

Topaz Archaeological Policy

This policy is established by the Topaz Museum to govern all archaeological projects and activities conducted at the Topaz National Historic Landmark site near Delta, Utah.

The medical maxim "first do no harm" also applies to significant historic archaeological sites such as Topaz. Given that archaeology is a destructive science, limiting excavations is the best way to preserve and protect the site.

Future technologies may provide more effective and less invasive options for teasing out the secrets of the past. Well-designed archaeological projects that address significant gaps in the Topaz story should definitely be considered and approved if they have merit.

As the only Japanese American confinement site that is totally owned by a private non-profit organization, the Topaz Museum Board has intentionally chosen to leave the site as-is, which basically means no building construction, no restroom facilities, no addition of anything that didn't exist when the last incarcerated left on October 31, 1945.

Unlike many of its contemporary camps, the Topaz site is an open book. The dry climate and the lack of overlaying soils make it very "readable" as-is. The Topaz Museum's goal is to preserve and protect what is there to the greatest extent possible.

No investigations on the site should be conducted without contacting the Topaz Museum Board and obtaining written permission. All artifacts found on the site are the property of the Topaz Museum Board and should be left where they were found.

To obtain permission, please fill out the Topaz Archaeological Permit Application. If your application is approved, the Topaz Museum will issue you a permit and will charge you a refundable security deposit and a fee that will go toward the maintenance of the Topaz National Historic Landmark site. In addition, if the Topaz Museum Board believes it is appropriate for you to have a Museum staff member onsite during your project, you will be charged accordingly, not to exceed \$150 per day.

For questions and inquiries, please contact info@topazmuseum.org.

And, as always, collecting or displacing artifacts by site visitors is prohibited.

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