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STAGE 1B ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE TALLMAN ISLAND  
WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PLANT EXPANSION PROJECT  
BOROUGH OF QUEENS, NEW YORK CITY  
QUEENS COUNTY, NEW YORK

(LEQR, GEIS no #)

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STAGE 1B ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE  
TALLMAN ISLAND WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PLANT EXPANSION PROJECT  
BOROUGH OF QUEENS  
QUEENS COUNTY, NEW YORK

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Stage 1B Archaeological Survey is to document the presence or absence of potential prehistoric and/or historic archaeological resources within the Tallman Island Water Pollution Control Plant Expansion Project Area in the Borough of Queens, New York City, Queens County, New York, through the use of physical testing techniques.

The project area is approximately 1,455 feet north to south by 770 feet east to west in size. Our testing was limited to parts of the northern and central area of the present Water Pollution Control Plant property. See Figure 1 for the location of the project area.

The project area lies on a moderate slope ranging in elevation from approximately 7.5 feet above sea level in the northwest to approximately 16.1 feet in the center. The portion of the plant within the project area has been landscaped and consists of grasses, shrubs and occasional trees.

A study of the topography of the project area and its immediate vicinity indicates that this location is probably just to the west of a former freshwater source that drained into Powells Cove. These conditions, combined with the existence of a drainage course to the southwest, provided prehistoric and historic peoples with a source of freshwater nearby, and access to the marine resources of Powells Cove and the East River (Roberts et al. 1990:17).

METHODOLOGY

The subsurface archaeological testing of the Tallman Island Water Pollution Control Plant Site in Queens, New York began on May 7, 1990 and was completed on May 8, 1990. As stated in our proposal for the Phase 1B survey, the technique used to expose buried surfaces and thereby determine the presence or absence of archaeological resources was the mechanical excavation of trenches. See Plate 1 for an example of the backhoe trenching in progress. Two trenches were excavated by backhoe (see Figure 2), and closely monitored by archaeologists. This testing strategy was designed by the principal investigator, and approved by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Construction Management, Cultural Resources Section.

The use of mechanical means of excavation expedites the removal of large quantities of fill. Approximately 1,275 cubic feet of soil were removed

