

CULTURAL RESOURCES REPORT FOR THE WOODMONT-SR-99/HOSKING COMMERCIAL CENTER PROJECT

BAKERSFIELD, KERN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

Jones & Stokes conducted a phase-1 cultural resource survey for the proposed Woodmont—SR99/Hosking Commercial Center Project on September 24, 2007. This investigation was performed at the request of the City of Bakersfield to fulfill requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Woodmont Bakersfield LP proposes to develop a 965,000 square foot retail center and associated parking lots east of Highway 99 and north of Hosking Avenue in Southeast Bakersfield, Kern County, California. The project area currently consists of approximately 22 acres of disturbed open space. One structure is located within the parcel. The structure is a single-family residence located along the north side of Hosking Avenue. It is not considered part of the proposed project footprint. Instead, it is considered part of a separate, but concurrent Caltrans project. As such, it was not evaluated for this project.

Prior to field investigations, Jones and Stokes conducted a literature search at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Archaeological Information Center, located at California State University, Bakersfield. The record search included a review of all available cultural resource survey and excavation reports and site records for an area within a one-mile radius of the project area. The results of this literature and records search indicate that two archaeological studies have been conducted within the project area. Surveys within the project area identified three isolated fragments of historic glass. Records for these artifacts are filed at the Southern San Joaquin Archaeological Information Center under the trinomial numbers KER-9205, KER-9206, and KER-9207.

Jones & Stokes also contacted the Native American Heritage Commission, which provided a list of Native American contacts in Kern County. Letters describing the project area and indicating the project location were sent to the Native American representatives on September 18, 2007. No comments have been received.

No further cultural resources were identified during the current project. However, if cultural materials (Native American or historic artifacts) are encountered during construction, work should stop in the vicinity of the find until a qualified archaeologist can assess the material. Design of a treatment plan and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer may be required to appropriately mitigate any unanticipated discoveries. Treatment measures typically include development of avoidance strategies, capping with fill material, or mitigation of impacts through data recovery programs, such as excavation or detailed documentation, or other mitigation measures, following standard archaeological procedures. If human remains are exposed during construction, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code 5097.98. Construction must halt in the area of the discovery of human remains, the area must be protected, and consultation and treatment should occur as prescribed by law.

INTRODUCTION

At the request of the the City of Bakersfield, Jones & Stokes conducted a phase-1 cultural resources survey of the proposed Woodmont—SR99/Hosking Commercial Center Project (Project). Woodmont Bakersfield LP proposes to develop a 965,000 square foot retail center and associated parking lots east of Highway 99 and north of Hosking Avenue in southeast Bakersfield, Kern County, California. It is depicted on the Gosford USGS Quadrangle map, in Township 30 South, Range 27 East, Section 25 (Figure 1).

The project area is approximately 22 acres of open land (Figure 2). One structure is located within the parcel. The structure is a single-family residence located along the north side of Hosking Avenue. It is not considered part of the proposed project footprint. Instead, it is considered part of a separate, but concurrent Caltrans project. As such, it was not evaluated for this project.

