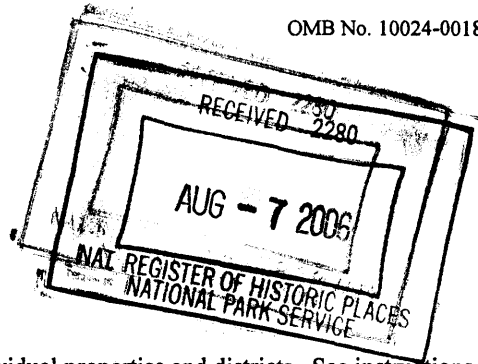


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**United States Department of Interior
National Park Service**



**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Bloyer Mound Group

Other names/site number Twin Lizard Mound Group, Catfish Mound Group, 47RI406/47RI410

2. Location

street & number	State Highway 60, 1500 feet southwest of County Highway 'OO'	N/A	not for publication
city or town	Town of Orion	N/A	vicinity
state Wisconsin	code WI county Richland	code 103	zip code 53556

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered nationally statewide locally (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title

Aug 1, 2006
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer - Wisconsin

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
 See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Bloyer Mound Group

Richland County

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

For Erik K. Martin Seibert
Signature of the Keeper

9/18/06
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- structure
- site
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

contributing	noncontributing
	buildings
1	sites
	structures
	objects
1	0 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property Listing).

Late Woodland Stage in Arch. Region 8

Number of contributing resources if previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/Ceremonial Site

FUNERARY/Graves/Burials

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Outdoor Recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

Other N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Bloyer Mound Group
Name of Property

Richland County
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHAEOLOGY/Prehistoric
RELIGION

Period of Significance

AD 750 - 1000

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Effigy Mound Culture
Late Woodland Stage

Architect/Builder

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Bloyer Mound Group
Name of Property

Richland County
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- X Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- X Other

Name of repository:

Wisconsin Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 15 Acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>710444</u>	<u>4786355</u>	3	<u>15</u>	<u>710434</u>	<u>4786194</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>15</u>	<u>710576</u>	<u>4786300</u>	4	<u>15</u>	<u>710252</u>	<u>4786295</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title	Amy L. Rosebrough	Date	03/01/2006
Organization	Wisconsin Historical Society	Telephone	(608) 264-6494
Street & number	816 State Street	zip code	53706
City or town	Madison, WI	state	WI

Bloyer Mound Group
Name of Property

Richland County
County and State

Wisconsin

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

Name/title	Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	Date	03/01/2006
Organization	State of Wisconsin	Telephone	1-608-266-2621
Street&number	101 South Webster Street	zip code	53707-7921
city or town	Madison	state	WI
Name/title	Dave Aigner	Date	03/01/2006
Organization		Telephone	1-608-739-4168
Street&number	23023 Aigner Drive	zip code	53573
city or town	Muscoda	state	WI

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Form 1040-10/05

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 7 Page 1

Bloyer Mound Group, Richland County WI

Narrative Description:

The Bloyer Mound Group (47RI407/410) comprises a Late Woodland Stage/Effigy Mound culture mortuary and ceremonial center (ca. AD 750-1000). The site is located on a fluvial terrace on the north bank of the Wisconsin River east of Orion, Wisconsin (Figure One). It stands within Sections 5 and 6, Town 08N, Range 01E, in the civil township of Orion.

The site is divided into two subgroups. The Twin Lizard Mounds (47RI407) are located on a low terrace of the Wisconsin River. They are in excellent condition, and remain in essentially the same condition as when first noted in the 19th century. The Catfish mounds (47RI410) are located on the edge of a higher terrace above the Twin Lizard subgroup. Only a fragment of a single mound in this subgroup remains. Surface indications of the remainder of the sub-group were completely destroyed by agricultural activities.

In total, the Bloyer Mound Group consists of four bird effigies, two "turtle" mounds, one bear mound, one "catfish" mound, nine linear mounds and two conical mounds. All surface indications of the "catfish" mound, located in the Catfish sub-group (47RI410) have been destroyed. Likewise, all but one fragment of the sole bird mound in the Catfish sub-group has vanished. The remaining mounds, all located within the Twin Lizard sub-group are extant (47RI406), and in good condition.

Environment and Setting:

The appearance of the site during the period of significance is unknown. GLO surveyors documented the presence of a thin and young oak forest with elm nearer the river (Sibley 1833). It is likely that a somewhat more open environment was present between AD 750 and AD 1000. At the current time the mounds lie within a young forest dominated by oak, hickory, elm and thorny brush. The Bloyer home, which once sat at the southern edge of the Twin Lizard sub-group (47RI406) has been removed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Cultural Background:

Zoomorphic, linear and small conical mounds are attributable to the Effigy Mound culture, a variant of the Late Woodland stage centered in the southern two-thirds of Wisconsin, far northern Illinois, extreme southeastern Minnesota and northeastern Iowa. Artifact analysis and radiocarbon dating indicate that the culture appeared between AD 600 and AD 700, and vanished between AD 1000 and AD 1200 (Salkin 2000, Stevenson et al 1997, Stoltman and Christiansen 2000).

