

II. METHODS

What follows is a technical discussion of the approaches used in researching, identifying, and evaluating potential Gladesmen TCPs. The criteria for identifying and evaluating TCPs are specified in National Register Bulletin 38 (Parker and King 1990, revised 1992, 1998), and much of the information directly below is drawn from that document. Following that is a discussion of the methods used to obtain data describing the Gladesmen Folk Culture toward the identification of locations with continuing cultural significance to that group. These data gathering techniques included literature review, ethnographic fieldwork, and informant interviews, which were followed by a Public Comment period that brought forth additional information from a larger population.

NRHP CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING A TCP

When identifying TCPs within a large area, such as the CERP-related properties of southern Florida, the NRHP guidelines (Parker and King 1990:7) observe that:

...most day-to-day management activities of a land management agency may have little potential effect on traditional cultural properties, but if the management activity involves an area or a kind of resource that has high significance to a traditional cultural group...the potential for effect will be high. The way to determine what constitutes a reasonable effort to identify traditional cultural properties is to consult those who may ascribe cultural significance to locations within the study area. The need for community participation in planning identification, as in other forms of preservation planning, cannot be over-emphasized.

A significant property reflecting a continuing association with the Gladesmen Folk Culture of southern Florida would warrant recording as a TCP if it meets NRHP eligibility criteria under the following definition, taken from National Register Bulletin 38 (Parker and King 1990:1):

A property associated with a rural community whose organization, buildings and structures, or patterns of land use reflect the cultural traditions valued by its long-term residents.

A TCP must be a tangible resource – a district, site, building, structure, landscape, view shed, or object – associated with the beliefs or practices of the group under study. The association between beliefs and the cultural resource gives the property its significance and can make it eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The NRHP guidelines also serve to distinguish a TCP as a property that not only meets existing criteria as a standard historic property (e.g., a building, site, or structure), but is also a property that represents a continuing association with the (Gladesmen) culture whose primary importance is its role in maintaining cultural identity and practice.

An identified historic property usually must be 50 or more years old to be considered a TCP and must maintain its integrity. The latter refers to whether the property has a sustained, integral relationship to traditional cultural practices or beliefs and if its existing condition is sufficient to convey significance. If a property meets these requirements, it is further evaluated to determine if it meets one or more of the four basic criteria for NRHP eligibility established in 36CFR Part 60:

- a. association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- b. association with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- c. embodiment of the distinctive characteristics or designs 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 or distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and a
- d. history of yielding, or potential to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Perhaps the most critical element in whether or not a property represents a TCP is its role in long term and continuous maintenance of a given culture. As an example, a location that a Native American group has used continuously for an extensive period of time (e.g., in conducting ceremonies, collecting special plants, or engaging in traditional practices that solidify group membership) may represent a TCP to that group if they view it as an important component in maintaining their culture and self-identity. Whether or not non-members of the group can perceive the property as a TCP is irrelevant; if members of that cultural group perceive a traditionally used property as significant to them it may meet the criteria of a TCP.

Because continuity in use plays such an important role in defining TCPs, changes in a property's use or association through time can change the eligibility status of that property. If extensive changes or discontinuity in use occur through time, a site that has integrity may still be eligible for recording as a historic property associated with a given culture, but it would not maintain the necessary level of significance for recording as a TCP. To be a TCP a property must exhibit at least 50 years of continuous use or association. In addition, the site needs to provide the same relationship or function to the culture for at least 50 years.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONSULTATION

To identify properties that may be TCPs within a study area it is necessary to consult with groups and individuals who have special knowledge about and interest in the history and culture of that area. In the case of TCPs related to the Gladesmen Culture (Simmons and Ogden 1998; Ogden 2005), this includes people who specifically see themselves and others as members of that group, and who acknowledge shared traditions, behaviors, and ideology with other members. An important first step in understanding and identifying such people is to conduct a review of existing literature to determine what is already recorded about the culture's history, ethnography, sociology, and folklife. The results of the literature search are included throughout the remainder of this report,

especially in describing the historical precedents that contributed to the formation of the Gladesmen Folk Culture (in Chapter IV) and in summarizing the adaptations and developments that characterize the modern Gladesmen tradition (in Chapters V and VII).

