

D. CULTURAL RESOURCES

Existing Conditions

This Section is based upon the Phase I Cultural Resources Investigation prepared by McKenna et al, dated December 13, 2002 (**Appendix 4**). This report provides a brief discussion of the Project site and vicinity within archaeological, paleontological, and historical contexts, as well as an evaluation of the area according to local, State and Federal criteria for historic designation.

Cultural History Background

The study area is located in an ethnographic area associated with the Gabrielino (*Tongva*) of the Los Angeles, San Gabriel, Rio Hondo, and Santa Ana River drainage (roughly Los Angeles County of today). The Gabrielino are known as a society identified by Late Prehistoric/Proto-historic ethnographic records and archaeological data identifying Late Prehistoric occupation of Southern California. Changes identified between earlier periods and the Late Prehistoric are evident in the archaeological record and in variations in technologies, social/community patterns and, in some cases, population estimates. Populations preceding the Gabrielino, and likely directly related to the Gabrielino, can be archaeologically identified as separate or variant forms of the evolving culture.

Early studies of the Gabrielino emphasized anthropological/ethnographic studies while more recent investigations have relied on archaeological data. The majority of the data currently available to archaeologists can be referenced in publications of the Society for California Archaeology (1990 to 1996).

The term Gabrielino is a reference to the direct association between Native American population of the San Gabriel Valley and the Mission San Gabriel de Archangel. The Mission was originally located in the Whittier Narrows area but relocated shortly after its founding because of unstable ground along the Rio Hondo/San Gabriel River channels.

The Mission San Gabriel serviced the entire San Gabriel Valley; ranging from the coast to the San Gabriel/San Bernardino Mountains and from northern Los Angeles County to just north of San Juan Capistrano. The northern and eastern extent of their territory included the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains and areas generally associated with the Serrano of the mountain and desert regions.

The Gabrielino utilized numerous plants and animals for food, shelter, and medicines. They used seeds most often, followed by foliage, shoots, fruits, and berries. Mountain shrubs, ash, elder, and willow were used for shelters and tool materials (e.g. bows). Over twenty plants were used regularly for medicinal purposes. Fauna used as food sources included deer, rabbits, wood rats, squirrels, quail, and ducks. Animals specifically not used were dog, coyote, bear, tree squirrel, pigeon, dove, mud hen, eagle, buzzard, raven, lizards, frogs, and turtles. Along the coast, the Gabrielino regularly exploited the wetlands and ocean resources.

The Gabrielino used numerous styles of bows, bedrock mortars, portable mortars, pipes, chisels, metates, manos, and various forms of chipped stone tools. Prior to the establishment of the Mission system, populations tended to live in larger villages with a series of "daughter" or "satellite" sites (limited activity areas) with lesser populations. Seasonal migration was practiced for the exploitation of resources and protection from seasonal weather conditions. Habitation structures were constructed of branches, grasses, and mud and interior hearths were used for heat. Cooking was generally conducted outdoors with hearths generally used for food preparation.

Archaeological data and correlations with ethnographic data have resulted in the determination of a generalized chronology for prehistoric Southern California. The project area is located within the inland areas of the Gabrielino territory while chronological data has emphasized coastal occupations. Nonetheless, current archaeological data has indicated that the coastal chronological data can be applied to this region. The coastal chronology generally accepted for Southern California has been as follows:

Early Man Horizon: Pre-dating 6,000 B.C.; is characterized by the presence of large projectile points and scrapers, suggesting a reliance on hunting rather than gathering;

Milling Stone Horizon: 6,000 to 1,000 B.C.; characterized by the presence of hand stones, milling stones, choppers, and scraper planes; tools for seed gathering and shell fish processing with limited hunting activities; evidence of a major shift in the exploitation of natural resources;

Intermediate Horizon: 1,000 B.C. to A.D. 750; reflects the transition period between the Milling Stone and the Late Prehistoric Horizons; little is known of this time period, but evidence suggests interactions with outside groups and a shift in material culture reflecting this contact;

Late Prehistoric Horizon: A.D. 750 to European Contact; characterized by the presence of small projectile points of the bow and arrow; steatite containers and trade items, asphaltum; cremations; grave goods; mortars and pestles; and bedrock mortars.

