ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS
IN COMPARTMENTS 132 AND 148
OF THE OCONEE NATIONAL FOREST
SOUTHERN PUTNAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

By
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ABSTRACT

A reconnaissance level cultural resources survey of approximately 506 acres of Oconee National Forest, Georgia, was conducted by archaeology students from the University of Georgia during July of 1991. The survey area was in two compartments in southern Putnam County, on the Little River drainage. Five archaeological sites were located in the areas surveyed. Four of the sites were prehistoric Native American sites, and one was a nineteenth century historic site. All of the sites are small thinly distributed and eroded artifact scatters. None of the sites located are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. No further work is recommended at any of the sites. This version of this report was lightly edited in December of 2010 by the author.

Compartment 132

<table>
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<th>Site Type</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
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<tr>
<td>GA08-1281</td>
<td>9PM898</td>
<td>Prehistoric Lithic Scatter</td>
<td>Eroded</td>
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<tr>
<td>GA08-1282</td>
<td>9PM899</td>
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Compartment 148

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<td>GA08-1285</td>
<td>9PM902</td>
<td>Historic Artifact Scatter</td>
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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This project served three distinct and separate purposes or goals. First, it served the normal needs of the U. S. Forest Service to survey stands of pine trees for cultural resources prior to the harvesting of those trees for timber. This is an ongoing and major portion of the activities of the Forest Archaeologist for the Oconee National Forest. The second and third goals of the project are unusual in the context of surveys on the National Forest lands and require some initial explanation.

The labor for the survey reported here was supplied by archaeology students from the University of Georgia during the summer quarter, 1991. These students were under the direction of their instructor, the author of this report. The survey conducted by the students was a portion of the summer's curriculum in field and laboratory techniques. In the past is has been rare for field school students to receive training in shovel-test surveying of a wooded tract. This has been unfortunate because a great portion of the available jobs for archaeology graduates consists of just this sort of field work. In recognition of the need to give students training in this sort of work, the University of Georgia and the Forest Service worked together through the Challenge Cost Share program of the Forest Service to make this training possible. This was the second goal of the project.

When it was decided that the students would include shovel-test surveys as part of their summer's training, the next decision was "where to conduct these surveys?". The Oconee National Forest Archaeologist, Jack Wynn, suggested a large number of compartments in the Oconee Forest that were in need of survey and left the final determination of location up to me. I decided on Compartments 132 and 148 based upon the following research-oriented plan.

Within the Oconee River valley, a tremendous amount of research has been conducted in the last 15 years upon the Mississippian period Native American inhabitants of the area. Specifically, studies have been conducted on the temple mounds and farmsteads within the valley. The mound sites represented the centers of small chiefdom-level societies, typically located about a day's walk from one another. These have all been mapped and tested. The best summary of the history of the growth and development of the five known Mississippian mound centers in the valley has been presented by Williams and Shapiro (1987). Huge numbers of farmsteads have also been found on surveys in the northern portion of the valley (Kowalewski and Hatch 1991). Additionally, excavations have taken place at a growing number of farmsteads in the valley (James Hatch, personal Communication).

Much of the work in the last 10 years grew out of a paper by Smith and Kowalewski (1981) on the special distribution of the Mississippian mound centers in the valley. While their work has been heavily modified and corrected in recent years, a puzzle has remained to this day. In their work, Smith and Kowalewski recognized that most of the mound sites were evenly distributed in the Oconee Valley, with a spacing of roughly 28 miles apart. A obvious gap in the distribution of the mounds was between the Little River site (9Mg46) in southern Morgan County (Williams and Shapiro 1990) and the Shinholser site (9Bl1) in southern Baldwin County (Williams 1990). The distance between these two sites is roughly twice the normal distance between mound sites in the valley and, in a straight line, was located on the lower portion of Little River near where it ran into the Oconee River before Lake Sinclair was created in 1949. Several people have informally
suggested that there may have been another Mississippian mound center in this vicinity, based upon these two observations.

