

MUSEUM OF NEW MEXICO

OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES

**BLUEBERRY HILL ROAD ARCHAEOLOGICAL TESTING: A PLAN FOR TEST
EXCAVATIONS AT NINETEEN SITES IN TAOS COUNTY, NEW MEXICO**

Jeffrey L. Boyer

Submitted by Timothy D. Maxwell
Principal Investigator

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INTRODUCTION

An archaeological survey along Blueberry Hill Road west of Taos, Taos County, New Mexico recorded 22 sites (Boyer 1994). Most of these sites are located on private land, although three sites are on land owned by the pueblo of Taos, and one site, an acequia, crosses private and Pueblo lands. The survey was conducted for the county of Taos, which plans to widen and realign Blueberry Hill Road. It was conducted at the request of Lawrence Ortega and Associates, Consulting Engineers, who are responsible for designing the reconstruction project for the county. Of the 22 sites, 19 extend into the Blueberry Hill Road project limits. Each of the sites is expected to provide information on Taos Valley history or prehistory. However, the potential of the portion of each site found within the project limits to contribute such information is not known. Consequently, a program of archaeological testing was recommended to determine the nature, extent, and data potential of the portions of the 19 sites within project limits. After consultations between Lawrence Ortega and Associates, the county of Taos, the pueblo of Taos, the USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and the New Mexico Historic Preservation Division (HPD), Lawrence Ortega and Associates requested that the Office of Archaeological Studies (OAS), Museum of New Mexico prepare a plan for archaeological test excavations.

This document will be submitted to Lawrence Ortega and Associates, the county of Taos, the pueblo of Taos, the BIA, and the HPD in fulfillment of that request. It presents a plan for archaeological testing at the 19 sites. Testing is designed to reveal whether subsurface cultural features or deposits of cultural material are present within project limits at each site location. Testing is also designed to define the horizontal extent and vertical depth of subsurface features and deposits, to define the nature of subsurface cultural and natural stratigraphy, and to evaluate the data potential of the portions of sites within project limits. Based on the results of testing, recommendations can be made concerning the need for data recovery investigations at each site.

The Blueberry Hill Road project area runs through unplatted lands in T25N and T26N, R12E and R13E (NMPM), west of the town of Taos, New Mexico. It starts at the planned new intersection of Blueberry Hill Road and US 64 approximately 289.5 m (950 ft) west of the intersection of US 64 and NM 522 (Fig. 1a). It ends at the planned new intersection of Blueberry Hill Road and NM 240 (Ranchitos Road) approximately 128 m (420 ft) west of the existing intersection of these two roads (Fig. 1b). For much of its length, the road parallels the edge of a gravel terrace overlooking the east side of the broad Arroyo Seco floodplain. Eighteen of the 19 sites included in this testing project are located along this portion of the road. Near its southern end, the floodplain narrows and the terrace edge shifts to the west away from the road. Only one site was recorded along this portion of the road; it is on the edge of a terrace overlooking the Rio Pueblo floodplain at the southern end of the project area. Figures 1a and 1b, in the appendix, shows the project location on the USGS Taos and Los Cordovas, New Mexico 7.5' quadrangles.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

The following site descriptions are modified from the survey report (Boyer 1994). They proceed from north to south. Site locations are shown in Figures 1a and 1b, in the appendix. Table 1, also in the appendix, lists the legal and UTM locations, land ownership status, and project station numbers for the sites. Site maps are included with Laboratory of Anthropology Site Survey and Site Record Forms in the appendix.

LA 53680

Nelson (1986) described LA 53680 as a sherd and lithic artifact scatter 120 m long north-south by 50 m wide east-west located near the north end of Blueberry Hill Road at the edge of the terrace. The ceramic assemblage was dominated by Taos Black-on-white and Taos Gray incised. Based on these types, he dated the site to the Valdez phase. Basalt was the predominant lithic material. Nelson observed a quartzite mano fragment and a sandstone metate fragment. He did not observe any features.

When I revisited the site during the survey, I found that the highest density of surface artifacts occurs in the vicinity of a low, circular mound. The mound is about 24 m in diameter and less than .5 m high and has a higher surface density of small gravels. It may represent the remains of an adobe pueblo. The mound just extends into project limits along its east side. No other features were observed. I found the artifact assemblage as Nelson described it, although I was not able to relocate specific artifacts. The artifact scatter is present on both sides of the road.

The landowner is building a house within the site; as a consequence, a short driveway and parking area has been bladed just south of the low mound. The mound has not been disturbed.

LA 102299

LA 102299 consists of a small scatter of chipped stone artifacts and sherds near the edge of the terrace on the west side of the road. The most common artifacts are basalt core flakes, of which 11 were observed. Three obsidian core flakes and one obsidian biface fragment were observed. One basalt uniface was observed, as was a Pedernal chert core flake. None of the chipped stone artifacts had cortex. The sherds include two Taos Gray plain sherds and one sherd with white slip but no paint. No features were observed. Artifacts are scattered over an area about 30 m long northeast-southwest by 20 m wide northwest-southeast. Most of the artifacts are concentrated in an area about 10 m by 12 m in the center of the site. Based on the ceramic assemblage, the site may date to either the Valdez or the Pot Creek phase.

