

Cultural Resources Desktop Inventory Report

Ventura Steel Site Alternative:

SoCalGas Ventura Compressor Station Modernization Project

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Management Summary/Abstract

South Environmental was retained by Dudek to complete a Cultural Resources Desktop Inventory Report for the Ventura Steel Site Alternative of the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) Ventura Compressor Modernization Project (VCM Project) located in the City of Ventura, California. This report includes an inventory of known archaeological, unique archaeological, and historic built-environment resources that could be affected by the Ventura Steel Site Alternative. Identification efforts include the results of a California Historical Resources Information Center (CHRIS) records search of the Ventura Steel Site and a 0.5-mile radius; a search of the Native American Heritage Commission's (NAHC's) Sacred Lands File; background research; and development of a cultural context for the Ventura Steel Site Alternative.

This report was prepared following the guidance for cultural resources technical reports as outlined in the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) *Guidelines for Energy Project Applications Requiring California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Compliance: Pre-filing and Proponent's Environmental Assessments* (CPUC 2019); and the California State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) *Archaeological Resource Management Reports (ARMR): Recommended Contents and Format* (OHP 1990).

Although there are no previously recorded archaeological resources within the Ventura Steel Site, the southernmost portion of the Offsite Impact Area is just 300 feet north of a previously recorded segment of the Mission San Buenaventura Aqueduct (CA-VEN-749H), which has been previously identified as a likely a continuation of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-listed Mission San Buenaventura Aqueduct (Property ID 75000497). In general, the portion of the Offsite Impact Area that intersects the undeveloped portion of the foothills should be considered sensitive for archaeological resources, as it is possible that other segments of the aqueduct are present within the Offsite Impact Area.

Although no previously recorded historic built environment resources are located within the Ventura Steel Site, a review of historic aerial photographs indicates that the Ventura Steel Site Alternative Station Site and Temporary Staging Area overlap two industrial buildings over 45 years old:

- 3608 N. Ventura Avenue (appears in aerial photographs by 1947)
- 3504 N. Ventura Avenue (appears in aerial photographs by 1959)

1 Introduction

South Environmental was retained by Dudek to complete a Cultural Resources Desktop Inventory Report for the Ventura Steel Site Alternative of the Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) Ventura Compressor Modernization Project located in the City of Ventura, California. The Ventura Steel Site is being evaluated as a potential alternative site for the existing Ventura Compressor Station at 1555 N. Olive Street in the City of Ventura, California. This report includes an inventory of known archaeological, unique archaeological, and built environment resources identified as a result of a desktop inventory report. No survey was completed as part of this study. Identification efforts include the results of a California Historical Resources Information Center (CHRIS) records search of the Ventura Steel Site Alternative components and a 0.5-mile radius; a search of the Native American Heritage Commission's (NAHC's) Sacred Lands File; outreach to Native American groups; and development of a cultural context.

This report was prepared following the guidance for cultural resources technical reports as outlined in the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) *Guidelines for Energy Project Applications Requiring California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Compliance: Pre-filing and Proponent's Environmental Assessments* (CPUC 2019); and the California State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) *Archaeological Resource Management Reports (ARMR): Recommended Contents and Format* (OHP 1990).

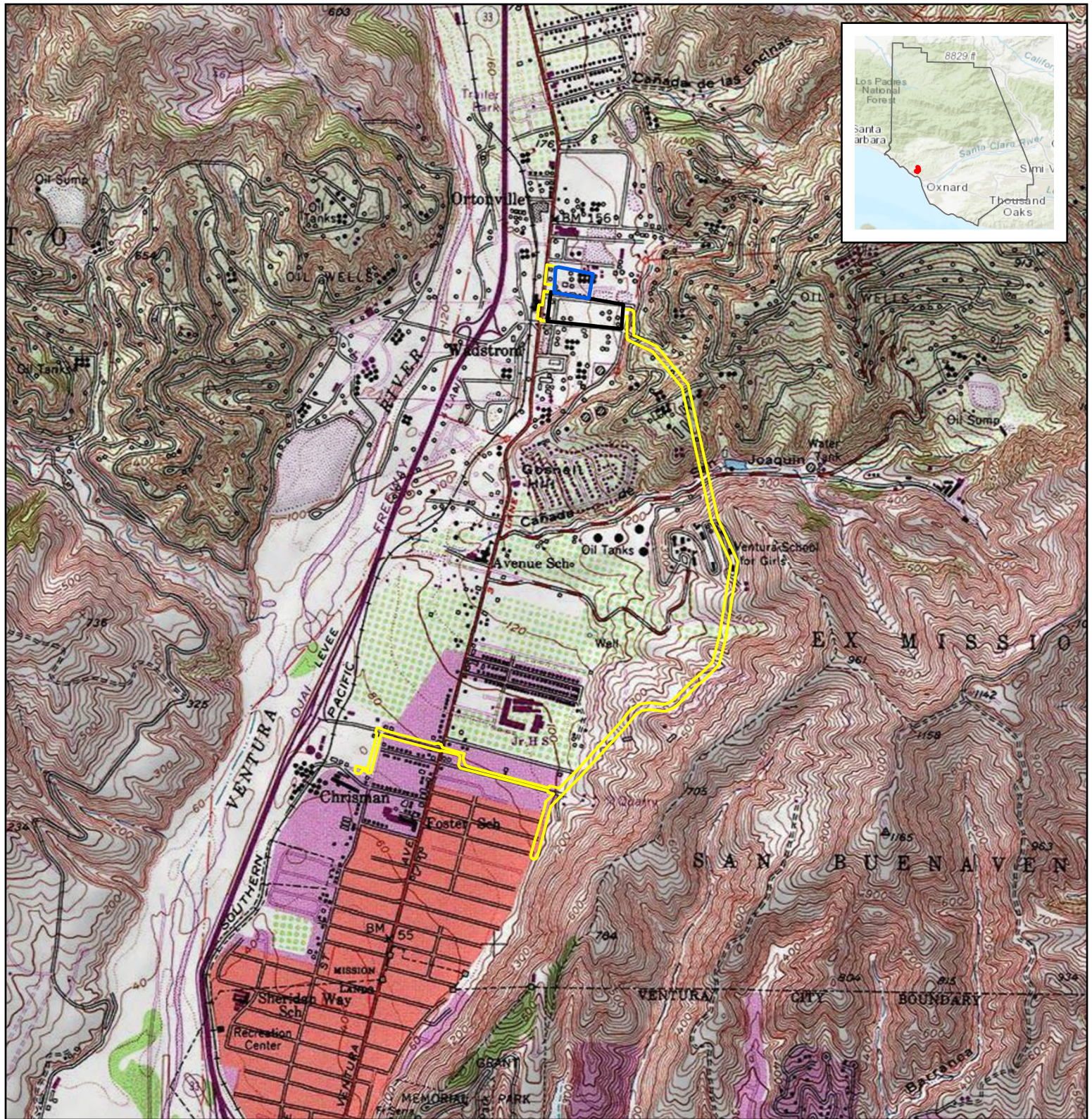
This report was authored by South Environmental Archaeologist Samantha Jovanovic, MA, MS and Archaeological Principal Investigator, Samantha Murray, MA, Registered Professional Archaeologist (RPA), who meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology.

