

5.0 RESEARCH APPROACH

The general purpose of a Phase I cultural resource survey is to locate and identify existing cultural resources within a landscape. According to the *Guidelines for Architectural and Archaeological Surveys in Delaware*, Phase I survey “includes a detailed, systematic field inspection, in which the surveyor locates and records all cultural resources in a project area, or conducts archaeological testing in conformance with a valid site predictive model” (DeSHPO 1993:9). In the present instance, the types of resources expected could be predicted based on settlement pattern models generated for the region. These models follow work initiated by Custer (1986, 1989), using temporally based study units to determine the potential for specific site types.

5.1 PREHISTORIC RESOURCES

The DeSHPO has sponsored preparation of a series of Management Plans that establish both the framework for the state’s cultural resources and the criteria by which to determine the significance of those resources. These Management Plans provided a framework for predictions about the potential for cultural resources within Bridge 2-210A project area. Information concerning historical contexts and property types was extracted from the *Delaware Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan* (Ames et al. 1989), *A Management Plan for Delaware’s Prehistoric Cultural Resources* (Custer 1986), *A Management Plan for the Prehistoric Archaeological Resources of Northern Delaware* (Custer and DeSantis 1986), and *Management Plan for Delaware’s Historical Archaeological Resources* (DeCunzo and Catts 1990).

Bridge 2-210A is situated in the Northern Sub-Unit of the Interior Management Unit, as defined by Custer (1986). Compared to other geographic areas in Delaware, the Interior Management Unit is considered to exhibit low probability for producing significant data from prehistoric sites. The probability for the discovery of significant sites is considered low for all chronological periods, with the exception of hunting sites (Paleo-Indian) and procurement sites (all periods), for which the probability is listed as low-to-medium. The quality of existing data for the unit is considered to be poor.

Generalized settlement pattern models suggest that several physiographic features are consistently associated with prehistoric site occurrence in most regions of the Middle Atlantic. Areas of high site probability typically combine attributes including distance to a perennial water source (150-250 meters), slopes of 10-15 percent or less, and good soil drainage (Gardner 1978; Thomas 1980; Kavanagh 1981). Secondary attributes may include areas in which floral and faunal habitats overlap, proximity to marshes or wetland areas, and proximity to lithic material of sufficient quality for stone tool manufacture (Thomas et al. 1975; Custer et al. 1983).

Based on these criteria, the Bridge 2-210A survey area appeared to exhibit medium-to-high potential for evidence of prehistoric activity. While located in an upland zone, away from high-order streams, the study area comprises a well-drained terrace overlooking extensive wetlands to the east, north, and west. Following the general model developed for the Interior

Management Unit, site potential was greatest for the discovery of small procurement stations, which would likely be associated with larger base camps on major watercourses downstream. Given the number of Early and Middle Woodland ceramic-bearing sites that have been documented in the immediate area, the potential appeared to be greatest for similar Woodland period sites, particularly related to the Early Woodland Wolfe Neck Complex. Given the type of site expected, survey strategies were designed to locate small, procurement-type sites through systematic, subsurface testing.

5.2 HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Historical contexts in Delaware are also organized by geographical region. The Bridge 2-210A project area is situated in Lower Peninsula zone, as defined in DeCunzo and Catts (1990). Themes that have been developed to aide in the interpretation and evaluation of historic properties in Delaware include: Economy, Manufacturing and Trade, Landscape, and Social Group Identity, Behavior and Interaction.

The region in which the Bridge 2-210A project area is located is rural. Most of the research questions that might be approached by archaeological data from the project area would focus on agricultural and transportation issues. The Manufacturing and Trade theme would appear to be the most applicable for the area. While no historical structures other than Bridge 2-210A itself have been documented in the project area, artifacts related to sites or locations outside the area might be present. Bridge 2-210A comprised a significant stream crossing on a north-south transportation route. Mills, such as *Choptank Mill*, operated in the area, and raw materials and agricultural products would have been transported on the road. Evidence may be present in secondary contexts related to agricultural or rural industrial activities in the immediate area.