Some Helps for New Pennsylvania Archaeological Site Survey (PASS) Forms

There are two versions of the form found on the website. One is a Microsoft Word template that you can download. This one has blanks that expand when you fill in information, so the actual number of pages when you are done may vary. The other is a PDF that you can print and fill in by hand.

Many of the fields are self explanatory. Others are described below, along with references and tips to help you fill them out. Frequently one of the choices of answers is "Unknown" so we request that you check that box when appropriate rather than leaving it blank. There is no longer a short form. We hope that this form will be user friendly enough that you will use it for all of your sites. Not all fields are required to be completed to produce a site record. In general, only complete the sections you are comfortable filling out. What we really need is to know what you found and where you found it. The more of the form that you can complete, though, the more useful your information will be. Written descriptions and pictures or drawings can all be attached. Eventually attachments (other than the location maps) will be added to the CRGIS.

Cultural Resource Management (CRM) PROJECTS: Site forms completed as part of environmental review projects must be completely filled out or they **will be returned**. You may submit a preliminary form during the Phase I and updates after subsequent work is completed, but do not assume that submitting a report automatically updates the PASS record.

We know that this form involves more paper than our old forms. We strongly recommend that you fill out the form on a computer if possible and email it to us at RA-CRGIS@pa.gov. Once we have assigned a site number and entered the data into the CRGIS, you can download a form that has only your information (without all the empty tables) and usually requires only 2-3 pages. You should keep a copy of all attachments and the final, confidential information page, as these will not appear on the CRGIS.

Definition of what constitutes a site are appended to this document and can be found at:
 http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/document/816378/siteidentificationcriteria_pdf

If you have questions, contact us by email RA-CRGIS@pa.gov or phone (717)787-4363.

Identification and Location

SITE NAME - Select a name that can easily be associated with the site such as a historical or physical landmark, the name of a farm, or the surname of the property owner. Historical and physical landmarks are preferred. Common surnames or stream names have the potential for being duplicated at other sites, thus causing confusion. Do not include the word "Site" as part of the name.

SITE NUMBER - If you are filing an update for a site and know the number put it here. If you don't know its number, or it's a new site, leave this blank or write in just the state and county part of the number (i.e. 36SO).

PUBLISHED REFERENCES - Are there any published reports or historic references concerning the site? This can include CRM reports. The ER number (BHP review number) for the project should also be recorded, if applicable.

Site Characteristics

SITE AREA - Estimate how long and wide the site is and then multiply to find the area. We record in square meters. If you measure in square feet, multiply by 0.09 to get square meters. Tell us whether you measured the site size in the field or on a map.

STRATIFIED, DEPTH OF STRATA - Some sites have multiple layers of occupation within the soil. Particularly river bank sites and rockshelter sites. Stratification usually can only be determined by a test excavation or some other freshly exposed cross section of a site's soil layers.

SITE TYPE – Check the one that best represents the site. If you think that more explanation is needed, use the comment section.

CHRONOLOGY (CULTURAL PERIOD(S)) - Check the eras or cultural periods for when the site may have been used if know. It is better to be general than inaccurate. The **BASIS** field lets you tell us how you determined the chronology.

FEATURES - Any man made structures or disturbances like foundations, pits, walls, wells, mounds and earthworks. If the site has been test excavated list any features such as hearths, pits and postmolds. If you think that more explanation is needed, use the comment section.

Artifacts

 The tables on the form represent the fields that can be entered into our database. They summarize and categorize the inventory. You are also encouraged to attach a full catalog.

LITHIC MATERIAL - If you have flakes and stone tools from the site, list the different types of stone that they are made of. If you don't know specific lithic sources, just list general descriptions of color and texture in the comments. If a large numbers of artifacts are present, approximate numbers are appropriate. This count should include all lithic artifacts, even though they are included in other counts in the artifact section.

ARTIFACT CATEGORIES – These tables includes common artifact types found on prehistoric and historic sites. Although it is not all inclusive, it is used to compare activities on sites. Categorize your artifacts as well as you can in this scheme, but don't worry if they are not all accounted for in these categories. You can use either specific counts or relative counts from the table, such as 51-100.

For prehistoric sites, if you know the material types, please include it, with a count as well (see example). Not all artifacts will have a material type.

