

APPENDIX 5.3

Phase I Archeological Study

**PHASE I ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE RIVERWALK
MARKETPLACE II STUDY AREA, PORTERVILLE, TULARE COUNTY,
CALIFORNIA**

Prepared For:

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16 February 2009

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

A Phase I archaeological survey was conducted for the 21.75 acres Riverwalk Marketplace II project area, Porterville, Tulare County, California. This involved an archival records search, a review of existing published and unpublished references on local prehistory and history, and an on-foot, intensive survey of the subject property. Archival records indicated that no previously recorded archaeological sites had been recorded within the study area. Intensive on-foot survey of the study area failed to result in the discovery of cultural resources of any kind. Development of the study area, therefore, does not have the potential to result in adverse impacts to significant cultural resources.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

At the request of Mr. Ken Koch, Impact Sciences, Inc., Camarillo, CA, a Phase I archaeological survey was conducted for the Riverwalk Marketplace II project study area, Porterville, Tulare County, California (Figure 1). The Phase I archaeological survey was intended to provide a background records search and literature review to determine if any known archaeological sites were present in the project zone and/or whether the area had been previously and systematically studied by archaeologists; an on-foot, intensive survey of the project area to identify previously unrecorded cultural resources and to examine known sites; and a preliminary assessment of such resources, should any be found within the subject property. This manuscript constitutes a report on this Phase I archaeological study. Subsequent sections provide background to the study; the findings of the archival records search; a summary of the field surveying techniques employed; the results of the fieldwork; and recommendations resulting from this work.

2.0 BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

2.1 Project Location and Environmental Setting

The Riverwalk Marketplace II project study area is located northeast of the intersection of Highway 65 and State Route 190, southeast of the intersection of Indiana Avenue and Springville Drive, in the City of Porterville, Tulare County, California (Figure 1). This places it on the floodplain of the Tule River, with the channel of this stream located about one-quarter mile to the north. Regionally, this is the open flat of the San Joaquin Valley, a large interior and relatively low-lying valley that drains northwards to the San Francisco Bay. Indeed, although the study area is a significant distance from the Pacific Ocean, elevation is only 440 feet a.s.l. The study area is 21.75 acres in size, falling in an area of mixed commercial and residential development.

At the time of the Phase I study, the Riverwalk Marketplace II project area can be characterized as a vacant suburban lot. Although the study area currently may be characterized as dry open valley bottom, historically (prior to the control of the Tule River) it fell within a low-lying water rich area characterized by sloughs, marshes and swamps. Most likely, it was occasionally inundated by floodwaters and, during most years, was probably marshy during the winter rainy season.

Historical and recent land-use has changed the vegetation that was once present within and near to the project area. Nonetheless it is likely that Riparian Woodlands were once found along the river, and a short distance from the study area. The project area itself may have been covered by the Valley Grassland community though, depending upon

drainage and seasonal storm systems, it may also have contained freshwater marshes (see Schoenherr 1992).

2.2 Ethnographic Background

Penutian-speaking Yokuts tribal groups occupied the southern and central San Joaquin Valley region and much of the nearby Sierra Nevada. Ethnographic information about the Yokuts was collected primarily by Powers (1971, 1976 [originally 1877]), Kroeber (1925), Gayton (1930, 1948), Driver (1937), Latta (1977) and Harrington (n.d.). For a variety of historical reasons this information emphasizes the central Yokuts tribes occupying the valley and, especially, the foothills of the Sierra. The northernmost tribes had suffered from the influx of Euro-Americans during the Gold Rush and were essentially extirpated by the time ethnographic study began at about the start of the twentieth century. The southernmost tribes, in contrast, were partly removed by the Spanish to the missions and subsequently were absorbed into multi-tribal communities on the Sebastian Indian Reservation (on the Tejon Ranch), and eventually the Tule River Reservation (outside of Porterville), and the Santa Rosa Rancheria, to the north. Although there were cultural differences between the different tribes, it is clear that the general details of indigenous life-ways were similar across the broad expanse of Yokuts territory, particularly in terms of the patterns of life for either the valley versus the foothill tribes, where environment influenced subsistence and adaptation, and in terms of religion and belief, which were everywhere similar.

