

DAACS Cataloging Manual: Projects and Contexts

by Jennifer Aultman

OCTOBER 2003

**DAACS CATALOGING MANUAL:
PROJECTS AND CONTEXTS**

1. PROJECT TABLES	3
1.1 MAIN PROJECT TABLE	3
1.2 NOTES FIELDS	5
1.3 GEO DATUM FIELDS.....	5
1.4 PROJECT SITE MAP.....	6
1.5 CONTEXTS.....	6
2. CONTEXT TABLES	7
2.1 MAIN CONTEXT TABLE	7
2.2 IMAGES	11
2.3 MASTER CONTEXT	11
2.4 QUADRAT BOUNDARY DATA	12
2.5 SEDIMENTS	12
2.6 ELEVATIONS.....	13
2.7 CONTEXT SAMPLES ENTRY FORM.....	14
2.8 SPECIAL CASES: POSTMOLDS, POSTHOLES, AND STPs.....	17

1. Project Tables

1.1 Main Project Table

The main **Project** table and its related tables store basic information about sites and projects, such as aspects of site location and estimated age. Project numbers, which are assigned in the **Project** table, also indicate whether a project is part of the official DAACS project or is a Monticello Archaeology excavation or survey project (see *Project ID Number*, below).

The **Project** table also serves to tie together all of the contexts attributed to a project. The same project number (which forms the first part of any Context or Artifact ID number) is assigned to all contexts and artifacts from a given project.

Project ID Number

This field contains the Project Identification Number. This number is required, since it serves as the prefix for all Context ID Numbers, Context Sample Numbers, and Artifact ID Numbers. Project ID Number is assigned by the cataloger.

Cataloging Protocol: The cataloger will assign every new project a Project ID Number based on the last assigned number. The numbers will either be assigned in numeric order, or so that the project number somehow relates to the site name. This numbering system allows for up to 9,999 projects.

Project Numbering System for Monticello Archaeology Department and DAACS:

Projects 1-999:

Reserved for Monticello excavation, mitigation, and miscellaneous projects. Plantation Survey seasons for all years are combined under Project 6. An effort should be made to have the project number reflect something about the site number—for example, Site 8 is Project 108, Site 7 Project 107, etc. If this is not possible, projects can simply be numbered sequentially.

Projects 1000-9999:

Reserved for DAACS. The first DAACS project begins with project number 1000, Building O.

Project Name

Project name must be entered into the database by the database administrator. Project names should generally be the colloquial name by which the project or site is known.

Region

This field identifies the geographical region where the project/site is located. Select the region from the lookup table.

County

This field identifies the county where the project/site is located. Select the county from the lookup table.

State

This field identifies the state where the project/site is located. Enter the abbreviation for the state in this field.

Place Name

This field records the place name for a project/site, such as Mount Vernon or Monticello. Select the place name from the lookup table.

Beginning Date

This field records the earliest known date of site occupation. Enter the year(s) or approximate year(s), i.e. 1780 or 1781/1782.

End Date

This field records the latest known date of site occupation. Enter the year(s) or approximate year(s), i.e. 1820.

State Site Number

This field records the state site number in the Smithsonian Trinomial System. Enter the assigned state site number.

Unit of Measurement

This field records the unit of measurement that was used by the project/site's excavators. Select the appropriate unit of measure from the lookup table.

Drainage

This field identifies the body of water into which the site's land area drains.

Site Soils

This field records the soil types for the project/site as designated by the USDA. Enter the USDA soil code for the area that the site is located in.

Nearest Water Source

This field records the name of the water source closest to the project/site.

Distance from Water Source

This field records the distance in miles from the project/site to the nearest source of water.

Elevation Type

This field identifies the type of elevation system used for recording the site.

Azimuth Orientation of Local Grid

Azimuth Orientation measures the angle of horizontal deviation (measured clockwise) of the local site grid from magnetic north. Measure the azimuth orientation by placing a map of the site on top of a USGS map, aligning set geographical points and then measure the angle of horizontal deviation.

