

# Phase I Cultural Resources Report

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23161 Mill Creek Project, City of Laguna Hills,  
Orange County, California

**Prepared For:**

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**Prepared By:**



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## Executive Summary

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South Environmental was retained to complete a Phase I cultural resources assessment for the 23161 Mill Creek Project (proposed project, project site) located in the City of Laguna Hills, Orange County, California. This study includes the results of a California Historical Resources Information Center (CHRIS) records search of the project site and a one-half-mile radius; a California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File search and informational letters to local tribes; and an intensive-level pedestrian survey of the project site by a qualified archaeologist. This study was completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 5024.1, Title 14 California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, and PRC Sections 21083.2 and 21084.1.

No cultural resources were identified within the project site as a result of the CHRIS records search, NAHC Sacred Lands File search, Native American coordination, and pedestrian survey by a qualified archaeologist. The entire project site has been disturbed by grading and previous development. Therefore, while the project site is unlikely to contain intact buried archaeological deposits, it is always possible to encounter resources during project-related ground disturbance. Standard Regulatory Requirements for archaeological resources and human remains have been provided in Section 6.2. With implementation of these requirements, impacts to archaeological and historical resources would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

# 1 Introduction

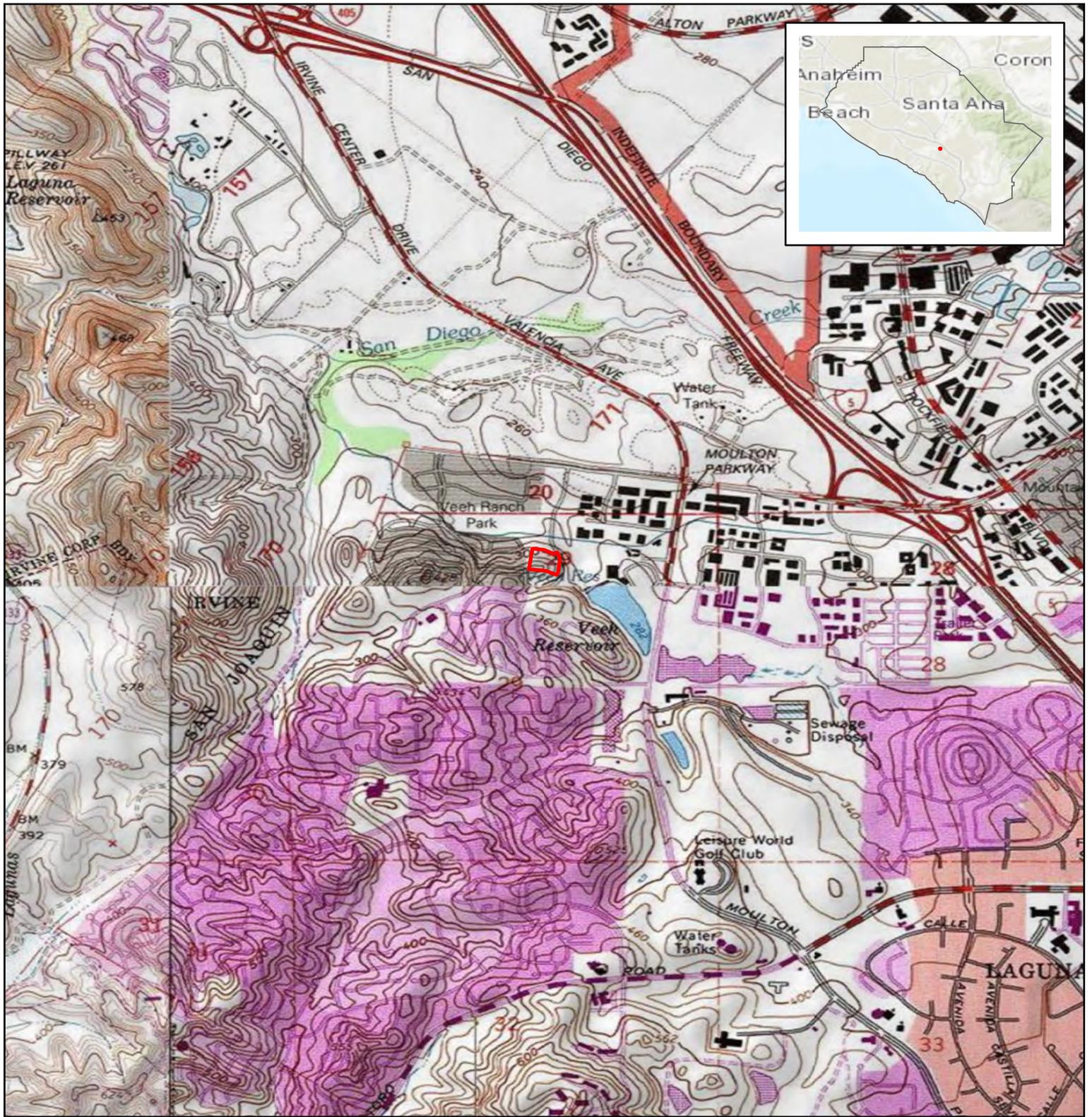
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This report was prepared by South Environmental Archaeologist Samantha Jovanovic, MA, MS, Principal Archaeologist Kevin Hunt, BA, and Archaeological Principal Investigator Samantha Murray, MA, RPA, who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for Prehistoric and Historic Archaeology. Resumes for all authors are provided in Appendix C.

## 1.1 Project Location

The project site falls within the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *San Juan Capistrano, California* 7.5-minute quadrangle map in Section 29 of Township 06 South and Range 08 West (Figure 1). The project site encompasses approximately 2.43 acres occupying Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 588-142-07, located at 23161 Mill Creek Drive in the City of Laguna Hills in Orange County, California (Figure 2). The project site is bound by Mill Creek Road to the east and north, parking lots and commercial buildings to the south, and residential development to the west. A school is located across Mill Creek Road to the east. Veeh Reservoir is downslope to the east, below other commercial buildings within Lake Hills Corporate Park.



Source: ESRI USA Topo Maps and World Topo Map 2024

23161 Mill Creek Project

# Figure 1. Project Location Map

Project Site



0 1,000 2,000 Feet  
 Scale: 1:24,000



Project Location is within Laguna Hills, California, in Orange County on the USGS San Juan Capistrano 7.5-minute quadrangle map in Section 29 of Township 06 South and Range 08 West

Center Coordinate (Decimal Degrees):  
 Latitude: 33.6259973N Longitude: -117.7356113W



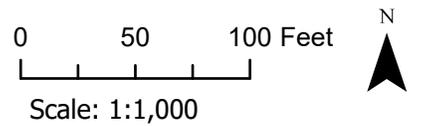


Source: Bing Aerial Imagery 2024

23161 Mill Creek Project

### Figure 2. Project Site Detail Map

 Project Site



## 1.2 Project Description

The proposed project consists of the demolition of the existing office building and associated surface parking lot and landscaping to construct 36 single-family attached condominium residential units, parking, on-site roadways, and associated infrastructure at a density of 14.8 dwelling units per acre (du/ac). Two units will be deed-restricted for very low-income households, while the remaining 34 units are designated as above-moderate income. The proposed project would be constructed on the 2.43-acre parcel located at 23161 Mill Creek Drive. The project site has a City of Laguna Hills General Plan land use designation of Mixed Use and is zoned MXU – Mixed Use.

### **Architecture**

The 36 residential units will feature two plan types – Plan 1 and Plan 2. Each plan type will feature four bedrooms and four bathrooms. Eighteen (18) units will consist of Plan 1, which has a total unit area of 1,991 square feet, while the remaining 18 units will consist of Plan 2, which will have a total unit area of 2,033 square feet. The proposed project has a density of 14.8 du/ac, 64 percent maximum lot coverage, 300 feet minimum lot width, and 360 feet minimum lot depth. The proposed project will also build to a minimum setback of 20 feet to the front, five feet to the side (interior), 20 feet to the side street, and 7.5 feet to the rear. The proposed project also includes 14,500 square feet of private open space in the form of balconies and private yards.

### **Landscaping**

The proposed project includes a landscape coverage of 20 percent and a minimum building separation of 6.5 feet. Landscaping will be distributed throughout the project site in the form of large accent trees, medium accent trees, perimeter screening trees, small accent trees, shrub and groundcover, and vines and espaliers.

### **Walls/Fences**

The proposed project is designed to include a concrete masonry block wall with cap or a mechanically stabilized earth wall surrounding the project site, a 3-foot 6-inch high steel cable guard rail along the western and southern project site boundaries, a 6-feet high split face block wall with precision cap in between each unit, and a 6-feet high tubular steel view fence along the northern and eastern project site boundaries. The entrance will include a 7-feet high cultured stone veneer entry wall with cap.

### **Utilities**

The proposed project includes a series of area drains and catch basins to collect street flow. The southern half of the project site drains out to Mill Creek Drive through a proposed parkway culvert near the proposed driveway. The north half of the project site drains out to Mill Creek Drive through a second proposed parkway culvert near the northeast corner of the project site.

## **Parking/Site Access**

The proposed project is designed to provide 90 parking spaces in the forms of attached garages and uncovered parking stalls. Access to the project site is proposed via one full-access gated driveway along Mill Creek Drive. The existing driveway at the project site will be modified to include a gate entry with call box, a monument signage wall, separate entrance and exit points, and fire lane entrance signs. The driveway will be a minimum of 40 feet wide and features a gated entry and exit.

## **1.3 Project Study Area**

The archaeological study area is the entirety of the approximately 2.43-acre project site and includes all areas where ground disturbance is expected to occur as a result of new construction.

## **1.4 Regulatory Setting**

### **1.4.1 State**

#### **California Register of Historical Resources**

In California, the term "historical resource" includes but is not limited to "any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which is historically or archaeologically significant, or is significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California" (California PRC Section 5020.1(j)). In 1992, the California legislature established the CRHR "to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the state's historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change" (California PRC Section 5024.1(a)). The criteria for listing resources on the CRHR were expressly developed to be in accordance with previously established criteria developed for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), enumerated below. According to California PRC Section 5024.1(c)(1-4), a resource is considered historically significant if it (i) retains "substantial integrity," and (ii) meets at least one of the following criteria:

- (1) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage.
- (2) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
- (3) 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.
- (4) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In order to understand the historic importance of a resource, sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with the resource. A resource less than

50 years old may be considered for listing in the CRHR if it can be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand its historical importance (see 14 CCR 4852(d)(2)).

The CRHR protects cultural resources by requiring evaluations of the significance of prehistoric and historic resources. The criteria for the CRHR are nearly identical to those for the NRHP, and properties listed or formally designated as eligible for listing in the NRHP are automatically listed in the CRHR, as are the state landmarks and points of interest. The CRHR also includes properties designated under local ordinances or identified through local historical resource surveys.

## **California Environmental Quality Act**

As described further below, the following CEQA statutes and CEQA Guidelines are of relevance to the analysis of archaeological, historic, and tribal cultural resources:

- California PRC Section 21083.2(g) defines “unique archaeological resource.”
- California PRC Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) define “historical resources.” In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) defines the phrase “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource.” It also defines the circumstances when a project would materially impair the significance of an historical resource.
- California PRC Section 21074(a) defines “tribal cultural resources.”
- California PRC Section 5097.98 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) set forth standards and steps to be employed following the accidental discovery of human remains in any location other than a dedicated ceremony.
- California PRC Sections 21083.2(b)-(c) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4 provide information regarding the mitigation framework for archaeological and historic resources, including examples of preservation-in-place mitigation measures; preservation-in-place is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to significant archaeological sites because it maintains the relationship between artifacts and the archaeological context and may also help avoid conflict with religious or cultural values of groups associated with the archaeological site(s).

More specifically, under CEQA, a project may have a significant effect on the environment if it may cause “a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” (California PRC Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)). If a site is either listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or if it is included in a local register of historic resources or identified as significant in a historical resources survey (meeting the requirements of California PRC Section 5024.1(q)), it is a “historical resource” and is presumed to be historically or culturally significant for purposes of CEQA (California PRC Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)). The lead agency is not precluded from determining that a resource is a historical resource even if it does not fall within this presumption (California PRC Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)).

A “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” reflecting a significant effect under CEQA means “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(1); California PRC Section 5020.1(q)). In turn, CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(b)(2) states the significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project:

1. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; or
2. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the PRC or its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the PRC, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or
3. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA.

Pursuant to these sections, the CEQA inquiry begins with evaluating whether a project site contains any “historical resources,” then evaluates whether that project will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource such that the resource’s historical significance is materially impaired.

If it can be demonstrated that a project will cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require reasonable efforts be made to permit any or all of these resources to be preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state. To the extent that they cannot be left undisturbed, mitigation measures are required (California PRC Section 21083.2[a], [b], and [c]).

California PRC Section 21083.2(g) defines a unique archaeological resource as an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.

3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

Impacts to non-unique archaeological resources are generally not considered a significant environmental impact (California PRC section 21083.2(a); CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c)(4)). However, if a non-unique archaeological resource qualifies as tribal cultural resource (California PRC Section 21074(c), 21083.2(h)), further consideration of significant impacts is required. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 assigns special importance to human remains and specifies procedures to be used when Native American remains are discovered. As described below, these procedures are detailed in California PRC Section 5097.98.

### **California State Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52)**

AB 52 amended PRC Section 5097.94 and added PRC Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 21084.3. Section 4 of AB 52 adds Sections 21074(a) and (b) to the PRC, which address tribal cultural resources and cultural landscapes. Section 21074(a) defines tribal cultural resources as one of the following:

(1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:

(A) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.

(B) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.

(2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Section 1(a)(9) of AB 52 establishes that “a substantial adverse change to a tribal cultural resource has a significant effect on the environment.” Effects on tribal cultural resources should be considered under CEQA. Section 6 of AB 52 adds Section 21080.3.2 to the PRC, which states that parties may propose mitigation measures “capable of avoiding or substantially lessening potential significant impacts to a tribal cultural resource or alternatives that would avoid significant impacts to a tribal cultural resource.”

