

# **NEGATIVE CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY REPORT**

## **THE MESA ROCK NURSERY PROJECT**

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA  
CASE NO. S08-015; Log No. 08-08-012  
APNs 187-100-37-00 and 187-100-35-00**

*Prepared for:*

**Hilltop Group Inc.  
807 East Mission Road  
San Marcos, California 92069**

*Lead Agency:*

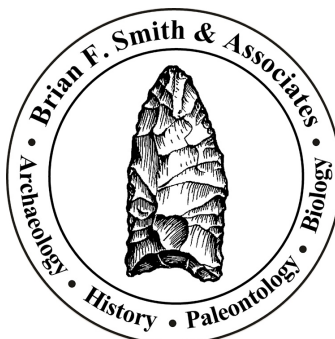
**Contact: Diane Shalom  
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Department of Planning and Land Use  
5201 Ruffin Road, Suite B  
San Diego, California 92123  
(858) 694-2960**

*Prepared by:*

**Brian F. Smith, Principal Investigator,  
and Sara Clowery-Moreno, Project Archaeologist**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Brian F. Smith and Associates  
14010 Poway Road, Suite A  
Poway, California 92064  
(858) 679-8218**



*August 14, 2008; Revised June 1, 2009*

## **National Archaeological Data Base Information**

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***Client/Project Proponent:*** Hilltop Group Inc.  
807 East Mission Road  
San Marcos, California 92069

***Report Date:*** August 14, 2008; Revised June 1, 2009

***Report Title:*** Negative Cultural Resource Survey Report; The Mesa Rock Nursery Project

***Type of Study:*** Phase I Archaeological Survey

***New Sites:*** None

***Updated Sites:*** None

***USGS Quadrangle:*** Valley Center, California (7.5 minute)

***Acreage:*** Approximately 35 acres

***Key Words:*** Negative report, no resources identified; survey of 35 acres; Mesa Rock Nursery Project; USGS *Valley Center*, California Quadrangle (7.5 minute)





August 14, 2008; Revised June 1, 2009

Mark L. Lemire  
Hilltop Group Inc.  
807 East Mission Road  
San Marcos, California 92069

RE: Results of a Phase I Archaeological Assessment for the Mesa Rock Nursery Project,  
within the unincorporated community of Jesmond Dene, San Diego County, California;  
Negative Findings; APNs 187-100-37-00 and 187-100-35-00, County Case No. S08-015.

Dear Mr. Lemire:

In response to a request from Hilltop Group Inc., Brian F. Smith and Associates (BFSA) conducted an intensive pedestrian survey and records review for the Mesa Rock Nursery Project. The following letter report describes the results of the assessment.

**County:** San Diego

**USGS 7.5' Quad(s):** *Valley Center*, California **Date:** 1968 (photorevised 1975)  
**Section:** 32 (southeast ¼ of southwest ¼) **Township:** 11 South  
**Range:** 2 West

**Address:** 25568 Mesa Rock Road, Jesmond Dene, California

**Other Locational Data:** The project is located on the west side of Interstate 15, within the southeast portion of the Merriam Mountains and is accessed by a dirt driveway. To reach the project area take the West El Norte Parkway exit, turn right on West El Norte Parkway and proceed to North Centre City Parkway. Turn left at North Centre City Parkway and follow until Mesa Rock Road. Turn left at Mesa Rock Road and proceed under Interstate 15. Road will curve toward right and on the left side the dirt access road is visible, but lock with a gate. Once past the gate, just follow the curving dirt access road up the slope.

**Assessor's Parcel No.:** 187-100-37-00 and a very small portion of 187-100-35-00

**UTM Coordinates:** Zone 11, 489390 mE/ 3670090 mN (estimated western project boundary, approximately at mid-north/south point)

**Elevation:** Ranges from approximately 960 to 1250 feet above mean sea level

**Owner/Address:** A D J Holdings LLC  
807 East Mission Road  
San Marcos, California 92069

**Survey Type:** Intensive Pedestrian

**Date of Survey:** July 23, 2008

**Field Crew:** Brian F. Smith, Principal Investigator, directed the study of the Mesa Rock Nursery Project with the assistance of Project Archaeologist Sara Clowery-Moreno and Field Archaeologists Clarence Hoff and Brad Comeau. Native American representative was Clint Linton, of Red Tail Monitoring and Research, Inc.

