



# McLellan's Brook Asbestos Disposal Facility

## Archaeological Resource Impact Assessment

Davis MacIntyre & Associates Limited

109 John Stewart Drive, Dartmouth, NS B2W 4J7

# **McLellan's Brook Asbestos Disposal Facility**

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Davis MacIntyre & Associates Limited  
Heritage Research Permit A2012NS152  
Project No. 12-073.1

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Submitted to:

LVM Maritime Testing  
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-and-

Coordinator, Special Places  
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Cover image: Geotechnical test pit on the southeast corner of the study area, looking north northwest.

## Executive Summary

Davis MacIntyre & Associates Limited conducted an archaeological resource impact assessment of the proposed McLellan's Brook Asbestos Disposal Facility near New Glasgow, Pictou County. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the potential for archaeological resources within the study area and to provide recommendations for mitigation, if necessary. The assessment included a historic background study and reconnaissance. The study concluded that, while the property had been granted as early as the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, there was likely no settlement on this portion of the grant as it was located well away from any roadways at that time. The land did not appear to have been settled in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and it was leased by coal companies throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest map indicating a road through here was (now the Old Mill Road) was published in 1902. Settlement and land use at that time was centered around McLellan's Brook Road to the south, Coalburn McLellan's Brook Road to the east, and along McLellan's Brook to the north. It is likely that a few residences were demolished when the Trans Canada highway was constructed but there is no indication of historic period settlement within the study area. Furthermore, the study area would not have been suitable for First Nations resource exploitation and settlement as there was little to attract them to this area. Therefore, the study area has been determined to be of low archaeological potential and no further mitigation is recommended.

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## 1.0 Introduction

Davis MacIntyre & Associates Limited was contracted by LVM Maritime Testing, on behalf of Marinus Verhagen Enterprises Ltd., to conduct an archaeological resource impact assessment of a proposed asbestos disposal facility in McLellan's Brook near New Glasgow, Pictou County. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the potential for archaeological resources within the impact area, and to provide recommendations for further mitigation if necessary.

The assessment was conducted under Category C Heritage Research Permit A2012NS152 (Appendix A). This report conforms to the standards of the Nova Scotia Heritage Division and the Heritage Research Permit requirements as per the Special Places Protection Act (*R.S., c. 438, s. 1.*).

## 2.0 Study Area

McLellan's Brook is located approximately 1.5 kms southeast of New Glasgow in Pictou County. The study area incorporates approximately 1 hectare of land located between Shale Brook (which flows into McLellan's Brook) and Highway 104 and is located adjacent to an existing construction and demolition site (Figures 2.0-1 and 2.0-2).

McLellan's Brook is located in the Pictou Rivers sub-Unit of the Pictou Valleys theme region (Figure 2.0-3). It lies within the Pictou coalfield, a late Carboniferous feature that underlies an area approximately 5 kms by 16 kms beneath New Glasgow, Stellarton, and Trenton. Part of the East River is a fossil valley. The Pictou River sub-Unit falls within three tertiary watersheds draining the East River, Middle River and West River into Pictou Harbour. There are extensive floodplains along the East River. Soils in the region are derived from shales and sandstones and in the Pictou Rivers sub-Unit soils are predominantly well-drained gravelly clay loams. White Spruce and Balsam Fir have established on old fields and pastures while Sugar Maple, Yellow Birch, American Beech, Red Maple and aspen grow on slopes. The West, Middle, and East Rivers support significant salmon stocks.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Davis and Browne, 1996: 140-141.