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Section 7 Page 2

Bloyer Mound Group, Richland County WI

Late Woodland stage sites containing effigy mounds fall within a broad area characterized by oak savanna, and seem to be limited by the presence of open prairie to the west and south, by Lake Michigan to the east and by the southern limit of the boreal forest on the north. Effigy mounds are not distributed evenly over this area, but fall within discrete clusters concentrated in approximately twenty localities. The localities are distributed along the courses of major rivers, including the Mississippi, Wisconsin, Kickapoo, Baraboo, Yahara, Rock and Fox rivers (Rosebrough 2006).

It seems likely that each locality served as the core territory of a single macro-band. Mound style and characteristics of mound group layout vary from locality to locality. Furthermore, each locality is dominated by a small number of mound types, which also vary from locality to locality. This distribution of mound types is consistent with the use of effigies as corporate markers (e.g. clan totems). These factors support the presence of distinct territories inhabited by a number of related corporate groups (Rosebrough 2006). Settlement models derived from studies in the western Driftless Area posit a seasonal round with population dispersal into the uplands in winter months and population aggregation in large river valleys in the summer (Benn 1979, 1980, Mallam 1976, Storck 1972, Theler 1987). Mound construction and ritual would presumably have taken place during times of population aggregation, within the locality cores.

Overall, Effigy Mound subsistence was characterized by an incipient horticultural strategy that mixed the limited production of maize and other cultigens with the collection and processing of deer and resources suitable for bulk storage (i.e., mussels, berries, fish and nuts) (Benn 1979, Benn and Green 2000, Salkin 2000, Schroeder 2001, Stevenson et al 1997, Stoltman 1990, Stoltman and Christiansen 2000, Zalucha 1985). Some localities may have relied more heavily on maize horticulture than others (compare Stoltman and Christiansen 2000 and Salkin 2000).

Excavations at Effigy Mound habitation and mortuary sites have revealed evidence of ceramic, lithic, bone, ground stone and textile craft production (Hurley 1975, McKern 1928: Plate LI, Figure 1, Rowe 1956: 56). Bow-and-arrow technology was introduced into the upper Midwest shortly before the rise of Effigy Mound. During the mature Late Woodland, several small arrow point types were utilized, including Klunk Corner-Notched, Madison Triangular, and Grant Side-Notched (Baerreis 1953, Hurley 1975, McKern 1930, Stevenson et al 1997). Effigy Mound pottery varied regionally, and included ceramics grouped within the Madison ware, as well as Collared ware types, Grant series ceramics and Angelo Punctate. Decorated vessels of each ware (excluding Angelo Punctate) were impressed with geometric patterns obtained by impressing cord and textiles into wet clay (Boszhardt 1996, Rosebrough 2006, Stevenson et al 1997, Stoltman and Christiansen 2000).

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**National Register of Historic Places
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Section 7 Page 3

Bloyer Mound Group, Richland County WI

Evidence for the long-distance trade of exotic items or raw materials is sparse. Orthoquartzite, obtained from northwestern Wisconsin, appears to have been the most common non-perishable trade item. Lake Superior copper awls, wedges and beads have been recovered from habitation and mortuary contexts. Galena cubes, obtained from southwestern Wisconsin, northwestern Illinois or northeastern Iowa, are also occasionally found at Effigy Mound sites. Ceramic elbow pipes are the most commonly encountered ritual item encountered (Stoltman and Christiansen 2000: 511-512).

The most distinctive trait of the culture is the construction of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic earthen mounds. Effigy mounds often contain evidence of the ritual use of fire, colored earth and water. Effigy Mound communities also continued to erect conical mounds, as well as linear mounds and a number of geometric or abstract forms. Such mounds are probably as symbolic as zoomorphic effigies, but do not yield their meanings as readily to modern researchers. The zoomorphic and anthropomorphic effigies for which the period is best known come in a number of forms, and represent several classes of animals.

The most common forms are those of birds, so-called "bears," long-tailed forms commonly known as "panthers," shorter-tailed animals in several varieties, and so-called "turtles" (animal forms shown in plan view). Less common types include those representing cranes or waterfowl, birds with forked tails, and animals with elongated bodies. The remaining effigy mound types are truly rare, and include deer, rabbits, horned birds or bats, anthropomorphs, buffalo, fish, and rattlesnakes (Rosebrough and Birmingham 2003, Rosebrough 2006, Rowe 1956).

Effigy Mound burial regimes were quite variable. Articulated and bundle burials, cremations, pit burials, primary mound floor and primary mound fill burials are all commonly encountered. Mound construction ranged between simple single-stage construction episodes using local soils placed over unaltered ground surfaces, to multi-stage construction using colored non-local soils, placed over elaborately prepared mound floors. The only consistency in burial regime was the preferred placement of the deceased near the "heart" of the effigy, followed by alternative but anatomically significant locations such as the head, mid-body or "hip" of the mound. Grave goods were rarely included with burials, and were generally utilitarian in nature (Birmingham and Eisenberg 2000, Rosebrough 2006, Stevenson et al 1997, Stoltman and Christiansen 2000).

To date, the only firmly dated Late Woodland ceremonial site not associated with mounds is that of the Gottschall Rockshelter, which yielded small, egg-shell thin, highly-decorated ceramics that may have been produced specifically as offerings or for ritual use. A spectacular carved and painted stone head

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Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 4

Bloyer Mound Group, Richland County WI

was recovered from the same strata. A panel of petroglyphs that may depict part of the historically documented "Red Horn" narrative has also been associated with Effigy Mound levels at the shelter (Salzer 1997). It has been theorized that the shelter served as the locus of long-term ritual, possibly tied into an ancestral cult.

