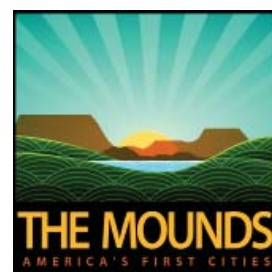




Cahokia Mounds is the largest pre-Columbian city north of Mexico. Cahokia, along with its surrounding ancient communities, transformed the region into a dominant religious, political, economic and cultural center. It is the only Mississippian Culture site that is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Combined with the surrounding satellite mound centers, Cahokia Mounds emerges as the most significant and unsurpassed example of its time period.

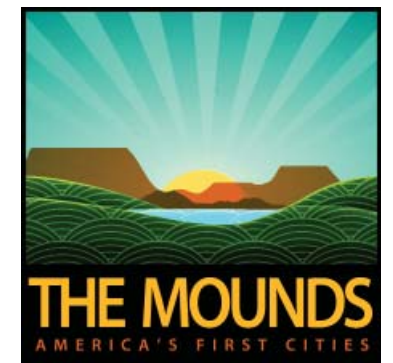
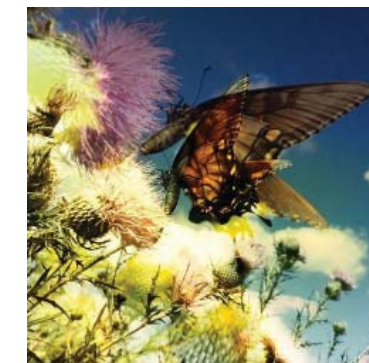
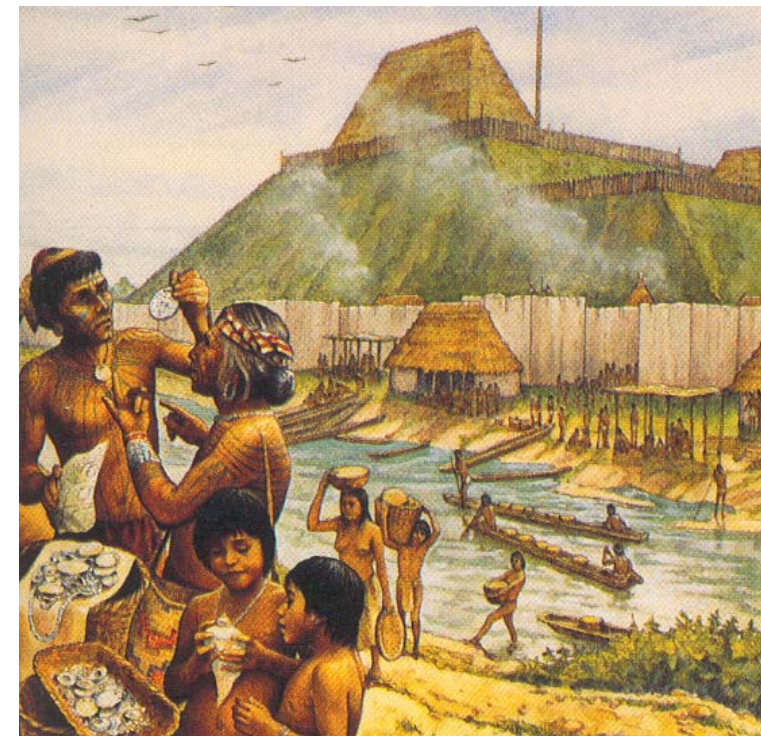


www.facebook.com/TheMounds
www.facebook.com/HeartLandsConservancy
www.HeartLandsConservancy.org



The Mounds - America's First Cities

A F e a s i b i l i t y S t u d y



A study outlining the feasibility of elevating Cahokia Mounds, and associated Mound Centers, to a National Designation within the auspices of the National Park Service.



Executive Summary

2014



Funders

HeartLands Conservancy has received generous funding for The Mounds - America's First Cities: A Feasibility Study. Thank you all for your support.

- Great Rivers Greenway
- Illinois Archaeological Survey
- The Crown Family
- The Grand Victoria Foundation
- The Kemper Foundation
- The Kerr Foundation
- The Kutterer Foundation
- The Oerter Foundation
- Waste Management, Inc.
- Anonymous Donors

Project Team

- David C. Eustis, President/CEO
- Ed Weilbacher, Special Projects, Team Lead
- Laura L. Lyon, CNU, Special Projects, Research & Strategic Planner
- Megan Reichmann, AICP, Community & Environmental Planner
- Sarah Vogt, Environmental Programs Technician & GIS

- Mark Lynott, Ph.D., Archaeology & National Park Service Liaison
- John Kelly, Ph.D., Archaeology & Regional Liaison
- Suzanne Kutterer-Siburt, MPA MSW, Community Outreach

- Robert M. Lewis, Principal, Development Strategies, Economic Impact Study
- Katie Medlin, Associate, Development Strategies, Economic Impact Study
- Brian Licari, Associate, Development Strategies, Economic Impact Study

HeartLands Conservancy

HeartLands Conservancy | 406 East Main | Mascoutah, Illinois 62258
618.66.4451 | Fax: 618.566.4452 | info@heartlandsconservancy.org

January 2014 revised 3.14.14

Image Credits: Bill Iseminger, Bryan Werner, Cahokia Mounds Historic Site, HeartLands Conservancy, Missouri Historical Society, The Mounds Project Team, The Museum Society, and National Geographic. Credits are located in the full report.

FUNDING NEEDS

The next steps include further public outreach (meetings, exhibits, educational materials, etc.), further outreach to the American Indian Nation/Tribes, and early implementation of the recommendations. The proposed funding needs for the next twelve months is \$100,000.

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Collaborate with The American Indian Tribes

While the Project Team has successfully reached out to the American Indian Tribes, these are ongoing relationships to grow and strengthen. In sharing their wisdom, histories, contemporary culture and knowledge, interpretation, methodology, and future planning will be enriched.

