National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

De Soto National Memorial
Bradenton, Florida

De Soto National Memorial

Cultural Landscape Report



Southeast Region
Cultural Resources, Partnerships & Science

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De Soto National Memorial
Cultural Landscape Report

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Prepared under the direction of:

National Park Service
Southeast Region
Cultural Resources, Partnerships & Science

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Cover Image: De Soto National Memorial, park entrance, 1955 (De Soto National Memorial Archives)

De Soto National Memorial
Cultural Landscape Report

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Foreword

We are pleased to make available this cultural landscape report, part of our ongoing effort to provide comprehensive documentation for the landscapes and historic structures of National Park Service (NPS) units in the Southeast Region (SER). A number of individuals and institutions contributed to the successful completion of this work. We would particularly like to thank the staff at De Soto National Memorial for their assistance throughout the process. We hope this study will be a useful tool for park management in continuing efforts to preserve the cultural landscape and to others interested in the significance of the park's many cultural resources.

Dan Scheidt, Chief
Cultural Resources, Partnerships & Science
Southeast Region
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Introduction

Management Summary

The De Soto National Memorial (DESO) occupies most of a small promontory of land on the south bank of the Manatee River, where the river meets the waters of Tampa Bay, approximately 5 miles west of Bradenton, Florida (Figure 1-1). Traditionally known as Shaw's Point (officially renamed De Soto Point in 1966), this bit of land remains largely undeveloped, an unusual occurrence for this area.

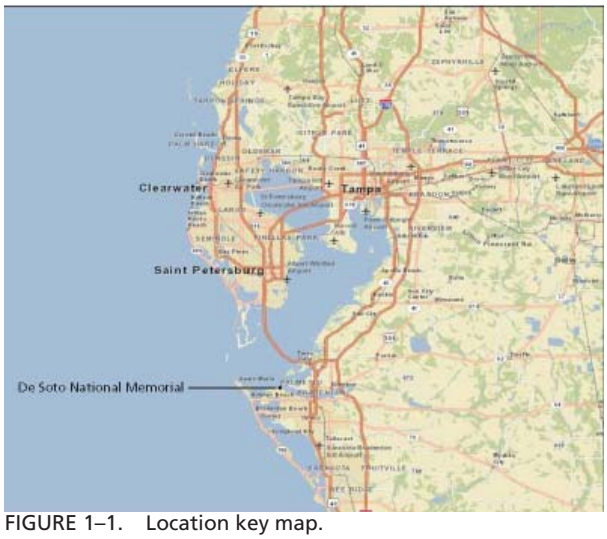


FIGURE 1–1. Location key map.

The Memorial property, together with the abutting 11-acre Riverview Pointe Preserve owned by Manatee County, form an oasis of sorts, surrounded by expanses of low-scale, single-family residential development, typical of the suburban subdivisions that proliferated in coastal southern Florida after World War II (Figure 1-2, p. 2, below). While both of these properties offer a rare, preserved slice of something akin to a natural landscape of this region - a sort of representation, at least, of the environment as it might have been encountered by earlier peoples - the Memorial also seeks to communicate a complex story, and to engage those who visit it in thoughtful consideration of an often difficult history. In service of that effort, the natural landscape plays an important cultural role.

Congress authorized the De Soto National Memorial in 1948, for "the purpose of establishing an appropriate memorial to Hernando de Soto," and to construct a suitable memorial structure "for the benefit of the people of the Unites States." The order formally establishing the Memorial, on land that had been donated several months earlier, entered the Federal Register in August, 1949.[1]

In establishing the Memorial on this site, the National Park Service (NPS) took over a privately developed monument that had been placed there a decade earlier by the Florida Chapter of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America, with the help of the Bradenton Chamber of Commerce. This in turn was the culmination of years of study and speculation about the landing place of De Soto, the first European explorer to traverse what is now the southeastern United States.

De Soto's journey lasted four years, from 1539 to 1543, and went 4,000 miles. It began a long history of armed conflict between European colonists and the indigenous people of the region; it introduced diseases that decimated native populations, and plants and animals that upended the region's ecology; and it proved fatal to De Soto and half of his party. In the United States of the 1930s, however, the average person would more likely have admired De Soto, and the other explorers and "conquistadors" of his day, for their accomplishments, their courage, and their strength, than to be troubled by their devastating impacts on the people and lands they encountered in the "New World." As the 400th anniversary of De Soto's 1539 landing approached, scholars and amateur historians had argued and jockeyed for the picking of one site versus another, throughout southwest Florida, as the landing place. City officials and business promoters argued and jockeyed too, well aware of the lucrative impact such a designation could have on their share of the state's burgeoning tourism industry.

1 David E. Whisnant and Anne Mitchell Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues: De Soto National Memorial and the Commemoration of a Difficult History*** (Atlanta, GA: NPS Southeast Regional Office, 2007), 153-154.



FIGURE 1–2. Site key map and study boundary - De Soto National Memorial.

At that time, scholarly consensus had recently settled on Shaw's Point as the most likely landing spot, based on the work of ethnologist John R. Swanton and his fellow members of the Presidentially-appointed *United States De Soto Expedition Commission*. In subsequent decades, critics of Swanton's theories have largely erased that consensus, based on the lack of any finding of archeological evidence, on this site, of a 16th-century Spanish presence, and on further analyses of the few surviving records.[2] Regardless of such doubts, the De Soto National Memorial still serves, by act of Congress, as the nation's focal point for commemoration of, and reflection on, this transformative historic event. How that event is perceived, shared and taught is a dialog that continues to evolve.

As its mission, the NPS "preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world."[3]

The Memorial's *Foundation Document* states this park's purpose this way: "The purpose of the De Soto National Memorial is to commemorate Hernando de Soto's 1539 expedition throughout what is now the southeastern United States, and its overwhelming impact on the course of North American history."[4] The Memorial's managers, and a small but dedicated staff, strive to do this by offering programming, interpretation, and self-directed experiences that can give people a sense of

2 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues***, 5-15.

3 "Foundation Document: De Soto National Memorial, Florida" (NPS document DESO 388/12839, May 2015) 1.

4 "Foundation Document," 4-5.

what this part of the world looked like and felt like in De Soto's time - for people on both sides of the cultural divide, Europeans and Native Americans - as well as an understanding of how people here, both before and since De Soto, have lived in and shaped this environment.

A cultural landscape typically reflects just this kind of powerful, dynamic, mutual impact between human beings and the natural world around them. At the Memorial, the natural landscape becomes even more inseparable from the cultural story, because of the role it plays in interpretation, education, and visitor experience. Also, the Memorial tells a central cultural story about how one human event changed the environment of North America; thus, it offers an exceptional opportunity to convey the importance of stewardship, because even a "natural" landscape can be shown to be an artifact of human culture.

A Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) researches, documents and analyzes this artifact of landscape, in order to help managers determine how to best protect its essential qualities and the physical components that give it meaning and significance. At De Soto National Memorial, no one has found physical traces of the event the site commemorates, and our collective understanding of both the event and the site continues to evolve. At the same time, the resources that the site *does* have offer opportunities to strengthen and broaden the story that is told here.

In addition to the 1939 monument, those resources include 11 known remnant shell mounds and middens, the earliest of which date to approximately 395 BCE (before common era); the ruins, primarily foundations, of a 19th-century tabby house; elements built by the NPS, including the 1967 visitor center (part of the NPS' nationwide Mission 66 initiative) and other site features and infrastructure; and the landscape components, both natural and human-made, that along with these resources complete the fabric of this landscape.

The purpose of this CLR is to document the history of the site's existing resources, to provide an overview and analysis of existing conditions, and to make recommendations for treatment and management of these resources.

The *Site History* section was prepared based on a limited investigation: recent researchers have authored a thoroughly researched administrative history and an extensive archeological study, and NPS staff provided both of these documents, along with extensive archival materials. The *Site History* section thus focuses on bringing together information from disparate sources, and on gathering information that may help in re-evaluating the significance of aspects of the site that have received less attention in the past, such as the early park development, or the Mission 66 visitor center, neither of which are within the designated periods of significance in the Memorial's two National Register of Historic Places (National Register) nominations. It also spotlights information about the tabby house ruin, a structure about which many questions remain.

The Report then summarizes the park's existing conditions, and provides an evaluation and analysis that identifies which elements should be considered cultural resources; whether and how they contribute to this site's significance; their integrity; and threats to maintaining their integrity. Key issues that have been pointed out by park staff, as well as in the *Foundation Document*, include: degradation of the site's natural communities, through climate change, shoreline erosion, the presence of invasive species, or other threats; threats to archeological resources, especially the tabby house ruin; maintaining access throughout the site, a goal that faces challenges because of shoreline erosion, aging of the boardwalk, and other factors; and opportunities to expand the interpretive focus. The Report then makes recommendations for treatment, to guide management decisions affecting the site's cultural resources.

Historical Summary

Florida's first human settlers arrived at least 14,550 years ago, during the late ice age.[5] Seas were lower at that time, and the coastline lay approximately 100 miles off of today's shoreline. During this Paleo-Indian period and the time frames of the Archaic cultures that followed (2,500 - 10,000 years ago), Florida's climate, coastline, and environment changed dramatically. People of the middle and late Archaic increasingly concentrated on coastal resources, especially fish and shellfish, as a key strategy in adapting to these changes. Tampa Bay

5 Jessi Halligan, et al., "Pre-Clovis Occupation 14,550 Years Ago at the Page-Ladson Site, Florida, and the Peopling of the Americas," ***Science Advances*** 2(5):e1600375, May 13, 2016.

took its modern form as an estuarine environment around 7,000 years ago and, like estuaries typically do, offered an especially rich resource base. Cultures spread and diversified, becoming increasingly sophisticated and complex, a process that continued into the historic period. Around Tampa Bay, numerous settlements appeared by the late Archaic.

At Shaw's Point, the first traces of human settlement that archeologists have found date back almost 2,400 years. NPS archeologist Margo Schwadron's extensive investigations found that people of successive cultures, known as Deptford (Woodland Period), Manasota (Mississippian Period), and Safety Harbor (Mississippian), had all lived on this site. Their presence spans some 1,800 years, up to approximately 1395 CE (common era). The latter centuries of this time span saw great changes in Mississippian Period Florida cultures, with hierarchical societies, powerful chiefdoms, very extensive trade networks, complex ritual systems, and the construction of shell mound temple/ village platforms.[6]

Evidence suggests that this site was a substantial mound-village complex; however, a significant portion of the original mound was lost, as of the late 19th century, to coastal erosion, and most of the rest of its material was removed in the early 20th century, when shell mounds across the state were being hauled away for use in road construction. The few descriptions and sketches that survive from the period before the mounds' destruction do not give a very complete picture of this landscape, prior to European contact; nor does the remaining archeological record, at least not the investigations completed to date. The archeological record does not conclusively show whether the site was abandoned after circa 1395, either, since so much of the archeological resource base has been lost.

Between the time of De Soto and the other early Spanish explorers to the region, in the early- to mid-16th century, and 1763, when Spain ceded Florida to England, the American Indian societies of the Tampa Bay region (and throughout Florida) experienced massive cultural disruption and loss. Armed conflict between Europeans and American Indian tribes, and shifting alliances and hostilities between various tribes and various European and colonial powers, destroyed settlements and killed many thousands of people. Introduced European bacteria and viruses, to which the tribes had no immunity, decimated populations. Introduced pigs and European plants and animals disrupted ecosystems on which people depended. Within decades, many of the southeast's chiefdoms collapsed. By the mid-18th century, the remnants of Florida's original tribes had been virtually eliminated, forced to flee to Cuba or St. Augustine, or assimilated into the new arrivals of Muscogee (Creek) groups - themselves pushed out of other southern colonies by expanding white settlement.

The site's historical and archeological records pick up in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, a time when official control of Florida passed between Spain, England (1763-1783), Spain again, and the United States (1821-present). During this period, the relatively wild frontier that was southern Florida was the setting for a unique mix of cultures. Fishing camps (*ranchos*), seasonal at first, then more permanent, sprang up on the Gulf coast, peopled largely by a mixed culture of Spanish and American Indian fishers and their families, fom Cuba and Florida (later joined by whites from New England and elsewhere); the Seminole tribes formed, including refugees from the Muscogee and other southeastern tribes, as well as fugitives from slavery and free blacks; other African / African-American communities formed, including both escapees and free persons; and white settlers came, often looking to escape a troubled past or simply make a new start.

Shaw's Point first shows up on maps of the period as a rancho. William Bunce owned it in the 1830s, employing about thirty resident "Spaniards and . . . Spanish Indians," many of them second-generation there. Bunce was spurred to re-locate elsewhere during the Second Seminole War; for a brief time, the Army used the site for an adjunct fort. William Shaw, a merchant shipper from Key West, owned the property and lived there with his family from 1843 to 1856. They, too, opted to leave when war came (the Third Seminole War, 1855-1858).[7] Some modern researchers have suggested that the tabby

6 Margo Schwadron, ***Archeological Investigation of De Soto National Memorial*** (Tallahassee: NPS - Southeast Archeological Center, SEAC Technical Reports No. 8, 2002) 41.

7 The United States fought three wars with the Seminoles: 1817-1818, 1835-1842 and 1855-1858. Florida Department of State, dos.myflorida.com/florida-facts/florida-history/seminole-history/the-seminole-wars/ (accessed June 29,2016); http://www.semtribe.com/History/NoSurrender.aspx (accessed June 29, 2016).

house was built as Shaw's residence, although some evidence suggests it originated earlier, and perhaps survived from a rancho that the Army torched. Several sources also say that Shaw ultimately disassembled the house, and shipped most of it to Key West.

Locals referred to the place as Shaw's Point ever since. It saw minor action during the Civil War, when a Confederate battery consisting of a "gun . . . on wheels on top of an Indian mound" was taken out by a Federal gunship, and an abandoned barracks burned.[8] Later 19th-century uses left little record; although a staging area and dock for loading cattle has been fairly well corroborated, other uses mentioned by local historians have not, including a tavern, post office, quarantine station, yellow fever cemetery, and trading post.[9]

Florida's landscape character could strike people either as idyllic or harsh. Early descriptions depicted it as strange, rich, fruitful and dangerous (Figure 1-3). Its challenges - heat, swamps, sawgrass, insects, jungles - helped a significant contingent of the Seminole outfight and outlast the United States military through three wars, never signing a treaty or accepting re-location westward. (The Florida Seminole today proudly use the term "the Unconquered People.")[10] As Florida entered the modern era, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, promoters leveraged the idyllic version of its environmental image to help spark a tourism industry, and a land development industry, that together would dramatically transform the state.

Tourism, in particular, relied on Florida's exoticism and peculiarity. The new road networks of the 1910s and 1920s let in a wave of "tin-can tourists" - northerners who innovated a new lifestyle of automobile-based travel and camping, and who congregated in "tin-can towns" (precursors to the trailer park) to enjoy the special pleasures of a winter in Florida. They explored the lesser-known places and unique sites of the state's interior, as well as the established destinations along the coast. Many communities began working to attract the snowbirds, offering camping sites, municipal services, and other amenities, and the service industry expanded as new roadside attractions, restaurants and related businesses sprang up throughout the state. As the industry grew, towns and businesses strove to put forth unique themes, from alligators to orchids, pirates and Spanish conquistadors, in the competition for tourists' dollars.[11]



FIGURE 1–3. Sixteenth-century engraving by Theodore de Bry, depicting the Timucua hunting alligator in the wilds of northeast Florida. (Florida State Archives)

In the boom years of the early 20th century the Bradenton area, like much of coastal Florida, was developing and growing by leaps and bounds. Between approximately 1902 and the early 1920s, most of the Shaw's Point shell mound complex was carted off to build roads. In 1926, Florida's real estate bubble burst. The crash, along with a massive and deadly east coast hurricane in September of the same year, effectively put Florida into Depression mode three years before the rest of the country;[12] and while the hard times slowed development, they also saw many Floridians latching onto the expanding tourism industry as a way to stay afloat. The roadside attractions and festivals proliferated

8 Janet Snyder Matthews, ***Edge of Wilderness: A Settlement History of Manatee River and Sarasota Bay, 1528-1885*** (Sarasota: Coastal Press, 1983), 256; Lillie B. McDuffee, ***The Lures of Manatee: A True Story of South Florida's Glamorous Past*** (Bradenton: B. McDuffee Fletcher, 1961) 125.

9 Matthews, ***Edge of Wilderness*** 304.

10 Florida Department of State, http://dos.dos.state.fl.us/florida-facts/florida-history/seminole-history/ (accessed March 14, 2016).

11 "Tin Can Tourism," Florida Department of State (https://www.floridamemory.com/photographiccollection/photo_exhibits/tincans/ accessed June 29, 2016) 1; Margot Ammidown, "Edens, Underworlds and Shrines: Florida's Small Tourist Attractions," ***The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*** 23 (1998) 243-258; Gary R. Mormino, ***Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams: A Social History of Modern Florida*** (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005) 79.

12 Paul S. George, "Brokers, Binders, and Builders: Greater Miami's Boom of the Mid-1920s," ***The Florida Historical Quarterly*** 65:1 (July, 1986) 49-50;

further, in a trend that would only continue to get stronger as the century progressed. It was into this context that the debate about De Soto's Florida landing place came, in the 1930s.

In 1935, the 74th Congress authorized the *United States De Soto Expedition Commission*, for the purpose of producing recommendations for the national observance of the expedition's upcoming 400th anniversary.[13] The President appointed seven members, led by anthropologist John R. Swanton, an expert in southeastern American Indian tribes, from the Smithsonian Bureau of Ethnology. The other members, all prominent citizens from the southeastern states that the expedition had traversed, came from varied walks of life; several had training or experience in archeology and the study of American Indian cultures.[14]

Interest in the 400th anniversary had been building since at least 1923, when the National Society of Colonial Dames of America had established a "DeSoto Committee" to begin planning for a great celebration of "the discovery of the Mississippi River." The Colonial Dames' work on the De Soto route and ideas for the celebrations were shared with the federally appointed Commission in the spring of 1937.[15] In 1938, as the anniversary approached, Swanton led the Commission's efforts to settle the questions of where De Soto had landed, and what his route had been.

When the United States De Soto Expedition Commission issued its *Final Report* in 1939, it named Shaw's Point as the most likely landing spot. The business-focused Bradenton Chamber of Commerce now found itself in alliance with the civic mission of the Expedition Commission and, more significantly for this site, with the Florida Chapter of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America. The Colonial Dames bought and installed the eight-ton granite monument to De Soto, after successfully lobbying the Chamber and the County Commission to acquire a portion of Shaw's Point - rather than select a location "downtown" - and to build a road to it. The dedication occurred on May 30, 1939, the 400th anniversary, to the day, of De Soto's landing.[16]

This event, and the annual De Soto Celebrations that began soon thereafter, helped make Bradenton and the surrounding Gulf Coast region one of the state's top tourism draws. At the same time, local and state officials and other advocates continued to press for the site to be established as a *national* memorial, befitting the tremendous historical significance of the expedition. Florida Senator Spessard Holland spearheaded the effort, which culminated in the Memorial's authorizing legislation in 1948, and the property's acquisition and establishment order the following year.

Since taking over the property in 1949, the NPS has provided stewardship of both a difficult site and a difficult story. The property's outstanding characteristic, as one NPS evaluator put it, is that "it is low."[17] Covered mostly with tidally inundated mangrove forest, the site required large quantities of fill in order to be made accessible. The process had begun, on a modest scale, with the County's clearing and filling of an acre in 1939 for the monument and road. It continued, in earnest, as NPS crews and contractors dredged, pumped, hauled, and spread shell, sand, and topsoil, throughout the first year of the park's existence, to make a parking area, a larger sand beach, a raised "plaza" area around the monument for a contact station and other amenities, and a network of trails. Over the next fifty years, park managers would then face an almost constant challenge of maintaining that accessibility, re-nourishing the beach, and re-constructing the trails after storms and tides washed them away, sometimes two or three times in a given year.

After the construction of the visitor center in 1967-68, a focal point for the park envisioned in its Mission 66 Master Plan, beach erosion became an even more critical concern: it now threatened a main facility,

13 Public Resolution 74-57, August 26, 1935 (accessed at http://legisworks.org/congress/74/pubres-57.pdf, June 29, 2016).

14 Julian H. Steward, ***John Reed Swanton 1873-1958, A Biographical Memoir*** (Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences, 1960) 333-335; Whisnant and Whisnant ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 9.

15 "An Historical Sketch of the DeSoto Committee of The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, on the Celebration of the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the Discovery of the Mississippi River by Hernando DeSoto," (unpub. typescript, n.d. [c. November-December, 1938]) copy in DESO Archives, H1417 [***Administrative History Source Materials, 1936-1967***]. We have not found any records indicating whether any of the Colonial Dames' Committee's work may have been incorporated into the federal Commission's findings.

16 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 11-15.

17 Roy E. Appleman, 1947, quoted in Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 19.

stocked with cultural artifacts, barely 50 yards from the water's edge. Numerous studies all pointed to the inherent instability of the shoreline, and its mutability throughout not just the park's history, but the preceding century - most of which involved loss, not gain, in the most critical locations. In 1989, managers finally replaced the trail along the park's vulnerable northeast shoreline with a boardwalk through the mangroves, set back from the shore. In 2005, they replaced what little was left of the once-wide beach along the plaza with a four-foot-high rip rap embankment, in order to safeguard the visitor center. After six decades of annual De Soto Landing ceremonies as well as everyday use, the monument's beach, created in 1939 with tons of fill, and since replenished numerous times, had been returned to the river.

If the park's dynamic coastal landscape presented one set of challenges, public perceptions of its themes and identity presented another. The NPS' mission-driven, broadly public-serving purposes in managing the Memorial, and its reflective approach to the expedition's consequences both positive and negative, did not necessarily mesh with the enthusiasms of local promoters organizing the festive De Soto Celebrations. Nevertheless, because community partnership is also within the NPS' mission, and perhaps also because of mutual interests in boosting visitor numbers and public interest in De Soto's story, park managers and staff have always supported the annual ceremony, even when it was dominated by over-simplified, admiring "re-enactments" followed by parades, beauty pageants, and regattas. American Indian rights groups and other protesters in the 1990s ultimately persuaded the local promoters of the De Soto Celebration to take a broader perspective, which among other changes led to its re-christening as the Florida Heritage Festival. The park's messaging has also evolved, with an increasing emphasis on presenting the expedition's story as seen from both sides of the event - the native Americans' as well as the colonizing Europeans' experiences. The story line is still evolving, as history always will.

Study Boundary

The Memorial occupies 24.78 acres of land, acquired by the federal government for this purpose through two separate donations: a 24.18-acre parcel in 1949, and another 0.6-acre piece in 1960. It sits on the small promontory of land known as De Soto Point (also known as Shaw's Point), which forms the south bank of the Manatee River at its confluence with Tampa Bay.

The scope of this Cultural Landscape Report is limited to the 24.78 acres owned by the NPS. It does not include the adjacent County-owned park land, which although managed jointly under a Memorandum of Understanding between the NPS and County government, is not considered to be part of the Memorial proper. Figure 1-2 (p. 2, above) shows the boundaries of the Memorial and the adjacent County property, Riverview Pointe Preserve.

The majority of the park's acreage lies in Section 18, Township 34S, Range 17E. The second largest share occurs in Section 13, Township 34S, Range 16E; the entrance drive aligns with the section line between these two (Figure 1-4). Very small portions of the property extend south into Section 19, T34S, R17E and Section 24, T34S, R16E.

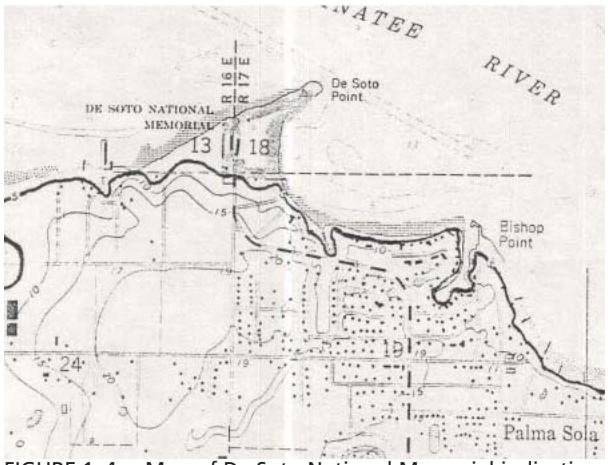


FIGURE 1–4. Map of De Soto National Memorial indicating sections and ranges - within Township 34S. (DESO Archives)

Manatee County, Tampa Bay, and the west coast of peninsular Florida serve as the larger context for the study. The geologic and natural history of this region, its unique environment, its history of significant environmental change in the course of several millennia of human occupation, and the distinctive identity that this environment has in the popular imagination all form important and inseparable threads in the cultural history of the region. That cultural history and identity have played - and continue to play - important roles in shaping this landscape.

Project Methodology

The staff of the NPS Southeast Region Cultural Resources Division (SER-CRD) provided management of the consultant team contracted to prepare this Report. The consultants prepared the site history, documented existing conditions (landscape characteristics and features), and performed an analysis and evaluation to better define the significance of this cultural landscape, its historical associations, and the significance and integrity of specific landscape elements. The consultant team drafted treatment recommendations to assist park managers in planning and decision-making for the preservation of important features and characteristics within the park. SER-CRD and Park staff assisted with data collection and coordination within NPS and facilitated site reviews by the consultants; they also reviewed the team's drafts and provided essential feedback.

Archival research included review of both digital and physical archives. NPS staff provided materials from the SER and DESO archives in digital form. Consultants reviewed digital files of archeological data and GIS data provided by NPS' Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC). The consultants also reviewed relevant digital files from the NPS-IRMA site and checked for relevant information at the following repositories: the State Archives and Library of Florida (www.floridamemory.com); University of Florida Digital Collections (ufdc.ufl.edu/fhp); Land Boundary Information survey (labins.org/survey_data/landrecords/landrecords.cfm); the Manatee County Public Library System Historic Image Digital collection (http://cdm16681.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16681coll1); the Manatee County Public Library, Eaton Room - Historical Collections, Bradenton, Florida; and the Sarasota County Historical Resources Department, Sarasota, Florida. NPS documents that proved especially relevant and useful included the park's administrative history, *Small Park, Large Issues*, completed by David E. and Anne Mitchell Whisnant in 2007; the *Archeological Investigation of De Soto National Memorial* by NPS archeologist Margo Schwadron (2002); and the park's *Foundation Document* (May, 2015).

The consultant team conducted site visits for existing conditions documentation on November 30 and December 1, 2015 and on January 21, January 25 and February 1 and 2, 2016. The team met with SER-CRD and Park staff on November 30, 2015 and held additional, informal discussions with Park staff during subsequent site visits.

Evaluation and analysis involved comparing historical imagery and documentation to the site's existing conditions, to gain an understanding of the origins of, and subsequent changes to, each existing landscape feature or characteristic. This served as a basis for the summary analysis of what makes the landscape culturally significant, and whether and how each landscape feature or characteristic contributes to that significance. An evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity included assessments of the integrity of each of the seven characteristics identified in the *National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1981): location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The treatment recommendations were developed based on the results of the existing site conditions review and the evaluation and analysis process, with an intent to help address as many as possible of the planning and management issues that were raised by NPS staff - or that became apparent to the team, during the process - within the context of the site as a cultural landscape. The recommendations all strive to help retain and enhance the integrity of those characteristics and features that give this landscape its cultural significance.

Summary of Findings

The De Soto National Memorial property holds the largest portion of the archeological resources that make up the Shaw's Point Archeological District, as listed in the National Register. The site serves as a repository for what remains of a significant pre-historic shell mound complex, likely including a temple and village site as well as a cemetery and other burials. A number of distinct cultures left their imprint on the site over a span of nearly 1,800 years. In the historic period, the succession of cultures continued: Cuban fishing ranchos, a unique and under-represented chapter in Florida's history, were followed by early settlers of the American period (which began in 1821 in Florida), a time in which this part of the state saw a diverse and dynamic mix of Anglos and Spanish, Seminoles and Black Seminoles, fugitives from slavery and free blacks. Its 19th-century history was also touched by the Second and Third Seminole Wars and the Civil War.

The greatest imprints on the site today date from the early- to mid-20th century. The national commemoration of the 400th anniversary of De Soto, the regional explosion of the place-based tourism industry, the postwar expansion of the national park system that included its acquisition of this site, and the Mission 66 initiative that led to the building of the visitor center all represent significant historical trends that shaped this landscape.

Period of Significance

Four distinct periods of significance play a role in the importance of this site. The pre-contact period spans the known occupation dates of the site, from ca. 395 BCE to ca. 1395 CE, as identified in the archeological investigations that have been done to date, and that served as the basis for the National Register documentation for the Shaw's Point Archeological District (2001).

The second period of significance, 1539, relates to the De Soto expedition's landing on May 30. The Memorial's authorizing legislation and first National Register nomination (1966) established this association based on the 1939 Final Report of the *United States De Soto Expedition Commission*. Although based on what was arguably the best available scholarship at that time, the Expedition Commission's findings that this site was the landing place no longer reflect the consensus view of experts in the field.[18] Archeological work has found no physical evidence of this association, and no existing site features appear to date from this time.

The third period of significance begins circa 1815, the approximate date thought to be associated with the earliest occupation of what is now the tabby house ruin. Additional archeological investigation (recommended under *Treatment*) will likely help clarify this date, which may correspond with the site's use as a rancho. This period extends through the other locally and regionally significant site events of the 19th century, including Seminole War and Civil War involvement, to 1862. This time span represents an expansion of the period of significance previously identified for the Shaw's Point Archeological District, which was based only on the known occupation dates by William Shaw and family.

The fourth period of significance encompasses the identification of the site by the *United States De Soto Expedition Commission*; the involvement of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, and the 1939 installation of the monument; the subsequent ceremonial usage; the 1949 acquisition by the NPS, and the initial park design and construction; and the Mission 66-related activities that culminated in the 1967-1968 construction of the visitor center. This represents a new period of significance, recommended by this CLR, that spans from 1939 to 1968.

Integrity

The site retains a high degree of integrity related to its 20th-century period of significance, in all seven of the requisite characteristics defined in the National Register criteria: location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Relative to its pre-contact and 19th-century periods of significance, the Memorial retains a high degree of integrity of location, materials, and association; a moderate degree of integrity of setting, workmanship, and feeling; and a low degree of integrity of design. Overall, the site generally reflects a high degree of integrity.

Treatment

A recommended overall treatment of ***preservation/rehabilitation*** will allow visitors to the De Soto National Memorial to continue to experience this cultural landscape as a way of engaging the important historical themes and narratives that the Memorial was created to share. The preservation treatment primarily applies to management of the site's archeological resources, as well as to the 1939 monument and its setting. The rehabilitation treatment applies more appropriately to the site's other, NPS-related 20th-century resources and to the natural landscape components that also function as elements of the cultural landscape.

18 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 5-15.

Site History

The De Soto National Memorial site, also known as Shaw's Point, shows the imprint of a long history of human occupation and use, dating back almost 2,400 years. The geology, natural systems, and location of the site have long offered easy access to estuarine and maritime resources, and strategic advantages for transportation or defense, often giving it roles in human events of local and regional significance.

Natural History

While the *Existing Conditions* chapter addresses natural systems in greater detail, the dynamic nature of the Memorial's environment has also shaped the site's history, and is intrinsically woven into many of its most important cultural resource management issues.

Geologic History

Manatee County, where the Memorial is located, forms a part of the Coastal Lowlands region of Florida. Its geologic history has largely been shaped by rises and falls in sea level. The Floridian Plateau, which includes the present peninsula and a wide section of continental shelf off of the state's coastline, drops very gradually in elevation for many miles out into the Gulf of Mexico. As sea levels have risen and fallen, the shoreline has advanced and retreated up and down this relatively flat plateau.

Five million years ago, today's coast lay under perhaps 100 feet of ocean. Ancient oceans' deposition of sediments, shells, and the remains of other sea creatures formed virtually all of Florida's soils and much of its underlying bedrock. In the late Pleistocene, some 18,000 years before present, with a cooler climate locking up more of the world's water into glaciers, sea level had dropped to as much as 330 feet below present levels. At that time, Florida's western coastline stood some one hundred miles off of its current shores, and the area

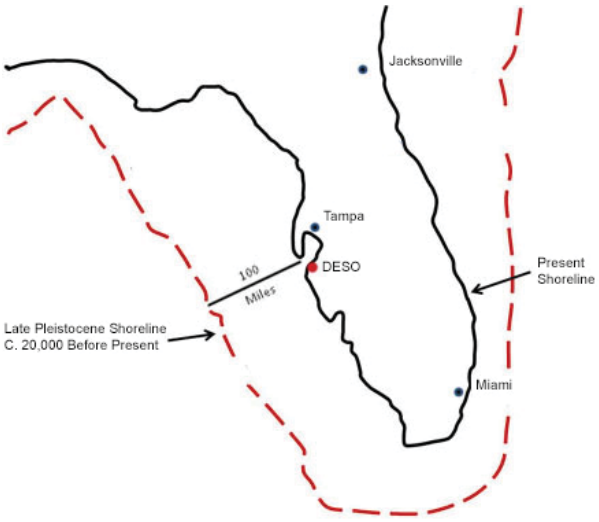


FIGURE 2–1. Ice age shoreline compared to present shoreline. (Adapted from diagram, image courtesy of ***Exploring the Submerged New World 2012 Expedition***, NOAA-OER)

of Shaw's Point lay inland, well into the interior of the peninsula (Figure 2-1).[1]

Within the past 14,000 years or so - the approximate time frame of known human presence in Florida - sea levels have continued to rise and fall, although the overall result has trended dramatically upward. Ecological communities as well as human ones have had to adapt. Within the last 2,500 years, roughly the era in which people have used Shaw's Point, sea levels in southwest Florida have fluctuated between approximately 2 feet below and 4 feet above their current position, according to recent research.[2]

This geologic history produced a highly dynamic and changeable environment. As changing sea levels pushed shorelines up and down the Floridian plateau, winds and tides also constantly moved the sandy coastal soils, changing the shape of the coast alongshore. Biologically rich estuarine environments formed where fresh and salt waters collided, such as in Tampa Bay, where the rising sea filled the lower valleys of the Hillsborough, Alafia,

1 John Edward Hoffmeister, ***Land from the Sea: The Geologic Story of South Florida*** (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1974) 19-32; J. M. Adovasio and C. Andrew Henmings, "Sea Level Rise on the Inner Continental Shelf of the West Coast of Florida" (http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/explorations/12newworld/background/sealevel/sealevel.html, accessed March 8, 2016); Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 17-24.

2 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 17-25.

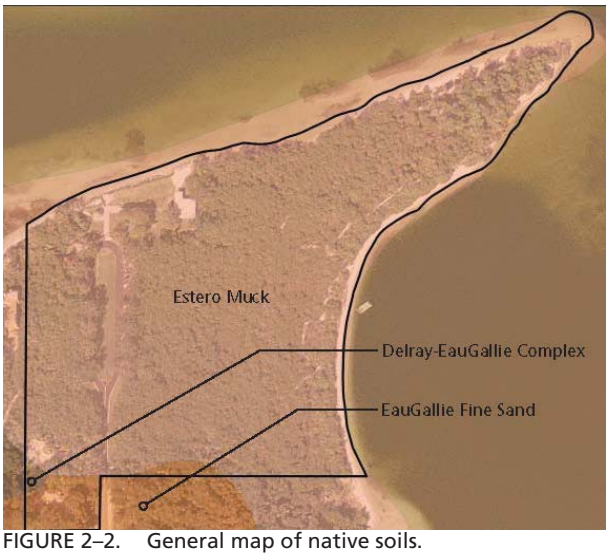


FIGURE 2–2. General map of native soils.

and Manatee rivers, and where the formation of barrier islands softened the impacts of wave energy.[3] Resilient and adaptable ecosystems, such as the mangroves that historically covered most of the Memorial's site, came to dominate the region's shorelines.

Natural Systems

Soils, Topography, and Hydrology

The original soils, topography, and hydrology of the Memorial site reflected its maritime origins and dynamic coastal setting. Primarily a low-lying coastal swamp, almost all of the existing property most likely originally lay within a foot or two of the mean high water elevation. As summarized by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, Estero Muck forms almost all of the site, absent human modifications. Estero Muck, found in tidal areas, typically floods daily during high tides, drains "very poorly," has high salinity levels and very little slope (typically less than 1/10 of a percent), and usually supports vegetation such as "a thick stand of black mangrove." Two other types of fine sand soils, EauGallie Fine Sand and Delray-EauGallie complex, underlay small areas of the property towards the west and south, where natural elevations would have been just slightly higher than that of the mangroves (Figure 2-2). Both of these soils drain poorly, lay fairly flat (slopes less than 2 percent), and are likely to have high water tables for at least a portion of the year. [4]

Vegetation

Mangroves

The mangrove ecosystem that dominated, and still dominates, this site shows a unique resilience, adapting itself to relatively rapid changes in landform, hydrology, and salinity. The term "mangrove" refers generally to forests that grow in intertidal and coastal zones throughout the tropical and subtropical parts of the world; it is an ecological, not a botanical, classification. Different species play this role in different regions. In Florida, mangrove tree species include red mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*), black mangrove (*Avicennia germinans*), and white mangrove (*Laguncularia racemosa*); some sources also consider buttonwood (*Conocarpus erectus*), a tree that often populates the upslope edge of mangrove forests, to be a mangrove.

Mangroves have developed remarkable adaptations that allow them to grow in salt and brackish water. They quickly colonize accreting shorelines and emerging sandbars as conditions become appropriate. They decline and die back when tidal flows are blocked, but regain vigor when channels reopen. Hence, despite centuries of human impacts and other environmental changes, we can still see the general type of coastal swampland that the area's first inhabitants saw, and that would have greeted Hernando de Soto: red mangroves reaching rusty-colored proproots towards the sea, dark-barked black mangroves filling tidal basins with sticklike vertical pneumatophores, and white mangroves and buttonwoods mingling with them along landward slopes (Figures 2-3 and 2-4, p. 12, below).

Typically, the various species sort themselves according to the micro-scale factors of elevation and tides, water depth, and salinity that are optimum for each of them. Figure 2-5 (p. 12, below) illustrates J. H. Davis' classic zonation diagram, updated to reflect regional variations found in Tampa Bay and elsewhere.[5]

3 Gerold Morrison and Kimberly K. Yates, "Origin and Evolution of Tampa Bay" (http://www.tampabay.wateratlas.usf.edu/upload/documents/403_Chapter%203_37-62.pdf, accessed March 16, 2016) 37.

4 National Cooperative Soil Survey, ***Soil Survey of Manatee County, Florida*** (Washington, DC: US Department of Agriculture,1981) 21-24, 119.

5 R. R. Lewis and B. Streever, "Restoration of mangrove habitat," ***WRP Technical Notes Collection*** (ERDC TN-WRP-VN-RS-3.2), U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center, Vicksburg, MS (2000).

Site History



FIGURE 2–3. Red mangrove.



FIGURE 2–4. Black mangrove.

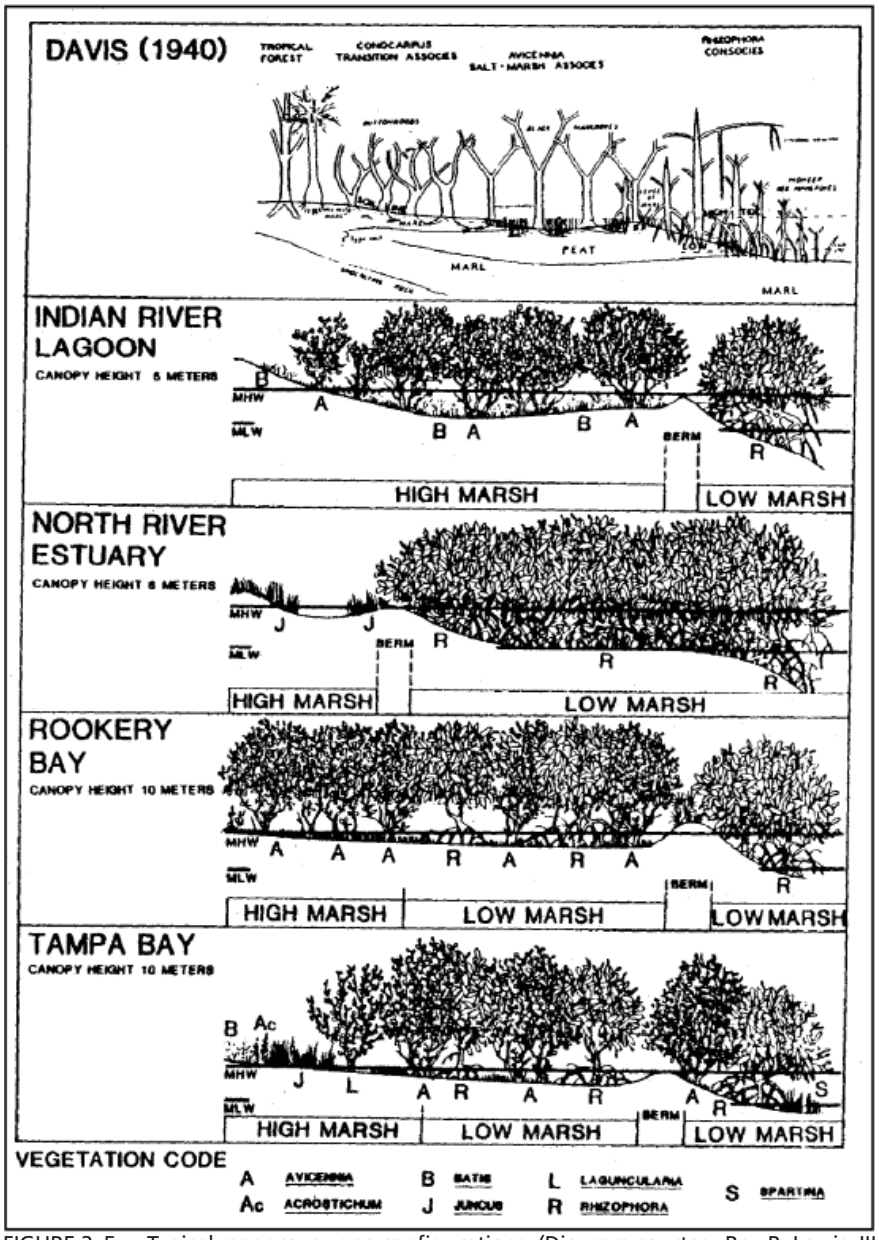


FIGURE 2–5. Typical mangrove zone configurations. (Diagram courtesy Roy R. Lewis, III, from Lewis et al., "Mangrove Habitat and Fishery Resources of Florida" [1985]).

Site History

Mangroves may grow to 60-75 feet in height, and many forests encountered by earlier peoples would have towered over the trees at the Memorial today. The account of De Soto's journey by the anonymous "Gentleman from Elvas" describes the immediate area around their first encampment as "very fenny, and encumbered with dense thicket and high trees," and the whole countryside as "being of very high and thick woods."[6] However, over time such forests' scale and extent will vary greatly. Severe freezes kill back Tampa Bay mangroves every hundred years or so, pushing the coastal swamps back into the marshland stage of succession.[7] Hurricanes will also knock back mangrove forests severely, as has happened locally on multiple occasions within the modern era.[8] Their remarkable resilience typically allows these forests to recover from such events.

Historically, humans also changed the forest landscape. People of the late Archaic and other pre-contact cultures in Florida (see *Native American Occupation*, below), often relying heavily on the plentiful resources of coastal and estuarine environments, built shell mounds and villages, left middens, carved canals through the mangroves, and harvested wood for building construction, fuel, and other uses. Later colonists and settlers - Spanish, English and American - cut mangroves for charcoal.

Other Vegetation Communities

Without human influences, coastal grasses and other sand-binding beach species will colonize emerging sand spits like Shaw's Point. Pioneer beach species like seashore paspalum (*Paspalum vaginatum*), bitter panicgrass (*Panicum amarum*), sea oats (*Uniola paniculata*), baybean (*Canavalia rosea*), railroad vine (*Ipomoea pes-caprae*), beach sunflower (*Helianthus debilis* ssp. *vestitus*), coastal searocket (*Cakile lanceolata*), and sea purslane (*Sesuvium portulacastrum*) will move outward as accretion extends the shoreline, eventually to be replaced by successional vegetation: first, a shrubby coastal strand community dominated by seagrape (*Coccoloba uvifera*), which then evolves into a coastal hammock characterized by gumbo limbo (*Bursera simaruba*) and a variety of other tropical trees. As the shoreline moves further out, this transitions into an interior hammock, and cold-tolerant species like live oak (*Quercus virginiana*) and cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*) begin to outnumber the tropicals.

Where humans make the sandy soil more calcareous and the microclimate warmer by depositing shell, a characteristic suite of species adapted to those conditions forms a hammock type so distinctive that it is recognized as a separate natural community, called Shell Mound, by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory.[9] Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) often joins gumbo limbo on such sites, but seldom remains uncut for long since it provides such valued insect-resistant timber.

NPS archeologist Margo Schwadron's research indicates that people were constructing shell mounds or middens on this site by about 365 BCE,[10] which certainly would have altered the vegetation and hydrology of the mangroves as well as these other plant communities.

Native American Occupation: Pre-European Contact

Paleo-Indian and Archaic Cultures

Evidence shows that peoples have made use of the productive near-shore habitats in the vicinity of Shaw's Point as far back as the Archaic Period, when sea levels approached current levels, approximately 5,000 years ago; but human history in Florida begins much earlier. It was into the cooler, drier Florida of the tail end of the last ice age (c. 16,000 - 10,000 BCE), a landscape of open grasslands and scrub, that the first people came, hunting large game

6 Edward Gaylord Bourne (ed.) and Buckingham Smith (trans.), ***True Relation of the Vicissitudes That Attended the Governor Don Hernando de Soto and Some Nobles of Portugal in the Discovery of the Province of Florida Now Just Given by a Fidalgo of Elvas*** (www.americanjourneys.org/aj-021/ accessed July 6, 2016) 23-24.

7 Roy R. Lewis III, personal communication (February 28, 2016).

8 Thomas J. Smith III, et al., "Cumulative impacts of hurricanes on Florida mangrove ecosystems: Sediment deposition, storm surges and vegetation," ***Wetlands*** 29:1 (2009) 24-34.

9 Florida Natural Areas Inventory, ***Guide to the Natural Communities of Florida: 2010 edition*** (Tallahassee: Florida Natural Areas Inventory, 2010) 95.

10 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 13.

such as mastodon and giant sloth, but also largely subsisting on plants and on smaller animals.[11]

These first Floridians, termed Paleo-Indians, certainly would have occupied coastal sites, to take advantage of the plentiful resources of fish and shellfish; however, today's higher seas have covered any such sites.[12] (Throughout the time frame of known human presence in Florida, sea levels have fluctuated, with the overall trend moving significantly upward; thus, most coastal sites older than about 5,000 years remain unknown.) No traces of the people of this period have been found at Shaw's Point, although the nearby Harney Flats site, on the Hillsborough River, demonstrates that they used this region.[13]

The Archaic cultures that emerged approximately 8,000 BCE faced rising sea levels, an increasingly warm and wet climate, and a changing environment. Many large animal species went extinct in this period, likely due to a combination of hunting and habitat loss as oak and pine forests replaced the grasslands these animals depended on. Archaic settlements occurred primarily in the interior highlands, although coastal settlements increasingly appear along modern shorelines by the Middle Archaic period, 5000-3000 BCE. As with the Paleo-Indian period, the sea has most likely covered virtually all evidence for earlier use of the coastline.[14]

Archaic peoples responded to environmental change by making greater use of aquatic resources, and with technological innovations involving a great variety of tools made from shell and bone, in addition to stone, and the use of the atlatl, or throwing stick. Settlements around Tampa Bay, which began taking its modern, estuarine form approximately 5000 BCE, exemplify this trend, although no cultural resources from this period have been found at Shaw's Point.[15]

Shaw's Point

Woodland and Mississippian Period Cultures

Around 2,500 years ago, a diversity of pottery types emerges in the archeological record, signaling that Archaic peoples were establishing culturally distinct regional populations across Florida. During the Woodland period (500 BCE - 900 CE), the people of the Gulf Coast developed more complex and sophisticated tools, settlements, and societies, relying intensively on the now stable resources of the coastal environment. They fished and harvested shellfish, while also hunting animals and birds, and collecting fruits, nuts, and other plant products. They built shell mounds and middens, often very extensive ones, and frequently developed their primary settlements along estuaries at the edges of hammocks or mangroves. [16]

The Mississippian period (900 - 1500 CE), the last stage of pre-contact American Indian cultures in the southeast, represented "a period of monumental changes in material culture, sociopolitical organization, and religious practices. . . . [with] hierarchical societies, or chiefdoms; the development of settlement systems dominated by platform mound centers; and the use of ritual paraphernalia and religious symbols, indications of the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex . . . ."[17] At the De Soto National Memorial site, NPS archeologist Margo Schwadron's extensive investigations found that people of successive cultures known as Deptford, Manasota, and Safety Harbor had all

11 M. Russo and I.R. Quitmyer, "Sedentism in Coastal Populations of South Florida," in ***Case Studies in Environmental Archaeology***, ed. E.J. Reitz, L.A. Newsom, and S.J. Scudder (New York: Plenum Press, 1996) 215-232; Halligan et al., "Pre-Clovis Occupation 14,550 Years Ago at the Page-Ladson Site."

12 M.K. Faught, "The Underwater Archaeology of Paleolandscapes, Apalachee Bay, Florida," ***American Antiquity*** 69:2 (2004) 275-289; R.J. Ruppe, "The Archaeology of Drowned Terrestrial Sites: A Preliminary Report," in ***Florida Division of Archives History and Records Management, Bureau of Historic Sites and Properties, Bulletin No. 6*** (Tallahassee, FL: 1980) 35-45.

13 I.R. Daniel, "A Preliminary Model of Hunter-Gatherer Settlement in Central Florida," ***The Florida Anthropologist*** 38 (1985),261-275; I.R. Daniel and M. Wisenbaker, ***Harney Flats*** (Farmingdale: Baywood Press, 1987).

14 Russo and Quitmyer, "Sedentism in Coastal Populations."

15 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 36-37.

16 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 36-38; Jerald T. Milanich, ***Archaeology of Precolumbian Florida*** (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994); G. M. Luer and M.M. Almy, "A Definition of the Manasota Culture," ***The Florida Anthropologist*** 35 (1982) 34-58; Jerald T. Milanich, "Weeden Island Cultures," in ***The Woodland Southeast***, ed. by David G. Anderson and Robert C. Mainfort, Jr. (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002) 352-372.

17 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 41.

lived here, during a span of some 1,800 years or more, from c. 365 BCE to at least 1395 CE.

