

# **CULTURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT**

**AVENUE G INDUSTRIAL PROJECT**

**CITY OF LANCASTER**

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

**LSA**

January 2022

# CULTURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

## AVENUE G INDUSTRIAL PROJECT CITY OF LANCASTER LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Prepared for:

Mr. David H. Clark, President  
Warmington Properties  
3090 Pullman Street  
Costa Mesa, California 92626

Prepared by:

Riordan Goodwin, RA  
LSA Associates, Inc.  
1500 Iowa Avenue, Suite 200  
Riverside, California 92507  
(951) 781-9310

LSA Project No. WHO2103

### **National Archaeological Database Information:**

*Type of Study:* Records Search, Survey, Archaeological Assessment

*USGS Quadrangle:* Lancaster, California

*Acreage:* ~72



January 2022

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## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

LSA was retained by Warmington Properties to conduct a cultural resources assessment for the proposed Avenue G Industrial Project in the City of Lancaster (City), Los Angeles County, California. The City required this study as part of the environmental review process to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

A cultural resources records search, additional research, and a field survey were conducted for the project area. One marginal cultural resource was previously documented within the project area. Although the location of this resource was not reacquired, it is minimal, not a “historic resource” per CEQA and any project impact to it is inconsequential. The project area has been previously surveyed twice as part of other studies and no other cultural resources were identified. Therefore, no further cultural resources studies or monitoring are recommended.

In the event buried cultural materials are encountered during earthmoving operations associated with the project, all work in that area should be halted or diverted until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the finds.

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.

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## INTRODUCTION

LSA was retained by Warmington Properties to conduct a cultural resources assessment for the proposed Avenue G Industrial Project in the City of Lancaster (City), Los Angeles County, California. This assessment was completed pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code Chapter 2.6, Section 21083.2, and California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 3, Article 5, Section 15064.5. The research and field survey were conducted to determine whether the proposed project could adversely affect any resources considered historical resources per CEQA.

The project is bounded by residential and commercial development to the north and east and vacant land to the south and west. The project is depicted on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *Lancaster, California* topographic quadrangle map in Section 5, Township 7 North, Range 12 West, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian (USGS 1993; Figure 1). The project area is one parcel (Assessor's Parcel Number 3114-011-031) totaling approximately 72 acres, and is currently vacant. The proposed project is a commercial center and associated parking.