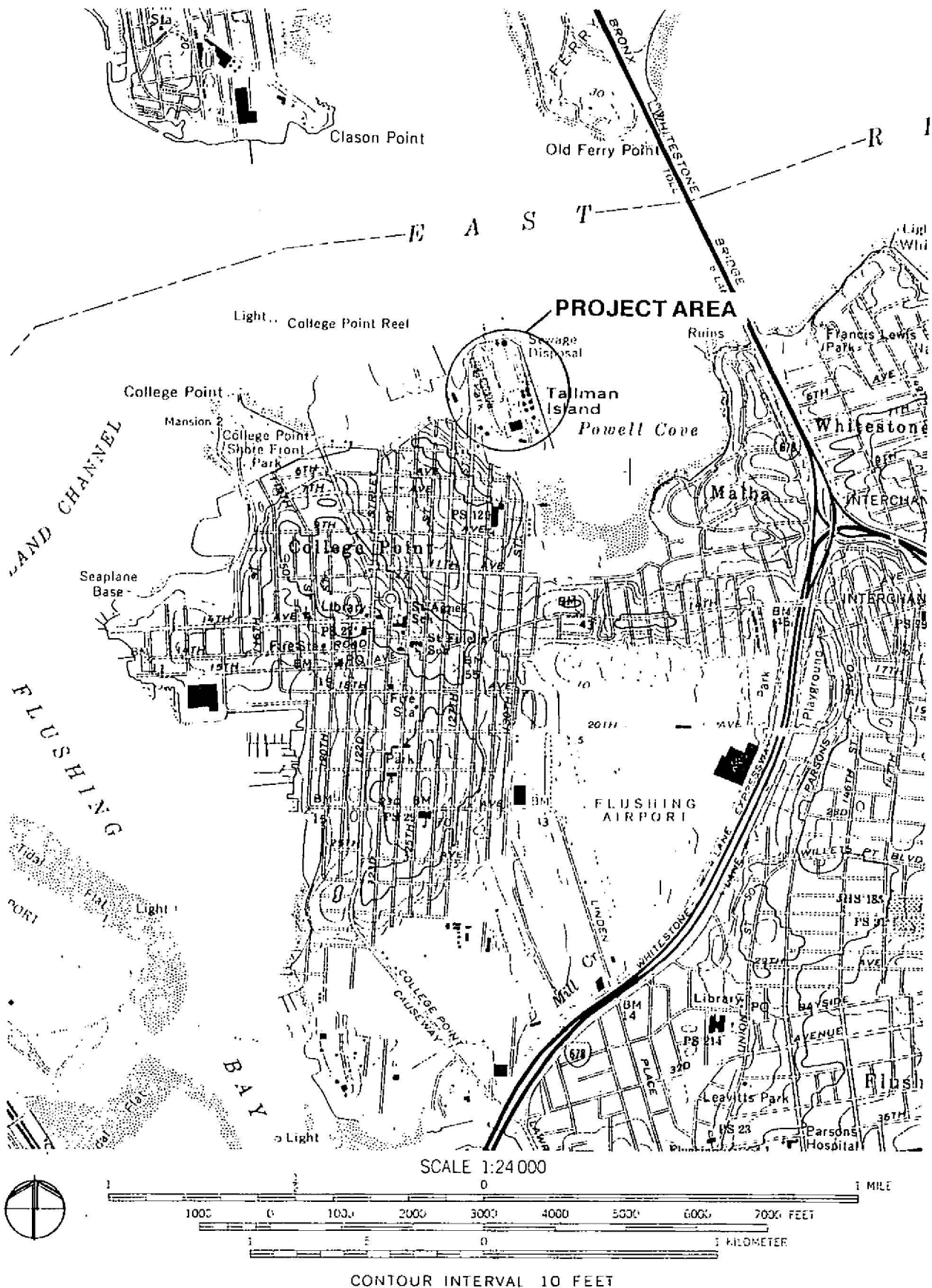


Figure 1

Location of Project Area shown on U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute Flushing, New York Quadrangle (1966, photorevised 1979).

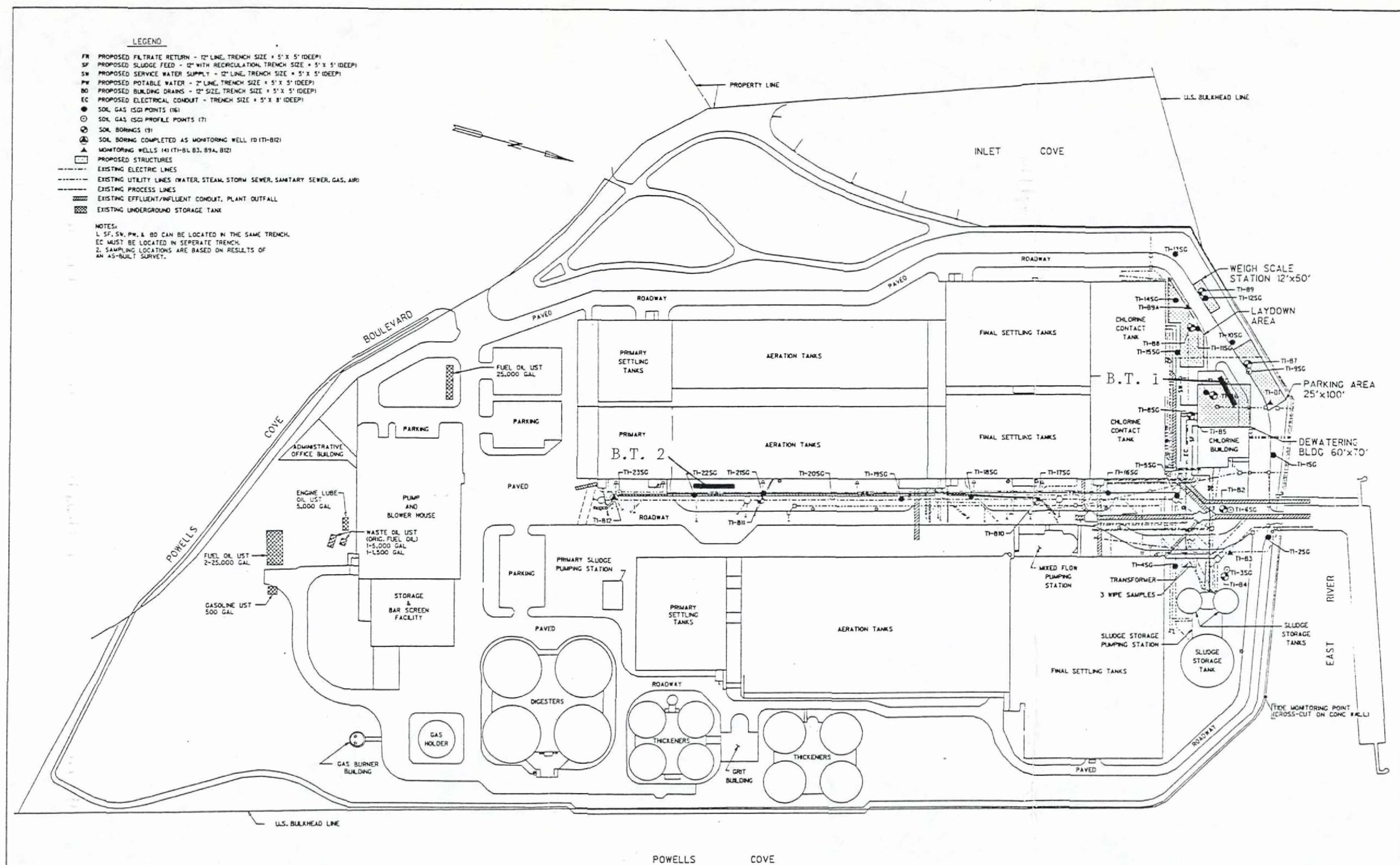


Figure 2 Locations of Test Trenches within Project Area.