### **California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5**

California law protects Native American burials, skeletal remains, and associated grave goods, regardless of their antiquity, and provides for the sensitive treatment and disposition of those remains. California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that if human remains are discovered in any

place other than a dedicated cemetery, no further disturbance or excavation of the site or nearby area reasonably suspected to contain human remains can occur until the county coroner has examined the remains (Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5(b)). PRC Section 5097.98 also outlines the process to be followed in the event that remains are discovered. If the coroner determines or has reason to believe the remains are those of a Native American, the coroner must contact the NAHC within 24 hours (Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5(c)). The NAHC will notify the "most likely descendant." With the permission of the landowner, the most likely descendant may inspect the site of discovery. The inspection must be completed within 48 hours of notification of the most likely descendant by the NAHC. The most likely descendant may recommend means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and items associated with Native Americans.

## 1.4.2 Local

### **Laguna Hills General Plan**

#### Conservation and Open Space Element

The Conservation and Open Space Element of the Laguna Hills General Plan (City of Laguna Hills 2009) includes discussion and policies regarding the preservation and value of cultural resources. Specifically, this element states "Cultural resources that reflect the history of a community, from descendants of the earliest Native Americans to later explorers, settlers, and immigrants, are important to the community and, therefore, warrant protection by the City."

"The City will continue to review City of Laguna Hills General Plan conservation and Open space COS-15 future development proposals to ensure that cultural resources (including prehistoric, historic, and paleontological) are conserved in compliance with CEQA requirements" (City of Laguna Hills 2009).

**Policy COS-1.15:** Recognize that archaeological and paleontological resources are nonrenewable resources worthy of preservation.

**Policy COS-2.7:** Promote and expand the link between recreation and educational activities by exploring opportunities tied to sites of paleontological or archaeological interest and other environmentally sensitive areas.

## 2 Environmental Setting

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Regionally, the project site is located in south Orange County approximately 6.98 miles inland of the Pacific Ocean. Locally, the site is located 1.4 miles south of Interstate 405, 0.8-mile southwest of Interstate 5, 2.55 miles north of State Route 73, and 1.16 miles east of State Route 133. The project site is within a developed urban setting with an existing development throughout the entire project site that includes two office buildings, a parking lot, and ornamental landscaping throughout. The site is also surrounded by dense urban development with similar commercial buildings, parking lots, and a residential neighborhood. Prior to the region's development, coastal sage scrub, grassland, and south oak woodland plant communities were likely present (Munz and Keck 1975).

The project site is at an elevation of approximately 335 feet above mean sea level (amsl) near the northern edge and slopes upward to 360 feet amsl near the center and south end (USGS 2024). The climate in the region is Mediterranean, with average summer high temperatures (°Fahrenheit) in the low-80s and average winter lows in the mid-40s. Average annual rainfall is approximately 14 inches with most of the precipitation occurring between December and March, with almost no precipitation between June and September (City of Laguna Hills 2024a; NOAA 2024).

The site is located on the eastern flank of the San Joaquin Hills, which are part of the Peninsular Range. The Peninsular Ranges geomorphic province extends southward from the Los Angeles Basin to the tip of Baja California and is characterized by elongated northwest-trending mountain ranges separated by sediment-floored valleys (Yerkes et al. 1965). The site sits atop the Sespe Formation, a widespread fossiliferous non-marine sedimentary geologic unit intermixed with metamorphosed marine sedimentary rock that formed during the Miocene era. The Sespe Formation includes Oligocene-aged nonmarine (continental) sedimentary rocks, comprised of well consolidated sandstone, shale, and conglomerate. Adjacent geologic units include generally unconsolidated, undifferentiated Quaternary alluvium and marine deposits of Pleistocene to Holocene age (California Department of Conservation 2015).

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soils Database there is one major soil complex within the study area (USDA/NRCS 2024): Alo variant clay, 15 to 30 percent slopes. These soils occur in the entire project site and have a parent material of residuum weathered from sedimentary rock (USDA/NRCS 2024).

## 3 Cultural Setting

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### 3.1 Prehistoric Context

While many chronological sequences have been developed to describe cultural changes in Southern California, the following builds on Wallace (1955, 1978), who developed a prehistoric chronology for the Southern California coastal region that is still widely used today. Four periods are presented in this sequence: Early Man, Milling Stone, Intermediate, and Late Prehistoric. The summary of prehistoric chronological sequences for Southern California coastal and near-coastal areas presented below is a combination of Wallace (1955) and Warren (1968) as well as more recent studies.

#### 3.1.1 Early Man Horizon (ca. 10,000 – 6,000 B.C.)

Numerous pre-8,000 B.C. sites have been identified along the mainland coast and Channel Islands of Southern California (Moratto 1984; Erlandson 1991; Rick et al. 2001; Johnson et al. 2002; Jones and Klar 2007). The Arlington Springs site on Santa Rosa Island produced human femurs dated to approximately 13,000 years ago (Johnson et al. 2002). The most widely accepted dates for archaeological sites on the southern California coast are from two of the northern Channel Islands, located off the coast of Santa Barbara. On San Miguel Island, Daisy Cave clearly establishes the presence of people in this area about 10,000 years ago (Erlandson 1991:105).

Early Man Horizon sites are generally associated with a greater emphasis on hunting than later horizons. Recent data indicate that the Early Man economy was a diverse mixture of hunting and gathering, including a significant focus on aquatic resources in coastal areas and on inland Pleistocene lakeshores (Moratto 1984).

#### 3.1.2 Milling Stone Horizon (6,000 – 3,000 B.C.)

Set during the Altithermal, which began around 6,000 B.C., the Milling Stone Horizon is characterized by changing subsistence strategies in response to drier climate. This included a greater emphasis on plant foods and small game. Extensive seed processing is evident in the dominance of stone grinding implements in contemporary archaeological assemblages; namely, milling stones (metates) and handstones (manos). The mortar and pestle, associated with acorns or other foods processed through pounding, were first used during the Milling Stone Horizon and increased dramatically in later periods (Wallace 1955, 1978; Warren 1968). Other food resources including small and large terrestrial mammals, sea mammals, birds, shellfish and other littoral and estuarine species, near-shore fishes, yucca, agave, and seeds and other plant products (Kowta 1969). Depending on the environmental setting (coastal or inland), food procurement strategies are found to be highly variable (Byrd and Raab 2007:220).

### 3.1.3 Intermediate Horizon (3,000 B.C. – A.D. 500)

The Intermediate Horizon is characterized by a shift toward a hunting and maritime subsistence strategy, as well as greater use of plant foods. During the Intermediate Horizon, a noticeable trend occurred towards a greater adaptation to local resources including a broad variety of fish, land mammals, and sea mammals along the coast. This diversity was reflected in tool kits for hunting, fishing, and processing food and materials, with flake scrapers, drills, various projectile points, and shell fishhooks being manufactured. Mortars and pestles became more common during this period, gradually replacing manos and metates as the dominant milling tool. This change in milling stone technology indicates a transition from the processing and consumption of hard seed resources to the increased reliance on acorns (Glassow et al. 1988; True 1993).

### 3.1.4 Late Prehistoric Horizon (A.D. 500 – European Contact)

The Late Prehistoric Horizon is characterized by an increased diversity of plant food resources and land and sea mammal hunting. Material culture became more complex as demonstrated through more diverse classes of artifacts. During this period, the northern Channel Islands populations further developed craft specializations, including shell bead manufacture, that sustained trade with mainland settlements and with further trading partners to the east, creating a regional economy. Steatite quarried on Santa Catalina Island was used to make stone bowls, pipes, comals, sucking tubes, pendants, beads, and effigies. The lack of pottery in coastal and near-coastal sites implies that ceramic technology was not widely used, or that ceramics were obtained by trade with neighboring groups to the south and east. The lack of widespread pottery manufacture may also be due to the utility of tightly woven and watertight basketry that functioned in much the same way as ceramic vessels.

In areas of inland settlement, by the end of the Intermediate Period, mobility and long-distance migration towards the coast from seasonal camps was replaced by the development of permanent settlements. The period between A.D. 500 and European contact is divided into three regional patterns: Chumash (Santa Barbara and Ventura counties), Takic/Numic (Los Angeles, Orange, and western Riverside counties), and Yuman (San Diego County). Modern Gabrielino/Tongva, Juaneño, and Luiseño people in this region are considered to be the descendants of the Uto-Aztecan, Takic-speaking populations that settled along the California coast during this period (Warren 1968).

## 3.2 Ethnographic Context

### 3.2.1 Gabrielino/Tongva

The project is located within the southern edge of the Gabrielino/Tongva ethnographic territory, less than one mile northwest of Aliso Creek, which is considered the interface with the Juaneño/Acjachemen (Bean and Smith 1978:538; Kroeber 1925: Plate 57). Adjacent Native groups include the Chumash and Tataviam/Alliklik to the north, Serrano and Cahuilla to the east, and Juaneño to the south. Santa Catalina Island (*Pimu*) and San Clemente Island (*Kinki*) are located at the western

extent of Gabrielino ethnographic territory, with the Chumash having occupied most of the northern Channel Islands. The project site is on the eastern flank of the San Joaquin Hills, in the southern end of the traditional Gabrielino/Tongva territory.

Archaeological, linguistic, and genetic evidence documents interaction between the Gabrielino and their neighbors in the form of intermarriage and trade. The term “Gabrielino” denotes those people who were administered by the Spanish at Mission San Gabriel, which included people from the traditional Gabrielino territory as well as other nearby groups (Bean and Smith 1978; Kroeber 1925). Many modern Gabrielino who identify as descendants of the indigenous people who lived within the Los Angeles Basin refer to themselves as Tongva (King 1994:12), but this term is not universally used. This term is used in the remainder of this section to refer to the contact period indigenous inhabitants of the Los Angeles Basin and southern Channel Islands and their descendants. Tongva lands encompassed the greater Los Angeles Basin and three Channel Islands: San Clemente, San Nicolas, and Santa Catalina (Bean and Smith 1978:538; Kroeber 1925:636).

The Tongva language belongs to the Takic branch of the Uto-Aztecan language family, which can be traced to the Great Basin region (Mithun 2004). This language family includes dialects spoken by the nearby Juaneño and Luiseño but is considerably different from those of the Chumash people living to the north and the Diegueño (including Ipai, Tipai, and Kumeyaay) people living to the south in modern San Diego and Imperial Counties. Tongva society was organized along patrilineal non-localized clans, a common Takic pattern. Each clan had a ceremonial leader and contained several lineages.

The Tongva established large permanent villages and smaller satellite camps in locations from the San Gabriel Mountains to the southern Channel Islands and throughout the Los Angeles Basin and Santa Ana Plain. Ethnohistoric work conducted by Stephen O’Neil (2002) suggests a total tribal population of nearly 10,000, roughly twice that of earlier estimates (Bean and Smith 1978:540). The Tongva village of *Kengaa* was located approximately nine miles west of the project site in the vicinity of modern Newport Beach’s back bay (Kroeber 1925; McCawley 1996). The Tongva village of *Pasbenga* was located approximately nine miles northwest of the project site in modern Santa Ana (Kroeber 1925; McCawley 1996).

Tongva subsistence was oriented around acorns supplemented by the roots, leaves, seeds, and fruits of a wide variety of plants. Meat sources included large and small mammals, freshwater and saltwater fish, shellfish, birds, reptiles, and insects (Bean and Smith 1978; Langenwaller et al. 2001; Kroeber 1925; McCawley 1996). The Tongva employed a wide variety of tools and implements to gather and hunt food. The digging stick, used to extract roots and tubers, was frequently noted by early European explorers (Rawls 1984). Other tools included the bow and arrow, traps, nets, blinds, throwing sticks and slings, spears, harpoons, and hooks. Like the Chumash, the Tongva made oceangoing plank canoes (known as a *tí’at*) capable of holding six to fourteen people and used for fishing, travel, and trade between the mainland and the Channel Islands. Tule reed canoes were employed for near-shore fishing (Blackburn 1963; McCawley 1996:117-127).

*Chinigchinich*, the last in a series of heroic mythological figures, was central to Tongva religious life at the time of Spanish contact (Kroeber 1925:637–638). The religion was spreading south among other Takic-speaking groups at the same time the Spanish were establishing Christian missions. Elements of *Chinigchinich* suggest it was a syncretic mixture of native and Christian belief and practices (McCawley 1996:143-144).

Prior to European contact and subsequent assimilation, the Tongva practiced burial and cremation funerary traditions. Burial was more common on the Channel Islands and the adjacent mainland coast, while cremation was practiced primarily in the interior (Harrington 1942; McCawley 1996:157). After pressure from Spanish missionaries, cremation essentially ceased during the post-Contact period (McCawley 1996:157).

### 3.3 Historic Context

Post-Contact history for the state of California is generally divided into three periods: the Spanish Period (1769–1822), Mexican Period (1822–1848), and American Period (1848–present).

#### 3.3.1 Spanish Period (1769–1822)

In search of the legendary Northwest Passage, Spanish explorer Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo stopped in 1542 at present-day San Diego Bay. Cabrillo explored the shorelines of present-day Catalina Island as well as San Pedro and Santa Monica Bays. Much of the present California and Oregon coastline was mapped and recorded in the next half-century by Spanish naval officer Sebastián Vizcaíno. Spain laid claim to California based on the surveys conducted by Cabrillo and Vizcaíno (Bancroft 1885:96–99; Gumprecht 1999:35).

The 1769 overland expedition by Captain Gaspar de Portolá marks the start of California’s Historic period. With a band of 64 soldiers, missionaries, Baja (lower) California Native Americans, and Mexican civilians, Portolá established the Presidio of San Diego, a fortified military outpost, as the first Spanish settlement in Alta California. In July of 1769, while Portolá was exploring southern California, Franciscan Father Junípero Serra founded Mission San Diego de Alcalá at Presidio Hill, the first of the 21 missions that would be established in Alta California by the Spanish and the Franciscan Order between 1769 and 1823.