LA 53681

Nelson (1986) described LA 53681 as a large site consisting of three artifact "clusters" on the west side of the road. The site was 400 m long north-south by 70 m wide east-west. Cluster C1, the northernmost, was a "20 m by 20 m concentration of tan clayish (adobe?) soil, gravel, and cobbles." Artifacts observed around

the possible adobe mound included a basalt core, two "choppers," a slab metate fragment, and fragments of tabular basalt. The ceramic assemblage included Taos Gray plain and incised sherds and unidentifiable white ware sherds. Cluster C2 consisted of an adobe mound 23 m by 32 m by .5 m high identifiable by tan, clayish soil with more gravels and cobbles than the surrounding "reddish sandy" soil. The ceramic assemblage included Taos Black-on-white and Gray plain sherds. Cluster C3, the southernmost, was an adobe mound 23 m by 13 m with a lower surface density than the other clusters. Ceramics were limited to Taos Gray plain sherds. Other artifacts included a mano fragment, a chopper, and an obsidian flake. Based on the sherds, particularly from C2, Nelson assigned a Valdez-phase date to the site.

When I revisited the site, I found clusters C1 and C3 essentially intact as Nelson described them. Cluster C1 is a low adobe mound 17 m north-south by 15 m east-west, surrounded by a high-density artifact scatter. It is outside project limits. A basalt Pueblo side-notched projectile point was collected from the site surface near cluster C1. Cluster C3 is a low adobe mound 19 m north-south by 13 m east-west, also outside project limits. In the approximate center of the site is an area about 88 m long north-south by 65 m wide east-west that has been bladed since Nelson recorded the site. This area includes the location of Nelson's cluster C2, the largest adobe mound recorded on the site. The mound is no longer visible. However, inspection of the area showed that only about 10 to 15 cm of soil was moved by blading and many artifacts are present in the area. In addition, artifacts are present in a low slope-cut in the bladed area just south of the location of C2. The small amount of soil apparently removed by blading and the presence of numerous artifacts in the recorded location of C2 suggest that the mound was only minimally disturbed by blading and that subsurface remains of the pueblo probably represented by the mound are likely still present. The mound location as described by Nelson in cluster C2 just extends into project limits. The artifact scatter at LA 53681 is present on both sides of Blueberry Hill Road, although no surface evidence of structural remains or other features was observed on the east side of the road.

LA 53682

Nelson (1986) described LA 53682 as consisting of a "25 by 16 m soil anomaly, possibly an adobe mound" with an associated sherd and lithic artifact scatter. Adjacent to the possible mound was a "possible depression" 10 m by 10 m and surrounded by a low berm. Ceramic types observed included Santa Fe Black-on-white and Taos Gray plain. On the basis of the ceramics, Nelson dated the site to the Pot Creek phase.

On revisiting the site, I found a low adobe mound 15 m long east-west by 11 m wide north-south. The mound appears to be cut by the existing road. I saw no clear evidence of a depression. The associated artifact scatter is 68 m in diameter and is present on both sides of Blueberry Hill Road. The mound is within project limits, as is a portion of the artifact scatter on both sides of the road.

LA 102300

LA 102300 consists of four concentrations of chipped stone and ceramic artifacts in an area 90 m long north-south by 40 m wide east-west. Concentration 1 is 20 m long by 6 m wide. Five basalt core flakes and two Taos Black-on-white sherds were observed. Concentration 2 is 18 m long by 16 m wide. One Taos Black-on-white sherd and one Taos Gray sherd were observed. One rhyolite core flake, one red chert biface fragment, one Pedernal(?) chert core flake, and 21 basalt core flakes were also observed. Concentration 3 is

9 m long by 5.5 m wide. One Taos Gray sherd and five basalt core flakes were observed. Concentration 4 is 12 m long by 6 m wide. Six basalt core flakes, one obsidian core flake, one obsidian biface flake, and one chert core flake were observed. Based on the ceramic types observed, the site dates to the Valdez phase.

Concentrations 1, 2, and 4 are on the west side of Blueberry Hill Road; Concentration 3 is on the east side. Portions of Concentrations 1, 2, and 4 are within project limits and Concentration 3 is within project limits.

LA 102301

LA 102301 consists of four concentrations of chipped stone artifacts in an area 86 m long north-south by 45 m wide east-west. Concentration 1 is 26 m long by 13 m wide. Four obsidian core flakes and 10 basalt core flakes were observed. Concentration 2 is 17 m long by 11 m wide. Five basalt core flakes were observed. Concentration 3 is 15 m long by 9 m wide. Two obsidian core flakes, one chert (Pedernal?) core flake, one chert biface fragment that may be a projectile point base, and four basalt core flakes were observed. Concentration 4 is 15 m long by 14 m wide. One chert core flake, eight basalt core flakes, and a basalt biface were observed. Between Concentrations 3 and 4 on the east side of the Acequia de Juan Manuel (LA 102681) is a large side fragment of a deep trough metate. The metate fragment is quartzitic sandstone. It is 37 cm long, 19 cm wide, and 13 cm thick. The outer edge shows no evidence of preparation or shaping by pecking or grinding. The trough is about 9 cm deep and ground very smooth. The top surface is also ground.

