

**From:** [Erkel, Melissa L \(DFW\)](#)  
**To:** [Kaehler, Gretchen \(DAHP\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Petersen, Deb \(PARKS\); SEPADesk2 \(DFW\)](#)  
**Subject:** Flaming Geyser State Park Beaver Creek Cultural Resources Report  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 10, 2016 9:37:14 PM  
**Attachments:** [Flaming Geyser Cultural Resources Report.pdf](#)

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Gretchen Kaehler,

I am writing in responds to your SEPA comment letter regarding the cultural resources survey for Flaming Geyser State Park Beaver Creek Barrier Culvert Replacement and Restoration Project, Project Tracking Code: 2016-05-03323. For this project we have submitted the attached cultural resources report to the Army Corps of Engineers as part of our permit package. We are currently waiting for them to start the Section 106 process. Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Thank you,

Melissa Erkel  
Fish Passage Biologist, WDFW  
[Melissa.Erkel@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Melissa.Erkel@dfw.wa.gov)  
360-742-2745

# CULTURAL RESOURCES REPORT COVER SHEET

Author: Charles T. Luttrell

Title of Report: Flaming Geyser State Park – Culvert Replacement Project Redux, King County, Washington Letter Report

Date of Report: September 2015                      Acre(s): ca. 2.17

County(s): King                      Section 27, T21N, R6E

Quad(s): Black Diamond, WA (1949/1973)

CD Submitted? Yes    PDF of Report? Yes    Historic Property Export Files? No

Does this replace a draft? No

Archaeological Sites/Isolates Found or Amended? No                      TCP(s) found? No

Does this report fulfill a DAHP permit requirement?  Yes #     No

DAHP Archaeological Site #:

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## REPORT CHECK LIST

Report should contain the following items:

- Clear objectives and methods
- A summary of the results of the survey
- A report of where the survey records and data are stored
- A research design that:
  - Details survey objectives
  - Details specific methods
  - Details expected results
  - Details area surveyed including map(s) and legal locational information
  - Details how results will be incorporated into the planning process

Please submit reports unbound. Please be sure that any electronic version of a report submitted to DAHP has all of its figures, graphics, appendices, attachments, correspondence, cover sheet, etc., compiled into one single PDF file. Please check that all digital files display correctly when opened.



Don Hoch  
Director

STATE OF WASHINGTON

## WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

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September 21, 2015

Deborah Petersen  
Environmental Planner III  
Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission  
1111 Israel Road SW  
Olympia, WA 98504-2650

**RE: Flaming Geyser State Park – Culvert Replacement Project Redux, King County, Washington**

Dear Deborah:

As you recall in 2012, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (WSPRC) proposed to replace or remove four metal culverts within Flaming Geyser State Park, and undertook an associated archaeological study at that time (Luttrell 2012). Culvert replacement or removal was undertaken to enhance fish passage in the Green River watershed. The project was successfully constructed, but the design to improve Culverts #940126 and #940127 has not proved functional. The existing Beaver Creek culvert and open channel does not meet required stream-simulation criteria and needs replacement. The WSPRC proposes, with support from the Muckleshoot Tribe natural resources staff, a Beaver Creek channel realignment that will bypass the existing failed design. Beginning near the north end of existing wetlands, the new channel will extend northerly to a new confluence with the Green River. A proposed realignment will utilize remnants of an abandoned or relic stream channel to restore Beaver Creek connectivity with the river (Figures 1-3).

A bridge is planned where the new channel will cross beneath the primary park access road. The failed single replacement culvert will be abandoned and a portion of its associated open channel filled. The proposed new design will result in a net gain of additional wetlands.

Proposed work will require a federal permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), thus the project is considered subject to Section 106 compliance. As the lead federal agency, the ACOE has responsibility for consultation with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), and interested or affected tribes. An Area of Potential Effects (APE) surrounds the proposed realignment and the culvert abandonment area in Section 27, T21N, R6E. The APE is limited to ca. 2.17 acres (see Figures 2 and 3) within southern King County. This letter report addresses the results of an archaeological survey completed in advance of project implementation.

## **Background Information**

Flaming Geyser State Park is one of two state parks located in the Green River Gorge Conservation Area. The park contains a segment of the well-incised Green River, the name source of the various Green River Indians. Many descendants of those ethnographic bands are present-day members of the contemporary Muckleshoot Nation.

