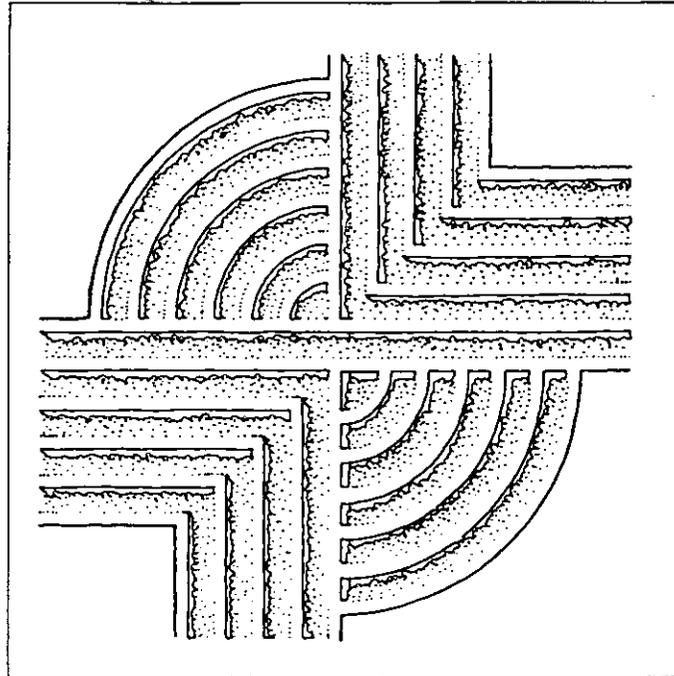


**ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED  
BRIARCLIFFE SUBSTATION,  
HORRY COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA**



**CHICORA RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION 140**

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED  
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HORRY COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

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## ABSTRACT

This study presents the results of an intensive archaeological survey of the proposed Briarcliffe substation. The purpose of this investigation was to locate any archaeological sites which may exist on the tract and evaluate them for their eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

Examination of the site files housed at the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology indicated that there were no previously recorded sites for the tract. As a result of the intensive survey, no new sites were identified. Shovel testing revealed that the tract has been filled with about 0.8 to 1.0 feet of sand and coquina shell, overlying chunks of asphalt and logs.

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## INTRODUCTION

This investigation was conducted by Ms. Natalie Adams of Chicora Foundation, Inc. for Mr. Robert C. O'Dell of Santee-Cooper. The proposed four acre Briarcliffe substation tract is located in eastern Horry County. The tract is bounded to the north by the Intracoastal Waterway, to the east by Briarcliffe Mall, and to the south and west by privately owned lands (Figure 1).

The property contains several drainage ditches running both parallel and perpendicular to the Intracoastal Waterway. Vegetation is sparse and consist primarily of spotty areas of grasses. In addition a thin line of trees was found immediately adjacent and parallel the waterway. Developments will likely consist of grading, road construction, and construction of the substation facility. These activities have the potential to damage or destroy archaeological resources if such resources are within the affected portion of the tract.

This study is intended to provide a detailed explanation of the archaeological survey of the Briarcliffe substation tract, and the findings. Chicora received a request for a budgetary proposal on March 29, 1994. This proposal was accepted on April 18, 1994.

Ms. Natalie Adams examined the site files of the S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology. A project area map was faxed to the S.C. Historic Preservation Office on April 15, 1994 requesting information on National Register sites and previous architectural surveys. No National Register properties or surveys were found for the area (Dr. Tracy Powers, personal communication 1994).

