

A Phase 1 Archaeological Study
For the the Proposed San Ramon Canyon Storm Drain Project
City of Rancho Palos Verdes, Los Angeles County, California



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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Robert J. Wlodarski'.

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Summary of Findings

At the request of **SFC Consultants**, a Phase 1 Archaeological Study was prepared for an environmental document in support of the proposed San Ramon Canyon Storm Drain Project, City of Rancho Palos Verdes, Los Angeles County. This report was designed to achieve compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and applicable city and county planning guidelines, policies and procedures pertaining to the completion of phase 1 archaeological studies. The scope of work consisted of:

1. Performing a records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center California State University Fullerton.
2. Conducting an on-foot surface reconnaissance of the project area.
3. Preparing a report summarizing the results of the records search and field phases.

The project area lies south of Torrance, west of Long Beach and north and east of the Pacific Ocean, Los Angeles County, California (Figure 1). The project area is depicted on the San Pedro, California, USGS 7.5-minute topographic map (1963 - photorevised 1981) within Township 5 North, Range 14 West, in an unsectioned portion of Rancho Palos Verdes (Figure 2). The project area lies north of Palos Verdes Drive South and east of Palos Verdes Drive East, in the southwestern section of Rancho Palos Verdes. Generally, the project parallels the San Ramon Creek on the east side of Palos Verdes Drive East, crosses W. 25th Street and lies on the west side of an existing trailer park along an easement until reaching the Pacific Ocean on the south (Figure 3). There are three main areas of impact for the project. **The northern area** is situated east of the top hair-pin curve on Palos Verdes Dr. E. and encompasses moderate-to-steep sloping terrain adjacent to the San Ramon drainage. The proposed alignment of the storm drain will include tunneling under W. 25th Street and extending south of 25th Street. This area would also include the construction of a temporary construction access road, and permanent maintenance road in the canyon. The access road would require retaining walls in order to provide an accessible road along the relatively steep slopes; **the central area** lies south of W. 25th Street, adjacent and to the west of an existing trailer park. This portion of the project area will involve cut and cover pipe that extends roughly 1,700 feet to point about two hundred feet from the ocean bluff top. The cut & cover pipe will be located within an existing 100-ft. wide utility easement; **the southern area** involves a transition into a second tunnel to a new outlet structure at the base of the bluff. A new trail system will be constructed to keep pedestrians and animals safe. A second shorter tunnel will be drilled to a new outlet structure at the bluff face. Construction staging would occur within the existing 100' wide utility corridor south of 25th Street near the proposed lower tunnel launching pit. Access would also be provided along the beach at the base of the bluff (Figure 4).

A records search was performed at the South Central Coastal Information Center, California State University Fullerton (SCCIC-CSUF) on August 25, 2010 (SCCIC #10818.7591 - Stacy St. James) and was updated by professional archaeologist, Diane Bonner on August 4, 2011. Based on a review of a more detailed project description, a previously noted recorded resource lies outside of the project area. In addition, the following results apply within a ½-mile radius of the project area:

- Nine prehistoric archaeological sites (**19-000849, 19-000850, 19-000859, 19-000861, 19001522, 19-002191, 19-002797, 19-002800, and 19-002803**) have been identified. One prehistoric archaeological site (**19-000859**) is located roughly 80-feet to the west of the proposed temporary access road.
- Two historic archaeological site or historic properties over 45 years old are identified: **19-120001, and 19-120002**.
- No National Register of Historic Places are identified (1979-2005 and supplements to date).
- No California Register of Historic Resource listings are noted (1992, with supplemental information to date).
- No California Historical Landmarks are listed, the Office of Historic Preservation, Department of Parks and Recreation (OHP-DPR), (1995, with supplemental information to date).
- No California Points of Historical Interest are noted (OHP-DPR), (1992, with supplemental information to date).
- No State Historic Resources Commission issues are presented (1980-present).
- The California Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) lists no properties within the search radius.
- No City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments are listed.
- Twenty-five studies have been conducted: **Anonymous** n.d.; **Bissell** 1989, 1997a,b; **Boxt** 1979; **Dillon** 1982a,b; **Duke** 2002a,b; **Eggers** 1978; **Greenwood** 1977; **Jertberg & Padon** 1989; **McKenna** 2001, 2002; **Messick & Hale** 2002; **Padon** 1999; **Rosenthal** 1998; **Singer, Atwood & Sinopoli** 1994; **Singer, Atwood, Preziosi, Stevenson, & Parsons** 1994; **Stickel, Minch, Gow & Minch** 1998, 1999; **Weintraub** 1974; **Wells** 1995; **Westec Services, Inc.** 1978; **Whitley & Ivie** 1976.

