

## 4.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section includes a discussion of cultural resources in the project vicinity, including prehistoric and historic resources, and identifies any impacts that may result from the proposed project. Surveys were performed by SWCA cultural resources staff and JRP Historical Consulting. This section is based on the results of two technical reports, a Cultural Resources Survey (SWCA 2009) and a Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report (HRER) (JRP 2009). The surveys were prepared to determine whether any archaeological/cultural resources were present, to map their extent based on surface examination, and to determine the nature and significance of any archaeological or cultural resources discovered. These reports are not available for public review in this document because of the need to keep recorded sites confidential to protect the resources; however, the results have been submitted to the State Records Clearinghouse and are available for review by qualified persons at the Department of Public Works.

### 4.4.1 Existing Conditions

#### 4.4.1.1 Pre-Historic Resources

The project site lies in San Luis Obispo County, near the city of Arroyo Grande, an area that was historically occupied by the Obispeño Chumash, the most northern of all Chumash groups. San Luis Obispo County was home to the Northern Chumash or Obispeño for over 9,000 years. The term “Chumash” is derived from a Native American word and initially applied to the people living on Santa Cruz Island. Chumash now refers to the entire linguistic and ethnic group of societies that occupied the coast between San Luis Obispo and northwestern Los Angeles County and inland to the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley, including the Santa Barbara Channel Islands.

At the time of Spanish contact in 1542 and again in 1769, the early accounts describe settlement along the Santa Barbara Channel coast as heavily populated. Estimates of total Chumash population for the initial contact period vary from 8,000 to 22,000. Diarists on the 1769 Portolá expedition described the village of *Shisholop* at the mouth of Santa Clara River near today’s city of Ventura as a large and nicely laid out “rancheria” with 30 large houses, 15 canoes, and at least 900 people. Some coastal Barbareño Chumash villages near Goleta and Dos Pueblo were even larger, with more than 1,000 inhabitants and 120 houses. Inland, the Spanish noted the villages were smaller, with 100 to 500 occupants. Chumash place names in the project vicinity include *Pismu* (Pismo Beach), *Tematitimi* (along Los Berros Creek), and *Tilhini* (near San Luis Obispo).

The first permanent non-indigenous settlement in the general area occurred with the founding of Mission San Luis Obispo in 1771, and soon numerous troop and supply trains passed through Chumash lands on the way from San Diego to more northerly missions and outposts.

The effect of mission influence upon local native populations was devastating. The dissolution of their culture alienated them from their traditional subsistence patterns, social customs, and marriage networks. European diseases, against which they had no immunity, reached epidemic proportions, and Chumash populations were decimated. The increase in agriculture and the spread of grazing livestock into their collecting and hunting areas made maintaining traditional lifeways increasingly difficult. Although most Chumash eventually submitted to the Spanish and

were incorporated into the mission system, some refused to give up their traditional existence and escaped into the interior regions of the state, as refugees living with other tribes.

With the secularization of mission lands after 1834, traditional Chumash lands were distributed among grants to private owners. Most Chumash managed to maintain a presence in the area into the early twentieth century as cowboys, farm hands, and town laborers. Since the 1970s, Chumash descendants living in the city of Santa Barbara and the rural areas of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties have formed social and political organizations to aid in cultural revitalization, to protect sacred areas and archaeological sites, and to petition for federal recognition. Today, the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians is the only federally recognized Chumash tribe.

A records search performed by the Central Coast Information Center (CCIC) for this project indicates that 256 cultural resources studies have been conducted within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area. The complete list of the 256 cultural resources studies within a 0.5-mile radius is included in the SWCA Cultural resources report. Of these studies, 18 partly overlapped with the current project area and 10 are adjacent.

The record search by the CCIC indicates that 28 cultural resources have been recorded within a 0.5-mile radius of the project area. These include 23 prehistoric archaeological resources, three multi-component sites, one historic church, and one unknown resource. According to the literature search, no cultural resources have been previously recorded within or immediately adjacent to the current project area. Pedestrian surveys were also performed of the entire site, covering approximately 110 acres. No cultural resources were identified during the intensive-level pedestrian survey within the project area.

#### **4.4.1.2 Historic Resources**

The project area is located in the lower Arroyo Grande Valley and Cienaga Valley southeast of San Luis Obispo near the Pacific Coast of California. Spanish and Mexican ranchers settled in the area in the 1830s, and by the time of California statehood, farmers and other immigrants to the area discovered that the alluvial plain of the creek provided excellent soil for growing seeds, beans, and other crops. Agricultural production flourished in the valley with Oceano as the main rail shipping point.

