
SANTA MARIA WEST SITE

1814 BRICKELL AVENUE

Designation Report



City of Miami

REPORT OF THE CITY OF MIAMI
PRESERVATION OFFICER
TO THE HISTORIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION BOARD
ON THE POTENTIAL DESIGNATION OF THE
SANTA MARIA WEST SITE, 1814 BRICKELL AVENUE,
AS A HISTORIC SITE

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Passed and
Adopted on March 05, 2013

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Historic Name:

None

Current Name:

Santa Maria West Site / 1814 Brickell Park

Location:

1814 Brickell Avenue
Miami, Florida 33129

Present Owner:

City of Miami Parks and Recreation
444 SW 2nd Avenue, 8th Floor
Miami, Florida 33130-1910

Present Use:

Public park

Zoning District:

CS – Civic Space

Tax Folio Numbers:

01-4139-092-0030

Legal Description:

IERI SUBDIVISION PB 164-26 T-22010 LOT 3 BLK 1 LOT SIZE 35500 SF FAU 01-4139-001-2110 OR 22505-4544 07/2004 2 (3)

Classification:

Archaeological Site

II. SIGNIFICANCE

Specific Dates:

Late Archaic cemetery, Tequesta Village: 1000 B.C. to A.D. 500 (Glades I Period);
Spanish American War: 1898-1899.

Statement of Significance:

The Santa Maria West Site is significant on a local level because of 1) a Late Archaic cemetery associated with the possible ancestors of the Tequesta Indians; 2) a habitation site associated with the Tequesta; 3) its use as a Spanish American War military encampment.

The site encompasses a prehistoric cemetery that dates from as early as ca. 1000 B.C. This cemetery component is below, and predates a Glades period midden located across the property. The site is within the Tequesta domain, an area that extended from the Florida Keys north to the current Broward/Palm Beach county line. The park contains a Pamlico sand aceramic burial horizon underneath a black dirt midden. Both components are associated with the Indians who lived in Miami prior to European settlement. The midden is characterized by food remains (animal bone and shell), pottery, and tools made from shell, bone, and stone.

The human remains are attributed to primary interments associated with the Late Archaic ancestors of the Tequesta Indians. The site is significant because of the information it can yield on prehistoric mortuary practices and because it represents a Native American cultural site and contains archaeological material that has the potential to yield important information regarding Tequesta culture and lifeways.

Relationship to Criteria for Designation:

The Santa Maria West archaeological site is significant in the archaeological heritage of the City of Miami and is eligible for designation under the following criteria:

8. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The Santa Maria West archaeological site incorporates the remains of a Tequesta village and Late Archaic cemetery, as well as a historic archaeological component possibly related to a Spanish American War encampment. The archaeological remains contain data that could provide significant insight into the mortuary practices and daily life of the Tequesta.

III. DESCRIPTION

Present and Original Appearance:

Setting:

The project parcel is located at 1814 Brickell Avenue, in the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, Florida. The parcel encompasses 0.8 acres and is bounded on the southeast by Brickell Avenue and by private parcels on all other sides. The project parcel is located in Section 39, Township 54S, Range 41E and the relevant USGS map is the Miami Quadrangle. To the east of Brickell Avenue are large high-rise condominiums with large landscaped setbacks, to the north of the park is a Lutheran Church, to the south of the park is mid-rise, 3 to five story apartments and townhouses, and to the west of the site are large single-family homes fronting South Miami Avenue.

Description:

The parcel is located on the Atlantic Coastal Ridge, a natural formation of oolitic limestone that extends north-south along the southeastern coast of Florida. The parcel elevation is 4.5 meters above sea level. Natural soils are on average shallow organic sandy soils, averaging about 20 cm from the surface to the top of the oolitic limestone bedrock. The parcel's most distinctive physiographic feature is a large solution feature within the limestone formation that extends across much of the eastern part of the parcel.

