

**Nevada Test and Training Range, Nellis Air Force Base
Legislative Environmental Impact Statement
Native American Ethnographic Studies
Study Area for Alternative 3A
February 9 – 12, 2018**

Prepared By:

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March 2, 2018
(Revised March 29, 2018)

This document contains the observations and evaluations of
the members of the CGTO Writers Committee.
When released it will have been fully reviewed and approved.

PREFACE

The purpose of this Preface is to explain the structure of the following report of cultural identifications and evaluations related to the proposed expansion of Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR). This proposed action is being assessed in a Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (LEIS). This report is focused on study area for Alternative 3A, which exists to the west of Nellis near the Oasis Valley and Beatty, Nevada

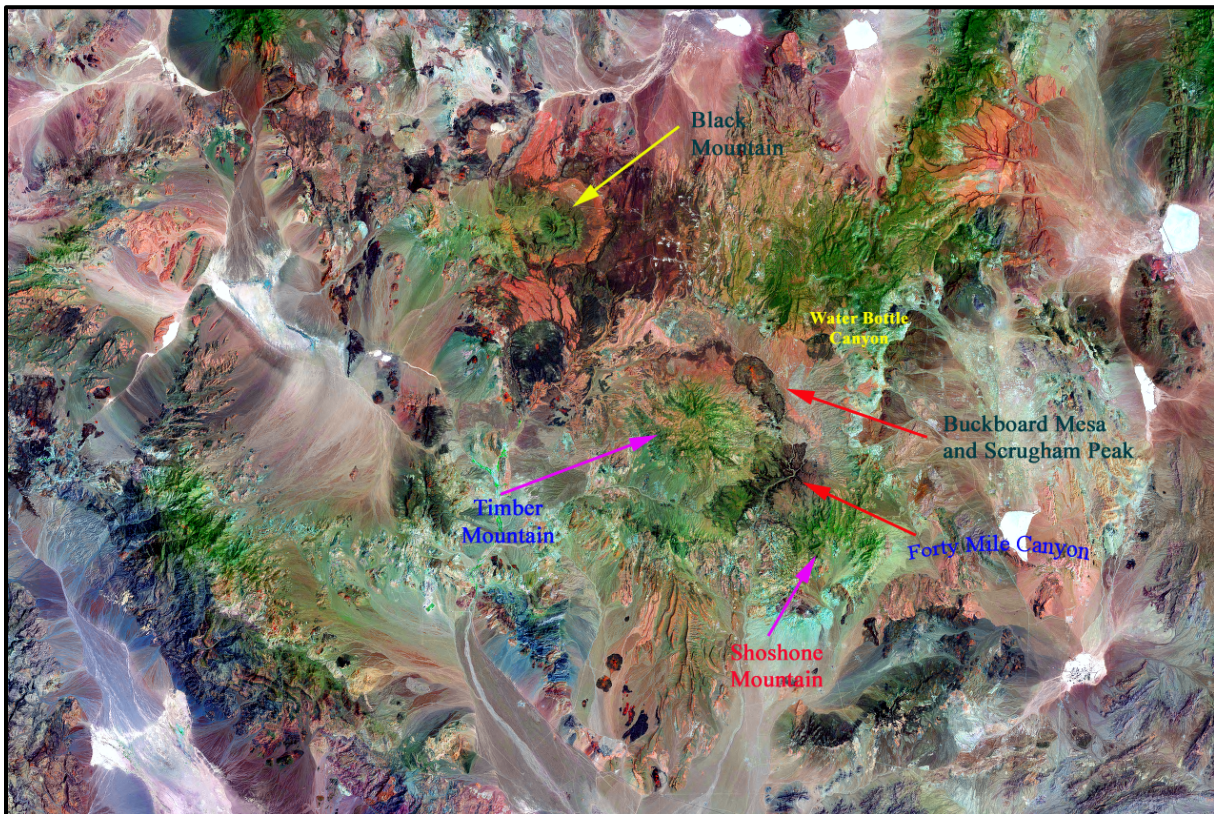


Figure 0.1 Culturally Significant Landscape and Features Surrounding Oases Valley

The authors of the report include researchers from the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology, School of Anthropology, University of Arizona (UofA) and members of a Writers Committee appointed by representatives of 17 Native American tribes who are in formal government-to-government consultation with NTTR. The consulting tribes identify themselves as the Consolidated Group of Tribes and Organizations or CGTO.

The following report is organized by places in the proposed expansion study area called Alternative 3A that were visited by the Writers Committee. The analysis of each place contains (1) a description of the place and why it was chosen for assessment, (2) the Writers Committee cultural identifications and assessments, and (3) tiering information. The latter is required by federally mandated guidelines, which largely derive from the National Environmental Policy Act. The place descriptions and Writers Committee assessments are rather straight forward, and thus easy to understand, but the tiering requires a bit of explanation. In general tiering involves a commitment to use past studies involving similar topics and/or places as those that are being

considered in this study. As such, tiering is used to contextualize what is being said by the Writers Committee. In other words, tiering information places new cultural identifications and evaluations along side ones that were provided during one or more similar studies.

The following tiering statement corresponds with ones about home farming communities and their relationships to pilgrimage trails and their ceremonial destinations. The following ethnographic text was shared by tribal representatives of the CGTO during a Nevada Test Site funded study of a place called Water Bottle Canyon which was determined to be a traditional Central Ceremonial Destination for people from all the 17 CGTO tribes (Stoffle, Van Vlack, and Arnold eds. 2006). Water Bottle Canyon, located just north of Ammonia Tanks, is a ceremonial area having tonal rocks with offering holes located along a narrow canyon, bow and arrow shaft trees, and a place for training and observing the stars. There is a great deal of evidence that Water Bottle Canyon is part of the traditional site called Waungiakuda. Waungiakuda was a place where Native American people continued to live until the Twentieth Century, when the dispersal of family members occurred due to a number of factors related to encroachment. In the late 19th Century, the site was occupied on a full time basis and served as a place where people from the region wanted to visit for various reasons, including seed gathering. It was the home (perhaps one of the homes) of Wangagwana, who was known as the chief of this general region in the 1930s years after his death (Steward 1938:95). It was the birth place and early residence of Wangagwana's son, who the non-Indians called Panamint Joe and who the Native American people considered as Chief of the Shoshone during the Rhyolite mining boom about 1906 (Steward 1938:95). Waungiakuda was a place to visit for hunting, gathering, trade, and ceremony in the late 19th Century.

Central to the area is a large isolated sandstone butte. Nearby was found a Clovis point estimated to be 13,000 years old. It has been argued that Indian people have been visiting these places in the caldera for ceremonial purposes for more than ten thousand years.

The interpretation summary presented below is based on a total of 75 interviews that were collected during four field sessions in 1997, 1998, 2000, and 2004. After being fully reviewed by the CGTO and the DOE it was published in 2006 (Stoffle, Van Vlack, and Arnold eds. 2006). The following text has been edited for use in this Preface.

In order to use the features in Water Bottle Canyon for their various ceremonial activities, they had to take numerous steps to prepare themselves. Usually preparation would begin far in advance of their arrival to Water Bottle Canyon, and it started in the pilgrims' home communities. They took many steps to cleanse and purge themselves of any impurities and ill thoughts. In order to do that, the pilgrims use prayer and sweats. In some communities the Native American people used the nearby hot springs as a form of purification.

The rock (prominently located at Water Bottle Canyon), is a very important place, it was put here by the creator and it wasn't moved. It can't ever be moved. It's the foundation for Paiute people. We have stories about this, welcome here and talk about the importance of protecting it and it gives the power and the protection that we need. A long time ago people used to come to this rock (Figure 0.2), the Las Vegas, Pahrump, Ash Meadows, and Chemehuevi people would come up here. They

know about this rock. That's how...it's one that cannot only give off the power to the people but to the land. It's where you come to leave offerings, sometimes just to talk to it, to leave your thoughts and your prayers. The rest of the area...the mountains...these are a part...they're all related. The mountains around here protect the rock. It's like it's being guarded by the surrounding mountains, so it's very very important in that way. The moon - it's a crescent moon with the quarter facing down, the rain wasn't going to come because of that. It also was a time that warned women...it was there time to have their menstrual cycle...it was a very important time, a very delicate time and they have to be careful for what they are involved in. The men came here; it wasn't a place where families go to play...it's a very special place.



Figure 0.2 Landmark Rock

Ceremonies are conducted at places with high concentrations of *puha* and thus it would be too dangerous for people who were not religious specialists to stay for long periods at ceremonial places. Therefore, people who use a ceremonial area must have had to travel to it from safe home bases. The pilgrims traveled along an extensive trail network that connected Indian communities and ceremonial places from all over California, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona with many of the trails converging at Water Bottle Canyon. The major trails all start in the larger Native American communities. The home communities were oasis agricultural centers like Ash Meadows and Oasis Valley. They were known for having irrigated agricultural fields and large populations. In Oasis Valley, for example, long-term Native American settlements have been documented (Steward 1938). Along these trails pilgrims would stop at various locations to say prayers asking for a safe journey and protection for the families they had to leave behind and to acquire the power necessary to enter the area. The following section focuses on two of the pilgrimage trails that begin in the communities along the Amargosa River both of which ended at or near Water Bottle Canyon (Figure 0.1). Along these trails are other destinations, which could be selected given the purpose of the pilgrimage.

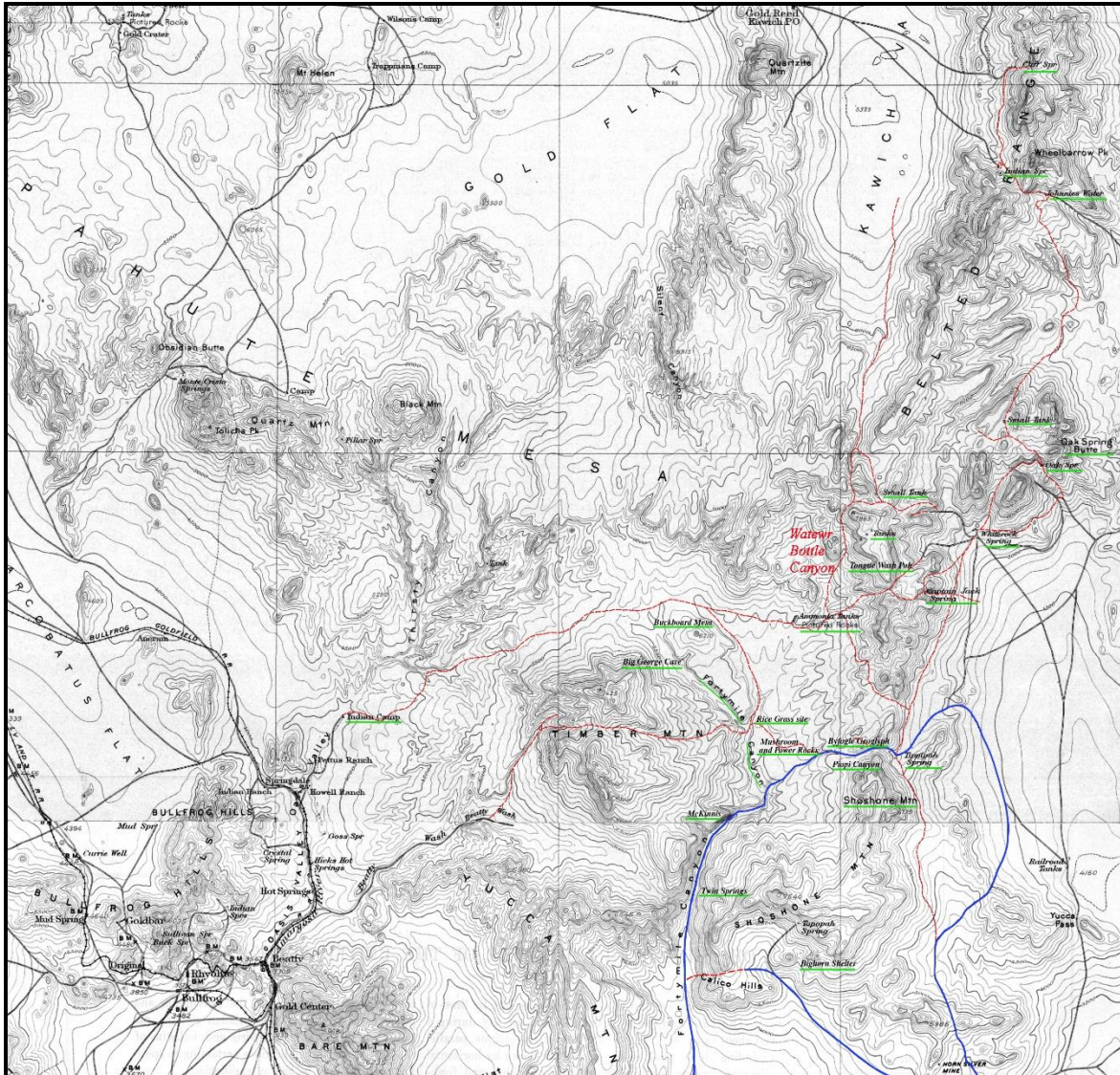


Figure 0.3 Traditional Trails across the Central Portion of the NTR (Stoffle, Van Vlack, Arnold eds. 2006: 111)

The Oasis Valley Pilgrimage Trails

Coming out of the Oasis Valley area, there were two different trails heading towards Water Bottle Canyon across what are now lands managed by NTR (Figure 0.3). Each trail was a very distinct and different route, which served a specific purpose. The differences in the routes are attributed to the fact that some trails are ceremonial trails and others are trails to communities and use areas. The ceremonial trails also differ in function; some trails were trails to vision questing places (like at Buckboard Mesa (Figure 0.4)) and others were trails to healing and doctoring places (like the Doctor Rocks on the NTS (Figure 0.5)). Some ceremonial trails, also known as pilgrimage trails, trails can only be used by *puha'gants*. The religious and ceremonial trails were also not frequented by families. Many of the destinations along these trails are too powerful and dangerous for children and non-initiated people.



