A LIGHT IN THE DARK: ILLUMINATING THE MARITIME PAST OF THE
BLACKWATER RIVER

by

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ABSTRACT

A LIGHT IN THE DARK: ILLUMINATING THE MARITIME PAST OF THE BLACKWATER RIVER

Benjamin Charles Wells

With its headwaters in Alabama and terminus in Blackwater Bay, the Blackwater River is the major river of Santa Rosa County, Florida. For centuries this river has played an integral role in the development of northwest Florida as the primary avenue for transporting resources, goods, and people in and out of the interior of this area. In 2013 the Bagdad Waterfronts Florida Partnership, Inc., contacted Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN) Northwest Region office seeking assistance in developing a heritage outreach program distinct to and representative of the local waterfront communities. Utilizing maritime landscape theory, a maritime heritage trail was envisioned to present the river’s cultural resources, both on land and underwater. The focus of this master’s thesis research, the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail encompasses a 4.1 mile (6.60 km, 3.56 nm) stretch of the river, promotes local heritage, and lays a framework for future trail development and expansion.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Public interpretation of archaeological and natural resources is not a new concept, which in the United States finds its roots in early naturalist and conservationist movements. The theoretical underpinnings of modern cultural heritage originated in the U.S. during the late 1950s when Freeman Tilden (2007) conceptualized and published *Interpreting Our Heritage*. Tilden defines interpretation and outlines six principles which stand today as the pillars upon which the vast majority of interpretation and this research are built.

Cultural resource managers have a professional responsibility to interpret their materials in a timely, scientific manner, but moreover, they are beholden unto the public. Until recently, public interpretation of terrestrial archaeological sites has been a much more common practice than interpretation of submerged cultural resources. Submerged cultural resources, whether shipwrecks, inundated landscapes, or other underwater sites, often remain out-of-sight, out-of-mind. As a result, a large majority of these sites and areas are never interpreted for the public.

In the past two decades, resource managers have greatly increased the number of outreach programs that allow individuals to interact with maritime resources more often and in new and exciting ways. Maritime heritage trails are one method that resource managers use both often and effectively to communicate the value of a maritime past (Scott-Ireton 2005; National Ocean Service 2013; Sorset 2013; Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary 2013; Florida Department of State 2014). Value is not measured as the monetary worth of the site or object(s), but rather is the inherent cultural and historical value that sites and artifacts possess. Cultural resources, whether maritime or not, are nonrenewable and need to be managed in a manner that allows them to be accessed while being preserved for the future. This course is often a difficult
one to strike, and if not approached correctly can easily lead to sites being damaged due to mismanagement, or conversely, information being locked away in an “ivory tower” with the researcher. Involving local communities in the preservation of their own heritage is often the best course of action. This research approaches this concept in a distinct fashion by turning over the trail to a local organization, the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership, for future management and expansion.

The Blackwater River near the towns of Milton and Bagdad, Florida, is teeming with submerged, partially inundated, and terrestrial maritime cultural resources (Figure 1 and Figure 2). From Native Americans traversing the area to early European exploration to modern shipping, the river has been utilized by visitors and locals alike for centuries. The communities

Figure 1. Google Earth image of Florida with project region outlined.
that developed at the water’s edge and nearby are inexorably tied to this body of water and as such possess a high degree of respect and care for the cultural components and their related history. Within these communities, several civic and nonprofit organizations exist who make it their priority to understand, protect, and preserve the cultural resources present in their area.

Founded in 2007, the Bagdad Waterfronts Florida Partnership, Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation whose express purpose is to serve “as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization throughout the village of Bagdad, Florida” (Bagdad Waterfronts Florida Partnership 2014). Currently, the neighboring towns of Bagdad and Milton, Florida, are undergoing a series of renewal projects, many of which revolve around the maritime past of these two waterfront communities. The Waterfronts Partnership is significantly involved in renewal projects, which include the development of a public park on a historic mill site as well as the maritime heritage trail discussed here.

In 2013 the Waterfronts Partnership approached Dr. Della Scott-Ireton, of the Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN), in hopes of establishing a maritime heritage trail in the Blackwater River. Recognizing the potential for graduate student involvement, she contacted the University of West Florida (UWF) to ascertain whether any student might be interested in taking on this project to fulfill the thesis requirement of their Master’s education. I was offered this opportunity and eagerly accepted.

The Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership originally envisioned the creation of a blueways trail that would span an undetermined length of the Blackwater River. After several meetings and further research, project organizers realized the creation of a blueways trail was more complicated than originally anticipated and would involve several steps which might possibly slow or even prevent the completion of the trail in a timely manner (i.e., water rights issues).
Figure 2. Google Earth image of Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa Counties.
Trail organizers decided that a maritime heritage trail would meet the desire of the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership’s original concept and could be completed on a more reasonable timeline.

The National Park Service (NPS) states “water trails, or blueways, embody the nexus between rivers and trails” (National Park Service 2014). NPS further specifies that “most water trails are managed…with the philosophies of environmental stewardship, environmental education, and accessibility for all users” (National Park Service 2014). Maritime heritage trails are generally not formal paths but, rather, are a collection of historically and culturally important places (Florida Department of State 2014). Cultural resource managers integrate the natural and cultural components by discussing the connection to, and human modification of, the natural landscape. The Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership originally envisioned a trail that focused on the cultural significance of the Blackwater River and its surrounding communities. In keeping with their original intent, the maritime heritage trail created by this research will enable the management of the resources in, on, and around the river more effectively than would a blueway concept.

This research revolves around a singular hypothesis: foundationally, landscape theory, with specific focus on maritime landscape concepts, can be used to develop an interpretive heritage trail that is sustainable, enduring, and capable of engaging the public while meeting their desires and instilling an appreciation of the resources present. Landscape theory is a holistic theoretical paradigm, a framework which is employed in this research to create a complete picture of river use that encompasses all parts and presents them not as separate entities but how they compose the whole. The resources in and along the Blackwater River are not singularities but, rather, are portions of the shared heritage. Education through an interpretive heritage trail
attempts to foster care for the resources present by intimating the inherent value these resources possess to locals and visitors alike.

The primary goal of this research is the development of a maritime heritage trail in the Blackwater River utilizing a landscape theory approach to assess the submerged cultural resources and partially inundated maritime activity areas present in and around the 4.1 mi. (6.60 km, 3.56 nm) research area and to inform the development of interpretive materials for users of the river (Figure 3). To date, resource managers have not pursued interpreting most of the sites in and along the Blackwater River. This study evaluates the resources present and creates a sustainable interpretive outreach program to protect the resources and meet the needs of the stakeholders.

As a response to a local desire, the interpretive materials serve both the surrounding communities and visitors who wish to gain insight into the maritime past and landscape use of the Blackwater River. Specifically, this research serves as a guide for future trail development in the Blackwater River, its tributaries, and its drainage system. Moreover, this Master’s research ideally stands as a model for maritime heritage trail development in not only the surrounding waterways, but also in other similar locations. This research is outlined to facilitate an ease of understanding and access for future researchers.

Paramount to any interpretive outreach activity is a comprehension of the area and the resources present. Chapter II begins by delineating the historical past of the Blackwater River concentrating on the role the river played in the settling of the region, its importance to the industrial boom due to natural resources, the overall decline of these industries, and the river’s subsequent return to a more pristine environment. A brief geographic setting is provided to place the river into perspective within the region. Following this is a discussion of the previous
Figure 3. Research area with 4.2 mi. main channel dashed. (Figure by author, 2015).
terrestrial and maritime archaeological investigations in the Blackwater region as they pertain to this research.

Rationale for interpretation is given throughout Chapter III beginning with a background overview of cultural heritage and the legislation that not only promotes but also requires interpretive outreach. This chapter then turns to the specifics of maritime heritage management and some of the challenges confronting this field. Stemming from this is a cursory discussion of the phases of maritime heritage trail development, with the caveat that not all trails must follow the order or timeline suggested. Finishing the chapter is a small section on the materials presently available to researchers for consultation. The majority of research relating to the development of maritime heritage trails is found primarily in single articles discussing specific trail attributes and their challenges. These works are supplemented by only a few select edited volumes that discuss the principles and theoretical issues confronting cultural resource managers focusing on maritime heritage trail development.

While this research draws heavily from other maritime heritage trail projects, including both their successes and concerns, it is structured around landscape theory with a specific focus on the fluid nature of a maritime landscape. Chapter IV outlines this theoretical framework then launches into the methodology developed directly from it. Interpretation of the resources found to be present during the historical and archaeological background research and the new sites discovered during this research is discussed in Chapter V. A thematic approach for interpreting the resources naturally developed during the research and is discussed at the end of this chapter.

This trail is unique in its development, end product, and future moderation. The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail was spawned by a community interest and will ultimately be returned to the stakeholders for moderation and future growth. Chapter VI relates this
significance while noting the potential hazards facing this project. A final section for future recommendations and other resources available completes this work. This thesis serves as the basis for future maritime heritage development of the Blackwater River, connected bodies of water, and potentially other similar settings. Areas such as this with a rich maritime historical past are prime candidates for sustainable heritage interpretation outreach.
To understand the nature of the Blackwater River, historical sources were consulted and archaeological reports evaluated. Broken into three sections, Chapter II begins by outlining the general prehistory and history of west Florida with a focus on the exploration, settling, and industrial development of the region immediately surrounding the river. The second section discusses the geographic setting of Santa Rosa County with a specific focus on the Blackwater River. This portion highlights the changes the river and surrounding land have experienced due to the industrial activities which have now disappeared from the landscape allowing nature to reclaim much of the region.

The final section overviews the terrestrial and maritime archaeological research previously conducted in the project area. Terrestrial sites are considered part of the maritime landscape if they exhibit a direct connection to the river (i.e., shipyard) or are situated less than 0.5 miles (0.8 km) from the water. Prehistoric sites are limited in this region and possess minimal artifactual evidence of the original inhabitants but must be considered to fully comprehend the archaeological and historical past. The results of the archaeological work conducted for this project are discussed in Chapter V. This background information establishes a base for interpreting the resources present on the Blackwater maritime landscape.

Historical Background

Prior to westward exploration by intrepid Europeans, various people groups occupied the present-day United States of America. Arriving some 13,000-15,000 years before present, or perhaps even earlier, established theory suggests these people utilized a “land bridge” exposed by low sea levels to cross from Asia to North America and proceeded down an ice-free corridor
to the southern portion of the U.S. (Adovasio and Hemmings 2009). While there is no direct evidence of prehistoric people residing along the Blackwater River during this time, they must have been present on the landscape, since archaeological evidence from sites elsewhere in the Florida panhandle substantiates this (Webb 2006; Meltzer 2009). The major resource lacking in the Blackwater River Basin is knappable stone, a resource widely available throughout much of the rest of Florida. Many of these early sites may be deeply buried in the bays or flood plains or submerged in the numerous waterways (Cook 2012a). This supposition appears logical as Paleoindian sites generally are located close to fresh water sources, which also attracted food sources.

Though native peoples may have been present on the landscape prior to 8,500 B.C., their occupation does not become prolific until the early Archaic period (8000-6000 B.C.) (Milanich 1994). Numerous low-density, pre-ceramic sites from this period have been recorded in Blackwater River valley (Little et al. 1988; Phillips 1989). Native American settlement patterns remained relatively unchanged into and throughout most of the Woodland period (1000 B.C.-A.D. 1200). Sites from this time period are characterized by population growth along the coast and in the river valleys (Milanich 1994). New settlement patterns arose near the end of the late Woodland period and were marked by a noticeable shift in occupation to the upper portions of the bay systems with several small communities structured around a nearby mound (Bense 1989). Populations continued to grow during the Mississippian stage (A.D. 1200-1700). Small satellite camps surrounded larger settlements and were generally found on coastal hammocks (Bense 1989). Coastal and riverine communities were the first to witness the European expeditions into northwest Florida.
The first Europeans to potentially see what is currently northwest Florida were members of the 1528 Narváez expedition (Rucker 1990). Further exploration 26 years later by Hernando de Soto brought Europeans to north Florida again. In an attempt to resupply de Soto in 1540, Diego Maldonado brought a large herd of Spanish cattle and horses to the Pensacola area (Monroe 2013). While sailing along the Gulf Coast, Maldonado and crew were arguably the first Europeans to see parts of present-day Santa Rosa County. The natives informed Maldonado that this area was called Ochuse, which is the first known name of Pensacola Bay (Coker 1999:6).

Captain Juan de Rentería and his pilot, Gonzalo Gayón, extensively scouted Mobile Bay and a bay they named Polança, which was Ochuse. Informed by their report, the Spanish Crown selected Polança for colonization. Disaster struck when Don Tristán de Luna y Arellano ventured to colonize the shores of Polança, or what he named Santa María Filipina (Bratten and Worth 2009). Shortly after arriving, a hurricane dealt the Spaniards a devastating blow, destroying all but three of their ships, two small barques, and the only caravel of the fleet. Forced to leave the area due to lack of supplies, the Spanish traversed north in hopes of acquiring food from the natives and fulfilling their orders by reaching Santa Elena in present-day Parris Island, South Carolina (Bratten and Worth 2009). During their trek across Florida, the Spanish encountered many of the indigenous populations. Among these groups would have been the Pensacola, Chatot, Hitchiti, Koasati, Choctaw, Yuchi, and Yamasee. These groups would later be replaced by Creeks from Alabama and Georgia (Rucker 1990:4). After Luna’s failed colonization attempt and further scrutiny of the area, the Spanish government decided no colony or fort was needed in the Pensacola Bay area unless France attempted to seize control of it or a scientific survey was deemed necessary (Coker 1999:7).
In 1685 France’s interest in the Gulf Coast was manifest when René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle tried to establish a settlement on the coast of present-day Texas. The Spaniards, terrified of losing control over the region, began contemplating again a permanent settlement on the northern Gulf Coast shores, and initiated searches for the La Salle colony (Coker 1999). During one of these eleven expeditions, the Enriquez Barroto-Romero voyage sailed into Pensacola Bay where they encountered “the local natives [who] called themselves and the bay Panzacola, a Choctaw word for long-haired people” (Coker 1999:6).

Prior to the Spanish, the Native Americans of northwestern Florida probably navigated the waters surrounding the area with great ease. Though the original names given to many of these waterways have been lost to time, the Creek referred to the upper portion of the modern-day Blackwater River as Fukechattelegge, meaning “red clay place” (Rucker 1990:142). The lower portion which empties into Blackwater Bay was known as Weekasupka, or “cold water” (Rucker 1990:142). Naturally, as the Spanish continued to stake claim to La Florida, they imported their own names for the locations they now “owned.” Almirante (Admiral) Andres de Pez promoted the new colonization attempt of Pensacola, and in 1693, certain Spaniards sought to honor him by naming the Blackwater River Rio del Almirante (Rucker 1990:143). In that same year, Don Carlos de Siguenza y Gongora designated East Bay and Blackwater Bay as La Bahia de Santa Maria de Galve (Rucker 1990:137). The majority of the early 18th century was characterized by Spain extending its control over La Florida through the mission system, a tumultuous era for northwest Florida. This region, though heavily influenced and altered by the Spanish, would not undergo additional dramatic changes at the hands of other Europeans until the French and Indian War in the 1750s.
During the Seven Years War, Britain captured Havana, Cuba, from the Spanish, and in 1763 negotiated an exchange for control of Florida (Howard 1940:109). The Spanish extracted their people from the majority of Florida, leaving a small community in St. Augustine and an even smaller military outpost in Pensacola. Colonel Prevost, British commandant of Pensacola at the time, remarked that the inland soil was rich and naval stores, pitch, tar, resin, and pine wood were abundant (Howard 1940:112). These advantageous commodities played a large role in the development of Florida’s panhandle.

