

## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

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This summary of archaeological data recovery operations at the Delaware Park Site outlines the purpose of the project, the nature of the investigations, the problems encountered during the research project, the results of the investigations and the general significance of the project results. It also briefly summarizes recommendations further detailed in the project report.

### Project Location

The Delaware Park Site is located just west of State Route 7 a short distance south of Stanton, New Castle County, Delaware. The site, 7NC-E-41, is situated on a knoll overlooking the confluence of the White Clay and the Mill Creek, approximately two miles upstream from their confluence with the Christina River. The site is located partially within the right-of-way of a proposed Route 7 relocation project and will be directly impacted by a high level bridge which will carry traffic over the main line of the Amtrak Northeast Railroad Corridor.

### Project Objectives

The primary purpose of the data recovery operations was to recover information about the prehistoric inhabitants of the immediate area prior to their destruction planned road construction. The nature of the information to be sought relates to the economic activities engaged in by the prehistoric occupants of the Delaware Park Site. These include information about the resource procurement activities; what types of nourishment did the people depend upon for substance, when and how did they procure and process their food resources, what was the technology used in these pursuits and how did they structure their settlement and lifestyles to assure that their basic nourishment needs were met.

### Scope of Work

The Research Design approved by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for the implementation by the investigators, Mid-Atlantic Archaeological Research, Inc., was supplemented by a "Blueprint for Action", also approved by the project reviewers. DeLeuw, Cather provided personnel, financial and material management services in the performance of the field tasks and subcontractor control. The review function was provided to the Delaware Department of Transportation (Del-DOT), sponsors of the investigations, by the Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, a branch of the State Historic Preservation Office (in Delaware) hosted in the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs.

The scope of work called for the conducting of a controlled surface collection within surveyed grid units. This was followed by the removal of all top soil from the project area by means of earth moving machinery. The earth stripping operations were controlled and carefully watched by a team of

archaeologists provided by the consultants. Upon removal of the top soil, the team carefully "flat shoveled" the entire area while any evidence of prehistoric activity was plotted on a project base map and marked for further investigations. Sub-surface features were then excavated in accordance with a carefully developed plan outlined in the "Blueprint for Action" (see Appendix B). These excavations were monitored by the review agencies during numerous scheduled meetings held at the site.

Following the excavation of all features identified at the site, and the processing of soil samples taken for specialized analyses, laboratory analysis began. The analysis included the careful macroscopic examination of all artifacts, the submission of specimens for radio-carbon dating, the analysis of soil samples for chemical residues, seeds and other organic fragments, pollen and phytoliths. Analysis was then followed by interpretation of the data and the preparation of a project report.

#### Research Limitations

Perhaps the major limitation of the Delaware Park Site research program was the restrictions, necessarily placed by DEL-DOT, on the areas that could be investigated. This was due to the fact that the project ROW did not encompass the entire archaeological site. Minor limitations that were noted included the fact that certain portions of the cultural record, such as food bone debris, were missing; that sufficient numbers of diagnostic projectile points and ceramics were not found within the context of subsurface features; that with a few exceptions no artifacts associated with the actual functions of the subsurface features were found in situ; and that no stratigraphic information to supplement radio-carbon dates was recovered.

#### Recovered Data

Information recovered from the investigations have revealed a considerable amount about the nature of food procurement activities, intra-site structure, technological development and sub-surface "architectural" styles and functions. Artifacts found include such lithic items as projectile points, scrapers, choppers, drills, axes, pounding and grinding implements, and a small ovate pendant. Ceramics were of a variety of types ranging from sherds of Early Woodland to Late Woodland derivation. Seeds recovered during the flotation of feature fill include over seventeen species including raspberry, strawberry, hickory, acorn, and chenopodium, among others. Pollen of local boreal and grass species was found as were phytoliths relating to native plants. The radio-carbon dates received range from 1850 B.C. to A.D. 740.

#### Significance and Recommendations

The importance of the data recovery operation lies in the fact that no other site in the Middle Atlantic area has received such careful treatment and has revealed such a wide variety of information about the cultures that were

responsible for its existence. The information received can be used by other investigators to relate surface and sub-surface data to environment, prehistoric procurement activities, chronology and technological development.

Based on the fact that data of such a variety has been found at the Delaware Park Site intact and in relative abundance, it is strongly recommended that other sites of prehistoric occupants within the northern Delaware and Middle Atlantic areas be subjected to careful data recovery when threatened with impact by modern cultural activity. It is also recommended that whenever possible, sites being threatened and found deserving of mitigation be preserved in place if feasible. This will allow the refinement of methods attempted at the Delaware Park Site and found to be promising methods or procedures for the recovery of data.

A specific recommendation can be made that that portion of the Delaware Park Site which lies adjacent to the State Route 7 right-of-way be carefully protected from further disturbance by construction activities and future erosional factors.