



**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**National Park Service**

**[N7014; NPS-WASO-NAGPRA-NPS0042368; PPWOCRADN0-PCU00RP14.R50000]**

**Notice of Inventory Completion: Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Archaeology, Nashville, TN, and Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY**

**AGENCY:** National Park Service, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Archaeology (TDEC-DOA) and Western Kentucky University (WKU) has completed an inventory of human remains and associated funerary objects and has determined that there is a cultural affiliation between the human remains and associated funerary objects and Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations in this notice.

**DATES:** Repatriation of the human remains and associated funerary objects in this notice may occur on or after [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**].

**ADDRESSES:** Send written requests for repatriation of the human remains and associated funerary objects in this notice to Phillip R. Hodge, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Archaeology (TDEC-DOA), 1216 Foster Avenue, Cole Building #3, Nashville, TN 37243, email *Phil.Hodge@tn.gov* and Nikki A. Wilcox, Western Kentucky University, 1906 College Heights Blvd, Bowling Green, KY 42101, email *nikki.wilcox@wku.edu*.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice is published as part of the National Park Service's administrative responsibilities under NAGPRA. The determinations in this notice are the sole responsibility of the TDEC-DOA and WKU, and additional information on the determinations in this notice, including the results of consultation, can be found in its inventory or

related records. The National Park Service is not responsible for the determinations in this notice.

### **Abstract of information available**

Human remains representing, at least, three individuals have been identified. The 649 associated funerary objects are lithic and faunal materials, shell, and ceramic artifacts.

*Site 15LO11, Logan County, Kentucky.*

In 2025, TDEC-DOA discovered a box in their repository labeled “Savage Cave, 15LO11; 10-69.” Upon examination, it was determined that the numbers referred to a date (October 1969) rather than a TDEC-DOA accession number. Inside the box, TDEC-DOA found a single partial ancestor and various materials removed from the site, most likely by a Tennessee Archaeology Society (TAS) member who later donated them to TDEC-DOA, although no records confirm this. Research revealed that 15LO11 is a multicomponent location that has experienced extensive looting over the years. Several Kentucky universities, along with advocational archaeology groups such as TAS have been associated with the site. TDEC-DOA contacted all relevant universities and discovered additional site materials in Western Kentucky University's care.

At WKU this site was visited by both Dr. Jack Schock in 1969/1970 and later by Valerie Haskins in the 1990's. According to artifact bags in the collection and the ledgers that were kept, Dr. Jack Schock likely visited the site with students and excavated a unit in 1969/1970. While there are no field journals notes from this time, records from an incomplete ledger of that period documents that materials were removed in 1969 on January 11th, February 19th, February 22nd and April 30th, as well as in 1970 on May 28th. At least one Ancestor was removed during this time, and the listed belongings removed included faunal remains, lithics, ceramics and shell. Based upon the presence of unit-depth information in the ledger, the archaeologists excavated one unit or trench despite there being no unit numbers or locations listed.

In 1970, one student completed a short documentation and subsequent summary of the faunal remains removed during the 1969/1970 excavations. This is the only further known documentation completed at this site. Despite there being a larger number of belongings known to have been removed during the 1969/1970 excavation, only seven of the belongings have been

located, meaning that 638 belongings and one Ancestor are currently unaccounted for presently.

Steps are being taken to identify their location.

In 1995, WKU students, under the guidance of Valerie Haskins, visited this site to see the aftermath of looting. Students visited the cave twice in 1995; on November 29th and December 2nd. During these visits, Haskins and students removed the remains of at least one Ancestor and brought them back to WKU. The remains of this Ancestor were not included in the initial 1990's NAGPRA inventory for reasons unknown.

### **Cultural affiliation**

Based on the information available and the results of consultation, cultural affiliation is clearly identified by the geographical location or acquisition history of the human remains and associated funerary objects described in this notice.

### **Determinations**

The TDEC-DOA and WKU have determined that:

- The human remains described in this notice represent the physical remains of three individuals of Native American ancestry.
- The 649 objects described in this notice are reasonably believed to have been placed intentionally with or near individual human remains at the time of death or later as part of the death rite or ceremony.
- There is a connection between the human remains and associated funerary objects described in this notice and the Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma; Cherokee Nation; Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma; Quapaw Nation; Shawnee Tribe; and the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma.

### **Requests for Repatriation**

Written requests for repatriation of the human remains and associated funerary objects in this notice must be sent to the authorized representative identified in this notice under ADDRESSES. Requests for repatriation may be submitted by:

1. Any one or more of the Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations identified in

this notice.

2. Any lineal descendant, Indian Tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice who shows, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the requestor is a lineal descendant or an Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization with cultural affiliation.

Repatriation of the human remains and associated funerary objects described in this notice to a requestor may occur on or after [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE **FEDERAL REGISTER**]. If competing requests for repatriation are received, the TDEC-DOA and WKU must determine the most appropriate requestor prior to repatriation. Requests for joint repatriation of the human remains and associated funerary objects are considered a single request and not competing requests. The TDEC-DOA and WKU are responsible for sending a copy of this notice to the Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations identified in this notice and any other consulting parties.

**AUTHORITY:** Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, 25 U.S.C. 3003, and the implementing regulations, 43 CFR 10.10.

Dated: March 11, 2026.

**Melanie O'Brien,**

*Manager, National NAGPRA Program.*

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