



1980

# 42-Archaeological Survey of Proposed New Bridge--C.R. 687--Crossing the Paw Paw River in Section 10 of Hartford Township, Van Buren County, Michigan

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REPORT OF INVESTIGATIONS

NO. 42

1980

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF PROPOSED NEW  
BRIDGE--C.R. 687--CROSSING THE PAW PAW RIVER  
IN SECTION 10 OF HARTFORD TOWNSHIP, VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN.

ELIZABETH B. GARLAND

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May  
1980

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF PROPOSED NEW BRIDGE - C.R. 687 -  
CROSSING THE PAW PAW RIVER IN SECTION 10 OF HARTFORD TOWNSHIP,  
VAN BUREN COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Introduction

This project was undertaken in response to a request for an archaeological survey of the area to be impacted from Mr. Paul J. Kaiser, Van Buren County Highway Engineer. A letter to this effect was received by Dr. R. J. Smith, Chairman of the Department of Anthropology at Western Michigan University, dated May 6, 1980. A Plan of Site map was also forwarded to Dr. Smith by R. S. Scott Associates, Inc. of Alpena, Michigan.

An agreement to do the survey was made in a phone call from Dr. Elizabeth Garland to Mr. Kaiser on May 9, 1980. The survey was carried out on Sunday, May 18, 1980.

Project Personnel

Principal Investigator: Elizabeth Garland, Ph.D.

Field Assistants: Barbara W. Anthony, Ph.D.  
Deborah Rhead, M.A. Candidate

Description of Survey Area

The area surveyed is located in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ -NW $\frac{1}{4}$ -SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 10, Hartford Township (USGS Hartford 15' quadrangle) where the existing bridge carries County Road 687 across the Paw Paw River a mile north of the village of Hartford. When the bridge is replaced the road will be realigned in a westerly direction, producing a minor change in the ROW south of the bridge and a more marked shift of up to 250' north of the bridge. The distance surveyed extends about 850' along the western edge of the existing ROW.

### Previous Archaeological Research in the Area

The Michigan History Division in Lansing confirmed prior to the survey that there are no known archaeological sites in Section 10 of Hartford Township. The author has however done field work on the large multicomponent Shindeldecker Site (20 VA 23) located a mile to the west of the survey area on the north bank of the Paw Paw River in Section 9, and there are at least 4 known sites on the Paw Paw River four miles west of the project area in Section 13 of Watervliet Township, Berrien County. The existence of significant archaeological remains in the area of this project was thus deemed a strong possibility.

### Field Methods

Field procedures consisted of systematic shovel probes placed at 5 meter intervals along the area to be impacted in portions of that area which were relatively undisturbed. It was obvious that the area immediately northwest of the existing bridge had been filled, as was confirmed by the store owners whose place of business is adjacent. Shovel probing was therefore concentrated along the ROW north of the filled area, where a dark humus overlying a yellow sandy subsoil was encountered. The humus was turned and the contents examined for cultural material. One ceramic sherd of white glass, probably of mid-20th century vintage, was recovered, but no prehistoric material was found. In addition to the filled area near the river we were informed by a resident that the area has been further disturbed by a deep sewer line which has recently been put in along the western side of the existing road, further restricting the size of the area which might preserve archaeological remains.

South of the bridge we examined the low grassy field adjacent to the existing ROW. Shovel probes here revealed a sandy clay soil with some modern roadside trash present on the surface. Shovel probes were carried out up to the river where clay deposits were noted. No prehistoric materials were found.

We also examined and shovel tested the area north and east of the bridge on both sides of the existing ROW which is to be graded for use as a boat launching ramp. We found this area to be heavily disturbed by fill on the western side of the existing road and by excavation of undetermined origin near the river east of the existing ROW. Relatively undisturbed areas were shovel probed, but produced no archaeological material. An adjacent strawberry field on high ground was examined under conditions of excellent surface visibility, again with negative results.

Recommendations:

Our survey did not produce evidence of any materials of archaeological or historic significance. It is therefore recommended that the bridge replacement and road realignment will have no adverse impact on cultural resources and should proceed as scheduled.

Prepared and submitted by:

Elizabeth B. Garland, Ph.D.  
Principal Investigator

May, 1980