

## **8C.0 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: HISTORIC/CULTURAL RESOURCES**

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### **8C.1 OVERVIEW**

Cultural resources include historic buildings and structures, historic districts, historic sites, prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, and other prehistoric and historic objects and artifacts.

#### **LEGAL BASIS AND REQUIREMENTS**

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As mandated by the Open Space Element, "...(A)reas of outstanding...historic and cultural value..." shall be afforded protection under the general plan. (Government Code Section 65560(b)(3).)

### **8C.2 PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY**

Tehama County is rich in historic and archaeological resources, some of which are already protected under state or national landmarks legislation. Although perhaps not significant on a state or national scale, many areas possess historic or cultural resources that are locally or regionally significant. Implementation of General Plan policies can thus become the means to provide protection for these resources at the local or county level.

Information contained in this report is based on a review of documents pertaining to the historic and cultural resources of Tehama County.

### **8C.3 EXISTING SETTING**

Prior to Euro-American settlement, Tehama County was occupied by two tribal groups. For approximately 4,500 years, archaeological records state that the Yana and their predecessors occupied the area from the Round Mountains near the Pit River in Shasta County, to Deer Creek in Tehama County. The Nomlaki (Central Wintun) were relative newcomers by comparison, having arrived from the north only 400 years ago. This tribe generally occupied the area spanning 10 miles east of the Sacramento River into the coastal range, in what is now Glenn and Tehama Counties.

The Mexican Land Grants of the mid-1800s brought many European-Americans to present-day Tehama County in 1844. The first major landowners in the area included Josiah Beldon, William George, Job F. Dye, Robert Hasty Thomes, Albert G. Toomes, and Peter Lassen. In honor of Senator Thomas H. Benton of Missouri, Lassen laid out the original townsite of Benton City, located near today's community of Vina. However, due to the discovery of gold, most of the settlers were drawn to the hills, and the town of Benton City eventually folded.

When the Gold Rush commenced in the late 1840s, European-Americans began arriving in great numbers. The town of "Red Bluffs" was soon established as the head of river navigation on the Sacramento River. Steamboats brought provisions up the river to "Red Bluffs," where they were transferred to wagons and mules and carried overland to the Shasta and Trinity mining camps. "Red Bluffs" soon changed its name to Red Bluff.

Tehama County was formed April 9, 1856 from parts of the three surrounding counties (Butte, Colusa, and Shasta). The name "Tehama" was most likely derived from a local Native American word meaning "high water" or "low land"; probably referring to the Sacramento River.

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### **HISTORIC**

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Several historic sites are under the protection and management of the state or federal government. Plaques designate the location and describe the significance of sites identified by the State Historic Landmarks program and the Federal Register of Historic Places. A listing of these sites is also published in state and federal documents, which are available to the general public.

In Tehama County, one of these California Registered Historic Landmarks has been further utilized. The Residence of General William B. Ide, with support from the State Department of Parks and Recreation, has been designated as a Historical/Cultural Area Park and provides picnicking facilities as well as historic information. Other locally significant historic sites in Tehama County include the original Masonic Lodge and Original Tehama County Jail in the City of Tehama and the former Leland Stanford Ranch in Vina. Additionally, Mineral Headquarters is designated and managed by the National Park Service as a historic district.

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

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In contrast to historic resources, the archaeological resources of Tehama County are not accessible to the general public. This is primarily due to the sensitive nature of prehistoric sites and artifacts, but also to the lack of areas where public access can be controlled to prevent artifact damage. However, sites in Tehama County with visible surface indications of past cultural activity could be utilized for interpretive displays. These would include rock shelters, midden sites in association with prehistoric dwellings, rock walls/circles, and petroglyph or pictograph sites.

Traces of Native American societies have been found at two major archaeological sites: one, the "Los Molinos Vicinity – Ishi Site" in Deer Creek Canyon, and the other, the "Sulphur Creek Archaeological District" in the Mill Creek vicinity. Projectile tips, burial sites, examples of basketry, matting fragments, and other items related to Wintun Indian settlement life were found at these locations. Both areas are listed on the Federal Register of Historic Places.

These two sites, however, represent only a few of the archaeological resources known to exist in Tehama County. In addition to the two described above, excavations have uncovered several hundred prehistoric sites, including burial sites, west of the Sacramento River where the Nome Lackee Tribe is known to have settled. Additionally, over 250 settlement sites have been identified along the Sacramento River in Tehama County, as well as several along river tributaries in the foothill regions of the County.

Although several archaeological regions have been identified, many sites are characterized by a lack of knowledge regarding their prehistory. The quality or existing information, moreover, is highly variable. Additionally, the high rate of growth in Tehama County, as well as throughout northern California, and consequential development increases represent threats to archaeological records. Further, expanding recreational use in much of the backcountry areas has exposed many regions to vandalism and unauthorized artifact collecting. Thus, the rate of knowledge acquisition and the success in prehistoric site preservation are in danger of being exceeded by the rate at which this irreplaceable information is being lost.

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### 8C.4 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

#### FEDERAL REGULATIONS

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Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and its implementing regulations, 36 CFR 800, 33 CFR 325 for Corps permits, and 36 CFR 60.6 for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility, requires that before beginning any federal project, a federal agency must take into account the effects of the undertaking on historic properties and determine if any properties are eligible for or listed on The NRHP, and afford the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) an opportunity to comment on these actions. It must be noted that any property judged eligible has the same protections as a listed property.

Section 106 effects projects that occur on federally owned land, involving federal permits, or grants or loans. Examples of Federal undertakings would include: FHA Loans, FAA permits, Corps Section 404 and Nationwide permits, DOT local assistance grants, HUD Block Grants, etc. Specific regulations regarding compliance with Section 106 state that, although the tasks necessary to comply with Section 106 may be delegated to others, the federal agency is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the Section 106 process is completed according to statute.

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) lists properties that are important to our nation's past. To be eligible for listing, a property must be 50 years of age or more; it must possess historic significance; and it must possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Historic significance is the importance of a property to the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or cultural aspects of a community. To qualify for the NRHP, a property must have significance in American history at the local, state, or national level. This importance can be present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity and meet one of the following criteria:

- A) Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history;
- B) Associated with the lives of persons significant to our past;
- C) Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D) Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### STATE REGULATIONS

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As the designated California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency for approval of CEQA projects in Tehama County, the County is responsible for compliance with requirements regarding the identification and treatment of historic and prehistoric cultural resources. CEQA requires public or private projects financed or approved by public agencies to assess the effects of the project on cultural resources (Public Resources Code Sections 21082, 21083, 21083.2, and 21084.1 and California Code of Regulations 15064.5 and 15126.6). Cultural resources are defined as buildings, sites, structures, or objects that may have historical, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or scientific importance (Public Resources Code Section 50320.1 Defines Historical

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Resources). CEQA states that if a project results in significant impacts on important cultural resources, then alternative plans or mitigation measures must be considered.

The CEQA Guidelines define significant historical resources as "resources listed or eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (CHR)" (Public Resources Code Section 5024.1) (Public Resources Code Section 4850 Defines the California Register of Historic Places). It must be noted that a property judged eligible has the same protection as a property that is listed. A historical resource may be eligible for inclusion in the CHR if it:

- A) is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
- B) is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
- C) embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
- D) has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

In addition, Section 15064.5(c)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines also requires consideration of an archaeological site that does not meet the criteria defined in subsection (a), but does meet the definition of "an unique archaeological resource" described in Section 21083.2 of the Public Resource Code.

Since its inception in 1971, CEQA has undergone a number of significant changes affecting cultural resources. The most recent change occurred in 1992 but did not take effect until ca 1999, when changes to the code were included in the CEQA Guidelines. In addition, since the 1970s the professional definition of cultural resources and archaeological sites has changed. As a rule of thumb, it is prudent to consider reports prepared before 2000 as possible not adequate since historic era cultural resources less than 100 years old were not considered: CEQA's definition of historic era cultural resources was changed from 100 to 50 years and went into standard effect approximately 2001. One other important note: Before the mid-1980s, archaeologists did not routinely record any historic era cultural resource as the focus was entirely on prehistoric sites.

Public Resources Code Section 5097 specifies procedures to be followed in the event that human remains are discovered. The disposition of Native American burials falls within the jurisdiction of the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). California Code of Regulations Section 15064.5 (f) identifies the need to establish procedures to be followed in the event of the discovery during construction of buried cultural resources other than human bone on nonfederal land.

### **8C.5 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The 1983 Tehama County General Plan expressed the following objective:

- HA-1: Preserve the historic and archaeological resources of the County for their scientific, educational, aesthetic and recreational values.

The 1983 Tehama County General Plan expressed the following policies:

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- HA-a: The County shall refer any development proposals affecting historic resources to the Tehama County Historical Commission and when necessary, request an evaluation by a professional historian of the significance of the resource in question and appropriate measures for its protection.
- HA-b: Encourage the nomination of significant historic and archaeological sites to the California historical Landmarks Series or to the Federal Register of Historic Places.
- HA-c: Encourage public and private agencies and organizations to develop interpretive and educational programs in order to safely utilize historic and prehistoric sites for community benefit.
- HA-d: The County shall require appropriate surveys and site investigations when needed as part of the initial environmental assessment for development projects in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Surveys and investigations shall be performed under the supervision of a professional archaeologist or other person qualified in the appropriate field, and approved by the County.
- It is recognized that Timber Harvest Plans have been declared by the State to be functionally equivalent to environmental assessments required by CEQA.
- HA-e: Encourage the rehabilitation, preservation and utilization of historic buildings that are representative examples of the County's heritage.