

**A PHASE I ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF
THE INGHAM SPRINGS PROPERTY
SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP, BUCKS COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA**

(ER#92-0304-017)

Prepared for:

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a Phase I archaeological survey of the 48-acre Ingham Springs property in Solebury Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania carried out in 2004 for the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. The work was mandated under state law because of the proposed sale of the property to Solebury Township.

The property derives its name from the dramatic spring at the western end of the tract owned by the Ingham family in the 18th century. There are strong local traditions of the importance of the site to local Native Americans, including accounts of a settlement in the area in the late 1600s. A small number of prehistoric sites have been previously recorded in the project vicinity, and a preliminary geomorphological survey of the property itself was completed in 1995.

The western portion of the tract is chiefly occupied by Aquetong Lake, created by the erection of a large dam in 1870. West of the lake and north of the spring is a terraced area currently occupied by an early 20th-century house built by Perry and Helen Bond. The terrace was also the site of late 19th-century activity, including a fish hatchery and water bottling plant, taking water from a pool created by damming the stream running from the spring.

East of the Aquetong Lake dam, on the 22 acre Kate Smith tract, lie several 19th-century features. Examination of the 20th-century Kate Smith cottage and historical research suggests that this building is set on the western half of the foundation of the early 19th-century paper mill built here by Samuel Ingham. The raceway that powered the mill remains as a prominent landscape feature north and west of the mill and house. South of the mill lies the site of a house shown on a map of 1860. At the southeastern corner of the property, south of Aquetong Creek and west of the dam, lie the foundations of another house, also shown on the 1860 map.

A shovel-testing program was implemented at four agreed locations on the property. The objective in three of the areas was to identify and characterize any prehistoric occupation. Limited quantities of prehistoric artifacts were found at the western end of the terrace north of the spring, but close interval testing, including augering, indicated that much of the terrace is a product of extensive landscaping operations in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Unmodified earlier soil profiles remain only in a small percentage of the area. However, the presence of both prehistoric and late 18th- and early 19th-century artifacts within 200 feet of the spring suggests that this area does have some archaeological sensitivity.

Three prehistoric artifacts were also recovered between the north shore of the lake and U.S. Route 202, east of a drainage feeding into the lake from the north. No prehistoric materials were recovered east of the dam, and the soils in this area were generally extremely wet with small springs emerging in many places. Testing around the house site south of Aquetong Creek recovered a sample of late 18th- and 19th-century artifacts from a yard deposit, including an 18th-century drawer pull.

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY (CONTINUED)

Several questions remain about the history of the property and structures erected upon it. Jonathan Ingham is reputed to have built a stone dwelling and fulling mill on the property after 1747 onward. A secondary source claims these were "south of the spring". This makes little sense, but may imply that these structures were at least close to the spring. A late 19th-century bottling house used by Bond as a source of stone for his garage might possibly have incorporated remains of one of these earlier structures. Bond also demolished a purportedly late 19th-century wood frame building on the terrace near the site of the present house, but no other information on this structure has been obtained. The history of the prominent rectangular hatchery ponds below the spring is similarly unclear.

It is considered that the identified historic features on the Kate Smith tract east of the dam should all be regarded as significant and worthy of preservation, interpretation and management. The area of the western terrace and the spring surroundings should be treated as archaeologically sensitive. Any operations requiring ground disturbance in this area should be subject to archaeological review and oversight in order to permit documentation of any archaeological resources and to develop a fuller picture of their location, integrity and significance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>page</i>
Management Summary	i
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures and Plates	v
Acknowledgments	vii
1. INTRODUCTION	
A. Project Background and Scope-of-Work	1-1
B. Previous Research and Sources of Information	1-1
2. GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING	
A. Physiography	2-1
B. Geology	2-1
C. Soils	2-1
D. Current Land Use and Topography	2-3
3. CULTURAL BACKGROUND	
A. Prehistoric Background	3-1
B. Historical Background	3-4
4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD INVESTIGATIONS	
A. Field Methods	4-1
B. Subsurface Testing	4-1
C. Survey of Mill Race and Paper Mill	4-10
5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	5-1
REFERENCES	R-1
APPENDICES	
A. Resumes	A-1
B. Scope of Work	B-1
C. Geomorphological Survey	C-1
D. Summary of Subsurface Testing	D-1
E. Artifact Inventory	E-1
F. Gift Agreement	F-1
G. Pennsylvania Archaeological Site Survey Form	G-1
H. Bureau for Historic Preservation Report Summary Form	H-1
I. Project Administrative Data	I-1