

Video: Intro

Dr. David Rice talks about excavation, challenges, and site use.

DR: The wet site work began in 1960 and it continued intermittently through 1963. Most of the later work was up on the bank. What we were trying to do was tie a stratigraphy in to the lenses that go into the river and see what happened as the site goes up onto that floodplain bar, that level section that you were on. And so, that's the most of it. The activities were one day field trips out of Seattle because the work was so sloppy, wet and muddy, it would take the other day of the weekend to clean yourself up.

Because the site was the first perishable site of any scope that had been identified in Washington even though a few isolated artifacts like the Skagit River atlatl had been found before, but that wasn't really a complex site, as this one is. And so, uh, it was an overwhelming scope of problems. Of preservatives, of recording, how do you get a proper datum. It was always dreary so photography and that kind of recording was always difficult. The season was only open a few days each fall. It was a learning experience, so hopefully we can put Humpty Dumpty back together.

And this would have been probably a seasonal fishing station. Astrida (Dr. Blukis Onat) was surmising that the presence of a single, solitary house here may have had special significance. So we have learned through trial and error through these experiences in Washington archaeology, um, how to deal with wet sites, and uh we're learning that they offer a great deal of knowledge to fill in the gaps about the archaeology that we otherwise are missing because of the wet site components.