Concentrations 1 and 2 are on the west side of Blueberry Hill Road, while Concentrations 3 and 4 are on the east side. Portions of all four concentrations are within project limits.

LA 102302

LA 102302 is a very large scatter of sherds and chipped stone artifacts stretching from the south side of Eototo Road to south of Senda Alegre Road. The site, which is 213 m long north-south by 88 m wide east-west, is found on both sides of Blueberry Hill Road. Unlike LA 102300 and 102301, which are primarily lithic artifact scatters, LA 102302 includes a great many sherds. In this, it resembles the structural sites in the project area, suggesting that LA 102302 is also a structural site. One possible structural area was observed. An area about 40 m long by 9 m wide along the west side of Blueberry Hill Road is the area within the site with the highest surface artifact density. Artifacts were observed on rodent backdirt piles, suggesting subsurface deposits are present. There may be a very low mound in this area, although an adobe mound such as those at other project area sites is not present. Also, a very shallow swale at the north edge of this area may indicate a pithouse location. This is very speculative. The fact that sherds are uniformly present across the site suggests that there may be other structural areas on the site, but such were not definable at the survey level of investigation. The possible structural area is cut by the west side of Blueberry Hill Road. This area is within the Blueberry Hill Road project limits, as is an artifact concentration. Based on the presence of Taos Black-on-white and Taos Gray incised sherds, the site probably dates to the Valdez phase.

LA 102303

LA 102303 consists of an adobe roomblock, a possible pithouse, and two sherd and lithic artifact concentrations. The roomblock, located on the east side of the site, is a low adobe mound 17 m north-south by 9 m east-west. It is less than .5 m high on the west (uphill) side and .5 to 1 m high on the east side. An electric transmission line passes through the site; a two-pole structure is located in the pueblo roomblock. The probable pithouse is a shallow depression located in the north-central part of the site. The depression is about 8 m in diameter. The two artifact concentrations are located on the west side of the site. The northern artifact concentration is 18 m long by 12 m wide and extends slightly into project limits on its west side. The southern artifact concentration is 17 m long by 14 m wide and also extends slightly into project limits on its western side. Based on the presence of Taos Black-on-white and Taos Gray incised sherds, the site probably dates to the Valdez phase.

LA 102304

LA 102304 consists of a large sherd and lithic artifact scatter on both sides of Blueberry Hill Road. On the west side of the road is a possible very low adobe mound. The mound is approximately 7 m long north-south by 3 m wide east-west and less than .25 m high. A possible mano fragment and fragments of chipped tabular basalt are present on the west side of the mound. East of the road opposite the mound is an area about 6 m wide by 12 m long with relatively high surface gravels when compared to surrounding soil. This may relate to melted adobe from the mound. East of this gravel area is a semi-circular eroded area 10 m long by 7 m wide and .3 to .4 m deep. A hearth consisting of nine pieces of fire-cracked rock and ash-stained soil is eroding from the west side of this area. Based on the presence of Taos Black-on-white and Taos Gray incised sherds, the site probably dates to the Valdez phase.

The adobe mound is within project limits; the features on the east side of Blueberry Hill Road are not within project limits. The site touches the north side of LA 53683. I chose to record it separately rather than as a part of LA 53683 because of substantial changes at LA 53683 since Nelson recorded it in 1986. I didn't want to confuse things by adding size and features to LA 53683 while changing its description due to development.

LA 53683

Nelson's (1986) description of LA 53683 states, "An 8 by 8 meter rectangular depression with soil mounded up around the depression's edge suggests a pithouse. The mounding creates an east facing situation looking down into a north-south oriented ephemeral drainage." This mound and depression was located on the west side of Blueberry Hill Road. In the road cut on the east side of the mound was a charcoal lens 16 m long and 5 cm thick. Burned wood fragments, charcoal, charcoal-stained soil and artifacts were observed in the road cut and lens. The ceramic assemblage included Taos Black-on-white, Taos Gray incised, and unidentified painted sherds. Nelson assigned the site to the Valdez phase.

In the late spring of 1993, prior to beginning the survey, I visited LA 53683. My opinion was that the structural area consisted of an adobe mound with a central depression, suggesting a pueblo mound. When I

revisited the site during this survey, I found that an area about 42 m long north-south by 19 m wide east-west had been bladed. This area includes the structural area of the site. An 8 ft ("single-wide") by 42 ft mobile home had been placed on the area where Nelson recorded the depression and mound. The mobile home has since been removed. Blading removed less than 20 cm of soil and the low mound is still discernable. Many artifacts are still visible on the surface of the bladed area. The fact that the mound is still discernable, the presence of many surface artifacts, and the presence of artifacts in the road cut suggest that significant subsurface remains are present in the bladed structural area of the site. This area is within project limits.

I also found that the associated sherd and lithic artifact scatter is larger than recorded by Nelson. The scatter is 156 m long north-south by 91 m wide east-west. Near the south end of the artifact scatter is a basalt trough metate fragment.

