3D. Cultural Resources

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to assess whether or not the proposed project may negatively impact important archaeological, historic, and/or paleontological resources. Cultural resources identified within a one-quarter mile radius of the proposed project site include sites of historic origin, and fossil deposits of paleontological importance. These resources are regulated at the federal, state and local levels.

SETTING

Properties of community significance exist within a one-quarter mile radius of the proposed project location. There are no known fossil vertebrate localities that lie directly within the proposed project boundaries.[1]

Paleontological Resources

Paleontology is a branch of geology that studies prehistoric life forms other than humans through the study of plant and animal fossils. Fossils are the remains of organisms that lived in the region in the geologic past and therefore preserve an aspect of Southern California prehistory that is of scientific importance, since many species are now extinct.

Fossils are found embedded in geologic formations that range in thickness from a few feet to hundreds of feet. These formations form a complex relationship below the surface. Sedimentary formations are layered atop one another, and over time the layers have been squeezed, tilted, folded, and shaped by fault activity. Sensitive fossil bearing formations found at the surface also may extend from just below the surface to many miles below the surface. Consequently, the task of predicting paleontologically-sensitive areas is difficult.

Paleontological Potential

There are no potentially significant paleontological rock formations that are known to exist or are exposed within the proposed project site area.[2]

Archaeological Resources

The project area was home to Native American population groups for at least 6,000 to 8,000 years. The native ecological environment consisted of rock outcrops, and river and stream drainages, which were prime locations for Native American food processing and village sites.

[1] McLeod, Sam. Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. Letter to ESA dated July 9, 2002.
[2] *Ibid.*

These locations were often valued for their water sources, and therefore, quickly urbanized once Europeans entered the region. Prehistoric and historic construction typically did not disturb the subsurface soils more than one or two feet. Prehistoric archaeological sites are often covered by several feet of topsoil thereby protecting the sites after the area became urbanized. Some prehistoric sites do occur on the surface in desert locations.

Native American Inhabitants: The Gabrielino

The Gabrielino occupied the majority of the Los Angeles basin in Los Angeles and Orange Counties.[3] Their traditional lands included the watersheds of the San Gabriel, Santa Ana, and Los Angeles rivers, several of the smaller streams of the Santa Monica Mountains and Santa Ana Mountains, to Aliso Creek in Orange County and the Rancho Palos Verdes Peninsula. They also inhabited the offshore islands of San Clemente, Santa Catalina, and San Nicolas.

Although the Gabrielino populated a large territory, in many ways, they are considered among the least known of all native California groups. This is attributable both to the location of their territory in the present day Los Angeles County where they were quickly assimilated into the missions and European culture. Because early ethnographers believed the last of the Gabrielino died about a century ago, they have never been granted Federal recognition. Gabrielino population estimates are difficult to reconstruct, but likely ranged into the thousands. As many as 50 to 100 villages existed at any one time during the late 18th Century. Spanish reports estimate village populations between 50 and 200 inhabitants.

The material culture of the Gabrielino reflected an elaborately developed artisanship, with even day to day utensils decorated with shell inlaid, rare materials, carvings and paintings. The most well known Gabrielino items are those made of steatite (soapstone), which was quarried on Santa Catalina Island and brought to the mainland in plank canoes. The Gabrielino were also known for the high quality of basketry, made from grasses and rush stems. Gabrielino houses were hemispherical in form, made of driving poles into the ground, then arching the poles into the center where they were tied. A thick layer of woven grasses was placed over the poles for warmth. Some of these structures may have housed as many as 70 persons. Every village also had a sweat house, similar in form to the houses but partly subterranean with a roof entrance. A typical Gabrielino village consisted of several houses, storehouses, a sweatlodge, a ceremonial enclosure and a dedicated cemetery at a distance from the living area.

Labor was divided between the sexes. Men carried out most of the heavy, but short-term labor such as hunting and fishing, conducted most trading ventures, and had as their central concerns the well being of the village and the family. Women were involved in collecting and processing most of the plant materials and basket production. The elderly of both sexes taught children and cared for the young.

[3] Information excerpted from Bean, Lowell John and Charles R. Smith, 1978, *Gabrielino, Handbook of North American Indians*, op.cit., pp. 538-549.

Project Area History

In 1826, Jedediah Strong Smith led the first American overland exploration to the proposed project area, known generally as "Mud Springs."[4] He was the first American to cross the southwestern portion of the American continent. This area was part of the last Spanish land grant, Rancho San Jose. Then, in 1887 with the extension of the Santa Fe Railroad, the San Jose Land Company formed and chose to call this area San Dimas, after the canyons has the same name located to the north.[5]

Similar to several other areas of Southern California, the San Dimas area was found to be very suitable for the harvesting of lemon and orange groves, and to some extent avocados, in its earlier years. However, as urban sprawl and the expansion of the Los Angeles area population tended eastward from the coast, most of the nurseries and agricultural aspects of the area were lost.

