

APPENDIX G  
ARCHEOLOGICAL SCREENING AND RECONNAISSANCE

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# MARITIME LAUNCH SERVICES ARCHAEOLOGICAL SCREENING AND RECONNAISSANCE



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Maritime Launch Services (MLS) Ltd. is proposing to develop a satellite launch facility, located in the Municipality of the District of Guysborough, approximately 3.5 kilometres south of the community of Canso. More specifically, MLS proposes to construct and operate a private commercial space launch site for medium class orbital rockets and to support the commercial space transportation industry (MLS 2016:5). In order to evaluate the potential for the presence of archaeological resources within the proposed development footprint, Strum Consulting, on behalf of MLS, retained Boreas Heritage Consulting Inc. (BHCI) in September 2017 to conduct archaeological screening and reconnaissance of the proposed launch facility study area.

The archaeological assessment was directed by BHCI Principal and Senior Archaeologist Stephen Garcin and conducted according to the terms of Heritage Research Permit A2017NS081, issued by the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage - Special Places Program (SPP). Background research was provided by Principal and Senior Archaeologist Sara Beanlands and technical support was provided by Jason Beanlands. The field component of the archaeological assessment was carried out on October 5, 2017.

The 2017 archaeological screening and reconnaissance of the Maritime Launch Services proposed launch facility study area consisted of a background study and visual assessment of the property. It did not involve sub-surface testing. Based on the nature of the terrain, the distance to a significant water source, and the lack of evidence indicating significant cultural modification, the study area is considered to exhibit low potential for encountering significant archaeological resources.

It is therefore recommended that the study area, as identified in this report, be cleared of any requirement for further archaeological investigation.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Maritime Launch Services (MLS) Ltd. is proposing to develop a satellite launch facility, located in the Municipality of the District of Guysborough, approximately 3.5 kilometres south of the community of Canso. More specifically, MLS proposes to construct and operate a private commercial space launch site for medium class orbital rockets and to support the commercial space transportation industry (MLS 2016:5). In order to evaluate the potential for the presence of archaeological resources within the proposed development footprint, Strum Consulting, on behalf of MLS, retained Boreas Heritage Consulting Inc. (BHCI) in September 2017 to conduct archaeological screening and reconnaissance of the proposed launch facility study area.

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This report describes the archaeological assessment of the proposed Canso satellite launch facility study area, presents the results of this investigation and offers cultural resource management recommendations.

## 2.0 STUDY AREA

The archaeological study area is located within the Municipality of the District of Guysborough, approximately 3.5 kilometres south of the community of Canso, on a section of currently undeveloped Crown Land designated PID 35096320 (*Plate 1; Figures 1 & 2*). Comprising an area measuring approximately 25 ha, the proposed development includes a launch vehicle processing/launch control area and a launch pad that are to be connected by an access corridor, which is expected to coincide, in part, with the existing access road to the Sable Wind Farm (*Figure 2*). In addition, underground power and data lines and utilities would be installed in conjunction with the proposed access corridor. The study area can be accessed from Canso by way of the access road to the existing wind farm.



**PLATE 1:** Aerial view of the launch site near Canso, © Maritime Launch Services.

**FIGURE 1**



**FIGURE 2**

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The objectives of the assessment are to evaluate archaeological potential within the study area, to delineate areas considered to exhibit high potential for encountering archaeological resources, and to provide the most comprehensive information possible so that appropriate resource management strategies can be devised. To achieve these ends, BHCI designed a research strategy consisting of the following components.

### 3.1 Background Study

The objectives of the background study are to identify known archaeological and historic sites, delineate areas of archaeological potential, and provide a context for resources identified during the course of the assessment. The background study includes a review of previous archaeological research undertaken in the area, an examination of extant records and archival sources relating to historic settlement and development activities within the study area, and a review of relevant geomorphological research and environmental features that may have influenced human settlement and resource processing patterns.

