

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN
BARTOSH PARK, CITY OF RIVER FALLS, RIVER FALLS TOWNSHIP,
PIERCE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

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Work Conducted Under the Auspices of
the U.S. Department of Agriculture
Soil Conservation Service, Madison

September, 1981

ABSTRACT

On September 15, 1981, an archaeological survey was conducted by the author at the site of proposed improvements in Bartosh Park, City of River Falls, River Falls Township, Pierce County, Wisconsin. Examination of the project area by pedestrian reconnaissance produced no evidence of prehistoric or historic sites within the limits of the project. An archives and records search yielded similar negative results. Based on the negative results of this survey, it is recommended that the proposed project be allowed to proceed.

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INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological survey conducted by the author at the site of proposed improvements to Bartosh Park, City of River Falls, River Falls Township, Pierce County, Wisconsin (Figs. 1 and 2). The exact location of the project is the SE $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, and NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 1, T27N, R19W (Fig. 3). The proposed improvements will consist of the construction of a water control structure or a series of structures within a creek valley in the park. The goal of the project is to slow the water flow during periods of heavy runoff to halt erosion of the valley. In addition, an existing structure in the valley may be modified or replaced.

This study was commissioned by the United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service in order to determine whether the proposed improvements will have any adverse impact upon prehistoric or historic sites in the project area. The Principal Investigator for the survey is Robert J. Barth, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Fieldwork on the survey was conducted on September 15, 1981, by the author and one field assistant.

