



**STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION**  
SUITE 900, JAMES K. POLK BUILDING  
505 DEADERICK STREET  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-1402  
(615) 741-3655

**WILL REID**  
COMMISSIONER

**BILL LEE**  
GOVERNOR

July 21, 2025

Mr. E. Patrick McIntyre, Jr.  
Executive Director and State Historic Preservation Officer  
Tennessee Historical Commission  
2941 Lebanon Road  
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0442

**RE: Archaeological Assessment for Truck Parking Lot and Bridges Replacement on Interstate 40 over the Caney Fork River in Smith County and Putnam County, Tennessee. PIN: 131552.01**

Dear Mr. McIntyre,

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) with funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposed for a truck parking lot and bridges replacement on Interstate 40 over the Caney Fork River in Smith County and Putnam County, Tennessee (see attached maps). The I-40 Welcome Center Improvement project will add a 125 bay truck parking expansion adjacent to the Welcome Center, replace twin bridges on I-40 adjacent to the Welcome Center, and update ramp acceleration and deceleration lengths to current standards.

Please find enclosed Stantec's **draft** report of a Phase II archaeological assessment for the subject project. Duane Simpson served as Principal Investigator. Stantec had the following conclusions:

- Site 40SM273 is potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), but will be completely avoided by all construction activity the site, was not tested. It remains potentially eligible.
- Site 40SM274 is not eligible for inclusion in the NRHP
- Site 40PM184 is eligible for NRHP listing, but will be avoided by all construction activities.

TDOT concurs with Stantec's opinion. Additionally, those parts of sites 40SM273 and 40PM184 which are within the existing right of way will be delineated by high-visibility fencing and marked on plans as Sensitive Environmental Areas to be avoided. Since TDOT had no plans to construct or do ground-disturbing activities within the boundary of site 40SM273, we did not do Phase II testing.

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (as amended) and implementing regulations 36 CFR 800, please review the enclosed information and provide me with your comments. If any additional information is needed, please contact Michael Jeu (629) 239-9546 for archaeology, or me at or me at (615)-313-3764. I appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely,