**Description:** The current project is located along the west side of Interstate 15, within the unincorporated community of Jesmond Dene, San Diego County, California, in the southeast portion of the Merriam Mountains (Attachments 1 and 2). The project property is approximately 35 acres, identified as APN 187-100-37-00 and a very small portion of a dirt access driveway within APN 187-100-35-00. The intensive pedestrian survey of the entire property was conducted as part of the environmental clearance required for the commercial development of a wholesale nursery, eight paved parking stalls, and an office proposed for development within 15 acres of the northeast portion of APN 187-100-37-00 and the southern margin of APN 187-100-35-00 (a portion of the dirt access driveway) (Attachment 3). The survey program was conducted in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the County of San Diego guidelines (approved September 26, 2006) to determine the presence of any archaeological or historical cultural resources that would be affected by the proposed project.

The methodology employed during the current investigation followed standard archaeological field procedures and was sufficient to accomplish a thorough assessment of the entire project area. When possible, the field methodology included walking survey transects evenly spaced approximately 33 feet (ten meters) apart and oriented north to south across the property while visually inspecting the soil surface. The 15 acres within the proposed limit of disturbance were closely inspected. Within this area, the majority of the ground surface was visible (approximately 85 percent) and fairly level due to prior disturbance in the form of grading. Large amounts of modern trash (plastic, glass, metal, and ceramic fragments) covered the eastern portion of the project. Weeds, such as short pod mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), provided ground cover in some small areas, particularly along the north and east edges of the project. The remainder of the disturbed area consisted of a Disintegrated Granite surface.

The remainder of the property that will not be developed is sloped at a moderately steep angle and contains dense Chaparral and Inland Sage Scrub vegetation, including laurel sumac, sage, chamise, manzanita, and oak. Ground visibility within this area was poor (approximately 15 percent) due to dense foliage. Accessible areas that were potentially sensitive for cultural resources, such as exposed bedrock boulder clusters, were closely inspected. Broken remnants of large bedrock boulders were observed but no grinding surfaces were identified. The bedrock boulders exhibited large vertical faces with little horizontal surface to permit resource grinding. One prominent cluster of large bedrock boulders and Coastal Live Oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) on

the north facing slope of the south central portion of the parcel could have served as a rock shelter; however, no evidence of cultural occupation or artifacts was located and the steepness of the slope likely deterred prehistoric use. Graffiti was observed on the surface of the boulders, indicating recent human activity. No historic or prehistoric cultural resources were identified within the boundaries of the current project, and no artifacts, features, or darkened soils were observed. The survey was accomplished with the assistance of a Native American representative, Clint Linton, of Red Tail Monitoring and Research, Inc.

In addition to the intensive pedestrian survey, records searches were requested from the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) at San Diego State University (SDSU) and from the San Diego Museum of Man (MOM) to identify previously recorded archaeological sites in the project area. A Sacred Lands File (SLF) search was also requested from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) to identify any sacred or ceremonial sites or landforms on the project. The SCIC and MOM records searches indicated that there were no recorded cultural resources within the project boundaries. In addition, the SCIC records search indicated that a previous study had encompassed the majority of the current project area (TMI Environmental Services 1990: see Confidential Appendix) and reported no cultural resources. Within a one-mile radius of the project area the SCIC records the presence of 19 cultural resources and one historic address. The MOM records duplicate nine of the 19 cultural resources recorded at the SCIC. The 19 recorded cultural resources consist of 10 prehistoric sites (two isolates, one milling slick, two shell scatters, and five lithic scatters), five historic sites (one rock wall, one rock fence, one hunting blind, one cistern with trash scatter and one auto bridge) and four resources of uncertain temporal identification (three rock markers and one set of overlapping rock circles). The historic address consists of an altered Victorian farmhouse located at 2124 Mudge Lane, to the south of the project area. The prehistoric resources tend to be located near drainages and at more level, lower elevations found to the northeast, southeast, south and southwest of the project area. The SLF search requested from the NAHC failed to indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources within the project. BFSA requested additional information from all Native American contacts listed within the NAHC response letter. As of the submittal of this negative letter report, no responses had been received. Any responses will be forwarded to the County of San Diego upon receipt.

