STATE OF ALABAMA
ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
468 SOUTH PERRY STREET
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FRANK W. WHITE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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February 9, 2009

Heath Franks
PERC Engineering
P.O. Box 1712
Jasper, Alabama 35502

Re: AHC 09-0293
Bear Creek Mine Revision R-6
Franklin County, Alabama

Dear Mr. Franks:

Upon review of the cultural resource assessment conducted by P. E. LaMoreaux, we have determined that project activities will have no adverse effect on cultural resources eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Therefore, we concur with the proposed project activities.

However, should artifacts or archaeological features be encountered during project activities, work shall cease and our office shall be consulted immediately. Artifacts are objects made, used or modified by humans. These include but are not limited to arrowheads, broken pieces of pottery or glass, stone implements, metal fasteners or tools, etc. Archaeological features are stains in the soil that indicate disturbance by human activity. Some examples are postholes, building foundations, trash pits and even human burials. This stipulation shall be placed on the construction plans to insure contractors are aware of it.

We appreciate your efforts on this project. Should you have any questions, please contact Greg Rhinehart at (334) 230-2662. Please have the AHC tracking number referenced above available and include it with any correspondence.

Truly yours,

Elizabeth Ann Brown
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

EAB/GCR/gcr

A Phase I Cultural Resource Assessment For The Proposed Bear Creek Mine R-6 Area In Franklin County, Alabama

Prepared For:

PERC Engineering, Inc.
1606 Highway 78 West
Jasper, Alabama 35501

Prepared By:

PE LaMoreaux & Associates, Inc.
P.O. Box 12
Lauderdale, MS 39335

January 21, 2009

Terry L. Lolley, M.A., R.P.A.
Archaeologist

INTRODUCTION

In January 2009, P.E. LaMoreaux and Associates, Inc. (PELA) conducted a cultural resource survey of the proposed Birmingham Coal & Coke, Inc.'s, Bear Creek Mine R-6 area in southeastern Franklin County, Alabama. The purpose of this investigation was to locate and document any prehistoric or historic archaeological resources present, and to obtain sufficient data about those resources to allow PELA to make any recommendations for avoidance or mitigation of adverse impacts to any sites from the proposed activities.

The project area (Figure 1) consists of approximately 92 acres. Approximately 25 acres have been previously disturbed from surface mining. The survey was conducted in Sections 20 and 21 of Township 8 South, Range 10 West, and Section 7 of Township 18 South, Range 5 West on the Kinlock Spring (USGS 1967) topographic quadrangles. Graphics documenting the present state of the area with regard to terrain, general flora, and previous land-use are provided within this report (Figures 2 through 5).

Terry Lolley served as Principal Investigator for this project and was assisted in the field by Curt Spikes and Jimmy Mawk. The fieldwork was conducted on January 12 and 13, 2009.

LITERATURE AND DOCUMENT SEARCH

Neither the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nor the Alabama Register lists any historic properties within the project area. A review of the 1927 Franklin County soil map and the 1949 Kinlock Spring topographic quadrangle indicated one structure within the project area at those times. The structure was mapped at the end of a road along the Section 20 and 21 line. The results of the field reconnaissance indicated that this structure no longer exists.

The primary source of information for the research was the Alabama State Archaeological Site Files (ASASF) maintained at the University of Alabama's Office of Archaeological Research at the Moundville Archaeological Park, Moundville, Alabama. An examination of the site file maps and site forms indicated no previously recorded sites within the project area.

Several surveys have been performed in the vicinity of the current project area (Figure 1). Four sites are located outside of the project area (Figure 1). Site 1Fr452 was recorded as a light density lithic deposit at the southern end of a ridge toe. Approximately 32 flakes, one partial projectile point base, and one complete projectile point were recovered from four positive shovel tests. Richard Yarnell, University of Alabama, (Oakley 1976) recorded site 1Fr611. The site is marked by a series of high, narrow overhangs that border Little Dice Branch. This particular shelter is approximately sixty-one meters (m) long, eighteen meters high, but only about three to four meters from drip line to rear wall. The site was probably used only for brief camps. One stemmed point was recovered from the shelter. Site 1Fr687 was recorded (Lolley 2002) as a small lithic scatter overlooking Little Dice Branch. These three sites were considered ineligible for the NRHP. Site 1Fr686 was recorded (Lolley 2002) as a rock shelter approximately 30 m wide and 4.5 m high. The maximum distance from the dripline to the rear wall is about four meters. Although previously vandalized, the site was recommended as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

FIELD METHODS

The project area lies within the Pottsville formation of the Warrior Basin physiographic district. Elevation for the project area ranges from 920 to 950 feet above mean sea level. The western and northern portions of the project area have been previously surface mined (Figure 1).

