Archaeological Subsurface Survey of Lighthouse Point, South Eleuthera, Bahamas

Tucker Beckett, Brigid Carr, Charlie Fichtner, Rachael Pridmore, Sarah Sasek, and Daisy Spencer

Advisors: Justin Symington, Gabe Wolfford, Taylor Fargo, and Francesca Perkins

Introduction
The Lucayans were a group of people who migrated from the Bahamas to the Caribbean in the years of 9000 BC to 1500 CE (see Figure 1). They maintained residence there for about 1000 years, until they came into contact with Columbus and his men in 1522. Their population peaked at 10,000 died out within 20 years. Since the Lucayans had no written records, there is very little known about their culture. There have been some archaeological work done in the Bahamas which has been focused mainly in the Islands near Providence, San Salvador, and Turks and Caicos; yet, there is still much to learn.

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the nature of the Pre-Columbian usage at Lighthouse Point. This site has shallow near and caves, which are closely associated with Lucayan religious and ceremonial traditions. In addition, there are reefs nearby to provide food, and sandy beaches which would have made a good area to build canoes. This information led the archaeology team to hypothesize that the Lucayans used Lighthouse Point for religious and ceremonial purposes.

Results
The majority of the materials found at Lighthouse Point were artifacts and fine-earth materials. This evidence is inconclusive because the activities that may have occurred have not been identified. In the area where the excavation was conducted, there was evidence of Lucayan activity; there were no remains of Paternia and Lighthouse Point were found. There has been Palmetto found at Lighthouse Point in the past, but not enough to prove Lucayan activity. The majority of the materials were found between 20 and 65 cm of depth, and some pits displayed a clear cultural layer (see Figures 4 and 5).

Discussion
We found no conclusive evidence of Lucayan habitation or activity at Lighthouse Point. However, the presence of ecofacts, combined with the results of the surface survey conducted in 2008, are highly suggestive that a limited amount of Lucayan activity occurred at Lighthouse Point. In order to prove the hypothesis, a Lucayan tool of Paternia Wood would have to be found. Since they are associated with Lighthouse Point, it is possible that some of these artifacts were uncovered in the survey and findings were inconclusive.

Due to lack of experience, areas near caves were intentionally avoided, because these are likely burial sites. Future research and investigation of cave areas might reveal conclusive evidence of Lucayan activity.