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**CULTURAL RESOURCE INVESTIGATION
OF THE PROPOSED RIVER OAKS II DEVELOPMENT
NORTH RIVER ROAD, PASO ROBLES**



Prepared at the request of:

Richard Willhoit
2727 Buena Vista Dr.
Paso Robles, CA 93446

Prepared by:
John Parker, Ph.D., RPA

USGS Quads:
Paso Robles 7.5'

February 20, 2007

FIELD AND RESEARCH ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES

SUMMARY

On July 19th 1999, Steve Gregory requested that the author conduct a cultural resource investigation of a 242-acre parcel on North River Road. The purpose of the investigation was to locate, describe, and evaluate any archaeological or historical resources, which may be present on the parcel (Parker 1999).

On January 8th 2007, Richard Willhoit requested that the author review the results of the 1999 field inspection and apply them to a newly planned development at the same location. In addition, the author was to assess the impact that might occur as a result of the proposed construction of a mixed residential/open space development.

The results of this analysis indicated that no significant historic or prehistoric cultural resources exist within the newly proposed project area. It is recommended that the proposed project be approved as planned.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The fieldwork carried out as part of this study was conducted by John and Cheyanne Parker. Dr. Parker holds a Ph.D. in Archaeology, and is a Registered Professional Archaeologist. Cheyanne has 8 years of archaeological field and lab experience. The fieldwork took place August 10th, 12th, 17th, 18th, and 25th, 1999.

The proposed project will require a local discretionary permit indicating that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) applies to the project. Therefore this cultural resource evaluation was designed to comply with the requirements set forth in CEQA (sec. 21083.2). This report follows the outline for identification of cultural resources as presented in the "Archaeological Resource Management Reports (ARMR): Recommended Contents and Format" (State of California 1990).

The parcel covered 242 acres of level, gently rolling, to steep terrain making up a portion of the Salinas River Drainage. Soils throughout the area were very similar and consisted of a medium to light gray or graybrown clay soil over a white siltstone bedrock. In upland areas this soil contained small to fist-size river gravels and cobbles, including natural chalcedony, basalt, and Monterey chert. Low-lying areas contained less rock and more clay in the soil. Although most of the area had been planted in barley, soils would have originally supported an oak grassland environment. A small portion of the

project area included a stretch of the Salinas River bed, containing a riparian environment.

The property is depicted on the Paso Robles 7.5' USGS topographic map as existing in an unsectioned portion of the Santa Ysabel Land Grant, T26S, R12E (see attached map for area inspected). The project area was situated north of HWY 46 on both sides of North River Road and extended eastward to Buena Vista Drive.

The proposed project will involve major trenching and grading to accommodate the construction of a mixed residential/open space development.



Cultural Background

Archaeological research has indicated that the Paso Robles area has been home to prehistoric people for at least 9,800 years (Parker 2004). Studies of prehistoric sites have demonstrated continuous cultural use of the area until the time of European contact. The changing culture and technology of these people allowed them to successfully adapt to changes in their environment

brought about by the end of the ice age and population growth (Parker 1997).

Ethnographic and historical research has indicated that the Paso Robles area was the home of the Northern Chumash at the time of European contact (Gibson 1983). The various Chumash languages belong to the Hokan language family, considered the oldest language family in California and possibly in the New World (Shiple, 1978). It is likely that Hokan speaking people have inhabited California for at least 12,000 to 14,000 years (Parker, 1994).

The earliest European contact in San Luis Obispo County came in 1595, when Sebastian Rodriguez Cermeño put in at Port San Luis. He was met by a large contingent of Indians who lived on the top of the bluff. Soon following were the explorations of Sebastian Vizcaino in 1602 and Gaspar de Portola' in 1769.

The Portola' expedition reported seeing native people coming and going from 10 different villages between San Luis Obispo and Monterey. Many of these villages were Chumash towns.

As the Portola' expedition traveled through the Paso Robles area, some of the villages encountered by him were likely in this vicinity.

Very little is known about the inland Chumash people in San Luis Obispo County. This is mostly due to their demise by diseases brought by Europeans and their later incarceration as slave labor in the missions and on ranchos (Heizer, et. al. 1971).

It seems that none of the explorers or missionaries did any studies of the Chumash people while their culture still existed. By the time Anthropologists took an interest in their lifestyle and culture, there were no people left who could remember the traditional lifeways.

