

3-1975

Archeological Survey of the South Tyger Watershed

Michael O. Hartley

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarcommons.sc.edu/archanth_books



Part of the [Anthropology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hartley, Michael O., "Archeological Survey of the South Tyger Watershed" (1975). *Research Manuscript Series*. Book 59.
http://scholarcommons.sc.edu/archanth_books/59

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Archaeology and Anthropology, South Carolina Institute of at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Research Manuscript Series by an authorized administrator of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact SCHOLARC@mailbox.sc.edu.

Archeological Survey of the South Tyger Watershed

Description

At the request of the Soil Conservation Service an archeological survey was conducted by the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina on three proposed reservoir projects in the South Tyger River Watershed, Greenville County, South Carolina. The survey took place in February 1975 and revealed eight previously unrecorded sites in the watershed area. None of these sites are of a significance to warrant further extensive investigation, and there is little possibility that the reservoir projects will destroy any significant archeological sites.

Keywords

Excavations, Greenville County, Soil Conservation Service, South Tyger River Watershed, South Carolina, Archeology

Disciplines

Anthropology

Publisher

The South Carolina Institute of Archeology and Anthropology--University of South Carolina

Comments

In USC online Library catalog at: <http://www.sc.edu/library/>

ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF
THE SOUTH TYGER WATERSHED

by

Michael O. Hartley
Research Manuscript Series, No. 69

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The various representatives of the Soil Conservation Service, for whom this survey was undertaken, were at all times willing to assist in any way necessary to aid the Institute in meeting its responsibility. With assistance and interest of this kind, a successful survey is much more easily achieved.

The author particularly wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. James Kesecker and Mr. Wilbur Campbell of the Columbia office of the Soil Conservation Service and Mr. John Case and Mr. Robert Hendricks of the Greenville office.

Georgianna Graham, Historic Preservation Coordinator of the District 1 South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments and Mr. Bob Adams, President of the Greenville County Historical Society were most cooperative in providing information concerning the historical background of the area.

Thanks also to John Combes and Leland Ferguson of the Institute staff for various forms of advice and assistance and to Sandy Anderson for assistance in the preparation of the manuscript.

ABSTRACT

At the request of the Soil Conservation Service an archeological survey was conducted by the Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina on three proposed reservoir projects in the South Tyger River Watershed, Greenville County, South Carolina. The survey took place in February 1975 and revealed eight previously unrecorded sites in the watershed area. None of these sites are of a significance to warrant further extensive investigation, and there is little possibility that the reservoir projects will destroy any significant archeological sites.

INTRODUCTION

The area of the South Tyger River Watershed involved in the survey lies in Greenville County within the Southern Piedmont Region in northwestern South Carolina. The purpose of the survey was to reveal any significant archeological site, historic or prehistoric, within the geographical area affected by three proposed dam and reservoir projects within the South Tyger River Watershed.

SURVEY AREA AND TECHNIQUE

The major area considered consists of 800 acres of alluvial floodplain along the river bottom and confining hill slopes, determining the potential flood area of the proposed Lake Robinson. This area lies on South Tyger River proper. Two additional projects, 6A and 3D located on Beaverdam and Mush Creek tributaries respectively, were also examined. These were considerably smaller than Lake Robinson, 6A being 40 acres and 3D containing 15 acres.

The floodplain in bottom areas was found to be generally overgrown with a briar and undergrowth mat which restricted the examination of that sector. The surveyor penetrated the river bottom where terrain and undergrowth permitted and was able to do so effectively enough to determine that under the most advantageous survey circumstances sites within the river bottom would probably be scarce and difficult to locate.

The hill slopes bounding the floodplain were followed, maintaining the elevation of the high-water mark, which varied from approximately fifty feet above the alluvial floodplain near the dam to a point

immediately above the floodplain at the head of the proposed lake. This procedure permitted movement either down into the floodplain or into higher levels above the flood zone as conditions permitted, with a knowledge of where the flooded area would be in relation to sites. The slopes were generally too steep for human habitation and this combination of steep hill slopes and alluvial floodplain leads to a sparsity of sites within the immediate flood zone.

