

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 10 presents an overview of the conditions of sites examined during this survey and recommendations for future work on the sites. The project has provided a preliminary evaluation of the number and type of prehistoric and historic archaeological resources along the middle Salt Fork of the Arkansas River and tributaries in Grant and Kay counties. In most cases, current site status is only approximated from surface conditions. There was very little subsurface testing, and evidence of soil deposition suggests that buried cultural deposits may be preserved on low terraces, high terraces, and possibly some upland ridges. Some of the survey area is currently in use as pasture although many fields are cultivated. Also, most of the terraces along the river and creeks have been cleared and plowed in the past. Uplands in the study area are frequently plowed or have been plowed and occasionally terraced at some time, although some sloping areas near creeks are in pasture. Other disturbances to prehistoric and early historic sites include house construction, roads, oil production, and movement of the river and creeks. Oil production has not been a significant factor in the middle part of the Salt Fork and house construction in this area is minimal; current populations appear to be concentrating in or near the towns. Movement of the Salt Fork River and its larger tributaries is a constant activity that results in erosion of the stream banks and removal of sites situated on terraces near the streams. The current channels of creeks in the study area appear to be fairly stable and stream erosion is currently minimal. Road construction has impacted a few sites, primarily around bridges crossing the creeks. The buried cultural deposit at GT31 was noted only

after the cutting of a low water crossing resulted in a deep cut bank along Pond Creek. This site is now subject to increased erosion during heavy rains and high creek flow.

Ground visibility was generally very good during the survey. During initial work, plowing and rain resulted in excellent ground exposure in most fields resulting in increased artifact visibility. Densities of materials, however, were relatively low given this good exposure. Later in the project, the growth of winter wheat provided less ground visibility, although conditions remained good in most fields. Pastures were probably optimal for surveying during the winter and early spring, although dense dead grasses and forbs limited visibility in some areas. Locating sites was improved due to the general lack of stone of any kind in much of the surveyed area. Small gravel deposits exist on some of the high terraces and upland slopes, but low terraces have virtually no natural gravels or other stone. Thus, fields could be easily examined until any lithic item or other material was found. These items usually indicated some activity by people, although trash and some stone were frequently related to modern farming or other late historic activities. In general, survey conditions in the winter and early spring of 1999/2000 were good for this area, but more extensive subsurface testing is needed to evaluate the type of occupation or the time period represented at many sites.

Probably the greatest hindrance to understanding the culture history of this area is our uncertainty of the prehistoric site sample. We concentrated surveys near major streams, thus biasing the sample. But even

Table 10. Recommendations for sites examined during the Salt Fork survey.

Site #	Site Type	Disturbances	Preservation	Recommendation
GT3A	Village/Base Camp	Plowing, erosion	Good	ENR
GT3B	Camp	Plowing, erosion	Good	Test
GT3C	Camp	Plowing, erosion	Good	Test
GT4A	Base Camp?	Plowing, terracing, erosion	Fair-Good	Test
GT4B	Base Camp?	Plowing, terracing, erosion	Fair-Good	Test
GT5	Base Camp?	Plowing, terracing, erosion	Fair-Good	Test
GT8	Base Camp	Plowing, erosion	Good	Test
GT9	Village/Base Camp	Plowing, terracing	Fair-Good	ENR
GT31	Camp	Road construction	Good, buried	ENR
GT32	Base Camp?	Plowing	Good	Test
GT33A	Camp	Plowing	Good	Test
GT33B	Camp	Plowing	Good	Test
GT34	Historic Farmstead	Plowing, structures gone	Fair	NFW
GT35	Historic Farmstead	Structures deteriorating	Good	NFW
GT36	Camp	Plowing, terracing, erosion	Good	Test
GT37	Camp	Plowing	Good	Test
GT38	Historic Store	Plowing, structures gone	Poor	NFW
GT39	Historic Cemetery	Overgrown with weeds	Good	Grave Markers Recorded, NFW
GT40	Camp	Plowing, erosion	Fair	Test
GT41	Historic Farmstead	Plowing, erosion, structures gone	Poor	NFW
GT42	Historic Farmstead	Plowing, structures gone	Poor	NFW
GT43	Historic Farmstead	Plowing, structures gone	Fair	NFW
GT44	Historic Farmstead	Plowing, partial destruction of structures	Fair	NFW
KA160	Camp	Plowing	Fair-Good	Test
KA402	Camp	Plowing	Good	Test
KA403	Historic	Plowing, structures gone	Poor	NFW