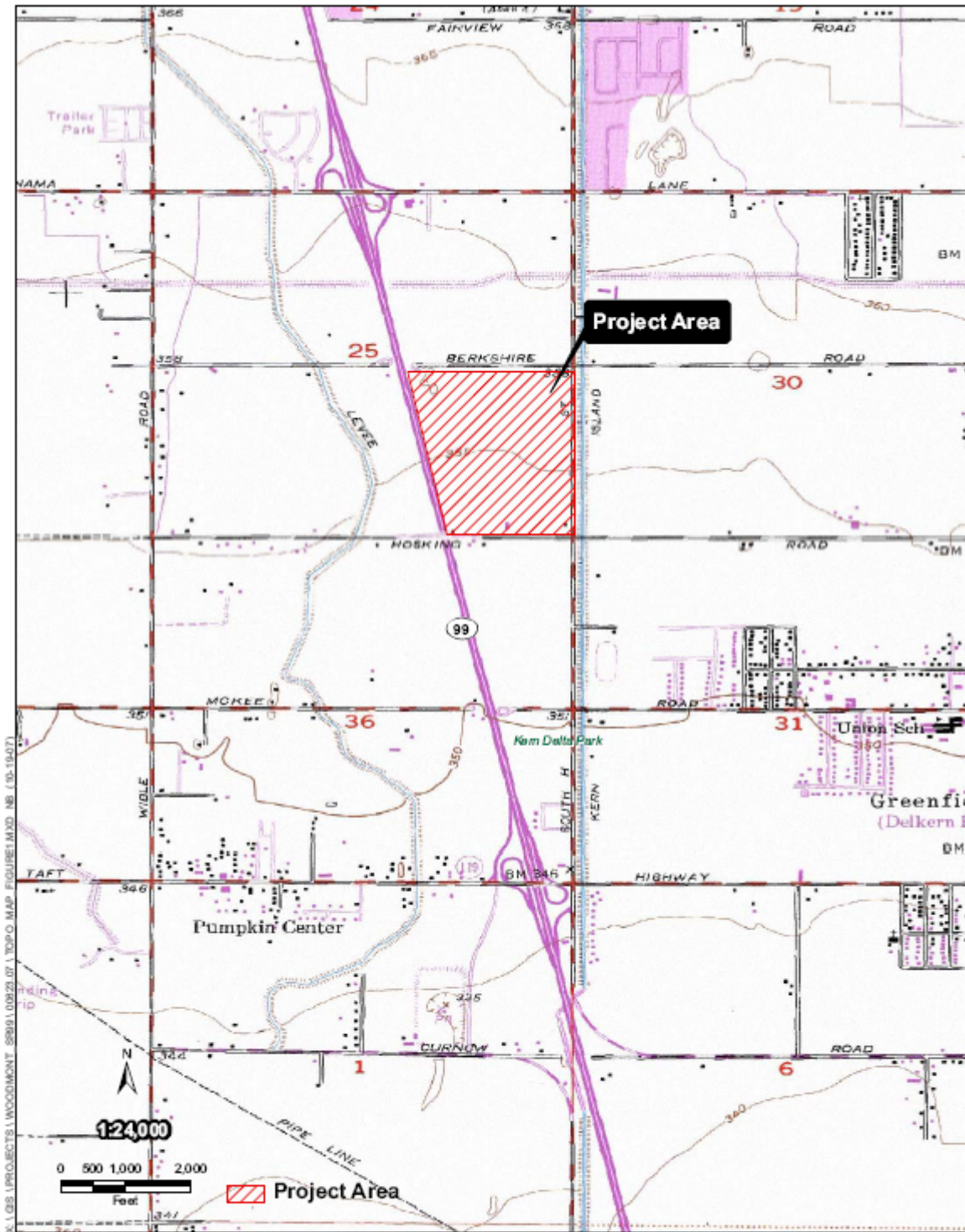
Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

The Project is regulated by Section 106 of the NHPA. Section 106 requires federal agencies, or those they fund or permit, to consider the effects of their actions on “historic properties,” as defined by Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 800) for implementing Section 106. Historic property means any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. This term includes artifacts, records, and remains that are related to and located within such properties. The term includes properties of traditional religious and cultural importance to an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization that meet the National Register criteria [36 CFR Section 800.16(l)].

To determine whether an undertaking could affect NRHP-eligible properties, cultural resources (including archaeological, historical, and architectural properties) must be inventoried and evaluated for listing in the NRHP. In order for a property to be considered for inclusion in the NRHP it must meet the criteria for evaluation set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.4, as follows:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and

