

## **Abstract**

This report presents the results of a Phase IA Archaeological Sensitivity Assessment for the Great Dam Feasibility and Impact Assessments Project, located in Exeter, New Hampshire. This assessment considered potential short term construction related impacts associated with the dam's removal, and potential long term impacts associated with reduction of the water level and exposure of the stream banks. The area of potential effect (APE) for the project extends from the confluence of the Exeter and Little rivers to about 700 meters (2,297 feet) west of Linden Street, and along the Exeter River from the Great Dam downstream to State Route 108.

Information gathered through contextual and documentary research, a walkover of publically accessible land along the stream banks, and a canoe trip from Larry Lane to Gilman Park reveals that there are no previously reported sites within the project's area of potential effect (APE) at the dam site. There are two previously reported sites within the APE upstream from the dam. Both sites are Pre-Contact period (Native American) sites, situated within 100 meters (328 feet) of the river. There is little substantive information available about either of these sites, but their position on modestly elevated, well-drained sandy terraces close to the river suggests that other sites can be anticipated in similar environmental contexts.

If the Town of Exeter determines that dam removal is the preferred alternative, soil core testing throughout the APE at the dam site is recommended to determine whether there are intact soil horizons below grade and whether those soil horizons could have hosted archaeological sites. Hydraulic modeling results also should be reviewed to determine whether monitoring of archaeologically sensitive areas along upstream river banks is warranted to evaluate the long term effects of changes to the stream flow, and to determine whether lowering the water level will expose archaeologically sensitive areas to erosion.