

Report of the State Archaeologist

February 2017

This report summarizes the activities of the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) as directed by Minnesota Statute 138.38 which states that the State Archaeologist complete a report of activities “annually and also upon leaving office.” The previous State Archaeologist retired in January of 2016 and completed a report for the OSA prior to his retirement covering Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 (July 2014 through June 2015), and the first half of FY2016 (July through December 2015). This report covers the last half of FY2016 (January through June 2016).

The Office of the State Archaeologist is housed in the Community Services Division of the Department of Administration. The Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) has two staff members, and leases office space from the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) at the Fort Snelling History Center.

Introduction

The Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) strives to preserve archaeological sites and unplatted burials, encourage communication between state agencies, foster collaboration between the archaeological and tribal communities, assist with development planning, and promote archaeological research and education in Minnesota (Figure 1). We work with developers, tribal representatives, governmental agencies, educators, and the public to identify, preserve, and interpret our archaeological resources.



Figure 1. Lithic Workshop organized by the OSA.

In 2015, 177 new archaeological sites were entered into the OSA site files, with another 183 being added in 2016. As of February 2017, there are 12,429 confirmed archaeological sites in Minnesota. An additional 6,910 reported, but not yet confirmed, archaeological sites are also recorded in the OSA's site files. These sites are recorded in all 87 Minnesota counties, with the top four counties having 3,085 sites (24.5%) (Table 1). Conversely, there are only 79 recorded archaeological sites in the four counties with the fewest number (Table 2). Please note that number of recorded sites likely reflects the amount of survey conducted in a county, rather than the actual number of archaeological sites that exist in that county.

Table 1. Minnesota Counties with the highest number of recorded sites.

County	Number of Archaeological Sites	Percent of Archaeological Sites	Density
St. Louis	1,244	10%	1 site every 5.5 miles
Cass	779	6%	1 site every 3.1 miles
Lake	565	4.5%	1 site every 5.3 miles
Hennepin	497	4%	1 site every 1.2 miles
Total	3,085	24.5%	Average of 1 site every 3.8 miles

Table 2. Minnesota Counties with the fewest number of recorded sites.

County	Number of Archaeological Sites	Percent of Archaeological Sites	Density
Dodge	16	.0013%	1 site every 27.5 miles
Watonwan	17	.0014%	1 site every 25.8 miles
Mahnomen	21	.0016%	1 site every 27.8 miles
Pennington	25	.0020%	1 site every 24.7 miles
Total	79	.0063%	Average of 1 site every 24.5 miles

Statutes and Duties

The Field Archaeology Act (MS 138.31 - .42) established the position of State Archaeologist in 1963. The State Archaeologist is a state civil service employee appointed by the Commissioner of Administration. Currently, Amanda Gronhøvd serves as the Minnesota State Archaeologist, and Bruce Koenen serves as the Research Archaeologist for the Office of the State Archaeologist.

The Office of the State Archaeologist manages the State's archaeological sites on behalf of the citizens of Minnesota. Two statutes primarily define the duties of the State Archaeologist; the **Field Archaeology Act** (MS 138.31-.42), and **Private Cemeteries Act** (MS 307.08).

The **Field Archaeology Act** (MS 138.31-42) established the position of Minnesota's State Archaeologist and gives the state "the exclusive right and privilege of field archaeology on state sites, in order to protect and preserve archaeological and scientific information, matter, and objects" (MS 138.32). In other words, the State Archaeologist is charged with managing Minnesota's archaeological resources located on public (non-federal) land for the citizens of the state. The Field Archaeology Act defines the duties of the State Archaeologist as:

- Sponsoring, engaging in, and directing archaeological research within Minnesota; (138.35 Subd 2 [a])
- Cooperating with state agencies, the Minnesota Historical Society, and the University of Minnesota to preserve, protect, and interpret archaeological sites and data; (138.35 Subd 2 [b and f])
- Protecting and encouraging the preservation of archaeological sites located on private property; (138.35 Subd 2 [c])
- Identifying, protecting, and preserving archaeological sites and data; (138.35 Subd 2 [d and e])
- Reviewing proposed development plans on public land, and making recommendations for the preservation of archaeological or historic sites;
- Disseminating archaeological information; (138.35 Subd 2 [g])
- Approving licensing of qualified individuals to conduct archaeological projects on state sites; (138.35 Subd 2 [h]) and (138.36 Subd 2)
- Informing and partnering with the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) when development is proposed in areas thought to contain American Indian archaeological, historic, or religious sites; and (138.40 Subd 3)
- Enforcing the *Field Archaeology Act* (138.35 Subd 2 [i]).