1.1 Ventura Steel Site Location

The Ventura Steel Site is an approximately 10.00-acre site located approximately 7,000 feet north of the existing compressor station, east of North Ventura Avenue within County jurisdiction (also within the City's sphere of influence). The Ventura Steel Site falls within the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) *Ventura 7.5 Minute Topographical Quadrangle*, in Sections 21, 22, 27, 28, and 33, Township 3 North, Range 23 West (Figure 1, Ventura Steel Site Location Map).

For clarity throughout this report, the following terms are used to describe the three distinct components of the Ventura Steel Site Alternative (see Figure 1):

- Ventura Steel Site Alternative Station Site
- Temporary Staging Area
- Offsite Impact Area (i.e., the linear portions of the Ventura Steel Site Alternative that include proposed access roads and electrical interconnects).



Source: ESRI USA Topo Maps and World Topo Map 2025

Figure 1. Project Location Map

- Ventura Steel Site Station - Permanent Impact
- Ventura Steel Site Temporary Staging Area - Temporary Impact
- Ventura Steel Site Offsite Impact Area - Permanent Impact

Project Site is within unincorporated and Ventura, California, in Ventura County on the USGS Ventura 7.5-minute quadrangle map in Sections 21,22,27,28,33 of Township 03 North and Range 23 West

Center Coordinate (Decimal Degrees):
Latitude: 34.3044915N Longitude: -119.3116339W



0 1,150 2,300 Feet
Scale: 1:24,000



The old facility will be decommissioned one year after the new facility is fully operational. No road improvements, pipeline extensions, or other permanent off-site infrastructure would be necessary to construct the Ventura Steel Site Alternative.

1.2 Regulatory Setting

1.2.1 State

California Register of Historical Resources

In California, the term “historical resource” includes but is not limited to “any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript which is historically or archaeologically significant, or is significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California” (California Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(j)). In 1992, the California legislature established the CRHR “to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify the state’s historical resources and to indicate what properties are to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change” (California Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(a)). The criteria for listing resources on the CRHR were expressly developed to be in accordance with previously established criteria developed for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), enumerated below. According to California Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(c)(1–4), a resource is considered historically significant if it (i) retains “substantial integrity,” and (ii) meets at least one of the following criteria:

- (1) Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage.
- (2) Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.
- (3) Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
- (4) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In order to understand the historic importance of a resource, sufficient time must have passed to obtain a scholarly perspective on the events or individuals associated with the resource. A resource less than 50 years old may be considered for listing in the CRHR if it can be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand its historical importance (see 14 CCR 4852(d)(2)).

The CRHR protects cultural resources by requiring evaluations of the significance of prehistoric and historic resources. The criteria for the CRHR are nearly identical to those for the NRHP, and properties listed or formally designated as eligible for listing in the NRHP are automatically listed in the CRHR, as are the state landmarks and points of interest. The CRHR also includes properties designated under local ordinances or identified through local historical resource surveys.

California Environmental Quality Act

As described further below, the following CEQA statutes and CEQA Guidelines are of relevance to the analysis of archaeological, historic, and tribal cultural resources:

- California Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(g) defines “unique archaeological resource.”
- California Public Resources Code Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) define “historical resources.” In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) defines the phrase “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource.” It also defines the circumstances when a Project would materially impair the significance of an historical resource.
- California Public Resources Code Section 21074(a) defines “tribal cultural resources.”
- California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) set forth standards and steps to be employed following the accidental discovery of human remains in any location other than a dedicated ceremony.
- California Public Resources Code Sections 21083.2(b)-(c) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4 provide information regarding the mitigation framework for archaeological and historic resources, including examples of preservation-in-place mitigation measures; preservation-in-place is the preferred manner of mitigating impacts to significant archaeological sites because it maintains the relationship between artifacts and the archaeological context and may also help avoid conflict with religious or cultural values of groups associated with the archaeological site(s).

More specifically, under CEQA, a Project may have a significant effect on the environment if it may cause “a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” (California Public Resources Code Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b).) If a site is either listed or eligible for listing in the CRHR, or if it is included in a local register of historic resources or identified as significant in a historical resources survey (meeting the requirements of California Public Resources Code Section 5024.1(q)), it is a “historical resource” and is presumed to be historically or culturally significant for purposes of CEQA (California Public Resources Code Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)). The lead agency is not precluded from determining that a resource is a historical resource even if it does not fall within this presumption (California Public Resources Code Section 21084.1; CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a)).

A “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource” reflecting a significant effect under CEQA means “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(1); California Public Resources Code Section 5020.1(q)). In turn, CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(b)(2) states the significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a Project:

1. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for, inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources; or
2. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the Project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or
3. Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of a historical resource that convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA.

Pursuant to these sections, the CEQA inquiry begins with evaluating whether a project site contains any "historical resources," then evaluates whether that Project will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource such that the resource's historical significance is materially impaired.

If it can be demonstrated that a Project will cause damage to a unique archaeological resource, the lead agency may require reasonable efforts be made to permit any or all of these resources to be preserved in place or left in an undisturbed state. To the extent that they cannot be left undisturbed, mitigation measures are required (California Public Resources Code Section 21083.2[a], [b], and [c]).

California Public Resources Code Section 21083.2(g) defines a unique archaeological resource as an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

Impacts to non-unique archaeological resources are generally not considered a significant environmental impact (California Public Resources Code section 21083.2(a); CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c)(4)). However, if a non-unique archaeological resource qualifies as tribal cultural resource (California Public Resources Code Section 21074(c), 21083.2(h)), further consideration of significant

impacts is required. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 assigns special importance to human remains and specifies procedures to be used when Native American remains are discovered. As described below, these procedures are detailed in California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98.

Assembly Bill 52

AB 52 amended PRC Section 5097.94 and added PRC Sections 21073, 21074, 21080.3.1, 21080.3.2, 21082.3, 21083.09, 21084.2, and 21084.3. Section 4 of AB 52 adds Sections 21074(a) and (b) to the PRC, which address tribal cultural resources and cultural landscapes. Section 21074(a) defines tribal cultural resources as one of the following:

- (1) Sites, features, places, cultural landscapes, sacred places, and objects with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that are either of the following:
 - (A) Included or determined to be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources.
 - (B) Included in a local register of historical resources as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1.
- (2) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Section 5024.1 for the purposes of this paragraph, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

Section 1(a)(9) of AB 52 establishes that “a substantial adverse change to a tribal cultural resource has a significant effect on the environment.” Effects on tribal cultural resources should be considered under CEQA. Section 6 of AB 52 adds Section 21080.3.2 to the PRC, which states that parties may propose mitigation measures “capable of avoiding or substantially lessening potential significant impacts to a tribal cultural resource or alternatives that would avoid significant impacts to a tribal cultural resource.”

California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5

CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5 assigns special importance to human remains and specifies procedures to be used when Native American remains are discovered. As described below, these procedures are detailed in PRC section 5097.98. California law protects Native American burials, skeletal remains, and associated grave goods, regardless of their antiquity, and provides for the sensitive treatment and disposition of those remains. California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that if human remains are discovered in any place other than a dedicated cemetery, the following procedures shall be followed:

- Stop immediately and contact the County Coroner.

- If the remains are determined to be of Native American descent, the Coroner has 24 hours to notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC).
- The NAHC will immediately notify the person it believes to be the most likely descendant (MLD) of the deceased Native American.
- The MLD has 48 hours to make recommendations to the owner, or representative, for the treatment or disposition, with proper dignity, of the human remains and grave goods.
- If the owner does not accept the MLD's recommendations, the owner or the MLD may request mediation by the NAHC.

