediate area throughout the span in question. Strata 2-6 may, in fact, represent a trash mound composed of debris swept up from nearby portions of the settlement, possibly the Str. 414-7/8 and Str. 414-10 patio group to the southeast.

Time Span 3

Evidence of activities pertaining to this period is concentrated in the southwestern half of the excavation. Here, a complex stratigraphic sequence hints at localized disturbance of the pre-existing layers. Strata 7 and 8, separated by 1m of unexcavated earth, are the principal markers of human activity disrupting the uppermost segment of S.3 over an area measuring 3.79m northeast-southwest. Stratum 7, a brown/dark brown (7.5YR-4/2), compact silt incorporating bajareque fragments and numerous small to medium-size angular rocks, disrupts S.3's summit over an exposed 2.04m before disappearing into the unexcavated block on the southwest. This level is 0.04-0.21m thick and protrudes as much as 0.17m into underlying S.3. Stratum 8 is found in roughly the same stratigraphic position as S.7, on the southwest side of the aforementioned block. This layer, a brown (10YR-5/3), ashy, compact silt containing variably sized bajareque fragments, lenses out on the southwest and reaches a maximum thickness of 0.28m. The 0.27m separating S.8 from S.3 on the southwest is filled with a downward extension of overlying S.10, a brown/dark brown (10YR-4/3), compact silt. Stratum 10 may have filled a cavity left open at the conclusion of TS.3, possibly related to the intrusion of Bu.1.

The high frequencies of cultural material found in S.7 and 8, their distinctive appearances, and the disruption of the stratigraphic sequence engendered by their introduction

suggest that the above layers represent debris intruded into soil deposited during the preceding TS.2. The near-vertical truncation of S.3 on the far southwest, as noted above, may point to the excavation of a pit in this area into which S.7 and 8 were deposited. More likely, the declivity in question was dug at a later date, cutting S.8 as well as S. 3 (see Bu.1, TS.4, below). Time Span 3, therefore, seems to represent a short-time, spatially restricted occupation of the area exposed in Subop. 414B.

Time Span 4

Burial 1 was encountered 1.16-1.3m below current ground surface (measured from Subop. 414B's southeast corner) within the loosely compacted brown ashy soil of S.6. The interment consists of the partial remains of a single adult, apparently buried in a tightly flexed position, facing east with the head oriented to the south. The bones are scattered over 0.14m vertically and 0.88m north-south and do not preserve their anatomical integrity in all cases. Artifacts, including at least one large obsidian blade and large ceramic fragments, abound in the vicinity of the bones but none of these were unambiguously associated with the body as offerings. Analyses of these items suggest that many date to a period radically later than other objects derived from deposits unearthed in Subop. 414B (Late Classic I as opposed to the Middle Preclassic majority). Burial 1, therefore, appears to have been intruded into the stratigraphic sequence created during TS.2 and 3, probably after a considerable hiatus. This disruption may be related to the "pit" dug through S.3 and 8 described in TS.3.

Though attractive, the above interpretation does not account for the apparent integrity of S.3 overlying Bu.1. At present, we hypothesize that the grave was filled in with the same type of soil removed during its creation, maintaining roughly the same stratigraphic order after refilling the grave. This seems to have been the case with S.6; Bu.1 is found in a southwestward continuation of S.5, the principal difference between the two being S.6's very loose compaction along with the inclusion of human bones and temporally diagnostic artifacts out of keeping with those found at the same level and above it. Though not completely satisfying, the above account of Bu.1's insinuation into the Subop. 414B sequence matches the available data well enough to be tentatively accepted for the moment.

Time Span 5

The final period attested to in Subop. 414B sees the gradual, apparently natural, deposition of S.9 over the entire excavated area. Stratum 9 is a 0.18-0.38m thick (excluding the downward extension in the area of the putative pit) layer of brown/dark brown (10YR-4/3) silt that is compact over much of its distribution save in the southwestern-most 1.12m where it is very loosely consolidated. Artifacts dating to the recent past, including metal nails, glass, and glazed pottery sherds, were recovered at various points throughout the level, mixed with prehistoric items. Though no sign of a modern construction was noted in the immediate vicinity of the excavation, such a building (possibly associated with cattle raising in the area) possibly existed nearby. Plowing over and around Str. 414-6 almost certainly resulted in the mixture of prehispanic and historic period materials.

