



Cultural Resources Review of the Proposed Skagit County Jail Sites, Mount Vernon Skagit County, Washington.



By:
Garth L. Baldwin, M.A., RPA

Prepared For:
Maggie Buckley, LEED AP
Associate / Environmental Planner
David Evans and Associates, Inc
415 118th Avenue SE
Bellevue, WA 98005

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Author: Garth Baldwin

Date: October 17, 2013

Location: Skagit County, Washington

USGS Quadrangle: Mount Vernon, WA 7.5 minute quadrangle (1981)

STR Sections 19 & 32, Township 34 North, Range 4 East, Willamette Meridian

SUMMARY

Drayton Archaeology was contracted to conduct the present investigation at the request of Maggie Buckley, Associate / Environmental Planner at David Evans and Associates, on behalf of the City of Mount Vernon (the City) and Skagit County (the County). The purpose of the present cultural resources effort was to review two separate potential development sites for the planned Skagit County Jail Facility. The two sites are presently mixed use commercial properties. The level of previous development at the selected sites varies slightly, but both have active or past commercial or industrial use. The Truck City and Suzanne Lane properties are an operational truck stop and speculatively developed (cleared, leveled, filled, utilities partially installed), with vacant acreage in a mixed use area. The second site is the Alf Christianson site, a former grain and seed warehouse complex, prior to that a lumber mill, and some formerly residential parcels which were cleared of structures by the owner.

The present cultural resources assessment consisted of background review, field investigation, and production of this report. In the case of the present project, there are no known historic structures or sites (precontact or otherwise) recorded within the project areas. The history of the land is well documented. Previous land use, commercial/industrial, farming and natural alluvial/fluvial processes have undoubtedly impacted soils throughout the area. Field investigation included pedestrian survey, close inspection of exposed soils and trench excavation. The probability for locating any cultural resources was considered moderate due to numerous factors. Rapidly buried surfaces by natural processes of the Skagit River, long-term precontact and historic use of the area and the locations of previously recorded resources suggest either area could contain surface and/or buried cultural deposits. An effort to locate buried cultural deposits was combined with surface survey of the areas. Surface survey and select trenching did not locate any cultural resources within either project area.

During the course of the present work an attempt was made to locate historic and/or precontact cultural deposits. The sediment and soil observed were consistent with the natural soil profiles defined for the area. Soils in both areas suggest that the rapidity of deposition could have inundated and preserved surfaces that might have supported human activity locations. However, no evidence for precontact or historic archaeological occupation or deposits was encountered during surface and subsurface review. Based upon the result of this review, further archaeological review is recommended after site selection is completed. Additional subsurface testing should be conducted because subsurface trenching was limited in scope due to access issues at both sites. The locations made available for trenching were vastly limited to selected locations outside of the developed commercial areas. Components in the observed soil profiles suggest that there is a potential for encountering buried, intact surfaces during excavations.

REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

The impetus for this analysis is the preparation of a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed project. SEPA requires that potential impacts to cultural resources from a proposed project be evaluated. As part of the review, previously existing historic or precontact archaeological sites and historic built environment structures must be considered within the context of any proposed development projects.

All agencies of the state must assure proper consideration for cultural resources on all projects in which they are involved. Consultation with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and interested Tribal agencies is required to consider and, if deemed necessary, develop archaeological survey and mitigation strategies. In the case of the present project, there were no known archaeological or historic sites recorded within the project area. The pedestrian and subsurface reviews reported herein is, in our opinion, a good faith effort to identify and document surface and buried cultural resources in the project areas.

In addition, the State of Washington requires compliance with the cultural resources management laws and regulations under the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 27.53 Archaeological Sites and Resources, RCW 27.44 Indian Graves and Records, and RCW 68.50.645 Skeletal Human Remains—Duty to Notify. The latter regulation provides a strict process for notification of law enforcement and other interested parties in the event of the discovery of any human remains, regardless of inferred cultural affiliation.

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The two sites being reviewed for selection are located in Mount Vernon, Skagit County, Washington. The Truck City site is a 10.4 acre composition of parcels in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 32, T34N, R4E, and the Alf Christianson site is 8.2 acres of land in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 19, T34N, R4E, Willamette Meridian (Figures 1-2). Based on the results of the EIS, one of two locations will be selected to construct a new 400 bed jail facility to replace the existing facility. The proposed facility would be constructed and designed to meet all codes and standards. The facility design would include provisions for expansion to 800 beds to incorporate future, 30 to 50 year, build-out plans.

The building will include a court room and administration spaces required to operate the facility. It is envisioned the overall building size will be roughly 90,000 square feet to accommodate the initial 400 beds and up to 165,000 square feet for all future buildout needs of 800 beds for the facility. The outdoor exercise area will be enclosed and no inmates will be visible from the exterior of the site at any time. The only fencing visible on the site will be the rolling gates at the Sally Port. All other enclosures will incorporate solid walls.

