

How to Write the Archaeological, Historical, Cultural Prescription

First, let's do a quick review of what information generally should be included in the Archaeological, Historical, Cultural Prescription narrative:

- Date of the archaeological, historical, cultural search.
- If there are NO results from the search, then indicate “No known reported resources identified by the search.”
- If there ARE results from the search, then indicate known reported resources identified by the search, provide the site number or identifier, and how these resources will be protected during the harvest.

This first example has all the basic elements, stating that a search was conducted and indicating the date.

“No archaeological, historical or other cultural concerns based on a search of the NHI Database on October 28, 2013.”

However, it also states that the search was done in the NHI database. Remember, a separate database—maintained by the Wisconsin Historical Society and accessible to DNR staff through a cooperative agreement—exists for archaeological, historical and other cultural resources. In this example, it's not clear if a search was completed for archaeological and historical resources. In addition, this narrative doesn't describe or indicate that the area was searched for archaeological, historical or other cultural resources. Referencing the map included with the cutting notice could be useful in this situation.

Here's a second example.

“A logging camp was identified. Avoid as able within project area.”

Clearly, this example needs to provide details of when the search was conducted and to specify no recorded resources identified. It's also missing information on the date the search was completed, the database searched and the location searched.

Here's an improved version of this example.

“A search completed on February 25, 2014 in the Archaeological, Historical or Cultural Database identified a reported resource, a logging camp (site number #12345). To protect this resource, harvesting should only be done on well-frozen ground—ideally with snow cover—to minimize soil disturbance (and no stump pulling, no road cuts within this area either).”

As you can see, the search date is provided along with the specific resource searched. Details regarding HOW the harvesting should occur are provided as well.

In summary, keep these items in mind when filling out this prescription:

- This information is important and required for the Cutting Notice form.
- The Archaeological, Historical, Cultural Database search should be performed BEFORE the cutting notice is submitted to the DNR forester.
- Work with your local DNR forester prior to submitting the cutting notice to get this information.
- Fill-in the information you receive from your local DNR forester even if the search finds no recorded archaeological or historical resources.
- Be sure to include the date the search was completed.