Structure 414-7

Structure 414-7 closes off the northwest side of the patio defined by Strs. 414-7/8 and Str. 414-10, ca. 24m northeast of Str. 414-6 and 27m west of Str. 414-8. Suboperation 414C was dug against the building's northwest flank, oriented 104 degrees, and extending 14.96m from beyond the platform's surface-visible margin to the approximate center of the summit. Digging here, under the direction of A. McCoy, reached maximum depths of 1.32m below current ground surface outside construction and 1.07m beneath ground level within construction fill. Three construction phases were tentatively recognized during the course of this work.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.1	-	MPrecl?
2	Str. 414-7-2nd	U.1-7	S.2	-	MPrecl
3	Str. 414-7-1st	U.8,9	-	-	MPrecl
4	-	-	S.2	-	-
5	Str. 414-Sub1,2	U.10,11	-	-	LCLIII
6	-	-	S.3,4	F.1,2	-

Time Span 1

Stratum 1 is a fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, dark brown clay with few included stones. This level was uncovered to a maximum thickness of 0.2m (its base was not revealed) and ascends 0.07m over 6.18m southeast-northwest (exposed in two discontinuous segments). Stratum 1 underlies all exposed architecture, indicating that it was deposited, probably by natural means, prior to erection of the exposed segments of Strs. 414-7, 414-Sub1, and 414-Sub2. Recovery of artifacts from this level indicates that there was a human presence in the immediate area predating the raising of these buildings.

Time Span 2

Units 1 and 2, oriented approximately 348 degrees, comprise the northwestern basal facing and first ascending riser of Str. 414-7-2nd, respectively. The former stands 0.61m tall and rests directly on S.1. Unit 1 is 0.76m wide and is succeeded on the southeast by the 0.55m-high ascent of U.2. Both elements are fashioned of unmodified angular stones and cobbles set in a brown mud mortar but not placed in clear courses nor were their naturally flatter aspects oriented outwards. Rock sizes range from 0.13x0.2m to 0.37x0.4m. The impression conveyed by U.1 and 2 is of fairly massive, but casually built, walls. It is very likely that the lower 0.14m of U.1 was buried by that portion of S.2 directly overlying S.1 (as suggested by the stratigraphic position of U.9, see TS.3; see TS. 4 for a description of S.2). Unit 1, in this case, would have

stood 0.46m above ancient ground surface. Unit 2 is apparently backed on the southeast by ca. 3.5m-wide earthen surface. This element ends at U.3; in the absence of a clearly preserved floor, we cannot say for certain how U.2 and 3 were articulated.

Unit 3 is a 0.59m-thick, 0.34m-high stone column revealed only in the northeast trench wall. This entity, built of unmodified river cobbles set in a brown mud mortar, may mark the edge of a doorjamb for Str. 414-7-2nd's superstructure. No effort was apparently made to choose rocks with naturally flat faces for inclusion in U.3. Most stones in U.3 measure between 0.24x0.34m to 0.42x0.57m. Southeast of U.3, a sequence of four earthen fill units was revealed (U.4-7). Unit 6, the thickest exposed element (0.87m thick, its base lying beyond excavation limits), consists of moderately coarse-textured, moderately soft-compacted reddish brown soil containing considerable quantities of stones ranging from small pebbles (0.01-0.04m along their longest dimensions) to rocks measuring 0.1x0.1m (angular and rounded examples are both attested to in U.6). Distinct lenses of moderately coarse-textured gray-brown soil and very fine-textured, very hard-compacted tan clay are recorded in this earthen fill. Unit 6 slopes up 0.5m over 2.04m northwest-southeast in the southeastern-most portion of the trench. Built against U.6 on the northeast are U.4 and 5. Unit 4, a 0.1m thick (minimally), fine-textured, hard-compacted tan clay with very few included stones, is overlain by 0.12m of U.5. The latter is identical to U.4 in all ways save color, tending towards gray-brown. Unit 7, a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted brown clay with relatively few included stones, buries U.4 and 5 by 0.16-0.2m and runs more-or-less level between U.3 and the top of U.6. Units 6 and 7, covering the lower 0.21m of U.3, may be remnants of Str. 414-7-2nd's summit floor.