- Thirteen of these projects encompass portions of the project site: **Bissell 1989,1997a; Dillon 1982a,b; Jertberg, & Padon 1989; McKenna 2001,2002; Messick & Hale 2002; Padon 1999; Singer, Atwood & Sinopoli 1994; Stickel, Minch, Gow & Minch 1998,1999; Westec Services, Inc. 1978.** Due to the age of the prior studies and the uneven focus of those investigations specific to the project area, the SCCIC is recommending an updated Phase 1 Archaeological Study specific to the project area

Additional historic maps on file at the Geography Department Map Reference Center, California State University Northridge, and Bureau of Engineering, Los Angeles City Hall were consulted as follows:

- 1852-1890 Township/Range Plat Survey Maps;
- 1881 Map of the County of Los Angeles, California - Stevenson;
- 1888 Map of the County of Los Angeles, California - Rowan;
- 1891 Map of the Reservoir Lands in the County of Los Angeles-Seebold;
- 1896 edition, San Pedro, California 15-minute USGS topographic map;
- 1901 edition, Santa Ana, California 15-minute USGS topographic map (surveyed in 1894);
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- 1924 Percival's Map of Los Angeles and Vicinity-Thompson;
- 1944 edition, San Pedro 15-minute USGS topographic map;
- Historic USGS maps indicate that in 1896 several streams were present and the names Palos Verdes and San Pedro were noted. In 1944, there is marked development in the area with more roads and buildings.

A pedestrian survey performed for the project on July 30, 2011 by RPA certified archaeologists Robert Wlodarski and Wayne Bonner, yielded the following results:

- **The northern area** is situated east of the top hair-pin curve on Palos Verdes Dr. E. and encompasses sloping terrain adjacent to the San Ramon drainage. This area is extensively disturbed by road improvements and current modifications to the area above San Ramon Creek where construction is currently taking place.
- **The central area** lies south of W. 25th Street, adjacent and to the west of an existing trailer park. This area has been graded, disked and cleared of natural vegetation and lies within an existing 100-ft. wide utility easement.
- **The southern area** encompasses a portion of a disturbed 100-ft. wide utility easement adjacent to a trailer park on the east. Trail trend south from W. 25th Street and east-west along the bluff.

No visible signs of prehistoric or historic archaeological resources were observed during the pedestrian survey of the project area. All exposed surface terrain and fortuitous exposures such as rodent burrows, drainage cuts, and graded, cleared, or landscaped areas, were thoroughly inspected for signs of cultural resources. Plate 1 illustrates selected photographs of the project area.

Any proposed improvements or modifications within the project area will have no direct, adverse impact on known cultural resources. Based on the latest findings, archaeological monitoring is not recommended. Since the nature of an on-foot surface reconnaissance can only confidently assess the potential for encountering surface cultural resource remains; therefore, customary caution is advised in developing within the project area. Should unanticipated cultural resource remains be encountered during land modification activities, work must cease, and the lead agency contacted immediately to determine appropriate measures to mitigate adverse impacts to the discovered resources. Cultural resource remains may include artifacts, shell, bone, features, altered soils, foundations, trash pits and privies, etc.

If human remains are encountered during excavations associated with this project, all work must halt, and the County Coroner must be notified (Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code). The coroner will determine whether the remains are of forensic interest. If the coroner, with the aid of the supervising archaeologist, determines that the remains are prehistoric, the coroner will contact the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The NAHC will be responsible for designating the most likely descendant (MLD), who will be responsible for the ultimate disposition of the remains, as required by Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code. The MLD should make his/her recommendations within 48 hours of their notification by the NAHC. This recommendation may include A) the nondestructive removal and analysis of human remains and items associated with Native American human remains; (B) preservation of Native American human remains and associated items in place; (C) relinquishment of Native American human remains and associated items to the descendants for treatment; or (D) other culturally appropriate treatment.

