NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item be marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name QUINEBAUG RIVER PREHISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISTRICT

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Between Route 169 and the Quinebaug River

☐ not for publication

city or town Canterbury ☐ vicinity

state Connecticut code CT county Windham code 015 zip code 06360

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

SHPO 7.14.09

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

CCT /SHPO

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

7.14.09

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

CCT /SHPO

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☒ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain):

for Erika K. Martin Gibbs

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 9/7/09

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
- ☐ public-local
- ■ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
- ■ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
5		sites
		structures
		objects
5	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: camp
INDUSTRY: tool production site
AGRICULTURE: agricultural field
SUBSISTENCE: animal facility
SUBSISTENCE: fishing site

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE: conservation area
AGRICULTURE: agricultural field

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

foundation
walls
roof
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark an "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ■ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ■ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in a ll the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, structure
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHEOLOGY: Prehistoric

Period of Significance
6,000 B.P. - 400 B.P.

Significant Dates
N/A

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
Late Archaic
Woodland

Architect/Builder
N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Building Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ■ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Connecticut SHPO
59 South Prospect Street, Hartford, CT 06106

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 22 acres

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1
Zone Easting Northing

2

3
Zone Easting Northing

4

■ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Brian Jones and Daniel Forrest, Archaeologists, and Bruce Clouette, Historian

organization Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. date June 12, 2009

street & number P.O. Box 543 telephone 860-429-2142

city or town Storrs state CT zip code 06268

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps
A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

street & number 79 Elm Street telephone 860-424-3000

city or town Hartford state CT zip code 06106-5127

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

DESCRIPTION

Summary

The Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District includes 22 acres on a river terrace overlooking the west bank of the Quinebaug River in Canterbury, Connecticut (Photograph 1); the district is contained within the 1,600-acre state-owned Quinebaug River Wildlife Management Area. The land immediately adjacent to the river is wooded, with portions further west open and in use as agricultural fields; a narrow dirt farm road runs through the area (Photographs 2 and 3). The district boundary (Section 7, Figure 2) was delineated to include the publicly-owned portions of five prehistoric sites identified during archaeological surveys undertaken in connection with a wetlands mitigation project; the surveys recommended the five sites as eligible for the National Register, both individually and collectively as an archaeological district. The boundary of the proposed National Register district coincides with the Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District State Archaeological Preserve, designated in 2003. The occupation of the sites is primarily from the Woodland Period (2,700 B.P.-European contact), with some components dating back to the Late Archaic Period (6,000-2,700 B.P.). Cultural material recovered from the sites during subsurface testing (Photographs 4 through 9) includes projectile points, debitage from tool manufacture, and pottery sherds, along with small amounts of charcoal, shell, and calcined bone. The sites appear to have been associated with repeated seasonal camps at which hunting and fishing activities occurred.

Environment

Because of constricting ridges, the Quinebaug River valley at this point is relatively narrow, 1,000 feet wide at the northern end and only 200 feet wide at the southern end. The proposed district is found on a terrace about three to twelve feet above the level of the river. Soils include pedogenic strata developed from Holocene-age alluvium (Suncook and Pootatuck series). The area closest to the river is lightly wooded with hardwood trees and brush, with the interior portion mostly plowed agricultural fields. Small, unnamed seasonal streams flow through the area, creating wetlands.

The location and topography of the district are important in evaluating archaeological material recovered from the component sites. Large-scale archaeological surveys (e.g. Nicholas 1988; McBride and Soulsby 1989) indicate that Connecticut's uplands were home to substantial populations supported by intensive use of a broad spectrum of plant and animal resources. Rather than relying on "specialized" farming or fishing economies, upland peoples likely balanced their resource needs with a variety of seasonally available foodstuffs hunted or collected from a very wide range of habitats. The narrowing of the valley at this point would have likely funneled game animal movements between the broader floodplain environments to the north and south. In addition to prospects of good hunting, people may have been drawn by the narrow river channel itself, which would have made an ideal fish weir location. The stony river bottom and abundance of large boulders in the channel made weir construction much easier in this stretch of the river than any area within two miles north or south.

Large rivers such as the Quinebaug were significant sources of food and important transportation routes in the past. Anadromous fish, including both shad (*Alosa sapissima*) and Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), were seasonally abundant in the Quinebaug River prior to the construction of mill dams in the 19th century. Riverine

wetlands bordering the Quinebaug and other major rivers would have offered numerous economically important plants, such as cattails (*Typha spp.*), bulrushes (*Scirpus spp.*), water lilies (*Nymphaea spp.*) and goosefoots (*Chenopodium spp.*). Associated wetlands and shallow water marshes would have also provided an abundance of edible aquatic and emergent flora, including cattail, bulrush, water lily, blue flag (*Iris versicolor*), smartweeds and knotweeds (*Polygynum spp.*), as well as game animals like moose, beaver and muskrat and migratory water fowl.

Past Appearance

Reconstruction of the appearance of the nominated property in the past must necessarily be somewhat speculative, but based upon the commonly accepted understanding of changes in the land over the time period identified as the period of significance, the following generalizations probably apply:

- At the beginning of the Late Archaic Period (6,000-2,700 B.P.), hemlock co-dominated with oak as the major components of a temperate forest cover. Over the course of the period, hickory replaced hemlock in the forested uplands of southern New England. The expansion of hickory and other nut-bearing trees in the region may have contributed to higher densities of several important terrestrial game species, particularly white-tailed deer and turkey. Glacially-formed ponds scattered along the tributary drainages of the Quinebaug River Basin gradually filled with sediments and organic remains, eventually becoming swamps and then swamp forests. The stratigraphy of the river terrace suggests this period of time is marked by changes in the local conditions on the Quinebaug River floodplain. A period of floodplain aggradation following the initial Native American use of these sites is suggested by buried topsoils overlain by fine sands. Poorly developed buried A-horizons were observed at depths between 50 and 60 centimeters below the present-day ground surface. These buried topsoils are overlain by weakly weathered sediments, marking an interval of more frequent flooding along the Quinebaug River. A regional climatic shift from relatively warmer and drier conditions between 8,000 and 5,000 B.P., to a cooler and wetter pattern between 5,000 and 2,000 B.P., has been noted by several researchers (e.g., McWeeney 1999, Forrest et al. 2006) and this pattern appears to have held for the upper Quinebaug River Valley. Analysis of the landforms on the flooplain indicates that natural levees near the river channel and several small backswamps located along the distal margins of the floodplain/terrace system probably formed during this period. These landscape features appear to have been focal areas of subsequent Woodland Period occupations.

- In the Woodland Period (2,700 B.P.-European contact), chestnut replaced hickory as a major component of the forest cover. Between 2,000 and 1,000 B.P. average temperature in the region rose approximately 1 degree centigrade (McWeeney 1999). This interval is correlated with the formation of stable soils in the Connecticut River Valley near Hartford (Forrest et al. 2006), suggesting reduced floodplain sedimentation and possibly overall drier conditions. The present-day patchwork of small marshes along tributary drainages and relatively dry

terrace surfaces likely reflects the conditions at the time the Woodland Period occupations. The floodplain was likely forested, with silver maple expected to be most common within backswamps and other poorly-drained sections and red maple more abundant along the levees' terrace treads. The understory vegetation would have included silky dogwood, alder, arrowwood and a variety of herbaceous species.

- European use of this land, beginning about 1700, resulted in the clearing of forest for agricultural fields, pastures, and meadow. There is no evidence of historic or modern-period construction within the district and the area surrounding this section of the Quinebaug River Valley retains a rural character. Industrial development of the Quinebaug River Valley in the nineteenth century resulted in the construction of several mills and dams upstream and downstream of the archaeological district. The regulation of flood waters and dam construction expanded significantly in the wake of a catastrophic flood in 1955. Local floodplain hydrology is now strongly influenced by the Rajak Dam, roughly 3.5 miles upriver in Town of Danielson and the Aspinook Dam, five miles downriver in Jewett City.

Physical Characteristics

The district, as nominated, is an elongated area on a terrace and floodplain above the west bank of the Quinebaug River; it is located east of State Route 169 about a mile (1.6 kilometers) north of the center of Canterbury. The district's long axis is oriented in a northeast to southwest direction. In addition, the district includes a short north-south "tail" at the south end that surrounds a portion of the farm road that provides access to the area. Five prehistoric archaeological sites collectively make up the district:

- **Site 22-29**. This site was identified during archaeological testing along the sides of an existing dirt access road. The site extends over the entire 20 to 25-meter wide floodplain in this section of the district, encompassing an area of approximately 0.3 hectares (0.75 acres). Elevations on the floodplain surface range between 1.2 and 2.1 meters (4 to 7 feet) above mean water height for the Quinebaug River. The site is bounded to the northwest by a steep slope leading upward to a large kame terrace. The northern site boundary is a riparian wetland formed by the confluence of a small tributary stream and the Quinebaug River. The southern boundary is arbitrarily placed at the limit of subsurface testing. The site is bordered to the east by the Quinebaug River. Prehistoric-period artifacts were recovered over a 140-meter-long section of the access road. There are at least two temporal components. At the northern end is a Late Woodland-period occupation on the top of a small knoll, as evidenced by a Levanna point and chert and quartzite flakes; fragments of wood charcoal were also recovered, suggesting the likely presence of cooking hearths or other cultural features in this section of the site. The knoll overlooks an unnamed tributary drainage and small wetland basin. In the southern portion of the site, an earlier occupation is evidenced by a fragment of an atlatl weight, rhyolite, felsite, and quartzite flakes, and fragments of calcined bone; these

artifacts appear to date to the Late or Terminal Archaic periods (5,000-2,700 B.P.). An even earlier occupation is suggested by deeply buried quartzite flakes found beneath a buried topsoil horizon.

