



MEMORANDUM

TO: Governor Bill Lee
Governor of the State of Tennessee

Lieutenant Governor Randy McNally
Speaker of the Senate

Speaker Cameron Sexton
Speaker of the House of Representatives

FROM: David W. Salyers, P.E.
Commissioner

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Salyers".

DATE: January 28, 2026

SUBJECT: Annual Report on Tennessee's Archaeological Advisory Council

Tennessee Code Annotated § 11-6-103 requires the Department of Environment and Conservation to prepare an annual report on the activities and results of the studies of the Archaeological Advisory Council and State Archaeologist. The report is to be submitted to the Governor and Tennessee General Assembly.

Attached is your copy of this year's report that covers Calendar Year 2025.

Archaeological Advisory Council

TDEC Division of Archaeology

Annual Report for Calendar Year 2025

Submitted January 28, 2026



Department of
**Environment &
Conservation**

Division of Archaeology

1216 Foster Ave., Cole Bldg. #3
Nashville, TN 37243

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Archaeological Advisory Council is an eleven-member body created in 1970 pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated § 11-6-103. The Council consists of five anthropologists, three members of Native American descent, and three members representing archaeological associations, the Tennessee Historical Commission, and the public-at-large, respectively. The role of the Council is to advise the commissioner of the Department of Environment and Conservation and the State Archaeologist on all matters of policy related to the activities of the Division of Archaeology and to the employment of professional personnel. The Council did not meet in 2025. The Council joins the state’s archaeological community in mourning the passing of Dr. Kevin E. Smith, who represented Middle Tennessee State University on the Council and at the time of his passing served as its chair. The Council also recognizes and mourns the passing of Ann Toplovich, who represented the Tennessee Historical Commission on the Council.

The Division was fully staffed in 2025 with twelve full-time positions, all classified as TDEC Cultural Resources Consultants, except for the State Archaeologist. The Division met its budget goal for FY 2025 and, with an appropriation for FY 2026 of \$1,622,600, is on track to do so again. The Division maintains intra-agency contracts with the Tennessee Historical Commission to provide archaeological review services to the State Historic Preservation Office. These contracts are funded annually through the federal historic preservation fund.

Major initiatives included ongoing focus on the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and advancement of the Division’s GIS capabilities. The Division continues to support Department goals focused on stewardship and management of cultural resources within Tennessee State Parks and beyond. Core services include issuance of archaeological site numbers and permits, providing information to external researchers, state and federal project reviews, and general technical assistance. The Division remains engaged in the planning process for new state parks established as part of Governor Lee’s conservation strategy and is supporting the planning process for the reconstruction of David Crockett Birthplace State Park, tragically destroyed in the Hurricane Helene disaster.

The Division carried out a robust program in 2025 to promote Tennessee archaeology, which included tours of state-owned archaeological sites, educational events, presentations, digital and print publications, online engagement through the Division’s website and Facebook page, and resource management in Tennessee State Parks and State Historic Sites.

The Division of Archaeology by the numbers:

Budget	Staff	Project Reviews (State & Federal)	Permits Issued	Site File Requests	New Sites	Promote TN Archaeology*
\$1,622,600	12	2,220	84	997	281	57

*Promote Tennessee Archaeology (Conferences, Tours, Publications, Presentations, Interviews, Outreach/Education)

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Cover Photo: Fort Southwest Point, a federal military post built in 1797 on what was then the southwestern boundary of the United States. In 2024, Governor Bill Lee announced that Fort Southwest Point will become a new Tennessee State Park, ensuring that this important archaeological and historical site will be protected forever.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

PURPOSE & COMPOSITION

The Council is charged with the duty to advise the commissioner of the Department and the State Archaeologist on all matters of policy related to the activities of the Division and to the employment of professional personnel. Members of the Council are appointed by the governor to overlapping five-year terms. The Council consists of five anthropologists, one each representing the University of Tennessee, the University of Memphis, Vanderbilt University, Middle Tennessee State University, and East Tennessee State University, respectively. The Council also includes three members of Native American descent, one representative from the Tennessee Historical Commission, one representative from a recognized archaeological association in Tennessee, and one member from the public-at-large.

Current Membership of the Archaeological Advisory Council

Member	Representing	Appointed	Expiration
Vacant*	Middle Tennessee State University	4/24/2024	6/20/2027
Dr. Ryan Parish	University of Memphis	7/1/2025	6/30/2030
Dr. Kandace Hollenbach	University of Tennessee System	4/23/2025	6/30/2028
Dr. Lindsey Cochran	East Tennessee State University	4/24/2024	6/30/2026
Dr. Steven Wernke	Vanderbilt University	6/24/2025	6/30/2027
Mr. Jim Kay	Tennessee Historical Commission	4/25/2025	12/31/2027
Mr. Tim Fields	Archaeological Associations	6/24/2025	6/30/2028
Mr. Jeremy Kaunisto	Native American	1/8/2018	6/30/2022
Mr. Charles Robinson	Native American	7/1/2025	6/30/2030
Ms. Cindy Yahola	Native American	6/24/2025	6/30/2028
Ms. Lauren Webb	Public-at-Large	4/24/2024	6/30/2028

*The MTSU seat is vacant as it was held by Dr. Kevin Smith, who passed away unexpectedly in 2025. An appointment to fill the remainder of Dr. Smith's term is in progress.

The Council generates no revenue. Its expenses are included in the Division's state appropriations and used to reimburse Council members for travelling to meetings. Public notice of meetings is posted on the Council's website, along with written minutes and video recordings of each meeting.

COUNCIL MEETING FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2024

This brief report is submitted pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated 11-6-103. The Council was scheduled to meet on January 26, 2025, at the Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville. Due to concerns about attendance, Council Chair Dr. Kevin Smith postponed the meeting on January 9, 2025 with the intention of rescheduling it for later in the year. Unfortunately, Dr. Smith passed away unexpectedly in March, and with transitions in Council membership, State Archaeologist Phil Hodge recommended deferring until the next meeting in January 2026.

DIVISION OF ARCHAEOLOGY – 2025 REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

Prepared by State Archaeologist Phillip R. Hodge and the staff of the Division of Archaeology.

The Division of Archaeology was established in 1970 under the Tennessee Antiquities Act with the mandate to “...initiate, operate, and maintain a statewide program in archaeology.” Since then, the Division has fulfilled its mandate by identifying and excavating archaeological sites across the state, conducting archaeological research, planning, and education, curating artifacts and sites, and sharing its findings with the public and professional communities. As a Division of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, the State Archaeologist and the Division’s staff of professional archaeologists are motivated by the Department’s mission to “conserve and promote natural, cultural, and historic resources” and work annually with a wide range of public and private partners to document and explore the Volunteer state’s irreplaceable archaeological record. The following report of activities for calendar year 2025 is submitted pursuant to Tennessee Code Annotated 11-6-103.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Budget

The Division’s total spending plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 (beginning July 1, 2025) is \$1,622,600. Personnel expenses comprise 86% of the budget with the balance allocated for operational expenses. Through December 31, 2025, the Division is meeting monthly budget goals and on track to complete FY 2026 on budget.