Grow the Mounds Heritage Trail

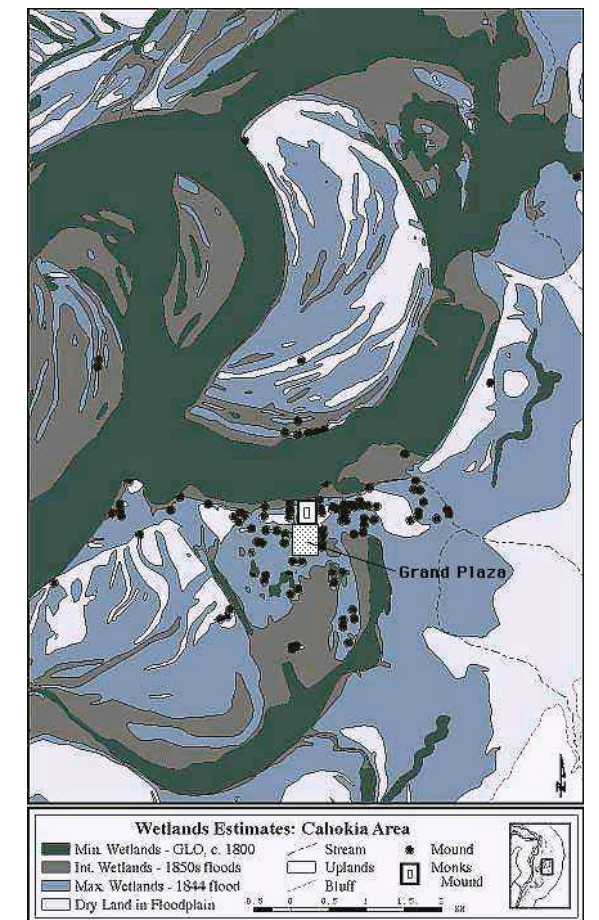
The Project Team seeks to expand the Mounds Heritage Trail through neighborhoods and communities along new alignments connecting more mound centers to the north, west, and east in the bi-state region. Opportunities to leverage signage, programming, planning, and interpretation on both sides of the river are being discussed.

Partner with Educational, Cultural Institutions, & Universities

Work with the area cultural and educational institutions on service teaming and programming opportunities during the project development. Amongst others, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and Washington University in St. Louis have expressed an interest in involving their students, including working with the Washington University's Buder Center staff and American Indian students to focus on aspects of contemporary American Indian culture and ancient Mississippian culture.

Expand Outreach with Information Tables, Presentations, & Exhibits

The Project Team has committed to participating in presentations and information tables throughout the region. To grow outreach opportunities, traditional and nontraditional venues and special events have been identified to attend for the first half of 2014. The Project Team will give presentations to bring awareness to the significance of the Mississippian Culture and provide an interactive forum for discussion. Mobile exhibits placed in community venues, libraries, and schools provide more intimate interaction with the materials.





NEXT STEPS

Important Dates to Build Upon

- 2014 Fairmont City, IL Centennial
- 2014 St. Louis' 250th Anniversary
- 2015 Gateway Arch's 50th Anniversary of the Completion
- 2016 National Park Service's Centennial
- 2018 State of Illinois' Bicentennial
- 2020 State of Missouri's Bicentennial

REMAINING TASKS

- Continue Discussions with National Park Service
- Continue to actively gain Local and National Support
- Continue to Engage Legislators, Cities, and Community Outreach
- Continue to Engage Partnering Agencies & Organizations
- Install more Mounds Heritage Trail Signage in Missouri & Illinois
- Participate in Regional Cultural and Special Events
- Develop Exhibits at Schools and Libraries
- Develop Fundraising Campaign
- Assist in the Special Resource Study by National Parks Service
- Initiate Next Steps:
 - o Develop Partnership Framework
 - o Draft Legislation as necessary
 - o Introduce Legislation with Support of Leadership
 - o Implement Early Action Items of the Approved Alternative
 - o Develop Mound Preservation & Acquisition Plan

The **Next Steps** of the STUDY shall advance the understanding of, interaction with, and preservation of the world-class cultural legacy associated with the Mississippian Society, circa 800 - 1400, within the greater St. Louis region through the Mississippian Culture Initiative and the following objectives over the next 1-3 years:

Attain appropriate national designation for Cahokia Mounds as well as thematically connected, publically-owned, sites within the greater St. Louis region.

Organize a diverse partnership, whose purpose shall be to provide technical leadership, to identify projects, and to leverage financial resources and focus public and private investment in a manner which best advances the initiative.

Provide leadership in the voluntary protection of remaining mound sites; including lands in both public and private ownership.

Plan and implement efforts which physically and/or interactively connect sites associated with the Mississippian Culture, including signage, streetscapes, trails, driving tours and web applications.

Link to other efforts to preserve and promote the Mississippian Culture along the Mississippi River and the Mississippi Watershed.



The Mounds - America's First Cities

A F e a s i b i l i t y S t u d y



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Recommendations	12
Impacts	14
Next Steps	18



INTRODUCTION

Grand Plaza

Monks Mound

Canteen Creek



GLOBAL SIGNIFICANCE

Throughout the history of humankind, certain episodes and events stand out as particularly important in the evolution of societies - human adaptations, social organization, or cultural florescence. Students of world archaeology easily recognize the importance of the Ancient Civilizations of the Near East, Egypt, Greece, Rome, and China.

When attention is turned to the Western Hemisphere, great achievements in the archaeological record are often limited to the Inca, the Maya, and the Aztecs. In North America, four archaeological complexes stand out as the greatest achievements in the ancient history of the continent: Poverty Point, Ohio Hopewell Culture, Chaco Canyon, and Cahokia Mounds.

OUR REGION'S CAHOKIA: THE CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE

Some of the mounds built between AD 1000-1400 stand as earthen monuments and remnants of Mississippian - **North America's greatest ancient culture** and ancestral to many of today's great Indian nations. Our region represents one of the most important cultural landscapes of this ancient continent. The **two largest Mississippian "Mound Cities" were in our immediate region**, situated at the country's crossroads along the Mississippi River: East St. Louis and Cahokia.

