

# AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED I-71 INTERCHANGE IN LAGRANGE, OLDHAM COUNTY, KENTUCKY (ITEM NO. 5-483.30)



by  
Thomas H. McAlpine, Jr., RPA 989402

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THE PROPOSED I-71 INTERCHANGE IN LAGRANGE,  
OLDHAM COUNTY, KENTUCKY  
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by

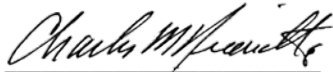
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# ABSTRACT

On August 6 and 7, 2019, Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc., personnel completed an archaeological survey of the proposed I-71 interchange in LaGrange, Oldham County, Kentucky (Item No. 5-483.30). The survey was conducted at the request of Daniel Peake of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet proposes to construct a new interchange for I-71 between KY 393 and KY 53 to relieve traffic congestion in LaGrange. The proposed project will add approximately 4.2 ha (10.5 acres) of new right-of-way. A previous archaeological survey has covered approximately 2.7 ha (6.8 acres) of the new right-of-way. The current study will cover the unsurveyed portions of the new right-of-way, which cover approximately 1.5 ha (3.7 acres).

Prior to the field research, a records review was conducted at the Office of State Archaeology. The review indicated that eight previous professional archaeological surveys have been conducted within a 2.0 km (1.2 mi) radius of the project area. Six archaeological sites have been recorded in this area also. While one of the previous survey areas is partially within the current project area, none of the previously recorded sites are.

All previously unsurveyed portions of the project area were subjected to intensive pedestrian survey supplemented with screened shovel testing. No archaeological sites were recorded as a result of this survey. No archaeological sites listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places will be affected by the proposed construction activities. Therefore, archaeological clearance is recommended.



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# I. INTRODUCTION

On August 6 and 7, 2019, Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc. (CRA), personnel completed an archaeological survey of the proposed I-71 interchange in LaGrange, Oldham County, Kentucky (Item No. 5-483.30) (Figures 1–3). The survey was conducted at the request of Daniel Peake of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC). The fieldwork was completed by Thomas H. McAlpine, Jr., in 13 work hours. Office of State Archaeology (OSA) Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data requested by CRA on November 27, 2018, was returned on December 12, 2018. The results were researched by Julia K.C. Gruhot of CRA at the OSA on January 8, 2019. The OSA project registration number is FY19-9860.

## Project Description

KYTC proposes to construct a new interchange for I-71 between KY 393 and KY 53 to relieve traffic congestion in LaGrange. The proposed project will add approximately 4.2 ha (10.5 acres) of new right-of-way (ROW). A previous archaeological survey (Prybylski 2006a) has covered approximately 2.7 ha (6.8 acres) of the new ROW. The current project will cover the unsurveyed portions of the new ROW, which cover approximately 1.5 ha (3.7 acres).

## Purpose of Study

The study was conducted to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This transportation project is federally funded and is therefore considered an undertaking subject to Section 106 review. Any state, county, or municipal lands in the project area were surveyed under OSA Kentucky Antiquities Act Permit Number 2019-28 pursuant to Kentucky Revised Statute (KRS) 164.720.

The purpose of this assessment was to locate, describe, evaluate, and make appropriate recommendations for the future treatment of any historic properties or sites that may be affected by the project. For the purposes of this assessment, a site was defined as “any location where human behavior has resulted in the deposition of

artifacts, or other evidence of purposive behavior at least 50 years of age” (Sanders 2006:2). Cultural deposits less than 50 years of age were not considered sites.

A description of the project area, the field methods used, and the results of this investigation follow. The investigation is intended to conform to the *Specifications for Conducting Fieldwork and Preparing Cultural Resource Assessment Reports* (Sanders 2006).

## Summary of Findings

Prior to the field research, a records review was conducted at the OSA. The review indicated that eight previous professional archaeological surveys have been conducted within a 2.0 km (1.2 mi) radius of the project area. Six archaeological sites have been recorded in this area also. While one of the previous survey areas (Prybylski 2006a) is partially within the current project area, none of the previously recorded sites are.

All unsurveyed portions of the project area were subjected to intensive pedestrian survey supplemented with screened shovel testing. No archaeological sites were recorded as a result of this survey. No archaeological sites listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) will be affected by the proposed construction activities. Therefore, archaeological clearance is recommended.

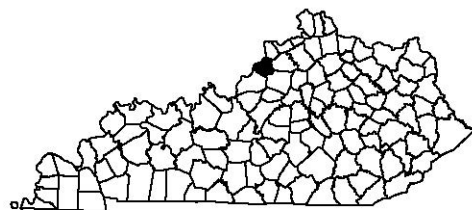


Figure 1. Map of Kentucky showing the location of Oldham County.

