Late Woodland Landscapes in the Eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan

This paper explores pre-European settlement ecosystems in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Pilot studies have shown that Late Woodland peoples utilized certain environments more extensively than others and also modified landscapes through their activities. Likewise, there is evidence that Native Americans used fire for landscape modification in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. While forest and understory clearing for horticulture has been viewed as the primary rationale for this burning, evidence for habitat improvement for other resources is presented. Finally, the evidence is also considered in relation to prehistoric land use in the region.

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