



## Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

1 Old State Capitol Plaza • Springfield, Illinois 62701-1507 • (217) 782-4836 • TTY (217) 524-7128

### PROTECTING ILLINOIS' CULTURAL RESOURCES

*An Introduction to Archaeological Surveys*

Prepared by  
**ILLINOIS STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**

When you read the accompanying letter, you were notified that your Federal or State permitted, funded, or licensed project will require an archaeological survey. We also review projects that use public land. The purpose of this survey will be to determine if prehistoric or historic resources are present within the project area. If you are the average applicant you have had little or no experience with such surveys. This short introduction is designed to help you fulfill the Federal/State requirements and complete the process.

**WHY PROTECT HISTORIC RESOURCES?** Historic preservation legislation grew out of the public concern for the rapid loss of our prehistoric and historic heritage in the wake of increasingly large-scale Federal/State and private development. The legislation is an attempt to protect our heritage while at the same time allowing economic development to go forward.

**WHAT IS THE LEGAL BASIS?** The basis for all subsequent historic preservation legislation lies within the national Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA). Section 106 of NHPA requires all Federal Agencies "undertakings" to "take into account" their effect on historic properties. As of January 1, 1990, the State Agency Historic Resources Preservation Act (Public Act 86-707) requires the same for all private or public undertakings involving state agencies. An "undertaking" is defined to cover a wide range of Federal or State permitting, funding, and licensing activities. It is the responsibility of Federal/State Agencies to ensure the protection of historic resources and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) regulates this effort. In Illinois the SHPO is part of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA).

**WHAT IS AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY?** An archaeological survey includes both (1) an examination of the written records, such as county plat books, published and unpublished archaeological reports, state site files, and (2) a field investigation of the project area to determine if prehistoric or historic resources are present. This process of resource identification is called a Phase I survey.

**WHAT DOES A PHASE I SURVEY REQUIRE?** Archaeological evidence is normally buried beneath the surface of the ground. To determine if an archaeological site is present it is necessary to get below this surface. The most efficient way is by plowing. If the project area is or can be plowed then the artifactual evidence will be brought to the surface and systematic pedestrian surveys (walkovers) will determine if a site is present. These walkovers are best done when the vegetation is low in the fall or spring. If the project area is covered with vegetation then small shovel probes (1' sq.) are excavated on a systematic grid pattern (usually 50' intervals) to sample the subsurface deposits. Where deeply buried sites may be present, such as in floodplains, deep coring or machine trenching may be required.

**WHO DOES ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS?** Professional archaeologists who meet the Federal standards set forth in the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (48 FR 44738-9) may conduct Federal surveys, while those meeting the State standards set forth in the Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Protection Act (20 ILCS 3435) may conduct surveys on public land in the State (see the other side of this sheet for information on obtaining the services of a contract archaeologist). The applicant is responsible for obtaining and paying for such services.

**AFTER THE SURVEY - WHAT NEXT?** When the field investigations are completed the archaeologist will submit a report of their findings and recommendations to the applicant. **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE APPLICANT TO FORWARD TWO (2) COPIES TO THE SHPO FOR EVALUATION AND FINDINGS.** If no sites were found or the sites found are not eligible for the National Register the project may proceed. Occasionally, a significant archaeological site may be encountered. In such a case the SHPO and the Federal or State Agency will work with the applicant to protect both the cultural resources and to facilitate the completion of your project.

**NEED FURTHER ASSISTANCE?** The IHPA is here to assist you and the Federal/State agencies in complying with the mandates of the historic preservation legislation. If you have questions or need assistance with archaeological resources protection or Federal/State compliance, please contact the Archaeology Section, Preservation Services Division, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, 500 East Madison Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701 (217/785-4512).

**OVER**

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Illinois Historic Preservation Agency – Archaeology Section  
Information for Developers and Agencies about general procedures for Phase 2 archaeology projects

Anyone notified of an archaeological site subject to Phase 2 testing in their project area, has several options:

1. Preserve the site by planning your project to avoid or greenspace the site, a deed covenant maybe necessary depending on the land ownership and the law the project is being reviewed under.
2. Hire an archaeological firm to conduct a Phase 2 project on the site.
3. Choose a different location for the project (generally means starting review process over from scratch, but there will be rare occasions when this is actually the fastest and cheapest option). This is something you may wish to consider if there are burials in the project area, or an extremely large or dense site in the project area.

Phase 2 archaeological projects consist of fieldwork, analysis, and report by the archaeological firm, and then review of the report by the IHPA and sometimes also by the funding or permitting agency, with additional work required part of time depending on the significance of the site(s). However, if a project has no significant sites after a Phase 2 project has been completed and reviewed, then the archaeology is completed as soon as IHPA accepts the report. If a project area has more than 1 site, each one is reviewed independently, in other words, one could be determined not significant and while another one is determined significant or potentially significant.

Phase 2 field work generally consists of obtaining good artifact type and location data from the site surface by methods such as grid collections, piece plotting, etc., this is followed by a small scale excavation. In some cases the fieldwork (commonly called test units) can be done with assistance of machines like backhoes or occasionally even large equipment like belly scrapers (plowed or partially disturbed sites), but sometimes it is necessary to dig by hand (mounds, unplowed sites, or inaccessible locations). The test units are excavated to the base of the plowzone or topsoil, and then the base of the unit is checked for presence of archaeological features (foundations, pits, hearths, burials, middens, etc.) If features are present, a small number (generally not more than 5-10) of them are excavated to provide information about the site's age, function, integrity, etc. Samples of soil from each feature for botanical and zoological analysis are usually taken. Also on floodplains of large rivers, several additional "deep" trenches are usually necessary to check for buried sites. The amount of time required for fieldwork is highly dependent on the size of a site, on whether machines can be used, and on the density of features, as well as the weather.

Analysis at Phase 2 consists of identifying and inventorying all of the artifacts recovered and preparing data recorded in the field for a report. The length of time needed is again highly variable based on the factors listed above. The report describes the field and lab information, provides a preliminary interpretation of the site, and makes recommendations concerning the significance of the site.

The archaeology staff at the State Historic Preservation Office (IHPA in Illinois) and sometimes the archaeologists at the lead funding or permitting agency review the report. Based on the report and their knowledge of regional archaeological, they determine (following criteria outlined in the appropriate law and regulations for each project) if the work done was acceptable, and whether the site(s) are not significant and need no further investigation or are significant. If a site is significant (meets the eligibility criteria for the National Register of Historic Places), the choices are mitigation (generally by complete excavation) or preservation.

Mark E. Esarey, PhD, Chief Archaeologist (1-21-98)

**ILLINOIS-BASED CONSULTING SERVICES WITH PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGISTS** (by zip code order, 3/27/2002 update)  
In order to assist agencies, engineering firms, and others who require professional archaeological services the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) has listed below Illinois-based firms with professional archaeologists currently performing contract archaeological compliance work. Based on documentation supplied by them these individuals appear to meet current Federal qualifications. This list is provided for your assistance, however, you may use any archaeologist who meets the minimum qualifications as set forth in Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (36 CFR 61). Federal and state regulations require a completed graduate degree with an emphasis in archaeology and 16 months of professional archaeological experience (**BOLD names** below). If you have any questions please contact IHPA at 217/785-4512. **THE INCLUSION OF INDIVIDUALS OR ORGANIZATIONS ON THIS LIST DOES NOT CONSTITUTE ANY RECOMMENDATION OR ENDORSEMENT OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE OR PERFORMANCE RECORD BY THE IHPA.**

### CHICAGO METRO REGION

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More Central Listings - Over  
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