

**SCDOT Cultural Resources Survey of Areas Potentially Affected by the  
Emergency Replacement of the SC 48 (Bluff Road) Bridge over Myers  
Creek (Back Swamp), Richland County, South Carolina**

**DRAFT**



**Bill Jurgelski  
and  
Chad Long**

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### **Management Summary**

One historic structure (cemetery) and one archaeological site were identified during a cultural resources survey of the area that will potentially be affected by the replacement of the SC 48 (Bluff Road) bridge over Myers Creek (Back Swamp), in southern Richland County. Both resources are located on a rise on the north side of SC 48 approximately 500 feet west of the Myers Creek bridge. Site 463-3679 (Myers Cemetery) is a previously recorded family cemetery dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The cemetery has been assessed as potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). It is recommended that this site be avoided during bridge replacement construction activities. In addition, an archaeological monitor should be present during any ground disturbing activities that occur within 50 feet of the cemetery. Site **38RD1439** is a prehistoric archaeological site that was documented during the current survey. It is recommended that this site be avoided during bridge replacement construction activities. If avoidance is not possible then additional archaeological testing will be required to assess the NRHP eligibility of this site.

### **Introduction**

This report summarizes the results of a cultural resources survey conducted in conjunction with the replacement of the SC 48 (Bluff Road) bridge over Myers Creek (Back Swamp) in southern Richland County (**Figure 1**). This bridge was damaged during the historic flood of October 2015 and closed to the public in April 2016. The bridge will be replaced in its current location.

The bridge replacement project study area measured 100' to the north and south of the Bluff Road centerline for a distance of 1000 feet from each end of the existing bridge (**Figure 2**). The cultural resources survey was conducted on April 25, 2016, by SCDOT archaeologists Chad Long and Bill Jurgelski, assisted by Dr. Adrienne Daggett of the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office. The survey resulted in the discovery of one archaeological site the re-identification of one previously recorded historic structure (cemetery) within the study area.

Site 38RD1439 is a small Woodland period prehistoric archaeological site situated on a rise on the north side of Bluff Road approximately 500 feet to the west of the Myers Creek bridge. The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility of this site was not determined during the survey. It is recommended that the site be avoided during construction activities associated with the Myers Creek Bridge Replacement. If avoidance is not an option then additional testing to assess the NRHP eligibility of the site is recommended.

Site 463-3679 (Myers Cemetery) is a previously recorded family cemetery dating to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The cemetery has been assessed as potentially eligible for inclusion on the NRHP. It is recommended that this site be avoided during bridge replacement construction activities. In addition, an archaeological monitor should be present during any ground disturbing activities that occur within 50 feet of the cemetery.

