A CULTURAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT FOR THE HARVEST POWER FACILITY UPGRADE, 24487 ROAD 140, TULARE, TULARE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Prepared for:

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27 November 2012

Topographic Quadrangle: Tulare, 7.5' (1989)
Area: ~35 acres (~14 hectares)

(Keywords: *Tulare, Township 19S, Range 25E, Choinok Yokuts)*

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

On 13 November 2012, a cultural resources survey was performed of approximately 35 acres (14 hectares) of land located at 24487 Road 140, just northeast of the City of Tulare, in Tulare County, California (Map 1). The Project Study Area includes a 35-acre rectangular parcel (APN 150-140-014 and -016); also included are existing office and scale facilities, an all-weather driveway connecting the compost yards and the office, storage sheds, fuel tanks, employee maintenance shed and portable restroom, and a proposed fueling station (see Maps 2 and 3). The study area is located in Township 19S, Range 25E, Section 33, MDB&M.

Harvest Power California, LLC, proposes to expand its existing composting facility with the addition of more green and food waste, manure, and the addition of an anaerobic digester. A compressed natural gas (CNG) station will be installed on a small pad just north of the 35-acre parcel near the existing truck scales and immediately east of a hay barn.

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required by the County of Tulare to assess the potential impact of expansion of an existing composting facility on environmental resources. Provisions and implementing guidelines of the CEQA, as amended March 18, 2010, state that identification and evaluation of historical resources is required for any action that may result in a potential adverse effect on the significance of such resources, which include archaeological resources.

No historical resources or properties (i.e., properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historical Properties or the California Register of Historic Resources) were identified as a result of surface inspection of the Project Study Area; thus, it is unlikely that expansion of the existing composting facility have an effect on important archaeological, historical, or other cultural resources. No further cultural resources investigation is therefore recommended. In the unlikely event that buried archaeological deposits are encountered within the project area, the finds must be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist. Should human remains be encountered, the County Coroner must be contacted immediately; if the remains are determined to be Native American, then the Native American Heritage Commission must be contacted as well.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of a cultural resource survey of approximately 35 acres (14 hectares) of land located at 24487 Road 140, just northeast of the City of Tulare, in Tulare County, California (Map 1). The Project Study Area includes a 35-acre rectangular parcel (APN 150-140-014 and -016); also included are existing office and scale facilities, an all-weather driveway connecting the compost yards and the office, storage sheds, fuel tanks, employee maintenance shed and portable restroom, and a proposed fueling station (see Maps 2 and 3). The study area is located in Township 19S, Range 25E, Section 33, MDB&M.

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The author conducted a cultural resources survey of the Project Study Area 13 November 2012. A brief description of the natural and cultural setting of the Project Study Area follows this introduction. Survey methods and findings are presented in the subsequent section.

2.0 SETTING

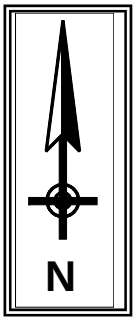
The Project Study Area is located on valley bottom lands approximately four miles northeast of the City of Tulare, in west-central Tulare County, California. Twentieth century modifications within and immediately surrounding the study area include the existing composting facility which includes a scale house and pond in addition to the compost yard; a feed lot with tank silos, hay barns, grain elevators, conveyor shed, and other outbuildings, and nine residential houses; and the earthen Tulare Colony Ditch. Surrounding land uses primarily consist of an agricultural mixture of orange orchards, row crops and farmed lands surrounding the proposed Project site. Rural residences are located less than one mile to the south and east, and commercial businesses are situated to the north and southeast of the proposed Project site. The Sundale Preschool and Elementary School are located less than one mile to the southeast of the proposed Project site.