As the fight for independence broke out across the American colonies, Spain directed a portion of their military efforts toward reclaiming Florida. In 1781, Spain succeeded in capturing much of the Pensacola region. Their military pursuits led them through the bays and into the present-day Blackwater River where they chased HMS Mentor to her final resting place, yet to be found (Servies 1982). After the British loss of the War for Independence, the Crown traded all of Florida to Spain for the Bahama Islands. However, from the end of the Revolutionary War through the beginning of the 19th century, both internal and external border disputes plagued the region of Florida. These border contestations resulted in West Florida becoming the Republic of West Florida on 17 July 1810 (King 1972). Throughout this time, Spain recognized its grasp on the territory was diminishing significantly.

With the outbreak of the War of 1812, Spain feared the eventual loss of the entire territory to the British, which would provide a massive foothold for operations against the U.S. This conflict and the newly popular notion of “manifest destiny” that characterized the U.S. government’s and citizens’ outlook on the North American continent fueled the migration of American settlers into Florida. General Andrew Jackson’s 1814 and 1818 military conquests into Spanish Florida galvanized in many Americans’ minds the eventual ownership of Florida.
Furthermore, it elucidated that Spain could hardly defend the territory from internal or external threats (Rucker 1990:35). The Spanish retained ownership of Florida until 1819 when the Adams-Onís Treaty ceded Florida to the United States. Two years elapsed before the treaty was ratified, as a revolution and other delays in Spain postponed the transfer, and in 1821 Florida became a territory of the United States (Rucker 1990).

Migration in the northwestern portion of Florida continued steadily as settlers to the area recognized the value of the abundant natural resources. Europeans had long noted the clay bluffs along the waterways; these clay sources led to the first major industry boom in the Blackwater Region, brick making (Romans 1776; Rucker 1990). In 1829 John Hunt purchased a 97 acre plot of land and another half tract the following year. At this time brick manufacturing boomed as Captain William H. Chase assumed control of all Army Corps of Engineers projects along the entire Gulf Coast where he oversaw the construction of coastal defense forts (Rucker 1990:146).

John Hunt’s influence on the Blackwater region was not limited to a simple brickyard; his business acumen led him to acquire vast tracts of land along the east bank of Blackwater Bay and River as well as a three mile section on the western shore of the bay. Through his dealings in the region he gained widespread influence and respect, catapulting him into local and eventually territorial politics. Hunt’s rapport in the Blackwater region led others to migrate to the area, beginning the 1830s “Black Water Settlement” (Rucker 1990:156). Much of the Blackwater region was settled during the 1830s. This population influx birthed what would become Santa Rosa County’s premier settlements—Bagdad and Milton.

In 1828 a young man left the employ of John Hunt’s brickyard, purchased a tract of land northeast of Bagdad on Pond Creek from John de la Rua, and erected a dam to operate a saw mill. This young man was Joseph Forsyth who would go on to shape much of the Blackwater
region with his mill (Overman 1939). Forsyth’s economic expertise allowed him to transcend Arcadia Mill and become partners with Andres P. Simpson and Ezekiel E. Simpson. Together they transported the workings at Arcadia Mill to the confluence of Pond Creek and the Blackwater River, establishing what became the most productive and long-lasting sawmill on the river (King 1972:28-29).

The growth of industry and population along the Blackwater River resulted in a desire for greater autonomy from the trading hub of Pensacola. Established in 1842 as the 21st county in Florida, Santa Rosa County was carved out of Escambia County with Milton named as the county seat, a position it retains to present day. Three years later, the United States admitted Florida as the 27th state in the Union. The period leading up to Civil War was characterized by industrial growth as the timber industry boomed. Industry burgeoned on the Blackwater as individuals such as John Gardner established another primary economic endeavor, shipyards (Rucker 1990:156).

Shipbuilding on the Blackwater River was closely intertwined with the development of the lumber industry. King (1972:33) remarks that “some of the greatest names in shipping and shipbuilding along the Gulf coast had their beginnings” at shipyards on the Blackwater River; he also mentions, at one undisclosed period of time, six shipyards were in operation on the river that possessed ways. The 1850 U.S. Census does mention three shipyards present in Santa Rosa County, those of James Fitzsimmons, Joseph Bowers, and Peterson and Till (Rucker 1990:801-803). More notable shipyards were erected after this time period.

Near the end of the 1850s William M. Ollinger and Martin F. Bruce established their shipyard within close proximity of the E. E. Simpson & Company mills (Woolsey 1994:49). During operations, Ollinger dredged Dutchman’s Cut to facilitate water-borne traffic from
Oakland Basin to the yard, a geographic feature still present today (Woolsey 1994:51). Within close proximity temporally, F. G. Howard constructed a shipyard located along the Milton waterfront (Woolsey 1994:53). Other similar enterprises may have existed along the Blackwater River at this time, but determining this number immediately preceding the Civil War is difficult since shipyards as an industrial category were not included on the U.S. Census in 1860 for Santa Rosa County (Rucker 1990:805).

As war seemed imminent, many local business owners closed operations and took measures to protect their economic interests (Rucker 1990). As war tore through the southern states, the Blackwater region was not left unharmed. Several military skirmishes occurred around the area. In March 1862 Confederate forces conducted a scorched earth expedition into Santa Rosa County, specifically up the Blackwater River where they destroyed naval stores and supplies, and two Confederate gunboats to prevent them falling into Union hands (Rucker 1990:714). Milton, Bagdad, and the general Blackwater region were dramatically affected by the war, so much so that Milton appeared as a ghost town (Rucker 1990:714). Reconstruction was slow for Santa Rosa County, but business did return with a force and soon industrial giants began capitalizing on the natural resources once again (Rucker 1990).

Shortly after the turn of the century, Santa Rosa County entered a period of economic decline and overall stagnation. As the timbering industry continued to fell the great stands of pine near the river, little was done to sustain the resource. Bagdad Land and Lumber Company (BLLC) found it financially detrimental to engage in reforestation activities, though they eventually initiated a program for it, albeit too late (Scott 1971:80). Scott (1971:31) suggests that residents and company men alike were cognizant of the dangers of overharvesting but preferred
to live in the present. The overharvesting of timber was just one of a range of problems that plagued the continued development of Santa Rosa County.

An overwhelming dearth of roads and railways connecting Pensacola to Bagdad and Milton, or moreover Escambia County to Santa Rosa County, contributed to a general isolation. In 1907, Santa Rosa County attempted to raise funds to construct two major bridges, one over Blackwater Bay and a second over Escambia River. The project garnered much support, but ultimately failed. Eight years later the county secured the needed funds to construct both bridges, ushering in a much-needed avenue for travel (Scott 1971:67-68). Additionally, BLLC fostered the development of road and bridge construction for the entire county since they owned much of the heavy machinery necessary for such undertakings (Scott 1971:30).

Individuals wishing to visit Pensacola, or conversely to travel to Bagdad or Milton, voyaged on the Blackwater River via sail and later steam power. This journey was a major undertaking normally reserved for special occasions or necessary business trips until packet steamers began plying the region’s waterways frequently. Until the development of automobiles and airplanes, travel by water was the prime mode of transportation. Whether powered by humans, nature, or machines, people have been utilizing bodies of water to convey themselves and goods for centuries.

For several years preceding 1915, residents of Santa Rosa County petitioned state government officials to divide the county differently, those with different holdings suggesting contrary divisions. BLLC supported a simple north-south division with the northern half becoming Pine County and the southern half remaining as Santa Rosa County. Residents proffered a second possibility where the county would be divided in half creating an east-west split, with the western portion remaining as Santa Rosa County and the eastern portion to be
named later. The final alternative residents put forth revolved around the creation of an entirely new county carved out of Santa Rosa County and Walton County (Scott 1971:34-35). Though it never reached the state legislature, the Pine County proposition would have granted BLLC almost absolute control over the new county, opening more of the rich forests to their saws (Scott 1971:36).

Despite being destructive in their practices, BLLC did assist Milton by providing lights until 1913 when the town created its own power plant, water works, and sewage system (Scott 1971:54). The BLLC was a guiding and often dominating hand in much of the early-20th-century development in the Blackwater region. The company finally relinquished its “power” control over Bagdad shortly before closing in 1939 when Gulf Power laid their own power lines into the village (Scott 1971:32). Much of the Blackwater region was shaped by this industrial giant, though its efforts were not enough to propel the company and the county well into the modern era.

Scott (1971) argues that Santa Rosa County was a little too out of the way to develop into a major port hub as its neighbor Pensacola did. She continues by saying that the rivers came from nowhere and went nowhere. This is an oversimplification of the nature of the waterways of Santa Rosa County. The Blackwater River was the primary artery of the county for several centuries upon which countless vessels plied their trades and goods and people moved about constantly. It appears the true downfall of this area was the reliance on destructive logging practices with no regard for the future and the inability to diversify industrial practices both during the timber boom and after. Presently, the landscape of the region is vastly different; most of the area surrounding the river has returned to a natural state, though the flora and fauna are not the same.
Gone are the large stands of yellow pine, major industrial complexes, and the wilderness this area once was.

Geographical Setting

Modern Santa Rosa County is flanked by Escambia County on the west and Okaloosa County on the east (2). Its northern border is the Florida/Alabama state line, and its southern boundary is the Gulf of Mexico. According to the 2010 census, Santa Rosa County is 1,011.61 mi² (2,621.07 km²) and possesses a population of 151,372 (United States Bureau of the Census 2010). The southern portion of the county is characterized by several major fluvial systems that eventually empty into the Gulf of Mexico.

With its headwaters in the Conecuh National Forest near Bradely, Alabama, the Blackwater River flows for 62 mi (99.78 km), of which 49 mi (78.86 km) are in Florida, and drains an area of about 860 mi² (2,227.39 km²). The lower 14 mi (22.53 km) of the river are tidal, with minimal diurnal tides averaging 1.1 ft (0.34 m) (Lewis 2010:7). The river runs across the Alabama/Florida border into Okaloosa County then into Santa Rosa County where it empties into Blackwater Bay, the eastern portion of Pensacola Bay.

Featuring a sand bottom and countless sandbars, the river is characterized by dark, tannin-rich water which provides the fluvial system’s name. The reddish color, caused by tannins and organic acids, is generated by drainage of acidic flatwoods and other wetlands adjacent to the river (Lewis 2010:7). It is “one of the last remaining shifting white sand bottom river systems in its natural state in the world” (Ankersen et al. 2010:4). The natural state of this river and its previously discussed historical past make the Blackwater River a prime candidate for archaeological research.
Previous Archaeological Investigations

Before reviewing the past archaeological research conducted in and around the Blackwater River, it is paramount to note that, due to its prominence for transportation of goods and people, the Blackwater has been clearly altered by humans. The River and Harbor Act of 3 March 1905 was enacted authorizing the Blackwater River Project (United States Army Corps of Engineers 1974). The original dredging only occurred in the bay and never extended into the river. As of 1974, no dredging activities were expected to be necessary in the river. The significance of this cannot be overstated. Aside from any private dredging activity that may have occurred historically around mill sites or other industrial complexes on the river, the majority of the resources in the river should be unaffected by such activities. This affords archaeologists a unique opportunity to record and study sites that may not have persevered through the past in other locations.

Recognizing the potential for well-preserved shipwrecks around the state, the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research (BAR) endeavored in January 1991 to develop a long-term management plan for these submerged cultural resources in Florida. Their pilot study, the Pensacola Shipwreck Survey (PSS), as it came to be called, began the first phase of investigations in February 1991, continuing until September of that year. The PSS research strategy identified four geographical areas closely associated with past maritime activities and expected to have high concentrations of significant sites (Franklin et al. 1992). These four areas were Pensacola Bay, the Gulf Breeze Peninsula, the bayous, and the Blackwater River.

Resulting from their survey in the Blackwater River, BAR reported that 15 wrecks were located in the Blackwater; however, they generated a map displaying the locations of 16 shipwrecks in the river (Franklin et al. 1992:10, 153). Of the 16 identified wrecks in the river, 8 are located in the 4.1 mi. research area (Franklin et al. 1992:153). These 8 wrecks are the
Snapper Wreck (8SR1001), Milton RR Swingbridge Hull (8SR1488), a barge off Sanborn’s (8SR1493), barge(s) off Dutchman’s Cut (8SR1482), a barge at the #38 channel marker (8SR1483), a barge south of Dutchman’s Cut (8SR1484), the Marquis Basin barge (8SR1485), and the Quinn Basin barge (8SR1487) (Franklin et al. 1992:5). Graduate students from UWF later revisited several of these sites to conduct thesis research.

Funded by BAR and the UWF Archaeology institute, archaeologists from UWF embarked in 2000 and 2001 on an underwater survey throughout the greater Pensacola region. As a portion of this research, archaeologists conducted a survey in the Blackwater River. The crew returned to the Snapper Wreck and the Swingbridge Hull Wreck for a site analysis with updated recommendations for their preservation and conservation (Cozzi et al. 2001:138-139). Directly across from the Swingbridge Wreck, a local informant reported the location of a bronze rudder gudgeon with bronze fasteners and the remains of the sternpost. Unfortunately, none of these components were relocated by UWF divers (Cozzi et al. 2001:139-140). Near the Snapper Wreck, another local informant related finding a rudder and stem. The rudder was relocated and deemed to have been from a small coastal or fishing vessel (Cozzi et al. 2001:141). The stem was also relocated, raised for photography and mapping, then returned to its resting place. This structural element was rather small and probably was from a small vessel of unknown use and type (Cozzi et al. 2001:142). No other significant sites or wrecks recorded during this survey fall within the current project area.

During the 2001 summer field school season, Jason Raupp and other UWF archaeologists and students conducted an investigation on the Snapper Wreck, located in front of the historic site of the Ollinger and Bruce Shipyard just south of the modern Oyster Pile Boat Ramp. The UWF field school did not perform any excavations since the majority of the site was, and
remains to this day, exposed. While the BAR concentrated mainly on a general overview of the site, they did distinguish several diagnostic features and recorded general dimensions of the hull. The 2001 fieldwork “focused on recording as many of the chronological and functionally diagnostic features as possible” and attempted to ascertain whether the vessel would fit the model for a fishing schooner (Raupp 2004:2). As a result of this work, Raupp proffered that the Snapper Wreck should be considered a Pensacola fishing schooner. This hypothesis was later tested by another UWF graduate student conducting research on the snapper fishing industry in Pensacola (Bucchino 2014). Bucchino conducted no further fieldwork on the vessel but did reanalyze Raupp’s data and drawings in an attempt to declare the Snapper Wreck a commercial fishing vessel. She tentatively identified it as such, while highlighting that it would have been one of the largest commercial fishing vessels in Pensacola from approximately 1910-1935 (Bucchino 2014:65).

