MRS CONSULTANTS, LLC.

Cultural Resource Specialists Archaeologists NHPA Section 106 Consultants

A Phase I Cultural Resources Survey Assessment of the Proposed Blue Creek Mine 1 Revision 9 Project in Wiley, Fayette and Tuscaloosa Counties, Alabama

By Erinn E. Townsend

Beth A. Ryba
Principal Investigator

PERFORMED BY:

MRS Consultants, LLC.

P.O. Box 3146

Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35403

PERFORMED FOR:
McGehee Engineering Corporation
P.O. Box 3431
Jasper, AL 35502

October 11, 2023

A PHASE I CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY ASSESSMENT ‘ OF THE PROPOSED BLUE CREEK MINE 1 REVISION 9 PROJECT IN WILEY, FAYETTE AND TUSCALOOSA COUNTIES, ALABAMA

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Project Information:
Project Type: Mine revision
Survey Size: 244 acres (97.7 hectares)
Township: 16S, 17S **Range:** 9W
Date of Survey: September 6-8, 2023 & September 12, 2023

Locational Data:
County/State: Fayette County, AL & Tuscaloosa County, AL
Topographic Map: Wiley, AL
Section: 1, 2, 27, 34 & 35
Topographic Association: Floodplain and Hills

INTRODUCTION

MRS Consultants, LLC was contracted by McGehee Engineering Corp. to perform a cultural resources assessment for a proposed mine project for the Blue Creek Mine 1 Revision 9 Project in Wiley in Fayette and Tuscaloosa counties, Alabama. All phases of research comply with requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as well as guidelines established by the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC).

Cultural Resource Specialist, Linda A. Hollis conducted background research to determine the existence of previously recorded archaeological sites, cemeteries, historic structures, and historic properties listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). A pedestrian reconnaissance survey was conducted at the project area to determine the existence of archaeological sites, cemeteries, and historic structures within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Cultural Resources Specialist, Jeffery M. Meyer and Linda Hollis performed the archaeological field survey between September 6 and September 12, 2023. Beth A. Ryba serves as the Principal Investigator.

The survey area includes approximately 244 acres (97.7 hectares) in Sections 1, 2, 27, 34 & 35, Township 16S, 17S Range 9W and can be viewed on the USGS 7.5' Wiley, Alabama topographic quadrangle (Figure 1). Elevations within the survey area range between approximately 510 ft to 667 ft AMSL. The APE is restricted to the areas adjacent to the proposed mine revision area.

This report details the cultural resource studies conducted for the proposed project. Specific data for the project area are provided throughout the report, including general project and locational data, information pertaining to the background research, and archaeological field data for the survey area. Recommendations concerning the proposed project conclude the report.

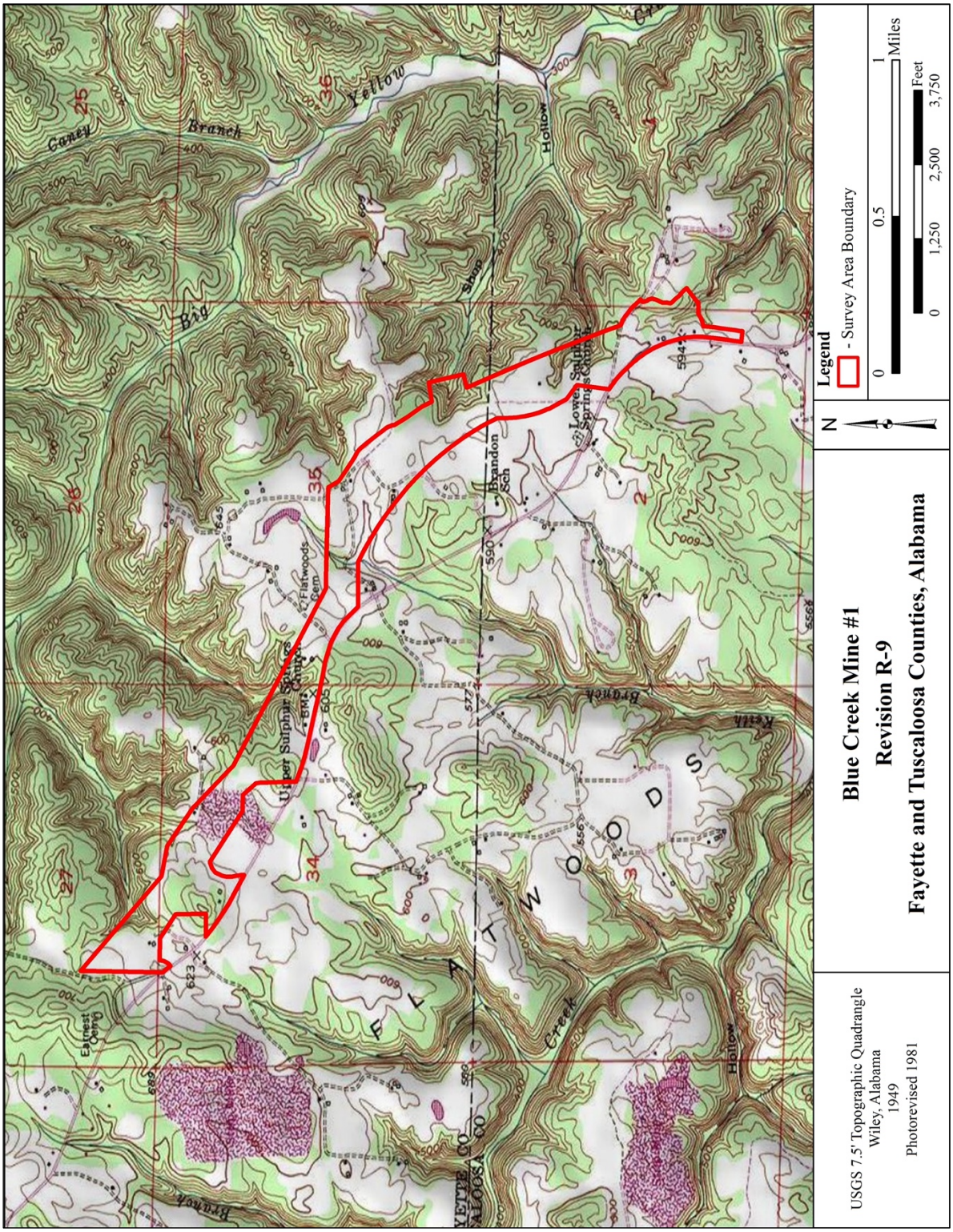


Figure 1. USGS 7.5' Wiley, AL Topographic Quadrangle Showing the Survey Area.

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Background research was conducted prior to the survey to identify any known cultural resources. This research also served to identify the potential for such resources. Several sources were referenced during the research, including the *Alabama Online Cultural Resources Database* (AOCRD) and *Phase I Surveys Module* maintained by the University of Alabama Office of Archaeological Research, the *National Register of Historic Places* (NRHP), the *National Historic Landmarks* (NHL), the *Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage* (ARLH). Historical maps at the *Historical Map Archive* website by the University of Alabama and *The National Map: Historical Topographic Map Collection* website at the U.S. Geological Service were also referenced.

Alabama Online Cultural Resources Database: The AOCRD Alabama State Site File (ASSF) was referenced for previously recorded archaeological sites. Five archaeological sites were previously recorded within one mile of the survey area.

Site 1Tu364 was recorded in 1978 by Charles Moorehead, University of Alabama, University, Alabama during a cultural resources survey of federal mineral lands in North Central Alabama. Little information is provided in the site file other than it's a prehistoric site of unknown aboriginal origin. The site file states that the site is not considered eligible for the NRHP.

References on file: "*Cultural Resources Survey of Federal Mineral Lands in North Central Alabama*", by Charles W. Moorehead, Benjamin I. Coblentz, and Hope N. Gillespie, University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Research, Report of Investigations 7, 1978.

Site 1Tu369 was recorded by Carlos Solis and Nickey Tew, University of Alabama. The site is a small lithic scatter discovered at the terminal point of a ridge spur overlooking Keith Branch. The survey crew was informed of the site by several construction workers. One reported finding a milling stone and a projectile point at the site.

References on file: "*Cultural Resources Survey of Federal Mineral Lands in North Central Alabama*", by Charles W. Moorehead, Benjamin I. Coblentz, and Hope N. Gillespie, University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Research, Report of Investigations 7, 1978.

Site 1Tu370 was recorded by Carlos Solis, John Blitz, Nickey Tew, and Joni Keyser, University of Alabama. The site is located at the edge of a ridge bluff overlooking Little Yellow Creek. The area currently is in pasture. All artifacts were collected from a road bed which skirts the edge of the bluff.