- **Site 22-30**. This site is located along the access road just north of Site 22-29 and on the opposite side of the small tributary drainage. As with Site 22-29, the site is located on a section of the active river floodplain with elevations ranging between 1.5 and 2.4 meters above mean water height within the Quinebaug River. The site is bounded to the north and south by small tributary drainages, to the east by the Quinebaug River, and to the west by a small wetland basin. Total site area is estimated at approximately 0.3 hectares (0.75 acres). A small but diverse assemblage of debitage was recovered during subsurface investigations at Site 22-30, including jasper that was most likely transported from eastern Pennsylvania. Additional lithic materials represented in the assemblage include gray and black cherts, chalcedony, Plainfield Quartzite, and quartz. Debitage from non-local materials (cherts, chalcedony, and jasper) is confined to late-stage retouch and resharpening flakes, indicating that finished tools fashioned from these materials were modified, not manufactured, at the site. Debitage from quartz and quartzite include a full range of early to late-stage reduction types, with quartzite flakes weighted towards secondary biface-thinning. The quartzite assemblage is consistent with the production of knives or projectile points from rough bifacial preforms at the site. Although no diagnostic tools made from jasper were found here, the regional pattern of lithic material use suggests the jasper flakes are likely associated with a late Middle Woodland period component (2,000 to 1,200 B.P.) Three pieces of Woodland-period undecorated mineral-tempered Native-American pottery were also found, as well as a piece of shell. As with Site 22-29, there was evidence of both a Woodland Period occupation and an older and deeply buried occupation, possibly predating 5,000 B.P. All of the deeply buried artifacts are quartz or quartzite, indicating that only local lithic materials were utilized during the earliest documented phases of site occupation.

- **Site 22-31**. This site occupies a large portion of a low terrace located just northwest of the Quinebaug River floodplain and is by far the largest site within the proposed district. The site encompasses approximately 2.6 hectares (6.4 acres). The river channel in this section of the valley is oriented along a northeast-southwest axis. The terrace surface sits roughly 1.2 to 2.0 meters (4.0 to 6.5 feet) above the adjacent floodplain and 2.4 to 3.2 meters (7.9 to 13.0 feet) above mean water height in the Quinebaug River. The northeastern section of Site 22-31 coincides with a linear knoll oriented parallel to the river channel. This knoll rises two meters (6.5 feet) above the adjacent sections of the terrace tread, and is the most notable topographic feature with the district boundaries. Numerous projectile points, knife fragments, bifaces, scrapers, and drills were recovered during a systematic inspection of the plowed terrace surface and during subsurface testing. Projectile points include eight Late Woodland-period Levanna and two Madison specimens, with estimated date ranges of 1,200 to 600 B.P. All of the Levanna points were manufactured from locally available lithic materials - seven from

quartz and one from Plainfield Quartzite. One of the two Madison points was fashioned from a piece of gray chert of from an undetermined but clearly exotic source. The second Madison point was manufactured from the local Plainfield Quartzite.

Late Woodland-period artifacts are concentrated in two sections of the site. A small area at the southern end of the site borders an unnamed tributary stream which drains the adjacent sections of the high Pleistocene-age kame terraces to the north of the site. One Madison and three Levanna points were recovered in this section along with a Levanna-type drill and a small number of quartz and chert flakes. Quartz debitage from this area suggests local stream cobbles were exploited to produce both bifacial and unifacial tools. The full range of quartz debitage types representing cobble reduction through tool retouch were recovered in this section of the site. The small chert assemblage is heavily weighted towards bifacial retouch flakes, indicating that finished tools were resharpened or modified in the area. The second area of Late Woodland-period artifact concentration is at the northen end of the site, where a long linear knoll rises above the surrounding terrace surface. The four remaining Levanna points, the quartzite Madison point, and a dozen quartz scrapers produced from thick flakes were recovered from the knoll top. Seven retouched flakes and fifteen broken or rejected bifaces indicate a variety of tasks were undertaken on the knoll, consistent with a longer period of occupation. A series of very small "bird points" were recovered in close spatial association with three quartz Levanna points near the northern end of the site. A small cooking hearth excavated nearby yielded an accelerator mass spectrometer (AMS) date of 850 +/- 40 B.P., representing the first dated context for these small projectile points in eastern Connecticut.

An Early Woodland-period component at Site 22-31 is indicated by the recovery of a single chert end scraper produced by steep retouch along the base of a Meadowood cache blade. The material from which this scraper was made is a visually consistent with Onondaga Formation Chert. A Middle Archaic-period component of the site is evidenced by a single Plainfield Quartzite Neville projectile point (8,000 to 7,000 B.P.) surface-collected from the knoll top, and two rhyolite artifacts found on the surface of a small colluvial fan at the northwestern edge of the terrace. A large rhyolite knife blade consistent with Middle Archaic-period knives recovered from southeastern Connecticut and a rhyolite drill fashioned from a bifacial thinning flake were surface-collected from the fan. No Woodland or Late Archaic-period diagnostic artifacts made from rhyolite were recovered from Site 22-31, and it appears the use of this Boston Basin-derived material was confined to the Middle Archaic occupation(s).

- **Site 22-32**. This small site is located east of Site 22-31, on the active Quinebaug River floodplain. The site encompasses an area of 0.1 hectares (0.25 acres) with the long axis of the site oriented parallel to the river channel. The site is bounded by a relict river channel to the east, and sterile shovel test pits to the north, south, and west. The ground elevation of the

local floodplain surface slopes gently downward to the west (away from the river) in the site area, and drainage conditions observed during the investigations suggest the lands between Sites 22-31 on the terrace and 22-32 on the floodplain may have been too wet for occupation. Among the artifacts recovered from Site 22-32 are a quartz biface and a gray chert end scraper consistent with Early Woodland-period scraper forms. The end scraper was manufactured on a well-thinned biface similar in form to Early Woodland Meadowood cache blades and exhibits evidence of steep retouch along a transversely snapped edge. The chert from which this tool was fashioned is a dolomitic chert visually consistent with the Onondaga Formation cherts favored for the production of Meadowood blades. The majority of the debitage assemblage from the site consists of Plainfield Quartzite biface thinning flakes, with smaller numbers of quartz shatter, and two small rhyolite bifacial retouch flakes. No chert debitage was recovered during the testing at this site. Two pieces of charcoal were found at depths of 65 and 80 centimeters; they may be associated with a small deeply buried Plainfield Quartzite assemblage identified during subsurface testing.

- **Site 22-33** . This small site lies just to the south of Site 22-32 on the floodplain and is separated from that site by sterile shovel test pits. The site is bounded to the east by a relict river channel, to the south by a riparian wetland formed by a small tributary stream. The western boundary is defined by sterile test pits coinciding with a low-lying and consistently wet section of the floodplain. The site encompasses an area just under 0.2 hectares (0.4 acres), with the long axis oriented parallel to the Quinebaug River channel. Stone tools diagnostic of the Late Archaic, Middle Woodland, and Late Woodland periods were recovered from this site, including a Squibnocket Triangle quartz point (4,300 to 4,100 B.P.), a Jack's Reef Pentagonal point (2,000 to 1,200 B.P.) made from jasper, and two quartz Levanna points (1,200 to 600 B.P.). In addition, two small sherds of undecorated mineral-tempered pottery and several fragments of charcoal were associated with a mottled soil stain, a possible cultural feature. The debitage from the site includes quartz, Plainfield Quartzite, jasper, and basalt flakes. As is consistent with the patterns noted at the other district sites, biface thinning flakes are very well-represented in the quartzite assemblage from Site 22-33. The handful of jasper artifacts, aside from the Jack's Reef projectile point, are all resharpening flakes from the modification of finished bifacial tools. A deeply buried component at this site was identified at depths exceeding one meter (3.3 feet). The artifacts recovered from this component include three basalt flakes and six quartzite flakes found within a buried A-horizon. The stratigraphic context of these finds is consistent with the deeply buried components at the other district sites.

Period of Occupation and Archaeological Cultures

The cultural material recovered from the five sites indicate Native-American occupation from the Late Archaic Period (6,000-2,700 B.P.) through the Woodland Period (2,700 B.P.-European contact). Estimates of the age of artifacts were based upon form and stratigraphy. For example, the atlatl weight discovered at Site 22-29 is characteristic of the Late Archaic Period, while the Levanna point from that site is a Woodland-Period artifact typical of 1,200-600 B.P.; the site's good stratigraphy supports an early date for deeply buried quartzite artifacts at the site. Although the investigations did not use other methods of dating, the presence of charcoal alongside some of the artifacts shows the potential for the use of carbon-dating if additional studies are undertaken.

The cultural contexts of Northeastern Native Americans are discussed in detail in Section 8. Briefly, the Late Archaic Period is believed to have been one of cultural fluorescence, with increases in population levels, long-distance exchange networks, and elaborate mortuary traditions (Ritchie 1969a, 1969b; Snow 1980). Research in northeastern Connecticut suggests that large camps were located near major inland wetlands, with smaller, more temporary, and more specialized sites in the surrounding upland interior (McBride and Soulsby 1989). This pattern contrasts with the contemporary settlement patterns in the lower Connecticut River Valley, where long-term habitation sites are concentrated along river terraces (McBride 1984). Long-term seasonal occupation of camps in both the Quinebaug and Connecticut river valleys suggests a degree of stability and territoriality lacking in earlier time periods (McBride 1984). The succeeding Woodland Period was characterized by the development of agriculture (maize, beans, and squash), an increased use of pottery, investment in food-storage facilities, and increasing complexity of burial rituals. Socially, the Woodland Period was marked by greater sedentism and larger and more complex social groups. Early Europeans identified a number of political groups in southern New England that had (or claimed) particular geographical boundaries, among them the Mohegans, Pequots, Narragansetts, and Nipmucks. All of the foregoing had alliances or tributary relations with the Quinebaug people who occupied the area of the nominated property at the time of European contact.

