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UCSB Earth Science Professor to Discuss Effects of Extraterrestrial Collision

Geological and archeological findings suggest that a major extraterrestrial collision took place over North America nearly 13,000 years ago, the energy from which caused continental-wide fires and severe environmental changes.

In a UCSB Affiliates Science Lite lecture titled "Comet Over North America: A Bad Day for Mammoths, Humans, and Climate 13,000 Years Ago," James Kennett, a paleoceanographer and professor emeritus of earth science at UC Santa Barbara, will discuss how this extraterrestrial impact appears to explain at least three major events that have long puzzled the scientific community: the massive and abrupt extinction in North America of many large mammals and birds; abrupt cultural change among early (Clovis) paleoAmerican populations; and the triggering of abrupt cooling over broad areas of the earth and associated major change in ocean circulation.

The presentation will begin at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 13, at the First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall at 21 E. Constance Avenue in Santa Barbara. The cost of the lecture is \$8 for UCSB Affiliates and Chancellor's Council Members, and \$10 for others. Contact the UCSB Office of Community Relations at 893-4388 to register, as space is limited.

Kennett has published on an extensive range of subjects in the Earth sciences over the last 45 years, with particular emphasis on marine geology, climate history, paleoceanography, earth system history, and oceanic biotic development through time. His current research involves the causes of abrupt climate change and the consequences of the extraterrestrial event 12,900 years ago.

For more information, visit <http://www.ia.ucsb.edu/comrel/events.shtml>

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.