

## **Tinker's Creek Greenway Property, Portage County, Ohio: Phase I Evaluation of Cultural Resources**

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### **Introduction and Physical Setting**

The Tinker's Creek Greenway property encompasses approximately 53 hectares. Portage County Parks received a \$300,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund grant to assist with purchasing of the property for the purposes of developing a park called Trail Lake. In following federal regulations in development of the park, an archeological assessment was required and conducted by Kent State archaeologists.

The property is bounded by Ravenna road to the south and to the east by Ferguson road (Figure 1). Within the property boundaries, there are several different types of landscapes: patches of forested areas to the northwest; agricultural fields to the southeast; glacial kames in the northwest corner; and wetlands to the north that connect to Herrick Fen State Nature Preserve and Gressard Lake at the center (Figure 2). The property is under a mile away from Tinker's Creek, a notable water source that has numerous archaeological sites within its watershed.

### **Land Use and Soil Profiles**

A review of historical land survey documents, topographic maps, and aerial photography yielded minimal information pertaining to the land use within the area of interest (AOI). According to Field & Stream magazine (Daubel 1975) the Gressard family started constructing a private "fishing hole" in 1956. This was confirmed through historical aerial photography and the 1956 Cleveland topographic map (USGS). The Gressard family referred to the lake as "Trail Lake". Field & Stream stated, "Gressard has maintained a limited and unique commercial fishery at his lake for almost as long as the lake has existed" (Daubel 1975:99). Gressard, or Trail, Lake was maintained and fished throughout the year. Lidar analysis revealed the precise loci of the Cleveland & Pittsburgh (C&P) Original Alignment Brady Lake to Hudson rail bed (Figure 3), a part of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which was established in 1846. Within Tinker's Creek

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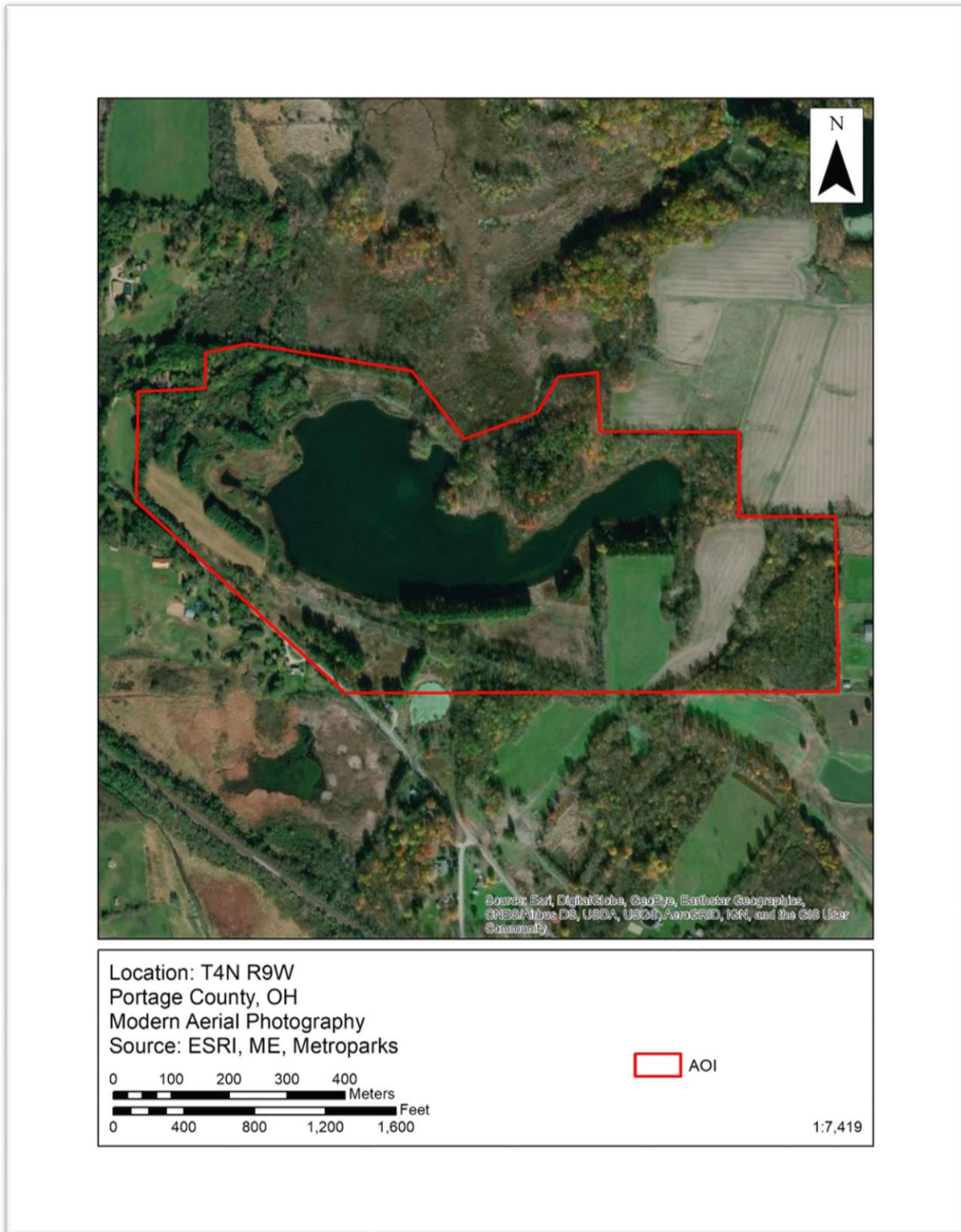
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Greenway property, the railroad extends about 661 meters. No information was found on the C&P Original Alignment Brady Lake to Hudson. However, it is historical, and preservation



