

Successes **in** Stewardship

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Maryland State Highway Administration Supports Stewardship Through Archaeology

State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) can play an important role in preserving historic structures and archaeological sites. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) is one such State DOT that has bolstered its Cultural Resources Section over the last five years to direct and participate in archaeological excavations and associated public outreach that celebrates the State's history and heritage.

The mission of the Cultural Resources Section is to advocate for the State's historic resources, facilitate the construction and maintenance of highway infrastructure, and share the State's heritage with its residents. Eight of the Section's archaeologists and architectural historians advise

SHA's transportation project teams on ways to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts on cultural resources. While Federal laws set minimum requirements for the management of archaeological sites and historic structures (see sidebar), the Section exceeds these basic

requirements through extensive programming in archaeology and historic preservation. The Section includes a Public Outreach Program, a Historic Bridge Program, and a Native American Consultation Program.



SHA archaeologists and others excavate trenches at the Indian Queen Tavern site in Bladensburg. (Courtesy of SHA)

Regulations for Cultural Resources

- [Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act](#) (NHPA)
- [Section 4\(f\)](#) of the DOT Act of 1966
- [Transportation Enhancement \(TE\) activities](#) funded through SAFETEA-LU include archaeological planning and research and historic preservation.

Archaeology and Highway Planning

Archaeological planning and research is one of 12 categories eligible for Federal Transportation Enhancement (TE) project funds, which reimburse up to 80 percent of eligible project costs. According to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), archaeological planning and research projects eligible for TE funds must be related to surface transportation and must benefit the public through the provision of public access and use.

SHA archaeologists generally conduct research and excavations on properties that it owns within or near highway right of ways. Projects funded by the TE program need not be adjacent to highways; many SHA projects are

eligible due to their contribution to public knowledge about historic transportation systems. For example, several excavations examine the purpose and roles of historic buildings and artifacts. Through the study of these places and objects, researchers can understand how a site and its inhabitants evolved over time and how these populations designed transportation systems to meet the needs and constraints of daily life.

Archaeological Activities

The Cultural Resources Section participates in a range of programs related to archaeological research and historic preservation. A primary responsibility of the Section is to identify and consider the impacts of road construction on archaeological sites and historic standing structures. Section activities also include researching and excavating historic homes along roadsides and moving and preserving stone mile-markers along parts of the Historic National Road, such as the McMullen Highway (US 220). More recently, the Section has participated in several innovative archaeological projects in preparation for [the War of 1812 Bicentennial](#), described below.

- **Excavation of a War of 1812 Shipwreck**

SHA is working with the U.S. Navy and the Maryland Historical Trust on an underwater archaeology project to search for the USS *Scorpion*, an important flagship in the War of 1812. The ship's remnants can be found in the Patuxent River. The findings from the surveys and excavations will contribute to public educational resources for the [Star-Spangled Historic Trail and Byway](#); resources will include promotional literature, a website, wayside signage, and publications associated with the War of 1812. The excavation is financed primarily by TE funds, the U.S. Navy, and the Maryland Historical Trust.



Excavation of a shipwreck that may be the USS *Scorpion* is staged from a barge on the Patuxent River. (Courtesy of SHA)

As documented on the [Search for the USS Scorpion blog](#), archaeologists excavated sediment and

examined artifacts from one shipwreck site in July and August 2010. The team plans to finish the survey of the first site in 2011 and then examine an adjacent wreck site. In 2012, the team will conduct outreach, installing a cofferdam and a public viewing platform. The excavation and display of artifacts from the site is expected to help increase tourism to Maryland during the War of 1812 Bicentennial celebration.

- **Research and Excavations in Bladensburg**

The Cultural Resources Section is examining the historical transportation landscape of Bladensburg, specifically as it relates to the War of 1812. Archaeologists have partnered with the University of Maryland to excavate archaeological sites and parts of the Bladensburg battlefield along U.S. Highway 1. The purpose of the battlefield excavation is to identify artifacts from the battle and to help preserve parts of the battlefield. SHA will also provide signage at the battlefield and other wayside pulloffs along the [Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail](#) and the [Anacostia Trails Heritage Area](#).

SHA archaeologists also excavated the Indian Queen Tavern, a colonial and early-19th-century structure that played a role in the Battle of Bladensburg and is located along the proposed route of the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail. The excavation revealed an assemblage that included burnt corn cobs and artifacts spanning back to Native American occupation. Researchers hope to learn about the lives of the Swiss-German immigrants and the general evolution of the site over time. These excavations have been documented in the [Bladensburg Archeology Project](#) blog.

