

3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

A Cultural Resources Assessment was prepared for the proposed project in March 2007. This section summarizes the results and conclusions presented in the technical report. A complete copy of this report is included in Appendix D of this EIR.

3.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

PREHISTORIC OVERVIEW

While people are known to have inhabited southern California beginning at least 13,000 years before present, the first evidence of human occupation in the Los Angeles area dates to at least 9,000 years before present and is associated with a period known as the Millingstone Cultural Horizon (Arnold, Walsh and Hollimon 2004; Wallace 1955; Warren 1968). Departing from the subsistence strategies of their nomadic big-game hunting predecessors, Millingstone populations established more permanent settlements. Settlements were located primarily on the coast and in the vicinity of estuaries, lagoons, lakes, streams, and marshes where a variety of resources, including seeds, fish, shellfish, small mammals, and birds, were exploited.

Although many aspects of Millingstone culture persisted, by 3,500 before present, a number of socioeconomic changes occurred (Erlandson 1994; Warren 1968; Wallace 1955). These changes are associated with the period known as the Intermediate Horizon (Wallace 1955). The Intermediate Horizon marks a period in which specialization in labor emerged, trading networks became an increasingly important means by which both utilitarian and non-utilitarian materials were acquired, and travel routes were extended. Archaeological evidence suggests that the margins of numerous rivers, marshes, and swamps within the San Gabriel River drainage served as ideal locations for prehistoric settlement during this period. These well-watered areas contained a rich collection of resources and are likely to have been among the more heavily trafficked travel routes (Erlandson 1994).

The Late Prehistoric period, spanning from approximately 1,500 years before present to the Spanish mission era, is the period associated with the florescence of the contemporary Native American group whom the Spanish referred to as the Gabrielino (Wallace 1955). Occupying the southern Channel Islands and adjacent mainland areas of Los Angeles and Orange counties, the Gabrielino are estimated to have numbered around 5,000 in the pre-contact period and maps produced by early explorers indicate that at least 26 Gabrielino villages were within close proximity to known San Gabriel River courses, while an additional 18 villages were within reasonably close proximity to the river (Kroeber 1925; Gumprecht 1999).

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Spanish explorers made brief visits to Gabrielino territory in both 1542 and 1602, and on both occasions the two groups exchanged trade items (McCawley 1996). Sustained contact with Europeans did not

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commence until the onset of the Spanish Period, which began in 1769 when Gaspar de Portola and a small Spanish contingent began their exploratory journey along the California coast from San Diego to Monterey. Gabrielino villages are reported by early explorers to have been most abundant along the dominant rivers of the Los Angeles Basin, including the Los Angeles, San Gabriel, and Santa Ana Rivers. Nine important villages were located within the San Gabriel Valley, including Sheshiikwanonga, Sonaanga, Akuuronga, and Shevaanga in the vicinity of the modern City of San Gabriel. These four communities were close-knit, and shared their own regional dialect. The Gabrielino living in the Whittier Narrows area called themselves Kichireños, and occupied smaller settlements named Iisanchanga and Wiichinga, whose specific locations are not known. According to the Mission records, the latter community was noted to be “to the east of [the old San Gabriel] Mission on a plain closed by water on all sides,” a description that fits the project site and surrounding parcels well (McCawley 1996).

A string of 21 Missions were established in the years that followed the Portola expedition, the fourth being Mission San Gabriel Archangel founded in 1771, near the present-day city of Montebello, west of the lease boundary. This original location enjoyed fertile soils, but was repeatedly damaged by the periodic flooding of the San Gabriel River. In 1775, the mission was moved to higher ground five miles to the northwest (McCawley 1996; Lindsey and Schiesl 1976). By the early 1800s, the majority of the surviving Gabrielino population had entered the mission system, under the jurisdiction of Mission San Gabriel or Mission San Fernando several miles to the northwest (Jackson 1999).