History of Investigations:

In the early 1840's the Bloyer Mound Group was visited by S. Taylor, who was intrigued by the large effigy mounds he found there. He noted the presence of mounds resembling "the form of the frog", as well as bird mounds, animal mounds and linear mounds (Taylor 1843: 28).

The next reference to the site in the archaeological literature was penned in 1886 by T. H. Lewis, an itinerant surveyor in the employ of Alfred Hill and the Northwestern Archaeological Survey. Lewis mapped the entirety of the site, and noted two additional mounds on the terrace above the Bloyer Mound Group (the Catfish sub-group [47RI410] (Lewis 1886: 13, 15). Surface indications of this second set of mounds, consisting of one bird mound and one problematic mound resembling a fish, appear to have been largely destroyed. A linear feature that is likely to be one wing of the bird mound is all that remains.

The Wisconsin Historical Society became aware of a proposed residential development plan for the Bloyer property in the summer of 2000. It quickly became clear that the intensive nature of the project was not compatible with the parcel for a variety of reasons— including the presence of the mound group. During negotiations with the developer, crews with the Wisconsin Historical Society-State Archaeology and Maritime Preservation program flagged the boundaries of the group as part of the burial sites cataloging process under Wis. Statutes 157.70. A registered survey was completed shortly afterward, and the site was formally cataloged.

After the prospective developer withdrew from the project, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) expressed interest in protecting the mounds and adjacent natural resources. The department used Stewardship funds to purchase the property in 2003. The former Bloyer home was subsequently torn down. Trails and interpretative material were developed by the Lower Wisconsin Riverway Board. They are now available to the public, allowing them to learn more about this rare and sacred heritage resource.

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Bloyer Mound Group, Richland County WI

Current features:

All seventeen mounds mapped by T. H. Lewis at the Twin Lizard sub-group (47RI406) remain extant. The mounds are grouped into three irregular rows that parallel the river bank (Figure 2).

- Mound #1— This mound is a tail-less 'turtle' (an animal effigy depicted in plan view). It probably represents a bear. The effigy is unusually high, and has an unusual head angled towards the end of an adjacent short linear (Mound #3).
- Mound #2— This mound is a small conical. It lies south of Mound #1, on the edge of the northern bank of the Wisconsin River.
- Mound #3— This mound is a short linear. It lies west of Mound #1, and its eastern end abuts the head of the effigy.
- Mound #4— This mound is a bird mound, with non-symmetrical bent wings. The head of the effigy faces west. It appears to be "flying" downstream. The edge of the head of the mound has been slightly impacted by construction of the driveway to the Bloyer home. It lies southwest of Mound #3, close to the riverbank.
- Mound #5— This mound is the longest linear in the group. Its eastern end lies a short distance from the former northwestern corner of the Bloyer home, southwest of Mound #4. The eastern end has been slightly damaged by foot traffic and construction.
- Mound #6— This linear mound is located west and slightly north of Mound #5, in the southern-most row of mounds.
- Mound #7— This linear mound is located west and slightly south of Mound #6. It angles slightly from northeast to northwest, paralleling a minor bend in the riverbank. It is the westernmost mound in the southern row.
- Mound #8— This mound is the largest bird effigy in the site. It has a fanned tail, bent wings and a sharply hooked beak and apparently represents a raptor. The top of the head of the bird has suffered minor damage from construction of the driveway to the Bloyer home. It is located west of, and in line with, Mound #3, in the northern row of mounds.
- Mound #9— This mound is the third bird effigy in the group. It has a rounded head, bent wings and a slightly fanned tail. It lies on the opposite side of the driveway from Mound #8, and continues the line of the northern row of mounds.
- Mound #10— Mound 10 is the largest effigy on site. It is similar to Mound #1, taking the form of 'turtle'. Like its twin to the east, the mound is unusually high for an effigy. The hind limbs are crooked, and the forelimbs are extended forward. The head lies to the west, and abuts the eastern end of a short linear mound (Mound #11). This mound is the easternmost in the central row of mounds. It is southwest of Mound #9, but near

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Section 7 Page 6

Bloyer Mound Group, Richland County WI

enough so that the right rear limb touches the left wing of the bird effigy.

Mound #11— This mound is a short linear mound, that conjoins the head of Mound #10. It lies directly west of, and in line with, the effigy.

Mound #12— This mound lies north of the right front limb of Mound #10. It is a short linear that continues the northern row of mounds.

Mound #13— This linear mound is essentially identical to Mound #12. It is west of Mound #12, and continues the northern row of mounds.

Mound #14— This is the second conical mound in the group. It lies west of Mound #13, and east of Mound #16, in the northern row of mounds.

Mound #15— This is the only bear effigy in the group. It depicts a profile of the animal, with legs towards the river and the head pointed downstream. The effigy has prominent ears. It is the westernmost mound in the central row.

Mound #16— This mound is a short linear or long oval. It lies between conical Mound #14 and Mound #17 in the northern row of mounds.

Mound #17— This mound is the second-longest linear at the site. It lies slightly south and west of Mound #16, and is the westernmost mound in the northern row.

As noted previously, a partial mound seems to remain extant at the site of the Catfish mounds. Its surface configuration and orientation roughly match that of the bird effigy identified by Lewis. It currently sits within a fenced woodlot just south of the entrance road and east of the drive leading to the former Bloyer home.

