

3.9 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed project on cultural resources within the project area. This evaluation is based on a records search conducted at the South Coastal Information Center, an intensive pedestrian survey of the site, and a Native American contact program. The cultural resources survey report (Tierra Environmental Services 2006b) is included as Appendix F to this EIR.

3.9.1 Existing Conditions

Cultural History

The earliest documented prehistoric sites in southern California are identified as belonging to the Paleoindian period, which has locally been termed the San Dieguito complex/tradition. The Paleoindian period is thought to have occurred between 9,000 years ago, or earlier, and 8,000 years ago in this region. The San Dieguito complex is seen as a hunting economy generally focused on highly ranked resources such as large mammals, with limited use of seed grinding technology. Archaeological evidence associated with this period has been found around inland dry lakes, on old terrace deposits of the California desert, and also near the coast, where it was first documented at the Harris Site.

The Early Archaic period is differentiated from the earlier Paleoindian period by a shift to a more generalized economy and an increased focus on the use of grinding and seed processing technology. At sites dated between approximately 8,000 and 1,500 years before present, the increased use of groundstone artifacts and atlatl dart points, along with a mixed core-based tool assemblage, identify a range of adaptations to a more diversified set of plant and animal resources.

Around 2,000 years ago Yuman-speaking people from the eastern Colorado River region began migrating into southern California, representing what is called the Late Prehistoric Period in San Diego County, and recognized by smaller projectile points, the replacement of flexed inhumations with cremation, the introduction of ceramics, and an emphasis on inland plant food collection and processing, especially acorns (True 1966). Inland semi-sedentary villages were established along major watercourses, and montane areas were seasonally occupied to exploit acorns and pinon nuts, resulting in permanent milling features on bedrock outcrops. Mortars for acorn processing increased in frequency relative to seed grinding basins.

The project area is located within the ethnographic territory of the Kumeyaay who inhabited the southern region of San Diego County, western and central Imperial County, and northern Baja California (Almstedt 1982; Gifford 1931; Hedges 1975; Luomala 1976; Shipek 1982; Spier 1923) and are the direct descendants of the early Yuman hunter-gatherers. Acorns were the single most important food source used by the Kumeyaay. Their villages were usually located near water, which is necessary for leaching acorn meal. Seeds from grasses, manzanita, sage, sunflowers, lemonadeberry, chia and other plants were also used, along with various wild greens and fruits. Deer, small game, and birds were hunted, and fish and marine foods were eaten as well. Houses were covered with tule bundles that had excavated floors and central hearths.

Other structures included sweathouses, ceremonial enclosures, ramadas, and acorn granaries. Their traditional material culture included ceramic cooking and storage vessels, baskets, flaked lithic and ground stone tools, arrow shaft straighteners, and stone, bone, and shell ornaments.

Hunting implements included the bow and arrow, curved throwing sticks, nets, and snares. Shell and bone fishhooks, as well as nets, were used for fishing. Lithic materials including quartz and metavolcanics were commonly available throughout much of the Kumeyaay territory. Other lithic resources, such as obsidian, chert, chalcedony and steatite, occur in more localized areas and were acquired through direct procurement or exchange. Projectile points including the Cottonwood Series points and Desert Side-notched points were commonly produced.

Kumeyaay culture and society remained stable until the advent of missionization in 1769, which along with the introduction of European diseases, greatly reduced the native population of southern California. The Spanish Period (1769-1821) represents a period of Euroamerican exploration and settlement. Dual military and religious contingents established the San Diego Presidio and the San Diego Mission along the San Diego River. The cultural and institutional systems established by the Spanish continued beyond the year 1821, when California came under Mexican rule. During this time the Spanish missionaries forced local Native Americans to construct a dam and flume that would carry water from the San Diego River to the mission for irrigating crops. The dam and flume were constructed of native rock, cement, and tile. A portion of the flume still exists within the project area although it is in poor condition and little trace of cement or tile was found.

During the Mexican Period (1821-1848) the project area was part of a land grant deeded to Don Santiago Arguello in 1845 (Moyer 1969:109). Under Arguello's ownership, the project area was leased for a variety of agricultural pursuits and mining and was opened to settlement by Arguello's heirs in 1885. In 1917, the U.S. Government set up Camp Kearny in a large tract of land that includes the project area, and nearby Fortuna Mountain was used for artillery practice. The base was reactivated by the U.S. Marine Corps in 1934 as Camp Elliott, and from this period until 1960 the project area continued to be used for military training. In 1960, about one-third of the bases' holdings were deactivated by Department of the Navy and were transferred to the General Services Administration. Some portion of the property was then deeded to the City of San Diego, San Diego State University, and the San Diego Unified School District (Alter 2005). Mission Trails Regional Park was established in 1974.

Survey Results

The records search conducted at the South Coastal Information Center revealed that 16 studies have been conducted within a 1-mile radius of the project area and that portions of the project area have been previously investigated. In addition to previously completed surveys within the vicinity of the project area, the records search identified 36 cultural resources, including 34 prehistoric sites and 2 historic sites, within 1 mile of the project area, with 11 of the previously recorded sites within the project area. The previously identified cultural resources suggest a variety of site types are present in the area, ranging from prehistoric habitation sites to historic structures and other resources. These sites are dominated by lithic scatters and may include several Early Archaic sites.