A number of sites were located above the high-water marks of the reservoirs and not within the area to be potentially flooded. They are mentioned, however, as awareness of the existence of sites immediately adjacent to an area of environmental change will affect future secondary development of the area.

Much of the area surveyed is covered with hardwoods and some replanted pine. Roads, erosional gulleys, tributary channels and similar occurrences were utilized to examine the area. Scraping away leaves on bluffs and ridge lines in likely site areas was done and test pits were placed in distinctive areas. Erosional remnants within the floodplain were examined, one of which local tradition called an "Indian Mound". This was not the case and no cultural material was found there. As some of the more gently sloping ground is under cultivation, lying fallow, or used as pasture for livestock, these areas were examined as potential site locations where evidence of cultural activity might be more readily seen.

DOCUMENT RESEARCH

A further inquiry was made into the documentation of the area to determine what significant historic sites might be noted in the

literature:

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

was examined and a mill site was seen on the South Tyger River near the area of the survey. The author was not able to determine that the site did fall within the scope of the survey, and no mill site was observed during the course of the survey.

Georgianna Graham, Historic Preservation Coordinator of the District 1 South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments, Greenville, and Mr. Bob Adams of the Greenville County Historical Society were also consulted for any information concerning historic sites within the area. No historic sites were reported by those agencies in the involved area.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

During the course of this survey eight sites were located, seven on the Lake Robinson project and one on project 3D (see Fig. 1).

3D PROJECT SITE

38GR13---located on a slope in a cultivated cornfield just above the 3D reservoir area on the north side of Mush Creek. This site contained two preforms, a worked quartzite flake tool, several flakes and a Savannah River projectile point.

The Savannah River occupation of the Piedmont signals the termination of the Archaic culture there. This site would date ca. 1000 B.C. Further occasional surface collecting is recommended.

LAKE ROBINSON SITES

38GR14---located in a cultivated field in level area at base of slope, just north of Wildcat Creek and east of the South Tyger River outside of the reservoir area. One Yadkin point, a smaller triangular point similar to Clements, and an unidentified corner notched point believed by Leland Ferguson to be late (personal communication). Ten sherds of assorted nondescript Indian pottery and one sherd of historic earthenware were also found on this site.

Material from this site places it in the Woodland tradition with this particular site apparently primarily dating within the span 1200 to 1400 A.D., with some later historic use. No recommendations are made for investigation beyond occasional surface collecting.

38GR15---one quartzite Morrow Mountain projectile point located in an eroded pasture on north side of a small tributary of the South Tyger River and east of Pennington Road. The Morrow Mountain complex is an Archaic culture not dating much before 4500 B.C. No further recommendations are made for this site.

38GR17---one quartzite Morrow Mountain projectile point located on hilltop at east end of the proposed dam location for Lake Robinson. Assorted flakes were also seen. The Morrow Mountain Complex is an Archaic culture not dating much before 4500 B.C. No further recommendations are made for this site.

38GR18---one worked chert flake located in eroded path on east side of South Tyger River. No recommendations are made for further activity in the area.

38GR19---one unidentified quartzite projectile point base found in erosional cut on west side of South Tyger River south of Few's Bridge

Road and due west of erosional remnant. No recommendations are made.

38GR27---worked quartzite flakes on west side of South Tyger River, in farm road. No recommendations are made.

38GR28---historic stone house footings and chimney. Located in pasture on east side of South Tyger River near Ponders Lake. Late nineteenth century to twentieth century. No recommendations are made.

These sites do not represent the total number of sites to be found within the survey area, but can be said to be generally representative. From the observations made during the survey it can be determined that no damage will result to significant archeological sites through the completion of this project. The Institute would appreciate the opportunity to review areas of the project when clearing is begun as a means of gathering additional information.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

COE, JOFFRE L.

- 1964 The Formative Cultures of the Carolina Piedmont.
Transactions of the American Philosophical Society,
Vol. 54, Part 5. Philadelphia.

MILLS, ROBERT

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

UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

- 1972 Environmental Reconnaissance Inventory of the Charleston
District. Washington, D.C.

