APPENDIX 18A: STAGE 1 ARCHAEOLOGY MITIGATION



Altamira Consulting Ltd.

INTERIM REPORT

Stage 1 Archaeological Mitigation KdVi-1, KeVi-6, KfVi-2, KfVi-3, KfVi-4 and KfVi-5 Casino Mine Project

Casino Mining Corporation

Yukon Class 2 Permit Number 13-06ASR

By

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the request of the Casino Mining Corporation and the Casino Mine, Stage 1 Mitigative excavations were conducted at six known sites identified during previous archaeological assessments within the Casino Mine property and the associated Britannia Creek and Casino Creek corridors. These sites include pre-contact era sites KdVi-1, KeVi-6, KfVi-2, KfVi-3, KfVi-4 and KfVi-5.

The work was undertaken between June 6 and June 16, 2013 under the direction of Margarita J. de Guzman of Altamira Consulting Ltd. (Altamira). The following report is an interim report submitted for the purpose of the identification of site significance such that viable mitigation measures may be determined in the event of unavoidable impacts to known heritage resources.

This interim report is being submitted in order to facilitate clearance for mining approval. Of concern are archaeological sites KdVi-1, KeVi-6, KfVi-2, KfVi-3, KfVi-4 and KfVi-5. Current analysis of the results from the field work indicates that these sites have high archaeological significance and should be avoided. If avoidance is not possible, then further staged archaeological mitigation should be undertaken.

These recommendations are in accordance with Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (YESAB) Operational Policy No. 2011-01 Heritage Resource Information Requirements for Land Application Proposals Policy (August 23, 2011).

2.0 SCOPE

The Casino Mine Project consists of an open pit porphyry mine with deposits of gold, copper and molybdenum. Proposed development within the mine includes construction and upgrading of associated access roads, air fields and various other infrastructure developments, as well as a potential water supply line and air strip capable of supporting large aircraft, the lattermost of which has yet to be defined and assessed with regard to heritage resources.

A Historical Resources Assessment was conducted in 2009 for the Central Mine Property and the proposed access road corridor (YASR Permit 09-9ASR), which resulted in the recording of six new archaeology sites (KdVi-1, KeVi-6, KfVi-2, KfVi-3, KfVi-4 and KfVi-5), 13 new historic sites and, 5 previously recorded archaeological sites and two known historic sites were revisited. The 2009 assessment included investigations of the sites that are currently of concern. i.e., KdVi-1, KeVi-6, KfVi-2, KfVi-3, KfVi-4 and KfVi-5.

In 2010, a Historical Resource Assessment was conducted for the Britannia Creek Road Realignment (YASR Permit 10-4ASR). During the 2010 assessment, KfVi-5 and KfVi-6 were noted to be outside the road right-of-way (ROW) but were flagged for avoidance (with a 30m buffer). Casino Mine had indicated that these sites would not be impacted given their location outside the proposed impact zone; further concern for the sites was not warranted. Mitigative excavations of KdVi-1, KeVi-6, KfVi-2, KfVi-3, KfVi-4 and KfVi-5 were planned for 2010 but work was suspended by Casino Mine and no excavations were carried out. Altamira was asked to proceed with this work in 2013 under Yukon Permit Number 13-06ASR.

3.0 METHODS

The field work was undertaken between June 5 to 16, 2013. The work included testing and excavation at six sites: KdVi-1, KeVi-6, KfVi-2, KfVi-3, KfVi-4 and KfVi-5.

Unit placement was based on the selection of previous test units that produced larger numbers of artifacts or otherwise significant data. The specific excavation units in 2013 were placed on or adjacent to the 2009 shovel test locations that produced significant amounts of archaeological material. In this way, the sites and test units were revisited using 2009 provenience data.

The number of units excavated depended in part on previous recovery numbers, the size and nature of the site, and the ongoing recovery of artifacts from 2013 shovel tests and excavation units.

Excavations were conducted by hand, in 1-x-1-m units and using 10-cm arbitrary levels. The excavations continued in depth until basal deposits were identified. Artifacts found *in situ* were recorded using three point provenience and the matrix was screened using 6-mm mesh. The following provides a brief summary of the results of this Stage 1 excavation work.