No further disturbance or excavation of the site or nearby area reasonably suspected to contain human remains shall occur until the County Coroner has examined the remains (Section 7050.5(b)). PRC Section 5097.98 also outlines the process to be followed in the event that remains are discovered.

1.2.2 Local

CPUC decisions, as well as California courts, have confirmed the CPUC's preemptory powers over matters of statewide concern, including utility project siting. General Order 177 was passed in December 2022, reaffirming preemption of local authority. As such, no local discretionary (e.g., rezone, land use) permits would be required because the CPUC has preemptive jurisdiction over the siting, construction, maintenance, and operation of natural gas facilities in California. The Ventura Steel Site is within portions of the City of Ventura and County of Ventura. This section identifies land use plans and regulations for informational purposes and to assist with environmental review, although the VCM Project is not subject to local discretionary permitting. The Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA) lists the local authorizations that may be required for VCM Project construction.

City of San Buenaventura – 2005 Ventura General Plan

Policy 9D: Ensure proper treatment of archeological and historic resources.

Action 9.14: Require archaeological assessments for Projects proposed in the Coastal Zone and other areas where cultural resources are likely to be located.

Action 9.15: Suspend development activity when archaeological resources are discovered, and require the developer to retain a qualified archaeologist to oversee handling of the resources in coordination with the Ventura County Archaeological Society and local Native American organizations as appropriate.

Action 9.16: Pursue funding to preserve historic resources.

Action 9.17: Provide incentives to owners of eligible structures to seek historic landmark status and invest in restoration efforts.

Action 9.18: Require that modifications to historically-designated buildings maintain their character.

Action 9.19: For any Project in a historic district or that would affect any potential historic resource or structure more than 40 years old, require an assessment of eligibility for State and federal register and landmark status and appropriate mitigation to protect the resource.

Action 9.20: Seek input from the City's Historic Preservation Commission on any proposed development that may affect any designated or potential landmark.

Action 9.21: Update the inventory of historic properties.

Action 9.22: Create a set of guidelines and/or policies directing staff, private property owners, developers, and the public regarding treatment of historic resources that will be readily available at the counter.

Action 9.23: Complete and maintain historic resource surveys containing all the present and future components of the historic fabric within the built, natural, and cultural environments.

Action 9.24: Create a historic preservation element.

2 Environmental Setting

The Ventura Steel Site Alternative includes industrial, urban, and undeveloped hillsides. The Ventura Steel Site Alternative Station Site and the Temporary Staging Area are located in an industrial area while the Offsite Impact Area traverses undeveloped hillside and urban areas. The Station Site and the Temporary Staging Area are relatively flat, with existing active oil wells on site. More broadly, the Ventura Steel Site is located within the Ventura River Valley and in the Ventura Hills foothills west of the City of Ventura. The nearest major water features being the Ventura River (approximately 0.25 miles to the east of the Station Site and Temporary Staging Area) and the Pacific Ocean (approximately 1.3-miles south of the southernmost tip of the Offsite Impact Area).

The Station Site and Temporary Staging Area are at an elevation of approximately 148 feet above mean sea level (amsl) (United States Geological Survey [USGS] 2025). The highest elevation of the southern end of the Offsite Impact Area is approximately 500 feet amsl and the lowest elevation in the urban area of the Offsite Impact Area is approximately 80 feet amsl (USGS 2025). The region has a Mediterranean climate with temperate, warm, dry summers and comparatively wetter winters. (Kauffman 2021). Rainfall is highly seasonal with the majority of the annual 16 inches falling between November and March (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration 2025).

The Ventura Steel Site is within the Transverse Ranges geomorphic province characterized by east-west trending mountain ranges and intervening valleys (Yerkes et al. 1965). The Station Site and Temporary Staging Area are located within the Ventura basin and approximately 0.25-mile east of the Ventura River. Much of the Ventura Steel Site is underlain by Holocene age stream terrace deposits composed of sand, silt, and clay deposits (Gutierrez et al. 2008). The Ventura Fault and Ventura Street Anticline are just north of the Station Site and Temporary Staging Area, running approximately along the northern boundary of the Temporary Staging Area (Gutierrez et al. 2008). The Offsite Impact Area traverses the foothills eastwards and southwards from the Station Site and Temporary Staging Area before curving westwards through urban portions of the City of Ventura.

Due to the large geographic coverage of the Ventura Steel Site, there are many soil series throughout including Sorrento, San Benito, Huerhuero, Azule, Soper, Nacimiento, Los Osos, and Anacapa (University of California, Davis [UCD] and Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS] 2025).

At the Station Site and Temporary Staging Area, the soils are based on fluvial deposits and predominantly (at least 85 percent) comprise Sorrento, which is well-drained alluvium from sedimentary sources. The Sorrento series is characterized by fine-grained soil with a high loam content (National Cooperative Soil Survey [NCSS], 1999). In the hills, the Offsite Impact Area traverses a diverse soil landscape consisting of deep, well-drained soils in valley floors (San Benito) (NCSS 2003), transitioning to clay-rich soils on hills and mountains (Azule, Los Osos, Huerhuero) (NCSS 1997, 2001, 2020) and moderately deep soils with some clay (Nacimiento, Soper) (NCSS 1999, 2023), all formed from weathered sedimentary rocks. Soils within the urban area of the Offsite Impact Area comprise

Sorrento and Anacapa. Similar to Sorrento, Anacapa soil series is also characterized by fine-grained sandy loam from sedimentary sources that form in floodplains (NCSS 2003).

3 Cultural Setting

3.1 Prehistoric Context

While many chronological sequences have been developed to describe cultural changes in Southern California, the following builds on Wallace (1955, 1978), who developed a prehistoric chronology for the Southern California coastal region that is still widely used today. Four periods are presented in this sequence: Early Man, Milling Stone, Intermediate, and Late Prehistoric. The summary of prehistoric chronological sequences for Southern California coastal and near-coastal areas presented below is a combination of Wallace (1955) and Warren (1968) as well as more recent studies.

3.1.1 Early Man Horizon (ca. 10,000 – 6,000 B.C.)

Many pre-8,000 B.C. sites have been identified along the Southern California coast and Channel Islands (Moratto 1984; Erlandson 1991; Rick et al. 2001; Johnson et al. 2002; Jones and Klar 2007). The Santa Rosa Island Arlington Springs site produced human femur bones that dated to approximately 13,000 years ago (Johnson et al. 2002). The most widely accepted dates for archaeological sites on the Southern California coast are from two of the northern Channel Islands, located off the coast of Santa Barbara. On San Miguel Island, Daisy Cave clearly establishes the presence of people in this area about 10,000 years ago (Erlandson 1991:105).

Early Man Horizon sites are generally associated with a greater emphasis on hunting than later horizons. Recent data indicate that the Early Man economy was a diverse mixture of hunting and gathering, including a significant focus on aquatic resources in coastal areas and on inland Pleistocene lakeshores (Moratto 1984).

