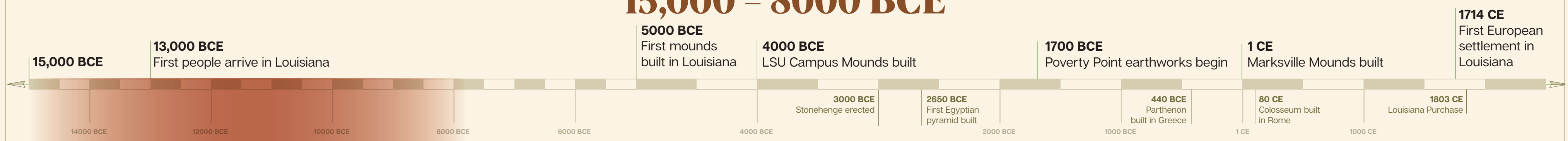
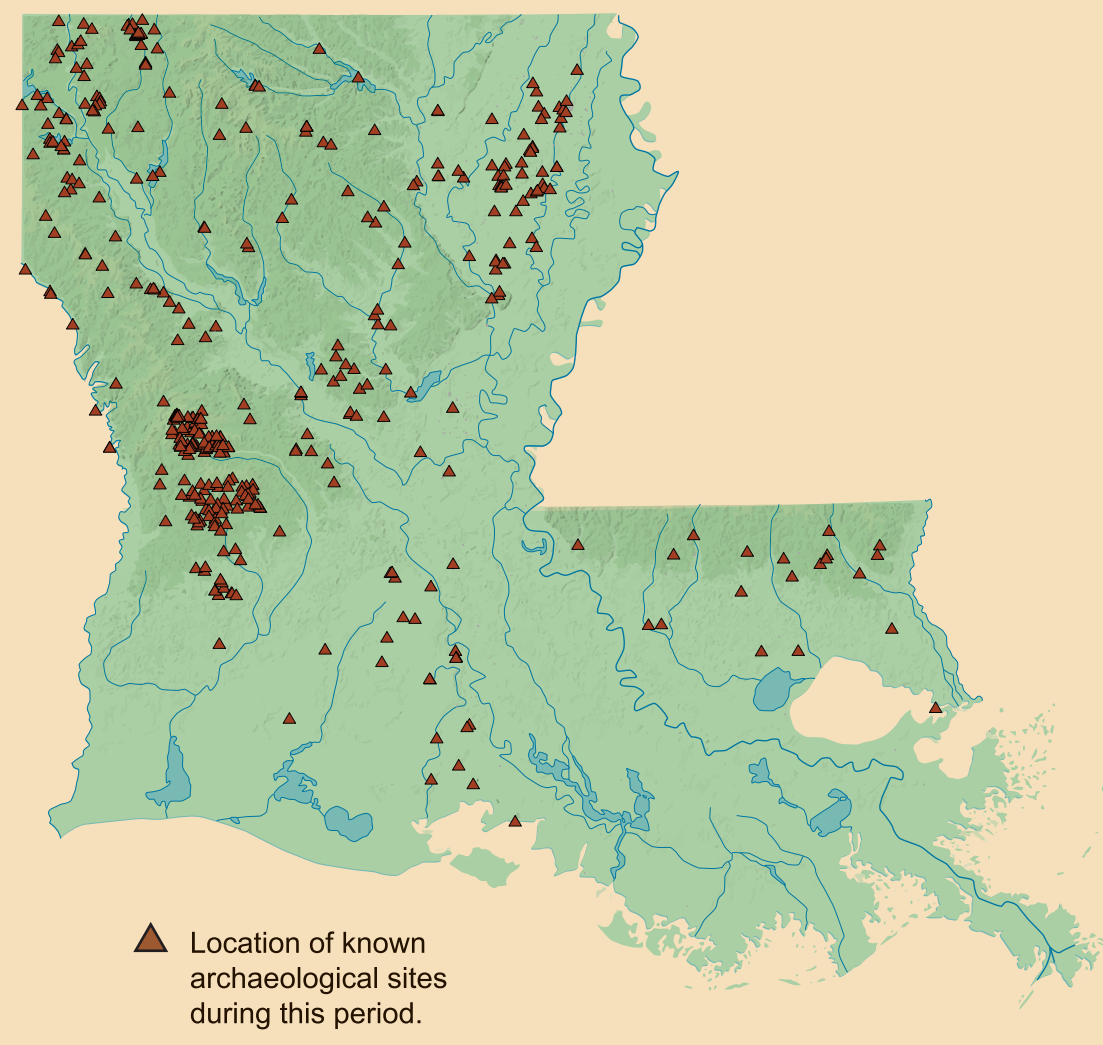