DESIGNED _____ DRAWN _____ CHECKED _____ SUPV. ENGR. _____ PROJ. ENGR. _____		STONE & WEBSTER ENGINEERING CORPORATION NEW YORK, NEW YORK	HAZEN AND SAWYER, P.C. ENGINEERS NEW YORK, NEW YORK	APPROVED FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK PROJECT ENGINEER _____ CHIEF, DIVISION OF PLANT DESIGN	CITY OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BUREAU OF HEAVY CONSTRUCTION DIVISION OF PLANT DESIGN WP-284 LAND-BASED SLUDGE MANAGEMENT PLAN PHASE I DEWATERING FACILITIES	TALLMAN ISLAND FIELD SAMPLING LOCATIONS	SCALE 1" = 50' DATE _____ SHEET _____ OF _____ FIGURE 2-3
--	--	--	---	--	---	--	---





from the two trenches, the dimensions of which ranged from approximately 40 feet to 60 feet long, by 3 feet wide, by 8 feet to 9 feet deep.

Soil samples were selectively removed from the trenches where distinct changes were observed. This soil was then screened through 1/4 inch mesh in order to recover artifacts. Artifacts were also recovered when they were observed in the trench by directing the backhoe operator to selectively remove them with the backhoe bucket. Soil strata were measured, described, and recorded for all trenches. All trenches were backfilled immediately following excavation and the recording of data.

### STRATIGRAPHY

Two backhoe trenches at the Tallman Island Water Pollution Control Plant Site were excavated in order to uncover various depths of landfill, and thereby expose any evidence of prehistoric occupation underneath the fill in the area. The following summary of the stratigraphy will identify the layers of soil by color (including references to the geologic color standards set forth in the Munsell Soil Color Charts), texture, thickness, and inclusions. A more detailed description of the cultural materials recovered from the various strata will be discussed in the Artifact Analysis section. Copies of the forms used to record data collected in the field are attached to this report as Appendix 2.

Both backhoe trenches were located in the landscaped portions of the Water Pollution Control Plant. The upper layers of Backhoe Trench 1 were a very dark brown (Munsell color 10 YR 2/2) silty loam with inclusions of gravel. Beneath the topsoil, beginning at a depth of approximately 0.3 feet, four layers of fill were observed down to the bottom of the trench, 8.0 feet to 9.0 feet below grade. These layers of fill varied in thickness from 0.4 feet to 2.0 feet, and texture, from compact silt to sand. Soil colors exhibited similar variance, and included yellow browns (10 YR 5/8 and 10 YR 4/4), olive brown (2.5 Y 4/4), and dark brown (10 YR 3/3).

The topsoil in Backhoe Trench 2 was a gray to very dark brown (10 YR 3/2) silty loam. Two layers of fill were recorded before the sides of the trench collapsed. Both layers were brown (10 YR 4/3 and 10 YR 5/3) silty sands. The upper fill layer was approximately 0.7 feet thick, the second, was of indeterminate thickness. Though the bottom depth of landfill could not be determined, cultural materials were recovered to depths of approximately 5.0 feet. See Plate 2 for an oblique view of Backhoe Trench including the south section. Note the collapsed east and west sections.

### ARTIFACT PROCESSING, ANALYSIS AND INVENTORY

Subsequent to all fieldwork, all recovered materials were washed, marked, stabilized, and catalogued in the Greenhouse laboratory. The majority of artifacts were washed in room temperature tap water with added ORVUS

paste (modified sodium lauryl sulfate), which is a non-ionic detergent. Harsh detergents leave an alkali residue if not completely rinsed away, which will chemically attack certain artifacts (the overglazed decoration on porcelain, for instance). ORVUS is a mild and free-rinsing surface active agent with a low pH of 6.3. Metal artifacts were systematically dewatered by submersion in acetone immediately after rinsing. The drying procedure was dependent upon the condition and material class of the artifact. The standard procedure employed was slow air drying on screens in the laboratory processing area.

All recovered materials were then catalogued according to the National Park Service Material Culture Data Base taxonomy for artifacts (see Appendix 1). All historic artifacts were coded as to group, class and material. All diagnostic artifacts such as glass and ceramics were dated based on stylistic and technical criteria according to the TPQ (terminus post quem, or the beginning date of manufacture). The TPQ provided a time frame for establishing the initial date after which the deposit had to have been laid down. During tabulation, the National Park Service code system was employed to the group, class and material level.

