Comparison of projectile point locations, high site numbers, and their environmental zones indicate heavy use of the alpine region during an Early Archaic (6,500-4,500 BP, years before present) warm period. Warmer summers and longer growing seasons at high altitude encouraged larger numbers of game in alpine areas and help account for the high density of seasonal human occupations.

Tool materials found in RMNP from prehistoric times (11,000-400 BP) were obtained mainly (65-80%) from regional sources within 40 miles of the park. The local tool use pattern indicates limited seasonal migration into the park from nearby mountain valleys or the eastern Front Range foothills, suggesting a long-term history of residentially localized human occupations with short-distance seasonal migratory rounds between lower elevation (cold season) and upper elevation (warm season) environmental zones. Fewer artifacts came from more distant stone sources through either trade or long-distance migrants to the park region. Surprisingly, three obsidian artifacts found in the park were brought from distant locations: Teton Pass, Wyoming; Wild Horse Canyon, Utah; and Cerro Del Medio, New Mexico. Source analysis of stone artifacts is an important technique for unveiling park history.