APPENDIX C
Cultural Resources Assessment

LSA

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December 7, 2009

Robert P. Lenard, Director
City of Laguna Niguel
Community Development Department
27781 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, California 92677

Subject: Validity of the July 2007 Cultural Resources Assessment for Site Development Permit SP 07-01P (1 O'Hill Ridge – Curtone Residence) Located in the City of Laguna Niguel, Orange County, California

Dear Mr. Lenard:

In July 2007, LSA Associates, Inc. (LSA) completed a cultural resources assessment for Site Development Permit SP 07-01P (1 O'Hill Ridge – Curtone Residence) located in the City of Laguna Niguel, Orange County, California (Figure 1 – attached). The purpose of the assessment was to determine the presence of cultural resources within the proposed project area.

The assessment included a records search, field survey, and report. The records search, conducted at the South Central Coastal Information Center, indicated that the entire project area had been previously surveyed twice and that no cultural resources are documented within the project area. The field survey did not identify any cultural resources, and ground visibility at the time of the survey was excellent.

Soil on site consists of Bosanko series clays developed by weathering of the underlying bedrock that were in place prior to human occupation of the area. As such, any cultural material should be on or near the ground surface, and any subsurface material is due to bioturbation or other disturbance. As such, the likelihood of previously unidentified intact subsurface cultural deposits to be present within the project area is very low.

Therefore, LSA concluded that no further cultural resource management of the project area is necessary. LSA cautioned, however, that in the unlikely event that previously undocumented archaeological materials are encountered during construction, work in the vicinity of the find should be halted and an Orange County certified archaeologist consulted to determine the appropriate treatment of the discovery. LSA also advised that in the event human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC. The MLD will have the opportunity to offer recommendations for the disposition of the remains.

Based on the results of the records and survey and the presence of Bosanko series clays on the entire project site, the LSA findings and recommendations of 2007 remain valid. No additional archaeological work is necessary at this time.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at (949) 553-0666 or at debbie.mclean@lsa-assoc.com. I look forward to assisting you if the need arises.

