

Archaeological Short Report Guidance March 2021

We are pleased to provide INDOT specific guidance to clarify issues we've seen since the introduction of the updated Indiana Archaeological Short Report (ASR) which went into effect on January 1, 2021. These best practices follow the arrangement of the ASR form and are best reviewed with a blank ASR document open to follow along with. Please keep in mind that this guidance pertains to ASR's prepared for FHWA undertakings reviewed by INDOT, CRO only.

Archaeology Short Report

- **Title**

- Always start title with "A Phase Ia Archaeological Reconnaissance for the proposed..."
- Titles must always include Name of Roadway (SR 28, Ellis Drive, I-74, etc.), Work Type (small structure replacement, bridge replacement, intersection improvement with roundabout, etc.), Feature Crossed (if applicable), Distance to nearest junction (INDOT projects only), County, State, and INDOT Des. No.
 - It is suggested that you use the 2018-2021 or 2020-2024 STIP to produce the title if is not provided by prime consultant. Download STIPs from here https://www.in.gov/indot/files/STIP_2018-2021-UpdatedProjectlisting.pdf and here https://www.in.gov/indot/files/STIP_2020-2024-UpdatedProjectlisting.pdf and save as PDF to search document by Des. No.

Indiana Department of Transportation	40582 / 1701567	A 14	US 52	Small Structure Replacement	US 52, 1.49 mi N of SR 18 S Jct , Over UNT to Mud Creek
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- Example Title using info from STIP: A Phase Ia Archaeological Reconnaissance for the proposed US 52 Small Structure Replacement over UNT to Mud Creek, 1.49 miles north of SR 18, Benton County, Indiana, INDOT Des. No. 1701567.
 - The "Records check only" box should never be selected for reports produced for INDOT reviewed projects. The results of the records check should either result in an archaeological assessment (included in the Section 106 Early Coordination Letter or a later Report Distribution Letter) or a Phase Ia reconnaissance. Please do not submit standalone records check reports to INDOT, CRO.
- **Project Overview Section**
 - You are encouraged to use the purpose and need developed for the NEPA document as your project description when available. At a minimum, the project description should explain the transportation deficiency or problem and the set of objectives that will be met to address the deficiency.

- Please refrain from oversimplistic and generic project descriptions such as, “The proposed project consists of the replacement of the bridge carrying US 24 over Crooked Creek”.
- Describe the overall undertaking (Project Area) and specific project activities proposed within it (ground-disturbance) that could potentially impact previously recorded or undocumented archaeological sites.
- Please provide the amount of right-of-way required for the project and an explanation of the area surveyed if greater or less than the right-of-way proposed for the project. For instance, the size of the project area may be greater than the area surveyed because the majority of the undertaking is limited to pavement rehabilitation. Conversely, the survey area of an intersection improvement project may be larger than the project area because it was decided to square off the right-of-way required in the four quadrants of the intersection.
- **Legal Location Section**
 - Use no more than the space allotted in the short report, if possible
 - The project area should be described from smallest to largest ¼ by ¼, from left to right.
 - Use the comments box for linear projects to indicate that the project starts in the ¼ by ¼ by ¼ of Section #, Township, Range and ends in the ¼ by ¼ by ¼ of Section #, Township, Range.
 - In some cases, it is appropriate to leave the ¼ by ¼ section blank in short reports and use the comments box to describe the project location (e.g. through the middle of Section 4 or on the common line of Sections 23 and 24).
 - Please use your best judgment in defining aliquots. We tend to see consultants stating the project is in the NW ¼ when the location could be much more specific by dividing aliquots further on one line or adding a second line. On the other hand, we’ve had consultants provide 15 lines of ¼ by ¼ by ¼ by ¼ sections when they could just state the project is in two or three ¼ by ¼ Sections.
 - **Property ownership**
 - INDOT projects = Private and State Government
 - Local projects = Private and Local Government
- **Project Area Details Section**
 - Please include the entirety of the undertaking in the size of the project area, regardless of whether or not all of project area was subjected to archaeological survey. For instance, when conducting fieldwork for small structure replacements as part of a linear pavement project that does not extend past the edge of pavement, be sure to include the whole undertaking in the project description and figures.
 - Natural Region: Use Region, not section.
 - Topography: Use Appendix A from DHPA’s Short Form Instructions; Form 54566.
 - Soils: Please be sure to include the description of each soil series in the survey area (drainage characteristics, hydric classification, alluvial, eroded, slope, etc.)

as it relates to the potential for archaeological resources to be present. Include the series abbreviation for each soil type.