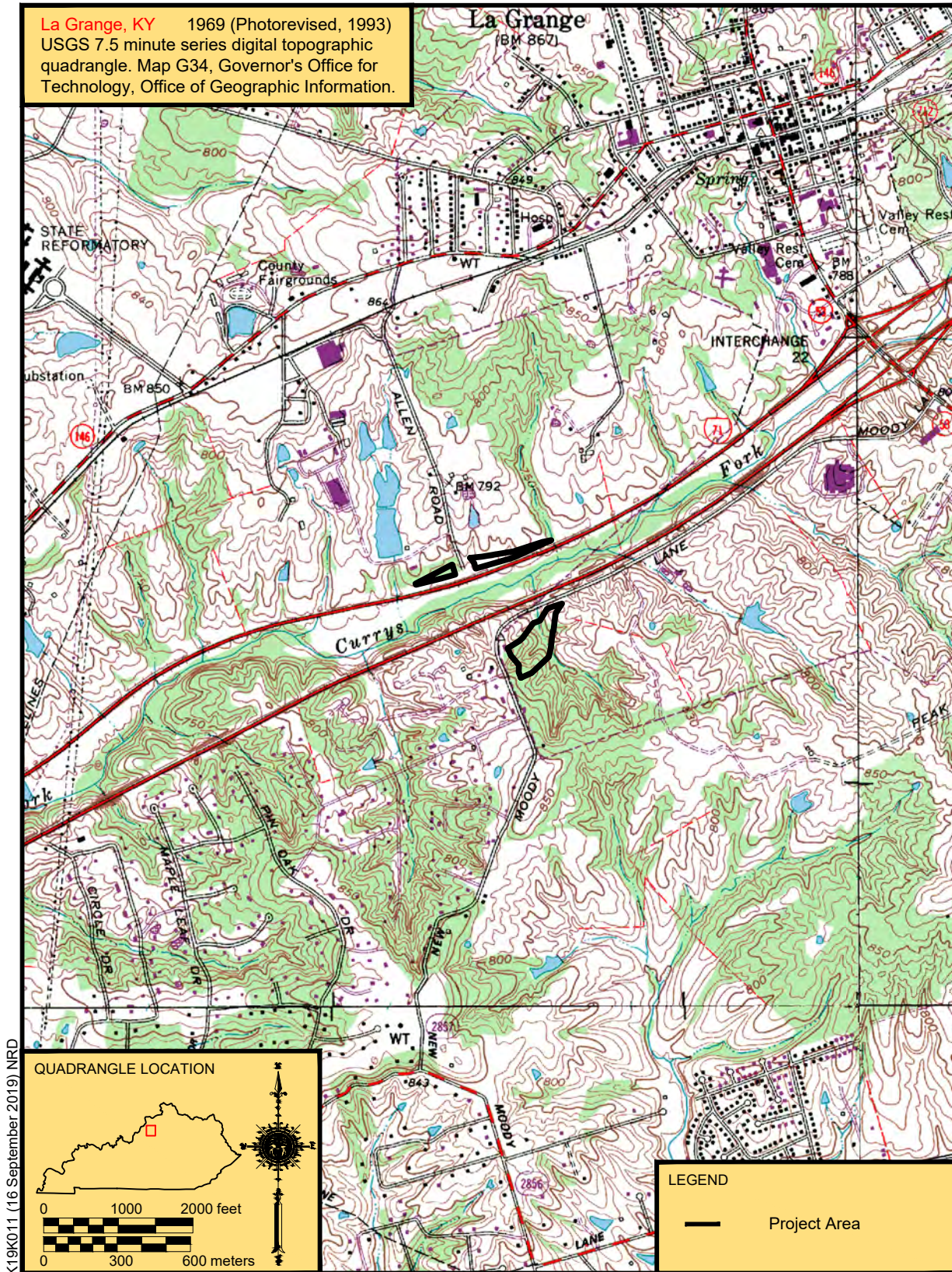