Subsequent to cataloging, all artifacts were then computer inventoried as a file in dBase III+, which provided sorted catalogues with totals and numbers for each excavated group of artifacts by units of stratigraphic association. The final inventory is reproduced on paper and appears as Appendix 1.

#### Artifact Analysis Results

A total of fifteen objects or fragments thereof were recovered from the test trenches excavated at the Tallman Island Water Pollution Control Plant. These items came from five decimal subdivisions of two contexts. No prehistoric artifacts were recovered.

Nine artifacts were fragments of glass. Although most of these fragments were too small to determine the date or shape of the original vessel, it is expected that the majority of them are fragments of glass containers, such as beer or soda bottles. One fragment recovered from the next to lowest stratum in Backhoe Trench 1 represents the base of a drinking glass. Three fragments from the same layer mend to form the base and most of the body of a rectangular container manufactured using a semi-automatic bottling machine, providing a TQP of 1881 (Lorrain 1968:42). It is possible that the beverage containers and drinking glass are related to the use of this location as a resort or beer garden during the first decade of the twentieth century and possibly earlier (Roberts et al. 1990:18).

Only one other artifact was found at the Tallman Island Water Pollution Control Plant Site that produced another TPQ, a wire nail (from Backhoe Trench 2, layer 2), the manufacture of which began in 1830 (Sickels 1972:67).



## RESULTS

Greenhouse Consultants performed Stage 1B archaeological testing at two locations within the Tallman Island Water Pollution Control Plant Expansion specified as having potential for preserving prehistoric and/or historic remains in the "Archaeological Sensitivity Evaluation for Eight Water Pollution Control Plants in New York City" (Roberts et al. 1990:19). Excavations were carried out through two backhoe trenches in order to expedite the removal of large quantities of landfill indicated by the soil borings performed by Warren George, Inc., during July to October 1989.

Analysis of the data obtained from these trenches indicates that proposed construction activities at the specified sites will not adversely affect any archaeological resources that may remain buried in the area. While evidence of cultural activity was recovered from both excavation units, no evidence was obtained indicating prehistoric or early historic activities in the test locations.

### Analysis of Backhoe Trench Units

Backhoe Trench 1, located in an area adjacent to the existing chlorine building within the footprint of the proposed dewatering building, was excavated to depths of 8.0 feet to 9.0 feet, well below the depth of proposed impact (approximately 5.5 feet). Four strata of fill were encountered at a depth of 0.3 feet down to the bottom of the trench. Cultural material recovered from these layers consisted of fragments of glass and one ceramic sherd.

Backhoe Trench 2, located in the area of the proposed pipes and electrical conduit, east of the existing aeration tanks, was excavated to a depth of 8.0 feet, below or contiguous with the depth of projected impact (8.0 feet). Two strata of fill were observed before the sides of the trench collapsed. The artifacts recovered from these layers consisted of fragments of glass, wire and plywood.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is our conclusion that no potentially significant cultural resources were found within the two mechanically excavated test trenches. Based on this subsurface testing, we further conclude that it is highly unlikely that any significant cultural resources will be impacted by the proposed expansion of the Tallman Island Water Pollution Control Plant. We recommend that no additional archaeological testing or mitigation is necessary at these locations.

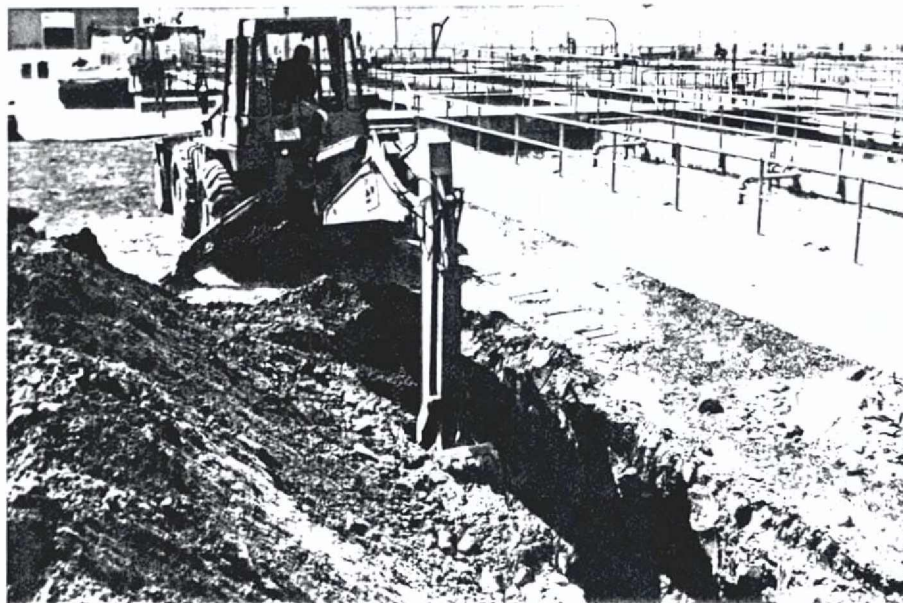


Plate 1                      Backhoe trenching   in progress of Backhoe Trench 2 looking southwest.

