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A CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
OF THE ITEM NO. L-858-R,
LAKE COUNTY, RIDGELY, TN. LEVEE
MAINTENANCE PROJECT - A NEGATIVE
FINDING REPORT.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Memphis District

Jimmy D. McNeil
Archeologist

June 1987

ABSTRACT

On 27 May 1987, an intensive Cultural Resources Survey was conducted by the Environmental Analysis Branch of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District along a portion of the Ridgely Riverside Levee in Lake County, Tennessee. A literature search and a pedestrian survey failed to locate any archeological, historical or architectural sites within the proposed project area. Thus, it is concluded that the proposed work will not have any impact on cultural resources.

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INTRODUCTION

An intensive cultural resource survey was conducted on 27 May 1987. The length and width of the proposed borrow area was walked over and shovel test units dug where required. The literature search indicated no sites in the proposed area.

STUDY AREA AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Memphis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is proposing to undertake Levee Maintenance along the east side of the Levee. Fill materials will be taken from an area near the levee. The project extended from stations 10/40+00 to 11/15+00 (Map 1).

The borrow area investigated extended 30 meters east/west and 150 meters north/south and is approximately 210 meters east of the levee. The surveyed area contains 1.15 acres. The remainder of the project area is all fill material and does not require a survey.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The project area is located in the eastern lower Mississippi alluvial valley (Fisk 1944). The eastern lowland is the active flood plain of the Mississippi River and is characterized by alternating ridges and depressions of little relief. The ridges are the natural levees and the lowlands are abandoned channels formed by the continuous meandering river and its tributaries.

The general area is under cultivation. However, approximately 30% of the proposed project area is wooded. The treed area is a rather dry, fairly mature bottomland hardwoods community. Dominant canopy species are green ash (Fraxinus pennsylvanica var. subintegerrima), red maple (Acer rubrum), and American elm (Ulmus americana). Common associates are sugarberry (Celtis laevitata), sweet gum (Liquidambar styraciflua), shell bark hickory (Carya laciniata), and swamp chestnut oak (Quercus michauxii).

The understory is open with widely scattered blue beech (Carpinus caroliniana), deciduous holly (Ilex decidua), and common privet (Ligustrum amurense), among others.

The forest floor was heavily covered with a few taxa. The most common are rue anemone (Anemonella thalictroides), and Japanese honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica), with lesser amounts of panic grass (Panicum sp.) and aster (Aster sp.).

Various species of fauna were observed. Avifauna observed in the impact area included Carolina chickadee (Parus carolinensis), American crow (Corvus brachyrhynchos), common flicker (Colaptes auratus), downy woodpecker (Picoides pubescens), American robin (Turdus migratorius), blue jay (Cyanocitta cristata), northern junco (Junco lyemalis), and horned lark (Eremophila alpestris).

Mammal signs observed in the area included raccoon (Procyon lotor), white-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginianus), eastern cottontail (Sylvilagus florida), fox squirrel (Sciurus niger), gray squirrel (Sciurus carolinensis), and Virginia opossum (Didelphis virginiana).

RESULTS OF THE RECORDS SEARCH

Tennessee State Site Records and the National Register of Historic Places were consulted. No prehistoric or historic cultural remains were recorded within the proposed project area.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

The proposed borrow project area is approximately 1.15 acres in size. Approximately 90% of the area was in trees; 50-70% of the ground surface was visible. Seven shovel cuts, 30 meters apart, were placed along the length of the borrow area. Each shovel test was approximately 50 cm deep. The soil profile showed only recently deposited sites. No artifacts or feature indicators were found in the shovel tests.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on an infield cultural resources survey and a background literature search, no evidence of prehistoric, historic, or architectural resources exists within the direct impact zone of the proposed project area. However, on the surface was found recent beer cans, glass drink bottles, and plastic. It is, therefore, concluded that the proposed project will not have any impact on cultural resources.

The survey methodology used does not eliminate the possibility of encountering deeply buried sites. Therefore, it is recommended that any site encountered during construction be protected from further damage until its significance can be determined by the Environmental Analysis Branch, Memphis District, Corps of Engineers in conjunction with the Tennessee Historical Commission.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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1944 Geological Investigations of the Alluvial Valley of the
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Mississippi

RIVER CHUTE

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10136+00

10140+00

50.7

25.44

56.29

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56.24

10152+68 = 11170+00

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