

## **APPENDIX F**

### Cultural Resources Background Report

Prepared by

Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc.  
400 S. Farrell Drive, Suite B-205  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Identification and Evaluation of Historic Properties  
Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Trails Plan  
**Confidential Document Not Included in EIR/EIS**

Prepared by

CRM Tech, Inc.  
4472 Orange Street  
Riverside, CA 92501

### **NOTICE ON APPENDIX REDUCTION**

This technical appendix has been reduced by 50% and printed double-sided to conserve paper and to allow the technical appendices to be incorporated into the EIR/EIS. If you wish to have a full-sized copy of this appendix, please contact the CVAG at 760-346-1127.

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

# **APPENDIX F BACKGROUND REPORT CULTURAL RESOURCES**

## **Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan & Natural Communities Conservation Plan**

**Prepared for**  
**Coachella Valley Association of Governments**  
**California Department of Fish and Game**  
**US Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**US Bureau of Land Management**  
**Department of the Interior**

**April 2003**

**Prepared by**



**Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc.®**  
**400 South Farrell Dr., Suite B-205**  
**Palm Springs, CA 92262**

# CULTURAL RESOURCES BACKGROUND REPORT

---

## 1.0 Introduction

This background report has been prepared as part of the preparation of The history of human occupation and exploitation of the HCP/NCCP and CDCA planning area has been pieced together from a wide variety of studies and assessments prepared for large scale planning efforts and for individual projects. Knowledge and information on native culture, technology, ethnobotany, and other cultural attributes continue to emerge as additional research adds to current data, interpretation and understanding. The following discussion describes the current state of knowledge about the Native American groups that occupied the planning area and the region.

Based upon the current regional knowledge of artifacts and habitation sites dating back approximately 12,000 years, archaeologists have divided the pre-European epoch into five periods: Early Man Period, Paleo-Indian Period, Early Archaic Period, Late Archaic Period and the Late Prehistoric Period. Each is briefly discussed below.

The earliest prehistoric periods were distinguished by the use of large stone points to hunt and process large late iceage mammals, and the lack of milling stones and other food grinding implements. As climate conditions and available food changed, local inhabitants started using smaller projectile points on the smaller game; there was also substantial migration going on during this period. From about 4000 years ago, seeds and grains and their processing became more important, and stone-tools became more sophisticated; there was also a corresponding increase in cultural complexity and variation.

By about 1500 years ago, the bow and arrow had been introduced and a wider food base was exploited. Milling of foodstuffs also continued extensively. By the latest period starting about 800 years ago to just before contact with Europeans, there is evidence of extensive contact and trade with tribes of the Colorado River. This included the distribution of pottery across the upper Colorado and Mojave Deserts. It is from this period that ethnic or tribal affiliations are best known.

### **Pre-Historic Culture in the Planning Area**

The Coachella Valley HCP/NCCP planning area encompasses a wide range of environments, which have been exploited by different indigenous groups over thousands of years. These included the low desert fresh water lakes of the various stands of Ancient Lake Cahuilla, the palm oases and mesquite vegetation associated with fault zones and other areas of high groundwater, alluvial fan areas, mountain canyons and the mountains themselves.

In the HCP/NCCP planning area, the oldest cultural remains date back about 2,700 years before the present (BP) and are located near the intersection of Jefferson Street and Fred Waring Drive along the ancient shore line of Lake Cahuilla (Love 1996) Numerous types of habitation and village sites developed throughout the planning area. These included villages occupied for extended periods of time, milling sites used seasonally as particular foods become available, lithic workshops and quarries for making stone tools and weapons, and rock art sites that were used for artistic/religious expression.

The “prehistoric” period refers to time before the arrival of non-Indians. In the Coachella Valley, the prehistoric period began with the Archaic Period, which occurred before A.D. 1000. This period involved important cultural changes, including a change in burial practices to cremations around 500 B.C., and the introduction of the bow-and-arrow around A.D. 500.

The introduction of pottery to the Coachella Valley after A.D. 1000 marks the beginning of the Late Prehistoric era in this region. Pottery was an innovation of peoples of the Colorado River, and its presence in the Coachella Valley indicates that contact occurred between inhabitants of the Coachella Valley and Colorado River settlements.