The Prehistoric Landscape at Shaw's Point

Most of the visible evidence of what the site's landscape might have looked like prior to the historic era has disappeared, destroyed by erosion or by modern development (see also sections *The Late Pioneer Period* and *The Early Modern Era*, pp. 24-29, below). Based on radiocarbon dating and on analysis of artifacts from the remnants of mounds and middens, Schwadron gave the estimated end date of occupation of 1395 noted above. Whether people lived on this site in the 15th, 16th, or 17th centuries, and if so, who they were and how they shaped it, the evidence does not tell us.

Approximations of what the site may have looked like come from interpretations of the archeological record, including both professional and amateur analyses, as well as the recollections of modern-era individuals as to what the site looked like before the destruction of the mounds. The *Late Pioneer* and *Early Modern* sections below (pp. 24-28) address this in more detail, as does the *Existing Conditions* chapter (see *Archeological Resources*, p. 77). An interpretive exhibit at the Memorial provides an artist's interpretation of what a mound and village may have looked like in this area, at the time of first European contact (Figure 2-6).

Schwadron provides two important perspectives on the site's evolution and appearance in the pre-contact era. First, her analyses found that the shape of the coastline changed with the relatively minor fluctuations in sea level of the past 3,000 years (Figure 2-7). They show that the site's earliest known surviving resource, the Deptford Period midden near the Point, was likely wholly or partially submerged for some periods of time, and that the spatial pattern of certain other features, specifically the shell ridges that people of successive time periods created, also reflects these shoreline changes.

Second, although no depictions of the actual prehistoric development of this site survive, Schwadron provides a useful summary description of the typical form of towns of the Safety Harbor culture:

> "Excavations of Safety Harbor mound-village complexes revealed town plans with truncated pyramidal mounds adjacent to plazas, surrounded by village middens and burial mounds. . . . Archeological investigations suggested that each Safety Harbor town had a single large flat-topped temple mound, which was periodically rebuilt. The mound served as the base of a wooden and thatched structure, probably the chief's residence. A ramp extended down the mound to the plaza, which was situated between the mound and the villagers' residences and kept clean of occupational debris. The village living area appeared to be a linear shell midden paralleling the Gulf or Tampa Bay."



FIGURE 2–6. Artist's rendering of mound/temple/village complex, displayed at the Memorial in January, 2016.

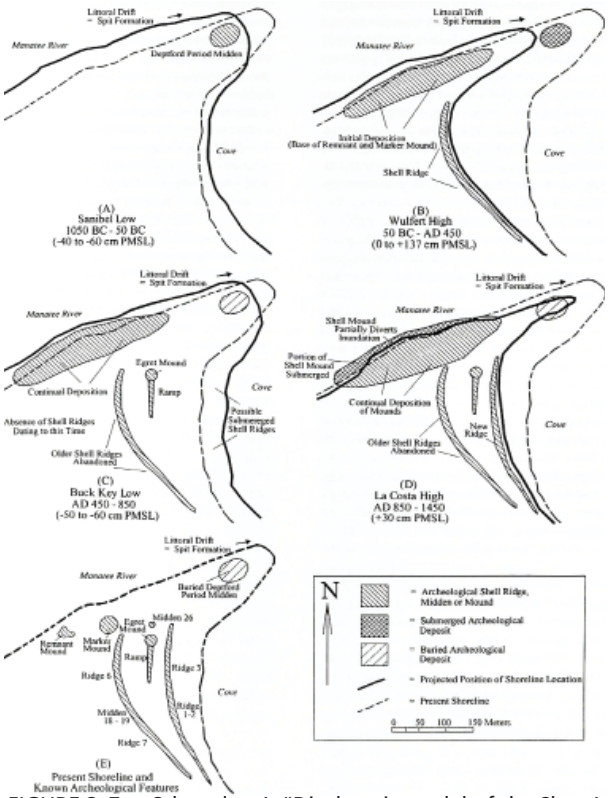


FIGURE 2–7. Schwadron's "Diachronic model of the Shaw's Point site over time." (***De Soto National Memorial*** 221)

Schwadron also points out that this suggested typical form "correlates closely with a de Soto party member's description of the 1539 town of Ucita near de Soto's landing camp: *The Town was seven or eight houses, built of timber and covered with palm leaves. The chief's house stood near the beach, upon a very high mount made by hand; at the other end of the town was a temple, on the top of which perched a wooden fowl with gilded eyes. (in Smith 1968)"*[18]

These suggestions that the Shaw's Point site was a substantial mound-village complex reinforce the images found in early archeological studies of the site and in oral histories provided by elderly area residents in the mid-20th century (see *The Late Pioneer Period*, pp. 24-26, below).

The Historic Period

Spanish Florida (c. 1513 - 1763)

First Contact and the De Soto Expedition

Hernando de Soto was not the first Spaniard to explore Florida's Gulf coast. In 1513, Juan Ponce de León sailed from Puerto Rico in search of new lands for the Spanish Crown. His voyage would land first on the peninsula's east coast where he christened the landmass *La Florida*, before traveling around the straits of Florida to Charlotte Harbor. Before he could return to colonize Florida in 1521, near the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River, other expeditions came to both the Atlantic (Pedro de Salazar c. 1514-1516) and Gulf coasts (Diego Miruelo c. 1516, Alonso Álvarez de Pineda 1519). Ponce de León's 1521 settlement survived only 3 months, after repeated attacks by the Calusa. Pánfilo de Narváez (1528) made a second, also unsuccessful attempt, landing at Tampa Bay - initially recorded as Bahía Honda.[19]

An anonymous 16th-century map (Figure 2-8, p. 17, below), sometomes referred to as "the De Soto map," illustrates many of the place-names detailed in historical documents of the De Soto expedition, including "Baya Honda." Some authorities estimate its date to around 1572, but others infer that it may have been drafted as early as 1544, based on the information that it includes.[20]

Hernando de Soto's forces landed in 1539, with the intent to establish the most suitable location for a permanent Spanish settlement. The expedition would last four years, traversing over 4,000 miles, and serving as the first European foray into the interior of what is now the southeastern United States. It helped to spark the era of colonial expansion that followed, transforming and disrupting cultures and environments in both the "Old" and "New" worlds.

De Soto's nine ships carried more than 600 men and several women, along with 220 horses, a cadre of war dogs, and a herd of pigs. They first camped for six weeks at a settlement called Ucita (or Oçita),[21] thought to be near the mouth of the Little Manatee River. The Spanish made several forays into the surrounding area, encountering the indigenous peoples of the Ucita and a nearby group, the Mococo, with both friendly and - more often - hostile results. A Spaniard, Juan Ortiz, a member of the 1528 Narváez expedition who had been subsequently captured and tortured by chief Ucita, and who was living under the protection of chief Mococo in 1539, was able to join De Soto as a translator.

As with the Narváez expedition before him, De Soto marched inland and northward towards Apalachee near present-day Tallahassee. While the precise landing site remains undiscovered, archeologists located the expedition's 1539-1540 winter encampment at Anhaica.[22] De Soto, a veteran of Francisco Pizarro's conquest of Peru, pushed

18 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 42.

19 Note: the expedition's story is well known to most Memorial staff, but is summarized here for the convenience of readers less familiar with it, and to provide background for later sections of the CLR.

20 Charles Hudson, ***Knights of Spain, Warriors of the Sun: Hernando de Soto and the South's Ancient Chiefdoms*** (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1998) 454. Image accessed at https://www.loc.gov/item/2003623374/ (July 7, 2016).

21 Numerous spellings have been used by various authors, as is often the case where Native American words have been translated into European languages. For consistency, this Report uses "Ucita" (which appears to be the most commonly used historical form), except when directly quoting other sources that use a different spelling, or when referring to "Camp Uzita," a facility within the park.

22 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 42; C. Ewen, "Anhaica: Discovery of Hernando de Soto's 1539-1940 Winter Camp," in ***First Encounters: Spanish Explorations in the Caribbean and the United States, 1492-1570***, ed. Jerald T. Milanich and Susan Milbrath (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1989) 110-118.

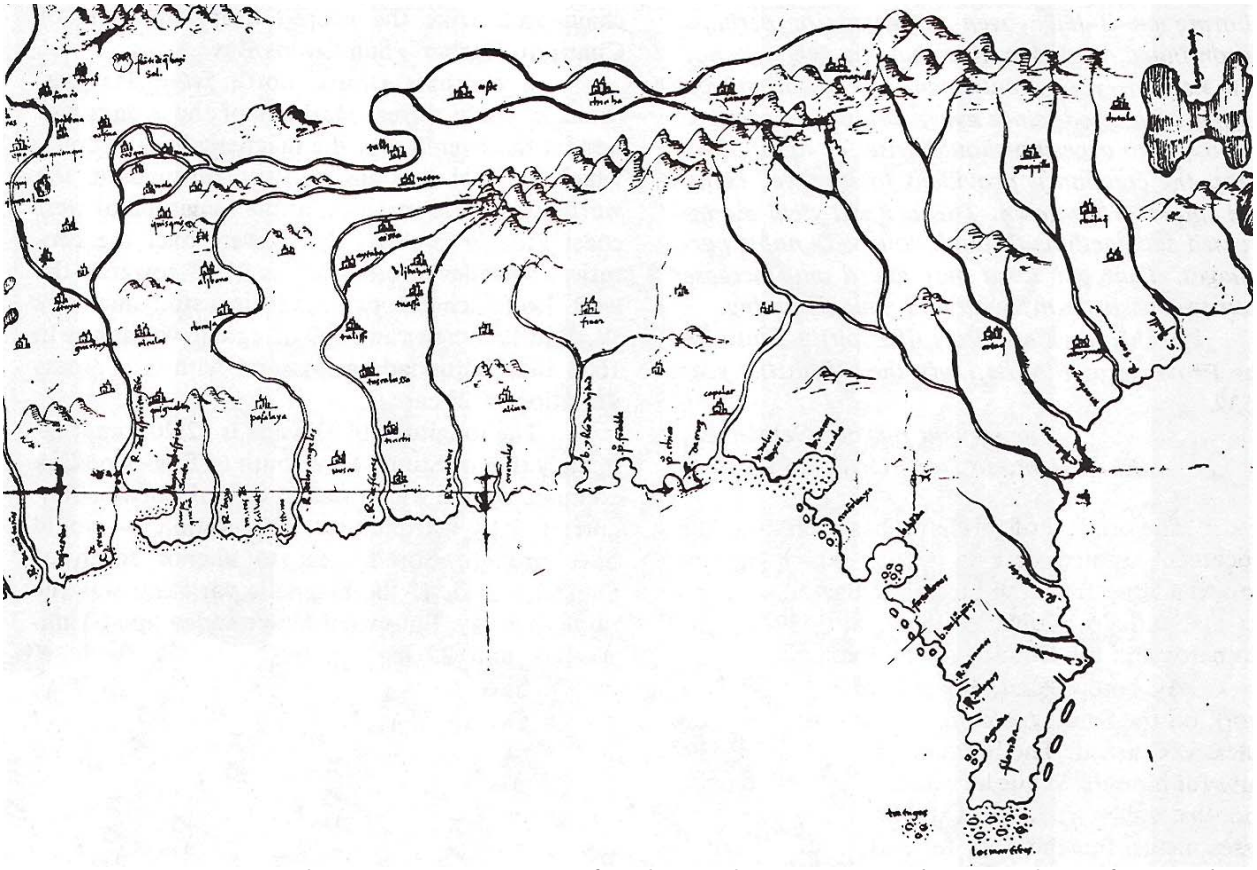


FIGURE 2–8. Anonymous 16th-century map sometimes referred to as "the De Soto map." (Courtesy Library of Congress)

further inland to explore mountainous regions of the southeast in hopes of finding precious metals. Over the next three years, he and his party would meander across lands that now form part of twelve states. They missed a planned resupply at Pensacola Bay, and continually supplemented their supplies with what they could trade for or, more often, take from the various tribes encountered. They occasionally had friendly contact, but more often fought with, kidnapped, and/or enslaved the inhabitants of these "new" lands. After De Soto's 1542 death in what is today Arkansas, the surviving members of the expedition - about half the original force - found their way back to the Mississippi River, where they constructed boats and sailed to Mexico.

Attempts to reconstruct the precise route of De Soto date back at least to the early eighteenth century. French cartographer Guillaume Delisle published a map of North American with De Soto's route in 1718.[23] However, scholars lacked much usable information until the early twentieth century, when improvements in topographic mapping and translations of early texts were published. The congressional appointment of the *United States De Soto Expedition Commission* in 1935, in advance of the 400th anniversary of the expedition, represented the most concerted attempt to establish a definitive route. Anthropologist John R. Swanton authored the Commission's report, which determined that Shaw's Point was the "the place where the greater part of De Soto's army landed."[24] He also identified Terra Ceia Island as the most likely location for De Soto's first encampment at Ucita.

In the decades since Swanton, however, the tools, methodologies and knowledge base available to archeologists and historians have all grown tremendously, in both scope and sophistication.[25] Archeologists have discovered additional information about sixteenth-century European

23 Charles Hudson, C.B. DePratter and M.T. Smith, "Hernando de Soto's Expedition through the Southern United States," in Milanich and Milbrath (eds.), ***First Encounters*** 77-98.

24 John R. Swanton, ***Final Report of the United States De Soto Expedition Commission*** (1939), quoted in Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 11.

25 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 51-53.

forays into the region, including confirmation of some interior settlements.[26]

In Florida, researchers have identified three sites in the vicinity of Tampa Bay – The Weeki Wachee, Ruth Smith, and Tatham burial mounds – as places with evidence of trade goods from the De Soto or Narváez expeditions.[27] However, based on the failure to find any archeological evidence for a Spanish presence on either Terra Ceia or Shaw's Point, as well as on ongoing scholarship on the expedition as a whole - analyzing both the documentary record and the ever-growing archeological database - most scholars now believe that De Soto's first encampment at Ucita was not on Terra Ceia Island, and that the landing did not take place at Shaw's Point.[28]

Ultimately, De Soto's mission failed in its original goals of establishing suitable sites for permanent settlements, finding gold, or converting indigenous peoples. However, the stories and documentary record that returned helped galvanize further European efforts to explore and colonize North America, a seminal event for subsequent world history and, ultimately, the origins of this country.

The expedition's records also provide a rare glimpse of the American Indian chiefdoms in the southeast, many at their final peak of sophistication and power. The expedition also, undoubtedly, played a role in their demise. These early European expeditions, including De Soto's, introduced bacteria and viruses to which American Indians had no natural immunity; such diseases decimated indigenous populations. Pigs and other European plants and animals, introduced by the explorers, also disrupted ecosystems on which the region's tribes depended. Colonial intrusion and military confrontations disrupted food supplies and existing power structures.

Within decades, many of the southeast's indigenous societies collapsed. With the exception of the Tristán de Luna (1559-1561) and Juan Pardo (1566-1568) expeditions that visited some of the same towns, a century would pass before Europeans would progress again into the region's interior. Records from later encounters provide a very different picture of the Southeast's American Indian societies, which by then had been transformed by massive population loss and political and economic upheaval.[29]

Spanish Florida

Between the time of first European contact and the ceding of Spanish Florida to England in 1763, Spanish explorers and, later, colonists tried to establish a permanent presence in this "new" world, with limited success. For the indigenous peoples of the region, the post-contact generations faced cultural upheaval and, ultimately, decimation.

Four sixteenth-century Spanish major expeditions, including De Soto's, provided accounts of the people and cultures around Tampa Bay.[30] Detailed coastal geography recorded by Pedro Menéndez Márquez, who had established a fort among the Tocobaga in 1567, provided the basis for the earliest

26 Hudson et al., " Hernando de Soto's Expedition" 82.

27 Jeffrey M. Mitchem, "The Ruth Smith, Weeki Wachee, and Tatham Mounds: Archaeological Evidence of Early Spanish Contact," ***The Florida Anthropologist*** 42:4 (1989) 317-339.

28 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 50-51.

29 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 47; Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 48-49; "Foundation Document" 3; Hudson et al., "Hernando de Soto's Expedition" 78; Robbie Etheridge and Jeffrey M. Mitchem, "The Interior South at the Time of Spanish Exploration," in ***Native and Spanish New Worlds: Sixteenth-Century Entradas in the American Southwest and Southeast***, ed. Clay Mathers, Jeffrey Mitchem and Charles M. Haecker (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013) 182-183.

30 Adorno and Pautz 2003; Buckingham Smith (trans.), ***Relation that Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca Gave of What Befel the Armament in Indias***. (Reprinted, Ann Arbor: University Microfilms March of America Series 9,1966); J. T. Milanich, ***Florida Indians and the Invasion from Europe*** (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995); J. A. Robertson, "The Account by a Gentleman from Elvas," in ***The De Soto Chronicles: The Expedition of Hernando de Soto to North America in 1539-1543, Vol. 2***, eds. L.A. Clayton, V.J. Knight, Jr, and E.C. Moore (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993); J.E. Worth, "Account of the Northern Conquest and Discovery of Hernando De Soto by Rodrigo Rangel, in ***The De Soto Chronicles: The Expedition of Hernando de Soto to North America in 1539-1543, Vol. 1***, eds. L.A. Clayton, V.J. Knight, Jr., and E.C. Moore (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1993); Hann, John H. (ed. and trans.), ***Missions to the Calusa*** (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1991); John E. Worth (ed. and trans.), ***Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narratives from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*** (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2014).

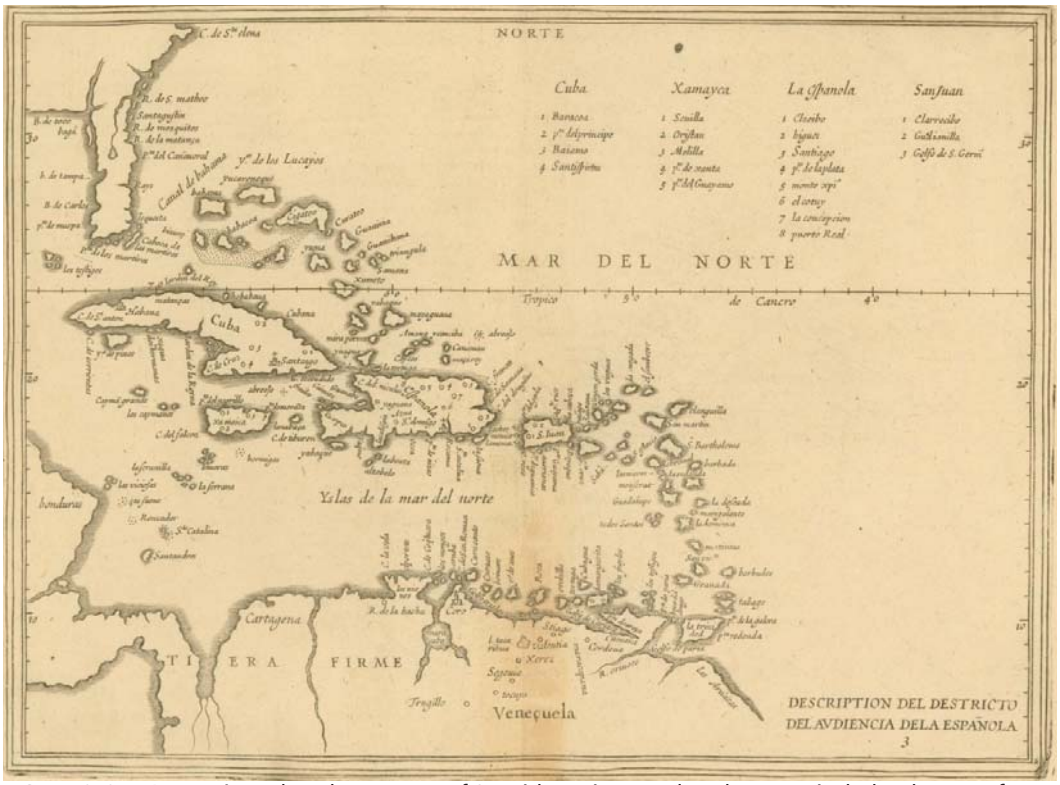


FIGURE 2–9. Juan López de Velasco's map of Spanish territory and trade routes includes the Bay of Tocobaga, copied and published by Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas in 1601. (Courtesy The J. Carter Brown Library Map Collection)

mapping of the "Bay of Tocobaga," by Juan López de Velasco (Figure 2-9).[31]

During a flare-up of tensions, Menéndez Márquez arrived at the fort one January day in 1568 to find the entire garrison murdered. In retaliation, he burned the Tocobaga temple and village.[32] Hostilities between the early Spanish colonists and the indigenous leadership continued to ebb and flow, well into the seventeenth century.[33] Despite the hostilities, the aboriginal communities of Pojoy in northern Tampa Bay and Alafaia near the southern part of bay survived into the early 1700s.

The disintegration of the Spanish mission system across northern Florida between 1704 and 1706 precipitated the displacement of local American Indian populations. Slave-raiding Muscogee [Creek] and Yamasee from the north, operating initially as British agents,[34] aggressively penetrated the peninsula. Some members of Tampa Bay's aboriginal communities likely assimilated with the new tribes, while others fled north to St. Augustine. By 1735, Franciscan clerics reported to the crown on the status of the American Indian nations of Florida: "All of these provinces and peoples today have been destroyed and none possess settlements."[35]

31 J.H. Hann, ***Indians of Central and South Florida 1513-1763*** (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003) 120-121; J. E. Worth, ***The Timucuan Chiefdoms of Spanish Florida, Vol. 2*** (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998), 17; J.E. Worth, "Pineland During the Spanish Period," in ***The Archaeology of Pineland***, eds. K.J. Walker and B.H. Marquardt (Gainesville: Institute of Archaeology and Paleoenvironmental Studies, 2013) 769; López de Velasco, ***1894 Geografía y Descripción Universal de las Indias***, (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia) 157-170; E. Lyon, "Pedro Menéndez's Plan for Settling La Florida," in Milanich and Milbrath (eds.), ***First Encounters*** 160-161.

32 Letter of Pedro Menéndez Márquez, March 28, 1568 (trans. John E. Worth), in Worth, ***Discovering Florida*** 270.

33 J.H. Hann, ***Indians of Central and South Florida 1513-1763*** (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 120-121; Worth, ***Timucuan Chiefdoms, Vol. 2*** 17; Worth, "Pineland During the Spanish Period" 769; Hann, ***Missions to the Calusa*** 9-12.

34 J. E. Worth, "Razing Florida: The Indian Slave Trade and the Devastation of Spanish Florida, 1659-1715," in ***Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone***, ed. R. Ethridge and S. Shuck-Hall (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009) 295-309.

35 Matthews, ***Edge of Wilderness*** 62

Early Settlement Period (1763-c. 1902)

In tracing the history of the Memorial's site, this Report finds the eventual destruction of the bulk of the shell mounds, beginning c. 1902 (the same year the railroad came to Sarasota), to mark the beginning of the modern era. It therefore defines the "Early Settlement" period as the span of time between the end of Spain's initial attempts at colonization (1763) and the commencement of the destruction of the mounds. During this period, official control of Florida passed to England, back to Spain (1783), and thence to the United States (1821-present), and settlement in the vicinity remained at a relatively low intensity.

Although Florida's indigenous cultures of the late Mississippian/early historic period - the Calusa, Timucua and Tocobaga, among others - had been decimated and displaced, this period also saw the emergence of new tribes, as American Indian refugees from wars and colonial expansion, mainly in Georgia and Alabama, moved south. Bands of people from numerous southeastern tribes, most of whom whites termed simply "Creeks," joined up with the few remaining survivors of Florida's earlier tribes and with free or escaped Africans to form what would come to be called the Seminole. First recorded as establishing the town of Alachua in 1740, the Seminole would go on to maintain their independence through three wars with the United States in the nineteenth century, never surrendering or signing a peace treaty. Although several thousand were forcibly relocated to Oklahoma, the descendants of these resilient people remain strong in Florida today, as the Seminole Tribe of Florida (federally recognized in 1957) and the Miccosukee Tribe of Florida (recognized 1961).[36]

Ranchos

For the period between the end of the fourteenth and the late eighteenth centuries, researchers have found almost no direct evidence of human use of the Memorial's site, either in physical traces, or in documentary records. By the early 1800s, however, evidence shows that William Bunce owned a fishing *rancho* on or adjacent to the point.



FIGURE 2–10. Fishing rancho showing typical wood and thatch buildings, cleared grounds (very possibly on a shell mound) and drying racks. (State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory.)

Cuban fishers had begun establishing seasonal fishing camps along Florida's coastal estuaries on the Gulf of Mexico in the early 1700s, even before the demise of the indigenous Florida tribes.[37] Fishers often established these ranchos on American Indian mound sites, where they built small thatch huts, manufactured nets from silk grass (Spanish bayonet, *Yucca aloifolia*) and prepared racks for drying fish. They caught and cured drum, pompano, and sea trout for transport back to Havana, along with turtle, fish roe, and shark liver oil.[38] In 1769, Bernard Romans, Deputy Surveyor General for the Southern District of the British Colonies, wrote that thirty or more vessels from Cuba engaged in the trade, employing 300 to 400 Spanish fishers and salting about 1,000 tons of fish each year.[39] By the 1780s, some fishers were living in the ranchos year-round, with cultivated gardens and citrus groves (Figure 2-10).[40]

These settlements represented a unique cultural assemblage: Cuban fishers, adapting their

36 James Leitch Wright, Jr., ***Creeks and Seminoles: The Destruction and Regeneration of the Muscogulge People*** (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990) 1-6; Daniel F. Littlefield, Jr., ***Africans and Seminoles: From Removal to Emancipation*** (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1977) 5; Official Seminole Tribe Website, www.semtribe.com/History (accessed February 29 and July 7, 2016).

37 John E. Worth, "Creolization in Southwest Florida: Cuban Fishermen and 'Spanish Indians,' ca. 1766-1841," ***Historical Archaeology*** 46:1 (2012) 143.

38 James W. Covington "Trade Relations Between Southwestern Florida and Cuba, 1660-1840," ***The Florida Historical Quarterly*** 32:2 (1959) 114, 118.

39 E. Ashby Hammond "The Spanish Fisheries of Charlotte Harbor," ***Florida Historical Quarterly*** 51:4 (1973) 363.

40 Dorothy Dodd, "Captain Bunce's Tampa Bay Fisheries, 1835-1840," ***The Florida Historical Quarterly*** 25:3 (1947). Figure credit: Image No. RC01936, ***Palmetto thatched hut houses***, n.d (1800s). State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory. <https://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/25793> (accessed March 31, 2016).

technologies to Florida's large estuaries, mixed with Muscogee [Creek] migrants who were breaking from their own cultural traditions to take up maritime fishing.[41] Many of the Spanish fishers married American Indian women; these marriages were legally recognized in Cuba. Although some of the children married members of the emerging Seminole tribe, most spoke Spanish and had not gone ten miles into the interior of Florida.[42] Additionally, many Africans who escaped slavery in Georgia or elsewhere in the southeast fled to Florida, and such escapees often joined these communities, as did free blacks.

Spain had ceded Florida to England in 1763, only to regain these lands in 1783. Through these transitions, conflicting reports depicted the ethnically mixed residents of the ranchos as either tax evading, uncivilized smugglers during English rule or as harmless, hardworking fishers during Spanish governance. After the transfer of Florida to U.S. control in 1821, authorities viewed these communities with increasing suspicion, especially for their harboring of fugitives from slavery. That same year, General William McIntosh led a force including 200 Coweta fighters into the Tampa Bay region; they destroyed the African maroon community of Angola (see also *Angola*, p. 22, below), re-captured several hundred fugitives, and continued raiding south to Charlotte Harbor where they destroyed other ranchos.[43]

Evidence for fishing ranchos on the Manatee River even prior to Florida's cession to the United States comes from several sources, including Spanish Land Grant applications filed in United States Territorial Courts; communications from the Governor of Cuba on the subject of trade with Florida's tribes; and a map by Jose d'Evia (Figure 2-11).[44]



FIGURE 2–11. 1783 Map of Bahia de Tampa by d'Evia. (Courtesy of the Florida Collection, University of South Florida Library)

41 Worth, "Creolization in Southwest Florida" 154.

42 Worth "Creolization in Southwest Florida" 120; Uzi Baram, "A Haven from Slavery on Florida's Gulf Coast," ***The African Diaspora Archaeology Network -June 2008 Newsletter***, 2-4. Worth posits that the so-called "Spanish Indians" represent a distinctive creole community that included American Indian and part-American Indian women who had married Spanish fishers, and the children resulting from these marriages, living an essentially Spanish lifestyle. These communities endured from circa 1766 to 1841. They pre-dated Seminole presence in southern Florida, and were geographically distinct from the Seminole as well.

43 Canter Brown, "Tales of Angola: Free Blacks, Red Stick Creeks, and International Intrigue in Spanish Southwest Florida, 1812-1821," in D. H. Jackson, Jr. and C. Brown, Jr. (eds.) ***Go Sound the Trumpet: Florida's African American History*** (Tampa: University of Tampa Press, 2005) 11-15; [Wasserman 2009] 191-198.

44 J. D. L. Holmes, "Two Spanish Expeditions to Southwest Florida, 1783-1793," ***Tequesta*** 25 (1965) 97-107; Worth, "Creolization in Southwest Florida" 144-145; J. W. Covington, "A Petition from Some Latin-American Fishermen, 1838," ***Tequesta*** 14 (1954) 61-65.

William Bunce's Rancho and the Tabby House

William Bunce had established his rancho at the mouth of the Manatee River by 1834, most likely at Shaw's Point.[45] Bunce stated in 1835 that he employed "about ten Spaniards and twenty Spanish Indians, most of the latter born and bred at the rancho on the coast."[46]

By 1835, military authorities in Florida were raising concerns about the number of so-called "Spanish Indians" living in the fishing establishments, away from a reservation in the interior of the state. On January 19, 1835, General Thompson's correspondence to the War Department characterized the ranchos as "unauthorized settlement[s] of negros, Indians and Spaniards (lawless bands)".[47]

The Army attacked Charlotte Harbor in 1836, an event that reportedly spurred approximately 100 "Spanish Indians" to flee Bunce's rancho; Bunce then evacuated, moving his entire group to Passage Key. Late the next year, a squadron under Commander Dallas burned Bunce's rancho on the Manatee. Dallas reported: "The buildings were worth in excess of $10,000, and in fact, one of these buildings, a concrete or tabby house, was still standing and survived the burning".[48] By 1838, General Jesup had captured the "Spanish Indian" refugees.[49] The multi-ethnic, coastal rancho communities had become intertwined with the U.S. struggle over Seminole relocation, and by 1841, the government had forcibly removed their American Indian and mixed-heritage wives and children to Arkansas.[50]

Many contemporary De Soto National Memorial documents attribute the tabby house ruin to William Shaw, who owned the property beginning in 1843 (see *The Seminole Wars and William Shaw*, p. 23, below).[51] However, other studies suggest that the house pre-dated William Shaw, and references such as Commander Dallas' above may support such an interpretation. Over a century later, a 1947 article in the Bradenton *Herald* included a statement by the Reverend Edward Gates, who was six when his family moved to the Manatee River, that the tabby house "was a ruin when my family came to Manatee in 1842."[52] Ceramics found during the limited archeological investigations of the tabby house to date may also support dates earlier than Shaw's, and possibly even earlier than Bunce's (see also *Angola*, below).[53] The type of tabby construction used may also suggest a construction date prior to 1830.[54]

Angola

Florida had offered a haven for Africans escaping from slavery in the British colonies since at least 1693, when the Spanish crown offered limited freedom to any who would accept Catholicism. During English rule (1763-83), many who escaped still chose to head south to Florida, where the Seminole, and other communities such as the ranchos, welcomed them. At the time that Florida was ceded back to Spain in 1783, Black Seminoles and other refugee communities as well as a number

45 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 51; Dodd, "Captain Bunce's Tampa Bay Fisheries" 246-256.

46 Bunce to Wiley Thompson [Indian Agent], January 9, 1835, quoted in Joe Warner, ***The Singing River: A History of the People, Places and Events Along the Manatee River*** (Bradenton: Self-published, 1986) 5.

47 "Captain William Bunce (Bunce's Pass)," typescript (n.d.) from the papers of Carl D. King, compiled by Walter P. Fuller (1968). Copy available in Eaton Reading Room, Bradenton Central Library.

48 Warner, ***Singing River*** 6.

49 George E. Buker, "Lieutenant Levin M. Powell, USN, Pioneer of Riverine Warfare," ***The Florida Historical Quarterly*** 47:3 (January, 1969) 256-258; Hammond, "The Spanish Fisheries of Charlotte Harbor" 374-379.

50 Worth, "Creolization in Southwest Florida" 153; William C. Sturtevant, "Chakaika and the 'Spanish Indians': Documentary Sources Compared With Seminole Tradition," ***Tequesta*** 13 (1953) 54.

51 "Foundation Document" 3; The ***National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for Shaw's Point Archeological District*** identifies 1843-56, Shaw's tenure, as the Period of Significance for the tabby house, although the attached descriptions discuss possible earlier associations.

52 Jack B. Leffingwell, "History Given of Ancient 'Tabby House' near City," ***Bradenton Herald*** (November 2, 1947) 3.

53 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 218; Sherry Robinson Svekis, "Hidden Histories: A Historical Archaeology Approach to the Tabby House Ruins at De Soto National Memorial Park" (BA Thesis, New College of Florida, 2005) 87.

54 Svekis, "Hidden Histories" 43-48.

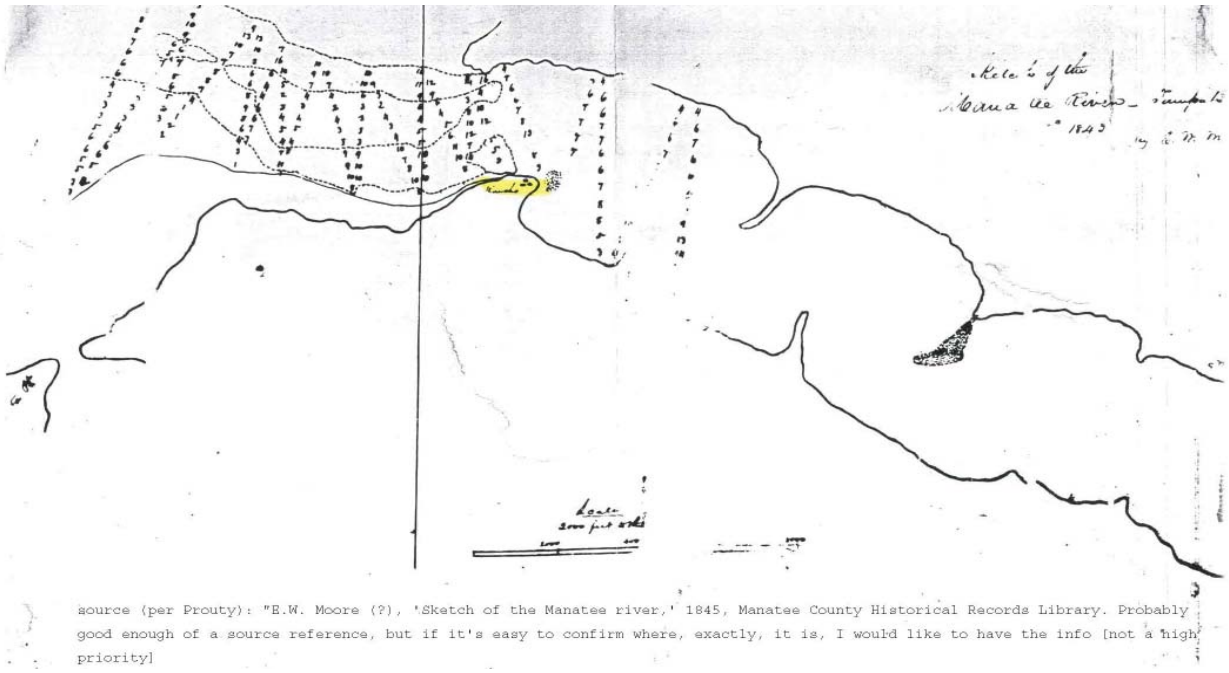


FIGURE 2–12. Sketch of the Manatee River,' 1845, Manatee County Historical Records Library; the spit of land that would become known as Shaw's Point is labeled "Rancho." (Copy, with highlighting by Ron Prouty, in DESO Archives)

of Black Seminole villages were well established in Florida.[55]

At the end of the War of 1812, black soldiers who had served with the British in West Florida decamped to Tampa Bay and established plantation communities at places that became known as Angola and Sarrazota.[56] Angola became a magnet for other black freedom-seekers; historian Canter Brown has placed this community on the south side of the Manatee River, an area that may have sheltered a number of such settlements. Margo Schwadron also references the name *Angulo* for the "large fishing rancho at Shaw's Point" that William Bunce bought in 1834.[57] Her report determined a Mean Ceramic Date of 1817 for the artifacts found at the site, based on the analytic formula developed by Stanley South; although the small size of the sample makes for less certainty, this finding offers at least a possibility that whoever inhabited the tabby house lived here during the time period of the 1810s-1820s.

55 Toni Carrier, "Black Seminoles, Maroons and Freedom Seekers in Florida," ***The USF Africana Heritage Project***, http://www.africanaheritage.com (accessed 2005).

56 Canter Brown, "The 'Sarrazota, or Runaway Negro Plantations:' Tampa Bay's First Black Community," ***Tampa Bay History*** 12 (Fall/Winter 1990) 2.

57 Brown, "The 'Sarrazota,'" 299-300; Baram, "A Haven from Slavery," 2-4; Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 51,68.

The Seminole Wars and William Shaw

The U.S. Army briefly used William Bunce's abandoned rancho as the site for Fort Starke during the Second Seminole War (1835-1842). Approximately 140 soldiers spent about six weeks there during the winter of 1840-41. The fort was an adjunct post for Sarasota's Fort Armistead: the available records do not indicate any substantive construction, and whatever structures the soldiers built may have been temporary in nature. A military trail connected the two outposts.

The U.S. and Seminoles ended hostilities in 1842, without a formal peace treaty; a very costly and difficult war had failed to fully subdue and remove the Seminoles. Seeking to stabilize and expand the United States' hold in Florida, Congress that year passed the Armed Occupation Act, which offered 160 acres of land to any head-of-household or single man who built a dwelling, worked at least five acres, and stayed at least 5 years.[58]

One of the area's first white settlers, Josiah Gates, sailed up the river in 1842, and reportedly encountered three "old Spanish men" living in the

58 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 51; Ron Prouty, "Shaw's Point" (research materials emailed to DESO Ranger B. Loadholtz, Oct. 14, 1996), copy in DESO Archives - ***Records of the Chief Ranger's Office 1949-2008***, Series III, Subseries A, Sub-subseries 1; Official Seminole Tribe Website, www.semtribe.com/History (accessed July 7, 2016).

tabby house. The next year, William Shaw filed for an armed occupation permit for a 165-acre tract including the tabby house and the present Memorial site.[59] He described his intended settlement lands as:

> "Lying at the mouth of the Mannattee River on the South side Line commencing at the Point known as 'Bunces Rancho' running thence in a South Westerly direction 900 yards or thereabouts – thence due South 750 yards thence due East – to the shore of the Mannattee River thence in a North Westerly direction following the curve of the River to the place of beginning Embracing about one Qtr section of Land there being on the same two high shell mounds."[60]

Shaw ran a thriving shipping business from the Point, where he lived with his wife Harriet and their children, but left no records or other evidence of where their house or other structures were; they may have lived in the tabby house, but no direct evidence reinforces that idea. Shaw's family may have divided its time between the river and Key West, where they had lived prior to settling here; the 1850 census counts them in Key West.[61]

In 1855, the Seminoles ambushed an Army reconnaissance party. The Third Seminole War (1855-1858) ensued as the U.S. military mobilized to apprehend the attackers. After a series of Seminole attacks on homes and plantations in the Manatee and Sarasota areas, the Shaws, like a number of other settlers, left the river. Shaw reportedly returned later, dismantled the family residence and rafted parts of it to their new home, Key West. During the war, a D. H. Tucker requested protection; he was living somewhere on Shaw's Point, as reflected on a map drawn by Lieut. E.M. Follett in 1851 (Figure 2-13).[62]

The Civil War

During the Civil War, armed forces again made use of the Point. Defenders with the Florida Volunteer Coast Guard used the mounds as a lookout and signal station, and at least five Confederate units occupied Shaw's Point in 1861-62. Their main fortification was later described as "a gun mounted on wheels on top of an Indian mound;" a Union commander's report, which was entered in to the Congressional Record, states that found it "to be an old Indian mound and barracks that had been lately occupied...to which we applied a match and burned [it] to the ground."[63] As with previous (and later) 19th-century occupants of the site, these participants in the site's history left no records indicating the landscape's appearance or configuration while they were there, or of changes to it that they may have wrought - at least, none that have been uncovered to date.

The Late Pioneer Period

The last decades of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth still represented pioneer

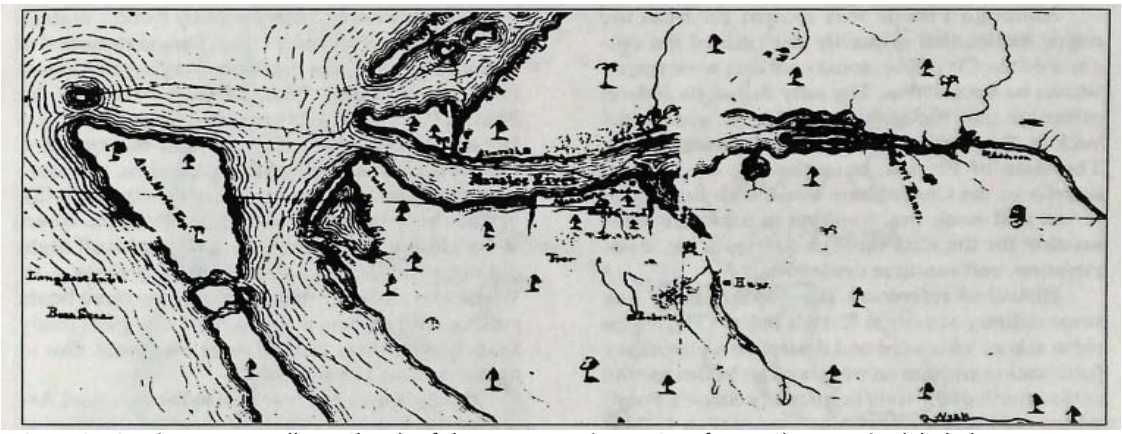


FIGURE 2–13. Lieut. E. M. Follett, 'Sketch of the Manatee River,' 1851; future Shaw's Point labeled "Turner." (Manatee County Historical Records Library; reproduced in Schwadron, ***Overview and Assessment***)

59 Margo Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial: Archeological Overview and Assessment - SEAC Accession 1324*** (Tallahassee: NPS Southeast Archeological Center, 1998) 42-44; Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** (2002) 52.

60 Svekis, "Hidden Histories" 39 and Appendix C.

61 Svekis "Hidden Histories" 40.

62 Official Seminole Tribe Website, www.semtribe.com/History (accessed February 29, 2016); Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 52; Follett map reproduced in Schwadron, ***Overview and Assessment*** 44-45; McDuffee, ***The Lures of Manatee*** 101; Warner, ***Singing River*** 8.

63 Matthews, ***Edge of Wilderness*** 256; McDuffee, ***The Lures of Manatee*** 125.

years in the Manatee area, and much of the rest of Florida. The federal government dredged a deeper channel into the Manatee River in 1880; in 1898, the outbreak of the Spanish-American War spurred significant improvements to harbors around the state. Such transportation improvements - harbors, railroads, and eventually automobiles - would lay the groundwork for a transformative era of growth in Florida, but by 1900 the Manatee County census still listed only 4,660 people.[64]

At Shaw's Point, whatever uses people made of the property, from Shaw's or Bunce's time up to the turn of the century, left few traces other than the tabby ruin, and people's recollections. Oral histories collected by Superintendent Vince Gannon in the early 1960s indicated that, sometime after the tabby's construction, three or four wooden buildings were built near it, and that "the surrounding grounds were well-cleared for some distance from around all the structures;" and that a cattle-loading dock operated there from the 1880s to about 1910, with cattle pens, runs, and chutes put in place near the Point to help manage the animals. Local historian Janet Snyder Matthews indicates that the docks were operated by McNeil and McKay and that area residents referred to the cove east of the Point as Cattle Dock Cove; in 1939, Bill Lathrop, helping to scout out sites for the proposed granite monument, pointed out to a Bradenton *Herald* reporter the remains of the old wharf pilings.

A 1947 *Herald* article quotes local historian Jack Leffingwell that the site, at one time or another, served as a post office, a quarantine station, a cemetery (for some who did not survive their quarantine), a cowboy camp, a trading post, and a tavern.[65] However, no photographic or direct documentary evidence corroborates these recollections, or even corroborates the existence of physical remnants (like the wharf pilings seen by the *Herald* reporter) that might confirm these earlier uses.

Early Archeology of the Shell Mounds

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, several researchers visited the site and examined the shell mounds, including Daniel G. Brinton (1859), Jeffries Wyman (1869), and Sylvanus T. Walker (1879). In the early decades of U.S. archeology, such investigators tended to focus on the description and classification of sites and materials, and these men did no major excavations and provided relatively little documentation. Brinton, like others of his era, misunderstood the shell mounds to be natural formations. Wyman's work, largely focused on the Atlantic coast and the St. Johns River, helped convince his peers that the mounds were built structures. [66]

Walker conducted more exploratory excavation than the two earlier visitors, and also had an opportunity to view a cross section of a large mound that was in the process of eroding away: "The shell heaps or mounds at this place extend along the shore 564 feet, and are from 15 to 20 feet in altitude at the highest points. The encroachment of the sea upon the northern front has cut away the slope and left a perpendicular wall 15 feet high, presenting a perfect section of the mound through its greater diameter, and affording a better view of its internal structure than could possibly be obtained by anything short of many months' labor and the expenditure of many hundreds of dollars."[67] Walker produced drawings of the Shaw's Point mounds as well. The plan drawing (Figure **2-14**) lacks reference points that would help to orient it in relation to the site today. The bottom of the drawing clearly represents north, or at least seaward, since that edge of the mound

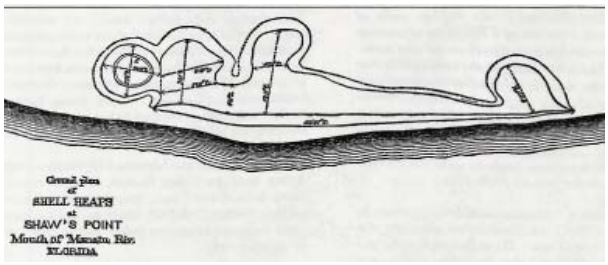


FIGURE 2–14. Sylvanus Walker's 1879 plan of the Shaw's Point mound. (Walker, "Report of the Shell Heaps of Tampa Bay, Florida," ***Smithsonian Institution Annual Report 1879***, reproduced in Schwadron, ***Overview and Assessment***)

64 U.S. Census Office, 1901, page xl, Table XV "Population of Counties."

65 Schwadron, ***Overview and Assessment*** 46, 75; Vince Gannon, Superintendent, Memorandum to Regional Director, "Beach Restoration and Nourishment, De Soto" (July 28, 1965; copy in DESO Archives) 5; Ellen B. Ehrenhard, "Archeological Data Section for a Preliminary Cultural Resource Management Plan, De Soto National Memorial" (unpublished; NPS Southeast Archeological Center, March 1982) 3; "Chamber of Commerce Making Plans to Have DeSoto Marker Erected At Shaw's Point Where Explorer Landed," ***Bradenton Herald*** (March 12,1939) 1; Matthews, ***Edge of Wilderness*** 304.

66 Schwadron, ***Overview and Assessment*** (1998) 51-52.

67 Sylvanus Walker, in Schwadron, ***Overview and Assessment*** (1998) 52.

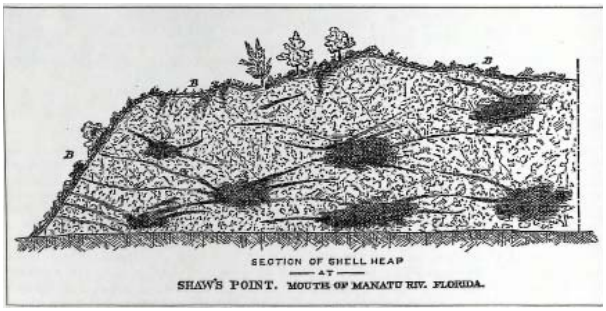


FIGURE 2–15. Walker's section drawing of the mound. (Walker, "Report of the Shell Heaps of Tampa Bay, Florida," ***Smithsonian Institution Annual Report 1879***, reproduced in Schwadron, ***Overview and Assessment.***)

appears to be the one cut away in "perfect section." Walker's section drawing conveys his insights into the construction processes of the mound, its stratigraphy and the inclusion of fire camps (Figure 2-15). A later attempt to locate Walker's plan elements in relation to the modern site, made by park Superintendent Vince Gannon in 1965, places most of the mound well offshore (Figure 2-16).[68]

To the extent that it can be assumed that Walker drew his cross-section based on a somewhat careful observation, and depiction, of the site, it also gives a glimpse of the vegetative cover of the mound and the character of the landscape at that time. It shows an open, generally low-growing cover of grasses and other plants, with occasional, scattered trees; this is consistent with the few surviving pictures from the early 1900s that show vegetation (see Figure 2-17), and with later observers' recollections that the area was kept clear beginning by at least the mid-1800s and continuing through the early 1900s.[69]

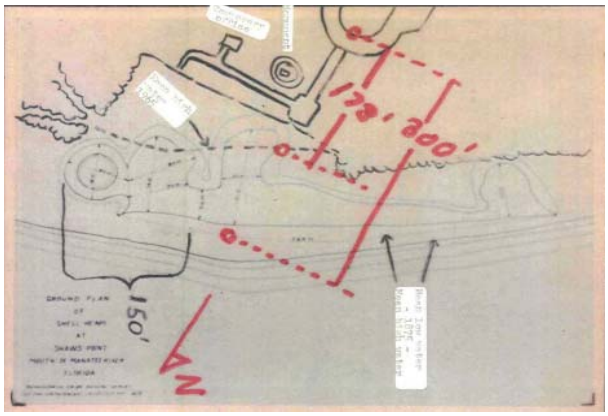


FIGURE 2–16. Vince Gannon's overlay of Walker's plan on the 1965 park site. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–17. Unidentified women on top of the Shaw's Point mound, 1915 (Manatee County Historical Society; reproduced in Schwadron, ***Overview and Assessment.***)

Spanning into the early modern era (see p. 27, below), local resident Charles T. Earle got perhaps the last look at the Shaw's Point mounds before they were almost entirely removed - as they appear today. Earle visited the site in 1920 and made carefully observed diagrams of what remained of the mounds

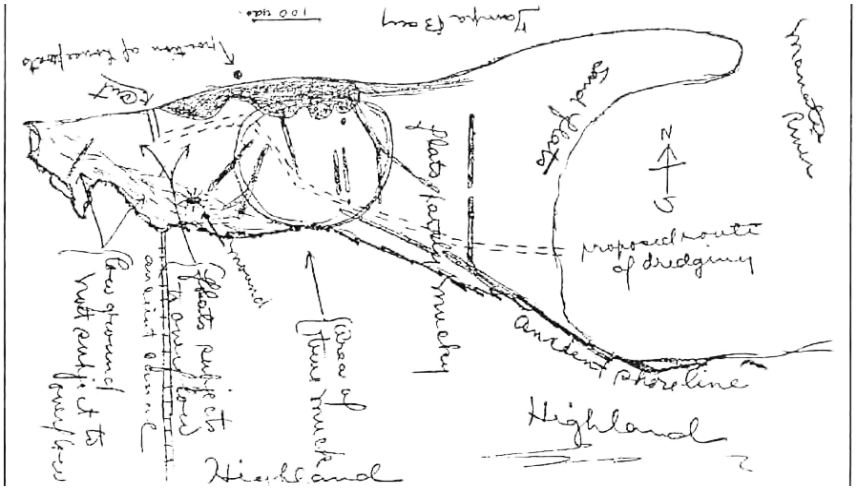


FIGURE 2–18. Earle's sketch of the Shaw's Point mound, 1920. (National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, reproduced in Schwadron and Mattick, "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the Shaw's Point Archeological District")

68 Gannon Memorandum, "Beach Restoration" 25 and attachment [last page in file].

69 Gannon Memorandum, "Beach Restoration" 4.

(Figure **2-18, p. 26, above**)). His drawings show striking similarities to Walker's plan view; he also mapped the low shell ridges, and identified them as archeological in origin.

