

Archaeological Resources

The archaeological resources of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park include artifacts, features, and sites of both the Native American and historic periods, as well as traditional cultural places and resources; sacred sites; and cultural preserves. These resources have been researched, documented, and inventoried by California State Parks archaeologists as part of a cultural resource inventory (see below). It is vital for planning and management purposes to know what archaeological sites exist within the Park, where they exist, what condition they are in, and what threats they face. Threats to both the known and undocumented archaeological sites include erosion, fire, construction, unauthorized trails, illegal camping, and vandalism including graffiti, looting, and artifact collecting.

Archaeological and Ethnographic Overview

The cultural story of the land that is now Cuyamaca Rancho State Park starts far in the distant past. The creation accounts of the Kumeyaay and Kwaaymii peoples of the region tell them that their ancestors were placed in this area by the creator, and they have been here since time began. Scientific evidence, such as radiocarbon dating, indicates that people have been living in southern California for more than 9,000 years, with some evidence from the Channel Islands pushing the date back to at least 13,000 years. The resources of the Cuyamaca Mountains, including ample wildlife, plants, water sources, and stones that could be shaped into tools, made this area ideal for habitation and procurement activities.

At the time the first Europeans started settling the eastern mountains of San Diego, there were seven major Villages or village complexes identified within what would become the park boundaries, including *Ah-ha' Kwe-a-mac'*, the village site that is the namesake for the mountains, rancho, and the current state park. Most of these villages were shown on the map that was drawn for the original Rancho de Cuyamaca land grant in approximately 1846. Besides *Ah-ha' Kwe-a-mac'* they include *Hual-cu-cuish* (*Hal-kwo-kwilsh*), *Mesa de Huacupin* (*Juacuapin*), *Pisclim*, *Mitaragui*, and *Pilcha*. In 1950, H. Rensch identified one other village site within the Park: *Pam-mum Ah-wah*. In addition, the villages of *Yguai* (*Iguai*), *Jamatyume*, and *Hum-poo' Ar-rup'ma* were just outside what are now the boundaries of the Park, but it is expected that satellite camps, procurement areas, and other use areas associated with these three villages are within the current Park boundary.

Archaeological Inventory

The archaeological investigations of these earlier people and cultures began in the Cuyamaca region in the 1930s and 40s with site documentation and excavations directed by Malcolm Rogers, an early San Diego archaeologist who was affiliated with the San Diego Museum of Man. Over the years there have been a number of other archaeological excavations and surveys within the Park, many following wildfire events such as the 1986 Peak Fire and the Cedar Fire of 2003.

These studies have resulted in the identification and recordation of over 790 archaeological sites and 130 isolated artifacts. A majority (81%) of the sites are Native American resources such as villages (4%), camps (16%), grinding features (47%), rock shelters (0.4%), rock art sites (0.5%), artifact scatters (3%), stone artifact scatters (2%), pottery sherd scatters (4%), quarry sites (2%), rock feature sites (2%), and trails (0.1%).

The other 19% of the sites are historic archaeological resources, dating from the mid-1800s through the mid-1900s. These include a town site, cabin and home sites, mining sites, trash dumps, work camps, recreational features, bridges and culverts, roads and trails, a cemetery, and an airplane crash site, as well as assorted features and artifacts of the more recent past.

Archaeological surveys of the Park have only examined about 54% of the total park acreage, indicating that there is a high probability that additional archaeological sites exist within those areas of the Park that were not examined during the resources inventory or previous work.

Sacred sites and areas, which continue to hold significance to the Native Americans of the region, have also been identified within the Park. There are also four designated Cultural Preserves within Cuyamaca Rancho State Park: *Cuish-Cuish* (East Mesa), *Pilcha* (West Mesa), *Ah-ha' Kwe-ah-mac'*

Stonewall Mine, and Kumeyaay Soapstone. These preserves were created to protect areas of significant cultural and archaeological importance.

Additional information and details on the archaeological resources of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park is located in the confidential document: *Cuyamaca Rancho State Park Resource Inventory: Archaeology* (Mealey 2014), on file at California State Parks, Southern Service Center.