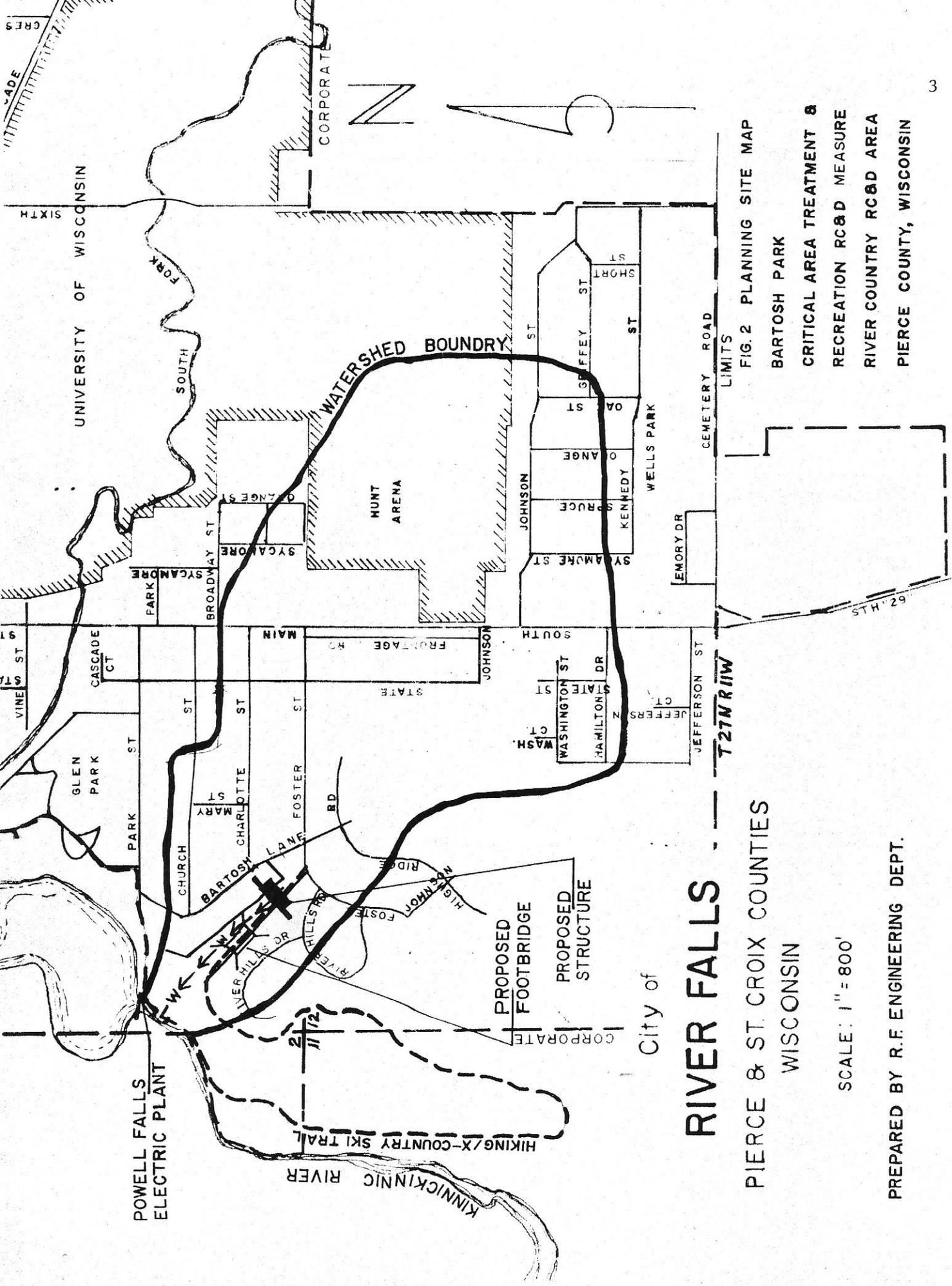
PHYSICAL SETTING

The project area is located in Bartosh Park on the southwest side of the City of River Falls, Wisconsin. The River Falls area lies within the Western Upland Geographical Province (Martin, 1965:Fig. 10). Most of this region is a thoroughly dissected upland (Martin, 1965:42). The average elevation above sea level is 1100 feet in Pierce County. The portion of the Western Upland in which the project area is located is underlain by the belt of Lower Magnesian Limestone. This is covered, in sections, by glacial drift. The soil types in the project area are Waukesha loam and Waukesha fine sandy loam (Whitson et al., 1930).

The creek valley itself is characterized by relatively steep sides. The floor



Figure 1. Location of the Project in Wisconsin.



RIVER FALLS

PIERCE & ST. CROIX COUNTIES
WISCONSIN

SCALE: 1" = 800'

PREPARED BY R.F. ENGINEERING DEPT.

FIG. 2 PLANNING SITE MAP

- BARTOSH PARK
- CRITICAL AREA TREATMENT &
- RECREATION RC&D MEASURE
- RIVER COUNTRY RC&D AREA
- PIERCE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