Regardless of tribal affiliation, historical village distribution was similar across the region. Villages were typically located along lakeshores and major stream courses (as these existed circa AD 1850). Most Yokuts groups, regardless of specific tribal affiliation, were organized as recognized and distinct tribelets. These were land-owning groups linked by their shared territory and descent from a common ancestor, organized around a central village. The population of most tribelets ranged from about 150 to 500 peoples (Kroeber 1925).

The tribelet was headed by a chief who was assisted by a variety of assistants, perhaps the most important of whom was the winatum, a herald or messenger and assistant chief. A shaman also existed who served as religious officer but the shaman did not have any direct political authority in a strict sense although, as Gayton (1930) has illustrated, they maintained substantial influence within their tribelet.

Shamanism is a religious system common to most Native American tribes. It involves a direct and personal relationship between each individual and the supernatural world, with this relationship enacted by entering a trance or hallucinatory state (usually based on the ingestion of psychotropic plants, such as jimsonweed or, more typically, native tobacco). Shamans, per se, were considered individuals with an unusual degree of supernatural

power, and they served as healers or curers, diviners, and controllers of natural phenomena (such as rain or thunder). Shamans are also known to have produced the rock art of this region, which depicted the visions they experienced in their vision quests, believed to represent their spirit helpers and events in the supernatural realm (Whitley 1992, 2000).

The centrality of shamanism to the religious and spiritual life of the Yokuts was demonstrated by the role of shamans in the yearly ceremonial round. The ritual round was always the same. It started, in the spring, with the jimsonweed ceremony, then the rattlesnake dance and (where appropriate) finally the first salmon ceremony. The Fall rituals began, in the late summer after return from seed camps, with the mourning ceremony, followed by first seed and acorn rites and then the bear dance (Gayton 1930:379). In each case shamans served as ceremonial officials responsible for specific dances which, at the fundamental level, involved a display of their supernatural powers (Kroeber 1925).

Subsistence practices varied from tribelet to tribelet as a result of specific environments of residence. Throughout Native California and the Yokuts territory in general the acorn was a primary dietary component, as were a variety of gathered seeds. The valley tribes augmented this resource with lacustrine and riverine foods, especially fish and wildfowl.

Although population estimates vary, and population size was greatly effected by Euro-American introduced diseases and social disruption more generally, the Yokuts as a whole were one the largest and most successful groups in Native California. Cook (1978), for example, estimates that the Yokuts region contained fully 27% of the aboriginal population in the state at the time of contact; some other estimates are even higher.

Kroeber (1925) placed Porterville within the territory of the Yaudanchi Yokuts, near their boundary with the Koyete and listed no historical villages nearby. Latta, however, stated that:

"From the [Southern Pacific Right-of-Way] and [Highway 99] east to the present town of Porterville the channel of the Tule [River] was occupied by the Koyete...tribe. The chief village was called Choko Weshau and was situated on the north bank of the Tule River a fraction of a mile above the present (1925) Porterville City limits" (1977:195).

This suggests that the study area originally fell within Koyete tribal territory and that it is unlikely that a historical village fell within or near to it.

2.3 Archaeological Background

The San Joaquin Valley region, even though far from remote in relation to other portions of California, has received minimal archaeological attention compared to other areas of the state. In part this is probably due to the fact that the majority of California archaeological work has concentrated in the Sacramento Delta, Santa Barbara Channel and central Mojave Desert areas (see Moratto 1984). Although our knowledge of the prehistory of this region is therefore limited in specific details, enough is known to determine that the archaeological record is broadly similar to south-central and central California as a whole (see Gifford and Schenk 1926; Hewes 1941; Wedel 1941; Fenenga 1952; Elsasser 1962; Fredrickson and Grossman 1977; Schiffman and Garfinkel 1981). Based on this fact, the general prehistory of the region can be outlined as follows.

Initial occupation of the region occurred at least as early as the *Paleoindian Period*, or prior to about 10,000 YBP (years before present). Evidence of this early use of the region has been revealed by the discovery of characteristic fluted and stemmed points found around the margin of Tulare Lake, in the foothills of the Sierra, and in the Mojave Desert proper. (In each case these are locations that are many miles distant from the study area.)