### **The Cahuilla Indians**

The most recently identifiable native culture to evolve in the Coachella Valley region is the Cahuilla. The Cahuilla were a Takic-speaking, hunting and gathering people from the Great Basin region of Nevada, Utah and eastern California whose migration into southern California occurred sometime between 1000 BC and AD 500. The Cahuilla are generally divided into three groups by anthropologists: the Pass Cahuilla of the Banning-Beaumont area, the Mountain Cahuilla from the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, and the Desert Cahuilla from the eastern Coachella Valley, as far east as today’s Salton Sea.

The Cahuilla did not have a single name that referred to an all-inclusive tribal affiliation; rather, membership was in terms of lineages or clans, and each belonged to one or two main divisions of the people, known as moieties. Members of clans in one moiety had to marry into clans from the other moiety. Individual clans had villages, or central places, and territories they called their own. Each clan, or lineage, had its own food harvesting areas, ceremonial house, and lineage chief. However, a number of lineages are known to have cooperated with one another for political, social and economic purposes.

Surveys performed by the U.S. Government Land Office (GLO) in the mid-1850s noted a large number of Native American villages, or rancherias, in the planning area. All or most of these settlements are believed to have been settlements of the Desert or Pass Cahuilla people. Prominent settlements were located adjacent to major resource areas, including the shorelines of Lake Cahuilla, along the “cove communities” areas supported by shallow wells, mesquite and wildlife resources, and in the Indian Canyons areas of Palm Canyon. Seasonal occupation sites were also associated with palm oases on the east side of the valley, which were an important source of water, food and fiber. A number of other features believed to have been made by the Cahuilla included an extensive network of trails.

The first Cahuilla contact with Europeans occurred in the 1770s, when Spaniards crossed through Cahuilla territory in search of new land routes between Mexico and northern California. As time passed, relations between European settlers and the Cahuilla became strained due to conflicts over land ownership and exploitation, and religious and cultural practices. European disease, to which the Cahuilla had no immunity, furthered the gap between Indian and non-Indian relations. A smallpox epidemic in the early 1860s decimated the Cahuilla population, which declined from an estimated 6,000 to 10,000 people to only 2,500 individuals. By the time the planning area was re-surveyed by the U.S. government in the early twentieth century, most of the villages and rancherias noted from earlier surveys had vanished, and signs of Euroamerican influence, such as fences and irrigation ditches, were observed. The Cahuilla continue to inhabit parts of the Coachella Valley today, and are mostly affiliated with one or more of the Indian reservations in the Coachella Valley. Among these are the Torres Martinez, Augustine, Agua Caliente, Cabazon and Morongo.

### **Known Local Native American Resource Areas**

A large number of cultural resource surveys have been conducted in the MSHCP/NCCP planning area. Recorded significant archaeological resources are generally identified by a trinomial designation given the site by the Eastern Information Center (EIC) at the Archaeological Research Unit at the University of California at Riverside. All or most prehistoric sites identified in the planning area have been recorded by the EIC and include information on prehistoric and historic sites and resources.

Numerous village sites have been identified that were associated with the shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla, which was created and maintained by inflows of the Colorado River. Approximately 500 years ago, the Colorado changed course and once again found its way to the Sea of Cortez. As the lake level fell, the Cahuilla moved their villages into or near the mouth of mountain canyons where about 80 percent of the necessary food and other resources were to be found within a five-mile radius (Bean 1872). Occupation sites, beyond seasonal hunting and gathering camps, were rare above 5,000 feet.

Areas with dependable water supplies were essential, especially after the retreat of ancient Lake Cahuilla. Canyons of the San Jacinto Mountains had apparently been important habitation areas during Lake Cahuilla's last stand, including Palm, Andreas and Murray Canyons, which then as now had year-round streams. Many canyons of the Santa Rosa Mountains also had springs which supported palms and other sources of food and fiber. Whitewater Canyon was also an important wintering home (Bean, ca 1960) and is still an area of high sensitivity to modern Cahuilla. As stated by Bean, et al., "It can be assumed that spring sites were places known to the Cahuilla and used by them, and that there were villages or significant use sites near all major springs."<sup>1</sup>

The Indian Canyons south of Palm Springs have included many important heritage sites of the Cahuilla from pre-historic time to the present. Villages, rock art, irrigation ditches, ceremonial trails, and food processing areas are found throughout the area. Important trails were also associated with the canyons and associated springs.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Cahuilla and the Santa Rosa Mountain Region: Places and Their Native American Association Lowell J. Bean, Sylvia Brakke Vane and Jackson Young. Edited by Russell L. Kaldenberg. Cultural Systems Research, Inc. for the US Bureau of Land Management. October, 1981.

