

**3.9-2 PHASE II CULTURAL RESOURCES  
ASSESSMENT (EXCERPT SUMMARY ONLY)**



A PHASE II CULTURAL RESOURCES TEST INVESTIGATION

OF

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE CA-RIV-8282

LOCATED WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF TENTATIVE TRACT MAP 36388

CITY OF WILDOMAR  
RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA  
TOWNSHIP 6 SOUTH, RANGE 3 WEST, SECTION 19, SBM  
USGS ROMOLAND, CALIFORNIA QUADRANGLE, 7.5' SERIES

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## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

A Phase II Cultural Resources Test Investigation of archaeological site CA-RIV-8282, located within the boundaries of Tentative Tract Map 36388, was requested by the project sponsor, Sunbelt Communities. The subject property, which is part of The Farm (Specific Plan 116), is located south, east and west of Bundy Canyon Road, and north of Cornstalk Road in the City of Wildomar, southwestern Riverside County. Existing land use is vacant. The proposed project is the subdivision of the subject property into 315 single family residential lots and 17 open space lots, with the archaeological site situated near the northeastern corner of the property.

The intent of the Phase II investigation was to determine whether the lithic scatter comprising the site qualified as a significant cultural resource according to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) criteria and to determine the appropriate level of mitigation since preservation of the deposit is not considered a viable alternative under the proposed development plan. The Phase II investigation included a review of previous studies and recorded sites in the region, collection of surface artifacts, subsurface testing, and analysis of all recovered artifactual material. The results of the Phase II Cultural Resources Test Investigation were evaluated according to CEQA criteria.

The archaeological site CA-RIV-8282 was originally recorded in 2007 by C. Bouscaren and C. Cisneros of Applied EarthWorks, Inc. in conjunction with a field survey entitled "Built Environment Historic Resources Technical Memorandum for Bundy Canyon-Scott Road Improvement Project" by Francesca G. Smith and Caprice D. Harper of Parsons (2007). The unpublished report (RI-7852) is on file with the Eastern Information Center at the University of California, Riverside. At the time of discovery, CA-RIV-8282 was mapped as covering an area of approximately 33 meters (north-south) by 33 meters (east-west). It was described as a small, sparse lithic scatter consisting of 26 pieces of debitage (22 quartz flakes, 3 metavolcanic flakes, and one edge modified andesite flake). The site location had been recently disced and no ground stone artifacts were observed. The site was regarded as having some potential for a subsurface deposit. Bouscaren and Cisneros (2007) stated that in the event avoidance was not a feasible option, that a limited testing program be implemented to determine the presence/absence of subsurface cultural deposits.

The site was relocated in 2012 by this firm during a Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment of the ±150-acre Tentative Tract Map 36388 (Keller 2012). During the field study, the ground containing the site had been recently disced and visibility approached 100%. However, despite a thorough examination of the mapped location, only two quartz and three metavolcanic flakes were found scattered over an area measuring 59 meters (north-south) x 19 meters (east-west).

After due consideration, it was concluded that CA-RIV-8282 had been impacted by periodic discing which had resulted in the inadvertent dispersion and burial of cultural material. Moreover, examination of a recent percolation test pit (Test Pit-16) located near the site indicated that the possible depth of cultural material could be somewhat limited. To positively determine the presence/absence of a potentially significant subsurface deposit at CA-RIV-8282, a Phase II Test Program was initiated. The Cahuilla Band of Indians and Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians concurred with this recommendation.

The Phase II Cultural Resources Test Investigation, conducted in June of 2012, consisted of two phases of investigation: surface collection and an STP/Auger sampling program. Despite a thorough examination of the site location, only 15 items were originally collected from the surface of CA-RIV-8282; one of the finds was subsequently rejected as non-cultural. Based upon the locations of the 14 surface finds, the artifact scatter at CA-RIV-8282 covered a maximum area of approximately 58 meters (north-south) by 46 meters (east-west). Half of the surface items were found concentrated at the north end of the site adjacent to the property boundary and Bundy Canyon Road between the 1712-1714- foot elevation while the remainder were more widely dispersed.

Artifacts collected from the surface of CA-RIV-8282 included both chipped stone finds and ground stone implements. The chipped stone finds included (4) waste flakes, (1) shatter, (1) core, (1) projectile point fragment, (1) biface fragment, and (3) hammerstones. These artifacts are manufactured from quartzite, andesite, felsite, chalcedony, and quartz. Ground stone implements comprised (2) manos and (1) metate fragment.

A total of 39 STP/Auger holes were excavated at CA-RIV-8282, with 12 auger holes yielding lithic debris. Specific material recovered included (5) waste flakes, (1) retouched flake, and (19) shatter. The waste flakes and retouched flake were excavated from the various STP/Auger holes and depths: A-5 (16-20 cm), A-10 (retouched flake; 15-35 cm), A-12 (0-19 cm), B-5 (18-30 cm), B-10 (0-16 cm), and C-11 (0-35 cm). Angular pieces of shatter were recorded from STP/Auger holes A-6 (19-25 cm), A-9 (24-35 cm), A-10 (15-35 cm), A-12 (0-19 cm), A-13 (0-11 cm), B-10 (17-35 cm), B-11 (15-35 cm), C-8 (0-8 cm), and C-13 (0-35 cm). The results of the excavations were subsequently plotted over the surface collection map with the overlapping area representing the approximate site boundaries of CA-RIV-8282. This area measures 48 m (north-south) x 32 m (east-west). Depths of finds appear to extend to approximately 35 cm.

