
3.3 - Cultural Resources

This section describes the potential cultural resources effects of project implementation on the project site and its surrounding area. Descriptions and analysis in this section are based on information contained in the March 26, 2013 Cultural Resources Addendum Survey, which supplements the January 21, 2008 Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment and Paleontological Records Review and the April 21, 2008 Addendum Letter Report to the Final Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment and Paleontological Records Review, all of which were prepared by Michael Brandman Associates. The Cultural Resources Addendum Survey, along with the previous Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment and Addendum Letter Report, are included in this Draft EIR as Appendix D. The Morongo Band of Indians provided comments on the NOP prepared for the project. One comment requested clarification that the SGPWA service area includes the Morongo Tribal lands, and this was clarified in Section 1.1 of this Draft EIR. Another comment requested information on soil removal associated with the project and this information is provided in Sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 of this Draft EIR. A final comment requested information on local groundwater quality levels because the levels reported were over 30 miles away; however, as described in Section 6.9.1 of this Draft EIR, the water quality levels identified at the Devil Canyon Afterbay which is approximately 30 miles from the project site were levels of the SWP water. These levels were identified as higher in quality than the levels within the groundwater extracted from the project vicinity.

3.3.1 - Existing Conditions

Regional and Local History

City of Beaumont and Vicinity

In 1819, the Mission San Gabriel established an asistencia at San Bernardino, followed by a second outpost, which was given the name San Gorgonio, purportedly established near Beaumont in 1824. The purpose of this outpost was to guard the Cocomaricopa Trail, which had been used as a Native American trading route between the Colorado River tribes and lower Southern California. In 1821, José Cocomaricopa, a Cocomaricopa chief, arrived at the Mission San Gabriel on a trading mission from Tucson, Arizona. His route took him through the San Gorgonio Pass, a route not previously explored by the Spanish, but became used after José Cocomaricopa agreed to move mail for the padres between Arizona and California. The San Gorgonio outpost was never described by the padres in the official records, and was apparently little used for many years. Due to the lack of interest in this particular outpost, local Cahuilla natives were relatively unaffected by early Spanish incursions compared to the coastal tribes.

With time, the San Gorgonio Pass route became more widely accepted by Southern California merchants, serving as a wagon road between towns and mines in lower Arizona and coastal cities in Southern California, eventually becoming known as the “Bradshaw Trail.” In 1877, the Southern Pacific Railroad line out of Los Angeles crossed the Colorado River, reaching Yuma, and solidified

the role of the San Gorgonio Pass as the key transportation corridor between the greater Los Angeles area and points east.

The Southern Pacific Railroad built their railroad once lands were deeded in a checkerboard pattern to the company in the 1860s. This pattern was established by the Pacific Railroad Act of 1864, which deeded every odd-numbered section of land to a railroad company in a 20-mile wide area bisected by a railroad track. The resultant checkerboard pattern was placed along the new Southern Pacific line between the Arizona border and the easternmost edge of the Rancho San Bernardino. Once the Southern Pacific tracks were laid through the San Gorgonio Pass and Whitewater area in 1875 and 1876, various stops and sidings were established.

The Southern Pacific needed grading equipment, lumber, and men to build their tracks. To facilitate these needs, a contract was issued to Colonel Milton Sanders Hall, who built a company town, Hall City, located south of Cabazon at the foot of the San Jacinto Mountains; constructed a road, the San Jacinto Toll Road; built a sawmill; and was contracted to lay track between Spadra, now known as Pomona, and Indian Wells. Hall City was established and the mill constructed, but the community was short-lived, as Hall underestimated his costs. The railroad track was laid, but the venture was sold before failing entirely prior to 1880.

After the failure of the Hall City development, a large quantity of private land was available for sale. In late 1883, George Egan, a storeowner from Banning, purchased approximately 320 acres of land from the Southern Pacific around the Summit Station area. Egan used this land to form a new town site, which he named San Gorgonio, after the San Gorgonio Pass. In February of 1884, a “Map of San Gorgonio” was developed that subdivided Egan’s property into various lots and streets. Throughout 1884 and 1885, various people moved into the area and purchased land from George Egan, from other residents, or homesteaded. In late 1885, another tract of land was developed as San Gorgonio Heights. This town site was purportedly located about four miles from San Gorgonio, though no map was ever created for this community.

By 1886, the Southern California Investment Company, headed by Dr. H.C. Sigler, came to the area in search of property. George Egan sold several hundred acres, including the San Gorgonio town site and portions of the San Gorgonio Heights area to this group. Sigler eventually renamed the area Beaumont to honor his hometown in Texas.