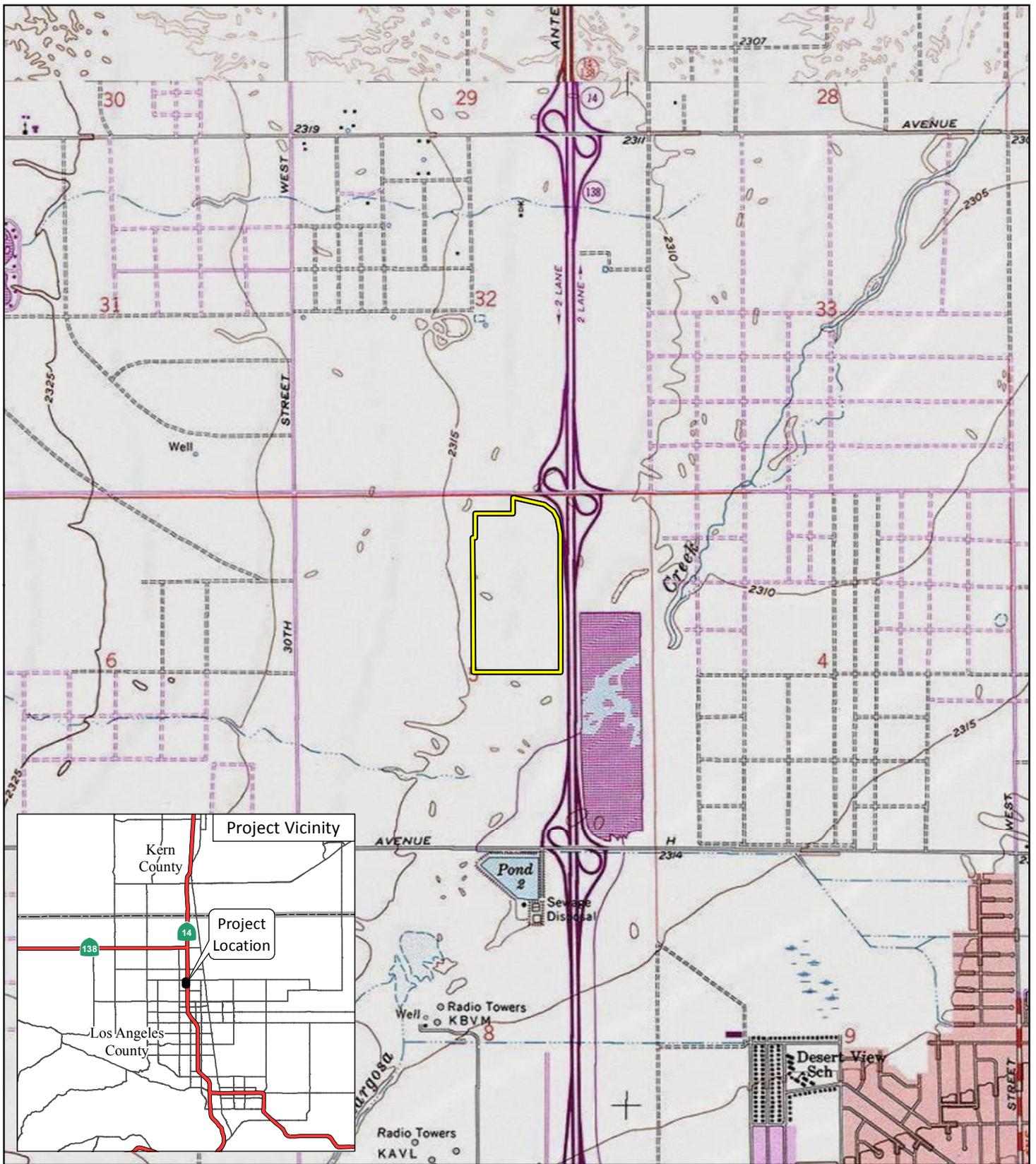


FIGURE 1

LSA

LEGEND

 Project Location



0 1000 2000  
FEET

SOURCE: USGS 7.5' Quad - Lancaster West (1974)

I:\WHO2103\GIS\MXD\ProjLoc\_USGS.mxd (1/10/2022)

Lancaster Avenue G Industrial Project  
Project Location and Vicinity

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## SETTING

### NATURAL SETTING

#### Climate and Watershed

The project region is characterized by an arid climate, with dry, hot summers and moderate winters. Rainfall ranges from 5 to 8 inches annually (Beck and Haase 1974). Precipitation usually occurs in the form of winter rain, with warm monsoonal showers in summer. The project area is located on the western periphery of a braided portion of Amargosa Creek, which drains northeast.

#### Biology

At an average elevation of approximately 3,110 feet, the project is within the Lower Sonoran Life Zone of California (Schoenherr 1992), which ranges from below sea level to 3,500 feet in elevation. Common wild plants observed included creosote, Joshua tree, and sparse xeric grass. Extensive fauna are known locally, including many endemic species of reptiles, birds, and insects.

#### Geology

The project is located in the Mojave Desert Geomorphic Province, which forms an elevated alluvial plain with large expanses of desert punctuated by isolated mountain ranges (California Geological Survey 2002; Norris and Webb 1976). This province is located on a wedge-shaped fault block bounded by the San Andreas Fault Zone and Transverse Ranges to the southwest and the Garlock Fault Zone and Tehachapi Mountains to the north (California Geological Survey 2002; Norris and Webb 1976). The geology of this province is similar to that of the Sierra Nevada, with numerous rock outcroppings useful to the Native Americans for resource milling, shelter, and ceremonial art.

### CULTURAL SETTING

#### Prehistory

Chronologies of prehistoric cultural change in Southern California have been attempted numerous times, and several are reviewed in Moratto (1984). No single description is universally accepted as the various chronologies are based primarily on material developments identified by researchers familiar with sites in a particular region and variation exists essentially due to the differences in those items found at the sites. Small differences occur over time and space, which combine to form patterns that are variously interpreted.

