CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY
AND
CEMETERY AUTHENTICATION DATA COLLECTION
FOR
DNR TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AT MURPHY'S LANDING AND MEMORIAL PARK, SCOTT COUNTY, MINNESOTA

FOR THE
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

BY
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INTRODUCTION

OBJECTIVES

The objectives are to conduct cultural resource assessment and cemetery authentication related to proposed DNR development of the Minnesota Valley Trail within Murphy's Landing and Veteran's Memorial Park (City of Shakopee), Scott County, Minnesota. State and federal standards have been followed (see Scope of Work, Appendix D).

LOCATION

The proposed Minnesota Valley Trail segment is located in T115 N, R22W, Section 4 of Scott County, City of Shakopee (Fig. 1). The proposed trail follows the south bank of the Minnesota River, running along the north edge of Memorial Park and the south edge of Murphy's Landing (Minnesota Valley Restoration Project), in part following the existing service road. The trail corridor was originally proposed for the lower terrace, between the river and the Murphy's Landing development. The current proposal would place the trail corridor through Murphy's Landing, following the fence line between Murphy's Landing and Highway 101 in the west half, and the existing service road in the east half. The portion of the trail through Veteran's Memorial Park follows the route of an existing paved trail. A new section of service road would be constructed on the lower terrace to replace the portion used for the trail route (Fig. 2).

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The project lies within the Shakopee Historic District, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. Cemetery sites 21-SC-22 and 21-SC-24 are known to be located within the project area, as are materials and features relating to 19th century Euroamerican occupations.

Survey of the Minnesota Valley Trail corridor from Highway 169 to the east end of Murphy's Landing was conducted in 1989 by the Institute for Minnesota Archaeology (Breakey and Johnson 1989). Although this included shovel testing at both Memorial Park and Murphy's Landing, the tests were confined to the lower terrace, where the trail corridor had been initially planned (Breakey and Johnson 1989:11), and did not cover the present project trail or service road corridor.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The general environmental history of the area is discussed in Breakey and Johnson (1989). The particular area involved in this project is located on terraces of the Minnesota River. The trail segment is on an upper, bedrock controlled terrace, while the proposed new service road is on a lower lying terrace. This terrace is capped by shallow alluvial soils underlain by carbonaceous sedimentary rock.

Vegetation within the project area is a mixture of upland and floodplain hardwoods. Most of the upper terrace is cleared land covered by grasses and other low vegetation.

Modern disturbance is largely confined to the upper terrace levels and includes development associated with the Murphy's Landing facility.

HISTORY OF THE PROJECT AREA

Two Native American cemeteries are located within the project area (Fig. 3). The Steel Mounds, 21-SC-24, originally consisted of 111 circular mounds, as mapped by T.H. Lewis in the 1880s. Some of these mounds are located within the Murphy's Landing complex, while others were destroyed by railroad and highway construction. In 1969 the University of Minnesota excavated a number of mounds in this group which were threatened with destruction due to an expansion of the right-of-way of Highway 101. According to Johnson, except for one intrusive historic burial, the burials and mound construction dated from between 500 A.D. and 800 A.D. (Johnson 1988). Johnson also noted that most burials were in pits excavated into the original soil surface or actually dug into the underlying dolomite. This would indicate that burials could still be present even where the surface mound had been removed.

The Pond Mound group, 21-SC-22, is located immediately west of the Steele group, within Memorial Park. Records indicate that building and highway construction have destroyed all but five of the mounds. Some of these remaining mounds have suffered further damage from park activities, ranging from the placement of a flagpole in the center of one, to maintenance which disturbed human remains, to impacts from foot traffic and recreational activity.

The literature search conducted by Breakey and Johnson indicates that the area was used by the Mdewakanton (Eastern Dakota), probably during the latter part of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century (Breakey and Johnson 1989:6). According to E. Judson Pond, in 1834 the gardens for Shak pa's village, Taopa or Tintowan, were located on the floodplain, probably below Murphy's Landing . The village was located south of the gardens, on the upper terrace (Breakey and Johnson 1989:6).

Survey by the IMA located chert, mammal bone, charcoal, a forged nail, and a mussel shell in one set of shovel tests along the lower terrace (Breakey and Johnson 1989:11). They suggest that the village was located south of the survey area, within the Murphy's Landing restoration.

