ARCHAEOLOGICAL QUALITY

Archaeological resources are found throughout the Corridor (Map 9), with the highest concentration along the Des Moines River. Many of these resources meet the Federal Highway Administration’s first stipulation of scientific significance. However, few of the resources have visible physical evidence which would allow them to be directly interpreted.

Nonetheless, these resources are an important part of the Byway story. A key task for protecting and enhancing this intrinsic quality is to decide how and where to tell that story to visitors.

ASSESSMENT AND CONTEXT

Archaeology is the study of the ancient and recent human past through material remains. It is a subfield of anthropology, the study of all human culture. From million-year-old fossilized remains of our earliest human ancestors in Africa, to 20th century buildings in present-day New York City, archaeology analyzes the physical remains of the past in pursuit of a broad and comprehensive understanding of human culture.

Archaeological resources can represent both prehistoric and historic times. Prehistory is the period prior to the written documentation of a culture. In Iowa, historic time is considered to begin after the French arrived on the Mississippi River in 1673 (Figure 6).

Table 12 shows 1,576 archaeological sites have been recorded in the Corridor. Of those sites, 854 were identified as prehistoric sites, 566 are historic sites, and 150 represent occupation during both historic and prehistoric times. Over one-half the sites are located in Van Buren County.

Archaeological evidence of people in the Byway Corridor dates back more than 8,500 years to the Paleoindian period, though human occupation may have begun earlier (Haury-Artz, 2013).

The discussion below is divided into three groups: Prehistoric Native Americans, Historic Native Americans, and Euroamericans. Some sites were occupied by all three groups.

Table 12. Number of archaeological sites recorded in Byway Corridor by county (Office of the State Archaeologist, 2015).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Prehistoric</th>
<th>Historic</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appanoose</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wapello</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Buren</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,004</strong></td>
<td><strong>716</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,576</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Map 9. Distribution of Archaeological Resources in the Byway Corridor
Prehistoric Native Americans
Archaeological investigations in the Corridor suggest occupation of the area by humans beginning 10,500 to 8,000 years ago. Information about the earliest cultures comes primarily from surface finds of artifacts rather than site excavations, including the study of private artifact collections. *A River of Unrivaled Advantages* (Haury-Artz, 2013) discusses several significant prehistoric sites along the Des Moines River in Van Buren County.

**Wenke Site (Late Archaic – Late Woodland)**
The Wenke Site is on the west edge of Bonaparte on a terrace of Honey Creek. There are 18 prehistoric sites along a one-mile stretch of the creek. Collections made at the site indicate that people occupied the area over a long period of time. Occupation likely began in the Late Archaic period, with the most intensive use in the Late Woodland.

**Mounds (Middle – Late Woodland)**
There are 28 documented sites containing burial mounds in Van Buren County. Beginning in the late Archaic period, some cultures in the region begin interment of dead in earthen mounds. These communal burial sites were usually built on bluff tops and terraces above rivers and streams. Mound burial sites became common on most drainages in Iowa during the Woodland period (Alex, 2000). The mounds documented in Van Buren County are from Middle and Late Woodland period. Five mound groups are located in Lacey Keosauqua State Park and seven mounds are in the Iowaville Cemetery.

**Lambert Site (Middle – Late Woodland)**
Excavations at this Woodland site near Selma revealed features that suggest the presence of a house structure. Other artifacts included stone hunting tools, drills, grinding stones, pottery fragments, shell middens and rock-lined basins. The combination of materials found indicate the site was either used often for an extended period of time or often reused.
Shell Midden (Late Woodland)
An archaeological site in present day Lacey Keosauqua State Park was discovered initially in 1869 by workers digging a hole for a ferry boat guide rope. The hole revealed a large “shell midden” or debris site from human waste with a predominance of shells from river mussels. When the site was investigated in 1961, it was described as being four feet thick. The midden dates to the Late Woodland period and subsequent investigations found fragments of pottery along with bones from deer, bear, wolf, dog and turtles. Three other shell middens have been found in Van Buren County, suggesting the importance of this river as a resource for Woodland era culture.

Oneota Village (Late Prehistoric)
Near the end of prehistoric times, the dominate culture in Southeast Iowa was the Oneota. However, only one significant Oneota site has been discovered along the Des Moines River in the Corridor. Collections made at this site along the river at Lacey Keosauqua State Park point to a substantial occupation, such as a village. Researchers also believe the site was located on a trail that connected the southeastern Iowa Oneota villages on the Mississippi River with villages in central Missouri.