Grants & Contracts

The Division maintains an annual intra-agency contract with the Tennessee Historical Commission (THC) to provide archaeological review services to the State Historic Preservation Office’s Section 106 program. These contracts are funded through grants from the federal historic preservation fund. The grant covering federal FY 2025 was awarded in the amount of \$50,000. The term for the most recent grant was extended to cover federal FYs 2026 and 2027 in the amount of \$111,000.

Personnel

The Division was fully staffed in 2025 with twelve full-time positions. Most staff are based in the Division’s main office in Nashville; one staff member is based in West Tennessee near Reelfoot Lake and another on the Cumberland Plateau near Pickett CCC Memorial State Park. Long-time Division staff archaeologist Aaron Deter-Wolf completed his PhD in Archaeology last year at the University of Exeter. His doctoral dissertation synthesized a decade of his peer-reviewed research on the archaeology of tattooing.

From CCC Camps to Siberian mummies, Division staff are engaged at all levels of professionalism in archaeology, attending and presenting research in local, state, regional, national, and international conferences. They publish research in popular and professional outlets, in both print and online media, give podium presentations and posters at conferences, and share Tennessee archaeology with the public at a wide range of statewide educational events. In 2025, staff also completed a variety of training and development programs, including for example, geophysics, GIS, wildland fire, and wilderness first aid, among others. Staff also completed annual training required of all state employees (e.g., Ethics, Cyber Security, Title VI, and Respectful Workplace).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, staff volunteer to serve their professional and local communities in a wide range of roles and organizations, reflecting their commitment to archaeology in Tennessee and the reputation that the Division and its staff have at all levels. See the last section of this report for a full list of staff publications, presentations, and service.

SITE FILE & REVIEW GROUP

The Site File and Review Group is led by Jennifer Barnett with responsibilities for maintaining records of archaeological sites within the state, reviewing projects subject to state and federal archaeological laws, and issuing archaeological permits for research on land owned or controlled by the state.

Site File

The Site File Team consists of three staff members. Paige Silcox serves as supervisor, guiding the overall direction of the Site File and coordinating day-to-day priorities and tasks. Satin Platt primarily reviews Site Record submissions, records new sites, and processes updates to previously recorded sites. AnnaLevi Chavis responds to document requests, assists with Site File research, and processes new reports and publications into the TDOA library.

Site File HUB and Online Research

The TDOA Site File continues to move toward the goal of being fully accessible to online researchers, with the bulk of Site File research being conducted through the Site File HUB. The Site File HUB has 352 users as of December 15, 2025. User affiliations break down much as they did in 2024, with most users being professional archaeologists employed in private consulting or contracting firms (68%). The balance consists of qualified professional archaeologists in state and federal agencies (21%), universities (7%), and tribal historic preservation offices (5%).

The Site File HUB Map Viewer was updated in December 2025 with new data layers and updated custom research tools. Approved users can search Site File data for archaeological information within a specific geographic area or query the data tables to filter by a wide range of variables. The site and survey data available to Site File HUB users is current up to the

minute, providing customers with immediate access to newly recorded or updated sites as well as new publications as they are added to our library.

The Site File HUB also includes a Document Request tool which researchers can use to request PDF copies of Site Records, Survey Reports, or other publications from the Division's archives. In 2025, the Site File Team responded to 449 individual document requests, sending a total of 3,286 Site Records and Publications to Site File HUB users.

Site Record Submissions

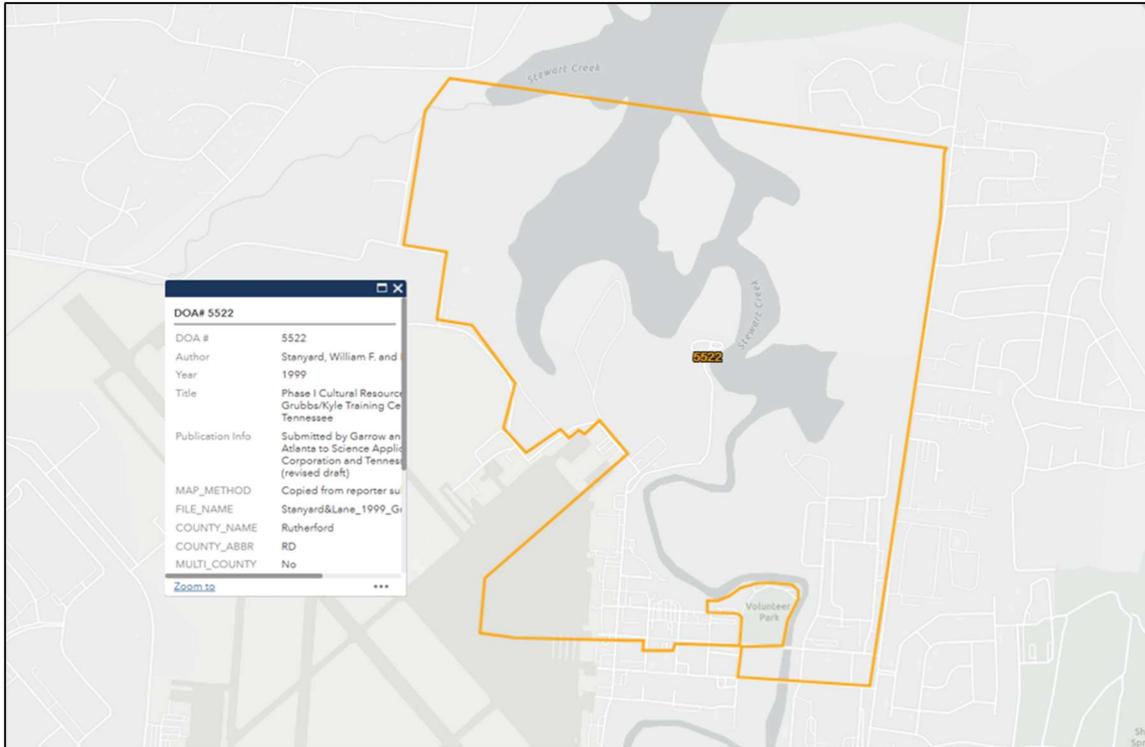
In 2025, 548 site records were submitted for review, with 205 previously recorded sites updated and 281 new sites recorded. That brings the statewide total of recorded archaeological sites to 28,592. The TDOA's Archaeological Site Survey Record was revised in 2025 to include new data points, updated data selection options, and clarified narratives. An instruction manual with detailed guidelines and instructions for completing and submitting Site Record submissions was created and distributed with the revised Site Record in August 2025.

