

U.S. Department
of the Interior
National Park Service
Interagency Archeological
Services

Archeological and Historical Data Recovery Program 1979

D-153

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NPS General



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Effigy vessel from Averbuch Site, Tennessee.

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As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities to protect and conserve our land and water, energy and minerals, fish and wildlife, parks and recreation areas, and to insure the wise use of all these resources. The Department also has major responsibility for American Indian Reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

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U.S. Department of the Interior

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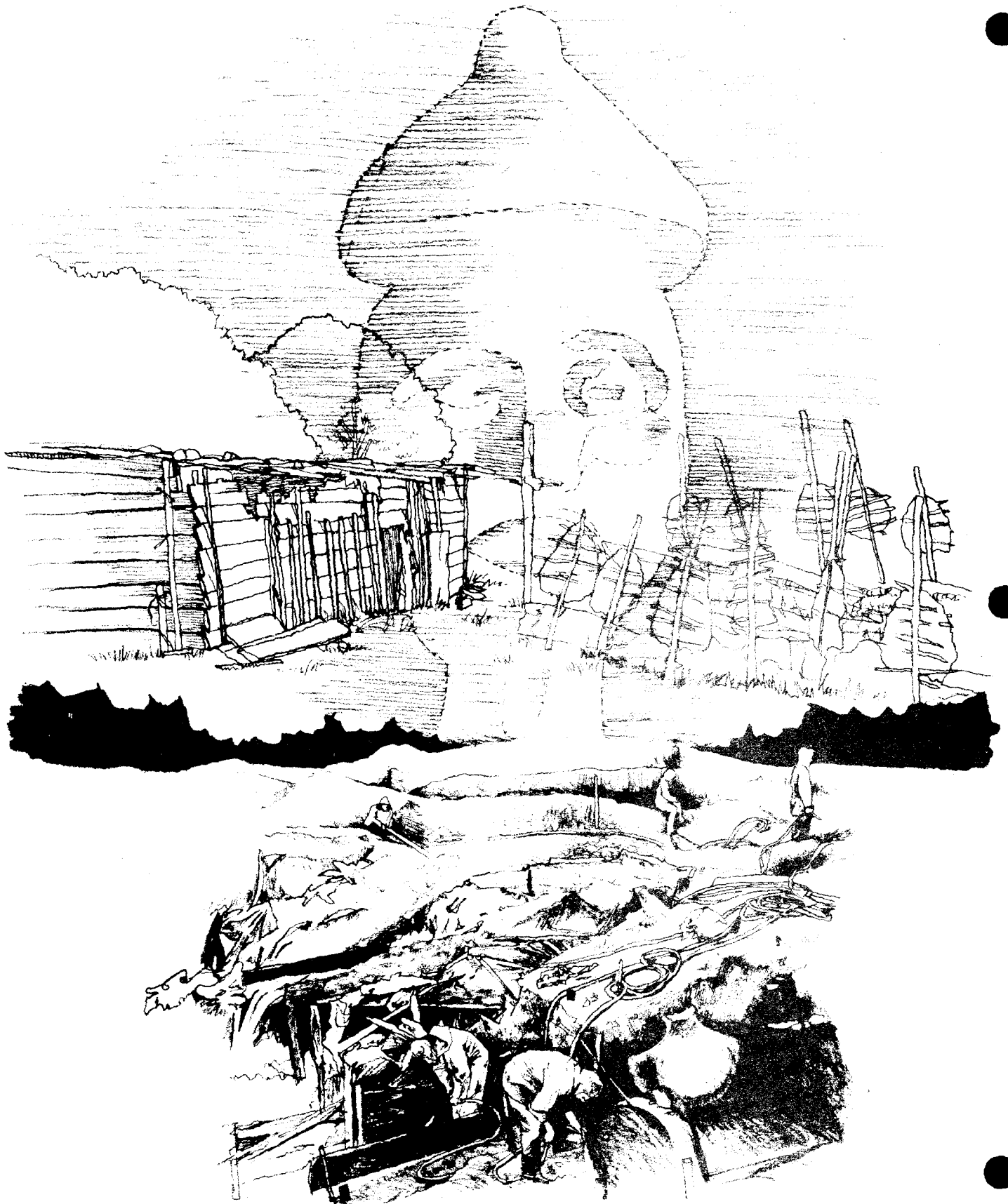
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Vanished social organization, economic systems, and cultural patterns live again through controlled archeological excavations, analysis, and interpretation.

