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**This document has been checked for information on Native American burials. No images considered to be culturally insensitive, including images and drawings of burials, Ancestors, funerary objects, and other NAGPRA material were found.**

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UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA  
LABORATORY OF ARCHAEOLOGY SERIES  
REPORT NUMBER 62

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
OF THE WALLACE DAM TAILRACE**

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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
OF THE WALLACE DAM TAILRACE

MARCH 25, 1977

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This report will present the results of an archaeological survey of Georgia Power Company's Wallace Dam Tailrace in Hancock and Putnam Counties, Georgia. The purpose of the survey was to identify any archaeological sites that might be impacted by construction measures and to determine their eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Wallace Dam Tailrace will extend downstream from the dam for a distance of over six kilometers into the existing backwaters of Lake Sinclair. Proposed construction measures call for the excavation of 5433 acre-feet from the channel. These spoils will then be deposited in eight deposition areas along the channel. The excavation for the most part will be within the bounds of Lake Sinclair. An exception to this is that portion of the Tailrace north of Georgia Highway 16 where the excavation will cover about one kilometer of dry land.

Prior to this survey two surveys conducted by the University of Georgia's Department of Anthropology visited the area. In 1973 the author and Mr. Chung Ho Lee, both graduate students at the University of Georgia, conducted an archaeological survey of Greene, Morgan, and Putnam Counties, Georgia. This survey located and identified several prehistoric archaeological sites in the immediate area (Wood and Lee 1974). For the most part these sites were located on upland ridges overlooking the Oconee River

north of Wallace Dam. These appear to be small, seasonally visited sites, ranging from Early Archaic through the Late Mississippian period. The Tailrace area was not visited during this survey, however.

In 1974 and 1975 an intensive survey sponsored by Georgia Power Company was conducted in the proposed basin of Wallace Reservoir by the University of Georgia's Department of Anthropology (DePratter 1976). Many new sites were located and identified during this survey including sites in the Oconee River's floodplain. One site (9 Pm 215) was located in the tailrace area during this survey. It should be noted, however, that at the time of survey the investigators knew nothing of the plans for the tailrace. It was also thought that this site had been destroyed by construction of a large drainage ditch. For these reasons little thought was given to possible mitigation of the site in DePratters report. With the exception of the two surveys mentioned, this section of the Oconee River Valley has received no attention from archaeologists.