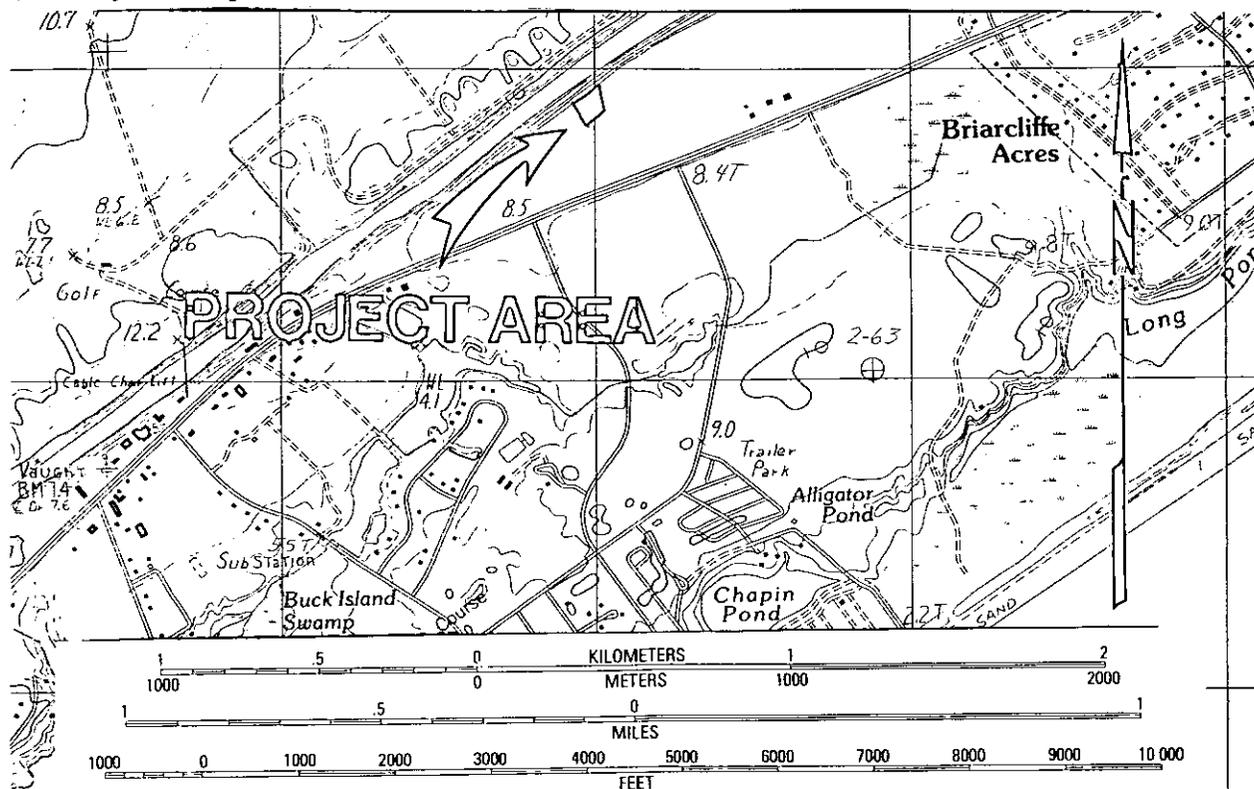


Figure 1. Location of project area on the 1984 Hand USGS Quadrangle map.

The field investigations were undertaken by Mr. Ryan Boera on April 21, 1994. The laboratory processing of the resulting collections, curation preparations, and report production have taken place at Chicora Foundation's laboratories in Columbia on April 22 and 25, 1994.

## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Horry County is bounded to the north by Brunswick and Columbus Counties, North Carolina, to the east by the Atlantic Ocean, to the south by Georgetown County, and to the west by Dillon and Marion counties.

The county is located in the lower coastal plain which is made up of marine or fluvial deposits that contain varying amounts of sand, silt, and clay (Dudley 1986). The soils were formed during the Pleistocene epoch, and several terraces were deposited in sequence from the lowest to the highest (Dudley 1986: 85). The study area is located on the Pamlico terrace.

