

APPENDIX F

Archaeological/Paleontological Survey
W. H. Bonner Associates

ARCHAEOLOGICAL/PALEONTOLOGICAL SURVEY
SIERRA CANYON HIGH SCHOOL
LOS ANGELES COUNTY,
CALIFORNIA

For

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING ASSOCIATES, INC.
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Prepared by

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Oat Mountain Quad
~ 11 acres, Records Check, Survey, No Sites

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INTRODUCTION

The following report is submitted by W.H. Bonner Associates at the request of Environmental Planning Associates, Inc. (EPA) to perform a Phase 1 cultural resources/paleontological records check and survey of the 4.4 acre Sierra Canyon High School property located at 11023 Lurline Avenue, Chatsworth section of the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California. The undeveloped 7 acre field south of the high school estate was also surveyed in anticipation of its acquisition by the school. The entire ~11 acres is scheduled to be developed for the Sierra Canyon High School Campus. Rinaldi Street will be extended eastward across the parcels from its current terminus, east of DeSoto Avenue.

The assessment is in compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) requirements.

LOCATION AND SETTING

LOCATION

The Sierra Canyon High School Project is located in the Northwest 1/4 of the Southwest 1/4 of Section 8 of Township 2 North, Range 16 West, SBBM, as shown on the Oat Mountain U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute quadrangle (Figure 1). It lies at an elevation ranging from approximately 1,070 (southeast corner) to 1,140 feet (northern boundary) above mean sea level.

NATURAL SETTING

No natural vegetation remains in the area. The terrain is generally flat, but slopes gently to the south and east. The existing school property sits on a natural terrace, slightly higher in elevation than the undeveloped field to the south.

The surface deposit consists of Recent alluvium (Qal) composed of clays, silts, and sands. It is unconsolidated and poorly stratified. This is underlain by Late Cretaceous marine sedimentary rocks over several thousand feet thick, locally termed the Chatsworth Formation (Kc). The Chatsworth is composed of thickly bedded sandstones, alternating with thinly bedded sandstones, mudstones, shales, and conglomerates. The formation often contains marine invertebrate fossils (marine shells) which are not considered rare in occurrence (Jennings and Strand 1969). This deposit is exposed in the Santa Susanna Mountains north and west of the high school parcel. Other formations in the area include Paleocene Martinez Formation, Eocene Santa Susana and Las Lajas Formations, Miocene Topanga and Monterey Formations, Pliocene Pico Formation and Pleistocene Saugus Formation.



TN 13.5° 00 05 10 15 20 miles
 00 05 10 15 20 25 30 km
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Figure 1. General Location of Sierra Canyon High School Property.
 Oat Mountain USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle. Scale 1:24,000.

CULTURAL SETTING

According to Wallace (1955) four main horizons exist in the southern California prehistoric cultural chronology:

Early Man Horizon

Spanning the period from the end of the Pleistocene to approximately 6,000 B.C., archaeological assemblages attributed to this horizon are characterized by large projectile points and scrapers. The limited data available suggests that prehistoric populations focused on hunting and gathering, moving about the region in small nomadic groups.

Milling Stone Horizon

Characterized by the appearance of handstones and millingsstones, this horizon tentatively dates to between 6,000 B.C. and 1,000 B.C. Assemblages in the early Milling Stone period reflect an emphasis on plant foods and foraging subsistence systems. For inland locales, it has been assumed exploitation of grass seeds formed a primary subsistence activity. Artifact assemblages include choppers, and scraper planes, but generally lack projectile points. The appearance of large projectile points in the latter portion of the Milling Stone Horizon suggests a more diverse economy. The distribution of Millingstone sites reflects the theory that aboriginal groups may have followed a modified central based wandering settlement pattern. In this semi-sedentary pattern, a base camp would have been occupied for a portion of the year, but a small population group seasonally occupied subsidiary camps in order to exploit resources not generally available near the base camp. Sedentism apparently increased in areas possessing an abundance of resources which were available for longer periods of time. More arid inland regions would have provided a seasonally and areally dispersed resource base, restricting sedentary occupation.