Research is focussed on the identification of areas considered to exhibit high potential for encountering archaeological resources and includes a review of relevant documentation and inventory files, such as available land records, historic maps, and local and/or regional histories. A review of previous archaeological research in the greater area is conducted in order to determine the range and nature of archaeological remains that might be anticipated within the study area. Topographic maps and aerial photographs are consulted in order to identify geomorphological and hydrological attributes that correlate with high archaeological potential (e.g. waterfalls, rapids and marine terraces representing former coastal locations). The historical and cultural information is integrated with the environmental and physiographic data to identify areas of archaeological potential within the study area and to provide a framework for the initial interpretation of any resources encountered during the field component of the assessment.

The background study also includes the development of an archaeological potential model using environmental and cultural factors identified during background research, which facilitates the identification of areas of high archaeological potential within the defined study area. Modelling is based on 1:10,000 mapping, historic mapping, aerial photographs (both historic and modern) and inventories of known archaeological and historic sites. The model is developed through the analysis of a range of natural and cultural attributes including proximity to water (essential for drinking and transportation), slope, aspect and elevation, as well as proximity to known archaeological and historic sites. The result of the modeling is a visual depiction of archaeologically sensitive areas within the proposed development area.

### 3.2 Archaeological Reconnaissance

The objectives of the archaeological field reconnaissance are to conduct a visual inspection of the study area, to delineate areas exhibiting high archaeological potential, as identified during the background study and/or encountered during the course of the field survey, and to document any archaeological resources identified during the background study and/or the field survey. In order to achieve comprehensive coverage of the property, the archaeological reconnaissance involves pedestrian transects throughout the study area in an effort to evaluate archaeological potential and identify any surface features or other signs of human occupation. Particular attention is paid to geomorphological features deemed to have potentially influenced human settlement and resource processing patterns, and topographic and/or vegetative anomalies that might indicate the presence of buried archaeological resources. All areas of exposure, including tree falls, are visually examined for artifacts and cultural features. During the course of the survey, strategies will be identified for the appropriate methodology and scope of more detailed assessment for areas considered to exhibit high archaeological potential.

The process and results of the field reconnaissance are documented in field notes and with photographs. A hand-held Global Positioning System (GPS) unit is used to record UTM coordinates within the study area. All coordinates are UTM projection with NAD 83 as datum. Any archaeological resources encountered during the course of the archaeological reconnaissance will be evaluated and sufficiently documented for registration within the Maritime Archaeological Resource Inventory (MARI), a provincial archaeological site database maintained by the Nova Scotia Museum.

## 4.0 RESULTS

### 4.1 Background Study

The following discussion details the environmental and cultural setting of the study area. This background study facilitates the delineation of areas considered to exhibit archaeological potential and provides a framework for the initial interpretation of any resources encountered during the field component of the assessment. It is noted that, as per Heritage Research Permit requirements, the Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO) was advised of the proposed archaeological investigation as part of the background study for this project.

#### 4.1.1 Environmental Setting

A number of environmental, topographic and hydrographic factors, such as water sources, physiographic attributes, soil types and vegetation, have influenced settlement patterns and contribute to the archaeological potential of the area.

##### Water Sources

Proximity to water, for drinking, resource exploitation and transportation, is a key factor in identifying Precontact and historic Native, as well as early Euro-Canadian, archaeological potential. The study area is located less than 500 metres northwest of Three Islets Cove, situated within Andrew Passage in Chedabucto Bay (*Figure 1*). Although the surrounding area contains a number of small lakes and creeks, there are no significant watercourses within the proposed development footprint. The transportation corridor, however, does intersect a small unnamed tributary that drains Publicover Lake, and portions of the study area are situated in the vicinity of a wetland/peat bog.

Changes in sea level in Nova Scotia have resulted from the interaction between the discharge of glacial meltwater from the late Quaternary ice sheets and isostatic adjustments of the crust (Shaw, Taylor & Forbes 1993:223). Deglaciation of Nova Scotia appears to have been virtually complete by 11,000 BP (Stea & Mott 1898:184). Relative sea level rose rapidly during the early Holocene period at a rate of approximately 1.2 m per century (or approximately 12 mm per year) until about 6,000 years ago, at which time it diminished to approximately 1.8 mm per year (until the last few decades) (Force 2013:34). The highest rate of increase during the Holocene was approximately 11 m per kiloannus around 7,500 BP (Shaw, Taylor & Forbes 1993:223). The eustatic rise in Atlantic Canada was complicated by post-glacial crustal rebound, which resulted in sea-level rise on the order of 2.5 mm per year in some parts of Nova Scotia (Force 2013:34). These and other factors, such as storm events and erosion have led to the reconfiguration and/or submergence of coastal areas and, in many cases, the entire disappearance of coastal landforms, including potential evidence of early occupations and archaeological sites.