Report Library Scanning and Digitization Project

The Division partnered with the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to digitize the report library and create shapefiles for survey areas from each report. This partnership was the result of a Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between TVA and the SHPO that sought to identify a creative mitigation solution, one part of which was digitizing the Division's report library.

In November 2025, TVA, working through their contractor WSP, delivered a newly constructed Survey Areas Geodatabase that included 4,011 digitized survey areas and associated PDFs. Site File staff were able to add an additional 152 digitized survey areas with associated PDFs to the database, nearly tripling the number currently available. This new geodatabase allows the Site File to maintain the library catalog in ArcGIS Online, with complete references and extensive data about each report or publication connected to a geospatial location. This data was added to the TDOA Staff Map Viewer in November and to the Site File HUB in December. These new data layers provide TDOA staff and Site File researchers with up-to-date current Survey Area locations. Because every feature in the geodatabase has an associated PDF, the process of requesting reports and other publications will be quicker and more efficient.

While the requirements of the Section 106 MOA were fulfilled, TVA wishes to extend this project with the goal of having a single geodatabase that includes all reports and publications in the TDOA library. Pending approval of additional funding, the second phase of this project will begin in 2026 and continue at least throughout the year.



Example survey area and associated report information digitized through TVA partnership.

Site Record Digitization and Archival Improvements

In calendar year 2025, the Site File Team added 2,221 scanned and finalized Site Records to the electronic file, bringing the percentage of Site Records with available PDFs up to 56%. In addition, reprioritization of tasks in the Site File has allowed staff to focus on finalizing Site Records as new Site Numbers are assigned. The Site File Team will continue to focus on increasing the percentage of Site Records with available PDFs throughout 2026.

In addition, in 2025 the Site File began procurement of acid free archival document cases to improve the environment in which hard copies of Site Records are curated. At present, Site Records are curated in three-ring binders organized by county and site number. These binders have served the Site File through many years of in-person research; however, accumulated use-wear currently presents a threat of damage to the Site Records they hold. In 2026, the Site File will begin a systematic process to rehouse the Site Records into acid-free archival boxes, thus ensuring greater physical protection and improved accessibility for future researchers.

Site File HUB Fee Implementation

With TDEC's Office of General Counsel, the State Archaeologist developed a policy regarding implementation of a Site File HUB access fee, which was signed by TDEC Commissioner David Salyers in late 2025. This policy defines and sets an access fee to recover costs associated with maintaining and sharing electronic geographic data developed and controlled by the TDOA. This policy applies to professional archaeologists accessing the Site File HUB for commercial

purposes, often associated with contractual projects related to compliance with state or federal archaeological laws and regulations. The fee does not apply to professional archaeologists employed by state, federal, or local agencies, tribal governments, or universities engaged in non-commercial research. An online payment portal was built in coordination with the state's Strategic Technology Solutions Division, which involved developing a payment process, customer tracking system, and associated materials for incorporating a fee payment into the HUB access process. The fee will be implemented July 1, 2026.

Federal Programs Review

In addition to her managerial duties, Jennifer Barnett also serves as the sole archaeological reviewer for federally funded, licensed, or permitted projects subject to the National Historic Preservation Act. The Division provides archaeological review services to the THC's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) through the intra-agency contracts and grant reported above. In 2025, Jennifer received and completed reviews for 1,449 requests, which is equivalent to the volume reviewed in 2024. Jennifer maintained a remarkable average completion time of 1.12 days, which included reviewing 276 reports.

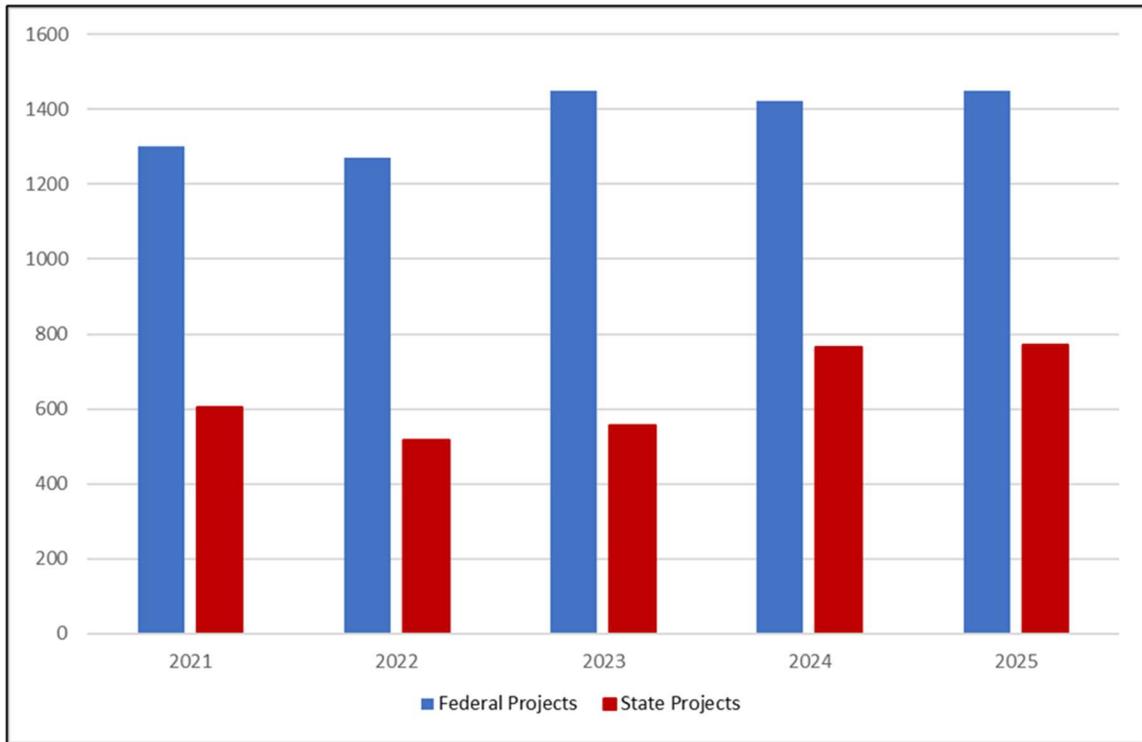
Additional project specific reviews included finalization of a memorandum of agreement for the East Tennessee Natural Gas Ridgeline Gas Pipeline Project that runs through eight Tennessee counties. Fifteen National Register eligible archaeological sites will undergo Phase III data recovery excavation under this MOA. Additionally, a parkwide programmatic agreement for the routine maintenance of trails was signed with the National Park Service and Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The development and use of Programmatic Agreements continue to be an effective tool to streamline project reviews and protect historic properties under the National Historic Preservation Act.