Both fluted and stemmed points are particularly common around the lake margins, suggesting a terminal Pleistocene/early Holocene lakeshore adaptation similar that found in other portions of the far west at this same time, although little else is known about these earliest peoples. Although it has now been well-established that human occupation of the state occurred during the Late Pleistocene, relatively little can yet be inferred about the nature and distribution of this occupation, with just a few exceptions. First, there is little evidence to support the idea that these Paleo-Indians peoples were necessarily big-game hunters, similar to those found on the Great Plains. Second, the western Mojave Desert evidence, at least, suggests small, very mobile populations that left a minimal archaeological signature.

Substantial evidence for human occupation of California first occurs during the middle Holocene, from roughly 7500 to 4000 YBP. This period is known as the *Early Horizon*, and is sometimes alternatively referred to as the Early Millingstone along the Santa Barbara Channel. In this southern area, population concentrated along the coast, with minimal visible use of inland areas. Adaptation appears to have emphasized hard seeds and nuts, with tool-kits dominated by mullers and grindstones (manos and metates). Minimal evidence of Early Horizon occupation has been found in most inland portions of the state. In part this is due to a severe cold and dry paleoclimatic period which occurred at this time. Regardless of specifics, it appears that Early Horizon population density was low and, if any kind of specialized subsistence adaptation existed, it was probably tied to plant food gathering rather than hunting.

Environmental conditions improved dramatically after about 4000 YBP, during the *Middle Horizon* (or Intermediate Period). This period is known climatically as the Holocene Maximum (which, strictly, starts at about 3800 YBP) and it was characterized

by significantly warmer and wetter conditions than were experienced previously. Archaeologically it was marked by a large population increase and radiation into new environments along the coastal and interior south-central California and the Mojave Desert (Whitley 2000). In the Delta region to the north, this same period of favorable environmental conditions was marked by the appearance of the Windmill culture which exhibited a high degree of ritual elaboration (especially in burial practices) and perhaps even a rudimentary mound-building tradition (Meighan, personal communication, 1985). Along with ritual elaboration, Middle Horizon times experienced increasing subsistence specialization, perhaps correlating with the appearance of the acorn processing technology. Penutian speaking peoples (including the Yokuts) are also posited to have entered the state roughly at the beginning of this period and, perhaps, to have brought this technology with them (cf. Moratto 1984). Likewise it appears that the so-called "Shoshonean Wedge" in southern California, or the Takic speaking groups that included the Gabrielino/Fernandeño, Tataviam and Kitanemuk, may have moved into this region at this time, rather than at about 1500 BP as first suggested by Kroeber (1925).

Evidence for Middle Horizon occupation of interior south-central California is substantial. In northern Los Angeles County along the upper Santa Clara River, for example, the Agua Dulce village complex includes occupation extending back to the Intermediate Period, at which time population of the village may have been 50 or more people (King et al n.d.). Similarly, the inhabitation of the Hathaway Ranch region, near Lake Piru, and the Newhall Ranch, near Valencia, appears to have begun during the Intermediate Period (W & S Consultants 1994). To the west, there is little or no evidence for pre-Middle Horizon occupation in the upper Sisquoc and Cuyama River drainages, with population appearing for the first time there at roughly 3500 YBP (Horne 1981). The Carrizo Plain experienced a major population expansion during the Middle Horizon (W & S Consultants 2004; Whitley et al. 2005). Moreover, recently collected data indicate that the Tehachapi Mountains region was first significantly occupied during the Middle Horizon (W&S Consultants 2006), and a parallel can be drawn to the inland Ventura County region, where a similar pattern has been identified (Whitley and Beaudry 1991), as well as to the western Mojave Desert (Sutton 1988a, 1988b), the southern Sierra Nevada (W & S Consultants 1999), and the Coso Range region (Whitley et al. 1988). In all of these areas a major expansion in settlement, the establishment of large site complexes, and an increase in the range of environments exploited, appear to have occurred sometime roughly around 4000 years ago. Although most efforts to explain this expansion have focused on very local circumstances and events, it is increasingly clear that this was a major southern California-wide occurrence, and therefore that any explanation of it must be sought at a larger level of analysis (Whitley 2000). Moreover, evidence from the Carrizo Plain suggests that the origins of the tribelet level of political organization may have developed during this period (W & S Consultants 2004; Whitley et al. 2005). But whether this same demographic process holds for the southern and central San Joaquin Valley, including the study area specifically, is yet to be determined.