While small deposits of gold had been mined previously in southern California, the discovery of gold in northern California led to an enormous influx of American citizens in the 1850s and 1860s, and these settlers rapidly displaced the old rancho families (Guinn 1977[1915]). The Southern Pacific Railroad extended its line from San Francisco to Los Angeles in 1876, with a spur line running less than a mile south of the lease boundary. Newcomers continued to pour into Los Angeles and the population nearly doubled between 1870 and 1880. More settlers continued to head west and the demand for real estate skyrocketed. The city’s population rose from 11,000 in 1880 to 50,000 by 1890 (Meyer 1981). During the first three decades of the 20th century, more than 2 million people moved to Los Angeles County, transforming it from a largely agricultural region into a major metropolitan area (Gumprecht 1999).

The groundbreaking and controversial film, *The Birth of a Nation*, was partly filmed within Whittier Narrows in 1915, probably within or immediately south of the lease boundary. This was among the first feature-length films ever to be made and the highest grossing film of all time until it was surpassed in 1925, and its creation here presaged the centrality of the Los Angeles region to the film industry in subsequent years (Lindsey and Schiesl 1976). Several early Tarzan films were also filmed within the Natural Area (Natural Area) due to its lush, jungle-like appearance, including *Son of Tarzan* in 1920 as well as *Tarzan and his Mate* in 1934 (Long 2006). Another important economic development in the area was the discovery of oil in 1917 within Whittier Narrows that led to the opening of the Montebello Oil Field (Takahashi 1976).

The rivers of the Los Angeles basin like the San Gabriel River flooded frequently in historic times, depositing rich soil that attracted early settlers. These unpredictable overflows became increasingly problematic as the landscape filled with ever more people in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, however. Until January of 1868, the San Gabriel River emptied into San Pedro Bay. Massive flooding that year caused the river to cut a new, more southerly course after leaving Whittier Narrows, destroying the young town of Galatin and ultimately discharging at Alamitos Bay. The new channel gradually took on the name of San Gabriel, while the original course of the San Gabriel River came to be known as Rio Hondo upstream and the Los Angeles River downstream (Gumprecht 1999).

The San Gabriel River experienced significant floods in 1884, 1889, 1911, 1914, and again in 1934 and 1938, each seemingly more destructive and costly than the last. A comprehensive flood control plan was drafted as a response, including the construction of 14 dams to impound San Gabriel Mountain storm waters. The Los Angeles County Flood Control District was also created at that time, and is now administered by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works (LADPW). A federal flood control act, passed in 1936, placed flood control in the Los Angeles Basin under the ultimate control of USACE (Gumprecht 1999; Lindsey and Schiesl 1976). While first proposed in 1937, the \$32 million dollar earthen Whittier Narrows Dam was not finished until 1955, due to the objections of residents of El Monte whose homes would be flooded by the dam's reservoir. The construction included the "evacuation" of the 2,500-acre flood basin of the many small homes and businesses that had previously existed there (Lindsey and Schiesl 1976; USACE 1955).

PROJECT AREA

The lease boundary was very likely host to Native American hunting and gathering prior to the 19th century, farming associated with the San Gabriel Mission beginning in 1771, and livestock pasturage associated with Rancho San Francisquito beginning in 1851. These activities are not likely to have had a lasting impact on the land or to have left behind durable evidence of their occurrence.

The modern history of the lease boundary did not begin until the early 20th century. The National Audubon Society leased 326 acres of the San Gabriel River floodplain from the Cate Ditch Company and Frank F. Pellissier and Sons in 1939, creating the San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary. This outdoor conservation education facility was the first of several of such facilities built by the National Audubon Society throughout the United States in subsequent years. In 1943, 7 acres of the lease boundary with frontage on Durfee Avenue were purchased by the National Audubon Society to be used as the headquarters of the sanctuary. World War II caused delays in the development of the facility, and a reassessment of the federal flood control plan. The federal government purchased the property in 1951, but the National Audubon Society was allowed to lease the land and continued to develop the lease boundary and surrounding areas as a wildlife sanctuary. Forty-five acres of the property burned in a fire in April 1955, although the headquarters buildings were not damaged. Later that same year, 2 additional parcels were acquired by the National Audubon Society along Durfee Avenue, and their largest building was moved to that high ground and altered to serve as a children's museum, becoming the focal point of