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I. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope of the Project

At the request of **SFC Consultants**, a Phase 1 Archaeological Study was prepared for an environmental document in support of the proposed San Ramon Canyon Storm Drain Project, City of Rancho Palos Verdes, Los Angeles County. This report was designed to achieve compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and applicable city and county planning guidelines, policies and procedures pertaining to the completion of phase 1 archaeological studies. The scope of work consisted of:

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2. Conducting an on-foot surface reconnaissance of the project area.
3. Preparing a report summarizing the results of the records search and field phases.

1.2 Location and Description of the Project

The project area lies south of Torrance, west of Long Beach and north and east of the Pacific Ocean, within Rancho Palos Verdes Estates, Los Angeles County, California (Figure 1).

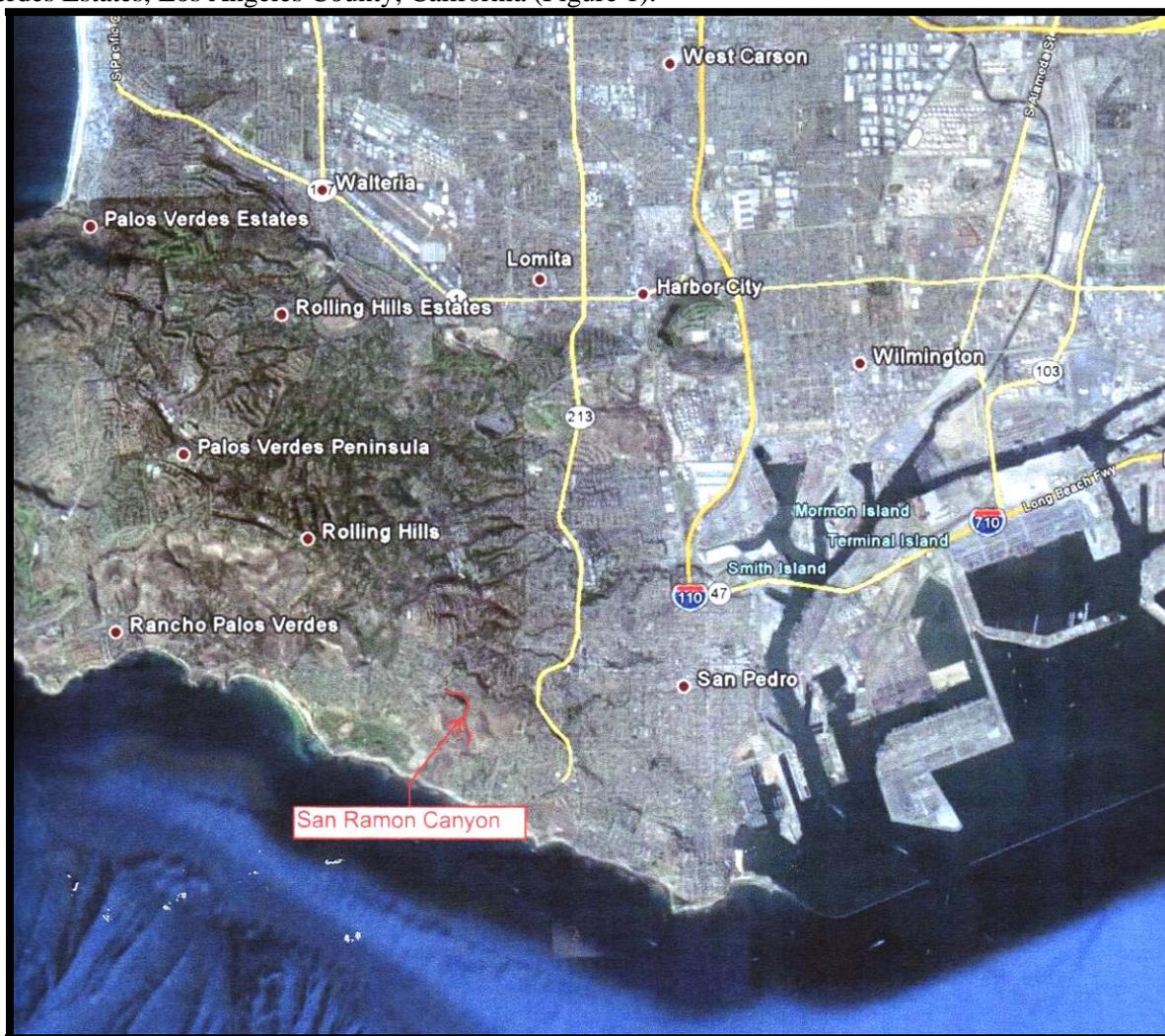


Figure 1: Vicinity Map

The project area is depicted on the San Pedro, California USGS 7.5-minute topographic map (1963 - photorevised 1981) within Township 5 North, Range 14 West, in an unsectioned portion of Rancho Palos Verdes (Figure 2).

