

ABSTRACT

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 project research design focused on issues of prehistoric chronology, subsistence, settlement patterns, intrasite patterning, environmental adaptation, and technology. The principal episodes of site use occurred during the Archaic and Woodland periods, but there is also evidence that Paleoindian groups visited the site. The first period of frequent site use occurred during the Early Archaic period (circa 8000 - 6000 BC), followed by a period of infrequent use during the Middle Archaic (circa 6000 - 3000 BC). The second period of intensive site use occurred during the Late Archaic (circa 3000 - 1000 BC) to Early Woodland (circa 1000 - 500 BC) periods, followed by sporadic visits during the Middle Woodland (circa 500 BC - AD 800). Use of the site during the Late Woodland (circa AD 800 - 1600) may have continued almost until the period of European contact.

The site occupies a low, sandy ridge surrounded by extensive upland wetland areas, and it appears to have been used on a seasonal basis for procurement and processing of upland game and plant resources. Very little faunal material was preserved at the site, but flotation samples contained an important early cultigen -- sumpweed (*Iva annua*) -- as well as a few other economically important floral resources. A limited variety of features was 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 plant food processing, tool maintenance, and generalized processing tasks.

The artifact assemblage consisted primarily of lithic tools and debitage, together with a small amount of pottery. Analysis of the lithic assemblage focused 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 vicinity lacks a source area for lithic raw material; nonetheless, analysis indicated that the groups that visited the site made extensive use of cobble deposits that were scattered throughout the Delmarva Coastal Plain.

The site also contained a small family cemetery used during the late eighteenth century. DelDOT authorized a separate excavation program for the human burials, and the excavation and analysis of the cemetery is presented in a separate report, DelDOT Archaeology Series No. 134 (LeeDecker et al. 1995).