End of Description of Physical Appearance

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Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 1

Bloyer Mound Group, Richland County, WI

Statement of Significance

The Bloyer Mound Group, built between AD 750 and 1000 by participants in the Effigy Mound Culture, meets the registration requirements of the property type, "Late Woodland Mounds" as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation, "Late Woodland Stage in Archaeological Region 8". The site contains seventeen mounds, including two "turtle" effigies, three bird effigies and one bear effigy. The turtle mounds are unusually large, and are of a type rare in western Wisconsin. The site is unusually well-preserved, and has the potential to yield important information about cosmological beliefs, ritual activity and social organization during the mature Late Woodland stage (AD 700-1000). It is thus eligible under Criterion D at the local level.

Land-Use

The Bloyer Mound Group is located in Fractional sections 5 and 6, which were among the first to be purchased by private hands during initial Euro-American settlement in the mid-1840's. The banks of the Wisconsin River were largely bypassed by development for the next century, though an east-west road was constructed along the north section line, and houses were constructed along it.

During the late 19th century and early 20th century the parcel containing the Bloyer Mound Group was owned by the Bobb family, who established a stock and fruit farm there (Harrison and Warner 1874, Hood 1895, Hixon 1915, 1920, 1924, Ogle 1919, Richland Rustic 1903). Their decision spared the Twin Lizard sub-group (47RI406) from the plow and helped preserve the mounds for nearly one-hundred years after settlement. Wisconsin Land Economic Inventory maps compiled in 1838 (Wisconsin Department of Agriculture 1933/1945) indicate that the site area was set aside as woodlot and "permanent pasture." Cleared fields on the Bobb farm were limited to the higher terraces where the Catfish group once stood. In the 1940's ownership of the parcel was transferred to the Brenner family (General Map Co. 1949).

The Bloyer family purchased the property in the 1950's. They built a small house near the river, at the southern edge of the Twin Lizard sub-group (47RI406). The family was careful to wind the entrance drive between the mounds, and to avoid damage to the site during construction of the house and septic field. The fine condition of the site today is due, in no small part, to their consideration.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2

Bloyer Mound Group, Richland County, WI

Significance

The Effigy Mound culture flourished during a period not typically associated with complex ritual activity. The Late Woodland stage in Eastern North America has typically been characterized as an interregnum separating the complex Hopewell and Middle Mississippian societies. Effigy mound culture sites stand in stark contrast to this stereotype. Rather than simply providing data on a "good gray culture," effigy mound sites yield an invaluable snapshot of a population on the forefront of a revolution in subsistence practices, settlement patterns, material culture and ceremonial behavior.

Late Woodland peoples in Wisconsin, and bordering counties in adjacent states, participated in a series of developments that set the stage for fully horticultural societies, sedentary settlements, Middle Mississippian expansion, and the Oneota emergence. Late Woodland peoples initiated a cycle of resource intensification within their territories, beginning mass harvests of native nuts and seeds, fish and shellfish. Maize horticulture was introduced to the region during this period, and was adopted to varying degrees by different communities (Benn and Green 2000, Salkin 2000, Stoltman and Christiansen 2000).

By AD 1000 some Late Woodland peoples in the region had begun to aggregate together in semi-sedentary villages and construct raised fields. A small number of these villages (Aztalan being the most prominent) participated in Middle Mississippian trade. The Upper Mississippian Oneota appear in the archaeological record at this point, possibly as the result of interaction between Late Woodland and Middle Mississippian peoples (Stoltman and Christiansen 2000).

Between AD 750 and AD 1100, as these events were taking place, Late Woodland peoples in the Upper Midwest constructed hundreds of mound groups containing thousands of mounds. The largest and most complex groups are those built by Effigy Mound peoples. Effigy Mound sites are concentrated into a series of distinct localities, each probably marking the core territory of a macro-band (Figure 3).

Mound construction was primarily tied to mortuary ritual, but mound sites are believed to have also served as seasonal ritual centers, where world-renewal ceremonies were conducted during periods of population aggregation (Benn 1979, Mallam 1976, 1984). The forms of individual mounds at each site are thought to represent the corporate group affiliations of those either buried within the mound or participating in the ceremony (Mallam 1976, Radin 1911, S. Taylor 1843). Effigy forms may also represent animals and spirits prominent in Late Woodland cosmology (Birmingham and Eisenberg

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Section 8 Page 3

Bloyer Mound Group, Richland County, WI

2000, Mallam 1976, Rosebrough 2003). Though the Bloyer Mound Group was utilized for human burial, the age of the site and its use for significant social and cosmological ritual mitigate criteria consideration D.

The Orion-Muscoda area in Richland and Iowa Counties was once home to a spectacularly large and dense concentration of mature Late Woodland stage mortuary sites, grouped within the Eagle Township locality (Rosebrough 2006). Most mound sites in the vicinity were built on terraces within the floodplain of the Wisconsin River, on land later prized for agricultural development. The largest groups, on the English Prairie in Iowa County and near Mill Creek in Richland County, were plowed under by 1900. Since that time cabins and homes have been built along the north shore of the Wisconsin, destroying mounds spared by agricultural development. Only a handful of mounds located in woodlots and on the summits of hills and ridge spurs have survived.