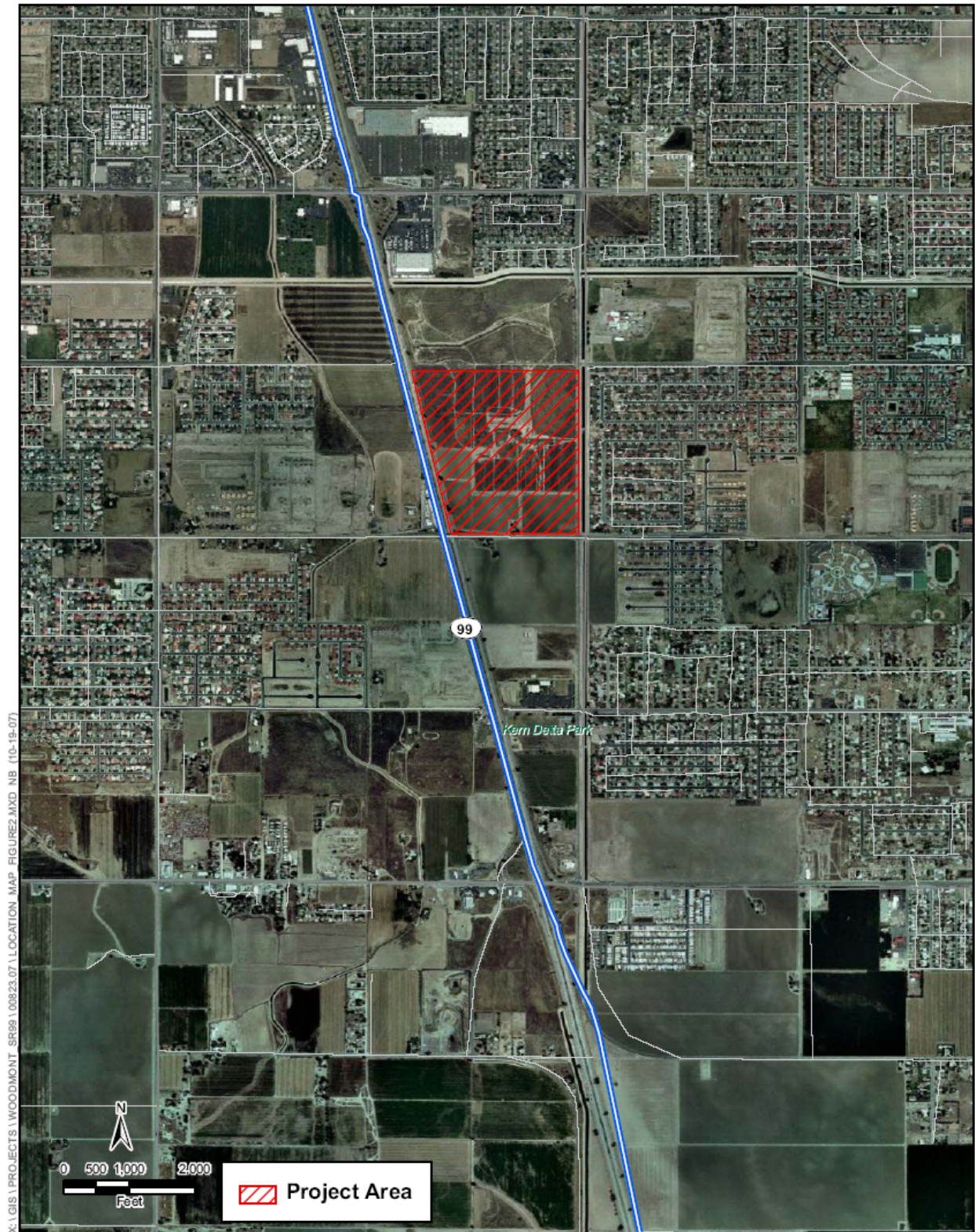
- (a) that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- (b) that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- (c) that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic



SOURCE: USGS 7.5' Quad., California: Gosford



Figure 1
Topographic Map
SR 99/Hosking Commercial Center Project



SOURCE: ESRI Streetmap USA (2006), Aerials Express (05/15/2006, 0.5m)



Figure 2
Location Map
SR 99/Hosking Commercial Center Project

- values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- (d) that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Among other criteria considerations, a property that has achieved significance within the last 50 years is not considered eligible for inclusion in the NRHP unless certain exceptional conditions are met.

California Environmental Quality Act

The Project is also governed by CEQA. In accordance with Section 21084.1 of CEQA, the proposed project would have a significant adverse environmental impact if it causes a substantial or potentially substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource.

According to CEQA (PRC Section 21084.1), historical resources include any resource listed, or determined eligible for listing, in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register). Properties listed, or determined eligible for listing, in the NRHP, such as those identified in the Section 106 process, are automatically listed in the California Register. Therefore, all “historic properties” under federal preservation law are automatically “historical resources” under state preservation law. Historical resources are also presumed to be significant if they are included in a local register of historical resources or identified as significant in a qualified historical resource survey.

