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A CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY OF THE
MAINLINE LEVEE REPAIR, SECTION NO. 2,
DYER COUNTY, TENNESSEE
LEVEE MAINTENANCE PROJECT
A NEGATIVE FINDING REPORT

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Memphis District

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MAPS

Map 1

Location Map

Map 2

Project Detail Map

Introduction

An intensive cultural resources survey was conducted on 12 October 89. The length and width of the proposed borrow area was walked over and shovel test units dug where required. The literature search indicated no sites in the proposed area.

Study Area and Project Description

The Memphis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is proposing to conduct emergency repairs at two locations in Dyer County, Tennessee. Both repairs are along the portion of mainline levee adjacent to the Obion River (Map 1). Slide No. 1 is approximately 2,000 feet long and 200 feet wide. Slide No. 2 is approximately 1,800 feet long and 200 feet wide. Slide No. 1 is approximately 9.2 acres in area and Slide No. 2 is approximately 8.3 acres. The entire project is a total of approximately 17.5 acres.

The Corps proposes to rebuild the levee failures further back from the river edge. Each section will be tied-in to the existing levee (Map 2). Materials for building the new levee sections will be taken from the existing older levee. No other borrow areas will be required.

Environmental Setting

The project area is located in the eastern lower Mississippi alluvial valley (Fisk 1944). The eastern lowland is the active flood plain of the Mississippi River and is characterized by alternating ridges and depressions of little relief. The ridges are the natural levees and the lowlands are abandoned channels formed by the continuous meandering river and its tributaries.

The project right-of-way is under cultivation. However, the levee area was overed with trees and bushes. Here could be found green ash (Fratiaus penneslyvanica var subintegeriana) red maple (Acer rubrum), and American elm (Ulmus americana). Cornon private (Ligustrum amurense), rue anemone (Anemonella

thalictorides), Japanese honeysuckle (Lonicera japonica), panic grass (Panicum sp.) and aster (Aster sp.).

Various species of fauna were observed. Avifauna observed in the area include Carolina chickadee (Parus carolinensis), American crow (Corvus brachyrhynchus), common flicker (Colaptes auratus), downy woodpecker (Picoides pubescens), American robin (Turdus migratorius), blue jay (Cyanocitta cristata), northern junco (Junco lyemalis) and horned lark (Eremophila alpestris).

Mammal signs observed in the area included raccoon (Procyon lotor), Virginia opossum (Didelphis virginiana), white-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginianus), eastern cottontail (Sylvilagus florida), fox squirrel (Sciurus niger), gray squirrel (Sciurus carolinensis).

Results of the Records Search

In-house records and reports were consulted but indicated that no prehistoric or historic cultural remains were recorded within the proposed project area.

Survey Methodology and Results

The entire right-of-way was under cultivation. Even though crops were in the fields, the visibility was 40-60% overall. From the landward edge of the existing levee two transects, 30 meters apart, were walked along the length of the right-of-way. No non-modern cultural materials or indicators were found.

Recommendations

Based on an infield cultural resources survey and a background literature search, no evidence of prehistoric, historic or architectural resources exists within the direct impact zone of the proposed project area. However, on the surface was found recent glass and plastic. It is, therefore, concluded that the proposed project will not have any impact on cultural resources.

The survey methodology used does not eliminate the possibility of encountering deeply buried sites. Therefore, it is recommended that any site encountered during construction be protected from further damage until its significance can be determined by the Environmental Analysis Branch, Memphis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in conjunction with the Tennessee Historic Preservation.

Bibliography

Fisk, Harold N.

1944 Geological Investigations of the Alluvial Valley of the Lower Mississippi River. War Department, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi River Commission, Vicksburg, Mississippi.

McNeil, Jimmy D.

1989 A Cultural Resources Survey of the Mainline Levee Repair, Dyer County, Tennessee Levee Maintenance Project - A Negative Finding Report. In-house report for the Memphis District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis, Tennessee.

