1.0 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources are old things or places – anything from an Indian arrowhead to an old bottle. Technically speaking cultural resources include prehistoric or historically important structures or objects, the location of a historic event, or an area considered important to a group of people. Cultural resources tell us about local and regional history, in this case the history of the Chuckwalla Valley and of Southern California. Each cultural resource is unique and irreplaceable. Genesis Solar is committed to preserving California's cultural heritage by implementing mitigation measures during project construction.

1.1 Setting

Humans have lived in the Blythe area for about 12,000 years. (photo, map) These early American Indians lived by hunting animals and gathering seeds and other plants. Instead of the dry, hot desert that is here today, 12,000 years ago the climate was colder and wetter. Today, one of the few safe places to live for longer than a few days is along the Colorado River. But in colder, wetter times, the Southern California desert had many lakes. The lakes had fish and attracted birds like ducks and geese, making these attractive places for people to hunt and settle with their families for a few months. Sometimes you can still find the signs of these old camp sites along the edge of dry lakes, such as Dry Ford Lake on the south edge of the Genesis project site, or at springs or tanks. Some of these very old camps may be buried in the sand. The earliest peoples used spears with large stone points to hunt animals. Later, as the climate became dryer the Indians started to use stones to grind seeds into flour. Finally, around 1500 years ago most of the local people settled along the Colorado River and farmed corn, beans and squash. They also started to use the bow and arrow and pottery. These farmers liked to trade for shells and pottery with people who lived as far away as the California coast, the Gulf of California, and New Mexico. Bits of the ancient trade routes can still be seen in well preserved parts of the desert. These routes are the same ones we use today, such as Interstate 10.

Who were the people who lived here? Well, when the Spanish arrived in the 1740s they found people who today call themselves the Chemehuevi, Serrano, Cahuilla, Mojave, Quechan, Maricopa, and Halchidoma living in this part of Southern California and Arizona (See map below).

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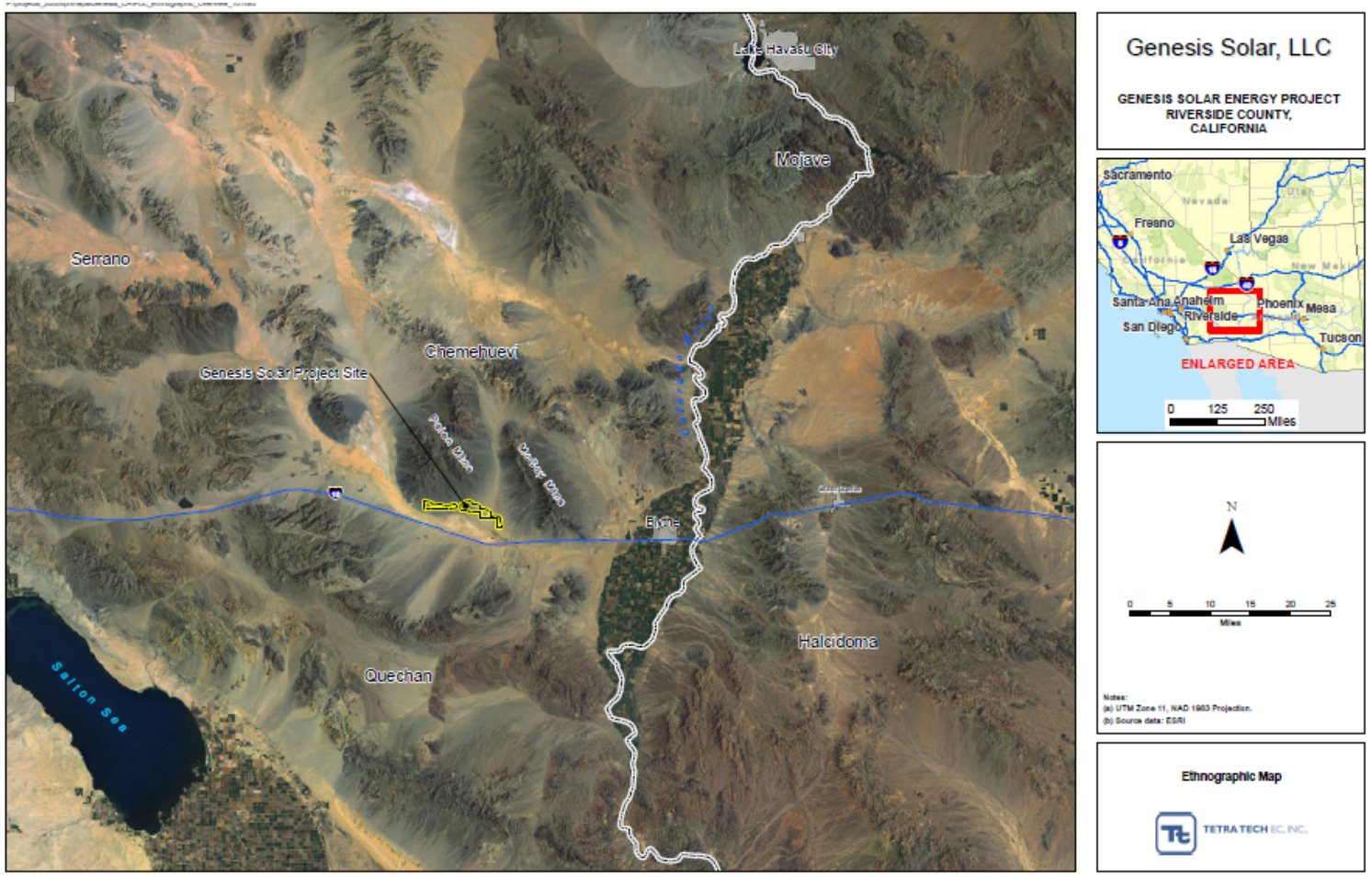

