



Phase II and Phase III Archeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18FR17

Site Name: Nolands Ferry I

Prehistoric ☒

Other name(s) Nolands Ferry Archeology Site

Historic ☒

Unknown ☐

Brief Description:

Paleoindian, Archaic, and Woodland base camp and Late Woodland village; Early 18th century possible house

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 39.2561 Longitude -77.4883

Elevation m Site slope 6-10%

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. 17

SCS soil & sediment code EhB2

Physiographic province Lancaster/Frederick Low

Terrestrial site ☒

Underwater site ☐

Ethnobotany profile available ☐ Maritime site ☐

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Tuscarora Creek

Saltwater

Ocean ☐

Estuary/tidal river ☐

Tidewater/marsh ☐

Spring ☐

Minimum distance to water is 100 m

Freshwater

Stream/river ☒

Swamp ☐

Lake or pond ☐

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

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 U

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	
Clovis	1	Perkiomen	
Hardaway-Dalton	2	Susquehanna	5
Palmer		Vernon	6
Kirk (notch)	1	Piscataway	
Kirk (stem)		Calvert	
Le Croy	3	Selby Bay	21
Morrow Mntn		Jacks Rf (notch)	
Guilford	4	Jacks Rf (pent)	
Brewerton	4	Madison/Potomac	45
Otter Creek	4	Levanna	72

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	4	Popes Creek		Shepard	29	Keyser	7
Dames Qtr		Coulbourn		Townsend		Yeocomico	
Selden Island		Watson		Minguannan		Monongahela	
Accokeek	2	Mockley		Sullivan Cove		Susquehannock	
Wolfe Neck		Clemson Island		Shenks Ferry			
Vinette		Page	84	Moyaone			
				Potomac Cr			

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware		Ironstone		Staffordshire		Stoneware	
Astbury		Jackfield		Tin Glazed		English Brown	
Borderware		Mn Mottled		Whiteware	3	Eng Dry-bodie	
Buckley		North Devon		Porcelain		Nottingham	
Creamware	5	Pearlware	3			Rhenish	
						Wt Salt-glazed	1

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts		Other fired clay	
Flaked stone	12088	Human remain(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ground stone	10	Modified faunal	3
Stone bowls		Unmod faunal	10
Fire-cracked rock	9	Oyster shell	
Other lithics (all)	2	Floral material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ceramics (all)	128	Uncommon Obj.	
Rimsherds		Other	

Prehistoric Features

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

Lithic Material

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

☒ Dated features present at site

11 dates from 6 Features - 1 burial pit (Feat. 2); 4 refuse pits (Feat. 5,7,12,18); 1 possible hearth (Feat. 14)

Historic Artifacts		Tobacco related	
Pottery (all)	67	Activity item(s)	
Glass (all)	28	Human remain(s)	
Architectural	11	Faunal material	
Furniture		Misc. kitchen	
Arms		Floral material	
Clothing		Misc.	19
Personal items		Other	

Historic Features

Privy/outhouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unknown	<input type="checkbox"/>
Const feature	<input type="checkbox"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trash pit/dump	<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: 875 +/- 65 years BP

Reliability

SI-3880a: carbon from north half of an oval burial pit (feat. 2), assoc. w/ 14 Page sherds, human remains, debitage, possibly points & animal bones

High

Sample 2: 745 +/- 60 years BP

Reliability

SI-3880b: carbon from bottom of an oval burial pit (feat. 2), assoc. w/ 14 Page sherds, human remains, debitage, possibly points & animal bones

High

Sample 3: 470 +/- 85 years BP

Reliability

SI-3880c: carbon from south half of an oval burial pit (feat. 2), assoc. w/ 14 Page sherds, human remains, debitage, possibly points & animal bones

85

Sample 4: 360 +/- 60 years BP

Reliability

SI-3881: carbon from a shallow, oval refuse pit (feat. 5), assoc. w/ 4 Page sherds, debitage, possibly points & animal bones

Low

Sample 5: 455 +/- 60 years BP

Reliability

SI-3882a: carbon from west half of a shallow, irregular refuse pit (feat. 7), assoc. w/ 4 Page sherds, debitage, possibly points & animal bones

