



# Phase II and Phase III Archeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18DO170

Site Name: Shoal Creek

Prehistoric ☒

Other name(s)

Historic ☒

Unknown ☐

Brief Description:

Early Archaic to Late Woodland possible base camps or hamlets; 19th century domestic scatter

## Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 38.5583 Longitude -76.0530

Elevation 5 m Site slope 0

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 Archeological Research Unit No. 4

SCS soil & sediment code

Physiographic province Eastern Shore Coastal P

Terrestrial site ☒

Underwater site ☐

Ethnobotany profile available ☐ Maritime site ☐

## Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Unnamed trib. of Shoal Cre

### Saltwater

Ocean ☐

Estuary/tidal river ☐

Tidewater/marsh ☐

Minimum distance to water is 0 m

### Freshwater

Stream/river ☒

Swamp ☐

Lake or pond ☐

Spring ☐

## 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:

### Historic

Urban/Rural? 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

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 ☒

Flotation samples taken ☒

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	2
Clovis	
Hardaway-Dalton	
Palmer	
Kirk (notch)	1
Kirk (stem)	3
Le Croy	1
Morrow Mntn	
Guilford	3
Brewerton	3
Otter Creek	
Perkiomen	
Susquehanna	
Vernon	3
Piscataway	3
Calvert	11
Selby Bay	8
Jacks Rf (notch)	1
Jacks Rf (pent)	4
Madison/Potomac	1
Levanna	1

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

## Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek		Popes Creek		Shepard		Keyser	
Dames Qtr	17	Coulbourn		Townsend		Yeocomico	
Selden Island		Watson		Minguannan		Monongahela	
Accokeek		Mockley	14	Sullivan Cove		Susquehannock	
Wolfe Neck	53	Clemson Island		Shenks Ferry			
Vinette		Page		Moyaone			
				Potomac Cr			

## Historic Sherd Types

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

## Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts	
Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	4789
Ground stone	15
Stone bowls	
Fire-cracked rock	2847
Other lithics (all)	208
Ceramics (all)	110
Rimsherds	
Human remain(s)	
Modified faunal	
Unmod faunal	25
Oyster shell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Floral material	
Uncommon Obj.	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Prehistoric Features

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

## Lithic Material

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

☒ Dated features present at site

Pit containing Dames Quarter sherds

Historic Artifacts	
Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	
Glass (all)	
Architectural	
Furniture	
Arms	
Clothing	
Personal items	
Activity item(s)	
Human remain(s)	
Faunal material	
Misc. kitchen	
Floral material	
Misc.	107
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> coal, cinders, slag

## Historic Features

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

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

☐ Additional raw data may be available online

## Summary Description:

The Shoal Creek Site (18DO170) is a prehistoric base camp at Cambridge in Dorchester County. The site occupies a horseshoe-shaped terrace bounded on the north and south by two short feeder tributaries. A third, very short, intermittent drainage channel bisects the center of the site. The site is situated to provide nearby access to both fresh and brackish water resources, as well as substantial wetland areas. Vegetations typical of the site and surrounding area include six species of oak, two of gum, and one each of loblolly pine, red maple, beech, American holly, southern arrowwood, sassafras, magnolia, highbush, pepperbush, blueberries, Virginia creeper, greenbriers, and poison ivy. The marshes and estuaries of the area supported an abundance of anadromous and catadromous fish, shellfish, and avifauna. Deer, raccoon, muskrat, opossum, rabbit, and fox are larger mammalian fauna common to the area. Soils at the site are Sassafras (Ingleside) sandy loams.

The site was first documented in 1988, during the course of a Phase I archeological survey conducted by the Maryland Geological Survey – Division of Archeology. An intensive survey was carried out in this area due to the (then) planned construction of a dredge spoils facility by the Maryland Port Authority. The work was undertaken to comply with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and the Maryland Historical Trust Act of 1985.

At the time of the Phase I survey, site 18DO170 was largely obscured by soybean stubble and weeds, with surface visibility estimated at less than 5%. An initial unsystematic survey of the agricultural field led to the recognition of a concentration of artifacts (n=25) in the northwest portion of what would eventually be identified as a site. Surface data were supplemented by the excavation of 25 shovel test pits (STPs) in five cruciform clusters. These STPs were 50 cm in diameter and soils were screened through hardware cloth. Each was excavated at least 10 cm into the subsoil. Shovel tests do not appear to have been excavated stratigraphically, and no soil profile records appear to have been kept. Plowzone and excavation depths of individual STPs were generally noted on artifact bags. Some historic artifacts were discarded in the field, but all prehistoric artifacts were collected.