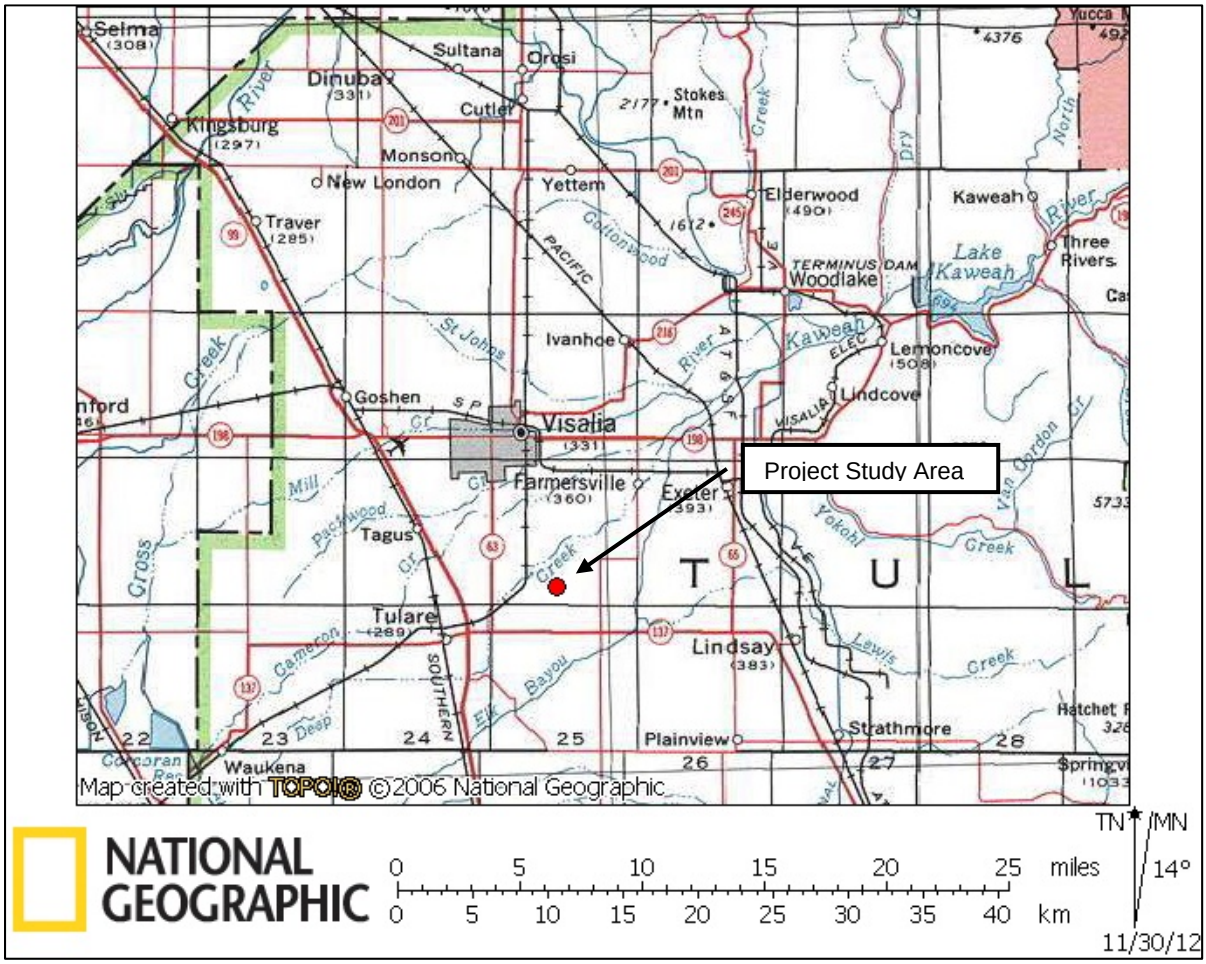
2.1 Natural Environment

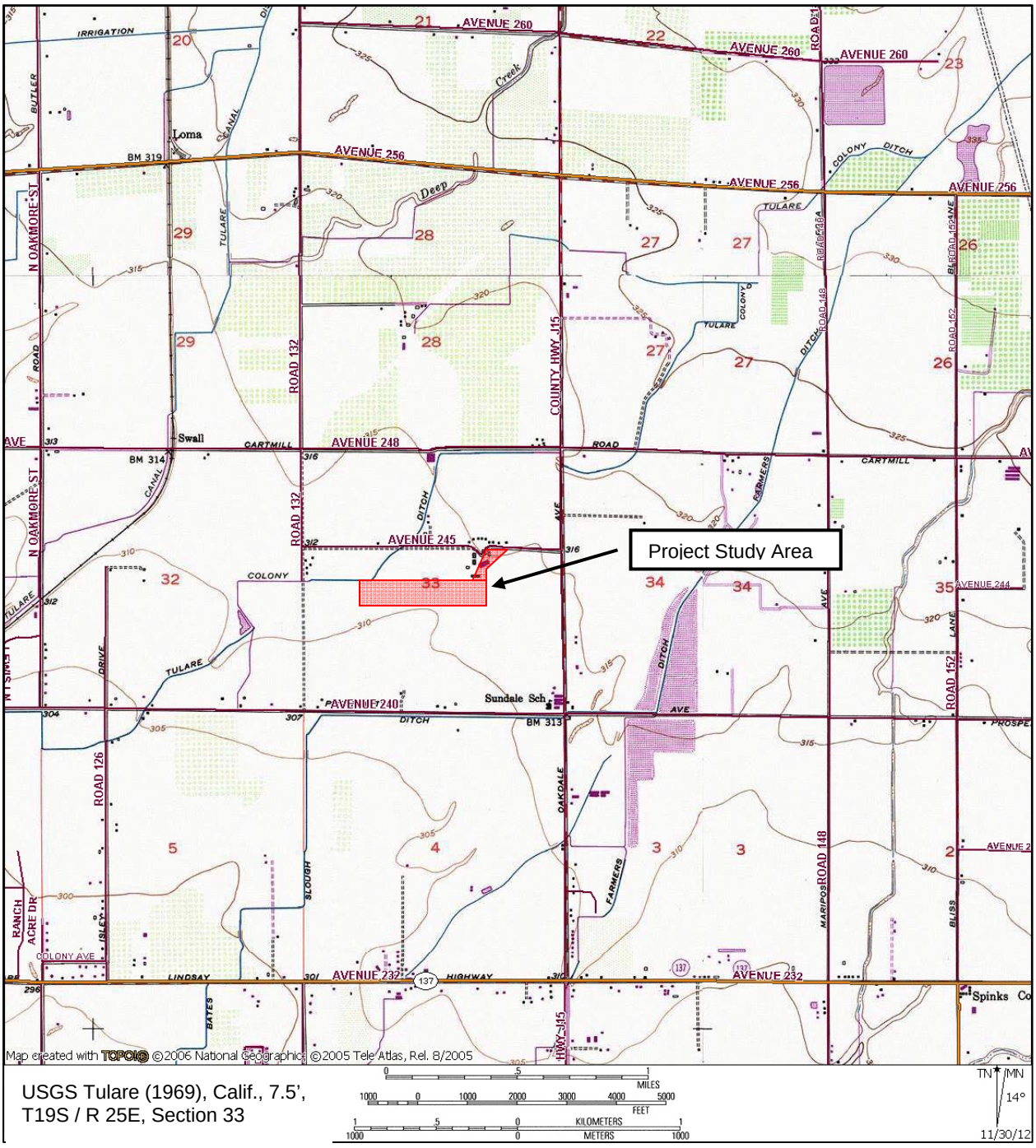
The Project Study Area is situated in the broad Kaweah River drainage in the lower elevations of the western south-central Sierra Nevada foothills of eastern Tulare County, at an elevation of 312 ft (95 m) above mean sea level. Soils within the study area include fine sandy loams of the Nord Series. Current land use in the study area vicinity is primarily agricultural with scattered single-family residences. Vegetation within the study area is limited to introduced grasses with stands of non-native trees lining the parcel boundary on the east and south.

