

5.0 SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A complete Phase I archaeological survey, including background research, geomorphology, and field investigations, has been completed for DelDOT's proposed S.R. 24 Improvements, S.R. 1 to Love Creek and Holly Lake Road to Oak Orchard Road project located in Rehoboth and Indian River hundreds, Sussex County, Delaware. The goal of Phase I archaeological survey is to visually inspect all undisturbed portions of the project area for evidence of cultural resources and to record any newly identified resources. In addition, documentation of disturbances to the project area is also accomplished. The survey results include descriptions of the newly identified resources, and recommendations for further testing of those resources.

The archaeological APE consists of two discrete segments of roadway corridor and stormwater management areas. Background and geomorphological research identified 29 areas within the archaeological APE that retain intact soils of appropriate age to contain pre-contact archaeological resources, and also have potential for historic archaeological resources based on review of historic documentation. The geomorphological reconnaissance provided the appropriate information for the Principal Investigator to make decisions regarding the appropriateness of testing or not testing in any given portion of the archaeological APE. Each designated test area was then surveyed *via* pedestrian reconnaissance and/or hand excavated STPs, totaling 730 for the entire project. The combination of pedestrian reconnaissance and hand-excavation was utilized because it has been proven effective in identifying both prehistoric and historic period resources of all types, is time and cost effective especially in spatially constricted test areas, and is less intrusive/disruptive for the private landowners on whose property the survey takes place. Based on the disturbances recorded for the archaeological APE, and the resources identified during the survey, the survey methods appear to have been appropriately scaled to the anticipated S.R. 24 Improvements project impacts.

The S.R. 24 Improvements Phase I archaeological survey yielded 11 fragmentary historic period ceramic, brick, and metal artifacts. With the exception of a nail, the artifacts are not functionally diagnostic due to their small size and incomplete form. None of the artifacts is temporally diagnostic due to their lengthy manufacturing and use periods. All except one of the artifacts were recovered from the upper levels of the plowzone, indicating that they could be modern and/or from mixed stratigraphic contexts. None of the artifacts is associated with any historic standing structures, sites of former structures, or historic period cultural features. The artifacts are indicative of general residential/domestic and agricultural/rural land use and/or modern

litter and do not contribute significant information about the specific land use history within the archaeological APE.

No previously recorded pre-contact or historic period archaeological sites or NRHP-listed or -eligible archaeological sites are present within the S.R. 24 Improvements archaeological APE; only a few isolated, non-diagnostic historic period artifacts were recovered during the Phase I archaeological survey; and no cultural features of any type were identified. Based on the lack of previously identified archaeological remains in the archaeological APE, the presence of only non-diagnostic historic period artifact isolates, and the disturbed/developed nature and constricted size of the archaeological APE, the proposed S.R. 24 Improvements project, as currently designed, will not affect any significant pre-contact or historic period archaeological resources, and no additional archaeological investigations are warranted.