



REGION 4

ATLANTA, GA 30303

March 28, 2024

Scott Campbell
South Alabama Materials, Inc.
8 East Quintette Road
Cantonment, Florida 32533
scott.campbell@acs-office.com

Dear Mr. Campbell:

On January 30 and 31, 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 4, conducted a Clean Water Act (CWA), Section 404 Inspection (Section 404 Inspection) at the South Alabama Materials, Inc. Sardine Pit facility located at or near 3028 Alger Road, Atmore, Escambia County, Alabama. The purpose of the Section 404 Inspection was to evaluate South Alabama Material, Inc.'s compliance with the requirements of sections 301 and 404 of the CWA, 33 U.S.C. §§ 1311 and 1344.

Enclosed is a copy of the EPA's Inspection Report. If you have any questions, please contact Christopher Parker at (404) 562-9838 or parker.christopher@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

AHMAD
DROMGOOLE

Digitally signed by
AHMAD DROMGOOLE
Date: 2024.04.01
11:45:34 -04'00'

Ahmad Dromgoole, Chief
Waterways and Wetlands Enforcement Section
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division

ENCLOSURES

1. South Alabama Materials Sardine Pit CWA 404 Inspection Report

cc (via electronic mail):

Philip Hegji, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District

William McClimans, Alabama Department of Environmental Management

Scott Hughes, Alabama Department of Environmental Management

Neil C. Johnston, Esq., Hand Arendall Harrison Sale, LLC



Clean Water Act Section 404: Site Visit/Case Development

For inspections authorized pursuant to Clean Water Act sections 308 and 404 (33 U.S.C. §§ 1318 and 1344)

This report includes only factual information gained by documentation, onsite observations, and/or onsite interviews.

Inspector Name(s)	Christopher Parker Blaine Preston	Time In	9:30 AM	Start Date	January 30, 2024
		Time Out	5:00 PM	End Date	January 31, 2024
Inspector's Organization	Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division/Waterways and Wetlands Enforcement Section				
Organization Requesting Inspection (if different)	N/A				
Inspection Type	Evaluation	Inspection Status	Original		
Site Name	South Alabama Materials, Inc., Sardine Pit				
Site Address*	3028 Alger Road				
City*	Atmore	County*	Escambia	State*	AL
				Zip Code*	36502
Mailing Address*	8 East Quintette Road				
City*	Cantonment	County*	Escambia	State*	FL
				Zip Code*	32533
Latitude*	31.172131	Longitude*	-87.365565		
Estimated Size of Site (acres)	800	Is there a home on the site?	☐ Yes ☒ No		
Inspector Signature	CHRISTOPHER PARKER			Digitally signed by CHRISTOPHER PARKER Date: 2024.03.20 13:39:51 -04'00'	
				Date	
Supervisor Signature	AHMAD DROMGOOLE			Digitally signed by AHMAD DROMGOOLE Date: 2024.04.01 11:46:07 -04'00'	
				Date	

Clean Water Act Section 404: Site Visit/Case Development

For inspections authorized pursuant to Clean Water Act sections 308 and 404 (33 U.S.C. §§ 1318 and 1344)

Site Name	South Alabama Materials, Inc., Sardine Pit	Start Date	January 30, 2024
		End Date	January 31, 2024
Inspection Purpose	Initial site visit		
Opening Conference			
☒ Presentation of Inspector Credentials			
Name and Title (Use N/A if owner/operator not available to join the inspection)			
Scott Campbell, Mike Campbell, Paul Bell, and Rita Nettles (at closing conference only) - South Alabama Materials, Inc. Sean O'Toole - Biome/URS (Present on Jan 30, not present on Jan 31) Ben White - Tensaw Engineering (Present on Jan 30, not present on Jan 31) Neil Johnston - Hand Arendall Harrison Sale, LLC (Present on Jan 30, not present on Jan 31, attended closing conference via telephone)			
☒ Opening Conference			
Name of person authorizing access if applicable			
Scott Campbell			
Notes from Opening Conference			
Site access was arranged through Scott Campbell with South Alabama Materials. At approximately 0930 (Central) on January 30, 2024, the inspection team met with representatives of South Alabama Materials (listed above). Introductions were given and a sign-in sheet was circulated for those in attendance (see Attachment A). During the opening conference an overview of why EPA was inspecting the Site and the areas planned for inspection (including examination of soil, vegetation and hydrology, collecting field notes, photographs, and general observations of the Site) were discussed. EPA explained that the inspection involved Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 402 of the Clean Water Act and that the Section 402 team would provide an overview of their activities. A map depicting the area planned for inspection along with approximated sample point locations (see Attachment B) was reviewed during the opening conference and a course of action to initiate the inspection was decided. During the opening conference, Mike Campbell asked about the Corps of Engineers involvement with the inspection and stated that they had received a permit. According to Mike Campbell, he believed that the Corps permit covered all of the ongoing activities. The inspection team stated that it was aware of the Corps action as it related to a smaller mining footprint on the southern end of the mine (124-acre parcel located between I-65 and a utility easement). From its review of the Corps 2005 action, EPA did not believe there to be coverage outside of the 124-acre area. The inspection team also stated that if South Alabama Materials had additional information, it could provide that as part of its 308 Information Request response. In response, Mike Campbell stated that he was just the land owner. When asked when he last purchased property within the area of concern/Site, he stated 2015. Mike Campbell also stated that the Site flooded 2-3 times per year and that during one flood event, a dredge was carried off-site down Big Escambia Creek and had to be retrieved. During the opening conference, Scott Campbell asked why the EPA was at the site, what it was looking for/concerned with, and why now. EPA personnel stated that it had been conducting inspections of sand and gravel mines throughout Alabama. As part of this effort, the EPA, along with ADEM, ADOL, and the Corps of Engineers conducted outreach in 2019 at the ADEM Montgomery office. Scott Campbell stated that he recalled that meeting and that he may have even attended. Scott Campbell provided a general overview of operational information for the mine and potential safety concerns. Scott Campbell asked that the inspection team be escorted by South Alabama Materials while in the areas of active mining and sorting and that inspectors stay 50-feet away from the edges of active mine pits.			
☒ Access Issues if Any			

Clean Water Act Section 404: Site Visit/Case Development

For inspections authorized pursuant to Clean Water Act sections 308 and 404 (33 U.S.C. §§ 1318 and 1344)

Site Name	South Alabama Materials, Inc., Sardine Pit	Start Date	January 30, 2024
		End Date	January 31, 2024
Describe			
Large site with many previously mined areas, reclaimed mined areas, ongoing material sorting, and heavy equipment operation.			
Inspection Observations and Sample Collection			
Site Owner/Site Operator/Responsible Party (Name, title and contact information)			
Mike Campbell - Owner (stated during the opening conference that he was the land owner) South Alabama Materials, Inc. - Operates mining activities			
Additional Persons Present at Inspection			
Lonnie Dorn, Jeremy Judd - EPA, Region 4 Ange Boatwright, Robert Glover - ADEM Kort Kirkeby, Kate Forsmark - ERG Dane Leach, Jennifer Wilder, Jessica Savage - Corps of Engineers (only present on day 2 of the inspection)			
General Site Characteristics (layout of property, etc.)			
The Site is located within the Southeastern Plains physiographic province, Southern Pine Plains and Hills Level IV Ecoregion. The Southern Pine Plains and Hills typically consisted of mixed forest and longleaf pine, but now loblolly and slash pine plantations cover wide areas. The hill summits and higher elevations within the Southern Pine Plains and Hills are composed of the Citronelle formation, generally sandy, gravelly, and porous, and more resistant to erosion than the older underlying Miocene sandstones. The Site itself is a broad floodplain, flat with little to no slope, but generally drains to the south and east toward Robinson Creek and Big Escambia Creek. Properties to the west drain to the Site. There are several unnamed tributaries to the west that drain to the Site.			
Purpose and Need for Discharge of Dredged and/or Fill Material			
N/A			
Site Overview (Past inspections, site description, permits, etc.)			
No prior inspections have been conducted by EPA at the Site. The Site is an approximately 800-acre sand and gravel mine located north of Interstate 65 and east of Alger Road, adjacent to Big Escambia Creek in Escambia County, Alabama (see Attachment B). Work at the Site consisted of mechanical land clearing, construction of drainage ditches, mining material and creating containment cells, construction of roads and levees, stockpiling materials, and material sorting.			
Scope of Inspection (Areas inspected or not inspected)			
See Attachment B.			