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The GSEP project area doesn't appear to have been part of any specific territory, but the project area is located near a corridor of trails used for east/west travel between the Colorado River and the Pacific Coast. Several tribes used this corridor for travel to natural resource areas used for hunting animals, gathering of plants used as food or other purposes, to visit religious or sacred sites, and to trade with one another. Archaeological sites, historic documents, and oral history provide information regarding the Native Americans that lived and still live in the project region.

Native American's record their history in songs that are geographically connected to the landscape and are a means to store and transfer knowledge regarding the landscape in connection with religious beliefs and practices, the location of specific religious events, locations of hunting and food gathering places, and tribal territories. For example, the Salt Song Trail is a series of songs that trace the journeys of ancestral people across the landscape to historical, spiritual, and scared sites within the region. These songs speak of near-by Mountains, springs, the Colorado River, and other areas across the desert landscape. These locations hold cultural and religious significance to the Native Americans in the region and are considered holy.

Native American people have lived in this region for thousands of years and archaeological sites in combination with historic accounts and oral histories provide information regarding these people and their ways of life.

The nearest Native American reservations to the GSEP project include the Chemehuevi Indian Reservation (along the Colorado River and near Lake Havasu, Arizona), the Colorado River Reservation (along the Colorado River just north of Blythe, California and Arizona), and the Fort Mojave Indian Reservation (along the Colorado River near Needles California and extends into Arizona and Nevada), and several other tribes near Palm Springs, California (see map below).