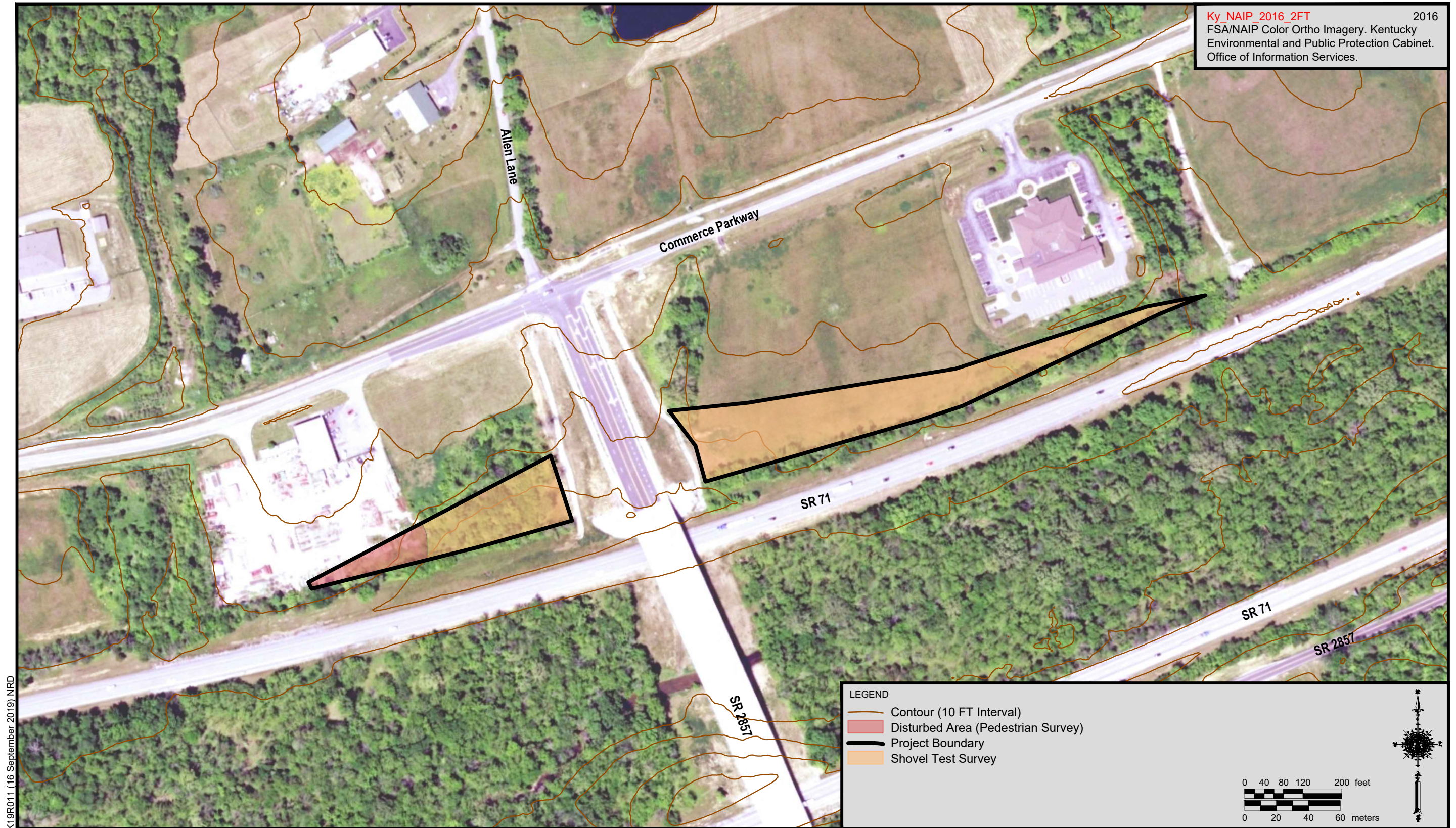


