

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For NPS use only

received

date entered

### 1. Name

historic CONOVER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE (44DW21) (VHLC 26-121)  
and/or common N/A Gooseneck Field Site (preferred)

### 2. Location

street & number [REDACTED] XX not for publication  
city, town Carson X vicinity of  
state Virginia code 51 county [REDACTED] code 053

### 3. Classification

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

### 4. Owner of Property

name Harold Conover  
street & number [REDACTED]  
city, town Carson N/A vicinity of state Virginia 23830

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dinwiddie County Courthouse

street & number N/A  
city, town Dinwiddie state Virginia 23841

### 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission  
title Survey (Site No. 44DW21) has this property been determined eligible? yes X no  
date 3 December 1982 federal X state county local  
depository for survey records Research Center for Archaeology, P.O. Box 368  
city, town Yorktown state Virginia 23690

## 7. Description

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

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

#### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Conover Archaeological Site (44DW21), a prehistoric site dating to the Paleo-Indian and Early to Late Archaic periods, [REDACTED]

Prehistoric occupation debris is distributed over an upland area measuring approximately 150 meters in diameter. Test excavations by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission's Research Center for Archaeology in 1982 determined that shallow stratigraphy may exist. A controlled surface collection demonstrated that distinct and separate surface concentrations of Paleo-Indian and Archaic material are present.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The Conover Archaeological Site is located in an upland area [REDACTED]. One hundred meters northeast of the site is a springhead situated in a ravine. The nominated acreage, most of which is in cultivation, is at the east end of a large agricultural field (Photo 1). Prehistoric occupational debris is distributed over an area measuring approximately 150 meters in diameter. The Conover Archaeological Site has been designated 44DW21 in the state's official inventory of archaeological sites.

Random surface artifacts collected throughout 1982 by the landowner are available for study. All of this material, excluding two Paleo-Indian fluted projectile points and a limited number of chert artifacts, has been donated to the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission's Research Center for Archaeology for curation.

Test excavations by the Research Center for Archaeology in 1982 consisted of three 1 x 1 meter squares dug to a depth of 35 to 50 centimeters. Two squares produced thirteen and fourteen chert flakes each in the plow zone (30 centimeters thick), while each yielded three chert flakes within the next 10 to 20 centimeters of undisturbed yellow sandy clay subsoil. A third square, situated near the site edge, yielded only one chert flake in the plow zone.

A controlled surface collection over eighty-three gridded squares, each measuring 10 x 10 meters, yielded a variety of prehistoric material dating primarily to the Paleo-Indian and Early to Late Archaic periods (Figure 1). The distribution of chert artifacts, quartz and quartzite artifacts, fire-cracked rock, and steatite vessel fragments suggests the two general periods of occupation (Figures 2 and 3). The chert artifacts, thought to represent the Paleo-Indian period dating from at least 9500 BC to 8000 BC, are widely scattered across the site, but concentrations do indicate four separate activity areas. The quartz and quartzite artifacts, fire-cracked rock, and steatite vessel fragments, thought to represent the Early to Late Archaic periods dating from 8000 BC to 1000 BC, are concentrated in the northern end of the site.

Artifacts manufactured from chert have been attributed to the Paleo-Indian period, because two Paleo-Indian projectile points and other artifacts were recovered from the site which closely parallel samples described from the Williamson Site (44DW1), another well-documented, Paleo-Indian site. Other chert artifacts collected to date include

## 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 ca. 9500-8000 BC

Builder/Architect N/A

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Conover Archaeological Site (44DW21), a prehistoric site dating to the Paleo-Indian and Early to Late Archaic periods [REDACTED] possesses extremely high potential for contributing significantly to the very limited research data currently available on the Paleo-Indian period. The surface of the site has provided a wide range of chert artifacts from the Paleo-Indian period, while a limited number of chert flakes were excavated from a context that suggests the possible existence of shallow stratigraphy also dating to this time period.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Currently available data indicate that the earliest Native American occupation in Virginia dates back to the Paleo-Indian Period (at least ca. 9500 BC to 8000 BC). The extreme rarity of archaeological sites dating to this time period is principally due to (1) the relatively low overall Paleo-Indian population density which resulted in few sites, and (2) the unlikelihood of sites of such antiquity (ca. 10,000 years or more old) to the present. Accordingly, few Paleo-Indian sites in Virginia have been identified, and knowledge of this cultural period is extremely limited.

