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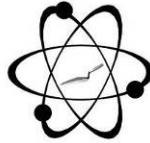
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## **SOURCE PROVENANCE OF OBSIDIAN ARTIFACTS FROM FIVE SITES IN SOUTHWEST UTAH**



Obsidian at the Wild Horse Canyon source, Mineral Mountains, Utah. Photo courtesy of Joe Moore. Note the mahogany (red) colored nodules debitage of which is present in this assemblage

by

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## INTRODUCTION

The analysis here of 63 obsidian artifacts (three are not obsidian) from five sites in southwestern Utah, indicates a source provenance assemblage with artifacts mainly produced from two sources in southwestern Utah, Modena in Iron County and Wild Horse Canyon in Beaver County, and the Kane Springs source in Lincoln County, Nevada (Haarklau et al. 2005; see cover image, Tables 1 and 2, and Figures 1 and 2). One small piece of debitage was produced from the Obsidian Cliff source in the Yellowstone Plateau of northwestern Wyoming (source data at laboratory). Obsidian Cliff obsidian does occur in early contexts throughout the West and into the Middle West (Beck and Jones 2011; Davis et al. 1995; Scheiber and Finley 2011; Shackley 2014, 2017). See source discussion below.

## LABORATORY SAMPLING, ANALYSIS AND INSTRUMENTATION

All archaeological samples are analyzed whole. The results presented here are quantitative in that they are derived from "filtered" intensity values ratioed to the appropriate x-ray continuum regions through a least squares fitting formula rather than plotting the proportions of the net intensities in a ternary system (McCarthy and Schamber 1981; Schamber 1977). Or more essentially, these data through the analysis of international rock standards, allow for inter-instrument comparison with a predictable degree of certainty (Hampel 1984; Shackley 2011).

All analyses for this study were conducted on a ThermoScientific *Quant'X* EDXRF spectrometer, located at the Geoarchaeological XRF Laboratory, Albuquerque, New Mexico. It is equipped with a thermoelectrically Peltier cooled solid-state Si(Li) X-ray detector, with a 50 kV, 50 W, ultra-high-flux end window bremsstrahlung, Rh target X-ray tube and a 76  $\mu\text{m}$  (3 mil) beryllium (Be) window (air cooled), that runs on a power supply operating from 4-50 kV/0.02-1.0 mA at 0.02 increments. The spectrometer is equipped with a 200 l min<sup>-1</sup> Edwards vacuum pump, allowing for the analysis of lower-atomic-weight elements between sodium (Na) and titanium (Ti). Data acquisition is accomplished with a pulse processor and an analogue-to-digital converter. Elemental composition is identified with digital filter background removal, least

squares empirical peak deconvolution, gross peak intensities and net peak intensities above background.

### **Trace Element Analysis**

The analysis for mid Zb condition elements Ti-Nb, Pb, Th, the x-ray tube is operated at 30 kV, using a 0.05 mm (medium) Pd primary beam filter in an air path at 100 seconds livetime to generate x-ray intensity  $K\alpha_1$ -line data for elements titanium (Ti), manganese (Mn), iron (as  $Fe_2O_3^T$ ), cobalt (Co), nickel (Ni), copper, (Cu), zinc, (Zn), gallium (Ga), rubidium (Rb), strontium (Sr), yttrium (Y), zirconium (Zr), niobium (Nb), lead (Pb), and thorium (Th). Not all these elements are reported since their values in many volcanic rocks are very low. Trace element intensities were converted to concentration estimates by employing a linear calibration line ratioed to the Compton scatter established for each element from the analysis of international rock standards certified by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the US. Geological Survey (USGS), Canadian Centre for Mineral and Energy Technology, and the Centre de Recherches Pétrographiques et Géochimiques in France (Govindaraju 1994). Line fitting is linear (XML) for all elements. When barium (Ba) is analyzed in the High Zb condition, the Rh tube is operated at 50 kV and up to 1.0 mA, ratioed to the bremsstrahlung region (see Davis 2011; Shackley 2011). Further details concerning the petrological choice of these elements in North American obsidians is available in Shackley (1988, 1995, 2005, 2019b; also Mahood and Stimac 1991; and Hughes and Smith 1993). Nineteen specific pressed powder standards are used for the best fit regression calibration for elements Ti-Nb, Pb, Th, and Ba, and include G-2 (basalt), AGV-2 (andesite), GSP-2 (granodiorite), SY-2 (syenite), BHVO-2 (hawaiite), STM-1 (syenite), QLO-1 (quartz latite), RGM-1 (obsidian), W-2 (diabase), BIR-1 (basalt), SDC-1 (mica schist), TLM-1 (tonalite), SCO-1 (shale), NOD-A-1 and NOD-P-1 (manganese) all US Geological Survey standards, NIST-278 (obsidian), U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology, BE-N (basalt) from the Centre de Recherches Pétrographiques et Géochimiques in France, and JR-1 and JR-2 (obsidian) from the Geological Survey of Japan (Govindaraju 1994).

