

Review of: "Ancient Trails of the Surigao Gold District: A Preliminary Baseline Predictive Model"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Overall, your paper presents a promising start to understanding the regional archaeology of the ancient gold trade in the Surigao district. Here are some major scientific observations and suggested improvements to enhance the quality of the paper:

Clarity and Structure: The introduction provides a good overview of the research context, but it would benefit from a clearer statement of the research objectives and hypotheses. Consider revising to explicitly state the research questions or objectives to guide the reader through the paper.

Literature Review: While the introduction briefly mentions previous research on the Surigao gold district, it could be expanded to provide a more comprehensive review of relevant literature. Include discussions of key studies, theories, and methodologies in the field of ancient gold trade and archaeological research in the Philippines.

Methodology: The methodology section provides a detailed description of the data sources and analysis techniques used, which is excellent. However, consider providing more rationale for the choice of specific methods and variables. Explain why least cost path modeling and remote sensing data were chosen as suitable approaches for the study.

Data Presentation: The figures and images included in the paper are valuable for visualizing the results of the analysis. However, ensure that the figures are properly labeled and referenced within the text. Additionally, consider including a brief description or caption for each figure to explain its relevance to the study.

Results Interpretation: The discussion of results provides insightful observations about the least-cost path trails and potential transshipment points. However, it would be beneficial to acknowledge the limitations and uncertainties of the model. Discuss factors that may influence the accuracy of the model predictions, such as the assumptions made in the analysis and the potential presence of archaeological features not captured in the data.

Future Directions: The paper outlines potential avenues for future research, including testing the baseline model on other datasets and conducting archaeological exploration on targeted sites. Expand on these future directions to provide a more comprehensive roadmap for advancing the research agenda. Consider discussing potential challenges and limitations of future research efforts.

Language and Style: Overall, the language and style of the paper are clear and professional. However, ensure that technical terms and concepts are defined or explained for readers who may be less familiar with the subject matter.

Additionally, proofread the text for grammatical errors and clarity of expression.