

## AN UPDATE ON THE HIGHWAY SALVAGE PROGRAM IN FLORIDA

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This report has been prepared to provide the FAS membership with an update on the highway salvage program of the Florida Department of State, Division of Archives, History and Records Management, Bureau of Historic Sites and Properties, which will be referred to as the Bureau elsewhere in this text. This salvage program has been a cooperative effort between the Bureau and the Florida Department of Transportation since 1966.

This report focuses on the Hillsborough County area where all of the current highway salvage excavation activities are being undertaken. These activities are but a part of the overall program which involves the assessment of the impact to cultural resources of proposed State and Interstate highway construction, upgrading and maintenance, including associated borrow pit areas. Approximately 150 archaeological and historic site assessment surveys were conducted for highway related projects during the 1980 and 1981 fiscal years, and more than 200 additional projects were reviewed and cleared on the basis of the information contained in the Florida Master Site File, the State's central site inventory maintained by the Bureau.

The ongoing Phase II (test) and Phase III (mitigative salvage) excavation activities in Hillsborough County were preceded by a Phase I site reconnaissance survey of the proposed I-75 right-of-way corridor. This work was performed by the Bureau in accordance with the provisions of a cooperative agreement between the Florida Department of Transportation and the Florida Department of State.

Authorization to begin the Phase I survey was received in late 1977, and the entire 41.2 mile route across Hillsborough County was surveyed by B. Calvin Jones during February and March of 1978. With one exception, the right-of-way surveyed was 300 to 400 feet wide. The exception lies between the I-4 crossing of the corridor northward to the Hillsborough River. A 1320 foot wide corridor was surveyed in this area, which contains extensive archaeological site remains. This wider corridor was surveyed in an effort to locate a route which would least affect such resources. However, because it was determined that the density and character of sites throughout this area is essentially uniform, no change in the original right-of-way alignment was made.

Survey methodology consisted of a physical walk-over of the entire project area with periodic 1m x 0.5m test pits being excavated in selected physiographic areas, such as ridge tops, slopes, plateaus, river terraces, and levees. One or more informal test pits were placed in selected locations. Each pit was excavated with a shovel to at least one meter in depth by using an oblique angle thin slicing technique. A total of 31 sites was located within the selected right-of-way, and additional sites were found in the larger surveyed corridor.

Thirteen sites that best represented the kinds of cultural resources contained within the right-of-way were selected for Phase II excavation from the thirty-one sites (see Map 1). With one exception (8Hi480), they represent Archaic period sites; although, 8Hi507 also contains a Paleo-Indian component. These thirteen sites represent twenty-two site areas, since some of the larger sites were arbitrarily divided into smaller sub-areas based on physiographic conditions and gross artifact cluster patterns. One of these sub-areas included an underwater area in the Hillsborough River.

The Phase II sample was chosen according to the following criteria: 1) a sample of sites within the three major physiographic zones traversed by the right-of-way--the Gulf Coastal Lowlands, Polk Uplands and Hillsborough River-Zephyrhills Gap; 2) a sample of sites within the micro-environmental zones; 3) a sample of sites representing the various cultural phases and periods found in each zone; 4) sites that appeared to be relatively undisturbed; 5) sites with the highest concentration of artifacts and/or vertical depths; and, 6) specialized activity sites, such as quarry sites. An average of five weeks of fieldwork was budgeted for each site area. To assist in the analysis and artifact processing a laboratory was set up at the Department of Anthropology, University of South Florida.

Twelve of the thirteen sites and their sub-areas have undergone Phase II testing to date. These sites are as follows:

Site	Senior Site Archaeologist	Began Fieldwork	Report Status
8Hi480	M. Almy	May 1979	Final
8Hi471	M. Almy	June 1979	First Draft
8Hi473	M. Chance	August 1979	Final
8Hi393c	K. Gagel	August 1979	Final
8Hi393c/uw (underwater)	J. Palmer	May 1981	Final
8Hi483a	M. Chance	September 1979	Final (by Randy Daniel)
8Hi483b	K. Gagel	September 1979	In Progress
8Hi99b,c	L. Fisher	November 1979	First Draft (by Ken Hardin)
8Hi476a,b	B. Wharton	December 1979	First Draft
8Hi472a,b, c,e,g	J. Haviser	March 1980	In Progress (Final Report on 8Hi472e Completed)
8Hi450d	R. Daniel	March 1980	Final
8Hi507a,b	R. Daniel	July 1981	In Progress
8Hi510a	K. Gagel	September 1981	In Progress

The Phase II testing has thus far revealed a number of limitations on the information which can be retrieved from the deep sandy sites in interior Hillsborough County, Florida. These limitations include: 1) the virtual absence of floral and faunal material in most of these sites; 2) the virtual absence of datable material (wood, shell and/or bone remains which can be radiocarbon dated; although, thermoluminescent dating of chert is being considered); and 3) the relative lack of visible stratification (which is related primarily to leaching and a significant degree of bioturbation; although this problem varies with each site).