This negative letter report constitutes the final archaeological investigation for the Mesa Rock Nursery Project. Based upon the results of the field survey and institutional records searches, no prehistoric or historic sites are present within the boundaries of the current project. It is recommended that the project be allowed to proceed without additional archaeological assessment. A copy of this report will be permanently filed with SCIC at SDSU. All notes and other materials related to this project will be curated at the archaeological laboratory of BFSA in Poway, California.

Sincerely,

Brian F. Smith, Principal Investigator  
Brian F. Smith and Associates

Attachments:

Attachment 1: General Location Map

Attachment 2: Project Location Map (7.5' USGS topographic map)

Attachment 3: Project Development Map

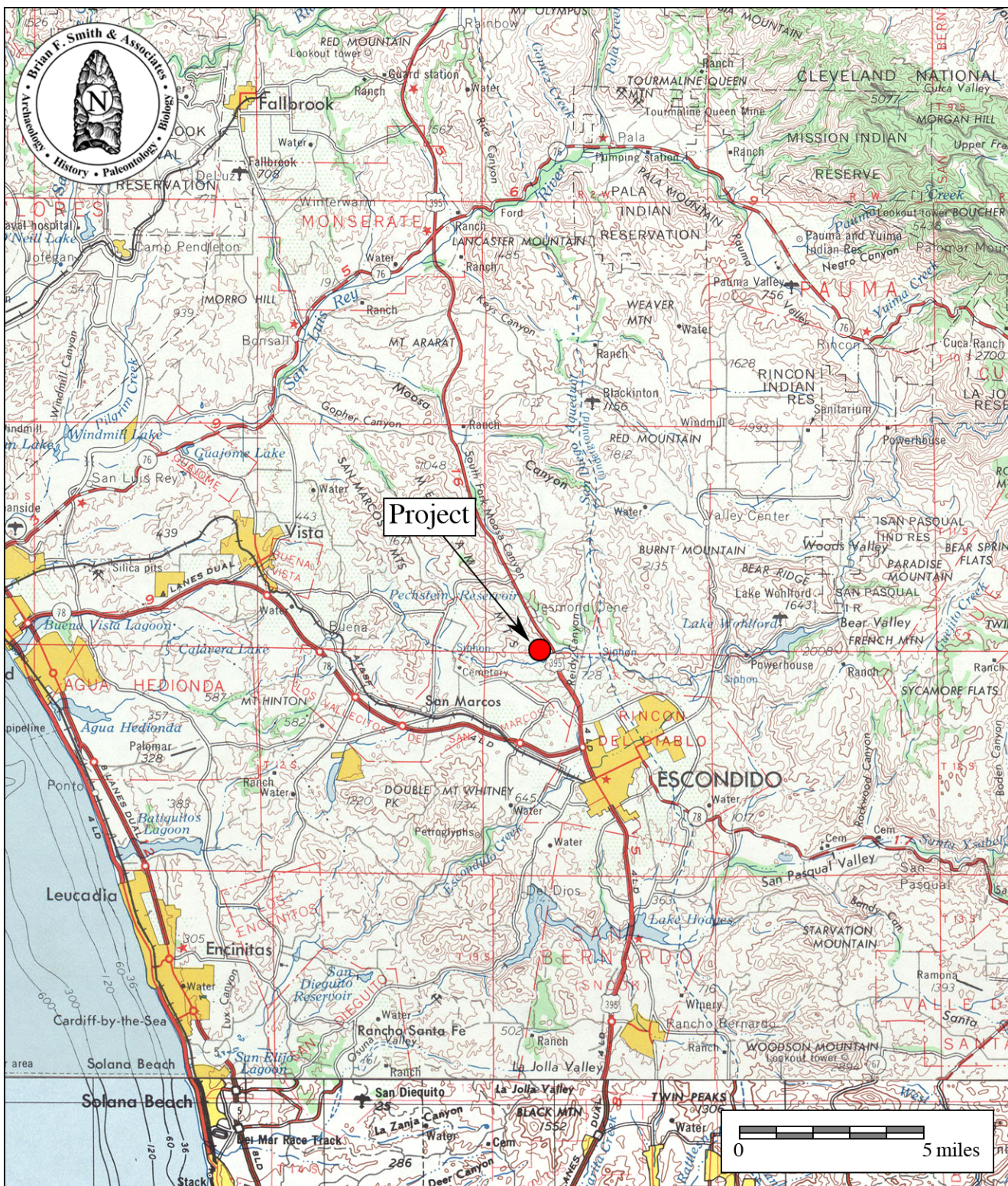
Confidential Appendices (only submitted to the County of San Diego; bound separately):