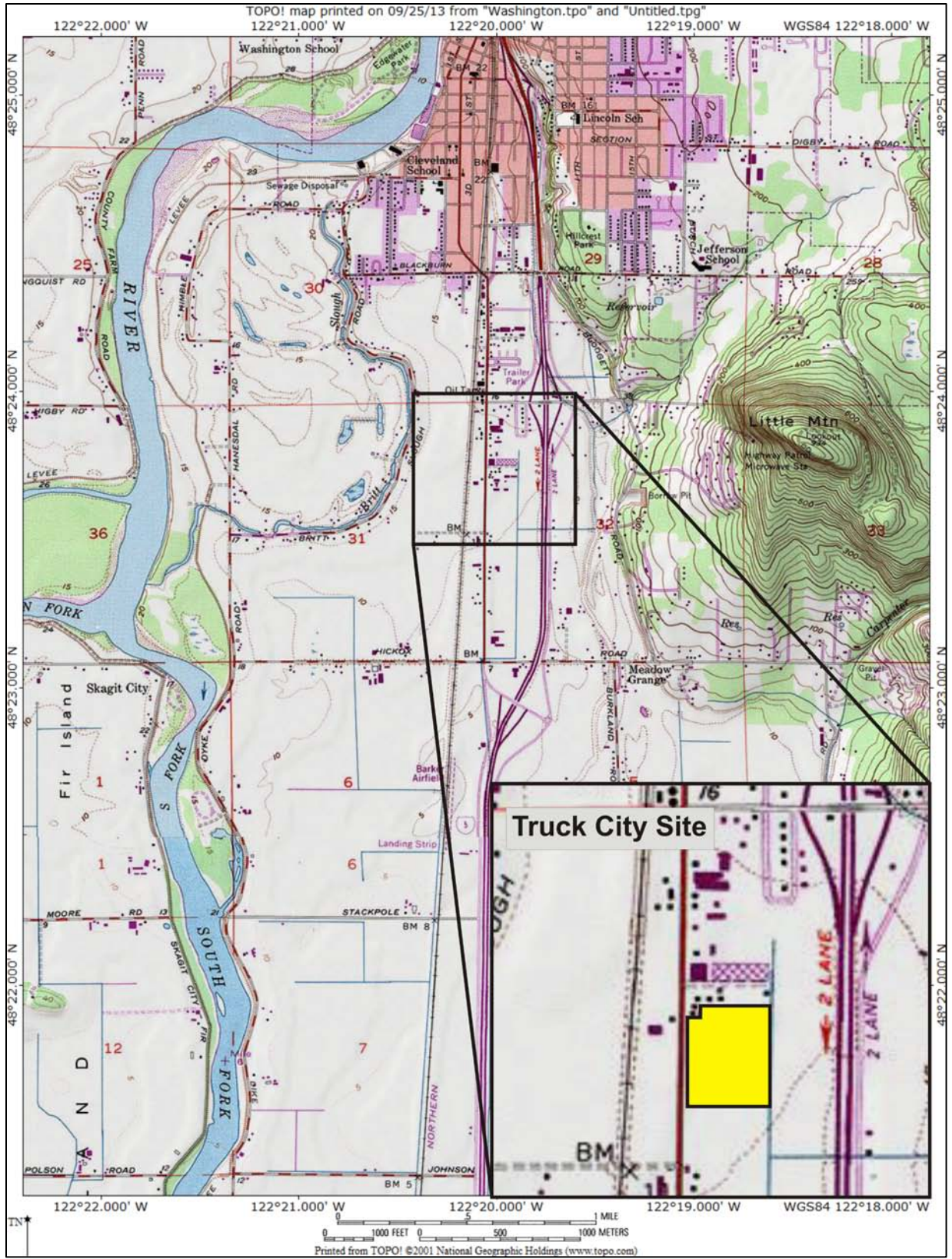


Figure 1. The Truck City Site illustrated on a portion of the Mt. Vernon, WA 7.5-minute quadrangle.

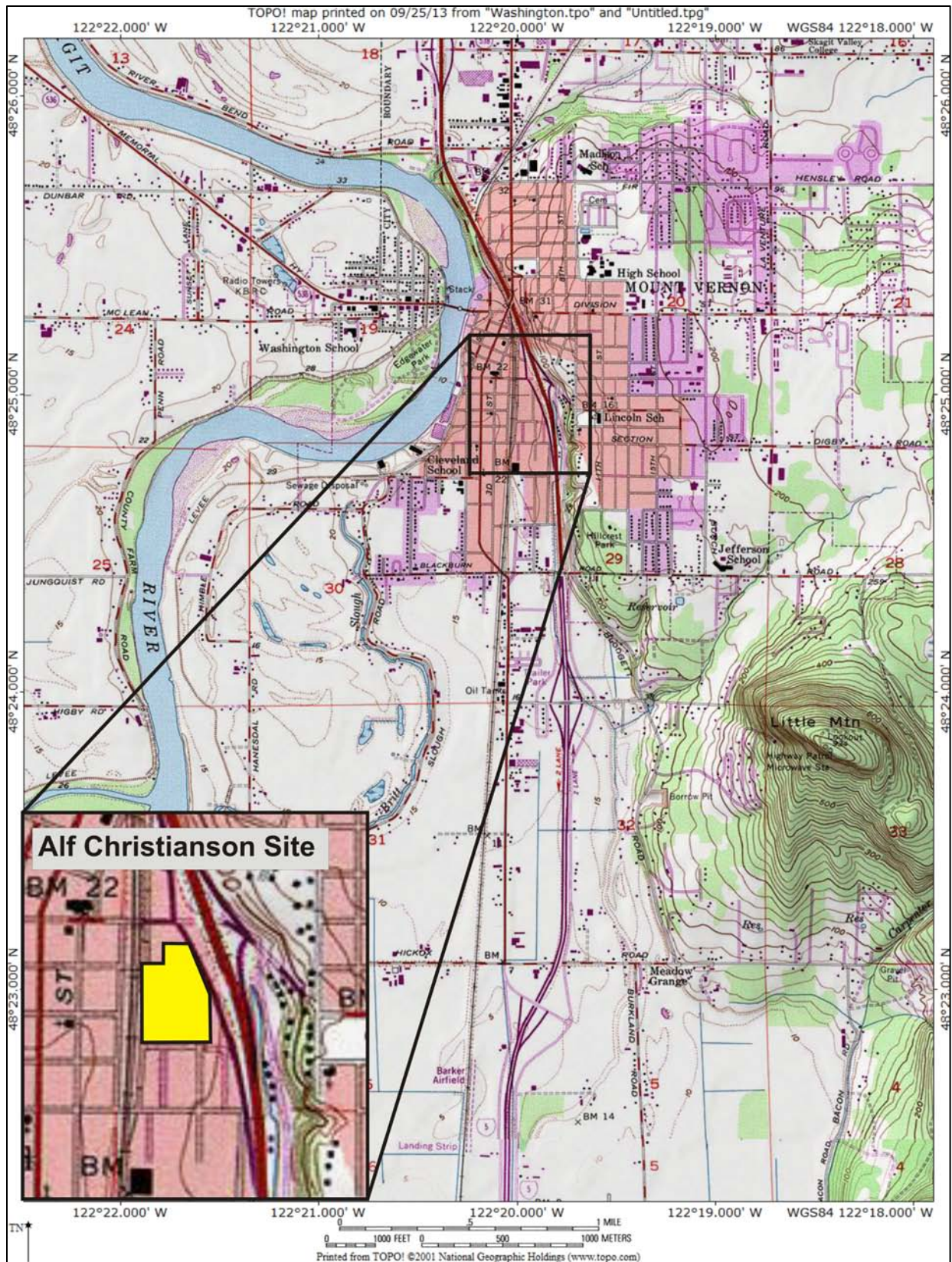


Figure 2. The Alf Christianson Site illustrated on a portion of the Mt. Vernon, WA 7.5-minute quadrangle.

Truck City / Suzanne Lane Site

The Truck City site along Old Highway 99 and Suzanne Lane includes three separately owned properties (Figure 3). When the application for rezoning was submitted a final configuration for the site was not known; therefore much more land than is necessary was included. A larger area than is likely necessary was included. Presently there is a defined area for development as illustrated in the figure. In order to complete the project some minor boundary line adjustments would be needed to include providing a 30' access easement across parcel B to the east half of the Truck City property.

Access to the site would be from both Old Highway 99 and Suzanne Lane. The proposed plan included here, is illustrating the space required for the proposed jail and all future additions to the building for the additional 400+ beds. Utilities will be provided to the site and to the east half of the Truck City site from either Old Highway 99 or Suzanne Lane as available.

Alf Christianson Seed Site

The Alf Christianson Seed Site is composed of numerous individual of parcels all under the same ownership (Figure 4). The total area identified for rezoning, as with the Truck City/Suzanne Lane site, is more than is needed for the jail project, however not knowing the final space requirements the rezone application used a liberal boundary. Further design and final acquisition of a site will facilitate refining the exact area needed for the project. The total boundary for the jail facility will need to include the structures as well as some street vacation and boundary line adjustments to the parcels. Presently there is a defined area for development as illustrated in the below figure.