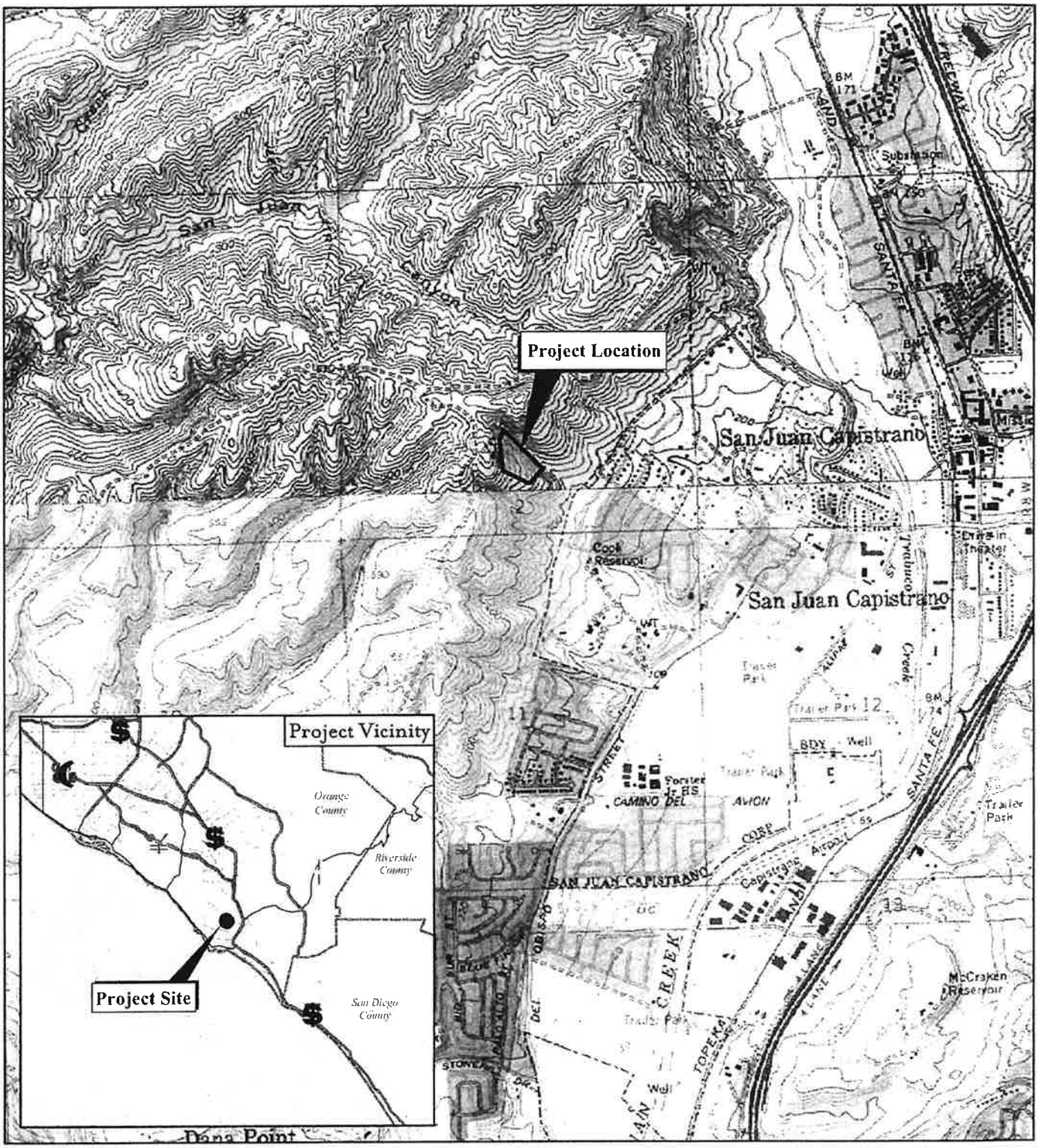
Sincerely,

LSA ASSOCIATES, INC.

Deborah McLean

Deborah McLean, RPA
Principal/Archaeologist

Attachment: Figure 1



LSA

FIGURE 1

LEGEND

Project Location

N

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

1 O'Hill Ridge – Curtone Residence

Project Location Map

SOURCE: USGS 7.5' QUAD - DANA POINT ('75), SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO ('81); CALIF.

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CULTURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT SP 07-01P

(1 O'HILL RIDGE-CURTONE RESIDENCE)

CITY OF LAGUNA NIGUEL

ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

LSA

July 2007

CULTURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

SITE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT SP 07-01P

(1 O'HILL RIDGE-CURTONE RESIDENCE)

CITY OF LAGUNA NIGUEL

ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Submitted to:

Mr. Robert P. Lenard, Director
City of Laguna Niguel
Community Development Department
27781 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, California 92677

Prepared by:
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LSA Project No. CLN0702

National Archaeological Data Base Information:

Type of Study: Records Search, Survey
Sites Recorded: None
USGS Quadrangle: *San Juan Capistrano, California* 7.5'
Acreage: ~6 acres
Key Words: Negative Survey

LSA

July 2007

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Figure 1: Project Location 3

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A: PROJECT PHOTOGRAPHS

ABSTRACT

LSA Associates, Inc. (LSA) conducted a cultural resources assessment for the Site Development Permit SP 07-01P (1 O'Hill Ridge-Curtone Residence) project located in the City of Laguna Niguel, Orange County, California. The assessment included a records search, field survey, and report. A records search that includes the current project area was completed for an adjacent parcel in August 2006. The results of that research were used for the current project. The field survey was completed in June 2007 and the report was completed in July 2007. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the presence of cultural resources within the proposed project area.

The records search conducted at the South Central Coastal Information (SCCIC) indicated that the entire project area had been previously surveyed twice and that no cultural resources are documented within the project area. The field survey did not locate any cultural resources, and ground visibility at the time of the survey was excellent.

Soil on site consists of Bosanko series clays that developed by the weathering of the underlying bedrock and were in place prior to human occupation of the area. As such, any cultural material should be on or near the ground surface and any subsurface material is due to bioturbation or other disturbance. As such, the likelihood of previously unidentified intact subsurface cultural deposits to be present within the project area is very low. Therefore, LSA recommends that no further cultural resource management of the project area is necessary.

However, in the unlikely event that previously undocumented archaeological materials are encountered during construction, work in the vicinity of the find should be halted and an Orange County certified archaeologist consulted to determine the appropriate treatment of the discovery.

In the event human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner will notify the NAHC, which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC. The MLD will have the opportunity to offer recommendations for the disposition of the remains.

INTRODUCTION

The City of Laguna Niguel contracted LSA to conduct a cultural resources assessment for the 1 O'Hill Ridge-Curtone Residence project area to determine whether cultural resources are present. This assessment addresses the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act ([CEQA] as amended January 1, 2007): Public Resources Code, Division 13 (Environmental Quality), Chapters 2.6 §21083.2 (Archaeological resources) and 2.6 §21084.1 (Historical resources); and the Guidelines for CEQA (as amended July 11, 2006), California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 5 §15064.5 (Determining the Significance of Impacts on Historical and Unique Archaeological Resources).

The project proposes the construction of a 16,250-square-foot custom single-family residence and ancillary structures and improvements, such as a swimming pool, fences and walls, and a tennis court. Ground-disturbing activities associated with the proposed project include grading the project area for the proposed improvements, construction of a driveway, excavation of the pool, and installation of utility infrastructure such as gas, water, sewer, and telecommunication lines.

The project area is located within an approximately 6-acre parcel (Parcel 1 of Parcel Map 85-128, SP 07-01P) located southeast of the terminus of O'Hill Ridge Road in the Bear Brand Ranch gated community in the City of Laguna Niguel, Orange County, California. The parcel address is identified as 1 O'Hill Ridge. The project area is depicted on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *San Juan Capistrano, California* 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map in Township 8 South, Range 8 West, in the south half of Section 2, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian (Figure 1).