## **Statistical and Graphical Source Assignment.**

The data from the WinTrace™ software were translated directly into Excel for Windows software for manipulation and on into SPSS ver. 27 and JMP 12.0.1 for statistical analyses. In order to evaluate these quantitative determinations, machine data were compared to measurements of known standards during each run. RGM-1 a USGS obsidian standard is analyzed during each sample run of  $\leq 19$  for obsidian artifacts to check machine calibration (Table 1).

Source assignments were made by reference to the laboratory database (see Shackley 2005) and the Skinner/Shackley North American Obsidian Database. Further information on the laboratory instrumentation and source data can be found at: <http://www.swxrflab.net>. Trace element data exhibited in Table 1 and Figure 2 are reported in parts per million (ppm), a quantitative measure by weight.

## **SOURCE DISCUSSION**

While the obsidian source assemblage was not too diverse, the sources commonly recovered in archaeological contexts, the short descriptions below will have some utility.

### **Kane Springs Wash Caldera, Lincoln County, Nevada**

This source, as well as many others in the western Great Basin has received intensive study recently (Johnson and Wagner 2005). About 14 Ma, the Kane Springs caldera collapsed creating an ash flow tuff that quenched rhyolite to obsidian and distributed it over hundreds of square kilometers (Noble 1968; Novak 1984; Novak and Mahood 1986). Similar to the Valles Caldera event in the Jemez Mountains of northern New Mexico, subsequent and final ring eruptions created moat rhyolite domes that quenched to produce obsidian. The earlier and later events that produced obsidian exhibit slightly differing Sr and Ba concentrations, but the sample size in the archaeological assemblage here is too small to discriminate, so no attempt here is made to discriminate the two reported varieties of Kane Springs obsidian (Johnson and Wagner 2005: 36-40). Kane Spring obsidian occurs throughout the Great Basin, although the nodule size at that age are relatively small (marekanites). Its presence in this assemblage seems reasonable

(see Figure 1). Artifacts produced from this source were present at sites 5140 and 5354 and comprised 7.9% of the total assemblage (see Table 2 and Figure 1).

### **Panaca Summit-Modena Area, Nevada and Utah**

This source, often called simply Modena occurs in a number of alluvial deposits east of Panaca, Lincoln County, Nevada into Utah (Johnson and Haarklau 2005:127). It appears to be eroding out of the Steamboat Mountain Formation near Prohibition Spring (Rowley et al. 2002). This formation dates to 11-13 Ma. Cobble size obsidian occurs at this source, and Modena is one of the more commonly recovered sources in this region, and comprises 65.1% of the total assemblage and was present at all sites (see Table 2 and Figure 1).

