

CULTURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

APN 3148-041-001 Project

City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California

Prepared for:

Leatha Clark, AICP
USA Multifamily Development
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Prepared by:

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Project No. USA1901

National Archaeological Data Base (NADB) Information:

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BCRCONSULTING LLC

November 12, 2019

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

BCR Consulting LLC (BCR Consulting) is under contract to USA Multifamily Development to complete a Cultural Resources Assessment of the Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 3148-041-001 Project (the project) located in the City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California. A cultural resources records search, reconnaissance-level pedestrian field survey, vertebrate paleontological overview, and Sacred Lands File search with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) were conducted for the project site in partial fulfillment of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The records search revealed that 26 previous cultural resource studies have taken place, and two cultural resources have been recorded within one mile of the project site. None of the previous cultural resource studies have assessed portions of the project site.

During the field survey, BCR Consulting archaeologists did not discover any cultural resources, including prehistoric or historic archaeological sites or historic buildings, within the project site boundaries. As a result BCR Consulting recommends that no additional cultural resources work or monitoring is necessary for proposed project activities within the project site boundaries. However, if previously undocumented cultural resources are identified during earthmoving activities, a qualified archaeologist shall be contacted to assess the nature and significance of the find, diverting construction excavation if necessary.

If human remains are encountered during the undertaking, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY	ii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
NATURAL SETTING	1
GEOLOGY	1
HYDROLOGY	1
BIOLOGY	1
CULTURAL SETTING	3
PREHISTORY	3
ETHNOGRAPHY	4
HISTORY	5
PERSONNEL	5
METHODS	6
RESEARCH	6
FIELD SURVEY	6
RESULTS	6
RESEARCH	6
FIELD SURVEY	6
RECOMMENDATIONS	7
REFERENCES.....	8
FIGURES	
1: Project Location Map.....	2
TABLES	
A: Cultural Resources and Reports Within One Mile of the Project Site	6
APPENDICES	
A: PALEONTOLOGICAL OVERVIEW	
B: PHOTOGRAPHS	
C: NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION SACRED LANDS FILE SEARCH	

INTRODUCTION

BCR Consulting LLC (BCR Consulting) is under contract to USA Multifamily Development to complete a Cultural Resources Assessment of the Assessor Parcel Number (APN) 3148-041-001 Project (the project) located in the City of Lancaster (City), Los Angeles County, California. A cultural resources records search, reconnaissance-level pedestrian field survey, vertebrate paleontological overview, and Sacred Lands File search with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) were conducted for the project site in partial fulfillment of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

NATURAL SETTING

Geology

The project site is located in the southwestern portion of the Mojave Desert. Local sediments have been derived from several geologic units (Hernandez 2010), including:

- Holocene slope wash composed of loose sand and rubble debris from downslope movement of Holocene surficial materials;
- Holocene modern alluvium containing unconsolidated fluvial gravel, sand and silt;
- Younger alluvial fan deposits (Holocene to Late Pleistocene) consisting of consolidated, dark-yellowish-brown, silty, fine arkosic sand with clay and calcium carbonate content.

Field observations during the current study are basically consistent with these descriptions, although disturbances related to excavation work for a large in complete construction project were severe. None of the naturally occurring materials observed during the field survey exhibited evidence for the manufacture or acquisition of prehistoric stone tools or materials.

Hydrology

The project site elevation ranges from approximately 2,385 to 2,395 feet above mean sea level (AMSL). Sheetwashing locally occurs from southeast to northwest, and flood channels are often active after summer and winter storms. To the southeast, the peaks of the San Gabriel Mountains rise above 10,000 feet and are often capped with snow until late spring or early summer. The area currently exhibits an arid climate, with dry, hot summers and cool winters. Rainfall ranges from five to 15 inches annually (Jaeger and Smith 1971:36-37). Precipitation usually occurs in the form of winter and spring rain or snow at high elevations, with occasional warm monsoonal showers in late summer.

