

1. Avoid highway alignments that would degrade recreation resource areas;
2. When aesthetics and geometrics do not mix, occasionally give precedence to aesthetics; and
3. Consider what should be done to provide greater pleasure driving opportunities.

## historic and prehistoric values

Joan E. Freeman  
State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Interest in preserving historic and prehistoric sites has been increasing in recent years. That may be partially due to increased mobility of the population. More people visit restored historic sites throughout the country and become more interested in local history. Urban sprawl also increases concern for both the physical and cultural environment. People in urban areas are more vocal about destruction than those in rural areas simply because change is more rapid in the urban areas.

It is impossible to establish guidelines as to which sites need protection because personal views vary. Local people may be concerned about the destruction of Indian mounds, for they feel that the mounds are a local asset. A study of all mounds in the state may show that a particular mound group is not highly significant. However, both state and local views must be considered before changes are made in the land.

For environmental impact statements that must now be written for federal-aid highways, historic and prehistoric sites must be evaluated if they are in the path of a highway. Sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places have prime consideration because they have been declared to be of national, state, or local significance.

All states are working as fast as possible to list and evaluate sites for possible inclusion in the National Register. There are many types of historic sites ranging from houses that are still standing and Indian burial mounds to historic and prehistoric sites that have long since disappeared beneath the farmer's plow. As an archeologist I am more attuned to those sites that now appear as a corn field, a pasture, or fallow land. I feel that those nonvisible sites are more easily neglected than others. There are no written records by Indians as to the location of prehistoric sites and often few written records on historic sites that are now partially destroyed.

Archeologists are hesitant to evaluate sites. They can make a few statements about a prehistoric site from surface collections of pottery and arrowheads, but only full-scale excavation can tell the significance of a site. Because archeological excavation actually destroys a site, we archeologists are perhaps more concerned about destruction by other means than are most people.

Another problem is that archeologists do not know the location of every prehistoric site in a state. In Wisconsin we have records of site locations, but only an exhaustive field survey will reveal the location of every site. Last summer we initiated the first survey for prehistoric sites for evaluation for the National Register. In 5 weeks, about 55 miles along the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers in Crawford County were covered. About 70 burial mound groups and some 50 camp or village sites were located. Of these, 3 were felt to be of such significance as to be nominated for the National Register.

Although only 3 sites may be placed in the Register, there are many sites in the area that could be destroyed by construction. Archeologists are concerned about all sites because each site has a unique combination of artifacts that show the unique human activities that were carried on.

When there is highway construction and a site cannot be preserved we do have a backup plan in the highway salvage program, which makes it possible for data to be collected through excavation. Although the Federal-Aid Highway Acts of 1956 and 1966 provide for the highway salvage program, it has not been established by all states.

Those who are concerned with environmental impact statements should check at an early date in planning with agencies and people who are knowledgeable about the state's

history. Important sites can thus be preserved, and many last-minute objections can be avoided. In each state there is a state liaison office appointed under the National Historic Preservation Act. Usually the liaison officer has channels of communication already set up. Many states have a state archeologist or someone who serves a like function. In each state there is an archeologist who is a member of the Society for American Archeology's Committee for Public Understanding of Archeology. That society, the Society for Historic Archeology, or local historical societies can be contacted about sites. Public Archeology, a book by Charles R. McGimsey, III, has a summary of archeological programs in each state and summary of state and federal laws concerning protection of archeological sites.

Many agencies and many individuals may have to be contacted by those preparing an environmental impact statement in order to protect those aspects of our culture that people value. Highway planners must find out who the experts are in their states and contact them early in the planning of each highway.