

14 *Pinellas County Archaeological Resources*

The archaeological site inventory of 1991 resulted in the addition of 17 newly recorded archaeological sites to the Florida Master Site File, bringing the total number of recorded archaeological sites in Pinellas County to 286, as listed in **Appendix G**. The total number of sites that are currently recorded in the unincorporated portions of the County equals 116. The following discussion summarizes the survey findings. It describes significant archaeological sites discovered in unincorporated Pinellas County.

SIGNIFICANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE UNINCORPORATED COUNTY

Bay Pines, 8Pi64 – The Bay Pines archaeological site is located at the Bay Pines VA Hospital and is under the jurisdiction of the federal government. The archaeological component consists of several large middens and midden mounds that date from the late Archaic stage through the Manasota phase of the Formative stage. Several excavations have been conducted at the site (e.g., Gallagher and Warren 1975; Braley 1978). The site, listed on the National Register in 1983, also contains 14 historic structures.

Bayview Indian Midden, 8Pi855 – This is a large, black dirt and shell midden located on the north shore of Upper Tampa Bay in the town of Bayview. The Old Bayview Hotel is located immediately to the west of the midden and a garage sits on top of the site. The construction of these buildings has caused only minor damage to the midden. The site is believed to date to the Safety Harbor phase. It was investigated by the University of South Florida in 1980 and was determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places because of the site's research potential regarding the prehistoric Safety Harbor culture.

Ft. DeSoto Cantonment, 8Pi1697 – This site is associated with the Ft. DeSoto Batteries that were listed on the National Register in 1977. The archaeological deposits at this site are from the military cantonment area that contained over 30 structures built between 1898 and 1906 including officer's and enlisted men's barracks, civilian's quarters, a bakery, quartermaster's building, stables, blacksmith shop, a hospital, a guardhouse and other buildings. None of these buildings are standing today; however, recent excavations at the site have demonstrated the presence of buried support piers and artifacts related to these structures. This site is considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for its historical and archaeological significance.

Weedon Island, 8Pi1 – This large, complex site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972. The site consists of large midden areas and the remains of a burial mound. Professional excavations were conducted by the Smithsonian Institution in 1923-1924 and by the University of Florida in 1962. A major part of this site was owned and managed by the State. The County currently manages this site as a preserve. Approximately half of the Weedon Island site is located within the corporate limits of St. Petersburg, but the remainder of the site, including some of the largest midden areas, extends into unincorporated Pinellas County. The St. Petersburg portion has been designated a City Historical Landmark.

Safety Harbor, 8Pi2 – The Safety Harbor site is located at Philippe Park within the city of Safety Harbor, however it is County owned and operated. This large temple town was occupied during the prehistoric Safety Harbor period. According to Spanish accounts, it was the town of Tocobaga and was visited by Menéndez in 1567 where he reportedly established a mission. The site was also inhabited by Count Odet Philippe, who homesteaded there in 1830. His grave is located within the County Park. Professional excavations were conducted at Safety Harbor in the 1940s by Griffin and Bullen (1950). The site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1966.



POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE UNINCORPORATED COUNTY

Bayshore Homes, 8Pi41 – This large village site originally contained a temple mound, two burial mounds and associated middens. Excavations were conducted at the site in 1960 and much of the site was destroyed by construction of the Bayshore Homes subdivision. Large portions of the site remain, however, including one of the burial mounds and a large portion of the bayside midden. Part of this site extends into the corporate limits of St. Petersburg, but the majority of it, including the burial mound, is in the unincorporated County.

Madelaine Key, 8Pi1265 – This is a large shell midden located within the County's Ft. DeSoto Park. Based on artifacts collected from the eroding shoreline, the site dates to the Safety Harbor phase. The north half has been subjected to some impact from the construction of picnic tables and a road, however the south half is in excellent condition. This is one of the better-preserved prehistoric sites within the park and is deserving of protection for both its archaeological and public educational value.

Myers Cove Midden, 8Pi1257 – This is a large Weedon Island phase, black dirt midden with an associated shell midden. It is located on the Anclote River near its mouth. The site was investigated by professional archaeologists in 1987 and it was determined to be a potentially significant resource. A housing development was subsequently constructed on the site, but due to its size and depth, there is likely to be much undisturbed deposits preserved beneath these modern houses.

Oakhurst Burial Mound, 8Pi65 – This burial mound has been preserved by private landowners. The site is believed to date to the Manasota-Weedon Island phase and is one of the few mounds in the County that remains in relatively good condition.

Yat Kitischee (Moog Midden), 8Pi1753 – The Yat Kitischee site was initially discovered during the first comprehensive historic and archaeological survey conducted in Pinellas County in 1991. The findings contained in the Archaeological Test Investigation Report indicate that the Yat Kitischee site displays the internal structure indicative of a small village or settlement consisting of at least three (possible) households, a midden mound, and two burial sites.

Evidence of specific activity areas associated with possible bone tool and shell bead manufacture were also identified. The presence of a post mold for a possible structure was also significant. The Yat Kitischee Site is located adjacent to the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport and is approximately five miles northwest of Weedon Island State Park, where significant archaeological resources have previously been discovered.

The testing determined that despite the illicit digging, most of the site retained a high degree of integrity. Artifacts and other data classes were found to be abundant and in good stratigraphic context. The testing also revealed the presence of two human burials. Four radiocarbon dates indicated that the site was occupied from about A.D. 450 to A.D. 1100. The dates in conjunction with the artifacts recovered from the site indicated that the site was occupied during the Manasota and early Safety Harbor Periods. In 1994, after receiving a \$125,000 grant from the Florida Division of Historical Resources to conduct a public archaeology project, the County acquired the property containing the Yat Kitischee site with financial assistance from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport.

Before the start of the Yat Kitischee public archaeological project, the name of the site was recorded as "Moog Midden site" with the Florida Master Site File office. At the request of local Native Americans, the name of the site was changed from Moog Midden to Yat Kitischee, meaning "red people" in the Muskogee language. The name was chosen to honor the people who once lived at the site and were buried there.

The Yat Kitischee Public Archaeology Project involved a full-scale excavation to learn more about the life ways of these native people. The excavation focused on the area that contained the post mold from a possible prehistoric structure. In conformance with Chapter 872, and in deference to the wishes of Native Americans, the excavation was focused in an area where human remains had not been encountered. The project was designed to educate the public about archaeology and prehistory by involving them in an actual field experience.

The excavation lasted seven weeks and nearly 500 people visited the site. Twice per week volunteers worked side by side with professional archaeologists to excavate the site. Regularly scheduled tours of the site were available to the public every Saturday. The tours enabled more people to see the excavation in progress. A free lecture series brought in distinguished scholars from around the country. The Yat Kitischee Public Archaeology Project is an example of how archaeologist, Native American, volunteers and government officials can all work together successfully to help preserve the past. This project won the 1996 Florida Trust for Historic Preservation Education Award from the Florida Trust and the 1996 Stewards of Heritage Award from the Florida Archaeological Council.