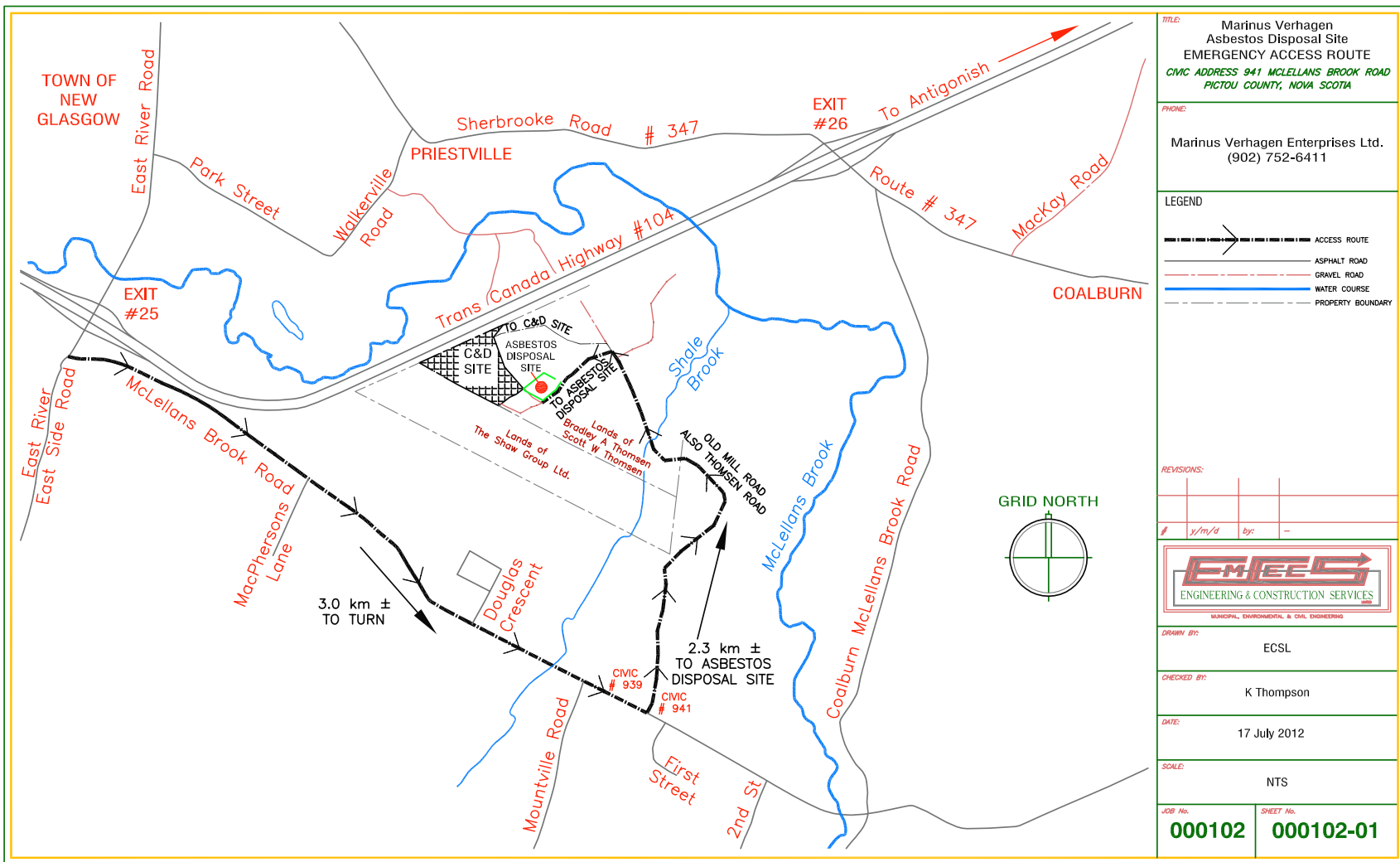


Figure 2.0-1: Map of the general area of McLellan's Brook showing the location of the study area bounded in green (map courtesy LVM Maritime Testing).



