California Field School: Interim Report

Hidden Villa Field Seasons from April 2023 through December 2024

Prepared for: Hidden Villa, 26870 Moody Road, Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

By

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(Cover watercolor by Alex Apffel)

Acknowledgements

This report details some research findings by Foothill College students during four short field school seasons in 2023 and 2024. Archaeology field schools were carried out with roughly one hundred twenty students who came to Hidden Villa from all over California on Fridays in the Spring and Fall. They are too numerous to name but suffice it to say the beauty of the farm at 8AM on a cool Fall morning as the sun climbs over the ridge tops was a sight to behold for all of us – thank you. Our work was restorative in many senses, as students from all walks of life joined the team, so much love and thanks on our parts. Hidden Villa staff and volunteers were as enthusiastic as they were welcoming. Thank you, all team members, including Garth, Nicky, Sofia, Bret, Elliott and many more. Our heartfelt gratitude for opening your doors.

Background

Whether today or in the 1850s, if you asked someone to imagine a perfect location hidden from the hustle and bustle of booming California, then Hidden Villa would certainly come to mind. This land has long offered refuge and reflection—a space for thinking and learning, free from the pressures of the outside world. We believe that the sense of calm and inspiration people feel when walking through the property today is the same feeling experienced by those in the past. That spirit—embraced and nurtured by the Duveneck family—still welcomes anyone who crosses the creek into the valley. As the morning sun peaks over the ridge and the fog lifts, it is clear this is a place rooted in continuity and meaning. The work we present here is grounded in that sense of place and its importance across time.

In the Fall of 2022, Hidden Villa board member Diane Duerr-Smith reached out to Foothill College to explore the possibility of a collaborative archaeology project. A planning group was formed to rebuild the long-dormant relationship between Hidden Villa and Foothill College. We proposed archaeological research as a meaningful way to reconnect our institutions and engage students, educators, and the local community in uncovering the rich history of the land.

Previous archaeological research by Foothill College on the property of Hidden Villa began with small ad-hoc survey days in 2008 with 5-10 students taking part in an Archaeology Survey course. In 2011, Foothill College archaeology students returned to conduct a preliminary reconnaissance of the property in which both the possible Moody Cabin and Thisleton cabin sites were recorded for future study. Several documents were prepared for Hidden Villa, to include a very preliminary report (Connell 2011).

No archaeology took place at Hidden Villa during the next decade until the current program of study began in April 2023. Following several years of field seasons with the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Duerr-Smith contacted Connell to propose work at Hidden Villa. This report provides a preliminary update on the various avenues of research conducted by the students and professors on the project.

Foothill College initiated a student-centered field program on the Hidden Villa property in 2023. Teams of students carried out various phases of reconnaissance, survey, and test excavations during a first Spring field season (April-June 2023), a second Fall field season (September-December 2023), a first lab session in the winter 2024, followed by the Spring 2024 third field season (April-June) and the Fall 2024 season (September-December).

Students enrolled in courses such as *Archaeology Survey*, *Basic Laboratory Methods*, and *Applied Archaeology Methods* meet each Friday at 8 a.m. to conduct fieldwork and research until mid-afternoon. Over these three-month sessions, students engage in hands-on learning while making real contributions to understanding Hidden Villa's past.

The objectives of the program are to:

1. Deepen our understanding of the early history of the Hidden Villa property.
2. Locate and document early structures and features.
3. Identify artifacts that speak to the unique history of the site.
4. Develop educational tools and materials for Hidden Villa docents and visitors.
5. Support Hidden Villa's broader goals, including archival work and service-learning activities tied to the farm.

Students analyze and process artifacts in winter laboratory courses, preparing materials for museum displays and educational use. While we intend to write more frequent reports, this document summarizes findings and progress through Fall 2024.

Goals and Methods

This is a long-term field study with education as the primary goal. Through an educational mindset, we focus on the dual purpose of training archaeology students and reaching out to the public in a thoughtful and deliberate manner.

An equally important goal is to provide Hidden Villa with documentation of cultural historical features to be used by the organization to mitigate future projects. With Dr. Samuel Connell as Principal Investigator, the Foothill College Center for Applied Anthropology is able to provide a preliminary assessment of the cultural resources on the property. According to California law, any project requiring a "discretionary" permit must be reviewed for archaeological resources (California Environmental Quality Act. Sec. 15065(a), 21083.2, and 21084.1). For most projects, this entails a simple inspection of the project area and a background record search performed by a qualified archaeologist. The focus of our research is to locate and report on the presence or absence of historic or prehistoric features, buildings, or other cultural resource sites.

If archaeological sites are discovered, the significance of the sites must be determined to assess whether future farm operations will affect them. California State guidelines have been established (Title 14, Public Resource Code, Sec. 4852 b and c.) that list specified criteria that must be met for a prehistoric or historic resource to be deemed significant. Federal guidelines list the same criteria, while specifying that the cultural resource must be at least 50 years old (36 CFR part 60.6).

If no cultural resources are discovered during the inspection and background search, the projects may proceed as planned. In this case, because of the historical and cultural significance of Hidden Villa, it is recommended that all construction proceed with caution and preliminary survey and testing be completed prior to land improvements.

The current project is located at 26870 Moody Road Los Altos Hills, CA 94022 (APNs 35104017 35104018, 35136017, 35136019, 35136020, -021, -028, & 35106002, see Figures 1, 2,

& 3). The total acreage of the entire parcel area is approximately 1600 acres, a small percentage of which has been surveyed during our field seasons. All fieldwork and archival research for this project was performed by members of Foothill College.

Archival Research: Requests for Information

In addition to fieldwork, we are conducting archival and ethnographic research to better understand the historical and cultural context of the site. This includes reviewing documents, maps, oral histories, and other sources to develop a more complete picture of Hidden Villa's past.

A record search was completed at the California Historical Resource Information System (CHRIS) office at Sonoma State University on May 17, 2024. No previously recorded archaeological sites had been previously recorded within the property or within two kilometers of the center of the farm (Figure 4). However, several reports had been previously written about surveys within two-kilometer radius of the farm (Reports S-016691, S-08843, and S033474)

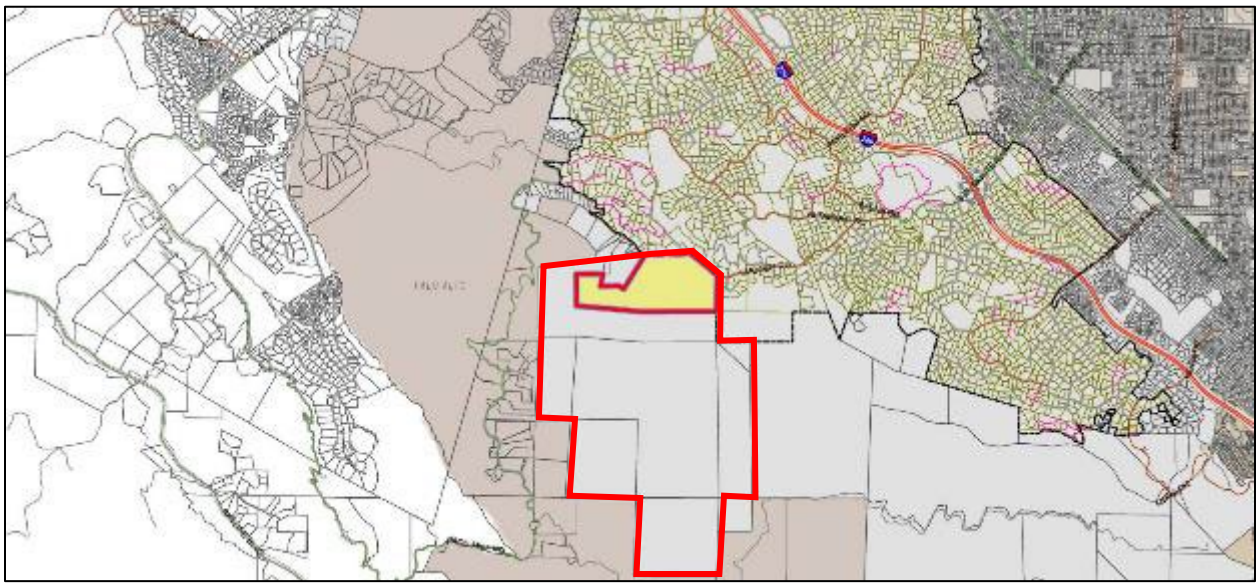


Figure 1. Hidden Villa property boundaries with each APN enclosed (Los Altos Hills Parcel Viewer, ArcGIS). Parcel 35136020, highlighted in yellow, is the primary parcel with the bulk of the farm.