An area along Kincaid Street would be offered for retail development opportunities, not purchased by the County. In addition, the triangular section of the property, the area south of Union Street, would be accepted out of the purchase.

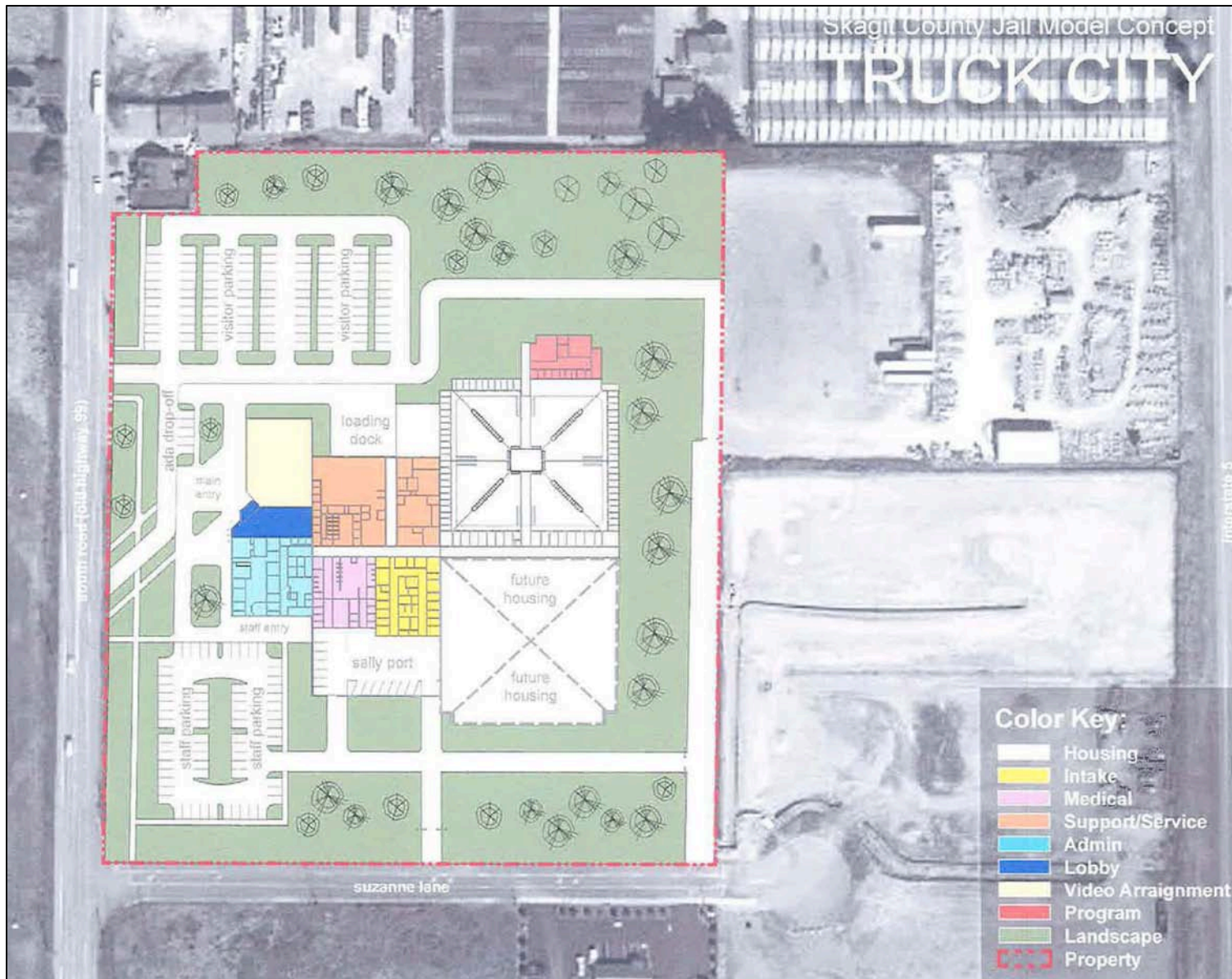


Figure 3. A proposed layout for the jail if located at the Truck City/Suzanne Lane property.

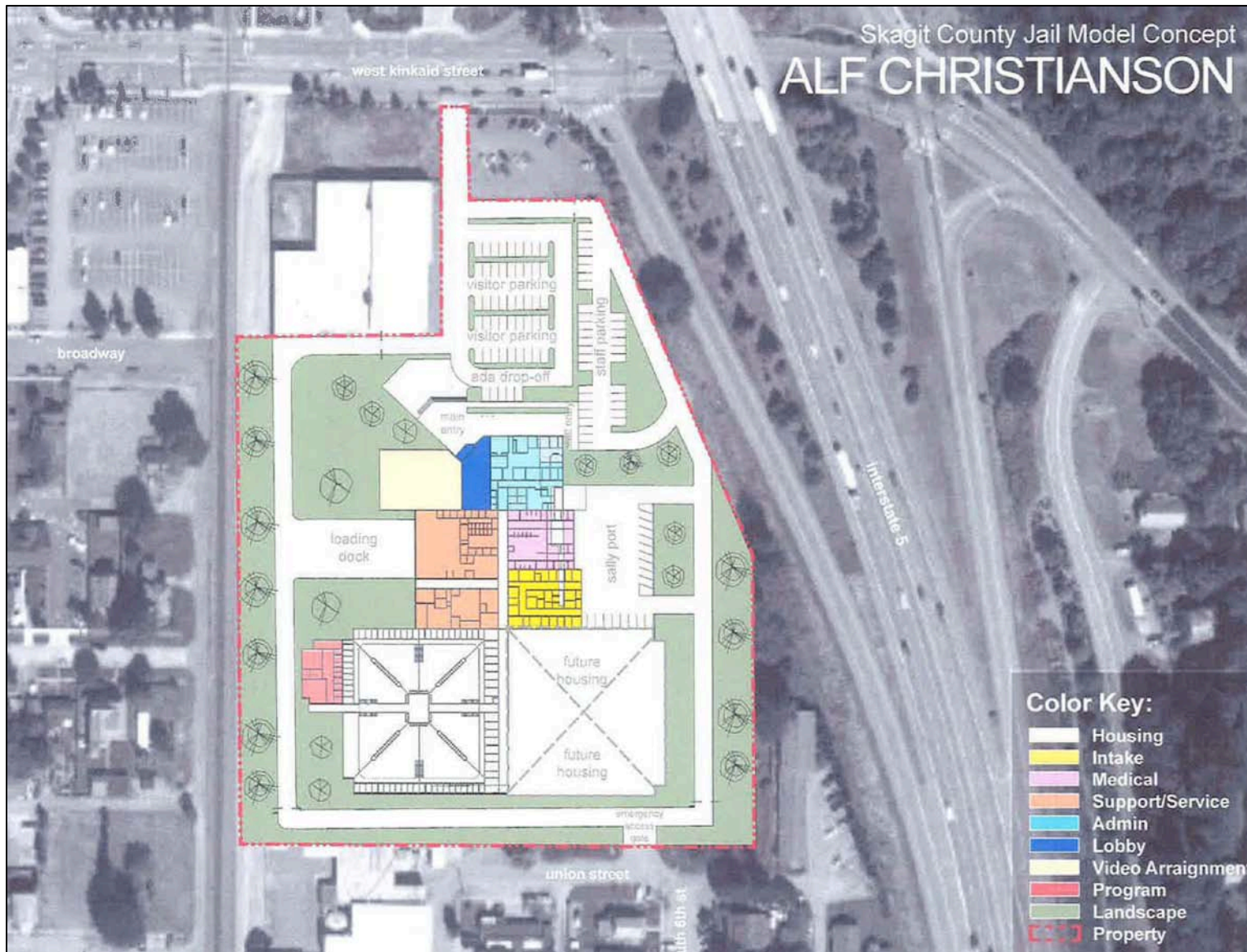


Figure 4. A proposed layout for the jail if built at the Alf Christianson Properties.

