

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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# THE STEWARDS HANDBOOK

Texas Archeological Stewardship Network

Archeology Division

Texas Historical Commission

Austin, Texas

2009 (amended 2011)



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

*real places telling real stories*

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[www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)

# Contact Us

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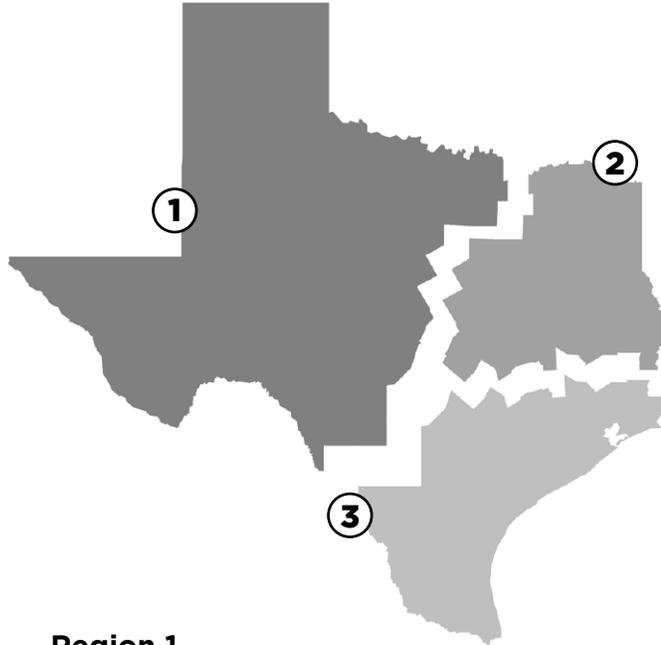
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# Introduction

**THE STATE OF TEXAS** probably contains more than a million archeological sites, left behind by at least 12,000 years of human occupation. Nearly 95 percent of this period stretches beyond the scope of written history. Everything we know about the prehistoric peoples who occupied the plains, canyons and deserts that now comprise the state of Texas is derived from the material remains left behind—the archeological record—and from our own careful and imaginative interpretation of those remains.

Archeology is concerned not only with prehistory, though. Most of our state's historic events—everything from pivotal battles to the building of a simple wattle and daub *jacal* a hundred years ago—have also left behind material clues to the past. Through study of that material record we can verify or question historical accounts. Material remains also provide us with the opportunity to gain new information not included in written histories. Thus, the study of archeology and the protection of archeological sites are in the interest of all people who call themselves *Texans*, a name that is itself derived from the prehistoric past and one of our state's great native peoples, the Caddo.

The archeological record is a laboratory in which we discover and understand the past, and as laboratories go, the one called Texas is huge, covering 268,581 square miles of land and water that is divided into 254 counties. Responsibility for a public archeology program dedicated to understanding, preserving and interpreting this vast archeological landscape falls largely to the Texas Historical Commission (THC). The THC is a small state agency, with just over 100 staff members based in Austin, including about 12 archeologists.

Working alongside the THC staff, members of the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network (TASN) serve a critical role in bringing public archeology to life in their own communities. Founded in 1984, the TASN is a program of the THC's Archeology Division. The "stewards," as they are known, are selected volunteers whose efforts in preservation, education and research have become an essential part of the THC's statewide archeological program. The TASN is one of the most innovative and successful programs of its kind in the nation and has served as a model for similar organizations in other states.

This handbook provides a summary of and guidelines for the TASN program.

## Mission

The TASN seeks to preserve, educate and contribute to our knowledge of Texas' archeological heritage. The network consists of a select group of experienced and capable avocational archeologists who work on a strictly volunteer basis to assist the THC to achieve these goals.

## TASN Purpose and Activities

“Okay,” you might be asking, “let’s get to the good stuff—what is expected of me, and what can I do as a steward?” In reality there is no “typical” steward. Each steward brings his or her own talents and experiences to the network, creating a broad-based program that encompasses a range of activities. The following are examples of some of the activities stewards engage in. Not all stewards do *all* the activities listed here in a given year, but most do at least a few of them. These are all equally important activities that contribute to

the understanding, preservation and interpretation of Texas' archeological heritage. THC archeologists (including regional archeologists, state archeologist and state marine archeologist) are available to assist you with any questions or issues that arise during the course of your TASN activities. Contact information is provided on the inside front cover of this handbook.

