



POINTS WEST HERITAGE CONSULTING LTD.

2595 – 204th Street, Langley, BC V2Z 2B6

Phone: (604) 534-5054 Fax: (604) 534-6381

October 2, 2006

Tom Andrews, Territorial Archaeologist
Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
Government of Northwest Territories
Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

Dear Mr. Andrews:

**Re: Preliminary Archaeological Assessment of the Tamerlane Venture Inc.'s
Pine Point Project**

In early September, EBA Engineering Consultants Ltd. (EBA) requested that I examine a proposed project area near Hay River, NWT. Weather concerns and the lateness of the field season prompted me to propose a preliminary archaeological assessment to determine if the project area contained terrain that was suggestive of sufficient archaeological potential to justify more detailed archaeological investigations.

The Pine Point Pilot Project area is located south of Great Slave Lake (Figure 1) between Hay River and Pine Point. It is situated inland from the lake and west of Buffalo River. The study area is slightly less than 1 km by 1 km in area, but is irregular in outline since one property boundary follows the northeast side of Highway 5 (Figure 2). Only a small portion of the property will be used for the pilot project proposed by Tamerlane Venture Inc. (Tamerlane). The development proposed for this property involves underground bulk sampling in a central portion of the property and ancillary infrastructure (temporary portable units) at one or more locations within the project area; not all facilities shown on Figure 2 will be utilized, some are alternate locations.

I traveled to Hay River on September 11 and visited the project area briefly that afternoon in the company of Jerry DeMarco of Tamerlane. We drove slowly along the highway bordering the property, the north-south oriented access road within the property and west along the section of road that is centrally located. We also drove through the large gravel pit in the southeast corner of the project area. This quick visit provided me with a plan for examining the area with representatives of the local First Nations the next day. This examination also confirmed my interpretation of the 1:50,000 topographic map, which suggested that the road and gravel pits were situated on the highest terrain and the other areas were characterized by slope or were low and wet.

On Tuesday, September 12, Jerry and I met with Paul Harrington of the Northwest Territory Metis Nation and Amos Cardinal of the Katlodeeche First Nations at the intersection of the highway and the project access road. We talked briefly while waiting for Louis Balsillie of the Deninu Ku'e First Nation. Due to confusion over the date of the meeting, Louis was late and the three of us started our examination while Jerry waited at the intersection. Paul, Amos and I drove up to the northeast corner of the study area and beyond to look at the terrain adjacent to the road and within an abandoned gravel pit and at an active gravel pit just north of the project boundary. The road and gravel pits are situated on the highest terrain in this area. This elevated terrain is undulating and/or sloped with no well-defined edges. The gravel pit and a

portion of a trail/seismic line to the east will be used during the pilot project (Figure 2) and some small areas that are currently treed will be disturbed. However, the disturbance from past uses extends well into the naturally reforested areas adjacent to the road and trail.

We parked the vehicle near the abandoned gravel pit and walked southeast along a seismic line that has been used as an access road/trail to the eastern boundary. After looking northwest along the seismic line and finding the terrain to be sloped, we turned south to follow the line in the other direction. By following this seismic line we were able to get a good overview of the terrain in this portion of the project area. The terrain sloped slightly downhill, we crossed a small low, wet area and then traversed gradual uphill slope. There were no well-defined landform edges along this route although one narrow, fairly well-defined ledge/bench (north-facing and heavily vegetated) was crossed. Unfortunately, there is evidence of considerable seismic line construction and fire-fighting activity (approximately 20 years ago) and the surface disturbance is extensive although it has been naturally reforested.

When we reached the northwestern edge of the active gravel pit that is just east of the southeastern edge of the property, we headed inland to the eastern end of the large, currently inactive gravel pit. We walked along the upper edge (north) of the gravel pit, but this area (and the area between the two pits) was extensively disturbed by clearing activities and the removal of overburden prior to gravel extraction, as well as by road construction and possibly fire-fighting. We continued in a southwest direction, descended an artificial cut to the now abandoned railway bed (tracks have been removed) and climbed onto higher terrain between this right-of-way and the highway. The elevated area between these two transportation corridors has also been extensively disturbed, likely as a result of a fire-fighting camp. A large hole excavated by heavy equipment was encountered and contained some camp debris. We also discovered the remains of an outhouse and fire-fighter type rain pants. Paul and Amos both noted that there were fire-fighting camps all along the highway and that extensive clearing occurred in an attempt to control the fire.

