

# How to Submit an Archaeology Report to SHPO for Cultural Resource Professionals

*Updated June 9, 2026*

SHPO is required to maintain an inventory of archaeological survey reports. Since the OSA Portal was re-launched in August 2025, the reports have been managed through that application. All archaeological reports completed in Minnesota must now be submitted through the OSA Portal. These instructions explain how to submit a report, which fields SHPO asks archaeologists to complete, and provide answers to common questions.

**The OSA Portal is not a project review submission portal. It is an inventory of archaeology reports and site data. Submitting an archaeological report in the OSA Portal does not notify SHPO staff and does not constitute a project review request under federal or state law.**

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## Log in or Request an Account to the OSA Portal

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The archaeologist who prepared the report must first log into the OSA Portal. If the archaeologist does not have an account, an account can be requested by following the steps outlined in the OSA Portal User Guide, provided as screenshots below.

### Request an Account

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In accordance with Section 304 of the National Historic Preservation Act, Minnesota Statute § 307.08, subd. 11 and Minnesota Statute § 13.37, full access to detailed records is reserved for qualified archaeologists, tribal historic preservation officers, and the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council. Access is granted on a case-by-case basis. **Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA) staff will determine what level of access to provide based on your qualifications and need for the data.**

If you need an account to receive greater access to the information provided by the Portal, follow the step-by-step instructions below.

1. Visit the [OSA Portal](#).
2. Click **Log In** in the upper right-hand corner of the webpage header.



3. The steps to create an account depend on whether you are an internal or external user. **Internal users** are State of Minnesota employees who have an account in the Active Directory (state.mn.us email address). All other users are considered **external users**.

### External Users

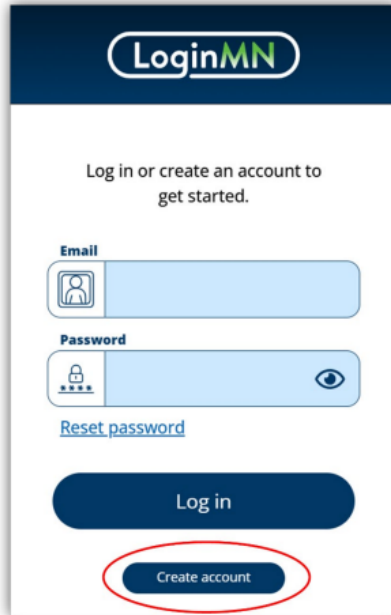
4. If you **are not** an employee of the State of Minnesota, click on the link to **Request an account as an external user**.

## External Partners

Log in using a username and password.

Don't have an account yet? [Request an account as an external user](#)

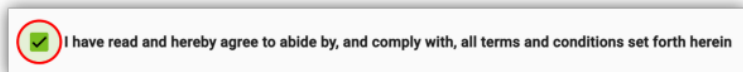
5. You will be taken to LoginMN.com. This is a secure and centralized sign-on service to access multiple State of Minnesota applications. If you already have a LoginMN account, log in with your email address and password. If you do not have an account, scroll down and click the **Create account** button.



6. Follow the instructions on LoginMN to create your new account.
7. Once your LoginMN account is active, return to the OSA Portal. **Approval by the OSA is not automatic.** Once you log into the OSA Portal with your LoginMN account, you will be taken to

the OSA's request form. Fill out the requested information. Required fields are marked with an asterisk (\*). Upload a PDF file of your current resume/CV.

8. Read the OSA Portal User Agreement. You must check the box next to the user agreement to proceed.



9. Double-check that the information you provided is correct. Upload your current resume/CV as a PDF and confirm it is the correct file. Then, click the **Submit Registration** button.