Clean Water Act Section 404: Site Visit/Case Development

For inspections authorized pursuant to Clean Water Act sections 308 and 404 (33 U.S.C. §§ 1318 and 1344)

Site Name	South Alabama Materials, Inc., Sardine Pit	Start Date	January 30, 2024
		End Date	January 31, 2024
Environmental Conditions (e.g., wind, rain, smoke, dust, temperature, snow)			
Weather conditions during the inspection: 01/30/2024 - Sunny and mostly clear skies, high temperatures in the mid-fifty's. 01/31/2024 - Sunny and mostly clear skies, high temperatures in the mid-fifty's. Analysis of rainfall data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's daily global historical climatology network indicated antecedent precipitation for the Site 90 days prior to the inspection was normal (see Attachment C).			
Field Work Conducted			
Observations and/or sampling of data points were conducted throughout the Site and their locations were recorded using a GPS enabled Nikon AW120 camera and a Trimble Geo7X (submeter accuracy GPS unit). Photographs were taken of soil profiles, wetland locations, and field observations. The inspection team utilized the Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain (Version 2) in addition to the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual, to sample and confirm wetlands at five locations at the Site. Locations of observations are included on the attached photographic log (see Attachment D). After the opening conference, the Section 404 inspection team drove to a location near Points 6 and 14 (see Attachment B). The team was accompanied by Sean O'Toole and Neil Johnston, representatives of South Alabama Materials, Inc. The area was observed to be planted pine that had been recently thinned. In this area inspection team identified hydric soils, wetland hydrology, and hydrophytic vegetation at Data Point A1 (see Attachment D, Photos 1-5). While making observations at or near Data Point A1, Neil Johnston stated that he did not think the area was jurisdictional and asked about jurisdiction. In response, the EPA inspectors stated that the jurisdictional determination was a legal determination and that they could not comment on the jurisdictional status. The inspection teams broke for lunch at this time reconvening after lunch at the southern end of the Site to resume the inspection. At the southern end of the Site, the inspection team observed mining operations, berm construction along Big Escambia Creek, and general site conditions. The inspection team documented observations of a remnant tributary to Big Escambia Creek (see Attachment D, Photos 6-8). The inspection team also made and recorded observations of general site conditions and mining activities (see Attachment D, Photos 9-11). Once these observations were documented, the inspection team discussed and made plans to resume the inspection on the following day. It was agreed to meet at the office at 0830 the next day to resume the inspection and EPA inspectors departed the Site for the day. On the second day of the inspection, the inspectors met at South Alabama Materials' office at 0830. The team discussed holding a closing conference at the end of day and agreed to meet back at the office at 1630. For the second day, the Section 404 inspection team was joined by project managers from the Corps of Engineers, Mobile District. The 404 inspection team along with the Corps personnel drove to a location near points 12 and 13 (see Attachment B). In this area, the inspection team observed mechanized land clearing, stockpiling of material (soil and vegetation), and excavation with sidecast at Data Point A2 (see Attachment D, Photos 12-20). At Data Point A2, EPA inspectors observed hydric soils and wetland hydrology, vegetation that had been recently removed and evidence that the area was mechanically cleared. The 404 inspection team also observed the confluence of a recently filled ditch leading to Big Escambia Creek near this location (see Attachment D, Photos 12-13). The inspection team then proceeded NW to Data Point A3. There the team observed that the area around Data Point A3 had been cleared of vegetation but not mechanically cleared (observed intact stumps and beds). EPA observed hydric soils, wetland hydrology, and hydrophytic vegetation at Data Point A3 (see Attachment D, Photos 22-26). The 404 inspection team then proceeded NE to Data Points A4 and A5. There it observed that the area around Data Points A4 and A5 was recently thinned planted pine plantation. EPA inspectors found hydric soils, wetland hydrology, and hydrophytic vegetation at Data Points A4 and A5 (see Attachment D, Photos 27-32). With the site inspection concluded, the Section 404 inspection team returned to South Alabama Materials' office for the closing conference. The Corps personnel departed the Site and did not attend the closing conference.			

Clean Water Act Section 404: Site Visit/Case Development

For inspections authorized pursuant to Clean Water Act sections 308 and 404 (33 U.S.C. §§ 1318 and 1344)

Site Name	South Alabama Materials, Inc., Sardine Pit	Start Date	January 30, 2024
		End Date	January 31, 2024

Closing Conference
Documents Received and/or Requested During the Inspection
No documents were received during the inspection. The only request for documents, as outlined in the opening conference, were for documents pertaining to any permits issued by the Corps of Engineers.
Compliance Assistance Provided (If any)
See Observations Relayed to Site Owner/Operator and Potential Issues of Concern sections below.
Observations Relayed to Site Owner/Operator
EPA inspectors informed South Alabama Materials, Inc. that observations would be discussed internally at EPA and that the EPA inspection report will be released to South Alabama Materials, Inc. within 70 days of the closing conference. EPA also informed South Alabama Materials, Inc. that it observed hydric soil indicators, wetland hydrology, and hydrophytic vegetation (wetlands) in the areas adjacent to and north of the current mining activities.
Actions Taken by Owner/Operator During the Inspection (If any)
None.
Potential Issues of Concern Including Regulatory Citations
Unauthorized discharges of dredged and/or fill material into wetlands and tributaries and using impounded wetlands and tributaries for stormwater treatment (Sections 301 and 404 of the CWA, 33 U.S.C. §§ 1311 and 1344).

Attachments*
☒ Maps and Sketches ☒ Photographs (including location) and Photo Log ☐ Other (SSIP, Wetlands Delineation Forms, etc.)
Attachment A - Attendance Log Attachment B - Map of Area of Inspection and Approximate Sampling Locations Attachment C - Rainfall Data Attachment D - Photographic Log

Additional Notes
During the closing conference on January 31, 2024, Mike Campbell was believed to have been observed by a member of the inspection team filming the closing conference on his phone without providing notice to or seeking prior consent from the EPA inspection team.

Chris Parker EPA	parker.christopher@epa.gov
Lonnie Dorn EPA	dorn.lonnie@EPA.GOV
Blaine Preston EPA	preston.blaine@epa.gov
JEREMY Judd EPA	judd.jeremy@epa.gov
Sean O'Toole Biome/URS	sootoole@teamurs.com
Ben White Tensaw Engineering	bwhite@tensawengineering.com
Kort Kirkeby ERG	Kortney.Kirkeby@pgenv.com
Kate Forsmark, ERG	Kate.Forsmark@pgenv.com

Ariel Johnston (Harrison) (Harrison)	
Ariel Johnston @ Harrison Sale LLC	
Paul Bell S.A.M.	PAUL.BELL@AES-Shop
Angel Boatwright ADEM	maboatwright@Adem.alabama.gov
Robert Glover ADEM	Robert.glover@adem.alabama.gov
Scott Campbell	Scott.Campbell@ACS-Office.co

Closing

Rita Nettles Office Manager	rita.nettles@aes-office.com
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Legend