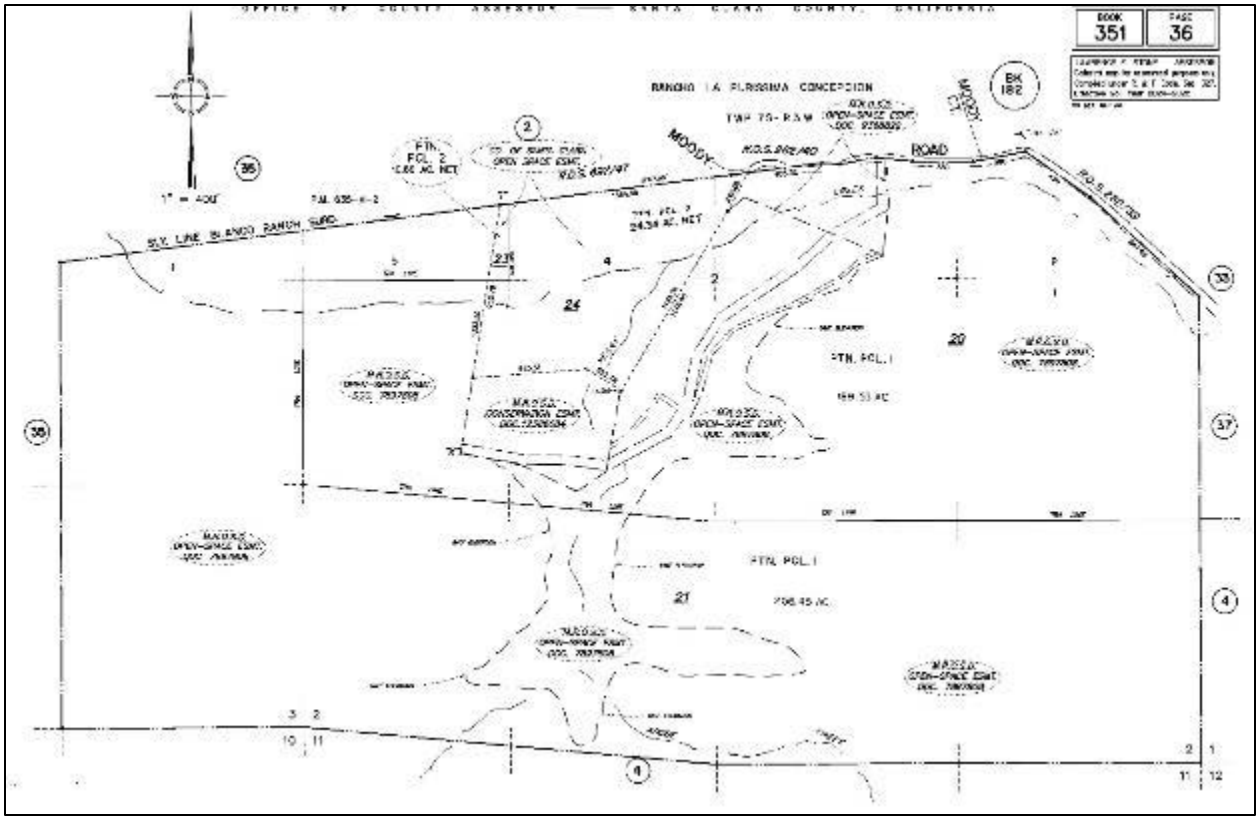


Figure 2. Santa Clara County Assessor Map of the Hidden Villa Address the northern section of the property. Parcel 35136020 is seen here stretching east underneath 35136024.

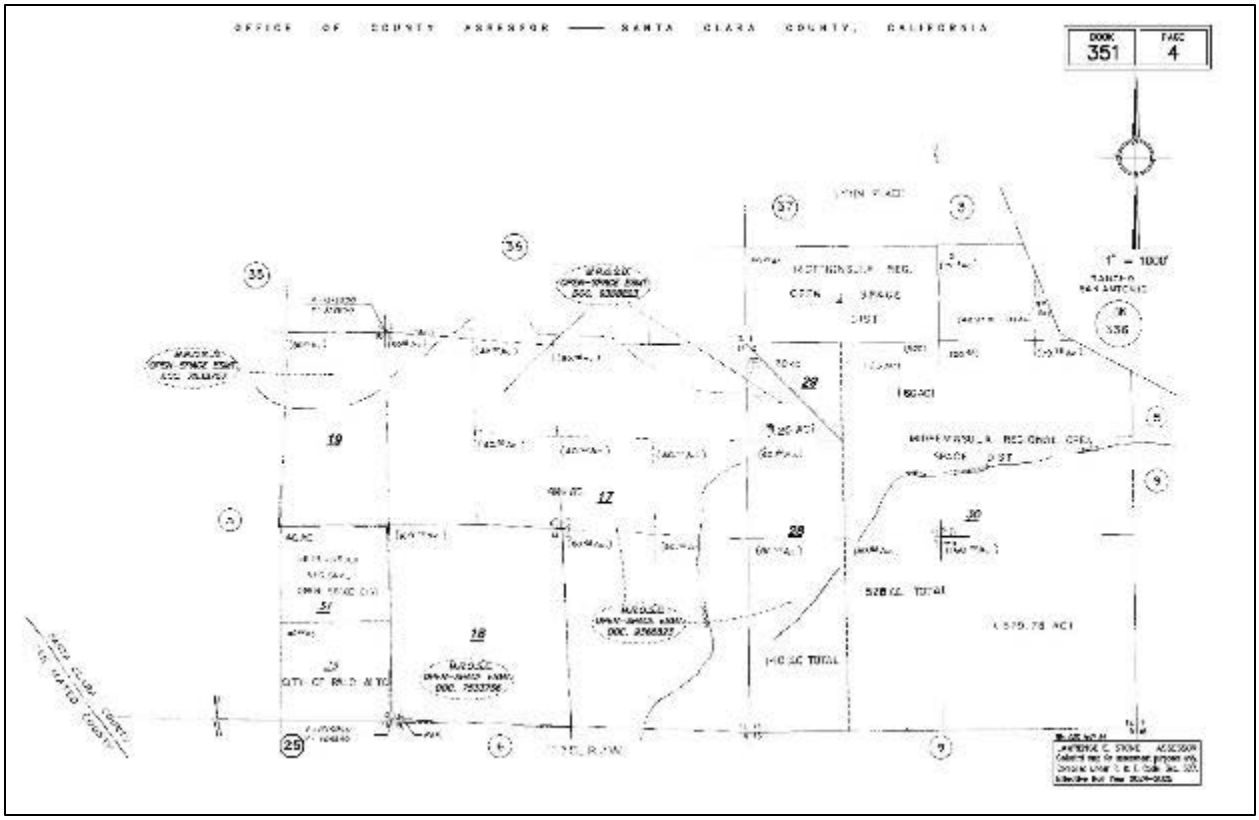


Figure 3. Second Assessor map from Santa Clara County showing Hidden Villa's southern section. It denotes the acreage of the allotments and designates the APNs as 351-04-0##, with the last two numbers underlined and with bold text. For example, the central parcel would be 351-04-017.

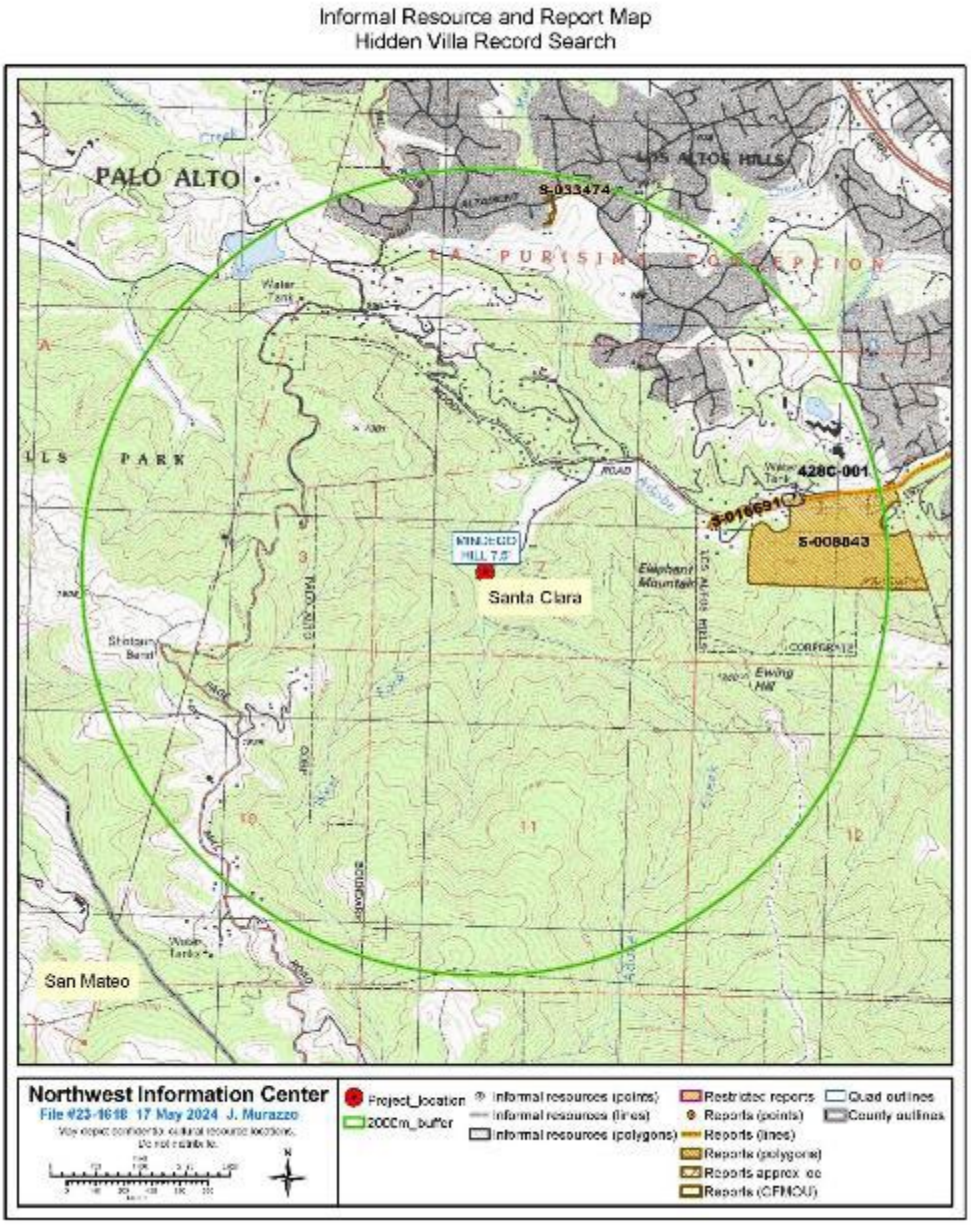


Figure 4. Map provided by the Northwest Information Center on May 17, 2024 during a visit by the field school. Depicts a 2-km radius or 'buffer' around the White House at Hidden Villa. Note that no archaeological sites are shown, and that three reports of previous work by archaeologists are noted.

