



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY REQUIRED FORM

This form only pertains to ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES for this project. It is not valid for Historic Architecture and Landscapes. You must consult separately with the Historic Architecture and Landscapes Group.



PROJECT INFORMATION

Project No: **Bridge 321** County: **Ashe**
 WBS No: **17BP.11.R.136** Document: **Minimum Criteria**
 F.A. No: **na** Funding: ☒ State ☐ Federal

Federal Permit Required? ☒ Yes ☐ No Permit Type: **NWP# 3 or 14**

Project Description:

The project calls for the replacement of Bridge No. 321 on SR 1526 (John Griffith Road) over Helton Creek in Ashe County. The archaeological Area of Potential Effects (APE) for the project is defined as a 400 foot (121.92 m) long corridor running south and west along John Griffith Road from its intersection with NC 194. A second corridor also runs for 600 feet (182.88 m) along NC 194 extending 300 feet (91.44 m) east and west from the intersection. The corridors are approximately 150 feet (45.72 m) wide extending 75 feet (22.86 m) on either side of each road from the present centerlines. Both corridors to the west of the bridge have been merged. The APE encompasses a total of 3 acres.

SUMMARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES REVIEW: SURVEY REQUIRED

Brief description of review activities, results of review, and conclusions:

Bridge No. 321 is located east of the community of Helton, west of Sturgills, and north of Lansing in the northern portion of Ashe County, North Carolina. The project area is plotted in the western half of the Grassy Creek USGS 7.5' topographic quadrangle (Figure 1).

A site file search was conducted at the Office of State Archaeology (OSA) on October 31, 2016. No previously recorded archaeological sites have been identified within the APE or within a mile of bridge. According to the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office online data base (HPOWEB 2016), there are no known historic architectural resources within the APE that may yield intact archaeological deposits. Topographic maps, USDA soil survey maps, aerial photographs (NC One Map), and historic maps (North Carolina maps website) were examined for information on environmental and cultural variables that may have contributed to prehistoric or historic settlement within the project limits and to assess the level of ground disturbance.

Bridge No. 321 is situated just south of the intersection of John Griffith Road with NC 194 and is oriented north-south over Helton Creek. NC 194 runs east-west within the project area, while John Griffith Road heads south for a short distance from the intersection before curving west after crossing the creek. Helton Creek drains to the east and south into the North Fork New River. The APE consists of a pasture on a stream terrace north of the creek and a residential property on hillside slope to the south (Figure 2). The hillside is a mix of trees and grassy lawn. Ground disturbance appears minimal, but fill could be present alongside the creek and the bridge in order to provide stability. Grading along the hillside for the structures is also likely. Soils in the pasture could be intact.

The USDA soil survey map for Ashe County shows Colvard fine sandy loam (Co) throughout the APE with Evard loam (EvF) mostly outside to the south (see Figure 2). However, characteristics of the

landform south of the creek suggest that the Evard series extends to the waterway. The Colvard series occupies the terrace to the north. This soil is nearly level and well drained. Due to these qualities along with minimal disturbance makes the soil highly probable for archaeological resources. The Evard loam is found along the side slope and is described as well drained with a steep slope of 25 to 45 percent. Slope of 15 percent or more is not usually tested, since it is unlikely to yield archaeological sites.

A review of the site files shows no sites within a mile of the project area. This is due to a lack of investigations along this section of Helton Creek. A few projects mostly for road improvements and bridge replacements have been carried out further to the east. In general, additional work is needed in the area before conclusions can be drawn from previously known sites this area.