Prior to development the project parcel was part of the Brickell Hammock that once extended from the Miami River southward to Coconut Grove. Much of the natural hammock vegetation had been cleared, probably as early as the nineteenth century by pioneer settlers. Native floral communities prior to park development included gumbo limbo, sabal palms and oak. Today the only remnants of the hammock are several oaks. Park landscaping has added numerous shrubs and two rows of exotic magnolias.

Prior to park development, clearing and ground-disturbing activities associated with the construction of two homes (ca. 1925) and their subsequent demolition have disturbed the upper 10-20 cm of the parcel's sediments. Surviving natural soils average 10 to 50 centimeters in depth on top of the bedrock except in solution holes where they can be considerably deeper. Most upper soils are organic sandy sediments that are typical of hammocks. Deeper pockets of soils occur in solution holes that occur in the bedrock. These deeper soil horizons within the solution hole are characterized as very fine silty sand with quartz inclusions that appear red-orange in color, corresponding to hue 7.5 YR 5/8 on the Munsell color chart, denoted as dark brown. Today the parcel has been cleared, graded, and

intensely disturbed as part of the park development. A level of fill covers most of the parcel.

A city park was officially opened on June 12, 2012. Park improvements have greatly added to the site disturbances. Grading, ditching, and other excavations have impacted an estimated 60% of the overall archaeological deposits within the park parcel.

Prehistory:

The Tequesta were the prehistoric indigenous people of southeastern Florida. Their principal town was at the mouth of the Miami River. Their territory reached north to Boca Raton Inlet, south to Key West, and west into the Everglades. They were well adapted to living in the south Florida environment that was largely wetlands prior to modern drainage. Transportation was by dugout canoe, and daily trips between the Everglades and Biscayne Bay using the Miami River, the Little River, and the Oleta River were common.

Tequesta subsistence was based on hunting, gathering, and extensive fishing strategies that were adapted to a mosaic of wetland and aquatic environments graduating from the fresh water sloughs of the Everglades to coastal estuaries, coral reefs, and deep sea. Lacking native sources of hard stone, the Tequesta fashioned tools from shell, bone, limestone, and wood. They crafted pottery bowls from local clays. They also carved ornaments and ritual objects of high artistic value from shell and bone.

The Tequesta and their ancestors thrived in south Florida from as early as 5000 years ago until the 18th century. After European contact in the 16th century their population began to decline, depleted first by exotic diseases and later by slave raids. In 1763, with only 300 survivors, the last of the Tequesta fled to Cuba.

Archaeological Data:

The first archaeological assessment of the parcel was conducted by archaeologist Richard Haiduven who excavated a total of 7 trenches (60 cm wide) across the parcel. A large hearth feature (Feature 29) was found by Haiduven in one of the excavated trenches (RH-T1). After trench excavations were completed, Haiduven used a small backhoe to remove redeposited overburden sediment from on top of the intact black dirt midden horizon. This was done primarily to determine the extent and integrity of the intact black dirt midden zone. This area of exposed black dirt midden was later to be designated as the North Block area of archaeological excavations. During those operations, Haiduven uncovered a Late Archaic Period human burial and thereafter all archaeological work ceased until recommendations and approval from the State Archaeologist were received under provisions of Florida Statute 872.05. During the lapse in archaeological excavations, AHC was retained by IERI, Inc. to continue the archaeological investigations.

The Archaeological and Historical Conservancy began archaeological field work by creating a baseline grid across the excavation area. A professional surveyor was hired to establish this control grid, which was based on the metric system, and all subsequent measurements during this archaeological study were recorded using the metric system. A master datum point was established within the sidewalk at the entrance to the project parcel and assigned coordinates of N0/E0.

A total of 147 shovel tests were dug systematically across the site. Shovel tests measured 50 cm square and were dug down until sterile sand, limestone bedrock, or a significant feature (e.g. human burial) was encountered. Test unit excavations were dug at locations where shovel tests uncovered human remains. A total of 36 test units were excavated in the North and South Blocks. All test units measured 2 meters squared, except for a few units that measured 1 by 2 meters squared (Units 28 and 29) and 1 meter squared (Units 30, 33, 34). Nine trenches were dug to further document the extent of the midden and to find additional burials or human remains. All trenches were excavated by backhoe and measured 60 cm wide.