The beginning of the *Late Horizon* is set variously at 1500 and 800 YBP, although a consensus seems to be growing for the shorter chronology for this time period. In fact, there is increasing evidence for the importance of the Middle-Late Horizons transition, from roughly AD 800 to 1200, in the understanding of south-central California prehistory. This corresponds to the so-called Medieval Climatic Anomaly, a period of climatic instability that included major droughts and resulted in demographic disturbances across much of the west (Jones et al. 1999). It is also believed to have resulted in major population decline and abandonment across south-central California, involving as much as 90% of the interior populations in some region, such as the Carrizo Plain (Whitley et al. 2005). It is not yet clear whether this site abandonment was accompanied by a true reduction in population or instead an agglomeration of the same numbers of peoples into fewer but larger villages in other areas. What is clear, however, is the fact that Middle Period villages and settlements were widely dispersed across the landscape, including at many locations that lack contemporary evidence of fresh water sources. Late Horizon sites, in contrast, are typically located where fresh water was available during the historical period, if not currently.

The subsequent Late Horizon then can be best understood as a period of recovery from a major demographic collapse. One result is the development of the regional archaeological cultures that are the precursors to ethnographic Native California. That is, the ethnographic life-ways recorded by anthropologists are believed to extend back for roughly 800 years into the past.

The position of San Joaquin Valley prehistory relative to the patterns seen in surrounding areas is still somewhat unknown. The presence of large lake systems in the valley bottoms can be expected to have mediated some of the effects of desiccation seen elsewhere. But, as the reconstruction of Soda Lake in the nearby Carrizo Plain demonstrates (see Whitley et al. 2005), environmental perturbations had serious impacts on lake systems too. Identifying certain of the prehistoric demographic trends for the southern San Joaquin Valley and determining how these trends (if present) correlate with those seen elsewhere, is a current important research objective.

2.4 Historical Background

The initial Euro-American occupation of Porterville can be traced to the Gold Rush of 1849, when prospectors moved into the region in search of gold. By 1856 a store had been established, serving the local miners and Native American population. The origin of the name Porterville is attributed to Royal Porter Putnam, who moved into the area in 1858 to manage the Tule River Station, and to raise livestock. Putnam purchased 40 acres of swampy land near the current intersection of Oak and Main Streets, where he built a two-story store and hotel. Due to flooding in 1862, the Tule River changed its course and

drained Putnam's land, allowing him to sub-divide it into lots for sale. This was the origin of the town's development (<http://www.ci.porterville.ca.us/govt/>).

This early settlement was primarily associated with agriculture. In 1888 the SPRR extended a line south from Fresno, allowing the local farmers to more easily access markets. The City of Porterville was incorporated in 1902 and, by 1920, had about 5000 residents (ibid). The early agricultural-economic emphasis of the town has continued into contemporary times although industrial and commercial activities increasingly contribute to the town's economy.

3.0 ARCHIVAL RECORDS SEARCH

An archival records search was conducted at the California State University, Bakersfield, Southern San Joaquin Valley Archaeological Information Center (AIC), by AIC staff members to determine: (i) if prehistoric or historical archaeological sites had previously been recorded within the Riverwalk Marketplace II project study area; (ii) if the project area had been systematically surveyed by archaeologists prior to the initiation of this field study; and/or (iii) whether the region of the field project was known to contain archaeological sites and to thereby be archaeologically sensitive. The results of this archival records search are summarized here (see also Appendix A).

The records search at the AIC indicated that the study area had not previously surveyed by archaeologists in 2004, and that no sites had been recorded within it. Furthermore, no archaeological sites were known within the immediate vicinity, indicating that the surrounding area exhibited little archaeological sensitivity.