The Franklin County Soil Survey of 1965 indicates two soil associations within the current project area (Sherard, et al. 1965). The upland portion of the project area consists of ***Albertville fine sandy loam***, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded. The surface layer may range from 0-10 and 0-16 centimeters of brown fine sandy loam, overlying yellowish-brown clayey subsoil (Sherard, et al. 1965). The sloping wooded portions of the project area consist of ***Rock land***, ***sandstone***.

The survey was conducted in accordance with procedural standards set by the Alabama Historical Commission. Land coverage requirements were achieved by physically walking and visually examining the project area. Any roads and areas of ground surface exposure were visually examined for cultural material.

A standard 30 meter interval transect pattern was employed where previous ground disturbance or slope did not preclude excavation (Figure 1). Shovel tests were excavated at 30 meter intervals along transects. Shovel tests consisted of standard 30 centimeter (cm) diameter cylindrical holes excavated to the top of the underlying subsoil. Shovel test soils were passed through a 1/4" wire mesh screen to recover any cultural materials, which may have been present. Shovel test locations labeled “no test performed’ were done so due to exposed subsoil, rock, or other disturbance.

The use of a handheld GPS and digital topographic maps aided in transect and shovel test mapping. The device has a stated accuracy between 3 to 5 meters. A total of 93 transect shovel tests were excavated in the project area. An additional six shovel tests were labeled as “no test performed.”

LABORATORY METHODS AND COLLECTION CURATION

All project records and cultural material collected from cultural resource surveys are periodically transported for curation at the Office of Archaeological Research, Erskine Ramsay Archaeological Repository, at the University of Alabama Museums, Moundville.

SURVEY RESULTS AND EVALUATION

The survey was initiated in the northern portion west of Highway 243 in a formerly clear area now wooded (Figures 1 and 2). Transects were traversed southward across the location of a former road. Transects continued southward on moderate slope to an abandoned dirt road.

Transects were then traversed in a north to south direction on a small upland between several dirt road locations. The slope became steeper as transects progressed to the southern edge of this portion of the project area (Figure 3)

The survey continued across a rather broad plateau that sloped steeply to the north, west, and south. A previously mined area with high walls and ponds was present to the south and west (Figures 1 and 4). Portions of this

upland plateau had been cleared in the past and developed into green fields (Figure 5). Transects were generally oriented east to west with the exception of transects that took advantage of two ridge fingers to the north and south.

Representative shovel tests on the upland consisted of 0-3 centimeters of organic material, 3-15 centimeters of brown (10YR5/3) sandy loam, and 15+ centimeters of brownish-yellow (10YR6/6) silty clay loam subsoil.

Two mapped structure locations (Figure 1) just outside the southern project area were examined. Standing structures were no longer present at these locations.

Where possible, the slopes were examined for indication of rock shelters. No suitable formations were observed. More probable rock shelter locations would be to the west outside of the project area along Little Dice Creek.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This survey was conducted by P.E. LaMoreaux & Associates, Inc. (PELA) for Birmingham Coal & Coke, Inc. through PERC Engineering Co., Inc. in compliance with Federal and State regulations. No sites were recorded through the course of the field investigation. It is PELA's opinion that the proposed project will not impact any cultural resources that are eligible or potentially eligible for the NRHP.

REFERENCES

Lolley, Terry L.
2002 *Phase I Archaeological Survey, Proposed Bear Creek Mine, Franklin County, Alabama*. P.E. LaMoreaux & Associates, Inc., Tuscaloosa.

Oakley, Carey
1976 *Interim Report Concerning the Intensive Survey and Testing of the Upper Bear Creek Reservoir*. University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Research.

Sherard, Hoyt, R.A. Young, J.P. Bryant, Sam J. Smith, and James A. Gibbs
1965 *Soil Survey of Franklin County, Alabama*, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington.

United States Department of Agriculture
1927 Franklin County Soil Map.

United States Geological Survey
1949 Kinlock Spring 7.5 Minute Topographic Quadrangle.
1967 Kinlock Spring 7.5 Minute Topographic Quadrangle.