INTRODUCTION

This report is submitted pursuant to section 5(c) of Public Law 93-291, the Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974. It is the responsibility of the Secretary of the Interior to coordinate all federal survey and recovery activities authorized under Public Law 93-291, and to report on the the scope and effectiveness of this law in directing federal archeological data recovery activities to the Interior and Insular Affairs Committees of the United States Congress.

In fulfilling their responsibilities under Public Law 93-291 and several other preservation laws and regulations, federal agencies may undertake a variety of archeological activities. In some cases, this work is administered by the agencies themselves. In other cases, the agencies transfer funds to the Secretary of the Interior for the purpose of having Interior administer any necessary archeological work. In turn, this latter responsibility is delegated to Interagency Archeological Services (IAS), National Park Service.

In preparing this report on federal archeological data recovery activities conducted during FY 1979, IAS has attempted to accumulate data on all federal activities undertaken pursuant to Public Law 93-291. In many cases, however, appropriate data were not forthcoming from the agencies involved or the data were incomplete. Information based on work administered by the IAS on behalf of other agencies is relatively complete, but does not encompass the majority of federal data recovery activities which are undertaken by the agencies themselves. In the following report an attempt has been made to include information from both sources while eliminating insofar as possible, duplicate or overlapping data.

THE MEANING OF ARCHEOLOGY

Archeology is the scientific study of man's past through an examination of the physical remains of his activities. In North America, man's past extends back thousands of years, and for much of this time span buried physical remains are the only evidence left to tell us about daily life, relationships to the environment and to other groups, and many other aspects that have bearing on our life today. Even for more recent historic periods for which written documents are available, archeology offers a candid supplemental or alternative view of daily life.

Archeology utilizes a variety of theories and scientific techniques to help us understand mankind by reconstructing patterns of past human behavior. It is unique among the social sciences in its ability to provide insight into change over a long span of time, thus helping us understand processes as well as events.

Archeological evidence consists of (a) artifacts manufactured by man, (b) features comprising the physical evidence of past activities, (c) ecofacts denoting other activities resulting in changes of natural objects, and (d) the contextual relationships between artifacts, features, and ecofacts in the earth. Such kinds of evidence have been determined to be a significant aspect of our nation's heritage as witnessed by the enactment of the Antiquities Act of 1906 (P.L. 59-209), the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (P.L. 74-292), the Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960 as amended (P.L. 86-523), the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (P.L. 89-665), the Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-291), and the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (P.L. 96-95).*

When archeological and historic resources are destroyed, our knowledge of the past is diminished irreversibly. Millions of archeological sites have already been destroyed, and more fall every day to land-altering forces of social and economic growth and change. Since archeological resources have been determined to be a significant aspect of our heritage, the federal government has become concerned with the location, evaluation, preservation, protection, and/or recovery of these resources when they are in danger of damage or destruction. The goal of the various federal programs involved with archeology is to minimize the destruction of archeological sites and data while simultaneously minimizing the disruption of other necessary federal activities.

FEDERAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE PRESERVATION OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

Since World War II, massive public construction projects (highways, dams, urban renewal) have destroyed hundreds of thousands of archeological sites throughout the country. With the rapid expansion of essential construction activities today, we as a nation are losing irreplaceable information about our cultural heritage on such an enormous scale that it is impossible for the private sector alone to retard or prevent the loss. Therefore, it is fitting that the federal government, acting on behalf of the American people, play a major role in protecting and preserving those historic and archeological resources still intact.

*Editor's note: The National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1980 (P.L. 96-515) provide further protection.

All federal agencies are required by law to consider the presence of significant cultural properties before they undertake any project that may cause irreparable loss or destruction of such properties. This responsibility also extends to the systematic search for, documentation of, and evaluation of cultural properties on public land in the absence of any active federal undertaking.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN THE UNITED STATES

Since colonial times Americans have had considerable interest in preserving historic and prehistoric sites. The mounds in the southeastern United States sparked the curiosity of early relic hunters and amateur archeologists, the most famous being Thomas Jefferson who carefully excavated an Indian mound near Monticello. The cult that arose around George Washington and other personalities resulted in attempts to preserve historic homes such as Mt. Vernon and the Hasbrouch House, which was purchased by the State of New York in the last part of the 19th century.

