

DITCH WITCHING INTO THE PAST

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF ELECTRICAL LINE
TRENCHES
IN
PIONEER VILLAGE
SPRING MILL STATE PARK
2004

DRAFT REPORT

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Abstract from Management Summary

In the winter and early Spring of 2004, archaeologists affiliated with the Office of Cultural Resource Management at the Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology, Indiana University monitored the excavations of several utility trenches at Spring Mill Village (Pioneer Village), Spring Mill State Park, in Mitchell, Indiana (Lawrence County). The trench excavations, although of limited scale and scope, provided new information on the composition, history, and internal structure of Spring Mill Village. A large sample of well-preserved ceramics, food remains and other domestic items were recovered in the vicinity of two residences occupied by prominent nineteenth century village developers and statesmen. Additionally, a few items were recovered that identified a prehistoric component, activities of the Civilian Conservation Corp and tourist industry. Importantly, the trench excavations documented for the first time evidence for intact subsurface deposits and spatial patterning associated with the nineteenth century occupation of the village. Based on our findings, we argue that as an important heritage and archaeological resource, future research at Spring Mill Village and State Park has the potential to address a number of important topics including, but not limited to, early statehood, frontier capitalist expansion, the Civil War era, modernization, rural-urban transitions, depression-era public works, and early twentieth century tourism.