



**NEGATIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT
OF APPROXIMATELY 1.5 LINEAR MILES
FOR THE NEWHALL COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
VASQUEZ CANYON ROAD WATER PIPELINE PROJECT
NEAR SANTA CLARITA, LOS ANGELES COUNTY,
CALIFORNIA
(USGS 7.5' Mint Canyon Quadrangle)**

Prepared for:

David Magney Environmental Consulting

P.O. Box 1346

Ojai, California 93024

805/646-6045

Contact: David Magney

Prepared by:

Conejo Archaeological Consultants

2321 Goldsmith Avenue

Thousand Oaks, California 91360

805/494-4309

Author: Mary Maki



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I. INTRODUCTION WITH PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

This report was prepared at the request of David Magney of David Magney Environmental Consulting for the Newhall County Water District (NCWD). The 1.5 linear mile long project site is located in the Mint Canyon area, near the City of Santa Clarita, in Los Angeles County (Exhibits 1 & 2). The NCWD plans to install 1.1 linear miles of 18-inch diameter water main pipeline in Vasquez Canyon Road between Sierra Highway and 16572 Vasquez Canyon Road. An additional 0.4 linear miles of pipeline will be laid in Sierra Highway between Vasquez Canyon Road and Sand Canyon Road. The project route is located within existing roadways, with the exception of three locations where the pipeline will cross natural watercourses, Mint Canyon Creek and two unnamed tributaries to Mint Canyon Creek. The Mint Canyon Creek crossing will involve trenching through the creek bed a few feet upstream from the Vasquez Canyon Road bridge. The remaining two-pipeline crossings will span the drainages and require no soil disturbances within the channels. The new main pipeline will provide water service to existing residences and businesses in the area, and will also serve proposed new housing developments on Vasquez Canyon Road. This archaeological study was undertaken in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

II. STUDY FINDINGS

Based on the South Central Coastal Information Center's (SCCIC) record search results, field survey findings and the extent of previous ground disturbance that has occurred within the pipeline route from road construction, no impacts to archaeological resources are anticipated from project development. Therefore, no further archaeological investigations are warranted prior to or during project implementation. In the event that buried prehistoric or historic cultural materials are encountered during construction, all earth disturbing work within the vicinity of the find must be temporarily halted until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the nature and significance of the find, as detailed in Section VI of this report.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Physical Environment: The approximate 1.5 linear miles of water pipeline will be constructed within Sierra Highway and Vasquez Canyon Road in the Mint Canyon area of Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County. Topographically, the general project area follows along the bottoms of Mint Canyon and Vasquez Canyon. Mint Canyon Creek, which is the largest drainage in the area, parallels Sierra Highway. Vasquez Canyon Road is bordered by rural residential land use. Sierra Canyon Highway is lined with a combination of commercial, industrial and residential land use.

The project area is underlain by the Vasquez Formation, an Oligocene sedimentary body, deposited

as alluvial fans during the orogony of the San Gabriel Mountains. As noted by Whitley and Simon (1991:2) "Subsequent tilting, faulting and hydrographic downcutting have resulted in the dramatic exposures of alternating sandstone and conglomerate beds that typify this area."

Project vegetation adjacent to the roads consists of disturbed ruderal weedy vegetation, with some riparian woodland habitat along the drainages. Native grasses and creosote-scrub associated plant species vegetative some of the steeper slopes bordering Sierra Highway and Vasquez Canyon Road.

Cultural Environment:

Prehistory. The project site lies within the historic territory of the Native American group known as the Tataviam. At the time of first European contact the Tataviam population is estimated under 1,000 and their territory included the upper reaches of the Santa Clara River drainage east of Piru Creek and north over the Sawmill Mountains into the southwestern edge of the Antelope Valley (King and Blackburn 1978). The Tataviam are believed to be Takic speakers. However, the exact language roots of the Tataviam, as well as the geographical boundaries between them and their Chumash and Gabrielino speaking neighbors have not been resolved.

Knowledge of the Tataviam is limited, although archaeological evidence indicates similarities to adjacent Takic and Hokan groups, as well as Yokut groups to the north. Due to the dominance of south facing slopes in the region, yucca was probably more of a dietary staple for the Tataviam than their neighbors. The Tataviam also utilized acorns, sage seeds, juniper berries, small mammals, deer, and possibly antelope. Archaeological and ethnohistoric data indicate that major Tataviam villages housed up to 200 people with satellite settlements holding 10-15 inhabitants. Several historic Tataviam village names and locations are known for the region, including *Etseng* and *Huyung* on Piru Creek, *Tochonanga* near Newhall, and other villages at San Francisquito, Piru, and Castaic Reservoir (King and Blackburn 1978).