Primary project personnel include Phil Fulton, who conducted the field survey and this report; and Deborah McLean, who provided project oversight.

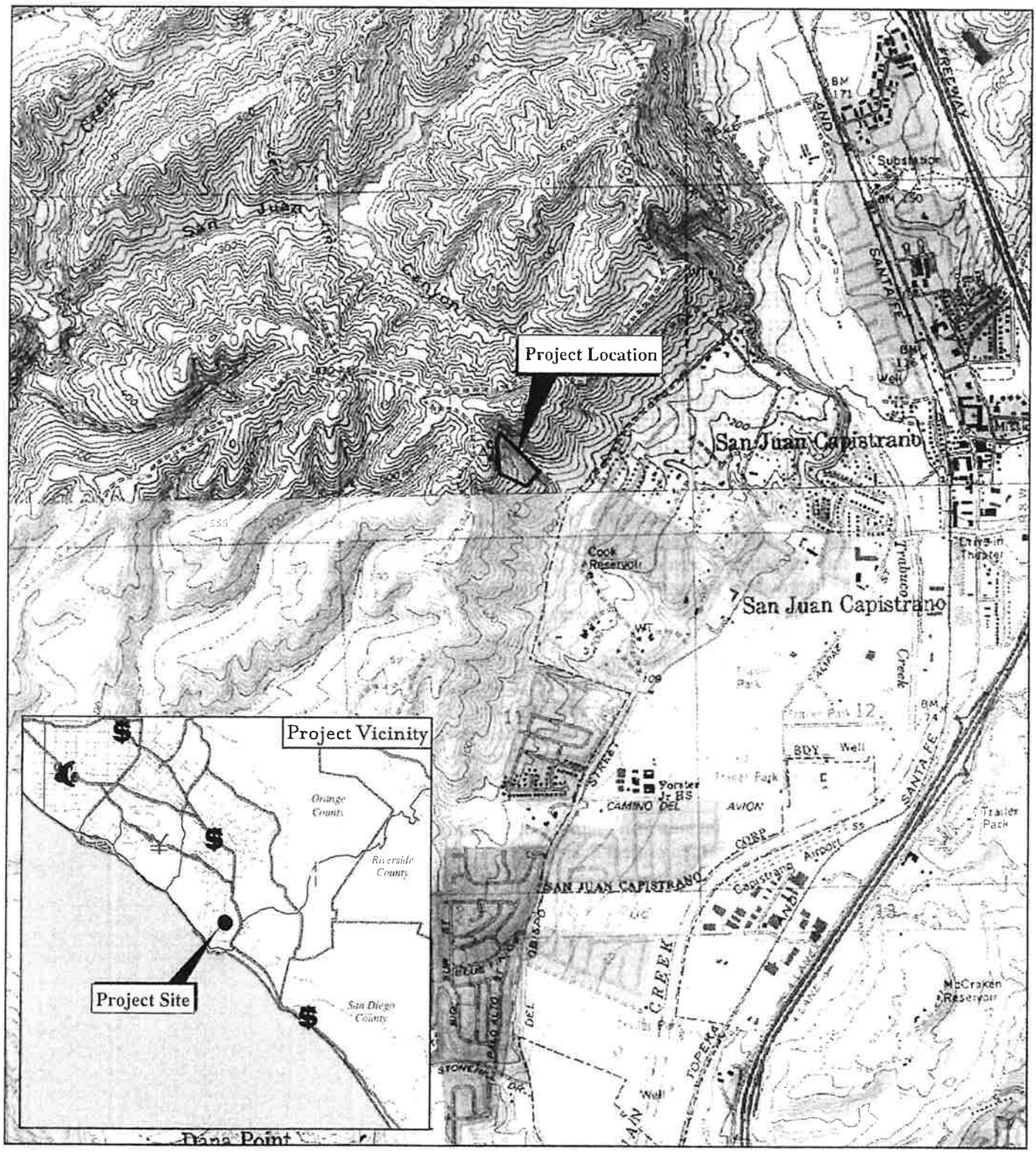

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FIGURE 1

LEGEND

Project Location

0 1,000 2,000 Feet

1 O'Hill Ridge - Curtone Residence

Project Location Map

SOURCE: USGS 7.5' QUAD - DANA POINT ('75), SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO ('81); CALIF.

