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Archeological
and
Historic
Data
Recovery
Program

Fiscal
Year
1975

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Cover: Spiro Mounds Conch Shell Engraving, Oklahoma Smithsonian Institution Collections

Archeological and Historic Data Recovery Program

Fiscal Year 1975

**Submitted pursuant to Section 5(c) of Public Law 93-291 to the Interior and Insular Affairs
Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States.**

Introduction

The Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-291; 16 U.S.C. 469a-1) places liability for mitigation of damage or destruction of the Nation's archeological and historic resources caused by Federal and federally-related construction projects directly on agencies responsible for such projects. It specifically authorizes Federal agencies to undertake data recovery activities in advance of construction projects, to transfer to the Secretary of the Interior up to 1 percent of those funds authorized to be appropriated for a project, program, or activity, or to seek funding assistance from the Secretary of the Interior for such investigations. The Secretary of the Interior is responsible both for coordinating all Federal data recovery activities to assure a uniform Federal effort and reporting annually to the Congress on the scope and effectiveness of this program. The National Park Service has been delegated the responsibility for administering

these functions under the Act.

It is the policy of the Department of the Interior to implement the Archeological and Historic Preservation Act in a manner consistent with existing environmental statutes to which all Federal agencies are subject. These are primarily the Antiquities Act of 1906, the Historic Sites Act of 1935, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and Executive Order 11593. Until agencies complete environmental planning procedures relative to these statutes, the possibility that "significant scientific, prehistoric, historic, or archeological data might be irrevocably lost or destroyed" will in most situations remain speculative. If in the course of environmental planning it is determined that such data may not be lost or destroyed, the Department believes that the preservation of these data *in situ* is more preferable than their recovery through archeological investigation.

Scope and Effectiveness of the Program

A statement setting forth the basic policy approach of the Department of the Interior to implementation of Public Law 93-291 has been circulated for review by all Federal agencies and by all State Historic Preservation Officers to insure as uniform and feasible an application of the law as possible.

In conjunction with this statement of program approach and in order to facilitate coordination of the overall program, the National Park Service is developing guidelines for: (1) the recovery of archeological and historic data; (2) the preparation of professional reports to disseminate information recovered under Public Law 93-291 authority; and (3) minimum qualifications for professional researchers and institutions engaging in Public Law 93-291 data recovery activities. Once these guidelines have been disseminated, Federal agencies may be expected to intensify their efforts to establish sound cultural resource identification, evaluation, and mitigation procedures within agency planning frameworks. In addition, the National Park Service and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation are currently developing coordination measures which will facilitate agency compliance with the consultation and review procedures of the Council (36 CFR 800).

During Fiscal Year 1975, many agencies were not able to discharge their Public Law 93-291 responsibilities because necessary funds were unavailable through the normal budgetary process. Consequently, the National Park Service has conducted needed data recovery investigations associated with a wide spectrum of Federal activities that in the future will be funded by the agencies that are directly responsible for adverse impacts on cultural resources. These investigations include archeological survey, testing, and excavation conducted concurrently with project construction. National Park Service support of archeological data recovery will necessarily continue until all Federal agencies are able to adjust their planning procedures and budget-

ary requirements so that they will be fully responsive to the needs created by their projects or activities.

In preparation for increased responsibilities under the Act, the National Park Service has established field liaison offices of its Interagency Archeological Services Division in Atlanta, Georgia; Denver, Colorado; and San Francisco, California. Each is staffed with experienced professional archeologists obtained through realignment of existing authorized personnel positions. Each office administers the program in approximately one-third of the nation, the boundaries for which are drawn to correspond closely with those of Federal land-developing agencies in order to simplify coordination (see Map). Through workshops, conferences, and consultations the professional staff of the Interagency Archeological Services Division advises Federal agencies and the archeological community on technical and procedural matters so that recovery of data may proceed smoothly in accordance with existing laws and policies and in a manner supportive of basic agency missions. In addition, these liaison offices negotiate and administer contracts with qualified institutions and organizations for Public Law 93-291 investigations.

During and after the current transitional period in which guidelines are being formulated and Federal agencies are adjusting planning and budgetary requirements to carry out their responsibilities for preservation of archeological and historic remains, the level of data recovery conducted under the authority of Public Law 93-291 is expected to rise significantly. To handle this increase effectively, the National Park Service will require full appropriations authorized by Sections 7(b) and 7(c) of the Act. In addition, the Service must be able to respond to an increasing number of requests for technical advice from the field offices of other Federal agencies. Service liaison activities concerning mitigative measures to be taken and professional monitoring

