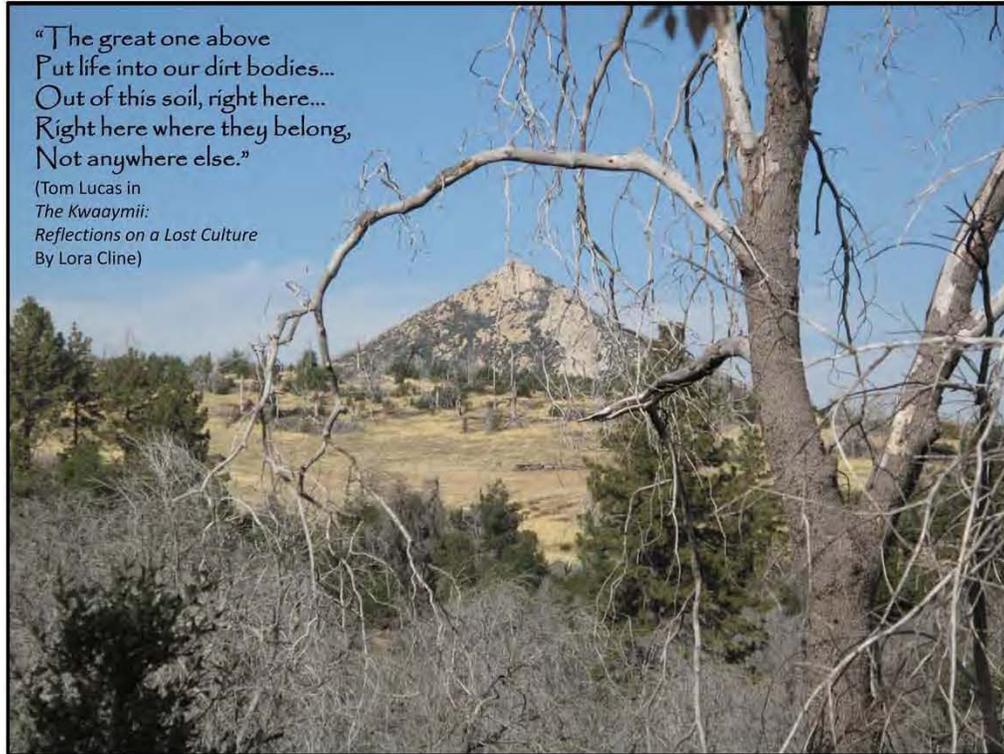


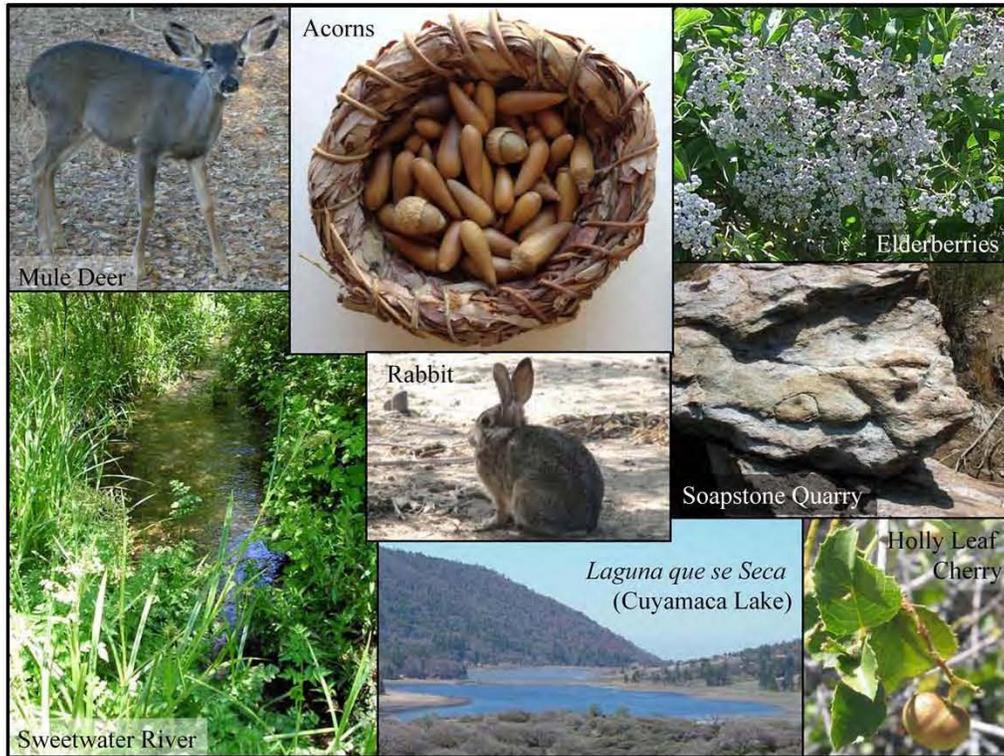
Information and data contained in this presentation are current as of October 3, 2012, and are based on information provided by the Colorado Desert District, the Southern Service Center, California State Park data files, and previous work. All images and text are the property of California State Parks unless otherwise noted.



