Appendix E

Phase I Cultural Study

PHASE I SURVEY,
CARLETON ACRES SPECIFIC PLAN PROJECT,
TULARE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

A Phase I cultural resources survey was conducted for the Carleton Acres Specific Plan Project (Project). The Project area totals approximately 507 acres and consists of undeveloped land located just north of the city limits of Visalia, Tulare County, California. Specifically, the proposed Project is located in Section 15, Township 18 South, Range 24 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (M.D.B.M.). The Phase I survey included background research and an intensive pedestrian survey of the entire Project area. ASM Affiliates, Inc. (ASM) conducted this study, with David S. Whitley, Ph.D., RPA, serving as principal investigator. The study was undertaken to assist with compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The City of Visalia is the lead agency for the proposed Project.

A records search of site files and maps related to the Project area and a 0.5-mile (mi.) radius surrounding it was obtained by ASM on July 19, 2021, from the Southern San Joaquin Valley Archaeological Information Center (IC), California State University, Bakersfield. The search results indicated the Project area had not been previously surveyed and no cultural resources had been previously documented within it. The search also indicated that two previous studies had been conducted within the 0.5-mi. records search radius and that one prehistoric cultural resource had been documented within that search radius, a prehistoric lithic scatter and bedrock milling features (P-54-000126).

A Sacred Lands File (SLF) search from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was received on August 5, 2021. The search was negative for sacred sites and tribal cultural resources. ASM sent outreach letters to the tribes provided on the NAHC contact list on August 5, 2021, with follow-up emails sent to any contacts who had not yet responded on September 10, 2021. The only response received to date was from the Santa Rosa Indian Community of the Santa Rosa Rancheria who expressed concerns regarding the Project and requested that a tribal monitor be present for all ground disturbance related to the Project.

The Phase I survey fieldwork was conducted on August 10-11 and November 4, 2021. The entire 507-acre Project area was surveyed in parallel transects spaced at 15-meter (m) intervals. No prehistoric resources of any kind were identified within the Project area. The current study however resulted in the documentation of two historical-period resources within the Project footprint: segments of the nineteenth century Wutchumna and Modoc ditches. Both ditches were created by the Wutchumna Water Company in the 1870s to transport water from the Kaweah River for irrigation purposes, with the Modoc Ditch serving as a short distributary for the Wutchumna Ditch. The courses of both ditches were changed subsequently and they no longer maintain integrity of original location. Both ditches also now lack integrity of setting, design, materials, feeling and association. As common property types lacking integrity, they are recommended as not eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). Based on these findings, the development of the Carleton Acres Specific Plan Project will not result in adverse impacts to known significant or unique cultural resources as defined by CEQA. It is recommended, however, that an archaeologist be contacted in the unlikely event that cultural resources are uncovered during the development or use of the property to evaluate the discovery, and that a tribal

monitor be present for all ground surface disturbance following the recommendation of the Santa Rosa Rancheria – Tachi Yokut Tribe.

1. INTRODUCTION AND REGULATORY CONTEXT

ASM Affiliates, Inc. (ASM) was retained by Crawford & Bowen Planning, Inc. to conduct a Phase I cultural resources study for the Carleton Acres Specific Plan Project (Project), located in Tulare County, California (Figure 1). The study was undertaken to assist with compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The lead agency for the proposed Project is the City of Visalia. The investigation was conducted, specifically, to ensure that significant impacts or adverse effects to historical resources do not occur as a result of project construction.

This current study included:

- A background records search and literature review to determine if any known cultural resources were present in the project zone and/or whether the area had been previously and systematically studied by archaeologists; and
- An intensive pedestrian inventory of the Project area to identify and record previously undiscovered cultural resources.

David S. Whitley, Ph.D., RPA, served as principal investigator. ASM Associate Archaeologist Robert Azpitarte, B.A., led the fieldwork effort, with assistance in the field from ASM Assistant Archaeologists Maria Silva, B.A., Margarita Lemus, B.A., and Cameron Jackson, B.A.

This document constitutes a report on the Phase I survey. Subsequent chapters provide background to the investigation including historic context studies, the findings of the archival records search, Native American correspondence, field methodology, and the fieldwork results. We conclude with management recommendations for the Project area. The records search results and Native American correspondence is included as Confidential Appendix A; DPR forms for the newly documented resources are included as Confidential Appendix B.

1.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The Project is located immediately north of the city limits of Visalia, California, in Tulare County, California. Specifically, the proposed Project is located in Section 15, Township 18 South, Range 24 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian (M.D.B.M.), as illustrated on the USGS Visalia, California 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle. This places the proposed Project on the open flats of the San Joaquin Valley. Elevation within the Project parcel, which is flat, ranges from 303 feet (ft.) to 315 ft. above mean sea level (amsl). Currently the parcel is mostly undeveloped and consists of active agricultural fields with a bisecting irrigation ditch. It is bounded on the east by existing Ridgeview Middle School and on the south by residential development (northwestern Visalia).

