

QUICK GUIDE



CULTURALLY MODIFIED TREES

Identification and Recording



CULTURALLY MODIFIED TREES

(CMTs) are cultural resources and recorded as archaeological sites protected by state and federal Laws. CMTs are created for a variety of purposes including but not limited to:

- » peeled bark for basketry, textiles, and construction materials such as house planks
- » peeled or tapped for sap, pitch, edible inner cambium, and medicinal purposes (Figure 1)
- » trees carved with symbols, letters, or other markings known as arborglyphs (Figure 2)
- » trained branches to mark direction and important locations
- » boundary trees marking property lines or blazes marking trails or roads



Figure 1. Example of peeled pine.



Figure 2. Example of an arborglyph.



KEEP IN MIND

Indigenous CMTs are often found in groups and may represent multiple visits or frequent use of a location on the landscape. Trees modified within the last 50 years may be associated with older CMTs.

CMT SCAR SHAPES

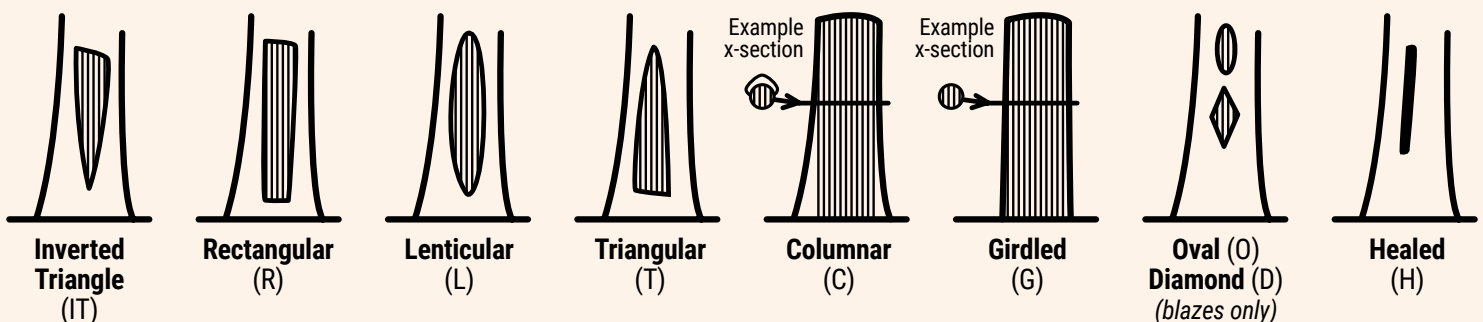


Figure 3. Frequently encountered shapes of CMT modification. — From CMTs of Coastal British Columbia [BC Archaeology Branch 2001].

HOW TO RECORD A CMT



1 NATURAL OR CULTURALLY MODIFIED?

Determine if tree modification is cultural. Trees next to roads may have been injured by vehicles rather than peeled. Look for evidence of injury. For peeled trees look for tool hatch marks at the top or bottom of the peel (*Figures 3 and 4*)

2 RECORD THE MODIFICATION

Peeled tree information to record:

- » Scar shape (*Figure 3*)
- » Depth of the scar
- » Total length and width (*Figure 5*)
- » Height of scar/modification above ground surface

Note: The tree may have multiple modifications – be sure to record each one

3 AGE OF TREE

Determine relative tree age by finding the diameter

Use a flexible tape to measure the circumference of the tree at approximately 1.2 meters above the ground, at breast height

$$\text{Diameter} = \text{Circumference} / 3.14$$

4 GPS & PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

Needed for documentation:

- » Close-up photos of the modification
- » Overview photos of the tree location
- » Photo of entire tree to show height relative to surroundings

5 CONDITION & SETTING

Document the species of the tree and overall tree condition

(i.e., green canopy, burned, fallen)

6 SCAR ORIENTATION

Use a compass to record the orientation of the modification

(i.e., northwest side of tree)

7 SUBMIT SITE FORM

Send records and photographs to the appropriate Agency

*State Historic Preservation Office
Tribal Historic Preservation Office*



Figure 4. Close-up of hatch mark on burned cedar, measured with a ruler.

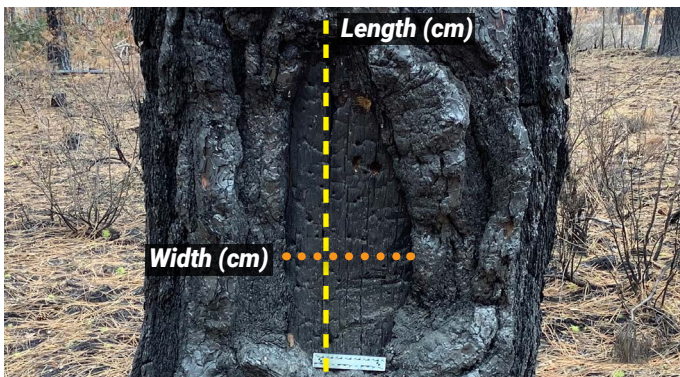


Figure 5. Schematic photo showing measurements.

COMMONLY MODIFIED TREE SPECIES IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

- » Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)
- » Incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*)
- » Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*)
- » Paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*)
- » Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*)
- » Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*)
- » Western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*)
- » Western larch/Tamarack (*Larix occidentalis*)
- » Western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*)
- » Western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*)



WATCH VIDEO

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