

Statement by Christopher Lindner, PhD, archaeological consultant, 10 V '07  
at DEC hearing on the proposed Red Wing gravel mine, Town of Milan, NY

I live in the Town of Red Hook. I have been retained by Milan Concerns to review the archaeological data on this project. My research has its focus on the mid-Hudson Valley. I have served as a reviewer of archaeological reports such as Red Wing's for federal, state, and town agencies. Part of my professional service has been through the New York Archaeological Council on a committee that in 1994 formulated the Standards for Cultural Resource Investigations, which the DEC and SHPO adopted as official guidelines.

One important provision of the Standards, which the Red Wing reports in the DEIS Appendices lack, is careful background study of the area, particularly local knowledge. The reports contain no reference to local individuals, many of whom could have told the researchers that the area adjacent to the proposed mine is known by long-term residents as Indian Hill, and that numerous projectile points have been found there. The stream along Turkey Hill road would have been particularly attractive to prehistoric settlement.

I urge that the DEC delay its findings for a month or two, until contact can be made with local residents who have knowledge of finds in the project area. One individual has provided me with a photograph of a projectile point the style of which date it to approximately 3,000 to 4,000 years ago.

Another glaring omission in the Red Wing archaeologist's reports concerns the local Indian name of the area. I have seen 1744 and 1798 maps that have the word Waraghamack in the area, near where a pond is known by a similar name today. Native Americans were still in the area in the 1740s, for example at the Shekomeko village in Pine Plains. Mr. Lion Miles, a linguistic scholar of the Mohicans and Lenape, has communicated through one of my students that this word is particularly important in the Mohican language, with meaning that range from "pine swamp" to "bowl place." It is close to the Indian name of John W. Quinney, a Mohican chief who in 1837 wrote the constitution for the tribe. Such names can relate to key places.

Prehistoric artifact finds by local residents in this area would add to this information. From recent experience, such new data might cause the SHPO to reconsider the completeness or adequacy of the Red Wing reports.