MAP 1. PROJECT VICINITY

Harvest Power Facility Upgrade,
24487 Road 120, Tulare,
Tulare County

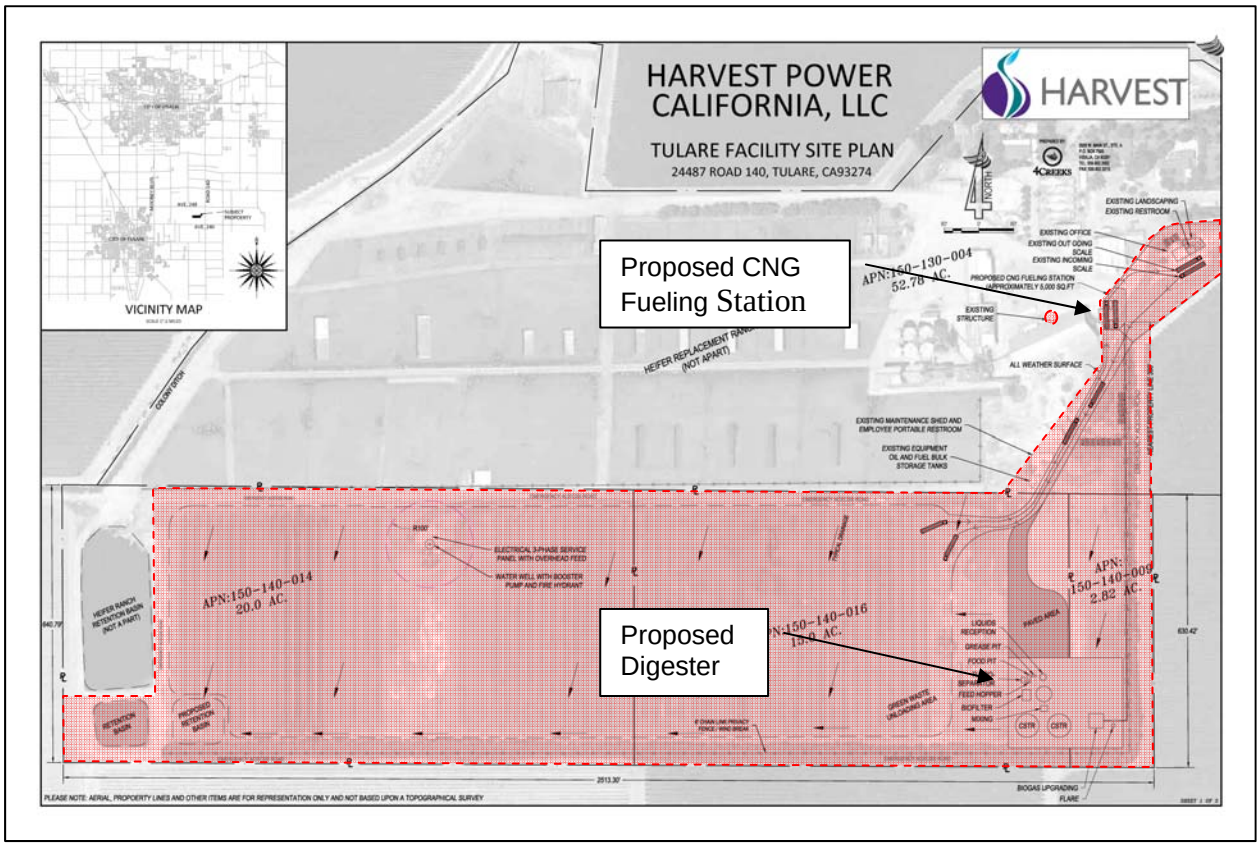






USGS Tulare (1969), Calif., 7.5', T19S / R 25E, Section 33

Map 2. Project Study Area.



Map 3. Harvest Power Site Plan with Digester and CNG Station (Project Study Area in red).

Prior to EuroAmerican exploration and settlement in the region, the central San Joaquin Valley was extensive grassland covered with spring-flowering herbs. Stands of trees -- sycamore, cottonwoods, box elders and willows -- lined the stream and river courses with groves of valley oaks in well-watered localities with rich soil. Rivers yielded fish, mussels, and pond turtles; migratory waterfowl nested in the dense tules along the river sloughs downstream. When the Spanish first set foot in the area, they found the deer and tule elk trails to be so broad and extensive that they first supposed that the area was occupied by cattle. Grizzly bears occupied the open grassland and riparian corridors on the valley floor and adjacent foothills. Smaller mammals and birds, including jackrabbits, ground squirrels, and quail were abundant. Native Americans occupants of the region describe abundant sedge beds, along with rich areas of deer grass, plants that figure prominently in the construction of Native American basketry items.

2.2 Prehistoric Period Summary

The San Joaquin Valley and adjacent Sierran foothills and Coast Range have a long and complex cultural history with distinct regional patterns that extend back more than 11,000 years (McGuire 1995). The first generally agreed-upon evidence for the presence of prehistoric peoples in the region is represented by the distinctive basally-thinned and fluted projectile points, found on the margins of extinct lakes in the San Joaquin Valley. These projectiles, often compared to Clovis points, have been found at three localities in the San Joaquin Valley including along the Pleistocene shorelines of former Tulare Lake. Based on evidence from these sites and other well-dated contexts elsewhere, these Paleo-Indian hunters who used

these spear points existed during a narrow time range of 11,550 BP to 8,550 BP (Rosenthal et al. 2007).

As a result of climate change at the end of the Pleistocene, a period of extensive deposition occurred throughout the lowlands of central California, burying many older landforms and providing a distinct break between Pleistocene and subsequent occupations during the Holocene. Another period of deposition, also a product of climate change, had similar results around 7,550 BP, burying some of the oldest archaeological deposits discovered in California (Rosenthal and Meyer 2004).

The Lower Archaic (8,550-5,550 BP) is characterized by an apparent contrast in economies, although it is possibly they may be seasonal expressions of the same economy. Archaeological deposits which date to this period on the valley floor frequently include only large stemmed spear points, suggesting an emphasis on large game such as artiodactyls (Wallace 1991). Recent discoveries in the adjacent Sierra Nevada have yielded distinct milling assemblages which clearly indicate a reliance on plant foods. Investigations at Copperopolis (LaJeunesse and Pryor 1996) argue that nut crops were the primary target of seasonal plant exploitation. Assemblages at these foothill sites include dense accumulations of handstones, millingslabs, and various cobble-core tools, representing "frequently visited camps in a seasonally structured settlement system (Rosenthal et al. 2007:152). As previously stated, these may represent different elements of the seasonal round. Future investigations should address this question. What is known is that during the Lower Archaic, regional interaction spheres had been well established. Marine shell from the central California coast has been found in early Holocene contexts in the great basin east of the Sierra Nevada, and eastern Sierra obsidian comprises a large percentage of flaked stone debitage and tools recovered from sites on both sides of the Sierra.

