

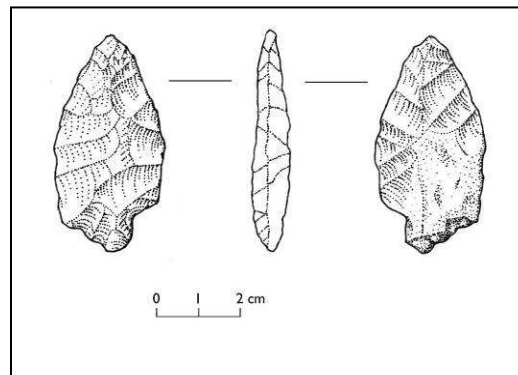


## FACT SHEET

**Anderson Branch Site: Prehistoric Quartz Quarry and Camp  
October 31, 2007**

### Phase I

As part of the Intercounty Connector (ICC) Study, archeologists discovered fragments of projectile points (arrowheads or spear points) and stone flakes from stone tools found in a quartz quarry at the site near MD 97 and MD 28.



### Phase II

Last fall (2006), a second team of archeologists returned to the location to determine if these artifacts represented an important discovery that could add to our knowledge about Maryland prehistory. After excavating several deep holes, they recovered over 25,000 artifacts.

The age of the projectile points suggest that Native Americans may have lived in this area of Maryland at least 5,000 years ago. The variety of artifacts communicate that these prehistoric people not only quarried quartz to fashion into tools at this location, but they may have processed food and utilized their newly made blades and scrapers on freshly caught game.

### Phase III: Today – The Dig

Since starting work in August, archeologists have excavated more than 30 pits across the site, the largest of which are three feet wide, three feet long and four feet deep. The excavation will help answer questions about how the local Native Americans processed the quartz from this location. Archeologists are interested in learning what types of tools were made and used on site, as well as which tools may have been carried away and used elsewhere.



## **ICC Archeological Dig**

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The artifacts found on site also may unlock the mystery of what species of plants and animals were consumed at the quarry/campsite site. Notable finds include:

- A heavily weathered projectile point (from an arrow or dart), which appears to date from either the Late Archaic period (2,700 to 3,400 years ago) or Terminal Archaic period (3,400 to 5,000 years ago).
- Two features have been found on opposing ends of the excavation area. Archeological features are defined as non-portable artifacts, such as hearths, architectural elements or stains in the soil. Both features discovered at the site show evidence of having served as activity or work areas with large amounts of quartz cores, shatter, and flakes, as well as a variety of tools.
- A possible hammer stone was recovered from one of the features. A hammer stone is a rock used to detach flakes from a stone in order to form projectile points or tools and typically show signs of impact damage, such as crushed edges.

### **Next Steps**

When the dig concludes later this fall, an innovative test more akin to forensic science than traditional archeology will be used to lift blood residue from stone scrapers, knives and other tools. The blood residue will then be analyzed, which may reveal the species of animals that were killed and/or butchered with the prehistoric tools. With well-preserved trace amounts of blood protein, the tests may help reconstruct the diet of Native Americans who lived in Montgomery County thousands of years ago.

The findings of the Anderson Branch archeological investigation will be shared with Maryland public through a variety of mechanisms, including:

- ICC Project website ([www.iccproject.com](http://www.iccproject.com))
- Exhibits at public events, such as the Maryland State Fair
- Presentations to students attending Montgomery County schools
- Display at archeology workshop sponsored by the Maryland Historical Trust and Archeology Society of Maryland

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL: SHA's Media Line 410-545-0303**