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the new Audubon Center of Southern California. Several additional facilities were built, including “a large utility building, a picnic shelter, rest room facilities, a new mailing center and a complete fencing job,” and 80 acres of the Natural Area were set aside as a wildlife sanctuary (Gould 1956). The Audubon Center of Southern California was dedicated on September 30, 1956, and hosted over 15,000 visitors in its first year of operation. By 1966, it had expanded to 127 acres (Gould 1956; Hillinger 1966). Following additional flooding in 1968 and 1969, the USACE channelized the San Gabriel River (Long 2006).

The facility was transferred to the County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation (LADPR) in 1970, becoming the WNNC. The construction of State Route 60 (SR 60) in the early 1970s created a large borrow pit within the Recreation Area, which filled with rainwater and was named North Legg Lake. Los Angeles County planners planned to develop the lake for recreation, but construction delays allowed a thriving wildlife community to emerge in and around the lake. When development resumed, wildlife enthusiasts and conservationists protested and filed lawsuits opposing changes to the lake. In an out-of-court settlement, the County agreed to create similar habitat in the form of three lakes south of Durfee Avenue to replace the habitat that would be impacted by the development of North Legg Lake. The creation of these “New Lakes” in 1974-1975 may represent one of the first riparian habitat restorations undertaken in California (Long 2006).

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Records Search

Archival records research of the proposed project area was conducted on April 3, 2006 at the South Central Coastal Information Center housed at California State University, Fullerton. The research focused on the identification of previously recorded cultural resources within a 1-mile radius of the lease boundary. A one-mile radius was chosen for its potential to yield information relevant to the potential use of the site in historic and prehistoric times. A larger radius may yield information that is not relevant to potential activities at the site. The archival research involved review of historic maps, previously recorded archaeological site records and reports, and historic site and building inventories.

A review of historic USGS topographic maps revealed that very little development took place within the lease boundary prior to the 1930s. The 1896 and 1900 15' Pasadena Quadrangle show a road where Durfee Avenue passes along the northern boundary of the lease boundary today. While several buildings were mapped along the north side of the road at this time, none are indicated within the lease boundary.

The records search revealed that a total of 25 archaeological/historical investigations were previously conducted within a 0-mile radius of the lease boundary (see Appendix D). Seven of these projects have encompassed part or all of the lease boundary. Five of these were archaeological surveys. All of the lease boundary has been previously surveyed. Of the 25 previous investigations, 5 appear to have been carried out in connection with the Whittier Narrows Flood Control District, 2 with the development of regional master plans, 2 with the installation of pipelines, 2 with the construction of cellular towers, 2

with the maintenance of roadways, 2 with the installation of fiber optic cables, 2 with a cemetery, and 2 with the development of a landfill. The remaining investigations were conducted for an equestrian center, a water reclamation project, and 4 were conducted in connection with unspecified development projects. None of the previous investigations appear to have involved archaeological excavation.

The records search indicated that 3 historic-period resources were previously recorded within 1-mile of the lease boundary, including a scatter of ceramic and metal fragments, a portion of the Union Pacific Railroad, and 4 historic structures (see Appendix D). No prehistoric archaeological resources have been recorded within the lease boundary. None of the historic-era resources identified by the record search are located within the lease boundary. Thus, such resources would not be affected by the proposed project.

Records and maps were examined at the WNNC. These included pamphlets, newspaper articles, historical photographs, and maps related to the lease boundary. WNNC staff members were interviewed to aid in the reconstruction of the history of the property. A detailed map produced by the USACE of the Whittier Narrows Flood Control Basin, created between 1939 and 1955, indicated that two structures stood on the western portion of the lease boundary prior to the construction of the National Audubon Society's San Gabriel River Wildlife Sanctuary. These are labeled "stable" and "garage shop."