### **Record New Sites**

With permission (preferably in writing) of the landowner, record any sites that become known to you. Use the restricted-access Texas Historic Sites Atlas (TexSite database) to record site data and have the data included in the state inventory of archeological sites. What? You've never recorded a site before? Don't worry! It's not hard to do, and our staff will work with you as you learn the ropes. Besides being an important service, site recording is fun and provides an opportunity to get outdoors and see the country.

### **Monitor Known Sites**

Monitor recorded sites in your region, especially State Archeological Landmarks (SAL), National Register sites and sites on public lands that are protected by law. Report any observed disturbance or threats of disturbance to the THC staff, and we'll work together to deal with the problem.

### **Seek Protective Designations and Easements for Important Sites**

Work with the THC staff to secure protective designations—such as SALs or National Register of Historic Places listings. Your regional archeologist is available to consult about sites you plan to nominate for SAL or National Register listing. Compile an inventory of sites in your region that you believe are particularly significant and worthy of protection, and then conduct any necessary site recording and research in support of your nominations. Submit your preliminary nominations to your regional archeologist for evaluation and further action. Conservation easements offer potential tax benefits to landowners who wish to protect archeological sites. Information on protective designations and conservation easements is available on the THC web site ([www.thc.state.tx.us](http://www.thc.state.tx.us)).

### **Record Private Collections**

With written permission of the owner, record private artifact collections that become known to you. Acquire as much provenience data as possible, document details about the artifacts and photograph all collections that you record. Submit information and images to the THC so that others can use these records for their own research. Encourage the donation of significant private collections to certified archeological repositories or museums. A listing of certified archeological repositories is available from the Archeology Division.

### **Carry Out Emergency or “Salvage” Archeology**

In some cases, emergency recovery of data may be undertaken from sites threatened with imminent destruction. *Before undertaking any emergency recovery, a steward must consult with the THC.* Do not violate state or federal laws or act without written permission of the landowner in undertaking salvage archeology. Consult with your regional archeologist to develop an overall plan for the salvage project, including developing a research design and determining who will be involved with analysis, write-up of the investigation's results, and disposition of artifacts and records. Examples of permission documents are available from the THC.

### **Form an “Action Team”**

Stewards form "action teams" of two or more non-TASN volunteers who can help with emergency salvage work or any other projects stewards undertake. While not a requirement, action teams can be valuable aids in situations requiring rapid response, and over time they bring additional experienced volunteers into the TASN program.

## **Educate the Public**

Join a local or regional archeological society and promote archeological preservation and education. Seek appointment to your county historical commission. Give talks to county historical commissions, local preservation groups, schools and civic groups. If you prefer not to give presentations, attend meetings and support preservation activities. Visit museums in your region that display archeological collections or that have related interpretive exhibits, and check the accuracy and effectiveness of exhibits. Participate in or plan activities for Texas Archeology Month, held every October.

## **Mentor and Motivate Youth**

From time to time, interested youth contact the THC Archeology Division looking for opportunities to learn about archeology. Parents and teachers might contact you directly if you give public presentations. With your permission, we will refer young people (in the fourth grade and higher) from your area to you. You may choose to serve as their “mentor” and include them on your action team for a specific project or period of time. You could also direct them to local learning opportunities offered by an archeological society. If a more formal program is desired, we can provide you with a copy of the “Texas Archeology in the Classroom” teacher’s unit, which contains activity ideas. We strongly encourage parental participation in all activities whenever possible. *It is important to understand that these young people are not official members of the TASN and that they should not present themselves as stewards.*

## **Assist in Cultural Resource Projects**

Share your knowledge of sites in the area with archeologists carrying out state or federally mandated cultural resource projects. These archeologists are encouraged to contact stewards in order to gain a fuller understanding of the local archeological record.

