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"SINCE THE BEGINNING"

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Dan Revay
Senior Development Director
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August 8, 2007

Dear Mr. Revay:

RE: CULTURAL RESOURCES FIELD INSPECTION OF THE COUNTY CROSSINGS
PROJECT, ANTIOCH, CONTRA COSTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Holman & Associates has recently completed an archaeological field survey of the approximately 265 acre County Crossings parcel located in Antioch, Contra Costa County, California. No evidence of prehistoric cultural resources was found during either the literature review or field inspection. Several historic resources, discussed in this report, were discovered during the field inspection. This report contains a summary of information gained from the archaeological literature review and field inspection, and includes recommendations for further research inside the project borders.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

On June 13, 2007, Holman & Associates submitted a proposal to complete an initial CEQA cultural resources inventory for the County Crossings project which included the following tasks:

- **ARCHAEOLOGICAL LITERATURE REVIEW:** records on file at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) would be checked to obtain information about recorded historic and prehistoric archaeological sites, and information about previous archaeological surveys of the project area and surrounding areas.
- **VISUAL FIELD INSPECTION:** all accessible parcels comprising the 265 acre project area would be inspected for cultural resources.
- **INITIAL REPORT OF FINDINGS:** an initial report of findings would be produced summarizing findings from the literature review and field inspection. Recommendations

would be made to formally record any potentially significant resources found during the field inspection. If warranted, recommendations would be made to conduct mechanical subsurface presence/absence testing in areas of suspected buried archaeological deposits.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

An archaeological literature review was conducted by the author of this report at the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) on June 15, 2007 (file no. 06-1982). There are no prehistoric archaeological sites recorded inside the project borders (see Survey Location map and Project Location Map), and only one recorded historic site: a portion of the Southern Pacific Railroad alignment (formerly the Central Pacific Railroad) has been recorded as P-07-2568/Trinomial CA-CCO-749H). There have been a number of surveys which have covered portions of the project area, discussed below.

In 1987, Polly Quick surveyed a triangular shaped parcel of land of unknown acreage for a proposed apartment project bordered by Willow Avenue on the east, a line paralleling Oakley Road on the north, and the Southern Pacific Railroad right of way on the south. No cultural resources were found.

In 1997 Basin Research Associates studied a proposed multipurpose pipeline project which transected the project area along the railroad right of way; no cultural resources were reported.

Perhaps the most informative report to be done for the project area was done in 2005 by Tremaine Associates for proposed improvements to the Trembath and Oakley Floodwater Control Basins which are located just north of the current project area. The Tremaine report includes a discussion of the potential for the discovery of prehistoric archaeological materials, based primarily upon the presence of East Antioch Creek, which drains the current project area from the southeast to the northwest, where it meets up with a slough:

"Prehistoric expectations for this project are based upon the project's geographical location in the Central California Delta/Bay regions, its physical location adjacent to East Antioch Creek, and the geomorphology as expressed by the presence of alluvial sands and the potential for sand dune remnants in the area. These expectations include the potential for open-air campsites or other occupation-type areas along the creek, possibly eroding from the bank. Based upon our understand of the Meganos Aspect and its associated burial practices, potential exists for possible burials in any intact remnant of sand dunes." (Carper and Tremaine 2005:15).

The above reference to burials refers to the discovery of human remains in indurated sand dunes in a zone several miles deep starting from the edge of the Carquinez to the east of Antioch, extending eastward into Oakley and Bethel Island . At numerous locations these raised dune formations have yielded human burials not associated with culturally modified

archaeological soils, suggestive of discrete off-site cemeteries. At other locations human remains are found in association with heavily modified soils (midden) indicative of year round village locations (CCo-138, otherwise known as the Hotchkiss Mound) or in a midden matrix which yields evidence of specific uses, such as CCo-128, found south of the Hotchkiss mound, where the major cultural soil component is a combination of small animal and fish bones and small flakes of obsidian and chert, the results of tool manufacture and/or retouching at this location.

Recent monitoring of two large "burial mounds" on Bethel Island resulted in the discovery of discrete clusters of human remains with no associated culturally modified soils. Ongoing testing for a large development south of Bethel Island in an area which includes the Hotchkiss Mound and several others reveals a mixture of simple "burial mounds" in close proximity to obvious year round village locations (Hotchkiss and the recently discovered Biggs Mound/CCo-767). In addition, there appear to be several specific use sites such as CCo-128 and others found to the north of Hotchkiss, closer to the Carquinez. This pattern of year round village sites, specific use sites and "burial mounds" appears to be a prehistoric adaptive model which includes the Pittsburg-Antioch-Oakley area, extending from the edge of the Carquinez to a point several miles to the south.

The Tremaine report concluded that despite finding no traces of cultural resources on the surface during their survey, there remained a high potential that the area might contain buried archaeological deposits. Training of all construction personnel involved in grading the basins was recommended to help in the process of identifying cultural resources; monitoring by Native American representatives was also recommended. There is no record at the Northwest Information Center that the work was completed or if any cultural resources were discovered.

DESCRIPTION OF FIELD INSPECTION

In July of 2007, Holman & Associates personnel including Ian Alexander, Kevin Dobinson and Juan Cervantes conducted a pedestrian survey of the 265 acre County Crossings project area. The survey area is bordered to the south and east by State Route 4, to the north by Oakley Road and to the west by Hillcrest Drive. The eastern portion of the project area is bisected diagonally from the southeast to the northwest by a branch of East Antioch Creek, which forms a variety of riparian zones and wetland areas within the project boundary. The project is located in the margins of two ecological zones; the interior valley (oak savannah) and the delta, characterized by alluvial and aeolian sand deposits, tall grasses and the confluence of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers.