By the time the Spanish started colonizing Alta California, they had developed an effective system for establishing resilient, long-lasting settlements. With the goal of reaching self-sustainability as quickly as possible, the Spanish used a three-pronged approach comprising military presence to enforce order and mount a defense against attack, commerce for the production and trade of necessary goods, and religion (Kimbrow and Costello 2009). This approach was meant to build stable communities that could sustain and protect themselves. With time, these communities expanded into towns and, eventually, modern cities such as San Diego, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, and San Jose (Kimbrow and Costello 2009).

In 54 years, the Spanish built twenty-one missions, four presidios and three pueblos in Alta California (Kimbrow and Costello 2009). The mission system was fraught with successes and failures. As great churches and new crops rose from the ground, often the local Native American people and culture fell to disease and acculturation in droves (Kimbrow and Costello 2009:1). However, experiences varied between the missions depending on the managerial personnel, tribal inclinations, and political and environmental events (Kimbrow and Costello 2009:1).

In 1774, Juan Bautista de Anza led an overland expedition northward from Sonora, Mexico, to explore the inland areas of California and find an acceptable passage to Monterey in Alta California (National Park Service [NPS] 1996). In October 1775, de Anza led a group of 240 immigrants along the same 1,200-mile route, traversing the San Jacinto Valley and crossing the Santa Ana River near the modern City of Riverside before arriving at Mission San Gabriel in the first week of January 1776 (Anza Trail Foundation 2024). The group successfully made it to Monterey in April 1776 with only one fatality. Some continued to San Francisco to establish the presidio and mission on the peninsula (NPS 1996).

### 3.3.2 Mexican Period (1822–1848)

After more than a decade of intermittent rebellion and warfare, New Spain (Mexico and the California territory) won independence from Spain in 1821. In 1822, the Mexican legislative body in California ended isolationist policies designed to protect the Spanish monopoly on trade, and decreed California ports open to foreign merchants (Dallas 1955:14).

Extensive land grants were established in the interior during the Mexican Period, in part to increase the population inland from the more settled coastal areas where the Spanish had first concentrated their colonization efforts (Dallas 1955). The secularization of the missions following Mexico's independence from Spain resulted in the subdivision of former mission lands and establishment of many additional ranchos. During the supremacy of the ranchos (1834–1848), landowners largely focused on the cattle industry and devoted large tracts to grazing. Cattle hides became a primary southern California export, providing a commodity to trade for goods from the east and other areas in the United States and Mexico. The number of nonnative inhabitants increased during this period because of the influx of explorers, trappers, and ranchers associated with the land grants. The rising California population contributed to the introduction and rise of diseases foreign to the Native American population, who had no associated immunities.

In 1842, Rancho Niguel was established in a 13,000-acre land grant to Juan Avila that included modern day cities along Aliso Creek such as Laguna Hills, Aliso Viejo, Laguna Niguel, and Dana Point on which Avila raised cattle herds. After the Mexican-American War, Avila was able to patented his land claim with the United States government (Laguna Beach Historical Society 2024).

### 3.3.3 American Period (1848–Present)

The Mexican–American War ended with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, ushering California into its American Period. California officially became a state with the Compromise of 1850, which also designated Utah and New Mexico (with present-day Arizona) as U.S. Territories.

The Gold Rush began in 1848, and with the influx of people seeking gold, cattle were no longer desired mainly for their hides but also as a source of meat and other goods. During the 1850s cattle boom, rancho vaqueros drove large herds from southern to northern California to feed that region’s burgeoning mining and commercial boom. The cattle boom ended for southern California as neighbor states and territories drove herds to northern California at reduced prices. Operation of the huge ranchos became increasingly difficult, and droughts severely reduced their productivity (Cleland 2005:102–103).

#### **Orange County**

In July 1769, the Portolá expedition traversed the region that became Orange County (Smith 1965). Portolá named the area El Valle de Santa Ana (the Valley of Santa Ana). After Mexican independence from Spain, few ranchos in the future Orange County were granted to Mexican citizens who would cultivate land for the government. After the secularization of the missions by the Mexican government in 1933, nine additional ranchos were granted between 1837 and 1846 (Middlebrook 2024).

The future Orange County remained dominated by ranches in the early American period. In 1862, however, a disastrous flood, smallpox outbreak, and subsequent drought resulted in many large ranch owners as well as farmers losing their properties through inability to pay taxes (Middlebrook 2024). Many of the large ranches were broken up and townships plotted throughout the Santa Ana Valley including Anaheim (1857), Santa Ana (1870), and Orange (1870) (Dumke 1970[1944]:112-115). The Santa Fe Railroad reached Anaheim in 1887, the same year that the Southern Pacific Railroad reached Santa Ana.

The County of Orange was established in 1889 from a 780-acre portion of Los Angeles County that included 40 miles of coastline and some of the best citrus groves in Southern California (Dumke 1970[1944]:118).

Despite significant population growth throughout the early twentieth century, Orange County largely retained its agricultural character. After World War II, inadequate housing supply due to a population boom resulted in many of the agricultural fields and groves being replaced by suburban housing tracts. Construction of the Santa Ana Freeway (Interstate 5) in the 1950s and the Riverside Freeway (State Highway 91) in the early 1960s established further transportation routes to and through Orange County. With its mild climate, miles of beach, and development of amusement parks such as Disneyland and Knott’s Berry Farm, the county became known as a tourist destination in the late

twentieth century. In the twenty-first century Orange County continues development and redevelopment of aging urban and suburban areas.

### **Laguna Hills (post-1830s)**

During Spanish and throughout Mexican occupation, the area around Laguna Hills was used for grazing herds of cows with large land grants forming Rancho San Joaquin, Rancho Loma de Santiago, and Rancho Niguel (City of Laguna Hills 2024b). When cattle became unprofitable, sheep took their place. Lewis Moulton from Boston leased Rancho Niguel in 1874 and purchased it in 1895 along with 9,000 more acres, increasing the Rancho from Don Juan Avila's original 13,000 to 22,000 acres. Moulton and his business partner Jean Pierre Daguerre raised sheep, cattle, and crops on the land. This use was continued into the twentieth century until the 1960s when the land was broken up into smaller lots and developed for residential and commercial use (City of Laguna Hills 2024b). Laguna Hills became an official city in 1991 and annexed North Laguna Hills in 1995 (City of Laguna Hills 2024b).

## 4 Background Research

### 4.1 CHRIS Records Search

On December 4, 2024, South Environmental archaeologist Samantha Jovanovic performed a cultural resources records search of the project site and a one-half-mile search radius at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC), which houses cultural resources records for Orange County. This search included their collections of mapped prehistoric and historic archaeological resources and historic built-environment resources, State of California Department of Parks and Recreation Site Records (DPR forms), technical reports, archival resources, and ethnographic references. Additional consulted sources include historical maps of the study area, the NRHP, the CRHR, the lists of California State Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and the Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility list. A summary of the results of the records search is presented in Appendix A.

#### 4.1.1 Previously Conducted Cultural Resource Studies

The SCCIC records search results indicate that two previously conducted cultural resource studies intersect the project site. A summary of these studies is provided following Table 1. An additional 24 studies were identified outside the project site within the one-half-mile records search radius. A list of all previously conducted studies identified within the records search radius is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1. Previous Cultural Resources Investigations Within 0.5-Mile of the Project Site**

SCCIC Report Number	Author	Year	Report Title	Proximity to Project Site
OR-00066	Desautels, Roger J.	1976	Archaeological Survey Reports on Ridge Route Drive and Moulton Parkway (VEEH Reservoir) Road Widening and Installation, Laguna Hills Area, Orange County, California	Outside (Approximately 0.33-mi E)
OR-00143	Desautels, Roger J.	1976	Archaeological Survey Report on 85(+ Or -) Acres of Land Located in the Laguna Hills Area of the County of Orange Tract No's 9610, 9611, 9612, and 9613	Outside (Approximately 0.02-mi SW)
OR-00274	Anonymous	1978	Report of Archaeological Resources Survey Conducted for Laguna and Peter's Canyons	Outside (Approximately 0.33-mi W)
OR-00305	Schroth, Adella	1979	The History of Archaeological Research on Irvine Ranch Property: The Evolution of a Company Tradition	Outside (Approximately 0.28-mi N)
OR-00737	Padon, Beth	1984	Cultural Resources Assessment Planning Area 34b Orange County, California	Outside (Approximately 0.26-mi N)

**Table 1. Previous Cultural Resources Investigations Within 0.5-Mile of the Project Site**

<b>SCCIC Report Number</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Proximity to Project Site</b>
OR-00742	Padon, Beth	1984	Historic Property Survey Report for Irvine Center Drive Widening	Outside (Approximately 0.26-mi N)
OR-00841	Mason, Roger D.	1986	Archaeological, Historical, and Paleontological Assessments for Planning Area 34b, City of Irvine	Outside (Approximately 0.26-mi N)
OR-00847	Padon, Beth	1985	Archaeological Resource Inventory City of Irvine and its Sphere of Influence	Outside (Approximately 0.37-mi N)
OR-00945	Van Horn, David M.	1982	Rossmoor Business Park Liquidating Trust Properties	Outside (Approximately 0.29-mi SE)
OR-01032	White, Robert S.	1990	Archaeological Resource Assessment Two Road Alignments Within Village 34 Lake Forest Drive and Bake Parkway Orange County, California	Outside (Approximately 0.49-mi NW)
OR-01109	Padon, Beth	1986	Addendum to the Historic Property Survey Report for Irvine Center Drive Widening	Outside (Approximately 0.26-mi N)
OR-01127	Rosenthal, Jane	1991	Past to Present: Cultural and Scientific Resources, an Archival Inventory Irvine Ranch Open Space Reserve Orange County, California	Outside (Approximately 0.49-mi WSW)
OR-01129	Van Horn, David M.	1982	Cultural Resource Assessment: the Koll Property Near Laguna Hills; a Possible Annexation Area for the City of Irvine and its Sphere of Influence	<b>Within</b>
OR-01344	Rosenthal, Jane	1993	Cultural Resources Element City of Laguna Hills, Orange County, California	<b>Within</b>
OR-02225	Strozier, Hardy	1978	The Irvine Company Planning Process and California Archaeology- A Review and Critique	Outside (Approximately 0.32-mi W)
OR-02267	Hunt, Kevin P. and Brian F. Smith	2000	An Archaeological and Paleontological Survey of the Irvine Spectrum GPA Project	Outside (Approximately 0.26-mi N)
OR-02336	Demcak, Carol R. and Milos Velechovsky	2000	Final Report on Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Program Conducted at Spectrum 5, Irvine, Orange County, California	Outside (Approximately 0.26-mi N)
OR-02406	Duke, Curt	2001	Review of Cingular Wireless Facility SC 008-02	Outside (Approximately 0.25-mile SE)
OR-02534	unknown	1976	Annual Report to The Irvine Company from Archaeological Research, Inc.	Outside (Approximately 0.26-mi N)
OR-02626	Younger, Shannon and Smith, Brooks	2003	Results of Archaeological Construction Monitoring Planning Area 27 Needlegrass Creek Conservation Area, Irvine, California	Outside (Approximately 0.34-mi W)



**Table 1. Previous Cultural Resources Investigations Within 0.5-Mile of the Project Site**

<b>SCCIC Report Number</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Proximity to Project Site</b>
OR-02639	Drover, Christopher E.	1998	A Cultural Resources Inventory in Planning Area 18 Irvine, California	Outside (Approximately 0.32-mi W)
OR-03358	Archer, Gavin H., Sarah A. Siren, Lawrence G. Barnes, Andrew Schmidt, and Noelle Shaver	2005	Historical, Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Identification and Evaluation for the Planning Area 18 Project Including Impacts Analysis and Mitigation Measures	Outside (Approximately 0.32-mi W)
OR-03467	Bonner, Wayne H. and Sarah A. Williams	2006	Cultural Resource Records Search Results and Site Visit for Cingular Telecommunications Facility Candidate OC0175 (Laguna Village HOA) 23441 Avenida Costanero, Laguna Hills, Orange County, California	Outside (Approximately 0.3-mile SW)
OR-03743	Losee, Carolyn	2009	Cultural Resources Investigation for T-Mobile LA02880E "Maxwell" 88 Maxwell, Irvine, Orange County, California 92618	Outside (Approximately 0.33-mi N)
OR-04107	Archer, Gavin H., David C. Hanna, and Mark R. Deering	2007	Cultural Resources Field Assessment for the Lake Forest Drive and Bake Parkway Extensions Project in City of Irvine Planning Area 34	Outside (Approximately 0.37-mi NW)
OR-04289	Stone, David and Victorino, Ken	2012	Archaeological Survey Report Tertiary Treatment Plant and Recycled Water Distribution System Expansion Project Laguna Hills and Laguna Woods, Orange County, California	Outside (Approximately 0.18-mi NW)

**OR-01129**

*Cultural Resource Assessment: the Koll Property Near Laguna Hills; a Possible Annexation Area for the City of Irvine and its Sphere of Influence* (David M. Van Horn 1982). This study by Archaeological Associates includes a records search for three project areas and a pedestrian survey of one project area. The current project site was not surveyed as part of this study; however, the records search identified one prehistoric archaeological resource southeast of the current project site (P-30-000432 [CA-ORA-432]). This study included a field inspection of P-30-000432 and stated that the site was "completely destroyed by grading operations conducted in connection with construction of an office building complex." The site is described in Section 4.1.2 below.



## **OR-01344**

*Cultural Resources Element City of Laguna Hills, Orange County, California* (Jane Rosenthal 1993). This study presents the results of a records search and literature review for the entire city of Laguna Hills. The study includes the current project site; however, no survey was conducted as part of the study.

### **4.1.2 Previously Recorded Cultural Resources**

The SCCIC records search results indicate that one previously recorded cultural resource (P-30-000432 [CA-ORA-432]) was located within one-half-mile of the project site; however, this resource was destroyed by development prior to 1982. No additional resources were identified within the 0.5-mile records search radius.