Earle made several subsequent visits, as the site was being cleared and some of its muck-filled areas dredged in preparation for the construction of a resort (see *Boom Times and the Removal of the Mounds*, below). Earle collected a number of artifacts from the site and corresponded with J. W. Fewkes, Chief of the Bureau of American Ethnology in Washington, DC, through 1927. He encouraged the Smithsonian to take an interest in the site and may have influenced the developer, Ed Ballard, to try to preserve more of the site's archeological and natural resources.

Earle donated his artifact collections to the Smithsonian Institution. Subsequently, a number of archeologists - both avocational (Montague Tallant and William Plowden) and professional (Marshall T. Newman, John Goggin, and Ripley P. Bullen) - have collected artifacts from the site. These materials are now housed at the Museum of South Florida, the Florida State Museum, the Florida Museum of Natural History, the National Museum of the American Indian, and the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History.[70]

The Early Modern Era (c. 1902-1949)

Boom Times and the Removal of the Mounds

In 1902, crews building the Seaboard Air Line Railway's southward extension reached Sarasota, giving Manatee County residents reliable railway service. Electricity and telephones soon followed. In roadbuilding, Florida initially lagged behind other southern states; but by 1916 the Legislature, feeling pressure from local governments and businesses and the "Good Roads" movement, had created a State Road Department, and construction picked up dramatically.

Better roads, like better railroads, sparked opportunities for agriculture and other industries; roads, also, brought a new phenomenon, the automobile tourist. Real estate speculators and developers cashed in on the same idealized image of tropical Florida that tourism boosters used, and triggered a boom that reached its peak in the 1920s.



FIGURE 2–19. Partially removed mound, circa 1910. (Manatee County Historical Society; reproduced in Schwadron, ***Overview and Assessment***.)



FIGURE 2–20. Partially removed mound, circa 1910; appears to be the same mound visible in background of previous photo (Manatee County Historical Society; reproduced in Schwadron, ***Overview and Assessment.***)

Manatee County's total valuation shot up from$7.75 million in 1921 to $13.75 million in 1926.[71]

Booming tourism, real estate, development, and agriculture all counted on the state's rapidly expanding road network. Roadbuilders all over Florida discovered a ready supply of materials in the "Indian mounds" found throughout much of the state. Beginning in about 1902, local builders began taking the Shaw's Point mounds; this process continued until the once-vast mounds were virtually all gone. Figures 2-19 ands 2-20, dated 1910, show the removal in process. John Gover, who worked for then-owner Ed Ballard at the Shaw's Point property in 1920 and 1921, described it as having been a

70 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 60-62.

71 Martin Dodge, Director, ***Report of the Office of Public Road Inquiries: from Annual Reports, Department of Agriculture*** (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904) 422; "State Highway Department Proposed for Florida," ***Better Roads and Streets*** IV:10 (October, 1914) 18; Doris Davis, "The Tamiami Trail - Muck, Mosquitoes and Motorists: A Photo Essay" (www.nps.gov/bicy/learn/historyculture/upload/History-of-Tamiami-Trail.pdf, accessed March 6, 2016); McDuffee, ***The Lures of Manatee*** 321.

"huge Indian mound, so high and big that it built all the roads in Palma Sola, Cortez, and Bradenton."[72]

John Gover's job in 1921 was to help Ed Ballard turn Shaw's Point into an island, on which Ballard planned to build a romantic, million-dollar resort hotel. According to Charles Earle, Ballard expressed concern for the archeological resources on the site, and routed his proposed canal in such a way as to minimize their destruction (see Figure 2-18, p. 26, above). Earle also noted that Ballard scraped the site clear of vegetation, in preparation for his development. Gover worked a dragline for a year to dig the canal, which appears to be as far as Ballard's project progressed. The canal shows clearly on a 1940 aerial photograph (see Figure 2-35, p. 34, below), and parts remain visible as of 2016 (see *Existing Conditions* chapter, p. 89).[73]

Fanciful schemes such as this, to lure vacationers, home buyers, or investors to a Florida paradise, proliferated in the boom years. Florida increasingly entered the national consciousness in the late 19th and early 20th century, with an alluring brand built on an exotic, tropical image. As transportation improved, lands opened up. An expanded agricultural industry shipped out products that captured shoppers' imaginations: rare treats like oranges, or fresh tomatoes and celery in the dead of winter; or strange and wonderful new foods like bananas, grapefruits, and avocados.[74]

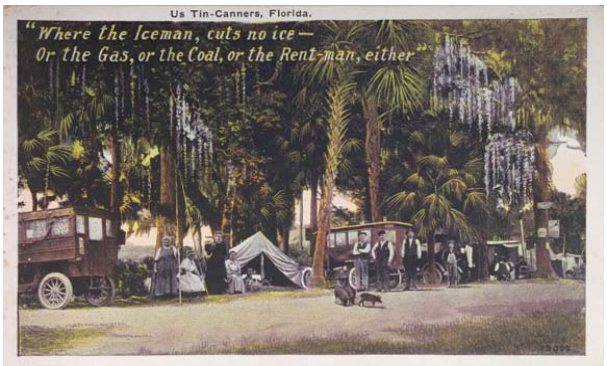


FIGURE 2–21. Tin-canners postcard, c. 1920s-1930s, from the exhibit ***Visions of Paradise: Florida in the Popular Imagination*** at the Museum of Florida History. (Photo: Ray Stanyard; www.museumoffloridahistory.com/ exhibits/permanent/visions, accessed July 17, 2013)



FIGURE 2–22. ***Timucuans Farming***, c. 1564, Theodore de Bry; purportedly based on first-hand observations by Jacques Le Moyne, but possibly copied after paintings by John White. (Florida State Archives)

A benevolent climate promised freedom from the discomfort and cost of living in the north, and wide open, undeveloped landscapes offered a chance to own - or visit - a piece of paradise at affordable prices. Soldiers billeted in Florida during the Spanish-American War or World War I came back for the opportunity. Especially beginning in the 1910s, with the expansion of the paved road network, "tin-can tourists" flooded the state, exploring heretofore little-known interior sections, as well as established destinations along the coasts, and looking for unique and interesting places. So-called for their stores of canned food that typically filled their vehicles, the tin-canners represented an expansion of the tourism market: as opposed to the wealthy customers of the existing resorts, they were middle- and working-class people, taking advantage of the freedom created by cars and roads to come "from snow to paradise" (Figure 2-21).[75]

72 Florida Natural Areas Inventory, ***Guide to the Natural Communities of Florida*** 85; Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 53; Warner, ***Singing River*** 11.

73 Warner, ***Singing River***, 11; Earle quoted in the "National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the Shaw's Point Archeological District" (February 2001) sec. 7, p. 8.

74 David Fairchild, ***The World Was My Garden: Travels of a Plant Explorer*** (Reprint: Miami: Banyan Books, 1982) 114-115, 310, 338.

75 "Tin-Can Tourism" (www.floridamemory.com, accessed June 29, 2016) 1; Kenneth L. Roberts, ***Sun Hunting: Adventures and Observations among the Native and Migratory Tribes of Florida, including the Stoical Time-Killers of Palm Beach, the Gentle and Gregarious Tin-Canners of the Remote Interior, and the Vivacious and Semi-Violent Peoples of Miami and Its Purlieus*** (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1922) 87-89; The Miamian XVII (January, 1936) 9, quoted in Paul S. George, "Passage to a New Eden: Tourism in Miami from Flagler through Everest G. Sewell," ***The Florida Historical Quarterly*** 59:4 (April, 1981) 460.



FIGURE 2–23. Florida Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Immigration promotional booklet, 1931. Compare to Fig. 2-22, above. Museum of Florida History, ***Visions of Paradise*** exhibit. (Photo: Ray Stanyard; www.museumoffloridahistory.com/ exhibits/ permanent/visions, accessed July 17, 2013)

Some of the roots of this image of Florida trace back as far as the earliest years of European exploration (Figure 2-22, p. 28, above).[76] While the soldiers, settlers, and priests who suffered and died alongside Ponce de Leon, Narvaez or De Soto probably saw it differently, this paradisiacal image of Florida would persist in modern times, helping to transform it from a sleepy, southern backwater to the country's fourth most populous state and its most-visited tourism destination in the course of the 20th century.[77] Perhaps ironically, its turbulent heritage as Spanish Florida would become one more ingredient in the state's "exotic" flavor, with De Soto himself front and center.[78]

The 1939 De Soto Monument

As the 400th anniversary of De Soto's landing in La Florida approached, Floridians - like people all over the country - were struggling to emerge from the Great Depression. Florida's economic pain had started earlier than the rest of the country's, when the Florida land boom's bubble burst in 1926, followed shortly thereafter (1926 and 1928) by two deadly and very destructive hurricanes. At the same time, the tourism industry, young, unruly, and rapidly growing, offered a rare bit of economic hope. Tourism income, at small family-owned campgrounds, restaurants, and often quirky or hastily thrown-together roadside attractions, helped keep many Floridians afloat.[79]

Any theme that could grab a tourist's attention might spark a festival or a roadside attraction: jungle gardens and Edens, alligator farms and alligator-wrestling venues, tropical birds and monkeys, "burning springs" and gardens set to music, Asian monasteries and Spanish pirates. The Seminoles were early exploiters of the opportunity, building small roadside attractions or simply opening up parts of their villages, in much the same way that cash-strapped English aristocrats would soon open up parts of their great houses to the paying public. The story of Ponce de Leon inspired more than one Fountain of Youth attraction.[80]

The growing interest in De Soto, as the anniversary approached, thus reflected two strong motives. History-minded officials, scholars, and other citizens with an interest in commemorating and teaching about this pivotal, historic event were joined by business people and city leaders interested in competing for the tourist dollars that

76 Mormino, ***Land of Sunshine*** 79; Ammidown, "Edens, Underworlds and Shrines" 240. Ammidown notes that an English-language edition of Theodore de Bry's 16th-century work depicting an idyllic native Florida (Fig. XX) appeared in 1875. Questions about their source are discussed in Jerald T. Milanich, "Alligators With Ears? Theodore de Bry's Engravings of Timucua Indians" in T. M. Schober (ed.), ***ArtCalusa*** (Fort Myers: Lee Trust for Historic Preservation, 2013) 12-14, as well as other sources.

77 Mormino, ***Land of Sunshine*** 335-336; State of Florida - Quick Facts (http://www.stateofflorida.com/facts.aspx, accessed June 20, 2016).

78 Mormino, ***Land of Sunshine*** 79; Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 15, 22-23, 25-26.

79 Nelson, David, "When Modern Tourism Was Born: Florida at the World Fairs and on the World Stage in the 1930s," ***The Florida Historical Quarterly*** 88:4 (Spring 2010) 452-453, 460-461; City of St. Petersburg, ***Sunken Gardens Cultural Landscape Report*** (October, 2012) 15.

80 Ammidown, "Edens, Underworlds and Shrines" 243-258; Mormino, ***Land of Sunshine*** 79; Patsy West, I***mages of America: The Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes of Southern Florida*** (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2002) 57-62.

De Soto-related publicity could bring; no doubt, both motivations overlapped in many cases.

In 1935, the 74th Congress authorized the *United States De Soto Expedition Commission,* for the purpose of producing recommendations for the national observance of the expedition's upcoming 400th anniversary. The Joint Resolution expressed the desire that the occasion be "properly celebrated and markers placed at such points along the route of [the] expedition as may be definitely determined and established after thorough investigation."[81] The President appointed seven members, led by anthropologist John R. Swanton, an expert in American Indian tribes of the Southeast who worked at the Smithsonian Bureau of Ethnology. The other members, all prominent citizens from the southeastern states that the expedition had traversed, came from varied walks of life: a judge, a leading businessman, a journalist, and a pioneering woman forester, among others. Several had training or experience in archeology and the study of American Indian cultures.[82]

In February, 1939, the City of Tampa hosted the United States' *Pan-American Hernando De Soto Exposition* at its Florida State Fair. At the same time, Swanton and the Commission were preparing to release their final report - previously submitted to Congress, in December 1938 - that determined Shaw's Point to be the expedition's landing spot. The official announcement came in early March, 1939. By that time, the Florida chapter of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America, which had advance notice of the Commission's findings, was already working on plans for a granite monument to De Soto, to be placed at or near Shaw's Point. The Manatee County Commission and the Bradenton Chamber of Commerce both became partners in the effort.[83]

The Colonial Dames

Interest in the 400th anniversary had been building since at least 1923, when the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America had established a "DeSoto Committee" to begin planning for the anniversary. Earlier that year, the Mississippi chapter had erected a monument to the expedition's 1540-41 winter encampment in that region, and the National Society subsequently expanded on the idea, charging its new Committee with planning a "great celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the Mississippi River by Hernando de Soto." Between 1929, when the Society adopted the Committee's recommendations, and 1937, when they began working directly with John R. Swanton and the De Soto Expedition Commission, Committee members developed ideas for a series of celebrations and educational displays; they also worked at figuring out and marking De Soto's route across maps of each of the southeastern states he had crossed.

The Colonial Dames' Committee met with the federally appointed Commission in the spring of 1937, and shared the results of their work to date.[84] Swanton also spoke at the Colonial Dames' national meeting, later that year.[85] Throughout 1938, the Colonial Dames' De Soto Committee advocated for their planned celebrations, through correspondence, radio publicity, and open meetings in Memphis and in Washington, DC, to which influential men were invited as guests and, often, speakers. They reached out to members of Congress and other officials as well as to foreign dignitaries, "Chambers of Commerce along the Mississippi," and leaders of "the great Transportation Companies, Railroads and Inland Waterways;" they helped spur the creation of the "Mississippi River Discovery Association," formed by "leading men of the Mississippi Valley." As the Society's chronicler of the effort put it, "It may, perhaps, seem a bold thing for women to plan with such a group as this, but Homer in his Odyssey said: 'A decent boldness makes friends for itself.'"[86]

The Colonial Dames' influence on the national plans for the De Soto 400th anniversary commemoration and their involvement in the creation of the Shaw's Point De Soto Monument reflected a long tradition of leadership by such women's groups in the field of historic preservation. Initiatives at Mt. Vernon in the

81 Public Resolution 74-57, August 26, 1935 (http://legisworks.org/congress/74/pubres-57.pdf, accessed June 29, 2016).

82 Steward, ***John Reed Swanton*** 333-335; Whisnant and Whisnant ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 9 provides further detail on the Commission's members.

83 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 11-13.

84 "Historical Sketch of the DeSoto Committee of The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America."

85 Steward, ***John Reed Swanton*** 348.

86 "An Historical Sketch of the DeSoto Committee of The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America."

1850s were among the first; women's associations continued to spearhead efforts to protect, and promote understanding of, important historical resources throughout the ensuing century and a half. The writer of the c. 1938 "Historical Sketch" of the Colonial Dames' De Soto Committee displays a broader cultural perspective on the event's significance than would most De Soto celebrations of the next fifty years:

> "Hernando DeSoto's Expedition is of vastly greater importance than the reasons which originally motivated it, because through it we learn of the interior of our present Southeastern States. The recorded Indian village sites, trails or river crossings give depth to our knowledge of prehistoric remains and fascinating folk lore of the early Americans. . . . A Patriotic Society may fulfill its mission most comprehensively by an active campaign for the protection of historic wealth, some of which is not to be found on the shelves of libraries or in the depositories of manuscripts, but in the great earth-bound volumes of the Mounds, Village and Burial Sites of our predecessors on this continent . . . ."[87]

The Monument Installation, 1939

The Florida Chapter of the Colonial Dames, the Bradenton Chamber of Commerce, and the Manatee County Commission all played essential roles in getting the De Soto Monument placed at Shaw's Point in time for the May 30, 1939 anniversary of De Soto's landing. The Colonial Dames commissioned and paid for the granite marker, designed by Col. John Fordyce of Arkansas - an engineer, explorer, archeologist and member of the U.S. De Soto Expedition Commission - and fabricated by Clark Memorials in Macon, Georgia. They worked with the local committee on the details of its siting, lobbying the County Commission for help in securing a site as near as possible to the Point.

The Chamber of Commerce persuaded the "Ballard heirs" to donate land at Shaw's Point. Although the Chamber committee sought a donation of 18 acres, enough to establish a park (which they hoped to convince the "National Park Commission" to adopt), the owners only agreed to give a little over an acre, just enough for the monument and a small setting. The County Commission provided convict laborers who cleared the site and built the road to it, following the alignment of an older public road that had fallen into disuse.

At the time, the Bradenton *Herald* described the site as "dense jungle," which prevented the Colonial Dames' representatives from even reaching the Point on their first attempt; they managed on the second, after "a hectic struggle." The County Commissioners had tried to suggest alternate sites, fearing that the monument would end up "at an inaccessible place and seldom seen by visitors." Ultimately, they deferred to the Colonial Dames, who wanted their marker installed at the landing place that the U.S. De Soto Commission had confirmed. [88]

In preparing the site, the crews cleared mangroves, constructed a wood bridge over the 1921 canal, and placed fill for the road, as well as adding to



FIGURE 2–24. The marker, c. 1939, on apparently new sand fill. (DESO Archives)

87 William J. Murtagh, ***Keeping Time: The History and Theory of Preservation in America*** (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2006) 21-23; Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 12; "An Historical Sketch of the DeSoto Committee of The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America."

88 "Chamber of Commerce Making Plans to Have DeSoto Marker Erected," ***Bradenton Herald***, (March 12, 1939) 1; "Commission Collaborates With Memorial Committee," ***Bradenton Herald*** (March 21, 1939) 4; Whisnant and Whisnant, Small ***Park, Large Issues*** 13-14; "U.S. DeSoto Body Establishes Landing Site," ***Bradenton Herald*** (March 7, 1939) 1.



FIGURE 2–25. View southwest to marker; this photo also appeared in the May 28, 1939 ***Bradenton Herald***. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–26. View south to face of marker, n.d. (probably c. 1939-1940), from the water's edge. (DESO Archives)

the remnant mound where the marker would be placed. They also added fill, which may have been hydraulically pumped from a borrow pit just offshore, to build a wider beach in front of the monument's location. The crews preserved the existing gumbo limbo trees and cedar, which suggests that the depth of fill on the marker mound was not extensive, as the trees survived.[89] Figures

89 Gannon Memorandum, "Beach Restoration" 6; the borrow pit is visible on a 1940 aerial (Figure 2-35, p. 34); "Road is Cleared by Convict Gang to Shaw's Point," ***Bradenton Herald*** (March 30, 1939) 12; Gannon Memorandum, "Beach Restoration" 4.



FIGURE 2–27. Re-enactors portray De Soto meeting American Indians, n.d. (probably early 1940s). Note the costumes, unlike any worn by Floridian tribes. (DESO Archives)

2-24 to 2-26 show the appearance of the site at or shortly after the installation of the monument. The dedication ceremony occurred on the May 30, 1939 landing anniversary as planned, accompanied by a parade organized by the Chamber of Commerce.[90]

1939 - 1949: Promotion and Advocacy

The Bradenton community began a tradition of De Soto Celebration "pageants" in 1941 (Figure 2-27). These included a re-enactment of De Soto's landing, parades, beauty pageants, and theatrical productions that portrayed the adventures of De Soto and his men in their search for gold, and paid homage to Manatee County past and present. These festivities celebrated the romanticized Spanish past, with a keen focus on the appeal to tourists. They served as but one of a host of such events, designed to swell the ranks of visitors to the Gulf Coast, such as a Gasparilla [pirate] Festival, Swamp Buggy Races, Epiphany Celebration, and Tin-Can Tourists Convention.[91]

During the decade after the monument's dedication, community leaders continued to advocate for the NPS to be given control of Shaw's Point as a national memorial. A 1947 report by NPS Regional Historian Roy Appleman gives his impressions of Shaw's

90 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 14.

91 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 15-17; "DeSoto Pageant Outstanding in Winter Season," ***Bradenton Herald*** (January 27, 1941); Mormino, ***Land of Sunshine*** 79.



FIGURE 2–28. View southwest to marker, 1947. Roy Appleman's caption states that "the foreground was raised...by means of an hydraulic fill about the time the marker was erected (1939). Mangrove forest and marshy ground lie beyond the marker." (DESO Archives)

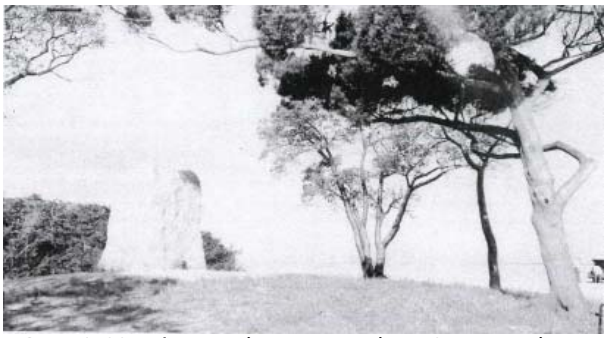


FIGURE 2–29. View northwest to marker, 1947. Lawn has replaced the sand of earlier pictures. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–30. Remnant, eroding portion of shell mound, west of parking area, 1947. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–31. View west from directly in front of the marker, at low tide, 1947. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–32. View from beach in front of marker looking east, toward the Point, 1947. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–33. View from Shaw's Point south, across the cove, 1947. Appleman's Report stresses the value of this and similar "unspoiled" coastline views. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–34. View from Shaw's Point south, across the cove, 1947. (DESO Archives)

Point and two other sites thought to have De Soto associations, Terra Ceia Island and Snead's Island. Some of the photographs he attached are included herein (Figures 2-28 to 2-34). Appleman's analysis of Shaw's Point warned that the site was low-lying, covered largely with mangrove swamp, and prone to tidal inundation. He found it virtually impossible to traverse, other than along the shoreline, around the marker, and along a few slightly higher bits of terrain; he noted that any construction would probably require costly filling and draining. Appleman also pointed out that if it were to become a national memorial, the site's most advantageous building spot would be the easternmost tip, where there was at least somewhat higher ground, and striking views up and down the river as well as south into the cove. He stressed the need for adequate land acquisition for any national memorial site, especially of shorefront that is visible from the Point. Without it, he predicted that this "interesting and unspoiled . . . section of the subtropical Florida West Coast," a bit of "great beauty [that] is just as De Soto might

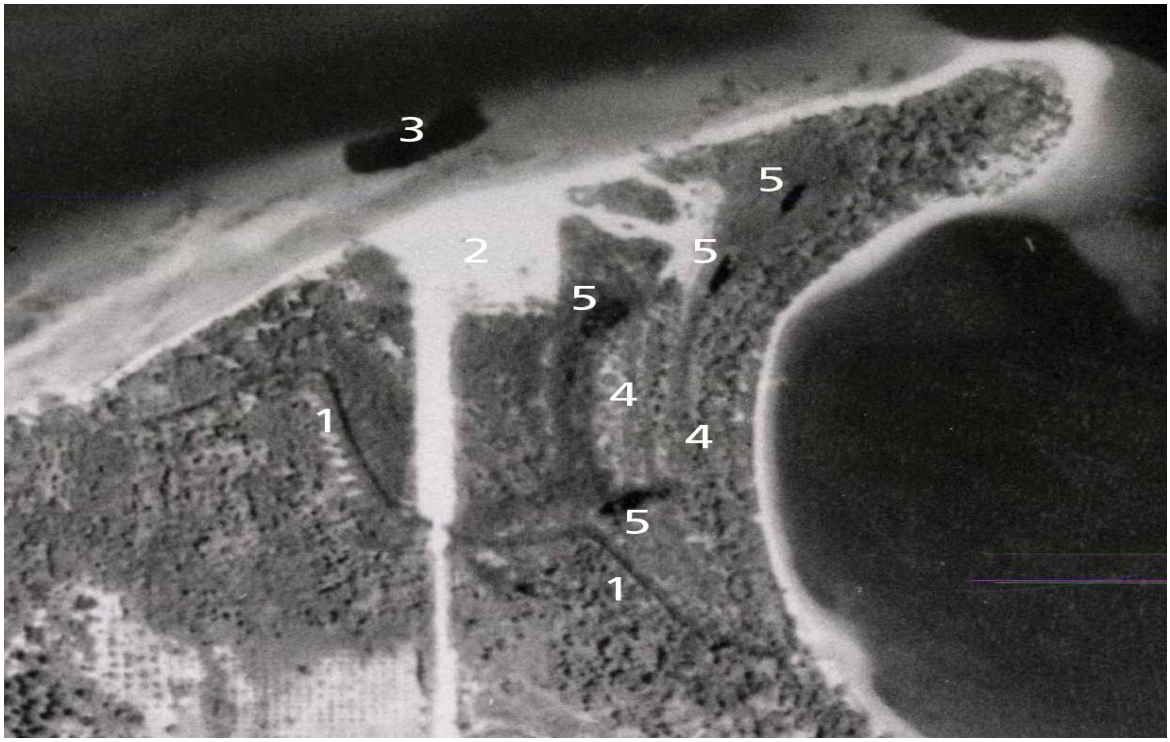


FIGURE 2–35. Aerial view, 1940. Key features visible in the photograph include: (1) John Gover's 1921 canal; (2) one-acre area cleared by Manatee County in 1939 for the monument, parking and beach; (3) dredged area from which fill was taken for the work; (4) shell ridges parallel to the cove shoreline; and (5) several small ponds. Roy Appleman's 1947 Report noted that the lower-lying areas appear darker in the image, and the higher areas lighter. (DESO Archives)

have seen it 400 years ago," would become full of residential and other types of development.[92]

The campaign to make the De Soto Monument site a national memorial finally succeeded, in 1948. Congress authorized the De Soto National Memorial in March, 1948, for "the purpose of establishing an appropriate memorial to Hernando de Soto," and to construct "a suitable memorial structure, together with such connecting roads and public facilities as may be desirable," for the benefit of the people of the Unites States. The authorization capped land acquisition at 25 acres. Later that year, Owners W.D. Sugg and Lowry Blake agreed to donate 22.6 acres for the Memorial. Sugg and Blake had bought the land in 1940, not long after the monument's installation, from the Lost River Investment Company, an Indiana corporation associated with the Ballard family. They retained several hundred acres surrounding the proposed Memorial site, and were likely aware of the positive impact on land values that the park's establishment would have. The donation ended up being 24.18 acres, formally transferred in June, 1949. The federal order establishing the De Soto National Memorial entered the Federal Register that August.[93]

The National Park Service (1949-present)

De Soto National Memorial was dedicated on March 24, 1950, in a ceremony attended by an estimated 750 people. Mrs. Peter Arrington, Vice President of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, spoke first, followed by NPS Assistant Director Conrad Wirth and Congressman Hardin Peterson from Florida's First District.[94]

92 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 18-19; Roy E. Appleman, "Report on Shaw's Point, Bradenton, Florida, Site of Proposed De Soto Memorial" (April 4, 1947)12-13 (copy in DESO Archives).

93 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 20-21; "Deed of Sale" to Sugg and Blake from Lost River Investment Co. (Harry Ballard, Vice President), October 28th, 1940 (Copy in DESO Archives, ***Land Records and Deeds [1948-2006]***); Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 153-154.

94 "Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Report" [hereinafter SMNR] March 1950 (April 1, 1950) 1; and "Program, Dedicatory Exercises, De Soto National Memorial, March 24, 1950;" in ***Records of the Superintendent's Office, Series I, Subseries A***, DESO Archives. NOTE: all of the SMNR citations in this chapter are from this source, unless otherwise indicated.



FIGURE 2–36. Representatives of the National Society of Colonial Dames of America at the dedication of the De Soto National Memorial, March 24, 1950. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–37. Road to the park, June 1950. (DESO Archives)

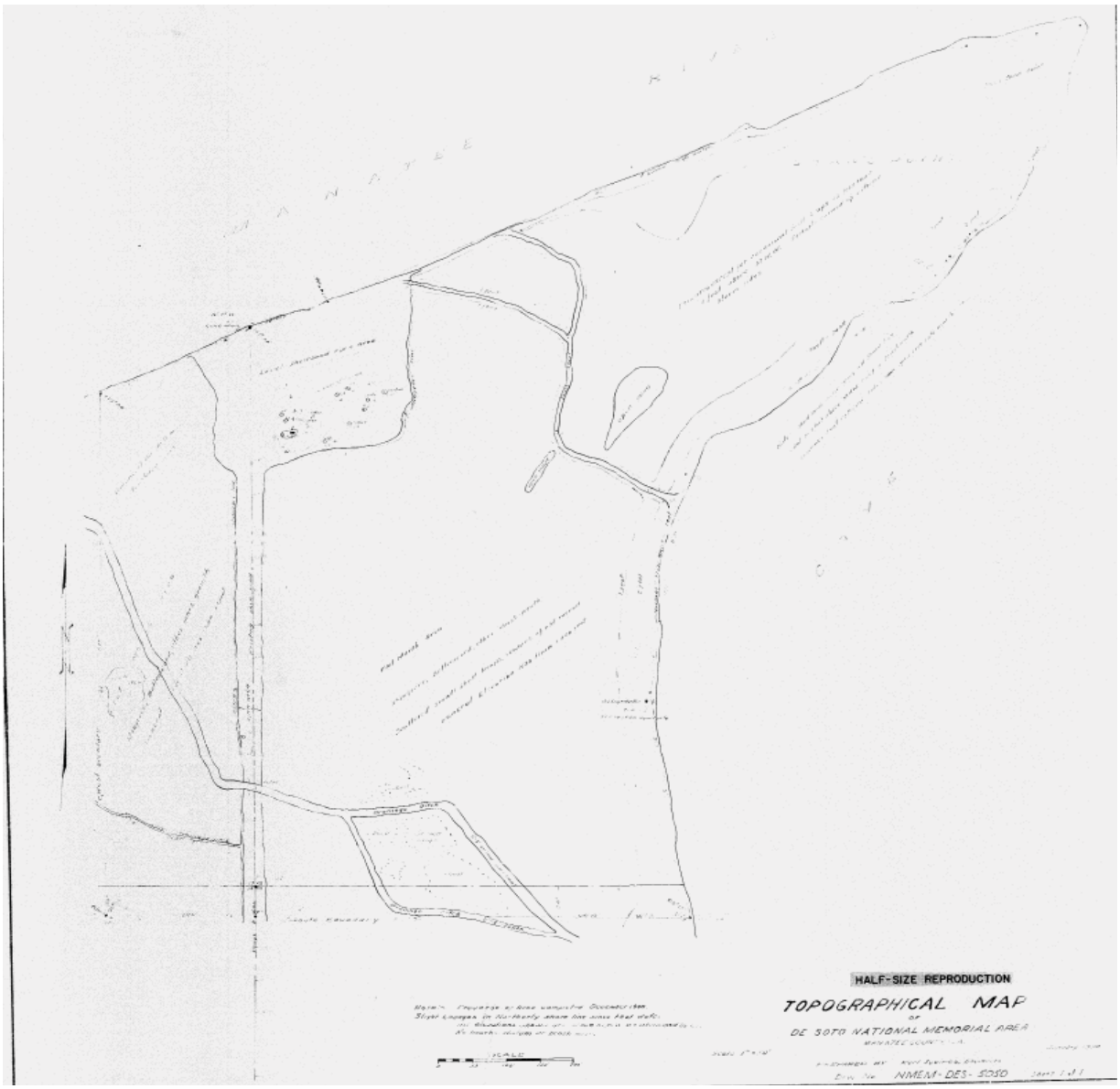


FIGURE 2–38. Topographic Survey, 1948 / 1950, drawing no. NMEM-DESO-5050, showing the 1921 drainage canal and 1939 County improvements made for the monument. Work by NPS had not yet begun. (DESO Archives; see also Appendix C)

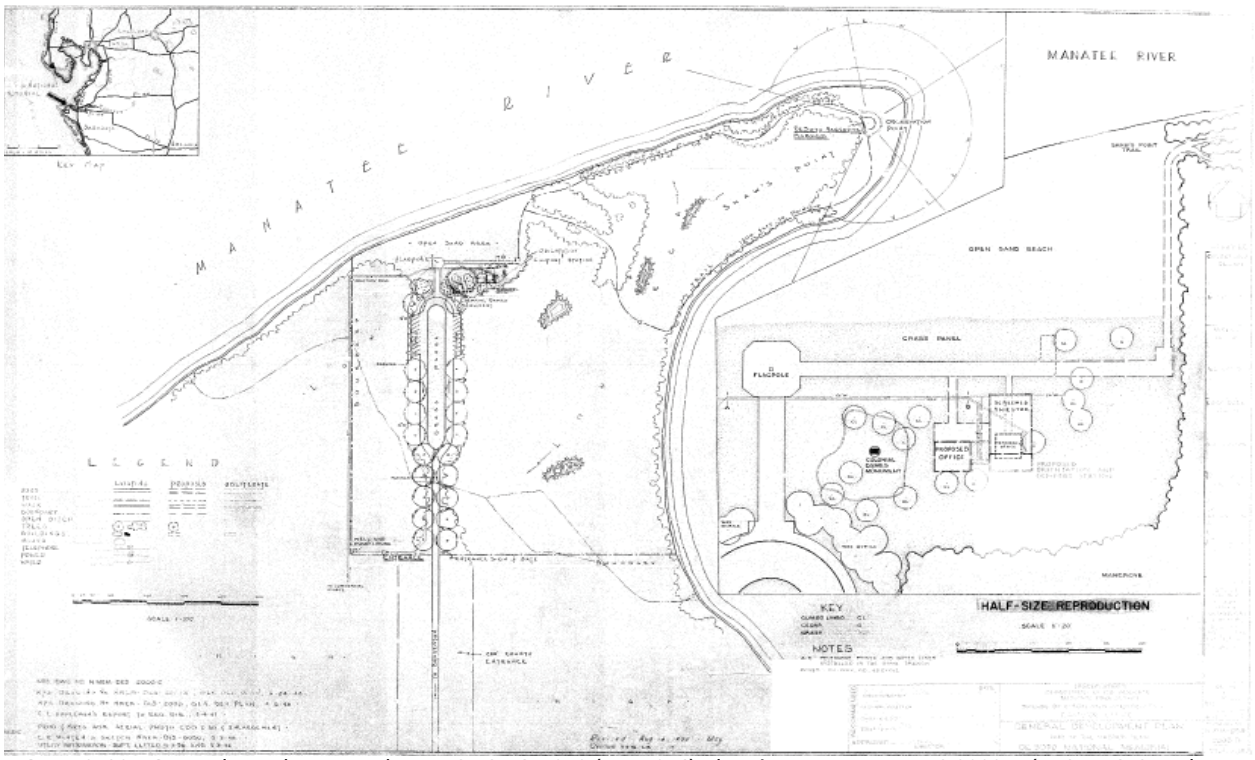


FIGURE 2–39. General Development Plan, NPS EODC, 1950 (rev. 1956), drawing no. NMEM-DES-2000D. (NPS-ETIC. See also Appendix C)

Early Park Development: Initial Construction, 1950-1952

By the time of the dedication, in March, 1950, County road crews had only just roughed out a new approach road to the Memorial (Figure 2-37, p. 35, above); nevertheless, with signs placed on area roads and highways, an estimated 1,250 cars would bring nearly 4,000 visitors that month.[95] Park staff, temporary laborers, and contractors completed the bulk of the initial park construction over the next sixteen months.

The NPS Regional Office prepared initial plans (see Figures 2-83 to 2-86, pp. 49-50, below). DESO Superintendent Richard Hopper and Regional Superintendent Roy Vinten did a field check in May, 1950, and recommended a few minor adjustments.[96] The Eastern Office of Design and Construction (EODC) issued the final plans in 1950 (Figure 2-39; see also Figure 2-49, p. 38, below). The site plan reflects a strongly axial organization. The parking area serves as a kind of forecourt into the rest of the park; making use of the same area initially cleared by Manatee County, it sets up a long north-south visual axis that extends across a central, oblong grass panel, leads straight to the flagpole beyond, and then terminates in a vista of the Manatee River and the distant tree line on the river's far shore (see Figure 2-51, p. 38, below).

At the north end of the parking area, a pathway leads on axis north to the flagpole set in a small, octagonal paved area. A cross-axis then leads to the right, along a path into the park's main public space. This plaza, as it came to be called, provides the setting for viewing the 1939 monument, contains the contact station and main interpretive features (and the visitor center), and leads to the beach and loop trail beyond. In conjunction with the beach, the plaza would become the main public, group space: an event space for continuing the annual De Soto commemorations, including landing re-enactments, ceremonies, performances, and festivals.



FIGURE 2–40. Fill freshly placed on "loop trail" to Shaw's Point; north shore, view west,May 1950. (DESO Archives)

95 SMNR March 1950 (April 1, 1950) 2.

96 SMNR May 1950 (June 8, 1950) 2.



FIGURE 2–41. View north into parking area at start of construction, 1950; concrete pipe is for building culverts beneath the road. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–42. View south into parking area, hydraulic filling in progress,1950. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–43. View north into parking area, filling and grading in progress, 1950. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–44. View south into parking area, paving in progress, 1950. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–45. View south into parking area, paving appears complete, 1950. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–46. View north into parking area, paving appears complete, topsoil delivered, 1950. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–47. Fill being delivered to beach, 1950. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–48. Fill being placed in "plaza" and beach area north of the monument, 1950. (DESO Archives)

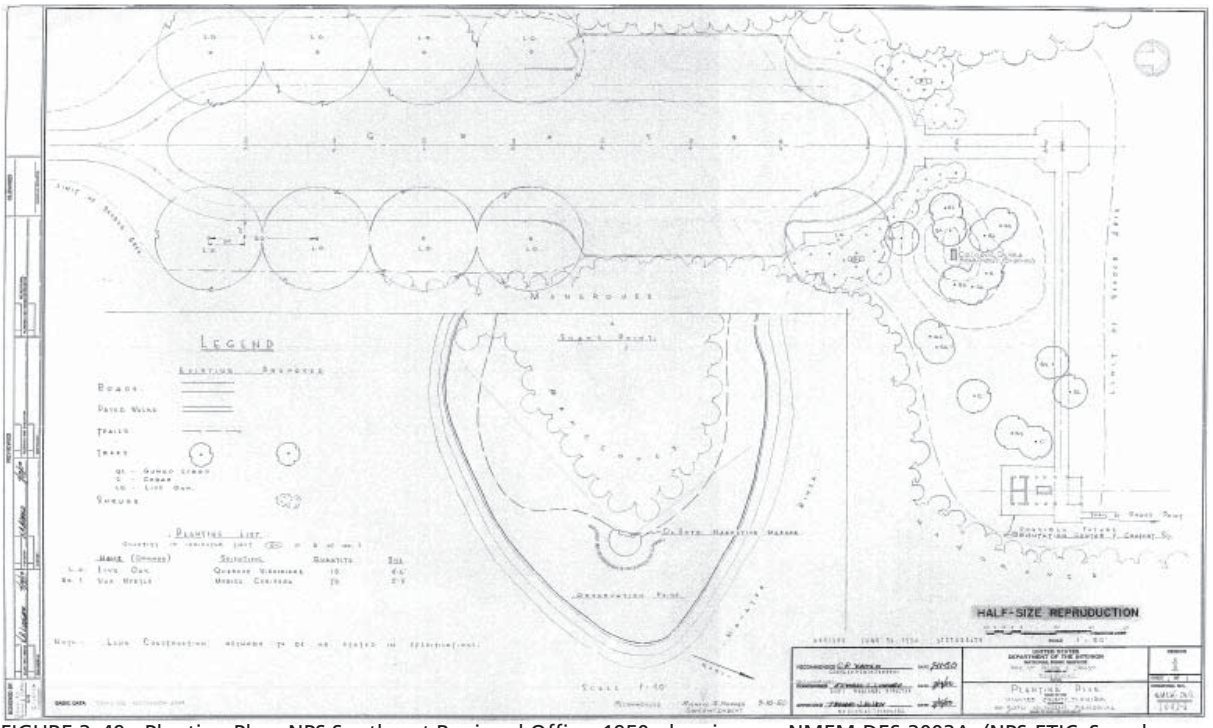


FIGURE 2–49. Planting Plan, NPS Southeast Regional Office, 1950, drawing no. NMEM-DES-2002A. (NPS-ETIC. See also Appendix C)

The plaza's axis terminates in a wall of vegetation, the edge of the mangroves. The main points of interest along the plaza are not placed on axis, but are offset: the Colonial Dames' De Soto Monument, future office, and contact station to the south; and the access to the beach and trails to the north. (The building locations had evolved, through several previous plans; the first development plan showed none, while subsequent iterations showed various locations. See *Mission 66 and the Visitor Center*, p. 49, below.) The loop trail, beyond, leads through the mangrove forest to Shaw's Point, where another interpretive marker was planned; one side of the loop following the north shore beach, the other traversing more deeply into the forest and along a portion of the cove beach.



FIGURE 2–50. View north-northeast from north end of parking area; vista framed by wax myrtle, circa 1955-1960. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–51. View north at park entrance, 1955. (DESO Archives)

As Roy Appleman had predicted, the initial development of the park required extensive filling. A dredging contractor pumped 6,642 cubic yards of fill onto the property in June for the loop road, the parking area, and the "loop trail" to the Point - areas that had just been cleared of mangroves. The entrance road's wooden bridge that crossed the drainage canal was replaced by twin 30-inch pipe culverts, with the road above on fill. Work crews continued to fill and grade the site throughout the summer. They placed "twenty loads of hydraulic fill" on the Shaw's Point Trail, another twenty on the trail from the cove to the monument, and



FIGURE 2–52. Aerial photo, U.S. Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, 1951. Construction appears essentially complete, including the parking area, walks, plaza, contact station, and freshly filled trails. (TRS Environmental and Historical Research, Inc. See also Appendix C)

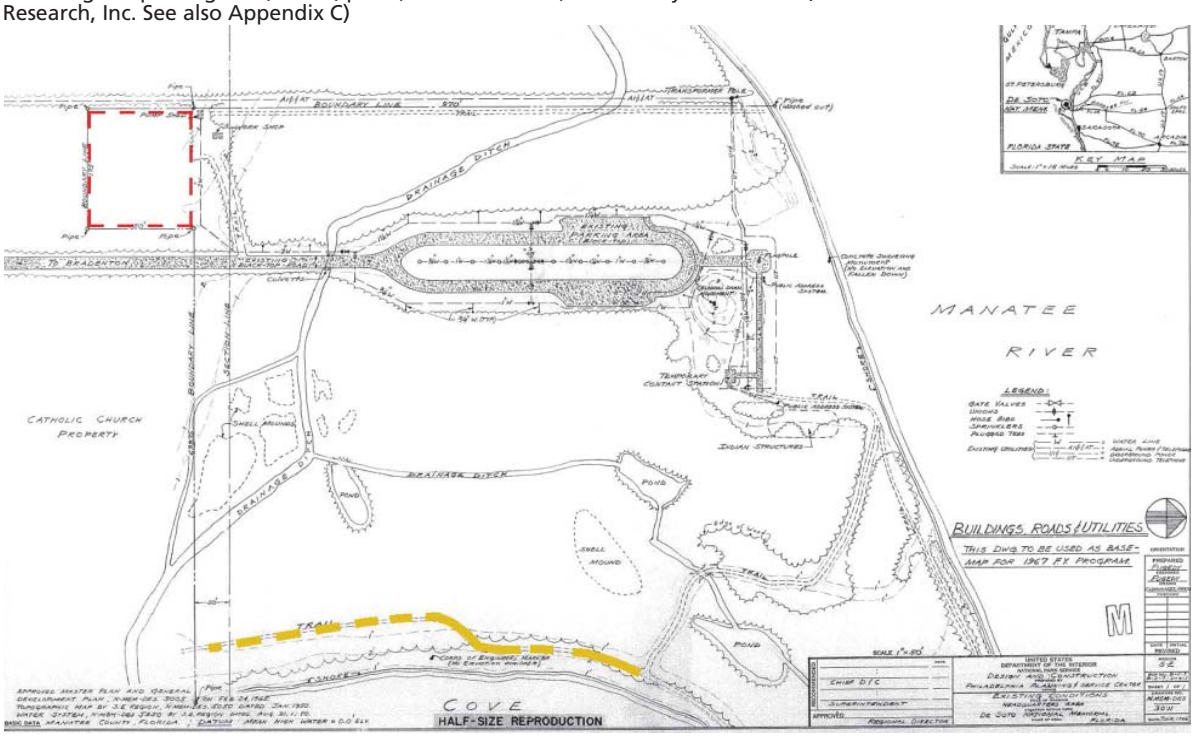


FIGURE 2–53. Existing Conditions Plan for Headquarters Area, NPS EODC, June 1966, drawing no. NMEM-DES 3011. Although done much later, this drawing fairly well reflects the as-built condition of the park circa 1952; the only later additions shown are the "Indian Structures;" a 0.6-acre 1960 property acquisition (red dashed line added); and the trail along the south half of the cove (yellow dashed line added). (DESO Archives. See also Appendix C)



FIGURE 2–54. Aerial view of park looking south-southeast, March 1, 1951, De Soto Landing ceremony. (DESO Archives/SMNR March 1951)

raised the grade approximately one foot where the interpretive section and comfort stations were planned (the plaza). They also imported topsoil and placed it along the road and parking areas, and around the monument (Figures 2-40 to 2-48, pp. 36-37, above).[97]

Meanwhile, by the end of 1950, visitors were finding the parking area complete, although the entrance road was still unfinished. Contractors planted a row of live oaks along each side of the parking area in January 1951, after which park staff dug and transplanted several dozen native wax myrtle (*Myrica cerifera*) from nearby private lands, adding screening and buffers near the monument and along the walk to the flagpole (Figures 2-50 and 2-51, p. 38, above). Hurricane Donna would ultimately decimate these wax myrtles in 1960; park staff replaced then them with non-native Hibiscus (*Hibiscus cvs*.)

Crews had finished the temporary park office or "contact station," east of the monument, in December 1950, following completion of the park's first structures - an 8-foot by ten-foot tool shed and an outdoor toilet for staff, built in the property's southwest corner - the previous June. During the first year of work (1950), they had also completed the park's initial utilities. By midsummer 1951, new St. Augustine grass (*Stenotaphrum secundatum*) covered the main public areas, the flagpole was in, and most of the plaza walkways were laid out (Figures 2-52 to 2-54). Final grading and surfacing of the walkway to the contact station essentially



FIGURE 2–55. First model of benches (installed c. 1952), flagpole area, with De Soto Expedition interpretive map, 1962. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–56. First model of bench, cove trail, n.d. (DESO Archives)

97 SMNR June 1950 (July 11, 1950) 1-2.



FIGURE 2–57. Second-generation bench: fabricated of wood, by Park staff, 1950s; shown with storm damage from Hurricane Donna, 1960. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–58. De Soto interpretive marker on main beach, 1953. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–59. Nature trail sign, c. 1960. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–60. Nature trail sign, c. 1960; "This unspoiled bit of shoreline is just as De Soto might have seen it 400 years ago." (DESO Archives)

completed the park's initial construction in September, 1951; only the entrance gate remained to be done (completed October, 1952), and the addition of site furniture and interpretive signs.

Visitor Amenities, Land Use and Interpretive Mission

Smaller additions such as the entrance gate and sign, other interpretive signs, and site furniture came gradually, over the course of the 1950s and early 1960s. Staff put out benches, a few at a time, beginning in 1952 - cement models at first, later supplemented with wooden ones made on-site - and continuing through at least the next decade, along with informational and regulatory signs (Figures 2-55 to 2-60).[98]

Throughout its existence, the Memorial has faced conflicting demands and conflicting ideas about its purpose and usage. As early as 1952, visitors were asking for amenities like picnic tables, benches, and boat docking facilities. At the same time, park managers had a different view: the mission focused on trying to convey deeper stories about the historical importance, and context, of De Soto and the first contact that the expedition represented. As the 1961 Mission 66 *Master Plan* put it, the Memorial's mission was "to commemorate de Soto's landing in Florida, in 1539, and the first large-scale, organized European exploration of the interior of the southern portion of what is now the United States; to make known the significance and discoveries of the Expedition and the effect on the later history of North America." The park's natural resources, specifically the mangrove swamp, the beach, and the views to Tampa Bay played a key role: "The natural setting preserved and removed from the urban developments at its boundaries, gives a feeling of detachment and quiet essential to the visitor's full appreciation of these lonely shores in 1539." Throughout the park's history, managers and staff would refer to these natural resources as important cultural landscape elements.

The *Master Plan* recognized that "inspirational enjoyment" was the Memorial's overarching purpose, and to that end recommended the

98 SMNR February 1952 (March 5, 1952) 2; SMNR April 1952 (May 2, 1952) 2; SMNR February 1954 (March 13, 1954) 1; SMNR April 1955 (May 1, 1955) 2; SMNR May 1955 (June 2, 1955) 1; SMNR May 1961 (June 3, 1961) 2; SMNR February 1962 (March 5, 1962) 3.