Biology

The mild climate of the late Pleistocene allowed piñon-juniper woodland to thrive throughout most of the Mojave (Van Devender et al. 1987). The vegetation and climate during that epoch attracted significant numbers of Rancholabrean fauna, including dire wolf, saber-toothed cat, short-faced bear, horse, camel, antelope, mammoth, pelican, goose, duck, cormorant, and eagle (Reynolds 1988). The drier climate of the middle Holocene resulted in the local development of complementary flora and fauna, which remain largely intact to this day. Common native plants currently include creosote, cacti (various species), rabbit bush, interior golden bush, cheesebush, sage (various species), buckwheat (at high elevations and near drainages), Joshua tree, and seasonal grasses. Common native animals include coyotes, cottontail and jackrabbits, rats, mice, desert tortoises, roadrunners, raptors, turkey vultures, and other bird species (see Williams et al. 2008).

CULTURAL SETTING

Prehistory

The prehistoric cultural setting of the Mojave Desert has been organized into many chronological frameworks (see Warren and Crabtree 1986; Bettinger and Taylor 1974; Lanning 1963; Hunt 1960; Wallace 1958, 1962, 1977; Wallace and Taylor 1978; Campbell and Campbell 1935), although there is no definitive sequence for the region. The difficulties in establishing cultural chronologies for the Mojave are a function of its enormous size and the small amount of archaeological excavations conducted there. Moreover, throughout prehistory many groups have occupied the Mojave and their territories often overlap spatially and chronologically resulting in mixed artifact deposits. Due to dry climate and capricious geological processes, these artifacts rarely become integrated in-situ. Lacking a milieu hospitable to the preservation of cultural midden, Mojave chronologies have relied upon temporally diagnostic artifacts, such as projectile points, or upon the presence/absence of other temporal indicators, such as groundstone. Such methods are instructive, but can be limited by prehistoric occupants' concurrent use of different artifact styles, or by artifact re-use or re-sharpening, as well as researchers' mistaken diagnosis, and other factors (see Flenniken 1985; Flenniken and Raymond 1986; Flenniken and Wilke 1989). Recognizing the shortcomings of comparative temporal indicators, this study synthesizes Warren and Crabtree (1986), who have drawn upon this method to produce a commonly cited and relatively comprehensive chronology.

Paleoindian (12,000 to 10,000 BP) and Lake Mojave (10,000 to 7,000 BP) Periods. Climatic warming characterizes the transition from the Paleoindian Period to the Lake Mojave Period. This transition also marks the end of Pleistocene Epoch and ushers in the Holocene. The Paleoindian Period has been loosely defined by isolated fluted (such as Clovis) projectile points, dated by their association with similar artifacts discovered in-situ in the Great Plains (Sutton 1996:227-228). Some fluted bifaces have been associated with fossil remains of Rancholabrean mammals approximately dated to ca. 13,300-10,800 BP near China Lake in the northern Mojave Desert. The Lake Mojave Period has been associated with cultural adaptations to moist conditions, and resource allocation pointing to more lacustrine environments than previously (Bedwell 1973; Hester 1973). Artifacts that characterize this period include stemmed points, flake and core scrapers, choppers, hammerstones, and crescentics (Warren and Crabtree 1986:184). Projectile points associated with the period include the Silver Lake and Lake Mojave styles. Lake Mojave sites commonly occur on shorelines of Pleistocene lakes and streams, where geological surfaces of that epoch have been identified (Basgall and Hall 1994:69).

Pinto Period (7,000 to 4,000 BP). The Pinto Period has been largely characterized by desiccation of the Mojave. As formerly rich lacustrine environments began to disappear, the artifact record reveals more sporadic occupation of the Mojave, indicating occupants' recession to the more hospitable fringes (Warren 1984). Pinto Period sites are rare, and are characterized by surface manifestations that usually lack significant in-situ remains. Artifacts from this era include Pinto projectile points and a flake industry similar to the Lake Mojave tool complex (Warren 1984), though use of Pinto projectile points as an index artifact for the era has been disputed (see Schroth 1994). Milling stones have also occasionally been associated with sites of this period (Warren 1984).

Gypsum Period. (4,000 to 1,500 BP). A temporary return to moister conditions during the Gypsum Period is postulated to have encouraged technological diversification afforded by the

relative abundance of resources (Warren 1984:419-420; Warren and Crabtree 1986:189). Lacustrine environments reappear and begin to be exploited during this era (Shutler 1961, 1968). Concurrently a more diverse artifact assemblage reflects intensified reliance on plant resources. The new artifacts include milling stones, mortars, pestles, and a proliferation of Humboldt Concave Base, Gypsum Cave, Elko Eared, and Elko Corner-notched dart points (Warren 1984; Warren and Crabtree 1986). Other artifacts include leaf-shaped projectile points, rectangular-based knives, drills, large scraper planes, choppers, hammer stones, shaft straighteners, incised stone pendants, and drilled slate tubes. The bow and arrow appears around 2,000 BP, evidenced by the presence of a smaller type of projectile point, the Rose Spring point (Rogers 1939; Shutler 1961; Yohe 1992).