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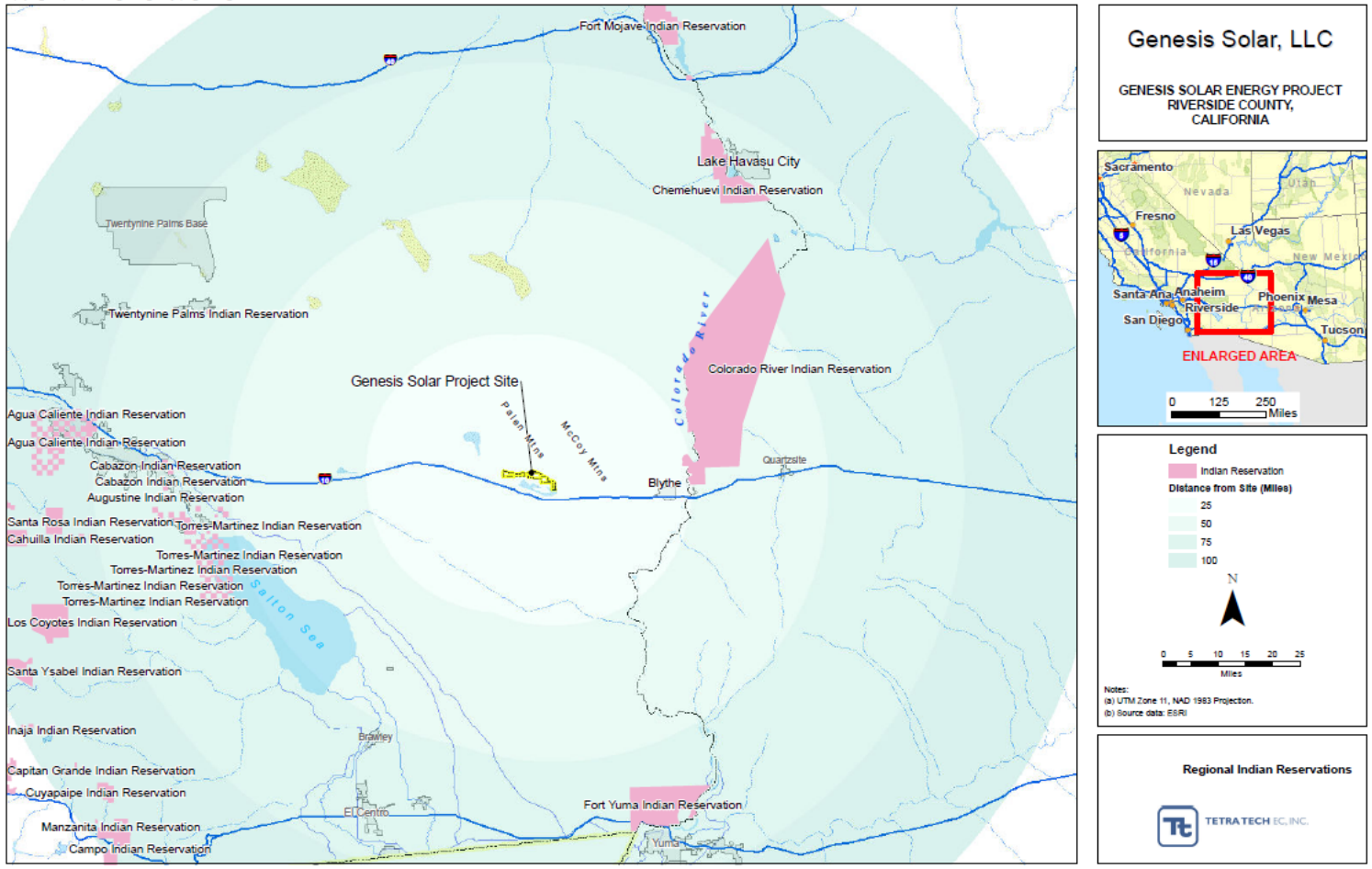

Genesis Solar, LLC

GENESIS SOLAR ENERGY PROJECT
RIVERSIDE COUNTY,
CALIFORNIA

Legend

- Indian Reservation
- Distance from Site (Miles)
  - 25
  - 50
  - 75
  - 100

N

0 5 10 15 20 25
Miles

Notes:
(a) UTM Zone 11, NAD 1983 Projection.
(b) Source data: ESRI

Regional Indian Reservations

TETRA TECH EC, INC.

The area was generally considered unappealing to European settlers until advances in dry land farming techniques, well drilling, and irrigation were made in the late nineteenth century. Although there was some gold mining activity in the hills, permanent European settlements did not occur until the 1880s. During World War II, the desert region was utilized as a training facility for troops bound for the deserts of Africa. The Desert Training Center/California Arizona Maneuver Area (1942–1944) was originally established by General George Patton and included areas with semi-permanent facilities, infantry camps, outpost, airstrips, roads, and training areas. The Genesis project area was used by these troops to practice small group maneuvers and larger tank battles with air support. Ration cans, bullets, and tank tracks can still be found on parts of the project site.

Photo of a WWII B-unit, C-Ration Can artifact found on the project site.

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Photo of a WWII bullet shell casing

1.2 Regulation and Protection of Cultural Resources
The following state and federal laws and regulations affect the management of cultural resources:
•Archaeological Resources Protection Act
•National Historic Preservation Act
•California Environmental Quality Act
•California Public Resources Code (Sections 5097.5, 5097.9, and 5097.99)
All onsite personnel will be instructed that it is illegal for site workers to collect any objects, including old bottles, from public land according to the federal Antiquities Act and the California Public Resources Code (Sections 5097.5 and 5097.9). Disturbing Native American burial sites is a felony under California Public Resources Code (Section 5097.99). In addition, the deliberate destruction and removal of cultural resources on private land is prohibited under the conditions of GESEP's permit from the CEC.

