



**PHASE I CULTURAL RESOURCES
ASSESSMENT OF AN 18-ACRE PARCEL
(APN 3204-004-024) IN THE CITY OF
LANCASTER, LOS ANGELES COUNTY,
CALIFORNIA**

October 26, 2023

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Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment of an 18-Acre Parcel (APN 3204-004-024) in the City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California

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Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment of an 18-Acre Parcel (APN 3204-004-024) in the City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California

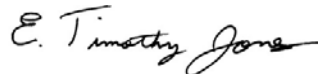
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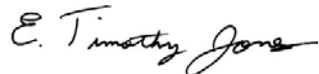
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Project Summary

Report Title: Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment of an 18-Acre Parcel (APN 3204-004-024) in the City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California

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Lead Archaeologist(s): Santos Cenicerros-Rodriguez

Report Author(s): Kevin P. Groark, Ph.D. and Ben Kerridge, MA

Report Date: October 26, 2023

Fieldwork Dates: September 14, 2023

County: Los Angeles

Land Jurisdiction: City of Lancaster

Legal Location: Township 7 North, Range 13 West, Section 34, SBBM

United States Geological Survey 7.5' Quadrangle(s): Del Sur

Survey Data Shapefiles Provided: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Site Data Shapefiles Provided: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Newly Recorded Resources: 0

Previously Recorded Resources: 0

Total Cultural Resources: 0

Resources Recommended Eligible: 0

Resources Recommended Ineligible: 0

Resources Not Evaluated: 0

Resources Not Relocated: 0



Abstract

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended, and the requirements of the City of Lancaster, Stantec initiated a Phase I cultural resources investigation of Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 302-260-053 on 14 September 2023. The property consists of a 17.79-acre rectangular parcel of undeveloped land at the southeast corner of 70th Street West and Avenue L in the City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California. The goal of this survey was to identify, document, and evaluate any cultural resources of potential historical significance located within the project site, as defined under CEQA.

An in-person California Historical Records Information System (CHRIS) records search conducted at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at California State University, Fullerton identified one previous cultural resources study conducted within or overlapping the project site with negative results. There are no previously recorded cultural resources within the project site or the 0.25-mile records search buffer. In addition, a search of the Native American Heritage Commission's (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) records returned negative results for tribal cultural resources (TCRs) within the project area and vicinity.

Following background data collection, Stantec conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of the project area to identify any cultural resources that may be present, yielding negative results for both historic and prehistoric cultural resources. No California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR)-eligible resources were identified within the project site, nor within the 0.25-mile search buffer. Although subsurface testing was not conducted as part of the study, the complete absence of surficial cultural resources or signs of midden soils suggests a low likelihood of discovering subsurface cultural materials or human remains on the subject property during ground-disturbing work.

Based on the results of the CHRIS records search, SLF search results, and intensive pedestrian field survey, Stantec does not anticipate that the project will impact CRHR-eligible historic or prehistoric cultural resources. Any potential impacts to unidentified buried cultural resources or human remains will be reduced to a less-than-significant level with the implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-2 and CR-3 (see Section 7). As required under Assembly Bill (AB) 52, Stantec also recommends the City of Lancaster consult with traditionally affiliated tribes to gain additional information on any unrecorded tribal cultural properties that might be present in the project area, to assess any potential impacts that might result from project implementation, and to develop appropriate mitigation measures. A list of tribal contacts is provided in Appendix C.

This cultural resources investigation conforms to the California Office of Historic Preservation's *Archaeological Resource Management Reports Recommended Contents and Format* (1990) and the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines for archaeology and historic preservation (48 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 44716).



Acronyms/Abbreviations

AB	Assembly Bill
AMSL	Above Mean Sea Level
APN	Assessor Parcel Number
BERD	Built Environment Resources Directory
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CHL	California Historical Landmarks
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CRHR	California Register of Historical Resources
CHSC	California Health and Safety Code
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
GLO	General Land Office
GPS	global positioning system
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MSL	Mean Sea Level
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
SB	Senate Bill
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SLF	Sacred Lands File
SOI	Secretary of the Interior
Stantec	Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
TCR	Tribal Cultural Resource
USC	U.S. Code
USGS	United States Geological Survey



1 Project Location and Description

On 14 September 2023, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended, and the requirements of the City of Lancaster, Stantec Consulting Services Inc. (Stantec), under contract to KB Home, conducted a Phase I cultural resources assessment of APN 3204-004-024. The subject property consists of a 17.79-acre rectangular parcel of undeveloped land at the southeast corner of Avenue L and 70th Street West, in the City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California. It is specifically located in the W ½ of the NW ¼ of the NW ¼ of Section 34, Township 7 North, Range 13 West, San Bernardino Baseline Meridian, on the Del Sur 7.5' United States Geologic Survey (USGS) topographic quadrangle (Appendix A, Figures 1-3).

The proposed project consists of the construction of an EnergyStar Certified residential home tract by KB Home. Construction activities include grading the property, installing wet utilities, street installation, and house construction. Construction equipment will include dozers, scrapers, graders, excavators, loaders, and back hoes. Rough grading will create cut/fill transitions and fill lots. All lots will be overexcavated such that all building pads are underlain by at least 5 feet of compacted engineering fill. Transition (i.e., cut/fill) lots will be overexcavated a minimum of 5 feet below proposed grades or to a depth of 1/3 of the maximum fill thickness. All cut lots will be overexcavated to a depth of at least 3 feet below proposed grade, or 5 feet below natural grade (whichever is deeper) and replaced with engineered fill. The project area encompasses all access routes and staging areas, and all areas of planned ground disturbance, including grading and excavation.

This report is part of the environmental review process for the proposed project, as required by the City of Lancaster, pursuant to CEQA. CEQA mandates that state, county, and municipal agencies consider the impacts of their projects on the cultural environment, with particular attention to cultural resources that may be eligible for listing on the CRHR (PRC § 21100 et seq.)

The purpose of this study is to provide the City of Lancaster with the necessary information and analysis to determine whether the proposed development would have an adverse effect on any "historical resources" (as defined in California Public Resources Code [PRC] § 21084.1) which may exist in or near the project site. As defined under CEQA, "historical resources" include both prehistoric and historic-era resources more than 50 years old that are assessed as being "significant" due to an association with an important historic context, and in the case of most archaeological sites that are deemed significant, the potential to yield important information on prehistory and/or history.

The goals of this assessment include: 1) the identification and documentation of any cultural resources located on the property, 2) an evaluation of the significance of said resources, as defined under CEQA; and 3) an impact assessment for significant cultural resources, with recommended mitigation measures. This report presents the results of the Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment, and is based on the following data sources:

- Comprehensive records searches of the CHRIS and NAHC SLF designed to assess recorded historic and prehistoric cultural resources, as well as traditional cultural properties, located in or near the project site.



- Review of historical topographical maps, historical aerial imagery, and Bureau of Land Management General Land Office (BLM-GLO) patents for the subject property.
- Intensive pedestrian archaeological survey to identify any cultural resources visible on the property's surface.
- The regulatory framework provided by CEQA, as it relates to the assessment of significance for any identified cultural resources, as well as the evaluation of impacts upon such resources as may be expected to result from the proposed project.

Kevin P. Groark, Ph.D. served as the Principal Investigator and lead author for this cultural study. Stantec archaeologist Santos Cenicerros-Rodriguez conducted the field survey, and Stantec archaeologist Ben Kerridge assisted in background research and report drafting. The assessment documented in this report was carried out in compliance with state regulations, and this report has been prepared according to California Office of Historic Preservation standards as outlined in *Archaeological Resource Management Reports (ARMR): Recommended Contents and Format*.

2 Regulatory Context

2.1 STATE REGULATIONS

2.1.1 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA requires public agencies to evaluate the implications of their project(s) on the environment, including but not limited to historical resources and tribal cultural resources. CEQA evaluation aims to determine eligibility for listing in the CRHR.

Under CEQA, a project that results in a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant adverse effect on the environment (CEQA Statutes 21084.1). CEQA defines substantial adverse change in the significance of a resource as the physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of the resource is materially altered (CEQA Guidelines 15064.5). Additionally, no project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is exempt from CEQA (CEQA Statutes 21084e).

A resource is considered historically significant if it is listed on the CRHR or has been determined to be eligible for listing by the California State Historic Resource Commission. A historical resource may also be considered significant if the lead agency determines, based on substantial evidence, that the resource meets the criteria for inclusion on the CRHR.



2.1.2 California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR)

The CRHR is a listing of State of California resources that are significant to California's history. The CRHR criteria are modeled after National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) criteria; however, the CRHR focuses more closely on resources that have contributed to the development of California.

Accordingly, a cultural resource may be found to be eligible for the CRHR because it is significant relative to state or local history, but that resource need not be significant at a national level, which would similarly make it eligible for inclusion in the NRHP. Therefore, typically, any resource associated with California and eligible for or included in the NRHP is automatically considered eligible for inclusion in the CRHR, but resources found eligible for the CRHR may or may not be similarly eligible for the NRHP. Finally, the California State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) recognizes an age threshold of 45 years. Cultural resources built less than 45 years ago may qualify for consideration, but only under the most extraordinary circumstances.

The CRHR serves as a guide to cultural resources that must be considered when a government agency undertakes a discretionary action subject to CEQA. It helps government agencies identify, evaluate, and protect California's historical resources and indicates which properties are subject to mitigation from substantial adverse change (PRC § 5024.1[a]). The CRHR is administered through the State Office of Historic Preservation.

CEQA manages cultural resources differently than under federal laws and regulations. CEQA requires consideration of impacts to:

- Historical resources
- Unique archaeological resources, and
- Tribal Cultural Resources

Each of these resource types is discussed below.

Historical Resources—In California, a “historical resource” is defined as a resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the CRHR (PRC § 21084.1); a resource included in a local register of historical resources (Title 14 CCR § 15064.5[a][2]); or any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which is historically or archaeologically significant, or is significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California” (PRC § 5020.1[j]).

Under CEQA, the term “historical resource” specifically includes:

- 1) A resource listed in or determined eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission for listing in the CRHR (PRC § 5024.1; Title 14 CCR § 4850, et seq.).
- 2) A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in PRC § 5020.1(k), or identified as significant in a historical resource survey meeting the PRC § 5024.1(g) requirements, shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must



treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.

- 3) A resource that has been identified as significant in an historical resources survey, as defined in Public Resources Code § 5024.1(g); or
- 4) A resource that is determined to be historically significant by the CEQA lead agency [Title 14 CCR § 15064.5(a)].

The specific criteria for listing resources in the CRHR were expressly developed to be in accordance with previously established criteria developed for listing in the NRHP, enumerated below. According to PRC § 5024.1(c)(1–4), a resource is considered historically significant if it (i) retains “substantial integrity,” and (ii) meets at least one of the following criteria:

- 1) It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
- 2) It is associated with the lives of persons important to California history;
- 3) It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
- 4) It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of California.

Accordingly, a cultural resource may be found to be eligible for the CRHR because it is significant relative to state or local history, but that resource need not be significant at a national level, which would similarly make it eligible for inclusion in the NRHP. Therefore, typically, any resource associated with California and eligible for or included in the NRHP is automatically considered eligible for inclusion in the CRHR, but resources found eligible for the CRHR may or may not be similarly eligible for the NRHP. Finally, the California State OHP recognizes an age threshold of 45 years. Cultural resources built less than 45 years ago may qualify for consideration, but only under the most extraordinary circumstances.

If a cultural resource in question is an archaeological resource, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c)(1) requires that the lead agency first determine if the resource is a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5(a). Typically, archaeological sites exhibiting significant features qualify for the CRHR under Criterion D because such features have information important to the prehistory of California. However, a lead agency may determine that a resource may be a historical resource as defined in PRC § 5020.1(j) or 5024.1, even if it is:

- Not listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the CRHR
- Not included in a local register of historical resources pursuant to PRC § 5020.1(k)
- Not Identified in a historical resources survey per PRC § 5024.1(g).

To be eligible for listing on the CRHR, a resource must not only be historically or architecturally significant under one or more of the criteria for listing, but it must also retain integrity, or its ability to convey its



historical importance for its period of significance. Integrity is grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance within one or more contexts. It is a function of the resource's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and must be closely related to the reason for the resource's significance. Resources that have lost a great deal of integrity are generally not eligible for the NRHP. However, the CRHR regulations have specific language regarding integrity that notes: "It is possible that historical resources may not retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, but they may still be eligible for listing in the California Register. A resource that has lost its historic character or appearance may still have sufficient integrity for the California Register" (Title 15 CCR, 11.5[c]).

If an archaeological resource does not qualify as a historical resource but does qualify as a "unique archaeological resource," then the archaeological resource is treated in accordance with PRC § 21083.2 (see also CEQA Guidelines Section 15069.5(c)(3)).

According to CEQA, the fact that a resource is not listed in or determined eligible for listing in the CRHR or is not included in a local register or survey shall not preclude the lead agency from determining that the resource may be a historical resource (PRC § 5024.1). Pursuant to CEQA, a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource may have a significant effect on the environment (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5[b]).

Unique Archaeological Resources—The second type of resource, "unique archaeological resource," is a rarely used classification of cultural resource considered under CEQA, established in 1981 by the Deddeh Act (AB 952), representing Section 21083.2 of the PRC, and prior to the establishment of the CRHR criteria (AB 2881, 1992). The CEQA Guidelines require that lead agencies determine whether a site is a historical resource as defined above and in Title 14 CCR §15064.5(a). Only if the site does not meet those definitions, then the lead agency must consider whether it represents a unique archaeological resource, which is defined in Section 15064.5(g) of the CEQA statute as: "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.

The definition of unique archaeological resource mirrors the eligibility criteria for inclusion in the CRHR. As a practical matter, any resource that meets the definition of a unique archaeological resource will meet the comparable criteria for inclusion in the CRHR and vice versa, thereby triggering the requirement to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.

Tribal Cultural Resources (TCR)—The final type of cultural resource subject to CEQA are "tribal cultural resources." Effective July 1, 2015, AB 52 amended CEQA to mandate consultation with California Native American tribes during the CEQA process to determine whether the proposed project may have a



significant impact on a TCR. California Native American tribes are defined as “a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission for the purposes of Chapter 905 of the Statutes of 2004.” (PRC § 21073).

Section 21074(a) of the PRC defines TCRs for the purpose of CEQA as: “Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes (geographically defined in terms of the size and scope), sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following”:

- a) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; and/or
- b) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1; and/or
- c) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Because criteria (a) and (b) also meet the definition of a historical resource under CEQA, a TCR may also require additional (and separate) consideration as a historical resource. Moreover, a tribal cultural resource may or may not also meet the definition of a Traditional Cultural Property under federal law.

Adverse Effects to Cultural Resources—State CEQA Guidelines specify that a “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired” (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5). Material impairment occurs when a project alters in an adverse manner or demolishes “those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion” or eligibility for inclusion in the NRHP, CRHR, or local register. In addition, pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2, the “direct and indirect significant effects of the project on the environment shall be clearly identified and described, giving due consideration to both the short-term and long-term effects.”

Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15378), study of a project under CEQA requires consideration of “the whole of an action, which has the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.” State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15064[d]) further define direct and indirect impacts:

- 1) A direct physical change in the environment is a physical change in the environment which is caused by and immediately related to the project.
- 2) An indirect physical change in the environment is a physical change in the environment which is not immediately related to the project, but which is caused indirectly by the project. If a direct physical change in the environment in turn causes another change in the environment, then the other change is an indirect physical change in the environment.



- 3) An indirect physical change is to be considered only if that change is a reasonably foreseeable impact which may be caused by the project.

If it can be demonstrated that a proposed project will cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require reasonable efforts be made to permit any or all of these resources to be preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state. To the extent that they cannot be left undisturbed, mitigation measures are required (PRC § 21083.2[a], [b], and [c]). CEQA notes if an archaeological resource is neither a unique archaeological resource nor a historical resource, the effects of the project on those resources shall not be considered to be a significant effect on the environment (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5[c][4]).

2.1.3 California State Senate Bill 18 (SB 18)

Signed into law in 2004, SB 18 requires that cities and counties notify and consult with California Native American tribes about proposed local land use planning decisions for the purpose of protecting traditional tribal cultural sites. Cities and counties must provide general and specific plan amendment proposals to California Native American tribes that the NAHC has identified as having traditional lands located within the city's boundaries. If requested by the Native American tribes, the city must also conduct consultations with the tribes prior to adopting or amending their general and specific plans.

2.1.4 California State Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52)

Recognizing that California tribes are experts in their TCRs and heritage, AB 52 of 2104 formalized the consultation process to require the lead agency to initiate consultation with Native American groups that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the Project, including tribes that may not be federally recognized. Lead agencies are required to begin consultation prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report. AB 52 requires that lead agencies carry out consultation with tribes at the commencement of the CEQA process to identify TCRs.

Section 4 of AB 52 adds Sections 21074(a) and (b) to the PRC, which address tribal cultural resources and cultural landscapes. Section 21074(a) defines tribal cultural resources as one of the following:

1. Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
 - a. Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.
 - b. Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.
2. A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.



Section 1 (a)(9) of AB 52 establishes that “a substantial adverse change to a tribal cultural resource has a significant effect on the environment.” Therefore, effects on TCRs should be considered under CEQA. Section 6 of AB 52 adds Section 21080.3.2 to the PRC, which states that parties may propose mitigation measures “capable of avoiding or substantially lessening potential significant impacts to a tribal cultural resource or alternatives that would avoid significant impacts to a tribal cultural resource.” Further, if a California Native American tribe requests consultation regarding project alternatives, mitigation measures, or significant effects to tribal cultural resources, the consultation shall include those topics (PRC § 21080.3.2[a]). The environmental document and the mitigation monitoring and reporting program (where applicable) shall include any mitigation measures that are adopted (PRC § 21082.3[a]).

Consultation is concluded when either the lead agency and tribes agree to appropriate mitigation measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect, if a significant effect exists, or when a party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached (PRC § 21080.3.2[b], whereby the lead agency uses its best judgement in requiring mitigation measures that avoid or minimize impact to the greatest extent feasible.