Site #	Site Type	Disturbances	Preservation	Recommendation
	Farmstead			
KA404	Camp	Plowing	Good	Test
KA405	Camp	Erosion, road construction	Good	Test
KA406	Camp	Plowing, erosion	Good	Test
KA407	Historic Dugout	Undisturbed but for some digging	Good	Test
KA408	Camp	Erosion	Fair-Good	Test
KA409	Base Camp	Plowing, trailer house	Good	Test
KA410	Base Camp/Historic Farmstead	Plowing, erosion, no standing structures	Good	Test
KA411	Camp	Plowing, erosion	Good	Test
KA412	Camp	Plowing, erosion	Good	Test
KA413	Camp	Plowing, terracing, erosion	Good	Test
KA414	Camp	Plowing, erosion	Good	Test
KA415	Historic Farmstead	Plowing, structures gone	Poor	NFW
KA416	Historic Farmstead	Plowing, partial destruction of structures	Fair	NFW
KA417	Historic Farmstead	Plowing, structures gone	Poor	NFW

ENR = Evaluate for National Register status; NFW = No further work recommended; Test = subsurface investigation of the extent and density of cultural deposits to further evaluate the site.

in these settings, we suspect that the sites recorded by the survey represent only a small portion of all prehistoric occupations. Soil deposition and erosion are the two main factors that influence the number of sites recorded. There was little time for significant subsurface testing during the survey, but cut banks and other exposures were examined to determine the extent of buried cultural deposits. Based on the limited testing and on bank cuts, it appears that even the largest and latest prehistoric components, Woodland or Plains Village sites, are often buried on the low terraces along the middle Salt Fork River and its major tributaries. There is some evidence for movement of the river and streams into

terraces and possible destruction of sites. Most of the prehistoric sites examined during the survey, however, do not appear to have been impacted by this type of erosion. The presence of deeply buried soils in all bottomland settings examined suggests that early camps related to Woodland, Archaic, and probably Paleo-Indian occupations may exist at depths from 50 cm to well over 20 meters. The presence of a cultural deposit dated to the Late Prehistoric period and buried 3 meters beneath the surface indicates that even the latest prehistoric sites could be concealed on terraces of the Salt Fork and its tributaries. The buried soils found in the Salt Fork valley need much more extensive testing and evaluation to identify these

buried cultural materials and determine the potential for intact deposits in various settings. The presence of large, possibly multi-component sites on some ridges near tributaries is additional evidence that nearby bottomland settings should contain many camps.

Few collectors were identified during the project, but the two collections examined have contributed significant information on a few sites and contributed to the cultural-temporal placement of sites in Grant and Kay counties. It is interesting that few individuals have, apparently, collected in this area, and landowners typically suggest that no prehistoric camps occurred here. This may result from the relatively low density of materials found at most sites. Collectors tended to have materials from ridge top sites or well-exposed terrace locations that may have been repeatedly occupied. Although artifact densities are generally low at sites, the number of tools relative to debris appears to be fairly high at these camps (Table 11). Also, we found many isolated flakes or other artifacts scattered in well-exposed fields near the tributaries. The terraces of the Salt Fork were much less productive, possibly indicating more soil deposition near the river.

