

Mammoth tusk lifted from Seattle construction pit

February 15 2014, by Donna Gordon Blankinship



In this photo provided by the Rafn Company, Burke Museum paleontologists Bruce Crowley, left, Christian Sidor and Dave DeMar apply layers of plaster to the exposed side of a mammoth tusk early Friday morning, Feb. 14, 2014. The mammoth tusk was discovered days earlier during excavation at an apartment construction site just north of downtown. Measured at eight and one-half feet, the tusk appears to be one of the largest and most intact specimens ever found in the area. The plaster protects the tusk from bending and cracking throughout the drying process, which may take up to 12 months. (AP Photo/Rafn Company, Craig Leckness)

To the sound of cheers, a fossilized mammoth tusk found in a Seattle

construction site has been retrieved from a 30-foot-deep pit in downtown Seattle, and it's on its way to a museum.

Scientists and construction crews used a [crane](#) to retrieve and hoist the tusk from the pit to a waiting flatbed truck. The tusk was placed on a pallet, encased in plaster and covered in blankets.

The tusk is believed to be from a Columbian mammoth. It was measured at 8.5 [feet](#) long after researchers cleared enough dirt overnight to fully expose it.

Paleontologist Christian Sidor says the tusk is between 22,000 and 60,000 years old.

Construction workers found it Tuesday about 30 feet below street level, thinking at first that it might be a pipe or a root.



In this handout photo provided by the Rafn Company, a mammoth tusk is fully

exposed after being excavated overnight and into early Friday morning, Feb. 14, 2014. The mammoth tusk was discovered days earlier during work at an apartment construction site just north of downtown. Measured at eight and one-half feet, the tusk appears to be one of the largest and most intact specimens ever found in the area. The plaster protects the tusk from bending and cracking throughout the drying process, which may take up to 12 months. (AP Photo/Rafn Company, Craig Leckness)



In this photo provided by the Burke Museum, Bruce Crowley, paleontology lab manager at the museum, uses an awl to move sediment from around a mammoth tusk early Friday, Feb. 14, 2014. The mammoth tusk was discovered days earlier

during excavation at an apartment construction site just north of downtown. The tusk, believed to be of a Columbian mammoth, was measured at 8.5 feet long after it was fully exposed overnight. The company building a 118-unit apartment complex at the site has nearly stopped construction to accommodate the scientists. (AP Photo/Burke Museum, Christian Sidor)



In this handout photo provided by the Rafn Company, a mammoth tusk is fully exposed after being excavated overnight and into early Friday morning, Feb. 14, 2014. The mammoth tusk was discovered days earlier during work at an apartment construction site just north of downtown. Measured at eight and one-half feet, the tusk appears to be one of the largest and most intact specimens ever found in the area. The plaster protects the tusk from bending and cracking throughout the drying process, which may take up to 12 months. (AP Photo/Rafn Company, Craig Leckness)

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