About 8,000 years ago, many California cultures shifted the main focus of their subsistence strategies from hunting to nut and seed gathering, as evidenced by the increase in food-grinding implements found in archeological sites dating to this period. This cultural pattern is best known for southern California, where it has been termed the Milling Stone Horizon (Wallace 1954, 1978a), but recent studies suggest that the horizon may be more widespread than originally described and is found throughout the region during the Middle Archaic Period. Radiocarbon dates associated with this period vary between 8,000 and 2,000 BP, although most cluster in the 6,000 to 4,000 BP range (Basgall and True 1985).

On the valley floor, early Middle Archaic sites are relatively rare. This changes significantly toward the end of the Middle Archaic. In central California late Middle Archaic settlement focused on river courses on the valley floor. "Extended residential settlement at these sites is indicated by refined and specialized tool assemblages and features, a wide range of nonutilitarian artifacts, abundant trade objects, and plant and animal remains indicative of year-round occupation" (Rosenthal et al. 2007:154). Again, climate change apparently influence this shift, with warmer, drier conditions prevailing throughout California. The shorelines of many lakes, including Tulare Lake, contracted substantially, while at the same time rising sea levels favored the expansion of the San Joaquin/Sacramento Delta region, with newly formed wetlands extending eastward from the San Francisco Bay.

In contrast, early Middle Archaic sites are relatively common in the Sierran foothills, and their recovered, mainly utilitarian assemblages recovered show relatively little change from the preceding period with a continued emphasis on acorns and pine nuts. Few bone or shell artifacts, beads, or ornaments have been recovered from these localities. Projectile points from this period reflect a high degree of regional morphological variability, with an emphasis on local

toolstone material supplemented with a small amount of obsidian from eastern sources. In contrast with the more elaborate mortuary assemblages and extended burial mode documented at Valley sites, burials sites documented at some foothill sites such as CA-FRE-61 on Wahtoke Creek are reminiscent of "re-burial" features reported from Milling Stone Horizon sites in southern California. These re-burials are characterized by re-interment of incomplete skeletons often capped with inverted millingstones (McGuire 1995:57).

A return to colder and wetter conditions marked the Upper Archaic in Central California (2,500-1,000 BP). Previously desiccated lakes returned to spill levels and increased freshwater flowed in the San Joaquin and Sacramento watershed. Cultural patterns as reflected in the archeological record, particularly specialized subsistence practices, emerged during this period. The archeological record becomes more complex, as specialized adaptations to locally available resources were developed and valley populations expanded into the lower Sierran foothills. New and specialized technologies expanded distinct shell bead types occur across the region. The range of subsistence resources utilized and exchange systems expanded significantly from the previous period. In the Central Valley, archaeological evidence of social stratification and craft specialization is indicated by well-made artifacts such as charmstones and beads, often found as mortuary items.

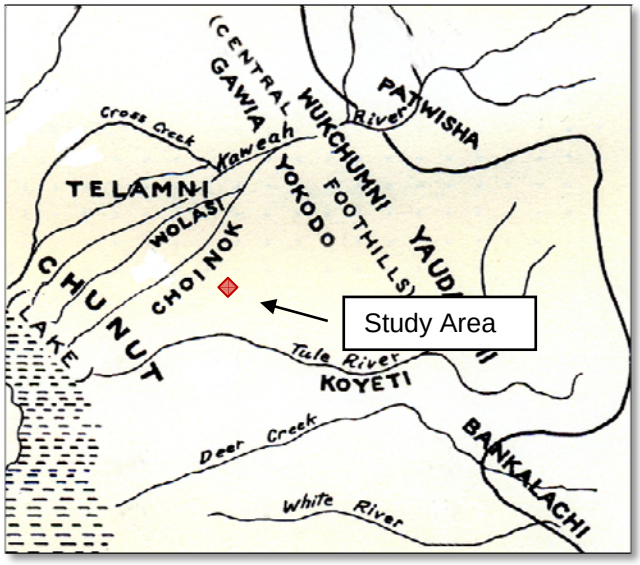


Figure 1. Southern Valley Yokuts Tribelet Locations (from Latta 1999).

The period between approximately 1,000 BP and Euro-American contact is referred to as the Emergent Period. The Emergent Period is marked by the introduction of bow and arrow technology which replaced the dart and atlatl at about 1,100 to 800 BP. In the San Joaquin region, villages and small residential sites developed along the many stream courses in the lower foothills and along the river channels and sloughs of the valley floor. A local form of pottery was developed in the southern Sierran foothills along the Kaweah River. While many sites with rich archaeological assemblages have been documented in the northern Central Valley, relatively few sites have been documented from this period in the southern Sierran foothills and adjacent valley floor, despite the fact that the ethnographic record suggests dense populations for this region.