State Programs Review

State Programs archaeologist Dr. Daniel Brock provides archaeological resource reviews for state projects and coordinates issuance of permits on land owned or controlled by the state. During 2025, Dan reviewed 771 state projects for the presence of previously recorded archaeological sites or for potential impacts. This represents a small increase over 2024. He also reviewed and approved 84 applications for permits to conduct archaeological investigations on state owned or controlled land. Dan archived shapefiles from reports submitted to the Division and provided report updates to the Site File. Archived state programs documentation was also digitized, and relevant site information was submitted to the Site Information File. State Programs also include assistance to State Historic Sites owned by the THC, as well as review of state funded projects from the Departments of Transportation and Agriculture.



High resolution bird's-eye photo of MTSU's archaeological field school taken with a drone piloted by Daryl Hickman, Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operations Manager with MTSU's Department of Aerospace.



Number of federal and state projects reviewed 2021-2025.

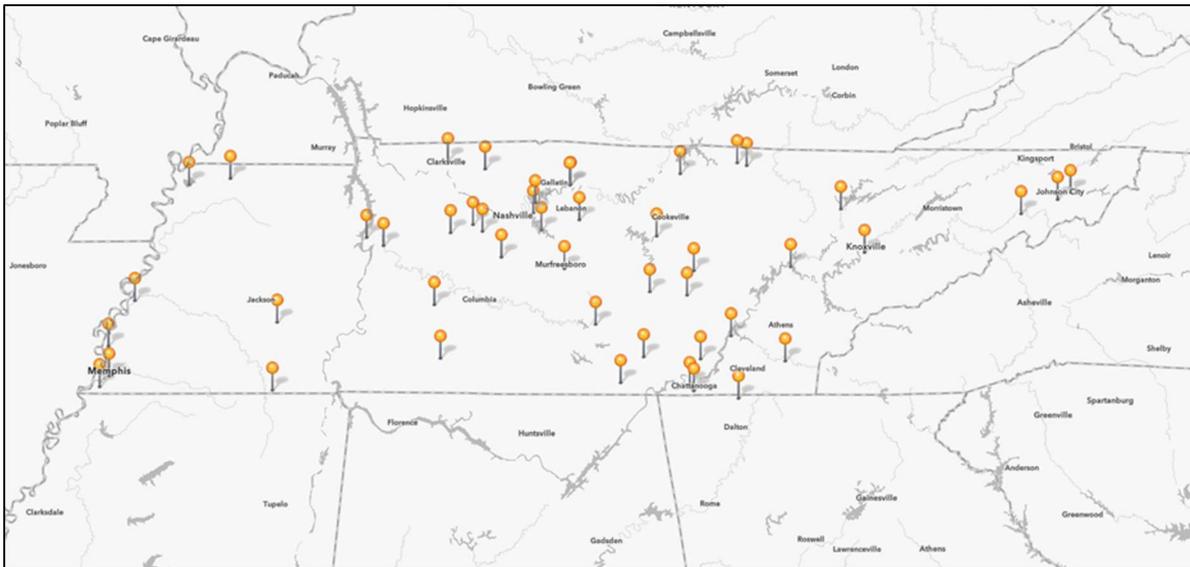
Finally, with Dan’s background in archaeological geophysics, he was tasked to develop a proposal for a new program area within the Division focused on geophysics, specifically for the use of non-invasive ground penetrating radar (GPR) and gradiometer instruments in terrestrial archaeological surveys. This proposal developed alongside technical assistance he provided to The Hermitage regarding terrestrial geophysics and discussions with the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga about a partnership program focused on submerged archaeological sites. The Division has also developed a relationship with MTSU’s Unmanned Aircraft Systems Operations program in the Department of Aerospace to explore the use of aerial geophysical systems in archaeological contexts. The nexus between geophysics and Division support for archaeological resource management in Tennessee State Parks (*see next section*) provided an opportunity to partner with Montgomery Bell State Park in 2026 to conduct a GPR survey of the historic Laurel Furnace Enslaved Workers Cemetery, funded with a grant from the THC.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GROUP

The Technical Assistance Group is led by Ben Nance and provides information and guidance regarding archaeological sites and related issues to a wide range of interests, including landowners, government agencies, developers, universities, private consultants, law enforcement, and the public, among others. Technical Assistance staff include Bill Lawrence, Aaron Deter-Wolf, Macie Orrand, Hannah Guidry, and Sierra Bow.

Tennessee State Parks

As a peer Division within TDEC, Technical Assistance staff provide expertise and guidance to Tennessee State Parks, including project reviews, resource management, research, and interpretative information. The Division is participating in the planning process for the establishment of new state parks as part of Governor Lee's conservation strategy, specifically those of archaeological or historical significance such as Cardwell Mountain State Archaeological Park, Fort Southwest Point State Historic Park, and Cherokee Trail of Tears State Park. Technical Assistance staff have also provided expertise across the state park system for a wide variety of projects such as construction of new visitor centers, hiking trails and other improvement projects, ecological restoration, and flooding assessments, among others.



Locations where Technical Assistance staff have responded in the field to provide guidance or assistance regarding archaeological resources or collections.

As reported at the 2024 meeting of the Archaeological Advisory Council, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's Division of Forestry and TDEC were working on a transfer of jurisdiction pursuant to a 2005 agreement for nursery property adjoining Pinson Mounds State Archaeological Park. The transfer of jurisdiction was officially completed and approved by Governor Lee on July 10, 2025. A copy of the transfer documentation is attached as Appendix A. In December, the State Archaeologist and State Forester met with Forestry staff and tourism partners in southeastern Tennessee to tour the East Tennessee Nursery, including the site of Hiwassee Old Town (40PK3). This site is set aside within the nursery operation as an archaeological preserve under the jurisdiction of the Division. With the successful completion of the Pinson transfer and new connections at the East Tennessee Nursery, the Division looks forward to new partnerships with the Division of Forestry on state lands and other projects of mutual interest and benefit.

In March the State Archaeologist and Technical Assistance staff welcomed The Chickasaw Nation's Department of Homeland Affairs to Pinson Mounds State Archaeological Park for a

workshop which featured a round table discussion followed by a guided tour of the park in the. Likewise, Division personnel hosted professional staff from the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians' Tribal Historic Preservation Office for a brief visit to the future Cardwell Mountain State Archaeological Park. As with Forestry Partners, the Division looks forward to additional opportunities to work with Tribal Partners and hosting visits to ancestral and archaeological places stewarded by Tennessee State Parks.

David Crockett Birthplace State Park

The Division's work at David Crockett Birthplace State Park merits special attention considering the scale of the impact from Hurricane Helene and the scope of archaeological review for its reconstruction and rebirth. Current archaeological research at the park involves evaluating the stability of known sites, documenting areas of erosion, sediment displacement, and bank failure, and identifying locations where cultural materials have been exposed or where site integrity may have been compromised.



Dr. Sierra Bow works with ETSU students and park volunteers at David Crockett Birthplace State Park.

