

# Archaeology

In Howard County and  
at Mount Pleasant  
(The Howard County  
Conservancy)

# Archaeology is:

- 1. the systematic unearthing of material culture (artifacts)
- 2. the scientific attempt to reconstruct our past
- 3. a method of recovering evidence of human culture
- 4. protecting our antiquities

There are **five** basic **steps** that archaeologists follow in their line of work.

**Where** - to look

**How** - to go about recovering evidence of human culture

**Recording** - the location of artifacts and features

**Analyzing** - what is found

**Reconstructing** - what occurred at a specific site at a specific time



40x40 cm  
Shovel Test Pits



Excavation by  
Meter Square

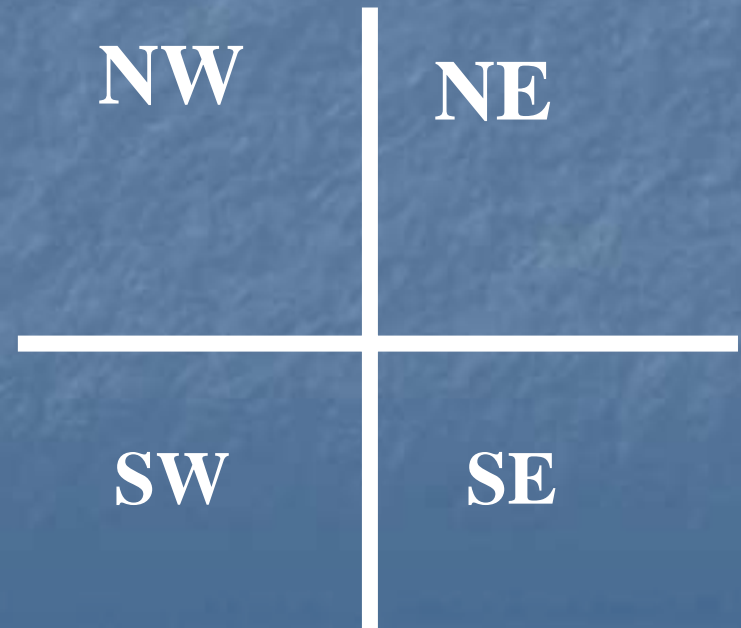
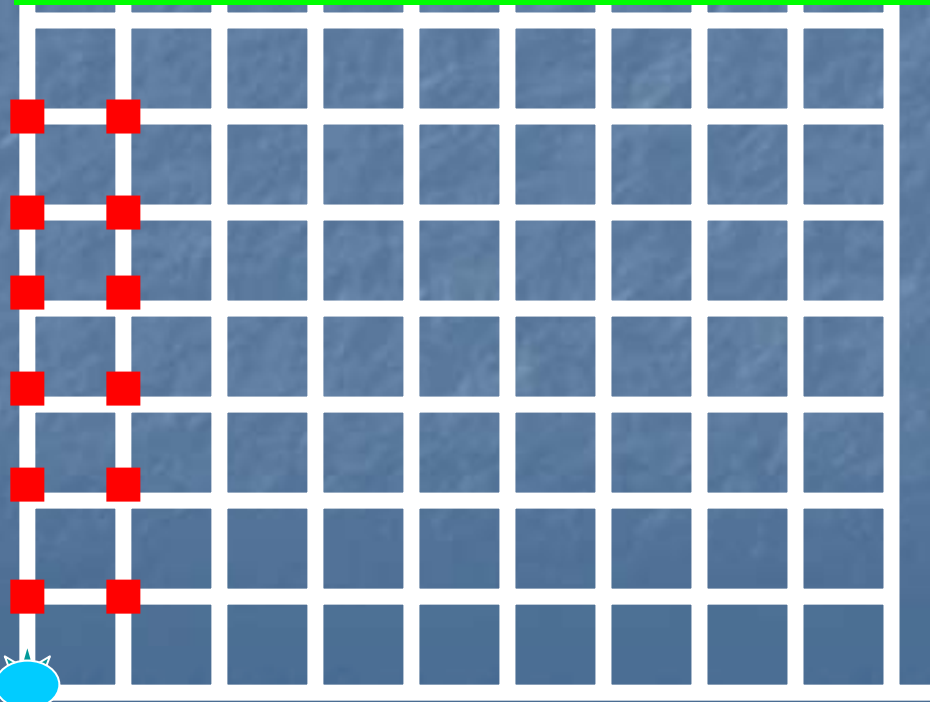
3 Ways to locate a site or extract information  
from a site



Surface Reconnaissance- Flag, Measure, Bag



Shovel Test Pits, 40 X 40 cm, are placed at pre-determined intervals, along a grid, to search for evidence of material culture beneath the surface