2.3 Ethnographic Summary

Prior to EuroAmerican settlement, speakers of Yokutsan languages occupied most of the San Joaquin Valley and the bordering foothills of the Sierra Nevada and Diablo Range. Most of the Valley Yokuts lived on the eastern side of the San Joaquin River. The Project Study Area falls within territory occupied by the *Choinok Y*okut. "The Choinok … were the southernmost of three tribes in the flaring, slough-intersected delta of the Kaweah. They lived south of Tulare City and below Farmersville, probably on Deep and Outside Channels, in which region their town of Ch'iuta may be looked for" (Kroeber 1925:482).

Due to the abundance and diversity of wildlife habitats and plant communities within the Sierran foothills and nearby San Joaquin Valley and higher elevations of the Sierra Nevada,

Native American population densities in the region were quite high (Baumhoff 1963). While the acorn was the dietary staple, the diversity of accessible natural resources provided an omnivorous diet. The reader is referred to Gayton (1948), Kroeber (1925), Latta (1999), and Wallace 1978b for additional information on pre-contact Yokuts subsistence and culture. Figure 1 depicts the territory of the location of *Choinok* Yokut relative to the Project Study Area.

2.4 Historic Period Summary

The San Joaquin Valley was visited in the early 1800s by Spanish expeditions exploring the interior in search of potential mission sites. The Moraga (1806) expedition may have passed through *Choinok* territory (Cook 1960; Smith 1939). One of the earliest Americans to explore the Tulare area was Jedediah Strong Smith in 1826-27. In 1832-33 Colonel Jose J. Warner, a member of the Ewing-Young trapping expedition, passed through the San Joaquin Valley. Warner described Native villages densely packed along the valley waterways, from the foothills down into the slough area. The next year he revisited the area following a devastating malaria epidemic. Whereas the previous year the region had been densely occupied by Native peoples, during this trip not more than five Indians were observed between the head of the Sacramento Valley and the Kings River (Cook 1955).

EuroAmerican appreciation for the land did not include acceptance of its indigenous human populations, and pressure was exerted upon the US military to remove the Native population from the region, leaving the region open for American settlement and resource development. EuroAmerican settlement of the region began in 1851 with the establishment of Fort Miller on the San Joaquin River. Hostilities between Native inhabitants and American settlers initially prevented widespread settlement of the region; however, by 1860 such threats had been reduced and settlers began taking up large tracts in the region.

In late 1849 or early 1850, a party under the leadership of John Wood settled on the south bank of the Kaweah River, about seven miles east of the present city of Visalia (Hoover et al. 1990:508). In April, 1852, Tulare County was created, with the county seat initially located at Woodsville. In 1853 the county seat was removed to Fort Visalia, located in the area bounded by Oak, Center, Garden and Bridge streets. The City of Tulare, founded by the Southern Pacific Railway Company in 1872, was designed to become the leading city of the county, as well as the county seat. Tragedy struck the city in the form of a succession of devastating fires, followed by massive debt, causing many to move their homes and business to Visalia. The city finally recovered in 1902 and became a thriving center for dairy farming.

Figure 2 provides a map of land ownership and development in the general project area vicinity. The Project Study Area falls within lands owned by B. F. Bishop, Mrs. A. Mc. M. Hayes, W.H. Hammond. No structures are depicted within or adjacent to the Project Study Area. Bates Slough, depicted on the 1892 map as flowing through the Project site, has subsequently been channelized into the Tulare Colony Ditch located immediately northwest of the Project site.