Project Location and Environmental Setting

Hidden Villa is nestled in a quiet valley within the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains, just south of Los Altos Hills (Figures 5, 6, & 7). The ranch sits within the historical landscape of Rancho La Purísima Concepción, a Mexican land grant once owned by Juana Briones (see Figure 8). To the east lies Rancho San Antonio, managed today by the City of Mountain View, while Monte Bello Open Space Preserve borders the property to the south.

The landscape of Hidden Villa encompasses a mix of flat grasslands, valley oak woodlands, and riparian corridors. Visitors will encounter stands of valley oak and California bay laurel interspersed with remnants of old olive groves, open pasturelands, and historic buildings now adapted for the property's role as an educational farm. Adobe Creek cuts through the heart of the valley, fed by three tributary forks from the south before flowing east-northeast along Moody Road. Eventually, it joins the San Francisco Bay watershed, forming a boundary between the cities of Mountain View and Palo Alto.

Vegetation across the area includes valley and foothill grasslands, cismontane woodland, and patches of riparian forest. The canopy is dominated by species such as valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), Northern California black walnut (*Juglans hindsii*), California bay (*Umbellularia californica*), California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), Pacific madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), and white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*). Introduced species, some possibly dating back to early settlement, include olive trees (*Olea europaea*), white poplar (*Populus alba*), blackwood acacia (*Acacia melanoxylon*), and scattered fruit trees exotic to the area, such as quince. A student documented the variety of fruit trees around the white house (see below).

The understory varies depending on elevation and exposure and may include California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*), toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*), and cherry plum (*Prunus cerasifera*). Groundcover is composed of native and non-native grasses, forbs, wild lupine (*Lupinus* spp.), ferns, coyote brush (*Baccharis pilularis*), poison oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*), and other moisture-tolerant plants, particularly along the creek bed.

Wildlife is abundant and diverse. The area is frequented by black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), bobcats (*Lynx rufus*), and various smaller mammals. Birdlife is rich and varied, and the habitat supports reptiles, amphibians, and other terrestrial species. Sensitive species such as the dusky-footed woodrat, Townsend's big-eared bat, and possibly steelhead trout are known to inhabit or traverse the area, making Hidden Villa not only a cultural resource but also an ecologically significant landscape.

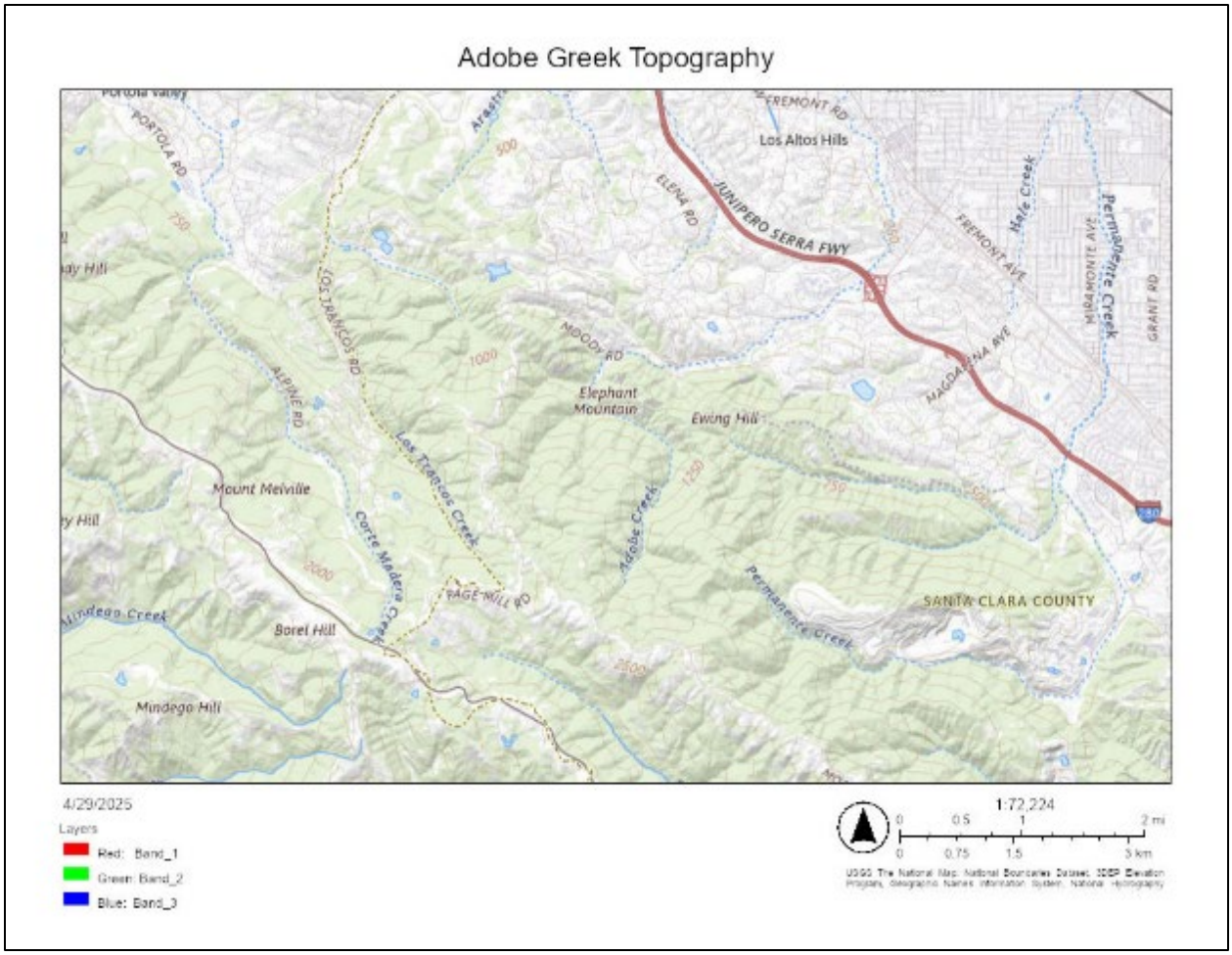


Figure 5. Topography of Adobe Creek as it winds north and east from the top of the Santa Cruz Mountains down to the bay. The creek originates at the northern edge of the San Andreas Fault where many spring heads are found in the Montebello Open Space Preserve. (Source – USGS National Map Viewer)

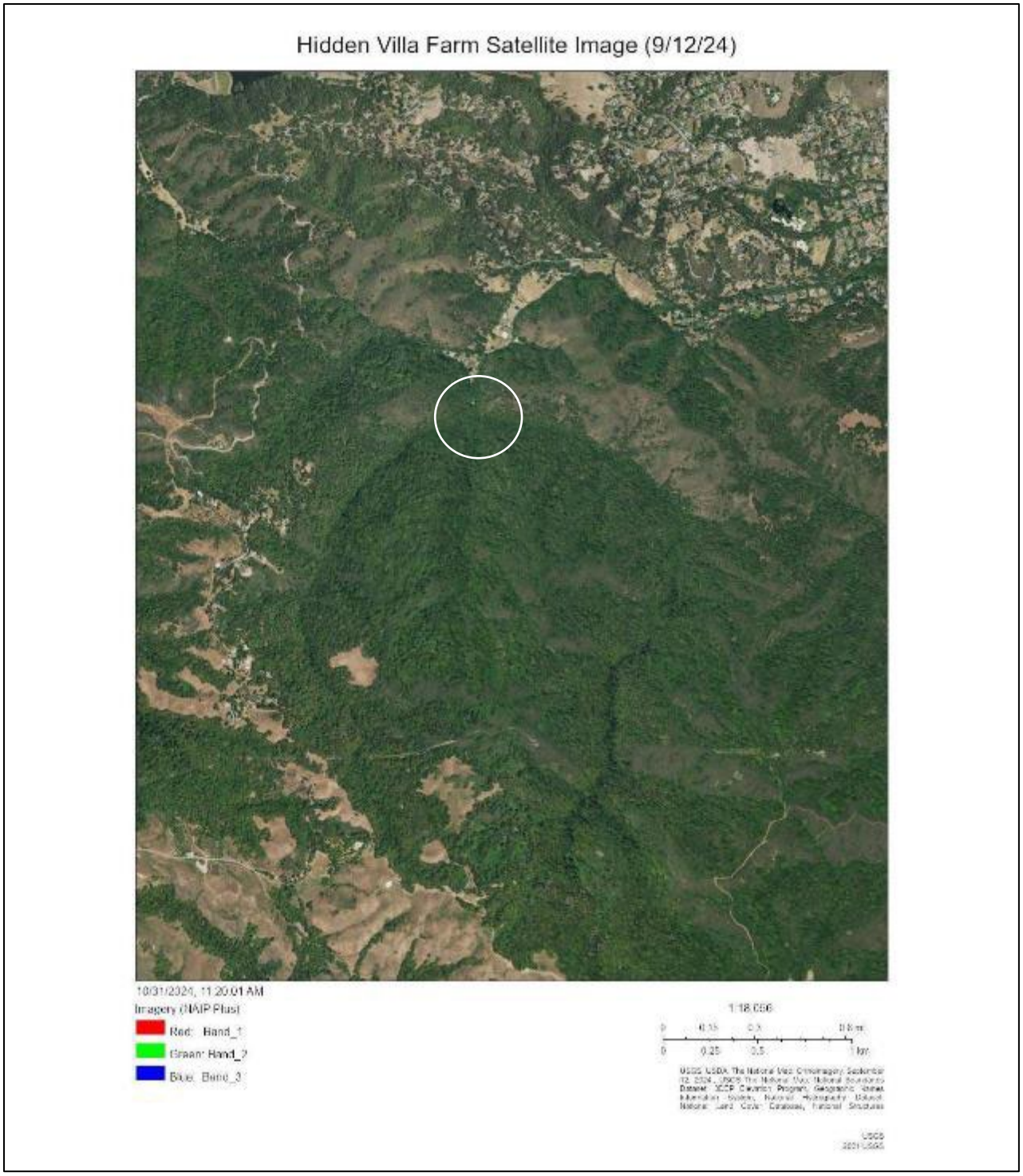


Figure 6. USGS 2021 satellite image of Hidden Villa Farm and surrounding lands. The distinctive tripartite creek formation at its southern end makes Hidden Villa readily apparent on maps. (Circled in white)