Development of the parcel into a park involved extensive episodes of ground-disturbance, all of which required either preemptive testing or some level of monitoring. The impacts included the installation of new utilities, establishment of perimeter walls and fencing, removal of existing trees, planting of large trees and smaller shrubs, laying down of irrigation lines, construction of stem walls, and surface re-contouring and grading.

In addition to monitoring of trenching and excavations, an additional 130 test holes and/or test units were dug by the archaeologists. A total of 675 field specimens were recovered from the 2007 and 2011 projects including prehistoric and historic artifacts.

Prehistoric material includes artifacts, faunal bone, marine shell, charcoal, charred seeds, and human remains. Remains of a total of 15 individuals were recovered from the site. Recovered materials are associated with both habitation and mortuary activities. Artifacts indicate that prehistoric people used the parcel from the Late Archaic Period (ca. 1000 BC) to the Glades I Period (ca. AD 100 – 500).

Historic artifacts ranged from the 18th century to the mid-20th century, and included an 18th century bottle base. Several artifacts and a trash dump appear to be associated with an encampment of Spanish American soldiers from 1898 – 1899.

History of the Site

The 1814 Brickell Avenue Park parcel consists of parts of Lots 14 and 15 fronting Brickell Avenue. The parcel is located within the Mary Brickell Donation, a large (2000+ acre) area owned by William and Mary Brickell that extended several miles southward from the mouth of the Miami River to Coconut Grove and inland from the shore of Biscayne Bay to a point some distance west of today's Miami Avenue.

Prior to the Brickell acquisition the project parcel was part of the Hagan or Egan Grant. The early 19th century Polly Lewis homesite (Santa Maria Site), 8DA2132, is located approximately 1000 feet east of the subject parcel.

Brickell Avenue began as a footpath that ran north-south through Brickell Hammock from the south bank of the Miami River to Coconut Grove. This path was known as the Coconut Grove Trail. The trail was described in 1896 as follows: "There was a trail leading from the Brickell homestead, in a southerly direction to a settlement known as 'Coconut Grove' which the pioneers were fond of visiting on their bicycles. In traversing this trail one had an impenetrable jungle on one side and the bay on the other." This trail was located a short distance east of the subject parcel. The trail was soon widened to a narrow wagon road and eventually was paved with crushed stone and became known as Brickell Avenue.

Development on the south side of the Miami River lagged behind the development on the north side of the river. Although Miami was incorporated in 1896, it was not until 1903 that the Miami River was bridged, first by Henry Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway, and later that year by the first vehicular bridge, a flimsy wooden bridge located at today's Southwest Second Avenue. This bridge was declared a danger soon after it opened, and the same year work started on a new iron automobile bridge located at today's Miami Avenue. The bridge at Brickell Avenue was not built until 1929.

The earliest Miami insurance or plat map to show the vicinity of the project parcel is the Sanborn Insurance Map of 1918. While it does not depict the project parcel, it bears the legend "vacant beyond" at its southern limit at the approximate location of today's Southwest 18th Road.

Currently Southwest 18th Road terminates at South Miami Avenue, but this was not always the case. The 1936 Hopkins map shows a short road, designated as Southeast 18th Terrace running between Miami Avenue and Brickell Avenue, and located immediately adjacent to, and south of the project parcel. This road also appears on the 1938 revision to the 1924 Hopkins map, but is designated Southwest 18th Road. This seems to be in error, as it is east of South Miami Avenue, and therefore should have been designated Southeast 19th Road. After its depiction on the 1938 map, this short extension of 18th Road no longer appears on any map.

There are two addresses for Lots 14 and 15 which form the subject parcel, 1810 and 1814 Brickell Avenue respectively. The 1924 Sanborn map shows both lots as being improved by the construction of structures.