Intermediate Horizon

Dated to between 1,000 B.C. and A.D. 750, the Intermediate Horizon represents a transitional period. Little is known about the people of this period, especially those of inland southern California. Sites assemblages retain many attributes of the Milling Stone Horizon. Additionally, Intermediate Horizon sites contain large stemmed or notched projectile points and portable mortar and pestles. The mortars and pestles suggest that the aboriginal populations may have harvested, processed, and consumed acorns. Neither the settlement-subsistence system or the cultural evolution of this period is well understood due to a general lack of data. It has been proposed that sedentism increased with the exploitation of storable food resources (acorns); the duration and intensity of occupation of base camps increased, especially toward the latter part of this horizon.

Late Prehistoric Horizon

Extending from A.D. 750 to Spanish contact in A.D. 1769, the Late Prehistoric Horizon reflects an increased sophistication and diversity in technology. This is characterized by the presence of small projectile points which imply the use of the bow and arrow. In addition, assemblages include steatite bowls, asphaltum, grave goods, and elaborate shell ornaments. Use of bedrock milling stations was widespread during this horizon. Increased hunting efficiency and widespread exploitation of acorns provided reliable and storable food resources. These innovations apparently promoted greater sedentism.

Ethnohistory

At the time of European contact in 1769, the San Fernando Valley was occupied by the Fernandeoş, so called by the Spanish for those Native Americans living near Mission San Fernando de Espaşa. The Fernandeoş are considered a subgroup of the Gabrielino who occupied the Los Angeles Basin including much of Los Angeles and Orange counties, and the offshore islands of Santa Catalina, San Nicolas, and San Clemente. According to Bean and Smith (1978:538) the Gabrielino are one of the least known groups of California native inhabitants. Gabrielino populations are difficult to reconstruct. However, it is estimated that any one time as many as 50 to 100 villages were simultaneously occupied. Like the prehistoric culture before them, the Gabrielino were a hunter/gather group who lived in small sedentary or semi-sedentary groups of 50 to 100 persons, termed rancherias. These rancherias were occupied by at least some of the people all of the time. Location of the encampment was determined by water availability. Within each village houses were circular in form, and constructed of sticks covered with thatch or mats. Each village had a sweat lodge as well as a sacred enclosure (Bean and Smith 1978).

Their subsistence relied heavily on plant foods, but supplemented this with a variety of meat, especially from marine resources. Food procurement consisted of hunting and fishing carried out by men and gathering of plant foods and shellfish by women. Hunting technology included use of bow and arrow for deer and smaller game, throwing sticks, snares, traps, and slings. Fishing was conducted with use of shell fish hooks, bone harpoons, and nets. Seeds were gathered with beaters and baskets. Food resources were stored in baskets, then processed with manos and metates, and mortars and pestles. Plants and meats were cooked in baskets coated with asphaltum, in stone pots, on steatite frying pans, and by roasting in earthen ovens (Bean and Smith 1978).

Historic Period

The first intrusion of Europeans into the San Fernando Valley occurred in 1769 when the Portol expedition passed through on the way to Monterey Bay (Robinson 1938:np). San Fernando mission was not established until 1797 (Johnson 1964:261). Once established, the mission was deeded most of the San Fernando Valley. Two private ranchos (El Escorpion

and Encino) later were granted on the west side and south side, respectively. Following closure of the California missions in 1834, the San Fernando Valley was leased by the Mexican government to Andrés Pico in 1845. The next year, Governor Pio Pico sold the same property to Eulogio de Celis in order to raise money to defend California against the American invasion. de Celis recognized Andrés Pico's lease and sold him half interest in the San Fernando Valley rancho in 1854 (Kyle 1990:152).

In 1874, senators George K. Porter and Charles Maclay purchased the northern half of Ex-Mission San Fernando. The valley remained largely agricultural throughout the remaining decades of the Nineteenth Century (Kyle 1990:153). During this period, a number of small communities were established. One of these was the settlement of Chatsworth, founded in 1887, during a population boom in southern California that followed the arrival of the railroad to Los Angeles (Gudde 1969:61). All that remains today of early Chatsworth is the Hill-Palmer House which was built by James David Hill (Kyle 1990:153).

San Fernando Valley, except the City of San Fernando, was annexed to the City of Los Angeles in 1912 in order to obtain water rights provided by Mulholland's water project. This permitted establishment of new communities throughout the San Fernando Valley (Robinson 1961). Chatsworth, being in the far northwest corner of the San Fernando Valley, remained largely rural until the last half of the Twentieth Century when residential communities began filling up over the entire valley.