LA 102305

LA 102305 consists of a large sherd and lithic artifact scatter 186 m long north-south by 67 m wide east-west. Most of the artifacts are on the west side of Blueberry Hill Road, although some were observed east of the road. The highest surface artifact density occurs in a strip about 2 m wide running for about 130 m long the west side of the western right-of-way fence. For much of this length, the strip is slightly mounded (< .5 m). Since it is difficult to imagine a pueblo 130 m long but less than 2 m wide, it seems unlikely that this is a pueblo mound. Signs indicate that a natural gas pipeline is present on the east side of the western right-of-way fence. It seems possible that the long mound is back dirt from the pipeline trench. If so, then subsurface remains are present. At the north end of the long mound is a low mound about 3 m long east-west by 2 m side north-south. This mound has very high surface artifact density. Based on the presence of Taos Black-on-white and Taos Gray incised, the site probably dates to the Valdez phase. One other small artifact scatter was observed in the southwest part of the site and others are probably present. A basalt metate fragment was observed near the south end of the site. The northern third of the long, low mound and the small mound are within project limits.

LA 102306

LA 102306 consists of a large artifact scatter, a small adobe pueblo mound, and a concentration of surface artifacts. The mound is about 12 m east-west by 14 m north-south and .5 to .75 m high. It is located outside project limits near the east end of the site. Artifacts are fairly closely concentrated around it and surface artifact density, especially immediately south of the mound, is high. The other artifact concentration is an area about 18 m long north-south by 12 m wide east-west. No evidence of structural remains is present. The area is along the existing right-of-way fence within project limits. The most common artifacts in the concentration are Taos Black-on-white and Taos Gray sherds. Basalt flakes are present. Basalt is the most common lithic material on site, although chert and obsidian are present in small quantities. The site probably extends across the road, although artifacts were not observed there.

LA 102307

LA 102307 consists of an adobe pueblo mound and an associated artifact scatter on the east side of

Blueberry Hill Road. The mound is about 26 m north-south by 32 m east-west and is .5 to 1 m high, with the highest part on the eastern side of the mound. In the approximate center of the mound is a depression about 10 m in diameter. This is large for a pithouse; it may be a kiva. A white chert Pueblo side-notched projectile point was collected from the surface of the mound. The associated artifact scatter is 69 m long north-south by 49 m wide east-west. Based on the presence of Taos Black-on-white and Taos Gray sherds, the site probably dates to the Valdez phase. The western half of the mound and the western edge of the depression are within project limits, as is part of the artifact scatter.

LA 53684

Nelson (1986) described LA 53684 as an L-shaped adobe mound and a large associated artifact scatter. The mound measured 36 m long by 20 m wide and was 50 cm tall. He noted an ceramic assemblage consisting of Taos Gray smoothed corrugated, incised, and plain, and probable Taos Black-on-white sherds. Based on these ceramic types, Nelson assigned the site to the Valdez phase. Lithic artifact materials included basalt, chalcedony, and Pedernal chert, with basalt being predominant.

Heuett (1992) described the site as consisting of a large adobe mound, a smaller adobe mound, and the artifact scatter. Feature 1, which corresponds to Nelson's mound, consisted of an irregular adobe mound .5 m tall covering 900 square meters. She states that the structure may have had a rubble or volcanic rock foundation. Feature 2 consisted of a smaller, rectangular, adobe mound located southwest of the larger mound.

When I revisited LA 53684 during the survey, I found the large mound recorded by Nelson and Heuett and the small mound recorded by Heuett. The large mound, Heuett's Feature 1, is 58 m long north-south by 24 wide east-west with a possible eastern extension 10 m wide by 10 m long. The top of the main portion of the mound is about 15 m wide by 23 m long. At its highest point, the mound is about 1.2 m tall on its western side and .6 to .75 m tall elsewhere. This height suggests that the mound may have been multi-storied. The area of highest artifact density is on the southeast side of the mound. Heuett's Feature 2 consists of a small, L-shaped adobe mound located southwest of the large mound. Its two arms are each about 10 m long and the mound is less than .5 m tall.

In addition to these features, I observed a large artifact concentration 73 m long east-west by 40 m wide north-south located at the northern end of the site. The concentration is found on both sides of Blueberry Hill Road. On the west side of the road, in the approximate center of the concentration is a possible small adobe mound about 15 m long north-south by 9 m wide east-west. It appears to be cut by the existing road.

The small mound at the northern end of the site and part of the artifact scatter are within project limits. It should be noted that artifact density on the east side of Blueberry Hill Road is very low relative to that on the west side.

LA 53686

Nelson (1986) observed an adobe mound at LA 53686, as well as two cobble feature identified as possible storage cists. The mound was 20 m long by 9 m wide with possible, short, north-south and east-west cobble alignments. It was located along a historic two-track road in the approximate center of the site. The two "cists"

were located near the edge of the terrace overlooking the Arroyo Seco. The northern cist consisted of about 30 cobbles aligned in three short lines, two running northeast-southwest and one running northwest-southeast. He noted a slight depression in the center of the alignments. The southern cist consisted of about 20 cobble near another slight depression. Only four sherds, three Taos Gray plain and one Taos Black-on-white, were found in the vicinity of the features. Ceramics in the general artifact scatter included Taos Black-on-white and Taos Gray incised, characteristic of the Valdez phase. Mano and metate fragments were observed near the mound.