Appendix I: South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) at San Diego State University (SDSU) Records Search Results

Appendix II: Museum of Man (MOM) Records Search Results

Appendix III: Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Sacred Lands File (SLF) Records Search Results and Native American Correspondence





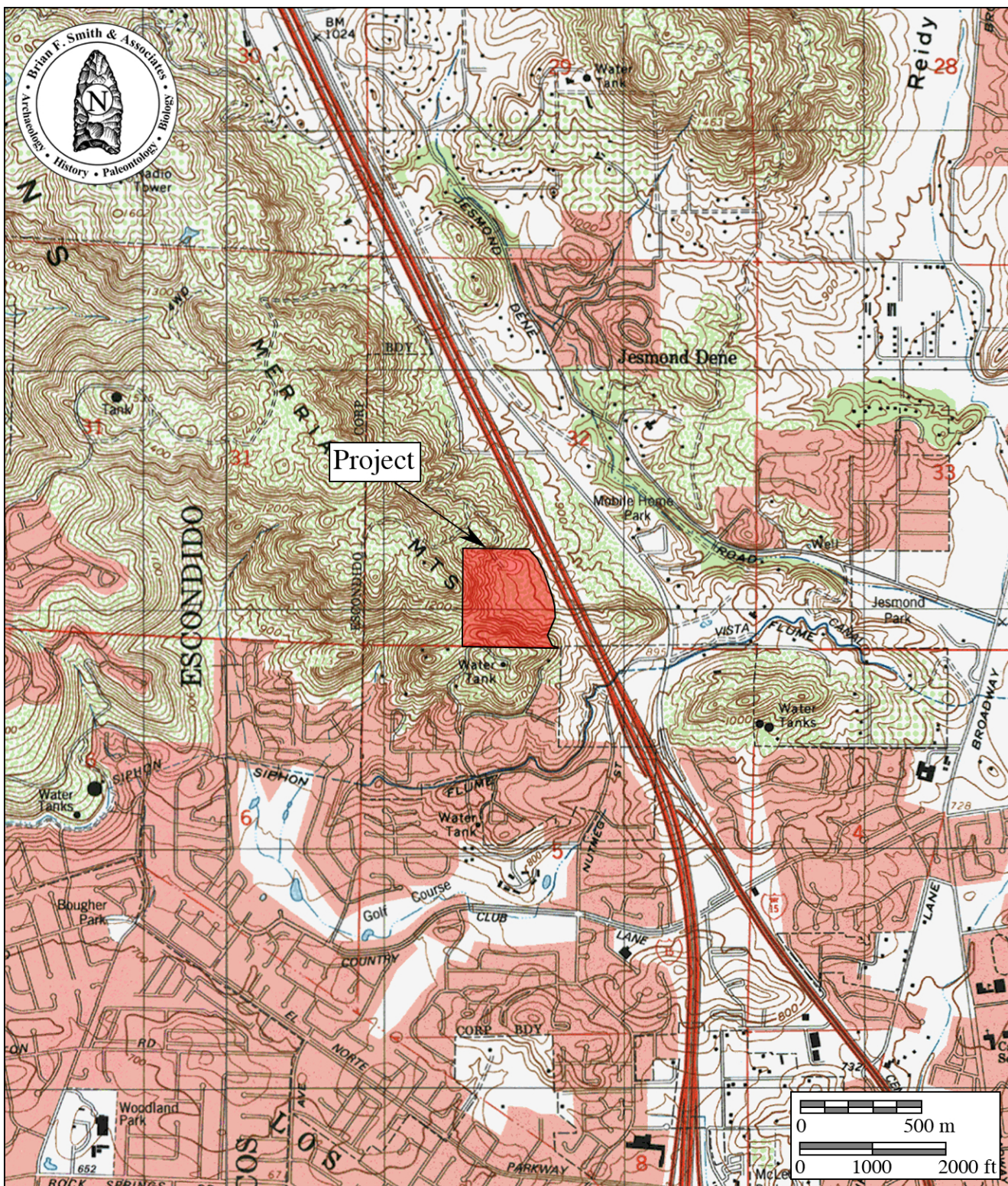
## Attachment 1

### General Location Map

#### The Mesa Rock Nursery Project

USGS Santa Ana and San Diego (1:250,000 series)





