

Plan for Scientific Excavations at the Collier Lodge Site (12 Pr 36)

2009 Season

Submitted to the

Indiana Department of Natural Resources,

Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

by

Mark R. Schurr

Associate Professor

Department of Anthropology

University of Notre Dame

Notre Dame, IN 46556

(574) 631-7638

Email: Mark.R.Schurr.1@nd.edu

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Archaeological Background

Prior Field Work at the Collier Lodge Site

The Collier Lodge site (12 Pr 36), also known as Baum's Bridge, is located on the southern border of Porter County, Indiana on the northern edge of the former Kankakee Marsh. This location was first described as an archaeological site by McAllister (1932) as Porter County site number 36. At the time of McAllister's visit to the site, it was only one of two prehistoric sites in Porter County known to have produced pottery. From McAllister's description of sherds from the site, it is clear that they included grit-tempered Woodland period pottery (1,000 B.C. to A.D. 1100) and a few examples of shell-tempered sherds, an artifact type characteristic of the Upper Mississippian period (ca. A.D. 1100 to historic contact) in northwestern Indiana (Faulkner 1972; Schurr 2003).

The site was used throughout the historic period. Its original historic name was Potawattommie Ford. The first ferry across the marsh in Porter County was established near the site by Sherwood in the 1830s. By 1836, Eaton was operating the ferry. He later attempted to establish a toll bridge in 1849 but it soon burned down and he reverted back to the ferry. Sawyer bought the property in 1857 and also attempted to maintain a bridge, but it was quickly swept away by drift. In 1863, the site was purchased by Baum, who built the first successful bridge across the Kankakee at this location, and the site has since been best known as Baum's Bridge. In 1865, the bridge was taken over by the county. The first hunting club was established in the vicinity in 1878. In 1898, the Collier Lodge was built at the site, and that building, although very deteriorated, is still standing. After Jim Collier's death in 1952, the site passed through the hands of several owners until it was purchased by John Hodson in 2001.

Today the site consists of a grassy lawn containing the Collier Lodge building. Several small outbuildings that stood at the site up until 2006 have since been removed. The site is located on a sandy ridge adjacent to a short segment of the original Kankakee River. A short portion of the channel was isolated as a sort of bayou or slough when the marsh was drained and this segment was bypassed by a drainage ditch to the south. Today, the borders of the old channel segment look much like they must have when the lodge was in use.

Prior Archaeological Field Work at the Site

The site has been the location of an on-going archaeological project by the University of Notre Dame and the Kankakee Valley Historical Society. Results of prior field investigations from 2003 through 2005 have been reported in a single volume (Schurr 2006). Investigations in 2006 and 2007 were briefly described in the permit applications submitted for subsequent year's work and in a National Register Nomination submitted to DHPA on May 6, 2009. Since 2007, the field work at Collier Lodge has concentrated on defining a very large feature (Feature 25), informally known as the

“mega-feature.” The 2008 results are summarized below. Although a report is in progress, it will not be possible to complete it until the investigation of Feature 25 is finished. The size and complexity of the feature combined with a short (12 day) field season means that even single 1 x 2 m units take several years to complete.

Results of the 2008 Season

The primary goal of the 2008 season was to investigate the large historic feature (Feature 25) identified in 2007. At the end of the 2007, Feature 25 was determined to be a deeply stratified historic feature containing a stratum of brick located at approximately 30 cm B.S. The brick stratum extended at least 4 m to the north of the southern edge of the feature.