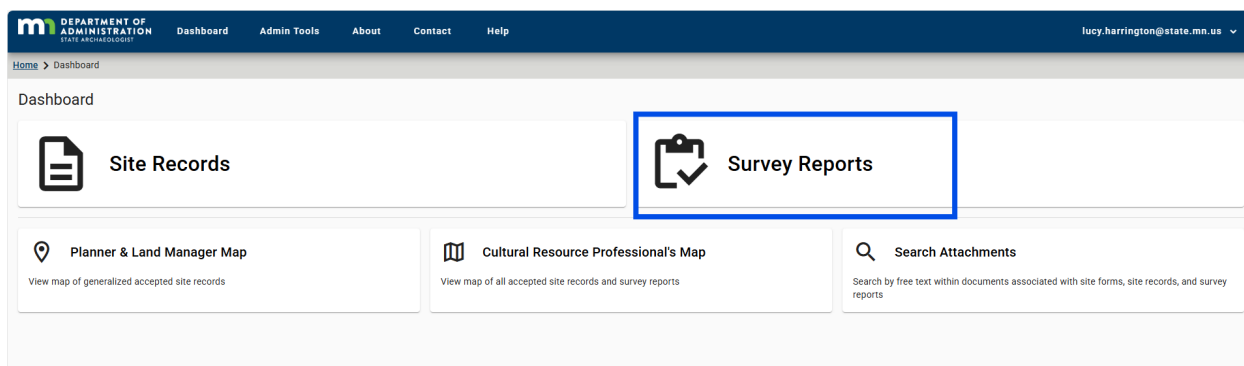


10. You will be notified by an automated email from [no-reply-osa@state.mn.us](mailto:no-reply-osa@state.mn.us) if/when your request has been approved. If you do not receive the message within five business days, check your spam folder. If there is no message, email [OSA.Portal.ADM@state.mn.us](mailto:OSA.Portal.ADM@state.mn.us) for help.

## Submit a New Report

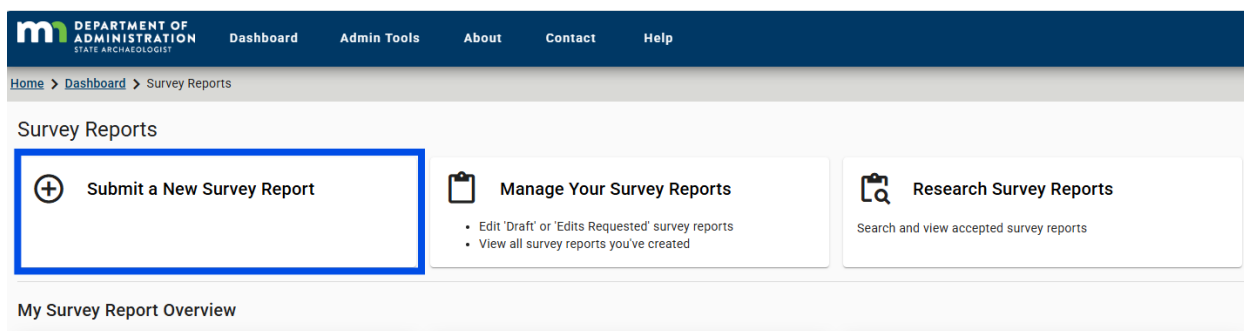
Once the archaeologist who prepared the report is logged in to the OSA Portal, the Survey Reports module can be accessed from the Dashboard. First click “Dashboard” in the top left corner, and then click “Survey Reports” (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Dashboard in the OSA Portal - Survey Reports Highlighted in Blue