The site was originally characterized as a sparse lithic scatter. However, the test did yield several ground stone implements comprising two manos and one possible metate fragment. In addition, three hammerstones were recovered which were likely used to dress or sharpen milling equipment. In light of these finds, activities at the site may have included the processing

of seeds such as chia. In addition, one point fragment and a biface fragment were recovered which would indicate hunting. Although no bedrock milling stations are physically associated with the artifact scatter, there are numerous sites in the area. The closest of these is CA-RIV-1256 described as a highly eroded metate slick on top of a large granitic boulder (Keller 2012). It lies nearby within the subject property.

As the results of the STP/Auger hole program have demonstrated, there is no detectable, high-density deposit of prehistoric finds associated with CA-RIV-8282. Furthermore, no fire-altered rock, carbon, charcoal, or animal bone (burned or otherwise) was encountered. Consequently, the paucity of finds would tend to support the supposition that the site was casually used, probably by a single family during daylight hours. In all likelihood, the site was frequented by prehistoric peoples who ventured to the area to collect and mill seeds for short periods of time and then returned to their base camp. Clearly, the statistical data generated by the Phase II investigation lends little or no support in favor of CA-RIV-8282 representing a habitation site.

No doubt, the users of the site resided at one of the habitation sites in the region, possibly at a permanent or semi-permanent village like the Walker Ranch or the Audie Murphy Ranch. Oxendine (1983) stated that the material culture of a village site should include items that can be identified and related to various activities. Among these are food preparation, tool manufacture, cooking, manufacture of pottery vessels, clothing, basketry, pipes, effigies, ceremonial enclosures and religious rituals. Additionally, she suggests that such village sites were positioned within the territory so that the majority of subsistence needs could be attained without prolong absence from the village complex.

A very important and difficult question is, “when was CA-RIV-8282 in use?” None of the artifacts in the collection are time-sensitive. No C-14 datable organic materials were recovered during our investigation and obsidian for hydration dating is lacking. Nonetheless, an educated guess may be made on the basis of what is lacking combined with what is known about the archaeology of the region.

The complete absence of a Late Prehistoric date such as a potsherd, suggests that CA-RIV-8282 may have been used more than 1,000 years ago. However, it is equally true that at this small site, a ceramic vessel simply had not been broke, thus the lack of even one potsherd. Moreover, an upper limit for the age of the site may be suggested on the basis of what is known about the local archaeology. Unlike some regions of California, western Riverside County does not appear to have had a significant population prior to about 2500 years ago.

Based on the results of the Phase II Cultural Resources Test Investigation, CA-RIV-8282 was not deemed to be representative of a significant archaeological resource, as per CEQA criteria. Therefore, neither further research nor mitigation for CA-RIV-8282 is recommended.

## INTRODUCTION

In compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and City of Wildomar Planning Department requirements, the project sponsor contracted with Jean A. Keller, Ph.D., Cultural Resources Consultant, to conduct a Phase II Cultural Resources Test Investigation of archaeological site CA-RIV-8282, located within the boundaries of Tentative Tract Map 36388. The intent of the investigation was to comply with recommendations made by this firm in a 2012 Phase I Cultural Resources Assessment of the subject property. Recognizing that the proposed residential development of the subject property would adversely impact CA-RIV-8282 and that preservation of the recorded lithic scatter was not a viable alternative, further study of the site was recommended in order to evaluate its potential significance according to CEQA criteria and to determine the appropriate level of mitigation required.

The proposed project, Tentative Tract Map 36388, is the subdivision of the subject property into 315 single family residential lots ranging in size from 4000 to 7200 square feet, as well as 17 open space lots; CA-RIV-8282 is situated near the northeastern corner of the project (Fig. 1). As shown on the USGS Romoland, California Topographic Map, 7.5' series, the subject property, which encompasses a total of  $\pm 150.38$  acres of land, is located in Section 19, Township 6 south, Range 3 west, SBM (Fig. 2). Current land use is vacant; adjacent land uses are vacant to the north, east, and west, and The Farm Community to the south. Disturbances to the subject property are substantial and represent cumulative impacts resulting from discing, construction and operation of a visitor center for The Farm, grading, paving, off-road vehicle traffic, lift/pump stations, and trash dumping.

The Phase II Cultural Resources Test Investigation consisted of an advanced literature, archival, and cartographic search, surface collection, subsurface testing, and artifact analysis. Fieldwork and analysis were conducted by Laurie S. White, Robert S. White, and Susan Lochowitz of Archaeological Associates, with participation in the fieldwork by Anna Hoover and Loren Garcia of Pechanga Cultural Resources Department.

