CRM TECH
1016 E. Cooley Drive, Suite A/B
Colton, CA 92324

May 6, 2019

Lisa Burtner
McDonald Learning Center
PO Box 150
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315

Re: Extended Phase I Archaeological Testing Program
McDonald Learning Center East Project
Big Bear City Area, San Bernardino County, California
CRM TECH Contract No. 3483

Dear Ms. Burtner:

At your request, CRM TECH has completed an Extended Phase I (XPI) archaeological testing program as a follow-up to the previously completed Phase I cultural resources survey for the project referenced above (Tang et al. 2019). The project entails the construction of an approximately 2,930-square-foot child care facility with associated parking spaces and utilities. The project area is located on the northeast side of Greenspot Boulevard (State Route 38) and the southeast side of Erwin Ranch Road, in the northeast quarter of Section 19, T2N R2E, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian. (Figures 1, 2).

The XPI program was conducted in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and in response to recommendations by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians during consultations with the County of San Bernardino under provisions of Assembly Bill 52. The purpose of the XPI program is to assist the County and the Tribe in assessing the sensitivity of the project area for buried archaeological remains that may constitute "historical resources" or "tribal cultural resources," as defined by CEQA. In order to accomplish this objective, CRM TECH conducted a systematic resurvey of the project area and supervised the controlled archaeological excavation of a total of 5 backhoe trenches. This letter presents a brief summary of the methods and results of these research procedures.

Methods

The research procedures for the XPI program were designed in accordance with standard practices in the field of cultural resources management and in coordination with Jessica Mauck, Cultural Resources Analyst for the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. The archaeological fieldwork was carried out on May 3, 2019, under the direct supervision of CRM TECH field director Daniel Ballester. M.S.. CRM TECH archaeologist John D. Goodman, II, M.S. served as field crew member.

Prior to the commencement of subsurface excavations, the ground surface in the project area was systematically resurveyed at a reconnaissance level. Ground visibility ranged from poor (0-10 percent) to fair (70 percent) in different portions of the project area, dependent on the presence or absence of dense forest detritus (Figure 3). The backhoe trenches were placed at relatively undisturbed locations where ground disturbances are anticipated during the upcoming phases of the project. The 5 backhoe trenches, two measuring approximately 10x1 meters and three measuring 5x1 meters, were placed within the proposed parking lot and within the proposed building footprint, in various orientations and excavated to a minimum depth of one meter (Figures 2 and 4). Selected samples of the excavated soil were screened through a half-inch hardwire mesh. The soil stratigraphy observed in the trench sidewalls was record in the field. A trench sidewall profile was hand-drawn in the field to record the geological and archaeological stratigraphy.