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SETTING

NATURAL

Geology and Geomorphology

The project area is located on the western flank of the Peninsular Ranges geomorphic province. This region is characterized by a series of northwesterly trending mountain ranges separated by northwesterly trending valleys and subparallel faults branching from the San Andreas Fault. These ranges are essentially a series of fault-bounded blocks that dip gently to the west and have a steep eastern escarpment. The Peninsular Ranges extend from the tip of Baja California to the Transverse Range north of the Los Angeles Basin. The width of the Province varies from 30 to 225 miles, with a maximum landbound width of 65 miles (Sharp 1976). The Los Angeles Basin and the island group (Santa Catalina, Santa Barbara, and the distinctly terraced San Clemente and San Nicolas Islands), together with the surrounding continental shelf (cut by deep submarine fault troughs), are included in this province (California Geologic Survey 2002). The rocks of the Peninsular Ranges are typically composed of Jurassic-age medasedimentary and metavolcanic as well as Cretaceous-age igneous rocks of the Southern California batholith. These older rock units are, in turn, capped by limited exposures of Cretaceous to recent marine and terrestrial sedimentary deposits composed of every sedimentary rock type from clay, silt, sand, gravel, and cobbles. The primary sediment source for the geologic formations in this province is the uplifted Southern California batholith.

Specifically, the project is located in an area of gently rolling to steeply sloped hills within the boundaries of the gated Bear Brand Ranch single-family residential development. The project area ranges in elevation from 340 to 680 feet above mean sea level (amsl).

Soils within the site area consist of Bosanko series clays. The Bosanko soils are gently sloping to moderately steep and occur in the uplands at elevations of about 300 to 2,500 feet amsl. These soils formed in residuum weathered from igneous rocks of granitic nature (National Resources Conservation Service 2005).

Biology

The project area climate is Mediterranean semiarid steppe moderated by its proximity to the coast (Jaeger and Smith 1966). The Mediterranean climate is characterized by mild winters, warm springs and autumns, and hot, dry summers. Rains primarily occur in the winter and early spring. Morning fog occurs along the coastal plain and occasionally reaches the inland valleys and mountains.

Vegetation in the project area is composed of ruderal nonnative grasses, nonnative ornamental vegetation, and coastal sage scrub. The dominant native plant community on site consists of Venturan-Diegan coastal sage scrub (LSA Associates, Inc. 2007).

Ruderal vegetation is indicative of disturbed areas and is dominated by weedy introduced species. Vegetation on the majority of the site falls under this classification.

Current Setting

The project area currently consists of a vacant residential hillside parcel traversed by a graded dirt road used to access the property. Custom single-family residences are adjacent to the south and west, and vacant land planned for the development of several custom single-family residences is to the north and east.

CULTURAL

Prehistory

The description of an overall regional chronology demarking the major stages of cultural evolution in the Southern California area has been attempted many times. Two principal chronologies, Wallace (1955; 1978) and Warren (1968), have been revised slightly (Koerper 1981; Koerper and Drover 1983). Southern California cultural developments occur gradually, and appear to have long-term stability; specifically applying a chronology is often difficult.

These researchers have divided regional prehistory into a four-stage chronology describing changing artifact assemblages and evolving ecological adaptations. The principal chronology proposed by Wallace (1955) divides the area prehistory by major cultural changes within general prehistoric time periods. Wallace defined four cultural horizons, or periods, for Southern California: These include the Early Period, the Millingstone Period, the Intermediate Period, and the Late Prehistoric Period these periods are discussed in detail below.

The Early Period covers a period between approximately 10000 and approximately 5500 BC. Artifacts and cultural activities from this time period represent a predominantly hunting culture (Wallace 1955). Although Early Period sites in Southern California are rare, Moratto (1984:76) lists several traits characteristic of sites occupied during this period. This list includes location on shorelines of ancient lakes and marshes. In coastal areas, such sites are located along stream channels or near estuaries. Although bow and arrow do not exist, atlatl and dart are known. An array of specialized cobble, core, flake and blade implements are also known. In certain areas, the presence of extremely large, often fluted bifaces marks the Early Period (Moratto 1984:81).

Early Period artifacts have seldom been identified in Orange County. Relatively early radiocarbon dates show that two sites, ORA-195 and ORA-64 (the Irvine Site), contain Early Period components, although ORA-64 was also occupied later in time (Erlandson 1994:219). Material from ORA-64 includes shellfish from Newport Bay, leading Drover et al. (1983) to conclude that the Early Period component at ORA-64 was similar to some early site components in the San Diego region.

Erlandson (1994:218–221) describes several radiocarbon dated Early Period sites, including ORA-246, ORA-339 and ORA-386, that contain quantities of the rocky open coast inhabiting mussel *Mytilus californianus*. It is possible that Early Period occupation will be identified at those sites exhibiting Millingstone and Intermediate Period occupation when excavation and analysis procedures have become more advanced.

The Early Period is followed in time by the Millingstone Period. Sites from the Millingstone Period (post-5500 BC) typically contain groundstone artifacts such as manos, metates, and cogged stones as

well as soapstone objects. Wallace suggests that Millingstone Period cultures were generally hunter-gatherers who spent much time collecting and processing plants. When bifaces are found on Millingstone Period sites, they are commonly large and associated with the use of the atlatl.

