MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18PR143 **Site Name:** Site 2 complex, Stream B

Other name(s)

Prehistoric ☑ Historic ☐ Unknown ☐

Brief Description: Early, Middle, & Late Woodland short-term resource procurement camps

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 11 SCS soil & sediment code Bo

Latitude 38.6860 Longitude -76.9979 Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal Terrestrial site ☑ Underwater site ☐

Elevation 9 m Site slope 6-10% 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	☐	High terrace	☐
Hilltop/bluff	☐	Rockshelter/ cave	☐
Interior flat	☐	Hillslope	☐
Upland flat	☐	Unknown	☐
Ridgetop	☐	Other	☐
Terrace	☑		
Low terrace	☐		

Ownership

Private	☐
Federal	☐
State of MD	☐
Regional/ county/city	☑
Unknown	☐

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Unnamed tributary of Pisca

Saltwater		Freshwater	
Ocean	☐	Stream/river	☑
Estuary/tidal river	☐	Swamp	☐
Tidewater/marsh	☐	Lake or pond	☐
		Spring	☐

Minimum distance to water is 0 m

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site		Woodland site		Contact period site		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	P	Mid. woodland	Y	ca. 1720 - 1780		Post 1930	
Late archaic	P	Late woodland	Y	ca. 1780 - 1820			
Unknown prehistoric context				Unknown historic 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?

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

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken N

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

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Prehistoric Sherd Types

				Shepard		Keyser	
Marcey Creek		Popes Creek	9	Townsend	2	Yeocomico	
Dames Qtr		Coulbourn		Minguannan		Monongahela	
Selden Island		Watson		Sullivan Cove		Susquehannock	
Accokeek	38	Mockley	2	Shenks Ferry			
Wolfe Neck		Clemson Island		Moyaone			
Vinette		Page		Potomac Crk	4		

Historic Sherd Types

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

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts

		Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	3108	Human remain(s)	☐
Ground stone		Modified faunal	
Stone bowls		Unmod faunal	
Fire-cracked rock	2087	Oyster shell	☐
Other lithics (all)	4	Floral material	☐
Ceramics (all)	452	Uncommon Obj.	
Rimsherds	1	Other ☐	

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)		Storage/trash pit	☐
Midden	☐	Burial(s)	☐
Shell midden	☐	Ossuary	☐
Postholes/molds	☐	Unknown	☐
House pattern(s)	☐	Other	☐
Palisade(s)	☐		
Hearth(s)	☑		
Lithic reduc area	☑		

Lithic Material

		Fer quartzite	☐	Sil sandstone	☐
Jasper	☐	Chalcedony	☐	European flint	☐
Chert	☑	Ironstone	☐	Basalt	☐
Rhyolite	☐	Argilite	☐	Unknown	☐
Quartz	☑	Steatite	☐	Other	☐
Quartzite	☑	Sandstone	☐		

☐ **Dated features present at site**

Historic Artifacts

		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)		Activity item(s)	
Glass (all)		Human remain(s)	☐
Architectural		Faunal material	☐
Furniture		Misc. kitchen	
Arms		Floral material	☐
Clothing		Misc.	
Personal items		Other ☐	

Historic Features

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

Unknown	☐	
Other	☐	

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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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at Catholic University

☑ Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Site 18PR143 (Site 2, Stream B) is the remains of a series of Early, Middle, & Late Woodland short-term resource procurement camps in southern Prince George's County. The site is located in the middle reaches of a feeder stream for Piscataway Creek. In this portion of the stream, a series of horizontally small, but vertically noticeable terraces have developed. The site is situated on two adjacent terraces in this area (T2 and T3). The stream itself is not directly affected by tidal action although it must be assumed that in the past the rising water table along the Potomac and Piscataway and the increasing tidal activity in these zones must have affected the flow of the stream. Plant foods in the area prehistorically would have included acorns, beechnut and hickory nuts, as well as sub-arboreal tubers, roots, and berries. However, compared to areas closer to the confluence of the stream and Piscataway Creek (see synopsis report for 18PR142), plant resources (and the animal resources that would have been attracted to them) were probably rather limited. Soils at the site are primarily of the Marr-Dodon complex.

The site was first identified by Dr. William Gardner and a number of undergraduate and graduate students from the Catholic University of America. In early 1976, Gardner and his students were conducting survey work along two secondary streams draining toward Piscataway Creek in the vicinity of planned sewer-line improvements by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). Reconnaissance methods included sub-surface sampling with 61 X 61 cm (2 X 2 ft) square test unit excavations and screw augers, map study, archival and laboratory study, and examination of exposed surfaces, eroded slopes, and stream bank cuts. Four areas of prehistoric cultural habitation were found, one of which was 18PR143.

A site map provided in the full site report for the 1976 project reveals that the site was investigated with a series of seventeen 61 cm X 61 cm square test units. Eight of these units yielded prehistoric artifacts. The artifacts encountered during the survey work in 1976 include 1 quartz point fragment, 1 quartzite core, 69 flakes (21 quartz & 48 quartzite), 3 worked chert cobbles, 5 chunks (1 jasper, 3 quartz, 1 quartzite), 10 pieces of fire-cracked rock, and 3 possible Accokeek sherds (badly eroded). Cultural material in this area comes from both the A horizon and the top few inches of the underlying B horizon. Based on this data, the site was initially interpreted as a limited purpose resource extraction site of the Early Woodland period. Researchers also noted that the site may have been related to nearby Site 18PR142. The very presence of habitation on the terraces flanking a low order stream was highly unexpected. The researchers determined that the site was potentially eligible to the NRHP and pursued a more rigorous testing regime the following summer, since the site was situated directly in or close to the sewer pipe center line.