For historic sites, we have provided an artifact matrix. This type of table is helpful for historic sites as many artifacts, such as glass, can have multiple functions. You may, for example, have both bottle glass (kitchen) and window glass (architectural). These two types tell us different things about the site, so it is helpful if you designate them as kitchen or architectural. The matrix below is organized with functional artifact categories (South 1977) along the left column and material class categories like glass and metal along the top. Place your count or relative count for each artifact functional class by material in the corresponding cell of the matrix. Because artifact collections for historic sites can be very diverse, and this matrix only accounts for the most common artifact types, it is particularly recommended that in addition to filling out the historic artifact matrix you include a full catalog.

South, Stanley
1977   *Method and Theory in Historical Archaeology.* Academic Press, NY.

DIAGNOSTIC ARTIFACTS – This list is not exhaustive and we may be adding to it in the near future. The types that are listed are the ones that most people agree can be well dated and distinguished. It does not include all known types. Artifacts that do not fit the listed types should be included in the illustrations and may be described in the comments. There are many web resources that can help you determine your point types and ceramic types. These are a few, but many others exist:

http://www.oplin.org/point/index.html Ohio point types.
http://www.marylandarcheology.org/Resource_Guide/ARCH_GUIDE.htm Maryland Avocational Archaeologists Guide to Information resources on the World Wide Web.

Physical Data and Site Condition

Any of this material that cannot be observed on site is optional, but the more you can fill out, the more useful your data will be. It is also interesting to see how your location fits into its surrounding environment.

SOIL TYPE - Soil mapping unit designations are available for most counties on the CRGIS. Additional information and soil association (general type) can be found either on the websites http://soilmap.psu.edu or http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/ or in the Soil Survey Book that covers the county where the site is located. This book can be obtained at your nearest USDA Natural Resources Conservation office. Instructions and maps for determining soil type can be found in this book.

MAP ELEVATION - Brown lines on USGS topo maps mark elevation contours above mean sea level in feet or meters. The unit of measure and the contour interval can be found at the bottom of the map. The thicker brown lines are called index contours. Thin brown lines are called intermediate contours. Find the closest thick brown line to your site. Follow that line until you find the number that represents its elevation. Count the number of thin brown lines between the thick line and the location of your site. Add the maps contour interval to the elevation for

every thin line counted if the site is uphill from the thick line. Subtract the maps contour interval if it is downhill. If you are using the quad maps from any online source, including the CRGIS, the map information may not be visible. You can count contour lines between index lines to determine the interval. If there are 5 lines between indices, then it is a 20 foot contour map. We record elevation in feet because the most available topo maps are in feet. All other measurements are in meters.

SLOPE DIRECTION AND DEGREE - slope is usually measured as a percentage of elevation change over distance. A 20 feet change in elevation over 500 feet of distance equals 4% slope, (500/20=.04). A general slope description can be determined by using a Soil Survey Book (see Soil Type above). Indicate the down hill direction of the slope, such as west or northeast. Tell us whether you measured it on the ground or used the soil data or map to estimate.

BEDROCK - The most readily available way to determine the geologic name of the bedrock underlying a site is to use the Atlas of Preliminary Geologic Quadrangle Maps of Pennsylvania located on the DCNR web site at http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/topogeo/map61/61intro.aspx . Locate the topo quad that you're interested in on the "List of Quadrangles". When you find the Quad on the list click on its link to download the map. You need Adobe Acrobat Reader for this. Not all quads are available. The names of the rock formations are listed on the border of the quad under "Explanation." Bedrock information is also available at the soil map site listed above.

PHYSIOGRAPHIC PROVINCE - Physiographic Provinces are large regions of similar topography. Each province is further subdivided in to Sections. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has an excellent web page that describes each physiographic province and section at DCNR Map 13 . You can determine what province and section your site is in from there.

IMMEDIATE VEGETATION - Open fields (what kind of crops), pasture land, woodlands (avg. size of trees, undergrowth thickness), kind of trees and wild plants etc. We actually have a set list of possibilities, but give us a description and we will fit it into the list.

DISTURBANCE AND POSSIBILITY OF DESTRUCTION - List both man made and natural threats, such as excavation, construction, erosion, and rodent borrowing.

Water Drainage Area Information

Any of this material that cannot be observed on site is optional, but the more you can fill out, the more useful your data will be. The measurements are all more accurate done on site, though, so please fill in those as completely as possible.

