

ARMS Note 1

REPORTING CULTURE/TEMPORAL AFFILIATION & ETHNICITY ON THE LABORATORY OF ANTHROPOLOGY SITE RECORD

This note is intended to relay changes in ARMS procedures for identifying Cultural/Temporal Affiliations on the LA Site Record and in NMCRIS. It addresses differences in procedure from the NMCRIS User Guidelines, as issued in 1993. Specifically this note seeks to clarify the key issues of: 1) sites of an unknown aboriginal cultural affiliation; 2) sites of an unknown historic affiliation; 3) sites of an unknown cultural or temporal affiliation; and 4) sites with more than one cultural/ethnic affiliation in contemporaneous occupation.

Unknown Aboriginal

This issue pertains to artifact scatters and features which are clearly of Native American creation, but lack diagnostic cultural or temporal identifiers. Logic would dictate such sites *cannot be dated* yet they are often reported as *prehistoric*. An undated aboriginal site is neither reliably of prehistoric or historic derivation. To properly reflect this type of site in NMCRIS a new affiliation called **unknown aboriginal** was instituted. When querying NMCRIS, one might see the statement "end date based on local land settlement patterns". Field personnel and supervisors must have a good working knowledge of the settlement patterns of the project area, and should base the end date of the component on that information. This cultural affiliation tacitly assumes the site is in an area that did not see the arrival of mass-produced goods until after the stated end date of occupation.

Unknown Historic

In areas where more than one cultural/ethnic group lived in contemporaneous occupancy during the historic period, but where features and/or assemblages do not clearly identify an affiliation, the designation of **unknown historic** is used. Unknown historic sites possess temporally diagnostic artifacts and/or features, but the cultural/ethnic affiliation of the site inhabitants cannot be reliably determined. Previous versions of the NMCRIS Guidelines recommended these sites be reported with all possible cultural/ethnic affiliations stated in a single component. Variations on these multiple combinations could not be consistently reported in NMCRIS and resulted in records that are difficult to retrieve. The best way to address such sites is by reflecting the cultural affiliation as Unknown Historic. Speculation on the possible cultural/ethnic associations should be made in the Basis for Cultural/Temporal Affiliations and Narrative portions of the LA Site Record.

Unknown Affiliation

Use this designation for sites where culturally and temporally diagnostic artifacts and/or features were not observed. Unknown Affiliation is limited to situations where it is truly **not possible** to determine cultural or temporal occupation of the site. Typical sites include: rock cairns, rock alignments, depressions and ash/charcoal stains of unknown affiliation.

Multiple Contemporaneous Cultural/Ethnic Associations at One Site

Certain types of sites such as rendezvous locations, ethnically segregated town sites or logging camps, battle locations, etc. have multiple contemporaneous **KNOWN** cultural/ethnic occupations. In general, components are differentiated based on a temporal hiatus. Sites of this nature are different.

1. **Cultural Affiliation:** In order to reflect the cultural complexity of the site, the recorder should indicate *each* cultural/ethnic unit, *regardless of contemporaneity of occupation*, as a separate component. As per above, this will allow retrieval of site data from NMCRIS using the variable "culture" as a querying mechanism.
2. **Period of Occupation-begin date; end date:** At first glance one would think the site is multi-component. The recorder must reflect the occupation date range accurately to establish the overlapping occupation of different groups.
3. **Features Data:** Associate only those features which can be affiliated **reliably** with each component. If a feature can be associated with more than one component, associate it with all appropriate components. If a feature cannot be associated reliably with any cultural component do not link it to any component. Linking the feature to all components will not provide any clarifying information and may confuse a later recorder.