BACKGROUND REVIEW

Determining the probability for encountering buried cultural deposits within a project area is based upon a review and analysis of the known historic use, environmental and cultural contexts of an area, as well as taking into account of previous cultural resource studies and recorded sites within close proximity. Consulted sources included reviewing local geologic data to better understand the depositional environment; archaeological, historic and ethnographic records on file on the Washington Information System for Architectural and Archaeological Records Data (WISAARD) database; and selected published local historic records.

Archival Research

Background research for this project included a DAHP review of previously recorded archaeological sites and archaeological surveys conducted within the vicinity. Research resources also included accessing regional sources at the University of Washington Special Collections, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey (T-Sheets) (Figure 5), General Land Office (GLO) maps, geologic maps of the area and accessible historic photographs.

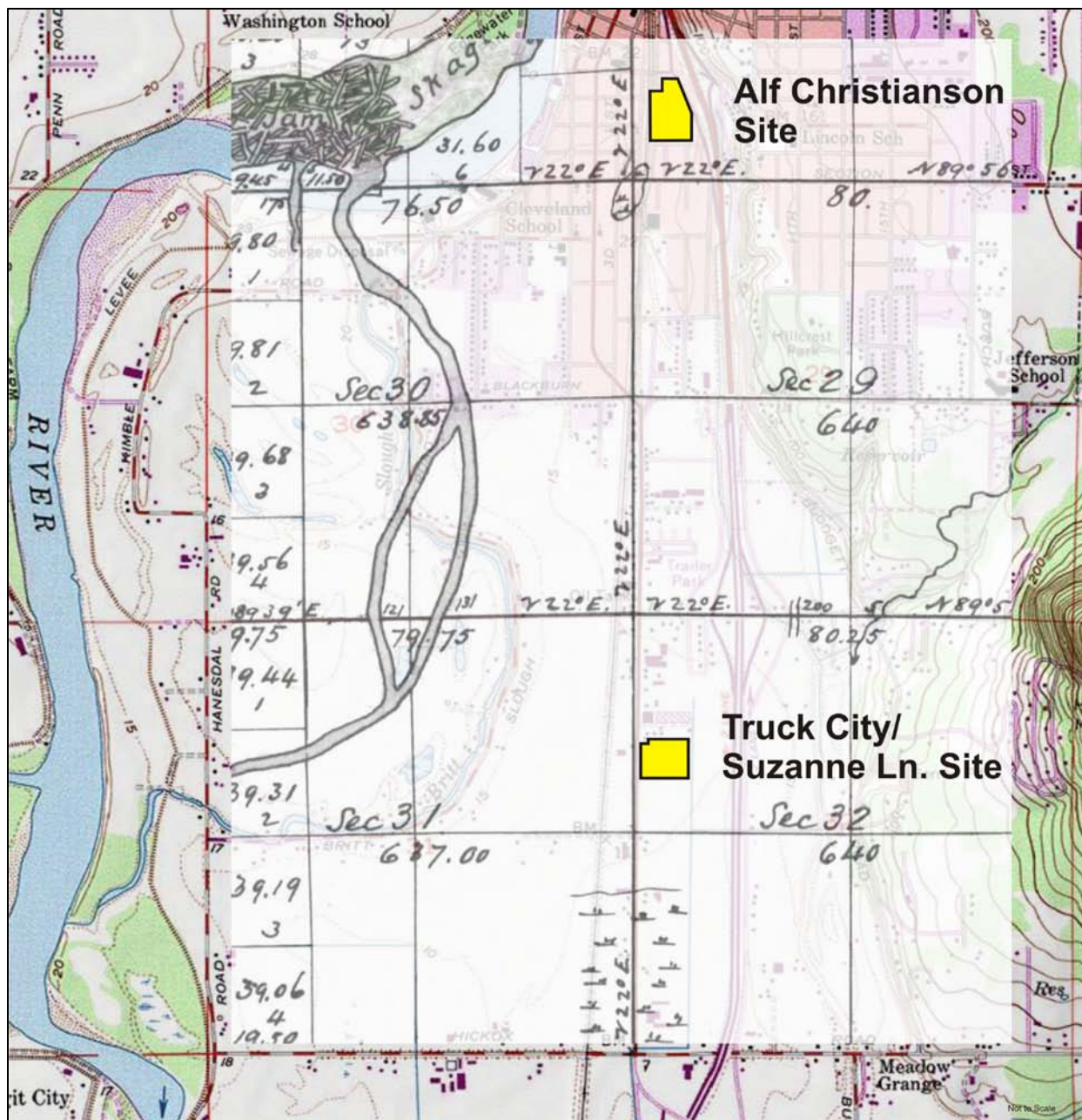


Figure 5. A composite of the current USGS and the 1882 GLO illustrating the property locations.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Contemporary vegetation in the general area is dominated by various species of grasses, landscape plants, Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus discolor*), black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera*) and red alder (*Alnus rubra*). Reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) dominates most open ground at the Suzanne Lane vacant parcels (south of Truck City). Surrounding areas are primarily developed urban and commercial interests, farmed fields and residential properties.

The general area is within the *Tsuga heterophylla* vegetation zone (Franklin and Dyrness 1973:44–45). Large areas would have differed from the broader regional pattern, however, with areas of prairie, oak woodland, and pine forest being distributed throughout the southern Puget Sound basin (Franklin and Dyrness 1973:88). Prior to clearing, native vegetation would have included, but not have been limited to, Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), and vine maple (*Acer circinatum*). Other locally important and available vegetative species would have included bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), blackcap (*Rubus occidentalis*), currants (*Ribes* spp.), deer fern (*Blechnum spicant*), gooseberries (*Ribes* spp.), huckleberries (*Vaccinium* spp.), Indian plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*), oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*), red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*), and trailing blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*) (Pojar and MacKinnon 1994).