Prior to fieldwork, the Project Ethnographer completed a literature review that involved research at various repositories, as well as research via the Internet, i.e. archival and institution databases, federal archival databases, and JSTOR (short for digital Journal Storage). The objective of this research was to gather available information on the origins, environment, and history of the Gladesmen and related Florida Cracker cultures, as well as to determine the extent and use of the culture area, as documented in previous research by anthropologists, folklorists, historians, and the Gladesmen themselves.

Foremost in terms of previous documentation of Gladesmen, New South consulted and met with Dr. Laura Ogden, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, at Florida International University to discuss her knowledge of specific sites and locations associated with the group. Recent work by Ogden (1998, 2005) and Simmons and Ogden (1998) served to formally identify Gladesmen Culture as a distinct entity and to elaborate on the determinants of significance to them. Ogden's work comprised some of the best first person Gladesmen accounts available and these, in combination with others obtained during the literature review, served as a good starting point for learning about the culture as she defined it and conducting interviews with the Gladesmen to identify properties they deemed significant.

As enumerated in the report Acknowledgments, a number of individuals were consulted at various agencies and research facilities that assisted New South in conducting archival research, obtaining field permits, and gathering information. Research and/or literature reviews were conducted at the Clewiston Museum, Collier County Museum, Museum of the Everglades (Everglades City and Naples), Historical Museum of South Florida, Miami-Dade Public Library-Florida Collection, Florida International University-Special Collections, and by utilizing individual non-published information. Additionally, professional and avocational anthropologists and folklorists who have studied the area were consulted, and contacts were made with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Florida Master Site File (FMSF), and the Bureau of Archaeological Research for suggestions and to acquire existing data pertinent to the study.

Electronic research was completed at a variety of sources: the CERP Website; Emory University's Woodruff Library; Everglades National Park Archives and Photo Collection; the Florida Master Site Files; individual Florida Memory Collection; Publication of Archival Library and Museum (PALMM)-Reclaiming the Everglades Collection and the Big Cypress National Preserve Collection; Library of Congress-WPA Collection; Florida Historical Quarterly On-line Archives; University of Florida-Samuel Proctor Oral History Program. Telephone and electronic inquiries were also made to various institutions to determine the extent relevance of their collections: Florida State Archives and Library; University of Florida's Smathers Library; University of Miami Library-Special Collections; and the Florida State University Library-Special Collections.

ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDWORK

After reviewing available background data, the next step in identifying cultural properties and evaluating TCPs is to make contact with individuals and/or groups that are part of the group under study to elicit information from them directly (Parker and King 1990:7). The process of obtaining first hand information from individuals representing a group/culture is known as ethnography. Ethnography is the exploration and description of the social and cultural systems of one particular group with the goal of understanding the worldview of those under study (Hunter and Whitten 1976:584). The data collected can often indicate that changes have occurred within a culture over time.

There have been many ethnographic studies conducted all over the world that have focused on diverse cultures, both old and new. Many of these were the focus of a series of case studies published from 1960 through 1984 that was edited by George and Louise Spindler. To illustrate the variety of groups that have been the subject of an ethnographic study, a sample can be cited here to point out that they all share one common goal – to learn about a culture by obtaining first hand information from its members.

The Washo Indians of western Nevada and the eastern Sierra slopes of California were the subject of an ethnographic study by Downs (1966) who put the memories of older Washo together with existing history and knowledge of the culture area. Perhaps the most well known ethnographic study is that conducted by Chagnon (1968) of the Yanomamo Indians of Venezuela. Closer in time and space to the present Gladesmen is an ethnographic study that took place in Gainesville, Florida, during the late 1960s of a “Hippie Ghetto” (Partridge 1973). At the onset of the latter study, the author found himself asking a very basic question: “What is a hippie?” Similar to Downs (1966) and Chagnon (1968), Partridge (1973) developed a better understanding of his study group by eliciting personal histories from self-proclaimed members. More recent works that utilize informant interviews include a study of Philippine Americans in San Diego in which 90 interviews were conducted from a population in 1990 of 95,945 (Espiritu 1995) and a description of life in Alachua County, Florida, that used existing oral histories (n=26) and new interviews (n=7) to explore north Florida’s unique history, culture, and geography (Cauthen 2007). The same approach – learning about a group through oral histories – is used in the present study of the Gladesmen.