Assessment: The mounds in Lacey Keosauqua State Park and at Iowaville Cemetery are the only visible on-site resources from prehistoric occupation. Interpretation of the mounds may be desirable but must be balanced with the need for protection of the resources.

There are prehistoric artifacts in private collections like the Indian Artifacts Museum in Bentonsport. Other Corridor museums may also have collections. These collections could be assessed to determine suitable locations for interpretation.

Even with a lack of visible resources, human occupation during prehistoric times fits well with the rest of the Byway story. It is worth investigating ways to incorporate that interpretive piece.

Significance: Regional

Related Resources:
- Prehistoric Mounds (Iowaville Cemetery and Lacey Keosauqua State Park)
- Indian Artifacts Museum

Historic Native Americans
Most of the resources related to Native American culture in the historic time period are archaeological, rather than historic resources. Nearly all these resources are from collections and site reports which do not include visible evidence that can be interpreted to visitors. The most significant resources are detailed below.

Thunderbird Petroglyph
There is little information available about this Native American artifact located in Lacey Keosauqua State Park, but it is likely from historic times. According to Horgren and Peterson (2014), “Site 13VB676 is located within Lacey-Keosauqua State Park. Petroglyphs related to Native American mythology and symbolisms are often found carved in sandstone and limestone boulders and outcrops. There are approximately 30 known recorded sites in Iowa that have rock art and attempts to understand their meaning and function have been limited.”

Currently, park officials are reluctant to publicize the location due to concerns about vandalism. However, there is nothing restricting access to the site. While the site would be interesting for visitors, making it more accessible must be weighed against the need for protection and preservation.
**Ioway Village**

From about 1770 to 1820, the Native American nation usually referred to as “Ioway” had their last great village in Iowa along the Des Moines River near the present-day unincorporated town of Selma (Foster 1996). The Euroamerican town of Iowaville was later established at that same site.

The earliest Ioway villages were found in southwestern Minnesota but eventually the Ioway moved into what would become Iowa through trade and territory disputes. By the early 1700s, Ioway numbers were greatly reduced by war and epidemic diseases. The Ioway withdrew from the northern part of their territory and the main Iowa villages were in southern Iowa, including the Iowaville site. In the early 1800s, a second small pox epidemic further reduced the Ioway population and most of the estimated 800 survivors occupied the Iowaville village. The Ioway were displaced from the site around 1820, either by other tribes or for other reasons (Haury-Artz, 2013).

Extensive surface collections of the site have taken place both by professionally and by private collectors. The collections reflect extensive trading with other tribes and foreign traders. The site was also studied in 2011 using remote sensing techniques, ground penetrating radar and some excavation.

**Sauk Village**

A Sauk village, which is also the home and burial place of the warrior Black Hawk, was located between Eldon and Selma, not far from the Ioway village site. Sauk war leader Black Hawk is known to have spent at least one summer in this village. He died and was buried there in the fall of 1837, though his body and other burial artifacts were robbed later. There is a memorial to Black Hawk in the nearby Iowaville Cemetery (Haury-Artz, 2013).

**Assessment:** Other than the petroglyph and Chief Black Hawk memorial marker in the Iowaville cemetery, there is no other visible evidence of the historic Native American archaeological resources.

As stated in the historical assessment in this document (page 17), there is an effort underway to purchase the Ioway village site. The site is privately owned and is currently in row crop production. Collectors can legally take artifacts as long as they have permission from the landowner. Under public ownership, collection by individuals would no longer be legal. In addition, the area would be seeded to permanent cover to further protect the site. This is a high priority due to the significance of the site and the urgent need for protection.

There are historic Native American artifacts in private collections like the Indian Artifacts Museum in Bentonport. Other Corridor museums may also have collections. These collections could be assessed to determine a suitable location to interpret this information.

**Significance:** National

**Related Resources:**
- Chief Black Hawk Memorial Marker
- Chief Black Hawk burial site
- Iowaville Archaeological Site
- Indian Artifacts Museum and other private collections
- Petroglyph (Lacey Keosauqua State Park)

**Euroamericans**

There are Euroamerican archaeological resources but most relate to stories better told through historic resources: Iowaville, Mormon Trail, mill and brick industries, and agriculture. One exception is the Des Moines River pottery industry as described below.

**Des Moines River Potteries**

The 19th century pottery industry in Iowa provided essential household, farming and industrial materials such as butter pots, pickle jars, tableware, paving bricks, drainage tiles and chimney stacks. The pottery industry flourished along the Des Moines River because of the transportation system and readily available clay. The first kiln in Iowa was built in 1836 downriver from the future site of Bonaparte (Haury-Artz 2013).

