

Special Scoping Study of Archaeological Sites
in the Proposed Realignment Corridor
for KY 30, Jackson and Owsley Counties, Kentucky

by

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ABSTRACT

Wilbur Smith Associates prepared an overview study of archaeological sites located in reconstruction corridor of KY 30 Corridor in Jackson and Owsley Counties, Kentucky. The work was conducted under contract to Palmer Engineering, Winchester, KY. The proposed realignments of KY 30 from US 421 at Tyner in Jackson County to KY 11 just west of Booneville in Owsley County for a total project length of about 18 miles.

This overview summarizes available documentation for archaeological sites currently documented within or near the proposed corridor. These data were compiled from existing Office of State Archaeology data files and are current as of this writing. The collection of this kind of information prior to selecting an alignment for the proposed relocation will facilitate the completion of base studies for any future environmental documents that are likely to be needed for the project to proceed, and will reduce the number of resources requiring evaluation.

A Phase I archaeological survey is recommended for the selected alignment.

Introduction & Purpose of the Study

This study was requested by the KTC to document existing archaeological sites within the proposed relocation of KY 30 in Jackson and Owsley Counties, KY (Figure 1). The objective of this study is to establish the known site locations, identify the kinds of sites, and discover if any of these are considered eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Most archaeological sites are documented as part of the Section 106 legislation, and those sites found not to be eligible are often destroyed in whole or in part by the federal undertaking.

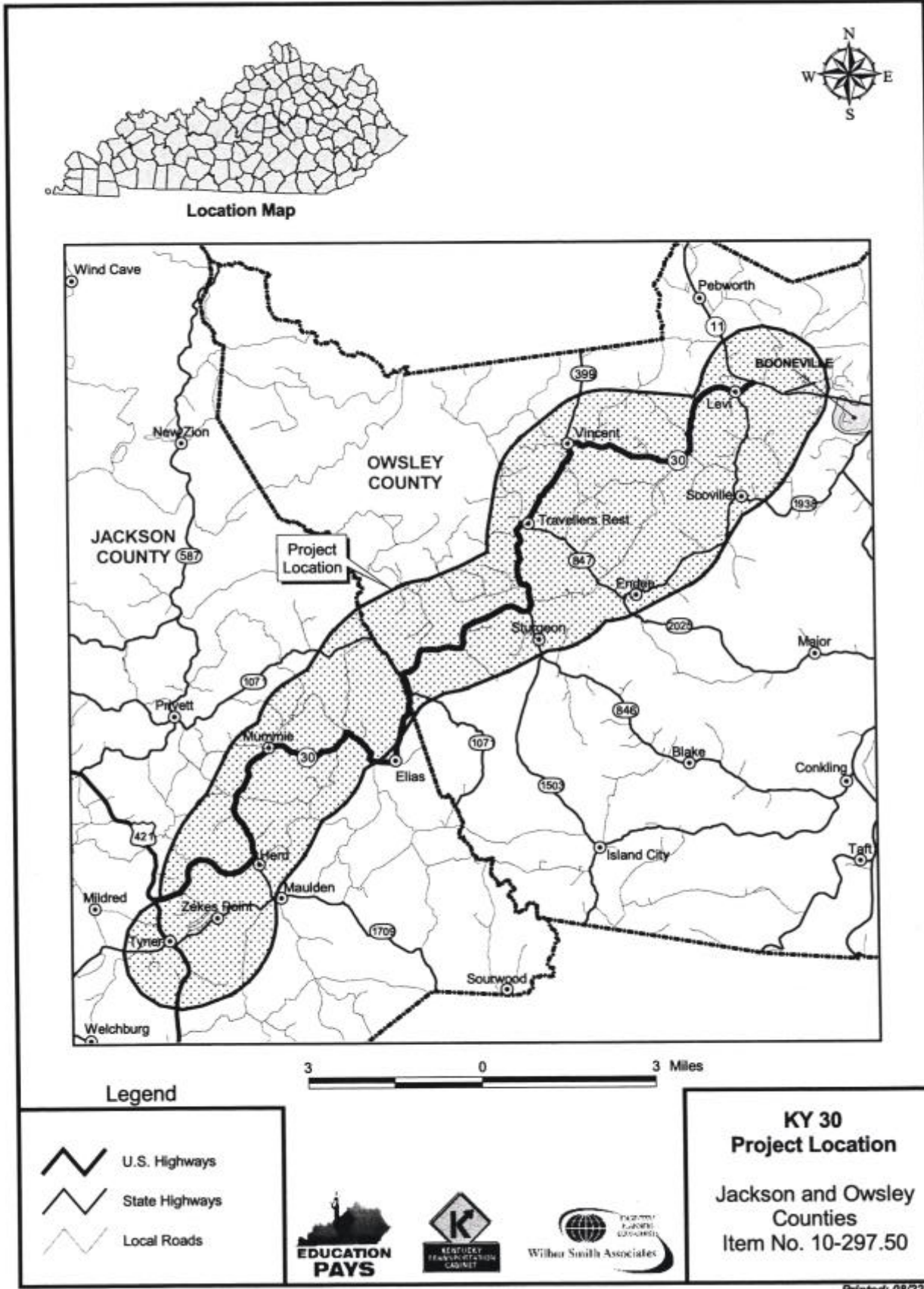
This first tier study will reduce or eliminate redundant studies necessary for the production of the final environmental document for this project. Because this study is at an overview level, it will only identify and document known archaeological sites within and adjacent to the project area, and does not serve as a National Register evaluation document. This study is not intended for SHPO compliance and review and does not meet the standards for such documentation.