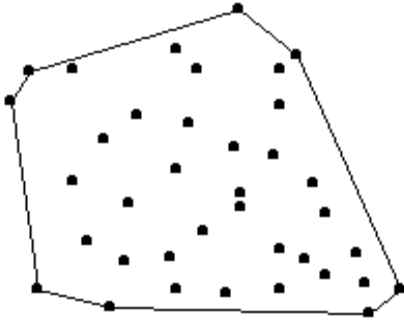
Total Area Excavated

This field records the total area excavated at the project/site. This measure does not include unexcavated areas between excavated quadrats or areas.

Important Note: total area excavated is given in the units (feet and tenths, meters, etc.) employed by the excavator. The units will be different for different sites!

Total Convex Hull

The statistical definition for a convex hull is a set of points that form the smallest convex set that includes all of the points. In this case, a convex hull indicates the total area of the site based on the perimeter of the excavated units. Measure the circumference of the site using the most outlying test units as points on the polygon.



Artifact Repository

Name of the institution that curates the artifacts and other data from the project/site.

1.2 Notes Fields

Project Notes

This field allows the cataloger to include notes about the project that are not covered by any other field.

Site Abstract

This field contains an abstract describing the project/site. Enter a brief description of the site, its occupational dates (if known), the function of the site, who lived there, etc.

1.3 Geo Datum Fields

Geo Datum

This field records the geodetic datum used on the project/site.

Geo Coordinate System

This field records the coordinate system used to establish the grid used on the project/site.

Cataloging Protocol: Select the appropriate coordinate system from the lookup table.

Northing Geo Coordinate of Local Datum

This field locates the north coordinate of the local site datum in the real-earth coordinate system specified in the Geo Coordinate System field. The local site datum is the point on the site that serves as the origin ($x=0$, $y=0$, $z=0$) of the Cartesian coordinate system in which the site was excavated. Enter the Northing coordinate for the origin that served as the local project/site datum.

Easting Geo Coordinate of Local Datum

This field locates the east coordinate of the local site datum in the real-earth coordinate system specified in the Geo Coordinate System field. The local site datum is the point on the site that serves as the origin ($x=0$, $y=0$, $z=0$) of the Cartesian coordinate system in which the site was excavated. Enter the Easting coordinate for the origin that served as the local project/site datum.

Vertical Geo Coordinate of Local Datum

This field locates the vertical coordinate (i.e. elevation) of the local site datum in the real-earth coordinate system specified in the Geo Coordinate System field. The local site datum is the point on the site that serves as the origin ($x=0$, $y=0$, $z=0$) of the Cartesian coordinate system in which the site was excavated. For example, if elevations for the site are taken at sea level, then the value for "Vertical Coordinate of Local Datum" should be 0. If the elevations

for the site are given relative to an arbitrary 0-point on the site, then "Vertical Coordinate of Local Datum" should be the (estimated) elevation above sea level of that local 0-point. Enter the vertical coordinate for the origin that served as the local project/site datum.

1.4 Project Site Map

The file pathway to any digitized site maps is located in this field.

1.5 Contexts

This 'window' shows all of the contexts that have been entered into the Context Table for the project. Information from the context records created for each project is automatically displayed in this field.

2. Context Tables

The Context Data Entry Form is tied to several context tables, including the Main **Context** Table. Data related to context locations, descriptions, interpretations, sediment descriptions, context sampling strategies, etc. are recorded in either the **Context** table or one of the many tables related to it.

2.1 Main Context Table

Context ID Number

This number is an archive-assigned combination of Project ID and the Context designation. This number can only be generated after the *Project ID*, *Context*, and *Added By* fields have been completed. Press the button “Confirm Information and Assign Context ID Number” and the Context ID will be assigned.

