

The Grand Falls Project

First Nations Liaison/Field Monitor Report

Completed by: Austin Paul

Report covering the period from: October 18th-24th, 2016

Date: October 18th, 19th, 24th, 2016

Activities Conducted:

Monitored geotechnical work being carried out by GHD. This aspect of fieldwork is associated with the potential Grand Falls Project.

Pertinent Information:

Five drilling locations were chosen for the study: 3 boreholes are being extracted from Front Street in Grand Falls, 1 near the present intake for the current powerhouse and another near the current outflow of the powerhouse. The aim of the study is to determine what the substrate and bedrock conditions are in the study area.

The core samples are 2 inches wide and are being drilled to 75 meters (maximum). The width of the core tube is very small and does not offer a great deal of potential to uncover cultural material. The areas that I have inspected appear to have been heavily disturbed by the construction of the generating station and infrastructure associated with the development of the town of Grand Falls. The areas adjacent to the intake and outtake of the dam appear to be less disturbed and will be monitored by First Nations staff.

Upon seeing the core samples extruded from Front Street, it is my opinion that the work will not require a monitor. I have taken extra precautions and gave the drilling crew a crash course in N.B. pre-contact archaeology and have shown them examples of local tool-stone varieties and to inform me if they come across anything suspicious.

The work being conducted at the moment is exploratory in nature and did not require permitting, as such, archaeological monitoring was not mandated, however, the leadership at NB Power felt that it would be prudent and beneficial to have a first nations monitor on site.

Interests and Potential Concerns from a First Nations Perspective

The Grand Falls area is very significant to the Wolastoqiyik people. It was, and remains a major obstacle in terms of river navigation and required an overland portage. When canoeing over long distances, it is natural for people to make camp either at the beginning or end of portage trails. Lugging gear overland takes a great deal of energy and many paddlers choose to rest for the night before continuing the journey. Over time, archaeological material is deposited on the site and preserved in the soils. It is due to this fact that I believe that the intake and outtake area offer the most potential, however, even these areas have been impacted in the past.

Many legends are associated with the falls, most notably the legend of Malabeam who led a large party of Mohawks to their doom by running the falls. The area undoubtedly contains archaeological sites; however the condition and distribution of these sites are presently unknown. It is my understanding that in what archaeologists term the Palaeo Period (12,500-9000 years before present) the overall ocean levels were 75 meters higher than the present. This higher water level suggests that Grand Falls was the head of the tide at that time, just as Ekpahak is currently the head of the tide on the Wolastoq. The head of the tide on nearly every river system in N.B. is host to archaeological sites. The Grand Falls area may have been important to the people who lived in the Palaeo Period, however, no sites from this time frame have been identified in the area thus far. An archaeological walk over survey will begin on November 2nd, 2016 and is being carried out by Stantec Consulting. I will be present for the entirety of the survey and will strive to find unidentified archaeological sites.

Photographs



Above: the GHD coring crew working on Front Street.



Above: A core tube composed of loose fill and glacial till.