The 2008 season was preceded by a ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey using a 250 MHz antenna in a survey grid with coordinates E 78–91 N 78–89. The GPR survey grid was placed over the area containing Feature 25, as shown in Figure 1. The GPR data were converted into time slices using the program GPR-Slice. A map of the GPR signals at approximately 30 cm B.S. was especially informative (Figure 2) and was used to guide the 2008 excavations. Figure 3 shows the locations of the excavation units from 2007 and an interpretation of the GPR data. The red area within Unit E 81–82 N 87–89 (upper left) is a radar echo produced by the sheet of plastic used to line the floor of the unit before it was backfilled in 2007. The strong signal in the floor of the unit indicates this GPR time slice map is depicting returns that mainly arise from objects or soil transitions located at about 30 cm B.S., approximately the same depth as the upper brick stratum in Feature 25. The scattered red anomalies located around unit were interpreted as bricks or other historic artifacts within the fill of Feature 25 (an interpretation that was later confirmed by excavation). Other features visible on the map include a linear feature that is a metal pipe (lower left), the square fireplace hearth (Feature 1) first documented in 2004, and an anomaly of unknown origin (center right).

The excavations followed the 2008 plan of extending the north-south line of units that identified the southern edge of Feature 25 and the continuation of the upper brick stratum seen in the exposed profile, with the advantage of the new GPR survey to guide unit placement. Once the northern limit of the feature was identified, units were extended to the east and west to determine those boundaries (Figure 4 shows unit locations on the plan map and Figure 5 is a view of the units from the north). As shown in Figure 6, four 1 x 2 m units were placed to determine Feature 25's boundaries. These were later supplemented with a 1 x 1 m unit adjacent to the east edge of the lodge and a 1 x 2 m unit south of the lodge's southeastern corner (Figure 4). In addition, an unfinished 2 x 2 unit that had been opened in 2007 was reopened to determine if a corner of Feature 25 extended into the northwest corner of the excavation unit. In combination, the units provided a north-south trench through the feature that determined its northern edge lay at approximately N 90.2 and two flanking units that determined the feature's eastern edge lay at approximately E 82. The edge coordinates are approximate because the feature's edges are uneven. The reopened unit E 81-83 N 83-85 did indeed appear to locate the

southwest corner of Feature 25, which was clearly visible in the west profile wall (Figure 7). A circular Upper Mississippian pit was also defined in the floor of Level 8 (the last level completed in 2008).

Feature 25 was found to contain a dense concentration of late nineteenth century historic artifacts in its upper levels. Piece plotting and mapping the artifacts and other associated features required a substantial amount of time, even with an additional day's work in one of the flanking unit as part of the Aukiki River Festival. By the end of the field season the limits of Feature 25 had been defined (Figure 8) but none of the units opened in 2008 were completed to sterile soil.

One additional 1 x 2 m unit was placed over the GPR anomaly centered on the approximate grid coordinate E 87 N 82. The unit was placed so that it would intersect the edge of whatever feature was producing the anomaly. Excavation showed that the GPR anomaly was probably produced by the difference in radar transmission rates between a layer of Upper Mississippian midden that was sealed beneath what appeared to be marl or a degraded mortar deposit dating to the historic period. This unit was completed but only defined the western edge of the prehistoric and historic deposits, both of which appear to slow downward to the east.

At the end of the season, all incomplete units were lined with black 6 mil polyethylene sheeting and all units were backfilled.

Goals of the 2009 Season

The 2009 excavations will once again focus on Feature 25. The goal will be to reach the bottom of the feature to obtain a full record of the vertical stratigraphy in at least one or two portions of the units running north-south through the feature. Work will also be conducted in the flanking units on the east edge of the feature to create one or more east-west profiles of the feature. Because of the feature's complexity, excavation will have to be conducted very slowly and will have to be carefully documented (including maps, photographs, and piece plots). The excavations will begin by removing the backdirt at the southern end of the feature to fully expose the profile mapped in 2007. Each stratum of the feature will then be removed one at a time across the entire north-south profile, beginning with the layer of bricks, each of which will be piece-plotted. Once the brick stratum is removed, subsequent levels will be excavated as described below until the base of the feature is encountered. Great care will be taken to make sure that strata can be correlated across all 1 x 2 m units.

Excavation Procedures

Investigation at the site will begin with the re-establishment of a metric site grid defined in 2003 by reference to several local benchmarks. Horizontal and vertical control of the excavations will be maintained by reference to the grid coordinate system.

