



Allyson Brooks Ph.D., Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

June 4, 2024

RE: Davis-Meeker Oak: Archaeological Permit Requirements under Chapter 27.53 RCW

Honorable Debbie Sullivan
Mayor, City of Tumwater
555 Israel Road SW
Tumwater, WA 98501

City Attorney's Office
555 Israel Road SW
Tumwater, WA 98501

Mayor Sullivan and City Attorney's Office,

Chapter 27.53 RCW and Chapter 25-48 WAC require a permit, administered by the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), for the excavation, alteration, or removal of archaeological resources on public and private lands. This is a requirement for all pre-contact archaeological sites and any post-contact historic property that is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

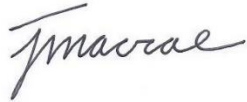
DAHP understands that the City of Tumwater intends to remove a tree known as the Davies-Meeker Garry Oak Tree (the Tree). Based on the information DAHP currently has about the Tree and its historic and tribal association, the Tree is an archaeological site or object and therefore protected under state law. The Tree is a registered historic property on the City of Tumwater Historical Register that, based on published accounts, is an historic feature associated with the precontact Cowlitz Trail and historic Oregon Trail. The Tree is also likely eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. Consequently, the City of Tumwater must obtain a Washington State Archaeological Excavation and Removal Permit issued by DAHP before the removal or alteration of the Tree. Failure of the City of Tumwater to obtain a permit prior to removal of the Tree is a violation of state law.

Under RCW 27.53.060, the Tree cannot be knowingly removed, altered, dug into, excavated, damaged, defaced, or destroyed without the City of Tumwater first obtaining a permit from DAHP to do so. Failure to obtain a permit from DAHP prior to removing, altering, digging into, excavating, damaging, defacing, or destroying the Tree will result in penalties from DAHP pursuant to RCW 27.53.095. Such penalties may include, but are not limited to, reasonable investigative costs incurred by a mutually agreed upon independent professional archaeologist investigating the alleged violation, reasonable site restoration costs, and civil penalties in an amount of not more than five thousand dollars per violation. Each day of continued violation shall constitute a distinct violation for the purpose of calculating penalties. A violation of Chapter 27.53 RCW is a misdemeanor.



Specific information about Archaeological Excavation and Removal Permits can be found in RCW 27.53 and WAC 25-48. Do not hesitate to contact me further if you have any questions or concerns, or wish to discuss the process of obtaining a permit from DAHP.

With respect,



James Macrae
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