Archaeological Survey of the Dry Creek/ Long Cane Creek Area, Abbeville County, South Carolina

Authored by

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Introduction

This report briefly summarizes the results of an archaeological surface survey of approximately 99 ha (245 ac) of an uplands area located between Long Cane Creek and Dry Creek in Abbeville County, South Carolina (U.S.G.S. Abbeville East 1950). Fieldwork for this study was conducted on April 17, 1993 by volunteers with the LAMAR Institute. The primary area examined was a recent timber clearcut tract owned by the Champion Paper Corporation. Portions of U.S. Forest Service land (also clearcut) also were examined. The survey consisted of surface reconnaissance only, and no collections were made from any of the sites. Notes were taken concerning potentially diagnostic artifacts. This tract was selected because of its proximity to the Ramona Mound site (38AB355), and because of the author's need to know if any significant Woodland period sites were located in this area (Elliott 1984:21). All sites within the tract were identified and state site forms completed for each. A total of 16 field sites were located, and 13 of these were recorded as state archaeological sites. Figure 1 shows the location of these sites. The remaining three included two isolated artifact finds and one field site that was combined with another to form a single state site. Selected diagnostic artifacts observed by the survey crew are shown in Figure 2. While this study was not intended as a compliance document, recommendations for additional research on potentially significant sites identified within the study area are provided.

The project area is located on the outer reaches of the Savannah River watershed in Abbeville County, South Carolina. This area is composed of extensively eroded igneous and metamorphic rocks whose upper surface is weathered to form clay and sandy clay saprolite soils. The drainage in this area is dendritic, and continues to erode when vegetation is removed. The Champion Paper tract had been recently clearcut and planted in pine seedlings. Heavy equipment was used in the clearing process resulting in extensive damage to the upper soil surfaces. This area has been degraded by many years of cultivation as well.