In May, June, and July of 1976, Site 18PR143 was investigated with the excavation of fourteen 1.524 m X 1.524 m (5 ft X 5 ft) units. Nine adjacent test units were placed downstream on one of the adjoining stream terraces where substantial artifact quantities were encountered during the earlier survey work. A second cluster of five units was placed farther upstream on another stream terrace. Standard excavation procedures during this work included digging in 7.62 cm (3 in) arbitrary levels. With the exception of the humus (which was shoveled), all excavations with this method employed only small hand tools such as trowels, dental picks, and spoons. Most soil was screened through 3/8 inch mesh hardware cloth. Selected samples from floors and all soils from features such as hearths were floated through window screen in an effort to recover charcoal, bone, small artifacts, etc. Only very tiny pressure flakes were recovered using this method. Efforts were made to leave all artifacts encountered in situ until an entire level had been excavated. This method insured that any patterning of the artifacts was noted, aided in interpretation, and served to guide the ongoing excavations. After each level was excavated, the floors were photographed and mapped (where warranted) with artifacts being numbered and keyed to the map prior to removal.

After artifact removal, the floor of each level was scraped in an effort to discern soil stains denoting pits, postmolds, etc. Vertical excavation in the squares continued until artifact free levels were encountered. Within some of the test squares, 1.52 meter (5 ft) square units were carried down to the underlying basal gravels to check for the possibility of any earlier cultural occupation and to assist the project geologist and pedologist. Due to time constraints, excavation methods had to be altered in two of the test squares. Instead of leaving artifacts in situ until levels were completed, in the lowest level of one square and throughout 1 entire unit the test square was sub-divided into 30.5 cm (1 ft) squares to speed up excavation but retain some information to help determine horizontal patterning.

Artifacts recovered during the summer 1976 testing at 18PR143 included 1 point, 16 bifaces, 1 knife, 1 drill, 1 chopper, at least 2 cores, 12 retouched flakes, 2,943 flakes, 52 unspecified lithic tools, 4 hammerstones, 2,077 pieces of fire-cracked rock, and 449 ceramic sherds. Diagnostic artifacts include a probable Levanna point, 35 Accokeek sherds, 9 Popes Creek sherds (including 1 rimsherd), a few Potomac Creek sherds, some possible Mockley, and possibly some Townsend ware (Rappahannock). Identified lithic raw materials include chert (3 objects), quartz (73), quartzite (697), and sandstone (7). The only features encountered during excavation were hearths.

One of the activities reflected in the artifacts recovered at the site is quarrying. Apparently the gravels and cobbles which occurred in the stream bed and in the banks were an important attraction. While cobbles occur at 18PR142, they are much more easily procured at 18PR143. Corroborating the inference of quarrying and lithic tool manufacture are the large numbers of chipping clusters showing primary stage reduction, large numbers of direct percussion flakes, and high incidence of flakes with primary cobble cortex. This contrasts markedly to the situation at 18PR142 where middle and late stage biface reduction appeared to be the norm. Thus, Site 18PR143 may be the result of quarrying and initial lithic reduction by the occupants of 18PR142.

In the upstream portion of the 18PR143 complex, five excavation units revealed 3 periods of occupation. The earliest of these was a minor component of Accokeek which was represented by only two potsherds. It was thought, at the time, that a larger component of this period might lie outside of the right-of-way or else may have been washed away along the eroding stream bank. The next period of occupation was represented by Pope's Creek ware. In one area a small hearth was associated with this occupation. There were also two chipping clusters which could be assigned to this period. The dominant flake types were baton and hard hammer percussion flakes. Over 80% of these flakes contained cortex, indicating immediate modification of the local cobbles. The close association of these chipping clusters with remnants of point bars underscores the quarrying nature of this component and the ease with which raw material could be procured.

Stratigraphically above and slightly upslope from the area of Popes Creek activity was an early Late Woodland component marked by shell tempered pottery (Rappahannock/Townsend ware). Other artifacts associated with this were a diffuse hearth, flakes with cortex, quartzite cobble cores, bifaces, a knife, drill, and chopper. This range of artifacts is indicative of multiple activities including quarrying, stone tool manufacturing, and primary vegetable food gathering (primary in the sense of immediate use suggested by the absence of storage units). The multiplicity of activities manifested during this period and absent in the Popes Creek area may be indicative of changes which took place during this time lapse or simply a sampling error. There are also a few sherds of the

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later Late Woodland Potomac Creek period, but these all occurred in the humus zones and could not be associated with any other activities or artifacts.

Somewhat further downstream in the other area of 18PR143 which was excavated, a quite similar picture emerges. Here the hearths were more discrete and Late Woodland Potomac Creek pottery was more well represented and directly associated with a hearth. Once again there is a picture of relatively limited activities of quarrying and stone tool manufacturing associated with the Popes Creek component, minimal representation of Early Woodland Accokeek, and multiple activities associated with the shell tempered and Potomac Creek occupations.

In summary, Site 18PR143 appears to have been occupied first by populations corresponding to the Early Woodland with increasing intensity of use going on through the Middle and Late Woodland. Initially the site would appear to have been primarily a quarry and tool manufacturing site with the users carrying their partially finished tools back to a site like 18PR142. During the Late Woodland these same activities continue, but new ones such as vegetable food gathering and primary processing also became important. During this period, 18PR143 was apparently an outpost of more permanent base camps, in this case probably one of the large Piscataway or Potomac floodplain horticultural settlements. Provided that the sewer-line installation went forward as planned in 1976, the site was likely destroyed by construction activities. Thus, 18PR143 has no remaining research potential.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00006566, 00006567, 00006568