

# Cultural Resource Planning for Small Communities

A Presentation for Dane County  
Planning and Development



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Driftless Pathways, LLC

# About Us

**Native American Heritage**  
A Story of Friendship

**10,000 Years of Human History**  
Native Americans have inhabited the unglaciated Driftless Area for millennia. How do we know? By sifting through the sands of time. Archaeologists with the Mississippi Valley Archeology Center (MVAC) at UW-La Crosse have excavated at Trempealeau intensively since the 1950s. Their digs have yielded Native American pottery fragments and stone tools, some dating to 10,000 years ago.

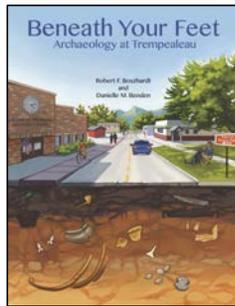
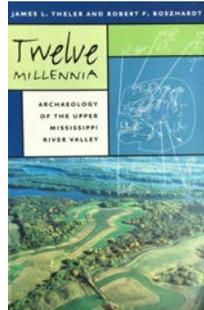
**Late 1800s—Early 1900s**  
By 1855, Nels Skumrud and his second wife Ellen, the first of three generations of Norwegians, settled this land. Despite ongoing conflicts between the government and the Indians, the Skumruds established and maintained friendly relations with Native people. The Church (Wishnago) Indians camped nearby along Spring and Cane Creeks. At night, a lantern burned bright in the Skumrud cabin signaling a boarding place for passing traders, many of whom were Native Americans.

"There was a settlement of Winnebago Indians down in the pasture. They often brought beadwork to the Skumruds to be exchanged for loaves of bread."  
—Ruth Thorne

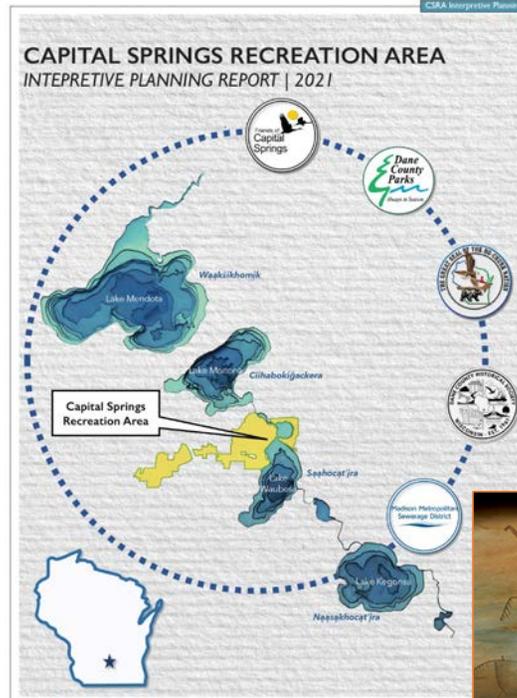
There the second floor left sheltered travelers alongside the five Skumrud children. Sometimes the children were worked in the loft, while mother and father slept in a bed on the ground level, with children cradled on the family floor.