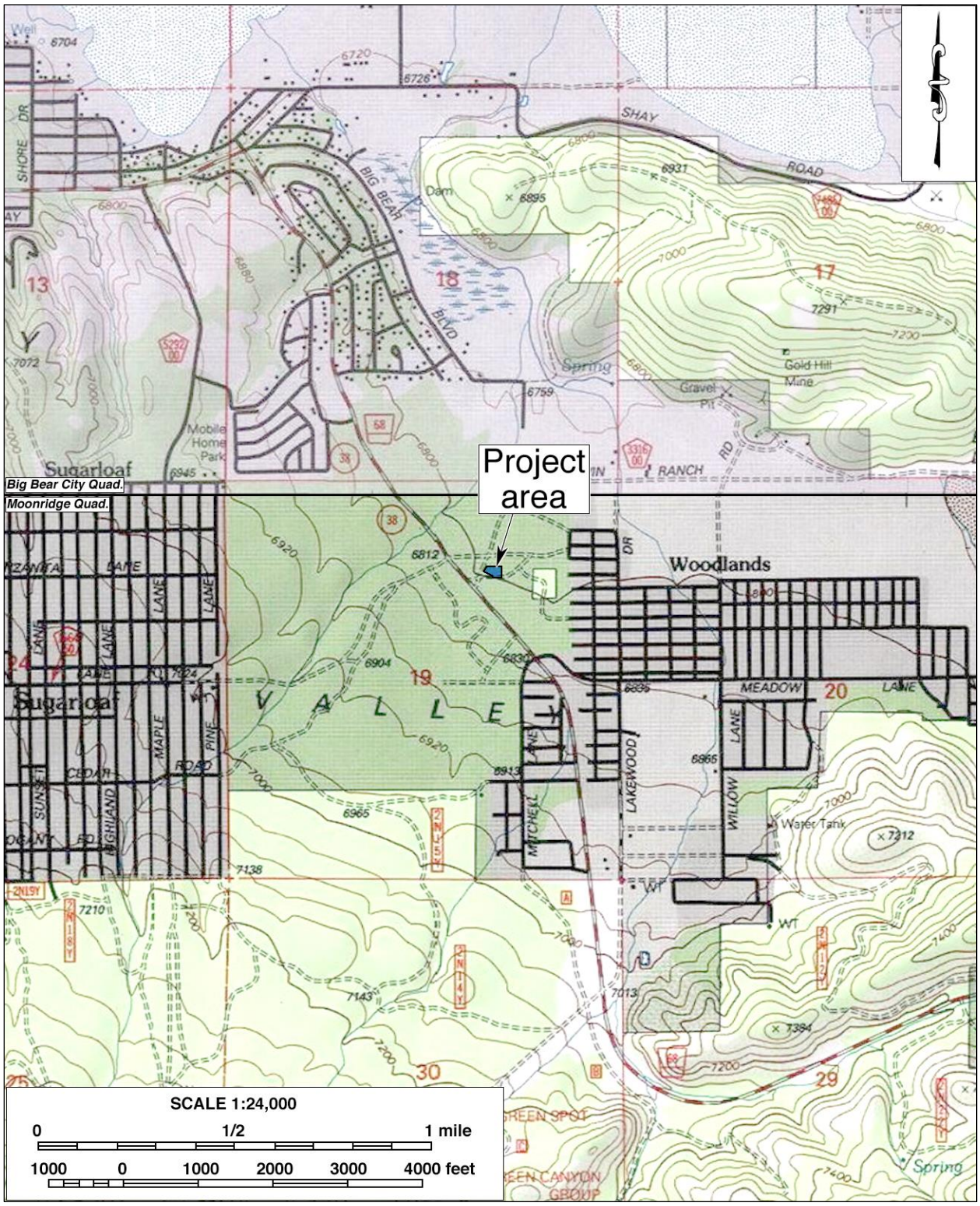

Figure 1. Project area. (Based on USGS Big Bear City and Moonridge, Calif., 7.5' quadrangles [USGS 1996a; 1996b])