Until now no one has tested this possibility. Our survey in the Oconee National Forest was designed with this information in mind and forms the third goal of the project. Thus the two compartments selected for survey, Numbers 132 and 148, were ones that were as close as possible to the area half way between Little River mounds and the Shinholser mounds and as close to the main stream of Little River (Figure 1). It was unlikely that a mound itself would be found, but it is known that many small farmsteads are located near mounds, and if any of these were found this would provide indirect evidence of a mound. Forest Archaeologist Jack Wynn supplied maps of these two compartments with subsections, or stands of trees, that were scheduled to be thinned or clearcut in the near future labeled. All of the stands that were in the selected compartments were surveyed by this project.

Certainly, sites of time periods other than Mississippian were likely to be encountered by the survey in these compartments. The sequence of cultures from Paleo Indian through the Historic period in this area of Georgia has been reviewed many times. The best recent summary is that of Price and Wood on other nearby National Forest lands (Price and Wood 1990). A large number of other surveys have also taken place in Putnam County on the Oconee National Forest. These include two surveys by David Fant and David Davis (Fant and Davis 1989a, 1989b); one survey by Jack Wynn (Wynn 1984); three surveys by Steve Webb (Webb 1985, Webb 1987, and Webb 1988); and one survey by Karen Wood and Charlotte Smith (Wood and Smith 1988). Those surveys that were close to the areas included in this survey yielded relatively few sites.

In the Georgia Piedmont the major periods of human occupation have been divided into the same categories used through all of the South. The earliest occupation in the area was during the Paleo Indian period, from about 10,500 B.C. until 8500 B.C. During this period band-level societies first came into the region during the height of the most recent Ice Age. Sites of this period are rare in this area. Following the end of the Ice Age, the Archaic period began in Georgia. Lasting from 8500 B.C. until about 1000 B.C., the societies of this period were also band-level hunters and gatherers. The population of these people slowly increased throughout the Archaic period. This increased population laid the foundation for the following Woodland period. The time range for the Woodland in Georgia is approximately 1000 B.C. until A.D. 1000. During this period people began growing some native Eastern cultigens and developed tribal level social groupings. After A.D. 1000 chiefdom-level societies developed in Georgia. These are during the Mississippian period. The main crops grown by these agricultural people included corn, beans, and squash. After European invaders came into Georgia, these chiefdom societies rapidly collapsed, although Native Americans continued to live in the Putnam County area until about A.D. 1650. Georgia settlers expanded into the Putnam County area by the late part of the eighteenth century and cotton farming dominated the local economy until the early twentieth century.

**FIELD METHODS**

All exposed areas within the survey acres were carefully examined, although such locations were rare. Because most of the area examined was in pine tree forest, it was necessary to use shovel tests to locate sites there. Shovel tests were typically 30 centimeters in diameter,
and were carried down to sterile soil. The soil depth in virtually all of the tests made was very shallow. The sterile red clay was reached in many cases in less than 10 centimeters, and only rarely was as great as 20 centimeters. Apparently the entire area has been badly eroded by nineteenth century cotton-farming activities. The topography of most of the area includes narrow ridge tops and strongly sloped side. None of the area surveyed was in the flood plains of Little River or any of its branches--it was all uplands.

Shovel tests were placed at approximately 25 meter intervals in areas that were relatively flat, and at intervals of approximately 50 meter on sloping sides of ridges. When artifacts were located in shovel tests, several other shovel tests were placed up to 10 meters from the first shovel test to the edge of obvious natural features. The soil from every shovel test was screened through 1/4 inch mesh hardware cloth to recover artifacts. For purposes of this project a site was defined as the recovery of even a single artifact, and the often used concept of an artifact occurrence was not used. Numbers are cheap and information coded as occurrences is almost always lost to archaeological research when it is not given a site number. The work took place in late July of 1991. The crew consisted of 12 members, total, although several were absent on most days.
Compartment 132 and 148
Figure 1
COMPARTMENT 132