In the summer of 2010 a small contingent of UWF graduate and undergraduate students participating in the field school endeavored to create a site plan of the Milton Railroad Swingbridge Hull (8SR1488), a vessel first noted in the 1991 PSS report. The following year, a similar group returned to the site for two days to assess its condition (Foster 2013:55-56). Full-scale “excavation” and recording did not begin until 2012 when Marisa Foster led several weeks of archaeological investigations on the site as part of her graduate thesis work. She centered the work around three hypotheses which were to uncover the use history of the vessel, determine its typological categorization, and ascertain when it sank (Foster 2013:ix). In her conclusion, Foster (2013:89) states that she failed to prove all three hypotheses and suggests further excavations and fieldwork may elucidate the truth about this wreck.
Also during the 2010 and 2011 field school, Danny Haddock, another UWF graduate student, conducted his thesis research on the Centerboard Schooner (8SR01978) which lies in Marquis Bayou, just north of the railroad swingbridge and associated wreck. Similar to Foster, Haddock sought to obtain an understanding of the vessel’s life history and its demise by analyzing artifacts, ship construction characteristics, and the historical record. He concluded that this vessel was locally built (based on wood samples) and probably a regional schooner that operated on the Intracoastal Waterway and rivers of the Gulf Coast (Haddock 2014:1-2). Unfortunately, as is the case with many wrecks in this river, it remains inconclusive how this vessel sank—although it is clear this vessel was burnt. It either fell victim to Beard’s 1862 raid, as did many vessels and industrial sites in the region, or it was simply abandoned in the post-Civil War period once it ceased being of use (Haddock 2014:4).

On a much broader scale, UWF received funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Office of Ocean Exploration and Research (NOAA OER) to search for the wreck of HMS Mentor, a British sloop-of-war lost in the Blackwater in 1781. During the Revolutionary War, Bernardo de Gálvez commanded the Spanish fleet and laid siege to Pensacola. The Mentor fought in several battles and skirmishes before running from the Spanish and capsizing during a squall in what the British called Middle River. This river is assumed to be the Blackwater since it is the middle of three rivers that empty into Pensacola Bay. The possibility exists that the Middle River may not be the Blackwater River, but currently is the best hypothesis to work from. The survey for this wreck utilized both side scan sonar and a magnetometer in an attempt to locate the vessel. UWF professor Greg Cook designed two survey areas, the first in the southern half of the Blackwater River and the second in Blackwater Bay. The northern half of the survey area covers from the Interstate-10 overpass to just south of
Dutchman’s Cut (Cook 2012b). This portion is the southern half of the 4.1 mi. area under study for the maritime heritage trail. Though to date this project has yet to locate the Mentor, the search continues.

Also in 2012, the UWF Archaeology Institute conducted a maritime survey of the Bagdad Waterfronts proposed park construction area at the confluence of Pond Creek and the Blackwater River. Their designs featured several water-based facilities, docks, piers, and walkways that require construction in the river. No previously recorded sites exist in this section of the river, and no significant cultural resources were detected during this survey. A crib structure was detected and deemed to be outside of the project area and not historically significant. Cook (2012a) cautioned construction workers to avoid the structure simply as a safety concern.

Further site-specific research in this 4.1 mi. stretch of the Blackwater did not occur again until 2013 when Will Wilson (2015) initiated a multisite temporal analysis of the site formation processes at work on the historic shipwrecks in the river to better understand and manage sites in the region. Two of the five wrecks he selected fall within this research’s area, the Snapper Wreck and the Milton Railroad Swingbridge Hull. Wilson (2015:8) selected these particular sites based on their historical/archaeological significance and their location. His research was founded in site-formation processes and influenced heavily by Schiffer’s behavioral archaeology, namely in its application to maritime archaeology (Wilson 2015:3). Wilson explored and utilized these paradigms to uncover both the natural and cultural factors influencing these wrecks. His research not only informs future archaeologists and other scientists of the elements at work, but also suggests methods to continue preservation and conservation of these and other sites in similar settings.
At this writing, Chris Dvorscak, another UWF graduate student, is investigating a vessel currently known as the Killian (8SR2182). It is a sidewheel steamer discovered by a UWF maritime survey course led by Greg Cook. This steamer features the remains of a boiler, tiller arm, portions of the bow structure, and a large majority of the propulsion machinery. It derives its name from the manufacturer’s mark imprinted on the fire bricks found under the boiler. Dvorscak (2015, pers. comm.) hopes to gain insight into the life history of this vessel and ascertain its true identity. Recent historical research suggests this vessel may be the wreck of the Columbia due to the location of the wreck, its construction, and time frame.

This research focuses primarily on the submerged resources present in the Blackwater River, although it also takes into account archaeological and historical sites located on shore along the river. These sites are obviously directly tied to the maritime landscape, a concept fully discussed in the first section of Chapter III. No terrestrial fieldwork was conducted for this project, though previous investigations are described below as the sites they located will be discussed in the final product of the maritime heritage trail.

Dissimilar to most of the work discussed here, Peters and Jones (1973) conducted a historical investigation of the entire Blackwater River to comprehend the influence humans have had on the ecology. Their study highlights the unique nature of the Blackwater as a sand-bottom river that, despite periods of intense human activity in and along the waterway, still exists in its natural state for the majority of its length. They accurately cite that although “the banks of the river are almost entirely protected by state or national forest,” an increase in local population and tourism has served to add pressure to the river (Peters and Jones 1973:251). Coincidentally, they mention the overwhelming concern local residents have for the river and its protection and preservation for the future, a reality this researcher discovered to have only escalated with time.
While other historical studies have been undertaken concerning the Blackwater region, they are not discussed in this section but were utilized in constructing a chronological background for this research (see previous section, this chapter). Additionally, the desire for further conservation and preservation of the Blackwater is at the heart of this research.

In 1988 the UWF Archaeology Institute, funded by the Santa Rosa Historical Society and the State of Florida, initiated a multi-year and multi-phase large-scale comprehensive survey of the Blackwater drainage area. Prior to this project, very little professional archaeological work had been conducted in this region. Forty-four archaeological sites were discovered during the first phase of this survey, 9 were previously recorded sites and the remaining 35 were new (Little et al. 1988). Based on site descriptions and locations, 9 of the 44 sites appear to fall within the heritage trail research area (Table 1). These terrestrial sites range from early Native American lithic assemblages to the remnants of the John Hunt Brick Yard. None of these sites were revisited for the current research.

TABLE 1
1988 SURVEY SITE NAMES, NUMBERS, AND DESCRIPTIONS IN PROJECT AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Number</th>
<th>Site Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lane Lot</td>
<td>8SR750</td>
<td>Aboriginal lithic and ceramic scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwater-1</td>
<td>8SR752</td>
<td>Historic artifact scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crigler Cemetery</td>
<td>8SR754</td>
<td>Historic cemetery, aboriginal ceramic and historic artifact scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelican Bayou-1</td>
<td>8SR755</td>
<td>Aboriginal ceramic scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelican Bayou-2</td>
<td>8SR756</td>
<td>Historic house sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crigler-Hunt Mill</td>
<td>8SR758</td>
<td>Historic brick scatter, kiln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland Basin</td>
<td>8SR759</td>
<td>Aboriginal ceramic scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avalon Beach</td>
<td>8SR763</td>
<td>Isolated lithic scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwater Air-Dry Pilings</td>
<td>8SR766</td>
<td>Historic pilings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following year, John Phillips initiated the second phase of this multi-year assessment. He notes that Little’s survey was only below the Interstate 10 overpass, which seems to contradict
the location of some of the sites Little recorded (Phillips 1989:1). This second phase was
designed to survey the Blackwater River drainage above Interstate 10. Analogous to Phase I,
Phase II sought to identify sites known by local citizens that had not been recorded in the Florida
Master Site File (FMSF) and to appraise their significance (Phillips 1989:20). This portion of the
reconnaissance uncovered a total of 62 previously unrecorded sites, 24 of which were identified
by locals. Of these 62 sites, 11 arguably fall within the scope of this project and represent some
portion of the past maritime landscape in this region (Table 2). Most notable of these sites are the
Chaffin-Milligan Mill Site (8SR805), Shipyard Point (8SR807), Bagdad Steam Engine Mill
(8SR821), and the Island Mill (8SR841). Phase III was carried out in 1991 as the final phase,
although a fourth was planned but lacked the funding. The Phase III survey area is outside the
boundary of this project but is important to mention for future researchers in this area as it occurs
directly north of this research area (Penton 1991).

TABLE 2
1989 SURVEY SITE NAMES, NUMBERS, AND DESCRIPTIONS IN PROJECT AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Number</th>
<th>Site Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unnamed</td>
<td>8SR793</td>
<td>Victorian American artifact scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnamed</td>
<td>8SR794</td>
<td>Keego Brick Ovens or Brickyard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnamed</td>
<td>8SR795</td>
<td>Historic artifact scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaffin-Milligan Mill</td>
<td>8SR805</td>
<td>Mill site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnamed</td>
<td>8SR806</td>
<td>Historic artifact scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipyard Point</td>
<td>8SR807</td>
<td>Shipyard and associated features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagdad Steam Engine Mill</td>
<td>8SR821</td>
<td>Lumber mill and associated features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagdad Commissary</td>
<td>8SR840</td>
<td>Portion of Bagdad industrial complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island Mill</td>
<td>8SR841</td>
<td>Lumber mill and associated features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcadia/Bagdad Flume</td>
<td>8SR842</td>
<td>Board lined log flume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcadia and Blackwater Railway</td>
<td>8SR843</td>
<td>Mule drawn railway remnants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concurrently with the Phase III survey of the Blackwater drainage, Kaye Phillips (1991)
compiled an archaeological education package for the Santa Rosa School District. By creating
what she terms “a culture history of the Blackwater River basin,” Phillips attempted “to develop
an understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage of Santa Rosa County with a focus on
the Blackwater River” (Phillips 1991:1). The major drawback of this package is its limited scope
since it targeted a particular audience, children in grades K-5.

Shortly after the conclusion of these projects, John Phillips embarked on yet another
massive archaeological undertaking in the panhandle region; his focus this time was on mills and
other water-powered industries throughout northwest Florida. In both of these technical reports,
Phillips (1993, 1996) covers a vast region with a multitude of sites and components that persist
in the archaeological record. Five of the myriad sites associated with a water-powered industry in
these two reports fall within the current research project area. All five are discussed elsewhere in
this section.

In 1999 a 10 acre plot of land in Santa Rosa County was slated for development. The
UWF Archaeology Institute acquired the contract, and John Phillips carried out the survey. This
section of property ran between Milton and Bagdad along the Blackwater River and between two
small bayous (Phillips 1999). Background research of the project area indicated no cultural
resources were present. The archaeological investigation carried out by Phillips (1999:26) also
yielded no new sites, and the development was given approval to continue.

As aforementioned, this research stems from the interest of the Bagdad Waterfronts
Partnership for an avenue to disseminate historical and archaeological information to the public.
Currently, this organization is completing the development of a 20 acre passive park on the
historic site of the Bagdad Land and Lumber Company. Before any work on the park could be
done, the UWF Archaeology Institute conducted a survey of the area. Only one previously
recorded site existed within the bounds of the project area, the Bagdad Steam Engine Mill Site
This site was found to be “extensively damaged by recent industrial activities and the remaining features [were] covered with several feet of fill” (Phillips and Sommerkamp 2010:39). Archaeologists carried out a surface examination of the site and excavated 23 shovel tests, none of which yielded any cultural material. As a result, the project area was deemed suitable for construction of the park since the proposal for development would not impact any significant cultural resources (Phillips and Sommerkamp 2010).

Many sites discussed here play a pivotal role in the development of the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail. Consideration for the more significant sites is discussed further in Chapter IV. The historical past, geographical setting, and archaeological significance all combine to create a unique environment well suited for public interpretation. The development of a maritime heritage trail is the most advantageous method of public outreach based on these factors. The following chapter outlines the building blocks of cultural heritage and creates a framework for the construction of the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail.
CHAPTER III
HERITAGE BACKGROUND

Stemming from their roots in antiquity, the concepts of culture and heritage have transformed and are currently still being redefined by those participating in the preservation of the past. Sir Edward Burnett Tylor (1871:1) penned one of the first cohesive definitions of culture in his work *Primitive Culture* when he wrote, “Culture…is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” Throughout the following discussion, the term “cultural resources,” as it becomes further defined, is used to mean both the cultural and related natural elements present in the study area.

This chapter first lays out the basis of cultural interpretation to examine how this field originated. Immediately following, heritage protection legislation is overviewed first at an international, then national, and finally a state level to evidence the range of concern for heritage protection and interpretation on a multiscalar plane. A brief literature reviews proceeds from this overview to establish the manner in which a legal framework has been influential in cultural resource management. The next section lays the groundwork for submerged heritage management programs as they exist worldwide. Stemming from this discussion, the following section outlines existing maritime heritage trails, their utility, and their shortcomings to illustrate the considerations given for this research. The final section outlines general trail development guidelines. Their direct application to this research is discussed at length throughout Chapter IV. The goal of this thesis is to provide an operative framework for maritime heritage trail development in the Blackwater River and connected bodies of water, a trail that is built upon the foundations of cultural heritage interpretation.
Cultural Heritage Interpretation

Modern cultural heritage interpretation originated in the late 1950s in the United States and, shortly thereafter, throughout the rest of the world. In 1957 Freeman Tilden (2007:34-35) conceived six principles of interpretation which he succinctly put forth. Tilden (2007:33-34) recognized he was the pioneer blazing the philosophical trail on the subject matter and prophetically declared that he expected future individuals to revise his principles. Although somewhat modified, his framework remains to this day the cornerstone of all modern heritage interpretation and aided in guiding this research. These principles are as follows:

1. Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.

2. Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.

3. Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical, or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.

4. The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

5. Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.

6. Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentations to adults but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.
Before outlining his six principles, Tilden (2007:33) creates a definition of the function of interpretation, describing it as “an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.” He immediately recognizes that this definition will not suffice a true interpreter who will transcend the simple activity of interpretation to bring others to an appreciation of a real, whole, and more important truth. For cultural resource managers, his charges and principles are paramount to present and future heritage development.

Tilden (2007) outlines his six principles, then proceeds to unpack each throughout the course of several chapters, and concludes by projecting future concerns for interpreters and discussing potential methods to combat them. Rather than attempt to recreate each principle, a brief overview is given to understand their application to this project. Tilden’s fourth principle is the most pivotal for cultural resource interpretation. He declares that the end goal of interpretation is provocation; this objective he terms as the “chief aim of interpretation” (Tilden 2007:35). The ultimate purpose is to prompt the individual to desire a greater understanding of the truths and principles underlying simple facts and information. Cultural resources deserve protection and preservation not just by resources managers but by the stakeholders and individuals daily engaging with the resources. Actualization of this goal is no simple task and requires several other of Tilden’s principles to guide interpreters.

Principles one and two must be accomplished to fulfill the aim of prompting individuals to see a need for continued protection and preservation. Simply put, interpretation is not information but rather revelation. As such, the interpreted information must connect with some part of the visitor or relate to their experience; otherwise it accomplishes nothing (Tilden
The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail endeavors to accomplish these goals by affording individuals the ability to select their desired area of learning based on their interests and the things meaningful to them. The material is not presented in a static format, but all relevant information is interpreted in a manner to engage the public while encouraging their support for protection and preservation. Reaching the public at every age and every situation is not an easy task, one which Tilden discusses with his sixth principle.

Interpretation for adults should be markedly different than interpretation for children (Tilden 2007:35). When creating an interpretive program, resource managers need to consider their audience’s age and position in life. Countless well-meaning interpretive programs have failed to reach their audience simply because of ineffective communication by an interpreter. A passionate interpreter will possess the style necessary to carry out this task. While not a direct principle, Tilden (2007:35) discusses this aspect of style as the final piece of the puzzle. The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail is unique because the online format makes it accessible to all age ranges. Considerations for other interpretation methods and programming are discussed in Chapters IV and V.