3W/4 RIVER FALLS 15' QUADRANGLE

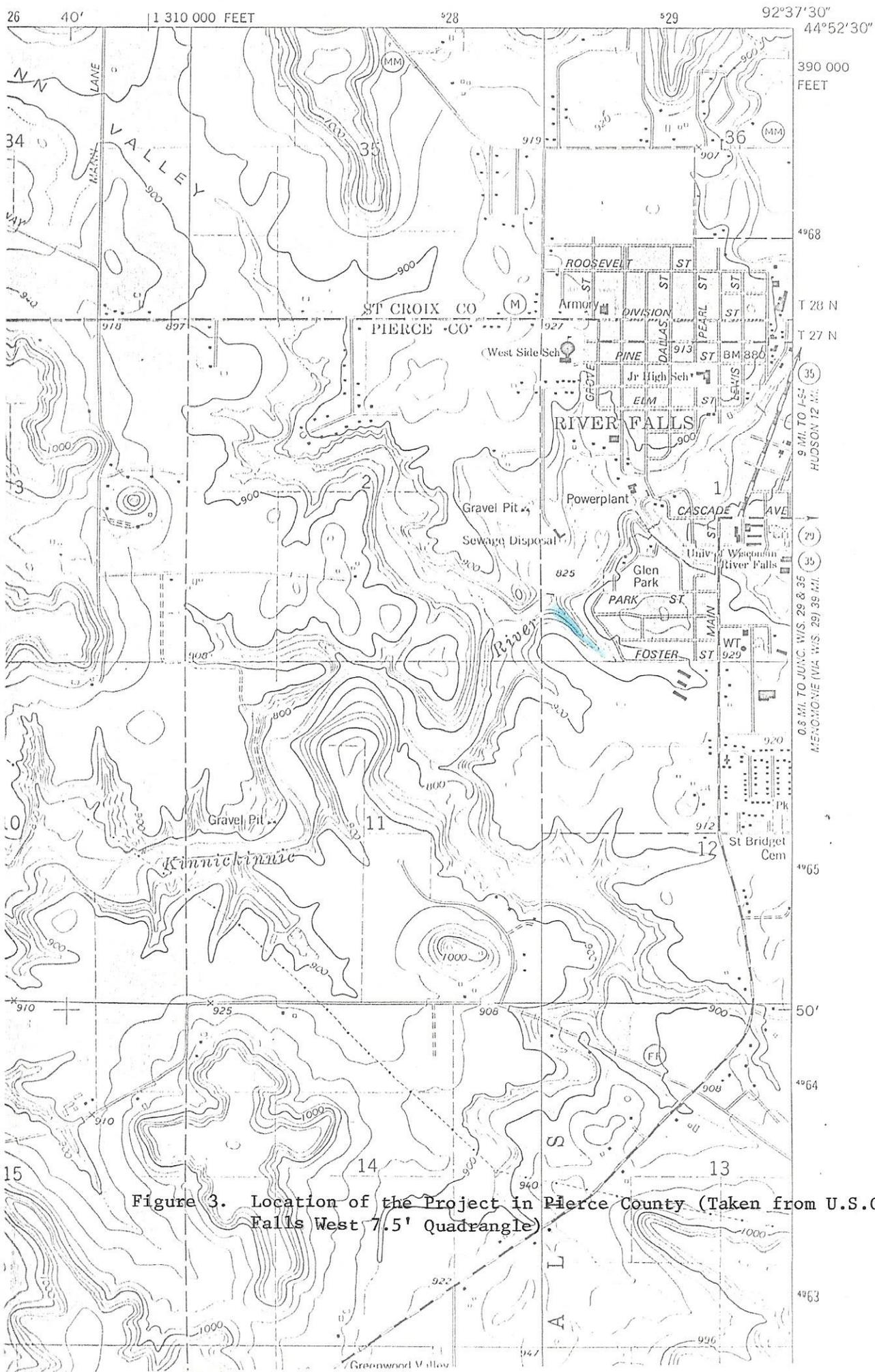


Figure 3. Location of the Project in Pierce County (Taken from U.S.G.S. River Falls West 7.5' Quadrangle)

of the valley lies approximately 60 feet below the surrounding upland. In many places, the sides of the valley are eroded and the floor of the valley is littered by fallen trees and refuse.

The General Land Office Survey records indicate that the historic vegetation of the Bartosh Park area was oak openings (Finley, 1976). At the present time, the park area is wooded.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

Prior to the commencement of fieldwork on the survey, a records and archives search was conducted in order to determine whether any prehistoric or historic sites had been reported for the project area. The initial data sources consulted were the Wisconsin Archeological Site Codification File, housed at the Office of the State Archeologist, Madison, and the Historic Preservation Inventory File, housed at the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Archeological Site Codification File indicated that only one site, Pi-44, had reported for River Falls Township. This site is located several miles southwest of the City of River Falls. The Historic Preservation Inventory File indicated that no structures designated as having historical or architectural significance had been reported for the project area.

An additional unpublished data source consulted was the Charles E. Brown manuscript collection, housed at the Office of the State Archeologist, Madison. This source contained no reports of any prehistoric sites or artifacts from the project area.

Published data sources consulted included The Wisconsin Archeologist, The Wisconsin Magazine of History, The Wisconsin Historical Collections, and county and regional histories. A search of these records produced no results.

In summary, the records and archives search did not indicate the presence

of any archaeological sites within the limits of the project area.

METHODS

Because the proposed improvements will only affect the creek valley itself and not the surrounding area, survey was confined to the valley. Survey began at the lower end of the valley and proceeded upstream to the existing water control structure. A clean profile was trowelled on the eroded sides of the valley and the face was examined for the presence of cultural materials and subsurface cultural features. The material littering the floor of the valley was also examined for the presence of historic and prehistoric materials.

RESULTS

The eroded sites of the valley produced no prehistoric cultural materials or evidence of subsurface cultural features. Some modern debris was eroding from the valley sides, suggesting refuse disposal along the sides of the valley. The material from the valley floor also appeared to be from within the last 20 to 30 years and consisted of such items as automobile parts, beer and pop bottle fragments, broken tableware, and food wrappers. All of the evidence suggests that the valley was used in recent times for refuse disposal. No evidence of prehistoric or historic material was recovered. A small sample of the debris on the valley floor was collected and will be curated at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

IMPACT

Due to the fact that the proposed improvements will be confined to the valley itself and because the survey of the areas to be affected revealed no indications of any archaeological sites, the proposed project will have no adverse impact on the cultural resources of the River Falls area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the negative results of this survey, it is recommended that the proposed improvements to Bartosh Park be allowed to proceed.

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