## **Contribute to THC Publications**

Submit articles, news items or accounts of your activities for inclusion in the Archeology Division’s newsletter, *Current Archeology in Texas*, and the TASN journal, *the Steward*.

## **Complete and Submit Semiannual Reports**

Summarize your projects on the Semiannual Report of Activities forms that are sent to stewards twice each year. It is important that these forms be submitted to the Archeology Division by the stated deadline. These forms are important sources of information about the accomplishments of the TASN program. Data gleaned from these forms are reported to the Legislative Budget Board. This information is then available to the Texas Legislature and the public.

# **TASN Rules**

The following rules have been established to help guide your activities as a steward. Adherence to the rules and policies of the THC is also required. Violation of any of these rules and policies may form the basis for the termination of an individual’s participation in the TASN program.

## **Avocational Status**

The TASN is an *avocational* program of the THC. Because of the recognized knowledge and capabilities of the members of the TASN, stewards may be offered the opportunity to participate in archeological projects for pay. When do such opportunities conflict with a steward’s avocational status? If, during a given year, a steward accepts

such employment and the work is expected to last more than three consecutive months (including part-time equivalent), they should inform the Archeology Division in writing. Upon receipt of such a notice, the steward will be placed on “inactive status” for the duration of his or her employment. Once the employment is terminated, the steward’s status in the TASN is reactivated. See also the related “Conflicts of Interest” section below.

### **Compliance with Preservation Laws**

In the course of their duties, stewards will comply with all pertinent federal, state and local preservation laws and regulations. In any activity not regulated by law, stewards will be guided by *The Stewards Handbook* and associated materials.

### **Confidentiality of Information and Landowner Rights**

In actively pursuing the identification and protection of sites on private lands, stewards will respect the personal, property and privacy rights of landowners. Site location information, whether on public or private land, will be held in confidence by stewards, and all such information gained through the stewardship program will be added to the state archeological site inventory pending private landowner approval. This includes entry into the official archive of the University of Texas (UT) at Austin’s Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL) via the Texas Historic Sites Atlas online database.

### **Private Collections**

Under no circumstances will stewards retain in their permanent, private possession artifacts recovered by them or given to them during the term of their stewardship. This rule pertains to historic or prehistoric artifacts or collections from Texas, all other U.S. states and all other nations. TASN members may temporarily retain artifacts for processing and/or analysis; however, upon request of the State Archeologist, or the State Marine Archeologist for the Marine Group, stewards will surrender all such collections to the THC or to an archeological repository or museum acceptable to the THC.

### **Recovering Artifacts from Investigated or Monitored Sites**

When investigating or monitoring archeological sites on private land, stewards will not collect archeological materials unless the site being investigated is under imminent threat of development, looting or some other damaging factor. If recovery has or will occur as part of a TASN-related project, contact your regional archeologist to work out a plan for treatment and permanent storage of the materials. Under no circumstances will stewards recover archeological materials of any kind from public property.

### **Treatment of Human Remains and Other Sensitive Materials**

The presence or discovery of a cemetery or human grave is subject to the provisions of Chapter 711 of the Health & Safety Code of Texas. Stewards will handle human skeletal remains, mortuary artifacts and other related sensitive materials only under the direction of THC staff in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 711 of the Health & Safety Code, pertinent sections of the Penal Code [28.03 (f), 31.03 (e) (4) (B), and 42.08], and the rules of the THC (Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Cultural Resources, Part 2, Texas Historical Commission, Chapter 25).

### **Handling Publicity**

As a means of protecting landowners’ rights and restricting access to archeological site data, news releases or other news media publicity concerning sites, collections or stewardship activities will not be issued without the consent of any involved private landowners and authorization by the State Archeologist or the State Marine Archeologist for the Marine Group stewards. With the consent of involved private landowner(s), talks and lectures do not require Archeology Division authorization.

