

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

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JUN 10 1987

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District.

AND/OR COMMON  
N/A

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
N/A

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Stanton

VICINITY OF 2960

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

North Dakota

38

Mercer

057

**3 CLASSIFICATION (See Continuation Sheet)**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	N/A IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	N/A BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Region

STREET & NUMBER

655 Parfet Street, Post Office Box 25287

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Denver

N/A VICINITY OF

Colorado

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Mercer County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

N/A

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Stanton

North Dakota

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (See Continuation Sheet)**

TITLE "Cultural Resource Reconnaissance in the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site" by Steven K. Lovick and Stanley A. Ahler

DATE

1982

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of North Dakota

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Bismarck

North Dakota

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED    DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District is comprised of 44 archeological sites lying wholly or partially within the boundaries of the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site. The discontinuous district -- which totals approximately 550 acres --

[REDACTED] County, North Dakota, in what is archeologically termed the Upper Knife-Heart Region of the Middle Missouri Subarea. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the entire area of the district is now parkland administered by the National Park Service, but it formerly was devoted to agricultural uses and was comprised of cultivated fields and pastureland before acquisition by the Service.

The boundaries of the district coincide with those of the included archeological sites which have been defined during several years of systematic, intensive archeological survey of the park. This survey was conducted by the University of North Dakota and covered 93% of the land within the boundaries of the National Park Service. [REDACTED]

For similar problems of access, lands outside the park were not archeologically surveyed. Several of the archeological sites included in [REDACTED] (32ME8, 32ME9, 32ME383, 32ME407, 32ME416, 32ME474, 32ME499, 32ME787, and 32ME493). [REDACTED]

Also, several of the district sites are historic trails which are known -- largely on the basis of aerial photographs -- to extend beyond the park boundary. Likewise, the extra-park portions of these sites are excluded from the district. These sites include:

32ME475	Bedi Ari
32ME476	Hidatsa Northern Trail Complex
32ME494	Sakahami Trail

The archeological survey (Lovick and Ahler 1982) resulted in the identification of a total of 57 archeological sites that are either wholly or partially within the boundary of the National Historic Site. However, ten of these are excluded from the district because they are either the

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES 5,000 B.C. -1861

BUILDER/ARCHITECT N/A

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Knife River Indian Villages National Historic District contains a broad range of archeological sites (44 sites including three Hidatsa communities) representing more than 7,000 years. The Hidatsa communities contain the best-preserved earthlodge depressions of any major Native American site in the Great Plains. The extensive ethnohistoric documentation make these sites unique in the plains and greatly adds to their importance. The Hidatsa villages played an important role in the trans-plains trade network and later a major role in the fur trade and exploration of the American west. The villages show the effects of nearly a century of fur trade interaction with the whites, including the drastic results of epidemics and material culture change. Additional important areas that could be studied at the National Register District include adaptation to a changing plains environment, subsistence, resource utilization, plains culture history, village and subgroup movements of the Hidatsa Indians, distinction of differences between the archeological remains of the Mandan and Hidatsa Indians, and study of the origins of the Crow Indians. Knife River Indian Villages National Historic District is nationally significant as it meets Criteria A, B, and D of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended.

### Discussion

The following discussion of the significance of the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site archeological district has been adapted from the Cultural Resources Management Plan (1984) for the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site.

The Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site is the only unit of the National Park System that was created primarily to commemorate the history and prehistory of the Plains Indians. The archeological resources of the archeological district document changes in native ways of life and differing cultural adaptations to the rigorous Plains environment over the past several millenia. The park contains some of the best preserved, surviving examples of earthlodge village sites which once numbered in the hundreds along the Missouri River in North and South Dakota. Most of these village sites have, unfortunately, been destroyed as a result of the creation of large reservoirs on the mainstem of the Missouri, and many others have been (and are continuing to be) destroyed through agricultural practices, construction activities, and other modern use of the terraces along the Missouri River. Very few of the earthlodge village sites of the

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (See Continuation Sheet)

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY ca. 550  
 UTM REFERENCES Stanton, North Dakota

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(refer to Continuation Sheet)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A			

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Thomas D. Thiessen, Archeologist

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service  
Midwest Archeologist Center

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Federal Building, Room 474  
100 Centennial Mall North

TELEPHONE

FTS 541-5392  
CML (402) 471-5392

CITY OR TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

James E. Shroy  
 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is  National  State  Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Cheryl W. Beards

TITLE

Cheryl W. Beards

DATE

June 4, 1987

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

John J. Knowl  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

7/25/87

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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The Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District is a discontinuous district located within the boundary of the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site.

Clarification of ownership

A total of 44 sites is included within the archeological district. Four of these sites also



- |         |                         |
|---------|-------------------------|
| 32ME312 | Madman's Bluff site     |
| 32ME493 | Sakakawea Cemetery      |
| 32ME495 | Sakakawea Trail Complex |
| 32ME499 | Lower Hidatsa West site |

[Redacted] (32ME410, 32ME497, and 32ME498).

Clarification of accessibility

Access to the lands held in fee ownership by the National Park Service is unrestricted to pedestrian visitors. However, motorized vehicle traffic within the park is restricted to public roads and designated trails.



Clarification of present use

The area encompassed by the park boundary totals 1,293.35 acres. Of this, 1,156.94 acres are held in fee ownership by the National Park Service and are devoted exclusively to parkland purposes.



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Representation in Existing

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Representation in Additional Surveys

The Big Hidatsa Village, 32ME12, was identified in 1963 as a "site of exceptional value" to the "Contact with the Indians" theme (Theme VIII) of the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings (see Holder 1963:151-154 in item 9 of this form.) And on July 19, 1964, it was designated a National Historic Landmark. The site was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966.

Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site was placed in the National Register of Historic Places on October 26, 1974, the date of the park's authorization by Congress.

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result of twentieth century farming activities or represent secondary deposits of bones and artifacts exposed by the Knife River channel. None of these ten sites are judged to be of significance to the theme of the park or to the region's history or prehistory, and all ten sites are omitted from the archeological district map (they are, however, shown on the 22-sheet archeological resource basemap that accompanies this form).

