3.0 CULTURAL SETTING

3.1 Pre-contact Context and Site Potential

The following is a summary of previously identified pre-contact period archaeological sites in the general vicinity of the Bridge 918 on S.R. 30 project APE, and a discussion of the potential for the project APE to contain pre-contact period archaeological sites. The pre-contact context discussion is modified from Gundy *et al.* (2004). A state site file review was not conducted for this project because such reviews had recently been completed for the Eastern Shore Natural Gas Pipeline project (Breetzke 2004) and the Milton Truck Bypass project (McCormick, Taylor & Associates, Inc. 2001) (see Section 3.2).

The Paleoindian period started with the arrival of the earliest inhabitants of Delaware, *ca.* 15,000 years ago, and ended with the emergence of essentially modern environmental conditions at approximately 6,500 years ago. Paleoindian archaeological remains in Delaware include fluted projectile points attributable to the Clovis, Mid-Paleo, and Dalton-Hardaway phases, as well as early side- and corner-notched projectile points such as Palmer, Amos, and Kirk types (Broyles 1971; Coe 1964; Custer 1986:32). Types of Paleoindian sites include quarries, quarry reduction stations, base camps, base camp maintenance stations, outlying hunting sites, and isolated projectile point finds, with isolated projectile points the most common site types (Custer 1984:52-53). The majority of the Paleoindian site types, as defined by Gardner (1979), are directly related to lithic resource procurement and lithic tool manufacturing. Since no good sources of high quality lithic raw materials are located in the Bridge 918 project region, Paleoindian sites would not be expected in this area. Custer (1986, 1987) and Custer and Mellin (1991a, 1991b) do not list any Paleoindian sites in southeast Delaware, and no Paleoindian archaeological remains have been previously identified near the project APE.

Custer (1984:61) argues "the beginning of the Archaic period coincides with the emergence of Holocene environments in Delaware and is characterized by a shift in human adaptation strategies." This adaptation strategy shift occurs at approximately 6,500 years ago with the emergence of bifurcate projectile points such as St. Albans, LeCroy, and Kanawha types (Broyles 1971; Chapman 1975). Based on preliminary information gleaned from excavated archaeological sites in locations surrounding Delaware, a variety of stemmed projectile point types characterize the Archaic period from approximately 6,000 B.C. to 4,000 B.C. (Custer 1984:62). Indicators of the new adaptations include the addition of new tools, such as groundstone, to the tool kit; the addition of alternative lithic raw material sources (e.g.,

secondary cobble sources) for tool making; replacement of direct procurement systems by embedded systems; reduction in the range of activities carried out at special purpose sites; less reliance on cryptocrystalline lithic raw materials; increased floral resource use; reduced emphasis on hunting; and site location preference to a wider variety of environmental settings different from Paleoindian preferences. Custer (1986:65) reports: "In the overall picture the variety of site types and activities seems to represent a diffuse adaptation (Cleland 1976) to an increasing variety of environmental settings as well as the increasing variety of resources available due to increased seasonality." This seasonality is reflected in the macro/micro-band/procurement site settlement types postulated for the Archaic period in Delaware. Interior environmental settings are likely to yield procurement sites and stations adjacent to poorly drained locations (Custer 1987:27). The Bridge 918 on S.R. 30 project APE is an interior environmental setting; therefore, procurement sites rather than base camps would be expected. The Sowbridge Branch and its wetlands immediately north of the project APE do not qualify as major drainages, and Archaic base camps are not expected. However, the APE has well-drained soils adjacent to wetlands, and can be considered to hold some potential for containing Archaic procurement sites. Few Archaic period archaeological sites are known in Delaware generally (Custer 1984:61, 65). The potential for the APE to contain Archaic period archaeological remains is low to moderate based on the absence of defined Archaic cultural materials associated with nearby previously recorded archaeological sites, the absence of typical environmental settings associated with Archaic period base camps, and the small size of the project APE. If Archaic period materials are identified in the project APE, they will most likely reflect ephemeral transitory use of the area for procurement activities.

As discussed in the geomorphological context, parts of the Delaware Coastal Plain underwent aeolian deposition during the Early and Middle Archaic periods. Warm, dry climatic conditions resulted in the vegetative denuding of certain landforms, and the fine sands of the Coastal Plain were often displaced by high winds of the middle Holocene. If Early-Middle Archaic materials are present in the APE, and if the APE is characterized by an aeolian-enhanced E horizon, the artifacts can be expected below or in the lower portion of the E horizon.

The Woodland I period begins approximately 3,000 B.C. when the rate of sea level rise slowed, and riverine and estuary environments began to stabilize (Custer 1987:31; Morin *et al.* 2001:3.2). An increase in population is posited for the period, along with the development of sedentism. Many large base camp sites, with associated large numbers of people, are evident in many parts of the Delmarva Peninsula during the Woodland I period (Custer and Catts

1991:19). The overall trend was towards more sedentism, with increases in local populations. Woodland I period lifeways varied from the Archaic period and included increases in plant processing tools; the introduction of stone and then ceramic containers; the development of incipient ranked societies; the addition of fishing gear such as netsinkers; increases in broad-bladed knives; and the development of trade and exchange networks/systems.