Natural and Cultural Disturbance and Site Integrity

The Quinebaug River, like all the major watercourses of northeastern Connecticut, has experienced periodic floods that have altered the terraced valley through which it flows, resulting in both the deposition of waterborne silts and sands and erosion. It is to be expected, then, that archaeological sites that once existed (as well as additional portions of the ones described herein) have been destroyed by river action. Evidence of erosion within the district sites is apparent in the identification of buried topsoils (A horizons) in only *some* sections of the site areas. These soils mark periods of reduce alluvial deposition that would have allowed for stable vegetated surfaces to develop on the floodplain. As these conditions are directly tied to the hydrology of the Quinebaug River, they should have been synchronous across the district sites. Where the buried soils are absent, it is most likely due to erosion of the floodplain sediments during flood events. Erosion in these contexts is likely to have been due to the formation of small channels and sinks during floodwater draw-down and appears to have been sufficient to remove the thin incipient soil horizons in affected areas. Although erosion has clearly affected portions of all the sites, the overall stratigraphic context of the archaeological deposits has not been compromised to a significant degree. The relatively minor extent of erosion is indicated by the presence of deeply buried and intact archaeological components

at all of the district sites. Otherwise, ground disturbance within the nominated area has been relatively minimal. Agricultural activities have been confined to a generally shallow plowzone, and only a small portion of the area has been affected by the construction and use of the farm road.

Sites 22-29 and 22-30 were protected from impacts during the creation of the wetland in 2002 by covering the existing ground surface with geotextile material and placing 12 or more inches of gravel on top to serve as a buffer against the weight and vibration of heavy construction vehicles. Topsoil from Site 22-31 was removed and redistributed, in part, on the surfaces of Site 22-32 and Site 22-33. Surface-collection of artifacts from Site 22-31 preceded this activity, as did detailed sampling of subsurface remains at Site 22-32 and Site 22-33. Along with a carefully mapped record of the distribution of topsoil, this sampling will allow future studies to distinguish *in situ* artifacts from any cultural material deposited with the redistributed topsoil.

Archaeological Investigations

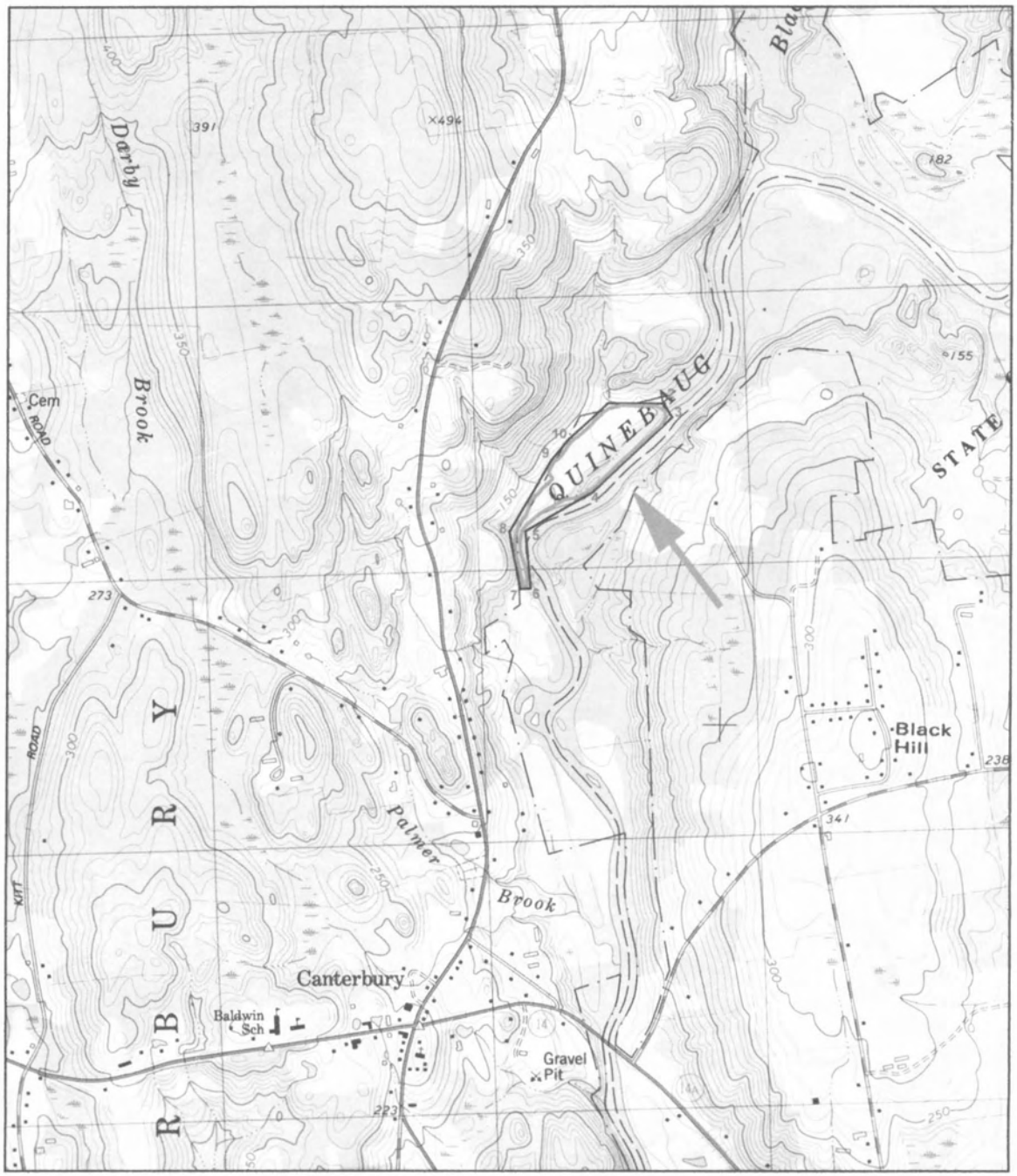
In 2001, a Phase I Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey of the area that includes the district was undertaken by Public Archaeology Survey Team, Inc. in connection with a proposed wetland mitigation project (Forrest et al. 2007). A total of 115 shovel test pits were excavated, of which 30 yielded cultural material. Five potentially National Register-eligible prehistoric sites were identified during this survey: Site 22-27, Site 22-28, Site 22-29, Site 22-30, and Site 22-31. In addition, three geological cores were obtained in order to better understand riverine processes in this vicinity. The following year, the same investigators returned to undertake a Phase II Intensive Archaeological Survey of the five sites. Additional shovel test pits were placed at five-meter intervals at each of the Phase I sites. Site 22-27 and Site 22-28 were judged to be ineligible for National Register listing; the other three sites, however, were recommended as eligible for the Register based upon Criterion D, the ability to yield information important in prehistory.

In 2002, changes to the impact area of the proposed wetland mitigation led to additional archaeological testing. Two more sites were identified, Site 22-32 and Site 22-33, and were recommended as eligible for listing on the National Register. Based on the information from these investigations, the publicly owned area surrounding the five sites was designated a State Archaeological Preserve in 2003. All investigations were carried out in accordance with the State Historic Preservation Office's *Environmental Review Primer for Connecticut's Archaeological Resources* (Poirier 1987).

Contributing and Noncontributing Resources

The count of resources includes the five sites identified during the archaeological investigations: Site 22-29, Site 22-30, Site 22-31, Site 22-32, and Site 22-33.

Figure 1: Nominated property plotted on USGS Plainfield Quadrangle, 7.5 Minute Series.