Scope of Work

The scope of work states that the study should document archaeological sites within the corridor and obtain archaeological information from the Office of State Archaeology. No field work was conducted to assess if archaeological sites are still preserved. This phase of the study can be conducted on a preferred alternate when a Phase I archaeological survey will likely be conducted. Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), the location and known boundaries of archaeological sites are presented with respect to the proposed project corridor.

Project Description

The existing KY 30 corridor is a narrow, two lane, winding roadway through mountainous terrain with little or no shoulder. Due to geometric deficiencies in the roadway such as poor



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Figure 1.1

sight distance, vertical and horizontal curves, poor grades and blind entrances, speeds from 15 to 45 mph are required for driving. The proposed project is the reconstruction of KY 30 from US 421 at Tyner in Jackson County to KY 11 just west of Booneville in Owsley County. The study corridor is approximately 1000 ft (0.3 km) on either side of alignment Alternates A, B, and C (see Figure 1.1).

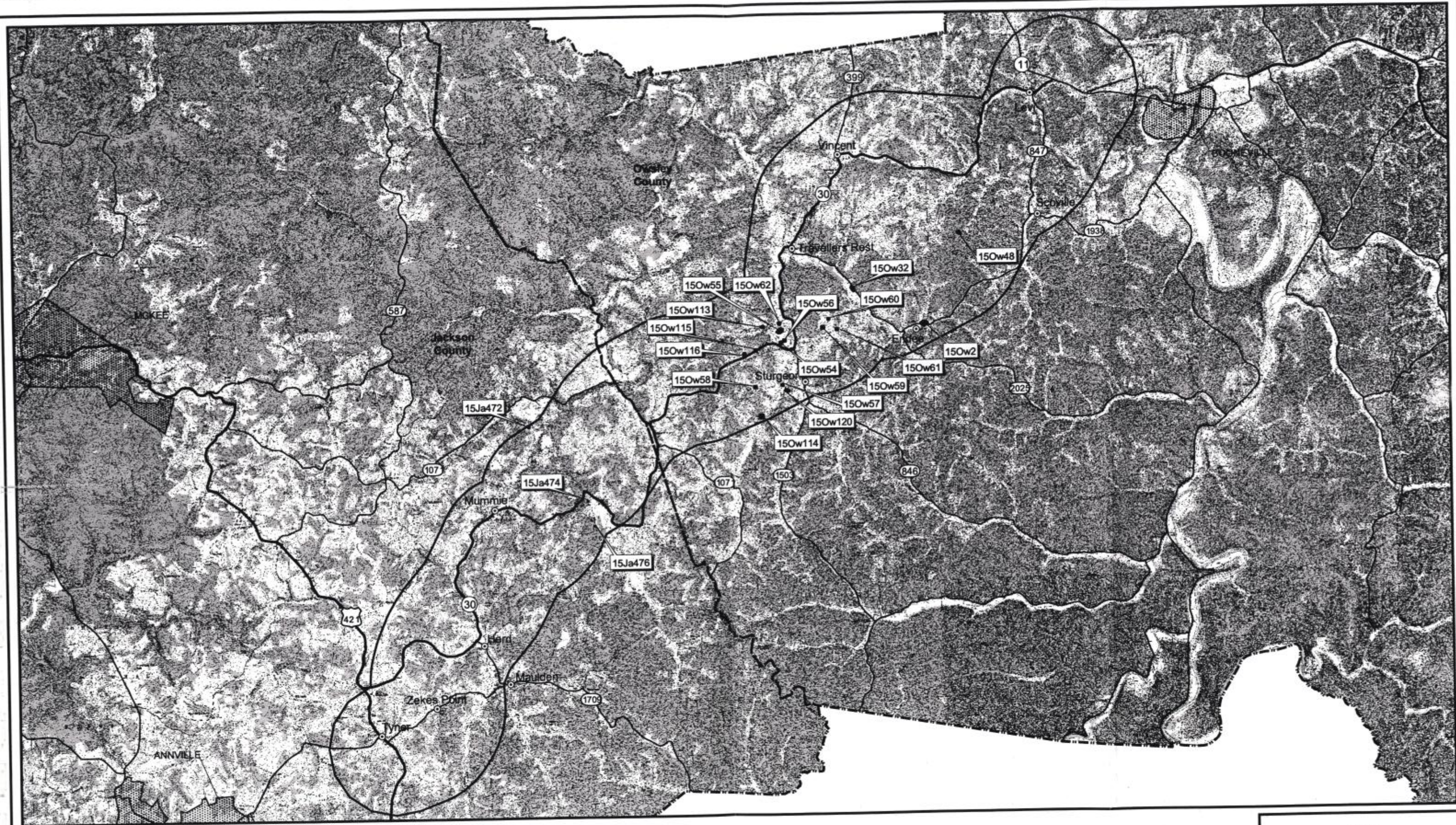
There are several purposes for this project. Primarily, the project would provide better access to the interstate highway system and safer driving conditions along KY 30, which creates an additional benefit in travel time savings for local residents traveling to work, shopping centers, and medical facilities. Truck access to and from local industries would be greatly improved. Finally, the economic development this project would bring to local communities in the project area is very important