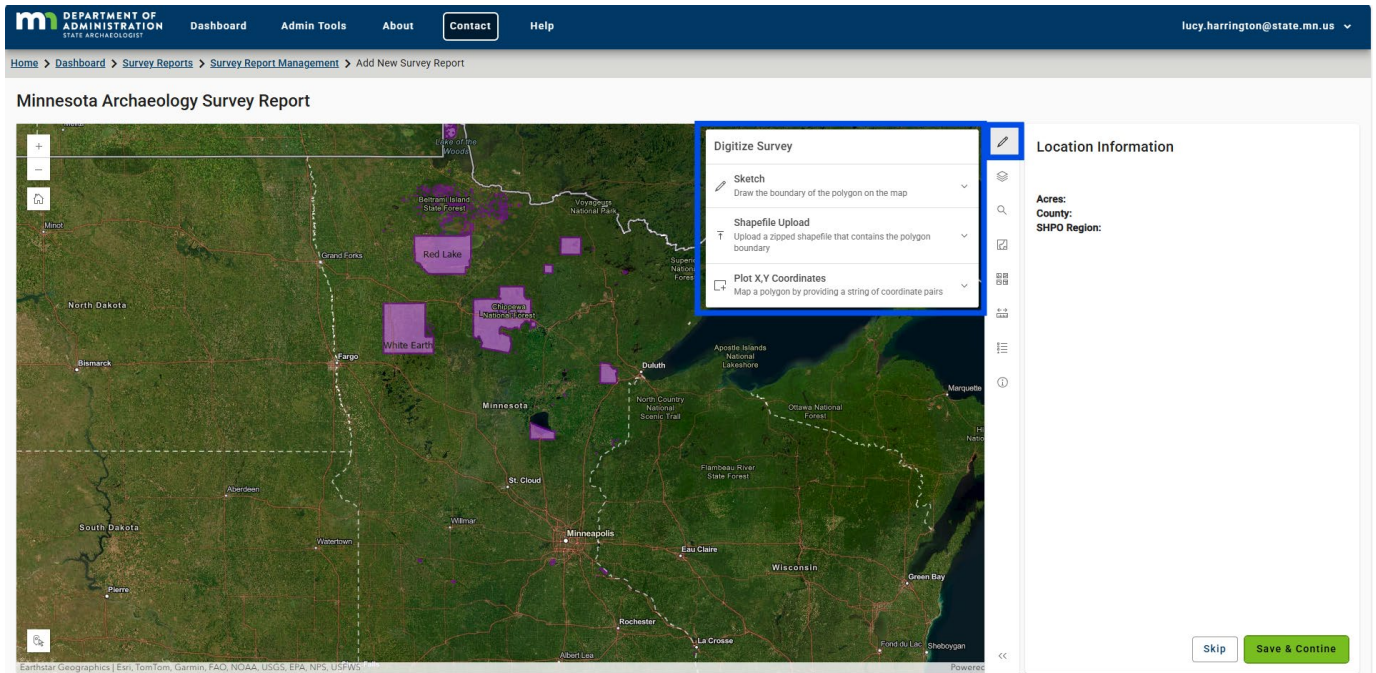
To submit a new survey report, click “Submit a New Survey Report” (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Survey Reports Widgets - Submit a New Survey Report Highlighted in Blue



After clicking “Submit a New Survey Report,” the archaeologist will be taken to a map where they must add the survey area location (Figure 3). SHPO staff recommend uploading a zipped shapefile of the survey area (not the project area, the study area, or the area of potential effects) into the map. The survey area boundary can be digitized by hand if it is relatively small and simple. **All Phase Ia, Phase I, Phase II, Phase III, and any combined, multiple phase reports are required to be submitted with survey geometry.** For other types of reports, please reach out to SHPO staff ([DataRequestSHPO@state.mn.us](mailto:DataRequestSHPO@state.mn.us)) if you are unsure whether you need to add the survey geometry.

Figure 3. Add Location Information for the Survey Report - Digitize Survey Highlighted in Blue



Once the survey location has been added, click “Save & Continue” in the bottom right corner. A new page will be loaded to fill out additional information about the survey report (Figure 4) and upload the PDF/A<sup>1</sup> of the survey report.

<sup>1</sup> A PDF/A is a Portable Document Format file that is saved in a format which is more suitable for long-term digital archiving; the “A” stands for “archival.” Adobe provides instructions on converting a PDF to a PDF/A here: <https://www.adobe.com/acrobat/hub/how-to-convert-pdf-to-pdfa.html>.