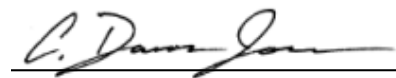
A historic map review was also conducted for the project area. Most early maps from the 18th and 19th centuries provide only general details concerning the region illustrating just major roads and settlements. An approximate location for the project was first identified on the 1892 USGS Wytheville topographic map (Figure 3). This map depicts Helton Creek and a road similar to NC 194. No road is present on the southside of the creek. In addition, no structures are illustrated on this map. The subsequent 1912 *Soil Survey Map for Ashe County* illustrates much of the same picture, but two structures are shown south of the creek near the approximate location for the bridge (Figure 4). This suggests that a drive or unmarked road/trail was present. Remains of these structures might be within the APE, but there is no indication that they were significant. Lastly, The 1953 *North Carolina Highway Map for Ashe County* is the first to show a crossing at or near the current bridge, but structures are not identified (Figure 5). From the map review, it is unlikely that deposits associated with former significant structures will be encountered within the APE.

The preliminary background investigation suggests that archaeological fieldwork consisting of a field inspection and subsurface testing is required along the stream terrace north of Helton Creek within the APE. This field investigation will be to identify any significant archaeological resources that might be impacted by the replacement of Bridge No. 321 in Ashe County.

SUPPORT DOCUMENTATION

See attached: ☒ Map(s) ☐ Previous Survey Info ☐ Photos ☐ Correspondence
☐ Photocopy of County Survey Notes Other: **images of historic maps**