Amidst unique environs and at the center of the Mississippian River network, **Cahokia Mounds rose to be the largest city**, and served as a cultural and trade center spanning the present day areas of southwestern Illinois, and eastern Missouri. By the end of the eleventh century AD the population of **Cahokia, America's First City**, grew to be the same size as its contemporary, London, England. For reasons unknown, the population of Cahokia Mississippian Culture, dissipated and the center and its satellite towns were abandoned by 1400 AD. The largest remaining mound (Monks Mound) stood tall in the prairies as the **highest structure on the North American continent until 1867**. Slowly over time many of Cahokian homesteads, artifacts, and mounds in the American Bottom and along the adjacent bluffs were erased.

OUR DISAPPEARING MOUNDS & CULTURAL HERITAGE

Over the last 250 years, countless mounds and sites were destroyed in favor of development; the mounds were used for infilling low and wet areas and for construction of buildings and railroads. Since 1811, enthusiasts and archaeologists have documented the mounds and

Midwest. Though not easily quantified, the knowledge gained from new learning opportunities is beneficial to all levels of society. In addition to education, Cahokia Mounds and satellite sites will offer unique recreation opportunities to the east side of the region—especially to areas that have not seen significant recreation infrastructure improvements. The health benefits of increased exercise are not typically included in economic multiplier calculations, yet the benefit of the trail system tie-in is very important to both physical and financial health to the surrounding communities. The conservation of Cahokia Mounds and satellite sites ensures that past cultures are not completely forgotten and that the area will remain unencumbered by other development. In many ways, these sites are invaluable and outside the realm of economic impact multipliers. While little new development can occur at Cahokia Mounds, the surrounding areas and the proposed satellite sites are prime locations to introduce new, quality development into the area.

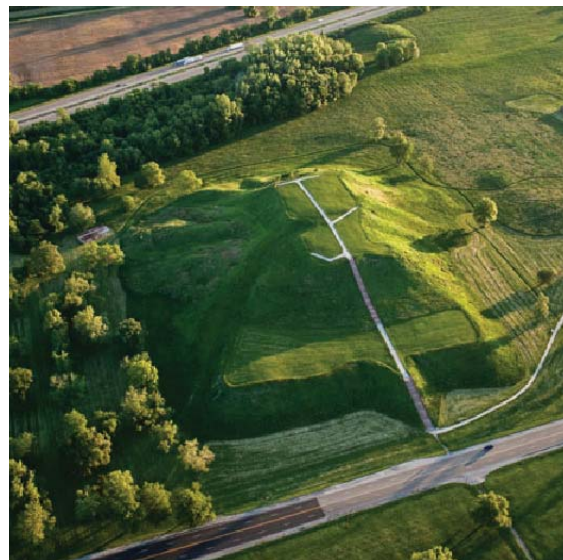


Above: Character Image for Interpretive & Trail Enhancements
Below: Economic Benefits of elevating Cahokia Mounds

CAHOKIA MOUNDS' CURRENT DESIGNATIONS

- Illinois purchased first 144 acres in 1925: became an **Illinois State Park**
- **U.S. National Historic Landmark**: July 19, 1964
1 of 2,507 in US: 1 of 85 in IL, 1 of 37 in MO
- **U.S. National Register of Historic Places**:
October 15, 1966: 1 of 1,700 in IL
- **Illinois State Historic Site** 1975: 1 of 56 in IL
- **UNESCO World Heritage Site**: 1982:
1 of 981 Globally
1 of 21 in US
1 of 1 in the Midwest

Cahokia + elevated national designation	+10% Visitorship	+25% Visitorship	+40% Visitorship (Cahokia has had approx 500,000 visitors in the past, post UNESCO designation & interpretive center opening)
+ site 0% visitors net increase from East St. Louis/Fairmont City Mound Group Interpretive Site	+ site 40K visitors annually net from East St. Louis/Fairmont City Mound Group Interpretive Site	+ site 60K visitors annually net increase from East St. Louis/Fairmont City Mound Group Interpretive Site	+ site 75K visitors annually net increase from East St. Louis/Fairmont City Mound Group Interpretive Site
<p>For Illinois</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate \$19.6 million in economic activity, • Generate \$6.1 million in household earnings, and • Supports, both directly and indirectly, 179 jobs within the state 	<p>For Illinois</p> <p>+ \$3.6 million in overall economic output, +\$1.1 million in household earnings, +27 direct/indirect jobs for Illinois;</p>	<p>For Illinois</p> <p>+ \$6.8 million in overall economic output, +\$2.0 million in household earnings, +62 direct/indirect jobs for Illinois;</p>	<p>For Illinois</p> <p>+ \$16 million in overall economic output, +\$4.7 million in household earnings, +144 direct/indirect jobs for Illinois;</p>
<p>For St. Louis Region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate \$16.5 million in economic activity, • Generate \$5.2 million in household earnings, and • Supports, both directly and indirectly, 169 jobs within the metro area. 	<p>For St. Louis Region</p> <p>+ \$2.8 million in overall economic output, +\$821,000 in household earnings, and +29 direct/indirect jobs for the St. Louis metropolitan area;</p>	<p>For St. Louis Region</p> <p>+ \$5.4 million in overall economic output, +\$1.6 million in household earnings, and +56 direct/indirect jobs for the St. Louis metropolitan area;</p>	<p>For St. Louis Region</p> <p>+ \$12.6 million in overall economic output, +\$3.6 million in household earnings, and +131 direct/indirect jobs for the St. Louis metropolitan area;</p>
<p>For Metro-East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate \$12.2 million in economic activity, • Generate \$3.4 million in household earnings, and • Supports, both directly and indirectly, 133 jobs within Metro East 	<p>For Metro-East</p> <p>+ \$2.0 million in overall economic output, +\$489,000 in household earnings, +23 direct/indirect jobs for Metro East;</p>	<p>For Metro-East</p> <p>+ \$3.9 million in overall economic output, +\$939,000 in household earnings, +44 direct/indirect jobs for Metro East;</p>	<p>For Metro-East</p> <p>+ \$9 million in overall economic output, +\$2.2 million in household earnings, +101 direct/indirect jobs for Metro East;</p>



