

From: Eric Solorio
To: Kenneth Stein; Meg Russell; Scott Busa
Date: 4/7/2009 4:40 PM
Subject: Beacon_cultural

Kenny,
 Here is what I understand to be a draft of a proposed mitigation measure in the FSA. I haven't read it. Please review and if at all possible provide your comments no later than Friday. Call with any questions. Thanks.

Eric

Archaeological Zone 1

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The destruction of a portion of Archaeological Zone 1 as a result of the construction of the proposed project would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the historical resource, and would, therefore, have a significant effect on the environment. Staff here proposes a program to mitigate the partial loss of the resource. The partial loss of the resource represents a loss of information that it is in the public interest to preserve. The proposed program attempts to compensate the public for the loss of a unique body of information on the prehistory and early history of Native American life in Fremont Valley through the partial recovery and dissemination of that information.

Staff proposes a phased program that would mitigate the destruction of buried deposits that represent the one type of archaeological site that is presently known to make up Archaeological Zone 1. Clusters of traditional Native American fire features such as those found at archaeological sites FWARG-01, and Sites 8, 9, and 11 and 12 represent that site type. The phases of mitigation that staff proposes would serve to recover information on the part of the zone that would be subject to destruction through the development of a more complete inventory of the population of the fire feature clusters that make up the zone, the documentation of the variation in the physical character, the material content, and the age of the constituent features in the clusters, and the documentation of the material culture assemblages that may be present on the buried land surfaces that may surround constituent features. To further mitigate the loss of information on the zone, staff also proposes the preparation of a National Register of Historic Places nomination and its formal submission to the State Historical Resources Commission for consideration, and professional and public interpretation initiatives.

There a number of options to consider to better inventory the balance of the buried fire features that are most likely present in Archaeological Zone 1. A staff field inspection on January 27, 2009, of the subsurface stratigraphy of the zone during the field phase of the geoarchaeology study found that the sedimentary deposits below the surface of the zone are largely made up of fine-grained silts that contain almost no gravel. The types of fire features that are now known from archaeological sites FWARG-01, and Sites 8, 9, 11, and 12, features that typically include clusters of fire-affected, igneous pebbles and cobbles, and fire-hardened bands of oxidized sediments, are so distinct from the sedimentary matrix

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that encases them that the features may be high-quality candidates for location using geophysical methods such as ground-penetrating radar or magnetometry. The use of geophysical methods to conduct a sample survey as the initial inventory phase of the mitigation program offers the opportunity to more accurately and efficiently document the extent and the character of Archaeological Zone 1. The results of a geophysical survey would be subject to ground-truthing to verify and refine the survey results. If the results of the geophysical survey prove to be reliable, then the mitigation program would shift into a data recovery phase to investigate a sample of the fire features and to search for and document a sample of the buried land surfaces that may surround them. If the results of the geophysical survey prove inconclusive, then a sample subsurface survey of the zone would be conducted mechanically using equipment such as a road grader or a backhoe.

Staff proposes a data recovery phase for the Archaeological Zone 1 mitigation program that would include different modes of investigation for different aspects of the fire feature clusters. One mode would be small excavation exposures to uncover and document a sample of the individual fire features in the zone. The purpose of this documentation would be to gather data for the description of the physical variability of the features in the archaeological record, for the identification and inventory of the artifacts and ecofacts that are found in them, and for the interpretation of the methods of construction and the potential uses of the features. A second mode of investigation would be larger block exposures to attempt to uncover a sample of the buried land surfaces that may surround individual fire features or groups of them, and to document the material culture assemblages that may be found on such surfaces. The purpose of this documentation would be to gather data on the composition and spatial distribution of the assemblages for more holistic interpretations of the use of the features and for interpretations of the broader behavioral contexts in which the use of the features were embedded. A staff field inspection on January 27, 2009, of the subsurface stratigraphy of the zone during the field phase of the geoarchaeology study found that the preservation of subtle sedimentary features such as ancient polygonal surface cracks was common and indicates that the character of the sedimentary deposition in Archaeological Zone 1 would highly favor the preservation of former land surfaces and archaeological deposits related to their use.

Staff proposes further mitigation measures to promote the preservation of the portion of Archaeological Zone 1 that the construction of the proposed project would not destroy and to interpret the zone for the benefit of the public and the professional archaeological community. One measure would be the preparation of a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the zone and the submission of the nomination to the State Historic Resources Commission for formal consideration. Such a nomination would facilitate pulling the extant information for the zone together in one place, and the consideration of the nomination would help to raise public awareness of it, if not afford it greater protection under State and Federal historic programs in the future. Another measure would be the preparation and presentation of materials that interpret the zone for the public so that the public derives a direct benefit from the degradation of their environment. Public interpretation initiatives may include the preparation of an instructional module for use in local school districts, or the preparation of a display for existing public interpretation venues such as Red Rock Canyon State Park. A final measure would be the preparation and presentation of a paper or a journal article to inform the professional archaeological community of the zone and to interpret its implications for our understanding of the prehistory and early history of Native American life in the region.



BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
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APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION
For the *BEACON SOLAR ENERGY*
PROJECT

Docket No. 08-AFC-2

PROOF OF SERVICE
(Revised 2/9/09)

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DECLARATION OF SERVICE

I, Maria Santourdjian, declare that on April 10, 2009, I served and filed copies of the attached CEC Proposed Mitigation Measure – Cultural Resources. The original document, filed with the Docket Unit, is accompanied by a copy of the most recent Proof of Service list, located on the web page for this project at: **[www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/beacon]**. The document has been sent to both the other parties in this proceeding (as shown on the Proof of Service list) and to the Commission's Docket Unit, in the following manner:

(Check all that Apply)

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CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

Attn: Docket No. 08-AFC-4

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I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.



Maria Santourdjian