Settlement during the Woodland I period commonly consisted of repeated-use camp sites and semi-sedentary to sedentary village sites along major river floodplains and estuaries (Custer 1987:31; Morin *et al.* 2001:3.3). Woodland I sites are the most common sites identified in Delaware's Atlantic Coastal zone. Due to the lack of major river/stream floodplains and estuaries in the APE, there is a low probability of identifying Woodland I period macro-band sites; however, due to the proximity of large streams and associated wetlands to the project APE, associated Woodland I micro-band sites may be present.

According to regional geomorphology results, Woodland I and II components should be expected to post-date the major periods of aeolian deposition in Sussex County. As such, Woodland I and II components should occur in A/Ap horizons or the uppermost portions of aeolian-enhanced E horizons.

The Woodland II period is dated from A.D. 1000 to the contact period, *ca.* A.D. 1600. The period is marked by the alteration of Woodland I lifeways (Custer 1984:146). Custer (1984:146) reports:

> The basic changes noted in Delaware include the breakdown of trade and exchange networks, alterations of settlement patterns, the development of sedentary lifestyles, and the appearance of agricultural food production to varying degrees in different areas.

Horticulture became very important across the Middle Atlantic region during the Woodland II period, although little archaeological evidence for it has been identified in Delaware (Morin *et al.* 2001:3.3). Brown *et al.* (1990:9) noted that "exploitation of sites with Woodland I components continued during Woodland II." Small triangular projectile points and various styles of ceramics are temporally diagnostic Woodland II period artifacts. Two basic varieties of ceramics, Townsend and Minguannan wares, are distinguished in Delaware (Custer 1984:148). Townsend ceramics are described as shell tempered, fabric impressed exterior surface wares (Griffith 1982), while Minguannan wares exhibit sand, grit, or quartz temper with smoothed, corded, or smoothed-over corded surfaces (Custer 1981). Other items of material culture

include bone and antler tools, stone celts, clay pipes, and shell beads (Brown and Basalik 1984).

Settlement patterns in the Woodland II period are similar to those of the Woodland I period. In interior environmental settings, micro-band base camps are located on floodplains of low-order drainages, with procurement sites located near poorly drained woodlands and ephemeral drainages (Custer 1987:45). Due to the proximity of the Sowbridge Branch wetlands adjacent to the APE, micro-band base camps would be expected. As well, the APE would have been suited for use as procurement sites.

Based on the presence of previously recorded pre-contact period archaeological sites located near the project APE along drainages that extend into the project APE; the information contained in the statewide contexts, including a categorization of the area as having medium to high site potential for most of the pre-contact period site types in concert with a need for research; and the presence of soils of appropriate age to contain pre-contact period archaeological remains, the wetland mitigation APE is considered to have a moderate to high potential to contain pre-contact period archaeological remains. If pre-contact period archaeological remains are identified, they will most likely represent ephemeral transitory use (procurement sites according to Custer 1986) of this upland area as part of a more general settlement pattern, which included larger more permanent base camps in the Broadkill River or Primehook Neck areas. The wetland mitigation area has moderate potential to contain a micro-band site from the Woodland period. For additional pre-contact period context of the project area, the reader is referred to *A Management Plan for Delaware's Prehistoric Cultural Resources* (Custer 1986); *Delaware Prehistoric Archaeology, An Ecological Approach* (Custer 1984); and *Chesapeake Prehistory* (Dent 1995).

3.2 Previous Investigations in Project Vicinity

Three cultural resource projects were previously completed in the project vicinity. In 2001, McCormick, Taylor & Associates, Inc. (MTA) completed cultural resource studies for the proposed Milton Truck Bypass. Their APE included the existing road (S.R. 30) and dam, but did not encompass the proposed wetland mitigation area. No sites were recorded in or near APE.

In 2004, Environment and Archaeology, LLC (E&A) conducted a Phase I cultural resource survey for a proposed natural gas pipeline (Breetzke 2004). The proposed pipeline will be located 15.0 m (49.2 ft) east of the eastern edge of the existing pavement of S.R. 30. The survey discovered a historic archaeological site, apparently representing the Ponder tenant

house/Jensen residence. The site (7S-C-92) also yielded a single jasper flake. The mill remains were not recorded as an archaeological site (Breetzke 2004).

In 2005, Parsons completed a background study for the general area as part of their Milton Bypass project. Auman *et al.* (2005:3) concluded for the Reynolds Pond area that:

> the remains of one historical mill may remain on the east side of Bridge 3-918. A second mill was once located north of the bridge and on the east side of the roadway, although the exact location of the mill is unknown.