FIGURE 2–61. 1964 Landing re-enactment: crowd watches from bleachers as local young women portray American Indians anticipating De Soto's landing. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–62. 1964 Landing re-enactment: volunteer actors portray priest and soldiers of De Soto's army. Note supposedly local tribes' "huts" shaped incongruously like palm-thatched tipis. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–63. Pageant queen on parade through town, 1955. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–64. De Soto and one of his soldiers pose with pageant queen, 1972. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–65. Postcard celebrating "the heroic exploits" of De Soto, 1964. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–66. Postcard dispenser (left) and audio pylon (right), plaza area, c. 1964. (DESO Archives)

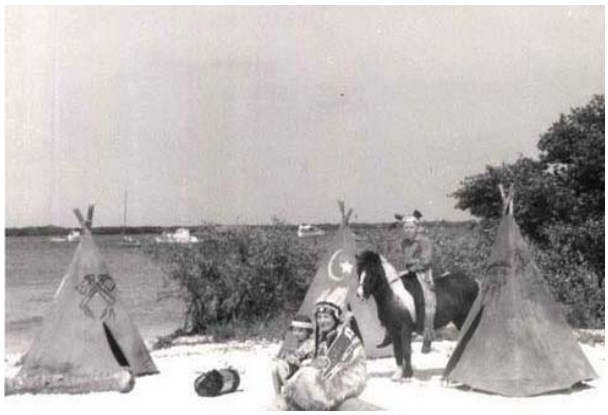


FIGURE 2–67. Early version of tipis on beach, c. 1950-1955. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–68. Later version of rounded, thatched huts (based on de Bry's 16th-century Timucuan depictions); area high school students portraying members of local tribes, c. 1964 -1967.(DESO Archives)

construction of a visitor center. It called for a shop that could sell "selected and appropriate publications, postcards and other items," but stated that a concession operation was not necessary, there being plenty of other options in the immediate vicinity for such services. It also took the position that "Picnicking and other recreational activities on Memorial grounds are incompatible with the purpose of the area and no provision will be made for them."[99]

The De Soto Celebrations put the contrast between the NPS' mission-driven approach and the popular, leisure-oriented mindset into sharp relief. Greater attendance and greater interest in De Soto being mutual interests, the Memorial's Superintendents and staff supported the De Soto Historical Society in hosting the annual celebrations, with notable guests from Washington often in attendance as De Soto's landing was re-enacted on the Memorial's beach, complete with welcoming parties from local tribes, and frequently followed by beauty pageants or regattas (Figures 2-61 to 2-68).[100]

The local community of enthusiasts, who had helped to get the park established, tended more toward the business-booster approach. The entertainment- and recreation-rich De Soto Celebrations drew the tourists, at a time when the tourism trade was growing furiously in much of the state. Park officials often tried to encourage the Society to improve their interpretive message, as when Superintendent Gannon met with the event's organizers, in 1966, to "outline the advantages of a quality pageant treatment of the entire expedition rather than the past preoccupation with, and treatment of, a landing-site theory and reenactment." He apparently had some success; the next year, the Superintendent "spoke on a local radio program to emphasize the memorial character of the area and to congratulate the community for also taking a commemorative



FIGURE 2–69. Cypress log groins along cove trail, installed after earlier palm logs failed, 1959. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–70. Hurricane Donna damage, north shore trail, 1960.(DESO Archives)

99 SMNR December 1951 (January 4, 1952) 1; Supt. R.G. Hopper, ***Master Plan for the Preservation and Use of De Soto National Memorial, Mission 66 Edition*** (October, 1961[portions written 1952 and 1956]; DSC ETIC Document DESO_388_D16) Foreword, 2-8; see also ***Existing Conditions*** chapter, ***Views and Vistas*** (p. 74).

100 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 26, 65-67.



FIGURE 2–71. Hurricane Donna damage, 1960; the Superintendent's Monthly Report described this photograph as showing the area "pushed back 20' to 30', waves are now eating into grass at right of flagpole." (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–73. North shore mangrove plantings, January 1961. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–74. Hydraulic filling for major beach re-nourishment, plaza beach and north shore, 1961. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–75. Hydraulic filling for major beach re-nourishment, plaza beach and north shore, 1961. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–72. Post-Donna repairs in progress, north shore trail, April 1961. (DESO Archives)

and historically meaningful approach to the De Soto story in its pageant."[101]

Some years later, beginning in the early 1990s, Native American protestors would force the issue of how one-sidedly the story of De Soto was being celebrated, and after several years of confrontation and negotiation, the event's organizers re-named it the Florida Heritage Festival.[102] However, the tension of differing, and evolving, perspectives on De Soto continued to present challenges for how programming and interpretation are handled at the Memorial. These challenges still inform the decision-making process (see also *Treatment* chapter, *Land Use and Interpretation*, p. 120).

Erosion Control and Hydrologic Management

Coastal erosion has plagued the park since its inception. At first, construction crews, and thereafter maintenance crews, would face a seemingly endless task of replenishing the trails. Already, by the end of August 1950, higher-than-normal tides, associated with a hurricane in the Gulf, had caused some erosion on portions of the newly filled trail. The park's first erosion-control measures had gone in earlier that month, when palm-trunk logs were placed as groins along 150 feet of the cove trail to Shaw's Point. In March 1951, another 260 cubic yards of shell went toward raising the elevation of the Point by a foot, and filling in low areas of the trails. In April, crews added more log groins. After placing 296 cubic yards of topsoil and another 84 yards of shell in May, 1951, the Superintendent reported that the park's "shell hauling is complete for the present." Yet, in October of that year, park crews again needed to build up the Shaw's Point

101 SMNR for May, 1966 (June 7, 1966) 3; SMNR for March, 1967 (April 13, 1967) 1.

102 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 73-75.

trail on the north side with additional shell, and were adding more log groins. [103]

This pattern continued, with storm and tide events large and small, and a similar wide range of repair and restoration projects, for the parks' next five decades. In early 1959 the Superintendent reported that all of the log groins along the cove trail had been rebuilt, using cypress logs, with the posts "jetted down and average of 3 1/2 feet. These should resist the slap and bang from waves and the wash from speed boats" (Figure 2-69, p. 43, above). Hurricane Donna caused major damage in 1960, but two other storms that year also contributed (Figures 2-70 and 2-71, pp. 43-44, above). Park crews made repairs and planted some red mangroves along the north shoreline, but a larger project was needed, employing "groins and spoil from dredging;" an extensive, contracted dredge and fill project followed in mid-1961 (Figures 2-72 to 2-75, p. 44, above). High tides that fall washed away significant portions of the new fill and damaged the new groins. Supt. Carl Stoddard had a 150-foot section of the cove trail moved inland from the "erosion area" in 1962.[104] That same year, park managers had the log groins on the cove trail removed, having determined that these were more of a maintenance problem than they were a solution.[105]

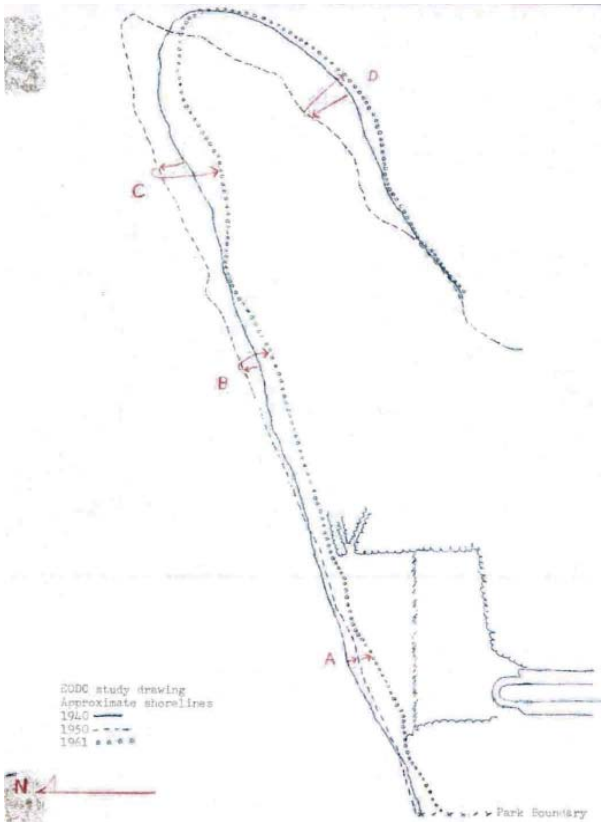


FIGURE 2–76. Graphic summary of shoreline changes at DESO prepared by the EODC and included in Supt. Gannon's 1965 Memorandum. (DESO Archives)

Numerous studies all pointed to an inherently unstable beach and north shoreline. The Eastern Office of Design and Construction (EODC) visited the site and made a report in 1965; Supt. Vincent Gannon then prepared a thorough analysis, based on reviews of historical aerial photographs as well as on site investigations (for example, locations and migration of various grades of shell, sand, and silt; shifts in offshore sandbars, borrow pits, and



FIGURE 2–77. Culvert bulkheading, photographed after storm damage, November 1968. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–78. Panel bulkheading at plaza, near flagpole, 1972. (DESO Archives)

103 SMNR August 1950 (September 6, 1950) 1; SMNR March 1951 (April 3, 1951) 2; SMNR April 1951 (May 1, 1951) 1; SMNR May 1951 (June 4, 1951) 2; SMNR October 1951 (November 5, 1951) 2.

104 SMNR January 1959 (February 12, 1959) 3; SMNR February 1960 (March 11, 1960) 2; Vincent Gannon, "Chronology of erosion damage and maintenance as taken from superintendent's monthly narrative reports" (attachment to Memorandum "Beach Restoration," 1965).

105 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, "DESOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL SHORELINE EROSION CONTROL, MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA" (August, 1980) 6.

channels; and discernible patterns of currents). Gannon agreed with EODC's analysis of the main beach's recession (Location "A" on Figure 2-76, p. 45, above), but did not believe that the other locations had accreted and eroded in exactly the way that EODC's drawing suggested.[106]

Gannon roughly estimated that the main beach's shoreline had receded approximately 125 feet between 1875 and 1965. He also estimated that of that loss, roughly 72 feet appeared to have occurred just since 1940. His final conclusions gave the erosion rate of the plaza beach at about 2.625 feet per year and the rate along the north shoreline, further east, at about one feet in three years. He also noted that at that rate, the plaza shoreline would approach the proposed visitor center's location (see also *Mission 66 and the Visitor Center*, p. 49, below) in 57 years.[107]

Gannon was pessimistic about the effectiveness of beach re-nourishment, based on the results he had seen of previous efforts, and discussed some potential options for bulkheading selected, limited portions of the north shore; these he generally concluded might make effective short-term solutions, but were not likely to survive occasions where high tides coincided with strong surf. Gannon recommended further testing and trials of these options, especially for the plaza beach, the loss of which could threaten existing physical improvements in the park as well as the annual "De Soto's Landing" reenactment. As for the park's shoreline trails, he suggested that simply re-locating portions of the trails away from the beach might be the most economical and practical solution, although it would do nothing to prevent the loss of mangrove forest or park acreage.[108] Several types of bulkheading, along the lines of Gannon's discussions, appear in park photographs from the 1960s and 1970s (Figures 2-77 and 2-78, p. 45, above). A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study in 1980 concluded that none of these remedial measures had succeeded in controlling the shoreline's erosion.[109]

The Corps' investigators performed their own version of Gannon's analysis of shoreline change, and determined that the plaza beach had receded 80 feet between 1940 and 1979 - a similar finding to Gannon's - but noted that an initial recession of 40 feet occurred in the first eight years of that period, and probably represented the rapid loss of much of the fill that had been placed during the initial construction of "the park" (more accurately, the De Soto Monument); since 1948, the average rate of recession along the north shore had been more like one foot per year. Furthermore, the dredging just

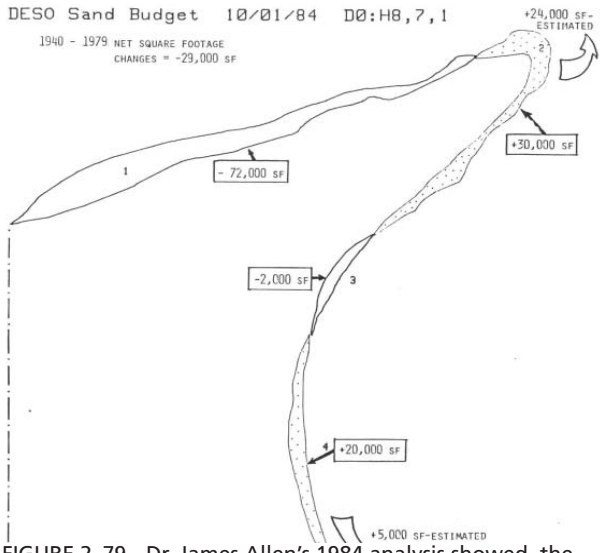


FIGURE 2–79. Dr. James Allen's 1984 analysis showed the dramatic loss of land along the north shoreline, and gains elsewhere, with another small erosion area in the middle of the cove frontage. (DESO Archives)

offshore to obtain fill for the construction actually exacerbated the erosion problem, contributing to the rapid loss of material afterwards.

The Corps report presented five options (winnowed down from ten preliminary alternatives), consisting of different combinations of beach renourishment, beach revetment, and/or the construction of various configurations of groins. It evaluated these options on the basis of cost, environmental impacts, and relative effectiveness in meeting three objectives: erosion control, retention of recreational beach, and preventing damage by flooding and wave action. It recommended choosing simply to continue to re-nourish the beach, using borrow from off-shore dredging and filling for a distance of approximately 1,550 by 200 feet. This was consistent with a "no seawall" policy adopted by NPS in 1972. However, it was also expensive, and - even as the most

106 Gannon Memorandum, "Beach Restoration" 13-25.

107 Gannon Memorandum, "Beach Restoration" 3, 10, 26.

108 Gannon Memorandum, "Beach Restoration" 7, 26-27, 30-32.

109 Corps of Engineers. "DESOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL" 6.

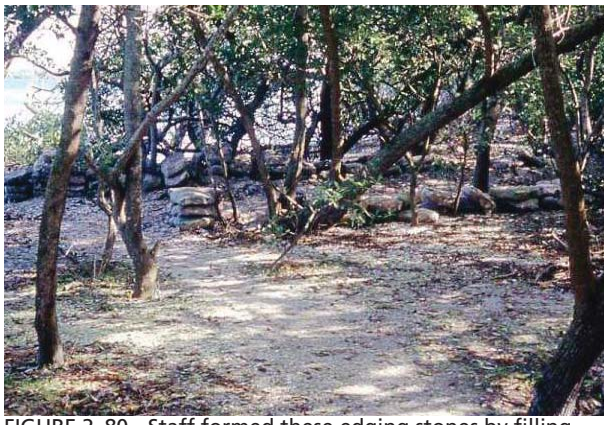


FIGURE 2–80. Staff formed these edging stones by filling sandbags with cement; here shown staged for use in reinforcing trail edges and a drainage channel, c. 2000-2005. (DESO Archives)

economical of the Corps' five schemes - would likely exceed any available NPS funding.[110]

NPS Coastal Geomorphologist Dr. James Allen again evaluated the site in 1984. He, too estimated the historical net gain or loss of shoreline areas (Figure 2-79, p. 46, above). By this time, the park had its visitor center to protect, along with the beach and the marker mound. Allen recommended a combination of rip rap barrier and periodic renourishment for the beach. For the chronically endangered north shore trail, he echoed Gannon's suggestions that bulkheads be installed or, alternatively, that the trail be replaced - in this case, with a raised boardwalk. He also pointed out the importance of maintaining "adequate saltwater conduits into the mangrove swamp," for the health of that forest. Shortly after the boardwalk option was implemented, in 1990, a storm washed away 600 feet of the "old nature trail."[111]



FIGURE 2–81. Maintenance crew member known as "Mr. Hughes" using DDT fogging machine, 1961. (DESO Archives)

The last major round of erosion-control measures occurred in the early 2000s. A beach re-nourishment project in 2004 used excess sand purchased cheaply from Holmes Beach to replace materials lost to Hurricane Gabrielle in 2001. Shortly thereafter, the 2004 dual hurricanes Frances and Jeanne washed away all of that sand and more. In 2005, a four-foot high embankment of rip-rap, topped off with sand fill, plantings, and turf grass, took the place of the last remaining strip of beach. At about the same time, park staff armored the most vulnerable sections of trail, using cement-filled bags to augment natural stone rip rap (Figure 2-80).

As Allen had observed in his 1984 report, park management faced ongoing challenges in maintaining the hydrologic patterns needed to sustain the mangroves. In filling and maintaining shorelines and trails to keep them accessible to visitors, NPS designers and the Memorial's staff had blocked off much of the natural tidal flow that the mangrove forest depended on. The various drainage ditches that had been dug - John Gover's in 1921, and smaller ditches made by park crews in the 1950s and early 1960s - often served as the only means by which much of the mangrove swamp received new water, although staff also tried installing pipes under portions of the loop trail to help this flow.[112]

Flushing of water also helped keep mosquito populations (somewhat) in check. In the park's early years, maintenance personnel regularly fogged the park with DDT; in July of 1955, for example, they were fogging "almost daily" (Figure 2-81). This practice was stopped by 1962. Another early mosquito-control practice involved pouring used motor oil into streams and ponds. These practices almost certainly would have affected the ecology and environmental health of the park, although as far as the available archival record shows, no one had studied or documented this.[113]

110 Corps of Engineers. "DESOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL" 23-36, B15-B17; Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 81-82.

111 Dr. James R. Allen, "DeSoto National Memorial Shoreline Assessment" (NPS unpub. [internal] report, 1984) 7-12; "Superintendent's Annual Report 1990" (DESO Archives) 8.

112 SMNR June 1953 (July 9, 1953) 1; SMNR June 1956 (July 13, 1956) 2; SMNR March 1962 (April 11, 1962) 3.

113 SMNR April 1951 (May 1, 1951) 2; SMNR December 1953 (January 13, 1954) 2; SMNR July 1955 (August 11, 1955) 1; Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 85.



FIGURE 2–82. View of Snead Island from Memorial plaza area, 1953. (DESO Archives)

Area Development , Viewsheds, and Land Acquisition

In latter 20th-century Florida, land development went hand in hand with tourism development, both part of northern visitors' rediscovery of Florida and of the state's explosive growth. The establishment of the Memorial helped catalyze the transformation of the surrounding landscape: almost immediately, in April 1950, Supt. Hopper reported that a channel had been cut from the new park approach road, northward, to the cove east of the park (see Figure 2-52, p. 39, above), and that the area east of this new channel was being "cleared and filled in." By that October, an area resident was building the first new house in the neighborhood. In the mid-fifties, state-funded advertising as well as private initiatives like the Florida Attractions Association (founded 1949) had spurred west coast visitation to record levels, and the Bradenton Chamber of Commerce was soliciting local residents to rent out rooms to tourists for whom no hotels could be found. The Memorial had its own record month of over 13,000 people in February, 1957. Hopper attributed the strong attendance to both increasing tourism and the "steady growth of population in this section."[114]

Development brought a decidedly mixed blessing. Although it boosted attendance, it also threatened the "unspoiled" natural setting so important to the park's interpretation of the De Soto expedition story. From the beginning, Supt. Hopper and others had expected that Dr. Sugg, one of the Memorial's original land donors, would be profiting from the development of his remaining, surrounding properties, and they watched it happen as the view east, across the cove, became filled with residential development in the 1950s.

In 1964, Supt. Lloyd Pierson recommended a boundary adjustment so that the Memorial could protect another key view, north across the river, by acquiring the shoreline of Snead Island (Figure 2-82). Although Pierson's attempt was unsuccessful, that viewshed ultimately was protected in 1991 when, after years of developers' unsuccessful attempts to move forward with permitting and construction, Manatee County acquired the property.[115]

On the western front, the abutting land became the Riverview Landings subdivision in 1981. Over the ensuing two decades, residents built a half dozen docks extending into the river, most of which the Memorial's Superintendents considered a significant negative impact on the critically important park viewsheds. Some tried, unsuccessfully, to block the construction of these structures; in some cases, they and other concerned citizens were able to get permit restrictions imposed, which limited the length of the dock, or required native landscaping buffers to be planted at the dock builders' expense.[116]

Along the Memorial's southern boundary, the Catholic Church acquired 11 acres abutting the park and announced plans in 1958 to build a "monument to the religious idea that De Soto carried with him on the expedition." For a time, NPS officials had considered trying to acquire 3 acres along this south boundary, but ultimately only succeeded in obtaining a 0.6-acre donation from Dr. Sugg, in 1960 (see Figure 2-53, p. 39, above). By 1964, church officials had developed designs for a statue on the property, to honor "martyred Spanish priests in early Florida." By that time, however, they had abandoned plans for a chapel on the property, due to lack of funds. Park crews cleared a new cove-

114 SMNR April 1950 (May 3, 1950) 2; SMNR October 1950 (November 8, 1950), 2; SMNR June 1956 (July 13, 1956) 1; SMNR January 1957 (February 14, 1957) 1; SMNR February 1957 (March 9, 1957) 1; SMNR December 1956 (January 11, 1957) 1.

115 LLoyd M. Pierson, ***Boundary Status Report - De Soto National Memorial***, May 16, 1964 (copy in DESO Archives, ***1949-1973 Deed, Titles and Maps***); Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 102.

116 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 99-100; see also DESO Archives, ***Superintendent's Records, Desk Files (Series I, Subseries B, Sub-subseries 1)***, File 017, especially folders "Weinkle Dock," "Rynerson Dock,""Myna dock" (all docks that were opposed by the Superintendent) and "Schulman Dock" (where plantings were required).

side trail in December, 1965, connecting from the existing loop trail south to the Church's planned site of this "De Soto interpretive facility."[117]

The Diocese of Venice acquired a bronze statue of De Soto and installed it on the site on a sculptural, stone-clad pedestal in 1967, as a monument to the explorer; the larger Priests' monument, a 60-foot tall cross, came later (1995). At the same time, the Church had been seeking a buyer for the remaining nine acres. Supt. Barbara Goodman tried unsuccessfully to find funding for the acquisition, and the land went to a developer in 1996; however, following months of pressure from area citizens, Manatee County in turn acquired it. County officials named it "Riverview Pointe Preserve," and in 1999 signed a Memorandum of Understanding giving the NPS management responsibility for the land.[118]

Mission 66 and the Visitor Center

The NPS' Mission 66 program launched in 1956, conceived by Director Conrad Wirth as a means to upgrade and expand the national parks system to meet the greatly increased demand of the postwar years. He proposed it as a ten-year initiative of planning, design and construction. Wirth envisioned Mission 66's completion coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of the NPS, in 1966; however, its program of improvements ultimately extended through 1972, under the Parkscape USA program implemented by his successor, Director George Hartzog. The same trends that helped Florida tourism take off in the 1950s - the end of wartime austerity, growing prosperity, increasing automobile ownership and the vast expansion of the nation's roadway network - also fueled the growing demand for new NPS facilities and infrastructure, as well as for new NPS units.

Mission 66 designers embraced the Modern architectural style, a dramatic departure from the Rustic style used in pre-war parks. To accommodate large numbers of visitors arriving in large numbers of automobiles, Mission 66 architects interpreted the more horizontal, less decorative aesthetic of the Modern style as a new way to fit larger buildings

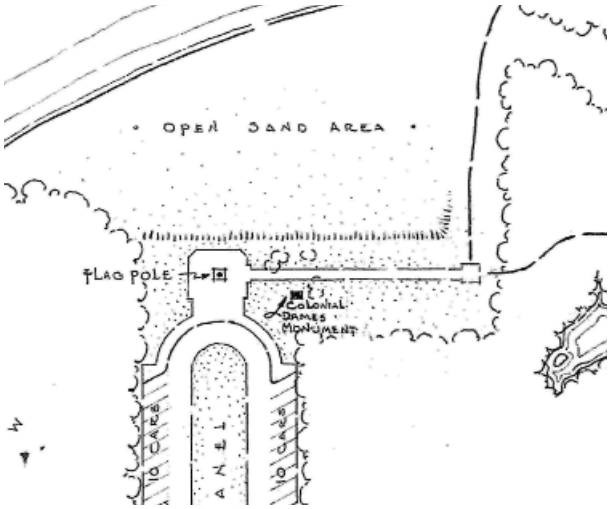


FIGURE 2–83. General Development Plan by Regional Office, Drawing NMEM-DES-2000-0, April 1948; no buildings. (DSC-ETIC)

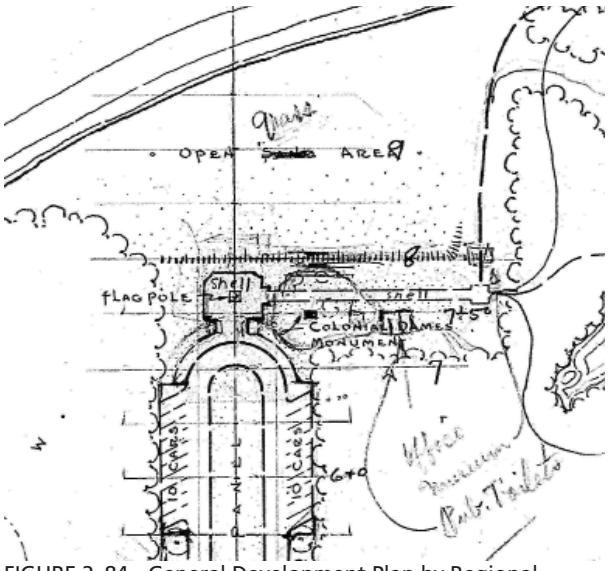


FIGURE 2–84. General Development Plan by Regional Office, Drawing NMEM-DES-2000-A, June 1948; marked up (January, 1950) to include "public toilets" and "Office, Museum" buildings, in separate locations. (DSC-ETIC)

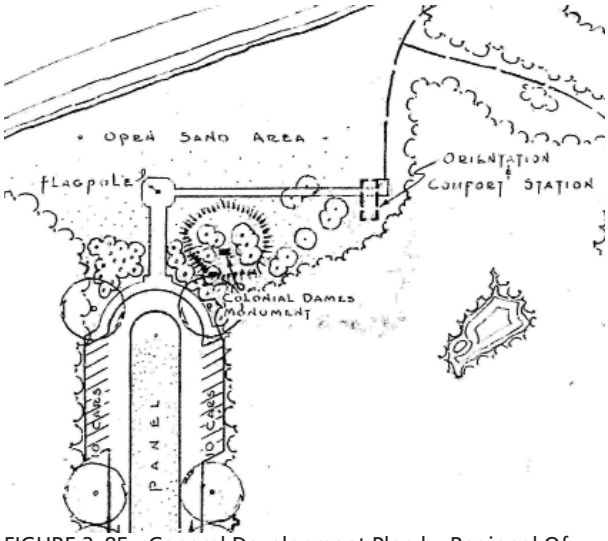


FIGURE 2–85. General Development Plan by Regional Office, Drawing NMEM-DES-2000-B, rev. August 1950; one building, visitor orientation/restroom, only. (DSC-ETIC)

117 SMNR December 1958 (January 9, 1959) 2; Supt. Richard J. Hite, ***Land Acquisition Plan, De Soto National Memorial*** (March, 1980; copy in DESO Archives) 2-3; SMNR September 1964 (October 8, 1964) 2; SMNR December, 1965 (December 31, 1965) 2.

118 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues***102-104.

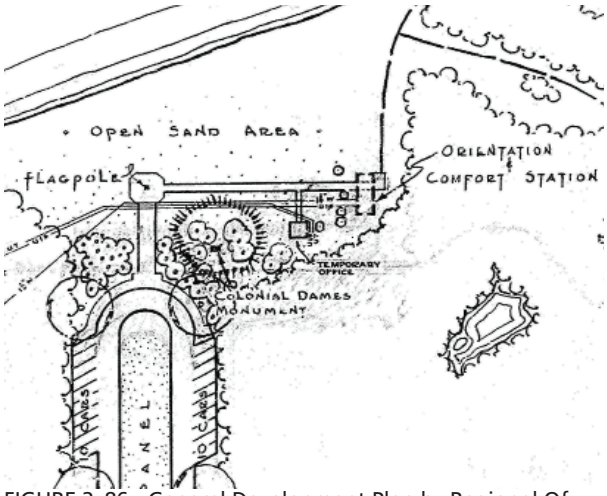


FIGURE 2–86. General Development Plan by Regional Office, Drawing NMEM-DES-2000-C, rev. August 1950; two buildings; office separated from all visitor services. (DSC-ETIC)

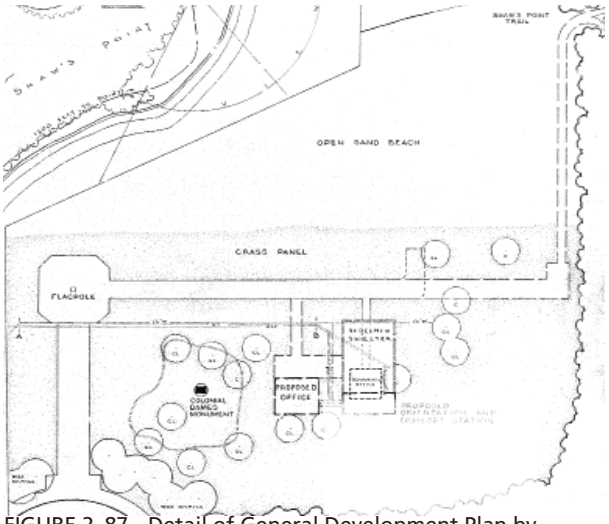


FIGURE 2–87. Detail of General Development Plan by EODC, Drawing NMEM-DES-2000-D, rev. May 1956; a single "Orientation and Comfort Station." (DESO Archives)

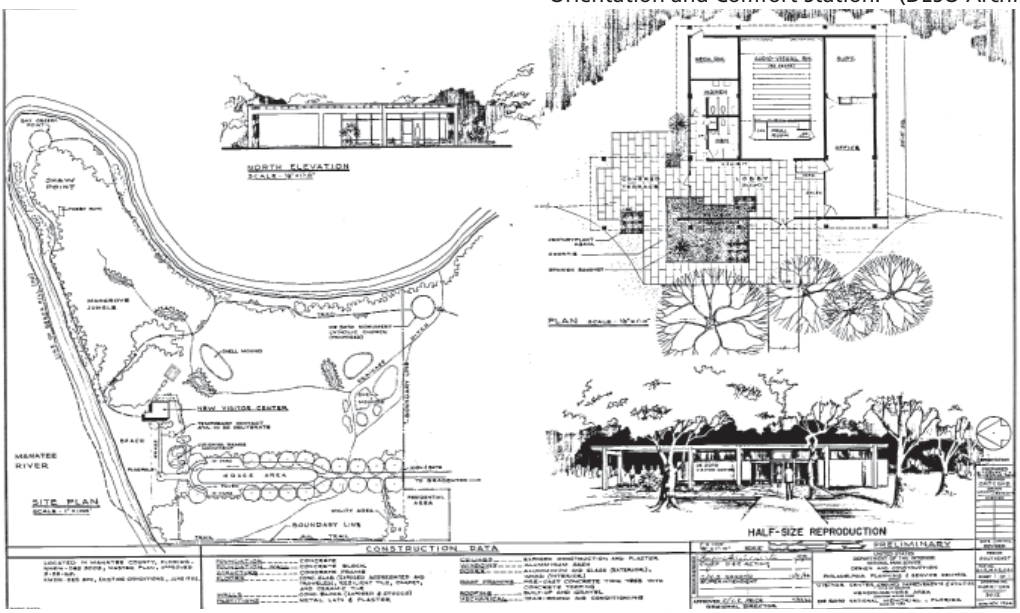


FIGURE 2–88. Preliminary visitor center drawing - site plan, building/planting plan, elevation and perspective sketch, November 1966; Drawing No. NMEM-DES-3012. (SERO Archives. See also Appendix C)

into the landscape less obtrusively. The style also offered other advantages: its emphasis on blurring the boundaries between indoor and outdoor space, through extensive use of glass, or continuity of ground-plane materials, helped reinforce park facilities' focus on the landscapes around them; and mass-produced modern materials such as concrete and steel could offer substantial economies compared to traditional materials such as stone masonry and timber construction. Despite some very negative reactions from a number of critics, including some prominent conservation organizations, the style also helped establish a unique "Park Service Modern" body of work, that many architects, at least, greatly admired.[119]

The postwar-era NPS designers and planners essentially created a new building type, the visitor center, and the projects that would roll out under Mission 66 established it as a standard. For De Soto National Memorial, the Regional Office drew several early versions of a General Development

119 Sarah Allaback, Mission 66 ***Visitor Centers: the History of a Building Type*** (NPS, 2000: www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/allaback/vct.htm accessed March 12, 2016), "Introduction" and "Appendix III;" Ethan Carr et al., ***National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form - National Park Service Mission 66 Era Resources*** (August, 2015) E1-E4, E10-E12.

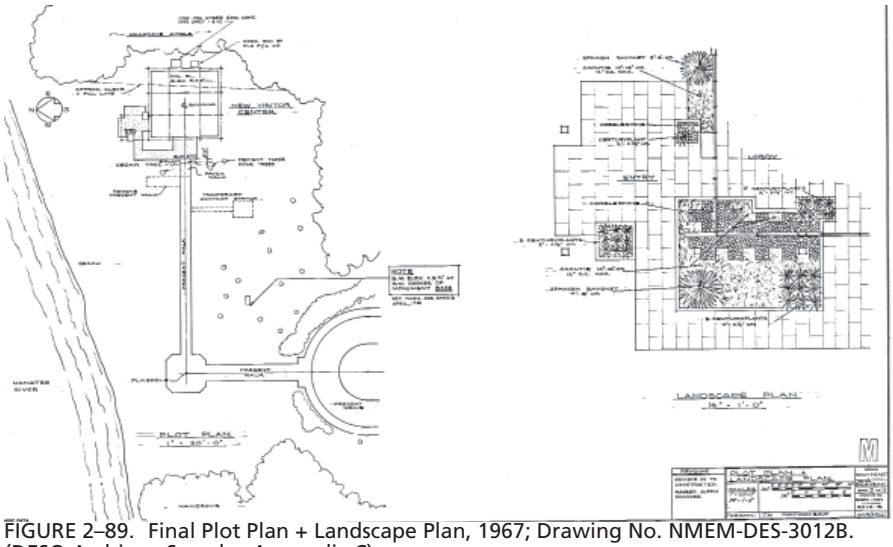


FIGURE 2–89. Final Plot Plan + Landscape Plan, 1967; Drawing No. NMEM-DES-3012B. (DESO Archives. See also Appendix C)



FIGURE 2–90. Visitor center construction, 1967-1968; forming and pouring concrete columns and beams. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–91. Visitor center construction, 1967-1968; forming and pouring concrete columns and beams. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–92. Visitor center construction, 1967-1968; placement of prestressed double-tees to form the building's roof. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–93. Visitor center construction, 1967-1968; placement of prestressed double-tees to form the building's roof. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–94. Visitor center west facade and plantings, shortly after completion, c. 1968. (DESO Archives)

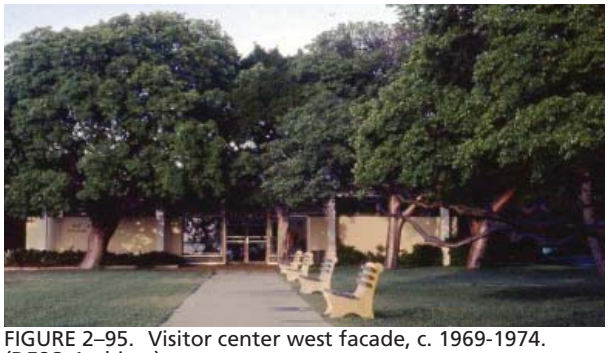


FIGURE 2–95. Visitor center west facade, c. 1969-1974. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–96. Completed visitor center, c. 1968, view north to river along west facade. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–97. Completed visitor center, c. 1968-1972, view north to river from interior. (DESO Archives)

Plan without one (Figures 2-83 to 2-86, pp. 49-50, above). The final version sent by the EODC in July, 1956 (Figure 2-87, p. 50), although it does not use the term, shows all the components of a visitor center: a combination of office space with visitor services, including orientation (interpretation) and restrooms, more or less combined into a single unit; a location on the main circulation path, allowing it to serve as point of arrival; and a strong relationship of interior space to the landscape outside.[120]

Several successive park superintendents had a hand in the Mission 66 edition of the park's Master Plan, which was completed in 1963, although several of the included sections had been written as early as 1952. The authors included many of the earlier plans for the park, thus showing several configurations and locations for what would become the visitor center. When park staff wanted to install audio pylons in September 1963, they could not get approval for permanent locations from the EODC because "the location of the proposed visitor center has not been decided upon;" they had to settle for a temporary installation (Figure 2-66, p. 42, above).[121]

The visitor center finally landed on a fixed location in 1967, when local architect Edward Dean Wyke developed the construction documents. Wyke's plan set the building at the east end of the plaza, on axis with the flagpole and thus directly on the walkway. Exterior paving flows continuously between the interior and exterior spaces, as do planting areas

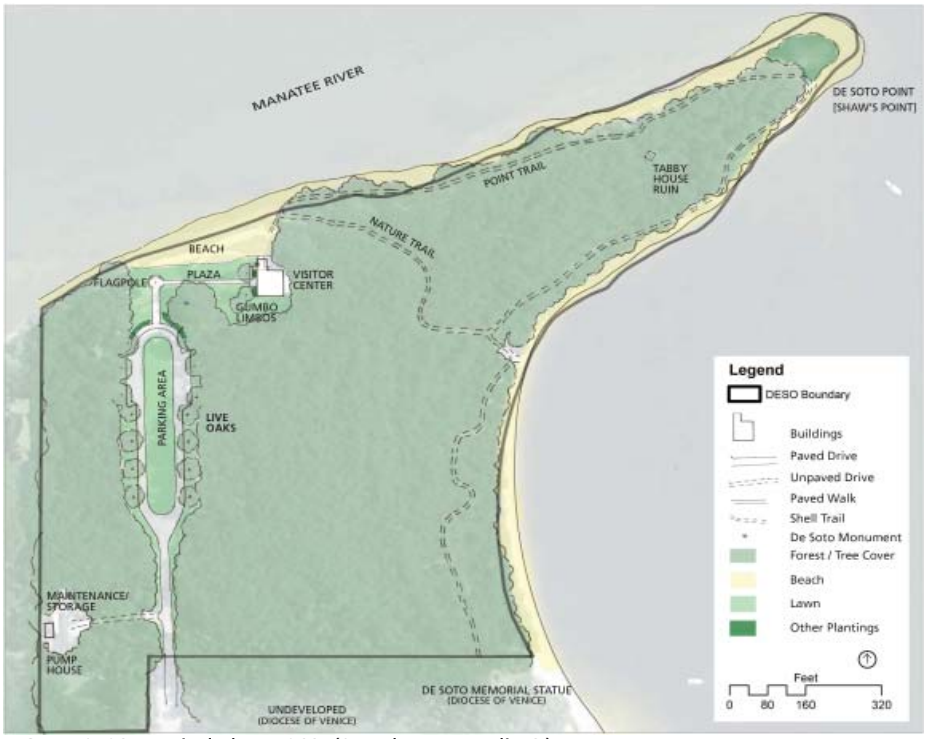


FIGURE 2–98. Period Plan, 1968. (See also Appendix C.)

120 SMNR July 1956 (August 9, 1956) 4; Allaback, ***Mission 66 Visitor Centers***, "Appendix III."

121 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 32-34; SMNR September 1963 (October 8, 1963) 2.

on either side of the largely glass walls (Figures 2-88 and 2-89, pp. 50-51, above). The designers specified plantings native to southern Florida - although not necessarily all species likely to be indigenous to the site - including Spanish bayonet (*Yucca aloifolia*), century plant (*Agave americana*) and coontie (*Zamia floridana*).

The building presented a strongly horizontal form fitting it to the flat landscape. Wyke turned the building's structural system, rugged, cast-in-place concrete columns and beams, into a main design feature, along with the horizontal lines of the ribbed ceiling, formed by the underside of the precast, prestressed concrete double-tee beams craned into place to make the roof (Figures 2-90 to 2-93, p. 51, above). In the curtain walls, he used extensive glazing, in large panes, to form a geometric composition with blank, stuccoed panels; the ribbed ceiling, like the walkways and plantings, extended right through the walls, linking the inside and the outside (Figures 2-94 to 2-97, pp. 51-52, above).



FIGURE 2–99. Maintenance building construction, 1994; view south. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–100. Maintenance building construction, 1994; view south. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–101. Maintenance building construction, 1994; view south. (DESO Archives)

Later Park Development 1968-Present

The opening of the visitor center in early 1968 firmly established the physical and programmatic framework for the park, providing as it did for a clear circulation pattern to an obvious arrival point, a fixed place for visitor orientation and interaction with park staff, and a space for interpretive exhibits and displaying some of the park's collection of historical and archeological artifacts.[122] Its completion represents a culmination of the park's initial design and construction. Figure 2-98 (p. 53, above) provides a snapshot of the park's site configuration at this point in time.

In the almost five decades since, park staff worked with both internal teams and contractors to revamp the exhibits several times, including significant re-design of the auditorium space. They have made relatively few changes to the building itself. A portion of the office became a sales shop, involving the addition of an interior wall segment, and built-in fixtures, in 1998; at the same time, contractors removed the portion of the landscape planter that



FIGURE 2–102. Camp Uzita, 1976. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 2–103. Camp Uzita, 1976. (DESO Archives)

122 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 36.



FIGURE 2–104. Visitor center and Camp Uzita from the air, 1974. (DESO Archives)

that came inside the lobby (see Figure 2-97, p. 52, above) and replaced it with concrete flooring, as part of a renovation of the lobby exhibits.[123]

Additional Structures

The visitor center represented the largest capital investment in the park since its initial construction and greatly helped address the basic needs of both visitors and staff. Since its completion, park management has added only one other significant structure, an administration and maintenance building on the 0.6-acre parcel that had been added to the park in 1960. Utilitarian in function and design, this 2,250 square foot, reinforced concrete block structure joined several older, smaller structures to complete the maintenance yard in the southwest corner of the site, largely screened from visitors' view (see also *Existing Conditions* chapter, *Administration and Maintenance*, p. 82, below). The NPS' Denver Service Center (DSC) provided plans for the construction, completed in 1994 (Figures 2-99 to 2-101, p. 53, above).

Between 1967 and 1970, workers dismantled and removed the 1950 contact station, including the walkway to it. By circa 2000, staff had replaced it with a wood kiosk structure on a new concrete walkway. Structures of a less permanent nature, but that nonetheless made a significant visual presence, came to the site in the 1970s, associated with the park's living history program.

Camp Uzita [124]

With a museum-type space finally up and running, park staff began to expand the Memorial's interpretive programming, mindful of new trends and techniques emerging within the NPS and elsewhere. By 1973, staff had developed a full living history program; in contrast to the earlier, highly inauthentic tipis on the beach, they built a small demonstration area, using wood and thatch construction that copied Seminole techniques (Figures 2-102 and 2-103, p. 53, above). This attempted to more accurately reflect aboriginal Florida culture and the way that the Spanish might have adapted these local materials in constructing shelters. Costumed interpreters demonstrated weaponry, blacksmithing, and cooking as they might have been practiced by the soldiers of De Soto's expedition. Staff named the spot Camp Uzita, after the American Indian town - perhaps located not far from Shaw's Point - that De Soto's forces had occupied briefly in 1539.

Camp Uzita originally took up the southeast corner of the plaza, tucked next to the visitor center (Figure 2-104). Sometime by 1993, staff built an expanded version at the northwest edge of the parking area. Arson, apparently at the hands of bored local teenagers, damaged or destroyed the camp's various structures in a number of incidents between 2001 and 2005. Staff built an additional palisade and entrance gateway in 2003, and an additional chickee for a pair of interpretive panels - part of a larger interpretive renovation - in 2004.[125]

Other Recent Landscape Modifications

Exterior Exhibits: The team of NPS interpretive designers that led the 2003-2004 renovations created a series of life-sized image panels, depicting De Soto's soldiers and the local tribes they engaged, that were set into the landscape along the Memorial's trails (see also *Existing Conditions* chapter, *Outdoor Interpretive Exhibits*, p. 85, below). In using this technique, the designers sought to give visitors a

123 "Work Specifications for Exhibit Rehabilitation Projects" (n.d., probably spring 1998) and related correspondence, in file ***[Rehabilitation of Visitor Center - Plans and Specifications, 1996-1999]***. (DESO Archives)

124 Originally spelled "Ucita," the name of this facility was modified to its current spelling circa 2001, because visitors from New York were tending to call it "Camp Utica" (Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 134).

125 Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 133-134, 142; "History of the Living History Camp" typescript (1993) in DESO Archives, file unit ***Living History, 1974-2008***) 3; Superintendent Jorge Acevedo, personal communication (July 7, 2016).

more emotional, immersive way to learn about the clash of cultures that this contact represented, and to encourage them to imagine what the people on both sides of the conflict might have experienced, as they confronted it in a landscape arguably similar to this one.

Boardwalk: Park staff replaced the original wood decking of the 1990 boardwalk in 2000, using a recycled plastic-composite material.[126]

Site Furniture: Also in 2000, park staff replaced many of the benches in the park with new models made with recycled materials. Staff also added a picnic area with a grouping of picnic tables, bounded by a split rail fence, at the northeast corner of the parking lot in 2003.[127] After the construction of the beach berm in 2005, they also placed benches along a shell walkway on top of the berm, and added wood fencing along the walk's north edge as well as in selected locations within the plaza (see also *Existing Conditions* chapter, *Fencing,* p. 87, below).

Invasive Plants: Other human actions, although inadvertent, have significantly affected the landscape at the park - as well as throughout Florida, and many other regions - through the introduction of invasive plant species. This problem has accelerated in recent decades, as an ever wider variety of horticultural introductions, as well as stowaway plants, from other regions of this country or from abroad, find their way into the landscapes of natural areas. At the Memorial, as far back as the 1960s, park management was recognizing the impact of invasive, introduced vegetation, and taking steps to combat it. Staff removed a colony of Autralian pine (*Casuarina spp.*) from the beach, and launched an eradication program for Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) in 1964. In similar efforts in more recent decades, park staff or contractors have targeted carrotwood (*Cupaniopsis anacardioides*), nephthytis (*Syngonium podophyllum*), and other species.[128] This subject is addressed further in the next chapter of this Report, *Existing Conditions*.

126 "De Soto National Memorial Annual Narrative Report 2000" (DESO Archives) 5.

127 "Annual Narrative Report 2000" 4; Supt. Jorge Acevedo, personal communication (July 7, 2016).

128 SMNR for September, 1964 (October 8, 1964) 2; Whisnant and Whisnant, ***Small Park, Large Issues*** 89-90; Supt. Jorge Acevedo, personal communication (November 30, 2015).

Existing Conditions

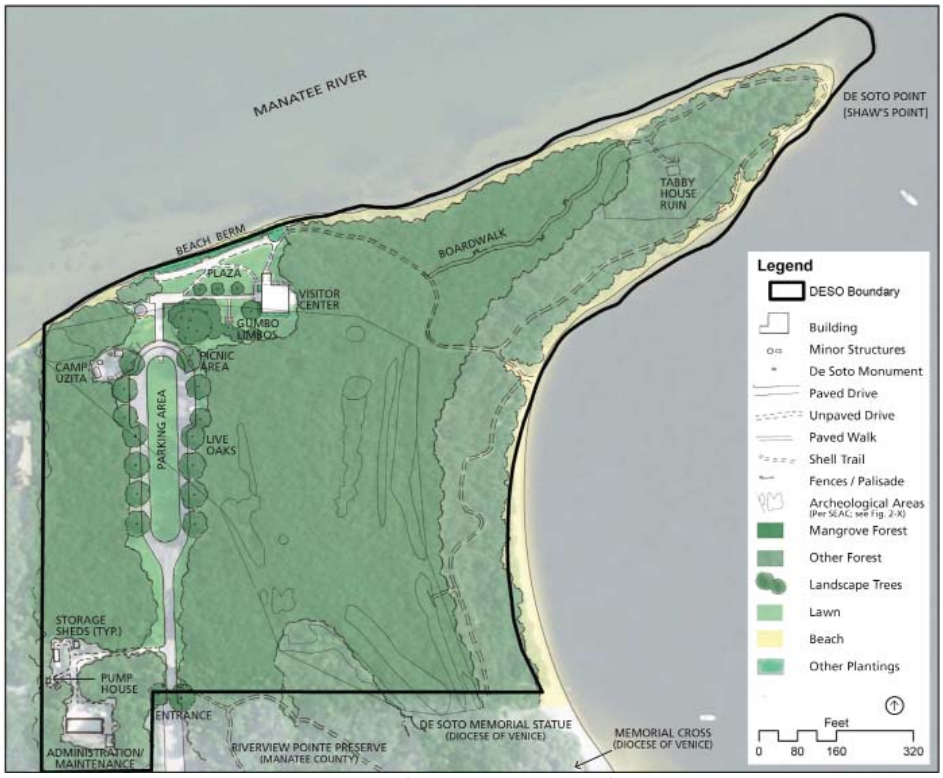


FIGURE 3–1. Existing Conditions Plan. (See also Appendix C)

This section provides a summary of existing conditions observed at the De Soto National Memorial site during four site visits between November 30, 2015 and February 2, 2016. It also gives a brief overview of potential impacts to this site, based on the latest available climate / sea level trend data and models for this location, obtained from NPS climate specialists. Figure 3-1 graphically depicts the site's existing buildings, structures, major site features and circulation systems.

Spatial Organization

The Memorial site sits at the northern terminus of Bradenton's Northwest 75th Street, 5 miles west of downtown and 2.3 miles north of Manatee Boulevard, the northernmost of the area's main east-west thoroughfares. Northwest 75th Street, a two-lane, well-maintained asphalt road, serves as a neighborhood collector, and approaches the Memorial past low-scale, single-family homes and neighborhood elementary and middle schools.

The road proceeds straight and is aligned due north, in keeping with the section-based, gridded road layout of this and many other south Florida communities. However, it does not align with the park's entrance: shortly before reaching the Memorial, the road bends to the west-northwest, where its name changes to the De Soto Memorial Highway. The visual character along the right-hand side of the road also changes, in this stretch, from suburban and residential to something more naturalistic, because of the views to the County's Riverview Pointe Park (Figure 3-2, p. 57, below). The road then turns quickly due north again, now strongly on axis with the park's entrance and parking area. The first glimpse of the park thus only appears just before arrival (Figures 3-3 and 3-4, p. 57, below).

Live oaks arching over the entrance to the park form a portal, reinforced by the monumental entrance



FIGURE 3–2. Approach to the Memorial site (view north - northwest).



FIGURE 3–3. Approach to the Memorial site (view north).