#### **P-30-000432**

This prehistoric archaeological site (also identified as CA-ORA-432) was recorded by C. Reeves and J.B. Houser in 1973. The site is a surface scatter of flaked and ground stone tools, as well as one marine shell fragment. Flaked artifacts identified include choppers and a scraper plane. Ground stone artifacts include a mano and a metate rim fragment. One fragment of *Pecten spp.* marine shell was also observed. No site dimensions or sketch map were included in the record. David Van Horn's (1982), "Cultural Resource Assessment: the Koll Property Near Laguna Hills; a Possible Annexation Area for the City of Irvine and its Sphere of Influence," stated that P-30-000432 was completely destroyed and the "area graded off completely."

## **4.2 Native American Scoping**

A Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File search was requested by South Environmental on November 15, 2024. The NAHC responded to the request on December 5, 2024, and reported negative results (i.e., no sacred lands or resources important to Native Americans are recorded in the vicinity of the project). The NAHC recommended contacting the Native American tribes listed in Table 1, for additional information or knowledge they may have regarding the presence of cultural resources that may be impacted by the proposed project. On December 5, 2024, South Environmental sent letters to each contact provided by the NAHC.

As summarized in Table 3, three tribal groups have responded to the outreach letters to date. No archaeological, historical, or tribal cultural resources were identified within the project site as a result of South Environmental's coordination with tribes and none of the responses expressed concern regarding the proposed project (see Table 3 below). All Native American outreach completed by South Environmental is documented in Appendix B.

**Table 2. Summary of Native American Outreach**

<b>Native American Tribal Contact</b>	<b>Method of Notification/Date</b>	<b>Response Received</b>
Cahuilla Band of Indians Anthony Madrigal, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Cultural Affiliation: Cahuilla	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	BobbyRay Esparza responded on December 18, 2024, behalf of Cahuilla Band of Indians. See below.
Cahuilla Band of Indians Erica Schenk, Chairperson Cultural Affiliation: Cahuilla	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	BobbyRay Esparza responded on December 18, 2024, behalf of Cahuilla Band of Indians. See below.
Cahuilla Band of Indians BobbyRay Esparza, Cultural Director Cultural Affiliation: Cahuilla	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	Responded on December 18, 2024, behalf of Cahuilla Band of Indians: "The Cahuilla Bands will defer this project to the Gabrielino/Tongva tribes."
Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation Christina Swindall Martinez, Secretary Cultural Affiliation: Gabrieleño	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation Andrew Salas, Chairperson Cultural Affiliation: Gabrieleño	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Gabrieleño/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians Anthony Morales, Chairperson Cultural Affiliation: Gabrieleño	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council Christina Conley, Cultural Resource Administrator Cultural Affiliation: Gabrielino	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council Robert Dorame, Chairperson Cultural Affiliation: Gabrielino	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Gabrielino/Tongva Nation Sandonne Goad, Chairperson Cultural Affiliation: Gabrielino	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe Charles Alvarez, Chairperson Cultural Affiliation: Gabrielino	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe Sam Dunlap, Cultural Resource Director Cultural Affiliation: Gabrielino	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Juaneño Band of Mission Indians Sonia Johnston, Chairperson Cultural Affiliation: Juaneño	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Juaneño Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation - Belardes Joyce Perry, Cultural Resource Director Cultural Affiliation: Juaneño	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.

**Table 2. Summary of Native American Outreach**

<b>Native American Tribal Contact</b>	<b>Method of Notification/Date</b>	<b>Response Received</b>
Juaneño Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation 84A Heidi Lucero, Chairperson, THPO Cultural Affiliation: Juaneño	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians Norma Contreras, Chairperson Cultural Affiliation: Luiseno	Letter sent on December 6, 2024.	No response to date.
Pala Band of Mission Indians Christopher Nejo, Legal Analyst/Researcher Cultural Affiliation: Cupeno Luiseno	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	Shasta Gaughen responded on behalf of the Pala Band of Mission Indians on December 12, 2024. See below.
Pala Band of Mission Indians Alexis Wallick, Assistant THPO Cultural Affiliation: Cupeno Luiseno	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	Shasta Gaughen responded on behalf of the Pala Band of Mission Indians on December 12, 2024. See below.
Pala Band of Mission Indians Shasta Gaughen, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Cultural Affiliation: Cupeno Luiseno	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	Responded on behalf of the Pala Band of Mission Indians on December 12, 2024, stating the project is outside the tribes' Traditional Use Area and, therefore they "have no objection to the continuation of project activities as currently planned and we defer to the wishes of Tribes in closer proximity to the project area."
Pauma Band of Luiseno Indians Temet Aguilar, Chairperson Cultural Affiliation: Luiseno	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians Steven Estrada, Tribal Chairman Cultural Affiliation: Cahuilla	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	Vanessa Minott responded on behalf of the Santa Rosa Band on December 9, 2024. See below.
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians Vanessa Minott, Tribal Administrator Cultural Affiliation: Cahuilla	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	Responded on behalf of the Santa Rosa Band on December 9, 2024: "We defer any comments to Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians cultural resource department."
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians Joseph Ontiveros, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Cultural Affiliation: Cahuilla, Luiseno	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians Jessica Valdez, Cultural Resource Specialist Cultural Affiliation: Cahuilla, Luiseno	Letter sent via email on December 5, 2024.	No response to date.

### 4.3 Historical Topographic Map and Aerial Photograph Review

Historic topographic maps and aerial photographs of the project site were reviewed from Nationwide Environmental Title Research LLC and USGS National Geologic Map Database. These included



topographic maps for the years 1901, 1902, 1904, 1942, 1943, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1956, 1957, 1959, 1960, 1963, 1965, 1966, 1968, 1969, 1974, 1983, and 1986; aerial imagery for the years 1938, 1946, 1952, 1963, 1967, 1972, 1980, 1981, 1985, 1987, 1988, 1992, and 1993, (NETR 2024, USGS 2024c).

The earliest topographic maps from 1901 depict the proposed project site as open space (USGS 2024c). From the earliest aerial photograph (1932) through 1972 the project site and surrounding area were agricultural land (NETR 2024). Veeh Reservoir, to the east of the project site, is first depicted on the 1942 (1943 ed.) *Santiago Peak, California* topographic map. By 1980, the area west of Mill Creek Drive was developed with residences. The extant building in the project site is visible in the 1987 aerial photograph (NETR 2024).

## 5 Archaeological Survey

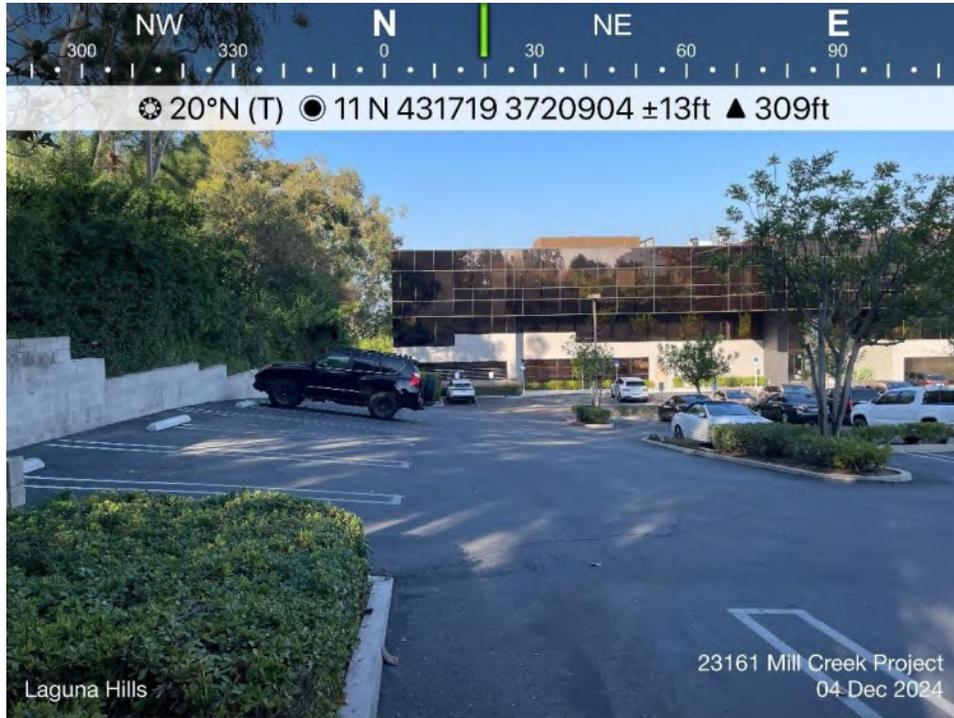
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### 5.1 Methods and Results

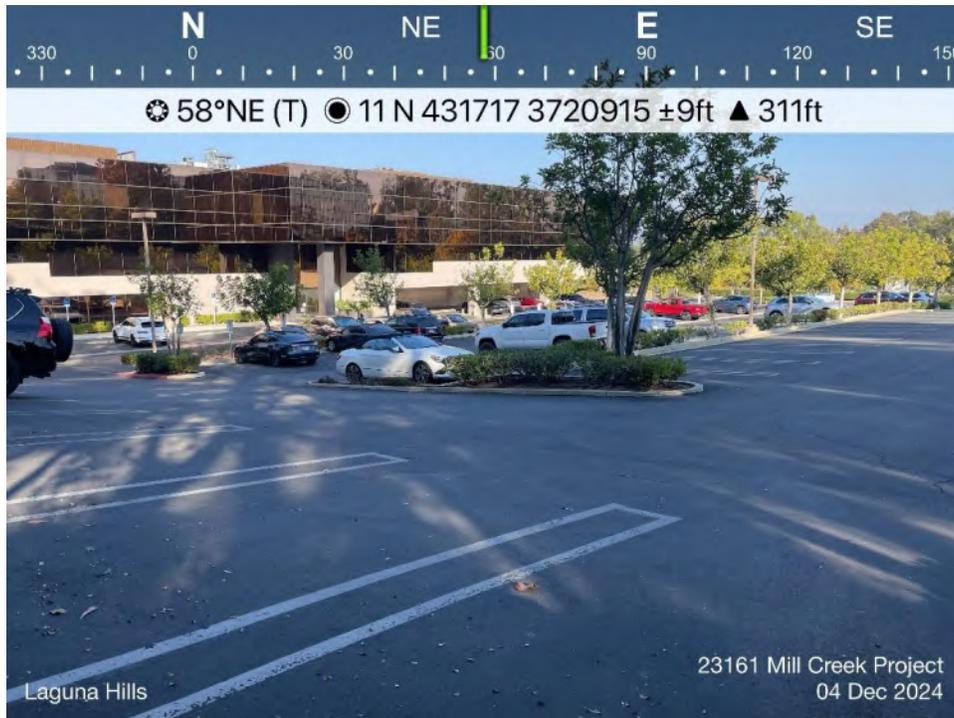
South Environmental cultural resource specialist Samantha Jovanovic MA, MS, conducted an intensive-level pedestrian survey of the project site on December 4, 2024. Fieldwork included taking field notes, photography, and examination of close-scale field maps. Photographs were taken with an iPhone 12 camera and Solocator Photography app.

During the archaeological survey, all exposed ground surface for the presence of prehistoric artifacts (e.g., flaked stone tools, tool-making debris, ground stone artifacts tools), historical artifacts (e.g., metal, glass, ceramics), sediment discolorations that might indicate the presence of a cultural midden, depressions, and other features that might indicate the former presence of structures or buildings (e.g., post holes, foundations).

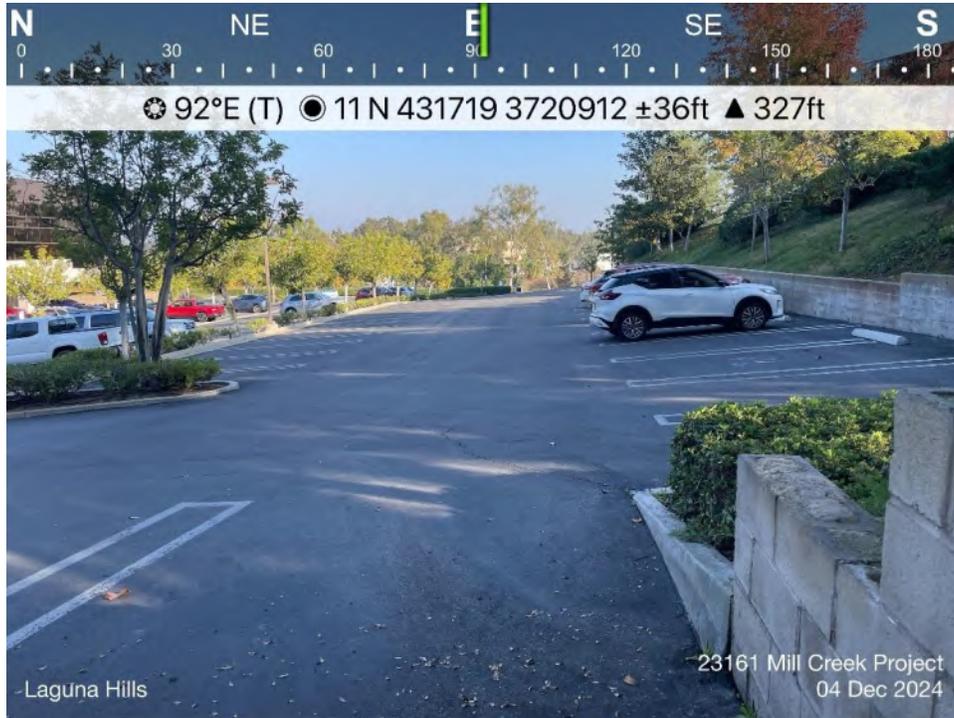
No archaeological resources were identified within the project site during the intensive-level pedestrian survey. The project site consists of a fully developed lot with a multi-story office building, a parking lot, and landscaped islands with non-native grasses, flowers, and trees (Photograph 1-5). There is a landscaped outdoor patio area east of the office building with an assortment of plants and decorative hardscaping (Photograph 6-7). Most of the project site is flat but for a steep grade drop at the northern edge of the project site (Photograph 8). Ground surface visibility was very poor, at approximately 5 percent throughout the project site due to the project site being a fully developed lot with existing building and a parking lot.