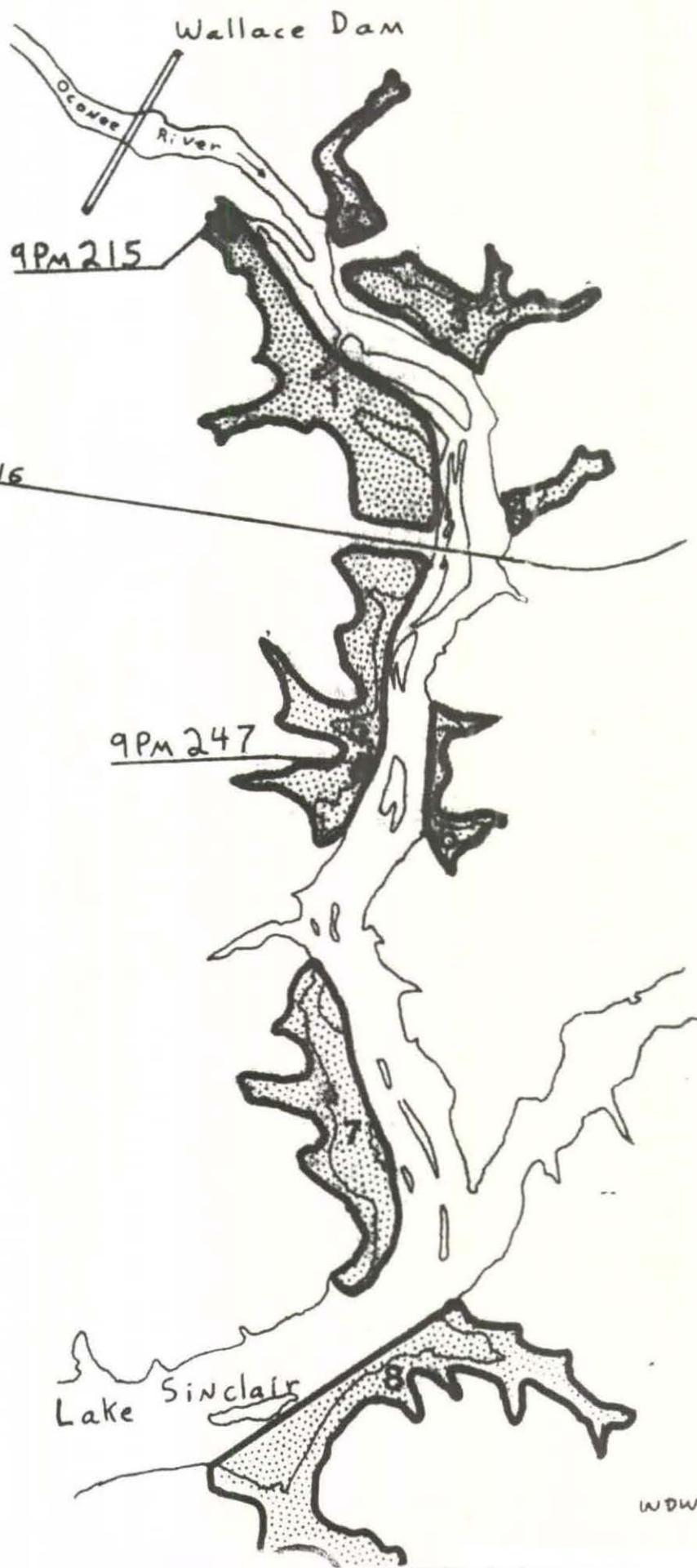
The archaeological survey of the Tailrace began in November 1976. Due to wet soil conditions and minor flooding in the project area (not to mention the extremely severe temperatures) work was halted in mid-December. Work was continued in February when drier conditions and warmer temperatures prevailed. Fieldwork in the project area took approximately 24 person/days to complete. Lab work including cleaning and sorting of artifacts, and report writing took approximately 18 person/days.



The survey area is a section of forested and swampy backwater of Lake Sinclair (Fig. 1). The path of the tailrace follows (for the most part) the old channel of the Oconee River. Since this path is permanently inundated by Lake Sinclair, survey of the Tailrace was limited to a single section which crosses dry land. The greatest impact to archaeological sites will occur in 8 areas where spoils from dredging will be deposited. Six of these areas (2, 3, 4, 6, 7, & 8) are presently inundated by Lake Sinclair. Deposition area 1 and 5 are for the most part dry shoreline. Since these areas are not presently inundated it was decided to concentrate the efforts of the survey here and also at the sections of the Tailrace which cross dry land. All areas of the Tailrace project were visited and visually surveyed.

The forested nature of the area necessitated the use of subsurface survey to detect sites. Areas which were expected to yield sites were systematically tested. These expectations were based on the authors experience in the area and on the results of the two previous surveys. Surface survey was of limited value due to the dense vegetation on the ground surface. Posthole diggers, folding shovels, and a soil corer were used to detect artifacts or midden stains. A canoe was used to closely inspect the shoreline of Lake Sinclair for eroding sites. Once a site was found a systematic non-random posthole digger

Figure 1



Archaeological Survey  
Wallace Dam  
Tailrace Project

 deposition areas and dikes

WDW

sampling scheme was employed to obtain an artifact sample, investigate site stratigraphy, and define the limits of the site. After testing the site a map was drawn showing the location of natural and cultural features, all post-hole digger tests, and excavations. The sites were flagged to enable future visits.

