



1987

77-Archaeological Survey of Department of Natural Resources Property Including Proposed Boating Facilities at Presque Isle Harbor, Presque Isle County, Michigan (ER-2036)

William M. Cremin
Western Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/archaeology_reports_of_investigations

 Part of the [Archaeological Anthropology Commons](#)

WMU ScholarWorks Citation

Cremin, William M., "77-Archaeological Survey of Department of Natural Resources Property Including Proposed Boating Facilities at Presque Isle Harbor, Presque Isle County, Michigan (ER-2036)" (1987). *Reports of Investigations*. Paper 53.
http://scholarworks.wmich.edu/archaeology_reports_of_investigations/53

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by the Anthropology at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Reports of Investigations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.



WILLIAM M. CREMIN

(ER-2036)

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
PROPERTY INCLUDING PROPOSED BOATING FACILITIES AT PRESQUE ISLE
HARBOR, PRESQUE ISLE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

1987

REPORT OF INVESTIGATIONS NO. 77

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

A Report Prepared for:

Recreational Facilities Division
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 30028
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Attention:

Mr. Bruce Walker
Assistant Operations Supervisor

INTRODUCTION:

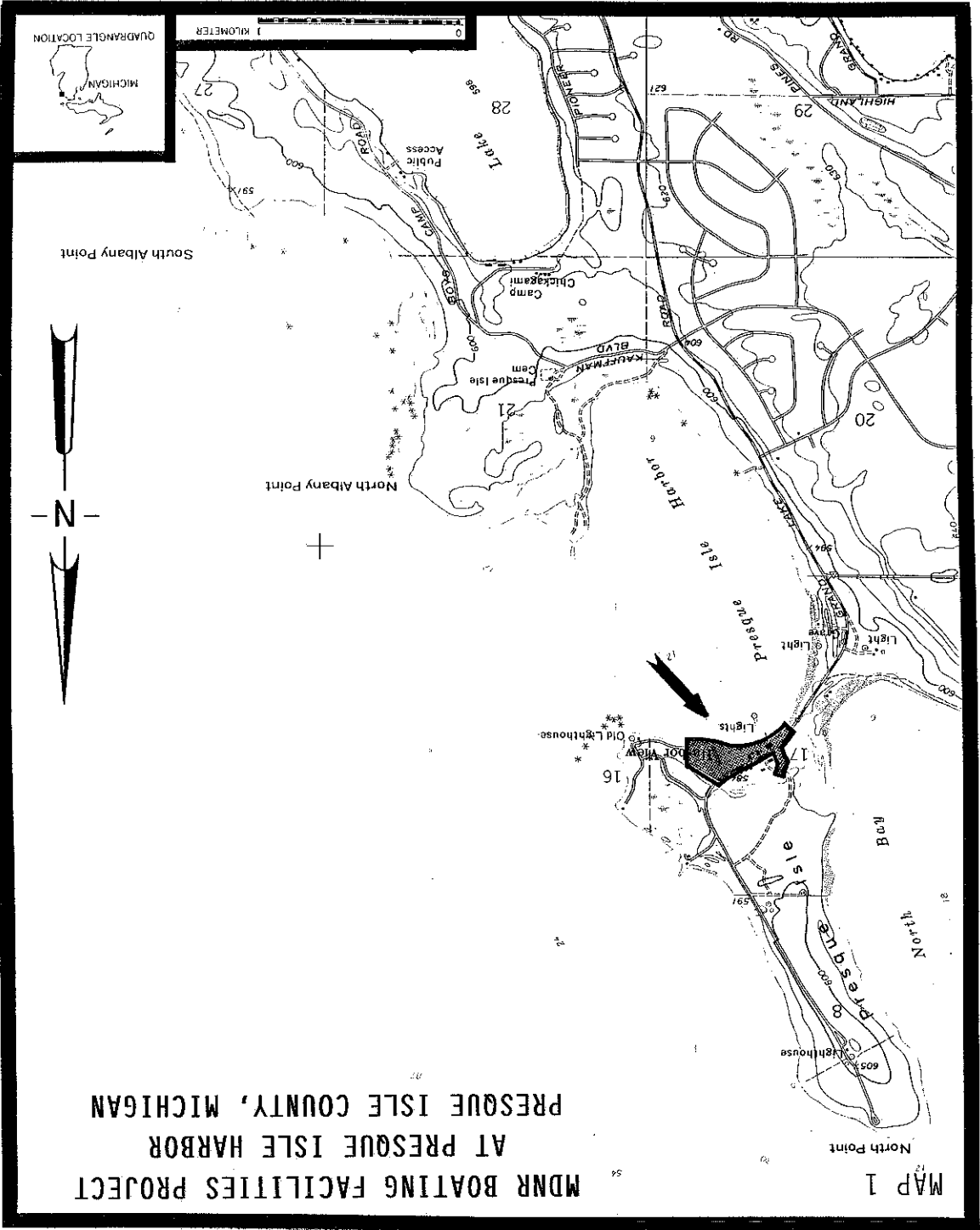
Pursuant to receipt of authorization from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DPO No. 87-GA8903, dated 17 Jul 87) for a Phase I archaeological survey of property including proposed boating facilities at Presque Isle Harbor in Presque Isle County, Michigan, archaeologists from the Department of Anthropology, Western Michigan University began a literature, documents, and site files search and prepared to conduct on-site evaluation of the project area in order to ascertain whether proposed construction of recreational facilities would have an adverse impact on potentially significant archaeological resources. There follows a report of fieldwork undertaken at Presque Isle Harbor on 2-3 Sep 87, together with appropriate background information and the recommendations derived from our program of research.