PHASE 1 INVESTIGATIVE METHODS

A cultural resources records check was conducted at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) on February 5, 2002. The records check is required to determine what cultural resources might be recorded on or within a one-half mile radius of the project location. It also reveals if any previous archaeological assessments have been performed on or within a one-half mile radius of the project site. The records check involves a review of archaeological resource maps, historic topographic maps, and historic register lists. Geologic maps of the area also are examined.

Upon completion of the map review and records check, an on-site walk over was carried out on June 12, 2002. This was necessary because the Sierra Canyon High School property had not been previously surveyed for prehistoric, historic, or paleontological sites or features. The field inspection was performed by Wayne H. Bonner, M. A., RPA certified archaeologist. Mr. Bonner fulfills the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for a field archaeologist. He also has over forty years of field experience with paleontological resources.

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

RECORDS CHECK

Archaeological Resources

The records check indicates that three archaeological sites (LAn-209, LAn-649, and LAn-1743) and three historic properties (19-150431, 19-150432, and 19-150433) have been recorded within a one-half mile radius of the project address. All three archaeological sites consist of rock shelters using overhanging granite boulder outcrops. They are located some 1,500 feet northwest of the survey parcel. The historic structures, each over fifty years of age but not eligible for NR listing, are mapped about 1,000 feet west of the survey parcel. Sixteen previous investigations have been performed within a one-half mile radius (see Appendix A). None of these assessed the subject property.

Historic Property Registers

Historic registers including the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California State Historic Resources Inventory (HRI), the California Points of Historical Interest (CPHI), and the California Historical Landmarks (CHL) do not list any historic properties on or within a one-half mile radius of the Sierra Canyon High School property.