The ca. 22 acre field was subsequently plowed to provide better visibility for surface collection and site definition. Plowing afforded 100% visibility, but time constraints required that surface collection be conducted prior to significant rainwashing of soils. The field was then walked along 1.5 m interval survey transects and artifacts were flagged. A third, brief, unsystematic surface reconnaissance of a previously examined area in the southern portion of the site was made by the Division of Archeology following a rain. Additional artifacts were flagged and later collected. All flagged surface artifacts (n=118) were piecemealed using a plane table and alidade. These artifacts were largely prehistoric and only diagnostic historic materials appear to have been retained.

An additional 55 STPs were excavated in 9 loci of activity identified through surface collection. An initial STP was placed in each area and then subsequent tests were placed in a cruciform pattern out from the initial STP, with occasional supplemental STPs along the wooded terrace edge as well as the plowed field. These STPs were also 50 cm in diameter, screened through hardware cloth, and some were reported to have been excavated stratigraphically. STPs were generally dug to "reddish brown clayey sand". Consistent soil profiles were recorded and all artifacts (prehistoric and historic) were collected.

Artifacts from all Phase I fieldwork episodes in 1988 totaled 595 items, with the vast majority recovered (around 76%) from shovel test pits. No evidence of a discrete historic occupation was encountered and 58% of the assemblage relates to the prehistoric occupation of the site. The lithic raw materials were primarily quartz (159), followed by chert (95), quartzite (25), rhyolite (9), argillite (2), sandstone/siltstone (9), and other stone (1). Phase I artifacts indicated several prehistoric occupations of the site, beginning in the Early Archaic and extending through the Middle Woodland subperiods.

Based on these findings, Phase II testing was recommended for 18DO170. Redesign and relocation of the dredge spoils facility was undertaken to avoid most of the site except for a 42" drain pipe corridor through the northwestern portion of 18DO170. The Maryland Historical Trust concurred with this strategy and requested Phase II work within the pipe corridor only. However, Phase II testing of the entire site, partly concurrent with construction, was requested by the Maryland Governor's Office. This was carried out by the Division of Archeology in April and May of 1988.

Phase II fieldwork was staged to include controlled surface collection, followed by the mechanical stripping of plowzone over selected portions of the site to search for features, and the excavation of several test units to evaluate the depth cultural deposits.

A grid system, oriented at 30° east of north, was established over the site area. Phase II controlled surface collection involved the establishment by transit of a 28 m interval staked grid across the site. Four by four collection units marked by pin flags were subsequently laid out by pulling tapes between stakes. A total of 4,549 collection units were ultimately laid out and collected within 17 large blocks. To facilitate field planning and staging of excavations, individuals were assigned blocks of collection units, and made field tallies of fire-cracked rock, prehistoric ceramics, debitage, and tools found in each unit. All prehistoric items were collected, but only diagnostic historic artifacts were noted or collected.

Controlled surface collection field artifact tallies were compiled into rough density distribution maps to locate concentrations of prehistoric artifacts. This information was used to select seven trench locations for plowzone stripping. This was accomplished by use of a road grader, followed by manual shovel scraping to expose the top of the subsoil. A total of 1,104 square meters was stripped, including 784 square meters in three trenches in the major surface artifact concentrations, and 320 square meters in four trenches in the minor surface concentrations.

Numerous subplowzone stains were exposed by this process. Thirty-one stains representing possible cultural features were identified, mapped, and numbered. Following the mapping of features, 22 were excavated to determine their cultural versus natural origin. Portions of feature fill were retained for flotation. Based on other feature excavation results, and characteristics of surface plans and soil coloration, none of the features left unexcavated during these investigations were expected to be cultural in origin.

A single test unit, generally 1 X 1 m in size and tied into the controlled surface collection grid, was excavated into the subsoil of each trench floor to determine the depth of cultural deposits in the matrix, and to provide information on size and site development. These units also served as controls for the comparison of artifact density in non-feature areas and in features of probable natural origin. All units were excavated 20 to 30 cm into sterile subsoil. All soils were screened through hardware cloth. A larger 1 X 2 m unit was excavated in Trench 2 to fully expose a larger feature. Another 1 X 2 test unit was excavated in an adjacent wooded area to evaluate the stratigraphy and artifact content of a potentially unplowed area of the site. A total of eight test units were excavated.



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Comparison of test unit soil profiles and artifact densities in the plowed field and the presumably unplowed wooded terrace edge, indicate that the majority of the intact archeological deposits on the site have been plowed and eroded away. It was estimated that approximately 50 to 60 cm of soil depth has been lost from the original ground surface. Continuously very windy field conditions during Phase II fieldwork suggest that deflation may be the primary agent of soil loss, even in the relatively protected setting behind the Choptank's southern bank. The trend of the Shoal Creek estuary may have facilitated the passage of relatively high winds across the site surface, and clearing and plowing for agriculture would have accelerated deflation in the historic period.

