



The new Pickett State Park Archaeology Museum and ETSU Archaeological Research Station, which opened in spring 2017, features the Native American prehistory of the Upper Cumberland Plateau region in and around Pickett CCC Memorial State Park, Pickett State Forest and Pogue Creek Canyon State Natural Area.

The building also houses a research and field station for ETSU archaeological projects in the area. Among the goals and events for the museum and research station are tours of the museum for the public at large, visits to nearby archaeological sites, public programming and outreach, professional workshops, and archaeological field schools. While there are archaeological state parks in Tennessee, this relationship appears to be unique with a state agency and a state public educational institution working together toward public outreach and archaeological research.



PUBLIC OUTREACH

Visitors to the park can tour the museum for a small fee. They also have the option to receive a tour of Rock Creek Mortar Shelter. We conduct programming out of the museum for school groups and other members of the public. Programs encompass activities such as pottery making, atlatl throwing, bedrock mortar hole grinding and acorn processing, and knap-ins. We hope to grow programming efforts to include a multitude of activities as we move forward.

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PICKETT STATE PARK ARCHAEOLOGY MUSEUM AND ETSU ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH STATION

T E N N E S S E E
State Parks



THE FACILITY

The two front rooms consist of a living-dining room area that serve as the exhibit rooms. One wall focuses on the culture history of the Upper Cumberland Plateau and its geology. Another depicts lifeways in container (pottery) and stone tool technologies in the region. There is also an exhibit featuring current and ongoing archaeological research of East Tennessee State University on the plateau. An interactive bedrock mortar hole exhibit is also located in the main room. The back room is used to display presentations and short films for the public. Additionally, this area is used by archaeology students to sort and catalog artifacts, perform database entry, and conduct research.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The building serves as a base of operations for ETSU field schools and research as we continue our management surveys of Pickett State Forest and new land acquisitions by Pickett State Park. Ongoing research will highlight themes that are particular to the Upper Cumberland Plateau like bedrock mortar hole sites and the tens of thousands of rock shelters in this unique landscape. Upland areas tend to be looked at as isolated, marginal, and backward. Our archaeological research here indicates that this is not the case; the Upper Cumberland Plateau was a vibrant and connected place for thousands of years.



ROCK CREEK MORTAR SHELTER

Rock Creek Mortar Shelter is within very close proximity to the Archaeology Museum and Research Station. Just a ten-minute walk away, students and museum staff will provide guests with tours of the site. Rock Creek Mortar Shelter is convenient, but it is also quite unique in that it features an 11,500 year-long archaeological sequence from the time of the earliest humans in the region to at least 1,000 years ago. We will continue to conduct archaeological investigations at this site for many years. This site presents a unique research opportunity for us to learn about the culture history of the region and its proximity enables us to share this with the public.