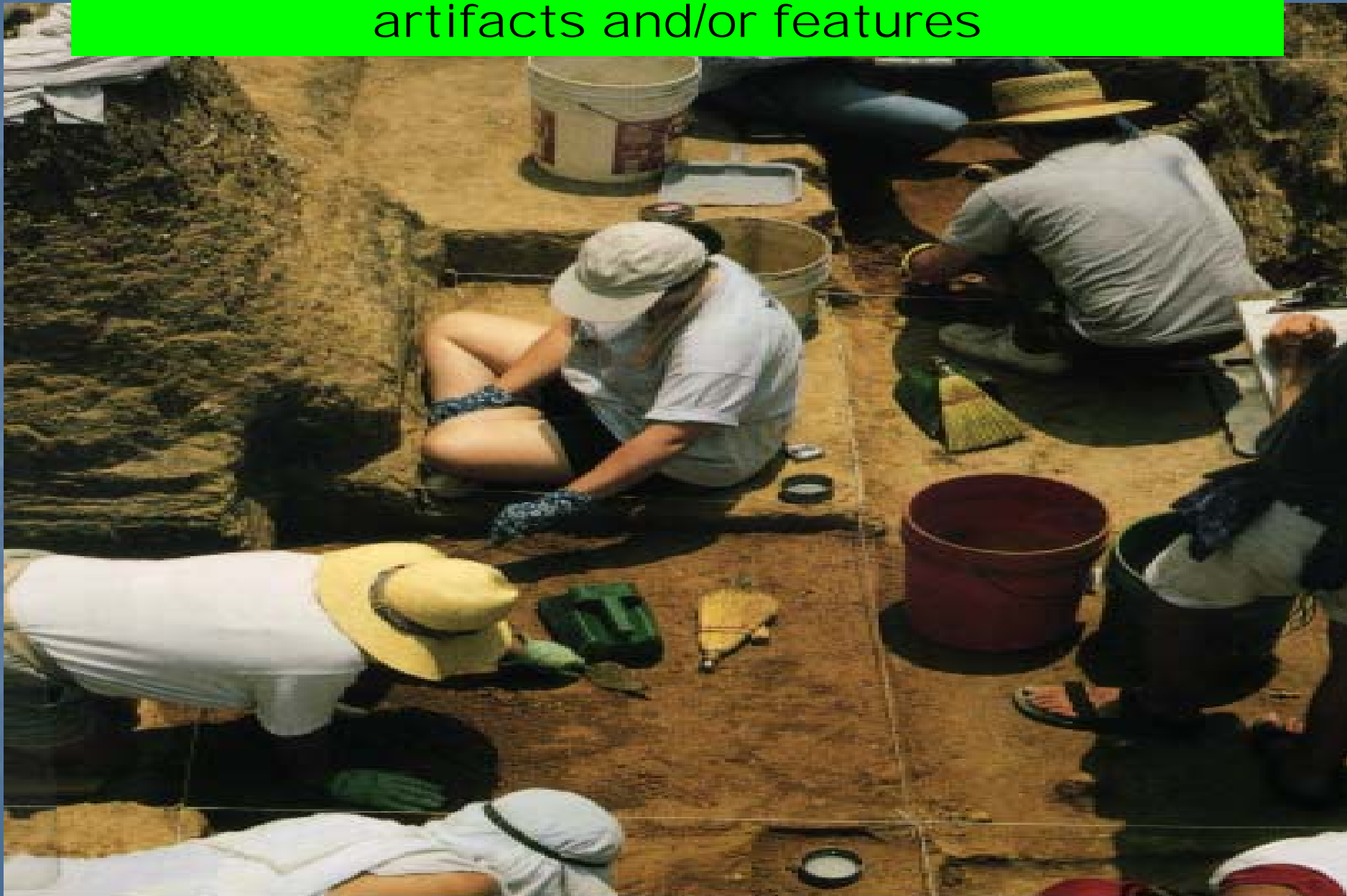
If artifacts/features are discovered the STP may be expanded to a meter square

A controlled surface collection (reconnaissance) may be conducted in farm fields where the soil has been tilled and artifacts are on the surface