The Pamlico terrace ranges from sea level to 25 feet above sea level and makes up approximately 25 percent of the county. It runs along the flood plains of the Waccamaw River, Bull Creek, and the Little Pee Dee River, and southeast from the Intracoastal waterway to the Atlantic Ocean. The topography of the study area nearly flat and the elevation is 25 feet above mean sea level (MSL).

The geology of the coastal plain has been described by Cooke (1936). He notes that from the Cape Fear River in North Carolina to Winyah Bay in South Carolina, the coast forms a "great arc scooped out by waves" (Cooke 1936:4). In this area salt marshes are poorly developed or absent and few tidal inlets breach the coast (Smith 1933:20-21). Mills (1972 [1826]:584) noted that compact shell limestone was found on the Waccawaw River between Gaul's ferry and Bear Bluff. Soils in the study area consist of poorly drained Ogeechee loamy fine sand.

The western portion of the county is drained by the Pee Dee River system which is found along the western boundary and consists of the Lumber River which drains into the Little Pee Dee River which in turn feeds the Great Pee Dee River. There is also a sizeable stream (Bull Creek) near the southern boundary of the county which connects the Pee Dee to the Waccamaw River. The Waccamaw River essentially bisects the county into east and west halves and drains numerous swamps between the river and the Atlantic Ocean. In the northeast corner of the county is the mouth of the Little River. The Intracoastal Waterway runs perpendicular to the Atlantic Ocean and connects the Waccamaw and Little Rivers. The closest drainage to the study area is the Intracoastal Waterway which does not follow any pre-existing drainage. The closest natural drainage to the tract is Long Branch which drains into the Atlantic Ocean at Singleton Swash.

The vegetation in Horry County has been classified by Kuchler (1964) as part of the Oak-Hickory-Pine forest, based on potential natural vegetation. Floodplains are covered by mixed hardwoods, including bald cypress, tupelo gum, and black gum. Less water tolerant trees such as pines occur on uplands. Also found in the bottomlands, floodplains, and Carolina bays are red maple, ash, water oak, elm, and sweet gum. On the better drained uplands pine dominates, with loblolly and longleaf pines being indigenous and the slash pine introduced.

In 1826, Mills noted:

The long leaf pine abounds, also the cypress, live oak, water oak, white oak, &c. The fruit trees are, peaches, apples, pears, plums, cherries, figs; besides strawberries, which grow wild, whortleberries, &c. The forest trees begin to bud in the latter part of March, and the fruit trees in April. The pine and cypress are mostly used for building, though there is plenty of clay to make good brick. The lime is burnt from oyster shells (Mills 1972 [1826]:582).

Mills also remarked that there was a large amount of wasteland in Horry county including both swamp and high lands. The highland waste areas were only suitable for cattle grazing (Mills 1972 [1826]:585).

## BACKGROUND RESEARCH

### Prehistoric Synopsis

The Paleo-Indian period, lasting from 12,000 to 8,000 B.C., is evidenced by basally thinned, side-notched projectile points; fluted, lanceolate projectile points; side scrapers; end scrapers; and drills (Coe 1964; Michie 1977). The Paleo-Indian occupation, while widespread, does not appear to have been intensive. Points usually associated with this period include the Clovis and several variants, Suwannee, Simpson, and Dalton (Goodyear et al. 1989:36-38).

At least one Paleo-Indian projectile point has been found in Horry County which was found on the Waccamaw River (Goodyear et al. 1989:33). This pattern of artifacts found along major river drainages has been interpreted by Michie to support the concept of an economy "oriented towards the exploitation of now extinct megafauna" (Michie 1977:124).

Unfortunately, little is known about Paleo-Indian subsistence strategies, settlement systems, or social organization. Generally, archaeologists agree that the Paleo-Indian groups were at a band level of society, were nomadic, and were both hunters and foragers. While population density, based on the isolated finds, is thought to have been low, Walthall suggests that toward the end of the period, "there was an increase in population density and in territoriality and that a number of new resource areas were beginning to be exploited" (Walthall 1980:30).