Currently, two primary regional culture chronology syntheses are commonly referenced in the archaeological literature. The first, Wallace (1955), describes four cultural horizons or time periods: Horizon I – Early Man (9000–6000 BC), Horizon II – Milling Stone Assemblages (6000–3000 BC), Horizon III – Intermediate Cultures (3000 BC–AD 500), and Horizon IV – Late Prehistoric Cultures (AD 500–historic contact). This chronology was refined (Wallace 1978) using absolute chronological dates obtained after 1955.

The second cultural chronology (Warren 1968) is based broadly on Southern California prehistoric cultures and was also revised (Warren 1984; Warren and Crabtree 1986). Warren's (1984) chronology

includes five periods in prehistory: Lake Mojave (7000–5000 BC), Pinto (5000–2000 BC), Gypsum (2000 BC–AD 500), Saratoga Springs (AD 500–1200), and Protohistoric (AD 1200–historic contact). Changes in settlement pattern and subsistence focus are viewed as cultural adaptations to a changing environment, which begins with gradual environmental warming in the late Pleistocene, continues with the desiccation of the desert lakes, followed by a brief return to pluvial conditions, and concludes with a general warming and drying trend, with periodic reversals that continue to the present (Warren and Crabtree 1986).

## Ethnography

The project is located within the traditional cultural territory of the Serrano (Bean and Smith 1978; Kroeber 1925). Tribal territories were somewhat fluid and changed over time. Like other Native American groups in Southern California, they were semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers who subsisted by exploitation of seasonably available plant and animal resources. The first written accounts of Native American groups in Southern California were by Spanish missionaries in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Later documentation of the Serrano was by Benedict (1924), Bright (1975), Strong (1929), and many others.

### *Serrano*

The Serrano lived in the area generally north of Cahuilla territory (western Riverside County), occupying much of present-day San Bernardino County and northeastern Los Angeles County, but there is some overlap in the perceived ancestral areas. The term Serrano is Spanish for “mountaineer” or “highlander” and was given to people who inhabited the areas of the San Bernardino Mountains that had no associated mission.

The Serrano were hunter-gatherers who relied on the women to do much of the collecting while the men hunted and captured various animals. Although they exploited whatever flora was available in the area they happened to be, generally they collected acorns, pinion nuts, honey, mesquite, yucca, and cactus fruits, in addition to various seeds, bulbs, and roots. Plants were consumed both raw and cooked. Food processing involved the use of manos, metates, mortars, and pestles. Antelope, deer, mountain sheep, rabbits, and rodents were killed and captured, and the most common hunting implements were the bow and arrow, throwing stick, traps, snares, and deadfalls. Meat was prepared in earth ovens, by boiling in watertight baskets, or by parching (Bean and Smith 1978).

Most of the Serrano lived in small villages near reliable sources of water (springs, perennial seeps, streams, and small lakes) (Benedict 1924). They lived in tule-covered, dome-shaped structures and had ceremonial houses and sweat houses for their religious activities. The basic settlement unit was a village with a number of small satellite resource-gathering camps.

The Serrano had a patrilineal society composed of clans and families linked by both ancestry and ceremony. Three clans divided this group: the Mohineyam, the Yuhevatam, and the Maringayam. The Serrano were also divided by moieties: the Wildcats and the Coyotes.

With the Spanish intrusion came a drastic change in lifestyle for the natives of Southern California. Incorporation of the indigenous populations into the mission system led to the disruption of native cultures and changes in subsistence and land use practices. Mission San Gabriel, established in 1771, probably had a limited effect on the Serrano population until the San Bernardino Asistencia were

established in what would become Redlands around 1820 (Harley 1988). Within a short time, the missions controlled many ranchos where Indians lived and worked.

## History

In California, the historic era is generally divided into three periods: the Spanish Period (1769–1821), the Mexican Period (1821–1848), and the American Period (1848–present). As the trace historically ambiguous refuse identified within the project area dates to the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see Results below), this historic context will focus on the local community.

### *Lancaster (from City of Lancaster 2022 except where noted)*

The community had its origin as watering stop in along Southern Pacific (SP) Railroad's line between San Francisco and Los Angeles completed in 1876. The name was bestowed upon the town by a Mr. Purnell of the SP, who was in charge of naming stations. Following the drilling of an artesian well by the railroad (that was sufficiently productive to foster agriculture) and subsequent establishment of a post office, newspaper, several stores, a church, hotel and a saloon, Lancaster prospered by the end of the 1880s (Salley 1977). The 1890s would bring drought to the Antelope Valley that resulted in the decline of agriculture and the local economy (and ultimately the population), along with the discovery of lucrative mineral resources in the surrounding hills and mountains (gold and borax).