Project ID Number

Select the Project ID Number for the context you are cataloging from the lookup table. The following rules govern project number assignment:

1-999:	Monticello Archaeology projects.
1000-9999:	DAACS Archive project numbers. Assigned project numbers as of 10/14/03 are:
	1000: Building O
	1001: Building L
	1002: Building S
	1003: Building T
	1004: Building R
	1005: JC298
	1006: ST116
	1007: House for Families (Mount Vernon)
	1008: Palace Lands Quarter (Colonial Williamsburg)
	1009: Richneck Quarter
	1010: Quarter (Poplar Forest)

Context

This is the full context designation – for example, 734AA1. This field should contain only the context number and layer designation, not descriptive labels such as ER, Test Pit, or STP. STPs at Monticello have a slightly different Context format – see “Special Cases” section, below.

Was this context excavated?

Enter Yes or No. The default is Yes. Ignore the N/A option.

Level Type

The archaeological field records indicate whether the context was excavated in arbitrary layers or in natural litho-stratigraphic layers:

“Arbitrary”:

Both the beginning and ending of this context were delineated independent of natural sediment strata.

“Natural”:

Both the beginning and ending of the context coincide with a clear change in sediment color, texture, or consistency.

“Arbitrary to natural”:

Beginning of context does not coincide with clear sediment change, but ending of context was defined to coincide with strata boundary.

“Natural to arbitrary”:

The reverse of “arbitrary to natural.”

“Missing Information”:

Used when excavators’ notes fail to indicate the nature of the level.

Deposit Type

This field describes the kind of material that constitutes the deposit. Choices are:

DepositType
A Horizon
Alluvium
Architecture
Brick in Course
Buried A Horizon
Clean-Up/Out-of-Stratigraphic Context
Colluvium/Wash
Cut/Depositional Basin
Fill
Floor, clay
Floor, stone
Floor, wood
Missing Information
Not Applicable: For shovel test pits only
Not in List
Other Soil Horizon
Plowzone
Postmold
Subsoil
Surface Collection
Topsoil
Unidentified

Include in Spatial Distribution Map?

Select “Yes” if the artifacts from the context should be included in a spatial distribution map. Select “No” to exclude artifacts. This field will always be “No” for all Features. Select “Yes” for Unnumbered Features that contain plowzone or other fill that should be included in a distribution map.

Unit Type

Choose from the following list of options: STP, Metal Detector Hit, Quadrat/Unit, Feature, or Unnumbered Feature.

Feature Number

Features are often assigned feature numbers by the excavators; if so, these feature numbers are recorded here. If not, feature numbers will be assigned by DAACS to features in order to tie together contexts from different quadrats that are actually part of the same feature. Feature numbers assigned during data entry (not in the field) take the form “F#”. The numbers are assigned sequentially within a site, and bear no relation to feature position within the site.

Feature Type

This field is a duplicate of the “Feature Type” field found on the Feature tab/subform. Once features are assigned numbers and all feature information has been included on the feature form, assign the feature type found on the feature form to the context. For unnumbered features, which are not included on the feature form, simply assigned a feature type here.

Context Length

This field records the length, or longest measure, of the excavated context. For contexts that cover an entire unit, Context Length and Width will be the same as the Quadrat Size. For a five-foot by five-foot unit, for example, Context Length and Width will each read “5” while Quadrat Size will read “05.00x05.00”.

For a feature that has been given its own Context ID, the exact length and width of the feature will be recorded in the Context Length and Context Width fields. For example, if a 1’x1’ posthole was excavated within a 5’x5’ unit, the 1’x1’ information will be recorded in the Context Length and Width fields.

Context Width

This field records the width, or shortest measure, of the excavated context. See the above discussion of Context Length.

Max LS Thickness (Maximum Lithostratigraphic Thickness)

The *Maximum Lithostratigraphic Thickness* indicates the greatest of the measured thicknesses for the context. It is determined by calculating the differences in opening and closing elevations or depths for any given location in the context (such as the northwest corner or the center). Be sure to record *Max LS Thickness* in feet and tenths of feet. This field can be skipped if absolute elevation data (recorded in the “Elevations” table) exists for the top and bottom of the context.