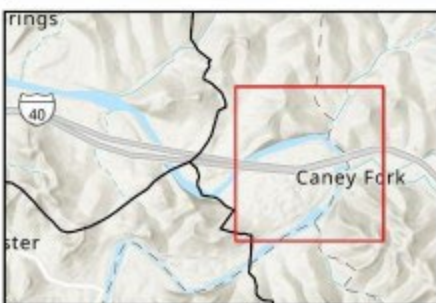
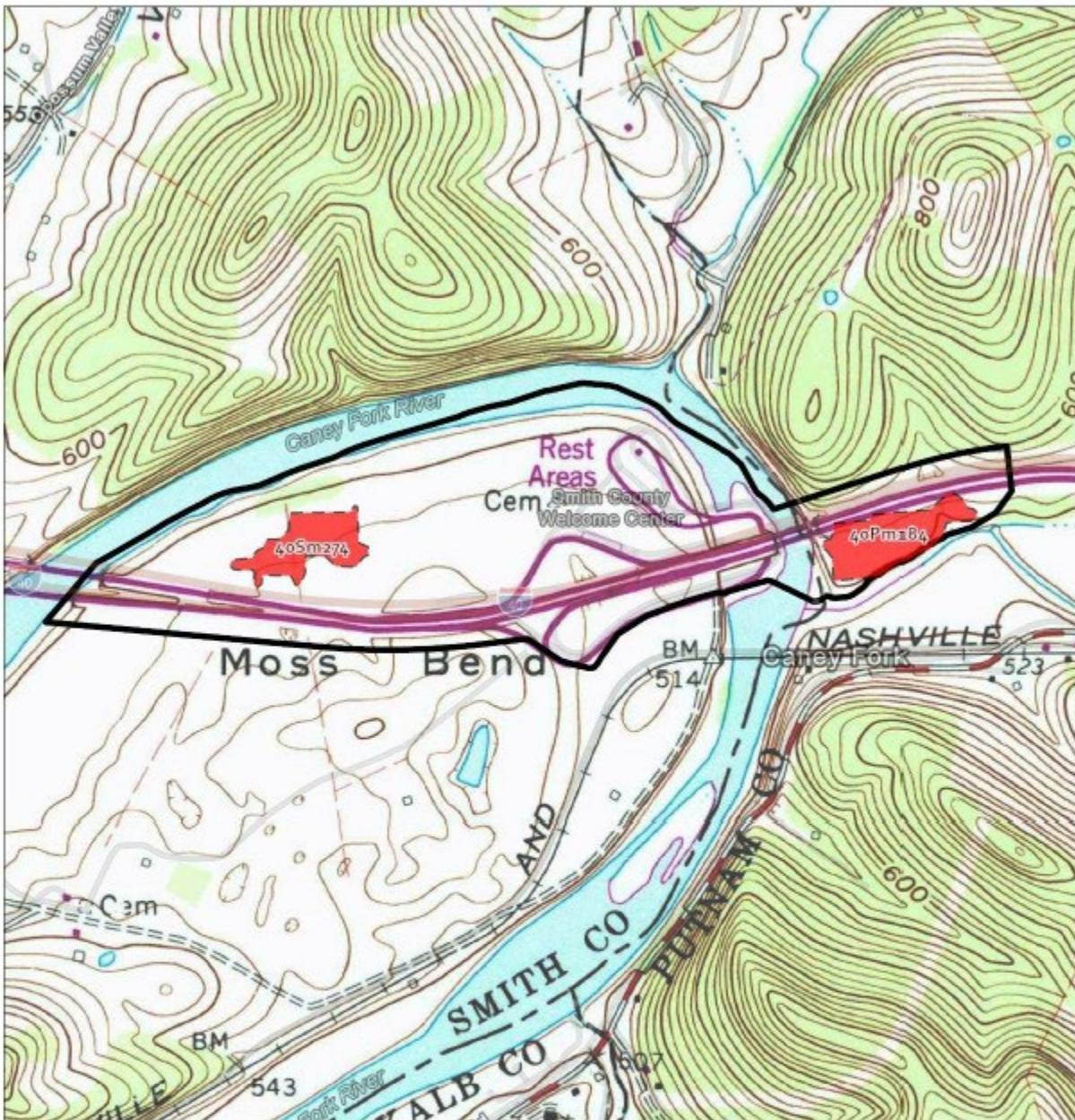
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kim Vasut-Shelby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kim" and last name "Vasut-Shelby" clearly distinguishable.

Kimberly Vasut-Shelby

Cultural Resources Team Lead

KV/ msj

Attachment 1: Project location (red) on excerpt of USGS Buffalo Valley (322NE), TN 7.5' quadrangle.



**Legend**  
 APE  
 Archaeological Sites

0 500 1,000 Feet  
 (At original document size of 8.5x11)  
 1:12,272



Project Location Prepared by TCR on 2025-09-06  
 Smith and Putnam Counties, TN TR by CBB on 2025-09-06  
 Client/Project IR by CBB on 2025-09-06  
 Client/Project 172033879