Compartment 132 was the first examined. It is approximately 8 miles due south of Eatonton and located on the southern shore of the Little River arm of Lake Sinclair (Figure 2). Indeed, this is the only portion of the Oconee National Forest that touches that lake. A portion of the area has been developed by the Forest Service into a campground and recreation area. Four stands were surveyed within this compartment. These were Stands 2, 7, 12, and 18. By my calculations, these total 236 acres in extent. There were very few exposed areas in these stands, but what few were present were completely examined. All high probability areas under tree cover were thoroughly examined with shovel tests. These included all flat places, ridge tops, and areas that were close to water. Other areas on slopes were shovel tested, but less intensively. The total number of shovel tests made was 80. These were distributed by stand as follows:

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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
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<td>18</td>
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Site 9PM898 (FS GA08-1281)

There were only two sites, neither of any size or extent located in Compartment 132. The first of these, 9PM898, consisted of a single well-formed tertiary quartz flake found in a shovel test near an old logging road on a ridge slope the near the center of Stand 18 (Figure 3). The site was close to the western edge of the Forest boundary. The elevation of the site is 125 meters above sea level in the pine woods where it was located. No other artifacts were found in other shovel tests here. The period of occupation of this possible camp site is obviously unknown, and the site is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
Site 9PM899 (FS GA08-1282)

The second site located in Compartment 132 was also in Stand 18 (Figure 4). This was on a ridge crest along an old logging road in the northwestern part of the stand at an elevation of 116 meters above sea level. It is numbered 9PM899 in the Georgia Site Files. Two of four shovel tests yielded artifacts at this tiny site. The first yielded a single tertiary quartz flake, and the second yielded a single small quartz Morrow Mountain projectile point. The material here is obviously rare, and is very restricted in size. No other shovel tests on this ridge yielded any artifacts. The site presumably is a short term camp that dates to the Middle Archaic period based upon the projectile point. It is not considered eligible for the National Register for Historic Places.
There were no sites located in Stands 2, 7, or 12. In terms of the goal of the possibility of a Mississippian occupation in the area, it is noteworthy that not a single pottery sherd was located in Compartment 132.

**COMPARTMENT 148**

This compartment is located 4 miles southwest of Eatonton, Georgia, on the western bank of Little River (Figure 5). There were 12 stands examined in this compartment. These were numbers 11, 12, 15, 16, 21, 23, 28, 30, 33, 37, 38, and 39. The total number of acres examined is 270. Most of this area was well back from Little River in the uplands. Stands 16, 21, and 37 were fairly close to the river, however, and were believed to have high potential for sites. As with Compartment 132, all high probability areas were thoroughly shovel tested. A total of 248 shovel tests were placed in this compartment. The number of shovel tests placed in each of the stands is listed here.

<table>
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<th>Stand</th>
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<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
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</table>

Only three sites, none of any size or particular significance, were located within Compartment 148. The individual sites are described below.
Compartment 148
Resseauss Crossroads Quad
Areas Surveyed Are Shaded
Figure 5
Site 9PM900 (FS GA08-1283)

Site 9PM900 was located in the center of Stand 12 on a descending ridge crest not near any specific features (Figure 6). The elevation of the site is 155 meters above sea level. The three artifacts found at the site were all found on the surface in a tree tip. Shovel tests in the pine woods in this area yielded no artifacts. The three items recovered included two quartz flakes (one tertiary and one primary) and a single quartz biface. The site may date to the Archaic period, but this is uncertain. It presumably is the location of a short term campsite. The site is not eligible to the National Register for Historic Places.
Site 9PM901 (FS GA08-1284)

The second site located in Compartment 148 was site 9PM901. This was located in the northwestern portion of Stand 15, on the descending side of a low ridge slope (Figure 7). The elevation of the site is 165 meters above sea level. The only item found was a fragment of green salt-glazed stoneware, presumably part of a nineteenth century churn or crock. No other evidence of a historic homestead were discovered here, and it is uncertain why this fragment was located in this spot. The area is located in a pine forest. This site is not considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
The final site found in the examination of Compartiment 148 was site 9PM902. This site was located in the southwestern corner of Stand 21 in the big bend of Little River at an elevation of 121 meters above sea level (Figure 8). The artifacts consisted of two quartz flakes found in disturbed soil adjacent to an old logging road through the area. No shovel tests in the area yielded any more artifacts, and this possible camp site cannot be dated to any specific archaeological period. It is not eligible to the National register for Historic Places.
SUMMARY

A total of approximately 506 acres was surveyed on various stands in Compartments 132 and 148 of the Oconee National Forest south and southwest of Eatonton, Georgia. Two sites were found on Compartment 132 and three were found on Compartment 148. None of these were large or important. One dates to the Middle Archaic period, one to the nineteenth century, and three were of undetermined prehistoric periods. No further work is recommended for any of these sites.

