

## 4.0 HISTORIC CONTEXTS AND SITE EXPECTATIONS

---

### 4.1 Paleo-Indian / Early Archaic: Late Pleistocene - 6500 BC

Two concentrations of fluted points have been noted in Delaware (Custer 1983; 1984b); one between Newark and Elkton, and another in the poorly-drained Midpeninsular Drainage Divide. The former is located in proximity to high quality lithic raw material outcrops and the latter is located where numerous game-attractive loci (e.g., swamps and bogs) were extant in the Pleistocene/Early Holocene transition. The Everett Site is likely representative of Paleo-Indian period sites in an optimum setting in northwestern Delaware. The site is located within 500 m of the Iron Hill School Quarry site adjacent to a bay/basin feature. A Paleo-Indian fluted point and later Kirk and Palmer notched projectile points were included in the assemblage, along with cutting and scraping tools. The artifacts were made exclusively from the locally obtained materials (Custer et al. 1986b).

For the portion of the Route 13 Relief Route (State Route 1) project area in the Midpeninsular Drainage Divide and the Mid-drainage Zones, Custer et al. (1984) suggested the following settlement preferences. Base camps were most likely in well-drained ridges in areas of maximum habitat overlap. Base camp maintenance stations were likely to be located in game attractive locales (swamps, bay/basins), and hunting sites were likely to be found in game attractive areas away from base camps.

Paleo-Indian sites in the vicinity of the Purple Section 1 APE consist exclusively of isolated fluted point finds, likely representing hunting episodes. The surface cobble concentrations of lithic raw materials in the Purple Section 1 route would not attract large base camps with long-duration stays. Based on Custer's (e.g., Custer et al. 1984) concept of serial use of high quality lithic sources, the small surface cobble clusters of the study area suggest that settlement would be sparse and widely spaced across the landscape. Ridges overlooking optimum hunting areas are lacking. Thus, it is likely that widely scattered Paleo-Indian and early Archaic hunting sites would be expected in the study area.

### 4.2 Archaic (Traditional Middle Archaic): 6500 - 3000 BC

Archaic diagnostic materials in central and southern New Castle County have been limited to sparse subassemblages at multi-component sites dominated by Woodland I components. Such sites include Wrangle Hill (located five miles north of the C&D Canal, Custer et al. 1996a), the Osborne Wetland Site (located three miles north of Smyrna, Bedell et al. 1997), the Snapp Site (located southwest of the St. Georges Bridge over the C&D Canal, Custer and Silber 1994), and the Frederick Lodge Site (located between Smyrna and Pine Tree Corners, Bupp et al. 2003, DelDOT n.d.). These sites yielded one or two projectiles representing Kirk, Bifurcate, and/or Stanley types of the Early and Middle Archaic that were likely associated with low frequencies of debitage. They represent procurement sites at which site utilization were sporadic and brief. These components tend to occur on small streams and adjacent to wetlands.

No Paleo-Indian or Archaic period sites are known from the portion of the preliminary Route 301 APE south of the C&D Canal, although Kellogg (1992) noted ten previously recorded Archaic components on the St. Georges Quadrangle. Thus, sites from these periods have a high research value. Custer's Archaic site typology in the Mid-Atlantic Coastal Plain (e.g., Custer et al. 1984, Custer 1987, 1989) included macro-band base camps, micro-band base camps, and procurement sites. For macro-band base camps, low terraces along major drainages were favored locations of precontact people, especially at lower order confluences. Micro-band base camps are found in upper terraces of major drainages, along lower order tributaries, and at low order stream confluences up to 10 km from major drainages. Procurement sites occur near swampy floodplains of major and minor drainages, alluvial fans associated with swamps, bogs, and near lithic resources. However, in the decades since formation of this model, Archaic components discovered in northern and central Delaware overwhelmingly represent procurement sites. There appears to have been a continuation of the adaptive strategies and concomitant settlement patterns of precontact people from Paleo-Indian, through Early Archaic and Middle Archaic times.

Based on the physiography of the study area, the margins of Scott Run would provide a potential setting for procurement sites. The remainder of the project would likely have a limited to very limited potential for procurement sites and/or ephemeral scatters associated with short durations of use.

