

# Inadvertent Discovery Plan

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## 1. Introduction

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) completes the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as applicable, for projects authorized by a Department of the Army permit. However, cultural resources or historic properties may unexpectedly be encountered during project construction based on the project location or type of work. These unforeseen finds are called an inadvertent discovery. This plan describes requirements should an inadvertent discovery occur.

In accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA, Federal agencies, such as the Corps, are required to take into account the effects of any permitted action to historic properties. The Corps completes these requirements in cooperation with States, local governments, Native American Tribes, and private organizations and individuals. There are numerous federal and state laws and regulations that apply to historic preservation that include, but are not limited to:

National Historic Preservation Act – [54 USC 306108] [36 CFR 60]

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act – [25 USC 3001] [43 CFR 10]

Procedures for the Protection of Historic Properties – [33 CFR 325 – Appendix C]

Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments – [Executive Order 13175]

Rights and Duties Relating to Cemeteries, Human Bodies and Anatomical Gifts – [ORS 97.740- 97.760]

Oregon Historical and Heritage Agencies, Programs and Tax Provisions; Museums; Local Symphonies and Bands; Archaeological Objects and Sites – [ORS 358.905 – 358.955]

Permits and Conditions for Excavation or Removal of Archaeological or Historical Material; Rules; Criminal Penalty – [ORS 390.235]

## 2. Background

For thousands of years, Native American Tribes have lived on the lands that now comprise the state of Oregon. Although these lands are under various ownerships, Native Americans still retain a strong connection to their ancestral lands. Tribal archeological and burial sites are not simply artifacts of the Tribe's cultural past, but are considered sacred and represent a continuing connection with their ancestors. Native American cultural resources, ancestral remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony are protected under federal and state laws. Examples of Tribal cultural resources include, but are not limited to: lithic flakes, stone tools, Native American human remains, remnants of structures (e.g. house pits), fish weirs, and/or shell middens.

In addition to potential Tribal-related sites, non-Tribal cultural and historical resources are also protected under federal and state laws. Examples of material that may be found at a historic-period site include, but are not limited to: glass bottles, cans, structural

foundations, machinery or parts, nails and many other items. If material such as this is uncovered during the course of a project, the procedures outlined below are applicable.

**3. Inadvertent Discovery** – The permittee shall implement the following procedures:

**a. Projects that do not require monitoring by a professional archeologist** (see permit special conditions):

1) In the event evidence of human burials, human skeletal remains, cultural items, suspected cultural items, or historic properties, as defined by the NHPA, are discovered and/or may be affected during the course of the authorized work, the permittee shall **Immediately Cease All Ground Disturbing Activities** that may cause further disturbance to those remains or resources. The area of the find shall be secured and protected from further disturbance, including an appropriate buffer around the discovery (i.e. 100 feet) using flagging or other visible marker. Sensitive resources, such as human skeletal remains, may not include visual markers in order to avoid attracting attention. The find may be temporarily protected through stabilization or non-destructive covering. Reasonable steps shall be taken to ensure confidentiality of the discovery and restrict access. The permittee or permittee's representative shall immediately notify the Corps and other appropriate agencies as identified in part 3(a)(2) of this plan, below.

2) Notification Procedures:

- Notification to the Corps, Portland District, Regulatory Branch Archeologist shall be made by email to [brian.s.heil@usace.army.mil](mailto:brian.s.heil@usace.army.mil) or phone at 503-808-4382 as soon as possible following discovery, but in no case later than 24 hours. The email or call shall clearly specify the purpose is to report a cultural resource discovery, provide the permittee's name, and Corps permit number.
- The permittee shall also notify the Corps representative (by email or telephone) as identified in the permit letter.
- If the inadvertent discovery is identified as human skeletal remains on non-federal or non-tribal public and private lands, the permittee shall report the discovery to the Oregon State Police at (503) 731-4717 and the county medical examiner/coroner in the most expeditious manner possible. The remains shall not be touched, moved, or further disturbed. The county medical examiner/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 medical examiner/coroner determines the remains are non-forensic, then they will report that finding to the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) who will then take jurisdiction over the remains.
- In all inadvertent discovery situations, the permittee is also responsible for contacting the SHPO at (503) 986-0690.

