

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES SURVEY

RUFFIN CANYON TRAILS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

CITY OF SAN DIEGO

SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Prepared for:

San Diego Canyonlands
3552 Bancroft Street
San Diego, California 92104

Prepared by:

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LSA Project No. SDC1801



February 2019

This report form shall be used when a site-specific survey for historical resources was completed and no archaeological resources were identified within the project Area of Potential Effects (APE). This form may be used, rather than the completion of an Archaeological Resource Management (ARMR) report, when archaeological resources were identified and, based on an evaluation, were determined to be non-significant or are potentially significant but will not be directly affected by the proposed development project. Completion of the required site-specific survey and this report form must conform to the Historical Resources Guidelines of the Land Development Manual.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

This report addresses a proposed public trail realignment within the southern portion of Ruffin Canyon and the permitting of the existing trails in the northern portion of Ruffin Canyon Open Space. The project is located within the Serra Mesa Community Plan Area, north of Friars Road, west of Mission Village Drive, and south of Gramercy Drive in the City of San Diego, California (Figure 1, Attachment B).

The new trail realignment (South Ruffin Canyon Trail) is approximately 2,626 feet in length, and would move the existing southern portion of Ruffin Canyon trail from the cobblestone-laden streambed, east along the lower portion of the canyon slope. The proposed trail realignment would improve the trail users experience and would allow trail use during the rainy season when the exiting trail is flooded, while minimizing biological impacts and improving long term maintenance and sustainability of the trail.

The new trail would be constructed by hand clearing with power tools such as chainsaws and string-line trimmers. Cuttings and brush will be removed from the canyon via the existing City access road and taken to an appropriate disposal facility. Final trail tread grades would be established with hand-held tools, including power tools such as jackhammers. For the new section, the final trail tread will be 2-4 feet wide, but a 5-foot average impact corridor is assumed for the trail construction to allow for cut and fill, and outsloping of the trail on the east side of the canyon to construct the bench for the trail. The trail will consist of native soils and will be installed by hand crews.

The existing trails proposed for permitting are referred to in this report as the North Ruffin Canyon Trail, and the Taft Canyon Trail. The North Ruffin Canyon Trail is located in the northern portion of Ruffin Canyon, and includes the Shawn Canyon Finger. The North Ruffin Canyon Trail is approximately 6,690 feet in length and is comprised of a City maintenance/access path and a foot/bike trail. Portions of the existing maintenance/access path are being used as a foot/bike trail. The Taft Canyon Trail is approximately 2,149 feet in length and based on historical aerial photographs, was established around 2009.

Following the opening of the realignment, public use of the existing streambed would be discouraged using a combination of signs, peeler log fencing, brushing and/or planting. Pedestrian access to manholes south of the realignment for inspection and maintenance by Public Utilities Department will still be required.

II. SETTING

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The project is located approximately 5 miles north of downtown San Diego, within the Serra Mesa Community north of Mission Valley. The proposed trail realignment is located within Ruffin Canyon Open Space park, which is characterized by native vegetation and pedestrian trails. Residential development is located along the fringes of the canyon along the mesa areas.

Vegetation consists of coastal sage scrub and patches of native riparian species. Elevations within the project area range from approximately 170 to 300 feet above mean sea level.

Currently, the areas surrounding the project area are heavily developed with residential neighborhoods, parks, and schools including Taft Middle School, Cubberley Elementary School, and Juarez Elementary School.

ETHNOGRAPHY/HISTORY

The Southern California coastal region has a prehistoric chronology determined through decades of archaeological studies (e.g., Byrd and Raab 2007; Erlandson 1994; Erlandson et al. 2007; Gallegos 1991; Jones 2008; King 1990; Koerper et al. 1991; Mason et al. 1997; Masters and Gallegos 1997; Moratto 1984:130, 132, 146–165; Moriarty 1966; Rogers 1945, 1966; True 1966; Wallace 1955; Warren 1964, 2012; Warren et al. 1993; and others). Regional studies suggest that San Diego County has been occupied for the last 10,000 years, including the current project area. The studies referenced above include comprehensive accounts of the prehistoric activity in San Diego and will not be included here.

