



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18MO633

Site Name: Watts Branch

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Brief Description:

Terminal archaic through Late Woodland short-term camp, possible Contact

Unknown

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 12

SCS soil & sediment code 47A

Latitude 39.0436

Longitude -77.2550

Physiographic province Eastern Piedmont

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation m

Site slope 0-3%

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) Potomac River

Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 0 m

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site

Woodland site

Contact period site P

ca. 1820 - 1860

Archaic site

MD Adena

ca. 1630 - 1675

ca. 1860 - 1900

Early archaic

Early woodland Y

ca. 1675 - 1720

ca. 1900 - 1930

Middle archaic

Mid. woodland P

ca. 1720 - 1780

Post 1930

Late archaic

Late woodland Y

ca. 1780 - 1820

Unknown historic context

Unknown prehistoric context

Unknown context

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

Native American P

Asian American

African American

Unknown Y

Anglo-American

Other

Hispanic

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? Rural

Domestic

- Homestead
- Farmstead
- Mansion
- Plantation
- Row/townhome
- Cellar
- Privy

Industrial

- Mining-related
- Quarry-related
- Mill
- Black/metalsmith
- Furnace/forge
- Other

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 N

Flotation samples taken N

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"/> 1
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"/>
Morrow Mntn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Selby Bay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guilford	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Brewerton	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Otter Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Madison/Potomac	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Levanna	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Popes Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shepard	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Keyser	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
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"/> 5	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"/> 5		
				Potomac Crk	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		

Historic Sherd Types

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

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts			
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/> 268	Other fired clay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Modified faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="checkbox"/> 100	Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fer quartzite	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chert	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Sandstone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Metasedimenta	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts			
Pottery (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tobacco related	<input type="checkbox"/>
Glass (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Activity item(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architectural	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	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"/> 1	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>	Misc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
		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: 130 +/- 30 years BP

Reliability

Sample 2: 950 +/- 30 years BP

Reliability

Sample 3: 4390 +/- 30 years BP

Reliability

Beta 391834. Charcoal recovered within the Ab1 (55-60 centimeters bs) to date soil stratigraphy.

High

Beta 391835. Bulk soil from the lower part of the Ab1 (35-40 centimeters bs) to date soil stratigraphy.

High

Beta 391836. Charcoal sample was recovered from the Btb1 horizon at 125 to 147 cmts to date soil stratigraphy

High

Sample 4: 6660 +/- 30 years BP

Reliability

Sample 5: +/- years BP

Reliability

Sample 6: +/- years BP

Reliability

Beta 391837. Charcoal sample was recovered from the Btb2 horizon to date soil stratigraphy

High

Sample 7: +/- years BP

Reliability

Sample 8: +/- years BP

Reliability

Sample 9: +/- years BP

Reliability

Additional radiocarbon results available



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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Site 18MO633, the Watts Branch site in Montgomery County, MD is a Terminal Archaic through Late Woodland short-term camp which contains a possible Contact period component. The site is located within an area where the National Park Service prepared an Environmental Assessment to evaluate the environmental impacts of proposed construction of a new offshore submerged channel intake for water supply at the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission's (WSSC) Potomac Water Filtration Plant.

Site 18MO633 is located upstream from Great Falls, Maryland, in Maryland Archeological Research Unit 12. 18MO633 is in the Piedmont physiographic province. Site 18MO633 is situated on a T-1 alluvial terrace and consists of a secondary growth forest with an understory of brush. Surface elevations within the 18MO633 site area range from 52 to 54 meters above mean sea level (amsl), while the valley walls rise to 90 to 105 meters amsl to the bluffs overlooking the Potomac River Valley.

In the project vicinity, the Potomac River channel narrows to 5 to 6 kilometers. The narrow channel results from resistant bedrock that rises 18 to 20 meters above an alluvial zone roughly 100 to 120 meters wide in the project vicinity. Watts Branch, a large third-order stream, flows into the Potomac River on the left bank upstream from the site. Despite differences in elevation across floodplain and the terraces, the Soil Conservation Service maps the project vicinity as Lindside silt loam, 0-3 percent slopes, which is occasionally flooded. Lindside soils are Fluvaquent Eutrudepts, deep soils formed on valley bottoms in alluvium washed from areas underlain by limestone. A typical Lindside soil profile comprises an Ap/BA/Bw/BC/C sequence of horizons; thickness of the solum (comprising the Ap through Bw horizons) may vary from 63 to 150 centimeters.

The first archaeological investigations at 18MO633 were conducted in 2005 by John Milner Associates as part of the Phase I survey for the WSSC Potomac River Submerged Intake Tunneling/Trenching project. During this survey, manual excavation of eight STPs, two test units, and three bucket auger cores and mechanical excavation of a trench within the undisturbed portion of the Phase I project area recovered Terminal Archaic and Early and Late Woodland diagnostics from buried surfaces with the potential to contain intact archeological deposits.

The Phase II archeological fieldwork at site 18MO633 consisted of four parts: 1) a pedestrian survey to search for above-ground features; 2) the establishment of a grid; 3) the excavation of TUs to collect a controlled sample of artifacts; and 4) to assess the potential presence of undisturbed contexts and cultural features. After establishment of a site grid, archeologists excavated TUs across the site. TUs were placed in areas of high artifact concentrations or locations believed to have the potential for containing intact features based on the results of pedestrian survey and the Phase I testing. TU excavation collected information on site formation and provided controlled depositional contexts for the artifacts recovered from the site.