2.1.5 Treatment of Human Remains

The disposition of burials and cremations—whether intact or disturbed—falls under the general prohibition on disturbing or removing human remains under California Health and Safety Code (CHSC) § 7050.5. More specifically, remains suspected to be Native American are treated under CEQA at CCR § 15064.5; PRC § 5097.98 illustrates the process to be followed in the event that remains are discovered. If human remains are discovered during construction, no further disturbance to the site shall occur, and the County Coroner must be notified (CCR § 15064.5 and PRC § 5097.98).

Section 7050.5 of the CHSC states the following regarding the discovery of human remains:

- a) Every person who knowingly mutilates or disinters, wantonly disturbs, or willfully removes any human remains in or from any location other than a dedicated cemetery without authority of law is guilty of a misdemeanor, except as provided in Section 5097.99 of the [California Public Resources Code (PRC)]. The provisions of this subdivision shall not apply to any person carrying out an agreement developed pursuant to subdivision (I) of Section 5097.94 of the [PRC] or to any person authorized to implement Section 5097.98 of the [PRC].
- b) In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the Coroner of the County in which the human remains are discovered has determined, in accordance with Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 27460) of Part 3 of Division 2 of Title 3 of the [California Government Code (CGC)], that the remains are not subject to the provisions of Section 27491 of the [CGC] or any other related provisions of law concerning investigation of the circumstances, manner and cause of any death, and the recommendations concerning the treatment and disposition of the human remains have been made to the person responsible for the excavation, or to their authorized representative, in the manner provided in Section 5097.98 of the [PRC]. The coroner shall make his or her determination within two working days from the time the person responsible for the



excavation, or their authorized representative, notifies the coroner of the discovery or recognition of the human remains.

- c) If the Coroner determines that the remains are not subject to their authority and if the coroner recognizes the human remains to be those of a Native American or has reason to believe that they are those of a Native American, he or she shall contact, by telephone within 24 hours, the NAHC (CHSC Section 7050.5).

Of particular importance to cultural resources is subsection (c), requiring the coroner to contact the NAHC within 24 hours if discovered human remains are determined to be Native American in origin. After notification, NAHC will follow the procedures outlined in PRC § 5097.98, which include notification of most likely descendants (MLDs), if possible, and recommendations for treatment of the remains. The MLD will have 24 hours after notification by the NAHC to make their recommendation (PRC § 5097.98). In addition, knowing or willful possession of Native American human remains or artifacts taken from a grave or cairn is a felony under State law (PRC § 5097.99).

2.1.6 Confidentiality of Cultural Resources Data

Under existing law, environmental documents must not include information about the location of an archeological site or Native American sacred lands or any other information that is exempt from public disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act. (Cal. Code Regs. § 15120[d]). Native American graves, cemeteries, and sacred places and records of Native American places, features, and objects are exempt from disclosure. (PRC §§ 5097.9, 5097.993.) The Public Records Act contains an exemption from disclosure for the items listed in these sections. Lead agencies under CEQA should maintain the confidentiality of cultural resource inventories or reports generated for environmental documents.

Recently enacted sections of CEQA govern confidentiality during tribal consultation. (PRC §21082.3(c).) First, information submitted by a California Native American tribe during the environmental review process may not be included in the environmental document or disclosed to the public without the prior written consent of the tribe (however, consistent with current practice, confidential information may be included in a confidential appendix). A lead agency may also exchange information confidentially with other public agencies that have jurisdiction over the environmental document (PRC § 21082.3[c][1]).

When it comes to a public agency acting as lead agency under CEQA, the lead agency and the tribe may share confidential information regarding tribal cultural resources with the project applicant. However, the project applicant should keep the information confidential unless the tribe consents to disclosure in writing to prevent looting, vandalism, or damage to the cultural resource. Additionally, information that is already publicly available, developed by the project applicant, or lawfully obtained from a third party that is not the tribe, lead agency, or another public agency may be disclosed during the environmental review process (PRC § 21082.3[c][2]).



2.2 LOCAL REGULATIONS

2.2.1 City of Lancaster General Plan 2030

Lancaster and the Antelope Valley have a rich history. Unfortunately, many of the physical reminders of that history have been destroyed. If Lancaster is to reaffirm its own identity and image as being a desirable place to live, it is important that residents have an appreciation of the community's history. The General Plan therefore seeks to preserve remaining physical reminders of the area's history and prehistory.

Objective 12.1: Identify and preserve and/or restore those features of cultural, historical, or architectural significance.

Policy 12.1: Preserve features and sites of significant historical and cultural value consistent with their intrinsic and scientific values.

Specific Action 12.1.1(a): As part of the CEQA review process, require site-specific historical, archaeological, and/or paleontological studies when there exists a possibility that significant environmental impacts might result or when there is a lack of sufficient documentation on which to determine potential impacts.

Specific Action 12.1.1(b): Include a condition of approval on all development projects that addresses State and Federal regulations with respect to the disposition of cultural resources.

Specific Action 12.1.1(c): Process requests for inclusion in state and federal historic registers those historic and prehistoric sites and features which meet state or federal criteria.

Specific Action 12.1.1(d): Prior to permitting demolition of any historic structure, require that an evaluation of the condition of the structure, potential adaptive reuse of the structure, and the cost of rehabilitation be undertaken.

3 Project Setting

The project site lies in an area known as the Antelope Valley. The Antelope Valley is located on the western edge of the Mojave Desert and comprises approximately 3,000 square miles. The valley is separated from the San Joaquin Valley by the Tehachapi Mountains to the northwest. To the south and southwest, it is separated from the San Gabriel Valley by the San Gabriel Mountain Range. Isolated buttes distinguish the northern and eastern boundaries of Antelope Valley. The City of Lancaster lies in the southern part of Antelope Valley, adjoining the northern foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains.

3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

The subject parcel is within the Mojave Desert Geomorphic Province (Jenkins 1938). This province lies to the east of the Great Basin geomorphic province and shares many of the same geomorphic features. Geologically, the Mojave Desert region is a tremendous wedge-shaped fault block, bounded to the southwest by the San Andreas fault, to the north and northwest by the Garlock fault, with an indefinite eastern boundary (Norris and Webb 1976). Mountain ranges separate the Mojave Desert from the



coastal area to the southwest and the Basin and Range province to the north. The desert is characterized by north-south trending mountain ranges enclosing arid valleys and low-lying basins or sinks. All drainage within this plain is interior, resulting in several saline lakes. The province contains Paleozoic and Mesozoic rocks, while the desert is a Cenozoic feature formed by the Garlock and San Andreas faults (Oakeshott 1971). The valley floors are composed primarily of Pleistocene alluvium containing gravel, sand, and silt. Lithic resources are restricted to buttes and ridges. Significant rhyolite deposits are found in great quantity in the Fairmont Buttes, and high-quality cryptocrystalline silicates occur in the nearby Tehachapi Mountains.

The climate of the Mojave Desert is sub-arid, a transitional zone between the relatively colder climate of the Great Basin and the subtropical climate of the Sonoran Desert (McCorkle-Apple and Lilburn 1992; Axelrod 1979). Seasonal temperatures vary, as do rain, general humidity, and wind levels. As a result, temperature extremes are common, ranging from well below freezing to over 100° Fahrenheit. Reliable water sources in the Mojave Desert are currently found only along major rivers, intermittent streams and springs, and seasonal claypans. Three main river systems flow into the Mojave Desert: the Mojave River, the Amargosa River, and the Owens River. During the Pleistocene and early Holocene, these rivers formed lakes where the present-day sinks are located.

Flora and fauna of the Mojave Desert have adjusted to these extreme environmental conditions, as well as the unpredictable availability of freshwater sources. The project area lies in the Mojave Desert scrub vegetation community. This biome is dominated by drought-resistant bushes such as creosote (*Larrea tridentate*), all-scale (*Atriplex polycarpa*), brittlebush (*Encelia farinosa*), desert holly (*Atriplex hymenelytra*), Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*), and white burro brush (*Hymenoclea salsola*), all of which commonly occur near desert playas. In addition, black brush (*Coleogyne ramosissima*) and various cactus species are common throughout the region. Blackbrush communities (which include yuccas and agaves) dominate at lower elevations, giving way to creosote communities between 3900-6000 feet above mean sea level (amsl) (Vasek and Barbour 1977:854). These plants were essential to aboriginal inhabitants of the region, having both economic and nutritional uses. Finally, at higher elevations, we find piñon-juniper communities. Piñon nuts occur in the eastern and northern Mojave mountain ranges and were an important aboriginal diet staple. The juxtaposition of different biotic communities and their vertical distribution provided a diverse inventory of essential foods to the native inhabitants of the region (Altschul 1991).

