

Perspectives for Debate

Below are possible perspectives for the debate centered on the fictional recovery of a complete mastodon on town property. Each student or group of students should be assigned one perspective.

Office of State Archaeology

The State Archaeologist and the volunteers from the Office of State Archaeology will excavate the bones and can store the specimen at the Connecticut State Museum of Natural History (CSMNH) at the University of Connecticut, if requested, but it will cost \$25 per box of artifacts. The State Archaeologist has custody of a vast collection of state archaeological material, which fills several storage buildings and already includes a mastodon. Storage space at the CSMNH is limited. Research the Office of State Archaeology: <http://www.cac.uconn.edu/osa.html>.]

[Note to Teachers: the Office of State Archaeology cannot actually refuse a collection and will take the mastodon, but for the purposes of the debate, students do not need to be told this.]

Town Leaders

The town leaders want to responsibly handle the mastodon, however, they do not want to pay more than they have to for storage and care. Research your local town leaders, budgets, and plans for the upkeep of public property.

Town Historical Society

The volunteer-run local historical society wants to keep the mastodon and display it as part of a temporary exhibition on town history. They do not have a solution for long term storage. Have students research the storage facilities at their local historical society and what the conditions would be like for the mastodon. Would be feasible to display it there?

Concerned Citizens

Some town residents want to ensure the mastodon is preserved (no matter what) and is made accessible to the public but do not have a specific plan for doing so. They feel as members of the community, they should have some say. Research how citizens in your area get involved in public forums and local decision-making.

Local Taxpayers

Some town residents feel that they did not ask for this mastodon to be found on town property, and they do not want to pay for its upkeep. Research your town's mill rate (and what that is) and the effects of tax increases in your local area.