Saratoga Springs Period (1,500 to 800 BP). During the Saratoga Springs Period regional cultural diversifications of Gypsum Period developments are evident within the Mojave. Basketmaker III (Anasazi) pottery appears during this period, and has been associated with turquoise mining in the eastern Mojave Desert (Warren and Crabtree 1986:191). Influences from Patayan/Yuman assemblages are apparent in the southern Mojave, and include buff and brown wares often associated with Cottonwood and Desert Side-notched projectile points (Warren 1984:423). Obsidian becomes more commonly used throughout the Mojave and characteristic artifacts of the period include milling stones, mortars, pestles, ceramics, and ornamental and ritual objects. More structured settlement patterns are evidenced by the presence of large villages, and three types of identifiable archaeological sites (major habitation, temporary camps, and processing stations) emerge (McGuire and Hall 1988). Diversity of resource exploitation continues to expand, indicating a much more generalized, somewhat less mobile subsistence strategy.

Shoshonean Period (800 BP to Contact). The Shoshonean period is the first to benefit from contact-era ethnography –as well as be subject to its inherent biases. Interviews of living informants allowed anthropologists to match artifact assemblages and particular traditions with linguistic groups, and plot them geographically (see Kroeber 1925; Gifford 1918; Strong 1929). During the Shoshonean Period continued diversification of site assemblages, and reduced Anasazi influence both coincide with the expansion of Numic (Uto-Aztecan language family) speakers across the Great Basin, Takic (Uto-Aztecan language family) speakers into southern California, and the Hopi across the Southwest (Sutton 1996). Hunting and gathering continued to diversify, and the diagnostic arrow points include desert side-notch and cottonwood triangular. Ceramics continue to proliferate, though are more common in the southern Mojave during this period (Warren and Crabtree 1986). Trade routes have become well established across the Mojave, particularly the Mojave Trail, which transported goods and news across the desert via the Mojave River, to the west of the current project. Trade in the western Mojave was more closely related to coastal groups than others.

Ethnography

The Uto-Aztecan “Serrano” people occupied the western Mojave Desert periphery. Kroeber (1925) applied the generic term “Serrano” to four groups, each with distinct territories: the Kitanemuk, Tataviam, Vanyume, and Serrano. Only one group, in the San Bernardino Mountains and West-Central Mojave Desert, ethnically claims the term Serrano. Bean and Smith (1978) indicate that the Vanyume, an obscure Takic population, was found along the Mojave River at the time of Spanish contact. The Kitanemuk lived to the north and west, while the Tataviam lived to the west. The Serrano lived mainly to the south (Bean and Smith 1978). All may have used the western Mojave area seasonally. Historical records are unclear

concerning precise territory and village locations. It is doubtful that any group, except the Vanyume, actually lived in the region for several seasons yearly.

History

Historic-era California is divided into three periods: the Spanish/Mission Period (1769-1821), the Mexican or Rancho Period (1821-1848), and the American Period (1848-present).

Spanish Period. The first European to pass through the project area is thought to be a Spaniard called Father Francisco Garces. Having become familiar with the area, Garces acted as a guide to Juan Bautista de Anza, who had been commissioned to lead a group across the desert from a Spanish outpost in Arizona to set up quarters at the Mission San Gabriel in 1771 near what today is Pasadena (Beck and Haase 1974). This is the first recorded group crossing of the Mojave Desert and, according to Father Garces' journal, they camped at the headwaters of the Mojave River, one night less than a day's march from the mountains. Today, this is estimated to have been approximately 11 miles southeast of Victorville (Marenczuk 1962). Garces was followed by Alta California Governor Pedro Fages, who briefly explored the western Mojave region in 1772. Searching for San Diego Presidio deserters, Fages had traveled north through Riverside to San Bernardino, crossed over the mountains into the Mojave Desert, and then journeyed westward to the San Joaquin Valley (Beck and Haase 1974).

