

**Post Field Summary Report for  
Archaeological Monitoring and Emergency Data Recovery of  
Subsurface Construction through the Fagā Village Site (AS-11-1)  
During the Waterline Installation Phase of the Ta'u Road Project,  
Ta'u Island, Manu'a, American Samoa**

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GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



## **INTRODUCTION**

Pacific Legacy, Inc., and SCS/CRMS, Inc., under contract to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (DACA 83-95-D-0004; Task Order 0044) conducted archaeological monitoring and emergency data recovery services during subsurface construction activities through the Fagā Village Site (AS-11-1), in the Manu'a Island Group of American Samoa. The construction work consisted of excavator trenching and installation of a new water line under the Ta'u Road prior to future filling and paving of the road surface. The construction work is being conducted by McConnell Dowell under contract to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.

The monitoring and data recovery work was conducted by Pacific Legacy's Project Supervisor William Shapiro, M.A., from June 14 to July 16, 1999. Mr. Shapiro was assisted in the field by SCS/CRMS Inc., archaeologists Randy Ogg (from June 14 to June 21) and Mike Carson (from July 6 to July 13). Paul Cleghorn (Pacific Legacy's Principal Investigator for the project) also assisted with the fieldwork (from June 15 to 18) and met with the chiefs of Fitiuta, as requested by the Army Corps of Engineers, to establish procedures to be followed in the event human remains or significant features or deposits were identified during the monitoring work.

## **RESULTS**

A total of sixteen subsurface archaeological features were identified during the construction monitoring through the site of Fagā. These included two possible lime making features, seven discrete burial features (one of which contained scattered elements of two sub-adults for a total minimum number of nine individuals) and seven *ili ili* pavements. In addition, numerous burn layers were identified which probably represent agricultural clearings for plantations. Table 1 provides a list of the identified features with reference to their engineering road station locations and depth in centimeters below the current ground surface.

A total of 27 detailed stratigraphic profiles of the waterline trench were obtained during the monitoring work. These were supplemented by numerous photographs in an attempt to acquire as much information as possible regarding the archaeological stratigraphy and geomorphological processes present at the Fagā site.

When burial features were discovered, construction work was halted until the remains could be excavated, recorded and removed. High Chief Paopao of Fitiuta was contacted when a burial feature was discovered so that the appropriate land owner could be notified. After excavation and recording of the feature, the human remains were removed and turned over to the property owner on whose land the remains were discovered. The remains were then reburied in their plantations away from the construction activity. The residents and *matais* of Fitiuta were very thankful for the care and consideration that the archaeologists on behalf of the Army Corps of Engineers were taking with regards to the treatment and removal of burial features within the Ta'u Road construction route. The locals were very interested in the features, were eager to assist with the screening and recovery of materials, were willing to allow full documentation of burial features, and many of the property owners requested copies of feature photographs.

In addition to the monitoring and excavation work at Fagā, McConnell Dowell engineers and Project Superintendent were shown the locations of the raised walkway site in Fitiuta (AS-11-8) and the bait cup site (AS-11-73) to insure that these resources would not be inadvertently damaged during construction in those areas.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

A total of 42 specimens were collected during the field investigation including numerous charcoal samples for radiocarbon dating, faunal bone for species identification, and lithic artifacts (e.g., basalt adze, adze blank, basalt flake, hammerstone, pounding rock and polishing stone). At a minimum, the six charcoal samples associated with the burial features should be

Table 1. Ta'u Road Monitoring Archaeological Features

<b>Description</b>	<b>Engineering Station Location</b>	<b>Depth Below Surface</b>
Feature 1, <i>umu</i> or lime making feature	station 69+09 to 69+17	90-130 cmbs
Feature 2, <i>ili ili</i> pavement	station 75+30 to 75+90	80-95 cmbs
Feature 3, Burial 1 - adult male	station 79+68.5 to 79+74	100-118 cmbs
Feature 4, <i>ili ili</i> pavement	station 80+60 to 84+14	58/70 - 85/92 cmbs
Feature 5, Burial 2 - adult male	station 81+99 to 82+06	100-120 cmbs
Feature 6, Burial 3 - adult male	station 83+16 to 83+20.5	20-45 cmbs
Feature 7, <i>ili ili</i> pavement & charcoal staining	station 83+90 to 84+75	30-66 cmbs
Feature 8, Burial 4 - adult male & Burials 5A and 5B - scattered sub-adult infant and young child	station 85+23 to 85+29	27-43 cmbs
Feature 9, <i>ili ili</i> pavement (above Feature 8)	station 85+20 to 86+20	2-30 cmbs
Feature 10, <i>ili ili</i> pavement (above Feature 11)	station 86+34 to 86+80	21-34 cmbs
Feature 11, Burial 6 - adult male	station 86+63 to 86+68.5	25-47 cmbs
Feature 12, Burial 7 - infant	station 86+60.5 to 86+62.5	30-35 cmbs
Feature 13, Burial 8 - adult male	station 86+58 to 86+61	7-16 cmbs
Feature 14, <i>ili ili</i> pavement	station 86+70.5 to 86+90	80/100-100/120 cmbs
Feature 15, lime making feature with burning	station 88+39 to 88+52	42-50 cmbs
Feature 16, <i>ili ili</i> pavement and charcoal staining	station 93+00 to 95+78	90/95-114/120 cmbs

submitted for radiocarbon dating. Many of the adult male burials had missing crania and one exhibited evidence of having the cranium removed and placed on a rock pedestal over the pelvis. Such features may be associated with the reported war between the peoples of Fagā/Fitiuta and those of Ta'u Village. Radiocarbon dates on these burials may provide a time-range for this reported war. Six other radiocarbon dates are directly associated with the *ili ili* paving features and the possible lime making features. Submission of these samples would provide chronological data for other subsurface features at the Fagā site.

During the field investigation it was unclear whether archaeological monitoring would be needed during the subsurface road construction work in Fitiuta village. The primary site of concern through the village is the raised walkway (AS-11-8). A basalt adze was collected from the walkway fill surface on the west edge of the village during an inspection with McConnell Dowell personnel. According to a local employee of ASPA (the American Samoa Power Authority), several burials were uncovered through Fitiuta when the government originally graded the road during the early 1960s. Similarly, according to McConnell Dowell personnel, additional burials were discovered during construction work for the airport in Fitiuta. Based on a series of 17 shovel test probes along the road in Fitiuta (Cleghorn et. al. 1998) it is unlikely that intact subsurface deposits exist adjacent to the current road. However, based on the information provided above, there is a chance that intact deposits and features may be located along the proposed lateral routes which extend from the proposed water line to the residences in Fitiuta. It is highly recommended that any subsurface construction within the village of Fitiuta be monitored by an archaeologist to ensure that significant deposits or features are properly dealt with. If burial features are uncovered in the future, it is also recommended that an osteologist be part of the field investigation, as the local Samoan community supports additional analysis prior to reburial of the archaeological human remains.

**REFERENCES**

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1998 Draft Summary Report: Archaeological Data Recovery Report for the Proposed  
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