Heuett (1992) revisited the site. She described the mound as 9 m long by 3 m wide and consisting of three rooms. It is not clear how she determined the number of rooms represented at the mound, although she stated that the rooms were filled with adobe and rock wall rubble. Heuett also observed the two possible cists. The northern feature consisted of "the remains of an adobe and cobble wall outline (4.0 m long by 2.5 m wide) with a central depression approximately 30 cm deep." The southern feature was "also an adobe cobble wall outline," was 1 m by 2 m with a shallow central depression. Both features appeared to Heuett to have been vandalized.

When I revisited the site during the survey, I found the features observed by Nelson and Heuett. The mound is about 25 m long north-south by 10 m wide east-west. Although cobbles are present on the south end of the mound, alignments representing rooms in the mound are not clearly evident. Approximately the size observed by Nelson, the mound is considerably larger than observed by Heuett. The "cists" are present as Nelson described them. Adobe cobble wall outlines as described by Heuett were not observed. Central depressions were not observed, although the cobble alignments appear to form C-shaped features. The relative paucity of associated surface artifacts makes defining the features as cultural in origin very problematic. Only excavation can confirm that the features are cultural.

The features are beyond project limits on the west side of Blueberry Hill Road. While the artifact scatter is present on both sides of the road, surface artifact density within project limits is very low.

LA 53687

Nelson (1986) described LA 53687 as consisting of a pithouse depression and an associated artifact scatter. The depression was irregularly-shaped and about 7 m in diameter. Cobbles were observed near the depression but no alignment could be defined. A second depression, located near the south end of the site was also recorded. It measured 3 to 4 m in diameter and was 20 cm deep. Between the depressions were two cobble concentrations of unknown origin or function. The ceramic assemblage consisted of Taos Gray plain and unidentified painted sherds, followed by Taos Gray incised and two Taos Black-on-white sherds. On that basis, Nelson assigned the site to the Valdez phase. Lithic materials included cherts and basalt. One metate fragment was observed.

Heuett (1992) visited the site but, as discussed above, mistakenly used the number LA 53687 to refer to another site to the north. Consequently, she used the number LA 87853 to refer to this site, which Nelson identified as LA 53687. Above, I suggested that the number LA 87853 be given to the site immediately south of LA 53686. Consequently, the number LA 53687 should be used to identify this site, as Nelson originally did when recording the site. Part of the confusion on Heuett's part may have been that, when she visited this site, she did not see the features that Nelson recorded. She describes the site as an artifact scatter with no visible features. She observed both Taos and Santa Fe Black-on-white sherds with Taos Gray plain sherds.

When I visited the site during the survey, I found the shallow depression recorded by Nelson. The depression, which is located in the approximate center of the site, is 7 to 8 m in diameter and less than .5 m deep. There is a small cobble pile on the northeast side representing rocks removed from the pithouse during its construction. Along the east side of the depression is a "disturbed area" 15 m long east-west by 12 m wide north-south. The soil in this area is grayer in color and contains more gravel than the surrounding soil. It supports less vegetation than the surrounding area, although the sagebrush is taller. This area and the pithouse depression correspond to the area of highest surface artifact density. It is my opinion that the disturbed area represents an adobe pueblo mound.

The small depression, recorded by Nelson, is located on the point of a ridge at the south end of the site. It is 3 to 4 m in diameter and .25 m deep. Artifacts are present around it but not in high numbers. Two cobble concentrations are present between the depressions. Like Nelson, I cannot define their origin or function.

In addition to the prehistoric features and artifacts, LA 53687 has a historic component. On a point of a ridge at the north end of the site is a low adobe mound. The mound is 9 m long east-west by 8 m wide north-south. Artifacts present on the surface of the mound and the surrounding artifact concentration include micaceous, polished black, and Euroamerican white ware sherds, and flakes of Pedernal chert, obsidian, and basalt. There are several late historic condensed milk cans and lock-and-lap-seam cans on the southeast side of the mound. The mound probably represents a historic homestead. The cans date to the 20th century; the other artifacts could date to the 19th or 20th centuries.

The features recorded at LA 53687 are located outside project limits on the west side of Blueberry Hill Road. The artifact scatter associated with LA 53687 extends to the east side of the road. However, surface artifact density within project limits is very low.

LA 53688

Nelson (1986) describes LA 53688 as consisting of two adobe mounds and three artifact "clusters" on the west side of Blueberry Hill Road. The northern mound, the largest, was L-shaped, 18 m long by 14 m wide by .5 m tall. The two arms were 5 m across. Rodent holes in the mound revealed charcoal and small mammal bones. Sherds associated with the mound included San Juan Red and Taos Black-on-white. Other artifacts included basalt flakes and a fragment of tabular sandstone. The southern mound, located about 40 m south of the larger mound, was 10 m long by 6 m wide by .25 m tall. Kapo Black sherds were present on the mound. Mano and metate fragments were also present. Cluster 1, located at the northern end of the site, measured 20 m long by 8 m wide and consisted of a concentration fire-cracked rocks and unidentified, painted, prehistoric sherds. Cluster 2, located between the large mound and Cluster 1, was 11 m long by 6 m wide. It consisted of a concentration of fire-cracked rocks, unidentified brown sherds, a Vadito Micaceous sherd, and two mano fragments. Cluster 3 was located in "the work area" between the two adobe mounds. It was a scatter of fire-cracked rocks, Taos Gray plain sherds, and a glaze jar sherd. How Nelson defined "the work area" is not clear. Based on the ceramic assemblage, Nelson assigned the prehistoric component to the Valdez phase and the historic component to the Spanish Colonial, Mexican, and/or American Territorial Periods (AD 1600-1900). He did not assign the features to the different periods and phases.

