Throughout the 1960s, following the 1960 Reservoir Salvage Act, the District worked closely with the Park Service to conduct archaeological investigations and salvage excavations.

This practice, however, was still known in the field as "crisis archaeology," conducted with little advance planning and limited funds. As late as 1973, the National Park Service, charged by Congress to lead in archaeology, received only $3 million annually for that purpose.

In the meantime, the Tulsa District continued its work. Calling it a park, the Tulsa District bought land at Spiro Mound and leased it to the state in 1972 for development as an interpretive center.

SOMETHING NEW. In 1970, the Tulsa District's Larry Banks, a geologist with lifelong experience in archaeology, became the first titled Corps archaeologist in the U.S. Banks had strong backing from Myron DeGeer, then head of the District's Engineering Division and a longtime amateur archaeologist.

It was not until the passage of the 1974 Archaeological Act that other Corps districts began hiring fulltime staff archaeologists. That landmark act allowed agencies to spend up to one percent of a project's construction costs on archaeological work on that project site. The Tulsa District provided leadership in implementing this new law; Banks was among four members of a federal task force that drafted implementing regulations.

The District archaeological program has evolved over the years through leadership from archaeologists such as Sue Purves, Wayne Shields, Daphnie Dervin Wilcox, Mike Corkran, and Dr. Kenneth Ashworth.

"Most of what is known about the prehistory of Kansas and Oklahoma has been the direct result of research and salvage programs funded by the Tulsa District," says Corkran, chief of cultural resources since 1980.

Scarce funds have precluded necessary archaeological work on some projects, but innovative work by District archaeologists has preserved and salvaged many important prehistoric sites, he says.

"The Tulsa District has been the most innovative and has maintained the longest on-going Corps of Engineers archaeological program in the nation."

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT. Among other significant trends in the Corps' history was the push toward nonstructural floodplain management.

The Corps' number one flood control success, in the view of the Corps' number one engineer, is a little-known program that builds, basically, nothing.

Lt. Gen. H.J. Hatch, Corps Chief Engineer, confessed in a 1988 speech that he has a "passion" for this program: floodplain management services.

Floodplain management is based on the theory that flood damages increase where people use floodplain lands unwisely. "Building in the way of the water," on floodprone lands that certainly will be flooded, means there certainly will be flood damages unless the builder takes prudent precautions, such as building on stilts or piers.

Hatch recalled that 13 years earlier, he was commanding the Corps' Nashville District when a flood filled all their reservoirs to the brim and beyond.

"Even with all our reservoirs working at full capacity, the flood was still worse than anything in recorded history," he said.

"I remember flying over Carthage, Tennessee, and viewing the extensive flooding of properties that had been built in the flood plain on land that had been vacant just a few years earlier when the Corps prepared a flood plain information report for the community. This was an eye-opening experience and the source of my passion for flood plain management," Hatch said.

"FPMS (floodplain management services) is, in my view, the model of effective Federal investment. The benefit/cost ratio for the FPMS program exceeds anything else the Corps of Engineers is doing and probably anything the entire federal government is doing to reduce flood damages. The nation is receiving billions of dollars in return for the few thousands invested in flood plain management services."[4]

Through the floodplain management services program, the Corps provides accurate information