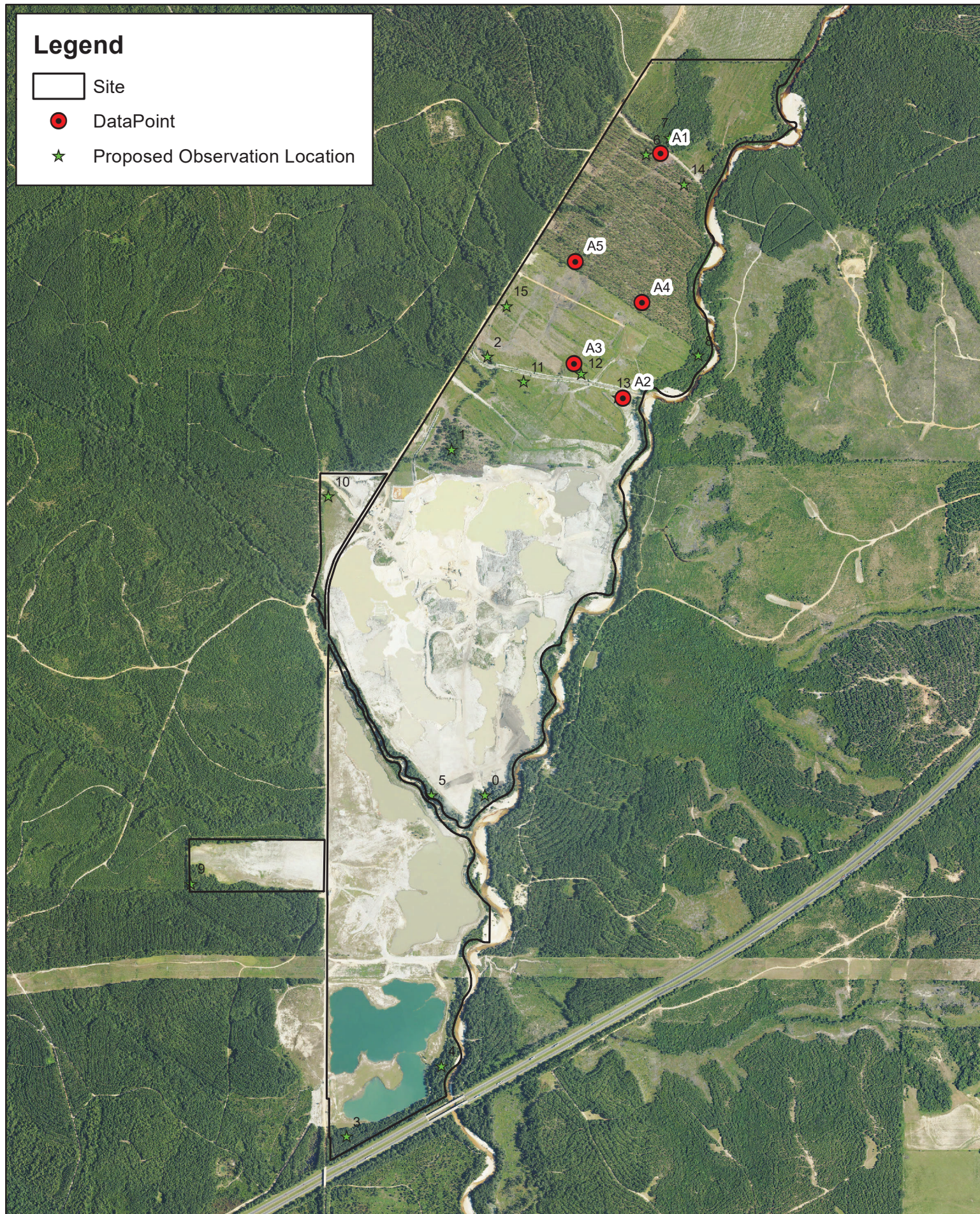
Site



DataPoint



Proposed Observation Location



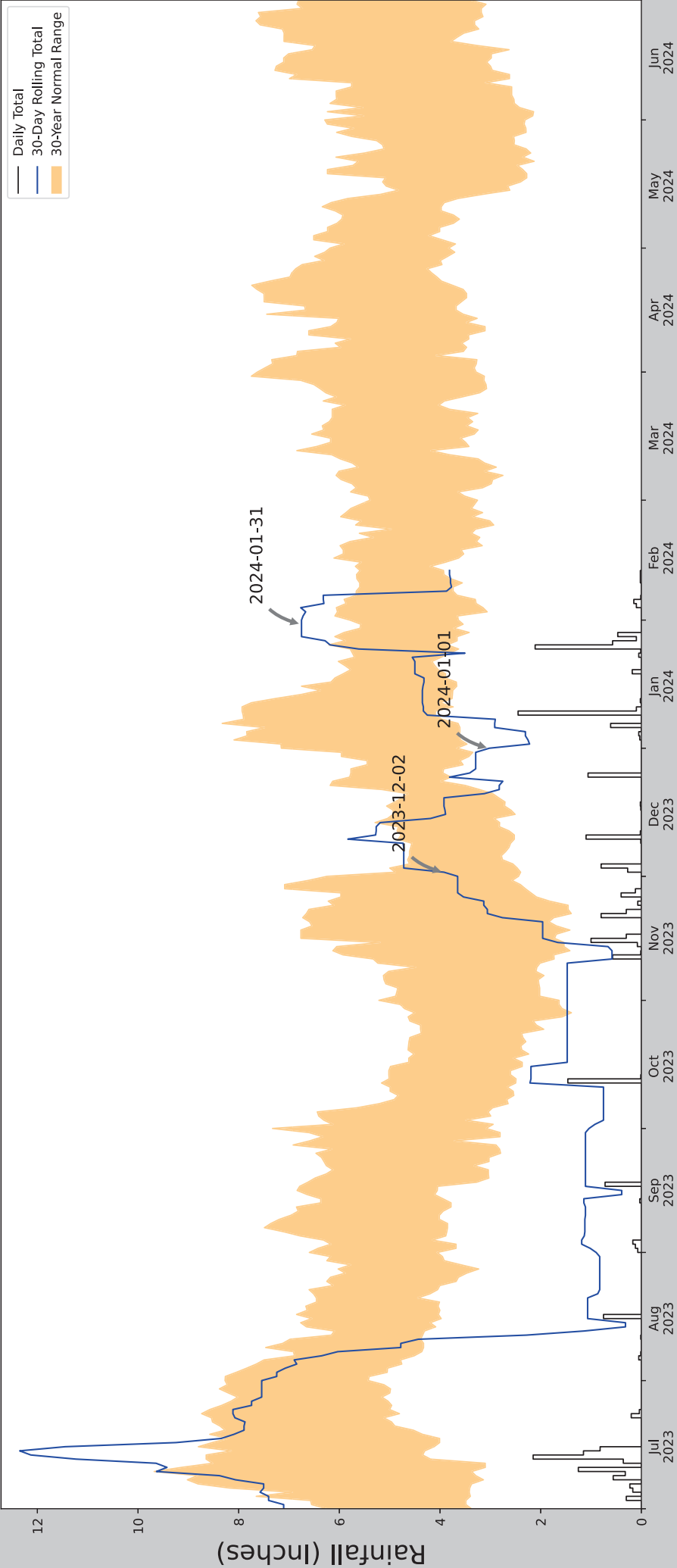
ATTACHMENT B
SOUTH ALABAMA MATERIALS, INC. - SARDINE PIT
ATMORE, ESCAMBIA COUNTY, ALABAMA

0 1,000 2,000 4,000
Feet

Imagery: 2023 USDA NAIP



Antecedent Precipitation vs Normal Range based on NOAA's Daily Global Historical Climatology Network



Coordinates	31.1862, -87.3614
Observation Date	2024-01-31
Elevation (ft)	140.677
Drought Index (PDSI)	Incipient drought
WebWIMP H ₂ O Balance	Wet Season

30 Days Ending	30 th %ile (in)	70 th %ile (in)	Observed (in)	Wetness Condition	Condition Value	Month Weight	Product
2024-01-31	3.542126	5.573229	6.751969	Wet	3	3	9
2024-01-01	3.66378	7.152362	3.019685	Dry	1	2	2
2023-12-02	2.399213	4.885827	3.92126	Normal	2	1	2
Result							Normal Conditions - 13



Figures and tables made by the
Antecedent Precipitation Tool
Version 2.0

Developed by:
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and
U.S. Army Engineer Research and
Development Center

Weather Station Name	Coordinates	Elevation (ft)	Distance (mi)	Elevation Δ	Weighted Δ	Days Normal	Days Antecedent
ATMORE	31.1819, -87.4389	299.869	4.591	159.192	2.797	11178	75
ATMORE 6.3 NW	31.0923, -87.5631	315.945	9.606	16.076	4.477	1	0
CENTURY 9.4 W	30.9873, -87.4194	266.076	13.495	33.793	6.529	7	0
FRISCO CITY 3 SSW	31.3894, -87.4203	274.934	14.379	24.935	6.829	19	0
URIAH 8.1 W	31.2875, -87.6418	207.021	14.033	92.848	7.618	18	14
CENTURY 12.1 W	30.964, -87.4658	228.018	15.139	71.851	7.9	1	1
WALLACE 2 E	31.21, -87.1789	205.053	15.489	94.816	8.439	128	0

ATTACHMENT D
South Alabama Materials, Inc.