Actual Measured Volume

This field identifies the volume of sediment removed from the context. This field will only be filled out when the volume of the entire context was measured. If the volume was not measured, leave this field blank. This measurement is recorded in liters, so please convert if the volume is recorded in a measurement other than liters.

QuadratID

This is the quadrat number, without the layer designation – for example, 734. Quadrat IDs are assigned to only to contexts designated as “Quadrat” and “Unnumbered Feature” in the “Unit Type” field. For all other Unit Types (such as STPs or features), leave this field blank.

Quadrat Size

Quadrat Size refers to the size of the quadrat that contains the context being cataloged. This information should be entered in the _._._ x _._._ format, for example, “05.00x05.00” for a five-foot by five-foot unit. The first number should be length, the longest measure, followed by the width.

When the context in question is a feature, protocols for this field are complicated. Feature contexts that are contained entirely within the boundaries of a quadrat are given the “Quadrat Size” of that quadrat. However, when features were dug without reference to a quadrat system, or when a feature spanning multiple contexts was excavated as a single entity without reference to those quadrats, quadrat size is left blank.

Artifact Presence

Enter Yes, No, or N/A. The default is Yes. “N/A” should be used when context information is being entered into DAACS, but artifacts from the context are not being catalogued into the system for one reason or another. “N/A” also applies to metal detector hits.

Discarded Artifacts

On some field recording forms, excavators can note whether artifacts have been discarded in the field. If artifacts have been discarded, enter this information (including artifact types and amounts) into the Data Entry Notes field.

TPQ

The TPQ for each context will be entered only after artifact analysis on each context has been conducted. This field should be left blank during the first stage of cataloging.

TPQ Notes

This field explains why and how a TPQ for the context was created. Because TPQs are not entered until later stages of artifact analysis, this field will initially be left blank. Once artifact analysis has been conducted, enter into the TPQ Notes field any relevant information concerning the assigning of a TPQ to the context. This could be, for example, the Artifact ID Number from the artifact that determined the TPQ.

Excavator Description

Enter the excavator’s description of the context – for example, “Dark reddish brown topsoil with late 18th-century artifacts including creamware and green wine bottle glass.” For institutions that do not have a “Description” field on their field recording forms, enter any descriptive information seen in the excavation summary or other field notes. Try to avoid entering any interpretations of the site – this will be covered in the next field.

Excavator Interpretation

Enter the excavator’s interpretation of the context – for example, “Artifacts dating from the late 18th century indicate that the site probably contained a domestic structure. The presence of modern artifacts indicates that the area was probably plowed.” For institutions that do not have an “Interpretation” field on their field recording forms, enter any interpretive information seen in the excavation summary or other field notes.

Date Opened

Enter the date the context was opened. Use the following format: dd-mmm-yyyy (ex. 13-Feb-2003).

Date Closed

Enter the date the context was closed. Use the following format: dd-mmm-yyyy (ex. 13-Feb-2003).

Excavated By

Enter the name or names (or initials) of the excavators.

Recorded By

Enter the name or initials of the person who recorded the context information.

Data Entry Notes

Use this field to clarify any information about either the context or the way the context was entered into DAACS.

2.2 Images

Photographs

Select Yes or No to indicate whether or not photographs were taken of the context.

Plan Drawings and Profile Drawings

Enter Yes or No to indicate whether or not there are plans or profiles in the field records. If the field records specify a drawing number, enter this information into the appropriate field.

Context Image

This table will be used to link digital images of context images.

2.3 Master Context

Master Context Number

This field applies only to record groupings of contexts made by Colonial Williamsburg, where “Master Context Numbers” are commonly assigned. No uniform set of criteria exists to define “Master Contexts.” Lithological similarity, sharing a common depositional basin, and belonging to a single architectural arrangement have all been criteria used to assign Master Context numbers by CW.

Master Context Interpretation

Provide a summary of any interpretations about cultural and/or taphonomic processes that contributed to the Master Context’s archaeologically observed state.

