

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**National Park Service**

[N7248; NPS–WASO–NAGPRA–
NPS0043022; PPWOCRADN0–
PCU00RP14.R50000]

**Notice of Inventory Completion:
Murray State University Archaeology
Laboratory, Murray, KY**

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.
ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the Murray State University Archaeology Laboratory has completed an inventory of human remains and has determined that there is a cultural affiliation between the human remains and Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations in this notice.

DATES: Repatriation of the human remains in this notice may occur on or after July 22, 2026.

ADDRESSES: Send written requests for repatriation of the human remains in this notice to Anthony Ortmann, Murray State University Archaeology Laboratory, 334 Blackburn Sciences Building, Murray State University, Murray, KY 42071, email aortmann@murraystate.edu.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice is published as part of the National Park Service's administrative responsibilities under NAGPRA. The determinations in this notice are the sole responsibility of the Murray State University Archaeology Laboratory, and additional information on the determinations in this notice, including the results of consultation, can be found in its inventory or related records. The National Park Service is not responsible for the determinations in this notice.

Abstract of Information Available

Human remains representing at least one individual have been identified. No associated funerary objects are present. On an unknown date in the 1970s, these remains were looted from an unnamed and unnumbered site in Stewart County, TN. These remains were donated to the Murray State University Archaeology Laboratory in 2003. No known individuals were identified. There is no known exposure to hazardous substances.

Cultural Affiliation

Based on the information available and the results of consultation, cultural affiliation is reasonably identified by the geographical location of the human remains described in this notice.

Determinations

The Murray State University Archaeology Laboratory has determined that:

- The human remains described in this notice represent the physical remains of at least one individual of Native American ancestry.
- There is a connection between the human remains described in this notice and the Cherokee Nation; Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; The Chickasaw Nation; and The Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

Requests for Repatriation

Written requests for repatriation of the human remains in this notice must be sent to the authorized representative identified in this notice under **ADDRESSES**. Requests for repatriation may be submitted by:

1. Any one or more of the Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations identified in this notice.
2. Any lineal descendant, Indian Tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice who shows, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the requestor is a lineal descendant or an Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization with cultural affiliation.

Repatriation of the human remains described in this notice to a requestor may occur on or after July 22, 2026. If competing requests for repatriation are received, the Murray State University Archaeology Laboratory must determine the most appropriate requestor prior to repatriation. Requests for joint repatriation of the human remains are considered a single request and not competing requests. The Murray State University Archaeology Laboratory is responsible for sending a copy of this notice to the Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations identified in this notice and any other consulting parties.

Authority: Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, 25 U.S.C. 3003, and the implementing regulations, 43 CFR 10.10.

Dated: June 12, 2026.

Melanie O'Brien,

Manager, National NAGPRA Program.

[FR Doc. 2026–12395 Filed 6–18–26; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**National Park Service**

[N7233; NPS–WASO–NAGPRA–
NPS0043006; PPWOCRADN0–
PCU00RP14.R50000]

**Notice of Intended Repatriation:
Wesleyan University, Archaeology &
Anthropology Collections, Middletown,
CT**

AGENCY: National Park Service, Interior.
ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), Wesleyan University intends to repatriate certain cultural items that meet the definition of sacred objects and that have a cultural affiliation with the Indian Tribes or Native Hawaiian organizations in this notice.

DATES: Repatriation of the cultural items in this notice may occur on or after July 22, 2026.

ADDRESSES: Send additional, written requests for repatriation of the cultural items in this notice to Wendi Field Murray, Wesleyan University (Archaeology & Anthropology Collections), 265 Church Street, Middletown, CT 06033, email wmurray01@wesleyan.edu.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This notice is published as part of the National Park Service's administrative responsibilities under NAGPRA. The determinations in this notice are the sole responsibility of Wesleyan University and additional information on the determinations in this notice, including the results of consultation, can be found in the summary or related records. The National Park Service is not responsible for the determinations in this notice.

Abstract of Information Available

A total of 13 cultural items have been requested for repatriation. The 13 sacred objects include an Ipu Pawehe (decorated gourd container), 'Ohe Kāpala (bamboo stamps), Pōhaku Ku'i 'Ai (poi pounder), I'e Kuku (kapa beater), Ko'i (stone adze blade), Lei niho palaoa (whale tooth pendant necklace), decorated and undecorated Kapa (bark cloth), Wa'a (wooden model of a war canoe), Ko'i kālai (bone adze with wooden handle), and Hue Wai (gourd containers, undecorated).

*Objects Transferred From the Bishop
Museum*

A total of five objects were transferred to Wesleyan from the Bernice Pauahi

Bishop Museum in 1940, including two 'Ohe Kāpala (bamboo stamps), one Pōhaku Ku'i 'Ai (poi pounder), one I'e Kuku (kapa beater), and one Ko'i (stone adze blade). The trade was facilitated by the Bishop Museum's Director at the time, Dr. Peter H. Buck. After Dr. Buck's visit to the Wesleyan Museum in 1939, he proposed a trade of the above-mentioned Hawaiian objects from the Bishop Museum's collection in exchange for one of the Manganian adzes he had seen in Wesleyan's collections. Catalog records indicate a geographical origin of Hawai'i, but do not include any additional information about the original collectors or the objects' provenance.

