

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO LAND DEVELOPMENT IN THE PUGET SOUND REGION, WASHINGTON

Man has always been interested in his past, and not without reason. By understanding what has occurred before, man can better comprehend his present actions and predict his actions in the future. Archaeology provides a means to understand more about the human being—not only his origins, but also the processes of cultural evolution itself. Unfortunately, present-day development commonly occurs in areas that were occupied by prehistoric cultures and that contain irreplaceable evidence of the past. Archaeological resources, being generally fragile, often are inadvertently destroyed during such development or changes in land use.

This map is aimed at developers, planners, public officials, engineers, or geologists who are involved in guiding or directing land development. These people are in a position to request archaeological advice when development plans are beginning. The map and accompanying text show where archaeological sites are likely to be found and are intended to provide an understanding of when and why an archaeologist should be contacted. Included is a brief discussion of archaeological methods and of the ancient history of the Puget Sound region based on work done by other investigators. This is one of a series of maps and reports being prepared by the U. S. Geological Survey and cooperating agencies to provide environmental and other information to assist land-use planning, resource development, and environmental protection in the Puget Sound region.

It is only recently that archaeological resources have been considered an important part of the environment. Several laws are now in effect that require an evaluation of an area's archaeology before the area is disturbed. The removal or disturbance of just a few relics or artifacts may change the interpretation of an entire archaeological site. Rather than merely collecting artifacts, an archaeologist needs to know their spatial relation to other features at the site to get a proper picture of the site. The Federal Antiquities Act (34 Stat. 225, June 8, 1906), the Moss-Bennett Act (Public Law 85-521, May 24, 1978), the National Historic Preservation Act (Public Law 89-663, October 15, 1966), and the Shorelines Management Act (Revised Code of Washington 27.44.010), and the Shorelines Management Act (Revised Code of Washington 26.60.100) all stress the need to recognize and protect the archaeological resources. This need is more explicitly stated in a recently enacted bill of the Washington State Legislature (Chapter 134 Laws of 1975, 1st Extraordinary Session). This bill does it unlawful for:

"...any person, firm, or corporation, to knowingly alter, dig into, or excavate, or to damage, deface or destroy any historic or prehistoric archaeological resource or site, American Indian or aboriginal camp site, dwelling site or skeletal remains and grave goods, cairn, or other material, including but not limited to, projectile points, arrowheads, knives, awls, scrapers, beads or ornaments, baskets, mittens, moccasins, grinding stones, rock carvings or paintings, or any other artifacts or portions or fragments thereof, without having obtained the written permission of the public or private landowner, such written permission shall be physically present while such activity is being conducted."

For the Puget Sound region there are three main sources of information and assistance in compliance with these laws (fig. 1). These are the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Olympia; the Washington Archaeological Research Center, Washington State University, Pullman; and the Office of the Washington Archaeological Research Center, the Office of Public Archaeology, University of Washington, Seattle. If the development project involves Federal land or funding, the local office of the Federal Agency should be contacted. Each agency has its own method of complying with the requirement for a cultural (including archaeological) resource survey.

Offices of the Washington Archaeological Research Center in eastern, central, and western Washington are geared to inform the public about the archaeological resources of the State and the numerous laws affecting archaeology. Specifically, their function is to maintain an up-to-date record of the locations of all known archaeological sites in Washington; maintain a library that contains information relating to the archaeology of the State; keep an inventory of the archaeological collections within Washington; act as a resource center where agencies, schools, and individuals can obtain information about archaeology; sponsor archaeological research in the State; publish studies on the archaeology of Washington; and solicit and award grant funds for the study of the State's archaeology.

The coordinating office for the Washington State Archaeological Research Center is located at Washington State University in Pullman. Inquiries to their office will be directed to the appropriate regional office or institution. The center for the Puget Sound region is called the Office of Public Archaeology and is located at the University of Washington in Seattle. This office is especially designed to provide help for environmental impact statements and, therefore, is an excellent source to call upon when the decision is made to develop an area. Archaeologists at the various colleges in the Puget Sound region are also sources of guidance.

Few areas in the Puget Sound region can be casually dismissed as having no potential as archaeological sites. During the first stages of planning an excavation or building project, the State Historic Preservation Officer, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, should be contacted to determine whether there are any archaeological sites in the proposed project area. However, since the known archaeological sites in Washington represent only about 5 percent of the possible sites, the State Historic Preservation Officer may recommend that a reconnaissance survey or an intensive archaeological survey can be carried out before any construction activities.

A reconnaissance survey is done by a professional archaeologist who walks a series of transects across the project area. It is an on-the-ground search for evidence of prehistoric human activity but does not involve any excavation. Information gathered on the reconnaissance survey may be enough to permit the construction project to start immediately or may influence the State Historic Preservation Officer's decision to recommend an intensive archaeological survey.

