



Contextual Study of the Turpentine (Naval Stores) Industry in the Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida Coastal Plain

Project # 12-506

Background:

Under Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, the Department of Defense is required to identify, evaluate and manage archaeological sites that are deemed potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). While many archaeological surveys have been conducted at DoD facilities located in the coastal plains of the southeast Atlantic and Gulf Coast regions, many sites related to the naval stores industry have been both overlooked and miss-identified. The need to preserve or mitigate this rapidly disappearing class of archaeological sites, namely those of the historic naval stores related industry and specifically the turpentine industry, has become apparent. While there are a number of correctly identified sites in various stages of preservation recorded on military installations and other federal lands, the best preserved sites are owned by non-governmental organizations (NGO) and operated as living history or historical reenactment centers. These sites could provide a unique opportunity for alternative mitigation of naval stores sites at DoD facilities.



Objective:

To generate a guideline or handbook for federal Cultural Resource Managers (CRM) to utilize in recognizing, assessing, and making eligibility recommendations to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). This project will also explore alternative mitigation for cases in which potentially eligible sites are deemed important.

Summary of Approach:

The approach to this project included five stages:

- Conduct a literature search to accumulate knowledge and data about the naval stores industry.
- Conduct site file searches in SC, GA, and FL to gather information about naval stores site distribution, density, quality, and NRHP status.
- Visit naval stores sites primarily at DoD installations but also in the private sector to gather information about the archaeological signatures of the various naval stores sites.
- Analyze the results and write the historic context.
- Develop a CRM handbook for identification of naval stores industrial sites and possible mitigation alternatives.

Benefit:

This historical context will be made available to all federal CRMs for use in recognizing, assessing, and recommending naval stores sites to the NRHP. It also recommends measures that should assist in streamlining the process and makes suggestions about alternative treatments and mitigation that may both benefit the particular Installation and support the last few living history programs that carry on the traditions of the naval stores industry.

Accomplishments:

This project created a historic context which described the history of the Naval Stores Industry, more specifically the Turpentine Industry, as it evolved within what today is the United States of America. While the project concentrated on the coastal plains of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, this historical context may also be applied to any other state in the Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Pine Belt. This project produced a handbook for federal CRMs that provides them with additional tools for the identification, assessment, and determination of eligibility for the NRHP and potential alternative mitigation options.



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