Figure 0.6 View to North of the Volcano Scrugham Peak and Buckboard Mesa



Figure 0.5 Paiute Representative Mr. Clifford Jake at the Power Rock Site, April 1997

Along both routes, the pilgrims sang songs and said prayers to guide them on their journey and to protect their families who had stayed behind. Along the route, plants could have been gathered and medicine could have been prepared to take with them on their journey to leave as offerings or in ceremonial activities

Oasis Valley Hot Springs

Before setting out on their pilgrimage to Water Bottle Canyon, the pilgrims had to begin to prepare themselves at the home communities. In the Oasis Valley area, pilgrims most likely came from distant home communities but used the hot springs so they could continue to cleanse themselves for their immediate journey. Hot springs have long been used by Native American people for cleansing and purification and there is evidence that this occurs across Numic territory.

Oasis Valley and Indian Camp Trails

After leaving the hot spring area they would travel to upper Oasis Valley and a place now called Indian Camp. From this location pilgrims could set out on their journey to either Water Bottle Canyon by traveling to the east of Thirsty Canyon trail or to continue north up Thirsty Canyon to Black Mountain. The Oasis Valley trail to Water Bottle Canyon is well documented because it was clearly in use during the initial mapping of the area by the United States Geological Survey crew in 1905 and was marked as a Native American trail on the official published map in 1906 (Figure 0.2). As illustrated by Ransome (1983), the trail leading into the site [called here Water Bottle Canyon] comes from a place labeled “Indian Camp,” which is located in the Oasis Valley just north of the town of Beatty.

This trail to Water Bottle Canyon continues eastward, stopping at Ammonia Tanks (which is sub-labeled Pictured Rocks), Water Bottle Canyon, Whiterock Spring, and apparently ending at Oak Springs. The trail is marked on the USGS 1906 color map (Figure 0.5) but that must be magnified a bit to be better observed. Given the specificity of these Native American trails recorded on the USGS map, the surveyors must have traveled along these trails during their mapping.



Figure 0.6 USGS Colored Map of Region published in 1906

Beatty Wash Trail and Cat Canyon

A second trail leaves Oasis Valley via Beatty Wash. As pilgrims reached the entrance of the canyon from Beatty Wash, the trail climbs 300 feet in elevation. Oasis Valley pilgrims followed this trail through Beatty Wash to a series of places that led them to the western edges of Timber Mountains and on past Ammonia Tanks. The trail had four main stopping points (1) Beatty Wash, (2) Cat Canyon, (3) Fortymile Canyon Petroglyphs, and (4) Fortymile Canyon just below Buckboard Mesa and Scrugham Peak (Figure 0.6), where people would pray, leave offerings, and prepare themselves for the arrival at Water Bottle Canyon.

The second place along the trail the pilgrims would travel through would be Cat Canyon. It is about 5 miles from the end of Beatty Wash to the entrance of the canyon. Cat Canyon is approximately eleven miles long and transects across the center of Timber Mountain. This canyon is a constricted space along the pilgrimage trail. Constricted spaces are places where puha concentrates, so pilgrims would come to these places like Cat Canyon to pray and acquire power. It was important for the pilgrims to get power from the stopping points along their journey mainly because ceremonial destinations such as Water Bottle Canyon have high amounts of puha and pilgrims would need a great deal of power or else they would not be able to handle the puha of Water Bottle Canyon. It could make them sick and in turn cause harm to other people. Therefore, while traveling through Cat Canyon, the pilgrims would take steps to further ready themselves for Water Bottle Canyon.

Before entering the canyon, the pilgrims introduced themselves to it. They explained to the canyon where they had come from and why they were there. Outside the canyon they might have left an offering of Indian tobacco, water, or some sort of precious stone and then the pilgrims entered the canyon and continued to prepare themselves. During a recent visit to Cat Canyon, pieces of worked obsidian and white chert were found. They are believed to be offerings left by Native American people as they made their pilgrimage (Van Vlack 2012). While in the canyon, the pilgrims received puha from the place and they could have received a song to take with them for the remainder of their journey.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

This chapter is intended to situate for the reader the site interpretations and evaluations provided by the Writers Committee appointed by the CGTO who are in government-to-government consultation with NTTR. This chapter contains some information about the natural resources of the Study Area identified as Alternative 3A of the LEIS and the occupation and use of the study area (Figure 1.1) by various Native American cultural groups. Note that this map which contains a number of regional cultural places including the entire Amargosa River hydrological system as it flows from Black Mountain to Death Valley, the Spring Mountains which are the origin mountains for the Southern Paiutes, and a highlighted portion of the Salt Song Trail which is the path to the afterlife for most Paiute peoples. The NTTR is highlighted in grey. The chapter largely draws upon previous studies, which have been produced by these consulting tribes and approved, by either the DOE or NTTR.

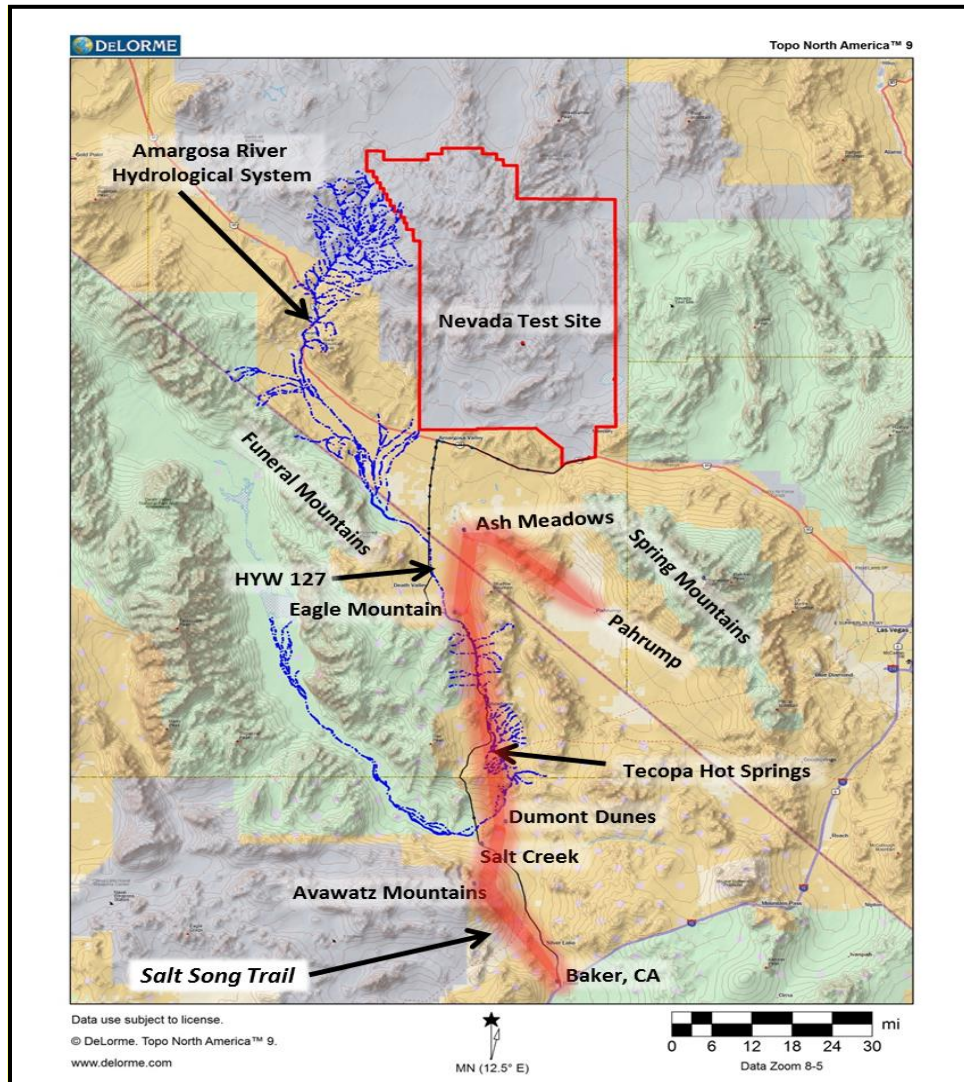


Figure 1.1 The Oasis Valley and the Amargosa River

Thorough investigation and tiering of ethnographic studies in the Beatty area situated the selection of two primary visit locations during the February 2018 visit to the Nellis LEIS Alternative 3A: (1) Indian Camp (Colson Pond area) and (2) Transvaal. Indian Camp includes a section of land that stretches from Colson Pond to the NTTR entrance gate within Thirsty Canyon. This area includes cultural features such as Thirsty Canyon, a Native American quartz quarry, and Intaglios situated on a hill with surrounding vistas. Transvaal, located to the southeast of the Indian Camp, is an old mining camp littered with debris and evidence of a rapid encroachment of EuroAmerican settlers. Additional descriptions of the study areas are provided in Chapter Two: Indian Camp and Chapter Three: Transvaal.



Figure 1.2 CGTO Members and UofA Researchers

In addition to talking about places and cultural resources, many discussions about natural resources took place during the February 2018 Field Study. This includes animals such as hawks, eagles, rabbits, bighorn sheep, and bobcats, as well as observed plants such as yucca, cottonwood, pine, and Indian tea. Cultural landscapes were suggested as a way of understanding the whole area and surrounding region.

1.1 Schedule of Events

The following is a list of the day-to-day activities, followed by brief descriptions of the types of interactions that took place. All times are approximations.

Day 1: February 9, 2012

- UofA research team arrive in Beatty, NV
- CGTO Writers arrive

Day 2: February 10, 2018

- 9:00 AM: Orientation
- 12:00 PM: Leave for Indian Camp Area
- 12:30 PM Arrive at Indian Camp Area (north) and have lunch
- 2:00 PM Travel to Indian Camp Area (south) and fill out forms
- 5:00 PM: Leave for Hotel
- 6:00 PM: Arrive back at hotel

Day 3: February 11, 2018

- 9:00 AM: Leave for Transvaal
- 9:30 AM: Arrive at Transvaal, visit site, and fill out forms
- 12:00 PM: Leave for Hotel
- 12:30 PM: Arrive back at Hotel for lunch and Closing Meeting

Day 4: February 12, 2018

- CGTO Writers depart
- UofA Team depart

The planned schedule of activities was followed closely. The weather was windy and shifting to cold as a front moved across the study area. The dirt roads remained dry and passable for both field days.

1.1.1 Orientation

On the morning of February 10, before proceeding to the field activities that were planned for February 10 and 11, the UofA research team and the CGTO Writers Committee met in an orientation meeting. There were three main objectives to this meeting. First, to review the maps and forms produced by the UofA team for the Beatty and Alternative 3A areas. Second, to review the proposed Schedule of Events, and third, to begin the dialogue concerning the historic events effecting Native peoples with roots in the Beatty and Alternative 3A area.



Figure 1.3 CGTO Discussing Site Visits with UofA Researchers

All members of the Writers Committee were familiar with the Beatty area, which had always served as a gathering area for peoples from around the region. Some of the Writers Committee had been monitors on the Far Western archaeology surveys conducted in the Alternative 3A expansion study areas.

1.1.2 Closing Meeting

On the afternoon of February 11, after arriving at the hotel from Transvaal, the UofA research team and the CGTO Writers Committee formed a closing meeting. During this meeting members of the CGTO and the UofA team discussed the many topics and sentiments that came to the forefront while conducting interviews and completing forms in the field.

The Writers Committee were in agreement that they wanted the entire area from the end of Thirsty Canyon down the Armargosa to at least the Indian Camp to be considered a single area potentially impacted by the proposed expansion. They believe that both sides of the Armargosa River should be included in the definition of this as an area for preparing for and returning from pilgrimages. At least two pilgrimage trails begin at the Indian Camp. In addition the timing of the pilgrimages would be determined in part by local time keepers using the intaglios on the higher ridge above the Indian Camp. The entire area should be managed as a cultural significant area within a much larger sacred landscape.

The members of the Writers Committee were in agreement that the best use of the Transvaal Camp site was to interpret the physical and cultural damage inflicted on the local Native American people by the mining activities and the miners themselves. Instead of erasing the presence of the miners, a task that would not be successful because of so many test pits and mine shafts, it was better to use the evidence of the event to explain what happened to the Native American people. The site should be placed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Native American Traditional Cultural Property or TCP. Unlike other TCPs, Transvaal would convey a sad but essential moment in the history of local Native American people.



Figure 1.4 CGTO Writers Committee and UofA Researchers in Closing Meeting

In addition to discussing the field visit to Alternative 3A, the CGTO did a technical review of the draft report for section 3c. Discussions on features within the Desert Wildlife Refuge, such as roasting pits, took place to develop further on those topics. Those suggested cultural observations have now been placed in the text on Alternative 3C.

The Writers Committee reaffirms that the Proposed Study Area 3a ethnographic identifications and assessments should be placed without further modification in the LEIS Appendix K.

Another recommendation from the Writers Committee was that the ethnographic studies begun in response to the LEIS continue in an effort to more completely fill out the Native American stories and cultural interpretations of these areas at the boundary of NAFB. This request reflects the Writers Committee's assessment that there are more ethnographic issues to be brought forward in response to the rapidly progressing LEIS schedule.

1.2 Natural Setting

The headwaters of the Amargosa River are in the area of the old volcano called Black Mountain. From there rain and snow waters flow southward down the high walled Thirsty Canyon. When these waters leave Thirsty Canyon they enter Oasis valley. This is an ecosystem of great biodiversity and biocomplexity which contributes to many species especially birds.