1.2 PROJECT AND STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

The Project will involve multi-use development including single-family residential housing, multi-family housing, commercial, educational, and parks/trails facilities. The proposal features several different types of housing for a total of up to 3,368 residential units at buildout. The proposed Project also includes up to 14.7 acres of commercial development in two locations within the

Project (for a total of approximately 100,000 square feet of gross leasable commercial area). The first commercial area consists of up to 6.4 acres of Neighborhood Commercial at the intersection of Riggin Avenue and Shirk Road. Anticipated uses at this location may include development such as a gas station, drug store, retail, restaurants (including drive-throughs), and similar uses. The second consists of up to 8.3 acres of Commercial Mixed-Use at the center of the development. Anticipated uses at this location may include development such as retail, services and restaurants. The commercial facilities are located to provide efficient accessibility to residents of the Project and the surrounding areas. Other proposed uses include a site for a potential future elementary school, land for a drainage basin, and approximately 15.2 acres of parks/trails/recreational facilities. Various other infrastructure improvements (water, stormwater and wastewater infrastructure, roadway improvements, and related improvements) will be required by the Project (CEQANET 2021). All future staging, laydown, excavation, and construction will take place within a combined 507-acre Project footprint.

1.3 REGULATORY CONTEXT

1.3.1 California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA is applicable to discretionary actions by state or local lead agencies. Under CEQA, lead agencies must analyze impacts to cultural resources. Significant impacts under CEQA occur when "historically significant" or "unique" cultural resources are adversely affected, which occurs when such resources could be altered or destroyed through project implementation. Historically significant cultural resources are defined by eligibility for or by listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). In practice, the federal National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) criteria (below) for significance applied under Section 106 are generally (although not entirely) consistent with CRHR criteria (see PRC § 5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4852 and § 15064.5(a)(3)).

Significant cultural resources are those archaeological resources and historical properties that:

(A) Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;

(B) Are associated with the lives of persons important in our past;

(C) Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of an important creative individual, or possess high artistic values; or

(D) Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Unique resources under CEQA, in slight contrast, are those that represent:

> An archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that, without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:
>
> (1) Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.

(2) Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.

(3) Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person (PRC § 21083.2(g)).

Preservation in place is the preferred approach under CEQA to mitigating adverse impacts to significant or unique cultural resources.

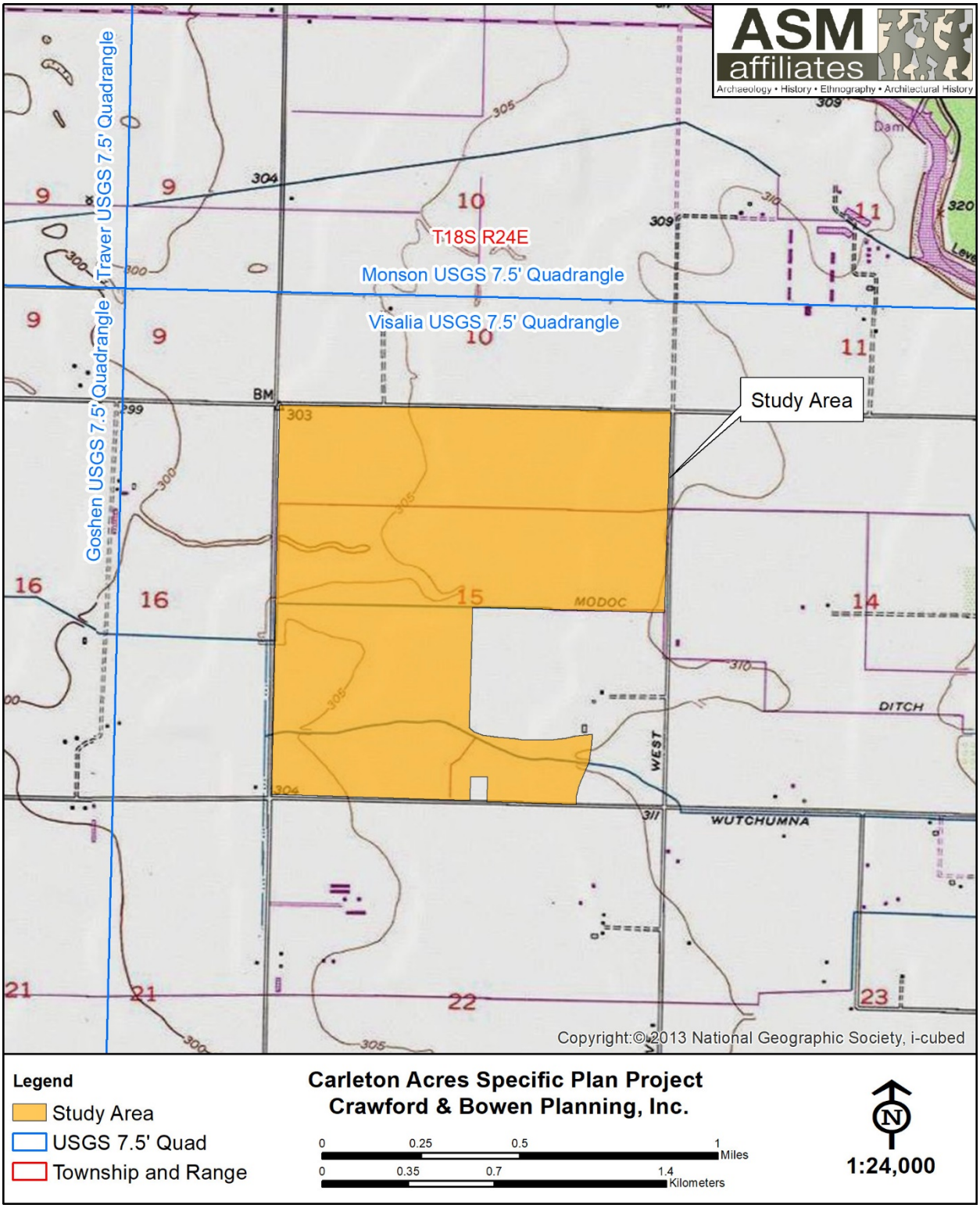

Figure 1. Location of the Carleton Acres Specific Plan Project, Tulare County, California.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL BACKGROUND AND GEOARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY

The elevation of the Project area ranges between 303 ft. and 315 ft. amsl on the open flats of the San Joaquin Valley just north of Visalia, in Tulare County, California. Currently this region can be characterized as a dry open valley bottom now utilized for agriculture. Prior to reclamation and channelization, the region would have been a low-lying, water-rich area characterized by streams, sloughs, marshes, and swamps. Occasionally inundated by floodwaters, in many years portions of this region would have been swampy during the winter rainy season and marsh land during other parts of the year. Historical and recent land-use has changed the vegetation that was once present within and near the Project area. The immediate Project location historically most likely fell within the Valley Grassland community, however, with Riparian Woodlands present along streams and freshwater marshes common in the area (see Schoenherr 1992).

A Caltrans geoarchaeological study that included the Project area classified this location as having Moderately High to Very High sensitivity for subsurface sites (Meyer et al. 2010). This study involved first determining the location and ages of late Pleistocene (>25,000 years old) landforms in the southern San Joaquin Valley. These were identified by combining a synthesis of 2,400 published paleontological, soils, and archaeological chronometric dates with geoarchaeological field testing. The ages of surface landforms were then mapped to provide an assessment for the potential for buried archaeological deposits. These ages were derived primarily from the Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO) and the State Soils Geographic (STATSGO) database. A series of maps were created from this information that ranked locations in seven ordinal classes for sensitivity for buried soils, from Very Low to Very High. Given its high sensitivity for buried deposits according to this analysis, buried sites and cultural resources therefore potentially may be present within the Project footprint.

2.2 ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Penutian-speaking Yokuts tribal groups occupied the southern San Joaquin Valley region and much of the nearby Sierra Nevada. Ethnographic information about the Yokuts was collected primarily by Powers (1971, 1976 [originally 1877]), Kroeber (1925), Gayton (1930, 1948), Driver (1937), Latta (1977), and Harrington (n.d.). For a variety of historical reasons, existing research information emphasizes the central Yokuts tribes who occupied both the valley and particularly the foothills of the Sierra. The northernmost tribes suffered from the influx of Euro-Americans during the Gold Rush and their populations were in substantial decline by the time ethnographic studies began in the early twentieth century. In contrast, the southernmost tribes were partially removed by the Spanish to missions and eventually absorbed into multi-tribal communities on the Sebastian Indian Reservation (on Tejon Ranch), and later the Tule River Reservation and Santa Rosa Rancheria to the north. The result is an unfortunate scarcity of ethnographic detail on southern Valley tribes, especially in relation to the rich information collected from the central

foothills tribes where native speakers of the Yokuts dialects are still found. Regardless, the general details of indigenous life-ways were similar across the broad expanse of Yokuts territory, particularly in terms of environmentally influenced subsistence and adaptation and with regard to religion and belief, which were similar everywhere.

This scarcity of specific detail is particularly apparent in terms of southern valley tribal group distribution. Kroeber (1925), Gayton (1948) and Latta (1977) place the Project area in Telamni territory, and none of them locate historical villages in the general area, however, with village locations instead concentrated to the east, in the foothills, or west, closer to the Tulare Lake shore. The Yokuts settlement pattern was largely consistent, regardless of specific tribe involved. Winter villages were typically located along lakeshores and major stream courses (as these existed circa AD 1800), with dispersal phase family camps located at elevated spots on the valley floor and near gathering areas in the foothills.

Most Yokuts groups, again regardless of specific tribal affiliation, were organized as a recognized and distinct tribelet; a circumstance that almost certainly pertained to the tribal groups noted above. Tribelets were land-owning groups organized around a central village and linked by shared territory and descent from a common ancestor. The population of most tribelets ranged from about 150 to 500 peoples (Kroeber 1925).

Each tribelet was headed by a chief who was assisted by a variety of assistants, the most important of whom was the *winatum*, a herald or messenger and assistant chief. A shaman also served as religious officer. While shamans did not have any direct political authority, as Gayton (1930) has illustrated, they maintained substantial influence within their tribelet.

Shamanism is a religious system common to most Native American tribes. It involves a direct and personal relationship between the individual and the supernatural world enacted by entering a trance or hallucinatory state (usually based on the ingestion of psychotropic plants, such as jimsonweed or more typically native tobacco). Shamans were considered individuals with an unusual degree of supernatural power, serving as healers or curers, diviners, and controllers of natural phenomena (such as rain or thunder). Shamans also produced the rock art of this region, depicting the visions they experienced in vision quests believed to represent their spirit helpers and events in the supernatural realm (Whitley 1992, 2000).

The centrality of shamanism to the religious and spiritual life of the Yokuts was demonstrated by the role of shamans in the yearly ceremonial round. The ritual round, performed the same each year, started in the spring with the jimsonweed ceremony, followed by rattlesnake dance and (where appropriate) first salmon ceremony. After returning from seed camps, fall rituals began in the late summer with the mourning ceremony, followed by first seed and acorn rites and then bear dance (Gayton 1930:379). In each case, shamans served as ceremonial officials responsible for specific dances involving a display of their supernatural powers (Kroeber 1925).

