

ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE

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The mandate to preserve cultural resources for the benefit, enjoyment, and understanding of this and succeeding generations is contained not only in the National Park Service Organic Act of 1916, but also in five other significant legislative enactments. These laws have significant impact on the policies, programs, activities, and procedures of the service, and taken in total impose a special obligation on the service to locate, identify, evaluate, preserve, manage, and interpret cultural resources in every federal park in such a way that they may be handed on to future generations unimpaired.

Therefore, as by law, the establishment of the Big Cypress National Preserve in South Florida required that the areas cultural resources be located, inventoried, and evaluated. Initial reconnaissance of the preserve began in the spring, 1977. This was the beginning of a 5 year program which is entering its fourth year. The resulting evaluative inventory is providing the substantive data needed to formulate historic preservation and resource management proposals: to guide planning, development, interpretation, maintenance activities, and comply with legal requirements. The cultural resources inventory is an essential part of the Preserve's information base.

The National Preserve is located within the Big Cypress watershed and encompasses approximately 2340 km<sup>2</sup> of sloughs, marshes, pine flatwoods, tropical hardwood tree islands, and prairies (Figure 1). The region is generally less than 4 m above sea level with large areas covered by cypress and secondary pine forests. Most of the soils in the swamp have developed on shallow deposits of recent and Pamlico sands overlying marl or limestone. Natural drainage in the swamp is by slow, overland flow to the south, with well defined streams occurring only along the coast where the swamp merges with the mangrove forest of the Ten Thousand Islands. The natural vegetation is that characteristic of extensive areas in southern Florida. It consists of a great variety of plants that vary locally with differences in the soils and water level. Wildlife in the swamp is aquatic or water tolerant and is adapted to seasonal inundation.

There is considerable literature concerning the archeological sequence of South Florida around the Big Cypress but the current deficiencies in our understanding of prehistoric cultural sequences within the swamp are primarily a function of the limited professional interest and research conducted there to date. The National Preserve is located well within the boundaries of the Glades archeological area. In this area two traditions are recognized: the Archaic and the Glades. The Archaic tradition is represented only sporadically in the Glades area, and as yet no sites attributable to this tradition have been

located within the National Preserve tract. Excavations conducted by Cockrell and Morrell on the southwest Florida coast at Marco Island demonstrated the existence of stratified Archaic sites with fiber tempered ceramics in the Glades area (Cockrell 1970a, Morrell 1969). This tradition may have existed from between 3000 B.C. to 1000 B.C. The subsequent Glades period, subdivided into eight subperiods, was constructed by Goggin (1947:114-27). This time span was characterized by the Glades Tradition subsistence, typified by "the exploitation of the food resources of the tropical coastal waters with secondary dependence on game and some use of wild plant food" (Goggin 1949:28). Undoubtedly, this resource exploitation strategy grew from similar patterns during the Archaic. The only amendment to Goggin's definition is that the resource exploitation featured adaptive strategies that reflected the site's local environment. Faunal material from prehistoric Glades period middens located in the interior portions of the preserve reflect this, but tools and items of marine origin are common throughout the tract. Griffin has modified much of Goggin's chronology after doing work in the Everglades National Park and presents the following dates for subsequent subperiods (Griffin 1976:13-14).

Glades I (Late)	ca. A.D. 500-700
Glades IIa	A.D. 700-900
Glades IIb	A.D. 900-1000
Glades IIc	A.D. 1000-1200
Glades IIIa	A.D. 1200-1400
Glades IIIb	A.D. 1400-1513
Glades IIIc	A.D. 1513-ca. 1750

Of 146 Glades tradition sites recorded to date 114 or 78% lack sufficient material to accurately place them in the Glades chronology. Known Glades I - II Period sites make up 11% of the total Glades tradition sites, with the remaining 11% exhibiting traits associated with the Glades II - III Period.

With the demise of native American populations within the Glades area after European contact, the complete extinction of the south Florida tribes occurred by the end of the eighteenth century (Romans:1962). This left a cultural vacuum in the Glades area that may have lasted from between 50 to 75 years. Significant migrations of Creeks into South Florida did not occur until after the First Seminole Indian War. A Southeastern Archaeological Conference Bulletin 28, 1980