The Tataviam aboriginal way of life ended with Spanish colonization. By 1810, most of the Tataviam had been baptized at San Fernando Mission (King and Blackburn 1978). As neophytes brought into the mission system they were transformed from hunters and gatherers into agricultural laborers and exposed to diseases to which they had no resistance. By the end of the Mission Period in 1834, the descendants of most of the missionized Tataviam had married members of other groups, either at the mission or in the Tejon region. By 1916, the last speaker of the Tataviam language was dead. Still today there are people who proudly claim Tataviam ancestry and take an active interest in promoting their culture and protecting archaeological evidence of their ancestors.

History. Growth in the general project region was first fueled by the discovery of gold in Placerita Canyon in 1842, which drew hundreds of miners into the area. Development of railroads and oil production in the late 1800s spurred additional growth in the region. Today the Mint Canyon area's development is fueled by an increasing need for housing in northwestern Los Angeles County, as the economy and population particularly in the Santa Clarita Valley continues to grow. The proposed NCWD water pipeline project is designed to provide the water needed to serve proposed future developments along Vasquez Canyon Road.

IV. SOURCES CONSULTED

South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC), CSU Fullerton, Mint Canyon Quadrangle	Conducted by May Maki November 7, 2001
National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)	May 2001
California Historical Landmarks	May 2001
California Points of Historical Interest	May 2001
California Register of Historic Resources	May 2001
Los Angeles County Landmarks	November 2001

Results: No prehistoric sites are recorded within a one-quarter mile radius of the project route. One historic site, 19-002897, is recorded within a one-quarter mile radius of the project route. Historic site 19-002897 consists of the foundation remains of a small hotel or residence occupied primarily in the 1930s (Gensler et. al 2001). This site is located approximately 150 meters (500 ft.) southwest of the southern most end of the project route and will not be impacted by project implementation.

Five archaeological surveys have been conducted within a one-quarter mile radius of the project route. Two of these surveys encompassed the Sierra Highway portion of the project route as part of much larger surveys for oil pipeline and fiber optics projects. (SAIC1996, Lerch 1998). Two surveys border the middle section of the pipeline route along the west side of Vasquez Canyon Road (Dillon 1981, Whitley and Simon 1991). The majority of the project alignment along Vasquez Canyon Road was not subject to previous archaeological reconnaissance.

The listings of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), California Historical Landmarks, California Register of Historical Resources, California Points of Historical Interest, and Los Angeles County Historic Landmarks include no properties within or adjacent to the project route.

V. FIELD METHODS

Archaeologists Mary Maki and Gwen Romani surveyed the approximate 1.5 linear mile proposed pipeline route on November 14, 2001 (Exhibits 2). Ms. Maki is certified by the Register of

Professional Archaeologists (RPA) and has over 14 years archaeological experience in southern California. Ms. Romani has over 20 years archaeological field experience.

As the proposed pipeline route is located within paved roads, survey methodology consisted of walking each side of Sierra Highway and Vasquez Canyon Road and closely examining any visible ground surface within the adjacent road shoulders and neighboring areas out to 10 meters (33 ft.) where feasible.


Overall ground surface visibility was good along Vasquez Canyon Road and fair to good along Sierra Highway. No prehistoric or historic resources were observed alongside the project route. The ground surface throughout the proposed pipeline route has been disturbed by road construction.

VI. REMARKS

Based on the record search findings, field survey results and the extent of previous ground disturbance along the NCWD water pipeline route, the proposed project is expected to have no impact on cultural resources. Therefore, no further archaeological investigation is warranted prior to or during project implementation. Since an archaeological survey can only confidently assess the potential for encountering surface cultural resource remains, the following two recommendations should be incorporated as conditions of project approval:

1. In the event that prehistoric or historic resources are unearthed during project construction, all earth disturbing work within the vicinity to the find must be temporarily suspended or redirected until a qualified archaeologist has evaluated the nature and significance of the find. A Tataviam representative shall be retained to monitor any mitigation work associated with Native American cultural material.
2. If human remains are unearthed, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98. If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission.

VII. CERTIFICATION

Prepared By: Mary K. Maki	Title: Principal Investigator	Qualification: RPA Certified 14 Years So. CA arch experience
Signature: 		Date: November 15, 2001

VIII. MAPS

Project Vicinity USGS 7.5' Mint Canyon Quadrangle

IX. PHOTOGRAPHS

Yes No Attached Yes (See Title Page) No

X. CITATIONS

Dillon, Brian D.