In terms of the question of Mississippian occupation in the area, the initial impression from this survey is that there is none. This would tend to support the idea that there was not a lost or missing Mississippian mound center in this area halfway between the Little River site and the Shinholsir site. Certainly this question is not settled by this small survey. A mound may yet exist and many Mississippian homesteads may be present. In the area of northern Greene County, however, where there are a great many such farmsteads, a survey of over 500 acres would almost certainly have yields at least one such site.

The number of sites recovered seems low. Not a single ceramic site was recovered, and all the lithic sites located are tiny. Why was this so? I do not believe that the use of student labor was the reason so few sites were found in the area, however. I certainly expected more sites to be located in the big bend of Little River in Compartment 148. The steepness and level of erosion there and in all areas surveyed seems quite high—the average depth of most shovel tests was no more than 10 centimeters. Perhaps this explains the low site total. It may be that there was little or no occupation in this area during the ceramic periods. The students were familiar with all possible artifact types and excavated 328 shovel tests in all the likely spots for sites. They did receive good on-the-job training in shovel-test archaeology, however. Certainly more survey is needed in this area of the Little River valley, but for now, despite the low yield of archaeological sites, I count the project a success on all three of the goals set forth herein.
REFERENCES CITED

Fant, David W., and David J. Davis


Kowalewski, Stephen A., and James W. Hatch

Price, T. Jeffrey, and Karen G. Wood

Smith, Marvin T., and Stephen A. Kowalewski

Webb, Robert S.


1985 Cultural Resource Survey, Compartments 146 and 147, Oconee National Forest, Jasper and Putnam Counties, Georgia. Webb Diversified Consulting, Marietta, Georgia.

Williams, Mark

Williams, Mark, and Gary Shapiro

1990 Archaeological Excavation at Little River (9Mg46), 1984 & 1987. LAMAR Institute, Watkinsville, Georgia.
Wood, Karen G., and Smith, Charlotte A.

Wynn, Jack T.
State Site Number: 9PM898  Institutional Site Number: FSGA08-1281

Public Status: 1. National Historic Landmark  2. National Natural Landmark

National Register Standing: 1. Determined Eligible  2. Recommended Ineligible

National Register Level of Significance: 1. Local  2. State  3. National

Preservation State (Select up to Two): 1. Undisturbed  2. Cultivated  3. Eroded
                                         9. Graded  10. Razed


RECORD OF INVESTIGATIONS

Supervisor: Mark Williams  Affiliation: LAMAR Institute  Date: 7-22-91
Report Title: Archaeological Surveys in Compartments 132 and 148 of the Oconee National Forest,
Southern Putnam County, Georgia
Other Reports:

Artifacts Collected: 1 Tertiary Quartz Flake

Location of Collections: UGA Laboratory of Archaeology
Location of Field Notes: UGA Laboratory of Archaeology
Private Collections:

Name:  Address:

CULTURAL AFFINITY

Cultural Periods: Unknown Prehistoric

Phases:

FORM PREPARATION AND REVISION

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<th>Institutional Affiliation</th>
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<td>Mark Williams</td>
<td>LAMAR Institute</td>
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GEORGIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE FORM
1990
Official Site Number: 9PM899

Institutional Site Number: FSGA08-1282 Site Name:
County: PUTNAM Map Name: RESSEAUS CROSSROADS USGS OR USNOAA
UTM Zone: 17 UTM East: 275865 UTM North: 3677350
Owner: U.S. Forest Service Address: Oconee National Forest
Site Length: 20 meters Width: 20 meters Elevation: + 116 meters
Standing Architecture: 1. Present 2. Absent
5. Unknown 6. Underwater
Type of Site (Mound, Mound, Quarry, Lithic Scatter, etc.): Prehistoric Lithic Scatter