3.3 Historic Site Potential

The wetland mitigation area APE is considered to have a low potential for historic archaeological sites. Historic maps (Price and Rea 1850; Beers 1868) show no structures in the APE. Residential settlement was focused directly upon S.R. 30. There is no evidence that any elements of the Reynolds/Jensen mill complex were in the APE. Oral history (see Appendix A) suggests that the wetland mitigation APE was in woods and pasture for most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

3.4 History of Reynolds Mill Vicinity

3.4.1 Methods

A number of methods were employed to complete the history of Reynolds Mill. The starting point was the detailed history of the mill provided in the draft final *Technical Report, Cultural Resources Investigations of the Milton Bypass, Sussex County, Delaware* (Auman *et al.* 2005). To confirm, supplement and, in a few instances, correct information contained in that report, Skelly and Loy researched the historic tax assessment records and the Census of Manufacturers for Broadkiln Hundred at the Delaware Public Archives. An oral interview was also conducted with the current owner of the property, Harry Isaacs, Jr. Coordination with DelDOT and the Delaware SHPO has included a field view plus verbal and written communications. The history of the mill is presented below, organized in the temporal periods of the *Historic Context Master Reference and Summary* for Delaware (Herman *et al.* 1989). Excerpts from an interview with Harry Isaacs, Jr., are included in the sections dealing with the twentieth century. The transcript of the full interview is presented in Appendix A.

3.4.2 Early Industrialization 1770 – 1830±

The year that a mill or mills were established at the location of Reynolds Pond on the Sowbridge Branch of Primehook Creek is unclear. Thomas Scharf's *History of Delaware, 1609-1888* contends that "grist and saw mills" owned by Nathan Reed were present by at least 1809 (Scharf 1888:1261). Tax records from that year seem to confirm Scharf's account. They list Reed as owning 64.8 ha (160.0 ac) of land and a one-half interest in a grist and sawmill in Broadkill Hundred[1] (Sussex County Tax Assessments 1809). In 1810, Nathan Reed purchased from John Smith of Philadelphia a one-half interest in a 2.4 ha (6.0 ac) property. The deed references a sawmill by the main road, a lumberyard adjoining the mill, and a mill pond (Sussex County Deeds 1810:426). This was apparently the other one-half interest in his existing mills, although the deed does not mention the name of the stream or even the hundred or hundreds where the property was located. The following year, Reed purchased from Spicer Warren another 8.1 ha (20.0 ac) of land adjoining the mill property, referenced in the deed as being partially in Broadkill Hundred and partially in Cedar Creek Hundred (Sussex County Deeds 1811:427). Again, the name of the stream is not given. However, the 1816 county tax assessments confirm Reed owned a 20.2 ha (50.0 ac) parcel with one grist and sawmill, and a second parcel of 80.9 ha (200.0 ac). The next assessment of real property, undertaken in 1822, attributes 101.2 ha (250.0 ac) of land, a gristmill, and an "out of repair" sawmill to Reed (Sussex County Tax Assessments 1816, 1822).

Gristmills and sawmills were important components of life in rural Broadkill Hundred and Sussex County. One of the first priorities of the new settlers was to clear the land for farming and to build houses for shelter. The area's abundant timber resources provided the necessary raw materials for houses and agricultural buildings. To exploit the resource, settlers established water-powered sawmills, which generally were post-and-beam buildings supporting an up-and-down saw. Getting sufficient head to power the mills was problematic, however. Although streams abounded, the flat topography generally did not provide the necessary fall to power a waterwheel. Consequently, settlers had to dam existing ravines to create millponds (Moore 1959). The ponds were often used to also power gristmills, which ground Sussex County's

[1] Prior to 1833, the hundred was known as Broadkill. After 1833, it was renamed Broadkiln, its current name.

staple crop, corn, into meal and wheat into flour (De Cunzo and Garcia 1993:22; Herman *et al.* 1989:48; Scharf 1888:1285).

Scharf states that Reed sold his mill property to William McIlvain (Scharf 1888:1216). A chain-of-title listed in the conveyance of the property by a later owner, Sallie Ponder, also traces ownership of the mill seat on Sowbridge Branch to McIlvain (Sussex County Deeds 1905:603). William McIlvain acquired the property in 1825 at public auction following Reed's death. A 24.3 ha (60.0 ac) parcel and mill seat were sold to satisfy Reed's debts to John D. Smith and Milby Simpler (Sussex County Deeds 1825:58). A handwritten notation added to McIlvain's tax records confirm the purchase, although it lists the transfer from Nathan Reed as "40 acres and a saw mill;" no reference is made to the other 8.1 ha (20.0 ac) or the gristmill (Sussex County Tax Assessments 1824). Perhaps the other 8.1 ha (20.0 ac) were assessed in Cedar Creek Hundred. William McIlvain did not hold the property long. According to tax records, it was transferred at some point between 1825 and 1828 to David McIlvain. The implication is that William McIlvain died, and that David McIlvain was the executor of his estate (Sussex County Deeds 1859:263). David McIlvain is listed as owning "1 grist and saw mill and lot." He also owned one-half of a second gristmill, but this was a different operation than the building historically owned by Reed and William McIlvain (Sussex County Tax Assessments 1828).