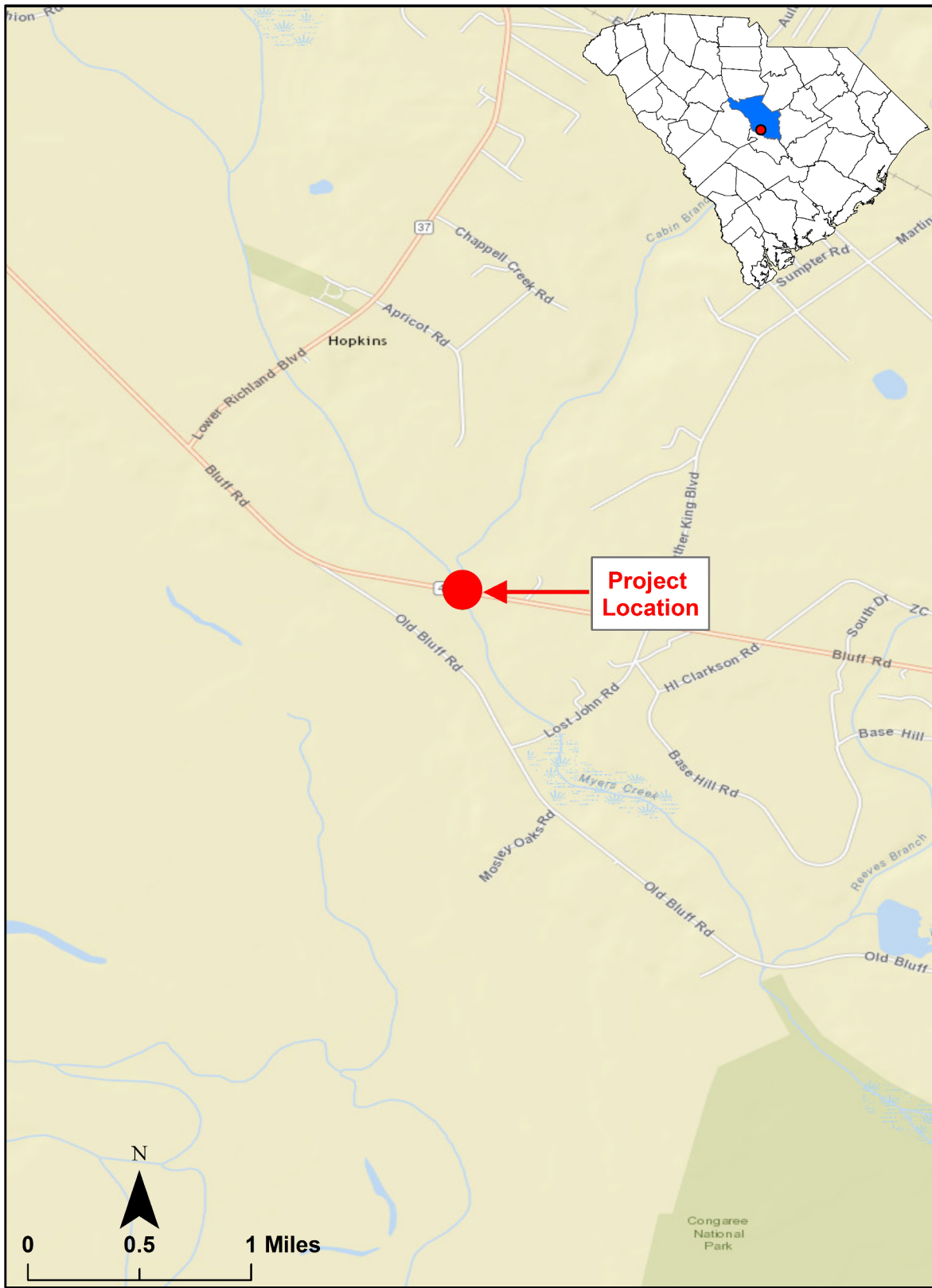


Figure 1 – SC 48 (Bluff Road) Myers Creek Bridge Replacement Project Location.



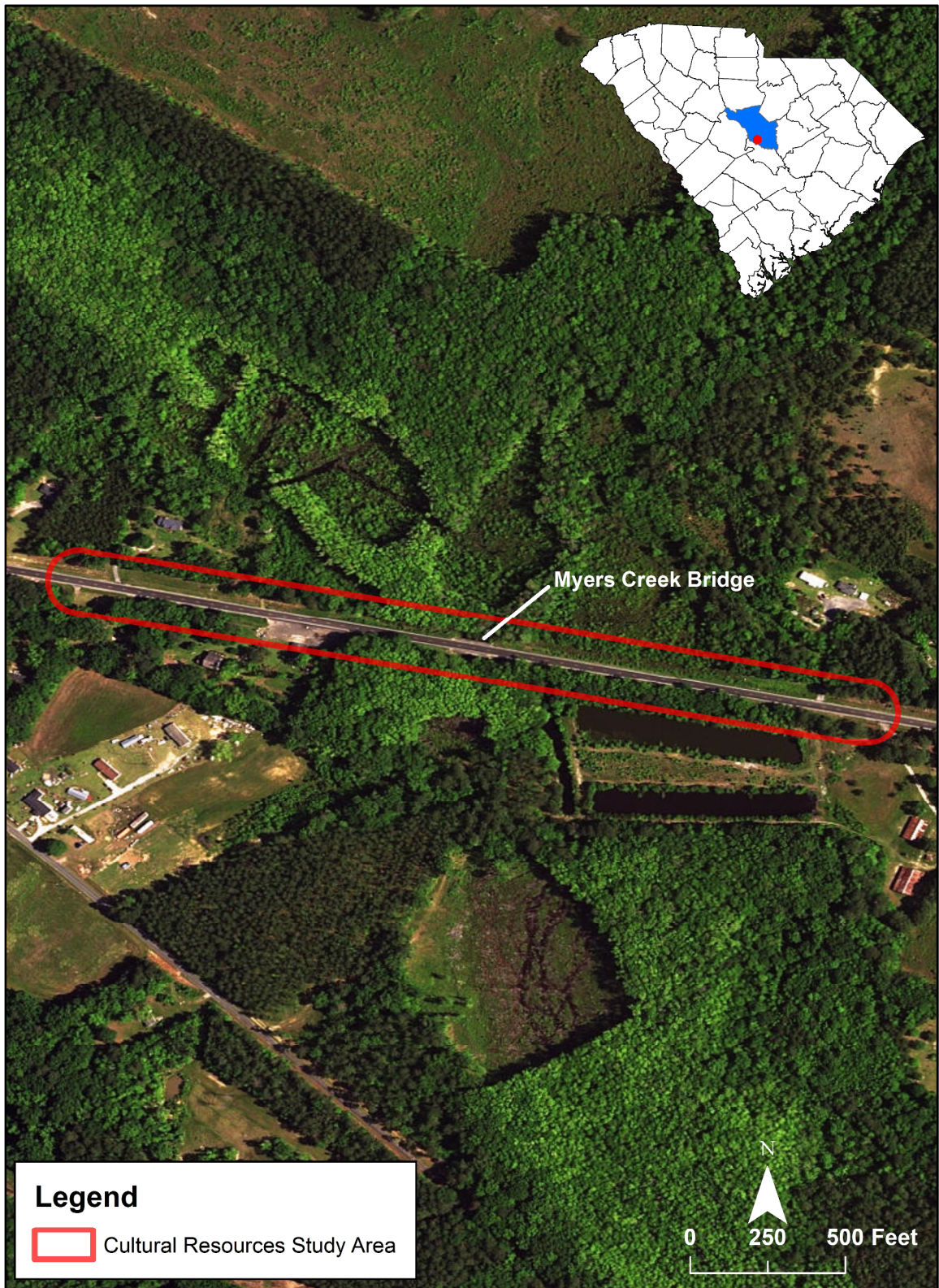


Figure 2 - S-68-227 Bridge Replacement Study Area Limits.