From 1797 to 1844, the project area was part of the Mission San Miguel land holdings. In 1844, the land was granted to Francisco Arce by the Mexican Governor as the Santa Ysabel Land Grant. A mile south and west of the project area, the town of Paso Robles had its beginnings with the purchase and development of the Paso de Robles Rancho in the late 1850's. A hot springs pool on the ranch became the centerpiece of a major stagecoach era resort and health center. This center later grew into the town of Paso Robles (Nicholson 1980).

FIELD METHODS

Prior to the field inspection, a record search was conducted at the Regional Archaeological Information Center (Dept. of Anthropology, U.C. Santa Barbara). This record review revealed that the parcel had not been the subject of an archaeological inspection in the past. The record search also indicated that no historic or prehistoric cultural resources had been recorded within 1 mile of the project area.

The fieldwork consisted of an intensive surface examination of all walkable portions of the property. This inspection was conducted by walking transects across the property at 10 meter intervals and inspecting the ground surface for evidence of historic or prehistoric cultural use.

To organize the inspection, the property was divided into 7 physiographic zones (A through G). Each zone was inspected as a unit. Although very similar overall, each zone had unique characteristics (see map on page 10 for zone boundaries).

Zone A

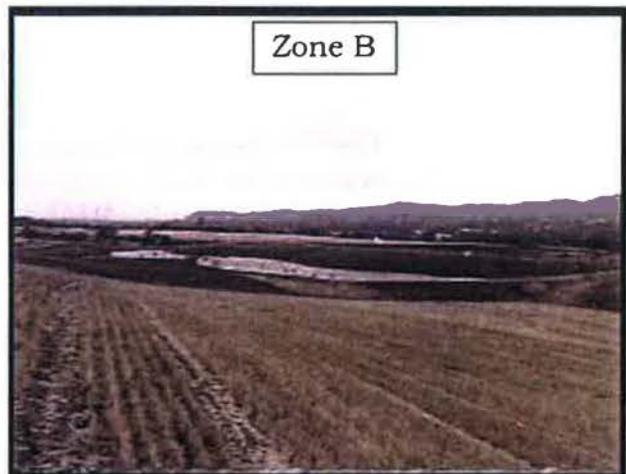
This zone was located at the southeastern corner of the property and consisted of a level to gently sloping recently harvested barley field. The ground surface was easily inspected with excellent soil visibility due to the recent plowing and harvesting. Two morning dove nests with eggs and young were encountered during the field inspection.

Zone B

This zone was situated immediately east of and on top of the bluff overlooking the Salinas River. Portions of this level area were under cultivation in corn and squash. The eastern edge of this zone contained a seasonal drainage, which had been converted into a small reservoir. This zone was also easy to inspect due to recent agricultural activities.

Zone C

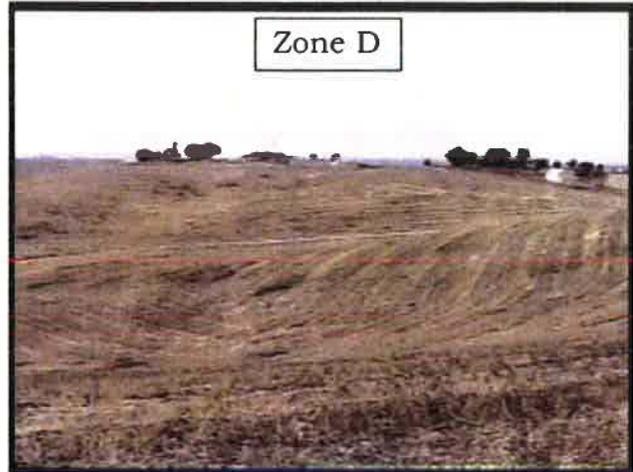
This zone was located in the northeastern corner of the property and was very similar to



Zone A. It was mostly level and consisted of a recently harvested barley field. A small single family residence and associated out buildings was located in this zone. The structure was likely built in the 1930's. Excellent soil visibility throughout.

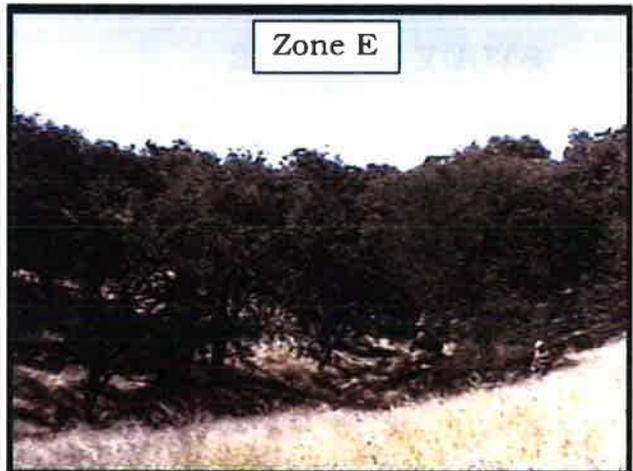
Zone D

This zone consisted of a gently rolling landscape surrounding a shallow drainage in the south-central part of the parcel midway between River Road and Buena Vista Drive. It included four small peaks, one of which contained a recent single-family residence. As with Zones A and C, this zone had been planted in barley and recently harvested. Excellent soil visibility throughout.