## Topography

The study area is located within the greater terrestrial region known as the Atlantic Coast – Granite Barrens (Canso) Unit, which is generally composed of granite intruded into slates and greywacke (Davis & Browne 1996:213). Extensive areas of exposed bedrock are common, as are thin deposits of granite, schist and slate tills. The bedrock dominated topography is generally described as undulating to rolling. Elevation within the study area ranges between approximately 5 m above sea level (asl) in the southeast to approximately 20 m asl in the northwest.

## Soils and Vegetation

The study area is covered by *Rockland* soils, which occur primarily in areas underlain by granite and quartzite. Bedrock outcrops are common, and bedrock is seldom more than 50 centimetres below the ground surface (Hilchey *et al* 1964:36). Vegetation consists mainly of Black Spruce and Balsam Fir, and Sheep Laurel, Huckleberry, Labrador Tea, Bracken Fern and alders. Drainage ranges from excessive to very poor in these areas. The study area also contains deposits of peat, which typically occupy old lake beds that have filled or are filling with peaty deposits. Stunted Black Spruce, alder and tamarack sometimes grow in shallow areas.

### 4.1.2 Indigenous Land Use

The land within the study area is part of the greater Mi'kmaw territory known as *Eskikewa'kik*, meaning 'skin dressers territory'. The Canso area provided a resource base for millennia prior to the arrival of European settlers and the Mi'kmaq seasonally moved throughout the greater region between areas where shelter and resources, including food and medicinal plants, were available and annually migrated between hunting and fishing grounds (Chute 1999). Mi'kmaw place names, those which have survived the influx of European travelers and settlers, underlie the importance of Canso and surrounding area. According to the French missionary and orthographer, Capucin Pacifique, the Mi'kmaw name for Canso, which was undoubtedly a seasonal camp, was *Gamsôg*, meaning 'rock on the other side', while Andrew Passage was known as *Asogômigatasgogeog*, meaning 'muddy fording' (Pacifique 1934:270).

A review of the MARI database determined that there are no registered archaeological sites located within the immediate vicinity of the study area. The lack of archaeological data for the area may reflect a lack of archaeological investigation, rather than an absence of archaeological sites. There are two registered Prehistoric archaeological sites located within 5 km of the study area (BhCf-01 and BiCf-01). BhCf-01, situated approximately 2.5 km northeast of the study area, is located at Glasgow Head, possibly known to the Mi'kmaq as *Gamsôgotjg*, meaning "little Canso" (Pacifique 1934:270). The site was identified on early twentieth-century mapping annotated by Harry Piers as "Indian Relics (stone)", although it could not be located during a 1973 survey of the area. BiCf-01, situated approximately 3.5 km northeast of the study area, is located on George Island. This site was also identified by Piers; however, the precise location remains unconfirmed.

Despite the lack of registered archaeological sites, there is an abundance of evidence for Mi'kmaq occupation and land use of the greater area. Indeed, there are numerous historical accounts of early encounters by European explorers, as the area had attracted French, Breton and Basque fisherman since at least the early sixteenth century. DeMons and Lescarbot, for instance, encountered two shallops in Canso in 1606, one of which was sailed by Mi'kmaq (Lescarbot 1609:78-79). Four years later, Lescarbot urged that missions to the Mi'kmaq be established in different parts of New France, including Canso, and recorded that Biencourt had met numerous Mi'kmaq, at least 50 of whom were baptized, when he arrived in the area in 1610 (Lescarbot 1610; 1612). Furthermore, de Gargas recorded the presence of 13 Mi'kmaq living in Canso in three wigwams in the 1687-1688 census. Additional references support significant Mi'kmaq occupation and use of the greater area well into the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (DAC 2004:9).