Sardine Pit
Photographic Log
Escambia County, Alabama
January 30-31, 2024

Overview Map

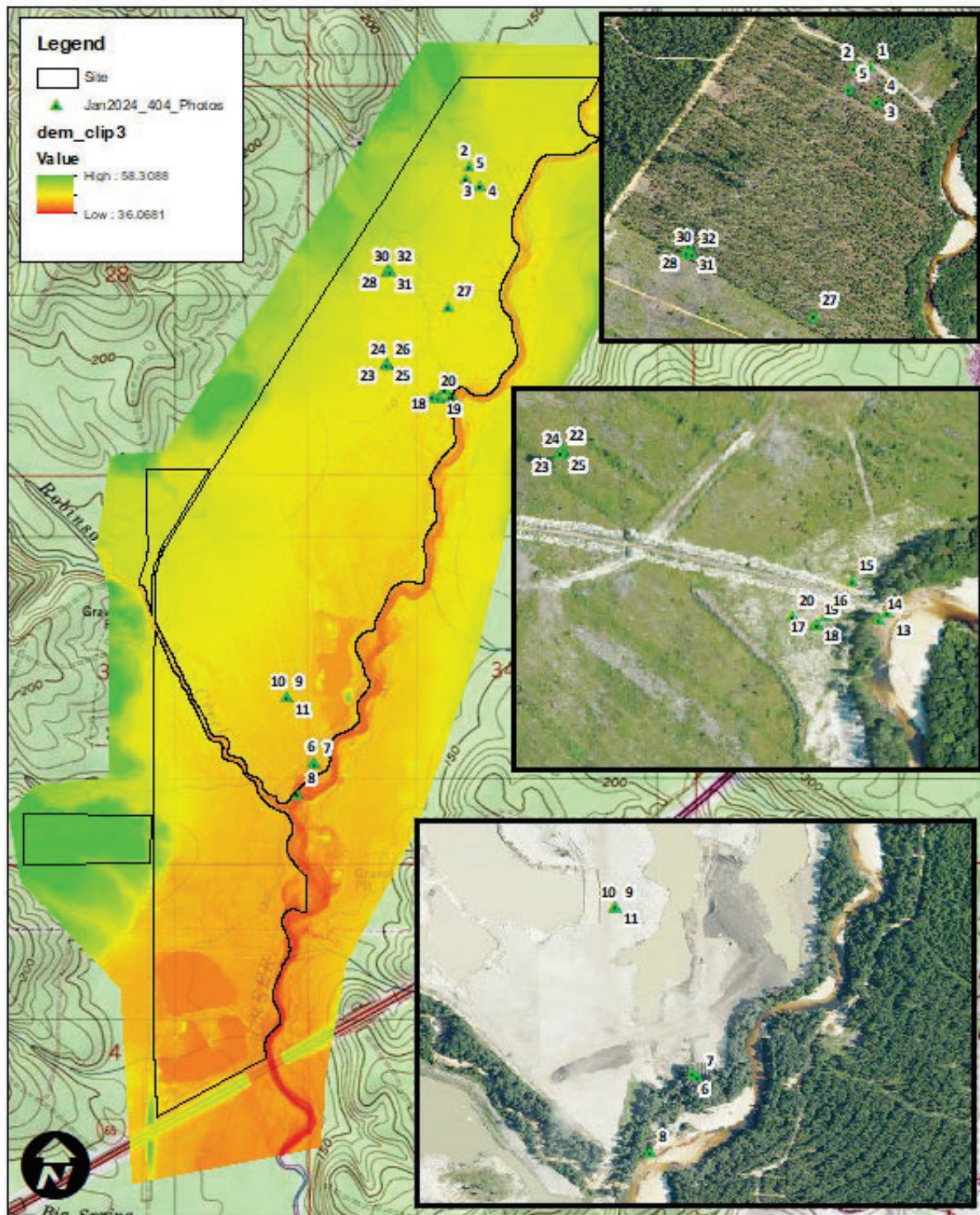


PHOTO 1



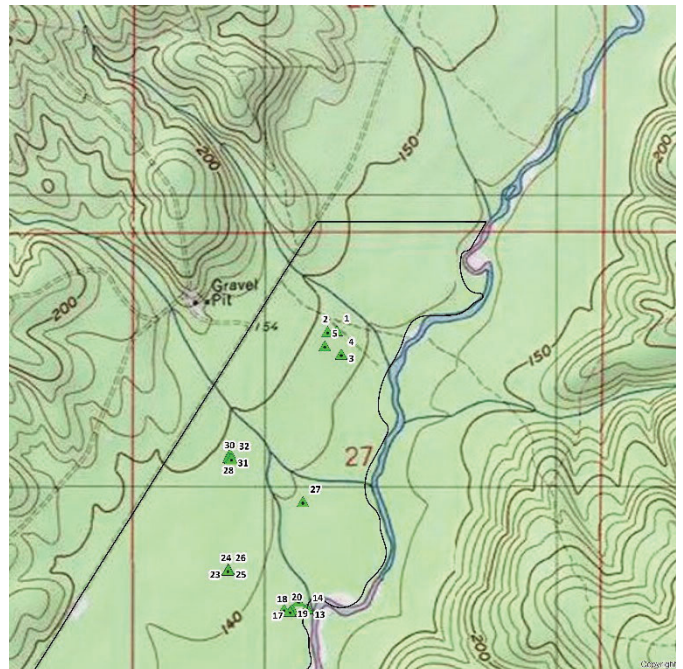
Title	Photo 1
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Soil profile at Data Point A1.

PHOTO 2



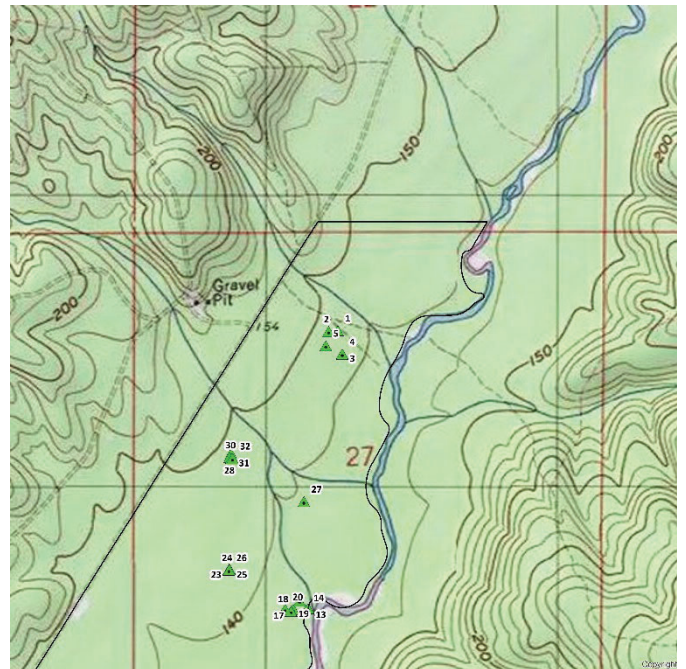
Title	Photo 2
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Soil profile at Data Point A1.

PHOTO 3



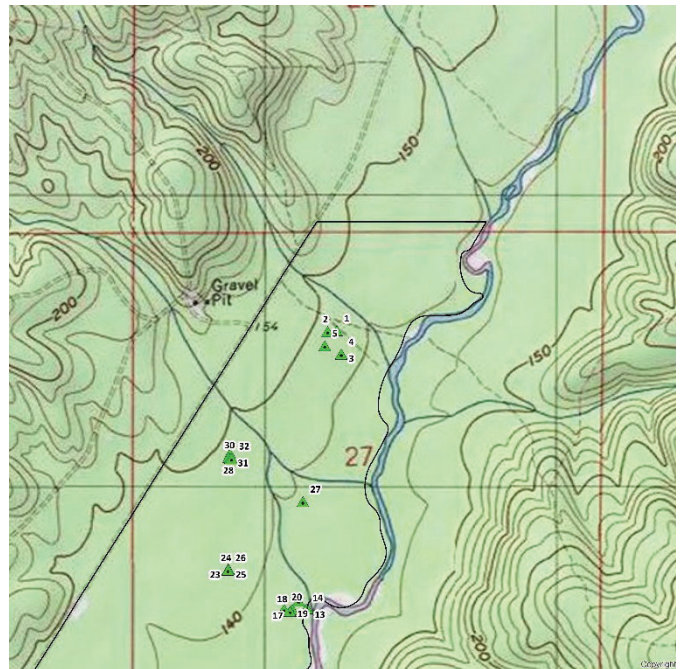
Title	Photo 3
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking south over Data Point A1.

PHOTO 4



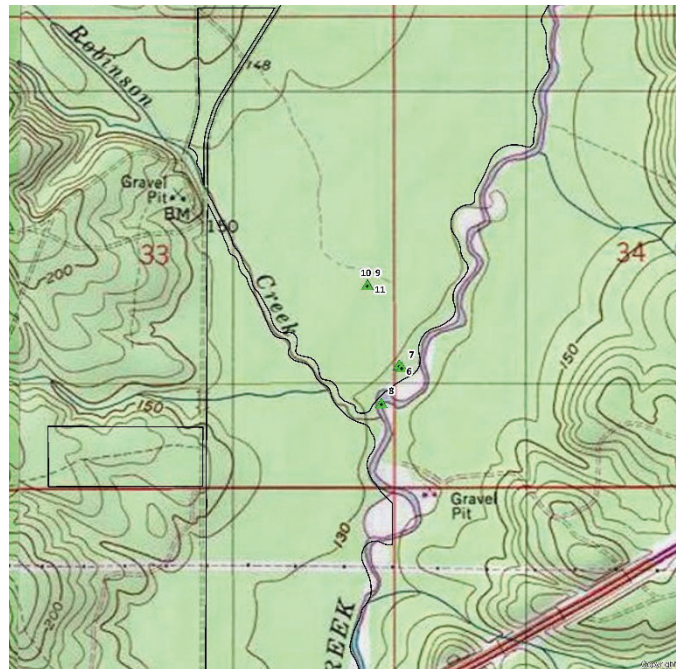
Title	Photo 4
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking east over Data Point A1.

PHOTO 5



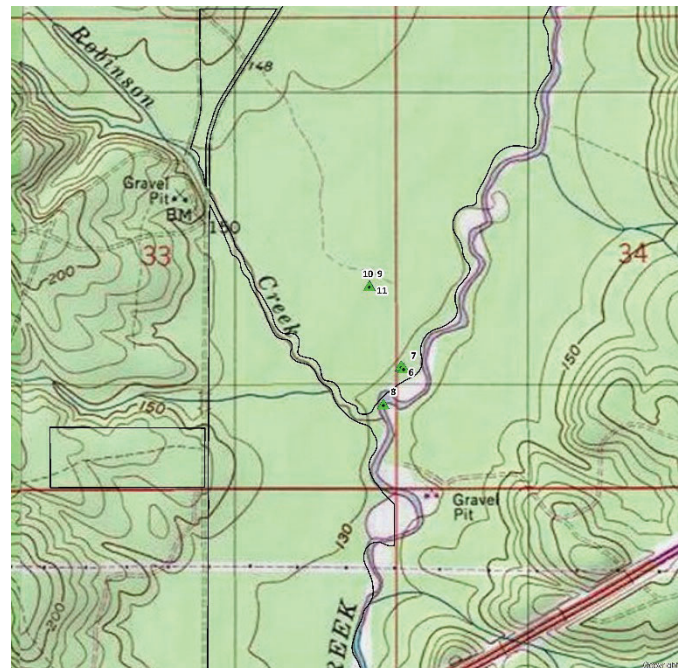
Title	Photo 5
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking west over Data Point A1.

