



# CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

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## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH FACILITY (CENTER): SELF-STUDY REPORT, 2014-2017**

by

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Archaeological Research Facility: Established 1975

Last Review: March 2013

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# ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH FACILITY (CENTER): SELF-STUDY REPORT, 2014-2017

## Mission and Goals

The Archaeological Research Facility (ARF) on the California State University at Fullerton campus houses invaluable archaeological and ethnographic collections, and their records, in order to maintain their continuing research, educational, heritage, and cultural resource management values for the University, Orange County, the State of California, and the federal government, and thus helps fulfill some of the University's Mission and Strategic Plan. The Facility is a significant repository for prehistoric archaeological resources of Orange County and archival documents that pertain to these collections, and maintains facilities in which students, faculty, and qualified researchers from the community can study these collections. Most of the collections were recovered from a number of prehistoric archaeological sites in Orange County that have since been destroyed by construction of houses, office buildings, roads, freeways, and other urban developments during the past 50 years. These archaeological collections are all that remains to document and verify the prehistoric human record of Orange County's past that extends back at least 12,000 years ago.

## Activities

### ***Proposed Transfer of Archaeological Collections in the "Old Children's Center"***

During the past four years, negotiations have been underway with the John D. Cooper Archaeological and Paleontological Center to transfer a major portion of the 2600 boxes of archaeological artifacts that pertain to Orange County from the "Old Children's Center" on campus to the Cooper Center in Santa Ana. Discussions are still ongoing, and the transfer may finally take place later this year.

***Archival Research Background for Archaeological Collections.*** During the past few years, undergraduate student interns (enrolled in ANTH 491) and graduate students under the guidance of the Director conducted research on the background of prehistoric archaeological sites that are part of our archaeological collections and worked with the staff at the South Central Coastal Information Center on campus in the Division of Anthropology (<http://anthro.fullerton.edu/sccic/>) in this endeavor. This research provides significant information about our prehistoric collections and serves as a means for teaching and training student interns, who may become future professional curators. One of our archaeology graduate students produced a GIS study of archaeological sites along the Aliso Creek drainage that combined data on archaeological collections in the Archaeological Research Facility and the Cooper Center for her M.A. thesis. She is now employed by a local Cultural Research Management firm based on her archaeological and GIS skills that she learned in our archaeological program.

**Assessment of Archaeological Collections for NAGPRA.** The 1990 Native American Graves and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) statutes and regulations (Public Law 101-601; 25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.; Title 43 CFR, Part 10) was amended in 2010 to include culturally unidentifiable (CUI) Native American human remains when a federally recognized tribe requests those remains and any associated artifacts for repatriation. The University

retained an archaeologist from an Orange County CRM firm as a consultant to work with Dr. Mitch Avila, former Associate Dean in H&SS (now Dean of Arts and Humanities at CSU Dominguez Hills), Dr. Carl Wendt, Archaeology Coordinator, and Dr. Steven James, Director of the Archaeological Research Facility, to assess the status of human skeletal remains in the archaeological collections with regard to the amended NAGPRA legislation and handle tribal requests for repatriation. An updated inventory of Native American human remains in the archaeological collections on the CSUF campus was developed as required by NAGPRA. Dr. Brenda Bowser is now serving as the NAGPRA contact and work is continuing. When CalNAGPRA (for non-federally recognized tribes in California) is implemented, this will require consultations with members of these tribes for repatriation of human remains, associated funerary artifacts, and any other ceremonial objects in our collections.

***Archaeological Classes, Projects, Labwork, and Research.*** The Archaeological Research Facility (ARF) provides archaeological equipment, vehicles, and lab space for field and lab research conducted by the CSUF archaeology faculty and their students, including archaeological field classes and field research in southern California, the American Southwest, and Mesoamerica.

***Faculty and Student Use of the Collections.*** Collections from the Archaeological Resource Facility were used in classroom instruction, including the following classes: ANTH 103 (Introduction to Archaeology), ANTH 461 (California Archaeology), and ANTH 463 (Archaeofaunal Analysis). Prehistoric artifacts were selected for this purpose from the following archaeological collections, which are named for their donors: Cailliez, Irvine, Malo, Ruby, Wexler, and Wilson collections.

***Southern California and American Southwest Research.*** Based on archaeological fieldwork on San Nicolas Island (one of the Southern California Islands), Palos Verdes Peninsula, San Bernardino Mountains, and northern Arizona in the American Southwest, Dr. James and his undergraduate and graduate students in the ARF have been conducting labwork and analyses on prehistoric archaeological materials collected from these regions. He and his students have given presentations at various professional meetings (e.g., Society for California Archaeology, Society for American Archaeology, Southern California Academy of Sciences, California Islands Symposium, and Southwest Anthropological Association) on the results of this research. Several of our graduate students have completed their MA theses based on this research. Similarly, Dr. Knell has been continuing his ongoing archaeological investigations in the Mojave Desert and research publications with students from the Archaeology Program.