Ethnography, or ethnographic fieldwork, can be most clearly described as “participant observation,” wherein the ethnographer spends time and talks with members of the group being studied. Fieldwork is conducted in order to elicit information through personal interviews about what is important in their culture and to learn about their opinions, histories, and ways of life. Ethnographers take part in the activities of the people they study because it enables a one-to-one relationship that helps in obtaining information on local behaviors, traditional practices, and collective thought. Toward this end in the present study, the project ethnographer met with subjects “in the field” and experienced traditional Gladesmen activities (by boat, canoe, swamp buggy, or airboat) in the company of people who describe themselves, and others they interact with, as Gladesmen. Most of the ethnographic interviews took place in camps and in remote areas that were the favored locations of the individuals interviewed. Participant observation allows the interviewer to share the experiences of the people being interviewed first hand, and this close association fosters an honest and open discussion.

Fieldwork for the Gladesmen study involved the ethnographer experiencing the environment of southern Florida in the company of people who love it, claim membership in the group, and were willing to share their time. Several people devoted a lot of effort and worked closely with New South; two key informants acknowledged again here include Barbara Jean Powell (Wildlife and Resource Management Liaison, Everglades Coordinating Council) and Frank Denninger. Locations visited during fieldwork that served as access points for reaching a number of camps and other off-road locations during the ethnographic study included Clewiston, Collier County, Everglades City, Ft. Myers, Glades County, Hialeah, Homestead, Lake Kissimmee, Kendall, Miami, Miami-Dade County, Naples, Ochopee, Pembroke Pines, Pinecrest, Southwest Ranch, and West Palm Beach, Florida.

INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Gladesmen represent a living culture with a tradition that can be traced back to the nineteenth century but does not have a long written history (Ogden 2005). Members of this group do not occur in a census as a distinct population, as they represent a subset of modern American culture in southern Florida whose membership numbers are not known. Gladesmen Culture is not a hierarchical one with a leader who can speak for the group as a whole; instead it is a member-driven group made up of individuals who share behaviors that have the vast wetlands of the region as their primary focus. Going back to the definition of culture given earlier, Gladesmen share learned behavior as part of a community of interacting and like-minded human beings. While many people may hunt and fish in southern Florida, they do not claim to be Gladesmen. In order to study the Gladesmen Culture it was necessary to speak with people who identified themselves and others as members; conversely, people knowledgeable about the region or interested in conservation who do not consider themselves part of the Gladesmen Culture are simply that – not members of the group/culture.

Interviews are the established method for eliciting the type of ethnographic information needed for a study of the Gladesmen (Hoebel 1958; Hunter and Whitten 1976; Edic 1996), as the product of this type of data gathering is an interpretive story, reconstruction, or narrative about a group of people (LeCompte and Schensul 1999:1-3). In conducting interviews, the ethnographer is an “invited guest” who asks questions designed to determine what members of a culture do and what reasons they give for doing so. As in the present study, interviewees also want to determine what, if any, changes have occurred within a culture through time. Questions are asked in a face-to-face setting, often in a location decided on by the subject, and the ethnographer never knows exactly where the dialogue is going to go. [In only one case were written responses given on paper]. If the interview gets sidetracked, it is the ethnographer’s job to get the discussion back on track. There are no right or wrong answers as each interviewee is stating his or her own personal opinions, and these may not necessarily be well-established facts. Each interview provides what is called an oral history that includes ancestry, childhood memories, personal experience, and present-day perceptions.

Use of ethnographic interviews in a similar cultural context occurred in a nearby study conducted during the 1990s of the *Fisherfolk of Charlotte Harbor, Florida* (Edic 1996). As with the Gladesmen, the subjects interviewed (n=10) claim a shared heritage that extends back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century pioneer fishing communities along Florida’s southwestern coast. Interviews that reveal their life experiences connect the present with the past, and provide a valuable link to the historical fishing heritage of the Charlotte Harbor area. Like the Gladesmen, the

fisherfolk of Charlotte Harbor have a social and economic tie to one specific southern Florida ecosystem. The Edic (1996) interviews involved the same practices utilized in the Gladesmen study (prepared questions, a release form, and taped interviews) and captured the thoughts of “senior fisherfolk” related to practices, traditions, and fishing strategies, as well as changes within their local culture through time. Studies of this kind make an important contribution to the memory of how things were in earlier times, and how adaptations have been made to traditions in reaching a more modern era.