FIGURE 3–4. Approach to the Memorial site (view north).

sign and pier that bracket the road (Figures 3-5 and 3-6). Beyond this the parking area, a long and narrow space oriented on axis, dominates the scene. Trees frame and define the parking area as a distinct outdoor room: the live oaks along its edges, originally planted in 1951, stand as some of the largest trees on the property, and the wall of mixed mangrove forest behind them stands almost as high, in places (Figures 3-7 to 3-9). Throughout this space, turf, asphalt, and crushed shell surfaces form a generally smooth, unbroken ground plane.

This oblong room sits near and runs parallel to the western boundary of the property. The framing forest on that side extends to a depth of only approximately 50-70 yards, before ending abruptly at the fence line abutting the Riverview Landings subdivision. Within that narrow buffer, at the southwest corner of the property, the administrative office/maintenance building anchors a cluster of



FIGURE 3–5. Park entrance, live oaks portal (view north).



FIGURE 3–6. Park entrance, live oaks portal (view north).



FIGURE 3–7. Entrance drive and parking area (view north).



FIGURE 3–8. Parking area vista (view north).



FIGURE 3–9. Parking area view north to portal (palisade).



FIGURE 3–10. View north through palisade to plaza area.

smaller structures (see *Buildings and Structures*, p. 79, below), all screened from outside views by the surrounding vegetation. At the north end of this forested strip, the wooden and thatch structures that comprise Camp Uzita and the adjacent palisade form another portal (Figures 3-9 and 3-10). This leads from the parking area into the site's only other large, open outdoor room, known as the plaza.

The plaza extends west to east, from the north end of the parking to the visitor center and the beginning of the trail system beyond. Along its north edge, the plaza space originally flowed uninterrupted to the beach and the river beyond, but today a berm, built as part of the 2005 shoreline reinforcement project, makes a definite boundary (Figures 3-11 and 3-12). A line of forest defines its south edge. Just in front of that edge, the 1939 De Soto Trail Marker (Monument) perches atop the gently rising Marker Mound, framed within an open grove of gumbo limbo trees (Figure 3-13). The visitor center dominates the east end of the plaza space and, together with the mangrove forest behind it, forms the east edge (Figure 3-14).

From the grassy top of the beach berm, the change in elevation and the now-revealed views to the river give this space a distinctly different feel, separating it from the plaza, while still allowing a strong visual connection and easy movement between the two spaces (Figures 3-15 and 3-16, p. 59, below; see also *Topography*, p. 62, and *Circulation*, p. 69, below).



FIGURE 3–11. View north entering plaza area.



FIGURE 3–12. View north-northeast entering plaza area.



FIGURE 3–13. Marker Mound in plaza, view looking SSE. Parking area in background at far right.



FIGURE 3–14. Plaza view east to visitor center.



FIGURE 3–15. Top of berm (view east).



FIGURE 3–16. View west-northwest from visitor center, along berm edge of plaza space.



FIGURE 3–17. Strip of open beach on north edge of berm (view west).



FIGURE 3–19. Typical spatial character of north shore beach (view east).

North of it, a sliver of beach runs along its base, essentially disappearing at high tide when the river's waves come right to the base of the rocks (Figure 3-17). Westward, from the end of the berm to the west property line, the beach widens only slightly. A large clump of seagrape (*Coccoloba diversifolia*) separates this beach from the plaza, giving it a secluded ambience; a narrow sand path provides a connection. Black mangrove (*Avicennia germinans*) cover much of this beach. When tall enough to arch overhead, they create a ceiling; when stepped back from the water's edge, they form a back wall; and for much of the beach, their pneumatophores make a visually striking floor (Figure 3-18).

To the east of the plaza and berm, the river's shoreline extends out to De Soto (formerly Shaw's) Point. Now too narrow to traverse, without clambering through mangrove roots and branches, for most of its length, this shoreline once served as the route of the loop trail (Figure 3-19). Wrapping around the Point, the shoreline strip - widening occasionally into a small beach - continues south, forming the east perimeter of the site. On this east side, its long crescent shape gives a sense of enclosure, with less of a visual connection to the river and more of an inward focus on the smaller, more intimate cove (Figure 3-20).



FIGURE 3–18. View west to beach strip west of berm, seen from path coming from plaza.



FIGURE 3–20. East (cove) shoreline, view north toward Point.



FIGURE 3–21. Dense portal at beginning of loop trail (view east).



FIGURE 3–23. Dense portal along loop trail (view east-southeast).



FIGURE 3–25. Meander in loop trail, more open to sky, south from boardwalk (view south).

Other than the major open spaces described above, forest of one type or another densely encloses almost all of the rest of the Memorial property, with the minor exceptions of the trails, and of occasional openings, such as at the tabby house ruin (which is maintained to keep the plant growth in check), or where a small glade of low vegetation appears among the trees. Within the circuit of the trails, a number of smaller spatial variations come and go, such as where some overhanging tree creates a portal, beyond which the trail may widen, and open up wider views to the sky; or where a short vista opens into the woods, or a break in the shoreline



FIGURE 3–22. Scrim of vegetation with glimpse of river, loop trail (view north).



FIGURE 3–24. Mangrove tunnel at boardwalk entrance (view northeast).

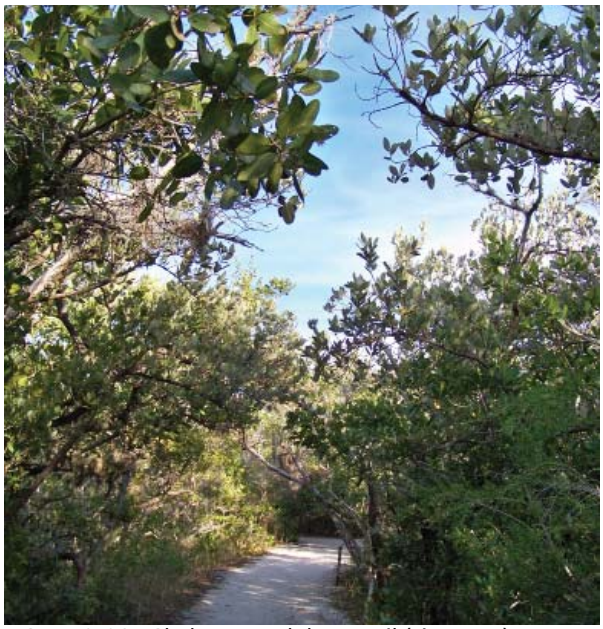


FIGURE 3–26. Glade on south loop trail (view east).

growth reveals views out to and across the water (Figures 3-21 to 3-36). For the most part, these happen at too small a scale, and occur in far greater numbers, than would be feasible to map. Figure 3-37 (p. 62, below) shows the locations of selected photographs, Figures 3-5 to 3-36, and summarizes the spatial organization observed on the site.



FIGURE 3–27. Portal of overhanging sand live oak (***Quercus geminata***), junction of south loop and cove trails (view east).



FIGURE 3–28. Portal along cove trail (view northeast).



FIGURE 3–29. Varied spatial qualities along cove trail, headed towards Point (view northeast).



FIGURE 3–30. Varied spatial qualities along cove trail, southwest of Point (view southwest).



FIGURE 3–31. Open view at Point along cove trail (view north).



FIGURE 3–32. North shore trail, west of Point, toward Tabby House ruin and boardwalk (view west).



FIGURE 3–33. Portal of mangroves at entrance to park from Riverview Pointe Preserve: south cove trail (view north).



FIGURE 3–34. Proceeding along south cove trail (view north).



FIGURE 3–35. Glade along south cove trail (view north).



FIGURE 3–36. Partial view along south cove trail (view east).

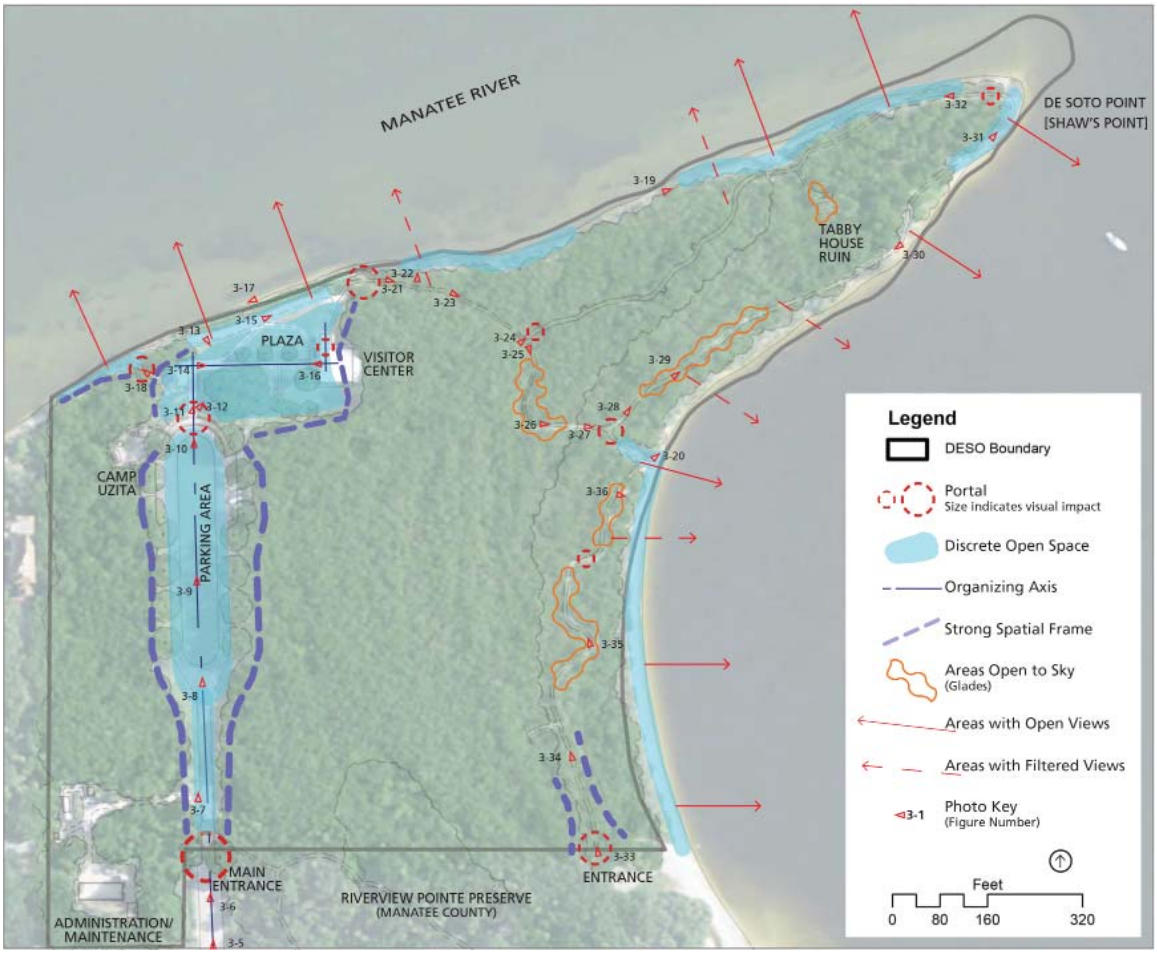


FIGURE 3–37. Spatial Organization diagram based on field observations November 2015 - February 2016. (See also Appendix C)

Natural Systems

Soils, Topography, and Hydrology

As documented in the *Site History* chapter, human beings have been modifying the landform, soils, and hydrology of the Memorial site for over two thousand years. In recent decades, under NPS stewardship, site managers have focused these efforts on combating erosion and storm surge, in order to protect the site's trails, facilities, and archeological resources, and on maintaining water flow through the mangrove forest, for the health of the mangrove ecosystem as well as to reduce mosquito populations.

The site today reflects those years of effort. The filled areas for roads, trails, and other facilities have formed a network of elevated land that weaves throughout the park. Most of the site, however, remains at its historically low elevations, generally less than four feet above sea level (Figure 3-38, p. 63, below). These raised areas, generally formed

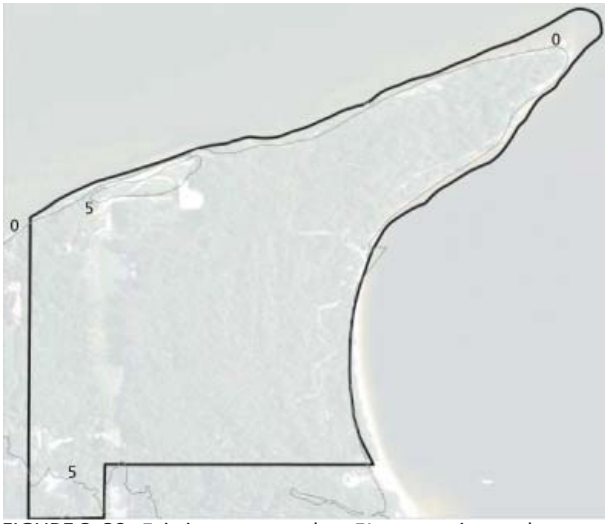


FIGURE 3–38. Existing topography - 5′ contour intervals. (Source: Manatee County)

of compacted shell and sand, create a distinct soil layer, better draining and somewhat less prone to inundation than the native soil types (see also Figure 2-2, p. 11, above). They have also created hydrologic barriers, affecting water flow into and through the site's mangrove and other swamps and tending to isolate certain areas (see *Vegetation*, p. 64, below). Park staff have installed a number of culverts over the years, in an attempt to mitigate these effects (Figures 3-39 and 3-40).

The beach berm that covers the former beach area rises some four feet higher than the adjacent plaza and parking area. Together with the marker mound nearby, this forms the site's most visually distinctive topographic feature, contrasting with the surrounding, relatively flat landscape. A combination of large and small boulders form the river side of the berm, augmented with a planting of mostly native species (see *Plantings*, p. 91, below). Turf areas with walkways and benches top the berm, and extend to the plaza to the south (Figure 3-41).

Erosion

Built in 2005, as part of the park's endless battle with shoreline erosion, the beach berm appears to be performing as intended; at least to date, erosion or storm impacts have since left the plaza, marker mound, and visitor center unscathed.[1] Prior to that time, park managers faced a virtually continuous need for beach re-nourishment and shoreline protection projects (see *Site History,* pp. 44-47,

1 Supt. Jorge Acevedo, personal communication, February 2, 2016.


FIGURE 3–39. Culvert under road, intersection of main drive and maintenance drive, view southwest.


FIGURE 3–40. Culvert/headwall, south side of maintenance drive, view west.


FIGURE 3–41. View of beach berm from main walk just north of parking area, looking north-northeast.


FIGURE 3–42. Shoreline north of visitor center, view east.



FIGURE 3–43. Tidal channel on north shore, approximately 50 yards east of visitor center, view southeast.



FIGURE 3–44. North shore, near the Point, view east.



FIGURE 3–45. Cove shoreline south of point, view north.



FIGURE 3–46. Cove shoreline near property midpoint, view south.

above). Previous studies by both NPS and US Army Corps of Engineers personnel establish that erosion has been taking portions of the north shoreline since at least the 19th century.[2]

While the berm provides protection for the area immediately behind it, it also represents an acknowledgement that the presence of a sand beach at this location cannot be sustained. Along virtually all of the park's north (river) shoreline, the beach has largely disappeared. Shoreline stability depends on mangroves and riprap; in addition, corrugated polycarbonate or fiberglass shoring and stacked "cement-bag" walls further protect the channels that provide seawater irrigation to the mangroves (Figures 3-43 and 3-44; see also Figures 3-177 to 3-183, p. 90, below).

Although previous studies also indicate that accretion, not erosion, historically occurred towards the eastern end of the park's north shore (the Point), current site observations show that the beach here has also disappeared (Figure 3-45). This may represent a change in pattern caused by a reduction in available sand and sediment from the west (perhaps associated with the surrender of the park beach, and the cessation of re-nourishment projects). Increasing wake activity from larger, faster and greater numbers of boats may also be helping to wash this area away.[3]

Cement-bag and riprap reinforcing now armor this shoreline, wrapping around the point and extending south along the cove, continuing for approximately 60 yards as a solid line and another 120 yards intermittently (See Figures 3-45, left, and 3-183, p. 90, below). Further south, the beach along the cove retains a slightly more generous width (Figure 3-46). Historically, researchers have observed that section of shoreline to be relatively stable, or even accreting.[4]

Vegetation (Natural Communities)

An NPS team from the South Florida Caribbean Network, led by community ecologist Kevin Whelan, completed a Vegetation Mapping project for the Memorial and Riverview Pointe Preserve

2 Gannon Memorandum, "Beach Restoration" 3; Allen, " Shoreline Assessment" 2.

3 Supt. Jorge Acevedo, personal communication, Feb. 2, 2016.

4 Corps of Engineers, "DESOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL" 16.

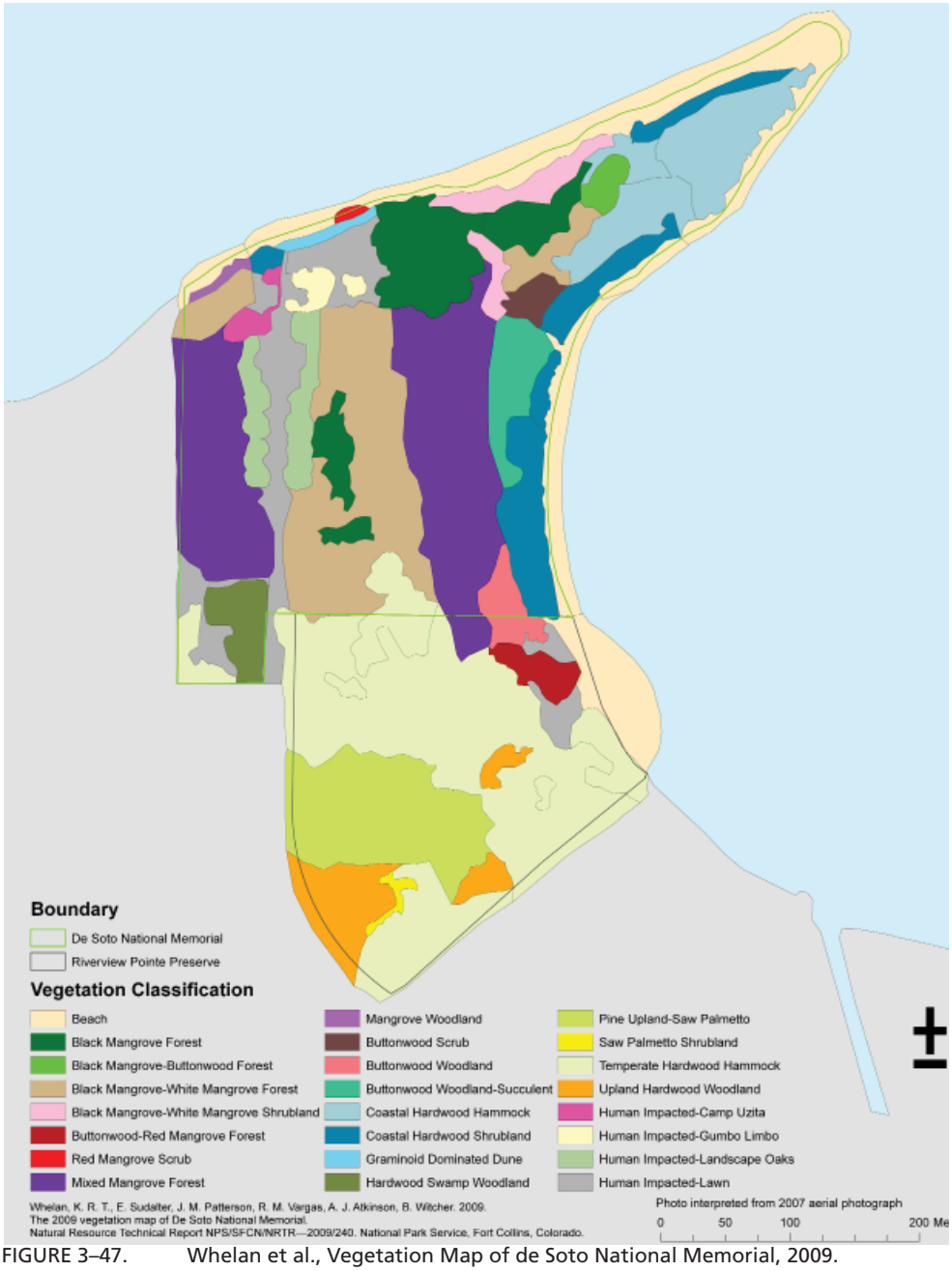


FIGURE 3–47. Whelan et al., Vegetation Map of de Soto National Memorial, 2009.

properties in 2009 (Figure 3-47). The team based its findings on analyses of aerial photography and LIDAR data and on collection and analysis of field data.[5]

The following overview of existing site vegetation provides a simplified scheme, based on Whelan et al.'s findings as supplemented by site observations in November/December 2015 and January 2016. This simplified classification scheme, shown graphically in Figure 3-48 (p. 66, below), serves as a basis for understanding and discussion of the site's natural vegetation communities as components of a cultural landscape. Planted vegetation and other landscape areas ("Human Impacted/Landscape") are treated separately below, under *Cultural Resources - Plantings* (p. 91).

Shoreline

Although Whelan et al. mapped the site's shorelines as Beaches, erosion has reduced these areas to narrow strips of sand; these almost entirely lack

5 Kevin R. T. Whelan, Eric Sudalter, J.M. Patterson, R.M. Vargas, A.J. Atkinson & B. Witcher, ***The 2009 Vegetation Map of De Soto National Memorial-Natural Resources Technical report NPS/SFCN/NRTR-2009/240*** (Fort Collins: National Park Service, 2009) 1-4.

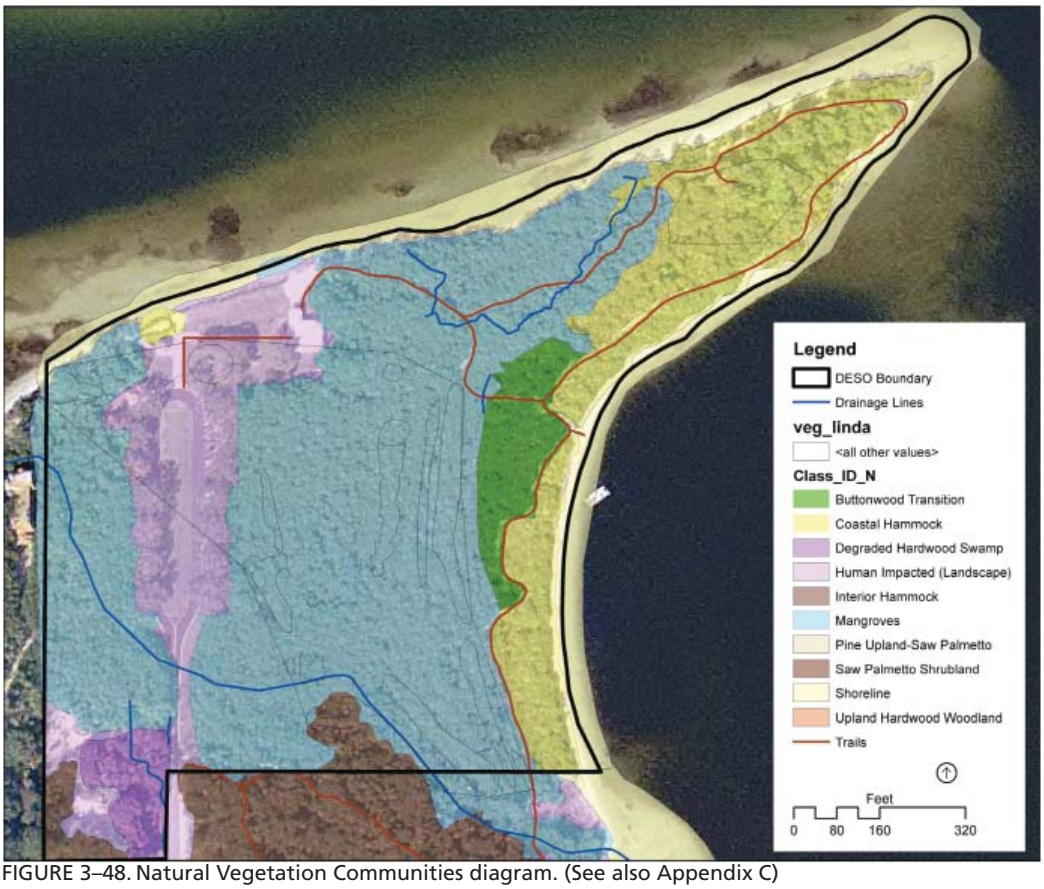


FIGURE 3–48. Natural Vegetation Communities diagram. (See also Appendix C)

vegetation, such as would normally characterize a beach, since the more active sections do not form dunes, and the quieter, accreting sections have not been colonized by cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*). Heavy human trampling activity may partially prevent vegetation establishment, but ongoing erosion probably plays the larger role. In many places, the waves come right up to the mangroves or are blocked by artificial barriers such as rip rap. Sea purslane (*Sesuvium portulacastrum*), which may or may not be naturally occurring, drapes over some of these rocks (Figure 3-49). The rip rap berm at the main beach falls under the category of *Plantings* (see p. 94, in *Cultural Resources*, below).



FIGURE 3–49. Sea purslane on rip rap along cove trail, south of Point.



FIGURE 3–50. Red mangroves at beach berm, view east.

Mangroves

Decades of clearing, filling, and replumbing have eliminated any clear zonation or delineations that the site's mangrove swamps would normally exhibit (see also Figure 2-5, p. 12, above). In a classic pristine landscape, red mangroves typically grow on the seaward edges of the community, with the greatest tidal flushing and lowest salinity, and black mangroves in shallow basins behind them where more salt concentrates. An increasing proportion of white mangroves will mix in as the vegetation

begins to grade, upslope, into buttonwoods along berms and upland edges.

The site's mangrove species now inter-mix, in response to micro-scale differences in elevation, hydrology, and propagule availability, rather than sorting into meaningful ecological communities. Figure 3-48 therefore combines Whelan et al.'s Red Mangrove Scrub, Black Mangrove Forest, Black Mangrove - White Mangrove Forest, Black Mangrove - White Mangrove Shrubland, Mixed Mangrove Forest, and Mangrove Woodland into the single ecological category of "Mangroves." This vegetation type's delineation generally corresponds to topographic low areas. Historically filled areas, such as the entrance road and parking, show clearly on historic aerial photographs as barriers to once-unified areas of mangrove swamp (see also Figure 2-35, p. 34, above). As noted in *Site History*, mangrove forest plays a central role in the interpretation of this site as a cultural landscape.

The areas that Whelan et al. mapped as various types of mangrove "scrub" or "shrubland" have a lower canopy and a much more open character than those mapped as "forest" or "woodland." However, based on site observations these do not appear to represent different ecosystems, but rather areas with younger vegetation of the same type.

The small shoreline cluster of low red mangroves Whelan et al. mapped just north of the beach berm may represent remnants of prior shoreline stabilization plantings. However, in a region with plentiful seed sources like this, red mangrove propagules will drift onto hydrologically appropriate sites and establish themselves without human assistance; thus, these may be natural recruits that have found recent beach topography to their liking. They do not appear to be advancing seaward or even holding their own now, however. Their unusually dense proproots tightly grip the shoreline stabilization rock around them, rather than arc adventurously towards the water (Figure 3-50, p. 66, above).

Buttonwood Transition

As described further in *Archeological Resources*, p. 76, below, shell middens paralleling the eastern shoreline of the site form a series of low ridges, just inland from the cove; a spoil pile from historic dredging also occurs here (see Figure 3-94, p. 76, below). A distinct vegetation type has colonized



FIGURE 3–51. Buttonwood transition with sea oxeye, junction of cove trail and loop trail, view south.



FIGURE 3–52. Buttonwood transition with sea oxeye, along south cove trail, view west.

these berms, characterized by a pre-dominance of buttonwood, with occasional black and white mangroves, and patches of sea oxeye (*Borrichia frutescens*) in the swales between the ridges. This irregular, transitional zone, generally intermediate in elevation between hammock and mangroves, reflects a disturbed condition. Figure 3-48 shows this as Buttonwood Transition, a category that includes Whelan et al.'s Black Mangrove - Buttonwood Forest, Buttonwood Scrub, Buttonwood Woodland, and Buttonwood Woodland-Succulent.

Coastal Hammock

Whelan et al. mapped areas of Coastal Hardwood Hammock and separate areas termed Coastal



FIGURE 3–53. Seagrape-dominant coastal hammock, cove trail approximately 100 yards south of Point, view west.



FIGURE 3–54. Seagrape-dominant coastal hammock, cove trail approximately 100 yards south of Point, view north.

Hardwood Shrubland, roughly corresponding to small trees of the coastal hammock and the shrubby coastal strand that precedes that community successionally. Since erosion has eaten away at the lower outer edges of this continuum and the shrubs now present are large, this Report unifies these categories as, simply, “Coastal Hammock." In addition to the dominant seagrape, coastal hammock species include gumbo limbo, sea myrtle (*Baccharis halimifolia*), Florida privet (*Forestiera segregata*), and occasional specimens of other typical tropical trees. A calabash, presumed to be the native black calabash (*Amphitecna latifolia*), but which may have originally been planted for its useful gourd-like fruits, grows in the remnants of this zone near the tabby house. These woody species are entangled with grey nickerbean (*Caesalpinia bonduc*), yellow necklacepod (*Sophora tomentosa*), and coinvine (*Dalbergia ecastaphyllum*) along sunnier edges and openings. Spanish bayonet (*Yucca aloifolia*) also appears prominently in some of these openings, along with prickly pear (*Opuntia spp*., likely *O. stricta* or *O. humifusa*).

Interior Hammock

Whelan et al. mapped a small area of upland forest in the site interior as Temperate Hardwood Hammock. Figure 3-48 delineates this area as Interior Hammock, because it includes many tropical species, especially in the sheltered understory. Characteristic species here include live oak, myrsine (*Myrsine cubana)*, wild coffee (*Psychotria nervosa*), strangler fig (*Ficus aurea*), red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), and hickory (most likely *Carya floridana*). The luxuriant vines in this community include Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), peppervine (*Ampelopsis arborea*), Calusa grape (*Vitis shuttleworthii*), snowberry (*Chiococca alba*), marine ivy (*Cissus trifoliata*), and poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*).

Young cabbage palms grow abundantly in this area, and epiphytic *Tillandsia* species are common on the trunks and branches of palms and trees. Firebush (*Hamelia patens*), rougeplant (*Rivina humilis*), and other species frequently featured by native nurseries appear especially plentiful along the portion of the



FIGURE 3–55. View north into Memorial property along south property line, on Riverview Pointe Preserve trail.



FIGURE 3–56. View south into Riverview Pointe hammock, from same trail as Figure 3-55.

nature trail immediately off of the entrance road, suggesting that supplemental planting may have been done there.

Degraded Hardwood Swamp

Although this area and the area mapped as Mangroves appear to have once been parts of the same swamp (see Figure 2-35, p. 34, above), species more characteristic of freshwater swamps and their upland fringes, rather than of mangrove communities, now dominate this segment. Modern landscape modifications such as the drainage canals and adjacent development have likely effected this change, by increasing the influence of freshwater urban runoff and reducing tidal influence and saltwater storm overflow. Native species in this community include cabbage palm, laurel oak (*Quercus laurifolia*), wax myrtle, elderberry (*Sambucus nigra* subsp. *canadensis*), and common reed (*Phragmites australis*).

Along the edges, where the swamp meets the lawn and driveway, a diverse mix of mostly weedy species dominates. The native species among them, such as Virginia creeper, peppervine, and native grasses (primarily including *Panicum* and/or *Dicanthelium* species), inter-mix with weedy exotic species. None of the species observed in this area appear on the latest (2015) *List of Invasive Plant Species* published by the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC). Within the interior, however, arrowhead vine (*Syngonium podophyllum*), an FLEPPC-listed Category I invasive, remains entangled in the dense swamp vegetation despite repeated efforts to eliminate it.[6]

Team members also spotted another aggressive exotic species, creeping inchplant (*Callisia repens*), near the administration/maintenance building; although presently not listed by FLEPPC, this plant spreads rapidly by rooting from tiny fragments, similar to listed species such as Tradescantia and Gibasis, and has been observed to invade mesic hammocks.[7]



FIGURE 3–57. Degraded hardwood swamp, view west to maintenance area from entry drive.

Cultural Resources

The following section summarizes site cultural resources including the park's circulation system, archeological resources, buildings and structures, small-scale features, and planting.

Circulation

Vehicles reach the Memorial via Northwest 75th Street/De Soto Memorial Highway and, as noted above, this roadway brings them into the park aligned on a main north-south axis that follows the section line. Signs, entry piers, a speed bump, and a pair of steel pipe gates mark the arrival point. Once inside the gate, pedestrians share the drive with cars, as there are no sidewalks (Figures 3-58 and 3-59).



FIGURE 3–58. View north into the Memorial entrance, showing park entry gates, piers and signage.



FIGURE 3–59. Arriving pedestrians use the drive aisle, along with cars.

6 FLEPPC, **2015 List of Invasive Plant Species**; Supt. Jorge Acevedo, personal communication, December 1, 2015.

7 Linda Conway Duever, personal communication, July 7, 2016.

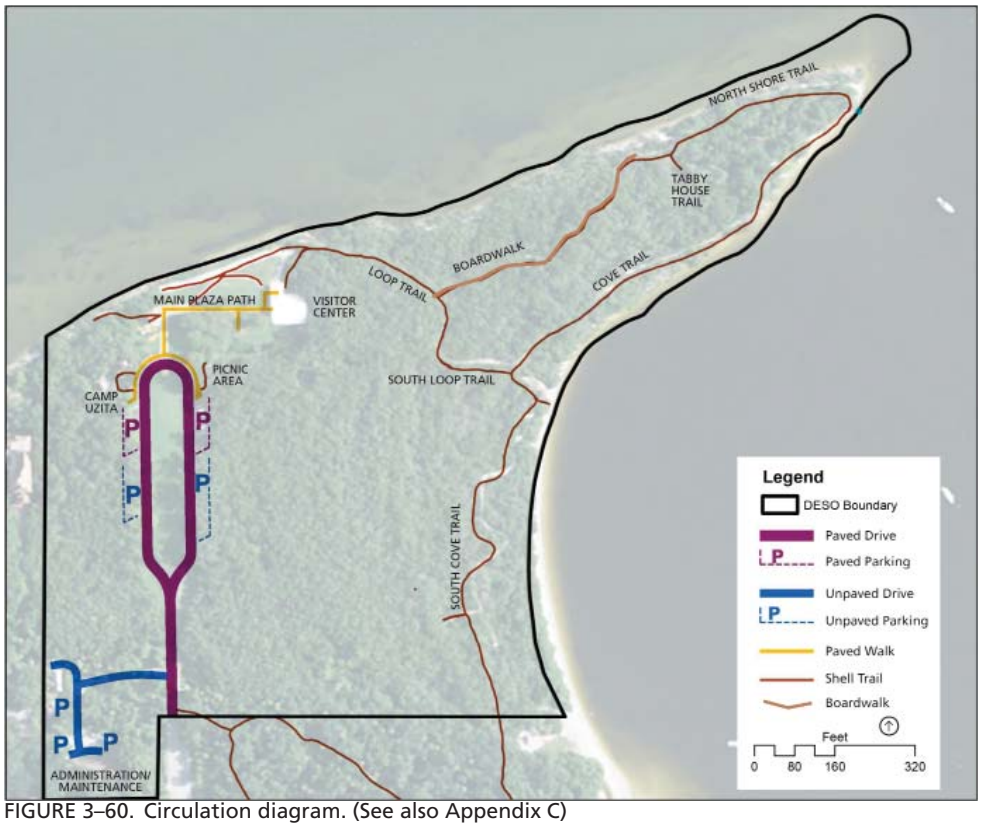


FIGURE 3–60. Circulation diagram. (See also Appendix C)

Approximately 280 feet inside the entrance the asphalt roadway, which is in generally good repair, diverges around the parking area's central lawn panel to form a one-way, elongated loop. The long, straight sides of this loop extend for some 360 feet before transitioning into the curve that forms the north end of the parking area (Figure 3-60). The inbound (east) and outbound (west) legs each provide 10 paved, 45-degree angled parking spaces, along their northernmost portion, including a single accessible space on each side. South of the paved parking areas, additional, informal parking surfaced in sand and shell extends between the large live oaks that line both sides of the space (Figures 3-61 and 3-62). The layout of the paved roadway and parking system retains its original 1950 form, although the curbs, sidewalks, and asphalt surface are all more recent replacements.

Between the parking area and the park entrance, an unpaved road leads west for a short distance, into the maintenance area. This unpaved road then turns south to the main administrative office and maintenance building, and an open area providing access to fueling and wash stations and storage areas (Figure 3-63, p. 71, below). Another short leg extends north to reach to additional storage structures and the trash collection area (Figure 3-64, p. 71, below).

A modern, standard concrete walkway wraps the northern arc of the parking area, connecting the paved spaces to the entrance into the plaza area, through the portal formed by the wooden palisade


FIGURE 3–61. Paved parking, east side of parking area.


FIGURE 3–62. Sand/shell parking, east side of parking area.



FIGURE 3–63. Maintenance area roadway, view south to main building.



FIGURE 3–65. Parking area concrete walkway, north end of lot, view east.



FIGURE 3–67. Main plaza path, view west.



FIGURE 3–69. Plaza sand path, west to beach.



FIGURE 3–64. Maintenance area roadway, view north to storage and dumpsters.



FIGURE 3–66. Walkway from parking into plaza, view north.



FIGURE 3–68. Plaza shell path, view northeast from "hub."

(Figures 3-65 and 3-66). Entering the plaza, this walk leads north until it reaches the cross-axis from the main entrance of the visitor center. This point, where the flagpole originally stood, now functions as a hub in the path system. The concrete path directly east, following the original 1950 path alignment, passes the Monument, and takes visitors directly to the visitor center, as well as to the small informational kiosk just before it (Figure 3-67; see also Figure 3-70, p. 72, below).

A third, shell-surfaced path heads east-northeast, ascending the beach berm and leading to the river



FIGURE 3–70. Plaza concrete walk at kiosk, view south.



FIGURE 3–71. Typical shell trail: loop trail near boardwalk, view east-southeast.



FIGURE 3–72. Typical shell trail: cove trail just south of Point, view west-southwest.



FIGURE 3–73. Typical sand trail: south cove trail, view south.

overlook walk and the entrance to the nature trail beyond. To the west, a narrow sand trail leads past a chickee hut interpretive structure down to the narrow beach that extends to the west property line. (Figures 3-68 and 3-69, p. 71, above). Interpretive waysides and a wall of vegetation define this hub's north and northwest edges. Its concrete paving, apparently relatively recently constructed, supersedes two earlier generations of hardscape: its original asphalt and shell surfacing had been replaced in 1968 by aggregate-surfaced ("Chattahoochee stone") pavers to match those used around the visitor center.

Outside of the immediate plaza area, shell- and sand-surfaced paths make up all of the rest of the pathway system, except for the boardwalk. Figure 3-60 (p. 70, above) shows the locations of these paths. As of winter 2015-2016, site reviews found these pathways almost without exception to be in good and sound condition, noting only one small occurrence of subsidence or erosion (Figures 3-71 to 3-74).

Boardwalk

As noted in *Site History*, the boardwalk, built in 1990, replaced the north shore loop of the Shaw's Point (nature) trail, which was severely vulnerable to erosion and had been completely re-built a number of times during the park's first four decades. Constructed originally entirely of pressure-treated wood - the decking was replaced in 2000 with synthetic wood board - the boardwalk



FIGURE 3–74. Path subsidence, south loop trail at culvert.



FIGURE 3–75. Boardwalk, view east, near west end.



FIGURE 3–76. Boardwalk, view east, near midpoint.



FIGURE 3–77. Adjacent ground, west end of boardwalk.



FIGURE 3–78. View east, near east end of boardwalk.



FIGURE 3–79. East end of boardwalk, seen from beach (view south).



FIGURE 3–80. Failed deck screws.

roughly parallels the north shore. It meanders generally east-west through dense mangrove forest; for most of its length it is set inland approximately 100 to 150 feet, but at its east end moves closer to the shore as it connects to the old Point trail (see Figure 3-60, p. 70, above). Along its approximately 500-foot length, three small seating areas project off of it, two on the north side and one on the south. Its deck height above the surrounding flat mangrove swamps generally ranges between two and three feet (Figures 3-75 to 3-80).

As part of this study, Master Consulting Engineers of Tampa prepared a site report giving a preliminary opinion of the boardwalk's condition. Appendix B includes the full site report. The report finds that the boardwalk remains in generally good condition and, based on a limited visual inspection and design analysis, the existing decking and floor structure should have the capacity to meet Florida Building Code (FBC) live load requirements of 60 pounds per square foot.

The report noted some minor settlement in limited locations. It also noted three deficiencies for which it recommended corrective action:



FIGURE 3–81. View north on original axis, parking area, January 2016.



FIGURE 3–82. View north on original axis, entering plaza, January 2016.



FIGURE 3–83. A small glimpse of the river, at plaza entry.



FIGURE 3–84. Docks in view west from top of berm.

absence of anchorage for uplift as required by FBC; substandard attachment of girders to columns; and failure of a number of the steel screws that attach the decking to the joists.[8]

Views and Vistas

The dramatic, axial vista on approach to the park formed a powerful part of the original design (see *Site History*, especially Figures 2-50 to 2-54, pp. 38-40). The approach vista would have quickly sequenced, upon entering the park, into the axial vista to the plaza area (with the original flagpole as focal point), including the river beyond; then unfolded into the extensive and dramatic views through the plaza to the broad expanse of the river and bay. After 1968, a secondary axial view through the plaza terminated at the visitor center.

In 2016, the approach vista remains a powerful image. However, it now terminates, less dramatically, on the various wood-constructed elements of Camp Uzita and its adjacent palisade, against a near background of solid vegetation (Figures 3-81 and 3-82). For a visitor entering the plaza, the beach berm blocks almost all view of the river; only a few tiny glimpses of water, and the openness of sky beyond the berm, give a hint of the kinds of views to come. The view to the visitor center remains a strong, if secondary, visual draw through the plaza area.

The iconic views of the waters around the Memorial now only first appear as a visitor ascends the beach berm. Throughout the park's existence, these views, to the "unspoiled" coastlines and wide blue waters as De Soto's eyes might have seen them, have represented an important cultural resource for enriching the visitor's experience and supporting interpretation. A 1998 Project Statement for a proposed Cultural Landscape Inventory summed it up this way: "The viewshed from the visitor center and adjacent beach is considered a cultural landscape. This view is used to invoke the imagination of visitors and ask them to think of Florida in 1539. This is possible because the viewshed is almost devoid of signs of the 20th century. Without modern intrusions it is possible to transport visitors back in time to imagine an Indian

8 See Appendix B, MCE Report dated February 16, 2016.



FIGURE 3–85. View north to Snead Island from top of berm.



FIGURE 3–86. View east at cove, full of modern elements.



FIGURE 3–87. One of several views along the north shore largely devoid of modern intrusions. (Approximately 75 yards west of the Point, view north.)



FIGURE 3–88. Water glimpse, north shore trail near the tabby house ruin.



FIGURE 3–89. Interior glade, north shore trail near tabby house ruin (view south).



FIGURE 3–90. Water glimpse, cove trail south of Point.

midden on the shore as nine large sailing ships enter the bay."[9]

Today, views outward from the site take in a number of modern intrusions: docks to the west, houses to the east, and a proliferation of speeding boats throughout the viewshed. Even the urban skyline of St. Petersburg appears in the distance, doubtless much more prominently than it would have been in the park's early days. Despite this, a number of locations along the park's shoreline still offer this important experience - at least, frequently, when boat traffic is out of sight and earshot - especially the views directly across the river, to the protected



FIGURE 3–91. Interior glade, cove trail south of Point (view northwest).

9 "Project Statement DESO-C-012.000, Cultural Landscape Inventory" (August 19, 1998), copy in DESO Archives.


FIGURE 3–92. View south along cove beach.


FIGURE 3–93. View west from northwest property corner.

shoreline of Snead Island (Figures 3-83 to 3-87, pp. 74-75, above).

In addition to river and bay views, a number of smaller-scale, more contained views and vistas throughout the site offer the potential for immersive experiences that support the themes and interpretation of the Memorial. These include internal landscape (primarily mangrove forest) vistas, as well as screened views and momentary vistas from the interior outward, to the surrounding waters. (Figures 3-88 to 3-91, p. 75, above).

The site's dense vegetation along its western and southern boundaries precludes almost all off-site views to adjacent properties, with two exceptions. The Venice Archdiocese of the Catholic Church retains ownership of the two memorials that it built in the northeast corner of what is now Riverview Pointe Preserve. The Memorial Cross that honors all of the priests who have served in Florida, beginning with the twelve who accompanied De Soto, dominates southerly views along the cove shoreline (Figure 3-92). The secluded shoreline west of the plaza also allows views to neighboring residences (Figure 3-93).

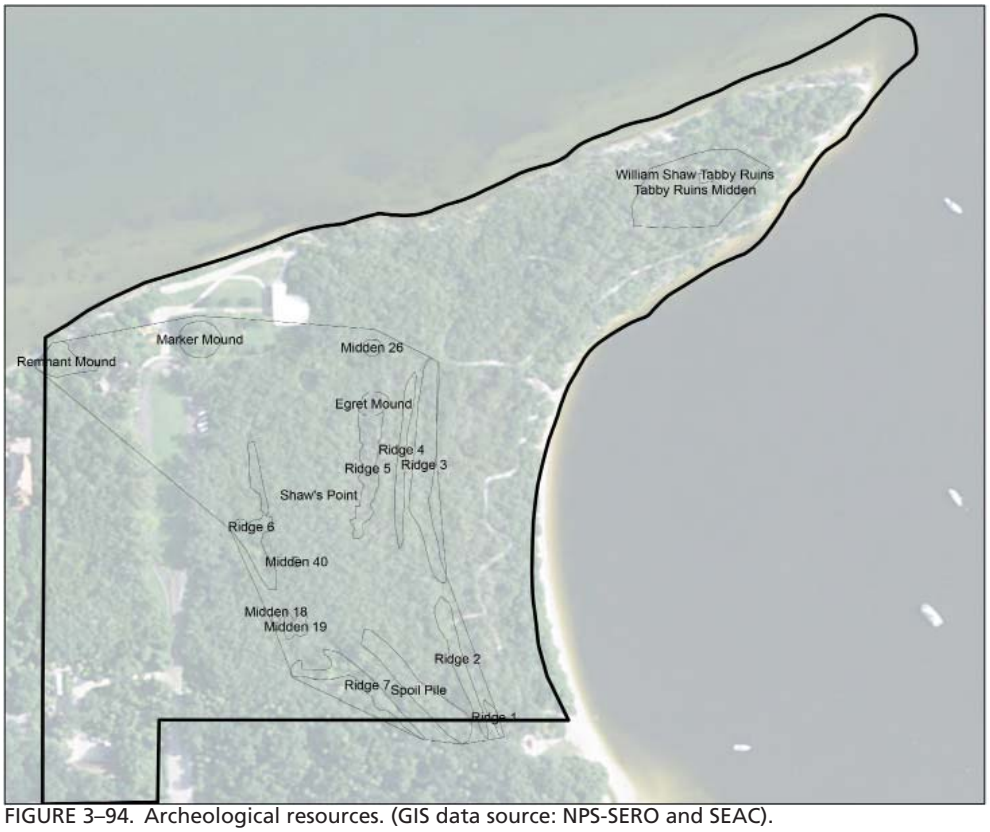


FIGURE 3–94. Archeological resources. (GIS data source: NPS-SERO and SEAC).

Archeological Resources

The team preparing this CLR did not perform reconnaissance for unrecorded archaeological resources as part of this study; previous studies have investigated the known resources on the property, leading to the 2001 designation of the Shaw's Point Archaeological District (see also *Site History* chapter, pp. 14-16).[10] Figure 3-94 (p. 76, above) shows these resources. They include three mound deposits – Remnant Mound, Marker Mound, and Egret Mound; one ramp leading to Egret Mound (also called Ridge 5); and six additional shell ridges along with a number of miscellaneous midden areas. A buried Deptford Period midden and the historic tabby house ruin are also included. The District also encompasses several off-site resources, not shown herein, including additional shell ridges, middens, and ramps; burials mounds; and a cemetery. Historical documentation ties the existing resources to the *Shaw's Point (8Ma7)* shell mound complex, an extensive construction that occupied some 600 feet along the river (see *Site History*).

Remnant Mound includes a very small portion of this once-vast mound complex at the northwestern corner of the Memorial property (Figure 3-95). The remaining deposits of Remnant Mound lie intact. Radiocarbon samples demonstrate occupation over an approximately 950-year period, from 50 BCE to 900 CE. The mound's initial builders may have been working in a mangrove environment. The narrow shoreline trail provides access to the Manatee River side of the Remnant Mound.

Marker Mound sits beneath the 1939 De Soto Monument (Figure 3-96). A small, roughly circular feature approximately 75 by 70 feet (c. 23 by 21 m), its 4-foot (1.22 m) depth of mound deposits includes one meter of intact archeological shell midden overlain with 80 cm of modern fill. Radiocarbon samples here are consistent with Remnant Mound at 15-475 CE. Even though these two mound areas are discrete today, previous archaeological assessment suggested that Remnant and Marker Mounds are extant portions of the original Shaw's Point shell mound recorded by Sylvanus Walker (1880). Egret Mound, a discrete archeological feature, lies southeast of the visitor center within the mangrove swamp. Its archeological deposits continue below present day sea level. Radiocarbon samples and pottery support occupation from 265 to 800 CE.

Shell Ridge Middens 1-7 parallel the eastern or cove shoreline of De Soto Point. Varying in length and width, the shell ridges typically undulate from approximately 10 cm to 1 m above ground level and consist of predominantly oysters and whelks. Four small isolated shell midden deposits occur adjacent to the ridges (Middens 18, 19, 26, 40) as well as 13 shell "spoil piles."[11] These ridge features continue onto the County-opened property south of the park. While a part of the larger Shaw's Point shell mound complex, these ridges did not physically connect to either Remnant or Marker Mounds in the past. Ridge 5 is the widest of the shell ridge features and is interpreted as a ramp feature to Egret Mound. Radiocarbon samples from some of the shell ridge deposits supports use of the shoreline during both the Manasota Period (Ridges 6 and 7; 365 BCE to 110 CE) and the Safety Harbor Period (Ridges 1 to 3; 1050-1395 CE).

The *Tabby House Ruins* (LCS #07031), a remnant outline, appears to pre-date William Shaw's residence, although current interpretation - consistent with the 2001 National Register listing - focuses on the Shaws' ownership of the property

10 The main reference for this section is Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial***.

11 Schwadron, ***De Soto National Memorial*** 77.



FIGURE 3–95. Remnant Mound, view south.