***Mesoamerican Archaeological Research.*** Over the past three years (F-2014 to S-2017), Dr. Wendt and his students have conducted archaeological research in the ARF as part of his National Science Foundation Senior Research Grant (BCS-1143571) project titled "Olmec Household Archaeology: Investigating Los Soldados" (\$248,907). Students in his lab have (1) completed petrographic analysis on archaeological bitumen and pottery, (2) digitized excavations maps in ArcGIS, and (3) entered pottery data into the project's Microsoft Access database. Over the course of the last three years more than 20 undergraduate and graduate students have worked in the lab as paid assistants and volunteers.

***Use of Collections by Outside Professional Archaeologists.*** Archaeological collections from prehistoric Native American sites in Orange County stored in the ARF have been examined by professional archaeologists for research purposes over the years. One of these requests was from a doctoral candidate at Stanford University, and last week, the Director visited the well-known Black Star Canyon Indian Village Site (ORA-132; California Historical Landmark No. 217) in the Santa Ana Mountains with this Native American student. We have a small archaeological collection from this site made during the 1970s. As outlined in the mission statement for the ARF, archaeological collections stored on the CSUF campus represent a significant repository for the prehistoric archaeological resources of Orange County and the archival documents that pertain to these collections, which are available for study by qualified researchers.

## **Organizational Structure and Governance**

The four tenured Archaeology Program faculty in the Division of Anthropology (Drs. James, Wendt, Bowser, and Knell) serve as the advisory board for the Archaeological Research Facility. Discussions about the archaeological collections and the ARF are listed on the agenda for our bi-weekly faculty meetings. Decisions related to operations of the Facility are from the Director (Dr. James), Archaeology Program Coordinator (Dr. Wendt), and the H&SS Dean's Office.

## **Resources and Sustainability**

The Archaeological Research Facility is housed in a room in the basement of McCarthy Hall (MH-2). The bulk of the archaeological collections are stored on campus in Building No. 44 South ("Old Children's Center"). There is also a cargo container on campus in which field excavation and other archaeological equipment are stored.

***Size and Content of the Archaeological Collections.*** In order to understand the magnitude and diversity of the archaeological collections that are held by the Archaeological Research Facility, there are at least 2600 boxes of prehistoric artifacts (each box is a cubic foot or larger), 400 ground stone artifacts (i.e., large prehistoric grinding implements for processing wild plant foods), and 10 file cabinets with archival documents, site records, and maps that provide supporting documentation of the archaeological materials (i.e., provenience information on the archaeological sites and the excavations).

***Major Collections.*** 1) Irvine Site (ORA-64), an archaeological collection obtained by CSUF in 2003 from the Irvine Company, which was recovered from excavations in the 1990s at the site by a Cultural Resource Management firm; 2) another separate "Irvine Collection," which is on long term loan from the Irvine Company (Irvine Ranch sites, pre-1982); some of the larger collections within this Irvine Collection were recovered from the following archaeological sites: ORA-64 (collections from 1970s and early 1980s), ORA-119, ORA-120, ORA-197, ORA-198, and ORA-244.

***Other Large Archaeological Collections.*** 1) California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) collections from ORA-195 (Jamboree Blvd. in Irvine), ORA-687, and LAN-690; 2) Newland House (site ORA-183, a collection held in partnership with the Huntington Beach Historical Society); 3) Wilson Collection – ceramics and ground stone from Arizona and New Mexico; 4) Rancho San Clemente Project (very large collection from several sites, CSUF

1980s field project); 5) Zzyzx (collections from CSUF field school in 1980s at the CSUF Desert Studies Center in the Mojave National Preserve, held for the federal government (National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management, Department of the Interior); 6) ORA-840 (collections from CSUF field class in mid-1990s); 7) ORA-116 (curated for the federal government—Food and Drug Administration (FDA) lab site in Irvine); 8) San Nicolas and San Clemente Islands (U.S. Navy); 9) Ruby Collection—artifacts from the Mississippi region and Southern California, donated by Dr. Charles Ruby.

**Funding and Support.** Funding for the operation of the Archaeological Research Facility is provided by the Archaeology Program in the Division of Anthropology and the H&SS Dean's office. The Director of the Archaeological Research Facility, Dr. Steven James, has a full teaching load (four courses and a number of graduate students) and receives no assigned time or compensation for serving in this capacity. He has undertaken this responsibility since 2006 as part of his service to the Division, College, and University, and because of his interest in preserving the significant archaeological collections housed at CSUF that are from Orange County and other areas of southern California, the American Southwest, and elsewhere in the world.

## **Highlights and Accomplishments**

Major highlights and accomplishments of the Archaeological Research Facility during the past three years were discussed above under Activities. The most important of these activities will involve the anticipated move of the majority of 2600 curation boxes and 400 ground stone artifacts from the "Old Children's Center" on campus to the Cooper Center in Santa Ana for storage. When the collections are moved, this will allow Building No. 44 South ("Old Children's Center") to be refurbished for other purposes by the University.