The **Private Cemeteries Act** protects all human burials and burial grounds that are more than 50 years old and are located outside officially platted, recorded, or identified cemeteries. This statute applies to cemeteries located on public and private property. Duties assigned the State Archaeologist under the Private Cemeteries Act include:

- Assessing whether a specific location is a "burial" or "burial grounds"; (307.08, Subd. 3a)

- Granting permission for disturbances, posting, and signage within non-Indian cemeteries (307.08, Subd. 3);
- Collaborating with MIAC to help protect, preserve, and manage the burial grounds, if the individuals within the cemetery are ethnically American Indian; (307.08, Subd. 7)
- Maintaining unrecorded cemetery data; (307.08, Subd. 11) and
- Reviewing development plans which might impact unrecorded burials to help determine whether known or suspected cemetery sites are not within proposed development projects (307.08, Subd.10).

The State Archaeologist is given additional duties in rules implementing Minnesota Water Law (MS 103F), the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MS 116D), the Coroner and Medical Examiner law (MS 390.25, Subd. 5), and the Legacy Amendment Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (MS 129D.17).

In addition to the duties outlined in Minnesota Statutes, the Office of the State Archaeologist also:

- Helps guide the *Statewide Survey of Historical and Archaeological Sites*;
- Assigns official state site numbers to archaeological sites;
- Maintains archaeological site files, burial files, and archaeological research documents and reports;
- Fosters collaboration and research between professional archaeologists, tribal communities, governmental agencies, and the public;
- Provides education to and answers questions from the public regarding archaeological resources; and
- Offers training opportunities to the archaeological professional community.

Specific Measures (between January 1st and June 30th, 2016)

- Archaeologists licensed: 62
- Development projects reviewed: 58
- Archaeological site forms reviewed: 55
- New archaeological sites added to the site files: 43
- Archaeological projects reviewed: 77
- Burial investigations: 7 (Figures 2 and 3)

- Website hits: approximately 13,000



Figure 2. Photograph of a stone memorial to Florence, Maggie, & Mary Malone.



Figure 3. Photograph of burial mounds in Stearns County.

Boards and Committees

The State Archaeologist serves on a number professional boards and committees, including:

- State Review Board for the National Register of Historic Places
- President and Past President of the Society for Industrial Archeology
- Oversight Board for the Legacy Amendment-funded *Statewide Survey of Historical and Archaeological Sites*

Bruce Koenen serves on the advisory board for the Cultural Resource Management Master's Degree program at St. Cloud State University.

Office of the State Archaeologist On-line Portal

The Office of the State Archaeologist is working with MnGeo and MnDOT to develop a secure website for accessing Minnesota's archaeological site information, and streamline the archaeological site form submission process. There is currently a functioning beta version, which is in the process of being finalized (Figure 4). The OSA Portal will allow tiered access to site information and will serve as a tool during the development planning process, and in the protection of archaeological sites and burial sites.

