

Attachment II-B

A PHASE I CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY
FOR OAK GROVE MINE/P-3232 REVISION R-44,
JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA

PREPARED BY
TERRAXPLORATIONS, INC.

PREPARED FOR
PERC ENGINEERING COMPANY, INC.



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AUGUST 2015

Perc Engineering Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 1712
Jasper, Alabama 35502

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BY

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TERRAX PROJECT NO. 2015.091

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR



PAUL D. JACKSON

AUGUST 19, 2015

A PHASE I CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY FOR OAK GROVE MINE/P-3232 REVISION R-44, JEFFERSON COUNTY, ALABAMA

INTRODUCTION

TerraXplorations, Inc. (TerraX) of Tuscaloosa, Alabama was contracted by Perc Engineering Company, Inc. of Jasper, Alabama to conduct a cultural resources survey of 7.74 acres (3.1 hectares) in Jefferson County, Alabama. The Phase I survey was performed on August 11, 2015 by Klint Baggett under the direction of Paul D. Jackson, Principal Investigator. The purpose of this study was to determine if any prehistoric or historic properties exist within the limits of the survey tract, and if so, to document and assess each based on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) criteria.

The project area is located about four miles west of the town of Sylvan Springs. There are two rectangular-shaped tracts plus an access corridor. The northern tract comprises approximately 2.96 acres (1.2 hectares) and is located within Section 31, Township 17 South, Range 5 West. The southern tract contains approximately 2.77 acres (1.12 hectares) and is within Section 6, Township 18 South, Range 5 West. The access corridor contains about 2.01 acres (.81 hectares) and lies within both of the aforementioned sections, with its majority in Section 6. All of the subject property can be found on the 1971 (photorevised 1982) Sylvan Springs, Alabama USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle (Figure 1).

A dirt road/pipeline corridor runs along the western boundary of the northern tract, which also has an old logging road running through the southeast corner. William Howton Road lies west of both tracts. In general, both tracts and the access corridor are within and surrounded by wooded areas. Photographs depicting the present state of the project area are provided (Figures 2-5).

PROJECT AREA ENVIRONMENT

The project area is located in Jefferson County in the Warrior Basin District of the Cumberland Plateau Physiographic Region (The University of Alabama 2015). Generally, the landscape of this region is comprised of flat-topped high-elevation plateaus separated by deep, steep sloping valleys. Rocks of the Pottsville formation of Pennsylvanian age lie beneath most of the Cumberland Plateau (Spivey, Jr. 1982). This consists of sandstone and shale beds with many coal seams.

A review of the Web Soil Survey (2015) identified two soil map units within the project area. The northern tract contains Montevallo-Nauvoo association (steep) soils above the logging road that cuts through the southeastern portion of the tract. South of the logging road is found Nauvoo fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes. The access corridor contains Nauvoo fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes and the southern tract is wholly comprised of Montevallo-Nauvoo association, steep soils.

Montevallo-Nauvoo association, steep soils have slopes that range from 6 to 55 percent. Montevallo soils are found on the steep sides of ridges and are composed of shaly silt loam over weathered siltstone and shale. Nauvoo soils are found on ridgetops and sides and are comprised of fine sandy loam over clay loam atop weathered sandstone. Due to the steep slopes, these soils are not conducive to crops, pasture, residential or industrial uses. Woodland usage and surface coal mining seem to be the major usage of these soils (Spivey, Jr. 1982).