3.4.3 Industrialization & Early Urbanization 1830 – 1880±

During this period, the mill seat was acquired by the family for whom the mill and millpond would become known: the Reynolds. The Reynolds would own the mill for approximately 27 years. The subsequent owners, the Ponders, would hold the property for a much longer period of time (46 years), but the Reynolds name would become attached to the pond despite multiple later owners.

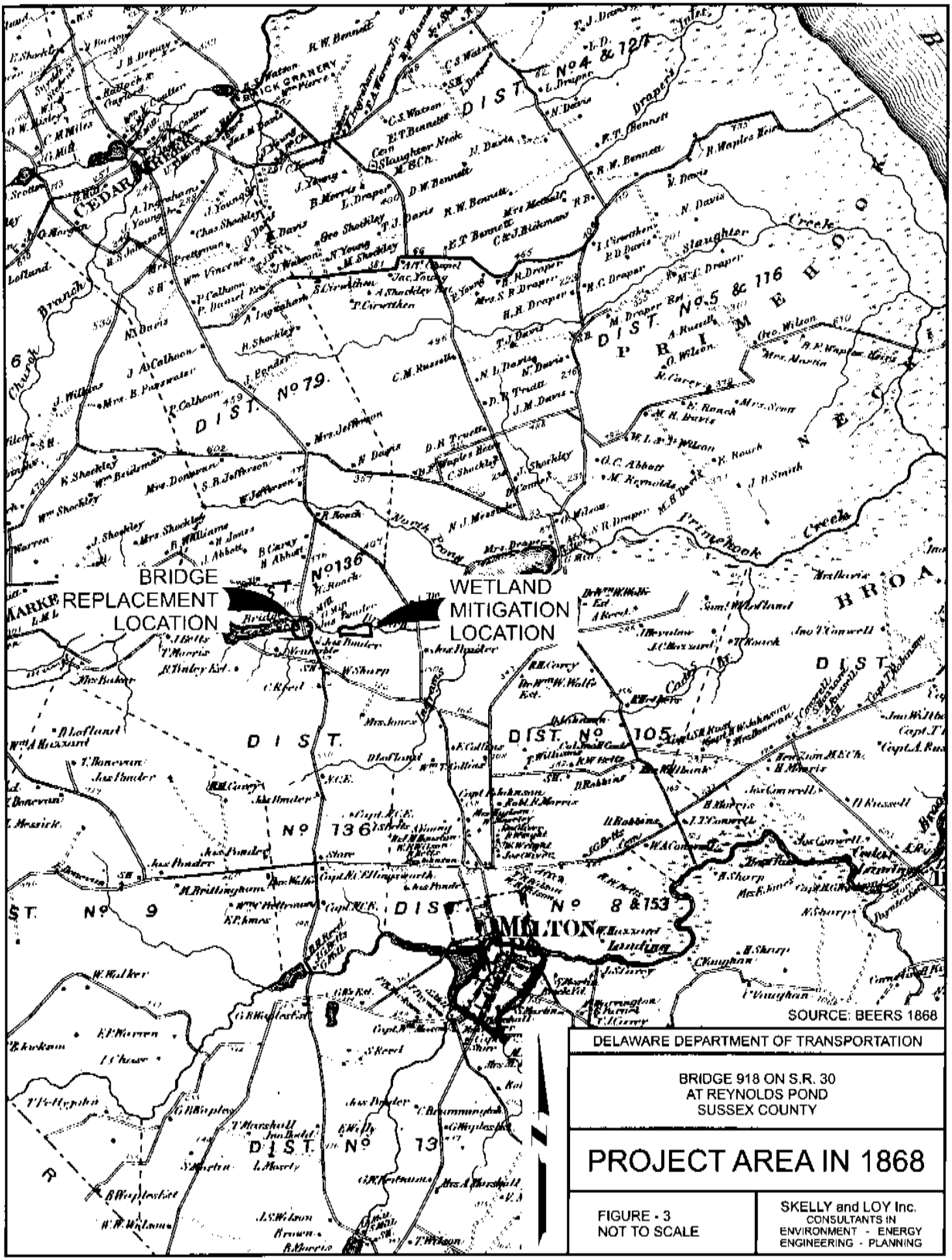
The deed record indicates that William McIlvain willed ("devised") the mill seat on Sowbridge Branch to Silas and Myers Reynolds (e.g., Sussex County Deeds 1849:260, 1859:263, 1905:603). McIlvain's will, however, is not on file at the Sussex County Recorder of Wills office. The first mention of Reynolds ownership of mill property in Broadkill Hundred occurs in 1832, when a handwritten notation notes the conveyance of a mill from David McIlvain to Silas and Maier (sic) Reynolds. A second notation in 1834 states that Silas and Miers (sic) Reynolds owned 16.2 ha (40.0 ac) and a mill. Neither

the 1832 nor the 1834 notations indicate the type of mill. The 1836 tax assessments contain no listing for Silas and Myers Reynolds, but Roderick Reynolds owns a grist and sawmill valued at $400 (Sussex County Tax Assessments 1828, 1834, 1836). According to Scharf, Roderick was Silas Reynolds's father (Scharf 1888:1261). Silas and Myers reappear in the 1844 tax assessments as owners of a saw and gristmill (Sussex County Tax Assessments 1844). They remained in partnership until 1849, when Myers and his wife Mary Jane convey their share of the mills and 24.3 ha (60.0 ac) of land to Silas (Sussex County Deeds 1849:260). Silas would own the property for 10 more years. The Price and Rea (1850) map labels the mill seat as "Reynolds G & S M," indicating that the mill was being used for both sawing and gristmilling at that time.

