

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



1. Name

historic Tuscumbia Landing Site

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Tennessee River (Pickwick Lake) at Spring Creek
legal location: SE/31,Tct,R11W NA not for publication

city, town Sheffield X vicinity of _____ congressional district 5

state Alabama code 01 county Colbert code 033

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>NA</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name City of Sheffield (Sheffield Park and Recreation Department) & T.V.A.(George Sherer)

street & number City Hall / 601 First Federal Building

city, town Sheffield / Muscle Shoals NA vicinity of _____ state Alabama

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of Recorder of Deeds Colbert County Courthouse

street & number Colbert County Courthouse

city, town Tuscumbia state Alabama

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Archaeological records on file at Mound State Monument
has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1930's - present federal state county local

depository for survey records Mound State Monument

city, town Moundville state Alabama

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The site of Tuscumbia Landing is located on the left bank of the Tennessee River (Pickwick Lake) and on the right bank of Spring Creek at the point of their junction. This area is just south of the Colbert and Lauderdale County line on the western edge of Sheffield in the northern portion of Alabama.

The site consists of an old wagon road (photo 1) six limestone foundations of the original landing (photos 2, 3 and 4), stone foundation walls (photos 5 and 6) and brick debris of the terminal building on top of the bluff (photo 7).

The old wagon road leads through the woods along the side of Spring Creek to a tiny bottom at the foot of the bluff which rises above the river. At the river's edge at the base of this bluff and extending into the water are the six limestone foundations of the depot. Beginning a few feet from Spring Creek, these foundations are located about 80, 70, 10, 10 and 24 feet apart, respectively. At the top of the bluff, which rises about 75 feet above the river, is the location of the terminal building for the Tuscumbia Railway. Evidence of this building is indicated by the stone foundation walls and brick debris.

The depot for the Tuscumbia Railway was erected in 1832. This building was parallel to the river and was 75 feet long and 60 feet wide. It was three stories high with the first built of strong rubble masonry and the other two of brick. The front of the building was set back 105 feet in a horizontal direction from the edge of low water. The upper floor was 62.37 feet above the high water mark and 85.75 feet above the lowest water mark, and was on a level with the railroad. An inclined plane passed from the edge of low water into the house upon the second floor and terminated upon the upper floor. The inclined plane was worked by horse power by means of gearing erected behind the building. A floating wharf was constructed to accommodate itself to that inclined plane at different stages of the water in the river. Thus, boats could dock and discharge their freight to be elevated into the warehouse above.

The two lower stories of the house were used for the storage of cotton, which was received from railroad cars by means of chutes and discharged again to and upon the floating wharf by another chute. The brick and stone work on the building cost \$2,134.62, and the total cost of the depot was estimated to have been \$7,000.00. (Deshler 1833).

The present abandoned railroad bed in all that is left of the road that connected Tuscumbia to the depot. Both passenger and freight cars, which were drawn by horses who walked on an adjacent graveled pathway, operated on this line. The railroad was constructed under the supervision of David Deshler, an engineer (Deshler 1833), and was 2.1 miles long with a maximum grade of 20 feet per mile. The rails were oak stringers capped with flat iron strips two inches wide by one-half inch thick. The iron for the railroad was delivered by the steamer James Monroe (Railroad Journal, 1832), and some of the iron casting for turn-outs were made at Russell's Valley Iron Works near Russellville, Alabama (Deshler 1833).

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The entire site, which is presently covered with trees and brush, is part of a 48.7 acre tract of land being developed by the town of Sheffield as City Park West. The sites of Tuscumbia Landing are located in the northern and western portion of the proposed park. A cultural resource survey was made of the park in November 1976 (Hubbert 1976), and it was suggested that if no ground disturbance activities took place in the specific areas of the located physical remains, the development of the park would not disturb the historical integrity of the area. Nature trails are the only planned development for this area of the park (Gamble 1978).

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c 1824 **Builder/Architect** NA

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

TRANSPORTATION:

As the site of the terminus of the first railroad west of the Appalachian Mountains and an important early 19th-century river landing, Tuscumbia Landing is primarily significant for its associations with the development of transportation in the United States, and for the information it may contain on early rail and river transportation.

EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT:

It is locally significant for its associations with the settlement and growth of the city of Tuscumbia.

* * * * *

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 7.0

Quadrangle name Tuscumbia

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>4</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D	<u>1</u> <u>6</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3</u> <u>3</u> <u>5</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>	<u>3</u> <u>8</u> <u>4</u> <u>5</u> <u>3</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

E	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

F	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

G	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

H	<u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>	<u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u> <u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code
-------	------------	------	--------	------------	------

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard C. Sheridan

organization NA date Dec. 1981

street & number 105 Terrace Street telephone 386-2601

city or town Sheffield state Alabama

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature [Signature]

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 4-11-82

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>William H. Brannan</u>	date <u>6.10.82</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>[Signature]</u>	date <u>6/8/82</u>
Chief of Registration	

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

In 1815, Michael Dickson, considered to be the first Euro-American settler of Tuscumbia, with his wife and our sons, came up the Tennessee River by boat to Coldwater Creek (now Spring Creek) and then traveled a short way up the creek to the big spring where they built a cabin. They were joined in May 1817 by the Randall Johnson family who arrived the same way. For several years these early Tuscumbia settlers were supplied by keel boats which could sometimes ascend the creek to the newly established town (Leftwich 1965: 45, 46, 67).

The first steamboat in the Muscle Shoals area probably arrived in 1821. Steamboats could not navigate Spring Creek, and Tuscumbia Landing was built prior to 1824. The New Orleans and Tuscumbia Steamboat Company was organized in January 1825, and regular lines were established to connect Tuscumbia with New Orleans and towns on the Ohio River (Leftwich 1965: 66).

At first, wagons were used to connect Tuscumbia to its landing. In 1830 the Tuscumbia Railway Company was chartered to provide a horsepowered railroad from the town to the river (Patterson 1956: 33). David Hubbard, a local planter who went to Pennsylvania to see one of the early railroads, is credited with the idea. The Tuscumbia railroad was the first in Alabama, and also the first west of the Appalachian Mountains (Ties 1960: 4). Ground was broken on June 5, 1831, and the road was constructed under the supervision of David Deshler, an engineer (Deshler 1833).

Several thousand people celebrated the completion of the railroad on July 12, 1832. Before the Tuscumbia railroad was completed, plans were made to extend it to Decatur to provide a route around the Muscle Shoals which effectively barred river transportation (The Nashville Republican 1834). The new line was completed in late 1834, and was known as the Tuscumbia, Courtland, and Decatur Railroad. This line used steam locomotives which were shipped by water to Tuscumbia Landing. These railroads were used to haul tremendous quantities of cotton to the river for shipment on steamers.

Thousands of Creek and Cheokee Indians passed through Tuscumbia Landing in the late 1830s on their way to new homes in the west. A party of 511 Creeks from Wetumpka arrived at the Landing on December 21, 1835. The Indians, their wagons, beef and corn were embarked on December 23 on a small steamboat and two keel boats and carried to Waterloo for transfer to a larger boat (Foreman 1932: 142-143, 275). A party of Cherokees in 1837 included the noted chiefs Major Ridge and his son John Ridge. The Cherokees came by river to Decatur and transferred to the railroad cars. Ridge's party reached Tuscumbia at dark on March 10, 1837, and camped at the Landing to wait for the boats to take them down the river. On March 14, they continued downriver on the steamboat Newark (Wilkins 1970: 291). Another contingent of 875 Cherokees remained at the Landing several days in June, 1837, before boats could be secured for them. During this time two children died, and about 100 Indians escaped and fled to the woods (Fleischmann 1971: 55-56; and Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-1854: microfilm M 234).

