# **IV. METHODS**

## LITERATURE AND RECORDS SEARCH

In August 2011, TRC collected information on previously recorded archaeological and historic architectural resources for an area encompassing the current Thomson-Vogtle transmission line project area. The research was conducted using the GNAHRGIS online cultural resources database. The purpose of the research was to identify previously surveyed archaeological sites within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area, as well as historic structures and NRHP properties within a 0.5-km radius of the project area. The library maintained by TRC in Atlanta also was used as a source of relevant background information.

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD METHODS**

The archaeological field survey was accomplished by pedestrian coverage of the entire project corridor and systematic shovel testing where appropriate. Shovel testing was not implemented in locations exhibiting slope greater than 10 percent, or in places where ground-disturbing activities have affected deposits to a depth reaching any archaeological remains that may have once been present. The most common types of disturbances observed in the project area derived from logging activities, and involved bladed areas and large push piles (Figures 8 and 9).

Along most of the project corridor, shovel tests were excavated at 30-m intervals. In areas with greater than 25 percent surface visibility (e.g., recently plowed fields), careful surface inspection supplemented but did not replace shovel testing; however, shovel test intervals were lengthened to 90 m. Standard shovel tests with a diameter of 30 cm were excavated to sterile subsoil or to a depth of 75 cm below surface. Soils were screened through 0.64-cm (¼-inch) mesh hardware cloth to consistently recover any artifacts that might be present. For each shovel test, the depth, artifact content, soil color, and soil consistency were recorded. A total of 5,232 shovel test locations were investigated in the project area (Figure 10). When artifacts were discovered, additional shovel tests were excavated at 10-m intervals to delineate site boundaries in each cardinal direction. In some cases, the site extended beyond the project area; no shovel tests were conducted beyond that limit.

Hand-held Global Positioning System units were used throughout the project to obtain site locations and other provenience information. Archaeological resources and general field conditions were photographed and documented with digital media.

## LABORATORY METHODS

The artifacts, notes, photographs, maps, and other project-related materials were returned to TRC's Atlanta laboratory for processing upon completion of the field studies. Artifacts were washed, accessioned, analyzed, and are being temporarily curated at that facility. The complete artifact inventory from each site is presented in Chapter V. Artifact analysis focused on



Figure 8. View of bladed area encountered within project corridor.



Figure 9. View of push pile encountered within project corridor. Thomson-Vogtle Cultural Resource Survey





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Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 1 of 19).



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Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 2 of 19).



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Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 3 of 19).



Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 4 of 19).



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Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 5 of 19).



Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 6 of 19).



Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 7 of 19).



Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 8 of 19).



Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 9 of 19).



Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 10 of 19).

![](_page_13_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 11 of 19).

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![](_page_14_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 12 of 19).

![](_page_15_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 13 of 19).

![](_page_16_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 14 of 19).

![](_page_17_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 15 of 19).

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![](_page_18_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 16 of 19).

![](_page_19_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 17 of 19).

![](_page_20_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 18 of 19).

![](_page_21_Figure_0.jpeg)

Figure 10. Map depicting shovel test coverage of project corridor (sheet 19 of 19).

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characterizing the assemblage in terms of site function and period of occupation. Lithic artifacts were identified according to function, type, and raw material. Ceramic artifacts were described according to surface treatment, temper, and vessel part, so that regionally-defined ceramic types could be identified.

### **Prehistoric Lithic Analysis**

The following typology was used in the analysis of lithic artifacts.

#### **Bifacial Tools**

<u>Tertiary Biface</u>. Artifacts in this category have well-defined lateral margins that have been refined by controlled percussion and/or pressure flaking. Cortex is usually absent. These may be finished implements that were likely used for cutting, scraping, chopping, and/or digging purposes. Hafted biface fragments that no longer retain their haft elements may also be classified as tertiary bifaces.

<u>Hafted Biface</u>. These artifacts are finished tertiary bifaces that exhibit haft elements, or other evidence (e.g. polished blade margins) that hafting was intended. They were used as projectiles and/or for cutting or scraping.

<u>Unimarginal Retouched/Utilized Flake</u>. This category includes flakes that exhibit retouch or usewear along the distal or ventral margin of one or more lateral edges; the edge angle is less than 30°. They are expedient tools primarily used to cut and scrape meat, bone, hide, and plant material.

<u>Indeterminate Core Fragment</u>. Artifacts that exhibit flake scars but are too fragmentary for classification are categorized as indeterminate core fragments.