References on file: "*Cultural Resources Survey of Federal Mineral Lands in North Central Alabama*", by Charles W. Moorehead, Benjamin I. Coblentz, and Hope N. Gillespie, University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Research, Report of Investigations 7, 1978.

Site 1Tu409 was recorded by Lawrence Alexander, University of Alabama. The site consists of historic house site located on a ridge above the Yellow Creek drainage. An east to west paved road is located 20 m north of the chimney foundation, an unimproved logging road has impacted its edge. The site is approximately 15 m in diameter and consists of fallen sandstone blocks from the

chimney and the house foundation. No artifacts were recovered during the field investigations. The site is considered ineligible for listing in the NRHP.

References on file: "*Letter Report: Cultural Resources Assessment of Drill Site Locations, Tuscaloosa, Fayette, and Walker Counties, Alabama*", by Lawrence S. Alexander, University of Alabama, Office of Archaeological Research, 1980 -- "*Additional Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey of the Proposed Yellow Creek Mining Project near the Whitson Community, North Tuscaloosa County, Alabama*", by Jeffery M. Meyer, University of Alabama, Alabama Museum of Natural History, Division of Archaeology, 1992 -- "*A Cultural Resources Survey of a Proposed Pipeline Corridor for the North Yellow Creek Mining Project near the Community of Whitson, North Tuscaloosa County, Alabama*", by Jeffery M. Meyer, University of Alabama, Alabama Museum of Natural History, Division of Archaeology, 1992 -- "*A Phase I Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey for the Proposed Blue Creek Energy Mine No. 1 near Whitson, North Tuscaloosa County, Alabama*", by Brandon S. Thompson, Office of Archaeological Research, University of Alabama Museums, 2011.

Site 1Tu647 was recorded by Jeffery Meyer, University of Alabama. This is a small family homestead located on a second terrace on the south bank of Little Yellow Creek. The site is comprised of two to three structures (chimney fall). An old roadbed is visible to the west of the site. A possible family cemetery of seven unmarked graves or piles of dirt and rock (east-west oriented) are is located between two seeps. A rock wall/fence line is located north of the possible cemetery.

References on file: "*Additional Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey of the Proposed Yellow Creek Mining Project near the Whitson Community, North Tuscaloosa County, Alabama*", by Jeffery M. Meyer, University of Alabama, Alabama Museum of Natural History, Division of Archaeology, 1992.

Phase I Surveys: The on-line GIS module was referenced for previous archaeological surveys in the vicinity of the study area (Figure 3). Seven Phase I surveys have been conducted within one mile of the project. Table 1 below summarizes the previously conducted surveys in the general area.

National Register of Historic Places: No NRHP properties are listed in or near the survey area.

Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage: No ARLH properties are listed in or near the survey area.

Alabama Historical Commission - Historic Preservation Map: Five structures are shown in the APE of the project; however, little information is provided and there are no available structure forms. Figure 2 illustrates the locations of the architectural survey properties.

TU_800S585
Property Name: Montgomery, Roy/ Montgomery
Street Address: on Berry Hwy at Fayette County line
TU_800S586
Property Name: Montgomery, Roy/ Montgomery
Street Address: on Berry Hwy at Fayette County line
TU_800S587
Property Name: Morris, Lula (Log)
Street Address: Flatwoods Community 1/8 miles W of Old Birmingham Road (near Fayette County line)
TU_800S588
Property Name: Morris, Lula
Street Address: Flatwoods Community 1/8 miles W of Old Birmingham Road (near Fayette County line)
TU_800S589
Property Name: Parker, William
Street Address: on Berry Hwy at Fayette County line

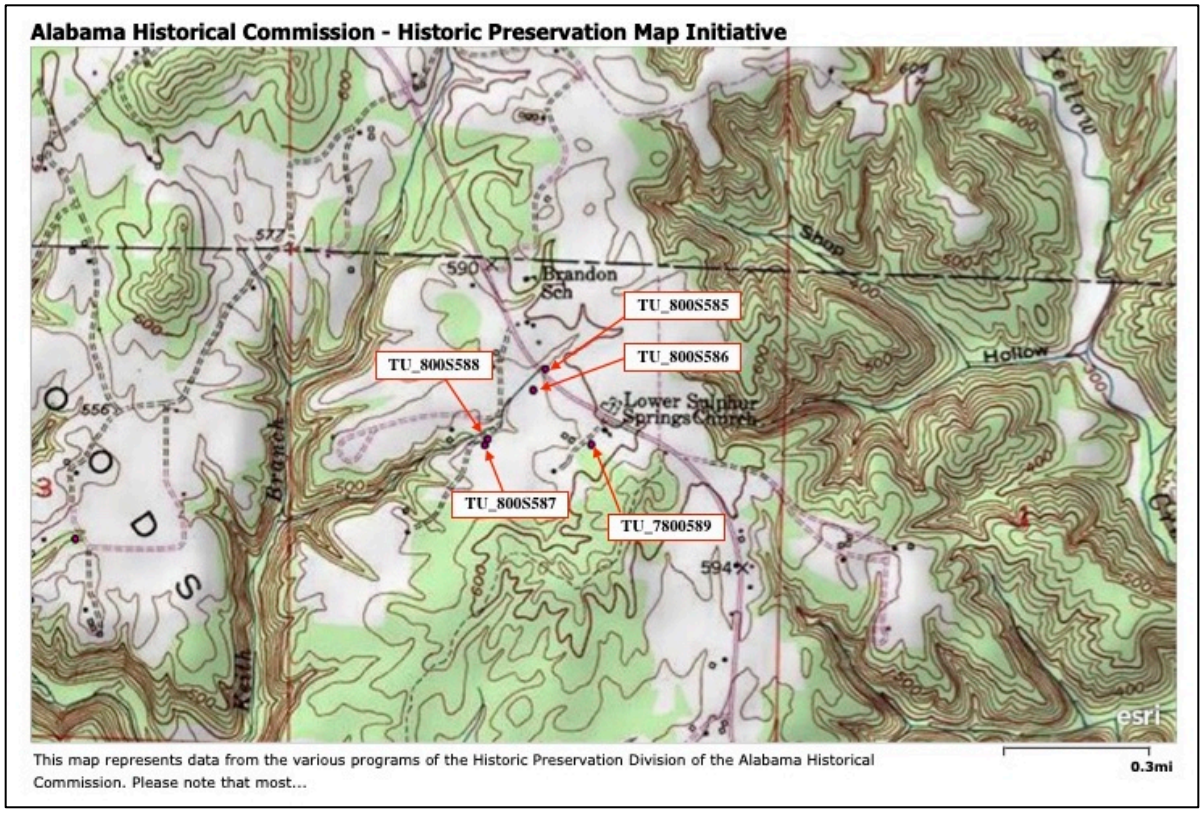


Figure 2. View of the AHC Historic Preservation Map Showing the Architectural Survey Properties.

Alabama Historic Cemetery Register: No cemeteries listed on the AHCR exist within or near the survey area. There is one cemetery noted within the APE; Upper Flatwood Cemetery but is not listed on the AHCR.

Historical Map Archive: Several maps were referenced at the University of Alabama's on-line map library; including early historical imagery on the University of Alabama's on-line website and Google Earth. Imagery taken in 2022 shows most of the project area as eroded with some foliage, planted pines/mixed hardwoods, roadways, and structures/residential areas (Figure 4). Aerial images from 1999 to 2022 show various stages of erosion in the project area. A topographic map from 1985 was reviewed for any structures that might be found as archaeological resources. Structures that could be noted are no longer standing. No communities or cultural features are noted in the mostly sloped upland survey area.

Table 1. Previous Phase I Surveys within the Project Area.