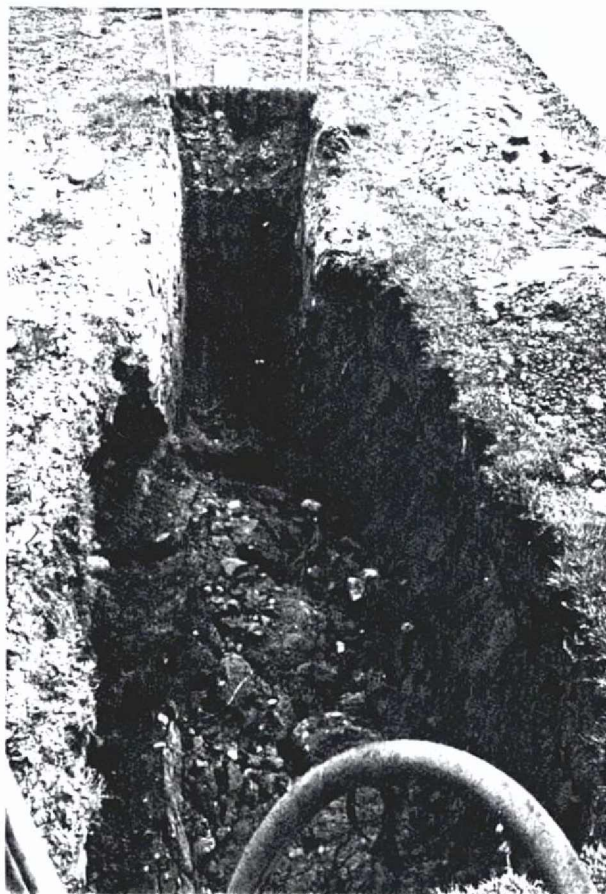


Plate 2                      Oblique view of Backhoe   Trench 2   looking   south showing collapse of portions of east and west sections.



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APPENDIX I  
THE COMPLETE ARTIFACT INVENTORY

including

Table 1. The National Park Service Material Culture Data Base  
Coding Chart.

Table 2. Coded Examples from the Data Base.

Table 3. Data Base Codes for Ambiguous Items.

GROUPS AND CLASSES

01 KITCHEN GROUP	09 ACTIVITIES GROUP
01 Dishes	01 Construction Tools
02 Containers	02 Farm Tools
03 Tableware	03 Leisure Activities
04 Kitchenware	04 Fishing Gear
	05 Nonkaolin Pipe
02 BONE GROUP	06 Smoking Accessories
01 Mammalia	07 Pottery Class
02 Aves	08 Storage Items
03 Reptilia	09 Ethnofaunal Zoological
04 Amphibia	10 Stable and Barn
05 Pisces	11 Miscellaneous Hardware
	12 Specialized Activities
03 ARCHITECTURAL GROUP	13 Military Objects
01 Window Glass	14 Housekeeping
02 Nails	15 Public Services
03 Spikes	16 Ethnobotanical
04 Door & Window Hardware	
05 Other Structural Hardware	10 PREHISTORIC GROUP
06 Construction Materials	01 Weapons
	02 Domestic
04 FURNITURE GROUP	03 Stone Working
01 Hardware	04 Wood Working
02 Materials	05 Digging Tools
03 Lighting Device	06 Other Fabricating or
04 Decorative Furnishings	Processing Tools
	07 Other General Utility
05 ARMS GROUP	Tools
01 Projectiles	08 Ceremonial & Ornamental
02 Cartridge Case	09 Miscellaneous Artifacts
03 Arms Accessories	
04 Gun Parts	98 UNSPECIFIED GROUP
06 CLOTHING GROUP	
01 Apparel	
02 Ornamentation	
03 Making and Repair	
04 Fasteners	
07 PERSONAL GROUP	
01 Coins	
02 Keys	
03 Writing Paraphernalia	
04 Grooming and Hygiene	
05 Personal Ornamentation	
06 Other Personal Items	
08 KAOLIN TOBACCO PIPE GROUP	
01 Kaolin Pipe Class	

MATERIALS - COMMON LIST (classified)

INORGANIC MATERIALS

CERAMIC

003 earthenware
004 ironstone/granite/whiteware
001 porcelain
002 stoneware
134 undifferentiated ceramic