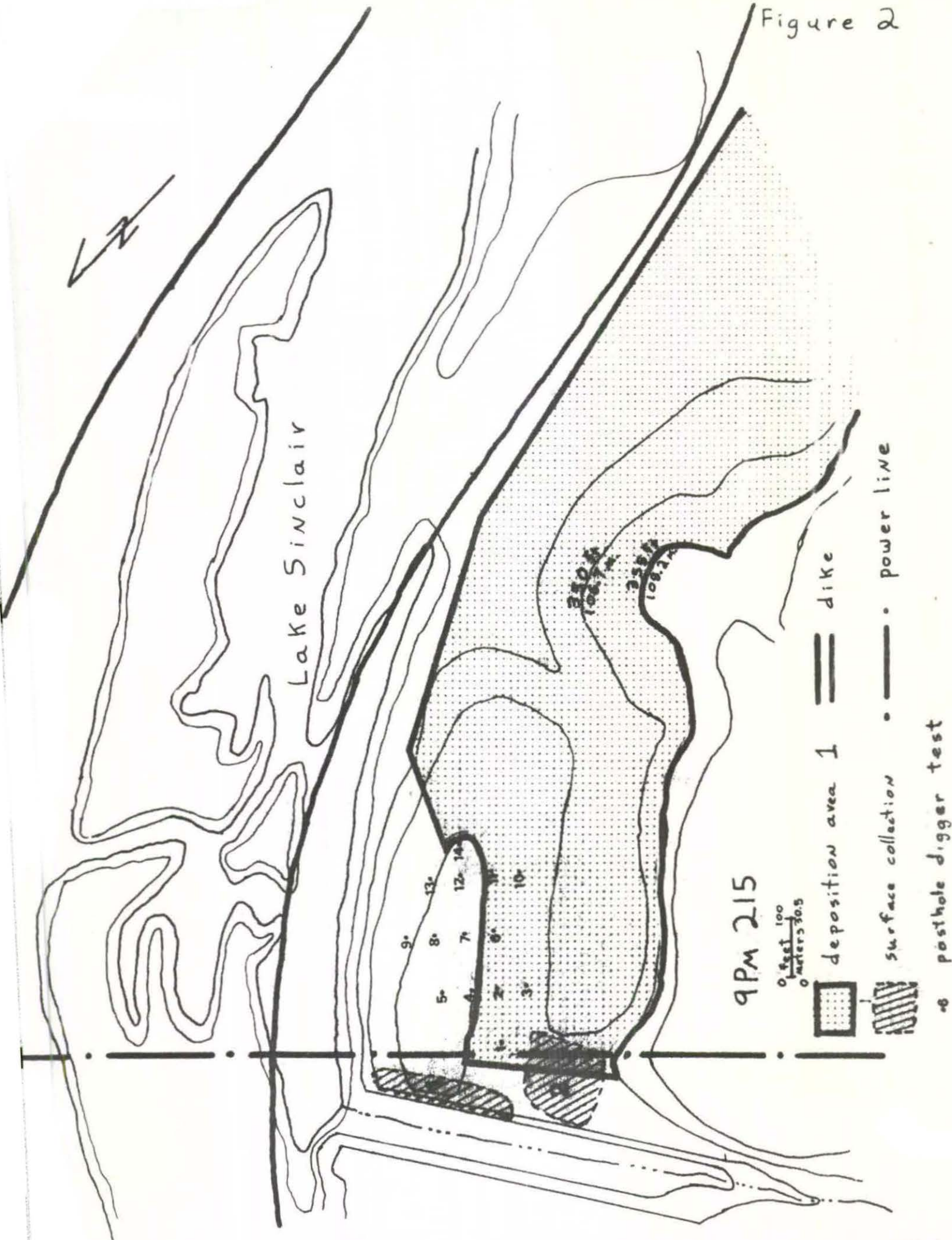
Two archaeological sites were recorded during the survey of the Tailrace, both of which will be impacted by the construction measures. One of these, 9 Pm 215, was located during the 1974-1975 survey of the Wallace Reservoir. An additional site, 9 Pm 247, was located during the Tailrace survey.