Heuett (1992) visited LA 53688 during the Las Sierras survey. She recorded the large adobe mound as an L-shaped mound 17.5 m long by 13 m wide. The two arms of the L were 6 m wide. The east side of the mound was thought to be a courtyard or work area, based on the low surface artifact density in that area.

Heuett (1992:41) identified Nelson's "work area" on the south side of the large mound as "an adobe structure with a rubble foundation" 23.2 m long by 10.2 m wide. She states that the "adobe and rubble mound on the interior of the structure" was 30 cm taller than the modern ground surface. Finally, she recorded Nelson's smaller, southern mound as a two-room adobe structure 8 m long, 4 m wide, and 30 cm tall. No other features were identified in the site area, although fire-cracked rocks and charcoal were observed. Heuett did not observe Nelson's artifact "clusters." Based on the presence of micaceous, Powhoge Polychrome and polished black sherds, Heuett suggests that LA 53688 is one of the five sites whose micaceous sherds were studied by Woosley and Olinger (1990).

I revisited the site during the survey. The large mound is an L-shaped mound 20 m long north-south by 17 m wide east-west and .5 to .75 m tall. The arms of the "L" are 9 m across. At the east end of the east-west arm is an area about 7.5 m in diameter with charcoal, fire-cracked rocks, polished red and gray sherds, many Euroamerican sherds, and a hand-turned brown bottle finish fragment. Other artifacts in the vicinity of the mound include Euroamerican white ware sherds, polished red, black, and gray sherds, and amethyst glass fragments. On the south side of the large mound is an earthen platform about 20 m east-west by 15 m north-south. This is Nelson's "work area" and "Cluster 3" and Heuett's Feature 2, the "adobe structure with a rubble foundation." While the platform is not an adobe structure, it may have been the location of a structure that has been removed. However, on the north side of the platform area is a small, low, adobe mound 5 m by 5 m and .25 m tall. Although Euroamerican and historic native sherds are present, most sherds on and around the mound are Taos Gray and unidentified, prehistoric, painted sherds. This may suggest that the mound is prehistoric and the focal point of the site's prehistoric component. On the south side of the platform is a very shallow depression 1.5 m in diameter and .25 m deep. It may have been a well.

The smaller, southern mound recorded by Nelson and Heuett is 8 m long north-south by 5 m wide east-west and .25 m tall. The area to the south and east has the highest surface artifact density. Artifacts include Euroamerican white ware sherds, polished red and black sherds, window glass fragments, and basalt flakes. A few Taos Gray sherds are also present.

Nelson's "Cluster 1" is located at the northern end of the site. It is 18 m long north-south by 6 m wide east-west and consists of a concentration of fire-cracked rocks. I observed no sherds but one obsidian projectile point base is present. "Cluster 1" may be a prehistoric feature. Nelson's "Cluster 2" actually consists of a low adobe mound and a surrounding artifact concentration. The mound is 4 m by 4 m and .25 m tall. Numerous rocks are present around the mound; some may be fire-cracked. Artifacts observed on and around the mound include polished red and gray sherds, one micaceous sherd, numerous small Euroamerican sherds, and one fragment of very thin, aqua-blue bottle glass. Basalt flakes and one obsidian flake were observed.

The structural features and artifact concentrations are located outside project limits on the west side of Blueberry Hill Road. The associated artifact scatter extends across the road.

LA 53689

Nelson's (1986) description of LA 53689 includes one large adobe mound and several smaller mounds, and several depressions and adobe borrow pits. The largest mound was irregularly-shaped, 48 m long by 20 m wide and 1.5 m tall. Artifacts on and around the mound included brown and dark green glass fragments, metal items, Euroamerican sherds, and polished red and black sherds. Three small depressions possibly representing adobe borrow pits were observed to the west and northwest of the mound. On the south side of the large

mound was the location of a mobile home, represented by vegetation changes, a gravel driveway, a pile of milled lumber, metal fence posts, and septic and electrical hookups.

North of the large mound was a smaller mound 11 m long by 5 m wide. The mound was 60 cm tall on its side and 1.5 m tall on the west side. Nelson does not mention the reason for this discrepancy; a large adobe and/or gravel borrow pit is present on the west side of the small mound and the north side of the large mound. Artifacts associated with the small mound included mammal bones, aqua, brown, and clear glass fragments. Six irregularly-shaped mounds were recorded on the east side of Blueberry Hill Road. At least two had been mined for adobe. Nelson observed a metal door hinge, polished black and micaceous sherds, Euroamerican white ware sherds, Euroamerican stoneware sherds, mammal bone fragments, and fragments of dark green, brown, and amethyst glass.

