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TABLE POINT ARCHEOLOGICAL DISTRICT (ZONE A)

Description;

Cumberland, the largest and southernmost of Georgia's barrier islands, Its initial geological development resulted from fluctuation in sea levels over 30,000 years ago. Later development during the Holocene resulted in its present formation. *more than*

The prehistoric cultural remains on Cumberland

Surface features which indicate the presence of a site are normally a matrix of rich, black humic soil and oyster shell middens or long ridges

In almost all cases, the sites have been extensively damaged through natural forces, vandalism or mining.

Zone A at Table Point is represented as a thin band of ground

Included in this zone are approximately

portion of Table Point. Soils and vegetation in this area are varied; soil groups include Leon Fine sand, Johnson Loam, and Chipley sand. Vegetation is a dense mixture of lowland mixed hardwoods, oak-palmetto-pine.

Undergrowth in this area is without a doubt the most impassable on the island. However, the area within the zone contained numerous shell middens.

Within the time framework of the survey, it was not possible to locate the boundaries of each occupation area. Investigation of the area suggests that land bordering the marsh at Table Point has been intensively used by aboriginal peoples.

Milanich conducted research here and excavated a shell ring. Ceramics of the Deptford Period were in abundance and the "presence of both cord-marked pottery and sherds similar to lower Mississippi valley types both suggest widespread contact with phases throughout the Southeastern area" (Milanich 1971:60).

Significance

Utilization of the Georgia lowlands dates back to over 5000 BP, however, the first intensive use of this area surfaces sometime around 4000 BP with the definition of the Bilbo Phase. These aquatically oriented peoples *more than*

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exploited the sea and salt marshes and developed one of the earliest ceramic assemblages currently identified in the New World. This ceramic tradition is distinctly tempered with organic fiber.

Beginning around 2950 BP Bilbo cultures begin to give way to other cultural manifestations still utilizing estuarine ecotones which are as yet poorly defined archeologically. At this time, noticeable variation in ceramic manufacture occurs with the introduction of sand as the tempering agent. While this is a period of cultural obscurity the emerging phase which comes to light is known as Deptford. Deptford Phase ceramics continued to be seen until around 1450 BP. In addition to ceramic innovations during the Deptford Period is the emergence of a burial mound complex.

The succeeding phase, the Wilmington, is poorly understood primarily for lack of research. It has been suggested that these people represent an invasion from the north. Also, the ceramics record another change; this is manifested by the use of crushed pottery as the tempering agent. Other Wilmington cultural manifestations, i.e., subsistence economy, appear to conform to those of earlier peoples.

No sharp distinctions can be made from the late Wilmington and the following phases, i.e., St. Catherines, Savannah, and Irene. However, at some point between 1450 BP and 450 BP aboriginal peoples on Cumberland gradually lost their cultural affiliation with the upper Georgia coast. Influences emanating from northeast Florida appear to gain momentum as evidenced by the San Marcos Phase ceramics which have been located on the island.

Aboriginal cultures are ended in their pure form with the arrival of the Spanish on the Florida coast in the middle 16th century.

The Table Point Archeological District is felt to be significant because it provides the research potential for increasing our concept of time, space, and development of the above occupations at Cumberland Island. Research here will help define the specific nature of aboriginal man/land relationships of Coastal Georgia and the barrier islands. The relationships and interaction between the Georgia mainland and the barrier islands cultural occupations is poorly defined. Scientific analysis of this site will provide data to generate cultural dynamic models for two pressing questions: are the barrier islands and the mainland representative of differing social groups; or does one reflect seasonal exploitation by the other? Research at these sites will provide much-needed information on ceramic modifications found in this area; do these differences reflect local indigenous modification, diffusion or migration? Cumberland Island

by the other?

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and the surrounding vicinities are representative of an estuarine subsistence economy. The relationships of this ecotone with interior portions of the Georgia Coastal Plan can be adequately explained through research at this site.

Verbal Boundary Description

The Table Point Archeological District

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

U.T.M. Coordinates:

Easting

Northing

A. [REDACTED]
 B. [REDACTED]
 C. [REDACTED]
 D. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]