

September 6, 2024

Randy Arnold
RCA Associates
15555 Main Street, D4-235
Hesperia, CA 92345

Subject: Cultural Resources Assessment for the 18.49-Acre Project, Joshua Tree, San Bernardino County, California (Project Number C-0368)

Dear Mr. Arnold:

At the request of RCA Associates (CLIENT), Duke Cultural Resources Management, LLC (DUKE CRM) has prepared a cultural resources assessment for a 18.49-Acre property (Project), located in Joshua Tree, San Bernardino County, California. San Bernardino County is the lead agency for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The Project is located at 61650 Alta Loma Drive, Joshua Tree, California (APN 0602-361-04). The project is located immediately south of Alta Loa Drive and west of Sunset Road. It is located in Section 35, Township 1 North, Range 6 East, as shown on the USGS *Joshua Tree South, Calif.* 7.5-minute quadrangle (see Attachment A for Project Maps). The Project will construct approximately 64 single family homes. Grading for the Project is anticipated to be between three to nine feet deep.

Cultural Resources Research

On August 19, 2021, DUKE CRM received the results of a records search conducted by the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC). The SCCIC located at the California State University, Fullerton is part of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS). The records search included a review of all recorded cultural resources within a 1/2-mile radius of the Project, as well as a review of known cultural resource survey and excavation reports. Additionally, an inquiry to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was submitted to ascertain the presence of known sacred sites, Native American cultural resources, and/or human remains within the boundaries of the proposed Project. On July 18, 2021, the NAHC indicated that there have been no Native American cultural resources identifies within the Sacred Lands File for the Project location and surrounding area (see Attachment C).

There are no recorded cultural resources within the Project but there are six cultural resources located within 1/2-mile of the Project. Table 1 below lists the resources in the record search area and their proximity to the Project boundary.

The SCCIC identified one cultural resource report within the Project and four additional cultural resource reports within 1/2-mile of the Project. The report, *Archaeological and Historical Resources Survey: Joshua Basin Water district's H Zone Reservoir and Pipeline Replacement Project San Bernadino County, California* was written by Carol Kielusiak in 2001 for the Joshua Basin Water District. It reports the results of a pedestrian survey during which a rock ring of undetermined age was discovered and an isolated basalt

flake was also observed. These resources were not affected by the Project; no cultural resources were observed within the current Project Area.

Table 1. Cultural Resources within ½-Mile of the Project Boundary

Resource No.	Resource Type	Description	Eligibility Status	Distance (ft.) and Direction
P-36-000216	Prehistoric	2 rock shelters with associated bedrock milling features, sparse lithic scatter, pottery sherds, burned bone, hearth, petroglyphs, ~1.5mi. N-S	Unknown	1,880 east
P-36-007035	Historic	Inscription of “1877”, “E” and “S” within a circle and initials “LC” below on granite boulder	Unknown	2,500 southeast
P-36-026908	Unknown	Small rock ring	Unknown	1,325 southwest
P-36-060155	Prehistoric	Primary quartzite flake	Unknown	1,720 southeast
P-36-060156	Prehistoric	Secondary felsite flake	Unknown	1,320 southeast
P-36-060157	Prehistoric	Secondary quartzite flake	Unknown	1, 715 southeast

In addition to the records search at the SCCIC, Morgan Bender, M.A., RPA, Archaeologist at DUKE CRM conducted a review of online historical aerial photographs and historic USGS quad maps utilizing UCSB FrameFinder, historicaerials.com, and USGS Historical Topographic Map Explorer. The 1970 historic aerial shows two (2) homes at the northeast border of the Project. The *San Bernadino* 1:24000 scale map from 1972 shows multiple highways and trails within Section 35. Single family residences continued to be built around and at the north border of the Project. An aerial view from 2005 shows a trail going east to west and the depression in the center of the Project with the RV near its current location. The current shed does not appear until the 2022 aerial (accessed on August 24, 2021 from historicaerials.com).