Since his seminal work, interpreters have been modifying and adapting Tilden’s six principles in a wide array of interpretive programming. The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail attempts to fulfill these charges while meeting the needs of the community, stakeholders, and visitors. Although guided by Tilden’s principles, this research is informed by a large body of legislation, worldwide, nationally, and locally, which has been crafted to meet the needs of cultural resource protection.
Heritage Protection Legislation

Cultural resource managers in the U.S. are empowered by a number of legislative actions at the international, national, and state levels. To better understand the development of the laws that promote heritage interpretation, major pieces of legislation are discussed below as they relate to the development of cultural heritage protection and promotion and specifically this research. Considerations are given for international standards to set the stage, with the primary focus resting on the discussion of germane legislation at the national and state levels.

The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), when laying down their guidelines in 1964, began with the simplistic yet insightful concept that historic monuments deserved protection. Their intuitive definition expanded to include “not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural setting in which is found the evidence of a particular civilization, a significant development, or a historic event” (The International Council on Monuments and Sites [ICOMOS] 1965:1). Although they only recognized a very particular suite of sites and objects, ICOMOS incorporated the landscape around the architectural work as significant, a concept they would later expand and build upon. Furthermore, ICOMOS, while listing the principles of interpretation, did little to address the how and why of interpretation, a major flaw noted by cultural resource managers (Jameson 2014).

In 1972 a massive global shift in the way cultural and natural heritage was viewed, protected, and preserved occurred. Early definitions often excluded various components or only focused on the natural over cultural aspects, or vice versa; however, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) drafted a resolution that continued to pave the path for global cultural and natural heritage protection. This document defined the cultural and natural portions individually and recognized that much of the world’s heritage was
being threatened “by changing social and economic conditions which aggravate the situation with even more formidable phenomena of damage or destruction” (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] 1972). Recognizing that these definitions could not remain as static pillars upon which cultural and natural heritage was built, UNESCO continued over time to revise and bolster the concepts of what heritage truly is and how it should be protected.

In 2001 UNESCO conducted a revision of its stipulations on how cultural and natural heritage should be dealt with. During this conference, UNESCO developed the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. This convention honed in on underwater cultural heritage by clearly defining it, discussing why it deserves protection, and considering how it should be handled in particular areas of the world. A drawback to this legislation was the timeframe established, requiring the resources to have been partially or totally under water for at least 100 years (UNESCO 2002:51). This time range is inconsistent with historical archaeological requirements in place in the U.S. that stipulate the site, object, etc. to be at least 50 years old or older to be considered part of the archaeological record. Natural and cultural factors already pressure sites younger than 100 years old, necessitating an approach that attempts to manage any maritime cultural resource despite its age.

In their opening statement on underwater cultural heritage, UNESCO (2002:50) specifically noted an increase in public interest and appreciation of underwater cultural heritage. This trend continues to gather momentum and today drives much heritage tourism that individuals and families engage in worldwide. Cultural resource managers must cope with new scenarios and challenges in attempting to meet the public’s needs while ensuring the protection and preservation of the heritage.
Continuing to adapt with the changing times and conceptions of what cultural heritage is and should be, UNESCO presently outlines cultural heritage as comprising both tangible items (i.e., artifacts, archaeological sites, shipwrecks) and intangible concepts (i.e., traditions, rituals, oral histories). Within this definition they also incorporate cultural heritage, natural heritage, and protection of heritage resources in the event of armed conflict under the term “cultural heritage” (UNESCO 2015). These principles of cultural heritage guided this research which sought to include all aspects of these definitions when contemplating the resources present in the Blackwater River.

Prior to UNESCO’s 2001 convention, ICOMOS (1996) developed a charter specific to underwater cultural heritage and even included archaeological heritage removed from an underwater environment. Dissimilar to their earlier charters, ICOMOS devised 15 articles that stand as suggestions of how projects attempting to protect and preserve underwater heritage should be conducted. While the approach should be commended, the reality of implementing each of these articles relies inherently on each individual project, the cultural resource managers involved, and established legislation in particular areas (i.e., individual state laws for conducting maritime survey).

On the national level, cultural heritage management began in the U.S. during the 19th century with the conservation movement and developed with the concepts of public stewardship of lands and resources in the early and mid 20th century (Jameson 2007:7). In the 1960s this concern resulted in the creation of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act. This act established the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the only organization that maintains the legal obligation to encourage federal projects to consider historic preservation in their
requirements (Advisory Council on Historic Preservation 2014). Over the following decades, heritage management legislation continued to be developed in the U.S.

The United States in 1987 passed the Abandoned Shipwreck Act, signed into effect in 1988. This act provided state and federal agencies the basic components of how to manage shipwrecks in waters under their ownership or control (National Park Service 1991). Included in these protocols are two sections worthy of note. The first requires providing for public access to wrecks when and where possible, especially for sport divers. The second is two separate considerations that function best when combined together, calling for archaeological research to be conducted to gain an understanding of the past while providing for “public appreciation, understanding, and enjoyment of shipwrecks and maritime history” (NPS 1991).

The late 1980s and early 1990s also heralded the beginning of many state-level maritime heritage programs in the U.S. Federal and state regulations, and specifically those of Florida, state any historical, cultural, archaeological, or paleontological resource is significant if older than 50 years (Florida Statutes 2012). Many of these heritage programs attempt to preserve and protect the resources while making them directly and indirectly accessible for the public. UNESCO’s (2002:56) declaration clearly dictates countries are to “take all practicable measures to raise public awareness regarding the value and significance of underwater cultural heritage and the importance of protecting it.” The proper management of heritage sites in the U.S. as developed through legislation calls for public engagement outcomes and the promotion of a preservation message through education.

Submerged Heritage Management through Promotion

Even as recently as the mid-2000s, very little scholarly material for managing maritime and submerged resources existed, even though many maritime heritage projects were in place or
in process at this time throughout the world (Scott-Ireton 2005:6). Maritime heritage as a concept is discussed further below. A definite disconnect existed between cultural resource managers and the aforementioned cultural resource regulations. Recently the field has seen a dramatic increase in the quantity of research and a growing number of publications as a result. International, national, and regional conferences, such as the Society for Historical Archaeology’s Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, have witnessed a proliferation of papers, sessions, and roundtable discussions centered on properly managing cultural resources. Researchers across the globe have seen a dramatic spike in the level of interest in maritime archaeology from locals, various organizations, and governmental heritage tourism planning groups; consequently, there has been an increase in the global discourse on underwater heritage protection and conservation (Jameson 2014:3). Further considerations and potential issues that arise from cultural resource management strategies, specifically for maritime resources, are discussed below.

The ultimate goal in any cultural heritage attraction is creating a vehicle whereby the public can access, utilize, and develop an appreciation for the resources present in a given area. The resultant project, which could range from a heritage trail to an educational course to a lecture series, is meaningless should it only disseminate information in a static format that does not engage the public and prompt them to question why our heritage is important and deserving of protection. Ideally, outreach programs will cause an individual to consider the past and the tangible resources remaining as their heritage. People naturally tend to place a higher value on items they perceive as having ownership of. With this in mind, cultural resource managers foster value that revolves around the inherent nature of the object or site, rather than a dollar amount that can be placed on it. This is often a precarious position for cultural resource managers as they seek to develop heritage tourism platforms that not only promote the intrinsic value of the
resource but also generate financial revenue through visitation for the town or region where the resource is located.

Paramount to cultural heritage is the focus on intrinsic value over the economic value of any site, artifact, or landscape. Often researchers are faced with the dilemma of stakeholders who are rhapsodized by the potential economic value through sale or other consumption of a cultural heritage resource and are thus blind to any educational or emotional impact the site or object may engender in those wishing to engage with the past through heritage tourism (Underwood 2014:37). It is the responsibility of the cultural resource manager to foster public involvement and develop compelling interpretation while protecting and preserving the resource(s) in question. Cultural resource managers must not only be successful in these areas but also must increase the public’s perception of the intrinsic value of the resources present. As the intrinsic value of the resource increases in the public eye, stakeholders should witness a boost for further protection and preservation (Deming 2014:95). Recognizing the inherent value of an object can lead to a twofold path that creates sustainable economic development of cultural resources and promotes the resources’ protection and preservation (Secci 2014:75). One method capable of interpreting and instilling an appreciation of cultural resources while benefitting the local economy is a heritage trail.

Maritime Heritage Trails

Maritime heritage, as defined by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), “includes not only physical resources such as historic shipwrecks and prehistoric archaeological sites, but also archival documents and oral histories. Maritime heritage can also include the stories of indigenous cultures that have lived and used the oceans for thousands of years” (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA] 2014). Within their...
definition, NOAA includes aspects that relate to the tangible and intangible nature of cultural heritage, as also discussed in UNESCO’s charters pertaining to cultural heritage. Through scientific research and effective interpretation, NOAA believes individuals will not only cultivate a personal recognition of the importance of maritime cultural resources but also become “more aware of the critical need…to be wise stewards of our ocean planet” (NOAA 2014).

Central to this discussion is the unchangeable fact that cultural resources are non-renewable and therefore require proper protection and preservation in the present and for the future. This concept is much harder to convey in situations where direct access to the resource is impossible due to the resource’s physical location or state of degradation. Submerged cultural resources often are inaccessible to a vast majority of the public simply because they are under water. Promoting and protecting resources in this type of environment present additional challenges for cultural resource managers, especially when merely trying to foster an understanding of why individuals should care and invest in something that is out-of-sight and out-of-mind. Often when resources are considered for public interpretation, certain sites are not suited for public interpretation due to a plethora of reasons, such as site integrity or degradation, cultural sensitivity, or presence of war graves (Evans 2014).

Cultural resource managers have developed multiple techniques to surmount these obstacles and create heritage outreach programs that are well-developed to meet the needs of the public while caring for the resources. This research attempts to build from existing strategies and implement a form of heritage management and tourism that responsibly preserves the resources present and appropriately relates to locals, visitors, and anyone interested in the maritime past of the Blackwater River.
An established method growing in popularity is the use of maritime heritage trails to interpret archaeological and historical resources in a given city, area, state, or even country. An overview of maritime heritage trails in the Gulf Coast and elsewhere in Florida is presented in Chapter IV. Irina Sorset (2013) accurately states that unlike underwater heritage trails, thematic maritime trails incorporate both terrestrial and underwater resources. In so doing, these types of trails offer natural, historical, and cultural components in, on, and around the water, that appeal to a broader spectrum of the public. Only a small sector of the public can access the resources present in an underwater trail, though this does not connote that trails of this nature are of any less value. Researchers have determined most individuals cannot directly access submerged resources and therefore place more value on terrestrial resources (Underwood 2014:39).

Thematic maritime heritage trails offer a broader range of topics spanning resources that can be accessed by divers and non-divers alike.

This critique of underwater heritage trails is not intended to diminish the importance they play in relating submerged cultural heritage to the public; rather, it is meant to highlight how underwater trails might be augmented by taking into account the full suite of maritime heritage resources that exist in a given area. Underwater heritage trails are perhaps a more applicable tool when utilized in settings that do not possess a tie with the maritime landscape surrounding them, for example singular submerged wreck sites with no associated cultural activity areas. Sites of this nature can also be tied into a more robust maritime heritage throughout a given region and serve as yet another aspect of an overarching maritime heritage trail. Maritime heritage trails that feature various areas of interest engage a wider range of the public and ultimately boost tourism in multiple sectors.
Tourism in general has been experiencing a decidedly marked increase worldwide over the past few decades (Walker and Carr 2013:13). A major component of tourism is heritage tourism which is defined by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (2015) as “traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past, and heritage tourism can include cultural, historic and natural resources.” Heritage tourism must engage the individual and provide enjoyment while fostering a respect for the resources present. A large majority of today’s travelers seem to possess a true appreciation of and a desire to visit the local cultural and heritage sites present in the areas they visit. Heritage tourism is a major economic engine in Florida.

The state of Florida possesses a stout economy ranking fourth largest in the United States; in fact, if the state were a country, it would have the eighteenth largest economy on the planet (Enterprise Florida 2015). Tourism composes the largest industry of this economic pie, setting a record in 2014 with 98.9 million visitors to Florida, a number that excludes in-state travelers (Visit Florida 2015). Florida tourism obviously relies heavily on the natural elements present in the state, centering on the numerous beaches and waterways, but heritage tourism alone contributes over $4 billion annually to the state’s economy (Center for Governmental Responsibility, University of Florida Levin College of Law, and the Center for Urban Policy Research 2010). Maritime heritage trails offer another aspect of both historical and ecological tourism by incorporating cultural resources with natural resources. Structured around Tilden’s principles of interpretation and necessitated by law, this project functions as a baseline for future maritime heritage interpretation in the Blackwater region and surrounding areas.
Trail Development

The development of a maritime heritage trail is a multifaceted project with several phases that can be delineated. These stages may, and often do, occur simultaneously; this listing of steps should by no means be considered definitive or a mandatory order to follow. Throughout all of these phases involving the public is highly recommended, particularly at the local level, if they are not already the driving force behind the project. Not only are they a valuable wealth of knowledge about the area, but involving locals creates active participants who begin to develop a deeper respect and care for their heritage and its resources (Deming 2014; Jameson 2014; Secci 2014). Often, by involving the public from the outset, the management of the trail can later be placed into their hands as resource managers. The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail is a prime example of these qualities as it was conceptualized by a local civic group, involved the public constantly, and will be maintained by the civic group once it is completed.

First, every trail must start with an idea of the project—where it will be, why it is necessary, and overall feasibility of the trail being developed and surviving. Deming (2014:95) correctly identifies the largest peril facing any public outreach initiative as stagnation, which must be combated by both researchers and participants. To avoid stagnation, cultural resource managers and/or trail managers should expect to continue updating the trail over time and work to promote new ways for individuals to interact with the trail.

Once the trail parameters are determined, the second step is direct and indirect research concerning the resources present. Cultural resource managers should conduct a thorough survey to ascertain what resources are present throughout the project area. This phase is a multidimensional approach that should consider the resources physically present in and around the trail setting while attempting to ascertain the historical and other cultural entities that are
absent from the landscape. Previous archaeological assessments should be consulted while historical records are researched to create a comprehensive narratives for the sites and the waterways (Evans 2014). By creating an inclusive description of the resources and waterways, researchers can avoid interpretive gaps that may cause the public to create a false mythical past (Secci 2014). This does not imply that once the initial research is completed nothing can be added or subtracted to the trail narrative. The absolute opposite should be the case and as new information, material, resources, or local informants are found or come forward the trail should be adapted accordingly.

At this juncture the third phase begins, which involves the development of interpretive material, whether digital, physical literature, and/or signage. A discussion on the most suitable medium of interpretation for the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail is presented in Chapter V. Each trail is unique in the demands placed on it involving the method of information transmission. What is applicable and works well for one program may be a complete failure for another. Some trails have succeeded with very little physical literature, while others depend entirely on signage and pamphlets. The mission of a researcher is to understand what method of information dispersion is best suited for the audiences they wish to reach. As the digital age progresses, the presentation of cultural resource information in a simple, easy-to-use, and easily updated format via a digital medium is the prevailing method of site interpretation (Jeffery et al. 2013; Smith 2014:11).

These three phases are extremely broad and contain numerous sub-steps within each one. Often, early phases need to be revisited and original ideas altered or even discarded entirely. Chapter IV discusses how these steps were implemented in the theorizing and development of the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail. As cultural resource managers endeavor to create a
viable, sustainable, and applicable maritime heritage trail, the best recourse for advice can be found in two major sources, the local, engaged public and the failures and successes of other researchers.