Nelson also recorded the location of a 1960s trash dump in a large arroyo at the north end of the site, as well as a possible prehistoric component represented by a single Taos Black-on-white sherd, several Taos Gray plain sherds, and a projectile point. He notes that the prehistoric artifacts may represent artifact collection by the site occupants.

I revisited the site during the survey and found the site essentially as Nelson recorded it, with changes due to construction and development on the east side of Blueberry Hill Road. The large adobe mound on the west side of the road represents an irregularly-shaped, 1.5 to 2 m tall, multi-storied, adobe house. The shape of the mound has been changed by adobe mining on its west and north sides. *Tierra blanca* plaster fragments are present on the west side of the mound at the edge of the large borrow pit on the mound's north side. Associated artifacts mirror those seen by Nelson. Two small mounds are present north of the large mound. The small mound closer to the large mound has a few Taos Gray sherds on its surface. Burned adobe is present on the mounds' west sides in the borrow pit cut.

Seven adobe mounds are present on the east side of Blueberry Hill Road. Six of these were recorded by Nelson. The small, northernmost mound has been cut by construction of a driveway on its north side and a small firepit in its center. Immediately south of this small mound, Nelson recorded an S-shaped mound. Most of that mound has been removed by blading and construction of a house. Only the western and northern parts of the mound are intact. The extent of disturbance to the mound cannot be evaluated without excavation. Nonetheless, numerous artifacts are present on and around the mound. They include polished red and black sherds, micaceous sherds, Euroamerican white ware sherds, amethyst and deep aqua-blue glass fragments, and thin window glass fragments. Just south of the S-shaped mound is a small mound that Nelson recorded as having been mined for adobe. That mound remains as Nelson recorded it. To its east, however, another small mound was partially bladed during construction of a house. South of a road Nelson recorded two adobe mounds, one of which had been mined for adobe. He also recorded a large, irregularly-shaped area that he thought had been mined for adobe. I found three small mounds, two of which (the two recorded by Nelson) have been mined for adobe. *Tierra blanca* plaster fragments are visible on the sides of one the mounds. A third small mound and adjacent depression are intact. The irregularly-shaped area does not appear to have been mined; rather, it appears to have been disturbed during site occupation, perhaps by animals kept in the area. The plant community in that area is a disturbed-ground community rather than a sagebrush community.

The site probably dates to the last quarter of the 19th or first quarter of the 20th centuries. Very little clear glass is present; most glass fragments are amethyst, brown, or aqua blue. Even the window glass is aqua blue. Euroamerican white ware sherds, including annular ware sherds, are plentiful, as are polished red and black sherds and micaceous sherds.

The large mound and one of the small mounds on the west side of Blueberry Hill Road extend into project limits. The other small mound on the west side of the road and the features on the east side of the road are outside project limits. Portions of the associated artifact scatter are within project limits on both sides of the road.

LA 102308

LA 102308 is a multicomponent site located near the southern end of the project area. The prehistoric component of LA 102308 consists of an adobe pueblo mound .5 to .75 m high. Although irregularly shaped, the mound is 23 m long southwest-northeast by 18 m wide southeast-northwest. The ceramic assemblage observed on the surface includes two Taos Black-on-white sherds, one Santa Fe Black-on-white sherd, several unknown white ware sherds, one Taos Gray incised sherd, and about a dozen Taos Gray plain sherds. A Taos Black-on-white sherd was observed about 60 m north of the site. In addition, a nearby land owner has several Taos Black-on-white and Taos Gray sherds from the site. Based on the presence of both Taos and Santa Fe Black-on-white sherds, the component may date to both the Valdez and Pot Creek phases. The prehistoric component is outside project limits.

The historic component consists of a low earthen mound (not adobe) that appears to have been a platform for a structure that is no longer present. The mound is 17 m long east-west by 7 m wide north-south and about .5 m high with a flat top. No evidence of the actual structure is present. Although trash is scattered around the mound, most of what appears to be associated with the mound is on its south side in a concentration approximately 17 m by 20 m in size. The artifacts include amethyst glass, aqua blue glass, aqua window glass, blue glass, white glass, and white ware sherds. A small concentration is also present on the northeast side of the mound. The historic component of LA 102308 is within project limits.

TESTING PROCEDURES

The Blueberry Hill Road archaeological testing project will employ the following general procedures, which are patterned after *Testing and Site Evaluation Proposal* (HPD Log No. 43648), prepared by the Office of Archaeological Studies for the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department and on file at the HPD. Alterations to that plan have been made as appropriate for this project.

Definition of Site Limits and Artifact Distributions

To determine site limits, archaeologists will traverse each site using parallel transects. Artifacts observed during these transects will be marked with pinflags. Site limits will be considered to be the boundary between the presence and absence of artifacts and features. The pinflags will also reveal areas of relatively higher surface artifact density and provide an indication of general artifact distribution. If artifact density across the site is so high that marking individual artifacts is impractical, only site limits and artifact concentrations will be marked with pinflags. The site as defined in this way will be mapped using a transit and stadia or tape.

