

CECP Cultural Resources WEAP

This portion of the training will discuss cultural resources and our obligations regarding their treatment if found during construction of the CECP. Mr. Clint Helton is the Designated Cultural Resources Specialist for the project.

The onsite Cultural Resource Monitors and Mr. Helton are your points of contact for questions or issues that arise regarding cultural resources for this project. You can find contact information in the WEAP training handbook or from the onsite construction manager.

Any trace of past human activity greater than 50 years old may be an important cultural resource. Locations where these artifacts are found are a part of a proud heritage that belongs to all of us.

In the San Diego County area, there are archaeological remains that represent thousands of years of Native American prehistory. Historical archaeological features, deposits, and pieces of old architecture may also be found in this area.

Significant cultural resources represent historical events, engineering achievements, and art or architecture styles that define what Americans have experienced. Ethnographic resources are also cultural resources, and they may include traditional plant-gathering areas, shrines and ceremonial areas, cemeteries, natural landscape features, and ethnic structures or areas of habitation.

Because these achievements define what we are and affect what we become, the past belongs to us all and we all have a responsibility to help preserve significant cultural resources. Archaeological and historical sites are non-renewable resources. Though we are always creating new cultural resources for people of the future to interpret or preserve for posterity, once a historical or archaeological site is destroyed, it's gone forever.

Archaeological remains are often fragmented and very small. Because of that, it's possible to scrape, dig, or bulldoze right through a buried site without even realizing it. Here's what to look for:

- Discolored soil, particularly gray-black soil with a greasy feel to it, in an area of lighter-colored soils.
- Any animal or human bone. The proper treatment of Native American graves is of great concern. Possessing artifacts or human remains from a Native American grave is a felony (PRC 5097.99).
- A thin layer, or series of layers, particularly dark layers containing charcoal or ash, in an excavation side wall.
- Freshwater or marine shells, or shell artifacts.
- Any unusual concentration of rocks, particularly if they seem to form a pattern (such as a campfire).

- A concentration of small pieces of broken rock, particularly obsidian or chert with sharp edges.
- A concentration of trash from an earlier period in history, including bottles, broken glass, broken ceramic, bone, and metal pieces.
- A concentration of brick, concrete, or mortared stone that might indicate a structural foundation.

The kinds of cultural resources that may be discovered here on the project site include prehistoric artifacts such as grinding stones, arrowheads, and stone flakes, and historic artifacts such as glass bottles, metal objects, animal bones, and building foundations. Human skeletons may also be exposed.

Cultural Resources Monitors

There will be a Cultural Resources Monitor onsite during all ground-disturbance activities. It is the monitor's job to evaluate any cultural resources discovered during construction activities, and to stop work if any important cultural resources are discovered.

Examples of Cultural Resources

The following are examples of cultural resources that could be uncovered in the project area. The first seven examples are all stone tools shaped for specific functions.

1. The first example is a small hammer stone. Hammer stones were used for a wide range of tasks and may show wear at one or both ends.
2. Flaked cobbles were used for scraping, digging, or cutting. You might find them in a variety of shapes and sizes with a smooth end for holding.
3. Scrapers had a variety of uses including preparing animal skins, shaping wood, or preparing food. Depending on their function, scrapers come in many shapes and sizes.
4. Lithic debitage is the waste material produced during the manufacture of flaked stone tools such as knives and projectile points. Debitage may be found in a variety of shapes and sizes, often as a concentration of small flakes of stone.
5. Flaked knives are very distinctive and easily identified by shape and flaking pattern. Flaked knives can be found in a large number of shapes and sizes.
6. Projectile points are also very distinctive, and are commonly referred to as arrowheads. Projectile points can range in size from one to six inches long, and several inches wide.
7. The mortar and pestle were used together as a grinding tool. They were used to prepare foods, pigments, medicines, and potions.

Historic artifacts that you may find on the site include glass bottles, bone, ceramics, metal cans, and other metal objects including wire, nails, and building hardware. You might even discover the remains of former building foundations and underground utilities.

Your Responsibility

If a Cultural Resources Monitor is present when a cultural resource is exposed, he or she will direct you to stop work at the location of the “find.” The Cultural Resources Monitors and I have the authority to halt construction in the area of a discovery to an extent sufficient to ensure that the resource is protected from further impacts. Stopping construction in the vicinity of an archaeological find is an important condition of the project’s license from the California Energy Commission and one which you must comply with. Work may be stopped or redirected for only a few minutes, or it may be shut down for an extended time, depending on what is found.

If a Cultural Resources Monitor is not present when a cultural resource is found, STOP WORK and notify your supervisor, the Construction Project Manager, a Cultural Resources Monitor or me. Mark the location of the find and block off access to it until cultural resources personnel arrive. Construction will not continue until it’s determined how to redirect the halted work. You can use readily available materials such as barrier fencing, barrier tape, or traffic cones to ensure that construction workers and equipment do not enter the area. The area of the find must be protected from potential damage to cultural resources that could be caused by construction activities.

It is illegal for you to collect any objects, including old bottles, from public land according to the California Public Resources Code. Also, disturbing Native American burial sites is a felony under the California Public Resources Code. In addition, deliberately destroying or removing cultural resources from private land is prohibited under the conditions of the project’s permit from the California Energy Commission.

The following state and federal laws and regulations affect the management of cultural resources:

- The Archaeological Resources Protection Act
- National Historic Preservation Act
- California Environmental Quality Act
- California Public Resources Code (Sections 5097.5, 5097.9, and 5097.99)

Violating these regulations can result in federal indictment, and are punishable by civil and criminal penalties. This could include fines and/or imprisonment, and might even result in the project certifications being revoked and the project itself being shut down at the direction of the appropriate state agency.

Remember that only authorized personnel may handle cultural resources. If you think you may have found a cultural resource, notify the Cultural Resources Monitor or Site Superintendent right away. Do not touch or move the object.

If you have any questions about these procedures, please ask your Site Superintendent, a Cultural Resources Monitor, or Clint Helton for more information or consult your WEAP training handbook. Thank you very much for your attention.