Geomorphological Context

The project is located along the main course of the Skagit River. It is located within the Skagit River Valley at the northern end of the Puget Lowland, just west of the North Cascade Mountains. The Puget Lowland is a physiographic province that was shaped by at least four periods of extensive glaciation during the Pleistocene (Easterbrook 2003; Lasmanis 1991). The region has also been shaped by volcanic activity in the North Cascades and erosion and deposition by the Skagit River.

During the Pleistocene, the bedrock was depressed and deeply scoured by glaciers, and sediments were deposited and often reworked as the glaciers advanced and retreated. The bedrock in the Skagit River region is mantled with glacial till and drift from the last glaciation (WDGER 2013). The Vashon Stade of the Fraser Glaciation began around 18,000 B.P. with an advance of the Cordilleran ice sheet into the lowlands (Porter and Swanson 1998). The Puget Lobe of the ice sheet flowed down into the Puget Lowland and reached its terminus just south of Olympia between 14,500 and 14,000 B.P. (Clague and James 2002; Easterbrook 2003). The Puget Lobe was thicker towards the north and thinned towards its terminus. The depth of the ice near the project area is estimated to have been about 1,600 m (5,250 feet) (Easterbrook 2003).

The Puget Lobe began to retreat shortly after reaching its terminus. Marine waters entered the lowlands that had been carved out by the glacier and filled Puget Sound. The remaining ice was floated and wasted away rapidly. Everson glaciomarine drift deposits dating between 12,500 and 11,500 B.P. were released from the melting glacial ice and deposited on the sea floor across the northern and central Puget Lowland (Easterbrook 2003). The enormous weight of the ice had depressed the land, but, as the crust rebounded, relative sea levels fell and exposed some of the drift deposits (Clague and James 2002; Easterbrook 2003).

The Skagit River has continued to shape the region throughout the Holocene. It has deposited a wide swath of alluvium and built up a large delta into Puget Sound. Much of the alluvium likely contains volcanic sediments from Glacier Peak (Dragovich et al. 1998). Glacier Peak has erupted numerous times during the Holocene, and lahar deposits are present in large areas within the Skagit River Valley (Dragovich et al. 2002; WDGER 2013). The Skagit River splits into two major forks approximately 16 km (10 miles) above its mouth, immediately below the present review area.

Vicinity soils are mapped as Skagit series soils. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) describes Skagit soils as consisting of very deep, drained, and protected soils (by constructed levees) that are variably drained (good to poorly) and all were subject seasonal to flooding. These soils formed in recent alluvium of a volcanic ash parent material on the Skagit River floodplain. As a result of their origin in alluvium and volcanic materials, the grain size of the soil is very small, giving them a clay-like appearance and similar permeability characteristics. The soils differ at each of the review locations in fine detail, but in respect to anthropogenic considerations and probabilities for location cultural remains they are very similar. Co-locating cultural materials and these soil types are not mutually exclusive.

The reported soils at the Truck City/Suzanne Lane property location have been mapped as Sumas silt loam (USDA-NRCS 2013). Sumas silt loam forms on deltas and flood plains in alluvium and is poorly drained. The typical profile consists of a surface layer of very dark grayish brown and dark brown silt loam that extends to a depth of about 30.5 cm (12 inches) below the modern surface. An underlying layer of gray silt loam measures about 20.4 cm (8 inches). Below that is a gray silty clay loam layer of about 15 cm (6 inches), while the next 61-cm (24-inch) layer is of another gray silt loam. The lowermost stratum is dark gray, very fine sandy loam to 153 cm (60 inches) or more below the present surface (Klungland and McArthur 1989:107). It must be noted that this description is of a natural, unmodified soil profile.

At the Alf Christianson site soils are recorded as Mt. Vernon-Field complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes (Klungland and McArthur 1989). The soil at the site is not definitively known because most areas are covered by buildings, roads, and parking areas (the proposed jail footprint at this location is a prime example). The Mt. Vernon-Field complex is described in the same way as the Sumas silt loam soil above. It is a very deep, moderately well drained soil formed in recent alluvium of volcanic ash parent material. The typical surface layer is dark brown very fine sandy loam 10 inches thick. The upper 19 inches of the underlying material is dark yellowish brown and grayish brown, stratified very fine sandy loam, fine sandy loam, loamy fine sand, and fine sand, and the lower part to a depth of 60 inches or more is grayish brown and olive gray, stratified silt loam, very fine sandy loam, fine sandy loam, loamy fine sand, and fine sand. In some areas the surface layer is sandy loam or silt loam, and in some areas the surface layer is not dark colored. Again, this description is of a naturally deposited, unmodified, and generally observed soil profile.

CULTURAL CONTEXT

In any investigation of the history of an area, a discussion of the past inhabitants is necessary to appreciate the full spectrum of possible occupational remnants. It is also important to broadly discuss the land use relationship of the setting specifically and the general occupation of the area along the Skagit River.

Occupation of the area and the surrounding area would not have been possible until the late pre-contact period due to geologic formation processes. The Skagit River Delta is a geologically recent landform. Cultural deposits of a historic nature would be expected very near the surface, while precontact deposits might occur as deeply as six meters (20 feet) below the present surface. That being said, a wide variety of estuary and fresh/salt water resources and the level, water-

accessible terrain would have lent itself well to human utilization of the area. Cultural summaries for the broader region can be found in a multitude of resources, including Ames and Maschner (1999) and Nelson (1990), and will therefore only be generally outlined here.

The Puget Sound lowland archaeology can be subdivided into three phases that include early (end of the last ice age to 5,000 years B.P.), middle (5,000–1,000 B.P.) and late stages of development (1,000–250 B.P.). The early period is characterized by an emphasis on the use of flaked stone tools, including large bifaces, fluted projectile points, leaf-shaped points, and cobble-derived tools. Camps were frequently established along river terraces or outwash channels. The middle period coincides with a stabilization of the environment to something similar to today. The broad cultural patterns include a larger suite of specialized tools, including smaller notched points and ground stone. Another class of artifacts that appears to increase in use is ground bone and antler implements. These items are employed in a variety of uses, such as woodworking, fishing/hunting, personal adornment, and art. Shell midden sites first appear during this period indicating a transition to a more maritime-based subsistence pattern. The late period is dominated by a settlement pattern along the coastline and along streams and rivers. Trade goods also appear indicating networks of trade up and down the coast as well as with inland and eastern Plateau peoples. Salmon became a primary food source at this time as sea levels had risen and riparian environments supported large runs of salmon and provided plentiful food for growing populations.

The present work is situated on the lower Skagit River floodplain delta. The area was once freely populated by two different bands of Skagit peoples, the Kikiallus and Nookachamps (Sampson 1972; Suttles and Lane 1990). The Nookachamps historically occupied the Skagit River Valley from near present-day Mount Vernon to Lyman (Sampson 1972). They are generally classified as Upper Skagit along with several other bands that occupied the Skagit River Valley from Mount Vernon up into the Cascades (Collins 1974; Ruby and Brown 1986; Sampson 1972; Suttles and Lane 1990). The Kikiallus are sometimes grouped with the Lower Skagit, who occupied a portion of Whidbey Island. The Kikiallus occupied the southern half of the Skagit River delta as well as lands on northern Camano Island (Ruby and Brown 1986; Sampson 1972; Suttles and Lane 1990). Historically, they had a large village with four longhouses where Conway was established (Ruby and Brown 1986:90; Sampson 1972). The northern portion of the Skagit River delta was historically occupied by the Swinomish. Other groups that frequently interacted with the Kikiallus included the Nuwaha, their neighbors to the north; the Stillaguamish, their neighbors to the south; and the Samish, who lived on the islands to the west. All of these groups spoke the Northern Lushootseed dialect of the Southern Coast Salish language (Suttles and Lane 1990).