Figure 1.5 Golden Eagle

The Amargosa River is often an intermittent waterway but in wet years and times of heavy rains it flows continuously and rapidly as it drains the Oasis Valley and the Amargosa

Desert. Eventually the river flows into Death Valley where it periodically fills shallow lakes and accumulates in an underground aquifer. When not flowing on the surface for most of its 185 mile-long route the Amargosa River critically flows beneath the surface. The subsurface river can be seen at various locations like at Devil's Pool. Despite the season or amount of rain and snow that falls in the this region, portions of the Amargosa River provide permanent surface water along the mainstream and at artesian springs and wetlands, such as those located in Oasis Valley and near Beatty, Nevada. In these permanent wetlands the river creates rich riparian areas including marsh and open water habitats. These areas support diverse groups of plants and animals, which are seldom seen in the vast arid landscapes that are characteristic of southern Nevada (Amargosa Conservancy N.d.).



Figure 1.6 View of Colson Pond Facing South

Surveys conducted between 2002 and 2008 in the Oasis Valley by the Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, and other groups identified more than 240 species of birds (Basin and Range Watch 2008). Over 100 of those observed and identified species are classified as being neo-tropical migrants who make use of the area during spring or fall migration. Other waterfowl, raptors, and shorebirds call this place home throughout the year (Basin and Range Watch 2008).



Figure 1.7 Red Tail Hawk (Photo by Sean Scruggs)

According to TRAILS Oases Valley (2014), a conservation group interested in balancing recreation and conservation, Oasis Valley hosts a significant number of single species concentrations. These include more than 25,000 individuals from four groups of the wood warbler family who pass through each spring. There are also many Nearctic birds that stay in the Oasis Valley and along the lower Amargosa River throughout the year. Of the 240 species reported, 35 of these stay year-round.

1.3 Ethnographic Background

There is a considerable body of ethnographic knowledge regarding the people of Oasis Valley and the surrounding region. Much of this literature has responded to the early work of Julian Steward; although those early studies are important, contemporary interviews with the descendant peoples have greatly multiplied what is known about the earlier people and their ways of life. Especially important are spiritual aspects of their lives, which were largely ignored by Steward.

Key to understanding the aboriginal use of the Oasis Valley and its surrounding topographic resources are the existence of spectacular volcanic landscapes (Figure 1.5 and 1.6). These volcanoes and associated topographic features, which are generally located in the massive Timber Mountain Caldera to the east of Oasis Valley, constitute one of the most culturally central ceremonial areas in the region.



Figure 1.8 Volcanic Landscapes by Oasis Valley

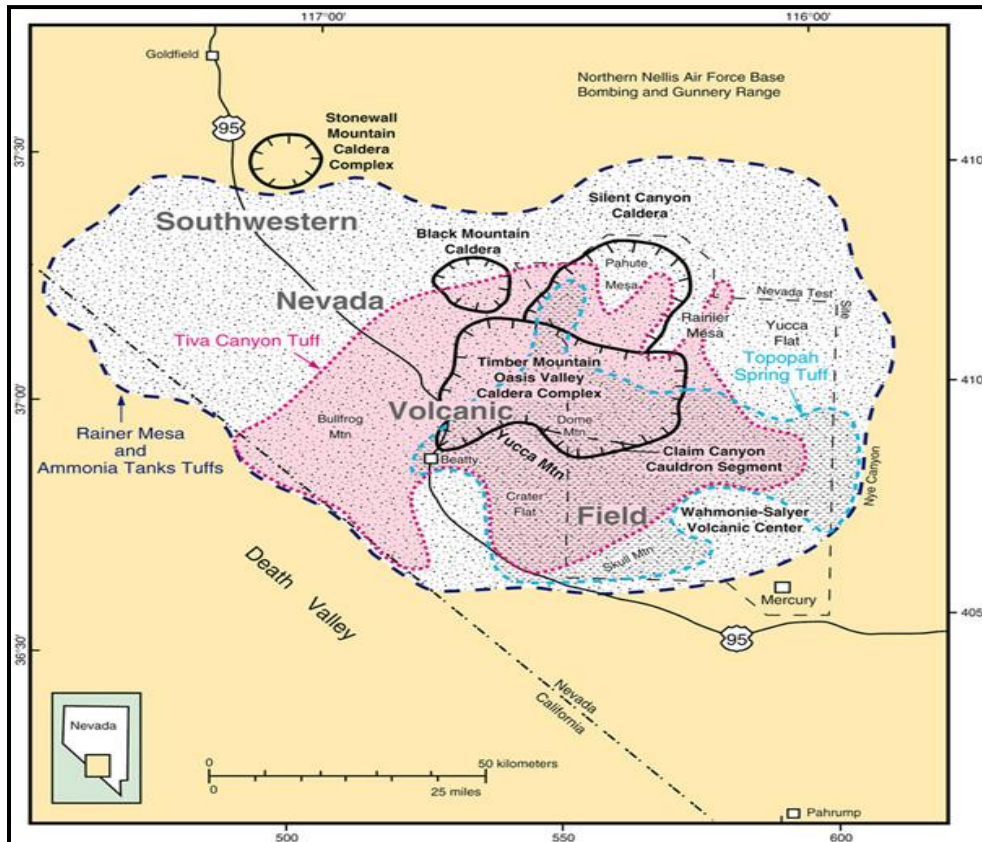


Figure 1.9 Map of Southwestern Nevada Volcanic Field

Old Native American pilgrimage trails have been documented in modern ethnographic studies, many of which are mentioned in this report of findings. Some of these trails begin at the hot springs in Oasis Valley and extend north up stream along the Amargosa River to Indian Camp and then on to Black Mountain and east to Buckboard Mesa and Scrugam Peak, and from there went further north to what is called Water Bottle Canyon. Ethnographic studies have documented that literally all of Timber Mountain Caldaria is crossed with pilgrimage trails. Some of these have been illustrated in Figure 0.1 in the Preface to this report.

1.3.1 Districts

Native American Nations (or cultural groups) are composed of regional units referred here as districts (Stoffle et al. 1990). Steward introduced the term district while discussing the people of Oasis Valley, near Beatty, and of the White Rock Spring area, near the Belted Range:

Some detailed information is available concerning two population centers, the vicinity of Beatty and the Belted Range, where, because there were an unusual number of springs, winter villages were clustered. Each of these centers is, in a sense, a district, for the residents naturally found it most convenient to associate with their nearby neighbors....It was probably rare that each place had a festival the same year; instead, the two districts seem to have alternated each year, playing host to each other....Warfare was unknown in these districts...To the extent that each was independent, having its own chief, gathering seeds in its own locality, and holding its own rabbit hunts and festivals, it approximated a band....In spite of these varying outside associations, however, members of each district usually cooperated with one another in the few communal affairs and had a local chief to direct them... (Steward 1938:93).

Drawing on archaeological, ethnographic, historical and oral history data, the present research (Stoffle et al. 1990) concludes that there were three traditional districts that intersected within the Nevada Test Site. The Ogwe'pi (Oasis Valley) District and the Eso (White Rock Spring) District are located in the Western Shoshone nation. The Ash Meadows District is located in the Southern Paiute nation. The districts, and by implication the two nations, apparently converged within the Nevada Test Site at the northern end of Fortymile Canyon.

The concept of a district as a sociopolitical and geographical unit differs in a number of respects from the term *band*, a concept that has been used in the Great Basin literature (Stoffle et al. 1990). The term band has typically been used in reference to a nomadic group without permanent, fixed residence, whereas people in these three districts lived in permanent villages for most of the year. Bands have been portrayed as lacking political organization at any scale larger than the small individual band, whereas the districts in the southern Great Basin constituted sub -units within regional and national - level political organization with national - level political leadership. Finally, the term band has usually been used to refer to groups whose subsistence strategy does not include agriculture or horticulture, whereas horticulture was part of the precontact—and postcontact—strategy of the people in these three districts. Semiautonomous local groups of extended families and lineages settled along major watercourses and oases in a "rancherian" pattern of dispersed villages (Spicer 1962; Dobyns and Euler 1980) which

seasonally gathered together for harvesting, hunting and ceremonial activities. Throughout the rest of the annual cycle, these localized units exploited a variety of ecozones outside of their core horticultural oasis areas (Stoffle and Evans 1978; Stoffle and Dobyns 1982, 1983; Stoffle, Dobyns and Evans 1983).

Each of these three districts encompassed a cluster of permanent settlements, closely linked by kinship. Each district also encompassed a territory that contained all or nearly all of the resources necessary for the survival of its population, including a cluster of reliable springs to support permanent settlements and horticulture, plant resources for use in manufacture, seed grain harvesting territories, pine nut harvesting territories, and game harvesting territories. Each district, then, included both a core area of permanent settlements at a cluster or string of springs and extensive hinterland areas where resources were harvested. Each district had a district political leader, often called the "local chief". Often there was some linguistic variation from one district to the next; even between two neighboring Western Shoshone districts, for example, there might be minor but distinctive variations in speech, as there were between the Oasis Valley district and the White Rock Spring district (Steward 1938:94; Stewart 1966:186).

The core areas or central places of the three districts discussed here are readily identified, and it was here that the people of each district had the most highly developed sense of territoriality and proprietorship. Outer boundaries cannot be as precisely delineated, for several reasons. In the remoter and higher elevation areas, one districts' harvesting territories often checker boarded with the neighboring district, and some harvesting areas were apparently used jointly by neighboring district groups. Also, whereas the ethnographic, historical, and archaeological records provide ample evidence about the location of the core residential areas of each district, documentary and ethnographic information about the hinterlands of the districts is unsurprisingly much more sketchy. This report delineates approximate boundaries for the districts.

1.3.2 Local Use Area

The term *local use area* is used in this report to indicate a set of occupational and resource use sites that are closely linked together, both in terms of spatial relationship and in terms of their constituting part of an integrated pattern of use (Stoffle et al. 1990). When Oasis Valley people, for example, went to the Dune Wash area of Yucca Mountain to harvest wild plant and animals resources there, they occupied temporary camps (used year after year), and used a complex network of sites including water sources, hunting blinds, seed drying floors, roasting pits, grinding stones, and so on. From one or more temporary base camps, women would go to various plant food harvesting territories, then bring back seeds and nuts for processing at the base camp. Men would go out to various sites to hunt with nets and from hunting blinds.

Native American people who visited the Yucca Mountain study area identified a series of local use areas by using knowledge from site visits, preexisting knowledge about the area, and cultural logic (Stoffle et al. 1990). These local use areas remain suggestive at this time, subject to further analysis by the Native American tribal representatives. Like professional archaeologists,

these Native American people tended to not move beyond available information when interpreting sites, occupational complex units, and the region.

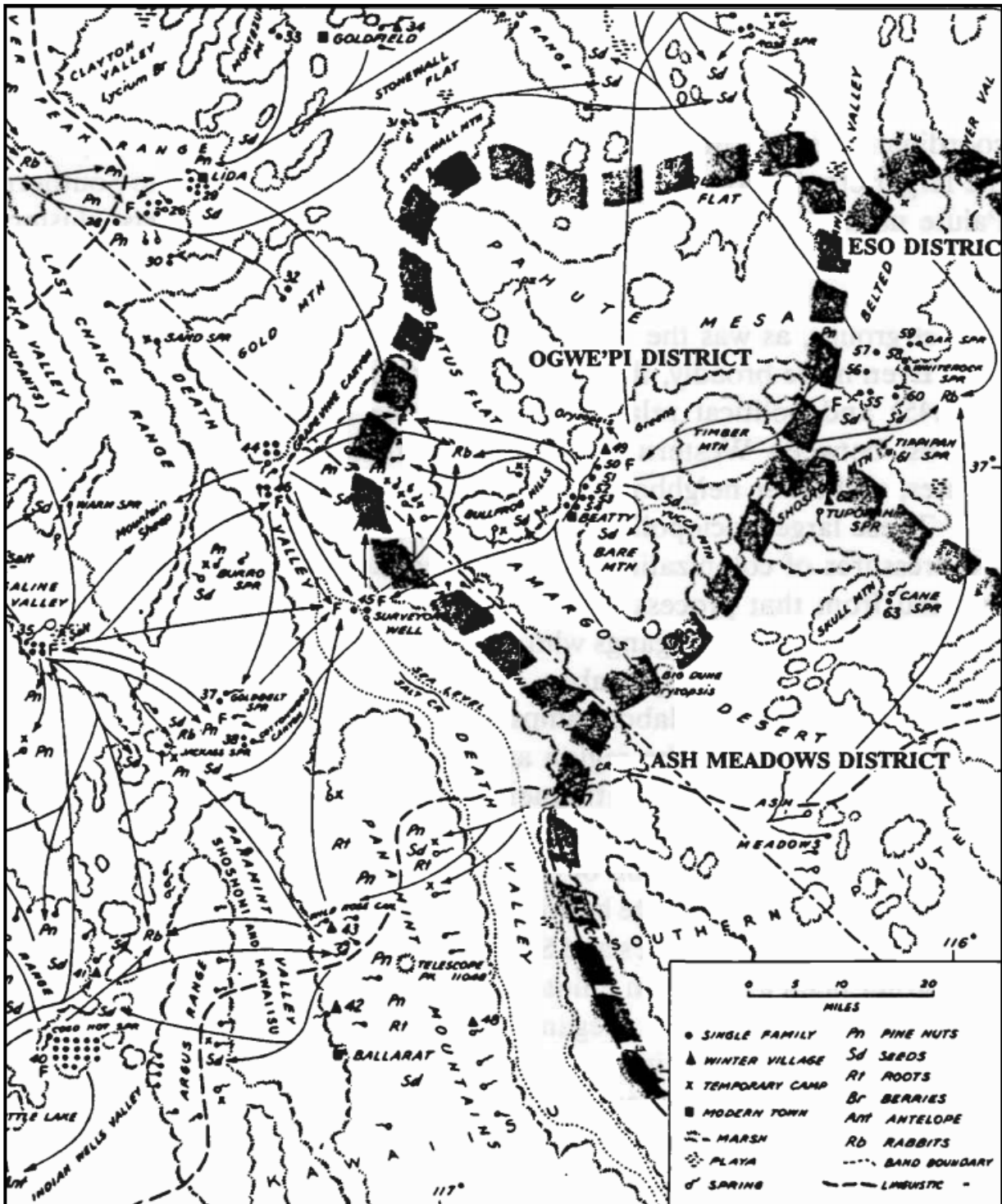


Figure 1.10 Native American Patterns of Use in the Nevada Test Site Region (Steward 1938:58)