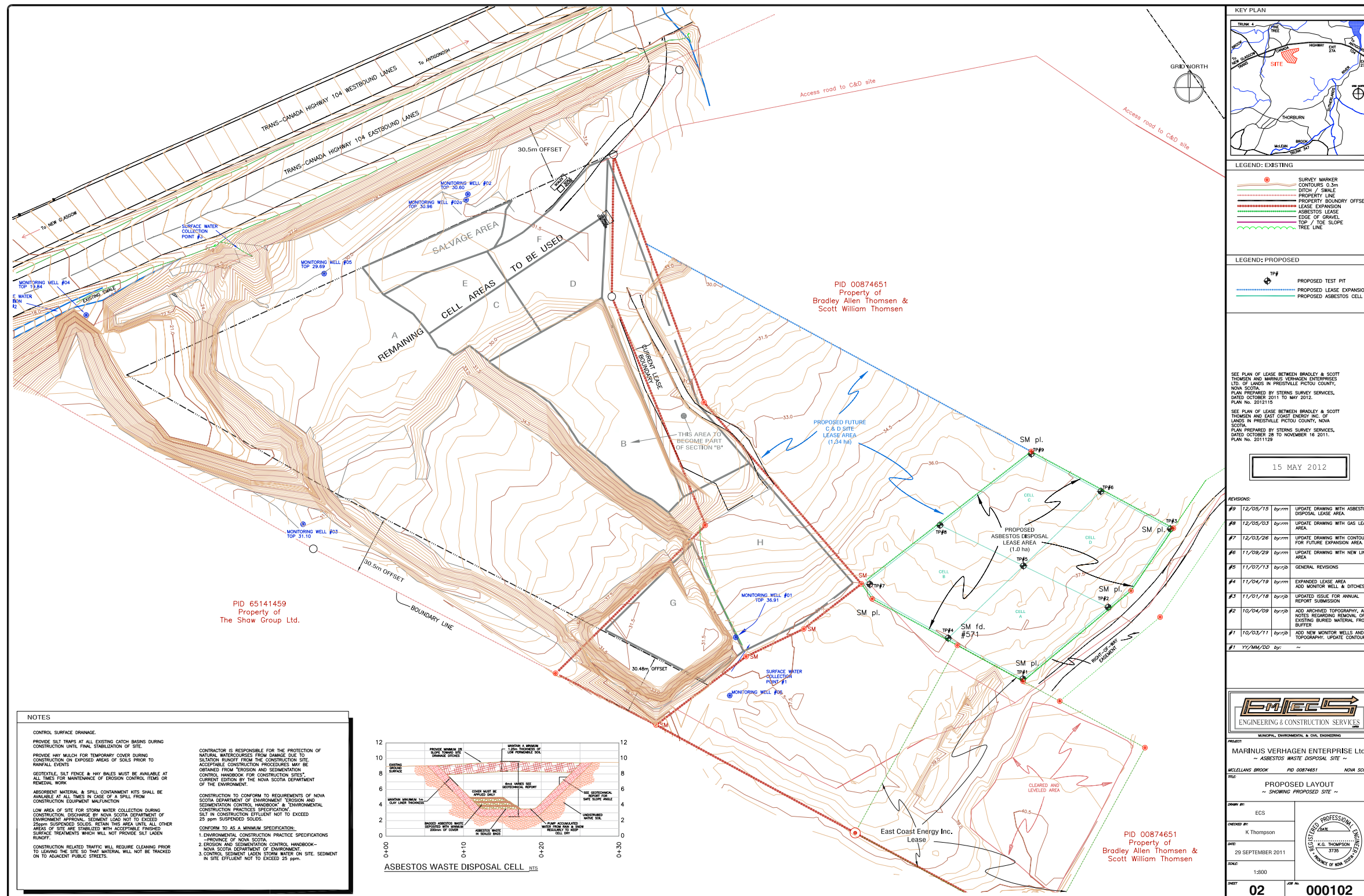
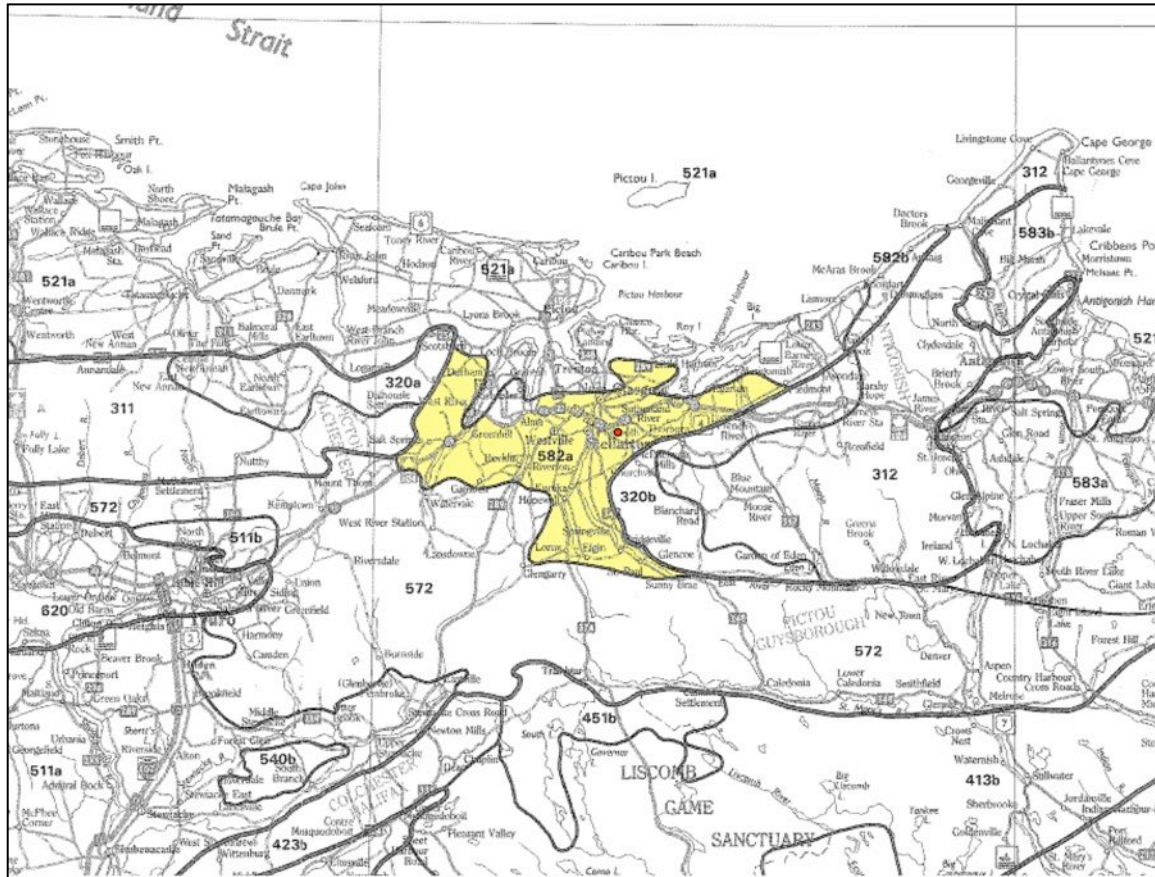


