MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18PR379 **Site Name:** Simpson Site A

Other name(s)

Prehistoric ☑ Historic ☐ Unknown ☐

Brief Description: Early Woodland short-term resource procurement

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 38.9544 Longitude -76.8167

Elevation 36 m Site slope 0-5%

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

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 8 SCS soil & sediment code CmB2

Physiographic province Western Shore Coastal Terrestrial site ☑ Underwater site ☐

Ethnobotany profile available ☐ Maritime site ☐

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) Folly Branch

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

Minimum distance to water is 46 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	P	Early woodland	Y	ca. 1675 - 1720		ca. 1900 - 1930	
MIddle archaic		Mid. woodland		ca. 1720 - 1780		Post 1930	
Late archaic		Late woodland		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 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		Koens-Crispin	
Hardaway-Dalton		Perkiomen	
Palmer		Susquehana	
Kirk (notch)		Vernon	
Kirk (stem)		Piscataway	
Le Croy		Calvert	1
Morrow Mntn		Selby Bay	
Guilford		Jacks Rf (notch)	
Brewerton		Jacks Rf (pent)	
Otter Creek		Madison/Potomac	1
		Levanna	

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Prehistoric Sherd Types

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

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	276	Human remain(s)	☐
Ground stone	1	Modified faunal	
Stone bowls		Unmod faunal	
Fire-cracked rock	47	Oyster shell	☐
Other lithics (all)		Floral material	☐
Ceramics (all)		Uncommon Obj.	
Rimsherds		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

☐ Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Simpson Site A (18PR379) is a multi-component prehistoric site west of Bowie in Prince George's County. Diagnostic projectile points from the site point to occupations during the Early Archaic, Late Archaic, and Late Woodland periods. The site is situated on a slight ridge overlooking Folly Branch, a tributary of the Patuxent River. At the time of the site's discovery, it was situated in a fairly level agricultural field and surrounded by a landscape of similar plowed land. Soils at the site are Collington fine sandy loams.

The site was first identified in 1988 during the course of a Phase I survey for improvements to nearby Maryland Route 450. A local informant notified project archeologists about a known collecting site and showed them samples of her collection from the site. The location was visited and researchers collected a quartz scraper and a quartz Calvert point from the surface of the site. The site was situated outside of the highway project impact area and fencing was used to avoid damages to the site. It was recorded in MHT Site Files as "Simpson Site A" for the surname of the local informant.

The site was not examined again professionally until 1997 when a Phase II testing project was carried out. The work was undertaken prior to (then) planned development of the "Lakeview" tract into a neighborhood of single-family homes. During the process of development, a Federal wetland permit was requested. This initiated a cultural resources review by the Maryland Historical Trust, which requested Phase II work in partial compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

Phase II work at the site entailed surface collection and formal test unit excavations. Surface collection was carried out after plowing and with the assistance of a total station laser theodolite to record three dimensional geographic coordinates of all artifacts collected from the surface. The electronic data was then downloaded to a computer and converted to maps.

Complete surface collection was accomplished by marking transects across the field containing the site with string. These transects were walked and all artifacts were collected and the locations recorded via total station. Transects extended across the entire landform to ensure complete inclusion of the site boundaries. Artifacts from the surface were examined to determine the age and function of the site. The material was also examined to determine if different areas of the site varied in function or period of use.

A total of 265 artifacts were collected from the surface. These include five typed projectile points and a bannerstone fragment. Identified projectile point types include one MacCorkle, a Bare Island, a Madison, and two Halifax. Also present were five quartz bifaces, a quartzite biface, an ironstone biface, and a quartzite scraper. All of the collected artifacts were lithic. The most common lithic type at the site, with 101 pieces, is a dark brown, fine-grained, ferrugineous quartzite (ironstone). Quartz was the second-most common material with 86 fragments followed by quartzite with 65. Rhyolite was a minor lithic type represented by 11 fragments. Jasper and chert were not found. Forty-one objects were fire-cracked rock.

Ironstone was found to be concentrated toward the center of the site with quartz to the south end on either side of the ridge. Fire-cracked rock was distributed unevenly across the site. The heaviest concentration is toward the south end of the site. The second, lesser, concentration is toward the north end. Fewer fire-cracked rocks were found towards the site's center.

The presence of the two Halifax points and the Bare Island point, in conjunction with their distribution and the readily identifiable ironstone (from which the Bare Island point was made) suggest that the heaviest use of the site occurred during the Late Archaic. Distribution of quartz debitage, ironstone debitage, the Halifax points, and the fire-cracked rock is interpreted as resulting from periodic reuse of the site during the Late Archaic.

With the site limits established, thee 1 X 1 m test units were excavated at the site to test for varying soil stratigraphy and horizontal distributions of artifacts. Locations were selected based on differences in artifact type as observed during surface collection activities (primarily lithic raw materials…see above). The units were also distributed across the site to test various areas for stratification and buried cultural features. Excavation proceeded following natural stratigraphy. All soil was screened through hardware cloth. Recovered artifacts were bagged and removed to the laboratory for study.

The first unit was placed on the southwest end of the site in an area that seemed to contain a higher percentage of quartz debitage. The second unit was placed 20 meters north of the first unit, towards the center of the site and within the area where more ironstone debitage was recovered. The third unit was placed to the northeast of the site center to examine the soil profile in this area.

Stratigraphy at the site is uncomplicated. There is a plowzone of approximately 32 cm on top of subsoil. In all cases, artifacts were found exclusively within the plowzone. Plow scars were readily visible at the interface of the subsoil and plowzone (about 30 cm deep). No cultural features besides the plowscars were encountered. A total of 67 artifacts were recovered from the three excavation units. Half of these were ironstone flakes. One ironstone biface was recovered. No temporally diagnostic items were recovered from the excavation units. The test unit assemblage consisted of 1ironstone biface fragment, 10 quartz flakes, 10 quartzite flakes, 35 ironstone flake, 1 quartz chunk, 4 ironstone chunks, and 6 fire-cracked rock fragments.

Site 18PR379 is a multi-component prehistoric site with no apparent subsurface integrity. Boundaries were readily distinguished by the distribution of artifacts across the field. Temporally diagnostic artifacts recovered from the surface include McCorkle, Halifax, and Madison style projectile points. These indicate periodic re-use of the site from Early Archaic through Late Woodland times. The site likely served as a procurement site throughout its use history.

The multi-component nature of Site 18PR379, and the fact that all of the material is mixed within the plowzone with no apparent subsurface features, leads to the interpretation that there is insufficient integrity for this site to provide important scientific information. The site is believed to be not eligible for inclusion on the NRHP on this basis. No additional archeological work was recommended and the site was subsequently destroyed by construction of the new housing development.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00006781, Site Files