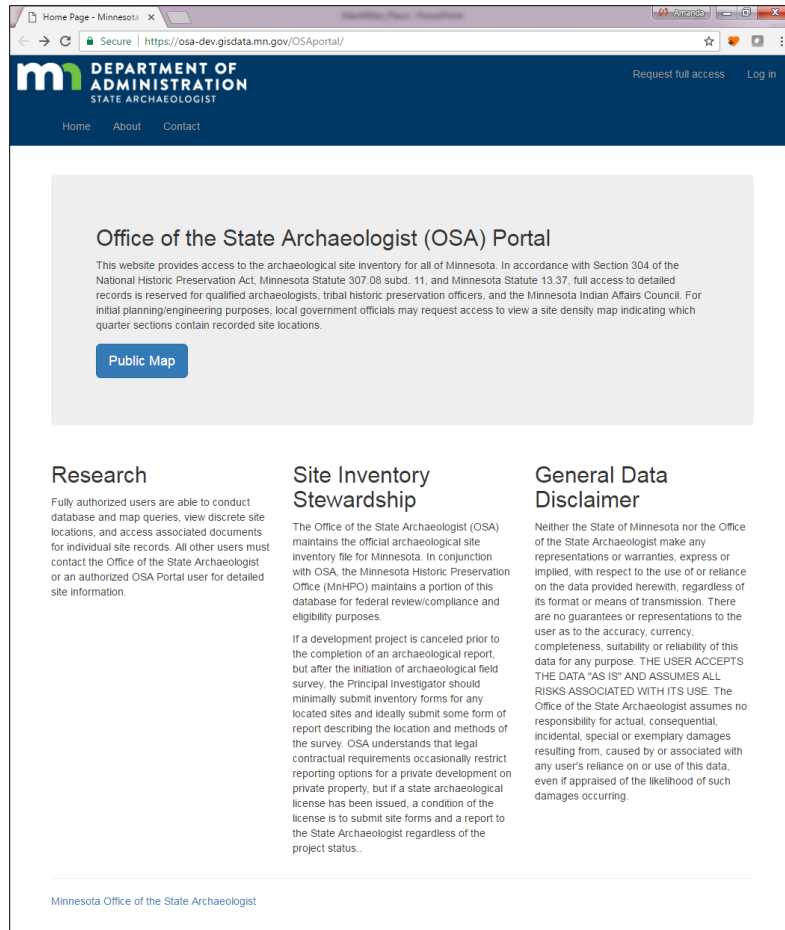


Figure 4. Screenshot of OSA Portal website.

The tiered access will include public, agency/governmental, and professional levels of access. The public version of the Portal will allow individuals to view the number of sites in a one square mile section, but will not include information about the site or its specific location. The agency/governmental level of access will allow public entities (e.g. cities and counties) to view site type and site number within a specific $\frac{1}{4}$ square mile section. The professional level will allow archaeologists to create, edit, and submit site forms on-line, and will give access to:

- A site map with shape files showing site location;
- Complete site information; and
- Scanned versions of existing site forms.

The OSA plans to introduce the Portal by allowing only limited access (at the public level) until the system has been fully tested, and the OSA is comfortable that the Portal is working properly.

Collaboration

Collaboration between the Office of the State Archaeologist and Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) increased between January and June 2016. The OSA and MIAC are consulting on all potential American Indian burial sites prior to and during initial investigation, as per MS 307.08 Subd 7. This process has streamlined burial investigations by opening lines of communication between state agencies and tribal entities.

The OSA and MIAC are also updating the procedures for implementing Minnesota's Private Cemeteries Act with the intent to include tribal representatives more closely and consistently in managing archaeological resources that are potentially of American Indian origin.

In addition to collaborating with MIAC, the OSA has been working with the Minnesota Historic Preservation Office (formerly SHPO, currently MnHPO) to clarify and streamline the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) review process. Specifically, the OSA and MnHPO have developed a process for reviewing and coordinating comments on proposed development EAWs. This process allows reviews to proceed more smoothly and assists agencies, developers, and the public with acquiring necessary construction and development permits. When these proposed projects have the potential to impact American Indian archaeological or burial sites, the MIAC is also included in the process.

Finally, the OSA has been working closely with the Hamline University Osteology Lab to address the backlog non-Indian human remains housed at the Lab, and to develop an Osteology for Archaeologists training workshop. The backlog of human remains is being assessed to determine what type and how many non-Indian human remains exist in the Lab, to develop a plan for processing the backlog of remains, and creating a system for addressing incoming remains. The Osteology for Archaeologists workshop will be offered to professional archaeologists, and focus on the identification of human remains during fieldwork.