4.0 **RESULTS**

4.1 KdVi-1

KdVi-1 is an archaeological site originally recorded in 1994 during an AIA for Pacific Gold Corporation (Handly *et al.* 1994). KdVi-1 was tested (n = 21) and three evaluative test units (ETUs) were also dug. The 1994 tests resulted in 134 pieces of debitage, four scrapers, one biface fragment and 25 pieces of calcined bone; debitage included 31 pieces of obsidian found near a hearth feature in one of the evaluation trenches (Handly *et al.* 1994). Bone from the feature was radiocarbon dated at 3, 390 +/- 60 BP (Handly *et al.* 1994).

KdVi-1 was revisited in 2009 as required under YASR Permit 09-9ASR and tested with 23 shovel tests, four of which produced archaeological material (Soucey *et al.* 2009). The 2009 shovel testing program expanded site boundaries further to the north. The 2009 work added nine specimens to the assemblage, including pressure flakes and reduction flakes of chert, siltstone and obsidian. The recovery of obsidian was particularly significant; obsidian can often be sourced and is indicative of trade and commerce routes.

Testing under the current permit resulted in three out of 38 shovel tests that were positive for archaeological material. These shovel tests were concentrated in the northwest portion of the site, approximately 40 m from the 2009 excavation units. Artifacts recovered include single flakes, each recovered from shovel tests 3, 21 and 31.

A total of five 1 x 1 units were excavated at KdVi-1. Three units were placed adjacent to the 1994 excavation units and positive shovel tests, and two were placed within the expanded site area. This expanded area lies approximately 40 m north of original 1994 site boundary and the 2013 units were placed amongst positive shovel tests from the 2009 and 2013 tests.

The excavations revealed a shallow soil profile with 3-4 cm of duff underlain by a reddish brown sandy silt layer. This second layer displayed moderate (50%) pea gravel inclusions to 10 to 13 cm below the surface followed by a basal layer of pea gravel and/or bedrock. The majority of materials recovered originated from the sandy silt layer.

The excavation of five 1 x 1 m units resulted in the collection of 78 lithic artifacts. No other archaeological materials were observed or collected. The majority of the items originated from Level 1 (0-10 cm below the surface), and from the three units placed adjacent to the 1994 trench.

Collected artifacts include one projectile point, one biface, one core, one knife, one uniface, one unimarginal modified flake and 72 pieces of lithic debitage (Table 1). Raw materials include obsidian, argillite, siltstone and quartzite. All of the tools were found in the two units adjacent to the south side of the 1994 excavation trench (199N100E, 199N99E). As such, the recovered assemblage from units alone represents a high tool to debitage ratio (6:39), accounting for over 15% of the lithics from 199N100E and 199N99E. This likely represents an activity area related to tool production and rejuvenation. This is further confirmed by the

diversity in the assemblage, with a high number of lithic tool types.

		Tool	ls	-	-	-	_	Debitage	
Unit	Level	Biface	Core	Knife	Projectile Point	Uniface	Unimarginal Modified Flake	Flake	Count
199N99E	1		1	1				12	14
199N99E	2							1	1
199N100E	1	1			1	1	1	19	23
199N100E	2							2	2
201N100E	1							15	15
201N100E	2							1	1
301N400E	1							22	22
Total:		1	1	1	1	1	1	72	78

Table 1. Artifacts collected during excavations at KdVi-1 in 2013.

Results from the initial or preliminary analysis of the materials and excavation and testing data at KdVi-1 indicate that the site is larger in size than previous work had shown. The site had been dated previously by C-14 in 1994, indicating occupation to be around 3,390 +/- 60 BP (Handly *et al.* 1994). Preliminary analysis of the obsidian projectile point collected during the current excavation show stylistic characteristics similar to the Whitehorse Point, which displays similarly a broad lanceolate shape and subconvex base (Hare *et al.* 2005). This point style along with the C-14 date places the site within the Taye Lake Phase of the Northern Archaic Period (1,500 - 4,500 years BP).