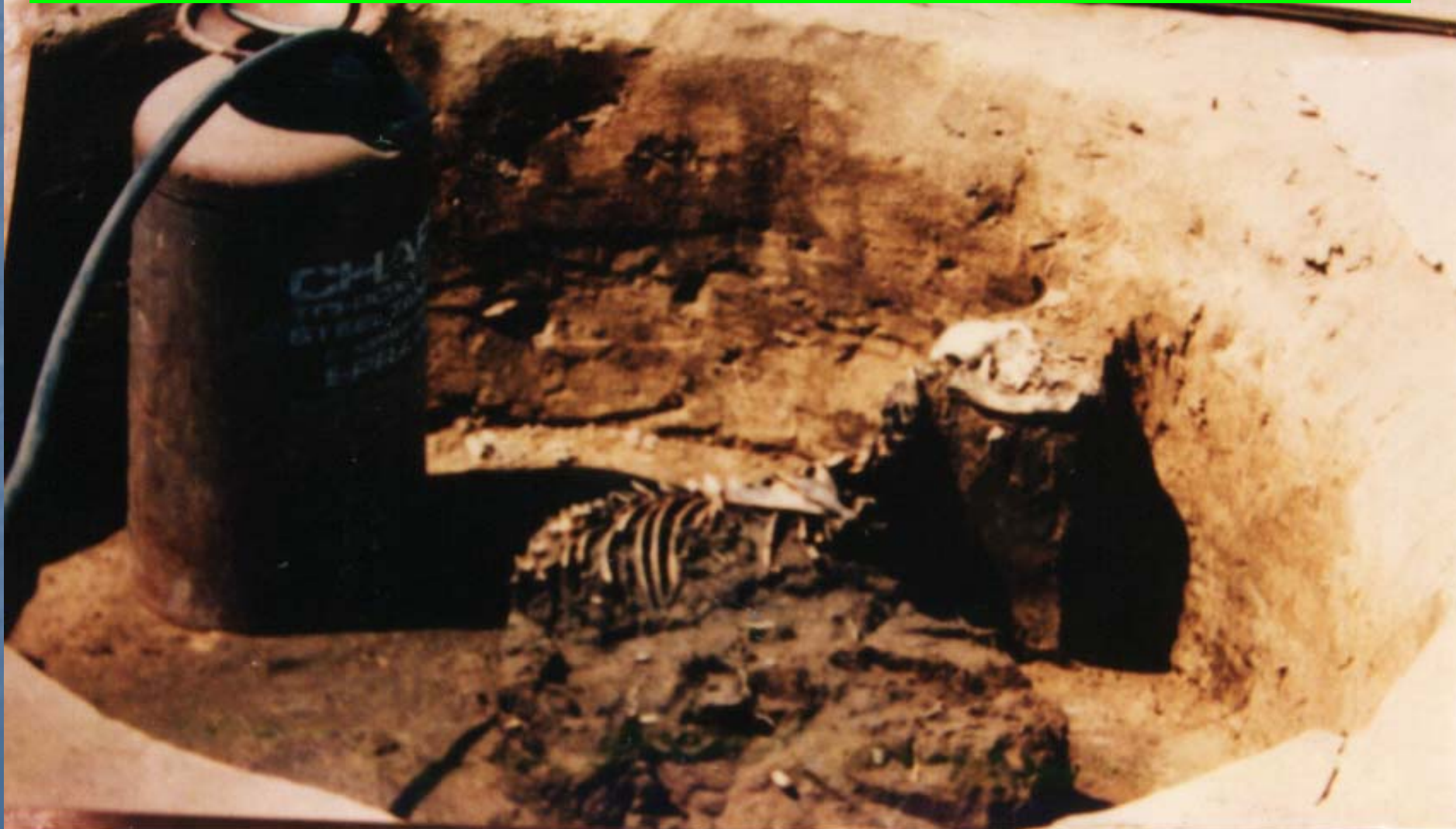


Flags are used to mark the exact location of artifacts which are then placed on a grid map

Full scale excavation occurs when squares or trenches are set in place to expose subsurface artifacts and/or features



A feature is a group of related artifacts/remains. Features, as this dog burial, are left in place (pedastaled) and carefully drawn to scale on a plan view map. Features include fireplaces, building foundations, postmolds, trash pits (middens) etc.



A brick foundation feature is shown in this  
2 meter square





Postmold- the remains of the decomposed wooden post



Post hole

A posthole and mold for an actual post is shown above. Careful excavation allows archaeologists to reconstruct a fence row, palisade and any number of other subsurface features.

Archaeologists dig  
up other peoples  
garbage



A trash feature is shown  
in the above square. It  
includes bones, pottery  
sherds, brick, charcoal.



Prehistoric Archaeology in America  
refers to Native American or Aboriginal sites

Native American sites in Howard County date to  
14,000 BP (Before Present). Evidence of their  
presence has been found in caves, tilled fields,  
and near rivers and streams