At the time of the park's authorization by Congress (1974), a number of standing buildings existed in several locations in the park. All of them related to late nineteenth and/or twentieth century farmsteads or residences, most of which were in use at the time the park was authorized. All of these structures were professionally evaluated by Regional Historic Architect Rodd Wheaton in 1977 and 1978 and were judged to be of no historic significance. The locations of these buildings were plotted on the photogrammetrically-produced archeological base map of the park, and they were described in a 1978 "Structures Survey" report compiled by park staff. Subsequent to their evaluation, all of the structures, with the exception of three at the former Grannis farmstead, which were retained for park use, were demolished and/or removed from the park.

The archeological survey employed a wide variety of techniques to identify and inventory the park's archeological resources. The survey methods and resulting inventory are detailed in a 1982 manuscript report entitled "Cultural Resource Reconnaissance in the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site," by Steven K. Lovick and Stanley A. Ahler. More recently, the principal investigator for this research, Dr. Stanley A. Ahler, has summarized these techniques in a draft manuscript entitled "The KNRI Archeological Inventory Program," which will appear in final form in the comprehensive synthesis of the Knife River Indian Villages research program that is now in preparation. A relevant portion of it is quoted below, with minor modifications (enclosed within brackets) to conform the text to the narrative format employed in this form.

"A large number of data sources were used for the location, assessment, and evaluation of cultural resources in the [park]. Historic documents (Wood 1977a, 1977b, 1979; Thiessen 1980a, 1980b) have played an important role in documenting the age and function of several archeological features in the area. Equally important have been data from the 1909 Libby-Stout mapping expedition. Ethnographic information collected by Bowers (1950, 1965) and Gilbert Wilson (1914 and thereafter) in the early part of this century has also proved of value in interpretation of site age and function. Other significant documentary sources include several series of vertical and oblique aerial photographs covering the [park] area, the earliest of which was taken in 1938. Several U.S. Department of Agriculture air photo series document successive land use changes in the

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[park], and these and the 1977 false-color infrared series produced by the [National Park Service] document a large number of archeological features which are no longer visible on the ground. Finally, two excellent series of modern contour maps, one at a 0.5 m interval for the entire [park], provide excellent tools for site description and documentation.

On-the-ground examination, surface artifact collection, and subsequent analysis of surface artifact data have provided the largest block of information central to the goal of locating and assessing [the park's] cultural resources. Four distinct procedures have been used for surface inspections in the [park]. The most complex and most precise is the point-quarter survey technique (Ahler, Weston, and Mehrer 1979; Ahler and Weston 1980) applied in previously cultivated areas where ground surface visibility was relatively good. A second, similar, point-quarter procedure was also adapted for use in uncultivated, pasture areas. Point-quarter survey was applied in approximately 11% of the [park's] land surface. The point-quarter technique generates data on both artifact content and surface artifact density measurements, without artifact collection, on a grid system covering a large land tract. Such density data have been plotted spatially with the SYMAP computer graphics package and such maps are used to empirically determine the locations of site boundaries, usually to a precision of [plus or minus] 10 meters as plotted on the 1:1000 scale [park] base maps.

The two other on-the-ground reconnaissance procedures include systematic explorations with a power auger and traditional or conventional on-the-ground reconnaissance. The auger survey was confined largely to a flood plain area where surface visibility was minimal due to heavy vegetation cover yet where the likelihood of cultural resources was relatively high due to the geological and topographic setting. Approximately 8% of the [park's] surface was examined in this manner, and results are thought to be rewarding. Traditional reconnaissance involved walking the ground surface in transects and flagging discovered artifact concentrations, followed by field definition of sites based on artifact distributions and topographic considerations. Traditional survey also included detailed examination [redacted] [park]. Approximately 65% of the [park's] surface was covered by traditional survey.

Surface artifact collections have been taken from a large number of [the park's] sites, and, in areas of high resource density, the collections have proven essential to determining site boundaries and providing preliminary culture-historic assessment of many resources."



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The archeological sites within the district range from large and extraordinarily well-preserved earthlodge villages to a variety of less conspicuous occupation sites, buried cultural strata, activity areas peripheral to the major villages, cemeteries, and remnants of trails which once interconnected the historic villages. The majority of the components represented at these sites relate to occupation of the area in late prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic times by the Hidatsa and Mandan Indians and their forebears. A number of the sites in the district contain evidence of earlier occupations that may date to Woodland or Archaic times; however, these components have received less investigation than the later manifestations and consequently are generally less well known. Together, the sites in the district offer the opportunity to investigate and interpret the broad outline of Plains Indian cultural development in the Northern Plains over the past several millenia.

When the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site was authorized by Congress in 1974, only four archeological sites (Big Hidatsa Village, 32ME12; Sakakawea Village, 32ME11; Lower Hidatsa Village, 32ME10; and the Buchfink site, 32ME9) were known to exist within the boundaries set by the authorizing legislation. Three of these were large village sites containing highly visible earthlodge depressions and refuse mantles that were attributed to occupation by the Hidatsa and Mandan Indians during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, while one site (Buchfink) was believed to be the remains of a substantially earlier village possibly as old as A.D. 1100. One additional major village, the historic Amahami Village, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Beginning in 1976 and continuing through 1981, an intensive archeological survey was conducted throughout the park by the University of North Dakota. With the recording of an additional 52 archeological sites and the realization that a small portion of the Amahami Village [REDACTED] this effort has resulted in completion of the formal archeological resources inventory for the park.

The archeological inventory of the park was directed by Dr. Stanley A. Ahler of the University of North Dakota. The most concise, available summary of the diversity and nature of the sites in the park is contained in a draft manuscript by Dr. Ahler, entitled "The KNRI Archeological Inventory Program," which will appear in final form in the comprehensive synthesis of the Knife River Indian Villages research program now in preparation at the University of North Dakota, the University of Missouri, and the Midwest Archeological Center of the National Park Service. Dr. Ahler's manuscript is quoted at length below, with minor modifications to "tailor" it to the specific details of the archeological district as described in this nomination form; modifications or additions to his text are enclosed within brackets. Summary information about the

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classification of components at individual sites in the district is given in the tables presented later in this section of the nomination form.

