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Archaeological Survey of Proposed Sewer Line Rights-of-Way in Pennfield Twp., Calhoun County, Michigan.

Project Personnel:

Principal Investigator: Robert G. Kingsley, M.A., Research Associate
Field Assistants: Linda Place, Jean Marek (graduate students);
Larry Wyckoff, M.A.

Introduction:

On May 27, an archaeological survey was conducted at the request of Mr. Robert Boruszewski of the Calhoun County Department of Public Works. The survey involved inspection of proposed sewer line rights-of-way in Pennfield Twp., prior to the start of construction. The areas to be impacted and surveyed were outlined by Mr. Philip Braswell of Snell Environmental Group, Inc. of Lansing, Michigan.

Previous Research:

There has been no intensive on-ground survey of this part of Calhoun County, though a good number of archaeological sites are known to exist in the area. The site files in the Department of Anthropology at Western Michigan University revealed that no known sites occurred directly within the proposed construction area. A number of prehistoric sites exist to the south of the project area in Emmet Twp.

Procedures:

As indicated above, the archaeological site files at the Department of Anthropology were inspected prior to actual fieldwork.

Field procedures consisted of surface reconnaissance of the area to be impacted as well as subsurface test probing in areas of poor surface visibility. Probes were generally spaced 25 yd apart and were dug into the glacial subsoil.

Description of Survey Area:

Two separate lines were surveyed. The longest of these, measuring approximately 1 mi in length, is located in the S.W. 1/4 of Sec. 21, the W. 1/2, N.W. 1/4, Sec. 28, and the N.W. 1/4, S.W. 1/4, Sec. 28. The line generally follows the edge of the bank of Battle Creek. The section of line in Sec. 21 was recently plowed; subsurface probes were not needed here. The rest of the line was subjected to test probing. About 120 test probes in this area revealed a soil profile consisting of a rather thin layer of

topsoil (usually 8-12 in) covering glacial sand. In some areas topsoil was completely absent. Glacial till and gravel was present everywhere. Throughout most of the area old plow furrows were observed. A dirt two-track road runs just along the edge of the river bank and was inspected throughout its entire length.

The smallest section of line (about 1000 ft) lies in the N. 1/4, Center, Sec. 32 and the S. 1/4, Center, of Sec. 29. Most of this area was wooded over; about 60 test probes in this area showed a soil profile of 12-16 in of topsoil over glacial sand and gravel. Glacial till, unless in the subsoil horizon, was less abundant than in the longer line.

Sites Recorded:

Prehistoric cultural material was recovered by the survey crew. Two chert flakes were found in the two-track road; 1 was found near the southernmost end of the line, the other near the center of the line. Intensive surface reconnaissance and test probing in these areas failed to produce any more material or features. One quartzite flake, 1 argillite flake, 1 chert flake, and 1 projectile point tip were discovered in the plowed field at the northernmost tip of the line. The area in which these items were encountered actually lies just west of the proposed line right-of-way. This area was recently plowed and intensive surface reconnaissance failed to produce any more material save for a few possible fire-cracked rocks.

It is difficult to assess the significance of this material. Since so little was recovered from a large area inspected with good surface visibility, it is felt that this area does not represent an archaeological site.

No material was recovered from the 1000 ft line.

Recommendations:

Since no historic or prehistoric sites were identified within the project area, as outlined to me by Mr. Philip Braswell of Snell Environmental Group, Inc., I can recommend that this project proceed as planned. In the case of the northern tip of the survey area, however, care should be taken to limit disturbance of the area immediately west of the line, in the event that an archaeological site does indeed lie further in that direction.

Prepared and submitted by:

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June 3, 1977

RGK:jw