The excavation of the Abrigo do Lagar Velho began as a salvage operation carried out under the supervision of João Zilhão, in the framework of the legal responsibilities of the Instituto Português de Arqueologia (IPA), and continues since 2000 as a collective research project of the IPA’s Centro de Investigação em Paleoecologia Humana e Arqueociências. Critical support to the salvage operation was provided in December 1998 by the site owner, Adelino Rodrigues, the councillor for Culture in the municipality of Leiria, Vítor Lourenço, and the governor of the Leiria district, Carlos André.

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