Units were excavated in natural levels. Where natural levels exceeded 10 centimeters, arbitrary 5- to 10-centimeter levels were excavated to provide vertical control of the assemblage recovered. All soils excavated from shovel test pits (STPs) and TUs were passed through 1/4 inch hardware mesh cloth. Profile photographs were taken and scaled drawings made of at least one wall from each unit. In addition, all features were photographed, and scale drawings were made in plan view. If archeological features were encountered during the Phase II fieldwork, they were not to be fully exposed or excavated. Features were to be covered and reburied after documentation. Nevertheless, excavators were to attempt to collect samples from features and other archeological deposits for radiocarbon dating.

Six 1-x-1 meter test units, designated TU 1 through TU 6, were excavated during the Phase II fieldwork at Site 18MO633. TU 1 through TU 5, excavated on the T-1 terrace, were located to sample spatial variation across the narrow terrace. TU 6 was excavated on the floodplain a short distance from the T-1 riser.

The excavation of test units and auger probes revealed a generalized profile consisting of an A/CB/Abl/Ab2/Bwbl/Bwb2/Btb/2BAb/2Bbl/2Bt2 sequence to around 225-240 centimeters (7.4-7.9 ft) bs. The soils making up the 45-50 centimeters of poorly defined upper profile (A and CB horizons) in the T-1 terrace are interpreted to be a combination of historic alluvium and slopewash from the proximal edge of the T-2 terrace and unvegetated canal towpath. Based on both a historic age for the upper sediments and the nature of chronologically diagnostic artifacts recovered, the Abl and Ab2 of the T-1 horizons (with a combined thickness of 15-20 centimeters) are of Late Holocene through Contact-Period age. This interpretation is supported by results of radiocarbon dating of charcoal and soil bulk carbon samples. Dating of charcoal recovered within the Ab1 (55-60 centimeters bs) resulted in numerous intercepts with the calibration curve and ages ranging from 280 years B.P. (1950) to post-1950 (Beta 391834). Bulk soil from the lower part of the Abl (35-40 centimeters bs) yielded a calibrated radiocarbon date of 930 to 790 years BP (Beta 391835). The darker color that distinguishes the thin Abl horizon from the Ab2 throughout the site may be related to a higher charcoal content resulting both from more intensive use of the site by Native Americans (as evidenced by higher artifact counts in the Abl versus the Ab2) and burning related to historic land-clearing by Euro-Americans. Both vertical distribution of artifacts and color differentiation of the Abl and Ab2 horizons indicate that the T-1 surface was not plowed prior to deposition of the 45-50 centimeter thick packet of historic sediment.

Based on soil development and the presence of diagnostic Accokeek ceramics (2900-2300 B.P.), the 30- 40 centimeter- thick Bwbl horizon underlying the Abl and Ab2 is of Late Holocene age. The Bwb1 horizon transitioned with depth to a more fine-textured Bwb2 horizon that was also 30-40 centimeters thick. The Bwb2 horizon had a slightly higher clay content than seen in Bwbl. Transition to a Btb horizon generally occurred at around 120-130 centimeters bs. The Btb1, examined mainly in bucket-auger cores, was formed in heavily mottled silty clay loam, firm and resistant to augering. A charcoal sample was recovered from the Btb horizon in an auger probe excavated in the base of TU4. The sample, recovered between 125 and 147 centimeters below the terrace surface, yielded a radiocarbon date of 5045-4865 B.P. (Beta 391836).

The six test units were excavated through three to five distinct soil horizons on site 18MO633. No cultural features were encountered during the excavation TU 1 through TU 6. Phase II archeological testing at site 18MO633 encountered artifacts associated with occupations ranging in age from the Terminal Archaic through the Late Woodland and, perhaps, the early Contact Periods (circa 4500-300 B.P.). Although anomalies exist, the stratigraphy appeared largely intact, with Middle to Late Woodland points and ceramics overlying buried horizons containing Terminal Archaic and Early Woodland artifacts.

Prehistoric artifacts recovered from the site constitute 99.2 percent of the 362 artifacts in the assemblage. The three historic artifacts include a copper alloy knee buckle and fragments of hand-made brick and daub. Eighteen percent of the prehistoric assemblage consists of ceramics (n= 64), the majority small, eroded sherds. Diagnostic ceramics included Accokeek (n= 5), Albemarle (n=4), Keyser (n=1), Shepard (n=1), Potomac Creek (n=4), and Moyoane (n=5). The lithic assemblage consists primarily of debitage (n= 268), which forms 90.8 percent of all lithics. The debitage size distribution skewed toward the lower end, with 224 or 84 percent no larger than 3 centimeters; cortex appeared on 11.9 percent (n= 32) of the assemblage, and no evidence of heat treatment was



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noted. Formal tools, including six bifaces and a core constitute less than two percent of the 295 lithics. Diagnostic projectile points recovered at 18MO633 include one rhyolite Susquehanna Broadspear, one rhyolite Rossville-like point, one chert Jack's Reef point, and two Levanna points (one made of rhyolite and one made of quartz). Excavation also unearthed a hammerstone and 19 FCR fragments.

At site 18MO633 the depositional context resulted in stratigraphically discrete occupations ranging in age from the Terminal Archaic or Early Woodland through the Late Woodland, and possibly, Contact Periods. Stratified multi-component sites are extremely rare in the Middle Atlantic region. Site 18MO633, therefore, preserves information important for understanding the Native American history of the Potomac Valley and the Middle Atlantic Region over millennia. Based on the potential contribution of site 18MO633 to the study of regional social evolution, site 18MO633 was recommended eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion D for its significance at the regional level.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

95002819