As defined under state law in Title 14, California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 4850, the term “historical resource” means:

“Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which is historically or archaeologically significant, or which is significant to the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural history of California.” For the purposes of CEQA, “historical resource” is further defined under PRC Section 15064.5 as a “resource listed in, or determined eligible for listing in the California Register.”

Section 15064.5 of the State CEQA Guidelines sets forth the criteria and procedures for determining significant historical resources and the potential effects of a project on such resources. Generally, a cultural resource shall be considered by the lead state agency to be “historically significant” if the resource meets any of the following criteria for listing in the California Register:

- (a) The resource is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.
- (b) The resource is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.

- (c) The resource 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.
- (d) The resource has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The cited statutes and guidelines specify how cultural resources are to be managed in the context of projects such as the proposed project. Briefly, archival and field surveys must be conducted, and identified cultural resources must be inventoried and evaluated in prescribed ways. Prehistoric and historical resources deemed “historically significant” must be considered in project planning and development.

California Health and Safety Code

Human remains are sometimes associated with archaeological sites. According to CEQA, “archaeological sites known to contain human remains shall be treated in accordance with the provisions of State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5.” The protection of human remains is also ensured by California Public Resources Codes, Sections 5097.94, 5097.98, and 5097.99. If human remains are exposed during construction, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the county coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. Construction must halt in the area of the discovery of human remains, the project proponent must assure that the area is protected, and consultation and treatment shall occur as prescribed by law.

SETTING

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The project area is located in Bakersfield in the Southern San Joaquin Valley of California. The San Joaquin Valley is 50-mile-wide lowland that extends from the Sacramento Delta in the north to the Tehachapi Mountains in the south (Norris and Web 1990:412). Bakersfield has a semi-arid, dry steppe climate characterized by hot, dry summers and short, cool winters. Rainfall is scarce, averaging approximately 6 inches per year. Natural bodies of water near the project area include Buena Vista Lake, located 13 miles southwest of the project area and the Kern River, located 6 miles northwest of the project area. Canals include Kern Island Canal, bordering the west end of the property, the Arvin Edison Canal, 0.2 miles north, and the West Branch Canal, 1.5 miles west of the property.

The 22-acre project parcel is relatively flat, as is typical of the San Joaquin Valley. The center of the project parcel is 365 feet above sea level with a slope of 0-2 percent. Surface soils consist of Kimberlina fine sandy loam (USDA 2007). The project area has been used for agricultural activities, but is currently vacant. Vegetation on the southern half of the property consists of thick creosote bush. Low lying grasses cover the northern half of the property. One structure is located along its southern edge. The structure is not part of the proposed project footprint. Instead, it is considered part of a separate, but concurrent Caltrans project. As such, it was not evaluated for this project.

Activities within the project area including construction, agricultural activities, dumping, grading, and recreation (dirt bikes, etc) have disturbed most of the project area. A large, rectangular hole has been dug in the east/central portion of the property. The date this area was dug out and the purpose it served is unknown, although we can speculate that it was a pond. The excavated area is 181 ft (e/w) x 104 ft (n/s) and is approximately 15 ft deep. A second depression exists 270 feet east of the first. The second depression is small and round. It is approximately 2 ft deep and has a diameter of 22.5 ft. The lack of surrounding prehistoric or historic artifacts indicates that these two depressions are recent and not historically or prehistorically significant.

Land west of the project area consists of Highway 99, bordered by agricultural fields primarily growing cotton. North of the project area is a vacant lot and a residential housing development. Residential housing developments are also located east and south of the project area.

PREHISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

This section provides a general overview of prehistoric, ethnographic, and historical periods in the southern California deserts. The discussion of the prehistoric cultural setting is based primarily on a cultural sequence defined by Warren (1984).

“Early Man” Period. Several sites in California, the most well known of which is Calico Hills, have been tentatively assigned to the “Early Man Period” with relative dates ranging from 12,000 years ago to as far back as 50,000 years ago (Moratto 1984). Various geologic and experimental dating methods provide these extreme temporal assignments. Thus far, however, none of these “Early Man” sites have withstood scientific scrutiny. Despite claims for evidence of “Early Man” in California, it appears likely that humans first arrived in California between 11,000 and 13,000 years ago.