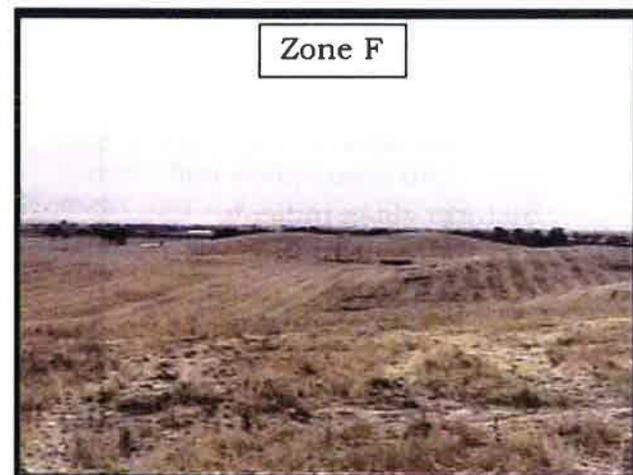
Zone E

This zone was located in the northwest part of the parcel and contained two deeply carved drainages. The immediate drainage areas were too steep to plant in barley and retained their original oak grassland character. Due to the lack of agricultural activity within the drainage areas, heavy grass cover obscured the ground surface in some areas. Rodent mounds were carefully examined and a trowel was used to clear to the mineral soil. Whenever possible, erosion banks and the root balls of downed trees were examined to see subsoils. Four horned owls were roused from their roosts in the oak trees during the inspection.



Zone F

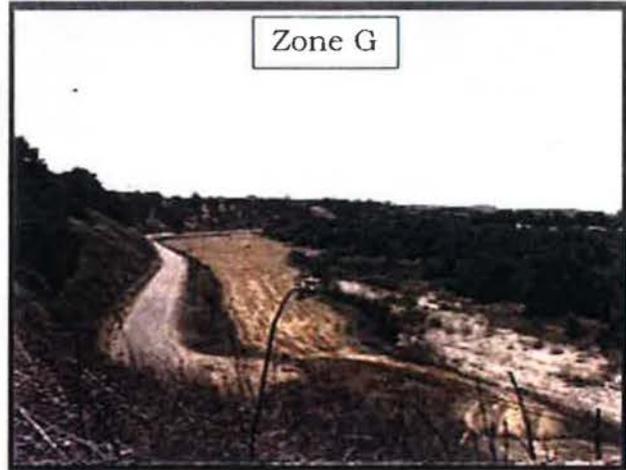
This zone was located in the north-central part of the parcel and was very similar to Zone D. This zone consisted of steep sided uplands surrounding a shallow seasonal drainage. This zone had also been planted in



barley and recently harvested. Excellent soil visibility throughout.

Zone G

This zone included the Salinas River channel and immediate bank area. The narrow east bank of the river floodplain had been planted in barley and harvested providing excellent visibility. The rest of the zone consisted of the actual river channel, which was a hodge-podge of gravel bars riparian vegetation, and drainage channels. Although excellent ground visibility existed throughout the zone, the recent and continual scouring of the channel area would have obliterated traces of prehistoric and early historic cultural uses. One deer was encountered during the inspection of this area.



STUDY RESULTS

Prehistoric Materials

Six isolated pieces of chipped Monterey chert were discovered during the field inspection. Although some may have been cultural in origin, none of the pieces could be positively identified as the result of prehistoric stone tool manufacturing. The amount of natural chert cobbles throughout the project area, coupled with years of plowing and disking could easily have created these chipped pieces.

These isolated materials are not considered significant cultural resources as defined by Title 14 of the Public Resources Code (Sec. 4852 b and c).