Additional research was conducted at the Los Angeles Public Library to obtain historic information pertaining to the history of Whittier Narrows and the WNNC. A search of key terms using the electronic Los Angeles Public Library database of local historic and modern newspapers and magazines produced additional articles.

Native American Consultation

As part of this investigation, information concerning sacred lands located in the vicinity of the proposed project was requested from the Native American Heritage Commission as part of a standards records search. No sacred lands were reported. In addition, a Native American contact program was conducted to inform interested parties of the proposed project and to address any concerns regarding Traditional Cultural Properties or other cultural resources that might be affected by the proposed project. Initial contact was made in writing, with letters and response forms having been mailed to each representative on the Native American Heritage Commission list, on August 28, 2006. Copies of the contact letters are included as part of Appendix D. Each letter was followed by a telephone call. Although no written responses were received, five representatives provided verbal responses. Aside from a general concern about proposed project impacts to unknown cultural resources, none of the representatives contacted provided information pertaining to specific known resources of concern.

Cultural Resources Survey

A cultural resources field survey was conducted on July 28, 2006. The lease boundary was surveyed on foot, with surveyors walking in parallel transects 10 to 20 meters apart. Particular attention was paid to

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areas of good ground surface visibility and to rodent burrows that had exposed buried sediments. Site records for resources identified during the survey are in Appendix D.

The eastern portion of the lease boundary is currently undeveloped. It is covered with weeds and non-native shrubs along with varying numbers of trees. Dense stands of shoulder-high mustard and thistle occupy the majority of the lease boundary, while thick canopies of native grape vines made several tree clusters entirely inaccessible. The brush tended to be thickest along Durfee Avenue, while unpaved access roads and clear patches to the south allowed greater visibility. Numerous rodent burrows scattered throughout the area afforded occasional glimpses of the subsurface. All visible soils consisted of a light brown sandy alluvium. In all, visibility was less than 25 percent within this portion of the lease boundary. No cultural resources were encountered in this area.

The western portion of the lease boundary is occupied by 3 WNNC buildings, paved access roads, a paved parking lot and an irrigated and manicured lawn. Ground surface visibility in these areas ranged from none to 50 percent, with the greatest visibility adjacent the buildings, immediately south of Durfee Avenue. A small native plant garden on the western edge of the lease boundary, along with two landscaped areas adjacent to the parking lot, afforded between 5 and 20 percent surface visibility. No archaeological resources were identified in this area. No evidence of the “stable” and “garage shop” that appear on the pre-1955 USACE map, one of the maps reviewed at the WNNC, was located. These buildings are presumed to have been removed during the construction of the Audubon Center of Southern California in 1955-1956. Six standing WNNC buildings were examined and photographed by cultural resource specialists, and are described below. Photographs of these features are shown in Figure 3.4-1.

County Police Substation (WNNC-1)

The County Police Substation (WNNC-1) was constructed in 1955-1956 by the National Audubon Society as a part of the Audubon Center of Southern California. Though originally used as a naturalist’s residence, it was subsequently used for office space and equipment storage. The building took on its current function as a County of Los Angeles Office of Public Safety office sometime after 1970.

This building is a single-story, wood-frame structure with a gable roof, slightly overhanging eaves, and exposed beam ends. The exterior features clapboard siding on the northern and eastern façades. The southern façade displays clapboard siding with vertically attached battens (a later addition). The western façade features board and batten siding. Fenestration on this building includes grill-covered aluminum sliding windows of varying sizes. A single entry door with a shed roof supported by brackets is present on the eastern facade. This door is accessed by concrete stairs with a wooden railing. A single entry door, accessed by wooden stairs, is also present on the southern façade. The entire eastern elevation appears to be an addition made to this building. This portion of the building features a change in the angle of the roof, making the overall roof shape into a type of broken variant of the gable. Also, a delineation separating the eastern façade from the rest of the structure is noticeable on the northern elevation. This building sits upon a concrete foundation.