Southern Pacific completed its coastal route between San Francisco and Los Angeles including service at Oceano in 1901 and a new period of land speculation began focusing on vacation travel and agricultural production. The Southern Pacific depot at Oceano expanded into the main shipping point for produce of the Arroyo Grande and Cienaga Valley. The most successful subdivision of the period was the Theosophical settlement of Halcyon east of the original Oceano plat, adjoining the study area to the northwest along Halcyon Road. A utopian community known as the Temple of the People was founded in 1903 in Halcyon, and was intended to provide a model for such communities and to attract new members to the movement.

An agricultural community of Japanese Issei and Nisei farmers also developed in the valley. The first Japanese settlers arrived around 1903 and continued to settle in the valley through the 1920s. The first Japanese farmer in the Oceano area was Eikichi Toshima, who went on to assist other Japanese interested in relocating to the area, despite the strict anti-Japanese limitations imposed upon land ownership. The population of Japanese farmers in the area grew

through the 1920s and by the end of the 1930s, approximately forty Japanese families had settled in the area.

The Oceano area Japanese community was devastated by US government relocation of Issei and Nisei farmers to internment camps far inland during World War II. Many who had leased farms were not able to return because others took up the leases while the Japanese were interred. However, several Anglo families in the Arroyo Grande area looked after the Japanese farms, collecting rents, preventing damage, and applying the rents to taxes and mortgages.

The post war period saw changes in agricultural production. Celery became a major crop, replacing beans. The Yamaguchi family introduced celery in the 1920s, and although it was soon discontinued, it was reintroduced following the war and was a major crop in the area through the 1970s. Japanese farmers also introduced Asian vegetables like bok choy and Napa cabbage.

The area remains agricultural despite the growth of Oceano, Arroyo Grande, and neighboring communities. Oceano grew to more than 2,500 people in 1970, but remained unincorporated. Adjoining communities sought to annex the community, and as a result Oceano and Halcyon became a Community Services District in 1981 to stave off annexation and maintain local control.

The history of the flood control channel is discussed in the project description and the Flooding, Drainage, and Water Quality sections.

The area included in the HRER analysis includes the project area identified in the project description, plus some additional area within parcels that comprise the project area. That area includes eight structures, including four houses, one agricultural accessory structure, two bridges, and the flood control channel.

### Residential and Accessory Structures

The earliest residence is 2150 Creek Road (Figure 4.4-1, Map Reference #2), built in the 1920s. The home began as a small cross gable building with a rectangular plan; however, an addition was added to the northwest corner that more than doubled the living area and has obscured the original form of the house. The windows have also been extensively altered and most have been replaced with sliding aluminum frame sash.

The Saruwatari farmstead (Figure 4.4-1, Map Reference #8) was constructed in 1924 and follows the simple vernacular construction seen in 2150 Creek Road (Map Reference #2). It is a single story end gable vernacular bungalow. The full width front porch was enclosed and a side gable addition added to the east. Original wood one-over-one double-hung windows remain on the west side, but other windows have been altered or replaced.

The Fukuhara residence at 1111 Halcyon Road (Figure 4.4-1, Map Reference #7), is a two-story Spanish Colonial Revival building built in 1941. The two story massing presents a more studied style than the earlier vernacular residences. The stucco building is topped with a complex system of tile gable roofs. The south facing and northeast corner porches have been enclosed.

The residence at 3120 Cienaga Road (Map Reference #5) is the newest of the residences in the study, constructed in 1948. Despite its later construction date, it has a more vernacular approach than the Fukuhara residence (Map Reference #7). The hip roof rectangular plan

residence has been converted for use as a commercial building, including installation of a plywood-sided breezeway constructed to connect the former residence and hip roofed garage. Wood over one single hung window has been partially replaced with aluminum framed windows. Additional windows have been cut into the adjoining garage.

The Saruwatari and Fukuhara farmsteads include outbuildings constructed of vertical wood planks with simple corrugated metal roofs. The agricultural outbuilding on APN 075-032-010 (Map Reference #4) is also utilitarian, but utilized an arched roof. The associated farmstead has been removed.

### Bridges

Two bridges over 50 years old carry transportation features across channelized Arroyo Grande Creek. They include a 1912 railroad bridge (Map Reference #3) and a roadway bridge carrying Highway 1 (Caltrans #49-0019) (Map Reference #6) that was built in 1956 and altered in 1984.