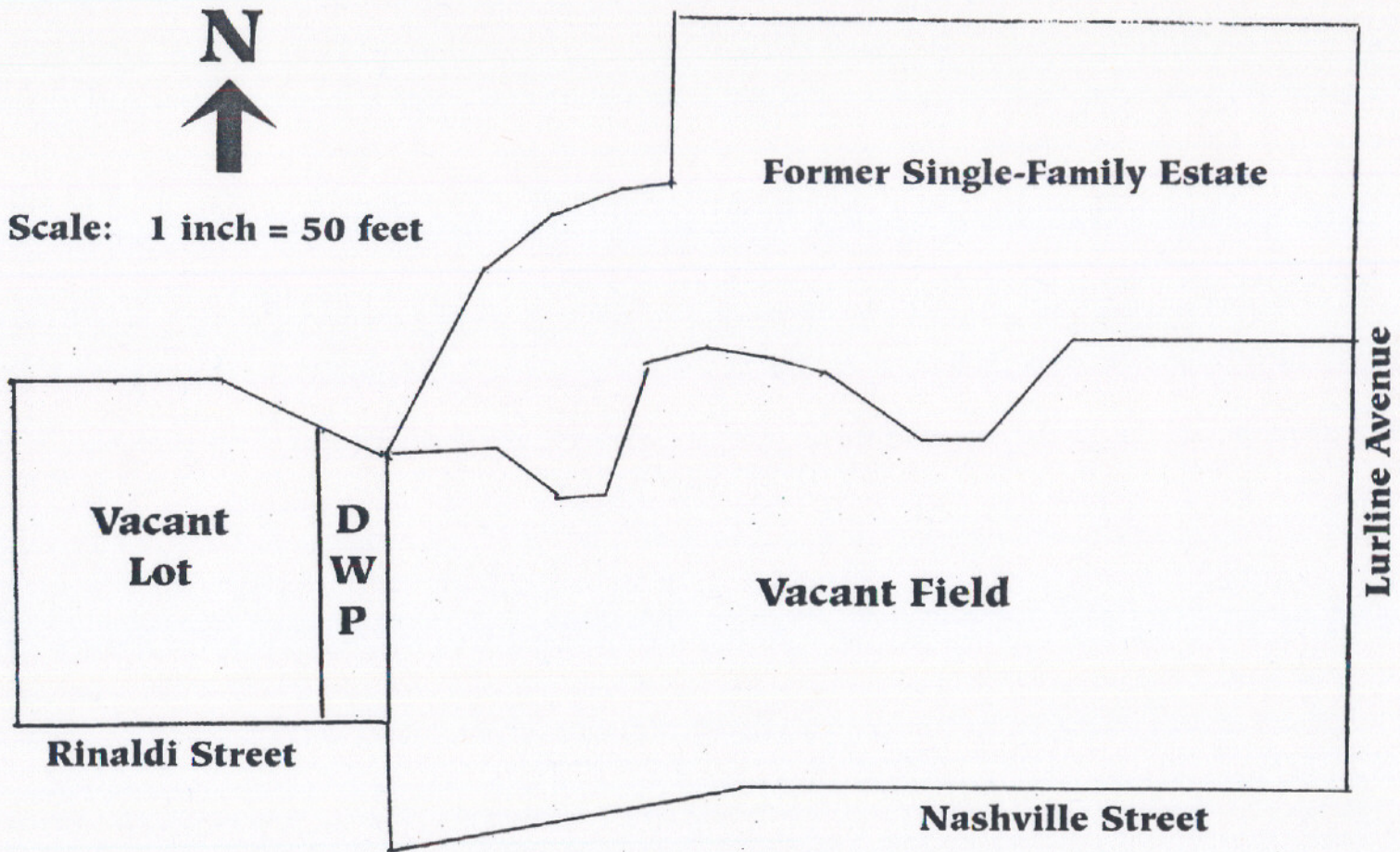
Historic Maps

The historic map review indicates that the parcel is located within the former Ex-Mission San Fernando Land grant. In 1903, a few scattered rural roads, and no more than one or two structures were located within a half-mile radius of the Sierra Canyon High property. Nothing is shown at the property location (Santa Susana 1903 USGS 15 minute sheet). By 1932, the area remained largely rural with a few scattered rural roads and three structures on the west side of DeSoto Avenue. Nothing is mapped at the property location (Zelzah 1932 USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle). By 1957, DeSoto and Lurline avenues have been paved, but Rinaldi Street is not yet constructed. The parcels north of Tulsa Street remain undeveloped (Thomas Brothers 1957:6).

WALK OVER SURVEY

Because of the lack of a previous survey of the property, it became prudent to conduct a walk over survey of the entire eleven acres in order to determine if any cultural or paleontological resources would be impacted during the construction phase. Transects were walked east to west, then west to east, spaced at intervals of approximately ten five meters (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Map of Parcels Surveyed.



RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The existing 4 acre Sierra Canyon High School parcel is almost completely landscaped and developed. Dominating the estate is a two story, wood frame, stucco Mediterranean Style residence. A multi-car garage is attached on the east side of the structure. A paved driveway enters the property at the south east corner of the estate, then extends diagonally across the parcel where it circles under a porte cochere on the south facing side of the home. The eastern half of the estate is landscaped with lawns and ornamental trees. No native vegetation remains on the estate. South of the house is a steel pipe frame horse stable (no longer in use). Northwest of the stables is a large decorative swimming pole with associated sunken barbecue and one story, stucco pool house. A wood frame gazebo is located west of the pool house. A small portion (less than one acre) at the west end of the estate is undeveloped and unlandscaped. The estate most likely was built no earlier than the 1980s; more likely the 1990s.

Adjoining the estate to the south is a seven acre vacant field. The field lies about ten to fifteen feet lower in elevation than the estate parcel. It slopes gently to the south and east. The soil is described as generally sandy, with scattered small rocks and pebbles. A few unmodified, fist-sized stones were observed. Numerous rodent burrows were noted. Ground visibility was good to excellent. The field is covered in dry grasses that may have been mown in the past few months. One flowering California poppy plant was observed. No other native vegetation was apparent. Some planted eucalyptus trees border the boundary between the field and the estate to the north. The only animals observed were ground and tree squirrels, one quail, and the carcass of a recently dead red-tailed hawk.

A very light scatter of modern trash was observed throughout the parcel. This included glass and plastic bottles, broken ceramic tiles, bricks, concrete, metal straps and potting cans. The remains of a concrete retaining wall was visible along the slope face between the field and estate.

Immediately west of the vacant field is a triangular shaped parcel owned or leased by the DWP. The tops of underground tanks or wells protrude to the surface of the parcel. These are surrounded by concrete slabs. No identifying marks were observed on any of the facilities. The parcel is graded. Ground visibility was excellent. No vegetation covered the surface.