Figure 4. Additional Information About the Survey Report

Home > Dashboard > Survey Reports > Survey Report Management > Add New Survey Report

### Minnesota Archaeology Survey Report

**Select Review or Submission Type**

You must select if this survey report is submitted to SHPO for review, to the OSA to fulfill licensure requirements or inclusion in the OSA report library, or both OSA and SHPO, before saving and/or submittal. This choice is predicated on the legal framework under which the work was undertaken, e.g. Section 106 review, the Field Archaeology Act, the Private Cemeteries Act, etc.


SHPO Environmental Review     OSA Report Submission     SHPO Environmental Review and OSA Report Submission

**Report Type**

Report Type  Report Date

**Location Information**

Acres	County	SHPO Region
33.51	Meeker	2n - Prairie Lake North



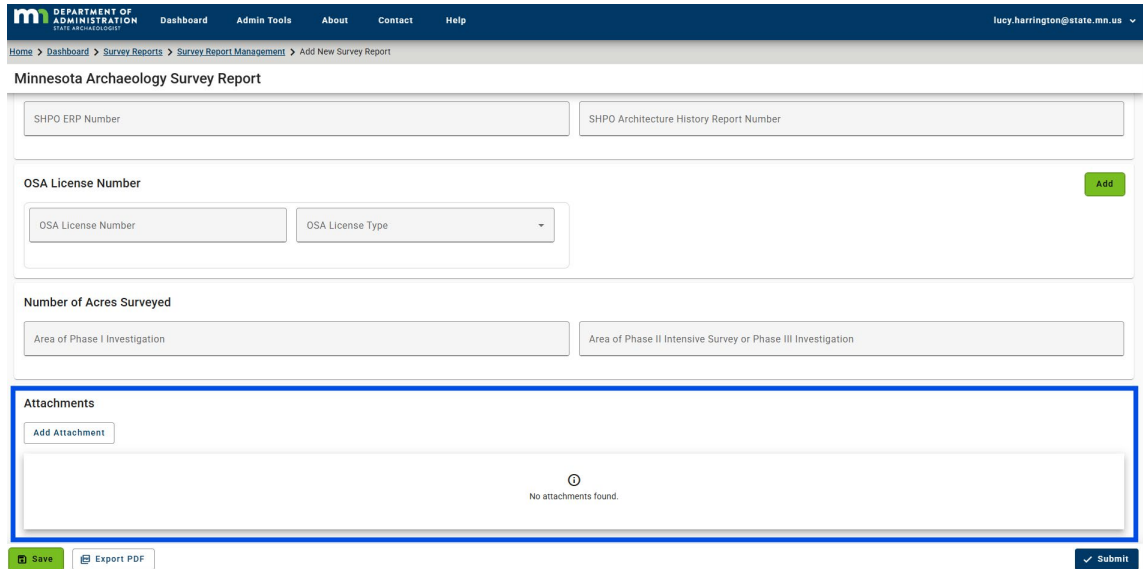
Please fill out the Survey Report Fields as described below:

- **Review or Submission Type:** Please select a type that includes “SHPO” either “SHPO Environmental Review” or “SHPO Environmental Review and OSA Report Submission.”
- **Report Type:** Select the appropriate category (i.e. Combined Phase I & II projects for a survey report that includes evaluation of archaeological sites or “Literature search...” for a survey report that is a desktop assessment).
- **Report Date:** The date the report was finalized in month, day, year format.
- **Contractor Details:** type the full report title, the author(s), contracting firm’s name, project sponsor (i.e. the client), Principal Investigator
- **Date of Survey:** please put the **last day of the survey** in month, day, year format or select No Survey Date for a literature review.
- **Sites:** List all new sites identified in the survey (please obtain site numbers from OSA first) and list all previously documented sites that were visited during the survey.
- **SHPO Report Number:** This is for “legacy” reports that are already on file at SHPO and have a SHPO report number. In general, this should not be filled out by non-SHPO staff.
- **SHPO ERP & Architecture History Report Number:** If an archaeology report is being submitted in response to a request for a survey by SHPO or SHPO’s Environmental Review Program has already assigned a number to a project, include the SHPO Number from the SHPO letter as the SHPO ERP Number. The Architecture History Report Number field should only be filled out by SHPO staff.
- **OSA License Number:** Please fill this out as requested by OSA in the OSA Portal User Guide.
- **Number of Acres Surveyed:**
  - **Area of Phase I investigation:** applies to the area (in acres) of the field survey conducted at a reconnaissance or Phase I level. This does not include desktop assessments that have no field survey (i.e. Phase Ia reports).
  - **Area of Phase II Intensive Survey or Phase III Investigation:** applies to the area (in acres) of the field survey conducted at an intensive level. This includes field work that results in an evaluation of an archaeological site (i.e. Phase II survey) or field work that results in the data recovery of an archaeological site (i.e. Phase III survey).

