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**APPENDIX E**

**CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEYS**

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**APPENDIX E****Cultural Resource Surveys**

The objectives of the cultural resource surveys at the Sites, Colusa Cell, and Red Bank Reservoir areas were to obtain information about the archaeological sites comparable to the data from the survey conducted at the Thomes-Newville Reservoir site in 1982, and to determine whether there are any cultural resource issues serious enough to consider removing a reservoir from further consideration. Many new sites were identified and documented during the surveys, representing a varied array of site types. In addition, almost all of the previously recorded sites were found again and documented to current standards. Archaeological evaluations of the proposed reservoirs yielded a wide range of variability in the numbers and types of sites, from 3 sites in one reservoir basin to more than 100 sites in another.

The reservoir assessments were based on record searches and field surveys. Database files, maps, and reports were reviewed at the Northeast, Northwest, and North Central Information Centers of the California Historical Resources Information System, an adjunct of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The goal was to determine the extent of coverage of prior surveys within the project footprints and to obtain the records of any previously recorded sites. The field surveys concentrated on those areas with the highest potential for significant archaeological sites, such as stream terraces and level woodland flats, though areas of lesser sensitivity, such as steep hill slopes and arid plains, also were sampled.

**Sites Reservoir**

Parts of the Sites area were surveyed in 1967 by a field class from the University of California, Los Angeles, and Chico State College, under an agreement with the National Park Service. A total of 15 prehistoric sites were recorded at that time. No further work has been done within the reservoir footprint until the present study, which resulted in the discovery of 26 additional archaeological sites. Of the 41 sites (15 sites from previous study and 26 sites from current study), at least 17 appear to be significant, in that they provisionally meet the criteria for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Six of the sites are not eligible for the NRHP and 16 have undetermined NRHP status. An accurate assessment could not be made of these sites based solely on the evidence visible on the surface. If further studies are warranted, a site testing program using techniques such as small-scale excavations, auger borings, and soil column sampling will be implemented to determine whether the sites have archaeological values that meet the criteria for eligibility to the NRHP.

Prehistoric settlement in the project area was constrained by the limited food and fuel resources and the scarcity of water; however, the area would have been important for seasonal hunting and gathering forays. The larger and more permanent villages were situated along the lower reaches of the bigger streams, in the Sacramento Valley, and on the knolls and natural levees along the Sacramento River.

Historic sites, features, and standing structures are significantly under-represented in the site totals. These resources were not recorded because they are associated with working ranches, occupied buildings, and the Town of Sites. A future survey of historic resources may yield an estimated 15 to 20 significant historic sites in addition to the Historic District of the Town of Sites. Moving the large cemetery associated with Sites and several smaller cemeteries would be costly and would present special problems; nevertheless, there is precedent, when these activities associated with a major public works project. No cultural resource problems are known that would remove this reservoir project from further consideration.

**Colusa Cell Reservoir**

The record search indicated that the footprint of the Colusa Cell Reservoir had never been surveyed for cultural resources and that there were no site records in the files of the state database. The field survey indicated an even greater scarcity of subsistence resources than existed in the Sites Reservoir area and an ephemeral water supply that was not suitable for extensive use or habitation during the prehistoric past.

A total of three sites was recorded, including two historic ranches and one site with a prehistoric and an historic component. The significance of the sites is undetermined. The assessment of eligibility to the National Register could not be made on the basis of surface indications. Additional studies would be necessary to complete the evaluation. The Colusa Cell has no cultural resource issues that would preclude reservoir construction.

**Thomes-Newville Reservoir**

A consultant for DWR completed a comprehensive survey of prehistoric sites within the Thomes-Newville Reservoir area in 1983. A total of 117 sites were recorded within the footprint of the proposed reservoir, representing a prehistoric settlement pattern that includes evidence of permanent or semi-permanent villages, seasonal camp sites, and special resource procurement and use sites. The presence of perennial streams and availability of fuel and subsistence resources accounts for the intensive use of the project area during prehistoric times. Approximately 60 sites meet the criteria for eligibility to the NRHP and would therefore qualify for some level of mitigation effort.

Historic features, sites, and standing structures are under-represented in the site totals. These resources are now given the same consideration as prehistoric resources; however, that was not the case in the early 1980s, when the survey was conducted. Additional survey work would be necessary to determine the number, type, and significance of the historic resources that are present.

As at the Sites Reservoir, moving the historic cemeteries within the footprint of the Thomes-Newville Reservoir would be costly and present special problems; however, there are no cultural resource issues serious enough to warrant removing this reservoir from consideration.

**Red Bank Project**

The record search for the Red Bank Reservoir indicated that the project area had not been surveyed for cultural resources and that no site records were present in the state database. The prior survey and excavations for the Red Bank Reservoir conducted in the early 1950s by the University of California, Berkeley, for the National Park Service was for a Sacramento River diversion project near Red Bluff that had the same name. The surveys completed in 1994 by California State University, Sacramento, for the Corps' Cottonwood Creek Project were downstream from the current proposed reservoir, with no overlap of the footprints.

A total of 31 sites were recorded within the footprint of three of the four sites comprising the Red Bank Reservoir; no sites were found at the fourth site. Twenty-eight sites are prehistoric, and three are historic. Nine sites appear to meet the criteria for eligibility to the NRHP, 16 sites are of undeterminable significance without further work, and 6 sites are not eligible for listing on the NRHP, and therefore are not significant.

The prehistoric sites in the Red Bank Reservoir area were generally small, and the artifact distribution was relatively sparse. The sites probably were associated with seasonal upland hunting, fishing, and

gathering activities. The larger permanent settlements were situated farther downstream, on the banks of the perennial streams and along the Sacramento River.

No cultural resource issues that were serious enough to prevent construction of the reservoirs were identified as a result of the survey of the Red Bank Reservoir.

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