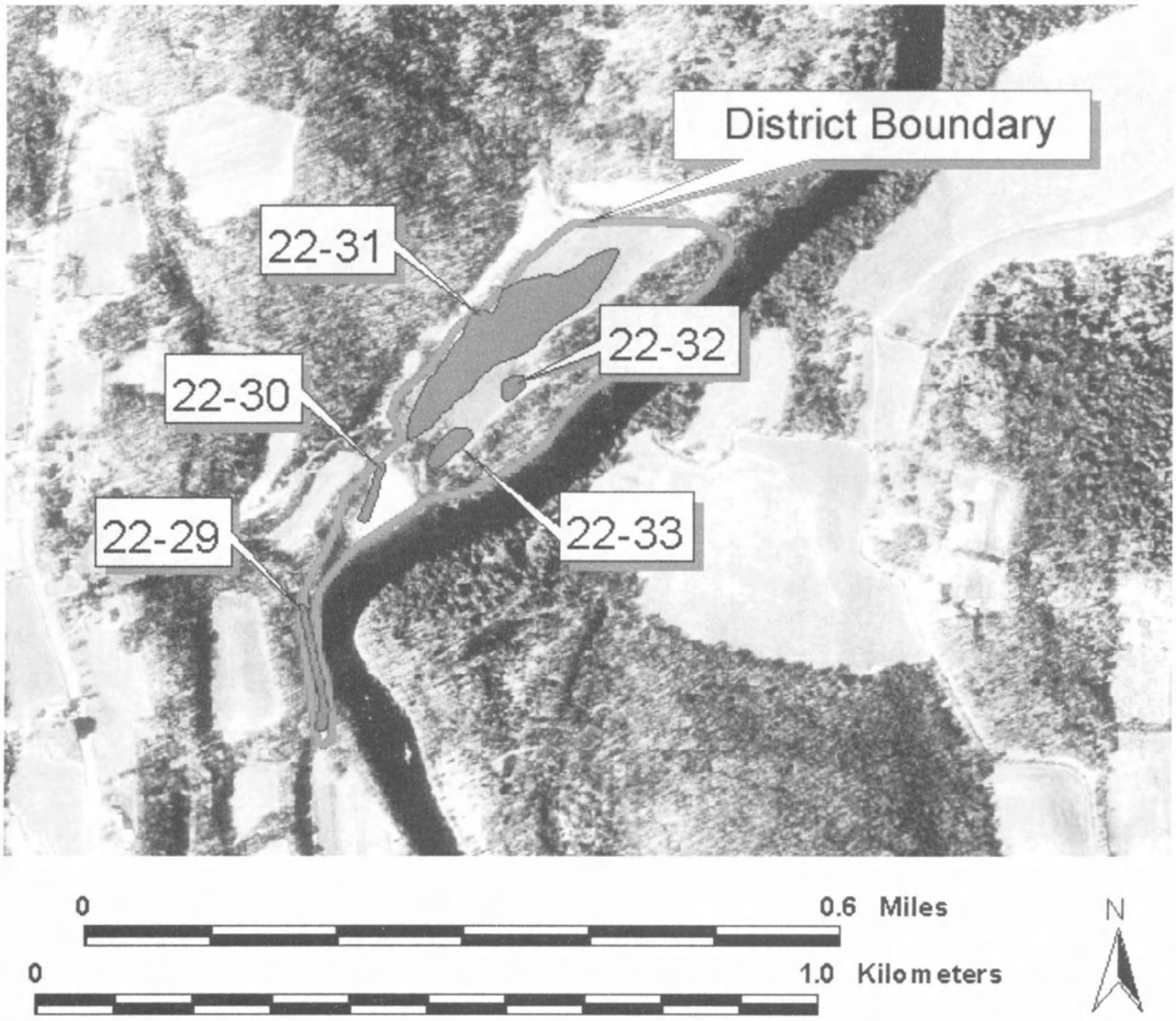


2000 feet

500 meters

North

Figure 2: **Map of archaeological district, showing boundary and location of component archaeological sites on 1991 aerial photograph.**



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District is significant because of the potential of its component sites to yield important information about Native American lifeways over a broad period of time (Criterion D). Archaeological surveys at the five sites have demonstrated their potential to yield important information about regional and local prehistory. Specifically, the data have established the potential to address three important research themes: prehistoric exchange and communication routes, interior riverine adaptations, and interior settlement organization. Information regarding prehistoric exchange is preserved in the lithic material assemblages from all five sites. While some data reflect Archaic Period patterns of raw material acquisition, most pertain to the temporal context of the Woodland Period (ca. 2,700 - 400 B.P.). The artifact assemblages include a variety of both local and exotic raw materials that indicate local economic adaptations as well as broad-ranging social networks. Adaptations to the riverine habitat are expressed in the organization of the sites in space and in their material contents which are associated with a variety of processing tasks. The location and character of the sites also provide information relevant to developing a better understanding of upland settlement organization, particularly during the Woodland Period. Such information is extremely limited at this time, and any new body of data is likely to provide important new insights regarding seasonal residential mobility and residential groups size as these relate to the transition from a hunting-and-gathering way of life to one which increasingly incorporated horticulture.

As a partially wooded terrace overlooking a river undisturbed by modern development, the district also possesses significance under Criterion A. The district's present appearance resembles that of the Woodland Period, and the fishing, hunting, and other human activities that took place there can be easily imagined.

Archaeological Context

While the district's sites have produced evidence of Archaic Period material culture, their significance lies primarily in the temporal context of the Woodland Period (ca. 2,700 - 400 B.P.) from which archaeological remains are most abundant. Regionally, this period reflects the transition from a hunting-and-gathering way of life to one increasingly invested in the horticulture of maize, beans and squash. While evidence for large, horticultural-based village sites exists after about A.D. 1,300 in Connecticut's central valley, little data regarding the importance of horticulture and its possible effects on social organization to upland riverine groups living in areas like the Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District currently exists.

Southern New England has been occupied by people for at least 11,000 years. The area was first colonized by Paleoindians who entered New England shortly before the end of the last Ice Age (Spiess et al. 1998). At that time, southern New England was covered in pine-spruce forest and was more similar to subarctic areas of Canada than modern-day Connecticut (McWeeney 1999). Very few people lived in the region then – perhaps as few as 100 individuals in extended family camps of 30 or so spread across the entire state. These people were likely the ancestors of all later Native groups. The Paleoindians are known to have been very mobile people. The stone materials they used often came from sources over 100 miles away from the archaeological sites at which they were

found. Because so few people likely lived in the region it is unlikely that they acquired these materials through trade (Meltzer 1989). Rather, they seem to have quarried them themselves during their wide-ranging annual movements. To survive, Paleoindians must have taken advantage of a variety of plant and animal resources. They probably hunted caribou and moose as well as small animals like beaver and muskrats. They may have hunted seals along the coast, and probably fished for salmon (Jones 1998), perhaps even along the Quinebaug.

About 10,000 years ago the Ice Age came to an end; however, the climate and environment did not take on its modern character until about 5,000 years ago. Early Archaic archaeological sites, those predating 8,000 years ago, are very rare across southern New England (Forrest 1999). Nevertheless, there is some evidence that daily life was becoming more complex in eastern Connecticut. One large site recently found on the Mashantucket Pequot Reservation in Ledyard, Connecticut, provides evidence for the construction of relatively large, semi-subterranean living structures, probably used for winter shelter (Jones and Forrest 2003). The food remains recovered there suggest a focus on wetland plant foods and hazelnut. Deer, turtle, beaver and muskrat were probably also taken, although faunal remains are poorly preserved.

Archaeological sites dating after 8,000 years ago are much more common in the region. During the Middle and Late Archaic periods local stone quarries of quartzite were routinely used, indicating a familiarity with and reliance on more local raw materials for stone tool manufacture (Jones 1999). At this time oak forests spread across the state, and it is likely that deer, bear and turkey became more common, but small game, fish and plant foods probably remained important in the diet. Elsewhere in New England relatively large camps dating to this period have been excavated. Some of these are believed to be fishing camps because they are located along waterfalls and other ideal locations to catch fish (Dincauze 1976). While a variety of fish were probably caught, group fishing was probably focused on anadromous fish such as salmon, shad, alewife, and lamprey eels. It was during this time that the resources of the Quinebaug River probably began to support larger local Native populations.

The hunting-and-gathering way of life continued largely unchanged until about 3,500 years ago. During the Terminal Archaic Period, human population density in the region appears to have increased, and social relations between groups likely became more complex. It was around this time that the regional exchange of goods, such as copper and soapstone, began (Leveillee 1999). People also increasingly utilized small, seedy plant resources such as goosefoot. Goosefoot is a highly nutritious plant food, but is difficult to gather. Its use suggests that local populations had a more limited access to other, more easily gathered and processed resources. In short, Native communities were beginning to become more packed into the landscape, reducing mobility, and consequently direct access to the same variety of resources they once enjoyed.

After 2,700 years ago, during the Woodland Period, pottery was increasingly used by Native people in the region, replacing bulky soapstone bowls and platters. It was about this time that evidence for the intensive use of shellfish also increased (Bernstein 1990). To some researchers, the use of pottery to process foods and the introduction of shellfish to the diet are indicators of population stress and reduced foraging territories (Cohen 1977). Large underground storage features are more common at sites after this time as well, suggesting increased efforts to hoard and preserve food for lean months by groups with limited access to other seasonal foraging territories (Jones 2002). There is some evidence that hickory nuts and even acorns (which require substantial processing for safe human consumption) became an increasingly important part of the diet at this time. In general, the archaeological record suggests an intensification in the use of wild plant foods throughout the Early and Middle Woodland periods (until about 1000 years ago). This might have even resulted in the first experiments with small-scale gardening (horticulture) of some native plant species. During the Early and Middle Woodland periods

(ca. 2,700-1000 B.P.), evidence for more formalized patterns of production and exchange are first evident, particularly in the occurrence of caches of lithic trade blanks (Calogero and Philpotts 2006).

The Native American way of life we are most familiar with in New England, based on the planting of maize, beans and squash (the Three Sisters), developed during the Late Woodland Period, beginning about 1,000 years ago (Feder 1999). The transition to a gardening way of life appears to have been very gradual. By about A.D. 1,300, some communities along the Connecticut River Valley probably developed village-based communities associated with large fields of corn (Lavin 1988). The archaeological evidence along the Connecticut coast suggests that gardening never became very important. These communities continued to follow a largely hunting-and-gathering way of life focused largely on a rich marine food base, perhaps supplemented by small family gardens. In the eastern and western uplands of Connecticut, where the growing season is shorter than it is in the central Connecticut River Valley, relatively small hamlet-based communities probably also planted family gardens to supplement their hunting and gathering way of life (Handsman and Maymon 1987). Only during periods of political upheaval, such as when war threatened, would such groups likely have formed larger, village-based communities. No large Native American village sites have been found in the Quinebaug River Valley, but only a small amount of archaeological work has been done in the region, so their presence cannot be ruled out.

Categories of Archaeological Information

The major categories of archaeological information preserved at the District sites include lithic raw material selection and lithic sources; tool classes and associated processing tasks; site size, inter-site and intra-site organization; and spatial relationships between the sites and natural features and ecological habitats. Among these, lithic raw material use is likely most important to developing a better understanding of changing patterns of social interaction that developed during the Woodland Period. Lithic raw materials utilized and discarded at the sites reflect a focus on locally available sources, but a significant proportion of raw material reflects very distant source areas. It is assumed that these materials entered the site through contemporary social exchange mechanisms. Specifically, preliminary analysis suggests that raw materials reflect sources in western and eastern New York State, eastern Pennsylvania and eastern Massachusetts. These broad-ranging exchange routes are assumed to reflect the development of formalized patterns of exchange during the Woodland Period that developed as an adaptation to an increasingly complex social environment.

Regarding site spatial organization and patterns of land use, the five sites that contribute to the Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District reflect a diversity of site uses in a variety of local habitats. Expansive upland areas above the river provided dry ground for long-term and potentially large-scale habitations in close proximity to upland, wetland and riverine resource areas. Sites positioned adjacent to the narrows were most likely used by groups taking advantage of the excellent fish weir location provided by this section of the river. Finally, sites on the floodplain itself indicate habitual use of its many resources by human foragers over millennia, although the greatest period of activity occurred during the last 2,700 or so years.