The Archaic period, which dates from 8000 to 2000 B.C., does not form a sharp break with the Paleo-Indian period, but is a slow transition characterized by a modern climate and an increase in the diversity of material culture. Archaic period assemblages, characterized by corner-notched, side-notched, and broad stemmed projectile points, are common in the vicinity, although they rarely are found in good, well-preserved contexts.

The Woodland period begins, by definition, with the introduction of fired clay pottery about 2000 B.C. along the South Carolina coast and much later in the Carolina Piedmont, about 500 B.C. It should be noted that many researchers call the period from about 2500 to 1000 B.C. the Late Archaic because of a perceived continuation of the Archaic lifestyle in spite of the manufacture of pottery. Regardless of terminology, the period from 2000 to 500 B.C. was a period of tremendous change.

The subsistence economy during this early period was based primarily on deer hunting and fishing, with supplemental inclusions of small mammals, birds, reptiles, and shellfish. Various calculations of the probable yield of deer, fish, and other food sources identified from some coastal sites indicate that sedentary life was not only possible, but probable. Further inland it seems likely that many Native American groups continued the previous established patterns of band mobility. These frequent moves would allow the groups to take advantage of various seasonal resources, such as shad and sturgeon in the spring, nut masts in the fall, and turkeys during the winter.

The South Appalachian Mississippian period, from about A.D. 1100 to 1640 is the most elaborate level of culture attained by the native inhabitants and is followed by cultural disintegration brought about largely by European disease. The period is characterized by complicated stamped pottery, complex social organization, agriculture, and the construction of temple mounds and ceremonial centers.

There is minimal archaeological evidence for historic Indian occupation along the Waccamaw River. The only known historic Indian site investigated is Wachesaw Landing, located about 17 miles north of the city of Georgetown associated with the historic Waccamaw Indian. Historic trade beads and copper or brass items were

found in addition to two flexed burials (Trinkley and Hogue 1979:1-19).

### Historic Synopsis

General accounts of Horry County history are presented by Drucker and Anthony (1980), Lewis (1970), Mills (1972 [1826]), Quattlebaum (1954), Rogers (1972), and Trinkley (1983). Also, Mills (1969 [1825]) shows the location of settlements in the early 19th century and gives a brief description of the Horry district in the 1820s (1972 [1826]).

The earliest European activity in the Horry County area may have been the Spanish Ayllon movement from the Cape Fear River to San Miguel de Gualdape, 45 leagues away. Some have argued that the Fort may have been located at the mouth of Winyah Bay, although it has been more recently suggested that the fort was in Beaufort County, South Carolina or Chatham County, Georgia.

The earliest known settlement in Horry County was established around 1700 in the vicinity of the modern town of Conway. Most of these early settlers were small landholders since the county was unsuitable for any large scale plantation agriculture (Mills 1972 [1826]). Other 18th century settlements were located near the mouth of Little River and along the east bank of the Waccamaw River, on Waccamaw Neck. The Little River area economy relied primarily on lumber and naval stores as well as livestock, skins, diversified farming, and the production of rice and indigo (Berry 1970).

In 1731 Governor Robert Johnson directed the establishment of eleven townships, organized for defense against Indian and Spaniards. The Kingston Township was located within present day Horry and Georgetown Counties. In 1734 the town of Kingston was laid out in streets and grew into a major river port and commerce center. In 1801 the name of the town was changed to Conwayborough, which was later shortened to Conway (Mills 1972 [1826]).

Kingston never became a parish itself, but remained as part of the Parish of Prince George, Winyah until 1785 (Rogers 1972:9). In 1768, South Carolina was divided into districts, and present day Horry County became part of the Georgetown District. This district was divided into four counties in 1785, one of which was Kingston County. In 1868 Horry County was established (Quattlebaum 1954).