Statewide Survey of Historical and Archaeological Sites

In 2008, the voters of Minnesota approved a constitutional amendment that increased the state sales tax by three-eighths of one percent for 25 years. A portion of this revenue goes to the *Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund*, which is dedicated to the preservation of the state's arts and cultural heritage. Out of this funding, the *Statewide Survey of Historical and Archaeological Sites* was initiated.

Representatives from the Minnesota Historical Society, Minnesota Indian Affairs Council and Office of the State Archaeologist serve as the Statewide Survey's Oversight Board. Four projects were managed by the Oversight Board between January and June 2016. These include the Minnesota Radiocarbon Dating Study, Minnesota Stone Tool Handbook (Figure 5), Lac Qui Parle County Survey (Figure 6), and an Archaeological Survey of the Fort Snelling Area.

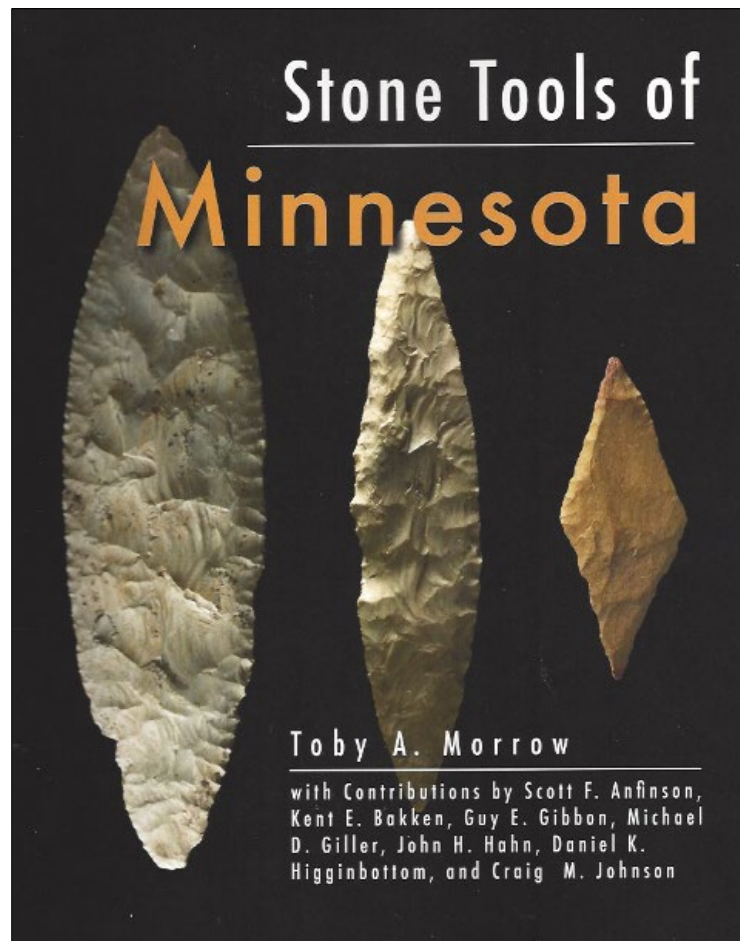


Figure 5. Cover of the Stone Tools Handbook.



Figure 6. Photograph of archaeological excavation at 21LP11.

The purpose of the Minnesota Radiocarbon Dating Study is to summarize what is known about absolute dating in Minnesota, evaluate dating methods, test and analyze archaeological samples, and provide directions for future research, while the Minnesota Stone Tool Handbook project created a comprehensive, well-illustrated overview of the prehistoric stone tools of Minnesota. The remaining two projects focused on archaeological field work. The Lac Qui Parle County Survey project will summarize what is known about the early human occupation of the county, update the OSA's site files, and identify unrecorded prehistoric and early historic sites, and the Archaeological Survey of the Fort Snelling Area focuses on redefining the boundary of the Fort Snelling National Register District, finding important sites within the district, and to summarizing the district's archaeological potential.