Stratigraphic Group Interpretation

Provides a summary of any interpretations about cultural and/or taphonomic processes that explain the grouping of the included stratigraphic layers.

DAACS Stratigraphic Group

Stratigraphic Groups are groups of contexts that field records indicate were part of a single stratigraphic layer or deposit. DAACS assigned such contexts to the same Stratigraphic Group. Stratigraphic Groups have an SG-prefix, which precedes the group number (*e.g.* SG01 equals Stratigraphic Group 1). For example at Building *o*, two portions of a single layer, described by the excavators as “orange clay with greenstone,” spanned two adjacent quadrats (536 and 537). The two layer segments were excavated as 536C and 537B. DAACS assigned these contexts to a single Stratigraphic Group (SG13). Not all contexts have Stratigraphic Group assignments.

DAACS Phase

This field groups together contexts and stratigraphic groups on the basis of approximate contemporaneity inferred from seriation of MCD types. DAACS Phase is therefore a sort of “ethnostratigraphic group” – a grouping of deposits by virtue of similarity in their ceramic assemblages, where similarity is reckoned on the basis of chronologically sensitive artifact types. Phases assigned by DAACS have a P prefix that precedes the phase number (*e.g.* P01 equals Phase 1).

Excavator Phase

Record here any “phases” assigned by the excavator.

2.4 Quadrat Boundary Data

Records the vertices of an excavation quadrat. All entries should be given as eastings and northings, as per the appropriate State Plane coordinate system.

Northings and Eastings

These fields record the Northing and Easting coordinates for the quadrat boundary of the context, in the appropriate State Plane coordinates. These points can be entered as negative or positive numbers, depending on the grid location of the context.

2.5 Sediments

2.5.1 Fine Sediments Table

Enter a record for each different sediment type in the context (as indicated in the field records).

Fine Sediment Description: Enter from the field records.

Munsell Color: Enter from the field records.

Excavator Sediment Color Description: Enter the color or colors recorded by the excavators. Note that these may be different from the color descriptors that accompany the Munsell color codes.

Percentage: This field indicates the percentage of individually recorded fine sediments within a context. From the field records, enter a percentage for each different sediment type – note that “<1” is included in the pull-down list. This information is listed under “Frequency” on the Monticello field recording form. These percentages are not independent of the Inclusions percentages. In other words, for any given context the “Fine Sediment” and “Inclusions” percentages would ideally add up to 100%.

2.5.2 Inclusions Table

Enter a record for each different inclusion type noted in the field records.

Inclusion Description: Choose from the list of possible inclusions. If an inclusion noted in the field records is not on the list, ask the administrator to add it.

Inclusion Size:

1. Very Coarse Sand (1-2 mm)
2. Granule (2-4 mm)
3. Pebble (4-64 mm)
4. Cobble (64-256 mm)
5. Boulder (>256 mm)

Also included in this field are ranges that combine the above categories – for example, an inclusion size that reads “2-3” indicates a combination of granules and pebbles. All possible combinations are listed in DAACS. If there is no indication of inclusion size in the field records, enter “Missing Information.”

Percentage: This field indicates the percentage of individually recorded inclusion types within a context. Note that “<1” is an option. This information is listed under “Frequency” on the Monticello field recording form. These percentages are not independent of the Fine Sediment percentages. In other words, for any given context the “Fine Sediment” and “Inclusions” percentages would ideally add up to 100%.

2.6 Elevations

2.6.1 Elevations Table

The elevations records the opening and closing elevations of each context (or level) in an excavation.

For each entry, indicate whether it is the opening or closing elevation being recorded in the “Opening or Closing?” field. In the “Location” field, note where in the excavation unit the elevation was taken. (For example, whether the measurement was taken in the NW corner of the quadrat, the center of the quadrat, etc. Additional “Location” terms must be added by the database administrator if the required term is not present in the list). Simply record the elevation (above mean sea level) in feet and hundredths of feet.