CLAY

047 clay
062 kaolin
079 red clay

CONSTRUCTION

069 brick
071 cement
070 mortar
072 plaster

GLASS

078 glass
013 glass, milk
112 slag and clinker

METALS

029 aluminum
035 chrome
026 cuprous metal
028 ferrous alloy
021 gold
034 lead
096 mercury
019 silver
032 steel
005 tin
136 undifferentiated metal

STONE

129 agate
075 asbestos
133 chalk
052 chert
046 gravel
109 jet
038 limestone
041 marble
049 mica
058 obsidian
057 ochre
068 precious stone
053 quartz
054 quartzite
039 sandstone
044 shale
040 slate
060 steatite
043 schist
126 undifferentiated stone
042 granite

ORGANIC MATERIALS

CELLULOSE

115 bark
108 burlap
128 charcoal
092 cork
087 cotton
131 fiberboard/masonite
085 hemp
011 paper
006 wood
121 cellulose seeds/seed covering

CONSTRUCTION

093 asphalt
125 formica
101 linoleum
102 tar paper

WAX

076 wax
---------

GUM/RESIN

010 rubber, elastic
009 rubber, hard

PETROCHEMICALS

073 carbon
095 coal
048 graphite
116 tar

PROTEIN

118 chitin (arthropod, exoskeleton)
106 felt
122 flesh
016 hair
117 keratin (horns/fingernail/claws)
015 leather
107 silk
090 sponge, natural
105 wool

COMBINATION MATERIALS

017 bone
132 ivory
067 pearl
089 shell

SYNTHETIC MATERIALS

103 celluloid
088 nylon
008 plastic
077 soap
091 sponge, synthetic
104 synthetic

TEXTILE

151 undifferentiated textile
------------------------------

TABLE 1 The National Park Service Material Culture Database Coding Chart (partial listing).

## GROUPS AND CLASSES

01	KITCHEN	SAMPLE ARTIFACTS
01	Dishes	Historic fragments, plate, cup, salt cellar
02	Containers	Bottle glass fragments
03	Tableware	Eating Utensils
04	Kitchenware	Cooking Utensils, pot, kettle
02	BONE GROUP	
01	Mammalia	Mammal Bones
02	Aves	Bird Bones
03	Reptilia	Reptile Bones
04	Amphibia	Amphibian Bones
05	Pisces	Fish Bones
03	ARCHITECTURAL GROUP	
01	Window Glass	Window pane glass
02	Nails	Copper nails, iron nails
03	Spikes	Railroad spikes
04	Door & Window Hardware	Doorknob, door hinge
05	Other Structural Hardware	Pipe, fireplace tiles
06	Construction Materials	Brick, mortar, metal roofing
04	FURNITURE GROUP	
01	Hardware	Handle, drawer pull, latch
02	Materials	Stove parts, chair part, bed frame
03	Lighting device	Candlestick, lamp base
04	Decorative Furnishings	Flower pot, clock parts, vase
05	ARMS GROUP	
01	Projectiles	Shot, bullets
02	Cartridge Case	Cartridge
03	Arm Accessories	Gun flints, bullet molds, powder horn
04	Gun Parts	Pistol barrel, flint lock assembly
06	CLOTHING GROUP	
01	Apparel	Hat, coat, scarves, glove, shoe
02	Ornamentation	Beads, sequin, hatpin, feather
03	Making & Repair	Thimble, straight pin, straight scissors
04	Fasteners	Buttons, snaps, buckles, cuff links
07	PERSONAL GROUP	
01	Coins	Silver coins, copper coins
02	Keys	Door lock keys, padlock keys
03	Writing Paraphernalia	Quill, fountain pen nib, graphite pencil
04	Grooming & Hygiene	Hair brush, razor, mirror, tweezers
05	Personal Ornamentation	Jewelry, ribbon, ornamental comb
06	Other Personal Items	Pocket watch, key chain, pocket knife
08	KAOLIN PIPE GROUP	
01	Kaolin Pipe Class	Kaolin pipe fragments