Mexican Period. In 1821, Mexico overthrew Spanish rule and the missions began to decline. By 1833, the Mexican government passed the Secularization Act, and the missions, reorganized as parish churches, lost their vast land holdings, and released their neophytes (Beattie and Beattie 1974).

American Period. The American Period, 1848–Present, began with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The Gold Rush had attracted huge numbers of American settlers and in 1850, California was accepted into the Union. The cattle industry reached its greatest prosperity during the first years of the American Period. Mexican Period land grants had created large pastoral estates in California, and demand for beef during the Gold Rush led to a cattle boom that lasted from 1849–1855. However, beginning about 1855, the demand for beef began to decline due to imports of sheep from New Mexico and cattle from the Mississippi and Missouri Valleys. When the beef market collapsed, many California ranchers lost their ranchos through foreclosure. A series of disastrous floods in 1861–1862, followed by a significant drought diminished the economic impact of local ranching. This decline combined with ubiquitous agricultural and real estate developments of the late 19th century, set the stage for diversified economic pursuits that have continued to proliferate to this day (Beattie and Beattie 1974; Cleland 1941).

PERSONNEL

David Brunzell, M.A., RPA acted as the Project Manager and Principal Investigator for the current study. BCR Consulting Staff Archaeologist Joseph Orozco, M.A., RPA authored the technical report. Mr. Orozco conducted the cultural resources records search through information from the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) located at California State University, Fullerton. Mr. Orozco also initiated the Sacred Lands File search with the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), and completed the field survey with BCR Consulting Staff Historian Dylan Williams, B.A.

METHODS

Research

Prior to fieldwork, a records search was conducted using information from the SCCIC. This archival research reviewed the status of all recorded historic and prehistoric cultural resources, and survey and excavation reports completed within one mile of the project site. Additional resources reviewed included the National Register, the California Register, and documents and inventories published by the California Office of Historic Preservation. These include the lists of California Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, Listing of National Register Properties, and the Inventory of Historic Structures.

Field Survey

A reconnaissance-level cultural resources field survey of the project site was conducted on October 3, 2019. The survey was conducted by walking parallel transects spaced approximately 15 meters apart across the site. Digital photographs were taken at various points within the project site.

RESULTS

Research

Data from the SCCIC revealed that 26 previous cultural resource studies have taken place, and two cultural resources have been recorded within one mile of the project site. None of the previous cultural resource studies have previously assessed portions of the project site. The records search results are summarized in Table A.

Table A. Cultural Resources and Reports Within One Mile of the Project Site

USGS 7.5 Minute Quad	Cultural Resources Within One Mile of Project	Cultural Resource Studies Within One Mile
<i>Lancaster East, California</i> (1974)	P-19-001526: Historic-Period House (3/4 mile SE) P-19-187948: Historic-Period Refuse (1/4 mile SE)	LA-1763, 1990, 5317, 6618, 6619, 6620, 6621, 6622, 7505, 7509, 7511, 7517, 7518, 7524, 7955, 7956, 7959, 8335, 8362, 8371, 8376, 8377, 8427, 9679, 10144, 8427*

*Previously assessed a portion of the project site.

Field Survey

During the field survey, BCR Consulting archaeologists did not discover any cultural resources, including prehistoric or historic archaeological sites, or historic-period buildings, within the project site boundaries. Surface visibility was approximately 75 percent, and exposed sediments consisted of silty sand with very few rocks. Vegetation included seasonal grasses and native and non-native scrub brush. Previous excavations on the property associated with an abandoned modern construction project indicate a low likelihood for buried resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The records search and field survey did not identify any cultural resources (including prehistoric or historic-period archaeological sites or historic-period buildings) within the project site. Furthermore, records search results combined with surface conditions have failed to indicate sensitivity for buried cultural resources. Therefore, no significant impacts related to archaeological or historical resources is anticipated and no further investigations are recommended for the project site unless:

- the proposed project is changed to include areas not subject to this study;
- the proposed project is changed to include the construction of additional facilities;
- cultural materials are encountered during project activities.