The Eagle Township locality is one of the more intriguing Effigy Mound localities defined in Wisconsin. It is distinguished by several factors:

First, the locality surrounds the former mouth of Morrey Creek, which drains the coulee leading from the Gottschall Rockshelter. Deposits dating to the period of effigy mound construction indicate that the shelter was the focus of ritual behavior, including the deposition of man-made sediments, the creation of rock art, feasting activity and possible ancestor worship. The main pictograph panel in the cave has been dated to the tenth century AD. It appears to depict a scene from the Red Horn Narrative, ethnographically known to have survived among the Ho-Chunk and Ioway (Salzer and Rajnovich 2000).

Second, mound densities are so high near the center of the locality that it is difficult to distinguish between individual sites. The Eagle Township group (47RI38), a massive mortuary complex at the heart of the locality, arches around a known Late Woodland habitation site; only the Silvernale phase groups at Diamond Bluff in far northwestern Wisconsin are known to do likewise (Maxwell 1950, Svec 1986). Though excavations in the habitation site area have been extremely limited, they have served to date the complex to ca. 900-1000 A.D..

Third, there is evidence that maize horticulture may have been practiced by its residents. Effigies at two sites—Wolf (47RI146) and Schaeffer (47RI39)—appear to overlie ridged fields (William Gartner personal communication 2000, Lewis 1886: 9). Excavations at the habitation site at Schaeffer (47RI80) have yielded pits with charred maize in association with mature Late Woodland material (Christiansen 2003).

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Section 8 Page 4

Bloyer Mound Group, Richland County, WI

Fourth, the locality contains an unusual proportion of mound types. Conical mounds are relatively—and unusually—rare. Fewer than half the effigy sites in the locality (49%) contain conicals. Only 21% contain more than two. Most conical mounds in the locality are, in fact, concentrated within six widely-spaced sites. It is likely, given the size of the central mound in the ‘citadel’ at the Eagle Township group that mortuary activity began there prior to the Late Woodland (S. Taylor 1843). Early Woodland ceremonial caches and Middle Woodland ritual artifacts have been collected from the vicinity of the Beckwith Group in the Lower Pine River cluster as well (Siefert 1903a, 1903b, 1907). It appears that the large Late Woodland site clusters accreted around these early mortuary centers, like pearls around grains of sand.

Finally, some of the largest and most unusual effigies ever constructed lie within the locality. Massive bird and fork-tailed bird effigies with wingspans approaching and even exceeding 900 feet are known to have stood at McCleary I (47RI211) (Birmingham and Eisenberg 2000: 65, Fig. 2.12, Lewis 1886: 52). ‘Horned’ birds and extremely rare anthropomorphic mounds were built at several sites. The large ‘turtle’ mounds at Bloyer are a locally rare type. Indeed, they are the only mounds of their type recorded in the locality. They seem to represent bear effigies, which are common in the Driftless Area, but the use of the plan-view ‘turtle’-style evident at the site is more often encountered in the Rock River drainage in eastern Wisconsin.

The Eagle Township locality once contained one of the most massive concentrations of effigy mounds in southern Wisconsin (Figure 4). Tragically, very few mounds remain extant. The Bloyer Mound Group is a prominent exception. The Twin Lizard sub-group (47RI406) is in essentially pristine condition—a rare condition where mound sites of any age are concerned. The property is a good candidate for non-intrusive remote-sensing investigations. Limited testing may also be of value at the margins of the mound group, to see if habitation material is associated here as at 47RI38 and 47RI39.

Eligibility Statement for Criterion D

Surviving effigy mounds have previously been considered potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under the multi-property nomination “Late Woodland Stage in Archaeological Region 8” (Birmingham 1990). With the exception of two mounds in the Catfish sub-group (47RI410), the Bloyer Mound Group is exceptionally well preserved. There are no indications that they have ever been excavated or looted. The Bloyer Mound Group has the potential to yield significant information on Late Woodland stage societies and is therefore eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D. The mounds, their setting, and any intact deposits

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within and surrounding them have the potential to inform researchers about aspects of Effigy Mound culture social structure, ritual, cosmology and land use patterns.

Eligibility Statement for Criteria Considerations A and D

It is likely that the Bloyer mound group was utilized for both ritual and mortuary purposes. Though cemeteries and religious sites are usually not considered eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places due to criteria consideration A and D, the antiquity of the site and its potential to illuminate facets of Late Woodland ceremonialism, cosmology, social structure and mortuary ritual mitigate the consideration.

Summary

The Bloyer Mound Group (47RI407/410) was constructed by participants in the Effigy Mound variant of the Late Woodland stage between AD 750 and 1000. They are located on a fluvial terrace on the north bank of the Wisconsin River, near Orion, Wisconsin. The group contains a total of nineteen mounds, including bird, bear, rare 'turtle' and 'catfish' effigies, divided into two sub-groups. Surface indications of the northern sub-group, containing one bird mound and one catfish mound, have been largely destroyed, though sub-surface deposits may still be intact. The remaining mounds are in excellent condition, having been well cared for by past landowners. The parcel was purchased by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in 2003. Trails and interpretative material were subsequently developed by the Lower Wisconsin Riverway Board and Cultural Landscape Legacies and made available to the public.

This well-preserved site expands our knowledge concerning Effigy Mound period iconography. The site is also one of the very few relatively intact remnants of the massive cluster of ritual sites within the poorly-understood Eagle Township locality. The site has the potential to yield important information about cosmological beliefs, ritual activity and social organization during the mature Late Woodland stage (AD 700-1000), and is thus eligible under Criterion D at the local level.