Several Millingstone Period sites have been identified in Orange County. The best known is ORA-64, which dates to ca. 6000 BC (Erlandson 1994:219–221). Drover et al. (1983) suggest that early Millingstone Period sites represent refuse from mobile hunters and gatherers who utilized coastal resources during the winter and inland resources throughout the remainder of the year. By the late portion of the Millingstone Period, faunal remains suggest relatively permanent settlements in the Newport Bay area. Subsistence strategies included intensive hunting of small and large land mammals, sea mammals and birds, as well as near shore fishing and shellfish collecting. Elsewhere, small mammals were hunted and seeds were collected, as documented by the many millingstones found at Millingstone Period sites throughout the Orange County area.

By 3000 BC, coastal populations began greater reliance on marine resources. The remains of near-shore and deep sea fish appear more often as refuse in middens. Much further inland, populations centered around pluvial lakes created by runoff from melting glaciers. In coastal areas, there was an increased use of the mortar and pestle, which marked a technological change in the manner seeds were processed. Instead of using just mano and metate, smaller seeds could be better contained in the basket like mortar or hopper mortar (basket asphalted to a mortar base), and it is possible that the mortar and pestle indicate a diversification in seed collecting strategy. The use of the mortar and pestle marks Wallace's Intermediate Period. Additional artifacts found predominantly within the Intermediate Period include discoidals and crescentics (crescentically shaped flaked stone artifacts).

Orange County researchers have had difficulty identifying the Intermediate Period, since tool categories, even the mortar and pestle, occur in both earlier and later periods. As a result, few Orange County sites have been placed in this Period. The few known sites often are dated by radiocarbon or obsidian hydration methods, which have isolated the Intermediate Period materials. Intermediate Period sites identified near Newport Bay include ORA-121 (Crownover et al. 1990), ORA-196/H (Strudwick et al. 1996), and ORA-287 (Clevenger 1986). Two temporary camps, ORA-221/222 and ORA-226, also appear to contain Intermediate Period components (Rosenthal and Padon 1986; Mason et al. 1987).

The Late Prehistoric Period begins approximately AD 500 (Bean and Smith 1978). During this period, artifact changes and new cultural practices occur. Smaller projectile points, representing bow and arrow hunting, appear on Late Period sites. This period is also marked by steatite effigies and by cremation as an interment practice. These artifacts and practices have been linked to a proposed Shoshonean (Takic) immigration from the Great Basin that ended at the coast. By AD 1000, smoking pipes and ceramic pottery occur, although ceramic smoking pipes may occur somewhat earlier, within the later portion of the Intermediate Period. Dating of sites to the Late Period also depends on the occurrence of other items such as Salton Sea (Obsidian Buttes) obsidian. Sites within the Orange County region occasionally contain the vitreous lithic (glassy stone) called Grimes Canyon fused shale, which originates from Ventura County (Demcak 1981; Hall 1988).

Ethnography

The project area is within territory ethnographically occupied by the Juaneño, with the Gabrielino located to the north and the Luiseño to the south. The Juaneño are considered to be a linguistically

related subgroup of the Luiseño that occupied the area near San Juan Capistrano. What is known about the Juaneño was recorded principally during the initial European land expeditions through the Southern California area. The reason for this is that the swift decline in native populations made it difficult even for early European explorers and inhabitants to observe endemic Southern California peoples in a natural state. This decline in native population was brought about by the inability of Native Americans to resist European diseases introduced through initial contact and the establishment of the mission system. This section describes previously published accounts of Juaneño territory.

Both Sparkman (1908:188–189) and Bean and Shipek (1978:550–551) state that the Luiseño occupied the area from a point just north of San Juan Capistrano southward to the mouth of Agua Hedionda in what is now Carlsbad. Sparkman (1908:189) states that due to language differences, the group near San Juan Capistrano was not considered Luiseño by some. The subsuming of Juaneño by Luiseño is illustrated by the inclusion of a discussion of Juaneño within a chapter on Luiseño (Bean and Shipek 1978). Rather than give an exact description of Luiseño territory, Kroeber (1976:648–649) states that the northern and northwestern neighbors of the Luiseño are the Gabrielino and Juaneño.

Kroeber (1976:636) states that the Juaneño were wedged in between the Gabrielino and Luiseño, and Juaneño territory ran from Aliso Creek on the north to a point between San Onofre and Las Pulgas on the coast. Rather than having a distinct language, Juaneño speech was said to be a dialect of Luiseño (Kroeber 1976:636). White (1963:104) states that the dialectical differences between the Juaneño and Luiseño "did not prevent mutual misunderstanding . . ." White (1963:104) continues that although local variations in culture between Juaneño and Luiseño may have existed, it was at the village level rather than the tribe level, suggesting only minor differences between the two groups. Sparkman (1908) and White (1963) argue that the Juaneño are really a subgroup of the greater Luiseño tribe. O'Neil (1988:107, 111) also makes reference to the Juaneño being a coastal branch of the Luiseño. Merriam (1968) extends Juaneño territory northward to the Santa Ana River and Newport Bay, although this is quite a distance north when compared with previous territory descriptions. These previous descriptions suggest major similarities between the Luiseño and Juaneño, perhaps as an initial stage of cultural evolution in the formation of a new language and tribal group. In any event, major similarities existed between the Luiseño and Juaneño groups, much less than the differences in language and custom between the Luiseño and Gabrielino.

