

ABSTRACT

A Phase I archaeological survey was conducted in April and May 2005 for a proposed wetland mitigation area. The wetland mitigation area is associated with the Bridge 918 on State Route (S.R.) 30 at Reynolds Pond Improvement project in Broadkiln Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware, for the State of Delaware Department of Transportation. The Area of Potential Effects (APE) was defined as the area of pond and dike construction plus a 6.1 m (20.0 ft) buffer to allow ingress-egress. The 1.07 ha (2.65 ac) APE was examined through plowing, controlled surface collection, and the excavation of 21 1.0 x 1.0 m (3.3 x 3.3 ft) test units.

A single pre-contact site was discovered in the APE. Site 7S-C-97 contained pre-contact ceramics and lithic artifacts from minimally the Early Woodland and Middle Woodland periods. The pre-contact material was limited to the Ap horizon (plowzone) and the upper 20.0 cm (7.9 in) of the underlying BA or E horizons. There was no evidence of cultural stratification within the BA or E horizons, and no pre-contact cultural features were discovered. The vast majority of the sherds and lithic artifacts were recovered from two clusters. There remains a strong potential for cultural features in the two clusters, and Phase II work to determine significance and potential eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places is recommended. Specifically, the hand excavation of an additional 27 1.0 x 1.0 m (3.3 x 3.3 ft) units and machine-assisted scraping of 213.0 m² (2,292.8 ft²) is recommended.

In addition to the proposed wetland mitigation area, the Bridge 918 project will also include impact to an 18.3 m (60.0 ft) by 45.7 m (150.0 ft) area centered on the existing bridge. The area will be impacted by the proposed removal of the existing bridge and a remnant mill flume, by the installation of a new coffer dam and flume, and by the replacement of the bridge. These mill remains are part of a sequence of two or more mill phases historically referred to as Reynolds Mill, Ponder Mill, and Jensen Mill. The archival, cartographic, and oral history research demonstrate that earlier mill remains are likely present beneath the existing flume, and four weeks of excavation are proposed once the coffer dam has been emplaced.

This report contains the methods and results of the Phase I survey of the wetland mitigation APE. The results of the excavations within the bridge replacement APE will be presented in a separate report.