Exhibits

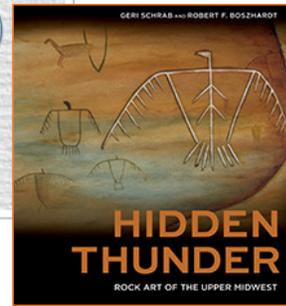
## Research



## Interpretive Planning



## Preservation and Public Education



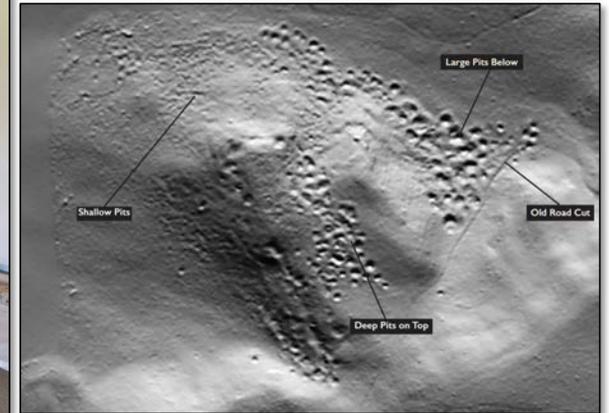
## Museum Consulting



## Tours



# Our Work is Collaborative



# Trempealeau, Wisconsin: A Unique Cultural Identity



River Town | Driftless Area | Perrot State Park

Catfish Days | Abundant Archaeological Resources



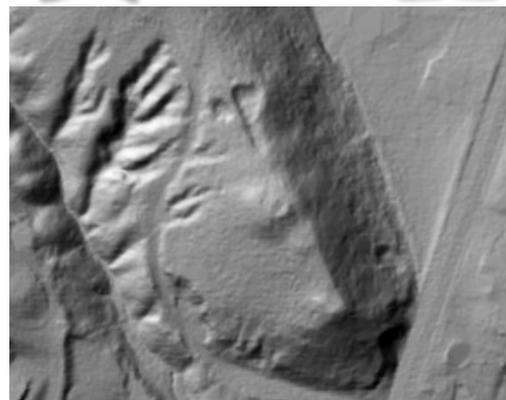
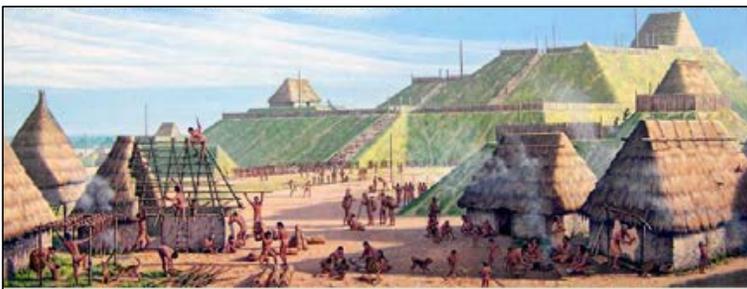
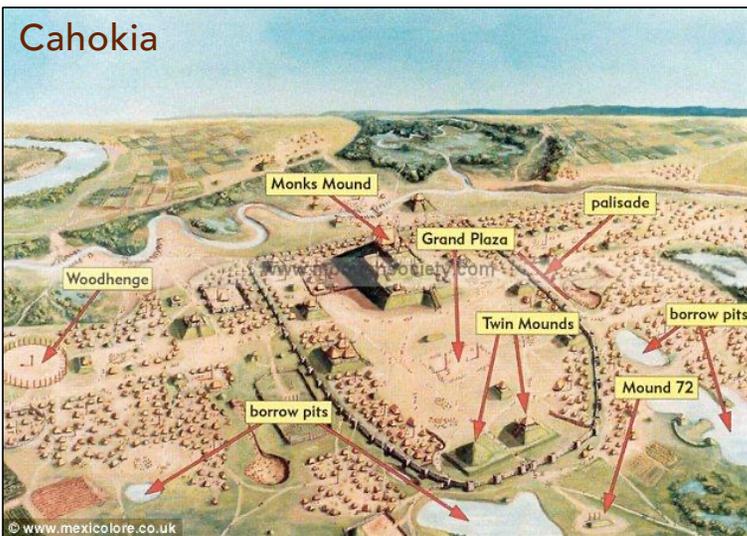
# Trempealeau, Wisconsin: A History of Archaeology