They utilized a variety of materials including stone, bone, wood and clay

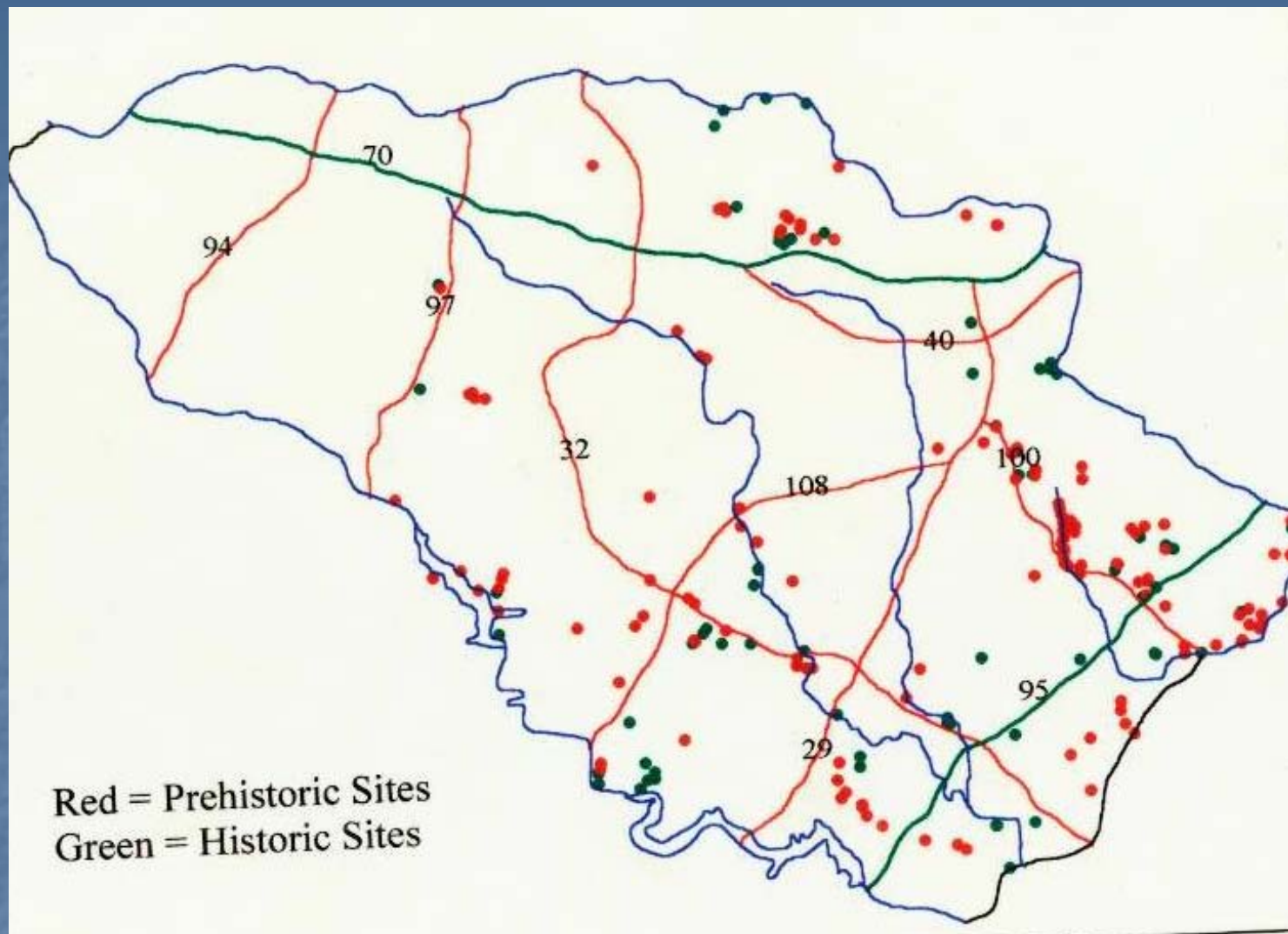


Paddles used  
to shape and  
decorate clay  
vessels

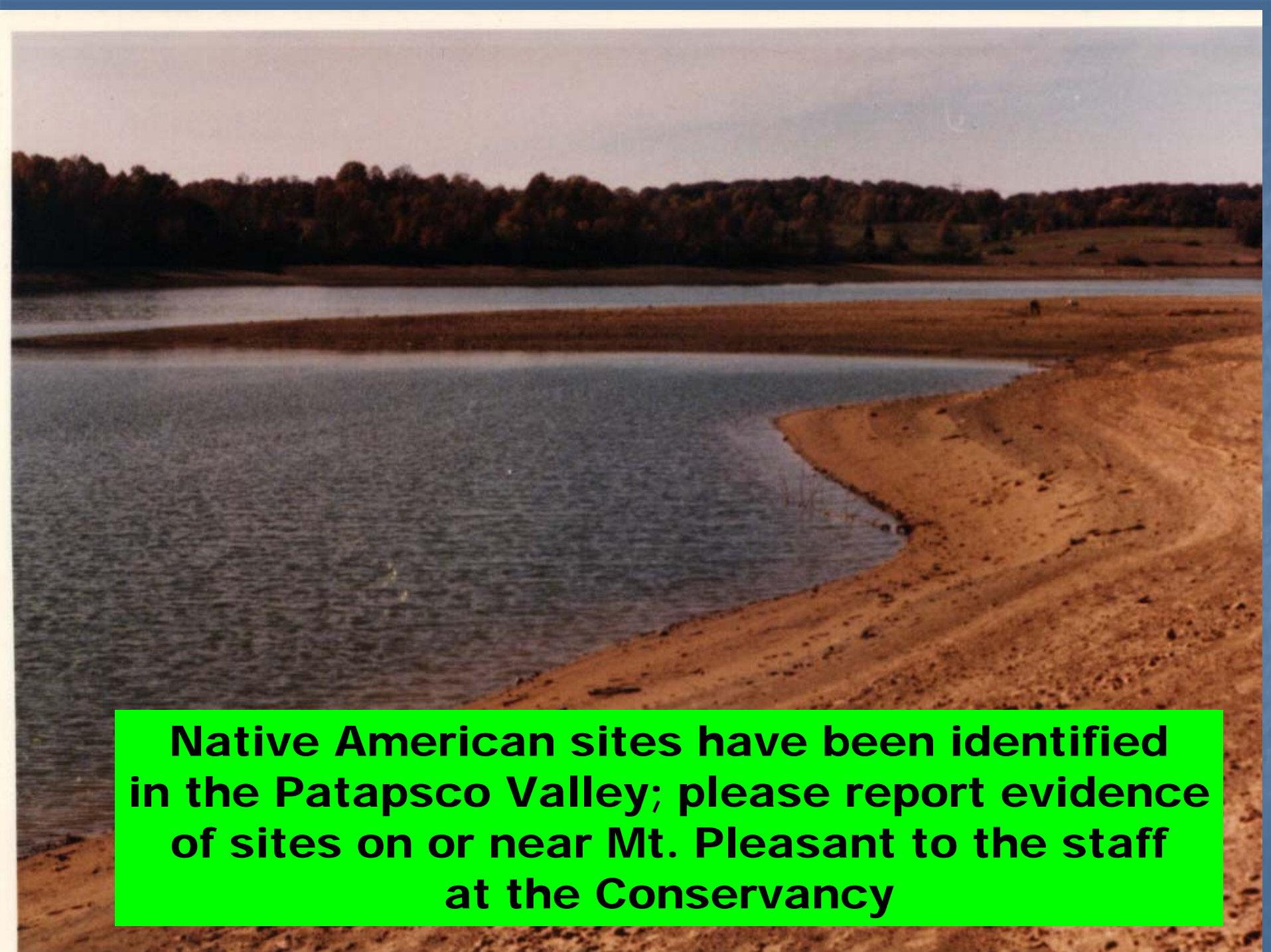


Woodland Indians lived in villages and raised corn





Although most of Howard County's 289 registered archaeology sites are prehistoric very little evidence has been found of their presence at Mt. Pleasant.... at least so far.