The name "Gabrielino" describes those native groups living in what is now the Los Angeles and Orange County areas and was given due to the affiliation of these groups with Mission San Gabriel Arcángel. Linguistically, the Gabrielino language, as well as that of the Luiseño and Juaneño, is a Cupan language in the Takic family, which is part of the Uto-Aztecan (formerly Shoshonean) linguistic stock that once extended across the Great Basin region of Utah, Nevada, and California (Bean and Shipek 1978:550; Bean and Smith 1978:538; McCawley 1996:2–3). In California, the northernmost members of this stock are the Mono, while the Chemehuevi are the easternmost, the Cahuilla are the southernmost, and the Luiseño were the southwesternmost California members (Kroeber 1976). These languages have elsewhere been referred to as Southern California Shoshonean.

The name Luiseño has been applied to those native people living within the "ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Mission San Luis Rey . . . [who shared] an ancestral relationship which is evident in their cosmogony, and oral tradition, common language, and reciprocal relationship in ceremonies" (Oxendine 1983:8). The term Juaneño describes those native people who were missionized into Mission San Juan Capistrano and who inhabited the northernmost portion of Camp Pendleton. Much

of the existing ethnohistoric information about the Juaneño is derived from accounts about the Luiseño (Kroeber 1976; White 1963).

The Gabrielino, Luiseño, and Juaneño were hunters and gatherers who used both inland and coastal food resources. They hunted and collected seasonally available food resources and led a semisedentary lifestyle, often living in permanent communities along watercourses and near coastal estuaries. Commonly chosen habitation sites included rivers, streams, sheltered coastal bays and estuaries, and the transition zone marking the interface between prairies and foothills (McCawley 1996). The presence of water, a stable food supply, and some measure of protection from flooding were the most important factors relating to the location of habitation sites. Gabrielino and Luiseño communities located in the interior regions maintained permanent geographical territories or use areas that averaged 30 square miles, although it is likely that coastal settlements, where food resources may have been more plentiful and more easily available throughout the entire year, occupied less acreage (White 1963:117, 119; Oxendine 1983:44).

In addition to permanent settlements, native groups occupied temporary campsites used seasonally for hunting, fishing, and gathering plant foods and shellfish (White 1963:120–124; McCawley 1996:25). Rabbit and deer were the most commonly hunted animals, while acorns, buckwheat, chía, berries, and fruits were some of the more commonly collected plant foods. Acorns were the staple food of most indigenous Californians (Kroeber 1976:84) and were the most characteristic feature of the domestic economy of native California (Gifford 1936:87). Fully 25–50 percent of inland Luiseño food is thought to have been acorns (White 1963:116, 121). Among the inland Luiseño, land use was patterned with only a small quantity of total territory in disuse (White 1963:122). The Gabrielino established seasonal camps along the coast and near estuaries and bays, such as Newport Bay, in order to fish, gather shellfish, and hunt waterfowl (White 1963:122; Hudson 1971). The economy of coastal groups is thought to have focused on marine rather than land resources (White 1963:119).

Boscana (1978:65) describes the permanence of Juaneño villages in the following passage: ". . . in the winter they resided in one place and in summer another. This was general among them, excepting in the case of those tribes located on the sea-coast who seldom moved because their maintenance was derived from the sea." This suggests that inland villages were seasonal, while coastal villages may have been occupied permanently, since their food source was more dependable.

Native culture in coastal Southern California was characterized by an active and elaborate system of rituals and ceremonies. Rituals included individual rites of passage, village rites, seasonal ceremonies, and participation in the widespread *Chinigchinich* cult (variant spellings, Kroeber 1976; McCawley 1996). The cult of the culture hero *Chinigchinich* was observed and recorded by Franciscan missionary Father Gerónimo Boscana during his residences at Missions San Luis Rey (1811–1814) and San Juan Capistrano (1814–1826) and describes the rich and complex cosmology and rituals practiced at the time (Boscana 1978; Harrington 1934).

History

Spanish Mission Period (1769–1821). The Historic Period in Southern California is generally accepted to commence with the establishment of Mission San Diego De Alcalá, first and southernmost of the Alta California Missions, on July 16, 1769 (Lowman 1993:2, 5). The seventh mission founded in Alta California was Mission San Juan Capistrano, established on November 1, 1776, in Juaneño territory (Lowman 1993:9). In 1778, Mission San Juan Capistrano was moved to its present location in order to take advantage of a more dependable water supply. Engelhardt (1998) disputes that there ever was an old mission site, based on Pedro Font's description of the area during Anza's trek to San Diego in 1776 (see Font 1913:43–45 for a description of the journey).

