

## F. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

### 1. Setting

An archaeological reconnaissance of the George Ranch site was conducted by trained personnel from the Cultural Resources Facility of Sonoma State University in fall 1979.<sup>1</sup> Archaeological studies conducted in the Sonoma Valley locality yield information which suggests that the earliest inhabitants entered the area approximately 7,000 years ago.

Archaeologic sites noted within George Ranch include two middens and two places said to be Native American Graves.

Middens. One Native American site was marked by a well-developed midden deposit containing a large quantity of marine shell and fire-cracked stone. The site measured about 45 x 50 meters and was situated southwest of a hayfield. The site's horizontal dimensions are an estimate of the area as it would have been prior to midden disturbance. Although the depth of the midden was not determined, it appeared to be at least 1 meter deep. Much of the site was destroyed about 3 years ago by individuals seeking Indian relics. Approximately one-third of the site may have been severely altered, although some midden deposit remains in the excavated area.

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas M. Origer, Senior Staff Archaeologist, "An Archaeological Survey of the George Ranch, Sonoma County California," Cultural Resources Facility, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, California, September 1979. Copies of this report are available at the Sonoma County Planning Department. Dr. David Frederickson, Archaeologist, reviewed the report for this EIR and noted any areas of potential impact.



The other Native American site was marked by a small quantity of marine shell and a moderate quantity of obsidian flakes in a poorly developed midden deposit. The site measured an estimated 25 meters in diameter and was situated along the paved road connecting the main ranch house with the caretaker's home. Grading for a corral and a paved road damaged and obscured the eastern limits of the site.

Burial Plots. The remaining two Native American sites were said to be burial plots by a resident of George Ranch. The first burial plot was a "chief's grave," near the northwest corner of the hayfield. It was observed that the grave had been severely damaged by relic hunters. Prior to its disturbance, the grave was marked by a rectangular arrangement of field stone (basalt) measuring about 1.25 x 3 meters, with a large flat stone on top. This stone, still present but pushed aside, measured about 1 meter in diameter. No evidence of human artifacts was found.

The second burial plot was situated northwest of the orchard on a small hill overlooking the caretaker's house. This site also had been severely damaged by relic hunters. Examination of the relic hunter's pit did not reveal any fragments of human bone.

While the two locations said to be Native American grave plots had been vandalized, no evidence of human burials was found in the form of human bone or fragments.

Euro-American Sites. A Euro-American basalt quarry was situated within the northeast portion of the site, north



of the main ranch house and adjacent to the old road. The quarry consisted of a small excavation measuring approximately 3 x 5 meters and an associated pile of basalt quarry waste. This feature may represent the remains of a test pit. Two other Euro-American sites were rock fences with disconnected segments constructed of basalt stones common to the area. The longest of the fences was situated along the ranch's western border. The second rock fence was situated to the east of the hayfield and extended south in discontinuous segments to a point near of the orchard.

## 2. Impacts

Examination of the proposed project map showing potential lot lines, road routes and house sites revealed that 2 of the 7 recorded sites could be adversely affected by direct project impacts.

One of the midden sites adjacent to the existing ranch road could be impacted by road improvement. Also, several sections of the rock fence in the east-central portion of the project site could be affected by road construction.

The other recorded sites appear not to be directly affected by the construction of roads and buildings, although they could be disturbed by increased human and domestic animal activity.

## 3. Mitigation

The midden site potentially affected by road improvement should be avoided by no grading at the site and the improvement



occurring east of the road (the exposed portion of the site is west of the existing road).

The two grave sites should be filled with foreign soil and there should be deed restrictions to preclude ground disturbance at the grave locations.

Although photographic, documentation of the rock fences has been completed, fence removal should be carried out only when necessary.

A qualified archaeologist should be contacted to evaluate any evidence of Native American or Euro-American sites that were not identified during the course of the study and which are uncovered during development. Specifically, work in the immediate vicinity of the finds should halt until the evaluation is completed. Native American site indicators include midden containing marine shell, obsidian, chert, or basalt flakes, bone, artifacts such as projectile points and grinding implements, and human burials. Euro-American sites of historic significance are often marked by old stone structure foundations, trash pits containing old bottles, ceramics, square nails and old wells or privies.



