

## COORDINATION OF FEDERAL CULTURAL RESOURCE PROGRAMS

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### SUMMARY

Over the past century, there has been a growing concern for this nation's cultural resources, embodied in a considerable body of law and executive orders. Chief among these are the Archaeological and Historical Preservation Act of 1974, which greatly expanded the authority, responsibilities and funding of the Interagency Archaeological Salvage Program, stimulated reorganization of the traditional salvage program, and established a national salvage program.

Equally important is Public Law 93-291, an amendment to the Reservoir Salvage Act of 1960, which extends the authority conferred by that act to all federal projects that involve alteration of the terrain, outside the national parks. It also provides sources of funding, both general and special, and charges the Secretary of Interior with coordinating all federal survey and recovery activities conducted under its terms. Powers conferred by P.L. 93-291 become operative only after alternatives to destruction have been explored and a systematic attempt made to reduce the destructive effects of a project on cultural resources.

The Interagency Archaeological Services Division, whose local office is in Denver, Colorado, is part of the coordinated national program, covering survey and recovery activities. The agency plans to carry out its

task of administering the law by contracting archaeological work to qualified professional individuals and organizations.

Most of the laws and orders affecting cultural resources are mandatory, not discretionary, carrying requirements which federal agencies must comply with. There are, however, many areas of overlapping responsibility and authority that can result in duplication of effort and confusion. Coordination of federal recovery activities, through the medium of the Interagency Archaeological Services, should help resolve some of these problems.

The principal concern of federal agencies, however, will be compliance with the laws and orders that guide their actions. Professional archaeologists and those engaged in developing resources on federal lands must learn to work within this framework. Basically, this means subordinating personal interests to what best fits the national interest in preserving cultural resources.