

4.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This discussion summarizes the findings of the Phase I Archaeological Survey prepared by Conejo Archaeological Consultants (June 2006). This section analyzes potential impacts to archaeological resources. The archaeological resource analysis included a records search with the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC), a field visit to the plan area, and analysis of historic aerial photographs. The full report is contained in Appendix D.

4.4.1 Setting

a. Prehistoric Overview. The plan area lies within the historic territory of the Native American Indian group known as the Chumash. The Chumash occupied the region from San Luis Obispo County to Malibu Canyon on the coast, and inland as far as the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley, and the four northern Channel Islands. The Chumash are subdivided into factions based on distinct dialects. Ventura County is within the historic territory of the Ventureño Chumash. The Ventureño were the southernmost Chumash group, occupying most of the area of present day Ventura County and the southwest corner of Los Angeles County. The name Ventureño is derived from the mission with local jurisdiction, San Buenaventura.

b. Historic Overview. As part of the Phase I Archaeological Survey, Earth Systems (2005) completed a historic land use review of the plan area that included an examination of historic aerial photographs and historical topographic quadrangles. The historic review started with aerial photographs dating as far back as 1903. From this date through the 1989 photographs, the plan area has remained relatively unchanged. The plan area was developed with one to two residential structures and has been in agricultural cultivation. As indicated in the records search, no places of historic significance are present on the plan area.

c. Records Search Results. A records search was conducted as part of the Phase I Archaeological Survey at the SCCIC at CSU Fullerton, dated May 25, 2006. The SCCIC record search identified no prehistoric or historic archaeological sites within a 0.5-mile radius of the plan area. Three historic structures are located within a 0.5-mile radius of the plan area, but none of them are located within or adjacent to the plan area and they will not be affected by project development. The listings of the National Register of Historic Places, California Historical Landmarks, California Historic Property Data File, and the California Points of Historical Interest, include no properties within or adjacent to the plan area. Additionally, no Ventura County Historical Landmarks are located within or adjacent to the property.

d. Field Reconnaissance Survey Results. An archaeological field survey was conducted as part of the Phase I Archaeological Survey. The methodology involved walking transects through the plan area. The field survey indicated that the ground surface has been extensively disturbed by agricultural activity that dates back prior to the 1930s. The field survey noted no evidence of prehistoric or historic resources within the plan area.

4.4.2 Impact Analysis

a. Methodology and Significance Thresholds. This assessment is based on the information gathered and analyzed in the Phase I Archaeological Survey (Conejo, 2006). This

survey included a records search with the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC), a field visit to the plan area, and analysis of historic aerial photographs.

Cultural resource impacts are considered significant if the proposed project would:

- *Cause a substantial adverse change in, or destroy or disturb important significant or unique historical, archeological or paleontological resources, including human remains interred outside formal cemeteries*

For purposes of this analysis, cultural (archaeological and historic) resources include the following:

- *A resource listed, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission for listing, in the California Register of Historical Resources*
- *A resource included in a local register of historical resources or identified as significant in an historical resource survey*
- *Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California*

b. Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures.

Impact CR-1 **The proposed project would not disturb any recorded cultural resources. However, site development has the potential to disturb as yet undetected cultural resources. This is a Class II, significant but mitigable, impact.**

Per the Phase I Archaeological Survey, no evidence of sensitive archaeological or historic resources was found within the plan area. The survey include a site visit, records search, and review of historical aerial mapping. Furthermore, it is unlikely that buried cultural resources are present within the plan area since the area has been highly disturbed by past and ongoing agricultural activity. The records search did not indicate any historical resources within one-half mile of the plan area. Nevertheless, it is possible that as yet undetected cultural resources are present. Therefore, impacts are considered potentially significant.

Mitigation Measures. The following mitigation measures are required to mitigate the potential for adverse effects to cultural resources to a level that is less than significant.

CR-1(a) Temporary Work Suspension if Resources Unearthed. In the event that archaeological or paleontological resources are unearthed during project construction, all earth disturbing work within the vicinity of the find must be temporarily suspended or redirected until an archaeologist or paleontologist as appropriate has evaluated the nature and significance of the find. After the find has been appropriately mitigated, work in the area may resume. A Chumash representative shall monitor any mitigation work associated with Native American cultural material.

CR-1(b) Human Remains Procedures. If human remains are unearthed, State Health and Safety Code Section 7070.5 requires that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC).

Significance After Mitigation. With implementation of the above measures, potential impacts to as yet unknown archaeological resources would be reduced to a less than significant level.

c. Cumulative Impacts. As discussed in Section 3.0, *Environmental Setting*, planned cumulative development associated with buildout of the 2005 General Plan in the City of Ventura would add more than 8,300 dwelling units, as well as about 1.2 million square feet of retail development, 1.2 million square feet of office development, 2.2 million square feet of industrial development, and more than 500,000 square feet of hotel development. Adverse effects to known resources are avoided or mitigated based on the environmental investigation and recommendations of specialists including historians, archaeologists, and paleontologists. However, there is always the potential for as yet undiscovered buried resources. Nevertheless the potential for adverse effects to as yet undiscovered resources is evaluated and mitigated on a case by case basis through mitigation as well as State health and safety code and public resources code.

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