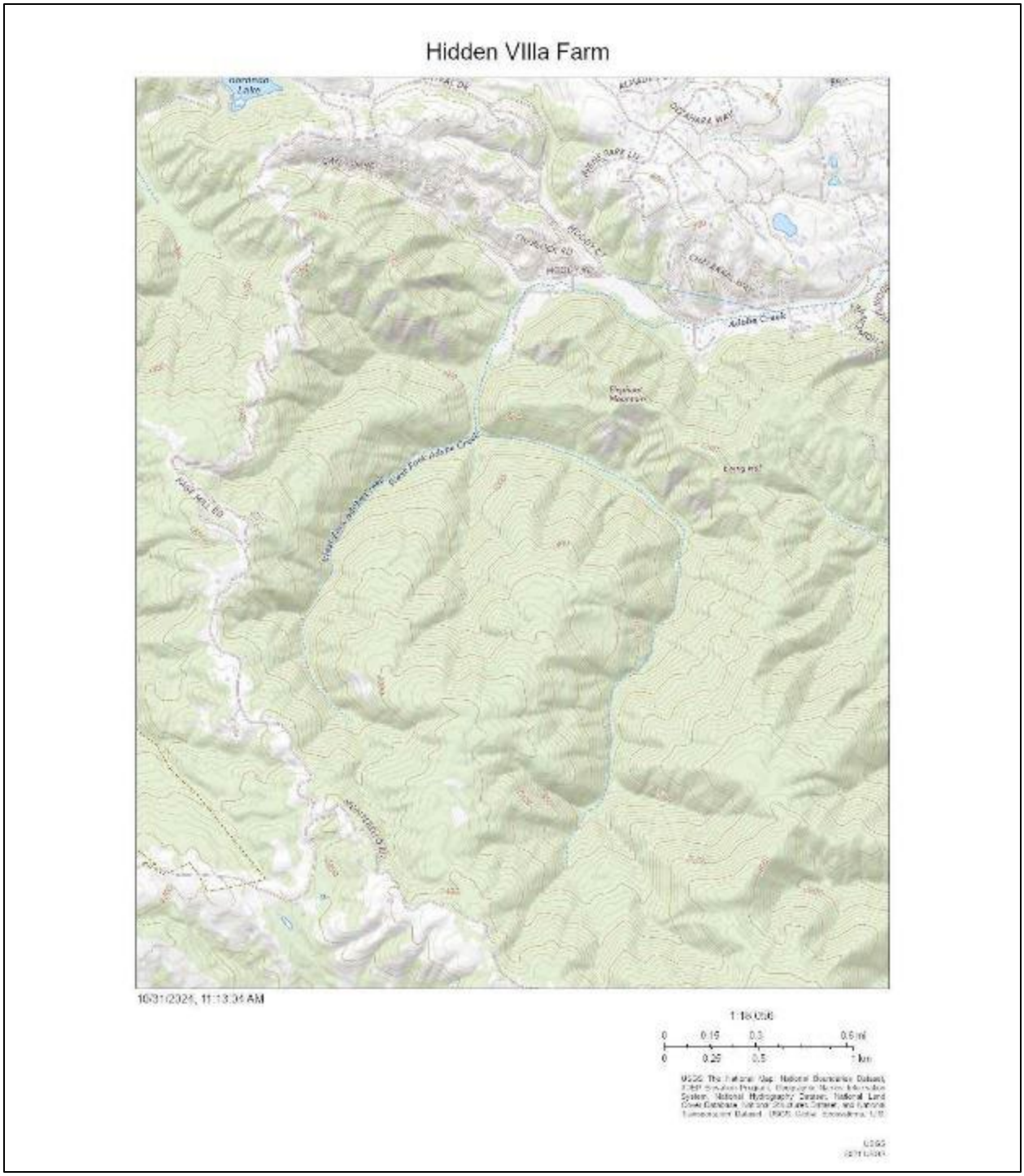


Figure 7. Topographic detail of Hidden Villa property (Accessed from the USGS National Map Viewer, USGS 2021)

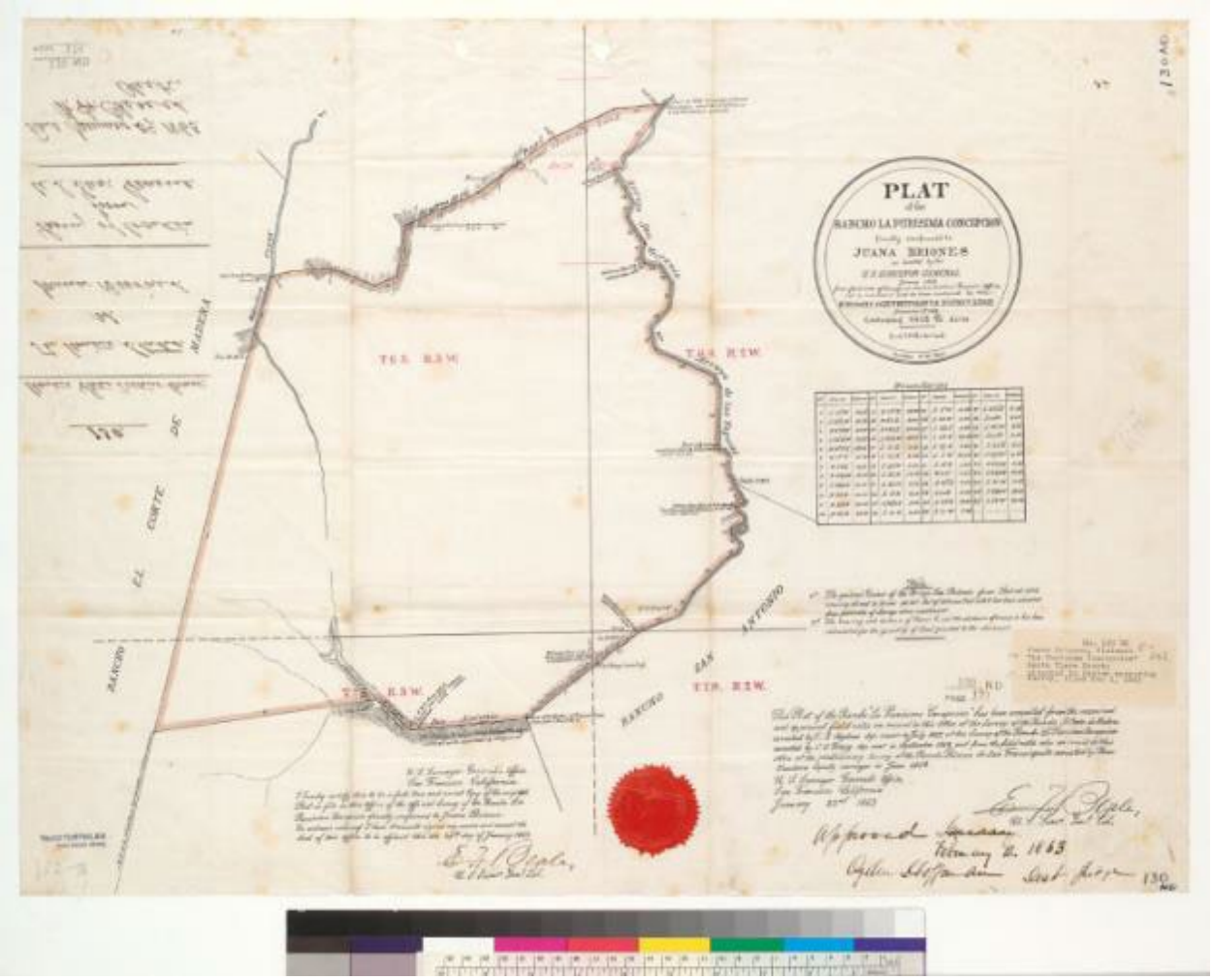


Figure 8. Original Plat of the Rancho La Purisima Concepcion, finally confirmed to Juana Briones in 1863: [Santa Clara Co., Calif.]. As located by the U.S. Surveyor General. Map retrieved from the Online Archive of California (OAC). The estate of Juana Briones paid for this map in order to document her lands as the new state of California was annexing lands for settlement. Hidden Villa is to the left of the red stamp. This map was made at the same time that the white barn was built. [Although some lawyers accused Juana of pre-dating a map that was made much later],