**Photograph 1 Overview along eastern side from southwest corner. View north.**



**Photograph 2 Overview of site from southwest corner. View northeast.**



**Photograph 3 Overview along southern portion from southwest corner. View east.**

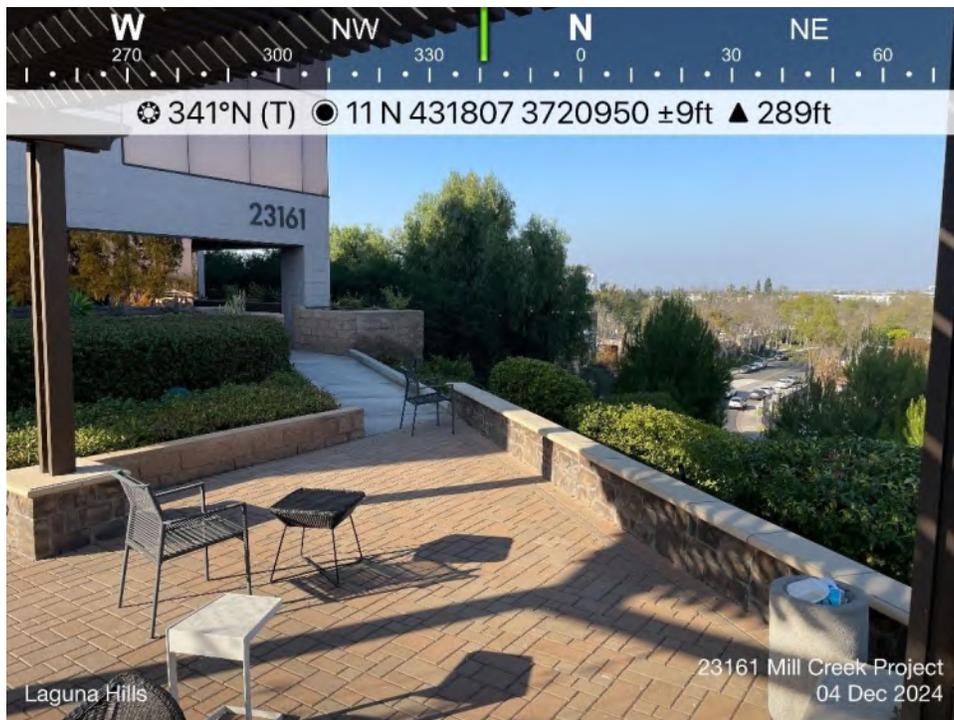


**Photograph 4 Overview along eastern portion from southeast corner. View north.**

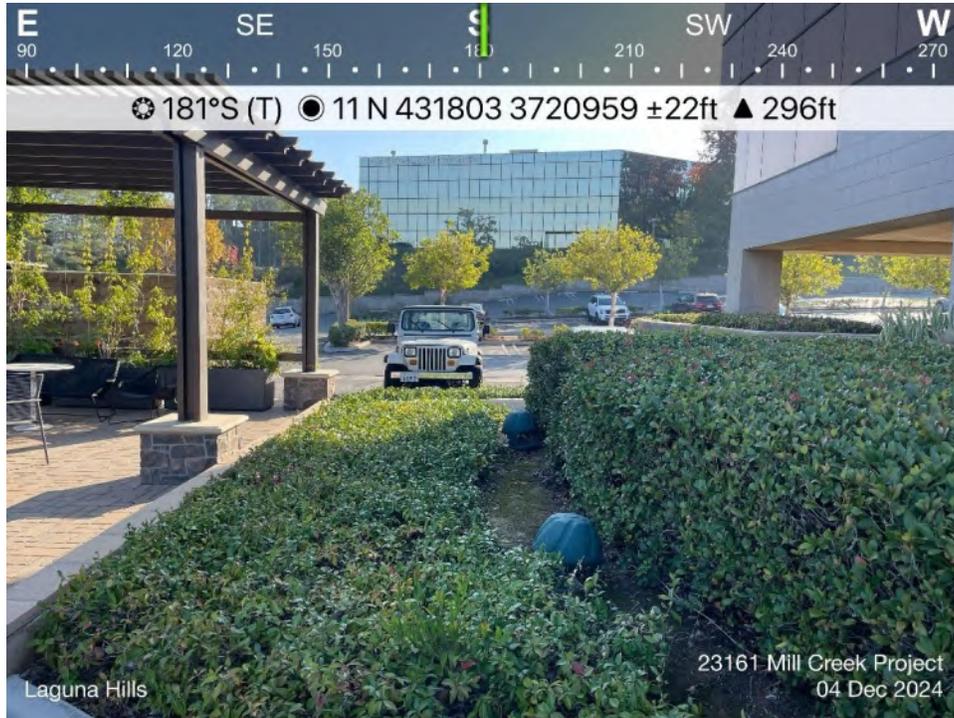




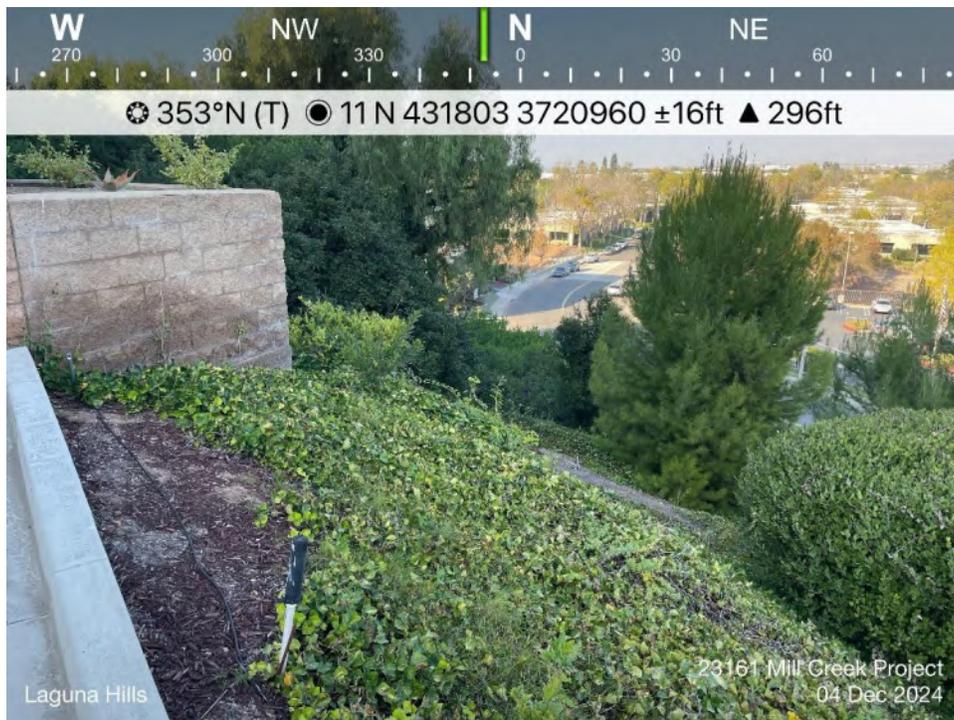
**Photograph 5 Overview from southeast corner. View northwest.**



**Photograph 6 Landscaped outdoor patio east of building.**



**Photograph 7 Outdoor patio space east of building with decorative plants. View south.**



**Photograph 8 Steep drop-off north of building. View north.**

## 6 Findings and Recommendations

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### 6.1 Findings

No archaeological resources were identified within the project site as a result of the CHRIS records search, NAHC Sacred Lands File search, Native American scoping, or pedestrian survey by a qualified archaeologist. Further, significant portions of the project site have been disturbed by grading and the development of the existing office building and parking lot. Therefore, while the project site is unlikely to contain intact buried archaeological deposits, it is always possible to encounter resources during project-related ground disturbance. The City's Standard Regulatory Requirements for archaeological resources and human remains have been provided below. With implementation of these requirements, impacts to archaeological and historical resources would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

### 6.2 Standard Regulatory Requirements

**California Administrative Code, Title 14, Section 4308 (14 CCR § 4308) (Accommodation for Unanticipated Cultural/Paleontological Resources).** In compliance with the California Code of Regulations, during ground disturbance or any other construction activity, no person shall remove, injure, deface, or destroy any object of archaeological, or historical interest or value.

**California Health and Safety Code, and Public Resources Code (Human Remains).** In the event that human remains are discovered, there shall be no disposition of such human remains, other than in accordance with the procedures and requirements set forth in California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 and Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. These code provisions require notification of the County Coroner and the Native American Heritage Commission, who in turn must notify those persons believed to be most likely descended from the deceased Native American for appropriate disposition of the remains. Excavation or disturbance may continue in other areas of the Project site that are not reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains or archaeological resources.

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# Appendix A: Records Search Results Summary

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## Report List

Report No.	Other IDs	Year	Author(s)	Title	Affiliation	Resources
OR-00066		1976	Desautels, Roger J.	Archaeological Survey Reports on Ridge Route Drive and Moulton Parkway (VEEH Reservoir) Road Widening and Installation, Laguna Hills Area, Orange County, California	Scientific Resource Surveys, Inc.	
OR-00143		1976	Desautels, Roger J.	Archaeological Survey Report on 85(+ Or -) Acres of Land Located in the Laguna Hills Area of the County of Orange Tract No's 9610, 9611, 9612, and 9613	Scientific Resource Surveys, Inc.	
OR-00274		1978	Anonymous	Report of Archaeological Resources Survey Conducted for Laguna and Peter's Canyons	Archaeological Resource Management Corp.	30-000184, 30-000305, 30-000306, 30-000307, 30-000308, 30-000309, 30-000314, 30-000317, 30-000502, 30-000508, 30-000547, 30-000548, 30-000556, 30-000557, 30-000681, 30-000682, 30-000688, 30-000767, 30-000768, 30-000769
OR-00305		1979	Schroth, Adella	The History of Archaeological Research on Irvine Ranch Property: the Evolution of a Company Tradition	Archaeological Resource Management Corp.	30-000002, 30-000044, 30-000047, 30-000048, 30-000051, 30-000053, 30-000059, 30-000060, 30-000061, 30-000062, 30-000063, 30-000064, 30-000065, 30-000066, 30-000067, 30-000068, 30-000069, 30-000070, 30-000071, 30-000072, 30-000073, 30-000077, 30-000091, 30-000099, 30-000100, 30-000104, 30-000106, 30-000107, 30-000109, 30-000111
OR-00737	Paleo -	1984	Padon, Beth	Cultural Resources Assessment Planning Area 34b Orange County, California	LSA Associates, Inc.	
OR-00742	Paleo -	1984	Padon, Beth	Historic Property Survey Report for Irvine Center Drive Widening	LSA Associates, Inc.	
OR-00841	Paleo -	1986	Mason, Roger D.	Archaeological, Historical, and Paleontological Assessments for Planning Area 34b, City of Irvine	Scientific Resource Surveys, Inc.	
OR-00847		1985	Padon, Beth	Archaeological Resource Inventory City of Irvine and its Sphere of Influence	LSA Associates, Inc.	30-000161, 30-000349, 30-000361, 30-000383, 30-000478, 30-000494, 30-000495, 30-000496, 30-000499, 30-000545, 30-000601, 30-000734, 30-000735, 30-000767, 30-000803, 30-000804, 30-000805, 30-000806, 30-000807, 30-000808
OR-00945		1982	Van Horn, David M.	Rossmoor Business Park Liquidating Trust Properties	Ultra Systems, Inc.	30-000610

## Report List

Report No.	Other IDs	Year	Author(s)	Title	Affiliation	Resources
OR-01032		1990	White, Robert S.	Archaeological Resource Assessment Two Road Alignments Within Village 34 Lake Forest Drive and Bake Parkway Orange County, California	Scientific Resource Surveys, Inc.	30-001110
OR-01109		1986	Padon, Beth	Addendum to the Historic Property Survey Report for Irvine Center Drive Widening	LSA Associates, Inc.	
OR-01127	Paleo -	1991	Rosenthal, Jane	Past to Present: Cultural and Scientific Resources, an Archival Inventory Irvine Ranch Open Space Reserve Orange County, California	LSA Associates, Inc.	30-000079, 30-000184, 30-000273, 30-000310, 30-000311, 30-000312, 30-000345, 30-000384, 30-000386, 30-000476, 30-000494, 30-000495, 30-000496, 30-000501, 30-000502, 30-000523, 30-000524, 30-000547, 30-000557, 30-000705, 30-000706, 30-000707, 30-000709, 30-000720, 30-000731, 30-000734, 30-000735, 30-000736, 30-000751, 30-000767, 30-000787, 30-000798, 30-000799, 30-000800, 30-000801, 30-000802, 30-000803, 30-000804, 30-000805, 30-000811, 30-000822, 30-000932, 30-000933, 30-000939, 30-000940, 30-000941, 30-000943, 30-000996, 30-000998, 30-001000, 30-001001, 30-001006, 30-001029, 30-001032, 30-001033, 30-001034, 30-001054, 30-001055, 30-001077
OR-01129		1982	Van Horn, David M.	Cultural Resource Assessment: the Koll Property Near Laguna Hills; a Possible Annexation Area for the City of Irvine and its Sphere of Influence	Archaeological Associates, Ltd.	30-000014, 30-000015, 30-000016, 30-000267, 30-000268, 30-000414, 30-000415, 30-000421, 30-000432, 30-000551, 30-000604, 30-000610, 30-000823, 30-000854, 30-001007
OR-01344		1993	Rosenthal, Jane	Cultural Resources Element City of Laguna Hills, Orange County, California	LSA Associates, Inc.	30-000354, 30-000355, 30-000432, 30-000515, 30-000551, 30-000604, 30-000659, 30-000702, 30-000703, 30-000769, 30-000849
OR-02225	Other - Irvine Ranch	1978	Strozier, Hardy	The Irvine Company Planning Process and California Archaeology- A Review and Critique	The Irvine Company	