Author	Year	Recorded Sites	Description
Alexander	1979	-	Cultural Resource Survey of 23 Drill Site Locations in Fayette, Marion, Tuscaloosa, and Walker Counties
Alexander	1983	1Tu396	A Cultural Resource Reconnaissance of a Coal Mining Area in Northern Tuscaloosa and Fayette Counties, Alabama
Meyer	1992	1Tu647	Additional Cultural Resource Reconnaissance Survey of the Proposed Yellow Creek Mining Project near the Whitson Community, North Tuscaloosa County, Alabama
Oakley	1991	-	An Archaeological Survey of the Proposed Pittsburg and Midway Railroad Spur Located Between the Communities of Berry and Whitson in Northern Tuscaloosa and Southeastern Fayette Counties, Alabama
Patterson	1991	-	A Cultural Resource Assessment of the Proposed Pittsburg and Midway Coal Mining Company Yellow Creek Project, Part A: Facilities Areas
Thompson	2011	Revisited: 1Tu409, 1Tu646, 1Tu660, 1Tu661, 1Tu670	A Phase I Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey for the Proposed Blue Creek Energy Mine No. 1 near Whitson, North Tuscaloosa County, Alabama
Watkins	2012	-	A Phase I Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey at the Proposed Blue Creek Energy Mine No. 1 for a Power Transmission Line in Tuscaloosa and Walker Counties, Alabama-

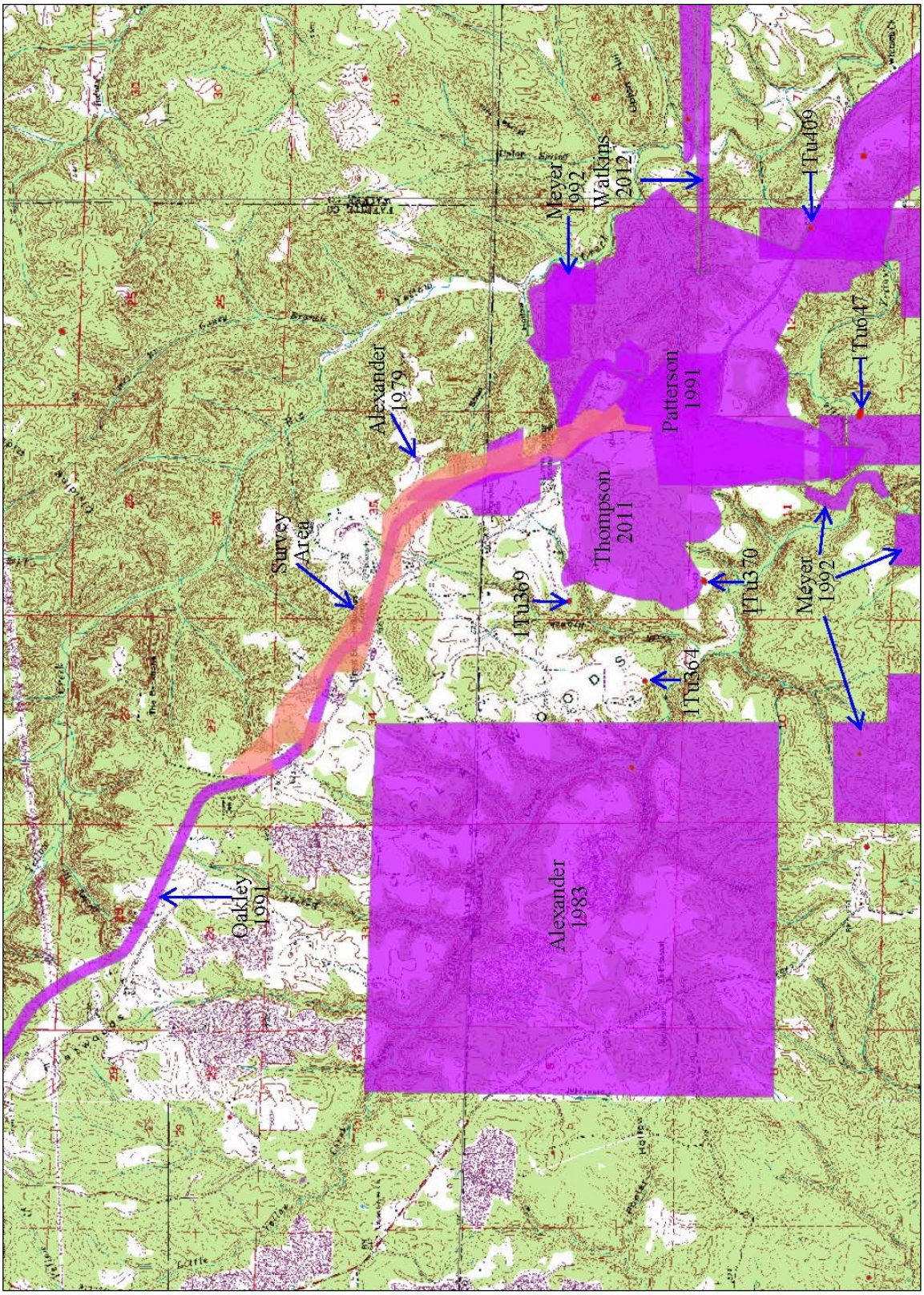


Figure 3. Topographic Map Showing the Previous Surveys within One Mile of Survey Area.

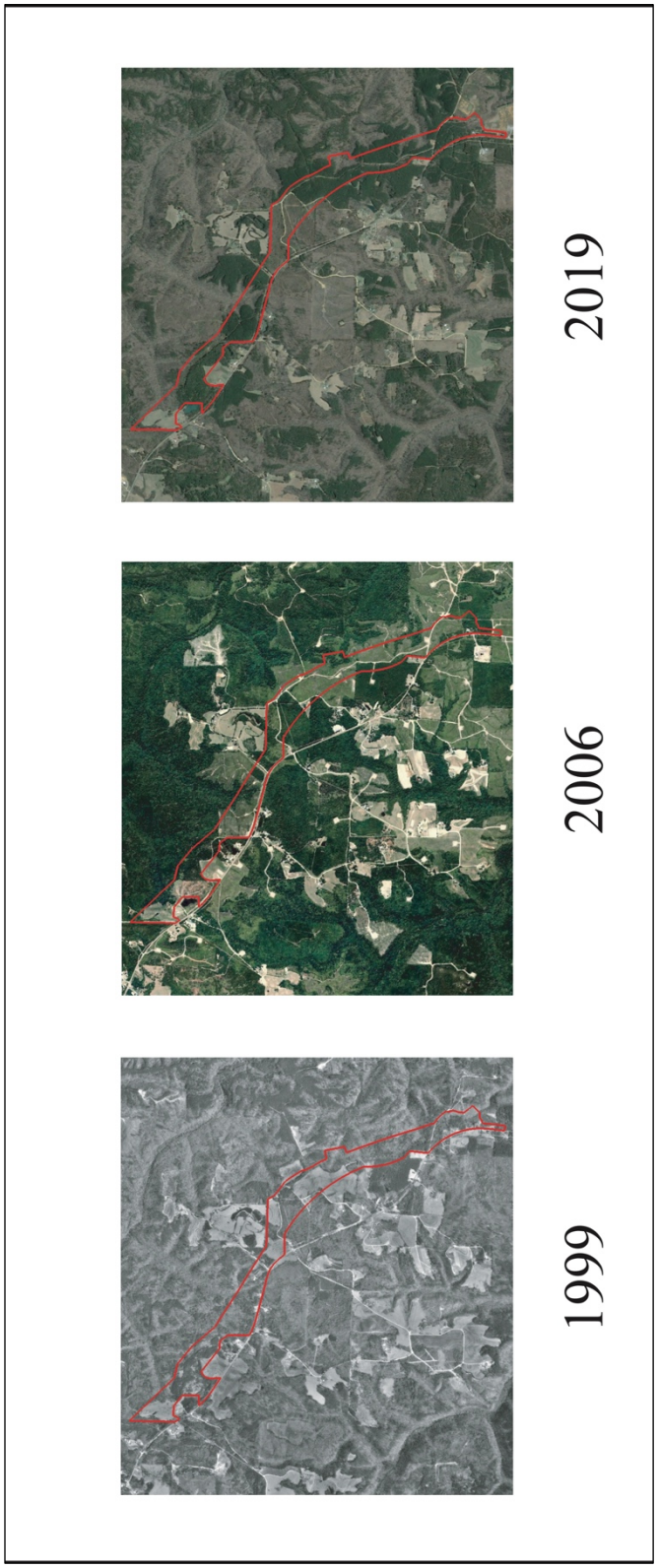


Figure 4. Aerial and Satellite Images Showing Changes to the Survey Area.

NRCS Soil Data: The NRCS Web Soil Survey (http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov) was referenced for soils within the survey area (NRCS 2023). Twelve soil types are present at the survey area and information is provided below:

Table 2. Soil Types within the Project Area.