"The [44] cultural resource sites within the [archeological district] have been classified according to two cross-cutting schemes; one is a descriptive/functional classification which deals with the physical appearance and inferred functional content of the sites, and the other is a culture-historic classification which places sites and components in taxonomic units based largely on stylistic or other variation in artifact content. Any given site may have more than one descriptive/functional classification depending on the variety and range of activities inferred to have occurred there. This happens because many sites are in topographic settings which were useful for various purposes which changed with the passage of time and shifts in settlement patterns. Similarly, a large number of the sites contain evidence of multiple components or episodes of occupation and activities which fall into more than one culture-historic unit. This again reflects the continued desirability of certain topographic settings for cultural activities over long periods of time. When functional-descriptive classification and culture-historic classification of the sites are considered together, a diachronic record of changing land use and settlement patterns in the [Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site] emerges.

The earliest archeological components in the [park] can generally be classified as belonging to the pre-Plains Village period (pre-AD 1000) meaning that these components belong to unspecified Archaic tradition (6000 BC-AD 1) or [Plains] Woodland tradition (AD 1-1000) culture-historic units. In nearly all cases, the temporal classification as pre-Plains Village period in age is based on occurrence of moderately to heavily patinated Knife River flint stone tools and flaking debris and/or the occurrence of projectile points which are distinctly non-Plains Village in form. Currently 17 components in the [park] are assigned to the pre-Plains Village period. All of these components are classified descriptively as artifact debris (primarily lithic) scatters, meaning that they are composed of diffuse scatters of flaking debris, stone tools, fire-cracked rock, and occasionally bone, and that more specific identification of site function is not presently possible. Only three of these components have been identified in stratified contexts (identified as preceramic), with the remaining 14 occurring as surface scatters, and in almost all cases as a minor component in a site where a later component occurs in greater prominence or density.

The stratified pre-Plains Village components are clearly the most significant ones [among] the group of 17 [pre-Plains Village components identified in the district], these occurring at the Scovill site, the

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Elbee site, and the Taylor Bluff site. At Scovill, a diffuse scatter of heavily patinated lithic materials is found stratified below Plains Village materials within the mid-Holocene age Pick City member of the Oahe formation (Clayton et al. 1976). The sample from Scovill is small and diagnostic materials are rare (Ahler and Mehrer 1984:162-191). At the Elbee site, a nonceramic component is sealed in a paleosol about 1 meter below the present surface of the A terrace, and C-14 dates from loci stratigraphically below this horizon date this component at younger than 2970 radiocarbon years BP (Ahler, ed., 1984). This component lacks stylistically diagnostic materials but contains heavily patinated chipped stone artifacts, fire-cracked rock, and a small amount of bone debris. At the Taylor Bluff site, the preceramic component occurs in a paleosol dated by C-14 at 3430 radiocarbon years BP; this component is known primarily from the cutbank exposure at the site which has yielded fragmented bison bone [and] charcoal, but no diagnostic lithic remains [(Ahler, Falk, Picha, and Mehrer 1983:30-31, 76-77; Toom and Ahler 1984:7)].

It is difficult to assign a more precise culture-historic classification to any of the pre-Plains Village components. Projectile points, a temporally sensitive artifact type, include a wide diversity of dart and possible arrowpoint forms which might span the Middle and Late Archaic and entire [Plains] Woodland period (perhaps from 7000 to 1000 BP). No definite [Plains] Woodland period ceramics have been found at any site within the [district], however.

The next major temporal period is the Plains Village period with its associated Plains Village tradition (AD 1000-1861). In keeping with the earlier discussion, this lengthy period is not organized here into other traditions, horizons, or variants, but rather, it is broken into a number of phases or similarly-scaled analytic units to which individual site components are assigned (without consideration here of broader culture-historic schemes and implications). The earliest such phase recognized in the [Upper Knife-Heart Region] is the Clark's Creek phase (AD 1000-1200) [Wood 1985]; no village components in the [district] are assigned to the Clark's Creek phase, although a component of this phase exists at the nearby Stiefel site (32ME202) [REDACTED]

Chronologically the next unit in the village period is the Nailati phase (AD 1200-1400), originally defined at the Cross Ranch site (32OL14) (Calabrese 1972) and dealt with in some detail at the White Buffalo Robe site (Lee, ed., 1980) [REDACTED]. The main components at the Buchfink site and at the Poly site are tentatively assigned to the Nailati phase and the main component at the Hump site possibly belongs to this unit. These assignments are based on the occurrence of Fort Yates ware pottery and a high frequency of check-stamped body sherd surface treatment

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(Ahler and Mehrer 1984:302,307). All three sites are descriptively/functionally classified as less prominent village sites, meaning that they are dispersed in plan without surface evidence of architecture or major midden accumulations but with the full functional range of Plains Village artifact types. [A Nailati phase component underlies the historic Plains Village materials at the Amahami site (Dill 1975)].

Scattered Village complex components (AD 1400-1650) comprise the next major culture-historic unit within the Plains Village period in the [district]. Scattered Village components are tentatively identified at 15 sites in the [district], with this identification most firm at [nine] sites which have been intensively surface collected (Poly, Scovill, Forkorner, Hum, Youess, Big Hidatsa, and Hotrok). The remaining six components in the Scattered Village complex are so assigned on the basis of general observations on surface ceramics and lithics as well as surface expression and location. Scattered Village complex sites vary in size from ca. [1.25 to 17.5 acres] and all such components are tentatively classified from a descriptive/functional perspective as less prominent villages. The latter classification is probably more firm for several of the larger sites which have been subjected to controlled surface artifact collection and test excavation and which can be demonstrated to contain the full functional range of village artifacts and dispersed midden deposits (cf. Ahler and Mehrer 1984). Such a classification is more of a guess for several locations where site size is small and/or where functional artifact content is basically unknown due to poor surface visibility or small sample size (such as at Running Deer, Black Owl, Madman's Bluff, Elder, Yellow Bear, and Lower Hidatsa East).