## Report List

Report No.	Other IDs	Year	Author(s)	Title	Affiliation	Resources
OR-02267	Paleo -	2000	Hunt, Kevin P. and Brian F. Smith	An Archaeological and Paleontological Survey of the Irvine Spectrum GPA Project	Brian F. Smith and Associates	30-000161, 30-000341, 30-000391, 30-000432, 30-000495, 30-000499, 30-000551, 30-000602, 30-000768, 30-000769, 30-000904, 30-001011, 30-001034, 30-001069, 30-001110, 30-100297, 30-100298
OR-02336	Paleo -	2000	Demcak, Carol R. and Milos Velechovsky	Final Report on Archaeological and Paleontological Monitoring Program Conducted at Spectrum 5, Irvine, Orange County, California	Archaeological Resource Management Corp.	
OR-02406	Cellular -	2001	Duke, Curt	Review of Cingular Wireless Facility SC 008-02	LSA Associates, Inc.	
OR-02534		1976		Annual Report to The Irvine Company from Archaeological Research, Inc.	ARI	30-000051, 30-000064, 30-000099, 30-000100, 30-000106, 30-000119, 30-000130, 30-000184, 30-000196, 30-000197, 30-000484, 30-000518, 30-000575
OR-02626		2003	Younger, Shannon and Smith, Brooks	Results of Archaeological Construction Monitoring Planning Area 27 Needlegrass Creek Conservation Area, Irvine, California	LSA Associates, Inc.	
OR-02639		1998	Drover, Christopher E.	A Cultural Resources Inventory in Planning Area 18 Irvine, California	The Keith Companies, Inc.	30-000767, 30-000769, 30-001547
OR-03358	Paleo -	2005	Archer, Gavin H., Sarah A. Siren, Lawrence G. Barnes, Andrew Schmidt, and Noelle Shaver	Historical, Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Identification and Evaluation for the Planning Area 18 Project Including Impacts Analysis and Mitigation Measures	The Keith Companies, Jones & Stokes	30-000769, 30-001547, 30-100390, 30-179839
OR-03467		2006	Bonner, Wayne H. and Sarah A. Williams	Cultural Resource Records Search Results and Site Visit for Cingular Telecommunications Facility Candidate OC0175 (Laguna Village HOA) 23441 Avenida Costanero, Laguna Hills, Orange County, California	Michael Brandman Associates	30-000432, 30-001547
OR-03743		2009	Losee, Carolyn	Cultural Resources Investigation for T-Mobile LA02880E "Maxwell" 88 Maxwell, Irvine, Orange County, California 92618	Archaeological Resources Technology	
OR-04107		2007	Archer, Gavin H., David C. Hanna, and Mark R. Deering	Cultural Resources Field Assessment for the Lake Forest Drive and Bake Parkway Extensions Project in City of Irvine Planning Area 34	STANTEC	

## Report List

Report No.	Other IDs	Year	Author(s)	Title	Affiliation	Resources
OR-04289		2012	Stone, David and Victorino, Ken	Archaeological Survey Report Tertiary Treatment Plant and Recycled Water Distribution System Expansion Project Laguna Hills and Laguna Woods, Orange County, California	Dudek	30-000014, 30-000015, 30-000268

# Resource List

Primary No.	Trinomial	Other IDs	Type	Age	Attribute codes	Recorded by	Reports
P-30-000432	CA-ORA-000432		Site	Prehistoric	AP02	1973 (REEVES, Archaeological Research, Inc); 1982 (David Van Horn, Archaeological Associates, ltd)	OR-01011, OR-01129, OR-01344, OR-01995, OR-02208, OR-02267, OR-03467

## Appendix B: Native American Scoping

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# Sacred Lands File & Native American Contacts List Request

## Native American Heritage Commission

1550 Harbor Blvd, Suite 100

West Sacramento, CA 95691

916-373-3710

916-373-5471 – Fax

[nahc@nahc.ca.gov](mailto:nahc@nahc.ca.gov)

*Information Below is Required for a Sacred Lands File Search*

**Project:** \_\_\_\_\_

**County:** \_\_\_\_\_

**USGS Quadrangle Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Township:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Range:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Section(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Company/Firm/Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

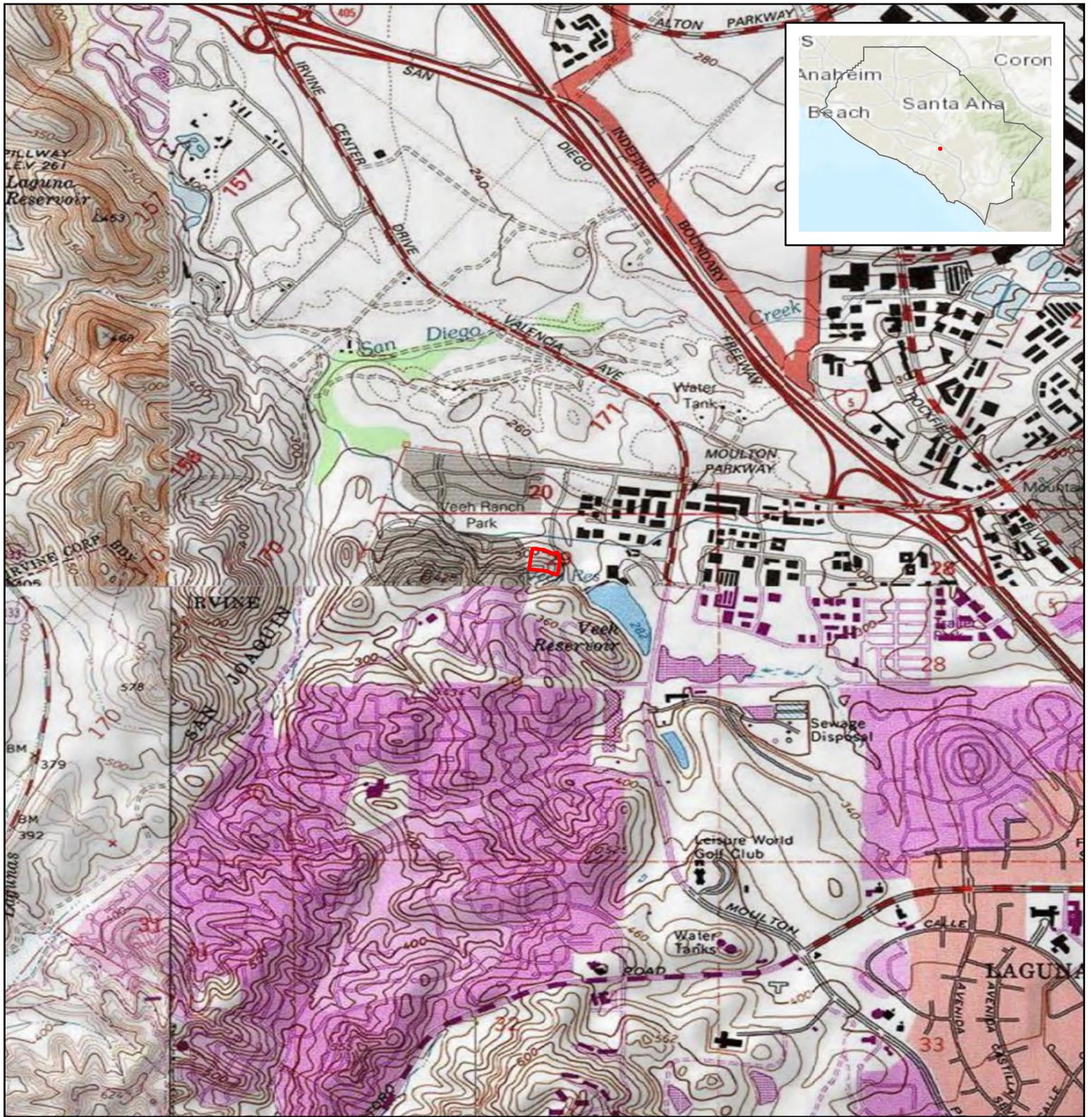
**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Description:**



Source: ESRI USA Topo Maps and World Topo Map 2024

23161 Mill Creek Project

## Figure 1. Project Location Map

Project Site



0 1,000 2,000 Feet

Scale: 1:24,000



Project Location is within Laguna Hills, California, in Orange County on the USGS San Juan Capistrano 7.5-minute quadrangle map in Section 29 of Township 06 South and Range 08 West

Center Coordinate (Decimal Degrees):  
Latitude: 33.6259973N Longitude: -117.7356113W



December 5, 2024

To all NAHC-listed Tribal Contacts  
for the project identified below

**RE: 23161 Mill Creek Project, City of Laguna Hills, Orange County, California**

Dear NAHC Tribal Contact:

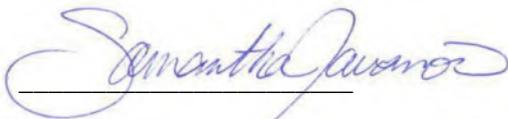
South Environmental was retained to conduct a cultural resources inventory for the proposed 23161 Mill Creek Project (proposed project). The project site occupies an approximately 2.43-acre area located at 23161 Mill Creek in the City of Laguna Hills, California. The proposed project site is located on the United States Geological Survey (USGS) *San Juan Capistrano*, California 7.5-minute Quadrangle Map in Section 29 of Township 06 South and Range 08 West (see enclosed Figure 1). The project proposes to demolish the existing building (constructed in 1987) and develop 43 residential duplexes with attached garages, guest parking, and green space.

As part of the process of identifying potential cultural resources, South Environmental contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and requested a Sacred Lands File search on November 15, 2024. The NAHC responded to the request on December 5, 2024, reporting negative results. The NAHC also provided a list of tribal contacts who may have knowledge of the presence of cultural resources in the vicinity of the proposed project.

If you have any knowledge of cultural resources that may exist within or near the project site, please contact me at [sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com](mailto:sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com) or 562-900-8816, or via U.S. mail at the address above.

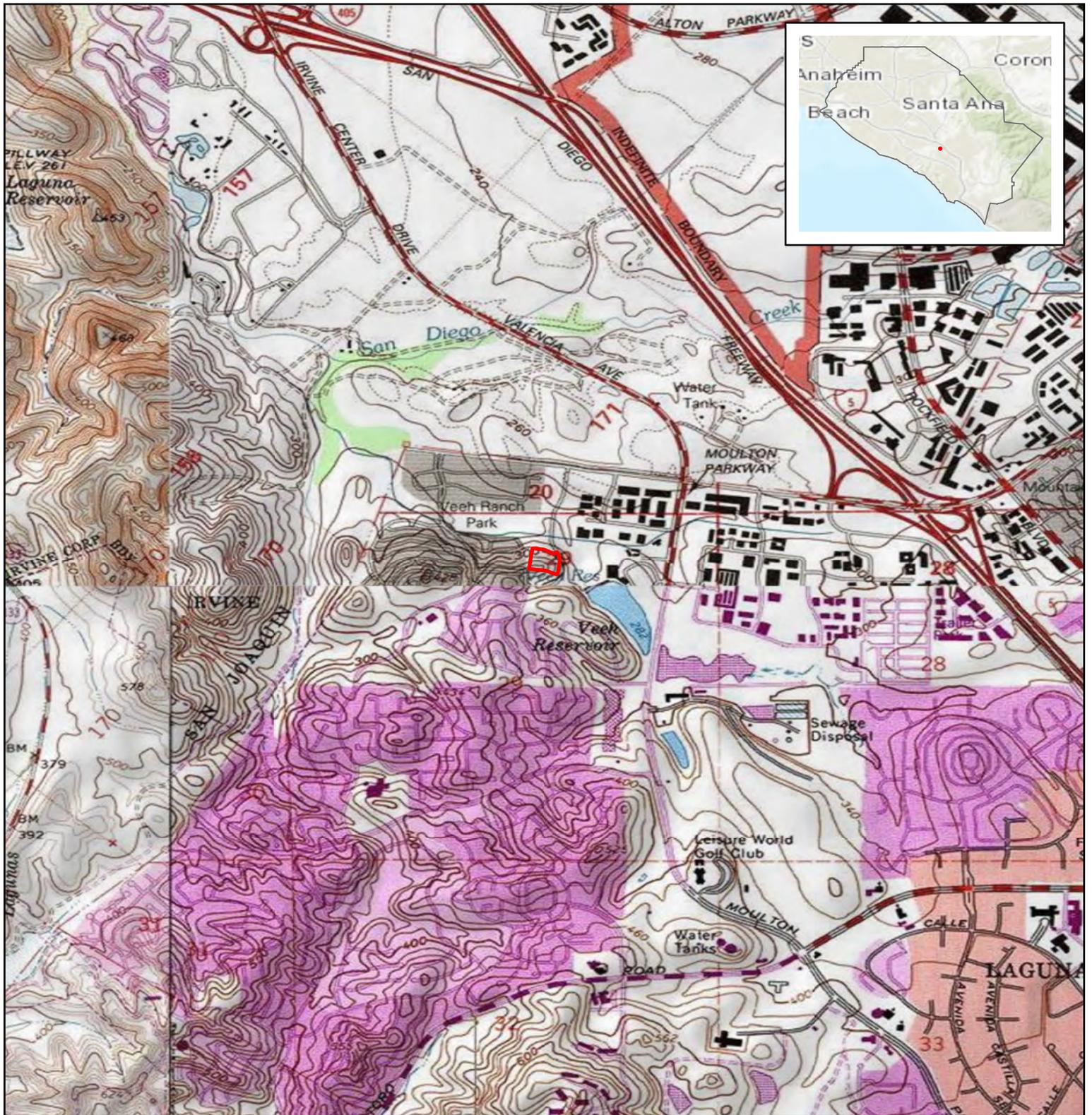
Please note that the request herein is for informational purposes only and does not constitute Assembly Bill 52 notification or initiation of consultation.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Samantha Jovanovic'.