Literature Review

Roger Smith (2003) in his opening remarks hails *Submerged Cultural Resource Management: Preserving and Interpreting Our Sunken Heritage* (Spirek and Scott-Ireton 2003) as “the first published source describing the scope and breadth of today’s underwater heritage trails and preserves.” In 2007 *Out of the Blue: Public Interpretation of Maritime Cultural Resources* (Jameson and Scott-Ireton 2007) was published, another body of edited papers that revolved around the growing field of public interpretation and management of maritime cultural resources, including those under water and on land. Even at this time, the editors remarked on the scarcity and overall lack of dissemination of publications, both scholarly and otherwise, directly related to public interpretation of maritime cultural resources.

A symposium at the 2012 SHA conference prompted a third volume which amassed the participants’ papers and expanded research, entitled *Between the Devil and the Deep: Meeting Challenges in the Public Interpretation of Maritime Cultural Heritage* (Scott-Ireton 2014). This work was “intended to impart cutting-edge interpretation and public engagement strategies for maritime heritage sites, both on land and under water” (Scott-Ireton 2014:v). The three volumes discussed above represent the scope of work being conducted concerning the maritime cultural resource interpretation. A variety of papers exist on individual global case studies (for Portugal see Freire 2014; China see Jeffery et al. 2013; Turkey see Varinlioglu 2011), but no other compilations merge concept building and case studies into one source.
Maritime cultural heritage, its management, and public interpretation have been moving into the spotlight in multiple fields of archaeology. This general trend is seen in the increase in the number of projects worldwide, the amount of research being published, an overall rise in the number of participants and sessions dedicated to maritime cultural heritage at general anthropology and archaeology conferences, and the creation of conferences specifically for discussion of maritime cultural heritage. From a minor subfield of archaeological research, the study of maritime landscapes and cultural heritage has grown within the fields of archaeology and anthropology. Arguably this avenue of research is reaching fruition and claiming a spot as a vital component of these fields and a major player in public outreach stories and strategies.

Romanticized views of the waterways and seas characterize much of the public’s sentiments and provide an excellent opportunity for cultural resource managers to engage and educate people about the inherent value of maritime cultural resources. If the public continues to place an importance on cultural heritage and to participate in heritage tourism, heritage resource managers must meet the demand with sustainable and adaptive interpretation programs. The future of cultural heritage management will be determined by the implementation of effective outreach strategies that are not only appropriate for the area but meet the demands of an ever-changing digital age. Resource managers must remain ever vigilant and forward looking as they attempt to remain relevant. Maritime heritage trails are a popular method of communicating the cultural heritage present in an area while educating the public on the value of the resources present and providing them with access, directly or indirectly, to submerged and terrestrial components of a maritime landscape.

The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail attempts to meet these challenges and remain adaptable for years to come. The following chapter discusses landscape theory as a theoretical
framework for interpreting a maritime cultural landscape. It is followed by an overview of maritime heritage trails within close proximity of this project. The current status of many of these outreach activities and projections of their futures serve as examples of interpretive strategies, both successful and effective, and those not, that have served to guide the current research.
CHAPTER IV
THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

Humans live on and interact with a physical landscape, one they conceptualize, discuss, and relate to in ways inimitable to each individual. Through this relationship researchers are able to open a discourse on how places and spaces were and are continually altered by those who once resided there and those who currently do. This research utilizes landscape theory as the foundation for interpreting the cultural resources present in the Blackwater maritime landscape. A brief overview of landscape theory is provided leading to a discussion on maritime cultural landscapes as a concept. Maritime heritage trails are subsequently reviewed to elucidate the interpretive activity this research creates. The methodology constructed to employ this approach is discussed in the remaining sections of this chapter.

Landscape Theory

Landscape theory has long been utilized as a model to understand past human interactions and reactions to the environment they operated in, and which reflexively operated on them. Anthropologists and archaeologists alike have utilized this approach in their attempts to understand past humans’ relationship with the natural environment. Questions of space and place all arise from this avenue of inquiry, causing definitions to become muddled and multiple other theories to be implemented in the process of illuminating the past.

While understanding the paths and multiple discourses that have brought landscape theory to the present day is important, undertaking a full recounting of its tumultuous past is not necessary. Landscape theory is an extremely nuanced approach, similar to all theoretical paradigms, and is still undergoing constant criticism and revision. Applying landscape theory to maritime landscapes and particularly the Blackwater River is useful for analyzing past human
interactions on this stage and for understanding how current researchers view and conceptualize that past. In an attempt to avoid creation of a false past, researchers must continually be self-analytical to provide the clearest reconstruction for the public.

The first true attempt to methodologize landscape theory came with Chris Tilley’s (1994) *A Phenomenology of Landscape* which melded several theories in a workable approach. Until this point, space was considered “an abstract dimension or container in which human activities and events took place” (Tilley 1994:9). He continues to introduce a phenomenological approach whereby the researcher attempts to comprehend and describe things as the subject would have experienced them (Tilley 1994:12). To reach this level of comprehension, researchers must recognize the distinction of space and place while acknowledging that without one the other cannot exist. Tilley (1994:15) states that “places constitute space as centres of human meaning” and space provides the context for places, but places imbue meaning on space. From this is derived the notion that personal and cultural identity revolves around places since places are the context for human experience. The landscape and humans are entrenched in a dialectic relationship where humans create the landscape and the landscape creates the humans (Tilley 1994:26). Individuals extend their perceptions and experiences from these geographical contexts into other places through spaces, thus forming landscapes (Tilley 1994:15). Here, landscapes include both the cultural context and the natural environment surrounding the individual. Overlapping spheres of space and place are involved when viewing a landscape, as researchers must incorporate both personal and group conceptions since individuals are not a culture unto themselves. From these definitions the following discussion is focused.

Landscape archaeology during the mid- to late 1990s and early 2000s began to undergo a shift in focus and implementation, with some practitioners viewing it as “archaeology of place”
During this period, the definitions of space and place were constantly re-envisioned by landscape theorists and altered to fit specific approaches. The intertwined nature these two terms once possessed was shredded by some who believed they should be mutually exclusive, causing rifts in the theoretical realms (Whitridge 2004). Out of this discourse came a multitude of landscape “types” in attempts to define particular areas by the human activities that were carried out there (i.e., taskscapes or lithic landscapes). Of particular interest to this current research is the development of the term “maritime landscape.”

Maritime Landscapes

Maritime archaeology, as a scientific venture pioneered by George Bass, Peter Throckmorton, and their associates, developed around the excavation, mapping, and recording of shipwrecks. A cursory glance through the first several decades of research from this field reveals the overwhelmingly focus on shipwrecks as singularities. Not until the late 1970s did Keith Muckelroy (1978) propose what is arguably the first theoretical framework with methodological guidelines specific to the field of maritime archaeology. His premature and unfortunate passing left a massive void in the maritime archaeological community.

Because Muckelroy concentrated his approach on shipwreck sites, it did not cover reasoning on how to approach the terrestrial components so often associated with maritime activities. Christer Westerdahl (1980) took this theoretical step in an unpublished thesis (unavailable at present) and put forth the term maritime cultural landscape after recognizing the need for such a descriptor during a maritime archaeological survey of the Swedish Norrland in 1975-1980. He defined a maritime cultural landscape as “a fabric made up of sea routes, sailing marks, beacons, harbours and anchorages of different kinds, fishing villages, etc.” (Westerdahl 1980:322). Departing from this point, he correctly assessed the uneven distribution of maritime
activity areas, noting their concentration at certain points, a fact he applied only to the Swedish coast, but one that could be transitioned fairly evenly to other localities (Westerdahl 1980).

Revisiting the maritime cultural landscape, Westerdahl (1992:5) refines the concept to signify “human utilization (economy) of maritime space by boat: settlement, fishing, hunting, shipping, and its attendant subcultures, such as pilotage, lighthouse and seamark maintenance.” He suggests the most obvious approach to understand the maritime cultural landscape as a true landscape, a reflexive cognitive landscape, is for researchers to consult locals to obtain their “cognitive perspective of local tradition” (Westerdahl 1992:5-6). While methodologically rudimentary, it does provide a plausible starting point and is an ethnographical field technique that can be instrumental in determining the local population’s general perspective on their maritime landscape.

Westerdahl continues laying a theoretical structure for maritime landscape by elucidating the cognitive, immaterial side of a landscape as paramount to its study; therefore, maritime archaeology alone is not enough to analyze a maritime cultural landscape. Studies of this nature can be compared somewhat to their terrestrial sibling, but should not be treated simply as an extension of it. Moving beyond a localized setting of maritime landscapes, primarily seen at that time as a coastal environment, he argues researchers should consider the inland waterways and associated cultural and cognitive components as a portion of the maritime networks. He concludes by illustrating five archaeological resources that he views as composing a maritime landscape: shipwrecks, land remains, tradition of usage, natural topography or havens, and place names (Westerdahl 1992). Though perhaps overly generalized, these five cultural resources cover the vast majority of the diversity researchers encounter while studying maritime landscapes.
Altered from its original form, maritime landscapes are now conceptualized in a different manner. Westerdahl (2008) even calls into question what is maritime and whether anything can exist that is solely maritime by nature. No one is by nature part of one culture and not part of any other; cultural lines blur and overlap constantly as people move from one station of their day to another. Maritime landscapes are vastly different and cannot and should not be approached in the same manner. An inland riverine community does not function in the same way as an island culture does, though both share the common trait of being a maritime community. Both cultures are connected to a body of water, connoting the maritime component, but they differ dramatically over their use and conceptualization of that space and the places they identify with. If nothing can be defined as purely maritime, then the existence of the field of maritime archaeology is to be questioned (Tuddenham 2010).

Originating as a popular paradigm employed throughout most of the world, maritime cultural landscape, as a general approach, has only recently become fashionable in North America. Grinnan (2013) states that when applying Westerdahl’s theories most research tended to take a large landscape perspective, sought to understand the community’s attachment to the sea, and excluded the submerged and semi-submerged resources. Not included in this argument is Westerdahl’s 2008 paper concerning the nature and existence of a maritime culture. Westerdahl builds upon his monumental research and discusses some of the early flaws in his and others’ theoretical approaches. He argues for viewing more than just singular maritime landscapes and acknowledges research must also include the individuals and related occupations essential to maritime activities (i.e., tar and pitch manufacturers, iron workers, even the individuals who deliver goods to maritime landscapes) (Westerdahl 2008:194). Westerdahl does promote this concept early on but fails to discuss it. Landscape theory is useful in making the
theoretical leap between these places by crossing the space in between them. Essentially, the land and the sea become a meeting ground of activity. The dialectic relationship continues with both unable to exist without the other.

Westerdahl (2008) furthers his suppositions by including submerged resources, adding to the argument that researchers need to be aware and consider prehistoric components as well. The range of human occupation of any landscape must be considered, though understanding prehistoric notions of a landscape, whether maritime or terrestrial, is problematic at best. Attempting to understand the cognitive systems of these individuals should be sought even if conclusions are tentative at best. The cultural heritage of any area involves both the physical components present, archaeological or otherwise, and the cognitive outlook possessed by the individuals who once, or still do, occupy the landscape.

Underwater cultural heritage, as it relates to a maritime cultural landscape, must be considered in its treatment and understanding. Generally cultural heritage management is divided into three main spheres: research, protection, and public interpretation and access of the resources (Secci and Spanu 2015). The above discussion relates directly to the development of many maritime cultural heritage outreach programs worldwide. Overarching principles apparent throughout the development of landscape theory and the resultant theory of maritime landscapes are given to highlight how researchers should approach a maritime heritage trail.

A dialectic relationship should be the driving medium of a maritime heritage trail. The attitudes of the public and their belief about the maritime landscape the trail encompasses should influence the direction and the nature of the project. Simultaneously, these places and the manner in which the public conceive the spaces impact their perceptions of the landscape. Furthering this notion, Westerdahl (1994) indicates that a bevy of historical, ethnological (others would argue
ethnographical), and anthropological methodologies and theoretical paradigms are required to adequately conduct maritime archaeology as it relates to a maritime landscape. No single approach to developing a maritime heritage trail, or studying a maritime landscape for that matter, is correct at all times in all places. The above trends and theories do provide a framework, presented as phases in the previous chapter, for developing a unique research design that will work on the individual level. Researchers must be clear with their definitions and methodology to validate their approaches and consequential program development. This study, while not directly surveying the public, does take a historical, archaeological, and cognitive approach in attempting to delineate the design of a maritime heritage trail for the Blackwater River that is best suited for its inhabitants and visitors alike.

Chapter II provided a historical overview of the Blackwater River and its role as a major lifeline for multiple cultures. The river and its branches must be considered as a maritime cultural landscape not singularly but as they fit into the broader maritime landscape and development of the northeastern Gulf Coast, Florida, and world landscape. The Blackwater’s role is multiscalar in relation to the variety of maritime landscapes it can be considered a portion of. From Native American occupation to discovery and settlement by European powers to Florida’s incorporation and role as part of the United States, this study analyzed the Blackwater River and its immediate maritime landscape as an area well suited for the development of a maritime heritage trail.

Maritime Heritage Trails

While this research was guided and based on the theoretical framework discussed above, primarily the work of Westerdahl, its realistic applications and formatting are drawn from the study of other maritime heritage trails present throughout the United States. This section
discusses several key trails that were consulted for a better understanding of the role they play as outreach programs as well as of their organizational development.

Initial research into maritime heritage trails sought to locate any existing trails or heritage tourism directly related to maritime activities within close proximity to the Blackwater River. Research shows a complete dearth of maritime heritage trails along the northwestern Gulf Coast as far west as Louisiana, although the concept had been advanced. In 2010, as part of America’s Great Outdoors Initiative Project, the Mississippi Coastal Heritage Trail was proposed as a signature piece of preservation legislation. It was slated to be a 100+ mile long trail that could connect the entire coastline of Mississippi by uniting smaller themed trails. With no further information seemingly available, this project never succeeded in amounting to anything more than a proposal with fewer than 200 names signed on the petition for support (Heritage Trails Partnership of the Mississippi Gulf Coast 2010).

To the east of the Blackwater River, Florida Foresight (2014) provides links to maritime heritage sites in Wakulla, Franklin, Leon, Taylor, Dixie, and Levy Counties. The “highlight” of this website is the Big Bend Maritime Heritage Trail, which appears to be the name given to the sites in these counties. The information provided for each “Maritime Heritage Profile” is basic, encourages no aspect of preservation, and barely offers any further information on how to discover more about particular interests. The website appears to have been last updated in 2014, but is designed simplistically and does not engage the visitor. The trail itself, while fulfilling the definition of a collection of places and areas related to maritime activities, does little to explain the intrinsic value of the site over the simple “cool” factor (Florida Foresight 2014). Overall this project is an excellent example of the stagnation that can result in the demise of a project.
In this same area, Irina Sorset (2013) researched and developed the Apalachicola River Maritime Heritage Trail (ARMHT), which is not listed on the Florida Foresight website, as partial fulfillment of her Master’s degree at UWF. Sorset (2013:xi) utilized ethnographic research to create “an effective methodology for making the past relevant through public interpretation and heritage tourism.” She allowed the data she acquired from her focus group, pilot study, and self-designed Apalachicola River Questionnaire to inform the strictures for trail design and layout and the resultant content and outreach materials (Sorset 2013:10). Sorset’s methodology is direct in its attempt to divine the cognitive aspect of current locals living in a maritime landscape. While her research did not clearly state any avenue of inquiry pertaining to past peoples, the assumption can be made that the cognitive mindset of past individuals was ascertained from historical documentation. Unique to the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail is the inclusion of historic records from the area that speak to particular individual’s mindsets concerning aspects of the maritime landscape and the incorporation of current living residents sentiments. Echoing this position, Sorset (2013:xi) argued that “public interpretation of heritage resources that begins with community assessment creates the foundation for a successful and community-relevant heritage tourism product.”