More recent investigations of sites in the Newport Bay/Irvine area of Orange County have yielded significant data resulting in refinements of the coastal chronological sequences. Summarizing the results found that the majority of sites were occupied during the Milling Stone period or the Late Prehistoric period, without much overlap. Only four sites yielded results suggesting occupation during more than one cultural period. In a few instances, dates suggested occupation during the Intermediate period.

Mixtures of dates appeared in limited areas and could be directly associated with areas of agricultural activities. The frequency distribution of radiocarbon dates were grouped in blocks of 50-year intervals and yielded a range of dates from 200 B.P. (before present) to 9280 B.P. These conclusions do not necessarily change the basic chronology, but distinguish more individualistic periods of occupation that are not necessarily evident in the analysis of an artifact assemblage.

Through the application of radiocarbon dating and comparative site analyses, studies have resulted in identifying relatively discrete subdivisions within the Milling Stone and Late Prehistoric sites. Variations appear within these two horizons/periods, which can be explained by temporally discrete occupations. Future studies of the sites yielding statistically valid artifact assemblages and radiocarbon samples can be conducted to further the understanding of Native American activities throughout Southern California.

The earliest known records of European contact with Southern California Native Americans date to the mid-1500's, are representing the early explorations of the Spanish. These explorations resulted in the identification of populations from the ships but did not include direct contact. Personal contact was not made until the 1770's, when Father Garces traversed the Mojave Desert and entered coastal Southern California through the Cajon Pass.

In the 1770's, the Spanish padres, under the direction of Junipero Serra, began the process of establishing a series of missions throughout Alta California, as California was then known. The project area is within the boundaries of lands historically held by the Mission San Gabriel de Archangel. The Mission continued to hold these large tracts until the Mexican government declared its independence from Spain and issued orders for the secularization of the missions (ca. 1824). By 1833-34, the majority of mission lands were taken from the Catholic Church and granted to individuals who had served as either Spanish or Mexican soldiers, settlers, financiers, etc. The Mexican government hoped to initiate a pattern of settlement in Alta California by relocating populations from Mexican settlements to California settlements.

In this case, the study area is located within the historic Mission San Gabriel de Archangel holdings and within the historic Rancho Ballona. The Rancho Ballona was originally granted to Don Ygnacio Machado in 1839. The Machado family held title to almost 14,000 acres of Los Angeles County land in ca. 1860. Stocker Street (bounding the southern boundary of the West Los Angeles College campus) was named for Clara Baldwin Stocker, daughter of

E.J. Baldwin (d. 1929). The Baldwin Hills area and the oil exploration in that area can be directly associated with Baldwin/Stocker control of the area in the late 1800s and early 1900's.

The majority of the area was uninhabited except along Ballona Creek during the first half of the 19th century. Most of the area was part of the La Ballona Rancho officially granted by Alvarado to the Machado family about 1839. The Rancho remained under the control of the family of Agustin Machado until the 1860's, when the family began to parcel off sections although large portions still remained in the hands of the heirs of Agustin Machado. The area continued to be used primarily for cattle grazing and production of crops requiring low irrigation. By the time Harry Culver began to develop Culver City in 1913, the region was used predominantly for bean farming.

Development of the West Los Angeles College campus began in the 1960's and the campus was officially opened in 1969. The first permanent facilities on the campus were developed beginning in the fall of 1973 and were completed by 1978-1979. The first structures included the Learning Resource Center, an Academic Center, and the Physical Education buildings as well as non-permanent buildings (a boiler plant, an audio visual center, a library, a language laboratory, technical and biological buildings, classrooms and offices).