## GROUPS AND CLASSES (cont'd)

09	ACTIVITIES GROUP	
01	Construction Tools	Axe head, drill bit, saw, paint brush
02	Farm Tools	Hoe, rake, plow blade
03	Leisure Activities	Marbles, jew's harp, doll parts
04	Fishing Gear	Fish hooks, sinkers, crab trap
05	Nonkaolin Pipe	Corncob pipe
06	Smoking Accessories	Snuff tin, tobacco tin, pipe cleaner
07	Pottery Class	(Indian) water jar, effigy pot
08	Storage Items	Crock, barrel staves, sacks
09	Ethnofaunal Zoological	Oyster shells, crab shells
10	Stable and Barn	Stirrup, horse shoe, rein, harness belt
11	Miscellaneous Hardware	Rope, bolts, nuts, washers, chain
12	Specialized Activities	Button blanks, metallurgic debris, saggers
13	Military Objects	Insignia, bayonets
14	Housekeeping	Broom, coat hanger, washboard
15	Public Services	Sewer pipe, water pipe
16	Ethnobotanical	
10	PREHISTORIC GROUP	
01	Weapons	Projectile point, atlatl hook
02	Domestic	Vessel, mortar, pestle
03	Stone Working	Hammerstone, baton, flake, core
04	Wood Working	Celt, grooved axe
05	Digging Tools	Hoe
06	Other Fabricating or Processing Tools	Drill, chisel, needle
07	Other General Utility Tools	Knife, prismatic blade, chopper
08	Ceremonial and Ornamental	Sheet, gorget, bead
09	Miscellaneous Artifacts	Function unknown

TABLE 2 Coded Examples from the Database.

THE ITEMS LISTED BELOW MAY BE AMBIGUOUS OR HARD TO PLACE IN A TAXONOMIC CATEGORY, BUT AS A CONVENTION, FOR INVENTORY PURPOSES, WILL BE CODED AS FOLLOWS:

Unident Wood Frags	98 00 006
Construction Wood, Wooden	
Pegs, Wood Planks	03 06 006
Twigs, Branches	09 16 006
Burned Wood (Partial)	Code as wood (above) and put "burnt wood" in the comments section.
Charcoal & all small frags of completely burnt wood	Code as charcoal
Coal	98 00 095
Slag, burned coal, vitrified metalworking or manufacturing by-products	98 00 112
Pantiles	03 06 003
Delft fireplace tiles, wall skirting, etc.	04 04 003
Porcelain bathroom tiles, other bathroom furniture (tub, toilet, etc)	03 05 001
Chamber Pot	04 02 ( )
Flower Pot	04 04 003
Teeth	02 ( ) 132
Fish scales	09 09 118
Coral	98 00 119
Eggshell	09 09 119
Seeds, Seed Covering	09 16 121
Schist (construction)	03 06 043
Schist (unident)	98 00 043
Red Brick	03 06 169
Yellow Brick	03 06 155
Linoleum	03 06 101
Metal Hardware (probably construction)	03 06 ( )
Furniture Hardware	04 01 ( )
Misc. hardware (other and unident), screws, car parts	09 11 ( )
Leather Shoe Parts	06 01 015
Unident Leather scraps	98 00 015
Leather Personal Items	07 ( ) 015

TABLE 3 Database Codes for Ambiguous Items.

ARTIFACT INVENTORY  
TALLMAN ISLAND  
BOROUGH OF QUEENS  
QUEENS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Context	Gp	Cl	Mat	Identity	Count	Weight	Comment	Reference	TPQ
1.04	01	01	004	Whiteware	1	0.00	Rim Annular		
1.04	01	02	078	Drinking glass	1	0.00	Base		
1.04	01	02	078	Container	3	0.00	Glass mends base and most of body rectangular Mold-made Semi-automatic	Lorrain 1968:42	1881
1.05	01	02	078	Container	1	0.00	Green glass		
1.05	04	04	078	Glass	1	0.00	Decorative?		
2.01	03	06	069	Brick/Tile	1	0.00			
2.01	01	02	078	Container	1	0.00	Glass lip		
2.01	01	02	078	Container	1	0.00	Glass		
2.01	03	06	069	Brick	1	140.90			
2.02	01	02	078	Glass	1	0.00	Yellowish		
2.02	03	02	028	Nail	1	0.00	Wire corroded	Sickels 1972:67	1830
2.02	04	04	003	Flowerpot	1	0.00			
2.02	09	09	089	Shell	0	10.50	Many fragments		
2.03	03	06	006	Wood	1	0.00	Plywood		
*** Total ***					15	151.40			

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APPENDIX II:  
SURVEY RECORD FORMS

SURVEY RECORD SHEET : Postholes, Auger holes, Shovel tests

PROJECT : 8 WATER POLLUTION CONTROL			COORDINATES : 24-25		
SITE : TALLMAN ISLAND WPCO	SUPERVISOR : WR	EXCAVATOR : JP	SCREENED ? 1/4" mesh	DATE : 5/7/90	TEST TYPE AND NO. : B.T. #1
STRATIGRAPHY :					
LAYER	DEPTH *	DESCRIPTION	COLOR	CULT. MAT.	NOTES
1	0 - 0.3'	TOPE + TAIL SILTY LOAM W. GRAVEL	10 YR 1/2 V. DK. BN	—	
2	0.3' - 0.7'	SAND	10 YR 2.5 YEL. BN	GLASS Filler CAP (NO. — SAVED)	
3	0.7' - 5.0'	SANDY SILT	10 YR 4/1 DK. BN	—	
4	5.0' - 7.0'	COMPACT CLT	2.5 Y 4/1 OLIVE BN	GLASS, CERAMIC WOOD PLANK W. PLUTONIUM (DISCARDED)	
5	7.0' - 9.0'	SLIGHTLY SANDY SILT	10 YR 2.5 DK. BN	glass	
6					
7					
8					
* Give depths relative to ground surface					
General Notes : (Note if cult. material retained, and if soil samples are taken.) Excavation stopped at 8.9'. Approx 40' x 3'					
Cross Refs :					
Plan		Photos 1 East, 1 North Rumors 35, 36			
Section		Notebook			