Located within the broad Puget Trough physiographic-geographic province of Franklin and Dyrness (1988:6), Flaming Geyser State Park soils adjoining the Green River are part of the Oridia-Seattle-Woodinville association of somewhat poorly drained and very poorly drained sediments that are nearly level and associated with major stream valleys (Snyder et al. 1973:General Soils Map). More specifically, Everett gravelly sandy loam dominates the project APE, very nearly level to gently undulating soils found on terraces (Snyder et al. 1973:15, Sheet No. 17). Everett soils formed in glacial-outwash deposits and are positioned under conifers.

Ground surfaces in the project APE are mostly covered with forest litter and understory vegetation (Figures 4 and 5). Overstory in Flaming Geyser State Park includes deciduous species, as well as abundant mixed conifers. Along the park's primary access road, many existing ground surfaces has been graded and contoured for roadways, trails, picnic areas, parking lots, and recreation zones planted in lawn.

The Green River bands were Southern Lushootseed speakers within the broader category of Southern Coast Salish (Suttles and Lane 1990:486). Throughout their traditional territory, individual bands obtained subsistence resources from saltwater, freshwater, and upland locales. Fishing for several aquatic species extended to the Green River and its tributaries.

Land survey of T21N, R6E by the General Land Office (GLO) did not occur until 1882 and included reconnaissance of the Green River meanders (GLO 1882a). Thereabouts, river bottoms were covered with a "large growth" of conifers and deciduous overstory, as well as dense thickets of understory vegetation (GLO 1882b). No settlers were then located in the land section, although several were occupying ground westward. On May 10, 1895, all of Section 27 was issued to the Northern Pacific Railroad Company as part of a larger land grant patent.

Unlike the nearby Kummer and Black Diamond areas, Section 27 had a very minor relationship with historic coal mining that dominated other areas of the township. Rather, farming and recreational enterprises were significant land-uses along the Green River in Section 27. One ca. 1912 coal-associated feature of namesake Flaming Geyser State Park is a test core into underlying deposits drilled by coal entrepreneur Eugene Lawson. First known as "Lawson's Drill Hole," the so-called Flaming Geyser in times past expelled sufficient methane gas to ignite as a dramatically visible jet or flame (Evans 1912:Plate 1). However, the surrounding private land was not subsequently exploited for coal.

At the time Lawson completed his unique test core, the underlying land belonged to Lizzie Shorey and children - heirs of farmer Samuel W. Shorey. The APE occupies a portion of property associated with a neighboring farm, that of Flora (also Flory) Brooks (Kroll Map Company 1912:26). While the farming Shoreys and Brooks families are largely forgotten to



King County history, the Flaming Geyser is not. The incendiary core became a defining attraction of a private recreational enterprise, Flaming Geyser Park.

An Everett-based interest known as the Riverdale Farm Company incorporated in 1920, but dissolved during December 1923. Apparent partial reformation as Riverdale Farm occurred earlier in May with new corporate partners and a transfer of business place to Seattle. Company stockholders changed the name of Riverdale Farm to Flaming Geyser Park in September 1926 (King County 1926). As illustrated in 1930, all of the former Shorey farmland was then designated Flaming Geyser Park, while the adjoining Brooks farm and other property in Section 26 belonged to Riverdale Farm Company, Inc. (Kroll Map Company 1930:26).

The exact date of the private entity's initial development is somewhat unclear, but the park was certainly open for business with a crowded picnic camp on July 4, 1924 (*Auburn Globe Republican* 1924a:5). Flaming Geyser, that "Freak of Nature – Mysterious, [and] Inexplainable" phenomenon was a marketing enticement to the curious with its "mass of roaring flames" or "huge crater belching forth salt water and flames at the same time;" however, operator Edward Weise also more modestly offered various pastoral facilities to:

. . . attract campers and picnickers, and has succeeded in making a very attractive park. There is a natural grove along the river bank that is splendidly adapted for camping and the fishing offered here is said to be wonderful [*Auburn Globe Republican* 1924b: 10, 1924c:12].