Figure 2. Location of project area on topographic quadrangle.



K19R011 (16 September 2019) NRD

Figure 3a. Project area plan map.



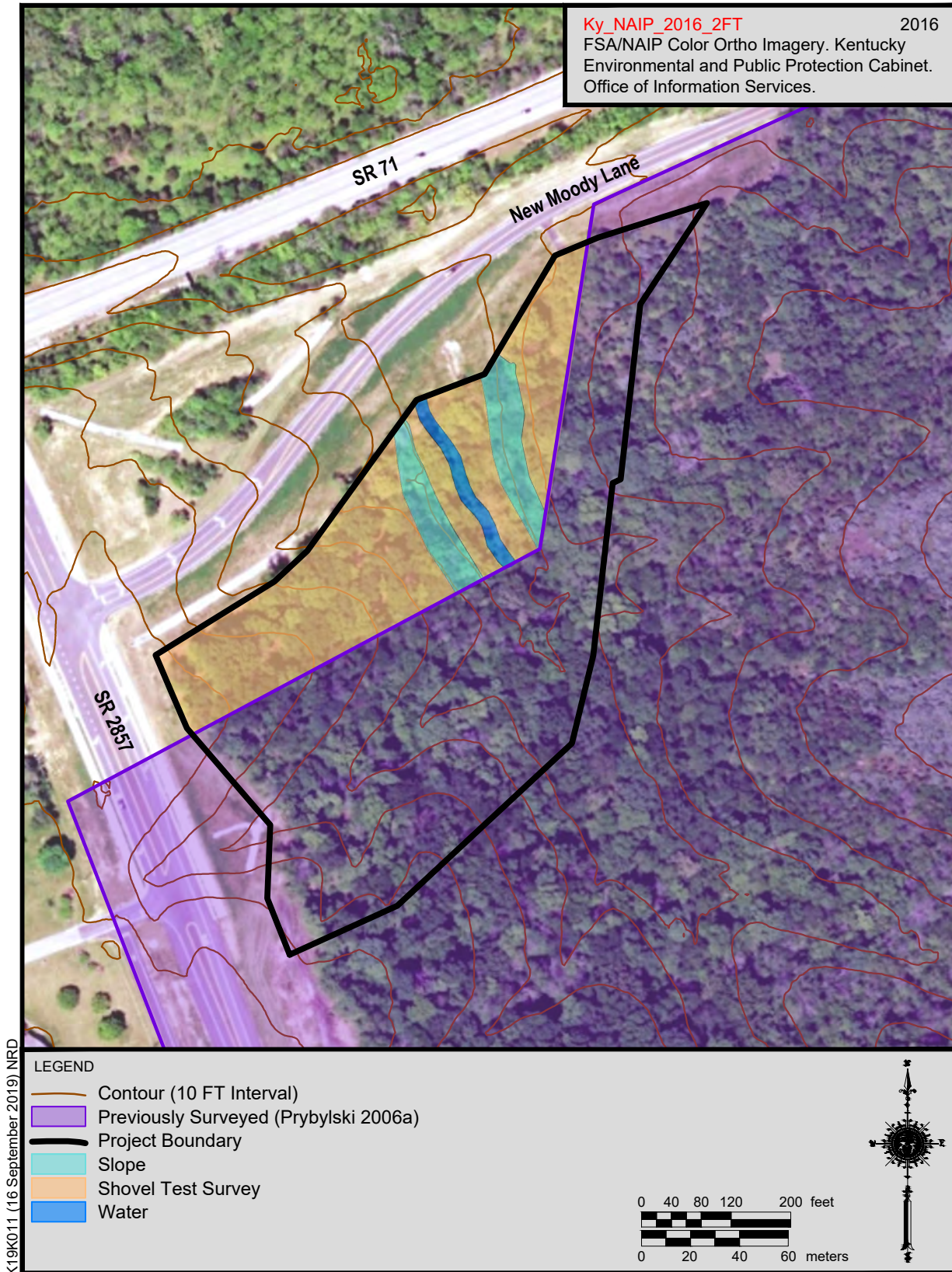


Figure 3b. Project area plan map.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT AREA

The project area is located approximately 2.22 km (1.38 mi) southwest of LaGrange, Kentucky. It is located along I-71, between Commerce Parkway to the north and Meadowbrook Drive to the south (see Figures 2 and 3). It is 4.2 ha (10.5 acres) in size, 2.7 ha (6.8 acres) of which has been previously surveyed. Elevations in the project area range from 223 m (730 ft) above mean sea level (AMSL) to 238 m (780 ft) AMSL. The Salt River and its tributaries drain the project area.

The project area consisted of three sections. The northwest section consisted of a dense gravel parking area with metal container sheds and vehicles (Figure 4), and a young deciduous forest with some undergrowth and no ground surface visibility (Figure 5). The northeast section consisted of a grass field (Figure 6) and a forest of young deciduous and coniferous trees with

dense undergrowth (Figure 7). There was no ground surface visibility in either the field or the forest. While the east edge of the forest sloped down to a drainage, the rest of the northeast section was level. The south section consisted of a deciduous forest, which ranged from level to steeply sloped, with little undergrowth (Figure 8). There was no ground surface visibility within the forest. A tributary of Currys Fork extended through the project area. The project area has been disturbed by construction activities, logging, and landscaping.

Four soil series (Beasley, Crider, Lindsie, and Nicholson) have been defined in the project area. The soil series are classified by the amount of time it has taken them to form and the landscape position they are found on (Birkeland 1984; Soil Survey Staff 1999). This information can provide a relative age of the soils and can express the potential for buried archaeological deposits within them (Stafford 2004). The soil order and group classifications for each soil series are used to assist with determining this potential.



Figure 4. Gravel parking area in northwest section of the project area, facing west.



Figure 5. Forest in northwest section of the project area, facing north.



Figure 6. Grass field in northeast section of the project area, facing east.



Figure 7. Forest with dense undergrowth in northeast section of the project area, facing east.



Figure 8. Forest in south section of the project area, facing southwest.



The Beasley series consists of deep, well-drained soils that formed in residuum from soft calcareous shale, siltstone, and limestone. They are found on ridgetops and hillsides. A typical Beasley profile shows an Ap horizon of dark grayish brown (10YR 4/2) silt loam extending to 18 cm (7 in) below ground surface (bgs). Below that is a Bt horizon of yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) silty clay extending to 58 cm (23 in) bgs (Soil Survey Staff 2019). The Beasley series is classified as an Alfisol, which only has archaeological deposits on or near the ground surface (Soil Survey Staff 1999).

The Crider series consists of very deep, well-drained soils that formed in a loess mantle and the underlying residuum from limestone. They are found on nearly level to moderately steep uplands. A typical Crider profile shows an Ap horizon of brown (10YR 4/3) silt loam extending to 20 cm (8 in) bgs. Below that is a Bt1 horizon of brown (7.5YR 4/4) silt loam extending to 30 cm (12 in) bgs. Below that is a Bt2 horizon of brown (7.5YR 4/4) silt loam with common distinct brown (7.5YR 4/3) clay films on faces of peds and common black (7.5YR 2.5/1) manganese concretions extending to 61 cm (24 in) bgs (Soil Survey Staff 2019). The Crider series is classified as an Alfisol, which only has archaeological deposits on or near the ground surface (Soil Survey Staff 1999).