Paleontological Research

On June 25, 2021 DUKE CRM requested the San Bernardino County Museum perform a paleontological records search for known fossil localities within and in the vicinity of the Project. On July 13, 2021, the San Bernadino County Museum found that there have been no paleontological resources discovered within the Project. The nearest fossil locality is located approximately 5.75 miles northeast. Locality SBCM 1.85.1 unearthed pre-mineralized rodent remains in surficial older alluvium deposits, in a matrix similar to those found on the current 19-acre Project. Located eight miles east of the proposed project is site SBCM locality 1.95.8 and approximately nine miles east is SBCM 1.95.1. Locality 1.95.8 uncovered fossil remains belonging to Testudinidae (turtle) while locality 1.95.1 yielded fossil horse (*Equus* sp.), both were discovered on surficial deposits of older alluvium similar to those found on the proposed project site.

The geology in the vicinity of the Project has been mapped by Dibblee (1967). A review of this map indicates the proposed Project is located on older surficial deposits of Pleistocene-Holocene age (*Qoa*). These are potentially-fossiliferous sediments that were deposited between ~1.8 million years ago to ~11,000 years ago. Older Pleistocene deposits in the area have been found to be highly fossiliferous yielding the remains of ground sloths, bison, and horse.

Cultural/Paleontological Resources Survey

Ms. Bender, Archaeologist with DUKE CRM and cross-trained in paleontological field techniques conducted an intensive, pedestrian survey of the Project on August 23, 2021 with parallel transect

spaced no greater than 15 meter apart. The survey area included 19-acres in the area of the proposed Project on Alta Loma Drive (see Attachment A, Aerial Map). The soil is a coarse-grained sandy loam with decomposed granite. The surface visibility was good, ranging from 90-100 percent with the vegetation consisting of high desert scrub and Joshua trees. The area is a desert shrubland located at an elevation of approximately 3,000 feet above mean sea level. There is a small home in the center of the property, however, the building was placed there in the past few years, as seen in the historic aerials, and is therefore not historic in setting (see Attachment B, Project Photographs). There were no cultural resources observed during the field survey.

Summary of Assessments

DUKE CRM evaluated the proposed project for impacts to paleontological and cultural resources according to CEQA.

The Project is considered to have a high potential to impact paleontological resources. The project is located on older surficial deposits of Pleistocene-Holocene age (*Qoa*). These are potentially-fossiliferous sediments similar to where documented fossil resources have been identified in the general area surrounding the Project. The Project is anticipated to disturb sediments to a maximum depth of nine feet. The Project is located on deposits with the potential for high paleontological sensitivity near the surface, and fossil localities are documented nearby from similar sediments. Therefore, it is recommended that any ground disturbance greater than one foot below ground surface within the Project area be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor. This, along with appropriate recording and recovery efforts, will mitigate the potential impact to a level that is less than significant for the purposes of CEQA.

Paleontological Monitoring - A paleontological monitor shall be present during ground disturbing activities below one foot from the surface. The monitor shall work under the direct supervision of a qualified paleontologist (M.S. or M.A. in geology, or related discipline with an emphasis in paleontology and demonstrated competence in paleontological research, fieldwork, reporting, and curation).

1. The qualified paleontologist shall be on-site at the pre-construction meeting to discuss monitoring protocols.
2. The paleontological monitor shall be present full-time during ground disturbance below one foot for the Project, including but not limited to grading, trenching, utilities, and off-site easements. If, after excavation begins, the qualified paleontologist determines that the sediments are not likely to produce fossil resources, monitoring efforts shall be reduced.
3. The monitor shall be empowered to temporarily halt or redirect grading efforts if paleontological resources are discovered.
4. In the event of a paleontological discovery the monitor shall flag the area and notify the construction crew immediately. No further disturbance in the flagged area shall occur until the qualified paleontologist has cleared the area.
5. In consultation with the qualified paleontologist the monitor shall quickly assess the nature and significance of the find. If the specimen is not significant it shall be quickly mapped, documented, removed, and the area cleared.
6. If the discovery is significant the qualified paleontologist shall notify the CLIENT and COUNTY immediately.

7. In consultation with the CLIENT and COUNTY the qualified paleontologist shall develop a plan of mitigation which will likely include full-time monitoring, salvage excavation, scientific removal of the find, removal of sediment from around the specimen (in the laboratory), research to identify and categorize the find, curation of the find in a local qualified repository, and preparation of a report summarizing the find.