SURVEY RECORD SHEET : Postholes, Auger holes, Shovel tests

PROJECT : 8 WATER POLLUTION CONTROL			COORDINATES : 24-25		
SITE : TALLMAN ISLAND WPCO	SUPERVISOR : WR	EXCAVATOR : JP	SCREENED ? 1/4" mesh	DATE : 5/7/90 & 5/8/90	TEST TYPE AND NO. : B.T. #2
STRATIGRAPHY :					
LAYER	DEPTH *	DESCRIPTION	COLOR	CULT. MAT.	NOTES
2. 01	0 - 0.6'	Top + silty loam	10 YR 1/2 Gray - V. 3.5 BN	Brick	
2. 02	0.6' - 1.3'	Silty Sand	10 YR 1/2 13.0 BN	Nail, wood plank Brick, shell glass	
2. 03	1.3' - ?	Silty Sand	10 YR 2.5/3 Brown	A STEEL REIN. FRAMING ROD WAS ENCOUNTERED AT 1.5' - 1.6' DEPTH IN NORTHERN END	
4				Northern wall - about 50' depth	
5				WOOD PLANK - 8-7 Feet	
6				Found out North wall - 5 feet down.	
7				Building material Pieces of FRAMING ROD Found North end of trench about 1 foot depth	
8					
* Give depths relative to ground surface					
General Notes : (Note if cult. material retained, and if soil samples are taken.) Excavation stopped at 8.9'. WALLS COLLAPSED (East Wall - 5/7 & West wall 5/8) Approx. 60' x 3'					
Cross Refs :					
Plan		5/7/90 Photos Filmmers 33, 34, 35 / 5/8/90 (2 South, 1 West) / Filmmers 102 Notebook 515/90 (West)			
Section		36 (South wall)			



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APPENDIX III  
THE CONTEXT SYSTEM

## APPENDIX 3 THE CONTEXT SYSTEM

Complex strata were a possibility within the project area, so a field recording system that could encompass this situation as well as the large number of finds expected, was required. Another requirement of the system was that it be compatible with computerized data management. It was with these requirements in mind that the field recording system used in this project was selected.

The stratigraphic recording system used at the site was derived from recent developments in British archaeological field methodology. In this system, the term Context is used to represent the minimal unit of stratification. On this project, this was the smallest observable natural stratigraphic deposit within a grid unit. A unique 3-digit Context number was used to identify each Context observed and described in the field. Contexts representing parts or all of strata are treated in exactly the same manner as those representing parts of all of the features. Each Context is given its own identifying Context number when initially described. It can then be interpreted as a feature or part of a stratum at any stage during the excavation or post-excavation stratigraphic analysis. In the case of deposits with a series of lenses or layers within a feature, decimal subdivisions of the Context number were employed (i.e. 397.02), to stress the relationship of these deposits as part of the same feature. This system can easily be used on a site where excavation by arbitrary stratigraphic units has been deemed necessary. The context was also used on this project to record the location of surface finds, both in relatively large areas and individually located artifacts.

The primary record of each Context is the Context or Survey Recording Sheet. Most of these forms should be self-explanatory. All the various slots and boxes were filled in immediately with the appropriate information by the excavator. Particular attention was paid to the accurate recording of the soil texture and inclusions, the Munsell color reading, and the various stratigraphic inter-relationships.

There are a number of advantages in the Context recording system. The use of only one number register to identify all varieties of soil deposits eliminates the premature interpretation of deposits that was necessary with many other recording systems. It is often difficult, if not impossible, to classify soil deposits when they are initially uncovered. Using the Context system, deposits are simply assigned Context numbers and excavated. They can be interpreted or re-interpreted at any time during or after their excavation without any need to change their identifying Context number. This leads directly to the Context system's second advantage. There is no possibility of confusing numbers issued from one register with these from any others if there is only one number register used to record and identify soil

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deposits. Another advantage is derived from using this single identifying number not only for the soil deposits and its description, but also for all the artifacts from the deposit during all stages of their processing, analysis and curation. One further advantage is the ability to expand the system. The Context numbers are a potentially infinite sequence, so any size site or survey can be encompassed. The final advantage present here is that the Context system is a digital recording system. As such, it is immediately adaptable for computer entry and numerical data sorting.