



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18MO372

Site Name: Musser Prehistoric Camp

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Brief Description:

Early Woodland short-term camp

Unknown

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 12

SCS soil & sediment code

Latitude 39.1737

Longitude -77.4558

Physiographic province Eastern Piedmont

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 94 m

Site slope 0

Ethnobotany profile available

Maritime site

Site setting

-Site Setting restricted

-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

Topography

- Floodplain
- Hilltop/bluff
- Interior flat
- Upland flat
- Ridgetop
- Terrace
- Low terrace
- High terrace
- Rockshelter/cave
- Hillslope
- Unknown
- Other

Ownership

- Private
- Federal
- State of MD
- Regional/county/city
- Unknown

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Unnamed tributary of Poto

- | Saltwater | | Freshwater | |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Ocean <input type="checkbox"/> | Estuary/tidal river <input type="checkbox"/> | Stream/river <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Swamp <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tidewater/marsh <input type="checkbox"/> | Lake or pond <input type="checkbox"/> | Spring <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Minimum distance to water is 76 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

- Paleoindian site
- Archaic site
- Early archaic
- Middle archaic
- Late archaic
- Woodland site
- MD Adena
- Early woodland
- Mid. woodland
- Late woodland
- Unknown prehistoric context

- Contact period site
- ca. 1820 - 1860
- ca. 1630 - 1675
- ca. 1675 - 1720
- ca. 1720 - 1780
- ca. 1780 - 1820
- Unknown historic context
- Unknown context
- ca. 1820 - 1860
- ca. 1860 - 1900
- ca. 1900 - 1930
- Post 1930

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

- Native American
- African American
- Anglo-American
- Hispanic
- Asian American
- Unknown
- Other

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

- ### Prehistoric
- Multi-component
 - Village
 - Hamlet
 - Base camp
 - Rockshelter/cave
 - Earthen mound
 - Cairn
 - Burial area
 - Misc. ceremonial
 - Rock art
 - Shell midden
 - STU/lithic scatter
 - Quarry/extraction
 - Fish weir
 - Production area
 - Unknown
 - Other context

- ### Historic
- Urban/Rural?
 - Domestic
 - Homestead
 - Farmstead
 - Mansion
 - Plantation
 - Row/townhome
 - Cellar
 - Privy
 - Industrial
 - Mining-related
 - Quarry-related
 - Mill
 - Black/metalsmith
 - Furnace/forge
 - Other
 - Transportation
 - Canal-related
 - Road/railroad
 - Wharf/landing
 - Maritime-related
 - Bridge
 - Ford
 - Educational
 - Commercial
 - Trading post
 - Store
 - Tavern/inn
 - Military
 - Battlefield
 - Fortification
 - Encampment
 - Townsite
 - Religious
 - Church/mtg house
 - Ch support bldg
 - Burial area
 - Cemetery
 - Sepulchre
 - Isolated burial
 - Bldg or foundation
 - Possible Structure
 - Post-in-ground
 - Frame-built
 - Masonry
 - Other structure
 - Slave related
 - Non-domestic agri
 - Recreational
 - Midden/dump
 - Artifact scatter
 - Spring or well
 - Unknown
 - Other context

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples Soil samples taken N

Flotation samples taken N Other samples taken

Historic context samples Soil samples taken

Flotation samples taken Other samples taken



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types			
Clovis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Koens-Crispin	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Perkiomen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehana	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirk (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vernon	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kirk (stem)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Piscataway	<input type="checkbox"/>
Le Croy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Calvert	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Morrow Mntn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Selby Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilford	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brewerton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Otter Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Madison/Potomac	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Levanna	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Popes Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shepard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dames Qtr	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Townsend	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yeocomico	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selden Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Watson	<input type="checkbox"/>	Minguannan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monongahela	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accokeek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mockley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehannock	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wolfe Neck	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shenks Ferry	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Vinette	<input type="checkbox"/>	Page	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moyaone	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				Potomac Crk	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware				Stoneware	
Astbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staffordshire	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jackfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tin Glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whiteware	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Porcelain	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>		
				English Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Rhenish	<input type="checkbox"/>
				Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts			
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/> 475	Other fired clay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Storage/trash pit	<input type="checkbox"/>
Midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shell midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ossuary	<input type="checkbox"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
House pattern(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Palisade(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hearth(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Lithic reduc area	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Lithic Material

Jasper	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fer quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="checkbox"/>	European flint	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhyolite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ironstone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Basalt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Argilite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quartzite	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Steatite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts			
Pottery (all)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Tobacco related	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass (all)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> 11
Architectural	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faunal material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	<input type="checkbox"/> 14
		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

Historic Features

Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Well/cistern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="checkbox"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Hearth/chimney	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheet midden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Earthworks	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Postholes/molds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Planting feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Road/walkway	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="checkbox"/>		

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 2: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 3: +/- years BP Reliability

Sample 4: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 5: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 6: +/- years BP Reliability

Sample 7: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 8: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 9: +/- years BP Reliability

Additional radiocarbon results available



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Description:

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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at MAC

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

The Musser Prehistoric Camp (18MO372) is an apparent prehistoric camp of Late Archaic to Early Woodland cultural association located on level terrace terrain east of a small stream valley in Montgomery County, Maryland. The site is situated within and adjacent to an existing garden plot on a farm near the community of Poolesville. The Potomac River is located farther to the west of the site. The northern and western limits of the site adjoin disturbed level terrain containing a utilitarian farm building, parking area, and roadways, and it appears likely that a portion of the site extended into that area at one time. Soils at the site are grouped under the Penn-Lewisberry soil association.