#### **4.3 Woodland I: 3000 BC - AD 1000**

Woodland I period components are the most common of the recorded prehistoric occupations both in the general vicinity and in the Purple Section 1 area. The majority of the previously recorded sites in the region had Woodland I components. Woodland I people utilized a broader set of resources than earlier groups and occupied a broader range of settings. Site occupation occurred more often and was of longer duration. A number of major sites with dominant Woodland I components have been excavated in the region in the past two decades. These include the Snapp Site (Custer and Silber 1994) and the Leipsic Site (Custer et al. 1996b), and more recently the Blackbird Site and the Black Diamond Site (Bupp et al. 2003, DelDOT n.d.). These components are dominated by stemmed points of a range of sub-types, which appear after 3000 BC. Broadspears occur dating to 1500-800 BC and often co-occur with steatite vessels. Non-local lithic raw materials become important representing far-flung trade and social relationships among precontact groups. A wide variety of cultural features, including residence structures, storage pits, hearths, and problematic features are typical of the period.

Ceramics appear in the first millennium BC and a series of relatively well-dated ceramic phases occur. During the Barker's Landing Complex (circa 2000-500 BC), precontact people made stemmed and notched points and broadspears, and began to use ceramics. Marcey Creek ceramics represent the earlier part of this complex. The Wolfe Neck and Delmarva Adena complexes occurred from 500 BC – AD 1. The Adena complex was a central Delaware phenomenon marked by elaborate mortuary and exchange patterns, and use of clay tempered ceramics. The Wolfe Neck complex was more generally distributed in the region, lacked the mortuary and exchange patterns of Adena, and was characterized by Wolfe Neck ceramics. Rossville and other stemmed points were common in both. The mortuary practices of the Adena

people suggest an incipient ranked society, with differential access to goods obtained in elaborate exchange networks. During the above time frame a continued concentration on aquatic resources likely prevailed, and various wild seeds, nuts, and roots were likely important. However, people also probably began to cultivate minor crops such as sunflowers and chenopods.

The Carey Complex occurred from AD 1-500 in central Delaware, marked by the use of contracting-stemmed, Fox Creek, and Jacks Reef points and Mockley ceramics. Important socio-ideological shifts occurred during this time, with decreases in signs of social ranking as seen through mortuary practices. The Webb Complex follows, from AD 500 – 1000, when Hell Island ceramics were in use. Some revitalization of Adena like trade networking occurred in parts of Delaware, although other areas witnessed a continuation of Carey Complex-like adaptations.

The characteristics of the Purple Section 1 APE suggest that the area around Scott Run would be a potential setting for Woodland I occupation sites. The remainder of the APE would provide settings more conducive of procurement sites of limited extent. It would be expected that Woodland I sites in the study area would be less extensive than some of the major sites such as Puncheon Run (LeeDecker et al. 2005) and Hickory Bluff (Petraglia et al. (2002) where estuarine brackish/freshwater boundaries provided more concentrated resources.

#### **4.4 Woodland II: AD 1000 - 1600**

For the Mid-drainage Zone, Custer et al. (1984) suggest continuity of Woodland I settlement location typology but lacking mortuary sites. The typology includes macro-band base camps along major streams; micro-band base camps along low order streams; and procurement sites along minor and ephemeral drainages, next to woodland swamps, and on small sand knolls. There is a potential for micro-band base camps near Scott Run and for procurement sites in other portions of the APE. Many of the Woodland II base camps recorded in northern Delaware also have evidence of earlier Woodland I occupations. The continuity in base camp location preferences suggests a continuation of adaptations (Custer and Griffith 1986).

The Lewden Green Site south of Christiana yielded Woodland II Minguannan ceramics, but lacked subsurface features. Large Woodland II habitations occur at the Delaware Park Site (Thomas 1981) and at the nearby Clyde Farm Site (Custer 1982, 1984a; Stewart et al. 1986). Peoples lifeways during the Woodland II period appear to have been similar to those of Woodland I people, despite the development of a horticultural economy (Custer 1984a; Stewart et al. 1986). No large village-type Minguannan settlements are known on the Delmarva Peninsula.