Subsistence practices varied from tribelet to tribelet based on the environment of residence. Throughout Native California, and Yokuts territory in general, the acorn was a primary dietary component, along with a variety of gathered seeds. Valley tribes augmented this resource with lacustrine and riverine foods, especially fish and wildfowl. As with many Native California tribes,

the settlement and subsistence rounds included the winter aggregation into a few large villages, where stored resources (like acorns) served as staples, followed by dispersal into smaller camps, often occupied by extended families, where seasonally available resources would be gathered and consumed.

Although population estimates vary and population size was greatly affected by the introduction of Euro-American diseases and social disruption, the Yokuts were one of the largest, most successful groups in Native California. Cook (1978) estimates that the Yokuts region contained 27 percent of the aboriginal population in the state at the time of contact; other estimates are even higher. Many Yokuts people continue to reside in the southern San Joaquin Valley today, including at the nearby Santa Rosa Rancheria.

2.3 PRE-CONTACT ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The southern San Joaquin Valley region has received minimal archaeological attention compared to other areas of the state. In part, this is because the majority of California archaeological work has concentrated in the Sacramento Delta, Santa Barbara Channel, and central Mojave Desert areas (see Moratto 1984). Although knowledge of the region's prehistory is limited, enough is known to determine that the archaeological record is broadly similar to south-central California as a whole (see Gifford and Schenk 1926; Hewes 1941; Wedel 1941; Fenenga 1952; Elsasser 1962; Fredrickson and Grossman 1977; Schiffman and Garfinkel 1981). Based on these sources, the general prehistory of the region can be outlined as follows.

Initial occupation of the region occurred at least as early as the *Paleoindian Period*, or prior to about 10,000 years before present (YBP). Evidence of early use of the region is indicated by characteristic fluted and stemmed points found around the margin of Tulare Lake, in the foothills of the Sierra, and in the Mojave Desert proper.

Both fluted and stemmed points are particularly common around lake margins, suggesting a terminal Pleistocene/early Holocene lakeshore adaptation similar to that found throughout the far west at the same time; little else is known about these earliest peoples. Over 250 fluted points have been recovered from the Witt Site (CA-KIN-32), located along the western shoreline of ancient Tulare Lake west of the Project area, demonstrating the importance of this early occupation in the San Joaquin Valley specifically (see Fenenga 1993). Additional finds consist of a Clovis-like projectile point discovered in a flash-flood cut-bank near White Oak Lodge in 1953 on Tejon Ranch (Glennan 1987a, 1987b). More recently, a similar fluted point was found near Bakersfield (Zimmerman et al. 1989), and a number are known from the Edwards Air Force Base and Boron area of the western Mojave Desert. Although human occupation of the state is well-established during the Late Pleistocene, relatively little can be inferred about the nature and distribution of this occupation with a few exceptions. First, little evidence exists to support the idea that people at that time were big-game hunters, similar to those found on the Great Plains. Second, the western Mojave Desert evidence suggests small, very mobile populations that left a minimal archaeological signature. The evidence from the ancient Tulare Lake shore, in contrast, suggests much more substantial population and settlements which, instead of relying on big game hunting, were tied to the lacustrine lake edge. Variability in subsistence and settlement patterns is thus apparent in California, in contrast to the Great Plains.

Substantial evidence for human occupation across California, however, first occurs during the middle Holocene, roughly 7500 to 4000 YBP. This period is known as the *Early Horizon*, or alternatively as the Early Millingstone along the Santa Barbara Channel. In the south, populations concentrated along the coast with minimal visible use of inland areas. Adaptation emphasized hard seeds and nuts with tool-kits dominated by mullers and grindstones (manos and metates). Additionally, little evidence for Early Horizon occupation exists in most inland portions of the state, partly due to a severe cold and dry paleoclimatic period occurring at this time, although a site deposit dating to this age has been identified along the ancient Buena Vista shoreline in Kern County to the south (Rosenthal et al. 2007). Regardless of specifics, Early Horizon population density was low with a subsistence adaptation more likely tied to plant food gathering than hunting.

Environmental conditions improved dramatically after about 4000 YBP during the *Middle Horizon* (or Intermediate Period). This period is known climatically as the Holocene Maximum (circa 3,800 YBP) and was characterized by significantly warmer and wetter conditions than previously experienced. It was marked archaeologically by large population increase and radiation into new environments along coastal and interior south-central California and the Mojave Desert (Whitley 2000). In the Delta region to the north, this same period of favorable environmental conditions was characterized by the appearance of the Windmiller culture which exhibited a high degree of ritual elaboration (especially in burial practices) and perhaps even a rudimentary mound-building tradition (Meighan, personal communication, 1985). Along with ritual elaboration, Middle Horizon times experienced increasing subsistence specialization, perhaps correlating with the appearance of acorn processing technology. Penutian speaking peoples (including the Yokuts) are also posited to have entered the state roughly at the beginning of this period and, perhaps to have brought this technology with them (cf. Moratto 1984). Likewise, it appears the so-called "Shoshonean Wedge" in southern California, the Takic-speaking groups that include the Gabrielino/Fernandeño, Tataviam, and Kitanemuk, may have moved into the region at that time (Sutton 2009), rather than at about 1500 YBP as first suggested by Kroeber (1925).

