**Two Rivers Platinum Mine – Accidentally Uncovered Burial**

**Site Visit Field Notes**

On the 8th of July 2014, Mr Coen Nienaber was called by the client, Mr Johannes Senyane, at Two Rivers Platinum Mine, regarding a skeleton that was uncovered on the mine property. The client insisted that this was an urgent matter as they are in the process of handling land claims with the local community. The client was concerned that the skeleton had been planted to support a land claim. As Mr Nienaber was not immediately available to visit the site, he called Mr Henk Steyn at PGS Heritage to take over the matter. My Steyn immediately called Mr Senyane to discuss their requirements. Mr Steyn then sent Mr Marko Hutten and Ms Stephany van der Walt, on the 9th July 2014, to inspect the skeleton and the site.

On arrival it was observed that a large steel cage had been placed over the skeleton and secured to the ground with a chain and bolts. The skeleton had been uncovered within an Iron Age cattle kraal, signified by the stone walling and compacted layers of dung from years of use as a cattle enclosure. On further inspection, the skeleton was confirmed as being archaeological in nature and associated with the site, not recently planted.

From further discussions with Mr Senyane and Mr Bethrum Dzonzi, the community liaison officer, a more detailed order of events was gathered. Roughly two weeks previous to the site visit, a groundsman was sent to get fertile soil from the hillside, with the bull dozer, for the gardens at the mine office. On the morning of the 8th of July 2014, someone was walking by the area in question and noticed that a skull was on the surface and immediately reported it. From the initial inspection by Mr Senyane and Mr Dzonzi, it was assumed that the skull had been planted on top of the soil. A cage was placed over the skull and Mr Nienaber was contacted.

After further inspection by the PGS team it was concluded that the groundsman had probably disturbed the skull when getting the soil for the office gardens. Instead of reporting it, he placed the skull on top of the soil in the kraal where it had been disturbed. It was only reported after it had been discovered by the passer-by on the morning of the 8th of July. The grounds-man was spoken to, but denied any knowledge of the skeleton in the kraal.

**Motivation**

Never-the-less, the skeleton has been disturbed and requires a full excavation and reburial. PGS Heritage has advised, and the client would prefer, that the skeleton be reinterred within the kraal. The excavation plan includes a trench excavation within the kraal at the place where the skeleton was disturbed, along with the exhumation and analysis of the skeletal remains. Once the excavation and analysis is complete, the skeletal remains will be reinterred in the excavated trench within the kraal before being backfilled.