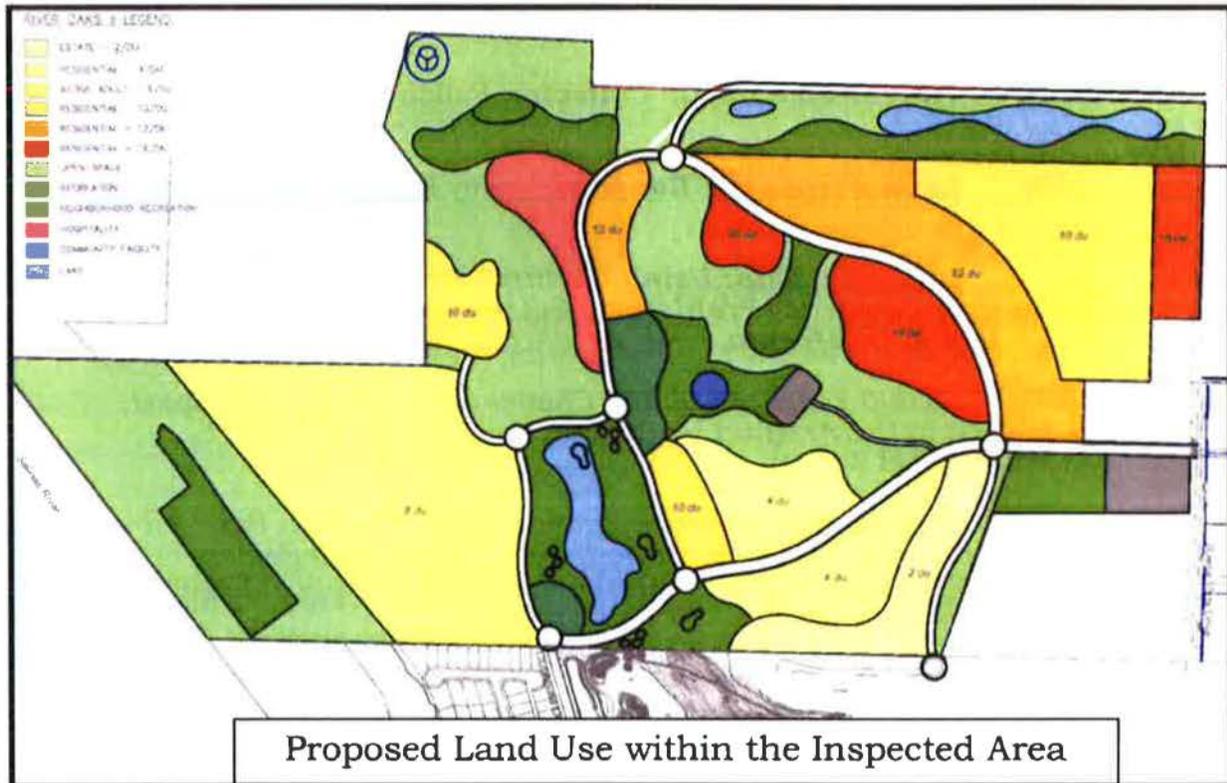
Historic Materials

Two cow skulls, a sheep skull and three pieces of historic glass indicate historic uses of the area. These isolated materials were randomly dispersed across the parcel. All broken glass pieces were



sun-altered purple indicating manufacture between 1880 and 1925 (Kendrick 1966). Two of the glass pieces represent the remains of canning jars and one was the base of a grape juice bottle.

These isolated historic materials are not considered significant cultural resources as defined by Title 14 of the Public Resources Code (Sec. 4852 b and c). However, they do indicate the general historic ranching use of the property.



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No significant cultural resources were discovered during the field inspection or records search for this project.

It is therefore recommended that the proposed project be approved as planned. No further cultural resource work will be necessary.