Above: Monks Mound with multiple jurisdictional boundaries
Below: East St. Louis Site & Old St. Louis National Stockyards Site



IMPACTS OF POTENTIAL INCREASED PATRONAGE

The draft demonstrates Cahokia Mounds spends approximately \$1.7 million annually to support its operations and attracts an average of 300,000 visitors per year, which is more than the attendance of seven Cardinals' games at Busch Stadium. The combined operational and visitor spending stimulates overall economic impact in Illinois of some \$19.6 million per year with \$6.1 million in household earnings supporting 179 jobs in the state. These jobs are the equivalent of 25 small businesses in the state of Illinois. This activity also generates an estimated \$336,000 in annual taxes for state government.

Visitation trends and case studies indicate that attendance could increase 10, 25 and 40 percent in additional visitors in the subsequent three years assuming a series of investments or programmatic enhancements take place including, "upgrading/elevating" the designation to a formal National Parks Service (NPS) unit, leveraging the UNESCO designation, forming strategic partnerships, continue to modernize museum facilities, and improving trails and connectivity to the site. Additionally, if a satellite site and welcome/visitor center were to be developed near the new Interstate 70 Mississippi Bridge on the former St. Louis National Stockyards site in Fairmont City, Illinois, the site could attract an additional 40,000 to 70,000 visitors annually.

QUALITATIVE, NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES IMPACT

While the economic multiplier analyses infers the number of jobs created and direct economic impact of new monies spent in the area, these analyses typically do not capture impact on the ongoing sustainability, revitalization, and overall quality of life in an area. On initial review, no negative impacts to natural or cultural resources have been identified due to the proposed National Designation recommendations. Implementation of any alternative would, by law, comply with local, state and federal regulations, including laws pertaining to health and safety, thereby also having no negative impacts. The implementation of the recommendations could, in fact, result in many positive impacts to preserve, conserve, and improve more natural and cultural resources. It would be most likely beneficial and help protect and prevent further demolition of significant archeological resources.

Improvements to the offerings at Cahokia Mounds, an elevation of the site to a National Historical Park, and investments in satellite sites will help further spread knowledge about the Mississippian culture in the

in some instances, their demise. From 1811 to 1909 alone, over forty mounds disappeared due to urbanization and development, including destruction of the entire mound group in Old North St. Louis.

Recent investigations further reveal the great significance and contributions of the advanced cultural developments at Cahokia and its satellite mound centers. The recent discoveries at the former site of the **St. Louis National Stockyards** (part of the East St. Louis Mounds Group) have demonstrated that there are still amazing parts of the archaeological record to be uncovered.

THE TIME IS NOW TO PROTECT THESE RESOURCES

In spite of legislative efforts, unprotected mounds in the region continue to be destroyed. As a result, the significant loss to this ancient cultural landscape and our national heritage continues. The current National Historic Landmark designation affords some limited protection around Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site proper, and the Illinois Burial Act has provided some protection. But many other mound sites - private or publicly owned - are threatened as new roads are built and development further encroaches on the remaining cultural resources of the region. **The preservation of the greater mounds community - the Mississippian mounds - are a national responsibility.**

HeartLands Conservancy assembled a multidisciplinary project team and advisory committees to compile data for **The Mounds – America's First Cities: A Feasibility Study** (hence forth referred to as the STUDY). Over the past 18 months with guidance from the American Indian Tribes/Nations, Illinois and Missouri state and federal agencies, and local communities, the Project Team completed an intensive work plan to gather input and support for elevating the Mississippian mounds in the St. Louis Metro region to a unit of the National Park Service.

When the entire initiative is complete, its success will ensure that the epicenter of America's pre-Columbian Mississippian civilization will be protected. It will secure the story of our ancient heartlands - both built and unbuilt - to be shared within our community and with our global neighbors.



Above: Archaeological Research at Cahokia Mounds with Dr. John Kelly & Big Mound Plaza in North St. Louis at New Mississippi Bridge. Below: Final image of the removal of Big Mound from MOHS; Sugarloaf Mound St. Louis, owned by the Osage Nation.





PROJECT OVERVIEW

PROJECT PROCESS & KEY OUTCOMES

Through case studies, research, and intensive community outreach, the STUDY seeks an appropriate national designation and process by which to protect, connect, interpret, promote, and preserve the ancient Mississippian civilization that once thrived in the region.

The Project Team conducted a lengthy public outreach campaign along with an extensive research and review of data on the bi-state region's archaeological maps and resources from the last three centuries. Findings were displayed onto the project map through GIS (see page 9). During work sessions with the public, American Indian Nations/Tribes, Steering and Technical Advisory Committees, mound centers were prioritized into primary, secondary, and tertiary sites. The Project Team developed a matrix (see page 13) to record significance, suitability, recommendations, opportunities, and challenges.

Through extensive engagement with the public-at-large, communities, civic leaders, and American Indian Tribes/Nations, the Project Team determined the following **priority recommendations and key outcomes**:

- Garner support for an elevated national designation for Cahokia Mounds State Historic site whilst developing satellite and destination sites to cover a larger thematic designation for the Mounds region;
- Create a multi-partner public/private effort (including existing Cahokia State Historic Site) for implementation/management in programming, maintenance, and acquisition;
- Protect natural and cultural resources: acquisition/control of key sites is urgent and necessary (Priority sites are Cahokia, East St. Louis, Emerald/Lebanon, Pulcher/Dupo, and Sugar Loaf West);
- Develop marker program for destroyed mounds;
- Enhance and improve the community's quality of life through national-level designation and sustainable economic development;
- Ensure proper adjacent development; do no harm;
- Ensure stewardship of this Bi-State, multi-cultural initiative;
- Expand partners and route of Mounds Heritage Trail;
- Develop welcome/interpretive center (St. Louis National Stockyards);
- Continue to work with local, state, and federal agencies for input;
- Continue to engage legislators in both Missouri and Illinois;
- Leverage resources through broader interpretation and grant opportunities;
- Gather and seek sponsors at local, state, and federal levels;
- Grow the project brand.

