

1B-1 Background Study (Stage 1 and Stage 2)

A background study is a detailed documentary research of the archaeological and land use history and present condition of a property. It is not a stage of archaeological fieldwork in itself, but it is a required component of **Stage 1** evaluations of archaeological potential. It is also a required component of **Stage 2** assessments if Stage 1 was not done for the property.

Background research that does not involve on-site examination of the property or archaeological fieldwork (i.e. archival research) may be done by a non-licensee, but the interpretation of all background research and reporting on the background study as part of the Stage 1 or Stage 2 report must be done by a licensed archaeologist.

1B-1.1 Objective

- To provide information about a property's geography, history, previous archaeological fieldwork and current land condition, to support determinations of archaeological potential in Stage 1 and choice of survey methods in Stage 2.

1B-1.2 Information Sources

Not all the following information sources will be available or relevant to all properties. The sources listed under **Standards** must be researched. The sources listed under **Guidelines** may be researched when available and relevant.

Guideline sources are optional for Stage 2 but must be researched in Stage 1 if the report includes recommendations for a customized assessment strategy that will not follow the standards and guidelines in later stages.

1B-1.2.1 Standards

Research the following information sources:

- The most up-to-date listing of sites from the Ministry of Culture's archaeological sites database for a radius of one kilometre around the property or wider radius where the property warrants it.
- Topographic maps:
 - At 1:10,000 (recent and historic), or most detailed scale available, for Stage 1
 - At 1:25,000 (recent and historic) or most detailed scale available, for Stage 2
- Historic settlement maps (e.g. historic atlas)
- Municipal archaeological master plan or other potential mapping
- Commemorative plaques or monuments.

1B-1.2.2 Guidelines

1. Research the following information sources as available and relevant to the property:
 - Reports of previous archaeological fieldwork within a radius of one kilometre radius around the property or wider radius where the property warrants it
 - Aerial photographs (both recent and historic)
 - Geotechnical studies (e.g. soil studies, hydrogeological studies)
 - Land titles or records, land registry documents
 - Historical land use and ownership records (e.g. assessment rolls, census records, commercial directories)
 - Aboriginal communities for information on traditional use areas, sacred and other sites.
 - Individuals with oral or written information about the land use of the property and area (e.g. proponent, professional and avocational archaeologists, municipal heritage planners, local residents)
 - Organizations with oral or written information about the land use of the property and area (e.g. local museums, archaeological or historical societies)
 - Primary historic documentary sources (e.g. diaries, manuscripts)
 - Secondary historic documentary sources (e.g. local and regional histories, academic research).
2. In addition to the above, for urban and brownfield properties, research the following specialized information sources as available:
 - Municipal engineering studies and maps
 - Municipal planning studies
 - Insurance and fire studies and maps.

1B-1.3 Related units:

- [Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Fieldwork: Stage 1](#)
- Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Fieldwork: Stage 2
- Project Reports and Maps: Stage 1
- Project Reports and Maps: Stage 2