



Cultural Resource Consultants

Memorandum

To: William Lee, Gowanus Environmental Remediation Trust #2

From: Michael Audin, RPA & Scott Warnasch, RPA

Date: March 19, 2021

RE: Memo # 10 - Results of Level 1 Cultural Resource Review
Debris Staging at Clean Earth – Claremont
RTA-1A Dredging, Level 1 Monitoring
Gowanus Canal Remediation Project
Brooklyn, Kings County, NY

This memorandum presents the findings of Archaeology & Historic Resource Services, LLC's (AHRS) review of screened sediments at the Clean Earth Claremont Facility in Jersey City, New Jersey (Clean Earth) from Level 1 Monitoring. The screened sediments are from the RTA-1 dredging currently underway at the Gowanus Canal Superfund Site in Brooklyn, New York. The purpose of this memorandum is to present the results and recommendations for the items recovered from sediment screening at Clean Earth reviewed by an AHRS archaeologist on 3/19/21. The attached figure provided by the Trust indicates the approximate area that was dredged between 3/5, 3/8 to 3/12, 3/15 and 3/17 (Figure 1).

INTRODUCTION

Cashman Dredging and Marine Contracting Co. (Cashman) continues with the dredging of soft sediments from RTA-1 under the oversight of the EPA. The dredge material is being processed according to the Level 1 Archaeological Monitoring protocol outlined in the draft Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan (revised September 2020). This protocol calls for dredged soft sediments to be placed directly into scows, floated to Clean Earth, and screened over 4" bars on a vibrating platform. Items removed during the vibratory screening process are then sorted by the Clean Earth operator as per the Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan. Items of potential interest (possible artifacts or objects of local interests) are placed in a separate stockpile and photographed daily for AHRS archaeologists to review. These items are then placed in a holding area for AHRS to inspect weekly.

RESULTS

AHRS archaeologist Scott Warnasch conducted a scheduled site visit on 3/19/21 to review the recovered items in person with the assistance of a Clean Earth machine and operator to sort through stockpiled items. Photographs were taken of stockpiled items at Clean Earth (Photos 1 – 11).

The materials to be reviewed were spread by machine on a flat hard surface to allow for an archaeologist to clearly review them (Photograph 1). Any item of potential interest was separated, rinsed and assessed. The reviewed material consisted unsorted and muddy debris comprised of concrete fragments, rocks, large and small pieces of wood and timber (Photograph 2, 3, 4 and 5), miscellaneous metal (Photograph 6), tires and car parts. Two items were recovered at the canal site and were delivered, cleaned and put to the side at Clean Earth prior to the site visit. The first item was a wooden wagon wheel, 55" in diameter, with a metal hub and tread missing a section of spokes and rim (Photograph 7). The second item was a section of a wrought iron fence/gate recovered in five pieces: an 11'X5'6" section of fencing, a square-sided cast iron support pillar with globe finial (in three pieces) and an associated rail (Photographs 8 and 9). Because this type of fencing is still manufactured today, it is difficult to assess its age without further examination and research. However, the pillar has a possible hinge attachment using modern stainless-steel bolts suggesting that it may be modern or at least was in use until relatively recently (Photograph 10). The third item recovered during this material review, is a small wrought iron fence-like object. Originally thought to relate to the larger fence, upon comparison, it does not appear to be associated and may be part of a security cage to cover a ground floor or basement window or other use (Photograph 11).



Photograph 1 – View of debris pile to be reviewed, front view.



Photograph 2 – Close up of the material to be reviewed, front view.



Photograph 3 – Typical view of the muddy condition of the material, front view.



Photograph 4 – View of concrete and small pieces of wood, front view.



Photograph 5 – Example of large timber, front view.



Photograph 6 – View miscellaneous metal, front view.



Photograph 7 – Wagon wheel, front view.



Photograph 8 – View of wrought iron fence/gate components, front view.



Photograph 9 – View of the post section of the fence (in three parts) and rail, front view.



Photograph 10 – View of hinge component(?) of the fence with modern bolts, front view.



Photograph 11 – View of small wrought iron object, front view.

Items Segregated for Further Review

AHRS archaeologist retained three items for further analysis: the wagon wheel, the wrought iron fence and pillar and the smaller wrought iron fencing. The wagon wheel will be stored submerged in water to mitigate drying out. The metal items will be stored in the onsite shelter.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AHRS concludes that three items observed during the sediment screening at Clean Earth retain possible historic/archaeological significance. Per the draft Cultural Resource Monitoring Plan, AHRS further recommends that all the non-historically/archaeologically significant debris at Clean Earth has been reviewed by the AHRS archaeologist as of 3/19/2021 may be disposed of.



Figure 1 – Approximate area dredged on March 5, March 8 to March 12 and March 15, 2021. March 16 and March 17, 2021, sediment was raked between the 3rd Street Bridge and Carroll Street Bridge in preparation for ISS activities with a negligible amount of debris removed. March 19, 2021, material was dredged in front of the flushing tunnel as part of a cofferdam exploratory investigation.