The Project is considered to have a low to moderate potential to impact prehistoric and historic archaeological resources. This is due to the fact that a large prehistoric habitation site has been found approximately 1,850 feet to the east of the Project; however, there have been two prior surveys along with the current study within the current Project boundaries, which have all been negative for cultural resources. Therefore, it is not likely that cultural resources will be impacted by the Project. DUKE CRM does not recommend any additional work for cultural resources. However, if ground disturbing activities associated with this project change, these changes may have the potential to disturb sediments that are previously undisturbed and may contain previously unidentified cultural resources.

If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, work shall be halted in that area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find. If human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), which will determine and notify a Most Likely Descendant (MLD). With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC. The MLD may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American burials.

Thank you for contacting DUKE CRM on this interesting project. If you have any questions or comments, you can contact me at (949) 356-6660, or by e-mail at curt@dukecrm.com.

Sincerely,

DUKE CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, LLC



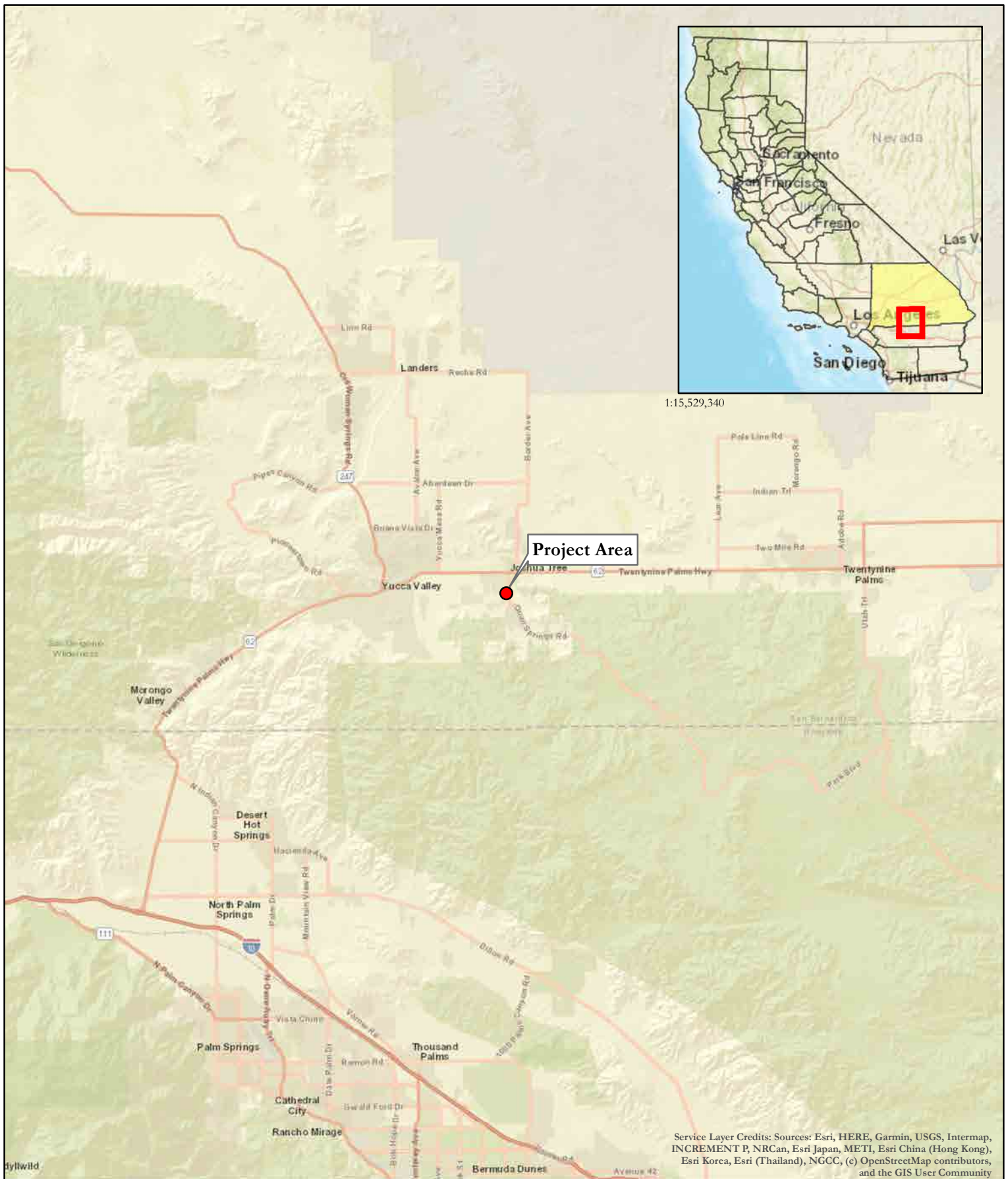
Morgan Bender, M.A., RPA
Archaeologist

Attachments

- A: Project Maps
- B: Project Photographs
- C: Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Land Files