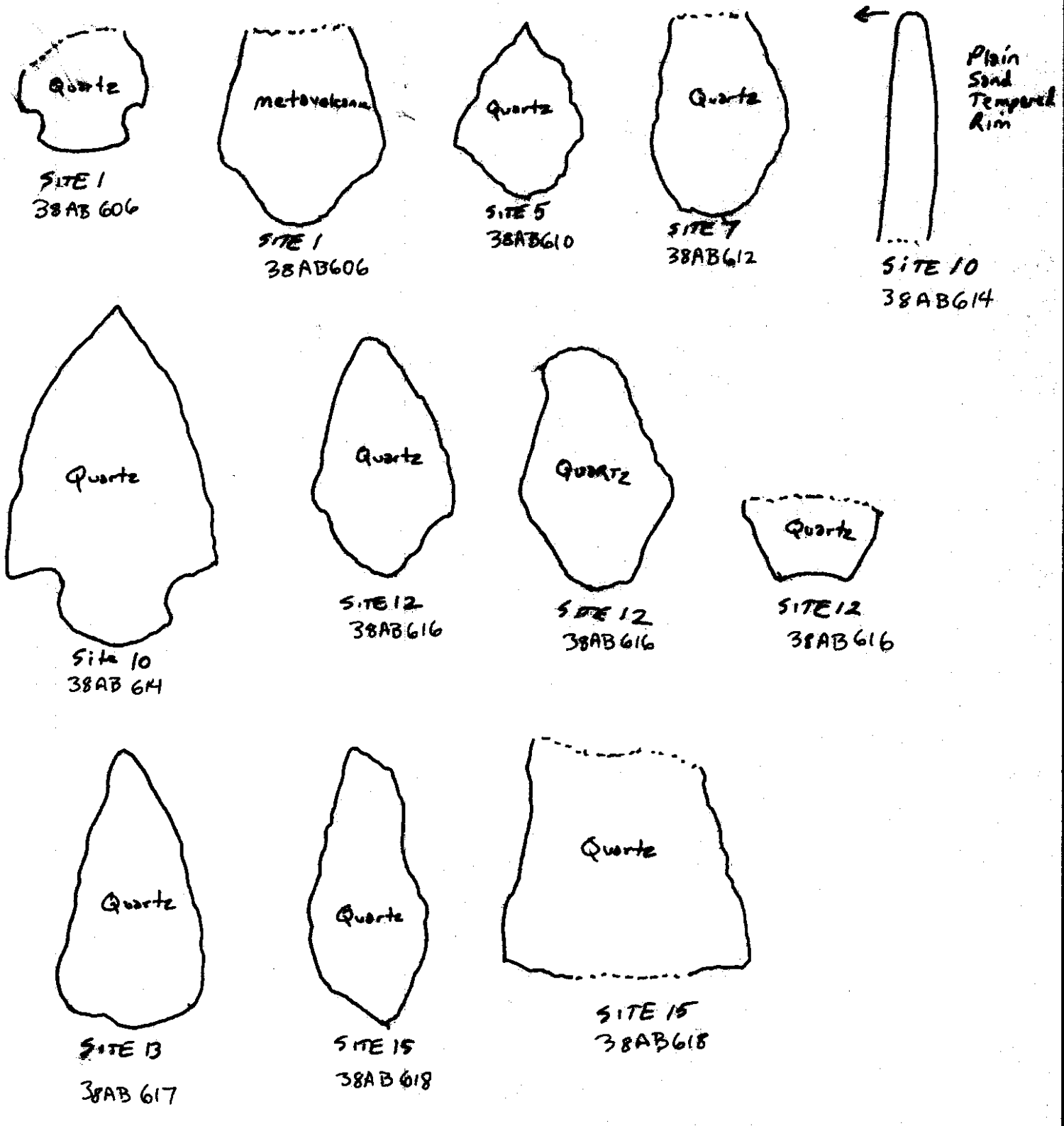

Figure 2. SELECTED ARTIFACTS, DRY CREEK/LONG CANE CREEK AREA.

Methods

The survey was a reconnaissance level effort designed to quickly locate all archaeological resources within the study tract. The crew consisted of Daniel T. Elliott, Rita F. Elliott, Joel Jones, and Kathleen Mulchrone. Surface visibility in the area approached 100 percent and this aided in the crew's ability to locate sites. The major landforms were traversed by a series of transects (no more than 40 m apart). Once an artifact was located the immediately surrounding area was examined in greater detail for additional artifacts. Once a site was identified, its dimensions were determined and a general assessment of its potential was made. Any potentially diagnostic stone tools were traced in outline and returned to the ground. Aboriginal pottery was classified by temper, surface decoration, and vessel form, and returned to the ground. General observations were made concerning other artifact types including ground stone and chipped stone debitage.

Results

Site 1 (38AB606) covered a large area of an eroded ridgetop on the Dry Creek/Long Cane Creek divide. The site measures approximately 425 x 175 m and has a maximum elevation of 580 ft (177 m) AMSL. The site is located on Hiwassee and Mecklenburg sandy loam soils. An historic house site was located on the southeastern end. This house probably dates to the early twentieth century and it probably had a rock and brick chimney, but no significant architectural elements remain. Historic artifacts observed include ironstone, glass, brick, and metal. Quartz debitage is lightly scattered over the entire landform. Diagnostic aboriginal artifacts include one metavolcanic Morrow Mountain projectile point/knife (PPK), one quartz Jacks Reef corner notched PPK, and one unidentified stamped grit tempered sherd. One quartz hammerstone also was observed. No additional work is recommended.

Site 2 (38AB607) is located on an eroded ridgeslope overlooking Dry Creek. The site measures approximately 80 x 50 m and has a maximum elevation of 530 ft (162 m) AMSL. The site is located on Wilkes sandy loam soils. Observed surface materials include nondiagnostic quartz bifaces and quartz debitage. The artifact density was low across the site. No additional work is recommended.

Site 3 (38AB 608) is located on an eroded ridgeslope overlooking Dry Creek. The site measures approximately 60 x 40 m and has a maximum elevation of 490 ft (149 m) AMSL. The site is located on Wilkes sandy loam soils. Observed surface materials include nondiagnostic quartz debitage and one small worked soapstone fragment. The artifacts were low in frequency across the landform. No additional work is recommended.

Site 4 (38AB609) is located on an eroded ridgeslope above Long Cane Creek. The site measures approximately 100 x 60 m and has a maximum elevation of 535 ft (163 m) AMSL. The site is located on Mecklenburg sandy loam soils. Observed surface materials include a low density scatter of nondiagnostic quartz bifaces and quartz debitage. No additional work is recommended.

Site 5 (38AB610) is located on a ridgeslope above Long Cane Creek and the site may continue onto a wooded area of U.S. Forest Service property. The site measures approximately 60 x 30 m and has a maximum elevation of 525 ft (160 m) AMSL. The site is located on Mecklenburg sandy loam soils. Observed surface materials include a low density scatter including one Morrow Mountain PPK, and quartz and metavolcanic debitage. Although that part of the site that is located on Champion's property appears eroded and largely destroyed, intact parts of the site may continue onto Forest Service property. Intensive survey treatment, including shovel testing, is recommended for the site.

Site 6 (38AB611) is located on an eroded ridgetop above Long Cane Creek. The site measures approximately 260 x 100 m and has a maximum elevation of 580 ft (177 m) AMSL. The site is located on Hiwassee sandy loam soils. Observed surface materials include nondiagnostic quartz tools, quartz, metavolcanic, and light colored chert debitage (with quartz predominate), and a single green alkaline glazed stoneware sherd. Artifact frequency across the site is low. No additional work is recommended.