Although Horry is a coastal county it developed very differently from Georgetown and Charleston counties. Horry District was isolated from South Carolina and had much stronger connections to North Carolina (Rogers 1972:3). The Waccamaw River was the major traffic artery, and it was not until the 1930s when the highway system developed that this reliance on river transportation changed. Most individuals were involved in subsistence farming in the early 1800s and farms were small, growing peas, wheat, rice, cotton, and corn, mainly for home consumption. Mills (1972 [1826]: 583) notes that most of the people were small farmers and that there were very few skilled tradesmen. The Mills Atlas (1969 [1825]) shows no subscribers in the study area. Figure 2 indicates that this portion of modern U.S. Hwy. 17 contained few subscribers.

Only 20 percent of the land in Horry County is subject to the type of tidal overflow necessary for wet cultivation of rice, therefore the emphasis on subsistence farming seems to have resulted from topography. River floodplain soil was rich and productive, where it could be reclaimed from the swamp. The upland soils, however, were much less productive and had a light soil (Mills 1972 [1826]: 581). Because the soils were unable to support plantation agriculture there developed a unique distribution of population and a very low percentage of slaves (Rogers 1972:12).

Following the Civil War, cotton and lumber became Horry County's chief products. Conway and Bucksport prospered as industrial and commercial centers, due to their location on the Waccamaw. The railroad system, the opening of remote areas of the county in 1887, and the accelerated production of tobacco during the 1890s helped to assure economic stability in the county (Lewis 1970).

