Since the Woodland period artifacts from Site 7NC-J-212 are generally not buried, it appears that the period of greatest soil mobility on the Osborne wetland sites was sometime in the Archaic period, probably between 6000 and 3000 BC.

4. Summary

Site 7NC-J-212 appeared to be a procurement site or microband base camp occupied by prehistoric peoples over a period of several thousand years. A total of 649 prehistoric artifacts were recovered during Phase I and II investigations—647 lithic artifacts and two ceramic sherds (see Table 31). Diagnostic artifacts recovered date to the Archaic (7000 to 6000 BC), earlier Woodland I (3000 to 1000 BC), and Woodland II (AD 1000 to 1650) periods. The site's attractiveness presumably came from its proximity to extensive wetlands and from the topography of the broad, nearly level ridge. The buried stratum on the lower terrace, tested in Units 10 and 13, was dated by the Stanly bifurcated-base point to the Archaic period.

P. SITE 7NC-J-214, THE OSBORNE WETLAND NO. 5 SITE

1. Site Description

Site 7NC-J-214, a small prehistoric lithic scatter, was located in Phase I Survey Area 5 of the Osborne Wetland Replacement Area, on a small hill southwest of a bend in the stream noted above in the description for Site 7NC-J-210 (Bedell 1995c) (see Figures 53, 56, and 102). When the Phase I survey of the site was carried out, the area had just been plowed and rained on, and surface visibility was excellent, so the survey was carried out by surface inspection. Twelve lithic flakes, and a chert projectile point resembling the Bare Island type (Custer 1996), were recovered from the surface in an area measuring approximately 55 by 45 meters (180x150 feet). A single transect of four shovel test pits was excavated in the survey area, but none of the shovel tests yielded artifacts.

2. Environmental Setting

Wetlands associated with the stream were present north and east of the site. The western, northern, and eastern sides of this small hill slope gently down to the floodplain of the stream, while the southern side rises toward a long, low ridge. At the time of the Phase II fieldwork, the majority of the site was covered in nearly mature soybeans. The extreme southern edge of the site was planted in corn, which was harvested during the Phase II fieldwork.

3. Phase II Testing

Phase II testing of Site 7NC-J-214 consisted of the excavation of eight test units (Figure 106). Since the Phase I shovel test pits were all culturally sterile, yielding no data on intrasite artifact distribution, Test Unit 1 was placed at the center of the site, as determined during the Phase I surface survey. The other seven test units were spread across the top of the landform at 10-meter intervals in all four cardinal directions so that full coverage of the hilltop was achieved. Nine