There are two separate structures depicted on Lot 14 with the corresponding address of 1810 Brickell Avenue. At that time the lot (and residence) extended from Miami Avenue to Brickell Avenue. The structures appear to occupy the approximate center of the subject parcel, and probably consisted of a residence and an outbuilding, as the city directories consistently list only a single name at this address. The structures located at 1810 Brickell Avenue existed on the subject

parcel until at least 1947, but are not shown on a 1952 aerial photograph. The only remnants of that residence in 2007 was the oolitic limestone wall and column located on South Miami Avenue. A similar wall and column at the driveway on Brickell Avenue were recently demolished.

The second address which corresponds to Lot 15, 1814 Brickell Avenue, is somewhat problematic. The 1924 Sanborn map shows a large structure located centrally on the southernmost half of Lot 15. That lot is shown as vacant on the 1936 Hopkins map, as well as on the 1938 revision to the 1924 Sanborn map. A structure is shown on the 1951 revision to the 1947 Hopkins map, but is absent on the 1953 revision to that same map. However, the 1952 aerial map of the subject parcel shows a structure located at the same place as on the earlier maps. The structure appears again on the 1963 revision to the 1947 map. On the 1985 Hopkins map, the entire subject parcel is vacant but that might be a discrepancy since it is probable that a structure existed there until its demolition sometime before 2004.

IV. PLANNING CONTEXT

Present Trends and Conditions

The site is currently designated as civic open space, one of few urban parks along intensely-developed Brickell Avenue. The designation of this important archaeological site as a public park provides greater protection of the site for the future.

Conservation Objectives

The designation of the Santa Maria West Site as a City of Miami Historic Site will provide recognition of this significant prehistoric site. It will also provide an additional layer of review for any possible ground disturbances related to improvements and maintenance of the park.

V. Bibliography

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Figure 1.



Figure 2. 1814 Brickell Avenue during 2007 excavations.



Figure 3. 1814 Brickell Avenue following 2007 excavations, looking north.



Figure 4. 1814 Brickell Avenue Park at grand opening, June 2012.



Figure 5. Large shark, possibly Great White, *C. Carcharias*, FS 422.



Figure 6. Perforated shark vertebrae: (from left to right) FS 193, FS 208, FS M-126.

Figures 5 and 6: Artifacts from Santa Maria West.

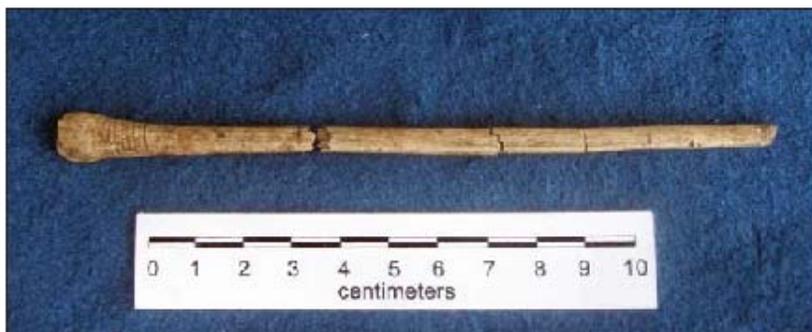


Figure 7. Carved bone pin (FS 410), Unit 24, level 2.



Figure 8. Carved bone pin (FS 205), Unit 15, 0-18 cmbs.

Figures 7 and 8: Artifacts from Santa Maria West.



Figure 9. Archaic stemmed point, FS 83, from Unit 6, level 2.



Figure 10. Archaic stemmed point fragments: (from left to right) FS 154, from ST 99; FS 224, Unit 24, level 1; FS 20, ST 20.

Figures 9 and 10: Artifacts from Santa Maria West.



Figure 11. Porpoise and/or monk seal teeth: (left) FS 308, found in Unit 28, level 1; (Right) FS 61 found in ST56



Figure 12. Carnivore teeth: (left) FS 225, found in Unit 25; (center) FS 258, found in Unit 27, level 2; (right) FS 225, monk seal *Monachus tropicalis* found in Unit 225.

Figures 11 and 12: Artifacts from Santa Maria West.



Figure 13. Dutch Blankenheym and Nolet case gin bottle, FS 356, from Feature 11 (23.5 cm tall).