Based on the results from the 2009 and 2013 shovel test programs, KdVi-1 measures approximately 50 m north to south and 10 m east to west, spanning an area of approximately 500 m^2 . Two distinct activity areas have been identified. The first activity area was identified and recorded in 1994 and is located towards the toe of the landform. A second activity area was identified during the shovel testing in 2009. This testing expanded the site area 30 m to the north of the originally identified location. Additional testing in 2013 revealed a concentration of artifacts in this new northern part of the site. KdVi-1 likely spans the entire landform, representing repeated and long term prehistoric occupation.

4.2 KeVi-6

KeVi-6 is an archaeological site recorded in 2009 during survey and shovel testing of the area. A total of six shovel tests were placed at the site, two of these were positive. The artifacts recovered from the shovel tests included 8 broken flakes, one microblade core rejuvenation flake, 8 pressure flakes and 4 fragments of calcined bone (Soucey *et al.* 2009). KeVi-6 was revisited in 2010, but no investigations were conducted given its location outside of the proposed project area. The site area was flagged and a 30-m buffer zone was established around the site, denoted by blue and white flagging tied to trees.

Under the current permit, two 1-x-1 m units (arbitrarily designated Unit 1 and Unit 2) were excavated at KeVi-6, one on either side of the bedrock, adjacent to or on top of positive shovel tests. Excavations revealed a shallow deposition, with a 5-cm duff atop reddish brown silt that extended to approximately 20 cm below the surface; excavations were continued to a depth of 25 cm when basal deposits were encountered.

The assemblage recovered from KeVi-6 totals 138 lithic artifacts, including 9 microblades (some fragmented), 1 unimarginal modified flake and 1 lanceolate projectile point; the majority of artifacts were recovered from Unit 2 (Table 2).

		Tools				Debitage	
Unit	Level	Microblade	Microblade Fragment	Projectile Point	Unimarginal Modified flake	Flake	Count
1	1	1					1
1	2		1			7	8
2	1		3		1	61	65
2	2	4		1		59	64
	Total:	5	4	1	1	127	138

Table 2. Artifacts recovered from excavations at KeVi-6.

KeVi-6 is described as a prehistoric archaeological site consisting of subsurface. The recovery of microblades indicates KeVi-6 to date to the Middle Prehistoric Period, and the recovery of tools with a relatively large number of debitage indicates the site was likely used for short term toolmaking activities.

4.3 KfVi-2

KfVi-2 is an archaeological site identified in 2009 during survey and shovel testing of the area. At that time a total of 22 shovel tests and one 1 m^2 evaluative unit were excavated (Soucey *et al.* 2009). Three of these shovel tests produced positive results; one shovel test yielded high quantities of calcined bone and fire-cracked rock. An evaluative unit placed over this test resulted in the discovery of a hearth feature; 613 pieces of calcined bone and 107 pieces of fire-broken rock (FBR) were collected.

Under the current permit, one $1 \ge 1$ m excavation unit (arbitrarily designated Unit 1) was placed adjacent to the $1 \ge 1$ m evaluation unit excavated in 2009 and two $1 \ge 1$ m excavation units (Unit 2 and Unit 3) were placed adjacent to productive shovel tests from the 2009 survey.

Unit 1, which was placed adjacent to the east side of the 1 x 1 m unit excavated in 2009, was excavated to uncover more of the known hearth feature found in 2009 and to collect samples of charcoal or faunal remains for radiocarbon dating, if possible. This unit was offset 50 cm to the south of the northern limit of the 2009 unit to avoid a clump of poplar. Unit 2 was excavated immediately east of ST 16, which had been excavated in 2009 and Unit 3 was placed immediately east of ST 48, which had been excavated in 2009.

Excavation of Units 1 to 3 at KfVi-2 revealed variable stratigraphy across the site. The profile of Unit 1 consisted of 10 to 22 cm of duff underlain by light grey silt to 13 to 19 cm below the surface, followed by laminated light to medium grey silt and organic lens to 25 to 30 cm below surface. Below this was a buried duff horizon to 30 to 32 cm below the surface, followed by a laminated light grey silt with dark grey organic silts to 31 to 39 cm below the surface, a laminated reddish brown silt, grey brown silt and dark grey organic silt to 50 to 58 cm below the surface, and a laminated light grey silt, reddish brown silt and dark grey organic silt to 63 to 65 cm below surface. Excavation of all three units was halted at the sterile medium grey brown sand at approximately 65 cm below the surface.

