

Regarding the National Endowment for the Humanities' Section 106 Review of Three Former Slave Quarter Sites Located in the Virginia Piedmont

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has provided the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK) with a grant to conduct a three-year archeological study of a former slave community in the Virginia Piedmont. NEH is an independent grant-making agency of the United States Government dedicated to supporting research, education, preservation and public programs in the humanities. This public notice is issued as part of NEH's responsibilities under 36 C.F.R. Part 800, the regulations which implement Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended, 16 U.S.C. § 470. NEH, as a funding agency, is required by regulation to identify and assess the effects of any proposed actions on historic properties. If any proposed action will have an adverse effect on historic resources, NEH works with the appropriate parties to seek ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects. Additionally, the Section 106 regulations require NEH to consider the views of the public when making final decisions that affect historic properties.

UTK proposes to use archaeological investigations to study and compare the former households of an 18th-century slave community that existed at three separate sites in the Virginia Piedmont. The three sites to be examined are as follows:

North Hill: North Hill is located in Bedford County, Virginia and is part of Poplar Forest, which is both a National Historic Landmark and listed on the National Register for Historic Properties (National Register). Poplar Forest is owned by the Corporation for Jefferson's Poplar Forest.

Wingos: Historically, Wingos was once part of Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest plantation, but it is now a privately-owned property also located in Bedford County. The Wingos property likely contains archaeological sites that are eligible for listing in the National Register as contributing resources to the historical significance of Poplar Forest.

Indian Camp: Indian Camp is, historically, a 1,200-acre tract located in Powhatan County, Virginia and is privately owned by several different parties. Indian Camp was acquired by Thomas and Martha Jefferson in 1773 and the resident enslaved community was moved to Poplar Forest in 1774. A 120-acre portion of the Indian Camp tract is currently listed in the National Register as French's Tavern. The larger Indian Camp tract likely contains archaeological sites that are eligible for listing in the National Register as contributing resources to the historic significance of French's Tavern and/or Poplar Forest.

At this time, UTK archaeologists have completed all excavations at North Hill and do not plan to do further field work at this location. For the Wingos site, UTK plans to continue work at a known house site previously excavated by the University between 2007 and 2009. Specifically, UTK will look for additional structures and house yards in a 2-5 acre area adjacent to the known house site by using a combination of archaeological methods.

Except for a known house site adjacent to French's Tavern, UTK archaeologists have not yet identified the exact location of former enslaved house sites at Indian Camp. Accordingly, UTK will search for former house sites in the upcoming two field seasons. Once UTK identifies the sites, it will undertake larger-scale excavations. At French's Tavern, UTK will undertake archaeological investigations depending on what the University finds at this location.

NEH, in consultation with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR), has found that UTK's proposed study will likely have an adverse effect on historic properties. This determination is based on NEH's review of UTK's proposal and on the VDHR's view that the archeological data recovery on National Register-eligible or -listed sites constitutes an adverse effect on historic properties because of its inherent destructive nature.

In order to mitigate or minimize the adverse effects to the historic properties, UTK has proposed the following measures:

1. Public Interpretation: UTK will create a website that provides information about the archaeological study, including updates on field and laboratory work and documentary research, and three interactive educational modules geared toward upper-middle and high school students. Further, UTK staff will make public presentations relating to work at these sites (e.g., presentations at Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, the Powhatan Historical Society, etc.).
2. Educational Training: UTK will involve undergraduate and graduate students in field work, laboratory analysis, and historical research relating to Wingos and Indian Camp. UTK will also offer students formal archaeological field school opportunities, volunteer and paid fieldwork opportunities, as well as for-credit and volunteer opportunities at UTK's Faulkner Archaeology Laboratory and zooarchaeological laboratory. Archaeobotany students at the University of Massachusetts, Boston will also have the opportunity to work with botanical samples recovered from the study sites.
3. Technical Reports, Site Data, and Publications: UTK will publish the technical reports, including field notes, some maps, and selected photographs on the project website and provide hard copies of these reports to VDHR, UTK, and the Poplar Forest Library. UTK will also post artifact and field databases, along with brief site summaries, on the Digital Archaeological Archive of Comparative Slavery (www.daacs.org). Further, project staff will present results of the archaeological study at regional and national conferences and write a minimum of three peer-reviewed journal articles or book chapters for edited volumes.

In this public notice, NEH is providing information about the UTK project and its effects on National Register-listed or -eligible properties. We are also seeking public input on the project, including the agency's finding of adverse effect and the possible measures proposed by UTK to mitigate the adverse effect. You may submit comments or questions to NEH via e-mail at gencounsel@neh.gov or by regular mail to: National Endowment for the Humanities, Office of the General Counsel, 1100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room 529, Washington, DC 20506. All comments or questions should be received by **April 18, 2011**.