Fauna in the Mojave Desert includes a variety of rodents, reptiles, small carnivores, and birds. Reptile species include the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizi*), chuckwalla (*Sauromalus obesus*), rattlesnakes (*Crotalus spp.*), shovelnose snake (*Chionactis occipitalis*), and several species of lizards. Carnivores include coyote (*Canis latrans*), badger (*Taxidea taxus*), desert kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*), and bobcat (*Felis rufus*). The small mammals include black-tailed jackrabbits (*Lepus californicus*), woodrat (*Neotoma sp.*), ground squirrels (*Spermophilus sp.*), and cottontail jackrabbits (*Sylvilagus audubonii*). Large herbivores such as the desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis*) and mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) can be found at higher elevations but are not common.

During the prehistoric period, the faunal community included pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra americana*). Avifauna includes the LeConte thrasher (*Taxostoma lecontei*), sage thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*), cactus wren (*Heleodytes brunneicapillus*), raven (*Corvus corax*), red-tailed hawk (*Buteo*



jamaicensi), turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*), various ducks (*Anas spp.*) and the American coot (*Fulica americana*).

3.2 CULTURAL CONTEXT

3.2.1 Prehistoric Overview

Although archaeologists first took an interest in the western Mojave Desert in the 1930s, little systematic research was done before the 1960s. Around that time, a sustained archaeology program based at Antelope Valley Community College (under the direction of Roger Robinson) began to establish site distributions and chronologies for the Antelope Valley region. Efforts since the 1960s have led to a prehistoric cultural chronology that can be divided into seven periods distinguished by paleoclimatic variations and differences in adaptive strategies (Warren 1984).

Throughout prehistory, many groups have occupied the Mojave Desert. Although long-term habitation sites in the foothills and near rocky buttes have been found to contain significant subsurface depth, most archaeological sites on the valley floor are sparse surface scatters without subsurface components. Given the rarity of developed cultural middens, Mojave chronologies have tended to rely upon temporally diagnostic artifacts, such as projectile points, or upon the presence/absence of other temporal indicators, such as groundstone. Fagan (2003), Moratto (1984), and Chartkoff and Chartkoff (1984) and Sutton et al. (2007) provide overviews of California archaeology in general and review the history of the desert regions in southern California. The most widely accepted regional chronology for Southern California's coastal and central interior is derived from Wallace's four-part Horizon format, which Warren later updated and revised (Wallace 1955, 1962, 1978; Warren 1984). Presently, regional archaeologists generally follow Wallace's Southern California format, but the exact dates for each period remain approximations. The documented stages are as follows (from Lloyd 2007):

Paleoindian Period (prior to 10,000 B.P.): The earliest archaeological evidence of cultural activity in the western Mojave Desert occurs during the terminal Pleistocene, a period marked by rising temperature, precipitation, and unstable climate. Although evidence of a Paleoindian occupation in the region is sparse, marked by a single Clovis point recovered from the foothills of the Tehachapi Mountains (Glennan 1971), the valley was likely an ideal place for the exploitation of late Pleistocene megafauna. Recent research at Searles Lake basin in the eastern Mojave Desert has identified geoglyphs and artifact concentrations dating back 11,000 years (Barna 2004). Archaeologists hypothesize that the earliest occupants of the region led a foraging lifestyle focused on lakeshore or wetland environments (Davis 1978; Moratto 1984). Thus, the population density was presumably relatively low. The tool kit included large lanceolate and fluted points (e.g., Clovis or Folsom) for hunting game, as well as crescents, gravers, scrapers, choppers, perforators, and numerous small formalized and informal flake tools (Davis 1978). Ground stone implements were rare, indicating that processed seeds or nuts did not play a significant dietary role.

Lake Mojave Period (10,000–7000 B.P.): Most of the early material identified within the valley dates to the Lake Mojave Period, when the climate was much drier than the preceding period with intermittent moist episodes. Numerous sites dating to this period have been found within the southwestern Great Basin and the northern Mojave Desert, suggesting a considerable population increase. Local sites from this interval include CA-KER- 322, on the northwestern fringe of Rogers Lake (Peak 1974, 1976; Sutton



1979), and CA-KER-760, northeast of Rogers Lake (Robinson, personal communication 1980; in Sutton 1988). Lake Mojave artifacts include large percussion-flaked foliate and stemmed points and knives (typically Lake Mojave and Silver Lake types), stone crescents, and a wide variety of scrapers, graters, and perforating tools. Ground stone implements continue to be rare. Sutton (1988:30) noted that much of Antelope and Fremont valleys may have been inundated by Pleistocene Lake Thompson. Because the relief in the valley is slight, extensive marshlands likely ringed the lake. Such marshes are among the most productive habitats, and Davis (1978) argued that these wetlands would have attracted early occupants. Thus, it is presumed that the adaptive strategy was one of generalized hunting and gathering focused on exploiting wetland resources.

Pinto Period (7000–4000 B.P.): A generalized hunting and gathering strategy continued into the Pinto Period; however, it underwent marked changes with the onset of greater aridity. The population decreased in response to variable and unstable climatic conditions and a decrease in permanent wetland habitats beginning in the mid-Holocene. This period corresponds to Antevs (1953) Altitheirnal (i.e., hot and dry), although recent research suggests that in the Antelope Valley, this aridity was punctuated by wet episodes (Grayson 1993; Mehninger 1986). Sites dating to this period tend to be small seasonal camps near streams and seasonal water sources. They lack developed middens but contain a diverse tool kit consisting of Pinto projectile points, other flaked stone tools, ground stone milling slabs, and hand stones. The appearance of milling tools indicates an increased reliance on seeds and nuts from the scrub and chaparral plant communities as wetland resources diminished. Rhyolite, fine-grained basalts, and poorer quality chert and quartz materials dominate the lithic assemblages.

Gypsum Period (4000–1500 B.P.): The Little Pluvial episode occurs between 5000 and 2000 B.P., marking a period of increased precipitation that intensified every thousand years until circa 1900 B.P. Modern vegetation and climate were well established by 4300 B.P., and mesquite trees, oaks, and piñon were readily available. The mortar and pestle were introduced to process mesquite pods, acorns, pine nuts, yuccas, and agaves. The archaeological record is marked by the appearance of large village sites reflecting a transition from seasonal migration to year-round or semisedentary settlements (Sutton 1988). The presence of coastal marine shell artifacts (e.g., *Olivella* beads) and Coso obsidian indicate that long-distance exchange systems were in place. Milling tools of various types dominate the artifact assemblages; diagnostic flaked stone artifacts include Humboldt, Elko, Gypsum, and Rose Spring projectile points.

Rose Spring/Saratoga Springs Period (1500–800 B.P.): This period is marked by moderate climatic conditions interrupted by severe drought at 1000–900 B.P. Adaptive strategies remain similar to the Gypsum Period, evinced by large village sites with deep middens reflecting a subsistence strategy focused on hunting and gathering and a continuation of trade networks with coastal and other outside groups (Moratto 1984; Sutton 1981). The most significant difference from the preceding period is the replacement of the atlatl, or spear thrower, by the bow and arrow. Projectile points diagnostic of this period include Rose Spring and Cottonwood points. Also prevalent are stone beads and schist and steatite ground stone artifacts reflecting the development of a regional stone trade. Schist and steatite stone workshops have been identified at habitation sites along Amargosa Creek west of Palmdale (Earle 2004). The end of the period is marked by a shift away from obsidian importation and increased use of local cryptocrystallines. Earle (2004) suggests that changes in regional networks of raw material



exchange may be associated with a drought episode (circa 850–650 B.P.) and the migration of Numic-speaking populations out of southeastern California.

Late Prehistoric Period (800–300 B.P.): Adaptive strategies of the Rose Spring/Saratoga Springs Period continued during the Late Prehistoric Period. With the amelioration of climatic conditions and an increase in precipitation circa 600 B.P., despite a severe drought around 500 B.P., the population increased, and subsistence practices featured more intensive exploitation of a variety of large and small mammals and some fish. The number of special-purpose sites appears to increase, use of Coso obsidian declines, and coastal trade items, particularly shell, increase. Rose Spring and Cottonwood points continue during this period, while Desert Side-notched types are also introduced. Late-period sites in the Antelope Valley are distinguished from other late-period sites in the southern Mojave Desert by their general lack of pottery. Moratto (1984) and others argue that the southwestern Hakataya influence so prevalent along the Mojave River valley was relatively minor in Antelope Valley because trade between the coast was well established. Interestingly, however, a surprising number of ceramic sherds have been found at CA-LAN-192 and other sites in the buttes (Earle 2004). Additional study of these sherds is necessary to determine their type. As Earle (2004) points out, their presence, along with the numerous shell beads, may reflect the existence of a coastal trans-Colorado trade route through the Antelope and the Mojave River valleys. Alternatively, the pottery may be of Numic origin, suggesting an affiliation with Numic speaking groups.