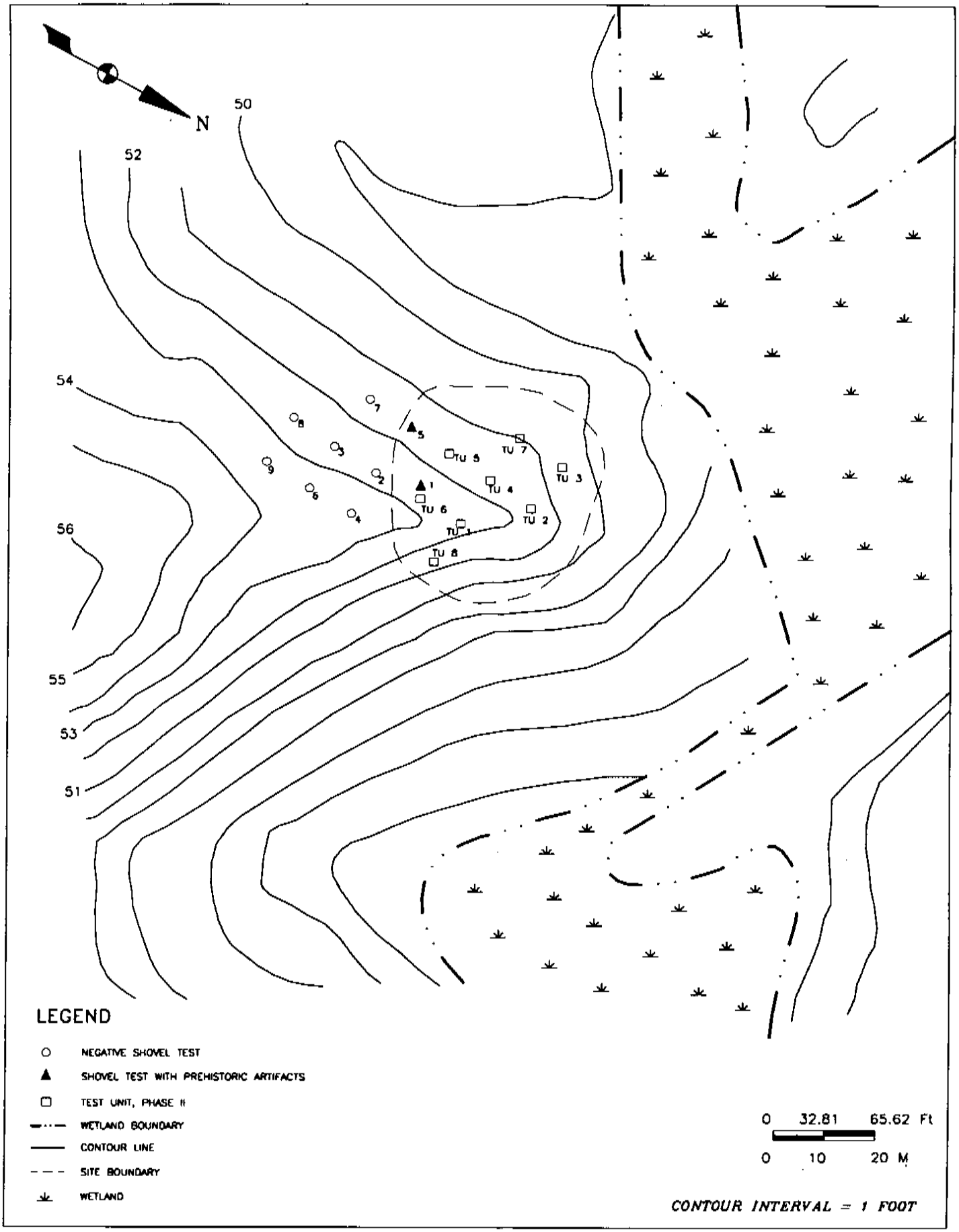

FIGURE 106: Osborne Wetland No. 5 (7NC-J-214) Site Plan

additional shovel test pits were excavated during the Phase II excavations at the southern end of the site. Their purpose was to reevaluate the Phase I conclusion that this site and Site 7NC-J-215, located close by, are separate. The counts of artifacts recovered during Phase I and II investigations are fairly low. A summary of the prehistoric lithic assemblage recovered from both phases of fieldwork at this site appears in Table 32.

Phase II artifact counts were fairly low. One hundred and nineteen prehistoric artifacts were recovered from the eight test units. Four were FCR, one was a chert core, one was a quartz biface, and the rest were lithic reduction debitage. Fifty-two pieces of this debitage were jasper, 26 were chert, 23 were quartz, nine were quartzite, and three were of unknown material. Only 13 of these artifacts were recovered below the plowzone. The sandiness of the soil makes the downward movement of artifacts very possible. It is unlikely that these 13 artifacts are indicative of a significant subplowzone cultural deposit. In fact, the overall distribution of cultural deposits at the Osborne property, as described above in the discussion of Site 7NC-J-212, seems to indicate that the movement of the landforms in the Holocene were toward the south or southeast, which would have exposed deposits at Site 7NC-J-214, rather than burying them.

Only two of the nine shovel test pits contained artifacts, and these were closest to the previously delineated site area. Shovel test pits excavated farther south were sterile, confirming that this site is separate from Site 7NC-J-215, located farther south on the same ridge. Shovel Test Pit 1 contained four flakes, and Shovel Test Pit 5 contained one flake and one argillite bifacial preform with some identifiable characteristics of the Rossville point type (Ritchie 1971), which dates to the Woodland I period. All but one of the flakes from these two shovel tests were in the plowzone, and the one exception was found immediately under the plowzone.

Soil stratigraphy was fairly consistent across the site. A well-developed plowzone of yellowish brown to dark yellowish brown loamy sand extended to an average depth of about 20 centimeters below the surface. The subplowzone soil was yellowish brown to strong brown in color and described as a loamy sand with a higher clay content in spots.

4. Summary

Site 7NC-J-214 can be interpreted as a small procurement site occupied by prehistoric peoples foraging in the nearby wetlands. Artifact counts were fairly low, and the few artifacts from below the plowzone were small and could easily have worked their way down from disturbed contexts. Based on the two possible diagnostic artifacts recovered, the main use of the site seems to have taken place during the Woodland I period.

Q. SITE 7NC-J-216, THE OSBORNE WETLAND NO. 7 SITE

1. Site Description

Site 7NC-J-216 was located during Phase I investigations in Survey Area 7 of the Osborne Wetland Replacement Area, on a low, broad, gently sloping hill south of the stream noted above