

ARCHEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE OF "D" RIVER AREA

BY

Thomas M. Newman and
Ruth D. McGilvra

ABSTRACT

An archeological reconnaissance of the "D" River Flood Control Project Area has been completed and there are no archeological materials in the project area which would be damaged by proposed modification and construction. The entire area has been substantially modified, and any materials of archeological interest which may have been there in the past would have been obscured by extant cultural features and modifications.

THE RECONNAISSANCE

On November 26, 1974, two individuals from the Anthropology Department, Portland State University, conducted a complete archeological reconnaissance of the "D" River Project Area, Lincoln County, Oregon. The area examined included the shorelines and adjacent areas of the "D" River approximately 300 meters east-west and less than 70 meters north-south in the south 1/2 of Section 15, T. 7 S., R. 11 W., W.M. The area is bisected by the "D" River bridge on U.S. 101 and may be considered in four sections, the Northeast, Southeast, Northwest, and Southwest.

The Northeast and Southeast sections are similar and may be considered together. They are immediately above the level of the river, subject to flooding, and have obviously been considerably modified. The Southeast section contains the marina and the original bank is not visible, but has been obscured with an asphalt launching facility, and the bank itself has been regularized and stabilized, rendering invisible the original surface. The Northeast section has obviously been leveled, possibly filled, and roads, foundations, and several small buildings are located there. The entire area

has been obscured in various ways, but examination suggested no evidence of archeological materials of interest. Additionally, the highway has been elevated on fill and stabilized in several ways, obscuring anything which might have been there.

The Southwest portion has likewise been substantially modified through leveling, paving, and a concrete wall placed to stabilize the bank has precluded close observation. Rip-rap pretty well obscures whatever else might be observed. Where it was possible to observe the original surface, no indication of an archeological site could be discovered.

It was only in the Northwest portion that a reasonable assessment of the archeological potential of the area was possible, and the motel and its parking lot obscured part of this. Salal, some evergreens, and other vegetation between the motel parking lot and the highway appear to represent something approximating original cover and relatively undisturbed surface. No evidence of significant archeological materials were found in this area.

As a gratuitous aside, it should be noted that virtually all modern construction, such as in evidence along the "D" River, involves clearing, levelling, paving or use of other stabilizing metals, foundations, trenching, etc. All these activities are incompatible with the discovery or survival of prehistoric materials. If these prehistoric resources, uniformly non-renewable, are to be preserved, all future construction must take avoiding or salvaging of these resources into account. On the Oregon Coast, there is reason to believe that something in excess of 90% of 1800 A.D. archeological sites of major significance are now largely destroyed or badly damaged. I wish to commend the effort to consider the prehistoric materials on the "D" River.

In conclusion, no archeological materials are known from the area and there will be no prehistoric materials damaged by the proposed construction.