#### 9 Pm 215

Located 400 meters southeast of the Wallace Dam, this site occupies a **forested** terrace about 5 meters above the Oconee River (Fig. 2). A large drainage ditch, which has been excavated recently, marks the northwestern edge of the site. From here the site extends at least 140 meters along the terrace in a southeasterly direction. The maximum width of the site is 167 meters. Fifteen posthole digger tests were systematically excavated on the site and all yielded artifacts. Stratigraphy at the site consists of three distinct strata. The plowzone is a brown mottled, fine sandy loam from 0-15 centimeters below surface. A more homogeneous zone of brown fine sandy loam is found below the plowzone to a depth of 25 centimeters below surface. These zones contain Lamar ceramics, quartz








Figure 2



Lake Sinclair

9PM 215

0 50 100  
meters 30.5

-  deposition area 1
-  dike
-  surface collection
-  power line
-  posthole digger test

and chert debris, and quartzite river pebbles. Beneath this zone is a zone of red or orange sandy loam which is culturally sterile.

A test pit measuring 1 x 2 meters was excavated in anticipation of locating cultural features which had penetrated the orange subsoil. Two arbitrary levels were excavated and screened through  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch wire-cloth: 0 to 12 centimeters below surface, and 12 to 25 centimeters below surface. In level two a relatively undisturbed dark brown soil was encountered which may represent a midden deposit. This soil contrasts with the very mottled plowzone located above. Lithic debris is homogeneous throughout the two levels. Ceramics, however, are more numerous in level one (plowzone). One feature was discovered at 22 centimeters below surface but was interpreted as a tree stain after profiling.

Two surface collections were also made where recent construction had exposed portions of the site. Collection One was made along the margins of the large drainage ditch which borders the site on the northwest. The area collected is not more than 300 square meters. Collection Two was made along the western margins of the site in an area where recent land clearing by bulldozers had exposed the ground surface. Artifacts were collected in an area of not more than 5120 square meters.

Occupation at 9 Pm 215 based on the results of this survey indicate that the site was utilized intensively



during the Lamar phase of the Late Mississippian period (A.D. 1300-1600). A tabulation of all artifacts, recovered from the posthole digger testing, surface collection, and from the test pit, follows this report in the Appendix.

9 Pm 247

This site is also located on a terrace of the Oconee River about .9 kilometer southwest of the Georgia Highway 16 bridge (Fig. 3). Lake Sinclair marks the eastern boundary of the site as the Lake has inundated the lower backswamp between the terrace and the river's levee. Ground cover and vegetation on the site is intensive, a factor hindering the surveys efforts to investigate the site. The terrace was clear-cut within the past six years and the resulting regrowth of sweetgum trees and blackberry bushes have made the problem of mobility difficult and painful.

Twenty-six non-random, systematic posthole digger tests were excavated on the site in order to define it's limits, recover an artifact sample, and examine site stratigraphy. All of these tests revealed artifacts. The site measures at least 80 meters north-south and 60 meters east-west and protrudes to some extent into the Lake. The stratigraphy at the site extrapolated from posthole testing shows a yellow, fine sandy loam zone from 0 to 20 centimeters below surface containing artifacts. Below that zone is a mottled brown and orange fine sandy loam

Figure 3


9PM 247



 deposition area 5

07 post hole digger test

 dike

North 

a23  
a22  
a21  
a20  
a19  
a18

355 ft.  
108.2 m  
350 ft.  
106.7 m

Lake Sinclair

WDW



zone from 20 to 35 centimeters below surface. This zone appears to be culturally sterile. The subsoil at the site is an orange sandy loam beginning at about 35 centimeters below surface. No undisturbed midden deposits or cultural features were identified during testing of the site.

Occupation of the site as evidenced from posthole digger testing indicated intensive utilization of the site during the Lamar phase of the Late Mississippian period (A.D. 1300-1600). A tabulation of all artifacts recovered during the testing phase follows this report in the Appendix.

