

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This report details grant-supported research conducted by the Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne Archaeological Survey (IPFW-AS) at the Castor Farm site (12H3) and the nearby site, 12H1052, during the IPFW-AS Archaeological Field School June 27 through August 5, 2011, and Indiana Archaeology Month in September and October 2011. These investigations marked the eleventh anniversary of “Public Archaeology Weeks” during Indiana Archaeology Month, public programming at Strawtown Koteewi Park near Noblesville in Hamilton County, Indiana, that is jointly sponsored by the IPFW-AS and the Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department (HCPRD). All investigations were conducted in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and Guidelines for Identification, Evaluation, and Archaeological Documentation*, the *Guidebook for Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory—Archaeological Sites*, and the *Grants Manual* of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (IDNR-DHPA), under permit number 2011023. Grant monies for the fieldwork, report, and other expenses were provided by the Historic Preservation Fund (grant number 18-11-31921-5) administered by the IDNR-DHPA. The HCPRD provided the publicity for the events, administered the public tour program at Strawtown, and generously supplied personnel for tour guides and some site interpreters, as well as accommodations for students and staff during field school and Indiana Archaeology Month. All materials related to the investigations will be curated at the Strawtown Koteewi Park, Hamilton County, Indiana, under accession numbers 11.1 (12H1052) and 11.3 (12H3).

Archaeology Month public programs at the Strawtown Koteewi Park are vital in meeting HCPRD goals. During the past eleven years they have attracted thousands of volunteers and visitors from the interested public, including local elementary and middle schools, home-school organizations and students, scout groups, professional and amateur archaeologists from across the state, and the media. The 2001 excavations attracted approximately 250 visitors during Indiana Archaeology Month. Subsequent years have seen significantly increased attendance, with the eleventh anniversary attendance in 2011 totaling over 4,200 visitors in the three weeks of public programming (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2).

The overarching objective of this research was to collect information to better define the regional settlement system for Late Prehistoric, Western Basin peoples of the Maumee valley and the contemporaneous, Western Basin-derived peoples along the West Fork of the White River in central Indiana. The Western Basin Tradition is commonly described as a Late Prehistoric cultural expression centered on the Maumee River watershed from northeastern Indiana through northwestern Ohio and southeastern Michigan, although a Western Basin-derived population was present in central Indiana. Previous investigations at the Strawtown Koteewi Park in Hamilton County, Indiana, defined this Western Basin-derived group as Castor phase peoples, since their development in central Indiana contained communal and domestic structures and other elements of material culture different enough from those identified in the Maumee valley to justify a separate designation (McCullough 2005, 2008; McCullough and Graham 2010:II). The origin of the Castor phase peoples, their continuities with and divergence from northeastern Indiana Western Basin populations, their persistence along the White River for several centuries, and their interactions with Fort Ancient and Taylor Village settlements nearby are questions of considerable importance in understanding Western Basin Tradition in regional context and ones the current research begins to address.



Figure 1.1. Photograph of a group touring the site during the 2011 Indiana Archaeology Month program.



Figure 1.2. Photograph of volunteer and student participation during the 2011 Indiana Archaeology Month program.

Although a primary objective of this research was to increase public awareness of archaeology in Indiana through on-site interactive visitation of excavations in progress, an equally important goal of the project was collecting data which will aid in nominating site 12H1052 to the National Register of Historic Places. Excavations targeted previously identified cultural features and attempted to locate a prehistoric structure that may be related to these features. Another goal was to complete the excavation of a large semi-subterranean structure, designated Structure 1 that can provide data relating to community organization at the Castor Farm site. Investigations in 2011 concentrated on excavating the remaining western portion of the structure that was exposed and partially excavated in the 2004 and 2005 Main Block near the central portion the site. A brief summary of excavations of the structure in 2005 is also presented in this report. The information gathered will clarify the construction pattern of a Late Prehistoric structure that will be used for reconstruction and interpretive purposes at the park. The final goal of this investigation is to study temporal, artifact, and site variations and provide a general analysis of the two unique Castor phase sites.

While excavation activities were focused on collection of primary data, the broader research agenda was integrated with a proactive public program to increase awareness of archaeology and archaeological methods and goals during both the field school portion of the project and Indiana Archaeology Month 2011. Excavations open to the public at the Castor Farm site were designed to encourage public participation and education, and volunteer labor and public outreach were important components.

During the field school portion of the project, June 27 to August 5, 2011, IPFW-AS excavations at Strawtown Koteewi Park were open to the public every Tuesday and Thursday, and the afternoon lab session was open to the public Monday through Thursday. In addition to the open investigations, there was more formal visitation: staff from the Indiana Department of Transportation Cultural Resource Office visited the site on July 28, 2011 and Craig Arnold led 12 Boy Scouts in earning merit badges in archaeology during the Strawtown Koteewi Park summer merit badge clinic July 20-21, 2011. Students who participated in the IPFW summer field school during the month of July and first week of August included Kealy Bickel, Melissa Cline, Vasiliki Gianakos, Stephanie Howe, Cassie Ledbetter, Christina Rogers, Lauren Schrader, Maja Sljivar, Matthew Tuttle, and Heather Wilson.