Phase II excavations yielded evidence of four definite cultural features and eight features of ambiguous origin out of an excavated sample of 22 stains. Definite prehistoric features include a large fire-cracked rock concentration and the bases of two basin-shaped circular pits. Early Woodland Dames Quarter sherds were associated with one of the pits. Both were severely truncated and of such similar shape that it was suggested both likely dated to the Early Woodland, and probably the same occupation. A cinder-filled historic feature is probably a postmold. Four of the "ambiguous" features are possible postmolds, but their isolation from any other potential postmolds calls this interpretation into question. The other 4 ambiguous features may be pits of some sort (these did contain artifacts), but their shapes were too amorphous to make any definitive conclusions. Nine unexcavated stains, ten excavated stains, and sixteen sandy, silty clay anomalies all appear to be natural in origin.

Field tallies of controlled surface results clearly indicated the presence of horizontal patterning in artifact distribution across the site. However, no evidence of stratified deposits was encountered. While the remnants of a few features excavated into the clay subsoil layer still remain, the original prehistoric surface and living floors have been thoroughly disrupted. Except for a very narrow band, ranging from 0 to 10 m wide that occurs between the field edge and the drainages, few additional intact archeological deposits can be expected.

The assemblage from 18DO170 (Both Phase I and Phase II) included 111 points and point fragments (some reshaped and retouched into drills, scrapers, etc.), 4 drills, 2 bifacial scrapers, 1 perforator, 70 other bifaces, 103 retouched flakes, 33 other unifacial tools, 565 cores, 2,132 flakes, 1,516 chunks, 214 other pieces of debitage, 1 winged bannerstone fragment, 1 gorget fragment, 4 axe/celt fragments, 4 pestles, 5 other groundstone object, 176 hammerstones, 1 anvil stone, 8 pitted stones, 1 scraper-plane, 1 use-modified chopper, 21 other use-modified lithics, 2,847 pieces of fire-cracked rock, 108 ceramic sherds, 25 pieces of collected bone/shell, and 107 historic items (cataloged in the table above as "miscellaneous"). The projectile point assemblage included 1 Kirk corner-notched point, 3 Kirk stemmed points, 1 LeCroy, 1 MacCorkle, 2 Stanly points, 3 Guilfords, 3 Brewerton side-notched points, 1 Normanskill, 6 Bare Islands, 2 Poplar Islands, 2 Savannah Rivers, 2 Koens-Crispins, 3 Snook Kill points, 1 Fishtail, 4 Lamokas, 3 Vernon points, 11 Calverts, 3 Piscataways, 1 Meadowood, 1 Helgrammite, 8 Selby Bay, 2 Raccoon Notched points, 4 Jack's Reef Pentaganols, 1 Jack's Reef Corner-notched, 1 Madison, 1 Levanna, 4 untyped stemmed points, 2 untyped side-notched points, 1 lanceolate, and 33 non-diagnostic point fragments. The prehistoric ceramic assemblage consisted of 17 Dames Quarter sherds, 53 Wolfe Neck, 14 Mockley, 13 untyped sand-tempered sherds, 2 untyped hematite-tempered sherds, and 9 unidentifiable sherdllets.

Phase I and II archeological investigations at the Shoal Creek site (18DO170) have documented prehistoric use and occupation of the terrace above the Shoal Creek estuary ranging from the Early Archaic through Late Woodland time periods. Casual historic period use also occurred. The major occupations of the site occurred in the Late Archaic through the Middle Woodland time periods. The Late and Terminal Archaic period peoples tended to favor the western edge of the site. Early Archaic, Middle Archaic, and Late Woodland site use was limited and transient.

In 1997, a Phase I survey, again, touched on the site. This work was carried out prior to construction of a new hospital in the area: a project which would receive significant public funds. A series of shovel tests near the edge of the site led to an extension of 18DO170 to the north, just on the opposite side of a small drainage. The 1997 shovel test pits yielded 1 biface fragment, 37 pieces of debitage, and 2 thick quartz-tempered sherds. The Phase I work in 1997 did not lead to additional Phase II work.

The Maryland SHA (who oversaw the aforementioned Maryland Port Authorities project in 1988) and the Maryland Historical Trust disagreed on the significance and eligibility of 18DO170. SHA stated in 1988 that the systematic Phase II investigations had recovered the bulk of the important information available from the site, but that intact deposits might remain near the edges of the (now) former agricultural field where plowing had not taken place. MHT determined that the extent of disturbance to artifact deposits and truncation of features by plowing and wind action was too great and that the site was not eligible for listing in the NRHP. Although SHA believed the site to be eligible, they agreed that no further work was necessary to document the site. Today, most of the site has probably been destroyed as it is currently the site of a golf course.

## External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00007057