CLASS III CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY: LS 111 WASHOUTS, SAN GORGONIO PASS, RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

In December of 2005, Kinder Morgan Energy Partners (KMEP) requested TRC Solutions, Inc. (TRC) conduct an archaeological survey of a portion of a petroleum products pipeline in the San Gorgonio Pass near Cabazon, California. The pipeline designated Line Section 111 (LS 111) transports petroleum products between Colton, California and Phoenix, Arizona. The pipeline right of way (ROW) generally follows Interstate 10 (I-10) and is located in Riverside County (Figure 1). In the Cabazon area, the pipeline follows and is sometimes within the San Gorgonio wash south of I-10. During the winter of 2005, heavy precipitation in the area exposed a portion of the pipeline within the San Gorgonio wash east of Cabazon, California. KMEP proposes actions to rebury the exposed pipeline, including the construction of a concrete revetment designed to prevent future washouts at the location. A cultural resources inventory (inventory) was necessary to satisfy the requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act with regard to identification and protection of cultural resources. The inventory consists of a records search, a field survey, Native American consultations, and a report of findings.

An archaeological records check and survey were undertaken for the approximately 0.5 acre project site located on the Whitewater 7.5 minute USGS quadrangle, to ascertain whether any cultural resources might be impacted by the proposed usage. A surface survey conducted on the subject property and a check of the archaeological site records on file at the Eastern Information Center (EIC), University of California, Riverside, were accomplished.

A 24,000-scale USGS map of the subject property provided the location for the exposed pipeline. The two exposed sections of pipeline are located in Section 8 of the Whitewater Quadrangle. Survey activities resulted in the definition of no historical or archaeological sites. Limited cultural resource constraints (mitigation measures) exist for the subject property and are discussed at the end of this report.

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) conducted a search of their sacred lands file to determine if any Traditional Cultural Properties were located on or near the

Figure 1. USGS Whitewater Quadrangle Depicting Pipeline Washout Locations In San Gorgonio Wash

project area. The search yielded negative results. The NAHC provided TRC a list of tribal affiliations for the area. TRC notified each tribe on the list of the project and invited comments or questions regarding the project. A copy of the notification letter is contained in Appendix A along with the responses received from several tribes.

PREHISTORY

At European contact times, the study area was within areas occupied by groups known as the Cahuilla. The Cahuilla culture area incorporated east-central Riverside County, consisting of desert, pass (San Gorgonio Pass) and mountain groups with each affiliation describing the exploitation areas of each group. Desert Cahuilla ranged throughout the Coachella Valley from almost El Centro to Cabazon; the Pass Cahuilla occupied San Gorgonio Pass and the Mountain Cahuilla dominated the Santa Rosa Mountains. The Cahuilla are linguistically comprised of a language of the Shoshonean language family (Kroeber 1925: Plate 57). The Contact period ethnicity of the study area is clear as the modern Cahuilla reservation of Morongo is four miles east the project area. Ethnographic literature pertinent to the Cahuilla and surrounding ethnographic groups is fairly extensive and has been collected since the 1800's (see Barrows 1900; Sparkman 1908; Kroeber 1925; White 1963 and Bean 1972).

ENVIRONMENT

The physiography of the subject property consists of San Gorgonio River wash just above its confluence with the Whitewater River. The wash runs through the San Gorgonio pass. The pass is created by the San Andreas Fault Zone and separates the Transverse range on the north from the Peninsular range to the south. The project area lies at an elevation of 1,320 feet above sea level. Soils on the property consist of decomposed granitics and stream worn cobbles and boulders from fast water, riverine deposition. The native plant association consists of a creosote scrub plant community as in other area in the San Gorgonio Pass. The abundant vegetation is dominated by creosote bush (*Larrea tridentate*), acacia (*Acacia greggii*), burro bush (*Ambrosia dumosa*), and yucca (*Yucca shidigera*). Faunal populations in the immediate vicinity consist of small mammals (rodents) and reptiles. Populations of deer inhabit the nearby piedmonts and mountain environments and remnant groups of mountain sheep are occasionally seen at higher elevations. The above mentioned plant community is noted as having rather broad ethnographic uses among the Cahuilla (Bean and Saubel 1972).