ATTACHMENT A

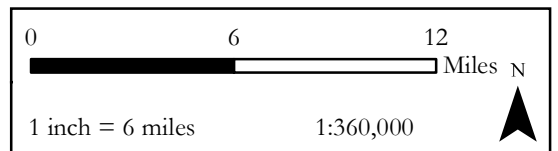
PROJECT MAPS

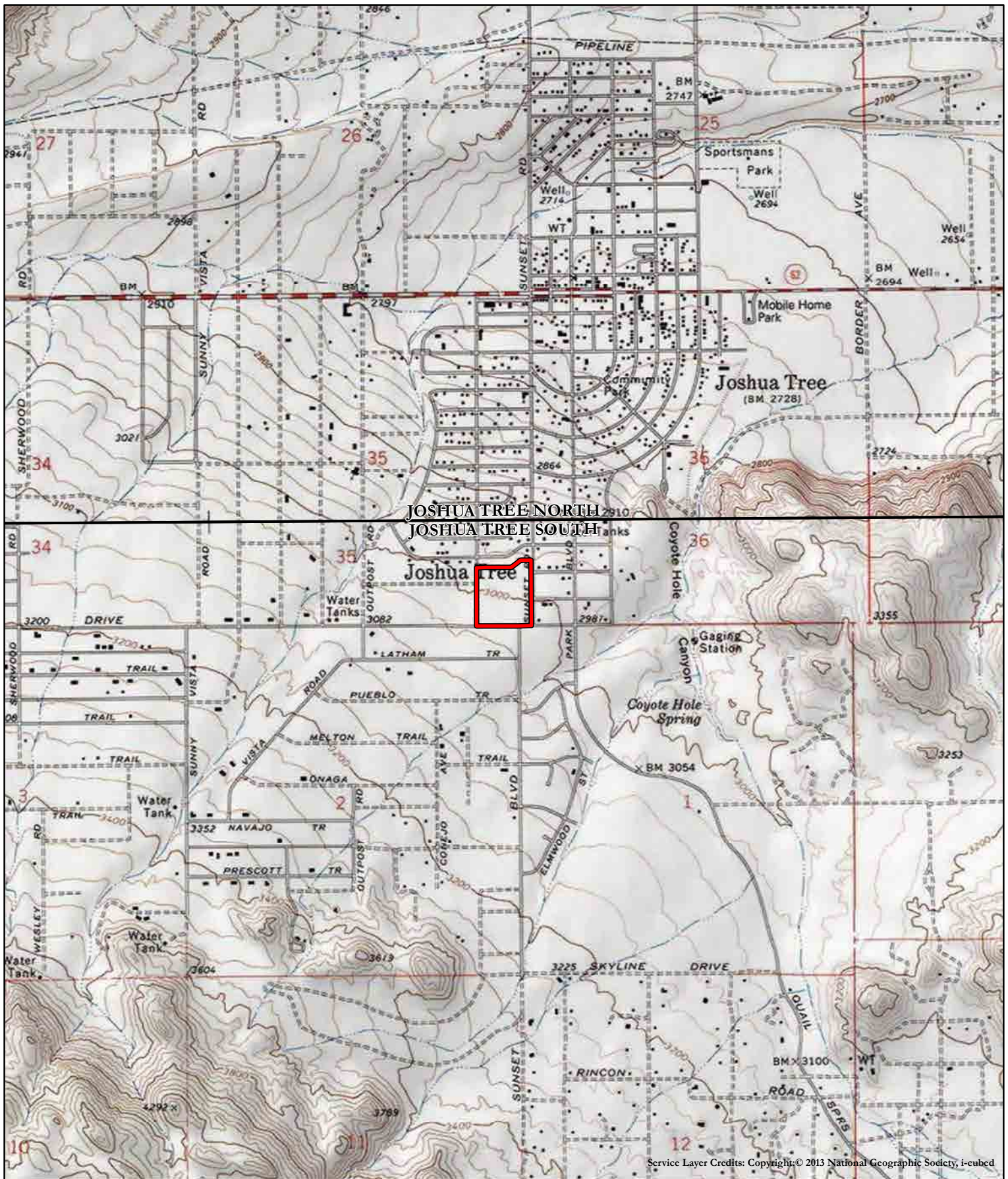


Map 1 - Project Vicinity
 19-Acre Site, Joshua Tree, C-0368



● Project Area





Service Layer Credits: Copyright © 2013 National Geographic Society, i-cubed

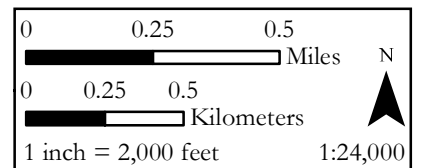
Map 2 - Project Location
 19-Acre Site, Joshua Tree, C-0368

Joshua Tree South, Calif USGS 7.5-Minute Quadrangle
 T1N, R6E, Section 35

Date of Map: 1972 / Photorevised: 1994



- Project Area
- USGS 7.5' Quads

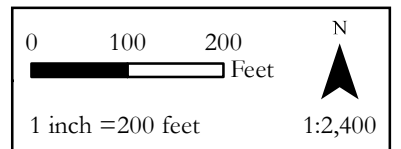




Map 3 - Project Aerial
19-Acre Site, Joshua Tree, C-0368



 Project Area



ATTACHMENT B

PROJECT PHOTOGRAPHS



Site overview. View to west.



Site overview. View to northwest.



Vegetation on site. View to northwest.



Ground cover. Plain view.



Site overview. View to north.



Site overview. View to northeast.



Broken glass near Alta Loma Drive. View to east.



Debris on property. View to east.



House in the middle of the property. View to northeast.



House in the middle of the property. View to north.



Site overview. View to southwest.



Site overview. View to east.



Site overview. View to southeast.



Site overview. View to east.

ATTACHMENT C

**NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION
SACRED LAND FILES**

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

July 18, 2021

Morgan Bender
DUKECRMVia Email to: morganbender@dukecrm.com

Re: 19-Acre Site, Joshua Tree (APN 0602-361-04) Project, San Bernardino County

Dear Ms. Bender:

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.

Sincerely,

Andrew Green
Cultural Resources Analyst

Attachment

CHAIRPERSON
Laura Miranda
LuiseñoVICE CHAIRPERSON
Reginald Pagaling
ChumashSECRETARY
Merri Lopez-Keifer
LuiseñoPARLIAMENTARIAN
Russell Attebery
KarukCOMMISSIONER
William Mungary
Paiute/White Mountain
ApacheCOMMISSIONER
Julie Tumamait-
Stenslie
ChumashCOMMISSIONER
[Vacant]COMMISSIONER
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nahc@nahc.ca.gov
NAHC.ca.gov

**Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
San Bernardino County
7/18/2021**

**Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla
Indians**

Jeff Grubbe, Chairperson
5401 Dinah Shore Drive Cahuilla
Palm Springs, CA, 92264
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Fax: (760) 699-6919

**Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma
Reservation**

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Preservation Officer
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historicpreservation@quechantrib
e.com

**Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla
Indians**

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**San Manuel Band of Mission
Indians**

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**Morongo Band of Mission
Indians**

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Banning, CA, 92220 Serrano
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abrierty@morongo-nsn.gov

**Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla
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Anza, CA, 92539
Phone: (951) 659 - 2700
Fax: (951) 659-2228
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**Morongo Band of Mission
Indians**

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**Serrano Nation of Mission
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**Quechan Tribe of the Fort Yuma
Reservation**

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**Serrano Nation of Mission
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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 Resource Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources assessment for the proposed 19-Acre Site, Joshua Tree (APN 0602-361-04) Project, San Bernardino County.

**Native American Heritage Commission
Native American Contact List
San Bernardino County
7/18/2021**

***Soboba Band of Luiseno
Indians***

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Cahuilla
Luiseno

***Soboba Band of Luiseno
Indians***

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Cahuilla
Luiseno

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Chemehuevi

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Chemehuevi

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