

# Archaeological Investigations Northwest, Inc.

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## MEMO

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Date: August 26, 2021

To: Jenny Anderson, Park Analyst/Project Manager, Lake Oswego Parks & Recreation

From: Kelley Prince Martinez, M.S., R.P.A., Supervising Archaeologist  
Samantha Gordon, M.S., Architectural Historian

Re: Rassekh Park, Lake Oswego, Oregon  
Cultural Resource Assessment  
AINW Report No. 4654

Via Email: [janderson@ci.oswego.or.us](mailto:janderson@ci.oswego.or.us)

### Introduction

Archaeological Investigations Northwest, Inc., (AINW), conducted a cultural resource assessment of Rassekh Park in Clackamas County, Oregon (Figure 1). Rassekh Park is located northwest of the roundabout at the intersection of SW Stafford Road, Rosemont Road, and Atherton Drive within the Lake Oswego city limits. The cultural resource assessment included background research and a pedestrian survey. The goal of the study was to determine if an archaeological resource or a high probability area, where a buried archaeological resource may be present, are within the park. The City of Lake Oswego proposes to develop a new multi-purpose sports field and play area on the currently undeveloped 9.8-acre parcel.

### Background Research

AINW reviewed records online using the Oregon Archaeological Records Remote Access (OARRA) database administered by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to determine if archaeological resources have been recorded or if archaeological surveys have been completed within or near the project area. In addition to this research, historical maps and other documents on file at AINW and available online were examined to determine the potential for encountering archaeological resources.

One cultural resource survey conducted for the construction of the roundabout at SW Stafford Road and Rosemont Road partially overlaps the southeastern portion of the current project area (Musil 2003). No archaeological resources were identified as a result of the pedestrian survey and periodic shovel scrapes (Musil 2003). Six other cultural resource studies have been conducted within 1.6 kilometers (km) (1 mile [mi]) of the current project area.

- Three cultural resource studies were conducted for the replacement of the Stafford Road Bridge, which crosses the Tualatin River approximately 1.6 km (1 mi) south of the current project area (O'Brien and Smits 2005; Smits and Reese 2007, 2008). A possible well was identified during the

pedestrian survey. Archaeological monitoring was recommended if ground-disturbing activities occurred within the vicinity of the well (Smits and Reese 2007). No cultural resources were identified as a result of the pedestrian survey and shovel testing conducted for the other two cultural resource studies (O'Brien and Smits 2005; Smits and Reese 2008).

- A cultural resource study was conducted for the expansion of an existing park and wetland area at Luscher Farm (Wilson and Fagan 2007). The park expansion portion of the project was located approximately 110 meters (m) (361 feet [ft]) northeast of the current project area. The wetland mitigation portion of the project was located approximately 115 m (375 ft) east of the project area. No cultural resources were identified as a result of the pedestrian survey and shovel testing (Wilson and Fagan 2007).
- A cultural resource survey was conducted for the extension of the Stafford Basin Trail located approximately 0.85 km (0.53 mi) east of the current project area. No cultural resources were identified as a result of the pedestrian survey and shovel testing (Marken and York 2011).
- A cultural resource study was conducted for the installation of a cell tower approximately 0.24 km (0.15 mi) north of the current project area. No cultural resources were identified as a result of the pedestrian survey (Finley 2014).

The nearest recorded archaeological site, 35CL376, is located approximately 1.83 km (1.13 mi) northwest of the project area. The site is a dense pre-contact archaeological site along the historic shoreline of Lake Oswego, though the area is now inundated. In total, 524 lithic artifacts were collected from the site, including 128 stone tools, 226 pieces of debitage, and 170 pieces of fire-cracked rock. Additionally, 73 pieces of bone were recovered from the site. Site 35CL376 represents Indigenous use of the area from throughout the early Archaic period into the contact period. The site was recommended to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (Punke et al. 2011).

The OARRA database indicates that Native American artifacts were collected in the vicinity of the project area, though no specific information or documentation is available. Additionally, a Native American Cemetery is reported on Cooks Butte, which is approximately 0.5 km (0.3 mi) west of the project area. Lithic artifacts and burials are reported between the Tualatin River and the current alignment of Interstate 205, though no specific documentation is available. Other recorded archaeological sites in the vicinity are generally lithic scatters and historic-period debris scatters located along the Willamette and Tualatin Rivers east-northeast and southwest of the project area.

The Shipley-Cook Farmstead, which is immediately south of the project area, is the nearest recorded historic resource to the project area. The NRHP-listed farmstead consists of an 1862 farmhouse with attached woodshed and cream separator building, a barn which was constructed in the 1860s or 1870s, and a chicken coup from 1928-1929 (SHPO 2021a). Twelve other historic-period resources are located within 1.6 km (1 mi) of the current project area; 11 of these are eligible for listing in the NRHP. The historic resources represent the early Euro-American settlement of the area (SHPO 2021b, 2021c, 2021d, 2021e, 2021f, 2021g, 2021h, 2021i, 2021j, 2021k, 2021l, 2021m).