In collaboration with East Tennessee State University faculty and students, TDOA conducted limited excavations along the riverbank to further assess flood impacts and document areas of active erosion and exposure of cultural material. These excavations help clarify the extent of

storm-related disturbance and contribute to a broader understanding of the site's archaeological context and the Nolichucky River. Initial assessments indicate both erosion-related loss and redeposition of flood sediments across several areas of the park. Staff continue follow-up monitoring to track ongoing changes and assess whether additional stabilization, documentation, or protective measures are required.

TDOA is also working closely with park management throughout the park's master rebuild planning process to ensure archaeological resources are fully considered during long-term recovery and redevelopment. Staff will continue to participate in public stakeholder meetings to communicate archaeological concerns, provide updates, and support transparent planning efforts.

Research Projects

The Division has several long-term research projects underway. Ben Nance is working to complete the report for the Division's statewide survey of Rosenwald Schools, along with small projects related to Civilian Conservation Corps camps and Wynnewood State Historic Site. Hannah Guidry developed a GIS dataset for Sellars Farm State Archaeological Area that integrates known spatial data about this site as part of her work to update the site management plan. She also continues work to analyze artifacts from Red Clay State Historic Park. Aaron Deter-Wolf is assisting staff from Harpeth River State Park with the second cycle of a grant from the Iris Fund designed to establish native plant species such as river cane at Mound Bottom State Archaeological Area. Sierra Bow continues applied research with TDEC's Division of Natural Areas and East Tennessee State University to assess the effects of prescribed fire on archaeological sites. Bill Lawrence continues his reanalysis of ceramics from Pinson's Mound 5 (Ozier Mound) as part of a broader reconsideration of Pinson's chronology.



Dr. Aaron Deter-Wolf with TDEC Commissioner David Salyers and Bill Morton, Park Manager, Harpeth River State Park at Mound Bottom State Archaeological Area.

Curation and Collections Management

In 2025, Curation Specialist Macie Orrand processed 30 requests related to archaeological collections, including the assignment of 16 accession numbers for new collections, seven transfers between the Division and various institutions, and three temporary loans. One notable loan involves a request from a graduate student at Indiana University researching historic foodways through faunal material from the Wessyngton Plantation site (40RB92) in Robertson County. The overall number of collection requests includes four donations of ancestral remains from members of the public and local law enforcement (*see the NAGPRA section below for more information*).

In coordination with Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), the Division undertook a substantial project to rehouse archaeological collections from the Castalian Springs Mound Site (40SU14) in Sumner County. These collections were excavated by the late Dr. Kevin Smith during multiple summer field schools under a TDOA permit. The inventory, analysis, and rehousing of this collection is a multi-year undertaking led by Dr. Paul Eubanks, Professor of Anthropology at MTSU and lead researcher at 40SU14. Other collection management projects include the rehousing of materials from Red Clay and Pinson's Mound 5 into modern archival storage containers as their ongoing analysis is completed.

The Division's primary artifact repository at Pinson Mounds State Archaeological Park has seen additional improvements beyond the 2023-2024 renovation project – specifically, coordinating work to repair the elevator and clean the complex system of ductwork in the facility.

MAJOR PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

Native American Graves Protection & Repatriation Act

Under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and its implementing regulations at 43 CFR Part 10, the Department is considered a museum and as such is required to initiate consultation with federally recognized Tribal Nations on the repatriation of ancestral human remains and Cultural Items in its possession or control. In 2025, the Division worked with Tribal Nations to complete the federal repatriation process for all known ancestral human remains and Cultural Items in the TDOA's direct care, publishing 28 federal notices of inventory completion and/or notices of intent to repatriate. Several joint notices were also published with the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, MTSU, and Mississippi State University. Appendix B contains a list of notices published in 2025.

The collections reported in 2025 constitute the majority of known ancestral remains and Cultural Items in TDEC's custody or its possession and control. Looking ahead to 2026, and in accordance with NAGPRA's new Duty of Care provisions [43 CFR Part 10.1(d)], the Division's NAGPRA team will begin reviewing general collections at the Pinson repository to identify ancestral remains and Cultural Items that may not be accounted for in existing inventories. This involves reviewing records and box inventories for approximately 6,000 collections. Based on

current workloads, it is anticipated this review will take two years to complete. Parallel to this, the Division is also working with Tennessee State Parks to complete the NAGPRA process for a small number of Cultural Items that were either on display or in storage.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

TDOA GIS Coordinator Paige Silcox is responsible for coordinating the Division's use of GIS resources, developing new GIS applications for the Division's various program areas, and maintaining existing GIS applications, such as the Site File HUB research tools and the Staff Map Viewer. Integrating GIS tools into everyday workflows and connecting data across working groups has made the Division's work more efficient and allowed us to more effectively manage the state's archaeological resources and information thereof.

Accession Number Request Tool and Collections Tracking Dashboard

Artifact collections originating from recorded archaeological sites located on land owned or controlled by the state are often permanently curated by the Division (*see T.C.A. 11-6-104 and 105*). A permanent accession number (i.e., a tracking number) is assigned to each collection when it is prepared for curation. Previously, the process to obtain an accession number required email-based coordination among three different program areas within the Division. To streamline this process, an online "Accession Number Request" tool was developed which allows Curation Specialist Macie Orrand to screen collections coming into our repository and ensure that all necessary information to issue an accession number is submitted directly.

The data collected through this process can be viewed in a customized dashboard with filtering and reporting tools. Each record is also associated with the current address location of the collection, so the data can be viewed in map form. This tool was sent to individual users for testing in June and distributed to all Site File HUB users in September.

Online State Programs Submission System

State Programs archaeologist Dr. Dan Brock is working to develop an online submission system for applications to conduct archaeological investigations on land owned or controlled by the state and to submit project review requests to the Division. This work currently takes place in the context of conventional email procedures through email attachments, or various file sharing services. The implementation of this system will streamline the process for external users and facilitate integration with our Division HUB platform.

Conservation Group Protected Data and Ranger Training

TDEC, Tennessee State Parks, and TDOA share strategic goals and directives to improve stewardship and protection of natural and cultural resources. In 2025, TDOA worked with staff from the Division of Natural Areas and the Department's GIS Team to create a data layer of locations within state park boundaries where rare and endangered species and archaeological

sites have been recorded. This Conservation Group Protected Data layer is available only to commissioned law enforcement rangers who have received specialized training in how to interpret and use the data as well as maintain data security.

TDOA's GIS Coordinator designed the archaeology portion of the ranger training, which includes an outline of state laws pertaining to recorded archaeological sites in Tennessee, an overview of what kinds of archaeological resources can be found in State Parks and how to recognize them, different kinds of damage or disturbance archaeological sites can be exposed to, and the importance of protecting archaeological resources by avoiding disturbance. Training will continue to be offered throughout the year for rangers utilizing protected data.