Research Questions

The presence of non-local lithic raw materials at the District sites indicates that social and economic relations between Native groups were becoming more complex during the Woodland Period, even in the relatively remote uplands. Trade in exotic materials was likely prompted by an increased desire to establish social connections with other groups, rather than out of an economic need for better-quality stone. The formation of more complex social networks probably reflects increased human population density in the region and the need to establish working political relationships with one's neighbors. To date, so few sites dating to the Woodland Period have been scientifically examined in the uplands of eastern Connecticut, that very little data regarding such important social and demographic changes exists. The sites comprising the Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District have established the potential to provide significant new information.

Conclusions

Data collected from the survey of the Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District sites suggests that Woodland Period land use was neither intensive nor large-scale. It is therefore unlikely that this part of the river ever supported large, permanent villages, although the presence of such sites elsewhere cannot be entirely ruled out. Instead, the archaeological survey suggests that the District sites made relatively non-intensive, small-scale use of the river's habitats, even during the period when a horticultural economy based on maize, beans and squash was well-established in the area. It is likely that this "low-intensity" economy represented an effective adaptation to the region's relatively dispersed resources, one that had been established millennia before by the region's Archaic hunting-and-gathering population. Despite the lack of compelling evidence for intensive social and economic activity, evidence from the sites indicates that its occupants took part in wide-ranging exchange systems that encompassed a large portion of northeastern North America. This apparent contradiction between "low-intensity" local adaptations and participation in complex systems of exchange merits further study. Archaeological work in this important and poorly understood part of the state will certainly provide a clearer picture of the dynamic human response to the unique social, political and economic environments of southern New England's uplands.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property includes the portion of the state-owned Quinebaug River Wildlife Management Area that is designated as the Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District State Archaeological Preserve. The boundary is indicated on the accompanying map (Section 7, Figure 2).

Boundary Justification:

The boundary for the nominated property, which coincides with that of the State Archaeological Preserve, was determined by means of an intensive archaeological reconnaissance survey of the area. The probable extent of the five identified sites formed the basis for drawing the Preserve boundary. It is probable that similar sites lie outside of the nominated property, but this could not be verified, since the testing was confined to publicly owned land.

UTM References:

1: 19.253480.4622600
2: 19.253690.4622580
3: 19.253720.4622520
4: 19.253410.4622260
5: 19.253160.4622200
6: 19.253190.4621930
7: 19.253160.4621930
8: 19.253120.4622160
9: 19.253270.4622400
10: 19.253340.4622480

All photographs:

1. Quinebaug River Prehistoric Archaeological District
2. Canterbury, Windham County, Connecticut
3. PAST, Inc. Photograph
4. March 2003
5. Digital photographs; prints prepared with Kodak 10 Series™ pigmented-ink cartridges and Kodak Ultra HP Premium Plus™ paper

Captions:

1. Typical view of the Quinebaug River from the archaeological district, just north of Site 22-29, camera facing north.

2. South portion of Site 22-30, camera facing north.

3. Middle portion of Site 22-31, looking north toward Site 22-33.

4. Squibnocket triangular projectile point of the type recovered from Site 22-29, Site 22-31, and Site 22-33.

5. Gneiss or greenstone notched atlatl weight (banner stone) blank from Site 22-29.

6. Early Woodland period bifacial end-scraper from surface collection at Site 22-31.

7. Middle Woodland period Jack's Reef Pentagonal point made from jasper; Site 22-33.

8. Late Woodland period projectile points from Site 22-31. A - Gray chert Madison Triangle from Surface Collection. B - Quartz Levanna Triangle from Surface Collection. C - Quartzite Levanna Triangle from test pit. D - Quartz Levanna Triangle from Surface Collection.

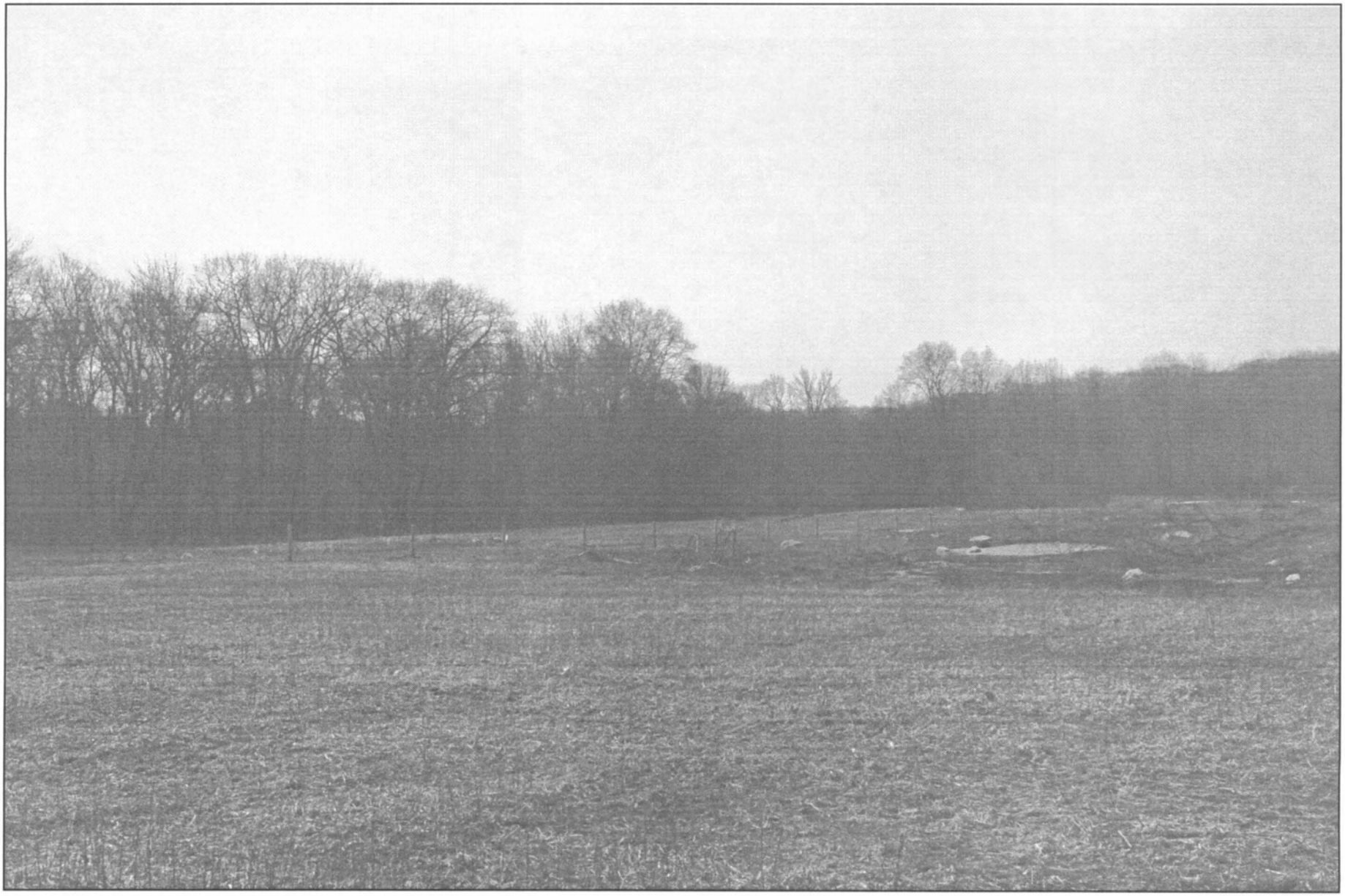
9. Small Late Woodland period projectile points ("Bird points") from Site 22-31. A - Small quartz triangle from Surface Collection. B -Small quartzite stemmed point from test pit, probably reworked from Levanna Triangle. C - Small quartz triangle from Surface Collection.

