United States Department of the Interior
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Permanent Instruction Memorandum No. AZ-PIM-2024-006

To: State Leadership Team and Line Officers

From: Deputy State Director, Resources and Planning

Subject: Use and implementation of the District Archaeological Technician Program

Program Area: Cultural Heritage Program

Purpose: This directive provides policy and guidance to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Arizona offices regarding the use and implementation of the District Archaeological Technician Program (DATP).

Policy/Action: The BLM Division of Resources and Planning developed the DATP to train District Archaeological Technicians (DAT) for use by BLM offices to aid in the identification and documentation of cultural resources, facilitate monitoring of cultural resources, and to provide general cultural heritage program support.

BLM offices may implement the DATP providing the following stipulations are met and adhered to:

1. District Managers and Field Managers must approve participation in the DATP.
2. Personnel must receive the approval of their direct supervisor to participate in the DATP.
3. Field Office cultural specialists will administer and oversee the DATP.
4. For offices with more than one cultural specialist, the Field Manager shall designate one cultural specialist to administer and oversee the DATP.
5. Field Offices must have at least one permanent cultural specialist (i.e., GS-0193-11 or higher) on staff to participate in the DATP.
6. Field Office cultural specialists must concur with the proposed use of the DATP on a project-by-project basis in consultation with the appropriate manager.

7. Field Office cultural specialists will conduct a yearly 3-day training to certify new and/or existing DATs. The certification of a DAT is at the discretion of the cultural specialist.
8. DATs receive annual certification by successful completion of the yearly 3-day training consisting of one day of classroom study and two days of field training.
9. Record(s) for DAT certifications will be maintained by both the DAT and the cultural specialist. The cultural specialist will also maintain a list of currently certified DATs.
10. Fieldwork completed during the two days of field training may be used to achieve District/Field Office L1050 Subactivity program elements (i.e., "targets") such as BC – Acres of Heritage Resources Inventoried and FD – Heritage Resources Intensively Recorded.
11. The use of non-BLM employees is not authorized with one exception. A District or Field Office may consider the use of Site Stewards or Tribal members provided that a volunteer agreement is appropriately issued.
12. DATs will not evaluate cultural resources for National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) significance or make determinations of eligibility for the NRHP.
13. DATs will not conduct condition assessments under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act or make findings of effect under the National Historic Preservation Act.
14. DATs will not collect or perform any mitigation.
15. DATs will not survey in high-site density areas or record large or complex sites unless the Field Office cultural specialist concurs with use of the DATP in those situations.
16. DATs will be directly supervised by the Field Office cultural specialist or an archaeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's professional standards, or an archaeologist who meets the Office of Personnel Management GS-0193-series grade 11 or higher, for all fieldwork and preparation of documentation or draft reports.
17. At the discretion of the Field Office cultural specialist, a DAT who has successfully participated in the DATP with good performance for two years, may perform small surveys of less than one acre unsupervised, or monitor ground disturbance within small projects less than one acre unsupervised (e.g., installation of a cattle guard, performing a reconnaissance survey of an Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring (AIM) plot, etc.).
18. BLM offices should consider potential conflict of interest or ethics violations when using the DATP (e.g., a Range Specialist who performs DAT duties for a range improvement project).
19. DATs may be removed from the DATP for poor performance at the discretion of the Field Office cultural specialist with approval from the appropriate manager.
20. The DATP and DAT are subject to all other Federal, State, and local laws and regulations applicable to the public lands and resources.
21. Archeological project design, literature review, development of the regional historic context framework, site evaluation, and recommendations for subsequent investigations must be developed with direct involvement of an archeologist who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation; fieldwork must be overseen by an individual who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

For offices to use in their implementation of the DATP, the Division of Resources and Planning prepared a DATP participants guide (Attachment 1), certification test (Attachment 2), training curriculum presentation (Attachment 3), and an example risk management assessment (Attachment 4). Substantive changes to the DATP participants guide, training curriculum presentation, and/or certification test are not authorized.

Timeframe: This policy is effective immediately.

Budget Impact: No budget impact is anticipated.

Background: The BLM Manual Supplement MS-8100, 8110, 8130, and 8140 provides BLM policy on professional qualifications, identification and documentation of cultural resources, consideration of cultural resources in land use planning, and protection of cultural resources on public lands. The BLM Arizona-specific handbook, H-8110 provides supplemental guidelines for identifying cultural resources and the use of cultural resource assistants.

Directives Affected: This PIM is consistent with BLM Arizona H-8110, Guidelines for Identifying Cultural Resources, Section VIII.

Coordination: This PIM was developed by the Division of Resources and Planning, in consultation with the State Executive Leadership Team.

Contact: Questions concerning this PIM should be directed to Matt Basham, Deputy Preservation Officer, at mbasham@blm.gov or 602-417-9216.

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4 Attachments:
1 - Arizona DATP Participants Guide (32 pp)
2 - District Archaeological Technician Program Certification Test (3 pp)
3 - District Archaeology Technician Program Training PowerPoint (84 pp)
4 - Example DATP Risk Management Assessment (6 pp)