Sorset outlines general guidelines for how researchers should implement the ARMHT should funding for it become available; at present no digital information is available online and her work does not appear to have been operationalized. Furthermore, while present in Apalachicola in 2014, the researcher did not notice any particular information pertaining to the trail, even in the maritime museum, indicating that Sorset’s proposed model has not been utilized by the community. Sorset’s model for the ARMHT and questionnaire are still valuable tools for researchers seeking an ethnographic approach to maritime heritage trail development.
Situated east of the Apalachicola River is Apalachee Bay, home to 10 different trails that compose the Apalachee Bay Maritime Heritage Trail. Visit Wakulla (2015), the website that plays host to this outreach, has a fresh appearance and updated information on many activities in the area. Each section of the trail has printable media available and mentions that laminated versions can be borrowed from the Wakulla Welcome Center. Most of the trail guides apparently were last updated in 2013. The history sections do provide a small amount of historical information on one particular resource located on that portion of the trail. There does not seem to be a theme connecting the trails or the heritage portions. While the site offers individuals great information on how to access the waterways, information on cultural resources is very limited with little recourse for discovering more. For this reason, the maritime cultural resources appear to be an afterthought to the natural setting of the trail. Maritime heritage trails should be a melding of both natural and cultural resources that contribute to interpreting the holistic maritime landscape. Users should be presented with the options of experiencing, learning about, and enjoying what they find appealing. Other examples from the state of Florida offer better insight into development of maritime cultural resources.

Since 1991, the state of Florida has done a commendable task of creating a variety of heritage trails that cover a wide range of topics from the British Colonial period to World War II to shipwrecks (Florida of Historical Resources 2015a). The Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources (DHR) maintains three major heritage trails that span a significant portion of the state’s maritime heritage. First, the Florida Maritime Heritage Trail “is a collection of sites and places along the coast…that represent Florida’s strong ties to the sea over thousands of years” (Florida Division of Historical Resources 2015a). DHR (2015a) distinguishes six major themes, interpreted with physical literature and on-line information,
which guide the user through the state of Florida: coastal communities, coastal environments, historic forts, lighthouses, historic ports, and historic shipwrecks. Each subset provides an overview of the resources present in the state for that theme, and the website allows the individual to click on a site for more information. Further details are provided about any particular site, and major elements are highlighted and linked to other webpages should the user desire more information. The overall layout, while not particularly aesthetically pleasing, functions more than adequately as a well-managed and maintained resource.

As a direct result of the BP Oil Spill, DHR created and continues to manage a second outreach program called the Florida Panhandle Shipwreck Trail. Comprised of 12 shipwrecks of varying size and life histories, this trail was designed to stimulate tourism while educating divers and the general public about a portion of Florida’s maritime past (DHR 2015b). As an encouragement for divers to visit all the wrecks, DHR offers a passport that is signed and sealed with a sticker after a diver has visited each site. To encourage further learning, QR codes are supplied to link the reader back to the DHR webpage to obtain further information (DHR 2015b). Though limited to a particular suite of underwater sites that excludes the majority of the public from physically visiting, many facets can be taken away from this outreach project.

The narrative synopsis for each wreck is robust enough to stand on its own, includes methods of how to arrive at the site, and even provides video overview of what the diver can expect to see. These flyover videos also appeal to the non-diving public who may not be able to access the site. The application of QR codes evidences the DHR’s ability to recognize how to reach a world that is so heavily invested in technology. The majority of the design features implemented on this trail have directly aided in the development of the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail.
The third trail’s roots sprouted in 1964, when the Florida Keys Underwater Guides Association president requested assistance from the governor of Florida to protect the wrecks of the 1733 Spanish plate fleet from current salvage operations. Unfortunately, this preservation would not occur for a quarter of a century, when in 1989 one of these vessels was designated as a public underwater park (Smith 2003). DHR continued with this work in 2004 and developed the 1733 Spanish Galleon Trail to interpret the disaster that befell these ships in the Florida Keys (McKinnon 2007). Within the state of Florida other interpretive methods are employed to promote the use, understanding, and protection of cultural resources.

The state of Florida has a stout heritage outreach program in the form of the Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN). FPAN’s “mission is to promote and facilitate the conservation, study and public understanding of Florida’s archaeological heritage through regional centers throughout the state” (Florida Public Archaeology Network 2015). Currently FPAN executes two outreach programs directly related to the maritime past. The first is Public Archaeological Shipwreck Tours (PAST), which affords certified recreational divers the opportunity to dive shipwrecks under archaeological study. At this writing, PAST features the second Emanuel Point shipwreck in Pensacola Bay. This unique approach places recreational divers side-by-side with maritime archaeologists conducting full-scale underwater work. Educating recreational divers on the scientific nature of the work conducted on these wrecks is the primary goal; the hope is that by understanding the scientific manner archaeologists employ to study shipwrecks, individuals will understand that the best method to comprehending a shipwreck is holistic study and not simple artifact removal.

The Heritage Awareness Diving Seminar (HADS) is FPAN’s second major maritime cultural outreach program. The dive training agencies PADI, NAUI, and SDI all approve HADS
as a specialty certification divers can obtain. This program seeks to convey the benefits of preserving and protecting submerged cultural resources both as sources of information about the past and as living ecosystems (FPAN 2015). Thus far, divers have seemed to embrace both programs quite enthusiastically. Though diving a blackwater environment may be daunting to some, the methods employed by both of these programs may eventually prove effective for promoting interest in the Blackwater River.

Another outreach activity developed by FPAN is Destination: Civil War, a smartphone and tablet-based application that prompts users to explore Civil War heritage sites throughout Florida (Florida Public Archaeology Network 2015). This app is easy to navigate and provides background information on Civil War activities in Florida while directing users on how to seek out sites to visit. Similar to Destination: Civil War, Historical Research Associates, Inc., partnered with UWF to develop an app and online platform called Next Exit History™. Billed as “international in scope and…the only heritage tourism app that you’ll ever need,” Next Exit History™ delivers a fun-to-use and well-developed method of sponsoring local heritage tourism at the user’s desired pace, frequency, and area of interest (Historical Research Associates, Inc. 2015). While these two programs are terrestrial in nature, they are relevant to the discussion of maritime heritage trails because their methodology can be applied to virtual maritime heritage trail development.

In south Florida, the National Park Service (NPS) created and maintains the Biscayne Maritime Heritage Trail. This trail features six major wrecks dating from the 1870s through the 1960s and offers opportunities for snorkelers and scuba divers alike. Recently, NPS added a seventh site to the trail that adds another, entirely different facet – a lighthouse. Maritime heritage trails tend to connect with a greater range of the public when they incorporate more than
a single type of resource. The trail website is well maintained and is easily navigable for guests seeking information on how to travel to the park and its wrecks. The cultural and historical information is succinct and offers individuals the opportunity to download brochures with site plans, maps, and further historical information. Lonely Planet listed this trail as one of a kind, which is not the entire truth as trails similar to this exist throughout the entire world (NPS 2015).

At the very southern tip of Florida is the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Shipwreck Trail. Boasting nine shipwrecks in water shallow enough for snorkelers and deep enough for seasoned scuba divers, this well-crafted trail puts divers on wrecks that date from 1733 to the late 1980s. Arguably the centerpiece of this trail is the San Pedro, a vessel from the ill-fated 1733 Spanish treasure fleet. The allure of a shipwreck transporting treasure is obviously romanticized by many, creating a large draw from both the snorkeler and scuba diver world. NOAA does a commendable job of highlighting this wreck, and all others featured on the trail, while simultaneously educating the public on why protecting and preserving these vessels is of interest not just to archaeologists but also to them. The trail website features short synopses that can be opened to further information and photographs. NOAA includes a history, archaeology, and site map section for each wreck emphasizing multiple aspects of the wreck and the types of information that can be procured from them (NOAA 2015). Such an approach is useful for sites with extensive backgrounds and decades of research, but may not be as applicable to wrecks that have not received more than a cursory study. Many of the sites in and along the Blackwater River have not been documented heavily in the archaeological record but do possess a deep and rich historical past that many locals still have connections to. With the longest coastline in the continental United States it is only logical that Florida touts the number of maritime heritage trails it does.
In 2010, the Deepwater Horizon Rig, operated by British Petroleum (BP), exploded, initiating what would become the worst environmental disaster in U.S. history (The Ocean Portal Team 2015). The resulting oil spill struck the Florida panhandle and northwestern Gulf Coast, dealing a direct blow to the beautiful beaches and waterways that attract so many of Florida’s tourists. Many Gulf Coast communities were devastated, and their economies declined sharply due to such heavy reliance on coastal tourism. Currently, as BP continues to pay reparations for the damages, the councils distributing the money throughout this region are looking for projects that will bolster sustainable tourism should another such disaster befall this area (Darryl Boudreau 2015, pers. comm.). Maritime heritage trails on inland rivers fulfill this criteria and offer long-term sustainability while encouraging heritage based ecotourism.

The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail incorporates many of the successful elements discussed throughout this section while attempting to avoid running aground as several of these trails have. Studying the successes and failures of other trails demonstrates the underlying components that serve to support a robust and long-lasting maritime heritage trail. This trail is built on the accomplishments of similar outreach programs and a general theoretical basis, but approaches the heritage resources present in a manner that is unique and suited to the landscape in, on, and under which they are located. To return again to Freeman Tilden (2007:35), the foremost task of interpretation is provocation, not instruction, and should be “[a]n educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.”

Secci (2014:74), when discussing Italian cultural heritage, recommends viewing the public, for whom these trails are intended, not as a captive audience but rather an operative one
that can be active participants in the development of heritage outreach opportunities and attractions. Consultation with locals is enhanced through historical and documentary research. 

Historical and Documentary Research Methodology

Many sites in and along the Blackwater River are well known both historically and archaeologically, with a greater body of works dedicated to the historical past. The historical background of the area discussed in Chapter II provides a brief overview of the anthropogenic forces that operated in the Blackwater region and their general effects on the landscape. Developed primarily for exploitation of natural resources, the region’s environment has been greatly altered by human activity. As industry begat industry, the area thrived until nature could offer no more. The engines of economic gain were halted and much sold off elsewhere. Nature crept back in and once again took hold. Now the communities on the Blackwater River appreciate the natural beauty that surrounds them and desire a deeper connection to and understanding of their past.

Descendants of some of the original settlers still live in the vicinity, and possess vibrant oral histories that are beginning to disappear with time. Since the outset of the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail project, the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership has lost four members, all of whom grew up and resided in the Blackwater community. Their remembrances and anecdotes are forever lost. One of the major goals of this trail is to incorporate locals’ stories by collecting and cataloguing so that others might have access to them now and in the future. Oral history collection is beyond the scope of the current research, although the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership has already intimated their desire for incorporating local anecdotes and oral histories on the trail website, potentially as part of a revolving series.
Local inhabitants of Bagdad, Milton, and surrounding communities are not just keepers of stories of the past, but guardians of many objects, documents, photographs, and other ephemera pertaining to the history and development of the region. Inevitably at meetings or presentations, individuals bring items they wish to show to researchers, have put on display, or donate in hopes the object will fulfill a greater purpose than sitting on a shelf collecting dust. Photographs comprised a large majority of the items presented to the researcher. In most scenarios individuals wished to make others aware of the ephemera they possessed, though they offered to provide copies if necessary. When presented with artifacts or materials better suited for a museum or curation, individuals were instructed to retain the items and discuss other methods of displaying them with members of the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership. The researcher ensured every interaction was characterized by gratitude and contact information exchanged should further questions or ideas arise.

Deming (2014) addresses this issue directly in her paper on the South Carolina Sport Diver Archaeology Management Program. As individuals present items or information to researchers, researchers need to be aware of their emotions. Simply dismissing the person or displaying a flippant attitude may push them away and, consequently, demonize cultural resource managers as uninterested or uncaring of local people’s contributions. Cultural resource managers need to be sensitive to the public’s needs and not be focused on simple data collection and information transmission. The process of interpretation is one that requires more than a simple translation of information, but accurate information must be acquired to inform effective interpretation.
Data Collection

Maritime field work involved direct survey of the entire section of the Blackwater River that composes this trail. The approximate 4.1 mi. main channel of the river and all its branches were surveyed using a Marine Sonics Centurion Splash Proof system with a 1200 kHz frequency. Although this higher frequency limited the range of the survey, it provided the necessary clarity for this research. The instrument was set to a 30 meter (98 ft.) range, or 60 m (197 ft.) swath width, covering a range of 60 meters, and towed no faster than 5 knots, affording the researcher the greatest amount of coverage with the most desirable clarity (Atherton 2011:1.11). Due to technical issues, a 600 kHz sonar fish had to be utilized to complete the survey. It was operated under the same parameters described above.

The sonar fish emits acoustic energy from the sensors on its sides which fans out until it strikes the bottom or another object and is returned as an echo to the device. This fan does not travel directly under the fish and creates a blank space where no data is recorded, called the nadir. Planned line files were created with 10 meter line spacing to ensure 100 percent overlap of the nadir. When potential targets were encountered, refinement survey was conducted to obtain a more detailed and precise image. This instrument allowed the researcher to view any submerged cultural resources that are present on and protrude from the bottom of the river.

Magnetometry was not used for this project as testing all large magnetic anomalies in the river is beyond the scope of this study. Years of dumping by those in and around the river, coupled with the density of large-scale infrastructure that once dominated this river, would cause target assessment to potentially take years. Additionally, no subbottom profiler was used in the survey due to sub-surface probing and excavation being beyond the scope of this research.
Although this research concentrated on maritime cultural landscapes, a terrestrial survey along the river banks was not undertaken for several reasons. First, the original intent of the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership was to take an account of the maritime cultural components present in the river for the purposes of the trail. Second, previous archaeological surveys were conducted along portions of this particular section of the Blackwater (Little et al. 1988; Phillips 1989; Penton 1991; Phillips 1999; Phillips and Sommerkamp 2010). Finally, the time and effort necessary to properly conduct the terrestrial survey is beyond the scope of this research.

The primary focus of this research was on the cultural remains on and protruding from the riverbed, as well as the sites and components along the river’s edge visible from the water and thus suitable for interpretation. Consequently, the field work relied upon the use of side-scan sonar to locate potential cultural components and target diving to confirm any majorly significant objects.

Maritime archaeologists generally create a computer-based projection of the area they are studying with straight lines spaced evenly apart to ensure their survey covers the totality of the project area. The nature of the Blackwater River is overwhelmingly serpentine, making such a projection unwieldy and at times essentially useless. In Quinn Bayou, Marquis Basin, and through long, straight sections of the river, a HYPACK survey project was designed. For the remaining areas, the Marine Sonic plotter feature was used. This function displays a real-time display of where the vessel and fish are, and the area covered. The vessel pilot used this readout as a guide to cover the winding portions of the river. Unfortunately, the program can only display a limited amount of data, frequently causing the pilot to end passes early in order to return and overlap the line just surveyed to ensure full coverage.
All survey data from the past three years were collected to guarantee every portion of the research area was fully surveyed. The Marine Sonic fish recorded and saved all files in a .mst file format. Several programs exist for analyzing this particular file type, one of them being Sea Scan Survey developed by Marine Sonic. Sea Scan Survey separates each .mst file, affording the researcher the ability to view small sections of data at a time. Unfortunately, it requires an older version of MicroSoft Windows to operate correctly.