Units will be re-opened or placed as necessary to accomplish the season's goals. When a unit is re-opened, the walls and floors will be troweled all soil zones and features will be correlated with maps and photographs showing the appearance of the unit at the end of the 2008 season. All excavation will be done by hand, using either shovels or trowels. The maximum size of any single excavation unit will be 2 meters square (most will be 1 x 2m units). The units will be excavated in either arbitrary levels with a maximum thickness of 10 cm, or in archaeological levels defined by changes in soil color, texture, or artifactual content. Archaeological levels with a thickness greater than 10 cm will be subdivided into arbitrary 10 cm levels to maintain additional stratigraphic control. Soil colors will be described using the Munsell system (1990 edition). All excavated soil will be screened through 1/4 inch hardware cloth, except for soils which appear to contain high concentrations of microbotanical or microfaunal remains. Soils from these contexts will be processed using flotation recovery techniques. Additional soil samples will also be water screened to test whether very small artifacts (such as seed beads or gunshot) are present. Water screening was evaluated in 2006 and 2007 and its use was expanded in 2008 to the extent that some contexts which might contain high densities of small bone fragments (such as fish bone) or important small artifacts (such as trade beads) were completely processed by water screening. The expanded sampling strategy used in 2008 will be employed in 2009. A water screening station will be established in the field so that samples can be processed simultaneously with the excavations and a special tagging system will be employed to track water screen samples. Soil samples will also be collected from each archaeological stratum.

Each archaeological level and feature will be documented using the appropriate form and by scaled maps with a resolution of 0.5 cm. Artifacts with significant spatial relations to each other or to other features will be piece-plotted. All artifacts collected will be recorded in a field specimen log to maintain associations between specimens and their archaeological contexts. Digital images (≥ 8 megapixels) will be supplemented with color slides and black and white photographs to document the excavations and a log book of all excavation photographs will be maintained. The completed field records and the photographs will be curated at the Archaeology Laboratory, University of Notre Dame. All artifacts collected during the excavation will be processed, catalogued, and will also be curated at the Archaeology Laboratory along with their associated documentation where they will be used for research and teaching.

It is now estimated that a maximum total area of approximately 10 m² will be excavated over the course of the project. At the conclusion of the excavation, all units will be backfilled and the site contours will be stabilized to prevent erosion. The methods used in the field investigation will meet or exceed the standards described in Department of Natural Resources 312 IAC 22.

The scientific investigation will be conducted between June 29 and August 23, 2009. The field season will begin with two days of excavation between June 29 to July 3 to demonstrate archaeology field work to students enrolled in Notre Dame's Summer Scholars program for pre-college students. The bulk of the excavations will be conducted

between July 6 to 23. We are requesting that the permit be extended to August 22 because the Kankakee Valley Historical Society (KVHS) will be sponsoring the Auikiki River Festival that weekend. The festival will include a variety of events, including a demonstration of archaeological field methods and informal lectures on archaeology and historic preservation to be conducted by the P.I. (who will finish the 2009 field season with one day of work during the festival on what is sure to be an uncompleted unit from earlier in the summer). Festival attendants who were not able to visit the site during the normal season will be able to see an archaeological unit, observe hand excavation, and learn about data recording. Information about historic preservation in Indiana will also be provided.

Personnel for the project will consist of volunteers from the KVHS. The excavations will be directed by Dr. Mark R. Schurr. He has extensive experience in Indiana archaeology and human osteology (vita attached). Experienced and qualified KVHS members will serve as unit leaders. Inexperienced KVHS members will be paired with more experienced people. They will begin by assisting with screening, flotation, water screening, and artifact processing, and will take on additional tasks as they are trained. All artifacts will be cleaned and receive an initial sorting in the field lab at the site.

A report of the results of the excavation along with an amended copy of the state archaeological inventory form for the site will be submitted to the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology one year after the excavations of Feature 25 are completed. Further reports describing laboratory analysis of cultural and biological materials from the site will be submitted as these analyses are completed.