Evidence for Middle Horizon occupation of interior south-central California is substantial. For example, in northern Los Angeles County along the upper Santa Clara River, to the south of the San Joaquin Valley, the Agua Dulce village complex indicates occupation extending back to the Intermediate Period, when the population of the village may have been 50 or more people (King et al. n.d.). Similarly, inhabitation of the Hathaway Ranch region near Lake Piru, and the Newhall Ranch near Valencia, appears to date to the Intermediate Period (W&S Consultants 1994). To the west, little or no evidence exists for pre-Middle Horizon occupation in the upper Sisquoc and Cuyama River drainages; populations first appear there at roughly 3500 YBP (Horne 1981). The Carrizo Plain, the valley immediately west of the San Joaquin, experienced a major population expansion during the Middle Horizon (W&S Consultants 2004; Whitley et al. 2007), and recently collected data indicates the Tehachapi Mountains region was first significantly occupied during the Middle Horizon (W&S Consultants 2006). A parallel can be drawn to the inland Ventura County region where a similar pattern has been identified (Whitley and Beaudry 1991), as well as the western Mojave Desert (Sutton 1988a, 1988b), the southern Sierra Nevada (W&S Consultants 1999), and the Coso Range region (Whitley et al. 1988). In all of these areas a major expansion in settlement, the establishment of large site complexes and an increase in the range of environments exploited appear to have occurred sometime roughly around 4,000 years ago. Although most

efforts to explain this expansion have focused on local circumstances and events, it is increasingly apparent this was a major southern California-wide occurrence, and any explanation must be sought at a larger level of analysis (Whitley 2000). Additionally, evidence from the Carrizo Plain suggests the origins of the tribelet level of political organization developed during this period (W&S Consultants 2004; Whitley et al. 2007). Whether this same demographic process holds for the southern San Joaquin Valley, including the Project area, is yet to be determined.

The beginning of the *Late Horizon* is set variously at 1500 and 800 YBP, with a growing archaeological consensus for the shorter chronology. Increasing evidence suggests the importance of the Middle-Late Horizons transition (AD 800 to 1200) in the understanding of south-central California prehistory. This corresponds to the so-called Medieval Climatic Anomaly, followed by the Little Ice Age, and this general period of climatic instability extended to about A.D. 1860. It included major droughts matched by intermittent "mega-floods," and resulted in demographic disturbances across much of the west (Jones et al. 1999). It is believed to have resulted in major population decline and abandonments across south-central California, involving as much as 90 percent of the interior populations in some regions, including the Carrizo Plain (Whitley et al. 2007). It is not clear whether site abandonment was accompanied by a true reduction in population or an agglomeration of the same numbers of peoples into fewer but larger villages in more favorable locations. Population along the Santa Barbara coast appears to have spiked at about the same time that it collapsed on the Carrizo Plain (Whitley et al. 2007). Along Buena Vista Lake, in Kern County, population appears to have been increasingly concentrated towards the later end of the Medieval Climatic Anomaly (Culleton 2006), and population intensification also appears to have occurred in the well-watered Tehachapi Mountains during this same period (W&S Consultants 2006).

What is then clear is that Middle Period villages and settlements were widely dispersed across the south-central California landscape, including in the Sierras and the Mojave Desert. Many of these sites are found at locations that lack existing or known historical fresh water sources. Late Horizon sites, in contrast, are typically concentrated in areas where fresh water was available during the historical period, if not currently.

One extensively studied site that shows evidence of intensive occupation during the Middle-Late Horizons transition (~1500 to 500 YBP) is the Redtfeldt Mound (CA-KIN-66/H), located west of the current Project area, near the north shore of ancient Tulare Lake. There, Siefkin (1999) reported on human burials and a host of artifacts and ecofacts excavated from a modest-sized mound. He found that both Middle Horizon and Middle-Late Horizons transition occupations were more intensive than Late Horizon occupations, which were sporadic and less intensive (Siefkin 1999:110-111).

The Late Horizon can then be understood as a period of recovery from a major demographic collapse. One result is the development of regional archaeological cultures as the precursors to ethnographic Native California, suggesting that ethnographic life-ways recorded by anthropologists extend roughly 800 years into the past.

The position of southern San Joaquin Valley prehistory relative to patterns seen in surrounding areas is still somewhat unknown. The presence of large lake systems in the valley bottoms appears

to have mediated some of the desiccation seen elsewhere. But, as the reconstruction of Soda Lake in the nearby Carrizo Plain demonstrates (see Whitley et al. 2007), environmental perturbations had serious impacts on lake systems too. Identifying certain of the prehistoric demographic trends for the southern San Joaquin Valley and determining how these trends (if present) correlate with those seen elsewhere is a current important research objective.

2.4 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Spanish explorers first visited the San Joaquin Valley in 1772, but its lengthy distance from the missions and presidios along the Pacific Coast delayed permanent settlement for many years, including during the Mexican period of control over the Californian region. In the 1840s, Mexican rancho owners along the Pacific Coast allowed their cattle to wander and graze in the San Joaquin Valley (JRP Historical Consulting 2009). The Mexican government granted the first ranchos in the southern part of the San Joaquin Valley in the early 1840s, but these did not result in permanent settlement. It was not until the annexation of California in 1848 that the exploitation of the southern San Joaquin Valley began (Pacific Legacy 2006).

