

First Name	Last Name	Submission Date	Feedback
David	Ellis	07/31/26	The proposed revisions in the archaeological permitting process are useful in clarifying the dispute resolution process. Unfortunately, the revisions fail completely in not addressing fundamental flaws in defining who is a "qualified archaeologist." I recognize there have been growing concerns about individuals with degrees from online programs and for-profit institutions. I also recognize that SHPO must operate within the constraints of ORS 390.235(6)(b). However, the SHPO response to these issues and limits has been regressive, backward-looking rather than forward-looking. Instead of rigorous, qualitative criteria or standards, what has been established are rigid, quantitative standards, a checkbox approach. Some of the latter include rather absurd requirements that field research has to include excavations in square units and actually touching artifacts to qualify as a "real" archaeologist. There are equivalent problems with the term "documented equivalency," which is defined primarily as "equivalent to that gained in conventional/accredited U.S. education programs to a MA, MS, or PhD." There are dozens of such accredited programs, with a considerable variability. Which of these programs will SHPO propose for equivalency? Furthermore, the term "conventional" is not defined. Although this is the only use of the term, conventionality permeates the criteria, for which I will reference one definition of "conventional"--"lacking in originality or individuality." This reflects a dependence on increasingly outdated academic standards, some of which date to the 1950s or earlier, when faculty and students were predominantly white, middle-class men. An example of the worst kind of "tradition." Over the past 20-30 years, there has been a major shift in North American archaeology to abandon this tradition, opening the doors to more non-traditional groups and individuals, to provide different perspectives and understandings of the past. The SHPO has largely failed to respond to this shift, taking instead the most narrow possible interpretation of the ORS 390.235 definition. That definition provides an alternative to the standard graduate degree requirement (as written in 1993) but SHPO has imposed so many conditions that that alternative is no longer a real one. SHPO has therefore closed the door for individuals from non-traditional and marginalized communities to pursue a career in our field outside the standard academic route. These limits also discourage colleges and universities from establishing alternative programs that provide better opportunities for non-traditional students. I have conducted archaeological fieldwork and research in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest for almost 50 years. The "qualified archaeologist" criteria employed by SHPO constitutes a step backward for the practice of archaeology in Oregon, the quality of the research, and our understanding of our past.
Jason	Cowan	07/31/26	Comment 1: The use of the term "Disputing Party" throughout the edits is confusing and unclear. There are three primary parties involved in this process: the Applicant, the SHPO, and Permit Reviewers. Please separate the dispute process between an Applicant and another party versus the dispute process between SHPO and permit reviewers, or between two permit reviewers. Comment 2: Disputes should be resolved before a permit is issued. Please clarify that conditions are not being added to a permit after issuance. Please change the language at 736-0051-0000(1)(d): about disputes over conditions after the permit is issued to state that disputes can arise over conditions that have been previously accepted by the applicant.