The project area was prehistorically occupied by the Kumeyaay, who exploited resources from San Diego Bay and the nearby riparian areas along Chollas Creek and other tributaries. Spanish exploration in the 17th century led to the eventual settlement of San Diego by missionaries and soldiers in the late 18th century. Mexican independence from Spain in the early 19th century led to major changes in land development and economic opportunities in Southern California. By the mid-19th century, California became a part of the United States, and the population on the west coast expanded well into San Diego. A more detailed history of the region can be found in Appendix A of the *City's Historical Resources Guidelines* and incorporated by reference and as summarized by Rosen (1994), Van Wormer (1995), and in the *Historic Properties Background Study for the City of San Diego Clean Water Program* (ASM Affiliates, Inc. n.d.).

III. AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS (APE)

For the purposes of this project, the APE includes all areas proposed for trail realignment and trail designation. The total APE for the project is approximately 19 acres. The APE is identified in Figure 2, Attachment B.

IV. STUDY METHODS

In addition to a field visit of the project area and background research, a cultural resources records search was performed at the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) at San Diego State University to determine the potential impacts to any historic-age archaeological resources within the project area.

Segments of the proposed new trail alignment were examined for evidence of cultural material and potential for buried archaeological deposits. The results of the survey were documented through field notes and photographs (Attachment C).

V. RESULTS OF STUDY

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Records Search. Based on the results of the records search performed at the SCIC in February 2019, at least eleven previous archaeological investigations have occurred within a 0.25-mile radius of the APE, one of which includes a portion of the APE (Confidential Attachment D, under separate cover). Two previously recorded archaeological sites are located within a 0.25-mile radius of the overall APE, although neither of these is mapped within the APE. The resources located within 0.25 mile of the APE include a historic-age electrical substation (P-37-036318; Mission Substation) and historic-age middle school (P-37-037561; Taft Middle School). None of the previously recorded resources are recommended as eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR).

An examination of historical maps and aerial photographs of the APE did not indicate the presence of any potentially historically significant resources within any portion of the APE.

FIELD RECONNAISSANCE

LSA completed a field reconnaissance survey on February 11, 2019. LSA Senior Cultural Resources Manager Natalie Brodie completed a pedestrian reconnaissance survey of the portion of the APE that includes the trail realignment. The area designated for trail realignment was not accessible due to heavy vegetation (Photographs 1 and 2, Attachment C). Vegetation consisted of native coastal sage scrub, and some sparse riparian species. In areas where the surface was visible, no cultural material was observed.

EVALUATION

No cultural material was observed within portions of the trail realignment area. The APE is minimally disturbed with pedestrian trails and the main sewer access road. The trail realignment area is located at the base of the mesa, and above the main channel of the drainage, and therefore the potential for buried cultural resources is moderate to high. Surface visibility was limited by dense vegetation, and much of the area has not been previously surveyed, so the potential for cultural resources exists along the trail route.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS


Although no cultural resources were observed within a portion of the APE along the trail realignment, access to the trail was limited by dense vegetation. The area has not been previously surveyed, and areas along natural drainage features should be treated as having a high potential for cultural resources. Additionally, the trail will be located along the base of the mesa and above the main channel of the drainage, which suggests the potential for buried resources.

Archaeological and Native American monitoring is recommended during initial ground disturbance and vegetation clearing for the new trail alignment. The monitoring scope for this work may be changed during the project as the development progresses. As no work is proposed for the remaining trail segments to the northern end of the canyon, no additional archaeological work is recommended.