Figure 2.0-2: Topographic map showing detail of the study area, bounded in green (map courtesy LVM Maritime Testing).





**Figure 2.0-3: : Natural Theme Regions of Nova Scotia, showing region #582a (highlighted in yellow) – Pictou Valleys, Pictou Rivers sub-unit.<sup>2</sup> The approximate location of the study area is indicated by a red ellipse.**

### 3.0 Methodology

A historic background study was conducted by Davis MacIntyre & Associates Limited in October 2012. Historical maps and manuscripts and published literature were consulted at Nova Scotia Archives in Halifax as well as online. The Maritime Archaeological Resource Inventory, a database of known archaeological resources in the Maritime region, was searched to understand prior archaeological research and known archaeological resources neighboring the study area. Finally, a field reconnaissance was conducted in order to further evaluate the potential for archaeological resources.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Davis and Browne, 1996.

### 3.1 Maritime Archaeological Resource Inventory

The Maritime Archaeological Resource Inventory was consulted in order to determine if known archaeological sites or resources exist within or near the study area. The nearest known sites to the study area are located in Stellarton and include the 19<sup>th</sup> century remains of the Albion Iron Foundry and the Stellarton Pumphouse, the latter which was moved from its original location near exit 24 to the Museum of Industry property. Other finds have been made at East River and Pictou Harbour where four stone celts have been reported, as well as at Merigomish Harbour and at Reidway near Little Harbour where Ceramic period (2,500 to 500 years BP) shell middens have been recorded.

### 3.2 Historic Background

#### 3.2.1 The Precontact Period

The history of human occupation in Nova Scotia has been traced back approximately 11,000 years ago, to the Palaeo-Indian period or *Sa'qewe'k L'nu'k* (11,000 – 9,000 years BP). The only significant archaeological evidence of Palaeo-Indian settlement in the province exists at Debert/Belmont in Colchester County.

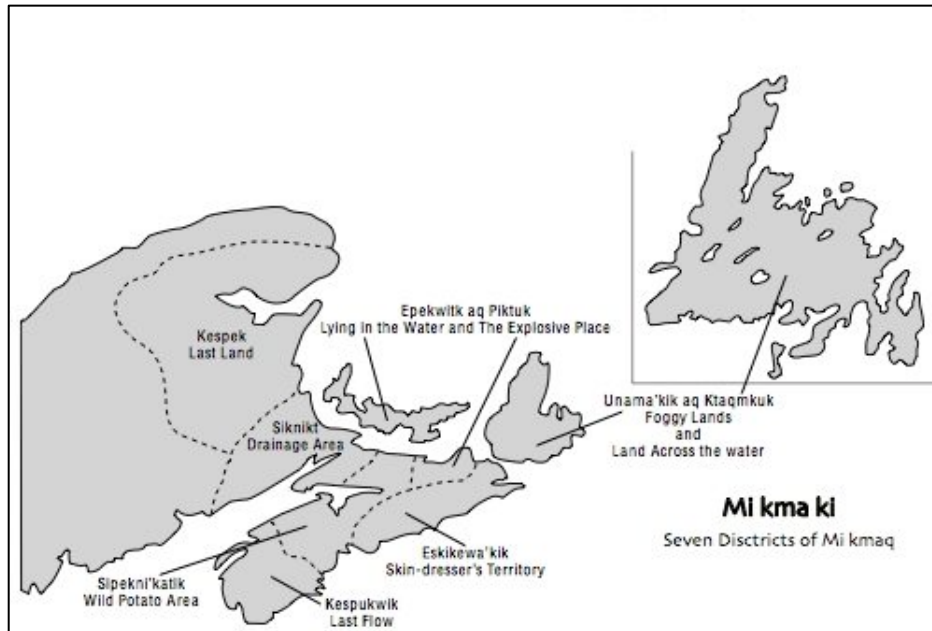
The *Saqiwe'k Lnu'k* period was followed by the *Mu Awsami Kejikawe'k L'nu'k* (Archaic period) (9,000 – 2,500 years BP), which included several traditions of subsistence strategy. The Maritime Archaic people exploited mainly marine resources while the Shield Archaic concentrated on interior resources such as caribou and salmon. The Laurentian Archaic is generally considered to be a more diverse hunting and gathering population.