Statement on Human Burials

McAllister (1932) reported that several burials were found in the “immediate vicinity” of the site prior to 1931. Their cultural affiliation is unknown but it is assumed they were prehistoric. Local oral history holds that burials were found under the area of a porch on the Lodge. Based on a picture of the Lodge dating to the early twentieth century, the burials may have come from the river bank along the western edge of the lodge. This area is now heavily overgrown with vegetation and will not be investigated during the project.

The collection of human bone is not a goal of the project and all reasonable attempts will be made to avoid disturbing human burials. If human bone is accidentally encountered during excavation, all work in the excavation unit containing the bone will be immediately halted, and the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology will be notified within two working days. Any human remains encountered will be treated in accordance with IC 14-21-1 and 312 IAC 22. We would then prefer to conduct the minimum amount of excavation necessary to determine the age and cultural affiliation of the burial (i.e., does it represent a prehistoric burial or a recent forensic case?), to

document these findings, and to then cover the burial with soil and preserve it *in situ*. The landowners of each site have also requested that any burials that are accidentally encountered be preserved.

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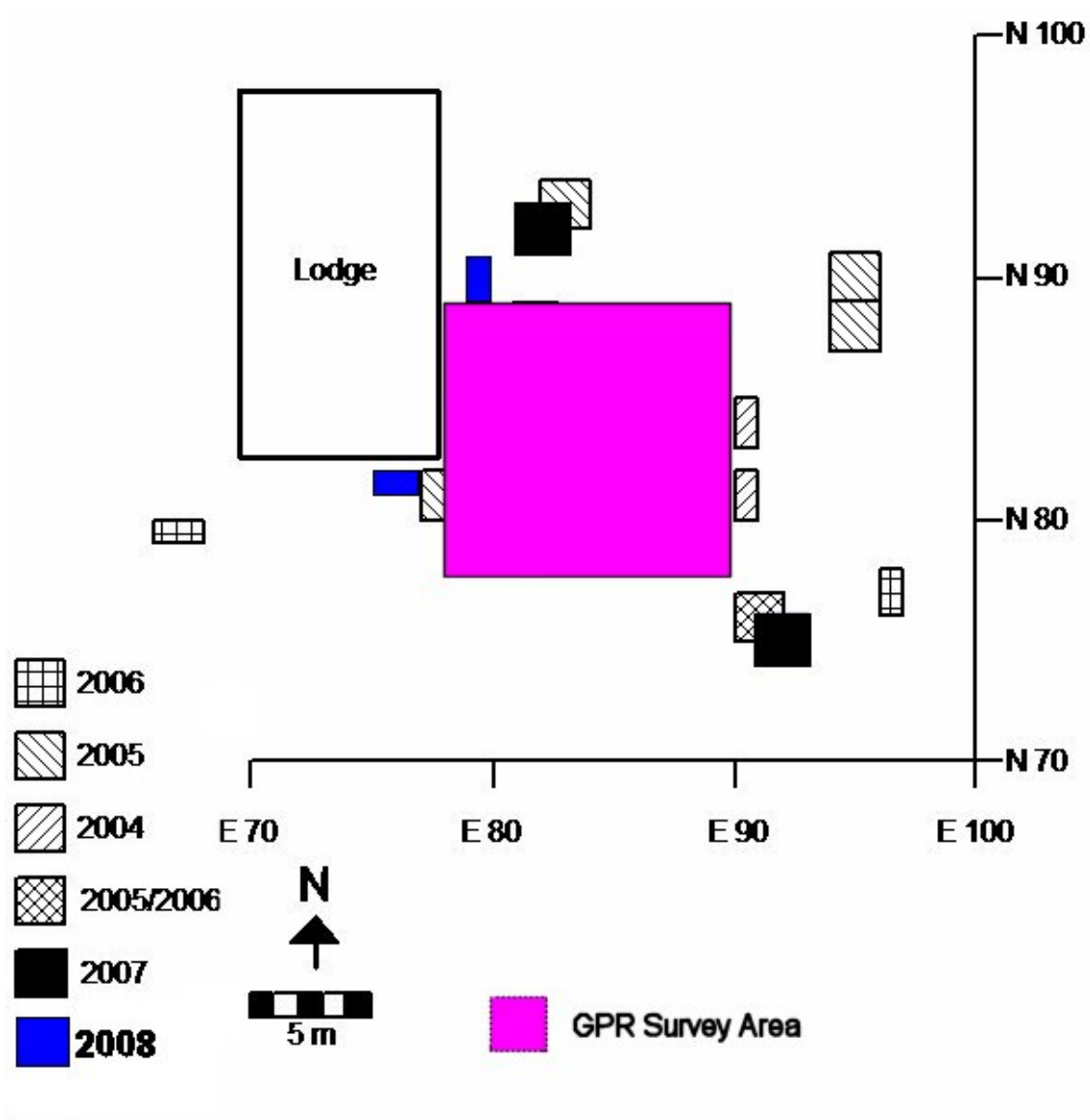