Figure 14. Owl Drug Company small medicine bottle with embossed perched owl maker's mark (8 cm tall).

Figures 13 and 14: Artifacts from Santa Maria West.



Figure 15. Kaolin smoking pipe bowl and stem, FS 339, obverse with stamped maker's mark "E. CHURCH".



Figure 16. Kaolin smoking pipe bowl and stem, FS 339, reverse with stamped mark "LONDON".

Figures 15 and 16: Artifacts from Santa Maria West.

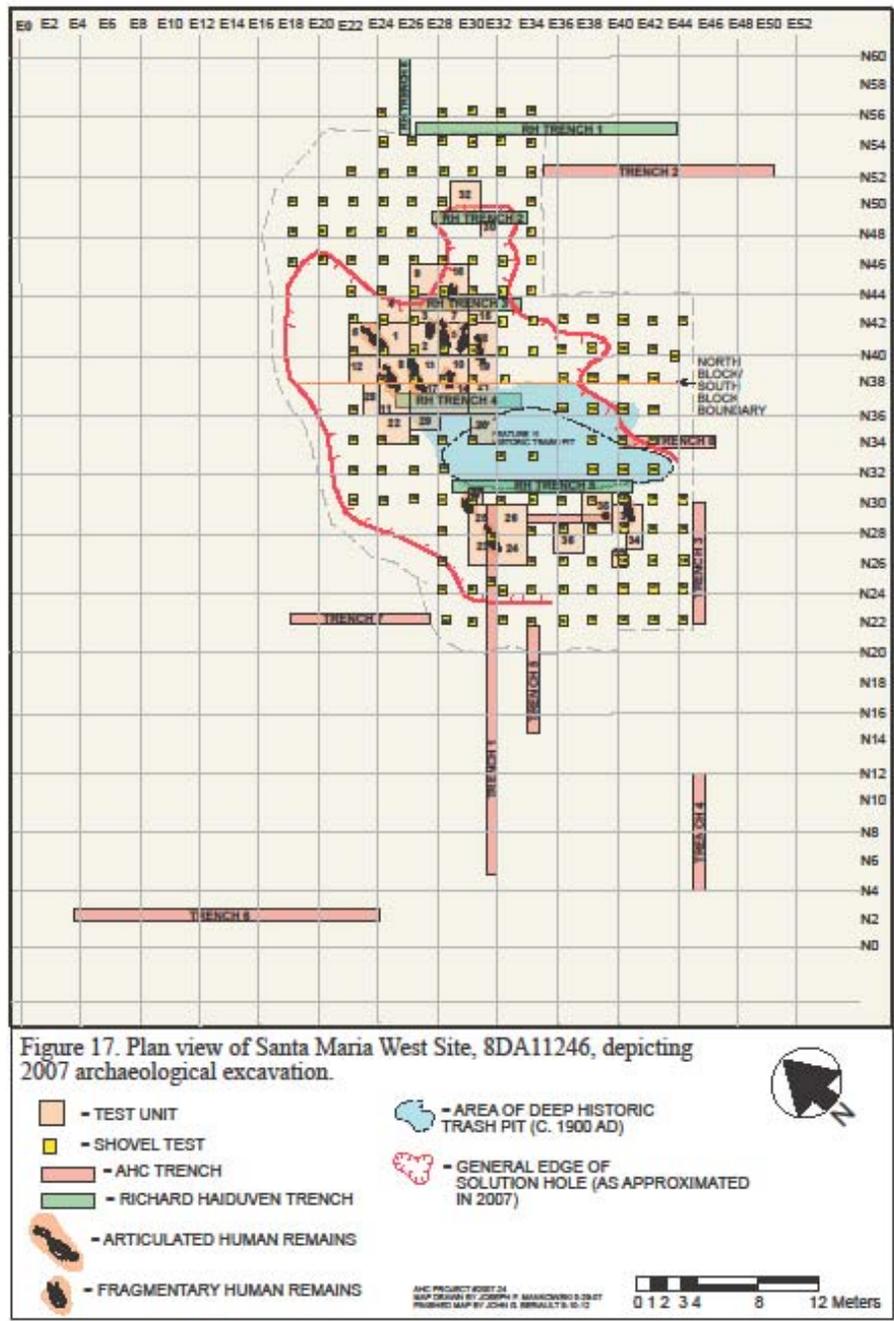


Figure 17: Map of 2007 excavations at Santa Maria West.