Compilations of records of Cahuilla cultural heritage sites by Lowell John Bean, Sylvia Brakke Vane, and Jackson Young<sup>2</sup> have been essential in recording places important to the Cahuilla in the planning area. Hundreds of such sites have been identified within the planning area. The following lists a few of these sites and their Cahuilla names.

Hidden Spring (Ataki)	Near Palm Canyon (Tev ing el we wy wen it)
Tahquitz Mountain (Ta co witz)	South Palm Canyon (Tatmilmi)
Murray Canyon (Sewitkul or Wa wash ca)	Whitewater Canyon (Con kish wi qual)
Whitewater Canyon Village (Wanup)	Snow Creek (Na hal log)
Cathedral Canyon “mescal gathering place” (Taupakic)	Deep Canyon (To-ho)
Bradley Canyon (Tanki?)	Mission Creek Area (Yamisevul)

Bradley Canyon Trail Magnesia Spring (Pah-wah’-te)      Edom Hill/Indio Hills (Pa hal ke on a)

Also important is the significant and obvious pattern emerging from the archaeological record of a dense clustering of Native American archaeological sites on alluvial cones and at the mouth of the springs and on the alluvial fan. Site surveys in the planning area have revealed many previously identified and newly recorded sites, including pottery scatters, grinding rocks, trail segments, and rock cairn features. The sites indicate extensive use of these canyon and “cove” area prior to European settlement.

Of particular interest are potentially significant rock cairn alignments found in canyon/alluvial fan areas. Many of these cairn features appear to represent supports for blinds constructed to guide and ambush bighorn sheep and deer (Love 1995 and 1997) making their way to water and foraging areas. Also well documented are the Coachella Valley Fish Traps, a 208± acre archaeological site constructed on the shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla, which are listed in the National Register. These numerous small weirs were loosely constructed of stacked rock, creating small ponds that into which fish would swim and become isolated, allowing their easy capture.

Archaeological resources associated with Native American occupation are less numerous on the eastern portion of the planning area. This is generally due to drier conditions and less vegetation and wildlife in these areas. Areas supporting the highest density of Native American resources include the Whitewater Canyon in the San Gorgonio Pass, Mission Creek northwest of desert Hot Springs, Big Morongo Canyon and the numerous vegetation scarps with desert fan palms and mesquite associated with the diked groundwater along the San Andreas Fault Zone. (Arkush 1989, Drover 1989). Most sites associated with these areas were typically small gathering and processing sites characterized by grinding stones, milling features and occasional large rock-lined roasting pits (Bean and Saubel, 1972; Bean 1972; Barrows, 1900).

---

2      Ibid.

## **The Historic Period**

Historically significant sites are generally more than forty-five to fifty years of age, but range from the period of the earliest European contacts, around the end of the 1700's to about the end of World War II. Types of potentially significant sites range from permanent trails and highways to living areas and small-scale remains of single activities. The following discusses the historic period and also identifies significant historical resource areas.

## **Earliest European History of the Planning Area**

The Coachella Valley region was first explored by Spaniards making forays northward from Mexico along the coast and the Colorado River. The earliest documented period of Spanish influence began in 1769 when explorers moved into what was then referred to as Upper California to establish a military, political and religious foothold. The development of land routes to supply inland missions brought the Spanish into the region in the 1770's.

## **The Mexican and Post Mexican-American War Periods**

In 1821, although there is no historical evidence of settlements in the planning area, the region fell under the influence of Mexico, as it secured its independence from Spain under the Treaty of Cordova. The issuance of land grants and the establishment of agricultural enterprises, under the organization of rancheros, dominated the region for the next thirty years. The defeat of Mexico in the Mexican-American War and the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 ushered in a new era.

With the region under American control and the discovery of gold in California, the stage was set for admittance of California into the union in 1850, and led to the influx of peoples from many countries. The first U.S. Government Surveys were made in the Coachella Valley in 1855-56, by surveyors Henry Washington, John La Croze and James G. McDonald, who observed a number of trails and roads crossing the area.