The SHA team completed the excavations in September 2010 with plans to launch a project website by early 2011 that showcases both the shipwreck survey and the results from the Bladensburg excavation. Artifacts and data uncovered from Bladensburg will also be incorporated into signage, pamphlets, and other educational resources as part of Maryland's War of 1812 Bicentennial celebration.

Outreach and Education

As the largest funder of archaeological research in the State, SHA has a wealth of information about Maryland's history, and the Cultural Resources Section works to share that information with residents. Residents are excited about their history and heritage, and they respond well to outreach related to archaeology projects in their communities. Section staff have increased their public outreach activities over the last three years to enhance the visibility of archaeological projects and to showcase Section activities as positive outcomes of federally funded programs.

The Section's Public Outreach Program is devoted to educational and outreach activities associated with specific archaeological projects. For example, multiyear archaeological research was completed at Connemara, a site with 18th- and 19th-century ruins located adjacent to the SHA District 4 Office in Bladensburg. Program staff had planned to construct a trail through the archaeological site and to create an environmental classroom with lessons about the natural environment and historic resources. Unfortunately, the trail construction has been placed on hold due to budget constraints.

For the Bladensburg excavations, SHA archaeologists partnered with University of Maryland professors and graduate students specializing in civic engagement. The team coordinated a public outreach campaign for the project, including public workshops that incorporated the interests and goals of the community into project research. The team also worked closely with local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as the Anacostia Watershed Society, which owns and maintains the George Washington House. The Bladensburg project included a pre-excavation workshop geared to the public and a blog documenting each stage of the excavations. The team also held two public archaeology days to allow the public to participate in the excavation.

Successes in Sharing History

To raise the profile of the Section's activities, SHA archaeologists have worked closely with managers and other decisionmakers in government agencies and NGOs. Section staff communicate with colleagues and partner agencies to educate them about the importance of archaeological research and historic preservation. On the basis of these peer-education efforts, the Section has received strong support from SHA management, allowing its expansion through new project initiatives and partnerships over the last four years. SHA Deputy Administrator Doug Simmons regularly tracks the Section's research and visits active excavation sites. SHA management has expressed appreciation for the positive visibility of archaeology projects, which generate good publicity for and public interest in the agency as a whole. The relationship between SHA management

and the Cultural Resources Section strikes a balance between moving construction projects forward and protecting historic resources.



SHA Deputy Administrator Doug Simmons removes a plate sherd from an excavation. (Courtesy of SHA)

Successful cultural resource programs cover oversight of highway projects for impacts to cultural resources, as required by Federal and State regulations, but also include stewardship and outreach initiatives to ensure that history lessons are shared with a public audience. Innovative archaeological research and other cultural resource projects allow transportation agencies to preserve local heritage, educate citizens, and foster mobility through traditional highway projects.

Contact Information

Dr. Julie Schablitsky

Chief Archaeologist, Cultural Resources Section
Maryland State Highway Administration
707 N. Calvert Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

JSchablitsky@sha.state.md.us

(410) 545-8870

Jeanette Mar

Environmental Program Manager
FHWA Delmar Division Office
10 S. Howard Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

jeanette.mar@dot.gov

(410) 779-7152

Look What's New!

- The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) launched a new website for its Every Day Counts (EDC) initiative, aimed at "shortening project delivery, enhancing the safety of our roadways, and protecting the environment." The website includes the first round of EDC initiatives for technology deployments and a Shortening Project Delivery Toolkit to improve highway projects delivery times. For more information, visit the [Every Day Counts Initiative](#) website.
- FHWA issued a new guidebook of case studies that demonstrate the implementation of livability principles in transportation planning, programming and project design. The *Livability in Transportation Guidebook* uses 15 case studies from State, regional, and local project sponsors. The *Guidebook* also includes chapters on relevant topics such as visioning, partnerships, and implementation and funding. A link to the *Guidebook* is available from the Center for Environmental Excellence [website](#).
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released an update to its Mobile Vehicle Emission Simulator model (MOVES2010), which incorporates updated fuel economy and greenhouse gas emission standards for cars and light trucks. For more information, visit the [MOVES website](#). EPA is conducting a series of training web-conference sessions on the MOVES2010 model, intended for State and local agency staff who will use the model for conformity analyses. Participants can register on the EPA MOVES [Training Sessions website](#).

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