

APPENDIX III
PUBLIC INFORMATION HANDOUT



STATE OF DELAWARE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
P.O. Box 778
DOVER, DELAWARE 19903

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CULTURAL RESOURCES PROJECT
OLD BALTIMORE PIKE FROM DE ROUTE 273 (CHRISTIANA BY-PASS)
TO DE ROUTE 896 (FOUR SEASONS PARKWAY)

A prehistoric and historic cultural resources survey is being conducted by the Delaware Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, and the Federal Highway Administration, in conjunction with the University of Delaware, Center for Archaeological Research. The cultural resources survey is necessitated by the proposed upgrading of Old Baltimore Pike from Delaware Route 273 (Christiana Bypass) to Delaware Route 896, a total distance of about 6 miles.

The history of the study area includes both old and important prehistoric and historic settlement locations in the Coastal Plain of New Castle County. Archaeological remains present an opportunity to investigate the lifeways of prehistoric peoples. The earliest known prehistoric peoples in Delaware lived during the Paleo-Indian Period, from about 12,000 B.C. - 6,500 B.C. This period overlapped and immediately followed the last glaciation of North America. These people probably led a nomadic existence, collecting foods and hunting now extinct large game animals. The Archaic Period (6,500 B.C. - 3000 B.C.) saw the establishment of oak and hemlock forests over the landscape, with the people adapting to present-day plant and animal forms. The settlement pattern for this period consisted of large base camps and outlying hunting sites. The Woodland I Period (3000 B.C. - A.D. 1000) saw a flourishing of tool types and an increase in the number of large sedentary base camps located near water sources such as the present-day Christiana Creek, Latham's Run, and Barratt's Run. Wild plant foods were intensively harvested and this may have led to the beginnings of agriculture in this region. In addition to woven baskets, stone and ceramic containers were used for cooking and storage. The Woodland II Period (A.D. 1000 - A.D. 1650) saw an increase on plant food reliance and shellfish utilization. The Contact Period (1650 - 1750) is the time when European settlers (Dutch, Swedes, and English) entered the region.

The road that today is known as the Old Baltimore Pike is located in an area of early settlement in northern Delaware, and the potential for the discovery of historic sites in the project area is great. The Old Baltimore Pike was established early in the history of New Castle County, probably before 1720. It was known variously as the Great Road from the Head of Elk (Elkton) to Christiana Bridge, the Christiana-Elkton Turnpike, and finally as the Old Baltimore Pike. The road served as part of a major transportation route between Philadelphia and Baltimore, and helped connect the shipping village of Christiana Bridge with the agriculturally-rich lands of New Castle County, northern Maryland, and southeastern Pennsylvania. Important milling

centers were located along the road, at Cooch's Bridge and in the vicinity of Christiana, on Smalley's Dam Road.

The portions of White Clay Creek and Pencader hundreds traversed by the Old Baltimore Pike have for nearly two centuries been predominantly agricultural and rural. Only in recent years have residential, industrial, and commercial development changed the local landscape. Because of this recent development, many important historical and archaeological sites are threatened with destruction. It is important that this survey be conducted so that these cultural resources can be investigated before they are gone forever. A principle objective of the historical and archaeological research will be to identify and evaluate any sites that may be affected by the proposed highway construction in terms of their eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

If you have any questions or request further information, please contact Kevin Cunningham, DelDOT archaeologist, at 736-4644.