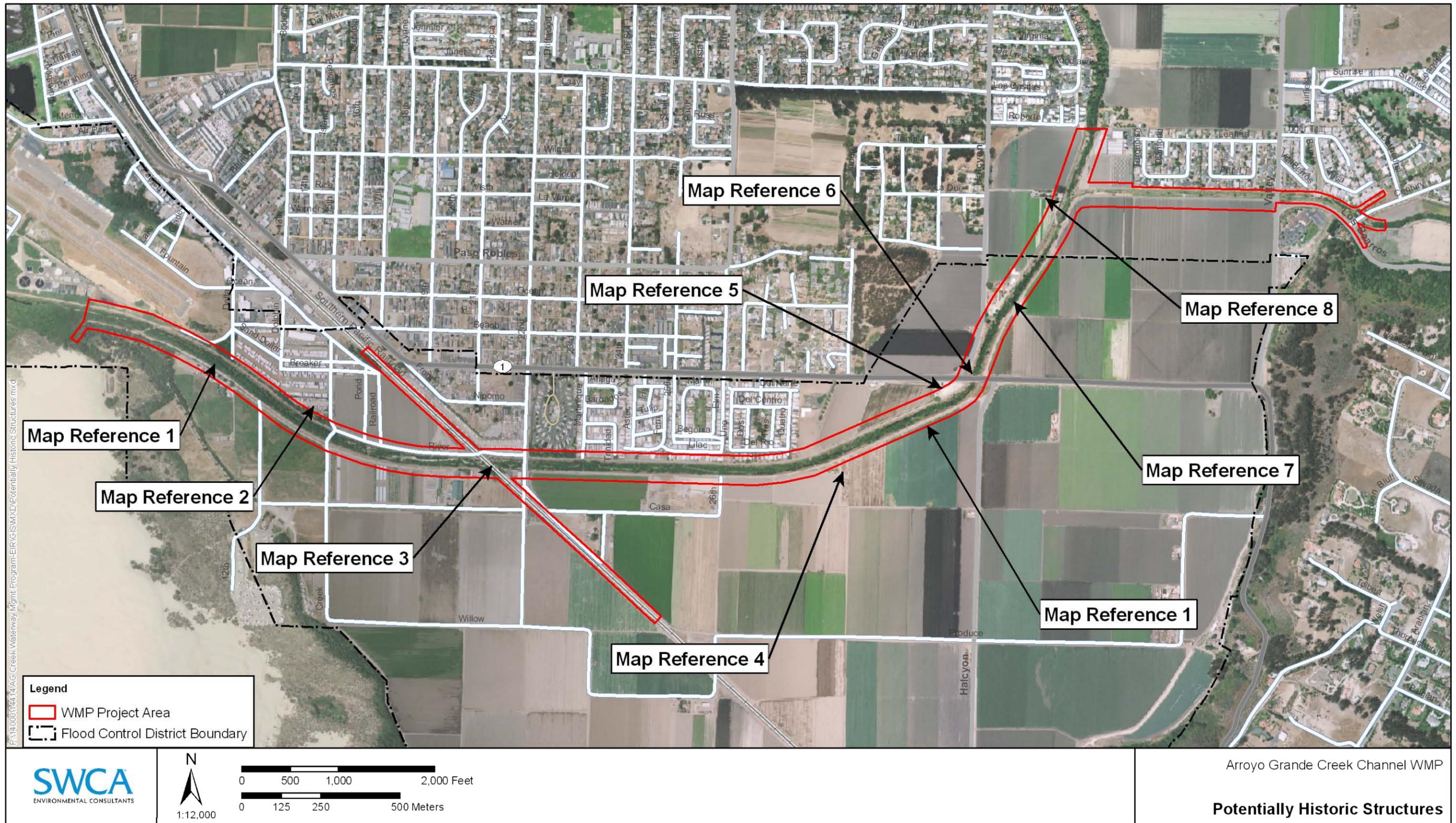
The Highway 1 Arroyo Grande Creek Bridge (Caltrans #49-0019) (Map Reference #6) is a continuous concrete slab bridge. The bridge is approximately 123 feet long and 47 feet wide and carries two lanes of traffic. The bridge has two bents consisting of concrete support columns dividing the bridge into three spans. The bridge has a simple formed blind concrete rail on both sides.