The Lindsides series consists of deep or very deep, moderately well-drained soils that formed from alluvium derived from limestone and/or calcareous sedimentary rocks on hills. They are found on floodplains. A typical Lindsides profile shows an Ap horizon of dark grayish brown (10YR 4/2) silt loam extending to 20 cm (8 in) bgs. Below that is a BA horizon of brown (10YR 4/3) silt loam extending to 43 cm (17 in) bgs. Below that is a Bw horizon of brown (10YR 4/3) silty clay loam with many fine and medium prominent yellowish red (5YR 4/6) masses of oxidized iron and few fine and medium faint grayish brown (10YR 5/2) iron depletions extending to 75 cm (30 in) bgs (Soil Survey Staff 2019). The Lindsides series is classified as an Inceptisol and may have deeply buried and intact archaeological deposits, depending on the landform on which it formed (Soil Survey Staff 1999), although there is little chance of such

deposits in the project area due to the presence of manganese in the subsoil of the shovel tests excavated in this area.

The Nicholson series consists of very deep, moderately well-drained soils that formed in a loess/silty material mantle underlain by a residuum of limestone, calcareous shale, and siltstone. They are found on nearly level to rolling upland ridgetops and shoulderslopes. A typical Nicholson profile shows an Ap horizon of brown (10YR 4/3) silt loam extending to 20 cm (8 in) bgs. Below that is a Bt1 horizon of brown (7.5YR 4/4) silt loam with few fine black (N2.5/0) manganese concretions extending to 56 cm (22 in) bgs (Soil Survey Staff 2019). The Nicholson series is classified as an Alfisol, which means archaeological deposits will only be found on or near the ground surface (Soil Survey Staff 1999).

The shovel tests excavated during the survey showed several different profiles. The north side showed a profile of brown (10YR 5/3) silt loam with manganese extending to 10 cm (4 in) bgs, on top of a yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) silt loam with manganese extending to 23 cm (9 in) bgs, on top of a yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) silty clay loam with manganese that was terminated at 35 cm (14 in) bgs. The high, level areas in the southern forest showed a profile of very pale brown (10YR 7/4) silt loam extending to 23 cm (9 in) bgs, on top of a strong brown (7.5YR 5/6) silt loam that was terminated at 33 cm (13 in) bgs. The low area next to the tributary in the southern forest showed a profile of yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) silt loam with very pale brown (10YR 7/4) mottles extending to 23 cm (9 in) bgs, on top of a light olive yellow (2.5Y 5/4) silty clay loam with manganese that was terminated at 50 cm (20 in) bgs. None of these profiles are consistent with any of the mapped soil series within the project area, indicating that the project area has been disturbed. Due to the presence of manganese in the subsoil next to the tributary and in the area mapped as the Lindsides soil series, no bucket augers were excavated.

# III. RESULTS OF THE FILE AND RECORDS SEARCH AND SURVEY PREDICTIONS

## Previous Research in Oldham County

Prior to initiating fieldwork, a search of records maintained by the NRHP (available online at: <http://nrhp.focus.nps.gov/natreghome.do?searchtype=natreghome>) and the OSA (FY19-9860) was conducted to: 1) determine if the project area had been previously surveyed for archaeological resources; 2) identify any previously recorded archaeological sites that were situated within the project area; 3) provide information concerning what archaeological resources could be expected within the project area; and 4) provide a context for any archaeological resources recovered within the project area. A search of the NRHP records indicated that no archaeological sites listed on the NRHP were situated within the current project area or within a 2.0 km (1.2 mi) radius of the project area. The OSA file search was conducted between November 27, 2018, and January 8, 2019. The work at OSA consisted of a review of professional survey reports and records of archaeological sites for an area encompassing a 2 km radius of the project footprint. To further characterize the archaeological resources in the general area, the OSA archaeological site database for the county was reviewed and synthesized. The review of professional survey reports and archaeological site data in the county provided basic information on the types of archaeological resources that were likely to occur within the project area and the landforms that were most likely to contain these resources. The results are discussed below.

## Previous Archaeological Investigations

*Julia K.C. Gruhot*

OSA records revealed that eight previous professional archaeological survey investigations have been conducted within a 2 km radius of the

study area. Six archaeological sites have been recorded in this area also. One of the previous archaeological surveys is located partially within the study area (Prybylski 2006a).

The records search revealed that five of the six sites in the file search area (15O1120, 15O1121, 15O1131, 15O1132, and 15O1134) are historic farms/residences. The final site (15O1133) is a historic cemetery. None of these sites are within 2 km of the study area. The 2 km radius included areas within the La Grange, Kentucky-Indiana, quadrangle (United States Geological Survey [USGS] 1969 [revised 1993]).