After the close of the Civil War, people became more concerned with examining the rapidly disappearing aboriginal cultures, and the rush to obtain Indian artifacts began. Semi-trained archeologists excavated frantically for years. The result was hundreds of thousands of unmarked and unprovenanced artifacts.

In the 1880s the federal government became interested in historic preservation and archeology; the extensive vandalism at Casa Grande had impressed enough people to cause the government to take action. After several abortive attempts at a broad based federal plan, the Antiquities Act of 1906 was enacted to protect cultural resources on federal land. Since that time concern with the preservation of our national heritage has increased. This concern is reflected in the development of more than a dozen laws that pertain to the preservation of archeological, architectural, and other cultural resources.

As a part of the extensive "New Deal" legislation of the Depression, the National Historic Sites Act of 1935 enacted a national policy of historic preservation and authorized the Secretary of the Interior to initiate a number of preservation programs, including designating National Landmarks and protecting property that is of national historic or archeological significance. In 1937 the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings began to identify and evaluate the significance of national properties, beginning the list of National Historic Landmarks.

In the late 1940s there was a surge of reservoir construction, unavoidably affecting countless riverine sites, both Indian settlements and historic communities. The River Basin Survey was established as a salvage program to act in concert with reservoir construction in an attempt to recover at least some of the artifacts before these resources were destroyed.

Interest in historic preservation continued to grow and, in 1949, the National Trust for Historic Preservation was established. Its major purpose is to encourage and facilitate public participation in the preservation movement. However, this growing movement was challenged in the 1950s by the program for interstate highways. More legislation

was needed to protect properties that would be affected by the construction of these highways. The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 was enacted which in turn led to the development of the Highway Archeological Salvage Program and finally, in 1966, the passage of the Department of Transportation Act which requires that, when feasible, highways be relocated rather than disturb significant sites. It also calls for setting aside Department of Transportation funds to protect sites which might be affected by the construction of roads or highways.

The 1960s saw the development of the "new archeology," a reorientation in ways of thinking about archeology and a response to innovations in method and theory. At this time there was also an attempt made to unify the archeology and historic preservation movements. In 1960 the "Beautification of America" program was begun; 1964 was declared "International Monuments Year." This laid the groundwork for the National Historic Preservation Act which was passed in 1966. This act defines historic preservation as "the protection, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, or culture." The Historic Preservation Act directed the establishment of the National Register of Historic Places, created the President's Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, directed agencies to consider the effects of undertakings on National Register properties and to consult with the Advisory Council when an undertaking may affect a property, and set aside grants for the states and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. As a result of the act, the Secretary of the Interior called for the establishment of State Historic Preservation Officers in each state.

In 1969 the National Environmental Policy Act was enacted. This act restates that every federally funded or licensed project must take into account during the planning stages the potential effects of the project on the total environment. This significant act emphasized the option of preserving or avoiding a site rather than automatically requiring last minute salvage attempts.

Executive Order 11593 (Preservation and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment) was signed in 1971 and directs all federal agencies to make a list of historic properties on their lands and to nominate those that meet certain criteria to the National Register. This calls for early consideration to be given to archeological resources and for agencies to "exercise caution" in construction to avoid damaging any possible National Register quality sites until the list is complete and all significant resources are known and located.

In 1974 another preservation measure was enacted by Congress: Public Law 93-291, the "Archeological and Historic Preservation Act." This act expanded the earlier Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960 by extending the salvage requirements from reservoir construction to all federal or federally licensed or financially assisted projects. Up to 1 percent of the total federal project cost can be transferred to the Department of the Interior or used by the individual agency to fund data recovery activities, and the act further sets a precedent for preserving data as well as artifacts by calling for analysis of recovered data and publication of the results of analyses. This annual report is produced in response to a mandate in the act, and frequent reference will be made to the act as "P.L. 93-291" in this work.

The Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 is a revision of the Antiquities Act of 1906. It redefines the concept of antiquities and includes penalties for violation of this act, giving enhanced protection to federally owned antiquities.