2.6.2 Stratigraphic Relations Table

The “Stratigraphic Relations” table provides a place to record how each context is stratigraphically positioned relative to other contexts within the same quadrat. Note that stratigraphic relations are recorded *only within the quadrat*—in other words, contexts from adjacent units should NOT be correlated with one another in this field. Choices for “Stratigraphic Relationship” are:

- **Missing Info:** Used for DAACS contexts that were created in the database for the sole purpose of recording artifacts that have lost all provenience information except for the quadrat.
- **Contains:** When a context completely surrounds another context, it is said to “contain” that context (i.e. a posthole can “contain” a postmold).
- **Correlates with:** If two contexts are later interpreted to be part the same deposit, “correlates with” indicates their similarity.
- **Seals:** When one context completely covers another.
- **Intrudes:** When one context cuts down into another, such as a posthole that was dug down into a fill layer, the layer that cuts into the other is said to “intrude” it.
- **Contemporary with:** Used to indicate that two contexts, although excavated separately, seem to date to the same episode. For example, two postholes within a quadrat that appear to be from the same fenceline could be designated “contemporary with” each other.
- **Intruded by:** The flip side of “Intrudes.” When another context intrudes down into the context being recorded, such as when the fill layer being recorded has a tree planting dug into it. The fill would be “intruded by” the tree hole.
- **Within:** The flip side of “contains.” When a context is entirely surrounded by another context (such as a posthole is “within” a postmold).
- **Sealed by:** Flip side of “seals.” When the context being recorded is completely covered by another context, it is said to be “sealed by” the other context.

In the “Context” field, simply indicate which other context is being stratigraphically related to the context being recorded.

2.7 Context Samples Entry Form

Every sample taken from within a context needs to be entered into the Context Samples Entry Form. This includes flotation, waterscreen, chemical, phytolith, pollen samples, and any other type of sample for any purpose. Each artifact in DAACS is tied to an individual sample. For example, an artifact recovered during dry-screening is assigned to a sample that represents the dry-screening process for that particular context. The same principals apply for artifacts recovered during flotation and water-screening. See complete explanation of “Recovery Method,” below.

Multiple context samples can be entered for each context.

Context ID Number

The Context ID Number is automatically generated by the database. This number is identical to the number generated and placed in the Context ID Number field at the top of the Context Entry Form.

Recovery Method

Choose the appropriate recovery method from the pull-down list of options. Choices for “Recovery Method” are:

- Chemical
- Dry Screen
- Flotation
- Not Screened
- Phytolith
- Pollen
- PreSample Recov
- Water Screen

Clearly, not all choices for “Recovery Method” are really recovery methods—some describe a type of analysis for which a sediment sample is collected. Chemical, flotation, phytolith, pollen, and water screen often are performed after excavation on sediment that is simply bagged and tagged in the field.

A single context can have multiple samples, and therefore be subjected to multiple “Recovery Techniques.” Often, a portion of a context is dry-screened and another portion wet-screened or floated. When a context has been divided into multiple parts that have been processed differently, the context will have several “Samples.” Each sample will receive its own “Context Sample ID”:

ContextID	ContextSampleID	RecoveryMethod	ContextSampleType	SampleSize
108-119C	108-119C-WTS-S-2;	Water Screen	Sample	10
108-119C	108-119C-DRS-;	Dry Screen	Sample	N/A

Note that the “-DRS-“ and the “-WTS-“ in the Context Sample ID indicate dry screening and wet screening recovery methods, respectively. Note also that not all samples are assigned sample numbers; in the above case, the “Dry Screen” sample was not assigned a sample number.

Two “sample types” that require further explanation are “Not Screened” and “Pre-Sample Recovery.” “Not Screened” refers to those contexts for which no screening, flotation, or other post-excavation artifact recovery method was employed. Artifacts from these contexts were visually sorted by hand during excavation, without further recovery efforts.