**Figure 1. The Tinker’s Creek Greenway, represented by the star, in Ohio and Portage County.**



**Figure 2. Tinker's Creek Greenway Property.**

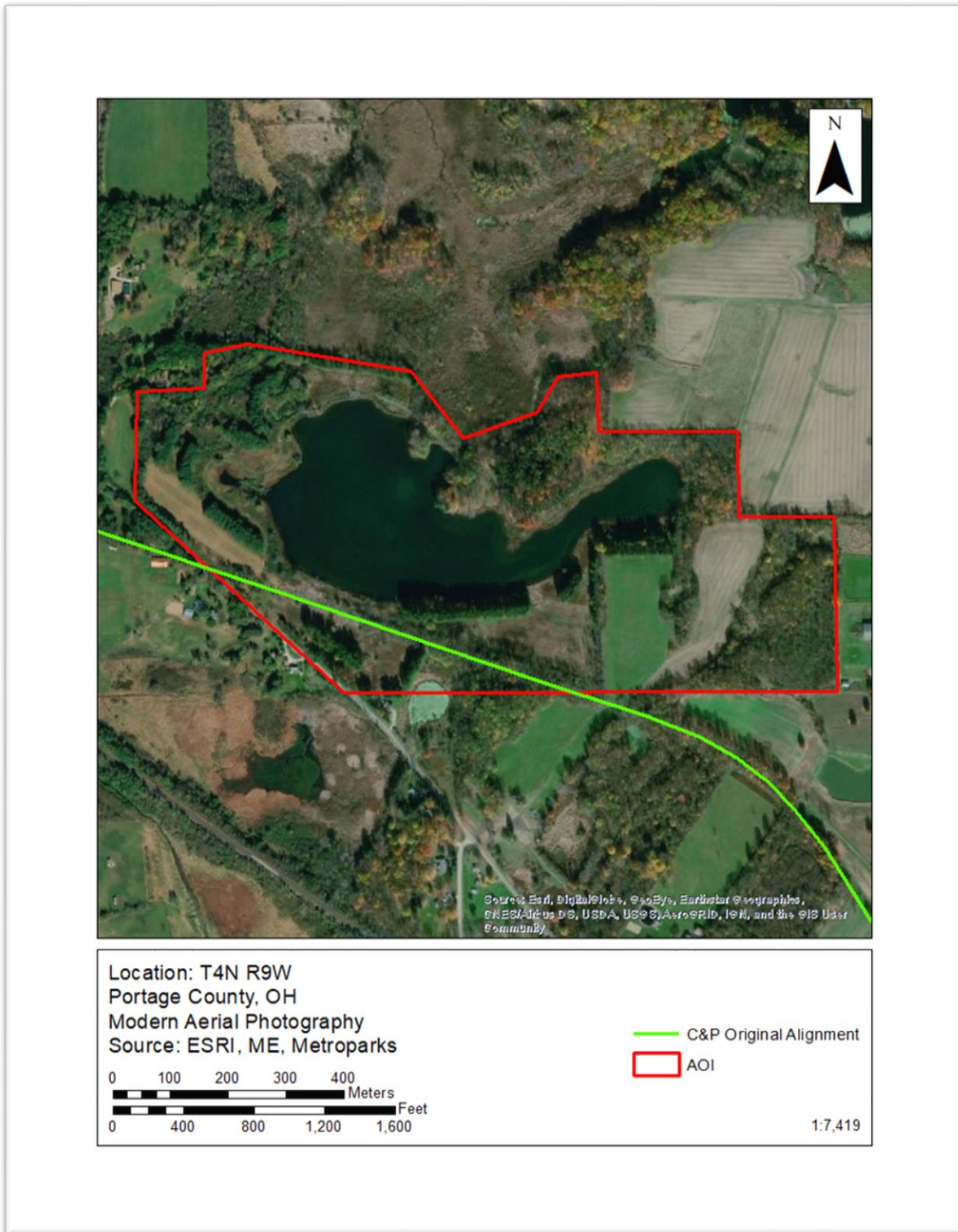


Figure 3. C&P Original Alignment Brady Lake to Hudson rail bed.

should be considered. This railroad line probably served as means to transfer people from Hudson, OH to Brady Lake Park but this has not yet been confirmed. It should also be noted, to our knowledge, that no historical documents associated this property with any Native American trails.

According to the USDA National Resource Conservation Service Web Soil Survey map, the AOI consisted primarily of Ellsworth silt loam (55.4%, 29.3 hectares), Water (25.0%, 13 hectares), and Chili loam (8.8%, 4.6 hectares). However, the Chili loam and Ellsworth silt loam can be divided by the percent of slope and erosion. The AOI also contained 10.8% or 5.7 hectares of various other soils. A detailed map and break down of the soils can be found in Figure 4 and are described in Table 1.

### **Methodology**

An archaeological survey was conducted at the Tinker's Creek Greenway during the summer of 2019 by the members of the Kent State Experimental Archaeology Laboratory. Standard archaeological field equipment was used to excavate the 53 30x30 cm shovel test units, this included trowels, shovels, tape measures, and ¼ inch mesh screens. For each unit, soil profiles, geographic location and artifact concentrations of each unit were documented. This survey was a means to understand and provide a description of the archaeological resources within the bounded property of Tinker's Creek. The methodology used for the archaeological assessment consisted of an extensive surface reconnaissance as well as 53 30x30 cm shovel test units. Each shovel test unit was excavated to sterile subsoil. Soil profiles were documented for each unit. Positive shovel tests, or shovel test containing artifacts, were delineated. This process consisted of shovel test units placed at five-meter intervals in all cardinal directions until two negative shovel tests were yielded. This method helped to determine whether the positive shovel test units were isolated finds or sites locations.

### **Artifact Recovery and Description**

Out of the 53 30x30 cm shovel test units, five contained artifacts. These five artifacts consisted of lithic debris. No artifacts were recovered during the surface survey. The proposed parking area had an isolated find. Shovel test units were placed in five-meter intervals, north, south, east and west of the find until two negative units resulted; no other artifacts were recovered in the area. There was another isolated find within the wooded area in the North section of the property. Isolated finds were noted but warranted no further investigation and did not interfere with any progress of the proposed park.

A potential archaeological site was found in the eastern portion of the property. Its location can be seen in the map provided by the Portage Park District (Figure 5) and shows the proposed approximate trail (red line) and proposed approximate trail – depending on switch backs (yellow oval). Further analysis and future avoidance are recommended in the eastern portion of the property.