Soil Type	Parent Material	Landform	Drainage Class	Typical Profile
EcC3- Enders clay loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes, severely eroded	Loamy and clayey residuum weathered from shale	Hills	Well Drained	H1 - 0 to 2 inches: clay loam H2 - 2 to 5 inches: fine sandy loam H3 - 5 to 8 inches: clay loam H4 - 8 to 39 inches: silty clay H5 - 39 to 46 inches: channery silty clay H6 - 46 to 80 inches: weathered bedrock
EdB2- Enders loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded	Loamy and clayey residuum weathered from shale	Ridges	Well drained	H1 - 0 to 2 inches: loam H2 - 2 to 5 inches: fine sandy loam H3 - 5 to 8 inches: clay loam H4 - 8 to 39 inches: silty clay H5 - 39 to 46 inches: channery silty clay H6 - 46 to 80 inches: weathered bedrock
EdC- Enders loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes	Loamy and clayey residuum weathered from shale	Hills	Well Drained	H1 - 0 to 2 inches: loam H2 - 2 to 5 inches: fine sandy loam H3 - 5 to 8 inches: clay loam H4 - 8 to 39 inches: silty clay H5 - 39 to 46 inches: channery silty clay H6 - 46 to 80 inches: weathered bedrock
EdC2- Enders loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes, eroded	Loamy and clayey residuum weathered from shale	Hills	Well drained	H1 - 0 to 2 inches: loam H2 - 2 to 5 inches: fine sandy loam H3 - 5 to 8 inches: clay loam H4 - 8 to 39 inches: silty clay H5 - 39 to 46 inches: channery silty clay H6 - 46 to 80 inches: weathered bedrock

EdD- Enders loam, 10 to 15 percent slopes	Loamy and clayey residuum weathered from shale	Hills	Well Drained	H1 - 0 to 2 inches: loam H2 - 2 to 5 inches: fine sandy loam H3 - 5 to 8 inches: clay loam H4 - 8 to 39 inches: silty clay H5 - 39 to 46 inches: channery silty clay H6 - 46 to 80 inches: weathered bedrock
MoC3- Montevallo channery silt loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes, severely eroded	Loamy residuum weathered from shale	Hills	Well drained	A - 0 to 2 inches: channery silt loam Bw - 2 to 16 inches: extremely channery silt loam Cr - 16 to 80 inches: bedrock
MoE3- Montevallo channery silt loam, 15 to 50 percent slopes, severely eroded	Loamy residuum weathered from shale	Hills	Well Drained	A - 0 to 2 inches: channery silt loam Bw - 2 to 16 inches: extremely channery silt loam Cr - 16 to 80 inches: bedrock
TmB2- Townley loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded	Clayey residuum weathered from shale	Ridges	Well drained	H1 - 0 to 6 inches: loam H2 - 6 to 22 inches: silty clay H3 - 22 to 80 inches: weathered bedrock
TmD2- Townley loam, 10 to 15 percent slopes, eroded	Clayey residuum weathered from shale	High Hills	Well Drained	H1 - 0 to 6 inches: loam H2 - 6 to 22 inches: silty clay H3 - 22 to 80 inches: weathered bedrock
TnC3- Townley silty clay loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes, severely eroded	Clayey residuum weathered from shale	Hills	Well drained	H1 - 0 to 6 inches: silty clay loam H2 - 6 to 22 inches: silty clay H3 - 22 to 80 inches: weathered bedrock
22- Montevallo-Nauvoo association, 10 to 45 percent slopes	Loamy residuum weathered from shale and siltstone	Hillslopes	Well Drained	A - 0 to 7 inches: channery loam B - 7 to 12 inches: very channery silt loam Cr - 12 to 80 inches: bedrock
23- Nauvoo fine sandy loam, 4 to 10 percent slopes	Loamy residuum weathered from sandstone and shale	Ridges	Well Drained	A - 0 to 17 inches: fine sandy loam B - 17 to 35 inches: loam BC - 35 to 41 inches: sandy clay loam Cr - 41 to 80 inches: bedrock

FIELD METHODS

Prior to the survey, the survey area was evaluated for its probability to contain archaeological sites. Soil classification, slope and topography, and nearby water sources are factors in determining site probability. The survey area is characterized by moderate to steep sloping terrain that consists of immature to mature pine trees, mixed hardwoods, green fields, erosional gullies, and drainages. Past disturbances associated with existing access roads, gas well, push piles, a gas/pipeline, and moderate to severe erosion have reduced any probability that intact cultural deposits exist. Therefore, the property is assessed as having a low to moderate probability for the occurrence of significant archaeological resources. Figures 5 and 6 provide satellite images of the survey area with environmental conditions noted. Figures 7 and 8 provide topographic maps showing the survey area, environmental conditions, and shovel test locations. Photographs taken during the field investigations are found at the end of the report in Figures 11-28.

The field survey conducted for the proposed mine revision implemented standard archaeological survey techniques. A pedestrian reconnaissance was conducted using subsurface shovel tests as well as visual inspection of exposed ground surfaces. The proposed mine revision includes 244 acres occupying floodplain and hills landform with sloped and eroded terrain. Immature to mature pine trees and mixed hardwoods cover much of the project area while the ground cover is consistent of pasture grass and erosion due to steep slope or drainage. Surface visibility varied from poor to excellent.

Any exposed ground surfaces in the survey area were closely inspected for cultural materials, aboveground features, structural remains, etc. In addition to the surface investigations, a subjective shovel testing program was conducted in order to identify cultural material as well as ascertain the stratigraphic integrity of the project areas. Shovel tests were excavated in the survey area taking into consideration the topography, soil conditions, and previous disturbances. Each shovel test measured approximately 30 cm to 40 cm in diameter and was excavated into subsoil. Soils were sifted within a 6 mm mesh screen to search for cultural materials. A total of 226 shovel tests were excavated within the survey area. Soil profiles are consistent throughout the area and tests revealed approximately 0 cm to 18 cm of light/medium grayish brown sandy loam clay that is underlain by yellowish red sandy clay subsoil. For each shovel test, the soil types and stratigraphic profile were recorded. Shovel test locations are shown on Figures 7 and 8. Past disturbances and moderate to severe erosion have reduced any probability that intact cultural deposits exist. A small number of historic materials were discovered during the surface investigations and subsurface testing. Recorded as 1Fa178, a sketch map and photograph of the site are provided in Figures 9 and 10.

Finally, the APE for the project was assessed for indirect effect. No historic architectural resources are identified in the survey area or the surrounding APE for indirect effect. As such, the proposed undertaking would have no effect upon any historic resources for indirect effect. Photographs were also taken during the survey to document the environmental conditions, disturbances, and cultural resources. Any artifacts recovered during the investigation were bagged by provenience, and returned to the laboratory for analysis. The artifacts were washed, categorized, analyzed, and documented. Each discovered resource (archaeological sites, cemeteries, and historic structures) was evaluated to a preliminary level necessary for determining its potential eligibility for inclusion on the NRHP.

Standard information was derived for each archaeological site, i.e. GPS coordinates, dimensions, vertical depth, positive/negative shovel tests, environmental context, photographs, sketch maps, etc.

