

ISOLATED FINDS

And Discovering Artifacts in Florida Rivers

Did You Know?

Artifacts from state lands (submerged bottomlands, wetlands or uplands) are state property. It is a violation of law to surface collect or excavate without having proper written authorization. The only exception is for the surface collection of Isolated Finds from Florida rivers. However, anyone who collects Isolated Finds must by law report what, where and when they found artifacts.

What Is an Isolated Find?

An isolated find is an artifact displaced from its original archaeological context through erosion or water currents. These artifacts are not considered of primary archaeological significance, since they have become isolated from their sites of origin.

What Is an Archaeological Site?

Archaeological sites include artifacts associated with sunken or abandoned watercraft, submerged docks, mills, and other structures, or artifacts contained in buried (stratified) sites of human activities. Isolated finds collecting is **not allowed from archaeological sites**.

What About Collecting Artifacts from Public Property?

Ownership of archaeological sites and artifacts located on state-controlled lands, including submerged lands, is vested in the Division of Historical Resources. The Division's Bureau of Archaeological Research administers policies and programs to protect and interpret these archaeological resources. Written permission to conduct research and recovery activities at state-owned sites must be obtained from the Bureau, except for the recovery of isolated finds in Florida's rivers.

What About Diving in Florida Rivers for Artifacts?

Divers may collect isolated finds from Florida rivers with the understanding that they **must** report their finds within 30 days of the recovery. Isolated finds permission is granted to divers to collect exposed and disassociated artifacts on the surface of state-owned, submerged bottom lands in Florida rivers, except from those areas that are part of state and federal parks, preserves, management areas or reserves where cultural resources are specifically protected.

How Can I Keep the Artifacts I Find in Rivers?

Once the finder provides the information about the isolated find, the Division will notify the finder it has received the report. The Division has 90 days from the date it receives the information to determine the disposition of the isolated find. The Division may transfer ownership to the finder; may determine that a particular artifact needs to be studied, cast, or otherwise documented in more detail before returning it to the finder; or, may retain possession of the original artifact and may provide the finder with a replica. If, after the 90-day period, the Division has not notified the finder of its intent, ownership of the artifact is automatically transferred to the finder.

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When am I breaking the law?

- Failure to report isolated finds
- Use of hand or power tools for excavation of submerged bottom lands
- Collecting artifacts from an archaeological site (i.e. sunken watercraft, stratified archaeological site etc.)
- Conducting any activity that results in archaeological site destruction

What Is the Diver's Responsibilities?

An Isolated Finds Form should be used to report the following information.

1. Finder's name, address and telephone number.
2. A map or copy of a map (USGS topographical map, county road map or equivalent) plotted to show where the recovery was made, and a verbal description of how to find the location.
3. A description of what was recovered and a photograph, computer scan (300 dpi or greater is preferred) or photocopy of the artifact(s) next to a scale (inches or centimeters).

Isolated Finds reports are to be done on a location by location and date by date basis. For example, if a diver makes recoveries from two or more locations on a given date, reports on each recovery location are required. Likewise, if a diver makes recoveries from the same **location on different dates, -reports for** each recovery day are required. It is the diver's obligation to complete this reporting process within 30 days of a find. This information should be sent to:

Isolated Finds
Bureau of Archaeological Research
R.A. Gray Building, Room 312
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

Where Do I Get Maps?

A good map store will have USGS 7.5' topographical quadrangle maps. Computer generated topographical quadrangle maps are available from software companies for about \$99.00 for full state of Florida coverage. They can be used to print out any area of interest in Florida on 8.5 *in. by 11 in. paper. Finally the Florida Department of Transportation (DOT) has county maps available for 30 cents each. You can call the DOT for information about purchasing maps at (850) 414-4050. Their fax is (850) 414-4915. Or you can writ them at: Florida Department of Transportation

Maps and Publications Sales
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

Where Do I Get Isolated Finds Forms and More Information?

Write to the Isolated Finds address given above, go to the Bureau's web Site at <http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/bar/finds/> or call us at (850) 245-6444