Effigy and linear mound construction ceased sometime around A.D. 1200-1300. Though limited conical mound construction was undertaken by Oneota peoples and possibly by post-contact Siouan-speaking groups, intensive mound ritual essentially ended in Wisconsin prior to A.D. 1400. However, funerary and other ritual continued to take place at mound groups, conducted by Oneota and post-contact Native peoples. Sites like the Bloyer Mound Group retain their spiritual and cultural importance to this day, and are still considered sacred by Wisconsin's Native Peoples.

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Boundary Description

The NRHP boundary is essentially described as a diamond-shape enclosing the extant mounds on Government Lot 5 in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Fractional Section 6 and the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Fractional Section 5 and on Government Lot 6 in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Fractional Section 5 in Town 8 North, Range 1 East, Township of Orion. The southwest and southeast sides of the diamond follow the northern bank of the Wisconsin River from the former location of the Bloyer house to points approximately 300 feet east and 800 feet west. The northern vertex of the diamond is located approximately 450 feet north of the former location of the Bloyer house. Please refer to the attached boundary map for survey coordinates.

Boundary Justification

The boundary incorporates all extant mounds at the site, including the fragmentary bird mound in the Catfish sub-group (47RI410). They include all catalogued mounds and a minimum five-foot buffer around them, as depicted on a registered survey plat (attached).

Top of Boundary Descriptions

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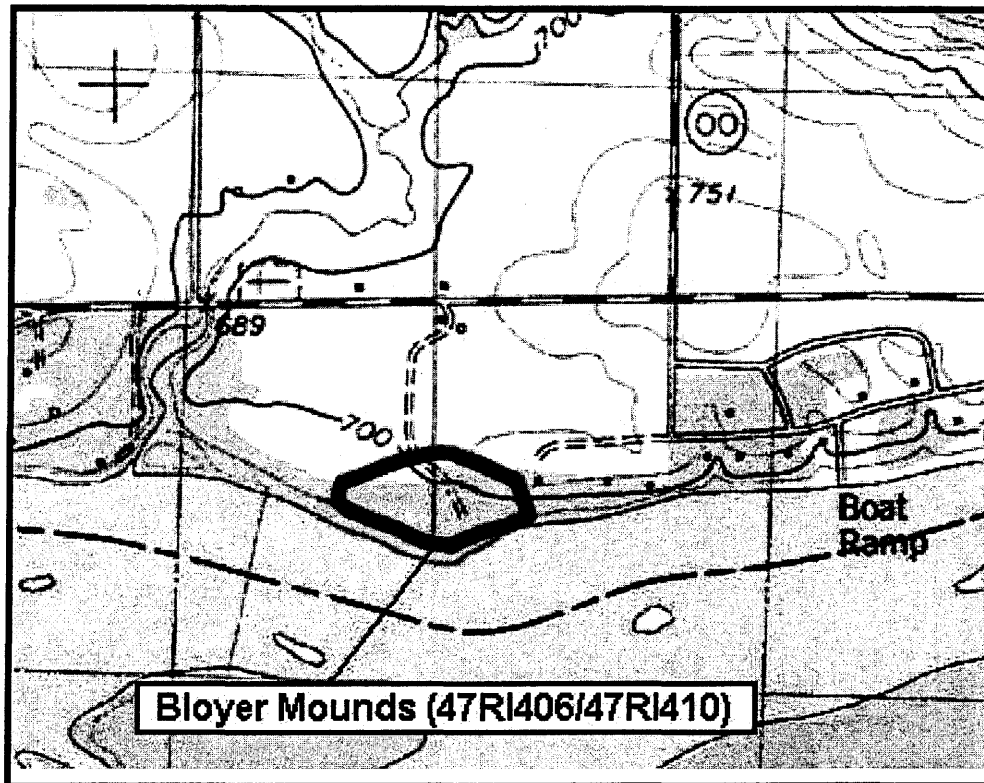


Figure One: Location of the Bloyer Mound Group on the U.S.G.S. 1983 Muscoda 7.5' Topographic Map, showing proposed NRHP boundaries.