We then walked west/northwest to the intersection of the highway and the project area access road where Jerry was waiting. Louis arrived moments later and after a brief discussion, we headed along the access road to the centre of the project area using the east-west oriented access road to the area of the proposed pilot project (Photo 1). I had walked around in this area briefly the day before and noted that there was extensive disturbance over much of the elevated terrain located along the road, especially in the area of the pilot project. The road is located at the height of land or just south of the height of land, but this central area is characterized by slope or gently undulating landforms with no well-defined terrain edges. The presence of a ring of stones forming a hearth (Photo 2) and three poles tied with white string indicates that the area has been utilized recently. There is also a fairly extensive north-south oriented trench to the north of the road that was apparently part of an earlier mineral exploration project.

The ground slopes gently to moderately down to the south where the pilot project will be located. This area is predominantly low and wet and the perimeter will be frozen to permit mining via an underground shaft. To either side of the road there will be disturbances as a result of activities associated with the pilot project (Figure 2). Just west of this proposed perimeter area, Amos and I traversed another north-south seismic line and confirmed that there were no well-defined terrain edges associated with the north side of the landform on which the road is located. To examine a larger area, we walked west along the road as far as a small lake outside of the project area. The ground slopes down toward the west and the lake; the slope is gradual and continual. Numerous seismic lines and disturbances likely associated with early mineral exploration or fire fighting are evident throughout this area.

We returned to the vehicles and talked briefly about the project and project area. In light of the extensive disturbance, it was concluded that it is unlikely that intact archaeological remains are present in the project area. Considerable evidence of recent use was encountered and Paul indicated that a portion of the access road is part of an earlier road from Pine Point that was constructed along an even earlier aboriginal trail. Since the terrain is higher and dryer than surrounding areas, it represents a likely travel route. It is also evident that the area has seen recent use, possibly for hunting. However, the degree of disturbance over a number of years and as a result of a variety of uses, heavy vegetation cover and lack of well-defined terrain edges would make it difficult to locate the types of archaeological sites that would likely result from transitory use; such sites are predicted to be very small and characterized by few artifacts.

It is thus suggested that there are no archaeological impediments to the activities associated with the proposed pilot project. There is not sufficient archaeological potential to justify more detailed archaeological investigation of the project area as shown in Figure 2. However, as a precaution, I will inform Tamerlane and EBA that if unexpected archaeological materials are encountered during any phase of this development, all activity in the area must cease and they must contact the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.

If you need additional information, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Jean Bussey
POINTS WEST HERITAGE CONSULTING LTD.

cc. Rick Hoos, EBA Engineering Consultants Ltd., Vancouver
Jerry DeMarco, Tamerlane Venture Inc., Blaine
Chief Robert Sayine, Deninu Ku'e First Nations, Fort Resolution
Chief Alec Sunrise, Katlodeeche First Nations, Hay River
President Robert Tordiff, Northwest Territory Metis Nation, Hay River
Louis Balsillie, Deninu Ku'e First Nations, Fort Resolution
Amos Cardinal, Katlodeeche First Nations, Hay River
Paul Harrington, Northwest Territory Metis Nation, Hay River



C:\Workover\GIS\0701 - YEL\17401-00-PinePoint\arcview_map\vegetation\1740149_Veg_Map01.mxd

LEGEND

- Study Area
- High Resolution Coverage

NOTES

Base data source: Quickbird Imagery (Digital Globe)
 acquired Aug. 31 and Sept. 02, 2005
 Landsat 7
 National Atlas of Canada

PINE POINT PROJECT

Overview of Study Area

PROJECTION	DATUM
UTM ZONE 11	NAD83

Scale: 1:200,000

Kilometres

FILE NO.
1740149_Veg_Map001.mxd

PROJECT NO.	DWN	CKD	REV
1740149	BGP	RH	3

OFFICE	DATE
EBA-VANC	September 27, 2006

EBA Engineering
 Consultants Ltd.

Figure 1



Photo 1. Louis Balsillie, Paul Harrington, Jerry DeMarco and Amos Cardinal at the Pine Point Project area (north of the proposed pilot project location)



Photo 2. Ring of rocks forming a hearth north of road near proposed pilot project location