This initiative reinforces the allied mission of Tennessee State Parks and the TDOA to protect and preserve sensitive resources, facilitates our shared responsibility to steward resources on state park lands, and ensures that state laws protecting archaeological sites are being enforced as needed. In 2026, this tool will be expanded to include a reporting function so commissioned rangers can report new archaeological resources and/or damage to existing resources to TDOA.

Field Collection Tools

TDOA staff have access to equipment and GIS resources that allow them to collect high-accuracy spatial data in the field. In 2025, TDOA staff including the GIS Coordinator and two Technical Assistance archaeologists, had the opportunity to take a two-day intensive ESRI training to learn best practices for how to use ESRI's Field Collection tools. They have put this training into practice with multiple projects, many of which are for state parks and natural areas, including Sellars Farm, Red Clay, David Crockett Birthplace, and Cardwell Mountain. Results from these projects have been used in resource management and planning as well as being presented at regional and statewide conferences.

Division staff archaeologist Hannah Guidry and a local Boy Scout use high resolution GPS equipment to record unmarked graves at Mt. Zion Cemetery in Shelby County.



PROMOTION OF TENNESSEE ARCHAEOLOGY

Online and Digital Engagement

The Division promoted Tennessee archaeology online by maintaining its website and Facebook page. The Division's Facebook page is actively managed through posting original content and sharing information about Tennessee archaeology to more than 4,500 followers.

Current Research in Tennessee Archaeology

The 2025 Current Research in Tennessee Archaeology event took place on January 25, 2025 at the Tennessee State Library and Archives in downtown Nashville. Approximately 150 people attended and enjoyed a program of 17 presentations covering a wide range of archaeological topics in Tennessee.

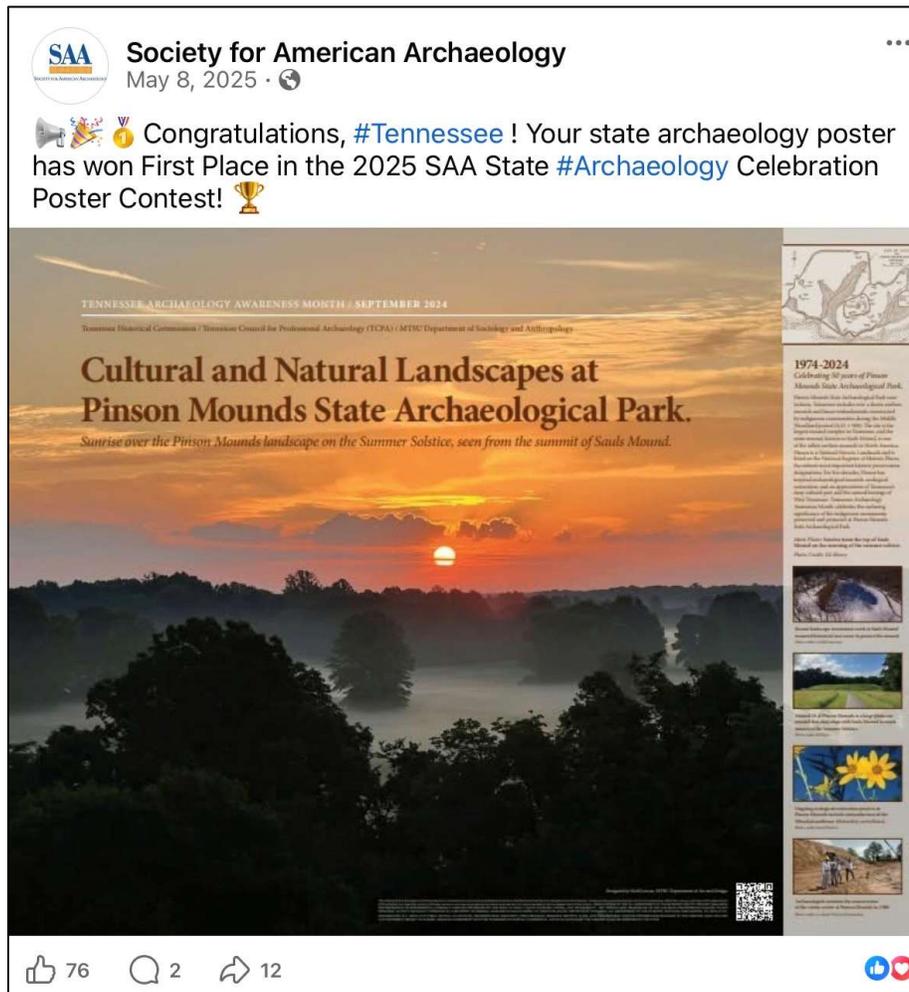
Outreach and Educational Events

The Division led or participated in archaeology related outreach or educational events, including informational and artifact identification tables, mock digs, and other activities at McClung Museum's "Can you Dig It?" event, Crockett Days, Harpeth River Fest, Archaeology Day at Bells Bend, and Red Clay's Cherokee Cultural Celebration, among others.



Division staff archaeologist AnnaLevi Chavis helping junior archaeologists learn about the past on a mock excavation site.

Last year’s report included information on the Tennessee Archaeology Awareness Month (TAAM) poster featuring Pinson Mounds State Archaeological Park. That poster was created by Noel Lorson, MTSU Associate Professor and Director of Graphic Design, to celebrate Pinson Mounds’ 50th anniversary as a Tennessee State Park. The Division is proud to report this year that Professor Lorson’s composition won the Society for American Archaeology’s award for the best archaeological awareness month poster in the nation!



Tours of State Archaeological Areas

Division staff led public tours of state-owned archaeological sites, including Mound Bottom, Link Farm, Reelfoot Lake, Sellars Farm, and those in Pogue Creek Canyon, all of which were advertised on the Division’s events calendar and Facebook pages, as well as Tennessee State Parks’ event calendar. Several other unadvertised tours were provided to various internal and external partners, including tours of the Montgomery Bell CCC Camp for Tennessee State Park managers, Pinson Mounds for The Chickasaw Nation, Cardwell Mountain for Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and key conservation partners, and Mound Bottom for the Tennessee State Parks’ fall legislative tour.

