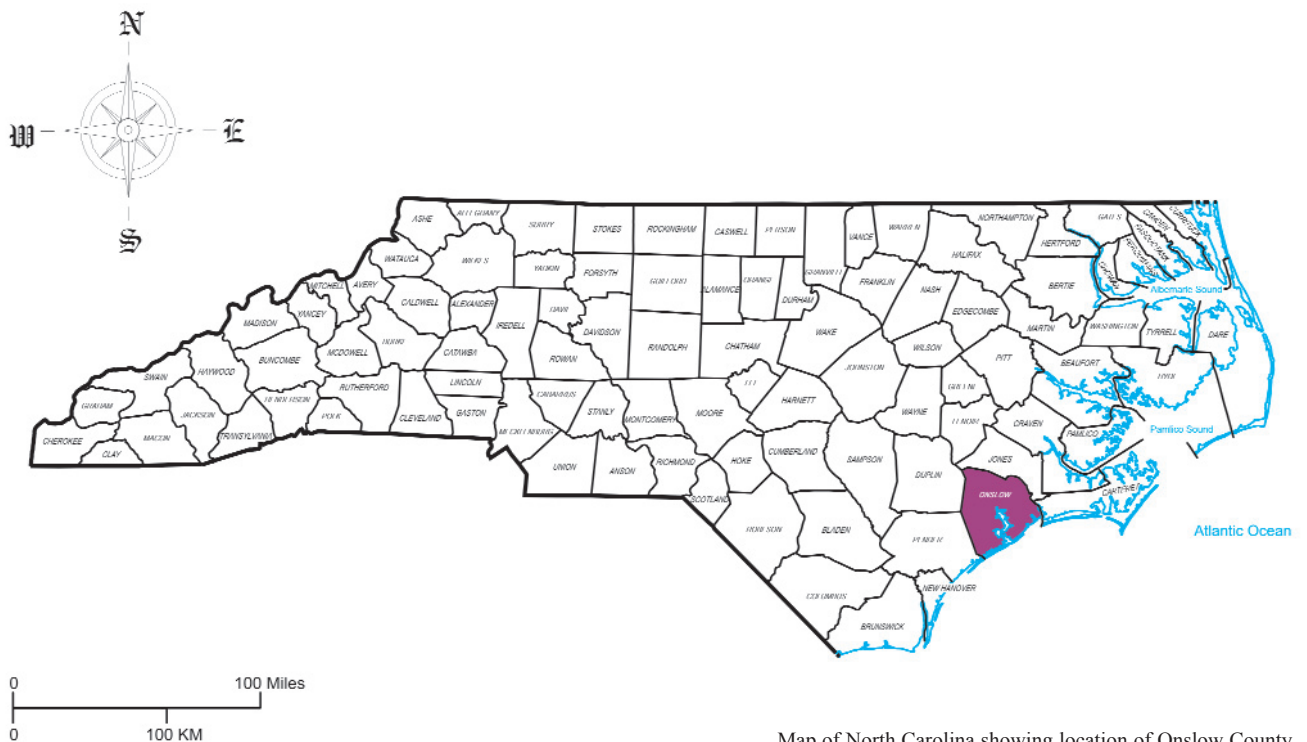


INTRODUCTION

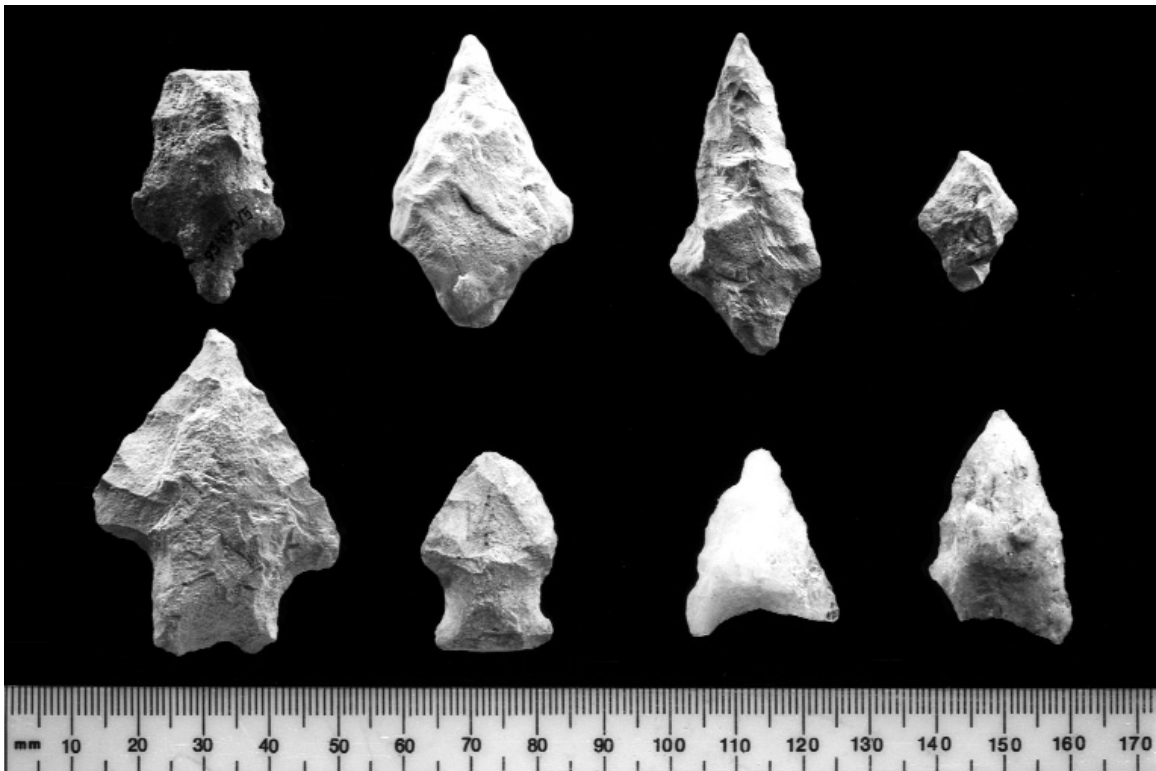
Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, "Home of Expeditionary Forces in Readiness," is located in southeastern Onslow County, North Carolina, an area whose cultural heritage originated at least 12,000 years ago and is now entering the third millennium of the current era. Throughout most of that time, natural and geographical factors have principally determined the historical development of the area that now constitutes the base, but eventually geography and human history became inseparable and need to be considered together to tell the complete story of the area. This document presents the history of the area prior to the establishment of the Marine Corps base, the factors that led to the selection of this part of Onslow County as the ideal location for an amphibious training base, and the continuing development of the base in training troops for preparedness in battle.

Occupying some 240 square miles (153,439 acres), the topography of Camp Lejeune is predominantly flat and tree-covered, with 14 miles of oceanfront. The area's moderate climate provides a welcoming environment for the eclectic flora and fauna found within the base's borders. The base is divided by the sinuously curving New River, which originates in northwestern Onslow County and flows to the southeast, lapping the bluffs of Camp Lejeune for almost 25 miles. Since the arrival of the 1st Marine Division here in September 1941, the area's features have provided and sustained what may be considered the premier training facility of the Marine Corps, despite the unseemly nicknames of "Swamp Lejeune" or "Swamp Lagoon" that Marines attached to the base from the very beginning.



Map of North Carolina showing location of Onslow County.





These points, or "arrowheads," were produced by the aboriginal people who occupied the area of present-day Camp Lejeune between 5000 and 3000 BC.