Baseline Economic Impacts on Illinois

Cahokia Mounds' direct spending of \$1.7 million along with \$4.9 million in spending from patrons from outside of Illinois triggered almost two times that amount in added economic activity in the state. This added activity indirectly supported 112 jobs within the state. In total, Cahokia Mounds' average annual operational and payroll spending in Illinois along with visitor spending:

- Generate \$19.6 million in economic activity,
- Generate \$6.1 million in household earnings, and
- Supports, both directly and indirectly, 179 jobs within Illinois

Baseline Economic Impacts on the St. Louis Region

Cahokia Mounds' direct annual spending of \$1.7 million along with \$4.0 million in spending from patrons from outside of the St. Louis metropolitan area triggered 1.9 times that amount in added economic activity in the metropolitan area. This added activity indirectly supported 104 jobs within the metropolitan area. In total, Cahokia Mounds' average operational and payroll spending in the metropolitan area along with visitor spending:

- Generate \$16.5 million in economic activity,
- Generate \$5.2 million in household earnings, and
- Supports, both directly and indirectly, 169 jobs within the region.

Baseline Economic Impacts on Metro East, IL

Cahokia Mounds' direct spending of \$1.7 million along with \$3.4 million in spending from patrons from outside Metro East triggered 1.4 times that amount in added economic activity in the region. This added activity indirectly supported 71 jobs within Metro East. In total, Cahokia Mounds' average operational and payroll spending along with visitor spending:

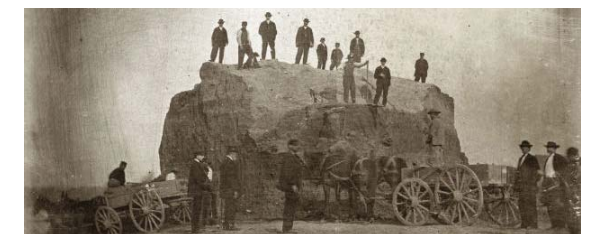
- Generate \$12.2 million in economic activity,
- Generate \$3.4 million in household earnings, and
- Supports, both directly and indirectly, 133 jobs within Metro East, IL.



CASE STUDIES VISITED AND/OR RESEARCHED

Throughout the process, the Project Team has sought advice on models and case studies to review, inform and guide our process. The following sites were selected as case studies:

- Casa Grande, AZ
- Cabrillo Point, CA
- Pullman Site, IL
- Lincoln Home, IL
- Poverty Point, LA
- Chaco Canyon, NM
- Rio Grande Heritage Area, NM
- Pueblo Cultural Center, NM
- Hopewell Culture Historical Park, OH
- Standing Bear, OK
- Chickasaw Cultural Center, OK

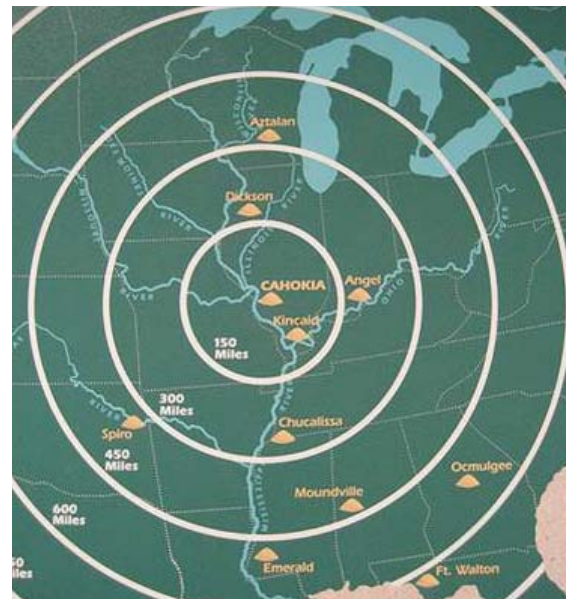


Above: Final Days of Big Mound being removed in St. Louis
Below: Research & Interpretation at Cahokia Mounds

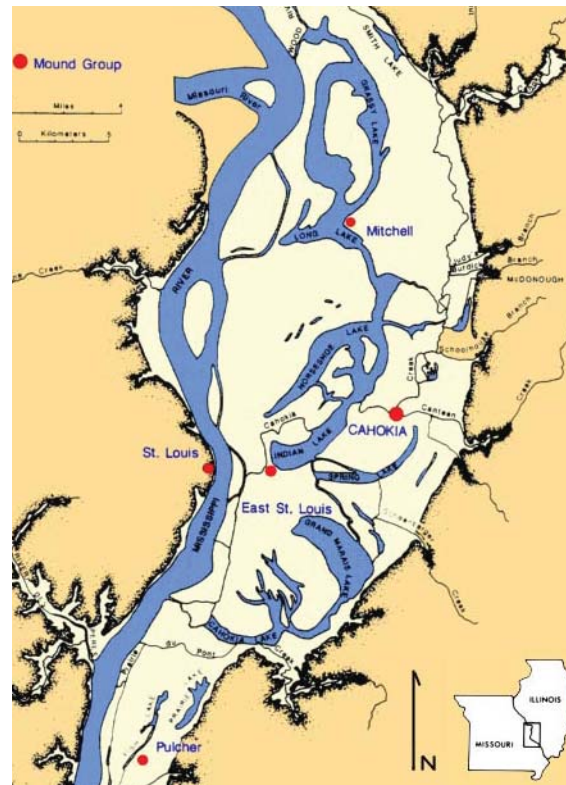




IMPACTS



Above: Cahokia's Influence throughout the Region and beyond
Below: Historic Waterways with Priority Mound Centers



ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY

HeartLands Conservancy engaged Development Strategies to conduct a baseline economic impact analysis of Cahokia Mounds' operations and its visitors have on the State of Illinois, the greater St. Louis region, and the Metro East. Specifically, the report documents the direct and indirect, or multiplier, impacts that are triggered by Cahokia Mounds and its visitors. It also estimates major taxes that are likely to accrue to Illinois as a result of these impacts. Using this baseline analysis, the report evaluates the potential economic impacts from increased attendance under different strategies/initiatives including:

- Changing the designation of Cahokia Mounds to a formal National Park Service unit;
- Creating satellite mounds sites and interpretive centers;
- Establishing a welcome and interpretive center at an archaeological site at the former St. Louis National Stockyards;
- Increasing regional trail connectivity;
- Enhancing marketing or upgrading the existing site and museum.

Development Strategies relied upon case studies of similar historic sites and other published data for this analysis. This report, however, is not intended to address the other significant quality of life, social, environmental, civic, governmental and aesthetic impacts that Cahokia Mounds certainly has in the region or specific real estate development potential based on new initiatives that would support increased attendance to Cahokia Mounds.

The conservation of important historic and natural sites across the country is important to retaining national history and unique sites that cannot be rebuilt. The conservation of Cahokia Mounds and satellite sites ensures that past cultures are honored and not completely forgotten; and that the area will remain unencumbered by inappropriate development. In many ways, these sites are invaluable and outside the realm of economic impact multipliers. East St. Louis/Fairmont City have long been known as economically disadvantaged areas that have not seen a significant amount of new development in many decades. While little new development can occur at Cahokia Mounds, the surrounding areas and the proposed satellite sites are prime locations to introduce new, quality development into the area, alleviating active and passive threats to these cultural resources.

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Established Steering and Technical Advisory Committees of Community Leaders and Experts;
- Held **9 Community Meetings** throughout the Bi-state region;
- Held **3 Regional Open Houses**;
- Held **Final Open Houses**;
- **Mapped 550+ Mounds**;
- Mapped recreational, natural and cultural resources;
- **Collected 500+ Surveys** results indicate;
 - o Very little support of "No action" approach;
 - o Public and legislators agree **action is necessary**;
 - o **Support for National Designations**;
 - o No significant negative impact found if action is taken;
 - o Support for Archaeo-Tourism, Eco-Tourism, and multi-generational Interpretation opportunities ;
- Outreach at Information booths;
- Outreach at Regional Special Events;
- Attended and presented at Archaeological Conferences
- Outreach at Cahokia Mounds Special Events;
- Established social media presence: Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TheMounds>;
- Engaged Legislators in Missouri & Illinois;
- Engaged Missouri & Illinois Park Districts;
- Engaged **11+ Indian Nations and Tribes**;
 - o Absentee Shawnee Tribe - Shawnee, OK;
 - o Cherokee Nation - Tahlequah, OK;
 - o Chickasaw Nation - Ada, OK;
 - o Eastern Shawnee Tribe - Seneca, MO;
 - o Loyal Shawnee Cultural - White Oak, OK;
 - o Miami Tribe - Miami, OK;
 - o Osage Nation/Tribe - Pawhuska, OK;
 - o Ottawa Tribe - Miami, OK;
 - o Peoria Tribe - Miami, OK;
 - o Ponca Tribe - White Eagle/Red Rock, OK;
 - o Quapaw Tribe - Miami, OK.

There are no other mounds within the National Park Service that represent the Mississippian Culture as holistically and uniquely as Cahokia Mounds. Combined with the surrounding satellite mound centers, Cahokia Mounds emerges as the most significant and unsurpassed example of its time period.



Above: The Mounds Project Team with Midwest Region NPS Office's Bob Bryson and Director Mike Reynolds.
Below: Riders on the Mounds Heritage Trail image by Trailnet





CONFLUENCE OF CULTURES



THE CONFLUENCE

The most significant physical natural resource feature in the region is the center of the world's third largest river system -- the confluence of the Illinois, Mississippi, and Missouri Rivers. This confluence was important to aboriginal American populations and remained so to Euro-American settlers.

No other river system in North America connects so many diverse regions. From the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers bisect the continent while the Missouri River connects the Old Northwest Territories and the Rocky Mountains. This 3,740 mile river system and watershed covering 1.2 million square miles is the world's second largest drainage basin. The meeting of these great rivers shaped the United States as no other natural feature could. It has seen a crossroads of diverse cultures, traditions, customs, beliefs, trade economies, and folk life - beginning with ancient pre-Columbian Mississippian onto Siouan, Spanish to French, English to American, and others.

This prime location of Cahokia Mounds and satellite sites in the American Bottom grew amidst diverse natural resources including prairie, forest, and wetlands that provided ample food resources for the large aboriginal population. The area, a natural travel corridor along the Missouri, Illinois and Mississippi Rivers, became an early center of transport and trading in central North America. The higher elevation of Cahokia protected it from most excessive floods. The prairie landscape and rich alluvial soils were suitable for growing crops. Nearby forests, savannas, streams, and lakes provided wood for fuel, and abundant fish and wildlife for food.

CAHOKIA: CITY OF THE SUN

The significance of Cahokia for purposes of this study lies not only in its sheer size, but rather in its role as **the single most important aboriginal site north of Mexico**. This role is key in understanding the global phenomenon of urbanism and its beginnings. This urbanization process began in the St. Louis region at the beginning of the eleventh century at Cahokia and its sister community of Pulcher/Dupo mounds group. Cahokia was rapidly transformed into a city with an epicenter of four large plazas and their attendant mounds centered around Monks Mound and covering nearly 4000 acres.