Recognizing this issue, Marine Sonic created a file converter, MST2SDS. All survey data was analyzed using Sea Scan Survey after the files had been converted using this program. MST2SDS often shut down or worked improperly when “overloaded.” It quickly became evident that the optimum number of files to convert at a time fell between 100-150 files. Attempting to convert more than this number of files caused some to be converted improperly or left completely out of the data set for analysis. Once this problem was identified, previous sections were revisited to ensure no data had been lost, corrupted, or left unanalyzed.

All data appeared in a waterfall format that could be easily played back for analysis. Extended use of this software led to an increased understanding of more expeditious ways to view the data. Scrolling through long empty sections shortened analysis time and increased the researcher’s ability to notice any anomalies. When an anomaly was detected, the waterfall was paused and all pertinent target information recorded on a UWF Side Scan Survey Target Form. At this point, a snapshot of the anomaly could be taken to enhance the divers’ familiarity with the target before diving on it (Figure 4 and Figure 5).
Figure 4. Side-scan sonar image capture of two barges. (Courtesy of the Division of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL.)
Figure 5. Side-scan sonar image capture of debris scatter. (Courtesy of the Division of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL.)
The file name recorded for each anomaly was the time stamp of when the waterfall was paused. Since each analysis sheet recorded the exact files that were converted and coalesced, present and future researchers retain the ability to recreate the exact same data suite. The anomaly was then noted to be in the left or right channel, or in some cases both channels if the survey line bisected the target. A GPS provided constant positioning data during survey. The location of the target was recorded in latitude and longitude, but can be converted to UTMs at any time through any free online converter. Coordinates were taken from the center of the target unless the anomaly was readily identifiable as a wreck or other culturally significant target or appeared as though it could be damage by an anchor. Each target was measured to obtain the length and width, which were taken from the widest and longest point of the target and measured in feet. Another characteristic recorded was a description of the anomaly, which was left to the researcher’s discretion. All targets were ranked in order of importance on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being insignificant and 5 representing a high-priority target. The rationale for this scale and its implementation are discussed in detail in Chapter VI.

After processing one segment of the data, the information was transferred into an Excel spreadsheet designed with correlated sections. The spreadsheet serves as a backup for the information and manages it in an accessible and easily searchable format. In addition to the analysis forms and spreadsheet, all survey data was compiled in SonarWiz 5 and georeferenced over a Google Earth image of the project area (Figure 6). The data mosaic fosters a clearer understanding of the area surveyed, puts into perspective the scope of the research, and reveals any gaps in the data that may not have been properly overlapped. Portions of the river could not be surveyed because of their shallow nature (i.e., Marquis Basin west half).
Figure 6. Mosaicked side-scan sonar data of project area.
All information recovered during the remote sensing and subsequent diving was recorded in accordance with the University of West Florida’s Division of Anthropology and Archaeology standards for maritime site survey and assessment. Permanent records, both physical and digital versions, are stored at UWF for future work involving these areas and sites.

Target Diving

Targets that were either indeterminate or spread over a large area were selected for direct visual assessment by divers. Furthermore, any targets which ranked a 4 or 5 on the significance scale and also required further investigation were evaluated via scuba diving. The majority of this dive work was carried out by graduate and undergraduate students participating in the 2013-2014 UWF Maritime Field School using standard open-circuit scuba equipment. While all the information recorded was vital to data collection, the Location and Size fields were of utmost importance for divers. The side-scan snapshots of the targets also assisted divers as they attempted to locate and confirm them in low-visibility conditions.

Once a target was selected for diving, the coordinates were input into a Garmin handheld GPS. While one individual piloted the vessel, another tossed a surface marker buoy with dive flag and weighted anchor as close to the mark as possible. Once the vessel was anchored safely near the target, divers entered the water and descended the line. After reaching the anchor, if the target was not apparent, divers carried out multiple circle searches in a systematic manner. If the target was small, for example 5 ft. (1.52 m) in length and 3 ft. (0.91 m) in width, divers swam a circle every meter (3.28 ft.). The larger a target was, the greater the interval of the circle searches. Since every target was a side-scan anomaly, the dive was not over until material that matched the target description and image was located. Generally, each target was located quickly and within close proximity to the anchor buoy. After assessing a target, divers recorded their
findings and observations on a UWF Target Form. All forms generated from target diving were later scanned into PDF format. Once the survey was completed, the findings were processed and prepared for interpretation.

Interpretation of Resources

The foremost concern for any site is the overall protection and preservation of it and its associated components. The Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership never intended to develop a trail which would provide the public with precise coordinates for wreck sites or cultural components for fear of possible looting or vandalism; a preservationist attitude characterizes their outlook for this project and “general vicinity” discussions are the goal for the trail. In any event, while there will always be a sector of the public that will go to any length to obtain material of “monetary value” from wreck sites, the Blackwater River is not a hotbed of diving activity for average recreational divers. The natural dark waters, poor visibility, limited depth, hazardous fauna, and a host of other factors typically ward off even the most seasoned divers.

Generally, the characteristics of the Blackwater River make it conducive for preservation of wrecks and cultural components. Will Wilson (2015:90) in his analysis of the site formation processes of several Blackwater wrecks, concluded that the tannin-rich water and low currents aid in the preservation of wooden components present in the river. He suggests sacrificial anodes to control corrosion potential on larger, significant iron components as an in situ conservation method (Wilson 2015:86). The impending threat to any of these sites is truly a cultural one – people. All too often boaters on the river are the major cause of harm to these sites, either intentionally or unintentionally.

The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail takes a thematic approach to the past and resources still present on the maritime landscape. Garnered from the research and discussed in
Chapter V, the themes selected for interpretation became self-evident as the research progressed. Should future research require addition of other themes, the trail is designed to accommodate such inclusions.

One of the goals of this project is to foster awareness of the cultural materials present in the river. Though no site locations will be provided, cautionary warnings in the form of information may assist in decreasing accidental site destruction. Informing the public that their favorite fishing spot may actually be a historic lumber barge associated with the Bagdad Land and Lumber Company may cause them to think twice about tossing an anchor out at their spot. Since none of the submerged sites will be considered for direct public access development, the safety of these sites is at no greater risk.

Known sites and those ranked as high-priority targets (and confirmed through target diving) are the best suited for public interpretation. Cultural resources of a similar nature, for example barges, are best suited to be grouped and discussed as a single entity in the overall dialogue concerning the lumber industry. Sites that have been the subject of other research, whether individually or as part of a larger research agenda, can be interpreted in a more robust manner as signature resources. Many of these sites do not have a definitive life history, allowing them to connect to multiple lines from the past. The spheres many of the vessels operated in often overlap, perhaps guiding the public to gain knowledge in an area they might have otherwise overlooked. The maritime landscape has an intertwined nature. The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail seeks to incorporate all maritime cultural resources present in an interpretation of the past.

Terrestrial and maritime sites alike will be interpreted both archaeologically and historically. The same concerns for maritime sites can be applied to terrestrial sites as well.
Many recorded terrestrial sites are located on private or government-owned lands. No coordinates will be given for terrestrial sites associated with the trail. A large majority of the terrestrial sites are ephemeral in nature in any case, possessing few above-ground features. These sites and others with limited information will be discussed generally under the major themes of the trail. Well-known sites with extensive historical documentation or archaeological investigation will be interpreted as key points of interest and anchor points for the overarching themes of the trail.

As more information is brought forth and locals supply documentation or anecdotes concerning areas of the trail, sites currently grouped with similar ones or those with no strong background may become signature sites. The general model of the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail is one that is fluid in nature, able to be remade to meet the needs of the locals and general public alike while embodying the spirit of the region. The results of this fieldwork and the model developed for site interpretation are discussed in the following chapter. Considerations for potential shortcomings and insight into future development are related in Chapter VI.
CHAPTER V
RESULTS

Initial inquiry concerning previous archaeological investigations carried out on and near the Blackwater River, discussed in Chapter II, yielded numerous maritime and terrestrial sites within the project area. Major maritime and terrestrial archaeological sites are discussed briefly below, as well as historical sites with no archaeological remnants. Sites of little to no significance, for example a previously reported site with no material now present, are not mentioned but are listed in Appendix. The major themes applicable to interpreting the resources present in and along the Blackwater River are presented in the final section of this chapter with further discussion found in Chapter VI. The maritime sites documented during this research are presented immediately following an overview of the previously known sites.

Documented Sites – Maritime

During the maritime survey conducted for this project, the entire 4.1 mi. main channel section of the Blackwater River was surveyed. Any small braid or branches running parallel to the main channel, as well as basins or dead-end cuts, were also surveyed. In total, more than 15 days were spent surveying this portion of the river.

Known shipwreck sites in the river numbered 10: one steamship, one centerboard schooner, one unknown hull, one snapper smack, and six barges (Table 3). The majority of the wrecks all date to the later portion of the 19th century, with the most recent wrecks dating from the 1930s and possibly 1940s.
**TABLE 3**
KNOWN SHIPWRECKS IN PROJECT AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Number</th>
<th>Type of Wreck</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Killian</td>
<td>8SR2182</td>
<td>Side-wheel paddle steamer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centerboard Schooner</td>
<td>8SR01978</td>
<td>Centerboard schooner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton RR Swingbridge Hull</td>
<td>8SR1488</td>
<td>Potential schooner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapper Wreck</td>
<td>8SR1001</td>
<td>Fishing smack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barge off Sanborn's</td>
<td>8SR1493</td>
<td>Barge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barge(s) off Dutchman's Cut</td>
<td>8SR1482</td>
<td>Barge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barge at #38 Channel Marker</td>
<td>8SR1483</td>
<td>Barge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barge south of Dutchman's Cut</td>
<td>8SR1484</td>
<td>Barge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marquis Basin Barge</td>
<td>8SR1485</td>
<td>Barge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinn Basin Barge</td>
<td>8SR1487</td>
<td>Barge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Six of these ten wrecks were relocated during the maritime survey, with the exceptions being the barge off of Sanborn’s, the Marquis Basin Barge, and the barges associated with Dutchman’s Cut. Barges are distinct in nature when much of the structure remains; however, extreme degradation causes a debris scatter that can be mistaken for dock structure. The Marquis Basin and Sanborn barges may have not shown up during survey due to shallow water conditions preventing side-scan operation at their location.

Overall, 130 anomalies were detected from the survey data. These anomalies included natural changes, suggesting perhaps buried cultural resources, and those clearly present on or above the river bottom. Sixty-three of these anomalies were defined as potential cultural material, the vast majority consisting of old dock structure. Comprising these 63 anomalies were one car, several modern fiberglass and aluminum johnboats and row boats, a canoe, several barges, structural debris scatter, machinery, and potential shipways. This survey located several previously unrecorded barges and an overturned hull of unknown type and construction date. The major discovery was of potential shipways which may correspond to one of two Confederate shipyards that were present on the Blackwater River.
Documented Sites – Terrestrial

No terrestrial survey or excavations were carried out during this research. Major swaths of the Blackwater region have received prior survey, as discussed in Chapter II. Several sites recorded during terrestrial archaeological surveys of the Blackwater region are not recorded by the Florida Master Site File but are presented here (Table 4). All sites listed by the Florida Master Site File in this region were compiled and are presented in Table 5. Sites along the Blackwater River range from prehistoric lithic scatters to modern industrial sites. The focal sites along the river include the Bagdad Steam Engine Mill (SR00821) (later the Bagdad Land & Lumber Company) and associated railway, the Bagdad Commissary (SR00840), the Island Mill (SR00841), and the Crigler-Hunt Mill (SR00758) (associated with the later John Hunt Brickyard). The most beneficial and user-friendly approach to these and the other resources present in and along the Blackwater River was a thematic approach. Through a multi-layered format, the cultural resources were assessed and assigned categories based on the time period and cultural sphere of operation they most generally related to.

TABLE 4
TERRESTRIAL SITES NOT LISTED BY FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Site Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pelican Bayou - 1</td>
<td>8SR755</td>
<td>Aboriginal ceramic scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelican Bayou - 2</td>
<td>8SR756</td>
<td>Historic houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crigler Cemetery</td>
<td>8SR754</td>
<td>19th century cemetery, aboriginal ceramic and historic artifact scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>8SR794</td>
<td>Brickyard, possible &quot;Keego Brick Ovens&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>8SR795</td>
<td>Colonial through Depression dense artifact scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcadia and Blackwater Railway</td>
<td>8SR843</td>
<td>One of first two operational railroads in Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Name</td>
<td>Site Number</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane Lot</td>
<td>SR00750</td>
<td>Indeterminate - Prehistoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwater I</td>
<td>SR00752</td>
<td>Historic Refuse/Dump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crigler-Hunt Mill</td>
<td>SR00758</td>
<td>Lumber Mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland Basin</td>
<td>SR00759</td>
<td>Prehistoric</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackwater Air-Dry Pilings</td>
<td>SR00766</td>
<td>Lumber Mill, Fresh water submerged site 19-20th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>SR00792</td>
<td>20th century American low density artifact scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>SR00800</td>
<td>20th Century American Homestead, low density artifact scatter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaffin-Milligan Mill</td>
<td>SR00805</td>
<td>1821-1899, 1900-present, Mill of unknown function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton Opera</td>
<td>SR00806</td>
<td>Wharf, Dock, Pier 19-20th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipyard Point</td>
<td>SR00807</td>
<td>Wharf, Dock, Pier 19-20th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagdad Steam Engine Mill</td>
<td>SR00821</td>
<td>Mill site with building remains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagdad Commissary</td>
<td>SR00840</td>
<td>Historic Building Remains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island Mill</td>
<td>SR00841</td>
<td>Historic Mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapper Wreck</td>
<td>SR01481</td>
<td>Historic Shipwreck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barge off Dutchman's Cut</td>
<td>SR01482</td>
<td>Historic Shipwreck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barge at #38 Marker</td>
<td>SR01483</td>
<td>Historic Shipwreck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barge South of Dutchman's Cut</td>
<td>SR01484</td>
<td>Historic Shipwreck</td>
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<td>Quinn Basin Barge</td>
<td>SR01486</td>
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<td>Milton RR Swingbridge Hull</td>
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<td>Barge off Sanborn's</td>
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<td>Sanborn's Rudder Site</td>
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<td>Centerboard Schooner</td>
<td>SR01978</td>
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Historical Sites and a Thematic Approach

Historical research for the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail began simply by conducting a search for historical works published on the history and development of the region. Directly related to this trail and the development of the Blackwater area is the historical settlement of the region and the two major towns located in the project’s scope, Milton and Bagdad. Due to multiple major conflagrations, the majority of public records and documents were destroyed when Milton’s City Hall and other repositories of documents burned. Consequently, very few historical works have been published on the general history of the area and its development (King 1972; Rucker 1990). From these select few works, major sites were identified and original historic sources sought out in public archives and private collections. Rather than create a trail based on several individual sites and wrecks, this trail takes a thematic approach that maximizes exposure of all the resources present and allows the user to “choose their own adventure.” Since direct access to the sites is essentially nonexistent, interpreting as many resources as possible while presenting them in a cohesive format is paramount. Overarching themes that span several decades or longer appeared to be the most useful approach. While presented here in a chronological format, the themes can be accessed in any order without having to move from one to the next through time.

