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REPORT OF INVESTIGATIONS No. 17

Archaeological Survey of Proposed Sewage Treatment Facilities at Duck Lake, Calhoun County, Michigan

Project Personnel:

Principal Investigator: Robert G. Kingsley, M.A., Research Associate
Field Assistants: Jerrel H. Sorensen (graduate student), Kevin Kincare (undergraduate student)

Introduction:

On June 27 and 28, an archaeological survey was conducted at Duck Lake, Calhoun County, Michigan. The work was requested by Mr. Brian Lorence of the Calhoun County Department of Public Works. The project involved inspection of sewer line rights-of-way and a treatment facilities site prior to actual construction.

Previous Research:

Little systematic archaeological survey or excavations have been done in this immediate area. The archaeological site files at the Department of Anthropology, Western Michigan University, indicated that several known sites existed around and north of Olivet, some 10-15 mi northwest of Duck Lake; these are the nearest sites to the project area, and no known sites were recorded directly within the project area. None of these known sites was visited by the survey crew.

Procedures:

As indicated above, site file and record search was performed prior to fieldwork.

Field procedures consisted of surface reconnaissance of sewer line rights-of-way. Subsurface test probes were utilized when deemed necessary; this was not often, since over half of the lines will pass through areas already heavily altered by recent activities (e.g. road grading, backyard landscaping).

The treatment facilities site was investigated by means of surface reconnaissance and subsurface probing. Transects were done in this area and probes were spaced about 35 yd apart. Low inundated swamp areas were not transected.

Description of Survey Areas:

Duck Lake lies within Sections 9, 10, 15, 16, and 21, Clarence Twp., Calhoun County. The line rights-of-way that were examined totalled 10,025 ft and consisted of 15 separate sections. Seven pump station sites were also examined, each consisting of 5-10,000 ft. The lines and pump stations were located all around the lake, though most were located on the eastern side. As mentioned above, most of these areas were already disturbed by modern activities. Topography, soil profile and vegetation

were all highly variable. Most of the lines crossed front or back yards; soil in these areas was usually fill dirt. Those lines occupying relatively undisturbed areas possessed varying soil compositions consisting of glacial soils, till, and clays.

The treatment site area consists of about 60 acres and occupies the N 1/2, NE 1/4, Sec. 21, Clarence Twp. Glacial features make up the topography here: the land is rolling and contains a great amount of large till and gravel. Clay was abundant in the very sandy soil. What appears to be a glacial esker occupies the western third of the area; low swamps border this feature. Low swampland also occupies the southern boundary of the site. One section of line will run along this southern border. Much of this line could not be inspected due to the swampy conditions.

Vegetation in this area varied from open field to woodland, and the above-mentioned swamps. Climax growth was deciduous. The eastern third of the parcel had been farmed (but not recently) and contained numerous corn stalks.

Sites Recorded:

No historic or prehistoric cultural material was encountered by the survey crew. As mentioned above, one section of line could not be inspected due to the presence of swamps, but it seems certain that this area does not contain cultural resources, due to the fact that it is nearly always inundated.

Recommendations:

Since this survey failed to discover either historic or prehistoric archaeological sites in the areas pointed out to me by Mr. Brian Lorence of the Calhoun County Department of Public Works, I can recommend that this project proceed as planned.

Prepared and submitted by:

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