If you have questions about how to fill in these fields, please reach out to SHPO Staff ([DataRequestSHPO@state.mn.us](mailto:DataRequestSHPO@state.mn.us)).

To upload a copy of the completed archaeological survey report, click the “Add Attachment” button (Figure 5).

**Figure 5. Additional Information and Attachments for Survey Reports - Attachments Section Highlighted in Blue**

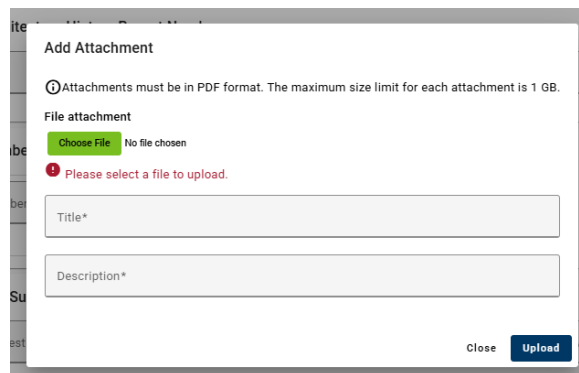


The screenshot shows the 'Minnesota Archaeology Survey Report' form. The 'Attachments' section is highlighted with a blue border. It contains an 'Add Attachment' button and a message: 'No attachments found.' Below the form are 'Save', 'Export PDF', and 'Submit' buttons.

The survey report document, saved as a PDF/A, must be uploaded to this record by adding it as an attachment (Figure 5). The file(s) attached must not exceed a total size of 1 gigabyte, but will preferably be less than 100 megabytes.

After clicking “Add Attachment,” a new window will appear to select a file to upload and type a brief Title and Description. Note that the file name cannot exceed 24 characters, so it should be abbreviated as much as possible. ***Please do not upload a cover letter, project review request form, or documentation other than the archaeological survey report to the OSA Portal. The OSA Portal is an inventory, not a project review and submission application.***

**Figure 6. Add Attachment Upload Window**



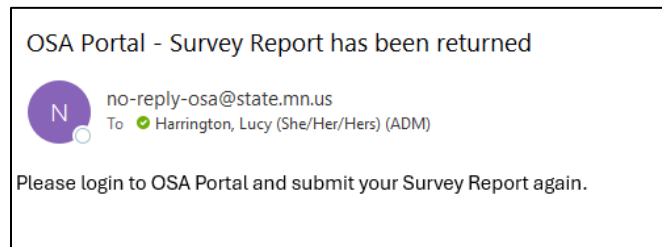
The screenshot shows the 'Add Attachment' upload window. It includes a message: 'Attachments must be in PDF format. The maximum size limit for each attachment is 1 GB.' Below this is a 'File attachment' section with a 'Choose File' button and the text 'No file chosen'. A red error message says: 'Please select a file to upload.' There are input fields for 'Title\*' and 'Description\*'. At the bottom right are 'Close' and 'Upload' buttons.

After filling out the fields and adding the attachment, press Submit in the bottom right corner (Figure 5).