The first theme is Prehistory, which spans the scope of early Native American migration into Florida and their subsequent arrival on the Gulf Coast. Archaeological sites from this time period are generally ephemeral and rare in areas devoid of workable stone, like the Blackwater region. While no confirmed Paleoindian (13000-8500 B.C.) sites are present in this area, their presence can be theorized. The fresh water sources with prolific fauna, prominent clay bluffs, abundant marine resources, and generally agreeable environment would have been a suitable
habitat for early Native Americans. Along the Blackwater River numbers of low-density Archaic (8000-1000 B.C.) sites have been identified. These pre-ceramic sites are characterized by a light artifact scatter consisting of lithic artifacts. Several sites matching this description were located during the first two phases of the Blackwater River Drainage Survey (Phillips 1982; Little et al. 1988). The subsequent Woodland Period (1000 B.C.-A.D. 1200), evidences a dramatic increase in population, ceramics, rituals, and trade networks. Sites of this nature are much more prolific in the archaeological record and present along the Blackwater River. The final stage of the Prehistory theme is the Mississippian Period (A.D. 1200-1700), during which peoples began to develop a settlement and subsistence pattern with large camps located in the flood plains of the river valleys and smaller camps along the coasts. The Blackwater River basin would have been an ideal location suited to this type of lifestyle, and the archaeological record corroborates that. Sites along the Blackwater that fall into the Prehistory category are interpreted based on their ability to inform the public of Native American occupation of the area.

Chronologically, the next theme is Discovery and Settlement, the first of the historic periods. This theme begins with the European discovery of Pensacola and Spain’s ill-fated 1559 Luna expedition that attempted to colonize the area. During the initial explorations of northwest Florida, the Spanish sailed through the Pensacola Bay system and into Blackwater River. Eventually the Spanish successfully colonized the area in 1698. The narrative tying this theme together is control; control of the waterways meant control of the land. As control of the water and land exchanged hands, toponyms, place names, changed drastically. Toponyms are a great way to see past declaration of control over a landscape and often evidence underlying sentiments about certain geographic areas. During this time period the Blackwater region was nothing more than the Wild West with little to no settlement or development occurring. Shortly after the
American War for Independence, immigrants from Europe began to settle throughout the new nation, and Spanish-controlled Florida was no exception. Border disputes were the norm as people began to claim land for themselves. Spain eventually ceded Florida to the U.S. after the War of 1812; at this point entrepreneurial individuals established industrial centers along the Blackwater River, long known to be rich in clay deposits and timber.

Temporally the themes diverge at this point into three main industrial categories. Numerous brickyards and manufacturing facilities sprang up along the banks of the Blackwater due to the presence of clay deposits and ease of transportation to major ports or final destinations. Fueling the kilns was a large demand for bricks to construct several forts installed nearby. With demand high and an excellent source of raw material nearby, many locals ventured into Brick Manufacturing, the first of these three industrial themes.

The second industrial theme is Shipbuilding. Noticing the timber readily available along the banks of the Blackwater River, the slight protection from hurricanes by being farther inland, easy access to deep water, and a thriving maritime industry present in Pensacola, many shipwrights began to operate along the river. Milton and Bagdad became known for the vessels produced there, although as many shipwrights outgrew their locations, some moved their entire operation to Pensacola. Historical documents and accounts coupled with archaeological survey located several of these activity areas. Major shipyards include the Ollinger and Bruce Shipyard, two known Confederate yards (and potential associated shipways), Bagdad Shipyard (associated with BLLC), and two shipyards in Milton which require further historical study. Additional documentation needs to be located concerning the reported presence of shipyards for the construction of World War I subchasers (Brian R. Rucker 2015, elec. comm.).
Following the development of the shipbuilding industry, the final industrial theme is the *Lumber Industry*. Early explorers and travelers through northwest Florida remarked on the area’s vast longleaf pine forests that dominated the landscape (Romans 1776; Haggott 1846). The small tributaries that feed into the Blackwater River and its branches provided the necessary source to power lumber mills. Together these aspects combined to create an industry that dominated the region for over a century. As a testament to its wealth of lumber, Santa Rosa County produced well over half the value of all mill products in Florida during the 1840s (Rucker 1990:492). Lumber mills at this time dotted the landscape with more than 20 in operation in Santa Rosa County alone. Historical and archaeological research indicates more than five of these operating in the proposed section of the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail (Phillips 1993, 1996).

Overlapping several of these thematic categories is final theme of the *Civil War*. This theme incorporates any activity on and around the Blackwater River related to the war. Several accounts detail troop movements through the region, which provide an excellent backdrop to the military activities that occurred there. Additionally, Beard’s Raid in 1862 left a wake of destruction in and around the river that is clearly seen in the historical record and potentially in the archaeological record. The Centerboard Schooner and Swingbridge Hull wreck may have fallen victim to this incident. Narrative accounts exist of the locals’ actions and responses to portions of the war, creating a much more personal connection to the conflict.

These six themes encapsulate the majority of finds both archaeologically and historically. They are not meant to be definitive or all-inclusive and should be added to, revised, and potentially discarded should the need arise. The thematic design follows from the methodology discussed in Chapter IV. The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail is meant to be a dynamic means of interpreting a wide array of resources. While this trail is short in length, it subsumes a
large amount cultural and natural resources. The abbreviated nature of the trail and thematic 
approach is intended to encourage future development both upstream and downstream and to 
facilitate a manageable trail that provides users freedom of exploration while enjoying the 
resources present in a short time period.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail is a direct result of the desire and efforts of a waterfront community that cherishes its cultural past. The Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership is comprised of individuals who were born in the area, spent most of their lives there, or fell in love with the region on a visit. The respect these individuals hold for the past lifeways, activities, and their ancestors is a direct mirror of the prevailing sentiment of the greater Blackwater community. The Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership initiated contact with FPAN indicating a desire for assistance from a professional cultural resource manager to establish a lasting and useful interpretive tool to promote cultural awareness and appreciation of the area for both residents and visitors. The original concept flowed seamlessly into the maritime heritage trail developed by this research.

Significance

The Blackwater region’s landscape, similar to much of the panhandle of Florida, is a lattice work of rivers and streams, of which the majority flow into the Gulf of Mexico. Waterways were the major avenues used by natives, explorers, settlers, industrialists, and countless others to establish themselves in the New World. Native Americans settled around fresh water sources for the resources it provided, such as water, food from animals, and an excellent stage for transportation. Similarly, Europeans sailed the Florida coastline looking for routes inland and potential valuable resources along the way.

Rivers and other bodies of water were the major thoroughfares well into the beginning of the 20th century. Europeans first discovered the Blackwater region while sailing along and into the Florida coast. Settlers to the area arrived via ships and subsequently put down roots near the
waterways to have access to the outside world. Industries sprang up along the river to profit from the rich natural resources of clay and timber, spawning job opportunities for many. Those who came to work and settle in the region, if they did not bring their family, created them here; many descendants of those families still live in the same area, and in some cases the same homes, as their forefathers. These residents are proud of their heritage and want to see it protected and promoted.

A maritime heritage trail that draws its meaning from the historical past and archaeological findings is the most appropriate way to protect, preserve, and foster an understanding of the past of the Blackwater region. This research project is the groundwork for what will hopefully extend throughout the greater Santa Rosa and Escambia County waterways. The impact of this research is not limited to this area, but can be extrapolated and utilized as a model for similar environments and communities elsewhere in Florida and the U.S.

The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail is unique for several reasons. First, it was developed from a community desire and overwhelmingly met with enthusiasm and support during presentations to the general public. Second, the nature of the river has preserved many underwater sites, making them prime candidates for further study. Furthermore, the dark, tannin-rich water dissuades those looking to gain financially from exploiting these resources, whether through salvage or looting. Third, this research, rooted in the holistic nature of landscape theory, stands as the first interpretive trail program for this river. With its online completion and projection for future growth, it has the potential to become a sustainable model for economic development of cultural resources.

Finally, cultural resource managers generally retain control and are responsible for maintenance of the interpretive programs they develop; however, the Blackwater Maritime
Heritage Trail methodology, documentation, and all frameworks for research will be turned over to the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership for management and future development. They will be receiving all materials developed from this research, including but not limited to site and theme narratives, a guide for future research (historical, archaeological, and natural), and any historical documentation and images. This step may be seen by some researchers as problematic, but throughout the course of this research the individuals comprising the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership expressed nothing but respect and concern for the resources present in and around the Blackwater River and their stated mission is continued protection, preservation, and research for further understanding.

Discussion

A maritime cultural landscape is by definition an all-encompassing entity, often best interpreted via a heritage trail. This research approached the Blackwater region through the lens of landscape theory with a focus on the discourse of how maritime landscapes develop and change through time. Through this theoretical paradigm, a holistic understanding of human river use was employed to present the resources not as singularities but as components of the complete picture of the Blackwater River. A comprehension of how the parts make up the whole is the foundation of this interpretive pursuit, one which seeks to instill an appreciation of the resources present and to foster their protection and preservation for the future.

The outreach program developed from this view was guided by the principles created by Freeman Tilden when he laid the framework for modern cultural resource interpretation. Within these guiding tenets, Tilden never considered their application to submerged or partially inundated resources; however, they are still applicable and useful for creating a maritime heritage trail. Trails afford cultural resource managers the opportunity to reach and engage a
wider audience. The variety of information is the driving factor behind this ability, and lends itself to be ever-evolving to suit the wants and needs of any interested party. Accurate historical and archaeological investigations are critical in establishing a well-designed trail that not only informs the public but fosters care and appreciation for the cultural resources.

In his suggestions for future work and preservation, Phillips (1989:103) speculates that “the most effective method to protect the archaeological resources within the Blackwater River drainage and the cultural heritage of Santa Rosa County as a whole is through public education.” A mere 26 years later, this research lays the framework for a modern interpretation of the archaeological resources present in the Blackwater River. Moreover, it establishes methods and protocols, while recognizing its shortcomings and pitfalls, for future researchers in this area. At the foundation of this project is the desire to create an interactive heritage trail that engages the public of all ages.

Maritime heritage trails incorporate a swath of resources, cultural and natural, present within an area, offering researchers a holistic way to present and interpret a variety of information that reaches many sectors of the public. The fluid nature of a maritime heritage trail, specifically the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail, cannot be overstated. Creating a primarily “virtual” heritage trail is not without its problems and shortcomings; however, the digital age makes the utility of this data much more manageable and accessible to a broader audience, both in age and location. Nevertheless, despite living in the digital age, not everyone has access or possesses the skills necessary to operate a computer.

Future researchers looking to correct mistakes, add to the existing content, or develop further segments of the trail will find greater ease and adaptability than when attempting to update traditional trail information in the form of signs, pamphlets, and other print media. A
virtual trail is not as costly to keep up-to-date as printed media. Any revision to printed media can also take weeks to months to finalize and disseminate. With printed media and signage there is always the possibility of old versions remaining in circulation or existence with potential misinformation. A major drawback to the digital format is how initial knowledge of the trail is disseminated. Word-of-mouth, lectures, and links on other related websites are all viable methods of communication but may fall short in reaching some portions of the public. Initial steps to make the public aware of the trail can be complicated, but the goal is to coordinate the trail release with the opening of the Bagdad Millsite Memorial Park in Spring 2016. Once made available, interest in the trail is expected to spread by word-of-mouth, public lectures and engagements, media announcements, community advertising, and through any other means possible. With semi-frequent maintenance, the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership, with assistance from UWF and FPAN researchers, can carry this trail forward and continue to make the past of the Blackwater River a vibrant and relevant topic that engages future generations.

For the Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail and future interpretation to succeed, trail managers must constantly strive to keep the trail relevant and not allow it to fall into stagnation. Stagnation remains the primary concern for any interpretive program, especially one that is primarily digitally based due to the ever changing nature of technology. Whether through the creation of new trail segments, addition of online content, or adoption of different outreach methods, future trail planners will determine the success or failure of this trail.

Recommendations

Once a platform for website development has been determined by the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership, a manual for online interpretation and maintenance will be created to standardize the online offerings. The current stakeholders and future researchers must keep the
protection and preservation of the cultural resources as the guiding strategy. The Blackwater Maritime Heritage Trail should be extended both south and north and into other major streams that flow into the river, such as Pond Creek. The next segment should be determined by both the Bagdad Waterfronts Partnership and the researcher(s) conducting the next portion of survey. The current length of the trail is conducive for a single day of paddling or boating. As further segments are added, this scale will be increased affording users the opportunity to “choose their own adventure” not just thematically but spatially as well.

A possibility that has been discussed but not fully methodologized yet is the use of Quick Response (QR) codes at strategic locations either along the trail or at areas of interest. QR codes are small, machine-readable series of black and white squares that store URL information often scanned by cameras on smartphones and tablets. When scanned, these codes send the user to a specific website, for example, a portion of the heritage trail webpage relevant to the location where the individual is stopped. These codes can be printed on weatherproof material appropriate for taking along on a boat, and they may be changed easily and frequently. Numerous free QR code generators are available, and the materials required for the physical code are inexpensive. QR codes can be strategically placed on everything from business cards to signage in the Millsite Park allowing them to be flexible and suitable for any portion of the project or trail. Further discussion of this will be included in the manual for development of online content, a document separate from this research.

The methods employed for this research were best suited for the Blackwater River and may be applicable elsewhere. Though no magnetometer survey was conducted, its utility may be beneficial in other areas with significantly less cultural components or areas that do not possess large amounts of ferrous bottom debris. The side-scan sonar survey employed and the data
analysis may yield marginally different results, as each researcher views anomalies through a slightly different lens. The general presupposition that all sites recorded can be shared, provided no locations are specifically listed, may be deemed by some as problematic. The grouping and inclusion of sites into broader categories, rather than discussing them specifically, provides an added layer of protection for sites needing additional care. This research does not attempt to provide a management plan for each site in or near the river, though future work may necessitate such an undertaking. The solutions and methods discussed elsewhere in this research cannot be implemented exactly worldwide since no other place possesses the same conditions, sites, resources, or any exact same aspect as those found in the Blackwater region. This research does provide suggestions for similar situations and can be used as a structural element in developing a similar methodology.

Another aspect of the methodology employed during this research was the thematic approach to the trail which collected the sites as attractions and organized them under broader, focused themes. Rather than simply listing all the sites with snippets of information, the sites identified through the historical and archaeology surveys are woven into an interpretive narrative guiding users through past. Researchers should take note that these categories are not definitive and should be altered as needed. Additional themes may be required, but the interpreter should recognize that many resources often overlap with multiple themes.

Further insight into many of the wrecks and other archaeological sites in and along the river could be gained through more intensive site-specific examinations. Future research could include other sections of the river, focused investigations on particular types of watercraft, a terrestrial maritime survey, and a host of other potentials. This study has endeavored to create a working model for continued cultural resource interpretation on the Blackwater River.
Archaeologists must attempt to interpret the resources they study in order to educate the public about the importance of and intrinsic value possessed by these resources. Through gaining an appreciation of the cultural resources that represent the past, individuals may begin to comprehend the necessity of their protection and preservation. At the very least, this research stands as one potential approach to educating and engaging the public through the development of an interpretive activity that embodies the past and the people of the Blackwater region.
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