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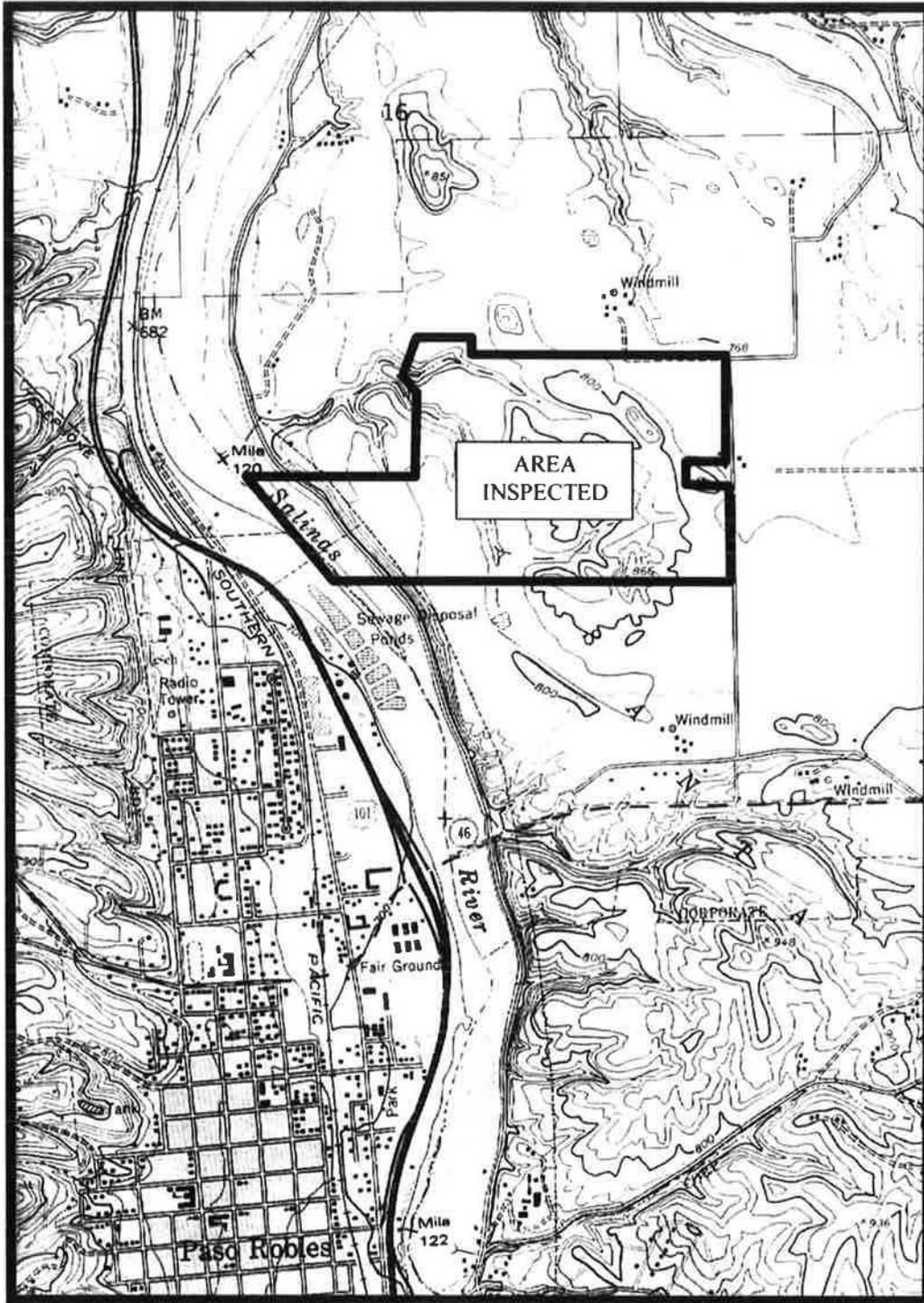
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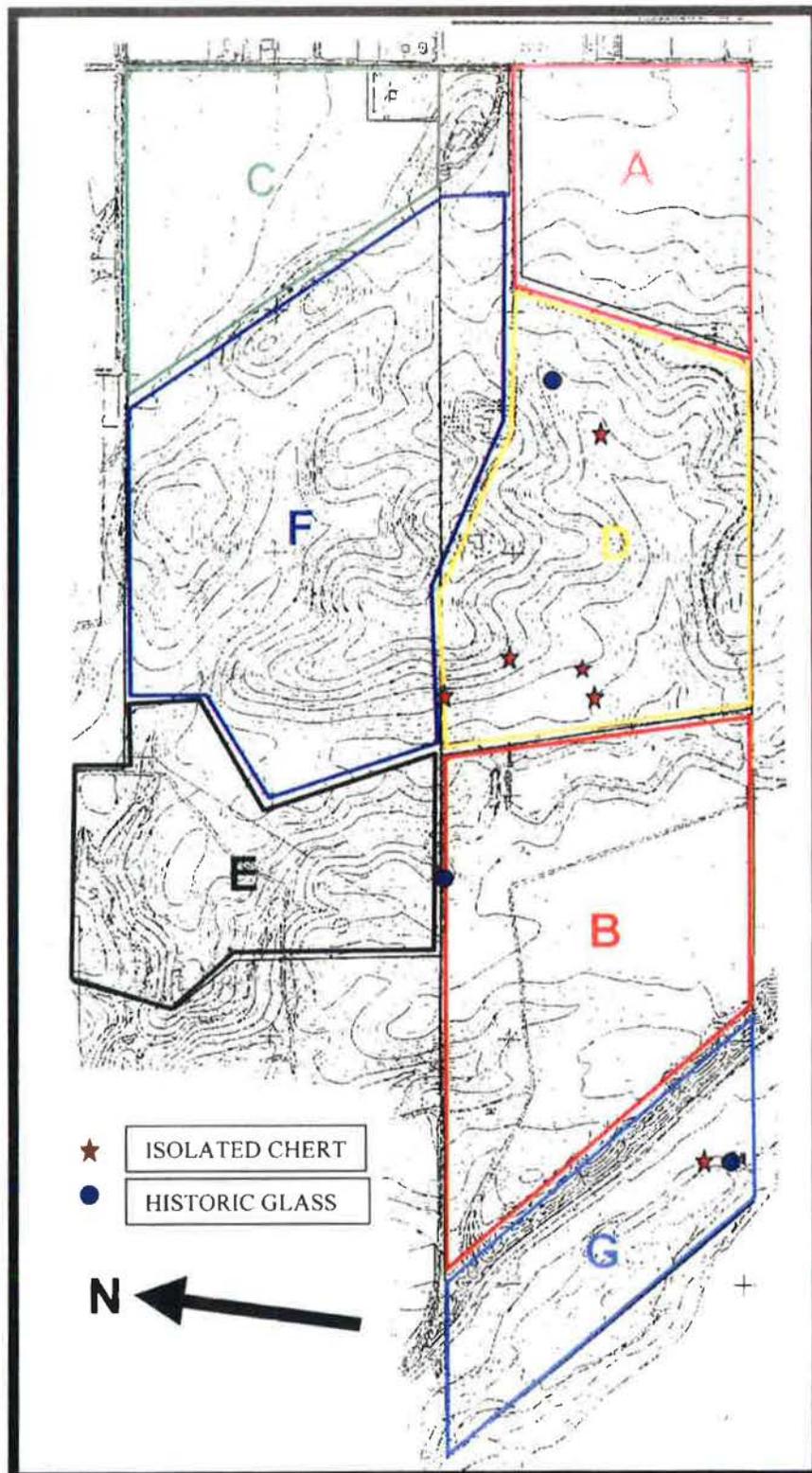
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**GENERAL PROJECT LOCATION
PASO ROBLES 7.5' USGS QUAD**