Within the group identified as Scattered Village complex sites, two distinct variants can be identified on the basis of ceramic and lithic content (Ahler and Mehrer 1984:316). The Youess and Forkorner sites exemplify the dominant variant which is distinguished by a low but consistent frequency of check-stamping in pottery body sherds, approximately equal proportions of unnamed S-rims and straight rim vessels, and a high occurrence of clear/grey chalcedony in the chipped lithic material. The second variant is identified clearly at the Elbee site and possibly at the Scovill site; assemblages there are characterized by near-absence of check-stamping in body sherds, a high frequency of unnamed straight rim vessels decorated most frequently by tool-modifications, and a lithic aggregate reflecting predominant use of Knife River flint. Remnants of a circular house are also found at Elbee. Overall, the Elbee ceramic assemblage is more similar to Extended

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Coalescent variant assemblages from South Dakota than it is to assemblages from other nearby Scattered Village complex components (Ahler, ed., 1984:115-116).

Among the [four] major villages in the [district] are found expressions of all three remaining phases identified for the Plains Village period. The Heart River phase, dated generally at AD 1400-1650, occurs at Lower Hidatsa Village (Ahler and Weston 1981) where it is tentatively dated in a more restricted period from ca. AD 1450-1600. Artifacts assigned to time Unit 6 at Big Hidatsa Village (AD 1600-1650) could also possibly be assigned to the Heart River phase (Ahler and Swenson 1985). The main components at the Hotrok site (Ahler and Mehrer 1984:45-72) and the Lower Hidatsa West site (Toom, Ahler, and Falk 1985) can also be assigned to the Heart River phase. The major village expressions of the Heart River phase are represented by apparently circular houses, ceramics dominated by Le Beau S-Rim ware with cord-impressed decoration, predominant use of Knife River flint for stone tools, and deep midden accumulations reflecting long periods of occupation.

The next taxonomic unit recognized in major village sites is provisionally termed the Transitional phase. This unit is characterized by village occupations with large accumulations of midden, apparently circular houses, ceramics containing both Le Beau S-rim ware and a braced, cord-decorated, S-rim ware distinct from Le Beau ware, and continued emphasis on use of Knife River flint. Euroamerican trade artifacts occur in very minor quantities in this phase. A Transitional phase component occurs at Lower Hidatsa Village (Ahler and Weston 1981) where it is suggested to date in the range AD 1600-1700, and materials in time periods 4 and 5 at Big Hidatsa Village (AD 1650-1745) can probably also be assigned to this unit (Ahler and Swenson 1985). Such a component also occurs at the Running Deer site (Ahler and Mehrer 1984:73-102).

The Knife River phase is the final Plains Village period culture-historic unit presently recognized in the [park], and components assigned to this phase occur in all [four] major village occupations as well as at several other spatially and functionally related sites. This is a protohistoric and fully historic period phase (ca. AD 1700-1862) characterized by progressively increasing occurrence of Euroamerican trade artifacts, decreasing use of Native stone and ceramic technologies, predominantly Knife River ware pottery, and increasing use of diverse local and non-local lithic resources. Knife River phase villages were very compact and were fortified in the fully historic period. The Knife River phase component at Lower Hidatsa Village is now suggested to date in the period ca. A.D. 1700-1780; at Sakakawea Village, in the period ca. AD 1795-

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1834/37; and at Big Hidatsa Village in the period ca. AD 1745-1845. [The Knife River phase component at Amahami Village is presumed to date in the period AD 1800-1834 (Lovick and Ahler 1982:221).]

[Many of the] remaining Plains Village period sites in the [district] contain one or more components which are functionally and chronologically linked to the occupations of the three major villages [(i.e. Big Hidatsa, Sakakawea, and Lower Hidatsa)] during one or more of the Heart River, Transitional, and Knife River phases. For a variety of reasons many of these sites cannot be assigned to a specific one of these phases, and they are simply designated as general Plains Village tradition in association. It is easiest to consider these components collectively as related to the major village occupations in the [district] without specifying in most cases precise phase associations during the period AD 1450-1845. These sites are descriptively/functionally broken down into a number of other categories not previously occurring in the Plains Village period, including village periphery zones, off-village activity areas, cemeteries, trails, and debris scatters.

Village periphery zone sites and components occur around all three major villages [(i.e., Big Hidatsa, Sakakawea, and Lower Hidatsa)] and consist of broad, fairly dense artifacts scatters lacking visible accumulation of midden mounds or architectural features in the areas immediately adjacent to the residential cores of the villages proper. A wide variety of activities is thought to have occurred in these sites, linked primarily to the use of greater space than was available in the villages proper. The area immediately surrounding the Lower Hidatsa Village proper is subdivided into four discrete periphery zone sites. A single periphery zone site is defined surrounding the uneroded portion of the Sakakawea Village, and at Big Hidatsa Village, a large periphery zone area is defined for the site without it receiving a separate site number and designation. At Lower Hidatsa Village and Sakakawea Village, extensive surface collections and excavated collections (Toom, Ahler, and Falk 1985) from the periphery zone sites confirm an artifact content generally similar in function and style to the material culture found within the villages proper.

Off-village activity areas are sites which are farther removed from the major villages than periphery zones, but which are thought to be closely linked to use of the major villages. Evidence of special activities, distinct from routine intra-village activities, occurs in some of these sites. Three off-village activity sites are found [REDACTED] [REDACTED] apparently linked to the occupation of Big Hidatsa Village (NaxpiKE, Taylor Bluff, Running Deer). Artifact content and location indicate use of these sites for village ceremonial activities, as a

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possible refuge area for populations seeking protection near Big Hidatsa, and as a possible seasonal horticultural activity center, respectively. [redacted] components at nine sites are identified as reflecting off-village activity locations. A great diversity of activities is reflected there by surface expression and content ranging from concentrations of fire-cracked rock at the Hotrok, Soni, Sakakawea Cemetery, and Ramble sites to bone concentrations at Hadu Nowassa and scatters of atypical artifactual debris perhaps relating to games and trading activities at Lobodi and Ramble.