3.4-1a

Typical Ground Cover, Western Portion of Project Area

3.4-1b

WNNC Park Police Office, View to the South

3.4-1c

WNNC Main Building, View to the Southeast

3.4-1d

WNNC Restroom Building, View to the South



3.4-1e

WNNC Police Maintenance Garge and Shed, View to Southwest



3.4-1f

WNNC Picnic Shelter, View to West



3.4-1g

Typical Ground Cover, Eastern Portion of Project Area

Figure 3.4-1
Photos of Site Structures

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Back of Figure 3.4-1

WNNC/Museum (WNNC-2)

The nucleus of the WNNC/Museum (WNNC-2) was originally a residence located closer to the San Gabriel River than it is today (Allen 2006). This former residence was relocated to its current location following the National Audubon Society acquisition of the property in 1955, and subsequently underwent the alterations and additions.

The main part of the building is a single-story, wood-frame structure with a gable roof, composition shingles, and closed eaves. The exterior features clapboard siding and a combination of sash and aluminum sliding windows covered with iron grills. A ribbon window is located on the front (south) façade. An inset porch, covered by the principal roof, is also located on the southern façade. A concrete stoop leads to a single-entry door located on the northwest façade. An addition was made to the eastern elevation of this building in 1955-1956, featuring clapboard siding, a gable roof oriented at a right angle to the original roof, and iron grills over the windows. This eastern-most addition serves as a gift shop. A garage addition was made to the western elevation of the WNNC, also in 1955-1956. This portion features a side gable roof, clapboard siding, and a wooden double door on the northern elevation. The roof on this addition falls approximately one foot below the primary building it is attached to. Another addition was later added to the western elevation of the garage. This western-most addition features a gable roof, stucco siding, and iron grills over the windows. This entire building sits upon a concrete foundation.

Restroom Building (WNNC-3)

The WNNC Restroom Building (WNNC-3) was constructed in 1955-1956 by the National Audubon Society as a part of the Audubon Center of Southern California. This building is a single-story structure featuring a flat roof with wide eave overhang on its northern façade. Brackets on each façade help support the roof. The exterior displays stucco siding, a combination of fixed and aluminum sliding windows, and single-entry doors on the northern, southern, and western façades. This building sits upon a concrete slab foundation.

Maintenance Garage and Shed (WNNC-4)

These buildings appear to postdate 1955. The garage is a single-story building featuring a side-gable roof with moderately overhanging eaves. Metal roll-up doors are located on the western façade. A single-entry personnel door is located on the eastern elevation. A squared piece of plywood attached to the northern façade possibly covers a window opening. Fencing attached to the southern elevation encloses a small paved parking area. This building sits upon a concrete foundation. A small shed is located east of the garage. This building is composed of modular block and features a flat wooden roof that extends out on the southern elevation to form an overhang. The overhang is supported by four simple square posts. A large metal entry door is located on the southern façade. Two ventilation ports are located on the

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eastern and western elevations. The mural painted on this building's northern façade is purported to have been a Boy Scout project. This building also sits upon a concrete foundation.

Picnic Shelter (WNNC-5)

The WNNC Picnic Shelter (WNNC-5) is a gable-roof structure featuring a modular block wall on its western elevation. No other walls are present on this shelter. The roof is supported by 3 squared posts on the eastern elevation. This structure sits upon a concrete foundation. It was constructed in the early 1980s. The main part of the building is a single-story, wood-frame structure with a gable roof, composition shingles, and closed eaves. The exterior features clapboard siding and a combination of sash and aluminum sliding windows covered with iron grills. A ribbon window is located on the front (south) façade. An inset porch, covered by the principal roof, is also located on the southern façade. A concrete stoop leads to a single-entry door located on the northwest façade. An addition was made to the eastern elevation of this building in 1955-1956, featuring clapboard siding, a gable roof oriented at a right angle to the original roof, and iron grills over the windows. This eastern-most addition serves as a gift shop. A garage addition was made to the western elevation of the WNNC, also in 1955-1956. This portion features a side gable roof, clapboard siding, and a wooden double door on the northern elevation. The roof on this addition falls approximately one foot below the primary building it is attached to. Another addition was later added to the western elevation of the garage. This western-most addition features a gable roof, stucco siding, and iron grills over the windows. This entire building sits upon a concrete foundation.