By 1854, Euroamerican presence in the area resulted in the construction of a ferry crossing at Murphy's Landing. The ferry site and the associated inn, built by

Richard Murphy, form the core of the Minnesota Valley Restoration Project. This site, along with the two cemetery sites, constitutes the National Register Shakopee Historic District.

The IMA survey in 1989 found no indication of any structure associated with the ferry landing, although they suggest that it could have been located in the area of their shovel tests 169-171, which would be at the east end of the proposed trail (Breakey and Johnson 1989:11, 12).

FIELD SURVEY

Fieldwork was undertaken to locate any cultural resource materials within the new proposed service road corridor and to locate and authenticate the burial mounds within or adjacent to the trail corridor. Subsurface testing was conducted in conjunction with the cemetery authentication, so that testing would not inadvertently impact the mounds. Project director was Grant Goltz, who was assisted by personnel from All Nations Cultural Resource Preservation, Inc. ANCRP personnel included Jim Jones, Jr., Edith Norris, Mary Wind, Joe Nadeau, Curt Cross, John Staples, Levi Williams, and Norman Cloud. Fieldwork was conducted on July 29, 30, and 31. Field verification of the mound locations in 21-SC-22 was done on August 24. Fieldwork was licensed under MN ST 138, License #93-32, issued to Grant Goltz.

CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

Reconnaissance survey consisted of walk-over observation of the project corridor and shovel testing at 10 meter intervals along both sides of the proposed centerline of the service road corridor and along the trail segment in Veteran's Memorial Park. One hundred and twenty-two (122) shovel tests were excavated. Supplementary soil cores were used to identify disturbed areas.

Shovel tests were approximately 30 to 40cm in diameter, and excavated to rock or to 60cm, depending on the location. Soil matrix was screened through 1/4 inch mesh. Standard soil profiles and field notes were recorded.

Subsurface testing was not conducted on the portion of the proposed trail through Murphy's Landing due to a combination of close proximity to burial mounds, location of project on existing road grade, and location of project on the filled berm of the existing fence.

CEMETERY AUTHENTICATION DATA COLLECTION

Data collection for authentication of the location and condition of the Native American burial mounds within or immediately adjacent to the project area was conducted following procedures established for the implementation of MN ST 307.08. The Indian Affairs Council was notified prior to the beginning of fieldwork, and the project was discussed in detail with field representative Earl Sargent. Data collection was conducted by Grant Goltz under authorization by the State Archaeologist (Appendix A).

Copies of the original survey notes of T.H. Lewis were used to reconstruct the location of the mounds on paper. This reconstruction was then used in the field to locate the mounds.

Several mounds are still visible on the ground. These were measured and their relationships to each other, in terms of compass bearing and distance, was determined. Comparison of this data with the paper reconstructions from Lewis' notes was used to identify which mounds were still extant. These were used as starting points to relocate remaining mound locations on the ground.

Where mounds were no longer visible or otherwise obviously altered, small diameter soil cores were taken to assess the condition and presence of any remaining mound fill.

LABORATORY ANALYSIS

Laboratory work was conducted by personnel from All Nations CRP and consisted of washing, accessioning, and compiling a computerized catalog of the materials recovered. Materials were accessioned into the system of the Minnesota Historical Society, and were assigned No. 1993.248.

Analysis consisted of further identification of recovered materials, including identification of raw materials and ceramics.

Maps and cemetery documentation were prepared by Grant Goltz.

RESULTS

CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

Of the 122 shovel tests, 70 were positive. Shovel tests within Murphy's Landing located Euroamerican materials, mainly glass from a former dump, and Native American materials, primarily lithic debitage. Although much of this area has been previously disturbed, several site loci representing pre-contact Native American use were located along undisturbed portions of the proposed access road (Fig. 4).

Shovel tests in Veteran's Memorial Park along the proposed trail corridor located a thin scatter of undisturbed pre-contact Native American habitation materials (Fig. 4).

The eastern end of the proposed service road location produced a thin scatter of EuroAmerican materials including whiteware, machine cut nails, and glass. This area included upland as well as lower terrace areas.

The central portion of the proposed service road location was entirely on the higher terrace. The entire area appears to have been used as a dump site which shows evidence of being more recently leveled. Dense layers of broken bottle glass were present in all shovel tests.