Paleontological Records Check

Dr. Samuel McLeod, Director of Vertebrate Paleontology at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, conducted a paleontological records check for the proposed project area on July 9, 2002 (see Appendix C).[6] This search included a review of all recorded fossil records for locality and specimen data in the Museum's permanent paleontology collection records. The records check found that there are no known "fossil vertebrate localities that lie directly within the proposed project boundaries nor any localities nearby from the same sedimentary rock units that occur in the proposed project area."

Archaeological Records Check

ESA conducted an archaeological records check for the proposed project on July 3, 2002 (see Appendix C). This search included a review of all recorded historic and prehistoric archaeological sites within a one-mile radius of the proposed project location, as well as a review of all known relevant cultural resource survey and excavation reports.

Prehistoric Resources

The results of a search by the Native American Heritage Commission "failed to indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources in the immediate project area."[7]

Historic Resources

Based on ESA's archaeological records search, one historic resource has been identified as a Place of Historic Interest. This structure, the San Dimas Hotel, is located on the southwest corner of San Dimas Boulevard and 1st Street, approximately 1.2 miles from the proposed project site.

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[4] Morgan, Dale. *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West*. 1972.
[5] San Dimas Chamber of Commerce. *San Dimas History*. www.sandimaschamber.com Accessed June 13, 2003.
[6] McLeod, Sam. Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. Letter to ESA dated July 9, 2002.
[7] Wood, Rob. Native American Heritage Commission. Letter to ESA dated July 5, 2002.

In addition, there are two single-family residences (932 and 948 West 5th Street) located on the proposed project site and one single-family residence (914 West Gladstone Street) within 220 feet east of the proposed project site that are designated by the City as "Contribution Structures." As defined by the City of San Dimas, these single-family residences are "structure[s] that significantly contribute to the historic fabric of a neighborhood."[8] However, these structures are not contiguous with the primary areas of the City of San Dimas. The City of San Dimas has a policy to help preserve historic structures. The proposed project would not impair the City's ability to preserve historic structures.

All three of the single-family residences have the National Historic Status of 5D.2 which identifies each of the structures as "ineligible for the National Register," but still "a contributor to a fully documented district [determined through a historical survey by the city] that is likely to be designated as a local district, overlay zone, or preservation area under an ordinance that has not yet been written or a procedure has not yet been implemented."[9] None of the single-family residences are on, or eligible for, the State of California Office of Historic Preservation's (OHP) California Historic Resources Inventory (CHRI) (see Appendix C).

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

State law protects cultural resources and archaeological human remains discovered on public and private land.

CEQA addresses the evaluation of the significance and mitigation of potential impacts to historic resources and archaeological sites. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines is also a guide to determining the significance of historic resources and archaeological sites. Most importantly, state law protects human remains of Native American origin and of an archaeological nature.

State Office of Historic Preservation

The Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) implements preservation laws regarding historic resources, and is responsible for the California Historic Resources Inventory (CHRI), which uses the National Criteria for listing resources significant at the national, state, and local level.

Native American Heritage Commission

The Native American Heritage Commission regulates Native American concerns with respect to the excavation and disposition of Native American cultural resources. Among its duties, the Commission is authorized to resolve disputes relating to the treatment and disposition of Native American human remains and items associated with burials. Upon notification of the discovery

[8] City of San Dimas. [online]. http://www.cityofsandimas.com/html/historic.html Accessed June 9, 2003.
[9] *Ibid.*

of human remains by a county coroner, the Commission notifies the Native American group or individual most likely descended from the deceased.

The laws referenced above enable the preservation of archaeological, historical, and paleontological resources because they are considered to be non-renewable resources and cannot be replaced. The information they yield is vital to archaeologists, historians and paleontologists in reconstructing and understanding the past.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

Criteria for Determining Significance

According to CEQA Guidelines the project may result in a significant impact, if it would:

- Cause substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource;
- Cause substantial adverse change in the significance of an unique archaeological resource ;
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature; or,
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Project Impacts

Impact 3D1: The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

According to the National Register and California Historic Resources Index qualifications, one historic resource, the San Dimas Hotel, exists within a one-mile radius of the proposed project site. However, the San Dimas Hotel is not in the immediate vicinity of the project site and would not be affected by construction or operation activities at the proposed project site. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not impact this resource.