Paleo-Indian Period. The earliest humans to occupy North America are believed to have been highly mobile hunters and gatherers called Paleo-Indians. Two traditions characterize the Paleo-Indian Period in the southern half of the San Joaquin Valley: the Western Fluted Point Tradition and the Western Pluvial Lakes Tradition (Moratto 1984). The Western Fluted Point Tradition in California is similar to the contemporary Llano Complex of the Southwest and Great Plains. Thirteen complete and seventeen fragmentary fluted and stemmed Clovis-like points, characteristic of this tradition, were collected from the southern shore of Lake Tulare, in the central San Joaquin Valley (Riddell and Olsen 1969). Similar points have been found near Bakersfield and on the Tejon Ranch (Zimmerman et al. 1999). While none of the California points have been radio-carbon dated, obsidian hydration measurements of specimens found at Borax Lake in Northern California have dated to 11,000-12,000 B.P. (Maratto 1984). Stone artifacts found on the southwestern shore of Buena Vista Lake, 13 miles southwest of the project area, have been associated with the Western Lakes Tradition. Radio-carbon dates, stratigraphy, artifact types, and depth of overburden place these artifacts at approximately 8000 B.P. (Fredrickson and Grossman 1977).

Early Horizon. Early Horizon sites are associated with the margins of pluvial lakes and with now-extinct springs. Pinto-series projectile points, crudely made stemmed or basally notched dart points, are the most distinctive artifact type of the Early Horizon. Other artifacts found at Early Horizon sites include large, leaf-shaped knives, thick, split cobble choppers and scrapers, scraper-planes, and small milling slabs and manos. This was a cold, dry period with low inland population densities. Most known Early Horizon sites are small surface deposits of lithic artifacts, suggestive of temporary and perhaps seasonal occupation by small groups of people.

Middle Horizon. Penutian-speaking peoples, including the Yokuts may have entered the southern San Joaquin Valley during the Middle Horizon, between 4000 and 1200 B.P. This was a time of cultural intensification. Large occupation sites are most commonly found adjacent to permanent water sources, such as lakes, streams or perennial springs (Moratto 1984). Technologically, the artifact assemblage of this period is similar to that of the preceding Early Horizon; new tools were added either as innovations or as borrowed cultural items. Artifact

types include rectangular-based knives, flake scrapers, T-shaped drills, milling slabs and manos, as well as core/cobble tool assemblages such as scraper planes, large choppers, and hammerstones. The bow and arrow and mortar and pestle were introduced during the Middle Horizon. Diagnostic projectile points include Humbolt, Gypsum, and Elko-series dart points (Warren 1984). Shaft smoothers, incised slate and sandstone tablets and pendants, bone awls, *Olivella* shell beads, and *Haliotis* beads and ornaments are also found (Warren 1984).

Middle-Late Horizon Transition. The Middle-Late transition period in the southern San Joaquin Valley coincides with the *Medieval Climatic Anomaly*, a period of increased temperatures and accompanying droughts. This climatic instability resulted in decreased water availability, a reduction in harvestable natural resources, and demographic stress. Evidence of transition period sites is minimal. Many of California's interior sites may have been abandoned at this time (Warren 1984).

Late Horizon. The Late Horizon was a time of recovery from the instability of the *Medieval Climatic Anomaly*. The relationship between the Southern San Joaquin Valley and surrounding areas in the Late Horizon is relatively unknown; however, it is believed that the precursors for historic Yokut lifeways developed during the Late Horizon, between 1200 and 800 B.P. (Warren 1984).

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Yokuts, along with other Penutian-speaking peoples, entered the southern San Joaquin Valley between 4000–1200 B.P. and the precursors of historic Yokut life ways developed between 1200 and 800 B.P. (Wallace 1978). At least 15 Yokut tribelets are known to have existed after A.D. 800. Each spoke a separate Penutian dialect (Wallace 1978). Estimations of population size are difficult to determine because of the extent of destruction caused by the introduction of European diseases and subsequent Euro-American colonization. Kroeber (1925:38) estimated 350 individuals per Yokut tribelet, bringing the total population of the 15 Southern San Joaquin Valley tribelets to 5,250 people. Nineteenth century Spanish expeditions calculated a much higher number. They estimated as many as 15,700 inhabitants (Cook 1995).

