

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document presents the Historic Context for the DuPont Highway, U.S. Route 113 situated in Kent and Sussex Counties, Delaware. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Delaware Department of Transportation (The Department) have committed to undertaking in-depth study and analysis associated with the planned upgrading of U.S. Route 113 from Milford south to the Maryland state line. Rummel, Klepper & Kahl (RK&K) has been retained by prime consultant Whitman Requardt & Associates (WRA) to prepare all necessary environmental documents for the project, and John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) was retained by RK&K to prepare the cultural resources documentation as part of the environmental documentation process. Tasks associated with this documentation include historic context development, documentation of existing cultural resources within the study areas, identification of potential historic properties, and sensitivity modeling for potential archeological resources.

U.S. Route 113 is a four-lane divided arterial highway that extends from Dover, Delaware to Pocomoke City, Maryland. Within the study area US 113 connects six municipalities (from north to south): Milford, Georgetown, Millsboro, Frankford, Dagsboro, and Selbyville. US 113 is part of the National Highway System designed to carry long-distance traffic safely at relatively high speeds (WRA & RKK 2004). Two distinct project areas are encompassed within the study area; 1) the Milford Study Area, and 2) the Georgetown South Study Area.

The Milford Study Area encompasses approximately 41.94 square miles. The northern limit of the study area is situated in Kent County at the intersection of Milford Neck Road (Road 120) with US 113, and the southern limit is at the intersection of US 113 with Staytonville Road (Road 224). In the Milford area US 113 is a four-lane divided arterial with numerous at-grade intersections. In the incorporated area of Milford US 113 provides access to adjacent residential and commercial uses and serves the larger transportation needs of the larger rural community. The Georgetown South Study Area encompasses approximately 76.99 square miles. The study area begins at Wilson Road (Road 244) north of Georgetown and then extends southward centered on US Route 113 to the Maryland state line. The Study Area includes the communities of Georgetown, Millsboro, Dagsboro, Frankford, and Selbyville. In the study area US 113 is a four-lane divided arterial with numerous at-grade intersections. Current land use patterns within the two study areas are a mix of rural, suburban, and urban. There are residential, commercial, and industrial properties along the major transportation routes. Agricultural lands and uses still predominate, including lumber extraction and poultry production. Some of the land is being converted to suburban development.

The period of the DuPont Highway context extends from 1908 when T. Coleman duPont first proposed the construction of a highway the length of the state to the present. For the U.S. Route 113 North/South Study, The Department consulted with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and determined that properties erected prior to 1963 along the portion of the highway within the two designated study areas—the Milford Area and the Georgetown South Area—will be evaluated for National Register eligibility.