PROJECT PERSONNEL:

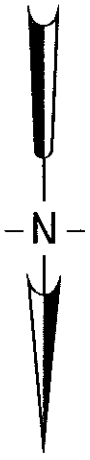
Principal Investigator - Dr. William M. Cremin, Associate Professor,
Department of Anthropology, WMU
Field Assistant - Mr. Dale W. Quattrin, M.A. Candidate in
Anthropology, WMU

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AREA:

The MDNR boating facilities project at Presque Isle Harbor comprises an irregular tract of land estimated to encompass 7.5 ha of the north shoreline of this small bay on Lake Huron in northeastern Lower Michigan. More specifically, the research area of this study is located in the center of the E 1/2 of Section 17, Presque Isle Township (T34N R8E), Presque Isle County, Michigan (Map 1).



MAP 1
 MDNR BOATING FACILITIES PROJECT
 AT PRESQUE ISLE HARBOR
 PRESQUE ISLE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

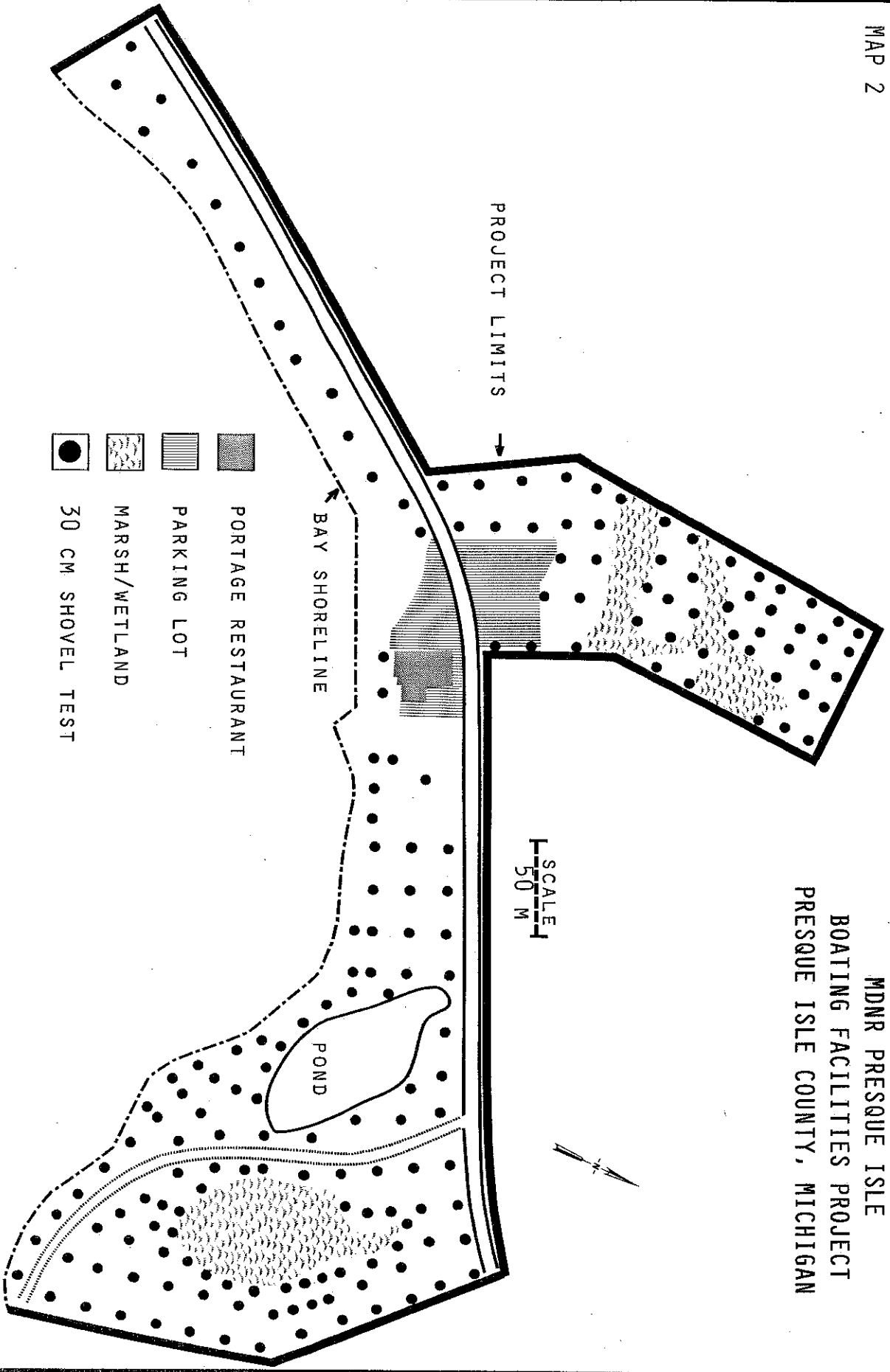


The study area commences on the shoreline at a point about 300 m west of the old lighthouse and follows water's edge to a point some 150 m south of the large building (Portage Restaurant) occupying a beach location in front of the existing boat slip with beacon lights. From the shoreline, project limits extend to Grand Lake Road, excepting for an extant parking lot and adjacent heavily wooded ridge across the road just opposite the restaurant. Here, surveyors evaluated a 90 m wide by 180 m long "arm" of the project extending north and away from the harbor. Precise project limits are shown on Map 2.

