

ABSTRACT

This report provides a summary of the Phase III data recovery excavations Rutgers University's Center for Public Archaeology (Rutgers) conducted at the Gabor Prehistoric Site (7NC-D-131B) in New Castle County, Delaware. At the request of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT), URS Corporation (URS) prepared this report from materials provided by Rutgers, including field notes, artifacts, and portions of Rutgers' incomplete report. In brief, data recovery excavations revealed several spatially discrete occupations dating to the Late Archaic, Transitional (or Woodland I), and Late Woodland (or Woodland II) periods. Bare Island and Poplar Island projectile points characterized Late Archaic occupations at the site. Several projectile points scattered across the site area date to the Middle Archaic period, suggesting transient use of the Gabor landscape at that time. Analysis of the distribution of debitage and identifiable projectile points show that several discrete areas are present within the site area, marking locations of short-term occupations that may have been linked to hunting and other extractive tasks. Retooling using locally available jasper was a prominent task at these components. The Late Woodland component, characterized by a small assemblage of Riggins Fabric-Imprinted pottery, may represent a small, seasonal hamlet occupation, perhaps tied to the location of a swidden field. Rutgers encountered no structural features to suggest the presence of a house. The various components identified within the Gabor Site are viewed within an interpretive framework based on the concept of "house societies." Small components or occupations are seen as segments of complete households, domestic units that form an organizing principal for understanding the use of the landscape through time. A house society functions together as a group within a macro-band base camp and segments into smaller units identifiable as micro-band exploitative camps.