1.3.3 Oasis Valley Core Area

The Amargosa River is an ephemeral watercourse, which flows through the Oasis Valley Core Area (Stoffle et al. 1990). It is fed by numerous major springs. Among these springs is a hot spring which has been operated as commercial venture for most of this century. For much of the year a stream flows through the Oasis Valley, supporting extensive meadows and marshes. Before EuroAmerican settlement began, the Oasis Valley was dotted with a series of Native American villages located in proximity to many of the major springs. Native American people have continued to reside in Oasis Valley from time immemorial, to contact with Europeans, through the present time. In the late 1800s there were eight village sites along the Oasis Valley: *Ta:kanwa* at the hot springs, later Hicks Hot Springs; four villages near the mouth of Beatty Wash including one named *Sakainaga* and one named *Pa:navadu*; *Hu:nusu* further north; one near what was later the Howell Ranch; and one at Indian Camp, at the head of Oasis Valley (Steward 1938:94). M. M. Beatty, from whom the town of Beatty takes its name, married into the local Native American community; he and his wife raised several "mixed-blood" children (*Rhyolite Herald* vol. 4, no. 34, December 16, 1908, inside p. 1, col. 3; *Bullfrog Miner* vol. 4, no. 38, Dec. 19, p. 8, col. 5). One of Beatty's sons, M. M. Beatty Jr. reported that during his childhood in the late 1800s and early 1900s there were still several groups of Native American people (15 to 20 per group) who resided in the Oasis Valley for part of the year and spent other parts of the year harvesting wild food resources elsewhere (Beatty 1968).

Until 1906 a group of about 25 Native American people under the leadership of Panamint Joe Stuart lived in a village about ten miles north of Beatty, near the later site of Springdale (*Beatty Bullfrog Miner* vol. 1, no. 19, October 7, 1905, p. 2, col. 2; *Bullfrog Miner* vol. 2, no. 18, July 27, 1906, inside p. col. 1). During the mining boom decade after 1904, there were also Native American labor camps located at the northern edge of Beatty, the northern edge of Rhyolite, and on the outskirts of Bullfrog, and Rhyolite (*Rhyolite Daily Bulletin*, vol. 1, no. 294, December 26, 1908, p. 4, col. 1; see photos 1 through 4). The 1910 U.S. federal census listed 30 Native American persons in the Springdale Census Precinct and 10 in the Rhyolite Census Precinct, all of them identified as Shoshone (U. S. Department of Commerce 1913).

In the 1930s, Native American people constituted a substantial minority of the population in the Oasis Valley. Of approximately 250 persons, some 75 or 90 were Native Americans; a 1937 Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) study reported that there were 15 Native American families living in Beatty and another four families living at a ranch two miles up the valley. A portion of their aggregate income came from the sale of basketry and other crafts and from commercial sale of pinyon nuts (U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs 1937:4,6,7). There was still a Native American settlement at the northern edge of Beatty until a flood destroyed the structures in the 1960s. Since that time, Native American people have lived in homes located throughout the Beatty area.

1.4 EuroAmerican Contact

The following analysis is focused on the history of interactions between EuroAmericans and local Native American peoples. The implications for Native Americans in the Oasis Valley area are directly derived from *Literature Review and Ethnohistory of Native American*

Occupancy and Use of the Yucca Mountain Area (Stoffle et al. 1990). Comments on EuroAmerican contact with Native Americans provided by representatives during this study are provided in Chapter Three of this report.

1.4.1 Disease

Throughout the Americas, and throughout the Great Basin and Mohave deserts, Native American populations were drastically reduced by the introduction of diseases carried by EuroAmericans, diseases to which Native American people had no prior exposure or acquired immunity. The impact of disease upon Native American population levels is well documented for areas of Nevada that had newspapers by the mid-nineteenth century. Native American people in southern Nye County were exposed to the same disease vectors, but there were few EuroAmericans settled in the region prior to the twentieth century and there were no newspapers in the area until the early 1900s. By the time events in southern Nye County began to be chronicled in detail by EuroAmerican sources, the Native American population had already been severely reduced. What appeared to be the baseline Native American population to early settlers in Oasis Valley and Ash Meadows was undoubtedly a much smaller population than had occupied the area before contact. And the decline continued during the first decades of EuroAmerican settlement in the region. Harsha White, who moved to Pahrump Valley in the late 1870s and took the census for that region in 1900, observed that the local Native American population had declined dramatically during the period of his residence. He attributed the decline to the impacts of liquor, changes in diet, and venereal diseases from contacts with EuroAmericans (*Beatty Bullfrog Miner*, vol. I, no. 27, September 23, 1905, p. 1, col. 1). There are considerable data on succeeding waves of epidemics and their fatal impact upon Native American people for the Pioche area, where publication of a newspaper began in 1870. Until 1904, Pioche was the location nearest to the study area with a newspaper. It can be assumed that the waves of epidemics reported in the area around Pioche (some fifty miles from the study area) also impacted Native American people in the study area, Oasis Valley, Ash Meadows, and Pahrump. Native American people throughout southern Nevada traveled widely, facilitating the spread of disease from one location to another. Even in areas without permanent EuroAmerican settlement, there was frequent contact between local Native American people and EuroAmerican prospectors and travelers, with water sources often serving as loci for the communication of disease.

1.4.2 Violence

Violent conflicts between Native Americans and EuroAmericans were another important demographic factor contributing to a reduction of the Native American population in and around the study area. EuroAmericans began killing Native American people as soon as contact began and this pattern continued well into the twentieth century. In Nevada, as elsewhere, the number of Native American people killed by EuroAmericans was far greater than the number of EuroAmericans killed by Native American people, as noted by a EuroAmerican in the Pioche area in 1873 (*Pioche Daily Record*, vol. 6, no. 13, April 1, 1873, p. 3, col. 3). Shootings of Native Americans by other Native Americans in southern Nye County were also all too frequent following the acquisition of alcohol and guns in combination with the economic,

social, and cultural stresses that were being experienced by Native American populations engulfed by the EuroAmerican frontier.

Violence perpetrated upon Native American people by EuroAmericans resulted in efforts by Native American people to avoid contact with EuroAmericans in the early post-contact period. Accounts by the forty-niner emigrants of their travels through the Nevada Test Site area document this pattern of withdrawal from contact. The same accounts record that the forty-niners took Native American people as captives in the Nevada Test Site area. The travelers saw numerous indications of Native American habitations and presence, and on several occasions saw Native American people fleeing from their approach.

1.4.3 Appropriation of Resources

In a desert region like southern Nevada, water is the crucial resource. Well before there was any permanent EuroAmerican settlement in the vicinity of the study area, EuroAmerican livestock were heavily impacting resources important to Native American people in the study area and vicinity. From the 1830s on, large numbers of livestock were moved through southern Nevada along the Old Spanish Trail, consuming wild grasses Native American people harvested for seed grains and impacting springs in the vicinity of the trail. Livestock of the emigrants who crossed the Nevada Test Site area in 1849 undoubtedly had a heavy impact on springs and associated plant resources along the routes. Mormon and other mining and livestock grazing activities in the region intensified in the 1850s. In the study area and vicinity, Native American resistance to EuroAmerican presence and EuroAmerican appropriation of resources often focused on livestock, with Native Americans shooting oxen, horses, and cattle. In 1849, several forty-niner oxen that had grazed at the Native American farm at Cane Spring for ten days were shot two days after the party of forty-niners had resumed its journey (Johnson and Johnson, 1987:61; Belden, 1954: 64). At Ash Meadows, Native Americans specifically targeted the work horses in the herd of livestock brought to the area by the Younts in 1876, killing all the horses with collar marks, in an apparent attempt to prevent EuroAmericans from establishing a ranch there (Doherty, 1974:166-167).

Beginning in the 1870s, EuroAmericans began establishing permanent ranches in the vicinity of the study area and appropriated many of the springs in the Oasis Valley, Ash Meadows, and Pahrump core areas, as well as some of the springs in the area east of the cultural resources study area. Native American people, however, retained control over some of the spring water resources in each of the three core areas.

EuroAmerican appropriation of water resources accelerated after 1904 with the mining boom that centered in the Oasis Valley area. This boom soon led to the construction of a railroad through the region. Many of the Oasis Valley springs were acquired by corporations that supplied piped water to the Oasis Valley boomtowns and to the ore processing mills servicing the mines of the region. Even in the boom years, however, Native American people continued to retain the use of some of the springs in the Oasis Valley area and in Ash Meadows.

It is important to note that Native Americans and EuroAmericans perceived transactions concerning water differently. In the EuroAmerican understanding, when EuroAmericans traded

money or other goods to Native Americans for the use of a spring, the EuroAmericans believed that they had acquired outright ownership of the spring and that the Native American people had relinquished any prior rights. In their understanding of the same transaction, Native American people believed that they had accepted gifts or payments in return for sharing the use of water sources over which they, the Native Americans, retained jurisdiction. It was, of course, the EuroAmerican legal system and EuroAmerican interpretations of these transactions that prevailed. In 1918, Ash Meadows Charley gave evidence of just such a clash of viewpoints. He testified that he had accepted payment from a EuroAmerican in exchange for permitting the EuroAmerican to use some of the water from a spring for one year only. The EuroAmerican challenged Ash Meadows Charley's rights to any further use of the spring water on the basis of the payment the EuroAmerican had made to him ("Testimony Taken in Ash Meadows," September 29, 1917, Correspondence Files of Lorenzo D. Creel). At springs where they saw no permanent habitation, EuroAmericans believed no one owned the spring and that it was their right to claim the spring, even though Native American people may have had traditional rights to the spring and may have used it on a regular basis. A case in point is the "wild grapes" which EuroAmericans observed at many of the springs throughout the region. What looked like wild grapes to EuroAmericans was probably a significant, regularly harvested crop for Native American people in the core areas.

EuroAmerican settlement in the Oasis Valley, Ash Meadows, and Pahrump Valley core areas began in the late 1800s. In the early 1900s, a mining boom in the vicinity of Oasis Valley resulted in a massive influx of EuroAmerican population, the establishment of numerous towns and mining camps in and around Oasis Valley, and the construction of a railroad across the northern edge of Ash Meadows and through Oasis Valley. As these developments occurred, Native American people took up a variety of new employments, in addition to continuing their traditional pursuits of cultivating corn, beans, squash, and other crops; harvesting pine nuts, wild grains, and other plants; hunting game; hunting and capturing wild horses; harvesting firewood; and harvesting selected mineral resources.

Many of the jobs local Native American people took in the EuroAmerican economic sector were similar to, or extensions of, their traditional employments. Many local Native Americans worked as farm and ranch laborers for EuroAmerican employers. Some continued to farm independently, marketing crops to the new mining towns, including traditional crops like melons. Local Native American men worked as prospectors, guides, cowboys, trackers, and deputies, all of these being jobs to which Native Americans brought a superior knowledge of terrain, water sources, game species, and mineral resources, acquired through generations of intimate familiarity with the extensive territories used by local Native American families. Local Native American men worked as woodcutters, construction laborers, teamsters, and mine laborers. Local Native American women worked as domestics, cooks, and laundresses, again extensions of traditional domestic tasks. Some local Native American women wove baskets for commercial sale. Native American people harvested and marketed pine nuts and firewood in the new mining towns, traditional activities that now had an expanded market during the boom years of the mining camps and towns. It should be noted that most of these occupations were temporary, seasonal, or intermittent, enabling Native American people to maintain their

traditional transhumant adaptive pattern of seasonally leaving the core areas to inspect the progress of plant and animal crops to be harvested later; to harvest pinyon nuts, seed grains, medicinal plants, and game; and to participate in fall festivals and other social events.

Native American people played a major role in the development of mining in southern Nye County. Many local Native Americans were active prospectors on their own behalf, locating their own mining claims. Local Native American people initially located many of the producing mines in southern Nye County. Several Native American people guided EuroAmerican prospectors to valuable ore deposits, but were not made equal partners as they may have expected and may have been promised. Mineral prospecting was one of the activities that took Native American people into the cultural resources study area. Native Americans also worked as mine laborers.

CHAPTER TWO INDIAN CAMP

The Indian Camp area in Alternative 3A is a broadly dispersed area that lies between Colson Pond and the mouth of Thirsty Canyon along the western banks of the Amargosa River. On the northern end of this cultural area there is a Quarry site that was used by Native peoples, and on the southern end there is a cluster of habitation sites and rock alignments. All of which are presumed to be routine native use areas until mining booms of the early 1900s.