West of the triangle is another undeveloped parcel (east of the home at 20846 Rinaldi Street). It shows signs of having been graded extensively in the past for house pads. An abandoned Karousell mobile trailer is located at the northeast corner of the lot. An abandoned storage container is located near the trailer. Neither of these is more than thirty years old. A few sandstone boulders were noted that contained small fragments of fossil shell. Ground visibility was excellent. No vegetation covered the surface.

No historic or prehistoric artifacts or features were observed on either the 4.4 acre estate or the seven acre vacant field. With the exception of the few fossil shell fragments seen in the lot east of 20846 Rinaldi Street, no paleontological resources were noted during the survey.

ASSESSMENT

The records check and on-site survey results demonstrate that no additional archaeological or paleontological investigation is required prior to the beginning of development.

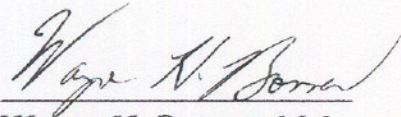
- 1) Ground disturbance for the Sierra Canyon High School Project will not cause any adverse change in the significance of a recorded historical resource as defined in SS 15064.5 of CEQA.
- 2) Ground disturbance for the Sierra Canyon High School Project will not cause any adverse change in the significance of a known archaeological resource pursuant to SS 15064.5 of CEQA.
- 3) Ground disturbance for the Sierra Canyon High School Project will not disturb unrecorded human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.
- 4) Ground disturbance for the Sierra Canyon High School Project will not disturb sensitive paleontological deposits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The absence of cultural or paleontological resources at the project location rates a Low sensitivity rating. Based upon the sensitivity rating and the proposed project parameters, we recommend the following:

- 1) No cultural resources or paleontological monitoring is required during ground disturbance or other construction activities.
- 2) If buried cultural materials or paleontological resources are exposed during construction, work must be halted in the immediate vicinity of the find until a qualified archaeologist/paleontologist can assess the significance (CEQA Section 15064.5-f and PRC Section 21082).
- 3) If the finds are termed significant, the archaeologist/paleontologist should be permitted to remove the items in a professional manner for further laboratory evaluation (CEQA Section 15064.5-f and PRC Section 21082).

4) If human remains are unearthed during construction, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition (CEQA Section 15064.5-e).



Wayne H. Bonner, M.A.,
RPA Certified Archaeologist

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APPENDIX A
RECORDS SEARCH LETTER



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February 12, 2002

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RE: Cultural Resources Records Check for a Parcel Located on Rinaldi Street and Lurline Ave. in the City and County of Los Angeles, California. Oat Mountain Quad.

Dear Jim:

As per your request we have conducted a records check for the above referenced project at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) on February 12, 2002. This search included a review of all recorded historic and prehistoric archaeological sites within a one-mile radius of the project location, as well as a review of all known relevant cultural resource survey and excavation reports. In addition, we have checked our file of historic maps, the *California State Historic Resources Inventory* (2002), the *National Register of Historic Places* (2002), the listing of *California Historical Landmarks* (1996), and the *California Points of Historical Interest* (1992). The following is a discussion of our findings for the project location.

PREHISTORIC RESOURCES:

The following prehistoric archaeological sites have been identified within a one-mile radius of the project location: **LAN-209, LAN-649, LAN-1743. None of these are located at the project address.**

HISTORIC RESOURCES:

The following historic archaeological sites have been identified within a one-mile radius of the project location: **150431, 150432, and 150433. None of these are located at the project address.**

The California *Historic Resources Inventory* (HRI) (2002) lists the following historic properties within a one-mile radius of the project location: **NONE**.

The *National Register of Historic Places* (2002) lists the following properties located within a one-mile radius of the project location: **NONE**.

The *California Historical Landmarks* (1996) of the Office of Historic Preservation, California Department of Parks and Recreation, lists the following Landmarks located within a one-mile radius of the project location: **NONE**.

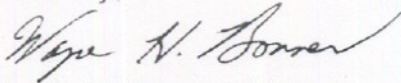
The *California Points of Historical Interest* (1992) of the Office of Historic Preservation, California Department of Parks and Recreation, lists the following properties located within a one-mile radius of the project location: **NONE**.

PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS:

The following surveys and/or excavations have been conducted within a one-mile radius of the project location: **(See Attached List)**. **None of these investigations assessed the project address.**

If you have any questions regarding our results or the recommendations presented herein, please feel free to contact our office at (310) 675-2745.

Sincerely,



Wayne H. Bonner, M.A.
RPA Archaeologist