Based upon the results of the Phase II testing at twelve sites, four (8Hi472b, 8Hi473, 8Hi476a and 8Hi507) have been selected for intensive Phase III salvage excavations. The criteria being utilized in this selection process include: 1) the state of preservation of the site; 2) the variety and quantity of artifacts present; 3) the nature of the functional components present; 4) the interrelationship of the various components of the site; and 5) the position of the site in the broader Archaic period settlement--subsistence systems operating in Hillsborough County. It should be noted, however, that because of tight road construction schedules, decisions for Phase III work have had to be made within two to four weeks following the completion of Phase II testing, rather than waiting until all Phase II work is completed, the data from all 22 site areas carefully evaluated, and comprehensive questions formulated on the basis of that information.

Phase III salvage excavations at 8Hi476a were completed in July 1981, and Phase III work was completed on 8Hi472b and 8Hi473 in November 1981. Finally, Phase III work was begun on site 8Hi507 in November 1981 and should be completed around April 1, 1982. 8Hi476a is a Middle Archaic base camp located east of Tampa along the edge of the Polk Uplands and the Gulf Coastal Lowlands. 8Hi472b is an Early-Middle Archaic period lithic workshop on the edge of the Polk Uplands near Zephyrhills Gap. Site 8Hi473, which is located a short distance south of 8Hi472b and overlooks the Hillsborough River, is an Early-Middle Archaic quarry site and secondary reduction area. Finally, 8Hi507 is a late Paleo-Indian to Early Archaic base camp located on the edge of the Polk Uplands overlooking Harney Flats in the Gulf Coastal Lowlands.

The specific Phase III excavation strategies used at each individual site, of course, depend upon the nature of the site and the categories of data which it contains. However, combinations of the following general strategies were or are being employed:

- 1) Excavations using spatially dispersed sampling designed to clarify the interrelationships of the various site activity areas and to obtain representative artifact samples from each.
- 2) Excavations of larger contiguous areas, coupled with subsequent spatial analyses, to determine the structure and organization of individual occupations and aid in the interpretation of functional areas.
- 3) Collection of representative samples of faunal, floral, and pollen remains which, coupled with additional geological data, will be analyzed by specialists to reconstruct the paleo-environment and Archaic patterns of adaptation to their biophysical environment and to provide more accurate dating of the various site components.

A synthesis of the prehistoric geological environment of Hillsborough County is being formulated as part of the I-75 project by Dr. Sam Upchurch. In addition, core sampling for pollen samples from sinkholes or ponds associated with sites 8Hi472, 8Hi476 and 8Hi510 is being initiated as a separate project under the direction of Dr. W. A. Watts in order to aid in reconstructing the prehistoric environmental setting. Finally, following the completion of the Phase II and Phase III excavations, a synthesis of the results of the I-75 work will be prepared. This final synthesis will be a non-technical, well illustrated report intended for non-professionals.

The I-75 Highway Salvage Program has provided much valuable data, the analysis of which will make the Paleo-Indian through the Middle Archaic cultures of interior Hillsborough County, Florida among the best known in the State. It is providing new paleo-environmental data for the area. The location of the archaeological sites within this reconstructed environmental framework permits a more concise interpretation and understanding of Paleo-Indian through Middle Archaic lifeways. It is the first intensive study of the edge area represented by the Polk Upland/Gulf Coastal Lowland/Zephyrhills Gap area. The first systematic underwater archaeological test excavation of a Hillsborough County site containing mastodon and Paleo-Indian (?) and Archaic artifact remains was conducted as part of this project. It is the most intensive study of lithic reduction and tool manufacture processes and associated tool kits and activity areas conducted in Florida. Finally, the work at 8Hi507 represents the most extensive excavation of an upland Paleo-Indian site in Florida and will contribute significantly to our understanding of that early culture period.

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