1.3 Cultural Resources at the Project Site
Prior to construction, the Project area was carefully investigated to identify prehistoric and historic artifacts. During construction phases when grading or excavation occurs, additional artifacts may be exposed. Artifacts can be anything that has been manufactured, altered, transported, or used by humans. (photo)

Examples of prehistoric artifacts may include such items as bones, hammer stones, scrapers, stone flakes, flaked knives, pottery, projectile points, grinding stones, or similar items. (photos, examples)

Historic artifact examples may include glass bottles, ceramics, tin cans, military-related artifacts, or similar items. In addition, materials and locations attributed to Hispanic and other ethnic or racial groups may also be considered important cultural resources. (photos, examples)

Artifacts can become buried or partially buried by natural environmental processes such as rodent activity, soil erosion, wind, and water (e.g. drainages, flooding). Partially buried and/or buried artifacts may appear, on the surface, as a rock, an earthen mound, an odd object, or a piece of trash. Deeply buried artifacts are typically not noticeable on the surface. When a buried artifact is uncovered or freshly exposed part or all of it may appear darker in color (compared to artifact or parts of artifacts on the surface), it may be very fragile, and the defining attributes that make it an artifact may become more apparent. (photos, examples)

On the Project site prehistoric surface deposits may appear as a scatter of large rocks that look out of place, a cluster of fire-cracked rocks, pottery and/or lithics (e.g. stone flakes, tools, etc) within a relatively defined area. Historic surface deposits can appear as refuse scatters or dump (e.g. cans, glass, ceramics, military related items, etc.), depressions, rock alignments, and/or foundations. In addition cleared areas for tents and depressions that were dug forfox holes are associated with WWII sites. Tank Tracks dating to the WWII era have also been reported in the region.

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Photo: example of WWII refuse scatter located on the project site.

Subsurface archaeological deposits on the Genesis site could range from concentrated light to dark soil with fire-cracked rock, baked clay, ash or charcoal, bone, and/or artifacts (e.g. stone flakes, tools, ground stone, shell). These types of deposits could be found near dry lake beds and/or in sand dunes where they may have been buried over from 1000s of years of sand shifting from the result of wind and/or drainages.

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Subsurface historic deposits could include burnt or darken soils with refuse (e.g. cans, glass, ceramics, military related items, etc.), rock alignments and/or foundations. Specifically on the project site, small units would conduct military training maneuvers over the landscape. Archeological evidence of these actives include refuse scatters that were left behind by the men either training and/or camping out in the desert for the night and/or could incude dug out depression that once served as a gun placements/fox-holes. (see WWII photos above).

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1.4 Project Construction and Unanticipated Finds

Indicators of artifact presence include bone fragments, shellfish remains, distinct baked clay or ash layers in the soil, remnants of a foundation (stacked stones, bricks, or cobbles), trash pits, ammunition casings, rock rings or distinct depressions. (photo) Genesis Solar will have Archaeological Monitors on site during ground disturbance, including earth-moving activities, clearing, grading, drilling, and trenching. The Archaeological Monitors will observe all activities involving native soil disturbance in areas where buried cultural resources may exist, down to soils that predate human occupation. In the event that any of the above items or conditions are identified during construction, the archaeological monitor has the authority to halt construction within the area of the find. If an archaeological monitor is not present, it is imperative to stop the activity and notify the Archeological Monitor or a Supervisor. A qualified Archeological Monitor will evaluate the find to determine if it warrants further investigation.

In addition, a local knowledgeable and well trained Native American monitor may be on site working alongside the archaeological monitor. The Native American monitor will monitor ground disturbance and assist in identifying prehistoric cultural material and will ensure that the identified cultural material is treated appropriately from a Native American point of view.

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(Include a discussion of what Native American monitors do, and how they will work with Archaeological monitors.)¶

1.5 Site Worker Responsibilities

It is important that each person on the jobsite remembers these basic rules for protecting cultural resources:

•If an Archaeological Monitor is present when a cultural resource is exposed, he or she will direct the worker to stop work at the location of the “find.” Stopping construction in the vicinity of an archaeological find is an important condition of the GESEP’s permit from the CEC and one with which site workers MUST COMPLY. Work may be stopped for only a few minutes, or it may be shut down for an extended period of time, depending on what is found.

•If an Archaeological Monitor is not present when a cultural resource is found, it is the worker’s responsibility to stop work and notify the Construction Supervisor immediately.

•Workers will be instructed to mark the location of the find and block off access to it until the Archaeological Monitor arrives. The area of the find must be protected from potential damage to cultural resources that could be caused by construction activities.
•Discoveries of bone are to be treated by construction personnel as potential human remains until a determination can be made by a qualified CRS.

(A discussion of local Native American beliefs, how those beliefs are related to archaeological resources that may be found in the area, and the appropriate respectful behavior towards sacred places and objects is pending response from the Tribes to BLM.)

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