The Conover Archaeological Site represents one of the few currently identified locations in Virginia yielding diverse artifactual data from the Paleo-Indian period. The wide range of lithic tool types and manufactured by-products recovered from either random or controlled surface collections indicates that the site was utilized as a quarry-related base camp or base camp maintenance station. This interpretation is based on the presence of generalized maintenance and processing tools, a significant amount of debitage, and bifaces in various stages of reduction. Within a permanently established grid system, a controlled surface collection by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission's Research Center for Archaeology documented that Paleo-Indian artifact concentrations likely represent four separate activity areas. Subsequent controlled surface collections should provide significant and more detailed information on intrasite community organization and the role of the site in regional settlement patterns.

Limited test excavations at the Conover Archaeological Site in 1982 documented a limited number of chert flakes in the yellow sandy clay subsoil, up to 20 centimeters below the plow zone. Whether these flakes represent cultural stratigraphy or deeper deposition due to natural forces has not been clearly determined. In situ subsurface cultural deposits dating to the Paleo-Indian period are particularly rare, and their possible presence at the Conover Archaeological Site further enhances its research potential and significance. Therefore, the landowner has agreed to discontinue deep plowing across the site as an aid in preserving such deposits if present for future investigations.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Yorktown, Va. Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission's Research Center for Archaeology.  
44DW21: Field notes on file for surveys and test excavations.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 6 acres

Quadrangle name [REDACTED]

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A [REDACTED]  
Zone [REDACTED] Easting [REDACTED] Northing [REDACTED]  
C [REDACTED]  
E [REDACTED]  
G [REDACTED]

B [REDACTED]  
Zone [REDACTED] Easting [REDACTED] Northing [REDACTED]  
D [REDACTED]  
F [REDACTED]  
H [REDACTED]

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The north side of the nominated area is bounded by a dirt farm road, the east by the 140' contour interval along the top edge of a ravine, the south by a tree line, and the west side is about 365' (110 meters) west of the east side of the cultivated field. The nominated area measures approximately 500' x 500'

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries** (See Continuation Sheet #1)

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

**name/title** Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

**organization** Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission **date** May 1983

**street & number** 221 Governor Street **telephone** (804) 786-3144

**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, Executive Director  
title Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

**date** June 21, 1983

For NPS use only

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

**date**

**Keeper of the National Register**

**Attest:**

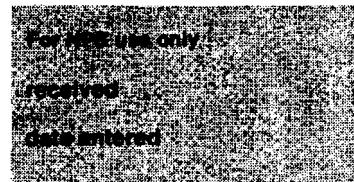
**date**

**Chief of Registration**

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

## **National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form**

CONOVER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE (44DW21), DINWIDDIE COUNTY, VA  
Continuation sheet #1      Item number 7, 8, 10



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### **7. DESCRIPTION--Archaeological Analysis**

flakes, cores, modified flakes, unifacial end and side scrapers, gravers, spokeshaves, perforators, bifacial rejects, and bifacial preforms (Photos 2, 3, and 4).

Occupation within the nominated area during the Early to Late Archaic periods is suggested by the recovery of a quartzite Palmer projectile point (ca. 7500 BC), three quartzite Morrow Mountain II projectile points (ca. 4000 BC), and two quartzite Savannah River projectile points (ca. 3000 BC to 1000 BC). One small quartz projectile point with a rudimentary stem could date from the Early Woodland period (ca. 500 BC). Other quartz and quartzite artifacts collected to date include flakes, modified flakes, unifacial scrapers, bifacial rejects, bifacial preforms, bifacial knives, and hammerstones in addition to steatite vessel fragments.

### **8. SIGNIFICANCE--Historical Background**

Virtually all artifacts known to have been removed from the Conover Archaeological Site have been inventoried, with the vast majority of these having been donated to the Research Center for Archaeology where they are available for examination. Thus, all former investigations of the site can be readily tied into future research, a situation rarely encountered in Paleo-Indian studies.

### **10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA--Verbal Boundary Description & Justification**

(150 meters x 150 meters). Boundary Justification: These boundaries demarcate the distribution of prehistoric artifacts noted during field research.

CONOVER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE (44DW21)

[REDACTED], Va.

BOUNDARY FOR 1982 CONTROLLED SURFACE COLLECTION

1982

Scale: see legend

VHLCs Research Center for Archaeology

Figure 1 of 3

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