Objects Donated by the Missionary Lyceum

A total of five objects were donated to the Wesleyan Museum by the Missionary Lyceum in 1870–1871. The Missionary Lyceum was a student missionary organization established in 1834. After it disbanded in the mid-19th century, the organization donated the objects its missionaries had collected to Wesleyan University for inclusion in a teaching museum. The objects listed in the catalog as being from Hawai'i include one Ipu Pawehe (decorated gourd container), collected by J. Bliss and one Wa'a (model of a war canoe), collected by Capt. Rice.

The Missionary Lyceum donation also included several pieces of bark cloth listed as being from "Oceania" in catalog records. Accession records further suggest that in 1940, Dr. Peter H. Buck observed at least one example of Hawaiian Kapa in the Wesleyan collection during the visit, though no catalog number was specified. Two of these bark cloth pieces (one decorated, collector unknown and one undecorated, collected by Lieut. C. McDonough) were identified during consultations as being examples of Native Hawaiian Kapa (bark cloth).

This group also includes one Hue Wai (undecorated gourd container) that catalog records list as being from Hawai'i, but was discovered to be missing by Wesleyan collections staff at some point after 1939. It has not yet been found. For future reference, this object was collected by Mr. Sizer, has the same cultural affiliation as the above-mentioned objects, and was included as part of the same Missionary Lyceum donation.

Lei Niho Palaoa

Based on Wesleyan's records, the Lei niho palaoa (whale tooth pendant necklace) was acquired at some point

between 1939 and 1971. Its provenance is unknown.

Ko'i kālai (Bone Adze With Handle)

This object was donated to Wesleyan University by G.W. Burke, an alum of Wesleyan and an officer of the Middletown Scientific Association during the late 19th century. He donated it to the Wesleyan Museum in 1871. There is no other information available relating to its provenance.

Hue Wai (Gourd Container, Undecorated)

Though the original collector of this object is not known, it was donated to Wesleyan by a local doctor, Dr. Simeon Shurtleff, to Wesleyan in 1868 as part of a large cabinet of both cultural objects and natural history specimens. Catalog records list as being from Hawai'i, but was discovered to be missing by Wesleyan collections staff at some point after 1939. It has not yet been found. For future reference, this object has the same cultural affiliation as the above-mentioned objects.

Preliminary testing for pesticide residues, carried out at the request of Hui Iwi Kuamo'o, revealed the presence of potentially hazardous substances (*i.e.*, pesticide residues) on these objects, including arsenic, mercury, bromine, and/or lead.

Museum records and previous testing on other museum objects (ethnographic and taxidermy) have also confirmed the presence of pesticide residues on some objects in the collection. While pesticides were not typically applied to non-organic objects due to their inherent resilience to pest damage, the objects have potentially been intermingling with organic objects in a large ethnographic teaching collection since the 1870s, and possibly with natural history specimens as well. To what extent Wesleyan staff attempted to mitigate cross-contamination when objects were stored or handled is unknown.

There is also one documented instance of pest fumigation relating to the collections that dates to 1972–1973. This was to treat a silverfish infestation in underground storage rooms that held the museum's objects after it closed. The proposal was for the application of dichlorodiphenyltrichlorobenzene (DDT) to the floors, the placement of open containers of paradichlorobenzene (PDB) around the room, and the placement of mildew-retarding insecticide inside the wraps of specimens. The specific contents of the room in which the chemicals were applied, and to what extent they were shielded from them, is unknown.

Determinations

Wesleyan University has determined that:

- The 13 sacred objects described in this notice are specific ceremonial objects needed by a traditional Native Hawaiian religious leader for present-day adherents to practice traditional Native Hawaiian religion, according to the traditional knowledge of a Native Hawaiian organization.
- There is a connection between the cultural items described in this notice and the Hui Iwi Kuamo'o.

Requests for Repatriation

Additional, written requests for repatriation of the cultural items in this notice must be sent to the authorized representative identified in this notice under **ADDRESSES**. Requests for repatriation may be submitted by any lineal descendant, Indian Tribe, or Native Hawaiian organization not identified in this notice who shows, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the requestor is a lineal descendant or a culturally affiliated Indian Tribe or Native Hawaiian organization.

Repatriation of the cultural items in this notice to a requestor may occur on or after July 22, 2026. If competing requests for repatriation are received, Wesleyan University must determine the most appropriate requestor prior to repatriation. Requests for joint repatriation of the cultural items are considered a single request and not competing requests. Wesleyan University is responsible for sending a copy of this notice to the Indian Tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations identified in this notice and to any other consulting parties.

Authority: Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, 25 U.S.C. 3004 and the implementing regulations, 43 CFR 10.9.

Dated: June 12, 2026.

Melanie O'Brien,

Manager National NAGPRA Program.

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