A review of General Land Office (GLO) maps showed that in 1852 the land in the vicinity of the project area was "rolling and hilly-soil good 2<sup>nd</sup> rate clay loam" with "Timber large scattering fir etc." (GLO 1852). A road titled "Road from Tualatin Plains to Oregon City" is depicted on the 1852 GLO map

along the approximate current alignment of Rosemont Road and continues to the northwest. The road appears to travel northeast of the current project area (GLO 1852). A Donation Land Claim overlapping the project area was granted to Jesse and Nancy Bullock in 1866 (Bureau of Land Management 1866). No structures associated with the homestead were shown to be within the project area on the 1862 map (GLO 1862).

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) maps dating from 1914 to 1982 do not show any development or structures within the project area (USGS 1914, 1939, 1961, 1982). By 1914, SW Stafford Road and Rosemont Road appear in their approximate current alignments (USGS 1914). A 1936 aerial shows the current project area as an agricultural field associated with the Cook farmstead (City of Lake Oswego 2021). Aerial photography from the 1950s to 2018 does not show development within the project area (HistoricAerials.com 1952, 1960, 1981, 2000, 2018). Earthmoving activities in the north-central portion of the project area appeared to have occurred between July 2018 and May 2019 (Google Earth 2018, 2019).

The parcel appears to have been owned by James and Susie Cook in 1928 and 1937 (Metsker Maps 1928, 1937). In 1951, the parcel was owned by W.B. Cook and the area was known as "Cooks Corner" (Metsker Maps 1951). The parcel was subdivided in 1966 and the area that is now Rassekh Park was owned by D.B. Starr (Metsker Maps 1966). The property was then transferred to public property in 1996 (Clackamas County 2021). Chahine Rassekh, born in 1955 in Tangier, Morocco, and Donush Rassekh, born in 1946 in Tehran, Iran, were both naturalized in June of 1980. The Rassekhs had a business selling Persian rugs and lived approximately 1.5 km (0.9 mi) north of what is now Rassekh Park (Ancestry.com 2021a, 2021b; *The Oregonian* 1978).

### **Surface Investigation**

A pedestrian survey was conducted on July 1, 2021, by AINW archaeologists Kelley Prince Martinez, M.S., R.P.A., and Shelby Saper, B.A. The parcel was examined by walking transects spaced no more than 15 m (50 ft) apart. All exposed ground surfaces were carefully examined for evidence of artifacts. Mineral soil visibility was limited by vegetation cover and graveled surfaces, and less than 10% of the mineral soil surface was visible. Several locations spread across the project area were previously excavated for geotechnical test pits and borings. The remnant backdirt piles were inspected for artifacts and evidence of archaeological features. No artifacts or evidence of archaeological features were visible in the backdirt piles. The entire 9.8-acre parcel was surveyed.

At the time of the pedestrian survey, a graveled area and large earthen berm were located in the north-central portion of the project area. The berm appeared to be constructed from imported sediment. Pecan Creek and a surrounding wetland are in the western portion of the project area. Vegetation surrounding Pecan Creek included dense Douglas-fir, Oregon ash, bigleaf maple, western hazelnut, western swordfern, poison oak, and juncus grass. The eastern portion of the project area had a slightly undulating surface that was covered with various grasses, blackberry patches, and sparse bigleaf maple, cherry, and hawthorn trees. A paved pedestrian path is located at the eastern edge of the project area, running parallel to SW Stafford Road.

Modern debris, including colorless glass, plastic, and nondiagnostic ceramic fragments, were identified on the ground surface in the disturbed area along the earthen berm in the north-central portion of the project area.

## Findings and Recommendations

AINW completed a cultural resource assessment for the City of Lake Oswego for the Rassekh Park project in Clackamas County, Oregon, which included background research and a pedestrian survey. No buildings or structures are within the project area and no archaeological resources were identified within the project area.

Based on the cultural resource assessment, AINW recommends the area along Pecan Creek, in the western portion of the project area, be considered a high probability area for buried archaeological resources. Shovel testing in this area is recommended if the area will be modified as part of the proposed development. The proximity of the Shipley-Cook Farmstead and the presence of other nearby historic-period resources and reported archaeological resources suggest the area has the potential for intact archaeological deposits. Shovel testing is also recommended in the eastern portion of the project area where the parcel will be leveled for the proposed park development. As Rassekh Park is public land, an archaeological excavation permit from the Oregon SHPO would be needed to conduct shovel testing on the parcel.

The current cultural resource assessment does not meet compliance requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. If a wetland fill permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be needed for the park development, a cultural resource survey would likely be needed to meet Section 106 requirements, and shovel testing would be a recommended part of that study.