In truth, the Flaming Geyser was a human-induced "natural wonder" that was fortuitous in competing against other private King County lakeside or riverine resorts, including several of the latter on the Green River. Additional park features included a dam to impound an 18-acre pond, an on-site trout hatchery to stock the pond, community kitchens, a barn for pack horses, and a Green River swimming pool/swimming hole with a diving board (*Seattle Star* 1925:Section 2:2; *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* 1925:Automotive Section:4:1; Meico Associates 1983:8). At the start admission was 0.50 cents per auto, but appears to have increased slightly to 0.25 cents per adult with children free one a year later. Fees for day use and overnight camping were the same.

As a private operation subject to consumer needs, the facilities must have experienced recreational changes and infrastructure improvements as it spanned the decades between the 1920s and 1960s, although summer remained the primary camping season. State park development began in 1969 as a portion of the Green River Gorge Conservation Area. Few initial park features of the built environment remain, excepting isolated constructions like the greatly modified Flaming Geyser and a wooden water tank.

However, it seems possible that existing wetlands which are drained by Beaver Creek and extend to the south end of the APE are a possible remnant or westerly extension of the aforementioned historic 18-acre fishing pond which ca. 1925 was situated on the Shorey family farm. As discussed earlier, the project APE is located upon the adjoining Brooks family farm and outside of private park boundaries illustrated in 1930 (Kroll Map Company 1930:26). On-site review of existing park landforms and topographic maps finds few other potential aquatic candidates for the historic pond, but additional archival research and/or fieldwork would be required to investigate this suspicion.

## **Survey Research Design**

Pedestrian survey by two WSPRC archaeologist was completed in the project APE with transects spaced less than three meters (9.9 feet) apart, but only in the vicinity of the existing Beaver Creek alignment, the vicinity of the existing gravel parking lot, the east end of the on-site abandoned channel, and the vicinity of the proposed bridge location (see Figure 3). Otherwise excessive understory vegetation (i.e., willows, vine maples, stinging nettles, and blackberries) in other portions of the APE did not allow entry to the archaeological surveyors

Shovel testing was only employed in two locations. Two tests were excavated to the immediate north of the existing gravel parking lot at 10-meter (33 feet) spacing and one test was dug adjacent to the new bridge location. Average test diameter was 42 centimeters (17 inches), with an average depth of 68 centimeters (27 inches). Testing sediments were screen through ¼-in hardware cloth and all tests were backfilled following the recordation of testing results. WSPRC personnel also completed a site search of Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) databases. In addition, GLO plats and notes were closely examined for relevant cultural features. Supplementary historic-period maps and/or other documents were obtained from Internet sources, the Washington State Library, Tumwater, and WSPRC Headquarters, Olympia.

## **Results**

No cultural resources were identified by pedestrian survey in a portion of project APE. The only cultural objects recovered during shovel testing were fragments of modern brown container glass from the two tests near the gravel parking lot – modern refuse that was not collected and is deemed insignificant. No prehistoric or historic artifacts, features, or sites were identified by the present investigation. The possibility that some portion of existing nearby wetlands being associated with a 1920s fishing pond is not confirmed at this time and would require efforts that are beyond the scope of the proposed undertaking.

In 2009, a cultural resources survey was undertaken in Flaming Geyser State Park that included shovel testing along the park's primary access road. A series of five shovel tests were excavated parallel to the eastern edge of the northern APE, between the access road and the Green River. Four tests were negative and one contained "modern, historical, or mixed modern and historical debris" (Sharley and Smith 2011:Figure 6). The latter authors considered the mixed debris to be evidence of extensive disturbance in the vicinity of the primary access road and that evaluation appears warranted given a local land-use history of farming, private park development, and/or public park construction in excess one hundred years. Previously recorded cultural resources are not present in the project APE, according to DAHP databases.

Given an inability to survey a majority of the northerly APE due to dense vegetation, it is recommended that an archaeological monitor be present during future ground disturbance associated with the proposed new channel between existing wetlands and the new confluence with the Green River (see Figure 3). Monitoring is not recommended at the location of the culvert/channel to be abandoned as a previous cultural resources study was negative for significant cultural resources and the area is entirely disturbed from installation of the existing failed system (Luttrell 2012).