While the location of the old mission is unknown, its name is not. The lands occupied by the old mission have been anglicized as Mission Viejo (Sleeper 1988). The San Juan Capistrano mission land holding was extensive in order to support itself and its Indian converts. The mission lands stretched 13–14 leagues north to south and 3–4 leagues east to west. The mission ranchos included *Rancho Santa Ana*, *Rancho San Joaquin*, *Rancho Mission Viejo*, *Rancho Trabuco*, and *Rancho San Mateo* (Bancroft 1966; Englehardt 1998). The *Rancho San Mateo* is specifically named by the mission fathers due to encroachment on their lands by the Mission San Luis Rey to the south. Englehardt (1998:88) quotes a report from the mission fathers that mentions the San Mateo rancho as being about 3 leagues southeast of San Juan Capistrano. However, the Mission San Luis Rey placed their own mission's *Rancho San Onófrio* within one-half league of San Mateo, apparently on lands of San Juan Capistrano. The mission's *Rancho San Mateo* should not be confused with a later Mexican grant in northern California with the same name. The mission used the land for crops and cattle. This land was to be turned over to the Indians as a pueblo and was thus held in trust by the Church for the benefit of the natives (Robinson 1979). The missions recruited neophytes, native converts, to settle on land close to the mission. Local native villages, *rancherias*, were thus incorporated into the mission system.

The Franciscans' goal was to convert the Native Americans to Christianity and incorporate them into Spanish society. The local natives could learn metallurgy, plant and animal domestication, and European building construction methods. Europeans learned how and where indigenous people lived and gathered information about native life as well as ceremonial and ritual practices. Occasionally, this information was recorded, and from these early records comes much of what we now know concerning native life.

Ultimately, Spanish colonization resulted in the destruction of native culture and society. Two important factors that contributed to this decline included (1) the removal of the youngest, healthiest and most productive natives from their traditional communities and their placement into the mission system, and (2) the introduction of highly infectious diseases, which eventually led to epidemics and reduced birth rates. As a result, traditional Native American communities were depopulated and the survivors integrated into local Mexican-American communities.

Mexican Rancho Period (1821–1848). In 1821, Mexico gained independence from Spain, and in 1848, the United States formally obtained California. The period from 1821 to 1848 is here referred to as the Mexican Rancho Period. During this period, there was a change from the subsistence agriculture of the Spanish Mission Period to livestock husbandry of the large ranches, or *ranchos*, acquired by Mexican citizens through grants or by purchase from mission administrators. This change was even more distinct after 1833–1834, when mission secularization occurred.

In 1833, 12 years after gaining independence from Spain, the Mexican government's Secularization Act changed missions into civil parishes, and those natives who had inhabited areas adjacent to a Spanish Period mission were to obtain half of all mission possessions including land. However, this did not occur in most instances, and the Secularization Act resulted in the transfer of large mission tracts to politically prominent individuals rather than to local natives. Economic activities centered around cattle ranching on the numerous expansive "ranchos" that had been created out of the mission lands.

The 1840s saw increased tension between the United States and Mexico. Finally, in 1846, war was declared between these two countries. By 1847, the United States had established control of California. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 formally ended hostilities.

American Period (1848–Present). Following the end of hostilities between Mexico and the United States, the United States officially obtained California in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848 (Cleland 1962:xiii). In 1850 California was accepted into the Union of the United States, mainly due to the population increase created by the Gold Rush of 1849. In the years immediately following the United States' acquisition of California, the cattle industry reached its greatest prosperity due to the massive influx of immigrants during the Gold Rush (Cleland 1952:102–108; Liebeck 1990:2–3). Mexican Period land grants had created large pastoral estates in California, and a high demand for beef during the Gold Rush led to a cattle boom that lasted from 1849 to 1855. In 1855, however, the demand for California beef began to decline as a result of sheep imports from New Mexico, cattle imports from the Mississippi and Missouri Valleys, and the development of stock breeding farms. When the beef market collapsed, California ranchers were unprepared. Many had borrowed heavily during the boom, mortgaging their land at interest rates as high as ten percent per month. The collapse of the cattle market meant that many of these ranchos were lost through foreclosure, while others were sold to pay debts and taxes (Cleland 1952:108–114). Nature also conspired to force economic change. During the winter of 1861–1862, a disastrous series of floods, followed by two years of drought, occurred in California (Cleland 1952:130–131).

Laguna Niguel. The following brief history of Laguna Niguel is from the City of Laguna Niguel website (City of Laguna Niguel, CA 2006-2007).

The name "Laguna Niguel" is derived from the Spanish word "Laguna," which means lagoon, and the word "Nigueli," which was the name of a Juaneño Indian village once located near Aliso Creek. In 1821, California became Mexican territory and many rancheros were formed in Southern California, including Rancho Niguel. During this period, Rancho Niguel was primarily used as a sheep ranch.