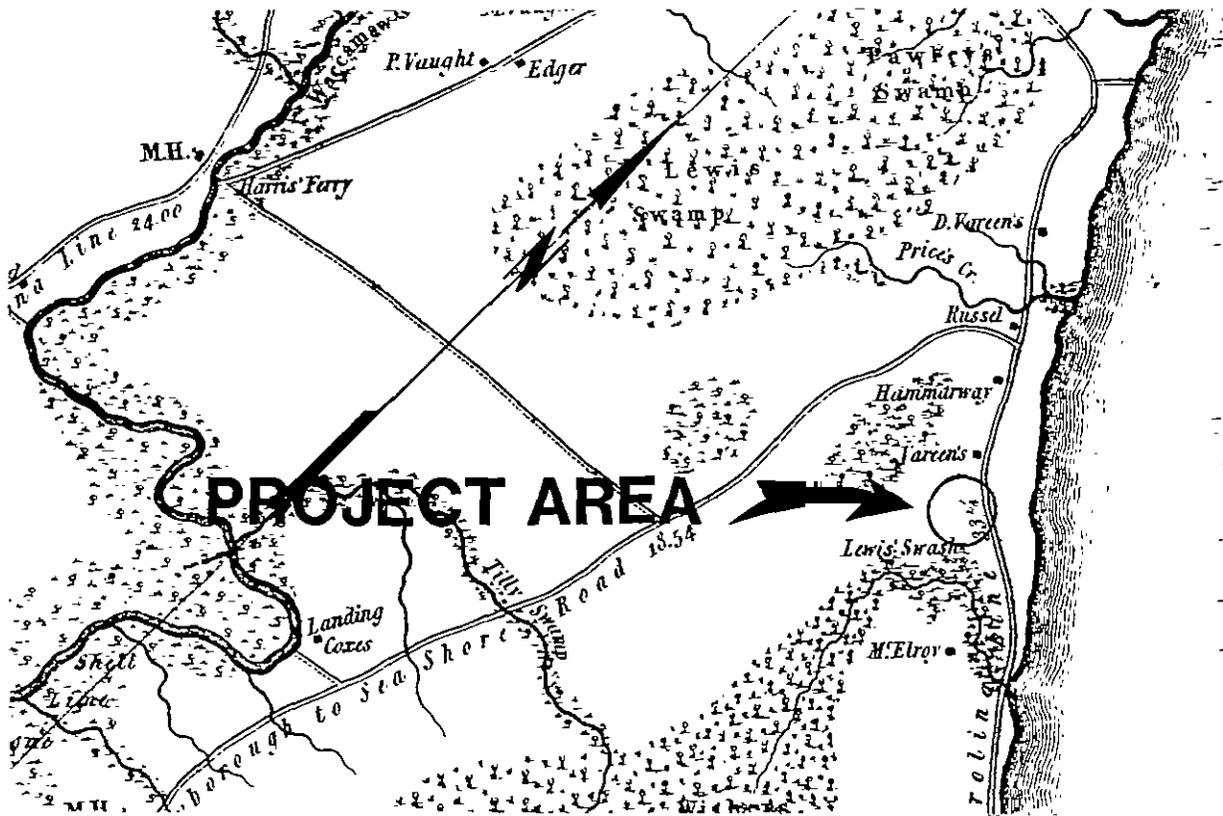


Figure 2. Mills' Atlas (1825), Horry District in project vicinity.

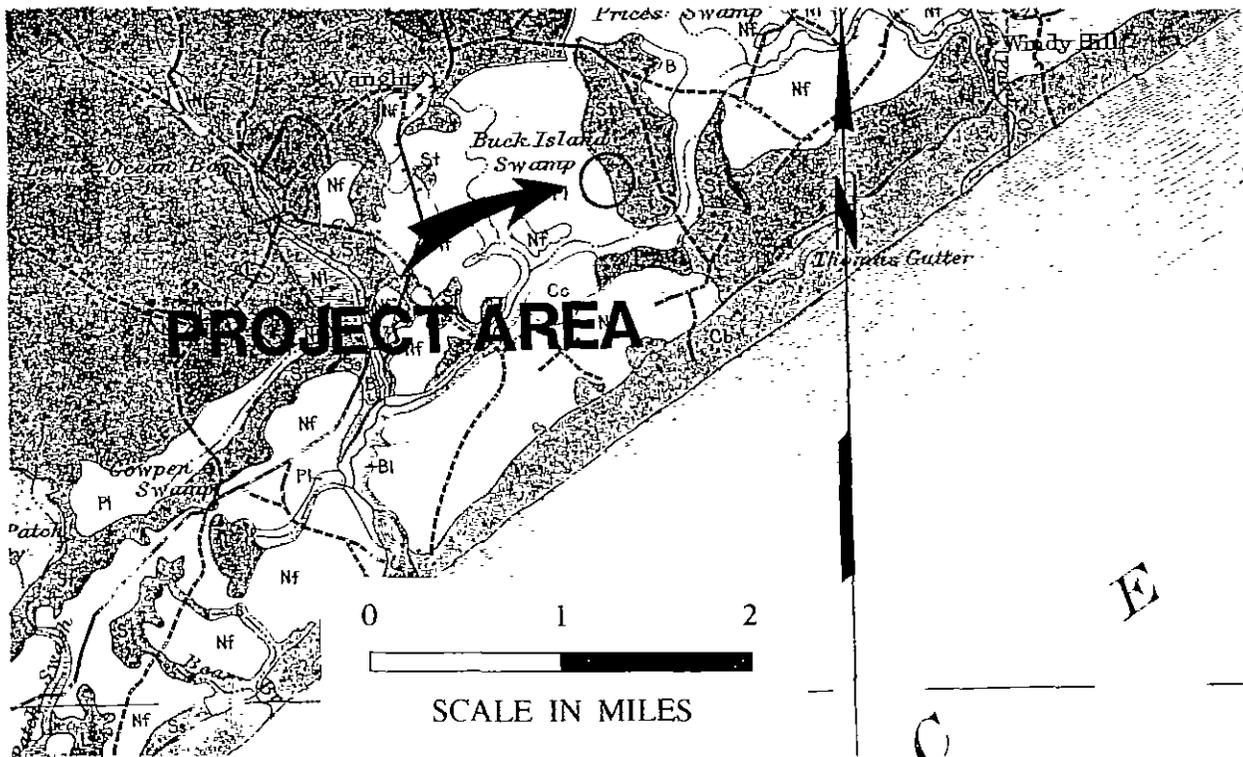


Figure 3. 1918 soil survey map for Horry County.

