

It is illegal to destroy, deface, collect, transport, sell/trade or assisting others with these activities of archaeological, cultural and historic resources.

Individuals who do this are subject to severe penalties (up to 5 years in jail) and fines (up to \$250,000) under State and Federal laws. These objects include, but are not limited to; Native artifacts, World War II and pre-historic objects on all US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Native and State lands. Contact local State, Federal or Native representative for additional information on what is permitted in those specific jurisdictions.

The Value of Archaeology

To Native American Cultural Identity

For Native Americans, archaeological sites and artifacts are essential elements of individual and group identity. Just as a church, synagogue, community hall, or cemetery in your community provides meaning and continuity for many people, so archaeological sites provide Native Americans with a sacred link to their ancestors and culture.



To Our Nation's Heritage and Scientific Knowledge

Archaeological sites are nonrenewable resources. An undisturbed archaeological site holds the clues archaeologists study to assemble the puzzle pieces of the past. When a site is disturbed, those damaged pieces can never again be reconstructed. While the Archaeological Resources Protection Act assigns a monetary value to cultural resources, their true worth is ultimately measured by the intangible values which benefit humanity. The history of humankind is written in stone, bone, seeds, and soil...

The landscapes, historic places, and prehistoric and historic-period archaeological sites protected on our public lands represent the natural and cultural legacy the American people have chosen to pass on to future generations.

The Cost of Looting

Desecration of sacred sites - Objects and places that hold great

significance to Native Americans are destroyed.

Theft of our national heritage - Objects that tell the stories of our past often end up being sold to private collectors and shipped overseas or dumped in storage lockers.

Loss of irretrievable archaeological data - When removed from sites, artifacts lose their scientific value.

Drain on tax-payer dollars to assess and repair the damage - Money that could be better spent interpreting and sharing archaeological data must instead be dedicated to assessing the loss and pursuing the perpetrators.

Looters - Face potential jail time and hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines. Vessels, vehicles, tools, and other personal property used to carry out the crime of disturbing archaeological sites may be confiscated.



“What a country chooses to save is what a country chooses to say about itself.”

Mollie Beattie