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

During the antebellum period, the steamboats unloaded a great assortment of merchandise at Tuscumbia Landing for delivery to Tuscumbia and other towns in the Tennessee Valley. In the 1830s and 1840s, Tuscumbia storekeepers were able to advertise a variety of goods which they had received per steamer Homer or some other boat including sugar, coffee, whiskey, wines, brandies, peas, lead, shot, tobacco, cigars, candles, mahogany veneering, Ohio cheese, assortment of iron from Nashville, axes, rope, books, turpentine, surgar house molasses, nails, buckets, brooms, chairs, etc. (The North Alabamian 1841). The steamboats also carried passengers and many travelers used this mode of transportation (Stine 1927). The U. S. Mail was another service that was made possible by the steamboats and railroads by their connection at the Landing.

The Landing along with the town of Tuscumbia was occupied by Union Troops under Colonel Turchin in April 1862, and a steamboat unloaded 100,000 rations for them on April 23, 1862 (The War of the Rebellion: ORA, ser. 1, vol. 10, pt. 2:124-6). According to one report, the soldiers destroyed the Landing when they left a few days later (Leftwich 1965:190). In February 1863, five Union gunboats approached the landing to attach Confederate batteries reportedly here (The War of the Rebellion: ORN, ser. 1, vol 23:309-315). In April 1863, 1,700 Confederate troops were stationed at the Landing (The War of the Rebellion: ORA, ser. 1, vol. 23, pt. 2:245-6). Later that month, Union troops under General G. M. Dodge occupied the valley, and destroyed the ferries, railroad, mills, tanyards, and everything that would in any way render aid to the rebels (The War of the Rebellion: ORA, ser. 1, vol 23, pt. 1:246-250). Tuscumbia Landing was certainly demolished at this time if it had not been completely destroyed earlier by Colonel Turchin. On April 11, 1864, Colonel James Jackson and his Confederates crossed the river at the Landing on a brief raid into Lauderdale County, Alabama (McDonald 1960). In October 1864, General N. B. Forrest and his cavalry command hid on Seven Mile Island to escape a large enemy force on the north side of the river. Then out of sight of the Union troops, the ferriage was continued to Tuscumbia Landing for two days and nights until all the troops were safely over (Wyeth 1959:445-446).

After the war, Tuscumbia Landing was occasionally visited by steamboats, but Florence became the main port of the Muscle Shoals area. In 1867 the steamer M. Burns advertised its services to the people of Tuscumbia (Florence Journal 1867). In 1869, "the new and light steamer Le Claire" listed Tuscumbia and Florence as shipping points (Florence Journal 1869). In 1874 it was reported that five steamboats were regularly running to Tuscumbia and Florence (North Alabamiam 1875). However, the warehouses at the Landing and railroad leading to it were never rebuilt. In the late 1880s another landing was built about 1 mile upstream to serve the new and growing city of Sheffield.

Although Tuscumbia Landing is adjacent to a large archaeological district (Seven Mile Island Archaeological District, NRHP 4/16/79), there has been no evidence of significant prehistoric activity. From the limited and disturbed nature of the evidence, it has been postulated that the area was used on a limited basis in prehistoric times for the acquisition of lithic raw materials (Hubbard, 1976).

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

Carr, John

1958 Early times in middle Tennessee. The Parthenon Press, Nashville,
(reprint of 1853 edition).

Corbitt, D. C., and Roberta Corbitt

1939 Papers from the Spanish Archives relating to Tennessee and the
old southwest 1783-1800. The East Tennessee Historical Society
Publications, No. 11.

Deshler, David

1833 Tuscumbia, Courtland and Decatur Railroad. Railroad Journal, 2,
No. 30, July 27, 1833.

Fleischmann, Glen

1971 The Cherokee Removal, 1838. Franklin Watts, Inc., New York.

Florence Journal

October 18, 1867.

Florence Journal

January 21, 1869.

Foreman, Grant

1932 Indian Removal. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Gamble, Kathy

1978 In Sheffield park work proceeding. Florence Times-Tri Cities
Daily. Florence, Alabama, February 26, 1978.

Haywood, John

1969 The civil and political history of the state of Tennessee.
The Tanase Company, Knoxville, (reprint of 1823 edition).