3.4.2 REGULATORY SETTING

The criteria for evaluation of cultural resources for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Properties are set forth in 36 CFR 60.4:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and:

- That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

A cultural resource is considered “historically significant” under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) if the resource meets one or more of the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historic Resources. The California Register of Historic Resources was designed to be used by state and local agencies, private groups, and citizens to identify existing cultural resources within the state and to indicate which of those resources should be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible, from substantial adverse change. The following criteria have been established for the California Register of Historic Resources (Pub. Res. Code Section 5024.1, Title 14, Section 4852). A resource is considered significant if it:

- Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California’s history and cultural heritage; or
- Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past; or
- 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; or
- Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

A cultural resource has “archaeological significance” per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(c) if it meets the requirements for a historical resource under CEQA as described above or it meets the definition of a unique archaeological resource in Section 21083.2 of the Public Resources Code. A “unique archaeological resource” is defined in Section 21083.2(g) 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:

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

3.4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The following cultural resources analysis is based on the archival and library search and historical and archaeological surveys conducted for this project. A detailed Cultural Resources Assessment was prepared for the proposed project (see Appendix D). This discussion is only limited to potential impacts to cultural resources during construction as the proposed project would not involve operational activities that would disturb or destroy underlying historical or archaeological remains.

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THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE

As part of the Initial Study (see Appendix A), it was determined that the proposed project would not directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource, geologic resource, or human remains interred outside of a formal cemetery. Accordingly, these issues are not further analyzed in the EIR.

The CEQA Guidelines establish that a proposed project would have a significant effect on cultural resources if it would result in one or more of the following:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource (Cal. Code Regs., Title 14, Section 15064.5);or
- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource (Cal. Code Regs., Title 14, Section 15064.5).

IMPACT ANALYSIS

CR-1: *The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.*

Applying the criteria set in Section 3.4.2, the existing site structures were evaluated for listing on both the National Register of Historic Properties and the California Register of Historic Resources.

County Police Substation (WNNC-1)

The County Police Substation (WNNC-1) is not eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Properties. This building is the result of ad-hoc alterations that have compromised its historic integrity. The modifications undertaken on this building (some exterior siding replacement, addition, etc.) have altered its original appearance. As stated in 36 CFR 60.4, a resource considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Properties must retain enough of its historic character or appearance to be able to convey the reason(s) for its significance. Such integrity is evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The modifications on this building have diminished its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Research did not reveal that the building possessed important associations with significant events or persons (National Register Criteria A & B) or embodied distinctive architectural characteristics (National Register Criterion C) that would mark it of exceptional significance to compensate for its diminished integrity. Therefore, this building does not appear National Register eligible.

Additionally, this building was evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(1)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code. Archival research has determined that this building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history or cultural heritage because the

structure does not possess distinctive architectural characteristics or craftsmanship. This building is not associated with the lives of persons important to our past. In addition, the structure does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction because the modifications to the building have diminished its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Further, the building is not associated with a renowned architect or builder; nor is it the only example of its kind remaining. As such, this structure does not yield information important in prehistory or history. Thus, this building was determined not to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

WNNC/Museum (WNNC-2)

The WNNC/Museum (WNNC-2) is the result of several ad-hoc alterations and has been moved from another location. As stated in National Register Bulletin 15, a moved building or structure would need to be of exceptional significance in order to be considered for National Register listing. This building does not rise to that level of importance. Although the National Audubon Society played a key role in contributing to wildlife protection in the United States (National Register Criterion A), this building was originally constructed as a private residence. As such, it does not maintain its original historic use or its original historic association. This building does not reflect an original association with the National Audubon Society. Furthermore, the alterations that have been undertaken on the building have changed its original appearance and resulted in a loss of integrity. This diminished integrity includes a loss of original materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association. As outlined in National Register Bulletin 15, a loss of integrity, if sufficiently great, will overwhelm the historical significance a resource may possess and render it ineligible. Research did not reveal that the building possessed associations with persons (National Register Criterion B) or embodied distinctive architectural characteristics (National Register Criterion C) that would mark it of exceptional significance to compensate for its loss of integrity. Therefore, this building does not appear National Register eligible.

