

Inadvertent Discovery Plan

Project Name:

Project Number:

Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation Number:

This Inadvertent Discovery Plan is intended to provide clear guidance for the management of an unexpected discovery or unearthing of cultural artifacts, archaeological features, or other evidence of cultural materials or skeletal material of human or unknown origin during projects funded by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). The plan applies to discoveries not governed by a Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP)-issued excavation permit, by a Monitoring or Site Protection Plan for a specific area or activity, or by a federal permit.

This plan is to be implemented without exception whenever a discovery occurs. It applies to all project sponsor staff, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers, and others who are involved with RCO-funded projects. This plan does not supersede or satisfy requirements for monitoring, site protection, or other plans developed to address concerns at known archaeological and historic sites. The project sponsor (as defined in the RCO grant agreement) is responsible for implementation of this plan. The project sponsor must sign below to indicate the plan has been read and to acknowledge responsibility for implementation of this plan.

As the project contact, I acknowledge that I am responsible for implementation of the Inadvertent Discovery Plan.

- ☐ It is my responsibility to ensure that all site crew on all phases of project excavation and construction understand the requirements of this plan.
- ☐ A complete copy of this signed document will be maintained at all times on the project site for the duration of the project for site crew training and available for inspection by the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, RCO, or others as authorized.
- ☐ I will follow the actions in the plan if the site crew uncovers any cultural resource as a result of project actions, including ground-disturbing activities such as excavation, boring, and concrete removal.
- ☐ I understand failure to follow the actions in this plan is a breach of the RCO grant agreement and that knowingly disturbing an archaeological site is a Class C Felony (Revised Code of Washington 27.53.060).

Sponsor Signature

Sponsor Name

Date

Plan and Procedures

1. INTRODUCTION

The following Inadvertent Discovery Plan outlines procedures to follow, in accordance with state and federal laws, if archaeological materials or human remains are discovered. The plan is required as part of agency terms and conditions for all grant-funded projects. The plan is not a substitute for a formal cultural resource review (Governor's Executive Order 21-02 or National Historic Preservation Act Section 106). Once completed, the plan must be kept at the project site during all project activities. The project sponsors must ensure all staff and subcontractors are familiar with this plan.

2. RECOGNIZING CULTURAL RESOURCES

A cultural resource discovery could be prehistoric or historic and includes the list below. See images below for further examples

- Agricultural or logging materials that appear older than 50 years, could include equipment, fencing, canals, spillways, chutes, derelict sawmills, tools
- An accumulation of shell, burned rocks, or other food-related materials
- Area of charcoal or very dark-stained soil with or without artifacts
- Bones, intact or in small pieces
- Buried railroad tracks, decking, or other industrial materials
- Clusters of tin cans or bottles, logging or agricultural equipment that appear to be older than 50 years
- Modified or stripped trees, often cedar or aspen, or other modified natural features, such as rock drawings or carvings
- Old munitions casings. Always assume these are live and never touch or move.
- Remnants of homesteading, which could include bricks, nails, household items, toys, food containers, and other items associated with homes or farming sites
- Stone tools or waste flakes (i.e., an arrowhead or stone chips)

The above list does not cover every possible cultural resource. When in doubt, assume the material is a cultural resource.

3. ON-SITE RESPONSIBILITIES

If any employee, contractor, or subcontractor believes he/she/they has uncovered cultural resources or human remains at any point, take the steps below to Stop-Protect-Notify. If the discovery is expected to include human remains, also follow Section 4. The discovery location should be secured at all times.

STEP A: STOP WORK. If an employee, contractor, subcontractor, or volunteer believes that he/she/they has uncovered a cultural resource at any point in the project, all work in the immediate area of the discovery must stop.

STEP B: PROTECT THE DISCOVERY. Leave the discovery and the surrounding area untouched and create a clear, identifiable, and wide boundary of 30 feet or larger with temporary fencing, flagging, stakes, or other clear markings. Provide protection and ensure integrity of the discovery until cleared by the Department of Archaeological and Historical Preservation (DAHP) or a licensed, professional archaeologist.

