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October 24, 2023
Project No: 23-15154

Dai Luu
Cemetery Property Development Manager
Archdiocese of Los Angeles
3424 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, California 90010
Via email: dluu@catholiccm.org

Subject: Monitoring Results for Heritage Recovery Investigations at the Saint Thomas Aquinas Cemetery, Ojai, Ventura County, California

Dear Mr. Luu:

This memorandum presents the findings of archaeological monitoring completed in support of the Heritage Recovery Investigations at the Saint Thomas Aquinas Cemetery (project) located in Ojai, Ventura County, California. The Archdiocese of Los Angeles (Archdiocese) retained Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) to assist with the sifting of approximately 50 cubic yards of accumulated back dirt for the potential presence of human remains. This letter report documents the results of the tasks performed by Rincon, specifically archaeological monitoring of back dirt sifting to identify any potential human remains. All work was completed in accordance with the Conditions of Approval (COA) of the Archdiocese's Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. PL19-0057, specifically Condition 20. The project was completed as due diligence and was not required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The CUP was issued by the County of Ventura (County).

Project Location

The project site comprises approximately 2.0-acres and is located north of East Villanova Road and approximately 325 feet south of Highway 33 in the city of Ojai, Ventura County, California (Figure 1). The property is identified as Assessor's Parcel Number 033-007-004 and is located at 291503.7mE / 3812222.4mN. The project site is depicted on Township 04 North, Range 23 West, Section 15 of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) Matilija CA 7.5'-minute quadrangle (Figure 2).

Project Background

In 2019, Rincon conducted a Phase I Cultural Resources Study for the St. Thomas Aquinas Cemetery Project in compliance with CEQA. This Phase I study included a California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) records search, a Sacred Lands File (SLF) search, Native American outreach, archival and background research, a field survey, and the preparation of a cultural resources technical memo. The study recommended that the St. Thomas Aquinas Cemetery was not eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR) or the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP). No other cultural resources were identified within the project site.

Methods

The Archdiocese's Catholic Cemeteries and Mortuaries staff conducted Heritage recovery efforts between October 2 and October 17, 2023 under the direction of Rincon Project Manager and Osteologist Alyssa Newcomb, MS, Registered Professional Archaeologist (RPA). The Heritage recovery



efforts consisted of both hand and mechanical screening of approximately 50 cubic yards (38 cubic meters) of back dirt graded and excavated from within the 2-acre cemetery property (through). The back dirt was initially dry-screened through an 1/8-inch using hand methods (Figure 3). After establishing the general sensitivity and gravel composition of the back dirt, soils were then dry-screened through an 1/4-inch mesh using mechanical methods (Figure 4).

Results

No human remains were identified during the Heritage recovery efforts. In addition, no cultural resources were identified and no changes to the recommendation of ineligibility for the CRHR and NRHP are recommended at this time.

Should you have any questions concerning this study, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned at 213-357-5105 or anewcomb@rinconconsultants.com.

Sincerely,

Rincon Consultants, Inc.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alyssa Newcomb".

Alyssa Newcomb, MS, RPA
Senior Archaeologist & Program Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher Duran".

Christopher Duran, MA, RPA
Principal

Attachments

Attachment 1 Figures

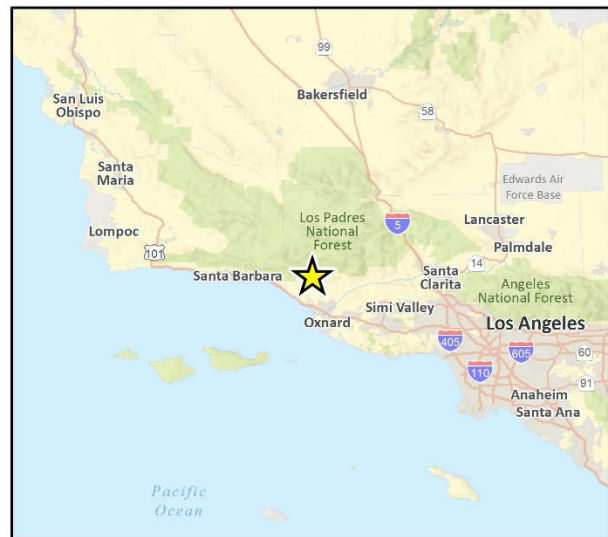
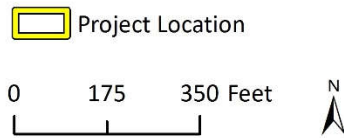
Attachment 1