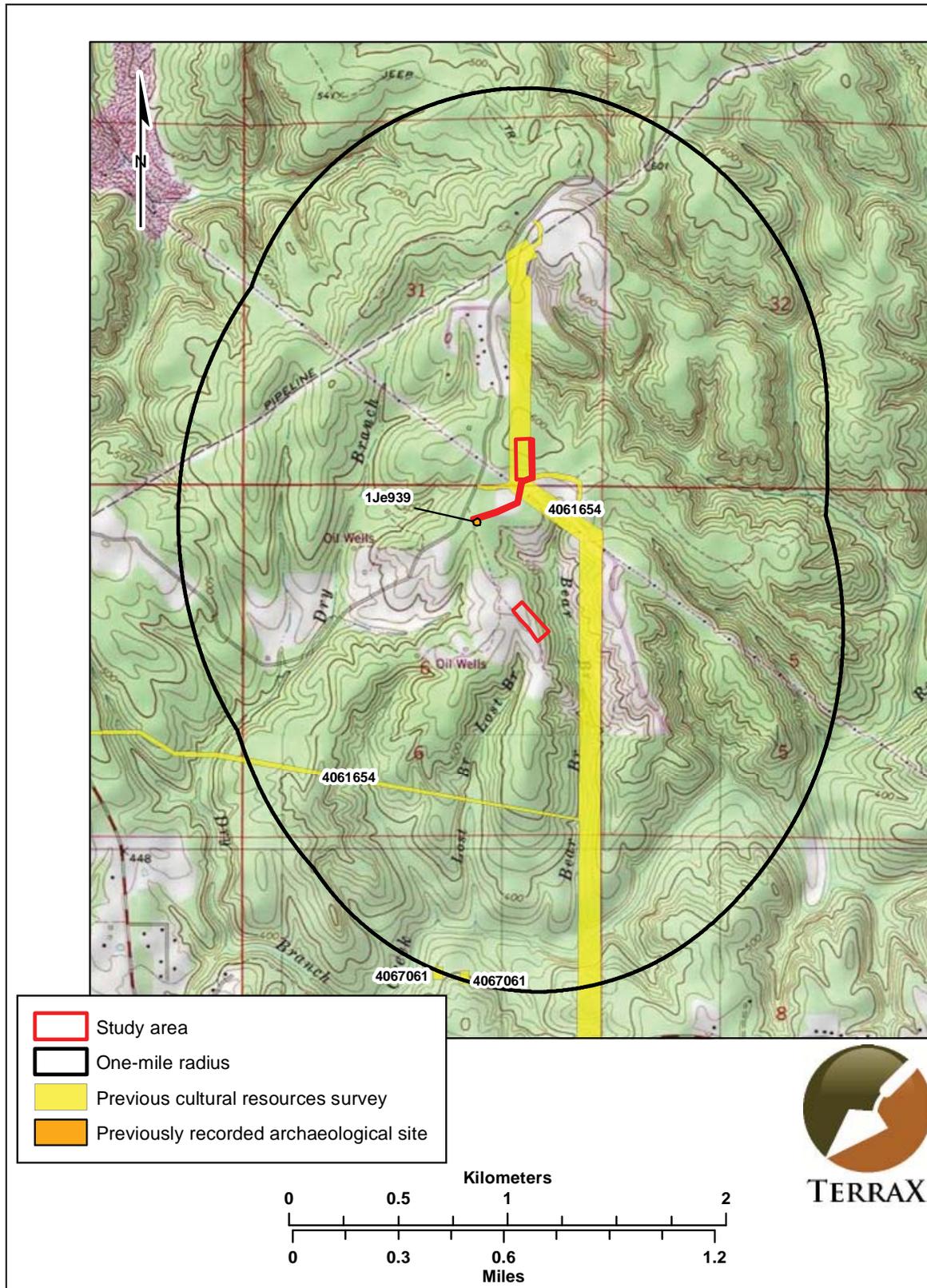


Figure 1. Map showing the project area and the previously recorded archaeological site and surveys within one mile of the project area (based on the 1971 (photorevised 1982) Sylvan Springs and the 1979 Concord, Alabama, USGS 7.5' series topographic quadrangles).



Figure 2. View of vegetation in central portion of northern tract, facing south.



Figure 3. View of vegetation in access corridor, facing northeast.



Figure 4. View of vegetation in southern tract, facing south.