The people of the Skagit River were skilled hunter/gatherers and craftsmen. During the spring, summer, and fall, people moved around to temporary camps focusing primarily on resource acquisition. Temporary shelters were constructed of poles covered with cattail mats. Much of the food gathered during the summer was stored for winter, when people congregated in permanent villages. Large winter houses were constructed from cedar posts, poles, and planks. They relied on salmon as a staple, but ate a wide variety of other food as well, including other fish, shellfish, waterfowl, land mammals, roots, and berries (Sampson 1972). Unlike many of their neighbors, the Kikiallus did not keep or hold others in slavery (Ruby and Brown 1986:90).

Diseases had swept through the region killing most of the native population even before settlers arrived. Most of the bands of Skagit, as well as the Samish and Swinomish, signed the Treaty of Point Elliot of 1855, which dissolved Indian title to their lands, although federally recognized tribes were permitted to fish in all usual and accustomed areas and to hunt and gather on uninhabited and unclaimed lands. The treaty set aside several temporary reservations of land. The Swinomish Reservation was one of the temporary reservations, but it was made permanent in 1873. Some of the native groups in the Skagit region moved there, but many did not. Four separate organized groups operated on the Swinomish Reservation: Swinomish, Samish, Lower Skagit, and Kikiallus (Sampson 1972).

The first homesteaders in the Skagit River Valley came in the 1850s and 1860s. A party of several men scouted the lower Skagit River in 1869 and brought their families and goods with them the following year. One of the parties reported that there were already 16 men with Indian wives living along the North and South Forks of the Skagit River at that time. One of the first was John O'Brien, who had married one of the Kikiallus upper-class women, a member of the Jack family (Ruby and Brown 1986:90). The Skagit River delta was forested when the first settlers arrived, and two large logs jams were present on the river just above and below present-day Mount Vernon. One of the log jams is said to have had trees growing on top of it. Early settlers cleared and diked their lands, and some set up logging camps (Willis 1973).

Two of the early settlements on the lower Skagit River were Mount Vernon and Skagit City, located along the banks of the South Fork just below the fork. One of the large log jams was located just above Skagit City and effectively blocked ships from sailing upriver. Skagit City became a major supply center for settlers and miners upriver and was also a stopping-off place along an overland route between American forts at Bellingham and Steilacoom. Between 1870 and 1890, the town had a hotel, restaurant, churches, recreation hall, and post office (Willis 1973).

The period from 1890–1920 saw rapid growth in the Skagit River Valley (Willis 1975). Many new people arrived, more farm land was cleared, lumber and shingles were produced, the flats were substantially diked and drained, and the Skagit River Valley developed as a major agricultural center (Willis 1973). The major crops raised in the early days were hay, oats, and potatoes. Cattle and dairy farming was very important to the region, and there were a number of creameries that operated in Skagit County in the early 1900s. Some flower bulbs were grown commercially as early as 1906, but it was not until after World War II when Dutch bulb growers arrived that the Skagit Valley became a major bulb-producing region (Willis 1975).

According to the 1889 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey (USCGS) Topographic Survey Sheet (T-Sheet), non-Native settlers were living on established farms and the town of Mount Vernon was growing; but there are no improvements shown at either of the subject review properties. The proposed jail development would be located on what were open, cleared areas (probably farmed at some point although not illustrated). The 1872 General Land Office (GLO) map for Township 34 North, Range 4 East depicts no settlers or any delineated farmland at either review site. However, the Alf Christianson site is near or incorporates a small oval wetland to the south.

PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGY

Generally there have been a few recent cultural resources studies conducted in the general area. The majority of recorded resources in the area (particularly the Alf Christianson site) are historic in nature. Previous archaeological work in the immediate vicinity of the proposed jail locations include relevant cultural resource surveys that pertain to the context of the properties and the potential for locating archaeological resources. A search of the WISAARD database, available through the DAHP, determined that there are no archaeological sites within the boundaries of either review property. There are no recorded archaeological sites within a mile of the Alf Christianson site and two within about a mile of the Truck City/Suzanne Lane site.

In the interest of considerations for buried archaeological deposits at both locations four archaeological sites in the general area can be presumed to be germane in considering the probability for locating buried resources. These sites are in similar geologic contexts and, depending upon depositional rates of in-fill of the Skagit River delta, these previously recorded deposits could have temporally and culturally connected deposits in the flood plain. In addition, the historic site, 45SK130, illustrates the historic use of the area and as such, these two locations would be probable locations for similar deposits. There are numerous historically significant structures near the Alf Christianson site, due to numerous reviews in the Mount Vernon core and along the levee (Berger 2008; DeJoseph 2005; LaBree 2013; Storey 2011). In addition, there are recent cultural resource surveys in the area to offer insight as well.

The sites in the area of the Truck City/Suzanne Lane site include three precontact shell matrix sites (45SK40, 45SK41, and 45SK64) located south east of the project site, along the edge of the floodplain terrace and the bank of an old slough (Conca 1985, Meyer 1974, Onat et al. 1974). The shell matrix sites were recorded topographically above the present site elevation suggesting that they are older than the deposits of the proposed jail. One notable historic site (45SK130) is located south west of the project area along the present banks of the South Fork of the Skagit River. The site 45SK130 is the historic Skagit City location. A post office, stores, and ferry were once located there (Bennett 1978).

The most recent cultural resource studies in proximity to the Truck City/Suzanne Lane site include three assessments for City of Mount Vernon road improvements, Skagit County Transit and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF). Cultural resource reviews for the City of Mount Vernon, Anderson and LaVenture Roads improvements project were conducted in three phases (Arthur and Baldwin 2009, Arthur and Baldwin 2009a; Baldwin et al. 2008; Baldwin et al. 2009). The projects included shovel probes and pedestrian survey along portions of Anderson, LaVenture and East Blackburn Roads during the work. In addition, a review of a proposed Transit Center for Skagit County was conducted south of the subject property in an identical geologic context (Baldwin et.al 2008a). Lastly, a project for a siding extension on the BNSF was conducted by Jones and Stokes (Cooper 2007). No cultural resources, artifacts or features were identified during surface or subsurface inspection of those project areas.

Cultural resource reviews relevant to the Alf Christianson site include recent studies for levee work, federal compliance reviews, a historic property study and a review for work at the City wastewater plant. The results of these reviews varied, but no buried archaeological deposits were

located. Historic structures were identified as part of one of the reviews and resources associated with the present review location seem most pertinent.