The Archaic period was succeeded by the Woodland/Ceramic period or *Kejikawek L'nu'k* (2,500 – 500 years BP). Much of the Archaic way of subsistence remained although it was during this period that the first exploitation of marine molluscs is seen in the archaeological record. It was also during this time that ceramic technology was first introduced.

The Woodland period ended with the arrival of Europeans and the beginning of recorded history. The initial phase of contact between First Nations people and Europeans, known as the Protohistoric period, was met with various alliances particularly between the Mi'kmaq and French.

The Mi'kmaq inhabited the territory known as *Mi'kma'ki* or *Megumaage*, which included all of Nova Scotia including Cape Breton, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick (north of the Saint John River), the Gaspé region of Quebec, part of Maine and

southwestern Newfoundland (Figure 3.2-1). Antigonish and Pictou Counties were known to the Mi'kmaq as *Eskikewa'kik* or "skin-dressers' territory".<sup>3</sup>



**Figure 4.2-1: Map of the Mi'kma'ki territories.**<sup>4</sup>

The Mi'kmaq had encampments on the east and west banks of the East River of Pictou. On a point a little lower down the river was another burial ground where a large iron cross about 10 feet tall stood until well into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This area is now known as Indian Cross Point but was known to the Mi'kmaq as *Soonunagrade* or rotting place. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the graves could still be seen, marked by rows of flat stones which originally covered the graves. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, some of the graves here could be found eroding out of the bank.<sup>5</sup>

The Mi'kmaq had, for some time, been at war with an Abenaki tribe out of Maine and New Hampshire. In around 1760, it is said that at Little Harbour, two Abenaki brothers had built two blockhouses "constructed of logs, raised up around a vault first dug in the ground. The buildings were covered over, had each a heavy door, and were quite a safe fortification in Indian warfare. At the mouth of Barney's River, near the site of the burying ground, the Micmac [sic] were entrenched in a similar fort."<sup>6</sup> The Mi'kmaq were attacked by the Abenaki at Little Harbour and many were killed, their bodies set afire. The Mi'kmaq quickly retaliated and attacked one of the blockhouses at Little

<sup>3</sup> Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, 2007:11.

<sup>4</sup> Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq, 2007:11.

<sup>5</sup> Patterson 1877:27-28.

<sup>6</sup> Meacham, 1879:5.

Harbour, sending out large parties from Merigomish and burning one of the Abenaki fortifications.<sup>7</sup>

### 3.2.2 European Settlement

The first recorded mentions of Pictou are found in the early French voyages of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when Nicholas Denys described the area in his *The Description and Natural History of the Coasts of North America* (1672). Although the French inhabited the territory known as Acadia for about a century and a half, they left little documentation or evidence of their settlement in Pictou County. The only evidence that exists comes from what the English settlers found upon their later arrival in the county. The largest French settlement appears to have been on Merigomish Island where the remains of several dwellings were found. There were other smaller settlements at the head of French River, at Little Harbour, and at Caribou. The French appear to have been engaged principally in the fishery so the settlements were based along the shore and on the islands, although small settlements have also been found further inland on the mainland where the French were engaged in lumbering for supply to the garrison at Louisbourg.<sup>8</sup>

The French had a small settlement at the upper part of Little Harbour where they were engaged in fishing. Remains of dwellings have been found here as well as in many places along the shores of Pictou Harbour. Merigomish was the largest of the French settlements in the county, however.

The English and French were at war for over 150 years over the ownership and occupation of Acadia (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI and part of Gaspé). In 1763, peace was drawn and the English took control of the colony. French Acadians were expelled from the colony in the 1750s and beginning in the 1760s, many New Englanders took up the lands recently vacated by the Acadians.

New Englanders first settled Pictou in 1765. On October 31 of that year, a grant of 200,000 acres was given which was known as the Philadelphia Grant.<sup>9</sup> The grant encompassed the greater portion of the township of Pictou as well as a large portion of Colchester County including part of River John and Brule Point, a large part of New Annan, all of Earltown and Kemptown, and a considerable portion of Stewiacke. The grant was escheated in 1784.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Meacham, 1879:5-6.