Cultural Contexts: Native California

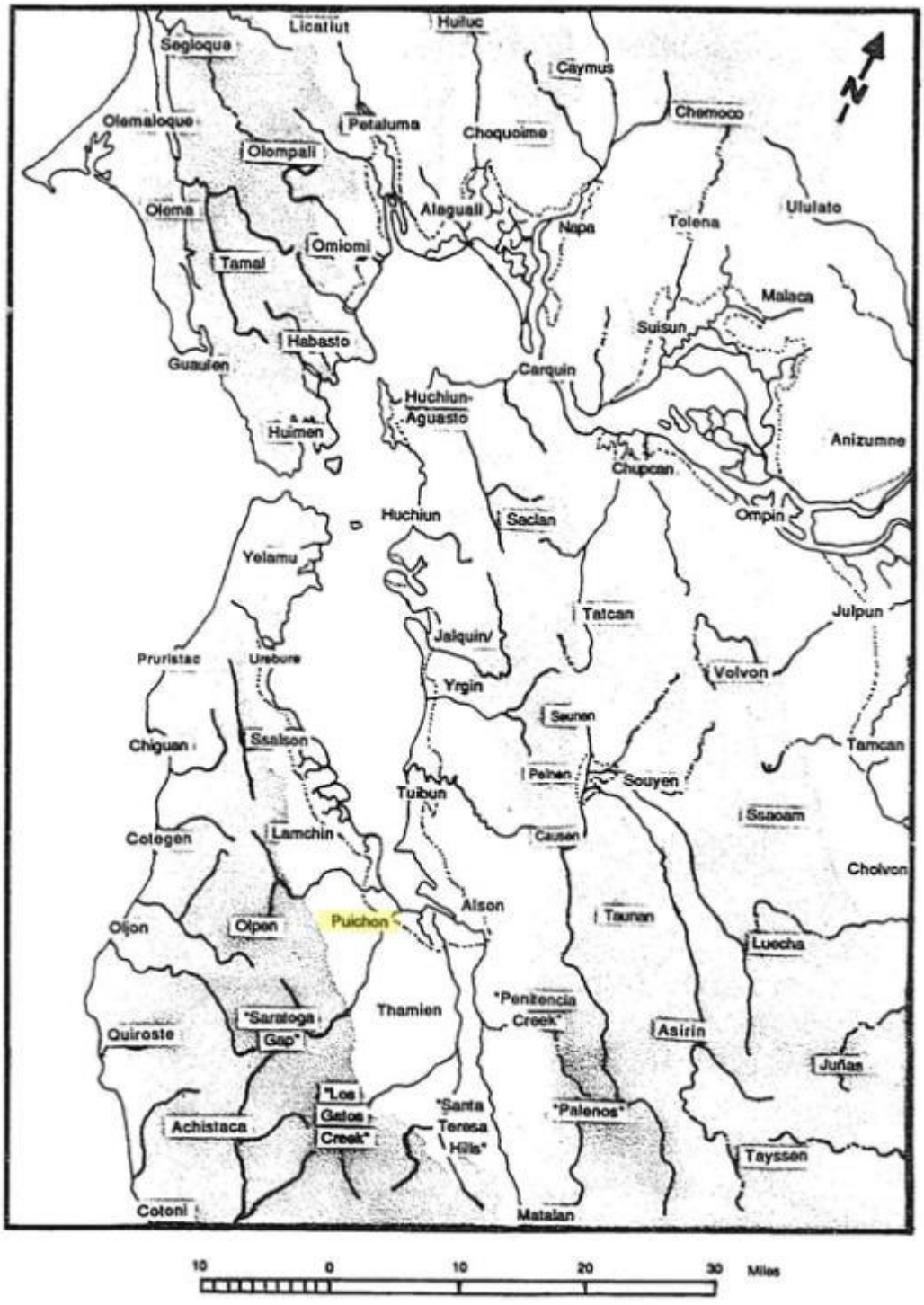
For many thousands of years, the ancestral Ohlone people lived in a landscape that offered a great range of ecological diversity and therefore year-round abundance. According to Randall Milliken's seminal work (1991), Hidden Villa is part of the ancestral lands of the Puichon peoples of the South Bay, whose descendants are enrolled in the present-day Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area. The Muwekma Ohlone Tribe comprises documented descendants of the Ohlone people from the San Jose, Santa Clara, and San Francisco missions (Figure 9).

While no formal archaeological investigations have been conducted within the Hidden Villa property, and no prehistoric artifacts have been recovered to date, the broader region bears evidence of extensive Indigenous occupation. The most significant local archaeological site is the Ohlone Village on Adobe Creek in the town of Los Altos. This village, later designated site CA-SCL-354 by archaeologists, was discovered in the early 1970s during the construction of a housing development north of O'Keefe Lane and west of El Monte Road in Los Altos. Unfortunately, the site was largely destroyed during development. Foothill College faculty and students, alongside concerned community members, conducted salvage collections in 1972 and formal test pitting in 1973 after stopping the bulldozers for a few months. Part of the original collection is at Foothill College, while the rest was at the Los Altos History Museum. Work is ongoing to repatriate these important cultural items.

Radiocarbon dating from CA-SCL-354 indicates prolonged habitation, suggesting that the Hidden Villa area was likely utilized by Indigenous peoples over extended periods. Adobe Creek, historically referred to as San Antonio Creek, would have served as a vital resource, providing water, food, and materials essential for daily life. The creek's riparian environment supported a rich array of flora and fauna, integral to the subsistence and cultural practices of the Ohlone.

The Ohlone people adeptly managed and harvested resources across various habitats, including tidal marshes, grasslands, oak savannas, and mixed woodlands (Hylkema 2012). They utilized locally available materials such as Franciscan chert for toolmaking, sandstone for milling, and cinnabar for pigments. Trade and intermarriage with neighboring groups facilitated the exchange of coastal resources like seafood, Monterey chert, and ornamental shells, enriching their material culture.

Ethnohistoric accounts highlight the Ohlone's sophisticated land stewardship, including controlled burns and selective harvesting, to enhance the productivity of their environment. The Santa Clara Valley, encompassing Hidden Villa, was among the most densely populated Indigenous regions in California prior to European contact, a testament to the Ohlone's sustainable practices and deep connection to the land.



Map 4. Approximate tribal group locations in the San Francisco Bay Area at Spanish contact. Uneven terrain is shown in grey.

Figure 9. Map highlighting the Puichon region (original is Map 4 in Milliken 1991)

The ability to store various food items, such as acorns, was vital to Native Californian communities during times when seasonal shifts reduced the availability of easily accessible resources. Acorns were ground into flour using stone bowls and pestles, and in the Santa Clara Valley, large quantities could be harvested and stored in granaries. Surplus acorns were often exchanged with neighboring communities. The development of storage and redistribution systems frequently led to social stratification, as new institutions emerged to manage the acorn-based economy.

In the uplands of the Santa Cruz Mountains along the ridges above Hidden Villa, the presence of bedrock milling features indicates that Native people regularly traveled to these higher elevations to access acorns. Several known milling stations exist within the surrounding Open Space Preserves, such as Russian Ridge, Long Ridge, Montebello, Mindego, and others. Hylkema (2012) suggests that these sites reflect the high nutritional return of acorns, which justified the labor-intensive effort required to harvest and process them in the uplands around the project area. Most significant for this project is the role these uplands may have played as interchange zones between coastal and interior socio-economic spheres because this implies frequent movement of people from the Baylands to the ridge tops through Hidden Villa.

People often walked for hours each day to reach key resources within their respective drainages. The Adobe Creek drainage, running through the Hidden Villa valley, offered the most direct route to the ridge tops and beyond (see Figure 10). Several upland milling stations may be linked to long-term, multi-seasonal settlements (Hylkema 2012). Were these areas the sites of direct economic exchange between Pacific and Bay Area communities, or did some groups strategically situate themselves at the crossroads of these exchange systems to assert greater control? If the latter was the case, we hypothesized that settlements would likely be located near year-round water sources. Such locations would not only support sustained habitation but also serve as important points of departure for travel along established trails connecting the uplands and the coast.

Figure 10. Possible routes over the Santa Cruz Mountains starting from Hidden Villa, which would have accessible from the area of what is today the city of Los Altos and ending in either San Gregorio or Pescadero. The several permanent spring sources are found along the ridge top in the Russian Ridge OSP and Montebello OSP.

People walked or jogged on foot as part of their daily commute up and down the ridges and valleys. Native populations accustomed to long-distance travel can easily travel fifteen miles in a single day. The trip to the top of the ridges beginning at the known Ohlone village site in Los Altos (SCL-354) was only seven miles to Russian Ridge, a trip taking less than two-hours. One can imagine a villager getting to the top of the ridge before breakfast via a well-manicured trail. The trip to the coast near Pescadero or San Gregorio adds another 13 miles, for a total of 20 miles from Los Altos to the coast. This is an easy single day walk for a person covering long distances on foot. Running a 10-minute mile is very easy for indigenous people who run these distances regularly. Amazingly, they could get to the coast from Los Altos in less than four hours.

An 1873 map from the State Geological Survey of California by J.D. Whitney clearly shows a trail to the top of the Santa Cruz Mountains that travels through Hidden Villa up to the properties labeled ‘J.L. Chandler’ and ‘Hayes’ (see below figure 11). The Page Mill Road and/or trail are not present, only the trail through Hidden Villa.