During the 1970s several significant changes occurred not only in the law, but in attitudes as well. There has been an attempt throughout the profession of archeology, both in academia and in the federal government, to raise standards of work and expectations through use of more highly qualified personnel with increased levels of expertise. Just as significantly, new attitudes about the role of archeology and historic preservation have developed. These changes have increased the credibility of archeology as a science, and particularly of archeology conducted with federal involvement.

PROGRAM SCOPE AND EFFECTIVENESS

Over the years the federal government has responded to the alarming rate of destruction of significant historic and prehistoric properties by enacting a body of law to protect and preserve cultural resources in place undisturbed or to recover the data content of such resources when they are threatened by federal actions or federally assisted actions. All of these laws acknowledge that many federal programs and projects, although developed for the greater public good, are often destructive to cultural resources, including archeological sites.

FEDERAL AGENCIES IN ARCHEOLOGY

All federal agencies are obligated by law to include archeology in their planning when undertaking any action that might have an impact on a cultural resource of any type. Several agencies have fulfilled this obligation by developing their own archeological programs, including full-time staff archeologists and managers with cultural resource expertise. Some of these programs are briefly described below.

United States Department of Agriculture

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) is now in the process of developing and expanding its Cultural Resource Management Program. Each bureau within the USDA has an individual program for cultural resource management, and the Forest Service alone employs over 150 full-time cultural resource management personnel. These cultural resource management personnel hold frequent training sessions on a variety of topics including "Law Enforcement and Cultural Resources." Management training to increase managerial staff understanding of cultural resource management is also available as well as annual training for other employees. The Forest Service publishes a series of work reports through the field offices where the work was undertaken.

This active program contrasts sharply with the cultural resource management work being done by the USDA's Soil Conservation Service (SCS). The SCS derives its principal authority from Public Law 93-291. Most cultural resource management work prompted by SCS activities is managed and at least partly financed by Interagency Archeological Services (IAS).

Federal Highway Administration

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) believes that the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 (as amended) and the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (as amended) adequately protect all cultural resources that might be affected by federal highway construction. Therefore this agency does not generally perform work under the authority of Public Law 93-291, and it does not report to IAS on activities performed under other authorities.

FHWA is currently publishing several articles and pamphlets on its archeology program. "The Consideration of Archeology and Paleontology in the Federal-Aid Highway Program" covers a number of geographical areas and time periods, giving brief examples of archeological activities from early salvage work to the most current excavations. This pamphlet stresses the importance of including archeology in the planning stages to avoid construction delays and to provide the best possible means of preserving resources in the impact area, and points out the FHWA's contributions to archeology.

One major FHWA program was the construction of I-270. IAS was asked to provide technical assistance that resulted in a considerable monetary savings for the FHWA. Two brochures were developed to describe the project. "Preservation Archeology Interstate 270" was conceived by the Illinois State Highway Department and financed by FHWA. These brochures describe and briefly discuss the different types of archeological resources found in the American Bottom and how to preserve and protect these resources. The project is being videotaped and prepared for public dissemination. This audio-visual representation shows clearly the importance of archeology and makes information on this exciting project directly accessible to the public.

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department has also published an illustrated brochure explaining the laws pertaining to archeology, and the process of identifying and excavating a site. It stresses the importance of studying the whole site in its original context and the artifacts in situ. The brochure also discusses the process of excavation, some of the theories behind field work, and the type of information that should result from such work.

The FHWA distributes two booklets that were published by the Department of the Interior. The booklets discuss the means of locating and excavating an archeological site. "The Archeological Survey: Methods and Uses" and "Guidelines for Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning" are distributed to FHWA employees to increase their general knowledge and to stress the importance of including archeology in every step of the planning process. The latter booklet deals more specifically with historic cultural resources.

The FHWA teaches a course entitled "Historic and Archeological Preservation" designed for professional highway personnel who are involved with cultural resource management. Representatives of other agencies are invited and encouraged to participate in the course, allowing a wider range of ideas and increased communication between the other agencies and the FHWA.