“Pre-Sample Recovery” refers to those cases where artifacts were picked out of sediment samples as they were being bagged for future processing, such as chemical analysis or flotation. For example, when excavators are bagging flotation samples in the field and notice artifacts in that sediment, they often pick those artifacts out and bag them separately from the rest of the sample. In that case, the recovery method for the hand-sorted artifacts is “Pre-Sample Recovery.” In essence, “Pre-Sample Recovery” is an example of a sequential artifact recovery technique. Contexts are never subjected only to “Pre-Sample Recovery”—they must be subjected to a subsequent “Recovery Method” as well. Artifacts found during actual flotation should be assigned to the flotation sample from which they were recovered.

ContextID	ContextSampleID	RecoveryMethod	ContextSampleType	SampleSize
108-177J	108-177J-FLT-S-11;	Flotation	Sample	14
108-177J	108-177J-FLT-S-12;	Flotation	Sample	12
108-177J	108-177J-FLT-S-22;	Flotation	Sample	10
108-177J	108-177J-FLT-S-23;	Flotation	Sample	10
108-177J	108-177J-FLT-S-24;	Flotation	Sample	10
108-177J	108-177J-FLT-S-25;	Flotation	Sample	10
108-177J	108-177J-FLT-S-26;	Flotation	Sample	10
108-177J	108-177J-FLT-S-27;	Flotation	Sample	10
108-177J	108-177J-FLT-S-28;	Flotation	Sample	10
108-177J	108-177J-PSR-;	PreSample Recov	All Collected	96L

This table illustrates how “PreSample Recovery” samples should be recorded. In the case of context 108-177J, all sediment from the context was collected for flotation. In all, nine separate bags of sediment were collected, and the volume of each (in liters) was recorded. As these nine bags were filled, artifacts were picked out of the sediment. Those handpicked artifacts were assigned to a “PreSample Recov” sample. Note that the volume for the “PreSample Recov” sample is equal to the collective volume of the nine flotation samples since all nine flotation samples were subject to handpicking as they were bagged for flotation.

Sample ID

When more than one sample is taken from a particular unit, field excavators often assign Sample ID numbers to these individual samples. For example, you might have samples S-1, S-2, and S-3 from Unit 115 at Monticello. For the first sample record, enter S-1 in the Sample ID field. Do not include the unit number. For samples that were not assigned Sample ID numbers, leave this field blank. This applies for most dry-screened samples.

Context Sample ID

The Context Sample ID is a three to four part identification tag that contains the Project ID number, the Context Number, the Recovery Method acronyms, and the Sample ID (if there is one). The Context Sample ID is automatically generated by the database when you save the Context Sample. To save, click on the disk icon to the right of this field.

ContextID	ContextSampleID	RecoveryMethod	ContextSampleType	SampleSize
108-119C	108-119C-WTS-S-2;	Water Screen	Sample	10
108-119C	108-119C-DRS-;	Dry Screen	Sample	N/A

The “Context Sample ID” contains a good deal of information. For the water screen sample in the table above, the Context Sample ID contains the following component parts:

108- = DAACS Project (Site) Number
119 = Excavation quadrat number
C- = C context within quadrat 119
WTS- = Water screen was the recovery technique for this sample
S-2 = The excavators gave this sample a sample number of S-2.

Sample Size

All sample size measurements should be given in liters.

For samples where the total volume has not been recorded, leave this field blank. The Sample Size field will default to N/A when the sample is saved. The total volume of sediment from dry-screened contexts, for example, is usually not recorded.

For a PreSample Recov sample, excavators bag artifacts during the excavation of a feature in which all of the feature’s sediment is saved for flotation and water screen analysis. In this case, add up the volumes of each flotation and water screen sample in the context, and enter this total sediment volume into the Sample Size field.

Sample Type

There are two options for Sample Type – “All Collected” and “Sample.”

“All Collected” should only be used when the sample represents all of the sediment in the context. For example, when an entire context was dry screened (and no other flotation or water screen samples were taken), sample type should be listed as All Collected.

“All Collected” can also be used in the case of PreSample Recov. When excavators bag artifacts during the excavation of a feature in which all of the feature’s sediment is saved for flotation and water screen analysis, the PreSample Recov sample type should be listed as “All Collected.”