Cemetery sites are defined on the basis of either surface expressions of burial pits, historic data on burial pit locations, or observations of human bone on the site surface. Thirteen sites are identified as having cemetery components. Most but not necessarily all of these are probably related to the occupation of the three major villages [i.e., Big Hidatsa, Sakakawea, and Lower Hidatsa], simply on the basis of population density in the area at that time as well as first-hand historic accounts of use of some of these general locations for necroceremonial activities. There are six cemetery sites in the vicinity of Big Hidatsa Village, all presumably associated with the occupation of that village. One of these is on the [redacted]

[redacted] Seven cemetery sites are identified for [redacted] and these are thought to be associated with occupations of both Lower Hidatsa and Sakakawea Villages. A major cemetery area containing two large clusters of burials is identified at the Sakakawea Cemetery site [redacted]

[redacted] Several human burials are known to have been removed from the Scovill site, and these appear to be late in age and associated with post-contact period occupations in the area (Ahler and Mehrer 1984:162-191). A single infant burial was discovered in testing at the Lower Hidatsa West periphery zone site (Toom, Ahler, and Falk 1985). Scattered human bone has been observed on the site surface at Ramble and Lobodi.

Trail system sites are associated with Sakakawea Village and Big Hidatsa Village, both of which contain fully historic components during which time the horse was in widespread use. Two trail complexes are defined for Big Hidatsa Village, one leading in several paths out of the village to the [redacted] and the other linking the village [redacted]

[redacted]. At Sakakawea, several trails lead from [redacted] and a portion of the main trail [redacted]

been identified. A possible segment of a trail [redacted] has been found in excavation at the Elbee site [redacted]

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(Ahler, ed., 1984). Early mapping data indicate the existence of several other trails, but many of these are not confirmable today by air-photo or on-the-ground examination, and these are not presently designated as sites.

Four other sites (Bihohka, Elbee, Metsiroku, Karishta) exhibit very diffuse scatters of artifactual debris which for one reason or another can be tentatively linked to the major episodes of occupation at the major villages, but which are too dispersed and ephemeral to allow meaningful descriptive/functional classification other than as debris scatters.

[Nine] sites in the [district] contain components which have been assigned to the Euroamerican tradition. All of these components with one possible exception are thought to be related to the Euroamerican period (AD 1861 to the present) which follows abandonment of the Upper Knife Heart Region by all Native American groups and which is associated with Euroamerican components consisting of recently operated farmsteads with associated residences, outbuildings, and standing structures of various kinds. In all six cases, these components are superimposed over earlier Plains Village period occupations. These include the Nate Olds (Big Hidatsa Village), Byron Grannis (Taylor Bluff), William Russell (Elbee), Maynard Borner (Madman's Bluff), Herbert Oberlander (Scovill), and Roy Schreiber (Buchfink) farmsteads. [Two] somewhat similar farmstead or homestead locations lacking standing structures at the time of survey are also designated as Euroamerican tradition components. These include the Boerner homestead and the Walker homestead, both of which also overlie earlier Plains Village archeological components (Yellow Bear and Poly, respectively). [The Euroamerican component at the] Lower Hidatsa West site [is represented by a ] debris scatter of uncertain specific origin and function. [See item 7, page 1, first full paragraph].

No Euroamerican components in the [park] can be traced to the early part of the Euroamerican tradition, which in this area would be the fur trade period (prior to AD 1861), when the Plains Village tradition was still the dominant cultural force in the vicinity. This is true despite the intensive trading activities carried on at the villages in the first half of the nineteenth century and intensive survey designed to locate such sites. One possible exception may exist at the Buchfink site where an earthwork feature mapped in the early part of this century was identified as a "soldier's fortification," implying a possibility that it may represent a palisade surrounding an early trading post (cf. Ahler and Mehrer 1984:103-132). This feature has been all but completely destroyed by gravel mining, apparently eliminating any possibility of investigation."



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As of January, 1987, all Euroamerican structures in the park except the Grannis Homestead buildings had been removed.

Non-contributing sites and structures lack integrity and/or fall outside the period of significance for the National Register District. The non-contributing sites and structures are listed in the following table:

<u>Site No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Cultural Affiliation</u>
	Grannis House and Barn	Euro-American
32ME482	Grannis School Place	Euro-American
32ME483	Fowler Homestead	Euro-American
32ME484	Scattered Board	Euro-American
32ME485	Old Corral	Euro-American
32ME486	Rusted Stove	Euro-American
32ME468	Hadu Duupa	Unknown Prehistoric
32ME469	Hadu Nawi	Unknown Prehistoric
32ME470	Hadu Topa	Unknown Prehistoric
32ME471	Hadu Kexu	Unknown Prehistoric
32ME472	SBG	Unknown Prehistoric

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Area of individual archeological sites within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District (figures taken from "Cultural Resource Reconnaissance in the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site," by Steven K. Lovick and Stanley A. Ahler).

Site Number (32ME_)	Site Name	Acreage	Comment
8	Amahami Village	N/A	Small portion of site
9	Buchfink	9.75	
10	Lower Hidatsa Village	12.75	
11	Sakakawea Village	5.6	
12	Big Hidatsa Village	16.5	
310	Bihohka	0.75	
311	Black Owl	6.5	
312	Madman's Bluff	3.0	
366	Taylor Bluff	10.0	
383	Running Deer	2.75	
407	Poly	10.5	
408	Elbee	4.5	
409	Scovill	3.75	
411	Lobodi	0.15	
412	Hotrok	4.5	
413	Forkorner	17.5	
414	Hump	6.25	
415	Youess	8.0	
416	Elder	5.75	
464	Yellow Bear	1.5	
465	Metsiroku	0.15	
466	Karishta	.015	
467	Hadu Nowassa	N/A	Extent not determined
473	NaxpikE	8.5	
474	Rokhohl	3.5	
475	Bedi Ari	N/A	Trail
476	Hidatsa Northern Trail Complex	N/A	Trail
477	Hidatsa High Bench Cemetery	0.25	

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Site Number (32ME_)	Site Name	Acreage	Comment
478	Hidatsa Hilltop Cemetery	1.0	
479	Hidatsa Long Ridge Cemetery	4.75	
480	Hidatsa Low Bench Cemetery	1.5	
481	Hidatsa Trail Cemetery	2.0	
487	Lower Hidatsa East	6.7	
488	Lower Hidatsa South	4.25	
489	Nash	15.0	
490	Lower Hidatsa North	7.5	
491	Sakakawea Southwest	9.0	
492	Soni	4.25	
493	Sakakawea Cemetery	27.5	
494	Sakahami Trail	N/A	Trail
495	Sakakawea Trail Complex	N/A	Trail
496	Ramble	18.75	
499	Lower Hidatsa West	18.75	
787	Baker Cemetery	N/A	Extent no determined

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List of archeological sites within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District (adapted from Table 1 in "Cultural Resource Reconnaissance in the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site," by Stephen K. Lovick and Stanley A. Ahler).