### **Study Area Description**

The SC 48 (Bluff Road) Myers Creek bridge replacement study area is located on the east and west sides of sides of Myers Creek within the Upper Coastal Plain physiographic province in central South Carolina. Elevations in the study area average about 120 ft. above sea level. Myers Creek flows northwest to southeast through the study area, eventually joining Cedar Creek before entering the Congaree River a few miles to the south.

Land use in the study area vicinity is mixed, with residences and a small country store scattered within a pine or mixed pine/hardwood forest. A large swath of wetlands bracket Myers Creek, to the extent that the area is sometimes called “Back Swamp.” The acreage of the wetlands was likely greater in former times than at present. According to a local landowner the area on the south side of Bluff Road immediately west of the creek was filled in in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century prior to the construction of a store and house.

Major soil types present include Persanti Very Fine Sandy Loam (Ps), a moderately well drained soil type that is present at the eastern and western ends of the study area, and Johnston Loam, (Jo) a very poorly drained soil that brackets Myers Creek.

### **Previously Recorded Cultural Resources Within the Study Area**

No previously recorded archaeological sites are present within or in close proximity to the Myers Creek bridge replacement study area. Two previously recorded historic structures, Myers Cemetery (Site # 463-3679) and the Matlock House (Site # 463-3680) are located within or close to the study area (**Figure 3**).

#### *Site 463-3679 (Myers Cemetery)*

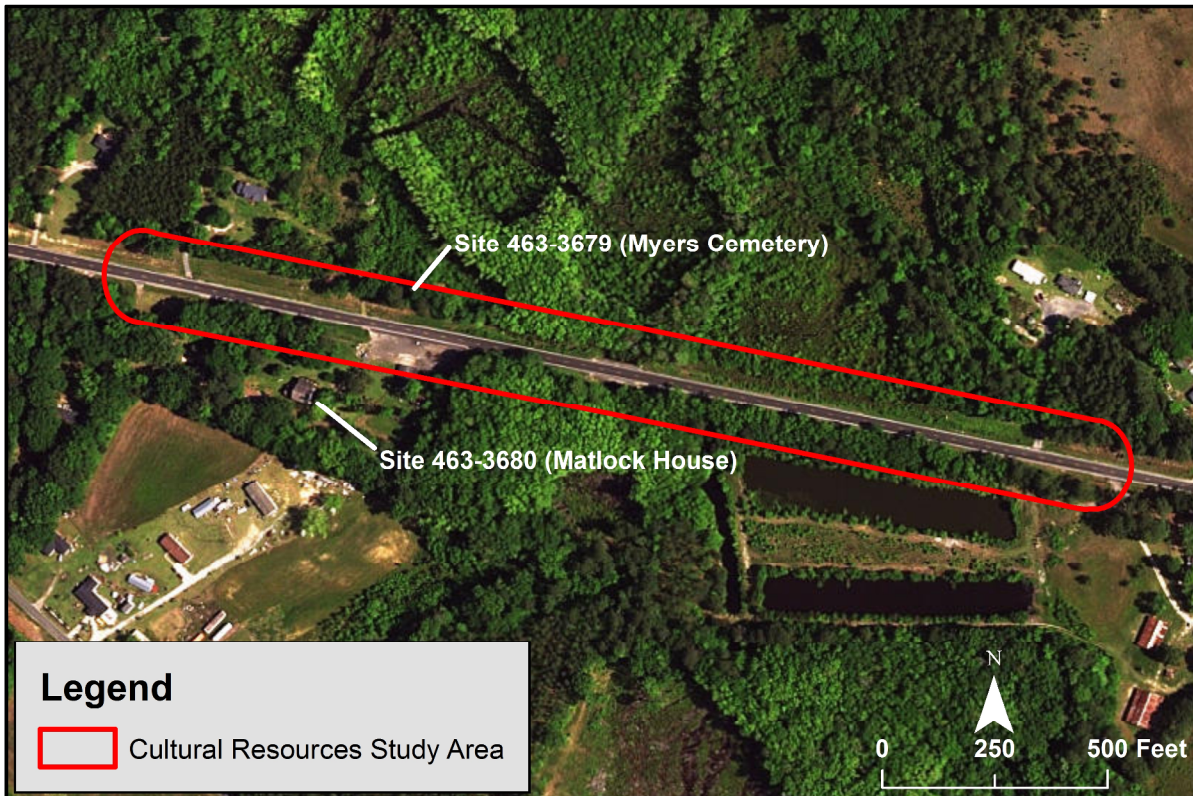
Site 463-3679, the Myers Cemetery, originally recorded in 1993, is located on a rise on the north side of Bluff Road just to the west of Myers Creek. It has been assessed as potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The site consists of a small (approx. 40 x 40ft) family cemetery enclosed by a rock wall. Approximately six marked graves with dates ranging from 1835 to the 1860s are present. The most notable marker commemorates the life of Colonel David Myers, who, according to the lengthy epitaph was “inhumanely murdered” in 1835. There is no historical record of or on-the-ground evidence to indicate that the cemetery extends beyond the rock enclosure, but this must be regarded as a possibility. The cemetery lies partially within the Bluff Rd/Myers Creek study area. It is recommended that this cemetery be avoided during construction of the new bridge facility, and that an archaeological monitor be present when ground disturbing activities associated with the bridge replacement occur within 50 feet of the cemetery.