Although the current study has not indicated sensitivity for cultural resources within the project site boundaries, ground disturbing activities always have the potential to reveal buried deposits not observed on the surface during previous surveys. Prior to the initiation of ground-disturbing activities, field personnel should be alerted to the possibility of buried prehistoric or historic cultural deposits. In the event that field personnel encounter buried cultural materials, work in the immediate vicinity of the find should cease and a qualified archaeologist should be retained to assess the significance of the find. The qualified archaeologist shall have the authority to stop or divert construction excavation as necessary. If the qualified archaeologist finds that any cultural resources present meet eligibility requirements for listing on the California Register or the National Register, plans for the treatment, evaluation, and mitigation of impacts to the find will need to be developed. Prehistoric or historic cultural materials that may be encountered during ground-disturbing activities include:

- historic artifacts such as glass bottles and fragments, cans, nails, ceramic and pottery fragments, and other metal objects;
- historic structural or building foundations, walkways, cisterns, pipes, privies, and other structural elements;
- prehistoric flaked-stone artifacts and debitage (waste material), consisting of obsidian, basalt, and or cryptocrystalline silicates;
- groundstone artifacts, including mortars, pestles, and grinding slabs;
- dark, greasy soil that may be associated with charcoal, ash, bone, shell, flaked stone, groundstone, and fire affected rocks;

If human remains are encountered during the undertaking, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC.

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APPENDIX A

PALEONTOLOGICAL OVERVIEW



October 15, 2019

BCR Consulting LLC
Joseph Orozco
505 West 8th Street
Claremont, California 91711

Dear Mr. Orozco,

This letter presents the results of a record search conducted for the Lancaster APN 3148-041-001 project in Los Angeles County, California.

The geologic unit underlying the 1-mile radius of this project is Pliocene-Holocene Quaternary alluvium that has high potential for fossils. The Western Science Center does not have localities within the project area or within a 1 mile radius. However, other Pliocene-Holocene Quaternary alluvium units have produced significant paleontological finds, including those associated with the Diamond Valley Lake Project in Hemet, California, near your project area. The Diamond Valley Lake Project resulted in over 250,000 Pleistocene fossil specimens and hundreds of fossil localities.

Any fossils recovered from the project area would be scientifically significant. Excavation activity associated with development of the project area would impact the paleontologically sensitive Pliocene-Holocene units and it is the recommendation of the Western Science Center that a paleontological resource mitigation program be put in place to monitor, salvage, and curate any recovered fossils associated with the current study area.

If you have any questions, or would like further information about the Diamond Valley Lake Project, please feel free to contact me at amcdonald@westerncentermuseum.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Andrew McDonald', is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Andrew McDonald
Curator

APPENDIX B

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photo 1: Project Site Overview (View N)



Photo 2: Project Site Overview (View NE)

APPENDIX C

NAHC SACRED LANDS FILE SEARCH

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION
Cultural and Environmental Department
1550 Harbor Blvd., Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95691
Phone: (916) 373-3710
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Website: <http://www.nahc.ca.gov>
Twitter: @CA_NAHC



October 18, 2019

Joseph Orozco
BCR Consulting

VIA Email to: josephorozco513@gmail.com

RE: APN 3148-041-001 Project, Los Angeles County

Dear Mr. Orozco:

A record search of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) was completed for the information you have submitted for the above referenced project. The results were negative. However, the absence of specific site information in the SLF does not indicate the absence of cultural resources in any project area. Other sources of cultural resources should also be contacted for information regarding known and recorded sites.

Attached is a list of Native American tribes who may also have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. This list should provide a starting place in locating areas of potential adverse impact within the proposed project area. I suggest you contact all of those indicated; if they cannot supply information, they might recommend others with specific knowledge. By contacting all those listed, your organization will be better able to respond to claims of failure to consult with the appropriate tribe. If a response has not been received within two weeks of notification, the Commission requests that you follow-up with a telephone call or email to ensure that the project information has been received.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from tribes, please notify the NAHC. With your assistance, we can assure that our lists contain current information. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at my email address: steven.quinn@nahc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steven Quinn".

Steven Quinn
Associate Governmental Program Analyst

Attachment

**Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
Los Angeles County
10/18/2019**

Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians

Jairo Avila, Tribal Historic and Cultural Preservation Officer
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Morongo Band of Mission Indians

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This list is current only as of the date of this document. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resource Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources assessment for the proposed APN 3148-041-001 Project, Los Angeles County.