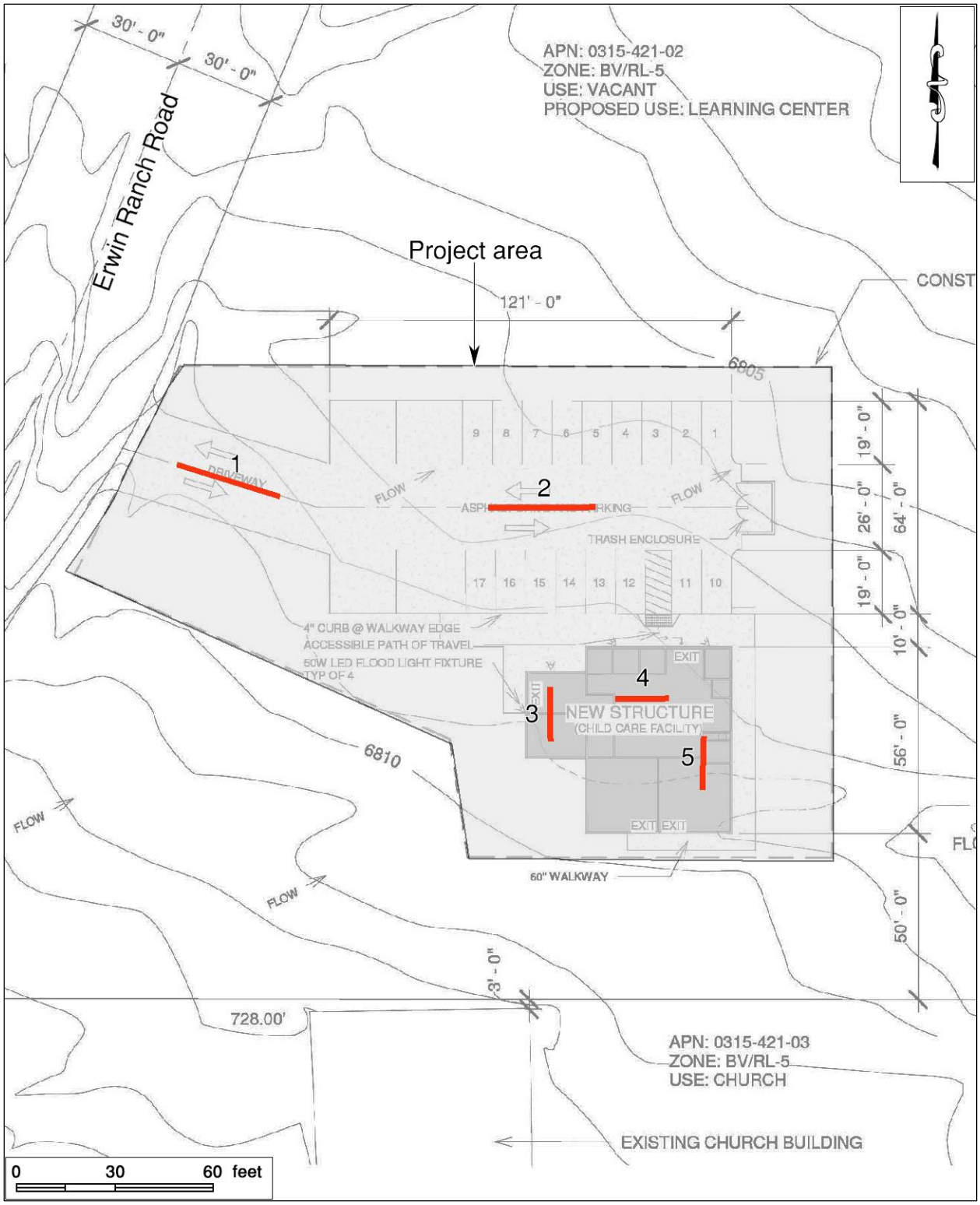

Figure 2. Engineer map of the project area, showing the location and orientation of backhoe trenches excavated during the XPI program.

Figure 3. Overview of the project area before archaeological excavations. (Photograph taken on May 3, 2019; view to the north)

Results

The resurvey of the project area encountered no evidence of any cultural resources from either the prehistoric or the historic period.

Based on the soil stratigraphy observed in the trench sidewalls (Figure 4) indicated that the subsurface soils across the property is relatively uniform. The top 10 centimeters generally consisted of a brown loose sandy loam mixed with a dense level of pine needle duff. A primary root zone was located between 10 to 40 centimeters. The soil in this level consisted of a brown sandy loam with rocks and gravel. The rest of the subsurface soils, between 40 cm and 110 cm consisted of an orange-brown sandy loam with some clay at 100 to 110 centimeters. No archaeological features or artifacts of prehistoric or historic origin were observed in any of the trenches or the screened soil samples.

Figure 4. Typical trench and trench side wall. *Left*: Trench 3; *right*: Trench 2. (Photographs taken on May 3, 2019)

Conclusion

In summary, this XPI program encountered no archaeological deposits within the five excavated trenches. Based on the results of the Phase I cultural resource survey (Tang et al. 2019) and the XPI program reported here, CRM TECH concludes that the project area, including the subsurface, appears to be relatively low in sensitivity for potentially significance archaeological remains from the prehistoric or early historic period.

No further cultural resources investigation is recommended for the proposed project unless development plans undergo such changes as to include areas that have not been surveyed. However, if buried cultural materials are encountered during earth-moving operations associated with the project, all work in that area should be halted or diverted until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the finds.

Thank you for this opportunity to be of service. If you have any questions or need further information regarding the research results presented above, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Daniel Ballester, M.S.
Field Director, CRM TECH

Reference

Tang Bai "Tom," Michael Hogan, Ben Kerridge, Daniel Ballester, and Nina Gallardo
2019 Historical/Archaeological Resources Survey Report: McDonald Learning Center East Project, Big Bear City Area, San Bernardino County, California. On file, South Central Coastal Information Center, California State University, Fullerton.