Topography (Ridge, Terrace, etc.): Ridge Crest
Current Vegetation (Woods, Pasture, etc.): Pine Woods
Additional Information:

SKETCH MAP (Include sites, roads, streams, landmarks)

OFFICIAL MAP (Xerox of proper map)
State Site Number: 9PM899    Institutional Site Number: FSGA08-1282

Public Status: 1. National Historic Landmark    2. National Natural Landmark

National Register Standing:    1. Determined Eligible    2. Recommended Ineligible
6. Unknown    7. Removed

National Register Level of Significance:    1. Local
2. State    3. National

Preservation State (Select up to Two): 1. Undisturbed    2. Cultivated
7. Destroyed    8. Redeposited
9. Graded    10. Razed

Preservation Prospects: 1. Safe    2. Endangered by:
3. Unknown

RECORD OF INVESTIGATIONS

Supervisor: Mark Williams    Affiliation: LAMAR Institute    Date: 7-22-91

Report Title: Archaeological Surveys in Compartments 132 and 148 of the Oconee National Forest, Southern Putnam County, Georgia

Other Reports:

Artifacts Collected: 1 Tertiary Quartz Flake
1 Quartz Morrow Mountain PPK

Location of Collections: UGA Laboratory of Archaeology
Location of Field Notes: UGA Laboratory of Archaeology
Private Collections:

Name:    Address:

CULTURAL AFFINITY

Cultural Periods: Middle Archaic

Phases:

FORM PREPARATION AND REVISION

Date    Name    Institutional Affiliation
7-22-91    Mark Williams    LAMAR Institute
GEORGIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE FORM
1990
Official Site Number: 9PM300

Institutional Site Number: FSGA08-1283

County: PUTNAM
Map Name: RESSEEAUS CROSSROADS USGS OR USNOAA
UTM Zone: 17 UTM East: 272900 UTM North: 3686100
Owner: U.S. Forest Service
Address: Oconee National Forest

Site Length: 10 meters Width: 10 meters Elevation: +153 meters


Standing Architecture: 1. Present 2. Absent
5. Unknown 6. Underwater


Type of Site (Mound, Mound, Quarry, Lithic Scatter, etc.): Prehistoric Lithic Scatter

Topography (Ridge, Terrace, etc.): Low Ridge Crest

Current Vegetation (Woods, Pasture, etc.): Pine Woods

Additional Information:

SKETCH MAP
(Include sites, roads, streams, landmarks)

OFFICIAL MAP
(Xerox of proper map)
State Site Number: 9PM900   Institutional Site Number: FSGA08-1283

Public Status: 1. National Historic Landmark  2. National Natural Landmark

National Register Standing: 1. Determined Eligible  2. Recommended Ineligible
                            7. Removed

National Register Level of Significance: 1. Local  2. State  3. National

Preservation State (Select up to Two): 1. Undisturbed  2. Cultivated
                                      3. Eroded
                                      7. Destroyed  8. Redeposited
                                      9. Graded  10. Razed

Preservation Prospects: 1. Safe  2. Endangered by:
                       3. Unknown

RECORD OF INVESTIGATIONS

Supervisor: Mark Williams   Affiliation: LAMAR Institute   Date: 8-1-91

Report Title: Archaeological Surveys in Compartments 132 and 148 of the Oconee National Forest, Southern Putnam County, Georgia

Other Reports:

Artifacts Collected: 1 quartz primary flake, 1 quartz shatter, 1 quartz biface

Location of Collections: UGA Laboratory of Archaeology
Location of Field Notes: UGA Laboratory of Archaeology
Private Collections:

Name:   Address:

CULTURAL AFFINITY

Cultural Periods: Unknown Prehistoric

Phases:

FORM PREPARATION AND REVISION

Date   Name   Institutional Affiliation
8-1-91  Mark Williams  LAMAR Institute
GEORGIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE FORM
1990
Official Site Number: 9PM901