Structure 414-7-2nd stood a reconstructed 1.9m high, was aligned roughly 348degrees, and may have been ascended on the northwest by two moderately high stone-faced risers, the uppermost giving way to a ca. 3.5m wide earthen surface terminating on the southeast in a door giving access to a summit room.

Time Span 3

This interval sees the deposition of two fill units (U.8 and 9) that seem to be part of an abortive effort to elevate the platform's summit and extend its northwest flank. Unit 8, a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, brown clay incorporating numerous small (0.02-0.04m, longest dimension) rounded and angular stones, covers U.6 and 7 by 0.19-0.26m on the summit. Unit 9 succeeds U.8 immediately northwest of U.3, continues downslope covering U.1-2, and lenses out 0.54m northwest of U.1. This entity consists of a moderately coarse-textured, hard-compacted, brown soil containing that contains almost more gravel than earth (the stones measure 0.02-0.22m on their longest dimension). U.9's base on the northwest slants up 0.09m over 0.54m southeast-to-northwest, apparently having come to rest on ancient ground surface exposed during the use of Str. 414-7-2nd.

Units 8 and 9 cover all Str. 414-7-2nd architecture. It is unlikely that these two entities were introduced by natural means. Their distinct composition and location atop some of the highest parts of a relatively tall edifice suggest, instead, that they were purposefully introduced by human action, apparently during a significant renovation of Str. 414-7-2nd. The absence of stone construction retaining and built on these fill units, replacing U.1-3, implies that: Str. 414-7-1st was an earthen platform; this final version of the structure was never completed; or, the earlier platform was purposefully terminated by blanketing it in earth. We tend to favor the last two interpretations as there is no sign of any facing or superstructure architecture, earthen or

stone, pertaining to Str. 414-7-1st. Another possibility is that all Str. 414-7-1st's stones were robbed to raise the edifices of later Site 414 occupants (see Strs. 414-Sub1 and 414-Sub2, below). Though possible, we are inclined to reject this interpretation because of: 1.) the total lack of stones, suggesting a thoroughness out of keeping with the casual recycling of building material; 2.) and the absence of stones from contexts that would have been submerged below ground surface during that later occupation (i.e., where U.9 is buried by the continued deposition of S.2 during TS.4).

Time Span 4

Deposition of S.2, a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, brown clay with relatively few included rocks, may have resumed during this interval, eventually burying the lower 0.4m of U.9. Stratum 2 eventually achieved exposed thicknesses of 0.18-0.55m. Though artifacts are found throughout S.2, its accumulation over the northwest flank of Str. 414-7-1st suggests a period in which the platform was abandoned, or at least was no longer being maintained.

Time Span 5

Two casual, surface-level constructions (Strs. 414-Sub1 and 414-Sub2) were raised on S.2 during this span. Structure 414-Sub1 is represented by U.10, two converging foundations, each ca. 0.3m wide and 0.1-0.2m high, built of small angular stones bonded together using a brown mud mortar. Stone sizes here range from 0.06x0.08m to 0.1x0.2m. Unit 10 may be Str. 414-Sub1's north corner. Unit 11 is the surviving, uncovered remnant of Str. 414-Sub2. This entity is a line of cobbles and angular stones running 0.92m northwest-southeast and rising 0.2-0.25m (one stone's height) above S.2. Situated 0.1m southeast of U.10, U.11 is probably another foundation intended to support the perishable upper walls of a surface-level building. The U.11 stones are held together with a brown mud mortar. Both U.10 and 11 are set 0.06-0.07m into S.2 and consist of single lines of unmodified rocks whose naturally flat faces are not oriented outwards. Unit 11 is aligned roughly 283 degrees while U.10 is oriented 329 degrees, measured along the northeast foundation.