3.1.2 Milling Stone Horizon (6,000 – 3,000 B.C.)

Set during the Altithermal, which began around 6,000 B.C., the Milling Stone Horizon is characterized by changing subsistence strategies in response to drier climate. This included a greater emphasis on plant foods and small game. Extensive seed processing is evident in the dominance of stone grinding implements in contemporary archaeological assemblages; namely, milling stones (metates) and handstones (manos). The mortar and pestle, associated with acorns or other foods processed through pounding, were first used during the Milling Stone Horizon and increased dramatically in later periods (Wallace 1955, 1978; Warren 1968). Other food resources included small and large terrestrial mammals, sea mammals, birds, shellfish and other littoral and estuarine species, near-shore fishes, yucca, agave, and seeds and other plant products (Kowta 1969). Depending on the environmental setting (coastal or inland), food procurement strategies are found to be highly variable (Byrd and Raab 2007:220).

3.1.3 Intermediate Horizon (3,000 B.C. – A.D. 500)

The Intermediate Horizon is characterized by a shift toward a hunting and maritime subsistence strategy, as well as greater use of plant foods. During the Intermediate Horizon, a noticeable trend occurred towards a greater adaptation to local resources including a broad variety of fish, land mammals, and sea mammals along the coast. This diversity was reflected in tool kits for hunting, fishing, and processing food and materials, with flake scrapers, drills, various projectile points, and shell fishhooks being manufactured. Mortars and pestles became more common during this period, gradually replacing manos and metates as the dominant milling tool. This change in milling stone technology indicates a transition from the processing and consumption of hard seed resources to the increased reliance on acorns (Glassow et al. 1988; True 1993).

3.1.4 Late Prehistoric Horizon (A.D. 500 – Historic Contact)

The Late Prehistoric Horizon is characterized by an increased diversity of plant food resources and land and sea mammal hunting. Material culture became more complex as demonstrated through more diverse classes of artifacts. During this period, the northern Channel Islands populations further developed craft specializations, including shell bead manufacture, that sustained trade with mainland settlements and with further trading partners to the east, creating a regional economy. Steatite quarried on Santa Catalina Island was used to make stone bowls, pipes, comals, sucking tubes, pendants, beads, and effigies. The lack of pottery in coastal and near-coastal sites implies that ceramic technology was not widely used, or that ceramics were obtained by trade with neighboring groups to the south and east. The lack of widespread pottery manufacture may also be due to the utility of tightly woven and watertight basketry that functioned in much the same way as ceramic vessels.

In areas of inland settlement, by the end of the Intermediate Period, mobility and long-distance migration towards the coast from seasonal camps was replaced by the development of permanent settlements. The period between A.D. 500 and historic contact is divided into three regional patterns: Chumash (Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties), Takic/Numic (Los Angeles, Orange, and western Riverside counties), and Yuman (San Diego County). Modern Gabrieliño/Tongva, Juaneño, and Luiseño people in this region are considered to be the descendants of the Uto-Aztecan, Takic-speaking populations that settled along the California coast during this period (Warren 1968).

3.2 Ethnographic Context

3.2.1 Ventureño Chumash

The Ventura Steel Site is located within an area historically occupied by the Ventureño Chumash (named for their historic association with Mission San Buenaventura) (Grant 1978). The Chumash spoke six closely related Chumashan languages, which have been divided into three branches — Northern Chumash (consisting only of Obispeño), Central Chumash (consisting of Purisimeño, Ineseño, Barbareño, and Ventureño), and Island Chumash (Jones and Klar 2007:80). Groups neighboring

Chumash territory included the Salinan to the north, the Southern Valley Yokuts and Tataviam to the east, and the Gabrielino (Tongva) to the south.

Early Spanish accounts of the total Chumash population vary from estimates of around 8,000-10,000 (Kroeber 1976) to 18,000-22,000 (Cook and Heizer 1965:21) along the Santa Barbara Channel coast. These coastal Chumash villages consisted of large, round dwellings made of tule reed mats and arranged in close groups. Lodging as many as 60 people, the houses supported large family groups (Brown 2001).

Subsistence strategies for the Chumash included both coastal and inland food resources. The acorn was a staple food for which the Chumash developed a variety of tools, including different baskets for processing, cooking, and serving acorns and other plant foods, and mortar and milling stones for crushing and grinding. Hunting was also an important component of daily life, with bows and arrows used to hunt large game and snares and traps used to capture smaller animals (Brown 2001; Hudson and Blackburn 1983).

Being located on the coast, the *tomol*, or wooden plank canoe, became essential to facilitating both marine resource procurement and to maintaining active trade networks between inland and coastal groups. Large marine mammals such as whales and seals were hunted with harpoons. Fish were captured using hooks, lines, and nets. Additionally, shellfish were procured from the coast, including clams and scallops, which could be dug up with sticks and other tools; and mussels and abalone, which could be gathered from rocks using prying tools.

Trade was an important aspect of both Chumash subsistence and maintaining social ties to other island and inland groups. Island, coastal, and inland Chumash traded a variety of materials including beads, tools, baskets, shells, acorns, steatite, obsidian, chert, and animal skins.

Like so many Native American groups, the Chumash were heavily affected by the arrival of the Spanish. The Spanish mission system, and later Mexican and American settlers, had devastating effects on native populations and dramatically altered traditional Chumash lifeways. The introduction of European diseases, against which native populations had no immunity, also took a tremendous toll on the Chumash (Johnson 1987). However, many Chumash descendants still inhabit the region today.

Review of various ethnographic studies and historic maps (King 1975; McLendon and Johnson 1999; Brown 2001; Grant 1978) indicate that prehistoric utilization of the nearby Ventura River was extensive. Several Chumash placenames were identified within the Ventura Steel Site vicinity, including the villages of *quyuy*, *kamexmey*, *micqanaqan*, and *šišolop* (King 1975). Based on a map produced by King (1975), the village site of *micqanaqan* appears to be the closest village site to the Ventura Steel Site.

The site of the historic village of *šišolop* or *Shishilop* (as recorded in site record CA-VEN-3) is located approximately 2.9 miles southeast of the Ventura Steel Site Alternative Station Site and 1.3 miles south of the southernmost tip of the Offsite Impact Area. It was one of the largest villages in the region and

was the political and commercial hub at the height of indigenous habitation. The village was located east of the mouth of the Ventura River in the vicinity of Figueroa Street and South California Street, south of the Ventura Freeway (Highway 101) (Exhibit 1) (McLendon and Johnson 1999:33; Ruppenstein 2019). Initial habitation of the village dates back to approximately 1,000 A.D. and extends into the historic period, with the landing and visitation of the Spanish explorer Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542 (City of San Buenaventura 2013). It is estimated that the village of *Shisholop* ("in the mud") spanned inland from the beach past the San Buenaventura Mission and was home to between 300 and 400 individuals at its peak. In 1975, the *Shisholop* village site as well as Cabrillo's Landing site were designated as a historical point of interest (No. 18) by the City of Ventura (City of San Buenaventura n.d., 2013).

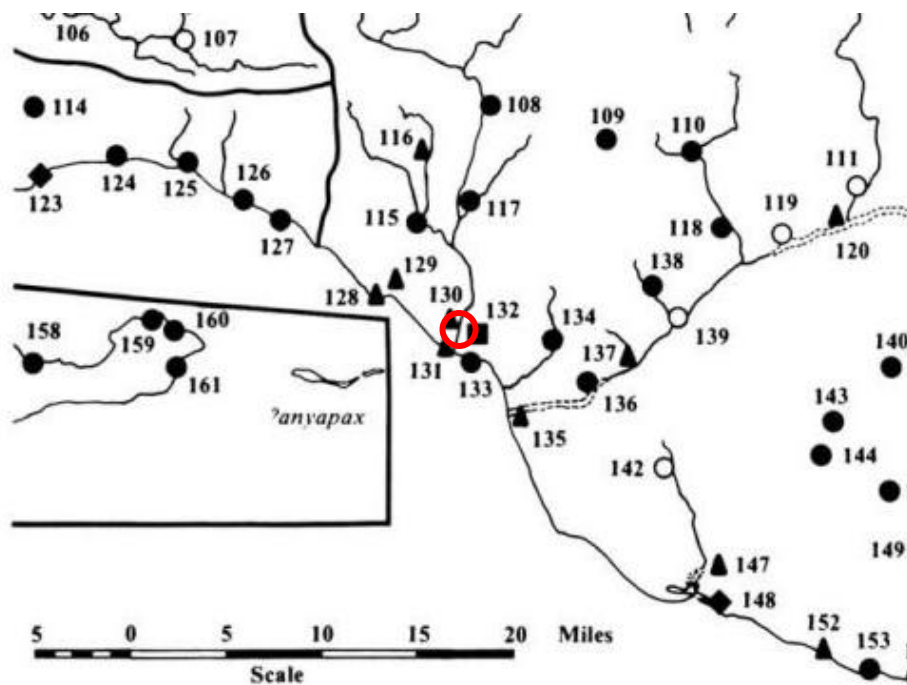


Exhibit 1. Map of Historic Chumash Villages (King 1975).

(Red circle shows approximate location of the Ventura Steel Site)



Exhibit 2. Historic Chumash Villages (McLendon and Johnson 1999)
(Red circle shows approximate location of the Ventura Steel Site)

3.3 Historic Context

Post-Contact history for the State of California is generally divided into three periods: the Spanish Period (1769–1822), Mexican Period (1822–1848), and American Period (1848–present).

3.3.1 Spanish Period (1769–1822)

In search of the legendary Northwest Passage, Spanish explorer Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo stopped in 1542 at present-day San Diego Bay. Cabrillo explored the shorelines of present-day Santa Catalina Island as well as San Pedro and Santa Monica Bays. Much of the present California and Oregon coastline was mapped and recorded in the next half-century by Spanish naval officer Sebastián Vizcaíno. Spain laid claim to California based on the surveys conducted by Cabrillo and Vizcaíno (Bancroft 1885:96–99; Gumprecht 1999:35).

The 1769 overland expedition by Captain Gaspar de Portolá marks the start of California's Historic period. With a band of 64 soldiers, missionaries, Baja (lower) California Native Americans, and Mexican civilians, Portolá established the Presidio of San Diego, a fortified military outpost, as the first Spanish settlement in Alta California. In July of 1769, while Portolá was exploring Southern California, Franciscan Fr. Junípero Serra founded Mission San Diego de Alcalá at Presidio Hill, the first of the 21 missions that would be established in Alta California by the Spanish and the Franciscan Order between 1769 and 1823.

A major emphasis during the Spanish Period in California was the construction of missions and associated presidios to integrate the Native American population into Christianity and communal enterprise. Incentives were also provided to bring settlers to pueblos or towns, but just three pueblos were established during the Spanish Period, only two of which were successful and remain as California cities (San José and Los Angeles).

3.3.2 Mexican Period (1822–1848)

After more than a decade of intermittent rebellion and warfare, New Spain (Mexico and the California territory) won independence from Spain in 1821. In 1822, the Mexican legislative body in California ended isolationist policies designed to protect the Spanish monopoly on trade, and decreed California ports open to foreign merchants (Dallas 1955:14).

Extensive land grants were established in the interior during the Mexican Period, in part to increase the population inland from the more settled coastal areas where the Spanish had first concentrated their colonization efforts. The secularization of the missions following Mexico's independence from Spain resulted in the subdivision of former mission lands and establishment of many additional ranchos. During the supremacy of the ranchos (1834–1848), landowners largely focused on the cattle industry and devoted large tracts to grazing. Cattle hides became a primary southern California export, providing a commodity to trade for goods from the east and other areas in the United States and

Mexico. The number of nonnative inhabitants increased during this period because of the influx of explorers, trappers, and ranchers associated with the land grants. The rising California population contributed to the introduction and rise of diseases foreign to the Native American population, who had no associated immunities.

War in 1846 between Mexico and the United States precipitated the Battle of Chino, a clash between resident Californios and Americans in the San Bernardino area.

3.3.3 American Period (1848–Present)

The Mexican–American War ended with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, ushering California into its American Period. California officially became a state with the Compromise of 1850, which also designated Utah and New Mexico (with present-day Arizona) as U.S. Territories.

Horticulture and livestock continued to dominate the Southern California economy in the 1850s. The Gold Rush began in 1848, and with the influx of people seeking gold, cattle were no longer desired mainly for their hides but also as a source of meat and other goods. During the 1850s cattle boom, rancho vaqueros drove large herds from Southern to Northern California to feed that region's burgeoning mining and commercial boom. The cattle boom ended for southern California as neighbor states and territories drove herds to northern California at reduced prices. Operation of the huge ranchos became increasingly difficult, and droughts severely reduced their productivity (Cleland 2005:102–103).

City of Ventura

The City of Ventura, officially named San Buenaventura, was founded in 1782. San Junípero Serra, established the Mission San Buenaventura as the ninth California mission, naming it after the Italian Saint, Bonaventura. This led to Ventura's nickname, the "city of good fortune" (City of Ventura 2025). By the 1840s, the prior mission land was divided into ranchos, with Rancho San Miguel deeded to Raimundo Olivas. Olivas built a grand hacienda on the banks of the Santa Clara River that remains one of the oldest extant buildings in Ventura today (Visit Ventura CA 2023).

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, Ventura was a thriving agricultural hub filled with orchards and gardens that were watered by a 7-mile-long aqueduct. After the city was incorporated on April 2, 1866, it began to transform (City of Ventura 2025). In 1873, Ventura was chosen as the County seat. After the Civil War, several settlers from the east came to the Ventura area to acquire lands and settle. One such easterner was Thomas Scott, a wealthy railroad magnate, who took ownership of land in Ventura. However, Scott never came to stay in Ventura and instead sent Thomas R. Bard, a soldier in charge of train supplies for Union Troops, to manage his property. In the late 1860s, oil was discovered near Ventura that brought an entirely new industry to the city. By 1890, the Union Oil Company was established with Thomas Bard serving as president (Visit Ventura CA 2023). This company and the oil industry led to a boom of growth in Ventura, leading to an increase in the arrival

of immigrants, and thereby increased infrastructure developments in the form of roadways and bridges (City of Ventura 2023). By 1914, the main oil field was drilled and at its peak would produce 90,000 barrels of oil a day (Visit Ventura CA 2023).

Ventura continued to grow slowly throughout the early twentieth century and its downtown saw a big transformation. Main Street in downtown Ventura began to fill in with red brick commercial storefronts, banks, a City Hall, and the Ventura County Courthouse. Victorian and Spanish Revival style residences were constructed in proximity to downtown, making it a walkable, pedestrian friendly area. Around mid-century, the landmark 70,000 square-foot Art Deco style theater was constructed, cementing the area as the hub of Ventura's entertainment and social scene (City of Ventura n.d.; Museum of Ventura County 2023).

Due to Ventura's remote location surrounded by coastal waters, forests, and agricultural fields, it was more difficult for people to migrate to the area. In 1969, the last portion of the Ventura Freeway was completed, linking the City to Los Angeles and making travel to the area much easier, resulting in population growth and increase in tourism (Visit Ventura CA 2023). Today, Ventura is home to approximately 109,000 residents who reside in a total of 32 square miles (City of Ventura 2023).

3.4 Historical Development of the Ventura Steel Site

A topographic map from 1904 (USGS 2025) depicts the Ventura Steel Site Alternative Station Site and Temporary Staging Area within the Canada Larga O Verde Rancho, while the majority of the Offsite Impact Area is within Ex-Mission San Buenaventura lands.

3.4.1 Station Site and Temporary Staging Area

The Ventura Steel Site Alternative Station Site and the Temporary Staging Area contain active oil wells. Historical aerial photographs and maps indicate that the Station Site and Temporary Staging Area have been used for oil industrial purposes for over a century, as indicated by the presence of wells, tanks, and industrial buildings (NETR 2025; UCSB 2025). Due to the region's sedimentary composition, a significant number of oil deposits have been exploited within Ventura County. Oil prospecting in Ventura County began in the 1860s. However, due to the challenging drilling conditions of the area, the first successful wells were not drilled until 1914 by Ralph Lloyd and Joseph B. Dabney, approximately two miles north of the City of Ventura (Hertel 1929:35; County of Ventura n.d.). The Ventura and Ojai Valley Railroad line (no longer extant) ran parallel and adjacent to the Station Site and Temporary Staging Area. Established in the 1890s along Ventura Avenue, this rail line facilitated the transportation of oil from Ventura to the rest of the country (Abandoned Rails n.d.).

The Ventura Avenue Oil Field was discovered in 1915 and by 1926, produced over 20,000 barrels of oil per day (County of Ventura 2019). The success of the Ventura Avenue Oil Field fueled a population boom, as people moved to the area to prospect for oil or work for the oil companies (County of Ventura 2019). The oil business boomed in the 1920s due to increased demand for gasoline for cars, which

declined during the Depression of the 1930s, and then surged again during the 1940s with the heightened demand for oil during World War II (County of Ventura 2019). The last major oil boom occurred in the 1950s, with oil output dwindling significantly by the 1990s and oil companies shifting their focus to inland wells near Bakersfield (Watson 1990).

3.4.2 Offsite Impact Area

The Ventura Steel Site Alternative Offsite Impact Area traverses a path in the foothills that has always been undeveloped. The most significant changes over time have occurred within the urban area of the Offsite Impact Area within the City of Ventura, with the gradual development of residences and businesses and the transition from rural farms to an urban center.

4 Background Research

The following research methods were used to identify known archaeological, unique archaeological, or built environment resources within all areas that could be affected by the Ventura Steel Site Alternative including areas of indirect effect.

4.1 CHRIS Records Search

On June 10, 2025, SoCalGas Principal Environmental Specialist Karl Holland, MA, RPA provided South Environmental with the results of the CHRIS records search completed by the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) that included the Ventura Steel Site Alternative Station Site, Temporary Staging Area, Offsite Impact Area, and a 0.5-radius. This search included their collections of mapped prehistoric and historic archaeological resources and historic built-environment resources, State of California Department of Parks and Recreation Site Records (DPR forms), technical reports, archival resources, and ethnographic references. Additional consulted sources include historical maps of the study area, the NRHP, the CRHR, the lists of California State Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and the Archaeological Resources Directory. The results of the records search are presented in Confidential Appendix A.

4.1.1 Previously Conducted Cultural Resource Studies

The SCCIC records search identified seven previously completed cultural resources studies (VN-00228, -01102, -01752, -01849, -02202, -02534) within portions of the Ventura Steel Site. A summary of these studies is provided following Table 1. An additional 22 previously conducted studies were identified within 0.5-mile of the Ventura Steel Site, conducted between 1977 and 2014 (Table 1). One of these studies (VN-02627) is a regional overview study that encompasses a large area and does not contain information specific to the Ventura Steel Site location. The remaining studies are a mix of archaeological field reports, architectural and historical evaluations, and survey reports.

Table 1. Previous Cultural Resources Investigations Within 0.5-Mile of the Ventura Steel Site

SCCIC Report Number	Author	Year	Report Title	Proximity to Ventura Steel Site Alternative Components
VN-00127	Clellow, William C. Jr.	1978	An Archaeological and Historical Assessment of Areas Within the Takelines of the Proposed Features of the Ventura County Water Management Project	Southwest Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-00214	López, Robert	1979	Archaeological Assessment for City of San Buenaventura EIR 705 (m-2572.15).	WITHIN Offsite Impact Area

Table 1. Previous Cultural Resources Investigations Within 0.5-Mile of the Ventura Steel Site

SCCIC Report Number	Author	Year	Report Title	Proximity to Ventura Steel Site Alternative Components
VN-00228	López, Robert	1979	An Archaeological Reconnaissance of the 143 Acres of the Dent Ranch Involved in Environmental Impact Report 677 City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California	WITHIN Off Site Impact Area
VN-00411	Lopez, Robert	1982	Archaeological Investigations of a Section of Mission San Buenaventura's Aqueduct Located Between Lewis and Vince Streets Within the City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California	South Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-00516	Brown, Roderick S.	1987	Cultural Resource Investigation: Proposed Facility of Ojai Rubbish Company, Ventura County	Northwest Of Temporary Staging Area
VN-00519	Singer, Clay A.	1987	Cultural Resources Survey and Impact Assessment for Four Potential Borrow Sites Near the Ventura River, Ventura County, California	West Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-01102	Singer, Clay A.	1977	Preliminary Cultural Resource Survey and Potential Impact Assessment for Thirteen Areas in Southern Ventura County, California	WITHIN Off Site Impact Area
VN-01634	Lopez, Robert	1996	An Archaeological Reconnaissance of the 4.87 Acres Involved in Planned Development Permit No. 1613, Ventura County California	South Of Station Site
VN-01752	Macfarlane, Heather	1990	Phase I Archaeological Survey for the Property at 3658 N. Ventura Avenue	WITHIN Temporary Staging Area And Offsite Impact Area
VN-01849	Maki, Mary K.	2000	Underground Utility District 15/ Project No. 66094	WITHIN Off Site Impact Area
VN-01850	Maki, Mary K.	2000	Phase I Archaeological Survey of Approximately 2,800 Linear Feet Ramona Storm Drain Phase 5 Project City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California	South Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-01851	Maki, Mary K.	2000	Negative Phase I Archaeological Survey & Impact Assessment of Approximately 440 Linear Feet for the Westside Street Improvements Project Ventura Avenue	Adjacent To Offsite Impact Area
VN-01908	LSA Associates, Inc.	2001	Cultural Resource Assessment for AT&T Fixed Wireless Services Facility No. VC_043_A, Ventura Co.	SW Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-01910	Sriro, Adam	2000	Bridge Widening and Rail Installation on State Route 33, Ventura Co.	West Of Station Site, Temporary Staging Area, And Offsite Impact Area

Table 1. Previous Cultural Resources Investigations Within 0.5-Mile of the Ventura Steel Site

SCCIC Report Number	Author	Year	Report Title	Proximity to Ventura Steel Site Alternative Components
VN-02200	Michael Brandman Associates	2001	Records Search Results for Sprint Pcs Facility Vr54xc425a (the Underwater Technical Services Site), Located at 2055 N. Ventura Ave., Ventura in Ventura County, California	North & West Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-02202	Maki, Mary	2002	Negative Archaeological Survey Report of Approximately 1,800 Linear Feet, Stanley Ave. Widening Project, City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California	WITHIN Offsite Impact Area
VN-02534	Maki, Mary K.	2002	Phase I Archaeological Survey of Approximately 3,300 Linear Feet for the Underground Utility District 15 Addition, City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California	WITHIN Offsite Impact Area
VN-02537	Foster, John M.	2004	An Extended Phase I Archaeological Program, Cedar Street Patio Housing, Ventura	South Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-02541	Lopez, Robert	2003	An Archaeological Reconnaissance of the 27.264 Acres at 2686 North Ventura Avenue, San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California	North & West Of Offsite Impact Area, South Of Station Site
VN-02543	Maki, Mary K.	2006	Phase I Archaeological Survey of Approximately One Acre at 185, 191, and 211 Stanley Avenue for the Avenida De La Futura Project, City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California	Adjacent To Offsite Impact Area
VN-02627	King, Chester	1993	Native American Placenames in the Vicinity of the Pacific Pipeline: Part 2: Gaviota to the San Fernando Valley: Draft	Regional Overview
VN-02708	McKenna, Jeanette A.	2008	A Cultural Resources overview and Historic Building Evaluation for the Westside Villas Project Area, San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California	South Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-02785	Maki, Mary	2009	Archaeological Survey Report of 20.2 Acres for the Westview Housing Project, City of Ventura, Ventura County, California	South Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-02802	Maki, Mary	2008	Archaeological Survey Report of 0.32 Acres for the SOHO Apartments Project 1150 North Ventura Avenue, City of San Buenaventura County, California	South Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-02808	Maki, Mary	2008	Phase I Cultural Resources Investigation of Approximately 3 Acres for the Ventura County Watershed Protection District's Ventura River Bank Restoration Project Upstream of Stanley Avenue, City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California	West Of Offsite Impact Area

Table 1. Previous Cultural Resources Investigations Within 0.5-Mile of the Ventura Steel Site

SCCIC Report Number	Author	Year	Report Title	Proximity to Ventura Steel Site Alternative Components
VN-02872	Fortier, Jana	2009	TEA-21 Rural Roadside Inventory: Native American Consultants and Ethnographic Study for Caltrans District 7, Ventura County	West Of Station Site, Temporary Staging Area, And Offsite Impact Area
VN-02953	Michael Brandman Associates	2010	Cultural Resources Records Search and Site Visit Results for T-Mobile USA Candidate SV12194-C (T&T), 1375 North Olive Street, Ventura, Ventura County, California	SW Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-03069	ACE Environmental	2012	Cultural Resource Records Search and Site Survey, AT&T Site SBOV, Stanley 1375 North Olive Street, Ventura, Ventura County, CA	SW Of Offsite Impact Area
VN-03220	Leftwich, Brent, Ericka Buckley, and Clarus J. Backes, Jr.	2014	Cultural Resources Technical Report for the Santa Barbara County Reliability Projects, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties, California	SW Of Offsite Impact Area

VN-00214 (López 1979)

Archaeological Assessment for City of San Buenaventura EIR 705 (m-2572.15) was prepared by Robert López in 1979. This letter report synthesizes an investigation into 87 acres as part of the City of San Buenaventura's Environmental Impact Report Number 705. The study included a literature review and archival research. The study did not find any records or resources within the 87 acres; however, López states that the area is sensitive for prehistoric and historic resources. Specifically, López mentions the proximity of the mission-era aqueduct on the adjoining property. The study did not include a pedestrian survey, and the report notes that the study area had not been previously surveyed. Recommendations included stopping work if any potential cultural materials were discovered and retaining a qualified archaeologist to assess any finds. Recommendations did not include a pedestrian survey due to a lack of cultural resources found within the study area and the significantly steep landscape. The Ventura Steel Offsite Impact Area bisects the project area of this study (López 1979).

VN-00228 (López 1979)

An Archaeological Reconnaissance of the 143 Acres of the Dent Ranch Involved in Environmental Impact Report 677 City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California cultural report was prepared by Robert López in 1979. This report synthesizes investigation into 143 acres of the Dent Ranch located in the foothills along the eastern periphery of the City of Ventura. The study includes a literature review, archival research, and an intensive pedestrian survey. Archival research indicated that a mission-era

aqueduct bisected the property and an area with scattered bricks was discovered during the pedestrian survey, however, López was unable to positively identify if the bricks were related to the aqueduct due to significant surface disruption by agricultural activities. López recommended archaeological monitoring of the areas most likely to contain material related to the aqueduct. The Ventura Steel Offsite Impact Area bisects the project area of this study (López 1979).

VN-01102 (Singer 1977)

The *Preliminary Cultural Resource Survey and Potential Impact Assessment for Thirteen Areas in Southern Ventura County, California* cultural report was prepared by Clay A. Singer of Archaeological Research, Inc. in 1977. This report synthesizes cultural resources investigations for 13 areas throughout Ventura County. Investigation methods included a record search and archival research. Area 11 is located within the City of Ventura and the northernmost end overlaps with the Ventura Steel Offsite Impact Area at the intersection of Ventura Avenue and Stanley Avenue. The report states that “at least four large and important archaeological and historical sites are located at the southeast end of the project area” (Singer 1977:9) and that this likely cultural materials below surface level. Six additional resources were recorded within a one-mile radius of the project area (Singer 1977). Recommendations included intensive pedestrian survey of the project area (1977).

VN-01752 (Macfarlane 1990)

The *Phase I Archaeological Survey for the Property at 3658 N. Ventura Avenue* was prepared by Heather Macfarlane of Macfarlane Archaeological Consultants (MAC) in 1990. This report synthesizes cultural resources investigations for 37 acres. Investigation methods included a record search and an intensive-level pedestrian survey. No resources were identified within the study area (Macfarlane 1990) during the record search or survey. The study area overlaps with the Temporary Staging Area, the northern portion of the Ventura Steel Site Alternative Station Site and a portion of the Offsite Impact Area. Recommendations included further archaeological research and monitoring of the project area if excavations exceeded six inches in depth.

VN-01849 (Maki 2000)

The *Underground Utility District 15/ Project No. 66094* cultural report was prepared by Mary K. Maki of Conejo Archaeological Consultants in 2000. This report synthesizes the cultural resources investigations for a proposed utility undergrounding project along Ventura Avenue from Mission Street to De Anza Drive in the City of San Buenaventura. The study included a records search, archival research of historic properties, and a pedestrian survey. During the records search, 10 archaeological sites were identified within a 0.5-mile radius of the project alignment, comprising five prehistoric and five historic sites, none of which were located within or adjacent to the proposed study alignment (Maki 2000). The records search also identified 58 evaluated historic properties within a two-block radius, including ten properties along Ventura Avenue. Due to complete pavement coverage throughout the project study alignment (Maki, 2000), the pedestrian survey yielded negative results.

Mitigation recommendations included professional archaeological monitoring of all excavation activities, immediate work suspension, and evaluation protocols for inadvertent cultural resource discoveries, as well as compliance with state requirements for the treatment of human remains. The Ventura Steel Offsite Impact Area bisects the project area of this study (Maki 2000).