Institutional Site Number: FSGA08-1284 Site Name:
County: PUTNAM Map Name: RESSEAU CROSSROADS USGS OR USNOAA
UTM Zone: 17 UTM East: 271500 UTM North: 3688250
Owner: U.S. Forest Service Address: Oconee National Forest
Site Length: 10 meters Width: 10 meters Elevation: + 165 meters
Standing Architecture: 1. Present 2. Absent
5. Unknown 6. Underwater
Type of Site (Mill, Mound, Quarry, Lithic Scatter, etc.): Historic Dump or Homestead

Topography (Ridge, Terrace, etc.): Ridge Slope

Current Vegetation (Woods, Pasture, etc.): Pine Woods

Additional Information:

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SKETCH MAP
(Include sites, roads, streams, landmarks)

OFFICIAL MAP
(Xerox of proper map)
State Site Number: 2PM301  Institutional Site Number: FSGA08-1284

Public Status: 1. National Historic Landmark  2. National Natural Landmark  

National Register Standing: 1. Determined Eligible  2. Recommended Ineligible  

National Register Level of Significance: 1. Local  2. State  3. National

Preservation State (Select up to Two): 1. Undisturbed  2. Cultivated  
9. Graded  10. Razed


RECORD OF INVESTIGATIONS

Supervisor: Mark Williams  Affiliation: LAMAR Institute  Date: 8-1-91
Report Title: Archaeological Surveys in Compartments 132 and 148 of the Oconee National Forest, Southern Putnam County, Georgia
Other Reports:

Artifacts Collected: 1 salt-glazed stoneware sherd

Location of Collections: UGA Laboratory of Archaeology
Location of Field Notes: UGA Laboratory of Archaeology
Private Collections:

Name:  Address:

CULTURAL AFFINITY

Cultural Periods: Nineteenth Century Historic

Phases:

FORM PREPARATION AND REVISION

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<td>LAMAR Institute</td>
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GEORGIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE FORM
1990
Official Site Number: 9PM902

Institutional Site Number: PSGA08-1285 Site Name:
County: PUTNAM Map Name: RESSEBAUS CROSSROADS USGS OR USNOAA
UTM Zone: 17 UTM East: 273350 UTM North: 3686530
Owner: U.S. Forest Service Address: Oconee National Forest

Site Length: 10 meters Width: 10 meters Elevation: + +121 meters
Standing Architecture: 1. Present 2. Absent
5. Unknown 6. Underwater
Type of Site (Mill, Mound, Quarry, Lithic Scatter, etc.): Prehistoric Lithic Scatter

Topography (Ridge, Terrace, etc.): Ridge Slope

Current Vegetation (Woods, Pasture, etc.): Pine Woods

Additional Information:

SKETCH MAP
(Including sites, roads, streams, landmarks)

OFFICIAL MAP
(Xerox of proper map)
State Site Number: 9PM902  Institutional Site Number: FSGA08-1285

Public Status: 1. National Historic Landmark  2. National Natural Landmark

National Register Standing: 1. Determined Eligible  2. Recommended Ineligible

National Register Level of Significance: 1. Local  2. State  3. National

Preservation State (Select up to Two): 1. Undisturbed  2. Cultivated  3. Eroded
9. Graded  10. Razed


RECORD OF INVESTIGATIONS

Supervisor: Mark Williams  Affiliation: LAMAR Institute  Date: 8-1-91

Report Title: Archaeological Surveys in Compartments 132 and 148 of the Oconee National Forest, Southern Putnam County, Georgia

Other Reports:

Artifacts Collected: 2 quartz tertiary flakes

Location of Collections: UGA Laboratory of Archaeology
Location of Field Notes: UGA Laboratory of Archaeology
Private Collections:

Name:  Address:

CULTURAL AFFINITY

Cultural Periods: Unknown Prehistoric

Phases:

FORM PREPARATION AND REVISION

Date  Name  Institutional Affiliation
8-1-91  Mark Williams  LAMAR Institute