

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED
ENO RIVER AND LITTLE LICK CREEK FORCE MAIN ROUTES,
DURHAM COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

by

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

During December 1990, personnel of the Research Laboratories of Anthropology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, conducted an archaeological survey and assessment of two proposed WWTP force main corridors for the city of Durham, NC (CH 91-C-0000-0138). One force main will connect the Little Lick Creek WWTP with the existing Northside WWTP, extending over a distance of roughly 5 mi, whereas the other runs from the Eno River WWTP to the Northside plant, covering a similar distance. A strip approximately 30 ft wide was subjected to surface survey along both corridors. The survey recorded two small, disturbed archaeological sites within the corridors. Four previously recorded sites also were evaluated during the course of the survey. These sites were found either to be outside the impact zones or destroyed by recent commercial development. Archaeological clearance for the force main extensions is therefore recommended.

INTRODUCTION

At the request of Hazen and Sawyer, P.C., H. Trawick Ward and students of the Research Laboratories of Anthropology at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill spent six person-days during the month of December surveying approximately 10 mi of the proposed Little Lick Creek and Eno River force main corridors (CH 91-C-0000-0138). The Little Lick Creek corridor extends from the Northside WWTP, just north of Club Boulevard, southeastward to the Little Lick Creek disposal plant, immediately west of Stallings Road.

Most of this 30 ft-wide route runs along previously disturbed areas bordering road right-of-ways, existing sewer lines, or utility easements. The Eno River force main corridor begins at the existing Eno River WWTP and follows a generally southern course to connect with the Northside plant near Ellerbe Creek. This 30 ft-wide route also runs through areas severely disturbed by urban development and generally follows existing easements.

The objectives of the survey were to locate and evaluate the research potential of as many archaeological sites as possible within the corridors. A "site", as defined here, refers to at least two spatially related artifacts or features that are indicative of prehistoric or historic activities. This somewhat broad definition only excludes the isolated "spot-find" which could result from an almost infinite variety of idiosyncratic or fortuitous events.

The evaluation of a site's potential or significance is guided by criteria of the National Register which state that archaeological resources are considered significant or potentially eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places if they have "yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history" (36 CFR Part 800.1). Although this guideline is vague, it seems that, minimally, a site should have spatial or depositional context sufficiently preserved to allow some level of behavioral inference beyond simple chronological placement.

As a result of the survey, two small lithic sites were found in previously disturbed areas along the Little Lick Creek force main corridor. Both were atop low, eroded knolls and lay within an existing American Telephone and Telegraph corridor. Because of their size and disturbed condition, neither meets minimal criteria for significance as outlined by the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition to these sites, four previously recorded sites, 31Dh99, 114, 119, and 159 also were inspected to determine their current condition and location relative to the proposed Eno River-Northside force main route. A fifth site, 31Dh370, was determined to be located north of the project areas after consulting with staff of the Office of State Archaeology prior to going into the field. As a result, it was not re-investigated. 31Dh99 and 159 were found to be well outside the construction areas, whereas 31Dh114 was found not only to be outside the sewer path but unfortunately, also under the recently constructed Mitsubishi plant near Catsburg. 31Dh119 had suffered a similar

fate due to industrial construction along Ellerbe Creek.

PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Archaeologists usually divide the cultures of North Carolina into four periods: Paleoindian, Archaic, Woodland, and Historic. The Paleoindian period marks the beginning of human occupation in North Carolina, ca. 10,000 B.C. The Archaic period dates between 8000 and 1000 B.C. and is further broken down into three subperiods--Early, Middle, and Late--which are based on the forms and methods of manufacturing chipped-stone tools, particularly projectile points. The Woodland period, which began with the introduction of pottery ca. 500 B.C., is divided into several phases. Along the northern Fall Line, the Vincent, Clements, Dan River, and Gaston phases have been defined (Coe 1964). These are related to the Deep Creek, Mt. Pleasant, and Cashie phases of the northeast Coastal Plain (Phelps 1983). In the central and southern Piedmont, the Badin, Yadkin, Uwharrie, Caraway, and Pee Dee phases have been identified (Coe 1952, 1964), while in the north-central Piedmont, the late prehistoric period is represented by the Haw, Dan River, and Hillsborough phases. The Historic period in the northern Piedmont is defined by the Early, Middle, and Late Saratown phases, and in the central Piedmont, the Mitchum, Jenrette, and Fredricks phases describe the archaeological remains of the historic Siouan-speaking tribes (Davis and Ward 1989).