Samantha Jovanovic, MA, MS  
Archaeologist

Attachment: Figure 1. Project Location Map



Source: ESRI USA Topo Maps and World Topo Map 2024

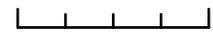
23161 Mill Creek Project

## Figure 1. Project Location Map

Project Site



0 1,000 2,000 Feet



Scale: 1:24,000



Project Location is within Laguna Hills, California, in Orange County on the USGS San Juan Capistrano 7.5-minute quadrangle map in Section 29 of Township 06 South and Range 08 West

Center Coordinate (Decimal Degrees):  
Latitude: 33.6259973N Longitude: -117.7356113W



## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

December 5, 2024

Samantha Jovanovic  
South Environmental, LLC

Via Email to: [sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com](mailto:sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com)

### Re: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Orange County

To Whom It May Concern:

A record search of the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) was completed for the information you have submitted for the above referenced project. The results were negative. However, the absence of specific site information in the SLF does not indicate the absence of cultural resources in any project area. Other sources of cultural resources should also be contacted for information regarding known and recorded sites.

Attached is a list of Native American tribes who may also have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. This list should provide a starting place in locating areas of potential adverse impact within the proposed project area. I suggest you contact all of those indicated; if they cannot supply information, they might recommend others with specific knowledge. By contacting all those listed, your organization will be better able to respond to claims of failure to consult with the appropriate tribe. If a response has not been received within two weeks of notification, the Commission requests that you follow-up with a telephone call or email to ensure that the project information has been received.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from tribes, please notify me. With your assistance, we can assure that our lists contain current information.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at my email address: [Andrew.Green@nahc.ca.gov](mailto:Andrew.Green@nahc.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



Andrew Green  
Cultural Resources Analyst

Attachment



CHAIRPERSON  
**Reginald Pagaling**  
Chumash

VICE-CHAIRPERSON  
**Buffy McQuillen**  
Yokayo Pomo, Yuki,  
Nomlaki

SECRETARY  
**Sara Dutschke**  
Miwok

PARLIAMENTARIAN  
**Wayne Nelson**  
Luiseño

COMMISSIONER  
**Isaac Bojorquez**  
Ohlone-Costanoan

COMMISSIONER  
**Stanley Rodriguez**  
Kumeyaay

COMMISSIONER  
**Laurena Bolden**  
Serrano

COMMISSIONER  
**Reid Milanovich**  
Cahuilla

COMMISSIONER  
**Bennae Calac**  
Pauma-Yuima Band of  
Luiseño Indians

ACTING EXECUTIVE  
SECRETARY  
**Steven Quinn**

**NAHC HEADQUARTERS**  
1550 Harbor Boulevard  
Suite 100  
West Sacramento,  
California 95691  
(916) 373-3710  
[nahc@nahc.ca.gov](mailto:nahc@nahc.ca.gov)

Native American Heritage Commission  
Native American Contact List  
Orange County  
12/5/2024

Tribe Name	Fed (F) Non-Fed (N)	Contact Person	Contact Address	Phone #	Fax #	Email Address	Cultural Affiliation	Counties	Last Updated
Cahuilla Band of Indians	F	Anthony Madrigal, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	52701 CA Highway 371 Anza, CA, 92539	(951) 763-5549		anthonymad2002@gmail.com	Cahuilla	Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	6/28/2023
Cahuilla Band of Indians	F	Erica Schenk, Chairperson	52701 CA Highway 371 Anza, CA, 92539	(951) 590-0942	(951) 763-2808	chair@cahuilla-nsn.gov	Cahuilla	Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	2/1/2024
Cahuilla Band of Indians	F	BobbyRay Esparza, Cultural Director	52701 CA Highway 371 Anza, CA, 92539	(951) 763-5549		besparza@cahuilla-nsn.gov	Cahuilla	Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	6/28/2023
Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation	N	Christina Swindall Martinez, Secretary	P.O. Box 393 Covina, CA, 91723	(844) 390-0787		admin@gabrielenoindians.org	Gabrieleno	Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura	8/18/2023
Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians - Kizh Nation	N	Andrew Salas, Chairperson	P.O. Box 393 Covina, CA, 91723	(844) 390-0787		admin@gabrielenoindians.org	Gabrieleno	Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura	8/18/2023
Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians	N	Anthony Morales, Chairperson	P.O. Box 693 San Gabriel, CA, 91778	(626) 483-3564	(626) 286-1262	GTTribalcouncil@aol.com	Gabrieleno	Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura	12/4/2023
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	N	Christina Conley, Cultural Resource Administrator	P.O. Box 941078 Simi Valley, CA, 93094	(626) 407-8761		christina.marsden@alumni.usc.edu	Gabrielino	Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura	3/16/2023
Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council	N	Robert Dorame, Chairperson	P.O. Box 490 Bellflower, CA, 90707	(562) 761-6417	(562) 761-6417	gtongva@gmail.com	Gabrielino	Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura	3/16/2023
Gabrielino/Tongva Nation	N	Sandonne Goad, Chairperson	106 1/2 Judge John Aiso St., #231 Los Angeles, CA, 90012	(951) 807-0479		sgoad@gabrielino-tongva.com	Gabrielino	Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura	3/28/2023
Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe	N	Charles Alvarez, Chairperson	23454 Vanowen Street West Hills, CA, 91307	(310) 403-6048		Chavez1956metro@gmail.com	Gabrielino	Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura	5/30/2023
Gabrielino-Tongva Tribe	N	Sam Dunlap, Cultural Resource Director	P.O. Box 3919 Seal Beach, CA, 90740	(909) 262-9351		tongvatcr@gmail.com	Gabrielino	Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Ventura	5/30/2023
Juaneno Band of Mission Indians	N	Sonia Johnston, Chairperson	P.O. Box 25628 Santa Ana, CA, 92799			sonia.johnston@sbcglobal.net	Juaneno	Orange, Riverside, San Diego	
Juaneno Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation - Belardes	N	Joyce Perry, Cultural Resource Director	4955 Paseo Segovia Irvine, CA, 92603	(949) 293-8522		kaamalam@gmail.com	Juaneno	Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	3/17/2023
Juaneno Band of Mission Indians Acjachemen Nation 84A	N	Heidi Lucero, Chairperson, THPO	31411-A La Matanza Street San Juan Capistrano, CA, 92675	(562) 879-2884		jbmian.chairwoman@gmail.com	Juaneno	Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	3/28/2023
La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians	F	Norma Contreras, Chairperson	22000 Highway 76 Pauma Valley, CA, 92061	(760) 742-3771			Luiseno	Orange, Riverside, San Diego	
Pala Band of Mission Indians	F	Christopher Nejo, Legal Analyst/Researcher	PMB 50, 35008 Pala Temecula Road Pala, CA, 92059	(760) 891-3564		cnejo@palatribe.com	Cupeno Luiseno	Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	11/27/2023
Pala Band of Mission Indians	F	Alexis Wallick, Assistant THPO	PMB 50, 35008 Pala Temecula Road Pala, CA, 92059	(760) 891-3537		awallick@palatribe.com	Cupeno Luiseno	Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	11/27/2023
Pala Band of Mission Indians	F	Shasta Gaughen, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	PMB 50, 35008 Pala Temecula Road Pala, CA, 92059	(760) 891-3515		sgaughen@palatribe.com	Cupeno Luiseno	Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	11/27/2023
Pauma Band of Luiseno Indians	F	Temet Aguilar, Chairperson	P.O. Box 369 Pauma Valley, CA, 92061	(760) 742-1289	(760) 742-3422	bennaecalac@aol.com	Luiseno	Orange, Riverside, San Diego	

**Native American Heritage Commission  
Native American Contact List  
Orange County  
12/5/2024**

Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians	F	Steven Estrada, Tribal Chairman	P.O. Box 391820 Anza, CA, 92539	(951) 659-2700	(951) 659-2228	sestrada@santarosa-nsn.gov	Cahuilla	Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	4/8/2024
Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians	F	Vanessa Minott, Tribal Administrator	P.O. Box 391820 Anza, CA, 92539	(951) 659-2700	(951) 659-2228	vminott@santarosa-nsn.gov	Cahuilla	Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	4/8/2024
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians	F	Joseph Ontiveros, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer	P.O. Box 487 San Jacinto, CA, 92581	(951) 663-5279	(951) 654-4198	jontiveros@soboba-nsn.gov	Cahuilla Luiseno	Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	7/14/2023
Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians	F	Jessica Valdez, Cultural Resource Specialist	P.O. Box 487 San Jacinto, CA, 92581	(951) 663-6261	(951) 654-4198	jvaldez@soboba-nsn.gov	Cahuilla Luiseno	Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego	7/14/2023

This list is current only as of the date of this document. Distribution of this list does not relieve any person of statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

Record: PROJ-2024-006254  
Report Type: List of Tribes  
Counties: Orange  
NAHC Group: All

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources assessment for the proposed 23161 Mill Creek Project, Orange County.

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**RE: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA**

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**From** Vanessa Minott <vminott@santarosa-nsn.gov>

**Date** Mon 12/9/2024 11:59 AM

**To** Samantha Jovanovic <sjovanovic@southernenvironmental.com>

Acha'i Tamit,

Thank you for reaching out to Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians. We defer any comments to Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians cultural resource department.

Respectfully,  
Vanessa Minott,  
Tribal Administrator



Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians  
P.O. Box 391820  
Anza, CA 92539  
951-659-2700 ext. 102  
760-668-0460 work cell

---

**From:** Samantha Jovanovic <sjovanovic@southernenvironmental.com>

**Sent:** Thursday, December 5, 2024 3:59 PM

**To:** Samantha Jovanovic <sjovanovic@southernenvironmental.com>

**Subject:** [External] Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA

Dear NAHC-listed Tribal Contact,

Attached please find a scoping letter and figure for the above referenced project. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments regarding the proposed project.

Regards,

Samantha Jovanovic, MA, MS

Archaeologist

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**Re: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA**

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**From** BobbyRay Esparza <besparza@cahuilla-nsn.gov>  
**Date** Wed 12/18/2024 9:42 AM  
**To** Samantha Jovanovic <sjovanovic@southernenvironmental.com>

Good morning,

The Cahuilla Bans will defer this project to the Gabrielino/Tongva tribes. Thank you.

**Respectfully,**

**BobbyRay Esparza**  
**Cultural Director**  
**Cahuilla Band of Indians**  
**Office: 951-763-5549**  
**Cell: 760-423-2773**  
**Fax: 951-763-2808**  
**Email: besparza@cahuilla-nsn.gov**



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**From:** Samantha Jovanovic <sjovanovic@southernenvironmental.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 12, 2024 11:14 AM  
**To:** Samantha Jovanovic <sjovanovic@southernenvironmental.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sjovanovic@southernenvironmental.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello again,

Attached please find a scoping letter with figure for the 23161 Mill Creek Project in Laguna Hills, CA. I am sending this follow-up email to provide an additional opportunity to comment on or ask questions.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at your earliest convenience if you have any questions or comments.

Regards,

Samantha Jovanovic, MA, MS  
Archaeologist



Mobile: 562-900-8816

[www.southenvironmental.com](http://www.southenvironmental.com)

---

**From:** Samantha Jovanovic  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 5, 2024 3:59 PM  
**To:** Samantha Jovanovic <[sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com](mailto:sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com)>  
**Subject:** Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA

Dear NAHC-listed Tribal Contact,

Attached please find a scoping letter and figure for the above referenced project. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or comments regarding the proposed project.

Regards,

Samantha Jovanovic, MA, MS  
Archaeologist



Mobile: 562-900-8816

[www.southenvironmental.com](http://www.southenvironmental.com)

December 12, 2024

Samantha Jovanovic, MA, MS  
Archaeologist  
[sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com](mailto:sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com)

**Re: 23161 Mill Creek Project, City of Laguna Hills, Orange County, California**

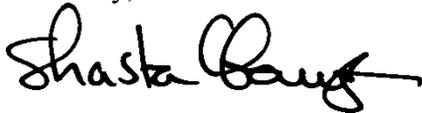
Dear Samantha Jovanovic:

The Pala Band of Mission Indians Tribal Historic Preservation Office has received your notification of the project referenced above. This letter constitutes our response on behalf of Robert Smith, Tribal Chairman.

We have consulted our maps and determined that the project as described is not within the boundaries of the recognized Pala Indian Reservation. The project is also beyond the boundaries of the territory that the tribe considers its Traditional Use Area (TUA). Therefore, we have no objection to the continuation of project activities as currently planned and we defer to the wishes of Tribes in closer proximity to the project area.

We appreciate involvement with your initiative and look forward to working with you on future efforts. Pala is now offering tribal monitoring services. If you have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the THPO office by e-mail at [THPO@palatribe.com](mailto:THPO@palatribe.com).

Sincerely,



Shasta C. Gaughen, PhD  
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer  
Pala Band of Mission Indians

**ATTENTION: THE PALA TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL REQUESTS FOR CONSULTATION. PLEASE ADDRESS CORRESPONDENCE TO SHASTA C. GAUGHEN AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO ALSO SEND NOTICES TO PALA TRIBAL CHAIRMAN ROBERT SMITH.**



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**Read: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA**

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**From** Shasta Gaughen <sgaughen@palatribe.com>

**Date** Thu 12/12/2024 11:22 AM

**To** Samantha Jovanovic <sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com>

Your message

To: Shasta Gaughen

Subject: Re: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA

Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2024 11:14:16 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)

was read on Thursday, December 12, 2024 11:22:20 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada).



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**Read: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA**

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**From** Shasta Gaughen <sgaughen@palatribe.com>

**Date** Thu 12/5/2024 6:50 PM

**To** Samantha Jovanovic <sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com>

Your message

To: Shasta Gaughen

Subject: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA

Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 3:59:10 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)

was read on Thursday, December 5, 2024 6:50:12 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada).



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**Read: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA**

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**From** Chris Nejo <cnejo@palatribe.com>

**Date** Thu 12/5/2024 4:00 PM

**To** Samantha Jovanovic <sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com>

Your message

To: Chris Nejo

Subject: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA

Sent: Thursday, December 5, 2024 3:59:10 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)

was read on Thursday, December 5, 2024 4:00:13 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada).



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**Read: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA**

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**From** Chris Nejo <cnejo@palatribe.com>

**Date** Thu 12/12/2024 4:16 PM

**To** Samantha Jovanovic <sjovanovic@southenvironmental.com>

Your message

To: Chris Nejo

Subject: Re: Scoping Letter: 23161 Mill Creek Project, Laguna Hills, Orange County, CA

Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2024 11:14:16 AM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)

was read on Thursday, December 12, 2024 4:15:52 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada).