Mod

Sample 6: 1080 +/- 65 years BP

Reliability

SI-3882b: carbon from east half of a shallow, irregular refuse pit (feat. 7), assoc. w/ 4 Page sherds, debitage, possibly points & animal bones

Mod

Sample 7: 1465 +/- 70 years BP

Reliability

SI-3883: carbon from a shallow, oval

Low

Sample 8: 400 +/- 60 years BP

Reliability

SI-3884a: carbon in north 1/2, upper

Mod

Sample 9: 855 +/- 70 years BP

Reliability

SI-3884b: carbon in south 1/2, upper

High



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refuse pit (feat. 12), assoc. w/ 2 Page sherds, debitage, possibly points & animal bones

level oval pit (poss. hearth - feat. 14), assoc. w/ 18 Page sherds, FCR, debitage, possibly points & animal bones

level oval pit (poss. hearth - feat. 14), assoc. w/ 18 Page sherds, FCR, debitage, possibly points & animal bones

☒ Additional radiocarbon results available



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External Samples/Data:

☐ Additional raw data may be available online

Collection curated at MAC

Summary Description:

The Nolands Ferry I Site (18FR17) in Frederick County, MD is a well preserved, multi-component prehistoric site with occupations from Paleoindian through Late Woodland times. The archeological deposits relating to an apparent Late Woodland village are the most thoroughly studied at the site and appear to represent the most intensive period of occupation. The site has been known to local collectors since at least the late 1940s. It is located south of Buckeystown, on a bluff north of the Potomac River. A small creek is located nearby. Soils at the site are Walkersville and Elk gravelly loams.

Spencer Geasey and August "Gus" Selckmann, two local collectors, are thought to have originally discovered the site in 1948. The extent of their collecting activities at the site is not well known, but Geasey eventually donated his entire collection to the Maryland Historical Trust. A description of the diagnostic projectile points in Geasey's collection is provided below. According to notes at the Maryland Historical Trust, Selckmann and Geasey surface collected points, pottery, bannerstones, celts, gorgets, grooved axes and other groundstone items, a bone fish hook, and shell beads from the site.

The first excavations at the site were carried out in 1978 as part of the Monocacy Valley Survey. Work consisted of a controlled surface collection to locate the site, followed by test excavations conducted by the Archeological Society of Maryland as part of their annual summer field session. The general area where the site was thought to be located was divided into 30 meter square units. These were further subdivided into 100 3 X 3 meter units. A total of 350 of these units were then systematically surface collected across the northern portions of the site. This area was planted in barley, but its immaturity at the time of the surface collection insured good ground visibility. The southern section of the site, however, was planted in hay and surface visibility was so poor as to preclude collection. Test pits were placed primarily in areas with high artifact density, based on the results of surface collection. Twenty-one 1 meter test squares were placed at 6 meter intervals within the northern section of the site, and additional units were placed every 30 meters. Five large 3 X 3 meter units were also opened up in this area to study the patterning of the archeological features encountered. In addition, several more 1 meter test units were located at 6 meter intervals within the southern hay field.

As features were encountered, test squares were expanded as needed to expose the entire feature for study. Features were cross sectioned and soil samples were retained for flotation (however, no ethnobotanical examination appears to have been undertaken). Most of the features appear to be refuse pits, but some burials were also encountered. They are situated in a circular arc on the edge of the village, with a conspicuous absence of features towards the center of the village/site. Carbon was recovered from features deemed to be relatively intact and unmixed with earlier or later cultural components and submitted for radiometric dating. C-14 results were obtained from 11 samples taken out of 6 different features. The dates and contents of the features are discussed above. All 6 features contained Page sherds, which are typically dated to between AD 900 and 1450. Three dates fell squarely within this timeframe. Feature 2 is an oval refuse-filled pit, which also contained a human burial. Carbon from the feature yielded uncalibrated dates of 875 ± 65 and 745 ± 60 years before present, which when calibrated (2 sigma) correspond to roughly AD 1031-1260 and AD 1162-1390 respectively. This fits squarely into the timeframe for Page ceramics. A third date which is calibrated to AD 1303-1635, is less certain, but still within the accepted timeframe for Page ceramics. Feature 14, a large, oval-filled refuse pit which contained fire-cracked rock (possible hearth?), also yielded an acceptable date of 855 ± 70 years before present. A calibrated 2 sigma date range for this sample corresponds to the calendrical years AD 1035-1271. Other dates from this feature are less certain or fall almost entirely outside the range for Page ceramics. The other two samples from Feature 14 yielded calibrated dates of AD 894-1157 and AD 1427-1636. Only Features 2 and 14 yielded dates which were wholly within the accepted chronological range for Page ceramics. However, several of the calibrated date ranges for other samples/features at Nolands Ferry I overlap with either the front or tail end of the Page timeline. For details regarding each dated sample, see the descriptions above.