10. Late Woodland-period Quartzite Levanna-style drill from Site 22-31.

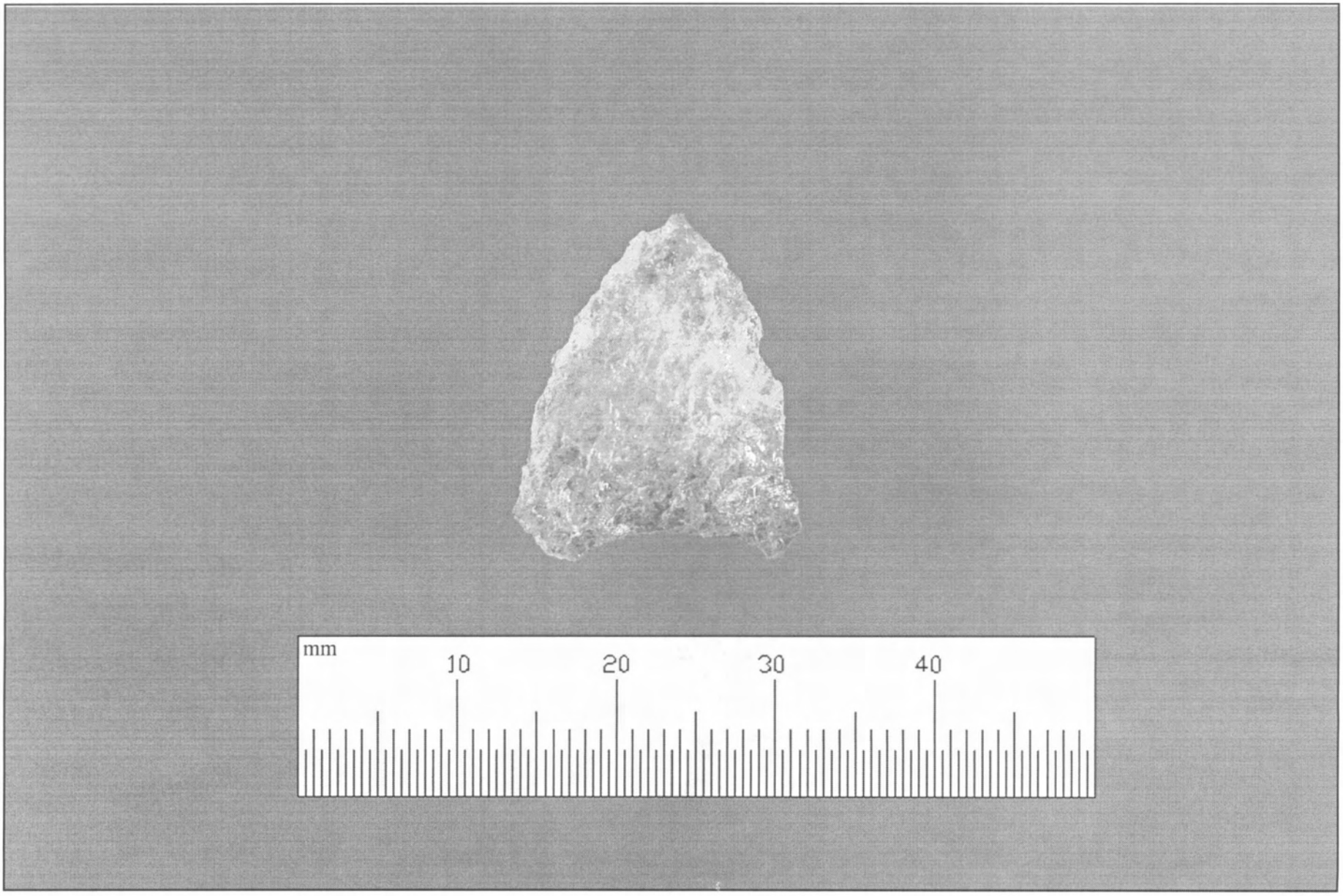
11. Native American mineral-tempered pottery sherds, recovered from Site 22-30 and Site 22-33.

1: Typical view of the Quinebaug River from the archaeological district, just north of Site 22-29, camera facing north.

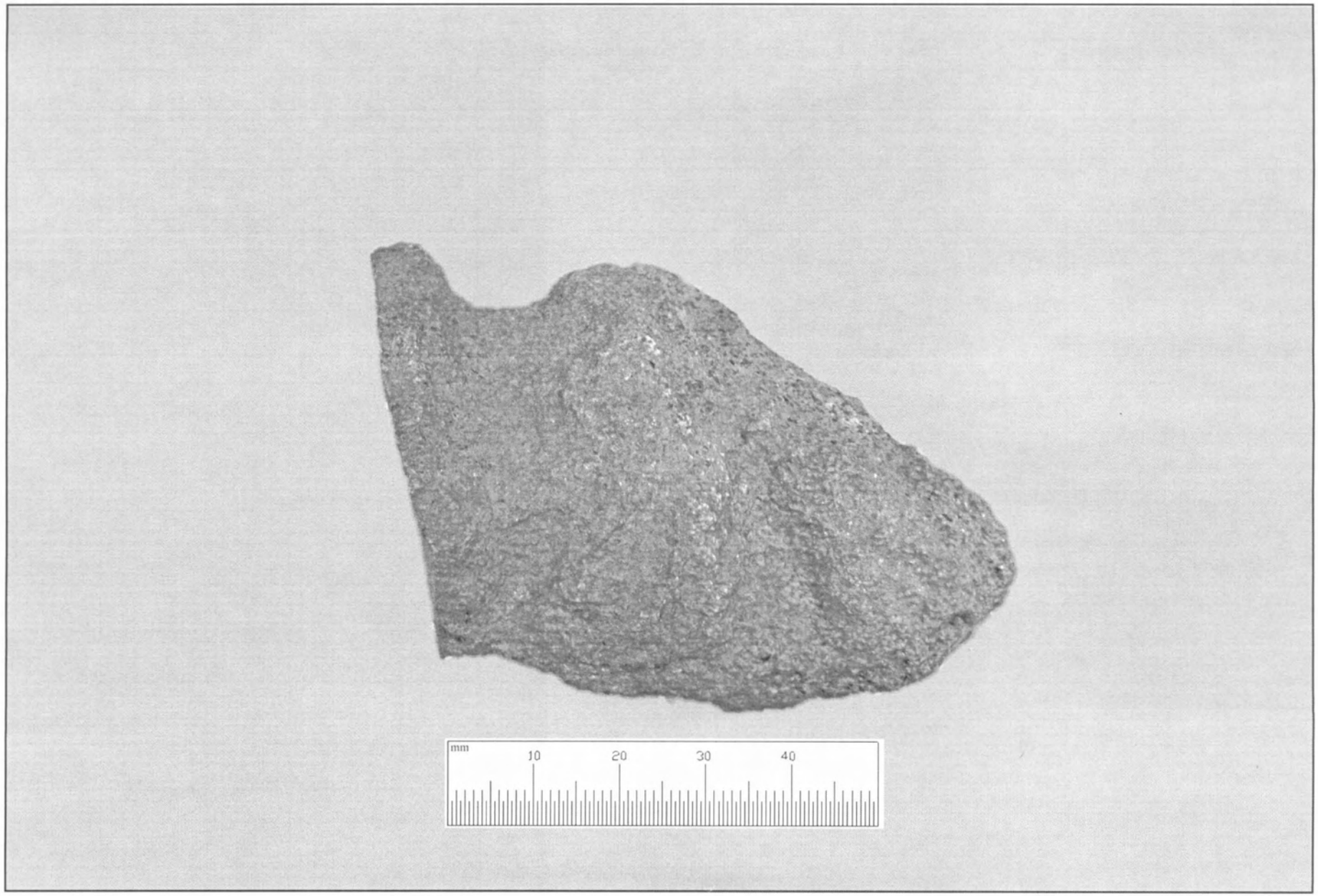
2: South portion of Site 22-30, camera facing north.



3: Middle portion of Site 22-31, looking north toward Site 22-33.



4: Squibnocket triangular projectile point of the type recovered from Site 22-29, Site 22-31, and Site 22-33.



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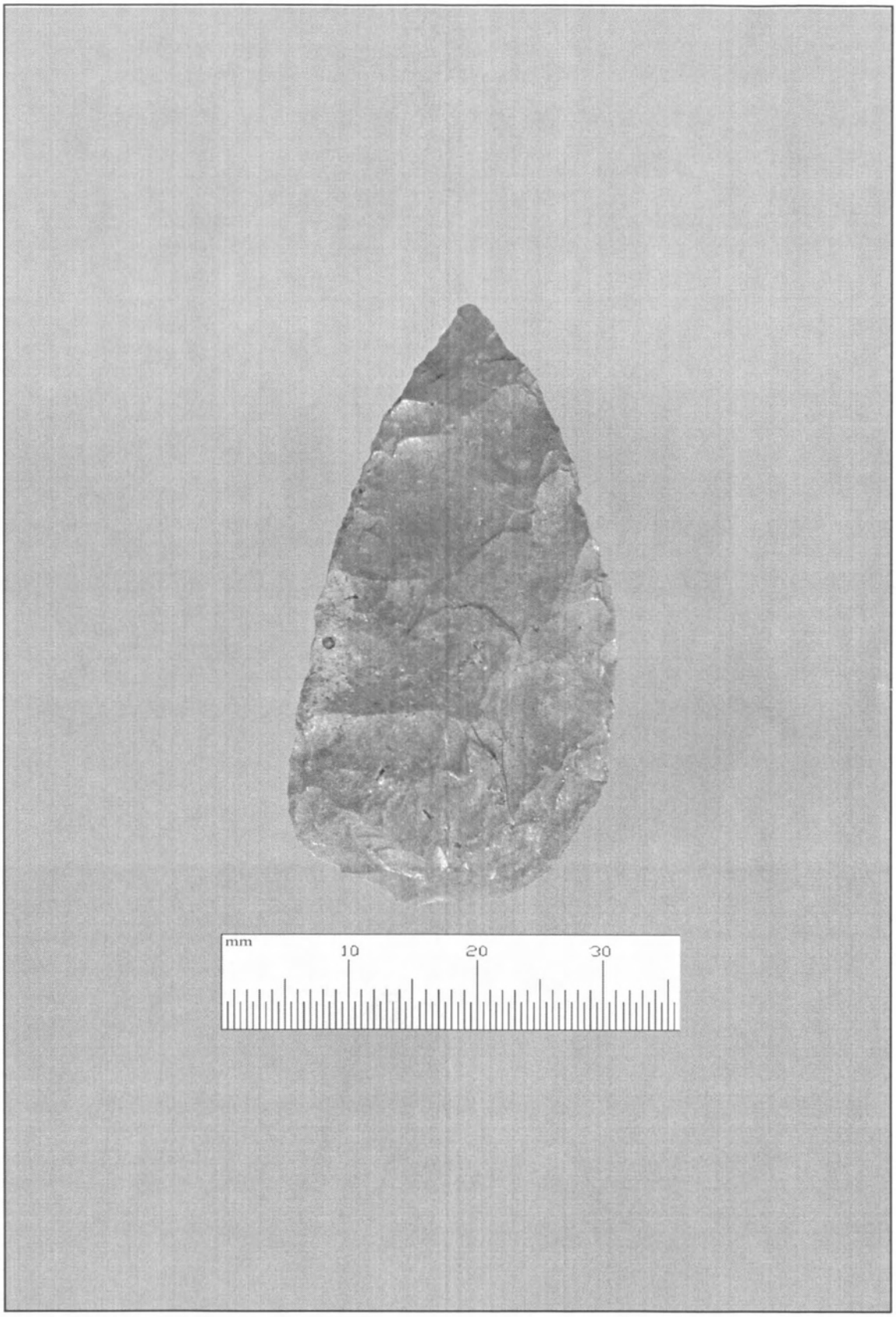