PHOTO 6



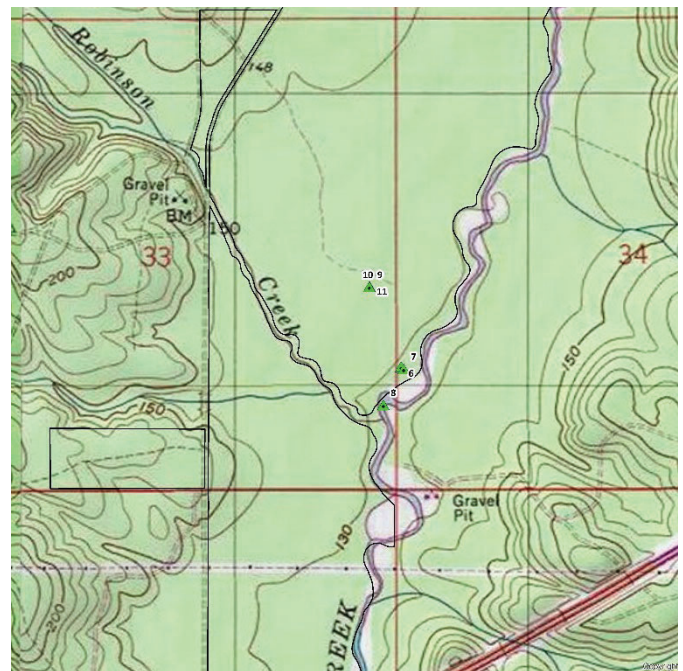
Title	Photo 6
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking downstream, unnamed tributary (UT) east of berm, just upstream of the UT's confluence with Big Escambia Creek. Red arrow indicates direction of flow.

PHOTO 7



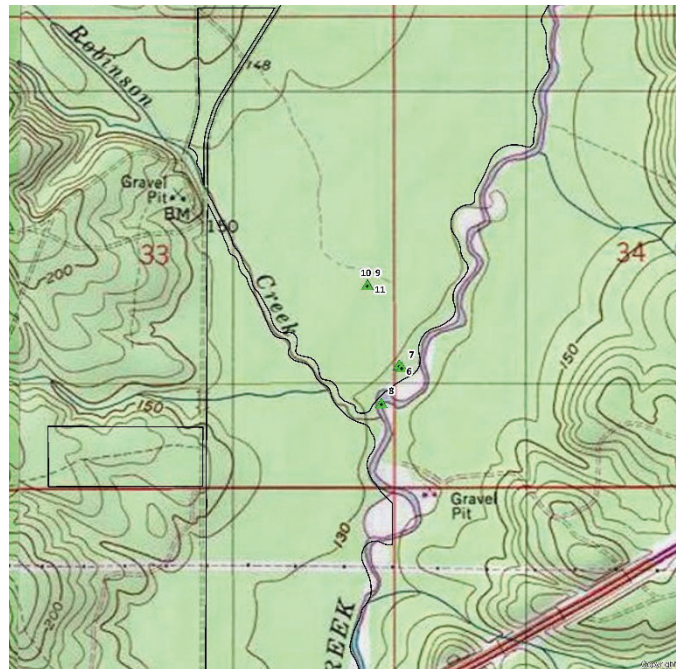
Title	Photo 7
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking northwest from same location as Photo 6 in UT channel, Big Escambia Creek's natural levee.

PHOTO 8



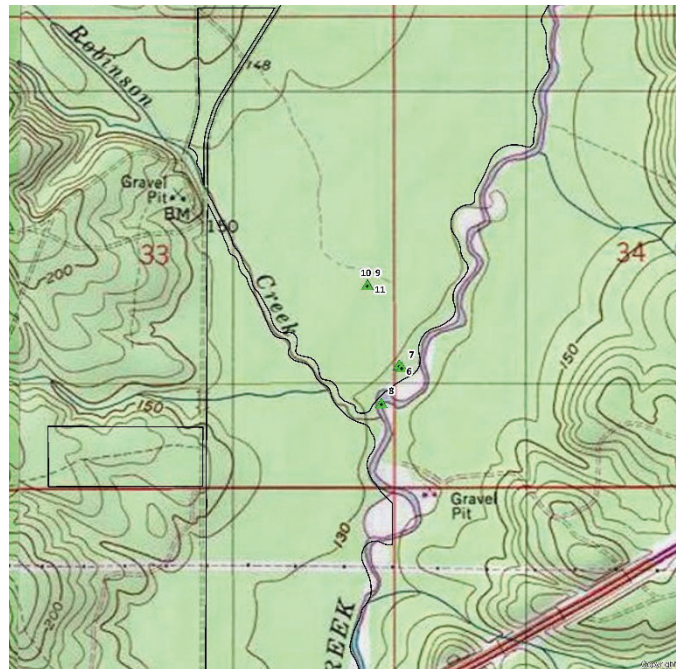
Title	Photo 8
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking downstream, unnamed tributary (UT) east of berm, at the UT's confluence with Big Escambia Creek. Red arrow indicates direction of flow.

PHOTO 9



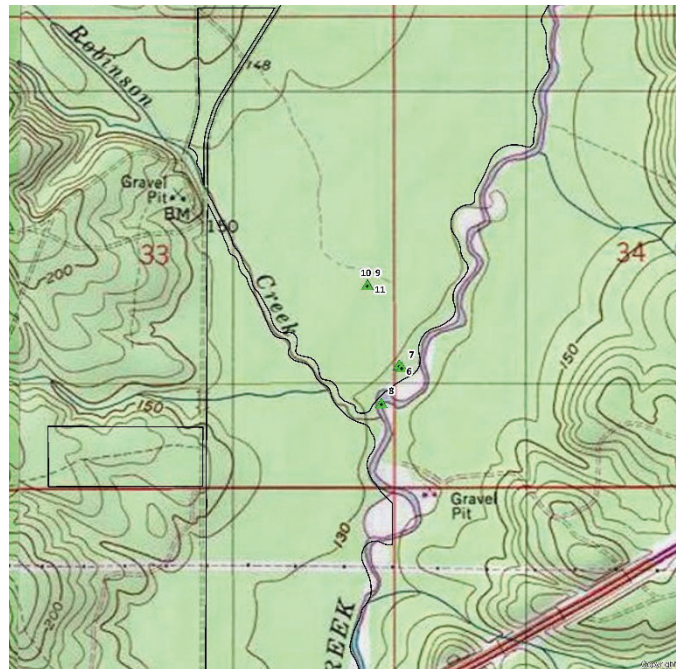
Title	Photo 9
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking northeast from interior of mine, spoil pile in background.

PHOTO 10



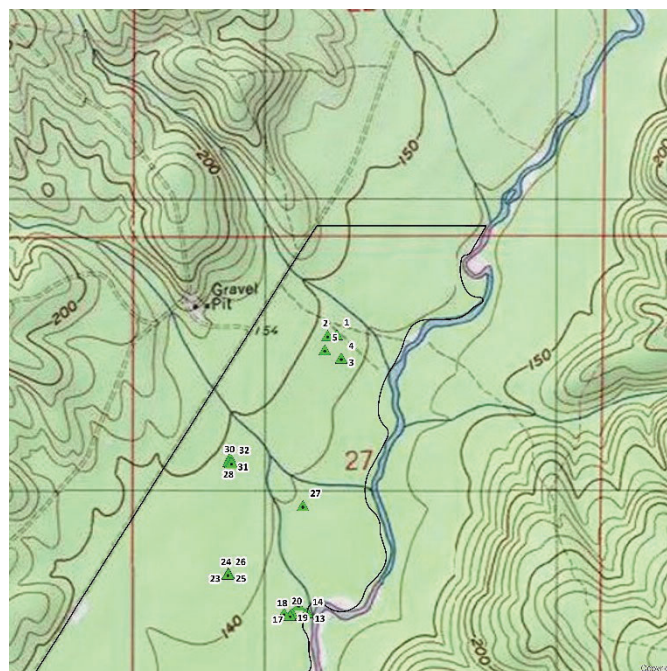
Title	Photo 10
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking southeast of mined area, berm in background.

PHOTO 11



Title	Photo 11
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking south of mined area, berm in background.