Cahokia became a pilgrimage spot, a place to come and participate in the

PRIORITIZATION FOR AN ELEVATED NATIONAL DESIGNATION FOR CAHOKIA AND SATELLITE SITES

NPS Criteria as relate to Priority Mound Sites	Cahokia Mounds, IL	East St. Louis/Fairmont City IL	Pulcher/Dupo, IL	Mitchell, IL	Emerald/Lebanon, IL	St. Louis, North St. Louis MO	Sugarloaf West, South St. Louis, MO
It is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource.	YES	YES	YES	Maybe	YES	NO	MAYBE
It possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the natural or cultural themes of our Nation's heritage.	YES	YES	YES	Maybe	YES	NO	MAYBE
It offers superlative opportunities for recreation, for public use and enjoyment, or for scientific study.	YES	YES* Current scientific & For future recreation & enjoyment	YES	NO	YES	NO	MAYBE* opportunities may be limited by Osage
It retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of the resource.	YES	Maybe	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES* with removal of residence
Site is Nationally significant, suitable and Feasible to be submitted as a unit of the NPS.	YES	MAYBE	MAYBE	NO	MAYBE	NO	MAYBE
Site can provide thematic connectivity.	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Current Designation	UNESCO World Heritage Site National Historic Landmark National Registered Historic Site State Historic Site Indian Sacred Site	TBD	National Registered Historic Site	National Registered Historic Site	State Historic Site National Registered Historic Site	TBD	National Registered Historic Site
Potential NPS Designation	National Monument National Historical Park National Archaeological Park	Part of a National Historical Park w/ Cahokia	Part of a National Historical Park w/ Cahokia	part of a National Trail w/ Cahokia	Part of a National Historical Park w/ Cahokia	Part of a National Trail w/ Cahokia	Part of a National Historical Park w/ Cahokia
Ownership	State (IHPA, IDOT, IDNR)/ Non-profits/ Private	Primarily Private/ Nonprofits/ State (IDOT)	Private	Private/ State (IDOT)	Private/ State (IHPA)	Private/ State (MoDOT)	Osage Tribe
Opportunities	Interested in partnering w/ NPS Can grow within boundaries MHT Trail/Recreation National Road Monk's Mound Woodhenge Demonstration farming / Heritage seed bank Partner as local food source Existing mounds Unique Archaeological Resource Interpretive Center Ecological/natural resources Interpretation	Potential for development St. Louis National Stockyards National Road, Great River Road, National Trails, & Scenic Byways Land Existing mounds Welcome Center Interpretive Center	Potential For development Area protected by State law City supportive of City Park & MHT Trailhead Kaskaskia Trail nearby African American Cemetery Existing Mounds Ecological connectivity Interpretation	Route 66 Existing Mound Interpretation	Agricultural Interpretation Ancient Trace Trails / Recreation Park Existing Mounds	Big Mound History & Plaza Developed / no mounds Urban Setting Connects to the Mississippi riverfront Trails Potential to reconstruct main mound group Good Historic maps for placing interpretation	Interested in partnering with MoDOT Parks Part of MHT South leg of Riverfront Trail Neighborhood connections Bluff experience of Mississippi River Trails / Recreation Expansion of Site Interpretation
Primary Challenge	Develop defined Innovative Partnership/Land Acquisition	Land Acquisition	Land Acquisition with willing seller	Programming, Land Acquisition	Land Acquisition	Many Owners to Develop Interpretive Programming	Develop Defined Innovative Partnership

Above: National Geographic's Ancient Human Migration
Below: National Geographic's Western Hemisphere Bird Migration





RECOMMENDATIONS

NATIONAL DESIGNATION CRITERIA

Most units of the National Park Service (NPS) have been established by an act of Congress, with the president confirming the action by signing the act into law. The exception to this process, under the Antiquities Act, allows the President to designate and protect areas as National Monuments by executive order. Regardless of the method used, all units are to be of national importance. **All potential units seeking formal inclusion must establish national significance, suitability, and feasibility.** The STUDY has taken the initiative to evaluate each priority mound group utilizing the NPS criteria. A potential unit should meet all four of the standards as listed in the chart to the right.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN ELEVATED NATIONAL DESIGNATION

The Project Team has prioritized primary mound centers in a matrix (page 13). It summarizes the Project Team's research and findings. Input to the matrix has been provided by the Advisory Committees, peer researchers, local and state agencies and presented to the National Park Service (NPS).

- Given the significance of NPS' other Paleo-Indian and pre-Columbian sites, which are at least National Monuments, and that Cahokia Mounds is more significant; **Cahokia Mounds is under-designated;**
- Given Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site has already been accepted as nationally significant and uniquely suitable through designations as National Historic Landmark and UNESCO World Heritage site, and given that Cahokia Mounds and Mississippian Culture is thematically different than that of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial; it is the **highest priority for inclusion as an independent NPS unit;**
- Given the contemporary settlement, jurisdictions, boundaries, and ownership, **a traditional National Park (i.e. Yellowstone) or National Landscape is not be appropriate for the entire STUDY Area;**
- Given the status of other aboriginal sites, **Cahokia Mounds should be elevated singly as a National Monument, and/or elevated with thematically-connected sites as a National Historical Park (i.e. Hopewell Culture Historical Park);**
- Given other existing non-contiguous mounds centers in urbanized areas (East St Louis, Emerald, Pulcher/Dupo, Sugarloaf Mound), **thematically-connected, and future archaeological finds (those deemed significant and suitable), should be included through the national designation legislation;**
- Given the richness of resources, **East St. Louis/Old National Stockyards should be considered as an opportunity to interpret, protect, and educate** people about the region's centuries of settlement, resources, and art through a welcome/cultural center;
- Given the multitude of mounds and interested parties, **an additional overlay of connectivity and branding may be sought** (i.e. National Heritage Area, National Trail, etc.) beyond an elevated designation;
- Given diverse ownership, financial resources, and variety of stakeholders, **utilize contemporary multi-partner stewardship models** in management, partnership, ownership and administration.
- Given the potential mutually beneficial outcomes, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA), as well as other entities, will **consider partnering and collaborating with NPS.**