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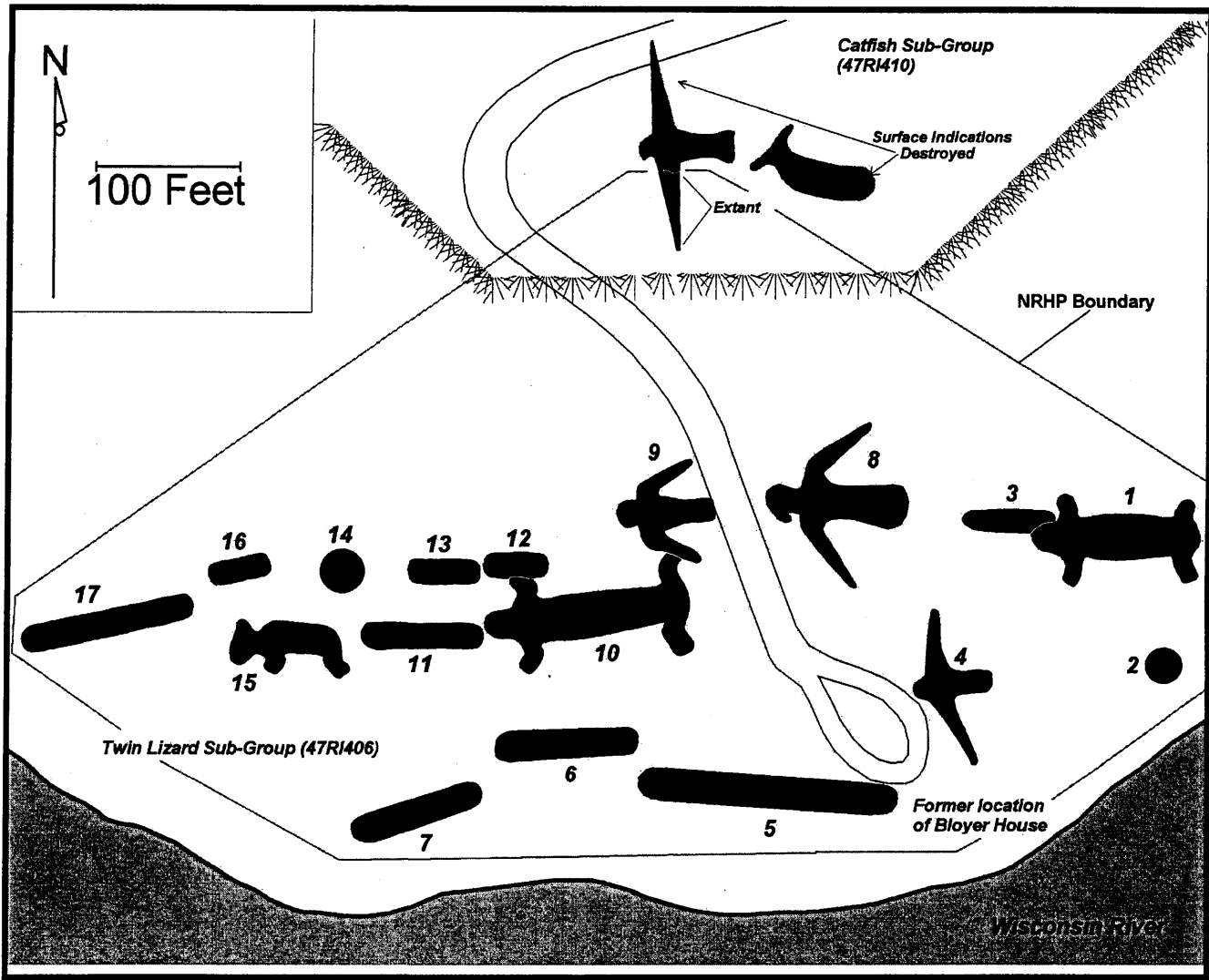


Figure Two: The Bloyer Mound Group, showing location of the driveway to the former Bloyer home, and relative locations of the Twin Lizard (47RI406) and Catfish (47RI410) sub-groups.

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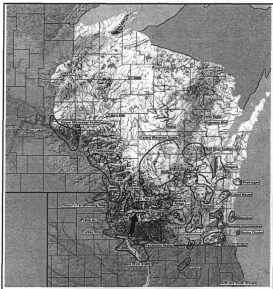


Figure Three: Distribution of individual Effigy Mound localities, site clusters, site scatters and isolated sites within Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois (Rosebrough 2006). The Bloyer Mound Group is part of the Eagle Township locality (arrow).