No thorough description has been published regarding artifacts recovered during the 1978 field session, and no notes are readily available at MHT. However, the principal investigator at 18FR17, Donald Peck, does provide a description of diagnostic artifacts recovered from the site in his draft reports on the Monocacy Valley Survey work. This description includes not only the materials recovered in 1978, but also artifacts collected by Geasey and examined by Peck. In addition to this catalog of diagnostic artifacts, a thorough lithic analysis was performed in 1979 by Laurie Steponaitis, which provides a good description of all lithic materials recovered during the 1978 field session. All of these sources are used to arrive at the counts described below. One hundred and twenty-one identifiable prehistoric sherds were present in the collections from 18FR17. There were 4 Marcey Creek sherds, 2 Accokeek sherds, 28 Shepard ware sherds, 82 Page sherds, and 5 Keyser ceramics. The lithic assemblage consisted of 70 projectile points, 18 bifaces (possible preforms), 53 cores, 47 utilized/retouched flakes, 35 primary flakes, 3,470 secondary flakes, 2,213 tertiary flakes, 5,814 fragments of shatter, and two pitted fragments of sandstone that probably served as hammerstones. Most of the lithic material is quartz or rhyolite, with lesser quantities of chert, argillite, and siltstone. The identifiable projectile points in the assemblage include 1 Clovis point, 2 Hardaway-Dalton points, 1 Kirk corner-notched, 2 MacCorkle stemmed, 1 St. Albans side-notched point, 3 LeCroy bifurcate base points, 3 Kanawha stemmed, 1 Stanley stemmed point, 2 Neville points, 4 Guilford Lanceolate points, 4 Mountindale, 4 Otter Creek, 5 Vosburg, 1 Brewerton corner-notched, 3 Brewerton eared-notched, 7 Lackawaxen, 6 Bare Island, 10 Savannah River stemmed, 2 Halifax Side notched, 6 Vernon, 5 Susquehanna Broadspears, 3 Dry Brook Fishtails, 1 Orient Fishtail, 1 Meadowood, 3 Hellgrammite, 2 Accokeek points, 3 Wormans Mill points, 2 Selby Bay Lanceolates, 4 Selby Bay stemmed, 15 Selby Bay side-notched variants, 41 elongate triangular points, 72 Levanna, and 45 Madison points.

The site was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. In 1988, Spencer O. Geasey revisited the site and spent two days surface collecting. He recovered a celt, 2 bannerstones or atlatl weights, and 30-40 triangular projectile points. In addition, Geasey encountered two concentrations of human bone.

The site was, again, revisited in 2003 when a CRM project was undertaken to mitigate effects of a proposed water pipeline installation. The New Design Raw Water Intake/McKinney Effluent Outfall Project would supply Frederick County, MD both with an adequate supply of potable water and with discharge capabilities. The project entailed the construction and installation of two 42" pipelines and an electrical duct bank, which would cross directly through Nolands Ferry I. Ten shovel tests (at ten meter intervals) and three 1 X 1 m test units were excavated within the site. These extended the boundaries of the site 130 meters to the south.

