

SAA members have spent their careers working hard to preserve the rich cultural heritage of the United States, and now that cultural preservation framework is at risk. We will continue to inform our membership about all the developments in the federal policy arena, and to enable our members to have their voices heard by policymakers. The following are answers to the questions from the March 18 policy webinar that we did not have time to address during the broadcast.

Also, please don't forget to register for the May 8 webinar launch of the History Matters Campaign, hosted by the SAA, ACRA and SHA. In this event, which is free to SAA members, you will learn how to use site visits to build relationships with your elected officials and educate them on the scientific, cultural and economic importance of the work that you do. Click [here](#) to register today!

<p>Are we prepared for the possibility that our colleagues in architectural history and historic architecture will "throw archeology under the bus" in an attempt cut down on perceived regulatory delays caused by archeology, in an attempt to placate the Trump administration? This happened at the first NCSHPO mtg when the NY SHPO proposed that NCSHPO support eliminating archeological sites from NHPA protections.</p>	<p>The SAA realizes that there are rifts within the preservation community. We will work to foster better relationships with other disciplines but also prepare for other professions to take different approaches. Ideally the best defense is for all the preservation groups to work together, but we acknowledge that there are times when we might have to find new allies and/or go it alone.</p>
<p>Are there any indications that the ACHP is, or will be, targeted for staff or budget cuts?</p>	<p>That is unclear at this time. It is possible that the staffing reductions that we are seeing in other agencies will also occur at ACHP.</p>
<p>How will all of this affect the SAAs Airlie House 2.0 initiative?</p>	<p>The Airlie House 2.0 initiatives will have to be adapted to the changing environment. This does not mean, however, that they will be shelved indefinitely. Participants are today examining ways to recalibrate the conclusions and methods agreed upon at the conference in order to achieve their objectives.</p>

<p>Many young people give up this field because of lack of promotion, full-time year-round work, and retirement benefits--this is an area and aspect of CRM that needs serious reform</p>	<p>It is hard to predict what kind of jobs will be available in the future. Right now, we are likely to see a significant drop in the number of federal archaeology jobs. During the previous Trump administration, federal job vacancies were not filled, and we expect this will happen again. One thing we will need help with in the future is having accurate numbers of what archaeology jobs were lost in the federal employment purges. These jobs will include archaeology, curation, and tribal liaison positions. We need to know these numbers if there will be an administration change in 2029 so that we can work to restore these jobs.</p>
<p>Do we have to be careful about blowback from aggressive strategies such as slowing down 106 reviews?</p>	<p>The profession must not intentionally slow down Section 106 reviews, but the cuts in funding and staffing will have adverse effects on review times. One of the arguments we will be advocating for is improvement in technology. We know that the federal government needs improved technology to enhance project delivery and is hindered by antiquated procurement and technology laws. The SAA acknowledges that technology will only go so far to address the lack of staff, but it is the best solution in this current anti-regulatory environment.</p>
<p>For companies that are or are considering becoming Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, how might the DEI issues cause problems for the companies and change contracting set asides?</p>	<p>As of 4/1/2025, the DBE program is in place and at least one court filing seeks more clarification. All federal contractors must comply with the law, and this includes Trump's EO on "ending illegal discrimination and restoring merit-based opportunity."</p>
<p>For those small repositories/museums that hold federal collections in out-of-the-way places, do you think lack of monies to support those collections may significantly hurt them?</p>	<p>The SAA is monitoring any proposed changes (funding, regulatory, etc.) regarding federal archaeological collections. We have not seen, outside of the proposed ending of the lease for NPS Southeastern Archaeological Center (Tallahassee, FL), any effects on archaeological collections. However, the SAA cannot rule out more effects on federal archaeological collections. This is where we need our members to alert us to any changes, they are made aware of regarding federal archaeology collections.</p>

<p>How are federal funding cuts going to affect repatriation grants to help tribes under NAGPRA?</p>	<p>NAGPRA funding was caught up in the initial funding freezes where tribes and institutions could not access funds and has been allegedly fixed. For now, the NAGPRA funding and the recent regulation changes are not being looked at. However, we know that in the first round of employment RIFs, there were several NAGPRA jobs cut, and several EOs could be used to target NAGPRA. The SAA will be monitoring this closely, and if anyone experiences changes in funding levels or access to funds, or other changes, please notify the SAA immediately.</p>
<p>With the proposed or drafted bill to eliminate OSHA, how do you think that CR organizations as a whole might address that proposed removal? Do you have a sense of its importance to the Administration on the scale of everything being introduced lately?</p>	<p>The current administration and Congress believe that regulations hinder development. OSHA could have its mandate limited or could be completely removed. As of now, Congress has not formally ended these various agencies in law, though that could change. The courts are deciding if the president has the authority to shut down agencies, but it is unclear how that process will develop. The best way the SAA sees to counter the anti-regulatory environment is to push an economic argument. There are whole industries that are affected by removing these regulations. If OSHA is severely limited or abolished, there will be downstream effects on companies that provide safety gear, manufacturers of safety gear, consulting companies that help design safe workspaces, the cost of getting workplace insurance will go up, etc. The best argument is to show that there is an entire industry that will shrink if we get rid of regulations that will adversely affect the economy and if we can tie that to specific congressional districts that will have the biggest effect on keeping these regulations.</p>
<p>This has been very informative. Can we expect another webinar for updates as things develop?</p>	<p>It is possible that another policy webinar will take place. On May 8, the SAA, ACRA and SHA will host a webinar on how to build relationships with their federal, state and local officials and show them the scientific, cultural and economic value of archaeological work. SAA members can <a href="#">register</a> here.</p>

<p>With such drastic cuts to federal funding, staffing and the targeting of Section 106, are we heading towards an actual industry collapse with CRM?</p>	<p>Staffing and funding cuts, proposed regulatory changes, and proposed legislation could all harm the ability to survey and mitigate archaeological resources and to protect and/or repatriate collections. However, these changes may also create opportunities, such as a growth in contracting. SAA will continue to monitor all of these changes, and we encourage our members to read the GA Update and to act repeatedly to affirm the value of archaeological jobs and knowledge.</p>
<p>From a bigger perspective, the cuts really appear to have the potential to negatively impact cultural heritage broadly, particularly Indigenous and descendent communities. The consequence seems to be violations of international human rights. How do we frame the impacts these policy decisions are having on international obligations and relationships as a true threat Indigenous and descendent communities?</p>	<p>To effectively advocate for Indigenous and descendant requires effective framing. Based on actions taken by the current administration, international human rights will not be the correct way to frame the effects. The most effective advocacy for Indigenous and descendant communities is members of those specific communities, with outside organizations being allies and listening to their needs at the moment. Federally recognized tribes have a legal basis to certain rights based on laws, treaties, and court cases. However, we know based on the first term of the Trump administration that this will be challenged. For broader descendant communities, their heritage will be at risk with this current administration. How to effectively frame these impacts must come from Indigenous and descendant communities.</p>
<p>Allyson said she took statistics showing success and a lack of delay on projects to support Section 106. What can we do in a state where delay by the state agency has become the norm?</p>	<p>State governments have budgets too, and these budgets fund SHPOs and other state regulatory agencies. They will need support as well through this process, and we encourage our members to advocate for your SHPO and other state regulatory agencies, so they stay adequately funded and staffed. Also, you can go to our Take Action page and contact your federal representatives to fight for strong funding for cultural resources.</p>