## **Planning and Strategic Outlook**

CSU Fullerton is the only university in Orange County with a significant prehistoric archaeological collection, and as such plays a critical role in preserving and protecting the region's archaeological record, and in making it accessible to qualified students and professional researchers. In concert with the South Central Coastal Information Center in the Division of Anthropology and the Cooper Center (which includes archaeological collections from Orange County but **not** owned by the University), the Archaeological Research Facility positions CSU Fullerton as a significant institution for understanding and researching Orange County's prehistory.

As a state institution, we have a particular responsibility to meet state and federal standards for the management of archaeological collections, as outlined in the "State of California Guidelines for the Curation of Archaeological Collections," and "Curation of Federally-Owned and Administered Archeological Collections" (36 CFR part 79) (for details: <http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/pages/1054/files/guide93.pdf> and <http://www.nps.gov/archeology/tools/36cfr79.htm>)

Under both state and federal criteria, and all current best practices, a professional curation facility is one that:

- Accessions, labels, catalogs, stores, maintains, inventories, and conserves collections on a long-term basis in accordance with professional museum and archival standards.
- Maintains all collection records in archivally secure conditions.
- Provides adequate equipment and space for storage, study, and conservation.
- Requires staff to be qualified professionals.
- Provides physical security for collections by use of safety codes, fire systems, intrusion systems, and possessing an emergency management plan.
- Handles, stores, cleans, conserves, and exhibits collections in a way that is appropriate to the nature of the materials, protects the objects, and preserves data.
- Regularly inspects collections and conducts inventories.
- Provides access to collections for qualified professionals, and for other legitimate public use.

Major goals and activities that the Archaeological Research Facility should implement during the next three years include:

1) Continue inventory of Native American human remains for meeting the requirements of NAGPRA (Native American Graves and Repatriation Act), as amended in 2010, and CalNAGPRA (for non-federally recognized tribes in California), when it is implemented.

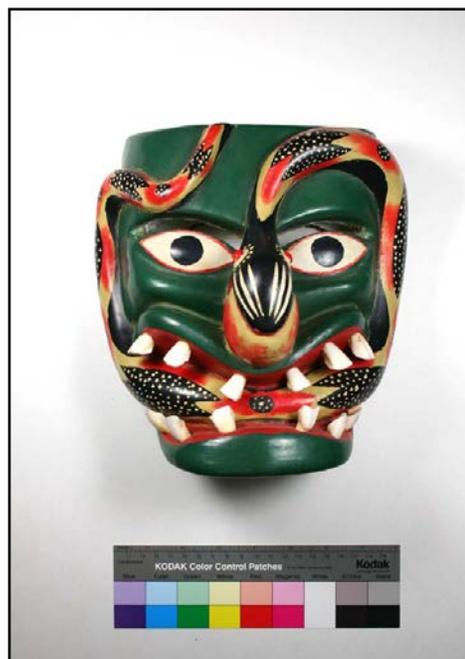
2) As noted above under Activities, we plan to move a major portion of the Archaeological Research Facility Collections from the “Old Children’s Center” on campus to the Cooper Center in Santa Ana for storage. During the past few years, meetings and discussions have been held with the Cooper Center in regard to the transfer of archaeological artifacts that pertain to Orange County from the Archaeological Research Facility to the Cooper Center. The University will still maintain legal ownership of this archaeological collection. Discussions are still ongoing, and hopefully, the transfer will take place later this year.

3) For the ARF collections that are not moved to the Cooper Center, funding is needed to upgrade the remaining collections and improve storage conditions with regard to federal and state curation standards, as well as funding for meeting the requirements of NAGPRA.

4) Find a funding source to hire a full-time Archaeological Curation Technician to continue the curation of the archaeological collections and assist the Director with implementation of tasks outlined here. The Director receives no release time, has a full teaching load, and needs a full-time Archaeological Technician to handle daily curation tasks and requests for access to the collections, as well as training student interns in curation procedures.

As discussed throughout this report, the Archaeological Research Facility (ARF) contains significant and invaluable archaeological and ethnographic collections that pertain to the prehistory and ethnohistory of Orange County and other areas of Southern California, as well as other regions of the world. The Facility also provides a number of other vital functions that serve to enhance education, research, and the pursuit of knowledge for the Division of Anthropology, the College of H&SS, the University, and the general public of Orange County.

The photographs shown below illustrate the range and diversity of the artifact collections at the Archaeological Research Facility.



**Sample of Artifacts Curated by the Archaeological Research Facility:**

Clockwise, from below: An “eccentric crescent” from Orange County (Irvine Collection) (perhaps 9,000 years old); a prehistoric granite mortar bowl found on CSUF property (Oxford Street); a Classic period Mayan tripod bowl (ca. A.D. 600-900); an ornament from Orange County (Irvine Collection); a Roman glass vial; and a contemporary mask from Michoacán, Mexico.

