

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## REFERENCE SERIES

### HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY RESEARCH DESIGN

Number 843

1985

Survey conducted to inventory state and local historic (as distinguished from archaeological, architectural, or engineering) sites requires a research design adapted to investigation of cultural resources that have a geographical--but not necessarily artifactual--setting. In Idaho's survey, research designs normally provide for a variety of subject or geographical contexts. Subject surveys--such as discovery and exploration, fur trade, mining, farming, forest products, transportation, variety of commerce, ethnic contributions, education, military operations, government and social history--normally respond to research problems related to a broad geographical area. Information derived from subject studies provides a guide for interpreting local histories of a half-dozen regions, each of which has a dozen or so natural subdivisions selected as areas convenient for preparing local historical summaries. Altogether, about six dozen geographical study units, many overlapping into adjacent states or British Columbia, are utilized for survey and comprehensive planning reports, each of which is investigated according to an elaborate research design. Other research designs are specified for archaeological, architectural, or engineering surveys. Each inventory is accompanied by a survey report that accompanies an appropriate historical study unit report and indicates survey results for non-archaeological, architectural, or engineering historic properties.

For geographical study units, research design provides for an historic context in a geographical setting for a sites inventory. For comprehensive planning purposes and for survey

context, brief archaeological, architectural, and engineering summaries are included. Appropriate maps and historical literature are referred to. Each study unit's historical summary is developed in relation to a state survey summary provided in Idaho's 1972 state historic preservation plan. Historic sites inventory can be identified and described only in terms of state and local historic context provided by these reports. Cultural resources inventoried according to survey research design provide additional historical evidence which allow revision and improvement of relevant historical summaries.

Each geographical study unit report contains sections relating to

1. geographical context
2. prehistory and significant archaeological sites
3. cultural resource surveys and archaeological literature
4. an historical summary, including a listing of major historical periods
5. historical documentation and literature
6. historic sites inventory
7. industrial archaeological and engineering summary
8. architectural resource summary
9. listing of United States Geological Survey maps
10. cultural resource management planning process and protection procedures

These sections are designed to serve a variety of planning purposes, including provision for identification of historic sites in survey programs. Sites indicated as interesting or important in historic context are entered on standard inventory forms that provide location and descriptive information designed to enable professional staff to evaluate their historic significance.

***Publications--450 N. 4th Street, Boise, ID 83702--208-334-3428***