

Andrew Clark

Director of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
State Historical Society of North Dakota

Biographical Statement:

Andrew Clark is the Director of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and Deputy SHPO for the State Historical Society of North Dakota. Clark's research interests include the archaeology of conflict and peace, public archaeology, and technological applications to cultural resource management including remote sensing and analyzing drone-acquired aerial photos. Working for the South Dakota State Historical Society, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and private consulting companies, he has spent most of his career working in the northern Plains but has also conducted archaeological investigations in 15 states and two countries. Andrew holds a bachelor's degree from the University of South Dakota, a master's from the University of Memphis, and a doctorate from the University at Albany.

If elected, what can you contribute to the Plains Anthropological Society, and what priorities would you emphasize?

Over the past few years, I have enjoyed seeing the Plains Anthropological Society grow through active student engagement, increased representation in membership, and continued participation by existing members. To continue this trend, and be successful in the modern world, the PAS must continue to foster these groups. A post-Covid reality is characterized by many challenges that affect the practice of anthropology. With its established history, tight-knit community, and a healthy mix of academic and non-academic members, I know the PAS is well situated to face these problems and those that expand beyond the Great Plains. I see three areas where the Society can have immediate impacts over the long term. First, NAGPRA issues are garnering national attention, especially at Plains institutions. The anthropological community must address this head-on. I have seen firsthand how compliance affects departments and entire universities while creating statewide problems, as well as the concerns of Native Nations. The PAS can become a leader in assisting smaller institutions navigation of the complex legal environment while providing best practice guidance for properly handling orphaned collections and ancestral remains. Secondly, many professional fields face a hiring gap, and anthropology is no different. Low unemployment, increased inflation, and the influx of large-scale infrastructure projects have created worker shortages. As a professional society, we can assist in the placement of more Plains-focused faculty in academic positions nationwide, creating opportunities to best train students who may choose academic or non-academic career paths and assist compliance-based, state, and federal agencies find qualified individuals. Finally, the PAS must continue to strengthen the reach of The Plains Anthropologist. Regional peer-reviewed journals are struggling nationwide. Dilemmas such as paywalls, open access, impact factors, and other metrics have created a challenging environment to recruit authors while providing content that reaches target audiences. We need to take stock of our audience, current technological advancements, and the financial climate that helps and hinders journals and re-imagine how the journal can recruit authors and increase our impact and influence nationally.

Dave Williams

State Archeologist

History Nebraska State Archeology Office

Biographical Statement:

Dave Williams has over 20 years of archeological experience across much of North America. Volunteering during high school with the South Dakota Archeological Research Center (ARC) led to Dave receiving a BA in anthropology from the University of South Dakota and an MA in anthropology from the University of Colorado Boulder. He then spent three years doing contract archeology with R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates out of their Lawrence, KS office. Dave returned to South Dakota, spending 6.5 years as the ARC's Contracts Manager before joining History Nebraska in Lincoln as the Nebraska State Archeologist. Dave has been a full-time member of the Plains Anthropological Society since 2012, and is also a member of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA), Register of Professional Archaeologists, Nebraska Association of Professional Archaeologists (NAPA), Professional Archaeologists of Kansas, and South Dakota Archaeological Society. He assists with layout and production of "Central Plains Archeology", the journal of NAPA, and is a Nebraska representative of the SAA's Public Education Coordinators group. Dave is a member of the History Nebraska DEAI Committee, and helped organize the Nebraska NAGPRA Circle, a collective of tribal officials, museum professionals, and archeologists who are involved in NAGPRA activities across Nebraska. Dave has a passion for public outreach and engagement, and enjoys developing collaborative projects between professional archeologists, students, underrepresented communities, and volunteers.

If elected, what can you contribute to the Plains Anthropological Society, and what priorities would you emphasize?

My background in CRM archeology, through both the private sector and state government, has provided me with a diverse array of experiences, interactions, and learning opportunities. I have developed a familiarity and knowledge of educational and training needs for young archeologists, and I have been afforded the privilege to work and cultivate relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders, including state and federal agencies, tribal governments, universities, private contractors, and avocational archeologists, understanding the different wants and needs of each group. Additionally, I have been involved to some degree with nearly every facet of archeological research, including project planning and management, navigating issues related to legacy collections and curation, tribal consultation and NAGPRA, publication, and getting the public involved and interested, so I feel comfortable and confident engaging in and troubleshooting issues surrounding these topics with anyone. More personally, I am a diligent worker and follow through to completion any task or project with which I am involved. I support teamwork over individual accomplishment and strongly believe in utilizing everyone to their strengths. I am fair and diplomatic, but will also be assertive and hold others accountable when needed. All of these components would serve the PAS well if I am elected.

I have identified three primary priorities to pursue if elected. First, I will advocate for increased organizational support for public outreach and engagement. Through consistent, positive interactions with the public in the field, at public events, or through the Internet, we can promote

better site documentation and preservation practices, increase awareness about broader sociopolitical issues surrounding archeology as a profession, and garner support to ensure that nearly all of us continue to receive funding for our work. Modeling the work of the SAA and other archeological organizations, I will suggest that the PAS begin developing a “Resources” page for the general public, educators, and students that provides contact information for professionals in their area, lists of FAQs, recommendations for websites and further reading, and general best practices when considering archeological sites and artifacts.

Second, I will initiate an expansion of the PAS Student Affairs Committee to explore how the Society can be best utilized in promoting educational, professional development, and mentoring opportunities for the next generations of archeologists. Moving forward, we need to strongly consider what students want out of an organization like the PAS, whether they are willing (and financially able) to maintain a membership with such a group, and how we can encourage continued student participation after the annual conference has ended. Working with PAS membership to develop in-person or web-based trainings on professional topics, host workshops outside of the annual conference, create mentoring opportunities, and generally expand options for career development and networking can contribute to lasting engagement from students as they become professionals. Without students and young professionals, the PAS is doomed to see its membership numbers drop in the coming years.

Finally, I will press the PAS to expand its efforts in engaging with and supporting individuals from marginalized and underrepresented communities with an interest in archeology. Providing educational resources, professional training, and financial support for these communities would allow them the opportunity to take an active role in documenting and sharing their own personal and community histories, a much-needed advance in our profession. This process would begin with a reevaluation of the PAS Code of Ethics and Anti-Harassment Policy to ensure that current practice allows for safe and inclusive academic and professional environments for all PAS members and the groups with whom they work. Then, working with PAS members already engaging with underrepresented communities and with the communities in our research areas themselves, we can begin taking the next steps toward identifying how the Society can situate itself to best support and encourage involvement in the field of archeology by all.