

Section 106 Success Story

M-231/US-31 Holland to Grand Haven

CROCKERY TOWNSHIP | OTTAWA COUNTY

During the summers of 2011 and 2012, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) funded a major archaeological investigation in Ottawa County. The archaeological work was conducted as part of MDOT's compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act requirements for the M-231 highway project. Excavations were undertaken to recover archaeological data from three known sites within the proposed construction zone for the highway. The pre-contact Native American sites date to the period A.D. 1000–1500. A wealth of archaeological information was recovered from the sites, including a variety of stone tool types and fragments of pottery vessels. Numerous deep pits that may have been used for food storage were also discovered and excavated. The MDOT senior staff archaeologist, the State Historic Preservation Office, the Federal Highway Administration, and six federally recognized Indian Tribes of Michigan collaborated to develop a Tribal Involvement Plan that provided for Tribal access to the site. It also stipulated a process should Tribal Ancestors be inadvertently discovered during the excavations.

MDOT and the tribes are developing educational and curriculum materials based on information gleaned from the project. The project was awarded a Governor's Award for Historic Preservation by the State of Michigan in 2015.

LOCATION

Crockery Township, Ottawa County, Michigan

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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FEDERAL AGENCY

Federal Highway Administration

PROJECT DATE

2011-2012