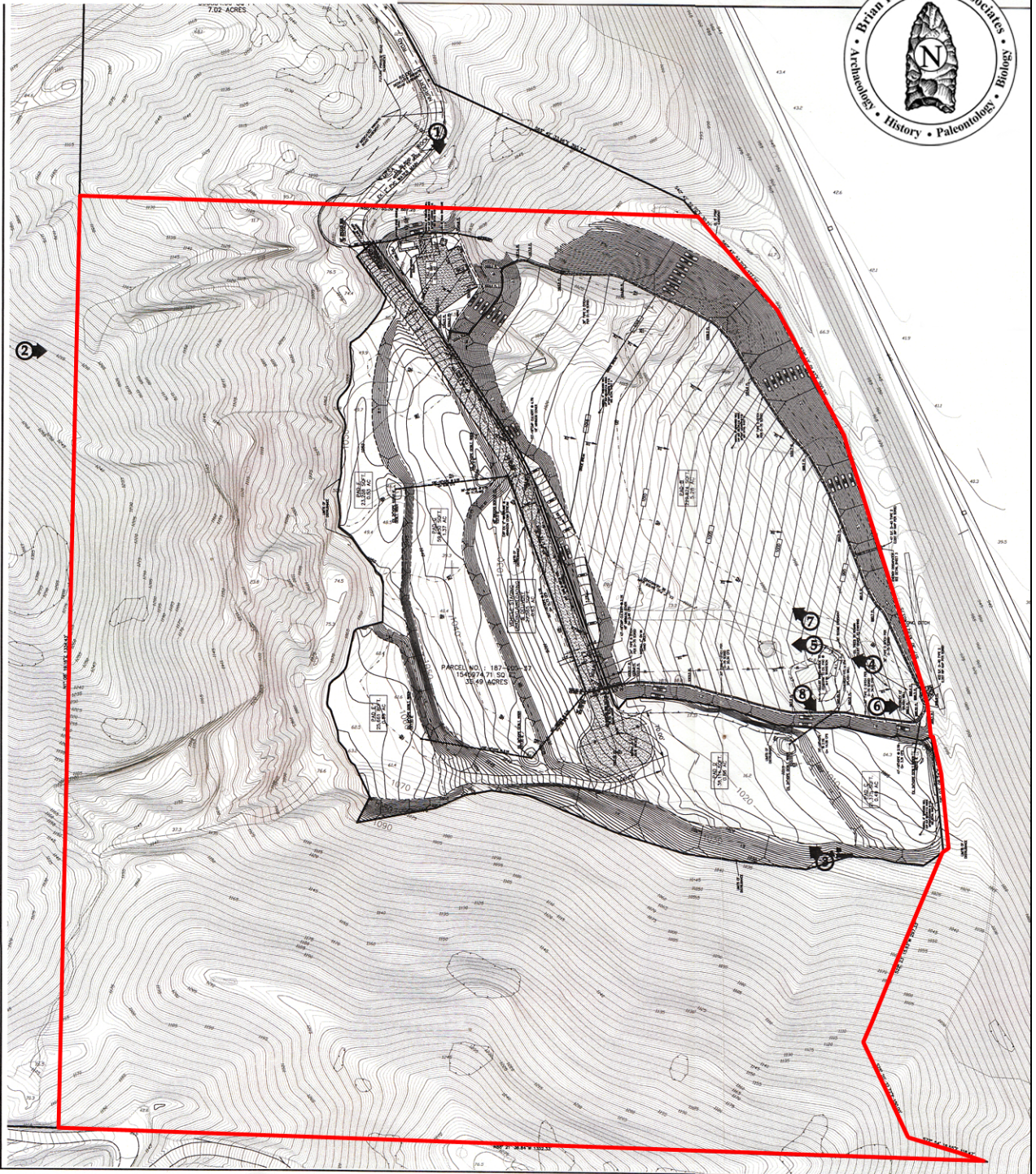
## Attachment 2

### Project Location Map

The Mesa Rock Nursery Project

USGS San Marcos and Valley Center Quadrangle (7.5 minute series)





**Attachment 3**  
**Project Development Map**  
The Mesa Rock Nursery Project