Selection of Site Areas to Be Tested

Areas to be tested include those of higher artifact density in relation to the site as a whole as indicated by clusters of pinflags. Obvious features such as hearths and rock alignments may be tested to determine if they have potential to contribute important data. Unidentifiable but visible surface manifestations of possible subsurface features will also be tested to determine their nature and extent. These manifestations include, but are not limited to, soil mounds, depressions, soil discolorations, charcoal/ash deposits, and rock alignments/concentrations. Archaeological testing will be limited to the portions of each site within project limits.

Collection and Recording

A datum will be established, and a Cartesian grid system oriented to cardinal directions will be imposed over each site. Surface artifacts that provide data on temporal placement or cultural affiliation may be collected. Surface artifacts that occur within areas selected for test excavations will be collected before testing proceeds. Locations of artifacts will be recorded using either a transit and stadia or by grid designations. Feature locations and general site characteristics will be recorded using some combination of Brunton, transit, tape, and stadia. Photographs of the site and features will also be taken.

Test Excavation Procedures

In general, test excavations will be performed using hand tools. Exceptions regarding the use of mechanical earthmoving equipment are discussed below. One meter by one meter test excavation units will be excavated

in areas selected for testing. The locations of all excavation units will be recorded on the site map. Vertical control will be established by using 10 cm arbitrary levels linked to the elevation of the site datum. Soil and sediment deposits will be screened, and all artifacts collected by excavation unit and level. Excavation will continue until sterile soil is reached or intact cultural deposits or features are clearly defined. Profiles of excavation units will be drawn, as appropriate, to illustrate natural or cultural stratigraphy and the locations of features. If deposits or features are encountered, they will be examined to determine whether they can be expected to provide chronological, artifactual, depositional, or site-structural information. If so, they will be recorded, covered, and left for data recovery investigations. Samples of features or deposits removed during excavation may be saved for laboratory analysis. Samples for flotation, pollen, radiocarbon, or tree-ring analysis may be taken from excavation units, as appropriate. All excavation units will be backfilled at the completion of the testing program.

Augering

Hand soil augers may be used to search for buried features or deposits having no evident surface manifestations. Auger tests may also be used to determine the depth of cultural deposits identified during test excavations. Soil removed by augering will be screened and all artifacts collected. Locations of auger tests will be recorded on the site map. All auger tests will be backfilled at the completion of the testing program.

Use of Mechanical Earthmoving Equipment

Geomorphological data may be of value in assessing the nature of a site. Therefore, it may be necessary to use mechanical earthmoving equipment. Such equipment may also be useful for finding subsurface features without obvious surface manifestations. All surface artifacts within corridors where mechanical equipment will be used, an adjacent buffering strip, and the expected position(s) of the mechanical equipment will be collected before use of the equipment begins. Examination of the area excavated by mechanical equipment will occur after the removal of each extracted unit of soil or sediment. The resulting backdirt will be examined for artifacts. Profiles of mechanical excavation areas may be drawn, as appropriate, to illustrate natural or cultural stratigraphy and the locations of features if present. Locations of mechanical excavation areas will be recorded on the site map. All mechanical excavation areas will be backfilled at the completion of the testing program.

Human Remains

If human remains are encountered, they will be protected and left in place. If conditions are such that they cannot be protected, field treatment will follow procedures outlined by the laws and regulations of the State of New Mexico (Sec. 16-6-11.2 NMSA 1978; HPD Rule 89-1) and the Museum of New Mexico policy adopted January 17, 1991 and modified February 5, 1991, "Policy on Collection, Display, and Repatriation of Culturally Sensitive Materials" (SRC Rule 11).

Laboratory Analyses

All collected artifacts will be cleaned, sorted, and examined in the laboratories of the Office of Archaeological Studies. Artifacts collected from sites that will not be recommended for data recovery investigations will be analyzed at the completion of the testing program. Artifacts from sites that will be recommended for data recovery investigations will be held until completion of the data recovery program and will then be analyzed with artifacts collected during data recovery. Analyses within each artifact material class will be conducted by standards established by the Office of Archaeological Studies.

Flotation, pollen, radiocarbon, tree-ring, and other samples collected from sites that will not be recommended for data recovery investigations will be submitted for analyses at the completion of the testing program. Similar samples from sites that will be recommended for data recovery investigations will be held until completion of the data recovery program and will then be submitted with samples collected during data recovery.

Disposition of Recovered Artifacts and Records

Unless otherwise stipulated by landowners or land managers, all recovered artifacts will be curated in the Archaeological Research Collection at the Laboratory of Anthropology, Museum of New Mexico. As a division of the Museum of New Mexico, the Office of Archaeological Studies maintains a curation agreement with the Archaeological Research Collection unit.

In addition, field notes, maps, analytic data, and photographs will be curated by HPD's Archeological Records Management Section (ARMS).

Published Report

A report containing a summary of the test excavations, laboratory analyses, and recommendations for site management will be produced upon completion of fieldwork and laboratory study. The report will be published in OAS's Archaeology Notes series. Updated site record forms will be submitted for the New Mexico Cultural Records Information System (NMCRIS), managed by HPD.

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