Native American sites have been identified in the Patapsco Valley; please report evidence of sites on or near Mt. Pleasant to the staff at the Conservancy

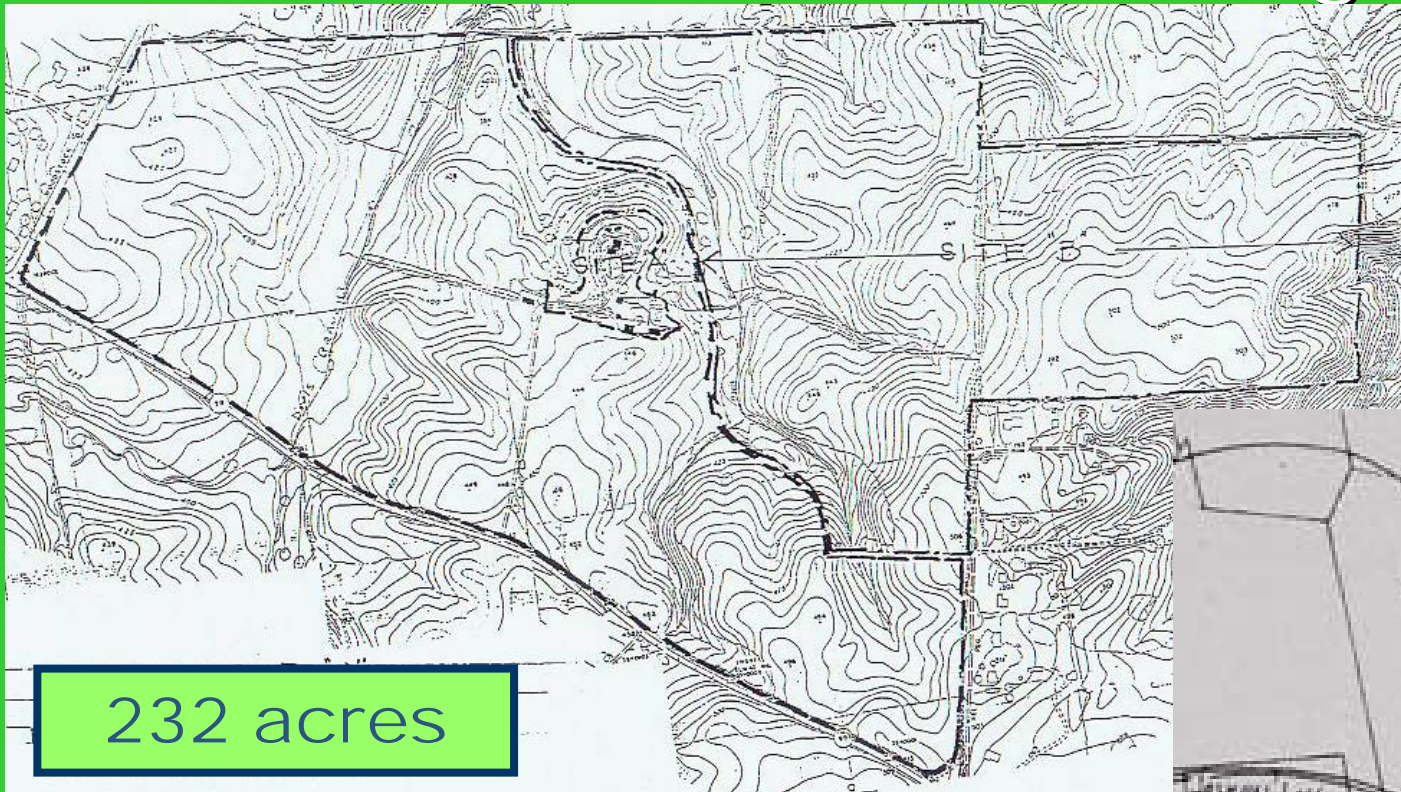
**Historical Archaeology** utilizes written records including deeds, letters, wills, photographs, diaries, inventories, Census data, etc. to help archaeologists locate sites and interpret artifacts and features.

Originals of land transactions can be found at the Hall of Records in Annapolis and at the Land Records Office in Howard County.



This section of The Howard County Land Grant Map shows the two 18<sup>th</sup> century grants, Ranter's Ridge and Good Fellowship, from which Mt. Pleasant was created.

Most of the 232 acre Mt. Pleasant parcel is part of the 415 acre 1703 land grant made to Thomas Browne and known as Ranter's Ridge





He was known as the Patuxent Ranger and was charged with keeping an eye on Indians in the Middle and Little Patuxent area between Laurel and the Patapsco River (the boundary between Howard and Baltimore County)

# This 1703 deed describes the 5 metes and bounds of Ranters Ridge

therefore hereby Grant unto him & his Thomas all & tract of Land call  
Ranters Ridge (going in & woods in Baltimore City on & South Side of  
the maine falls of Patapscoe Begging at about white oak standing  
in & head of a putupent Branch & running thence East north East  
sixty six p<sup>er</sup>ches then north thirty two deg: East one hund<sup>d</sup> & fifty three p<sup>er</sup>ches  
then North seventy nine deg: west three hund<sup>d</sup> & seventy p<sup>er</sup>ches then South  
sixteen deg: west thirty p<sup>er</sup>ches then South six deg: East one hund<sup>d</sup> & seventy p<sup>er</sup>ches  
to ad<sup>d</sup> red oak then by direct line to & first Tree Cont<sup>d</sup> four hund<sup>d</sup>  
& fifteen or more or less according to & Cert. of Sur. there of taken

East north east 66 perches, north 32 degrees east  
153 perches, north 79 degrees west 370 perches,  
South 16(it is actually 60, 16 is a mistake) west 30  
perches, south 6 degrees east 270 perches, then a  
direct line to the first=415 acres. 1 perch = 16.5 feet.



Point of  
beginning

Family genealogies have been helpful in tracing the transfer of land within and between families. Four generations of Browns are shown on the next two slides. When Benjamin Brown married Susannah Randall the present property adjacent to Mt. Pleasant, known as Good Fellowship, came into the Brown family.

1<sup>st</sup> generation

Thomas  
Browne  
"The Patuxent  
Ranger"  
1668-1715

Katherine  
Harris Brown

4

Thomas Browne Jr.