Figures

Figure 1. Project Location Map

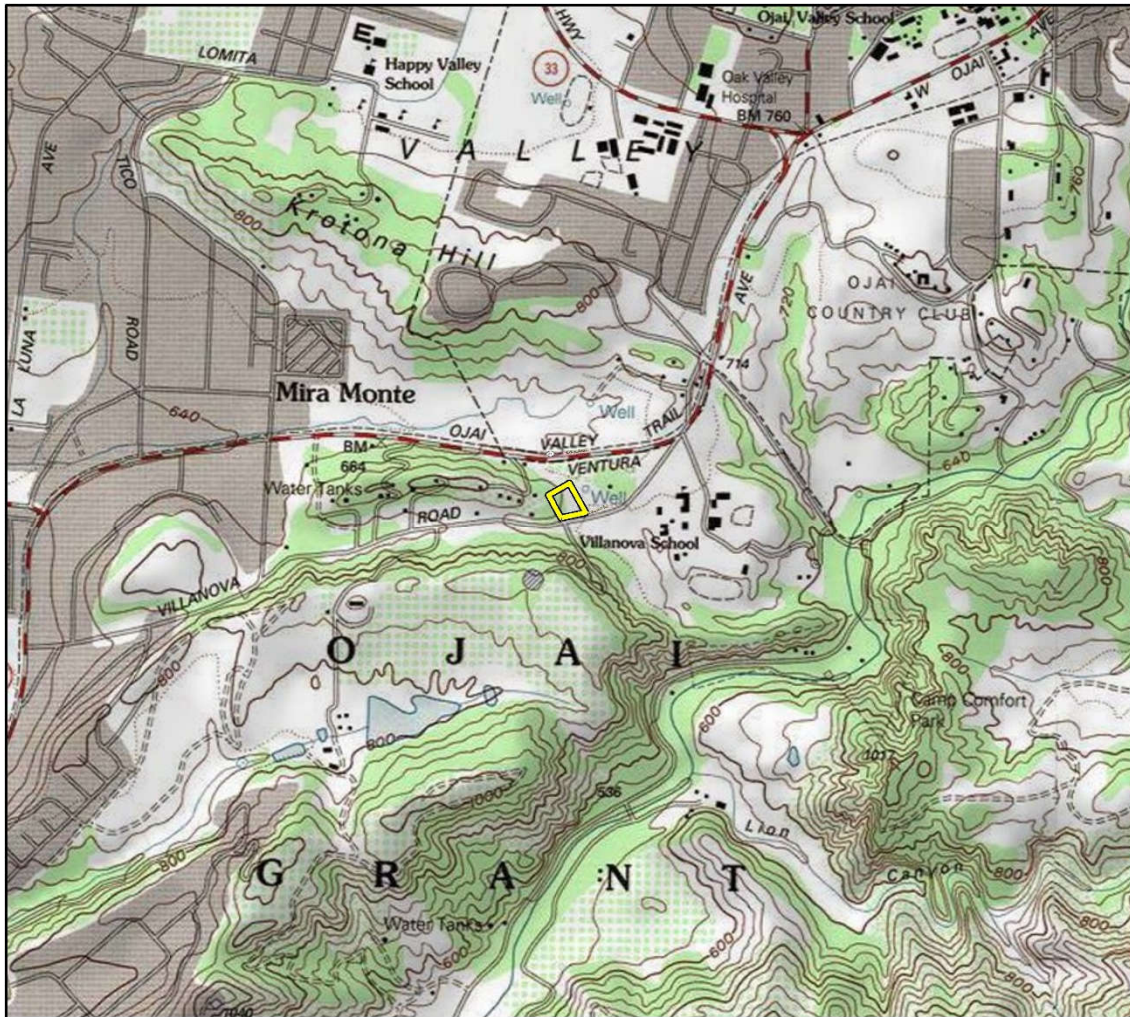


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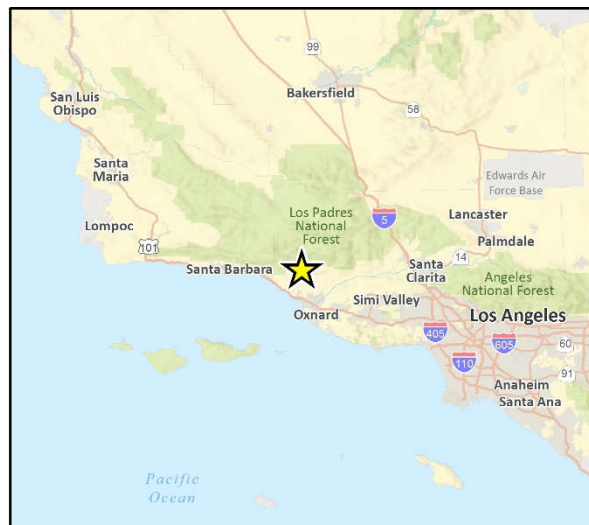
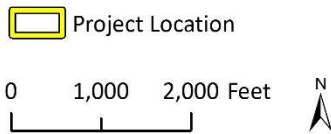


CRFig 1 Proj Locn Map

Figure 2. Regional Location Map



Imagery provided by Esri and its licensors © 2019. Matilija Quadrangle. T04N R23W S15. The topographic representation depicted in this map may not portray all of the features currently found in the vicinity today and/or features depicted in this map may have changed since the original topographic map was assembled.



CRFig 1 Regional Location Map

Figure 3. Overview of hand sifting of back dirt piles.



Figure 4. Overview of mechanical sifting of back dirt piles.

