

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Archaeology in Colorado is...

STATEWIDE

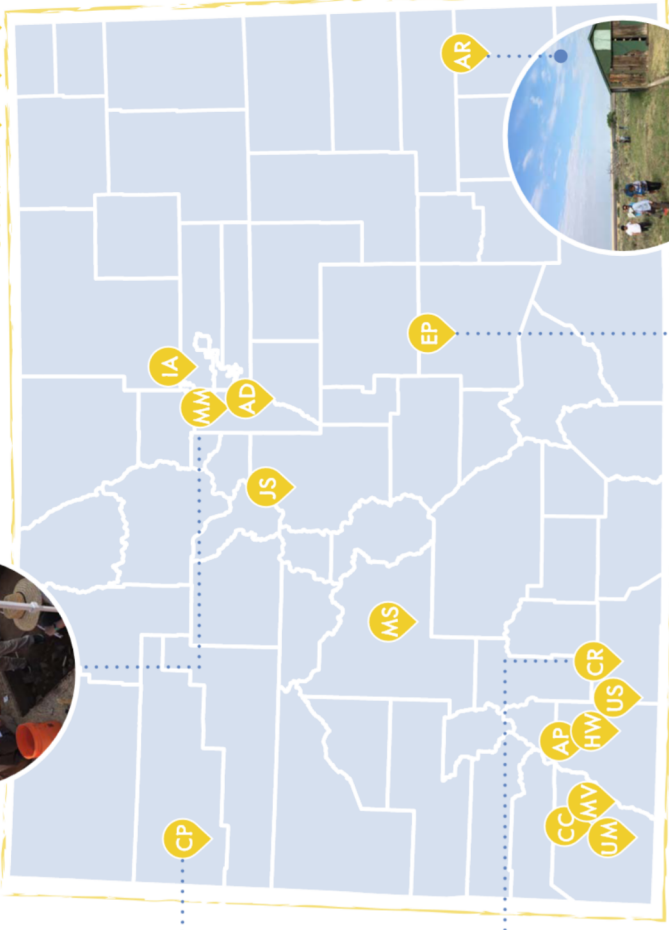
Archaeology is present in every corner of the state. The projects highlighted in this report are only a small sample of the work being done to preserve Colorado's colorful history.

Archaeological sites are widespread in Colorado. The benefits that come from archaeological investigations contribute to the prosperity of communities throughout all corners of the state. Mining sites and ghost towns in mountain communities, old homesteads on the Great Plains, rock art on the Western Slope, and indigenous sites in the San Luis Valley demonstrate the statewide scope of archaeology. As different as these landscapes and discoveries are, they all contribute to a fuller and more vibrant picture of the history of Colorado, while stimulating local economies. This report looks at a diverse array of archaeological benefits across the state.

Rural and Small-Town Colorado: Sites and museums in places like Dolores, Fairplay, Pagosa Springs, Trinidad, and Wray show that rural and small-town Colorado is rich with sites of great archaeological importance. These sites and museums attract visitors and generate substantial economic benefits for each of these communities.

Urban Colorado: In Colorado's larger cities, museums like the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and El Pueblo archaeological site in Pueblo explore archaeological experiences in urban settings. Archaeological sites in urban areas also benefit rapidly growing communities by preserving land and minimizing urban sprawl, exemplified by the Magic Mountain site in Golden (see pg 56).

Statewide AC PA CE



Projects Highlighted in this Report

- AR Amache Relocation Center, pg 28
- AC The Archaeological Conservancy, pg 61
- AD International Archaeology Day, pg 43
- AP Animes-La Plata Project, pg 30
- CC Crow Canyon Archaeological Center, pg 55
- CE Colorado Encyclopedia, pg 65
- CP Canyon Pinado, pg 35
- CR Chimney Rock, pg 37
- EP El Pueblo Project, pg 47
- HW Highway 550 Excavations, pg 23
- JS Jefferson Schoolhouse, pg 17
- IA Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs, pg 22
- MM Magic Mountain, pg 56
- MS Mountaineer Site, pg 39
- MV Mesa Verde National Park, pg 53
- PA Project Archaeology, pg 49
- UM Ute Mountain Tribal Park, pg 41
- US Ute STEM Project, pg 45

Archaeology in Colorado is...



ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE

Archaeology is the study of the human past through material culture, or artifacts. Archaeology projects lead to the identification and display of artifacts that allow us all to learn more about past peoples and landscapes. These discoveries, made by professional and avocational archaeologists alike, are often made accessible to the public in museums or on public lands. By seeing and touching these items from the past, everyone is able to better understand our connections to the people who came before us.

Learn more about the impacts of visiting archaeological sites on pg 34.

Exploring Archaeology Museums: Archaeological discoveries lend themselves to a deeper understanding of how past peoples lived. At museums located across Colorado, that knowledge is on display for everyone. High-quality exhibits at institutions like the Canyons of the Ancients Visitor Center and Museum and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science help bring to life the lessons of archaeology in easily accessible facilities. Learn more about visiting local museums on pg 40.

Discovering Archaeology Sites: Outside museums, Coloradans can visit archaeological sites like Cliff Palace at Mesa Verde National Park to explore human history in the exact locations where it occurred. These experiences provide a tangible connection with the past and also illustrate how Colorado's physical environment helped shape the human history on display.

RELEVANT

Archaeology teaches us how past societies answered, or failed to answer, pressing issues. Taking the lessons of yesterday's societies and applying them today helps us confront modern challenges with robust and informed solutions.

Climate Change: Archaeology is important for understanding climate change in complex ways. A wide variety of past societies dealt with climate change, such as Ancestral Puebloan societies in the thirteenth century, or farmers on the eastern plains during the dust bowl era. Climate change has its own history, and it is vital that we understand the drastic climate change we are experiencing today is caused by human activities over the past several centuries, and is itself an outcome of the industrial era. Learn more about the impacts of Climate Change on archaeological resources on pg 52.

Societal Change: By studying the past, archaeologists can better understand historical events and patterns, including how societies respond to significant pressures from population, climate, or even other groups. This analysis leads to revelations about human agency and behavior in societal changes we see today.

IMPORTANT FOR COLORADO'S ECONOMY

The economic contributions of many different types of archaeological activities are discussed throughout this report. Some of the most significant economic impacts are shown below and on the following page:

CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

2015 - 2019

Find more details on CRM economic impacts on pg 32.



GRANT FUNDING

1984 - 2019

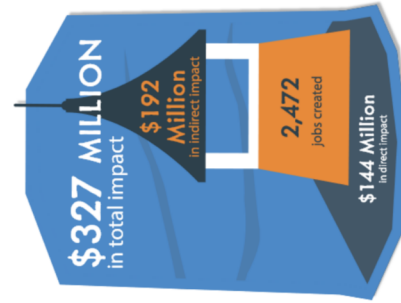
Find more details on grant funding for archaeological projects in Colorado on pg 26.



STATE & FEDERAL OVERSIGHT

2016 - 2019

Find more details on the economic impacts of state and federal regulations on pg 33.



HERITAGE TOURISM

2019

Find more details on the economic impact of heritage tourists who visit archaeological sites in the state of Colorado on pg 34.



GENERATED BY CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

Find more details on the economic impact of archaeology-related events in Colorado on pg 42.



GENERATED BY ARCHAEOLOGY EDUCATION

Find more details on the economic impact of archaeology programs in education on pg 44.



FROM VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES THROUGH THE COLORADO ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Find more details on the economic impacts of CAS activities on pg 46.