An intensive archaeological survey is a detailed search for, and evaluation of, archaeological resources in the project area. It usually involves some excavating, to a degree dependent on the physical characteristics of the project area. The intensive survey results in a comprehensive description of the resources; representative collections of specimens; and maps, photographs, and other documents. It thus provides a broad inventory of archaeological resources, including an evaluation of the relation of the site to those in other areas.

Much more extensive work needs to be carried out for the Puget Sound region before a complete culture history can be deciphered. Research is especially scanty in the southern part of Puget Sound and the eastern side of the Olympic Peninsula. Most of the previous archaeological work has been directed toward salvage operations concerned with the building of dams and roads and other construction. This kind of work tends to yield information from scattered sites rather than a systematic knowledge of the region. However, a tentative culture history can be drawn from this knowledge and from some of the work done in southern British Columbia. A summary of this prehistory is shown in the box to the right.

Seeking archaeological advice as early as possible in the planning process and allowing time in the development schedule for field surveys will greatly aid in the reconstruction of Puget Sound prehistory, will help to preserve it for posterity, and will keep you in compliance with the law.

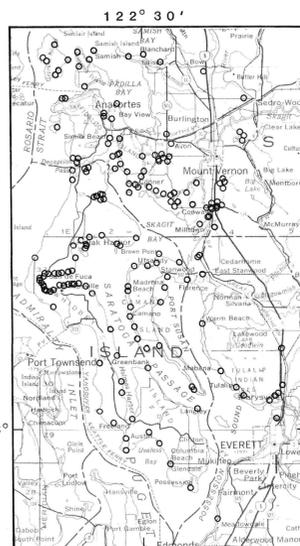


Figure 3. General location of sites found during survey of Island County and vicinity.

SELECTED REFERENCES

- Bryan, A. L., 1963, An archaeological survey of northern Puget Sound: Idaho State University Museum, Occasional Papers, No. 11, 92 p.
- Greene, R. E., and Houston, Robert, 1970, Excavations at the Marysvale Site: University of Washington, Reports in Archaeology, No. 4, 81 p.
- Kidd, R. S., 1964, A synthesis of western Washington prehistory from the perspective of three occupation sites: Seattle, University of Washington, Ph. D. thesis, 365 p.
- U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1975, Washington environmental atlas: Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 114 p.
- Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, 1977, Archaeological resources, pt. 2 of A guide to cultural resource surveys: Office of Archaeological and Historic Preservation, p. 47-61.

MAP EXPLANATION

- Area likely to contain greatest abundance of sites
- Boundary of Puget Sound region