# Trempealeau Interpretive Path



# Journey from Cahokia to Trempealeau 1,000 Years Ago



Little Bluff Mounds on Lidar



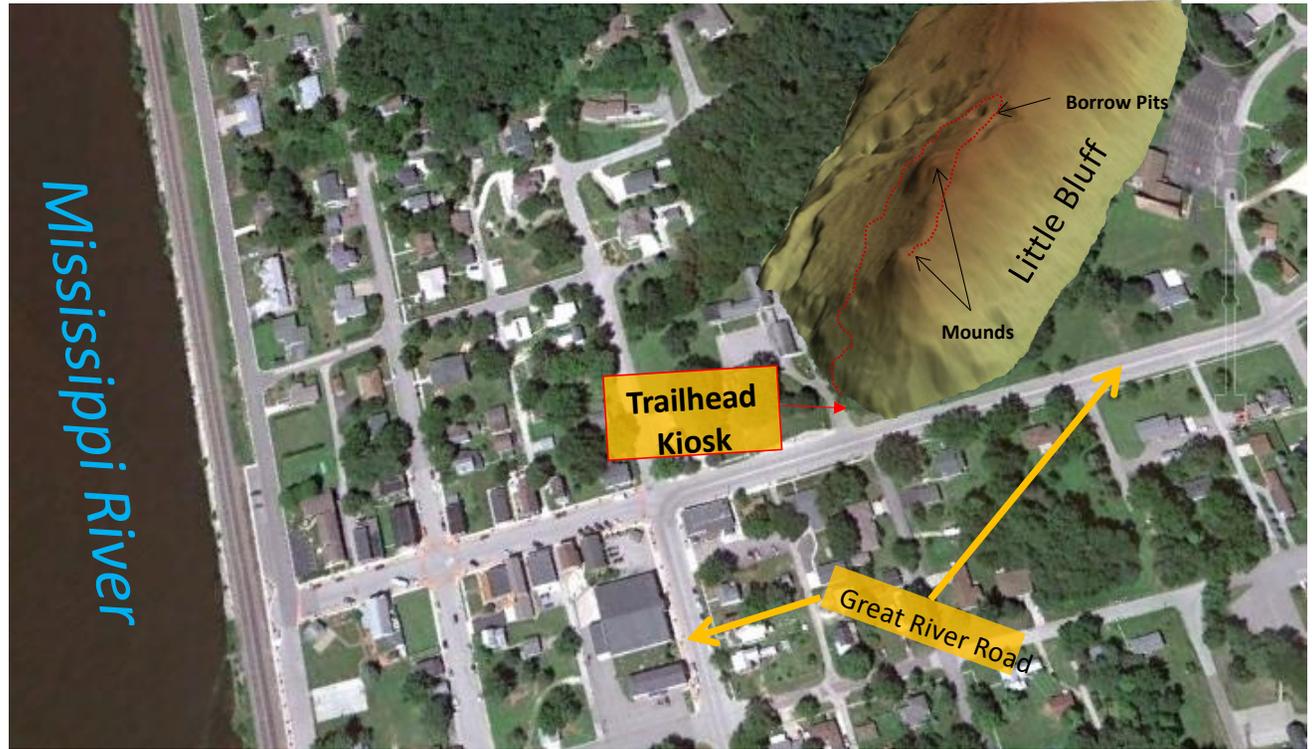
# Community Connections



# Shirley M. Wright Memorial Library



# Little Bluff Mounds Trail



# Little Bluff Mounds Trail



## Welcome to Little Bluff Mounds



A thousand years ago, a group of people that archaeologists call "Mississippians" packed their belongings and paddled dugout canoes more than 500 miles up the Mississippi River. They settled in Trempealeau, or place of the "Mountain Whose Foot is Bathed in Water." Trempealeau is named for an outlier bluff island, a unique landform in the entire 2,400-mile stretch of the Mississippi River.



The Source of the Mississippi River from Cahokia to Trempealeau.



The Trempealeau Landmark.

Canadian Illustration.



Mississippians came from the bustling city of Cahokia, their homeland of approximately 30,000 people, near present-day St. Louis and are well known for their masterfully engineered earthen platform mounds. Aligned to the cycles of the sun and moon, the mounds often served as platforms for temples and residences of chiefly elites who ruled over the commoners in the village below.

Artist's rendition of Cahokia.



# Little Bluff Mounds Trail



## Stories Below the Surface

In 2011, archaeologists excavated a T-shaped trench into the mound on which you are standing, the largest of the Little Bluff platforms. The goals were to (1) examine what damage had been done by the Village's former water tower (2) determine how the mound was constructed and (3) look for indications of Mississippian activities.

### Historic Damage to Mound 1

**Legend**

- Archaeological site
- Water tower
- Water tower foundation
- Water tower structure
- Water tower chimney
- Water tower base
- Water tower roof
- Water tower walls
- Water tower floor
- Water tower ceiling
- Water tower interior
- Water tower exterior
- Water tower foundation
- Water tower structure
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- Water tower base
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- Water tower floor
- Water tower ceiling
- Water tower interior
- Water tower exterior

**My Map of Mound 1**

Look for the mound that you are standing on. It is the largest of the Little Bluff platforms. The mound was constructed by the Mississippian people. The mound was used as a platform for a water tower. The water tower was built on the mound. The water tower was used to supply water to the village. The water tower was used to supply water to the village. The water tower was used to supply water to the village.



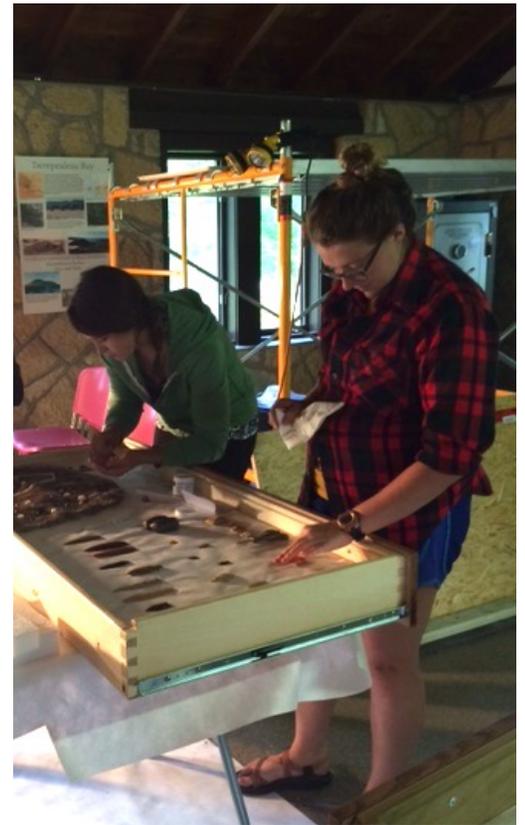
# Perrot State Park Nature Center



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