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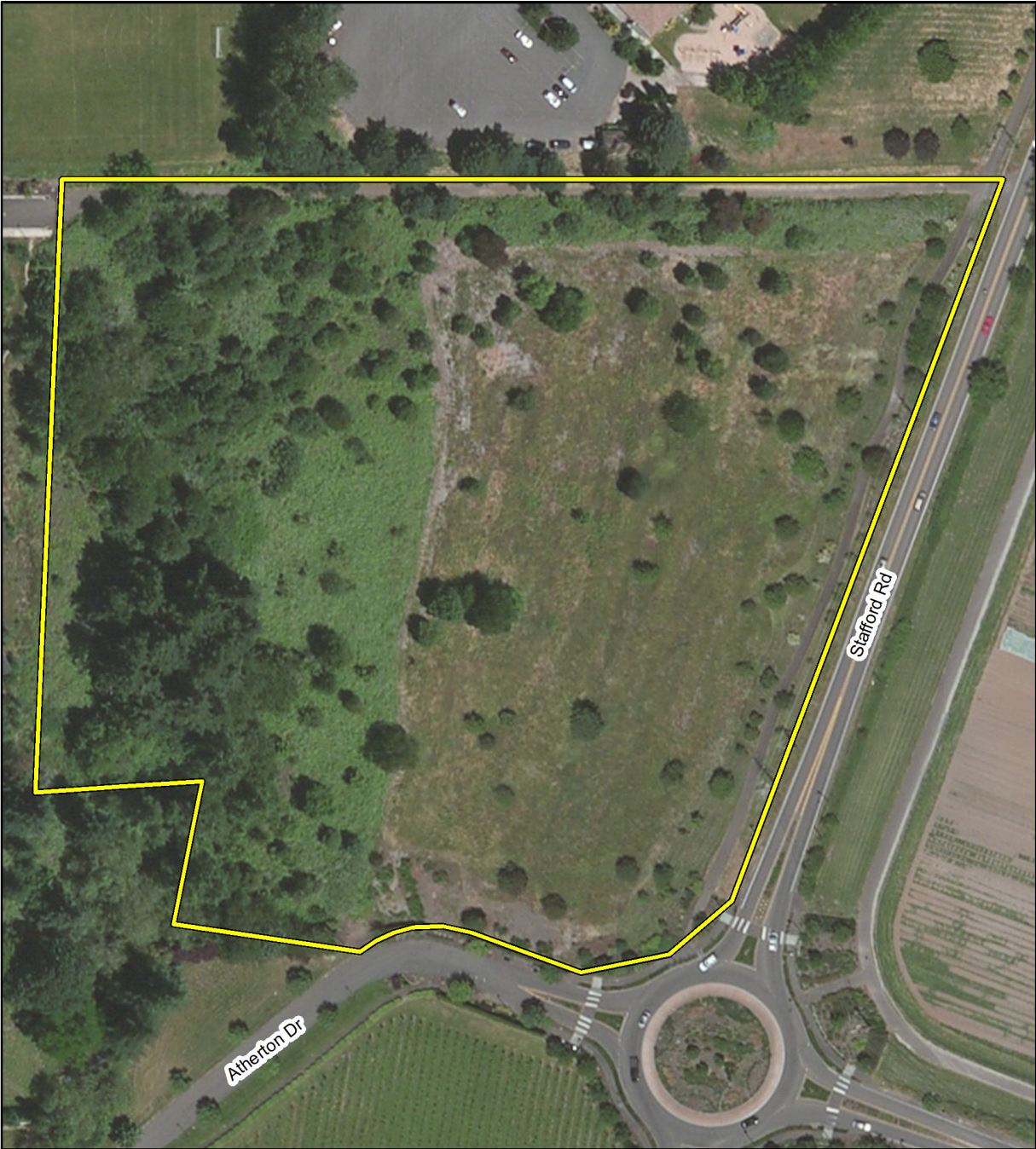
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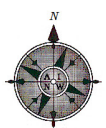
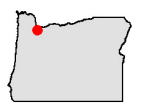
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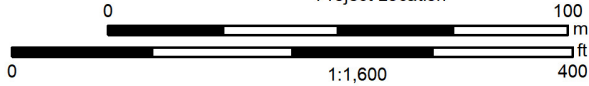


**RASSEKH PARK  
CLACKAMAS COUNTY, OREGON**



Project Location

 Project Area



T1S, R1E;  
Section 16  
Willamette Meridian  
USGS Topographic 7.5 Minute  
Lake Oswego, OR (2017) Quadrangle Map

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar  
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS,  
AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community Microsoft  
product screen shot(s) reprinted with permission from

Figure 1 (JAC; 8/11/2021)

Figure 1. Aerial photo of the Rassekh Park project area.