For the present study, interview subjects consisted of those members who were contacted or came forward and agreed to meet with the project ethnographer. The scope of work for the ethnographic study was designed to focus on self-identifying Gladesmen, many of whom participated in public meetings for some of the CERP projects and made themselves available for interviews. Because the total number of Gladesmen is not known, it is impossible to say what percentage of the group is represented in the present sample of interviews. Bishop Wright (2008b) stated, “I can name a couple hundred of them.”

The goal of the oral history interviews was to obtain information from Gladesmen on their background, their experiences, their way of life, and the things that are important to them. The group of people interviewed thus represents a “purposeful sample,” which is normally small (Patton 2002:536). No rule of thumb exists to tell a researcher precisely how to focus such a study, but a good sample size is said to include 30 people (Bernard 2002:174), which indicates that the Gladesmen oral histories (n=34) are a valid representative sample that is more than adequate for the purpose of better understanding the activities and opinions of that unquantified group. Additionally, accounts were obtained during the period of Public Comment that represented a larger segment of the Gladesmen population and made the sample more robust.

Potential interviewees were identified through a variety of methods, including contacting individuals named in the study’s Scope of Work (SOW), provided by the USACE as Gladesmen informants who were interested in sharing their input relative to the CERP Master Recreation Plan. From that starting point, locating additional interviewees was very successful and was stimulated by suggestions and introductions made by members of the Gladesmen community. Some members sought out the ethnographer and arranged introductions and interview schedules. All subjects were contacted by phone and a meeting time and place were set.

New South Associates conducted oral interviews with 33 individuals and obtained a written interview from one person (Figure 2). The information collected aided in identifying Gladesmen-related properties, establishing periods of use, and evaluating properties as potential TCPs. All of the people interviewed identified themselves as members of the Gladesmen Folk Culture who felt that they had associations with properties affected by CERP. The interviewees provided a wide range of valuable information regarding the history and use of the project area; their means of transportation; their personal opinions regarding the CERP project; and their personal/cultural connections with the Everglades ecosystem as Gladesmen. Many Gladesmen described family traditions that extended back several generations, which enabled a look at both continuity and change within the culture.

Figure 2.
Field Oral History Interviews



A. Susan Perlman Conducting Oral Interviews with Dave Balman, Jr. and Eric Kimmel, Pinecrest, Florida



B. William Lanier on Fisheating Creek

Questions/Topics for Oral History Interviews

Interview introduction (baseline information and questions to be included at the beginning of every interview):

"Interview with _____ conducted by _____ [interviewer], historian with New South Associates, being conducted on _____ [date] at _____ [location]."

If needed: "Other persons present at the interview are: _____."

"This interview is being conducted as part of the Gladesmen/Swamp Folk Culture Ethnographic Project for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District. This project involves the collection of information regarding Gladesmen/Swamp Folk Culture in the CERP impact areas, including traditional cultural properties.

Mr./Ms. _____ is being interviewed because _____." [Short statement of the reason we chose this person to be interviewed.]

Interviewer should state date and general purpose of interview.

QUESTIONS:

The following information should be asked next, or restated to the interviewee if the interviewer already has this information:

- Full name
- Age or date of birth,
- Place of birth, and
- Occupation

Some general information on your life history. How long have you lived in or adjacent to the Everglades?

Did your family live in the area? How did your family make a living? What was your mode of living like?

What do you remember the area being like?

What kind of changes have you seen through the years?

Tell me a little about the camps. Types of structures, what they were made of, locations, usage, how long used.

Modes of transportation in the Glades: glade buggy, skiffs, boats, canoes, airboats.

Activities in the Glades, past and present.

What is your definition of the Everglades. Is it just the park boundaries or areas outside the park?

What do the Everglades mean to you? Is it a geographic obstacle to get around, or something that you use?

How do you define your space (territory?)

What areas in the Everglades are important to you? Why? Can you describe them? How long has this area been used? Location?

What changes/modern adaptations do you think occurred to earlier Glades Folk Cultural patterns after the establishment of ENP in 1947?

Figure 3.
Blank Interview Form For Project

What were the continuities in Gladesmen practice from earlier times?

Out of all the different environmental components to the Everglades area, which are your favorites: mangroves, sawgrass plains, inland marches, cypress wetlands?

How much time do you typically spend on a normal trip to the Everglades.

What is the role of agriculture, if any? Do you often supplement gardens to add to what you get on hunting trips?

What role does barter play in the folk culture? Does one person specialize in gator and one in fish, etc?