John Brown

Valentine Brown

Capt. Joshua  
Brown  
1698-1774

2<sup>nd</sup> generation

Capt. Joshua  
Brown  
1698-1774

Margaret  
Chew  
1698-

6

John Brown

Joshua Brown Jr.

Anne Brown  
o/a 1735-

Hannah Brown

Margaret Brown

Benjamin Brown  
1724-1768

3rd

Benjamin Brown  
1724-1768

11

Susannah  
Randall  
1726-1804

Capt. Samuel Brown  
1747-1833

Ruth Brown

Joshua Brown

Rachel Brown

Vachel Brown

Susannah Brown

Richard Brown

Charles Brown

Ephraim Brown

Rebecca Brown

Benjamin Brown Jr.

4th

Capt. Samuel  
Brown  
1747-1833

8

Achsah Riggs  
1745-1817

Elisha Brown  
1774-

John Riggs Brown  
1775-

Mary Brown  
1777-

Susanna Brown  
1781

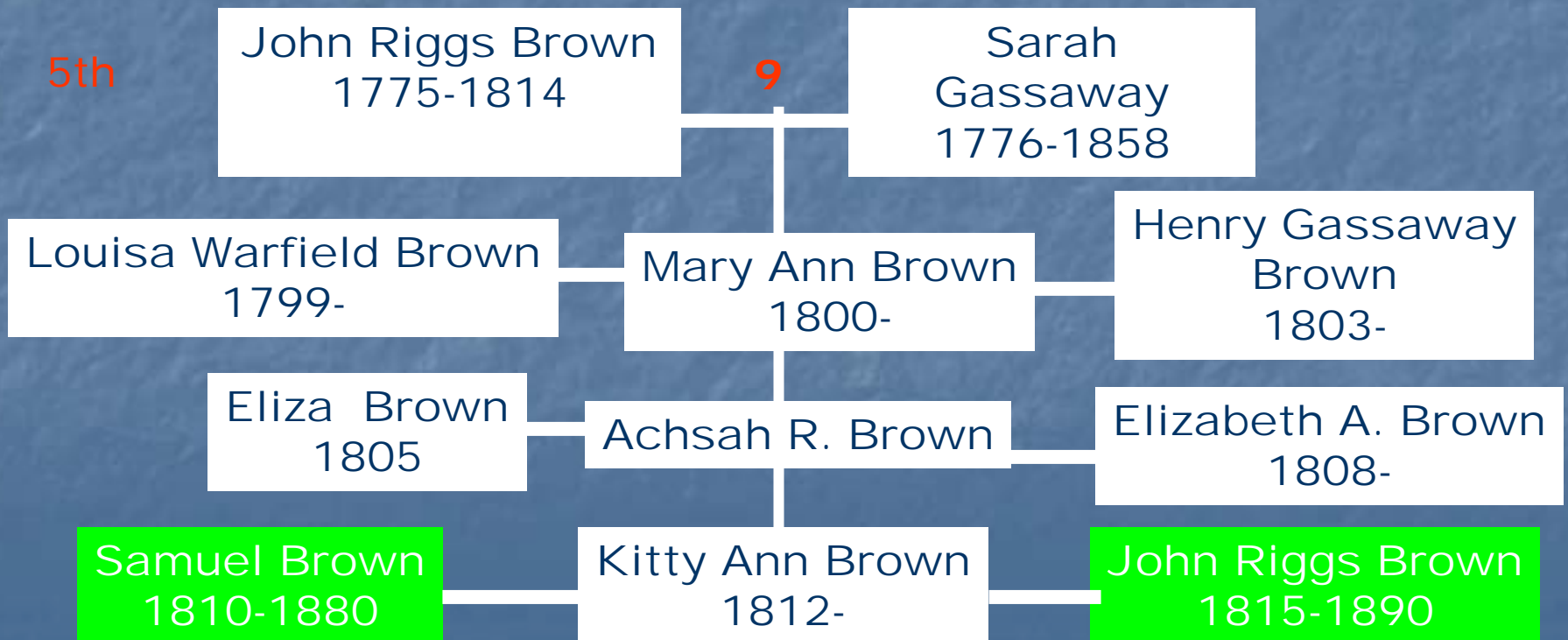
Samuel Brown  
1783

Vachel Brown  
1784

Joseph Brown  
1786

Achsah Brown  
1787-1817

4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> generation descendants were involved in numerous land transactions. Two of which resulted in the creation of the present 232 acre tract known as Mt. Pleasant. 6<sup>th</sup> generation Samuel Brown purchased a 192 acre tract in 1838 from Thomas and Camilla Herbert and added a 40 acre tract in 1859. He purchased it from his brother John Riggs Brown. The two tracts total 232 acres.



6th

Samuel  
Brown  
1810-1880

7

Elizabeth Jenkins  
Brown  
1812-1892

Henry George Brown  
1842-1929

S. Thomas Brown  
1843-1930

Gustavus Warfield Brown  
1844-

Charles E. Brown  
1851-1896

Frank DeSales  
Brown  
1854-1911

Mary I. Brown

Josephine E. Brown  
1846-

7th

Frank DeSales  
Brown  
1854-1911

3

Sara Louise  
Davis  
1869-1962

Donated Mt. Pleasant for  
preservation

Samuel Brown  
1902-1974

Ruth Davis Brown  
1903-1990

Frances Louise Brown  
1906-1992

Mt. Pleasant has the potential for any number of prehistoric sites and several historic stone foundations and architectural features have already been identified.