Figure 5. View of southeastern portion of southern tract showing slope, facing northeast.

Nauvoo fine sandy loam, 8 to 15 percent slopes occurs on ridges and upland plateaus. Well-drained, though strongly sloping, these soils consist of fine sandy loam over clay loam with relict rock structure underneath. The primary uses of this soil are for woodland and pasture, although it also does well in residential settings and, with special care, can be used for cropland (Spivey, Jr. 1982).

LITERATURE AND DOCUMENT SEARCH

Before conducting the fieldwork, TerraX performed a literature and document search in order to gather pertinent background information regarding the subject property and its surroundings. This research included inspections of the Alabama State Archaeological Site File (ASASF) (Office of Archaeological Research [OAR] 2015a), the National Archaeological Database Bibliography (NADB) (OAR 2015b), the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage (ARLH) (Alabama Historical Commission [AHC] 2015), and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (National Park Service [NPS] 2015).

Only one archaeological site is found within a mile of the project area, according to OAR (2015a) files. Site 1Je939 was recorded by TerraX in 2014. Located just east of William Howton Road near the southwestern end of the access corridor, this was recorded as a historic/modern trash dump. Trash was scattered about on the surface and one shovel test encountered a pit with burned trash. The site was recommended as ineligible for the NRHP.

Two archaeological surveys have been accomplished within a mile of the project area. The first (NADB# 4061654) was performed by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates for a natural gas pipeline (Robblee et al. 1998). While some cultural resources were found, their status is undetermined and they are more than one mile from the current project area. The remaining survey (NADB# 4067061) was for methane gas well pads and substation and was accomplished by P. E. LaMoreaux and Associates. No cultural resources were encountered (Lolley 2004).

No historic properties within a mile of the project area were located on the ARLH (AHC 2015) or the NRHP (NPS 2015).

FIELD METHODS

The Phase I survey was guided by procedural standards created by the Alabama Council of Professional Archaeologists in concurrence with the Alabama Historical Commission's (2002) specifications as outlined in the Policy for Archaeological Surveying and Testing in Alabama. Land coverage requirements were achieved by walking and visually inspecting the entire survey area. Any exposed surfaces were carefully examined for cultural material. Typically, subsurface testing is performed judgmentally or along 30-m interval transects comprised of shovel tests spaced 30 m apart. Standard shovel tests consist of 30 centimeter (cm) diameter cylindrical holes excavated to the top of the sterile subsoil layer. Soils from each test are screened through 1/4-inch hardware cloth for the purpose of recovering any cultural material that may exist at that location. When cultural material is encountered, the material is sorted by provenience and placed into bags labeled with the pertinent excavation information before being transported to TerraX's laboratory. Delineations are performed at either 5- or 10-m intervals.

This investigation required 61 shovel tests attempted along seven shovel test transects. Of these tests, 50 were negative, and 11 were not excavated due to slope. A map has been produced showing the placement of the shovel tests along transects (Figure 6).