### **Wild Horse Canyon and Pumice Hole Mine, Beaver County, Utah**

The second most common source recovered from these sites, Wild Horse Canyon obsidian erupted between 800 and 500 ka along the crest of the Mineral Mountains (Lipman et al. 1978). Two chemically distinct compositions are evident, particularly in Zr and can be readily seen in Figure 2 here. Wild Horse Canyon obsidian is present throughout the eastern Great Basin and northern Southwest sites, and was present in Crow Canyon Basketmaker sites (see Shackley 2014, 2017). This source comprised 25.4% of the assemblage and was present in all sites (see Table 2 and Figure 1).

### **The Obsidian Cliff Plateau Obsidian Source, Yellowstone Volcanic Field, Northeast Wyoming**

Probably the most well known source of archaeological obsidian in North America, the Obsidian Cliff source has been recovered throughout North America, at least as far east in Mississippian Period contexts in the North American Midwest (Holmes 1879; Davis et al. 1995). Part of the Quaternary Canyon Rhyolite formation, it is directly related to the Yellowstone Caldera event and is one of the largest single blocks of obsidian on earth (Boyd 1961; Christiansen and Blank 1972; Iddings 1888). The event occurred based on K-Ar dating at  $183 \pm 0.003$  ka and the obsidian covers an area of approximately 14.5 km<sup>2</sup> with an exposed thickness of 30 m (Schmitt 1995 in Davis et al. 1995). The sheer size of quenching to glass of

this structure was due to eruption into the continental glacier that at that time was over 2 km thick. The ice facilitated quenching the rhyolite at a very rapid rate. The one piece of debitage here from site 4098 comprises only 1.6% of the assemblage. It is likely that that piece of debitage is the result of production or rejuvenation of a biface.

### **Procurement Range/Social Networking**

I found it intriguing that there were no artifacts produced from Jemez Mountain or Mount Taylor obsidian sources of northern New Mexico. These sources are common in Archaic through PIII sites in the region, particularly in the later periods. It could be sampling error, but the assemblage indicates a relatively local procurement range or social network focused to the west and north.

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Table 1. Elemental concentrations and source assignments for the archaeological samples and USGS RGM-1 rhyolite standard. All measurement in parts per million (ppm).

Sample	Site	Ti	Mn	Fe	Rb	Sr	Y	Zr	Nb	Ba	Ce	Pb	Th	Source
1	42WS383 6	102 7	283	9447	196	85	27	124	18	541	46	27	40	Modena, UT
2	42WS383 6	119 5	372	9448	216	46	28	119	24	227	8	32	18	Wild Horse Canyon, UT
3	42WS383 6	123 3	322	1017 4	214	89	30	122	23	564	67	28	31	Modena, UT
4	42WS383 6	115 3	323	1000 6	209	90	21	130	18	532	50	28	35	Modena, UT
5	42WS383 6	127 5	379	9661	217	43	21	124	25	189	35	32	19	Wild Horse Canyon, UT
6	42WS383 6	125 3	382	9498	218	47	25	128	26	206	47	34	28	Wild Horse Canyon, UT
7	42WS383 6	137 4	388	1068 0	200	70	28	141	27	364	0	30	21	Modena, UT
8	42WS383 6	107 2	375	9382	209	50	23	121	22	224	38	28	20	Wild Horse Canyon, UT
9	42WS383 6	118 6	352	1045 6	203	87	30	121	20	572	34	30	34	Modena, UT
10	42WS383 6	122 5	344	1024 9	211	87	31	134	26	614	37	32	31	Modena, UT
11	42WS383 6	115 6	345	1025 9045	195	45	24	114	26	174	51	28	26	Wild Horse Canyon, UT
12	42WS383 6	125 8	323	1025 9	216	85	28	137	22	598	41	29	26	Modena, UT
13	42WS383 6	121 2	388	9400	208	47	26	119	28	227	35	37	32	Wild Horse Canyon, UT
14	42WS383 6	119 8	403	9398	205	42	23	121	29	207	15	26	31	Wild Horse Canyon, UT
15	42WS383 6	112 5	325	1007 5	210	88	35	126	20	574	43	28	37	Modena, UT
16	42WS383 6	109 0	335	9805	210	89	34	132	20	581	43	27	31	Modena, UT
17	42WS383 6	121 4	340	9637	199	48	29	117	25	203	50	28	24	Wild Horse Canyon, UT
18	42WS409 8	143 5	389	1147 5	246	98	28	120	14	414	5	37	25	Modena, UT
19	42WS409 8	116 1	260	1099 5	184	22	43	160	39	49	70	20	30	Wild Horse Canyon, UT*
20	42WS409	126	351	1059	226	94	27	135	20	555	33	27	34	Modena, UT