## Appendix C: Preparer's Qualifications

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## EDUCATION

B.A., Anthropology, minor in  
American Indian Studies, San  
Diego State University, 1995

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Society for California  
Archaeology

## TRAININGS

AB 52 and CEQA Training,  
2016

Cultural Side of NEPA  
Seminar, 2007

Traditional Cultural  
Properties Management  
Seminar, 2005

# Kevin Hunt

## PRINCIPAL ARCHAEOLOGIST

Kevin Hunt is a cultural resources management professional with more than 30 years of experience in California with specific expertise in the cultural resources requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), CEQA-Plus, National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). His responsibilities include the management and preparation of cultural resources studies, Native American scoping and consultation, and quality assurance and quality control for cultural resources documents. Mr. Hunt draws from his experience and training to ensure that all projects consider the full spectrum of cultural resources including archaeological, historic built environment, and tribal cultural resources. He is an expert in Native American consultation and has strong working relationships with California tribes and Native American consultants. Mr. Hunt coauthored and instructed a Native American monitor training course at the Cahuilla Reservation in 2005. Mr. Hunt also served on the City of Oceanside's Historic Preservation Advisory Commission from 2020-2023, when he moved out of the city.

In addition to experience with cultural resources, Mr. Hunt has managed multidisciplinary projects that included biological and paleontological resources services. Mr. Hunt has conducted paleontological monitoring and salvage and is approved by the County of Orange as a paleontologist and the City of San Diego as a paleontological monitor.

## EXPERTISE

- CEQA, CEQA-Plus, NEPA, and Sections 106 and 110 of the NHPA compliance documentation in consideration of impacts to historical, archaeological, and tribal cultural resources, and historic properties.
- Resource significance evaluations in consideration of National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and local designation criteria.
- Design and execution of archaeological data recovery programs for mitigation of impacts/effects to significant archaeological resources.
- Management of cultural resources and multidisciplinary construction monitoring programs.
- Third party peer review of cultural resources technical studies and environmental document sections.

## RELEVANT PROJECT EXPERIENCE

### **Southern California Edison (SCE) Subconsultant Agreement for Capital Projects (2021-ongoing).**

South Environmental is a subconsultant to Rincon Consultants, Inc. on SCE's Environmental Clearance contract and provides cultural resources services throughout SCE's service territory in Southern California. Mr. Hunt provides senior oversight and review on archaeological and ethnographic studies in support of this program and participated in pedestrian survey of project alignments. Technical reports recently completed by South Environmental and reviewed by Mr. Hunt include the following:

- Ethnographic Literature Review Report for the Cal City 115 kv Upgrade Project in Kern and San Bernardino Counties

**1901 Via Burton Project, Fullerton, Orange County, California (2022).** During previous employment, Mr. Hunt served as Principal and Project Manager of the cultural resources study for this industrial development project subject to CEQA. The study included a cultural resource records search, Native American scoping, pedestrian survey, significance evaluation of a historic period building, and preparation of a technical report.

**Yorba Linda HOFF Project, Yorba Linda, Orange County, California (2020-2021).** During previous employment, Mr. Hunt served as Principal and Project Manager of the cultural resources study for this residential development project subject to CEQA.

**Doheny Desalination Project, City of Dana Point, Orange County, California (2017-2018).** During previous employment, Mr. Hunt served as Project Manager for the cultural resources study in support of this desalination project's EIR and CEQA-Plus compliance for State Revolving Fund-assistance through the California State Water Resources Control Board. The project owner is the South Coast Water District. The cultural resources study included a records search, Native American scoping, pedestrian survey, and preparation of a technical report.

**Department of Water & Power Specific Plan Amendment EIR, Seal Beach, Orange County, California (2013).** During previous employment, Mr. Hunt served as Project Manager of the cultural resources study for this redevelopment project. The study included a cultural resources records search, Sacred Lands File search and Native American scoping letters, pedestrian survey of the project site, and preparation of a technical report for CEQA compliance.

**EVMWD Rice Canyon Reservoir Access Road and New Conduit Project, City of Lake Elsinore, Riverside County, California (2022).** South Environmental was retained to complete a cultural resources technical report for the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District (EVMWD). Efforts included the results of a CHRIS records search of the project site and a one-mile radius with the Eastern Information Center; a NAHC Sacred Lands File search and informational scoping letters to local tribes; a paleontological resources records search; and an intensive pedestrian survey of the project site by a qualified archaeologist and Native American monitor. Mr. Hunt conducted the pedestrian survey of the project site. South Environmental also assisted the District with its AB 52 obligations, including participating in meetings with tribes. This study was completed in compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA and CEQA.



## EDUCATION

M.S., Conservation for  
Archaeology & Museums,  
University College London,  
2018

M.A., Principles of  
Conservation, University  
College London, 2016

B.S., Anthropology,  
University of California,  
Riverside, 2013

B.A., Art History, University of  
California, Riverside, 2013

## PROFESSIONAL

### AFFILIATIONS

Society for California  
Archaeology  
Assoc. for Environmental  
Archaeology

Assoc. for Environmental  
Professionals.

Geological Society of  
America

## PROFESSIONAL

### CERTIFICATIONS

Google Project Management  
Professional Certification,  
Coursera, (2021)

# Samantha Jovanovic, MS

## ARCHAEOLOGIST

Samantha Jovanovic is an archaeologist with over six years of professional experience in archaeology and museums, and supporting various cultural resources projects. Ms. Jovanovic currently works as an archaeologist and cultural resource technician at South Environmental LLC writing reports, performing pedestrian surveys, and monitoring in both urban and undeveloped contexts, and assessing artifacts and buildings for historical significance based on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and local-level designation criteria. Ms. Jovanovic has analyzed hundreds of artifacts in several museum institutions ranging from several thousand years to less than a decade old.

## EXPERTISE

- CEQA, NAGPRA, and Section 106 of the NHPA compliance documentation in consideration of impacts to historical, archaeological, and tribal cultural resources, and historic properties.
- Resource significance evaluations in consideration of NRHP, CRHR, NAGPRA, ICOMOS (International Council of Monuments and Sites) and local designation criteria.
- Object conservation, stabilization, handling, and storage according to American Institute of Conservation (AIC) standards.

## RELEVANT PROJECT EXPERIENCE

**Metro Link Union Station (Link US) Utilities Project, Los Angeles, California (2024-ongoing).** South Environmental is a subconsultant to HDR Engineering, Inc. providing cultural resources services to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro). Ms. Jovanovic serves as the lead archaeological monitor ensuring compliance with state and local codes for cultural protection. To this end, Ms. Jovanovic coordinated with LADWP and Rasic Construction field representatives, provides WEAP training, ensures HASP compliance of cultural resource monitors, monitors soil disturbing activities, and writes daily reports. Ms. Jovanovic collaborates with local tribal monitors on the identification and significance of artifacts found in the field.

**Avalon South Beach Restoration Project (2024).** South Environmental was retained to complete a cultural resources study for this project to replace the old seawall on South Beach in Avalon. Ms. Jovanovic served as field archaeologist, performing pedestrian survey, conducted cultural resources records search, Sacred Lands File search, Native American outreach, and was primary author of the comprehensive cultural resources technical report.

**Vallarta Palmdale Supermarket Project (2024).** South Environmental was retained to complete a cultural resources study for this project to refurbish the existing grocery store and build a new one. Ms. Jovanovic served as field archaeologist, performing pedestrian survey, conducted cultural resources records search, Sacred Lands File search, Native American outreach, and was primary author of the comprehensive cultural resources technical report.

**Southern California Edison (SCE) Pole Upgrade Projects (2023).** Under Rincon Consultants, Ms. Jovanovic performed intensive-level archaeological surveys, historic built environment surveys, and evaluations around SCE power poles in various locations in Los Angeles, Orange, and Riverside Counties. These surveys seek to identify the presence of archaeological/historical resources.

**On-Call Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) Support (2023).** South Environmental is a sub-consultant to Rincon Consultants, Inc. on SoCalGas's on-call services contract and provides cultural resources services throughout SoCalGas's service territory. Ms. Jovanovic performs intensive-level pedestrian surveys of areas along gas lines in urban and undeveloped areas.

**Sequoia National Forest (SQNF) Survey of Windy and Castle Burn Zones (2023).** Under Rincon Consultants, Ms. Jovanovic performed intensive-level pedestrian surveys of the Castle Fire (2020) and Windy Fire (2021) burn zones within Sequoia National Forest.

**Southern California Edison (SCE) Subconsultant Agreement for Capital Projects (2021-2022).** South Environmental is a sub-consultant to Rincon Consultants, Inc. on SCE's Environmental Clearance contract and provides cultural resources services throughout SCE's service territory in Southern California. 2021-2022, Ms. Jovanovic performed a pedestrian survey along the SCE power lines near California City for the Cal City 115kV Upgrade project.

**Athos I & II Solar Project in Desert Center, California (2021).** Under Rincon Consultants, Ms. Jovanovic performed intensive-level pedestrian surveys and test pits of zones before construction, followed by archaeological monitoring and completion of cultural resources assessment reports in compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA.



## EDUCATION

M.A., Anthropology,  
California State University,  
Los Angeles, 2013

B.A., Anthropology,  
California State University,  
Northridge, 2003

## CERTIFICATIONS

Registered Professional  
Archaeologist (RPA)

## PROFESSIONAL

### AFFILIATIONS

California Preservation  
Foundation

Society of Architectural  
Historians

National Trust for Historic  
Preservation

# Samantha Murray, MA

## CULTURAL RESOURCES DIRECTOR

Samantha Murray is the cultural resources director at South Environmental and a principal archaeologist and architectural historian with over 18 years' experience in all elements of cultural resources management, including project management, architectural history studies, and historical significance evaluations in consideration of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), and local-level designation criteria. Ms. Murray has conducted thousands of historical resource evaluations and developed detailed historic context statements for a multitude of property types and architectural styles. She has also provided expertise on numerous projects requiring conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Ms. Murray meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for both Architectural History and Archaeology. She is experienced managing multidisciplinary projects in the lines of private development, transportation, transmission and generation, federal land management, land development, and state and local government. She is an expert in preparation of cultural resources compliance documentation for projects that fall under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Ms. Murray has also served as an expert witness in legal proceedings concerning historical resources under CEQA and local ordinance protection.

## EXPERTISE

- CEQA, NEPA, and Section 106 of the NHPA compliance documentation in consideration of impacts to historical, archaeological, and tribal cultural resources, and historic properties.
- Resource significance evaluations in consideration of NRHP, CRHR, and local designation criteria.
- Project design review for conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.
- Assistance with complex mitigation including HABS/HAER/HALS, salvage, and interpretive displays.
- Peer review.

## SELECT PROJECT EXPERIENCE

### **2101-2019 East Santa Clara Avenue Project, City of Santa Ana, Orange County, California (2023).**

South Environmental was retained by Psomas to prepare a historic built environment assessment report in support of the 2101-2109 East Santa Clara Avenue Project in the City of Santa Ana, California. The purpose of the report was to determine if the proposed project would result in impacts to historic built environment resources located within the project site. The report was prepared in conformance of the requirements of CEQA Guidelines § 15064.5 for historical resources. Two single-family residences were evaluated for historical significance in consideration of CRHR and City designation criteria and recorded on State of California Department of Parks and Recreation Series 523 forms (DPR forms). As a result of the evaluation, no historical resources were identified within the project site. Ms. Murray served as the contract manager and provided QA/QC of all deliverables.

### **Santiago Creek Dam Outlet Tower and Spillway Improvements Project, Orange County, California (2023).**

South Environmental was retained by Psomas to complete a Historic Property Inventory Report (HPIR) for the Santiago Creek Dam Outlet Tower and Spillway Improvements Project. The report included an intensive-level pedestrian survey of all built environmental resources over 50 years old within the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE); building development and archival research; recordation and evaluation of the Santiago Creek Dam Complex (P-30-176757) and the Southern California Edison (SCE) Taiwan 12 kilovolt (kV) overhead distribution line for historical significance in consideration of federal, state, and local designation criteria and integrity requirements; and an assessment of project-related effects on historic properties/historical resources. Ms. Murray oversaw completion of the HPIR and reviewed all final deliverables.

### **Historical Resources Evaluation Report for the I-5 Improvement Project (San Diego County Line to Avenida Pico), City of San Clemente, Orange County, California (2022).**

South Environmental was retained to prepare a Historical Resource Evaluation Report in support of the I-5 Improvement Project in the City of San Clemente. South Environmental carried out a survey of the I-5 corridor from the San Diego County line to Avenida Pico in the City of San Clemente and identified six built environment resources over 45 years old. The resources were evaluated for historical significance in consideration of NRHP, CRHR and City designation criteria and integrity requirements and were found not eligible under all designation criteria and integrity requirements. The proposed project was found to have a less than significant impact on historical resources under CEQA. Ms. Murray served as the contract manager for this project and conducted QA/QC of the final document.

### **Peer Review for Fullerton College Performing Arts Complex project, City of Fullerton, California (2022).**

South Environmental was retained by another consultant and Fullerton College to prepare a peer review and conformance review of a proposed Performing Arts Complex project on the campus. This analysis included review of a previously prepared SOIS conformance review and proposed building plans. The peer review concluded that the project was not in conformance with the SOIS and design recommendations were developed to achieve conformance. Ms. Murray served as the contract manager for this project and conducted quality assurance/quality control of the final document.

### **Historical Resources under CEQA Presentation: Prepared for the Orange County Historic Preservation Planner Working Group. Presented by Samantha Murray, Dudek. December 1, 2016.**

Delivered a 1-hour PowerPoint presentation to the Orange County Historic Preservation Planner Working Group at the City of Santa Ana, which included planners from different municipalities in Orange County, regarding the treatment of historical resources under CEQA. Topics of discussion included identification of historical resources, assessing impacts, avoiding or mitigating impacts, overcoming the challenges associated with impacts to historical resources, and developing effective preservation alternatives.