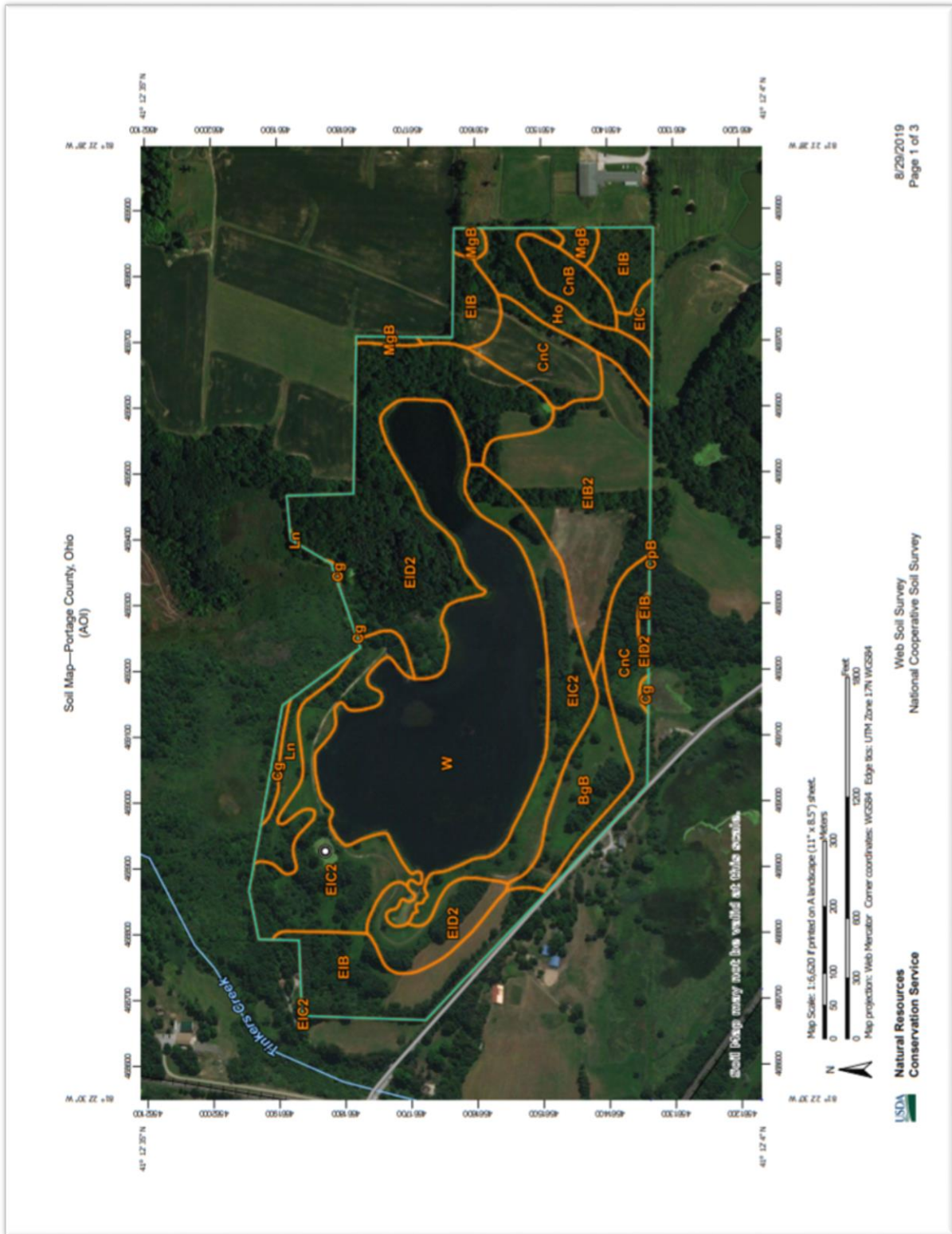


Figure 4. Soils.