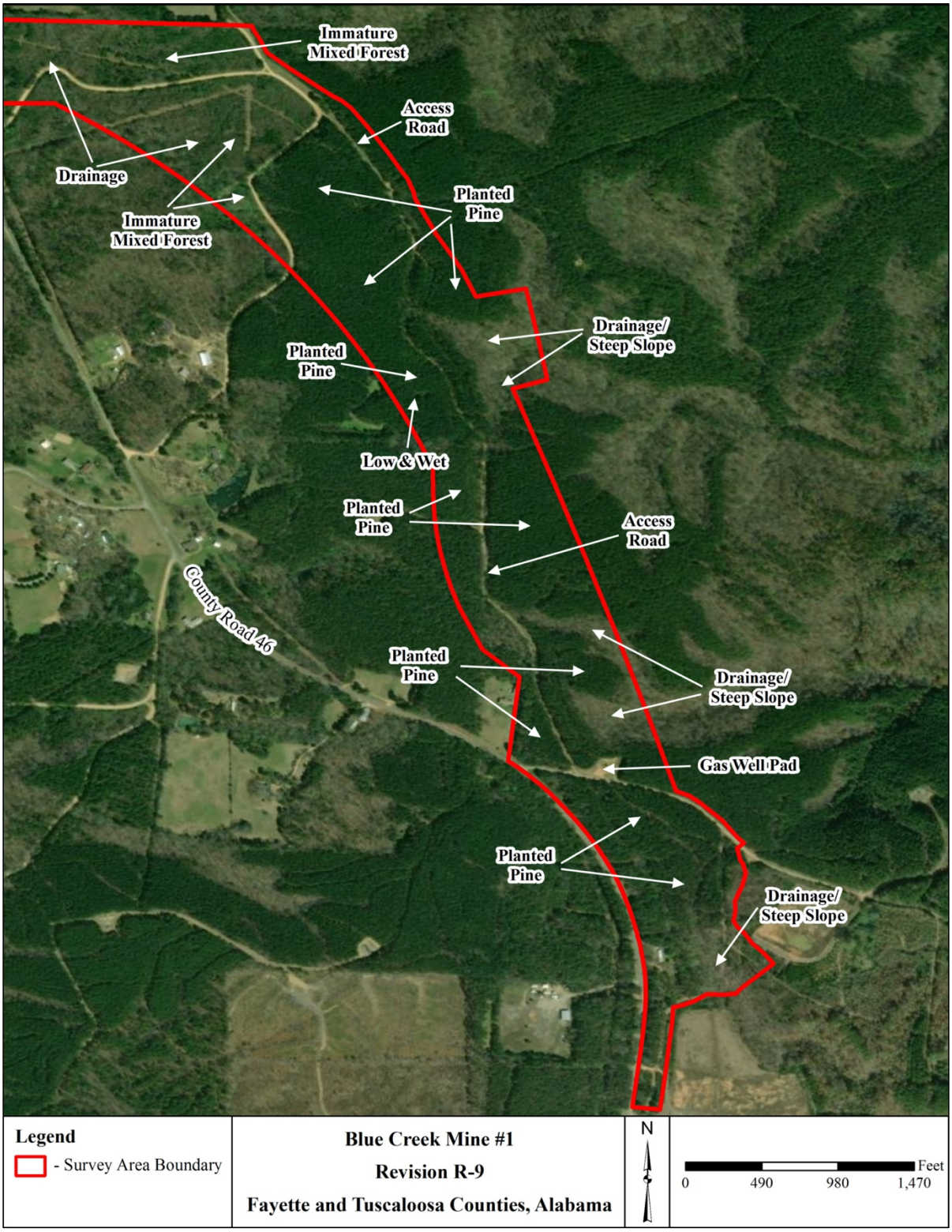


Figure 5. Satellite Imagery Showing the Eastern Portion of the Survey Area.

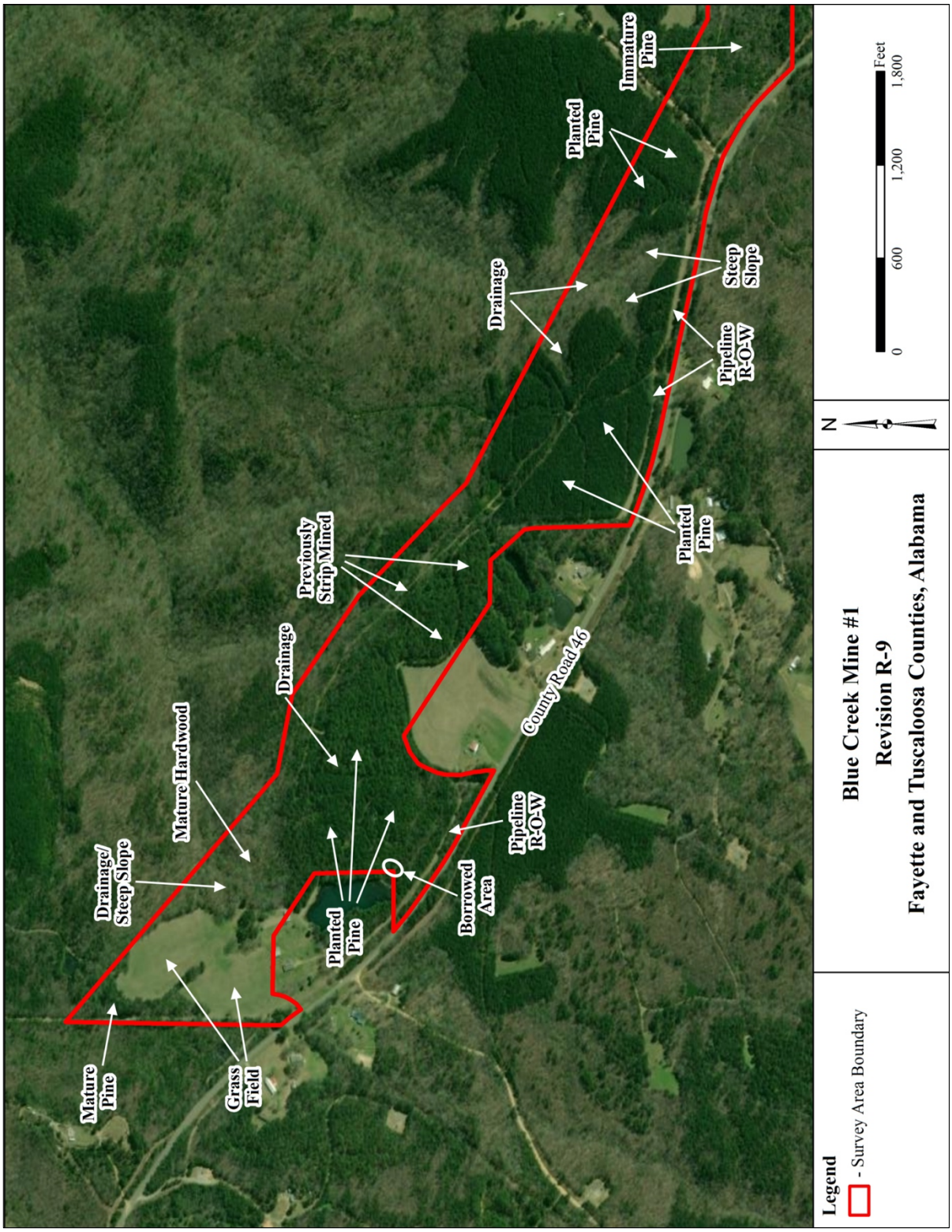


Figure 6. Satellite Imagery Showing the Western Portion of the Survey Area.

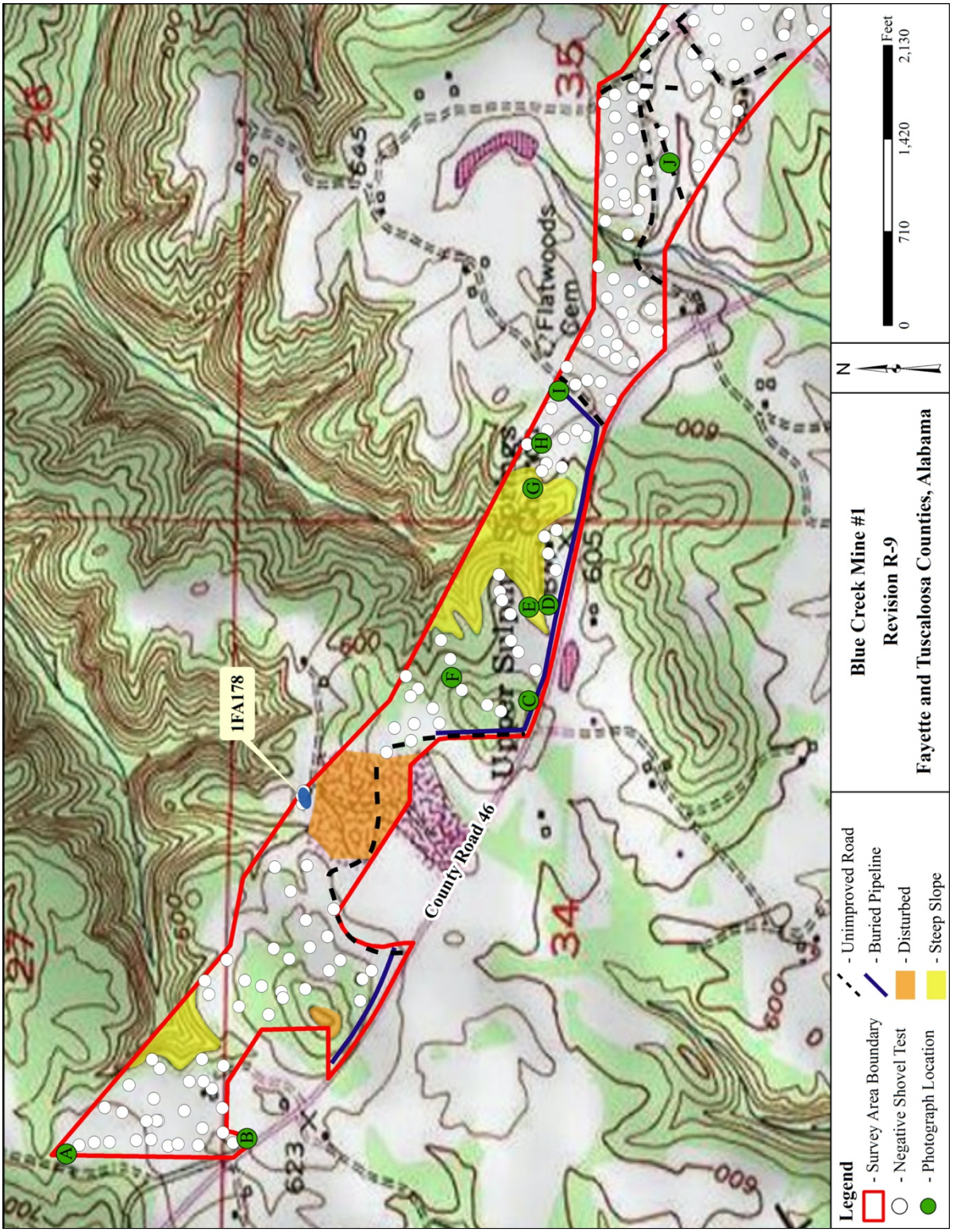


Figure 7. Map of the Western Portion of Survey Area Showing the General Condition of the Project Area, Locations of Shovel Tests, and Photograph Locations.