Precipitation is mainly a result of winter dominant, frontal storms from the northwest, although occasional summer thundershowers result from damp air intruding from the southern (Gulf of Mexico--Sea of Cortez) monsoon season. The subject property has experienced flooding and deposition repeatedly through time resulting in burial (or scouring) of evidence of cultural occupation especially at the western location on the toe slope of the north-trending ridgeline. The eastern location is in the wash and unlikely to have intact cultural remains associated.

METHODS

Field methods consisted of an on-site inspection conducted by Mr. David Smith in December of 2005. The survey of the subject property was accomplished by walking generally north-south tending transects across the two pipeline exposures out to a 50 foot radius. The only diversion from that strategy occurred along the unpaved access road along the south side of I-10 from Fields Road to the project area. This roadway was surveyed in its entirety.

FINDINGS

A review of the archaeological site records on file at the EIC indicated no sites are recorded within the subject property boundaries; however, one isolated artifact was observed in the southeast one quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 17. Two archaeological sites (Riv-1329 and 1826) are recorded within one mile of the project to the south, southeast and southwest respectively. Several smaller portions of the subject property had been previously surveyed with negative results (Rector and Wilke 1980; Swenson 1984; and Bouscaren 1984). Such results are not surprising given that the project sites lie within the active floodplain of the San Gorgonio River. Several narrow transect surveys were conducted in Section 17 as part of the Devers Powerline Project (Rector and Wilke 1980), one short linear survey in Section 17 (Bouscaren 1984) and the southern third of Section 8 was previously studied by Swenson (1984). No cultural resources were recorded with the exception of a single isolated artifact being recorded in one of the Devers Powerline transects. Drover (1998) surveyed portions of Sections 17 and 18 for a proposed windfarm. No cultural resources were discovered during that investigation. The Union Pacific Railroad line, immediately north of the pipeline, is recorded as CA-RIV-6381H. Historic refuse associated with the construction and use of the rail line may be present in the area.

Most of the archaeological sites of the general area are late prehistoric age (pottery present) and likely related to population movements and food procurement activities in San Gorgonio Pass. The eventual desiccation of Lake Cahuilla ca. A.D. 1500 resulted in the emigration of human populations (proto-historic Cahuilla) to the south and west through San Gorgonio Pass into the San Jacinto Plains (Wilke 1971; O'Connell et al. 1974). Settlement patterns seem to consist of campsites or villages (located near perennial water sources such as Morongo) and sporadic temporary activity locations. The prehistory of San Gorgonio Pass itself is not particularly well known. Within the pass itself, only two excavations have been conducted that of Snow Creek Rock Shelter (Riv-210, approximately 3.5 kilometers south of the project area), excavated in 1963 by Michels (1964). Approximately one-half of the shelter was excavated yielding Palomar Brown type (Tizon Brown Ware) and Lower Colorado Buff Ware ceramics and Cottonwood and Desert side-notched projectile points. The One Horse Canyon Shelter (Riv-8) was excavated at a similar time and yielded a very minimal inventory of artifacts of the same Late Prehistoric Horizon (Ruby 1964). Bean (1960) and Strong (1929) state that Snow Canyon (immediately south of the subject project area) was the home of the *Teshana Wanakik* Cahuilla clan, and that members of this clan continued to live there until 1880 (cf. Swenson 1984). It is obvious that prehistoric transhumance must have occurred regularly through this narrow portion of San Gorgonio Pass.

Considering the flora, topography, and proximity of the subject parcel to water, site density may be expected to be moderate to low. Based on settlement/subsistence observations of the area, temporary activity sites or isolated artifacts might be expected in the general area, however, they would more likely be located on the higher river terraces.

TRC conducted a pedestrian survey of the two washout locations and the access road leading from the unpaved frontage road. No archaeological or historical sites were located during survey activities.

IMPACTS AND MITIGATION

While the project area would have been conducive for limited prehistoric plant food gathering and processing, these activities were probably ephemeral in nature and unlikely to have resulted

in significant archaeological deposits. Consultations with Native American tribes affiliated with the area did not result in the identification of any known traditional cultural properties or sites in proximity to the repair locations (Appendix A). However, several of the tribes contacted requested a Native American monitor be present during excavation activities. In the event of an important archaeological discovery the monitor should have the authority to temporarily halt or divert excavation activities until a qualified archaeologist can evaluate the find.

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APPENDIX A

NATIVE AMERICAN CONSULTATION CORRESPONDENCE