



Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18M0719

Site Name: Watts Branch T-2

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Brief Description:

Late Woodland, and possibly Contact-Era, Camp (circa 750-300 B.P.); 19th century canal

Unknown

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 12

SCS soil & sediment code 47A

Latitude 39.0425

Longitude -77.2685

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

Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 90 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site

Woodland site

Archaic site

MD Adena

Early archaic

Early woodland

Middle archaic

Mid. woodland

Late archaic

Late woodland

Contact period site

ca. 1820 - 1860

ca. 1630 - 1675

ca. 1860 - 1900

ca. 1675 - 1720

ca. 1900 - 1930

ca. 1720 - 1780

Post 1930

ca. 1780 - 1820

Unknown historic context

Unknown prehistoric context

Unknown context

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

Native American

Asian American

African American

Unknown

Anglo-American

Other

Hispanic

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Prehistoric

Multi-component

Misc. ceremonial

Village

Rock art

Hamlet

Shell midden

Base camp

STU/lithic scatter

Rockshelter/cave

Quarry/extraction

Earthen mound

Fish weir

Cairn

Production area

Burial 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 Canal

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		Koens-Crispin		0	
Clovis	0	Perkiomen	0		
Hardaway-Dalton	0	Susquehana	0		
Palmer	0	Vernon	0		
Kirk (notch)	0	Piscataway	0		
Kirk (stem)	0	Calvert	0		
Le Croy	0	Selby Bay	0		
Morrow Mntn	0	Jacks Rf (notch)	0		
Guilford	0	Jacks Rf (pent)	0		
Brewerton	0	Madison/Potomac	1		
Otter Creek	0	Levanna	0		

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	0	Popes Creek	0	Shepard	0	Keyser	0
Dames Qtr	0	Coulbourn	0	Townsend	0	Yeocomico	0
Selden Island	0	Watson	0	Minguannan	0	Monongahela	0
Accokeek	0	Mockley	0	Sullivan Cove	0	Susquehannock	0
Wolfe Neck	0	Clemson Island	0	Shenks Ferry	0		
Vinette	0	Page	0	Moyaone	2		
				Potomac Crk	0		

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware		Ironstone	0	Staffordshire	0	Stoneware	
Astbury	0	Jackfield	0	Tin Glazed	0	English Brown	0
Borderware	0	Mn Mottled	0	Whiteware	1	Eng Dry-bodied	0
Buckley	0	North Devon	0	Porcelain	0	Nottingham	0
Creamware	0	Pearlware	0			Rhenish	0
						Wt Salt-glazed	0

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		Other fired clay		0	
Flaked stone	656	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Ground stone	0	Modified faunal	0		
Stone bowls	0	Unmod faunal	0		
Fire-cracked rock	1	Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Other lithics (all)	1	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Ceramics (all)	0	Uncommon Obj.	0		
Rimsherds	0	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	0	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 checked="" 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

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

Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related		0	
Pottery (all)	0	Activity item(s)	1		
Glass (all)	21	Human remain(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Architectural	4	Faunal material	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Furniture	0	Misc. kitchen	1		
Arms	1	Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Clothing	0	Misc.	3		
Personal items	0	Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	fill	

Historic Features

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

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1: 90 +/- 30 years BP Reliability Sample 2: +/- years BP Reliability Sample 3: +/- years BP Reliability

Feature 1 (Beta 391838). The modern date is clearly anomalous, perhaps as a result of mixed organic material at the feature surface.

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

Sample 7: 0 +/- 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 NPS Museum Resource Center, Landover Maryland

Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Site 18MO719, the Watts Branch T-2 site in Montgomery County, MD is a Late Woodland camp site with a possible Contact Period component and a 19th century canal also located at the site. 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 18MO719 is located upstream from Great Falls, Maryland, in Maryland Archeological Research Unit 12. 18MO719 is in the Piedmont physiographic province. Site 18MO719 occupies the T-2 landform, which is a stable surface lying approximately 5 meters above mean low water on the Potomac River.

The 18MO719 project area is located on the medial portion of the terrace, just north of the C&O Canal. Material excavated from the canal prism and not used in towpath construction was cast over to the north side of the prism where it now forms a wooded, irregular surface on the edge of the canal. Excavation at 18MO719 revealed that the backdirt along the north side of the canal is generally 1.0-1.25 meters thick. The T-2 terrace on the north side of the canal is approximately 50-60 meters wide, with the distal edge directly abutting the steep base of the north wall of the terrace overlooking the bottomland along the Potomac River. Visual inspection, bucket augering, and excavation on the T-2 all suggest that extensive disturbance and filling has taken place even outside of the general area of the canal. Much of this disturbance and filling is, in all likelihood, related to construction of the existing WSSC facility. The project area for the Phase II was bounded on the west by a natural gas pipeline corridor and above-ground facility. Large areas of standing water were present in the pipeline corridor, extending into the western end of the project area.