The advent of U.S. Army Air Corps use of Rogers Dry Lake to the northeast as a training field (Muroc Bombing and Gunnery Range) in 1933 initiated a long-term presence of what would become the U.S. Air Force. The base was used for training through World War II, and flight testing of prototype aircraft was also initiated during this time. Following the fatal crash of Glen W. Edwards (flying a YB-49 aircraft) in 1949, the base was renamed in his honor. The flight test facility grew in the ensuing decades, attracting the aerospace industry to nearby communities. Edwards Air Force Base fostered a second era of prosperity for Lancaster, which was incorporated in 1977.

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## METHODS

### RECORDS SEARCH

On December 14, 2021, the cultural resources records search was conducted for the project area by the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) located at California State University, Fullerton. It included a review of all recorded historic and prehistoric archaeological sites within one mile of the project, as well as a review of known cultural resource survey and excavation reports. In addition, the California State Historic Property Data File (HPD), which includes the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), California Historical Landmarks (CHL), and California Points of Historical Interest (CPHI), was searched.

### ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

In December 2021, LSA Senior Archaeologist Riordan Goodwin, RA, conducted additional research, including review of historic period aerial photographs and maps.

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SURVEY

On December 20 and 21, 2021, Mr. Goodwin conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of the project parcel. The property was surveyed in systematic parallel transects spaced by approximately 10 meters (approximately 35 feet). Special attention was paid to areas of exposed soil for surface artifacts and features and rodent burrows for evidence of archaeosols. The purpose of this survey was to identify and document, prior to the beginning of ground-disturbing activities, any cultural resources and thus also to identify any area(s) that might be sensitive for buried cultural resources.

## RESULTS

### RECORDS SEARCH

Data from the SCCIC indicate there have been 13 cultural resource studies previously conducted within one mile of the proposed project, two of which included the project area, which has previously been surveyed (Everson 2016). Isolated historic glass fragments (19-100318) are documented within the project parcel, and an additional 13 have been recorded within one mile, including minimal prehistoric resources and a historic period water conveyance system, refuse scatters, and isolated artifacts (Table A). The nearest prehistoric resource (19-100407) was documented approximately 400 meters (0.25 mile) east of the project area.

**Table A: Resources Within One Mile of the Project Area with DPR Documentation**

Primary #	Trinomial	OHP #	Site Description	Status Code
19-001819	CA-LAN-001819H	—	Historic period road alignment	—
19-002822	CA-LAN-002822H	—	Historic period refuse scatter	—
19-002823	CA-LAN-002823H	—	Historic period refuse scatter	—
19-002824	CA-LAN-002824H	—	Historic period refuse scatter, water conveyance feature	—
19-003044	CA-LAN-003044H	—	Historic period refuse scatter	—
19-004751	CA-LAN-004751H	—	Historic period refuse scatter	—
19-100318*	CA-LAN-100318	—	Historic period isolated artifact	—
19-100319	CA-LAN-100319	—	Historic period minimal refuse scatter	—
19-100407	CA-LAN-100407	—	Prehistoric isolated artifact	—
19-100408	CA-LAN-100408	—	Prehistoric isolated artifact	—
19-100409	CA-LAN-100409	—	Prehistoric isolated artifact	—
19-100410	CA-LAN-100410	—	Prehistoric isolated artifact	—
19-101395	CA-LAN-101395	—	Historic period isolated artifact	—
19-101396	CA-LAN-101396	—	Historic period wall/fence feature	—

\* Within project area

### ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

Review of aerial photographs and maps indicates that there were never any buildings or structures within the project area during the historic period (prior to 1970) (NETRonline var.).

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SURVEY

Mr. Goodwin conducted the pedestrian survey of the entire project area. Visibility was fair at approximately 75 percent with the surface partially obscured by vegetation. The entire southern fifth of project area has been predominantly subjected to surface disturbance from grading of a parking area with a portion near State Route 14 completely obscured by landscape dumping. Although the historic period isolated glass fragments (19-100318) were not relocated, temporally ambiguous refuse

along with modern refuse was noted on the surface throughout the project parcel. The observed soils are silty alluvium in nature. No cultural resources were identified.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

A cultural resources records search, additional research, and a field survey were conducted for the project area. No cultural resources have been previously documented within or adjacent to the project area. One marginal cultural resource was previously documented within the project area. Although the location of this resource was not reacquired, it is minimal, not a “historic resource” per CEQA, and any project impact to it inconsequential. The project area has been previously surveyed twice as part of other studies and no other cultural resources were identified. Therefore, no further cultural resources studies or monitoring are recommended.