The first private landowner of the area was Juan Avila, a resident of San Juan Capistrano, who obtained land through a Mexican land grant in 1842. Juan Avila was also successful in re-establishing his title to the land after California became US territory in 1848 and remained the owner of "Rancho Niguel" until 1865. In 1895, the "Rancho Niguel" land became part of the Moulton Company, a company that would eventually control over 19,000 acres of local ranch land.

The genesis of today's Laguna Niguel was the establishment of the Laguna Niguel Corporation in 1959 by Cabot, Cabot and Forbes, making it one of the first master planned communities in plan for the approximately 7,100-acre site. Land sales started to occur in 1961 in Monarch Bay and Laguna

Terrace subdivisions. Avco Community Developer acquired the Laguna Niguel Plan in 1971 and initiated development as set forth in the original Master Plan.

In 1986, Laguna Niguel residents, looking for local governance, took the first step toward Cityhood by forming a Community Services District. Three years later, on November 7, 1989, 89% of the voters favored incorporation and on December 1, 1989, Laguna Niguel became the 29th City in Orange County.

The vicinity of the project area remained undeveloped grazing land until recent years, when expansion of the City of Laguna Niguel created housing developments in the hillside areas surrounding the project.

METHODS

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

A records search for an adjacent parcel was completed on August 24, 2006, at the SCCIC, located at California State University, Fullerton; it included a review of all recorded historic and prehistoric archaeological sites within a one-half mile radius of the project area, as well as a review of known cultural resource survey and excavation reports. In addition, the California State Historic Resources Inventory, which includes the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), California Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and various local historical registers were examined. The Curtone Residence project area is within the area examined for the 2006 records search. As no activity (construction or archaeological) has occurred on the Curtone property since the 2006 records search, the validity of the records search remains current for the Curtone Residence project area. As such, the 2006 research was used for the current project.

FIELD SURVEY

LSA's methodology was based on the survey requirements and the nature of expected resources and archaeological characteristics. The survey scope required LSA to locate all resources greater than 45 years in age within the survey area. The survey unit boundary is defined horizontally as being approximately six surface acres. Since subsurface excavations were not proposed as part of this study, observation of the subsurface was limited to graded cuts, erosional cuts and gullies, as well as rodent burrows.

On June 15, 2007, LSA Archaeologist Phil Fulton conducted a pedestrian survey of the project area. The project area was intensively examined by walking the area at approximate 10-meter intervals.

REPORT OF FINDINGS

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

Results of the records and literature search indicated that 10 cultural resource studies have occurred within the one-half mile records search radius. Of these, two previous surveys examined the entire project area, and one survey examined a small portion of the project area. The entire project area was last examined in 1986. Four archaeological sites have been recorded within the one-half-mile records search radius, none of which are within the current project area. The nearest site, CA-ORA-493, is located on the adjacent parcel to the north, approximately 500 feet from the closest edge of the current project area. The site was originally recorded in 1974 and described as a "scatter of chipping waste exposed on eastern slope of summit of knoll" and containing "one small basalt core, one chert core, seven chert flakes, three quartzite flakes, and one white chert flake" (Leonard 1974). The site was determined to be not important and is not eligible for listing on either the National Register or the California Register of Historical Resources, nor does the site qualify as a "unique archaeological resource" per CEQA guidelines (Fulton 2006).

FIELD SURVEY

No cultural resources were identified during the field survey. Most of the project area consists of moderate to steep slopes where significant archaeological deposits would not be anticipated. Overall ground visibility was excellent as most of the area had been recently mowed. Only the steep slope on the northeast edge of the parcel was covered with dense coastal sage scrub vegetation that limited ground visibility. As stated, this area consists of steep slopes where intact cultural resources would not be expected.

Photographs of the project area are included in Appendix A.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Soil on site consists of Bosanko series clays that developed by the weathering of the underlying bedrock and were in place prior to human occupation of the area. As such, any cultural material should be on the ground surface and any subsurface material is due to bioturbation or other disturbance, and the likelihood of previously unidentified intact subsurface cultural deposits to be present within the project area is very low. Therefore, LSA recommends that no further cultural resource management of the project area (such as construction monitoring) is necessary.

In the event that previously undocumented archaeological materials are encountered during construction work in the vicinity of the find, all construction work should be halted and an Orange County certified archaeologist consulted to determine the appropriate treatment of the discovery.

In the event human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the County Coroner will notify the NAHC, which will determine and notify an MLD. With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC. The MLD will have the opportunity to offer recommendations for the disposition of the remains.

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APPENDIX A

PROJECT PHOTOGRAPHS

Project area overview from adjacent parcel to the north facing south.

Overview from access road at western edge of the project area facing south.

LSA

1 O'Hill Ridge–Curtone Residence

Site Photos

Overview from the southern corner of the project area facing northwest.

Overview from the western corner of the project area facing east.

LSA

1 O'Hill Ridge-Curtone Residence

Site Photos

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