4.0 FIELD SURVEY METHODS AND RESULTS

The study area was examined by walking parallel transects across the property spaced at approximate 10 - 15 meter intervals, in order to identify surface artifacts, archaeological indicators (e.g., shellfish or animal bone), and/or archaeological deposits (e.g., organically enriched midden soil). Special attention was paid to rodent hole back dirt piles, in the hope of identifying sub-surface soil conditions that might be indicative of archaeological features or remains.

The study area was surveyed by David S. Whitley, Ph.D., RPA, on 11 February 2009. Surface visibility was good. A moderate to low density cover of grass had begun to grow on the ground surface, which had been previously disked, but this accommodated easy visibility of the surface. Soils throughout the study area proved to be sandy alluvium with very few lithic clasts, reflecting a soils origin in deltaic or alluvial processes.

No cultural resources of any kind were observed within the study area, confirming the results of the previous study.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

An archival records search, background studies, and an intensive, on-foot surface reconnaissance of the Riverwalk Marketplace II project study area, Porterville, Tulare County, California, were conducted as part of a Phase I archaeological survey. No cultural resources of any kind were found to be present within the study area, confirming the results of a previous Phase I archaeological survey for the property. Development of this study area therefore does not have the potential to result in adverse impacts to cultural resources, and no additional archaeological work is recommended for it.

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7.0 FIGURES

Figures 1: Riverwalk Marketplace II study area.

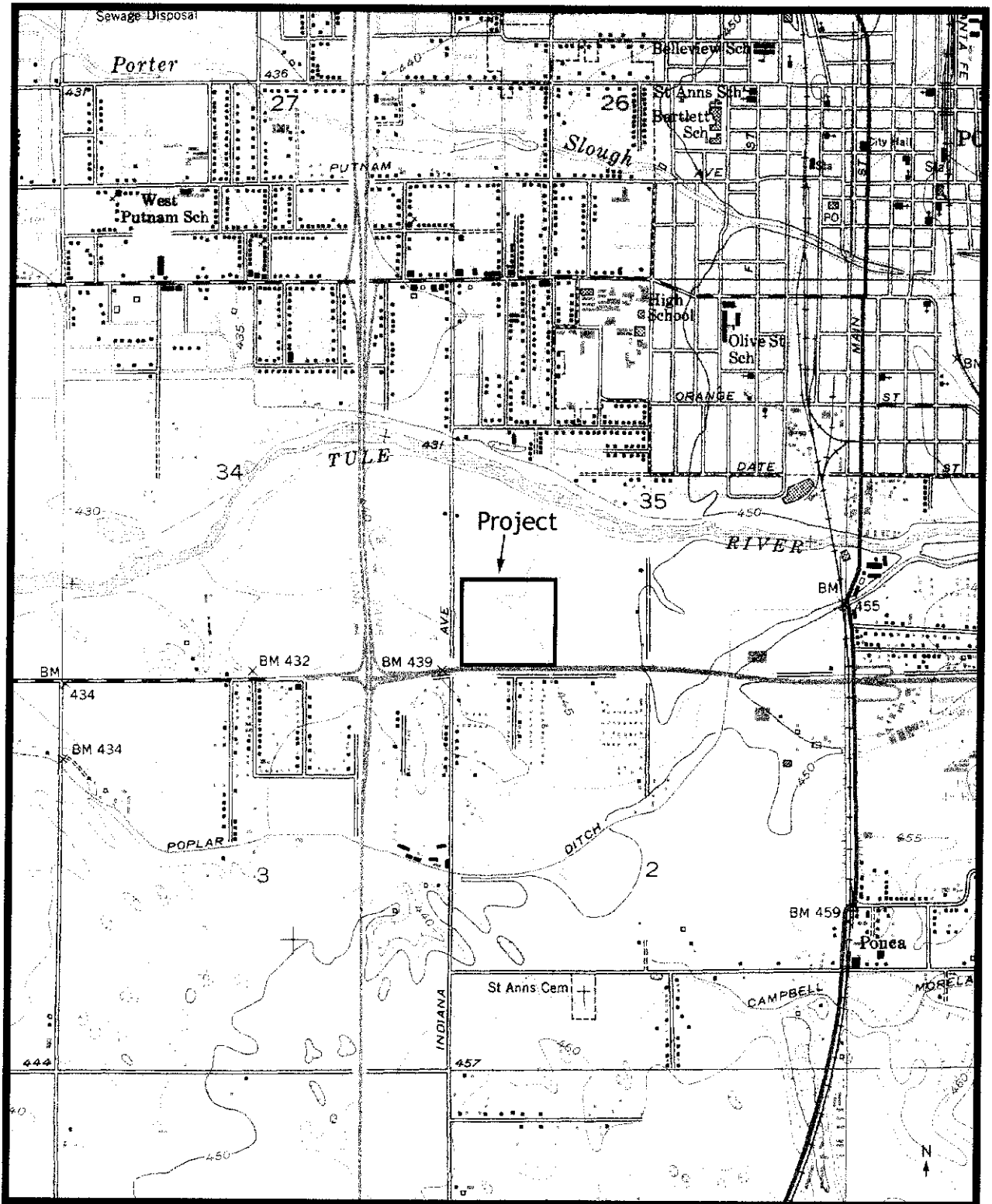
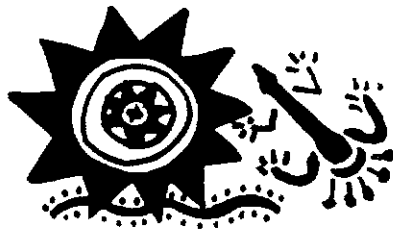