A 9-cm thick bowl-shaped, ash-filled hearth feature was observed at approximately 30 cm below surface, extending to 39 cm below surface at its deepest point; this feature appears to be a continuation of the hearth feature excavated in 2009. The recovered artifact assemblage from KfVi-2 was limited to six flakes and eight pieces of bone, as well as 104 pieces of firebroken rock (FBR), all collected from Unit 1; no artifacts were recovered from Unit 2 or Unit 3 (Table 4 and 5). A 1-L sample was also taken from the hearth for fine-sieving and radiocarbon dating; this will likely add to the assemblage but has yet to be assessed.

A total of 14 pieces of FBR were collected from the hearth itself, with an additional 90 pieces of FBR recovered above and below the feature; the additional FBR is likely associated with the hearth feature (Table 4). FBR appears to be predominantly fragments of discard size (< 5 cm), which would indicate prolonged and/or long-term occupation at KfVi-2. However, the recovery of the majority of FBR from outside of the hearth may indicate disturbance from bioturbation and/or fluvial activity, with artifacts being displaced vertically, and possibly

horizontally. However, the ash fill of the hearth appeared intact within the rocks lining the feature; it is likely that it was buried during a flood event of the Yukon River, which would have effectively sealed the feature below a layer of silt.

Unit	Laval	Debitage	Faunal	Count
Unit	Level	Flake	Unidentifiable	Count
1	1	1	1	2
1	3		3	3
1	4	1	3	4
1	5	4	1	5
	Total	6	8	12

Table 3.Artifacts recovered from excavations at KfVi-2.

Table 4.FBR recovered from excavations at KfVi-2.

	Count by	Count by Size			weight (kg)			
Level	< 5 cm	5 – 10 cm	10 cm	< 5 cm	5 – 10 cm	10 cm	Total Count	Total Weight (kg)
1	23	1		0.17	0.70	-	24	0.87
2	2			0.10			2	0.10
3	4	1		0.15	0.05		5	0.20
4	52	11	1	0.76	0.91	.24	64	1.91
5	2		2	0.02		0.45	4	0.47
Feature	6	6	2	0.22	0.9	0.88	14	2.00
Total	89	19	5	1.42	2.56	1.57	113	5.55

4.4 KfVi-3

KfVi-3 is a multi-component archaeological site identified in 2009 during survey and shovel testing of the area; 58 shovel tests were conducted, 42 of which were negative for cultural material (Soucey *et al.* 2009). Artifacts were recovered from 16 shovel tests; recovered materials include two core fragments and 76 pieces of debitage, as well as 16 long bone fragments and four unidentifiable faunal fragments. Debitage consisted of reduction flakes, pressure flakes and shatter, all of variable material, i.e., argillite, chalcedony, chert, quartzite and siltstone. KfVi-3 was also identified to have a historic component, represented by a poorly preserved wooden structure and an associated depression (3-x-2 m), as well as a scatter of Historic period artifacts.

Under the current permit, 45 additional shovel tests were conducted on an approximate 5-m grid. Of these, 15 were positive for cultural material; recovered artifacts include calcined bone and lithic debitage, which further included a number of microblades. A total of 205 artifacts were recovered from the shovel tests, including 74 fragments of calcined bone and a single, complete deer metapodial from 75 cm below the surface, as well as 128 flakes and two microblades (Table 5). The count and variety of raw material remained consistent with the 2009 assemblage, but 2013 shovel tests also identified additional activity areas along the northern perimeter of the site.

	Tools	Debitage	Faunal	1	
Shovel Test	Microblade	Flake	Metapodial	Unidentifiable	Count
10		2			2
11		68	1		69
12		24			24
13	1	7			8
14		2		74	76
15		4			4
18		1			1
23	1	1			2
25		2			2
30		9			9
37		3			3
40		1			1
41		1			1
43		2			2
45		1			1
Total:	2	128	1	74	205

Table 5. Artifacts recovered from 2013 shovel tests at KfVi-3.