FINDING BY NCDOT ARCHAEOLOGIST – SURVEY REQUIRED



C. Damon Jones
NCDOT ARCHAEOLOGIST

11/7/16

Date

4/6/17

Proposed fieldwork completion date

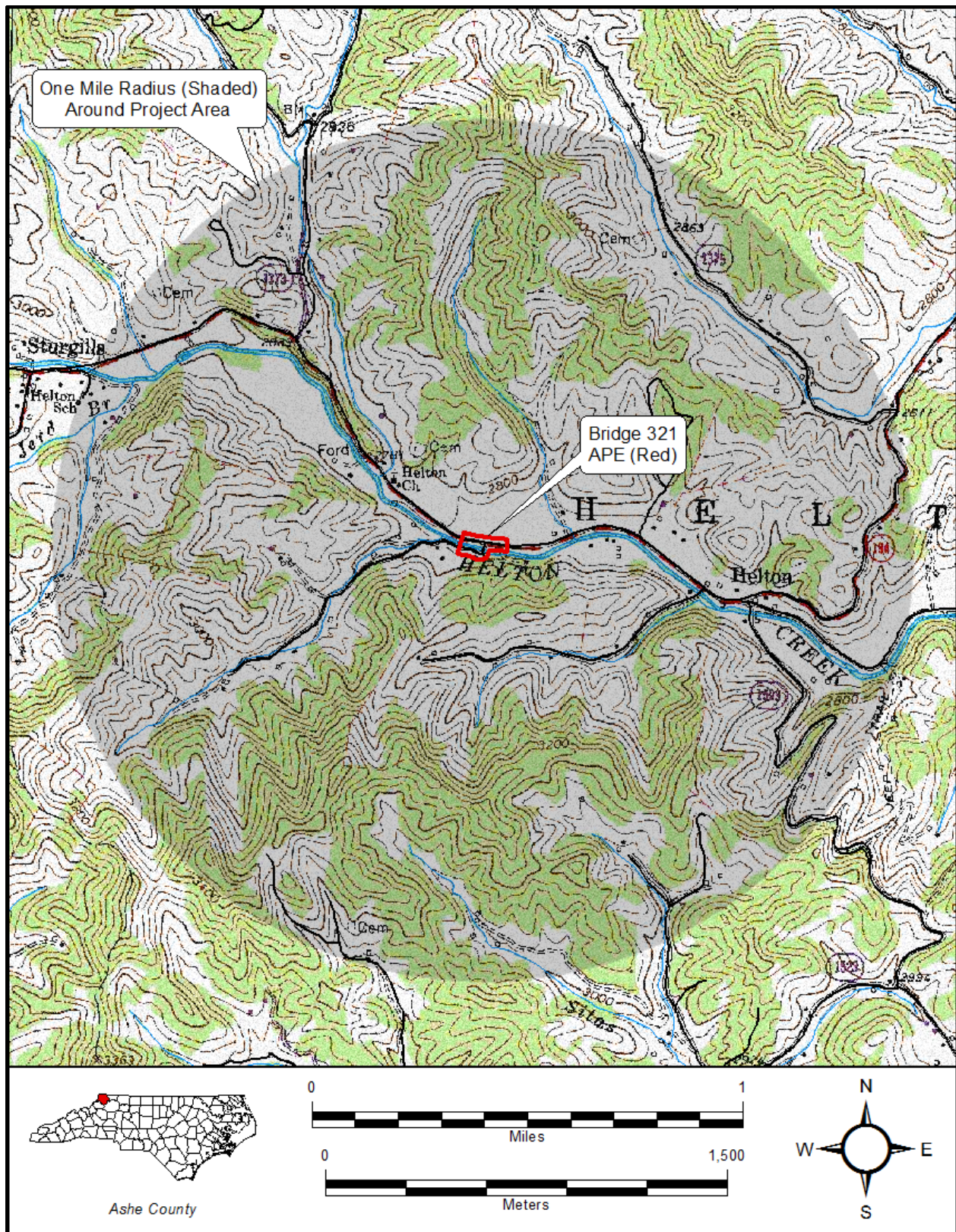


Figure 1. Topographic Setting of the Project Area, Grassy Creek (1966), NC USGS 7.5' Topographic Quadrangle.