On January 2 and 3, 1982, Biological Consultants conducted an archaeological survey at the request of Rankin-Presnell Associates that consisted of approximately 12,305 linear m (40,372 linear ft) for a proposed sewer line, and 4 ha (10 acres) for a proposed wastewater treatment center in Oldham County, Kentucky (Ball 1982). The field methods consisted of pedestrian and vehicular survey. No archaeological sites were found, and no further work was recommended.

During 1983, Philip J. DiBlasi and Jan Marie Hemberger conducted an archaeological survey at the request of Landmark Enterprises that consisted of 2.3 ha (5.7 acres) for a proposed apartment complex (DiBlasi and Hemberger 1983). The field methods consisted of visual examination of controlled plowing. No archaeological sites were found, and no further work was recommended.

Between September 5 and November 7, 1989, WAPORA, Inc., conducted an archaeological survey at the request of Texas Gas Transmission Corporation that consisted of approximately 100.0 km (62.5 mi) of proposed natural gas pipeline corridor in Breckinridge, Daviess, Hancock, Jefferson, Ohio, Oldham, and Trimble Counties, Kentucky (Bergman et al. 1989). The field methods consisted of pedestrian survey supplemented with shovel testing, which was occasionally screened in areas of high probability. One previously recorded site was revisited (15Jf233) and 11 new archaeological sites were recorded (15Bc166–15Bc169, 15Da165, 15Da166, 15Jf557–15Jf561). None of these archaeological sites are within the search radius for this project.

On March 17, 2000, CRA personnel completed an archaeological survey of a proposed industrial park access road between KY 393 and KY 53 in Oldham County, Kentucky (Reynolds 2000). The survey was conducted at the request of HMB, Inc., on behalf of the Oldham County Office of Economic Development. The project area consisted of approximately 25 ha (62 acres) of proposed surface disturbance, all of which was surveyed. The field methods consisted of pedestrian survey supplemented by shovel testing. No archaeological sites were discovered as a result of the field investigation, and no further work was recommended.

On September 11, 2000, CRA personnel completed a 21.3 ha (53.3 acre) archaeological assessment of the proposed Bluegrass Generating Facility near the community of La Grange in Oldham County, Kentucky (Wingfield 2000). The survey was conducted at the request of Harry S. Chen of Bluegrass Generation Company, LLC. Field methods consisted of an intensive pedestrian survey supplemented with the use of shovel testing. Two archaeological sites (15O1120 and 15O1121) were documented within 2 km of, but outside of, the current project area. These were both historic farms/residences and were recommended as ineligible for NRHP inclusion. Project clearance was recommended.

In 2006, Matthew E. Prybylski of AMEC Earth & Environmental conducted an archaeological survey at the request of Tetra Tech, Inc., that consisted of 414 ha (1,023 acres) for the Oldham County Economic Development Authority Campus (Prybylski 2006a). Field methods consisted of an intensive pedestrian survey supplemented with screened shovel testing. Four archaeological sites (15O1131–15O1134) were documented within 2 km of, but outside of, the current project area. Sites 15O1131, 15O1132, and 15O1134 were historic farms/residences and 15O1133 was the James Head family cemetery. Sites 15O1131 and 15O1132 were recommended as not eligible for NRHP inclusion, Site 15O1133 was recommended as eligible for inclusion in the NRHP, but was not nominated by the State Historic Preservation Office, and the NRHP status for Site 15O1134 was not assessed at the

time of the survey. This 414 ha block survey covered a portion of the current project area south of I-71.

On June 6, 2006, AMEC Earth & Environmental personnel conducted an archaeological survey of a proposed parkway within the Eden Park Development, La Grange, Kentucky (Prybylski 2006b). The survey was conducted at the request of Tetra Tech, Inc., and consisted of approximately 43 ha (106 acres). The field methods included pedestrian survey supplemented by screened shovel testing. No archaeological sites were discovered as a result of the field investigation, and no further work was recommended.

On July 19 and 20, 2011, CRA personnel conducted an archaeological survey for the proposed Phase 2A Waterline Improvements in Oldham County, Kentucky (Kelley 2011). The survey was conducted at the request of Johnathan Thomas of GRW Engineers, Inc., on behalf of the Oldham County Water District (Permit No. 2011-22). The project area consisted of approximately 16.5 ha (40.7 acres). A portion of the project area had been previously surveyed in 2006 and covered approximately 5.0 ha (12.4 acres). The remaining 11.5 ha (28.4 acres) were investigated via pedestrian survey supplemented with screened shovel testing. No archaeological sites were encountered and project clearance was recommended.

## Archaeological Site Data

The OSA records show that prior to this records review, 92 archaeological sites had been recorded in Oldham County (Table 1). The data indicated that the majority of archaeological sites consist of open habitations without mounds (n = 54; 58.70 percent). Other site types found include historic farms/residences (n = 22; 23.91 percent), undetermined (n = 8; 8.70 percent), cemeteries (n = 5; 5.43 percent), earth mounds (n = 2; 2.17 percent), and other (n = 1; 1.09 percent).