Site Number (32ME_)	Site Name	General Description
8	Amahami Village	Historic Awaxawi village/prehistoric village
9	Buchfink	Prehistoric village/trading post(?) Schreiber farmstead
10	Lower Hidatsa Village	Prehistoric and protohistoric Awatixa village
11	Sakakawea Village	Historic Awatixa village
12	Big Hidatsa Village	Protohistoric and historic Hidatsa village/ Olds farmstead
310	Bihohka	Plains Village debris scatter/pre-village debris scatter
311	Black Owl	Prehistoric village
312	Madman's Bluff	Prehistoric village/Borner farmstead
366	Taylor Bluff	Outlyer to Big Hadatsa villagle/pre-village debris scatter/Grannis farmstead
383	Running Deer	Plains Villagel activity area
407	Poly	Prehistoric village/historic homestead
408	Elbee	Historic village activity area/prehistoric village/pre-village debris scatter/ Russell farmstead
409	Scovill	Historic village cemetery/prehistoric village/ Oberlander farmstead
411	Lobodi	Cemetery, village or pre-village in age
412	Hotrok	Plains Village activity area
413	Forkorner	Prehistoric village
414	Hump	Prehistoric village/pre-village debris scatter
415	Youess	Prehistoric village/pre-village debris scatter
416	Elder	Prehistoric village
464	Yellow Bear	Prehistoric village/historic homestead
465	Metsiroki	Prehistoric village
466	Karishta	Prehistoric village debris scatter
467	Hadu Nowassa	Bone concentration
473	NaxpikE	Plains Village activity area/pre-village debris scatter

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List of archeological sites within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District (adapted from Table 1 in "Cultural Resource Reconnaissance in the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site," by Stephen K. Lovick and Stanley A. Ahler).

Site Number (32ME_)	Site Name	General Description
474	Rokhohl	Pre-village debris scatter
475	Bedi Ari	Trail [REDACTED]
476	Hidatsa Northern Trail Complex	Trails [REDACTED]
477	Hidatsa High Bench Cemetery	Cemetery associated with Big Hidatsa
478	Hidatsa Hilltop Cemetery	Cemetery associated with Big Hidatsa
479	Hidatsa Long Ridge Cemetery	Cemetery associated with Big Hidatsa
480	Hidatsa Low Bench Cemetery	Cemetery associated with Big Hidatsa
481	Hidatsa Trail Cemetery	Cemetery associated with Big Hidatsa
487	Lower Hidatsa East	Lower Hidatsa Village periphery zone/ prehistoric village
488	Lower Hidatsa South	Lower Hidatsa Village periphery zone
489	Nash	Plains Village activity area
490	Lower Hidatsa North	Lower Hidatsa Village periphery zone
491	Sakakawea Southwest	Sakakawea Village periphery zone
492	Soni	Plains Village activity area
493	Sakakawea Cemetery	Cemetery associated with Sakakawea Village/ Plains Village activity area/pre-village debris scatter
494	Sakahami Trail	Trail [REDACTED]
495	Sakakawea Trail Complex	Trail [REDACTED]
496	Ramble	Plains Village activity area and debris scatter/cemetery
499	Lower Hidatsa West	Lower Hidatsa Village periphery zone
787	Baker Cemetery	Cemetery associated with Big Hidatsa



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Summary of the culture-historic classification of sites within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District (after Table 1 in "The KNRI Archeological Inventory Program," draft manuscript by Stanley A. Ahler).

Site Number	Site Name	Euroamerican Tradition			Transitional Phase			Nailati Phase		
		General Plains Village Tradition	Knife River Phase	Heart River Phase	Scattered Village Complex	Pre-Village (Woodland or Preceramic)	Pre-Ceramic	Un-Known		
477	Hidatsa High Bench									
	Cemetery	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
478	Hidatsa Hilltop									
	Cemetery	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
479	Hidatsa Long Ridge									
	Cemetery	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
480	Hidatsa Low Bench									
	Cemetery	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
481	Hidatsa Trail									
	Cemetery	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
487	Lower Hidatsa East						X			
488	Lower Hidatsa South									
		-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
489	Nash									
		-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
490	Lower Hidatsa North									
		-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
491	Sakakawea									
	Southwest	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
492	Soni									
		-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
493	Sakakawea									
	Cemetery	-	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	-

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Summary of the culture-historic classification of sites within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District (after Table 1 in "the KNRI Archeological Inventory Program," draft manuscript by Stanley A. Ahler).

Site Number Site (23ME_) Name	Euroamerican Tradition		Transitional Phase		Nailati Phase		Pre-Village (Woodland) Or Pre-ceramic			
	General Plains Village Tradition	Knife River Phase	Heart River Phase	Scattered Village Complex	Pre- Ceramic Un- Known					
494 Sakaham Trail	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
495 Sakakawea Trail Complex	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
496 Ramble	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
499 Lower Hidatsa West	X	X	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-
787 Baker Cemetery	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4?</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>



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Summary of the descriptive/functional classification of sites within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District (after Table 2 in "The KNRI Archeological Inventory Program," draft manuscript by Stanley A. Ahler).