	8	7		0											
21	42WS409	108													Wild Horse Canyon, UT
	8	4	374	9331	204	50	24	117	20	218	49	30	29		
22	42WS409	121		1040											Modena, UT
	8	6	313	9	222	86	28	130	23	575	44	34	34		
23	42WS409			1306											Obsidian Cliff, WY
	8	899	320	9	259	12	63	195	46	0	27	40	38		
24	42WS409	121		1025											Modena, UT
	8	9	342	2	209	79	29	126	20	559	58	33	43		
25	42WS409	134		1081											Modena, UT
	8	4	330	2	218	90	34	125	19	464	43	33	28		
26	42WS513	107													Modena, UT
	3	9	323	9597	204	84	26	129	13	602	86	26	33		
27	42WS513	113													Modena, UT
	3	8	300	9183	194	80	32	125	20	649	109	25	29		
28	42WS513	133		1058											Wild Horse Canyon, UT
	3	8	396	2	204	51	26	113	20	213	54	35	33		
29	42WS513	123													Wild Horse Canyon, UT
	3	9	427	9878	211	53	25	115	24	217	0	23	22		
30	42WS513	124		1060											Modena, UT
	3	2	354	2	222	83	34	132	23	531	30	32	32		
31	42WS513	112													Modena, UT
	3	6	331	9777	206	87	32	134	25	650	86	28	41		
32	42WS514	116		1026											Modena, UT
	0	0	348	8	200	86	34	131	22	565	38	28	24		
33	42WS514	103													Modena, UT
	0	4	310	9459	200	83	30	125	21	601	59	26	32		
34	42WS514	110		1127											Kane Springs, NV
	0	9	271	8	204	49	32	157	27	306	52	22	34		
35	42WS514	114		1017											Wild Horse Canyon, UT
	0	3	354	3	219	86	31	133	28	591	64	34	35		
36	42WS514	117		1027											Modena, UT
	0	7	312	2	216	85	33	128	22	615	34	26	20		
Sample	Site	Ti	Mn	Fe	Rb	Sr	Y	Zr	Nb	Ba	Ce	Pb	Th	Source	
37	42WS514	110		1014											Modena, UT
	0	7	328	7	217	91	35	136	21	568	29	29	26		
38	42WS514	122													Modena, UT
	0	0	338	9540	175	69	24	133	23	355	37	26	19		
39	42WS514	130		1040											Wild Horse Canyon, UT
	0	7	437	9	218	45	27	112	27	185	24	35	29		
40	42WS514	113													Modena, UT
	0	4	312	9949	209	89	33	129	22	570	47	26	29		
41	42WS514	124		1067											Modena, UT
	0	8	371	6	222	88	32	128	18	593	38	32	36		

