

Interstate 85 Extension Archaeological Survey

Multiple Counties, Alabama



Above left: Brockington archaeologists document a scatter of Woodland artifacts in Dallas County. *Above right:* The discovery of a large potsherd from a mound site in Sumter County.

CLIENT

Volkert & Associates

In 2011, archaeologists with Brockington and Associates, Inc. conducted an intensive survey of the preferred alternate alignment of the proposed 125-mile extension of Interstate 85 through west central Alabama. This survey provides information to support the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by the Alabama Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. This requires considering the effect of the proposed project on historic properties.

The I-85 Extension project extends westward from Montgomery to Cuba, in Sumter County. Initial phases of the EIS by Brockington employed a GIS model of archaeological site locations to assess the potential of multiple alternate corridors to affect archaeological sites. A reconnaissance survey of historic architectural resources within the project study area also was conducted as a component of the modeling effort to provide information about aboveground historic properties. This information, as well as an array of environmental and socioeconomic variables, is being employed to select a preferred alternate alignment for the proposed project. Optimal routes are under consideration for the proposed highway, and additional studies continue along this alternate to provide more detailed information for the assessment of the effect of the project on the environment, including historic properties.

The survey identified over one hundred archaeological sites within or immediately adjacent to the project corridor, including a few cemeteries. However, we recommended that the highway be designed within the project corridor, in so far as possible, to avoid a dozen NRHP eligible and potentially eligible sites and cemeteries, or appropriate measures should be developed to mitigate the loss or damage that will result from the project. Archaeological investigations on the I-85 corridor are ongoing.

ELEMENTS

Archaeological survey

Predictive modeling

Transportation planning