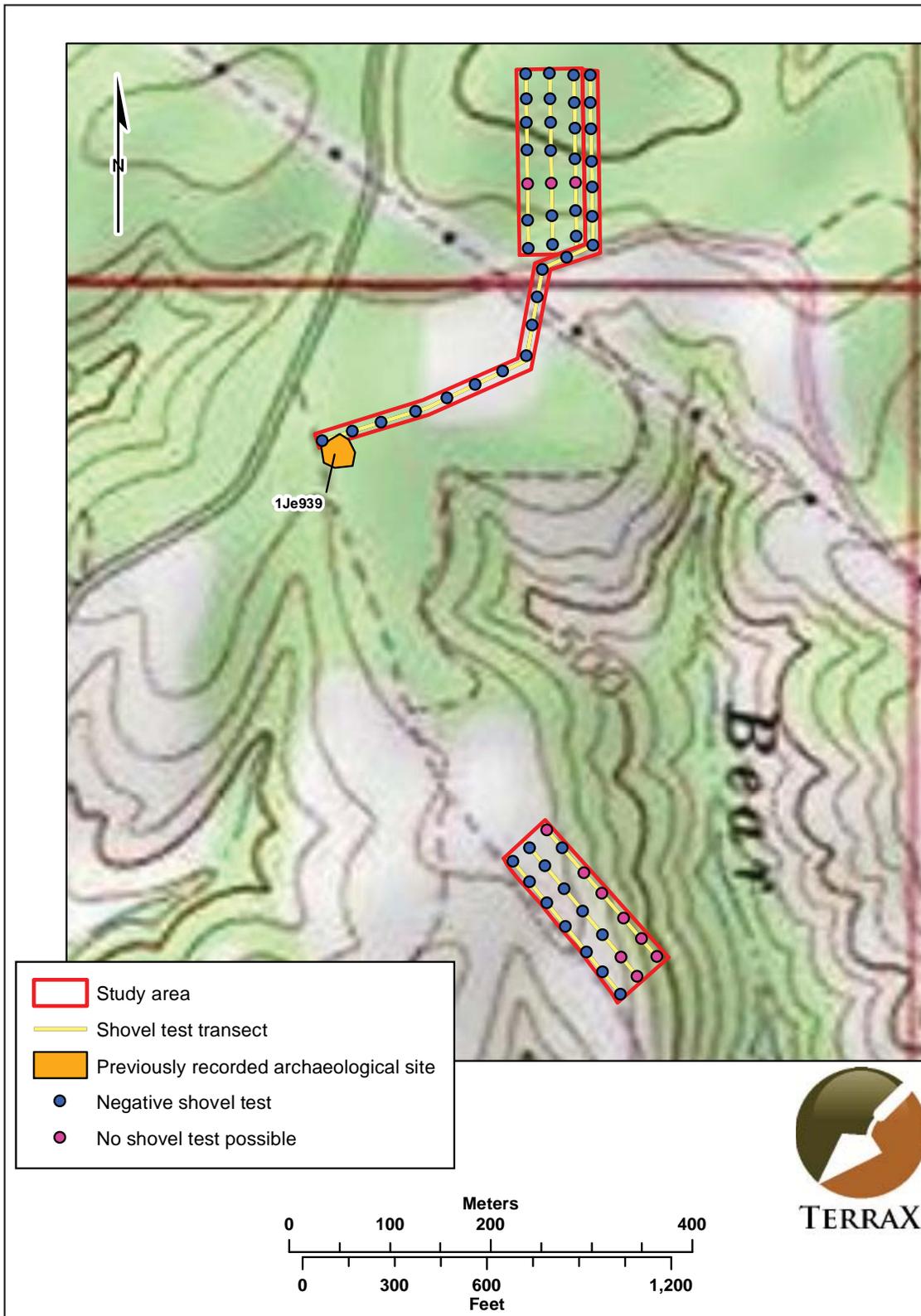


Figure 6. Map showing shovel tests along transects within project boundaries (based on the 1971 [photorevised 1982] Sylvan Springs, Alabama, USGS 7.5' series topographic quadrangle).

LABORATORY METHODS AND COLLECTION CURATION

Any cultural materials recovered during field projects are delivered to TerraX's laboratory in Tuscaloosa, Alabama for processing. Here, materials are sorted by provenience, cleaned, and analyzed. Along with the cultural material, all project records, photographs, and maps produced while conducting the investigation are transported for curation at the Office of Archaeological Research, Erskine Ramsay Curation Facility, University of Alabama Museums, Moundville, Alabama. A copy of the curation agreement can be found in Appendix D.