#### 4.1.3 Property History

Canso Harbour is likely one of the earliest fishing ports in the Maritimes, known to have been frequented by French, Breton, and Basque fisherman as early as 1504. They built temporary shelters, wharves and fish flakes along the shores to salt and dry the abundant stocks of codfish. Evidently, Baron de Lery arrived in Canso in 1518, and, although he mapped the harbour and is said to have left livestock in the area, he was unable to establish a permanent settlement (Hart 1927:1). Nevertheless, Haliburton recorded that “The harbour at Canso was distinguished at an early period as a place suitable for fishery, and Scaualet, an old mariner who frequented that port, had made no less than forty voyages to it previous to the year 1609” (Haliburton 1829). In 1603, DeMons was appointed by the French King, Henry IV, to engage in an expedition to search for minerals and establish a trade with Mi'kmaq trading partners. Before leaving France, he and Captain Morell agreed upon Canso as a place of meeting (Hart 1927:2).

An early map by Jean-Baptiste-Louis Franquelin, produced in 1686, illustrates a fort and fishing posts established by Nicolas Deny on the shores of Chedabucto Bay in 1659. By 1700, Canso was regarded as “a place esteemed by many as of greater commercial and military importance than Port Royal” (Hart 1927:2). Indeed, Canso emerged as a major salt-cod processing station for the French seasonal fishery throughout the seventeenth century. Because cod stocks were so plentiful offshore, European fishermen often ventured from the fishing base at the head of Chedabucto Bay, to set up *dégrats*, or temporary processing stations, where the fish were dried before being transported to Western Europe (DAC 2004:9). The French preferred cobble beaches where they could dry their catch directly upon the rocks rather than building wooden stages, and Franquelin's map indicates several processing stations along the shores of the islands situated in the harbour (Dawson 1988:38-39).

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the islands off Canso, possession of which was often contested, were used as a fishing base for both English and French. After the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the French were removed from Canso and New England fisherman and merchants established a permanent town in the harbour and continued profitable salt-cod trade with Europe

and the West Indies; the Canso islands would thus become the primary center for the New England cod fishery in the eighteenth century. The islands and nearby mainland were referred to collectively as Canso; settlement, however, proved difficult and remained seasonal. The British established a small fort, known as Fort William Augustus, in 1720, with Governor Richard Phillips as colonel of the regiment stationed in Canso to protect the fishery. The garrison, however, was unable to prevent the destruction of the flourishing fishing community by the French in 1744, after which the New England militia used the harbour as a base from which to launch their siege on the Fortress of Louisbourg in 1745 (Hart 1927). By 1760, the community had been rebuilt but was subjected to numerous raid by American Privateers and was again destroyed during the American Revolution. It was not until after 1812 that political stability and prosperity were gained through shipbuilding, trade and fishing. Canso was incorporated as a town in 1901 but was dissolved in 2012, at which time it became part of the Municipality of the District of Guysborough. The economic mainstay of the community is still fishing, as it was in the eighteenth century.

A review of historical mapping, such as Bayfield, Church, DesBarres, Lockwood, McKay, Morris, and Faribault (*Figure 3*) reveals an absence of settlement and no evidence of any historic structures within the immediate vicinity of the study area, thereby diminishing the potential for encountering significant historic/Euro-Canadian archaeological resources.

#### **4.1.4 Archaeological Potential Modelling**

An archaeological potential model, designed to facilitate the identification of areas of high archaeological potential within the defined study area, was developed using environmental and cultural factors identified during background research. Modelling is based on 1:10,000 mapping, historic mapping, and inventories of known archaeological and historic sites. The model is developed through the analysis of a range of natural and cultural attributes that display archaeological potential across the landscape, including proximity to water (essential for drinking and transportation), slope, aspect and elevation, as well as proximity to known archaeological and historic sites. The result of the modeling is a continuous depiction of archaeological potential across the entire landscape, with areas of highest archaeological potential highlighted in red (*Figure 4*).