Site 7 (38AB612) is located on an eroded ridgetop above Long Cane Creek. The site measures approximately 280 x 200 m and has a maximum elevation of 570 ft (194 m) AMSL. The site is located on Madison sandy loam soils. Observed surface materials include a Morrow Mountain PPK and other nondiagnostic bifaces, quartz, metavolcanic, and light colored chert debitage (with quartz predominate). Artifact frequency across the site is low to moderate. This site may continue onto Forest Service land. Intensive survey treatment (including shovel testing) is recommended for the site.

Site 9 (38AB613) is located on an eroded ridgetop above Dry Creek. The site measures approximately 40 m in diameter and has a maximum elevation of 565 ft (172 m) AMSL. The site is located on Mecklenburg sandy loam soils. It consist of a low density scatter of nondiagnostic quartz debitage and one quartz biface tip. No additional work is recommended.

Site 10 (38AB614) is located on a lower ridgeslope immediately overlooking Long Cane Creek. The site measures approximately 100 x 40 m and has a maximum elevation of 470 ft (143 m) AMSL. The site is located on Mecklenburg and Pacolet sandy loam soils. Surface materials include a large stemmed Late Archaic PPK, a sand tempered plain (Woodland) pottery rim sherd, a bifacially flaked light colored chert backed knife or chopper, and quartz and light chert debitage. This site may continue onto Forest Service property. Intensive survey treatment (including shovel testing) is recommended for this site.

Site 11 (38AB615) is located on a ridgeslope above Long Cane Creek. The site measures approximately 80 x 50 m and has a maximum elevation of 540 ft (165 m) AMSL. The site is located on Mecklenburg sandy loam soils. Surface materials include a low density scatter of nondiagnostic quartz biface fragments and quartz debitage. No additional work is recommended.

Site 12 (38AB616) is located on a lower ridge slope above Long Cane Creek. The site measures approximately 180 x 70 m and has a maximum elevation of 500 ft (152 m) AMSL. The site is located on Mecklenburg sandy loam soils. The site contains two surface concentrations of quartz debitage each containing Morrow Mountain PPKs. The intermediate area contains a low frequency scatter of quartz debitage and nondiagnostic tools. A pitted stone, containing pits, also was observed on this site. While this site is badly damaged by erosion and

logging, it may possess horizontal integrity that could prove to have some research value for understanding upland Middle Archaic settlement. Intensive survey treatment (including shovel testing and test unit excavation) is recommended for this site.

Site 13 (38AB617) is located on a lower ridgeslope immediately overlooking Long Cane Creek. The site measures approximately 60 x 30 m and has a maximum elevation of 470 ft (143 m) AMSL. The site is located on Mecklenburg and Pacolet sandy loam soils. The site contains a low density surface scatter including a Morrow Mountain PPK, a sand tempered body sherd (either fabric or cord impressed), and an iron/steel harmonica reed plate. Intensive survey treatment (including shovel testing) is recommended for this site.

Site 15 (38AB618) is located on a ridgeslope near a springhead. The site measures approximately 60 x 40 m and has a maximum elevation of 510 ft (155 m) AMSL. The site is located on Madison sandy loam. It contains a low density surface scatter of quartz tools and debitage. No additional work is recommended.

Field Site 8 consisted of a single piece of quartz debitage and was located approximately 320 m west of Site 9. Field Site 16 consisted of a single green alkaline glazed stoneware sherd and was located approximately 450 m south of Site 9. Field Site 14 was combined with Site 7 to form a single state site.

Summary

The upland tract examined by this reconnaissance survey contained a limited array of archaeological sites. Quartz debitage was the most frequently observed artifact type, but nowhere on the tract was the density of quartz high. Metavolcanic chipped stone was the next most frequent raw material followed by a minor presence of light colored chert. Small deposits of naturally occurring milk quartz and a dark green metavolcanic stone were present on the study tract, but there was no trace of intensive quarrying of either stone. Three aboriginal pottery sherds were found on the tract, on three separate sites. Despite intensive inspection of the areas surrounding these isolated sherd finds, no additional pottery was located. Two of the sherds probably date to the Woodland period, and the third could date either to the Woodland or Mississippian period. The chipped stone tools include Morrow Mountain, Late Archaic stemmed, and a Jacks Reef corner notched (possibly Middle or Late Woodland) types. Historic occupation of the study tract was confined primarily to one house site, although isolated historic artifacts were found on two other sites. Most of the sites found during the reconnaissance were extremely eroded and badly damaged by the recent logging operation. Additional study is recommended for five sites. Each

of these five sites may continue onto U.S. Forest Service property and would thus be subject to federal regulations regarding cultural resource properties.

References Cited

Elliott, Daniel

1984 *An Archaeological Survey of Selected Timber Stands on the Long Cane Divsision, Sumter National Forest.* U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Columbia, South Carolina.

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