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Archaeological Testing of Site 41CW25

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL TESTING OF SITE 41CW25

By

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Texas

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Highway Design Division
April 1984

ABSTRACT

Testing of Site 41CW25 on County Road 226, Caldwell County, to determine eligibility for inclusion within the National Register of Historic Places and to determine site depth, cultural context, and archaeological significance, was undertaken in January, 1984. The site lies on a high terrace of the north bank of the Clear Fork of Plum Creek, 1.6 miles east of US Highway 183 where County Road 226 crosses the creek. Evidence recovered demonstrates that insufficient material exists within the right-of-way to support a determination of eligibility for inclusion within the National Register.

INTRODUCTION

Archaeological Site 41CW25 was recorded at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory of the Balcones Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin, in December, 1982, by Daymond Crawford, a member of the professional cultural resources staff of the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation (SDHPT). Following initial evaluation, further investigation and testing were recommended. During the period of January 12 and 13, 1984, testing operations were conducted by Glenn T. Goode of the SDHPT cultural resources staff, with field support personnel provided by the SDHPT District 14 Bastrop Residency office.

Testing was performed under the auspices of Procedures for the Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties (36 CFR, Part 800), procedures prescribed and endorsed by the Federal Highway Administration. The object of the test was to determine eligibility for inclusion within the National Register of Historic Places as prescribed by federal regulation, and to determine the nature of the deposits and the cultural context of the site.

The highway construction project affecting the site is a bridge replacement involving the replacement of the existing bridge structure at the crossing of County Road 226 and the Clear Fork of Plum Creek. The existing bridge is a single-lane, steel pony truss with a timber floor. The pony truss is 50 ft. in length with a 20-ft. approach span

at each end. The truss is composed of three steel stringer spans supporting the timber flooring. This bridge was determined not to meet the criteria of eligibility for inclusion within the National Register of Historic Places, and such determination was endorsed by the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer on October 7, 1983.

The replacement bridge structure will consist of one concrete slab span, 95 ft. in length, supported by prestressed concrete beams. The structure will be 30 ft. wide and will provide a clear roadway width of 28 ft.

Archaeological Site 41CW25 is located some 1.6 miles east of US Highway 183, on a high terrace of the north bank of the Clear Fork of Plum Creek (Fig. 1). The area is currently rural farmland with improved pastures in the uplands. Surface evidence of cultural material is obscured by the heavy brush and grass. The exact horizontal extent of that portion of the site lying outside of the right-of-way was not determined. Three small flakes were observed in the roadcut provided by County Road 226.

.Soils consist of clayey loams and clays, principally of the Seawillow Series. These soils form on nearly level to gently sloping lands on old terraces. This soil series belongs to the Branyon-Lewisville Association of deep calcareous clayey soils over clays and clay loams

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PROCEDURES

Archaeological testing of Site 41CW25 consisted of the controlled excavation of two 1 by 1 meter test units and two shovel tests (Fig. 2). Matrix was passed through 1/4 in. hardware cloth screens, and recovered material was removed to the SDHPT Laboratory for Archaeological Studies for analysis and temporary storage. At the time of testing, the new right-of-way boundaries had not been firmly established. Since testing, the new right-of-way was aligned as shown in Figure 2. This alignment resulted in the location of the SDHPT excavation units and one shovel test outside the right-of-way.