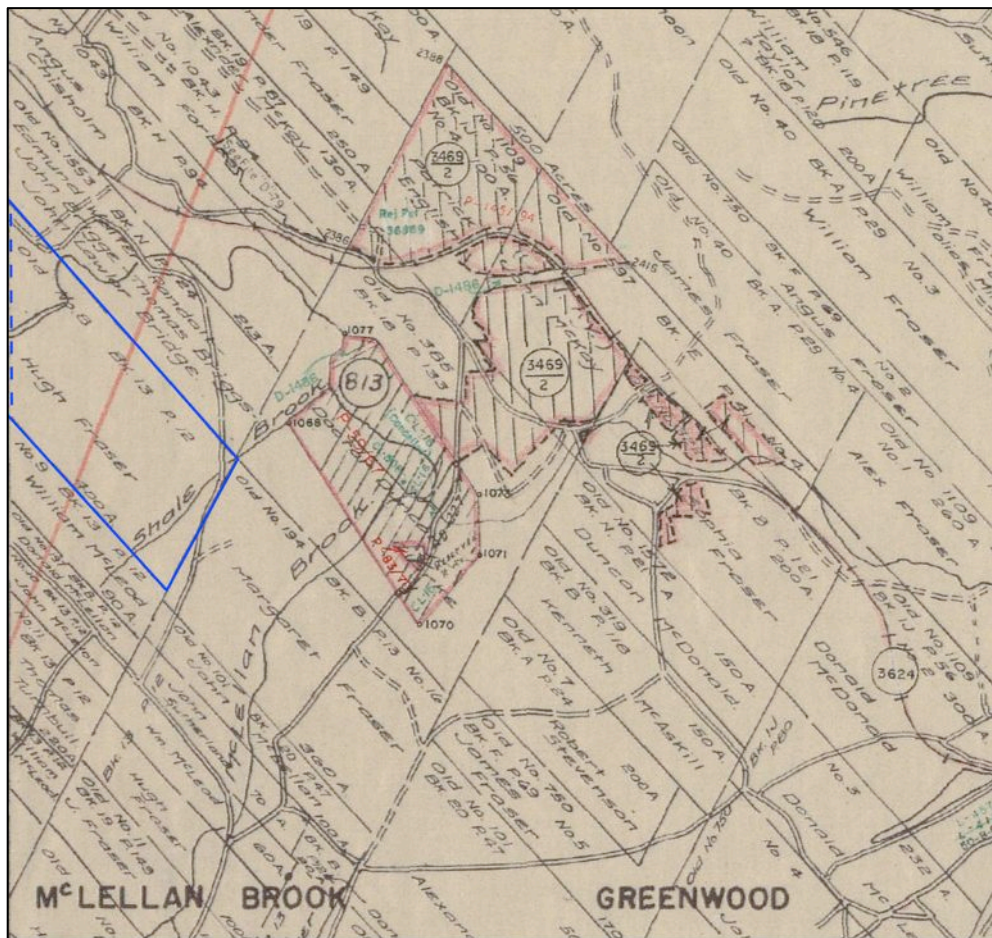
<sup>8</sup> Patterson 1877:24-40.

<sup>9</sup> Patterson 1877:49.

<sup>10</sup> PANS RG 20 Series C, Book 7, page 35.



In May 1767, the agents dispatched a ship, the *Hope*, from Philadelphia to settle the Grant. Among the passengers were twelve heads of families, about 20 children, and one convict servant. The town was laid out on a point in Pictou Harbour and the grantees were given a ½ acre town lot as well as a farm lot behind the town and extending into the interior.<sup>11</sup> The ship *Hector*, out of Scotland, arrived in 1773. Emigrants were promised free passage, a farm lot and a year’s provisions. Agent John Ross convinced 33 families and 25 unmarried men to embark. The immigrants settled on the lands around the East, West and Middle Rivers of Pictou on lands previously escheated from Colonel Alexander McNutt. However, a grant was never officially made to them until August 1783. It contained the names of 44 persons, some of who had arrived later.<sup>12</sup> Among these immigrants was Hugh Fraser, his wife and three children who was given 400 acres of land near McLellan’s Brook on August 26, 1783 (Figure 3.2-2).<sup>13</sup>



**Figure 3.2-2: Map of original land grants in Pictou from the Crown showing the grant to Hugh Fraser in 1783 (bounded in blue).<sup>14</sup>**

<sup>11</sup> Patterson 1877:49-61.

<sup>12</sup> Patterson 1877:79-91.

<sup>13</sup> Highland Settlement in Pictou (URL).

<sup>14</sup> Nova Scotia Department of Lands and Forests, 2009.



McLellan's Brook was named after John McLennan who settled at the mouth of the brook sometime between 1784 and 1789. The surname was changed through time to reflect the present name of the area.<sup>15</sup> Other early settlers were Sophia Fraser, who emigrated from Scotland in 1802 with her three children and two grandchildren, John McKay who came in 1805, James Fraser who settled in 1809, and Duncan McDonald who settled in 1827.