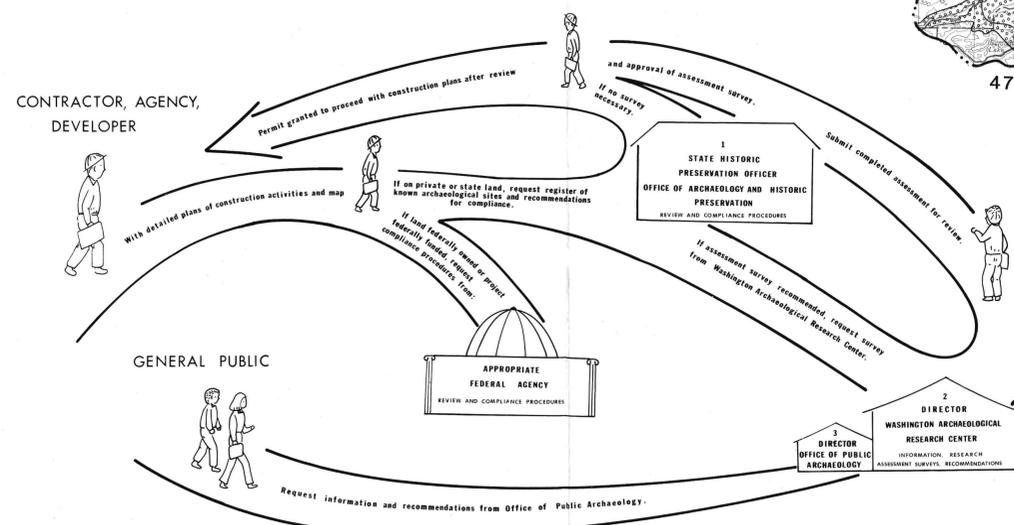
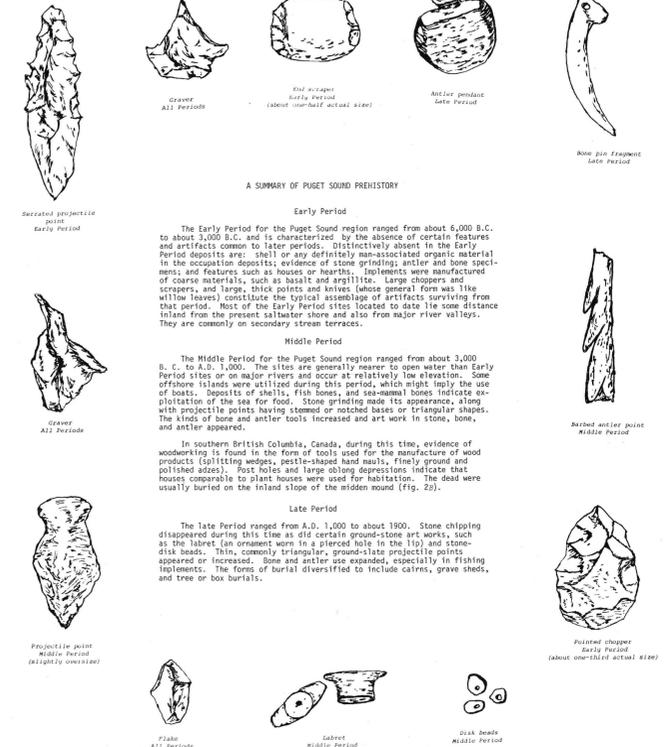
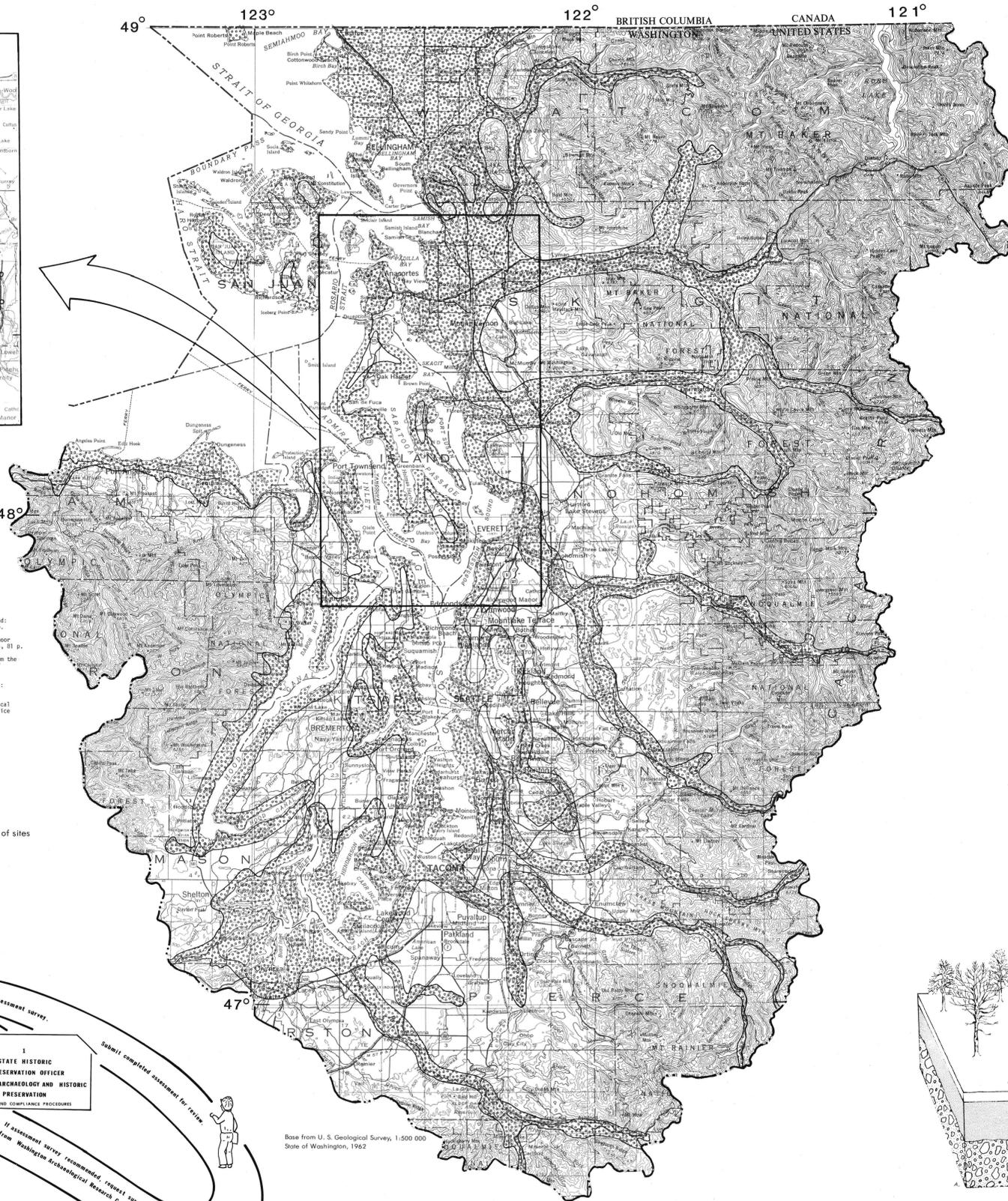


Figure 1. Flow chart showing procedure to be followed when contacting an archaeologist.