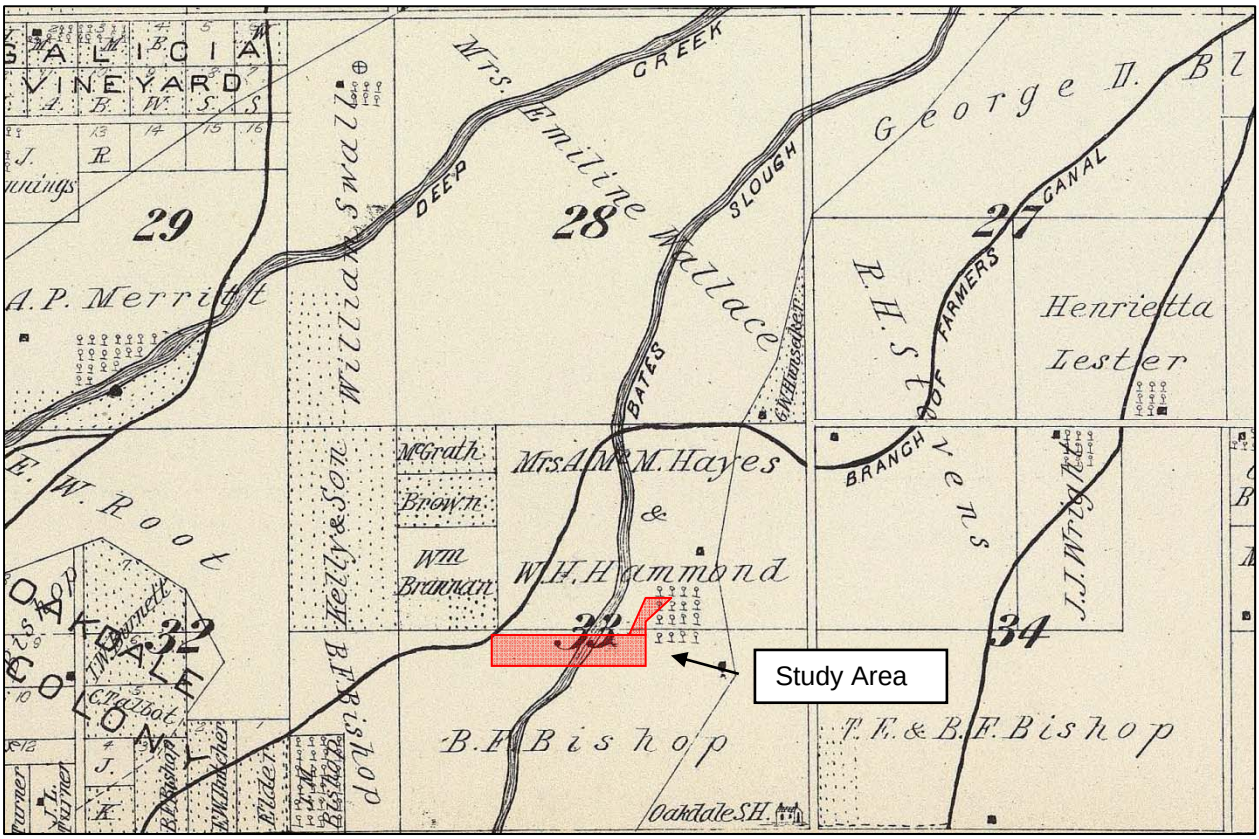


Figure 2. Land ownership and development, 1892 (Thompson 1892).

2.5 Record Search Results

In July 2012, a records search was requested on behalf of Harvest Power LLC by Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group with the Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System, to identify areas previously surveyed and identify known cultural resources present within or in close proximity to the Project site (Attachment 1). According to the Information Center records, there have been no cultural resource surveys completed within the Project site; one study has been completed within a ½-mile radius of the Project site. No cultural resources have been recorded within or adjacent to, or within a ½-mile radius of the Project site. No cultural resource sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, California Points of Historical Interest, State Historic Landmarks, or the California Inventory of Historic Resources have been documented within ½-mile radius of the Project site.

2.6 Native American Consultation

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) was contacted in order to determine whether Native American sacred sites have been identified either within or in close proximity to the project area). To date no response has been received from the NAHC.

3.0 METHODS AND FINDING

On 13 November 2012 the author conducted a cultural resources survey of the Project Study Area. Most of the 35-acre composting yard was covered with linear piles of green/food waste, with a separate area for manure, thus obscuring ground visibility. The perimeter of the

compost processing area as well as the proposed CNG tank site located just north of the compost yard adjacent an existing hay barn were inspected for evidence of cultural resources with negative results.

No historical resources or properties (i.e., properties eligible for listing on the National Register of Historical Properties or the California Register of Historic Resources) were identified as a result of surface inspection of the Project Study Area; thus, it is unlikely that expansion of the existing composting facility have an effect on important archaeological, historical, or other cultural resources. No further cultural resources investigation is therefore recommended. In the unlikely event that buried archaeological deposits are encountered within the project area, the finds must be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist. Should human remains be encountered, the County Coroner must be contacted immediately; if the remains are determined to be Native American, then the Native American Heritage Commission must be contacted as well.

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PREPARER'S QUALIFICATIONS

C. Kristina Roper conducted the historical resources inventory and background research, and assisted in the preparation of this Historic Resource Evaluation Report. Ms. Roper has over 30 years of professional experience in the field of archaeology, historical research and architectural evaluation, specifically in the investigation and management of cultural resources within the context of local, state and federal regulatory compliance for projects in the Far West. Ms. Roper holds a Master's degree in Cultural Resources Management awarded in 1993 from Sonoma State University, and is certified as a Registered Professional Archaeologist. She has completed graduate-level coursework in historical architectural evaluation and historic research. Her experience in cultural resources management includes both government and private sector employment and contracting for archaeological field services and historic research, documentation of resource assessments for Initial Studies (IS), Environmental Assessments (EA), Environmental Impact Reports (EIR), and Environmental Impact Statements (EIS). Ms. Roper is a registered archaeologist with the California Historic Resources Information System.

