

Cultural Resources

Goal

Cultural Resources. The Alaska Historic Preservation Act establishes the state's basic goal: to preserve, protect, and interpret the historic, prehistoric, and archaeological resources of Alaska so that the scientific, historic, and cultural heritage values embodied in these resources may pass undiminished to future generations. The intention of this plan is to implement the purposes of this Act through the identification of cultural, archeological, and historic resources prior to project development and to preserve and protect these resources either through avoidance or the use of stipulations in authorizations issued by the Department.

Management Guidelines

A. Cultural Resources Identification. Identify and determine the significance of cultural resources on state land through the following actions:

1. Cultural resources surveys conducted by qualified personnel;
2. Research about cultural resources on state land by qualified individuals and organizations; and
3. Cooperative efforts for planned surveys and inventories between state, federal, and local or Native groups.

B. Cultural Resources Protection. Protect significant cultural resources through the following actions:

1. The Office of History and Archeology (OHA) within DPOR reviews authorizations, construction projects or land uses for potential conflict with cultural resources. The office determines if there may be an adverse effect on heritage resources and makes recommendations to mitigate these effects.
2. Cooperating with concerned government agencies, Native corporations, statewide or local groups, and individuals to develop guidelines and recommendations on how to avoid or mitigate identified or potential conflict.

C. Cultural Resource Surveys Prior to Land Offerings. If determined by OHA during an agency review of a proposed land disposal that a cultural survey may be required, further coordination between OHA and DMLW prior to the land disposal is warranted. Cultural surveys should be considered where OHA reported sites exist or where there is a high

potential for such sites to exist. The extent and type of the cultural survey within the area of the proposed land disposal shall be determined by OHA in consultation with DMLW. Detailed procedures exist governing when a survey is required and extent of the cultural resource survey and are to be consulted by DNR adjudicators.

D. Cultural Resources Adjacent to Recreation Facilities. Recreation facilities that might subject cultural sites to vandalism because of the increased public use should not be placed adjacent to the cultural sites.

E. Heritage sites should be reported when found. The Alaska Heritage Resources Survey (AHRS) is an inventory of all reported historic and prehistoric sites within the State of Alaska and is maintained by the Office of History and Archaeology (OHA). The AHRS is used to protect cultural resource sites from unwanted destruction. By knowing of possible cultural remains prior to construction, efforts can be made to avoid project delays and prevent unnecessary destruction of cultural sites. While over 22,000 sites have been reported within Alaska, this is probably only a very small percentage of the sites which may actually exist but are as yet unreported. The AHRS is not complete or static, so heritage sites, when found, should be reported to the OHA.

F. Other Guidelines Affecting Cultural Resources. Other guidelines may affect cultural resources. See other sections of this chapter.