#### *Site 463-3680 (Matlock House)*

Site 463-3680, the Matlock House, originally recorded in 1993, is located on the south side of Bluff Road approximately 700 feet to the west of Myers Creek. It is not considered eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The structure is a Colonial Revival style dwelling built in the 1920s, but not moved to its current location until the 1960s. It is situated well off the road outside the Myers Creek bridge replacement study area. It will not be impacted by the bridge replacement project.

**Survey Methods**

Survey methods employed for this project consisted of a pedestrian reconnaissance of the entire study area augmented the excavation of shovel test pits (STPs) at 30 meter intervals in places that were considered to be likely locations of buried archaeological deposits. STPs were not excavated in areas that were steeply sloping, poorly drained (wetlands), or that had been subjected to extensive modern disturbance such as parking lots or roadside cut banks and ditches. Much of the project area fell into these categories. Shovel tests averaged about 30 centimeters (.98 feet) in diameter, and were excavated until sterile subsoil was encountered or further excavation was impractical due to the presence of rocks or large roots. Positive shovel tests were bracketed with additional tests excavated at 15 meter intervals until two consecutive negative tests were recorded or until a topographic barrier was encountered that constrained additional testing. Testing was not conducted outside the limits of the project study area. All artifacts recovered from positive tests were retained for curation.



**Figure 3 – Previously Recorded Historical Resources Within or Near the Myers Creek Bridge Study Area.**

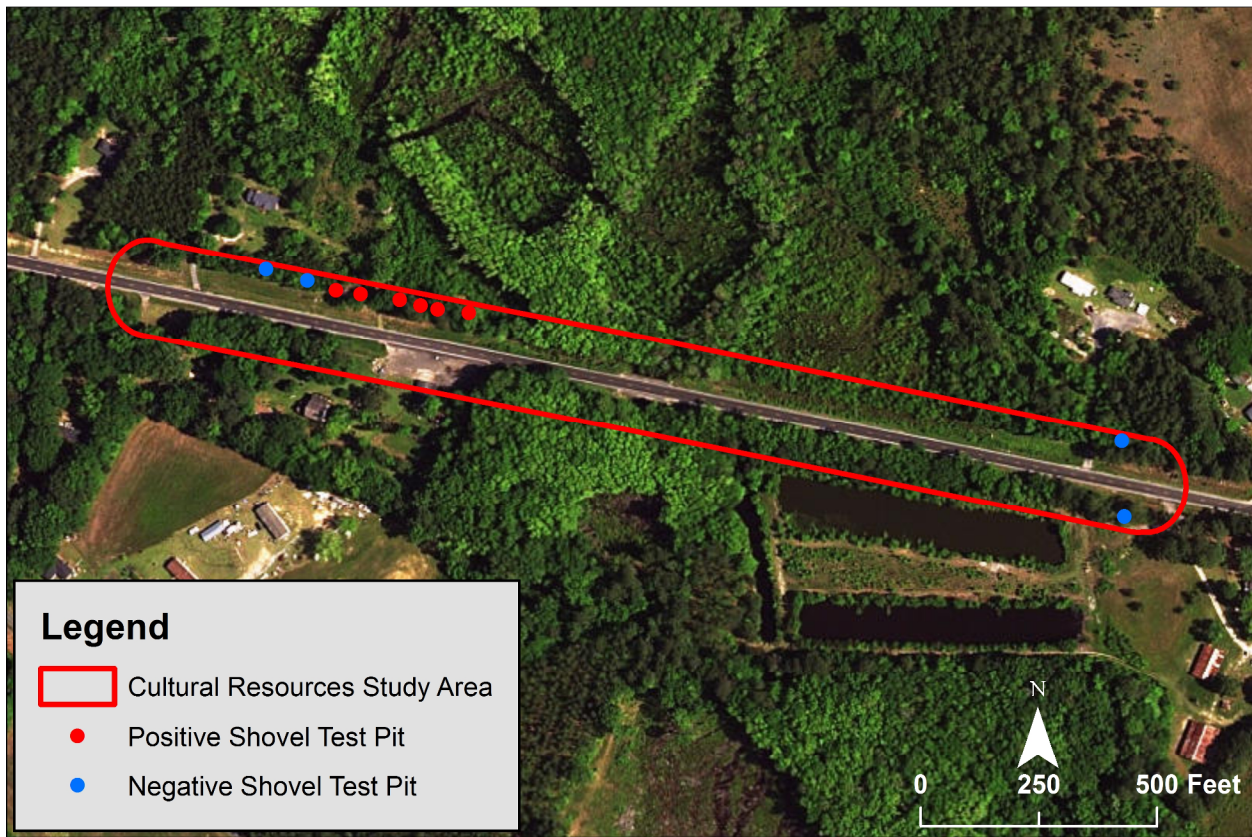


**Survey Results**

No historic structures, archaeological features, or artifacts were noted during the pedestrian reconnaissance of the study area. Much of the area was found to be too low lying or previously disturbed to be the likely locus of archaeological remains.