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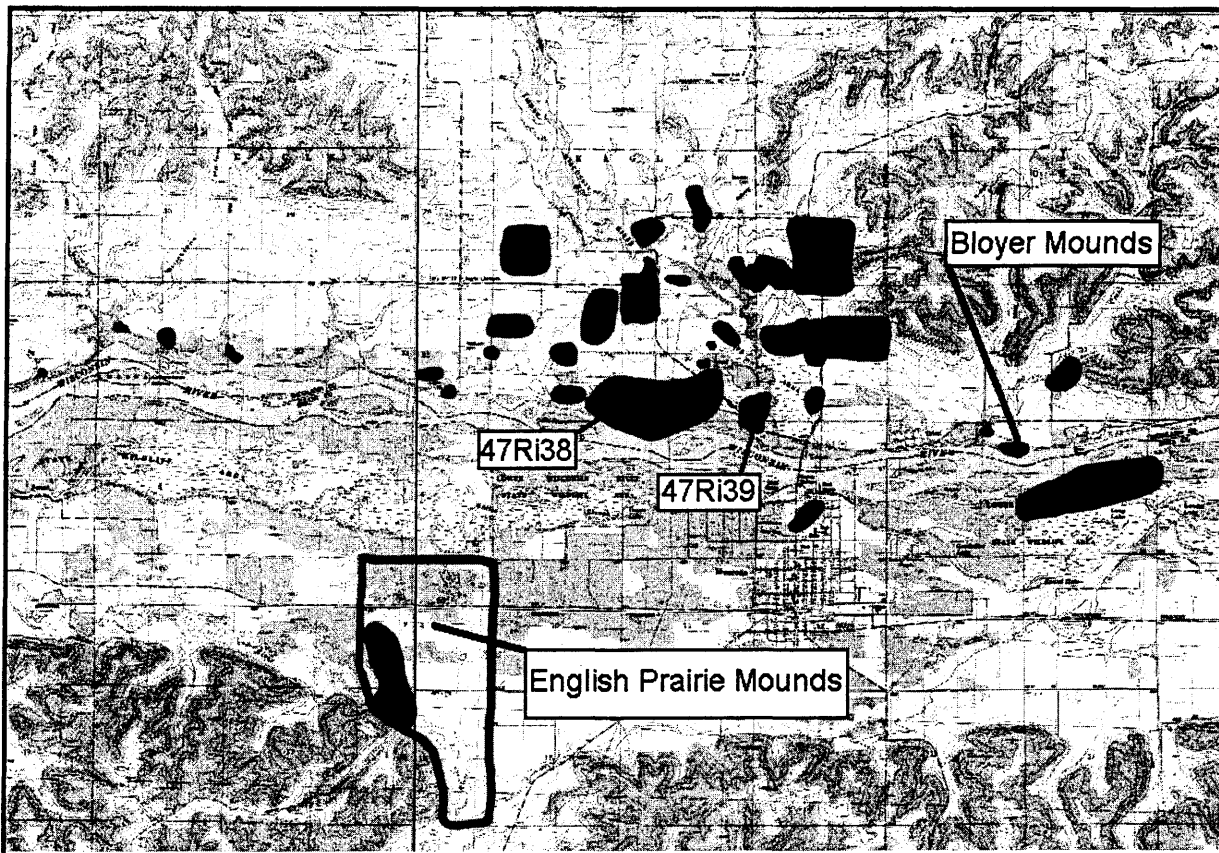
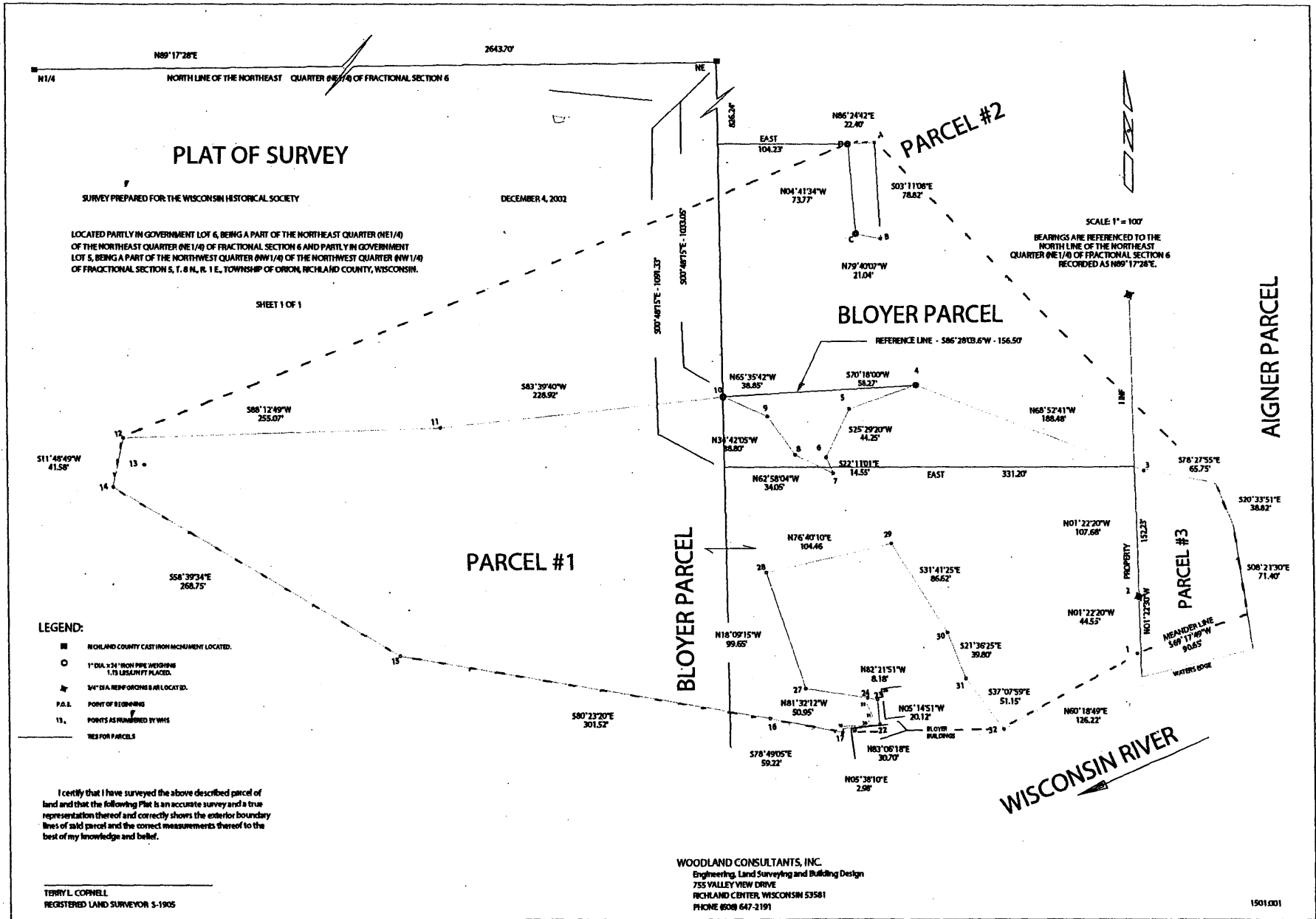


Figure Four: Distribution of mound sites within the Eagle Township Locality.

NRHP Boundaries of the Boyer Mound Group (47RI406/47RI410)

Richland County, Wisconsin



NRHP Boundary