That area of the project lying between the bay and the road is low, seldom reaching an elevation of more than a meter or two above the bay (The U.S.G.S. quadrangle sheet shows the elevation of Lake Huron and the bay to be approximately 174 m ASL). With the exception of the restaurant building, which is owned by the MDNR, extant structures are abandoned or have been removed in preparation for the expansion of boating facilities. The area of beach lying to the south of the restaurant features a shallow layer of fine sand underlain by coarse gravels, and much of this area adjacent to the road is covered by roadbed materials moving downslope toward water's edge.

To the north of the restaurant and several former house sites, we observed much disturbance resulting from heavy equipment having bladed the area, a pond, and a shoreline heaped with gravel piled here through the action of winter ice. The only area evidencing minimal recent disturbance lay across the road providing access to the old lighthouse from Grand Lake Road. The easternmost portion of the study area featured dense dark woods surrounding a remnant

MDNR PRESQUE ISLE
BOATING FACILITIES PROJECT
PRESQUE ISLE COUNTY, MICHIGAN



Links Presque Isle with the mainland, where this trail presumably City to the north and passing south of the narrow neck of land that trail of questionable accuracy paralleling the shoreline from Rogers of Hinsdale's (1931) Archaeological Atlas of Michigan shows an Indian consequence, and neither pertains to the area under study. Examination Our background research has revealed only two references of any