Ethnohistoric Period (300 BCE to Present): At the time of first contact with Europeans, the western Mojave Desert was occupied by at least five groups of Shoshonean speakers: four from the Takic family and one from the Numic family. These include the Numic-speaking Kawaiisu of the Tehachapi Valley (and throughout the southern Sierra Nevada in the vicinity of Lake Isabella and Walker Pass); the Tataviam (Takic), who occupied the Santa Clarita Valley, with a territory that extended north to the southwestern edge of Antelope Valley; the Kitanemuk (Takic), who resided south of the Kawaiisu and north of the Tataviam on the northwestern edge of the west end of Antelope Valley; the Serrano (Takic), of the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains, and their valley floor neighbors the Vanyume Serrano, who resided along the Mojave River in the Victorville region and the southern and southwestern portions of Antelope Valley. Ethnohistoric sources indicate that the principal ethnic groups occupying or utilizing the Antelope Valley were the Kitanemuk, Kawaiisu, Tataviam, and Vanyume. In general, the native occupants lived in sizeable permanent winter villages and dispersed into smaller mobile gathering groups during the late spring, summer, and fall months to harvest piñon nuts, mesquite, yucca buckwheat, chia, berries, and other seasonally available foods. The villages were exogamous, and marriage was patrilocal. Each village was ruled by a headman whose position was inherited from his father. Despite marital ties with other villages, most were politically independent.

Local Cultural Complexes: Based on data drawn from more than 20 years of archaeological excavation in the Mojave Desert, Sutton et al. (2007) have proposed a refined cultural chronology reflecting these local cultural trajectories. This revised chronology—which replaces Wallace's "cultural horizons" and Warren's "cultural periods" with local "cultural complexes"—is presented below in tabular form:



Date	Geological Epoch	Cultural Complex Sutton et al. (2007)	Cultural Period Warren (1984)	Cultural Horizon Warren (1984)	Artifacts
< 10,000 BCE	Pleistocene to Early Holocene	Pre-Clovis*			Unknown
10,000-8,000 BCE		Paleo-Indian	Clovis	Early Man	Fluted points
8,000-6,000 BCE	Early Holocene	Lake Mojave	Lake Mojave	Millingstone	Stemmed points
7,000-3,000 BCE	Middle Holocene	Pinto	Pinto		Pinto points
		Deadman Lake			Contracting stem & Leaf- shaped points
2,000 BCE – 200 CE	Late Holocene	Gypsum	Gypsum	Intermediate	Gypsum & Elko Series points
200 – 1,100 CE		Rose Spring	Saratoga Springs		Rose Springs & Eastgate Series points
1,100 CE - Contact			Late Prehistoric	Protohistoric	Late Prehistoric

*Hypothetical cultural period, to date no supporting material evidence

3.2.2 Ethnographic Overview

The project site lies near the traditional homeland of the Tataviam people, whose ancestral home stretched from the Liebre and Sawmill Mountains to the upper reaches of the Santa Clara River drainage in Los Angeles and Kern Counties. Like the neighboring Chumash, Gabrieliño, and Kitanemuk groups, the Tataviam adopted a general hunting and foraging subsistence strategy and did not farm or practice animal husbandry. The native language of the Tataviam may have been of the Takic family, and it likely diverged from various other languages in the family as late as 1,000 BCE. The language was mutually exclusive at the onset of the historic period and unrecognizable to neighboring groups. Today, only a little historical information regarding the group is known, although their population at the time of historic contact is estimated to have been around 1,000 (King and Blackburn 1978).

The field notes of Smithsonian ethnographer John P. Harrington, collected in the first quarter of the 20th century, indicate that neighboring tribal groups whose core territories were located elsewhere utilized or traveled through the Antelope Valley on an occasional and transient basis. Indeed, archaeological and ethnohistoric sources indicate that the Antelope Valley was an active hub of exchange and communication between coastal populations to the south and the west, interior populations living in the southern San Joaquin Valley to the north, and the Great Basin groups to the east. Harrington's field notes document extensive cultural exchanges (including trade, intermarriage, ceremonial exchanges, and conflict) between coastal, southern, and central California during the Spanish Period and into the historical era. Archaeological data indicates that these networks predated the mission system, characterizing interethnic relations during the prehistoric period. Southwestern Anasazi pottery sherds (including Tuzigoot White on Red, Flagstaff Black on White, and Wupatki Black on White—all from the Verde River area southwest of Flagstaff) have been found at the Barrel Springs site in the southern foothills of the Antelope Valley, indicating trade networks extending well into the southwest region.

With the development of the Franciscan mission system, numerous Serrano people were relocated to the missions between 1800 and 1820. Earle suggests that small Numic-speaking groups of Chemehuevi-Southern Paiute affiliation migrated into the western Mojave Desert from the east and settled across the valley and the San Gabriel Mountains from the 1840s to as late as 1890. More detailed overviews of the ethnography and ethnohistory of the region are available in Heizer (1978). Bean and Smith (1978) offer some information about the Vanyume and Serrano, while Blackburn and



Bean (1978) present background data on the Kitanemuk. Significant ethnohistoric data on the tribal groups in the region can also be found in the unpublished ethnographic notes of John Peabody Harrington, on file at the Smithsonian Institution.

3.2.3 Historic-Period Overview

The "historic period" in the Antelope Valley is generally understood to begin with the passage of Spaniards through the region in the mid to late 18th Century. Captain Pedro Fages was the first recorded European to visit the Antelope Valley in 1772. However, the most well know early entrada was that of Francisco Garcés. He was charged by the San Fernando mission to search out apostate Indians in the Antelope Valley in early 1776.

Fortunately, he left a detailed account of his journey through the region, and these records provide some of the earliest accounts of the native inhabitants of the region (notably, the Chemehevi, Kitanemuk, and Kawaiisu), as well as his stay at Willow Springs (near current-day Rosamond). Over the next 100 years, several small expeditions traveled through the region, including Jedediah Smith (1827), Kit Carson (1830), and perhaps most well-known, the John C. Fremont Expedition (1844), which undertook the first significant survey of the various resources of the region (Greenwood and McIntyre 1980).

Euro-American settlement began with the Southern Pacific Railroad, which laid tracks through the valley in 1876, connecting Los Angeles to San Francisco. The two cities of Lancaster and Palmdale have their origin in the late 1880s, following penetration by the Southern Pacific Railroad and its chain of stations and small settlements. Settlers flooded into the Valley between the late 1870s and the turn of the century. Lancaster was the first stable community in the region, created in 1884 when a real estate developer named M.L. Wicks purchased six sections of land from the Southern Pacific Railroad and established a small farming community. Lancaster had become a prosperous and rapidly growing town by the turn of the century.

Four events played critical roles in the settling of Antelope Valley. The first, as mentioned, was the entry of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which provided essential infrastructure and transportation. The second significant event was the 1877 Desert Lands Act, which granted title of government-held lands to private citizens at an affordable price. Third, and equally important, was the 1887 Wright Irrigation Act, which established irrigation districts and agricultural colonies. The fourth event was the completion of the California-Los Angeles Aqueduct system in 1913, which brought reliable water supplies into the region for domestic and agricultural uses. Once these elements were in place, the future of the small desert town of Lancaster was assured.

As might be expected from this brief overview, the earliest Euro-American historic sites in the vicinity date to the late 1870s, while most homesteading activities took place from the late 1930s through the early 1960s. Virtually all historic-period archaeological sites in the vicinity date to no earlier than the last thirty years of the nineteenth century. Sites dating from the early days of Euro-American settlement are quite rare, but later-period homesteads remain quite common.



4 Background Research

Prior to fieldwork, Stantec performed a cultural resources literature and records search of the project site and a 0.25-mile buffer. The records search and literature review provide a better understanding of the types of cultural resources that may be expected to occur within the project area. This review included a CHRIS records search; an examination of historical USGS topographic quadrangle maps; historical aerial imagery; BLM-GLO records; and a review of secondary sources to determine the extent of previous inventories, previously recorded cultural resources, and historic-period activity in or near the project site.

4.1 CHRIS RECORDS SEARCH

On 28 August 2023, Stantec archaeologist, Ben Kerridge, M.A., conducted a California Historical Resources Information Service (CHRIS) records search at the SCCIC at California State University, Fullerton. The records search included a review of all previously recorded cultural resources (historic and prehistoric) as well as previous cultural resources studies conducted within a 0.25-mile radius of the Project area. In addition, the NRHP, CRHR, California Historical Landmarks, California Inventory of Historic Resources, California Points of Historical Interest, and the Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD) were consulted. These data were used to identify the cultural context for the project area, including the types and density of archaeological and historical resources.

A single cultural resources study encompassing the project site was identified within the search radius (Tang et al. 2006). However, that study included only a reconnaissance-level “windshield survey” and did not include an intensive-level pedestrian survey of the project area (see Table 1).

The records search identified zero previously recorded cultural resources within the project site and zero previously recorded cultural resources within the 0.25-mile search radius.

Table 1: Previous Cultural Resources Studies Within the Project Area (n=1)

Report No.	Year	Author(s)	Title	Affiliation	Resources
LA-07991	2006	Tang, Tom “Bai”, Michael Hogan, and Josh Smallwood	Cultural Resources Technical Report, City of Lancaster General Plan Update	CRM TECH	None

4.2 SACRED LANDS FILE (SLF) SEARCH

The NAHC maintains the confidential SLF containing sites of traditional, cultural, or religious value to Native American tribes. In a letter dated 6 October 2023, the NAHC reported the results of the SLF records search they conducted on behalf of Stantec. The results of the file search were negative for the presence of TCRs.