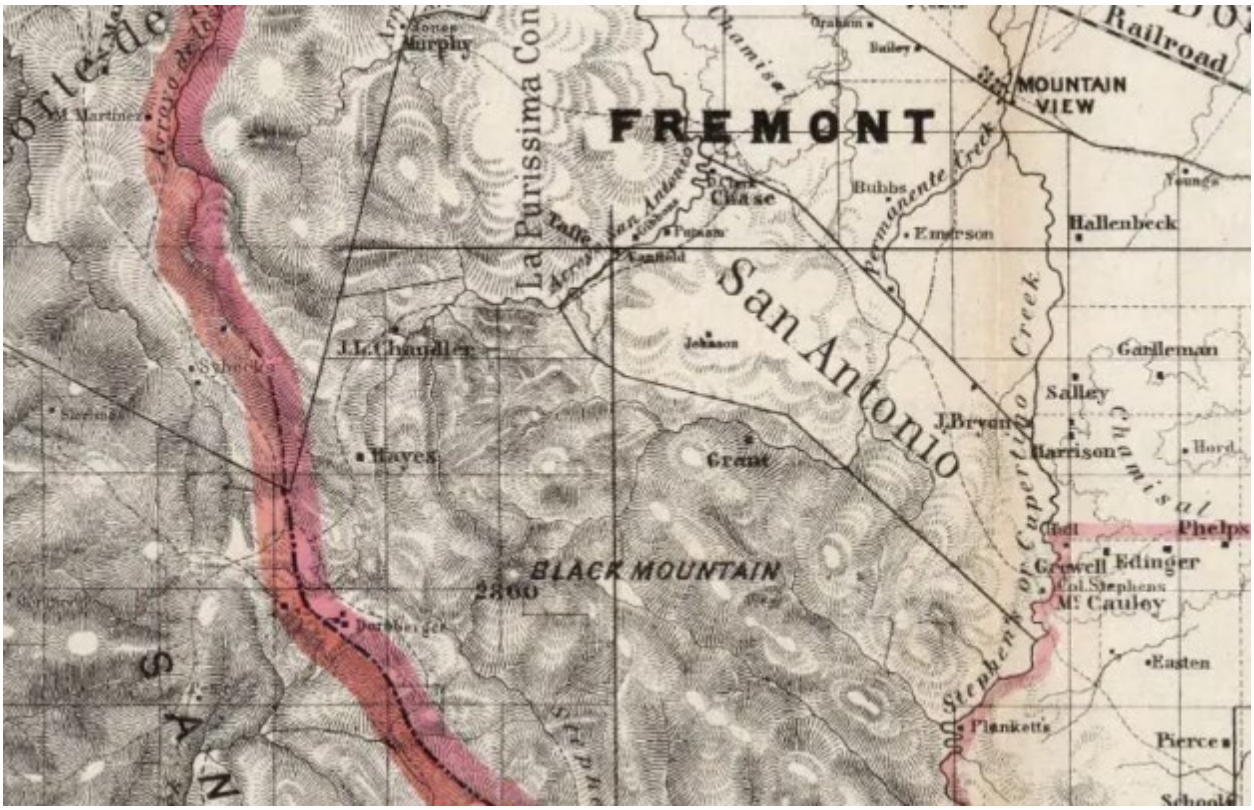


Figure 11. State Geological Survey of California. J.D. Whitney, State Geologist. Map of the Region Adjacent to the Bay of San Francisco. 1873. The Coast, Rancho, Township and Section Lines from Materials furnished by the U.S. Coast Survey and the U.S. Surveyor General's Office, the Topography chiefly from Original Surveys by C.F. Hoffman ... Julius Bien, Lith. Note the trail passing through the JL Chandler parcel, a previous owner of Hidden Villa. The town of Mountain View sought stagecoach access to the Pacific Coast from the rail stop.

Lack of Archaeological Evidence for Native Peoples at Hidden Villa

To date, we have found no evidence of native Californian activity at Hidden Villa, which leaves the research team with several open questions:

Has Adobe Creek removed or covered all evidence of pre-contact activity in the valley?

This is entirely possible. We invited a team of retired USGS geologists to Hidden Villa in Fall 2024. Richard Stanley and Helen Gibbons analyzed several exposures on site (see Figure 12 of geologic map below). On the valley floor, they identified thick alluvial features resulting from episodes of creek deposition. Some of the flooding events would have been incredibly

catastrophic; an exposure in Adobe Creek South Fork clearly shows large cobbles flowing downhill during massive flood episodes of greenstone and sandstone deposits. Smaller regular flooding with intense amounts of debris would have been commonplace. Unit 2, excavated alongside the barn, exposed at least five levels of alluvium deposits.

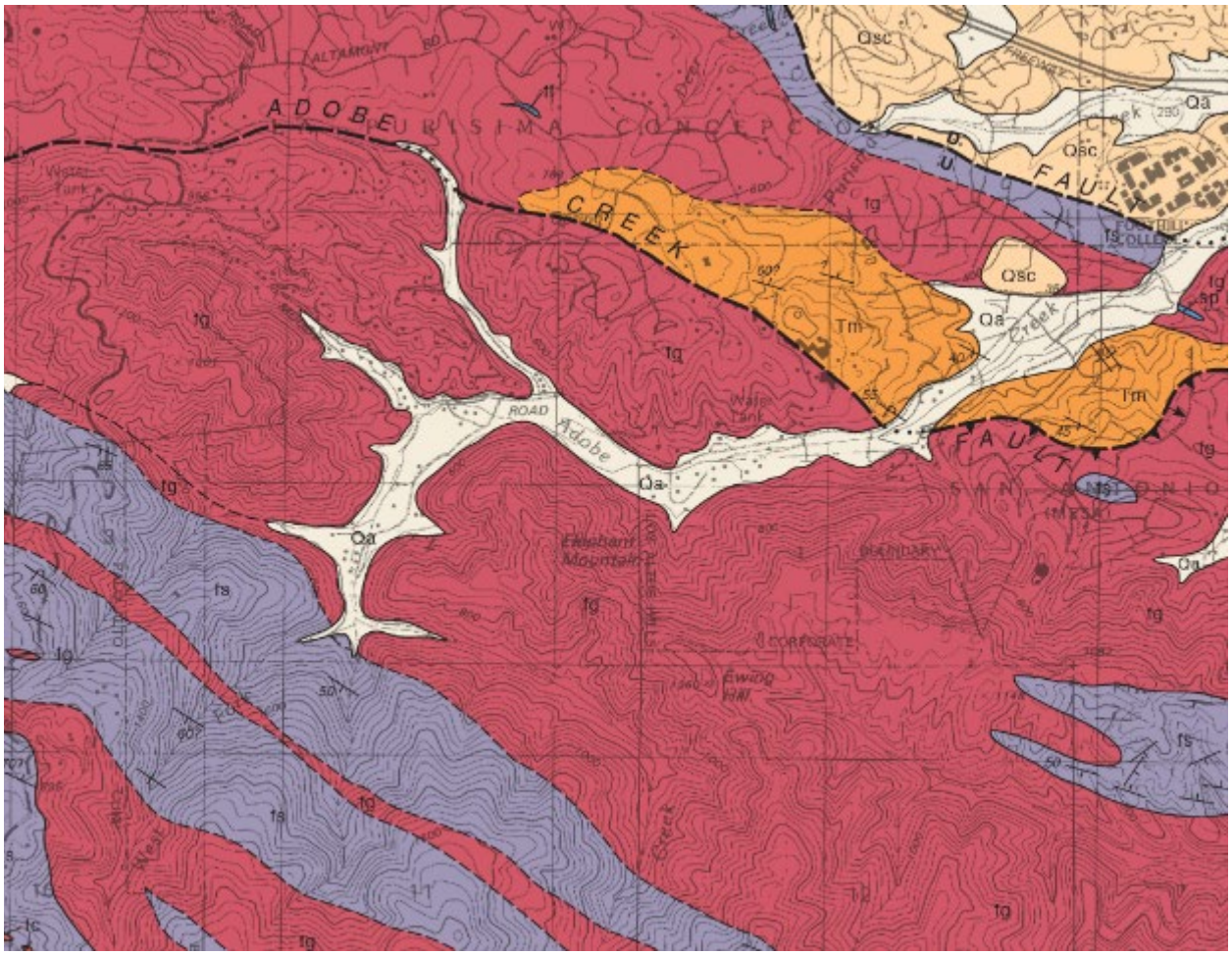


Figure 12. Segment of the 2007 USGS Geologic Map of the Mindego Hill Quadrangle focused on the Hidden Villa property with Foothill College upper right. Tan color (Qa) is Surficial Sediments containing alluvial gravel, sand, and clay of valley areas. Red color (fg) is part of the Franciscan Assemblage with greenstone (metabasalt), black, weathered dark brown, massive, amorphous, locally brecciated, interstratified or intertongued with fs. Purple color (fs) is also part of the Franciscan Assemblage with graywacke sandstone, or metagraywacke, gray, weathered brownish gray, hard, coherent but fractured, fine-grained, massive to bedded, locally includes thin layers of gray siltstone; includes mélange where locally sheared with dark gray claystone.

There have been continued efforts to shore up the creek bank to keep Adobe Creek flowing east of the large white barn and the forge area. In Units 2 and 3, we found thick deposits of overburden suggesting a continued pattern of dumping overburden to fill in this location. It is also apparent that the creek channel was manipulated in historic times to flow along the west side of the valley. The sharp west bend at the middle bridge is not a natural formation. It is highly

likely that the creek flowed through the valley in several different channels over time. At times, it may have meandered or even spread out in a marsh-like manner. It is not hard to envision a wet landscape, thus early farmers sought to control its path. In the 1930s, the Duvenecks built lily ponds that were filled by channels from the creek. The cement lining of the channel at the Duveneck house points to the heavy labor invested in controlling the creek, which was forced into a series of hard-left and right turns as it passed by the Duveneck home.

A naturally flowing creek would have been shallower and flooded more often. The gravel found in the fields of Hidden Villa suggest constant flooding with creek banks being breached often and farm workers in a never-ending competition with the water to stop its push into their fields. Some success was apparent to the east of the green house where trash from the farm was used to shore up the embankment and keep the creek running along the base of the ridge. Units 6 and 10 recovered a rich assemblage of artifacts used to secure the creek bank. Our survey and excavations show that a significant amount of labor was invested in keeping the channel running along the east side of the lower part of the farm, and then on the western side of the middle section of the farm. Debris from Adobe Creek could certainly have covered early settlements over time if anyone lived on the valley floor, but we suggest no one was living in the valley because it would have been a very wet place. A further survey is certainly needed, but we are assuming any evidence of early Native Californian settlement is covered by creek deposits.

Would Native Californians have been living permanently at Hidden Villa or foraging here seasonally?

If people were living at Hidden Villa they would have been located on small hills or promontories (earthen rises) to avoid the moist ground. The expectation is that evidence of settlement would be on high points such as the Girl Scout Camp area at the south of the farm and along the western side of the farm in areas above the valley but not too far removed. In this report we show that our survey teams have found no evidence of activity by Native Californians on the high grounds on the property.

