

**BALTIMORE HUNDRED, SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE
S.R. 54 IMPROVEMENTS
SOUND CHURCH ROAD TO KEENWICK ROAD**

PHASE I ARCHAEOLOGY

Prepared for:

**THE STATE OF DELAWARE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

Submitted by:

**SKELLY and LOY, Inc.
Engineers-Consultants
Monroeville/Harrisburg, PA**

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ABSTRACT

Phase I archaeological investigations have been completed for the State of Delaware Department of Transportation's (DelDOT) proposed State Route (S.R.) 54 Improvements, Sound Church Road to Keenwick Road project located in Baltimore Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware. The project Area of Potential Effect (APE) is located on the Assawoman Bay, Maryland-Delaware 7.5 minute United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic quadrangle, in the Eastern Shore Coastal Plain physiographic province.

The archaeological survey area consists of a 25.9 m (85.0 ft) wide corridor centered on the centerline of existing S.R. 54 from the intersection of S.R. 54 with Sound Church Road east to the intersection of S.R. 54 with Keenwick Road and the proposed Zion Church Road realignment area. The total length of the corridor is approximately 3,048.0 m (10,000.0 ft). Originally during the geomorphological reconnaissance, 17 potential test areas (A through Q) were delineated within the project APE. However, by the time of the actual archaeological survey, four of these areas (F, K, L, M) had been extensively disturbed by continued development along the roadway and were not tested. In addition, after review of a draft cultural resources report (Otter 2000) completed for the Americana Bayside development, it was determined that all or parts of Test Areas A, B, G, H, P, and Q had been previously surveyed. Eleven of the original 17 test areas (A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I, J, N, O, Q) were surveyed for archaeological resources, *via* 96 hand-excavated shovel test pits (STPs).

Historic period artifacts were identified in only one STP in Test Area N. None of the other test areas yielded any prehistoric or historic period archaeological resources. Test Area N yielded six small whiteware sherds. The sherds are plain, without decoration or maker's marks, but do exhibit crazing. These sherds are most likely from the same plate and are not temporally diagnostic due to the lengthy manufacturing and use periods associated with whiteware. These ceramic artifacts are most likely the result of a single discard activity, indicative of the general residential/domestic rural land use of the project area. These sherds do not contribute significant information about the specific land-use history within the project APE; therefore, no additional archaeological research at Test Area N is recommended.

No previously recorded prehistoric or historic period archaeological sites or National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-listed properties are present within the S.R. 54 Improvements project APE. Four historic properties that have been recommended eligible for listing in the NRHP are within the project APE. Only six historic period artifacts were recovered during the Phase I survey. Based on the lack of previously or newly recorded archaeological sites present in the project APE, the proposed roadway improvements, as currently designed, will not affect any significant archaeological resources, and no additional archaeological investigations are warranted.

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Prepared by:

**Barbara J. Gundy, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator**

and

Margaret G. Sams, C.P.S.S.

Prepared for:

**The State of Delaware
Department of Transportation**

Submitted by:

**SKELLY and LOY, Inc.
Engineers-Consultants**

**2500 Eldo Road, Suite 2
Monroeville, PA 15146
(412) 856-1676**

**2601 North Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110
(717) 232-0593**

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