								129						
42	42WS514	114		1007										
	0	4	347	4	215	87	37		17	588	58	28	36	Modena, UT
43	42WS514	123		1041										
	0	6	341	5	220	92	26	125	24	584	43	29	37	Modena, UT
44	42WS514	110												
	0	7	310	9401	195	83	26	138	21	593	67	27	20	Modena, UT
45	42WS514	108												
	0	5	314	9499	195	83	27	119	24	577	68	26	27	Modena, UT
46	42WS514	107												
	0	2	322	9503	203	86	34	118	22	602	49	29	27	Modena, UT
47	42WS514	116												
	0	7	332	9865	205	88	26	127	21	562	53	25	37	Kane Springs, NV
48	42WS514	115		1203										
	0	0	309	2	216	50	41	156	23	329	34	27	38	Wild Horse Canyon, UT
49	42WS514	124		1017										
	0	0	332	7	214	87	33	134	18	609	52	27	41	Modena, UT
50	42WS514	113												
	0	8	309	9878	212	88	28	127	17	614	34	32	30	Modena, UT
51	42WS514	114		1055										
	0	6	355	3	218	91	29	127	18	516	29	27	38	Modena, UT
52	42WS514	120												
	0	6	311	9508	200	86	29	120	20	566	74	27	39	Modena, UT
53	42WS535	133												
	4	3	354	9075	192	40	22	114	21	183	16	29	13	Wild Horse Canyon, UT
54	42WS535	108												
	4	2	315	9530	202	84	36	122	27	604	95	29	34	Modena, UT
55	42WS535	122		1002										
	4	6	334	5	209	89	28	123	19	608	48	34	33	Modena, UT
56	42WS535	112		1176										
	4	0	300	4	205	50	40	158	25	332	49	22	35	Kane Springs, NV
57	42WS535	105		1155										
	4	4	313	8	203	46	36	156	31	313	43	22	28	Kane Springs, NV
58	42WS535	111		1153										
	4	1	279	5	205	51	37	161	24	345	62	23	37	Kane Springs, NV
59	42WS535	127		1044										
	4	6	396	9	211	86	31	128	26	603	75	29	34	Modena, UT
60	42WS535	103												
	4	2	322	9376	198	82	29	132	22	621	97	27	35	Modena, UT
61	42WS535	753	153	5672	0	21	4	16	4	36	16	-1	4	not obsidian
62	42WS535	114												
	4	2	324	9400	199	80	28	135	20	620	111	23	30	Modena, UT
63	42WS535	776	158	5986	5	27	6	27	4	20	20	2	4	not obsidian

64	42WS535 4	765	150	5861	0	18	5	17	3	30	15	2	6	not obsidian
65	42WS535 4	119	301	9548	204	83	30	125	23	638	44	27	25	Modena, UT
66	42WS535 4	128	365	9843	200	68	28	148	32	454	59	31	29	Modena, UT
RGM1- S4		148		1307										
RGM1- S4		0	305	7	149	105	24	217	7	813	45	23	26	standard
RGM1- S4		156		1311										
RGM1- S4		8	294	6	153	105	25	221	11	822	18	16	16	standard
RGM1- S4		159		1332										
RGM1- S4		6	294	3	150	107	26	219	12	826	49	21	15	standard

Table 2. Crosstabulation of source by site. Non-obsidian samples not included (see Table 1).

		Source				Total	
		Kane Springs, NV	Modena, UT	Obsidian Cliff, WY	Wild Horse Canyon, UT		
Site	42WS383 6	Count	0	9	0	8	17
		% within Site	0.0%	52.9%	0.0%	47.1%	100.0%
		% within Source	0.0%	22.0%	0.0%	50.0%	27.0%
		% of Total	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%	12.7%	27.0%
42WS409 8	Count	0	5	1	2	8	
	% within Site	0.0%	62.5%	12.5%	25.0%	100.0%	
	% within Source	0.0%	12.2%	100.0%	12.5%	12.7%	
	% of Total	0.0%	7.9%	1.6%	3.2%	12.7%	
42WS513 3	Count	0	4	0	2	6	
	% within Site	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	33.3%	100.0%	
	% within Source	0.0%	9.8%	0.0%	12.5%	9.5%	
	% of Total	0.0%	6.3%	0.0%	3.2%	9.5%	
42WS514 0	Count	2	16	0	3	21	
	% within Site	9.5%	76.2%	0.0%	14.3%	100.0%	
	% within Source	40.0%	39.0%	0.0%	18.8%	33.3%	
	% of Total	3.2%	25.4%	0.0%	4.8%	33.3%	
42WS535 4	Count	3	7	0	1	11	
	% within Site	27.3%	63.6%	0.0%	9.1%	100.0%	
	% within Source	60.0%	17.1%	0.0%	6.3%	17.5%	
	% of Total	4.8%	11.1%	0.0%	1.6%	17.5%	
Total	Count	5	41	1	16	63	
	% within Site	7.9%	65.1%	1.6%	25.4%	100.0%	
	% within Source	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	7.9%	65.1%	1.6%	25.4%	100.0%	