The survey was performed by walking 20 meter transects in a north-south alignment wherever possible. Ground visibility was poor during the month of July due to dense low lying vegetation. Because of the lack of access to some areas within the project area which are still privately held, some resources were observed from the roadway and photo-documented as best as was possible. No prehistoric archaeological deposits were observed on the surface, up to 90% of which was obscured by vegetation.

A total of four historic resource areas were noted during the survey:

1. THE "FOUNDRY": a complex of three modern structures built on older foundations
2. 2500 WILLOW LANE: this parcel contains a single house and outbuilding
3. TWO LARGE PILES OF STRUCTURAL DEBRIS
4. AN ABANDONED SPUR LINE OF THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD

Location 1, The Foundry, is a complex of three modern (post 1960s) buildings, two of poured concrete and one of wood frame and a corrugated metal roof. It is located at the eastern terminus of an unnamed road (see Survey Location Map). While the structures are modern, two of the concrete buildings sit on what appear to be older foundations. The complex has a variety of introduced trees including blue gum eucalyptus, and several varieties of pine. The property is currently functioning as a foundry, however on both the 1916 and 1953 7.5' "Antioch South" quadrangles the property is labeled "Oil Tanks".

Location 2, 2500 Willow Lane, is a small homestead consisting of two structures; a single residence and a large outbuilding. The house is located to the north end of the parcel, bordered by the southern terminus of Willow Avenue and the intersection of an unnamed road. The house appears to be of early 1930s construction, wood framed and stucco with a gabled roof and tall porch. The house is in disrepair and unoccupied; it has been severely damaged by fire, and part of the roof has collapsed on the east side of the structure. The large outbuilding is wood framed and partially covered with corrugated metal. Structures appear on this property as early as the 1916 U.S.G.S. 7.5' "Antioch South" quadrangle. As access to the property was not forthcoming, all observations were made from outside of the property borders.

Location 3 (see Survey Location Map) consists of two large piles of possible historic debris. This debris was most likely associated with an earlier residence or structure which has since been removed. The debris piles appear to be associated with structures which appear on both the 1916 and 1953 U.S.G.S maps. While substantial amounts of material in both piles is comprised of modern debris (carpeting, tile, plywood and tires) and vegetative materials, three square nails were recovered from both piles, suggesting that they contain older, potentially significant historic materials.

Location 4 is an abandoned Southern Pacific Railroad spur line. This line is shown on the 1953 Antioch South U.S.G.S. map, terminating at "sand pits" within the easternmost project boundary. While no ties or spikes were observed during the survey, a sandy path containing large amounts of granite ballast was noted within the general area of the rail line as mapped.

FINDINGS

In summary, no surficial evidence of prehistoric archaeological resources was found by the Holman & Associates survey team in 2007 or by earlier researchers who surveyed portions of the present project area or surrounding property. The potential for the discovery of prehistoric

archaeological materials remains, in the opinion of this author, moderate to high despite the lack of surface discoveries for the following reason: the project area contains East Antioch Creek and its riparian zone, and sand deposits similar to those farther east known to contain archaeological deposits and/or human remains. The lack of surface discoveries since the 1980s in this area may be due to the dense vegetation which has plagued all archaeological teams who have worked in the area.

Four areas containing historic materials, structures and one historic landscape feature (the rail spur) were noted during the recently completed survey. Based upon the initial inspection of these resources, it is possible that locations 103 may contain additional archaeological elements and/or architectural features which may make them eligible for inclusion on the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR). None of these areas possess architecturally significant elements or integrity which may make them eligible; the fourth area, the former railroad spur, is associated with a rail line which has been formally recorded and has been considered for its eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places; the result of that determination is not known to this author.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Prehistoric Resources:

In the event that future development plans for the project area will result in earthmoving activities within 150 feet of the existing creek banks, a program of mechanical subsurface presence/absence testing is recommended to search for potentially buried or obscured prehistoric archaeological resources. The aerial dimensions and depth below existing surface should be determined and mapped by professional surveyors in order to facilitate planning activities which avoid impacts to the resource deposit(s), if discovered.

Historic Resources:

To date, three areas have been identified which may contain potentially significant archaeological materials and/or remnant architectural features which may be eligible for inclusion on the CRHR. A fourth area, a former spur of the railroad, had also been identified based upon the ballast rock which marks its former alignment.

It is recommended that the following work be accomplished:

1. Complete California Department of Parks and Recreation site forms for all four of the features listed above for submittal to the California Archaeological Inventory located at Sonoma State University.
2. Complete focused historical archival research for the project area to chronicle its historic development since the late 19th Century; this research will also serve to help identify the former

structures, uses and inhabitants of the first three historic site areas discussed in this report. Focused research may also provide information about potential historic archaeological features which may be impacted by the proposed project, allowing researchers to devise the best method of evaluating identified resources for CRHR eligibility through in-field testing. Any resources which are found to be eligible would then require mitigation through additional data retrieval and/or archaeological monitoring of construction related earthmoving activities to insure that significant archaeological materials and information is recorded and/or removed for analysis.

Sincerely,



Miley Paul Holman
Holman & Associates

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