

# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

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### A. SUMMARY

This document details the results of fieldwork and data analysis from the Phase IB archaeological survey of 11 locations along Section 1 (Purple) of U.S. Route 301, St. Georges Hundred, New Castle County, Delaware (Figures 1.1 and 3.1). A supplementary investigation was also undertaken in a previously inaccessible part of Section 2 (Area 17). The work has been performed under Task Order 12 of DelDOT Agreement 1415.

The primary task accomplished under this Task Order has been surface collection and subsurface testing within one area on Section 2 and nine proposed borrow areas and two locations on the road alignment on Section 1. The latter areas were identified in the Phase IA report (Archaeological and Historical Consultants, Inc. 2009), and the remainder in subsequent discussions with Delaware Department of Transportation, as likely to contain potentially significant archaeological cultural resources. Notice to proceed was issued on February 25, 2010, and the fieldwork was performed between March 16 and June 22, 2010. Prior to the investigation reported on here, a total of 29 survey segments along Section 1 had been surveyed at the Phase IB level by Archaeological and Historical Consultants, Inc. (2010), based on a prior general historical and archaeological sensitivity assessment (Archaeological and Historical Consultants, Inc. 2009). The results and conclusions from the Archaeological and Historical Consultants, Inc. (A&HC) surveys are incorporated into this summary as appropriate.

### B. REGULATORY BACKGROUND

As a federally funded and supervised undertaking, the U.S. Route 301 project is required to comply with a range of statutes, Executive Orders and guiding regulations. In November 2007 a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was signed by the Federal Highway Administration, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Officer, the Maryland State Historic Preservation Officer and the Delaware Department of Transportation. This MOA, prepared pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended) and to 36 CFR 800, sets out the procedures to be followed for historic properties (Federal Highway Administration 2008, Attachment D). This document forms part of the compliance process under the MOA.

### C. GEOGRAPHIC SETTING

The roughly 5 miles (8.5 kilometers) of the Section 1 alignment lie in the Inland Plain of the Coastal Plain Province. The underlying geology is primarily composed of the early to mid-Pleistocene Columbia Formation, composed of braided stream deposits whose potential cultural significance lies in their inclusion of gravel bars containing cobbles and pebbles of value for the production of lithic tools by prehistoric populations. Section 1 crosses a gently undulating plateau, generally between 40 and 75 feet above sea level, forming the mid-peninsular drainage divide between the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays. Soils are predominantly of the well-drained Matapeake-Sassafras Association (Matapeake, Mattapex, Sassafras and Woodstown types), with poorly drained Johnston Loams in the valley bottoms. There are five

stream crossings on this section as well as numerous small headwater drainages and swales, all draining to the Delaware River (see Archaeological and Historical Consultants, Inc. 2009:5-6 for additional detail, and Hunter Research, Inc. 2009 for adjacent areas).

The archaeological Area of Potential Effects (APE) of the main alignment of Section 1 is estimated to cover 262 acres/106 hectares (Archaeological and Historical Consultants, Inc. 2009:4). Under the current task order a total of 110 acres (44.5 hectares) were examined: 19 acres on the main alignment and the additional 91 acres in proposed borrow areas adjacent to the alignment. The 2010 landscape remains one of open farmland. Areas of woodland are present, chiefly in the stream valleys.