

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY SURVEY

**Alta Sierra Development Project,
One-acre, Nevada County, California.**

Prepared for

Simon CRE

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Archaeological Inventory Survey, one-acre, Nevada County, CEQA, USGS Grass Valley,
Ca. 7.5' Quads., No Eligible/Significant Historic Properties/Resources.

June 23, 2014

GENESIS SOCIETY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL - HISTORICAL - CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

1. INTRODUCTION

Project Background

This report details the results of an archaeological inventory survey of the proposed Alta Sierra development project, involving approximately one-acre located adjacent to the east side of Alta Sierra Drive, and the west side of Little Valley Road, approximately 200 meters east of State Route 49, in Nevada County, California (see attached *Project Location and Archaeological Survey Area Map*).

The proposed project would involve commercial development of the parcel which could result in construction of a new commercial building and associated features, including buried and overhead utilities, driveways, parking, landscaping, etc.

The proposed project will involve physical disturbance to ground surface and sub-surface components and will therefore have the potential to impact cultural resources located within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). In this case, the APE consists of the circa one-acre property itself. Evaluation of the project's effects to cultural resources must be undertaken in conformity with Nevada County rules and regulations, and in compliance with requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, Public Resources Code, Section 21000, et seq. (CEQA), and The California CEQA Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, California Administrative Code, Section 15000 et seq. (Guidelines as amended).

Scope of Work

At the most general level, compliance with CEQA requires completion of projects in conformity with the standards contained in Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines, as amended. Based on this and other relevant Sections of the Guidelines, the following specific tasks were considered an adequate and appropriate Scope of Work for the present project:

- Conduct a records search at the North Central Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System at CSU-Sacramento, and review state data bases and other relevant background information. The goals of the records search and data base review are to determine (a) the extent and distribution of previous archaeological surveys, (b) the locations of known archaeological sites and any previously recorded archaeological districts, and (c) the relationships between known sites and environmental variables. This step is designed to ensure that, during subsequent field survey work, all archaeological and historical sites considered significant per CEQA are discovered, correctly identified, fully documented, and properly interpreted.
- Conduct a pedestrian field survey of the project area. Based on map review, a complete coverage intensive survey was considered appropriate, given the presence of low to moderate archaeological sensitivity throughout the project area. The purpose of the pedestrian survey is to ensure that any previously recorded sites identified during the records search are re-located and existing evaluations updated based on current site and field conditions. For previously undocumented sites

identified which might qualify as “cultural resources” per CEQA, the field survey would involve formally recording these on DPR-523 Forms.

- Upon completion of the records search and pedestrian survey, prepare an archaeological inventory survey report that identifies project effects and recommends appropriate mitigation measures for any prehistoric or historic sites recommended significant under CEQA and which might be affected by the project.

The remainder of the present document constitutes the Final Report for this project, detailing the results of the records search and field survey and containing recommendations for treatment of significant sites that could be impacted by the project. All field survey procedures followed guidelines provided by the State Historic Preservation Office (Sacramento) and conform to accepted professional standards.

Location

The Alta Sierra development project involves approximately one-acre parcel located adjacent to the east side of Alta Sierra Drive, and the west side of Little Valley Road, approximately 200 meters east of State Route 49, in Nevada County, California. Lands affected are located within a portion of the northeast quarter of Section 22 of Township 15 North, Range 8 East, as shown on the USGS Grass Valley, California, 7.5’ series quad (see attached ***Project Location and Archaeological Survey Area Map***).

A number of important streams are located within the general vicinity of the project area, including Rattlesnake Creek to the north, and Wolf Creek to the west. However, none of these are located within or adjacent to the subject APE.

Until relatively recently, lands within this general area remained largely undeveloped for residential and related use, being utilized since about 1865 for ranching and farming. During the past several decades, however, the pace of development within this area of Nevada County has intensified with recent, residential and commercial development having occurred within the general vicinity, including immediately adjacent to the subject parcel.

Based on available topographic and other maps, but notwithstanding the effects of past and on-going land uses, the project area appeared to contain lands ranging from low to moderate in sensitivity for both prehistoric and historic-period sites and features.

2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Several information sources were considered relevant to evaluating the types of sites and site distribution that might be encountered within the project area. The information evaluated includes data maintained by the North Central Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System, consultation with the NAHC and Native American representatives on the NAHC contact list, and published and unpublished documents relevant to regional ethnography, prehistory, and early historic developments.

North Central Information Center Records

The records of the North Central Information Center were examined for existing recorded prehistoric and historic sites and previous archaeological survey within or near the project area (Records Search dated June 18, 2014, N.C.I.C. File NEV 14-24, copy attached), with the following results.

Previous Archaeological Survey:

The Information Center's records indicated that none of the subject property has been subjected to past archaeological survey. Likewise, no archaeological investigations have been conducted immediately adjacent to the subject parcel.

Recorded Cultural Resources:

According to the Information Center's records, no prehistoric or historic-era resources have been identified or recorded within, or immediately adjacent to, the subject APE.

Other Sources

In addition to examining records at the North Central Information Center and Native American consultation, the following sources were also reviewed by the Information Center, or separately:

- The National Register of Historic Places (2010 and Updates).
- The California Register of Historical Resources (2010 and Updates).
- The California Inventory of Historical Resources (1976).
- California Historical Landmarks (State of California 1996).
- California Points of Historical Interest (May 1992 and updates).
- The Historic Property Data File (OHP 2014).
- The Determination of Eligibility (OHP 2014).
- Caltrans Bridge Inventory (2009).
- USGS Quadrangle: 1949 Grass Valley 7.5'.
- GLO Plats: 1855, T15N/8E.
- Published and unpublished documents relevant to ethnography, prehistory and early historic developments in the vicinity (reviewed below), providing context for assessing likely site types and site distribution patterns for the project area.

Ethnographically, the project area is located within territory occupied by the Nisenan at the time of initial contact with European Americans (Wilson and Towne 1978: Figure 1). The Nisenan are Native American peoples also referred to as "Southern Maidu" who occupied the drainages of the southern Feather River and Honcut Creek in the north, through Bear River and the Yuba and American River drainages in the south. Villages were frequently located on flats adjoining streams, and were inhabited mainly in the winter as it was usually necessary to go out into the hills and higher elevation zones to establish temporary camps during food gathering seasons (i.e., spring, summer and fall).

As with all northern California Indian groups, economic life for the Nisenan revolved around hunting, fishing and the collecting of plant foods. These people were very sophisticated in terms of their knowledge of the uses of local animals and plants, and of the availability of raw material sources that could be used in manufacturing an immense array of primary and secondary tools and implements. Unfortunately, only fragmentary evidence of the material culture of these people remains, due in part to perishability and in part to the impacts to archaeological sites resulting from later (historic) land uses (mining, ranching and timber harvest).

Based on the results of previous survey work within the southwestern portion of Nevada County, the potential range of prehistoric site types included the following:

- Surface scatters of lithic artifacts and debitage associated with midden accumulations (sometimes including other surface features such as housepit depressions, mortar holes, petroglyphs), resulting from protracted occupation along stream channels, particularly where streams merge with one another.
- Surface scatters of lithic artifacts and debitage without midden accumulations, resulting from short-term occupation and/or specialized economic activities.
- Bedrock milling stations, including especially mortar holes, where suitable bedrock outcrops are exposed.
- Petroglyphs.
- Isolated finds of aboriginal artifacts and flakes.

Clearly, it was not expected that all of these site types would be encountered within the project area, but rather that these would be the most likely *types* to be encountered if any sites or features were identified at all.

Antecedent cultures in the area span several thousands of years and document use and occupation centered along water courses and elsewhere throughout the area. Detailed archaeological sequences are reviewed in works by Moratto (2004) and others.

Recorded history in the project area begins with the attempts of Spanish colonists to explore parts of California beyond the coastal zone. Gabriel Moraga's expedition was undertaken in 1806, with additional incursions occurring through the 1840's. European Americans began arriving in more substantial numbers in the mid-1820's, most notably with the trapping expeditions of Jedediah Smith. However, the European American incursion with the greatest impact on Native American population and culture occurred immediately following the discovery of gold at Coloma in 1848, which initiated the Gold Rush of 1849.

Mining along virtually every stream in the Nevada City and Grass Valley areas was underway by 1850. Placer mining continued to yield large quantities of gold through the next several years, and by 1855 supporting industry in the mine fields of Nevada County and along what is now Highway 49 and other early transportation corridors included stores, transportation companies, saloons, toll roads and stage lines, foundries, lumber mills, and water companies. Isolated features related to historic mining activities and associated transportation are ubiquitous throughout portions of Nevada County, and include sluiced areas, ditches, "glory holes", collapsed shafts and adits, debris scatters, tailings piles, and occasionally structural remains.

Logging, ranching and wood mill operations represent additional historic themes for this area of the County. As with the earlier mining emphasis, activities associated with these activities have also adversely affected the local cultural resource base.

Historic overviews for the region document the presence of a range of historic site and feature types and complexes throughout the area generally. Relevant historic site types potentially present in this area include:

- Historic narrow gauge railroad.
- Two-track trails/wagon roads, most of which are now paved roadways or no longer exist.
- Water distribution systems, including small and large ditch, canal and channel systems, and levees dating to historic time periods.
- Occupation sites and homesteads with associated features such as refuse disposal areas, privy pits, barns, and sheds.
- Ranch features, including structures, structural remnants, corrals, other feature types.
- Bridges associated with historic road corridors.
- Landscape modifications associated with both historic mining and wood mill operations, including also shafts, glory holes, tailings piles and additional feature types.

As with prehistoric sites, not all of these were expected to be present within the project area, with the list above representing the range of *types* considered most likely to be present based on background information available.

3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY and CULTURAL INVENTORY

Survey Strategy and Field Work

All of the one-acre APE was subjected to intensive pedestrian survey by means of walking systematic, parallel transects across the project area, with transects spaced at approximate 10 meter intervals.

In searching for cultural resources, the surveyor took into account the results of background research and was alert for any unusual contours, soil changes, distinctive vegetation patterns, exotic materials, artifacts, feature or feature remnants and other possible markers of cultural sites.

Field work was undertaken on June 21, 2014 by Sean Michael Jensen, M.A. Mr. Jensen is a professional archaeologist and historian, with 28 years experience in California archaeology, who meets the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Professional Qualification, as demonstrated in his inclusion on the California Historical Resources Information System's list of qualified archaeologists and historians. No special problems were encountered and all survey objectives were satisfactorily achieved.

General Field Observations

Fieldwork identified the following general conditions within the project area. Disturbance to the ground surface throughout the property has been moderate to minimal, resulting from adjacent road construction, and construction of adjacent residential and commercial facilities. Likewise, limited past tree and brush removal was evident, and recent evidence of perc/mantle excavations were observed within the APE. Finally, both buried and overhead utilities were observed within/adjacent to the subject property.

Prehistoric Sites

No evidence of prehistoric occupation or utilization was observed within the subject APE during the present pedestrian survey. The absence of such resources may best be explained by the absence of a suitable source of surface water within close proximity of the APE, and to more suitable habitation settings located along stream courses in the vicinity.

Historic Sites

No evidence of historic-era use or activity was observed within the subject APE.

4. ELIGIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

A project may have a significant impact or adverse effect on cultural resources/historic properties if the project will or could result in the physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance or values of the resource would be materially impaired.

Based on the specific findings detailed above under *Pedestrian Survey and Inventory*, no historic properties are present within the project area and no historic properties will be affected by the undertaking, as presently proposed.

5. Native American Consultation

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted and asked to supply information concerning sacred lands and to provide a list of interested Native American individuals/groups/tribes that could be contacted for information concerning traditional use areas and/or known archaeological sites.

A letter was sent to the NAHC on June 17, 2014. The NAHC responded on June 18, 2014, indicating that their search had “failed to indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources in the immediate project area.” As no prehistoric cultural resources were identified within the APE, no additional consultation was conducted.

6. PROJECT SUMMARY

This report details the results of an archaeological inventory survey involving approximately one-acre adjacent to the east side of Alta Sierra Drive, and the west side of Little Valley Road, approximately 200 meters east of State Route 49, in Nevada County, California. The proposed project would involve commercial development of the parcel.

Neither the pedestrian survey, existing records at the NCIC, or consultation with the NAHC, yielded any information concerning prehistoric or historic-era sites or features within the APE.

Based on project findings as summarized above, archaeological clearance is recommended for the proposed Alta Sierra development Project, with the following general provisions:

- 1) Evidence of human burial or scattered human remains related to prehistoric occupation of the area could be inadvertently encountered anywhere within the project area during construction or other ground-disturbing activities. In the event of such an inadvertent discovery, the County Coroner and the Native American Heritage Commission (State of California) would have to be informed and consulted, per State law.
- 2) The present evaluation and recommendations are based on the findings of an inventory-level surface survey only. There is always the possibility that previously unidentified cultural materials could be encountered on or below the surface during the course of future development or construction activities. This is particularly relevant considering the constraints generally to archaeological field survey, and particularly where past development and land uses partially obscure ground surface visibility. In the event of an inadvertent discovery of previously unidentified cultural material, archaeological consultation should be sought immediately.

7. REFERENCES CITED and/or UTILIZED

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2001 Archaeological Survey, Penn Valley Fire Station, c. 13-acre Development, Penn Valley, Nevada County, California (NCIC Report # 2615). Report on File, North Central Information Center, CSU-Sacramento.

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Jensen, Sean M.

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1982 The Shasta Complex in the Redding Area. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Anthropology, California State University, Chico.

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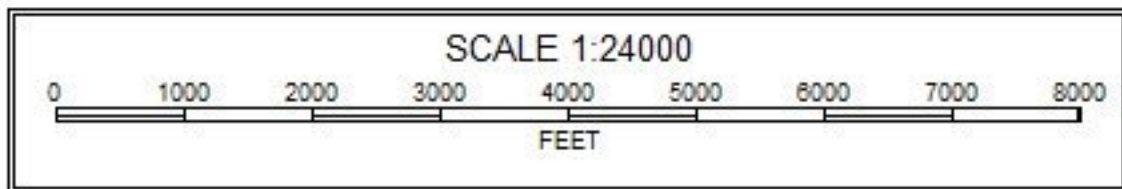
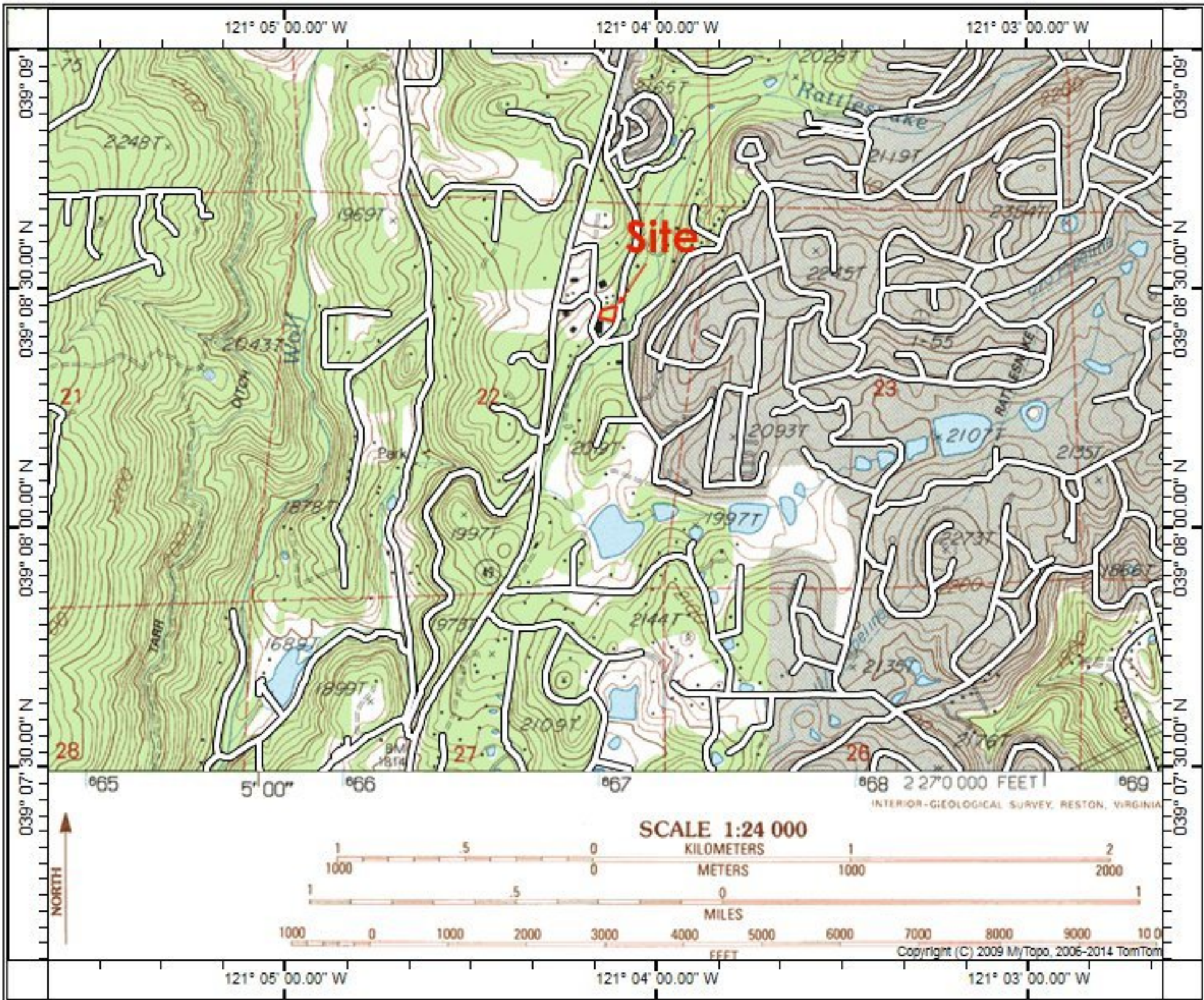
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVENTORY SURVEY

**Alta Sierra Development Project,
One-acre, Nevada County, California.**

ATTACHMENTS

- Project Location Map
- Records Search from CSU-Sacramento
- Response from the Native American Heritage Commission





6/18/2014

NCIC File No.: **NEV-14-24**

Sean Jensen
Genesis Society
7053 Molokai Drive
Paradise, CA 95969

Re: Alta Sierra

The North Central Information Center received your record search request for the project area referenced above, located on the Grass Valley USGS 7.5' quad. The following reflects the results of the records search for the project area:

As indicated on the data request form, the locations of resources and reports are provided in the following format: custom GIS maps shapefiles

Resources within project area:	No known resources are located within the project area.
Resources within radius:	No radius requested.
Reports within project area:	No known resources are located within the project area.
Reports within radius:	No radius requested.

- Resource Database Printout (list):** enclosed not requested nothing listed
- Resource Database Printout (details):** enclosed not requested nothing listed
- Resource Digital Database Records:** enclosed not requested nothing listed
- Report Database Printout (list):** enclosed not requested nothing listed
- Report Database Printout (details):** enclosed not requested nothing listed
- Report Digital Database Records:** enclosed not requested nothing listed
- Resource Record Copies:** enclosed not requested nothing listed
- Report Copies:** enclosed not requested nothing listed
- OHP Historic Properties Directory:** enclosed not requested nothing listed

Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility: enclosed not requested nothing listed
CA Inventory of Historic Resources (1976): enclosed not requested nothing listed
Caltrans Bridge Survey: enclosed not requested nothing listed
Ethnographic Information: enclosed not requested nothing listed
Historical Literature: enclosed not requested nothing listed
Historical Maps: enclosed not requested nothing listed
Local Inventories: enclosed not requested nothing listed
GLO and/or Rancho Plat Maps: enclosed not requested nothing listed
Shipwreck Inventory: enclosed not requested nothing listed
Soil Survey Maps: enclosed not requested nothing listed

Please forward a copy of any resulting reports from this project to the office as soon as possible. Due to the sensitive nature of archaeological site location data, we ask that you do not include resource location maps and resource location descriptions in your report if the report is for public distribution. If you have any questions regarding the results presented herein, please contact the office at the phone number listed above.

The provision of CHRIS Data via this records search response does not in any way constitute public disclosure of records otherwise exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act or any other law, including, but not limited to, records related to archeological site information maintained by or on behalf of, or in the possession of, the State of California, Department of Parks and Recreation, State Historic Preservation Officer, Office of Historic Preservation, or the State Historical Resources Commission.

Should you require any additional information for the above referenced project, reference the record search number listed above when making inquiries. Requests made after initial invoicing will result in the preparation of a separate invoice.

Sincerely,

Machiel Van Dordrecht
Researcher

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Edmund G. Brown, Jr. Governor

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

1550 Harbor Blvd., ROOM 100
West SACRAMENTO, CA 95661
(916) 373-3710
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June 18, 2014

Sean Michael Jensen
Genesis Society
7053 Molokai Drive
Paradise, CA 95969

Sent by Fax: (530) 876-8650
Number of Pages: 2

Re: Alta Sierra Development Project, c. 1-acre, Nevada County.

Dear Mr. Jensen,

A record search of the sacred land file has failed to indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources in the immediate project area. The absence of specific site information in the sacred lands file 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.

Enclosed is a list of Native Americans individuals/organizations who may have knowledge of cultural resources in the project area. The Commission makes no recommendation or preference of a single individual, or group over another. 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 or group. If a response has not been received within two weeks of notification, the Commission requests that you follow-up with a telephone call to ensure that the project information has been received.

If you receive notification of change of addresses and phone numbers from any of these individuals or groups, please notify me. With your assistance we are able to assure that our lists contain current information. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (916) 373-3712.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katy Sanchez".

Katy Sanchez
Associate Government Program Analyst

Native American Contact List
Nevada County
June 18, 2014

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 Miwok

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 Nisenan - So Maidu
 Konkow
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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 the statutory responsibility as defined in Section 7050.5 of the Health and Safety Code, Section 5097.94 of the Public Resources Code and Section 5097.98 of the Public Resources Code.

This list is only applicable for contacting local Native Americans with regard to cultural resources for the proposed Alta Sierra Development Project, c. 1-acre, Nevada County.