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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

APR 26 1989

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mud Island Creek Complex  
other names/site number (MJe-15 and MJe-17), 22-Je-508, 22-Je-513

2. Location

street & number Natchez Trace Parkway  not for publication  
city, town Lorman  vicinity  
state Mississippi code 28 county Jefferson code 063 zip code 39096

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		
		<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Edgar B. Williams 4-13-89  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Edwin C. ... 4/21/89  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
National Park Service  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.

John J. ... 6/10/89  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic - Village Sites

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Landscape - National Park

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

N/A

N/A

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

stone

foundation

walls

roof

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Site Type: The Mud Island Creek Complex consists of two small prehistoric habitation sites (MJe 15 and MJe 17) [redacted] in Jefferson County, Mississippi. MJe dates from the Anna phase of the Plaquemine Period (A.D. 1200-1350); While MJe 17 was occupied during the Coles Creek Period (A.D. 600-1200).

Environmental Setting: The Mud Island Creek Complex is located within the [redacted]

It is generally agreed that [redacted] were formed during the Pleistocene (20,000 to 18,000 years ago), but the manner of their origin has been the object of debate. Some geologists believe [redacted] were formed by colluvial transport, while others believe them to be of eolian origin.

[redacted] soils have a great deal of strength due to their calcareous nature. The lime within the soil cements individual particles together and gives the loess soils the ability to form steep angles of repose. Leaching, however, serves to weaken the cohesiveness through the removal of the lime, leading to erosion and severe gullyng. This natural process has caused the topography in areas of thick accumulation to become extremely rugged, commonly having 75 to 100 feet of local relief.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Archeology - Prehistoric

Period of Significance  
AD 600-1200  
AD 1200-1350

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation  
Coles Creek Period  
Anna Phase of the Plaquemine Period

Significant Person  
N/A

Architect/Builder  
N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Summary Statement of Significance: The two sites (MJe 17 and MJe 15) that comprise the Mud Island Creek Complex represent typical small, permanent hamlets of the Coles Creek (AD 600-1200) and Anna Phase of the Plaquemine (AD 1200-1350) periods, respectively. These sites appear to have been located [redacted] so as to make the maximum use of natural resources to create a diversified subsistence base which would have included, but did not rely solely upon agriculture. Both sites mirror the mixed hunting and gathering, and agriculture subsistence historically noted for the Natchez Indians who were the descendants of the Plaquemine and Coles Creek peoples that occupied [redacted]. Although these sites have been affected by agricultural activities, they are significant for illustrating the great time depth of subsistence patterns for this area.

In addition to the Coles Creek (MJe 17) and the Plaquemine (MJe 15) occupation of the Mud Island Creek Complex, excavators also found evidence of some earlier Archaic, Tchefunte, and Marksville cultures. These latter components were established on the basis of small numbers of diagnostic projectile points and ceramic sherds found during excavation. It is believed these occupations represent only minor and temporary visitation.

According to the State of Mississippi's Historic Context for the Post-Archaic Period of [redacted] "the character [redacted] occupation during this (Coles Creek) period remains poorly understood" (Morgan n.d.:28). Further work on small Coles Creek habitation sites, such as MJe 17 is needed



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Soils derived from loess parent materials [REDACTED] have high fertility and are easy to work. If the problem of erosion is kept under control, such soils are capable of producing high crop yields (Steponaitis 1974:6-9).

Archeological Investigations: The two archeological sites making up the Mud Island Creek Complex were located during archeological surveys of incomplete sections of the Natchez Trace Parkway, in Jefferson County, Mississippi. The first site (MJe 15) was located in 1975 by Park Service Archeologist Wayne Prokopetz in a reconnaissance survey that collected Coles Creek Period artifacts from the surface of the site. In 1977, the National Park Service, while conducting additional surveys in the area, located a previously unrecorded prehistoric site consisting of a concentration of surface material, [REDACTED]. This site was designated MJe 17. Subsequent testing at both sites tentatively indicated the major occupation was during the Coles Creek Period (AD 800-1200), but some ceramic evidence indicated use at MJe 15 and MJe 17 as far back as the Marksville Period (c. AD 500) and as late as the Plaquemine Period (c. AD 1200).