## **The Bradshaw Trail and Other Routes**

The most prominent of these trails identified in the government surveys was one labeled as a "road" on their survey maps and ran along the course of the Whitewater River. It was joined by a trail that skirted the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains in a more southerly course. The surveyors also noted an "Indian Trail" apparently passing through the northeastern portion of the study area on Edom Hill. By the 1880s, the trail along the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains had become the main route for travelers passing through the study area. And by 1885 it had been identified as part of the road from San Bernardino to the Colorado River and was to become known as the Bradshaw Trail, one of the most important desert trails in Southern California during the 1860s and 70s.

An historic route between Los Angeles and the Palo Verde Valley, the Bradshaw Trail was in fact an ancient Indian trade route variously named the Cocomaricopa Trail or the Halchidoma Trail. In 1857, a small party led by Dr. Isaac W. Smith surveyed portions of the trail, including that segment running through the City, but the lack of water limited its use. By 1862, however, the William David Bradshaw exploration party had "rediscovered" the route, which for the next few years served as the primary access to the gold fields along the Colorado River.



By the late 1870s, services gradually discontinued with the depletion of the gold mines and the expansion of the railroads into the region, which eventually connected the coast directly to Yuma and completed the second transcontinental railroad authorized by Congress in 1866 and later known as the Sunset Route. It was not until after the turn of the century that the Cocomaricopa Trail was revived as the Bradshaw Highway and ultimately became State Highway 111.

In 1926, the federal government established the National Highway System, which included the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway that ran through the City's SOI "along the Southern Pacific Railroad". Exact dates of construction are unclear, with archival sources tracing it to the late 1930s. Right-of-way for this highway was granted by the federal government in November of 1938, which was delineated as U.S 60/70/99. Apparently proof of construction was never filed on this segment of the highway. A segment of Varner Road running through the center of the valley was part of the original Ocean-to-Ocean Highway.

Most of the planning area remained unsettled and devoid of any evidence of land development around the turn of the twentieth century. The only features recorded during that time were the Southern Pacific Railroad, Bradshaw Trail, and another trail along the base of the Little San Bernardino Mountains at the mouth of West Wide Canyon. Several railroad construction workers' camps were present by the early 1900s.

During the 1910s, the County of Riverside improved the Bradshaw Trail into a county trail (the forerunner of today's Highway 111), which further paved the way for settlement and growth in the "cove communities" region of the Coachella Valley. By 1914, a railroad station named Edom, which contained a post office, was established in the planning area. In 1939, the post office was moved to the nearby community of Thousand Palms and renamed after that community, which by that time, had a population of about 20 permanent residents and 15 to 20 winter residents.

Non-Indian settlement in the Coachella Valley began in earnest in the 1870s, with the establishment of railroad stations along the Southern Pacific line. The rate of settlement increased significantly in the 1880s, after public land was opened for claims under the Homestead Act, Desert Land Act and other federal land laws. With the availability of underground water resources, farming became the dominant economic activity in the Coachella Valley.

The date palm was introduced to the area in 1904 and by the late 1910s the date palm industry was firmly established, extending from present-day Cathedral City south beyond Indio, which became the central agri-business district. The date palm became the area's main agricultural staple and the Coachella Valley became known as the "Arabia of America".

However, as the easily accessible groundwater resource was tapped, its limitations were quickly realized and further growth of agriculture was limited until the completion of the Coachella Branch of the All-American Canal in 1949, which brought Colorado River water to the valley for irrigation and other uses.

The European settlement of the Coachella Valley was also given significant impetus by the early development efforts of John Guthrie McCallum and other in the Palm Springs area, starting in about 1872. Surveys and land divisions began in about 1884 and the settlement was then called “Palm City” and was changed to Palm Springs in 1887. Surface water from the Whitewater River and Snow Creek provided a dependable supply and supported rapid development. By 1890, the population had grown sufficiently to support the establishment of a U.S. Post Office. And by the 1920s and 30s, Palm Springs became a favorite retreat for those in entertainment and show business, spawning a development trend that continues to today.

By the 1920s, the resort industry had begun to spread throughout the Coachella Valley. The construction of the La Quinta Hotel in 1926, by Walter H. Morgan and his Desert Development Company, provided the impetus for more “winter resort” development in the La Quinta area. In the early 1930s, E.S.”Harry” Keiner began subdividing the Cove area and marketing the sale of furnished weekend homes. Although the rest of the La Quinta area remained predominantly rural during this period, with scattered ranch-style houses, the planning area experienced rapid growth during the post World War II era. The City of La Quinta was incorporated on May 1, 1982 and in recent years has been recognized as the fastest growing city in California.