Figure 1: Location of the 2008 GPR survey.

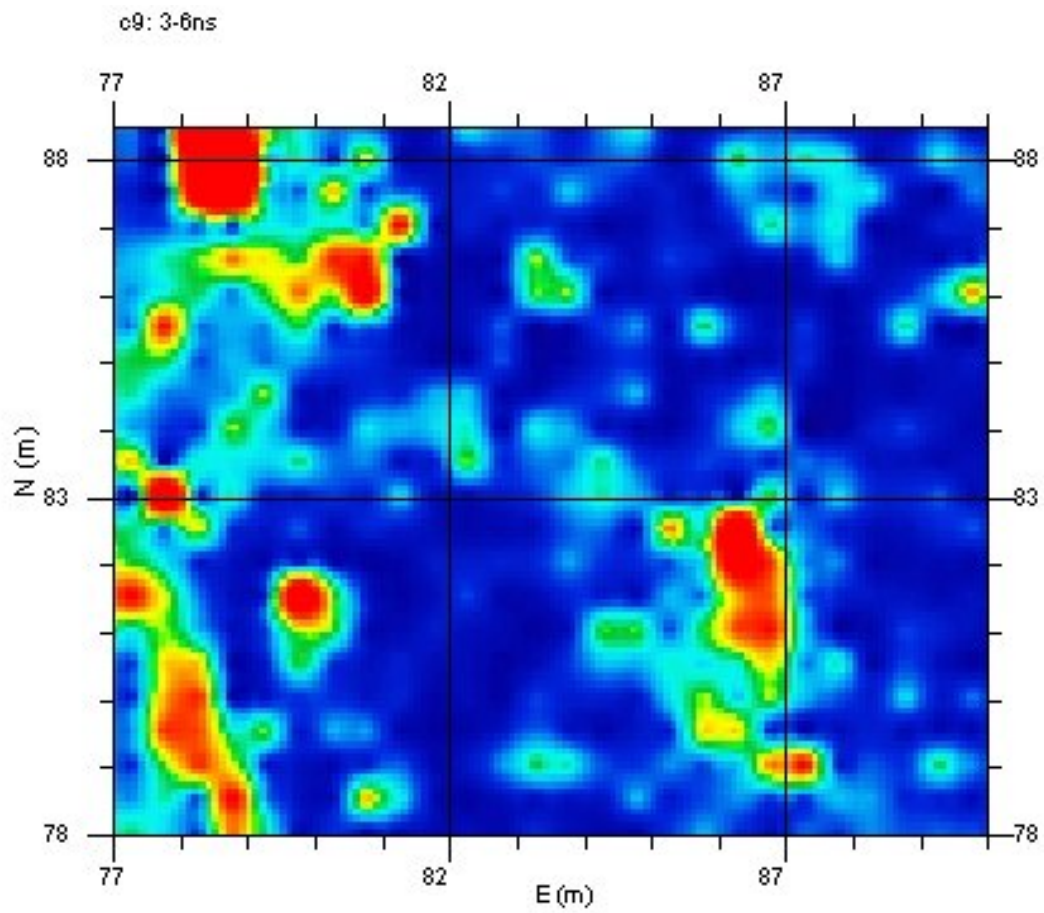


Figure 2. GPR time slice map (ca. 30 cm B.S.)