FIGURE 3–96. Marker Mound, view south.



FIGURE 3–97. View east-southeast on approach trail to tabby ruin; wayside is at the structure's northwest corner.



FIGURE 3–98. View south, along the structure's west edge.



FIGURE 3–99. View south, along the structure's east edge.



FIGURE 3–100. View northwest from southeast corner.



FIGURE 3–101. Glimpse of Ridge 1, barely discernible, view west from south cove trail.



FIGURE 3–102. Ridge 2, view west from south cove trail.



FIGURE 3–103. Ridge 2, view west.



FIGURE 3–104. Ridge 6.

from 1843 to 1856. Historical documentation may tie the ruin to the fishing rancho of Captain William Bunce and/or other earlier occupants (see *Site History* chapter, pp. 22-23). Although somewhat impacted by encroaching vegetation, the ruin's 2016 condition appears consistent with numerous other photographs from recent years, suggesting that park staff are managing to keep deterioration in check (Figures 3-97 to 3-100, p. 78, above).

Site reviews of the park's archeological features found no evidence of recent disturbance (Figures 3-101 to 3-104, p. 78, above). A PVC conduit was run on the surface through the mangrove swamp and across the northernmost extent of Ridge 6. Vegetation completely hides most of these archaeological features, all generally low-lying, from view along the park's pedestrian paths and byways. An access point to view Ridge 2 with an interpretive sign is provided as a way to connect the De Soto National Memorial story with its indigenous precursors. A similar overlook and interpretive sign stands at the tabby house ruin. The manicured St. Augustine lawn, gumbo limbo trees, and 1939 marker at Marker Mound disconnect this feature from its early history as part of the Shaw's Point shell mound complex. That it contained intact shell deposits was not known to park staff until excavations associated with tree planting in 2003.

Buildings & Structures

Visitor Center

The visitor center measures approximately 50 by 50 feet. The single-story, flat-roofed structure houses a lobby area with exhibits and an information desk, a gift / book shop, an auditorium / exhibition space, restrooms, and offices. As noted in *Site History* (pp. 51-53, above), cast-in-place concrete columns and beams and precast concrete roof segments form the building's structure; its exterior envelope features a series of plain stuccoed wall panels interspersed with generally large, undivided windows of both storefront and clerestory types (Figures 3-105 to 3-108). As noted in *Site History,* the visitor center shows relatively few modifications, beyond periodic upgrading of the exhibits, and conversion of some of the original office space into a shop. A lobby renovation project replaced an interior planter with solid floor, but the overall circulation pattern remains unchanged. The main visitor path through the plaza still enters the main door on the building's west



FIGURE 3–105. Visitor center, main (west) facade, view east-northeast.


FIGURE 3–106. Visitor center north facade, view southeast.



FIGURE 3–107. Exterior circulation at west facade.


FIGURE 3–108. Equipment enclosure east of building, view south.

facade and exits the door to the north, leading to the beach (berm) and nature trail. The lobby thus still functions as part of the main path, helping to tie together interior and exterior - although exterior walkways do offer visitors the option of bypassing the building (Figure 3-107, p. 79, above). Exterior paving, which extends into the building, remains the original "Chattahoochee" stone pavers. The building's massing, unchanged, still creates strong visual connections between interior and exterior. The main door and main exterior sign appear to have been relatively recently replaced. Mechanical and electrical equipment occupies a chain-link fenced enclosure on the east side of the building, largely screened from public view (Figure 3-108, p. 79, above).

Camp Uzita and Associated Structures

Camp Uzita forms a complex of related structures, used in living history programs and other interpretation, at the west end of the plaza and northwest corner of the parking area (Figures 3-109 to 3-117). A wooden palisade fence encloses the "camp," a roughly octagonal area approximately 55 feet across. The camp contains several wood and thatch structures, intended to suggest the appearance of shelters that the small contingent of De Soto's army that camped at Uzita might have used - possibly, appropriated from local tribes, or simply buildings constructed of the local materials and incorporating some indigenous building methods. While far less substantial and permanent than the park's buildings, these structures play an important role in the visual character of the site, as well as in programs and interpretation. Within the camp proper, two larger, open-sided huts (chickees) serve as flexible program spaces; support structures include a smaller storage building, with a lockable wooden door (hidden by thatch); a small shed and forge for blacksmithing demonstrations; wooden bleachers and benches for spectator seating; and other smaller, moveable props such as shooting targets and work tables.



FIGURE 3–109. View west to Camp Uzita, from north end of parking area lawn.

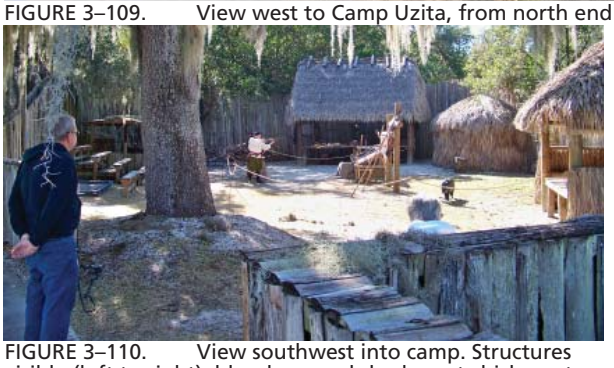


FIGURE 3–110. View southwest into camp. Structures visible (left to right): bleacher, workshed, west chickee, storage hut, and north chickee.



FIGURE 3–111. View northwest into camp, showing portion of storage hut, north chickee, and cross-shaped target stands.



FIGURE 3–112. Bench / accessible seating area / bleacher, view south.



FIGURE 3–113. Bleacher and workshed, view southwest.



FIGURE 3–114. Workshed with forge, view east.



FIGURE 3–115. West chickee, view west.



FIGURE 3–116. Detail of storage shed.



FIGURE 3–117. North chickee, view northeast.



FIGURE 3–118. Palisade, view west-southwest at plaza entry.



FIGURE 3–119. Palisade, view east-northeast.



FIGURE 3–120. Palisade, detail of construction.



FIGURE 3–121. Exhibit of dugout canoe in process, southwest corner of plaza, view southwest.



FIGURE 3–122. Replica of finished canoe displayed near of visitor center, view northwest.



FIGURE 3–123. Replica of 16th-century Spanish ship's boat displayed near visitor center, view southwest.



FIGURE 3–124. Chickee at west end of plaza, containing interpretive panels seen in Figures 3-125 and 3-126; view southwest.



FIGURE 3–125. Panel depicting the Europeans' experience of the times: De Soto's landing.



FIGURE 3–126. Panel depicting the Florida tribes' experience of the times: a typical shell mound temple and village complex.

From the camp's perimeter, an attached palisade extends along the back (north) edge of the concrete walk from the parking area, and forms a gateway into the plaza area (Figures 3-118 to 3-120, p. 81, above). Inside the palisade, additional interpretive materials speak to both sides of the 16th-century cultural divide: a partially completed dugout canoe (Figure 3-121, p. 81, above) serves for demonstrations of this American Indian technology; while a nearby chickee hut shows two large-panel artist's renderings, one of de Soto's landing and the other of a mound-village complex (Figures 3-124 to 3-126, p. 81, above).

Administration and Maintenance

This single-story, reinforced-block building, approximately 30 by 75 feet, houses the park's main administrative offices, maintenance workshop, storage, and restrooms. This straightforward utilitarian structure occupies the southwestern corner of the property, along with exterior storage and parking for vehicles and kayaks, a fueling station, propane tank, and storage structures, all screened from public view within the park by vegetation (Figures 3-127 to 3-132).

Minor Buildings and Structures

In addition to the administration and maintenance building, a number of minor buildings and structures, all modern and/or temporary in nature, line the maintenance complex's driveway. Figures 3-133 to 3-136 (P. 83, below) show and identify these elements.

Small Scale Features

Entry Sign and Gates

Masonry entry piers completed in 1952 flank the roadway at the park entrance (Figures 3-137 to 3-139, p. 83, below). The larger one, on the inbound (east) side, holds the main park identity sign. The sign, NPS arrowhead logo plaque, and address numbers all represent later additions, as



FIGURE 3–127. Administration/maintenance: view south to main facade.



FIGURE 3–128. Administration/maintenance: view west, just in front of building.



FIGURE 3–129. Parking area and fueling station in front of administration/maintenance building, view northwest; parked trailer in background.



FIGURE 3–130. Storage area to east of parking area, view east.



FIGURE 3–131. Propane tank in storage area, view east.



FIGURE 3–132. View south to storage sheds east of administration/maintenance.



FIGURE 3–133. View southwest to parked trailer and pump house, northwest of administration/maintenance.



FIGURE 3–134. Quonset hut north of pump house, view north-northwest.



FIGURE 3–135. Storage and trash transfer area north of quonset hut, view north.



FIGURE 3–136. Hazardous materials storage building, view east from north end of quonset hut.



FIGURE 3–137. Entry pier, signage and gate, west side, view north.



FIGURE 3–138. Entry pier, signage and gate, east side, view north.

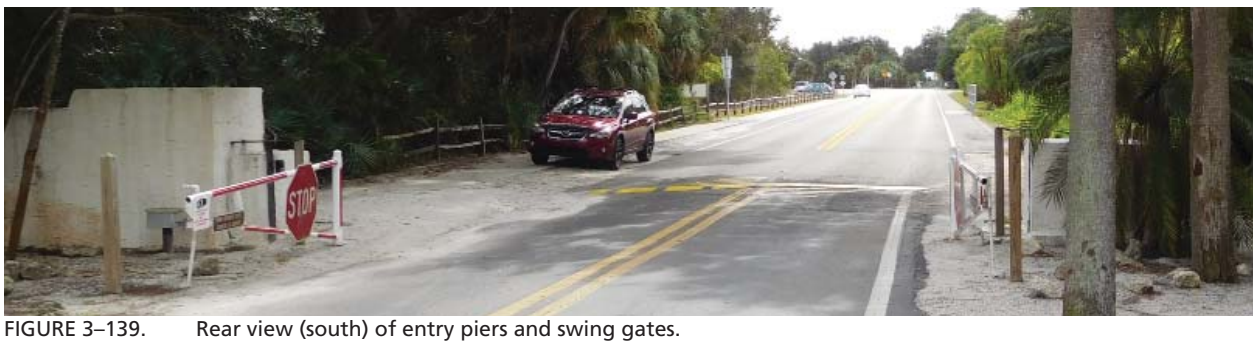


FIGURE 3–139. Rear view (south) of entry piers and swing gates.



FIGURE 3–140. De Soto Monument (De Soto Trail Marker), 1939, oblique front view (south-southwest).



FIGURE 3–141. De Soto Monument, rear view (north).

does the random ashlar pattern keystone cladding in a rubble pattern that now covers the front sides of the piers, installed sometime prior to 2000. The tops and back remain a painted stucco finish, as per the original design (Figure 3-139, p. 83, above). The "crossbow" park logo on the main sign dates from the 1990s, and was drawn by Ron Prouty, a graphic designer with the Tampa Bay *Times* and friend of the park. A smaller sign on the west pier marks the Memorial as being part of the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail. A utilitarian swing gate fabricated from steel pipe serves to close off the entrance to vehicles, after hours.

The De Soto Monument (LCS #07030)

The De Soto Monument serves as a "Trail Marker," originally intended to be the first of many that would mark the expedition's route (Figures 3-140 and 3-141). The words DESOTO TRAIL flank a bas-relief coat of arms, below which appears the credit "THE NATIONAL SOCIETY OF COLONIAL DAMES OF AMERICA IN FLORIDA." The inscription then reads, "NEAR HERE HERNANDO DE SOTO WITH HIS MEN LANDED MAY 30, 1539 AND BEGAN HIS MARCH WESTWARD TO THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER. THIS MARKER COMMEMORATES THE 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS ARRIVAL ON THE SHORES OF FLORIDA." The artist gave these inscribed and carved areas a smooth background, and the rest of the marker a rustic, rough-hewn finish. Measuring approximately three by five by six feet tall, the monolithic granite piece rests directly on the remnant shell mound now known as Marker Mound, and is set in a circular area of crushed shell. Minor discoloration marks some surface areas; otherwise, the monument appears in good condition.

Kiosk

An informational kiosk constructed of pressure-treated wood and fitted with a standing seam metal roof occupies the spot on the plaza where the temporary office (contact station) originally stood (Figues 3-142 and 3-143). Three acrylic-protected spaces for hanging posters take up the front face, while the unfinished wooden back provides flexible additional room for hanging printed information, in addition to a whiteboard for daily messages. Based on review of photographic records of the plaza area, this four-post version of the kiosk dates from sometime after 2004, and replaced an



FIGURE 3–142. Informational kiosk on the plaza, east of the monument, view south.



FIGURE 3–143. Kiosk, view west..

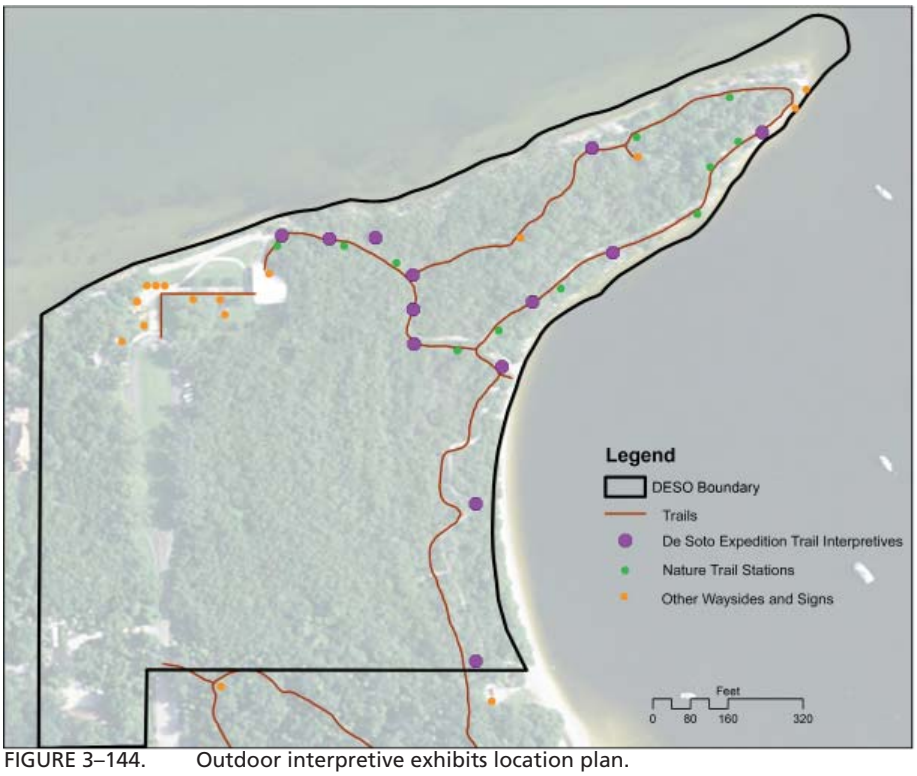


FIGURE 3–144. Outdoor interpretive exhibits location plan.

earlier two-post version with a tile roof that had been erected here before 1994. The kiosk is in good condition.

Outdoor Interpretive Exhibits and Other Signage

A variety of signs and exhibits offer interpretation on the Memorial site. The most extensive outdoor interpretive exhibit, designed and installed circa 2012 as the "De Soto Expedition Trail," aims to portray the story of the expedition reflecting both the European and the American Indian experience, in a more balanced interpretation than has typically been given in years past. Rather than using traditional NPS wayside designs, this exhibit deploys a series of life-sized figures, photo-reproduced from costumed actors on cutout polycarbonate panels, in a series of landscape settings along the park's trails (Figures 3-145 to 3-148). These are mounted to fabricated steel tube frames, anchored into the ground. Interpretive signage provides supplemental text in the form of contemporaneous quotes, such as those of the anonymous "Gentleman of Elvas," who survived the expedition and published an account of it. Occasional other props, such as a fragment of wood palisade, also supplement the story line.

Figure 3-144 shows the locations of these and other interpretive signs around the site. This other interpretive signage includes a series of "Nature



FIGURE 3–145. De Soto Expedition Trail interpretives depicting fighting men on both sides of the conflict: Spanish soldiers, cove trail view east.



FIGURE 3–146. Expedition Trail interpretive, cove trail, view west: a nearby sign quotes the Gentleman of Elvas, describing the deadly tactics of this American Indian fighter who - while "always running" - can fire off three or four arrows "before a crossbowman can fire a shot, and very seldom does he miss what he shoots at."



FIGURE 3–147. Interpretives depicting captured, enslaved American Indians carrying supplies for De Soto's soldiers.



FIGURE 3–148. Detail of panels seen in Figure 3-147. (South loop trail, view west.)



FIGURE 3–149. Nature trail signage, cove trail, view east.



FIGURE 3–150. Nature trail station, loop trail, view west.



FIGURE 3–151. Interpretive sign mounted to boardwalk.



FIGURE 3–152. Wayside at plaza hub (circa 1990).



FIGURE 3–153. Wayside at plaza hub (circa 1990).



FIGURE 3–154. Typical wayside, Camp Uzita.



FIGURE 3–155. Typical wayside, tabby house ruin.



FIGURE 3–156. Older wayside, De Soto Point.



FIGURE 3–157. Split rail fence, picnic area.



FIGURE 3–158. Split rail fences at dugout canoe and plaza main path.



FIGURE 3–159. Split rail fence at path corner by visitor center.

Trail" (plant identification) signs, and a variety of types of waysides and panels (Figures 3-149 to 3-156, p. 86, above). With the exception of two aged, faded signs along the boardwalk (Figure 3-151, p. 86, above), and some wear and weathering to an apparently older wayside at the Point (Figure 3-156, p. 86, above), all of the park's interpretive signage appears to be in good condition.

Fencing

Four types of wood fence appear at various locations around the Memorial site. A split rail fence bounds the picnic area and serves to prevent corner-cutting at two locations along the main plaza trail, and helps cordon off the canoe-making exhibit (Figures 3-157 to 3-159). A horizontal board fence attached to moveable posts provides a safety edge at the beach berm and a protective barrier at archeological exhibits (Figures 3-160 and 3-161). This fence varies from one to three boards, depending on the application and desired height. Park staff have developed this system of fencing, that does not require excavation for in-ground mounting, for ease of quick installation and to employ at potentially sensitive archeological locations.[12] A third type, the palisade fence using split logs nailed to a pressure treated frame, serves as part of the Camp Uzita exhibit (Figures 3-109 to 3-120, pp. 80-81, above). Finally, a standard commercial privacy fence screens off the area to the west of the administration/ maintenance building (Figure 3-162).



FIGURE 3–160. Board fence on site-cast, moveable footings; view east at beach berm.



FIGURE 3–161. Board fence on moveable footings, view east at tabby house ruin.

In addition to the wood fences, chain link fence also serves as boundary security on the park's western side and around the south and east sides of the maintenance area, as well as around mechanical equipment at the visitor center (Figure 3-108, p. 79, above). All of the wood fences appear to be of relatively recent construction. At the east boundary of maintenance, heavy vegetation has caused some warping of the chain link fence. Otherwise, all of the park's fences remain in good condition.

Flagpole

The flagpole originally stood within the plaza, at the north end of the entry axis (see *Site History* chapter, pp. 36-38, above). Park staff had it installed at its



FIGURE 3–162. Wood privacy fence at west end of maintenance building, view northeast.

12 Supt. Jorge Acevedo, personal communication, November 30, 2015.



FIGURE 3–163. Flagpole, paved pad and boulders, view south from plaza.

current location in the parking area lawn panel in the late 1990s. A concrete pad, painted gray, surrounds the flagpole's base, and four large caprock boulders provide edge protection where the adjacent lawn abuts the drive (Figure 3-163).

Other Site Furnishings

All of the site furniture observed on site appear relatively new and in good condition (Figures 3-164 to 3-170). Most benches and ADA accessible picnic tables feature recycled plastic boards: benches use recycled plastic for legs as well, while picnic tables mostly use galvanized steel pipe frames. Six picnic tables in the picnic area are entirely of wood, while two are ADA accessible, recycled-plastic models. Park management has provided painted steel trash



FIGURE 3–164. Typical picnic table, north shore trail.



FIGURE 3–165. Typical recycled plastic benches, top of berm.



FIGURE 3–166. Typical bench, plaza.



FIGURE 3–167. Typical bench, cove trail.



FIGURE 3–168. Typical receptacle, plaza.



FIGURE 3–169. Bicycle rack at picnic area, view east.



FIGURE 3–170. Scooping bag station at palisade.



FIGURE 3–171. Part of original 1921 drainage channel on Riverview Pointe Preserve, view west from cove trail.



FIGURE 3–172. Channel along west edge of entrance road, culvert under maintenance drive, view west.



FIGURE 3–173. Channel along west edge of entrance road, culvert under maintenance drive, view northwest.



FIGURE 3–175. Channel at midpoint of maintenance drive, view north.

receptacles at seven locations around the property. The picnic area also utilizes one recycled plastic model. Bicyclists have use of a painted steel bike rack adjacent to the picnic area. Because of heavy neighborhood usage of the park for dog walking, staff have also installed a scooping bag dispenser.

Drainage Ditches and Erosion Control

The property's owners, prior to and including the NPS, have been creating and maintaining ditches since at least the 1920s, for a variety of reasons (see *Site History* chapter, pp. 28 and 47). Storms, erosion and the natural processes of vegetation growth and debris accumulation make for constant change in the condition - or even the existence - of these features.

Figures 3-172 to 3-179 show the current condition of channels observed on site in winter 2015-2016. Park staff have reinforced or armored the edges of a number of these drainage ways using dry-stacked cement blocks, made on site by filling bags with a cement mix; these cement bag units have also helped reinforce trail edges at a number of locations. These bags serve in addition to natural stone rip rap, sometimes side by side (Figures 3-180 to 3-182, p. 90, below; see also Figures 3-43 to 3-45, p. 64, above). Figure 3-183 (p. 90, below)



FIGURE 3–174. Channel at midpoint of maintenance drive, view south.



FIGURE 3–176. Detail of pipe culvert under shell path, channel crossing under south loop trail.



FIGURE 3–177. Channel on north shore, approximately 50 yards east of visitor center, view southeast.



FIGURE 3–178. Channel seen in Figure 3-177, view west-northwest.



FIGURE 3–179. Channel near east end of boardwalk, view southeast.



FIGURE 3–180. Rip rap and cement-bag revetment, cove trail just south of Point, view south.



FIGURE 3–181. Detail of revetment seen in Figure 3-180.



FIGURE 3–182. Revetment further south on cove trail, view north.

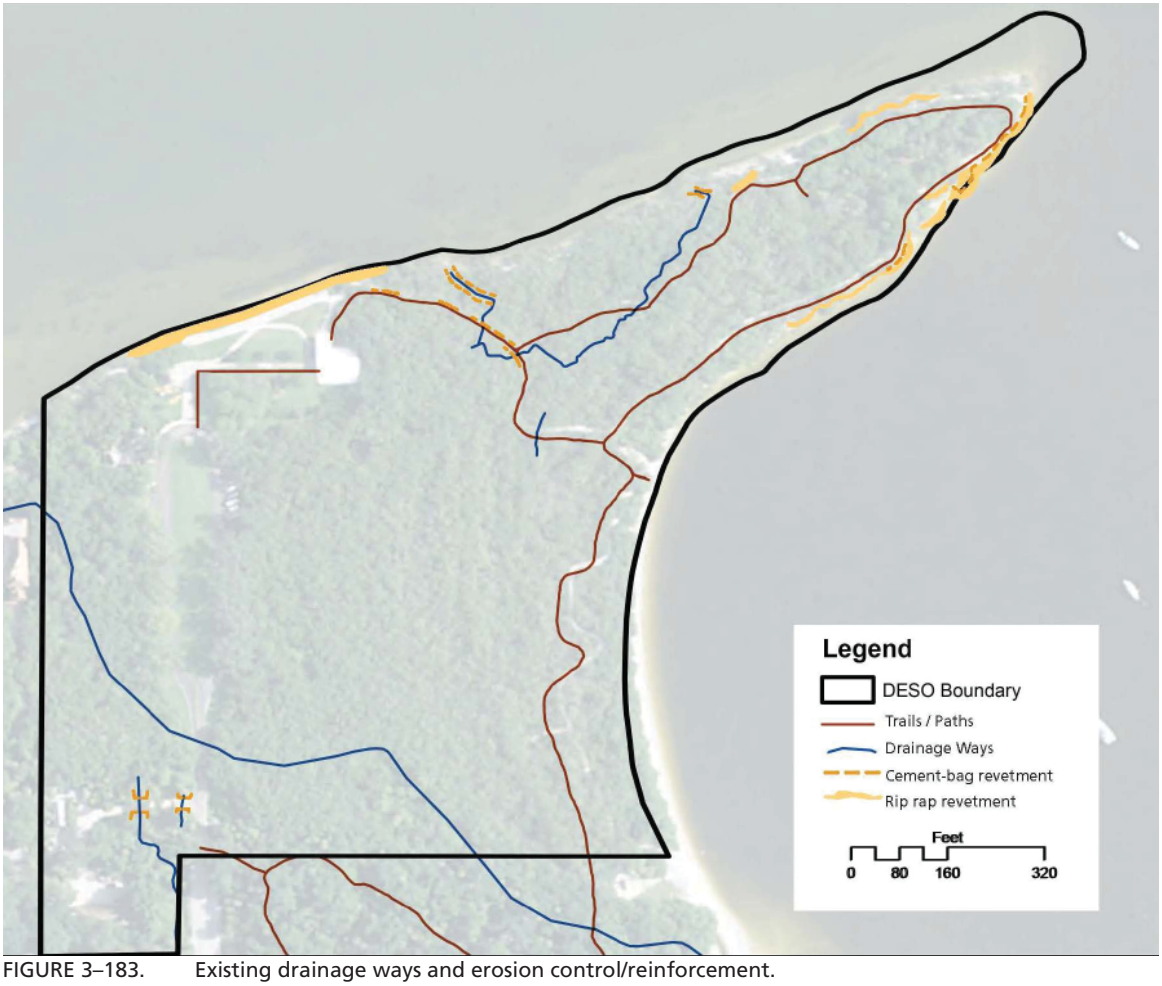


FIGURE 3–183. Existing drainage ways and erosion control/reinforcement.



FIGURE 3–184. Shoreline survey marker, north shore, near east end of boardwalk; view west.



FIGURE 3–185. Shoreline survey marker, north shore, approaching the Point; view east.



FIGURE 3–186. Gumbo limbo grove, view east in line with De Soto Monument.



FIGURE 3–187. Gumbo limbo grove, view east on main plaza path, just north of monument.

maps the existing channels and trails, based on GIS information dating from the mid 2000s and provided by SERO; and indicates the general locations of site reinforcing based on field observations.

Survey Markers

Remnants of former shoreline surveys mark several locations along the site's north shoreline (Figures 3-184 and 3-185). Reviews of available documentation in the park's archives could not confirm the exact origins or dates of these markers.

Plantings

Most of the Memorial site remains vegetated with some form of the area's natural communities (see *Vegetation*, p. 64, above), and plantings created by human actions play a secondary role. St. Augustine grass lawns dominate most of the park's developed areas. Two important landscape features stand out, both comprised of groupings of native trees.

A grove consisting primarily of gumbo limbo trees surrounds the De Soto Monument; the crews working to set the marker in 1939 left a number of these existing trees in place (Figures 3-186 to 3-189).[13] The largest of these, probably some 90 years of age or more - the site reportedly having been largely cleared in the early 1920s (see *Site History*, pp. 26-27) - is declining, and has been diagnosed with an infection of *Ganoderma*, an incurable, fatal, soil-borne fungus (Figure 3-188).[14] Some of the gumbo limbo trees, now dispersed throughout the plaza area, are younger: park crews replaced one of the original trees on the mound, in



FIGURE 3–188. Largest gumbo limbo, infected with ***Ganoderma***; view north.

13 Gannon, "Beach Restoration" 6; see also Figures 2-24 to 2-26, pp. 31-32, above.

14 Supt. Jorge Acevedo, personal communication, November 30, 2015.



FIGURE 3–189. Original, volunteer (circa 1920s) gumbo limbo in front of visitor center, view north.



FIGURE 3–190. Live oak rows at parking, view north-northwest.



FIGURE 3–192. Live oak with smaller trunk, likely a later replacement, just south of Camp Uzita..

kind, in 2003, after a 2001 hurricane toppled it; and aerial photographs show that all of the trees north of the main plaza walkway have been planted since 2005. Other than the one known to be infected, the gumbo limbo appear generally to be in good condition, although the largest (oldest) among them, such as the one immediately southwest of the visitor center's main door, had noticeably sparser canopies than the smaller trees, at the time of site evaluations in winter 2015-2016 (Figure 3-189). In addition, some signs of *Ganoderma* infection in other trees have been noted by Park staff.[15]

The rows of live oak that bracket the parking area also stand out as a visually distinctive feature (Figures 3-190 and 3-191). Seven oaks line each side. These trees mostly date from 1951, and generally range in size (trunk diameter) between approximately 30 and 50 inches. One tree of significantly smaller size, approximately 18 inches, appears to be a later replacement (Figure 3-192). All appear to be in good condition, with one exception (Figure 3-193).



FIGURE 3–191. Live oak rows at parking, view north-northeast.



FIGURE 3–193. Live oak with apparent crown dieback and distinct lean, at east side paved parking spaces.

15 Supt. Jorge Acevedo, personal communication, June 22, 2016.



FIGURE 3–194. Visitor center plantings, west facade.



FIGURE 3–195. Visitor center plantings, west facade.



FIGURE 3–196. Visitor center plantings, north facade.



FIGURE 3–197. Visitor center plantings, south facade.



FIGURE 3–198. Retained original red cedar south of building.

Another small area of planting occurs at the visitor center(Figures 3-194 to 3-198). A large, full grouping of coontie fills the planters off the northwest corner of the building. Judging from the historical documentation, these are likely the remaining plants from the building's original landscape in that area. A foundation planting of coontie also extends along the west facade south of the main door, to the building's corner, then turns and continues along its south facade. It skips over a shrub mass of sweet viburnum (*Viburnum odoratissimum*) planted in the center of the south facade.

A mixed planting of native and introduced species occurs at the park's main entrance. Small groupings of cabbage palms frame each entry pier (Figures 3-199 and 3-200); a few of these appear to have been left when the park was developed (see Figures 2-41 and 2-51, pp. 37-38, above), while others were added later. These groupings also include myrsine



FIGURE 3–199. Cabbage palm and pygmy date plantings at entrance.



FIGURE 3–200. Cabbage palm and myrsine plantings at entrance.

shrubs, which are native, and pygmy date palms (*Phoenix roebelinii*), which are not.

A final planted feature, the beach berm, was classified by Whelan et al. (2009) as a graminoid dune, but can perhaps be more accurately termed a landscape feature. Planted in sandy fill atop the rip rap berm built in 2005, this planting utilizes several species of Florida native plants typical of dune ecosystems elsewhere in the state, but not characteristically occurring together in shoreline plant communities in this vicinity. Species observed here include sea myrtle, beach sunflower (presumably the west coast variant, *Helianthus debilis* subsp. *vestitus*), railroad vine, sea oats (*Uniola paniculata*), seaside goldenrod (*Solidago sempervirens*), pennywort (*Hydrocotyle spp.*), and beggarticks (*Bidens alba*). St. Augustine grass has inter-mixed throughout, becoming a dominant presence (Figures 3-201 and 3-202).

Land Use

The ways in which people use a landscape helps define its visual character and overall feeling. At the



FIGURE 3–201. Beach berm plantings, view east: salt bush, railroad vine, ***Andropogon,*** and other regionally native species.



FIGURE 3–202. Beach berm plantings, view west: St. Augustine grass dominant.



FIGURE 3–203. Visitors arriving by bicycle and on foot.



FIGURE 3–204. Visitors enjoy the Memorial's setting for relaxation.



FIGURE 3–205. Many locals enjoy a walk with the dogs in the park.



FIGURE 3–206. School group on loop trail.



FIGURE 3–207. School group crossing the plaza.

Memorial, a wide variety of types of usage, ranging from the contemplative and commemorative to the leisurely and playful, have always had to try to co-exist in a very limited space. This wide range of uses continues today (Figures 3-203 to 3-210, pp. 94-95). On the programmatic, educational side, park staff engage visitors through activities ranging from informal conversations to guided tours, school programs, special activities and events - the Landing Ceremony, a Winter Luminary, a "Five Centuries of Florida History" day, and others - and hundreds of hours per year of living history demonstrations. Interpretive information is also displayed around the site, available for visitors' self-directed use. On the more leisurely side, visitors - especially area residents - make very extensive use of the Memorial (and adjacent County preserve) for the types of uses often enjoyed at a neighborhood park.



FIGURE 3–208. General visitors engage with living history interpretation.



FIGURE 3–209. A parent and child explore the setting.



FIGURE 3–210. Informal, self-guided interpretation.

Climate Change

Background

In their report *Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Opportunities for Salt Marsh Types in Southwest Florida*, Beever at al. (2012) describe how climate change is already affecting the region: more intense and less predictable patterns of drought and flood; increased average air temperatures (up 1.2°F in a century), as well as more days per year of high temperature; more severe tropical storms; and increased sea level.[16] These changes have resulted in - and will increasingly result in further - significant losses of coastal saltmarshes and mature mangrove forests, coastal erosion, geomorphic changes to barrier islands, and water quality degradation.

NPS scientist Patrick Gonzalez (2014) has interpreted long term regional climate records as indicating that the air temperature at De Soto National Memorial warmed at a statistically significant 1.8°F/century over the period between 1950 and 2010. Ingram et al. (2013) reported insignificant temperature increases in the southeast U.S. earlier in the 1900s, but pointed out that temperatures have risen steadily since the 1970s, with the 2001-2010 decade the warmest on record. They note that extremes of both summer heat and winter cold have become more frequent in Florida over that 1970-2010 period.[17]

Gonzalez (2014) also concluded that precipitation at the site has decreased at a rate of 7% per century over that period. Beever et al. (2012) explain that this precipitation change has come in the form of drier dry seasons and shorter wet seasons with more

16 Beever, James III, Whitney Gray, Lisa B. Beever, Dan Cobb and Tim Walker, ***Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Opportunities for Salt Marsh Types in Southwest Florida*** (Fort Myers, FL: Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program, 2012). Beever et al. estimated an 8-9 inch increase, c. 1913-2013; Caffrey (NPS) indicates 10 inches.

17 Patrick Gonzalez, "Climate Change Summary, De Soto National Memorial, Florida" (NPS Natural Resource Stewardship and Science, June 3, 2014); Keith Ingram, Kirstin Dow, Lynne Carter and Julie Anderson, eds., ***Climate of the Southeast United States: Variability, Change, Impacts, and Vulnerability*** (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2013).

precipitation, generating a pattern of alternating drought and flood.

University of Colorado scientists Maria Caffrey and Rebecca Beavers (2014) identified historical tide gauge data from St. Petersburg as the best estimation of sea level rise at De Soto National Memorial. Florida sea level researcher Jason Evans (2016) has stated that while data from that gauge indicate a rise equivalent to 0.85 feet, or about 10 inches, over the past 100 years, the rate of increase now appears to be accelerating, although the official NOAA trend is still 10.2 inches over 100 years.[18]

Projections

Gonzalez (2014) and Caffrey and Beavers (2014) have estimated the likely scale of climate change that will affect De Soto National Memorial by the year 2100.[19] Gonzalez projects that average annual temperatures will increase between 3.8 and 6.8 degrees F, depending on the level of carbon emissions through the remainder of the century (modeled on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] scenarios of "low," "high," or "highest" emissions).[20] Precipitation will also likely increase, although somewhat inversely to the increase in temperature: estimated at 7% for the low emissions scenario, or 4% for the high or highest scenarios.

Caffrey estimates that warming would be accompanied by a rise in sea level of between 0.93 and 5.25 feet by century's end (again, modeled on IPCC's three scenarios for emissions). The direct impacts of this rise obviously differ tremendously depending on where within that range the outcome falls. At the high end, virtually all of the site would be submerged and, essentially, lost, without some form of very extensive and costly adaptation - assuming a feasible means of adaptation could be developed. However, even at the low end, a rise of this magnitude will significantly alter the site.

In addition, if temperatures increase, the intensity of tropical storms will increase. The threat of storm surges - already a major concern in the past - will only grow. Caffrey's projections show an estimated storm surge height of up to 14.8 feet (average) for a Category 4 storm; increased sea level will only add to that. Graphic models provided by Caffrey for Category 3 and 4 Hurricanes at the memorial, occurring at mean high tide, suggest potential storm surges covering most of the site at heights in the 12-foot to 15.5-foot range (Figures 3-211 and 3-212).[21]

Site Impacts

The greatest impacts to the site's vegetation will come from sea level rise and, likely, increased storm surge events, although a temperature increase will also bring changes. Archeological and other cultural resources will face increased threats due to sea level rise and increased storm activity; changes

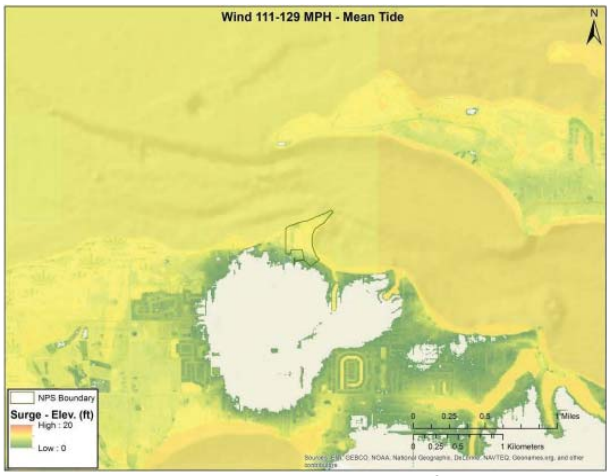


FIGURE 3–211. Storm surge projection for Category 3 hurricane. (Caffrey, "Sea Level and Storm Trends.")

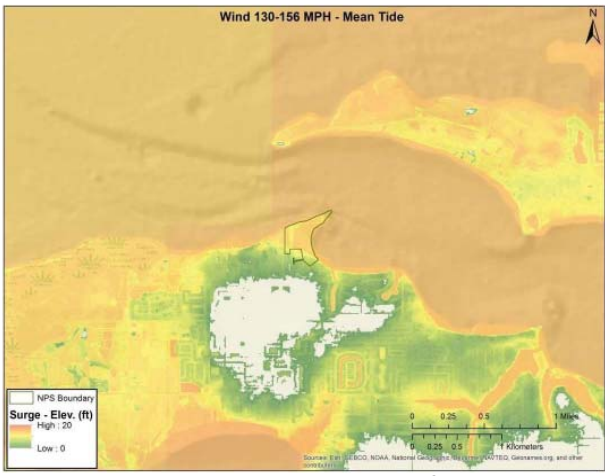


FIGURE 3–212. Storm surge projection for Category 4 hurricane. (Caffrey, "Sea Level and Storm Trends.")

18 Maria Caffrey and Rebecca Beavers, "Sea Level and Storm Trends, De Soto National Memorial" (University of Colorado Department of Geological Sciences, May 20, 2014); Jason M. Evans, personal communication, March 6, 2016.

19 Gonzalez, "Climate Change Summary;" Caffrey and Beavers, "Sea Level and Storm Trends."

20 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, ***Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis*** (Cambridge, UK: The Cambridge University Press, 2013), referenced in Gonzalez, "Climate Change Summary" 1.

21 Maria Caffrey, PhD, personal communication, July 6, 2016.



FIGURE 3–213. Red mangrove invading black mangrove, near boardwalk.



FIGURE 3–214. Gumbo limbo in the coastal hammock on the cove trail, south of the Point, are now at the water's edge and unlikely to survive long-term.

in vegetation may also affect certain archeological resources.

Sea Level

Fortunately, the mangrove communities cherished for their contribution to understanding of de Soto's experience have evolved to be extremely adaptable to gradual changes in sea level. So long as NPS assures that human activities do not block flows in and out of these areas, species composition will likely shift to accommodate higher sea levels. Red mangrove would increasingly invade the black mangroves and black mangrove would become relatively more abundant in areas now dominated by white mangrove and buttonwood (Figure 3-213). As salt water intrusion progresses, mangroves and buttonwoods may invade the degraded hardwood swamp if storms, animals, or people spread propagules there.

The communities that will lose ground are the hammocks, which will gradually convert to buttonwood along their mangrove edges. Without human intervention, the large seagrapes and gumbo limbos that give character to the trails along the shoreline will disappear first (Figure 3-214). If sea levels rise relatively slowly and/or human intervention minimizes the effects of erosion and storm surges, the species composition of the coastal hammock will become more tropical before it turns into mangrove swamp. Transitions of this sort are visible already in the region (Figure 3-215).

The archeological resource that will face the greatest threat from increased sea levels is the tabby ruin. In addition to - probably more so than - impacts from vegetation encroachment, the tabby will deteriorate



FIGURE 3–215. Remnant pine trunk in area overtaken by mangroves, Robinson Preserve, Perico Island, Manatee County, 2016. (Courtesy Damon Moore)

from salt water exposure and an increased frequency of wetting and drying cycles as sea level rises. In contrast, the site's prehistoric resources (mounds and middens), will likely endure such changes with far less impact, although all of these resources will face threats from coastal erosion. If submerged entirely, the mound and midden deposits will likely be protected by new layers of sea floor sediment. Significant sea level rise (the higher end of the projected scenarios) would likely effectively destroy

the tabby house ruin. Estimates of survivability for the site's other historic and modern resources, such as the 1939 monument or the visitor center, will also vary greatly depending on whether increases of one or five feet are involved.

Increased storm surges will also erode or destroy infrastructure such as trails, just as high tides and storms did in earlier years before the park adapted with armored trail edges and raised boardwalks. If a powerful enough mass of water sweeps over the site, it will of course damage or destroy facilities. A 1988 structural engineering study of the visitor center noted that the structure's ability to withstand lateral loads might be below then-current design standards;[22] this may mean that the building is even more vulnerable to damage from storm surge than are newer structures. A strong enough storm surge will also rearrange vegetation, or even rearrange the land itself. Vegetation impacts might include broken, uprooted, or altogether swept away trees and/or shrubs; formerly terrestrial areas may be under water, and/or new land areas built up. Storms may leave giant wrack lines that become berms enriched with subsurface organic debris, places where new vegetation grows very rapidly.

Storm surge also has the potential to raise salinities in freshwater system or damage non salt-resistant vegetation; this might have some effect on the Degraded Hardwood Swamp or Interior Hammock areas (see Figure 3-48, p. 66, above). A pulse of increased exotic invasion should be expected after any hurricane; if extensive areas are cleared out by storm surge, this effect would only intensify.

Weather

Temperate species will be stressed by the increasing winter temperatures and/or more erratic precipitation scientists anticipate. Species such as hickory will probably die out first, since they are already at the extreme southern end of their range. The live oaks will decline next, though they will probably persist until overtaken by mangroves. The tropical flora of these hammocks, which is derived from the heat and drought tolerant Caribbean flora, can be expected to do quite well for many decades. Gumbo limbo is actually the "poster child" used as an example of how tropical species are likely to respond to global warming by flourishing and expanding their ranges.[23] Whelan et al. (2009) provide generic South Florida plant lists for the communities they mapped. The species on these lists that do not occur onsite now might colonize the hammocks here (or be successfully introduced), as might a wide variety of the tropical non-natives that now invade hammocks in Miami and the Keys.

Hotter weather and more frequent and severe droughts will increase fire frequency and severity. So long as unprecedented numbers of palms or large exotic grasses are not allowed to build up dangerous fuel loads, De Soto National Memorial will not be very vulnerable to wildfire. Even mangroves can burn during an extreme drought, however, and a fire burning into the coastal hammock could destabilize it dramatically.

22 Larry L. Reynolds, "Structural Engineering Report: Feasibility of Adding Second Story to Visitor Center, DeSoto National Memorial" (NPS DSC, March, 1988, ETIC no. DESO_388_D8_id106954).

23 D. Wilson Crumpacker, Elgene O. Box and E. Dennis Hardin,"Climate Envelope Model to Predict Effects of Warming and Drying Scenarios on Florida Ecosystems." Presentation to ***Climate Change Conference, Florida Atlantic University Center for Environmental Studies***, Tampa, FL, May 9, 2007. (Accessed July 16, 2016 http://www.ces.fau.edu/ClimateConference2007/presentations/03_Hardin_Climate_Terrestrial.pdf)

Analysis & Evaluation

Significance Evaluation

Current National Register Status

The Memorial property is the subject of two separate listings in the National Register. The De Soto National Memorial was first listed in 1966 (revised 1975) for its association with the national commemoration of the De Soto expedition. The listing predates the development of the current *National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1981). These criteria state that those districts, sites or buildings are considered significant that "possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and

(a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

(b) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

(c) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

(d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history."[1]

The first National Register listing for the Memorial therefore does not refer to these later criteria, but simply states that the property "commemorates the landing of the De Soto expedition in Florida in 1539 and the first extensive organized exploration of the interior of the southeastern part of the United States." It relates the property's significance to the area of "Exploration/Settlement" and its period as 1500-1599, with a specific date of 1539. It also cautions that "the Memorial or Shaw's Point cannot be administered as a historic site because of the disagreement among historians as to the exact location of De Soto's landfall. But, it is generally accepted that he landed in the vicinity of Tampa Bay."[2]

Based on the archeological investigations of the Memorial site by Margo Schwadron (1997, 2000) and of the Riverview Pointe Preserve site by Janus Research (1996), Schwadron and Florida State Historic Preservation Officer Barbara Mattick prepared a separate nomination for the Shaw's Point Archeological District, which includes both properties as well two additional, privately owned acres. The listing, approved in 2001, "does not replace, nor does it update" the previous National Register listing of the Memorial site. The Shaw's Point District listing presents these properties' archeological resources as "the remaining vestiges of a once substantial prehistoric village site," a site that once extended well beyond the Memorial's (and the District's) western boundary (now the Riverview Landings neighborhood). The listing describes this as "one of the Florida gulf coast's most significant prehistoric sites," once an extensive mound complex (see also *Site History*, pp. 14-16). It also recognizes the tabby house ruin as a remnant of one of the earliest houses in the settlement of Manatee County, attributed to pioneer William Shaw. The listing cited Criterion D, that the property "has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or prehistory." It identified two periods of significance: 365 B.C. - A.D. 1395 for its prehistoric occupation, and A.D. 1843-1856 for its pioneer American Period occupation by William Shaw. [3]

CLR Significance Evaluation

The following evaluation of the site's significance considers the information contained in the documentation for both of the above-referenced

1 ***Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 60*** (7-1-12 Edition), §60.4.

2 Anne Castellina, [draft] "National Register Nomination Form for De Soto National Memorial," April 2, 1975. (SERO files)

3 Margo Schwadron and Barbara Mattick, "National Register Nomination Form for Shaw's Point Archeological District," February, 2001 (copy in DESO Archives), Sect. 8; Sect. 7 continuation page 1; Sect. 8 continuation page 1.

National Register listings, as well as in other documents and historical images from the Park's archives and other sources found in the course of the team's research. Review of this information and of the park landscape, in light of guidance provided by National Register Bulletin 15, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, suggests some updates may be justified in the way that this landscape's significance has been defined.

Periods of Significance

365 BCE - 1395 CE

The first of the two periods of significance identified in the 2001 Shaw's Point Archeological District National Register listing still appears to be appropriate. Should additional archeological investigations or research reveal evidence for additional periods of occupation outside of this time period, these dates may warrant adjustment.

1539

The 1975 De Soto National Memorial National Register listing's stated period of significance (1500-1599, with a specific date of 1539) appears questionable when evaluated in light of the the subsequently adopted (1981) *Criteria for Evaluation*. *Criteria Consideration F* defines commemorative properties as ineligible if considered solely for their role in commemorating a person or event to which the property lacks a direct association. A direct association with Hernando de Soto's expedition in 1539, if considered to mean that they set foot on this property, remains speculative at best, and seems highly questionable based on the current scholarly consensus. A broader interpretation of "direct association" might encompass Tampa Bay, the expedition's connection to which is more generally supported in current scholarship; in which case, the Memorial site can perhaps be put forth as a reasonable access point for providing a physical/visual connection to the site of the event, for people living today. (The same could no doubt be argued for any number of properties around Tampa Bay.)

In the Memorial's case, ultimately, justification for its association with this 16th-century time period derives not from current scholarship or from analysis and understanding of the site's existing resources, but rather from the 1948 legislation that established the Memorial, in which Congress endorsed the best scholarship available at that time. This was further reinforced in 1966, when all historic units of the National Park Service - including DESO - were listed in the National Register, and in 1975, when the rationale for its listing was first officially detailed.[4]

Circa 1815-1862

The second period of significance identified in the 2001 Shaw's Point National Register listing, 1843-1856, derives from the tabby house ruin, and corresponds to the dates believed to represent William Shaw's ownership of the property and occupation of the tabby house. Review of the available historical information suggests that the property in general, and the tabby house ruin in particular, are associated with additional locally and regionally significant events both before and after this period. Evidence strongly suggests that the tabby house predates Shaw, very possibly as much earlier as the 1810s, and that the property was William Bunce's rancho in the 1830-1840s.

The rancho represents a significant cultural phenomenon of the late 18th and early 19th centuries in this geographic area: the multi-racial communities including whites, blacks and American Indians, Anglos and Spanish, that flourished on the coast for several decades, during a time of great cultural, political, and social change and upheaval, in Florida and the surrounding region. The story of these communities represents a unique moment in the region's dynamic cultural evolution, one that seems to be largely unknown or under-represented in historical interpretation.

Evidence also suggests that this rancho, or this property, has at least the possibility of a connection to the free black communities of the area in the early 19th century, specifically Angola. Further investigations may clarify these relationships, and help to define the best start date for this period of significance. Also, both Bunce's rancho and William Shaw's family experienced events of the (respectively) Second and Third Seminole wars at this site; the U.S. Army had a presence here during the Second Seminole War. The Point's involvement in Civil War actions in 1861-62 represents another locally significant event, and suggests 1862 as a logical end date for this Period of Significance.

4 James Gabbert, NPS Historian, National Register and National Landmark Program; personal communication, July 19, 2016.

1939-1968

Although a direct connection to Hernando de Soto's expedition seems, as noted above, doubtful with regard to the Memorial site, based on current scholarly consensus, *Criteria Consideration F* does allow that commemorative properties may be significant if they contain "value as cultural expressions at the date of their creation." Thus, even if it were decided that the Memorial lacks a direct association with the events of 1539, the property certainly retains a direct association with events surrounding 1939, and a number of these reflect cultural significance.