#### Debitage

<u>Tertiary Flake</u>. Tertiary flakes have a dorsal surface that exhibits flake scars and no cortex. The platform often exhibits a high striking angle.

<u>Thinning Flake</u>. Debitage in this category was produced while thinning or trimming a biface. The following characteristics distinguish them from tertiary flakes: thinning flakes are typically curved in profile, the platform striking angle is low, and they may also exhibit a platform lip, feathered edges, and a small or non-existent bulb of percussion.

<u>Shatter</u>. These artifacts are angular pieces that broke along fracture planes within the rock during lithic reduction. They lack a striking platform, bulb of percussion, and ripple marks.

<u>Flake Fragment</u>. When a piece of debitage lacks a striking platform, and other attributes needed for classification, it is classified as a flake fragment.

![](_page_22_Picture_13.jpeg)

![](_page_22_Picture_14.jpeg)

### **Prehistoric Ceramic Analysis**

The analysis of prehistoric sherds began with a basic characterization of the entire assemblage. Sherds smaller than  $2 \times 2$  cm were counted, weighed, and examined to determine if any clear surface treatments or rims were present that could prove useful in the analysis. If not, they received no further attention. All larger sherds were classified by surface treatment, paste, and temper, and placed into their proper typological category whenever possible.

## **Historic Artifact Analysis**

Laboratory analysis focused on dating recovered artifacts and assigning functional ascriptions. All of the historic artifacts recovered from this project were categorized by material class along a system devised by South (1977). Godden (1964), Lehner (1988), and South (1977) were consulted when dating the historic ceramics.

### **Curation of Project Materials**

The artifacts, field notes, maps, photographs, and other technical materials generated as a result of this survey will be temporarily stored at the TRC corporate office in Atlanta. They will be permanently curated at the University of Alabama's Office of Archaeological Research in Moundville upon completion of the project.

## HISTORIC STRUCTURES SURVEY METHODS

The NRHP assessment was conducted in accordance with guidelines contained in National Register Bulletin 24, *Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning* (Derry et al. 1985). Survey information maintained throughout the course of the inventory included field notes, sketch maps, and photographs.

Federal regulations define the APE as "the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist." In regard to the proposed project, the architectural APE was determined to be 0.5 km along either side of the proposed transmission corridor(s), encompassing a one-mile radius. In assessing the APE during the field survey, viewsheds to and from the proposed project corridor(s) were terminated where vegetation, intervening modern construction, and/or topography obstructed lines of sight.

Each property was photographed using 8.0 megapixel digital camera. USGS quadrangle maps were used to plot the locations of the inventoried properties.

## NRHP ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

According to 36 CFR 60.4, cultural resources eligible for listing on the NRHP are defined as buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts that have "integrity," and that meet one or more of the criteria outlined below.

- Criterion A (Event). Association with one or more events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of national, state, or local history.
- Criterion B (Person). Association with the lives of persons significant in the past.
- Criterion C (Design/Construction). Embodiment of distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; or representation of the work of a master; or possession of high artistic values; or representation of a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- Criterion D (Information Potential). Properties that yield, or are likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. Criterion D is most often (but not exclusively) associated with archaeological resources. To be considered eligible under Criterion D, sites must be associated with specific or general patterns in the development of the region. Therefore, sites become significant when they are seen within the larger framework of local or regional development.

"Integrity" is perhaps the paramount qualification of NRHP eligibility, and can be related to any or all of the following:

- Location: the place where the historic property (or properties) was/were constructed or where the historic event(s) occurred;
- Design: the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property (or properties);
- Setting: the physical environment of the historic property (or properties);
- Materials: the physical elements that were combined to create the property (or properties) during the associated period of significance;
- Workmanship: the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory;
- Feeling: the property's (or properties') expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of the period of significance; and
- Association: the direct link between the important historic event(s) or person(s) and the historic property (or properties).

Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

- Consideration A: A religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or
- Consideration B: A building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or
- Consideration C: A birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no appropriate site or building directly associated with his or her productive life; or

- Consideration D: A cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, from association with historic events; or
- Consideration E: A reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or
- Consideration F: A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own exceptional significance; or,
- Consideration G: A property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

Each identified resource was evaluated in relation to these criteria and considerations, as relevant.

![](_page_25_Picture_5.jpeg)

![](_page_25_Picture_6.jpeg)