Structures 414-Sub1 and 414-Sub2 were apparently raised relatively late in the Str. 414-7 occupation sequence, postdating S.2's deposition and long after Str. 414-7-1st was abandoned. These edifices are probably components of a Late Classic III occupation that was apparently widespread across Site 414 (based on surface collections made at the settlement).

Time Span 6

Stratum 3 buries Strs. 414-Sub1 and 414-Sub2 along with most of U.9's lower slope (it pinches out between U.9 and overlying S.4 on the southeast). This earth level consists of a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted clay with numerous small angular and rounded stone inclusions (most of the rocks encompass 0.02-0.05m along their longest dimension). Stratum 3 ranges in exposed thickness from 0.15-0.5m and contains F.1 and 2. These dispersed collections of stones dislodged from construction are found for up to 1.43m southeast of U.11 (F.1) and 1.88m northwest of U.10 (F.2). Stratum 4, a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, dark brown, root-rich clay, overlies S.3 by 0.08-0.12m and

covers U.8 on the summit by an equivalent amount.

Structure 414-8

Structure 414-8 closes off the northeast flank of the patio defined by Strs. 414-7/8 and Str. 414-10, ca. 27m east of Str. 414-7 and 37m north and across the patio from Str. 414-10. The building was erected over land that slopes up gradually south-to-north before dropping precipitously into the seasonal watercourse that borders Site 414 on the north. That drop-off is 1m north of Str. 414-8. Suboperation 414D is a 1x20m trench, oriented 20 degrees, that bisected the edifice's southwest flank. These excavations, overseen by L. Sering, were initiated beyond surface visible-signs of construction on the southwest (plaza-facing side) and continued completely across the building. Three 1x1m blocks within Subop. 414D were not dug, the rest being carried down to maximum depths of 1.23m below current ground surface outside construction and 1.6m beneath ground level into and through construction on the summit. Sequential lots collected in the southwestern-most 1x1m block in Subop. 414D were screened through 1/4" mesh, others were not processed in this manner. A single construction phase was tentatively recognized in the course of this work.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.1	-	-
2	-	-	S.2-5	-	MPrecl
3	Str. 414-8-1st	U.1,2	S.6	F.1	MPrecl
4	-	-	S. 7	F.2	LCLIII, HIST

Time Span 1

Stratum 1, a dark yellowish brown (10YR-4/4), hard-compacted, gravel-rich deposit, is exposed to a maximum thickness of 0.36m underlying all uncovered architecture and strata (S.1's base lies beyond excavation limits). This layer has an undulating upper limit and ultimately rises 0.26m over 13m southwest-to-northeast (revealed in two discontinuous segments separated by 9m in which excavations were not pursued to sufficient depths to reveal S.1). Stratum 1 was almost completely devoid of cultural materials, the few artifacts it contained being limited to its uppermost 0.1m. Most likely, the objects in question percolated downwards from overlying culture-bearing deposits (especially artifact-rich S.2). Stratum 1, therefore, was probably introduced by natural means prior to the existence of substantial human occupation in the immediate environs of what would become Str. 414-8.

Time Span 2

Strata 2-5 are soil levels most of which contain significant quantities of cultural material and all of which were deposited atop S.1. These relations are clearest in the deep probe sunk beneath Str. 414-8's summit. Here, S.2, a brown/dark brown (10YR-4-3) soil, covers S.1 by 0.12-0.16m and is overlain over most of its exposed extent by 0.07-0.15m of S.3, a dark yellowish-brown earth (10YR-4/3). Strata 2 and 3 both contain large amounts of artifacts and organic remains, including animal bones, shell, and carbon, most likely representing slight, vertical gradations within a single 0.07-0.32m-thick trash deposit. These earth levels rest directly on, and conform to the same southwest-to-northeast ascending slope as, underlying S.1. This observation suggests that relatively little time and no noticeable construction intervened between the cessation of S.1's deposition and initiation of human occupation.

