CITY OF VANCOUVER
ARCHAEOLOGICAL PREDETERMINATION REPORT

Property Owner: Port of Vancouver
Mailing Address: 3103 NW Lower River Road
              Vancouver WA, 98660

Telephone: 518-3004

Applicant: Lisa Willis
Mailing Address: Port of Vancouver
              3103 NW Lower River Road
              Vancouver, WA 98660

Relationship to Owner: Same

Property Address: Port of Vancouver, 16101 NW Old Lower River Road

Legal description: Section 18, Township 2 North, Range 1 East, Willamette Meridian.
                  Portion of Parcel 153109000

Parcel Acreage: 30.91
Disturbance Area Acreage: 3.13

A map showing property location is attached.

General Physical Description of Site, including current uses: The project area is located approximately 0.8 kilometer (km) (0.5 mile [mi]) north of the Columbia River and 1 km (0.6 mi) south of Vancouver Lake. The project area is located in undeveloped land, in the part of Parcel 2 between NW Lower River Road (Highway 501) in the north and NW Old Lower River Road in the west (Figure 1). It consists of two separate areas approximately 150 meters (m) (492 feet [ft]) apart, and is located in a low-lying bottomland area covered by short grasses. The southern boundary of the eastern project area is a steep slope of gravel fill material covered in blackberry that slopes up to NW Old Lower River Road (Photos 1 and 2). To the north is a Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) substation. The area to the south and between the two areas was surveyed in March of 2011 by Archaeological Investigations Northwest, Inc. (AINW). The northern boundary limits of the tree mitigation area was staked 18 m (60 ft) from the intermittent and permanent wetland areas that contain cottonwood, willow, blackberry and thistle.

Description of proposed activity: The Port of Vancouver plans to plant trees to mitigate for related development.

Predetermination Trigger:

☑ Any portion of disturbance area within Predictive Model Probability Level A

☐ 5 acre or greater disturbance area wholly within Predictive Model Probability Level B.

☐ Disturbance area within ¼ mile of known archaeological site

☐ Director option

☐ Discovery principle
BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Detail all background research: Documents obtained from the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation were reviewed by AINW to determine if archaeological resources have previously been recorded in the project area and to determine if the surrounding areas have been surveyed. Copies of historical maps from various sources, on file at AINW, were also reviewed to assess the potential for historic-period archaeological resources. The records indicated no archaeological sites have been previously recorded in the vicinity of the project area.

The project area is within the Vancouver Lakes Archaeological District (45DT101). The district was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. The archaeological and historical sites noted in the nomination of the district are considered to be significant. The closest site listed in the district to the current protect area is located 1.5 km (0.9 mi) to the northwest (Western Heritage, Inc. 1982).

Numerous cultural resource studies have been conducted in the vicinity of the current project. The closest study was also within Parcel 2. This study borders the current project area to the south, and lies between the two current project areas. This study was conducted in 2011 for the Port of Vancouver by AINW, and it consisted of a pedestrian survey and excavation of six shovel tests. No evidence of an archaeological site was found (Davis and Ozbun 2011).

Another study which is adjacent to the west end of the current project was conducted for the River Road project (formerly the Cogentrix Pipeline Lateral project). This study was conducted in 1995 and consisted of a pedestrian survey and excavation of auger probes along the south side of Old Lower River Road. One archaeological site (45CL408) was identified as a result of this study and is located 1.6 km (1 mi) northwest of the current project (King 1995).

Two cultural resource studies located east of the current project area did not identify cultural resources (Moore et al. 1997; Thomas 1995). The area north of the current project has been surveyed for archaeological resources during two different studies (Buchanan and Reese 2008; Onat 1997). The area south of the current project is the former Vancouver Alcoa Aluminum Plant, operating from 1940 to 1986, and was studied in 2009 (Fagan and Zehendner 2009).

The nearest archaeological site to the project, located 0.35 km (0.2 mi) northwest, is 45CL83. The site is a low-density scatter of fire-cracked rock (Duncan 1978). The site is no longer extant. Other nearby archaeological sites (45CL458, 45CL628, 45CL726, 45CL768) consist mainly of small lithic scatters and are located approximately 1.8 km (1.1 mi) east of the project. A scatter of fire-cracked rock (45CL82) is located 0.7 km (0.4 mi) northwest, and a historic artifact scatter (45CL708) is located 1.4 km (0.9 mi) east of the current project.

The 1854 General Land Office (GLO) map for Township 2 North, Range 1 East, Willamette Meridian, shows that the area north of the Columbia River encompassing the project area was claimed by the Hudson’s Bay Company (GLO 1854). The updated 1860 GLO map for the same area shows the entire area north of the Columbia River to be “Washington Territory” (GLO 1860). In the 1863 GLO, two land claims were located in the project area: the Hendrickson Donation Land Claim (DLC) (No. 47) and the Matthews DLC (No. 44) (GLO 1863). No houses or other structures are shown in the project area on any of the GLO maps.

One transmission line tower is present north of the eastern project area and east of the western project area. Transmission towers were formerly on both project areas, but have been removed. A wooden-pole transmission line still remains on the northern portion of the western project area.
BACKGROUND RESEARCH, Continued

In summary, the project is located within the Vancouver Archaeological District and in a high probability area as determined by the Clark County Predictive Model. However, few sites are located near the project area; the disturbance from transmission line towers, the results from the 2011 survey conducted adjacent to the current project area, and the low-lying topography indicate a lower likelihood of finding historic and/or prehistoric sites.