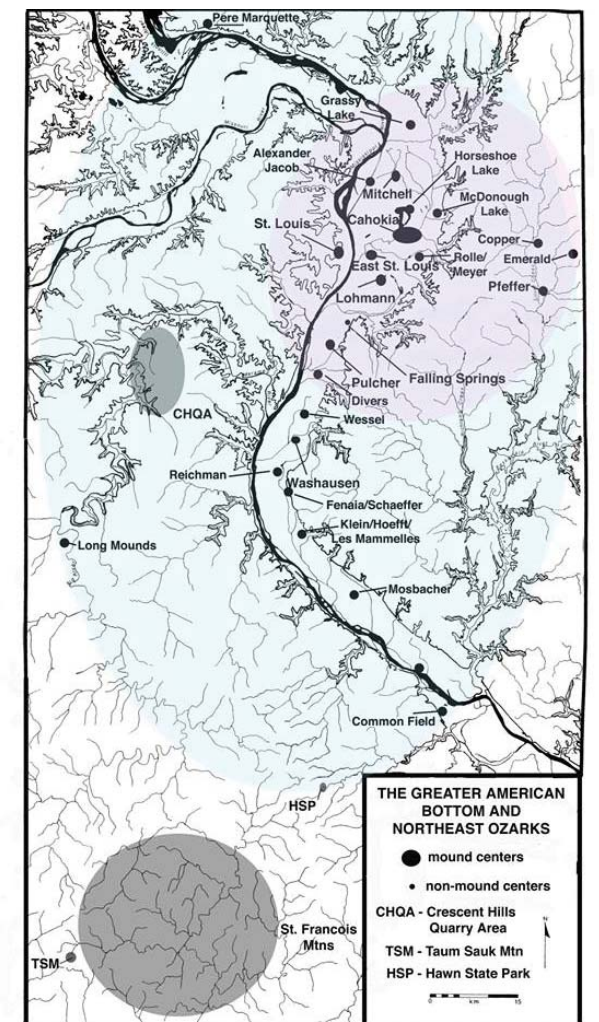
rituals linked to the origins of the cosmos - linking to the natural world and to the other communities at great distances. Residential areas and other smaller plazas and mounds along with cemetery areas and mortuary mounds were part of a well differentiated city of crafts-people skilled in the manufacture of ritual items for the elite and others participating in rituals at Cahokia. Toward the end of the twelfth century as other Mississippian urban centers developed outside the region, Cahokia rose to dominate. Cahokia, the City of the Sun influenced cultures to the far reaches of the cardinal points in a myriad of ways. However, by the end of the fourteenth century it was no longer a community but a mosaic of monuments to an urban phenomenon that would not be witnessed again in the area until almost four centuries later when the French began to create St. Louis.

CONNECTING ANCIENT & TODAY'S COMMUNITIES

The modern landscape of the greater St. Louis region now envelopes these ancient mound centers. While development has impacted some of the cultural resources to a devastating extent, the hopeful news is that in some areas much of what lies beneath remains.

Despite hundreds of years of changes, there are still places where the current landscape provides both a physical and visual connection to its rich past. The ancient city of Cahokia represents a preserved portion of that subtly hidden past. Much like today's communities, the older towns, villages, and farmsteads were connected by a network of ancient trails and natural waterways. As part of the STUDY and an early action item of the project, the Mounds Heritage Trail, which follows both new and old alignments link today's communities with the ancient traces once again.

The larger ancient towns of St. Louis, East St. Louis, Pulcher, Mitchell, and Emerald were residential and religious nodes that encompassed the core of communities. Each town has their own history and configuration as a community. They make-up not only places where people lived, interacted, worshiped, and died, but the mounds that are a visible part of today's landscape stand as earthen monuments commemorating their peoples' existence and tenure in this region - our heritage.



Above: Case Study - Hopewell Culture Historical Park
Far Right: Cahokia Mounds & Thematically Connected Sites

The STUDY's objective was to seek input from the public and review the sites through the criteria of the National Park Service to see if an elevated National Designation is feasible. **The simple answer is YES there is tremendous support and YES it is feasible. Cahokia meets all NPS criteria,** even as a stand alone site. The other sites where reviewed and it was concluded that they too are nationally significant if they are thematically connected to Cahokia - demonstrating the larger culture and advancements. **They are stronger as a whole.** They all can stand as a noncontiguous National Historical Park together. There are several approaches that can be taken to achieve the elevated National Designation. We are continuing to be prepared for all opportunities. The process could even set forth designation for future significant archaeological discoveries that are thematically connected.





This STUDY mapped over 550 mound sites in the bi-state region. This is the first time such an endeavor has been completed in over 100 years. Priority sites were selected to begin to investigate connectivity, interpretation, and opportunities.

Cahokia Mounds, some 13 km [8 miles] north-east of St. Louis, Missouri, is the largest pre-Columbian settlement north of Mexico. It was occupied primarily during the Mississippian period (800–1400), when it covered nearly 1,600 ha [4,000 acres] and included some 120 mounds. It is a striking example... with many satellite mound centers and numerous outlying hamlets and villages. This agricultural society may have had a population of 10–20,000 at its peak between 1050 and 1150AD. Primary features at the site include Monks Mound, the largest prehistoric earthwork in the Americas, covering over 5 ha [12.5 acres] and standing 30 m high [100 feet].

– UNESCO World Heritage Site
Designated: 1982

Above: Archaeological Dig in the Right of Way of the new Route 3 and the New Mississippi River Bridge with the Gateway Arch in the background. Below: A figurine possibly a fertility goddess, found at the East St. Louis dig site is made of a type of pipestone called Missouri flint clay. It portrays a kneeling woman holding a marine shell cup.

- Courtesy of the Illinois State Archaeological Survey, University of Illinois

