



# Phase II and Phase III Archaeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18WA14

Site Name: Conococheague Creek

Prehistoric

Other name(s)

Historic

Unknown

Brief Description:

Late Archaic to Late Woodland base camp, village

## Site Location and Environmental Data:

Maryland Archaeological Research Unit No. 19

SCS soil & sediment code Pn

Latitude 39.6087

Longitude -77.8392

Physiographic province Great Valley

Terrestrial site

Underwater site

Elevation 104 m

Site slope 0-3%

Ethnobotany profile available

Maritime site

### Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Conococheague Creek

#### Saltwater

Ocean

Estuary/tidal river

Tidewater/marsh

#### Freshwater

Stream/river

Swamp

Lake or pond

Spring

Minimum distance to water is 15 m

### 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

## 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?

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

Prehistoric Sherd Types					
Marcey Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Popes Creek	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Dames Qtr	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Selden Island	<input type="checkbox"/>	Watson	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Accokeek	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mockley	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Wolfe Neck	<input type="checkbox"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Vinette	<input type="checkbox"/>	Page	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Shepard	<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Keyser	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Townsend	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Yeocomico	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Minguannan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monongahela	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shenks Ferry	<input type="checkbox"/>	Moyaone	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susquehannock	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potomac Crk	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Historic Sherd Types		Ironstone		Staffordshire		Stoneware	
<b>Earthenware</b>		Jackfield	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tin Glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>	English Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Astbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mn Mottled	<input type="checkbox"/>	Whiteware	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eng Dry-bodied	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borderware	<input type="checkbox"/>	North Devon	<input type="checkbox"/>	9		Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buckley	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pearlware	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Porcelain</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rhenish	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creamware	<input type="checkbox"/>					Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="checkbox"/>

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

## Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		Other fired clay			
Flaked stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	1401	Human remain(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Ground stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Modified faunal <input type="checkbox"/>		
Stone bowls	<input type="checkbox"/>		Unmod faunal	<input type="checkbox"/>	32
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="checkbox"/>		Oyster shell	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other lithics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>		Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ceramics (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	113	Uncommon Obj.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Rimsherds	<input type="checkbox"/>		Other <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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

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

Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related			
Pottery (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Activity item(s) <input type="checkbox"/>		
Glass (all)	<input type="checkbox"/>		Human remain(s) <input type="checkbox"/>		
Architectural	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Faunal material <input type="checkbox"/>		
Furniture	<input type="checkbox"/>		Misc. kitchen	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Arms	<input type="checkbox"/>		Floral material	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>		Misc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Personal items	<input type="checkbox"/>		Other <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Historic Features		Privy/outhouse		Depression/mound		Unknown	
Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Well/cistern	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<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:  +/-  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 MAC (Accession No. 1975.001.001), Smithsonian NMN

Additional raw data may be available online

## Summary Description:

The Conococheague Creek Site (18WA14) in Washington County, MD is thought to be the remains of a Woodland period village. The site is along a terrace above Conococheague Creek in central Washington County. The site and surrounding landscape is predominantly wooded. Portions of the site have been impacted by activities associated with the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal and ancillary industries attracted to the canal, most notably the importation of fill. Soils at the site are pope fine sandy loams.

The site was first described in a Bureau of American Ethnology Report from 1894, which stated that the site was a village yielding ceramic sherds, bone fragments, flakes, an unfinished steatite pipe, and other "relics". During the 1950s two collectors, Ralph Fout and Nicholas Yinger, both of Frederick, excavated (with the assistance of a bulldozer) a large portion of the site. Details of their excavation are sketchy and no written report on the investigations is known. However, Spencer O. Geasey (another local collector) recalls from contemporary accounts that pottery, projectile points, flakes, and bones (including at least several human burials) were unearthed and that notes were taken during the work. Also described were two large (approximately 8 gallon) ceramic vessels used in the ground as liners for storage pits. One of the vessels was reportedly on display at a small museum in Brunswick for many years and was believed to be later Middle Woodland in age. The only other documentation that can be located is a small collection of annotated photographs by Ralph Fout in MHT files.

Henry Wright later performed a preliminary analysis of some of the pottery which he recovered from the surface of the site. Wright reports recovering 53 sherds; including 7 shell-tempered sherds (6 Keyser, 1 Rappahannock), 25 quartz-tempered sherds, 12 chert-tempered sherds, 6 limestone-tempered sherds, and 3 sherds without temper. Wright's collection was deposited at the Smithsonian Institution - National Museum of Natural History.

During an investigation along the C & O Canal, a single projectile point dating to the Transitional period was recovered from the site and in 1975 the Maryland State Office of Archeology made a brief site visit. The brief inspection by the Office of Archeology (now the MHT) revealed Late Woodland debris exposed in bare spots near the top of the Potomac River bank. Artifacts recovered included sherds, points, flakes, and bone.

In 1978 the site was briefly visited as part of the Maryland Route 68 reconnaissance survey. Though outside the actual proposed alignment for the road, the site was in close enough proximity to the project area to warrant a short site visit. At that time, tall grass, small trees, and scattered shrubs covered the site. No artifacts were observed. Two small cottages present in the 1950s (Fout and Yinger excavated right up to the edge of one of these) had been razed. No shovel-tests were dug at the site because it was outside the project limits and was within the C&O Canal National Historical Park (requiring a Federal permit for archeological work).

The most recent archeological work at 18WA14 occurred in 2009 when a combined survey and evaluation (Phase I and II) was conducted in support of proposed C&O Canal restoration efforts by the NPS. The work was conducted pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended. Canal restoration efforts entailed the possible creation of a possible turning basin in the vicinity of 18WA14 and the area was examined by the excavation of shovel test pits, test units, and geomorphological study through soil borings.