A datum was established approximately 11 m east of the historic depression; this was designated 100E100N. An east-west baseline was then established along the centre of the landform and excavation units designated in relation to the datum. Initial excavation units were placed in areas deemed to be the main activity areas as per the 2009 assessment; further excavation units were opened based on the ongoing results of the excavations, as well as the results of the 2013 shovel tests.

Excavation of 16 1-x-1-m units resulted in the recovery of 705 lithic artifacts and 1004 faunal specimens, the majority of which were recovered from Levels 2 and 3 (10 to 30 cm below the surface); lithic materials were concentrated in the western and northern portions of the site while faunal materials were mainly recovered from two individual units in the western and central portion of the site. The 2013 excavations also investigated the Historic period component, represented by the wooden structure and cultural depression. Two 1-x-1 m units were excavated with the depression itself, one of which encompassed the western berm (100N 144E and 100N 115E). Historic period artifacts were not recovered from within these excavation units, though Historic period remains were identified on the surface in the surrounding area. Prehistoric artifacts were recovered from the excavations, but these were of limited quantity (Table 6 and Table 7).

Preliminary analysis indicates two prehistoric components at KfVi-3, one that is represented mainly by chert flakes and microblades, as well as at least one burin spall, and an earlier component that is represented by basalt and silt stone. One microblade is potentially Edziza obsidian (Ray LeBlanc, pers.comm.). Materials recovered from the lowest depths of excavation include very minimal lithic artifacts and seemingly unworked bone; further investigation, including radiocarbon testing, may indicate the age of these materials, and may confirm a third prehistoric component.

The 2013 excavations also investigated the Historic period component, represented by the wooden structure and cultural depression. Two 1-x-1-m units were excavated within the depression itself, one of which encompassed the western berm (100N 114E and 100N 115E). Historic period artifacts were not recovered from within these excavation units, though Historic period remains were identified on the surface in the surrounding area. Prehistoric artifacts were recovered from the excavations, but these were of limited quantity.

	Tools						Debitage	
Level	Biface	Microblade	Microblade Core	Core	Scraper	Hammerstone	Flakes	Total
1	1	4	1	1			88	95
2	1	8	1		1	1	285	297
3	1	5					232	238
4	1				1		47	49
5							17	17
6	1						8	9
Total	5	17	2	1	2	1	677	705

Table 6. Lithic artifacts recovered from 2013 excavations at KfVi-3, by 10-cm level.

Table 7. Faunal material recovered from 2013 excavations at KfVi-3, by 10-cm level.

Level	Burnt	Calcined	Canine Tooth	Deer Metapodial	Fish Vertebrae	Long Bone Fragment	Unknown Fragment	Total
1	1	165						166
2	3	767						770
3		10						10
4		6	1				3	10
5		9			1		9	19
6		7				1	15	23
7								0
8				1			5	6
Total	4	964	1	1	1	1	32	1004

The 2013 excavations confirmed the presence of the Historic period component, represented by a temporary shack, possibly used as a short-term camp, as well as two distinct prehistoric components; there may also be a third, and very early, component though this is currently represented by a limited number of artifacts (mainly bone). The recovered assemblage is typical of long-term and repeated occupation, potentially spanning thousands of years. The presence of microblades and diagnostic materials indicate occupation dating to at least the Middle Prehistoric Period (8,000 to 5,000 BP) and, as per preliminary discussions with Yukon Archaeologist, Ruth Gotthardt, potentially into the Early Prehistoric Period (11,500 to 9,500 BP).

As per the 2009 and 2013 shovel testing program, KfVi-3 is estimated to extend at least 55 m east to west and 25 m north to south, spanning an area of 1,375 square metres. The 16 1-x-1-m excavation units account for only a 1.16% sample of the archaeological assemblage at KfVi-3, and many questions remain unanswered. The southeast portion of the site has not been investigated, and excavations in the northern portion are minimal; furthermore, the lithic and calcined bone concentrations in the western portion, as well as the central portion, are not thoroughly understood. In addition, the potential third component, which potentially dates to the Early Prehistoric Period, is very poorly understood.

4.5 KfVi-4

KfVi-4 is an archaeological site was identified in 2009 during survey and shovel testing of the area; 15 shovel tests were conducted, only three of which were positive for cultural material (Soucey *et al.* 2009). The recovered assemblage consists of six unidentifiable mammal long bone fragments, one grey chert pressure flake and one brown chert pressure flake.