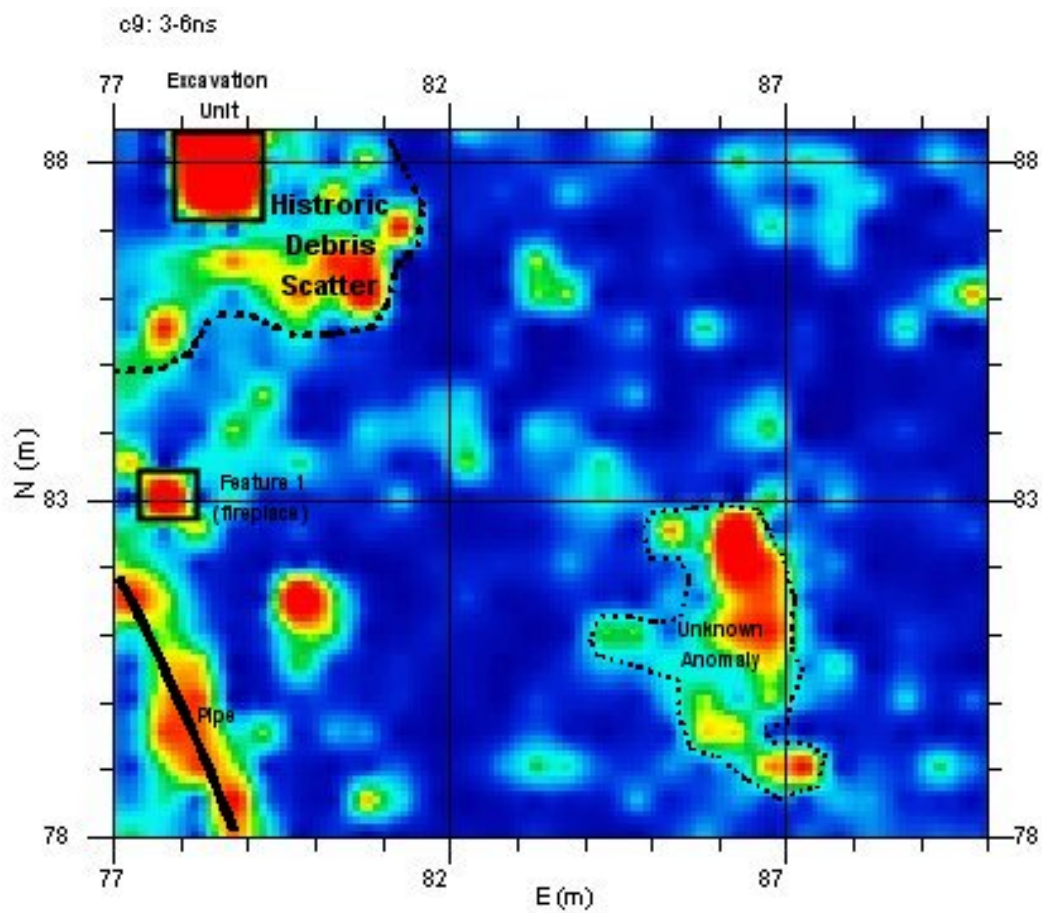


Figure 3. GPR map with interpretations.