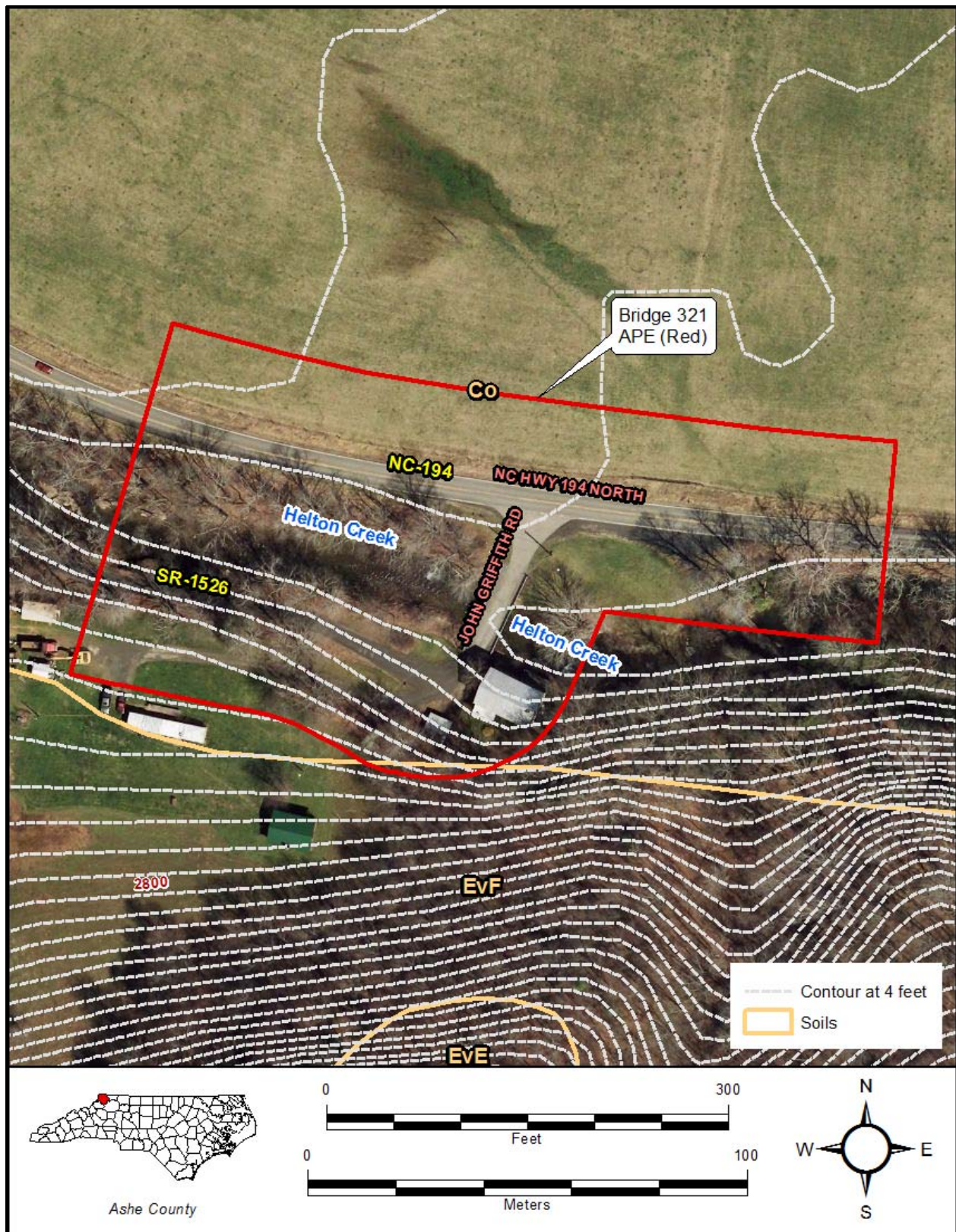


Figure 2. Aerial photograph of the APE showing landforms, soils, and development within and near the project area.

