

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON THE WASHINGTON STATE INVENTORY OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. *When are archaeological site numbers assigned?*

Archaeological site numbers, termed Smithsonian Trinomials, are assigned to archaeological resources upon the receipt of a completed Washington State Archaeological Site or Isolate Inventory form.

The form must be completed, coauthored or approved by an individual meeting the Secretary of Interior's Standards as being a professional archaeologist (36CFR61 Appendix A) prior to submittal to DAHP. When archaeological site forms are submitted for historic archaeological resources, only those sites that meet the minimum National Register (36CFR60) age threshold (50 years of age or older) will be retained as archaeological records and assigned Smithsonian Trinomials by DAHP.



Archaeological site numbers are usually requested by archaeologists two different ways: 1) If a previously unrecorded site is located during a survey, a Smithsonian Trinomial can be obtained by transmitting the site form to DAHP, before the final survey report is submitted. This way, the proper Smithsonian number can be used throughout the text of the final report. 2) A site form for a previously recorded site can be submitted as an appendix in a report.

2. *What is the formal definition of an archaeological site?*

The definition of an archaeological site, including both pre-contact (prehistoric) and historic time period sites, are defined in Washington State Law. Generally they are defined as geographic localities that contain artifacts and or features of human construction. Specific references are found in RCW 27.44 and RCW 27.53.

RCW 27.53.030 Archaeological Site and Resources Act defines the protected resources as: "Archaeological Site" means a geographic locality in Washington, including but not limited to, submerged and submersible lands and the bed of the sea within the state's jurisdiction, that contains archaeological objects. "Archaeological object" means an object that comprises the physical evidence of an indigenous and subsequent culture including material remains of past human life including monuments, symbols, tools, facilities, and technological by-products.

RCW 27.53.030 also defines "Historic Archaeological Sites" as properties which are listed in or eligible for listing in the Washington State Register of Historic Places (RCW 27.34.220) or the National Register of Historic Places as defined in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Title 1, Sec. 101, Public Law 89-665; 80 Stat. 915; 16 U.S.C. Sec. 470).

RCW 27.53.040 declares as examples: All sites, objects, structures, artifacts, implements, and locations of prehistoric or archaeological interest, whether previously recorded or still unrecognized, including, but not limited to, those pertaining to prehistoric and historic American

Indian or aboriginal burials, campsites, dwellings, and habitation sites, including rock shelters and caves, their artifacts and implements of culture such as projectile points, arrowheads, skeletal remains, grave goods, basketry, pestles, mauls and grinding stones, knives, scrapers, rock carvings and paintings, and other implements and artifacts of any material that are located in, on, or under the surface of any lands or waters owned by or under the possession, custody, or control of the state of Washington or any county, city, or political subdivision of the state are hereby declared to be archaeological resources.

3. *For inventory purposes, what distinguishes an historic resource from an archaeological resource?*

DAHP considers historic properties to be existing elements of the built environment that include buildings, structures, sites, districts, and objects that date from the contact era. Any historic features that are in ruin (i.e. collapsed structures, foundations, etc.) and that are 50 years of age or older are considered archaeological sites. Such properties must be recorded on Archaeology Site Inventory Form. If the resource in ruin is less than 50 years in age it should not be recorded at all unless it is determined to possess exceptional significance. If a surveyor needs to record a historic irrigation canal that continues to serve this function, the canal is considered to be a “historic property” and should be recorded in the Historic Property Inventory Database. The Historic Property Inventory Database should also be used if the irrigation canal has been abandoned but conceivably still could function for its intended purpose. However, using this same example, if the canal structure has been significantly breached or lies only in ruins or disconnected segments, the resource would be considered an historic archaeological site and documented on the Archaeology Site Inventory Form.



For a specific listing of historic site types, how they are classified, and use of DAHP’s Archaeology Site Inventory Form, Isolate Inventory Form or the Historic Property Inventory Database, please refer to the Site Type Table (Page 19).

4. *Will DAHP give inventory numbers to cultural landscapes?*

DAHP will not assign inventory numbers to cultural landscapes as a class of properties. Those wishing to document cultural landscapes should follow the NPS guidelines and provide the associated contributing properties on the respective DAHP archaeological site inventory form or historic property inventory form and/or the NPS National Register form.

5. *Will DAHP reject inventory forms or reports?*

DAHP will reject any submitted archaeology site or isolate inventory forms, historic property inventory forms, cemetery forms or cultural resource reports, when the information provided is deemed to be incomplete by DAHP reviewers.