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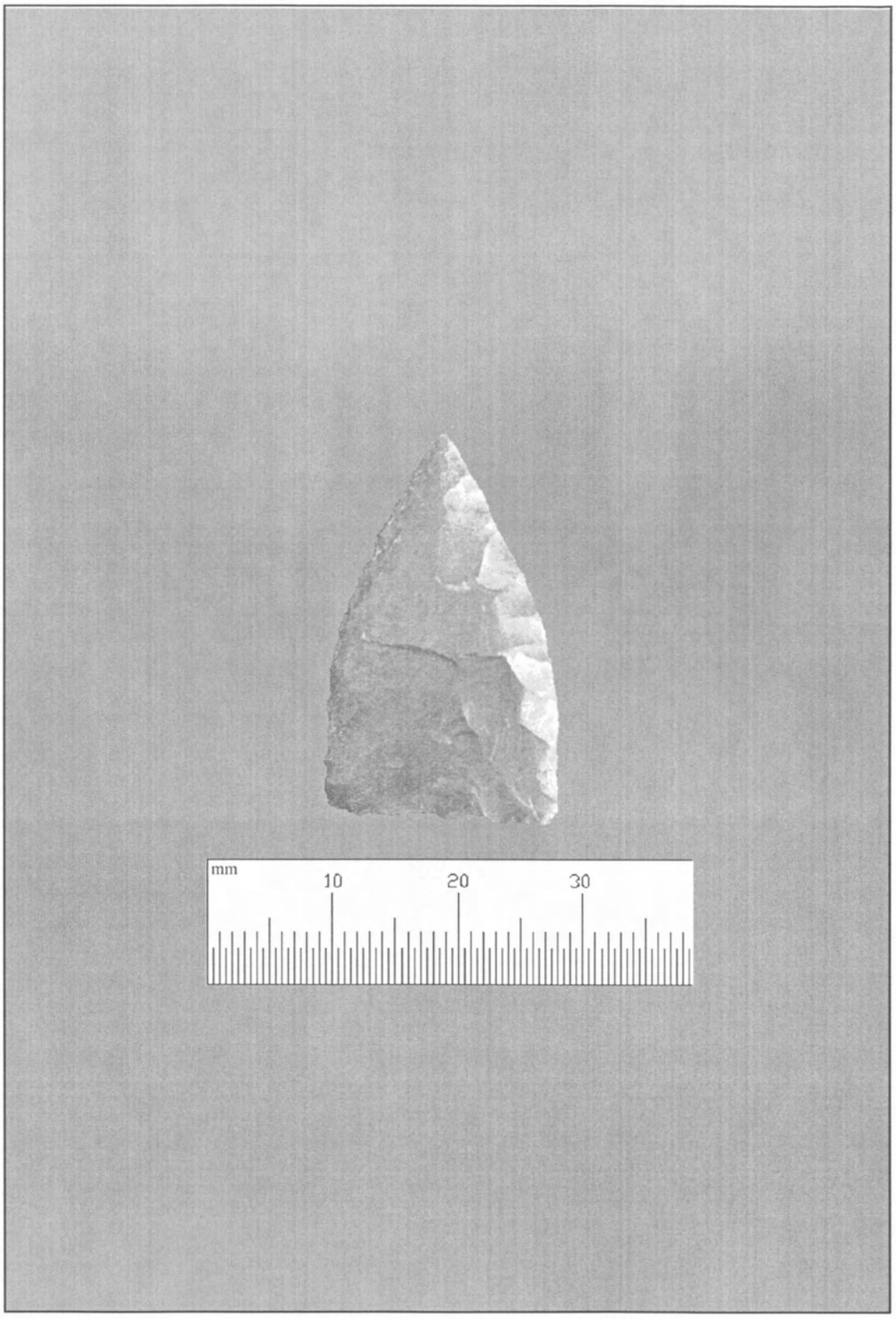

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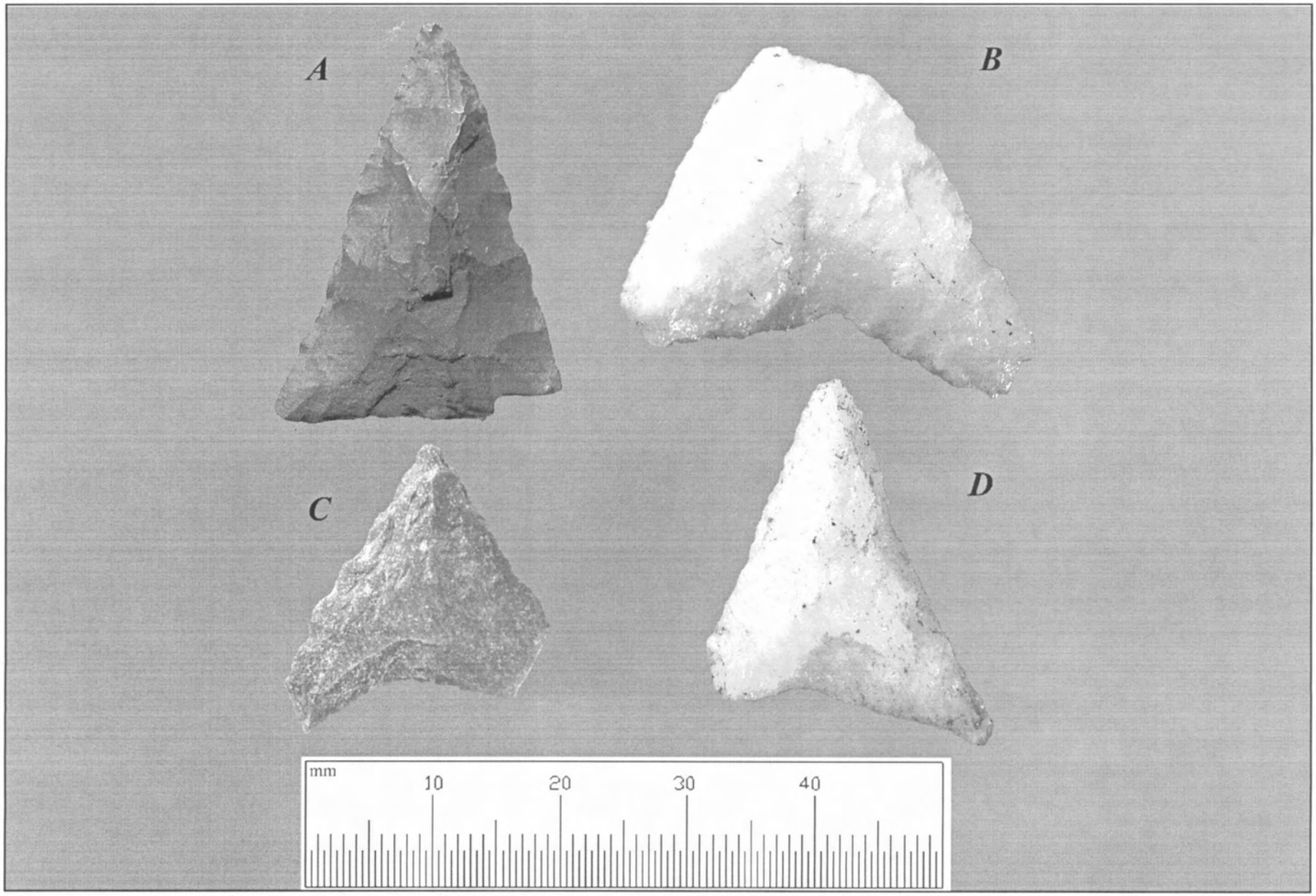
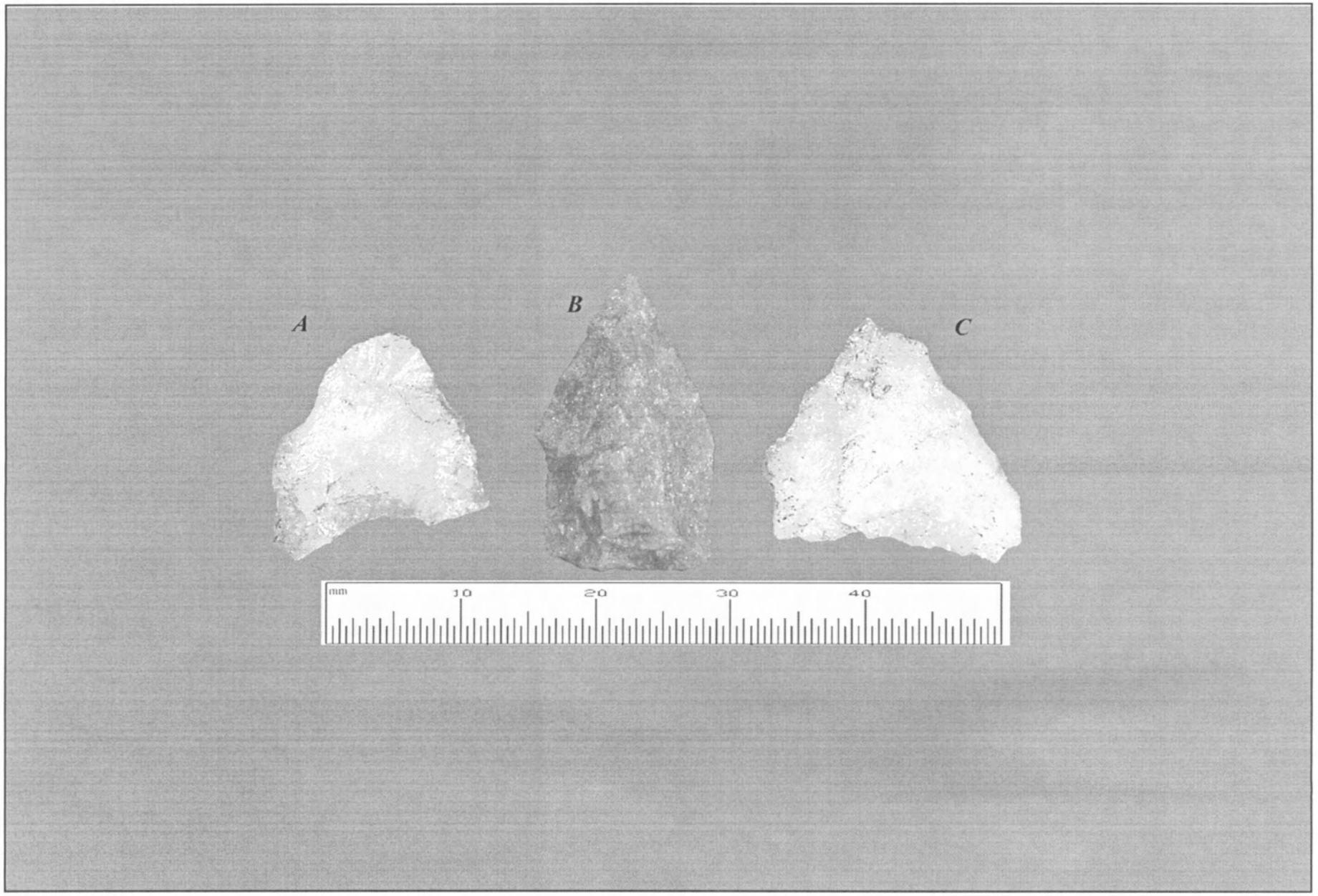