Staff Publications, Presentations, Conferences, and Service

Print and Digital Publications:

- “A Comparative Analysis of DStretch© and Alternative Image Enhancement Techniques for Identifying Tattoos in Archaeological Contexts.” *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*, 61, article 104984 (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- “Laser Imaging of Ancient Tattoos: New Tools Illuminate Established Knowledge.” *PNAS* 122 (13) e2501049122 (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- “New High-Resolution Near-Infrared Data Reveal Pazyryk Tattooing Methods.” *Antiquity* 10.15184/aqy.2025.10150 (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- “Timely Response to Critical Need: A Review of the Intensive NAGPRA Summer Training & Education Program.” Museum Anthropology Blog, Council for Museum Anthropology. (Macie Orrand, co-author)
- “Portable X-Ray Fluorescence Analysis of Rock Art Paintings in Southern Illinois.” *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology* 50 (2): 89–122 (Sierra Bow)
- “In Memoriam: Kevin E. Smith, PhD,” professional obituary for Dr. Kevin E. Smith, published in *Horizon & Tradition, The Newsletter of the Southeastern Archaeological Conference*. Volume 57, Number 1, April 2025 (Phil Hodge and Michael C. Moore, current and retired State Archaeologist, respectively)
- “Field Notes from the Tennessee Division of Archaeology,” Day 29 in the Tennessee Council for Professional Archaeology’s *30 Days of Tennessee Archaeology BlogFest* (Phil Hodge)
- “At the Confluence of Rivers and History: Archaeology of Fort Southwest Point,” *The Tennessee Conservationist*, Nov/Dec 2025 issue (Phil Hodge)

Presentations, Panels, Posters, & Interviews:

- “Preliminary Testing CCC Camp Dunbar in Pickwick Landing State Park,” Current Research in Tennessee Archaeology conference (Benjamin Nance)
- “A Summary of Impacts to Cultural Resources from Hurricane Helene in Northeast Tennessee,” Current Research in Tennessee Archaeology (Sierra Bow, co-author)
- “From Last Look to New State Park: The Archaeology and Preservation of Cardwell Mountain,” Current Research in Tennessee Archaeology (Phil Hodge)
- “Fifty Years of Historical Archaeological Site Survey,” Society for Historical Archaeology 2025 Conference, New Orleans (Benjamin Nance and Jennifer Barnett)
- “Integrating Digital Mapping and Mobile GIS Tools into Archaeological Resource Management at Sellars Farm State Archaeological Area, Tennessee,” Southeastern Archaeological Conference, Baton Rouge (Hannah Guidry and Paige Silcox)
- “Archaeology in the Aftermath: Cultural Resource Impacts and Public Outreach Following Hurricane Helene at Davy Crockett Birthplace State Park,” Southeastern Archaeological Conference, Baton Rouge, LA (Sierra Bow)

- “Tennessee Division of Archaeology’s Use of GIS in Archaeological Resource Management,” Information Technology Professional Association’s November 2025 Meeting (Paige Silcox)
- “Using Esri Field Maps in Archaeological Resource Management,” TDEC GIS Day Celebration 2025 (Paige Silcox)
- “Demystifying NAGPRA”, Tennessee Association of Museums Conference, Plenary keynote panel, Knoxville, Tennessee (Macie Orrand)
- “Getting Started with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA),” Tennessee Association of Museums, Workshop, Knoxville, Tennessee (Macie Orrand)
- “Forum: Four Decades of NAGPRA Part 3: Where it all began: Celebrating Six Years of North American NAGPRA Communities of Practice,” Society for American Archaeology, (Macie Orrand)
- “Careers Outside Academia,” University of Tennessee Visiting Lecturer Series, Panelist (Sierra Bow)
- “New Discoveries in Tattoo Archaeology,” Invited keynote address, 7th World Congress on Tattoo and Pigment Research, Rome (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- “An Archaeologist and A Tattoo Artist Decipher Ancient Ink,” NPR’s Science Friday (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- “How scientists are cracking the secrets of the world’s oldest tattoos,” National Geographic (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- “The Material Culture of Pre-Columbian Andean Tattooing,” 11th World Congress on Mummy Studies (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- “Tattooed Mallqui: Ancient Practices and Global Patterns,” 11th World Congress on Mummy Studies (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- “Tattooing on the Coast of Prehispanic Peru: A Millennial Tradition,” 11th World Congress on Mummy Studies (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- “Archaeological Survey of the Montgomery Bell CCC Camp,” TDEC State Parks Resource Management Lecture Series (Daniel Brock)
- “The Archaeology of the Brentwood Library Site,” Leadership Brentwood. (Phil Hodge)
- “Current Projects of the Tennessee Division of Archaeology,” PEO (Phil Hodge)
- “The Archaeology of East Fork of Stones River,” Cannon County Historical Association (Phil Hodge)
- “Navigating Critical Conversations from a Place of Trust,” Bureau of Conservation Leadership and Management Meeting, Tennessee State Library and Archives (Phil Hodge)

Archaeology Outreach and Education:

- Tennessee Council for Professional Archaeology’s Archaeology Day at Bells Bend (event planned by Hannah Guidry and Paige Silcox, activity table by Ben Nance, and mock excavation by Sierra Bow and AnnaLevi Chavis)

- Visit to speak with a middle school robotics team at South Doyle High School about site protection and looting prevention (AnnaLevi Chavis)
- McClung Museum's Can You Dig It? Public archaeology event at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (Hannah Guidry)
- Archaeology programs for college classes at University of South Dakota, Western Carolina University, and University of Missouri (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- White Plains, Algood Middle School (Macie, Hannah, and Sierra)
- WilCo Pow Wow (Macie Orrand and Phil Hodge)
- Red Clay State Historic Park's Cherokee Cultural Celebration (Macie and Phil)
- Curation Class, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, Invited Guest Speaker (Macie)
- Crockett Days, David Crockett Birthplace State Park (Sierra Bow and Ben Nance)
- Fall Creek Falls Cave-In (Sierra Bow)
- Tennessee State Parks Seasonal Interpretive Ranger (SIR) III Training (Sierra Bow)
- Cordell Hull State Park, Pioneer Days (Sierra Bow)
- FIRST LEGO League, Knoxville group (Sierra Bow)
- Archaeology of Religion, Troy University, Invited Guest Speaker (Sierra Bow)

Conferences, Workshops, and Development:

- Society for Historical Archaeology Conference, New Orleans, LA (Jennifer Barnett, Ben Nance)
- American Association for State and Local History, Cookeville, TN (Ben Nance)
- Southeastern Archaeological Conference Baton Rouge, LA (Hannah Guidry, Paige Silcox, Sierra Bow)
- Southeastern Archaeological Conference, Symposium Co-organizer (Sierra Bow)
- Tennessee Geographic Council Middle Tennessee Forum (Paige Silcox and Satin Platt)
- ESRI Training: Spatial Analysis with ArcGIS Pro (Paige Silcox), Field Data Collection and Management (Paige Silcox, Hannah Guidry, Sierra Bow)
- Tennessee Association of Museums Conference, Knoxville, TN (Macie Orrand)
- Society of American Archaeology, Denver, CO (Macie Orrand and AnnaLevi Chavis)
- 10th Annual Repatriation Conference: Igniting Change (Association on American Indian Affairs AAIA), Marksville, LA hosted by the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe (Macie Orrand)
- Society for American Archaeology Online Seminars, *A Practical Guide for Prioritizing Archaeological Collections, Metal Detecting Applications in Archaeology, Ground Penetrating Radar Applications to Archaeology, Cemetery Site Protections and Cultural Resource Management: A View from Louisiana and Implications for the Rest of the United States* (various staff)
- Wildland Fire Refresher Training and arduous pack test (Sierra Bow)
- Southeastern Grasslands Institute webinar, *Incorporating Indigenous Knowledge into Conservation and Restoration* (Sierra Bow)
- Association for Fire Ecologists: International Fire Ecology and Management Congress (Sierra Bow)
- Wilderness First Aid Training (all staff)