PHOTO 12



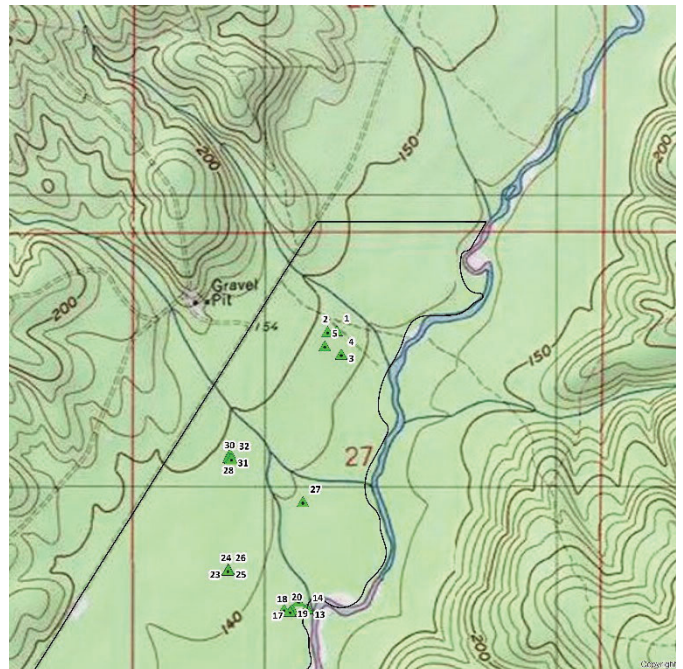
Title	Photo 12
Comment	Taken by Chris Parker.
Description	Striking E/SE at the end of a recently filled ditch and its confluence with Big Escambia Creek. Red arrow indicates direction of flow. (No GPS data for this photograph)

PHOTO 13



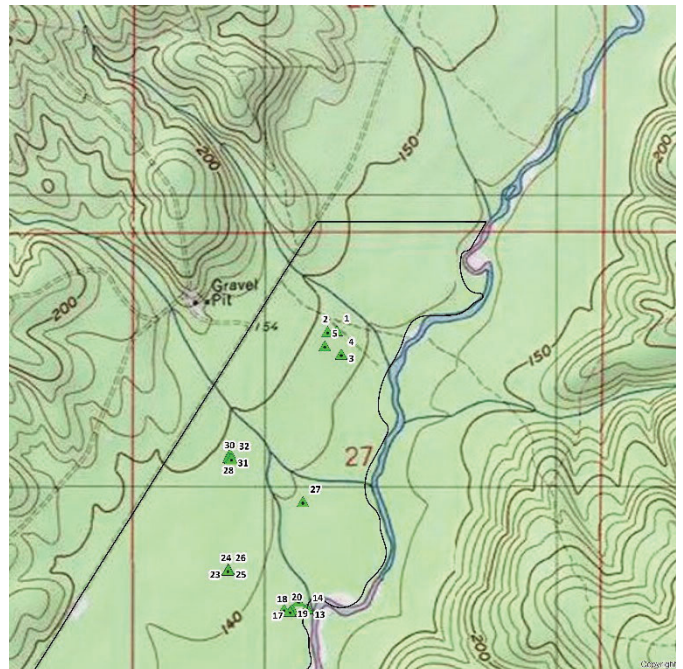
Title	Photo 13
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Same as Photo 12, GPS data collected. Red arrow indicates direction of flow.

PHOTO 14



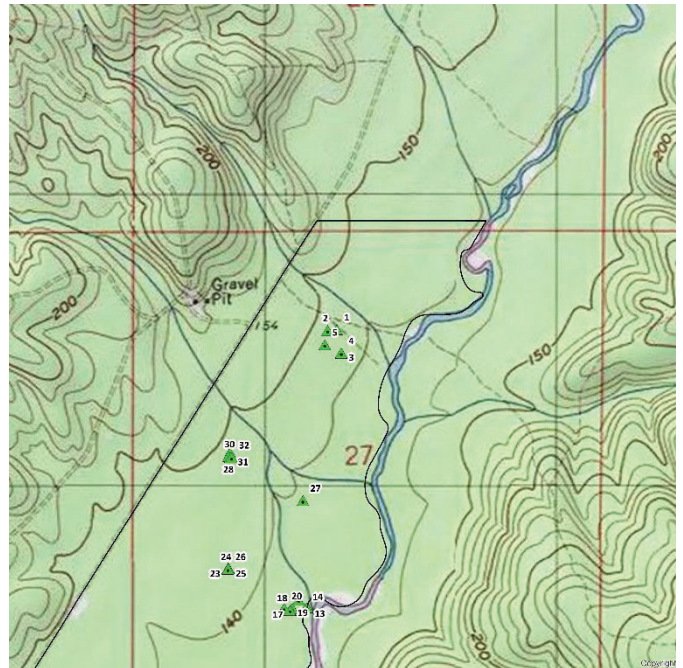
Title	Photo 14
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking west of ditch that had been recently filled.

PHOTO 15



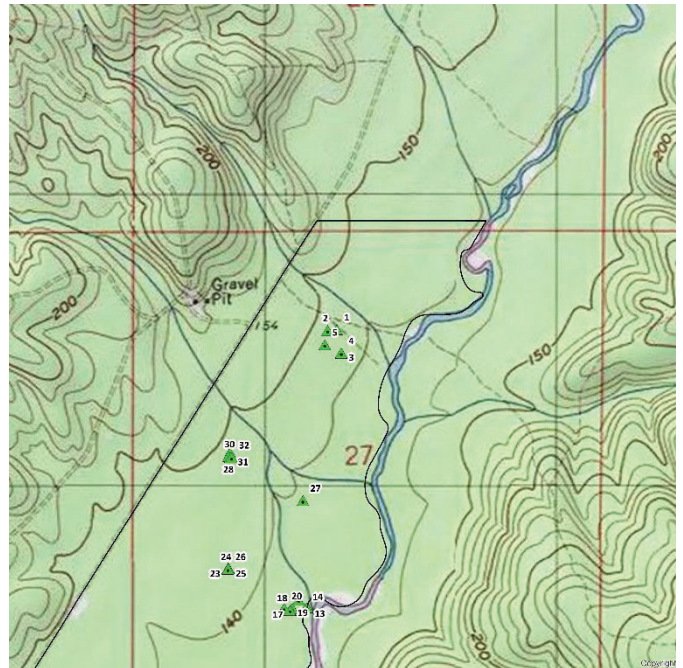
Title	Photo 15
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking southwest of mechanically cleared area and fill material.

PHOTO 16



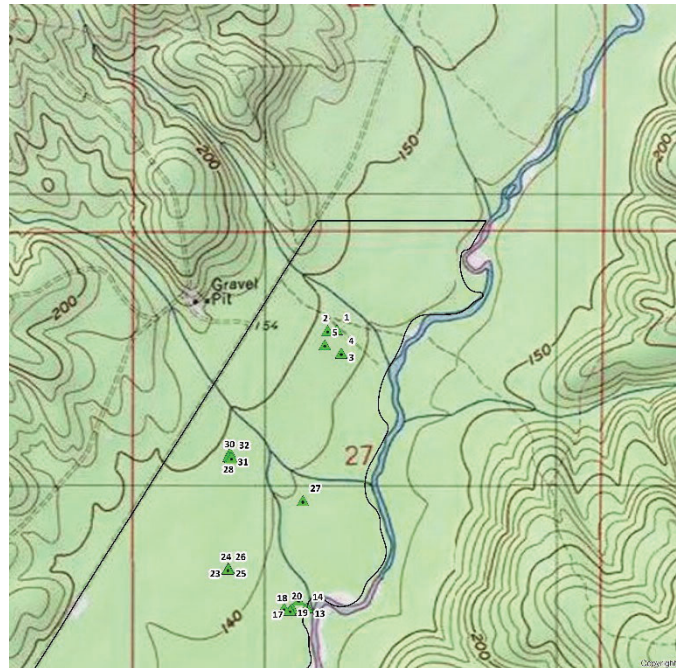
Title	Photo 16
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking south of fill material.

PHOTO 17



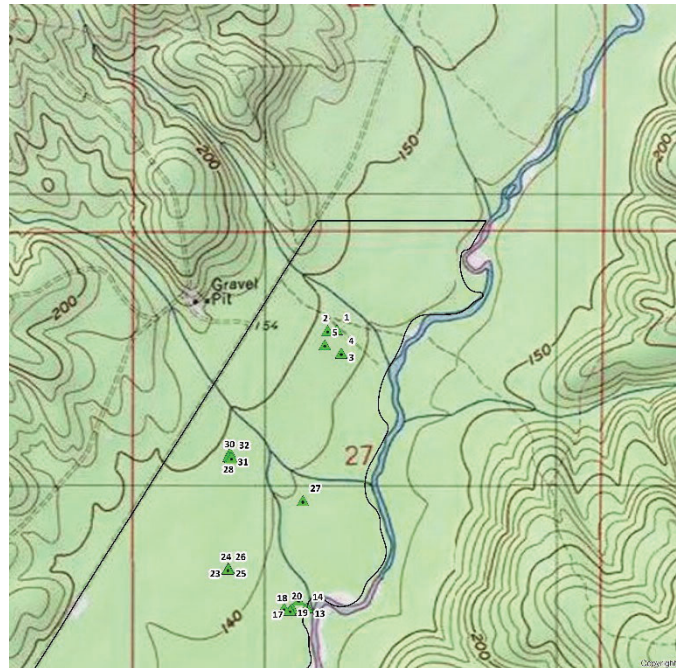
Title	Photo 17
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking west from berm of mechanically cleared area, fill material, and recently filled ditch.

PHOTO 18



Title	Photo 18
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking north from berm of mechanically cleared area, fill material, and recently filled ditch.