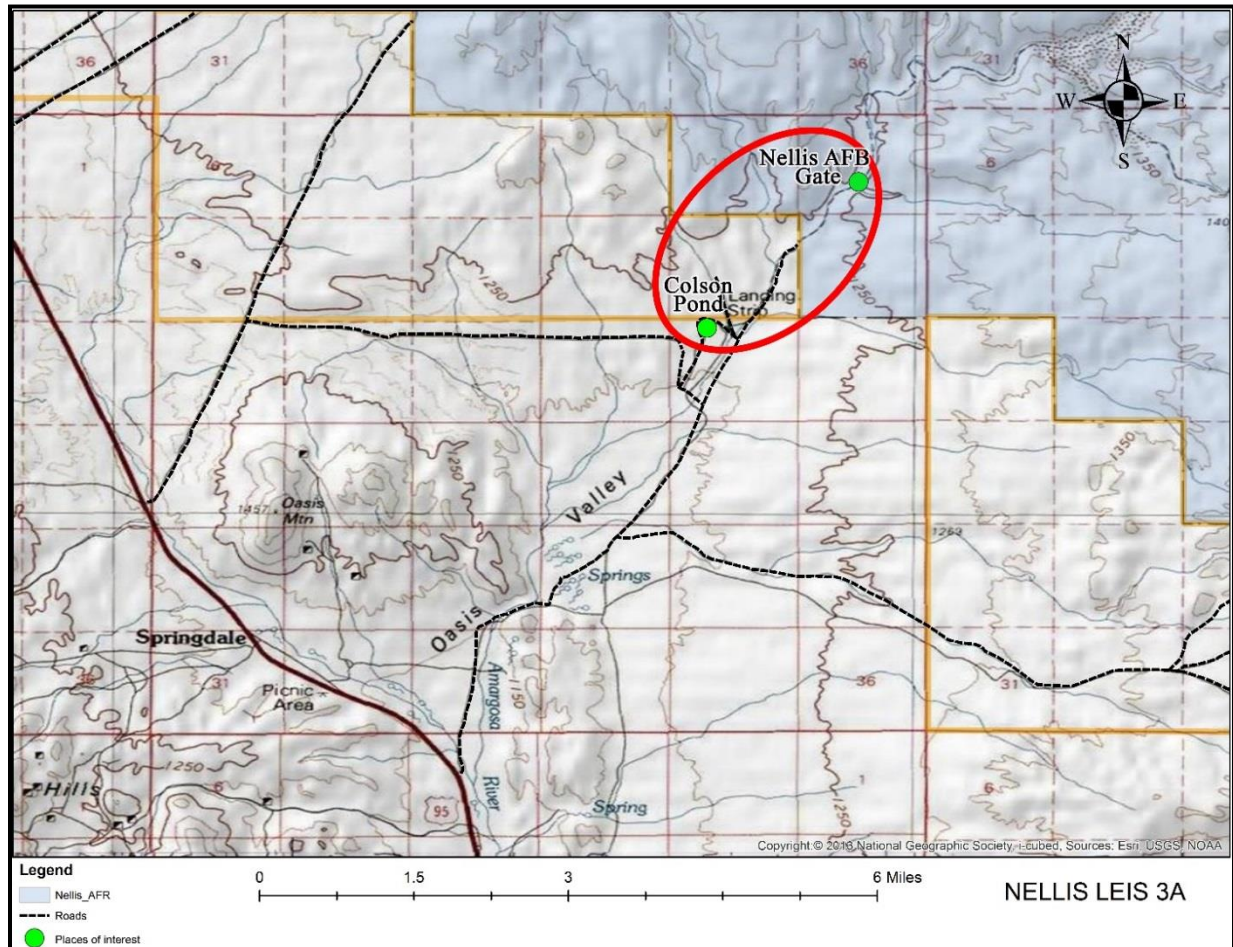


Figure 2.1 Map of Indian Camp Study Area

2.1 Indian Camp Native American Comments

The Indian Camp area was discussed in great detail by visiting representatives, who commented on the vast resources in the area as well as the intricate intaglios situated on the hill north of the pond. The following section summarizes the range of comments provided by the group, which maintain that this area was highly significant both geographically and spiritually. This area continues to remain important for Native Americans, particularly the Numic people, as one person summarized:

We all agree that this is within the homelands of all the Numic people here that we deal with. From Western Shoshone to Owens Valley Paiutes, to Southern Paiutes and Chemehuevi. This is all ours and this is what we believe is interconnected, it is part of a complex cultural landscape. And it has a variety of features, but they are all interconnected, so they cannot be separated. Because they interact, they are meant to interact with one another.



Figure 2.2 Looking North Towards Thirsty Canyon

The comments are sectioned into categories that were commonly discussed, including (1) natural resources, (2) connections between places and people, and (3) the use of this area.

2.1.1 Natural Resources

Representatives visiting section Alternative 3A maintained that the Indian Camp area was lush with resources. Although perceived as an arid desert void of life, members of the CGTO maintain that this area was abundant of “elements for everyday living.” As one representative noted:

This would be a great place to be to survive. Any place in the desert, if you know the desert and the resources that are out there, that will help you. Because you, right now, as you always say, you are in a pharmacy, or school, or hospital, or church, or homes. This is everything, nobody could ever discount that.

The following are general comments given about the natural resources that were used by Native American peoples that once occupied this region.

- *It has all the elements here man. You have the pond of water, the sacred area, I am sure volcanos were part of the magnetic pull. So there is a lot of power here. A lot of water babies.*

- *I saw some rabbits on the other side. So you got some mammals. I am sure there are some big horned sheep back that way, jackrabbits, cottontails. Probably some migrant birds out here because of the water. Duck, pheasant, geese.*
- *Lots of growth, plenty of good vegetation.*
- *I was looking for dog bane too. Didn't see any. But it is winter time so they do not come out there. This would be a good spot though because there is a lot of water. They would use that cliff rose... and probably some dog bane, but it is interesting to see something that old still, still intact. Tucked away, hidden. [This] place has a lot of resources in and around the area.*
- *[It is] very high up, you can see all mountains in the surrounding area.*
- *Thirsty Canyon, now a dry river, once would have had a flowing river and plant life. There are areas in the rocky ridges that provide shade, shelter for natives for any number of reasons.*

In addition to the current resources, this area was once thriving with water and associated plants and animals. One person noted:

you could imagine the farming that was going on. I mean, you have an abundance of water all throughout. Oasis Valley, that is why it was called Oasis Valley. And all the things that were occurring here that we were able to manage, that was then basically changed. And it is the kind of place that, just because you do not see the rows of crops that white people have, their farms or whatever they do, ours may not be managed that way. We are still managing the land and we are still growing the crops, and we can still make sure things are coming back, but we have to interact with the land. And if we do not, it dies and goes away.

According to visiting representatives, this area would have been prime for farming activities that could support a large community. Many representatives described the landscape as it would have been in the past, prior to the obstruction of rivers and drought. The following comments reflect the importance of water in this area both today and in the past.

- *[They] would use the water for ceremony, the water used to grow food. Food was being grown, was a lot of people living in the area all the artifacts that are still here.*
- *It is a river source and it flows down so everyone benefits.*
- *This area is rich with water and different plants. The water provided moisture for everything around.*
- *Two large springs are feeding the area. Water is used for offerings and cleansing.*

- *All the animals would get water there.*
- *River would have supported Big Horn Sheep or other animals. Birds that are a food source.*
- *I think it is the water that is what is important... Before you go anywhere, you do your cleansing. You clean yourself, you cleanse yourself before you go. Some of the Indians, what I know, where I am from, we always have a little bottle of water that we bring from home that we drink. And that is what we use, that water from where we are from.*
- *They bring offerings back to this water. Whether it is projectile points, crystals, or whatever. They give it to the water. Because this is a healing water.*
- *If you see all that [dust], that would defiantly tell you that there is a drought going on. You know, because if the wind blew this hard would it cause that much dust? And if you lived out here, and you saw that much dust, then you would know that there is no moisture over that way... [the land] tells you about the change in everything when you sit there and look at it.*

Although the land has changed over time, many resources remain in the Indian Camp area. Visiting representatives maintained a strong connection to these resources and maintain that this area supported vast communities prior to forced removal.

2.1.2 Connections

The unique geography of this area provides viewscapes to surrounding landscapes from far away places associated with living, power, and ritual. Representatives took time when visiting this location to take in the surrounding views and think about distant places that are tied to their heritage. According to the interviews given, this area is a central point along pilgrimage trails that were utilized by spiritual leaders. One representative noted:

You can be at this place and though it is not the highest point around, the vista is what is so spectacular here. And this is why people came here, that is why you see all kinds of cultural evidence of people being here, this is where the villages were. Because you were centered, you could see the Owens Valley, you could see the Southern Paiute, you could see the Western Shoshone. This is where you are able to call upon all those things.

Many comments were given about the ways in which this location is tied to other places and the people that lived there in both the past and today. The following comments demonstrate how the Indian Camp area is tied to places of power, such as Black Mountain, and its purpose on those journeys.

- *The area is connected as a part of trail going to Black Mountain. In the area a lot of people were living here – I mean thousands of natives.*



Figure 2.3 From the Quarry Looking South to the Funeral Mountains

- *It is connected with the Paiute and Rainier Mesas, Black Mountain, the Sierras, springs. This place is definitely used. It is connected with other places of power.*
- *Yes, mountains and old river ran through the area. [It is] very connected to other areas.*
- *Natives see Colson Pond area, Thirsty Canton thorough, and Black Mountain as one connected area. From a native person's perspective this is their origin spot.*
- *The other thing I think is important about all of the different areas that we have talked about right now is it really is within close proximity, it is not very far, and that is why it is hard to separate... This is the crossroads. This whole place is a crossroads where all of us come together. It does not just mean the crossroads in this particular area, because it goes throughout the land down there by the Air Force, and some of the stuff they are looking at withdrawing.*

- *This was actually probably a really good location to be. Because this was where a lot of things were centered. But they are so interconnected with every other place that we have been today, and that we will even be tomorrow.*

Some comments were given on how this place connected people as well. Numic peoples across the Southwest utilized this area—as well as others—in a joint capacity. It was a location that could be used by spiritual leaders from distant places to connect and share ideas, additionally serving the purpose of connecting people from far away villages with one another.

- *This is really a good spot for preparation, for traveling just about any direction that you are looking at. Because of course you are going to go visit your Paiute brothers and Chemehuevi brothers in that direction, of course you have to get ready to meet them. It is not always like your stories are, it is not always in warfare... We intermarried with each other also.*
- *This was kind of the highway. This was where the experts with a lot of power came from. And there were certain ones, there were Southern Paiute and Shoshone people that came here. And hearing those stories... Those were some of the ties. People from Owens Valley would come over here to get doctored. There were people from Fish Lake Valley that used to come down here. This is my grandma's time.*

Activities also connected this place to peoples from far away, and these connections are maintained through the natural surrounding elements. One representative noted how this area would resonate prayers from place to place:

Prayers can resonate to all over. There are great views and direct connections to the various areas that you have to draw upon. From the Spring Mountains to the Sierras and White Mountains to going up north to Arc Dome, different places all around. Things will bounce off and to get to wherever they need to get.

Although access is limited today, this area is still alive and maintains a spiritual connection that continues to reinforce these ties to living Native American communities throughout the Southwest.

2.1.3 Native American Use

The Indian Camp area was once used for “farming, hunting, and living” by the Native American inhabitants of this land. Although it was a village, representatives maintain that it served a distinct purpose for people traveling to powerful places. Therefore, this was not only a village but an important part of ceremonies and rituals. The following comments discuss the ceremonial use of this area and further describe the distinct connections that were made through these activities.

- *This place is definitely a preparation place for travel, doctoring, and ceremonies. If the time when the white people caused genocide on the Indian people they were forced to stop using this area.*

- *The entrance site has a prayer alter at the “mouth” of the canyon. Different medicine plants here, creosote, tea, and others. At Colson Pond, there is really cool intaglio on the hill overlooking the pond. It is a very sacred site, for prayer and preparation before the Black Mountain pilgrimage. Especially for ceremony. This area is the thoroughfare to Thirsty Canyon. A place for prayer and preparation before they go through the pilgrimage trail to Black Mountain and other places.*
- *This is part of a time keeping. You cannot just go to Black Mountain, you cannot just do all these things when you feel like it. They are very prescribed. So they have to happen sometimes during certain seasons, during certain times of the day, they have to be done by certain people.*
- *[This place was] for living, the people were making tools for shelter. The people made offerings to the creator. The people would help the traveler on their journey to Black Mountain.*
- *Pilgrimage trails are places where they acquire Puha, and meet other Indians doing the same thing. Out of respect they leave offerings along the trail to the land and people who came before them.*



Figure 2.4 A Sacred Offering still in place Along the Trail

- *These offerings were intended to be left in place forever because they continue to tie Indians to the past and the places themselves.*

- *This place was definitely used for medicine for preparing for the spiritual trip to Black Mountain, Paiute and Rainier Mesa, Scrougham Peak, Shoshone Mountain, White Mountains, Mount Charleston. For cleansing whether going there or coming back.*
- *Place to pray, to teach the young, to reconnect with the area and the earth.*
- *This place is aligned with stars. Stone figures are high up on the hill or mesa. It would be a very important place.*
- *Great place to gather energy.*
- *Colson Pond is an area used for cleansing and preparing for a trip to Black Mountain. It is the last main stop and important staying place on the way up to Black Mountain.*
- *Colson Pond is a preparation area for Black Mountain. Logistically speaking it is a great place to stop and nourish on the way home. Colson Pond would have supported a village, not just a stopping place during the trip... Colson Pond would have been a community. Farming along the river. [Serving as] preparation for a trip to Black Mountain.*
- *It is an integral part on the pilgrimage trail for natives on their journey to Black Mountain.*
- *All throughout history, when people, when settlers, when people came into encroach the area, we were forced to seek refuge into areas or get out just to help protect ourselves, or prevent them from getting to our resources. And you can always use those canyons to get to certain areas. So that is what we would do, we would often travel through those canyons to get to places, because on the landscape, if you are up above, you do not see who is down at the bottom. And so those are good places and good thoroughfares for us to use in traveling across the landscape.*
- *Right here where we are sitting and looking at these intaglios, it is like a preparation before they go up into Black Mountain (Figure 2.5).*