It is the recommendation of this author that the Georgia Power Company seek a determination of eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (at the local level of significance) for both sites identified in this report

A fine opportunity exists to study two sites of similar nature in close proximity to one another. Both sites have the potential to yield substantial information concerning riverine resource extrative systems and intra/inter-site settlement patterns. At present our knowledge of aboriginal culture in the Oconee River Valley is limited. This is particularly true of the Tailrace area since no archaeological survey was conducted prior to the inundation of Lake Sinclair

If the sites are eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, I would recommend

the following mitigation measures. Both sites should be cleared of all vegetation. A large block-excavation unit should be placed at 9 Pm 215 to examine the possible midden deposit. Other portions of this site and all of 9 Pm 247 should then be plowed and a fraction randomly sampled by surface collecting. Depending upon the results of the surface sample, portions of both sites could be scraped of plowzone so as to expose cultural features. A sample of features should be excavated to determine their nature. These measures are not time consuming or excessively expensive and will yield a maximum amount of information regarding the extinct cultural systems which may have operated at the sites.

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APPENDIX

ARTIFACT INVENTORY  
9 Pm 215

SURFACE COLLECTION ONE

<u>Ceramics</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>
Lamar incised	2
Lamar plain	15
 <u>Lithics</u>	
Quartz bifacial tool fragment	1
Quartz flake	22
Quartz angular fragment	2
Chert flake	1
Chert flake wear patterns	3
Large river pebble with wear patterns	2
Miscellaneous rock	12
 <u>Other</u>	
Very small mussel shell fragments	3

SURFACE COLLECTION TWO

<u>Ceramics</u>	
Lamar plain	1
 <u>Lithics</u>	
Quartz stemmed projectile point unknown type	1
Quartz unifacial tool, large	2
Quartz flakes	28
Quartz angular fragment	2
Chert flake, retouched	2
Large river pebble	1
Miscellaneous rock	2
 <u>Other</u>	
Very small mussel shell fragments	3



## ARTIFACT INVENTORY

9 Pm 215

TEST PIT

## LEVEL I: 0-12 centimeters below surface

CeramicsQUANTITY

Lamar incised	4
Lamar complicated stamped	1
Lamar plain	55
Unidentified	2
Historic shell edge	1
Bottle glass, clear	2

Lithics

Unifacial tool fragment unknown material	1
Quartz flakes	107
Chert flake	1
Miscellaneous rocks	numerous

Other

Daub fragments	3
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## LEVEL II: 12-25 centimeters below surface

Ceramics

Lamar complicated stamped	1
Lamar rim fragment	1
Lamar plain	10

Lithics

Quartz flakes	97
Chert flakes	9
Miscellaneous rocks	numerous

ARTIFACT INVENTORY  
 9 Pm 215  
 posthole digger sample

posthole test

	quartz bifacial tool	quartz flake	chert flake	miscellaneous rock	Lamar incised	Lamar stamped	Lamar plain
# 1	9			7		3	1
# 2	1			6			
# 3	1						
# 4	4			6	1		5
# 5	3	1	16		1	1	1
# 6	1	1	7				4
# 7	1		9				2
# 8			2				2
# 9	2	1	4				
# 10	1		5		1		
# 11			3				
# 12	2		7		1		
# 13	1		4				
# 14	1	1	2				4
# 15		1	3				1
TOTAL	2	26	4	81	4	4	20

ARTIFACT INVENTORY

9 Pm 247  
posthole digger sample

posthole test

	quartz bifacial tool	quartz flake	chert flake retouch	miscellaneous rock	Lamar incised	Lamar stamped	Lamar punctate	Lamar plain
# 1	1	1		1	1			
# 2		4		4				
# 3				3				
# 4				3				1
# 5				2				1
# 6	1	1	1	1				4
# 7		2						
# 8				1				
# 9		1		3				
#10				6				
#11		1		8				
#12				1				
#13				2				
#14				5				
#15		2		4				
#16		2		5				1
#17		3					1	
#18				6				1
#19				6	1	1		3
#20	1			14				1
#21				3				
#22				4				4
#23				1				
#24				5				
#25				8				
#26	4							
TOTAL	3	21	1	105	2	1	1	16