The site was first identified during a Phase I survey for the planned Montgomery County Site 2 Landfill. This study was conducted in 1991 as part of the county's transition from a traditional landfill-centered waste disposal system to a waste-to-energy based program. Currently, Montgomery County disposes of their waste by burning it at extremely high temperatures, and then using the heat to generate energy as either electricity or steam. This reduces the volume of the trash by nearly 90% leaving only ash and metals. The metals are then removed via a magnet and recycled reducing waste further. Currently the ash waste is shipped by rail out-of-county for disposal in landfills. However, in 1991, as the county's extant Oaks landfill built in 1982 was nearing the end of its use-life, plans for the disposal of the ash that would be generated in the new plant led to the purchase of a large tract (including Site 18MO372) for the construction of a new landfill. While this landfill has still not been constructed, the Montgomery County governments purchased the needed property for the landfill's eventual construction and currently lease it for tenant farming. All archeological research was conducted in anticipation of state permitting and possible Army Corps of Engineers wetlands permitting that will eventually be required whenever the construction project is realized.

Following its initial discovery, the site was investigated by non-systematic surface search and collection of a sample of the artifacts that were present. A large number of prehistoric artifacts were visible on the ground surface at this site. Approximately 4 to 5 artifacts per square meter were observed. The artifacts sampled included 1 point basal fragment that resembled the "Calvert" type which dates from the Early Woodland, a non-diagnostic side notched point, 2 scrapers, 2 bifaces, 1 unfinished lithic tool, 2 flaked tool fragments, and 26 fragments of debitage. The most common mineral represented was quartz with lesser amounts of quartzite and rhyolite. It was determined that the site likely represented a habitation camp, but sufficient data was not obtained to assess the significance of the site. Phase II testing was recommended at 18MO372 and researchers returned to the site in 1993 to conduct this work.

The Phase II evaluation included intensive fieldwork focusing on this area. First, a systematic surface collection survey was performed using transects spaced at 7.5 meter intervals. Visibility was very good because the garden plot had been recently plowed. The prehistoric cultural material was distributed over an area measuring about 60 meters north-south by 30 meters east-west. This work was followed by shovel test pit (STP) excavations spaced systematically at 7.5 meter intervals, followed by supplementary STPs excavated at locations that contained potentially significant cultural materials. STPs were no less than 30 cm in diameter and were excavated to the depth of natural subsoil by natural/cultural levels. A total of 26 STPs were excavated. The densest concentration of artifacts was found in the central portion of the site over an area measuring 30 meters north-south by 23 meters east-west. Two 2 m X 2 m excavation units were placed in this area. The 2 X 2s were excavated by natural/cultural levels. All soils (both STPs and formal excavations units) were screened through hardware cloth.

Four hundred sixty-one prehistoric lithic artifacts were collected. They consisted predominantly of chipped stone debitage from lithic tool manufacture and maintenance. The most common mineral represented was quartzite (66%), followed by quartz (22.1%) and rhyolite (10.6%). The prehistoric artifacts recovered included a probable Late Archaic point, 6 point fragments, 3 unfinished points, 9 bifaces, 4 preforms, 2 cores, 6 scrapers, 2 utilized flakes, 351 pieces of debitage, 56 pieces of shatter, 6 hammerstones, 1 abrader, 7 quartz crystals, and 7 pieces of fire-cracked rock. The presence of quartz crystals at 18MO372 was unique among the prehistoric sites encountered in the Montgomery County Landfill Site 2 project area. No quartz crystals were recovered from the historic period sites in the area. A suggested explanation for the presence of the crystals is that they represent some sort of ceremonial or ornamental behavior associated with the site's prehistoric occupation.

Thirty-one historic period artifacts were recovered from the site. Most of the materials were predominantly associated with farming activity, as might be expected since the site is on level terrain used for agricultural purposes. None of the historic material is considered interpretively important. Historic artifacts encountered at 18MO372 included 11 activity items (farm implements), 3 architectural objects (1 piece of window glass, 1 piece of hardware, and a drain pipe fragment), 3 kitchen-related items (1 redware sherd, 1 whiteware sherd, 1 gray stoneware sherd), and 14 miscellaneous objects (burnt/charred items).

Site 18MO372 appears to have served as a temporary habitation camp around the Late Archaic to Early Woodland transition period. However, the cultural material it contains may be due to multiple episodes rather than a single occupation. The depositional context and integrity of site 18MO372 has been disturbed by agricultural cultivation and no intact subsurface cultural features were encountered. The research potential for further study at Site 18MO372 is limited and it does not appear to have the potential to provide information of importance to Maryland archeology.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00006233, 00006290