Figure 2.5 The Intaglios near the Native American Village

- *The way we have always looked at it is you have to prepare your heart, you have to clear your mind. You have to go there with your thoughts, especially if you are going to go there for doctoring powers or for prayers or vision quests. You have to have your mind and your soul and your body has to be cleansed to be open to that. You cannot get there with bad thoughts... And maybe when you are up there you get your doctoring things but you cleanse yourself here before you go back into the community. You stop here and replenish, then you go back. Also we have to keep in mind maybe not all medicine that is acquired are good, there are also the ones that do that bad practice. So whichever way it is, it is always a cleansing thing. You know, you have to stop.*

- *They prepare themselves and then they go up there to where they do their doctoring and their vision quests, and all of that. This is a place where they get ready before they leave.*
- *If I have gone to Black Mountain for whatever my reason is, on the way back this is important, to rest then to replenish with water or food before my journey home. Because you have to go there, you have to come back.*
- *Well, those two smaller rock piles look like those are prayer altars that have collapsed (Figure 2.6).*



Figure 2.6: Prayer Shrine or Altar near the Native American village

- *Prayer altars are always very important, where you take one rock and you move it to another, but you always leave an offering with that rock sitting on top of it. So no doubt they were doing prayers before they go. I would say this is a very primary spot, just by what we see with the intaglios.*
- *Could be that they are going with the constellations? I mean, not everything is connected to the earth, there is also the sky. And at night time all of those stars and stuff, those stars have meanings also.*

- *Some places are used for the same purpose as this, as when people go back into the spirit world they use certain places. Like in the Grand Canyon, Deer Creek. That is one of the places that, when you leave this earth that is when you go through this area. This could be the same thing, used for that purpose, or one of the purposes. Connecting to the spirit world. That is what I think.*
- *Everything that we saw up there, everything has a meaning, everything was done purposely. It is not just done arbitrarily, it is a cause and effect, it was done because of the good things that are supposed to happen. It would be interesting to see a map, to map out some of these [intaglios] here on the ground, and see how it correlates to either the sky or even on the landscape here, other places around. These are distinct trails or distinct indicators that direct you to certain things in the world.*
- *There is a big educational process that goes on for you to learn, and you are being groomed for all of that. You will be with older people, different ones that are the experts, that will also give you their medicines, their information about the song. They explain to you what is going to happen, and then you now have to get all of that stuff and synthesize all of that, make it into your power. You own it. That is your gift that you have, to help people.*
- *This is a good map, a good visual to help explain the world. Everything that you see here, because you can see all the different mounds, you can see the water, you can see the plants, you can see the wildlife. Everything that is an example of what goes on in the world... This is the great drawing, or image, or depiction of the world.*

The intaglios and offerings found north of the pond indicated a specific use of this area on a greater journey. These rock alignments serve many uses to spiritual leaders and are understood and used by experts. When discussing these features, one representative noted:

Natives should study the intaglios and its relation to Black Mountain and the astrological calendar. More likely, the intaglios have a correlation to seasons and possibly gates or entry times to the calendar... The intaglios are likely related to the other intaglios... [They] should not isolate it or cut it off from Thirsty Canyon, they must remain together to presume its special significance.

The area also served as a village for people that were important in the preparation and training of spiritual leaders during their journey. The community that remained at the Indian Camp area was an integral part of the ceremonies and trails associated with powerful places within the landscape. The following comments were provided regarding the people that lived in this area to support individuals passing through.

- *These are the specialists that help you along the way. Everybody along the way, just as you do at the hot springs, there are people that know the protocols. You do*

not just go to the hot springs and say, "okay, I am going to go out there and I think I know what I am going to do." It is very, very orchestrated. And so people know what to do, and there are keepers here, and it is incremental.

- *This is something that I think is more significant, and I think that is why this is always indicated and known as a big camp. And a camp is probably the wrong word, it is a village. This was not a temporary thing that was here, this is permanent. And people will say that it should look different if it was permanent, no it should not look different, because this is a different culture, a different technology, a different people that adapt, that know this land.*
- *So these people who were here, everybody knew to come here to do what they need to do for their families. And they would stop here. Like I said there were people here waiting here to say, "yeah, this is where you need to go, to Black Mountain to do your offering and to do your ceremonies for your people." So there were people living here for that purpose, and helping people. Plus a big community, because they all believed in this. Everybody would come around, Paiutes, Shoshone, because they knew. They knew things like that because everybody talks... It was a community like you said, and it is thousands of people back then.*
- *All those different things, those are managed also here, those star people, they are the ones that can tell you when they are starting to move... [They know] when you need to start your journey... So this is part of that, mapping the gateway, to get through here, to get really educated on what you need to do on the next leg of your journey.*
- *[This is a] mixed use area. This is where the Shoshone, Paiute, maybe even Mojave came. I know it is a place they came through. Probably headed to some place.*

2.2 Indian Camp Tiering

Tiering materials regarding the Indian Camp were previously presented in Chapter 1. The reader is directed to this earlier text.

CHAPTER THREE TRANSVAAL

Camp Transvaal was a short-lived mining camp in the Bullfrog mining district in Southwestern Nevada. From its creation to its complete abandonment, the mining camps life spanned from February 1906 to the end of May 1906. During these three months, the camp grew to a population of 800 before it was depopulated and left in situ. The visible traces of this camp that can be seen today are the mounds of debris and a roving wild Burro population.

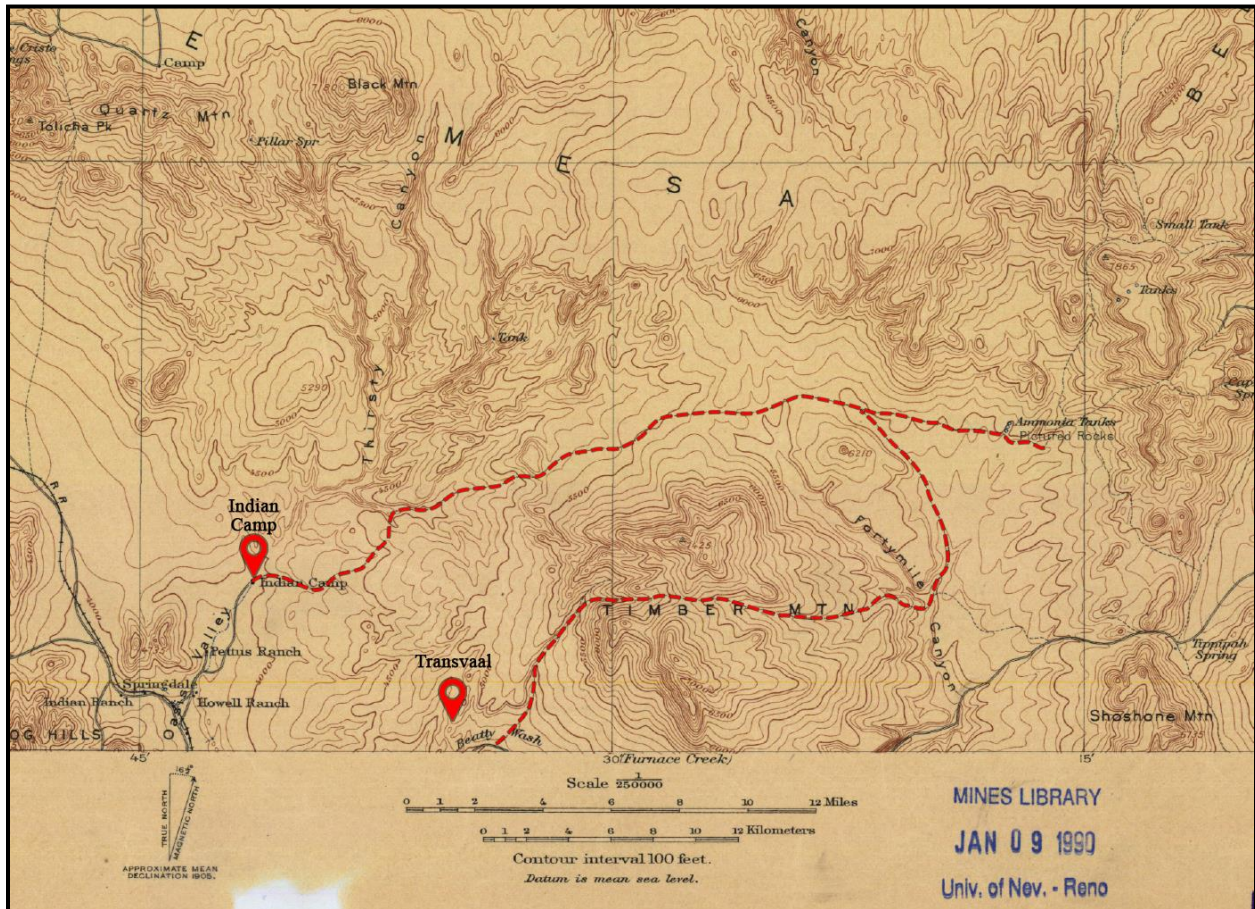


Figure 3.1

The Transvaal-Nevada Mining Company controlled all the mines. Business establishments at the camp included four saloons, an assay office, a lumberyard, a lodging house, and a number of broker and real estate offices.

The swift and dramatic collapse of Transvaal occurred in the first two weeks of May 1906 when it was discovered little valuable ore existed at Transvaal. People left in droves and by the third week the site was totally abandoned. From the hill just north of Colson Pond looking east, one can see the hills that were mined in the days of Camp Transvaal.

As marked on Figure 3.1 we can see that Camp Transvaal was located on one of the major pilgrimage trails that leads to the timber mountain caldera.



Figure 3.2 Viewscape Facing East from Transvaal

It is unknown if the burros in Figure 3.3 are directly descendent from the thousands of animals brought in by the miners in Camp Transvaal and the dozens of other mine camps in the Oasis Valley area. We do know, however, that such animals directly competed with other grazing animals traditionally used by Native Americans.



Figure 3.3 Burros Grazing at Transvaal

Here the Steward map (Figure 3.4) is presented again in order to study the range of useful food plants he documented for the people of the Oasis Valley District (Ogwe'pi District). The map specifically mentions the location for gathering *Oryzopsis (hymenoides)* which is called *wai* or Indian ricegrass (Stoffle, Evans, and Halmo 1989:66). Two locations for gathering *wai* are indicated as in upper Oasis Valley and to the south along the Armargosa River near Big Dune. Elsewhere in the Bullfrog Hills, Bare Mountain, and Yucca Mountains Steward records various unidentified seeds being gathered. Greens are singled out as being gathered in upper Oasis Valley between it and Timber Mountain. Roots are identified as being gathered north of Bullfrog Hills in what appears to be the southern portion of Sarcobatus Flat.

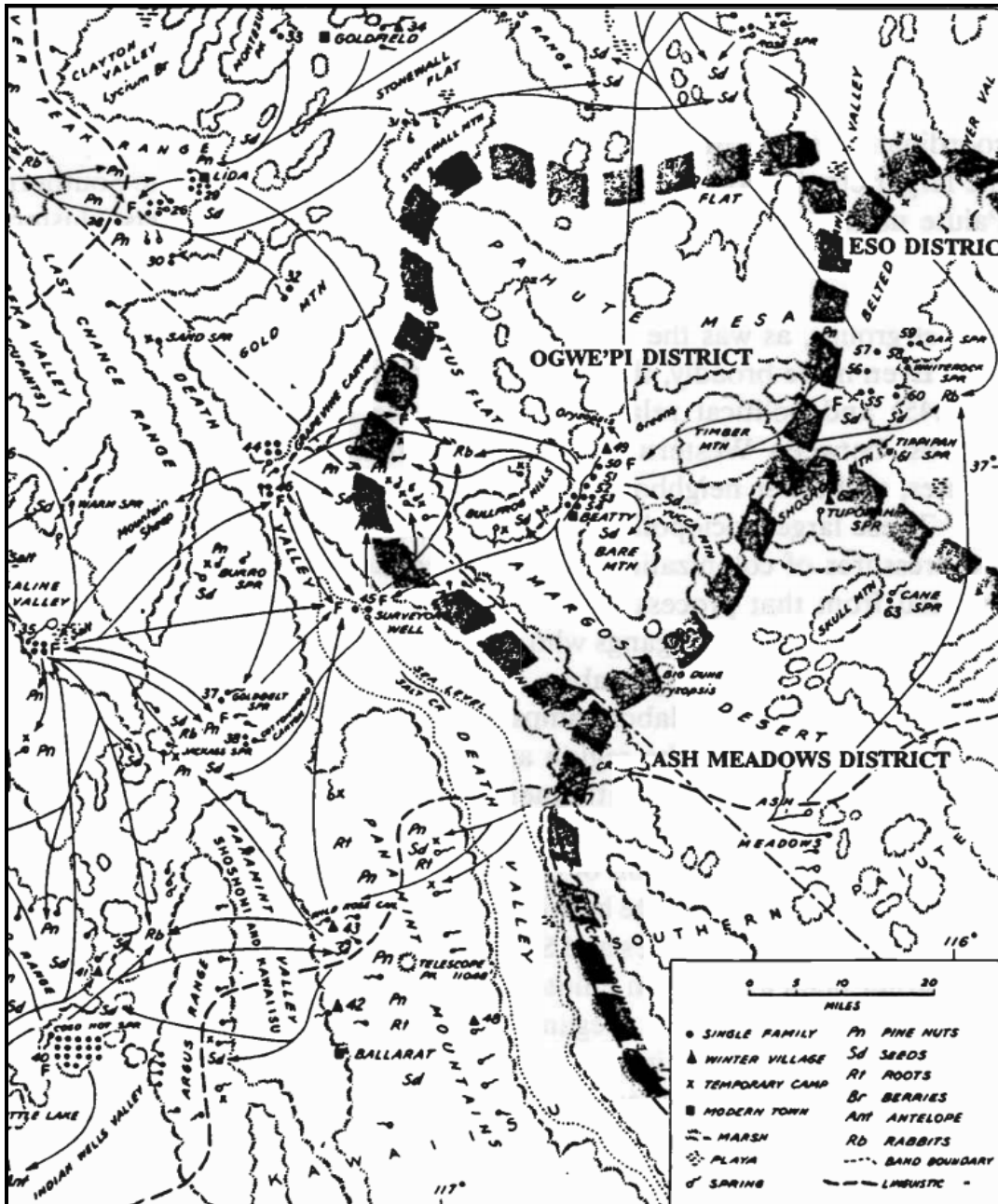


Figure 3.4 Native American Patterns of Use in the Nevada Test Site Region (Steward 1938:58)