1981 An Archaeological Resource Survey and Impact Assessment of Los Angeles County Zone Change 80-066: A 30 Acre Parcel at the Intersection of Vasquez Canyon Road and Gaspe Drive in Newhall, Los Angeles County, CA. On file at the South Central Coastal Information Center, CSU Fullerton.

Gensler, P., D.E. Purcell, N. Peterson, and J. Neves.

2000 19-002897 Site Record. On file at the South Central Coastal Information Center, CSU Fullerton.

King, Chester and Thomas C. Blackburn

1978 Tataviam. In *Handbook of North American Indians: California*, Volume 8. Edited by R.F. Heizer, pp. 535-537. W.G. Sturtevant, general editor. Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.

Lerch, Michael K.

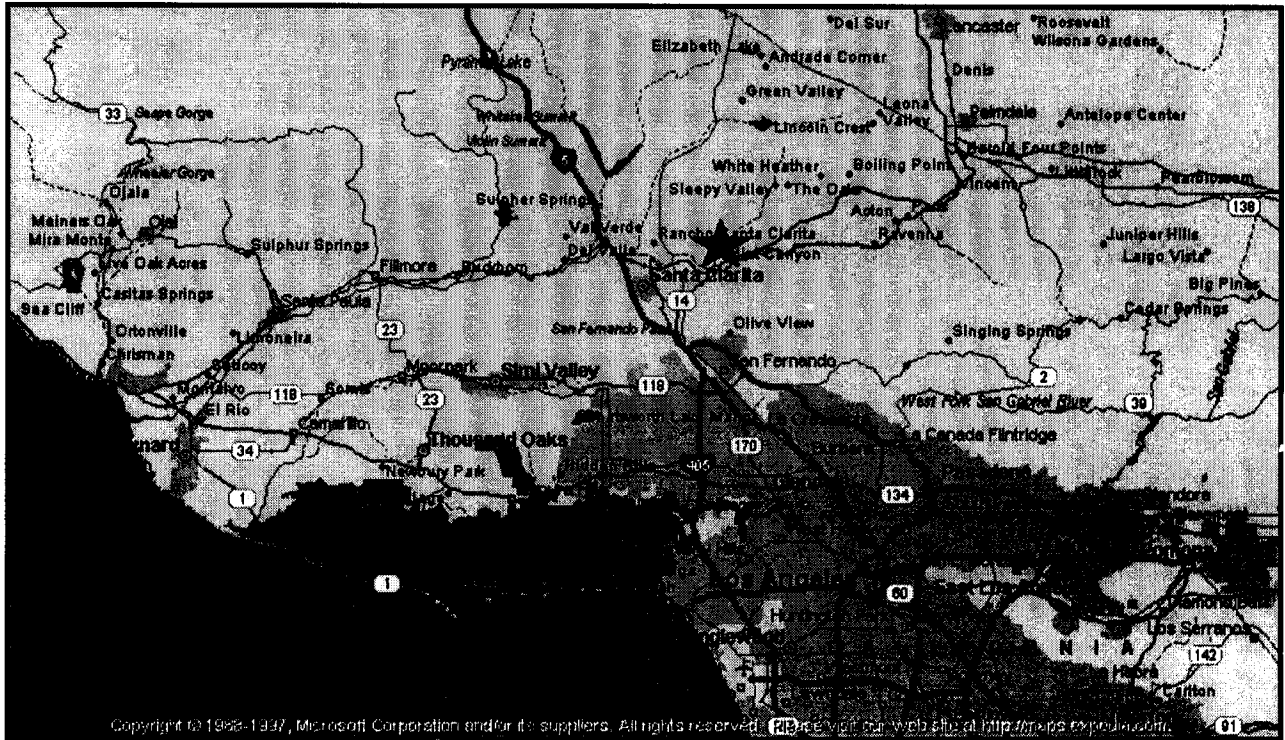
1998 Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation of the IXC Carrier, Inc. Fiber Optic Longhaul Project from Henderson, Nevada to Los Angeles, California. On file at the South Central Coastal Information Center, CSU Fullerton.

Science Applications International Corporation

1996 Cultural Resources Investigation Pacific Pipeline Emidio Route. On file at the South Central Coastal Information Center, CSU Fullerton.