The construction of the Colorado River Aqueduct by the Metropolitan Water District, between 1933 and 1939, brought a number of permanent and temporary features to the northernmost portion of the planning area. Among these were roads, power transmission lines, waterlines, and construction camps. The remains of one of eight construction camps, Camp Thousand Palms, have been discovered at the mouth of East Deception Canyon in the foothills of the Little San Bernardino Mountains.

By 1941, several rural settlements had been established in the area between the Southern Pacific Railroad (now Union Pacific) and the Indio Hills. Among these were Thousand Palms, Edom, Myoma, the Ferguson Ranch, the Thousand Palms Oasis, the Bar Bell Ranch, the Chuckwalla Ranch, and the Hunter Palms Ranch. The small community of Palm Village was established south of the railroad, on the north side of Highway 111. General George S. Patton selected Palm Village as the site for his motor pool during World War II, as it was in close proximity to the Desert Training Center used for military training during the war.

### **Documentation of Cultural Resources**

Archaeological studies and surveys are prepared to satisfy the requirements of current county, state (CEQA), and federal (NEPA) laws and guidelines pertaining to the identification and preservation of prehistoric and historic sites on property proposed for development. The lead agency is obligated determine what project-related project activities, if any, have the potential to adversely impact known or suspected sites of significance archaeological, historical and cultural sites within the planning area. Projects involving a federal agency, federal funding or other federal assistance must conform to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966. As set forth in 30 CFR 60.4, the federal government has established criteria to determine a site’s eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places.

According to California Public Resources Code (PRC Section 5020.1(j) a:

“‘historical resource’ includes, but is not limited to any object, building, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which is historically or archaeologically significant, or is significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California”.

The Eastern Information Center (EIC) at the Archaeology Research Unit of the University of California-Riverside is the local repository for local field surveys and other cultural records developed for the planning area.

A overall review of existing records indicates that substantial portions of the planning area have been surveyed for cultural resources since the 1970s, particularly in those areas where resort and other development has been concentrated in the past several decades. However, almost all of the MSHCP/NCCP planning area proposed for protection and conservation are lands that have had little or no development and, therefore, have not been extensively surveyed. While the type and extent of archaeological resources occurring in these areas can be extrapolated from current knowledge and understanding, specific information on resources in these areas is largely unknown.

### **Archaeological Sites**

1. Village sites: Villages are the most significant sites identified. They are generally located in areas that offer optimal climate, food, water, and materials. Occupied for extended periods of time, village sites are recognized by rich deposits of organic, ashy soil often containing artifacts and plant and animal remains.
2. Campsites and Temporary Habitation Sites: These sites are similar to villages but are shallower and contain fewer artifacts.
3. Milling Stations: These are sites in which grinding, pounding, and processing was performed on food materials.
4. Lithic Quarries: Quarries are outcrops of certain types of rock used in tool-making.
5. Lithic Reduction Sites/Lithic Workshops: Lithic workshops are areas in which rocks were reduced and shaped into tools and other useful materials.
6. Aboriginal Trails: The remains of Indian trails that were likely used as important travel corridors.
7. Sparse Lithic Scatters: These sites include the remains of stone-making activities.
8. Pot Drops: Areas in which pottery fragments from the breakage of a single vessel are identified.
9. Rock cairns and rock art sites: A rock cairn is a collection or mound of stones that served as a memorial or landmark. Rock art sites include pictographs, petroglyphs, and cupule boulders.

### **Historic Sites**

(A historic site includes any area more than 45 years old that contains evidence of human activity.)

1. Homes/Ranches: These sites include intact structures or the remnants of house foundations, wells, fences and rock walls, out buildings, and other features associated with living activities.
2. Roads/Trails: Corridors that were important transportation and/or trading routes.
3. Mining Sites: Mining sites include mine shafts, equipment associated with mining, and shallow pits in which minor prospects may have occurred.
4. Trash Dumps/Can Scatters: These sites contain trash that can be accurately dated.

The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) maintains the California Register, which includes all properties listed in or officially determined to be eligible for listing the National Register. The OHP also maintains the register of California Historical Landmarks for properties of statewide historic importance, and Points of Historical Interest for properties of county-wide or regional importance.