The NAHC noted that tribes do not always record their sacred sites in the SLF, nor are they required to do so, and a SLF search is not a substitute for AB 52 consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project’s geographic area. Therefore, Stantec recommends that the Lead Agency contact traditionally affiliated tribes for additional information on any TCRs, as well other Native American tribes who may also have knowledge of tribal cultural resources in or near the project area, to



fully assess the potential impact of the project on any tribally-recognized resources. A list of tribes and their contact information is provided with the NAHC's response (see Appendix C).

4.3 BLM-GLO RECORDS

In 1856, when the U.S. government conducted the earliest systematic land surveys in the Antelope Valley, no man-made features of any kind were noted in or near the project area (GLO 1856). The BLM-GLO Land Patents database records a single transaction for the subject parcel: On 3/25/1891, Henry Behnsen was deeded 160 acres of land encompassing the project area under the Homestead Act of 1862. Behnsen's name does not appear in local historical accounts of Lancaster, and he does not appear to be a significant person in the history of California.

4.4 HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHICAL MAPS & AERIALS

Stantec reviewed historical USGS 7.5-minute Topographic Maps of the Del Sur, Lancaster West, and Bouquet Reservoir, California Quadrangles (scale 1:24,000) to help identify past uses of the project site and the potential for cultural resources. The following table summarizes the maps reviewed and our observations.

Year	Scale	Observations of Subject Property and Adjoining/Nearby Properties
1915 1917 1931	1=96,000 1=125,000 1=24,000	No site details are depicted on the Subject Property or surrounding area. Roadways appear adjacent to the north and west.
1936 1958	1=24,000	No site details are depicted on the Subject Property. Wells and a small water feature appear to the north beyond Avenue L.
1974 1987 1995	1=50,000 1=24,000	No site details are depicted on the Subject Property. A High School appears approximately ¼ mile to the east along Avenue L. Residential development appears approximately to the ¾ mile to the south.
2012 2015 2018	1=24,000	No details are depicted. Roadways appear in their current configuration.

Historical sources consulted for this study suggest that the project area is relatively low in sensitivity for historic-period cultural resources. By 1915, the project vicinity, situated on the western outskirts of the town of Lancaster, demonstrated a typical rural settlement pattern, featuring a regular grid of roads lined by scattered buildings, including Avenue L and 70th Street West along the north and west project boundaries, as well as crisscrossed unimproved roads across the region (USGS 1917). By 1948, aerial photographs show the project area under agricultural use, and this pattern continues into at least the mid-1970s (USGS 1931; 1958). Despite sporadic development in the region slowly encroaching upon the project area, it has remained undeveloped (NETR Online 1974-2020).



5 Survey Methods

Preparation for the field survey involved a thorough review of modern and historical aerial photographs and topographic maps, a CHRIS records search of previously identified cultural resources, and a NAHC SLF records search to identify resources of tribal significance.

On 14 September 2023, Stantec archaeologist Santos Cenicerros-Rodriguez completed an intensive pedestrian survey of the entire 17.79-acre project site. The project location was confirmed using GIS, the setting and disturbances were recorded and photo-documented with a digital camera, and digital fieldnotes were taken in the field. The project site was surveyed using systematic, parallel transects spaced 10 meters or less. The goal of survey was to locate and document any previously recorded or newly identified cultural resources 45 years old or more, including archaeological sites, features, isolates, and historic resources within the defined project boundaries. Where present, exposed subsurface sediments (for example, in road cuts and rodent burrows) were visually examined for cultural resources or midden soils. Fieldwork methods and personnel meet or exceed the Secretary of the Interior's standards. All photographs and documentation are on file at Stantec's office in Monrovia, California.

6 Survey Results

The Subject Property consists of vacant land at an elevation of 2,454 feet above mean sea level (amsl). The property's topography is relatively flat with a slight gradient towards the north-northeast. Adjoining properties, as well as the nearby area, consist primarily of vacant land. Soils in the project area consist of a yellow-tan sandy loam characterized by granular materials of silty or clayey gravel and sand with slow infiltration rates.

Vegetation coverage was dense across the project site resulting in poor ground visibility (~15 percent). Plants observed included annual grasses, storks bill (*Erodium cicutarium*), vinegar weed (*Trichostema lanceolatum*), asters (*Corethrogyne* sp., *Stephanomeria* sp.), turkey mullein (*Croton setiger*), jimsonweed (*Datura wrightii*), tumble weed (*Salsola* sp.), and some small chaparral-like bushes.

Modern refuse, consisting mostly of domestic refuse and construction debris, was littered across the project site. Domestic items included plastic and glass bottles, food boxes, and mail. These items likely represent wind transport as well as littering from the surrounding neighborhoods. Construction debris consisted of scattered wood stakes, plywood boards, concrete chunks, green PVC pipe segments, and some foam knee pads. Additionally, three modern refuse piles were observed along the southeastern corner of the project site, likely pushed there to clear space for the construction project on the adjacent parcel. These piles contained old lumber, plastic tarps, branches, cement chunks, and foam. Evidence of recent ground disturbance in the form of tire tracks was observed.

No surface evidence of prehistoric or historic-era cultural resources was identified during the survey.



7 Cultural Resources Impact Analysis

This section discusses potential impacts associated with the proposed project, with suggested mitigation measures for historical resources, archaeological resources, and human remains:

7.1 HISTORICAL RESOURCE (IMPACT CR-1)

Threshold) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines?

Impact Analysis CR-1: No historical resources eligible for the CRHR were identified on the subject property. Because the proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, impacts to historic resources would be less than significant. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

Mitigation Measure CR-1 (MM-CR-1): No mitigation is necessary.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Less Than Significant Impact.

7.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE (IMPACT CR-2)

Threshold: Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource as defined in Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines?

Impact Analysis CR-2: As previously discussed, the results of the SCCIC records search indicate that there are no recorded archaeological resources on or within 0.25-miles of the project site. Moreover, no archaeological resources (prehistoric or historic-era) were identified during an intensive pedestrian survey of the project site.

Although there is no evidence of subsurface archaeological deposits, the project area could contain buried deposits, such as prehistoric cultural materials, refuse deposits or architectural features (e.g., foundations, walls, etc.) that were present prior to development. Although agricultural development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries likely disturbed upper layers of soil and any possible surficial deposits, it is possible that intact archaeological deposits could be preserved in deeper layers. The proposed project would require excavation ranging from 3 to 5 feet below ground level, which could result in the inadvertent discovery and/or disturbance of an archaeological resource. Any previously unrecorded cultural resource encountered during construction would be potentially eligible for the California Register and thus a potential historical resource under CEQA. In such a situation, the proposed project would potentially cause a substantial adverse change in its significance, thereby impacting a historical resource. This impact is considered potentially significant but would be reduced to a less than significant level by implementing Mitigation Measures CR-2.



Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Potentially Significant Impact.

Mitigation Measure CR-2 (MM-CR-2)—Inadvertent Discoveries: If buried cultural resources (such as chipped or ground stone, historic debris, or building foundations) are encountered during ground-disturbing activities, work shall stop in that area and within a 100-foot radius of the find until a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards for archaeology can assess the significance of the discovery and, if necessary, develop a response plan with appropriate treatment measures, in consultation with the City of Lancaster, the State Historic Preservation Officer, and other relevant agencies. If necessary, the evaluation may require preparation of a treatment plan and Phase II archaeological testing to determine CRHR eligibility. Preservation in place shall be the preferred treatment method per State CEQA Guidelines § 15126.4(b) (avoidance, open space, capping, easement). If the discovery proves significant under CEQA and cannot be avoided by the project, data recovery may be warranted to exhaust the resource's data potential, thereby reducing any impact to a less-than-significant level. Construction shall not resume until the Qualified Archaeologist has conferred with the City of Lancaster on the significance of the resource and the recommendations made by the Qualified Archaeologist have been implemented to the reasonable satisfaction of the archaeologist.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: Implementation of mitigation measures MM-CR-2 would avoid impacts during construction in the event that archaeological resources are discovered during excavation and grading activities, as all work activities in the area (within approximately 100 feet) of the discovery would be halted until such time as the Qualified Archaeologist has evaluated the find, coordinated with appropriate Native American representatives, and developed an Archaeological Resources Treatment Plan for the resource(s) in consultation with the City of Lancaster. **Therefore, with implementation of mitigation measures MM-CR-2, impacts on archaeological resources would be less than significant.**

7.3 HUMAN REMAINS (IMPACT CR-3)

Threshold: Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries.

Impact Analysis CR-3: There is no evidence of cemeteries or burials in the historic records for the project area. While no formal cemeteries, other places of human internment, or burial grounds sites are known to occur within the immediate vicinity, there is always a possibility that human remains could be encountered during construction. However, compliance with the regulatory requirements outlined in MM-CR-3 would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation: Potentially Significant Impact.