At present only one feature, a trash midden, has been investigated archaeologically



Field work began in 2002. Travis Young, in order to fulfill his Eagle Scout Archaeology Merit Badge requirement, received permission to conduct a dig in an area where "broken glass and other pieces of debris", had been found on the surface.

Two of the three squares excavated are shown below. The artifacts were cleaned and placed in a cabinet that is on display in the farm house.





The Upper Patuxent Archaeology Group (UPAG) offered to identify the horizontal and vertical boundaries of the entire midden and to catalogue and analyze the artifacts.



Dr. Charles Hall, Terrestrial Archaeologist for the State of Maryland, and archaeologist Kathie Fernstrom help in the setting up of the site grid.



Lee Preston's Physical Anthropology/Archaeology students from Howard Community College assisted in the field/lab work from 2005-2006.



Two, one meter units were opened. One, between the Eagle Scout units and one toward the eastern boundary.



UPAG applied for a site number from the State of Maryland. Mt. Pleasant became the 269<sup>th</sup> Howard County site officially registered with the State-18 HO 269.

18H0269

N10W2

N9E0



Dirt is removed with trowels and placed in buckets.



Buckets are dumped into ¼ inch mesh screens and the dirt is sifted separating any artifacts missed with hand trowels.







Artifacts are placed in bags and transported to the lab for cleaning, categorizing, and labeling.



Artifacts are placed on drying racks and then labeled with the site and square number.



Often artifacts are washed and placed on racks in the field; allowing volunteers to analyze what was just excavated.





70+% of the artifacts found thus far are in 2 squares- N10W2 and N10W3.

Many were complete and most are associated with the late 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Thus far the evidence suggests a one time clean out and dump; not a long term stratified 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century midden.

Piecing together broken pot sherds (articulation) also takes place in the laboratory.





Artifacts are categorized by functional groups:

Architectural  
Food and Beverage  
Domestic  
Personal  
Aboriginal





Most of the artifacts are bottles including, Mason jar lids and liners, A&P Extracts, Rumford Baking Powder, Listerine and other medicinals.



A unique ceramic vessel



Glyco-Thymoline is a mouthwash



Additional squares have been opened and fieldwork will continue until the boundaries of the midden have been identified.

Red=Eagle Scout Square

=Corner fence post

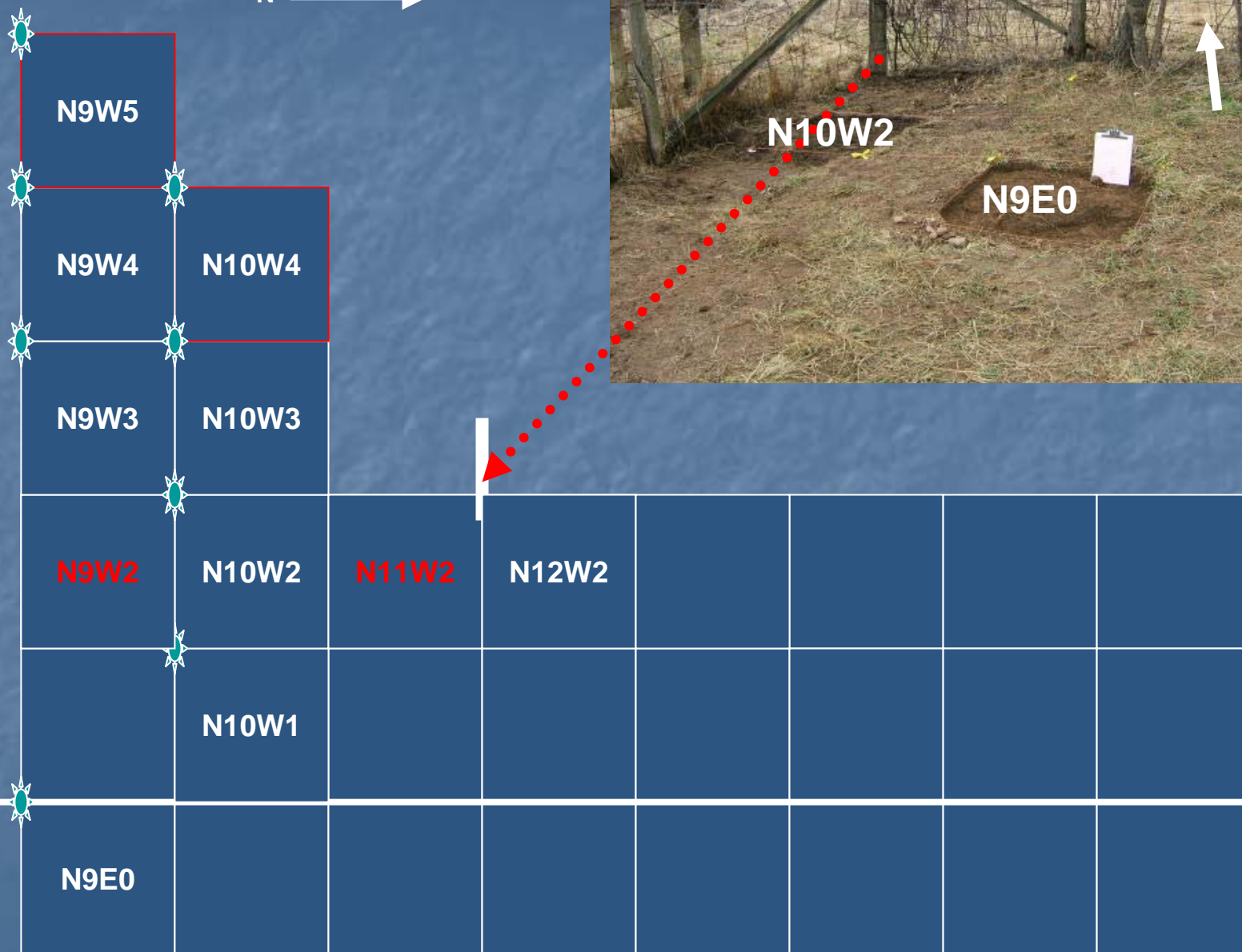
O=Auger Test

▬=fence post

☼=SW corner

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N →



Augering is being conducted to identify how far the midden extends N-S and E-W.