## **Management Summary**

Cultural resources investigations for the Flaming Geyser State Park – Culvert Replacement Project Redux did not result in the identification of significant cultural resources. However, monitoring of future ground disturbance for the proposed new Beaver Creek channel is recommended due to the presence of excessive vegetation limiting archaeological pedestrian survey and the area’s potential to contain historic or prehistoric resources. Otherwise, no other cultural resources work appears warranted. This report is being submitted to the appropriate review agencies and interested parties for review and comment prior to the initiation of any ground-disturbing activities. Please contact me at [charles.luttrell@parks.wa.gov](mailto:charles.luttrell@parks.wa.gov) should you have questions or comments regarding this report.

Sincerely,

Charles T. Luttrell  
State Parks Archaeologist

Enclosure(s): Figures 1-5

## **References**

*Auburn Globe Republican*

1924a “Many see Great Geyser on Fourth.” *Auburn Globe Republican*, July 11, 1924:5:2.

1924b “Water Burns at the Flaming Geyser.” *Auburn Globe Republican*, July 18, 1924:10:1.

1924c “Many Resorts are near this City.” *Auburn Globe Republican*, July 18, 1924:12:4.

Evans, George W.

1912 *The Coal Fields of King County*. Washington Geological Survey Bulletin No. 3. E.L. Boardman: Public Printer, Olympia.

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1882a Cadastral Survey Plat, T21N, R6E. On file, US Bureau of Land Management, Spokane.

1882b Cadastral Survey Notes, T21N, R6E. On file, US Bureau of Land Management, Spokane.

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1926 Amended Articles of Incorporation, Riverdale Farm (Changing name to Flaming Geyser Park), September 24, 1926. On file, Washington State Archives, Olympia

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1912 *Kroll's Atlas of King County, Washington*. Kroll Map Company, Seattle.

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1925 “Chrysler Speeds to Flaming Geyser Park.” *Seattle Star*, July 18, 1925:Section 2:1:1.

*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

1925 “Flames Leap from Water in Old Well.” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, September 20, 1925:Automotive Section:4:1.

Sharley, Ann, and Timothy J. Smith

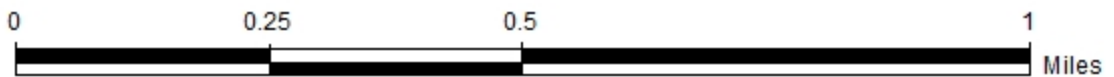
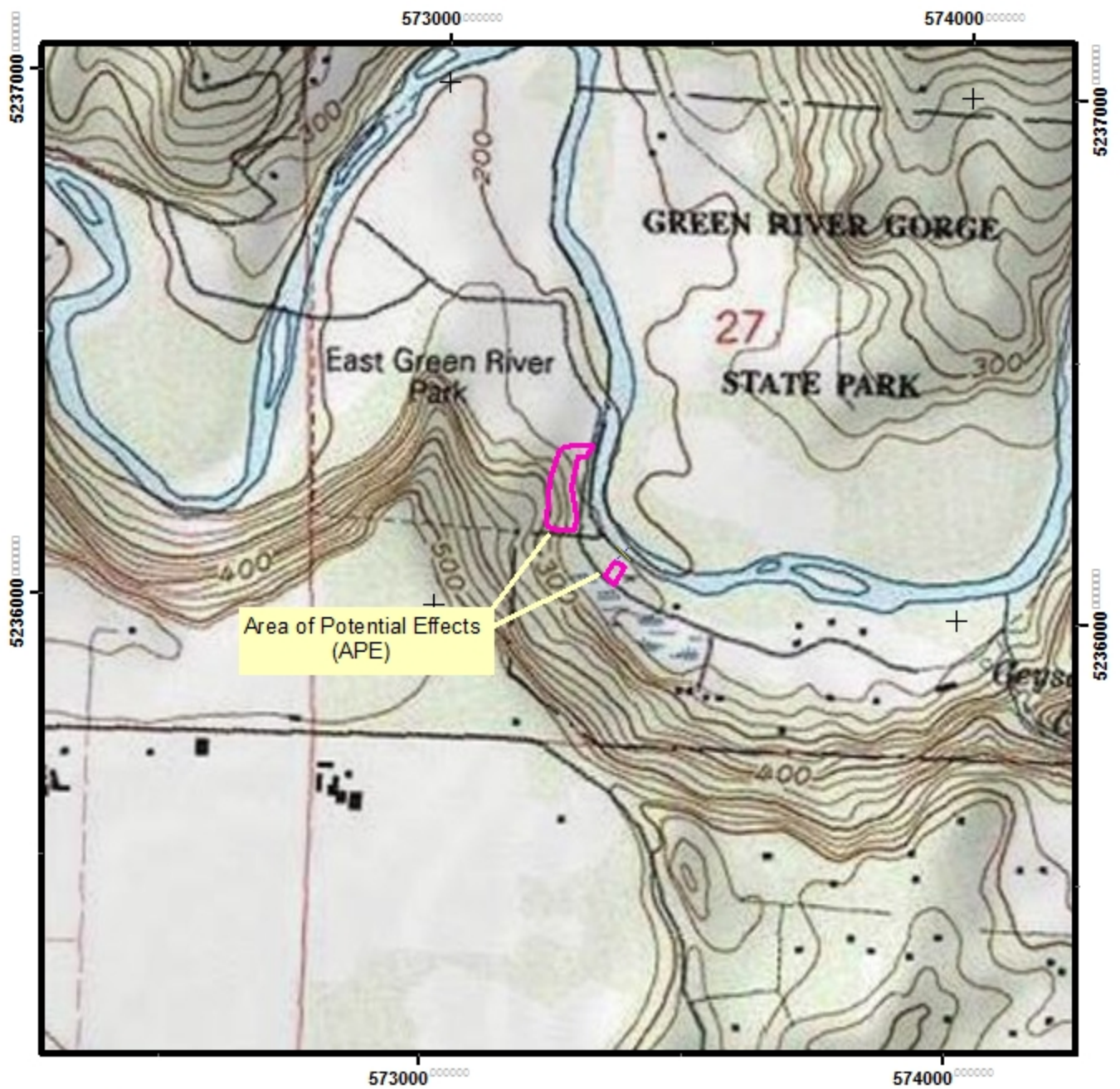
2011 *Cultural Resources Survey for Proposed Flaming Geyser State Park Improvements, King County, Washington*. Short Report 1037. Archaeological and Historical Services, Eastern Washington University, Cheney.