Committees and Service:

- Tennessee Council for Professional Archaeology Board Secretary, Events Committee member (Paige Silcox)
- Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area Advisory Board (Ben Nance)
- Community of Practice for Southeastern Curation Care, Organizer (Macie Orrand)
- Southeastern NAGPRA Community of Practice (SNACP), Speaker Liaison – Speaker Committee (Macie Orrand)
- Tennessee Council for Professional Archaeology Board Treasurer, Events Committee Member, Research Award Committee (Hannah Guidry)
- Tennessee Commission on Geographic Names, Commission Member (Jennifer Barnett)
- Adjunct Faculty, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Dissertation and Thesis Committee Member (Sierra Bow)
- EXARC Experimental Archaeology Award committee (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- Provided peer reviews for professional journals *American Antiquity*, *the Journal of Heritage Science*, and *Women's History Review* (Aaron Deter-Wolf)
- TDEC Data Governance Council (Paige Silcox)
- TDEC Caves & Karsts Steering Committee (Phil Hodge and Sierra Bow)
- Wilson County Black History Committee Pickett Chapel restoration, Archaeological Advisor (Phil Hodge)
- Commissioner, Archives and History Commission, Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference of the United Methodist Church, and Curator of the Asbury-Babb House (#72), a site listed on the Register of United Methodist Historic Sites (Phil Hodge)
- Middle Tennessee State University, Friends of Liberal Arts Advisory Board Member (Phil Hodge)
- National Association of State Archaeologists, Vice-President (Phil Hodge)
- Graduate Faculty, Middle Tennessee State University's Public Historic Program, doctoral dissertation committee member for Jared Bryson (Phil Hodge)

Appendix A: Transfer of Jurisdiction for Pinson Mounds



Department of
General Services

Real Estate Asset
Management (STREAM)

July 10, 2025

The Honorable Bill Lee
Governor of State of Tennessee
State Capitol, Nashville, TN 37219

RE: Transfer of Jurisdiction
To: The Tennessee Department of Environment
From: The Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry
Transaction Number: 25-03-018

Dear Governor Lee,

Pursuant to an agreement between the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry, and the Tennessee Department of Environment, certain real property located in Madison County, Tennessee, being a portion of Map 145 Parcel 016.00 on the maps of the Assessor of Madison County, Tennessee, should be transferred from the jurisdiction of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry to the jurisdiction of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation with consideration exchanged in the amount of \$0.00. The foregoing real property is more particularly depicted on Exhibit A attached hereto and made a part hereof.

If this transfer meets with your approval, please so indicate by affixing your signature at the designated place below.

Charlie Hatcher, Commissioner
Tennessee Department of
Agriculture, Division of Forestry

David Salyers, Commissioner
Tennessee Department of
Environment

Pursuant to T.C.A. § 12-2-112, Tennessee Code Annotated, I hereby approve this transfer.

Jeff Holmes, Interim Commissioner
Tennessee Department of General Services

Approved and jurisdiction hereby transferred from the Tennessee Department of General Services to the Tennessee Department of Children's Services this the 26th day of ~~July~~, 2025. August

Bill Lee, Governor

LAND TRANSACTION CORRESPONDENCE CHECKLIST
TR# 25-03-018 - Transfer of Jurisdiction – (Pinson Mounds Tract) DoA to TDEC

To: Jeffery H. Holmes, Interim Commissioner, Dept. of General Services
Bill Lee, Governor

From: Jenna McDermott, Real Estate Asset Management, 22nd Floor, Tennessee Tower

TRANSACTION TYPE AND SUMMARY

TR# 25-03-018: By agreement of the Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry, these properties located at Pinson Mounds State Forest will now be under the jurisdiction and management of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.

ACTION REQUESTED

Pursuant to T.C.A. §12-2-112, STREAM requests the approval and signature of the Interim Commissioner of the Department of General Services and the Governor.

REQUIREMENTS

T.C.A. §§ 12-2-112, 115 (if requirement met, please check box; if n/a, please explain exception)
Advertisement: N/A

Sale price equal to appraised value (attach copy of appraisal page indicating value): N/A

Attorney General Approval Required (attach preapproval): N/A

SBC Approval (attach minutes): N/A

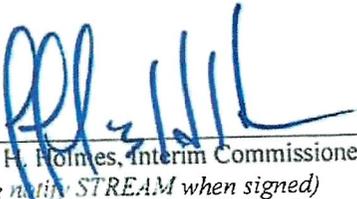
CERTIFICATIONS

I have reviewed the enclosed instrument and supporting documents and recommend approval of same. I certify that the documentation I have reviewed indicates that the applicable provisions of the law have been complied with in the negotiation and execution of this instrument.

STREAM LEGAL: Elizabeth R. Peters Digitally signed by Elizabeth R. Peters
Date: 2025.08.11 13:39:57 -05'00'

Date

APPROVED


Jeffrey H. Holmes, Interim Commissioner, Department of General Services
(Please notify STREAM when signed)

8.18.25

Date

Date delivered to Governor's office: _____
(Please notify STREAM when signed)

Appendix B: NAGPRA Notices Published in the Federal Register, CY 2025

Notices of Inventory Completion

Document Number	Published Date	MNI	AFOs/Lots
2025-01004	1/16/2025	13	6
2025-04635	3/19/2025	2	2
2025-10025	6/3/2025	5	15
2025-10023	6/3/2025	2	1
2025-10014	6/3/2025	2	2
2025-10015	6/3/2025	2	0
2025-10013	6/3/2025	7	15
2025-14268	7/29/2025	4	3
2025-14269	7/29/2025	8	1
2025-14270	7/29/2025	2	0
2025-14271	7/29/2025	7	2
2025-14275	7/29/2025	15	12
2025-15398	8/14/2025	80	16
2025-17880	9/16/2025	60	1
2025-19956	11/17/2025	23	360
2025-19955	11/17/2025	238	499
2025-14267, w/MTSU	7/29/2025	7	2
2025-15856, w/UTK	8/20/2025	23	48
2025-15855, w/UTK	8/20/2025	5	4
2025-17881, w/MSU	9/16/2025	17	25

Notices of Intent to Repatriate

Document Number	Published Date	UFOs/Lots
2025-10026	6/3/2025	1
2025-10017	6/3/2025	22
2025-14272	7/29/2025	1
2025-14273	7/29/2025	1
2025-14274	7/29/2025	12
2025-17879	9/16/2025	6
2025-19956	11/17/2025	13
2025-15857, w/UTK	8/20/2025	2