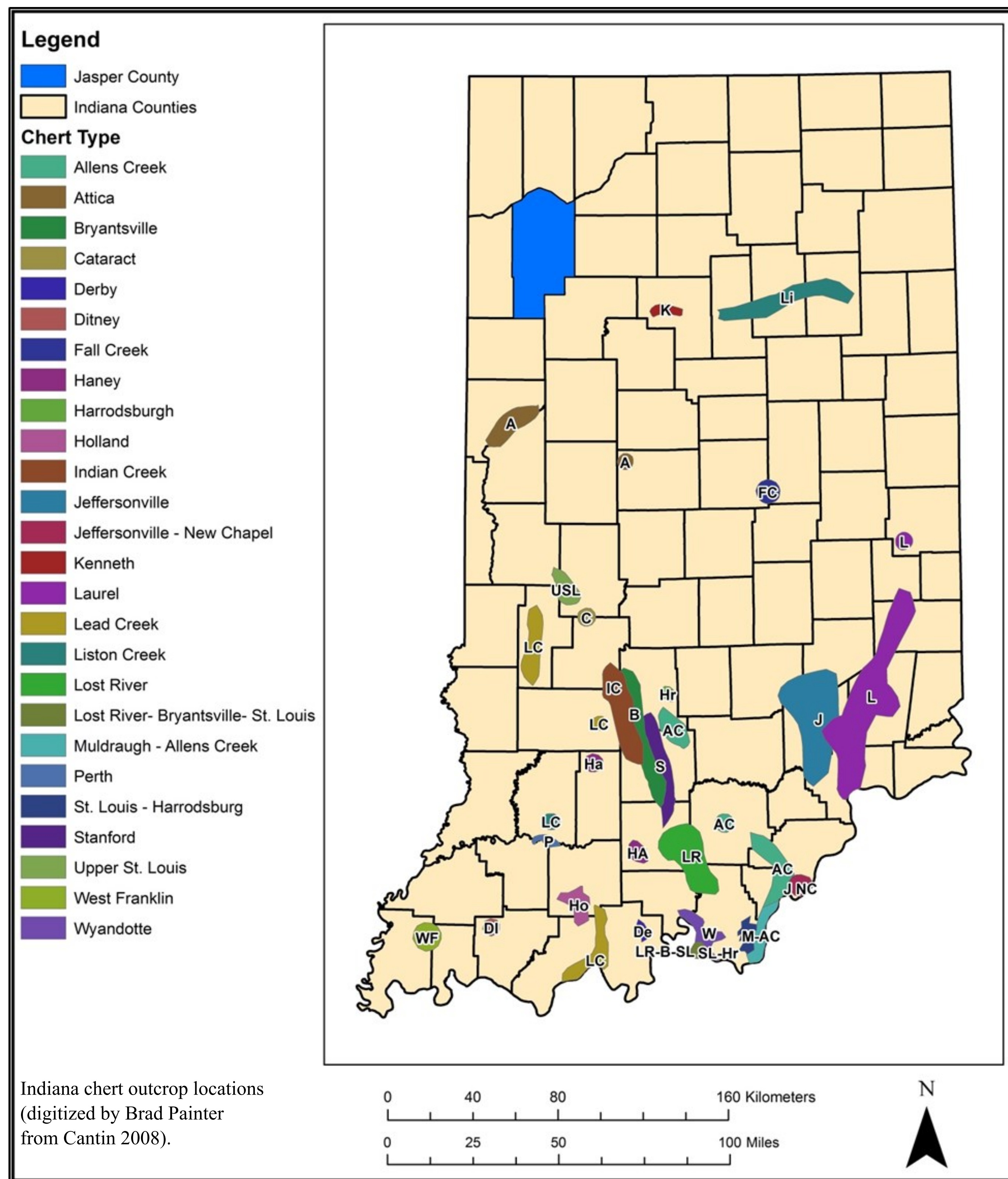


Archaeological Survey of a Data Deficient Region: Survey of > 900 acres in Jasper County, Indiana

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Abstract

The AAL conducted a data enhancement project for archaeological resources in Jasper County, Indiana funded by a FY2014 Historic Preservation Fund Grant. This project focused on major waterways such as the Iroquois and Kankakee Rivers in the southern half of the county. Approximately 900 acres of agricultural land were surveyed, identifying 112 new archaeological sites. The survey recovered 209 prehistoric artifacts and 307 historic artifacts. Cultural periods that are represented in the artifact assemblage include Middle Archaic, Late Archaic, and Late Woodland/Late Prehistoric components that were documented from the precontact era, in addition to Historic components. Two sites were recommended for additional research and are potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