Shortly after the initial purchase of land, Sigler and his group formed the Beaumont Land and Water Company, and began the surveying process. The “Map of Beaumont” was filed on March 15, 1887 and included 1,665 acres. Sigler and his group then began an aggressive campaign for prospective buyers, and began a beautification program, which included street grading and planting eucalyptus, pepper, pine, oak, and elm trees. While the group worked diligently to entice buyers, very few people settled at this new town site, and the operation was in poor condition by 1889. By 1893, the real

estate market had not increased in the area, and the German Savings and Loan Society of San Francisco, the main financial entity behind Sigler's group, took over Beaumont. No further improvements were made during this time, and development in Beaumont remained stagnant until after the turn of the century.

In 1908, Water Well No. 1 was drilled at the entrance to Edgar Canyon. This was followed by the construction of a shaft, which made a large quantity of water accessible. Other wells were then drilled in Noble Canyon, and this accessible water allowed the Beaumont area to boast land for crops and attract new residents.

Beaumont was incorporated as a city on November 18, 1912, and has continued to steadily increase in population. Since incorporation, agriculture has remained a main enterprise in the area, with the city also serving travelers along SR-60 and I-10 in the San Gorgonio Pass area.

Community of Cherry Valley and Vicinity

Cherry Valley is an unincorporated community within Riverside County that has been rurally developed since the 1840s. Developments in the San Gorgonio Pass between roughly 1840 and 1880 focused on the towns of Banning and Beaumont because these areas were crossed by the first trails, the stagecoach routes, and the Southern Pacific railroad. Once these and surrounding areas began to be developed, investors from Los Angeles formed the Cherry Valley Land and Water Company, a development scheme that quickly collapsed. This group's lands were then purchased by the holdings of the Beaumont Land and Water Company.

As water resources were developed in the canyons above the project area, agricultural developments focused on tree crops, with Highland Springs Resort being developed from the original Paulino Weaver holdings from the 1840s.

Records Searches

Previous records searches were conducted in August 2007 on lands within and near the southern end of Nobel Creek, and again in October 2009 as the prior Noble Creek recharge project was expanded northward to include recharge basin alternatives. Staff archeologists performed records searches at the Eastern Information Center (EIC) at the Department of Anthropology at University of California, Riverside. The current Beaumont Avenue Recharge Facility and Pipeline project description was compared with the records search data collected during the previous visits to the EIC. This comparison concluded that while a few cultural resources are located in the general project vicinity, no recorded cultural resources are located within the project site.

Reconnaissance Survey

Staff archeologists conducted a reconnaissance-level survey of the pipeline alignment between Cherry Valley and the southeast corner of the recharge facility site on APN# 404-010-015, Vineyard Street, Ralph Road, and Orchard Street.

With the exception of Hirsch's Deodar Cedar tree alignments, which are historical landscaping resources located on both sides of Beaumont Avenue, no cultural resources were located on the project sites. No cultural resources were detected during the surveys of lands previously included as part of the prior Noble Creek project. The Deodar Cedar tree alignments are located directly adjacent to the project site, and thus the resource requires a significance evaluation.

Hirsch's Deodar Cedar Tree Alignment (P#33-020974)

Alignments of Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) trees located along the east and west shoulders of Beaumont Avenue are considered a historical landscape resource. As such, the tree alignments have been recorded onto California Department of Recreation (DPR) DPR523 forms and submitted to the EIC.

Originally planted only between 14th Street (former City limits) and Cherry Valley Boulevard, the Deodar Cedar trees are native to Asia (Western Himalayas). Among Hindus, the tree is considered a divine tree. Planted in 1930 by Fred Hirsch, who was the owner of the Highland Springs Resort, the trees were placed northward to Cherry Valley Boulevard, which was the road that brought visitors into Highland Springs Resort from the west. Because some of the trees that were originally planted have been removed, the southernmost tree is now located on the east shoulder of Beaumont Avenue near a small ephemeral drainage approximately 560 feet north of 15th Street. Most of the trees occurring north of this point still remain, although it is possible that some have been replaced since the original planting date. The species is widely grown as an ornamental tree, and due to its drooping foliage is often planted in parks and large gardens. General cultivation is limited to areas with mild winters, as trees can be killed by temperatures below -25°C, limiting the species to warmer zones.