A published history of Milton provides little information on Silas Reynolds, noting only that he was a mill owner and a member of the fraternal order of Masons (Hancock and McCabe 1982:130, 109). Although the tax assessments state that Myers conveyed to Silas his interest in both a grist and sawmill, the 1850 United States Census of Manufacturers for Broadkiln Hundred credits Silas only with operating a water-powered sawmill (U.S. Census 1850). The most likely explanation for this was that the gristmill was a small portion of the operation; generally, to be listed in the Manufacturers Census, production had to reach $500 (GAI Consultants, Inc. 2004:40). Reynolds had invested $600 dollars in his sawmill, and had sawed 1,000 logs into lumber valued at $500 (U.S. Census 1850). That Reynolds's sawmill operation was more valuable than his gristmill is not surprising. In the mid-nineteenth century, wood was an important commodity in Milton, located about seven miles to the southeast. The town was known for processing lumber, shipbuilding, and furniture making (see Hancock and McCabe 1982:20; De Cunzo and Garcia 1993:23, 30).

The 1868 Beers atlas provides a view of the mill seat (Figure 3). On both the Cedar Creek Hundred and the Broadkiln Hundred maps, there are two separate buildings shown as mills. A gristmill is on the southern end of the dam, near the present flume remains. A sawmill is shown one-half to two-thirds of the way up the dam to the north, in the area currently under modern fill. Two races are shown in 1868.

Reynolds Mill was a node of community activity in a rural area of Broadkiln and Cedar Creek hundreds northwest of Milton during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (De Cunzo and Garcia 1993:23). Other community buildings included a schoolhouse and the Reynolds Methodist Episcopal Church (1872), which were located at the southeast quadrant of what is today S.R. 30 and Reynolds Pond



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BRIDGE 918 ON S.R. 30
AT REYNOLDS POND
SUSSEX COUNTY

PROJECT AREA IN 1868

FIGURE - 3
NOT TO SCALE

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Road (Beers 1868; United States Geological Survey [USGS] 1918; Reynolds Methodist Episcopal Church n.d.). The schoolhouse and church, like the mill, are no longer extant, although the graveyard associated with the church remains. The latest burials date to the mid-twentieth century.

Silas Reynolds's ownership of the pond that would bear his family's name ended in 1859, when he conveyed the 24.3 ha (60.0 ac) mill seat, sawmill and gristmill, and millpond to John Ponder and his son James (Sussex County Deeds 1859:260). Upon John's death, James Ponder became the sole owner of the Reynolds Pond mill seat (Sussex County Deeds 1905:603). The Ponders were local capitalists and entrepreneurs from Milton, with a variety of business interests. These included selling general merchandise, lumber, grain, and iron ore; building, buying, and selling sailing ships; operating various saw, grist, and bark mills; and farming (Auman *et al.* 2005:2-26, 29-30). James Ponder also served as Milton's postmaster, in the Delaware State House between 1856 and 1860, the Delaware State Senate (including a term as Speaker of the Senate) between 1864 and 1870, and as Governor of Delaware between 1871 and 1875 (Pickett 2005). In the 1880s, he went into business with Silas Reynolds's sons, opening a "large cannery" and a fruit drying operation in Milton (Hancock and McCabe 1982:163, 175). At the time, Sussex County farmers were shifting from a historic dependence on corn as a staple crop to extensive fruit and vegetable production, and canning and fruit "evaporation" were booming businesses (Hancock and McCabe 1982:164-177).

In light of his political service and multiple business enterprises during the time he owned the mills on Reynolds Pond, James Ponder undoubtedly rented the mills rather than operated them himself. An 1868 map of Broadkiln Hundred indicates that a miller's house was present on the property (Beers 1868:85) (see Figure 3). The Ponders, however, took an interest in the business, putting money into the mills. The 1860 Census of Manufacturers indicates that the Ponders invested $1,200 in the gristmill, ground 3,200 bushels of corn, and produced a similar amount of cornmeal valued at $2,240. The sawmill had a smaller investment ($800) but a higher production than during Silas Reynolds's tenure, processing 50,000 logs to produce 50,000 board feet of lumber valued at $500. The mills were water powered and operated seasonally. Each employed one man at $20 per month (U.S. Census 1860).

