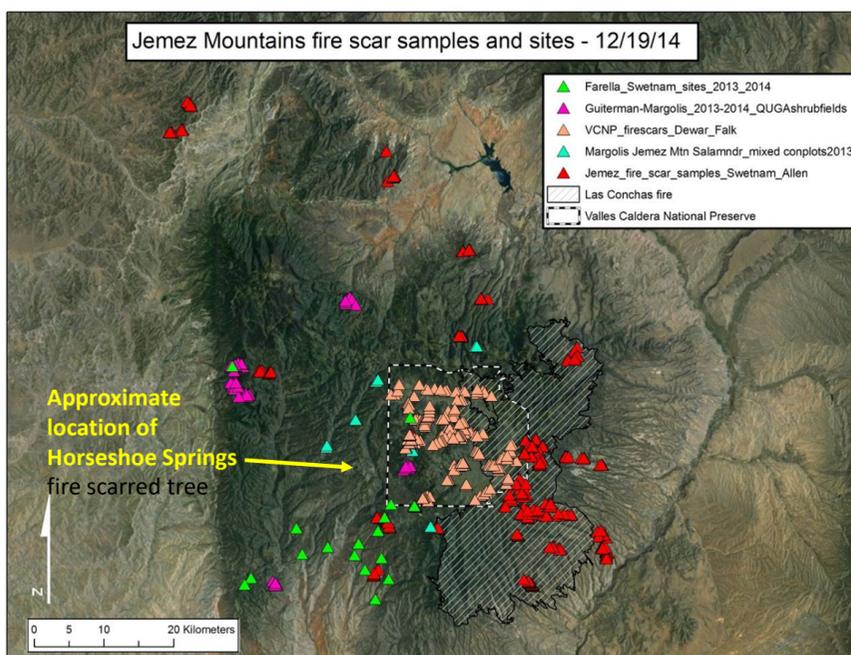


Fire Scarred Ponderosa Pine From Horseshoe Springs

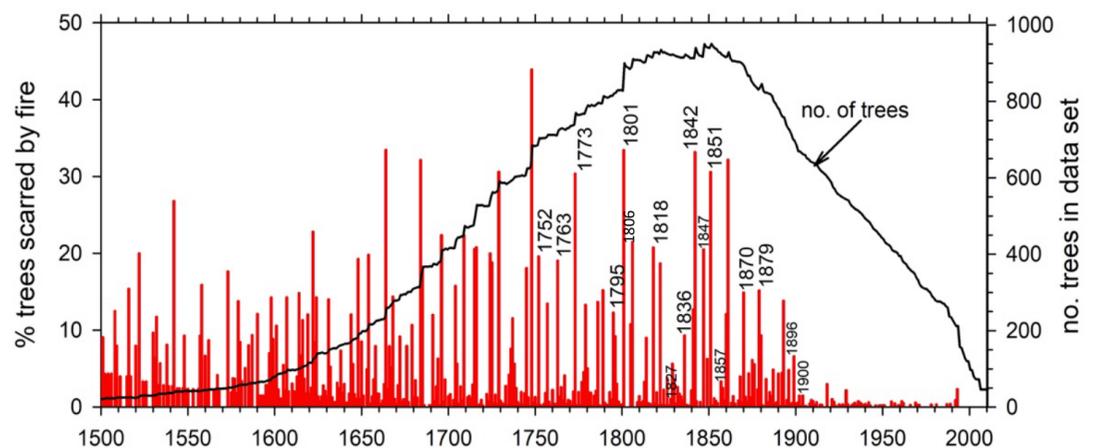
This fire scarred tree is an excellent example of an old ponderosa pine tree with more than the typical number of clearly recorded fire scars. A total of 17 fire events created scars on this tree. Most fire scars were within the earlywood portion of the ring, indicating fires that occurred between May and July.

The fire dates recorded by this tree are quite typical of the largest fires that spread over the Jemez Mountains during the past 300 years. All but four of the seventeen fire dates are among the largest fires recorded in the Jemez Mountains fire scar network.

The lack of recorded fires after circa 1900 reflects the pattern observed across the entire Jemez. Large numbers of sheep were grazed in the Valles, including the “Vallecito de la Cueva” especially after about 1870. They removed grassy fuels that carried fires, and they also created cleared “driveways” where sheep were moved back and forth almost daily between grazed areas and springs. The U.S. Forest Service began systematically suppressing wildfires after 1905, and especially after 1910.



A Google Earth view of the Jemez Mountains showing the location of fire scar sampling sites, as of 2014. Most of the sites shown include 5-10 or more fire scar trees sampled per site. The location of the sampled tree is near the old Horseshoe Springs Forest Service Campground (removed from public access in the late 1960s), and also near the old road that ascended Fenton Hill from La Cueva.



Time series of percentage trees scarred per year in the Jemez Mountains fire scar network, which includes more than 1,200 sampled trees. The seventeen labeled fire scar dates are those recorded by the Horseshoe Springs tree.



Brent Bonwell and Glen Banks cutting the cross section.



Tree-ring analyses by:
Thomas W. Swetnam
Jemez Mountains Tree-Ring Lab

For more information:
<https://tinyurl.com/HSPGS>