Given the proximity of Hidden Villa to the well-known village site in Los Altos at O'Keefe Lane, we suggest the Hidden Villa valley could have been part of the village economy. These lands could have been extensively managed and foraged by people who lived within a few miles. As stated above, CA-SCL-354 was a large village along Adobe Creek several miles downstream. In the early 1970s local historian Florence Fava alerted Foothill College anthropologists and geologists about the ongoing site destruction (Fava 1976). The teams managed to document what they could as bulldozers were beginning construction of homes at the site. The Ohlone village may have been one of the largest and most important in the region. It is very easy to imagine that the village was positioned in the best location for controlling access to the entire creek and its headwaters. Isolated camp sites would have been possible at Hidden Villa, but the tendency would have been to return to the large village if you were close to home. We know that Juana Briones wrote in her memoir that she was interacting with California native people at the Rancho. After she purchased her Rancho La Purísima Concepción from Jose Gorgonio one of

the last active Native Californians in the area, she allowed him to continue to live and work the land. Gorgonio and his son likely continued their cultural practices in the 1850s at the Rancho and assuredly also at Hidden Villa.

We believe there will be little or no evidence of Native Californian activity on the property because of the proximity of a big village and the activity of the creek itself through time. We are not saying it is impossible, but we are saying that it is highly unlikely given the evidence collected to date.

In this report we make the case that Hidden Villa was a space where people would hunt, forage and collect in open lands managed by the villagers downstream. The fact that Jose Gorgonio did not lay claim to the valley lands during the Rancho period and simply left them open to be managed by others, suggests that they had a different set of circumstances surrounding them.

Drastic changes via colonization

Adverse changes to the native landscape began soon after the Spanish colonization and the introduction of the mission system. Sudden contacts between the new European arrivals and the native populations exposed people to previously unknown diseases, like smallpox, that resulted in catastrophic mortality rates among the native people. Mission Santa Clara was established in 1777, and by 1805 most of the native Ohlone people of the Valley and Santa Cruz Mountains had succumbed to the missions. Unfortunately, poor nutrition and repeated exposure to introduced European diseases decimated the Ohlone.

Nonetheless, their descendants and re-formed tribal bands continue to live in their ancestral homelands to this day. The study area was within a large district that the early Spanish missionaries at Santa Clara referred to as San Bernadino (Milliken 1991). This district contained several different tribal polities and was vaguely defined, but it encompassed a vast area ranging from the SF Bayshore between Stevens Creek and San Francisquito Creek, which was controlled by the Puichon and Pojoron Ohlone people, westward over Skyline ridge where two small bands are scarcely mentioned (Olpen, and Wemelento Ohlone people), all the way to the ocean by Point Año Nuevo where the Quiroste tribelet was referred to by missionaries as a “nación” or nation.

It is not clear to what degree Mission Santa Clara would have controlled Hidden Villa lands back in the mission era, but it can be agreed upon that native peoples of the CA-SCL-354 village were coerced into giving up their lands and labor for the mission to use with a verbal guarantee of return.

The Mexican Period

By 1823, after the Mexican revolution divested Spain of its colonial landholdings, the newly formed Mexican government began to secularize the vast mission estates and deed properties to private ownership. Large ranchos were established in Santa Clara County and most of the earlier agreements with natives regarding land use (and return) were largely ignored. However, in the area directly adjacent to Hidden Villa, one native Californian landholder was

given a rancho allotment, a rare thing likely reserved only for established chiefs. Jose Gorgonio and his son Juan Ramon were able to establish ownership rights to the 4,436 acre Rancho La Purísima Concepción located in the foothills and bounded by Rancho San Antonio and Rancho Corte Madera. The Adobe Creek was its southern border as it ran into the modern town of Los Altos and would have passed through the aforementioned major Ohlone village site (CA-SCL-354). Another native Californian Lupe Yñgo (Inigo) also established Rancho Posolmi at the location of Moffett field. A well-known and powerful chief in the area, Yñgo lived at the site as caretaker of the ranch and its very large shell mound until the end of his life (see Figure 13).

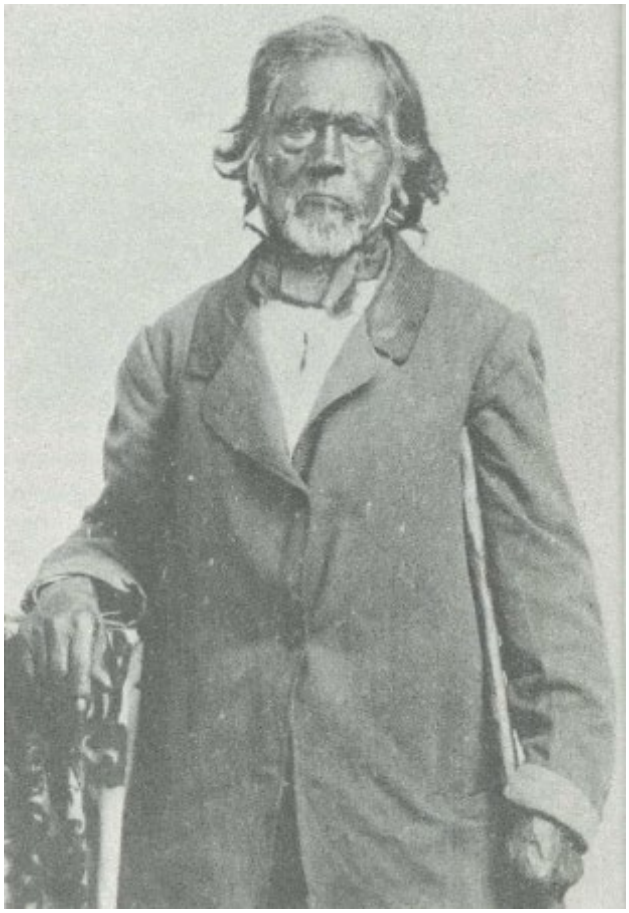


Figure 13. Lupe Yñgo, labeled as 'Old Chief'. This is the only known photo of a local native Californian living at that time. Photo taken from Orradre Library, University of Santa Clara. (Fava 1976:12)

When Juana Briones purchased the La Purísima Concepción rancho from Gorgonio and surveyed the borders in detail, she did not include the Hidden Villa valley. This is significant because in the 1850s we believe Gorgonio considered Hidden Villa communal lands managed for foraging activities throughout the year. He would have known the traditional uses of all lands in the region and probably left Hidden Villa open for use during the colonial period of land devastation. It is very fitting indeed that one of the earliest maps of the area, produced in 1855, labels the area of Hidden Villa Farm as 'public land' (Figure 14).

Figure 14. A map of Rancho La Purísima Concepción dated to1855. Photograph from Fava book entitled *Los Altos Hills: A Colorful History* (1976:30). Apparently, this map was used by Murphy during a later purchase of the ranch from Juana Briones. Pay particular attention to the bottom left of the map where the land of Hidden Villa is labeled 'Public Land'. This may be the first documented labeling of the area. (Incredibly prescient map maker!)

To continue, after Gorgonio and his son sold their lands in 1842 to Juana Briones de Miranda, she kept the Rancho in operation and made a good profit raising cattle on the lands. In the 1850s Briones struggled to keep the Americans off her land and had to prove her direct purchase from Gorgonio, which she did by creating detailed maps of the lands of Rancho La Purísima Concepción in 1858 and 1863 (Figures 15 & 16).

Foothill student Joseph Hidde managed to overlay the early maps onto the current maps provided by Google and was able to determine where the Post Markers were located (Figures 17 & 18). In the series of maps below, these two early maps of the property were georeferenced using ArcGIS software at Foothill College in order to place them onto the current maps. Hidde found the exact location of the posts and surveyed these areas. Post JB 12, was not found, but the GPS location is at the front of Foothill College (Figure 19). A post labeled JB2 ½ was discovered on Moody Court. We think this signifies the meaning "Juana Briones two and a half." Importantly, the location of the post today is north of the labeled JB2 marker as seen on the 1858 and 1863 map from more than 150 years ago (Figure 20). The JB2 marker would have been directly on what is today Moody Road at the entrance to the Hidden Villa farm.