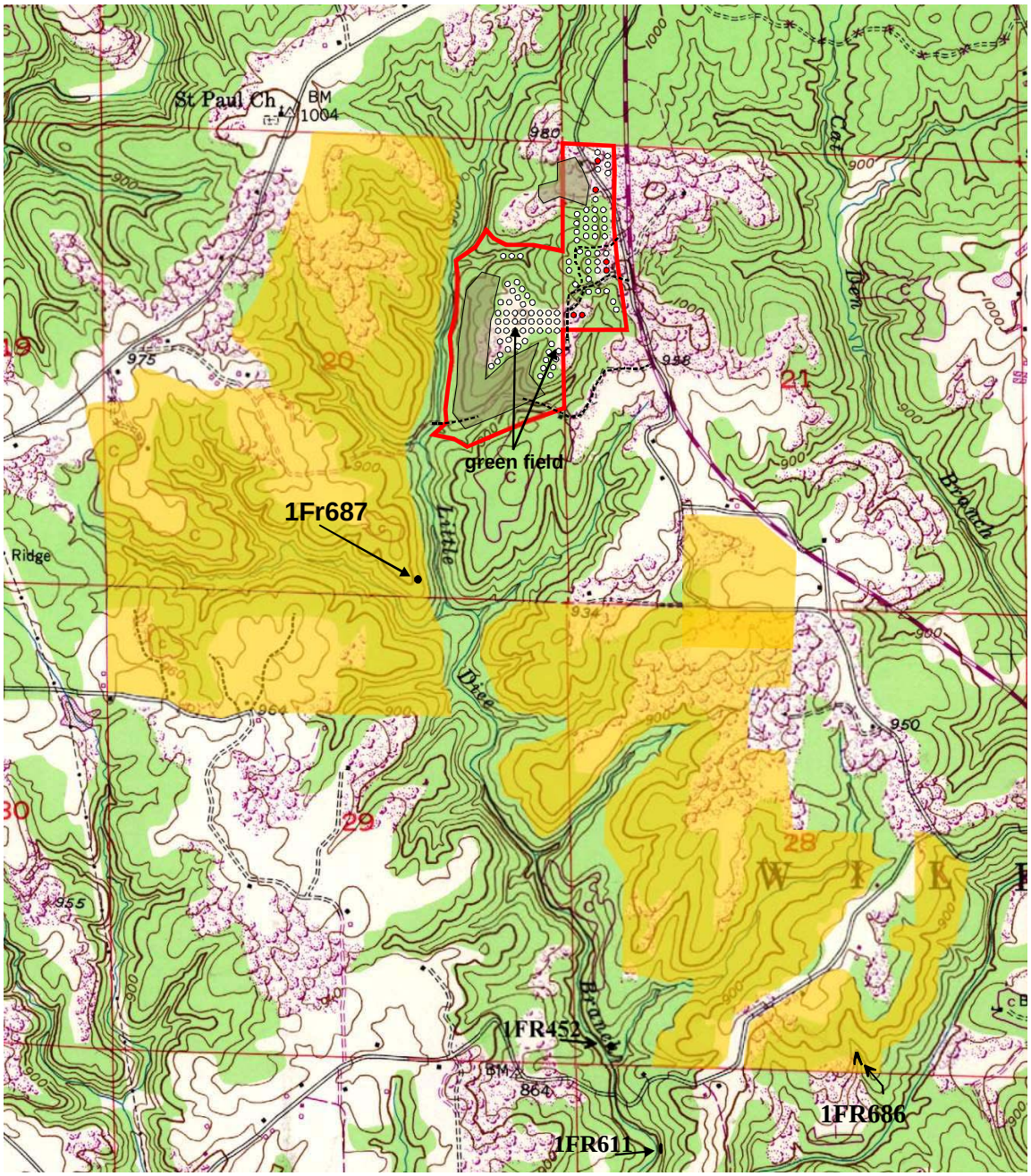

Figure 1. Project Area, Survey Coverage, and Site Locations (Kinlock Springs 1967 USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle).

- Project Area
- Road
- Negative Shovel Test
- No Test Performed
- Previously Surveyed
- Previously Surface Mined

N

0 500 meters

0 2000 feet

Figure 2. View of the Northern Project Area Facing South.

Figure 3. View of the General Terrain in the Southeastern Project Area.

Figure 4. View of Previously Mining in the Western Project Area.

Figure 5. Upland Green Field Facing North.