

**Nomination for John L. Cotter Award for Excellence in National Park Service Archeology**

**Nominee:** Dr. Douglas C. Wilson  
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**Project:** **Station Camp/Middle Village Archaeological Project  
2004-2009**

**Type of Project:** Exploratory Field Work with follow up Dissemination/Public Outreach

**Park of Benefit:** **Lewis and Clark National Historical Park**  
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## Nomination Statement for Dr. Douglas C. Wilson

This nomination for the John L. Cotter Award for Excellence in National Park Service Archeology is for Dr. Douglas C. Wilson, Archaeologist, and Director of the Northwest Cultural Resources Institute, based out of Fort Vancouver National Historic Site (FOVA), in Vancouver, Washington. Specifically, this nomination is for Dr. Wilson's efforts at spearheading the multi-disciplinary historical archaeological exploration of the Middle Village, or Station Camp/McGowan Site (45PC106), located on the Washington shoreline of the north bank of the mouth of the Columbia River. Dr. Wilson was the Principal Investigator for the project spanning the time period from 2004-2009, and was the Primary Author of the final report of the data recovery excavations of the site, entitled, "Historical Archaeology at the Middle Village, Station Camp/McGowan Site (45PC106) Station Camp Unit, Lewis and Clark National Historical Park, Pacific County, Washington," (2009).

The completion of this five year research project is an exemplary example of how NPS efforts to facilitate archaeological research necessary for a proposed undertaking at a park can result in a multi-disciplinary anthropological research design with testable results, while still addressing park management issues and scientific objectives. The archaeological data recovery efforts at the Station Camp site were the results of the proposed realignment of U.S. Highway 101 to create an interpretive space for the Station Camp Unit of the Lewis and Clark National and State Historical Park (LEWI). This interpretive area was planned to commemorate the encampment of the Lewis and Clark Expedition during November 1805, the history of the indigenous Chinook Indians, and the important salmon cannery town established by P.J. McGowan. Two components of the Station Camp site were explored: a fur trade period component (ca. 1792-1830) associated with the Lower Chinook Indians' Middle Village (*qiiqayaqilxam*) and a late-19<sup>th</sup> century to early-20<sup>th</sup> century cannery and fishing village called

McGowan.

Data recovery excavations focused on the Middle Village component within a "contributing" area within the right-of-way of the realignment project. This comprised an area of about .6 ha (1.5 acres). Eight defined areas guided the placement of data recovery excavation units. A total of 118.7 m<sup>2</sup> was excavated in formal units within these areas to recover a sample of the site's artifacts and record features and sediment characteristics. A total of 10.2% of the contributing portion of the site was explored using either formal units or mechanical stripping/trenching during the data recovery phase. These excavations led to the discovery of over 10,000 diagnostic artifacts, over 400 archaeological features, and the remains of no less than five Chinookan plank houses.

During the data recovery excavations led by Dr. Wilson, archaeologists, geoarchaeologists, and other specialists, collected data to refine chronology, site development, technology and trade/exchange patterns, the spatial distribution of artifacts and features, human subsistence, architecture, and site function and settlement patterns. The chronological analyses confirmed that, at least within the project area, the Middle Village component appears to date to the contact period (ca. 1792-1830) with very limited evidence for precontact use. The McGowan-period materials date to the later fishing, canning, and agricultural activities at the site, predominantly in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century when the fishing and canning activities were at their zenith, but also extending into the early-to-mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Through Dr. Wilson's partnership efforts with Portland State University (where is also a part-time Associate Professor of Anthropology), Dr. Wilson was able to enlist the help of both undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the Anthropology Departments at both Portland State University, and Washington State University Vancouver. Nearly ¼ of the archaeological field crew utilized during these excavations were enrolled students at these two universities, and many of these students continued on this project into the laboratory analysis of the recovered artifacts.

In addition, Dr. Wilson utilized his many professional contacts in the multi-disciplinary fields of archaeology to produce as many specialized data sets as could be initially generated from these excavations. Specifically, Dr. Wilson was able to employ the following impressive contributors to the final report:

- Kenneth M. Ames, Ph.D., Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology, Portland State University, Portland, Oregon (Analyzed the architectural remains and co-authored several chapters of the final report)

