

The St. Johns County Submerged Cultural Resources Inventory and Management Plan

2002-2003

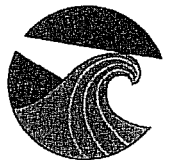
Phase II

Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program, Inc

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Executive Summary

This report presents the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program's (LAMP) 2002-2003 field season, which is Phase II of the St. Johns County Submerged Cultural Resources Inventory and Management Plan. While this project is designed to interpret the maritime landscape of St. Johns County, it is also intended to create a management plan that will be applicable to other counties in Florida. Phase I, conducted in 2001-2002 established the research design and methodological protocol for the entire five-year project and focused on conducting primary historical research, establishing survey areas, and conducting extensive remote sensing operations throughout the county (Morris et al. 2002). This fieldwork was oriented towards investigating St. Johns County's wide spectrum of maritime archaeological sites and expanding the survey areas to encompass a diverse range of environmental settings throughout the county. Remote sensing survey data generated over 142 magnetometer anomalies and sonar targets. Additionally, ten new sites were placed on the Florida Master Site File and five known sites were updated.

Phase II focused on the delineation and investigation of prioritized targets generated during the initial surveys. Phase II also refined and applied the methodological protocol for investigating targets in the field. The selected targets were prioritized based on remote sensing signature characteristics, location, and environmental diversity. This document therefore represents the continuation of the process started during Phase I.

In addition to testing the prioritized targets, LAMP initiated a site monitoring protocol in response to the impact of dredging and beach re-nourishment operations. In the course of this process, several known sites were reevaluated and updated. Three new sites, located outside of the survey areas, were also recorded. Sites from throughout St. Johns County were included in this season's work and reflect the wide diversity of maritime sites inherent in this region.

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Introduction

In 1968, the State of Florida set aside four underwater Archaeological Reserve areas around the state for the purpose of, “preserving a cross-sectional and representative sample of underwater cultural resources” (Singer 1998:342). The waters surrounding St. Augustine, the nation’s oldest port city, are included in one of these four reserves. St. Augustine’s reserve domain stretches from north of St. Augustine inlet to south of Matanzas Inlet near present day Marineland. The reserve areas were set aside exclusively for scientific investigations and may not be used for commercial salvage, however, very little underwater archaeological research has been undertaken within St. Augustine’s reserve prior to the present efforts.

What little academic underwater archaeology that has been conducted in St. Johns County was undertaken in the 1970s and early 1980s by Florida State University in conjunction with the National Park Service’s Southeastern Archaeological Center (SEAC) in Tallahassee. This early work was primarily used as training for field school students and did not produce any significant information pertaining to the maritime archaeology of the St. Johns County region. No other academic underwater archaeology took place in the county for a decade after these initial investigations, though large scale, multi-year projects have been undertaken mostly by the University of Florida and the city of St. Augustine’s archaeology program on many of the earlier colonial, terrestrial sites within St. Augustine (see White 2000 and Halbirt 1992). However, in 1995, research-oriented underwater archaeology resumed with a survey initiated by Southern Oceans Archaeological Research, Inc. (SOAR). This research continues today under the direction of the Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program, Inc. (LAMP).

SOAR initiated the St. Augustine Maritime Survey in 1995 as the, “first step towards interpreting St. Augustine’s maritime history from the perspective of the vessels involved in establishing, maintaining and protecting the oldest city in this country” (Franklin and Morris 1996:2). This initial remote sensing survey resulted in the generation of 48 anomalies offshore and seven anomalies inshore and the identification of three archaeological sites. The survey continued through 1998 under the direction of John W. Morris III with support from the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Museum, Inc (SALM). This survey resulted in the identification of several wrecks representing St. Augustine’s venerable maritime history. Perhaps the most significant of the wrecks identified during this period is the 1764 wreck of the British transport sloop *Industry*, and the remains of a wooden-hulled, screw steamship.

In 1999, LAMP was established under the leadership of Mr. Morris. LAMP was created in cooperation with the St. Augustine Lighthouse and Museum, which recognized the need to establish a maritime research program centered on a full time professional staff with conservation lab facilities, public access, museum interpretation, and support. LAMP began its first full year of operation on July 1, 2000 with a professional staff and has since developed an on-site conservation laboratory as well as exhibits which bring the research to the public through the Lighthouse Museum. In addition to continuing the research begun in 1995, LAMP also has created a formalized volunteer and student-intern program for high school, undergraduate and graduate students. LAMP conducts lectures and workshops for professional and public groups, and has developed a skills-based program for teaching high school students underwater

archaeology. After seven years of research in the region, LAMP has become the center of expertise for underwater archaeology in Northeast Florida and is often called upon by the State of Florida and other cultural resource entities to provide information, consultation and to help document submerged cultural resources throughout the state.

In 2001 LAMP initiated the St. Johns County Submerged Cultural Resources Inventory and Management Plan (Morris; Burns and Moore 2002). This project is designed to take three to five years to complete and is divided into three phases. Phase I, completed in 2002, established the research design and methodological protocol for the entire project. It focused on summarizing the historical background for the area, delineating the environmental diversity of the county and expanding the survey areas to encompass portions of all of the county's waterways. Phase I field work was devoted to remote sensing operations and the creation of a prioritized target list.

The first year of Phase II, presented in this report, is designed to examine and interpret these prioritized targets and to firmly codify the methodological protocol to be applied to field investigations. The targets chosen for investigation were selected from every type of marine environment encountered during the initial survey portion of this project. Existing sites were re-examined and monitored to ascertain environmental changes and impact from human activity. Data generated during Phase I, Phase II, and Phase II-A (2003-2004) will be utilized for the definitive interpretation of the maritime landscape of St. Johns County. This data will also provide the essential information necessary for generating a synthesized database for sound management decisions. The management plan will be completed during Phase III utilizing St. Johns County as a model. This will produce a blueprint that will be applicable for submerged cultural resource management on the county level throughout Florida.