Another component of American Indian gathering practices noted by Steward was the importance of festivals. Throughout Figure 3.4 are various “F” markings, which indicate locations of these events. On the subject, he writes:

Six-day festivals, involving dances, gambling, and rabbit drives, were held by each band in the fall after the pine-nut harvest. These were planned, organized, and managed by the band chief. Invitations were sent to neighboring villages. Large villages, for example those at Lone Pine, George's Creek, Fort Independence, and Big Pine, attracted people from distant places. Thus, Fort Independence drew visitors from Lone Pine, Olancha, and Big Pine. To avoid having festivals at the same time, large villages sometimes alternated each year, for example, George's Creek and Lone Pine. Sometimes villages held festivals at different times in the fall so that people from elsewhere could attend after completing their own festival. The chief of the host village or band was always in charge. (Steward 1938:54)

The “F” markings indicate the location of these festivals with arrows to indicate the neighboring villages that were invited to the events (Figure 3.5). Festivals—or Big Times as they are sometimes called—serve to strengthen communal and political bonds while simultaneously serving a spiritual role in the gathering and rebirth of sacred food plants.

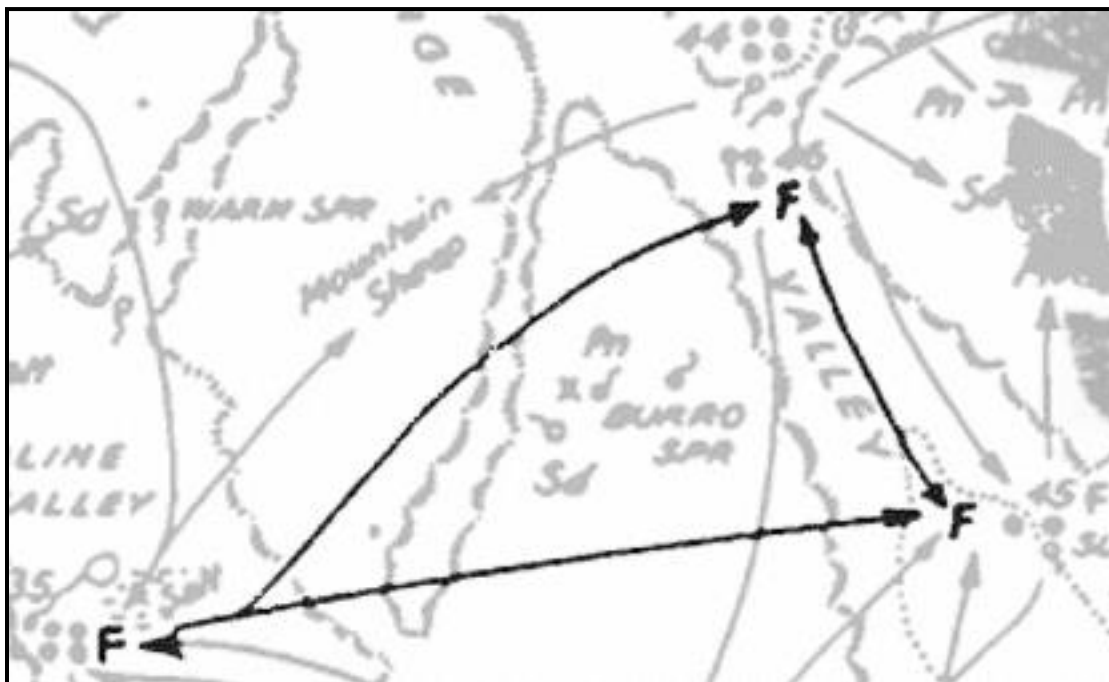


Figure 3.5 Festival Indicators and Communal Connections as Indicated by Steward (1938:58)

We know with certainty that the thousands EuroAmerican animals brought into the Ogwe'pi District during the mining boom grazed on and thus greatly diminished if not eliminated the Native American food plants essential to their life. These animals thus were a significant component of EuroAmerican intrusion on traditional Native American lifestyles.

3.1 Transvaal Native American Comments

Many discussions took place between representatives and UofA researchers at Transvaal. Evidence of the old mining camp elicited clear responses from members of the CGTO when visiting the area. Although isolated from other locations, remnants of the past are a reminder of the impacts of settler colonialism on Native American people. As one representative noted:

I think while, lots of people may have lived around Transvaal, the discussion point is the impact to the tribes. Whether they lived here or wherever there was still an impact to the tribe, to the lifestyle, to the community, to the resources, to basically removing tribal people or preventing access. And that is part of the parallel with the LEIS and with the area access concerns that will eventually come out of the write up. But I think this is a good example of what is documented, where people were, that we knew where people were, that impacted the lives of the tribes that were living here, that was central to all the tribes.



Figure 3.6 Cans and Other Metal Remains in Transvaal

Members of the CGTO were invited to comment on any aspects of the area that stood out to them. These comments are categorized into three sections: Resources, Native American Use, and Encroachment.

3.1.1 Resources

When discussing the resources, representatives commented on different geological and ecological features of the surrounding area. Resources can include both tangible—such as water or plants—and intangible features like views and soundscapes. The following comments on these resources present during visits to the Transvaal area were provided.

- *There is not, at least from looking at the map and visibly here, water sources. There is a road that goes back to Beatty... it could have been a place where water was obtained.*
- *There were things about the water and everything else that was a foreign concept. I remember they said [the settlers] came and said “this water is ours, get out of here.” And they forced us all off of that. Or some of the animals and different things around, now they are controlling that, now we cannot get on there, but that was our homeland.*
- *[Soundscapes] teach young Indians to learn from nature and the earth and all around.*
- *Areas is great for seeing people coming... The view from the mountain is useful.*

Transvaal had only a few traditional cultural resources which indicated to the Writers Committee that these had been either removed or covered up. One representative noted that these artifacts have been “*have been collected by miners*” during their occupation of the area, and many more have been trampled or buried into the ground over time. What remains is an abundance of historical evidence in the form of remaining metal objects. Some comments were provided on the historical resources, or trash, that was left behind.

- *I want to make sure this is listed as debitage for sure. I want them to say the 1906 Transvaal camp left their trash behind, they need to come back and pick this crap up.*
- *Transvaal Camp site has a massive trash pit – it ruins the appearance of this place.*

3.1.2 Native American Use

Representatives maintained that Native American people have been using this area since creation. Located only a mile north of Beatty Wash and near a prominent Native American pilgrimage trail, this location was frequently used until EuroAmerican encroachment and occupation. The following are comments given on the Native American use of the Transvaal area.

- *The thing that came to my mind, because it is so remote, they were not coming here to plant. They were coming here to do whatever they were doing, but strategically, this could have been a place where people came and you could plan your attack.*
- *Would use this site for hunting and making tools.*
- *Hunting for deer and rabbits.*
- *Springtime gathering, stone tools.*
- *Pilgrimage trails, power seeking.*

- *Doubtful for living but yes for hunting and passage.*

3.1.3 Encroachment

The majority of comments given were about the interactions between Native American people and EuroAmericans who came into the area for mining and to support the mining industry. When visiting Transvaal, representatives were reminded of the atrocities committed against their ancestors. One person noted that the setting “provides some context for what happened in the area and what happened with the encroachment.” There was general agreement that the Transvaal site should be used to educate the public regarding what occurred here and at the surrounding mining camps. The following statement summarizes the feelings of the CGTO during their visit to Transvaal:

It was really, truly a time of exploitation. The miners came in and they really did not care what they were doing. They did not think about the cause and effect they were doing to the people here so they were doing it self-servingly, trying to become rich or find the claims and the minerals, whatever they were doing, so it was forget the rest of you. We are going to do whatever we need to do, destroy everything we need to, and see if it pans out for us and if it does, great, and if it does not we are just going to move on. I think that is what happened here. People were here for a couple of years, it did not produce, and then they thought we need to move someplace else, and make some more money.

Because many comments were given on these historical interactions, they have been broken apart into subcategories: assaults, disease, trading, dislocation, and genocide.

3.1.3.1 Assaults

Transvaal continues to evoke strong emotional responses from Native American people. As one representative noted, “this place is hard to comment on because of the atrocities the miners did to the Native American people. Genocide, rape, and killing the native people.” Stories of these interactions are still passed down through generations, some of which are specific to the Beatty area. One comment given highlights the importance of this recent past to people today, as well as their significance in space and time.

That is why this is all related. Things carry over from not that distant past. The attitudes were already there against Indian people, there was a lot of reports about—on our way up here we passed a place called Laverne’s Wren, and they used to make wine and stuff there, and they used to try and get the Indian women drunk. They would give it to the men and they would go off and get drunk but the women they would try and take advantage of. There was a lot of trying to rape and do things to them.

As this comment and the one provided in the preface of this paper demonstrate, the historical memory and associated trauma of rape and assault committed against their people are still a burden to Native Americans today. In addition to sexual assault, one representative recounted stories passed down by their grandmother whom lived in the Beatty area during the encroachment period. Miners would regularly harass the Native American villages or regions of

refuge set up in the surrounding areas, even assaulting them with weapons. The following comments on these interactions were provided during the visit to Transvaal.

- *Shooting at [Indians] was just this mindset of thinking it was fun, “haha, let’s watch them.” My mom and they would have to hide behind these big boulders. They would hear a shot come up, and they would see them. These people knew where the Indian camps were, and people would be there playing and having a good time, and then they would have to hide behind the rock. They are shooting at them because they had to run around, and they were almost like targets, running around, trying to stay down, trying to pull the little kids down so that nobody comes and gets [them]. And you hear and see the dust from the bullets hitting the rocks and things, and they would get scared and they would have to stay down. You never knew if they were coming up or whatever.*



Figure 3.7 Representative at Transvaal (Photo by Sean Scruggs)

- *A lot of these miners would come in and would be drinking and would shoot at the Indian kids. My mom had to go through this too. They were there, her and another lady, in a little burro. And they were all little, the youngest ones, and they would try and protect them and [the miners] just thought it was funny, just to shoot at people to watch their reaction.*
- *Indian people could not fight back against some of that, the guns, so now you have the people that took it away and the new people coming in trying to take some of*

their land, and that is where you get into “now we are going to hold our ground here,” so that no one can come in and use it.

3.1.3.2 Disease

The spread of disease and illnesses has been a key topic in Colonial North American studies. Sickness was spread across the Americas with the introduction of European viruses, which traveled great distances along trade routes. This has led to the mass depopulation across North America with mortality rates ranging from 30 to 100 percent (Upham 1986). The following comment reflect the spread of disease during the mining boom in the Beatty area.

- *A lot of the sickness, I think that is what these folks brought, one of the big problems that truly affected Indian people. They were in an environment they did not know how to deal with, they brought in diseases we did not know how to deal with. It just spread throughout the Indian people. There were a lot of people that were lost. My folks used to talk about those that died and there were sicknesses later on, some sort of flu that came by and got everybody, and people would move.*
- *There is venereal disease that you get from people that come in and take advantage of the women. The second this is there were lots of other kinds of illnesses that we did not know how to address. Stuff that would cause the breathing, like tuberculosis kinds of things. A lot of unsanitary things they would do*
- *Some of the things that they were experimenting with, the things here, from the food to the plants, because they did not know the landscape, did not know the animals, did not know the plants and things, we knew how to harvest and grow, we knew when to take the animals, we knew when the animals were sick and not to take them, they would and they would get sick and share those sicknesses with us. They would often times give us spoiled thing or we would find their leftovers that would be spoiled and we would take that and get the sicknesses. Food poisoning became really serious stuff that by today’s standards, you hear about it and how it can have such a big, rippling effect. It had the same effect on us back then with a lot of the stuff they were doing.*
- *Some of the [Native Americans] from here would go down south, go over to Owen’s valley, up north, wherever, trying to find doctoring people that could help them. That is why, what I told you the other day, some people from Fish Lake that were here would go back up and come back down to get help again. There were people from Hopi that would come over here and a lot of that were impacted by the early miners. A lot of times their cure was to use the alcohol or whatever else to drown your sorrows and take away the pain, and then they would use that and try and sell it to the non-Indian people, or they would take advantage of the women.*

3.1.3.3 Trading

The topic of the use Native Americans provided for the miners came up during conversations at Transvaal. As encroachment continued and expanded, many Native Americans began to trade with the miners. Traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) allowed the indigenous

peoples to survive in this arid desert, giving them an upper hand in the location, collection, and use of natural resources. The following comments were provided regarding trading relationships.

