When droughts and floods struck ancient agricultural societies, complex networks of exchange and interaction channeled resources into affected settlements and migrants away from them. Did these networks evolve in part to connect populations living in differing climate regimes? Dr. Nicolas Gauthier examines this relationship with a long-term archaeological case study in the pre-Hispanic North American Southwest, analyzing 7.5 million artifacts from nearly 500 archaeological sites spanning 250 years.

He uses these artifacts to estimate how the flow of social information changed over time and to measure how the intensity of social interaction among sites varied as a function of distance and several regional drought patterns. Social interaction decayed with distance, but ties between sites in differing oceanic and continental climate regimes were often stronger than expected. Accounting for these different regional drivers of local climate variability is crucial for understanding the social impacts of droughts and floods in the past and present.

Old Pueblo Archaeology Center presents

Droughts and Floods Structured Social Interaction in the Pre-Hispanic Southwest

Free presentation by Dr. Nicolas E. Gauthier for Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s Third Thursday Food for Thought Dinner Series

Thursday
January 21, 2021
6 to 8:30 p.m.*

at El Molinito Mexican Restaurant
10180 N. Oracle Rd.
Oro Valley, Arizona

Reservations are required and must be confirmed by Old Pueblo by 5 p.m. Wednesday April 15: 520-798-1201 or info@oldpueblo.org

* Order your own dinner off of the restaurant’s menu at your expense starting at 6 p.m. The presentation will start around 7.

Donations will be requested to benefit Old Pueblo Archaeology Center’s educational efforts.

See more information on next page.
Dr. Nicolas E. Gauthier is an archaeologist and paleoclimatologist who uses methods from the geosciences to study past and present human societies. He specializes in building models of the complex ways humans interact with their natural and social environments.

He is particularly interested in how the societies of the past were able to survive and thrive in arid environments, and has done fieldwork in Turkey, Mexico, Italy and the U.S. Southwest. He received his Ph.D. from Arizona State University and is currently a Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Arizona, where he is studying the effect of snow on past and future droughts in western North America.