The work of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, which manifested itself on this site in 1939, with the monument's installation, relates directly to the larger context of the rise of historic preservation as a movement and an expression of common cultural values in the United States. This movement developed largely because of this and similar organizations, almost entirely led by women, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The first such group was the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union, which mobilized in the 1850s to save George Washington's Virginia plantation from development. Having failed to convince either the state or federal government to step in, this new organization, created by South Carolina's Ann Pamela Cunningham, raised private funds from across the country, and purchased the property, which it still owns today.

The innovative model that Cunningham and her colleagues created relied on state-by-state organizations, each led by a chapter head and secretary. These women used their social networks and connections, often working through state and local Garden Clubs and other community organizations, to communicate their goals and raise significant money. Their organizational model became the template for comparable, later initiatives in Newport, Rhode Island, Richmond, Virginia, and other cities and regions throughout the country. The reliance on private contributions, and the leadership by women in these organizations, both represent important trends in preservation that were unique to the United States.[5] The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, founded in 1891, reflected the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association model, with autonomous chapters in dozens of states spearheading preservation and educational projects. Their leadership in promoting public knowledge and education about the De Soto expedition spanned a 16-year effort, leading up to the expedition's 400th anniversary (see also *Site History*, pp. 30-31). The Florida chapter's pivotal role in creating the landing site monument and the 1939 commemoration was a culmination of that effort, and exemplifies these important trends that have "made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history."

The period of 1938-1939 also encompasses the work of the Presidentially appointed *United States De Soto Expedition Commission*, part of the larger story of the nation's cultural values of the time, as expressed in how the 400th anniversary of De Soto was understood, discussed, and commemorated (Figure 4-1). This process also led directly to the placing of the De Soto Trail Marker (the monument) at Shaw's Point in 1939. The event, and the presence of the monument today, reflect importance at the local, state, regional, and national levels.

Thus, this Report recommends that an additional period of significance be considered for the Memorial property, beginning in 1939 with the De Soto 400th Anniversary Commemorations and the monument's installation. A series of additional, largely unrelated events and trends, also considered significant, suggest that an end date of 1968 is appropriate for this period. This span of time encompasses the role of the monument and the continuing De Soto Celebrations in the context of Manatee County's and southwest Florida's



FIGURE 4–1. William Henry Powell's "Discovery of the Mississippi by de Soto" (1853), the last painting commissioned by Congress for the U.S. Capitol Rotunda. (National Geographic Photographer George Mobley, courtesy United States Capitol Historical Society; copy in DESO Archives.)

5 Murtagh, ***Keeping Time*** 28-30, 37-38.

evolution in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, particularly with regard to the rise of automobile tourism, an industry that transformed the region and the state. It also includes the NPS' taking on and developing the site.

The 1948-1951 design and development of the site by the National Park Service represented a significant local example of the nationwide postwar trend of national park development; it embodies the distinctive characteristics of this type and period of construction, specifically the transitional design aesthetic of this pre-Mission 66 phase, blending pre-war traditional park layouts, with their strong axial plan organizations and both formal and naturalistic landscape features, with modernist elements, especially in the programming and design of facilities and site structures.

The Mission 66-related work in the park also stands as a locally and state-level significant example of this important national trend. Mission 66 saw the NPS embracing modern architecture and adapting it, through the innovation of a new building type (visitor centers) and new approaches to site planning and circulation, to address the new requirements of a greatly increased, automobile-borne visitorship. The evolution of the Memorial's programming and site plan for what would ultimately become the 1968 visitor center, traceable in the development of the park's Master Plan between 1952 and 1963 (see *Site History*, pp. 49-50, above), clearly illustrates the maturing of this architectural idea in the context of the NPS' nationwide Mission 66 initiative.

Statement of Significance

The De Soto National Memorial site, the major component property of the Shaw's Point Archeological District, is significant, as stated in the District's National Register listing, "under Criterion D on the local and state level, because it has yielded and is likely to yield more information important to prehistory and history." The site "contains very significant, well-preserved archeological remains of an extensive prehistoric village site, including the remains of several large shell mounds, linear shell ridges, shell middens, and a shell ramp or walkway. . . . [Investigations] indicate that it was occupied from the Deptford, through the Manasota, and the Safety Harbor periods," from approximately 365 BCE to at least 1395 CE. It also contains the tabby house ruin, a significant resource that "has provided archeological data on the early settler life in coastal Florida."[6] The tabby represents a characteristic early construction type that was often used in vernacular structures, and often associated with under-represented cultural groups; relatively few such structures survive, having often been left to disintegrate after the Civil War, or harvested to re-purpose their materials. The tabby is associated with at least two of the area's earliest pioneer settlers of the American period of Florida and may yield important information about other site occupants of the period circa 1815-1862.

The De Soto National Memorial, independently of the archeological district, is also significant under Criterion A on the local and state level, because of its association with several events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The 1939 commemoration of the De Soto landing's 400th anniversary expressed the cultural values of the time through the ways in which the De Soto story was studied - its historiography - as well as the ways in which it was publicized and commemorated. This nationally significant event found physical expression here through the placement of the De Soto Monument at Shaw's Point by the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in Florida, in partnership with the local community. In the ensuing decades, the Memorial and the community's annual De Soto-related events that centered around it were an integral part of the development of the region's tourism industry. The unique characteristics of that industry responded to the unique character of Florida's environment and history, and the industry, in turn, became part of a trend that transformed the state, culturally, socially, and physically. The initial park design and construction (1948-51), and the park's master planning as part of Mission 66, with its culmination in the construction of the visitor center in 1967-1968, both stand as local- and state-level significant examples of important trends in the national history of the period.

Development of the site in the NPS era is also significant under Criterion C; the works constructed in the initial park development (1948-1951), and the visitor center (1967-1968), each "embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction;" respectively, the postwar NPS park development, or pre-Mission 66 period;

6 Schwadron and Mattick, ***Shaw's Point National Archeological District Registration Form***, Sect. 8, 1.

and the visitor center type, developed through Mission 66.

Analysis of Landscape Characteristics

This section provides a comparative analysis of the memorial site's existing conditions, summarized in the previous chapter, with the known landscape characteristics and features associated with its periods of significance. Its purpose is to help evaluate existing physical features and characteristics and understand their relationship with the site's historic/cultural significance, which in turn will provide a basis for treatment recommendations and management decisions affecting these features and qualities.

Spatial Organization

Available evidence does not provide a clear depiction of the site's spatial organization prior to the modern era. As a rancho in the early 19th century (or, possibly, the late 18th), presumably its occupants would have oriented the space towards the water, by which they came, and upon which they worked. They would have cleared portions - perhaps the majority of the current property - along the water's edge, as living and work spaces, and likely left the remainder enclosed within forest (mangrove or hammock). Ed Ballard reportedly cleared the entire site in the 1920s; to what extent re-growth of vegetation had shaped it, spatially, in the decades just prior to that time is not known. By early 1939, the local paper was describing it as a dense jungle.

The NPS' development of the park essentially built upon the spatial framework established by Manatee County's clearing for the monument's setting: two major outdoor spaces, connected in an ell - the parking area on its north-south axis, and the plaza/beach area, surrounding the monument, aligned east-west. Beyond those two spaces, forests again enclosed the rest of the site, penetrated only by the trail system, and edged on the north and east by the narrow, linear spaces of the beaches where they widen out from the adjacent trails. The site today still largely reflects this spatial organization, except where shorelines have been lost or modified. The plaza beach, once open to the river, has become a berm that bounds the north edge of the space. The north shore's beach has disappeared, its trail moved inland; the Point's beach has disappeared; much of the cove's has, as well. The plaza beach, north shore trail, north shore beach, and portions of the cove beach are missing historic resources.



FIGURE 4–2. Plaza beach, view west, 1947; photo by Roy Appleman. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 4–3. Plaza beach, view west, 2016.



FIGURE 4–4. North shoreline west of the Point in 1950, after initial placement of fill for trail. (DESO Archives)



FIGURE 4–5. North shoreline west of the Point, 2016.

Contributing features include the connected, strongly axial layouts of the park's two main spaces, and the immersive spatial quality of the forest trails beyond. The beaches are major missing features. The berm that replaced the main beach is non-contributing, as is the complex of wooden and thatch structures, comprising Camp Uzita and the adjacent palisade, that frames the north and northwest boundaries of the parking area and the southwest boundary of the plaza, and forms a portal between the two spaces.

Topography

Site topography has exhibited major changes as a result of both human intervention and natural forces for over 2,000 years. The site's first inhabitants built portions of it up 20 to 30 feet, with shell, in their centuries on the site. Coastal erosion began undoing that work, and harvesting of the material by road-builders largely finished that process in the early 20th century. A drainage canal sliced through the site in 1920, followed by smaller ones cut by NPS personnel in the 1950s and 1960s. County crews brought in some fill for the parking and the open space around the monument in 1939 - although not so much as to obscure the remnant "Marker Mound," or to kill the surrounding trees - and the NPS brought in quite a bit more a decade later, to raise up a larger parking area and beach, as well as all the trails. A fifty-year contest ensued, with the waters of the bay and river taking away the beaches and trails, and NPS crews and contractors putting them back.

As noted above, the beaches today are largely gone, especially on the site's north edge, and the plaza is now lined by a four-foot berm (Figures 4-2 to 4-5, p. 103, above). Otherwise, the site retains most of the same topographic condition that it has had since its early NPS years. The low-lying and flat terrain forming most of its site, overlain with a minimal network of filled land for visitor accessibility, is a contributing feature, related to its 1939-1968 period of significance. The remnant shell mounds and middens, especially the prominently visible Marker Mound that was chosen for the monument's setting, also represent contributing topographic features, related to this period. Due to their origin, the mounds and middens also relate to the site's prehistoric period of significance; and due to their importance as preferred building sites, landing sites, and defensive sites, they relate to the site's 19th-century period of significance as well. The most recent topographic addition, the beach berm, is non-contributing.

Vegetation (Natural Communities)

People who occupied this site in both the prehistoric and historic periods changed its vegetation as dramatically as they changed its topography. Mangrove forest forms the largest single component of the site today; this may well have been the case when the first mound-building began. Mound-top village/temple/plaza spaces would have been open, managed landscapes in their day, and after abandonment would have succeeded into coastal shell-mound vegetational communities of grasslands, shrublands, and hammocks. Later, rancho fishers or pioneer families like the Shaws would have kept much of their surroundings cleared. Mangrove forest would have persisted in the remaining low areas of the site, and would have reclaimed areas where the mounds were removed in modern times. Cleared in 1920, it regenerated enough to be described as a dense jungle in 1939; Appleman experienced the site mainly as wet, impassable mangrove forest in 1947.

Throughout the NPS period, park managers have identified the mangrove forest as an important cultural resource, primarily as a vehicle for trying to convey to visitors what the landscape might have been like as De Soto and his expedition experienced it. It also speaks to the experience of the other cultures that have occupied this coastal site, especially the successive centuries of American Indian societies that drew their living from this rich coastal environment. The mangrove forest also provides the most effective immersion experience of any of the site's landscape elements. In these regards, the mangrove forest is a contributing resource, related primarily to the site's prehistoric and 20th-century periods of significance.

Today's mangrove forest, however, reflects years of recent human impacts. Since beginning its regeneration after the clearing of the 1920s, the forest has endured filling that cut back its supply of tidal waters, and isolated one part from another; increased freshwater runoff, including pollutants, from nearby developments; and increases in shoreline erosion, exacerbated if not entirely caused by modifications to the surrounding channels and shorelines. Even the tallest of the site's mangroves

today probably stand barely half the size of the old-growth mangroves, the "very high and thick woods," that De Soto would have encountered.[7]

The site's other naturally occurring communities are, similar to the mangroves, contributing resources, to the extent that they help provide the important experience of immersion in an indigenous landscape. These include the buttonwood transition, coastal hammock, interior hammock, and (to the extent still present) shoreline communities. The degraded hardwood swamp, an apparently recent product of human impacts to the site's hydrology, is non-contributing. Also non-contributing, the presence of invasive introduced plant species is a negative factor affecting all of these communities.

Circulation

As is the case with *Spatial Organization* (p. 102, above), evidence reveals very little about site circulation patterns prior to 1939. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the prehistoric mound complex included a shell ramp or causeway that followed the shoreline.[8] In the 19th century, a cattle dock connected some presumed land route with a shipping route out of the cove. In 1939, Manatee County crews built the road to the monument along the alignment of an old, abandoned road. In 1953, they completed the new approach road, still in use today.

Within the park, the overall circulation pattern for vehicles remains essentially unchanged since its original 1951 form, although the pavement surface and curbs have been replaced over the years. The only variation that has occurred in the layout is the addition and expansion of the maintenance area's roadways, following the 1960 0.6-acre land acquisition in that area, and subsequent buildings' construction. In the main parking area, the layout still follows the original plan, with angled parking off of the one-way drive aisles that run along each side of the long central grass panel. Most of the pedestrian circulation network also remains unchanged since circa 1968. Changes since that time include the addition of the boardwalk in 1990 to replace a portion of the original north shore trail; the replacement of pavement on the plaza main path with concrete, including a slight enlargement of the paved pad at the west end of the plaza axis (the former flagpole location); the added walkway to the plaza kiosk; and the shell/sand paths on top of the berm.



FIGURE 4–6. View north from parking area, 1961. (DESO Archives)

Contributing resources include the layouts and alignments of the entry drive and parking area; the axial alignments (although not the materials) of the two main plaza paths; the remaining original paver walkways of the visitor center area (see also *Visitor Center*, p. 106, below); and the on-grade portions of the nature trail. These resources relate to the park's 20th-century period of significance. Non-contributing resources include the maintenance area road, the boardwalk, the walkway to the plaza kiosk, and the shell/sand paths on the berm.

Views and Vistas

Even before the Memorial's establishment, observers such as Roy Appleman had noted the important correlation between the site's outward viewsheds and its effectiveness as a setting for interpreting the De Soto expedition's story, and park managers have continued to consider visual resources like bay views, coastlines, and undeveloped forests



FIGURE 4–7. View north from parking area, 2016 .

7 Bourne (ed.), ***True Relation . . . by a Fidalgo of Elvas***, 23-34

8 Schwadron and Mattick, ***Shaw's Point National Archeological District Registration Form***, Sect. 7, 7.

as important cultural landscapes throughout the Memorial's existence.

The original layout of the park led visitors to the primary river and bay viewshed fairly quickly, through an entry sequence that strongly followed the arrival axis north to the plaza, then turned and opened directly onto the beach.

Views outward from the site continue to be contributing resources, except where dominated by modern intrusions (Figure 4-12, p. 110, below; see also Figures 3-84 to 3-87, pp. 74-75, above). The axial approach view into the park is also contributing; although recent additions to the park now truncate this original view sequence (Figures 4-6 and 4-7, p. 105, above), its intact portions remain a contributing feature related to the park's 20th-century period of significance, as does the axial view to the visitor center. Views to the boardwalk, and along it, are non-contributing. Views to and within Camp Uzita and the other interpretive structures (chickees, kiosk, etc.) are non-contributing.

Archaeological Features

All of the site's remaining archeological resources (Figure 3-94, p. 76, above) are contributing, although most of these resources remain out of view. As noted in *Topography* (p. 104, above), the Marker Mound relates to the park's 20th-century period and to its prehistoric periods of significance, although the previous existence of a large mound complex at Shaw's Point will not be obvious to the casual visitor. The Marker Mound, with its large gumbo limbo trees, St. Augustine grass and granite monument, reads more as a manicured landscape feature than as a piece of the site's archeological history.



FIGURE 4–8. View north from front of visitor center, circa 1968. (DESO Archives)


FIGURE 4–9. View north from front of visitor center, 2016.

Buildings & Structures

Visitor Center

As noted in *Existing Conditions*, the visitor center's exterior remains largely unchanged compared to its original 1968 appearance, other than the newer building sign and main door. The exterior paving still largely retains its original configuration and material, and the initial, native landscaping has simplified itself over the years but retains a significant original component (Figures 4-8 and 4-9). The building's interior has undergone some alterations, primarily involving revised exhibitions, but also including converting some of its office space to retail use. The basic overall usage of the building as a combined office/contact/interpretive/visitor services space still follows the original concept of the facility. The building's usage, plan, and exterior all exemplify the Mission 66 concept of a visitor center and largely retain their original character. Also significant are the building's siting and the way that it functions as a destination, integral to the main visitor path of circulation into the site. This too is a characteristic innovation of Mission 66, and here still functions in essentially the same way that it originally did. Because of these associations the visitor center is potentially eligible for listing in the National Register. It is a contributing resource related to the site's 20th-century period of significance.

Other Buildings and Structures

All of the site's other buildings and structures are relatively recent additions (generally within the last 10-30 years) and are non-contributing. This includes the administration office/maintenance building, the other maintenance area storage sheds, the pump house and Camp Uzita including the Camp's associated chickees, palisade and storage huts.

Small Scale Features

Entry Sign and Gates

The entry piers retain the original form of their 1951 design, despite a later addition of stone cladding on their front (south) faces, and are contributing, in the context of the park's 20th-century period of significance. The attached signage and adjacent gates and signage are all recent elements and are non-contributing.

The De Soto Monument

The De Soto Trail Marker (Monument) is a contributing resource, related to the site's 20th-century period of significance.

Other Small Scale Features

All of the other small scale features reflect recent origins and are non-contributing. These include the plaza kiosk; the De Soto Expedition Trail interpretive exhibits, and the other interpretive and informational signage; the flagpole, fencing and other site furnishings; the drainage ditch and erosion control reinforcements (cement bags, rip rap, shoring, etc.); and the survey markers.

Plantings

Planted elements that relate to the site's 20th-century period of significance and that largely retain their original character include the gumbo limbo/cedar grove surrounding the monument, the open lawn that forms the plaza's ground plane, the plantings of coontie in the original planters at the visitor center, the large live oaks lining the parking area and the live oaks and cabbage palms that frame the park entrance. These elements are contributing. The site's other planted features - the plantings on the beach berm, and the newer foundation plantings around the visitor center - are non-contributing.

Evaluation of Integrity

Integrity refers to the intactness of a cultural landscape's significant characteristics and features, and thus to the landscape's ability to convey its historical significance. As noted in *Significance Evaluation* (p. 99, above), sites and structures are considered significant that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Location

The location of the Memorial remains unchanged. The site retains the direct connection to the waters of the bay that gave it its significance in both the prehistoric and historic periods, and all of its contributing resources remain in their original location, with the sole exception of missing features (beaches). The approach to the site and the arrival sequence still follow the alignment of its 1948-51 layout which, although it replaced earlier circulation alignments, reflects significance in its own right. The Memorial retains a high degree of integrity of location.

Setting

The Memorial's setting retains, as noted above, a strong visual connection to the surrounding waters that are the most defining feature of its setting. Modern intrusions compromise the setting in some respects, but the Memorial site still offers significant access to the types of views of undeveloped shoreline that have been central to its meaning in the 20th century. The forests of the site, especially the mangroves, serve as both cultural feature and as setting. They provide the setting for other features including the 1939 monument and the significant features of the park development years (1948 - 1968). In that respect, they exhibit a high degree of integrity, serving as a solid backdrop to the various public landscapes of the park, and as an immersive forest environment along the trails, just as they did in those earlier decades. Although the mangrove forests have been invaded by non-native species, including Brazilian pepper and carrotwood, excellent invasive species control work by NPS has reduced their impact on the ecosystem. Hydrologic alterations have had a more sustained impact and remain an important consideration for ecosystem health, going forward. Issues of ecological health may reduce the forest's integrity as a cultural landscape feature, in the context of its 20th-century period of significance. At present, they retain a good degree of integrity.

Assessment of the forest's integrity poses a greater challenge with regard to the site's other periods of significance. Research has not turned up firm evidence of how they would have looked in the 19th century, for example, although presumably



FIGURE 4–10. View of the monument and surrounding gumbo limbo grove, 1939. (DESO Archives)

a fair amount of clearing and other landscape modification occurred (see *Site History*, pp. 25-28). Their characteristics in the prehistoric period remain even more of an unknown, although logic suggests that whatever forests did remain would have often tended to be far taller than those on the site today - except in the years immediately following major hurricane or freeze events. With most of these tree species known to mature in the range of 60 to 75 feet tall, the mangrove forests encountered by the people who built and lived on the Shaw's Point mounds, or by De Soto's expedition in 1539, would make today's mangroves seem small in comparison. Thus, this aspect of the setting retains only a moderate degree of integrity, with respect to the site's periods of significance prior to the 20th century.

The site's shell mounds and middens, similarly, function as both features (built elements) and as setting - places where people lived and worked. The large mounds have suffered significant loss of integrity due to the removal of much of their materials. The smaller ridges that parallel the cove shoreline retain a higher degree of integrity. Also, much of the site retains a resource base of subsurface archeological materials that have yet to be investigated (nearly 87% of the property, by one



FIGURE 4–11. View of the monument and surrounding gumbo limbo grove, 2016.

estimate).[9] This validates the continued importance of these archeological resources for their potential to yield additional information, important to prehistory or history.

Overall, the site's setting retains a high degree of integrity, especially with regard to its 20th-century period of significance.

Design

Designed features that form part of this cultural landscape include the prehistoric shell mounds, the 19th-century tabby house ruin, the 1939 monument, and the park elements developed by the NPS. The site's archeological features - its resources associated with periods prior to the 20th century - largely reflect a low integrity of design due to the removal of most of the materials from which they were originally constructed. On the other hand, the site's 20th-century features have suffered almost no such losses.

The 1939 monument, set on its low grass mound and surrounded by gumbo limbo trees, retains essentially the same appearance that it had at the time of installation (Figures 4-10 and 4-11). The park's 1948-1952 development features embodied the geometrically regular, axial formal layouts of the postwar, transitional period that incorporated Park Development Era formality and classicism with touches of modern elements. The park's arrival and parking zones still reflect this organization. Other physical changes and design additions are limited, and include the maturing of the live oaks framing the parking; minor additions to the entry piers (stone cladding, new steel swing gate, and updated signs); the relocation of the flagpole (still on axis);

9 ***State of the Park Report, De Soto National Memorial, Florida*** (Washington, DC: NPS, 2016) v.

Camp Uzita; and the picnic area. The 1967-1968 visitor center retains important character-defining features of its Mission 66 origins. These include its low, horizontal profile, meant to blend it in to the surrounding landscape; its reliance on modern materials; its minimalist, modern aesthetic; its integration into the site, by means of its extensive glazing, continuity of interior and exterior flooring, and intrinsic role in the site circulation path; and its programmatic concept that combines visitor and staff functions. The visitor center has seen minimal changes in its 48-year history and retains a very high degree of integrity.

Overall, the Memorial reflects a high degree of design integrity with regard to its 20th-century resources, but a low degree of design integrity for resources of earlier periods.

Materials

The materiality of what remains of the site's once vast, prehistoric shell mounds remains unchanged from its period of significance, as does that of the remnants of the 19th-century tabby house. Given the amount of material from each of these periods that has subsequently been removed, this integrity should be considered moderate. Discussion of materials in the context of this site focuses largely on its 20th-century resources.

The 1939 monument exhibits no changes of material. The original (1951-1952) park entrance features, the piers, gates, and signs, have been modified: the piers retain their basic stuccoed concrete construction on three sides, but exhibit a later surface application of keystone cladding on their front faces; the signs and gates all represent later replacements. The parking area (1950) comprises the same simple palette of materials it always did, including asphalt, concrete, St. Augustine turf, and live oak trees; the concrete curbs, and walks have been replaced in kind and the asphalt re-surfaced.

Pedestrian walkways and associated features in the plaza area show the biggest change, compared to the initial park development period. Leading from the parking area into the plaza, a portal originally formed by informal groupings of native shrubs (wax myrtle) has been replaced with the wooden palisade attached to Camp Uzita. The palisade, the Camp itself, and the other chickees, as well as the recently installed wood fences and other site furnishings, all constitute new material introductions. The plaza walkways themselves, originally a combination of asphalt and shell, with filled blocks for edging, now consist mainly of concrete, or (in the case of the berm walkways) crushed shell. The nature trails retain their original materials - replaced in kind, many times - of shell and sand; edge treatments such as rip rap or cement bags represent later additions.

The 1967-1968 visitor center retains the most consistently high degree of integrity of materials. Its original palette of materials, embodying the Mission 66 style and relying heavily on modern materials such as precast/prestressed concrete elements, cast-in-place exposed concrete, metal, and glass, remains prominent in the building's appearance today. The only elements that appear to be later additions are an updated main sign on the building's front (west) facade and a new main door. On the ground plane, the Chattahoochee-stone paver modules used to unify the building's exterior and interior floor remain in place, except where a portion was removed in the lobby to make way for new interpretive exhibits in 1998. Overall, the Memorial retains a high degree of integrity of materials.

Workmanship

For the most part, later modifications, including repairs, replacements and additions, to the Memorial landscape have kept consistent with the workmanship associated with its 20th-century period of significance. Changes to the visitor center have been kept to a minimum, other than the periodic upgrading of interpretive exhibits. A 1998 internal renovation to create a sales area maintained the simple materials palette used in the original building. Paths, trails, and plantings that have been added since the period of significance generally follow the precedent set by the original NPS-era construction.

One element that displays a noticeably different character is the series of palisades constructed in and around Camp Uzita. However, these function more in the nature of interpretive or living-history exhibits, rather than as permanent site structures. Other primarily utilitarian features such as trail-edge armoring, or the low wooden fences recently installed to control and direct pedestrian movement, also contribute a more contemporary aspect that departs somewhat from the typical look of works that dates from the period of significance. As a whole, the site retains a high degree of integrity of

workmanship, at least as it relates to the site's 20th-century period of significance.

Feeling

The Memorial site retains a high degree of integrity of feeling, based on its distinctive change of landscape character compared to the modern urban context around it, and to the immersive quality of much of its landscape, that does seem generally effective at transporting a visitor to "another time." The strongly axial organization of the entry sequence, combined with the almost completely natural palette of materials that comprise the visitor's view - turf panel, impressive large oaks, dense walls of mangrove forest, and skyline beyond - immediately give the feeling of entering a new and different environment, one with a great deal of deliberateness invested in its making. The quiet, axial formality of the plaza leads to the understated but solid presence of the modernist visitor center, and also provides a contemplative and virtually unchanged setting for the 1939 monument. Expansive views that are revealed of the river, bay and far shoreline continue to exert a powerful effect on the viewer, and the forest trails - although actually limited in extent - still evoke the sense of a remote, larger wild landscape. Only the feeling of the site as a large and thriving prehistoric village, or a 19th-century pioneer era working landscape, remain somewhat obscured; these can be evoked with the help of good interpretation, and should be considered moderate. Otherwise, the site retains high integrity.

Association

Based largely on its preservation of setting and of landscape feeling, but also on the effectiveness of its interpretive elements and on park staff's interpretive efforts, the Memorial site retains a moderate to high degree of integrity of association with its various periods of significance. It conveys its prehistoric significance through its natural landscapes and vistas, and its interpreted archeological features. The tabby house ruin and associated interpretation evoke the

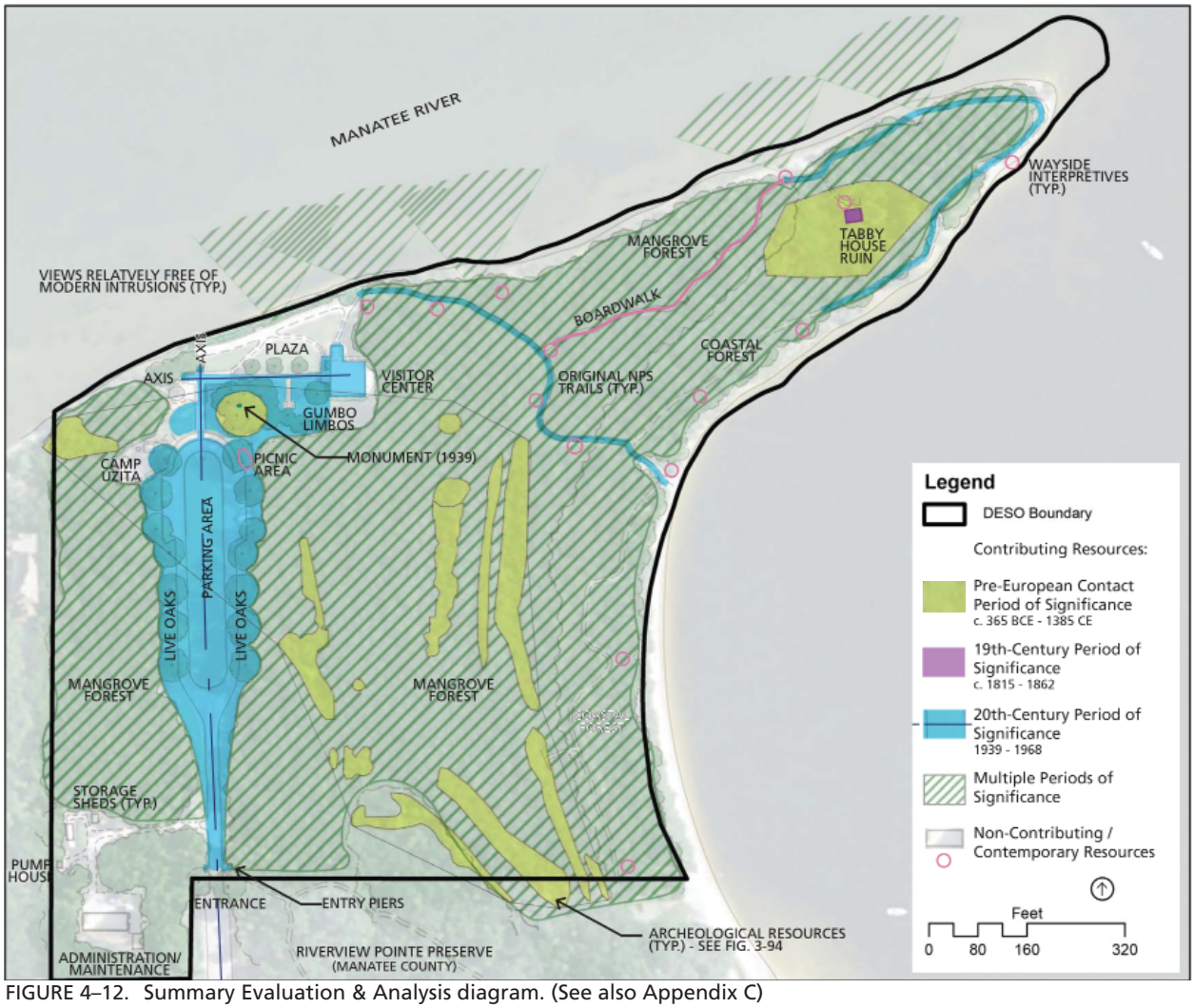


FIGURE 4–12. Summary Evaluation & Analysis diagram. (See also Appendix C)

site's pioneer era. The 1939 De Soto Monument, early park development layout, and Mission 66 visitor center all create strong associations with their respective time periods. The Memorial overall retains high integrity of association.

Summary

The De Soto National Memorial site reflects at least three distinct periods of significance: as a prehistoric archeological site with rich information-yielding potential; as a significant pioneer-era site, part of the early modern development of this part of the state; and as a 20th-century cultural landscape, encompassing the local expression of a national historic preservation movement as the 400th anniversary of the De Soto expedition was commemorated, and also reflecting the rise of Florida tourism, the expansion of the postwar national park system, and the legacy of NPS' Mission 66 initiative.

The site today clearly exhibits the distinct characteristics of these 20th-century cultural developments, including the understated setting for its 1939 monument, the well-planned axial formality of its original park layout, and the landscape-integrated geometric simplicity of its Mission 66 visitor center. The Memorial site retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, with respect to this period of significance. It also retains a high degree of integrity with respect to its earlier periods of significance in terms of location, materials, and association, and a moderate degree of integrity of setting, workmanship, and feeling, although its integrity of design is low for those earlier periods. Figure 4-12 (p. 110, above) graphically depicts a summary of the existing site evaluation.

Treatment Recommendations

De Soto National Memorial is a significant cultural landscape for its important role in multiple periods in our nation's history. As a significant example of a prehistoric development site, this location supported dwellings, food processing worksites, and ultimately an extensive shell mound complex likely including a temple, cemetery, and village; these developments spanned some 1,800 years and a number of distinct societies. Its archeological resources also include traces of 19th-century pioneer settlements that reflect the unique, multi-cultural rancho societies of Florida's Gulf coast at that time, relate directly to some of Manatee County's earliest Anglo-American settlers, and may also be associated with an important phenomenon of free black communities that sprang up in this area before the Civil War. As an archeological site, the Memorial site has yielded and is likely to yield information important to our understanding of the prehistory and history of this region.

The Memorial also holds significance as a cultural expression of national ideas and sentiments surrounding the 400th anniversary commemorations, beginning in 1939, of the De Soto expedition, and of how the expedition's story has been viewed and understood by people during and since that time. It represents an important early example - following the precedents set at Mount Vernon, and elsewhere, in the mid- to late-1800s - of the historic preservation movement's growth and development in the 20th century; a movement, often led by women's groups, that ultimately profoundly influenced our national culture. The National Society of Colonial Dames of America in Florida, who placed the 1939 De Soto Monument at Shaw's Point, precisely illustrate this trend. In the decades that followed, the site played a central role in building Gulf Coast Florida's tourism industry, part of a social and economic transformation that - building on public perceptions of Florida's unique environment - largely re-defined the state in the course of the 20th century.

Finally, the site holds significance for two distinct periods of its development under NPS' management. It exemplifies the type and style of design, and construction of national parks during the important postwar expansion of the transitional, pre-Mission 66 era; and its visitor center embodies the planning, design and construction typical of NPS' nationally significant Mission 66 program. Throughout the period of NPS management, the Memorial site's natural landscapes of mangrove, shorelines, and adjacent water views have offered an immersive experience to visitors that takes them out of their contemporary context, and encourages a connection to the site's earlier cultural periods. In this respect, the preservation of these natural landscape elements makes them cultural features.

The recommended overall treatment of ***preservation/rehabilitation*** will allow visitors to De Soto to continue to experience these cultural landscapes as a way of engaging the important historical themes and narratives that the Memorial was created to share. The preservation treatment primarily applies to management of the site's archeological resources, as well as to the 1939 monument and its setting. The rehabilitation treatment applies more appropriately to the site's other, NPS-related 20th-century resources and to the natural landscape components that also function as elements of the cultural landscape.

Climate Change

This *Treatment* chapter discusses climate change first because of its overarching and likely very significant impact to the site, and its importance as a context in which all of the subsequent topics are discussed. As the NPS' *Climate Change Response Strategy* noted in 2010, "[the] uncertainty of how and when specific impacts will become evident makes responding to climate change a challenge."[1] The issues faced at De Soto National Memorial illustrate this more starkly than most: depending on the trajectory of many different trends in both the

1 NPS Climate Change Response Program, ***National Park Service Climate Change Response Strategy*** (Fort Collins, CO: NPS, 2010) 5.

human and natural world, virtually none of which can be reliably predicted, implications for this site may range from significant impacts to total loss of integrity.

At a minimum, it appears certain that ongoing erosion exacerbated by rising sea level will increasingly threaten the Memorial's landscape: its topographic integrity, its vegetation, and its built features including archeological and historic resources, circulation systems, and park facilities. In addition, rising temperatures will affect everything from vegetative cover to attendance patterns, and from insect populations to park maintenance requirements and operational costs. The rate and severity of these changes will be difficult to predict. Even for the worst case scenario, park managers and others within NPS, who must decide on the appropriate present course of action, cannot be certain whether the time frame for such a total loss might be 80 years, 200 years, or something else, each of which might call for a different response.

The NPS *Policy Memorandum* on "Climate Change and Stewardship of Cultural Resources" advises managers to recognize, when developing and weighing options, the possibility of loss: "Responsible stewardship requires making choices that promote resilience and taking sustainable management actions. Funding temporary repairs for resources that cannot, because of their location or fragility, be saved for the long term, demands careful thought. Managers should consider some choices such as documenting some resources and allowing them to fall into ruin rather than rebuilding after major storms. Such decisions cannot be made lightly nor without appropriate consultation and compliance."[2]

The recommendations throughout the remainder of this chapter recognize that the viability of the Memorial site to continue fulfilling its legislatively mandated purpose and supporting the mission and mandate of the NPS may endure for only a few more generations, or it may endure much longer, even - in planning terms - indefinitely. They also recognize that, in the face of this uncertainty, the NPS is working to maintain flexibility; to continually incorporate the latest best available science into its actions of adaptation to climate change, or of mitigation of its effects; to communicate its actions, contributing to public understanding and discourse around the issue; and to "lead by example."[3]

- A more detailed vulnerability and risk assessment should be undertaken, to help NPS prioritize among possible actions to provide adaptation or mitigation for cultural/natural resources on this site and others in the region.

- For defending against erosion and storm surge in the near- to mid-term, since rates of change and the timing and severity of hurricanes cannot be predicted with confidence, hardscape solutions engineered to address specific conditions will not likely represent an effective response. As an alternative approach that promotes resiliency, NPS should consider a living shoreline installation to help protect the Memorial's vulnerable shores.

This type of adaptation has been successfully implemented by NPS at Canaveral National Seashore and by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge (PINWR), as well as in numerous other projects statewide and around the world (Figures 5-1 and 5-2, p. 114, below). In Florida, they typically involve strategically placing suitable substrates at elevations currently appropriate for oyster reefs and salt marshes, followed by cordgrass planting (*Spartina alterniflora*). Establishing the salt marsh sets the successional stage for mangrove colonization; although projects often involve planting mangrove trees, natural colonization tends to occur readily when hydrologic conditions are right, and is far more effective and economical. [4] This approach would create self-maintaining systems that naturally adapt to changing conditions without requiring constant human intervention. As sea levels fluctuate and coastal environments change, these shoreline-sheltering natural communities would naturally shift and expand into new habitats. As a leading-

2 National Park Service - Jonathan Jarvis, Director, ***Policy Memorandum 14-02,*** "Climate Change and Stewardship of Cultural Resources" (February 10, 2014) 4.

3 ***NPS Climate Change Response Strategy*** 3.

4 C.A. Schupp, R.I. Beavers and M. Caffrey (eds.), ***Coastal Adaptation Case Studies, NPS 999/129700*** (Fort Collins, CO: National Park Service, 2015) 7-8; Coastal Resources Group, Inc., "Pelican Island Restoration and Stabilization Project (Phase III) Final Report" (Report prepared for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service / PINWR, June 1, 2006) 19; Roy R. Lewis, III, "Ecological engineering for successful management and restoration of mangrove forests," ***Ecological Engineering 24*** (2005) 413-414.



FIGURE 5–1. Living shoreline installation, Canaveral National Seashore. Photo: Margo Schwadron, NPS-SEAC (In Case Studies, NPS 999/129700).



FIGURE 5–2. Aerial (top) showing planting areas and shell breakwaters; and planting area with cord grass at 3 months (bottom), PINWR. Photos: Coastal Resources Group (Project Final Report).

edge technology that works with living systems, it also allows the NPS to lead by example.

- Sea level rise, in addition to storm impacts and erosion, may lead to the loss of the tabby house ruin; storm impacts and erosion may also threaten the remaining shell mounds and middens, although due to the nature of these resources, submersion alone does not necessarily mean their loss. One of these, the Deptford Period midden under the tabby house, has been submerged before (see *Site History* chapter, *The Prehistoric Landscape at Shaw's Point*, p. 15, above). However, at some point park managers may face a decision, particularly with the tabby ruin, to perform complete investigation and documentation, if loss of the resource comes to seem likely. (See also *Archeological Features*, p. 117, below.)

Spatial Organization

Spatial organization serves as one of the strongest character-defining features of the Memorial landscape as an artifact of the early park development and Mission 66 years. Specifically, the plan's two strongly axial, articulated open spaces - the parking area and the plaza - connected in an ell, and framed on all almost all sides by dense forest, reflect the site planning style of the NPS at mid-century. They create a feeling that is at once warmly welcoming and serenely formal, almost ceremonial, in the sequence of arrival into the park.

Beyond these two spaces, most of the rest of the visitor circuit, through the enclosed, natural landscape of coastal forests, offers an immersive experience, punctuated only by the many views out to the water, that lends itself well to conveying the park's interpretive themes.

- Preserve the simple, open quality of the arrival and parking zone.
    - Avoid introducing structures, plantings, or other visually intrusive elements that detract from the open character of the ground plane and the simplicity of the space.
- Preserve and, where possible, strengthen the axial visual connection between the parking area and the original focal point in the west portion of the plaza (see also *Views and Vistas*, p. 117, below).
    - The above recommendation recognizes that the visual connection is likely to remain limited to views extending from the parking area to the plaza, and not all the way to the river beyond. Although an important contributing factor in the original layout, the extended viewshed is almost certainly infeasible to restore: the large growth of seagrape, and the rip rap berm beyond it, that block

these views will remain necessary as a defense against coastal erosion and storms.

- Preserve the spatial organization and landscape character of the plaza:
    - Preserve the axial organization of the plaza, both visually and in terms of its circulation to and through the visitor center.
    - Preserve the open character of the space by keeping plantings out, except at historically established locations, such as along the visitor center foundations.
    - Also preserve the open character by maintaining limits on the introduction of new structures and objects into the space.
    - Minimize contemporary intrusions, e.g., to eliminate corner-cutting at the main path's right-angle turn (just northwest of the monument), strategically placed benches might perform this function, in lieu of split-rail fence, more compatibly with respect to the original design.
- Preserve the immersive quality of the forest trails by managing the mangroves and other natural communities as effectively as possible for ecological health (see also *Vegetation*, below), and by minimizing the visual intrusion of contemporary elements (see also *Circulation*, p. 116, below).

Topography and Hydrology

The flat, low-lying topography of the Memorial site has been overlain with contributing cultural features including the prehistoric shell middens and (now mostly removed) mounds and the 1939-1951 modifications to accommodate the marker and the original construction of the park, and with the non-contributing main beach berm. The contributing topographic features and the natural topography are character-defining, but also create impacts to the site's hydrology and natural systems.

- Preserve the generally level appearance of the site by minimizing the introduction of distinct new topographic features.
- Should the raising of ground elevations become necessary in the future as a response to sea level rise, if possible such filling should be added evenly over broad areas, rather than creating discrete raised pads.
- Hydrologic restoration will help preserve and restore the site's mangrove forests (see *Vegetation*, below).

Vegetation (Natural Communities)

The site's natural vegetation communities, particularly the mangrove forest, play roles as cultural resources also; therefore, it is important to maintain and enhance the health and, as much as possible, the authenticity of these ecosystems. The mangrove forest serves critical functions ecologically, aesthetically, and programmatically and should therefore be a high priority; the most critical factor in mangrove health is tidal flow.

- An *Ecological Mangrove Restoration* (EMR)[5] approach should be considered. This relies on careful site-specific planning and engineering to create appropriate hydrologic conditions, based on detailed evaluation of the existing mangrove ecosystem. Reconstruction of winding, self-cleaning channels would enable proper tidal flushing. Providing optimum conditions for mangrove health helps to stabilize the site: it gives these land stabilizers strong root systems to grip the soil, dense canopies to shelter the land beneath them, and ample vigor to grow and reproduce so that they can quickly spread into adjacent areas as conditions change.
- Encouraging mangrove expansion would also enhance shoreline storm resistance and ecological resilience. The process requires site investigations to identify optimum elevations for various species of the mangrove ecosystem in relation to sea level, and may involve modifying topography in selected areas. As noted above with regard to living shorelines, natural colonization by mangroves would be more cost-effective than planting; there are

5 Further information about EMR can be accessed at http://www.mangroverestoration.com/

plenty of seed sources nearby, and mangroves readily spread into new habitat when given appropriate hydrologic conditions.

- EMR treatment of existing forests should be carefully integrated with the engineering and design of any new mangrove areas that might be developed for living shorelines. Both require the same expertise and detailed analyses of existing conditions.

- Prescribed burning is not appropriate for the vegetation types on the Memorial property, but managers should support burning programs on Riverview Pointe Preserve to the south.
    - Frequent burning of the fire-adapted pine-palmetto and cabbage palm communities there will reduce fuel loads that might otherwise lead to a dangerous wildfire that could spread to the Memorial property.

- As a fire prevention tactic, NPS may also want to thin out some of the population of cabbage palms that are spreading into the southern end of the site from Riverview Pointe. These highly flammable and firebrand-prone palms, while native, can be so competitive that they become invasive in certain situations.

- For invasive non-native species, continued monitoring and rapid removal is critical, but some exceptions to standard policy may be in order on this site. Given the erosion threat, removal of established seaside mahoe (*Thespesia populnea*) along the north shore may be unwise, especially since it is of disputed origin and does little damage. Seedlings of carrotwood (*Cupaniopsis anacardioides*), Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolia*), Australian pine (*Casuarina* spp.), and other invasives require constant removal. Park staff's habit of routinely pulling these as they are encountered seems to be controlling these species well. Ongoing arrowhead vine control efforts should be intensified with increased emphasis on hand-pulling between herbicide applications by the NPS Exotic Vegetation Management Program treatment team. Intensive "spiral weeding"[6] will eliminate the infestation most effectively. This involves thoroughly removing even the smallest stems, broken bits, and roots around the outer edges of each infestation and gradually expanding the resulting clean zone inwards until all traces of the vine are gone. Using professional staff and/or training volunteers in the proper use of protective clothing, barrier creams, urushiol-dissolving cleansers, antihistamines, and cortisone ointments to minimize poison ivy rashes should enable them to work in this area more effectively.

Circulation

Circulation and spatial organization both largely define the way the site is experienced, and both are tightly inter-connected. *Spatial Organization* (above) addresses the general organization and alignments of the circulation system's components.

- Preserve/maintain the simplicity of materials used in the entrance/parking and plaza areas (asphalt, concrete, shell/sand), as well as the axial alignments of the main paths. The painted surface on the concrete pad at the flagpole is non-contributing and could be dispensed with in future renovations.

- Preserve the Chattahoochee stone-surfaced pavers at the visitor center. These are original to the building's 1967-1968 construction.

- Preserve/maintain the naturalistic quality of pathway materials on the site's other trails and pathways. Minimize the visual intrusion of obviously contemporary construction elements on these paths; for example, the cement-bag armoring of path edges is non-contributing. In future capital maintenance (renovations/ replacement) of such structures, a more visually naturalistic solution might be developed.

- Exacerbated flooding incidences and rising sea level may spur an interest in continuing to raise the elevation of trails. Future pathway repairs, capital maintenance or other improvements,

6 L. C. Duever, Roy R. Lewis, III and Marc C. Dick, "Strategic Vegetation Management (SVM) for Longleaf Ecosystem Restoration." Presentation to ***Longleaf Ecosystem Restoration and Management, Spring Conference, Florida Chapter of the Wildlife Societ***y, Tallahassee, FL, April 22, 2010.

that become necessary in response to flooding and/or erosion, should always be coordinated with hydrology-related goals for enhancement of the mangrove forest. The development of effective tidal connections may require additional conversions of on-grade trail to boardwalk, and/or visually unobtrusive culverts beneath paths. Any increases in trail elevation under consideration should be evaluated in terms of long-term sustainability and in terms of aesthetic impact and maintaining a naturalistic feeling along the trails.

- The boardwalk should be repaired to address basic deficiencies including lack of anchorage to prevent uplift, replacement of failed deck screws, and upgrading of attachment of girders to columns (see *Appendix B*). Park staff were already working to address the girder attachments as of February 2016. In addition, some decay was observed in occasional joist locations; although it would require removing and re-installing decking, this should be checked throughout.

- The naturalistic feeling along the trails should be considered in future modifications to the existing boardwalk as well as in the design of any additional boardwalks. Options might include replacing the wooden rails with less visually intrusive elements; this would be especially appropriate in places where the deck is less than 30 inches above adjacent grade and a guardrail condition is not required. Also, park managers may wish to consider renovating the deck - especially if it is determined, at some point, that there are joists requiring replacement - in such a way as to lower the elevation, perhaps widen the deck slightly, and eliminate or reduce railings, to make the experience feel more immersed in the forest.

Views and Vistas

Strong axial views are character-defining features of the park's original design, and natural landscape views, especially views and vistas of the surrounding waters - where not cluttered with modern intrusions - have always played a central role in its interpretive messages on cultural and historical themes.

- Preserve and, when feasible, enhance the axial sightlines north-south through the entrance and parking area, and east-west through the plaza. A non-contributing feature like the existing palisade wall along the sidewalk, for example, when reaching the end of its useful life, might be replaced in a modified layout or location that restores the original, more open visual connection; in conjunction with this, framing shrub plantings, similar to the wax myrtle originally used, could serve as part of a rehabilitation treatment here.

- Preserve, to the extent possible, the remaining "unspoiled" water views that occur primarily along the north shoreline (see Figure 5-3, p. 118, below). While much of what could impair these viewsheds, such as boat traffic, is beyond NPS' control, park managers should remain vigilant for any opportunities to advocate for viewshed preservation, in cases where local governments or private entities are considering actions that could have negative impacts. In addition, internal management of circulation patterns and vegetation should strive to take maximum advantage of the specific stand points on-site that offer the best of these views and vistas.

Archaeological Features

The site's prehistoric archeological resources continue to offer significant potential to yield important information to aid in our understanding of the people that lived in this landscape in earlier eras, including how they responded to significant changes in their climate and environment.

- Topographic mapping of Shaw's Point Archaeological District is recommended. Archaeological deposits were recorded by GIS in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Advances in technology since that time allow for a more refined map of the topographic features within the Shaw's Point Archaeological District.

- NPS should establish an archaeological research protection plan to include monitoring with photo points to supervise disturbance in shell mound and midden areas.

- Park staff should continue to retain and manage vegetative buffers and screening between the shell features and the pedestrian pathways, to discourage public use of sensitive areas off of the trail.