A total of 10 shovel test pits were excavated during the survey (**Figure 4**). This figure includes shovel tests excavated to provide coverage of high probability locations within the study area as well as tests excavated to delineate positive tests. Artifacts were recovered from 6 of the 10 STPs. No buried archaeological features were noted in any of the STPs.

One prehistoric archaeological site, **38RD1439**, was recorded during the survey. All of the positive STPs logged during the survey were encompassed within this site.



**Figure 4 – Location of Shovel Test Pits Excavated Within the Myers Creek Bridge Study Area.**

**Site 38RD1439**

**Site Location:** Site 38RD1439 is located on low rise on the north side of Bluff Road approximately 550 feet (.10 miles) west of Myers Creek (Figure 5).

**Site Description:** Site 38RD1439 consists of prehistoric (primarily Early – Middle Woodland Period) ceramics and lithics buried to a depth of approximately 70cm. The site was discovered through the excavation of shovel test pits. No artifacts were noted on the ground surface, but ground surface visibility is poor in the site area (Figure 6). The site boundaries appear to correspond with a location where a thick (approx. 35-75 cmbs) fine sandy loam E horizon is present (Figure 7). However, no distinct artifact bearing soil horizons that could be attributed to or directly associated with human activity were noted on the site. Site soils map as Persanti Very Fine Sandy Loam (Ps).

