

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL VALUES AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Preservation is thus an indispensable element in the archaeological resource manager's tool kit, but it is not the only element required for a resource management program to be successful.

A comprehensive (and idealized) archaeological resource management program requires (1) identifying sites; (2) assessing them in a frame of reference that considers both their intrinsic characteristics and their resource values as established within particular, historically developed social contexts; (3) responding to the potentially destructive effects of economic development by proactive planning and by selecting sites for preservation or for study, if they are to be destroyed; (4) taking active steps to promote preservation of the archaeological resource base in general and over the long term; (5) ensuring that records and collections resulting from the preceding steps are adequately curated; and (6) providing ways in which at least some segments of society can directly or indirectly access the resource values that were the reason for managing the sites in the first place. Because archaeological resource managers are not the sole arbiters of what constitutes value, they must maintain some type of two-way interaction with the segments of society most engaged in establishing and accessing these values. Effective implementation of the Section 106 process can contribute to achieving some of these goals but does not in itself constitute a comprehensive resource management program.

### WHERE DO ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE VALUES COME FROM?

Resource value is not an inherent characteristic of archaeological sites, at least not in the same sense that site size or age or the distribution of artifacts and sediments is inherent. Assignment of value depends on particular socially and historically developed contexts or frames of reference (Darvill 2005; Lipe 1984:2). Assigning resource value also requires taking into account the particular intrinsic characteristics of the property in question, and ordinarily it depends on some confidence in the property's authenticity. Thus, a Puebloan archaeological site may be considered significant because it represents what scholars have decided is a particular architectural style from a particular time period. The site must have physical characteristics that represent this style and must date to the appropriate period. Further research may show that the characteristics of, say, the site's masonry do not conform to the assigned style, so the evaluation may change. Thus, recognition of value depends both on a culturally constructed context and on the specific characteristics of the property itself.

The dependence of archaeological resource value on context means

the starting point for management is to consider a variety of resource values when making choices about which sites to protect and how to manage them. It also implies that management programs should proactively take steps to ensure that public benefits are “delivered”—that is, to see that the public can in some way access the values that archaeological sites can provide and for which they presumably are being managed (Lipe 1984, 2000a; Little 2002, 2007a). Such access can be direct, as when researchers, culturally related groups, or lay people study or visit sites, or it can be indirect, as in dissemination of articles, images, accounts, and interpretations based on the archaeological record.

My frame of reference for thinking about values-based management for public benefits is derived substantially from my experience with federally administered public land in the western United States. Consequently, many of my comments are focused on that context for archaeological resource management. However, many of the issues faced by federal cultural resource managers apply in other settings as well.

In what follows, I begin with a general discussion of archaeological resource value and the role of authenticity. Next is a brief section on the contexts in which archaeological resource values are formed and accessed. In the main part of the chapter, I consider in more detail each of the six values already noted, with some comments on how current management approaches might be improved to better ensure that these values can be realized as public benefits. I draw examples largely from US public land contexts. Archaeological resource management requires numerous actors, including firms or individual consultants working under contract. In the US federal system, however, it is agency managers who are responsible for developing and maintaining programs for managing the archaeological resources controlled or affected by their agencies, including implementing sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Consequently, I often refer to “managers” as the primary agents in archaeological resource management while recognizing and in fact advocating that multiple other stakeholders need to be involved in these efforts as well.

The historic preservation movement grew up around the idea that preserving historic properties can ensure that their values remain publicly accessible over a long-term future. In fact, preservation, in and of itself, may be value enough for many people, much as establishing wilderness areas is supported by many who do not intend to visit, do research, or otherwise make direct use of such areas. In a larger perspective, however, in-place preservation of archaeological sites is generally a passive value—permitting but not ensuring the achievement of social benefits.

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## Archaeological Values and Resource Management

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A resource is something that is valued because it is or can be useful: “something that lies ready for use or can be drawn upon for aid” (King 2002:5). The starting point for thinking about how to manage archaeological sites as cultural resources is to consider what resource values these sites might have and how management can enable these values to be realized as public benefits. Archaeological resource values include preservation, research, cultural heritage, education, aesthetics, and economics. These are not hard-and-fast categories with impermeable boundaries; there is much fuzzy overlap among them, and different analysts might come up with somewhat different concepts (see, for example, discussions in Mathers, Darvill, and Little 2005). I refer to “values” rather than “significance” because I think that the first term is more general and encompasses the second and because in the United States the term *significance* tends to be defined by federal historic preservation policies and regulations (ACHP 2008; but also see Bruier and Mathers 1996). The National Register of Historic Places criteria that form the basis for assessing significance explicitly address research, heritage, and aesthetic values and can be interpreted to include educational value, so I do not intend to imply that my more general terminology is in opposition to these criteria.

What does value-based archaeological resource management imply in terms of what we might actually do? At the most basic level, it implies that