SURFACE INSPECTION

Date of inspection: January 20, 2012            Time of Day: Morning
Weather conditions at time of inspection: Cloudy and raining

Describe soil visibility: 
☐ over 50% visible  ☒ less than 50% visible

Description of proposed project’s locational characteristics: The project area is located at an elevation of approximately 3 to 6 m (10 to 20 ft) in gently rolling, low-lying bottomlands near areas of permanent and seasonal wetlands. Permanent ponds are located about 100 m (328 ft) north of the project area and the Columbia River is 0.8 km (0.5 mi) south of the project area. The project is located within the Columbia River floodplain. A pedestrian survey and shovel testing were conducted to within 18 m (60 ft) of the staked wetland boundary, which is excluded from the tree mitigation area. Vegetation in the area consists primarily of grasses, and the project is bordered to the north by vegetation consisting of sedges, cottonwood, willow, thistle, and blackberry. Blackberry vines cover the gravel-filled slope leading up to NW Old Lower River Road.

Describe surface investigation procedures: A pedestrian survey was conducted on January 20, 2012, by AINW archaeologists Sara J. Davis, M.A., R.P.A., and Sarah L. Jenkins, M.A. Both project areas were covered by walking west/east transects spaced no more than 10 m (33 ft) apart. Grass cover reduced ground surface visibility to between 5 to 10%, with a few, small areas of disturbed bare ground provided 75 to 80% ground visibility.

Describe any artifacts found: No artifacts – historic or prehistoric – were observed during the survey. Three modern ceramic insulators and six metal beams from the power lines were observed on the ground. The same insulators (modern) could be seen on the nearby transmission towers.

SUBSURFACE INSPECTION

Describe and quantify amount of subsurface probing and manual surface exposing activities that were carried out, if any: Four shovel tests (ST) were excavated in the project area to determine if subsurface cultural material was present. Shovel testing was conducted on January 20, 2012, by AINW archaeologists Sara J. Davis, M.A., R.P.A., Sarah L. Jenkins, M.A., Scott Slowinski, B.A., Lea Loiselle, B.A., and Marci Monaco, B.A. Three shovel tests (ST-1, ST-2, and ST-3) were excavated within the project area located on the west end of Parcel 2, and one shovel test (ST-4) was located in the east end of Parcel 2 (Figure 2). The shovel tests were 30 centimeters (cm) (12 inches [in]) in diameter. ST-1 was excavated to a depth of 40 cm (16 in) and was terminated after encountering a rock. The other three shovel tests were excavated to a depth of 65 cm (26 in), which is 4 cm (2 in) deeper than the proposed
SUBSURFACE INSPECTION, Continued

planting depth. Soil was screened through nested 6.4- and 3.2-millimeter (¼- and ⅛-in) mesh hardware cloth. The soil type mapped for the project area is the Sauvie series consisting of silty clay loam soils, which are found on gentle slopes to nearly level ground in bottomlands along the Columbia River. Soils observed during excavation of the shovel tests match the soil descriptions for the Sauvie series (McGee 1972). The upper 40 cm (16 in) consisted of a dark grayish brown silty clay loam. From 40 to 65 cm (16 to 24 in) below the surface the soils consisted of a mottled, dark grayish brown, dark yellowish brown, and orange brown silty clay loam. The soils contained less than 1% pea-sized subangular gravel to no gravel. A small, modern, ceramic electrical line insulator fragment was observed from 0 to 15 cm (6 in) below surface in ST-1, and a modern bolt was observed 15 cm (6 in) below the surface in ST-4 (Figure 2). No historic or prehistoric artifacts were observed during shovel testing.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

State findings and conclusions: No evidence of prehistoric or historic-period sites was found during the pedestrian survey and shovel testing. Modern debris consisting of four ceramic electrical line insulators, a bolt, and metal beams from the power lines formerly located in the project area suggest the upper soils may have been previously disturbed. There appears to be little potential for a significant archaeological deposit in the area, based on soil disturbances and the results for the previous survey conducted next to the current project area (Davis and Ozbun 2011). AINW recommends that no further archaeological work is required.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation:

☐ An archaeological resource survey is necessary.
☒ An archaeological resource survey is not necessary.
☐ Monitor during construction.
CERTIFICATION AND SIGNATURE

I certify that I am a:

☐ qualified archaeologist, as defined by RCW 27.53.030(9).
☒ professional archaeologist, as defined by RCW 27.53.030(8) and WAC 25-48 020(4).

Signature of Archaeologist: _______________________________ Date: January 27, 2012

Name: Sarah L. Jenkins
Name: Sara J. Davis

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REFERENCES

Buchanan, Kelsey W., and Jo Reese

Davis, Sara J., and Terry L. Ozbun

Duncan, Mary Ann
Fagan, John L., and Maureen N. Zehendner

General Land Office (GLO)

King, J. Scott

McGee, Dale A.

Moore, Robin, Leonard A. Forsman, Dennis E. Lewarch, and Lynn L. Larson

Onat, A.

Thomas, Bryn

Western Heritage, Inc., Olympia, Washington
Figure 1. Port of Vancouver Parcel 2 Tree Mitigation Area project locations.
Figure 2. Port of Vancouver Parcel 2 Tree Mitigation Area showing shovel test locations and pedestrian transects.
Photo 1. Overview of the western portion of the project area. The photo is taken from Aloca Road. Shovel test ST-1 is in the foreground, and shovel test ST-2 is in the background. The view is towards the east.

Photo 2. Overview of the eastern portion of the project area. The photo is taken from the western boundary. Shovel test ST-4 is in the foreground. The view is towards the west.