DAHP will also return forms that are not submitted on approved DAHP forms. Forms may also be rejected if they are not completed, reviewed and/or approved by a professional meeting the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the relevant discipline or if they contain erroneous or false information.



Note that DAHP will not accept archaeology site or isolate inventory forms for resources that are less than 50 years old. If you feel you have an important archaeological site from the recent past that you would like to inventory, please contact DAHP before proceeding.

DAHP is encouraging the submittal of historic property inventory forms for resources that are less than 50 years old that have exceptional significance. This program is part of the on-going "Nifty From the Last 50 Initiative", a program developed to encourage the discussion and appreciation of architecture that best represents the last 50 years. If you have identified an important historic property from the recent past that you would like to inventory, please contact DAHP's architectural historian for additional information about the "Nifty From the Last 50 Initiative".

6. *How often should inventory forms be updated?*

Existing **archaeology site inventory forms** should be updated anytime an archaeological site or traditional cultural place is visited by an archaeologist. A site form update should be a standard part of survey procedures and plans.

DAHP expects existing **historic property inventory forms** to be updated when new information about the property arises or becomes available, or if the form is **more than 10 years old**. New information that would trigger the updating of an existing form should be substantial enough to the point of affecting any evaluation of the property for National Register eligibility. For example, if a fire at a residence resulted in repairs using inappropriate materials and designs, these repairs comprise information that should be recorded and included on an updated Historic Property Inventory Database entry.

In taking these steps to update inventory forms on a regular basis, inventory data can maintain its usefulness to those needing to access the information and make the best decision possible.

If the inventory form is less than 10 years old and the property has not changed, then within your report please provide the name and address of the building, state that it has been previously surveyed, and provide the date and a verification of a previous determination of eligibility by providing either a DAHP Log number and/ or a letter verification with date.

7. *What is the cut-off date for historic properties when conducting a survey project for DAHP?*

For all survey projects, DAHP requires that inventory forms be created for all properties within the APE that are 50 years of age and older regardless of their condition or integrity level. Many large-scale projects in Washington may extend beyond a ten-year time frame. DAHP recommends that a survey cut-off date of 40 years be implemented in order to identify properties that may reach 50 years of age during the project period.



The preservation of the recent past is quickly becoming an important aspect of preservation activities across the country and DAHP encourages surveyors to be aware of important resources from the 1960s and even 1970s within their survey areas. While not required, DAHP encourages surveyors to inventory these sites as well.

Full coverage of the survey area is fundamental to historic preservation projects which have federal involvement. The survey results become formal legal documentation

and identification of historic resources under federal law.

8. *What are the specific laws and regulations that protect archaeological resources in the state?*

In Washington State several laws protect shipwrecks; archaeological sites; Native American graves; and abandoned, historic pioneer cemeteries and graves, whether or not they are maintained. These include the RCW 27.44 (the Indian Graves and Records Act), RCW 27.53 (the Archaeological Sites and Resources Act), WAC 25-48 (Archaeological Excavation and Removal Permit), RCW 68.60 (Abandoned and Historic Cemeteries and Historic Graves), and RCW 79.90.565 (Aquatic Lands).

In addition, the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), the Shoreline Management Act (SMA), the Forest Practices Act (FPA), and GEO 05-05 protects cultural resources during the environmental review process. For the full text of the various laws visit our website at: www.dahp.wa.gov.

9. What if I find human remains on non-federal and non-tribal land in the state of Washington?

If ground disturbing activities encounter human skeletal remains during the course of construction, then all activity must cease that may cause further disturbance to those remains and the area of the find must be secured and protected from further disturbance. In addition, the finding of human skeletal remains must be reported to the county coroner and local law enforcement in the most expeditious manner possible. The remains should not be touched, moved, or further disturbed.

The county coroner will assume jurisdiction over the human skeletal remains and make a determination of whether those remains are forensic or non-forensic. If the county coroner determines the remains are non-forensic, then they will report that finding to the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) who will then take jurisdiction over the remains and report them to the appropriate cemeteries and affected tribes. The State Physical Anthropologist will make a determination of whether the remains are Indian or Non-Indian and report that finding to any appropriate cemeteries and the affected tribes. The DAHP will then handle all consultation with the affected parties as to the future preservation, excavation, and disposition of the remains.



10. Will DAHP accept “short reports” and if so what are the requirements?

Yes, DAHP will accept “short reports”. Note that the requirements for these reports are the same requirements as outlined above in this document. The only different will be that the various sections will be smaller/ shorter in nature and in some cases not applicable.

11. Why do reports have to be submitted in PDF format?

PDF files will be displayed in our imaging system in color, the text within the document will also be searchable, and the graphics within the document are clearer and easier to read.