These sites are found on a variety of landforms, including dissected uplands (n = 59; 64.13 percent), floodplains (n = 15; 16.30 percent), undissected uplands (n = 10; 10.87 percent), terraces (n = 4; 4.35 percent), hillsides (n = 3; 3.26 percent), and unspecified (n = 1; 1.09

percent). These sites represent a variety of time periods, including Archaic (n = 17; 16.67 percent), Woodland (n = 7; 6.86 percent), Late Prehistoric (n = 3; 2.94 percent), Indeterminate Prehistoric (n = 44; 43.14 percent), Historic (n = 30; 29.41 percent), and unspecified (n = 1; 0.98 percent).

## Map Data

In addition to the file search, a review of available maps was initiated to help identify potential historic properties (structures) or historic archaeological site locations within the study area. The following maps were reviewed.

1879 Atlas of Jefferson and Oldham Counties (Beers and Lanagan 1879)

1925 Map of Oldham County (Kentucky Geological Survey [KGS] 1925)

1929 Map of the Areal and Structural Geology of Oldham County, Kentucky (KGS 1929)

1932 La Grange, Kentucky-Indiana, 15-minute series topographic quadrangle (USGS 1932)

1942 General Highway Map of Oldham County, Kentucky (Kentucky Department of Highways [KDOH] 1942)

1954 La Grange, Kentucky-Indiana, 7.5-minute series topographic quadrangle (USGS 1954)

1955 General Highway Map of Oldham County, Kentucky (KDOH 1955)

The historic maps show one Map Structure (MS 1) near the study area. MS 1 is first depicted, outside the project area, on the 1929 (KGS 1929) map (Figure 9). MS 1 is also depicted on the 1932, 1942, 1954, and 1955 maps (USGS 1932, KDOH 1942, USGS 1954, and KDOH 1955). Further review of other topographic maps and aerial photos (Nationwide Environmental Title Research 2019) showed that MS 1, likely a residence, was standing until sometime between 1969 and 1998, when it was demolished and a new residence was constructed in the same location (Figure 10). No artifacts were found in the shovel tests excavated near this location.

## Survey Predictions

Considering the known distribution of sites in the county, the available information on site types recorded, and the nature of the present project area, certain predictions were possible regarding the kinds of sites that might be encountered within the project area. Prehistoric open habitations without mounds were the primary site type expected, as it is the most common site type found in Oldham County. A historic farm/residence was also considered a possibility due to the historic map structure near the project area.

## IV. FIELD METHODS

The project consisted of an archaeological survey of 1.5 ha (3.7 acres) of new and previously unsurveyed ROW along I-71 in Oldham County, Kentucky (see Figures 2 and 3). The boundaries of the project area were determined using maps provided by the client and a handheld user interface equipped with Collector for ArcGIS.

Table 1. Summary of Selected Information for Previously Recorded Sites in Oldham County. Data Obtained from OSA and May Contain Coding Errors.

Site Type:	n	%
Cemetery	5	5.43
Earth Mound	2	2.17
Historic Farm/Residence	22	23.91
Open Habitation without Mounds	54	58.70
Other	1	1.09
Undetermined	8	8.70
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Time Periods Represented	n	%
Archaic	17	16.67
Woodland	7	6.86
Late Prehistoric	3	2.94
Indeterminate Prehistoric	44	43.14
Historic	30	29.41
Unspecified	1	0.98
<b>Total</b>	<b>102*</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Landform	n	%
Dissected Uplands	59	64.13
Floodplain	15	16.30
Hillside	3	3.26
Terrace	4	4.35
Undissected Uplands	10	10.87
Unspecified	1	1.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\*One site may represent more than one time period.