Mitigation Measure CR-4 (MM-CR-3)—Inadvertent Discovery of Human Remains: If previously unknown human remains are found during excavation, the Project would follow procedures as detailed in the CHSC § 7050.5. If human remains of Native American origin are discovered during construction, the project shall comply with State laws, which fall within the jurisdiction of the NAHC relating to the disposition of Native American burials (PRC § 5097). Upon discovery of human remains, all work within a minimum of 200 feet of the find must cease



immediately, and the County Coroner must be notified and allowed to examine the remains. If the Coroner determines the remains to be of Native American origin, he or she shall notify the NAHC. The NAHC shall then identify the most likely descendant (MLD) to be consulted regarding treatment and/or repatriation of the remains. The MLD shall be granted access to examine the remains and has 48 hours to provide recommendations for the treatment or reburial of the remains. If the MLD fails to make a recommendation within 48 hours of being granted access to the remains, the land manager/owner can rebury the remains in a location not subject to further disturbance. If the Coroner determines that no investigation of the cause of death is required and that the human remains are not Native American, then ground-disturbing activities may resume after the Coroner informs the County of Los Angeles of such determination. According to State law, six or more human burials at one location constitute a cemetery, and disturbance of Native American cemeteries is a felony.

Level of Significance After Mitigation: In the unlikely event that human remains are discovered during construction, compliance with the regulatory requirements outlined in MM-CR-3 would reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level. **Therefore, with implementation of mitigation measures MM-CR-3, impacts human remains would be less than significant.**

8 Summary

Stantec conducted a cultural resources assessment in support of the KB Home residential development project at the southwest corner of 70th Street West and Avenue L (APN 3204-004-024). This work was required by the City of Lancaster to fulfill their responsibilities as the lead agency under CEQA. The assessment included a CHRIS records search, a SLF records search conducted by the NAHC, a review of historic USGS maps, aerial imagery, and BLM-GLO land patents, and an intensive-level pedestrian survey of the project site. The goal of this assessment was to identify, document, and evaluate any cultural resources of potential historical significance located on the property, as defined under CEQA.

A CHRIS Information Center records search indicates that zero previously recorded cultural resources are recorded within the project site and 0.25-mile buffer. Similarly, zero resources eligible for listing on the CRHR are recorded within the project site or the 0.25-mile buffer. Results from the SLF Records search conducted by the NAHC were negative, indicating that no TCRs have been recorded in the project area (see Appendix C).

Following background data collection, Stantec conducted a pedestrian survey of the project site to identify any cultural resources that may be present. No prehistoric or historic-era cultural resources were identified. However, surface visibility was poor at the time of the survey, and unidentified cultural resources could be present under the dense vegetation cover.



9 Recommendations

Based on the results of the CHRIS records search, SLF search, and intensive pedestrian field survey, Stantec recommends that the City of Lancaster reach a finding that no known CRHR-eligible historic or prehistoric cultural resources will be affected by the proposed development. However, poor ground visibility limited the ability to fully assess the project site for the presence of cultural resources. Although subsurface testing was not conducted as part of this study, the absence of surficial cultural resources or signs of midden soils suggests a low likelihood of subsurface cultural materials or human remains within the project site. Any impacts to unidentified surficial or buried cultural resources or human remains will be reduced to a less than significant level with the implementation of Mitigation Measures CR-2 and CR-3 (see Section 7).

Also, as required under AB 52, Stantec recommends the Lead Agency consult with traditionally affiliated tribes to gain additional information on the nature and location of any unrecorded tribal cultural resources that might be present within the project site and immediate vicinity, to assess any potential impacts that may result from project implementation, and to develop appropriate mitigation measures in consultation with the appropriate tribes.



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APPENDIX A

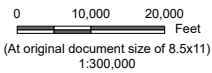
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 Project Location



Project Location
T7N, R13W, S34
USGS 7.5' Quad: Del Sur, CA.

Prepared by WCG on 2023-10-26
TR by AML on 2023-10-26
IR by KG on 2023-10-26

Client/Project
Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment of an 18-Acre
Parcel (APN 3204-004-024) in the City of Lancaster,
Los Angeles County, California

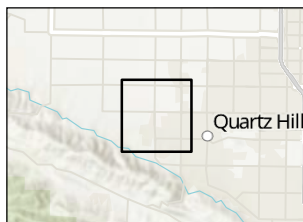
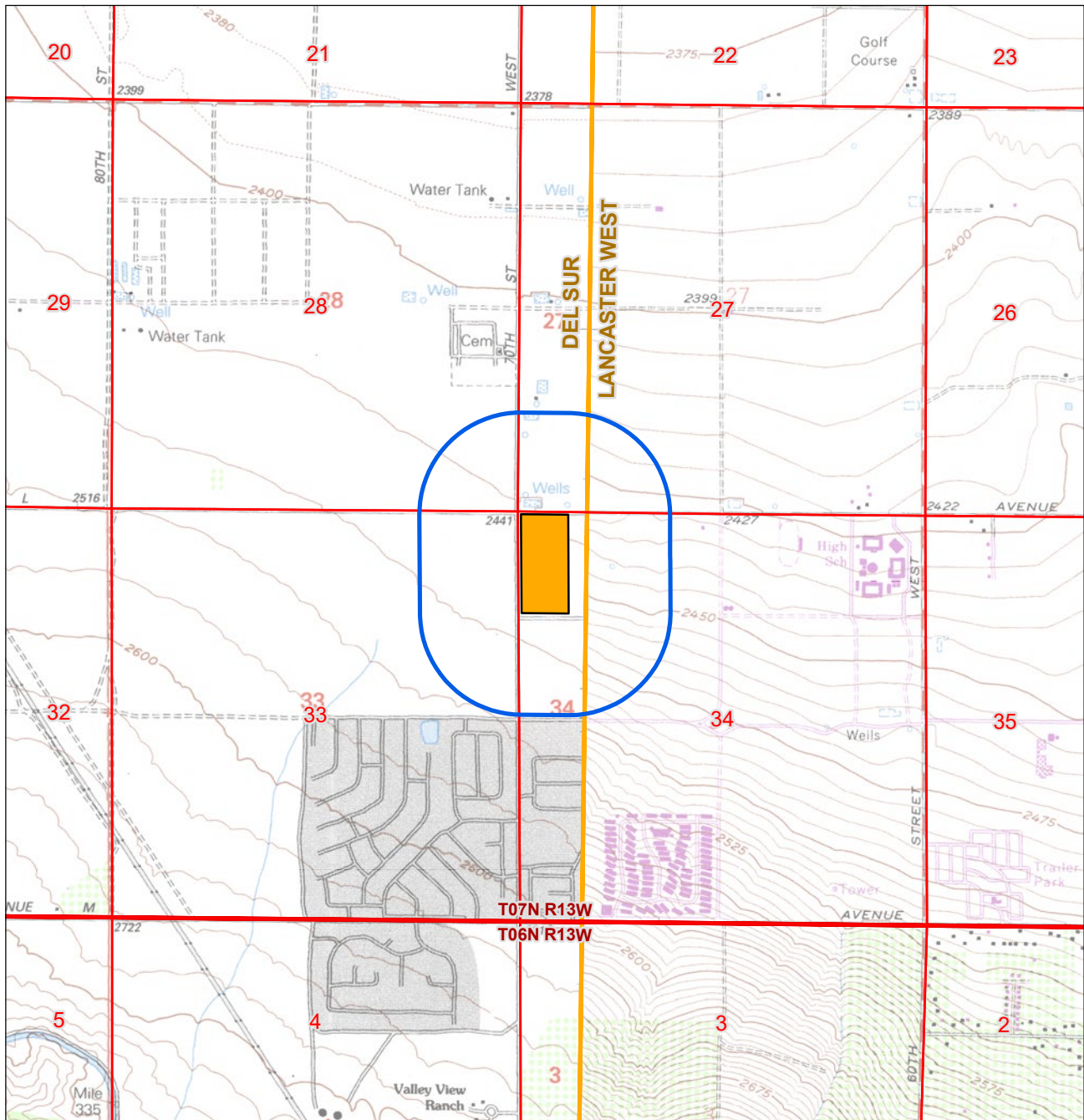
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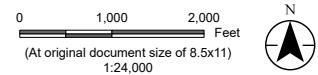
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1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11N
2. Data Sources: Esri, CGIAR, USGS, County of Los Angeles, Esri, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, County of Los Angeles, California State Parks, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, Esri, USGS
3. Background: ESRI World Topographic Map and Hillshade.

Disclaimer: This document has been prepared based on information provided by others as cited in the Notes section. Stantec has not verified the accuracy and/or completeness of this information and shall not be responsible for any errors or omissions which may be incorporated herein as a result. Stantec assumes no responsibility for data supplied in electronic format, and the recipient accepts full responsibility for verifying the accuracy and completeness of the data.

