

Arkansas Archeological Survey and University of Arkansas Museum

Guidelines for Sharing Photos of Archeological Sites and Artifacts on the Internet

Digital cameras, smartphones, and other wonderful new technologies give us a chance to share archeology with ever larger audiences. It is important for us to remember that we must also be careful to protect sites, sensitive artifacts, and the rights of private landowners.

If you, or anyone working with you, take pictures of artifacts, sites, features, and other archeological activities, be careful about posting pictures with sensitive information on the Internet, including personal web pages, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or other social media outlets. Pictures will not only affect the reputation of the Arkansas Archeological Society and Arkansas Archeological Survey (or any other entity that might be sponsoring a project), they have the potential to cause damage to archeological sites, to offend cultural sensitivities, and in rare cases even to violate the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

Guidelines for appropriate sharing of archeological images

Never post or share pictures of human remains or in situ grave furniture to any media, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or any websites, or allow people working on your project to do so.

Photographs of repatriated grave goods or items of cultural patrimony that are curated in a museum should not be posted on the Internet or otherwise published without the express permission of the culturally affiliated Indian Tribe. Obtaining such permission is a formal process that is conducted in writing between you and the Tribe, so your best guideline is to only post pictures of museum artifacts if they are in a public display.

Do not publicly disclose GPS locations, inadvertently or deliberately, of sites or features captured through the use of smartphones or other portable devices and attached to digital images. Some smartphones encode GPS locations of photos as they are taken, a feature that can be disabled.

Do not post or share pictures of sites or features that may reveal site location information to any media unless the site, like Toltec Indian Mounds State Park or Historic Washington, is protected.

Do not give names of sites or features, or the names of their landowners, as captions to publicly accessible photos if they might lead vandals back to the sites themselves.

I have read and understand the terms stated above:

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____