Do not permit vehicles, equipment, or unauthorized personnel to traverse the discovery site. Do not allow work to resume within the boundary until the requirements of this plan are met.

STEP C: NOTIFY PROJECT ARCHAEOLOGIST (if applicable). If the project has an archaeologist, notify that person. If there is a monitoring plan in place, the archaeologist will follow the outlined procedure.

Project Archaeologist (If applicable):

Name:

Company:

Phone:

E-mail:

STEP D: NOTIFY PROJECT MANAGEMENT. Contact the RCO grants manager, RCO cultural resources coordinator, and project sponsor's project manager.

RCO Contacts

Cultural Resources Program Coordinator

[Sarah Thirtyacre](#)

360-764-9841

Archaeologist
[Sarah Johnson Humphries](#)
360-764-3072

Front Desk
(360)-902-3000
[Grants managers' contact information](#) is online.

STEP E: RCO NOTIFIES DAHP AND TRIBES: Once notified, RCO cultural resource staff or the project sponsor will contact DAHP to report and confirm the discovery. If RCO was unreachable, the project sponsor may contact DAHP to avoid delay, DAHP will provide steps to aid identification. DAHP, RCO, and tribal representatives may coordinate a site visit following any necessary safety protocols. DAHP also may inform the project sponsor and RCO of steps to further protect the site. Do not continue work until RCO has issued an approval for work to proceed in the area of, or near, the discovery.

RCO will continue to manage the formal government-to-government consultation with tribes. The project sponsor and project consultant may contact tribes for technical communications and notifications.

DAHP Contacts

Archaeological Materials
[Dr. Rob Whitlam](#)
State Archaeologist
360-890-2615

Human Remains and Bones
[Dr. Guy Tasa](#)
State Anthropologist
360-790-1633 (24/7)

4. TRIBAL CONTACTS

If cultural resources are discovered, the following tribes will be contacted. See Section 10 for Additional Resources.

Tribal Contacts	
Example: Tribe: Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe Contact: Allie Taylor Title: Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Contact Phone: 360-681-4638 Email: ATaylor@jamestowntribe.org	

5. FURTHER CONTACTS (if applicable)

If the discovery is confirmed by DAHP as a cultural or archaeological resource or as human remains, and there is a partnering funding or permitting agency, the project sponsor will ensure the partnering agency is notified immediately.

Insert other agencies (if applicable)

6. SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR THE DISCOVERY OF HUMAN REMAINS

If human remains are encountered, regardless of antiquity or ethnic origin, treat them with dignity and respect at all times. Cover the remains with a tarp or other materials (not soil or rocks) for temporary protection in place and shield them from being photographed. Do not call or speak with the media about the remains specifically. For specific instructions on how to handle discovery of human remains, see: [Revised Code of Washington 68.50.645](#) about skeletal human remains.

If unsure whether the discovery is human bone or not, contact Guy Tasa with DAHP (contact information below), for identification and next steps. Do not pick up the discovery.

STEP A: NOTIFY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY OR CORONER'S OFFICE

- In addition to the actions described in Sections 3 and 4, the project sponsor (or person who made the discovery) immediately will notify the local law enforcement agency or coroner's office.
- The coroner (with assistance of law enforcement) will determine if the remains are human and whether the site constitutes a crime scene, and will notify DAHP.

STEP B: PARTICIPATE IN CONSULTATION

- Per Revised Codes of Washington 27.44.055, 68.50, and 68.60, DAHP will have jurisdiction over non-forensic human remains.
- RCO cultural resources staff will participate in consultation.
- Organizations also may participate in consultation at the discretion of DAHP, RCO, and the tribes.

STEP C: FURTHER ACTIVITIES

- Documentation of human remains and funerary objects will be agreed upon through the consultation process described in Revised Codes of Washington 27.44.055, 68.50, and 68.60.