Figure 3



Figure 4

## 4.2 Archaeological Reconnaissance

Fieldwork, consisting of a visual inspection of the property, was conducted on October 5, 2017 under warm, clear conditions. The primary purpose of the visual assessment was to evaluate the archaeological potential of the study area and to investigate any topographical or cultural features identified during the background study. The survey consisted of systematic pedestrian transects walked across the property, resulting in extensive coverage of the study area (*Figure 5*).

Visual inspection of the northern half of the proposed access alignment revealed undulating to sloping terrain comprised of a dense, mixed forest with thick regenerated undergrowth in many areas (*Plate 2*). This portion of the access corridor does not intersect any watercourse, but does run adjacent to a number of small streams. Typical terrain in these areas was low, wet and generally unsuitable for habitation. Although several trails and historic woods roads were encountered during the survey, the area appeared mainly unmodified and undisturbed (*Plate 3*). No evidence of archaeological resources or areas of elevated archaeological potential were encountered and no indication of significant historic cultural modification was identified within the northern portion of the proposed study area.



**PLATE 2:** Typical terrain within the northern portion of the study area; facing northeast.

Figure 5



**PLATE 3:** Existing trail running through study area; facing north.

The southern portion of the proposed alignment is situated within a more typical coastal barrens environment, consisting of level to undulating, low-lying terrain with exposed granite bedrock. Vegetation in this area is mainly comprised of low shrubs and moss with the occasional patch of spruce forest. Large mossy and boggy areas were also noted in the vicinity (*Plates 4 & 5*). The proposed alignment crosses two small, swampy, non-navigable watercourses to the northwest of the proposed launch site. Terrain in these areas, however, was low, wet and generally unsuitable for habitation (*Plate 6*).

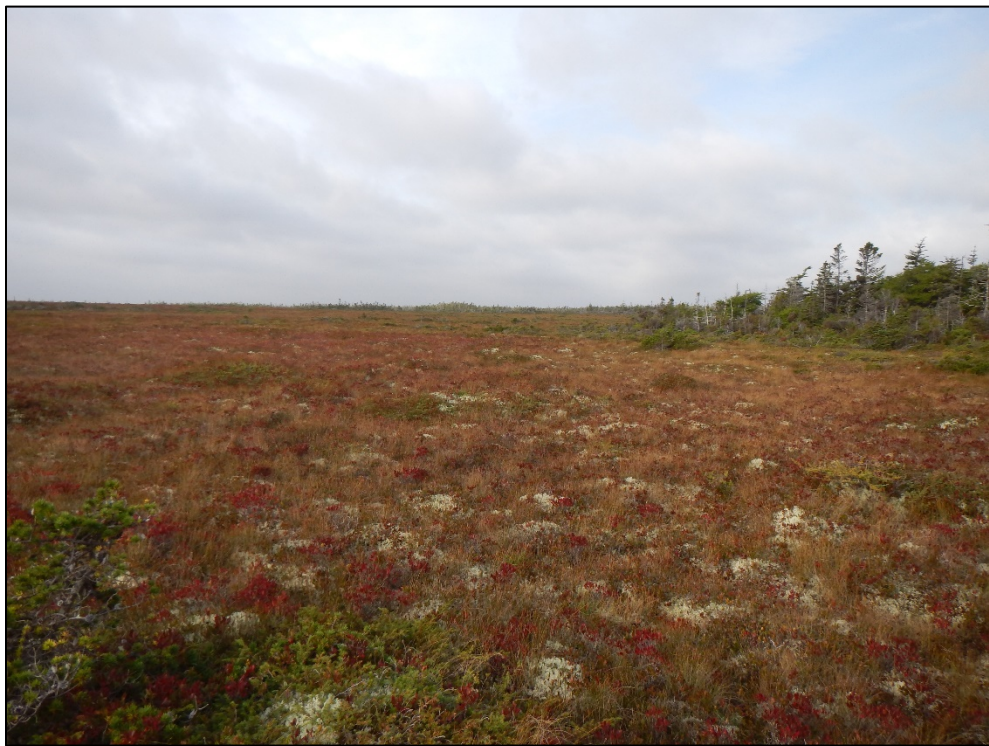
The launch site itself is situated within rough, undulating terrain situated well back from the coast and any other significant watercourse (*Plate 7*). A small, active ATV trail was noted in the area and a light scatter of modern refuse suggests modern land use, but the area appears to be mainly unmodified and undisturbed. No evidence of archaeological resources or areas of elevated archaeological potential were encountered and no indication of significant historic cultural modification was identified within the southern portion of the proposed study area.

