



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION

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**R.I. HISTORICAL PRESERVATION & HERITAGE COMMISSION TO HOLD
PUBLIC STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS REGARDING
COASTAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES DAMAGED BY HURRICANE SANDY**

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) will convene two public stakeholder meetings to discuss the nature, significance, and management of coastal archaeological sites damaged by Hurricane Sandy in 2012.

Native American settlement along Rhode Island's coastlines over the past 5000 years has generated a rich and irreplaceable archaeological record. Unfortunately, much of this record may be destroyed in the coming decades by rising sea levels and coastal storms of increasing intensity and frequency. Following Hurricane Sandy, the RIHPHC noted extensive damage to archaeological sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NR) and many sites eligible for listing in the NR on Block Island and along the South Coast. Using Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief Grant funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, the RIHPHC designed and administered surveys to identify and evaluate these sites. The recently completed surveys identified and documented archaeological sites damaged by Hurricane Sandy, evaluated the significance of these sites, projected their susceptibility to future storm damage, and proposed management options.

The RIHPHC will hold two public meetings to present survey findings and solicit comments and suggestions regarding long-term site management. State Archaeologist Timothy Ives explained that "Local engagement is the foundation of both coastal resource management and historic preservation in Rhode Island."

Information on the two meetings are as follows:

South Coast Archaeology Stakeholder Meeting
The Towers, 35 Ocean Road, Narragansett
Tuesday, September 13
7:00-9:00 PM

The Public Archaeology Laboratory Inc. will present the results of their survey of archaeological sites damaged by Hurricane Sandy on the South Coast of Rhode Island. Their

study area consists of coastlines on the east side of Point Judith Neck (extending from Narragansett Pier southward to Point Judith) and along the southern shores of Narragansett, South Kingstown, Charlestown, and Westerly to Napatree Point. Archaeologists will discuss several Native American archaeological sites, in addition to Fort Mansfield, an Endicott Era coastal artillery installation. Public questions, comments, and discussion will follow.

Block Island Archaeology Stakeholder Meeting

Island Free Library, Dodge Street, Block Island (New Shoreham)

Tuesday, September 20

1:00-4:00 PM

This meeting will feature a presentation by the Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc. on a seventeenth-century Native American site exposed by the washout of Corn Neck Road, the only land route between the northern and southern portions of Block Island. Next, the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center will present an overview of archaeological sites along the island's perimeter and low-lying salt ponds. Their findings show that Native American sites across the island are more diverse and widely distributed than previously thought, substantially recasting local research and preservation priorities. Public questions, comments, and discussion will follow.

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