Ambrose F. Church's map of Pictou County in 1867 indicates that the land surrounding the study area was leased by the Pictou Mining Company (and later the Acadia Coal Company) (Figure 3.2-3). There were a few settlers along Old Mill Road as well as along McLellan's Brook Road but there is nothing shown in the study area itself. To the northeast, there was a sawmill and blacksmith shop along McLellan's Brook but these were located well outside the current study area as well.



**Figure 3.2-3: Part of Ambrose F. Church's map of Pictou County in 1867 showing the area around McLellan's Brook. The approximate location of the study area is indicated by a red ellipse.**

<sup>15</sup> Pictou County Place Names (URL).

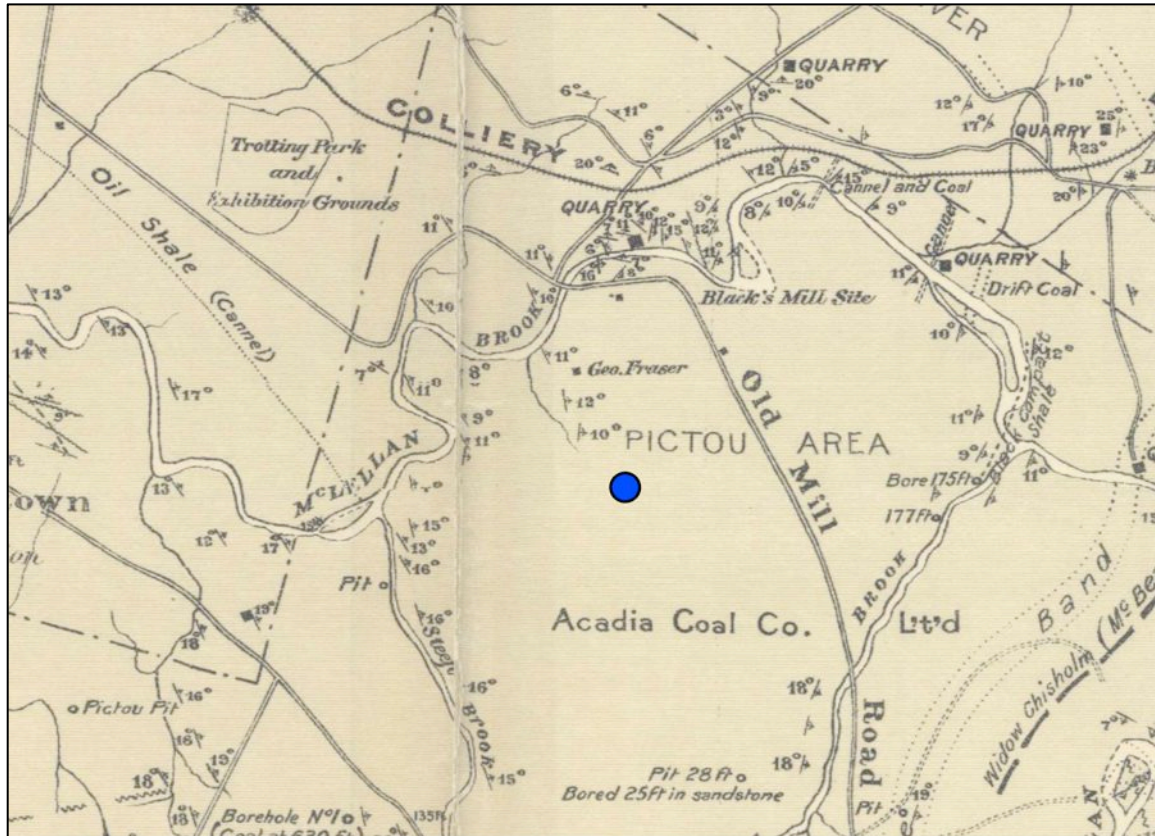
Meacham's atlas of Pictou County, published in 1879, shows that the land had actually been parceled off but in 1904, Geological Survey Maps still indicated that the Acadian Coal Company Ltd. retained leases on the land (Figures 3.2-4 and 3.2-5). The property that now takes in the proposed asbestos disposal facility was owned by the heirs of John McLeod and there was a house on the property facing on East River Road on the north side of McLellan's Brook, well outside the study area. The remainder of the lot nearer to the road was likely used for farm land while the backland would have likely served as woodlot. The Old Mill Road did not exist at this time.



Figure 3.2-4: Part of Meacham's atlas of Pictou County in 1879 showing McLellan's Brook. The land parcel that encompasses the study area is bounded in red.