Ponder's water-powered gristmill and sawmill were going strong at the time of the 1870 Manufacturers Census (U.S. Census 1870). Ponder now had $1,500 invested in the custom gristmill (meaning it ground corn for a local market), which operated one

wheel. However, it ground much less corn than it had 10 years earlier, producing only 475 bushels of corn valued at $600. The lower production probably was indicative of a historic trend in Sussex County, a shift from corn husbandry to a greater emphasis on fruit and vegetable production. Historically, corn had been Sussex County's major staple crop, but this began to change in the mid-nineteenth century, particularly following the completion of the Delaware Railroad down the state's spine in 1865 and the Breakwater & Junction Railroad along eastern Delaware communities in the 1870s (Lichtenstein Consulting Engineers, Inc. 2000:39). With quick access to urban markets now assured, farmers in Broadkiln and surrounding hundreds turned increasingly to truck farming as a livelihood (Beers 1868; De Cunzo and Garcia 1993:24, 89, 99; Hancock 1976:87-90; Herman *et al.* 1989:54).

The sawmill's production, by contrast, was noticeably higher than it had been 10 years earlier. A $1,500 investment in the sawmill resulted in 145,000 board feet of lumber valued at $2,175. The sawmill is listed as operating one saw and one wheel, perhaps meaning one up-and-down saw and one circular saw (U.S. Census 1870).

The final manuscripted federal Census of Manufacturers, undertaken in 1880, does not contain a listing for Ponder's gristmill (U.S. Census 1880). This could be because the record is incomplete -- only one gristmill is listed for the entire hundred -- or it could mean that the shift from corn to produce production had become so pronounced that the other gristmills either went out of operation or failed to reach the $500 production level need to be included in the survey. Tax records for the periods 1880 through 1888 assess Ponder only for a sawmill. A gristmill reappears in his tax assessments in the period from 1888 through 1892 and remained on the rolls for as long as the Ponders owned the mill seat (Sussex County Tax Assessments 1888, 1892). This seems to indicate that James Ponder built a new gristmill on the site.

The 1880 Census of Manufacturers also indicated that Ponder's sawmill had had a number of changes aimed at increasing production. The most significant was the replacement of the water wheel with a 20-horsepower "Green Mountain" turbine. Turbines, in general, were smaller in size, higher in speed and power, lower in cost, and operated more efficiently in variable water levels and at smaller head than horizontal-axle waterwheels (Hunter 1979). Green Mountain turbines were particularly high in speed and would have provided greater power and speed for a mill like Ponder's, where the fall was only 1.8 m (6.0 ft) (U.S. Census 1880; Wenthen *et al.* 1999). The turbine powered two circular saws and one muley saw (a type of up-and-down saw), which

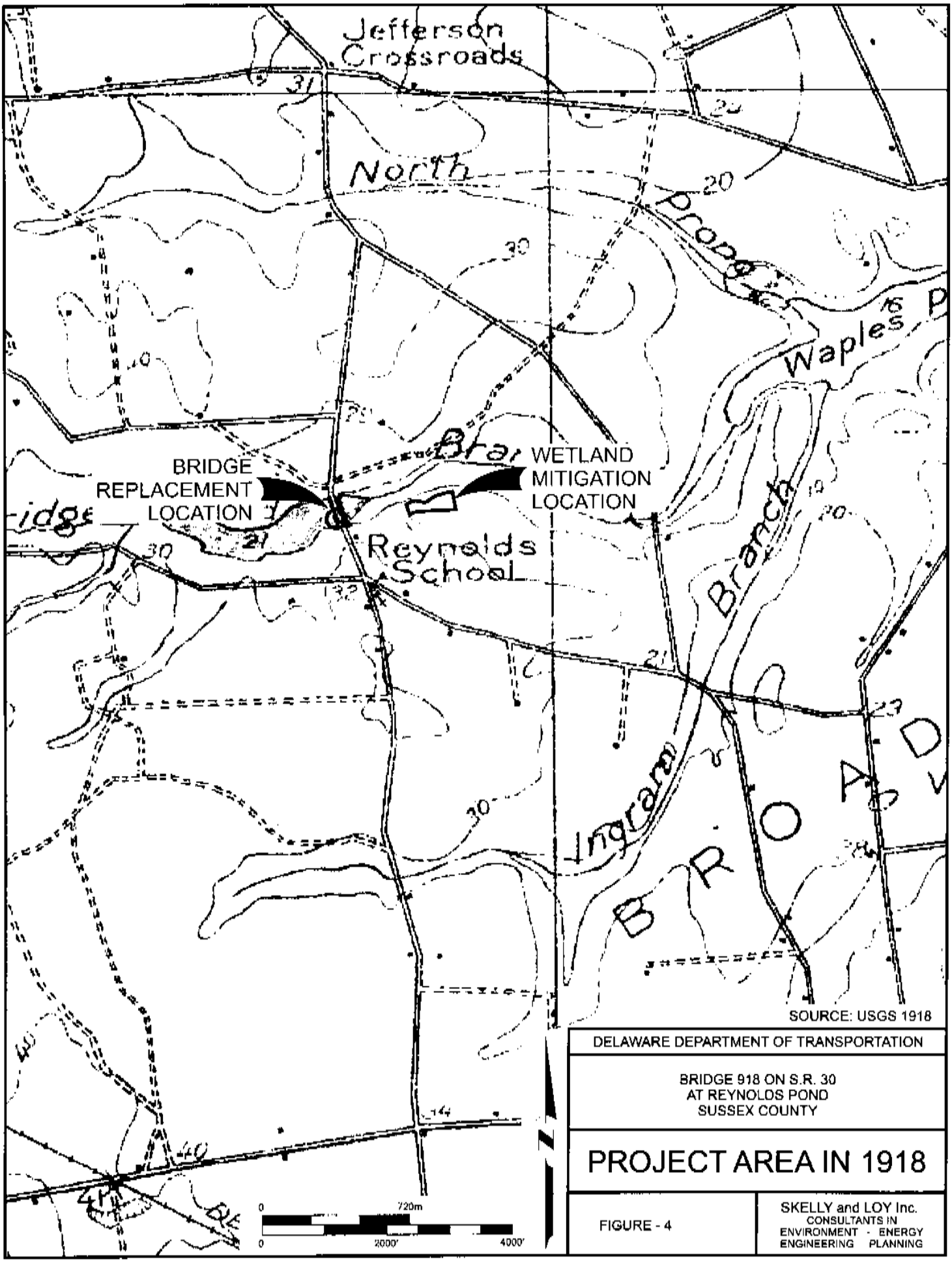
together produced 300,000 board feet of lumber valued at $3,650. The mill employed two males and operated full time for four months, part time for four others, and not at all for the remaining four. The lumber came from the district around the mill (U.S. Census 1880).

