



- Name of Property:** Davis Oriole Earth Lodge Site
City, State: Mills County, Iowa
Period of Significance: CE 1250-1400
NHL Criteria: 4, 6
NPS Theme:
- I. Peopling Places
 - 1. Family and life cycle
 - 3. Migration from outside and within
 - 4. Encounters, conflict, and colonization
 - V. Developing the American Economy
 - 1. Extraction and production
 - 2. Distribution and consumption
 - 3. Exchange and trade
- Previous Recognition:** 1971 National Register of Historic Places, Pony Creek Park
National Historic Context: Village Sites of the Middle Missouri Subarea, 1000-1887 CE
- I. Cultural Developments: Indigenous American Populations
 - B. Post-Archaic and Pre-Contact Developments
 - 10. Plains Hunters and Gatherers
 - 11. Plains Farmers

NHL Significance:

The Davis Oriole Lodge Site is significant as a specimen exceptionally valuable for study of the predominant Plains Village pattern habitation type—lodges—of the earliest part of this period, embodying all the distinctive characteristics of the homes of early indigenous farmers that typify sites of the Nebraska phase of the Central Plains tradition. The



property outstandingly illustrates the physical features of lodge habitations that commonly recur across the Plains.

- The Davis Oriole Lodge Site is equally significant for its demonstrated potential to yield information of major scientific importance about a period in history of great innovation when people across much of North America experienced profound cultural change related to the transition from modest horticultural practices to increasingly complex agricultural intensification. The property contains data essential to understanding theories, concepts, and ideas relating to the adoption of horticulture and its associated transformations across the continent, which included altered settlement patterns, housing, and food storage styles; the emergence and refinement of technologies, such as specialized stone and bone tools; increasing ceremonialism; and population increase.

Integrity:

- Site impacts are restricted to minimal archeological investigation and a modest, modern cultivation effect. Cultivation has only impacted the upper 0.2 m (0.6 ft) of deposits. In many places, precontact cultural deposits extend to 1.4 m (4.6 ft) below ground surface. The site has not been farmed since it was incorporated into a public park around 1960. Over 99 percent of the site is untouched by disturbance.

Owner of Property: Mills County, Iowa

Acreage of Property: 0.20 acres

Origins of Nomination: Golden Hills Resource Conservation & Development of Oakland, Iowa,

requested preparation of a nomination in 2008. The nomination was developed in cooperation with the Midwest Archeological Center, National Park Service.

Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:

- Designation will elevate public awareness of lodges and other American Indian precontact sites in general. Public appreciation of the national significance of this lodge site raises the likelihood that other lodge sites may be preserved in the future.
- Designation will increase tourism and educational value, for example through the development of interpretive trails and integration of American Indian lodge studies into educational curricula and other interpretive programming for the public.

Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program: None known.

Public Comments Favoring Designation (comments received as of 11/18/11):

Elizabeth Birkley-Leddy, Executive Director, Golden Hills Resource Conservation and Development Inc., Oakland, Iowa

Timothy N. Rhodd, Chairman, Iowa Tribe of Nebraska and Iowa

Douglas W. Jones, Archeologist and Review and Compliance Program Manager, State Historic Preservation Office, State Historical Society of Iowa

Elizabeth Birkel-Leddy, Executive Director, Golden Hills RC&D, Oakland, Iowa

Richard Crouch, Joe Blankenship, and Ron Kohn, Mills County Board of Supervisors, Iowa

Landmarks Committee Comments:

Landmarks Committee Recommendation: Designation. Dr. Mills moved, Dr. Allan seconded; unanimous approval.

Advisory Board Recommendation: Unanimous approval to designate the property as an NHL.