WATERSHED DATA - The easiest way to get the SUBBASIN and WATERSHED information is on the CRGIS. Use the spatial query tool to the left of the map and select the area around your site. The resulting summary box that pops up includes "Archaeological Sites by Watershed." This gives you a summary of the sites within the watershed and the names of the subbasin and shed are in the first column, such as Lower Delaware River (subbasin) A (shed). Major and minor streams can be determined from the topo map. Major streams are generally the one that drains the entire shed.

NEAREST WATER, etc - Rivers, Streams, lakes, springs, wells for historic sites, etc. can be used. Tell us the distances to the nearest point on the water source, the elevation at that point, and the type of water that it represents (i.e. spring, extinct, intermittent, or perennial stream, bog, lake, bay, or pingo).

Stream Order is more complicated to calculate. If you are using a GIS system, the data are available through PASDA at http://www.pasda.psu.edu . If you are not using GIS, you can use the topo maps to calculate order. Order is calculated based on permanent water (not extinct or intermittent). The first water from the source is order 1. Once two streams of the same order combine, the order is increased. So, two first order streams converge at a confluence to make a 2nd, but a 1rst order entering an existing 2nd order does not change it to a higher order.
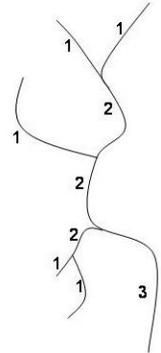
Comments and Attachments

We encourage as many attachments and comments as you need to make your information clear.

Administrative Information (Most items confidential)

*Location***:** There are several ways that you can indicate the location of your site, but a map is always required. It can be a portion of the CRGIS with the site boundaries outlined. Please indicate more than just a dot. Some good sources of online maps include the CRGIS, USGS National Map Viewer and http://maps.google.com . GPS data are welcome.

7.5 QUAD NAME, EDITION - The name of the topo is printed on the upper right and lower right border of the map. The edition is the year printed in black located on the lower right border. You can either identify the location by the "up and over" method or by UTMs.

Instructions for calculation your own locations follow.

> **UP, ACROSS** - If you have a 7.5 minute topographical map of the area, measure "UP" from the bottom edge of printed map border (not the edge of the paper) to the location of the site in centimeters. Then measure "ACROSS" from right printed edge (not the edge of the paper) to the location of the site **in centimeters**. It helps if you have a tee square to keep the ruler square with the border of the map. This is an easy method for plotting site locations on a topo map for those persons who are not familiar with the U.T.M. Coordinate system.

> **U.T.M.COORDINATES: ZONE, NORTHING, EASTING** - Universal Transverse Mercator is a metric grid system based on predetermined "ZONES". The Zone number for a given topo map can be found in the bottom left border, look for "*1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue*". Each of the blue tick marks around the border of the topo mark 1,000 meter increments north of the equator or 1,000 meter increments east of the zone's western baseline. An example of an UTM coordinate is "zone 17 4439080mN 675520mE." If grid lines are drawn across the map connecting the blue tick marks, a scale can be used to locate the site by measuring the number of meters north and east of the grid square's bottom left corner. Append the number of meters north

and east of the grid squares bottom left corner to the number located on the border at each tick mark, (4439 + 080mN = 4439080mN, 675 + 520mE= 675520mE).

OWNER, ADDRESS - **Remember!** Ask the landowner's permission before you collect artifacts on private property. It is a violation of state law to collect artifacts on state lands and a violation of federal law to collect artifacts on federal lands.

If you know the tax parcel data, we encourage including that information. A county Land Atlas or Plat Book can be very useful for determining land ownership. Local Ag Extension offices often have the latest edition available for purchase and several counties have this information on line. Because this information changes, please include the date of the resource from which you obtain the information.

COLLECTION LOCATIONS - List any details concerning the location and ownership of any know artifact collections from the site. This can be collectors' names or institutions.

INFORMANTS - The identities of persons providing information about sites will be protected.

CRITERIA FOR NATIONAL REGISTER INCLUSION - List any reasons why the site should be considered for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

SUBMITTED BY – Don't forget to include your SPA chapter affiliation. All of this information is kept confidential.

Mail the Completed PASS Form to:

Pennsylvania Archaeological Site Survey
PA Historical & Museum Commission
Bureau for Historic Preservation
Commonwealth Keystone Building, 2nd Floor
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093.