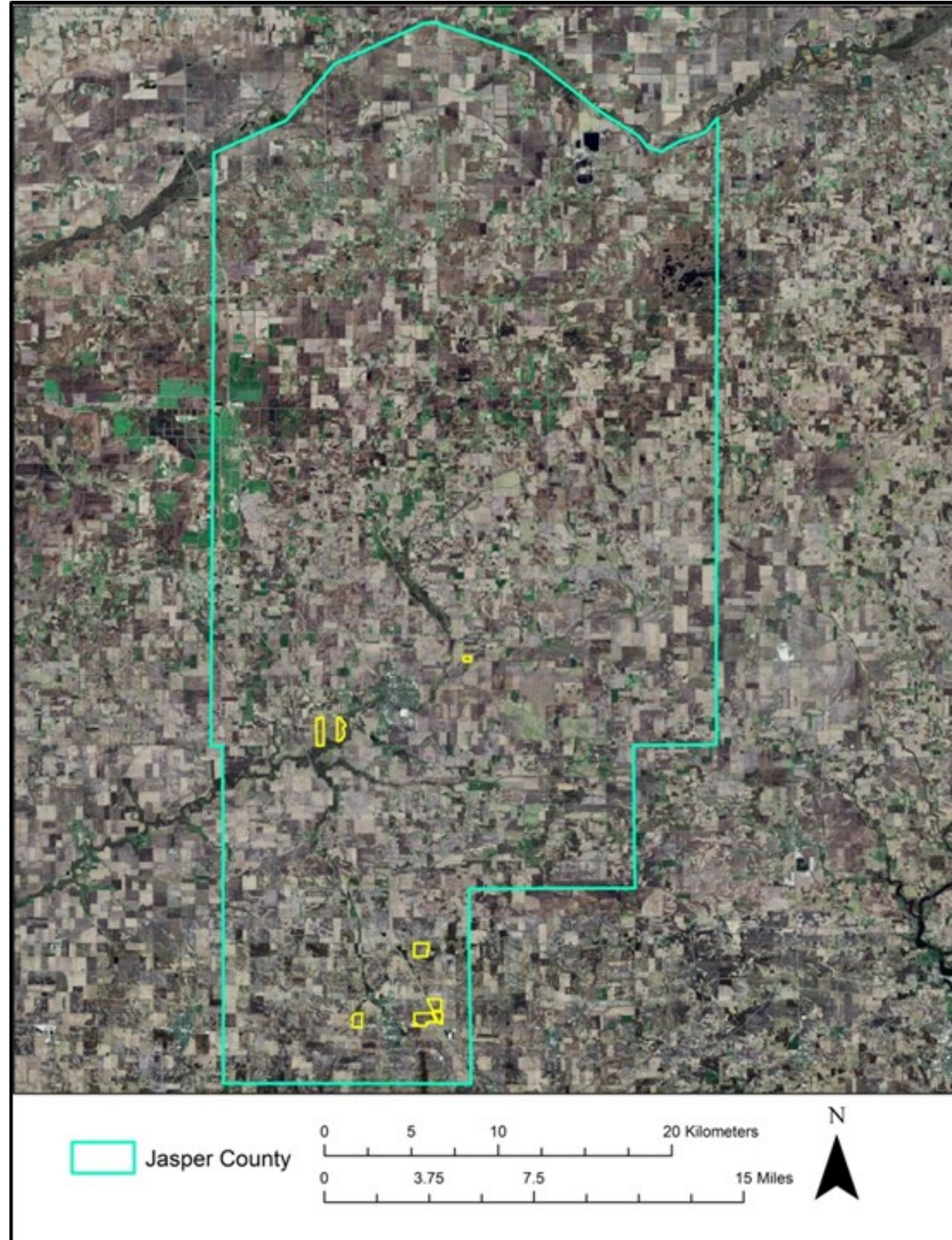


Introduction

The AAL was awarded a FY2014 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) Grant to survey areas in the southern portion of Jasper County, Indiana. The project involved a pedestrian survey of approximately 900 acres of agricultural land. The main goals of the project were to increase the site database, build on a previous HPF grant survey (Smith and Sanchez 2013), and to add to the understanding of the Early Woodland and Middle Archaic periods of the county based on the low number of previously documented sites. Jasper County had 196 archaeological sites recorded in the State Historic Architecture and Archaeological Research Database (Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology 2007) database prior to this survey, 137 of which were added by Smith and Sanchez (2013). The investigations in this report focus on the southern portion of the county, especially areas adjacent to the aforementioned Kankakee and Iroquois waterways. The survey recovered 209 prehistoric artifacts and 307 historic artifacts from seven parcels (see top center). The average site density recorded for the project area for precontact sites was one site per 15 acres and for Historic sites was one site per 13.85 acres.