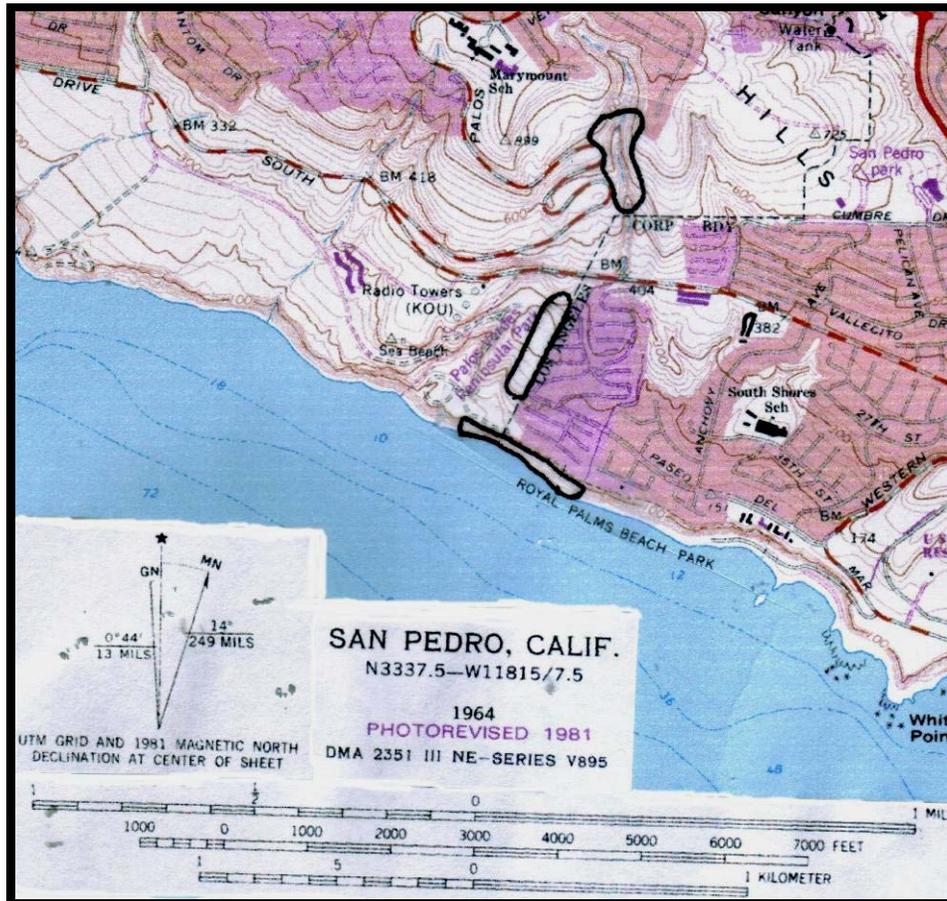


Figure 2: Location of the Project Area

The project area lies north of Palos Verdes Drive South and east of Palos Verdes Drive East, in the southwestern section of Rancho Palos Verdes. Generally, the project parallels the San Ramon Creek on the east side of Palos Verdes Drive East, crosses W. 25th Street and lies on the west side of an existing trailer park along an easement until reaching the Pacific Ocean on the south (Figure 3).