No previously unrecorded sites were located during the intensive pedestrian survey of the project area. Of the 11 previously recorded sites located within the project area, 6 were relocated. The remaining 5 sites were either not relocated or have apparently been destroyed. A detailed discussion of all 11 archaeological sites is provided in Appendix F.

Historic research included an examination of a variety of resources including the National Register of Historic Places, the California Inventory of Historic Resources, and the California Historical Landmarks listing. In addition, the 1955 edition of the La Mesa 7.5-minute USGS Quadrangle was consulted. No historic structures were indicated on these sources and none were observed within the project area.

3.9.2 Thresholds of Significance

Thresholds used to evaluate potential impacts to cultural resources are based on applicable criteria in the State CEQA Guidelines (CCR §§15000-15387), Appendix G. A significant impact to cultural resources would occur if the proposed project would:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines.
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines.
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

3.9.3 Impact Analysis

Would the proposed project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?

The only historical resource identified in the project area is the Mission Flume that once carried water from the Old Mission Dam through Mission Gorge to the San Diego Mission. The remains of the flume are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Impacts to this historical resource would be completely avoided as the FRS II and pipeline tunnel would be located well north of the resource and the proposed stabilized crossing of the San Diego River would be located to the south. None of the project features would require work or equipment near the flume. No impacts to historical resources would occur.

Would the proposed project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?

Eleven cultural resources were originally recorded in the project survey area. Seven of these archaeological sites have previously been tested and are not considered significant because they do not meet the criteria for listing on the California Register. Impacts to these resources would be less than significant.

Four resources located within the project survey area, briefly described below, have not been evaluated for significance and must, therefore, be avoided or evaluated for significance.

CA-SDI-5518 was originally located in 1978 and described as a scatter of lithics with shell. The current survey identified one metavolcanic flake within the boundaries of the site. However, the ground surface was covered with non-native grasses and annuals making visibility somewhat limited.

CA-SDI-5656 is located at the base of a small knoll and was recorded in 1978 as a light concentration of an unknown number of flakes and shell covering approximately 40 meters by 50 meters. The current survey located five flakes widely dispersed over the area.

CA-SDI-5657 was originally recorded as a collection of six bedrock milling surfaces and a light scatter of flakes. The site is in good condition and appears to be relatively unchanged since it was originally recorded. Lithic materials include metavolcanic and quartzite flakes.

CA-SDI-12018 was recorded in 1990 as a lithic scatter of seven cores and one flake. During the current survey the area was covered by dense non-native vegetation making visibility poor. The site was not relocated.

Direct impacts to extant cultural resources within the project area could result from brushing and vegetation removal, grading, and other ground disturbing activities during construction. These impacts would be significant (**Impact CR 1**).

No additional impacts to cultural resources are anticipated during operation of the project. However, construction of the proposed project components including the FRS II, portals, and tunnel, could uncover significant cultural resources that have not been previously documented. The impact of discovering unexpected cultural resources would be significant (**Impact CR 2**).

Only Water Authority personnel and passive recreational users routinely access this portion of the park. The project would not increase the number of visitors or workers to this area on a long-term basis. Therefore, indirect impacts to cultural resources would be less than significant.

Would the proposed project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?

No evidence of human remains has been discovered in the project area through a literature search and an intensive site survey. Based on the cultural resources discovered in the project area, human remains are not anticipated during excavation. This potential impact would be less than significant.

3.9.4 Mitigation Measures

To mitigate significant impacts to cultural resources during project construction, the Water Authority shall implement the following mitigation measures:

CR 1-1 Prior to construction, a qualified archaeologist shall flag the construction zone, including a 10-foot buffer zone, so that impacts occur entirely outside the boundaries of CA-SDI-5518, CA-SDI-5656, CA-SDI-5657, and CA-SDI-12018.

- CR 2-1** In the event that unanticipated cultural resources are encountered during project construction, all earthmoving activity shall cease until the qualified archaeologist examines the findings, assesses their significance, and offers recommendations for procedures deemed appropriate to either further investigate or mitigate adverse impacts to those cultural resources that have been encountered (e.g., excavate the significant resource). These additional measures shall be implemented.
- CR 2-2** If human bone or bones of unknown origin are found during project construction, all work shall stop in the vicinity of the find and the County Coroner and the Water Authority shall be contacted immediately. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the Coroner shall notify the Native American Heritage Commission who shall notify the person it believes to be the most likely descendant. The most likely descendant shall work with the Water Authority to develop a program for reinternment of the human remains and any associated artifacts. No additional work shall take place within the immediate vicinity of the find until the identified appropriate actions have been completed. Any collection of artifacts resulting from the surveys and monitoring, as well as the associated records, shall be curated at an appropriate institution in San Diego County that meets the standards of the State of California Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Collections.

3.9.5 Residual Impacts after Mitigation

No residual impacts would remain after implementation of the proposed mitigation measures.

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