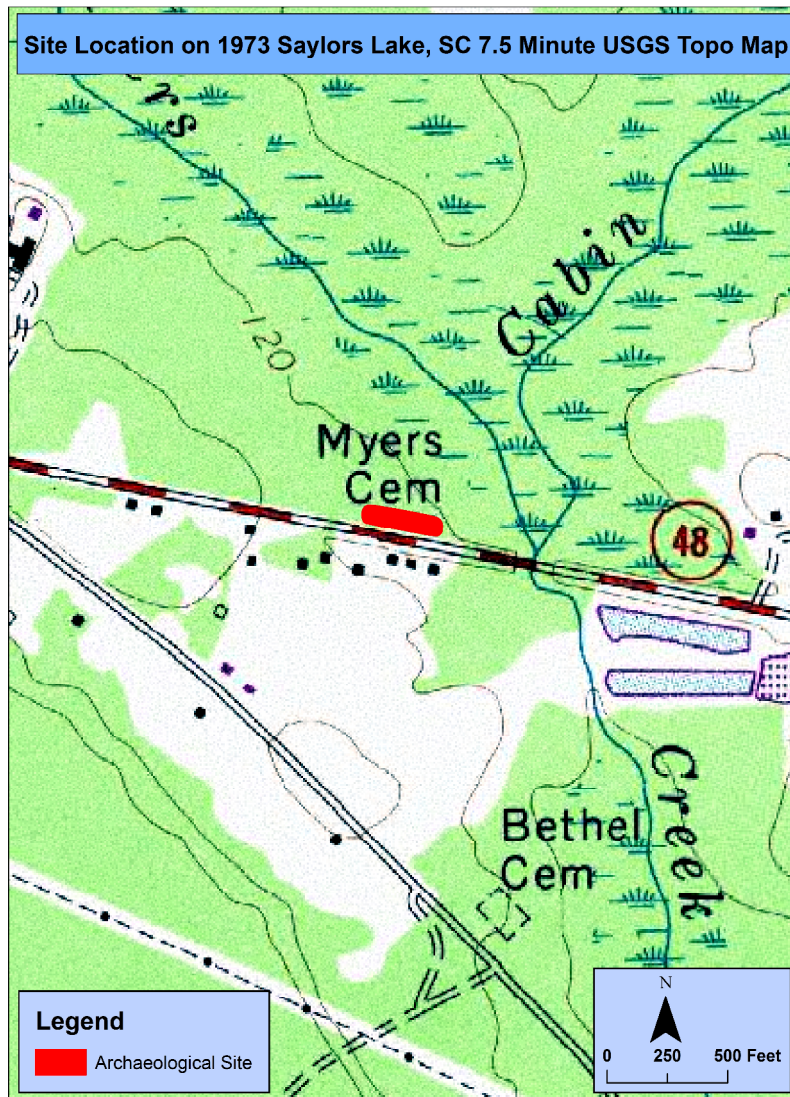


Figure 5 – Location of Site



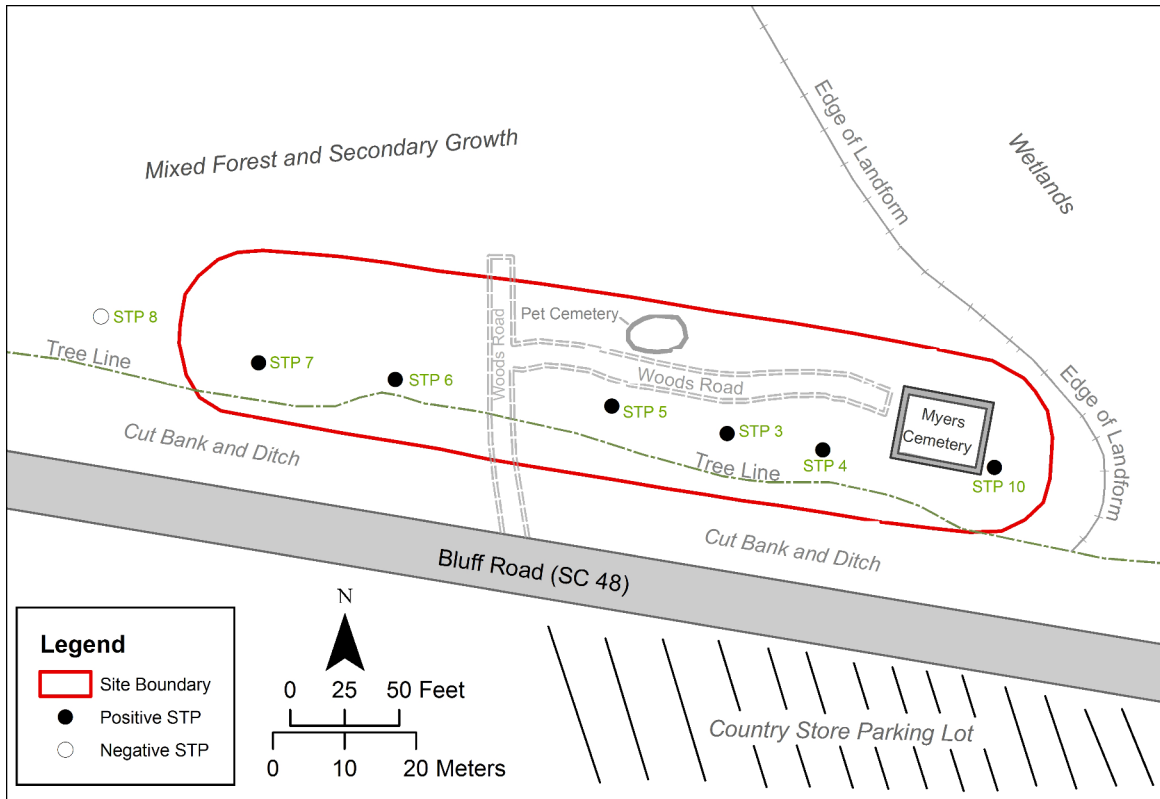


Figure 6 – Sketch Map of Site

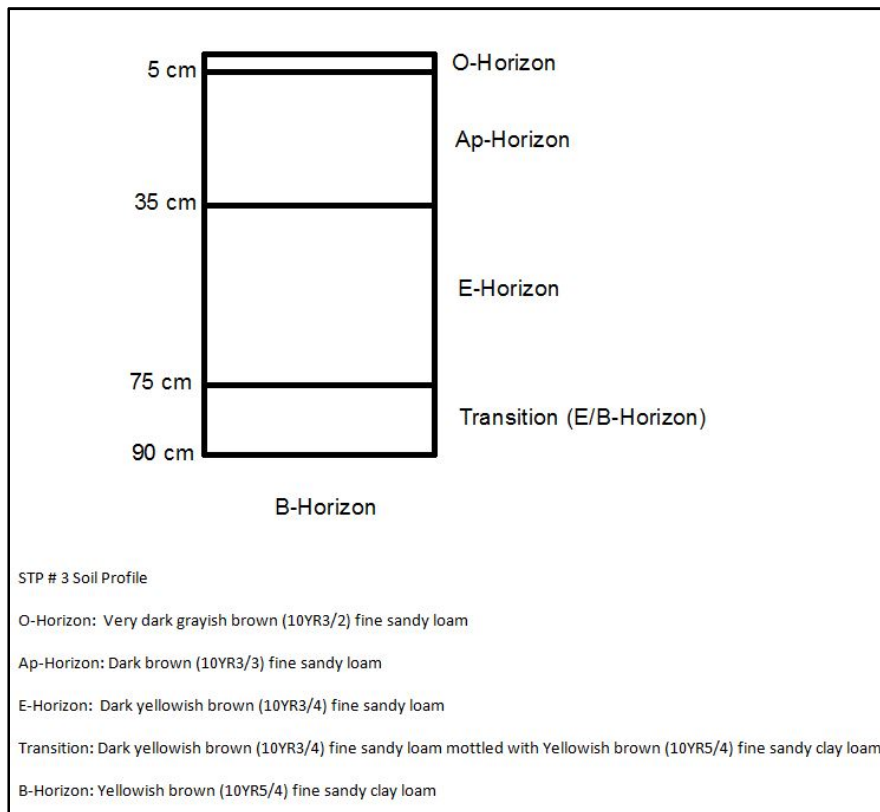


Figure 7 - Typical Soil Profile on Site

The site is bounded on the east by a steep drop-off to the floodplain of Myers Creek and on the south by roadside disturbance associated with Bluff Road. The western site boundary was determined by the excavation of two negative shovel test pits, and corresponds with the edge of the fine sandy loam deposit. The boundary on the north was outside the project APE and as such was not established through shovel testing, but was estimated based on local topography. As recorded the site measures approximately 105 meters (344 feet) E-W by 25 meters (82 feet) N-S.

Topography in the site area is generally flat, dropping off to the east and north onto the floodplain surrounding Myers Creek (**Figure 8**). The landform on which the site is located was probably more distinct before modern development. According to the owner of the land on which the site is located the area to the south of the site, on the south side of Bluff road, was filled in prior to the construction of a small country store. Vegetation in the site area consists of a medium age pine-hardwood forest with a moderate to thick understory.