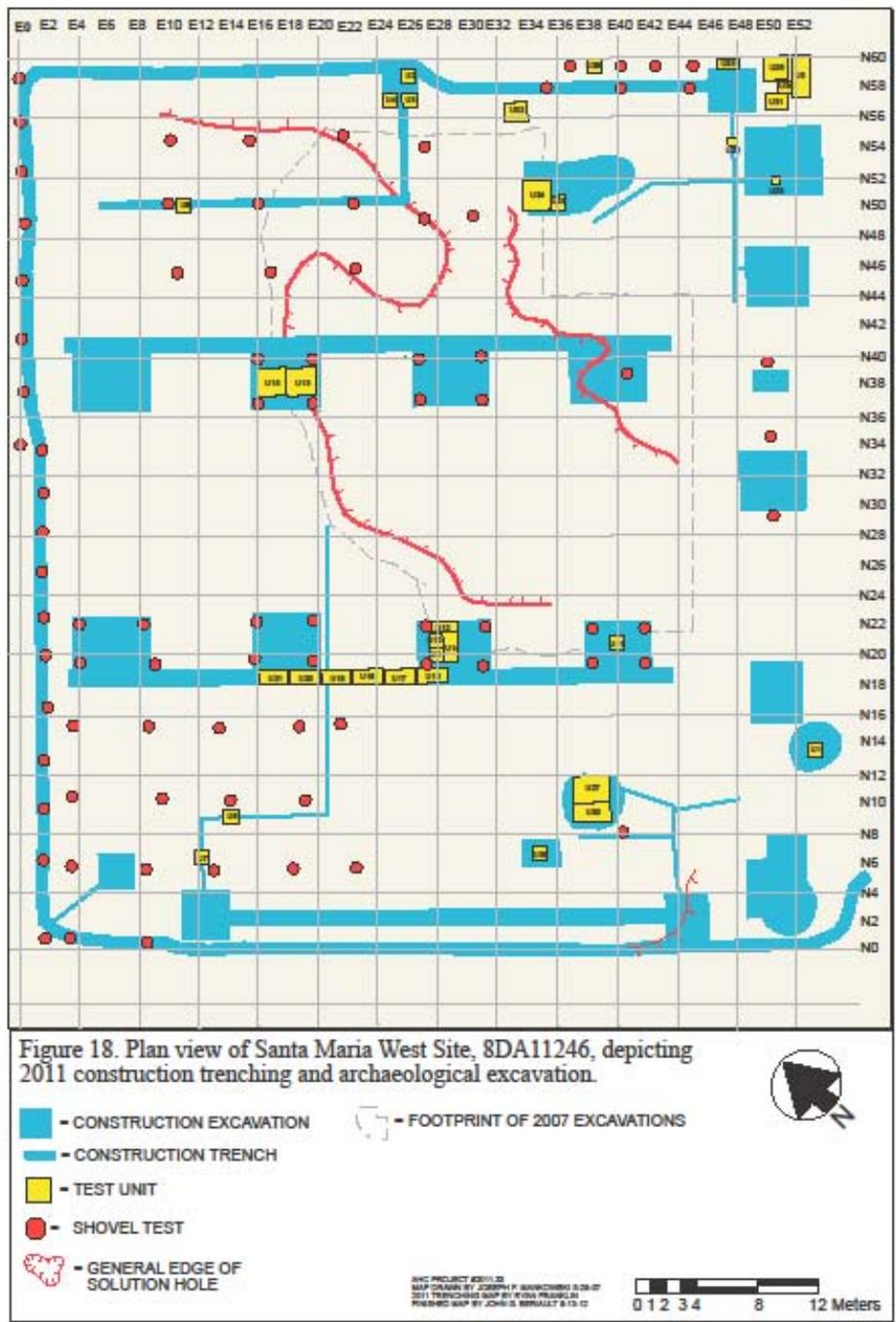


Figure 18: Map of 2011 excavations at Santa Maria West.

