



Protecting the Past



Courtesy of Southeast Archeological Center, NPS | Martin Pate

Give a Hoot, Don't Loot!

Artifacts are special clues that help archeologists, historians, educators and park rangers tell stories about history. It is important to protect and preserve archeological resources so we can learn from them.

History is much harder to share each time a clue is removed by looters or damaged by vandals. We will not be able to provide information about the past if every person spots a piece of history and says, "Finders Keepers!" Finders Keepers end up losing more than their new treasure.

Archeological resources belong to the American people. Give a hoot; don't loot!

Telling Stories

Archeology is the scientific study of past human culture, technology, and behavior. It is based upon the analysis of remains that people have left behind.

Archeologists use documents like maps, diaries, church records, letters, & business records to piece together untold stories. Many times no written record exists but all people leave behind ruins of buildings, a pile of trash, & graveyard burials.

Using careful methods to record and excavate sites, archeologists examine material remains left behind. These remains reflect individual cultures and by studying the remains we can learn about earlier people and places.

The study of the nonrenewable and fragile remains of past cultures instills awareness for the need to preserve and protect archeological sites. We need your help save these hidden treasures!

Digging for Trouble

Playing "Finders Keepers" will certainly make you weep! Not only does the searching for and taking of artifacts destroy archeological and social context, offenders will also discover hefty fines and potentially serve jail time. The National Historic Preservation Act manages the preservation of historical and cultural resources across America. In accordance with Archeological Resource Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA), it is strictly prohibited to possess or

use a metal detector, dig, or take artifacts from federal lands. Other repercussions include 10 thousand dollar fines, jail time and repossession of property. Think twice before giving into the temptation of taking home a great souvenir or you'll be the one weeping. Taking artifacts removes them from the rest of the story. Not only does the removal destroy the historic landscape (which is also valuable), it also destroys other artifacts and clues which are regarded by the untrained as worthless.

Finders, Leavers

If you find something special on your visit to Ninety Six National Historic Site, you should leave it where it is and notify a park ranger. Never take artifacts from the park. Each piece of evidence is critical to the understanding and interpreting American prehistory and history at Ninety Six. Leave it as you found it so archeologists can tell us more about Old Ninety Six. Don't be the one to give Ninety Six an incomplete history book.

If you discover an artifact during your visit at Ninety Six National Historic Site, leave the object in its original setting and notify a park ranger immediately. Never take an artifact with you. Report any suspicious activity. Call the visitor center at 864-543-4068.

Don't be Finders Keepers, be Finders Leavers!