VII. SOURCES CONSULTED

National Register of Historic Places	Month and Year: January 2019
California Register of Historical Resources	Month and Year: January 2019
City of San Diego Historical Resources Register	Month and Year: January 2019
Archaeological/Historical Site Records: South Coastal Information Center	Month and Year: January 2019
Other Sources Consulted: Historical Maps and Aerial Photographs	Month and Year: January 2019

VII. CERTIFICATION

Preparer: Natalie Brodie, M.A., RPA	Title: Associate/Senior Cultural Resources Manager
Signature: 	Date: 3/26/2019

IX. ATTACHMENTS

A: Bibliography

B: Maps: USGS Quadrangle
Project Maps (APE)

C: Photographs

D: Records Search Results (Confidential—Under Separate Cover)

X. CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENT (Bound separately)

Records Search Results

ATTACHMENT A

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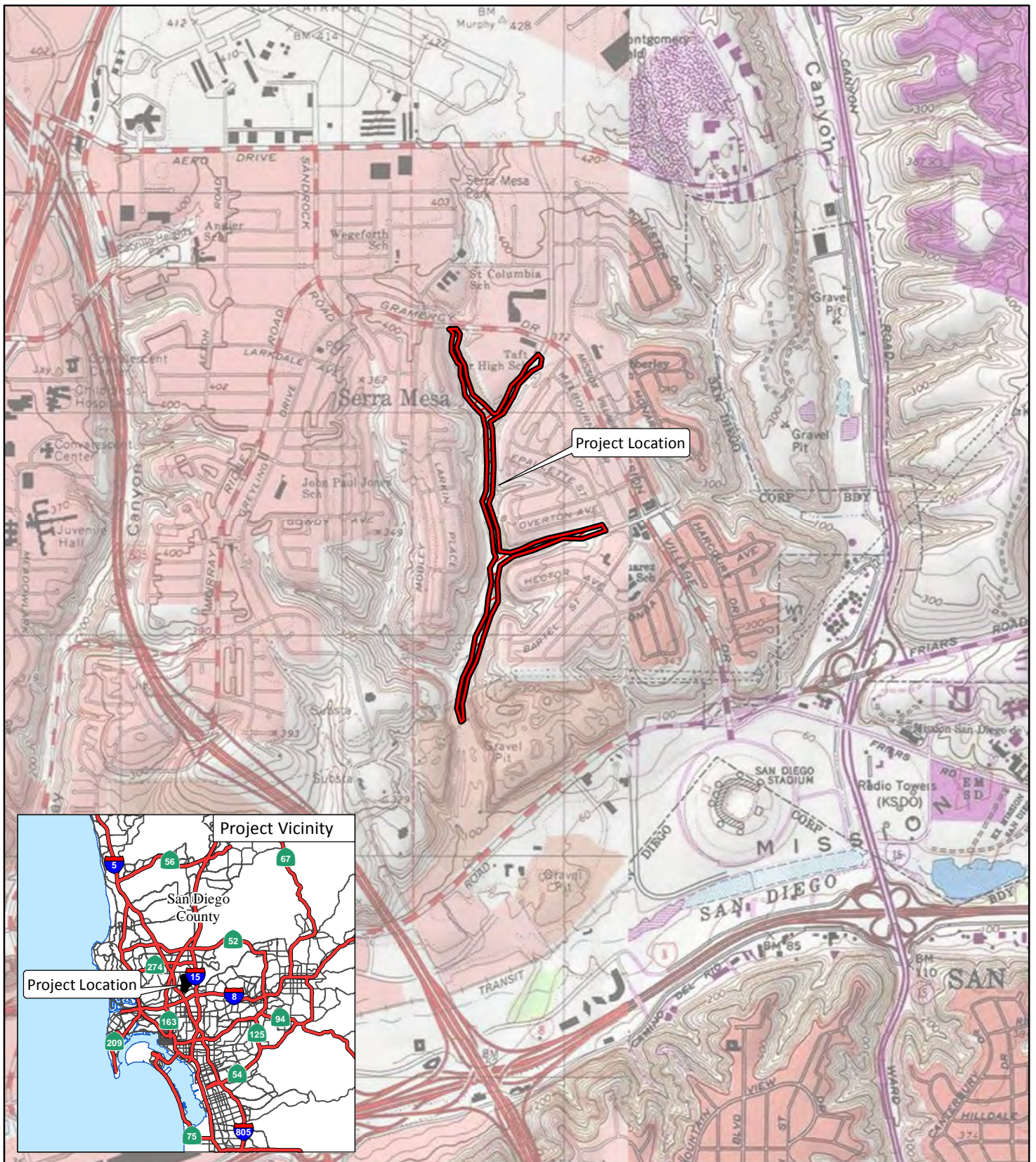
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ATTACHMENT B