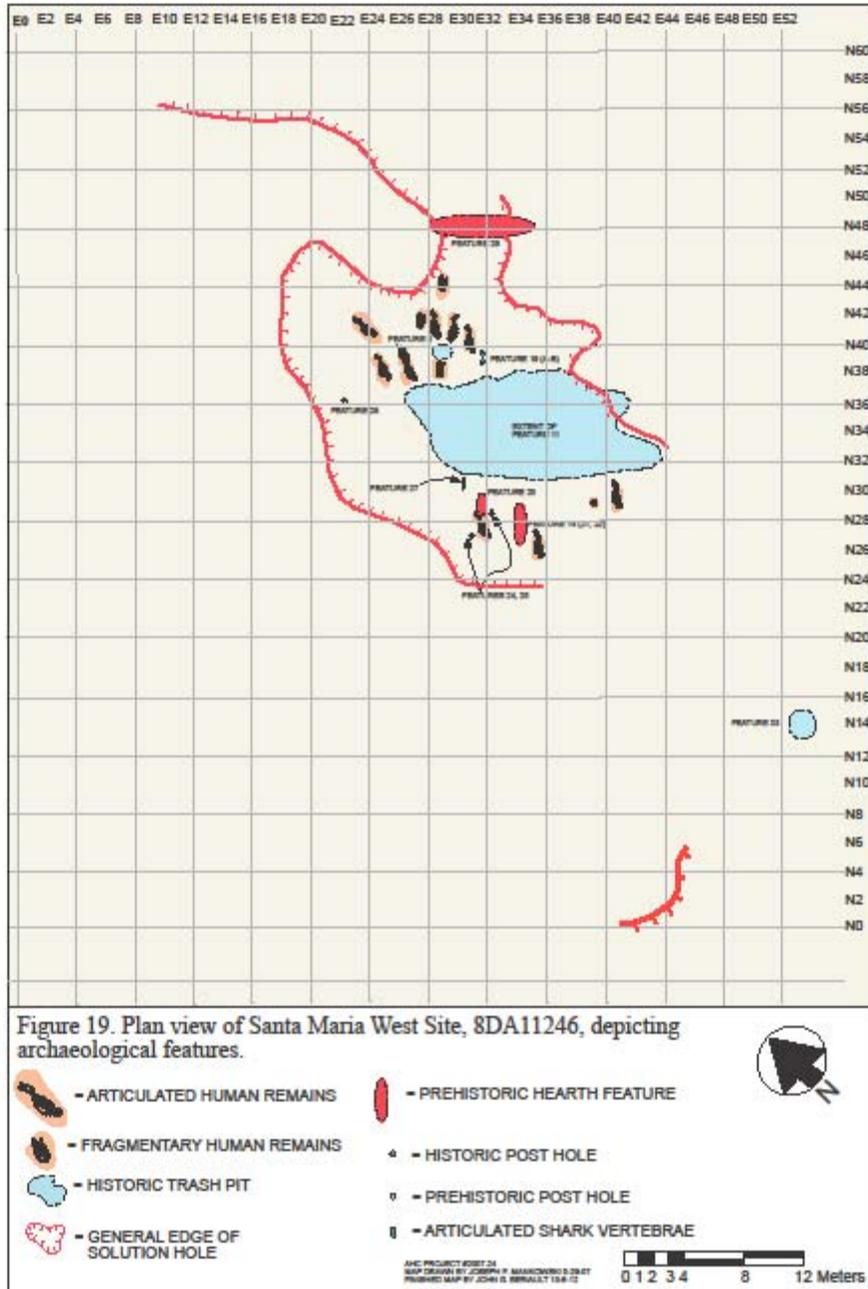


Figure 19: Map of archaeological features at Santa Maria West.