Further west, the proposed service road location drops to a lower terrace. This segment is heavily forested and shows little evidence of disturbance. This segment contains three distinct site areas, as well as a few scattered shovel tests with single fragments of lithic debitage (Fig.).

Field Site Number 1 is indicated by six positive shovel tests which yielded 16 chert flakes. This site is on a small rise in the lower terrace. Site dimensions are approximately 60 by 25 meters. Cultural materials are located from the surface to 40 cm, and show no sign of disturbance.

Field Site Number 2 is indicated by three positive shovel tests which yielded 18 chert and quartz flakes and 1 fabric marked ceramic body sherd. This site is also on a small rise on the lower terrace. Site dimensions are approximately 50 by 20 meters. Cultural materials are located at depths of 10 to 70 cm and show no sign of disturbance.

Field Site Number 3 is indicated by five positive shovel tests which yielded 33 lithic flakes, 1 broken chert uniface, and a Swan River chert core. This site occupies a small rise on the lower terrace. Site dimensions are approximately 100 by 30 meters. Cultural materials occur at depths of 0 to 60 cm. The southeast part of the site has been disturbed by manure piling activity.

The western end of the proposed service road location produced a thin to moderately dense scatter of EuroAmerican materials, including glass, nails, whiteware, and other metal fragments. Part of this may be trash dumping behind the inn associated with the ferry landing. A few pieces of lithic debitage are intermixed with the EuroAmerican materials, but they are obviously in a disturbed context.

The proposed trail segment in Veterans Memorial Park yielded a light scatter of pre-contact materials. Five positive shovel tests yielded 17 pieces of lithic debitage and a sandstone abrading tool or hammerstone. These materials are confined to a small area of the mid-level terrace.

CEMETERY AUTHENTICATION DATA

Twenty-six Native American burial mounds of SC-24 were located within the fenced area of Murphy's Landing. These include mounds 1 through 10, 14 through 16, 32, 33, and 37 through 46 (Fig. 5).

Mound No. 1 is located in the existing service road, just west of the school building. Due to the compacted road gravel, no soil coring was possible. There is little likelihood that intact burials remain, due to the disturbance caused by road construction.

Mound No. 2 is located five feet south of the existing service road in the yard area of the school building. Because of heavily compacted soil caused by traffic over the area, soil coring was not possible. Although the mound is completely leveled, it is possible that subsurface burial pits could remain relatively intact.

Mound No. 3 is centered at the edge of the mowed area east of the school building. Soil coring indicates that a small amount of mound fill is still present. The south edge is partially under the berm of the fence. Subsurface burial pits are likely still intact.

Mound No. 4 is completely under the fence berm. No condition assessment is possible.

Mound No. 5 is between the service road and the fence berm. Hard, compacted gravelly fill rendered soil coring impossible. Although the mound has been leveled, subsurface burial pits could still be intact.

Mound No. 6 is located just south of the service road. Although mostly leveled, the basal portion of the mound fill is still intact. Therefore, subsurface burial pits are still likely intact.

Mound No. 7 is located in the southeast corner of a fenced garden. Although leveled, mound fill is still present and subsurface burial pits are likely intact. A large bone fragment was noted on the surface just west of the mound center. It is part of a vertebrae, but was not identified or collected. Continued cultivation of the garden could adversely affect burials in this mound.

Mound No. 8 is located east of a large spruce tree, south of the service road. Although the mound fill is gone and the area has been heavily impacted by traffic, subsurface burial pits could still be intact.

Mound No. 9 is mostly under the fence berm, but extends partly to the north. At least 60cm of mound fill is still present, and burials are likely still intact.

Mound No. 10 is centered under the service road. As with Mound No. 1, the disturbance caused by road construction has likely removed any associated burial pits.

Mound No. 14 is located between the service road and the fence berm. It remains mostly intact and in good condition.

Mound No. 15 is located just south of the service road, with the north edge just one meter from the road edge. It is intact and in good condition.

Mound No. 16 is located just south of the service road. Road construction has removed approximately the north 10to 15 percent of the mound, leaving a road cut into the mound edge. Except for this damage, the mound is in good condition.

Mound No. 32 is located just north of the fence berm. It consists of a low remnant of mound fill, barely visible on the ground. Burial pits are likely still intact.