- *If you are a tribal person, you could bring rabbits here to barter. You could bring pine nuts... My mom used to—they dried everything from rabbits, to beef, donkey, burro, you have what you have. I have had turtle... It does not matter if you are white or Indian, if you are hungry you are hungry. If somebody has something, yes, I will trade you this for that. I can give you a supply of food and that will keep you going for a bit.*
- *That became part of the knowledge, the knowledge of the landscape. Anything that you know—where is the closest water, where is the closest this, have you seen any of this gold metal—and show us where you can find that, and I will give you something for this. Even, sometimes with—they had alcohol here. It could be a commodity that somebody wanted to trade.*
- *First of all, [they could have traded] knowledge of where there may be [gold]. Knowledge of the land and the resources, so if they did not have the maps, but the people knew there was some stuff... that could be one... Tribal people could have said, “yeah, there is something up here,” but people would not have stayed here for two years, or however many years. Indian people say “I think there is some stuff up here, just go up there,” they would have either found out yes there is, or no there is not. There would not have been a big influx of people coming to stay. There was something that drew them up here. I do not know what specifically, other than that there must have been some sort of resource.*
- *I think people would also try to take advantage of the situation, they would take advantage of the Indian people for their knowledge. There is no one to complain to.*

3.1.3.4 Dislocation

As a result of the invasion and associated destruction from mining operations, Native American people often resorted to finding refuge. The areas they relocated to are called *regions of refuge*. During their visit, many representatives discussed the aggregation of families into Indian Camps as a result of this encroachment, many families which continue to reside in reservations today. When discussing the stories passed down from their grandmother, one person noted that the camp had multiple families: “there were the Shaws, there were the Charlies, Edison Charlie, all different people. You had the Cottonwoods, the Sharpes, and the Buttons who were there. Shoshones, last name Shoshone were there. Who else was there? These are just some of the ones off the top of my head that I remember she used to talk about.” The following comments were provided regarding the mobilization to and use of these regions of refuge.

- *There were areas of refuge too, on the range [Nellis]. Because of the encroachment, because of the things that were going on, including the rapes, including the shooting.*

- *Part of it was that [my mother] lived on the outskirts of Beatty, and it would have been the same type of situation, even back in 1906 at the turn of the century, that wherever there was a big influx of non-Indian people coming in, the Indian people were being forced out. So now you have to live on the outskirts, where ever that was. So theirs was at one of the Indian Camps at the north end of Beatty.*
- *Later on, when a lot of people were displaced, going to different reservations around, they would also stay at different camps around the range because there were places where you got onto the range [Nellis], not too far out of Beatty, you could hide out there.*



Figure 3.8 Representative Observing Remnants from EuroAmerican Encroachment

- *You could use the washes and the canyons, as we talked about the other day, these are major thoroughfares where nobody can see you go places that you needed to get to, but we also had to be very cautious and people knew the land, and knew when to travel. Sometimes you had to travel at night, sometimes you had to travel when you knew people were not around. You had people watching, trying to make sure that it was safe to go out, to be on your own land.*

3.1.3.5 Genocide

Members of the CGTO agreed that Transvaal was a symbol of the violence that Native Americans endured at the hand of colonial settlers. Although this area was specifically utilized by large mining operations, the spread of EuroAmericans across North America has led to the mass genocide of Native American people. These concluding comments were provided to paint a picture of how this genocide has affected a people and their culture.

- *Work was done to destroy culture, civilization, families, lives, history, and relationships.*
- *The impact is eternal, infinite and perpetual all at once, the genocide altered the course of existence of Natives forever. No work, studies, money, or energy can restore what has been lost.*
- *One murder has an impact on many lives, multiple murders or systematic murders will effect a community, mass murders will destroy entire cultures.*
- *In 1906 was there a lack of law enforcement? Natives did not have rights yet. With Natives being killed and generally treated as sub-humans with no rights, it is hard to comment on these atrocities.*
- *I am a result of genocide, because of it I will never know my “true culture”. My songs, traditions, ceremonies, lifestyle, science, powers, and stories have been lost. I struggle to learn even a few words of my language. I do not live on our traditional lands, families still remain isolated from each other. How does one quantify or qualify that?*
- *I’m still trying to figure it out honestly, I do not know much about it but if you want my thoughts on killing natives all together I just reflect back on it the Owens Valley in 1862 and any other genocide; 1862 is when the cavalry showed up. After that they killed a bunch of people and took a bunch of prisoners to Fort Cajon, whoever was left over they kind of sorted out and either tortured them or put them in prison. And the others had no other choice but to behave and follow directions without any kind of consequences.*
- *If these miners are the ones doing the killing then I do not know. This does not make sense to me, this is just not what our culture does. It does not call for it, it just does not make sense. I understand why they did it, they were stupid they did not know any better I guess.*

3.2 Transvaal Tiering

The following excerpts are from *Ancient Voices, Storied Places: Themes in Contemporary Indian History* (Zedeño, Carroll, and Stoffle 2006), a collection of essays that address the history of Numic peoples in the southwest. This study recorded the voices of Native Americans to emphasize the impacts of a violent history of interactions with EuroAmerican miners and

settlers. These essays were developed in an effort to accurately represent themes that concern Native American people today, especially with the mistreatment and historical misrepresentation that continues today.

3.2.1 Norma Nelson

In the mid-nineteenth century, Euroamericans began to seize lands previously used and occupied by Numic people. In the process of colonizing aboriginal territories, individuals and families, as well as whole communities, sometimes found their lives dramatically and permanently altered by ethnic and resource conflicts. Norma is an Owens Valley Paiute from Bishop, California. In the following narrative, Norma tells the story of how her maternal grandmother, Minnie Grey, was conceived as a result of a rape instigated by a White cowboy from Fish Lake Valley. The personal memories of Norma Nelson lend a poignant realism to the process of nineteenth-century EuroAmerican encroachment.

Henry Chadovich met his wife, Minnie Grey Chadovich, in Fish Lake Valley. Minnie Grey's mother was attacked by White cowboys, and that is how she [Minnie Grey] was White. They [people from the Paiute community] took that baby and stuck it into sagebrush. My grandfather found the baby and raised it on pine nut milk. This was Mini C. who was later Mini Grey. When the baby was born, Shoshonean ladies told the mother of Minnie Grey to throw the baby away because it was too White. The man who helped Mini C. was from my grandfather's family. The man did it all by himself. So no one else did. This is the story of Mini Gray.

The story reminds people to be good and help someone else that is helpless because that baby could do nothing. Coyotes would scare her. Long years ago the cowboys did that to the Indian women and went their own way. Some who have no kids will take them. The White men were selfish and greedy to do that to a woman—they only wanted themselves to be satisfied. Sometimes the White men would kill the women. They would rape them unless some Indian men came along to stop them. Rape occurred because there was nothing up there but Indian people and there is no one who would shoot the men so they could just do that. The only way to protect themselves was to look around and hurry up. So they lived in fear. The ones that are really gone are from Arizona but here we don't try to do nothin' so that is why we get hurt. Wait in the bushes.

The White man told us how to be. Taking a woman like that and dragging them around behind houses and leave them for coyotes to eat. They would take the guys by the neck and do that to them like that (Zedeño, Carroll, and Stoffle 2006: 159-160).

3.2.2 Pauline Esteves

Pauline Esteves, a Western Shoshone elder from Death Valley, California, told of the impacts of encroachment on land use and political knowledge. She notes that contact with Spanish and English-speaking people and the eventual removal of the

Timbisha Band from the area affected the traditional knowledge of territorial boundaries and land rights. The loss of aboriginal language also affected these rights because people did not pass on names and words related to the land. The advance of urbanism, too, affected land use traditions.

According to Pauline, there were numerous and repeated instances of illegal loss of water rights to the White miners. Indians generally did not fight back because they did not know of their rights. An exception was Maggie Shaw, a Western Shoshone woman from Lida. When the miners tried to take the water source from Maggie's ranch, she fought in court, at Goldfield, and won. However, she was forced to move because of harassment. People also lost their ranches because they could not pay the high taxes.

Eventually, the entire Timbisha community lost their land rights to the federal government when Death Valley National Monument was established, in 1933. The National Park Service, in covenant with the owners of the local hotel, agreed to move the Indian community out; the people disagreed but eventually had to move. As a high school student, Pauline saw what was happening to the land and the people and tried to write about it in English class but could not do it because racism in school was rampant and her writings would not be tolerated. So she used a lot of metaphors to write about her community's loss and disguise the message. Pauline devoted most of her life to fighting back, until 2001, when the land rights were returned to Timbisha (Zedeño, Carroll, and Stoffle 2006: 19).

3.2.3 John Kennedy

John Kennedy is a Western Shoshone elder from Fish Lake Valley, Nevada. He recalls a story about how the local people lost their mine claims and ranches. His uncle, Ed Fred, for example, was a gold miner who did not know that he could register a claim, so he simply went around and dug three or four feet into the bedrock until he found gold in small pockets in the clay. This was placer gold that had to be panned. Another local Indian, Rawhide, also mined for gold. When the White miners took over his mine, he tried to register his claim, but the Whites told him, wrongly, that he could not do it because Indians did not have that right. So he lost his mine and water rights. Back in the 1920s, John says, Indians did not know what their rights were under the law and many could not speak or understand English.

His uncle Ed Fred also lost his ranch, a beautiful orchard near Rosen Creek, because he signed it over while he was drunk. Fortunately, Ed's son Tony later hired a lawyer who found out that the land was still unclaimed. He went to court and won the land back. The Kennedys used to work and live on that ranch but, at the moment, they have a federal allotment that was granted to John's uncle, who in turn willed it to John (Zedeño, Carroll, and Stoffle 2006: 19-20).

3.2.4 Early Mining Bonanza

The early mining bonanza lasted for about 20 years, but it was succeeded by numerous mineral discoveries throughout the territory and later the state. The industry had several immediate and long-term effects on the Indian people and the environment, including (1) loss of access to land and water and a concomitant decrease of economic self-reliance; (2) environmental degradation through extensive timber cutting and underground digging; and (3) exposure to imported disease, alcohol, and violence associated with resource competition, development, and racial conflict (see Forbes 1967).

Of immediate impact was the fact that numerous mining claims were registered throughout the territory. As mentioned above, the “squatters law” allowed anyone who could pay five dollars to register a claim in the respective county and thereby institute private property. Furthermore, the mineral reduction technology required access to water, resulting in the claiming of fresh-water springs that were pumped and improved. For miners who switched from the primitive dry reduction technology represented by the Mexican *arrastra* mill to wet-grinding technology, access to permanent water flow was of paramount importance. Mr. E. B. Harris, a Virginia City entrepreneur who opened the first hydraulic mill, reported that the profit and convenience of this technology was such that within a few months numerous other mills opened in the vicinity of the Comstock Lode. The business’ greatest weakness, however, continued to be the scarcity of running water and the high price of water harvested from underground tunnels to supply the mills (Angel 1881:73).

Those miners who did not produce enough mineral-rich rock to pay for the services of the industrial hydraulic mills had to reduce their own mineral and thus had to lay hands on their own nearby water sources. In addition to the mining claims, the profusion of water claims was catastrophic for Indian groups who depended on these water sources throughout the year. Given the letter of “the squatters’ law” in the early days of the claims system, anyone, Indian or otherwise, could conceivably walk into a courthouse and register a claim. Yet Indian people did not register claims because of linguistic barriers, cultural perceptions, and—worst of all—fear of the White miners who not only threatened people with fictitious penalties and actual violence but fed them misinformation regarding their land and water rights. This situation continued unabated and progressively worsened toward the turn of the twentieth century.

In addition to the loss of land and water during the mining bonanza, the technology that developed to increase underground and surface production resulted in the depletion of piñon-juniper woodlands and the onset of severe droughts and soil erosion. First, the construction of underground scaffolding required the cutting of mature trees that could yield primary beams (Zedeño, Carroll, and Stoffle 2006: 32-33).

3.2.5 Fish Lake Valley

In the case of Fish Lake Paiutes, there were reportedly 100 people living in the valley in the 1870s (see Chapter Three). By 1900 and 1910, federal census reports listed only 30 people in the same regions, indicating a decline of 70 percent in the population. Steward notes that Euroamerican miners opened a borax mine in 1865, and thereafter a number of Euroamerican-run ranches were developed. The average household size noted by Steward for 1870 was 6.2 persons (Steward 1938:62), whereas by 1900 the average size had decreased to 1.88 persons; it then rose to 2.14 people by 1910.

Although the Fish Lake Valley population (as well as the average household size) progressively declined from the 1870s until ca. 1900, ethnographic data suggest that complex social engagements beyond the level of the household occurred throughout this period. One indication of social complexity in the midst of external stressors, including population declines, is the development and spread of the Ghost Dance. Hittman (1974) noted that the leader of the 1870s Ghost Dance, Fish Lake Joe, was born in Fish Lake Valley. According to Steward's data (1938:64), Fish Lake Joe (Hittman 1973) instigated the Ghost Dance during the same period of time that gonorrhea outbreaks were known to be negatively impacting the valley population. *The Territorial Enterprise* (May 9, 1871) reported that in 1871 the entire Austin Shoshone band was affected by venereal diseases and some people were dying from them. Steward (1938:64) also noted that gonorrhea was prevalent among the people of Fish Lake Valley. Furthermore, Steward maintained that Fish Lake families "changed residence so often and traveled so widely that relatives were scattered over several valleys [and they were known to] cooperate with people from Deep Springs and Lida" (Steward 1938:62). If Steward's claims about the mobility of people from Fish Lake Valley are accurate, this disease likely spread over a large region in a short period of time.

Ghost Dance activities were also known to occur at Pigeon Springs in the 1890s, thus providing evidence of yet another socially complex and communal response to risks posed to residents in the Fish Lake Valley (Zedeño, Carroll, and Stoffle 2006: 123).

This document contains the observations and evaluations of
the members of the CGTO Writers Committee.
When released it will have been fully reviewed and approved.

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