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- Project Area
- .25 Mile Record Search Buffer
- Section Boundary
- Township and Range Boundary
- Quadrangle Map Boundary



Project Location T7N, R13W, S34
USGS 7.5' Quad: Del Sur, CA.
Prepared by WCG on 2023-10-26
TR by AML on 2023-10-26
IR by KG on 2023-10-26

Client/Project
Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment of an 18-Acre
Parcel (APN 3204-004-024) in the City of Lancaster,
Los Angeles County, California

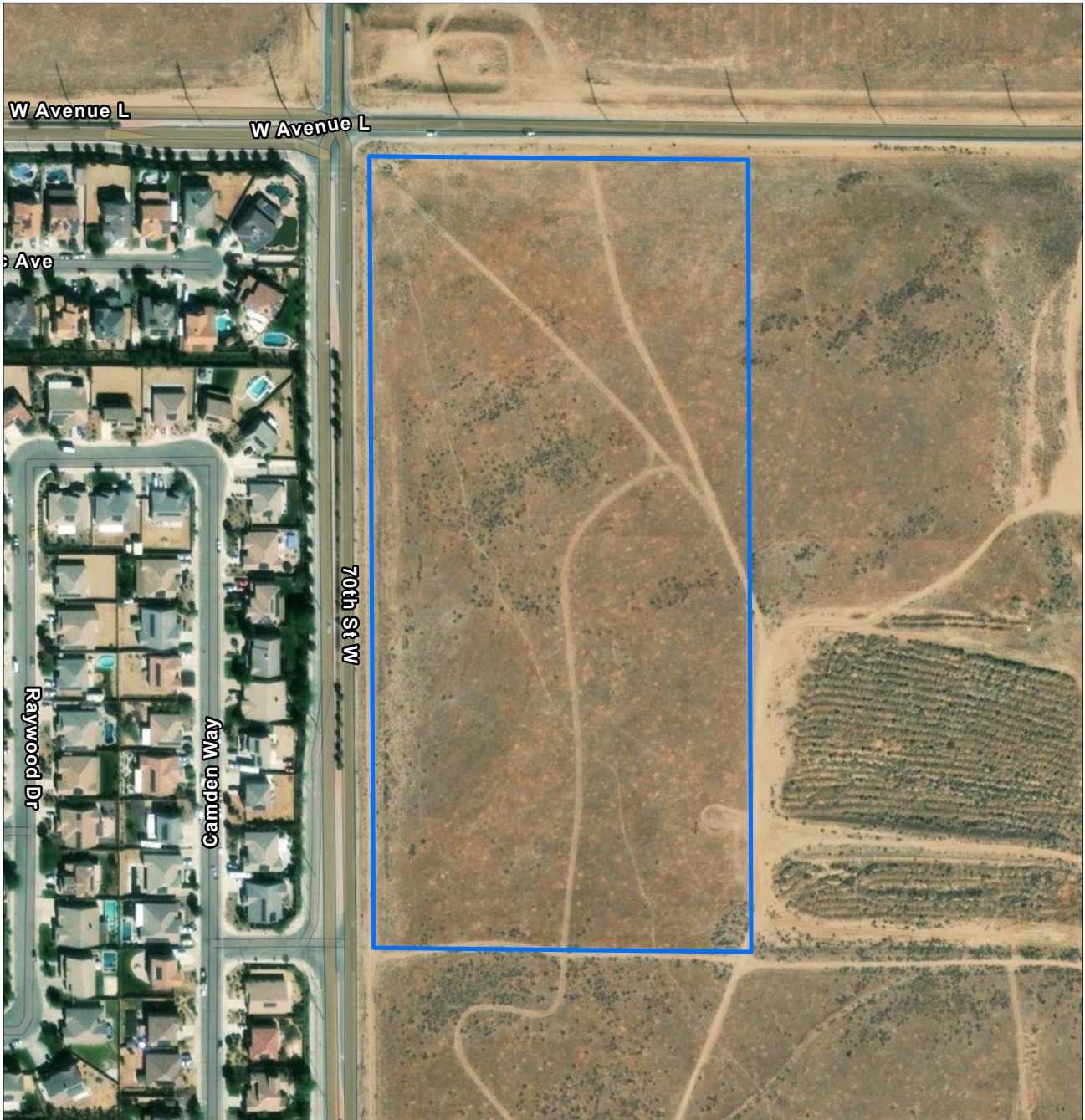
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2

Title
Project Area and 0.25-mile
Buffer

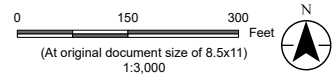
Notes
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2. Data Sources: County of Los Angeles, California
State Parks, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO,
METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management,
EPA, NPS, Esri, USGS
3. Background: Topographic map from <https://map.dfg.ca.gov/arcgis/services>

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 Project Area



Project Location T7N, R13W, S34 Prepared by WCG on 2023-10-26
USGS 7.5' Quad: Del Sur, CA. TR by AML on 2023-10-26
IR by KG on 2023-10-26

Client/Project Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment of an 18-Acre Parcel (APN 3204-004-024) in the City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California

Figure No. 3

Title Aerial Image of Project Area

- Notes**
1. Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11N
 2. Data Sources: Maxar, Microsoft, Esri Community Maps Contributors, County of Los Angeles, California State Parks, © OpenStreetMap, Microsoft, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/ NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, Esri, CGIAR, USGS, County of Los Angeles, California State Parks, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS, USDA
 3. Background: Aerial imagery from <https://map.dfg.ca.gov/arcgis/services>

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APPENDIX B

Photographs





Figure 4. Overview of project area facing southwest.



Figure 5. Overview of project area facing southeast.



Figure 6. Overview of project area facing northwest.



Figure 7. Overview of project area facing northeast.



Figure 8. Two refuse piles seen along the southeastern section of the project area.

APPENDIX C

NAHC SLF Search Results





NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

October 6, 2023

Ben Kerridge
Stantec Consulting Services Inc.

Via Email to: ben.kerridge@stantec.com

CHAIRPERSON
Reginald Pagaling
Chumash

VICE-CHAIRPERSON
Buffy McQuillen
Yokayo Pomo, Yuki,
Nomlaki

SECRETARY
Sara Dutschke
Miwok

PARLIAMENTARIAN
Wayne Nelson
Luiseño

COMMISSIONER
Isaac Bojorquez
Ohlone-Costanoan

COMMISSIONER
Stanley Rodriguez
Kumeyaay

COMMISSIONER
Laurena Bolden
Serrano

COMMISSIONER
Reid Milanovich
Cahuilla

COMMISSIONER
Vacant

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
Raymond C. Hitchcock
Miwok, Nisenan

NAHC HEADQUARTERS
1550 Harbor Boulevard
Suite 100
West Sacramento,
California 95691
(916) 373-3710
nahc@nahc.ca.gov
NAHC.ca.gov

Re: KB Homes at Ave L and 70th W Project, Los Angeles County

Dear M. Kerridge:

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 me. 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: Andrew.Green@nahc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Andrew Green
Cultural Resources Analyst

Attachment

**Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
Los Angeles County
10/6/2023**

Tribe Name	Fed (F) Non-Fed (N)	Contact Person	Contact Address	Phone #	Fax #	Email Address	Cultural Affiliation	Counties	Last Updated
Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians	N	Sarah Brunzell, CRM Manager	1019 Second Street San Fernando, CA, 91340	(818) 837-0794		CRM@tataviam-nsn.us	Tataviam	Kern, Los Angeles, Ventura	5/25/2023
Morongo Band of Mission Indians	F	Ann Brierty, THPO	12700 Pumara Road Banning, CA, 92220	(951) 755-5259	(951) 572-6004	abrierty@morongo-nsn.gov	Cahuilla Serrano	Imperial, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	
Morongo Band of Mission Indians	F	Robert Martin, Chairperson	12700 Pumara Road Banning, CA, 92220	(951) 755-5110	(951) 755-5177	abrierty@morongo-nsn.gov	Cahuilla Serrano	Imperial, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	
Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation	F	Jordan Joaquin, President, Quechan Tribal Council	P.O.Box 1899 Yuma, AZ, 85366	(760) 919-3600		executivesecretary@quechantribe.com	Quechan	Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	5/16/2023
Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation	F	Jill McCormick, Historic Preservation Officer	P.O. Box 1899 Yuma, AZ, 85366	(928) 261-0254		historicpreservation@quechantribe.com	Quechan	Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	5/16/2023
Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma Reservation	F	Manfred Scott, Acting Chairman - Kw'ts'an Cultural Committee	P.O. Box 1899 Yuma, AZ, 85366	(928) 210-8739		culturalcommittee@quechantribe.com	Quechan	Imperial, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	5/16/2023
San Fernando Band of Mission Indians	N	Donna Yocum, Chairperson	P.O. Box 221838 Newhall, CA, 91322	(503) 539-0933	(503) 574-3308	dyocum@sfbmi.org	Kitanemuk Vanyume Tataviam	Kern, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Ventura	5/8/2023
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians	F	Alexandra McCleary, Cultural Lands Manager	26569 Community Center Drive Highland, CA, 92346	(909) 633-0054		alexandra.mccleary@sanmanuel-nsn.gov	Serrano	Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino	3/27/2023
Serrano Nation of Mission Indians	N	Wayne Walker, Co-Chairperson	P. O. Box 343 Patton, CA, 92369	(253) 370-0167		serranonation1@gmail.com	Serrano	Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino	4/29/2019
Serrano Nation of Mission Indians	N	Mark Cochrane, Co-Chairperson	P. O. Box 343 Patton, CA, 92369	(909) 528-9032		serranonation1@gmail.com	Serrano	Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino	

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 KB Homes at Ave L and 70th W Project, Los Angeles County.

Record: PROJ-2023-004718
Report Type: List of Tribes
Counties: Los Angeles
NAHC Group: All