In the 1840s, Mexican rancho owners along the Pacific Coast allowed their cattle to wander and graze in the San Joaquin Valley (JRP Historical Consulting 2009). But the Mexican government did not grant ranchos in the San Joaquin Valley until the early 1840s, and even then these did not result in significant permanent settlement. The *Laguna de Tache Rancho* was granted by Governor Pio Pico in 1846 to Manuel de Jesus Castro, a former captain in the Mexican army. The rancho extended for 26 mi. down the north bank of the Kings River from modern Kingsburg to approximately Riverdale. It was sometimes called the "River Ranch." Castro's ownership of the Laguna de Tache Rancho grant was confirmed by the U.S. Public Land Commission in 1866, at which point it was sold to Jeremiah Clark.

The discovery of gold in northern California in 1848 resulted in a dramatic increase of population, consisting in good part of fortune seekers and gold miners, who began to scour other parts of the state. After 1851, when gold was discovered in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in eastern Kern County, the population of the area grew rapidly. Some new immigrants began ranching in the San Joaquin Valley to supply the miners and mining towns. Ranchers grazed cattle and sheep, and farmers dry-farmed or used limited irrigation to grow grain crops, leading to the creation of small agricultural communities throughout the valley (JRP Historical Consulting 2009).

After the American annexation of California, the southern San Joaquin Valley became significant as a center of food production for this new influx of people in California. The expansive unfenced and principally public foothill spaces were well suited for grazing both sheep and cattle (Boyd 1997). As the Sierra Nevada gold rush presented extensive financial opportunities, ranchers introduced new breeds of livestock, consisting of cattle, sheep, and pigs (Boyd 1997).

With the increase of ranching in the southern San Joaquin came the dramatic change in the landscape, as non-native grasses more beneficial for grazing and pasture replaced native flora (Preston 1981). After the passing of the Arkansas Act in 1850, efforts were made to reclaim small tracts of land in order to create more usable spaces for ranching. Eventually, as farming supplanted

ranching as a more profitable enterprise, large tracts of land began to be reclaimed for agricultural use, aided in part by the extension of the railroad in the 1870s (Pacific Legacy 2006).

Following the passage of statewide 'No-Fence' laws in 1874, ranching practices began to decline, while farming expanded in the San Joaquin Valley in both large land holdings and smaller, subdivided properties. As the farming population grew, so did the demand for irrigation. Settlers began reclamation of swampland in 1866, and built small dams across the Kern River to divert water into the fields. By 1880, 86 different groups were taking water from the Kern River. Ten years later, 15 major canals provided water to thousands of acres in Kern County.

During the period of reclaiming unproductive land in the southern San Joaquin Valley, grants were given to individuals who had both the resources and the finances to undertake the operation alone. One small agricultural settlement, founded by Colonel Thomas Baker in 1861 after procuring one such grant, took advantage of reclaimed swampland along the Kern River. This settlement became the City of Bakersfield in 1869, and quickly became the center of activity in the southern San Joaquin Valley, and in the newly formed Kern County. Located on the main stage road through the San Joaquin Valley, the town became a primary market and transportation hub for stock and crops, as well as a popular stopping point for travelers on the Los Angeles and Stockton Road. The Southern Pacific Railroad (SPRR) reached the Bakersfield area in 1873, connecting it with important market towns elsewhere in the state, dramatically impacting both agriculture and oil production (Pacific Legacy 2006).

Three competing partnerships developed during this period which had a great impact on control of water, land reclamation and ultimately agricultural development in the San Joaquin Valley: Livermore and Chester, Haggin and Carr, and Miller and Lux, perhaps the most famous of the enterprises. Livermore and Chester were responsible, among other things, for developing the large Hollister plow (3 ft. wide by 2 ft. deep), pulled by a 40-mule team, which was used for ditch digging. Haggin and Carr were largely responsible for reclaiming the beds of the Buena Vista and Kern lakes, and for creating the Calloway Canal, which drained through the Rosedale area in Bakersfield to Goose Lake (Morgan 1914). Miller and Lux ultimately became one of the biggest private property holders in the country, controlling the rights to over 22,000 square miles. Miller and Lux's impact extended beyond Kern County, however. They recognized early-on that control of water would have important economic implications, and they played a major role in the water development of the state. They controlled, for example, over 100 mi. of the San Joaquin River with the San Joaquin and Kings River Canal and Irrigation System. They were also embroiled for many years in litigation against Haggin and Carr over control of the water rights to the Kern River.

According to Grunsky (1898), the Wutchumna Water Company was incorporated in 1872 to bring water from the Kaweah River to farmers on the north side of the river (north of the parallel St, John's Fork of the rivwer). The Wutchumna Canal was not fully completed until 1880, though the lower segments were completed much earlier. Difficulty in constructing the upper reaches of the canal resulted because portions of it crossed bedrock which had to be blasted resulting in a cost for construction estimated at $60,000.00 in 1898 dollars. The Modoc Ditch was completed in 1876 as a distributary for the larger Wutchumna Ditch. Both ditches continue to be components of the Wutchumna Water Company's water conveyance system, which also supplies household water to residents of Woodlake.