Hubbert, Charles

1976 Correspondence to Mike Johnson, Director of the Sheffield
Recreation Department, regarding cultural resource survey of
City Park West. November 21, 1976. Copy on file, Alabama
Historical Commission, Montgomery, Alabama.

Leftwich, Nina

1965 Two hundred years at Muscle Shoals. American Southern, Northport,
Alabama, (reprint of 1935 edition).

McDonald, William L.

1960 Colonel James Jackson's raid in Lauderdale County, April 11,
1864. Bulletin of the North Alabama Historical Association, 5, 10.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Railroad Journal

1832 Railroad. Railroad Journal, 1, no. 20, May 12, 1832.

Ramsey, J.G.M.

1926 The annals of Tennessee to the end of the eighteenth century.
Kingsport Press, Kingsport, Tennessee, (reprint of 1853 edition).

Stine, Rosa

1927 Correspondence from Rosa Stine, Tuscumbia, Alabama, to Frank King, Leighton, Alabama, August 1, 1927. Copy on file in Nina Leftwich Papers, Wesleyan Archives, University of North Alabama, Florence, Alabama.

The Nashville Republican

Jan. 30, 1834 (quoting from the Huntsville Southern Mercury).

The North Alabamian

Jan. 23, 1841.
Feb. 25, 1875

The War of the Rebellion: A compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate Armies (ORA)

Series 1, vol. 10, p. 2
Series 1, vol. 23, p. 1 and 2

The War of the Rebellion: A compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate Navies (ORN)

Series 1, vol. 23.

Ties

1960 Benjamin Sherrod's Iron River, First Railroad in Alabama.
Ties, 14,4.

United States Ordinance Department

1922 Report on the Fixation and Utilization of Nitrogen. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington.

Wilkins, Thurman

1970 Cherokee tragedy: the story of the Ridge family and the decimation of a people. The Macmillan Company, New York.

Wyeth, John A.

1959 That devil Forrest: life of General Nathan Bedford Forrest. Harper and Brothers, New York, (reprint of 1899 edition).

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 3

Office of Indian Affairs

1924-54 Miscellaneous letters in "Letters received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-1854," microfilm M234, Rolls 13-16, National Archives Branch, Atlanta, Georgia.

Patterson, E. F.

1956 Alabama's First Railroad. Alabama Review, 9, 33.

(11/78)

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

Beginning at the point on the northeastern shore where Spring Creek flows into the Tennessee River; proceed in a northeasterly direction approximately 250 to a point on the eastern shore of the Tennessee River (16/433520/3845300). The true point of beginning; then south $88^{\circ} 57'$ east for approximately 550' to a point, then proceed in a North $58^{\circ} 12'$ east direction for approximately 500 feet to a point; then due south to a point on the northern shore line of Spring Creek; then proceed in a westerly direction along said shoreline to the Tennessee River; then northeasterly along the Tennessee River shoreline to the point of beginning.

(See Red line on Attached 1" = 500' map)