The Southern Pacific Coast Line Bridge over Arroyo Grande Creek (Map Reference #3) is a through plate girder bridge. It has board formed concrete abutments and a center pier supporting two 91-foot, 3-inch plate girder spans. The abutments, or portions thereof, appear to date to the original 1895 bridge. The plate girders are approximately 6-feet tall and each span is divided into 18 5-foot long sections. The girders are riveted together. The open deck floor beams form Xs across the bottom of the bridge. Triangular knee braces stiffen the joint between the girders and floor beams. Wooden ties lie directly on the floor beams. While railroad track charts indicate that the rails were replaced in 1950, the rail leading to the bridge is stamped "1360 00CF&F 1955."

### Flood Control Channel

The Arroyo Grande Creek Channel (Map Reference #1) is an engineered portion of Arroyo Grande Creek that is approximately three miles long, and the subject of the proposed project.

Figure 4.4-1. Potentially Historic Structures



This page intentionally left blank.

## 4.4.2 Regulatory Setting

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) requires consideration of a project's impacts on significant historical and archaeological resources. Significant impacts on such resources are to be avoided or mitigated to less than significant levels. Other state laws govern actions affecting cemeteries and human remains. Similarly, the City and County of San Luis Obispo require protection of archaeological and historical resources to the greatest extent feasible.

### Archaeological and Historic Resources

Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) is the governmental agency primarily responsible for the statewide administration of the historic preservation program in California. OHP's responsibilities include:

1. Identifying, evaluating, and registering historic properties;
2. Ensuring compliance with federal and state regulatory obligations;
3. Cooperating with traditional preservation partners while building new alliances with other community organizations and public agencies;
4. Encouraging the adoption of economic incentives programs designed to benefit property owners; and
5. Encouraging economic revitalization by promoting a historic preservation ethic through preservation education and public awareness and, most significantly, by demonstrating leadership and stewardship for historic preservation in California.

CCIC, under contract to the State Office of Historic Preservation, helps implement the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS). It integrates information on new resources and known resources into the CHRIS, supplies information on resources and surveys to government and supplies lists of consultants qualified to do historic preservation fieldwork within the area.

## 4.4.3 Thresholds of Significance

### 4.4.3.1 Cultural Resources Survey

CEQA requires a lead agency to determine whether a project may have a significant effect on historical resources. Section 21083.2(g) describes a unique archaeological resource as an archaeological artifact, object, or site about which it can be clearly demonstrated that without merely adding to the current body of knowledge, there is a high probability that it meets any of the following criteria:

1. Contains information needed to answer important scientific research questions and that there is a demonstrable public interest in that information.
2. Has a special and particular quality such as being the oldest of its type or the best available example of its type.
3. Is directly associated with a scientifically recognized important prehistoric or historic event or person.

These thresholds were used to determine significance in the Cultural Resources Survey. Generally, intact cultural and historic deposits are considered significant. Severely disturbed or mixed deposits often are not considered significant but may have educational value. Human remains and associated goods are accorded special consideration, even when fragmentary, and are considered significant.

#### **4.4.3.2 Historic Resources Inventory and Evaluation Report (HRER)**

For preparation of the HRER, JRP applied California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) significance criteria in the evaluation of historic era resources (built environment resources) within the study area. The eligibility criteria for listing properties in the NHRP are codified in CFR 36 Part 60 and explained in guidelines published by the Keeper of the National Register. Eligibility for listing in either the NHRP or CRHR rests on twin factors of significance and integrity. A property must have *both* significance and integrity to be considered eligible. Loss of integrity, if sufficiently great, will overwhelm historical significance a property may possess and render it ineligible. Likewise, a property can have complete integrity, but if it lacks significance, it is also ineligible.

#### **4.4.3.3 Environmental Impact Report**

The significance determination in the EIR reflects the determinations made in the two technical reports. CEQA guides lead agencies to protect and preserve resources with cultural, historic, scientific, or educational value. Appendix G of the CEQA *Guidelines* puts forth the following questions to be used in determining a project impact on cultural resources.

Would the project:

1. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource;
2. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource;
3. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature;
4. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

#### **4.4.4 Impact Assessment and Methodology**

##### **4.4.4.1 Prehistoric Resources**

In addition to the archival records and cultural resources records search performed by the CCIC for this project, SWCA archaeologists Philip Hanes and John Covert conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of the majority of the project area between July 29 and July 31, 2008.

Transect intervals were spaced no greater than 15 meters apart. SWCA archaeologist Kristina Gill, M.A., RPA, surveyed the eastern portion of the project corridor using the same methodology on May 9, 2009. Her survey area included the DeVincenzo and St. John's Lutheran Church parcels, as well as the area between those parcels along Los Berros Creek and Los Berros Road. The total area surveyed was approximately 110 acres. Because there are no existing records of cultural resources within the project area and the field survey also did not identify any prehistoric cultural resources, the impact assessment was concluded.