VN-02202 (Maki 2002)

The *Negative Archaeological Survey Report of Approximately 1,800 Linear Feet, Stanley Ave. The Widening Project, City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California*, was prepared by Mary K. Maki of Conejo Archaeological Consultants in 2002. This report synthesizes the cultural resources investigations for a proposed street widening project along Stanley Avenue between Ventura Avenue and Highway 33. Investigation methods included a record search, literature review, and an intensive-level pedestrian survey. The record search identified one prehistoric site and two historic sites within a 0.5-mile radius of the project alignment (Maki 2002). One historic resource (56-001109) intersected with the project alignment, which comprised Southern Pacific Railroad tracks (Maki 2002). A significant portion of the project alignment was paved, resulting in poor ground visibility; therefore, transects were limited to walking along both sides of Stanley Avenue and inspecting areas with exposed ground, such as planters and parking lots. Mitigation recommendations included professional archaeological monitoring of all excavation activities, immediate work suspension, and evaluation protocols for inadvertent cultural resource discoveries, as well as compliance with state requirements for the treatment of human remains. The Ventura Steel Offsite Impact Area overlaps the project alignment of this study (Maki 2002) along Stanley Avenue west of Ventura Avenue.

VN-02534 (Maki 2002)

The *Phase I Archaeological Survey of Approximately 3,300 Linear Feet for the Underground Utility District 15 Addition, City of San Buenaventura, Ventura County, California* was prepared by Mary K. Maki of Conejo Archaeological Consultants in 2002. This report synthesizes the cultural resources investigations for a proposed utility undergrounding project along Ventura Avenue and Stanley Avenue. The study included a records search, archival research of historic properties, and a pedestrian survey. During the records search, three archaeological sites were identified within a 0.5-mile radius of the project alignment, none of which were located within or adjacent to the proposed study alignment (Maki 2002). Due to complete pavement coverage throughout the project study area (Maki 2000), the pedestrian survey yielded negative results. Mitigation recommendations included professional archaeological monitoring of all excavation activities, immediate work suspension, and evaluation protocols for inadvertent cultural resource discoveries, as well as compliance with state requirements for the treatment of human remains. The Ventura Steel Offsite Impact Area overlaps the project alignment of this study (Maki 2002) along Stanley Avenue west of Ventura Avenue.

4.1.2 Previously Recorded Cultural Resources

No previously recorded cultural resources were identified within the Ventura Steel Site. The SCCIC records search identified six previously recorded cultural resources within 0.5-mile of the Ventura Steel Site (Table 2).

The closest previously recorded resource to the Ventura Steel Site is a segment of the historic Mission San Buenaventura Aqueduct (CA-VEN-749H), located approximately 300-feet south of the Offsite Impact Area along the foothills beginning near at the eastern end of Carr Drive, with additional segments recorded further south along the foothills until Cedar Street turns east to become Poll Street. Resource records (56-000749 from SCCIC) and overlapping previous studies (VN-214 and -228) indicate this resource is likely a continuation of the NRHP-listed Mission San Buenaventura Aqueduct (Property ID 75000497) and recommended the segments (CA-VEN-749H) be formally added to the nomination record/listing.

Table 2. Previously Recorded Cultural Resources Within 0.5-Mile of the Ventura Steel Site

Primary Number	Trinomial	Resource Age/Description	Resource Eligibility	Recorded by and Year	Proximity to Ventura Steel Site Alternative Components
P-56-000749	CA-VEN-749H	Historic Structure: Vince St. Aqueduct; Mission San Buenaventura Aqueduct	Unevaluated	1982 (Lopez, Moorpark College); 2004 (John M. Foster, Greenwood & Associates); 2004 (Linda H. Rehberger, Greenwood & Associates); 2005 (J. M. Foster, Greenwood & Associates)	South Of Offsite Impact Area
P-56-000849	CA-VEN-849	Prehistoric Site: artifact scatter	Unevaluated	1987 (Clay A. Singer)	West Of Offsite Impact Area
P-56-001109	CA-VEN-1109H	Historic Site: Ventura River & Ojai Valley Railroad; The Nordhoff Spur	Resource is no longer extant	1993 (M. Macko, Macko Archaeological Consulting); 1994 (Schmidt, James and June, Greenwood And Associates); 2012 (Hubert Switalski and Andrea Bardsley, AMEC)	West Of Station Site, Temporary Staging Area, And Offsite Impact Area

Table 2. Previously Recorded Cultural Resources Within 0.5-Mile of the Ventura Steel Site

Primary Number	Trinomial	Resource Age/Description	Resource Eligibility	Recorded by and Year	Proximity to Ventura Steel Site Alternative Components
P-56-001547	CA-VEN-1547/H	Prehistoric/Protohistoric Site: lithic scatter, habitation debris	Unevaluated	1994 (James J. Schmidt and June Schmidt, Greenwood & Associates)	West Of Offsite Impact Area
P-56-001600	CA-VEN-1600H	Historic Site: 2323 Ventura Ave	Unevaluated	1999 (N. Mandel-Toren, Compass Rose Archaeological Inc)	West Of Offsite Impact Area
P-56-152841	N/A	Historic Building: 1490 Ventura Ave./36 Leighton Drive	Unevaluated	2008 (J. McKenna, McKenna et al)	South Of Offsite Impact Area

4.2 Native American Coordination

As part of the process of identifying cultural resources within or near the Ventura Steel Site, South Environmental contacted the NAHC to request a review of the Sacred Lands File on May 28, 2025. The NAHC emailed a response on May 28, 2025, which indicated that the Sacred Lands File search was completed with negative results. Because the Sacred Lands File search does not include an exhaustive list of Native American cultural resources, NAHC suggested contacting Native American individuals and/or tribal organizations who may have direct knowledge of cultural resources in or near the Ventura Steel Site. The NAHC also provided contact information for 10 individuals and/or tribal organizations with whom to consult. Accordingly, SoCalGas sent outreach letters to those individuals and/or tribal organizations. The results of SoCalGas' outreach to Native American groups is documented in the associated Tribal Consultation Report (Appendix B).

5 Report Findings

No previously recorded archaeological, unique archaeological, or historic built environment resources were identified within the Ventura Steel Site as a result of this desktop inventory report, which included an SCCIC records search, NAHC Sacred Lands File search, and background research.

5.1 Archaeological Findings

Although there are no previously recorded archaeological resources within the Ventura Steel Site, the southernmost portion of the Offsite Impact Area is just 300 feet north of a previously recorded segment of the Mission San Buenaventura Aqueduct (CA-VEN-749H), which has been previously identified as a likely a continuation of the NRHP-listed Mission San Buenaventura Aqueduct (Property ID 75000497). In general, the portion of the Offsite Impact Area that intersects the undeveloped portion of the foothills should be considered sensitive for archaeological resources, as it is possible that other segments of the aqueduct are present within the Offsite Impact Area.

5.2 Historic Built Environment Findings

Although no previously recorded historic built environment resources are located within the Ventura Steel Site, a review of historic aerial photographs indicates that the Ventura Steel Site Alternative Station Site and Temporary Staging Area overlap two industrial buildings over 45 years old that have not been previously evaluated for historical significance:

- 3608 N. Ventura Avenue (appears in aerial photographs by 1947)
- 3504 N. Ventura Avenue (appears in aerial photographs by 1959)

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Appendix A. CONFIDENTIAL Records Search Results

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