## Conflicts of Interest

Stewards will not engage in activities or accept positions that represent conflicts of interest with the TASN program or the mission of the THC. Stewards will not provide any information to individuals, firms or clients that would in any way influence the selection of an archeological consultant or consulting firm. Stewards will not recommend a specific cultural resource management (CRM) consulting firm to individuals, firms or clients. As the TASN is designed to be an avocational program, stewards may not serve as principal investigators or project archeologists on CRM projects, nor may they be owners or partial owners of CRM consulting firms. If a steward has doubts or questions about what constitutes a conflict of interest, he or she should contact the Archeology Division for clarification.

## Keeping Records

As is the case with professional archeologists, stewards should keep complete records of their activities. Good records are essential to sound archeological research. They also form the basis for reports on your work to the Archeology Division and the publication of the results of investigations. Include the following in your records:

### 1. Personal Journal (Required)

Keep a permanent notebook of your TASN activities, including public talks; local work with a county historical commission, heritage society or archeological society; site monitoring or recording; report writing; collection analysis; landowner assistance; or anything else related to your work as a steward. Record the amount of time you spent, activities involved, whom you talked to, mileage expended, etc.

### 2. Site Records (Required)

When recording sites, TexSite software must be used. Photographs with photo logs, maps, field notes and other related information also are part of the site records. Site reports should be submitted to the official state repository at UT Austin's TARL. Contact your regional archeologist if you require assistance with this process. Also, don't forget to keep notes about your archeological investigations in your personal journal.

### 3. Semiannual Report of Activities (Required)

Twice each year, the THC sends TASN members a short form asking about the activities performed over a six-month period. This information is compiled by the THC and provided to the Legislative Budget Board, the Texas Legislature and the general public. *It is imperative that stewards complete this report in a timely manner.* It doesn't take long, but it is very important to the TASN program. Simply fill this form out as completely as possible and return it to the THC by email or mail, *even if there has been a period of relative inactivity.* The data reported on these forms serve as the basis for recognizing exemplary service. Alternatively, the lack of reporting may be grounds for dismissal from the TASN program.

### 4. Informal Reports (Optional)

In addition to the required Semiannual Report of Activities, both formal and informal reports can be made to the THC at any time concerning major projects or activities. All records relating to sites and collections should be submitted to the THC.

# **TASN Procedures**

## **TASN Advisory Committee**

Representatives of the professional and avocational archeological communities serve as advisors for the TASN program. This advisory committee consists of the current presidents of the Texas Archeological Society (TAS) and Council of Texas Archeologists, two state agency representatives, two senior members of the TASN and two professional archeologists who work extensively with avocational archeologists in Texas. The main purpose of this committee is to assist the Archeology Division with the review and selection of stewards. Advisors also may be called upon to consult with staff on policies and other matters relating to the TASN program.

## **Selection of Stewards**

TASN members, the TASN Advisory Committee, THC staff and members of the Texas archeological community may nominate candidates for stewardship positions. Individuals may also nominate themselves. It is preferred that all nominations be submitted on the standard TASN nomination form, available in this booklet, on the THC web site ([www.thc.state.tx.us/stewards/stwnominate.shtml](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/stewards/stwnominate.shtml)) or upon request from the Archeology Division. Nominees must be avocational archeologists. The TASN Advisory Committee and THC staff archeologists review nominations. The State Archeologist, or the State Marine Archeologist when considering marine stewards, will make final decisions concerning appointment of stewards in consultation with the Archeology Division Director. Each steward will be appointed for a four-year term. Each term begins on January 1 of the year in which the steward is appointed and concludes on December 31 of the fourth year. A membership cap may be imposed at the discretion of the Archeology Division.

## **Termination of Stewardship**

A stewardship term will be for a period of four years. At the end of that four-year period the steward may request reappointment, or the State Archeologist or State Marine Archeologist may request that the steward accept reappointment. Verification of reappointment must be in written form and signed by the State Archeologist or State Marine Archeologist. A steward who wishes to resign before completion of his or her term will notify the State Archeologist or State Marine Archeologist in writing. Termination other than that resulting from resignation or end of an appointment shall be the responsibility of the State Archeologist or State Marine Archeologist, in consultation with the Archeology Division Director. Noncompliance with THC rules and policies, including the rules and procedures of the TASN as stated in this handbook, form the basis for termination from the program. The lack of two or more consecutive semiannual reports (or other forms of communication) may also be grounds for termination.

