



## Rebuilding After a Wildfire: Ways to Mitigate Archaeological Risk for Property Owners and Developers

The British Columbia (B.C.) *Heritage Conservation Act* (HCA) protects archaeological sites across the Province. There are presently 62,000 known archaeological sites in B.C. and are protected regardless of previous disturbance or whether they've been officially recorded in the Provincial Heritage Register. (See [property\\_owner\\_brochure.pdf \(gov.bc.ca\)](#) for more context about the HCA and Archaeology in B.C.)

### ***Did you know?***

*While the province cannot require an HCA permit for properties that do not have previously recorded archaeological sites associated with them, there is a risk of encountering a previously unknown site.*

*For property owners, the consequences of uncovering a previously unknown site without authorization includes having to stop all work while required permits are obtained which results in delays and costs.*

*To mitigate these risks at the planning stage of your project you can:*

- 1. Contact the Archaeology Branch to request information specific to your property;*
- 2. Hire an archaeologist;*
- 3. Consider low impact building techniques.*

### HCA Permits for Residents Impacted by Wildfire in B.C.

Any impact to an archaeological site, including rebuilding a home after a wildfire, requires an HCA permit. In such cases, property owners and developers often need an archaeologist to review their building or development proposal and determine the work needed to meet HCA requirements.

To fast-track the permitting process and support people getting back into their homes, the Province has developed Wildfire Permits where multiple residents can be included on a single permit. To be included and receive authorization under a Wildfire Permit, the consulting archaeologist must make a request to the Archeology Branch on behalf of the property owner.

### Getting Started: Information about Properties Impacted by Wildfires 2023

Your first step to finding out if there is a recorded archaeological site on your property or if there's a risk of encountering an unrecorded site, is to submit a Data Request Form to the Archaeology Branch at: <https://www.archdatarequest.nrs.gov.bc.ca/> Under Section 2 of the data request form (see screen capture below), please indicate "**WILDFIRE**". This will ensure that your request is directed to the Disaster Response and Recovery Team at the Archaeology Branch.

**YOUR INFORMATION REQUEST**

\*1. What information are you requesting? (select and complete one):

I request information and advice about archaeological sites on the properties described below (In the text box below, include the Parcel Identifier (PID), street address, and the legal description if available. If you have maps, please upload them to the File Attachments section near the end of the form.):

Other (describe below):

\*2. Why do you require this information? (select and complete one)

I am a representative of the seller or prospective purchaser of the properties described above. The properties described above are currently listed for sale.

I am the property owner of the properties described above. I require the information because (describe below):

Other (describe below):

WILDFIRE

\*3. Who will have access to this information, including third party access? (select one)

I will not share this information with anyone.

## Hiring an Archaeologist

Qualified and eligible archaeologists provide expert archeological advice to be considered in the development of building plans and approaches.

### What is the role of an archaeologist?

1. They can review your development plans, provide a risk assessment, and make recommendations to minimize impacts to known archaeological sites.
2. They can assess properties with high archaeological potential to determine if a site is present.
3. Their findings help inform development plans, building approaches and recommendations to ensure alignment with the HCA.
4. They submit necessary forms and reports to the Archaeology Branch.

Hiring an archaeologist provides you with certainty and necessary knowledge about your property. It helps minimize unplanned delays and costs if there is an archaeological site on your property, or one is discovered in the process of planning to rebuild.

To learn more about how to hire an archaeologist, please visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/natural-resource-use/archaeology/private-commercial-or-development-property>

## Low Impact Building Techniques

Using construction options that minimize impacts to sites during rebuilding helps mitigate archaeological risks. See [property owner brochure.pdf \(gov.bc.ca\)](#) for examples of Low Impact Building Techniques.

As a property owner, you are encouraged to discuss low impact building techniques with your archaeologist.

## Contact Information

For inquiries relating to archaeological permitting on properties impacted by wildfires, contact the Archaeology Branch at: [WildfireRebuildHCA@gov.bc.ca](mailto:WildfireRebuildHCA@gov.bc.ca) or contact an eligible archaeologist.

For non-wildfire related inquiries about HCA permitting, contact the Archaeology Branch at: [Archaeology@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Archaeology@gov.bc.ca).