Myers Cemetery (Site # 463-3679 –described above) is located within the site boundaries near the eastern edge of the site. A small pet cemetery utilized by the present landowner's family is located in the north central portion of the site. At the time of the archaeological survey this cemetery was manifested by several upright uninscribed wooden markers and a dispersed array of decaying plastic flowers. Grassy paths or woods roads pass through the site leading to the Myers Cemetery and to a small building north of the site.

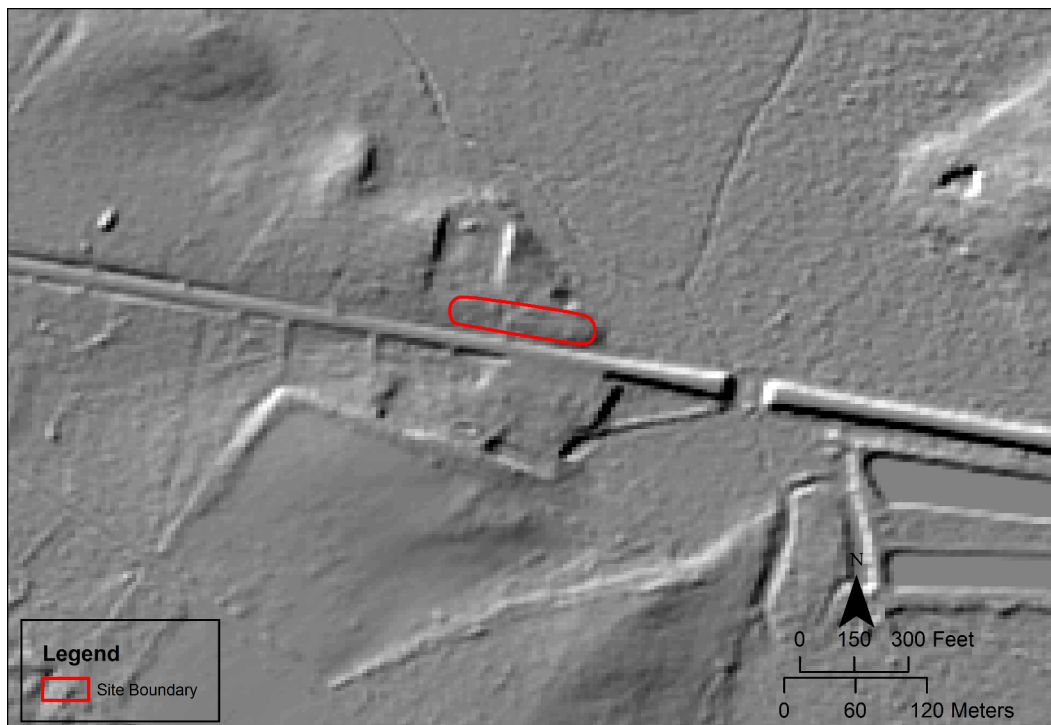


Figure 8 –Lidar Image of Site Area.



**Feature Descriptions:** No subsurface prehistoric features were noted on site **XXX**. As noted above the historic (mid-19<sup>th</sup> century) Myers Cemetery (Site # 463-3679) is present within the prehistoric site boundaries. The absence historic artifacts on the site suggest that no other historic features are likely to be present, and that the cemetery was probably isolated from domiciles or other activity areas. Also, as noted above, a modern pet cemetery is located within the boundaries of site **XXXX**.

**Artifacts:** A total of 73 artifacts were recovered from six positive shovel tests excavated within the site boundaries. These artifacts included 20 ceramic sherds, 36 flakes or flake fragments, a PPK fragment, a utilized flake, a hammerstone, a small quantity of lithic shatter, fire cracked rock (FCR), and a possible groundstone artifact (**Figure X – Artifact Layout**). Based on the ceramic assemblage the site appears to date primarily to the Deptford (Early – Middle Woodland) period. A complete inventory of artifacts recovered from **38RD1439** can be found in **Appendix 1**.

**Summary, NRHP Eligibility, and Recommendations for Further Work:** Site **38RD1439** is a prehistoric (primarily Early-Middle Woodland Deptford phase) artifact scatter with artifacts scattered to a depth of approximately 70 cmbs. The site occupies what was probably once a distinct rise overlooking the floodplain of Myers Creek. The site boundaries correspond to the edges of this rise on the east and to the limits of a fine sandy loam soil deposit on the west. The southern boundary of the site is formed by disturbance associated with Bluff Road; the northern boundary of the lies outside the project APE and was not precisely determined during the current cultural resources investigation. However, the boundary probably conforms to the edges of landform on which the site is situated.

No buried prehistoric features were noted in any of the shovel tests excavated on the site, and no buried soil strata that could be directly associated with or attributed to human activity were discerned. In all likelihood the depth of the artifacts that were found on the site can be attributed to bioturbation or to vertical movement of materials within the fine sandy soils located on the site. However, this is not certain.

Avoidance of **38RD1439** is recommended during construction activities associated with the Myers Creek bridge replacement project. If avoidance of the site is not feasible then additional testing on the site is recommended to more precisely define the site boundaries and to determine if intact subsurface archaeological deposits are present. Pending this testing the National Register Eligibility of the site cannot be determined.

### **Conclusions**

Archaeologists from the South Carolina Department of Transportation and the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office performed a cultural resources assessment of areas that will potentially be affected by the replacement of the bridge that carries Bluff Road (SC 48) over Myers Creek, in southern Richland County. The bridge was damaged during the historic flood event of October 2015 and closed to traffic in April 2016. The bridge will be replaced in its current location.

The study area covered by the cultural resources assessment comprised 100 feet from the existing roadway centerline on both sides of Bluff Road for a distance of 1000 feet from each end of the Myers Creek Bridge. Within this study area one previously recorded historic structure, the Myers Cemetery (Site # 463-3679) was identified, and one previously unrecorded archaeological site, **38RD1439**, was discovered.

The Myers Cemetery (463-3679) is a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century family cemetery that has been previously determined to be potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. It is recommended that the cemetery be avoided during the Myers Creek bridge replacement project. It is further recommended that an archaeological monitor should be present during any ground disturbing activities associated with the bridge replacement project that are conducted within 50 feet of the cemetery. This precaution is advised to ensure that the construction will not impact any undiscovered unmarked graves that might be present.

**Site 38RD1439** is a prehistoric (primarily Early to Middle Woodland Deptford Phase) archaeological site located on a rise above Myers Creek. The site consists of a moderately dense scatter of ceramics and lithics found to a depth of approximately 70 centimeters below current ground surface. The NRHP eligibility of the site was not determined during the current survey. It is recommended that **Site 38RD1439** be avoided during construction activities associated with the replacement of the Myers Creek bridge. If avoidance is not possible then additional archaeological testing is recommended to more precisely define the site boundaries and to determine if intact subsurface archaeological deposits are present.



Appendix 1 – Myers Creek Bridge Survey Artifact Inventory.

Artifact Inventory

PROVENIENCE	CATEGORY	COUNT	TYPE	DESCRIPTION
STP #3	Lithic	7	Flake Fragment	Quartz
	Lithic	2	Thinning Flake	Quartz
	Lithic	3	Flake Fragment	Metarhyolite
	Lithic	1	Flake Fragment	Coastal Plain Chert
	Lithic	1	Flake Fragment	Orthoquartzite
	Ceramic	1	Body Sherd	Plain, light sand temper with small amounts of crushed quartz
	Ceramic	1	Body Sherd	Simple stamped, medium sand temper with crushed quartz
STP #4	Lithic	4	Flake Fragment	Metarhyolite
	Lithic	5	Flake Fragment	Quartz
	Lithic	1	Shatter	Quartz
	Lithic	1	Thinning Flake	Orthoquartzite
	Lithic	2	FCR	
	Ceramic	2	Residual Sherds	Medium Sand Temper
STP #5	Lithic	5	Chunk/Shatter	Quartz
	Lithic	2	Flake Fragment	Orthoquartzite
	Lithic	1	Flake Fragment	Quartz
	Lithic	1	Flake Fragment	Coastal Plain Chert
	Lithic	1	FCR	
	Lithic	1	Groundstone?	Sandstone
STP #6	Lithic	1	PPK Fragment	Distal end of CP Chert Woodland Triangular PPK
STP #10	Lithic	1	Hammerstone	Quartz
	Lithic	3	FCR	Quartz
	Lithic	1	Chunk/Shatter	Coastal Plain Chert
	Lithic	8	Flake Fragment	Quartz
	Lithic	1	Utilized Flake	Banded Rhyolite
	Ceramic	6	Body Sherds	Fine Sand Temper with crushed quartz; two sherds have punctate dec.
	Ceramic	2	Body Sherds	Check-stamped medium to heavy sand; Deptford
	Ceramic	8	Body Sherds	Plain; light sand with crushed quartz temper