



# Northwest Archaeological Associates, Inc.

Cultural Resources Management Services  
5418 20th Avenue NW, Suite 200, Seattle, WA 98107

February 19, 2009

John Small  
Anchor Environmental  
1423 3rd Avenue, Suite 300  
Seattle, WA 98101

RE: Bainbridge Island Shoreline Improvement, Strawberry Plant Project

Dear Mr. Small:

Following is a summary of preliminary background research conducted for the Strawberry Plant project. This letter is intended to provide relevant information about the project's natural and cultural setting and to aid in design of the project.

## **Natural Setting**

The natural history of Bainbridge Island is largely structured by glacial activity during the Pleistocene, and climatic warming, sea level rise, and tectonic activity during the Holocene. The Puget Lobe of the Fraser Glaciation covered Bainbridge Island until approximately 14,500 BP (years before present) when it retreated rapidly, leaving behind massive deposits of till and outwash. After retreat of the ice, when sea level was lower, Eagle Harbor was an inland valley occupied by freshwater streams (Roedel et al. 2005). By about 5000 BP, marine water had slowly flooded the valley creating the protected inlet of Eagle Harbor. Over time, the harbor developed into a productive marine littoral environment for salmon, resident marine fish, shellfish, and plant resources. Tectonic events during the late Holocene have significantly altered the shoreline of Bainbridge Island. Activity along the Toe Jam Hill fault around 1100 BP produced an earthquake that uplifted the south end of Bainbridge Island by 16 to 23 feet and subsided Eagle Harbor by about 1.6 feet. The pre-1100 BP Eagle Harbor shoreline was submerged, along with any human settlements that may have been present along the shoreline.

Continuous direct exploratory probes (EP) conducted by Aspect Engineering and monitored by NWAA geoarchaeologist, Brandy Rinck encountered fill between two and ten feet (80 to 290 centimeters) deep. Beneath the fill were intertidal sands and silts, indicating that the cannery was built out beyond the natural shoreline and that the pre-fill shoreline is further north than it is today.

## **Cultural Setting**

The Strawberry Plant project area is within the traditional territory of the Suquamish Indians. Prior to the arrival of Euroamericans, the Suquamish settled along waterways and at the heads of embayments, living in large villages during the winter and in small camps while hunting, fishing, and gathering during the summer. Early settlers and ethnographers reported Suquamish camps, villages and place names in the vicinity of Strawberry Plant. One camp

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was reported near the present Eagle Harbor Waterfront park, about ½ mile to the east (Parfitt 1977). Other camps were reported at Wing Point (Parfitt 1977) and at Hawley Creek (Elfendahl 1997). The Suquamish referred to Eagle Harbor as elaledáltxw, meaning “home of the eagles” (Snyder 1968:135).

Archaeological sites have been recorded along the shore of Eagle Harbor and likely correspond with some of the camps mentioned by ethnographers. [REDACTED]

The first Euroamericans to settle on the north shore of Eagle Harbor were Asa Fowler and Henry Livingston in the late 1860s and early 1870s (Swanson 2002; Warner 1968). Other settlers in the area include Captain Alvin Oliver who by the late 1800s had a small farm, house, and boat landing in the vicinity of the Strawberry Plant property (Lorraine Scott, personal communication). The Port Blakely Mill Company, established in 1863, was the main employer on Bainbridge Island until the turn of the twentieth century. Although most workers lived at Blakely Harbor, some lived on the north shore of Eagle Harbor, rowed across the harbor to Eagledale and walked to the mill (Roedel et al. 2005).

Beginning in the early 1900s, Japanese mill workers began growing strawberries in the vicinity of Winslow. Sakakichi Sumiyoshi acquired land at the corner of Wyatt Way and Weaver Road around 1909 and started growing strawberries shortly thereafter (Nakata nd). As the production of strawberries increased, island farmers established the Winslow Berry Growers Association and initially canned their berries in Sumiyoshi’s home. Captain Benjamin and Harriet Tilton bought Oliver’s land in 1912, and leased some of it to George Masukawa who, by 1923, operated a small cannery on the shoreline at the end of Weaver Road. By 1930 the cannery had outgrown its space, and a new larger structure was constructed in the same location (Marriott 1941). The double-gable-roofed building was part on land and part on concrete and wooden piles driven into the harbor.

