

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Croaker Landing Archaeological Site (44JC70) (DHL File No. 47-93)

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number [redacted] not for publication

city, town Croaker vicinity of

state Virginia code 51 county James City code 095

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Commonwealth of Virginia - Division of Parks and Recreation c/o Commissioner Ronald D. Sutton,

street & number 1201 Washington Building

city, town Richmond N/A vicinity of state Virginia zip code 23219

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. James City County Courthouse

street & number South Henry Street

city, town Williamsburg state Virginia 23185

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Division of Historic Landmarks
title Site No. 44JC70

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date January 19, 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Division of Historic Landmarks 221 Governor Street

city, town Richmond state Virginia 23219

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Situated in James City County [REDACTED], the Croaker Landing Archaeological Site is a prehistoric midden containing undisturbed stratified deposits spanning approximately 2,500 years of aboriginal occupation. First discovered in 1978 during land clearing activities associated with the development [REDACTED], the key portion of the site has remained intact. From excavations in the deepest level at this location have been obtained examples of some of the earliest ceramics known for the coastal plain of Virginia. Designated by the VDHL as the Croaker Landing ceramic series, they date from ca. 1200 to 800 B.C.

BACKGROUND

The Croaker Landing Archaeological Site in James City County, Virginia [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The site is situated at the base of a 30 foot knoll. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Designated 44JC70 in the State's official inventory of archaeological sites, the Croaker Landing Archaeological Site is a prehistoric midden which includes undisturbed stratified deposits spanning approximately 2,500 years of aboriginal occupation. [REDACTED]

The site was first discovered in January, 1978, when land clearing activities associated with [REDACTED] development [REDACTED] revealed a surface scattering of prehistoric ceramics and oyster shell. An archaeological reconnaissance survey, performed by the VDHL at the request of park developers identified three areas of midden concentration, designated 44JC70 and 44JC71 (Figure 1; Photo 1).

Two midden concentrations, collectively designated 44JC70 and located upon a knoll, were tested archaeologically. The northernmost midden concentration, situated above the 32 foot contour line and not nominated, consisted of very shallow cultural deposits and contained small amounts of Early to Middle Woodland period materials.

At the southern base of the knoll, however, a deep stratified midden was located which measures 15 meters by 7 meters and which contained an abundance of cultural materials ranging from the Early through the Late Woodland period (ca. 1200 B.C. - A.D. 1600). Excavation of a T-shaped test trench, made up of eight one meter squares, or less than 1/10 of the area nominated, revealed eight pit features. Within the deposits, projectile points, aboriginal ceramics, and faunal remains, including shellfish and animal bone, were found (Figures 2 and 3).

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates N/A Builder/Architect N/A

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Croaker Landing Archaeological Site, 44JC70, in James City County, Virginia is a well preserved, stratified midden deposit containing evidence of prehistoric habitation through approximately 2,500 years of the Woodland period. [REDACTED], the site is known to contain projectile points, ceramics, and faunal remains in a stratified context, research data invaluable for (1) identifying diagnostic artifacts that can more precisely define prehistoric chronologies for Virginia's coastal plain and (2) document changes over time in human adaptation to the region's natural environment.

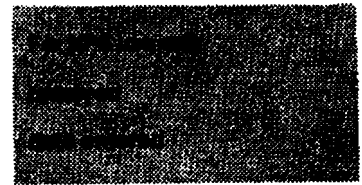
BACKGROUND

Well preserved, stratified midden deposits, such as that at the Croaker Landing Archaeological Site, are rare in the coastal plain of Virginia. Of significance here, excavations have documented the occurrence of temporally sensitive projectile points and ceramics in a stratified context covering the entire span of the Woodland period. The Croaker Landing ceramic series, named after the site and found in its deepest level, is one of the earliest pottery types identified for coastal Virginia, dating from ca. 1200 to 800 B.C. The recovery of other previously identified ceramic series and projectile points in a stratified context at 44JC70 confirms earlier work not only in Virginia but also in Delaware and Maryland and demonstrates the striking similarity of ceramics and projectile points in the Circum-Chesapeake Bay region during the Middle and Late Woodland periods. By more precisely identifying temporally diagnostic artifacts from deposits at 44JC70, archaeologists will be able to better investigate and date changes occurring in local societies through the Woodland period which culminated in the rise of the Powhatan Chiefdom, one of the most complex Native American societies in eastern North America at the beginning of the 17th century A.D. and whose capital district, Werowocomoco, was located across from 44JC70 on the opposite side of the York River.

Also of archaeological significance, 44JC70 is stratigraphically located within the York River's fresh water - salt water transition zone and contains in a stratified context a variety of well preserved shellfish such as soft shell clams, mussels, periwinkles, angel wings, and oysters. The study of Croaker Landing shellfish remains will demonstrate changes in shellfish habitat exploitation over time and yield new information regarding the methods and intensity with which shellfish were harvested by the area's prehistoric inhabitants. These data are vital to the understanding of prehistoric subsistence patterns in Virginia's coastal plain and the relationship of changes in such patterns to population rises and increasing sedentism and socio-cultural complexity occurring in the region through the Woodland period. Given the sensitivity of shellfish to variations in temperature, bottom conditions, and salinity, the stratified midden deposit at the Croaker Landing Archaeological Site also is significant for documenting environmental changes over the approximately 2,500 years of occupation here.

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Croaker Landing Archaeological Site (44JC70)
James City County, VA.

Continuation sheet 1

Item number 7

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Identified as a small campsite culturally associated with larger village sites [redacted], the Croaker Landing Archaeological Site in its deepest level contains examples of some of the earliest pottery types made in the coastal plain of Virginia. This pottery, designated by the VDHL as the Croaker Landing ceramic series, dates from ca. 1200 to 800 B.C. The VDHL test excavations have determined that cultural deposits at 44JC70 extend to a depth of at least one meter, making the site of great research value.

Although the construction of a public restroom facility at the York River State Park has impacted the adjacent area, the 105 square meters nominated have survived intact (Photo 3). The surface of the T-shaped trench, excavated during the testing of the site, was covered with black plastic and backfilled by hand. Above and surrounding the midden site the land surface has been planted in lawn grass. Because the northwestern portion of 44JC70 contained a small amount of cultural material and very shallow deposits, only that portion of 44JC70 at the base of the knoll and containing stratigraphically intact cultural deposits has been included in this nomination.

Test excavations at the easternmost midden, [redacted] revealed no cultural stratigraphy and few artifacts (Figure 1: 44JC71, test squares 1 and 2). Test areas designated squares 3 through 8, [redacted], revealed shallow stratigraphy containing ceramics from the Middle Woodland period, faunal remains, and oyster shell. Site 44JC71 is not considered archaeologically significant and is not included in the nominated area.

KTE

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Keith T. Egloff. 1981. Croaker Landing Site Report. Manuscript on file with Virginia Division of Historic Landmarks.
Keith T. Egloff and Stephen R. Potter. 1982. Indian Ceramics from Coastal Plain Virginia. Archaeology of Eastern North America. Vol. 10, pp. 95-117.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre (7 meters by 15 meters)

Quadrangle name [REDACTED]

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	B	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	D	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>
E	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	F	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>
G	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	H	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>

Verbal boundary description and justification [REDACTED]

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Keith Egloff

organization Division of Historic Landmarks

date 1987

street & number 221 Governor Street

telephone 804-786-3143

city or town Richmond

state Virginia 23219

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

H. Bryan Mitchell, Director
title Division of Historic Landmarks



date April 9, 1987

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration