

Appendix E  
**Cultural Resources Screening Memorandum**

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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Gilberto Ruiz, ICF  
**From:** Mark Robinson, ICF  
**Date:** January 21, 2016  
**Re:** Screening Memo-Venice Auxiliary Pumping Plant—Archaeology and Paleontology

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For the Venice Auxiliary Pumping Plant Project (VAPP), archaeological and paleontological resources and human remains were evaluated with the following two considerations in mind: 1) known archaeological and paleontological resources that exist in the Project footprint; and 2) the potential to encompass as yet undiscovered archaeological and paleontological resources, as well as human remains within the project footprint and area of potential effect (APE).

**Known Resources:** To determine if archaeological resources—including prehistoric human remains—are known to be present in the Project area, ICF conducted a records search at the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) located at California State University Fullerton. SCCIC is a branch of the California Historical Resources Information Center, which maintains the State of California's official records of previously recorded cultural resource studies and recorded archaeological sites for Los Angeles County. The SCCIC records search included the project study areas of potential effect (APE) and a 0.5-mile buffer surrounding the APE.

The record search indicated that the VAPP site had been surveyed twice in the past, and that no prehistoric or historic archaeological resources or isolated artifacts were recorded in the current project's footprint or within the 0.5 mile surrounding record search area. (Two historic period cultural resources are within the 0.5-mile record search area--the Venice Canal Historic District Lan-19-167310 (HRI-021273), and the Warren Wilson Beach House, LAn-19-174098.)

An ICF International archaeologist also conducted a comprehensive archaeological pedestrian survey of the VAPP on August 20, 2015. This area was surveyed in order to inspect for and identify any previously undiscovered cultural resources. The pedestrian survey consisted of walking transects in an east/west orientation, spaced 3 meters apart. Ground surface visibility was fair with the surface somewhat obscured by vegetation resulting in approximately 80% surface visibility. No cultural resources were identified during the field survey. Based on the record search and survey, no archaeological resources are known to be present in the project footprint. No human remains are known to be present in the VAPP or surrounding area.

To determine if paleontological resources are known to be present in the Project footprint, ICF contacted the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (NHMLAC) and requested a search of

their vertebrate fossil resources records. NHMLAC responded on October 6, 2015, that they had no recorded fossil localities in the VAPP footprint or the surrounding area. Based on this locality records search, no paleontological resources are known to be present in the project footprint.

**Potential for Undiscovered Resources:** The Project area is on the western margin of the boundaries of Ballona Lagoon, a broad swampy marsh that existed in the area until 20<sup>th</sup> Century development. The geologic formation underlying the proposed project area is tentatively identified as clay and sand of existing marshlands. These sediments are Holocene in age, and are less than 10,000 years in age. Sediment in the Project area may also derived from beach dune sands deposited along the lee of the Pacific Ocean, which are also Holocene in age. Both of these sediments are too young to contain fossil resources.

This area was originally marshland and beach dunes adjacent to the outlet of Ballona Creek at the Pacific Ocean. This setting is unlikely to have preserved prehistoric archaeological resources, due to constant erosion and deposition, prior to modern development. These marshland and beach dune sediments have been substantially altered by 20<sup>th</sup> Century development. This development altered landforms in the VAPP and surroundings to enhance an existing drainage into the Venice Grand Canal, and to create level, above water level lots on both sides of the Canal, which includes the VAPP footprint. Canal dredge spoils appear to have been used as fill for this purpose, as well as imported fill materials.

Any grading and excavation for the project would occur within this mixture of sediment and fill, and would not encounter unique paleontological resources or geologic features. There is some potential to encounter significant archaeological resources in undisturbed sediments. These marshland and beach sediments are unlikely to be the setting for the discovery of prehistoric human remains.

**Summary:** Impacts to paleontological resources and human remains have been analyzed sufficiently in the Project Initial Study and will not be further evaluated in the Project EIR. CEQA mandated consultation with Native American groups will continue, as required by the new AB 52 legislation. This consultation will determine if any Tribal Cultural Resources (TCR) are present in the VAPP. This AB 52 consultation will be summarized in the EIR in the Cultural Resources chapter.