#### **4.5 Contact Period: AD 1590 - 1650**

No Contact Period sites are known from the study area. A possible Contact Period site was identified adjacent to the southern edge of Churchman's Marsh (Custer and Watson 1985). The site is small and only a few European artifacts are included with the aboriginal materials. Contact period sites are possible in the study area, and Woodland II models may be the most applicable.

#### **4.6 Exploration and Frontier Settlement: AD 1630 -1730**

The earliest Euro-American settlement is poorly known. Historical publications have focused on the events associated with Fort Christina and New Castle on the shores of the Delaware River (e.g., Lindstrom 1978; Weslager 1987, 1988). There is little documentation of activities in the interior to the west. Swedish settlement outside of the immediate vicinity of Fort Christina was risky until circa 1670 because of the threat from the Native American populations in the region (Dahlgren and Norman 1988). Settlement may have spread into the study area both from the east and from the west. The boundary between Maryland and Delaware was in dispute until the 1760's (Lunt 1947). Euro-American migration into the area could also have occurred via the Appoquinimink River towards Middletown during the late seventeenth century (Kellogg 1992). Sites from this period would be small and hard to detect. They might exist as minor plowzone scatters of early ceramics (e.g., redware), in some cases mixed with field scatters of nineteenth century materials.

#### **4.7 Intensified and Durable Occupation: AD 1730 - 1770**

This period is better represented in the record. Kellogg (1992) found that forty-three localities from this time period were previously recorded for the larger preliminary Route 301 project area, including archaeological sites and standing structures. The most common site type noted was dwellings, and public buildings such as churches and taverns were also represented. Sites investigated in the region have included the Buck Tavern (Wilkins and Quick 1976), the Whitten Road farm complex (Shaffer et al. 1988), and the historic component (a log cabin) at the Hawthorne Site (Coleman et al. 1984). These site types have the potential to occur in the study area. Research conducted as a part of this study (see Section 6.4) indicated that warrants were being taken out on tracts along the APE in the late seventeenth century and that by the early decades of the eighteenth century, these warrants were being subdivided, and presumably occupied. Based on the rural character of the study area, dwellings and farm buildings are more likely than taverns.

#### **4.8 Transition from Colony to State: AD 1770 - 1830**

Kellogg (1992) tallied over one hundred historic resources dating from this period in the preliminary project area for Route 301. In addition to dwellings, taverns, and stores, numerous saw and grist mills were present by this time. Sites investigated include the earliest component of the Williams Site, a tenant dwelling (Catts and Custer 1990), the Grant Tenancy Site (Taylor et al. 1987), the Dickson I Site, a small store near Christiana (Catts et al. 1989), and the Bennett-Thomas Mill Site, located along Scott Run just to the northeast of the Purple Section 1 alignment (Baublitz et al. 2006; see Section 6.2). The APE thus has the potential to contain mills as well as dwellings. The rural character of the vicinity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries lessens the likelihood of taverns and stores.

#### **4.9 Industrialization and Capitalization: AD 1830 - 1880**

The majority of the previously recorded historic resources within the region at large fall into this time period. This is largely due to the availability of detailed atlases. In Kellogg's (1992)

tabulation of previously recorded sites for the preliminary Route 301 project area, dwellings and dwelling complexes dominated as site types. These were followed by agricultural complexes. Many of the dwellings and dwelling complexes were likely farms and farms with tenant farmers. Based on map and archival research (see Sections 6.3 and 6.4), this pattern pertained within the area crossed by the Purple Section 1 APE.

#### **4.10 Suburbanization: AD 1880 - 1940**

Occupations initiated earlier continued at many locations. Most sites that have been excavated in the larger region have been tenant houses, perhaps because the highway improvements that necessitated the archaeological surveys involved widening of existing roads, and tenant farmhouses are typically located closer to the road than owner-occupied farmhouses (Kellogg 1992). Both tenant and owner-occupied farmhouse sites are likely in the Purple Section 1 APE.