

## The Discovery and Treatment of Archaeological Resources

A “**Phase I**” survey (Resource Identification) simply locates and identifies archaeological resources. The goal of a Phase I survey is to locate and identify archaeological resources in an effort to determine the possible impact an undertaking might have on that resource. The Phase I survey includes fieldwork to determine the presence or absence of artifacts and includes background research on the history (or pre-history) of the project area. At this point, a site form is submitted to the Maryland Historical Trust, and the site is formally registered and recorded with the State Historic Preservation Office.

If a cultural resource is identified, a “**Phase II**” is undertaken to determine the scope and significance of the resource. This entails fieldwork, which better defines the sites’ boundaries and additional research and analysis to determine the sites’ integrity (is it still intact). These results are evaluated based upon local, State, and Federal standards of significance, usually the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places. (see attached)

Upon determining if the site is significant and intact, a treatment for the resource must be developed. Ideally, if the proposed project will negatively impact the archaeological resource, the project should be redesigned to avoid destroying the resource. If this is not a feasible alternative, then a “**Phase III**” survey (Data Recovery), must be conducted. The Phase III is intended to recover the information that an archaeological site contains prior to its destruction. A ‘phase III’ excavation seeks to “retrieve and analyze the maximum amount of information from an archaeological property necessary to address important research topics”. Through excavation, with its associated documentation and artifact recovery, a portion of the information held by the site is extracted, prior to destruction.