CITY PARK WEST
Land presently owned by TVA

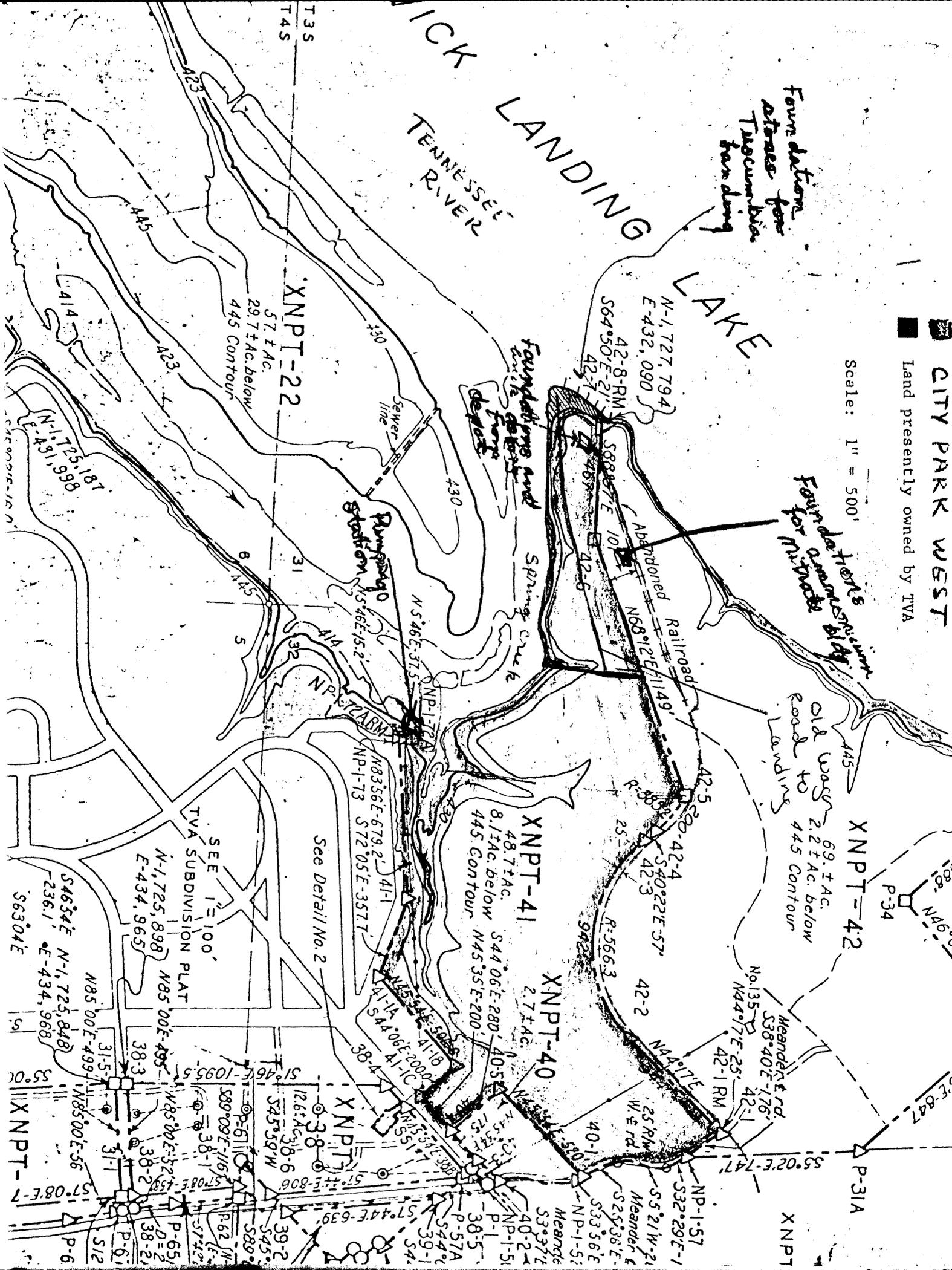
Scale: 1" = 500'

Four detours for
storage for
Tennessee
landing

Foundations
for
detours
for
storage

Old ways
road to
landings
445
contour

ICK LANDING LAKE
TENNESSEE
RIVER



XNPT-22
57.1 Ac.
29.7 Ac. below
445 Contour

XNPT-41
48.7 Ac.
8.1 Ac. below
445 Contour

XNPT-40
2.7 Ac.

XNPT-42
69.1 Ac.
2.2 Ac. below
445 Contour

SEE 1" = 100'
TVA SUBDIVISION PLAT

See Detail No. 2

S4634E N-1, 725, 848
-236.1' E-434, 968
S6304E

N8500E-499'

N8500E-495'

XNPT-7

XNPT-8

XNPT-9

XNPT-10

XNPT-11

XNPT-12

XNPT-13

XNPT-14

XNPT-15

XNPT-16

XNPT-17

XNPT-18

XNPT-19

XNPT-20

XNPT-21

XNPT-22

XNPT-23

XNPT-24

XNPT-25

XNPT-26

XNPT-27

XNPT-28

XNPT-29

XNPT-30

XNPT-31

XNPT-32

XNPT-33

XNPT-34