In 1981, under contract to the National Park Service, the Center for Archeological Research at the University of Mississippi began data recovery fieldwork at both MJe 15 and MJe 17 [REDACTED] (Johnson et al. 1983:1). Fieldwork at the two Mud Island Creek sites was conducted in two phases:

1. A surface collection and testing phase designed to clarify data dealing with the horizontal and vertical distribution of artifacts at the two sites.
2. A mechanical stripping of the plowzone of the portions of the two sites [REDACTED] followed by an intensive data recovery phase (Johnson et al. 1983:13) (see Figures 3 and 4 for fieldwork).

Controlled surface collections consisted of 952 two-meter squares at MJe 17 and 731 two-meter squares at MJe 15 in the first phase of mitigation. After stripping away the plowzone from those areas of the two sites to be mitigated, a total of 31 one-meter units at MJe 15 and 22 one-meter units at MJe 17 were excavated. In addition, flotation samples were taken at MJe 15 (Johnson et al. 1983:26).

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Dating of the two Mud Island Creek Complex sites was based on ceramic typology, which has been firmly established for [REDACTED] Mississippi. MJe 15 produced more than 2,800 ceramic sherds which demonstrated minor Tchefuncte (c. 1000-500 BC), Marksville (c. 1-400 AD), and early Coles Creek (c. AD 600-800) occupation components. The major occupation of MJe 15, however, occurred during the Anna Phase of the Plaquemine Period (AD 1200-1350) (Johnson et al. 1983:80). A carbon 14 date for MJe of AD 1350  $\pm$  60 years confirmed the ceramic dating.

The ceramics from MJe 17, although smaller in number (117 sherds) consisted primarily of Addis Plainware ceramics that were produced throughout the Coles Creek (AD 600-1200) and Plaquemine (AD 1200-1600) periods (Johnson et al. 1983:107-108). Lithic analysis from MJe 17 suggested a Late Archaic and Coles Creek occupation also, but of a minor nature (Johnson et al. 1983:163). Flotation samples from MJe 15 produced corn and hickory nuts indicating a mixed foraging and agricultural economy during the Plaquemine Period (Johnson et al. 1983:166). Archeological investigations conducted at the Mud Island Creek Complex concluded "there is no cultural stratigraphy at either site" (Johnson et al. 1983:163).

Excavations have interpreted both sites as small, permanently occupied habitation sites where Coles Creek (MJe 17) and Plaquemine (MJe 15) peoples were utilizing a broad range of subsistence activities in terms of collecting and hunting of wild food resources, and small scale agriculture (Johnson et al. 1983:174). The authors noted that this type of subsistence was similar to the ethnohistorical data provided on subsistence by early French explorers on the Natchez Indians who lived in the Loess Hills area in the 17th and 18th centuries, indicating a very long and stable subsistence pattern (Johnson et al. 1983:172-173).

Site Integrity: Both sites have been heavily modified by historic period agriculture, to the extent that no stratified cultural deposits apparently exist. The major affect on these two sites' integrity have been the data recovery efforts which removed about one-third of each site. The remainder of these sites are protected under a grass cover [REDACTED].

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according to this Historic Context to identify differences in Coles Creek occupations in other parts of Mississippi, [REDACTED]. Such information could contribute to "an adequate comprehension of interareal cultural interaction and influences during this period" (Morgan n.d.:30).

The Coles Creek Period of [REDACTED] is observed by the Mississippi Historic Context to represent an increase in population, "a phenomenon which has been attributed to the adoption of maize agriculture" (Morgan n.d.:18). However, "as elsewhere within the Coles Creek domain, the use of maize during this period remains to be documented" (Morgan n.d.:18). For the most part these general observations of the Coles Creek period are based primarily upon surface collections of Coles Creek sites [REDACTED]. Further work at habitation sites, such as MJe 17, might produce plant and pollen remains of maize, that would be required to assess the accuracy of these observations.

Site MJe 15 has already contributed to an understanding of the subsistence base of the Anna Phase (AD 1200-1350) of the Plaquemine Period, [REDACTED]. Recovery of domesticated corn and wild hickory nut remains illustrated a mixed collecting and agricultural subsistence pattern that continued into the historic Natchez period. Further work is needed at Anna Phase habitation sites, as noted by the Mississippi Historic Context, in order to clarify the ceramic typologies which could provide "a better understanding of the nature of the initial interaction between indigenous (Plaquemine) and Mississippian cultures in this area, a task requiring the excavation of sites with single or isolatable Anna phase components," (Morgan n.d.: 19). At MJe 15 excavations have produced large quantities of ceramics (2800+ sherds) from a partial mitigation project. As a primarily single component small habitation site, future work at MJe 15 could recover an even larger sampling of ceramics that could be applied to this problem.