

DNA from 14,000-year-old tooth offers oldest known link between Native Americans and southern Siberia

A 14,000-year-old genome scraped from a prehistoric tooth found in southern Siberia is now the oldest known connection linking living Native Americans to North America's first migrants.

Research published [May 20] in [Cell](#) provides a population history of people living in the Lake Baikal region of Siberia from the Upper Paleolithic through to the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age. A total of 19 human genomes were analyzed in the study.

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For much of human history, the Americas had no people at all. Northeast Siberia was the conduit from which Eurasians were finally able to migrate to North America at the end of the last ice age, likely through Beringia or a hypothesized [coastal route](#) linking the two continents. The first migratory wave likely [happened](#) some 23,000 to 20,000 years ago, with the new study suggesting a founding population from southern Siberia, rather than the north.

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Fascinatingly, and as previous research indicates, the founding population of North America branched off into two groups, one that would become an ancestor population to all indigenous North Americans, and the other a group, known as the Ancient Beringians, that ventured no further than Alaska.

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