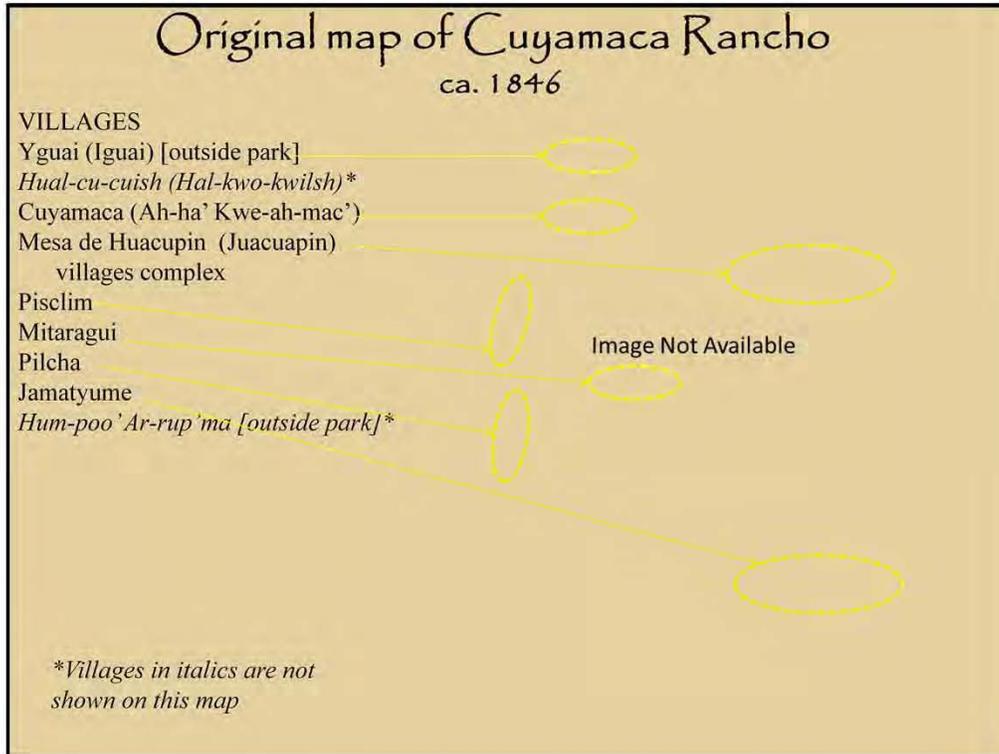
The cultural resources of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park include archaeological artifacts, features, and sites of both the Native American and historic periods, as well as traditional cultural places and resources; sacred sites; cultural preserves; and historic buildings, structures, landscapes, and sites. These resources are in the process of being researched, documented, and inventoried by California State Parks archaeologists and historians as part of a cultural resources inventory. 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.



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, shows 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.

