

Phase III Data Recovery Excavation Route 7/15 Project

Situated near the Norwalk River in southwest Connecticut, a multi-component Native American site was identified in the center of a highway interchange loop. Remarkably intact, it was



assessed as eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places and could not be avoided by transportation improvements. Diagnostic projectile points and a radiocarbon-dated hearth attest to hunting-related activity 4,000 to 5,000 years ago in the Late Archaic period. Early Woodland period use of the site is suggested by two Meadowood projectile points. A much earlier Paleoindian component is suggested by lithic debitage recovered. Site 103-49 established the archaeological sensitivity of the outwash plain

along the Norwalk River. Before colonial settlement in the area, the location of Site 103-49 can best be described as a low rise within a forested plain lying between the river to the west and rolling drumlin hills to the east. Other than the slightly better drainage provided by this slight rise, it was not an especially distinct location. Nonetheless, Native peoples came to this spot over the millennia. The site's survival, despite the construction of a forge and tailor shop on site in the 1890s, followed 100 years later by a highway interchange, suggests that numerous other sites like it may have survived on comparable landforms in the vicinity, despite relatively intense development.