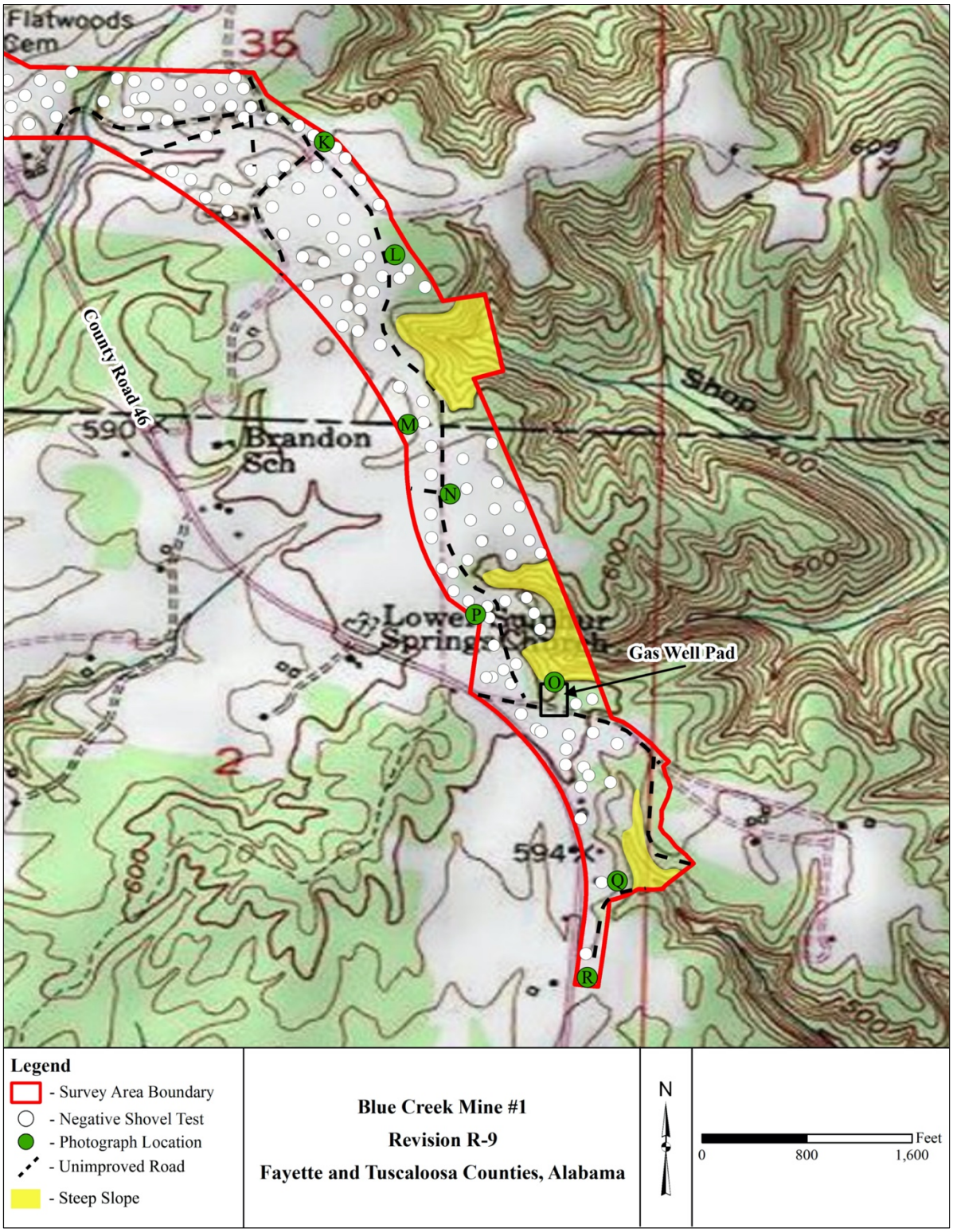


Figure 8. Map of the Eastern Portion of Survey Area Showing the General Condition of the Project Area, Locations of Shovel Tests, and Photograph Locations.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

One archaeological site was discovered in the APE during the investigation of the proposed mine revision: Site 1Fa178. The nonaboriginal historic artifact scatter is not considered eligible for the NRHP. The potential for the occurrence of intact cultural deposits to exist within the project boundary is reduced due to steeply sloping terrain and previous disturbances. In addition, no historic standing structures were located within the APE during the investigation that might be affected by the proposed undertaking. The following section summarizes the environmental conditions observed and recorded during the archaeological survey. Maps and aerial images of the survey area are provided throughout the report and photographs of the survey area are located at the end of the report (Figures 9-31). The following tabulation summarizes the environmental conditions observed and recorded during the archaeological survey.

Archaeological Data:

Setting/Ground Cover: Moderate to steep slope/planted pine/immature to mature mixed hardwoods/green fields/low-lying

Previous Impacts: Moderate to severe erosion/access roads/push piles/gas pipeline ROW/gas well/timber harvesting/probable mining operations

Degree of Surface Visibility: 20 % to 80%

Nearest Water Source: Blue Creek

Probability of Archaeological Sites: Low to moderate

Soil Types:

EcC3- Enders clay loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes, severely eroded;

EdB2- Enders loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded;

EdC- Enders loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes;

EdC2- Enders loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes, eroded;

EdD- Enders loam, 10 to 15 percent slopes;

MoC3- Montevallo channery silt loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes, severely eroded;

MoE3- Montevallo channery silt loam, 15 to 50 percent slopes, severely eroded;

TmB2- Townley loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded;

TmD2- Townley loam, 10 to 15 percent slopes, eroded;

TnC3- Townley silty clay loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes, severely eroded;

22- Montevallo-Nauvoo association, 10 to 45 percent slopes;

23- Nauvoo fine sandy loam, 4 to 10 percent slopes

Number of Shovel Tests: 226

Number of Archaeological Sites: One; Site 1Fa178

Findings: The survey area includes approximately 244 acres with Blue Creek to the west. The proposed mine revision mostly occupies a floodplain and hills landform with moderate to steep sloped terrain. County Roads 27 and 46 provide access to the survey area. Ground cover consists of pasture grass, immature to mature planted pine trees/mixed hardwoods with moderate to severe erosion due to drainage and other previous impacts. The surface visibility was mostly poor although numerous locations of exposed ground surface provided fair to good surface visibility. The project area is considered to have a low to moderate probability for the occurrence of cultural resources. Widespread disturbances associated with access roads, gas well pads, gas pipelines, and other utilities have compromised the survey area.

During the field investigation of the property, 226 shovel tests were excavated within the survey area boundaries. The survey area was visibly inspected for above ground features, notable depressions, etc., none of which were observed. Previous impact practices and subsequent erosion have reduced any likelihood for archaeological sites to exist. STPs in the project area revealed a shallow topsoil layer that rarely exceeded 18 cm. Typical soil profiles are consistent throughout the area and tests revealed approximately 0 cm to 18 cm of light/medium grayish brown sandy loam clay that is underlain by yellowish red sandy clay subsoil. The subsurface testing program revealed an eroded setting that causes soil loss. A small number of historic materials were identified during the shovel testing or surface investigations and recorded within the ASSF as Site 1Fa178. The historic archaeological site does not meet the criteria for the NRHP. No further testing or investigations are recommended. As such, no cultural resources will be affected by the proposed undertaking.

Archaeological Data:

Site 1Fa178

Location: UTM 456872 E 3719489 N

NE ¼ of NW 1/4 of the NE 1/4 of Section 34, Township 16 S, Range 9W Wiley, AL Quadrangle.

Size: 10 m by 5 m *Depth:* 0 cm

Description: Site 1Fa178 consists of a light, early to mid-twentieth century non-aboriginal historic surface scatter. The site area measures approximately 10 m by 5 m and is situated on a level upland ridge, located just north of a previously strip-mined area. A structure and its outbuilding, both nonextant, are shown on the 1949 7.5' USGS Wiley, AL topographic map in the location of the newly recorded site. The site was first identified on the surface within a fallow green field. Artifacts recovered from the surface include clear container glass (n=1), embossed clear container glass (n=1), milkglass canning lid liner (n=5), undecorated whiteware (n=2), and zinc canning lid screw cap (n=1). Two shovel tests were excavated within the site's boundary and were negative for

cultural material. Additionally, no above-ground or subsurface features were noted. Below are the table listings for all the artifacts discovered from Site 1Fa178 (Table 3). A copy of the site form for 1Fa178 is provided at end of report.

Table 3. Artifact Inventory for Site 1Fa178.

Site 1Fa178	Description	Count
Surface	Whiteware fragments	2
	Milkglass canning lid liner fragments	5
	Canning lid, zinc	1
	Glass, clear	1
	Glass, clear embossed	1
Total Cultural Materials from Sample Surface Collection		10

NRHP Status: Due to past disturbances, as well as a paucity of artifact, Site 1Fa178 is considered ineligible for the NRHP.

Potential Impacts: Site 1Fa178 lies within the area of direct effect for the proposed undertaking. However, it is not NRHP eligible and therefore, any effects are irrelevant.

Figure 9. View to the West of Site 1Fa178.

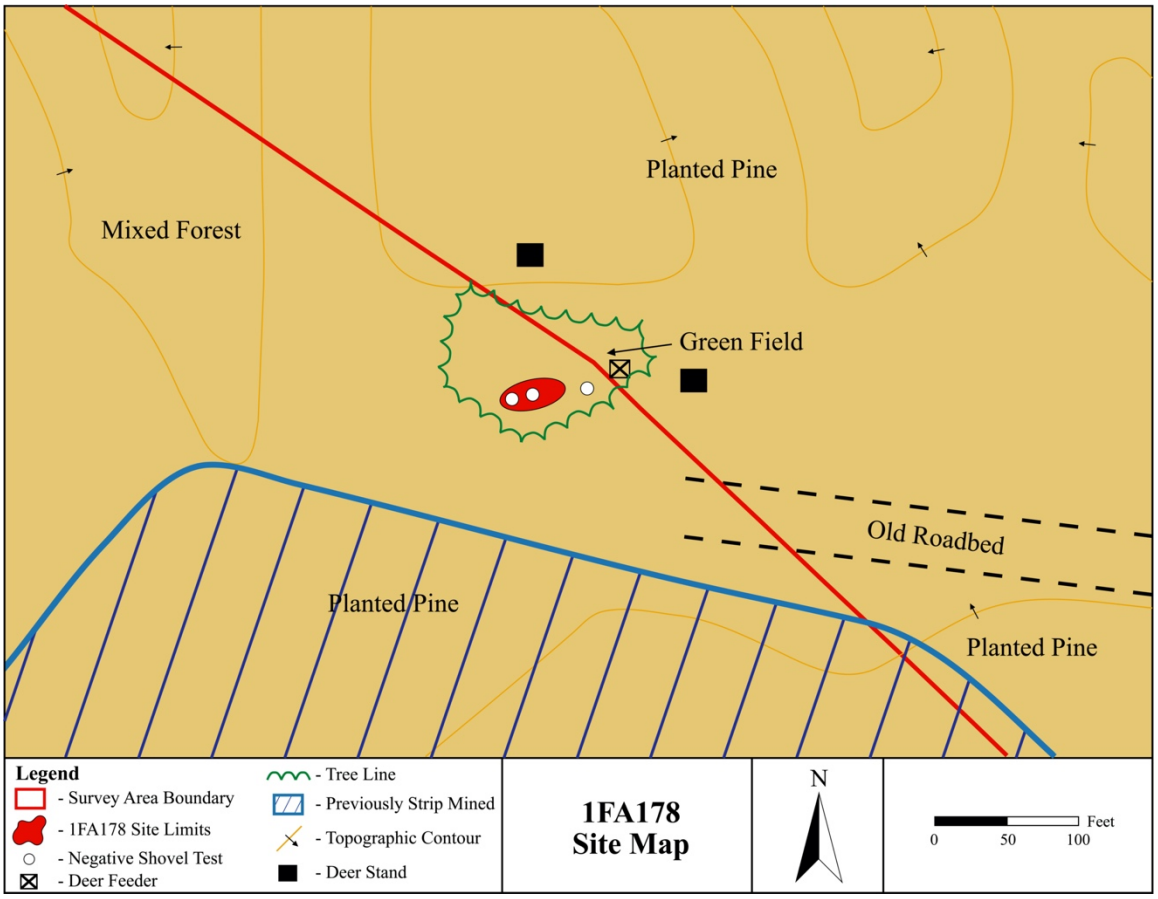


Figure 10. Sketch Map of Site 1Fa178.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

MRS Consultants, LLC was contracted by McGehee Engineering Corp. to perform a cultural resources assessment for a proposed mine project for the Blue Creek Mine 1 Revision 9 Project in Wiley in Fayette and Tuscaloosa counties, Alabama. All phases of research comply with requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as well as guidelines established by the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC).

Cultural Resource Specialist, Linda A. Hollis conducted background research to determine the existence of previously recorded archaeological sites, cemeteries, historic structures, and historic properties listed on or eligible for the NRHP. A pedestrian reconnaissance survey was conducted at the project area to determine the existence of archaeological sites, cemeteries, and historic structures within the APE. Cultural Resources Specialist, Jeffery M. Meyer and Linda Hollis performed the archaeological field survey between September 6 and September 12, 2023. Beth A. Ryba serves as the Principal Investigator.

The survey area includes approximately 244 acres (97.7 hectares) in Sections 1, 2, 27, 34 & 35, Township 16S, 17S Range 9W and can be viewed on the USGS 7.5' Wiley, Alabama topographic quadrangle (Figure 1). Elevations within the survey area range between approximately 510 ft to 667 ft AMSL. The APE is restricted to the areas adjacent to the proposed mine revision area.

The proposed mine revision mostly occupies moderate to steeply sloped terrain with low-lying areas and drainages. County Roads 27 and 46 provide access to the survey area. The majority of the study area is covered with immature to mature pine trees and mixed hardwoods while numerous areas of exposed ground surface indicate severe erosion and soil loss. Archaeological field investigations within the survey area boundaries included surface investigations and subsurface testing. Soil profiles generally revealed eroded and shallow deposits with little to no topsoil remaining in the project area.

One archaeological site was discovered in the APE during the investigation of the proposed mine revision: Site 1Fa178. The nonaboriginal historic artifact scatter is not considered eligible for the NRHP. The potential for the occurrence of intact cultural deposits to exist within the project boundary is reduced due to steeply sloping terrain and previous disturbances. In addition, no historic standing structures were located within the APE during the investigation that might be affected by the proposed undertaking.

As such, no historic properties will be affected by the proposed undertaking. The project should have no effect on any historic properties. Based on these findings, MRS Consultants, LLC. recommends that the proposed Blue Creek Transportation Mine 1 Revision 9 Project be cleared in regard to cultural resources.

All materials and documentation related to projects conducted by MRS Consultants will be periodically curated at a curational facility that meets Department of Interior 36 CFR Part 79 standards. Curation agreement attached.

REFERENCES CITED

Alabama Historical Commission
2023 *Alabama Historic Cemetery Register.* Montgomery, AL.
2023 *Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage.* Montgomery, AL.

National Park Service
2023 *National Register Information System.* http://www.nr.nps.gov/nrloc1.htm.
2023 *National Historic Landmarks Program.* http://tps.cr.nps.gov/nhl/.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
2023 *Web Soil Survey.* Electronic document, http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/

Office of Archaeological Research, University of Alabama Museums
2023 *Alabama Online Cultural Resources Database.* Electronic document.
2023 *Phase I Surveys.* Electronic document.

University of Alabama
2023 *Alabama Maps: Historical Map Archive.* Electronic document, http://alabamamaps.ua.edu

U.S. Geological Survey
2023 *The National Map: Historical Topographic Map Collection.*

Figure 11. View to the South of Pipeline ROW and Access Road. (See "A" on Figure 7).

Figure 12. View to the North of Grass Field with Immature to Mature Pine trees/Mixed Hardwoods in Project Area. (See "B" on Figure 7).

Figure 13. View to the East of Pipeline ROW in Project Area. (See “C” on Figure 7).

Figure 14. View to the East of Eroded Area. (See “D” on Figure 7).

Figure 15. View to the East of Intermittent Stream. (See “E” on Figure 7).

Figure 16. View to the West of Disturbance. (See “F” on Figure 7).

Figure 17. View to the West of Steep Slope. (See “G” on Figure 7).

Figure 18. View to the East of Planted Pine. (See “H” on Figure 7).

Figure 19. View to the South of Buried Pipeline Right-Of-Way. (See “I” on Figure 7).

Figure 20. View to the West of Powerline Right-Of-Way. (See “J” on Figure 7).