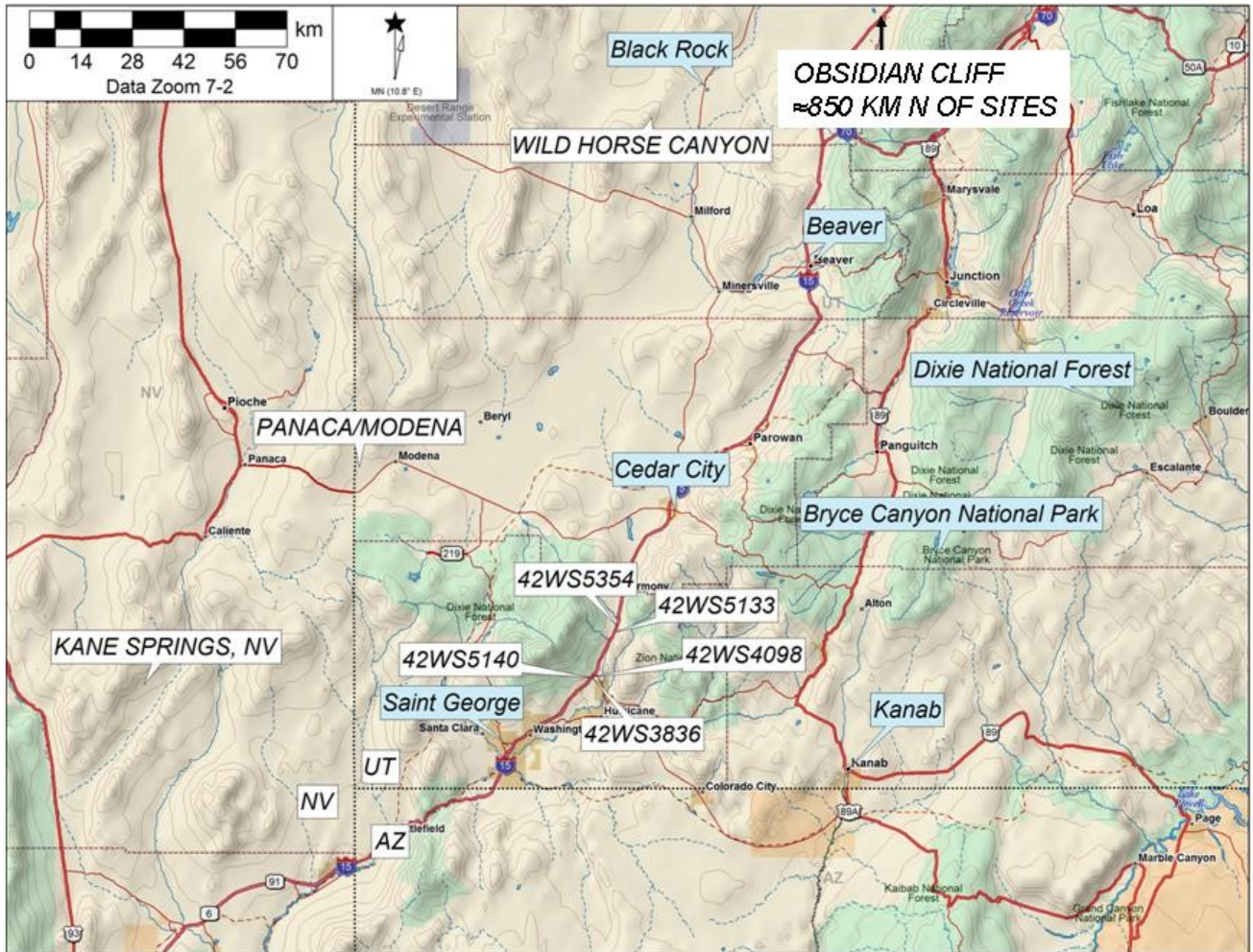


Figure 1. Location of identified obsidian sources (capitals) in southwest Utah and southeast Nevada.



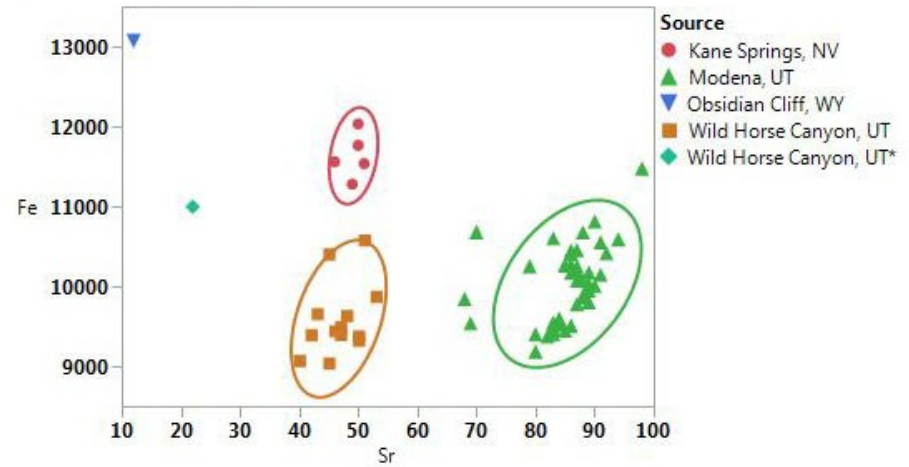
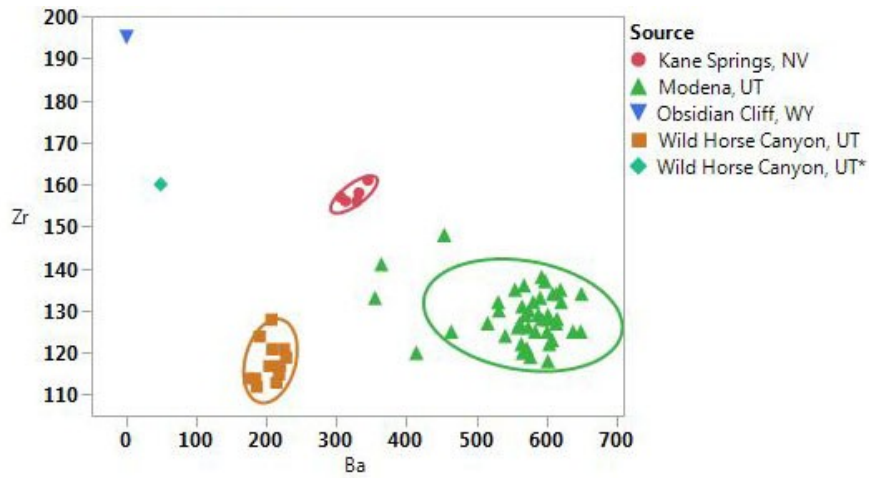


Figure 2. Ba/Zr (left) and Sr/Fe (right) bivariate plots of all samples. Confidence ellipses at 90%. Asterisked Wild Horse Canyon was a very small sample that otherwise fit the source composition, but is probably too small to confidently assign to source (see Davis et al. 2011).