If most of a unit was dry screened but a 10L water screen sample was also taken, the sample type for both the dry-screened artifacts and the water screen sample should be listed as Sample. If three different flotation samples make up the entirety of a context’s fill, the sample type for each one should still be listed as Sample, unless all three are combined in the field or lab into one sample in which case that context would be “All Collected” for flotation.

Screen Size

If a sample was screened, choose the screen mesh size from the pull-down list of options. If a sample was not screened, enter “Not Applicable.” At Monticello, dry screening is usually done through ¼ inch screens, while water screening usually done through 1/16th inch screens.

2.8 Special Cases: Postmolds, Postholes, and STPs

2.8.1 Postmolds

Postmolds of driven posts (no posthole) should be cataloged as follows:

Main Context Table:

Level Type: Natural
Deposit Type: Postmold
Unit Type: Feature

Feature Table:

Feature Type: Post, driven

Postmolds within Postholes should be cataloged as follows:

Main Context Table:

Level Type: Natural
Deposit Type: Postmold
Unit Type: Feature

Feature Tables:

Feature Type: Posthole

Postmolds within postholes are cataloged as separate contexts from the postholes in which they are located. The cataloging protocols outlined above rest on the logic that a postmold is a deposit that occurs within a posthole, which is a feature type. The postmold itself is not considered to be a complete feature unless it is a driven post with no posthole around it.

2.8.2 Postholes should be cataloged as follows:

Main Context Table:

Level Type: Natural
Deposit Type: Fill
Unit Type: Feature

Feature Table:

Feature Type: Posthole

Again, a posthole is considered a feature type, and any sediment within it is fill (except for postmold sediment, as described above). In the Stratigraphic Relations table, postmolds should be listed as “Within” the corresponding posthole. For the posthole, list that it “Contains” the corresponding postmold.

2.8.3 STPs should be cataloged as follows:

Main Context Table:

Context: ex. 12-W13 (where 12 is the area number, W is the N-S transect, and 13 is the flag number)
Was this context excavated?: Yes
Level Type: Natur. to Arbit.
Deposit Type: Not Applicable
Unit Type: STP
Feature ID: Leave blank
Context Length: 1 (standard length at Monticello)
Context Width: 1 (standard width at Monticello)
Max LS Thickness: Leave blank
Actual Measured Volume: Leave blank
Quadrat ID: Leave blank
Quadrat Size: Leave blank
Artifact Presence: Enter Yes or No. The default is Yes. Ignore the N/A option.
TPQ: Leave blank

STP Entry Form:

Note that each STP is considered one context in DAACS, but that the STP form allows for recording depth and sediment information for multiple levels within the STP. Each STP can have multiple levels, and each level can have multiple entries for sediment and inclusions:

STP Easting: The east coordinate, in the appropriate State Plane Coordinate system, of the STP's centroid
STP Northing: The north coordinate, in the appropriate State Plane Coordinate system, of the STP's centroid
STP Level: Which level number of the STP is currently being entered
STP Level closing depth, BDG: Depth, in feet and tenths of feet, of the bottom of the STP level
Fine Sediment Description: Choose a fine sediment description from the pull-down list
Munsell Color: If the field records present a wet and a moist Munsell designation, enter the moist designation
Percentage: Percentage of total sediments and inclusions represented by this sediment type
Inclusion Description: Choose an inclusion material from the list
Inclusion Size: Choose a particle size for the inclusions:

1. Very Coarse Sand (1-2 mm)
2. Granule (2-4 mm)
3. Pebble (4-64 mm)
4. Cobble (64-256 mm)
5. Boulder (>256 mm)

Also included in this field are ranges that combine the above categories – for example, an inclusion size that reads “2-3” indicates a combination of granules and pebbles. All possible combinations are listed in DAACS. If there is no indication of inclusion size in the field records, enter “Missing Information.”

Percentage: Percentage of total sediments and inclusions represented by this inclusion type.