1. State Historic Preservation Officer, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, P. O. Box 1128, Olympia, Wa. 98504
2. Director, Washington Archaeological Research Center, Washington State University, Pullman, Wa. 99164
3. Director, Office of Public Archaeology, FM-12, University of Washington, Seattle, Wa. 98195

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A SUMMARY OF PUGET SOUND PREHISTORY

Early Period

The Early Period for the Puget Sound region ranged from about 6,000 B.C. to about 3,000 B.C. and is characterized by the absence of certain features and artifacts common to later periods. Distinctively absent in the Early Period deposits are: shell or any definitely man-associated organic material in the occupation deposits; stone grinding; antler and bone speartments; and features such as houses or hearths. Implements were manufactured of coarse materials, such as basalt and argillite. Large choppers and scrapers, and large, thick points and knives (whose general form was like willow leaves) constitute the typical assemblage of artifacts surviving from this period. Most of the Early Period sites located to date lie some distance inland from the present saltwater shore and also from major river valleys. They are commonly on secondary stream terraces.

Middle Period

The Middle Period for the Puget Sound region ranged from about 3,000 B.C. to A.D. 1,000. The sites are generally easier to open water than Early Period sites or on major rivers and occur at relatively low elevation. Some offshore islands were utilized during this period, which might imply the use of boats. Deposits of shells, fish bones, and sea-mammal bones indicate exploitation of the sea for food. Stone grinding made its appearance, along with projectile points having stemmed or notched bases or triangular shapes. The kinds of bone and antler tools increased and art work in stone, bone, and antler appeared.

Late Period

The Late Period ranged from A.D. 1,000 to about 1900. Stone chipping disappeared during this time as did certain ground-stone art works, such as the labret (an ornament worn in a pierced hole in the lip) and stone-axes. The most commonly used projectile points, commonly projectile points appeared or increased. Bone and antler use expanded, especially in fishing implements. The forms of burial diversified to include cairns, grave sheds, and tree or box burials.



INDEX MAP OF WASHINGTON

EXPLANATION

- Stone flake
- Projectile point
- Cobble chopper
- Midden material

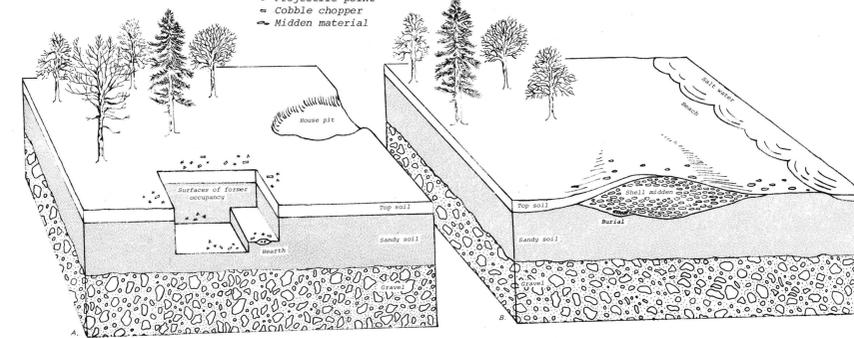


Figure 2. Examples of typical archaeological evidence at inland sites and sites near salt water in the Puget Sound region.

1. At an inland site, commonly on a flood plain or stream terrace, land-surface features usually do not indicate site location. The only evidence of ancient occupancy likely to be found on the inland site surface is commonly in the form of stone flakes, projectile points, and stellar artifacts. These artifacts are exposed at the present land surface by frost heave, erosion, plowing or other such disruption of the soil by man. Where such evidence is found, excavation is needed to evaluate the site further. The excavation (shown schematically above) commonly is started as a 1-m<sup>2</sup> test pit and is expanded in same-size increments as such expansion is warranted.
2. At sites near the salt-water coast, the shell midden is the most common type of evidence found. It is composed largely of shell and bone fragments. The midden may be observed as a mound above the ground or it may have been leveled to the general ground surface, depending on the original site of the midden and its exposure to erosional forces. Some shell middens were utilized for burial.