Yokut subsistence consisted of fishing, hunting waterfowl, and collecting shellfish, roots, and seeds. Fish were caught using nets and stick pens. Species include lake trout, chubs, perch, suckers, steelhead, salmon, and sturgeon. Mussels and turtles were also collected and eaten. Waterfowl were caught using nets and snares (Wallace 1978:450). Tule, among other grasses and flowering herbs, was collected, dried, pounded, and made into starch flour. Grassnuts, fiddle-neck, alfilaria and clover were eaten. Acorns were not easily accessible in the Southern San Joaquin, but may have been traded in from Kingston (Wallace 1978:450). Terrestrial mammals and birds made up a minimal portion of the diet. They were caught using snares, unbacked bows, and wooden-tip arrows (Wallace 1978:450).

The Southern Yokuts built domestic structures, granaries, and sweathouses (Wallace 1978). There are at least two types of domestic structures. The first type is a single-family structure. It is oval, wood framed, and covered in tule matting. The second type is larger than the first, but

similar in construction. It is wood framed and covered in tule mats. It differs from the first type of domestic structure in that it is steep-roofed, housed more than 10 families, and had multiple entryways and hearths (Wallace 1978).

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Early Exploration. European settlement of California began with the founding of Mission San Diego de Alcalá in 1769. Spanish explorers and missionaries began entering the Valley soon after. In the fall of 1772, Pedro Fages led a group of soldiers through the Tejon pass and visited a village on the shore of Buena Vista Lake, 13 miles west of the project area, on his way to San Luis Obispo. Garces, a Spanish explorer, followed Fages in 1776 (Wallace 1978). Between 1806 and 1814, the Franciscans led several incursions into the Southern Valley, but were unsuccessful in gaining a foothold there (Wallace 1978). While no missions were established in the Southern San Joaquin Valley, the area was indirectly affected by mission life through the infiltration of runaway Indian converts who took refuge in the Valley (Wallace 1978).

Mexican California. Mexico, including California, won independence from Spain in 1821. No ranchos were established in the San Joaquin Valley between 1822 and 1846 and direct Mexican influence over the area was minimal (Wallace 1978: 460). In 1833, a severe malaria outbreak, with an estimated mortality rate of 75 percent, decimated the Southern Yokut population (Cook 1995:303).

American Period. The acquisition of California by the United States at the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848, and the discovery of gold in 1850, brought the first major wave of Euro-Americans into the San Joaquin Valley. In 1851, the U.S. government removed southern Valley Yokuts to the Tejon reservation at the base of the Tehachapis and to the Fresno Reservation outside Madera, California (Wallace 1978:460).

City of Bakersfield. The first homestead claim within Bakersfield was filed in 1866 for a parcel of land named “Baker’s Field.” Named after Colonel Thomas Baker, the city of Bakersfield was formally laid out in 1869. Between 1869 and 1873, the city established a telegraph office, two stores, a newspaper, two boarding houses, a doctor’s office, a school, and a saloon. The town was incorporated in 1873. In 1876, it disincorporated and did not reincorporate until 1898. That same year, the San Francisco and San Joaquin Valley Railroad (later known as the Santa Fe Railroad) began providing service to and from Bakersfield.

Agriculture and oil played vital roles in early Bakersfield and remain central to the city’s economy. In 1927, one of the nation’s largest and oldest farming co-ops, the California Cotton Cooperative Association (CalCot), was founded in Bakersfield. Crops harvested in the area include carrots, alfalfa, cotton, grapes, almonds, pistachios, citrus fruits, wheat, garlic, and potatoes. Oil was discovered in 1877. In 1899, the Kern River Oil Field was tapped. The discovery of oil brought an influx of people and technology.