3.4.4 Urbanization & Early Suburbanization 1880 to 1940±

Following his death in 1897, the mill seat at Reynolds Pond was bequeathed to James Ponder's wife, Sallie W. Ponder (Sussex County Deeds 1905:603). Born Sallie Waples, she was from a Milton milling family. Waples Pond is located to the northeast of Reynolds Pond, at the confluence of the Sowbridge and Ingram branches of Primehook Creek (USGS 1992). Historically, there was also a Waples Mill west of Milton and south of Reynolds Mill (Price and Rea 1850). The deed and tax assessments indicate that a sawmill and a gristmill were present on Reynolds Pond property, but they clearly fell into disrepair during Sallie Waples ownership. Between 1896 and 1900, the mills were valued at $1,000. For the assessment period 1901 to 1904, the value had dropped to $600. The assessment period from 1905 to 1908 notes only a gristmill and pond, valued at $500 (Sussex County Tax Assessments). No further reference to a sawmill is contained in the historical records. Presumably, it did not operate after *ca.* 1904 and was dismantled.

The mill seat had a variety of owners in the twentieth century. Sallie Ponder sold the gristmill, millpond, dam, and 24.3 ha (60.0 ac) of land in 1905 to William T. and Rozena Chase of Wilmington. Chase was a miller, but he owned the property only until 1913, when it was auctioned off to pay his debts (Auman *et al.* 2005:2-30; Sussex County Deeds 1905:603, 1913:102). It became the property of Horatio S. Macklin, who sold it in 1918 to Fred K. Jensen (Sussex County Deeds 1918:104). The 1918 15 minute USGS quadrangle shows the mill, the Ponder tenant house, the school, and the church (Figure 4).

Jensen owned and operated the gristmill from 1918 into 1943, its last years of substantial operation. He was the last miller to grind flour and meal at the mill (Harry Isaacs, Jr., personal communication 2005). A Delaware State Highway Department as-built plan from 1940 (Figure 5) shows the gristmill, a number of small outbuildings, a two-story frame house on the east side of S.R. 30; and agricultural buildings and the millpond on the west side of the road (Delaware State Highway Department 1940). The