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1973 *Soil Survey of King County*. US Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, in cooperation with Washington Agricultural Experiment Station.

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1973 Black Diamond, Washington Quadrangle USGS  
 1973 Cumberland, Washington Quadrangle USGS

Scale 1:12,000 feet

**Legend**

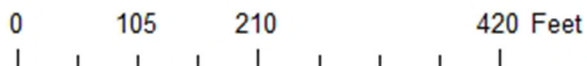
 Area of Potential Effects (APE)

**Figure 1.** Flaming Geyser State Park - Culvert Replacement Project Redux Location.





**Figure 2.** *Flaming Geyser State Park--Culvert Replacement Project Redux APE.*



Data in these maps were compiled for cartographic purposes. Due to the variability of the source information, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions, and, therefore, there are no warranties which accompany this material.





# FLAMING GEYSER STATE PARK

## ~BEAVER CREEK CHANNEL REALIGNMENT~

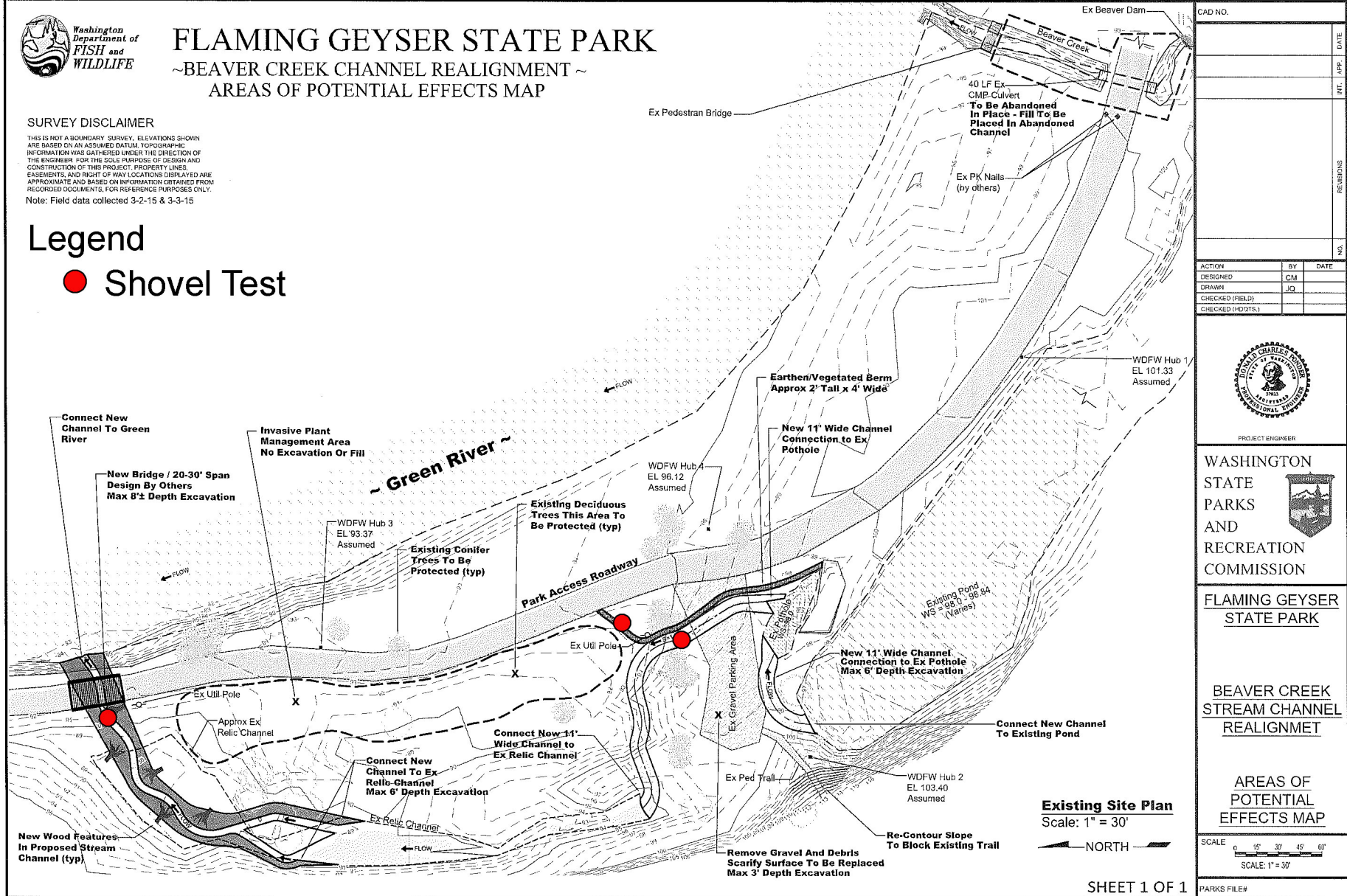
### AREAS OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS MAP

#### SURVEY DISCLAIMER

THIS IS NOT A BOUNDARY SURVEY. ELEVATIONS SHOWN ARE BASED ON AN ASSUMED DATUM. TOPOGRAPHIC INFORMATION WAS GATHERED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE ENGINEER FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THIS PROJECT. PROPERTY LINES, EASEMENTS, AND RIGHT OF WAY LOCATIONS DISPLAYED ARE APPROXIMATE AND BASED ON INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM RECORDED DOCUMENTS, FOR REFERENCE PURPOSES ONLY.  
 Note: Field data collected 3-2-15 & 3-3-15

#### Legend

● Shovel Test



CAD NO.		DATE
		INT. IPI.
		REVISED
		NO.
ACTION	BY	DATE
DESIGNED	CM	
DRAWN	JQ	
CHECKED (FIELD)		
CHECKED (MOTTS)		

PROJECT ENGINEER

WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

**FLAMING GEYSER STATE PARK**

**BEAVER CREEK STREAM CHANNEL REALIGNMENT**

**AREAS OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS MAP**

SHEET 1 OF 1

PARKS FILE#

Figure 3. Flaming Geyser State Park--Culvert Replacement Project Redux Plan.





*Figure 4. View of shovel testing near the existing gravel parking area, looking north (2015).*



*Figure 5. View of the shovel test location near the proposed bridge, looking southwest (2015).*