METHODS

RECORD SEARCH

Prior to field investigations, Jones & Stokes conducted a literature search at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Archaeological Information Center, located at California State University, Bakersfield. The record search included a review of all available cultural resource survey and excavation reports and site records for an area within a one-mile radius of the project area. The results of this literature and records search indicate that two archaeological studies have been conducted within the project area. In addition, two surveys were conducted directly adjacent to the project area and twenty-nine surveys were conducted within a 1-mile radius. Surveys within the project area identified three isolated historic glass items. Records for these artifacts are filed at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Archaeological Information Center under the trinomial numbers KER-9205, KER-9206, and KER-9207 (Garcia 1992). KER-9205 is recorded as a “small fragment of blue glass,” KER-9206 is a “small aqua glass bead”, and KER-9207 is a “large fragment of purple glass” (Garcia 1992).

NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION

On September 17, 2007, Jones & Stokes contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and requested that they consult their sacred lands file and provide a list of Native American representatives for the project area. The NAHC responded on September 18, 2007 stating that a search of their sacred lands database did not yield any sacred lands or traditional cultural properties within the project area. The NAHC provided a list of 8 Native American contacts in Kern County. Letters describing the project area and indicating the project location were sent to these Native American representatives on September 18, 2007. No comments have yet been received.

FIELD SURVEY

Results of the record search and other survey work in the area indicate that the valley floor setting of the Project area has potential to encompass prehistoric archaeological sites. The identification of historic glass suggests that additional historic artifacts may be present. The high degree of surface and subsurface damage to the Project area resulting from agricultural activities, grading, dumping, and construction activities decreases the chance of identifying intact archaeological deposit (Figure 3).

A pedestrian survey was used to investigate the Project area. No prehistoric or historic cultural resources were identified during the pedestrian survey. A Jones & Stokes archeologist walked 80% of the surface area in 15 meter transects. The remaining 20%, located on the southern portion of the property, was covered in thick creosote bush and was impassable. A high level of debris litters the surface. This debris includes piles of concrete slabs, sofas, hot water coolers, piles of dirt, car parts, and other modern debris and appears to be the result of modern dumping activities.

Two depressions were noted during the pedestrian survey. The first is 181 ft (e/w) x 104 ft (n/s) and is approximately 15 ft deep. The second depression is 270 feet east of the first. It is small and round, with a diameter of 22.5 ft and a depth of 2 ft. These depressions were intensively surveyed for archaeological resources and no prehistoric or historic artifacts were identified in or around them.



Figure 3. Overview of project area facing north

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATION

Three archaeological resources have been identified within the project area. All three are isolated pieces of historic glass. No further archaeological resources were identified during the current investigation. However, buried cultural resources may exist within the project areas that do not possess surface indicators. It is possible, although unlikely, that resources could be unearthed during project excavation activities. If cultural materials (e.g., bone, chipped stone, ground stone, shell, glass, ceramics, metal) are located below surface during the construction of the project, work should be halted in that area so that a qualified archaeologist can determine the significance of the find. Design of a treatment plan and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer may be required to appropriately mitigate any unanticipated discoveries. Treatment measures typically include development of avoidance strategies, capping with fill material, or mitigation of impacts through data recovery programs, such as excavation or detailed documentation, or other mitigation measures, following standard archaeological procedures.

If human remains are exposed during construction, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Pub. Res. Code 5097.98. Construction must halt in the area of the discovery of human remains, the area must be protected, and consultation and treatment should occur as prescribed by law. If the coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the coroner must contact the NAHC.

If Native American human remains are discovered during project construction, it will be necessary to comply with state laws relating to the disposition of Native American burials that are under the jurisdiction of the NAHC (Pub. Res. Code Section 5097). For remains of Native American origin, code 5097.98 states that no further excavation or disturbance shall take place until:

The Most Likely Descendent of the deceased Native American(s) has made a recommendation to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work regarding means of treating or disposing of the human remains and any associated grave goods, with appropriate dignity, as provided in the Pub. Res. Code Section 5097.98; or the NAHC is unable to identify a Most Likely Descendent or the descendent fails to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the Commission. In consultation with the Most Likely Descendent, the project archaeologist and the project proponent will determine a course of action regarding preservation or excavation of Native American human remains, and this recommendation will be implemented expeditiously. If a Most Likely Descendent cannot be located or does not make a recommendation, the project archaeologist and the project proponent will determine a course of action regarding preservation or excavation of Native American human remains, which will be submitted to the NAHC for review prior to implementation.

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