The Deodar Cedar tree alignments are found on historic aerial photographs (1938, 1959). In the early 1800s, the area surrounding Highland Springs Resort was known as the San Gorgonio Rancho, an outpost for the San Gabriel Mission. A large portion of the area was a Spanish land grant made to Paulino Weaver. In 1853, Dr. Isaac William Smith purchased 1,000 acres for \$1,000 from Weaver and established the Smith Ranch. The original Smith residence stood near where the Highland Springs Resort swimming pool does today. In 1862, Smith's ranch was dubbed "Smith Station" and was made a stagecoach stop. The Butterfield Overland Stage line ran coaches from San Bernardino, stopped at the ranch, and then continued along the Bradshaw Trail to Yuma, Arizona.

From 1864 to 1866, the route through Highland Springs along the Bradshaw Trail was the single connecting line for passenger, mail, and express travel between Southern California and the eastern regions of the nation. Smith's Station slowly developed into a popular hotel. In 1884, the Smith property was purchased by a Los Angeles company that built a three-story hotel on the property, calling it "Highland Home." It was during this time that the first cherry trees were planted nearby.

In 1927, Fred and William Hirsch bought the old Smith Ranch, renamed it Highland Springs Resort, and developed it into a health resort. Fred Hirsch was "made healthy" following the philosophy of

Professor Arnold Ehret, who was an early proponent of juice fasting and colon cleansing. The restaurant on the new Highland Springs Resort was vegetarian and Hirsch grew much of the produce that was served at the resort's restaurant. He also grew his own grapes and operated a small vineyard. Eventually, the resort became known as "The Last Resort," as many sick people allegedly became healthy through Hirsch's health practices while staying there.

In 1930, Fred Hirsch planted parallel rows of Deodar Cedar trees along both sides of Beaumont Avenue from 14th Street (now Oak Valley Parkway) north to Cherry Valley Boulevard. Hirsch likely chose to plant the trees along Beaumont Avenue instead of Highland Springs Road to beautify an area between Beaumont and Cherry Valley that contained dryland pasture or plowed fields that were susceptible to flash flooding. During the 1930s, this area likely did not contain any orchards because of repeated flooding in Noble Creek and Little San Geronio Creek. Planted 70 feet apart and staggered, the trees created an aesthetically pleasing visual environment to motorists traveling along Beaumont Avenue. The 7,800 feet between the former 14th Street and Cherry Valley Boulevard would have required roughly 112 trees on each side of the roadway. Today, a total of 85 live trees occur on the east side of Beaumont Avenue, and 87 on the west side. These trees have been replanted over the years, although many original trees are found opposite the western entrance of the Beaumont Sports Park.

The idea for planting Deodar Cedars trees may have come from City of Altadena's Christmas Tree Lane, which is a parallel alignment of about 150 Deodar Cedars placed on the shoulders of Santa Rosa Avenue in 1885. The trees of Christmas Tree Lane have been lit with lights at Christmas time since 1920. Christmas Tree Lane is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (1990) and is a California Historical landmark.

This data suggest that the Hirsch's Deodar Cedar tree alignment is a significant historical resource at the local- and State-level of analysis.

Native American Sacred Lands Search

On July 11, 2012, staff archeologists sent a sacred lands search request to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for the purpose of determining potential effects to unlisted and possibly sacred Native American use areas or sites. A response was provided on July 16, 2012, which indicated that no Native American cultural resources were identified within 0.5 mile of the area of potential effect. The NAHC recommended that specific tribal authorities be contacted and given the opportunity to comment on the search request. Letters were mailed to the nine listed tribal authorities on July 17, 2012. As of the date of this report, one phone call response has been received. No letter responses to the inquiry was received.

A phone call from Michael Contreras of the Morongo Band of Mission Indians was received on July 30, 2012. Mr. Contreras was interested in the exact location of the project sites. Staff archeologists

informed Mr. Contreras that SWP water would be conveyed from existing SWP facilities west of Little San Geronio flood control channel by underground pipeline to a recharge basin. Mr. Contreras stated that the Morongo Band would be pleased to receive a phone call in the event that any inadvertent finds are encountered during project construction.

3.3.2 - Regulatory Setting

Federal

Under National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106, federal agencies are required to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties and afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings. The agencies are responsible for initiating the Section 106 review process and for completing the requirements of the process. Section 106 requires that any federal or federally-assisted actions, or any undertaking requiring federal licensing or permitting, consider the effect of the action on historic properties listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NR). Under 36 CFR Part 800.8, all federal agencies are required to coordinate compliance with Section 106 and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The implementing regulations, "Protection of Historic Properties," are found in 36 CFR Part 800, while NR listing eligibility is contained in 36 CFR Part 63 and criteria for resource evaluation is located in 36 CFR Part 60.4[a-d].

