

**BNSF**



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Cultural Resource Investigations along the  
BNSF Abandonment of Railroad Line from Hoxie to Walport,  
Lawrence County, Arkansas

AHPP Tracking No. 52471

Toby Morrow  
9 June 2004

### **Introduction**

The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF) plans to abandon and dismantle its rail line from Hoxie to Walport and the Walnut Ridge Industrial Spur. The total length of this project is 6.7 miles. Nine previously recorded archaeological sites and three previously recorded historic structures are located in the general vicinity of the line. Of these known cultural resources, three sites, designated 3IN358, 3IN363 and 3IN364, and two of the structures, LW0037 and LW0064, are situated adjacent to the project right-of-way. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP) requested that these five cultural resources be located in the field and marked out relative to the railroad right-of-way so that impacts to these areas can be avoided during the removal of the rail line.

Site records maintained by the Arkansas Archeological Survey and historic structure records held by the AHPP were consulted prior to the field investigation. The fieldwork for this project was conducted by Toby Morrow on 8 June 2004.

### **Historic Structures**

Neither of the two historic structures are extant today. The former Missouri-Pacific R. R. Depot, designated LW0037, was located near the southern terminus of the project corridor. Today the area is a gravel-covered parking area. The Johnson Motor/Travel Court, designated LW0064, was situated just east of the railroad line at the intersection of highways 67B and 412. None of the buildings remain and the area is now a vacant lot.

### **Archaeological Sites**

The three archaeological sites noted above are all clustered near each other where the railroad crosses Coon Creek about 1.5 miles north of Walnut Ridge. This is the location of Bridge 401.2 (see Figure 1). Each of these sites is a small prehistoric habitation area. At the time of the field examination,

the agricultural fields in the area were all in flooded rice. However, dirt access roads provided strips of visibility adjacent to the railroad right-of-way.

3IN358 was originally recorded as being located just north of Coon Creek in the field lying to the west of the railroad. This area was in flooded rice and the field access road is built up with imported fill and stands 50 to 70 cm higher than the natural ground surface. No traces of site 3IN358 were observable to the west of the railroad line. However, the field road on the opposite eastern side of the railroad did yield artifacts, indicating the 3IN358 extends to both sides of the tracks. Three flakes (1 Burlington chert, 1 Crowley's Ridge chert, 1 unidentified chert) and one fire-cracked rock of quartzite were found on the road surface. The northern site boundary lies 50 m (160 feet) north of Coon Creek.

3IN363 and 3IN364 are both located to the south of Coon Creek and to the east of the railroad right-of-way. Only a single flake of Ordovician chert was found on the surface of the road in the vicinity of 3IN363. On the road surface in the area of 3IN364 a total of five artifacts were recovered. These consist of one biface/knife made on a triangular flake of Pitkin chert, three flakes (1 Burlington chert and 2 Crowley's Ridge chert), and a piece of thermally shattered chert. Sites 3IN 363 and 3IN364 are located adjacent to each other and the southern limit of 3IN364 lies 100 m (320 feet) south of Coon Creek.

### **Conclusion**

The two historic structures on record adjacent to the railroad line (LW0037 and LW0064) no longer exist and will not be impacted by the planned abandonment. The three archaeological sites (3LW358, 3LW363 and 3LW364) are clustered near the railroad crossing of Coon Creek at Bridge 401.2. These three sites can be avoided by confining dismantling activities to the railroad line itself over an area 320 feet south and 160 feet north of the bridge. The boundaries of these three sites have been marked with pin flags and stakes adjacent to the railroad right-of-way.

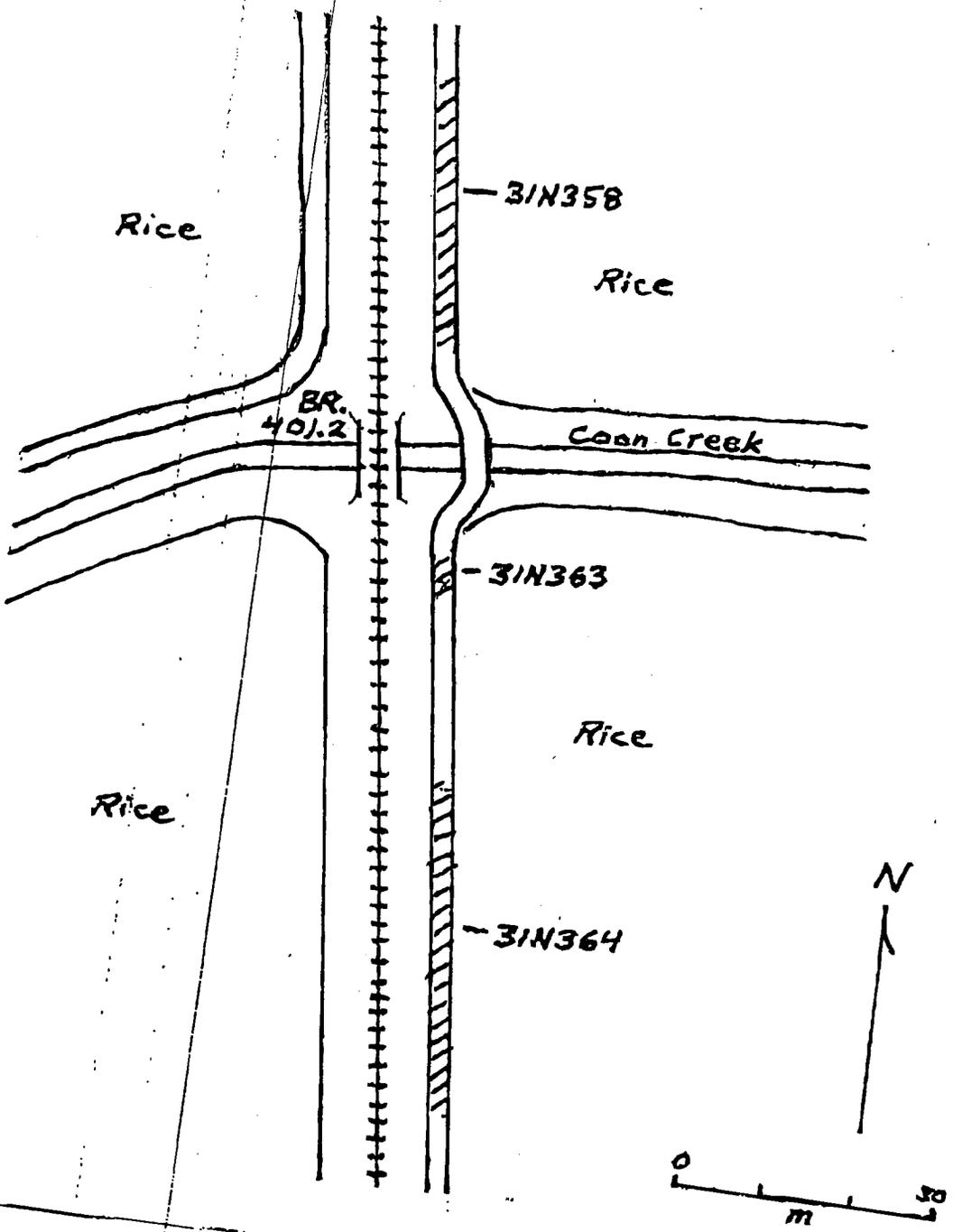


Figure 1. Detail map of the vicinities of sites 3LW358, 3LW363 and 3LW364.