Additionally, this building was evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(1)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code. Archival research has determined that this building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history or cultural heritage because the structure does not possess distinctive architectural characteristics or craftsmanship. This building is not associated with the lives of persons important to our past. In addition, the structure does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction because the alterations that have been undertaken on the building have changed its original appearance and resulted in a loss of integrity. Further, the building is not associated with a renowned architect or builder; nor is it the only example of its kind remaining. As such, this structure does not yield information important in prehistory or history. Thus, this building was determined not to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

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Restroom Building (WNNC-3)

The WNNC Restroom Building (WNNC-3) is not eligible for National Register. This building does not appear to be significantly associated with an important theme or person in history (Criteria A and B). Although it is part of a complex established by the National Audubon Society during the mid-20th century, the building itself has always functioned as a restroom and is not known have been significantly associated with the society's mission. This building does not embody distinctive architectural characteristics, nor does it appear to be the work of a master (Criterion C). While buildings can sometimes provide important information on historic construction techniques and technologies (Criterion D), this type of building is well documented in both written and visual sources, and does not appear likely to yield important primary information.

Additionally, this building was evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5(a)(1)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code. Archival research has determined that this building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history or cultural heritage because the structure does not possess distinctive architectural characteristics or craftsmanship. This building is not associated with the lives of persons important to our past. The building itself has always functioned as a restroom and is not known have been significantly associated with the society's mission. Further, the structure does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction. The building is not associated with a renowned architect or builder; nor is it the only example of its kind remaining. As such, this structure does not yield information important in prehistory or history. Thus, this building was determined not to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

Maintenance Garage and Shed (WNNC-4)

The County Police Maintenance Garage and Shed (WNNC-4) is not eligible for National Register listing. Research did not reveal these buildings to be significantly associated with an important historic theme or event (National Register Criterion A). The buildings appear to have always functioned as a maintenance garage and storage shed for the local police. These buildings do not appear to have significantly contributed to National Audubon Society's mission. Research did not indicate that the buildings are associated with an individual considered important in local history (Criterion B). These buildings do not embody distinctive architectural characteristics, nor do they represent the work of a master (Criterion C). These types of buildings are well represented regionally and on a statewide level, and therefore, do not appear likely to yield important primary information on historic construction techniques or technologies (Criterion D). These buildings do not appear to meet the eligibility criteria for National Register listing.

These buildings were also evaluated in accordance with Section 15064.5 (a)(1)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code. Archival research has determined that this building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history or cultural heritage because the

structure does not possess distinctive architectural characteristics or craftsmanship. The buildings appear to have always functioned as a maintenance garage and storage shed for the local police. These buildings do not appear to have significantly contributed to National Audubon Society's mission. Further, the structure does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction. The building is not associated with a renowned architect or builder; nor is it the only example of its kind remaining. As such, this structure does not yield information important in prehistory or history. Thus, this building was determined not to be historical resources for the purposes of CEQA.

Picnic Shelter (WNNC-5)

The WNNC Picnic Shelter (WNNC-5) is not eligible for National Register listing. This structure has always functioned as a shelter/kiosk and does not appear to be significantly associated with an important theme or person in history (National Register Criteria A & B). The picnic shelter was constructed in the 1980s, and therefore, did not contribute to the society's mission. This structure does not embody distinctive architectural or engineering characteristics, nor does it appear to be the work of a master (Criterion C). This shelter does not appear likely to yield important primary information (Criterion D).

