

## Vegetation Management for Burial Sites

One approach to conserving mounds or other unmarked burial sites is to manage or modify existing vegetation to encourage soil stabilization and discourage erosion. The following are practices for vegetation management on mounds and other burial sites that meet the approval of the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) and the OSA's Indian Advisory Council.

- No heavy machinery needed for vegetation management (e.g. tree removal or seeding) should be placed on or driven over mounds or other burial sites. Consult with the OSA Bioarchaeology Program to determine appropriate buffer zones.
- At maximum, small riding lawnmowers can be used to mow grass covering mounds. Mower decks should be set to the highest level possible and mowing should only occur when conditions are dry to prevent rutting.
- Large trees should be removed from mounds because they can cause unwanted damage if uprooted. **However, consult with the OSA and appropriate tribes before doing so as certain trees can be of cultural significance.** They should be cut flush with the ground surface, and the stump left in place. Tree removal is ideally done in the winter when the ground is frozen or when soil conditions are dry enough to avoid unwanted rutting by necessary vehicles/machinery.
- Controlled burning of a site and re-seeding with native species is the preferred method for modifying existing vegetation (herbicides should be avoided to eliminate invasive species if possible). Assistance from the local County Conservation Board staff or the County Roadside Vegetation Manager should be sought.
- If burning is not possible, remove unwanted weeds and undergrowth with hand tools only if necessary. Do not dig or pull out roots. Maximum coverage of mounds by low growth vegetation (with the exception of large tree species), especially in areas that are infrequently visited by the public, is ideal for both their stabilization and protection.
- If disking and seed drilling is required for seeding the area surrounding a mound or burial site appropriate buffers must be maintained. No disking nor seed drilling should be done on or immediately adjacent to mounds or other burial sites.
- Preferred seeding methods of such sites are broadcast/hand seeding or hydroseeding.
- Seeds used should be primarily local ecotypes that would match historical vegetation of the area.

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