## Revise a Report in Response to SHPO’s Request for Edits

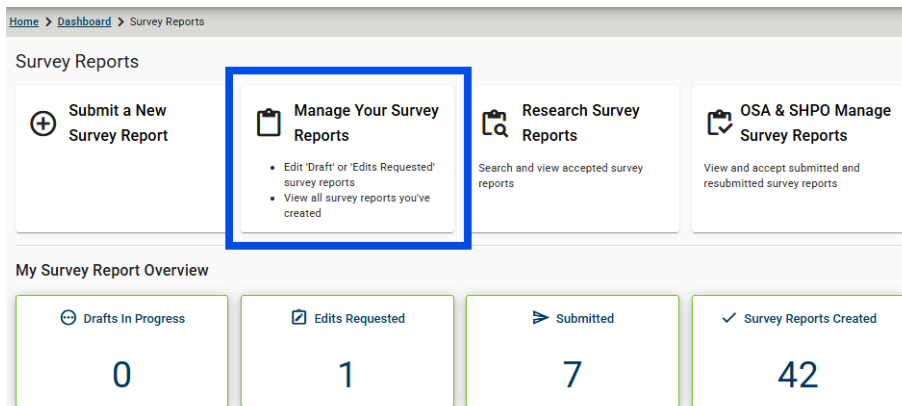
If the archaeologist who prepared and submitted the report in the OSA Portal receives an email notification, “Survey Report has been returned” (Figure 7), that means the SHPO or OSA staff have returned the report and requested edits.

**Figure 7. Survey Report has been returned Email**



After the archaeologist receives this email, they should log into the OSA Portal, click “Dashboard,” then “Survey Reports,” then “Manage Your Survey Reports” (Figure 8).

**Figure 8. Where to find reports for which edits have been requested: Manage Your Survey Reports**



A new page will open showing the submitted reports, which will only have the view icon, and the report for which edits have been requested, which will have several icons (Figure 9).

**Figure 9. List of submitted reports and one with edits requested**

County	SHPO Report Number	SHPO ERP Number	SHPO Architecture History Report Number	Report Title	Actions
Stearns	SN-2025-02	2025-1553		Phase I Archaeological Sur	
Fillmore		2026-0216		Phase I Archaeological Sur	
Pipestone	PP-2025-03	2025-1386		Phase I Archeological Inves	
Beltrami		2026-0340		Phase I Archaeological Inve	
Blue Earth		2024-1983		Phase I Archaeological Sur	
Norman		2025-0885		RE: NCC Response Letter to	
Hennepin		2025-1710		Lake Hiawatha Area Additio	
Kandiyohi				This is a Report	

Click the button “Edit Survey Report” (outlined in blue in Figure 9). A new page will open that shows the requested edits at the top in a box with a red outline. Typically, SHPO will note that we are requesting edits as outlined in a letter sent to the preparer and/or the responsible entity in relation to an Environmental Review Program project review request (Figure 10).

**Figure 10. Edits Requested Text Box**

The screenshot shows the SHPO website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo for the Department of Administration, State Archaeologist, and links for Dashboard, About, Contact, and Help. The user email is lucy.harrington@state.mn.us. Below the navigation bar is a breadcrumb trail: Home > Dashboard > Survey Reports > Survey Report Management > View Survey Report > Edit Survey Report. The main heading is "Minnesota Archaeology Survey Report". A red-bordered box contains the text "Edits Requested" with a bell icon and the instruction "Please revise the report as requested in the relevant SHPO letter." Below this is a section titled "Select Review or Submission Type" with a note: "You must select if this survey report is submitted to SHPO for review, to the OSA to fulfill licensure requirements or inclusion in the OSA report library, or both OSA and SHPO, before saving and/or submittal. This choice is predicated on the legal framework under which the work was undertaken, e.g. Section 106 review, the Field Archaeology Act, the Private Cemeteries Act, etc." There are three buttons: "SHPO Environmental Review" (selected with a checkmark), "OSA Report Submission", and "SHPO Environmental Review and OSA Report Submission".

The archaeologist who prepared the report will need to review the relevant SHPO letter and make the requested edits. Once the edits have been made to the report, the archaeologist will need to notify the responsible entity to resubmit a project review request as described on SHPO website for [Submitting a Project for Review](#).

## Request SHPO Review of a Report

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Submitting an archaeological report in the OSA Portal does not notify SHPO staff and does not constitute a project review request under federal or state law.

