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## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION OF THE APPOQUINIMINK NORTH SITE, NEW CASTLE COUNTY, DELAWARE

Archaeological sites are documents that preserve information about the past, just like the paper and parchment documents preserved in archives and museums. If archaeological sites are destroyed without proper excavation, that information is lost forever. In order to prevent such sad losses, the Delaware Department of Transportation, in conjunction with the Cultural Resource Group of Louis Berger & Associates, Inc., has conducted archaeological survey and testing in the proposed path of SR 1 in the Odessa vicinity. During that testing, a number of archaeological sites were located. The sites that are considered to be important records are now being excavated to preserve the information they contain. One of the sites being excavated is the Appoquinimink North Site, 7NC-F-13.

The Appoquinimink North Site is located on a bluff overlooking the north bank of the Appoquinimink River, just west of Odessa. The site was used occasionally by Indians beginning around 3000 BC, but the excavations, will focus on a historic site, a farm dating to the Revolutionary period. At that time the site was part of a 400-acre farm which belonged to some of New Castle County's leading families. Adam Peterson, whose family were some of the original Dutch settlers on the Appoquinimink, owned the property from 1708 until his death in 1763. The property then passed to his wife, Veronica Peterson, and in 1775 she willed it to her grandchild, Letitia McKean Clark. The farm at the Appoquinimink North Site appears to have been established during Letitia Clark's ownership. In 1814 she sold the farm to Robert Cochran, the son of John and Mary Cochran, founders of the important Cochran family of the Middletown-Odessa area. Robert Cochran probably lived at the Appoquinimink North Site until some time around 1830, when he built a new house farther inland at the farm called Spring Valley.

By excavating the Appoquinimink North site the archaeologists hope to learn about the lives of the Clarks, Cochrans, and the other people who lived in Delaware at the time. The foundations and other building remains will tell us about the houses they lived in and the farms they lived on. Bones and other food remains will tell us about their diet. Pottery, glass, and metal artifacts will tell us many things about the way they worked, cooked, ate, entertained and shopped, and personal items such as jewelry, buttons, combs and medicine bottles can help us reconstruct the intimate details of their lives. After the excavation of the site and analysis of the artifacts have been completed, a report will be prepared for DelDOT and the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office, which interested persons can obtain from DelDOT. Any artifacts found will be turned over to the Delaware State Museum. Instead of being lost, the historical record of the Clark/Cochran farm will be preserved, analyzed, and published so that anyone interested, now or in the future, can peruse it for understanding or enjoyment of the past. If you would like additional information concerning the project, please contact Kevin Cunningham, DelDOT archaeologist, at 739-3829, or Dr. John Bedell of Louis Berger & Associates at 202-331-7775.