The US Army Corps of Engineers conducted a geographically broad set of levee repair projects which were reviewed for cultural resource concerns per location (Storey 2011:25). A very small section of levee in the northwestern corner of Mount Vernon proper was reviewed as part of the repair project. No cultural resources were located during the review.

Another review near the Alf Christianson site was a proposed upgrade to the City's current wastewater treatment plant facilities (DeJoseph et.al 2005). Two residences in their APE dated to the early 1900s and were slated for demolition. Those residences were review, recorded and assessed. Neither was recommended eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Further, no archaeological deposits or isolated artifacts were observed during their work.

A City of Mount Vernon review was conducted by Berger (2008) for a proposed project to augment flood protection structures at their wastewater treatment plant. The project sought to build-up existing levees and remove numerous standing structures. A total of 50 structures were inventoried for the project and one was recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP (Hudson 2007). There were no archaeological sites or materials located.

The most recent report in the area was for a cellular tower project approximately .25 mile from the Alf Christianson site (LaBree 2013). The present review property was within that project's federally defined area of potential effect (APE); but it was determined to not be within view of the proposed tower. During the review LaBree recorded 26 potential historic properties within view of the proposed antenna site (a water tower) and determined that none of the structures, regardless of eligibility, would be affected by installation of the equipment. There was no concern or consideration for buried deposits during the work.

HISTORIC PROPERTIES EXPECTATIONS

Based on review of the project scope and environmental and cultural contexts, the proposed development sites were considered to be located in areas of moderate probability for cultural resource sites, objects and/or historic structures.

- The review sites are situated in a formerly forested river mouth area with access to fresh water and salt marsh estuary resources.
- An ethnographically and historically recorded Kikiallus village is known to have existed near the mouth of the Skagit River far south of either property.
- Historic GLO and USGS T-Sheet maps indicate that neither review area was utilized during the early contact and historic period.
- Cultural resources of a historic nature would be expected within a short depth of the surface, while precontact cultural materials could range in depth from the surface to

several meters below the present surface due to the geologic formation processes of the Skagit River delta.

- Types of cultural resources that were thought possible for discovery included precontact settlements; hunting, fishing, plant gathering remains; and/or ceremonial remains and/or historic trash scatters or artifacts associated with farming and logging activities, residential occupation, and/or transportation.

FIELD INVESTIGATION

The present cultural resources review was conducted systematically. DA principal Garth Baldwin made a cursory visual reconnaissance and brief meeting with Material Testing & Consulting (MTC) staff during their testing on September 5, 2013. On September 12, 2013 a second visit to the project areas was made where pedestrian survey and trench excavation was conducted. Weather during both visits was clear and warm. The Skagit County project manager and a crew of staff assisted in the field investigation by operating the excavator. A geologist from MTC was present during trench excavations to collaborate on interpreting and recording field data.

A physical archaeological assessment of an area is conducted through visual reconnaissance, examining existing and past ground alteration or disturbance and subsurface excavation as needed. Surface survey of an area proposed for ground alteration or other impacts is employed in an attempt to locate any surficial cultural materials or structures with any historic or archaeological importance or cultural concern. When utilized, shovel probes or mechanical excavation can assist in determining subsurface soil conditions for determining the potential for, or presence/absence of, buried archaeological deposits. The employment of probes or trenches is most often dependent upon considerations of the landform, topography, project proposal, and subsurface geologic conditions. At the present site, subsurface geology, surface visible soil conditions, and previous site alteration precluded the use of shovel probes. The County supplied an excavator and crew to excavate trenches. In addition, MTC employed a drill/boring machine for soil sampling. Due to the rapidity of alluvial deposition in the formation of both areas, trenches were deemed a more logical and efficient method of assessing subsurface conditions. The intent of trench excavation was to reach deeply buried soils and determine whether there was a potential for buried living surfaces where precontact deposits would be located. The number of trenches and their general locations was pre-selected by Skagit County. Trenching was prohibited in the developed areas where asphalt and/or gravel would have been disturbed. Screening of the soil/sediment was not considered necessary due to its homogenous consistency and obvious constituent materials.

The proposed jail sites are largely developed commercial areas with some adjacent residential homes, with the exception of the partially improved vacant land along Suzanne Lane (Figures 7-8). The Skagit River delta in the surrounding area is primarily agricultural. Vegetation in the area is composed of grass, landscape plants, blackberry vines and a few large trees. The ground surface is not openly visible at the Suzanne Lane parcels due to grass coverage; while the rest of both areas are primarily covered over in commercial concerns.

The observed soil profiles were recorded with notes and photographs for each trench; measured descriptions are presented in Appendix A. During the pedestrian survey a large area of the Suzanne Lane vacant land was noted as filled in two locations, one along Old Highway 99 and the other along the eastern property line. The landscape trees in the north west portion of open land appears to be the type associated with residence. No residence is currently present. All soils were inspected for cultural materials and/or anthropogenic soils. All of the trenches were dug to a depth below the proposed construction excavation.

In the trenches at the Truck City/Suzanne Lane site the profile of soil was consistent between the trenches. The only notable differences were that the upper layer in Trench 1 was very compacted (Photo 1-2). This was probably due to the area having been utilized as a stockpile location during development of the parcel immediately to the east. Another variation was that in Trench 2 a layer of preserved organic material was located within alluvial sand near the bottom of the trench (Photo 3-4). A sample was taken in the event that the site is selected and further testing is conducted. A date from the material could help determine a range of time for the depositional rate at this part of the delta. The MTC boring data, although much deeper, correlate to trench observations. No cultural materials were noted.

The general profile at the site is layers of low-energy alluvial soil with some episodic depositional variation. The soil is composed of soils with grain sizes small enough to appear as being nearly clay. Variegated staining was evident in all lower portions of the profile due to repeated ground water infiltration.



Figure 6. The Truck City/Suzanne Lane site with subsurface test units illustrated.



Photo 1. An overview of the Trench 1, looking south east.



Photo 2. Trench 1, at completion, the profile appeared to be intact.



Photo 3. Trench 2 was excavated near the Moose Lodge at Truck City.



Photo 4. Small organic woody remains were recovered from about 260cm in Trench 2.

The Alf Christianson site is located near downtown Mount Vernon's old town area (Figure 7). The site has been operated for a very long time and has been the home of numerous ventures. The soil profiles observed suggest that, naturally, it is contextually similar to the other site, but there have been some post-depositional contributions to the profile as well.

There were two trench locations identified by the County for testing the area. Trench 3 was located in a formerly residential lot (Photo 5). All residences on the subject property were razed at some point in the past. The soil profile in the trench showed some minor signs of alteration in the upper portion of the trench, but largely below 28cm the profile appeared to be naturally deposited (Photo 6). The profile of Trench 4 was dramatically different than any of the others.

Trench 4 was excavated in the north eastern portion of the property (Photo 7). The upper portion of the soil profile was clearly composed of disturbed fill. Nearly a meter of the uppermost profile contained myriad fill and trash constituents. Recent trash items to a steak knife blade of an undetermined age were recovered from the trench (Photo 8-9). The lower portion of the profile appeared to be intact native deposits. The location was likely a low area filled to bring it up to the present grade, although still slightly lower than the street level.