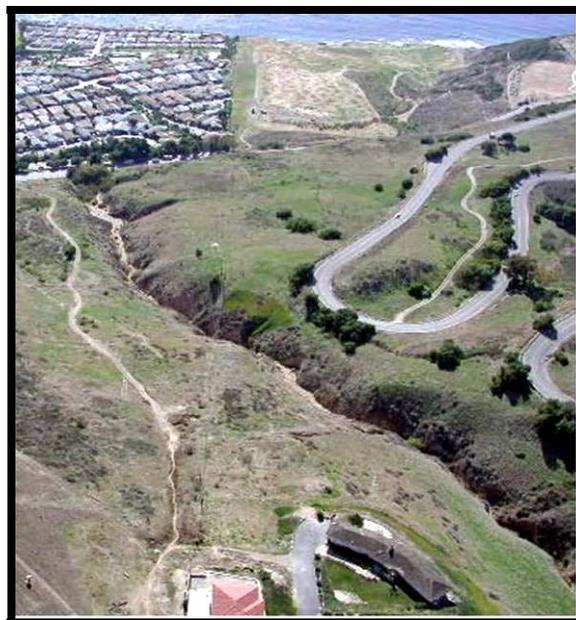


Figure 3: Aerial View of the Project

The Palos Verdes Peninsula rises abruptly out of the Pacific Ocean to a maximum elevation of 451 m. The hills slope down gradually to the north and east into the Los Angeles Basin. The highest point on the peninsula is San Pedro Hill. This peninsula is located about 32 km southeast of the Santa Monica Mountains, 56 km south of the San Gabriel Mountains and 48 km west of the Santa Ana Mountains. This area encompasses the Palos Verdes hills and surrounding lowlands and includes all or part of Carson, Gardena, Harbor City, Hermosa Beach, Long Beach, Lawndale, Manhattan Beach, Palos Verdes Estates, Rancho Palos Verdes, Redondo Beach, Rolling Hills, Rolling Hills Estates, San Pedro, Torrance and Wilmington. Steep cliffs (roughly 30m-65m high) face the ocean along the entire shoreline from Malaga Cove south to Point Fermin. The western and southern slopes of the peninsula are relatively steep and are distinctly terraced. The terraces (evidence of former shorelines) are much less distinct on the more gradual eastern and northern slopes. Many large gullies and canyons drain the hills. Although a few of these canyons have relatively permanent streams, a majority of the smaller creeks are dry throughout much of the year.

The region is characterized as Mediterranean warm, and lies between the dry climate of the Mojave Desert to the northeast and the humid mesothermal climate of the Pacific Coast to the south. The region is also characterized by warm, dry summers and mild, moderately wet winters with temperatures ranging from roughly 100 degrees in July and August, to the low 30s in January. Rainfall averages are about 12-14 inches per year and are much higher in the foothills and mountains. The normal rainy season occurs between November and April. The water table at present is different from that which existed during prehistoric times and even early historic times.

The project area falls within the California biotic province which ranges from west of the Sierra Nevada's and the southern mountain ranges, from northern California to Baja del Sur. The distribution of plant communities varies depending upon local climate, soil types, water supply and temperature. Generally, six plant communities can be found in the region, including: Freshwater Marsh; Grassland; Southern Oak Woodland; Riparian Woodland; Coastal Sage-Scrub; and Chaparral (U.S. Forest Service 1934). A range of potential wildlife for the general vicinity includes seasonally fluctuating populations of quail, rabbit, rodents, deer and coyote. Lizards, snakes, as well as a number of different species of birds also occur in the area.

III. Cultural Setting

3.1 Prehistory

The region was occupied for over 20,000 years based on work in the Ballona Creek area of the Los Angeles Basin, the La Brea Tar Pits, and Malaga Cove. Chronologies for southern California have been developed by Wallace (1955) and Warren (1968). Research points to a generalized hunting and gathering economy in existence at a very early time. The *Millingstone Period* dates to over 6000 years ago, and suggests a generalized plant collecting economy in operation, supplemented by hunting and fishing. Regional interaction appears limited when compared with later periods. Around 3500 years ago, there was an apparent economic shift to more reliance on hunting, as well as an increased exploitation of the acorn. This represents a subtle transition from the prior period where hard seed processing appeared to be more predominant. Sites attributed to this period appear to have been occupied by small groups. The *Intermediate Period* dates from 1000 B.C.-A.D. 1000. Sites from this time indicate an increased reliance on coastal resources with continued reliance on hunting and collecting. In addition, the advent of the bow and arrow, the appearance of more bone tools, and increased reliance on the mortar and pestle, are typical during this time. The *Late Period* that begins around A.D. 750-1000 is characterized by increasing economic and social complexity. Villages tend to be larger, with a more varied assemblage, and there appears to be an increase in smaller satellite sites, established to support the main village, and reflecting seasonal use of a particular area. There seems to be more intensive exploitation of localized resources, and social contacts and economic influences appear to be accelerated through trade and social interaction. There is an increase in the number of sites in the area, which some researchers believe is the result of a population increase. Leonard (1971) discusses the Late Period as a time when there are more specialized sites in terms of their location and function, and an amplification of all aspects of the cultural system.