Research Methods

A visit to the Kentucky office of State Archaeology was made, to request digital data showing the existing records for sites in the project corridor. These records were then imported into the project GIS, so that they could be located with reference to the study region. No fieldwork or detailed archival research was conducted for this project.

Results

A request to the Office of State Archaeology at the University of Kentucky resulted in the identification of 13 archaeological sites within one mile (1 mile) of the proposed corridor. Figure 1.2 shows the location of each site, site boundaries when known, or in situations where site boundaries have not been established, a circle surrounding the reported data point. Table 1.1 presents the site information that was used to generate Figure 1.2. These data are discussed in the next section of this report.









-  Known Archaeological Sites
-  County Boundary
-  Project Location
-  U.S. Highways
-  Corporate Boundary
-  State Roads



Figure 1.2



KY 30
Archaeological Sites
 Jackson and Owsley Counties
 Item No. 10-297.50

Table 1.1 Archaeological Sites Documented in the Study Area, Jackson and Owsley Counties, KY

SITE	UTM E.	UTM N.	E. Archaic	L. Archaic	E. Woodland	HISTORIC	Indeterminate	ELEVATION	AREA (sq m)
15Ow2	256520	4146049							
15Ow32	254846	4147006		1				900	2100
15Ow48	257496	4148190				1		1040	525
15Ow54	253034	4145799					1	995	5100
15Ow55	253022	4146095		1				1010	11550
15Ow56	253121	4145852					1	1010	2500
15Ow57	253005	4144782				1		1010	645
15Ow58	252345	4144777				1		1010	10000
15Ow59	254065	4146107				1		1010	10000
15Ow60	254214	4146309				1		1005	1600
15Ow61	254402	4146044				1		1000	1600
15Ow62	253024	4146276				1		880	1600
15Ow113	252619	4146213				1		980	20000
15Ow114	252452	4144054				1	1	920	8000
15Ow115	252417	4145659				1		980	320
15Ow116	252138	4145566				1		1020	6500
15Ow120	253106	4144642				1		950	1200
15Ja472	246800	4144165	1				1	980	1565
15Ja474	248116	4142311					1	960	295
15Ja476	248243	4141697		1	1	1	1	960	760
Total			1	3	1	13	6		

Discussion

A total of 20 archaeological sites are recorded within 1 mile of the proposed corridor. Of these 20 sites, 13 of them have historic components, and most of these are dwelling or farmstead sites. Most documented sites are at elevations between 900 ft amsl and 1010 ft amsl, reflecting habitation on the ridge tops in this region, as valleys are steep and narrow. Prehistoric sites are also recorded in the region, but not many have been documented.

Known sites include a single Early Archaic site, three Late Archaic sites, and a Woodland site. Several sites are indeterminate.

None of these sites are documented as having been assessed for National Register Eligibility.

The database for Owsley county is very limited, reflecting the fact that little work has been conducted in the county. In contrast, there are more than 500 sites recorded in Jackson County, reflecting the efforts of Cultural Resource and Heritage managers in the Daniel Boone National Forest Proclaimed Boundary area.

Conclusions

The number of sites recorded in Owsley County is very small, reflecting a lack of survey work, rather than an absence of sites (based on comparison with neighboring Jackson County). Any federally supported undertaking in the project region is likely to involve the discovery of numerous sites, particularly on ridgetops, and in many of the sandstone cliff lines and overhangs. Such sites will likely require intensive investigation if they have not been previously destroyed by looting (a significant problem in Jackson County).

Recommendations

Phase I archaeological survey work should be conducted in the project corridor. The work should focus on the valley bottoms where streams are located, on valley tops where overhangs and rockshelters likely contain sites, and along broader ridge tops where historic occupations have occurred. Efforts should also be made to contact the Kentucky Speleological Survey to assess if there are caves in the region where historic or prehistoric sites are located.

Summary

Research conducted at the Office of State Archaeology identified a small number of sites in the project region. There appears to be a serious under-enumeration of sites base don the much higher number of sites recorded in neighboring Jackson county, where Daniel Boone National Forest archaeologists have recorded many historic and prehistoric sites. Phase I survey focusing on ridge tops, valley bottoms, caves and rockshelters should be conducted, with some effort to contact local informants and knowledgeable individuals to ensure a thorough survey is conducted of this complex terrain.