Properties less than 50 years old may be considered for listing in the NR if they exhibit exemplary cultural characteristics. Listing in the NR requires integrity, and it is the integrity of the resource that must be addressed first in any analysis.

The NHPA established the NR as the official federal list for cultural resources that are considered important due to their historical significance at the local, state, or national level. To be eligible for listing in the NR, properties must meet specific criteria for historic significance and possess certain levels of integrity of form, location, and setting. The criteria for listing in the NR are nationally significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture as present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- B. Is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction; represent the work of a master; possess high artistic values, represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; and
- D. Yields, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

State

Sites, structures, and other properties may be considered an historical resource if they are significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military or cultural annals of California (PRC 5020.1[j]), or if they meets the criteria for listing in the NR or the California Register of Historical Resources (CR) (14 CFR 4850). If enacted by local legislation, CEQA allows for local historic resource guidelines to serve as CR criteria equivalent to State criteria.

If the historical resource has integrity and one or more of the following criteria are met, the resource would be considered a significant resource and any direct effect would be considered a significant impact on the environment:

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 represent the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; and
4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Typically, researchers in California use a 45-year age threshold following State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) recommendations. The five-year difference between State and federal criteria is explained by the fact that it takes approximately five years to plan and develop a property.

Local

As discussed previously in Section 1 of this Draft EIR, the SGPWA is exempt from local land use policies and ordinances in accordance with California Government Code Sections 53091(d) and 53091(e). Although exempt for the proposed project, SGPWA has chosen to provide a discussion of the local land use policies and ordinances.

City of Beaumont General Plan

The City of Beaumont General Plan contains the following goal and policy that address cultural resources.

Resource Management Element

Goal 5. The City of Beaumont will participate in cultural resources management and/or preservation efforts.

Policy 15. The City of Beaumont will identify and preserve those sites/buildings that are important to the community for the benefit of the future generations that will reside or work in the City.

County of Riverside General Plan

The County of Riverside General Plan contains the following policies that address cultural resources.

Multipurpose Open Space Element

Policy OS 19.2. Review all proposed development for the possibility of archaeological sensitivity.

Policy OS 19.3. Employ procedures to protect the confidentiality and prevent inappropriate public exposure of sensitive archaeological resources when soliciting the assistance of public and volunteer organizations.

Policy OS 19.4. Require a Native American Statement as part of the environmental review process on development projects with identified cultural resources.

Policy OS 19.5. Transmit significant development proposals to the History Division of the Riverside County Regional Park and Open-Space District for evaluation in relation to the destruction/preservation of potential historical sites. Prior to approval of any development proposal, feasible mitigation shall be incorporated into the design of the project and its conditions of approval.

Policy OS 19.8. Whenever existing information indicates that a site proposed for development may contain biological, paleontological, or other scientific resources, a report shall be filed stating the extent and potential significance of the resources that may exist within the proposed development and appropriate measures through which the impacts of development may be mitigated.

Policy OS 19.9. This policy requires that when existing information indicates that a site proposed for development may contain paleontological resources, a paleontologist shall monitor site grading activities, with the authority to halt grading to collect uncovered paleontological resources, curate any resources collected with an appropriate repository, and file a report with the Planning Department documenting any paleontological resources that are found during the course of site grading.

Policy OS 19.10. Transmit significant development applications subject to CEQA to the San Bernardino County Museum for review, comment, and/or preparation of recommended conditions of approval with regard to paleontological resources.

3.3.3 - Thresholds of Significance

According to the CEQA Guidelines' Appendix G Environmental Checklist, to determine whether impacts to cultural resources are significant environmental effects, the following questions are analyzed and evaluated. Would the project:

- a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5? (See Historic Resource Impact CUL-1.)
- b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5? (See Archaeological Resource Impact CUL-2.)
- c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? (See Paleontological Resource or Geologic Feature Impact CUL-3.)
- d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? (See Impact Human Remains CUL-4.)

3.3.4 - Project Impact Analysis and Mitigation Measures

This section discusses potential impacts associated with the proposed project and provides mitigation measures where necessary.