By 1902, the Old Mill Road had, in fact, been established and it lead to Black's Mill on McLellan's Brook, north of what is now Highway 104. Aside from the mill, there was a building on the east side of the road roughly in the area where the Trans Canada Highway now runs. There was a second building – the residence of George Fraser – to the west which also likely destroyed when the highway was built. The study area and much of the surrounding land does not appear to have been occupied (Figure 3.2-5).





**Figure 3.2-5: Part of the Geological Survey of Canada map of the Pictou Coalfield in 1904 showing the McLellan's Brook area. The approximate location of the study area is highlighted.**

### 3.3 Field Reconnaissance

An archaeological reconnaissance of the study area was conducted by Stephen Davis and April MacIntyre. The archaeologists were met by a worker at the adjacent construction and demolition site who indicated that he had cut three survey lines for the project. He did not know of any heritage resources in the area. The survey lines were cut through the north-south axis and geotechnical test pits had been excavated at the four corners of the study area (Plates 1 through 3). The survey lines were spaced approximately 35 meters apart and were used to facilitate the reconnaissance. Each of the geotechnical test pits were also investigated to ensure no archaeological deposits had been disturbed. The study area had been logged about 10 years ago and there were several skidder trails throughout the area. The ground is very rugged, as a result, and relatively wet. New growth is predominantly White Birch, Spruce and Maple. The geotechnical test pits created an area of disturbance approximately 110 meters long by 30 meters wide, as a result of the excavation of the test pits as well as the movement of the backhoe between the test pits. No cultural deposits or soils were noted in the area of the test pits and the very small study area was determined to be of low archaeological potential.

## 4.0 Results and Discussion

The study area encompasses a very small parcel of land which has been subjected to past and recent disturbances. The background study indicated that, while lands in this area were granted as early as the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the study area itself likely served as no more than woodlot and was leased by coal corporations in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The nearest settlement was along McLellan's Brook Road to the south, and the Coalburn McLellan's Brook Road, as well as in the vicinity of the present-day alignment of the Trans Canada Highway. These latter resources were, no doubt, demolished when the highway was constructed. Ventures in sawmilling and smithing were noted in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century along McLellan's Brook but these were well to the northeast on the northside of the present-day highway.

In regards to First Nations land use in the area, there would have been little in the way of exploitable resources to attract precontact or historic indigenous peoples for seasonal or short-term activity or encampment.

## 5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The study area has been determined to be of low potential for First Nations or Euro-Canadian resources. Therefore, no further mitigation is recommended. In the unlikely event that archaeological resources are encountered during construction, it is required that all activity cease and the Coordinator of Special Places, Ms. Laura Bennett (902-424-6475) be contacted immediately regarding a suitable method of mitigation.

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## **PLATES**



***Plate 1: Geotechnical test pits (one in foreground and one in background) at the west end of the study area looking north northwest.***



***Plate 2: Geotechnical test pit at the southeast end of the study area, looking north northwest.***



*Plate 3: Center survey cut line, looking south.*

**APPENDIX A:  
Heritage Research Permit**





Tourism, Culture and Heritage

Heritage Division

Special Places Protection Act, R.S.N.S. 1989

# Heritage Research Permit (Archaeology)

(Original becomes Permit when approved by  
the Executive Director of the Heritage Division)

Office Use Only  
Permit Number:  
A2012NS152

<i>Greyed out fields will be made publically available. Please choose your project name accordingly</i>	
Surname Davis	First Name Stephen
Project Name McLellans Brook Asbestos Disposal Site	
Name of Organization Davis MacIntyre & Associates Limited	
Representing (if applicable)	
Permit Start Date 26 October 2012	Permit End Date 31 December 2012
<b>General Location:</b> McLellans Brook, Coalburn, Pictou County	
<b>Specific Location:</b> (cite Borden numbers and UTM designations where appropriate and as described separately in accordance with the attached Project Description. Please refer to the appropriate Archaeological Heritage Research Permit Guidelines for the appropriate Project Description format) 20 T 5045521.38 m N 529509.20 m E (WGS84) (approx centre of study area)	
<b>Permit Category:</b> Please choose one: <input type="checkbox"/> Category A - Archaeological Reconnaissance <input type="checkbox"/> Category B - Archaeological Research <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Category C - Archaeological Resource Impact Assessment  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I certify that I am familiar with the provisions of the <i>Special Places Protection Act</i> of Nova Scotia and that I have read, understand and will abide by the terms and conditions listed in the Heritage Research Permit Guidelines for the above noted category. <input type="checkbox"/> I currently hold a treasure trove license or pending application for a licence related to this Heritage Research Permit.	
Signature of applicant <i>For Stephen Davis</i>	Date 17 October 2012
Approved by Executive Director <i>[Signature]</i>	Date <i>Oct 28 12</i>