Mound No. 33 is located just south of the service road. Although mound fill has been somewhat spread around, it is mostly intact and in reasonably good condition. Burial pits are likely still intact.

Mound No. 37 is located just north of the fence berm. It is intact and in good condition.

Mound No. 38 is located just south of the service road. It consists of a low remnant of mound fill. Although the mound has been partially leveled, burial pits are likely still intact.

Mound No. 39 is located in the existing service road. Disturbance from road construction has likely obliterated any burial features.

Mound No. 40 is located just south of the service road. It has been leveled to the point that no visible remnant remains. Subsurface burial pits could, however, still be intact.

Mounds 41 through 46 are located in a wide strip of undisturbed land between the service road and the fence berm. These mounds are all undisturbed and in good condition.

In summary, of the mounds within the fenced area of Murphy's Landing, eleven are still in good condition. The remainder range from slightly visible to completely removed. Of the latter, some probably have been so altered that no burial could be present; others may still have burials remaining.

Nine Native American burial mounds of SC-22, in adjacent Veteran's Memorial Park, were located. All have some visible remnants. These include mounds 16 and 21 through 28 of this group. None are within 50 feet of the proposed project corridor (Fig. 6).

Mound No. 16 and Mounds 21 through 24 are obvious, large mounds. Although impacted by park activities, they are largely intact.

Mounds 25, 26 and 27 are visible as low rises. Although most mound fill has been removed, subsurface burial pits are likely intact.

Mound No. 28 is located within the fenced in area of the Murphy's Landing parking lot. A small remnant is still visible. Although most mound fill has been removed,

subsurface burial pits are likely intact.

SWEAT LODGE AREA

A currently used sweat lodge is located in the forested area at the eastern part of the proposed service road. Personnel from Murphy's Landing stated that it is used by Gary Cavender of the Dakota Community.

CONCLUSIONS

This project, as currently proposed, could impact several cultural resource sites.

Proposed Service Road. The proposed route of the service road crosses several site areas. The thin scatter of EuroAmerican materials at the eastern end will need further evaluation, including archival research to determine if it represents a significant site possibly associated with the Ferry and Inn. Although the deposit is sparse and no surface features were observed, the area does not appear to be heavily disturbed.

The sweat lodge area will need to be addressed. Contact should be made with the Dakota Community. Further comment on this issue is beyond the scope of this survey.

The dump area in the central project area is likely not a significant cultural resource. These is evidence of considerable disturbance to the deposits.

The series of precontact Native American sites in the western part of the project will require Phase II evaluation testing to determine their significance. Although small, these sites are relatively undisturbed and may contain significant information. Based on the nature of materials recovered during Phase I survey, it is unlikely that these sites represent Shak pa's village.

The EuroAmerican materials at the west end of the project may be associated with the ferry landing and/or the Murphy Inn. Further archival research and testing will be required to determine the significance of this area.

Proposed Trail. The proposed trail route largely follows existing roadways or heavily disturbed areas. Cemetery Site No. 21-SC-24 lies within the proposed route. While some of the intact mounds are immediately adjacent to the route, they could be easily protected from disturbance through protective measures such as low fencing. Several mound locations are under the existing roadway. These have little likelihood of containing intact burial features, and unless heavy ground disturbing construction activities are planned, would suffer no additional impacts than those already experienced. Mound 3 lies within the proposed trail route that crosses from the existing road to the fence.

Trail routing away from mound locations would ensure that no damage occurs. The effect of the proposed trail on this cemetery should be discussed with the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, following procedures established under MN ST 307.08.

The major continuing impact is the gardening on Mound No. 7. This should be reviewed by the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council and recommendations for management should be prepared in consultation with personnel from Murphy's Landing.

Cemetery Site No. 21-SC-22 in Veteran's Memorial Park, will not be impacted by the present proposal. No mound remnants are within 50 feet of the project.

The thin scatter of artifacts within the Park may represent a significant site. If, however, the existing paved route is used, little additional impact would occur. If significant construction activities are planned in this area, Phase II evaluation testing should be done.

The Indian Affairs Council should review the current management of the mounds within the Park and prepare a management plan, in consultation with the City of Shakopee, which will reduce current impacts on the mounds.

REFERENCES CITED

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