Strata 4 and 5 are separated from the aforementioned layers by 6m where digging did not reach sufficient depths to test for the continued presence of S.2 and 3. Stratum 1 was also not revealed in the northeastern-most portion of Subop. 414D where S.4 and 5 were uncovered. Strata 4 and 5 are included in TS.2, therefore, because of their stratigraphic position underlying U.1 (introduced in TS.3), location at approximately the same depths as S.2 and 3, and close similarities in color and content between S.4 and 3. Stratum 4, in fact, has the same color as S.3 and both contain comparably large quantities of artifacts and organic remains. This finding suggests that S.3 and 4 are parts of the same, spatially extensive, midden. Stratum 4 is thicker than its southwestern counterpart (minimally 0.47m thick, the base lying beyond excavation limits) and contains lenses of dark brown (10YR-3/3) and dark yellowish brown (10YR-3/4) soils. There is no sign of S.2 beneath S.4; either the former layer lenses out before reaching the excavated area or this very similar soil could not be distinguished from S.4 on Subop. 414D's northeastern margin. *If S.4 is the northeastern continuation of S.2 and 3, then we can conclude that this artifact-rich deposit maintains essentially the same elevation over 7m southwest-northeast.* Stratum 5 is a dark brown earth (10YR-3/3) that caps S.4 by 0.07-0.15m. This soil level contains fewer artifacts than its stratigraphic predecessor and has no equivalent on the southwest. Stratum 5 may be the outcome of soil deposition processes operating under highly localized conditions near what would become Str. 414-8's northeast margin.

Time Span 3

This interval witnesses the deposition of at least a portion of U.1, a brown/dark brown (10YR-4/3) to dark yellowish-brown (10YR-4/4) soil containing moderate amounts of cultural material. Unit 1 varies from 0.26-0.8m thick, resting directly on S.1 in the southwest, covering S.2 and 3 near Subop. 414D's center, and overlying S.4 and 5 in the northeast. The behavioral significance of U.1 remains unclear. The two most likely interpretations cast it as a midden that accumulated over a considerable span or as the remnants of an earthen platform. There is not much to be said for either view and a lot to be said against both of them. In general, we favor seeing U.1 as platform fill because of the presence of (much disturbed) stone architecture located well up on U.1's southwest flank (U.2) and the fact that, rather than thinning out upslope, U.1 actually becomes thicker from southwest towards Subop. 414D's center. If U.1 is a trash deposit laid down over the northeast-to-southwest descent, it might be expected to be thickest at the base of that rise, thinning out further up the ascent. Reversal of this pattern *hints* at some factor(s) operating to thwart expectations, introduction of U.1 as platform fill being one process

that could produce this result. Such considerations make us uncomfortable interpreting U.1 as a midden; they do not give us great confidence in attributing to it the function of architectural fill. Contributing to this unease are the absence of any indications of summit floors and basal facings that would confirm U.1 as architecture. As it stands, therefore, we tentatively hypothesize that U.1 was introduced as architectural fill, creating a platform of undetermined lateral dimensions (possibly measuring as much as 19m northeast-southwest) that rose an estimated 0.87m at its highest preserved point (above underlying S.2).

Unit 2 is a very poorly preserved wall built of a combination of angular stones and cobbles, with the former predominating. It stands a reconstructed 0.34m high and is backed by U.1 and S.6. The latter is a dark brown soil (10YR-3/3) embedded in U.1 and lensing out 1.01m northeast of the back (northeast) side of U.2. Stratum 6's top is 0.1m below that of U.2 while its base is 0.05m below the lowest exposed U.2 stone. A brown mud mortar binds the U.2 rocks together. There is no sign of coursing nor were the U.2 rocks chosen or modified to create a vertical, exterior face. Significant quantities of rocks were found within 1m southwest of U.2 (F.1, does not appear in the excavation section), certainly more stone than was found anywhere else in the Subop. 414D excavations. This concentration of apparent architectural debris implies that U.2 originally stood taller and has been severely disrupted in the centuries following abandonment. Such damage, possibly precipitated by robbing stones to build other, later Site 414 edifices (e.g., Strs. 414-Sub1 and 414-Sub2, described under Str. 414-7), may help account for Str. 414-8-1st's paucity of surviving architectural elements.