The San Joaquin Valley was dominated by agricultural pursuits until the oil boom of the early 1900s, which saw a shift some parts of the region, as some reclaimed lands previously used for farming were leased to oil companies. Nonetheless, the shift of the San Joaquin Valley towards oil production did not halt the continued growth of agriculture (Pacific Legacy 2006). The Great Depression of the 1930s brought with it the arrival of great number of migrants from the drought-affected Dust Bowl region, looking for agricultural labor. These migrants established temporary camps in the valley, staying on long past the end of the drought and the Great Depression, eventually settling in towns such as Bakersfield where their descendants live today (Boyd 1997).

The town of Visalia, originally called Four Creeks, was founded in 1852 and is believed to be the earliest settlement in the San Joaquin Valley between Los Angeles and the Stockton area. It was made the county seat of Tulare County in 1853 and became a stop on the Butterfield Overland Mail stage route, which ran from Los Angeles to Stockton, in 1858. Camp Babbitt was created 1 mi. outside of Visalia during the Civil War, due to a significant number of southern sympathizers in the area. In 1874, the town was incorporated. Visalia has continued to grow due to industry and agriculture in the surrounding area, currently having a population of over 130,000 people (City of Visalia n.d.).

3. ARCHIVAL RECORDS SEARCH AND TRIBAL CORRESPONDENCE

3.1 ARCHIVAL RECORDS SEARCH

The project began with an archival records search conducted by the staff of the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center (IC), California State University Bakersfield, on July 19, 2021. The records search was completed to determine: (i) if prehistoric or historical archaeological sites had previously been recorded within the Project area; (ii) if the project area had been systematically surveyed by archaeologists prior to the initiation of this field study; and/or (iii) whether the general area within which the project lies was known to contain archaeological sites and to thereby be archaeologically sensitive. Records examined included archaeological site files and maps, the NRHP, Historic Property Data File, California Inventory of Historic Resources, and the California Points of Historic Interest.

According to the IC records search (Confidential Appendix A), no studies have previously been conducted within Project area, and no cultural resources of any kind are known to exist within it. Two previous studies have been conducted within 0.5-mi of the Project area (Table 1) and one cultural resource was recorded within the search radius (Table 2).

Table 1. Survey Reports within 0.5 Mile of the Project Area

Report No.	Year	Author (s)/Affiliation	Title
TU-00628	1974	Williams, Charlotte / Individual Consultant	The Archaeological Section of the Environmental Impact Report for Road 92 (Shirk Road) from State Highway 198 to Avenue 312 (Riggins Road)
TU-01248	2005	Jones, Kari / Pacific Legacy, Inc.	Archaeological Survey of North Linwood Cell Site, Tulare County

Table 2. Resources within 0.5 Mi. of the Project Area

Primary #	Type	Description
P-54-000126	Site	Prehistoric lithic scatter and bedrock milling features

Historical maps that included the Project area were consulted to identify potential historical structures or resources. According to USGS topographic quadrangles, historical aerials, and

Google Earth imagery, the Project area has undergone minimal development since at least the early twentieth century. The 1927 USGS Visalia 1:31,680 topographical quadrangle shows both Wutchumna Ditch (then Wutchumna Canal) and Modoc Ditch (then Modoc Canal) as already established, as well as two unknown structures and dirt roads on the eastern Project boundary. The 1950 USGS Visalia 1:24,000 topographical quadrangle shows no changes to existing ditch alignments, but additional small structures on the east in place by the mid-twentieth century. The 1980 ed. USGS Visalia 1:24,000 topographical quadrangle indicates that, by that date, the Wutchumna Ditch has been realigned and the structures were destroyed. The adjacent Ridgeview Middle School was completed in August 2016 (ABC30.com 2016).

3.2 TRIBAL CORRESPONDENCE

A Sacred Lands File (SLF) search from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was received on August 5, 2021. The search was negative for sacred sites and tribal cultural resources. ASM sent outreach letters to the tribes provided on the NAHC contact list on August 5, 2021, with follow-up emails sent to any contacts who had not yet responded on September 10, 2021. The only response received to date was from the Santa Rosa Indian Community of the Santa Rosa Rancheria who expressed concerns regarding the Project and requested that a tribal monitor be present for all ground disturbance related to the Project.

4. METHODS AND RESULTS

4.1 FIELD METHODS

An intensive Phase I cultural resources survey for the Project area was conducted by ASM Associate Archaeologist Robert Azpitarte, B.A., with assistance in the field from ASM Assistant Archaeologists Maria Silva, B.A., Margarita Lemus, B.A., and Cameron Jackson, B.A. The Project area was examined by walking parallel transects spaced 15 meters (m) apart.

The field methods employed included intensive pedestrian examination of the ground surface for evidence of archaeological sites in the form of artifacts, surface features (e.g., bedrock mortars, historical mining equipment), and archaeological indicators (e.g., organically enriched midden soil, burnt animal bone). Special attention was paid to any exposed ground surface areas, rodent burrow spoils piles, cut-banks, cleared edges of disturbed areas, and other spots with better ground surface visibility. The survey methodology was designed to include the identification and location of any discovered sites, should they have been present; tabulation and recording of surface diagnostic artifacts; site sketch mapping; preliminary evaluation of site integrity; and site recording, following the California Office of Historic Preservation Instructions for Recording Historic Resources, using DPR 523 forms.