Numerous archaeological sites had been located in Durham County prior to the current survey. In 1976, the senior author conducted an extensive survey and testing program in the vicinity of the Eno River WWTP, prior to its expansion (Ward 1976). Also, excavations have been conducted recently in neighboring Orange County which provide important insights into the aboriginal cultures of the Eno drainage (Dickens, Ward, and Davis 1987). These excavations, carried out between 1983 and 1990, are part of the Research Laboratories of Anthropology's Siouan project. Prior to and during the course of the Siouan research, large areas of Alamance, Orange, Chatham, and Durham counties were intensively surveyed in an effort to locate sites suited for excavation (Simpkins and Petherick 1985; 1986). The alluvial bottoms around the Eno River WWTP were re-investigated, as well as the area along the upper reaches of Ellerbe Creek.

In addition to these formal surveys, local collectors have found and recorded several sites in close proximity to the current project areas. Four of these, 31Dh99, 114, 119, and 159 were re-visited to precisely establish their location and present condition.

31Dh99 - This site was first recorded in 1970 by Alice and Peter Murphy, local collectors from the Durham area. It is located on the south side of Mt. Level Church Rd., SR 1656, and the west side of an unnamed tributary of the Eno River. The Murphys' collection consisted of numerous lithic artifacts dating

to the Middle and Late Archaic periods, including 85 projectile points. The site is situated on a knoll overlooking the tributary, and today is covered in a stand of pines. It will not be impacted by the Eno-Northside force main construction as it is on the opposite side of the unnamed stream. Because of poor surface conditions, no attempt was made to re-collect the site.

31Dh114 - The Murphys also discovered this site and recorded it with the Research Labs in 1970. It was located on the north side of SR 1634, across from Fellowship Church, in the Weaver community. As with 31Dh99, Dh114 represented a productive Middle-to-Late Archaic encampment that produced numerous stone tools, including 42 projectile points now in the Research Labs' collections. Unfortunately, Dh114 has been obliterated by the recent construction of the Mitsubishi plant and recreation facilities. The staked sewer corridor follows an abandoned railroad bed in the area where the site was located. Because of these disturbances, no evidence of 31Dh114 exists today.

31Dh119 - Although on the opposite side of Ellerbe Creek from the force main, near the intersection of Club Blvd. and Dearborn Rd., this site was re-visited and found to have been destroyed by recent excavation and construction activities. In 1989, Dh119 was brought to the attention of Research Lab personnel by Robert Weaver who reported finding a glass bead along with pottery sherds. Given its location, it was felt that it might represent a historic village of the Eno Indians or the village of Adshusheer. However, an inspection of Weaver's material showed that the bead dated to the 19th century, and the pottery dated to around 1000 A.D. The most recent visit revealed that what little that remained of the site in 1989 was now destroyed.

31Dh159 - This site also was discovered by Robert Weaver and entered into the Research Labs' files in 1975. It is located on the north side of Mt. Level Church Rd., at the end of a residential street, on the same side (west) of the unnamed Eno River tributary as Dh99. Dh159 is also situated on a low knoll overlooking the stream. Records indicate Weaver collected Late Archaic specimens, including a few steatite pottery sherds. Today the site is overgrown with brush and small pines and was not re-collected. It will not be affected by the present project because of its location on the opposite side of the tributary from the proposed route of the Eno-Northside force main.

31Dh370 - This site, also designated RLADh345, was determined to be located well north of the force main projects and not visited.

This brief review of the known archaeological sites in the general vicinity of the project area suggests a varied resource base exhibiting a long span of occupation. Most of the sites, like Dh99 and 159, are probably eroded, shallow, and lack buried contexts. However, there are several known sites along the major streams, like the cluster excavated by the Research Labs near Hillsborough, that offer excellent research opportunities. Dh 119 may have been one of these.

The written history of Durham begins with John Lederer's

visit in 1670. Lederer traveling through the Carolina backcountry with an eye towards developing trade with the Indians briefly visited the Eno tribe thought to have been located somewhere in the vicinity of Northern Durham. The German physician described the "Oenocks" as "covetous and thievish" but industrious, planting three crops of corn each year and supplying all their neighbors with grain. They built round houses of reed and bark, each with its own storage facility for corn and meat (Cumming 1958). Lederer also visited the village of Shakor located near Hillsborough and excavated by the Research Labs in 1989 and 1990.

Lederer was followed by the English surveyor John Lawson in 1701 who began his circuitous journey of a "thousand miles" in Charles Towne, S.C. shortly after Christmas in 1700. Around the first of February, 1701, he arrived at the Occaneechi village located on the Eno near where Lederer's Shakor once was. Here Lawson met the trusted Eno Will who led him to the village of Adshusheer, now the home of the Eno, Shakori, and probably remnants of other tribes (Lefler 1967). It has been suggested that Adshusheer also was located in northern Durham, perhaps on the Flat River (Ward and Coe 1975).

European settlement in Durham County didn't begin in earnest until after the middle of the eighteenth century. By this time only isolated Indian families remained, their fields and villages abandoned, soon to be buried by the steel plows of the invaders. Today most of the remains of these early white settlers have also suffered the oblivion of their native predecessors. Except in a few protected and isolated areas like Duke Forest where old mill races, crumbled dams, stone chimney rubble, and an occasional abandoned cemetery can still be found, little is left on the landscape to remind us of our frontier past.

SURVEY CONDITIONS, METHODS, AND RESULTS

Survey conditions can be summed up in a single word-- disturbed. Except for a small segment between Ellerbe Creek and Friendship Church, and along the unnamed branch that crosses SR 1656, Mt. Level Church Rd., the Eno-Northside force main lies in existing, previously disturbed sewer line easements or within road right-of-ways (Figure 1). And the proposed route along the unnamed tributary of the Eno River parallels an existing Old Oxford outfall corridor. Junk yards, parking lots, and various industrial developments are found along the entire corridor, providing little opportunity for the preservation of any archaeological resources.

The Little Lick Creek force main also generally follows existing sewers, road right-of-ways, or an AT&T telephone cable easement (Figure 2). Housing and industrial developments characterize most of the area. However, the segment between the Southern Railroad and Mineral Springs Road, SR 1815, crosses an area of scattered homes and small fields, parallel to the AT&T cable line.

Except for segments of the route along road right-of-ways and through areas of obvious, severe disturbance, eg. parking lots, equipment staging areas and other facilities associated with industrial and commercial developments, both corridors were walked in their entirety by a two-to-three person crew. This included segments within and paralleling existing easements. Surface visibility varied from moderate to excellent due to low vegetation growth and the cleared conditions accompanying the easements. Also many areas along the proposed force main corridors were exposed by access roads and various trails. Because of adequate surface visibility, the relatively narrow width of the corridors, and previous disturbances, subsurface testing was unwarranted.

Both of the archaeological sites discovered lie along the Little Lick Creek corridor in the vicinity of SR 1825. Both are small lithic sites in previously disturbed and eroded contexts, lacking minimal criteria for National Register consideration.

31Dh586 - This designation was given to two Early Archaic Palmer projectile points lying within 30 ft of one another in a small plowed field with excellent surface visibility. The only other evidence from the site consists of a single unmodified flake that was lying between the two projectile points. All three of the artifacts appear to be of the same highly patinated felsic raw material. The two projectile points are so similar in size, shape, and manufacturing characteristics that it is tempting to suggest that they were made by the same individual, perhaps part of a once-buried cache. The scarcity of other artifacts adds some credibility to this interpretation. The site is located on a low knoll approximately 200 ft north of the intersection of SR 1825 and SR 1800, within the AT&T easement (Figure 2). No permanent water source is in the immediate vicinity. Plowing, erosion, and the excavation of the trench for the telephone cable strongly suggest that contextual remains are absent.

31Dh587 - Also located in the Little Lick Creek force main corridor was a small scatter of four unmodified felsic flakes. These were found on the west side of SR 1825, approximately 0.6 mi south of the SR 1800 intersection in a small plowed field (Figure 2). The raw material is the same as that described for Dh586. The flakes were scattered over an area roughly 20 ft across, and although surface visibility was 100 percent, no other specimens could be found. Little more can be added other than the fact that the site was on an eroded toe slope with virtually no possibility of containing intact buried deposits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the fact that the previously recorded sites are well outside potential impact zones of the force main corridors and the sparse, disturbed nature of the two sites described above, archaeological clearance is recommended for the Eno-Northside

and the Little Lick Creek force main projects.

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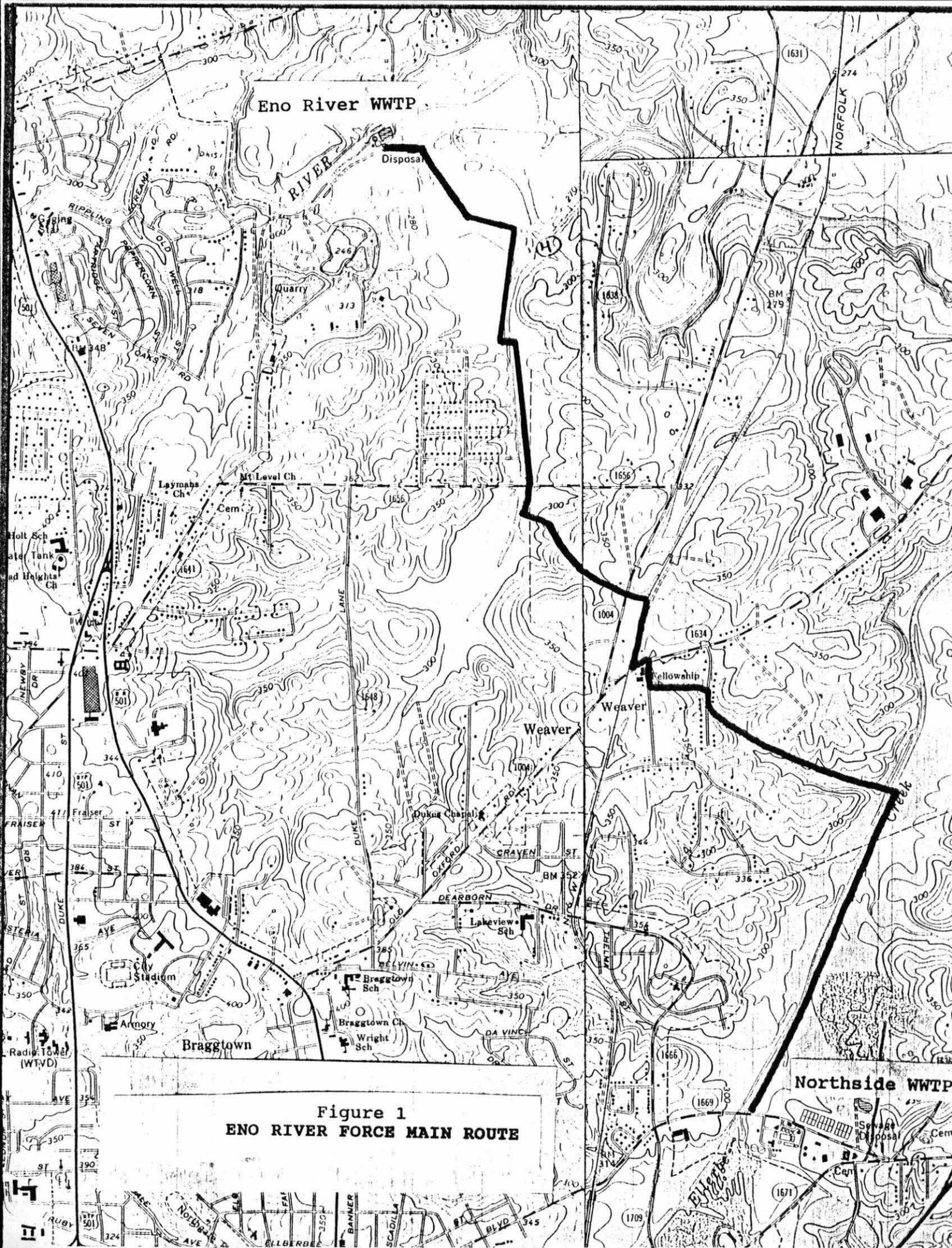
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Eno River WWTP

ENO RIVER

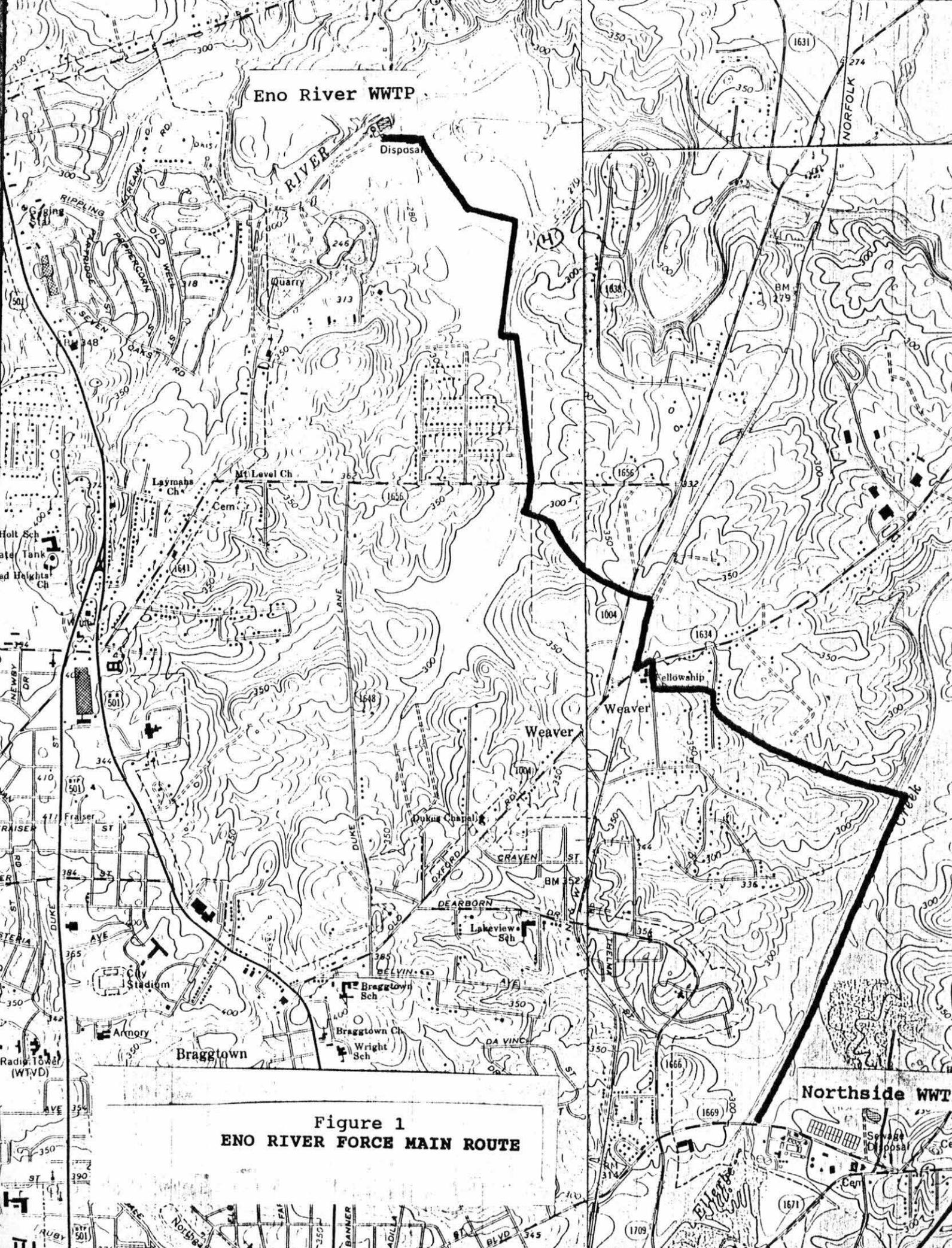
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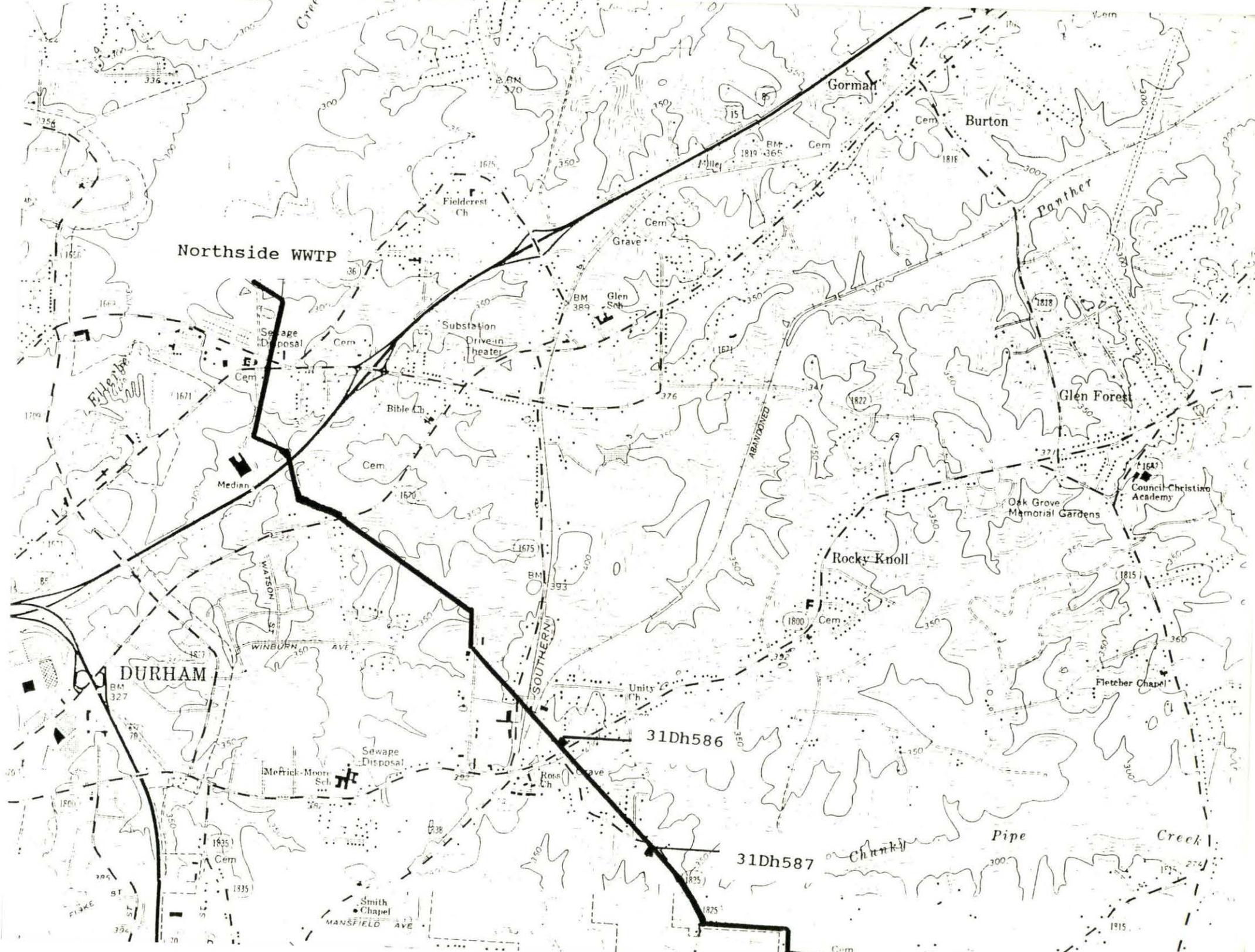
Weaver

Braggtown

Northside WWTP

Figure 1
ENO RIVER FORCE MAIN ROUTE





Northside WWTP

DURHAM

Gorman

Burton

Panther

Glen Forest

Rocky Knoll

Oak Grove Memorial Gardens

Council Christian Academy

Fletcher Chapel

Pipe Creek

Chunky

31Dh586

31Dh587

Fieldcrest Ch

Substation
Drive-in theater

Glen Sch

Bible Ch

Median

Unity Ch

Merrick-Moore Sch

Ross Ch

Smith Chapel

MANSFIELD AVE

WINBURN AVE

SOUTHERN

ABANDONED

Elmer

PLAKE

336

BM 370

BM 1819 365

1818

1822

1815

1671

1670

1675

BM 393

1800

1800

1835

1835

1825

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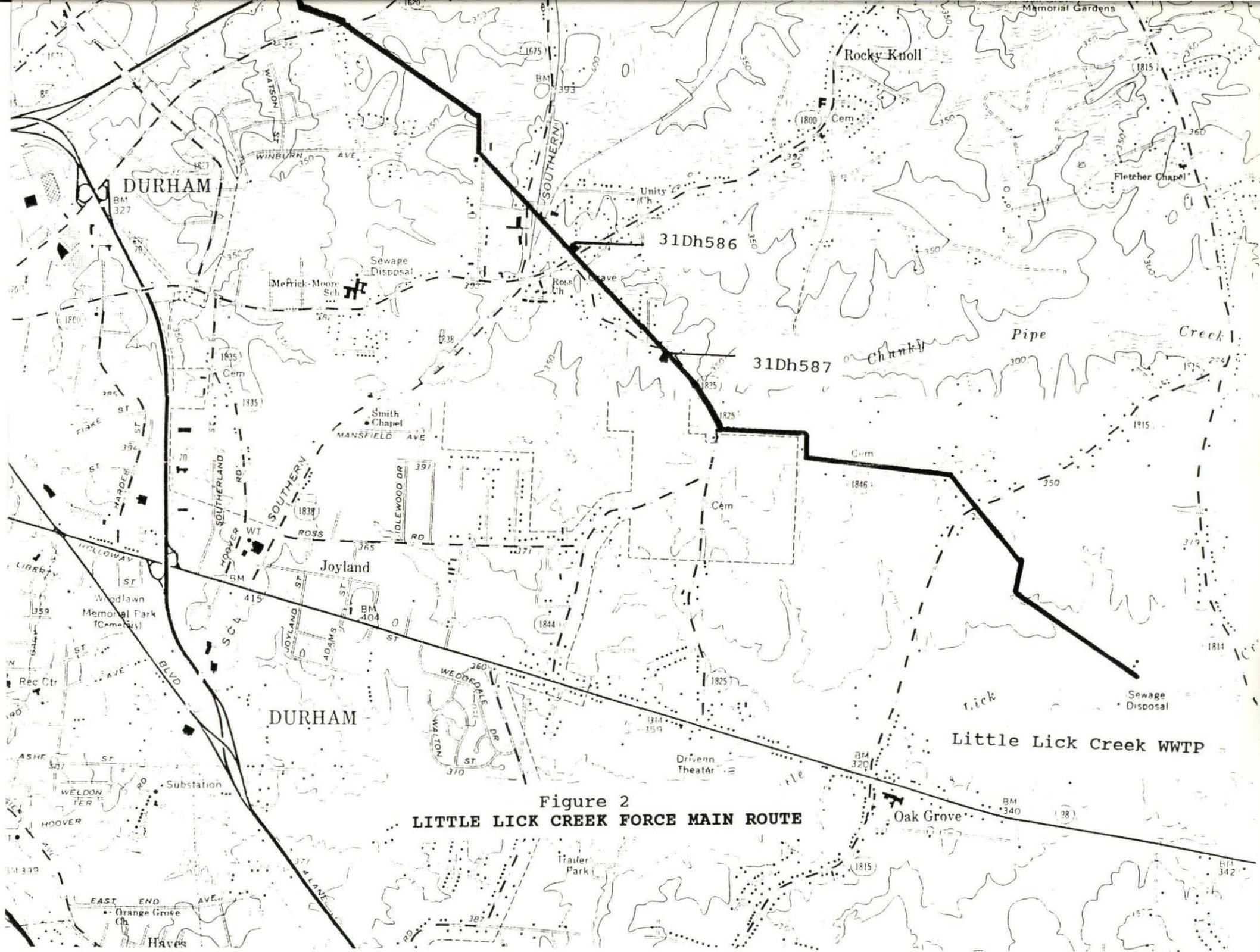


Figure 2
LITTLE LICK CREEK FORCE MAIN ROUTE