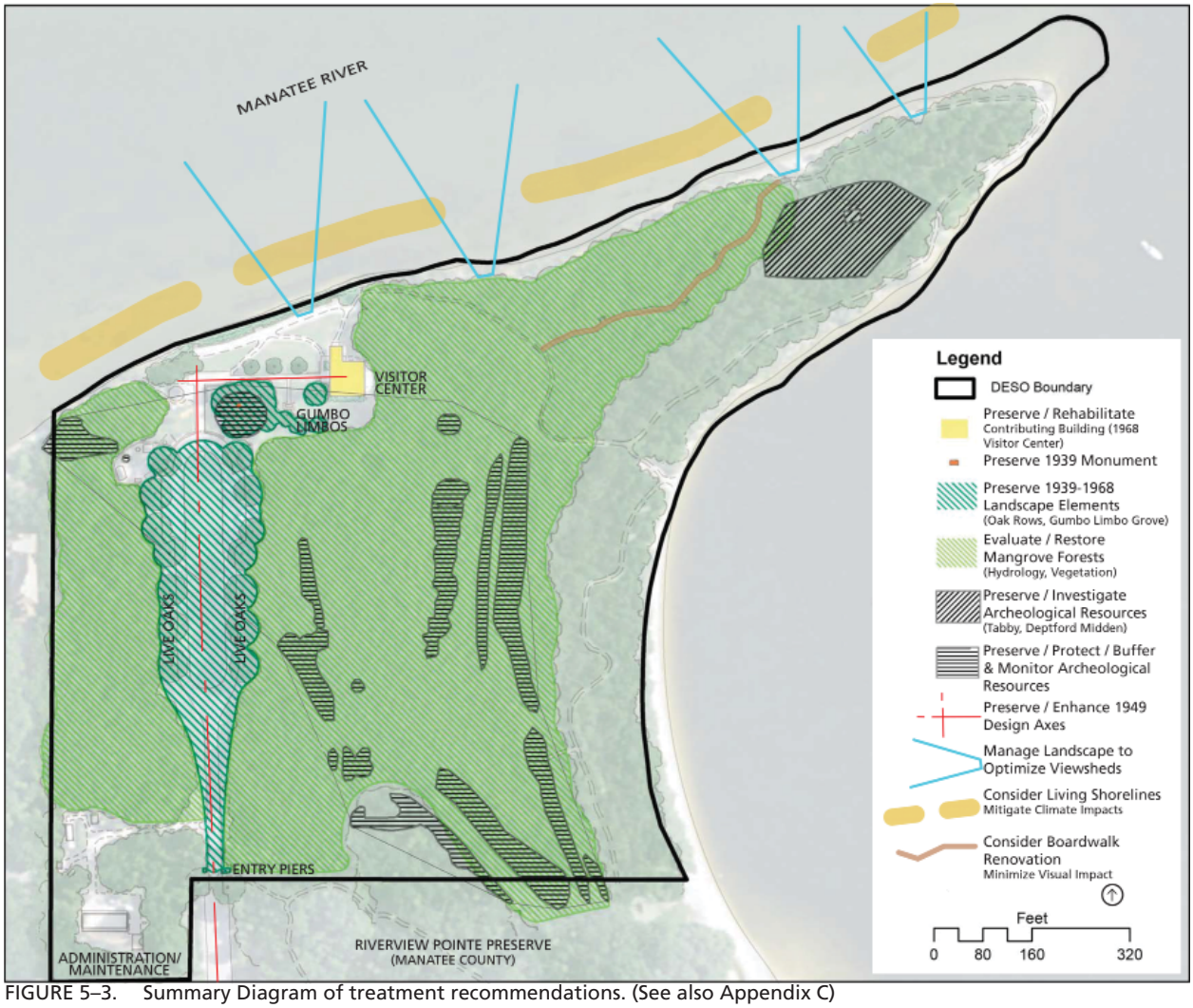


FIGURE 5–3. Summary Diagram of treatment recommendations. (See also Appendix C)

- A plan should be developed for land disturbance activities that could result in the inadvertent discovery of human remains or funerary objects, establishing a process for consultation. Consider a comprehensive agreement with federally recognized tribes in Florida. Burial mounds exist in the immediate vicinity of Shaw's Point, although none are recorded on the De Soto National Memorial property. Burial traditions of the Manasota culture do include interments in shell midden areas.

- Subsequent archaeological mitigation should consider the ephemeral nature of Cuban rancho settlements in attempting to tie the regional history in with Shaw's Point.

- At the buried Deptford Midden at De Soto Point ("tabby house midden"), the midden's extent is not known; additional subsurface testing is recommended, to identify the boundaries of this element. This part of the site may have been deposited during a period when sea levels were lower than today's. Its burial with sea level rise presents an opportunity for comparisons to impacts occurring to the site's shell ridges and middens with current and future climate change. The current De Soto Point area is heavily subject to erosion.

- The tabby house ruins should be given an extremely high priority due to threats that it faces from sea level rise, erosion and storms, and also due to its importance in interpretation of site history and the open questions regarding its origins. Archaeological testing of the Tabby House ruins has provided evidence that the structure pre-dates the homestead of Shaw's Point by William Shaw. A comprehensive assessment of all previous research in conjunction with a Historic Structures Report (HSR), materials characterization,

and preservation plan for the ruins will aid in developing a plan to slow the deterioration of this feature. Park staff should also continue to monitor and restrict vegetation encroachment.

Buildings & Structures

Visitor center preservation/rehabilitation:

- Preserve the elements of the visitor center that exhibit integrity, to the greatest extent practicable given the building's role in fulfilling park management objectives and programmatic needs.
    - Preserve the basic form, usage, spatial organization, and circulation pattern of the building, including the integration of interior and exterior circulation.
    - Preserve/maintain, or restore if necessary, surviving original facade and roof materials; preserve the surviving, original exterior appearance.
    - Maintain, if possible, the programmatic basis for the building, as a combined interpretive/educational, visitor amenity, and staff/office facility.
    - Consider restoring the original ground-plane design that incorporated a visually contiguous planter area on both sides of the glazed portion of the facade at the building's northwest corner, strengthening the exterior-interior connection, if this can be determined to be consistent with the programmatic needs for the facility.
    - If other programmatic or usage considerations should give rise to a potential for modifications to the building, follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*. Strive to preserve original elements as noted above.
    - Rehabilitate exterior plantings as outlined under *Plantings*, below.
- All of the site's other buildings are recent additions and are non-contributing. They may be altered or replaced as needed. Locating maintenance and support functions in the present, well-screened maintenance area has been an excellent practice and should continue. Camp Uzita and the other interpretive structures should play a secondary visual role and, as capital maintenance (replacements) occur in future, their siting and scale should be adjusted to minimize their intrusion or dominance of key vistas.

Small Scale Features

- Preserve the entrance piers. NPS may wish to consider upgrading the swing gates to a less utilitarian design, more reflective of the original design character. Similarly, signage tends to be periodically revisited; the design of future signage might reflect an evolving interpretive emphasis (see also *Land Use and Interpretation*, p. 120, below).
- Preserve the De Soto Trail Marker (1939 monument).
- The kiosk is non-contributing but appears compatible with the setting, in accordance with a rehabilitation treatment. It may be replaced or modified as needed; replacements should be similarly compatible.
- All of the site's other small scale features, including signage and interpretive elements, site furnishings, fencing, and path edge reinforcement are non-contributing and may be replaced, modified, or removed, as needed. In general, future replacements should be selected or designed to visually intrude as little as possible on the naturalistic character of the setting. Recommended characteristics include: geometric simplicity and minimal ornamentation in design; natural materials, wherever feasible; and darker colors that recede/blend into the landscape, avoiding brightly colored finishes or unfinished metal. (See also *Spatial Organization*, p. 114, and *Circulation*, p. 116, above).

Plantings

- Preserve the live oak rows that frame the parking area. Continue to forego underplantings in this

area; retain the simple treatment consisting of oaks, turf, sand/shell surface, and framing walls of forest behind the oaks. Replace any trees lost with new live oaks.

- Preserve the gumbo limbo grove in the plaza. While some of these trees are later additions, the grove as a whole is a character-defining feature for the setting of the monument as well as of the visitor center; the original trees among them trace back to the native forest that regenerated on the site after its early 20th-century clearing, and represent a link to the prehistoric landscape as well.

- The largest gumbo limbo tree is in decline and has been diagnosed with *Ganoderma*. If it does not survive, community engagement could help determine a course of action, in conjunction with the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation and the University of Florida (see below).

- Where gumbo limbo trees are infected with *Ganoderma*, work to minimize chances of spread of the disease:
    - Develop a plan for ongoing, timely removal of above-ground, infected material (trunks and branches).
    - If acceptable archeological monitoring protocols can be developed, also remove infected rootmass.
    - Consult with University of Florida researchers and/or other experts in the field for potential soil treatments (fungicides) and other best practices to combat the disease; note that a number of *Ganoderma* species are present in the region, and protocols may vary; also, note that research is ongoing.

- The non-native *Phoenix* palms in the front entrance plantings are not compatible with the original design intent of the park development period and should be removed.

- Plantings at the visitor center could be enhanced in a rehabilitation treatment that introduces other site-appropriate natives, to diversify the surviving coontie plantings. In keeping with the aesthetic of the original 1967 design, which used Spanish bayonet and agave in addition to coontie, plants with a similarly strong or sculptural habit would be most appropriate.
    - Examples of such sculptural plantings might include: spider lily (*Hymenocallis latifolia*), swamp flatsedge (*Cyperus ligularis*), bushy bluestem (*Andropogon glomeratus*), varnish leaf (*Dodonaea viscosa*), beach sunflower, or - if sufficiently far from the path to avoid injuries - prickly pear, Spanish bayonet, or agave.



FIGURE 5–4. Park entrance sign at cove beach landing.

Land Use and Interpretation

- Park staff have worked to maintain a successful balance between the commemorative and contemplative aspect of the park, and the purely enjoyable recreational usage that helps address NPS' theme of "connecting people to parks."[7] Staff should continue to adjust and refine this balance as new visitors show up, new usage trends emerge and new interpretive themes develop.

- Interpretive themes have evolved on the site, increasingly including the perspective, and highlighting the culture, of American Indians as opposed to a strictly Euro-centric approach. This aspect of interpretation has achieved much more balance than in the earliest days of the park (and of the De Soto Celebrations that preceded

7 National Park Service, "A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement" (August 25, 2011)

NPS' involvement), which focused on the experience of De Soto and his soldiers. These often glorified or romanticized, as adventure, what was essentially a military mission towards a territorial conquest - a mission that brought on violent conflict, environmental disruption and the destruction of whole societies. As interpretation continues to evolve, reflecting today's more balanced view of both the positive and negative aspects of this history - and incorporating new information that comes out of archeological and scientific investigations - site elements should also be updated to reflect current themes.

    - One example might be the current logo, which prominently features a crossbow, a horrific weapon of the time and a potent symbol of the violence of the expedition (Figure 5-4, p. 120, above). This may not be an object that NPS will want to continue to promote, by choosing it as a symbol of the park.

- Prehistoric occupants of this site lived through and adapted to significant climate change including changing sea levels, migrating coastlines, and transformations of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems including the flora and fauna used for subsistence. Their story exhibits similarities as well as critically important differences with the changes and challenges we are dealing with today - most dramatically, in terms of the pace of change. Interpreting this story can provide thought-provoking comparisons and insights, as suggested recently by NPS' Director: "Cultural resources offer lessons in past successes, and failures, in adapting to environmental changes, and provide insight the origins of the modern climatic situation. There is much to learn and share . . . ."[8]

8 ***Policy Memorandum 14-02***, 5.

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Appendix A

List of Features in the Cultural Landscape

Feature	LCS #	Construction Date	Contributing	Treatment
Deptford Period [Tabby Ruins] Midden	N/A	c. 365 BCE - 200 CE	Yes	Preserve [Investigate]
Tabby House Ruins	07031	c.1815 - 1843	Yes	Preserve [Investigate/Document]
Other Archeological Resources	N/A	c. 365 BCE - 1395 CE	Yes	Preserve
Entrance road and parking area layout	N/A	1950	Yes	Preserve
Entrance piers	N/A	1951-1952	Yes	Preserve
De Soto Trail Marker (De Soto Monument)	07030	1939	Yes	Preserve
Axial spatial organization / parking and plaza	N/A	1939/1950	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Plaza open landscape character/circulation pattern	N/A	1950	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Parking area oak rows	N/A	1950	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Plaza area gumbo/cedar grove	N/A	1939/1950	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Topography - low, generally level topography	N/A	1950 and earlier	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Immersive trail experience/forest spatial character	N/A	1950	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
River views	N/A	1950 and earlier	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Mangrove forests	N/A	N/A	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Shorelines	N/A	N/A	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Hammocks	N/A	N/A	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Visitor Center	N/A	1967-1968	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Visitor Center plantings	N/A	1967-1968	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Chattahoochee stone pavers - visitor center area	N/A	1968	Yes	Preserve/rehabilitate
Camp Uzita, palisade, chickees	N/A	c. 2000-2014	No	N/A
Administration/maintenance building	N/A	1994	No	N/A
Pump house	N/A	1950	No	N/A
Storage sheds	N/A	c. 2000-2010	No	N/A
Kiosk	N/A	c.2005-2010	No	N/A

Appendix B
Report of Structural Survey of Boardwalk

REPORT OF
STRUCTURAL SURVEY
OF
BOARDWALK
AT
DE SOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL
BRADENTON, FLORIDA

Prepared for:

David Sacks Landscape Architecture, LLC
89 Dartmouth Avenue
Avondale Estates, GA 30002

Prepared by:



MASTER
CONSULTING
ENGINEERS, INC.
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February 16, 2016

REPORT OF STRUCTURAL SURVEY OF
BOARDWALK AT
DE SOTO NATIONAL MONUMENT

Introduction

As authorized by you Master Consulting Engineers, Inc. (MCE) has inspected the boardwalk located at the De Soto National Monument Bradenton, Florida to conduct a condition survey. The purpose of this survey was to assess the condition of the boardwalk and determine if renovations are necessary.

The boardwalk was constructed in circa 1988. The boardwalk is approximately 500 feet long. MCE conducted a condition survey on February 1, 2016. A summary of the site visit is presented below.

Survey of Elevated Boardwalk

- The boardwalk is located on a flat site.
- Construction consists of pressure treated wood. Refer to Photo 1.
- Column/piers are spaced approximately 10 feet on center and are embedded into the ground 5 feet according to a park service memorandum dated July 22, 1988.
- There was some indication of minor column/pier settlement as evidenced by handrails which were not level. Also, several of the columns were not plumb.
- Floor/deck construction consists of 2x8 joists spaced 16" on center. The joists are supported by wood girders fastened to each side of the wood column with (2) 3/8" diameter lag bolts. Refer to Photo 2.
- Wood deck consists of a synthetic wood deck spanning between floor joists. The deck is secured to the joists with steel screws. Several of the boards were loose because the screws had failed.
- The 6x6 wood columns/piers extend above the wood deck and form the vertical supports for the handrail. Refer to Photo 4.

Code Analysis

The Standard Building Code 1985 edition (SBC), the predecessor to the Florida Building Code was in force when the boardwalk was designed. Today, the Florida Building Code 5th Edition (2014) sets forth the requirements for loads used to design buildings. A design live load of 60 pounds per square foot was specified by the code and was used in our design analysis.

Analysis of Boardwalk Components for Loads

Floor Joists

The floor consists of 2x8 wood purlins spaced at 16" on center. They have the capacity of support a 60 psf live load which meets FBC. The 2x8's are toe nailed into the supporting girders at the columns. There is no anchorage for uplift in accordance with FBC. There is no connection provided other than toe nails to resist uplift during a hurricane. Refer to Photo 3.

REPORT OF STRUCTURAL SURVEY OF
BOARDWALK AT
DE SOTO NATIONAL MONUMENT

Floor Girders

Typical floor girder construction consists of 2x8's each side of the 6x6 wood columns. The girders have the capacity to support a 60 psf live load in accordance with FBC. The lag bolt connection of the girder to the wood columns does not meet FBC and should be replaced with (2) 5/8" diameter stainless steel through bolts.

Synthetic Wood Deck

The deck is fastened to the wood joists with steel screws. The head on many of the steel screws has corroded and has separated from the shank of the screw. New stainless steel fasteners should be installed securing the deck to the joists.

Conclusions

It is the opinion of this report that the subject boardwalk is in good condition. Wood floors meet the Florida Building Code for walkway type loads of 60 pounds per square foot. New through bolts should be installed connecting the 2x8 girders to the 6x6 wood columns. The synthetic wood deck should be re-fastened to the wood joists. Hurricane clips should be added to the floor joist connection to the wood griders.

Closure

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with Professional Engineering services. Please note that Master Consulting Engineers, Inc. reserves the right to revise or update this report as other information becomes available. If clarification or additional information is necessary please contact us.

MASTER
CONSULTING
ENGINEERS, INC.
STRUCTURAL CONSULTANTS

REPORT OF
STRUCTURAL SURVEY OF
BOARDWALK AT
DE SOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL
FEBRUARY 16, 2015



Photo 1; Typical view of boardwalk.



Photo 2; View of typical connection of 2x8 girders to 6x6 wood post.



Photo 3; Typical view of floor joists bearing on wood girder.



Photo 4; View of out of plumb 6x6 wood post.

Appendix C
Maps, Drawings, and Illustrations

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DE SOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL
Cultural Landscape Report
January 2017



Aerial photograph, 1940
(DESO Archives)

(NTS)

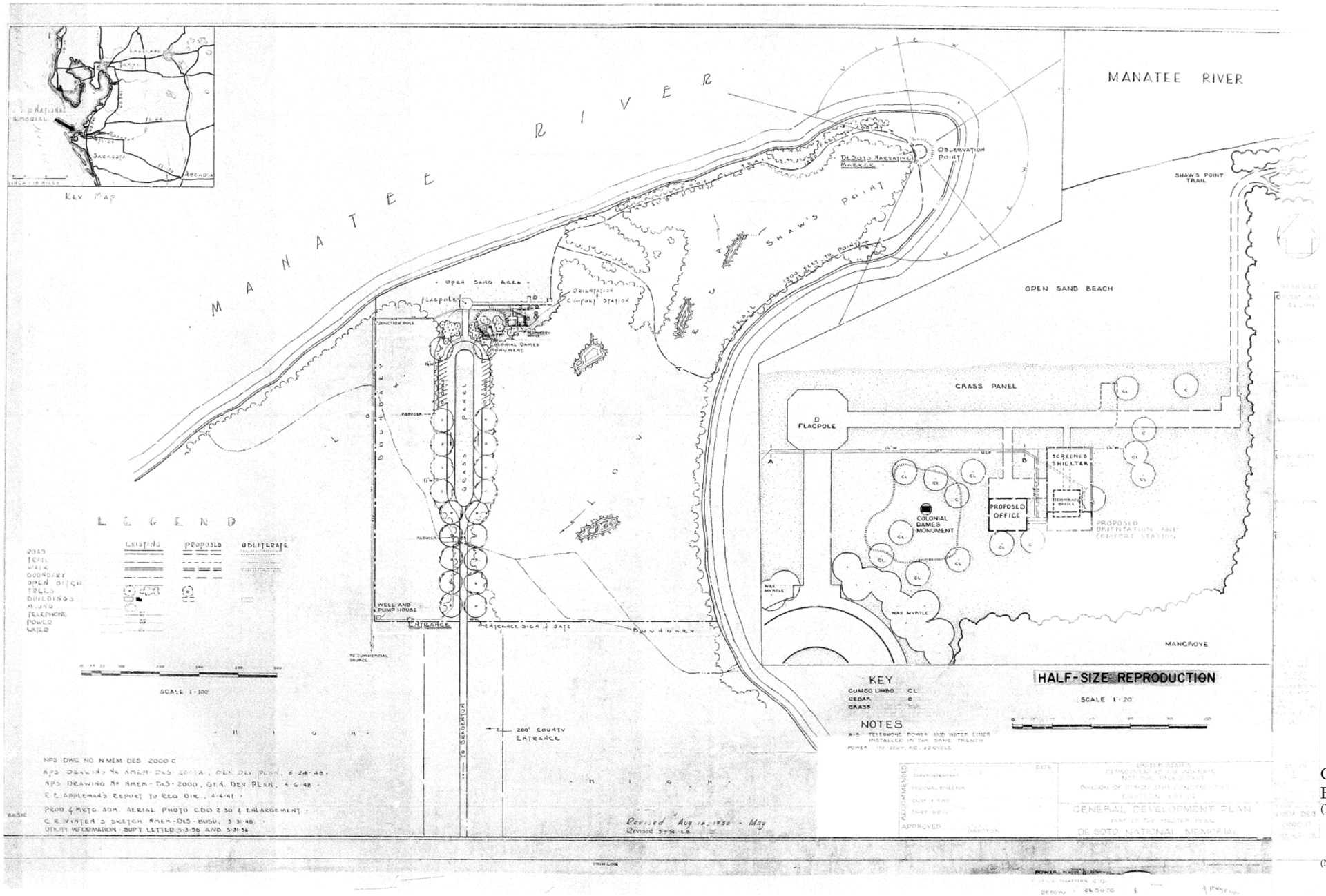
North



Site topographic survey, 1948/1950
(DESO Archives)

(NTS)

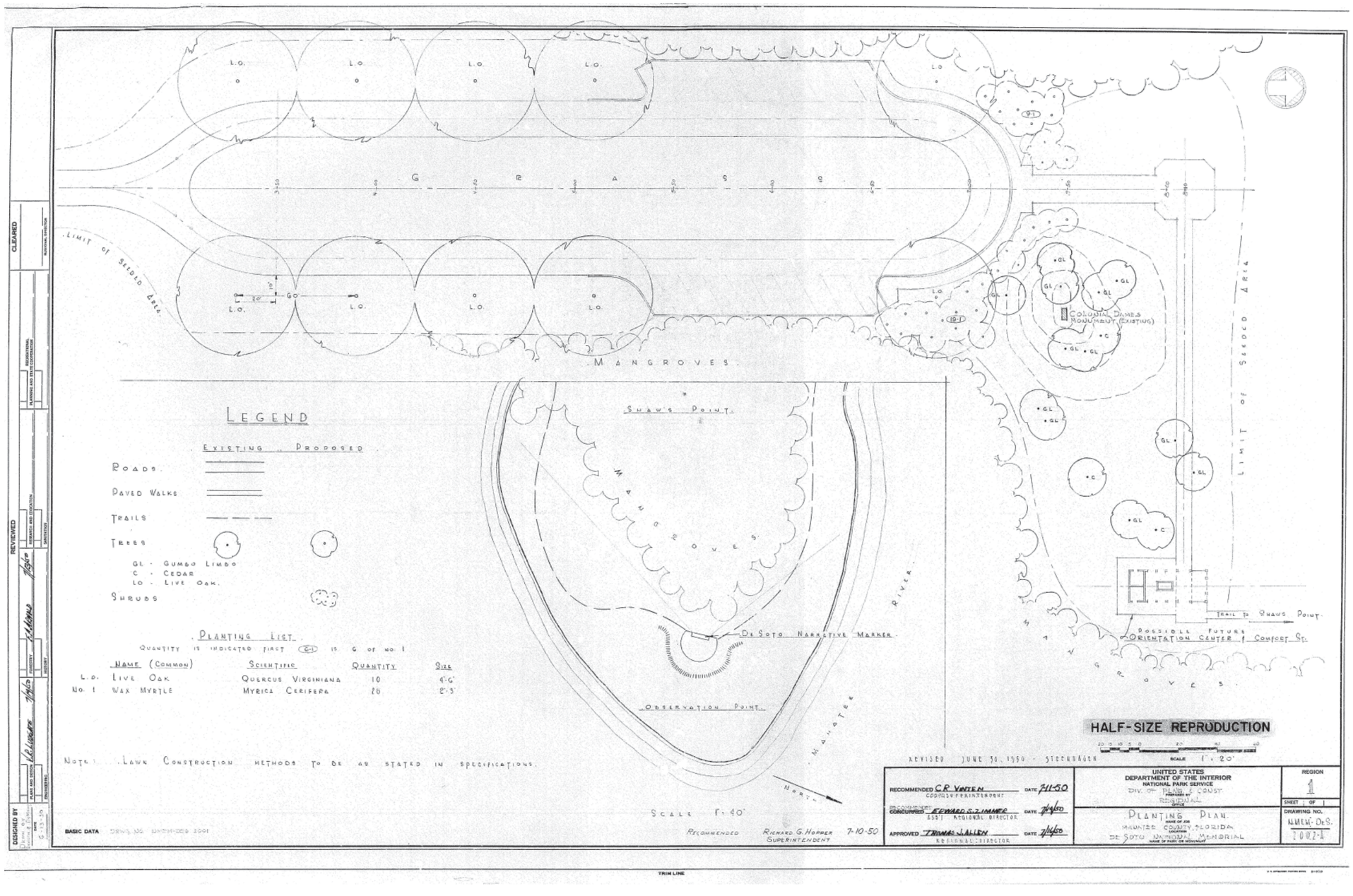
North



General Development Plan, NPS EODC, 1950/1956
(NPS-ETIC, drawing no. NMEM-DES-2000D)

(NTS)

North



Planting Plan, NPS Southeast Regional Office, 1950
(NPS-ETIC, drawing no. NMEM-DES-2002A)

(NTS)

North

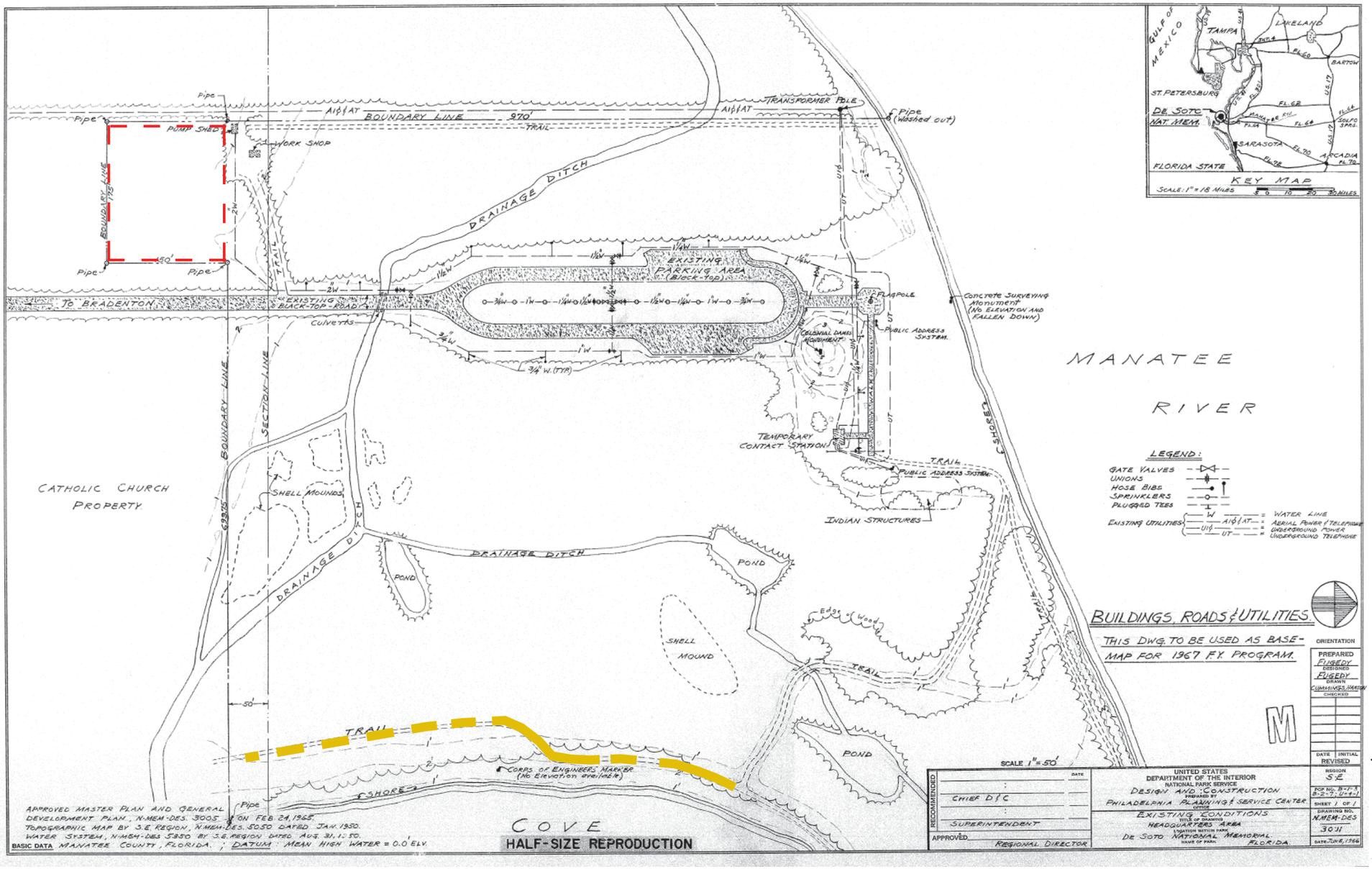
DE SOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL
Cultural Landscape Report
January 2017



Aerial photograph, U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service,1951
(TRS Environmental and Historical Research, Inc.)

(NTS)

North



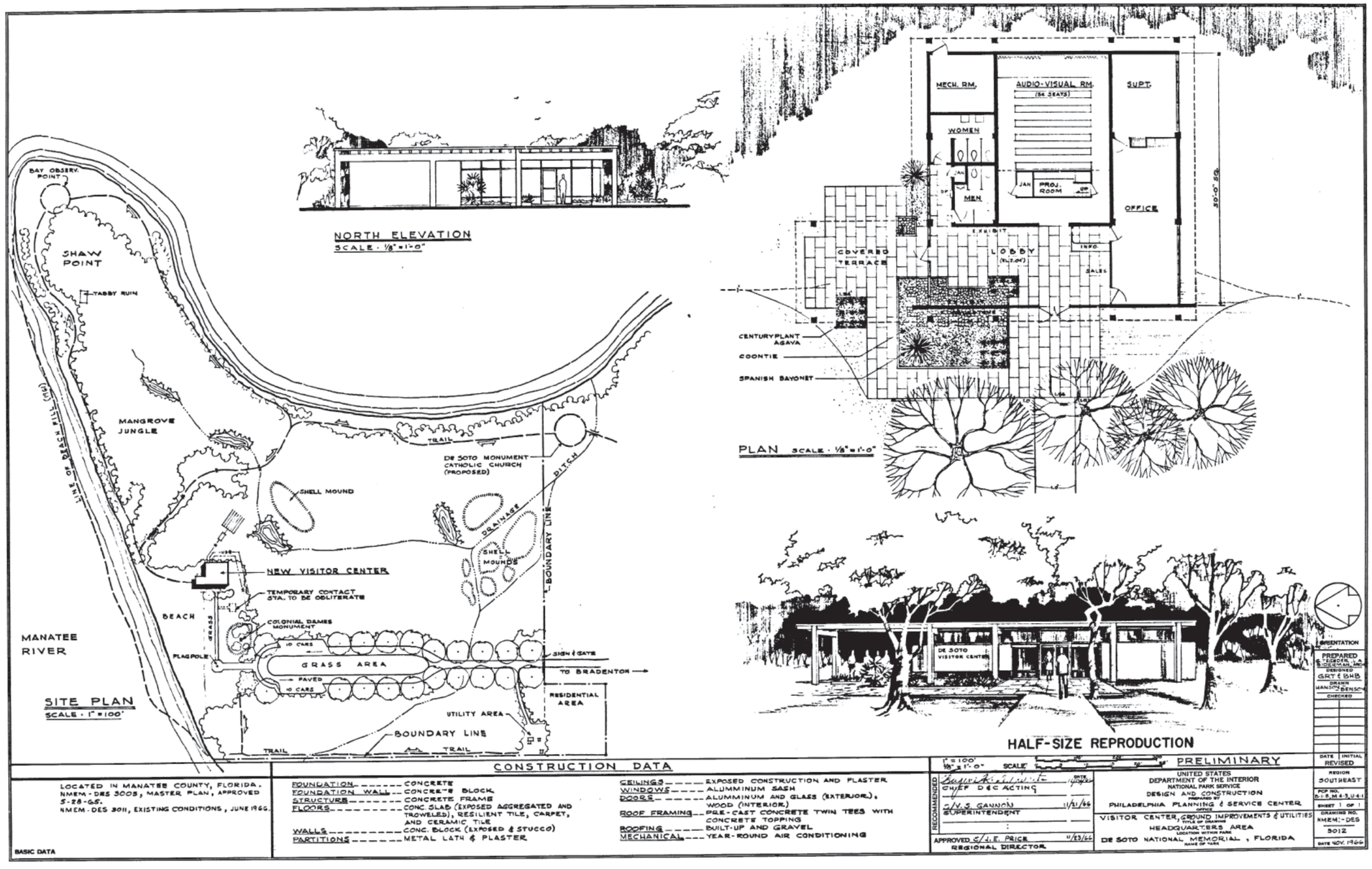
Existing Conditions Plan for Headquarters Area, NPS EODC, June 1966

NOTE: This also serves as a Period Plan, circa 1952: the only later additions shown are the "Indian Structures;" a 0.6-acre 1960 property acquisition (red dashed line); and the trail along the south half of the cove (yellow dashed line). Drawing no. NMEM-DES 3011. (DESO Archives)

(NTS)

North

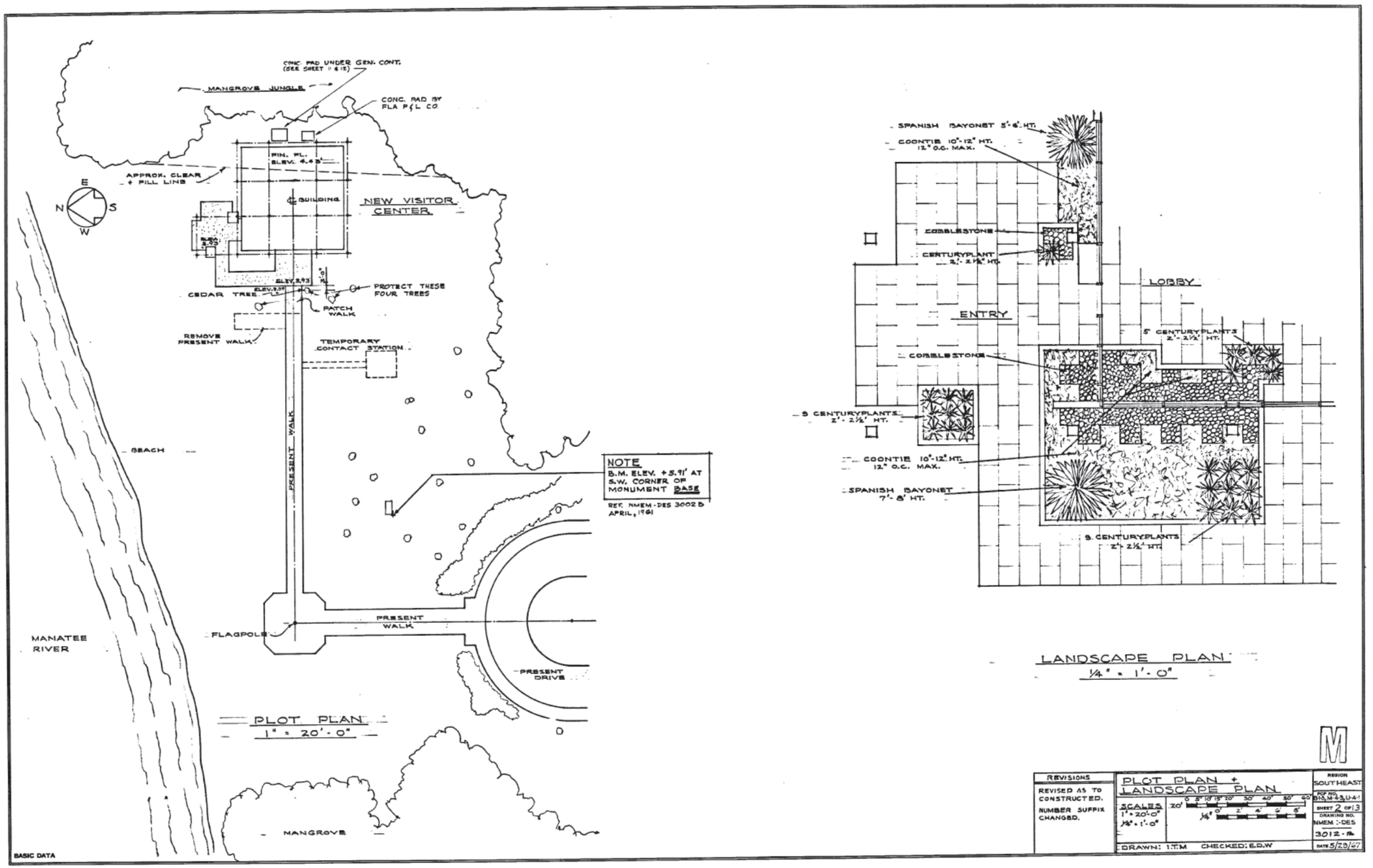
DE SOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL
Cultural Landscape Report
January 2017



Visitor Center Preliminary Plan, 1966
Drawing no. NMEM-DES-3012. (SERO Archives)

(NTS)

North



Visitor Center Plot Plan + Landscape Plan, 1967
Drawing no. NMEM-DES-3012-B. (DESO Archives)

(NTS)

North

DE SOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL
Cultural Landscape Report
January 2017



Legend

- DESO Boundary
- Buildings
- Paved Drive
- Unpaved Drive
- Paved Walk
- Shell Trail
- De Soto Monument
- Forest / Tree Cover
- Beach
- Lawn
- Other Plantings

Period Plan, 1968

(NTS) North

Feet
0 80 160 320

DE SOTO NATIONAL MEMORIAL
Cultural Landscape Report
January 2017



Legend

- DESO Boundary
- Building
- Minor Structures
- De Soto Monument
- Paved Drive
- Unpaved Drive
- Paved Walk
- Shell Trail
- Fences / Palisade
- Archeological Areas (Per SEAC; see Fig. 2-X)
- Mangrove Forest
- Other Forest
- Landscape Trees
- Lawn
- Beach
- Other Plantings

Existing Conditions Plan

(NTS) North

Feet
0 80 160 320

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Legend

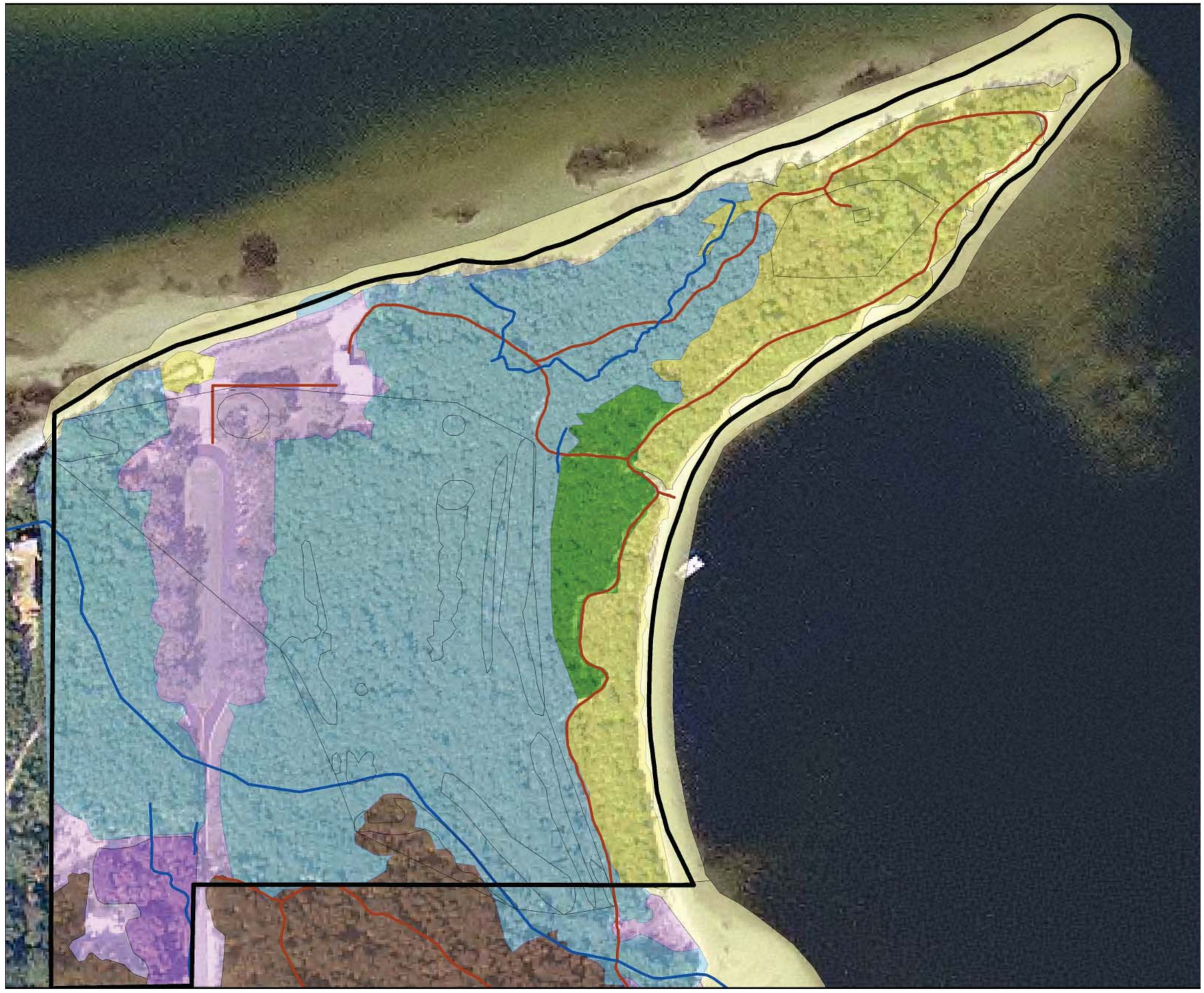
- DESO Boundary
- Portal (Size indicates visual impact)
- Discrete Open Space
- Organizing Axis
- Strong Spatial Frame
- Areas Open to Sky (Glades)
- Areas with Open Views
- Areas with Filtered Views
- 3-1 Photo Key (Figure Number)

Spatial Organization Diagram

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Legend

DESO Boundary

Drainage Lines

veg_linda

<all other values>

Class_ID_N

Buttonwood Transition

Coastal Hammock

Degraded Hardwood Swamp

Human Impacted (Landscape)

Interior Hammock

Mangroves

Pine Upland-Saw Palmetto

Saw Palmetto Shrubland

Shoreline

Upland Hardwood Woodland

Trails

Natural Vegetation Communities

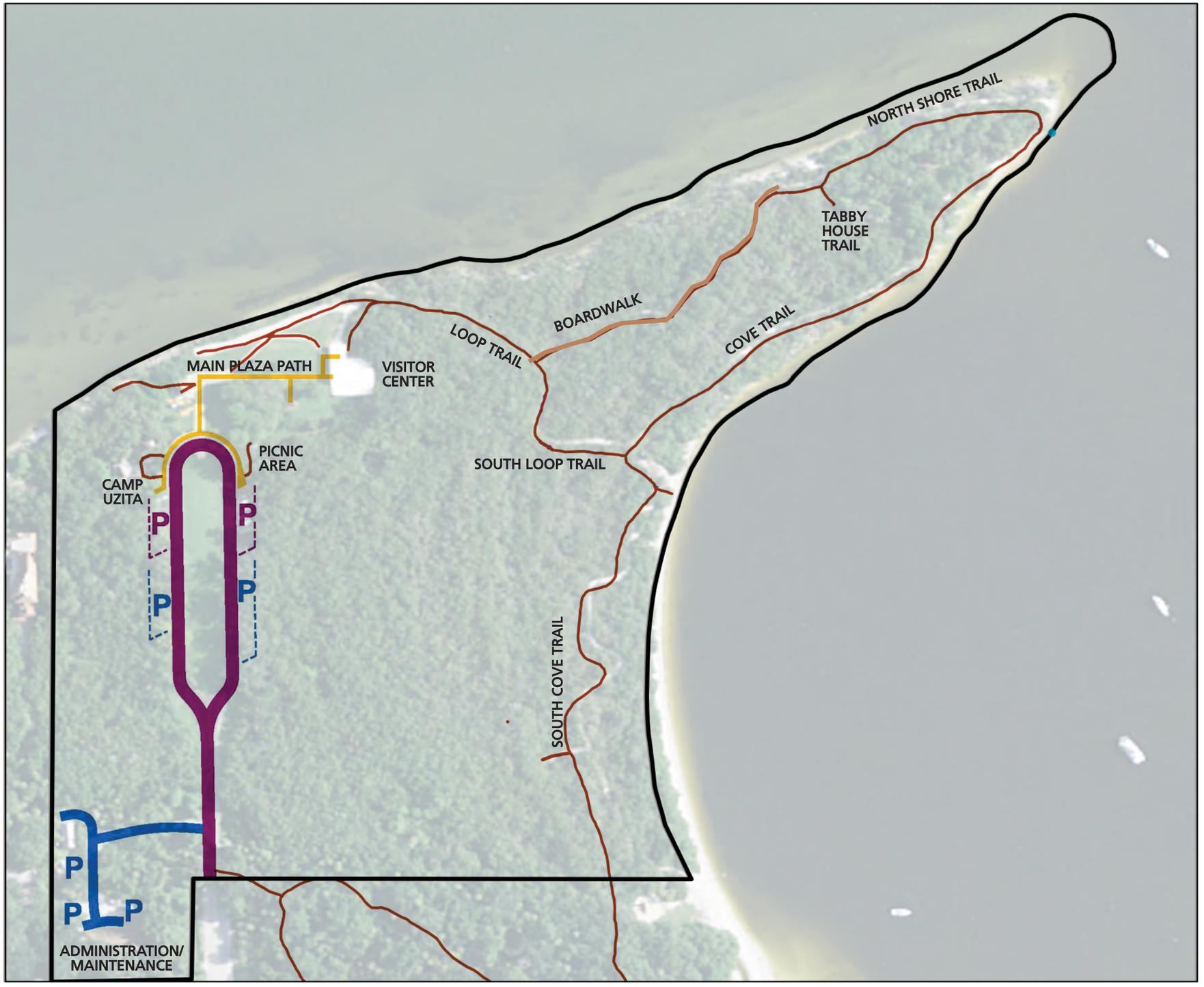
(NTS)

North

Feet

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Legend

- DESO Boundary
- Paved Drive
- Paved Parking
- Unpaved Drive
- Unpaved Parking
- Paved Walk
- Shell Trail
- Boardwalk

0

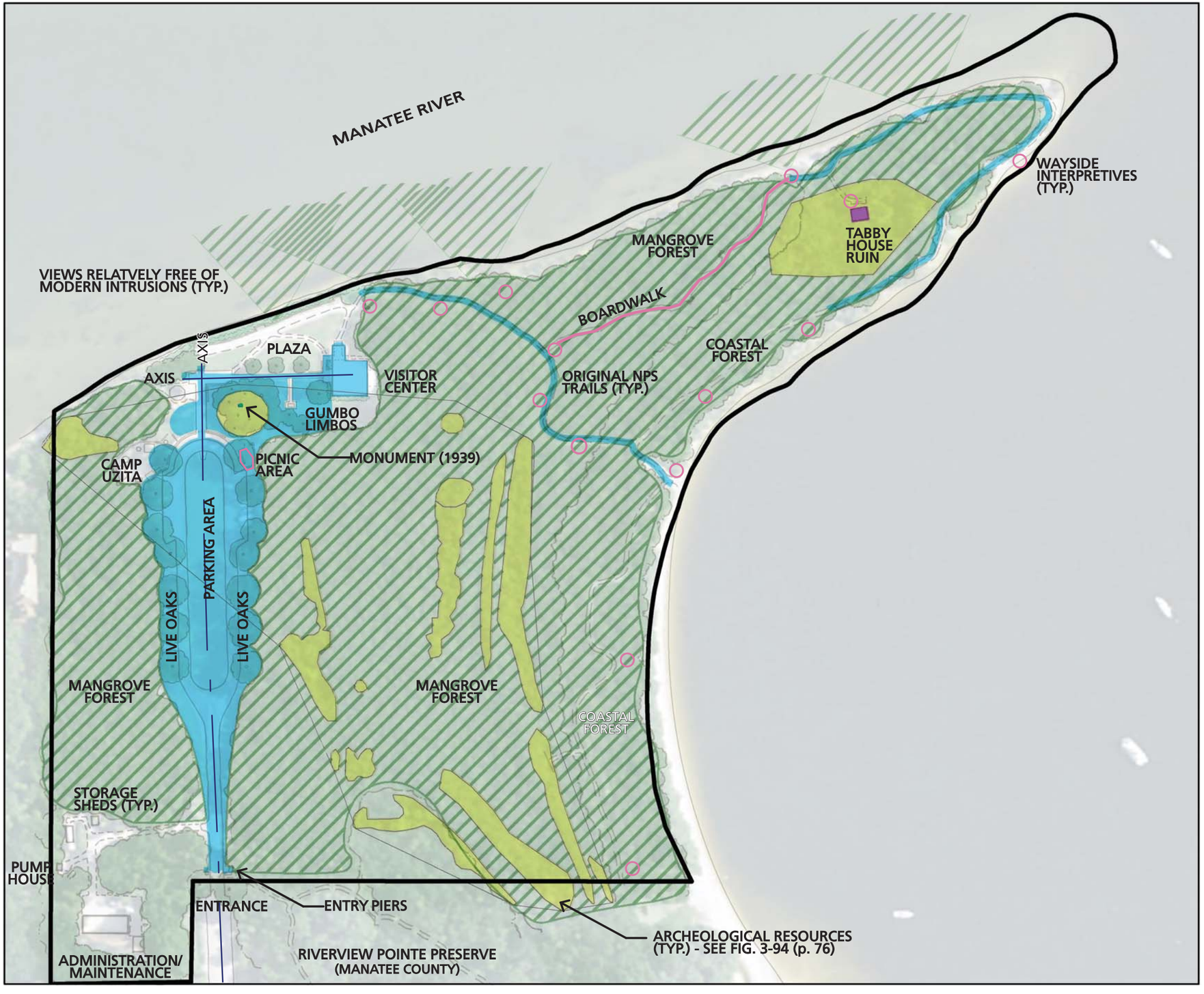
Circulation Diagram

(NTS) North

Feet

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Legend

- DESO Boundary
- Contributing Resources:
- Pre-European Contact Period of Significance
  c. 365 BCE - 1385 CE
- 19th-Century Period of Significance
  c. 1815 - 1862
- 20th-Century Period of Significance
  1939 - 1968
- Multiple Periods of Significance
- Non-Contributing / Contemporary Resources

Evaluation / Analysis Diagram

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Legend

- DESO Boundary
- Preserve / Rehabilitate
  Contributing Building (1968 Visitor Center)
- Preserve 1939 Monument
- Preserve 1939-1968 Landscape Elements
  (Oak Rows, Gumbo Limbo Grove)
- Evaluate / Restore Mangrove Forests
  (Hydrology, Vegetation)
- Preserve / Investigate Archeological Resources
  (Tabby, Deptford Midden)
- Preserve / Protect / Buffer & Monitor Archeological Resources
- Preserve / Enhance 1949 Design Axes
- Manage Landscape to Optimize Viewsheds
- Consider Living Shorelines
  Mitigate Climate Impacts
- Consider Boardwalk Renovation
  Minimize Visual Impact

Summary Diagram of Treatment Recommendations

(NTS) North

Feet
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As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.



NPS DESO 388/134967, January 2017

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National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

De Soto National Memorial
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Bradenton, Florida 32409

www.nps.gov/deso