PHOTO 19



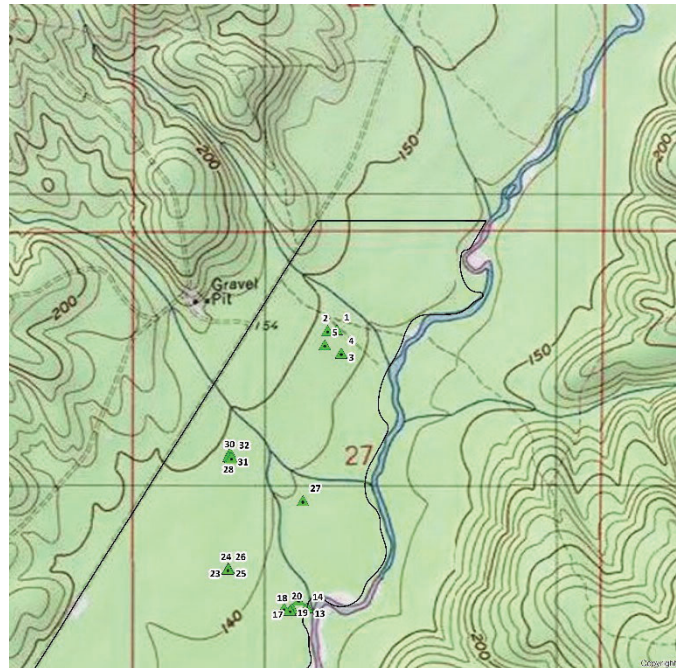
Title	Photo 19
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking east from berm of mechanically cleared area and Big Escambia Creek. Red arrow indicates direction of flow.

PHOTO 20



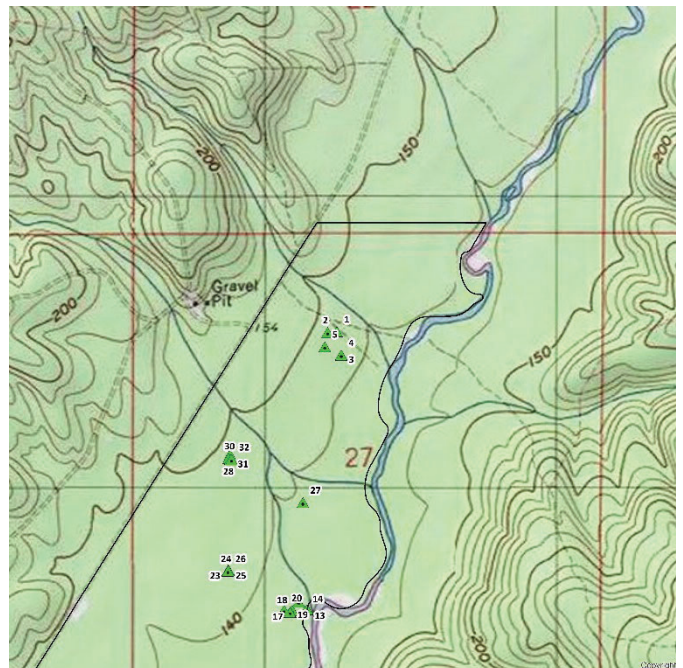
Title	Photo 20
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Soil profile at Data Point A2.

PHOTO 21



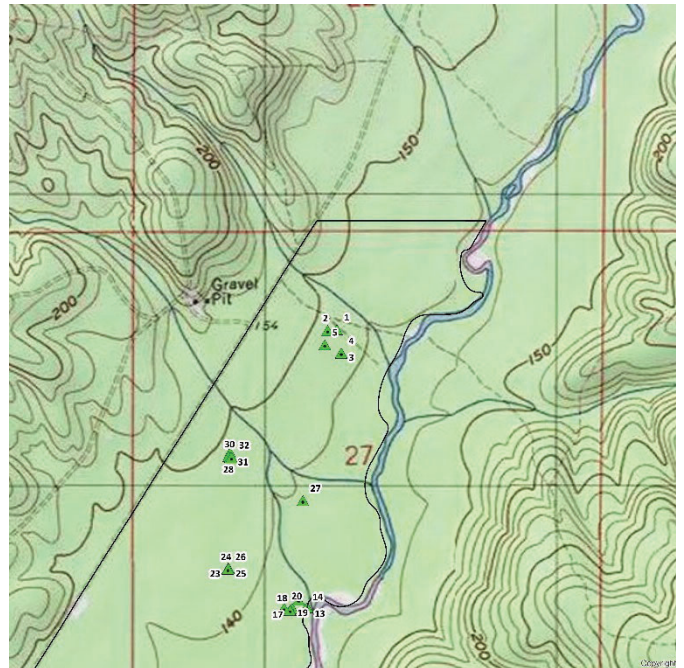
Title	Photo 21
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking northwest of recently filled ditch and area left unfilled or excavated after filling.

PHOTO 22



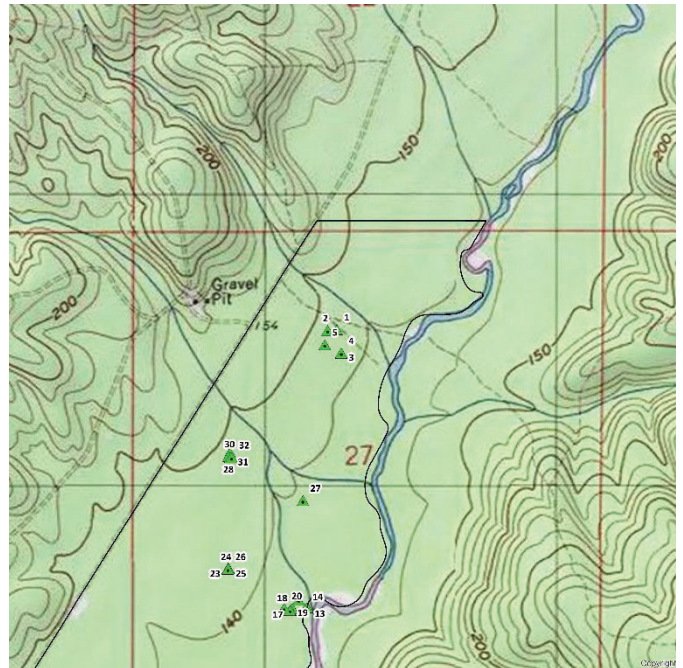
Title	Photo 22
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking north over Data Point A3.

PHOTO 23



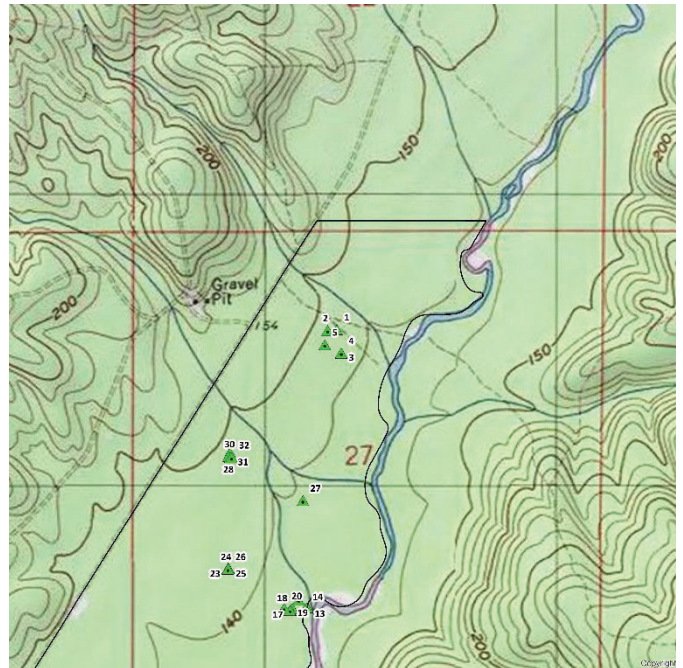
Title	Photo 23
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking south over Data Point A3.

PHOTO 24



Title	Photo 24
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking west over Data Point A3.

PHOTO 25



Title	Photo 25
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking east over Data Point A3.