Site Number (32ME_)	Site Name	Major Village		Less Prominent Village		Farmstead or Homestead		Debris Scatter
		Village Periphery Zone	Off-Village Activity Area	Cemetery	Trail	Other Historic Sites		
8	Amahami	X	-	X	-	-	-	-
9	Buchfink	-	-	X	-	X	?	X
10	Lower Hidatsa	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	Sakakawea	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
12	Big Hidatsa	X	-	X	-	X	-	X
310	Bihohka	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
311	Black Owl	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
312	Madman's Bluff	-	-	X	-	X	-	-
366	Taylor Bluff	-	X	-	-	X	-	X
383	Running Deer	-	X	?	-	-	-	-
407	Poly	-	-	X	-	X	-	X
408	Elbee	-	-	X	X	X	-	X
409	Scovill	-	-	X	X	X	-	X
411	Lobodi	-	X	-	X	-	-	-
412	Hotrok	-	X	-	-	-	-	X
413	Forkorner	-	-	X	-	-	-	X
414	Hump	-	-	X	-	-	-	X
415	Youess	-	-	X	-	-	-	X
416	Elder	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
464	Yellow Bear	-	-	X	-	X	-	-
465	Metsiroku	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
466	Karishta	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
467	Hadu Nowassa	-	X	-	-	-	-	-
473	Naxpike	-	X	-	-	-	-	X
474	Rokhohl	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
475	Bedi Ari	-	-	-	X	-	-	-

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Summary of the descriptive/functional classification of sites within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District (after Table 2 in "The KNRI Archeological Inventory Program," draft manuscript by Stanley A. Ahler).

Site Number (32ME_)	Site Name	Major Village		Off-Village Activity Area	Less Prominent Village	Farmstead or Homestead		Debris Scatter	
		Village Periphery Zone			Cemetery	Trail	Other Historic Sites		
476	Hidatsa Northern Trail Complex	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
477	Hidatsa High Bench Cemetery	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-
478	Hidatsa Hilltop Cemetery	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-
479	Hidatsa Long Ridge Cemetery	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-
480	Hidatsa Low Bench Cemetery	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-
481	Hidatsa Trail Cemetery	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-
487	Lower Hidatsa East	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-
488	Lower Hidatsa South	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
489	Nash	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-
490	Lower Hidatsa North	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
491	Sakakawea Southwest	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
492	Soni	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-
493	Sakakawea Cemetery	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	X
494	Sakahami Trail	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
495	Sakakawea Trail Complex	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-
496	Ramble	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	X

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Summary of descriptive/functional classification of sites within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District (after Table 2 in "The KNRI Archeological Inventory Program," draft manuscript by Stanely A. Ahler).

Site Number (32ME_) Site Name	Major Village		Less Prominent Village		Farmstead or Homestead			Other Historic Sites	Debris Scatter
	Village Periphery Zone	Off-Village Activity Area		Cemetery	Trail				
499 Lower Hidatsa West	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	X
787 Baker Cemetery	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15?</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1?</b>	<b>18</b>

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Area of individual archeological sites within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District (figures taken from "Cultural Resource Reconnaissance in the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site," by Steven K. Lovick and Stanley A. Ahler).

Site Number (32ME_)	Site Name	Acreage	Comment
8	Amamhami Village	N/A	Small portion of site
9	Buchfink	9.75	
10	Lower Hidatsa Village	12.75	
11	Sakakawea Village	5.6	
12	Big Hidatsa Village	16.5	
310	Bihohka	0.75	
311	Black Owl	6.5	
312	Madman's Bluff	3.0	
366	Taylor Bluff	10.0	
383	Running Deer	2.75	
407	Poly	10.5	
408	Elbee	4.5	
409	Scovill	3.75	
411	Lobodı	0.15	
412	Hotrok	4.5	
413	Forkorner	17.5	
414	Hump	6.25	
415	Youess	8.0	
416	Elder	5.75	
464	Yellow Bear	1.5	
465	Metsiroku	0.15	
466	Karishta	0.15	
467	Hadu Nowassa	N/A	Extent not determined
473	NaxpikE	8.5	
474	Rokhohl	3.5	
475	Bedi Ari	N/A	Trail
476	Hidatsa Northern Trail Complex	N/A	Trail
477	Hidatsa High Bench Cemetery	0.25	

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Area of individual archeological sites within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site Archeological District (figures taken from "Cultural Resource Reconnaissance in the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site," by Steven K. Lovick and Stanley A. Ahler).

Site Number (32ME_)	Site Name	Acreage	Comment
478	Hidatsa Hilltop Cemetery	1.0	
479	Hidatsa Long Ridge Cemetery	4.75	
480	Hidatsa Low Bench Cemetery	1.5	
481	Hidatsa Trail Cemetery	2.0	
487	Lower Hidatsa East	6.75	
488	Lower Hidatsa South	4.25	
489	Nash	15.0	
490	Lower Hidatsa North	7.5	
491	Sakakawea Southwest	9.0	
492	Soni	4.25	
493	Sakakawea Cemetery	27.5	
494	Sakahami Trail	N/A	Trail
495	Sakakawea Trail Complex	N/A	Trail
496	Ramble	18.75	
499	Lower Hidatsa West	18.75	
787	Baker Cemetery	N/A	Extent not determined

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Siouan-speaking Hidatsas and Mandans -- as well as their Caddoan-speaking neighbors, the Arikaras -- are relatively intact today. Three of the sites at Knife River represent virtually pristine examples of these village sites.

In addition to their being among the few surviving intact earthlodge village sites, these resources are also among the most dramatic in terms of visible surface expression, richness, and depth of subsurface deposits. These sites are covered with a thick earthen mantle -- up to approximately two meters deep in places -- of complexly stratified deposits resulting from long-term occupations and repeated earthlodge construction and maintenance episodes. Earthlodge depressions, cache pits, and fortification ditches are deep and well-defined in the ground, lending a highly visible aspect to these sites which is appreciated by informed visitors. Only a very small number of the few other surviving earthlodge village sites in the Dakotas offer to the visitor an appearance so striking as those within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site archeological district. A few other earthlodge villages are publicly owned as archeological preserves, but public interpretation of them is minimal or non-existent. Also, none of the them include the range of earlier prehistoric sites that exists at Knife River, which gives that archeological district the unique capability of telling a story about the development of Indian culture in the Plains over a period of several thousand years.