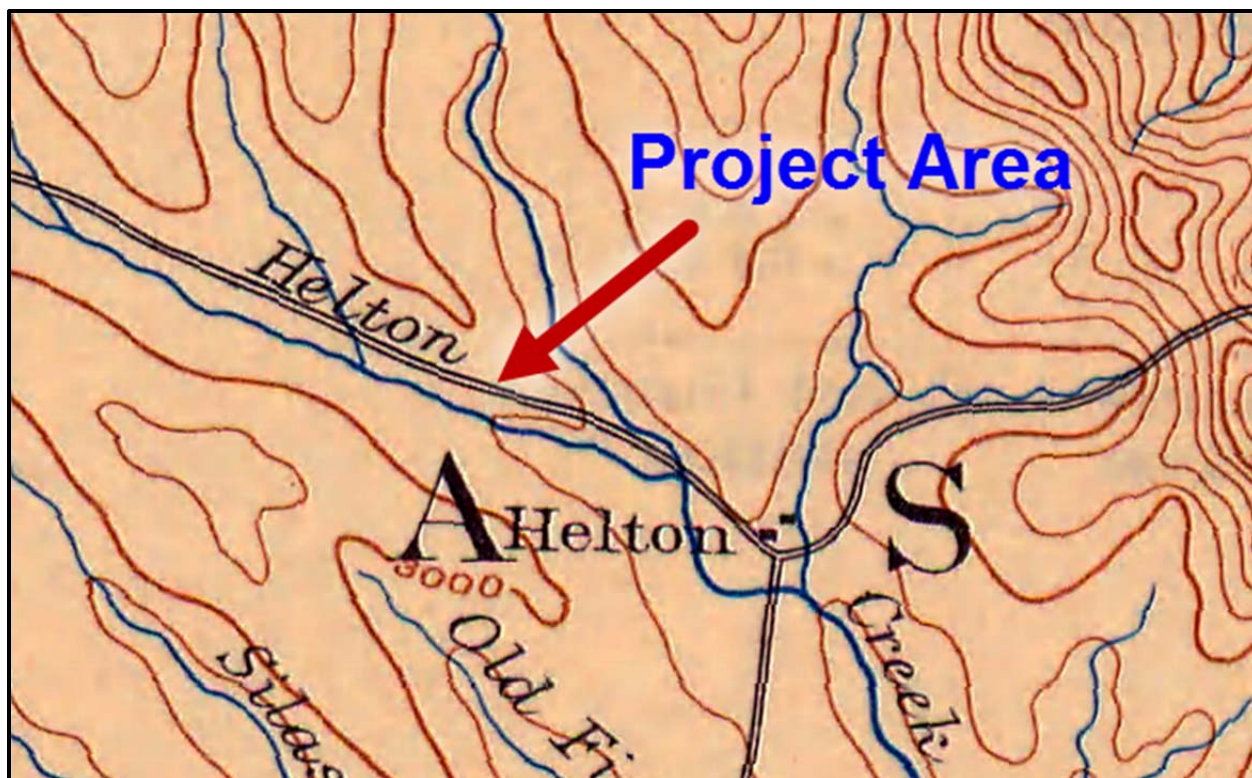


Figure 3. 1892 USGS Wytheville topographic map showing the approximate location of the project area.

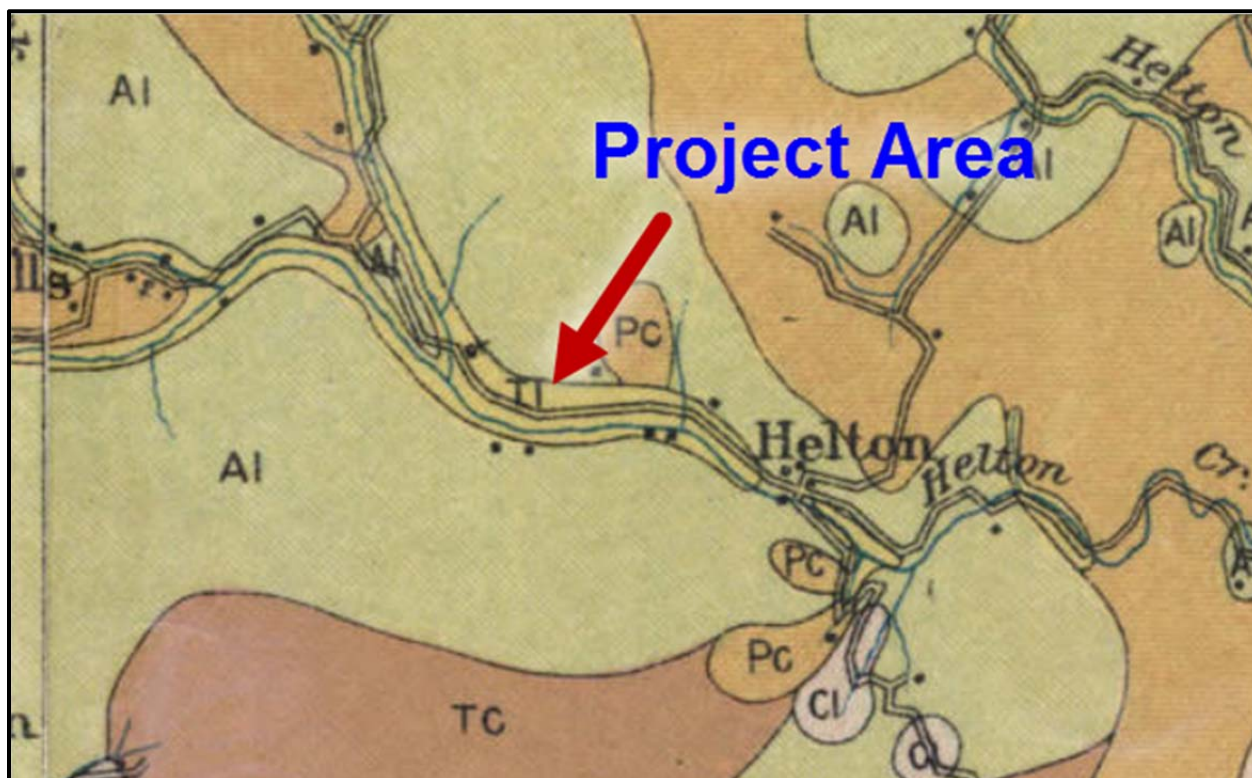


Figure 4. The 1912 Soils Map for Ashe County showing the location of the project area.



Figure 5. The 1953 North Carolina Highway Map for Ashe County showing the location of the project area.