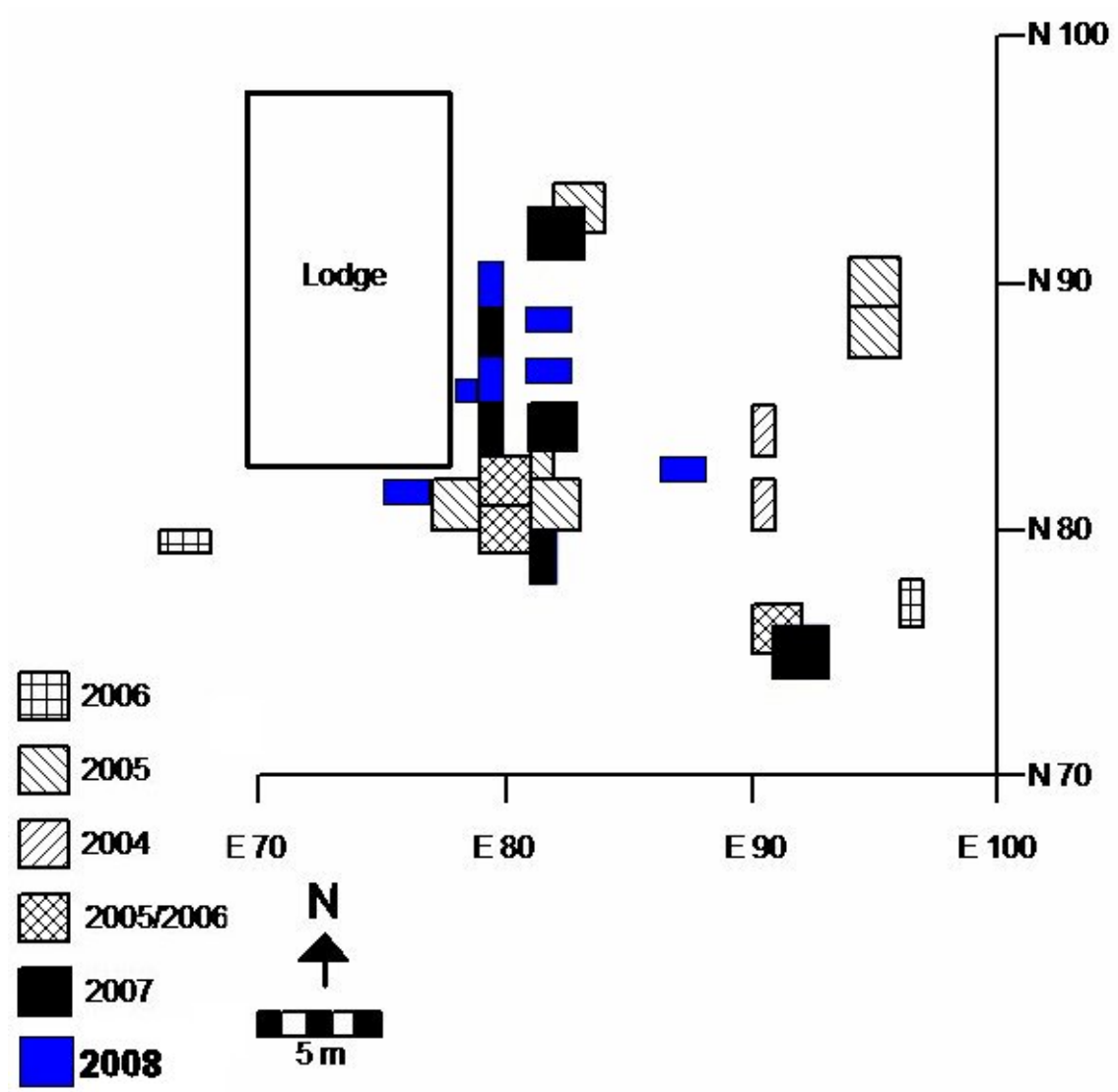


Figure 4. Unit locations by the end of the 2008 season.



Figure 5. Photograph of units over Feature 25 (from the northeast).