During the historic period, the inhabitants of what is now the area included within the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site archeologist district were the Mandan and Hidatsa Indians, who lived in semi-permanent villages of substantial earth-and-timber structures and whose economy was based on the hunting of animals (principally bison and other forms of large upland game), the taking of fish, and the growing of garden crops (primarily corn, beans, and squash). So successful was their adaptation to the environment that crop surpluses were raised which permitted the villagers to engage in a very active trade with other Indians (nomadic groups to the east and west of the Missouri River) for clothing, items of adornment, bows, dressed animal hides and other produces of the hunt, and, in historic times, horses and firearms. In a very real sense, these villages served as centers of trade which attracted Indian and Euro-American alike and led to a degree of cultural sophistication and affluence which has been regarded by some anthropologists as one of the native culture climaxes of the North America.

Because of their role as trade centers and their location on a major artery of western travel, the Missouri River, the villages at Knife River received many Euro-American visitors -- men drawn by the prospects of wealth in the fur trade, by the interests of exploration and national expansion, and by simple curiosity. For the most part, the Mandans and Hidatsas received these

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agents of an alien culture with openness and hospitality, with the consequence that the Mandan-Hidatsa villages provided a welcome respite to weary travelers and an important staging area for further travel and for fur trade operations in more remote regions. This frequent and sustained contact with an alien culture ultimately resulted in drastic transformation of the traditional way of life for the Hidatsas and Mandans, and it also contributed to the economic development and westward expansion of America.

Many of the early visitors to the villages were important historical figures in their own right. They include men who sought wealth in the fur trade, such as the Sieur de la Verendrye, a French-Canadian colonial officer responsible for opening up much of the western Great Lakes and northern Plains region to French commercial ambitions; John Evans, the Welshman who attempted to establish Spanish sovereignty at the Mandan-Hidatsa villages and to curtail British-Canadian trade there; the employees of the great Hudson's Bay and North West companies who for nearly three decades raced each other to the villages from their posts on the Assiniboine River two hundreds miles distant; Manuel Lisa and his associates, who opened the Upper Missouri county to American trade, used the Knife River area as a staging area for operations in the Blackfeet and Crow country at the headwaters of the Missouri; and many others. Perhaps the most famous visitors to the villages were the American military explorers, Lewis and Clark, whose expedition wintered [redacted] in 1804-1805, and who were substantially aided by the villages' most famous resident, the Shoshone Indian woman, Sacajawea. Steamboat travel on the upper Missouri, initiated in the early 1830s, introduced the villagers to a host of travelers with non-commercial interests in the Upper Missouri county its native inhabitants. Two of these visitors -- George Catlin and Karl Bodmer -- were gifted artists who left a priceless pictorial record of the Mandans and Hidatsas and their villages clustered [redacted]. Among the more famous visitors to the villages were Alexander Philip Maximilian, Prince of Wied-Neuwied, who published an edition of his extensive ethnological and natural history notes that is still a primary reference on the Mandans and Hidatsas, and the great American naturalist, John James Audubon. Prominent as many of these men were in the history of the American West, their major importance to the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site archeological district lies in the light that their writings and illustrations shed on the way of life of the native peoples who lived in the village sites that are now within the district. The historical record of the Mandans and Hidatsas is almost unparalleled among Plains Indians in terms of abundance of information, detail, and diversity of sources.

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Consequently, this abundance of historical documentation coupled with the pristine condition of the archeological resources at Knife River -- particularly the major earthlodge villages -- offers tremendous research potential for a wide variety of ethnohistoric and archeological studies. A few of the topics of research are:

1. Cultural evolution in the Plains over the past several millenia and the adaptation of native groups to the rigorous Plains environment in terms of the development of a semi-sedentary lifestyle with an economy increasingly based on a mixture of hunting/gathering and horticulture. Hardy varieties of corn and beans developed by these Indians over the course of centuries of plant husbandry are not only still being grown in the region, but are widely marketed as commercial products.
2. Technological change in the form of replacement of native industries by tool forms and materials introduced as a result of contact with Euro-American culture.
3. The response of the villagers to the introduction of epidemic diseases in the protohistoric and historic periods, and the reflection of this in their archeological record.
4. The village and subgroup movements of the Hidatsa Indians, as each of the three subgroups have separate traditional histories and origin myths.
5. Distinction of differences between the archeological remains of the Mandans and Hidatsas. The lifestyle and material culture assemblage of these groups were so similar that archeologists are presently unable to attribute village sites to one or another of these two groups without the aid of historic documentation. Study of micro-stylistic variation among artifact assemblages from documented Mandan and Hidatsa archeological contexts may allow attribution of ethnic identity to their village sites without reliance on historic records. If this is possible, such distinctions will be of use in tracing the introduction of these peoples into the Missouri River and their subsequent movements in the prehistoric period.
6. Study of the cultural decline of the Mandan and Hidatsa Indians in the face of a variety of cultural changes -- epidemiological, economic, military, social, technological -- induced by increasingly frequent contact with Euro-American culture on the advancing frontier of civilization.
7. Study of the origins of the Crow Indians, who are believed to have originally been part of the Hidatsa proper on the Missouri River. The Crows presumably split from the Hidatsas (possibly at Knife River), gave up their



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horticultural pursuits, and adopted the nomadic lifestyle of the classic Plains Indians in the southeastern Montana-northern Wyoming region. The reasons underlying this fissioning and the date of the separation of these groups are poorly understood.

Lastly, but not least, many of the sites in the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site archeological district are important to the members of the Three Affiliated Tribes, descendants of the original inhabitants of the earthlodge villages at Knife River. These village sites, and a few others in the immediate vicinity, represent the traditional homeland of the Hidatsas and the Mandans -- their place of residence before they consolidated into one village (and ultimately one society) in a new location that is on their present reservation. As such, these villages and the associated cemeteries are venerated by the living descendants of their original occupants. In 1979, the Tribal Council of the Three Affiliated Tribes expressed the concern of its people for the continued preservation of these resources by passing a resolution opposing development of any area of the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site that would result in disturbance of Indian graves. The importance of these archeological resources to the descendants of the original Hidatsa and Mandan inhabitants of the Knife River villages is also underscored by the fact that Native Americans constitute one-tenth of the current visitation to the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site. Through accurate interpretation of these resources and utilization of Native Americans as park employees and Volunteers-in-the-Parks, the National Park Service can give living Hidatsas and Mandans a greater awareness of their heritage.

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