A total of 26 shovel test pits (STPs) were excavated across the site, 21 of which produced artifacts (both prehistoric and historic). Shovel test measured approximately 45.72 cm (1.5 ft) in diameter. These were initially excavated at 15.24 m (50 ft) intervals and then subsequently at 7.62 m (25 ft) intervals. Most were excavated to a maximum depth of 91 cm (3 ft) because sterile subsoil could not normally be reached. When sterile subsoil could be reached, STPs were excavated 15.24 cm (6 in) into that subsoil. All soils were screened through hardware cloth for uniform artifact recovery. Obviously recent objects found in the shovel tests were noted and discarded, along with coal, clinker, brick, limestone, and other building materials. Other artifacts were bagged by provenience and STP data (soil descriptions and profile drawings) was recorded on standardized forms. Digital and black-and-white film photography was used to document excavations work and conditions. Many of these STPs documented some level of disturbance. The southernmost portion of the site was heavily disturbed and one STP in the north part of the site came down upon a poured concrete floor about 70 cm below the surface. The eastern portion of the site only produced historic artifacts. But in the west-central portion of the site, shovel tests suggested that soils were intact. Soil borings at the site also suggested that some portions of 18WA14 preserved buried soil horizons beneath historic fill.

Based on these findings, two formal test units were excavated in the west-central portion of the site. One unit was a roughly 295 cm X 91 cm (3 X 9.67 ft) trench, while the other was 91 X 91 cm in extent. The former unit was placed directly into the terrace edge in order to reach more greater depths. In order to excavated to such a depth safely, the unit was dug to a depth of 213 cm (7 ft) below the surface using a "staircase" method of excavation. Only the south half of the unit was extended to these lower depths. A similar "deep window" was excavated in the 91 cm square unit as well.

The "steps" in these test units were excavated by natural stratigraphy. Sub-plowzone layers deeper than 9.14 cm (.3 ft) were divided into arbitrary 9.14 cm levels. Each stratum and level of the unit was described on standardized forms that included information on the soil texture and Munsell color, the depth of the stratum, features encountered, and artifacts recovered. A detailed stratigraphic profile was prepared of at least one wall of each unit.

The upper strata of the site (in both test units) along with all of the material from the shovel tests, appear to date to the Late and Middle Woodland periods. Triangular points and chert-tempered pottery were found throughout this zone. In the Potomac Valley, chert-tempered pottery has generally been associated with the early Late Woodland, and features containing similar pottery at the Paw Paw Site (see synopsis report for 18AG144) in Allegany County have been radiocarbon dated to around AD 1000. In 2009, however, no artifacts dating to the latest part of the Late Woodland (the Luray phase) were found, so occupation of the area may have ceased by around AD 1400. It should be noted that Luray phase artifacts (Keyser sherds) were reported by Wright, however (see above).

Some materials from the Middle Woodland may also be present. A Hellgrammite point from one of the shovel tests would generally be dated to the Early Woodland, but some radiocarbon evidence points to a Middle Woodland. A side-notched point in Layer B of one of the test units could be considered either a Late Archaic or Middle Woodland specimen.

No Early Woodland pottery (Marcey Creek, Selden Island, or Accokeek) was found during the 2009 project. All of the pottery probably dates to the Late or possibly Middle Woodland. Some quartz-tempered sherds resemble the Shepard type. Three interesting sherds from one of the test units appeared to have



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been impressed with a loosely woven fabric. These sherds show occasional broad and rather deep grooves against a background of finer impressions. These could correspond to the thick elements that cut across the weave in some surviving textiles of the Mississippian period in the Southeast.

The debitage from the site is overwhelmingly small flakes from finishing or repair of stone tools. There is very little evidence of any quarrying activity, not even retrieving cobbles from the river. People did not come to Conococheague Creek in search of stone.

The animal bone found on the site includes several pieces large enough to be identifiable. These consisted of 12 white-tailed deer bones, 5 turtle bones, and 1 bone from a domestic cow. Most of the bone probably dates to prehistoric times (and has been cataloged as such above), but historic-era people also ate deer. The only piece of bone that can be dated with high degree of certainty to the prehistoric period is a single piece of deer bone from a deeper stratum in one of the test units. Some bone was found in highly disturbed contexts, and this material was discarded in the field.

The full prehistoric assemblage recovered from 18WA14 in 2009 were 7 projectile points, 8 other bifaces, 2 utilized flakes, 1 freehand core, 1,333 flakes, 5 pieces of block shatter, 45 ceramic sherds, and 17 possible prehistoric faunal remains (see above). Among the projectile points were a broken lanceolate point, a hellgrammite point, a side-notched point, and 4 triangular Levanna points. Thirteen probable Shepard-ware sherds were recovered.

Besides a number of cut and wire nails (counted as 5 architectural artifacts in the table above), a small number of historic artifacts were found on the site. These included 1 sherd of coarse red earthenware, 9 sherds of whiteware, and the aforementioned cow bone. A large amount of limestone in the soil suggests that stones for the nearby aquaduct were dressed in this location.

The Conococheague Creek Site (18WA14) consists of a large prehistoric site that likely represents a village or hamlet with multiple occupations dating from the Middle and Late Woodland periods. The site's subsurface integrity varies and has been impacted by flooding episodes, historic canal-related land alterations, and archeological work in the 1950s. Nonetheless, the site still retains intact, buried cultural features and deposits associated with its multiple prehistoric uses. Site 18WA14 has been determined by MHT to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D, for its demonstrated potential to yield important information contributing to the themes of subsistence, environmental adaptation, technology, and settlement during the Woodland periods.

## External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00006302, 95000498, 95001295