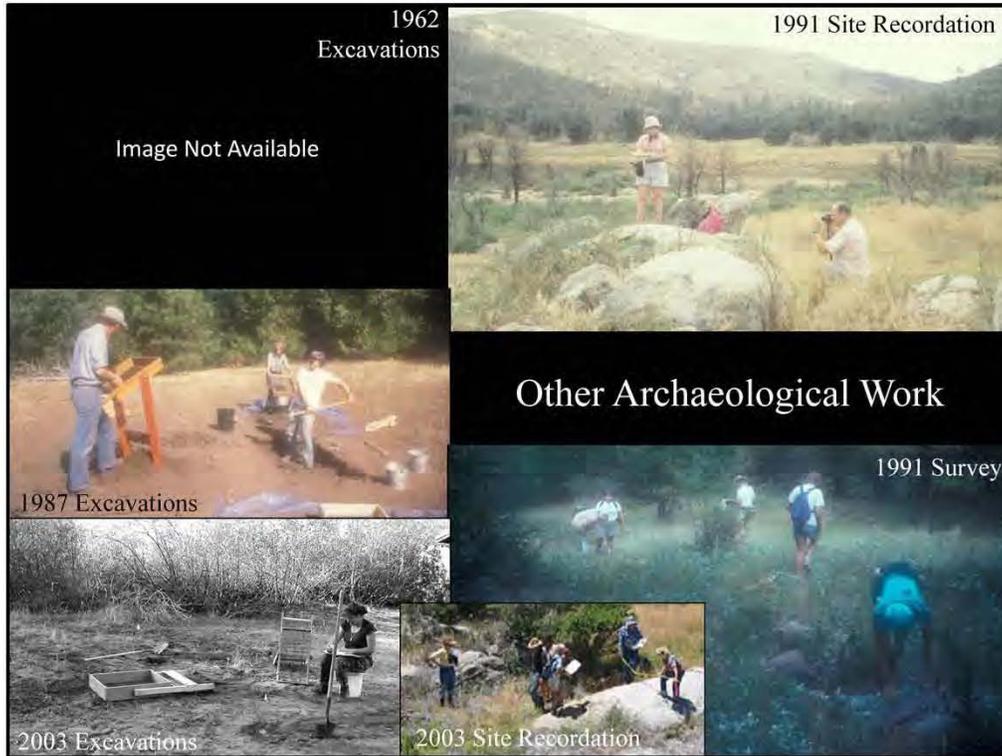


At the time the first Europeans started settling the eastern mountains of San Diego, there were seven major Villages or village complexes identified within what would become the park boundaries, including Ah-ha' Kwe-a-mac', the village site that is the namesake for the mountains, rancho, and the current 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.



Image Not Available

The archaeological investigations of these earlier people and cultures began in Cuyamaca 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 that resulted in the identification and recordation of numerous archaeological sites. Most of this work was conducted by State Parks archaeologists, volunteers, and college students participating in archaeological field classes. Prior to 2003 there had been nearly 400 sites documented within the park boundaries, many of these identified during large archaeological surveys in the 1960s and early 1980s. Additional surveys in the late 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s were smaller and focused on project areas for new trails, campground and facility improvements, and areas identified for the prescribed burn program.



Fire has been a presence at this park since it was formed. Wildfires burn in some portion of the park every few years. But most of these fires have been small or only burned relatively small areas of the park.



The exception to this pattern was the Cedar Fire of 2003. This massive fire burned hundreds of thousands of acres, including all of the park lands except a very small portion in the southern extent and a few areas that were protected by firefighters around the campgrounds and school camp.



For archaeologists and archaeological sites, fire can be both useful and destructive. Useful in clearing the brush and undergrowth such that it becomes easier to identify and record all the various components of a site, but destructive in that it can damage rock surfaces through spalling and cracking, alter soils and rock chemistry skewing the results of some types of analysis, burn and melt historic components such as wood and glass, and make sites more susceptible to erosion and vandalism. The Cedar fire also caused additional damages to archaeological collections due to the burning of the buildings that were housing the collections in the park.



After the Cedar Fire, State Parks archaeologists, volunteers, and college students took the opportunity to conduct several large surveys, resulting in the identification and recordation of hundreds of previously undocumented sites. Additionally, projects related to post-fire restoration work also included archaeological surveys, monitoring, and excavations, resulting in further recordation and analysis of sites.



There are now over 700 archaeological sites recorded within the park. These include Native American sites such as villages, camps, rock art sites, quarries, processing sites, and sacred sites; and historic sites such as building sites, mining sites, constructed landscape features, fences and walls, a cemetery, and an airplane crash site.



But many of these sites are threatened by damage or destruction. Threats to both the known and undocumented archaeological sites include erosion, fire, construction, off-trail use, unauthorized camping, cannabis cultivation, and vandalism including illegal artifact collecting.



Almost 40% of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park has been examined for archaeological sites and based on site densities and distribution it is expected that many more sites exist throughout the unexamined areas of the park. The more we know and learn about these sites, the better we will be able to interpret, manage, and protect them for future generations.