By the nature of its work the FHWA comes into contact with a large number of archeological sites. FHWA is now striving to protect these resources in the best way possible: through avoidance. When this is not feasible, mitigation of the impact on the resources is undertaken. By including archeological planning in every stage of the highway development process, FHWA is able to protect cultural resources without delaying ongoing highway construction.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) was involved in over 30 major construction projects in FY 1979, each with a corresponding archeology program. Because of its extensive construction activities, the COE has the largest archeology program of any single federal agency. In the past, most of the emphasis has been on salvage of artifacts and information from areas that face imminent destruction from Corps projects. The current emphasis, however, is on mitigating the impact of any construction, and on understanding the total archeological site.

One major aspect of the archeology program is training of COE personnel to heighten their awareness of the importance of archeology. Additionally, all incoming archeologists are enrolled in an orientation program to prepare them for their jobs as field consultants and advisors. A training course is offered to all soils engineers, instructing them how to recognize buried archeological deposits. At the managerial level there is a program designed to improve archeological contracting, teaching both the legal requirements and the archeological priorities.

In addition to these training programs, the COE publishes pamphlets on the archeology encountered in construction projects. The largest information project undertaken during 1979 was a movie documentary on Los Esteros, New Mexico. There are more than 200 sites in this one historic district including colonial Spanish, Comanchero, and Indian residential areas. This district provides a unique opportunity to study, compare, and contrast several different cultures within one localized region. This project has been well publicized and the documentary is an attempt to inform COE personnel as well as the general public of its significance.

The COE conducted an experimental project at Lewisville, Tennessee. This site was inundated 22 years ago and provides an excellent study ground for examining the effects of inundation on an archeological site.

National Park Service

National Park Service (NPS) is responsible for all cultural resources which fall within the boundaries of the national parks. The agency is less concerned with data recovery activities because most sites are protected due to their location on the federal land of a national park.

The NPS employed over 100 cultural resource management personnel in its in-house programs during FY 1979. Due to the present decrease in construction activities nationwide, very little salvage or rescue work is currently being done. The emphasis is on a cultural resource program which places high priority on training and management.

In addition to its Washington office, NPS has regional offices throughout the country. Each of the regional offices has ties to a university and many staff archeologists are professors. This enables them to teach courses in archeology as part of the NPS program. Each of the several archeological centers has its own publication series in addition to producing various pamphlets and assorted publications each year. Some of these publications fulfill the Public Law 93-291 reporting requirements.

One major project during FY 1979 was the Remote Sensing Program which has nine volumes currently in print. NPS also published manuals on a variety of topics including studies of the effects of fire on archeological sites (done in conjunction with the fire fighting program) and studies on the effects of inundation on different sites.

Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

The Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) was abolished on May 31, 1981. Most of the duties assigned to this bureau, including those assigned to IAS, were subsequently transferred to the NPS. However, during FY 1979 the HCRS, and specifically the IAS, was responsible for directing and coordinating the nationwide effort to protect significant archeological and historic remains threatened by federal construction projects, programs, or activities. This coordinating role was delegated to IAS by the Secretary of the Interior who has been mandated these responsibilities by Public Law 93-291. As part of this responsibility, IAS

- * Develops for the Secretary of the Interior national goals and objectives, policies, standards, guidelines, and procedures for all federal agencies to follow in the administration of the archeological and historic data recovery program under Public Law 93-291.
- * Assists federal agencies in fulfilling their Executive Order 11593 responsibilities by helping them to locate, identify, and evaluate historic properties under their jurisdiction or control, or to conduct data recovery if necessary under Public Law 93-291.
- * Manages the permit system instituted under the Antiquities Act of 1906 (P.L. 59-209) to regulate data recovery projects on most federally owned or controlled lands.
- * Consults with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on archeological issues.
- * Reports annually to Congress on the scope, effectiveness, costs, and results of the program.

The legal requirements included in the legislation are intended to integrate historic preservation goals with the successful and timely completion of construction and other projects that may adversely affect cultural resources. The compliance process should be undertaken at the earliest stage of project development to ensure that needless destruction of cultural resources is avoided and that the proper consideration and recovery of those resources do not result in project delay.

The Antiquities Program of IAS coordinates and establishes policy relative to antiquities present on public and Indian lands. Permits are issued for the purposeful removal of antiquities by scientific organizations for scholarly research, but the materials are to be placed in a public repository. An annual report to Congress is required relative to activities carried out, legislative changes recommended for the act, and liaison activities to foster communication. The legislation also provides for public awareness education on the benefits of the preservation of antiquities.