At one time there were 128 potteries along the Des Moines River from Boone County to Lee County (Table 13). Fifty-seven of the potteries are recorded in the Corridor counties of Wapello, Lee and Van Buren. Fourteen potteries in the Corridor are recorded as archaeological sites.
An excellent example of these nineteenth century potteries was unearthed during the flood of 1993. Parts of the Bonaparte Pottery, as it is known today, were exposed when floodwaters retreated. Archeologists later excavated the site and found the pottery remarkably well-preserved. Originally founded as the “Parker and Hanback Pottery” in 1866, it operated until 1895 when mass production took over the market.

The site includes the pottery factory building and the remains of two kilns. There is also a vast area along the river bank with visible deposits of stoneware pieces, whole vessels and other waste. During the excavation process in the 1990s, intact pottery molds were discovered. These molds are used today to produce pottery pieces. The pottery site is open to the public on an intermittent basis.

Not only is the site of interest from a historical perspective, the site’s archaeology is a story in itself – how it was revealed, the excavation process and waste site that is still visible on the river bank.

**Assessment:** The Bonaparte Pottery site is remarkable example of 19th century potteries. With the careful excavation that was accomplished, it is remarkably intact, easily visible to visitors and offers a wealth of interesting artifacts for interpretation. It also offers the opportunity to tell the story of the whole pottery industry on the Des Moines River. The site is privately owned and not under any known preservation easements. The future of the privately-owned site is in question. Tours are offered by request and the pottery does not have regular open hours. Finding methods to preserve and interpret this site is highly desirable for the Byway.

**Significance:** Regional and possibly national

**Related Resources:**
- Bonaparte Pottery & Archaeological District
- Other archaeological sites related to Des Moines River potteries

### PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT

Protection of archaeological resources presents several challenges. Current archaeological resources need protection and many are on private property.

Two current archaeological sites located on private property need protection or sustainable plans for protection: Iowaville and Bonaparte Pottery. The Iowaville site is under cultivation and new artifacts are exposed each year. Collectors can take artifacts from the site with the permission of the landowner. The historical information associated with that artifact...
is lost. The Bonaparte Pottery’s threats are related to the owner’s ability to keep the site open to the public, along with the ever present threat of another flood.

Sites that have yet to be discovered present another set of challenges. When new sites are exposed through development activities like construction and agriculture or by natural processes like flooding, landowners may not know why or how to report their finds. Artifact collectors can make significant contributions to archaeological knowledge by recording information about their finds and reporting them to the OSA.

Creating awareness and knowledge about the area’s past is important to protecting the resources. However, interpretation of the archaeological resources can be difficult. Most of the archaeological sites are on private property while others, like the petroglyph and mounds present a dilemma of protection vs. interpretation. However, there are significant stories to be told and a key task for enhancing this intrinsic quality is to decide how and where to tell the stories. One of the most promising sites is Lacey Keosauqua State Park which has archaeological resources spanning several cultures. Bonaparte Pottery also has potential as a site to interpret the pottery industry as a whole.

**Threats**

- Collection of archaeological artifacts without recording contextual information for historical records
- Sale and purchase of artifacts
- Destruction of archaeological sites by forces of nature, primarily flooding
- Lack of funding to protect and preserve the Iowaville site
- Lack of a sustainable plan for protecting and interpreting Bonaparte Pottery
- No interpretation of archaeological resources

**Solutions**

Many of the methods and resources for preservation of archaeological resources are similar to those for historic resources. The list below summarizes programs and resources currently available.

**Stewardship of Archaeological Sites**

Public awareness regarding private collection of artifacts is critical to protection and enhancement of archaeological resources. Many people enjoy collecting archaeological artifacts and it is legal to do so on private land with permission of the landowner (unless the artifacts are human remains). Laws prohibit collection on public lands.

Perhaps more critical than education about regulations, is helping collectors understand the importance of recording information about artifacts. Gathering and recording data about the location of finds contributes to the context of the item – the story of how and when it was deposited at the site.

Collectors can assist in furthering knowledge about Iowa’s past by reporting finds to the OSA through the Archaeological Sites program. According to the OSA website, reporting information on archaeological finds will “contribute to an ever-widening pool of archaeological knowledge.” The OSA has procedures to protect information collected on private land.

**Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA)**

The OSA is a research unit of the University of Iowa. OSA’s mission is to develop, disseminate, and preserve knowledge of Iowa’s human past through Midwestern and Plains archaeological research, scientific discovery, public stewardship, service, and education. The OSA conducts research and public programs, preserves ancient burial sites, and reinters ancient human remains. The OSA also maintains the state archaeological repository and manages data on all recorded archaeological sites in Iowa.
**Iowa Archeological Society**

Both professional and amateur archaeologists are involved in the Iowa Archeology Society. The purpose of the organization is:

- To unite those interested in Iowa archaeology
- To foster cooperation among professional and amateur archaeologists
- To promote the study, investigation, and interpretation of prehistoric and historic remains in Iowa
- To provide for the dissemination of knowledge and research in archaeology and related disciplines
- To encourage the recording and preservation of sites and artifacts
- To develop a constructive attitude toward these cultural resources through education and public involvement

The organization publishes newsletters and an annual journal, hosts meetings and sponsors field schools.

**National Register of Historic Places Program**

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the official list of the nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation. The NRHP program is part of a national program to coordinate and support efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect cultural resources. The National Park Service (NPS) administers the program.

Listing on the NRHP assist in preserving historic properties through:

- Recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, state or community
- Consideration in the planning for federal or federally assisted projects
- Eligibility for federal tax benefits
- Qualification for federal assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available

The first step in the process to nominate a property for listing is evaluation and research to determine the significance and integrity of the property. To be considered eligible, a property must meet the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. This involves examining the property’s age, integrity, and significance.

The application is submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa prior to being forwarded to the NPS for final review and listing. Submission of a good application to NRHP is a large undertaking. The State Historic Preservation Office of Iowa may offer technical assistance but it is the applicant's must complete the submission. Many property owners hire historians to assist with the process.

**Certified Local Government Program**

The National Historic Preservation Act established a program to encourage preservation and wise use of the nation’s historic resources. Among other things, the Act created the Certified Local Government (CLG) program which supports local historic preservation programs.

The CLG program provides training, technical assistance and funding to its participants. The Iowa State Historic Preservation office administers the program but local governments must follow certain guidelines to qualify. Requirements include operating under and enforcing a historic preservation ordinance or resolution and establishing a historic preservation commission.

In the Corridor, five cities and counties participate in CLG. Appanoose, Monroe and Lee counties do not participate but each have towns outside the Corridor in the CLG program. It may be beneficial to hold discussions with counties that are not certified to determine the barriers and benefits of participation.

**CLG Communities in the Corridor**

- Bloomfield Historic Preservation Commission
  Contact: Jon Douglas Dixon, Bloomfield
- Davis County Historic Preservation Commission
  Contact: Deb Baughman, Pulaski
- Eldon Historic Preservation Commission
  Contact: Gerald Cranston
- Van Buren County Historic Preservation Commission
  Contact: Mike Miller, Keosauqua
Local Historic Societies

Local historical societies are critical to historic preservation in the Corridor. They not only work to preserve historic resources, they also foster a love and appreciation for local history. Each county in the Corridor has a county historical society. Equipping these organizations with more resources in the forms of funding and personnel would be a great benefit to the Byway.

Van Buren Co. Historical Society
PO Box 423, Keosauqua

Davis County Historical Society
201 S Dodge St, Bloomfield

Appanoose County Historical Society
100 West Maple Street, Centerville

Wapello County Historical Society
242 W Main St, Ottumwa

Monroe County Historical Society
114 A Ave E, Albia

Lee County Iowa Historical Society
P.O. Box 125, Keokuk

North Lee County Historical Society
P.O. Box 285, Fort Madison

Pioneer Historical Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 132, Farmington

Historic Preservation Easements

Preservation easements (also known as covenants or restrictions) are conservation easements that protect properties having historic, architectural, or archaeological significance. Easements are tools that can address specific characteristics of a property, the property owner's interests, and the mission, goals, and interests of the easement-holding organization. Preservation easements may protect historic properties not governed by local preservation regulations, and may sometimes be the only protection for significant historic resources.

Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs

The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) is the agency with responsibility the state’s interest in the areas of the arts, history and other cultural matters.

The State Historical Society of Iowa is the division of the DCA that deals with education and preservation of the State’s history.

The DCA administers programs that provide technical assistance and funding.

Training Opportunities

Volunteers, local officials and property owners can be more effective in historic preservation if they know what resources are available. The Byway Coordinator and Council can assist in bringing workshops to the area and in distributing information about workshops online or in other locations. Examples include:

- Grant writing workshops
- Best practice workshops for museums and historical societies
- How to apply for NRHP status

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop interpretive plan for archaeological resources, especially at Lacey Keosauqua State Park, Bonaparte Pottery, and Iowaville.
- Assist Bonaparte Pottery in creating a sustainable plan for preservation and interpretation.
- Stay informed of efforts to purchase and protect the Iowaville site.
- Work with Office of the State Archaeologist to hold public programs.