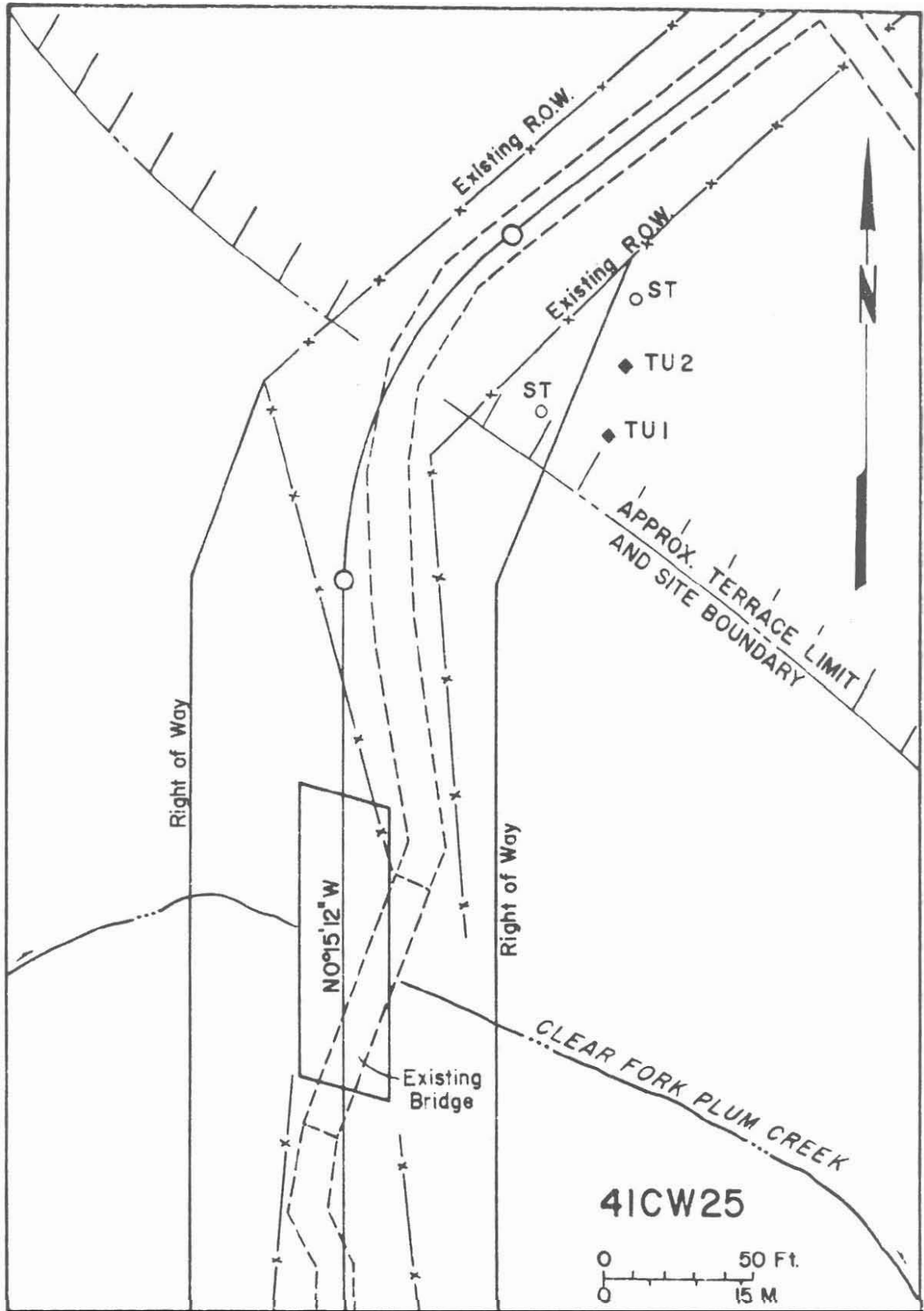


FIGURE 2. Site Map showing location of test units and shovel tests.

OBSERVATIONS

A total of 14 miscellaneous flakes was recovered. The test units and shovel tests were excavated until a basal clay was encountered, between 20 and 30 cm below ground surface. No tools were recovered, and no features were identified.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the material recovered from testing operations at Site 41CW25, **it** is believed that the portion of the site lying within the right-of-way does not meet the criteria for inclusion within the National Register of Historic Places. The site is shallow and the cultural material scanty. Although no diagnostic material was recovered, the fact that the soils are of the Branyon-Lewisville Association suggests that considerable mixing of materials may have resulted from the extreme cracking so characteristic of these soils during dry periods. The site does not appear to contain significant information worthy of further study, and no further investigation appears warranted.