



**Tupelo Mississippi**  
Planning & Environmental Study  
**Railroad Relocation**

**FINAL**

**APPENDIX E**

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**Cultural Resources  
Technical Memorandum**

**May 2006**

Prepared for:



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January 26, 2006 (Revised May, 2006)

Mr. Chad Luedtke, PE  
Vice President / Project Manager  
HDR ONE COMPANY | Many Solutions  
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RE: Cultural resources GIS database for Tupelo RR relocation.

Dear Chad:

In August 2005, Brockington and Associates, Inc. contracted with HDR to conduct background research in order to identify previously recorded architectural and archaeological resources that may be impacted by the relocation of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad in Tupelo, Mississippi. The results outlined in this letter report are intended for planning purposes only and are not meant as compliance with any state or federal legislation pertaining to cultural resources.

Our background review consisted of collecting data from the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH), the Mississippi Archives, and the Lee and Pontotoc County libraries. Also, we met and consulted with Mr. Jim High of the Tupelo Main Street Program, Mr. John O'Hear and Mr. Brad Lieb of the Cobb Institute of Archaeology, and Dr. John Stubbs. In addition, our project historian attended the initial meeting of the Tupelo Historic Preservation Commission.

All collected data was then plotted using ArcView GIS 3.3. These included separate files for architecture and archaeology, and for National Park Service data regarding the Natchez Trace Parkway. A conjectural boundary for Chickasaw Indian occupation and for the Tupelo Civil War battlefield have also been included in the GIS plotted data. These files are described in detail below.

## **Architecture**

From 31 October to 4 November, we conducted background research for architectural resources at the Historic Preservation Division (HPD), Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH). HPD systematically plots all architectural resources on 1:100,000 USGS

topographic maps. These include National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listed properties, Mississippi Landmarks, resources documented in the course of county surveys, and properties recorded through 106 environmental review projects.

In Mississippi, when a property of interest is identified through the environmental review process, it is not officially determined as “potentially eligible,” but if it retains sufficient integrity or possesses historic significance, it may “warrant consideration” during project planning. These properties are then provided an individual file. We copied each file for extant resources located within the project study area (non-extant resources are marked as such). In our database, those extant resources are identified as *architecture\_points.shp* and *architecture\_polygons.shp*.

### **Tupelo Architectural Survey**

In 1991, Ms. Susan M. Enzweiler conducted an architectural survey for the city of Tupelo. For that project, she documented hundreds of buildings of historical and architectural significance and prepared a Mississippi State Survey form for each. While we did not copy each individual form, we copied the report and used the table of surveyed properties and their corresponding addresses to create survey boundaries. These areas are shown in our GIS database, and the data tables contain relevant information regarding the number of properties recorded along each street or section of town.

Also, for the project Ms. Enzweiler completed a NRHP Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). According to the NPS, an MPDF nominates “groups of related significant properties [that share] themes, trends and patterns of history” (NPS 1999:2). These forms facilitate individual or district listings by assessing them against a prepared context. The Tupelo MPDF includes residential, industrial and public institutional resources. In addition, the MPDF nominated two districts, South Church Street and Mill Village. Four individual nominations included two Tudor Revival style houses, the Lee County Courthouse and the Church Street School. These are included in the GIS database (*Architecture\_tupelo\_survey\_1991.shp*). Those resources nominated for the NRHP are included with the NRHP shape files.

## **NRHP Properties**

There are 10 NRHP listed properties located within the study area boundary (*Architecture\_nrhp\_points.shp* and *All\_nrhp\_utm*). Most are concentrated within the Tupelo corporate limits, although two, the Mutt-Thomason site and Tupelo Homesteads are located within the county. In addition, we obtained archaeological site information from the NPS regarding the Natchez Trace Parkway (*zone 16\_nrhp.shp*).

## **Mississippi Landmarks**

All NRHP properties are also identified as Mississippi Landmarks. These landmarks are properties that possess significant architectural or historical associations to the state of Mississippi. In addition to the NRHP properties, there are two other Mississippi Landmarks, a section of concrete road purported to be the first of its kind in the state, and the Elvis Presley Birthplace. The Elvis Presley Birthplace is identified in the Tupelo Survey database, while the road is shown as *architecture\_road.shp*.

## **Archaeology**

During the week of 31 October 2005, we collected data on previously recorded archaeological resources at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History in Jackson, Mississippi. MDAH systematically records sites on 7.5' USGS topographical quadrangles. Each site has a corresponding site card. We copied each appropriate map, along with each site card that fell within or near the project study area boundary. We then entered each site into our GIS database.

## **Chickasaw Boundaries**

The Chickasaw Indians inhabited the Lee County area at least by late pre-Contact times, and the archaeology of their settlements has become a burgeoning field of study. Jesse D. Jennings made several excavations during the late 1930s, and published his findings in the *Journal of Mississippi History* (Jennings 1941). Jennings' later work consulted contemporary accounts of the Chickasaw by white settlers. All of his archaeological and documentary evidence pointed to the Chickasaw towns being located in and around Lee County, with a particular concentration in present-day Tupelo.

