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Management Summary

Between June 3 and July 18, 1996, a Southeast Archeological Center crew expended some 2,527 person-hours conducting a comprehensive subsurface testing program over the entire eighteen acres of the Magnolia Plantation unit of the Cane River Creole National Historical Park. Data recovery excavations at Cabins 1 and 3 and at the slave hospital/overseer's house were completed during this period. Cabin 7 data recovery investigations were carried out in November 1996. This report covers only the testing program.

We conducted the investigations by following a research design (Keel 1996) that specifically insured that no archeologically significant resources would be adversely impacted by the planned stabilization projects and that baseline data would be accumulated characterizing the location, distribution, age, integrity, and significance of archeological deposits throughout the Magnolia Plantation unit. Additionally, we were able to correlate some archeological deposits with historic documents and provide data, as needed, to the planning effort.

The comprehensive auger testing program provides an understanding of the distribution of archeological remains at the park. The analysis of the materials and the context from which they came (see Chapters 4 and 5) compose a corpus of infor-

mation on which to base future archeological research, develop cultural resource management plans, and carry out compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act. Suggestions for future research topics are found in Chapter 6.

The investigations provide information about the probable location of the structure housing the boiler and steam engine associated with the cotton gin. Architectural, engineering, historical, and archeological data all support the hypothesis that the gin house was built around 1890.

Archeological evidence suggests that the slave village was laid out in a grid pattern, four cabins across and six down for a total of twenty-four cabins. These were formally oriented in the cardinal directions. This slave village was reportedly the finest in the parish.

A complex of materials located between the slave hospital/overseer's house and the slave village represent the agency, mill, pigeonier, bell tower, and garden house.

Finally, the investigations suggest there was once a substantial domestic structure along Louisiana Highway 119 that was not recorded on G. S. Walmsley's 1858 plat of Magnolia Plantation. Although a precise date for construction, use, and abandonment cannot yet be determined, this structure could date as early as the 1830s.