MAPS

Figure 1: Project Location

Figure 2: Area of Potential Effects



LSA

LEGEND

 Project Location



0 1000 2000
FEET

SOURCE: USGS 7.5' Quad. (La Jolla, 1975)

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FIGURE 1

Ruffin Canyon
SDC1801 - City of San Diego
Project Location Map



LSA

LEGEND



Project APE



New Trail Alignment



0 375 750
FEET

SOURCE: Bing Maps (2015); SD Canyonlands (2019)

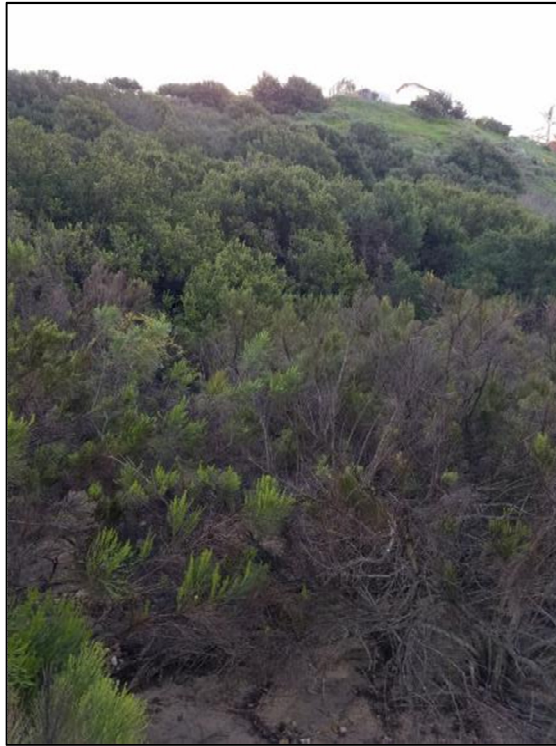
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FIGURE 2

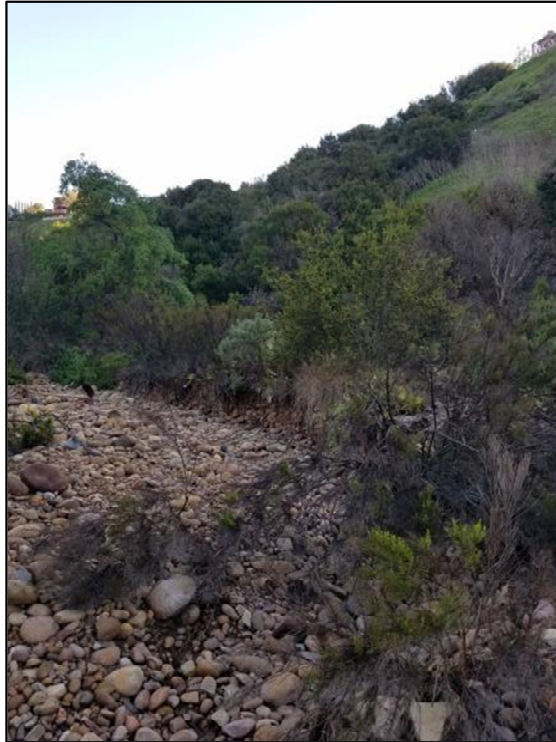
Ruffin Canyon
SDC1801 - City of San Diego
Project APE Map

ATTACHMENT C

PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph 1: Overview of new trail realignment, view to south



Photograph 2: Overview of trail location, view to northeast from existing cobble-lined channel

ATTACHMENT D

RECORDS SEARCH RESULTS

(CONFIDENTIAL—UNDER SEPARATE COVER)