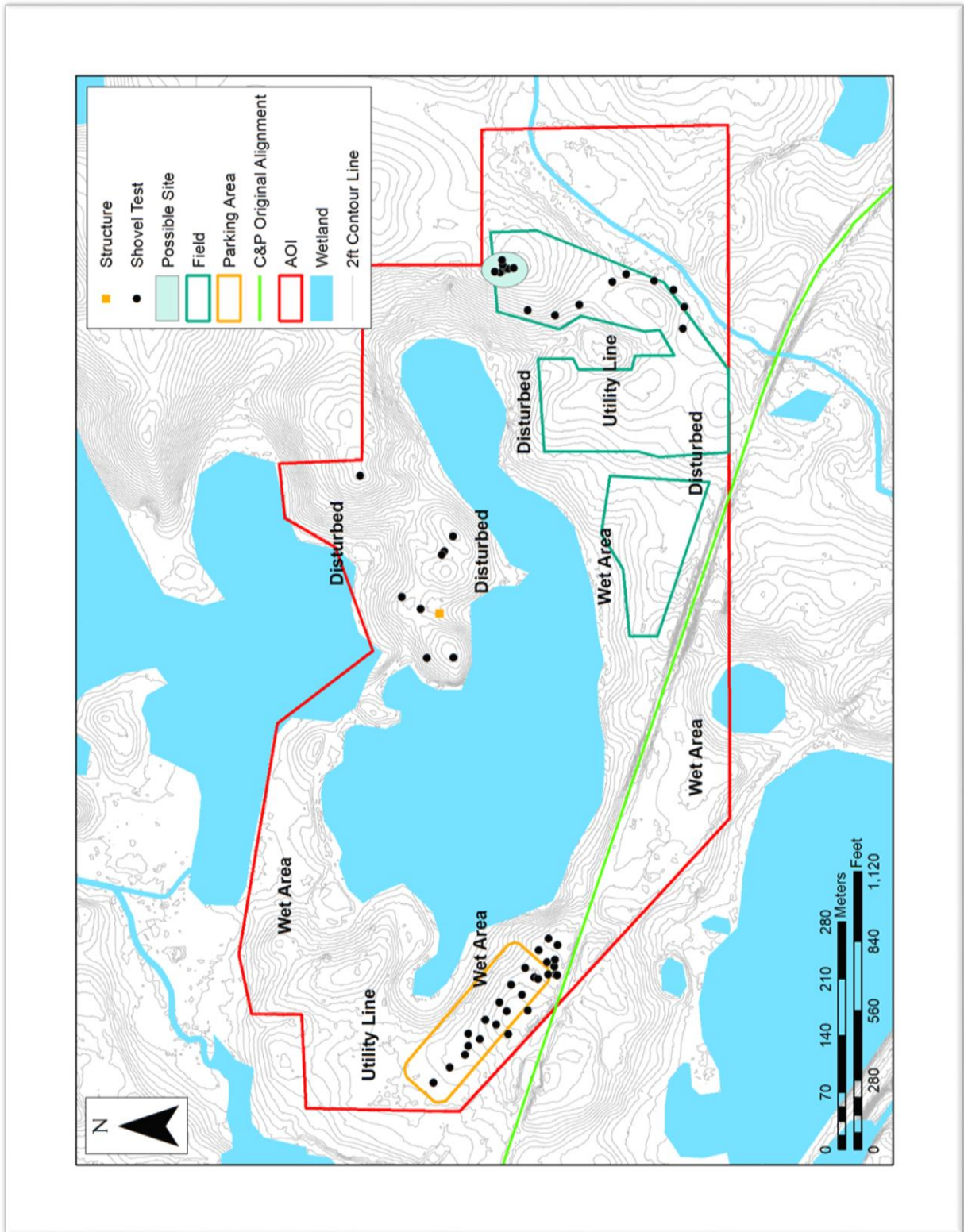


Figure 5. Sketch Map.

Artifacts from this potential archaeological site consist of stone tool production debris (Figure 6). Importantly, one of the artifacts possesses a morphology that is consistent with a spear point flute removal flake (Figure 7). This artifact weighs 1.5 grams, and is 28.76 millimeters (mm) in length, 16.81 mm in width, and 3.34 mm in thickness. Its striking platform is ground, prepared, and lipped, and likely struck with a soft hammer such as an antler billet. If indeed this flake is a flute removal flake, it may be indicative of the very first Stone Age Americans during the Pleistocene period, and thus a significant discovery.



**Figure 6. Chert Flakes.**





**Figure 7. Chert Flake.**

**Table 1. Soils.**

<b>Map Unit Symbol</b>	<b>Map Unit Name</b>	<b>Acres in AOI</b>	<b>Percent of AOI</b>
BgB	Bogart silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	5.1	3.9%
Cg	Carlisle muck	0.7	0.5%
CnB	Chili loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	2.4	1.9%
CnC	Chili loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	9.0	6.9%
CpB	Chili silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	0.0	0.0%
EIB	Ellsworth silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	12.2	9.4%
EIB2	Ellsworth silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded	14.4	11.0%
EIC	Ellsworth silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes	0.8	0.6%
EIC2	Ellsworth silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slopes, eroded	20.3	15.5%
EID2	Ellsworth silt loam, 12 to 18 percent slopes, eroded	24.7	18.9%
Ho	Holly silt loam	4.3	3.3%
Ln	Lorain silty clay loam	2.7	2.0%
MgB	Mahoning silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	1.4	1.1%
W	Water	32.7	25.0%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>		<b>130.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### **Conclusion**

Further investigation is needed in the eastern portion of the Tinker’s Creek Greenway project. It is recommended that three to five 1x1 meter units be placed in this area to determine if there is a prehistoric component within this location. It is also recommended that further research be conducted on the history of the Gressard Family and the C&P Original Alignment from Brady Lake to Hudson. If further investigation is not possible, then we recommend avoidance of the eastern portion of the area. However, we believe due to the artifacts recovered, further analysis is warranted to better understand the archaeological context. Several gas lines, steep slopes, and wetlands restricted the number of shovel test units placed within the property. The locations where the parking lot and picnic area is proposed pose no threat to any cultural resources. These areas primarily contain disturbed soils, which we believe is due to the original construction of the lake.

***Current Research in Ohio Archaeology 2020***

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**References Cited**

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1975 Tricks That Took 75,000 Bass. *Field and Stream*, Vol. 80 No. 3.