

## **Fieldwork:**

Portions of the project area will be examined for cultural resources prior to construction. This search for evidence of the past will be done by a team of professional archaeologists and architectural historians acting as DelDOT's consultants. The archaeological testing will involve mechanical and manual excavation. If archaeological sites are identified within the project area, additional testing may be necessary.



DelDOT's consultant will also be conducting detailed background and archival research on the history of the project area, including interviewing local informants familiar with the area.

*DelDOT is encouraging long-time residents, landowners, and others to help identify and interpret any archaeological remains that are uncovered and to share information, photographs, artifacts or any other remnant of the past activities in the area. We look forward to working with you to make this project a success.*

# **The Wooddale Bridge Replacement Project**

## **Cultural Resources Survey**

For more information or to contribute information about the Wooddale Bridge Replacement Project, please contact:

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**Delaware Department of  
Transportation**



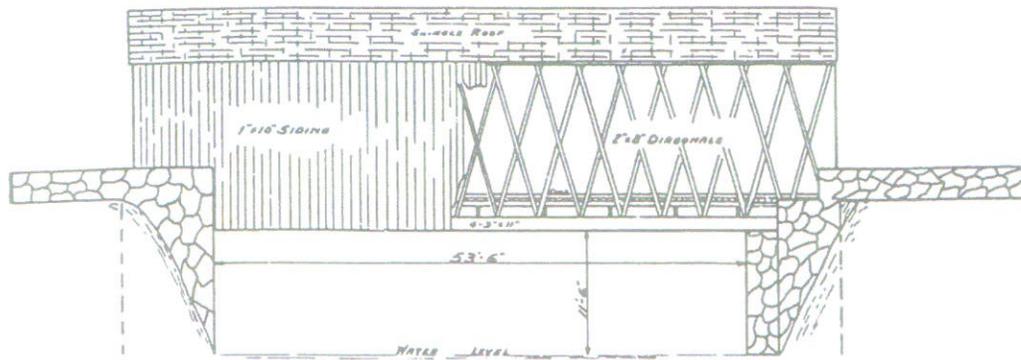
DeIDOT is planning to replace the Wooddale Covered Bridge over Red Clay Creek, which washed away in 2003. The project includes replacement of the bridge and stabilization of the banks of the creek. The new bridge, a replica of the original covered bridge, will site slightly higher to help limit flooding. The road will also be shifted slightly to improve driving safety conditions.

As part of the project, DeIDOT is required by federal law to conduct a survey of historic buildings and archaeological sites in the project area, prior to the start of construction. The goal of the survey is to identify and document potentially important cultural resources that may be affected by the bridge replacement project.



### **History of the Bridge:**

The Wooddale Covered Bridge was built around 1850 and provided access to the nearby Iron Works and community of Wooddale. The bridge was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was a contributing element to the Wooddale Historic District. The historic district includes workers' housing, an owner's house, and the archaeological remains of the former iron works. Another historic resource in the project area includes the Wilmington and Western Railroad Historic District, which extends through the project area northwest of the bridge.



*These plans, prepared in 1939 by the Delaware State Highway Department, are the earliest known drawing of the Wooddale Covered Bridge.*

### **Project Area History:**

The Wooddale Covered Bridge was associated with the industrial past of Red Clay Creek. The first iron works on this location were opened in 1814 by Edward Gilpin, who operated a slitting mill and a rolling mill powered by water from the creek. The Wood family leased the rolling mill in 1826 and specialized in production of spades and shovels used for the construction of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. Alan Wood bought the property. In 1844, the mill changed hands and evolved into the Delaware Iron Works. A railroad siding from the Wilmington and Western Railroad built in 1875 improved transportation. The mill produced 400 tons of sheet iron a year at its height. In 1873, mill operations were hit hard by the depression and operation declined. The rolling mill was converted it to a paper mill in 1891.