Louisiana Archaeology

15,000 – 8000 BCE



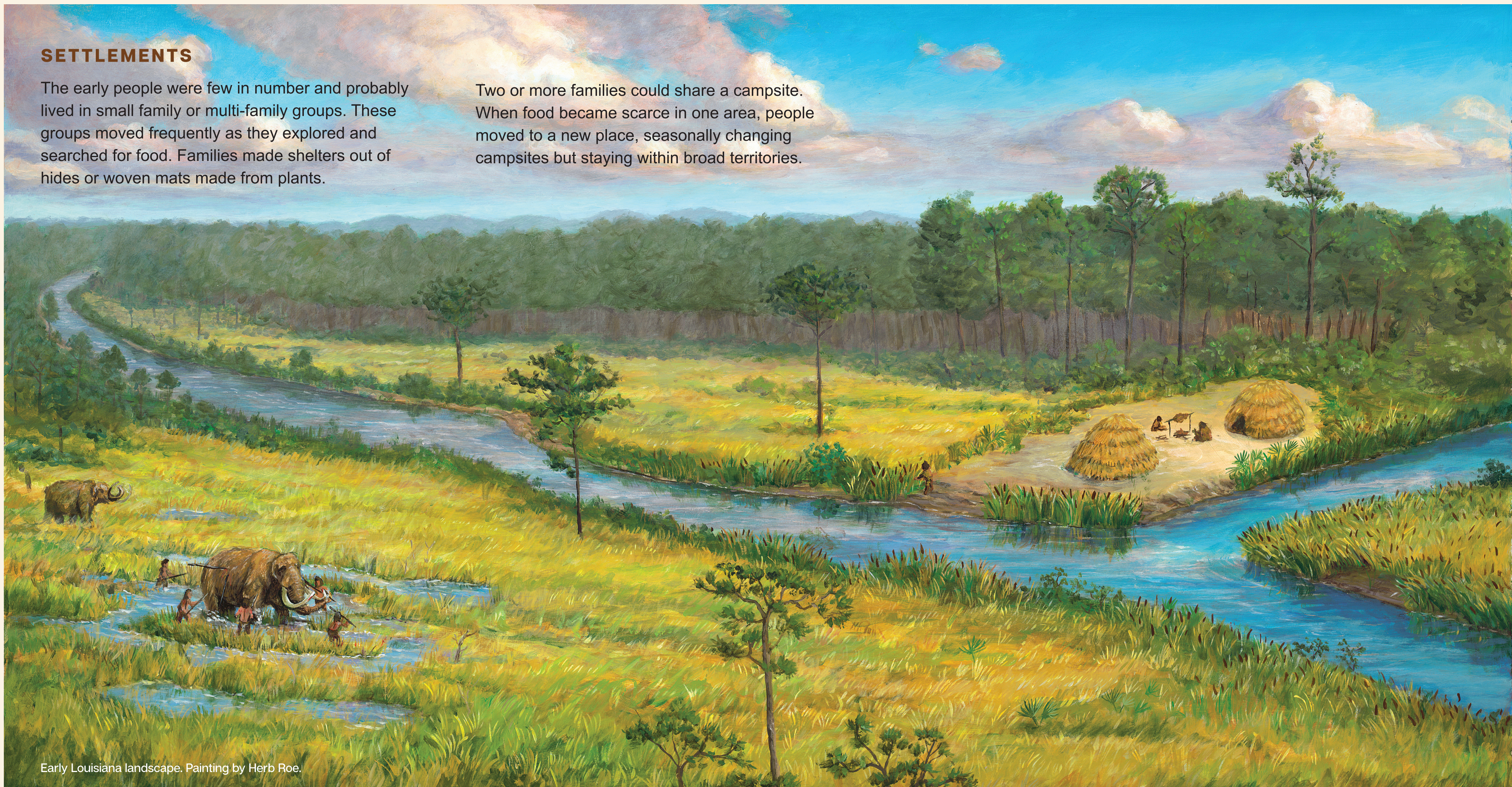
Louisiana's first people arrived sometime before 13,000 BCE. Over thousands of years, their ancestors voyaged over land and water into North America. At that time, Louisiana's climate was cooler and wetter. Forests covered more land, the sea was much lower, and the coast lay 100 miles farther south. Large mammals, such as mastodon and giant bison, lived here.



SETTLEMENTS

The early people were few in number and probably lived in small family or multi-family groups. These groups moved frequently as they explored and searched for food. Families made shelters out of hides or woven mats made from plants.

Two or more families could share a campsite. When food became scarce in one area, people moved to a new place, seasonally changing campsites but staying within broad territories.



ARTIFACTS

Families cooked food over a campfire, made clothes from animal skins, and crafted tools from stone, wood, and bone. Hunters used darts and spear throwers, called atlatls, to hunt animals. Families used stone scrapers to prepare hides and to shape bone and wood. They made adzes, axes, and other stone tools to build with and for shaping bone, wood, and other local materials.



FOODS

The early communities moved frequently, traveling long distances in search of food. Family groups got their food by hunting animals and gathering plants such as nuts, seeds, and berries. Mastodon and giant bison provided lots of meat but were harder to hunt. Birds, deer, fish, squirrels, and turtles were easier to hunt and the most common source of meat.

By 8000 BCE, the climate was warmer and drier. The sea levels were rising and large animals like mastodon were becoming extinct.

Artifact photographs courtesy of Jeff Girard and the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk.