#### **4.2.1 Archaeological Potential**

Based on the results of the archaeological reconnaissance, the nature of the terrain, the distance to a significant water source, and the absence of significant historic cultural modification, the study area was deemed to be less suitable for human occupation and/or work areas associated with resource exploitation by Precontact peoples and was assigned low potential for encountering significant archaeological resources.



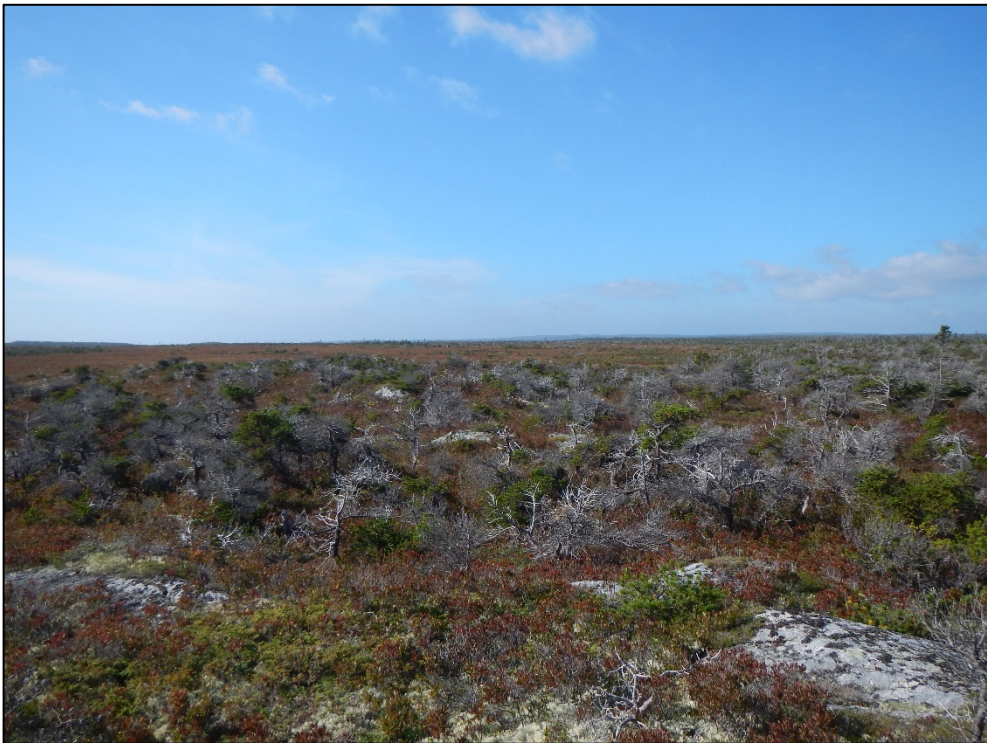
**PLATE 4:** Typical terrain and vegetation within southern portion of study area; facing north.



**PLATE 5:** Large boggy area within study area; facing southwest.



**PLATE 6:** Low, wet terrain in vicinity of small watercourse; facing southeast.



**PLATE 6:** Coastal barrens environment in vicinity of launch site; facing west.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2017 archaeological screening and reconnaissance of the Maritime Launch Services proposed launch facility study area consisted of a background study and visual assessment of the property. It did not involve sub-surface testing. Based on the nature of the terrain, the distance to a significant water source, and the lack of evidence indicating significant cultural modification, the study area is considered to exhibit low potential for encountering significant archaeological resources.

Based on the above results, Boreas Heritage Consulting Inc. offers the following management recommendations:

1. It is recommended that the study area, as identified in this report, be cleared of any requirement for future archaeological investigation.
2. In the event that archaeological resources and/or human remains are encountered, immediate contact should be made with Sean Weseloh McKeane, Coordinator of Special Places, Communities Culture and Heritage, at 902-424-6475.

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