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AN ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF A PORTION
OF THE UPPER NEW RIVER WATERSHED
IN JASPER COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

by

Travis L. Bianchi
Research Manuscript Series No. 70

Prepared by the
INSTITUTE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
March, 1975

INTRODUCTION

In December of 1974 the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology of the University of South Carolina conducted an archeological site survey on a portion of the Upper New River Watershed in Jasper County. This survey, performed under contract to the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, involved surface investigation of an approximately 25 mile network of proposed drainage channel construction, extension and enlargement.

The purpose of this project was to locate and record any archeological sites, either prehistoric or historic, that might be destroyed or endangered by construction activity, and to make recommendations regarding the preservation or salvage of those sites.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY AREA

The survey area lies in that part of South Carolina defined as the Atlantic Coast Flatwoods with elevations ranging from sea level to 200 feet. The climate is warm-temperate to subtropical with a 260- to 280-day growing season and an average annual precipitation of 50 inches. Habitats presently found in the general area include riverine wetlands, forests, and interspersed grasslands, croplands, pine plantations and orchards (Corps of Engineers 1972: 5, 6, and 7).

The survey area itself lies in and around Calf Pen Bay and Great Swamp and is comprised almost entirely of pine plantations and shrub and wooded swamps. The terrain is flat and wet and drainage is very poor although there is already an existing network of drainage channels.

Cropland and pastureland are found on some of the higher, better drained land on the edge of Calf Pen Bay and Great Swamp.

BACKGROUND

Documentary research prior to field investigation did not indicate any archeological or historical sites lying within the path of channel construction or in the general area. Major sources consulted were:

Archeological site files at the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia.

Environmental Reconnaissance of the Charleston District.
Prepared by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers,
Washington, 1972.

Historic sites records of the South Carolina Department of Archives and History, Columbia.

Mills Atlas of South Carolina by Robert Mills. Robert Pearce Wilkins and John D. Keels, Jr., Columbia, 1965.

THE SURVEY

The method employed for this survey was visual reconnaissance of the soil surface for cultural material. The entire channel network, both proposed and existing, was covered with emphasis on exposed areas such as fields, roads, and pastures. No archeological sites of any nature were located in or near the path of channel construction.

Due to the nature of this project, installation of drainage channels in low-lying areas, it would tend to avoid the type of terrain utilized by aboriginal or historic peoples for habitation or agriculture. Probably hunting and trapping occurred within the reaches of Calf Pen Bay and Great Swamp to a considerable extent. However, locating the sites created

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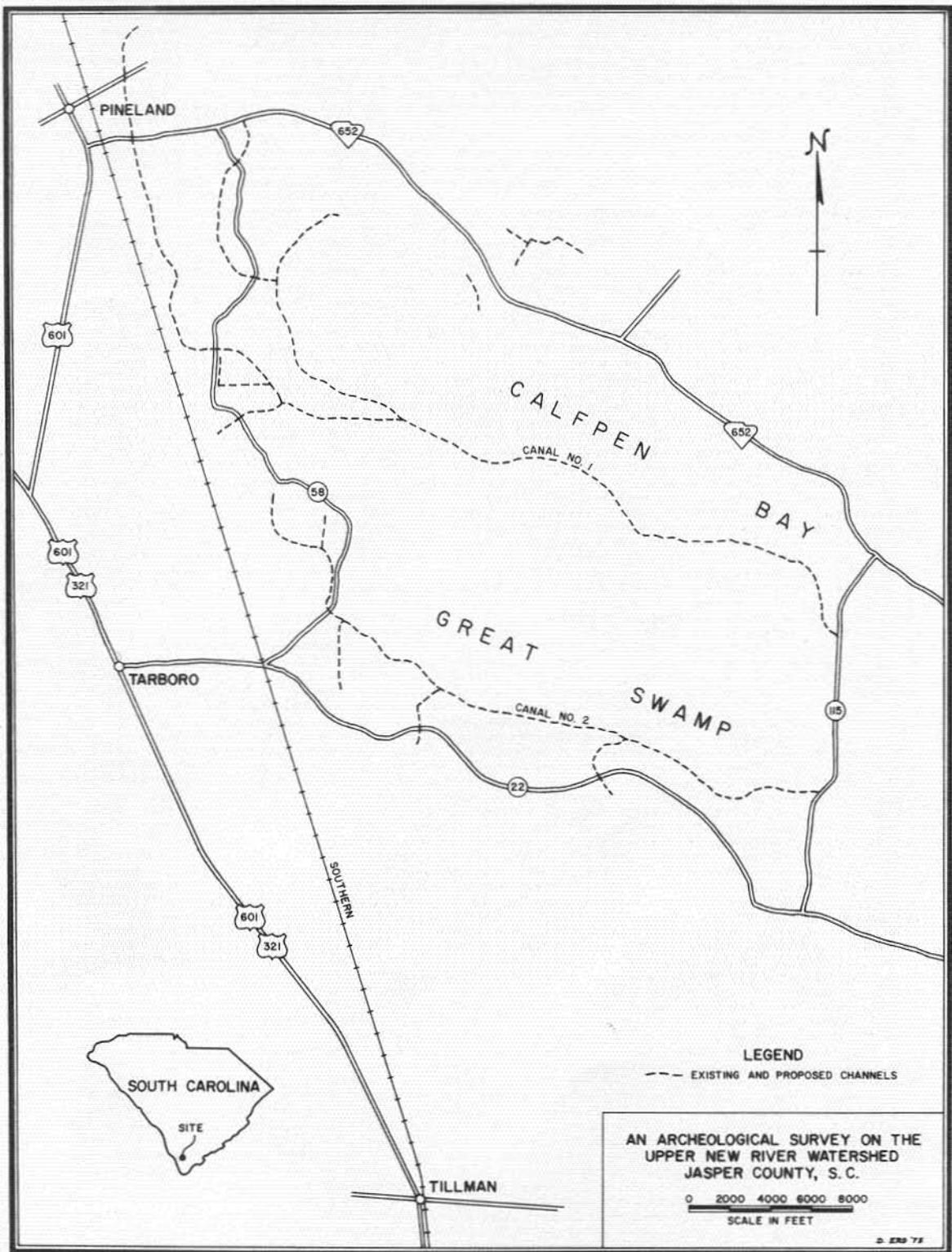
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by such activities is beyond the scope of a survey such as this. Trapping sites and the sites of hunting kills would be small in area, yield little or no cultural refuse as compared to a habitational site, and considering the terrain, be almost impossible to locate except by chance. The possibility exists, nonetheless, that construction activities may reveal sites of this nature and should that occur, the Institute of Archeology should be notified immediately so that it can determine whether salvage excavation is required.

SUMMARY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No archeological sites were located as a result of this survey. Thus, it does not appear, on the basis of presently available information, that construction of additional drainage channels or enlargement of the presently existing channels on this portion of the Upper New River Watershed will damage or endanger the archeological resources of South Carolina. Should construction reveal the presence of archeological material the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology should be notified immediately.

The author would like to thank Mr. Wilbur Campbell of the Soil Conservation Service for his most comprehensive and thorough assistance with this project. Mr. Harvey Lucas and Mr. Jim Wilson of the Ridgeland SCS office were also instrumental in insuring that this project was successfully completed. Cypress Woods Plantation Company, owner of the property on which the survey was conducted was most helpful in supplying needed assistance.



AN ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY ON THE
UPPER NEW RIVER WATERSHED
JASPER COUNTY, S. C.

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SCALE IN FEET

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