Holes are dug at one meter intervals in order to determine the horizontal limits of the midden.

Present evidence suggests the bulk of the deposit is within a 4x4 meter area.



The auger dirt being sifted.

Red=Eagle Scout Square

=Corner fence post

O=Auger Test

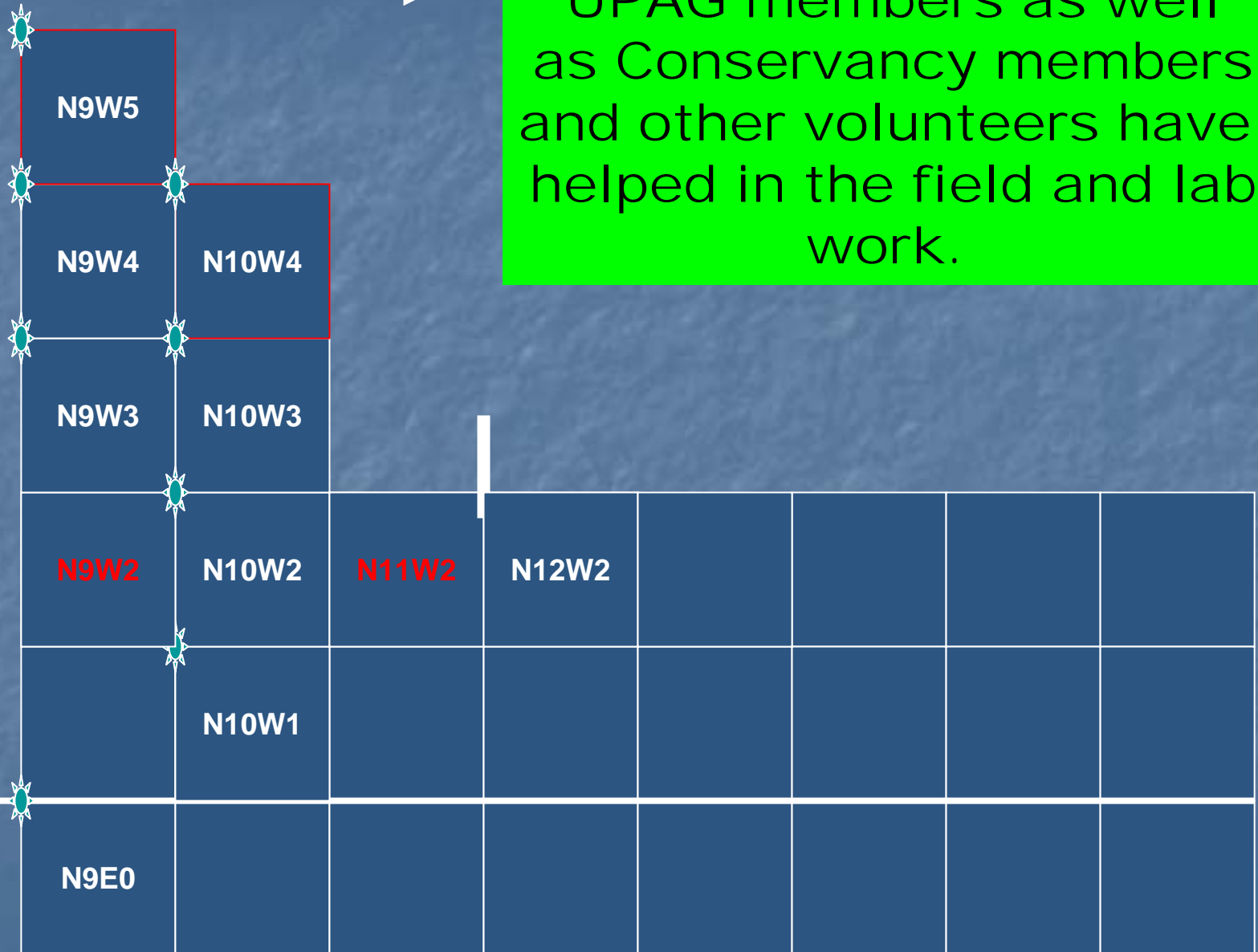
—=fence post

⊙=SW corner

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Conservancy

N →

UPAG members as well  
as Conservancy members  
and other volunteers have  
helped in the field and lab  
work.













Visitors learn proper field techniques; and everyone seems to enjoy the excitement of discovering pieces of our material culture.

















186-249  
N9-5  
2/2/17  
3














A photograph of an archaeological excavation site. A clear plastic bag filled with small, light-colored artifacts is placed on a patch of reddish-brown soil. The surrounding area is a mix of dirt and sparse green vegetation. A yellow ribbon is visible in the bottom left corner. A green text box is overlaid on the center of the image.

Field and laboratory work will continue, as well as the archival research associated with Historical Archaeology.

A photograph of a dry, grassy field with a fence and bare trees in the background. The field is covered in brown, dry grass and low-lying shrubs. A wooden fence with wire runs across the middle ground. In the background, there are several bare trees and a clear blue sky with some light clouds.

Contact the Conservancy if you'd like  
to be involved....Thank You.