Methods

Approximately 900 acres (364.22 hectares) of agricultural land were surveyed through pedestrian transects during this project. The field survey was conducted between August 12, 2014 and September 13, 2014. When a site was located, a closer interval pedestrian survey was conducted within a 5 meter radius of the initial find. Dense artifact scatters over large areas were plotted with a GPS every 5 meters and artifacts in the site were grouped together as such. When encountered, brick and FCR were estimated in count but not collected. Artifacts were analyzed by standard AAL procedures.



A private collection was also documented in a version of the protocol that eventually became the COADS protocol (see Olson et al. this session). All available diagnostics were sorted by base type, identified by raw material type, and 2D scanned on both sides. A small sample for artifacts were 3D scanned with a NextEngine HD laser scanner.



Results

Of the 112 archaeological sites, 59 had unidentified Prehistoric components (Macleod et al. 2015:Table 20). The identified precontact components consisted of Middle Archaic, Late Archaic, and Late Woodland. The frequency of diagnostic Prehistoric components encountered in the project area as a result of survey was similar to what had already been identified in Jasper County. This includes higher representations of Late Archaic, and Late Woodland, but is in slight contrast to the relatively low representation of Middle Archaic. It is also in keeping with no items dating to the Paleoindian, Early Archaic, Early Woodland, or Middle Woodland. This trend with previously recorded sites in Jasper County stands partially in contrast to the information gleaned from the collector visit particularly with respect to relatively high frequency of Paleoindian and Early Woodland materials. Two prehistoric scatters discovered as a result of this project (12-Js-279 and 12-Js-340) were recommended for further investigation.

Sixty five sites had Historic components, dating from the early-19th century to present. These sites ranged from isolated finds to moderate historic scatters and were often times multicomponent with

Unidentified Prehistoric scatters. The Historic components yielded the majority of the artifacts (n=307) recovered during the project. Though several moderately sized historic scatters were encountered during this survey, no sites with historic components were considered to meet the NRHP criteria.

Survey Summary

This project targeted the Iroquois River drainage in the southern half of Jasper County, Indiana, a data deficient county. Similar to results of previous surveys conducted in and immediately surrounding Jasper County (see Leeuwrik et al., Szmuto et al., and Thompson et al., this symposium), there is a dearth of artifacts in the areas surveyed. The generally expansive pre-colonial wetlands heavily restricted the population to concentrate activities to select well drained features. The four prehistoric diagnostics are from the Middle Archaic, Late Archaic, and Late Woodland periods. The presence of these materials shows that the area in which they were recovered was habitable during those time periods. The survey recovered 516 artifacts consisting of 209 prehistoric artifacts (one per 4.32 acres) and 307 historic artifacts (one per 2.93 acres). Two sites, both lithic scatters, were recommended for further investigation.



Collector Visit

A total of 431 diagnostic artifacts and tools were examined. The majority (55.22%) were classified as "unidentified" material due to time constraints. The remainder displayed a source breakdown comparable to the materials recovered from the survey. An overwhelming majority of identified cherts were of Mississippian age (33.41%, or ~76% of identifiable), 9.05% of the collection (~21% of identifiable) was Silurian in age, and 0.46% (~1% of identifiable) of the material was Pennsylvanian. An additional 0.70% (~1.6% identifiable) was identified as shale and quartzite. Fifteen fluted/Paleoindian points of various cherts were documented (3.48%). This may indicate a strong, as of yet, undocumented Paleoindian presence in Jasper County, or possibly may be collector bias. As for the other artifact classes in the general collection (above left), side notched points (n=89) were the most common, possibly indicating a strong Middle Archaic presence. Corner notched points (n=55) were the second most represented group. Stemmed points (n=47), common among Late Archaic through Early Woodland cultures, such as Adena, were also well represented. The preponderance of side notched points is surprising given the near absence of Middle Archaic sites in SHAARD. The proportion of side notched points is roughly consistent with the survey (though n=1). These numbers should be viewed cautiously as there are a relatively low number of diagnostic prehistoric sites in Jasper County. This means that only coarse comparisons based on these samples is warranted. A small prehistoric ceramic collection was also in the private collection (above right). This included three dentate stamped sherds, multiple incised sherds, and one Early Woodland sherd. The collection also included several boxes of grooved axes, a bannerstone, a partial birdstone, several gorget fragments, a historic ceramic stopper, several 19th century pipes, a few prosser-like buttons, historic bullets, and historic metal including iron and copper.

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