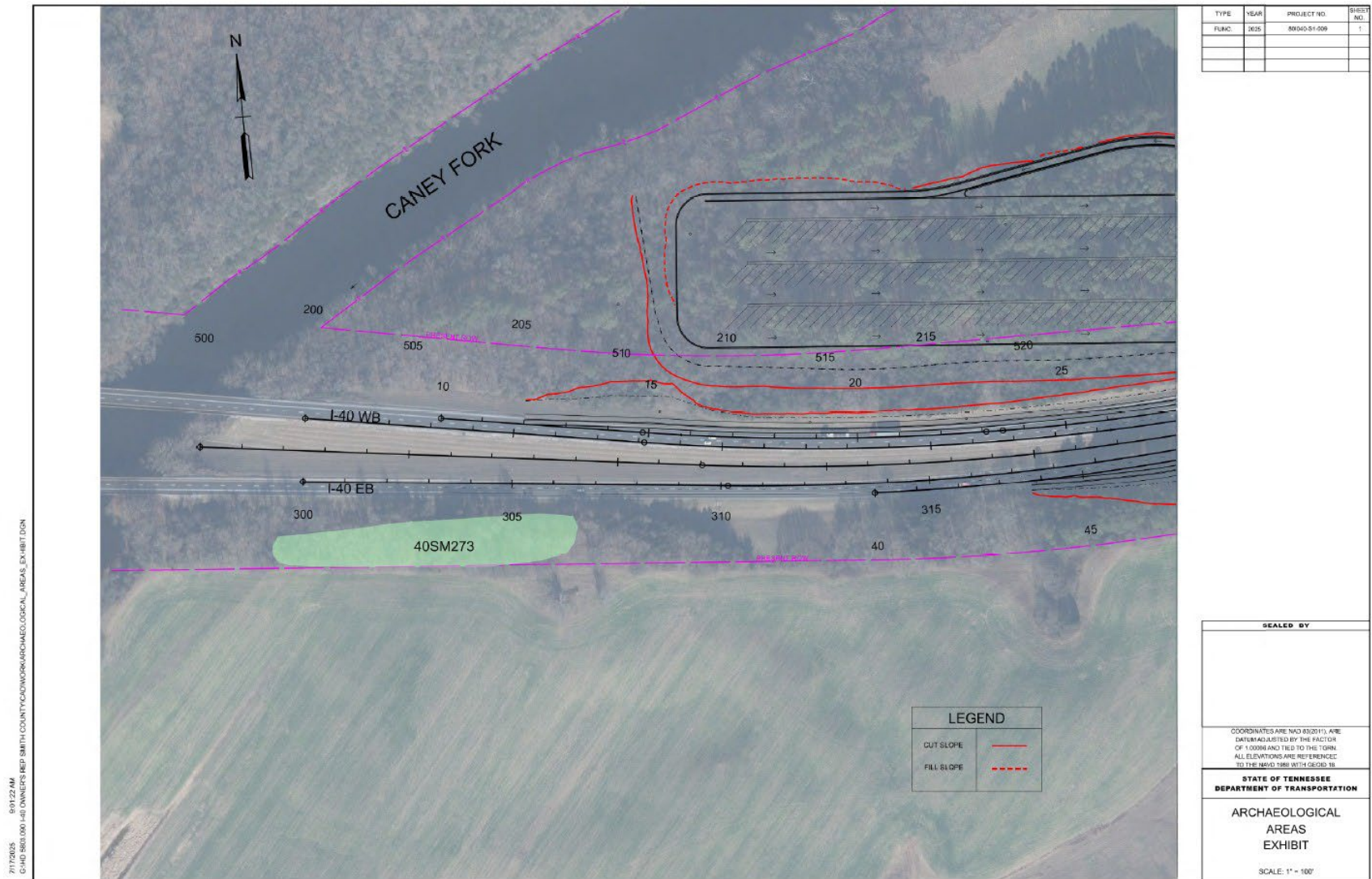
Client: TCR  
 Project: Archaeological Phase II Investigation of 40SM274 and 40PM187  
 Report: Phase II Archaeological Investigation of Sites  
 40SM274 and 40PM187, Smith County, TN  
 Figure No.  
**2**