A 1918 soil survey map for Horry County indicates that the study area was not occupied during the early 20th century (Figure 3).

#### Previous Archaeological Investigations

Relatively little archaeology has been performed in the Horry County area. Previous archaeological investigations in Horry County are presented in Anderson (1975), Drucker and Anthony (1980), Englemayer (1979), and Trinkley (1983). The project area contained no known sites listed in the Institute's files. However, site 38HR316 was located during the Conway bypass study about 1000 feet to the west of the tract and consists of a sparse Woodland Period ceramic scatter. This site was recommended as not eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (Joseph et al. 1990). Because of the poorly drained soils of the study area and the proximity of no substantial creek or river, it was believed that the project area had a low potential for containing archaeological sites.

Some unpublished research took place in the area during the 1960s at the Ellsworth Site by Erika Fogg-Amed. Several test excavations were placed within the site which yielded Stallings, Thom's Creek, Hanover, and Cape Fear potteries as well as a Morrow Mountain projectile point (Fogg-Amed n.d.a). No site boundaries were ever determined. Given the lack of basic descriptive information about the site, no site form was ever filed.

Fogg-Amed also tested "the Coates site" located about 10 miles north of Myrtle Beach on a high bluff overlooking a freshwater pond. Testing at this shell midden site produced exclusively lithic debitage (Fogg-Amed n.d.b). No site form has ever been completed for the site.

## FIELD METHODS

The initially proposed field techniques involved the placement of shovel tests and transects at 200 foot intervals with all fill being screened through ¼ inch mesh. Should sites be identified by shovel testing, further tests would be used to obtain data on site boundaries, artifact quantity and diversity, site integrity, and temporal affiliation. The information required for completion of South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology site forms would be collected and photographs would be taken, if warranted in the opinion of the field investigators.

All soil would be screened through ¼ inch mesh, with each test numbered sequentially. Each test would measure about 1 foot square and would normally be taken to a depth of at least 1 foot. All cultural remains would be collected, except for shell, mortar, and brick, which would be quantitatively noted in the field and discarded. Notes would be maintained for profiles at any sites encountered.

These field methods were put into effect with no major deviations. A pedestrian survey supplemented the shovel testing since surface visibility was excellent. This was performed using a random walkover instead of along formal pedestrian transects. As a result, a total of 12 shovel tests in three transects were excavated within the study area.

Field notes have been prepared for curation using archival standards and will be transferred to the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology as soon as the project is complete.

## RESULTS

The shovel tests and pedestrian survey did not identify any sites on the proposed Briarcliffe substation tract. Shovel testing revealed that the tract contains two fill layers. The first layer consists of what appears to be spoil, possibly from the dredging of the Intracoastal Waterway. This spoil consists of white sand with numerous small shells. This fill is found to a depth of 0.8 to 1.0 feet. Below this is a layer of large logs and chunks of asphalt and marl. Beneath this layer was found 0.5 feet of grayish brown (Munsell 10YR5/2) loamy fine sand overlying gray (Munsell 10YR5/1) sandy clay loam.

## CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the archaeological survey of the proposed Briarcliffe substation tract, no archaeological remains were identified. Consequently, no further investigations are recommended by Chicora Foundation.

It is possible that archaeological remains may be encountered in the survey tract during construction. Construction crews should be advised to report any discoveries of concentrations of artifacts (such as bottles, ceramics, or projectile points) or brick rubble to the project engineer, who should in turn report the material to the South Carolina State Historic Preservation office or to the client's archaeologist. No construction should take place in the vicinity of these late discoveries until they have been examined by an archaeologist.

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