

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Project Background and Scope-of-Work

The following report describes a series of archaeological studies carried out along and immediately adjacent to the project corridor for the Puncheon Run Connector, a proposed two-mile-long segment of new highway that will link State Route 1 with U.S. Route 13 to the southeast of Dover in Kent County, Delaware (Figure 1.1). This work involved Phase I-level survey of the entire project corridor, follow-up Phase II-level investigation of two prehistoric sites (the Puncheon Run Site [7K-C-51] and the Hickory Bluff Prehistoric Site [7K-C-411]) and two historic sites (the Dawson House Site [7K-C-413] and the Nixon Mill Site [7K-C-414]), and Phase III-level data recovery and monitoring at the Hickory Bluff Prehistoric Site in mitigation of the effects of the construction of a drainage swale. These studies were performed as specific investigative tasks under an open-ended agreement (Parent Agreement #728) between Hunter Research, Inc. and the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT).

The planned highway runs in a generally west-east direction and will span the St. Jones River, one of the principal drainages flowing into the west side of the Delaware Bay between Wilmington and Lewes. Beginning at the western end of the corridor at the intersection of Webbs Lane and U.S. Route 13 (Figure 1.2), the Puncheon Run Connector will veer northeast away from U.S. Route 13, crossing State Street and Puncheon Run just downstream from the present State Street crossing of this drainage. The alignment for the new highway then passes through an area of cultivated fields lying to the south and east of U.S. Route 13 and crosses the St. Jones River just upstream of its confluence with Puncheon Run. East of the St. Jones River, the corridor passes through secondary woodland and meadow before crossing U.S. Route 113, entering another patch of secondary woodland (since cleared) and intersecting with the recently constructed State Route 1. In addition to containing the full width of the proposed traveled way and right-of-way for the highway, the project corridor also included land set aside for drainage improvements and stormwater retention ponds. For study purposes and ease of reference the project corridor was divided into five sections designated A through E, extending from west to east. A more detailed physical description of the highway corridor is given below in Chapters 3 and 6.

These studies were conducted in accordance with the instructions and intents of various applicable Federal and State legislation and guidelines governing the evaluation of project impacts on archaeological resources, notably: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended; Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966; Section 101(b)(4) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969; Section 1(3) and 2(b) of Executive Order 11593; the regulations and guidelines for determining cultural resource significance and eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places (36 CFR 60 and 63); the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation (36 CFR 61); the regulations and guidelines specifying the methods, standards and reporting requirements for the recovery of scientific, prehistoric, historic and archaeological data (36 CFR 66); the regulations and guidelines for the protection of historic properties (36 CFR 800); the regulations and guidelines developed for the implementation of Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (23 CFR 771); the *Guidelines for Architectural and Archaeological Surveys in Delaware* (Delaware State Historic Preservation Office 1993); and various historic preservation and cultural resource management planning documents developed for the State of Delaware, notably the *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan* (Ames et al. 1989) and supplementary texts addressing prehistoric archaeological resources (Custer 1983) and historical archaeological resources (De Cunzo and Catts 1990; De Cunzo 1992).

Senior Hunter Research personnel who were responsible for undertaking these investigations meet the federal standards for qualified professional archaeologists as specified in 36 CFR 66.3(b)(2) and 36 CFR 61. Unless directed otherwise by the client, all archaeological materials and documentation from this study will be stored at the Hunter Research offices in Trenton, New Jersey until acceptance of the final report by the appropriate review agencies. Ultimately, these materials and data will be dispatched to the Island Field Museum, Delaware or other approved repositories for permanent curation.

No formal work scope was issued for these archaeological services beyond that governing the statewide open-ended cultural resources agreement under to these studies were referenced. Work tasks completed by the consultant included: background and documentary research (consultation of relevant agency maps and files, examination of pertinent primary sources, published secondary sources, historic maps and aerial photographs; and informant interviews); fieldwork, including subsurface testing and limited geomorphological analysis; laboratory and data analysis; and preparation of this report. The study area for this survey was defined as being the project corridor for the Puncheon Run Connector and the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE).

## **B. Criteria of Evaluation**

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic

values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Ordinarily, cemeteries, birthplaces or graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register. However, such properties will qualify if they are integral parts of districts that do meet the criteria or if they fall within the following categories:

A. a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance; or

B. a building or structure removed from its original location but which is significant primarily for architectural value, or which is the surviving structure most importantly associated with a historic person or event; or

C. a birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance if there is no other appropriate site or building directly associated with his productive life; or

D. a cemetery which derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events; or

E. a reconstructed building when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other building or structure with the same association has survived; or

F. a property primarily commemorative in intent of design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own historic significance; or

G. a property achieving significance within the past 50 years if it is of exceptional importance.

### **C. Definition of Terms**

The following definitions are from the Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places 36 CFR 63 (Federal Register, Vol. 42, No. 183, Wed. Sept. 21, 1977, pp. 47666-67):

1. A "district" is a geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration, linkage or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects which are united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district may also be comprised of individual elements which are separated geographically but are linked by associations or history.
2. A "site" is the location of a significant event, or prehistoric or historic occupation or activity or a building or structure whether standing, ruined, or vanished where the location itself maintains historical or archaeological value regardless of the value of any existing structures.
3. A "building" is a structure created to shelter any form of human activity such as a house, barn, church, hotel or similar structure. "Buildings" may refer to a historically related complex, such as a courthouse and jail or a house and barn.
4. A "structure" is a work made up of interdependent and interrelated parts in a definite pattern or organization. Constructed by man, it is often an engineering project large in scale.
5. An "object" is a material thing of functional, aesthetic, cultural, historical, or scientific value that may be, by nature or design, movable yet related to a specific setting or environment.