In addition, there are two single-family residences on the proposed project site, and one single-family residence within 220 feet east of the proposed project site, that have been identified by the City of San Dimas as "Contribution Structures." All three single-family residences are ineligible for the National Register and ineligible for the CHRI. These single-family residences are a part of network of single-family residences that share the same designation throughout the surrounding neighborhood. According to the City of San Dimas, these single-family residences "significantly contribute to the historic fabric of a neighborhood." The specific sites upon which the single-family residences are constructed have not been determined to have the historic value necessary to make them eligible for either the National or State Register for historic sites and structures. Therefore with the inclusion of the following mitigation measure, the proposed project would be anticipated to have a less than significant impact on historical resources.

Mitigation Measure

M-3D.1 *The two single-family residences located on the proposed project site at 932 West 5th Street, San Dimas, California, 91773-1721 and 948 West 5th Street, San Dimas, California, 91773-1721 shall be put up for sale for a period of sixty days. The sale must be upon the condition that the structures be moved to a vacant location outside of the proposed project site but within the limits of the City of San Dimas. In the event the houses are not sold and relocated, a photodocumentation of the structures and sites will be conducted and placed in the record of the local historic preservation society.*

Residual Impacts

Less than significant.

Impact 3D2: The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resource.

Based on ethnographic accounts the potential presence of prehistoric resources within a one-mile radius of the proposed project location rates an archaeological sensitivity rating of moderate. Four archaeological sites have been identified within a one-mile radius of the proposed project site. The proposed project site has never been surveyed for the presence of cultural materials, therefore the existence of archaeological resources at the site cannot be ruled out. Though the project area is a disturbed location, and contains several areas that contain fill material, many of these areas of fill material came from various portions of the existing project site. In consideration of the developed conditions of the project area, monitoring will be required during excavation below two feet. In the event cultural or paleontological resources are identified within the project area during construction activities, implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce potential impacts to less than significant levels:

Mitigation Measure

M-3D.2 *A qualified archaeologist/paleontologist and Native American monitor shall be on-call to monitor any disturbance of native soils. The archaeologist/paleontologist will be on-call during any activity when new soils are to be moved or exported in previously undisturbed portions of the proposed project area. The archaeologist/paleontologist shall be authorized to and must halt the proposed project and mark, collect, and evaluate any archaeological/paleontological materials discovered during construction. Copies of any paleontological surveys, studies, or reports of field observation during grading and land modification shall be prepared and certified by the on-call paleontologist and submitted to the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County Paleontological Repository. The Native American Monitor shall oversee the subsequent repatriation of any Native American remains or sacred religious materials discovered during construction, as mandated by the Native American Graves and Repatriation Act.*

Residual Impacts

Less than significant.

Impact 3D3: The proposed project would not directly or indirectly affect a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

No known paleotonlogical resources or sites or unique geologic features exist within the proposed project site boundaries. The potential for encountering resources of this type would occur during excavation and grading activities prior to construction. The inclusion of mitigation measure **M-3D.2** would ensure that the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on paleotonlogical resources and geologic features, if found.

Mitigation Measure

See mitigation measure **M-3D.2**.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant.

Impact 3D4: The proposed project could result in the disturbance of human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

No historic cemeteries are known to have existed on the proposed project site. In addition, the Native American Heritage Commission did not identify any sacred Native American Lands within the immediate proposed project area.[10] However, this does not preclude the existence of burials from being identified on the proposed project site. The recommendations of the Gabrielino/Tongva Tribal Council state that a monitor shall be retained for the excavation of previously undisturbed soils. The rich culture history of the region in which the proposed project site is located increases the potential for prehistoric Native American burials or cremations to occur. In order to reduce this impact to a less than significant level (see Mitigation **M-3.D2**), the following mitigation measure is recommended.

Mitigation Measures

M-3D.3 *In the event human remains are encountered, the Los Angeles County Coroner must be contacted to determine whether or not investigation of the cause of death is required. In the event the remains are of Native American origin, the Native American Heritage Commission shall be contacted by the Native American Monitor to determine necessary procedures for protection and preservation of remains, including reburial, as provided in the CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5(e).*

[10] Wood, Rob. Native American Heritage Commission. Letter to ESA dated July 5, 2002.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would be less than significant.

Impact 3D5: Together with other area projects, the proposed project would not have cumulative impacts on cultural resources in the proposed project area.

Impacts on cultural resources are generally localized and do not affect the immediate vicinity surrounding the proposed project site. Therefore, impacts to cultural resources resulting from construction and operation of the proposed project are not anticipated to result in cumulative impacts.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

Impacts would not be cumulatively considerable.