

Conclusions and Recommendations

In September 2022, Jim Gorton for Martin County requested that Cardno, now Stantec conduct an archaeological assessment survey of the Banner Lake project area, a site being considered for a low-income development. The archaeological site Banner Lake 1 (8MT379) was first documented in 1995 and was mapped in the northern portion of the project area. The goal of the current archaeological assessment was to determine if portions of the previously recorded archaeological site do in fact exist within the parcel that might affect potential development.

This survey was completed in accordance with Florida Chapter 1A-46 Florida Administrative Code Guidelines, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (PL 89-665), as amended, and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (PL 93-291) as amended. All work was performed under the direction of a registered professional archaeologist (RPA). In addition, all work meets the guidelines set forth in the Historic Preservation Compliance Review Program of the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources (DHR).

Field survey was conducted in October 2022 and successfully relocated 8MT379. A second site, the Banner Lake Historic Scatter (8MT1859), was also identified and documented during this survey.

The boundaries of 8MT379 were defined and accurately plotted using sub-meter GPS. Current findings agree with the previous assessments of 8MT379 that it represents a largely intact black earth shell midden. The site may contain additional research potential and the previous recommendation of potentially eligible for NRHP listing is maintained. It is Cardno, now Stantec's recommendation that site 8MT379 be avoided by proposed development and the SHPO be consulted to determine an acceptable preservation buffer around the site. We recommend a 25-ft. buffer around the new site boundaries as a reasonable area of avoidance. If avoidance is not possible, then the SHPO should be consulted to determine next steps to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts to the site.

Site 8MT1859 could not be associated with a significant historical event or person and, consequently it is recommended ineligible for nomination to the NRHP under Criterion A or B ((36 CFR § 60.4 [a-d])). The artifacts do not appear to exhibit any distinctive characteristic of a type, period, or method of construction, or to represent the work of a master or possess high artistic values, and consequently the site is recommended ineligible under Criterion C. The condition of the site is unlikely to yield information important to prehistory or history beyond that recorded during the present survey, and consequently the site is recommended as ineligible to the NRHP under Criterion D. Therefore, the site 8MT1859 is recommended as ineligible for listing in the NRHP under any criteria.