8: Late Woodland period projectile points from Site 22-31. A - Gray chert Madison Triangle from Surface Collection. B - Quartz Levanna Triangle from Surface Collection. C - Quartzite Levanna Triangle from test pit. D - Quartz Levanna Triangle from Surface Collection.



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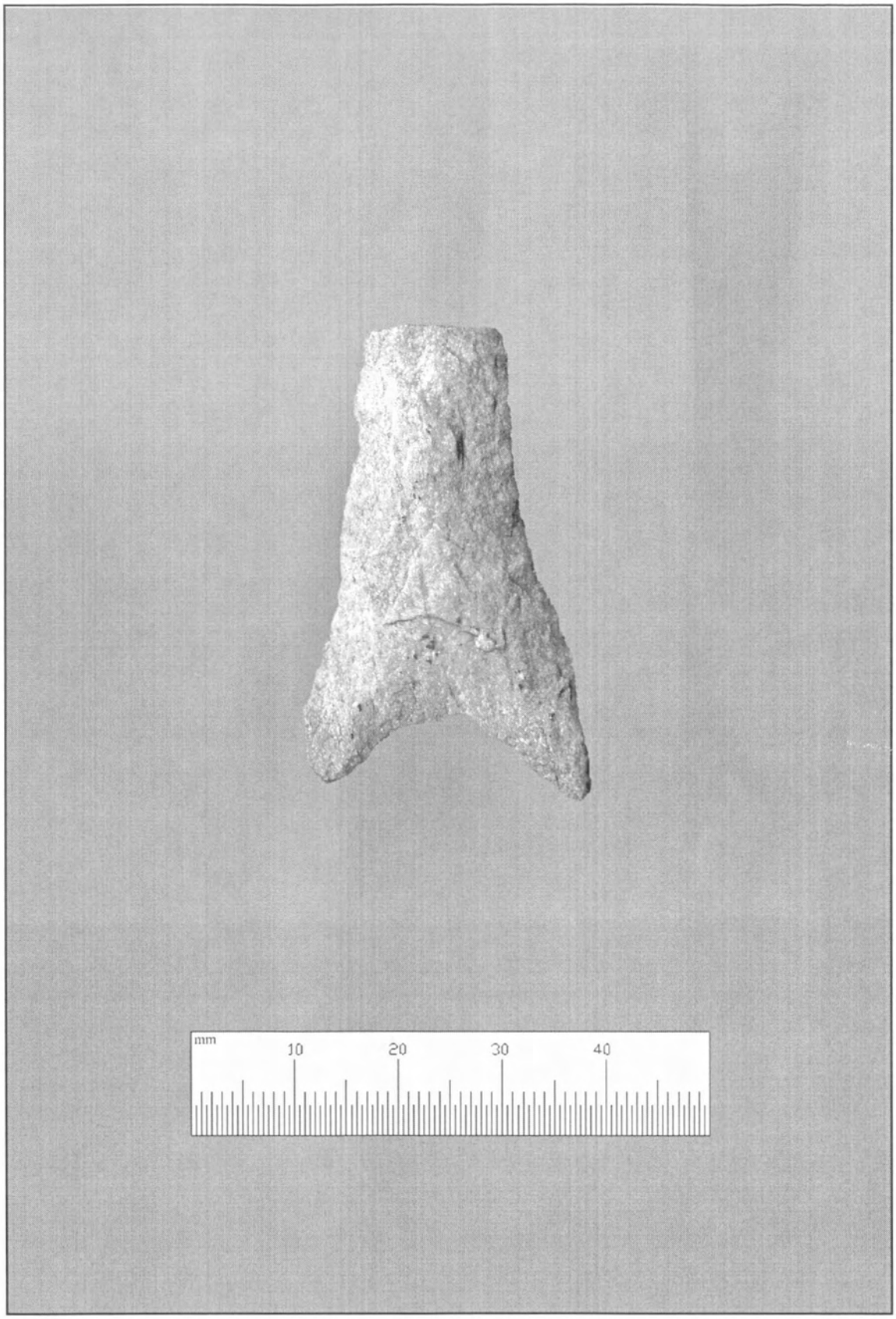
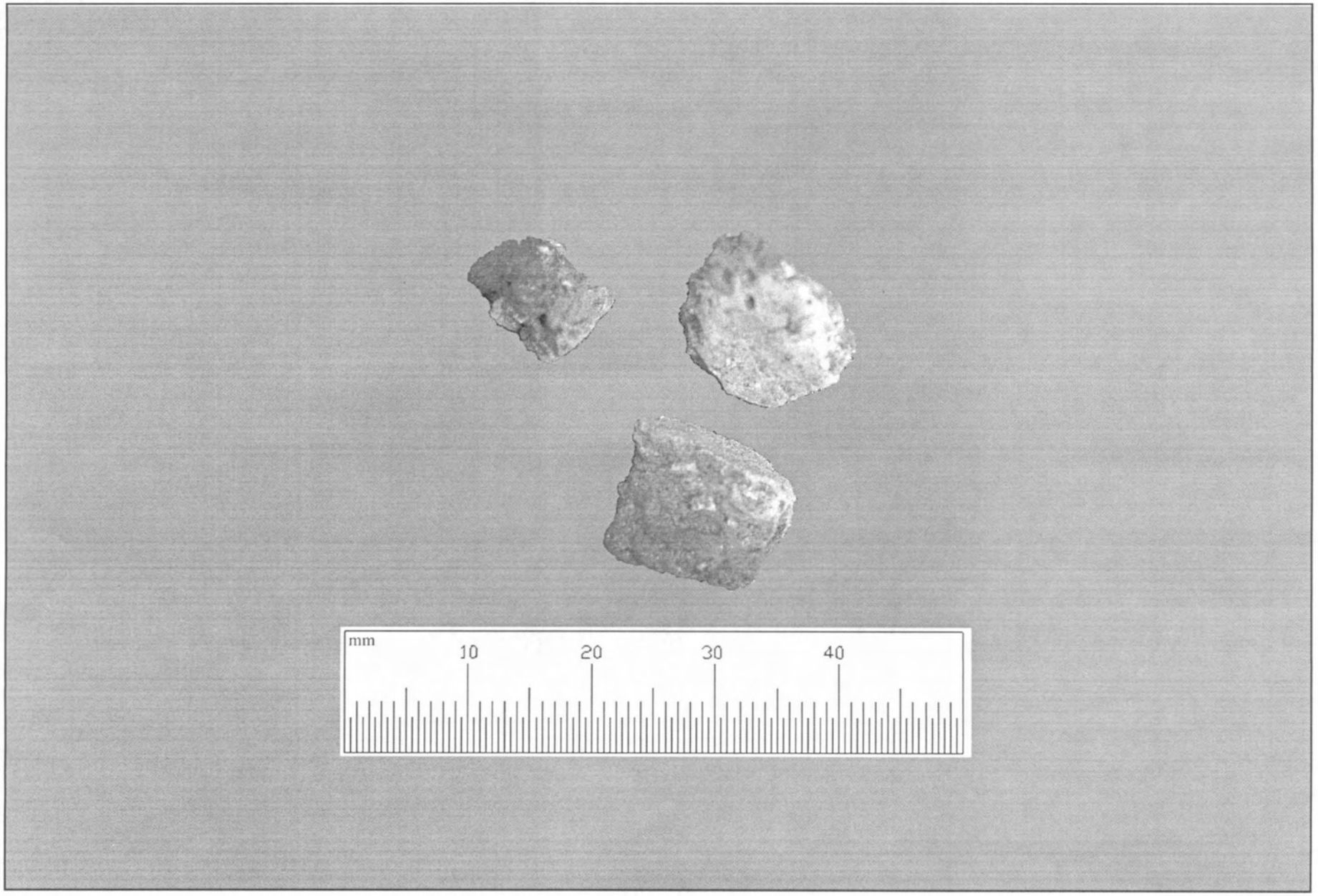


10: Late Woodland-period Quartzite Levanna-style drill from Site 22-31.



11: Native American mineral-tempered pottery sherds, recovered from Site 22-30 and Site 22-33.