PREVIOUS RESEARCH IN OR NEAR THE STUDY AREA:

glass and metal containers being strewn over the forest floor. evidence of recent dumping activity; trash in the form of bottle densely forested portion of the project, we observed considerable from north to south. In this as well as the previously mentioned grasses and shrub growth flanking the path that bisected the parcel arbor vitae, dominated this landform, excepting for an open area of forest cover, again consisting principally of pine, spruce, and backed by a ridge rising to an elevation of ca. 178 m ASL. Dense a dense cover of grasses interspersed with thin stands of trees these disturbed areas, we observed several remnant marshes supporting arm of a pond approaches the road from the north. Here, aside from construction of a parking lot and blading/leveling of land where the the restaurant also evidenced disturbance resulting from the prior The portion of the project lying across Grand Lake Road from growth of juniper, yew, and arbor vitae interspersed with moss. but where the sun reached the forest floor we did encounter a dense generally sparse under the canopy of pine, spruce, and arbor vitae, than was observed elsewhere in the project area. Ground cover was Forest litter underlain by a much deeper and sandier soil profile marsh revealed a humus layer consisting entirely of coniferous marsh. The "ridge and swale"-like topography occurring around the

The objective of our fieldwork was to perform a systematic survey of sufficient intensity to result in a conclusive recommendation with respect to the presence/absence of potentially significant archaeo-logical resources. Inasmuch as the project area afforded us only spotty surface visibility, reconnaissance level survey procedures were augmented by the application of shovel testing along transects; this being especially the case in areas of dense forest cover.

Typically, in those instances where shovel testing was employed, we traversed the project along lines of survey spaced 15-20 m apart, with shovel tests being excavated at intervals of 15-20 m along each transect. As we approached areas of wetland development and the bay shoreline, the interval between shovel tests was further reduced. The shovel tests were routinely excavated to a depth of 40-60 cm below the surface, excepting in those numerous instances along the shoreline where we encountered an impenetrable layer of large rocks at depths varying between 8-20 cm below the surface. The typical soil profile revealed where probing was effective consisted of a thin humus layer of forest litter extending to a depth of 6-8 cm underlain by a lens of sand that continued beyond the depth to which we probed. The occasional shovel test that we excavated to a depth of 80-100 cm afforded observations supporting our decision to routinely terminate tests across the project at the shallower depth of 40-60 cm. The 187

SURVEY FIELD PROCEDURES:

joined one running from Grand Lake to Lake of the Woods. And the only archaeological site presently recorded for Section 17, the Presque Isle Dump site (20P126), lies in the SW 1/4, NE 1/4, SE 1/4, SE 1/4, NW 1/4 of this section at a distance of about 300 m to the west of the MDNR project (Smith 1985).

shovel tests excavated in those areas where we anticipated that prior disturbance would be minimal are located on Map 2.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS DERIVED FROM THE PHASE I STUDY:

In summary, our thorough examination of the pertinent literature

and information in the state site files revealed that no archaeological sites had previously been recorded for the MDNR property at Presque Isle Harbor. Moreover, on-site evaluation through the application

of both surface reconnaissance and shovel testing procedures showed

much of the study area to have been previously disturbed. In those

portions of the project which we felt would afford promise of un-

disturbed context, shovel testing along transects and at tight inter-

vals produced not a single cultural item or an observation that

could be construed to suggest the presence of archaeological resources.

In the final analysis, we have only negative information to

report from our research at Presque Isle Harbor. Therefore, in light

of our systematic and intensive examination of the MDNR boating

facilities project it can be recommended without reservation that

the proposed construction activity be permitted to proceed as planned

inasmuch as no significant archaeological resources will be impacted.

REFERENCES CITED:

Hinsdale, W.B.

1931

Archaeological atlas of Michigan. University of Michigan
Handbook Series 4.

Smith, K.P.

1985

Report of the 1985 Presque Isle reconnaissance survey,
Presque Isle and Alpena counties, Michigan: national register
survey and planning grant program, grant #S85-221. Museum
of Anthropology, University of Michigan. Submitted to the
Bureau of History, Michigan Department of State.