PARCEL INSPECTED AND MATERIALS FOUND



Attachment C

Letter from Northern Chumash Tribal Council



Northern Chumash Tribal Council

1177 Marsh Street, Suite 110
San Luis Obispo, California 93401
805-773-0806

City of Paso Robles City Council
City of El Paso De Robles
1000 Spring Street
Paso Robles, CA 93446

July 23, 2007

Re: Dick Willhoit - River Oaks II – Paso Robles- General Plan Amendment

Paso Robles City Council:

The Northern Chumash Tribal Council was contacted by Mr. Dick Willhoit for the purpose of reviewing a General Plan Amendment to the project and properties known as River Oaks II, located in the City of Paso Robles.

The Northern Chumash Tribal Council (NCTC) is a non-profit corporation organized under Senate Bill 18. NCTC is on the Native American Heritage Commission's list as the only State recognized Chumash Sovereign Nation located in San Luis Obispo County.

In following the guideline mandated under SB 18 Mr. Dick Willhoit asked the NCTC to review the archaeological survey done by archaeologist John Parker PhD. John Parker PhD. is in continuous contact with the NCTC on many projects and issues in San Luis Obispo County and is in good standing following all the archaeological guidelines mandated by the State of California.

Upon review of the archaeological report and after discussions with Dr. Parker we find that the River Oaks II project General Plan Amendment will have no Native American Cultural Resources impacts. NCTC additionally toured the project with Mr. Dick Willhoit and walk and talk about all aspect of the project, it is our finding that Mr. Dick Willhoit and the River Oaks II project planners have done a very good job in their design and planning.

The Chumash and Salinan people have live along the Salinas River for over 9,000 years, we walk and hunted over all the land near the Salinas River. The Salinas River was a vital resource for the Native American Community. Mr. Dick Willhoit has assured NCTC that if during construction any cultural resources are uncovered he will contact Dr. Parker and NCTC.

NCTC has no objection to a General Plan Amendment for the River Oaks II Project.

Thank you,
Fred Collins

NCTC Tribal Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fred Collins', written over a horizontal line.