

DELAWARE AIRPARK  
CHESWOLD, KENT COUNTY, DELAWARE  
ARCHEOLOGICAL DATA RECOVERY INVESTIGATIONS  
AT THE  
AIRPARK EAST (7K-C-431) AND  
AIRPARK WEST (7K-C-382) SITES

GRANT NO. 3-10-0001-004-2003



PREPARED FOR  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
HARRISBURG AIRPORTS DISTRICT OFFICE  
CAMP HILL, PENNSYLVANIA  
DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DOVER, DELAWARE

AND

DELAWARE RIVER AND BAY AUTHORITY  
NEW CASTLE, DELAWARE

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2010

VOLUME 1: TECHNICAL REPORT

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**2010**

VOLUME 1: TECHNICAL REPORT

## ABSTRACT

John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) conducted archeological data recovery excavations of two prehistoric sites, named the Airpark East and Airpark West sites, prior to proposed improvements to the Delaware Airpark, located in Cheswold, Kent County, Delaware. Both sites were recommended eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) following JMA's Phase II archeological evaluations. This work was conducted for R.A. Wiedemann & Associates, Inc., on behalf of the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA), the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The goal of these investigations was to mitigate adverse effects to the sites through archeologically documenting and recovering artifacts, features, and samples to provide as complete a picture of the lifeways of the sites' prehistoric occupants as possible.

The Airpark East site (7K-C-431) was discontinuously occupied through the Archaic and Woodland I periods (or Middle Archaic, Late/Terminal Archaic, Early Woodland, and Middle Woodland periods), with the most substantial occupations during the Woodland I. Features were few and no floral, faunal, or radiocarbon samples were obtained. An early Woodland I occupation is represented primarily by Piscataway points, while later occupations included Mockley and Hell Island ceramics, the former being sparse and the latter greatly predominating. The lithic assemblage indicates tool resharpening, maintenance, and replacement with little primary reduction and tool manufacture. A large number of steep-retouch end scrapers were found, along with heavy chopping tools. The site is interpreted as a procurement site for plant foodstuffs as defined in current settlement models in central Delaware. However, other activities were conducted too, as evidenced by the lithic tool and debitage assemblage, scrapers, and chopping tools. The site is one of many recent examples indicating that small procurement sites may not have been so specialized as previously thought.

The Airpark West site (7K-C-382) was occupied discontinuously throughout the Archaic and Woodland I periods. An odd lot of Piscataway-like stemmed points were found, as well as other types including Rossville. The latter are likely related to a single vessel of Wolfe Neck Cordmarked found in one of the few features at the site; however, the points and pottery are spatially separated by a considerable distance and no discrete occupation is evident. No other prehistoric ceramics were recovered. The site is interpreted similarly to Airpark East, though far fewer scrapers and chopping tools were recovered.

Regional comparisons indicate that the Airpark sites were part of settlement systems extant during the Wolfe Neck, Carey, and Webb Complexes in the Leipsic and St. Jones River drainages. Statistical analysis of 591 site locations and environmental variables in these watersheds is conducted and several implications for future settlement analysis are offered.

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