I

INTRODUCTION

The Cultural Resource Group of Louis Berger & Associates, Inc. (LBA), has conducted an archaeological data recovery program for Site 7S-F-68, located in Sussex County, Delaware. This program was sponsored by the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) prior to the dualization of U.S. Route 113 between Georgetown and Milford. The study has been carried out in accordance with the instructions and intents of Section 101(b)(4) of the National Environmental Policy Act; Section 1(3) and 2(b) of Executive Order 11593; Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; 36 CFR 771, as amended; the guidelines developed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation published November 26, 1980; and the amended Procedures for the Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties as set forth in 36 CFR 800. As a recipient of funding from the Federal Highway Administration, DelDOT undertook this investigation to comply with federal cultural resource management policies that require consideration of the effects of construction on significant historic or prehistoric resources. DelDOT's commitment to undertake this program was formalized in a Memorandum of Agreement involving DelDOT, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Officer, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The proposed dualization of U.S. Route 113, also known as the Du Pont Highway, will involve new construction from a point just south of Milford, near Herring Branch of Mispillion Creek, to just north of Georgetown, near Route 18. North of Milford, U.S. Route 113 diverges from Route 1 and runs parallel to, and midway between, Routes 1 and 13 through Sussex County. Between Milford and Georgetown, the existing alignment passes near the towns of Lincoln, Ellendale, and Redden. The dualization will provide two additional 12-foot lanes, 10-foot shoulders, and a median area. The existing right-of-way averages 200 feet throughout the corridor, and for the most part this is sufficiently wide to permit the new construction without the taking of additional right-of-way. Plate 2 illustrates the site location near Redden.

The archaeological data recovery program described herein follows two earlier survey and site evaluation studies. Site 7S-F-68 was initially identified during a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Route 113 corridor between Milford and Georgetown (LeeDecker et al. 1989). The site was identified on a small knoll which extends westward outside of the highway right-of-way and to the north where it has been disturbed by construction of an automobile repair shop. Following completion of Phase II testing in 1991, the site was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (LeeDecker et al. 1992). Because the site will be destroyed by the planned dualization of Route 113, DelDOT sponsored a program for mitigation of adverse effects through archaeological data recovery.

This report is organized into nine chapters. Chapter II outlines the prehistoric context and includes a summary of the previous work at Site 7S-F-68 and an overview of regional prehistory. Chapter III, which describes the site's environmental setting, presents the results of a geomorphological and soils study of the site. The project research design, in Chapter IV, includes a discussion of the principal research issues and their relationship to the Delaware State Plan for Management of Archaeological Resources. Chapters V, VI, VII, and VIII describe the results of the excavations at Site 7S-F-68, including a discussion of the features (Chapter V), a discussion of site formation processes and cultural components (Chapter VI), the artifact analyses (Chapter VII), and the floral and faunal analyses (Chapter VIII). The concluding chapter summarizes the results of the study according to the principal research topics and relates the findings to regional prehistory and issues identified in the State Plan for Management of Archaeological Resources.

Fieldwork for the data recovery program was carried out over a six-week period from April 20 to May 1, 1992. The excavations were completed by a field team that included, at times, as many as 14 persons. The excavation strategy consisted of three principal components: (1) excavation of block areas centered on productive areas of the site identified during the Phase II fieldwork (2) exploratory excavations to provide a better spatial sample of the site area, and (3) expansion of block areas to recover significant features and deposits expected to be identified during the exploratory excavations. Altogether, the Phase III excavations involved a total of 46 excavation units, encompassing an area of 173 square meters. The overall sample from the testing and data recovery phases is equivalent to approximately 28 percent of the estimated site area within the right-of-way.

During the Phase III data recovery excavations, five historic human burials were identified unexpectedly. Upon exposure of human remains, a report was filed

with the Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and the human remains were left in place. In November 1992, LBA was authorized to begin excavation of the historic burials. After excavation of the five previously known burials, topsoil and pavement were stripped from adjacent areas to identify additional interments. Four additional human burials and two dog burials were identified, and these features were excavated immediately after exposure. DelDOT authorized preparation of a separate report dealing with the cemetery at Site 7S-F-68 (DelDOT Series No. 134; LeeDecker et al. 1995).

The research findings from this study focus on issues of prehistoric chronology, subsistence, settlement patterns, intrasite patterning, environmental adaptation, and technology. The site-specific chronology indicates that the principal use of the site occurred during the Archaic and Woodland periods, but there is also evidence of Paleoindian use of the site. The initial period of frequent site use occurred during the Early Archaic period, followed by a period of infrequent use during the Middle Archaic. A second period of frequent use of the site occurred during the Late Archaic to Early Woodland periods, followed by sporadic visits during the Middle Woodland. Use of the site during the Late Woodland may have continued almost until the period of European contact.

The site occupies a low, sandy ridge surrounded by extensive swampland, and it appears to have been used on a seasonal basis for procurement of upland game and plant resources. Very little faunal material was preserved at the site, but flotation samples contained evidence indicating use of an important early cultigen--sumpweed or marsh elder *(Iva annua)*--as well as a few other economically important floral resources. A limited variety of features were present within the site, and only one formal cooking/heating area was identified. There were also a number of informal cooking/heating areas, as well as tools and activity areas apparently related to the plant food processing, tool maintenance, and other generalized processing tasks.

The site's prehistoric assemblage includes nearly 6,500 items, including pottery and lithic tools and debitage, all of which have been cataloged in a computer database. Lithic analysis focused primarily on issues of technology, function, style, and raw material selection and procurement. An extensive program of residue analysis was also undertaken. Located in the Mid-Peninsular Drainage Divide zone, the site and surrounding catchment area lacks a direct source for

lithic raw material. Nonetheless, analysis indicated that the groups that visited Site 7S-F-68 made extensive use of cobble deposits that were scattered throughout the Delmarva Coastal Plain.

The archaeological collections from the site are currently in storage at LBA's archaeology laboratory in East Orange, New Jersey. The field records, original photographs, and other material related to the site have also been prepared for storage with the collection. The artifact collections and associated materials have been prepared for permanent storage at the Delaware State Museum.