3.2 Ethnographic Information

At the time of European contact, the project area was inhabited by the Shoshonean-speaking Gabrielino, as ascribed due to their association with Mission San Gabriel, which was founded in 1771. The Gabrielino are considered one of the most distinctive tribes in all of California, occupying a large area which was bordered on the west by Topanga and Malibu, the San Fernando Valley, the greater Los Angeles basin, the coastal strip down to Aliso Creek south of San Juan Capistrano, and the islands of Catalina, San Clemente, and San Nicolas. They are credited with an extensive and

elaborate material culture, their expert craftsmanship in quarrying and manufacturing soapstone, and constructing the plank canoe. Information about the Gabrielino comes from a number of sources including: Kroeber (1925), Boscana (1933), Johnston (1962), Blackburn (1963), Reid (1968), Bean and Smith (1978) and Hill (1985).

2.3 Historic Information

The following general information was summarized from Fink (1987). The project area was part on a major land grant received by a Spanish soldier named Juan Jose Dominguez (he died in 1809). The 75,000 acre grant was entitled in 1784 and included the entire Rancho Palos Verdes Peninsula. For over 35 years the rancho land supported several thousand heads of cattle and a flourishing hacienda. In 1827, Don Dolores Sepulveda received the Rancho de los Palos Verdes land grant (which translates to range of green trees).

Through misfortune and mishaps from 1862 to 1882, stewardship of much of his land passed from the Sepulveda family through various mortgage holders to Jotham Bixby of Rancho Los Cerritos. When his property could no longer be used for only cattle grazing, Bixby leased the land to Japanese farmers for cultivating grains and vegetables. At the close of the 19th Century, the Palos Verdes Peninsula was used by sheepherders. For the most part the mesas and terraces lacked trees, fences, roads and structures. During the early 1900's, the mesa was used for cattle ranching and farming, where over, 2,000 head of cattle grazed. Japanese families farmed the southern slopes, cultivating beans, peas and tomatoes, while the northern slopes were planted in barley for hay and grain.

By 1913, a consortium of New York investors (Harry P. Davidson of J. P. Morgan and Company; Benjamin Strong, president of the Bankers' Trust Company of New York; and Frank Trumbull, chairman of the board of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad) owned most of the Bixby land. Initially, these investors intended to divide the land into large estates. The founding father of the Peninsula, Frank Vanderlip, was one of these investors. Over the next decade, interest in the Peninsula would wane until Vanderlip allied himself with real estate promoter E. G. Lewis. In 1922, a real estate developer named H.G. Lewis acquired the Palos Verdes Project, which would constitute the future City of Palos Verdes Estates and part of the Miraleste area of the current day City of Rancho Palos Verdes, through exercising an option to acquire the Property from Mr. Vanderlip. The community was called Palos Verdes Estates and had decreased in development area from the original 16,000 acres to 3225 acres. Vanderlip held onto 13,000 acres in the southern portion of the peninsula for future development.

Vanderlip planned to develop the area above Point Vicente lighthouse as an Italian hillside village. Marble was imported from Italy for the first building in 1928, but the project was never completed. Vanderlip constructed his first residence on the Peninsula in 1916 in the Portuguese Bend area, the "Old Ranch Cottage", now known as the "Cottage". Other buildings were added in the 1920's including a small guest house and garage called "La Casetta" and a larger guesthouse in 1924, known as the "Villetta", now known as "Villa Narcissa". Behind the Villetta, a beautiful stairway of 268 steps, lined by cypress trees, soared to a lookout point where a white marble temple was built. Several recreational facilities, however, were constructed early in the development of the Palos Verdes Project. The La Venta Inn was constructed in 1923, and was the social center for Palos Verdes, hosting many weddings and dinner outings.

Six street entrances were planned for the Palos Verdes peninsula, three from the east and three from the north. The main broad street, Granvia La Costa (Palos Verdes Drive), considered a parkway with a landscaped center strip, was designed for the unrealized Pacific Electric Railway to run down its center. The Palos Verdes Golf Club was opened in 1924, and the Palos Verdes Swim Club was opened in 1930. Stables for horseback riding were also constructed in Palos Verdes Estates. The Swim Club was renamed the Roessler Pool, in honor of Fred Roessler, mayor of Palos Verdes Estates for 25 years and who was instrumental in the formation of the city of Palos Verdes Estates in 1939. The original Swim Club utilized recirculated ocean water. The Great Depression, which began in 1929, had an extremely debilitating effect on the Palos Verdes Project. Many lot owners defaulted on their property taxes, and the Palos Verdes Homeowners Association, which maintained the Project, was in deep financial straits. In 1932 the trustee turned over to the residents the responsibility of the Homes Association; only 1/3rd of the owners of building sites failed to pay their annual assessments.

With the death of Frank Vanderlip in 1937, control of the Palos Verdes Corporation, which owned the balance of the original Vanderlip property holdings other than that which was incorporated in the Palos Verdes Project, was passed to Vanderlip's son Frank. During December, 1939, the voters decided to form a city of the sixth class to have taxing authority. Control of the Palos Verdes Corporation passed in 1943 to Harry Benedict, a friend and business associate of Frank Vanderlip. In 1945, Kevin Vanderlip took control of the Corporation. During World War II Japanese farmers

and their families who had lived on the Peninsula since 1910 were sent to internment camps. Defensive positions were established at the Haggarty Estate in Malaga Cove. Battery installations were installed at the current location of the Rancho Palos Verdes city hall, as well as at Rocky Point in Lunada Bay in 1943 that included two 16 inch guns. Barracks and support buildings were also constructed in Lunada Bay. An underground observation point was also constructed at Punta Place overlooking Bluff Cove and the South Bay. Today, the Palos Verdes Peninsula contains some of the most luxurious homes and estates in the country. Rancho Palos Verdes was incorporated on 7 September 1973. The population was 41,145 at the 2000 census. Rancho Palos Verdes is a quiet, affluent suburb of Los Angeles sitting atop the bluffs of the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

IV. Records Search Results

A records search was performed at the South Central Coastal Information Center, California State University Fullerton (SCCIC-CSUF) on August 25, 2010 (SCCIC #10818.7591 - Stacy St. James) and was updated by professional archaeologist, Diane Bonner on August 4, 2011. Based on a review of a more detailed project description, a previously noted recorded resource lies outside of the project area. In addition, the following results apply within a ½-mile radius of the project area:

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- No City of Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments are listed.
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- Thirteen of these projects encompass portions of the project site: **Bissell** 1989,1997a; **Dillon** 1982a,b; **Jertberg, & Padon** 1989; **McKenna** 2001,2002; **Messick & Hale** 2002; **Padon** 1999; **Singer, Atwood & Sinopoli** 1994; **Stickel, Minch, Gow & Minch** 1998,1999; **Westec Services, Inc.** 1978. Due to the age of the prior studies and the uneven focus of those investigations specific to the project area, the SCCIC is recommending an updated Phase 1 Archaeological Study specific to the project area

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V. Field Reconnaissance Program

5.1 Methodology

A pedestrian survey, which entails the inspection of all land surfaces that can reasonably be expected to contain cultural resource remains without major modification of the land surface, was performed on July 30, 2011.

5.2 Crew

The crew consisted of Principal Investigator, **Robert Wlodarski** who has a BA in History and Anthropology and an MA in Anthropology from California State University Northridge (CSUN); 39 years of professional experience in California archaeology; over 1500 projects completed to date; certification in field archaeology, and theoretical/archival research by the Register of Professional Archaeologists [RPA], registered as a California historian by the California Committee for the Promotion of History [CCPH]; a member of the National Council on Public History; and, meets National Park Service Standards & Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation; and, **Wayne Bonner**, has over 37 years of experience in southern California archaeology with an MA in Anthropology from California State University Long Beach, is certified in field archaeology by the Register of Professional Archaeologists [RPA], and meets National Park Service Standards & Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

5.3 Results

The following field observations were made during the course of the pedestrian survey:

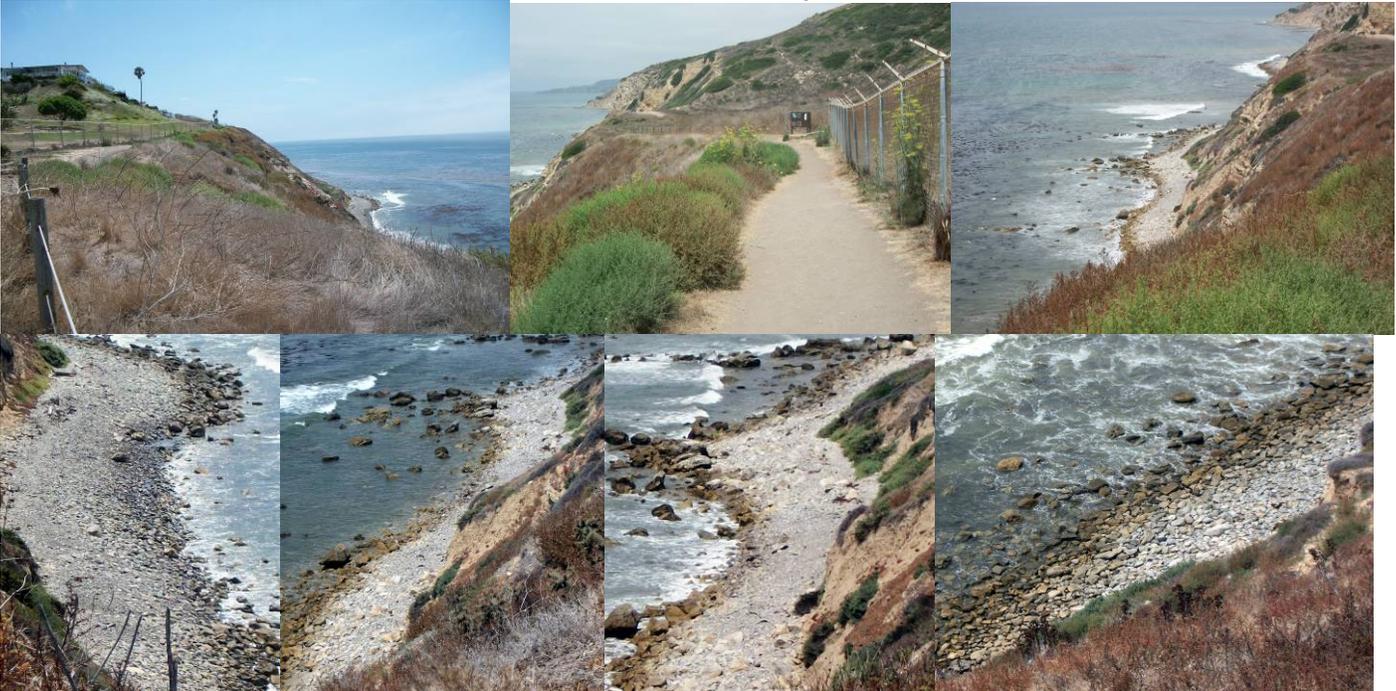
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- **The central area** lies south of W. 25th Street, adjacent and to the west of an existing trailer park. This area has been graded, disked and cleared of natural vegetation and lies within an existing 100-ft. wide utility easement.



- **The southern area** encompasses a portion of a disturbed 100-ft. wide utility easement adjacent to a trailer park on the east. Trail trend south from W. 25th Street and east-west along the bluff.



No visible signs of prehistoric or historic archaeological resources were observed during the pedestrian survey of the project area. All exposed surface terrain and fortuitous exposures such as rodent burrows, drainage cuts, and graded, cleared, or landscaped areas, were thoroughly inspected for signs of cultural resources.

5.4 Recommendations

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VI.

References

Anonymous

n.d. Environmental Impact Report Regarding: Seacliff Hills a Planned Residential Development. Report (LA00360) is on file at the South Central Coastal Information Center, California State University Fullerton.

Bean, Lowell John, and Charles R. Smith

1978 Gabrielino. In California, edited by Robert F. Heizer, pp. 538-549. Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 8, William G. Sturtevant, general ed. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Bissell, Ronald M.

1989 Cultural Resources Reconnaissance of Approximately 455 Acres in the Palos Verdes Peninsula, Los Angeles County on the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Report (LA01840) is on file at the South Central Coastal Information Center, California State University Fullerton.

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