Cultural Resources in the Project Area

Archaeological Resources

In preparing the study for the proposed project, McKenna et al. completed the following: Archaeological records check; Native American consultation; Historic background research; paleontological overview; field investigations, and analysis.

Information pertaining to previous research in the area of the College was completed through the California State University, Fullerton, South Central Coastal Information Center (CSUF-SCCIC). The CSUF-SCCIC is the local repository for previously completed cultural resource investigations and provides data on previously recorded archaeological sites and supplemental data. Other sources consulted were the Native American Heritage Commission in Sacramento; Bureau of Land Management; University of California Historic Map Library, Riverside; and Dr. S. McLeod of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. (A full listing of sources consulted is available in Appendix 4 to this DEIR.)

McKenna et al was able to determine that no resources listed on the National register of Historic Places, the list of California Historic Landmarks, the California Points of Historic Interest, or the Los Angeles County Historical Monuments are located within or near the current project area.

As of December 2002, a minimum of 13 cultural resources investigations have been completed within or near the College campus. Of these, two involved portions of the campus and one was adjacent to the property in the County Regional Park area. A minimum of eight archaeological sites have been recorded. However, none of these sites are within the project area and most are located on either side of Ballona Creek (not within or adjacent to the project area). Of the eight sites, seven have been recorded as destroyed by gravel operations, oil exploration activities, park improvements, or vandalism. Only one site is considered to exist in a buried context. In this case, the site was buried by landfill operations on the bank of Ballona Creek. Significant remains may be present, but inaccessible. The acreage associated with the West Los Angeles College was developed prior to the enactment of the California Environmental Quality Act and, therefore, whether or not resources were ever present within the campus is unknown.

A reconnaissance of the campus was conducted on December 6, 2002, and resulted in the identification of areas as being landscaped, paved for parking, and/or covered by structures. Essentially, all areas of the campus have been impacted to one degree or another and the only open spaces are those that have been artificially terraced or contour/landscaped. No areas of natural vegetation or soils were available for visual inspection. Because of the previous disturbance, resulting from the cut and fill activities in creating the building pads, the campus is not

considered to be highly sensitive for archaeological resources. However, the potential access road locations reflect the more natural setting for the area and are therefore more sensitive for archaeological resources.

Paleontological Resources

As indicated in a letter from Dr. Samuel McLeod (see Appendix 4), a search of the Vertebrate Paleontology records of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County for the West Los Angeles College site identified no localities of vertebrate fossils that lie directly within the campus boundaries. However, localities of vertebrate fossils have been found nearby from the same sedimentary units that occur in the project area.

Dr. McLeod goes on to state:

“In the elevated section of southeastern portion of the proposed project area, as part of the Baldwin Hills, there are deposits of the marine Pleistocene San Pedro Sand. Our closest locality in these or similar deposits is LACM 4423, situated almost directly east of the proposed project area on the edge of the Baldwin hills between Hillcrest Drive and Marlton Avenue. Fossils of bonito shark, *Isurus*, speckled sanddab, *Citharichthys stigmaeus*, and longfin sanddab, *Citharichthys xanthostigma*, were recovered from LACM 4423.”

“Our closest fossil vertebrate localities are northeast of the proposed project area from just west of La Brea Boulevard to west of La Cienega Boulevard and from Rodeo Road north to Washington Boulevard. In sediments around Ballona Creak we have locality LACM 4250, just south of Washington Boulevard and west of La Cienega Boulevard, where remains of fossil mammoth, *Mammuths*, were collected at unknown depth. Along the Southern Pacific Railway and Rodeo Road between Crenshaw Boulevard and Ballona Creek we have a number of fossil vertebrate localities collected in the 1920’s....”

The various localities included recoveries of: fossil human, *Homo sapiens*; fossil camel, *Camelops*; fossil mastodon, *Mammut*; fossil horse, *Equus*; fossil sabertooth cat, *Smilodon*.