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 Lindsides silt loam, 0-3 percent slopes, which is occasionally flooded. Lindsides soils are Fluvaquentic Eutrudepts, deep soils formed on valley bottoms in alluvium washed from areas underlain by limestone. A typical Lindsides 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 18MO719 were conducted in December of 2013, when Gannett Fleming discovered the site during limited archeological survey near John Milner Associates 2005 Phase I survey area for the WSSC Potomac River Submerged Intake Tunneling/Trenching project. Two STPs were excavated at site 18MO719 during limited Phase I testing in December of 2013. Excavation of the two shovel test pits suggested that two episodes of filling had taken place at the site and that A horizons had developed at the surface of both fill components. The upper fill, generally about 25 cm thick, was a silt loam containing angular and subangular schist gravel and cobbles and had a thin A horizon developed at the surface. The lower fill consisted of very firm, compacted silt loam containing matrix-supported rounded gravel and was likely material removed during excavation of the adjacent C&O canal. A sherd of whiteware was recovered from this fill. An 8 cm thick A horizon (Ab1) was also developed at the surface of the lower fill. A heavily reduced 12 cm thick silt loam Ab2 horizon beneath the fill yielded several pieces of quartz debitage and 1 square nail. The Ab2 horizon also contained a few rounded gravel and cobbles. The Ab2 was underlain by a heavily reduced Bwb horizon 15 cm thick and also containing a few rounded cobbles and gravel, in turn underlain by a Bwb2 horizon consisting of 60-70% rounded gravel and cobbles in a reduced silt loam matrix. Excavation was halted 5-10 cm into the Bwb2 horizon. Water entered at the base of both excavations. Based on the Phase I survey, the lower buried A horizon was believed to be relatively intact and could retain intact archaeological features.

The Phase II archeological fieldwork at site 18MO719 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.

Two STPs and three TUs were excavated by Gannett Fleming on Site 18MO719. Two to seven strata were observed during the excavations. Artifacts recovered during the excavation included a range of historic materials, many recent, as well as prehistoric artifacts including a projectile point and several sherds indicating a Late Woodland date (circa AD. 900-1600) for the assemblage.

The 90 prehistoric artifacts constitute 96.0 percent of the assemblage. The 32 historic artifacts include 21 pieces of glass, five plastic fragments, a .22 caliber shell, barbed wire, an aluminum can, a whiteware sherd, a cut nail, and a spike. Two percent of the prehistoric assemblage consists of ceramics (n=11), the majority of which are small or eroded sherds. The lithic assemblage consists primarily of debitage (n=656), which forms 97 percent of all lithics. Debitage skews toward the lower end of the size distribution, with 573 fragments (87 percent) no larger than 3 centimeters (1.0 in). Cortex, observed on six percent of the debitage (n=41), implies some cobble reduction on site; no thermally altered flakes were identified. Formal tools include two triangular projectile points, five early stage bifaces and a hammerstone. In addition, two cores and 15 FCR fragments were recovered.

Feature 1, recognized at the base of TU 1 in the Bwb horizon (Stratum VIII), was a deposit of dark brown (7.5YR 3/2) silt loam and fine charcoal flecks. When fully defined at the base of Level 2 in Stratum VIII (103 centimeters bd), the irregularly shaped oval had maximum dimensions of 35-x-20 centimeters. Charcoal and a quartz flake at the surface of Feature 1 were collected. Charcoal removed from the surface of Feature 1 returned a 90 +/- 30 B.P. assay. The modern date is clearly anomalous, perhaps as a result of mixed organic material at the feature surface.



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Unknown

Based on the Phase II survey, the size and setting of site 18MO719 was used to identify the site as a camp site or portion of a dispersed settlement, rather than a palisaded village. The presence of probable cultural features implied somewhat longer occupations and more varied activities than apparent at nearby site 18MO633. Phase II excavations showed that the construction of the C&O Canal and other historic activity disturbed the upper strata in parts of 18MO719 while the soil cast over during excavation of the canal served to cap and protect areas immediately north of the canal prism.

Although these upper, disturbed backdirt deposits contain artifacts associated with the construction and maintenance of the C&O canal, the complete loss of archeological integrity makes the resources unable to be securely associated with any particular event, activity, or specific time period. The disturbed upper deposits of site 18MO719, therefore, were recommended as not eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criteria A or D. The lower, capped strata, in contrast, contained artifacts and features dating to the Late Woodland and, perhaps, Contact eras, and probable cultural features were identified at the surface of the Bwb horizon. Site 18MO719, therefore, potentially contributes to knowledge of the Late Woodland and, perhaps, Contact eras in the Potomac River Valley and the Middle Atlantic Region. Based on the potential contribution of site 18MO719 to the study of the history of Native American occupation of the Potomac River Valley and the larger region, the undisturbed portion of site 18MO719 was recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion D for its significance at the regional level.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

95002819, 97002682