

ABSTRACT

In April and May 2015, Commonwealth Cultural Resources Group, Inc. (CCRG) conducted a Phase II archaeological evaluation on property owned by the Kohler Company (Kohler) in Wilson Township (T14N/R23E), Sheboygan County, Wisconsin. Kohler is developing an 18 hole, world-class golf course on the property, which consists of 247 acres (100 hectare) of its land along Lake Michigan in Sections 11 and 14. One hundred and ninety-five acres of the Kohler property lying above the active shoreline of Lake Michigan at the east and approaching the Black River lowlands at the west have been identified as a prehistoric and historic archaeological site (47SB0173) (Kubicek et al. 2015:34).

Phase II archaeological evaluation of site 47SB0173 consisted of the excavation of 96 formal test units and geomorphological investigations. These investigations resulted in the recovery of 25,186 prehistoric and historic artifacts and the documentation of extensive stratified cultural deposits. Prehistoric cultural materials indicate occupations spanning the Late Archaic stage (ca. 1200 B.C to 100 B.C.) to the late prehistoric Oneota tradition (ca. A.D. 1000 to A. D. 1600) with high frequencies of Early, Middle, and Late Woodland stage artifacts. The historic component consists of floor and foundation remnants, surface, and subsurface deposits related to the late nineteenth century occupation of the Fairchild Fish House.

Based on the results of the Phase II archaeological evaluation, it is the opinion of CCRG that the prehistoric component of the site meets the defined criteria of significance for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) (under *Criterion D*). The historic component of the site also may meet the defined criteria of significance for the NRHP (under *Criteria A and/or D*) and could provide insights into the domestic lifeways of a commercial fishing family and the challenges faced in the late nineteenth century when over fishing and depressed the fish market (Wyatt 1986 Vol II:18-5). The lack of buildings, structures, and artifacts relating to commercial fishing limit the potential for this type of information.

If site 47SB0173 is indeed found to meet the defined criteria of significance for the NRHP, project development must consider effects to the site caused by project activities. As the proposed project will not be able to avoid effects to the site, CCRG recommends mitigation measures that include data recovery and geomorphological investigations to preserve and bring information to the public.