Under the current permit two 1 x 1 m units (arbitrarily designated 100N99E and 100N100E) were excavated and 14 shovel tests, conducted on an approximate 5-m grid, were conducted at KFVi-4. Soil deposition at the site was shallow, with 2 to 10 cm of duff underlain by 14 to 20 cm of reddish brown silt; basal pea gravel deposits were identified below.

None of the shovel tests or the excavation units contained cultural material.

4.6 KfVi-5

KfVi-5 is a prehistoric site consisting of buried archaeological materials identified in 2009 during survey and shovel testing of the area; 15 shovel tests were conducted, 11 of which were negative for cultural material (Soucey *et al.* 2009). Lithic artifacts were recovered from four shovel tests; recovered materials included three broken flakes, two core reduction flakes, one pressure flake, one reduction flake and one microblade. KfVi-5 was revisited in 2010 but additional testing was not conducted; a 30-m buffer was placed around the site, denoted by blue and white flagging that was tied to trees.

Under the current permit, KfVi-5 was identified to be extensively disturbed by construction of a borrow source related to the Britannia Creek Road re-alignment. The main area of the site was observed to have been cleared of vegetation and a considerable amount of debris had been piled on the site area. Large machine tracks could be identified on the surface, showing likely movement of overburden generally from north to south. An approximate 1.5-x-4-m trench was also observed to have been machine-excavated in an area immediately southwest of the site, within the flagged area.

A total of 18 shovel tests were conducted throughout the intact area. Of these, three were positive for cultural material, yielding 12 pieces of lithic debitage (Table 8). These shovel tests actually expanded the boundaries of KfVi-5, identifying peripheral activity areas to the site proper, where the 2009 shovel tests were concentrated.

	Debitage	
Shovel Test	Flake	Count
4	3	3
6	1	1
10	8	8
Total:	12	12

Table 8. Artifacts recovered from 2013 shovel tests at KfVi-5.

An exploratory 1-x-2 m excavation unit was placed next to Shovel Test 4, as well as next to Shovel Test 10 (Shovel Test 6 was not in an intact area). Excavations of arbitrarily designed units 1, 2, 3 and 4 were conducted to depths of up to 60 cm below the surface (to Level 6), where bedrock or clay was encountered. Sediments above consisted of duff to 8 to 12 cm below the surface, atop orange-brown clayey silt that extended to 24 cm below the surface; below this was orange-grey silt that extended to 40 cm below the surface in Units 1 and 2, but 60 cm below the surface in Units 3 and 4.

	Tools	Debitage	Total	
Level	Adze	Flakes		
1	1	11	12	
2		41	41	
3		24	24	
4		21	21	
5		1	1	
6				
Total	1	98	99	

Table 9. Lithic artifacts recovered from 2013 excavations at KfVi-5, by 10-cm level.

KfVi-5 is described as a prehistoric archaeological site consisting of subsurface deposits found associated with a small, elevated colluvial bench on the lower western slope of the Britannia Creek valley on the south margin of the Yukon River. Long-term occupation may have been discernible through excavation of the site proper, however the recovered assemblage from the peripheral activity areas is typical of tool maintenance and short term camp site activities. KfVi-5 dates to the Middle Prehistoric Period, as determined by the presence of microblades; no microblades were recovered during the 2013 excavations, but one microblade fragment was recovered from shovel testing in 2009.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

All of the sites listed are located within lands that are held as property by the Casino Mining Corporation. Given this, there is a reasonable likelihood that the sites will be adversely affected by mining activities or activities associated with the Casino Mining project either in the near future or eventually. Experience with such eventualities indicates that concerns for and needs to gather data before disturbance occurs is mandatory.

The six archaeological sites, KdVi-1, KeVi-6, KfVi-2, KfVi-3, KfVi-4 and KfVi-5, which were subject to the exploratory excavations, were flagged with a 30 m buffer using yellow and black "No Work Zone" tape. These areas are recommended for avoidance pending review of the HRIA final report by the Yukon Heritage Unit. Avoidance of the 19 recorded historic sites is also recommended.

5.0 **REFERENCES**

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