

In Elko County, Nevada, is found one of the greatest concentrations of prehistoric antelope traps known anywhere in western North America. Since 2000, I have led surveys totaling approximately 15,000 acres in the Spruce Mountain area south of Wells, Nevada. More than a dozen juniper limb antelope traps were discovered in this area. Remarkably, a large number of projectile point concentrations were found at or near these existing traps. The figure below shows the survey block and the relationships between the location of the traps (T) and what I have termed “kill spots” (K), the latter of which represent projectile point concentrations that each contains a minimum of 20 points (and most of these point concentrations contain 50 or more points). As is evident by the figure below, the point concentrations are located in the same locations as the existing traps. In fact, most of them are found on the same finger ridge, and the same place on these finger ridges, as the traps themselves. In the journal *American Antiquity* in 2009, Tim Murphy and I argued that these physical associations are not random or spurious – they are in fact behavioral associations as well. What this means is that these places on the landscape served as prime locations for trapping and killing antelope for a very long time, and that the point concentrations represent ancient places of antelope trap construction. Nobody knows for sure how long the existing juniper tree traps might survive before they completely rot away, leaving no trace except for any stone tools left behind that were used to kill antelope or perhaps butcher and cook them nearby. The juniper limbs used to construct the traps may well survive for many centuries. However, most of the point concentrations located at the existing trap sites are Middle Archaic points that date between about 5,500 and 2,000 calendar years ago. Juniper limbs are not likely to survive that length of time; therefore, the most plausible explanation is that this survey area has served as a prime location for constructing antelope traps or corrals for thousands of years.