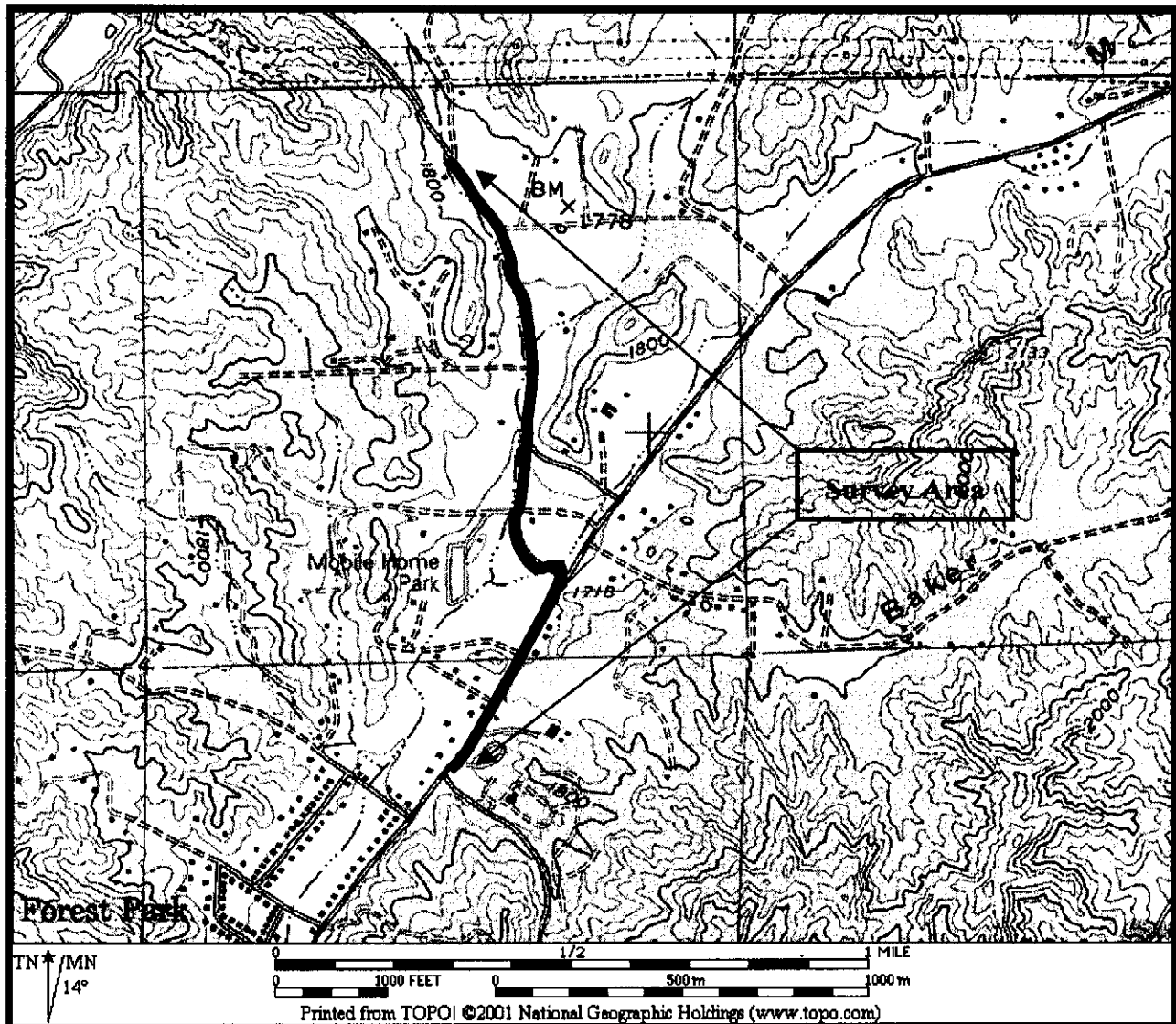
Whitley, David and Joseph Simon

1991 Phase I Archaeological Survey and Cultural Resources Assessment of T.T. M. #48354, Near Santa Clarita, Los Angeles County, California. On file at the South Central Coastal Information Center, CSU Fullerton.



PROJECT VICINITY MAP
Vasquez Canyon Road Water Pipeline Project
Canyon Country, Los Angeles County

Exhibit 1



Source: USGS 7.5' Mint Canyon 1960 Quadrangle, photorevised 1988

CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY AREA
Vasquez Canyon Road Water Pipeline Project
Canyon Country, Los Angeles County

Exhibit 2