

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE INVESTIGATION

John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) conducted a Phase I archeological survey as part of an environmental assessment associated with proposed I-95 improvements in New Castle County, Delaware. The work was conducted in association with Rummel, Klepper & Kahl, LLP (RKK) on behalf of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (Appendix I). The purpose of the investigation was to identify archeological sites, both historic and prehistoric, that might be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places and affected by the proposed highway construction, or to document the absence of such sites. In addition, the project included a geoarcheological assessment of two possible wetland mitigation areas to determine the presence or absence of deeply buried archeological deposits that might be adversely affected by possible wetland construction.

The proposed I-95 improvements will be funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Therefore, the undertaking is subject to review in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. The investigation was conducted in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation* (National Park Service 1983), as well as guidelines specific to the State of Delaware, including the *Delaware Statewide Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan* (Ames et al. 1987) and the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office's Guidelines for Archeological and Architectural Surveys in Delaware (1993).

### 1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) for archeology reported in this document consists of three spatially separate areas, which may be referred to generally as the western, central, and eastern portions (Figure 1). These three areas correspond to locations of proposed improvements at the existing toll plaza at the Delaware-Maryland state line, improvements at the interchange of I-95 and S.R. 1, and possible wetland replacement areas, respectively.

The western portion extends from the Delaware-Maryland boundary on the west eastward approximately 8,600 feet (1.6 miles) (Figure 2). Because no toll plaza-related highway improvements are expected to incur within the Maryland portion of Interstate 95, the project area terminates at the state line. Within this corridor a new toll plaza will be constructed, and new traffic lanes and shoulders will be introduced. The immediate environs of I-95 in this area include wetlands, open fields, and some residential development.

The central portion encompasses the I-95/S.R. 1 interchange (Figure 3). Within this sizable area existing lanes may be shifted and new ramps, traffic lanes, and shoulders may be introduced. Most of the acreage in this APE has been heavily disturbed by previous construction activities associated with I-95, Route 1, the existing interchange, and the nearby Christiana Mall. Three smaller areas within the APE have been isolated both as possessing moderate to high sensitivity for archeological materials and remaining relatively undisturbed (Figures 3-6).

The eastern portion of the APE includes two areas of proposed wetland mitigation, referred to as wetland mitigation Site 1 and Site 7 (Figure 7). Proposed mitigation Site 1 is located north of I-95 and south and east of the Christiana River. Proposed mitigation Site 7 is located on a point bar

position of a meander north and west of the Christiana River, on the south side of I-95. Site 1 has undergone extensive disturbance and contains considerable construction debris, while Site 7 is less obviously disturbed and is currently meadowland.