Historic Resource

Impact CUL-1	The project could potentially cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5.
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Impact Analysis

Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated. A historical cultural resource, the Deodar Cedar tree alignment is located adjacent to the proposed pipeline along Beaumont Avenue between Brookside Avenue and Cherry Valley Boulevard. Based on an evaluation of the deodar trees in Section 3.2, Biological Resources, the proposed project will not impact the deodar trees above ground because the trunk of the trees are located outside of the construction area. The proposed pipeline will be located below the existing surface of the pavement along Beaumont Avenue. The proposed trenching activities may impact the root structure of some of the deodar trees; however, based on the following (1) location of the trunks of the deodar trees which are approximately 20 to 24 feet from the proposed trench, (2) the width of the canopies which are approximately 40 to 51 feet, and (3) the location of the proposed trench (i.e., the canopies extending approximately one foot over the proposed trench), the health of the three existing deodar trees are not expected to be substantially affected. Therefore, potential impacts to the deodar trees is considered a less than significant impact.

As discussed in Section 3.2, Biological Resources, the mature deodar trees that are located along Beaumont Avenue contain a root structure that may extend under the roadway. The supportive root structure for trees are generally under the tree canopy, and the primary support root structure is closer

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to the tree trunk with smaller roots further away from the trunk. Construction activities, including trenching, would generally cause less than significant impacts to the health of a tree if the activities occur outside the tree canopy.

Therefore, a review of the proposed pipeline construction activities was conducted. The proposed pipeline would be constructed within an approximately 4-foot wide trench that extends from 4 feet to 8 feet from the existing centerline of Beaumont Avenue. Based on a review of aerial photographs, there are 3 of the existing 67 deodar tree canopies from Brookside Avenue to Cherry Valley Avenue that extend approximately one foot east of the western side of the proposed trench. The remaining trees do not extend over the proposed trench. The trunks of the 3 trees are located approximately 20 to 24 feet from the proposed trench. The canopies of the 3 trees range from approximately 40 to 51 feet in diameter. Based on a site visit, the widths of the existing tree canopies, and the location of the tree trunks, the 3 deodar trees are mature and healthy. Because the three deodar trees are mature and healthy as well as based on (1) location of the trunks of the deodar trees which are approximately 20 to 24 feet from the proposed trench, (2) the width of the canopies which are approximately 40 to 51 feet, and (3) the location of the proposed trench (i.e., the canopies extending approximately one foot over the proposed trench), the health of the three existing deodar trees are not expected to be substantially affected with the implementation of the proposed project. Therefore, potential impacts to the deodar trees is considered a less than significant impact.

Based on the record searches, there were no recorded historical cultural resources on the project sites. Although there were no historical cultural resources on the project sites and there were recorded sites in the project vicinity, the potential for impacts to buried unknown historical cultural resources is considered “Moderate.” As with most earthmoving activities in the project region, the potential exists for encountering buried unknown historical resources during project construction. Potential impacts to buried unknown historical cultural resources is considered potentially significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

MM CUL-1 Prior to the issuance of grading permits, a Project Archaeologist, approved by the County of Riverside for portions of the project sites located within the jurisdiction of the County of Riverside and the City of Beaumont for the portions of the sites located within the jurisdiction of the City of Beaumont, shall initiate and supervise cultural resource mitigation monitoring during project-related earthmoving activities in the project area, subject to certain constraints found in Mitigation Measure CUL-2.

MM CUL-2 The following monitoring measures that provide a framework for monitoring shall be followed:

- a) All earthmoving activities shall be monitored by the approved Project Archaeologist or his/her designated representative. Monitoring shall begin along the pipeline segments once two feet of surface fill has been removed.
- b) Once 50 percent of the earth to be moved has been examined by the approved Project Archaeologist, the Project Archaeologist may, at his or her discretion, terminate monitoring if and only if no buried cultural resources have been detected.
- c) If buried cultural resources are detected during monitoring, monitoring must continue until 100 percent of virgin earth within the study area has been disturbed and inspected by the Project Archaeologist or his/her designated representative.
- d) Earthmoving activities shall cease in the immediate area of a potential cultural artifact find as delineated by the Project Archaeologist or his/her designated representative. Such activities shall be permitted to continue in other areas while the particular find(s) is investigated.
- e) If cultural artifacts are uncovered during earthmoving activities, the resources shall be examined by a professional archaeologist subject to Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2, then curated in a museum facility chosen by the County of Riverside. A mitigation monitoring report shall accompany the artifacts once they are donated to the museum facility.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

The monitoring identified in Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2 will reduce the potential impacts to buried unknown historical cultural resources because the monitoring will allow examination and curation of significant resources if they are found.

Archaeological Resource

Impact CUL-2 **The project could potentially cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5.**

Impact Analysis

No known archaeological resources are located within the project area. As a result, no direct impacts to any recorded cultural resources would occur during project construction.