The Archaeology Month public excavation was conducted Tuesdays through Saturdays from September 13 to October 1, 2011. Dr. Robert McCullough served as Principal Investigator during the 2011 investigations, and Craig Arnold, Colin Graham, Scott Hipskind, and Andrew Smith served as field supervisors and crew chiefs. Additional archaeological staff included Kristine Adkins, Christy Brocken, Jamie Cochran-Smith, Devin Fishel, Leslie Nocton, Laura Roe, Eric Sanchez, and Erik Vosteen. In the three weeks of excavations during Indiana Archaeology Month at least 4,274 individuals visited the Castor Farm site; 49 percent (2,127) of these visitors attended through scheduled school and educational group tours in a structured program co-staffed by HCPRD and IPFW-AS personnel (see Figure 1.3). Activities included hands-on participation in screening and identifying artifacts, as well as demonstrations of actual archaeological methods, nature walks, and talks on the park's long history of human occupation. School groups participating during the 2011 programming included Allisonville Elementary, 4th graders (Marion County); Amy Beverland Elementary, 4th graders (Marion County); Cherry Tree Elementary, 4th graders (Hamilton County); Clay Middle School, 7th graders (Hamilton County); Coop Homeschoolers (Hamilton County); Hamilton County Homeschoolers (Hamilton County); Hamilton Heights Primary School, 4th graders (Hamilton County); Hazel Dell Elementary, 4th graders (Hamilton County); Hinkle Creek Elementary, 4th graders (Hamilton County); Indiana

Academy, 9th graders (Hamilton County); Lapel Elementary, 4th graders (Madison County); Mohawk Trails Elementary, 5th graders (Hamilton County); Montessori of Westfield, 1st-3rd graders (Hamilton County); SDA of Cicero, 5th-6th graders (Hamilton County); Stoney Creek Elementary, 4th graders (Hamilton County); Tipton Elementary, 4th graders (Tipton County); Williamsport Day School (Tippecanoe County); and Wright Homeschoolers (Johnson County).



Figure 1.3. Photograph of student participation during the 2011 Archaeology Month program.

Other groups touring the site were the Allisonville Christain Church (Marion and Hamilton County); ARCH of Fort Wayne (Allen County); Children’s Museum Family Tour (Marion and Hamilton County); Classical Conversations of Greenwood (Johnson County); Conner Prairie Educational Team (Hamilton County); Early Years and Beyond (Hancock and Marion County); Fishers Girl Scout Service (Hamilton County); Hamilton Parks Association (Hamilton County); Homeschool Helpers (Tipton County); members of the Miami Nation of Indiana; Mothers Group of Fishers (Hamilton County); Singles of Britton Falls (Hamilton County); and several Girl and Boy Scout groups from throughout central Indiana. Programming events in 2011, such as all-day atlatl throwing demonstrations and a breakfast for all Strawtown Koteewi Park volunteers, drew a wider range of age groups, as did “Digging through the Past, Building to the Future,” a park-sponsored development event to build an endowment fund for park archaeology. Importantly, an off-site event at Fort Benjamin Harrison during Indiana Archaeology Month, Hoosier Outdoor Experience, in which park personnel featured Strawtown Koteewi Park archaeology programming drew many more visitors.

Individual volunteers in the Archaeology Month excavations, many of whom have returned year after year, included Julie Abney, Richard Anderson, Chris and Cindy Ballard, Richard Ballard, Valley Blevins, Dean Caldwell, Cathy Carson, Jennifer Chisler, Kym Cobel, Nicole Coomer, Don Davison, Reed Dilley, Lisa Gardner, Jim Hadley, Perry Harrell, Terry and Dixie Ihnat, Ann Jamison, Olga Kaufman, Bruck Kinsey, James Lybarger, Teresa Lyons, Patty Morton, Cathy Mowry, Beverly Noel, Jon Pontzius, David Ramp, Jan Ranstead, Kris Richey, Bill Scheibelhut, Linda Shields, Cole and Amanda Sperry, Lou Ann Winterrowd, and Zach Wright. Kris Richey and Lou Ann Winterrowd also volunteered in the IPFW-AS laboratory throughout the year, helping process the materials.

The IPFW-AS excavations were also featured in various media: an article was in the *North Magazine*, August/September issue, 2011, about the Indiana Archaeology Month investigations at Strawtown Koteewi Park and another article about excavations during Archaeology Month and the Strawtown Koteewi Park/IPFW-AS sponsored “Digging through the Past, Building to the Future” event appeared in *The Indianapolis Star*, September, 2011.

This report is divided into chapters: Chapter 2 describes the general environmental and cultural setting of the research; Chapter 3 contains a description and results of the geophysical surveys conducted at 12H1052 during 2011 and subsequent shovel test probe data; Chapter 4 describes excavations at site 12H1052 with details of methodology, stratigraphy, and cultural features encountered; Chapter 5 contains a presentation of the cultural materials recovered from 12H1052, with a focus on chipped stone tools, ceramics, and modified fauna; Chapter 6 describes excavations at Castor Farm (12H3) with details of methodology, stratigraphy, and cultural features encountered; Chapter 7 contains a presentation of the cultural materials recovered from 12H3, with a focus on chipped stone tools, ceramics, and modified fauna; and Chapter 8 is a discussion of the 2011 field season research findings. Appendices include radiocarbon dates from 12H1052 (Appendix A), the field specimen (FS) logs from both 12H1052 and 12H3 (Appendices B and C), the flotation logs from both sites (Appendix D), a summary of postholes from 12H1052 and 12H3 (Appendices E and F), a typology of Castor phase ceramics (Appendix G), the macrobotanical analysis of specimens from 12H3 by Leslie L. Bush (Appendix H), and a student project report of artifact distribution from 12H1052 by Laura C. Roe (Appendix I). References for the literature cited in the appendices are included in the main bibliography.