RESULTS OF FIELD INVESTIGATION

The survey area encompasses approximately 7.74 acres (3.1 hectares) in Jefferson County, Alabama. Subsurface testing and visual inspections failed to reveal any cultural resources. While previously recorded Site 1Je939 exists partially within the current project boundaries, only modern plastic and styrofoam were observed during shovel testing and visual inspections. This site was recommended as not eligible for the NRHP and will not be adversely impacted by the proposed Oak Grove Mine project.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TerraX, under contract with Perc Engineering Company, Inc. of Jasper, Alabama, performed the Phase I cultural resources survey of 7.74 acres in Jefferson County, Alabama in compliance with federal and state regulations. No significant cultural resources were encountered. Based on the findings of this investigation, no further cultural resources studies are recommended for the subject property.

REFERENCES

Alabama Historical Commission

- 2002 Alabama Historical Commission Policy for Archaeological Survey and Testing in Alabama. Alabama Historical Commission, Alabama State Historic Preservation Office (ALSHPO), Montgomery, Alabama. Adopted May 13, 1996, Revised October 1, 2002.
- 2015 Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage. Electronic document available online at <http://preserveala.org/alabamaregister.aspx>, accessed on August 18, 2015. Alabama Historical Commission, Montgomery, Alabama.

Lolley, Terry L.

- 2004 *Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment, Twelve Proposed Methane Gas Well Pads and an Exhaust Shaft & Substation, Jefferson County, Alabama*. Prepared by P. E. LaMoreaux and Associates for Perc Engineering, Jasper, Alabama. NADB# 4067061.

National Park Service

- 2015 National Register of Historic Places. Electronic document available online at <http://www.nps.gov/nr/research/>, accessed on August 19, 2015. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.

Office of Archaeological Research

- 2015a Alabama State Archaeological Site Files. The University of Alabama, Moundville, Alabama. Secure access website, accessed on August 18, 2015.
- 2015b National Archaeological Database Bibliography. The University of Alabama, Moundville, Alabama. Secure access website, accessed on August 18, 2015.

Robblee, Patrick P., Ralph B. Draughon, Jr., Thomas Fenn, Glenn Walter, and William P. Athens

- 1998 *Phase I Cultural Resources Survey and Inventory of the Proposed Southern Natural Gas Company 20 in O.D. Calera Branch Line Project, Jefferson County, Alabama*. Performed by R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates for Southern Natural Gas. NADB# 4061654.

Spivey, Jr., Lawson D.

- 1982 *Soil Survey of Jefferson County*. United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, in cooperation with the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service, the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee, the Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries, and the Alabama Surface Mining Commission.

The University of Alabama

- 2015 Physiographic Regions. Electronic document available online at <http://alabamamaps.ua.edu/contemporarymaps/alabama/physical/index.html>, accessed on August 18, 2015. Produced by the Department of Geography, University of Alabama.

Web Soil Survey

- 2015 Soil Survey Staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Electronic document, <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/>, accessed August 18, 2015.

APPENDIX A
CURATION AGREEMENT

University of Alabama Museums
Office of Archaeological Research

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
M U S E U M S

Oct. 9, 2014

Paul Jackson
TerraXplorations
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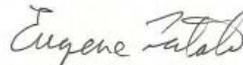
Dear Paul:

As per your request, this letter is to confirm our standing agreement with you to provide curation services to TerraXplorations on an as-needed basis. As you know, we are recognized by a variety of Federal agencies as a repository meeting the standards in 36 CFR Part 79 and have formal agreements to provide curation under these guidelines to agencies such as the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Soil Conservation Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tennessee Valley Authority, National Forest Service, etc.

Please be advised that once a year we must be notified of all reports in which we were named as the repository. Project collections must be submitted within one calendar year of completion. Small projects may be compiled for periodic submission. The AHC survey policy specifies which materials must be curated (Administrative Code of Alabama, Chapter 460-X-9). Renewal of this agreement is contingent upon compliance.

We appreciate this opportunity to be of assistance and look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,



Eugene M. Futato RPA
Deputy Director

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