### Environmental Review Program Project Review Request

In order to submit a project to SHPO for review under federal or state law, follow the steps described on the SHPO website [Submitting a Project for Review](#). Key steps from that website are outlined below:

1. Electronic submissions of project review requests must be sent to [ENReviewSHPO@state.mn.us](mailto:ENReviewSHPO@state.mn.us) by the responsible federal/state agency/local unit of government or delegated agent as authorized by the state/federal agency/local unit of government (the responsible entity).
2. The responsible entity should submit a cover letter that includes the project title, a detailed description of the project, names of involved government agencies, etc. as described on the website.
  - a. The cover letter should reference the title, author(s), and date of the report submitted in the OSA Portal and should clearly state that the report has been submitted in that application.
3. Include attachments as described on the website.
4. Submit the cover letter and attachments via email to [ENReviewSHPO@state.mn.us](mailto:ENReviewSHPO@state.mn.us).

### Submit a Courtesy Copy of an Archaeological Survey Report to SHPO

In order to share a courtesy copy of an archaeological survey report with SHPO for incorporation into the inventory, please have the archaeologist submit the report as described above. Then have the archaeologist email [DataRequestSHPO@state.mn.us](mailto:DataRequestSHPO@state.mn.us) to let us know that the report has been submitted in the OSA Portal. SHPO staff will then approve the report so that the OSA can accept it and make it accessible to other archaeologists.

## Frequently Asked Questions / Troubleshooting

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**Q: I skipped digitizing the survey area location and now I can't go back and add it. What do I do?**

A: Unfortunately, if you press "Skip" on the Location Information / Map page, you cannot go back and add the survey area location later. You will have to delete the draft report and submit the report again to include the location at the first step.

**Q: I uploaded a zipped shapefile of the survey area location and encountered an error. What am I doing wrong?**

A: We recommend creating a single dissolved or merged polygon shapefile of the survey area and zipping and uploading that. This is a problem particularly with large or complex survey areas, and a single polygon shapefile seems to work the best.

**Q: What should I put for acreage?**

A: SHPO is required to report survey acreage at the reconnaissance and intensive level in the state to the federal government every year. Please put the actual acreage that you surveyed at each level (Phase I = reconnaissance; Phase II & III = intensive). Do not put the project area acreage if you did not complete 100% survey of that area.

**Q: I can't get the report submission in the OSA Portal to work and my client needs to move forward with their project review request. What do I do?**

A: Have the responsible entity (the client or government entity) submit the report via email. If available, have them include a zipped shapefile of the survey area. If not, have them submit what they have. SHPO staff will add the report to the inventory.

**Q: The archaeologist that prepared the report is no longer involved in the project and I am not an archaeologist, so I can't get access to the OSA Portal. What do I do?**

A: Have the responsible entity (the client or government entity) submit the report via email. If available, include a zipped shapefile of the survey area. If not, submit what is available. SHPO staff will add the report to the inventory.

**Q: How do I create a PDF/A file format and what is that?**

A: The exact steps for how to create a PDF/A file format change over time. Please use a search engine to figure out the appropriate method. PDF/A compatible files are a specialized archival quality file format that ensure long-term preservation of electronic data. If you can't create a PDF/A file, upload what you can create.

**Q: As the archaeologist, when do I submit the report in the OSA Portal?**

A: SHPO recommends that when the archaeologist has completed the survey report, they submit it in the OSA Portal. However, we understand that there are several reasons why this may not be possible. We encourage the archaeologist to have their client or the responsible entity copy the archaeologist when the project review request is sent to SHPO so that the archaeologist can upload the report at that point. If the archaeologist would like to retain the ability to edit the report in response to client or responsible entity comments or questions, they are welcome to prepare the report submittal as a “Draft” (i.e., digitize the location, fill out all of the fields, upload the attachment, and then refrain from clicking the “Submit” button). SHPO staff will be able to see the Draft report and submit it on behalf of the archaeologist preparer and review it at that time.