How has technology changed life in the Everglades? (e.g., refrigeration)

How have the Everglades (or Big Cypress Swamp) changed in your lifetime?

What is the impact of tourism in your area?

How do you feel about CERP? What parts are good, what parts bad? (optional)

What town or community do you most identify with or use (assuming interviewee does not live in a town)?

What types of boats do you like to get around in? What types are most popular in your area? Are they customized? What's the difference in the use between airboats and swamp buggies?

Hunting: what animals most popular to hunt—turtles, alligators, others? Is hunting done for food, pleasure, or as source of cash? How has hunting changed in your lifetime?

Are game wardens and/or hunting laws an issue?

Is the burning of some areas still done today?

What kinds of challenges do you face-environmental, laws, etc? (What makes it hard on you?)

Fishing: Where do you prefer to go to fish? Prefer boating fishing or on bank? What fish most common? How has fishing changed in your lifetime?

Any personal or cultural connections with similar swamp & boat ways of life in other areas? For example, in the Okefenokee Swamp, or the Cajun areas of Louisiana?

Do the Gladesmen have any clubs or organizations (past and present.)

Types of businesses in or on the border of the Glades.

The project ethnographer developed a set of interview questions based on the purpose of the study and designed to obtain personal histories, family ties to southern Florida, information on the history of the Gladesmen, and the types of activities Gladesmen engage in. Information was sought regarding the physical location of traditional activities, with an emphasis on identifying places with strong social histories and those reflecting continued cultural associations with the Gladesmen. The questions were designed to elicit information on backcountry camps, personal experiences, and on what the Everglades means to a Gladesmen. A blank interview form is included as Figure 3.

Prior to each interview, subjects were given a consent form that verified their willingness to participate in the study (Figure 4); all interviewees read and signed that form prior to their interview. Each oral interview was digitally tape recorded by the project ethnographer and transcribed literally by a professional transcriptionist, with use of vernacular maintained. In minor instances the ethnographer edited the transcriptions for accuracy/clarity, without changing the content. The interview transcriptions are included in a separate volume on file with the Division of Historical Resources and USACE, Jacksonville District.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Following submittal of a Draft Report in May 2009, the USACE made a digital copy of the draft available for review and comment. Subsequently, additional written information was obtained from several sources: a larger group of men and women identifying themselves as Gladesmen, various agencies, and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. A meeting between the USACE and representatives of the Miccosukee Tribe was also held on September 11, 2009, from which notes were transcribed. Comments from this supplemental data gathering effort are addressed throughout this report, and the comments are summarized in Chapter VIII.

Figure 4.
Consent Form

**Release Form For Use Of Interview/Photographs
Gladesmen/Swamp Folk Culture Ethnographic Project**

Interviewer/Photographer: Susan Perlman, New South Associates

Interviewee:

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Date of Interview/Photographs:

By signing this interview/photograph release form, I agree to take part in the oral history interview conducted on the above date on a voluntary basis, as a contributor to the Gladesmen/Swamp Folk Culture Ethnographic Project for the Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District (COE). I also agree to the use of my image, photographed on the above date, on a voluntary basis, as a contributor to the same project. I understand that I am entitled to a copy of the final report in which this information and these photographs may be used. I also understand that these images, video and audiotapes of this interview, as well as the text of the transcript may appear in part or in whole in publicly accessible research and information formats such as the Internet and broadcast media unless otherwise specified below.

I understand that while this project is underway, New South Associates, Inc., will, upon request, provide me with a copy of notes taken during this interview, as well as a copy of the photographs, audio or videotape made during this interview for the purpose of my review and comment. I also understand that photographs, tapes and transcripts of this interview will be archived at the Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District and will be available for research purposes unless otherwise specified below

Prior to project completion, the photographs, tapes and transcripts of this interview will be kept by New South Associates, Inc., at 6150 East Ponce de Leon Avenue, Stone Mountain, Georgia, 30083, for research purposes. Upon project completion, the tapes and transcripts will be turned over to the COE. Local libraries, museums, or historical societies may acquire copies of the final report, photographs, oral interview transcripts and oral interview digital recordings from this project. Photographs may be used in the Executive Summary report, final report, draft report and the New South Associates website.

Restrictions (check one): ___ No Restrictions ___ Restrictions (specify):

RESTRICTIONS: _____

*Interviewee Signature:

Date _____

Interviewer Signature: _____

Date _____

