

"HARVESTING THE PAST"

THE ILLINOIS ANCIENT ARTIFACTS PROJECT

Losing Our History

The Illinois landscape has been home to people for over 10,000 years. Indian camps and villages were once thickly spread across the state. Today, often only their stone tools remain to mark these spots. Over 150 years of artifact collecting, while removing the evidence from the landscape, has often preserved the information in private artifact collections. This resource is dwindling for future collectors. Development and soil erosion are destroying sites, and increasingly larger farm equipment is breaking up and scattering these fragile stone tools.

Documenting the Past

The Office of the State Archaeologist, Illinois State Archaeological Survey (ISAS) has set an ambitious goal over the next decade of recording spearheads, arrow heads, knives, and other chipped stone artifacts with known locations from each county in Illinois. This will provide a detailed understanding of the hunting ranges and home territories for dozens of ancient societies that once prospered here.

How You Can Help

If you or your family have field-collected artifacts from known locations and would be willing to have these recorded as part of this historic study effort, please contact us at the location nearest you; and we will help you record your collections and share what we know about the artifacts you own.

About Us

The State of Illinois recently recognized the University of Illinois' century-long history of archaeological research and collection management by designating ISAS as a state scientific survey and creating the Office of the State Archaeologist (Public Act 098-0346). ISAS is part of the University of Illinois, Prairie Research Institute along with the Water, Natural History, and Geological surveys.



<http://www.isas.illinois.edu/index.shtml>

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