

APPENDIX III: GLOSSARY

Aboriginal - Prehistoric peoples in North America.

Aeolian - Carried by the wind. For example, sand dunes are aeolian deposits.

Ap-B-C profile - A standard coding sequence for soil development. The Ap horizon is the plow zone; the B horizon is a zone leached by ground water; and the C horizon is the parent material on which the soil has developed.

B1t horizon - The first B soil horizon below the A horizon. There may be several B horizon characterized by different sediments, color, or degree of weathering or illuviation.

Archaeology - The study of the people of the past through the recovery and analysis of the artifacts and other material left behind and context of the finds.

Argillic horizon - A B soil horizon in which argillite minerals have accumulated due to illuviation.

Artifact - Any object shaped or modified by humans, or as a result of human activity.

Assemblage - The contemporaneous objects and associations found at an archaeological site.

Band-level organization - Small, confederations of family groups who subsist by hunting and gathering. Bands do not usually have a formal political organization, and their composition is often fluid, or seasonal.

Base camp - A prehistoric, hunter-gatherer dwelling site from which resource procurement forays are made.

Bedload - The material carried in the bed of a stream - usually larger material, such as sand, gravel, and cobbles - that rolls, tumbles, or bounces along.

Biface - A stone tool that has been flaked on both sides.

Boreal - Northern forests and tundra.

C horizon - The parent material (sediment) on which a soil has developed.

Chalcedony - Cryptocrystalline quartz or chert; for example, agate.

Cobble - A water-worn, or rounded stone, frequently used as raw material for stone tool manufacture by prehistoric people.

Colluvium - A loose deposit of rock or soil debris accumulated at the base of a cliff or slope.

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Core - A piece of stone from which other pieces of stone are flaked off to make artifacts.

Cortex - The weathered exterior of a piece of lithic material, may be either vein or water-worn cortex.

Cretaceous Geologic period - The third period of the Mesozoic era characterized by the development of flowering plants and the disappearance of dinosaurs.

Cryptocrystalline - Indistinctly crystalline; having an indistinguishable crystalline structure (e.g., chert and jasper).

Culture - The non-biological mechanism of human adaptation, and rules, traditions, and customs of a particular society.

Curated technology - Artifacts reused and transported so often that they are rarely deposited in contexts which reflect their actual manufacture and use.

Datum - A fixed point from which all levels are measured at an archaeological excavation. A datum line is a horizontal reference line for making scaled drawings of excavations.

Debitage - Waste material from the manufacture of stone tools.

Deciduous - Leaf-bearing trees that shed in autumn.

Diagnostic - Artifacts with traits that are distinctive of a particular time period.

Difference-of-proportion test - A statistical test that measures the degree of difference between samples from two different populations of things.

Difference-of-means test - A statistical test that determines if the means (averages) of variables, or measurements are different.

Discards - Stone tools that are too heavily resharpened and modified to be further used.

Distal end - The pointed end of a projectile point.

Early stage biface discard - A biface that was used in an early stage of manufacture and then discarded before being more finely finished.

Early stage biface reject - A biface that never passed beyond the initial steps of stone tool production due either to flaws in the raw material or manufacturing errors.

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Edaphic factors - Environmental factors due to the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of the soil.

Estuary - A semi-enclosed body of water where fresh and salt water mix due to the action of currents and tides.

Extant - Still in existence.

Facie - A stratigraphic body distinguished from others by appearance, composition, or mode of deposition.

Feature - Any soil disturbance or discoloration that reflects human activity or an artifact that is too large to remove from an archaeological site; for example, a house, storage pits, or fire place. A feature may also be a very dense cluster of artifacts; for example, a lithic chipping feature.

Fire-cracked Rock - A rock that has fractured and/or discolored due to exposure to heat.

Flake - A piece of waste material produced during the manufacture of stone tools.

Flotation - The use of fluid suspension to recover tiny plant and bone fragments from archaeological deposits, such as feature fill.

Fluvial - Produced by the action of flowing water.

Formation - A distinctive unit of rock or sediment, often named by the geologist that first describes it, e.g., the Columbia Formation.

Gabbro - Coarse-grained, dark igneous (volcanic) rock.

Glacial outwash - Material carried away from the foot of a melting glacier by running water. Glacial outwash streams are commonly very dirty, and result in extensive deposits of gravel, sand, silt, and clay.

Gneiss - A coarse-grained rock with alternating bands of coarse and more fine-grained material.

Ground stone tool - A tool that has been shaped by grinding or pecking.

Hammerstone - A rounded stone to be used as a hammer. Sometimes grooved for hafting to a handle. Usually ungrooved, however, it has a variety of forms ranging from a crudely shaped sphere to a finely ground ovoid with a battered end.

Holocene - The latest division of the Quaternary period, which started 10,000 B.P.

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Illuviation - The movement of colloids, soluble salts, and mineral particles (clay) down through a soil profile through the leaching action of water.

Inclusions - Mineral, crystalline, or other material that is included within a larger, more uniform rock matrix.

Incipient ranked society - A society with a political organization in which some people have higher status than others, but no real extra, or formal power.

Jasper - Impure, slightly translucent cryptocrystalline quartz. Often red, brown, or green in color.

Jasperoid - Cryptocrystalline rock formed by the replacement of some other material in a larger rock body.