Thresholds of Significance

The proposed project would result in a significant impact on cultural resources if it would:

- Cause a substantial change in the significance of a historical or archaeological resource as defined in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines;
- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource; without proper testing, evaluation, retrieval and curation, if warranted; or
- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Project Impacts

Archeological Resources

The Master Plan for West Los Angeles College calls for development within the 72-acre parcel, and a second access road for which the final alignment has not been determined. The analysis and records check for cultural resources included herein has been prepared for the 72-acre campus, as well as the areas that could be affected by any of the three potential second access road alignments.

No historic or prehistoric cultural resources were identified within the project area and, therefore, no adverse impacts are likely to occur unless buried deposits are identified at some later date. No specific archaeological monitoring is necessary at this time for any grading activities on the terraced pads of the campus, but an archaeological monitor should be on-call should artifacts or remains uncovered as a result of any on-campus

development. The project shall incorporate this condition as mitigation measure CR-1 to reduce any impacts to less than significant levels.

Given the more natural setting of the areas that could be affected by any of the three potential second access road alignments there is a greater likelihood of grading for road cut and fill activities and thereby of encountering buried deposits. This could represent a potentially significant impact unless mitigated. Incorporation of mitigation measure CR-2 would reduce this potential impact to less than significant levels.

Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources are also likely to occur in the area, as the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County has records of fossil finds in the general area and concluded that fossil bearing soils are present in relatively shallow contexts along Ballona Creek and the nearby oil fields. Therefore, the paleontological sensitivity of the proposed project area would be considered to be of high potential, particularly at depth. Grading and excavation activities during construction on campus and along any second access route would have the potential to encounter a paleontological resource. The destruction of which would result in a significant project impact. Incorporation of mitigation measure CR-3 would reduce this potential impact to less than significant levels.

The operation of the new campus facilities and second access road would not result in a significant impact to any historic / prehistoric archaeological or paleontological resource.

Cumulative Impacts

The Environmental Setting Section (Section IV) provides a list of related projects that are planned or are under construction in the project area. Some of the related projects fall near localities in which archaeological and/or paleontological resources have been recorded. Therefore, there is a potential that any project that resulted in subsurface disturbance would have the potential to significantly impact an important resource. Each project will be subject to CEQA review and will incorporate mitigation measures as appropriate if necessary. The proposed project, with the incorporation of mitigation measures CR-1, CR-2, and CR-3 would not contribute to any potentially significant archaeological and/or paleontological impact.

The proposed project does not result in impacts to any historic structure; therefore, would not contribute to any cumulative effects.

Mitigation Measures

- CR-1** An archaeological monitor shall be on call during activities of grading or excavation on the campus site. Should resources be uncovered as a result on campus grading and/or excavation the on-call archaeologist must be notified and work in the find area shall cease until the monitor arrives. The archaeological monitor shall have the authority to halt any activities adversely impacting potentially significant archaeological resources while the find is evaluated in accordance with CEQA criteria for significance.

- CR-2** Archaeological monitoring shall occur while conducting grading or excavation for a second access road. The archaeological monitor shall have the authority to halt any activities adversely impacting potentially significant archaeological resources while the find is evaluated in accordance with CEQA criteria for significance.

- CR-3** A paleontological monitor shall be on call during activities of grading or excavation on the campus site. Should resources be uncovered as a result of on campus grading and/or excavation, the on-call paleontologist must be notified and work in the find area shall cease until the monitor arrives. The paleontological monitor shall have the authority to halt any activities adversely impacting potentially significant paleontological resources and said resources must be recovered, analyzed, and curated with the appropriate repository – in this case, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.
- CR-4** Paleontological monitoring shall occur while conducting grading or excavation for a second access road. The paleontological monitor shall have the authority to halt any activities adversely impacting potentially significant paleontological resources and said resources must be recovered, analyzed, and curated with the appropriate repository – in this case, the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

Significant Project Impacts After Mitigation

With the inclusion of mitigation measures, the proposed project would not result in a significant unavoidable impact on cultural resources.