Figure 7. The Alf Christianson site with subsurface test units illustrated.



Photo 5. An overview of the Trench 3 location, the former seed plant is in the background.



Photo 6. Trench 3 at completion, note the transition from silt to sand midway down and off-colored water.



Photo 7. Trench 4 was excavated in the north east portion of the Alf Christianson site.



Photo 8. Trench 4, revealed a thick layer of trash-laden fill (note clear delineation and concrete at the base of the upper strata).



Photo 9. A complete historic knife blade was recovered from Trench 4 (the blade is likely >50 years of age).

Soil in both of the proposed Skagit County Jail locations under review appear to be primarily intact, naturally deposited soils with easily discernible post-depositional alterations to the uppermost portions. No evidence for precontact or historic cultural deposits which could complicate developing either site was encountered. Trench matrices were consistently composed of the native soils with the exception of trash in the fill portion of Trench 4 (NRCS 2013).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The present investigation included background review regarding the environmental and historic context of the sites, field review with subsurface boring and trenching, and production of this report. Background review determined the project was located in an area of low to moderate probability for archaeological resources based upon development and past land use. The number of trenches and their general locations was pre-selected by Skagit County. Trenching was prohibited in the developed areas where asphalt and/or gravel would have been disturbed. The sediment and soil observed were consistent with naturally defined soil for the area, except for some fill in Trench 4. No evidence for precontact or historic archaeological occupation or deposits was encountered during surface and subsurface review at the lot.

Logistical limitations of the subsurface testing regiment and limited application for determining the presence or potential for anthropogenic soils and/or deposits from MTC boring data result in an incomplete picture of subsurface deposits at the sites. Truck City and expansive impervious surfaces at the Alf Christianson site rendered those areas off limits to archaeological subsurface testing. Data returned from the executed trenches illustrates that there is a potential for preserved, buried precontact cultural deposits in undisturbed alluvial deposits. In addition, at the Alf Christianson property historic materials were located in Trench 4. Those materials are not

considered significant, and not even technically archaeological, due to the mixed nature of older materials with modern trash. Therefore, based upon the results of this review, further archaeological testing or monitoring of any additional geotechnical testing is recommended for the selected property. Along these lines, in the opinion of this archaeologist, complications from encountering cultural deposits and historic structural concerns (depending upon funding and permitting sources) are much more likely to exist at the Alf Christianson property. Regardless of which site is ultimately chosen, additional archaeological oversight in the form of further subsurface review would be prudent.

It should also be recognized that Washington State law provides for the protection of archaeological resources in the state. Washington State Revised Codes of Washington (RCW) Chapter 27.53, Archaeological Sites and Resources, prohibits the unauthorized removal, theft, and/or destruction of archaeological resources and sites. This statute also provides for prosecution and financial penalties covering consultation and the recovery of archaeological resources. Additional legal oversight is provided for Indian burials and grave offerings under RCW Chapter 27.44, Indian Graves and Records. RCW 27.44 states that the willful removal, mutilation, defacing, and/or destruction of Indian burials constitute a Class C felony. A recent addition to Washington legal code, RCW 68.50.645, Notification, provides a strict process for the notification of law enforcement and other interested parties in the event of the discovery of any human remains regardless of perceived patrimony. The assessment of the property has been conducted by a professional archaeologist and meets or exceeds the criteria set forth in RCW: 27.53 for professional archaeological reporting and assessment.

In the event that archaeological materials are encountered during the development of the property, an archaeologist should immediately be notified and work halted in the vicinity of the find until the materials can be inspected and assessed. At that time, the appropriate persons are to be notified of the exact nature and extent of the resource so that measures can be taken to secure them. In the event of inadvertently discovered human remains or indeterminate bones, pursuant to RCW 68.50.645, all work must stop immediately and law enforcement should be contacted. Any remains should be covered and secured against further disturbance, and communication established with the Mount Vernon Police Department and the State Physical Anthropologist at DAHP for coordination with the concerned Native Tribe(s).

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APPENDIX A: TRENCH DATA

Depth in cm Below Surface (cmbs)	Soil Description	Results
Trench 1		
0-50	Very compact, blocky, medium brown to gray 2.5Y 4/2 silt loam	no cultural material
50-131	Silty sand, medium brown to grayish, 2.5Y 5/1, dry with variegation from water infiltration noted 2 cobbles to ~10cm diameter,	no cultural material
131-169	Generally fine medium brown to gray 2.5Y 3/1 silty sand/sandy silt. @157 a layer of coarse sand, gray, "beach-like" in consistency,	no cultural material
169-175	Gray coarse sand, water infiltration	no cultural material
Notes: Truck City/Suzanne Ln. GPS Locations (UTM zone 10) 549316.69m E, 5360327.58m N		
Trench 2		
0-31	Loose, medium brown to gray 2.5Y 4/2 silt loam, damp, grass roots	Plastic container (oil or antifreeze), styrofoam cup, potato chip bag
31-75	Silty sand, medium brown to grayish 2.5Y 5/1, dry with variegation from water infiltration noted 2 cobbles to ~10cm diameter	no cultural material
75-139	Generally fine medium brown to gray 2.5Y 4/2 silty sand/sandy silt mottled. @87cm burned cedar root	no cultural material
139-273	Gray coarse sand, water infiltration- @260-265cm layer of organic materials, conifer (cedar?) foliage, small twigs- sample collected.	no cultural material
Notes: Truck City/Suzanne Ln. GPS Locations (UTM zone 10) 549233.42m E, 5360345.85m N		
Trench 3		
0-28	Loose, top soil, medium brown 2.5Y 3/3 sandy silt loam, damp, grass roots	Bottle glass, plastic bag
28-91	Silty sand, compact, dry, brown 2.5Y 3/4, @77cm, ~5cm layer of dark brown soil with charcoal, 2.5 Y 4/3 -ish horizontal layer across to both sides of trench	no cultural material
91-183	Graded silty sand brown to gray, variegated	no cultural material
183-267	Sandy silt, gray, water table - orange water at watertable (probably NOT okay) @~210 preserved conifer log sample collected.	no cultural material
Notes: Alf Christianson, GPS Locations (UTM zone 10)549295.04 m E, 5362695.65 m N		
Trench 4		
0-81	Loose, top soil, mixed deposits with native and fill gravels, copious trash, medium brown 2.5Y 3/3 sandy silt loam, damp, roots near surface	Modern-historic era trash, concrete, tile, glass, plastic bags, condom wrapper, 14.5cm stainless steel steak knife blade: Warwick, Sheffield, England
81-239	Silty sand, compact, dry, brown 2.5Y 3/4,	no cultural material
Notes: Alf Christianson, GPS Locations (UTM zone 10)549304.23 m E, 5362827.88 m N		

Note: All trenches were excavated by Skagit County staff using a toothed bucket. They measured approximately 3-4 m long and 61 cm wide.