Figure 1: Project location on Porterville, CA. 1: 24 000 USGS quadrangle.

8.0 APPENDIX A: ARCHIVAL RECORDS SEARCH

**CALIFORNIA
HISTORICAL
RESOURCES
INFORMATION
SYSTEM**



**FRESNO
KERN
KINGS
MADERA
TULARE**

Southern San Joaquin Valley
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TO: Joe Simon, Project Archaeologist
W & S Consultants
2242 Stinson Street
Simi Valley, CA 93065

(RS# 08-423)

DATE: January 20, 2009

RE: Proposed Riverwalk Marketplace II (21.75 acres), City of Porterville

County: Tulare

Map(s): Porterville 7.5'

CULTURAL RESOURCES RECORDS SEARCH

The Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center is under contract to the State Office of Historic Preservation and is responsible for the local management of the California Historical Resources Inventories. The following are the results of a search of the cultural resources files at the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center. These files include known and recorded archaeological and historic sites, inventory and excavation reports filed with this office, and properties listed in the Historic Property Data File (10/31/08), the National Register of Historic Places, The California Register, the California Historical Landmarks, the California Inventory of Historic Resources, and the California Points of Historical Interest.

PRIOR CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORIES WITHIN THE STUDY AREA AND A ONE-EIGHTH MILE RADIUS

According to the information in our files, there have been two (2) previous cultural resource studies within the project area, TU-1201 and TU-1209. There are no additional surveys within a one-eighth mile radius. See the enclosed project map for survey locations and their associated report numbers.

KNOWN AND/OR RECORDED CULTURAL RESOURCES WITHIN THE STUDY AREA AND A ONE-EIGHTH MILE RADIUS

There are no recorded cultural resources within the study area or a one-eighth mile radius.

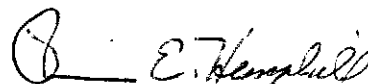
(RS # 08-423)

There are no known cultural resources within the project area that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Historic Property Data File, The California Register, California State Historic Landmarks, California Inventory of Historic Resources or the California Points of Historical Interest.

COMMENTS

Title pages for the above referenced reports are enclosed. If you need any additional information, please don't hesitate to contact our office at (661) 654-2289.

By


Brian E. Hemphill, Ph. D.
Coordinator

Date: January 20, 2009

Fee: \$150.00/hr. (Standard Service)

Please note that invoices for Information Center services will be sent under separate cover from the California State University, Bakersfield Accounting Office.