In 1936, the federal government finally purchased 292,979 acres owned by Herbard Lumber Company and President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 7593 to create the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge (ONWR) in 1937. The ONWR was established largely to provide a breeding ground for wildlife including migratory birds. Between 1938 and 1941, two Civilian Conservation Corps camps were established to develop the refuge's facilities including an all-black unit. Okefenokee Swamp Park opened on Cowhouse Island in 1946 and in 1947, the Okefenokee Recreation, Inc. of Homerville was allowed to build and operate Camp Stephen Foster on Jones Island, which was sold to the state of Georgia in 1954 to become the Stephen C. Foster State Park. The ONWR, managed by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service since 1937, became part of the National Wilderness System in 1974 with the development of a Wilderness Canoe Trail system throughout the swamp. The Ramsar Convention recognized the swamp as a Wetland of International Importance in 1986 and the ONWR has increased to 371,000 acres since its original purchase (Trowell 1998b; Kirkland and Cook 2007:23-24).

Field Methods

The Phase I survey was guided by procedural standards established by the Georgia Council of Professional Archaeologists in concurrence with the Georgia Historic Preservation Division. Full land coverage requirements were achieved through visual inspections of the entire survey area and systematic subsurface testing. While conducting visual inspections, any exposed surfaces were carefully examined for cultural material.

Subsurface testing was performed within the proposed project area along 30-meter (m) interval transects comprised of shovel tests spaced 30 m apart. Standard shovel tests consisted of 30 centimeter (cm) diameter cylindrical holes excavated to a minimum depth of 80 cm below surface (cmbs) or until water was encountered. Soils from each test were screened through 0.64 cm hardware cloth for the purpose of recovering any cultural material that may exist at that location. When cultural material was encountered, the material was sorted by provenience and placed into bags labeled with the pertinent excavation information before being transported to TerraX's laboratory. Any archaeological sites identified within the project area during transect testing were further examined in order to better define their horizontal and vertical limits. Delineations were conducted by establishing a datum within the area of the initial find(s). From datum, close interval shovel testing at 10 m intervals was conducted in a cruciform pattern in cardinal directions until at least two consecutive negative tests were encountered in each direction. A hand-held Trimble or Garmin GPS unit was used to record site locations and sketch maps of each were drawn by compass and pace and plotted to scale. Digital photographs were taken for any site recorded as well as for the survey area.

Laboratory Methods and Collection Curation

All cultural materials recovered during field projects are delivered to TerraX's laboratory in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, for processing. Here, materials are sorted by provenience, cleaned, and analyzed. Along with the cultural material, all project records, photographs, and maps produced while conducting the investigation are transported for curation at the Archaeological Research Center, Troy University, Troy, Alabama. A copy of the curation agreement can be found in Appendix A.

Archaeological Survey Results

The Phase I investigation included the placement of 2,481 shovel tests along 53 transects (Figure 12). An additional 42 shovel tests were placed while performing site delineations. Of the total 2,523 shovel tests placed during this study, seven recovered cultural materials, 1,939 were culturally sterile, and 577 were not excavated. The primary reason for the large number of unexcavated tests was the presence of expansive