

ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY STANDARDS FOR TEXAS

Archeological survey standards identify the minimum amount of work considered acceptable for intensive archeological surveys of 200 acres or less. These standards are not intended to limit additional work (i.e. more shovel tests or backhoe trenches) that may be deemed necessary to identify archeological sites on the basis of the Area of Potential Effect, anticipated impacts, or the likelihood of encountering significant cultural resources. Survey methodologies for project areas larger than 200 acres should be discussed with the Texas Historical Commission (THC) Archeology Division prior to implementing the survey.

1. Professional Qualifications: Archeological investigations must be supervised by an archeologist who meets the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for Archeology (48FR 22716 or 36 CFR Part 61); or meets the requirements for Principal Investigator defined in Title 13, Part II of the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 26.

2. Background Research: Archeologists must conduct a background literature search prior to field investigations. At a minimum this shall include searches of the Texas Historical Commission and the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL) records or the equivalent Texas Archeological Sites Atlas Database for previously recorded archeological sites and historic properties, and previous archeological work in the vicinity.

3. Submerged Archeological Sites: Projects crossing navigable state or federal waters may require an underwater survey.

4. Deeply Buried Cultural Deposits: Archeologists must assess the potential for deeply buried cultural deposits within the Area of Potential Effect prior to starting field investigations. At a minimum, this shall include a review of the USDA soil surveys and geologic maps. If there is a potential for deeply buried cultural deposits within the depth of impacts, deeper subsurface investigations (such as backhoe trenches, or other method acceptable to the THC) will be required.

5. Site Forms: Texas Archeological Site Data Forms must be completed for all archeological sites revisited or discovered during survey. These forms are submitted in TXSITE database and paper form to the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory, The University of Texas at Austin.

6. Survey Report: Archeologists are required to submit the results of their investigations in a report to the THC that follows the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeological Documentation* or the *Council of Texas Archeologists Guidelines for Cultural Resource Management Reports*. The THC normally will complete its review within 30 days. Comments

from the THC must be addressed in the final report and 20 copies of the final report must be submitted to the THC.

7. Curation: Archeological field notes, photographs and artifacts must be curated in accordance with the Council of Texas Archeologists guidelines.

8. Fieldwork

| MINIMUM SURVEY STANDARDS For Project Areas of 200 Acres or Less | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Transect Interval | Not greater than 30 meters | |
| Shovel Tests¹ | | |
| Project Areas | Size | Shovel test density |
| | 0-2 acres | 3 per acre |
| | >3-10 acres | 2 per acre |
| | >11-100 acres | 1 every 2 acres |
| | >101-200 acres | 1 every 3 acres |
| Linear Projects | ≤100' (30 m) wide corridor | 16 per mile |
| Number of Shovel Tests required to define site boundaries² | minimum 6 – more for larger sites | |
| Average Rate of Survey (per person/per day) | Non-linear surveys: 15 acres | Linear surveys: 1-3 miles |

¹Shovel tests are excavated in settings that have potential for buried cultural materials. They must be dug whenever there is less than 30 percent ground surface visibility, except on slopes greater than 20 percent. Shovel tests are 30 cm in diameter or on a side and are excavated to the bottom of Holocene deposits, if possible. They are dug in levels no thicker than 20 cm with sediments screened through ¼-inch mesh unless high clay or water content requires that they be troweled through.

²Sites with more than 30 percent ground surface visibility do not have to be defined by six shovel tests.

Texas Historical Commission
 Archeology Division
 P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276
 512/463-6096
 www.thc.state.tx.us