Three strata containing cultural materials were identified across the site; two A horizons which had been subject to plowing, and a largely intact B horizon. Eight of the ten shovel tests and the three test units contained 369 artifacts, all but 112 of which date to the prehistoric period. Temporally diagnostic artifacts of both the historic and prehistoric periods were recovered from the two upper strata. Additionally, the third stratum also contained both historic and prehistoric material. The lithic materials are representative of the Late Archaic and Late Woodland occupations at the site, while the prehistoric pottery is representative



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Unknown ☐

of the Late Woodland. However, they are largely intermingled within the strata.

Prehistoric artifacts encountered during the 2003 testing include 7 pottery sherds. Two of these appear to be Page sherds, 1 is an apparent Shepard ware sherd, and 2 are probably Keyser. The remaining 2 sherds are quartz-tempered with significant voids in the paste (may be eroded out limestone temper) and could be either Page or Shepard ware. Lithics recovered during the excavations include two diagnostic points (1 Halifax and 1 Clarksville), 2 undiagnostic points, 4 bifaces, 1 sidescraper, 11 utilized/retouched flakes, and 220 pieces of debitage. Most of the lithic material is, again, quartz and rhyolite. The other prehistoric objects from the site were 9 pieces of fire-cracked rock and 1 nut/seed.

The bifaces indicate that hunting and/or cutting activities took place at the site. Debitage represents the majority of the assemblage. Flake types identified within this group include bifacial reduction flakes, core reduction flakes, and undefined flake fragments. Interestingly, the debitage group includes 14 different raw material types, suggesting a diverse range of raw material sources. Likely included in these sources are local cobble quartz and Rhyolite quarried from the Catoctin Mountain range to the north. The debitage suggests that lithic tool manufacture and maintenance took place at the site. Specifically, the low density of artifacts per raw material type strongly suggests that the activity was oriented at tool manufacture and early to mid-stage tool manufacture. The presence of fire-cracked rock within the sub-assemblage indicates that at least some of the prehistoric activity may have included longer duration occupation of the area. The presence of modified and utilized expedient flakes suggests that lithic raw materials were processed to provide tools for the processing of food resources. This also is suggested by the presence of a unifacial sidescraper, a non-expedient curated tool. The vantage point on the bluff overlooking the creek and river floodplains would provide a likely place for resource procurement and subsequent processing.

Historic artifacts encountered during the 2003 testing include 1 German Westerwald sherd, 1 fragment of white bodied salt-glazed stoneware (British Scratch Blue), an unidentified buff-bodied sherd, 5 creamware sherds, 3 pearlware sherds, 1 undetermined white-bodied ceramic sherd, 3 fragments of whiteware, 1 of yellowware, and 51 miscellaneous undiagnostic ceramic sherds. Aside from these ceramic sherds, the other kitchen-related items from the site were 15 fragments of bottle/container glass. The remaining historic items were either architectural objects (4 pieces brick, 4 pieces window glass, 3 cut nails, and 10 unidentified nails) or miscellaneous objects (9 pieces unidentifiable glass).

Temporally diagnostic historic materials recovered during this investigation appear to date largely from the first half of the 18th century. They were recovered from all three strata, again suggesting mixture of the deposits by plowing or other disturbances. Some of these historic materials may derive from the occupation of the site by the Tuscarora Indians during their brief stay in the area after 1713. Review of the deposits encountered suggests that while historic and modern disturbance have occurred within the site, the potential exists for intact cultural deposits. Although no prehistoric or historic cultural features were identified within the portion of the site examined in 2003, the presence of cultural material in the fairly intact B horizon suggests that intact features extending into this stratum may have survived plowing.

Site 18FR17 is a historically significant archeological site for the information it contains regarding prehistory and early historic Native American culture. It dates from the Paleo-Indian period through the 18th century. The site boundary has never been defined archeologically, though the extent of the site has been extrapolated based upon topographical features. Cultural materials and features identified during numerous studies within the site indicate that portions of 18FR17 contain intact deposits. As much of the site remains unexamined, the potential ability of the site to answer significant research questions is exceptional, especially given the multi-component nature of the site and presence of diagnostic artifacts as early as Paleoindian times.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00005981, 00005984, MDARC16-1, 97002665, 00006808