

SECTION 2.0 RESEARCH GOALS AND DESIGN

The goals of this Phase I archaeological survey are to determine if documented prehistoric and historic period archaeological resources exist within the APE, to determine the probability for the APE to contain undocumented significant archaeological resources, and to identify the presence or absence of archaeological resources in the APE. Determinations of significance or potential significance are based on the National Register of Historic Places Criteria of historic and/or archaeological significance.

The research design for the Phase I archaeological survey included background research to develop prehistoric and historic contexts, the development of an archaeological sensitivity assessment for the APE, and archaeological fieldwork to survey of portions of the APE determined to possess a high sensitivity for prehistoric and historic archaeological resources. Locations assessed as having a high sensitivity where archaeological survey was needed were identified in consultation with DelDOT archaeologist David Clarke. These locations constitute the Phase I testing areas as depicted on Figures 1.3a-g.

Background research tasks included research on recorded archaeological sites, a review of cultural resource management reports, and the development of site-specific prehistoric and historic contexts to aid in the identification and interpretation of archaeological sites. Archaeological site records maintained by the DESHPO and archaeological survey reports on file at DelDOT and the DESHPO were reviewed. The goal of this research was to document the distribution of known sites within the APE, if any, and within one mile of the APE. This information aided in the assessment of the likelihood of encountering prehistoric resources and determining the site types that could be expected within the APE. This research also helped to reveal patterns of historic land use and to assess the potential of the APE for historic sites not depicted on nineteenth century maps and atlases.

Archaeological fieldwork included a site reconnaissance to evaluate existing conditions within the APE and subsurface archaeological testing in archaeologically sensitive locations within the APE to identify whether potentially significant archaeological resources are present. Unless avoidance is possible, the presence of a Native American or historic period site requires a subsequent survey to evaluate the significance or importance of the identified site. Typically, an archaeological site must have the potential to yield important new information in history or prehistory to be considered significant (National Register of Historic Places Criterion D).