#### **4.4.4.2 Historic Resources**

The HRER analysis included the area of direct disturbance identified in the project description plus the entire boundary of parcels that intersected that area, if the parcel contained one or more buildings, or structures within forty feet of the area of direct disturbance. JRP identified survey properties and confirmed the actual or approximate date of construction through preliminary research including review of historic aerial photography, assessor records, building permits, and USGS quadrangle mapping. Out of the 16 parcels in the project area, five contained buildings or structures over 50 years old that required evaluation. Three other structures, the Arroyo Grande Creek channel, Highway 1 Bridge, and the Union Pacific Railroad Bridge, do not have associated parcel numbers, but are over 50 years old and required evaluation.

### **4.4.5 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

#### **4.4.5.1 Prehistoric Resources**

There are no existing records of cultural resources within the project area and the field survey also did not identify any prehistoric cultural resources. No impacts to prehistoric cultural resources would result from any component of the proposed project. There is always the potential for the existence of buried archaeological materials within a project area. County Code (22.10.040) requires that in the event archeological resources are unearthed or discovered during any construction activities, the following standards apply:

1. Construction activities shall cease, and the Department shall be notified so that the extent and location of discovered materials may be recorded by a qualified archaeologist, and disposition of artifacts may be accomplished in accordance with state and federal law.
2. In the event archeological resources are found to include human remains, or in any other case when human remains are discovered during construction, the County Coroner shall be notified in addition to the Department so proper disposition may be accomplished.

These existing requirements reduce impacts to prehistoric resources to a *less than significant level*. No additional mitigation is required. In the event that construction staging or stockpile locations are located in previously undisturbed areas beyond and outside of the project area defined in this EIR, subsequent cultural resources surveys may be required.

#### **4.4.5.2 Historic Resources**

##### Residences and Accessory Structures

None of the residential or agricultural structures surrounding the Arroyo Grande Creek Channel appear to meet the criteria for the CRHR or NRHP. Two properties were previously evaluated:

1111 Halcyon Road (Map Reference #7), and 3120 Cienega Street (Map Reference #5). The previous evaluation concluded that the properties did not meet the criteria for either register. The Office of Historic Preservation concurred with these conclusions on October 8, 2004 (JRP 2009).

The remaining residential and agricultural properties: (Figure 4.4-1, Map Reference #2, 4, and 8), do not meet the criteria for listing in the NRHP or CRHR because they lack historical significance. They are not significant for their association with the settlement or agricultural development of the lower Arroyo Grande Valley. None of the properties is significant for this association or played a singularly important role in the local history.

### Bridges

Neither the Highway 1 nor the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) bridge is eligible for the NRHP or CRHR. The Highway 1 Bridge (Figure 4.4-1 Map Reference #6) was evaluated as a part of the 2004-2006 update to the Caltrans California Historic Bridge Inventory and was found "not eligible."

The UPRR (former Southern Pacific) bridge over Arroyo Grande Creek channel (Figure 4.4-1, Map Reference #3) is not significant within the context of railroad transportation development. The bridge was constructed as a replacement for an earlier bridge and did not alter the alignment or rail service in the area. The bridge does not have direct or important associations with any historically significant individuals. The bridge does not possess any distinctive characteristics or high artistic value that would render it historically significant.

### Flood Control Channel

The Arroyo Grande Creek Channel, constructed between 1957 and 1961, is the largest structure within the study area. The Arroyo Grande Creek Channel is not significant for its association with flood control development. The federal small watershed program (PL83-566) was launched following the successful demonstration of projects using multiple small structures and funded the construction of the channel. While the Arroyo Grande Creek Watershed Project was the first west of the Mississippi funded under this specific program, similar projects were already under way on Los Angeles River and Santa Ynez River under other federal programs.

None of the built environment resources in the study area of the proposed project meet the criteria for listing in the NRHP. All buildings or structures within the APE that were more than 50 years old received evaluation. None of the more recently constructed buildings meet the exacting standards of exceptional significance for such properties. None of the buildings in the project area are historic properties subject to Section 106, nor are they considered historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. Potential impacts to historical resources are considered *less than significant*. No mitigation is required.

## **4.4.6 Cumulative Impacts**

Based on the information above, the proposed project would have less than significant impacts to cultural resources. No historic or prehistoric resources were identified in the project area during records searches and field surveys of the project area. This project would not result in any impacts individually, nor require any mitigation, and therefore would not contribute to potential cumulative impacts to cultural resources. Impacts would be *less than significant*.