

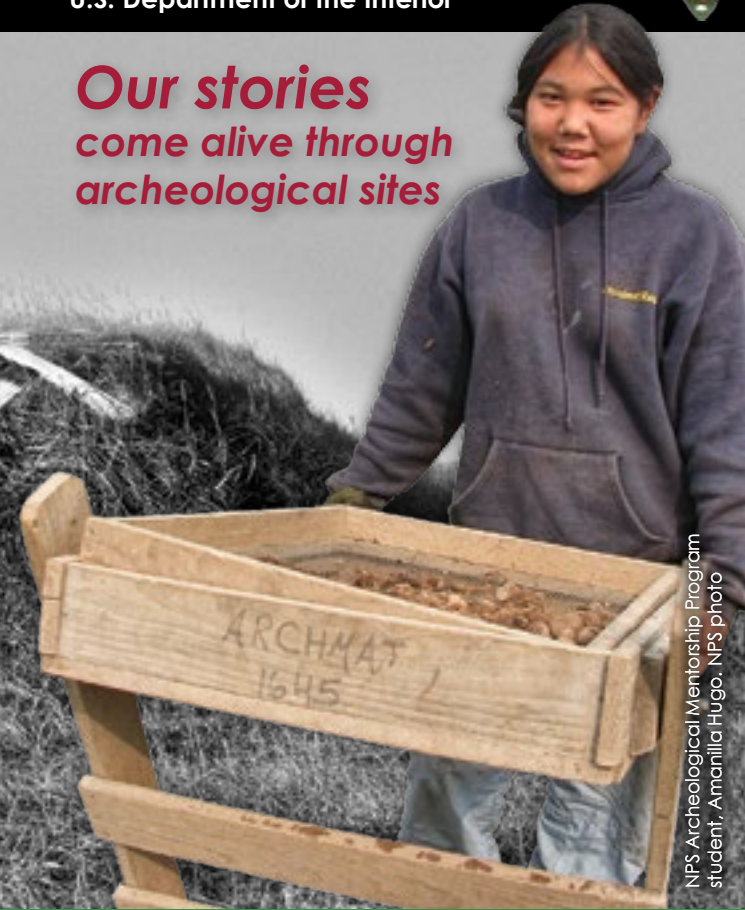


I am a proud protector of my heritage!

Taking artifacts from sites without scientifically documenting them is like ripping a page out a book. The story is lost forever.

- If you find a site, take a GPS point and photos
- Do not disturb any of the artifacts
- Tell an archeologist at: akr_rcr_archeology@nps.gov
- Ask about volunteer opportunities
- Report looting in an Alaska National Park to 1-800-478-2724

**Our stories
come alive through
archeological sites**



NPS Archeological Mentorship Program student, Amanilla Hugo. NPS photo

Background: Semi-subterranean houses at Ipiutak, NW Alaska, a National Historic Landmark. NPS photo



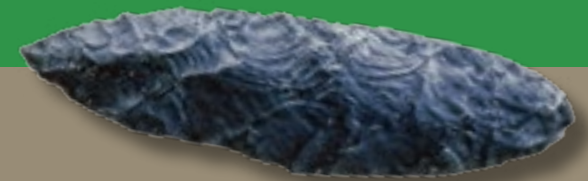
Left: Jeanne Schaaf, Archeologist. NPS photo



Above: Looters' diggings, NW Alaska. The artifacts removed from these depressions without archeological documentation have lost their place in the timeline of human activity. NPS photo

Archeological sites are a non-renewable resource. When sites are lost we lose the ability to pass that knowledge down to future generations. Some people may not understand the value these sites have to share with us. Looting sites on federal land is against the law. A person caught looting can serve up to five years of prison time and be fined up to \$250,000.

(Archaeological Resources Protection Act, National Historic Preservation Act, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and others)



Above: Stone blade from Tingmiukpuk, a site within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. Artifacts discovered by the National Park Service during archeological field work are available for future analysis. NPS photo

Imagine living in Alaska thousands of years ago. What do you think it would have been like?

**Help us preserve
Alaska's heritage!**

“Prehistoric sites are not some foreign and distant curiosity, they're part of a shared identity. We've been hunter-gatherers longer than we've been dependent on agriculture and industry. We need to remember that prehistoric sites are ancestral to all of us. Linguistic, cultural, and physical differences are very superficial and relatively recent in terms of human evolution. Archeological sites encompass the entire range of who we are, what we do, what we believe, and how we live.”

—Jeanne Schaaf

Location, Location, Location

Artifact is a word archeologists use to refer to an object that was made by humans. A stone tool is an example of an artifact. A feature is a representation of human activity in an area, but it cannot be moved. A tent ring is an example of a feature. Knowing exactly where an artifact came from in a feature tells us what someone was doing in that location and helps archeologists tell the story of our ancestors who lived there.



Traditional skin tent as photographed in northern Alaska, c. 1910, USGS photo



This tent ring, at Chandler Lake, provides evidence of past shelter that would have supported a skin tent, similar to the one shown in photograph to the right. Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve photo



Stone tool, Matcharak Lake, NPS photo



Caribou, NPS photo



Caribou bone remains, Matcharak Lake, NPS photo

Artifacts and animal bones from the 4,000 years old Matcharak Lake site, within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, show that people were using stone tools to hunt and process caribou.

Our Ancestors

Everyone loves stories, especially about our ancestors. People have lived in Alaska for at least 14,000 years. They left behind evidence in archeological sites scattered over the landscape. If archeologists and traditional knowledge bearers work together, we can learn more about the past. We have a responsibility to future generations to preserve our heritage. Let's work together to protect our shared heritage!

"The Archeology Mentorship Program...was interesting to me because it is a study about my ancestors who lived long ago."

—Bessie Barger, Noatak

Looking into the Past

Knowing exactly where an artifact came from can help us know how old it is and what activity was happening in that area. It is extremely important not to disturb sites until they can be recorded by an archeologist. Excavating a site changes it forever. It is essential to document everything about a site including microscopic elements. Even archeologists need to get permits to excavate a site!



An archeologist at work methodically excavating the Wrench Creek Site, Noatak National Preserve. NPS photo