

Report of the State Archaeologist (Fiscal Year 2018)

February 2019

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.” This report covers Fiscal Year 2018 (July 2017 through June 2018).

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 un-platted 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. We work with developers, tribal representatives, governmental agencies, educators, and the public to identify, preserve, and interpret our archaeological resources.

Between July 2017 and June 2018, 211 new archaeological sites were entered into the OSA site files. Archaeological sites are recorded in all 87 Minnesota counties, and dozens of previously unknown sites are discovered each year.

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 Gronhvd 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).

Field Archaeology Act (MS 138.31-42)

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 MHS 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]).

Private Cemeteries Act (MS 307.08)

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 During Fiscal Year 2018

- Archaeological licenses issued: 100
- Archaeological site forms reviewed: 280
- New archaeological sites added to the site files: 211
- Archaeological reports reviewed: 129
- Sites visited as part of the *Field Archaeology Act* (MS 138.31-42) and the *Private Cemeteries Act* (MS 307.08) projects:
 - Mission Creek (21SL1246), Duluth, MN
 - Fridhem Cemetery, Kragnes, MN
 - Silvernale Mounds (21GD0017), Red Wing, MN
 - Possible cemetery site, Mahnomen, MN

- Cooks Mounds (21HE0062), Mound, MN
- Bartlett Mounds Group 1 (21HE0065), Mound MN
- Mound site (21WA0007), Hastings, MN
- Historic Rose Hill Cemetery (21DK0137), Hastings, MN
- Single burial (21DK0136), South St. Paul, MN
- Archaeological site (21ME0005), Grove City, MN
- American Indian cemetery, Lake City, MN
- Rice like Mounds and Habitation site (21HE0076), Maple Grove, MN

Online Access and Electronic Files

OSA Portal

The Office of the State Archaeologist continues to work with MnGeo and MnDOT to develop a secure website for accessing Minnesota’s archaeological site information, and streamline the archaeological site form submission process. Phase I of the OSA Portal was completed in the 3rd quarter of Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17). During the 1st Quarter of FY18, the process of entering the backlog of archaeological sites was completed.

The public version of the OSA is online. The public version of the Portal allows individuals to view the number of recorded sites in a one square mile section, but does not give information about the site or its specific location.

Numerous professionals have also received the training required to access the Portal. In the 3rd Quarter of FY18 the OSA had 45 users, but by the end of FY18 the Portal had 105 users: an increase of 233% over the previous quarter. The professional level access allows archaeologists to create, edit, and submit site forms on-line, and allows them to view:

- A site map showing site locations;
- Site information; and
- Scanned versions of archaeological site forms.

Collaboration

The Office of the State Archaeologist continues to collaborate with MIAC on development reviews, projects, and education. The OSA and MIAC consult on all potential American Indian cemetery sites prior to and during initial investigation, as per MS 307.08 Subd 7. The OSA also coordinates with the State Historic Preservation (SHPO) Office and MIAC regarding Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) reviews.

OSA is also collaborating closely with MnDOT on proposed MnDOT construction projects. This includes the Mission Creek burial recovery project, located near Duluth. Other governmental entities involved in this project include MIAC, SHPO, the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the US Army Corps of Engineers, the City of Duluth, and the Department of Natural Resources. The Mission Creek burial recovery has also resulted in the development of a communication system regarding burial recoveries, cemetery delineations, and burial recovery procedures. It is anticipated that the Mission Creek recovery project will continue for several years.

Legacy Grants

Historic Human Remains Project

At the end of FY17, the OSA received a Legacy Grant from the legislature to address the human skeletal remains held by the OSA and in storage at the Hamline University Osteology Lab. In FY18 the OSA contracted with a team from Hamline University to complete the project. The collection consists of approximately 98 individuals, all of whom are believed to be Euro-Americans. Some of these remains were acquired when an individual burial was unearthed, while others were found when unrecorded or forgotten cemeteries were impacted, resulting the disturbance of numerous burials. The purpose of the grant is to identify as many of the individuals as possible and return them to their relatives, or communities of origin.

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 MHS, MIAC and Office of the State Archaeologist serve as the Statewide Survey's Oversight Board. Seven projects were managed by the Oversight Board between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018. These include the Lac Qui Parle County Survey, an Archaeological Survey of the Fort Snelling Area, Pope County Survey, Dakota County Survey, Minnesota's Archaic Tradition Study, Wadena County Survey, and Watonwan County Survey.