**Sites 40SM274 and 40PM187 shown  
 on the USGS (1962)**

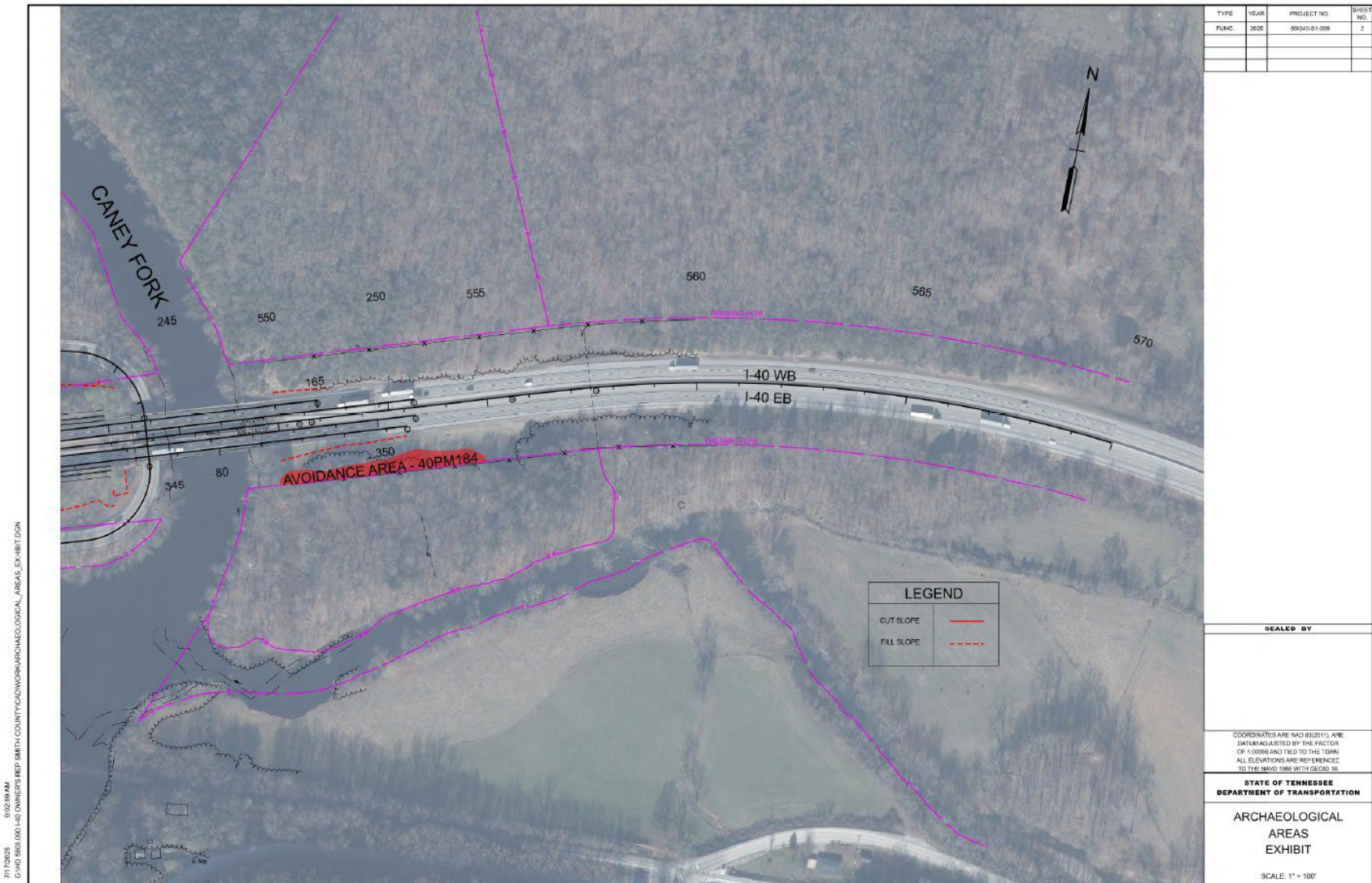
**Notes**  
 1. Coordinate System: unnamed  
 2. Data Sources: TopoView  
 3. Background: USGS 1962 Buffalo Valley  
 Quadrangle



Attachment 2: Aerial Avoidance Plans View of West side of the project area dated 7-17-2025, page 1.



Attachment 3: Aerial Avoidance Plans View of the East side of project area, dated 7-17-2025, page 2.





Attachment 4: TDOT Avoidance Plans, East side of the project area, dated 7-7-2025.