Further, this structure was evaluated under Section 15064.5 (a)(1)(2)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, using the criteria outlined in Section 5024.1 of the California Public Resources Code. Archival research has determined that this building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history or cultural heritage because the structure does not possess distinctive architectural characteristics or craftsmanship. Although situated on former National Audubon Society property, this shelter/kiosk was not shown to have contributed to the society's mission. Further, the structure does not embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction. The building is not associated with a renowned architect or builder; nor is it the only example of its kind remaining. As such, this structure does not yield information important in prehistory or history. Thus, this building was not determined to be a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

As described above, the 6 historic-era buildings identified as part of the present study have been photographed, documented and evaluated. None of the buildings are eligible for listing on either the National Register or California Register. Thus, removal of these structures during project construction would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. The impact would be less than significant.

The proposed project involves alteration of the landscape directly surrounding the existing WNNC and outbuilding between the WNNC and the existing parking lot. Further, to construct the new parking lot, ruderal vegetation and some trees would be removed. None of these landscape features have been identified as having a historical significance. As such, alteration of the landscape would not result in a significant impact to historic resources.

3.4 Cultural Resources

As described in the environmental setting, the Natural Area is associated with several early films. These include portions of *The Birth of a Nation* and several early Tarzan films. These films used the Natural Area before 1925, prior to the USACE control of the area for flood control purposes. The USACE took control of the Natural Area in 1936 and immediately proposed construction of the Whittier Narrows Dam as a means to prevent regular flooding in the area. The dam was finished in 1955 and changed the landscape and topography of the Natural Area. Homes above the dam in El Monte were flooded by the dam's reservoir and permanently removed. Below the dam, the San Gabriel River was channelized. Near the completion of the dam, the National Audubon Society gained control of the proposed project site and constructed its headquarters. In 1955, the headquarters building was moved to the current location of the WNNC to serve as a children's museum and a wildlife sanctuary. Due to construction of the dam, channelization of the river, and establishment of a museum and wildlife sanctuary, the landscape of the Natural Area was permanently changed from its appearance in *The Birth of a Nation*, *Son of Tarzan*, and *Tarzan and his Mate*. As such, the landscape conditions no longer exist and further alteration of the landscape would not result in a significant impact to historic filming locations.

CR-2: *The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource.*

The archival research indicated the presence of 3 previously recorded historic archaeological resources within a 1-mile radius of the lease boundary. No prehistoric archaeological resources have been previously recorded within a 1-mile radius of the lease boundary. Previous surveys and the survey conducted in connection with the proposed project did not reveal any surface evidence of archaeological resources within the lease boundary.

The lease boundary is located within the former San Gabriel River floodplain and contains alluvial soils deposited as a result of years of meandering and flooding. Although surveyors observed discrete locations where the alluvium appeared to extend as deep as 5 feet, the actual depth of alluvial deposit across the lease boundary is unknown. Approximately 6,000 cubic yards of soil would be graded as part of the proposed project. It is anticipated that much of the ground disturbance associated with the proposed project would occur within the recent alluvial deposit; such deposits are less likely to contain significant archaeological resources. However, the lack of surface evidence of archaeological materials and the presence of alluvium does not preclude the possibility that subsurface archaeological materials may exist. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act 16 U.S.C 470[f]) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800), in the event any archaeological materials are encountered during earthmoving activities, the construction contractor would cease activity in the affected area until the discovery can be evaluated by a qualified cultural resources specialist (archaeologist). LADPR, USACE, and the State Historic Preservation Office would be required to, at that time, engage in consultation to determine appropriate treatment measures for any resources determined to be significant. In addition, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(f) states that the lead agency shall make provisions for historical or unique archaeological resources accidentally discovered during construction. These provisions would include immediate evaluation of the find by a qualified

archaeologist. If the find is determined to be an historical or unique archaeological resource, contingency funding and a time allotment sufficient to allow for implementation of avoidance measures or appropriate mitigation shall be available. Compliance with these existing regulations would ensure a less than significant impact to archaeological resources.

3.4.4 MITIGATION MEASURES

No mitigation measures are required.

3.4.5 SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

The impacts would be less than significant.

3.4 Cultural Resources

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