In 1924, Sumiyoshi sold his land to the Nakata family, who continued to grow strawberries until the outbreak of World War II (Nakata nd). After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, all Japanese-American residents of Bainbridge Island were sent to internment camps in California and Idaho. Many families, including the Nakatas, left their farms in the care of Filipino families (Nakata nd). After the war, many Japanese-Americans returned to the island and resumed farming. The cannery was abandoned, however, for a new processing plant in downtown Winslow (McCormick 1997). Captain Tilton died in 1934, but Harriet retained the property until it was sold for back taxes after the war. Until destroyed by fire in 1997, the cannery building was used for gravel and sand processing, boat building, housing, and offices (Baurick 2004). One modern building remains on the property. Historic photographs viewed at the Bainbridge Island Historical Society show the strawberry plant in use as a sand and gravel plant in 1960. All that remains of the original cannery are two earthen piers that extend into the harbor. A large concrete pad, which still exists today, is north of the building and probably dates to its use as a gravel plant.

## Previous archaeological research

Since the 1970s, 23 cultural resource assessments have been conducted within one mile of the Strawberry Plant property. Eight assessments have been for private property development or repair of bulkheads (Daugherty 2000; Gill 2007; Hartmann 2004; Schumacher and Rooke 2000; Stein 1989, 1990a, 1990b; Thompson 1978). Four of those redefined the boundary of or relocated site 45KP101 (Daugherty 2000; Stein 1989, 1990a, 1990b).

Seven assessments have been conducted for transportation projects or installation of utilities (Blukis Onat 1976; Gillis and Heideman 2007; Hartmann 2003, 2005; Lewarch and Forsman 1995; Robinson 1992; Roedel et al. 2005). [REDACTED]

The Winslow Waterfront Park has been the subject of three surveys (Chambers 2005; Rinck 2008; Thompson and Weaver 1985), [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] A historic resources survey of the island recorded 24 historic buildings in the vicinity of Winslow (Boyle Wagoner Architects 1987), and a survey of sunken vessels around Puget Sound identified the MF Sterling within Eagle Harbor (PTI Environmental Services 1991).

Finally, three archaeological overviews have been completed for Bainbridge Island and surrounding areas (GeoEngineers 2006; Rooke et al. 2002; Stilson and Wessen 1987). In particular, a predictive model developed for Bainbridge Island defined areas of high probability for encountering archaeological material to be within 150 feet of shoreline, 100 feet from the center of streams, or 50 feet from a wetland. In addition, areas with slopes less than 5% and with a southern aspect were considered to be high probability (Rooke et al. 2002).

## Strawberry Cannery Evaluation

Although the Strawberry Cannery site has a rich history, it is not likely eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Eligible properties must be at least 50 years old and meet at least one of the following four criteria of significance (36 CFR 60.4):

1. association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
2. association with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
3. embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
4. have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

An eligible property must also retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association. Despite its association with events important in local and national history, the cannery no longer retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, or association, since nearly all structures relating to its operation have been removed. The

cannery building burned to the ground in 1997. The remaining wooden piling, which was determined not eligible for the NRHP by the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, was removed February 7-10, 2009. Furthermore, no buried material related to the cannery was encountered during monitoring of the exploratory probes discussed above, thus the cannery site is not likely eligible under criterion D.

### **Expectations for Buried Cultural Material**

The background information summarized above allows us to derive expectations for the presence of pre-contact and historic archaeological material within the Strawberry Plant parcel. Geologic evidence suggests that the pre-fill shoreline was further north than it is today. Several feet of fill were placed along the shoreline for construction of the strawberry cannery, significantly altering the historic shoreline. The pre-fill historic shoreline still retains a high probability for buried pre-contact or historic cultural material.

Since the project is along the shoreline and also at the mouth of a freshwater creek, it has a high probability for pre-contact archaeological material (Rooke et al. 2002). Furthermore, given the proximity of at least two shell midden deposits within the inlet, it is likely that pre-contact or early historic Native American midden deposits are along the former shoreline within the project area as well. Additionally, an earthquake about 1100 years ago subsided Eagle Harbor about 1.6 feet. If project activities extend south of the existing shoreline and below fill, pre-1100 BP archaeological material may be encountered.

Buried historic resources may also be present within the project area. Remnants of Captain Oliver's boat landing may yet exist along the historic shoreline, buried under the fill used to construct the strawberry cannery. Use of the parcel by George Masakawa and others prior to construction of the cannery may also be present under fill.

I hope that this information is useful in your design of the Strawberry Plant project. Since this letter includes sensitive information, including locations of archaeological sites, please do not distribute it without my permission. Also, please feel free to call with any questions.

Sincerely,

Amber Earley  
Archaeologist

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