Applied Remote Sensing for Archaeological Excavation Preparation Conducted in Northern Alabama

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Overview
Excavations recently were conducted on a large Woodland (200 B.C.- A.D. 500) platform mound at the Oakville Mound site in southeast Lawrence County, Alabama. Prior to renovation of stairs leading to the mound’s summit, imagery taken from remote controlled quadcopters allowed for a better view of site characteristics. After reviewing the site for potential research areas, two excavation units were positioned at the top and base of the mound. A flank trench was also excavated between the units to further identify mound stage construction.

Explanation
Remote sensing is increasingly becoming a valuable component to the field of archaeology. Data retrieved from satellite and terrestrial sensors often aids in the preparation, analysis, and overall understanding of archaeological sites.

Key Findings
Excavation of the two units provided a better understanding of mound stage construction, and also yielded pottery diagnostic of the Middle Woodland period.

Impact
Identifying chronological position of the mound provides local and archaeological communities with a better understanding of prehistory in the area and heritage.

Acknowledgements
Special Thanks to: Hunter Johnson, Dr. Keith Little, Dr. Robert Griffin, Casey Calamaio, and Oakville Indian Mounds Education Center Staff.