4.2 SURVEY RESULTS

The approximately 507-acre Project area consists mostly of undeveloped agricultural fields (Figure 2). Multiple bisecting irrigation ditches, dirt roads, and contemporary irrigation features (e.g., standing pipes, culverts, pumps) exist within the Project footprint (Figure 3). Surface visibility within the Project area was excellent for Phase I survey. Soils are brown alluvium, Quaternary deposits.

No prehistoric cultural resources were identified within the Project area as a result of the intensive pedestrian survey. However, two late nineteenth-century irrigation ditches were identified within the Project area: Wutchumna Ditch and Modoc Ditch. Both ditches are earthen in construction and they bisect the Project parcel in a general east-west direction.

Wutchumna Ditch

This resource is a short segment of the late nineteenth century Wutchumna Ditch, located on open valley flats just northwest of the northern city limits of Visalia. The recorded segment measures approximately 4,345 ft. by 15 ft. by 3 ft. deep and is situated at an elevation range between 305 ft. and 312 ft. amsl.

During the current investigation, ASM investigated only that portion of the linear resource within the Project area, which runs in an east-west direction for approximately 0.75 mi. The ditch is earthen in construction and has contemporary irrigation features associated with it (i.e., concrete culverts, corrugated sheet metal culverts, sluice gates, lift gates). No artifacts or related cultural materials of any kind were observed on or immediately adjacent to the ditch. The resource is in

good condition; however, it lacks integrity to its period of construction due to decades of agricultural activities, ditch modifications, and road maintenance.

According to Grunsky (1898:14), portions of Wutchumna Canal – later Wutchumna Ditch – had already been in place by late nineteenth century. In addition, USGS topographic quadrangles, historic aerials, and Google Earth also show that channelized portions of Wutchumna Ditch had been established in the early twentieth century, as seen on the 1927 (HTMC, 1927 ed.) USGS Visalia 1:31,680 topographic quadrangle. The current alignment of Wutchumna Ditch within the Project area has not changed since 1927.

Modoc Ditch

The resource is a short segment of the early nineteenth-century Modoc Ditch, located on open valley flats just northwest of the northern city limits of Visalia. The recorded segment measures approximately 5,575 ft. by 20 ft. by 3 ft. deep and is situated at an elevation range between 305 ft. and 312 ft. amsl.

During the current investigation, ASM documented only that portion of the linear resource within the Project area, which runs in an east-west direction for approximately 1 mi. The ditch is earthen in construction and has contemporary irrigation features associated with it (i.e., concrete culverts, corrugated sheet metal culverts, weirs, lift gates). No artifacts or related cultural materials of any kind were observed on or immediately adjacent to the ditch. The resource is in poor condition and lacks integrity to its period of construction due to decades of agricultural activities, ditch modifications, and road maintenance.

According to Grunsky (1898:20), portions of Modoc Ditch had already been constructed in 1876. In addition, USGS topographic quadrangles, historic aerials, and Google Earth also show that channelized portions of Modoc Ditch had been established in the early twentieth century, as seen on the 1927 (HTMC, 1927 ed.) USGS Visalia 1:31,680 topographic quadrangle. The current alignment of Modoc Ditch within the Project area was established sometime between 1963 and 1971, as seen in historic aerial photography.

Figure 2. Overview of Project area from the intersection of Riggin Road and Shirk Street, looking northeast.

Figure 3. Overview of Project area showing example of existing ditches (Wutchumna Ditch) and dirt roads, looking west.

5. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An intensive Phase I cultural resources survey was conducted for the Carleton Acres Specific Plan Project, Tulare County, California. A records search conducted at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Archaeological Information Center, California State University, Bakersfield indicated that the Project study area had not been previously surveyed and that no cultural resources had been previously documented within it.

The intensive Phase I pedestrian survey was conducted on August 10-11 and November 4, 2021, with parallel transects spaced at 15-m intervals walked across the entire Project area. No prehistoric resources were identified, but segments of two late nineteenth-century irrigation ditches were documented within the Project area: the Wutchumna Ditch and Modoc Ditch.

Both ditches date from 1870 – 1880 and reflect the establishment of an irrigation system in this portion of Tulare County. They thus could be potentially eligible for CRHR listing due to their association with this important historic event (CRHR Criterion 1). They have no known association with an important historical figure (CRHR Criterion 2) and, as common property types, are not notable in terms of design, materials or engineering (CRHR Criterion 3). They also lack research value not better provided by historical records and documents (CRHR Criterion 4).

Both ditches, however, have experienced changes in alignment, alterations to their immediate and landscape surroundings (including suburbanization along certain of their segments and the construction of modern bridge crossings), and the replacement of their original water control features with modern equipment (such as concrete culverts and metal gates). Both ditches therefore lack integrity of original location, setting, design, materials and feeling and they cannot convey their historical association.

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Wutchumna and Modoc ditches are recommended as not CRHR eligible and they do not constitute significant or unique historical resources under CEQA due to their lack of integrity. No other cultural resources of any kind were identified during a Phase I study of the Project study area. The proposed Carleton Specific Plan Project therefore does not have the potential to result in adverse impacts to know historical properties. The Santa Rosa Rancheria – Tachi Yokuts however, consider the Project area sensitive for tribal cultural resources and have requested that a tribal monitor be present during ground-surface disturbance. It is further recommended that an archaeologist be contacted in the unlikely event that cultural resources are uncovered during the development or use of the property, to evaluate the discovery.

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CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES