

**HERITAGE RESOURCE INVENTORY
DONNER SUMMIT PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT (DSPUD)
WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADES AND EXPANSION
(NEVADACOUNTY)**

**U.S. Forest Service Report
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by

**Susan Lindström, Ph.D.
Consulting Archaeologist
Truckee, California**

Report prepared for

**ECO:LOGIC Engineering Stantec
Nevada City, California**

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SUMMARY

The Donner Summit Public Utility District (DSPUD) is proposing upgrades and improvements on its wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and spray irrigation disposal system at Soda Springs, California (Nevada County). Project activities are planned on two separate parcels. The ten-acre site, which is partly developed, is situated south of the Yuba River and north of Interstate 80 on land under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service. The second site ("D4 parcel") is a 25-acre parcel located south of Interstate 80 on land owned by Boreal Ski Corporation. It is bounded by the Union Pacific Railroad on the north and the Nevada-Placer County line on the south. In order to bring the WWTP into compliance with its current discharge permit that authorizes it to discharge into the South Yuba River, major improvements involve sludge drying beds, holding tanks, storage and feed facilities, laboratory buildings, a pump house, power and blower systems, and the expansion of the existing effluent spray field. There will also be a major upgrade to the filtering system, which will include the installation of a Membrane Bioreactor (MBR) system, and there will be an installation of an ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system. The use of UV to disinfect the effluent before being discharged into the South Yuba River will greatly increase water quality as chlorine and sulfur dioxide will no longer be used to disinfect the effluent and will no longer be stored on site.

In compliance with federal (Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and NEPA) and state and county (CEQA) antiquities guidelines, DSPUD is required to consider potential project impacts on heritage resources. Accordingly, a heritage resource study was conducted by Dr. Susan Lindström under contract to ECO:LOGIC. Tasks involved: (1) prefield research (including the required records search at the North Central Information Center at California State University, Sacramento (see Correspondence) and the Tahoe National Forest, (2) consultation with the Washoe Tribe (see Correspondence), (3) an intensive archaeological field reconnaissance to identify and record heritage resources, and (4) presentation of findings in a final report. The records search disclosed that portions of the project area have been subject to prior archaeological survey, but no heritage resources were encountered. The field survey was guided by a mixed reconnaissance strategy. Coverage on each parcel was accomplished by four individuals walking parallel transects at less than 15-meter (~30 -foot) intervals and up to 25 and 35-meter (~80 and 115-foot) intervals depending upon terrain and vegetation factors. Two Native American archaeological technicians assisted in the field survey.

No heritage resources were identified within the project area. The potential effects of this project on heritage resources are not considered to be a significant effect on the environment. It is reasonable to conclude that the project should not result in the alteration of or adverse physical or aesthetic effect to any significant archaeological or historical sites, structures, objects, or buildings; nor should the project have the potential to cause a physical change that would affect unique ethnic (including Native American) cultural values or restrict historic or pre-historic religious or sacred uses. The Washoe Tribe has been consulted and concurs with the project findings. No further study or special operational constraints need be imposed on the project sponsor concerning these heritage resources. However, in the event of fortuitous discoveries of heritage resources,

project operations should cease in the area of the find, and a qualified archaeologist should be consulted for recommendations.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION, LOCATION AND SCOPE

The Donner Summit Public Utility District (DSPUD or District) is proposing upgrades and improvements on its wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and spray irrigation disposal system at Soda Springs, California. The project area is in Nevada County and falls within Township 17 North, Range 14 East, Section 22, M.D.M.. The project location is shown on the accompanying USGS quad map (Figure 1). Project activities are planned on two separate parcels. The ten-acre site, which is partly developed, is situated on land under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS; APN 47-021-04) south of the Yuba River and north of Interstate 80. Much of this parcel is covered by the existing WWTP. The DSPUD plans to upgrade its facilities in order to bring the WWTP into compliance with its current discharge permit that authorizes it to discharge to the South Yuba River. As shown on the project site plan (Figure 2), major improvements involve sludge drying beds, holding tanks, storage and feed facilities, laboratory buildings, a pump house, and power and blower systems. The second site (D4 parcel, APN 47-021-51) is a 25-acre parcel located on land south of Interstate 80 and owned by Boreal Ski Corporation. It is bounded by the Union Pacific Railroad on the north and the Nevada-Placer County line on the south. Improvements on this parcel involve the expansion of the existing effluent spray field. There will also be a major upgrade to the filtering system, which will include the installation of a Membrane Bioreactor (MBR) system, and there will be an installation of an ultraviolet (UV) disinfection system. The use of UV to disinfect the effluent before being discharged into the South Yuba River will greatly increase water quality as chlorine and sulfur dioxide will no longer be used to disinfect the effluent and will no longer be stored on site.

Since the DSPUD WWTP is located on both private and public land, the District must be in compliance with federal (Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and NEPA) and state and county (CEQA) antiquities guidelines that consider potential project impacts on heritage resources. Such heritage resource studies are customarily performed in a series of phases, each one building upon information gained from the prior study. Each of these phases is generally performed under separately negotiated contracts.

PHASE 1 INVENTORY: First, archival research and an archaeological field reconnaissance are performed to *inventory* and *record* known heritage resources and identify potential project constraints. Phase 1A of the inventory involves prefield research and a records search at the appropriate archaeological clearing house and a field survey to identify surface sites, features and/or artifacts. If heritage remains are discovered, Phase 1B heritage resource recording is accomplished.

PHASE 2 EVALUATION: If heritage properties are present and if they may be subject to project-related impacts, their significance is *evaluated*. For significant resources, a *determination of project impacts* is assessed and detailed measures to mitigate impacts are proposed. If project redesign to avoid impacts is unfeasible, then *mitigation measures* are *recommended* in order to recover the significant

information contained within these heritage properties prior to project ground disturbance activities.

PHASE 3 IMPACT MITIGATION AND DATA RECOVERY: A final phase may involve the *implementation of mitigation measures* recommended during the prior evaluation phase. Mitigation (or data recovery) typically involves additional archival research, field excavation, photo documentation, mapping, archaeological monitoring, etc.

Objectives of this Phase 1 inventory-level study are designed to satisfy heritage guidelines pertaining to the following tasks:

- (1) prefield research (including the required records search at the North Central Information Center at California State University, Sacramento and the USFS);
- (2) consultation with the Washoe Tribe;
- (3) an intensive archaeological field reconnaissance to detect and record heritage resources; and
- (4) presentation of findings in a final report.

BACKGROUND

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The project area is situated due west of the main crest of the Sierra Nevada. Birkeland (1964) has described the Quaternary geology of the Donner Pass area. Today, the average annual snowfall at Donner Summit is 35 feet (Powell 2003:107). Prior to 40,000 years ago, Pleistocene trunk glaciers flowed down Donner Pass into the Truckee River Basin on the east and the South Yuba River drainage on the west, sculpting the terrain into its present form. Holocene glaciation within the past 10,000 years was limited to the advance of small cirque glaciers along the Sierran crest. Moraines and glacial outwash are remnants of these events. The Pleistocene geology of the area has important implications for the distribution of lithic raw materials which were fashioned into prehistoric ground stone and flaked stone tools.

The study area lies within Storer and Usinger's (1971) Lodgepole Pine-Red Fir Belt or Canadian Zone. Dominant tree species are lodgepole pine (*Pinus murrayana*), Jeffrey pine (*P. jeffreyi*) and willow (*Salix* spp.). Open areas are covered by sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) and bitterbrush (*Pursia tridentata*), with wetter areas colonized by elderberry, serviceberry, alder, gooseberry, etc. Wet meadow grasses include brome, fescue, bluegrass, and sedge. Forbs include dwarf lupine, *potentilla*, pussy paws, yarrow, sorrel, pennyroyal, mallow, and buckwheat. It is doubtful that modern plant and animal communities closely resemble their pristine composition due to past disturbance. In earlier times the area is thought to have supported a luxuriant growth of native bunch grasses that allowed an abundant large game population and provided a nutritious source of seeds for use by prehistoric peoples.

Project topography varies greatly. On the 10-acre USFS parcel elevations range around 6,600 feet. This land surface slopes gently to the north and comprises a bouldered glacial moraine. The parcel is directly drained by the South Fork of the Yuba River, which passes through its northeastern corner. The existing wastewater plant covers about half of the parcel. Buildings are modern, being much younger than 45 years old. Disturbed ground and industrial debris extend north of the plant. Undisturbed areas outside the plant are thickly vegetated with conifer forest and riparian zones. On the 25-acre D-4 parcel, elevations range from about 6,720 feet at the base of the slope up to 7,320 feet along the ridge top. The lower one-third of the parcel is covered by a very dense and extensive alder wetland. The mid-slope flank is forested and a snowshoe trail passes through this zone. The upper one third of the slope is marked by steep and open volcanic slopes interspersed by small brush fields. Certain rocky knolls have been blasted to accommodate ski runs and ski lift construction.

PREHISTORY

In broadest terms, the archaeological signature of the Donner Pass area marks a trend from hunting-based societies in earlier times to populations that were increasingly reliant upon diverse resources by the time of historic contact (Elston 1982, 1986). The shift in lifeways may be attributed partially to factors involving paleoclimate, a shifting subsistence base, and demographic change. Some of the oldest archaeological remains reported for the Tahoe region date from the Pre-Archaic time period at about 9,000 years ago (*Tahoe Reach Phase*). Subsequent Pre-Archaic to Early Archaic occupation dates from about 7,000 years ago (*Spooner Phase*). The most intensive period of occupation in the region occurred at varying intervals between 4,000 and 500 years ago (*Martis Phase* during the Early and Middle Archaic, and *Early Kings Beach Phase* during the Late Archaic). The protohistoric ancestors of the Washoe (*Late Kings Beach Phase*), also of Late Archaic times, may date roughly from 500 years ago to historic contact (Elston *et al.* 1977; Heizer and Elsasser 1953).

ETHNOGRAPHY

Although Donner Pass is consistently reported in ethnographies as inside Washoe territory and trading routes, use by neighboring Maidu, Miwok, and Northern Paiute groups is not ruled out. d'Azevedo (1984:23) pointed out that much of the Washoe range, including the core territory, was used jointly by adjacent non-Washoe peoples and constituted a ventilated corridor of trade and travel. He further noted that, in terms of clear-cut tribal boundaries, the overall picture is one of extensive interaction among Washoes and their neighbors, an arrangement that engaged in cooperative practices of trade, inter-visiting and intermarriage between Washoe subgroups and the Pyramid Lake and Walker River Paiute, the Miwok, and the Maidu (Beals 1933:366; d'Azevedo 1984:32, 1986a:471; Downs 1966:51; Riddell 1960:75). The Southern Maidu (or Hill Nisenan) held the foothill and mountainous portions of the drainages of the Yuba, Bear and American Rivers and the lower drainages of the Feather River (Kroeber 1925; Wilson and Towne 1978). Nisenan occupation was most probably by small groups during hunting, fishing and plant collecting forays in the uplands above their more permanent villages

along the sierran west slope. The Soda Springs vicinity has been variously described as totally within Nisenan territory (Wilson and Towne 1978), as a "no man's land" between the Nisenan and the Washoe (Littlejohn 1928), or as Washoe peripheral territory (Price 1980). In consideration of the above, the area around Donner Pass seems most firmly within Washoe territory, with primary use by the northern Washoe or *Wa She Shu* (Downs 1966; Nevers 1976). Numerous Washoe settlements are known to have existed in the Truckee and Donner Lake basins and the Washoe themselves regard all "prehistoric" remains in this general region as associated with their own history.

Washoe

The Washoe are part of an ancient Hokan-speaking residual population, which has been subsequently surrounded by Numic-speaking intruders, such as the Northern Paiute (Jacobsen 1966). Even into the 21st Century, the Washoe have not been completely displaced from their traditional lands. The contemporary Washoe have developed a Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Washoe Tribal Council 1994) that includes goals of reestablishing a presence within the Tahoe Sierra and re-vitalizing Washoe heritage and cultural knowledge, including the harvest and care of traditional plant resources and the protection of traditional properties within the cultural landscape (Rucks 1996:3).

The Washoe once embodied a blend of Great Basin and California in their geographical position and cultural attributes. Washoe ethnography hints at a level of technological specialization and social complexity for Washoe groups, which is non-characteristic of their neighbors in the Great Basin. Semi-sedentism and higher population densities, concepts of private property, and communal labor and ownership are reported and may have developed in conjunction with Washoe residential stability stemming from a rich and reliable subsistence resource base (Lindström 1992, 1996). The ethnographic record suggests that during the mild season, small groups traveled through high mountain valleys fishing and collecting edible and medicinal roots, seeds and marsh plants. In the higher elevations, men hunted large game (mountain sheep, deer) and trapped smaller mammals. The Washoe have a tradition of making long treks across the Sierran passes for the purpose of hunting, trading and gathering acorns. These aboriginal trek routes, patterned after game trails, are often the precursors of our historic and modern road systems. Archaeological evidence of these ancient subsistence activities are found along the mountain flanks as temporary small hunting camps containing flakes of stone and broken tools. In the high valleys more permanent base camps are represented by stone flakes, tools, grinding implements, and house depressions.

Hill Nisenan

Nisenan villages consisted of from four to 12 separate dwellings, housing a nuclear or polygamous family with the main cooperative or corporate unit being an informal bilateral "family" (Beals 1933:344). Larger social organizations, called tribelets (Kroeber 1925), were formed by several villages uniting under a single chief. Boundaries of such tribelets were formed by using natural ridges between streams. However, the higher elevation areas were apparently not included in any one tribelet's territory.

For the Nisenan, like most hunters and gatherers, vegetable food resources formed the subsistence baseline. The Nisenan utilized a wide range of floral and faunal species although they apparently made extensive use of only a small percentage of these. The least productive time of the year was late winter-early spring. The salmon run began in late spring. Throughout the summer, nuts and seeds were gathered. Acorns became available in massive quantities in the autumn, which was also the time of deer hunting. Groups went on hunting and gathering expeditions within the mountains in the fall. Temporary camps were located along creeks where temporary lean-to structures with some mud covering at the base were constructed. (Beals 1933; Wilson and Towne 1978)

HISTORY

Events around Donner Summit are tied to the history of the community of Truckee. Truckee's beginnings are marked by the arrival of Joseph Gray, who built a stage station near the present-day downtown in 1863. This tiny way station grew from two structures into a thriving town which accommodated emigrants, stagecoach travelers and freight wagons in route westward to California's gold fields and eastward to the Comstock Lode in Nevada. The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 gave rise to other developments in the transportation, lumbering, ice, agriculture, dairying, and the tourism industries, all of which were to become the essential economic bases of Truckee.

Transportation

Heavy snowfall and rough terrain over Donner Pass presented a formidable obstacle to trans-Sierran travel. It impeded the efforts of early emigrants to cross, transformed construction of the Transcontinental Railroad into a daunting challenge and made it impossible to keep Sierran roadways open until recent times.

Emigrant Travel. Some of the first Euroamerican travelers over Donner Pass were members of the Stephens-Murphy-Townsend Party who ascended the Truckee River in mid-November of 1844. Hundreds of emigrant trains soon followed, the most notable being the ill-fated Donner Party. Their route has later been designated as the Truckee Route of the Emigrant Trail. It may have passed along the Donner Pass Road corridor, which falls between the two project parcels and outside the project area.

Dutch Flat Donner Lake Wagon Road. In 1864 the Dutch Flat and Donner Lake Wagon Road was opened over Donner Pass. The wagon road followed basically the same route over Donner Pass and along Donner Pass Road through Truckee that some of the earliest emigrants had taken. The road formed the final link in a continuous freight and passenger road to the Comstock mines near Virginia City and aided in transporting supplies to points along the line of the transcontinental railroad. The completion of the transcontinental railroad from the west to the Nevada state line in June of 1868 captured road travel across California and throughout the Truckee-Donner area. The Dutch Flat Donner Lake Wagon Road fell into disrepair and its usefulness as a trans-montane thoroughfare ended. However, it was still an important artery of local transportation. Nevada and Placer

counties controlled the road until it was taken into the state highway system in 1909, when it was rebuilt as an auto and truck road.

Lincoln/Victory Highway. In 1913 the old Dutch Flat Donner Lake Wagon Road was designated as a link in the Lincoln Highway, the nation's first transcontinental highway. In the 1920s portions of the Lincoln Highway were redesignated as the Victory Highway as a memorial to veterans of World War I. In 1927 the Lincoln Highway Association disbanded. In 1928 the Lincoln Highway/Victory Highway was incorporated into the Federal Highway system and the route over Donner Pass was renamed U.S. Route 40. In 1963 portions of the two-lane U.S. 40 were incorporated into the new interstate highway system and became the four-lane Interstate 80. However, a continuous segment of "old" U.S. 40, stretching from the Glenshire Bridge (five miles east of Truckee), through Truckee town, westward over Donner Summit, and down to Cisco Grove (an additional 20 to 25 miles) escaped impact by the new interstate freeway. In late 1964 the four-lane divided freeway was completed to the north of "old" U.S. 40 and the maintenance of the bridges and the roadway was assumed by Nevada County.

Transcontinental Railroad. The right-of-way for the nation's first transcontinental railroad also passes between the two project parcels and outside the project area. The railroad (designated State Historic Landmark No. 780) is now part of the Union Pacific Railroad. The first rail was laid at Sacramento on October 27, 1863. Construction moved ahead in 1864-1866. However, heavy snow and tunneling through granite rock near Donner Pass presented major obstacles in construction. Construction was completed in 1869. A transcontinental telegraph line (and later telephone line) paralleled the railroad, much of the line falling within the railroad right-of-way.

Winter Recreation. By the 1920s Truckee's industrial economy and society had largely disappeared, due in major part to the relocation of the train switching yard to Roseville, the depletion of local timber supplies, and the development of mechanical refrigeration which caused the demise of Truckee's ice industry. In its place, the community began to develop into a recreation-based economy. Historic Truckee was unique among turn-of-the-century mountain communities, in that summer recreationists and winter-sports enthusiasts could easily reach the town in summer or winter via the first transcontinental railroad or the first transcontinental highway. By the mid-1890s Truckee was host to ice carnivals, drawing people from both east and west of the Sierra in order to enjoy the mountain winters. Sleighing, tobogganing, dog races, two large ice palaces, and Hilltop's ski area and ski jump, along with the developing ski areas around Soda Springs were some of the attractions offered to tourists, along with "Snow-Ball" special excursion trains. The first known ski lift in America was reportedly built in Truckee in 1913. The development of Truckee's Hilltop ski hill and ski jump during the 1910s-1930s and the 1960 Winter Olympics at nearby Squaw Valley secured Truckee's position as a center point for year-round recreation.

West of Donner Summit, skiing was being promoted by Wendell Robie who founded the Auburn Ski Club in 1928 (Powell 2003:77; Norm Saylor, personal communication 8/4/2010) and, as noted above, the railroad played a key role in the

development of the ski industry at Norden-Soda Springs. The first ski lodge was built at Norden in 1925. In 1937 Charles Van Evera leased Beacon Hill (now Soda Springs Ski Hill) and put up the first commercial rope tow. In 1938 Van Evera added three more rope tows and a J-bar and built the Sitzmark day lodge up on the slopes of the Soda Springs ski area (Powell 2003:81). In 1941 construction was started on Beacon Hill Lodge; the war delayed its completion until 1945. Among other attractions, Beacon Hill featured a heated swimming pool (Powell 2003:84). Later in time, a third ski lift was added, *Jan's Lift*. This third and westernmost ski lift on the Soda Springs Ski Hill is located within the project area. *Jan's Lift* was constructed ca. 1983-1984 (Norm Saylor, personal communication 8/4/2010) and it has since been demolished. Cleared ski runs, the top terminal tower and the foundations of several lift towers, along with miscellaneous associated artifacts and features, remain.

An airway beacon was once located very near the top terminal of the existing long lift at the Soda Springs Ski Hill. This existing lift is located outside the project area and a few hundred yards to the east (Norm Saylor, personal communication 8/4/2010). Airway beacons were built during the mid 1930s in order to guide and orient postal planes that flew from beacon to beacon. Beacons were constructed from snow shed timbers and had latticed metal towers and concrete foundations. Electrical lines were run up to the beacons to supply power. Airway beacons were taken out of service during the 1960s. Sometime during the late 1990s Norm Saylor (personal communication 8/4/2010) visited the beacon once located due west of the top terminal of the existing Soda Springs long lift (not to be confused with *Jan's Lift* located farther to the west). All that remained of the beacon was a concrete foundation with a large painted orange arrow. Vestiges of other airway beacons remain at Blue Canyon, Cisco, Donner Ski Ranch Ski Area, and above the old USFS ranger station in Truckee.

METHODS

Archaeological work was conducted under a *Letter of Authorization* (dated August 4, 2010) from the USFS Truckee Ranger District. Prefield research and archaeological field survey were conducted by Susan Lindström, Ph.D., consulting archaeologist to ECO:LOGIC, engineering and environmental consultants to the DSPUD. Lindström has over 37 years of professional experience in regional prehistory and history, holds a doctoral degree in anthropology/archaeology and has maintained certification by the Register of Professional Archaeologists (formerly Society of Professional Archaeologists) since 1982. Archaeologist Lizzie Bennett assisted in the field survey. She has 20 years of archaeological experience working in the Tahoe Sierra. Native American consultants participated in the field survey and archaeological technicians Joseph Bryan and Tanya Ruiz represented interests of the Washoe Tribe. Mr. Bryan and Ms. Ruiz have completed a formal archaeological training course sponsored by the Tribe and both have prior experience in archaeological field survey. Meagan O'Seegan of ECO:LOGIC holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in anthropology and also joined the survey crew. Project boundaries were not marked and she provided survey orientation using a Trimble GPS unit that was programmed with the parcel borders.

PREFIELD RESEARCH

Records Search and Contacts

Prefield research for this study entailed a literature review of prehistoric and historic themes for the project area. This included a review of prior archaeological research and of pertinent published and unpublished literature. Historic maps dating from 1865 were checked to determine prior land ownership of the project area and trace developments in the local transportation and community development. Avocational historian Norm Saylor, was also consulted regarding the specific history of Soda Springs. In addition John Booth, retired employee of Boreal Ski Corporation, was also contacted regarding the ski industry around Donner Pass. Greg Matuzak of ECO:LOGIC and Tom Skjelstad, General Manager of the DSPUD, provided helpful project background information.

A records search was conducted by Carrie Smith, Acting Forest Archaeologist for the Tahoe National Forest. According to USFS files, the western portion of the USFS 10-acre parcel was previously surveyed in 1971 (Johnson 1971) as part of initial expansion plans by the DSPUD. The parcel was examined by walking 20-meter (~65-foot) transect intervals. No heritage resources were encountered.

An in-house records search (NCIC #NEV-10-33, correspondence attached) was also conducted by the North-Central Information Center (NCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (an adjunct of the State Office of Historic Preservation or SHPO). Records housed at California State University Sacramento were reviewed by NCIC staff to identify any properties listed on the National Register, California Register and other listings, including the files of the SHPO and the below sources:

- ✓ *National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historical Resources listings*
- ✓ *Office of Historic Preservation's Historic Property Directory (2010)*
- ✓ *California Inventory of Historical Resources (1976)*
- ✓ *California State Historical Landmarks (1996)*
- ✓ *National Register of Historical Places/California Register of Historical Resources listings (2008 and updates)*
- ✓ *Office of Historic Preservation Historic Property Data File (2010)*
- ✓ *Points of Historic Interest (1992)*
- ✓ *1987 and 2002 Caltrans Bridge Surveys*

Research at the NCIC disclosed that four archaeological studies have been conducted within or adjacent to the project area.

Peak and Associates 1976. On behalf of the DSPUD Peak and Associates surveyed large blocks of land surrounding (but not including) the USFS 10-acre parcel. At that time the District planned to expand their disposal areas, pipe alignments and wastewater

treatment plant. Field survey methods are not detailed in their report. No heritage resources were encountered within or in the vicinity of the current DSPUD project area.

Peak and Associates 1983. Again, on behalf of the DSPUD, Peak and Associates surveyed the western half of the 10-acre USFS parcel by walking the area of possible treatment plant expansion in 10 to 15-meter (~30 to 50-foot) transect intervals. The northern two-thirds of the 25-acre private parcel, to include mid-slope areas and the base of the mountain, were surveyed more cursorily. No heritage resources were encountered.

Suter 1996. As part of a Timber Harvest Plan, Suter covered land that adjoins the USFS parcel on the north. Archaeological survey coverage intensity is unclear. No heritage resources were found.

Native American Consultation

Prior ethnographic studies indicate that the Washoe Tribe is the applicable tribal authority for lands encompassing the project area, although the area is also peripheral to the traditional territory of the Hill Nisenan. Accordingly, Darrel Cruz, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) for the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, was contacted in order to incorporate the opinions, knowledge and sentiments regarding traditional Native American lands within the project area. No specific concerns were identified. As a follow-up, project background information and location maps were emailed to Mr. Cruz on July 29, 2010. Mr. Cruz was again contacted by telephone prior to the commencement of field work and provided helpful direction regarding the participation of trained Native American archaeological technicians in the field reconnaissance; Joseph Bryan joined the survey of the USFS parcel and Tanya Ruiz participated in surveying the private parcel.

FIELD RESEARCH

An archaeological field reconnaissance of the 25-acre private parcel was conducted on August 3, 2010; the 10-acre USFS parcel was surveyed on August 11, 2010. A USGS topographic map (7.5' quadrangle) and expanded scale project maps and aerial photographs were used to structure the field work phase. A programmed Trimble GPS unit aided in the delineation of unmarked project boundaries. Cardinal directions and transect intervals were maintained by altimeter, compass and pacing.

The entire project area was subject to a surface survey using a mixed reconnaissance strategy. Archaeological coverage is shown on Figure 3. Based on the expected location of prehistoric and historic resources of interest (discussed in the cultural setting section of this report), survey transects were narrowed to adjust for an adequate observing distance for encountering these resources. For example, areas of special interest to contain Native American resources (rock outcrops, flat areas near springs and drainages, ridge tops, and meadow margins) were examined more closely at intervals of less than fifteen meters (50 feet). Steep slopes and rock precipices, densely forested areas without water, thick riparian zones, and areas covered by existing wastewater treatment facilities are

considered to be less likely to contain heritage resources and were inspected at transect intervals up to 25 and 35 meters (~80 and 115 feet) apart.

Ground surface visibility ranged from excellent to poor. For both parcels, in some areas slash, duff and deadfall precluded examination of the ground surface. For the southern and most of the western portion of the USFS parcel, existing plant facilities totally obscured the native ground surface and interfered with transect spacing. An alder thicket covers much of the northern third of the private parcel. Here, systematic transects were difficult to maintain and there was no ground surface visibility. The mid-slope (i.e., middle third) of the private parcel is forested and duff and deadfall hinder ground surface visibility. The southern third of the private parcel is marked by steep volcanic terrain that is largely open and barren. While the ridge was thoroughly examined, the adjoining rocky slopes were subject to transect intervals between 25 and 35-meters (~80 and 115 feet) apart and walked according to contours that were maintained by altimeter and GPS readings. Parts of the middle and upper portions of the private parcel have been altered by ski runs constructed during the 1980s. The lower runs are now irrigated with wastewater from the treatment plant, producing a lush growth of grass and wildflowers that further obscure the ground surface.

RESULTS

No prehistoric or historic sites, features or artifacts or structures were identified within the project area. Evidence of various past cultural activities was observed, but not recorded because none of these features or materials possessed attributes that would unequivocally place them in the historic time period and their age of over 45-50 years cannot be authenticated. Brief observations on these non-historic resources follow.

As noted above, most of the southern and western portions of the 10-acre USFS parcel are developed as part of the DSPUD's wastewater treatment plant. Disturbed ground extends north of the plant, along with discarded artifacts from the facility (e.g., sheets of plywood, a 2x4-constructed shed pushed over the side of the office building pad, metal cylinder, wood stake, three-foot-diameter concrete and metal culvert, manhole covers, sections of cast-iron sewer line, rusted bolt, barbed wire, and miscellaneous plastic items). On modern USGS maps, a dirt road appears in the northwestern portion of the project area. Plant improvements have now obscured this road. The road does not appear on the 1955 USGS quad, but it is shown on the 1979 photo-revised version. It was not recorded as a historic linear feature as an age of over 45-50 years cannot be confirmed.

Within the flood zone of the South Fork of the Yuba River on the USFS parcel, flotsam has been carried with the high-water river current and dropped in the stream channel as water receded. Most of the flotsam consists of wood debris and modern trash. One chain link (2¼"x1"), a metal bracket and an insulator fragment, observed inside the river channel, were noted but not formally recorded.

Most of the contemporary resources noted but not recorded on the 25-acre private parcel are associated with skiing and modern wastewater disposal activities. The DSPUD has installed a sprinkler system along the lower courses of abandoned ski runs and they are now irrigated as effluent spray fields. The private project parcel contains the remains of *Jan's Lift*, constructed during the 1980s. This was one of three main lifts that made up the Soda Springs Ski Hill. In addition to the associated cleared runs, part of the top terminal tower of *Jan's Lift* is in place, along with the remains of three lift towers marked by concrete platforms and two-foot-diameter cut pipe. Other artifacts and features related to skiing include: a modern ski shack and utility pipe, milled boards and plywood, abandoned ski lift chair, metal electrical box (tree mount) and electrical cable, along with miscellaneous artifacts discarded or lost by skiers (sunglasses, liquor and soda bottles and cans, broken ski poles, etc.). A sparse and widely broadcast scatter of debris is located on the upper knoll of the ridge, due west of the *Jan's Lift* top tower. The scatter comprises several pieces of milled wood with wire nails, a piece of threaded pipe, electrical wire, a wire rope fragment, broken modern bottle glass fragment, coke bottle base, several pieces of strap metal, and a brown-glazed ceramic insulator fragment. An eight-foot square wood-beam platform formed of six beams (10"x7") held together with square bolts has eroded down slope from the debris scatter on the ridge. Norm Saylor and John Booth were both questioned about the debris scatter and neither new of any historic activities at this locale. Associations with the historic airway beacon were ruled out based upon Mr. Saylor's recollections of the beacon's placement nearer to the existing long lift. Given the closer proximity of the debris scatter to the top terminal of *Jan's Lift*, it is assumed that the debris scatter relates to modern ski activities.

On the private parcel, two remnants of telephone wire were also observed. One feature consists of a wire wrapped around a tree. The other feature is a downed utility pole associated with wound telephone wire, a clear insulator fragment and a bolt embedded in rock (that may have attached wire to support the pole). Both features are located near a modern utility line that traverses through the north-eastern part of the private parcel. This modern line crosses perpendicular to the historic telegraph-telephone line that parallels the tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad. Miscellaneous railroad debris and historic square utility poles (perhaps marking the original route of the telegraph that was strung along the first transcontinental railroad) were observed within the railroad right-of-way. Items were not recorded as they are located north and outside of the project boundary. The two wire-fragment features located within the project area do not appear to be associated with the historic telegraph-telephone line, as they are in proximity to the modern line and offset from the historic alignment.

North and east of the project area, a dirt road parallels a segment of the railroad along its south side. This road branches southwestward and enters into the northeastern corner of the project area. The branch extends for a short distance and splits again, with both segments terminating at informal camping spots. The road(s) does not appear on any historic maps and no associated diagnostic artifacts are present; therefore, it is assumed to be a modern recreational road.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No prehistoric or historic sites, features or artifacts were identified within the project area. It is reasonable to conclude that this project should not alter or adversely affect the physical or aesthetic properties of any significant heritage structure, site, feature, or object. This project should not have the potential to cause a physical change that would affect unique ethnic cultural values or restrict historic or prehistoric religious or sacred uses.

Although the project area has been subjected to a systematic surface investigation, it is possible that buried or concealed heritage resources could be present that may be detected during project implementation. If heritage resources are revealed during project operations, work should stop in the immediate vicinity, and a qualified archaeologist and/or Native American consultant should be contacted to assess the nature and significance of the find. If human remains are inadvertently discovered, California law requires that work must stop immediately and the county coroner must be notified. If the remains are found to be Native American, both the Native American Heritage Commission and members of the Washoe Tribe (or other identified descendants) must be notified to insure that proper treatment is given to the burial site. With the implementation of this recommendation, potential effects of this project on heritage resources are not considered to be a significant effect on the environment. No further study or special operational constraints need be imposed on the project sponsor concerning heritage resources.

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FIGURES

HERITAGE RESOURCE INVENTORY
DONNER SUMMIT PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT (DSPUD)
WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADES AND EXPANSION
(NEVADA COUNTY)

U.S. Forest Service Report
TNF02375/R2010051700137

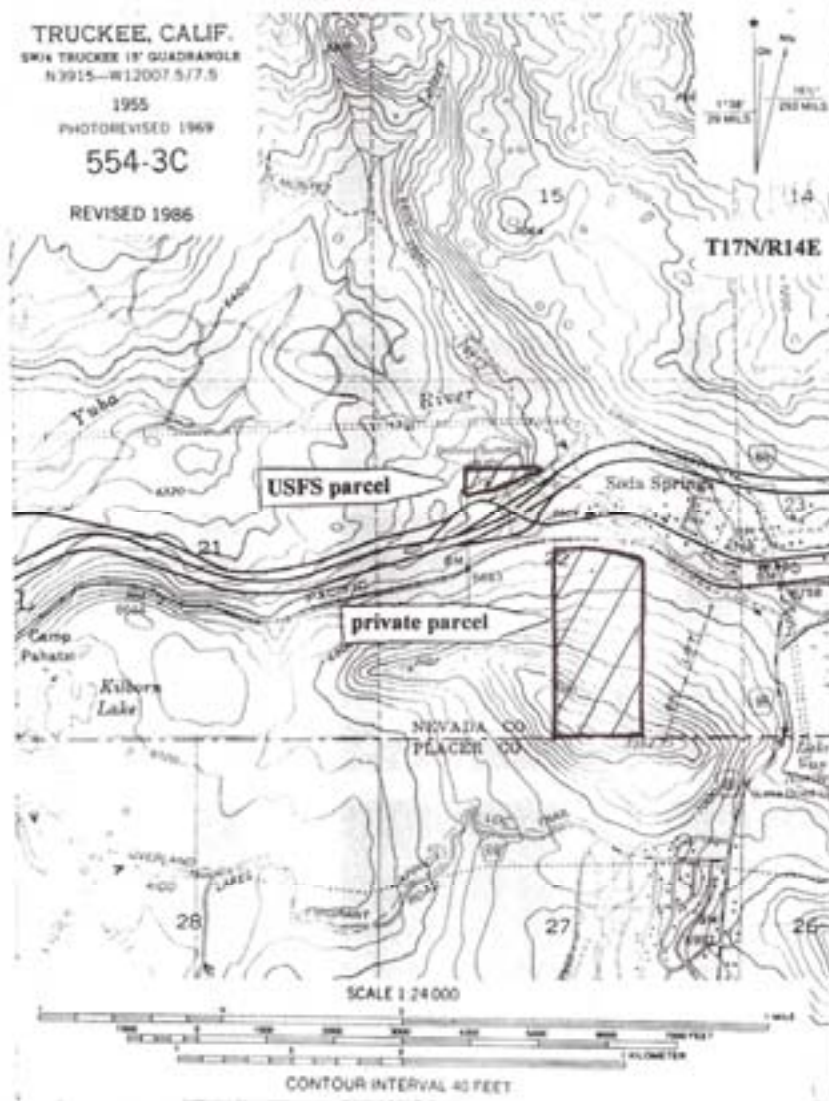


Figure 1. Project location map

HERITAGE RESOURCE INVENTORY
DONNER SUMMIT PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT (DSPUD)
WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADES AND EXPANSION
(NEVADA COUNTY)

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U.S. Forest Service Report
TNF02375/R2010051700137

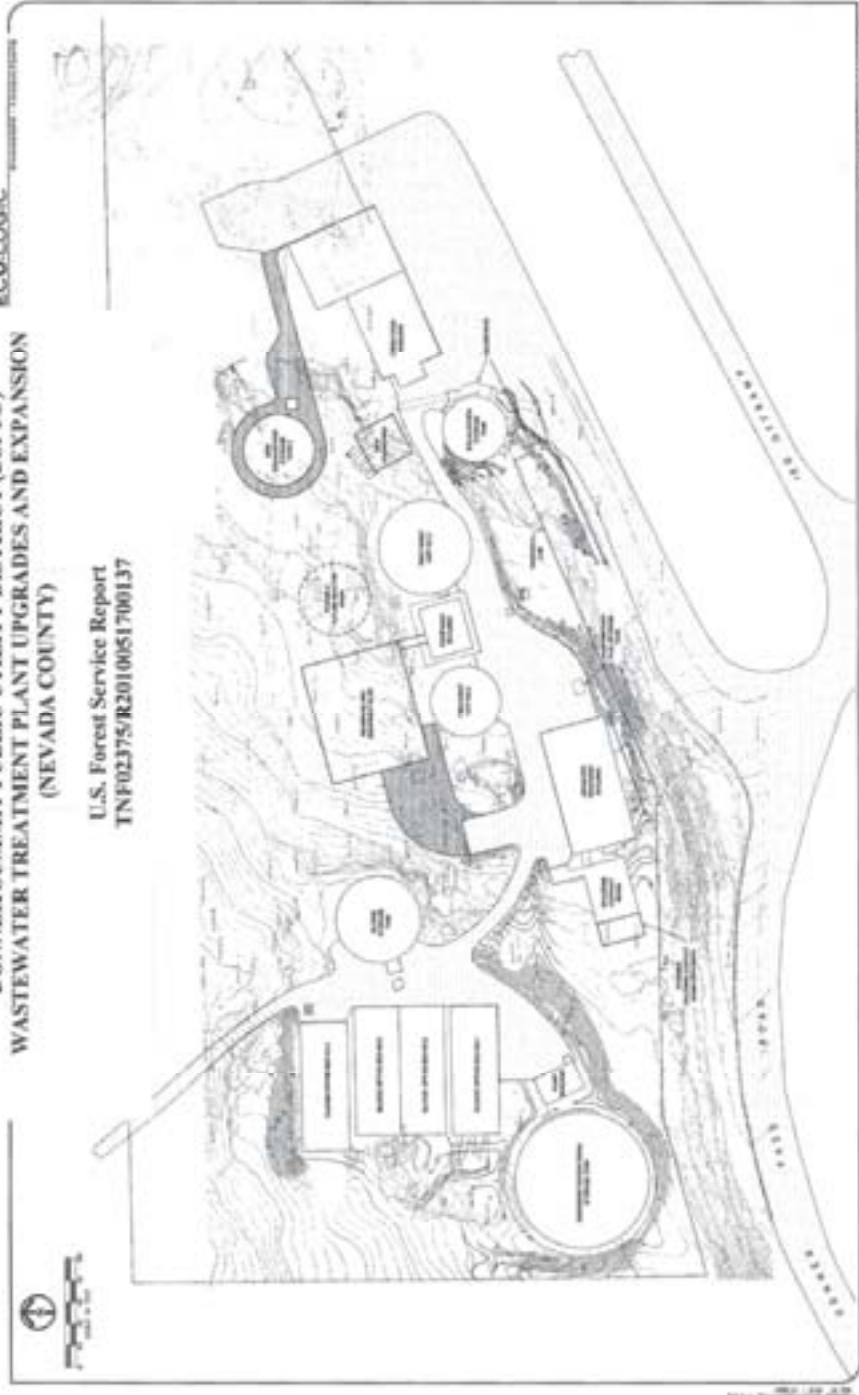


Fig. 10.2 CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

Figure 2. Project site plan (USFS parcel)

**HERITAGE RESOURCE INVENTORY
DONNER SUMMIT PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT (DSPUD)
WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADES AND EXPANSION
(NEVADA COUNTY)**

U.S. Forest Service Report
TNF02375/R2010051700137

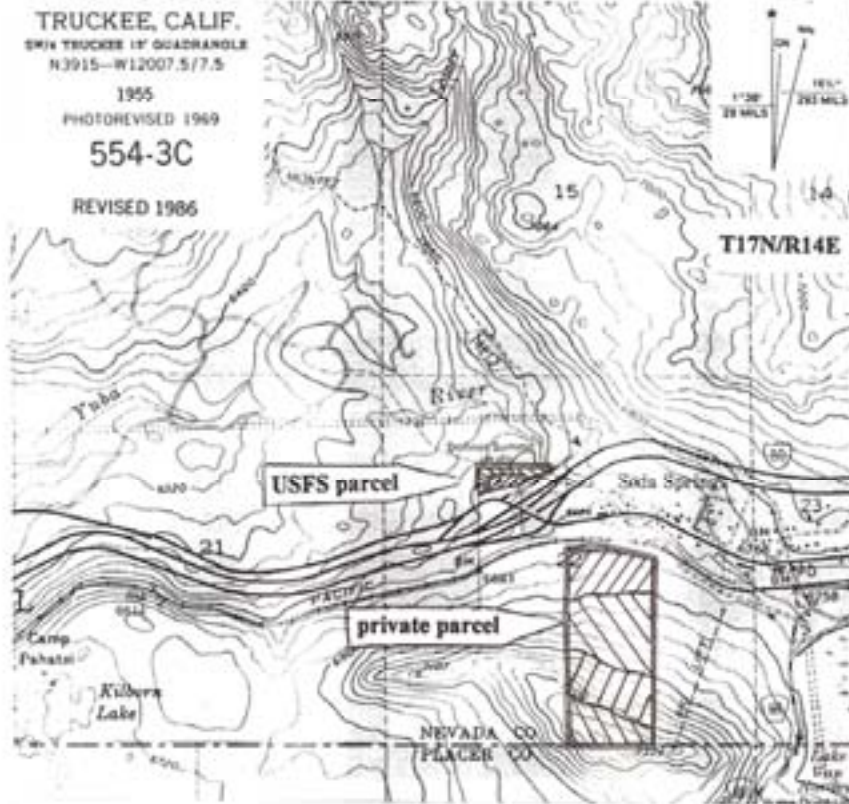

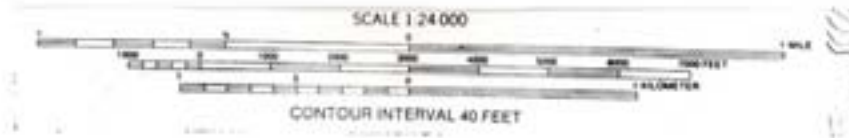


Figure 3. Archaeological coverage map

 = transects less than 15-meter (~50-foot) intervals

 = transects between 25 to 35-meter (~80 to 115-foot) intervals



CORRESPONDENCE

NORTH CENTRAL INFORMATION CENTER

916-278-6217

ncic@csus.edu

FAX 916-278-5162

CSU-SACRAMENTO - 6000 J STREET, ADAMS BLDG, SUITE #208 - SACRAMENTO, CA 95819-6100

Amador, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, and Yuba Counties

Records Search Results Summary

August 5, 2010

NCIC File No.: NEV-10-33

Susan Lindstrom
Consulting Archaeologist
P.O. Box 3324
14931 Denton Avenue
Truckee, CA 96160

Researcher: Ellen Bowden

Re: Donner Summit Public Utility District Expansion Project

T 17N/R 14E, Section 22
USGS 7.5' Soda Springs Quad, Nevada County

- NCIC Resources Within/Adjacent to Project Area: None
- NCIC Reports Within/Adjacent to Project Area: 1855; 1856
- OHP Historic Property Data File (2010): Nevada County pages copied
- Determination of Eligibility (2010): Emigrant Trail/Dutch Flat/Donner Party Wagon Road
- NRHP/CRHR listings (2008 & updates): Nothing listed
- California Inventory of Historic Resources (1976): Nothing listed
- California State Historical Landmarks (1996): Nothing listed
- Points of Historic Interest (1992): Nothing listed
- Caltrans Bridge Inventory: Nothing listed
- Historic Maps: Not requested

Thank you for using our services. An invoice confidentiality agreement is enclosed; upon receipt please sign and return.



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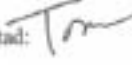
10811 Stockrest Springs Road
Truckee, CA 96161-2949
530-587-3558
530-587-6997 TDD
530-587-6914 FAX

File Code: 2360-3

Date:

AUG 04 2010

Mr. Tom Skjelstad
General Manager
Donner Summit Public Utility District
P.O. Box 610
Soda Springs, CA 95728

Dear Mr. Skjelstad: 

Both you and Greg Matuzak of Eco:Logic Consultants have been working with my staff to secure authorization to perform a cultural resource survey of a 10 acre parcel of National Forest Service system managed land for an expansion of the Donner Summit Public Utility District's (DSPUD) wastewater treatment facility. The DSPUD operates this facility on National Forest Service system managed land under a special use authorization. It is my understanding that this is a critical step to complete prior to the DSPUD upgrading and expanding the DSPUD wastewater treatment facility and the DSPUD has selected Dr. Susan Lindstrom as the archaeological consultant for the project.

Upon review of Dr. Lindstrom's Donner Summit Public Utilities District (DSPUD) Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades and Expansion Heritage Resource Study Scope dated May 21, 2010, I am satisfied that the DSPUD has selected a cultural resource consultant that understands the Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act steps necessary to complete the cultural resource survey for DSPUD's proposed undertaking on National Forest Service system managed land.

By this letter, you are authorized to have Dr. Susan Lindstrom proceed with the cultural resource survey per the study scope dated May 21, 2010. If you have any questions or should anything change for any reason, please contact Jon George or Carrie Smith at 530.587.3558 or email at jongorge@fs.fed.us or carriesmith@fs.fed.us.

Sincerely,


JOANNE B. ROUBIQUE
District Ranger



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Susan Lindström, Ph.D.

Consulting Archaeologist

**P.O. Box 3324
Truckee CA 96160
530-587-7072 voice
530-587-7083 fax
slindstrom@cebridge.net**

DATE: September 10, 2010

TO: Darrel Cruz, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California
919 Hwy 395 South, Gardnerville, NV 89460
775-888-0936 (775-546-3421 cell)
darrelcruz@washoetribe.us

FROM: Susan Lindström

RE: Donner Summit Public Utility District Wastewater Treatment Plant
Upgrades and Expansion: Heritage Resource Inventory

I'm following up on our email and telephone communication to inform you of the results of an archaeological survey of the Donner Summit Public Utility District Wastewater Treatment Plant project. Recall that the District is planning improvements on 35-acres of land in Soda Springs, California, Nevada County. I included a project description and location map in my July 29th email and have attached the project location map to this mailing for your convenience. No doubt you've already heard back some preliminary results from Joe Bryan and/or Tanya Ruiz who accompanied us on the field survey.

No prehistoric or historic sites, features or artifacts were identified within the project area. Although the project area has been subjected to a systematic surface investigation, it is possible that buried or concealed heritage resources could be present that may be detected during project implementation. I have recommended that if heritage resources are revealed during project operations, work should stop in the immediate vicinity, and a qualified archaeologist and/or Native American consultant should be contacted to assess the nature and significance of the find.

I wish to bring this project to your attention once again and I invite your opinions, knowledge and sentiments regarding any potential concerns for traditional Native American lands within the project area and I look forward to hearing from you if you have any additional information.

susan Lindstrom

From: susan Lindstrom [slindstrom@cebridge.net]
Sent: Thursday, September 23, 2010 1:30 PM
To: 'Darrel Cruz'
Subject: FW: Archaeological projects update Donner Summit PUD
Attachments: Donner Summit PUD Washoe Corres.doc; scan0001.jpg
Hi Darrel:

I'm following up our telephone conversation of September 22nd with this email. For your information, a map of the project area is attached.

Thank you again for your assistance in contacting Native American consultants. Joe Bryan and Tanya Ruiz were most helpful during our field survey. As we discussed, our survey disclosed no Native American resources. And because you agree with our findings and recommendations (as per our telephone conversation), I understand that you will not be preparing a formal letter response to my memo of September 10th (attached).

Thank you for your time and consultation.

Susan

From: susan Lindstrom [mailto:slindstrom@cebridge.net]
Sent: Friday, September 10, 2010 10:36 AM
To: 'Darrel Cruz'
Subject: Archaeological projects update

Morning Darrel:

I have four new and ongoing archaeological projects on which I'd like to update you:

- Tahoe City Transit Center
- Lakeside Bike Trail Phase VII
- Edgewood Golf Course
- Donner Summit PUD

Our telephone discussion could take more than just a few minutes so please give me a call when you have some time. I'll be in the office all day today and next week through Wednesday.

Thanks,

Susan