3) Failure to stop work immediately and continue such stoppage could result in a violation of federal and state laws. Violators may be subject to civil and criminal penalties. Work shall remain suspended until notified by the Corps that work may proceed.

4) The permittee shall not resume construction in the area surrounding the discovery until the Corps Regulatory Branch re-authorizes project construction, pursuant to 36 CFR Part 800.13.

**b. Projects that require monitoring by a professional archeologist** (see permit special conditions):

1) The Corps-required archeological monitor has the authority to temporarily stop all ground disturbing activities in the event evidence of human burials, human skeletal remains, cultural items, suspected cultural items, or historic properties, as defined by the NHPA, are discovered and/or may be affected during the course of the authorized work. Upon positive identification of human burials, human skeletal remains, cultural items, suspected cultural items, or historic properties, as defined by the NHPA, the archeological monitor shall notify the permittee of the inadvertent discovery and the permittee shall **Immediately Cease All Ground Disturbing Activities**. The archeological monitor will take actions necessary to secure the discovery location. The permittee or permittee's representative shall immediately notify the Corps and other appropriate agencies as necessary as described in the Notification Procedures above. Work shall remain suspended until notified by the Corps that work may proceed.

2) Before work can proceed, first, the nature of the discovery must be evaluated. If it is determined the discovery contains human remains, then section 4 below shall be initiated. If the discovery contains less than 10 artifacts, then paragraph 3) below shall be followed. If the discovery contains more than 10 artifacts and does not contain human skeletal remains, then the Corps, in consultation with the SHPO and tribes as appropriate, will determine whether the site may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). If deemed insignificant the Corps will allow work to continue. If deemed significant, the Corps, in consultation with the SHPO, will evaluate whether the continuation of work would constitute an adverse effect. If the Corps determines the effect will not be adverse, or the area can be avoided, then work will be allowed to continue. If the inadvertent discovery location cannot be avoided, and continuing work would have an adverse effect on the site, the Corps, in consultation with the permittee, SHPO, and tribes as appropriate, will need to draft and finalize a Memorandum of Agreement for the treatment of the historic site before work can proceed.

3) If an isolated artifact (defined as fewer than 10 artifacts by the SHPO) is identified, the archeological monitor shall determine: a) whether there is potential for other artifacts to be present in the vicinity of the initial discovery by acquiring a

state-issued archaeological testing permit (pursuant to state law) to conduct additional survey, soil screening, subsurface testing, or other method deemed appropriate, and b) whether the identified artifacts alone are significant. These two considerations will be used to determine if sufficient evidence is present to define a historic site (i.e. potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP). If upon closer examination the materials discovered are not consistent with human burials, human remains, cultural items, suspected cultural items, or historic properties, as defined by the NHPA, the monitoring archeologist shall notify the Corps (via by phone or email message), and can then allow work to proceed but with caution and at a slower rate until the monitor is confident no sites are represented. The isolated finds shall be reported in the archeological monitor's post-construction monitoring report.

#### 4. Human Remains

**a. Plan of Action:** If human burials and/or human skeletal remains are discovered, the archeological monitor shall ensure all unauthorized personnel have vacated the site location in a safe manner, make reasonable efforts to secure the location, and stabilize the remains if necessary (e.g. prevent remains from falling out of a trench wall). Every reasonable effort will be made by the monitor to ensure the remains are not physically handled or examined by unauthorized personnel until the proper notifications have been made. Reference is made to the Tribal Position Paper on Human Remains found on SHPO's website at:

[http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/ARCH/docs/Tribal\\_position\\_paper\\_on\\_Human\\_Remains.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/ARCH/docs/Tribal_position_paper_on_Human_Remains.pdf).

**b. Treatment Plan:** The permittee shall develop a Treatment Plan (TP) in consultation with the Corps, SHPO, and tribe(s), as needed, to ensure the proper handling, protection, or temporary storage of human remains and/or cultural items until the proper tribe or other entity, as appropriate, can be identified and those resources can be repatriated. The TP will define the items found; develop a strategy for handling/moving human remains and/or cultural items, if applicable; develop a strategy for determining whether additional human remains and/or cultural items are endangered; determine if additional testing is necessary to identify site boundaries; and determine the disposition of the human remains and/or cultural items. The TP will be agreed upon by all parties involved before any future ground disturbance activities resume.