The areas contained within our Chickasaw polygons represent an area of high-potential to contain Chickasaw Indian archaeological sites (*Chickasaw boundary.shp*). These boundaries are conjectural delineations drawn by our staff from consultations with professional archaeologists and historical maps. During our background research, we met with research staff members of the Cobb Institute of Archaeology (CIA), Professor John O’Hear and Mr. Brad Lieb. The CIA, associated with Mississippi State University in Starkville, has conducted numerous Chickasaw survey and data recovery projects in and around the Tupelo area. Based on their experience and knowledge of the area, they contend that sites will be concentrated along ridgelines and on the upland areas as illustrated in our database. Based on their studies, these sites are also very likely to contain burials.

In addition, we contacted Dr. John Stubbs who conducted a county-wide archaeological survey during 1981-1982. While completing his undergraduate archaeology course work at Harvard University, Dr. Stubbs applied for a grant through the MDAH to study Chickasaw sites in Lee County. Most of the sites identified in our GIS database are a result of his efforts to obtain information on artifacts collected by local residents and collectors or were found through his field inspection. Dr. Stubbs concurred with our boundary, and suggested that sites also may be found along the creek bottoms.

## **Other Cultural Resources**

### **The Natchez Trace**

Running diagonally from southwest to northeast, the Natchez Trace bisects the project study area. It was established as a scenic parkway by the National Park Service in 1938, with its headquarters in Tupelo. Our project historian met with Dr. Christina E. Miller, Cultural Resources Specialist for the park. Dr. Miller provided GIS shapefiles for their park data, including archaeological sites and sections of the Old Trace that remain in tact. We reviewed the Old Trace data and found that no original sections are located within the project study area. However, the NPS Trace itself has become an historic road. In a letter to the Tennessee DOT (copied to the Mississippi SHPO) dated 8 June 2004, the NPS wrote “it is the position of the National Park Service that the entire Natchez Trace Parkway is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places,” under Criterion A (associations with patterns of history) and Criterion C (distinctive design).

## **Tupelo National Battlefield**

In its *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields* (NPS 1993), the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC) identified and delineated the Tupelo battlefield (July 14-15, 1864), an engagement of General N.B. Forrest's Mississippi defense campaign. In that report, Tupelo was identified as a Class B battle, as it had "a direct and decisive influence" on the campaign. Due to modern development however, the Tupelo battle site was listed as a "lost site" with minimal interpretative potential. Presently, the NPS maintains a one acre site commemorating the Battle of Tupelo.

As part of their study, the CWSAC and the NPS identified clear and concise boundaries and associated troop movements on USGS topographical maps (**abpp core area.shp**). We obtained a copy of the appropriate map at HPD in Jackson and included it in our GIS database. CWSAC documented battle sites on two levels: 'study areas' and 'core areas'. *Study area* includes "all places related or contributing to the battle event: where troops deployed and maneuvered before, during and after the engagement" (NPS 1993). The study area for Tupelo includes a northeastern (see GIS shapefile) protrusion from a larger encompassing core area. *Core areas* are defined as "those places where the combat engagement and key associated actions and features were located; the core area includes, among other things, what often is described as 'hallowed ground'" (NPS 1993: 22).

Using the CWSAC findings as the basis for their study, The Conservation Fund, a nonprofit organization working in cooperation with other organizations and agencies to acquire land for conservation, published its *Civil War Battlefield Guide* in 1998. Like the CWSAC, it presents battles on USGS maps, but provides greater detail regarding troop movement (**civilwar.shp**). It also shows the military activities taking place west of the CWSAC maps. Unfortunately, the Conservation Fund does not provide details regarding the historical basis for their maps.

## **Observations**

As outlined above, there are numerous cultural resources within the project study area. Previously recorded architectural properties are largely concentrated within the Tupelo corporate limits, through some outlying properties do exist. Identified archaeological sites tend to follow topographical ridgelines, but there remains a high potential for sites beyond these ridges given the extensive occupation by the Chickasaw Indians.

Should you have any questions regarding our GIS database or the contents of this technical memo, please do not hesitate to contact me at (770) 662-5807 x32 or email [patriciastallings@brockington.org](mailto:patriciastallings@brockington.org). I have enjoyed working with HDR on this project and look forward to our continued correspondence.

Sincerely,

F. Patricia Stallings  
Historian

## References

Conservation Fund.

1998 *The Civil War Battlefield Guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. Edited by Frances H. Kennedy. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston.

Jennings, Jesse D.

1941 Chickasaw and Earlier Indian Cultures of Northeast Mississippi. *Journal of Mississippi History* (July 1941), pp. 155-126.

National Park Service (NPS)

1993 *Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields*. Civil War Sites Advisory Commission c/o NPS. Reprinted and revised 1998. Washington, D.C.

1999 *Guidelines for Completing National Register of Historic Places Forms: How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form*. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.