Unit 2 is buried on the southwest by U.1. This stratigraphic relationship may hint at a later construction phase in which a good part of Str. 414-8-1st was buried (including U.2). Alternatively, U.2 could be the extant foundations of an architectural element that initially rose above U.1. We have chosen the latter interpretation for the sake of simplicity and in the absence of evidence that compels a more complex view of the sequence.

Structure 414-8-1st, therefore, is tentatively reconstructed as a spatially extensive earthen platform that stood roughly 0.87m high (not enough of U.2, or any other architectural component, survived to permit describing the building's orientation). Unit 1's homogeneity and the absence of clear breaks in its deposition imply that this earth fill was introduced during a relatively short span, possibly as part of a single building episode.

Time Span 4

Following Str. 414-8-1st's abandonment, U.1 was buried by 0.06-0.26m of S.7, a dark brown soil (10YR-3/3) containing moderate amounts of cultural material including a very light scattering of items of recent vintage (some glass sherds were recovered from S.7 on the northeast edge of Subop. 414D). Feature 2 consists of a highly dispersed collection of rocks found primarily across the northeastern-most 2.2m excavated in Subop. 414D within S.7 and the uppermost portions of U.1. The stones in question probably derive from Str. 414-8-1st's final-phase architecture, though their origin in relatively insubstantial later edifices cannot be ruled out (see Strs. 414-Sub1 and 414-Sub2 described under Str. 414-7). No sign of the units from which these stones might have derived was recorded.

Chronological Summary

The earliest occupation attested to at Site 414 is the Middle Preclassic. Both Strs. 414-7

and 414-8 were raised, and most of the trash deposit glossed as Str. 414-6 was deposited, during this span. Given their integration within a coherent group and general similarities in overall building form, Strs. 414-6/10 were all probably built and in use during the Middle Preclassic.

An apparent hiatus in occupation intervened between the above interval and the resumption of habitation during the Classic period. The first sign of renewed activity is Bu.1, apparently intruded beneath the Str. 414-6 midden in Late Classic I. Late Classic III buildings were identified in the vicinity of Str. 414-7 (Strs. 414-Sub1 and 414-Sub2), possibly part of a more extensive settlement dating to this span. Structures 414-1/5, 414-11, and RC.4 comprise a patio-focused group on the northwest site margin. The organization of this cluster is strongly reminiscent of Late Classic II and III building aggregates elsewhere in the Naco valley. Late Classic III ceramics diagnostics were also recovered from surface collections near the southeast site limits. Taken together, these data suggest that Late Classic III settlement at Site 414 was widespread but relatively small-scale. None of the surviving buildings pertaining to this span is greater than 1m high and all seem to be the remnants of humble domestic units (Strs. 414-12/14 cannot be assigned a place in the chronological sequence). Reoccupation of Site 414 may help account for the paucity of stones found on excavated Middle Preclassic buildings (especially Str. 414-8-1st). Late Classic III inhabitants may well have recycled older building materials to raise their edifices, a practice attested to elsewhere in the basin. It may be no accident, therefore, that the only relatively intact Middle Preclassic stone architecture revealed in excavations was buried under earthen fill units (Str. 414-7-2nd) where it was out of sight of, and out of reach from, later builders.

No evidence of prehispanic occupation postdating Late Classic III was identified at Site 414. Recovery of materials dating to the recent past on Strs. 414-6 and, to a lesser extent, 414-8 point to at least sporadic use of the settlement within the last 100 years.