Figure 21. View to the Northwest of Planted Pines. (See "K" on Figure 8).

Figure 22. View to the Southeast of Planted Pine, Pipeline R-O-W, and Unimproved Road. (See "L" on Figure 8).

Figure 23. View to the Southeast of Buttressed Hardwoods in Low and Wet Area. (See "M" on Figure 8).

Figure 24. View to the North of Pipeline Right-Of-Way and Eroded Dirt Road. (See "N" on Figure 8).

Figure 25. View to the West of Gas Well. (See “O” on Figure 8).

Figure 26. View to the North of Mature Mixed Forest. (See “P” on Figure 8).

Figure 27. View to the Northeast of Mature Pines and Dense Secondary Growth. (See "Q" on Figure 8).

Figure 28. View to the East of Immature Pines and Eroded Dirt Road. (See "R" on Figure 8).

TROY UNIVERSITY

Archaeological
Research Center

Date: January 15, 2023

Marla Spry
MRS Consultants, LLC
P.O. Box 3146
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35403

Dear Marla,

This letter is to confirm our standing agreement to provide curation services to MRS Consultants, LLC on an as-needed basis.

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 complied 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,

Stephen B. Carmody
Director
Archaeological Research Center
Troy University

Site: FA178 Retrieve Site

Site Name: MRS TEMP 1

Location and Size

Easting:	456872	Northing:	3719489	Elevation:	595	
Township:	16S	Range:	09W	Section:	34	
	NE	1/4 of	NW	1/4 of	NE	1/4
Major Axis:	11	Minor Axis:	6	Max Depth:	0	

Location and Size

Preservation State: EROSION

Immediate Destruction Pending: ? Looting/Vandalism: ? % Destroyed: 40

National Register Status: NO?

Archaeological Information

Level of Investigation: RECONNAISSANCE

Excavation Status: SURFACE COLLECTION

Topographic Association: UPLAND CREST

Physiographic District: WARRIOR

Physiographic Section: CUMBERLAND

Nearest Water Source: FIRST

Direction To: N Distance To: 410 At Confluence: N

Drainage Basin: WARRIOR

Ground Cover: UNIMPROVED

Soil Type: ENDERS

Soil Texture Class: LOAM

County Soil Survey: null

Degree of Disturbance: UPPER

Characteristics

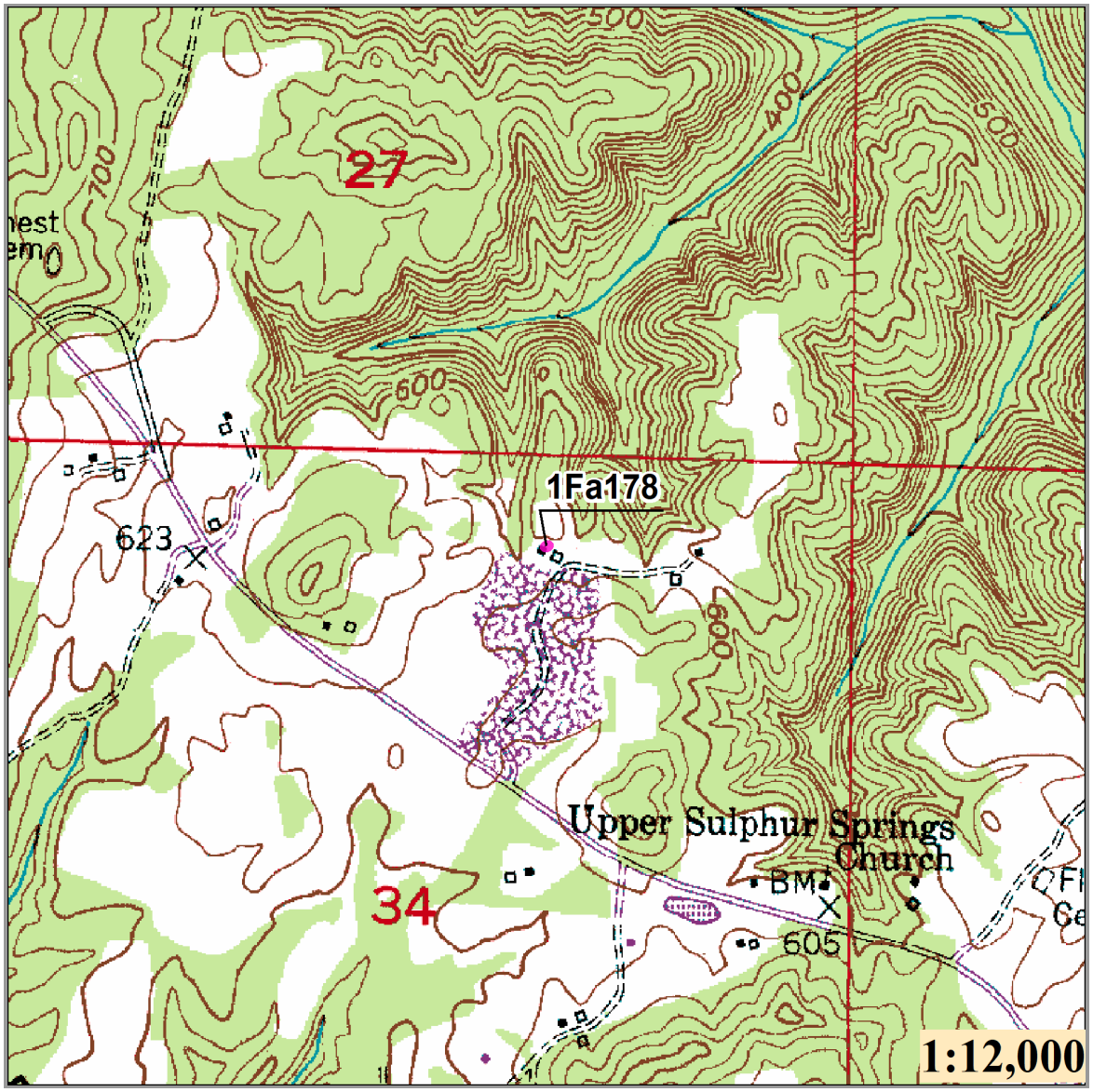
- [ ] Human Remains
- [ ] Features
- [ ] Petroglyph/Pictrograph
- [ ] Rockshelter
- [ ] Cave
- [ ] Artifact Scatter
- [ ] Midden
- [ ] Shell Midden
- [ ] Single Earthen Mound
- [ ] Multiple Earthen Mound
- [ ] Stone Mound(s)
- [ ] Weir
- [ ] Quarry
- [ ] Standing Historic Structure
- [x] Historic Structure Site
- [ ] Historic Cemetery
- [ ] Still
- [ ] Mill
- [ ] Engineering
- [ ] Other

Components

EARLY TO MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY NONABORIGINAL

Comments

MRS TEMP. SITE 1 MEASURES 10 M BY 5 M AND IS SITUATED ON A LEVEL UPLAND RIDGE, LOCATED JUST NORTH OF A PREVIOUSLY STRIP MINED AREA. THE SITE CONSISTS OF A LIGHT EARLY TO MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY NON-ABORIGINAL HISTORIC SURFACE SCATTER. A STRUCTURE AND ITS OUTBUILDING, BOTH NONEXTANT, ARE SHOWN ON THE 1949 7.5' USGS WILEY, AL TOPOGRAPHIC MAP IN THE LOCATION OF THE NEWLY RECORDED SITE. THE SITE WAS FIRST IDENTIFIED ON THE SURFACE WITHIN A FALLOW GREEN FIELD. ARTIFACTS RECOVERED FROM THE SURFACE INCLUDE CLEAR CONTAINER GLASS (N=1), EMBOSSED CLEAR CONTAINER GLASS (N=1), MILKGLASS CANNING LID LINER (N=5), UNDECORATED WHITEWARE (N=2), AND ZINC CANNING LID SCREW CAP (N=1). TWO SHOVEL TESTS WERE EXCAVATED WITHIN THE SITE'S BOUNDARY, AND WERE NEGATIVE FOR CULTURAL MATERIAL. ADDITIONALLY, NO ABOVE-GROUND OR SUBSURFACE FEATURES WERE NOTED.



USGS 7.5' Topographic Map: WILEY

Record Type: ☑ Clear ☐ Master ☐ Synonym

Form Status: ☐ Final ☐ Verified ☑ New

Form Completion: ☐ Final ☐ Map Search ☐ Literature Search

Sponsor Type:	PRI	Sponsored By:	McGehee Engineering
Recorder Type:	PRI	Recorded By:	MRS Consultants
Date Submitted:	2023-09-21	Date Revised:	2023-09-25

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