In the event that archaeological materials are encountered during construction, all construction work should be halted and a qualified archaeologist consulted to determine the appropriate treatment of the discovery (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15064.5(f)).

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

### RECORDS SEARCH BIBLIOGRAPHY

## Report List

WHO2103

Report No.	Other IDs	Year	Author(s)	Title	Affiliation	Resources
LA-02054		1990	Love, Bruce and William H. De Witt	Cultural Resources Evaluation for Lancaster Eir Group 13 Lancaster, Los Angeles County	Pyramid Archaeology	19-001819, 19-100318, 19-100319
LA-02140		1989	Alexander, Molly B.	An Archaeological Investigation of a 448+/- Acre" Parcel in the City of Lancaster, Los Angeles County		19-001819
LA-05322		2000	Norwood, Richard H.	Phase I Cultural Resource Investigation for a 60 Acre Property 20th Street West and West Avenue G, Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California	RT Factfinders	19-001819, 19-100318
LA-05323		2000	Norwood, Richard H.	Phase I Cultural Resource Investigation for a 200 Acre Property "parcel 3" 30th Street West and West Avenue G, Lancaster, Los Angeles County California	RT Factfinders	19-001819, 19-100318, 19-100319
LA-05799		2001	McKenna, Jeanette A.	City of Lancaster, Avenue G Improvements and Associated Elements	McKenna et al.	19-001819, 19-002823, 19-002824, 19-002825, 19-100219, 19-100318, 19-100408, 19-100409, 19-100410, 19-100411, 19-100412
LA-07963		2006	Hudlow, Scott M.	A Phase I Cultural Resource Survey for APN 3118-006-024, Property at Avenue H and 20th Street West, City of Lancaster, California	Hudlow Cultural Resource Associates	
LA-07964		2006	Hudlow, Scott M.	A Phase I Cultural Resource Survey for Avenue G-8 Storm Drain Improvements, Between 30th and 50th Streets West, City of Lancaster, California	Hudlow Cultural Resource Associates	
LA-08163		2005	Hudlow, Scott M.	A Phase I Cultural Resource Survey for Property at 30th Street West and Avenue H-8, City of Lancaster, California	Hudlow Cultural Resource Associates	
LA-08180		2001	Chandler, Evelyn N., Cotterman, Cary D., Mason, Roger D, and Van Hemelryck, Valerie M.	Archaeological Survey for the Proposed Installation of the Trunk "f" Sewer and Rosamond Outfall Relief Trunk Sewer Located Between Lancaster and Rosamond, Los Angeles County, California	Chambers Group, Inc.	19-001819, 19-002822, 19-003044, 19-100318, 19-100319, 19-100395, 19-100407
LA-09679	Paleo -	2008	Loftus, Shannon L. and Robin D. Turner	Cultural Resource And Paleontological Assessment, North Los Angeles / Kern County, Regional Recycled Water Master Plan, Los Angeles / East Kern Counties, California.	ArchaeoPaleo Resource Management, Inc.	19-003860, 19-003861, 19-100646, 19-100647, 19-100648, 19-100649, 19-100650, 19-100651, 19-100652

## Report List

WHO2103

Report No.	Other IDs	Year	Author(s)	Title	Affiliation	Resources
LA-11455		2011	Orfila, Rebecca	Archaeological Survey for the Southern California Edison Company: Thirty-nine (39) deteriorated power poles near Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California	RSO Consulting	
LA-12378		2013	Bonner, Wayne	Cultural Resources Records Search and Site Visit Results for AT&T Mobility, LLC Candidate IM0016, 2551 West Avenue H, Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California	EAS	19-001819, 19-100318, 19-100319
LA-13163		2014	Brunzell, David	Cultural Resources Assessment of the Avenue H Project, Lancaster, Los Angeles County, California (BCR Consulting Project No. TRF1405)	BCR Consulting LLC	