Based on the record searches, there were no recorded archaeological resources on the project sites. Although there were no archaeological resources on the project sites and there were recorded sites in

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the project vicinity, the potential for impacts to buried unknown archaeological resources is considered “Moderate.” As with most earthmoving activities in the project region, the potential exists for encountering buried unknown archaeological resources during project construction. Potential impacts to buried unknown archaeological resources is considered potentially significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2 is required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

The monitoring identified in Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2 will reduce the potential impacts to buried unknown archaeological resources because the monitoring will allow examination and curation of significant resources if they are found.

Paleontological Resource or Geologic Feature

Impact CUL-3	The project could potentially directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.
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Impact Analysis

The paleontological background of the general project area was previously reviewed in 2008 (Appendix D). The paleontological review found that the project area is situated entirely upon surface exposures of Pleistocene older alluvium, which is overlain and incised by recent (Holocene) wash sediments. The Holocene or recent sediments are too geologically young to produce fossil resources, and are assigned low paleontological sensitivity. In contrast, the Pleistocene or older alluvial sediments have a high potential to contain significant, nonrenewable paleontologic resources, depending upon their lithology. Excavations into Pleistocene sediments throughout the Inland Empire have previously yielded significant fossils of animals from the Ice Age, including mammoths, mastodons, ground sloths, dire wolves, short-faced bears, saber-toothed cats, large and small horses, large and small camels, and bison. Based upon these findings and the uncertain potential for developed and fossiliferous Pleistocene deposits in the project area, a visual review of the vertical cross-sections within the Noble Creek stream channel was conducted. Based on this review, it was determined that there is a low potential for yielding fossil resources between the ground surface and 10 feet below the ground surface. Below 10 feet, construction activities associated with the proposed project could result in potential significant impacts to unknown paleontological resources.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

- MM CUL-3** If grading and excavation plans show that a depth of 10 feet could be reached, a County of Riverside-qualified Project Paleontologist shall develop a mitigation monitoring program to reduce any potential impacts. If the paleontological monitor finds that underlying soils are conducive to the preservation of fossil resources, then Mitigation Measures CUL-4 through CUL-7 shall apply.
- MM CUL-4** Excavation monitoring in areas identified as likely to contain paleontologic resources shall occur. Paleontologic monitors shall be equipped to salvage fossils, as they are unearthed, to avoid construction delays, and to remove samples of sediments likely to contain the remains of small fossil invertebrates and vertebrates. Monitors shall be empowered to temporarily halt or divert construction activities to allow for the removal of abundant or large specimens.
- MM CUL-5** Preparation of recovered specimens to a point of identification and permanent preservation, including washing of sediments to recover small invertebrates and vertebrates, shall occur. Preparation and stabilization of all recovered fossils shall be deemed necessary to fully reduce impacts to significant paleontological resources.
- MM CUL-6** Identification and curation of specimens into an established, accredited museum repository with permanent retrievable paleontologic storage shall occur. These procedures shall be deemed necessary steps in effective paleontologic mitigation and CEQA compliance. Prior to the initiation of any mitigation activities, the paleontologist shall have a written repository agreement in writing. Mitigation of impacts shall not be deemed complete until such curation into a museum repository has been fully completed and documented.
- MM CUL-7** The paleontologists shall prepare a report of findings with an appended itemized inventory of specimens. The report and inventory, when submitted to the appropriate lead agency along with confirmation of the curation of recovered specimens into an established, accredited museum repository, shall signify completion of the mitigation program to reduce impacts to significant paleontologic resources.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

The monitoring identified in Mitigation Measures CUL-3 and CUL-7 will reduce the potential impacts to buried unknown paleontological resources because the monitoring will allow examination and curation of significant resources if they are found.

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Human Remains

Impact CUL-4 **The project would not disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.**

Impact Analysis

There are no existing or known formal cemeteries within or adjacent to the project sites. As a result, project implementation is not anticipated to impact human remains associated with either a formal or informal cemetery. Notwithstanding, in the event that any human remains or related resources are discovered, such resources would be treated in accordance with all applicable federal, State, and local regulations and guidelines for disclosure, recovery, relocation, and preservation, including CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e). Further evaluation of potential impacts related to the discovery of human remains is not necessary. Therefore, impacts associated with the discovery of human remains would be less than significant.

Level of Significance Before Mitigation

Less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are required.

Level of Significance After Mitigation

Less than significant impact.