Many prehistoric sites recorded during this survey consist of chipped stone debitage, cores/tested cobbles, and/or other non-diagnostic tools and materials. Few of these sites appear to be highly disturbed and many of the camps are recommended for limited testing to evaluate the cultural deposits. Twenty-five prehistoric sites (includes subareas of sites such as GT3) are recommended for testing. Many of these have been tentatively designated as "camps" because of artifact density and the recovery

of few culturally or functionally diagnostic tools. Testing is needed to evaluate the context of the artifacts and determine if intact features exist. Some sites classified as camps may have significant buried cultural deposits and testing could result in reclassification to base camps or villages. Several sites appear to be base camps or villages but these also need to be evaluated to confirm the extent of occupation and identify buried features indicative of a base camp or village. This testing may also provide evidence on the use of the middle Salt Fork at various times (e.g. is the area only used as a seasonal hunting/gathering locale during the Woodland and Late Prehistoric periods?). In general, testing at the camps and base camps/villages is suggested to further evaluate the potential for buried cultural deposits and provide better information on activities, the extent of habitation, and periods of occupation. This information will allow some evaluation of the National Register potential.

Some of the village/base camps appear to have extensive cultural deposits and may warrant nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. These sites need sufficient testing to identify the context of the remaining deposits and determination of the potential for intact features. These sites are recommended for National Register evaluation. Site GT9 has had some previous excavation, but few features were discovered. Evaluation of the previous excavations and additional testing would be needed to determine if National Register nomination is possible for this site.

In addition to the site testing, extensive documentation of the buried soils is recommended in the Salt Fork valley. The potential for buried cultural deposits appears to be high given the common presence of

buried soils in stream and road cuts. Dating of buried soils and analyses of the processes of soil deposition and erosion should provide better clues to past environmental

conditions and use of the area by prehistoric groups. Testing of some locales may also reveal additional buried cultural deposits.

Table 11: Tool/Debitage ratios for Salt Fork sites.

Sites	Tools/Debitage	Tool % of Total
GT3A	6/128 = 0.047	6/134 = 4.48%
GT3B	2/6 = 0.333	2/8 = 25%
GT3C	3/1 = 3.0	3/4 = 75%
GT4A	4/16 = 0.25	4/20 = 20%
GT4B	5/31 = 0.161	5/36 = 13.89%
GT5	4/22 = 0.182	4/26 = 15.38%
GT8	12/62 = 0.194	12/74 = 16.22%
GT9	3/36 = 0.83	3/39 = 7.69%
GT31	8/16 = 0.5	8/24 = 33.33%
GT32	8/124 = 0.065	8/132 = 6.06%
GT33A	4/36 = 0.111	4/40 = 10%
GT33B	1/9 = 0.111	1/10 = 10%
GT36	5/25 = 0.2	5/30 = 16.67%
GT37	1/4 = 0.25	1/5 = 20%
GT40	1/4 = 0.25	1/5 = 20%
KA160	1/9 = 0.111	1/10 = 10%
KA402	0/2 = 0	0/2 = 0%
KA404	0/2 = 0	0/2 = 0%
KA405	3/3 = 1	3/6 = 50%
KA406	0/7 = 0	0/7 = 0%
KA408	0/8 = 0	0/8 = 0%
KA409	8/58 = 0.138	8/66 = 12.12%
KA410	4/12 = 0.333	4/16 = 25%
KA411	2/6 = 0.333	2/8 = 25%
KA412	1/5 = 0.2	1/6 = 16.67%
KA413	13/4 = 3.25	13/17 = 76.47%
KA414	1/13 = 0.077	1/14 = 7.14%
ISOLATES	4/17 = 0.235	4/21 = 19.05%

Most of the historic farmsteads are not preserved and no work is recommended on these sites. An exception is KA407, which is recommended for testing to evaluate National Register potential. This dugout may date to the pre-statehood era and it

could contain important information on early Euro-American activities. The dugout and related dugout features appear to be preserved in good condition. The only other significant historic property may be the potential early house site at KA410. The

historic material, however, appears to be scattered by plowing and any structure that existed in the area may be dispersed. Testing of the historic deposits should be possible when testing the prehistoric portions of the site.

The historic cemetery located during the survey is in good condition. No further archeological investigation is recommended for GT39. The cemetery is related to early Euro-American settlers who occupied the area after 1893. Most grave markers have been recorded and preservation is recommended.