- Kristine M. Bovy, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island (Co-authored the faunal analysis chapter of the final report)
- Virginia L. Butler, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Anthropology, Portland State University, Portland, Oregon (Analyzed the aquatic animal remains recovered from the site and co-authored a chapter of the final report).
- Robert J. Cromwell, Ph.D., Archaeologist, Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, Vancouver, Washington (Analyzed the Ceramics recovered from the site and authored a chapter for the final report)
- Loren G. Davis, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon (Conducted the Geomorphology analysis and authored a chapter for the final report)
- Christopher R. DeCorse, Ph.D., Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology, Syracuse University, Syracuse New York (Analyzed the Beads recovered from the site and authored a chapter for the final report)
- R. Lee Lyman, Ph.D., Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology, University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri (Analyzed the terrestrial animal remains recovered from the site and authored a chapter for the final report)
- Michele L. Punke, Ph.D., Geoarchaeologist, Archaeological Investigations Northwest, Inc., Portland, Oregon (Conducted geoarchaeological analyses of the site and co-authored a chapter for the final report)
- Cameron M. Smith, Ph.D., Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Portland State University, Portland, Oregon (Analyzed the objects of aboriginal origin and co-authored chapters for the final report)
- Nancy A. Stenholm, Ph.D., Botana Labs, Seattle, Washington (Analyzed the archaeobotanical remains from the site and authored a chapter for the final report)

Dr. Wilson's willingness to reach out to such a multi-disciplinary team, and his connections with specialized scientists in both the academic and contract firm worlds allowed for a fuller understanding of the contexts of the site, and an incredibly rich final report with invaluable contributions to the understanding of the early fur trade contexts of the lower Columbia River.

In addition, Dr. Wilson ensured that a battery of cutting edge scientific tools was utilized as a part of the research design for the project. The site's chronology was determined through complimentary data sets, including C14 dating, geomorphology, and mean artifact dating. Dr. Wilson completed a thorough GIS analysis of much of the recovered data, including over 400 archaeological features, and created multi-variate map plots of different classes of recovered artifacts. Through Dr. Wilson's efforts, almost the entirety of the project area was surveyed through geophysical prospection tools (including Ground Penetrating Radar and a Cesium Magnetometer). Finally, Dr. Wilson has revolutionized the way historical archaeologists in the Pacific Northwest will analyze objects such as recovered lead musket balls and other lead objects, by leading cutting edge efforts to conduct lead isotope analyses on all of the recovered objects from the site manufactured out of lead. Based upon Dr. Wilson's research efforts, there is now a preliminary database of lead isotope results from this site that are suggestive of historical importation routes of such artifacts. Not only will these results provide the model for future elemental analyses of historical objects in the Pacific Northwest, but these results may ultimately lead future researchers to even determine if specific lead musket balls and objects were even imported by the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Dr. Wilson's charge to the cultural resources staff located at FOVA has always been to do our utmost to disseminate our knowledge of the cultural resources within the NPS to the greater public. Within this mandate, Dr. Wilson has developed the Northwest Cultural Resources Institute (NCRI), a collaboration of NPS cultural resource specialists with professors and students from Portland State University. As such, Dr. Wilson has taken every opportunity to share his knowledge of this site with the local community. This has included newspaper stories about the archaeological site with newspapers in Astoria, Oregon; Portland, Oregon; Longview, Washington; and Vancouver, Washington; and televised news stories on the site from the Portland, Oregon station affiliates. In addition, Dr. Wilson has presented public lectures on the site in Astoria, Oregon, Portland, Oregon, and Vancouver, Washington.

To date, Dr. Wilson and the co-authors of the final report have presented over ten separate papers on the results of these excavations to various professional archaeological societies, including: the Society for American Antiquity (SAA), the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA), and the Northwest Anthropological Conference (NWAC). A total of 500 copies of the previously cited archaeological report were published, and were disseminated to archaeological professionals in both academia and public agencies, local state historic preservation offices, and with consulting tribes and other interested parties. Currently, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Cromwell, and Dr. DeCorse are preparing

an article on the beads recovered from the site to be submitted to the peer reviewed journal, "Beads."

Finally, through all aspects of this project, Dr. Wilson led the effort to properly consult with several federally recognized Native American tribes that had ancestral claims to the Station Camp site. These tribes include: the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Indians of Oregon, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Indians. In addition, Dr. Wilson consulted with the Chinook Indian Tribe, a non-recognized tribe that has its offices only five miles from the Station Camp Site. There was great interest in the Middle Village component of the site from the local Native American community, so much so that Native American archaeological monitors were present during all phases of archaeological field work, and Dr. Wilson facilitated many meetings with Native American representatives to review the status of the project and to see the recovered artifacts from the site.

In short, I can think of few other archaeological professionals in the NPS who exemplifies the example of thorough, scientific archaeological research as fostered by Dr. John Cotter, than Dr. Douglas C. Wilson. He completed an exemplary archeological report of a complex archaeological site on a shoestring budget, utilizing a multi-disciplinary team, while still teaching undergraduate courses, leading a cultural resources program at another park, and consulting on other archaeological projects throughout the region.



Figure 1. Dr. Douglas C. Wilson (upper left corner with orange safety vest on) with archaeological excavation crew at the Station Camp site, Summer 2006 (NPS photo).



Figure 2. Dr. Douglas C. Wilson (right side with baseball cap) showing Dr. Richard Daugherty (left), Professor Emeritus, Department of Anthropology, Washington State University, some of the recent discoveries at the Station Camp site, Summer 2006 (NPS Photo).