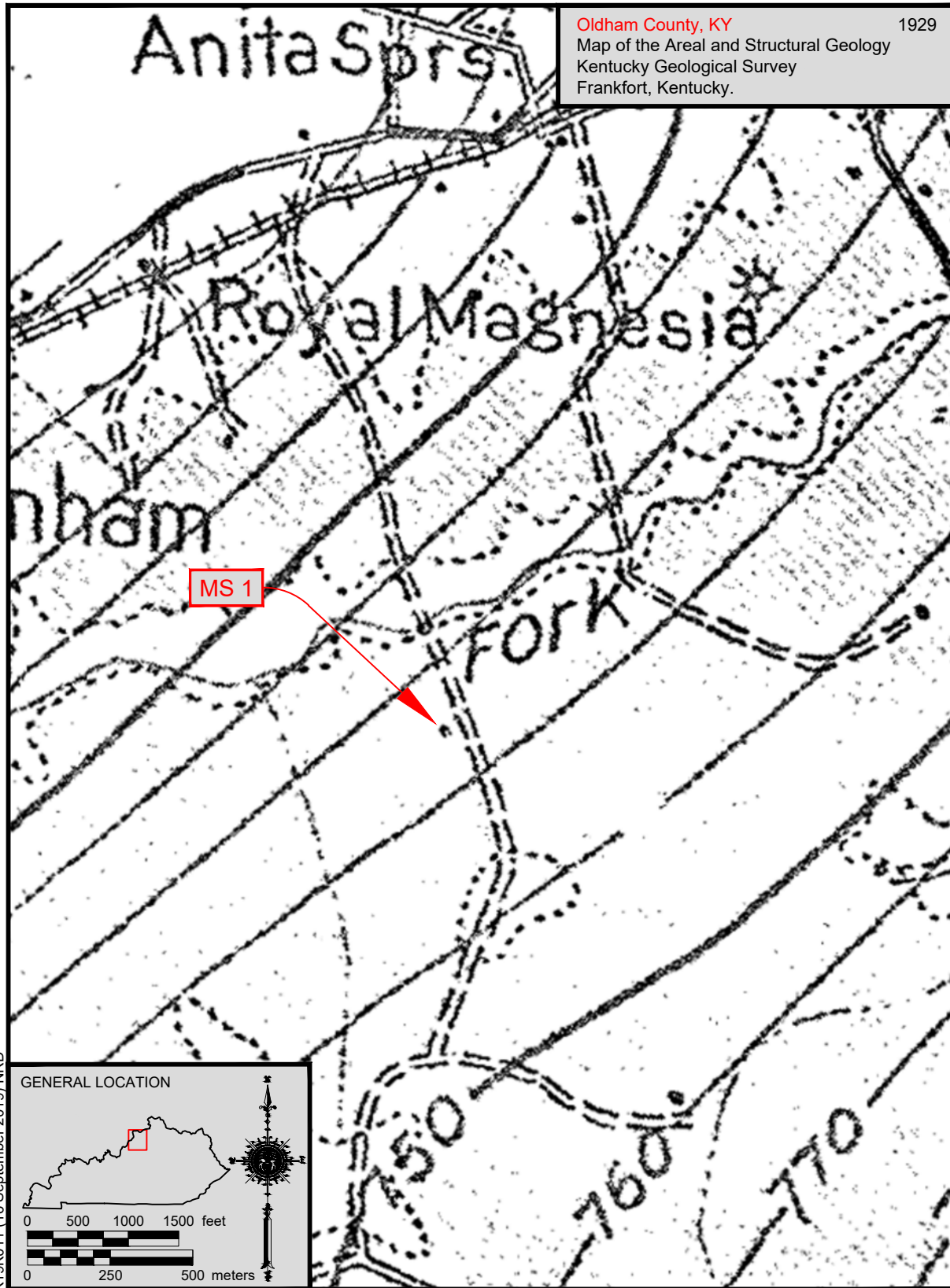


Figure 9. 1929 map (KGS 1929) depicting MS 1.



Figure 10. Modern residence in MS 1 location, facing east.

Approximately 2.7 ha (6.8 acres) of the project area had been previously surveyed to current SHPO standards (Prybylski 2006a). The unsurveyed portions of the project area, approximately 1.5 ha (3.7 acres), were subjected to intensive pedestrian survey supplemented with screened shovel testing. Level and gently sloping areas (slope less than 15 percent) were shovel tested at 20 m (66 ft) intervals. Each shovel test measured no less than 35 cm (14 in) in diameter and was excavated well into subsoil. All sediments were screened through 0.64 cm (0.25 in) mesh hardware cloth, and the sidewalls and bottoms of each shovel test were examined for cultural materials and features, though none were found. When shovel testing near a map structure location, the shovel test interval was reduced to 10 m (33 ft).

Steeply sloped areas (slope greater than 15 percent) were walked over at 20 m (66 ft) intervals and visually inspected for rock outcrop, geologic overhangs, and natural benches, though none were identified. The disturbed area in the

northwest section of the project area was walked over and visually examined for archaeological cultural material and features, though none were identified.

## V. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Note that a principal investigator or field investigator cannot grant clearance to a project. Although the decision to grant or withhold clearance is based, at least in part, on the recommendations made by the field investigator, clearance may be obtained only through an administrative decision made by the lead federal agency in consultation with the SHPO (the Kentucky Heritage Council [KHC]).

All unsurveyed portions of the project area were subjected to intensive pedestrian survey supplemented with screened shovel testing. No archaeological sites were recorded as a result of

this survey. No archaeological sites listed in or eligible for the NRHP will be affected by the proposed construction activities. Therefore, archaeological clearance is recommended.

If any previously unrecorded archaeological materials are encountered during construction activities, the KHC should be notified immediately at (502) 564-7005. Furthermore, if human skeletal material is discovered, construction activities should cease and the KHC, the local coroner, and the local law enforcement agency must be notified, as described in KRS 72.020.

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