



Archaeology: The study of past human life ways through the detection and analysis of the physical effects of human activities. It is one of the four sub-disciplines of anthropology.

Archaeological Evidence: Archaeological evidence consists of only two things: objects (or features and artifacts) and associations, or the physical relationships between such artifacts and features, other artifacts and features, and stratigraphy. Everything else is archaeological interpretation. No evidence = no site.

Archaeological Interpretation: Anything said, written, or thought about archaeology that cannot be identified as evidence. Any consideration of how old, how important, how unique, etc. an archaeological site, culture or region may be or may have been in the past is automatically archaeological interpretation. Any attempts at equating an archaeological site with an historic or protohistoric culture, any demographic estimating, any attempts at figuring out life expectancy, seasonal subsistence patterns, etc. is archaeological interpretation.

Archaeological Site: A location where ancient human activities took place, and where tangible physical remains in the form of artifacts and/or features can be recognized. For historic sites, “ancient” usually means at least 50 years of age. An archaeological site may include surface and/or subsurface elements. It may be historic, prehistoric, or both, be part of a larger unit (such as a site-cluster or district), and/or contain smaller units (such as loci).

Artifact: An object that is made, modified, altered, or transported by human agency or workmanship which cannot be confused with an accident of nature.

Assemblage: A group of artifacts and other elements in an archaeological site that appear to represent a single time period.

Cultural Resource: A broad category that describes a wide variety of resources including archaeological sites, isolated artifacts, features, records, manuscripts, historical sites, traditional cultural properties, historical resources, and historic properties, regardless of significance.

Culture: The learned and taught behavior patterns, customs, and habits of a human society. Cultures vary from place to place and change through time

Dating: Archaeological sites can be dated "absolutely" by physical methods including geological analysis and the radiocarbon method. ("Absolute" dates are usually bracketed with plus and minus factors and are not truly absolute). They can also be dated "relatively" by comparing the artifacts found in or on them with those found in or on sites that have been dated absolutely, and by other physical means which do not yield absolute dates.

Feature: An archaeological feature is either a large stationary artifact, such as a firepit, housepit, cairn, bedrock mortar, etc. or an association of related portable artifacts such as a cache or offering of related tools or ornaments. Human burials and lithic scatters are features. These are forms of archaeological evidence that represent a particular activity.

Historic Sites: Archaeological sites of the historic period. Locations where important events during the historic period took place or historic artifacts or features important to our understanding of the region's recent development can be identified. In general, the earlier the site, the more important it is, and the more intact the site, the more significant. Historic sites can be the remains of houses, barns, mines, logging camps, dumps, etc.

Settlement Patterns: The distribution of living and work areas over the surface of the land. Settlement patterns are defined using data from archaeological surveys; changes in settlement patterns can be studied by comparing different kinds of contemporaneous and/or non-contemporaneous settlements.

Tools used:

Trowels, shovels, small hand tools

Dust pans and brushes

Screens

Buckets

Transits

Measuring and mapping tools

Photography equipment

Labels, bags and journals