Late stage biface reject - A biface which was either broken during the later stages of manufacture, or which had been reduced improperly, so that further reduction would not produce a usable tool.

Lateritic - A soil zone leached of silica with concentrations of iron and aluminum hydroxides.

Lithic - Pertaining to or consisting of stone.

Loam - A loose soil composed of roughly equal parts of silt, clay, and sand, often containing organic matter, as well. Usually very fertile and conducive to plant growth.

Locus - A defined archaeological site or testing location.

Macro-band base camp - For a hunter-gatherer society, an archaeological site one hectare or larger in area characterized by a wide variety of tool types, abundant ceramics, semi-subterranean house structures, storage pit features, and abundant debitage from tool manufacture and reduction.

Mesic forest - A forest of relatively, wet-adapted plant species, such as hemlock forests.

Micro-band - A component of macro-band, perhaps one or two extended families, that periodically operates independently of the macro-band group.

Micro-flake - A lithic flake small than 1/4 inch. Usually recovered only from flotation samples which are passed through very fine screens.

Migmatite - Rock consisting of thin, alternating layers and lenses of granite and schist.

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Norite - A variety of gabbro.

Pedestrian survey - The walking and collecting of an archaeological site without the excavation of subsurface units.

Pedogenic - Referring to the development of soils in place.

Physiographic zone - Regions or areas that are characterized by a particular geography, geology, and topography.

Piedmont region - An area of gently rolling to hilly land lying between the Appalachian Mountains and the Atlantic Coastal Plain. The division between the Piedmont region and the Coastal Plain is marked by the Fall Line.

Platform - See striking platform.

Pleistocene - A division of the Quarternary Period, which began around 2 million years ago and characterized by rapid hominid evolution from Australopithecinae to Homo sapiens sapiens. Also characterized by the Ice Ages.

Plow zone - In a plowed field, the upper layer of organic soil which is continually reworked by plowing. In the Middle Atlantic region, plow zones are about 8-12 inches thick.

Prehistoric - The time period before the appearance of written records. In the New World this generally refers to indigenous, non-European societies.

Primary lithic resource - Outcrops of workable stone that are found within the matrix of their original formation.

Procurement Site - A place that is visited because there is a particular item to acquire in the vicinity; i.e., lithic outcrops.

Projectile point - Strictly speaking, a biface attached to the head of an airborne item of weaponry, like an arrow or a thrown dart. In general usage, refers to any biface.

Provenience - The exact location where an artifact was found on an archaeological site.

Pyroxenite - A medium or coarse-grained rock consisting of pyroxene minerals.

Quarry site - An archaeological site located at either a primary or secondary outcrop of lithic material used in the manufacture of stone tools.

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Quarry reduction station - A place where material obtained from a quarry, such as large flakes, cores and very early stage bifaces were taken for further reduction into smaller primary-thinned bifaces.

Regolith - Weathered, broken up bedrock. Often in a transition zone between C soil horizons and solid bedrock.

Rejects - Stone tools which have been thrown away due to manufacturing or material flaws.

Schist - A medium or coarse-grained metamorphic rock made up of micaceous minerals.

Secondary lithic resource - Cobbles and boulders of variable size that have been removed from the matrix of their original formation, transported by alluvial or glacial agents, and redeposited at a new location which may be quite distant from their original source.

Sediment - Particles of rock and mineral material laid down through the action of wind and water.

Siliceous - Composed, or formed primarily of silica.

Site - A place with evidence of human occupation.

Soil horizon - Soils are classified into three (A, B, and C) horizons, due to different kinds of chemical and physical processes.

Spokeshave - A stone tool with a semicircular concavity used for smoothing spears or arrowshafts.

Staging site - A temporary camp where preparations are made for another operation, such as a hunting foray.

Stemmed point - A projectile point that has an obvious hafting element for attachment to a shaft.

Stratigraphy - The soil and sediment layering on an archaeological site; the characteristics of each individual stratum and its relationship to others in the sequence is critical to understanding the temporal and spatial characteristics of the site.

Strata - The various layers of soils or sediments of human or geological origin which comprise archaeological sites.

Striking platform - On a flake - the remnant edge of the surface that was struck when the flake was removed from a larger body of rock.

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Subsoil - Sterile, naturally occurring soils, or sediments, not changed by human occupation.

Surface collection - Collecting artifacts seen on the surface of the ground, such as in an open or plowed field.

Susquehannock Indians - Iroquoian people living along the lower reaches of the Susquehanna River during the Woodland II and Contact periods.

Thermally altered - Changed in some way by exposure to high temperatures. The flaking characteristics of some types of stone are improved by heat treating. Thermal alteration often results in reddening or other color changes in stone, and characteristic breakage.

Tool kit - A collection of artifacts interpreted as being designed for a specific task.

Topography - The surface physical features and configuration of land.

Uniface - A stone tool that has only been flaked on one side.

Unconformity - A surface of erosion or non-deposition that separates strata.

Utilized flake - A waste flake from stone tool manufacture used, without modification, as a tool for cutting or scraping. Utilization often damages the sharp edges of a flake.

Xeric forest - A forest characterized by plants adapted to dry conditions, such as grasslands and forests of oak and hickory.

Xerophyte - A plant that grows in arid conditions.