Ms. Roper has participated in planning efforts with numerous governmental entities in the San Joaquin Valley. She has prepared heritage preservation ordinances for the City of Chowchilla, serves as advisory staff to the Chowchilla Heritage Preservation Commission, and has recently completed a multi-year survey and assessment of Chowchilla's built environment. Ms. Roper has prepared a cultural resources records search and sensitivity analysis to be used in the development of a revised General Plan for the City of Coalinga, Fresno County. Ms. Roper has consulted with Native American tribes in the San Joaquin Valley and Sierra foothills under Senate Bill 18 (SB 18), which applies to General Plans, Specific Plans, and amendments proposed on or after March 1, 2005. SB 18 expands CEQA for the protection of California's traditional tribal cultural places by requiring consultation with Native American Groups during these planning efforts to define resources and sacred areas and incorporate protection of these important resources into the planning process.

Ms. Roper has served as a Lecturer in Anthropology at California State University Fresno from 1995 to the present. Among her many courses taught is an upper division course in Cultural Resources Management which provides an overview of state and federal historic preservation law and the identification and evaluation of cultural resources. From 2002 through June of 2009, Ms. Roper served as Project Director for a services contract with the California Department of Transportation, District 6, Cultural Resources Branch, administered by the California State University Foundation. Ms. Roper supervised a team of cultural resources technicians who performed professional and technical services required by Caltrans for cultural resource studies. These included archaeological survey, title search for historic structures and properties, prehistoric and historic background research, excavation of archaeological sites, electronic data entry, and maintenance of confidential archaeological records and files.

ATTACHMENT A:

CALIFORNIA HISTORIC RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER
SOUTHERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY INFORMATION CENTER
RECORDS SEARCH (RS # 12-2120)

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL RESOURCES INFORMATION SYSTEM

FRESNO KERN KINGS MADERA TULARE

Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center
California State University, Bakersfield
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Bakersfield, California 93311-1022
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TO: Samantha V. Chaidez
Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group
130 N. Garden Street
Visalia, CA 93291

(RS# 12-212)

DATE: July 5, 2012

RE: Job No. 3503-12V1: Tulare County Biomass and Composting Facility Expansion

County: Tulare

Map(s): Tulare 7.5'

The Southern San Joaquin Valley Information Center is under contract to the State Office of Historic Preservation and is responsible for the local management of the California Historical Resources Inventories. The Center is funded by research fees and a grant from the State Office of Historic Preservation. The Information Center does not conduct fieldwork and is not affiliated with any archaeological consultants who conduct fieldwork.

CULTURAL RESOURCES RECORDS SEARCH

The Information Center files include known and recorded archaeological and historic sites, inventory and excavation reports filed with this office, and properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places (4/5/12), California Register, the California Historical Landmarks, the California Inventory of Historic Resources, and the California Points of Historical Interest. The following summarizes the known historical resources information currently available for this subject property based in part on the sources outlined above.

PRIOR CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORIES WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA AND A ONE-HALF MILE RADIUS

According to the information in our files, there have been no previous cultural resource studies conducted within the project area. There has been one (1) additional study conducted within a one-half mile radius, TU-00102.

(RS # 12-212)

RECORDED CULTURAL RESOURCES WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA AND A ONE-HALF MILE RADIUS

There are no recorded cultural resources within the project area or within a one-half mile radius, and it is not known if any exist there. Please note that no data does not mean negative data.

There are no known cultural resources within the project area or a one-half mile radius that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register, California Inventory of Historic Resources, California Points of Historic Interest, or the California State Historic Landmarks.

COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

We understand this project consists of the expiation of operations by adding a high solids anerobic digestion facility and Compressed Natural Gas refueling station. If the expansion will take place on currently vacant land where no underground utilities exist, we recommend a qualified, professional archaeologist conduct a field survey, prior to ground disturbance activities, to determine if cultural resources are present. If the land has already been developed or heavily disturbed by operation activities, no further cultural resources investigation is needed at this time. However, if cultural resources are unearthed during ground disturbance activities, all work must halt in the area of the find and a qualified, professional archaeologist should be called out to assess the findings and make the appropriate mitigation recommendations. A referral list of is available at www.chrisinfo.org. If you have any questions or comments, or need any additional information, please don't hesitate to contact our office at (661) 654-2289.

By 

Brian E. Hemphill, Ph. D.
Coordinator

Date: July 5, 2012

Fee: $225.00/hr. (Priority Service)

Please note that invoices for Information Center services will be sent under separate cover from the California State University, Bakersfield Accounting Office.