- When consultation and documentation activities are complete, construction in the discovery area may resume as described in Section 7.

Contacts for Human Remains

Dr. Guy Tasa
State Physical Anthropologist
360-790-1633

[County Coroner Contacts](#)

Notes:

- If the project occurs on federal lands (e.g., national forest or park, military reservation) or Indian lands (e.g., reservations, allotments, communities) the provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 apply, and the responsible federal agency will follow its provisions. Note that state highways that cross federal and Indian lands are on easements and are not owned by the State.
- If the project occurs on non-federal lands, it will comply with applicable state laws, and the procedure described below.

7. DOCUMENTATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIALS

Archaeological deposits discovered during construction will be assumed eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D per 36CFR800.13(c) until a formal Determination of Eligibility is made. If the project does not have a federal connection or compliance requirement, contact the project sponsor or DAHP about the need for an Emergency Excavation Permit. In general, expect the following:

- All prehistoric and historic cultural material discovered during project construction will be recorded by a professional archaeologist on the State of Washington's cultural resource site or on a form using standard techniques. Site overviews, feature, and artifacts will be photographed; stratigraphic profiles and soil/sediment descriptions will be prepared for subsurface exposures. Discovery locations will be documented on scaled site plans and site location maps.
- Cultural features, horizons, and artifacts detected in buried sediments may require further evaluation using hand-dug test units. Units may be dug in controlled fashion to expose features, collect samples from undisturbed contexts, or interpret complex stratigraphy. A test excavation unit or small trench also might be used to determine if an intact occupation surface is present. Test units will be used only when necessary to gather information on the nature, extent, and integrity of subsurface cultural deposits to evaluate the site's significance. Excavations will be conducted using state-of-the-art techniques for controlling provenience.

- Spatial information, depth of excavation levels, natural and cultural stratigraphy, presence or absence of cultural material, and depth to sterile soil, regolith, or bedrock will be recorded for each probe on a standard form. Test excavation units will be recorded on unit-level forms, which include plan maps for each excavated level, and material type, number, and vertical provenience (depth below surface and stratum association where applicable) for all artifacts recovered from the level. A stratigraphic profile will be drawn for at least one wall of each test excavation unit.
- Sediments excavated for purposes of cultural resources investigation will be screened through 1/8-inch mesh, unless soil conditions warrant 1/4-inch mesh.
- All prehistoric and historic artifacts collected from the surface and from probes and excavation units will be analyzed, catalogued, and temporarily curated. Ultimate disposition of cultural materials will be determined in consultation with the federal agencies (if any), DAHP, and the affected tribes.
- Within 90 days of concluding fieldwork, the archaeologist will provide a technical report describing all monitoring and resultant archaeological excavations to the project sponsor, who will forward the report to RCO, the federal agencies (if any), DAHP, and the affected tribes for review and comment.

If assessment activity exposes human remains (burials, isolated teeth, or bones), the process described in Section 6 will be followed.

8. PROCEEDING WITH WORK

The project sponsor shall work with the archaeologist, DAHP, and affected tribes to determine the appropriate discovery boundary and where work may continue. Work outside the discovery location typically may continue while documentation and assessment of the cultural resources proceed. A cultural resources specialist (either from DAHP, a consulting tribe, or a professional consultant) must determine the boundaries of the discovery location. In consultation with DAHP and affected tribes, RCO and the project sponsor will determine the appropriate level of documentation and treatment of the resource. If federal agencies are involved, the agencies will make the final determinations about treatment and documentation.

Project work may continue at the discovery location only after the process outlined in this plan is followed, and DAHP and the federal agencies (if any) determine that compliance with state and federal laws is complete.

9. ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITY

The project sponsor is responsible for ensuring the following:

- This plan has complete and accurate information.
- This plan is immediately available to all field staff at the sites and available by request to any party.
- This plan is implemented to address any discovery at the site.
- All field staff, contractors, and volunteers are instructed on how to implement this plan.

10. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- DAHP
- Washington State Standards for Cultural Resource Reporting
- Association of Washington Archaeologists
- Interactive Map of Tribes by Area
- Washington State Department of Transportation Tribal Contact Web site
- Washington State Department of Ecology's Unanticipated Discovery Plan video. This video explains the value of the plan protocol and what to do if a discovery is made.

Implement the Plan if You See the Following:

Chipped Stone Artifacts

Examples include the following:

- Angular material
- Glass-like material
- Unusual material or shape for the area
- Note regularity of flaking
- Variability of size



Stone artifacts, Oregon



Bi-face knife, scraper, or pre-form



Flaked stone artifact from Colorado



Stone artifacts, Oregon





Flaked stone core, Lopez Island, Washington



Shell midden with fish bone, British Columbia



Eroding shell midden, British Columbia



Intertidal stone fish trap, British Columbia

Intact Stone Artifacts

Examples include the following:

- Unnatural shapes or unusual stone
- Striations or scratching
- Etching, perforations, or pecking
- Regularity in modifications
- Variability of size, function, or complexity



Fishing weight, courtesy of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission



Fishing weight, courtesy of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission



Fishing weight, courtesy of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission



Fishing weight, courtesy of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission

Bone or Shell Artifacts

Examples include the following:

- Smooth or carved materials
- Unusual shape
- Pointed as if used as tool
- Wedge-shaped, like a shoehorn
- Variability of size
- Beads from shell



Choker and bracelet from Nez Perce



Bone pendants



Bone wedge, California



Tooth pendants



Bone awls, Oregon

Culturally Modified Trees, Fiber, or Wood Artifacts

Examples include the following:

- Trees with bark stripped or peeled, carvings, axe cuts, de-limbing, wood removal, and other human modifications
- Fiber or wood artifacts in a wet environment
- Variability of size, function, and complexity



Culturally modified tree, courtesy of the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation



Aspen tree carving, courtesy of the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation



Artifacts from Mud Bay, Olympia, Washington



Artifacts from Mud Bay, Olympia, Washington

Strange, Different, or Interesting Looking Dirt, Rocks, or Shells

Human activities leave traces in the ground that may or may not have artifacts associated with them. Examples include the following:

- Unusual accumulation of rock (especially fire-cracked rock)
- Unusually-shaped accumulation of rock (such as a fire ring)
- Charcoal or charcoal-stained soils, burnt soil, or soil with a “layer cake” appearance
- Accumulation of shell, bones, or artifacts that seem out of place
- Often have a layered appearance, associated with black or blackish soil and/or crushed or compacted shells



Underground oven, courtesy of the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation



Hearth excavated near Hamilton, Washington



Shell midden pocket in modern fill



Notice the blackish soil, layers of shell midden and historic debris.



Notice the blackish soil, layered appearance, crushed and compact shells.

Historic Foundations or Buried Structures

Examples include the following:

- Foundations
- Railroad and trolley tracks
- Remnants of structures



Historic structure in State Route 99 tunnel



Spokane historic trolley tracks



Intact foundation below parking lot

Historic Period Artifacts (More than 50 Years Old)

Examples include the following:

- Agricultural or logging equipment (fencing, canals, spillways, chutes, derelict sawmills, tools, etc.)
- Domestic items (square or wire nails, amethyst-colored glass, painted stoneware, etc.)
- Railway tokens, coins, and buttons
- Spectacles, toys, clothing, and personal items
- Items helping to understand culture or identity
- Food containers and dishware
- Munition casings
- Tins or glass bottles with maker's mark, distinct colors or older methods of opening the container



Spectacles



Artifacts, eastern Washington



Willow pattern serving bowl



Slip joint pocketknife



Coins



Artifacts, eastern Washington



British cartridge, Skagit River



Items, North Shore



Montgomery Ward pitchfork toy



Logo used between 1924-1938



Beer can, Oregon



Maker's mark on bottle