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Helen C. Rountree Lecture to Anthropological Society of Washington, 1988 October 18-19, Side 1, Helen C. Rountree Papers

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WEBVTT

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<i>Helen Rountree</i>: ...Indian folks, rolling country a bit less so. So let me take you through some of the ecological zones and what kind of archaeological sites from the late woodland - the very late woodland - we might expect to find in each one.

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And as I go I'll try and make a few half-baked predictions. I'll say at the outset: I've done almost no archaeology in this region. I've tried it in Arizona for a summer, didn't like it, and never went back.

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So those of you who are archaeologists, you can test what I'm saying. Alright, first of all, the first zone, which we now put a very high value on, and the Indians and also our own immediate ancestors put practically no value on, is the beach zone.

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Beaches were only places to get across as far as Indian folks were concerned. Beaches were not a place where you could get much food per-se', unless you wanted to go after coquina, which is a lot of work.

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Little bitty shell-like things. Or if some nice fish wash up on the beach, that's fine.

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But the beach itself is a way-station between more valuable lands inland, and the waters in which you can get more important food like clams and oysters.

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So beach-front property, per-se', was not valuable in Indian times any more than it was to Anglos who were into farming. It's not good country.

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I'll make a little footnote here: I've done title searches on a good deal of the Virginia Beach beach front south of the resort area, uh, which is now naval property. And I did the title search for the Navy.

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That sort of land was selling for something on the order of 10 dollars an acre until about 1880, and then it went up to about 50 dollars per acre, and by the time that everybody really began to get interested the Navy grabbed it.

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But it's only when you get resort usage - when you get recreation - that the beach front really, really becomes popular. And the Indians of this region were fisherman and farmers.

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So, you're not gonna have that much emphasis upon beaches per-se'. They would do their fishing by canoe; and you can push your canoe off

from an awful lot of places, it doesn't have to be beach.

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So. So far as really important sites are concerned, or really any sites, even if a beach was the kinda place for things...



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