- Watershed: Use the sub-basin (fourth level) name if using IndianaMap; otherwise, use the HUC 8 GIS layer.
- Use the comments box to discuss the potential for buried deposits to exist within the survey area based on consideration of the landform, soil order (e.g., Alfisols, Entisols, Inceptisols, etc.) and presence of alluvial or colluvial sediments.
- **Records Check Section**
 - Only use the “Date of records check” box; the Records check only box should not be selected for INDOT reviewed projects.
 - **Records consulted**
 - In addition to reviewing resources available on-line at the Indiana State Library, <https://www.in.gov/library/collections-and-services/>, it is recommended that a web search be conducted to locate additional historic maps that may reveal additional mapped structures within or adjacent to the survey area.
 - Please review the SHAARD map for IHSSI/NRHP structures mapped in or adjacent to the survey area only.
 - A half (1/2) mile radius records check study area is acceptable for all reports prepared for INDOT reviewed projects, but a two (2) mile radius is discouraged.
- **Field Investigation Section**
 - **Methods**
 - Define the Visual walkover interval (2m, 5m, 10m, etc.) in the “Describe methods” box if selecting Other. Keep in mind that visual walkover does not include pedestrian survey of agricultural fields but is reserved for areas of disturbances or natural slopes observed in the survey area.
 - Similarly, define the Pedestrian survey interval in the “Describe methods” box if selecting Other.
 - Auger probes are expected in alluvial soils with the potential to contain buried deposits. Please use the “Describe methods” to describe the results of auger probes.
 - Oakfield cores are not a substitute for shovel probing and should be limited to verifying presumed ground disturbance only. At least one shovel probe should be excavated to confirm and document the depth of disturbance; disturbed sediments do not need to be screened.
- **Results Section**
 - The Summary of relevant cultural background can be a tally of the cultural periods for the county as calculated in SHAARD or a general statement of the cultures/phases known to have been identified in a county or region. The results of regional surveys are also acceptable when applied to the specific region in which the survey occurred. For example, one should not use Stafford’s (1994) model for southwest Indiana for the Tipton Till Plain region when McCord et al.’s (2007) survey of Hancock County is more applicable.

- The results of the historic map, IHSSI and SHAARD search is to be summarized here as well. Please only list and describe those resources within or adjacent to the survey area.
 - Please do not attach cultural backgrounds to ASR's as an appendix-the cultural background box will expand to suit your prehistoric and historic context.
 - ASR's prepared for INDOT review should never have the top box under Records check selected.
 - Similarly, the top box under Phase Ia archaeological reconnaissance should never be selected.
- **Recommendations Section**
 - In the Records check section, the cemetery development plan box is the only option to select on INDOT reviewed projects. Cemetery development plans are required when a cemetery may be impacted by an INDOT/FHWA undertaking (i.e. temporary or permanent right-of-way taken from the limits of a cemetery or when the limits of a cemetery, and thus, project impacts, are unknown).
 - The results of the survey will result in either one or both options being selected in the Phase Ia archaeological reconnaissance section.
- **Attachments**
 - Representative photos of land use and field conditions are fine, but please keep the short report short. Multiple photographs of the same field from different directions are unwarranted.
 - Field photos should prioritize the actual surveyed areas over the adjacent previously disturbed R/W.
 - Photos should try to capture the field conditions. Photos between rows of corn or soybeans are better than an overview shot of field crops.
 - Photographs of every shovel probe are not necessary, but a few representative examples may be appropriate to show variations or disturbances.