Upon termination of stewardship, each steward will transfer to the THC all records and documents pertaining to the steward's program activities. Artifact collections will be transferred to the THC or to an archeological repository or museum acceptable to the State Archeologist or the State Marine Archeologist.

## **Supplies and Services Provided by the THC**

Given availability of funds, the THC will supply the following items to TASN members without charge:

### **1. Printed Public Outreach Materials**

A range of printed brochures, posters and leaflets on archeology is available from the THC for distribution. Our inventory is constantly changing as new materials are produced and old ones are modified, updated or eliminated. Texas Archeology Month materials are produced annually and are available to stewards while supplies last. Contact the Archeology Division to obtain public outreach materials.

## **2. Other Supplies Available from the Archeology Division**

- USGS maps (“Quad Sheets”)
- TexSite software (for PCs only)
- Notebooks for Stewardship Journals

## **3. Texas Historic Sites Atlas restricted information access**

### **4. Training**

Training is offered to TASN members at the annual workshop, typically held in Austin during the late summer. The training offered is designed to expand steward capabilities and thus enhance the overall program. Stewards themselves offer suggestions for this training. Additional training opportunities may also be offered by regional archeologists.

### **Liability**

Do not put yourself, your property or the property of others at risk; neither the THC nor the TASN Advisory Committee is liable for any damages you may incur. You are strongly encouraged to acquire personal liability insurance. Do not confront persons who are vandalizing sites or collecting artifacts. While the THC encourages stewards to gather information about site vandalism in their areas, it is not the intent of the THC or the TASN Advisory Committee to place stewards in confrontational or dangerous situations with vandals or artifact collectors.

### **Meetings**

The THC will direct arrangements for all TASN meetings. Two TASN meetings are held annually: a summer workshop and a fall business meeting held in conjunction with the TAS annual meeting (typically in late October). The State Archeologist or State Marine Archeologist may call additional meetings as necessary to address specific topics or problems.

The State Archeologist and/or State Marine Archeologist will call meetings of the TASN Advisory Committee as needed.

## **A Note of Thanks**

The Texas Historical Commission would like to thank Tom Middlebrook, M.D., whose generous donation to the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network was used to pay for the printing of this handbook. Dr. Middlebrook, who serves on the TASN Advisory Committee, has been a member of the TASN since 1990.

*Thank you for supporting our work.*

# Texas Archeological Stewardship Network

## Code of Ethics

### Statement of Adoption for Archeological Stewards

I, the undersigned, recognize that the archeological record is an irreplaceable, nonrenewable resource for understanding the history and prehistory of Texas. As a steward, I will promote the careful management and scientific study of archeological sites and materials as a matter of public benefit and public trust. As a steward, I will work with the Texas Historical Commission to advance the goals set out in *The Stewards Handbook*. I will adhere to the rules and policies of the Texas Historical Commission. I have read and will abide by the methods, goals and procedures set out in this handbook as my Code of Ethics.

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Nominee

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Date

I accept this Nominee into the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network.

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Patricia Mercado-Allinger  
Texas State Archeologist

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Date



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# Texas Archeological Stewardship Network

## Code of Ethics

### Statement of Adoption for Archeological Stewards, Marine Group

I, the undersigned, recognize that the archeological record is an irreplaceable, nonrenewable resource for understanding the history and prehistory of Texas. As a steward, I will promote the careful management and scientific study of archeological sites and materials as a matter of public benefit and public trust. As a steward, I will work with the Texas Historical Commission to advance the goals set out in *The Stewards Handbook*. I will adhere to the rules and policies of the Texas Historical Commission. I have read and will abide by the methods, goals and procedures set out in this handbook as my Code of Ethics.

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Nominee

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Date

I accept this Nominee into the Texas Archeological Stewardship Network.

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Amy Borgens  
Texas State Marine Archeologist

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Date



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