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BRIDGE 918 ON S.R. 30
AT REYNOLDS POND
SUSSEX COUNTY

PROJECT AREA IN 1918

FIGURE - 4

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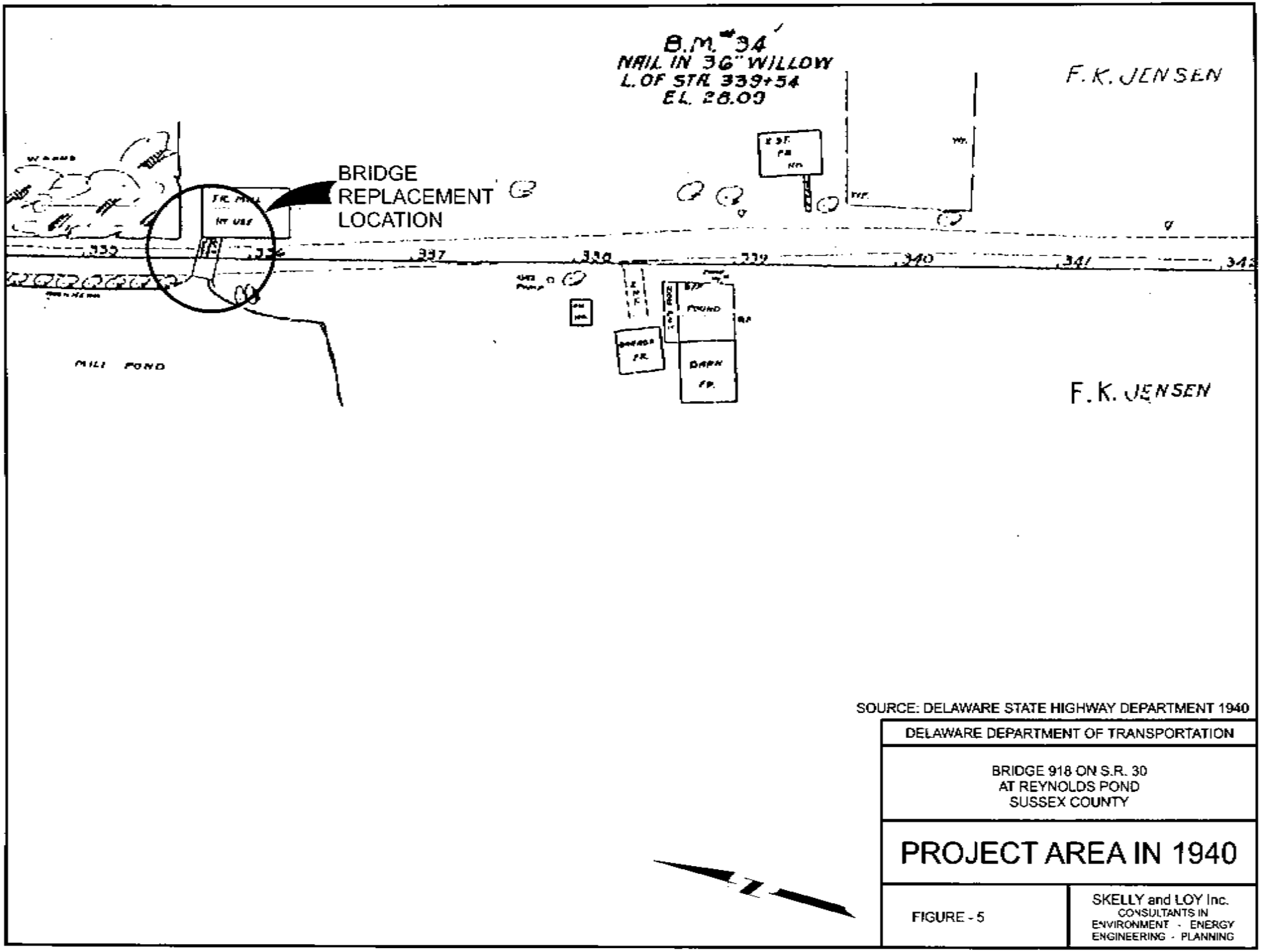

SOURCE: DELAWARE STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT 1940

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BRIDGE 918 ON S.R. 30
AT REYNOLDS POND
SUSSEX COUNTY

PROJECT AREA IN 1940

FIGURE - 5

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body of water is referred to as Jensen's Pond, although maps from 1918 and 1944 each refer to it as Reynolds Pond (Delaware State Highway Department 1940; USGS 1918, 1944). Photograph 3 is a 1940s or 1950s image of the mill, facing north-northeast.

In 1943, John S. Isaacs and his wife, Mary, purchased the 24.3 ha (60.0 ac) Reynolds Pond mill seat from Jensen (Sussex County Deeds 1943:143). John Isaacs began as a tenant farmer in Slaughter Neck. Gradually he acquired parcels of land in Broadkiln and Cedar Creek hundreds, eventually owning over 4,047.0 ha (10,000.0 ac) of land. His home farm was located north of Reynolds Pond on what is today called Hummingbird Road. According to his grandson, in the 1940s, John Isaacs was the largest producer and processor of lima beans in the country. He also operated the largest chicken processing plant in the world (Harry Isaacs, Jr., personal communication 2005).

Isaacs was a farmer who had no real intention of going into the milling businesses, but mill buildings and ponds frequently came with his land purchases. In addition to Reynolds Mill, Isaacs owned both the Cedar Creek and Waples mills. Isaacs was the last operator of Reynolds gristmill, although he used it to crack corn for chicken feed rather than to grind meal. The mill ceased operation in 1950, following his death. The miller's house was destroyed by an accidental fire in the 1950s; the mill was the victim of arson in the 1970s. A tenant house, moved to the northeast quadrant of S.R. 30 and Reynolds Pond Road during the 1950s, is not historically associated with the operation of the mill (Harry Isaacs, Jr., personal communication 2005). The mill dam, bridge over the millrace, millpond, and the area where the mill and miller's house were located remain in Isaac family ownership, part of a 2.4 ha (6.0 ac) wooded tract (Sussex County Tax Assessments 2002).

Photograph 3. Historic photograph of Reynolds Mill, facing north-northeast.