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A Cultural Resources Survey of the
Carter Edwards Permit Request Area
Haywood County, Tennessee
A Negative Finding Report

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Memphis District

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Abstract

On 3 August, 1988, an intensive Cultural Resources Survey was conducted by the Environmental Analysis Branch of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District along a 700 foot long portion of a proposed private levee near the South Fork of the Forked Deer River, in Haywood County, Tennessee. A check of the State site files indicates that twelve prehistoric sites have been recorded within the overall project area. However, none of these sites are within the limits of the surveyed, permit area. A pedestrian survey failed to locate any archeological, historical, or architectural sites within the permit area. Thus it is concluded that the proposed work will not have any impact on cultural resources within the permit area.

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INTRODUCTION

An intensive cultural resource survey was conducted on 3 August 1988. 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 permit area.

STUDY AREA AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Mr. Carter Edwards proposes to build a levee near the South Fork Forked Deer River near Brownsville, Tennessee. The entire levee project is approximately 5 miles long. Of this only 700 feet of the proposed area requires a 404 permit. The area requiring a permit is the only portion of the levee project surveyed (Map 1).

The levee permit area investigated extended 210 meters (700 feet) NW/SE and 20 meters (60 feet) NE/SW. The surveyed area contains 0.96 acres. The remainder of the levee project area is not waters of the United States and does not require a permit.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The project area is located in the eastern lower Mississippi alluvial valley (Fisk 1944). The eastern lowland 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 has been under cultivation in the recent past. However, the project area was totally over grown with weeds. Dominant canopy species in the area 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.

Various species of fauna have been observed. Avifauna observed in the impact area included Carolina chickadee (Parus carolinensis), American crow (Corvus brachyrhynchos), common flicker (Colaptes auratus), 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), and gray squirrel (Sciurus carolinensis).

RESULTS OF THE RECORDS SEARCH

Tennessee State Site Records and the National Register of Historic Places were consulted. Twelve prehistoric cultural remains were recorded within the overall project area. However, no cultural resources were recorded within the surveyed permit area.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

The proposed project area is approximately 0.96 acres in size. Approximately 100% of the area was in weeds; 10% of the ground surface was visible. Eight shovel cuts, 30 meters apart, were placed along the length of the permit area. Each shovel test was approximately 50 cm deep. The soil profile showed only recently deposited soils. 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 permit area. However, on the surface was found recent beer cans, glass drink bottles, and plastic, all seemingly brought in by recent floodings. It is, therefore, concluded that the proposed project will not have any impact on cultural resources within the permit area.

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.

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