PHOTO 26



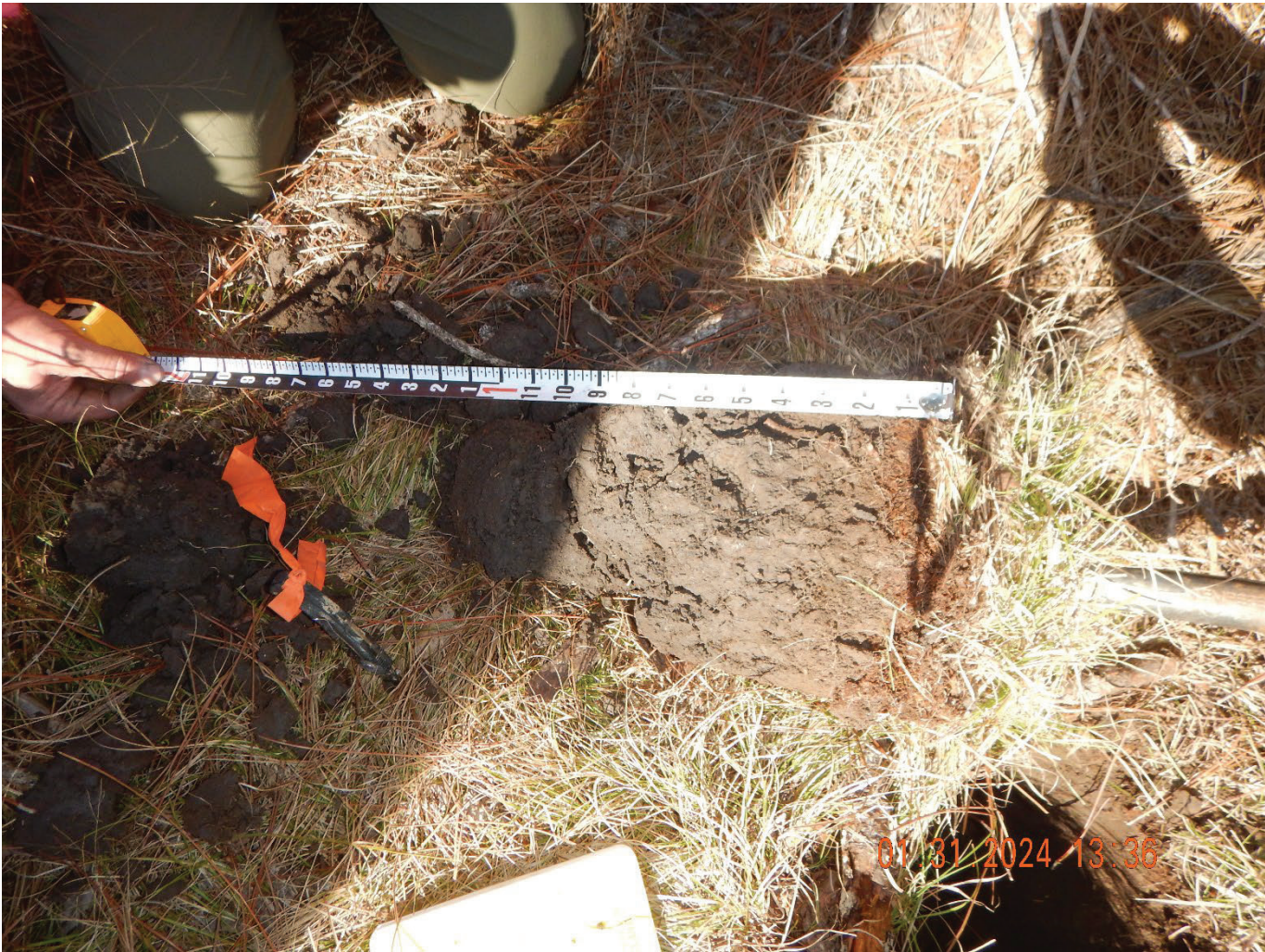
Title	Photo 26
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Soil profile at Data Point A3.

PHOTO 27



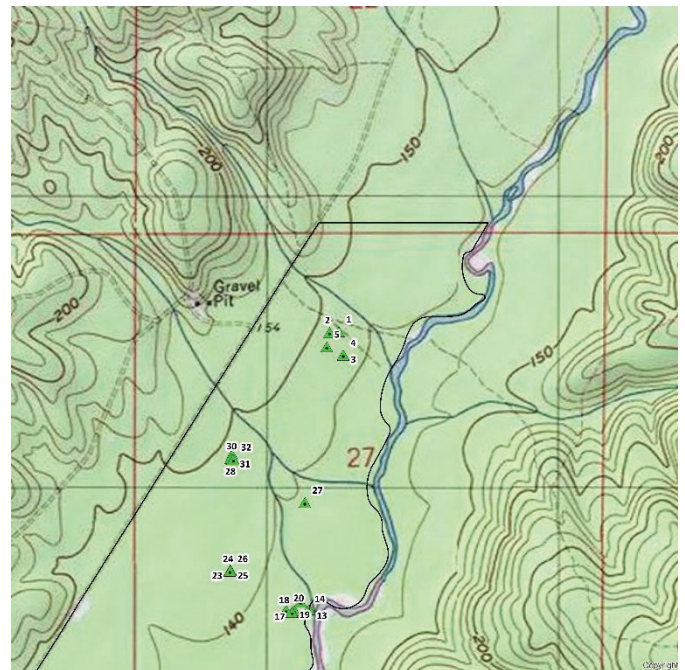
Title	Photo 27
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Soil profile at Data Point A4.

PHOTO 28



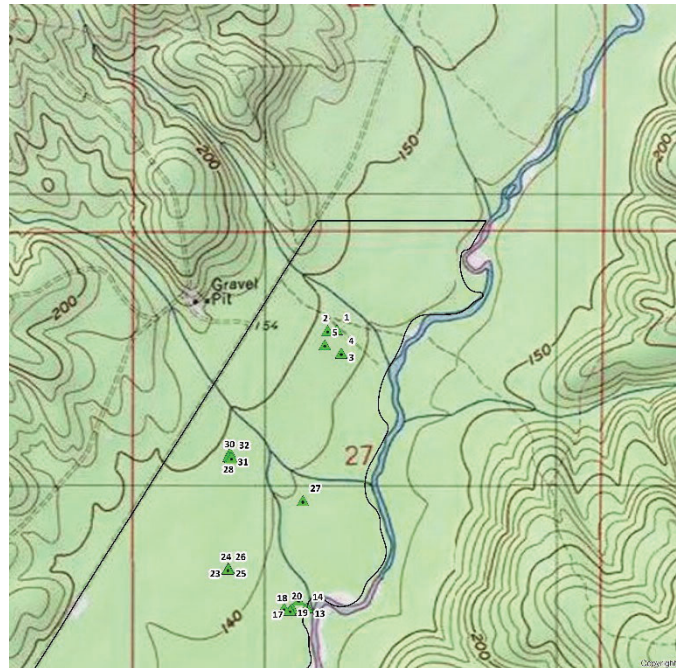
Title	Photo 28
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Soil profile at Data Point A5.

PHOTO 29



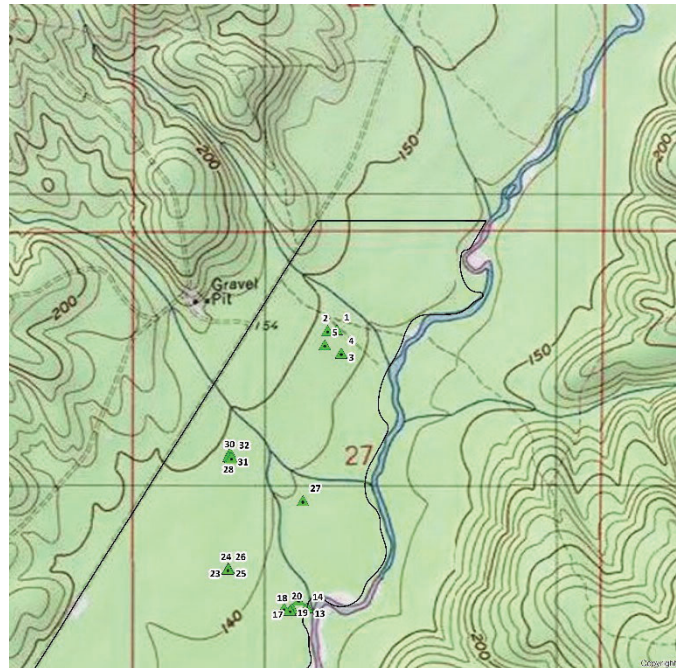
Title	Photo 29
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking north over Data Point A5.

PHOTO 30



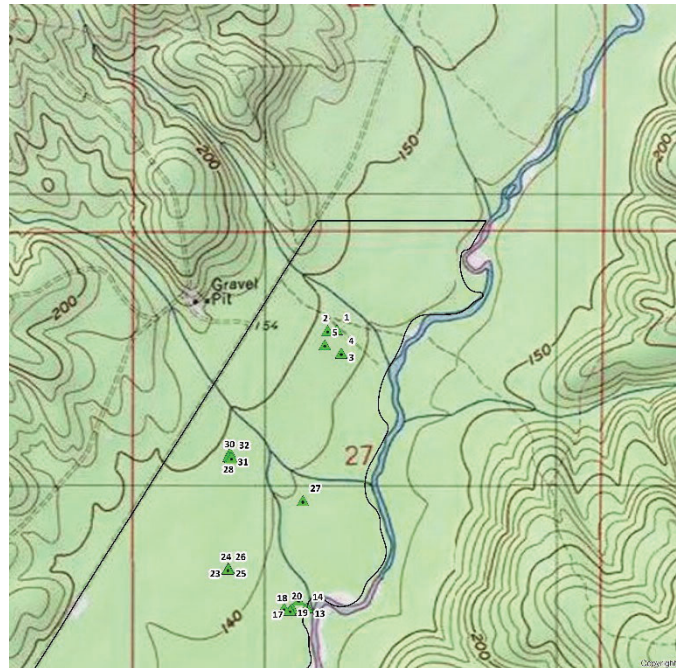
Title	Photo 30
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking east over Data Point A5.

PHOTO 31



Title	Photo 31
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking west over Data Point A5.

PHOTO 32



Title	Photo 32
Comment	Taken by Blaine Preston.
Description	Striking south over Data Point A5.

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