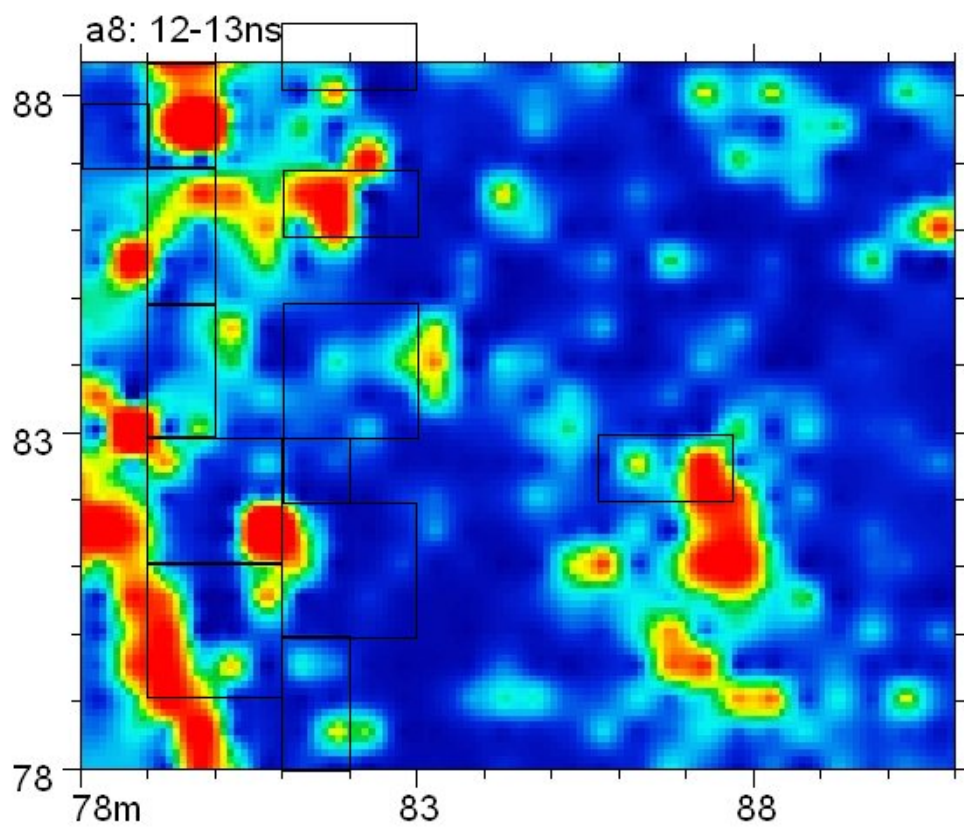


Figure 6. Unit locations on GPR map.



Figure 7. West wall of Unit E 81 – 83 N 84 -85 showing southwest corner of Feature 25.

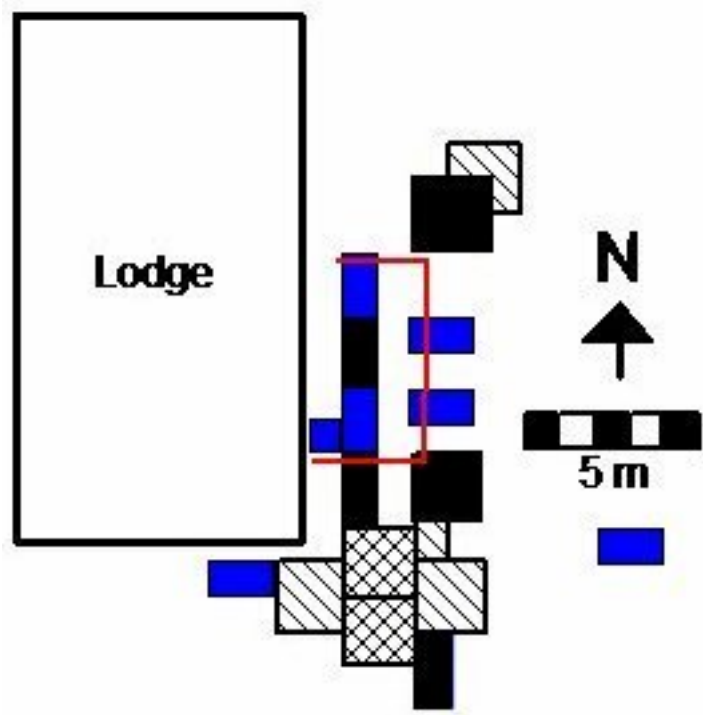


Figure 8. Horizontal limits of Feature 25.