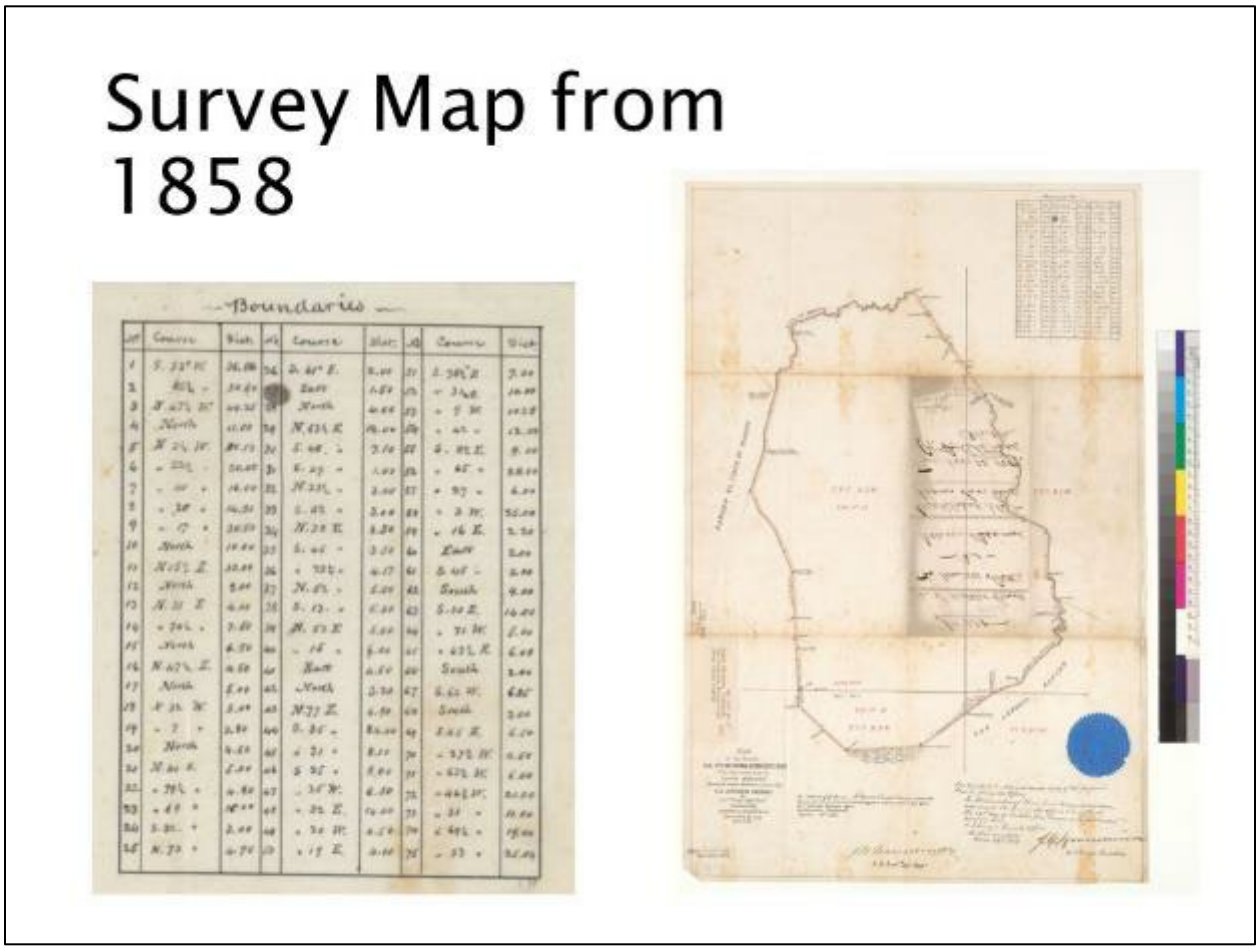


Figure 15. Map data from Berkeley Map collection, Caliosphere (seen in earlier figure)

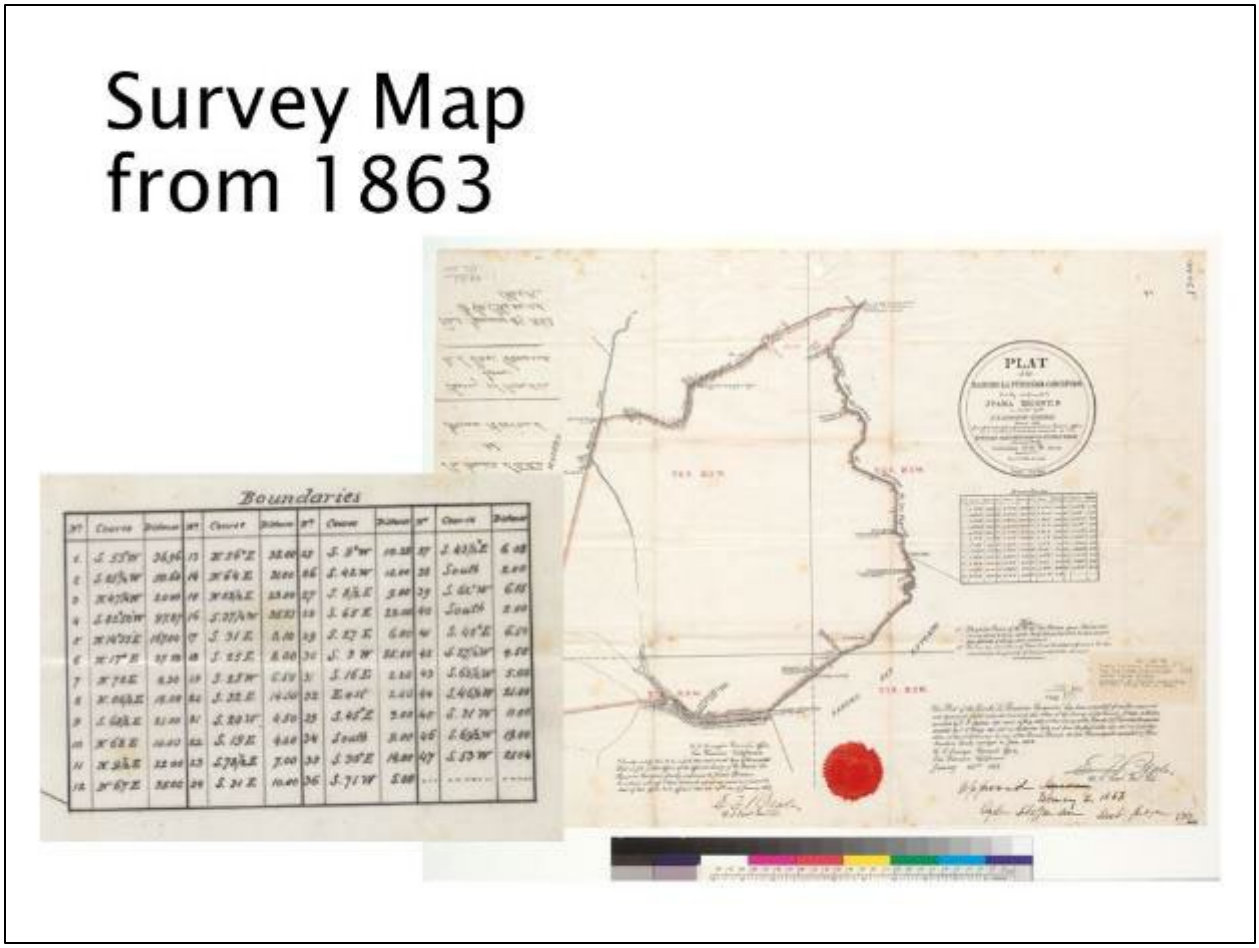


Figure 16. Second map for Juana Briones detailing the new borders of Rancho La Purisima Concepcion. Adobe Creek is seen extending to the southwest of the new border west extension of the border.

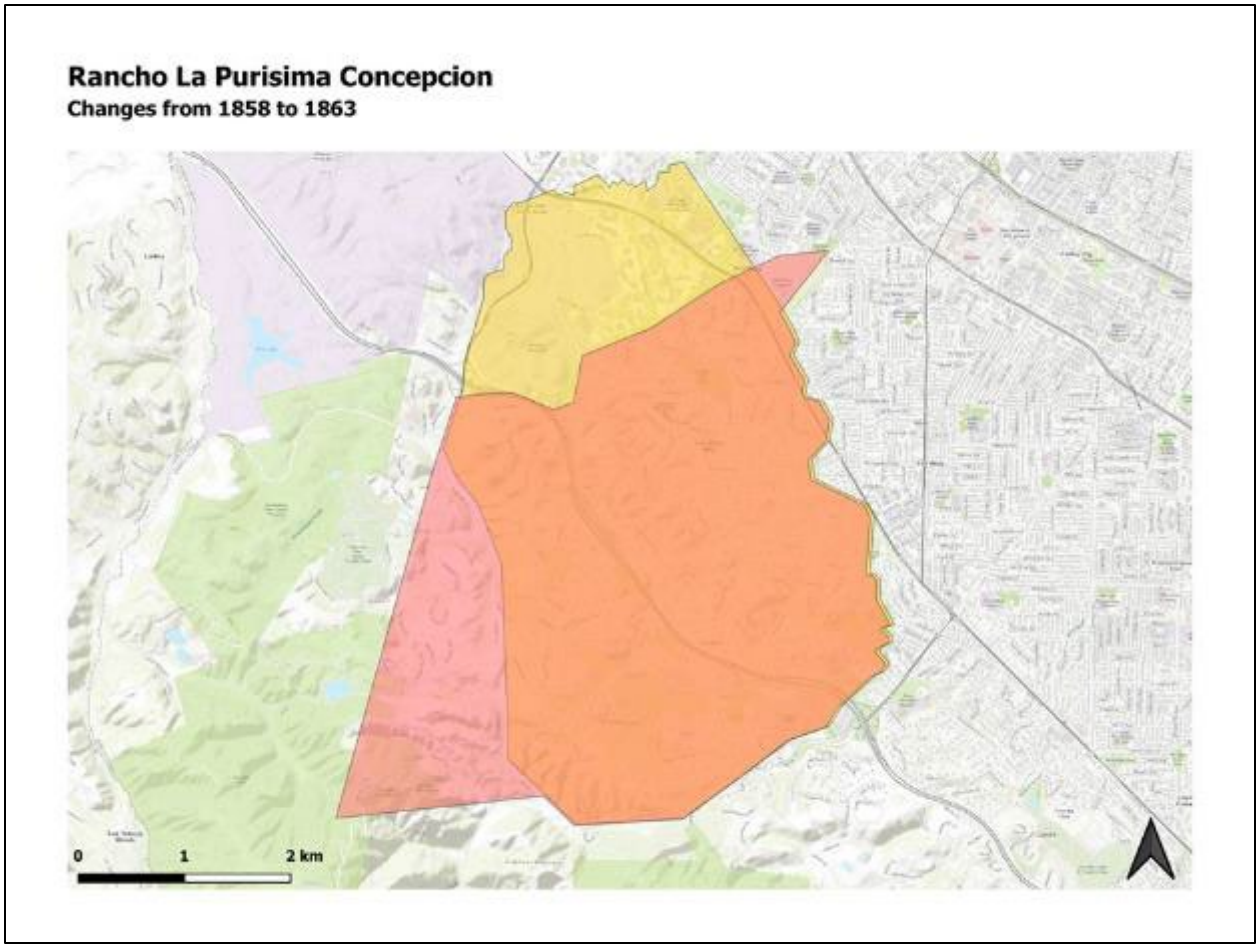


Figure 17: Both versions of the Rancho map are shown here (Hidde 2019). Yellow is the older 1858 version, and pink version extends the land to the southwest in 1863. It is unclear why there seems to be an exchange of acreage from the north portion to a western extension. Adobe Creek and Hidden Villa are located below the western extension.

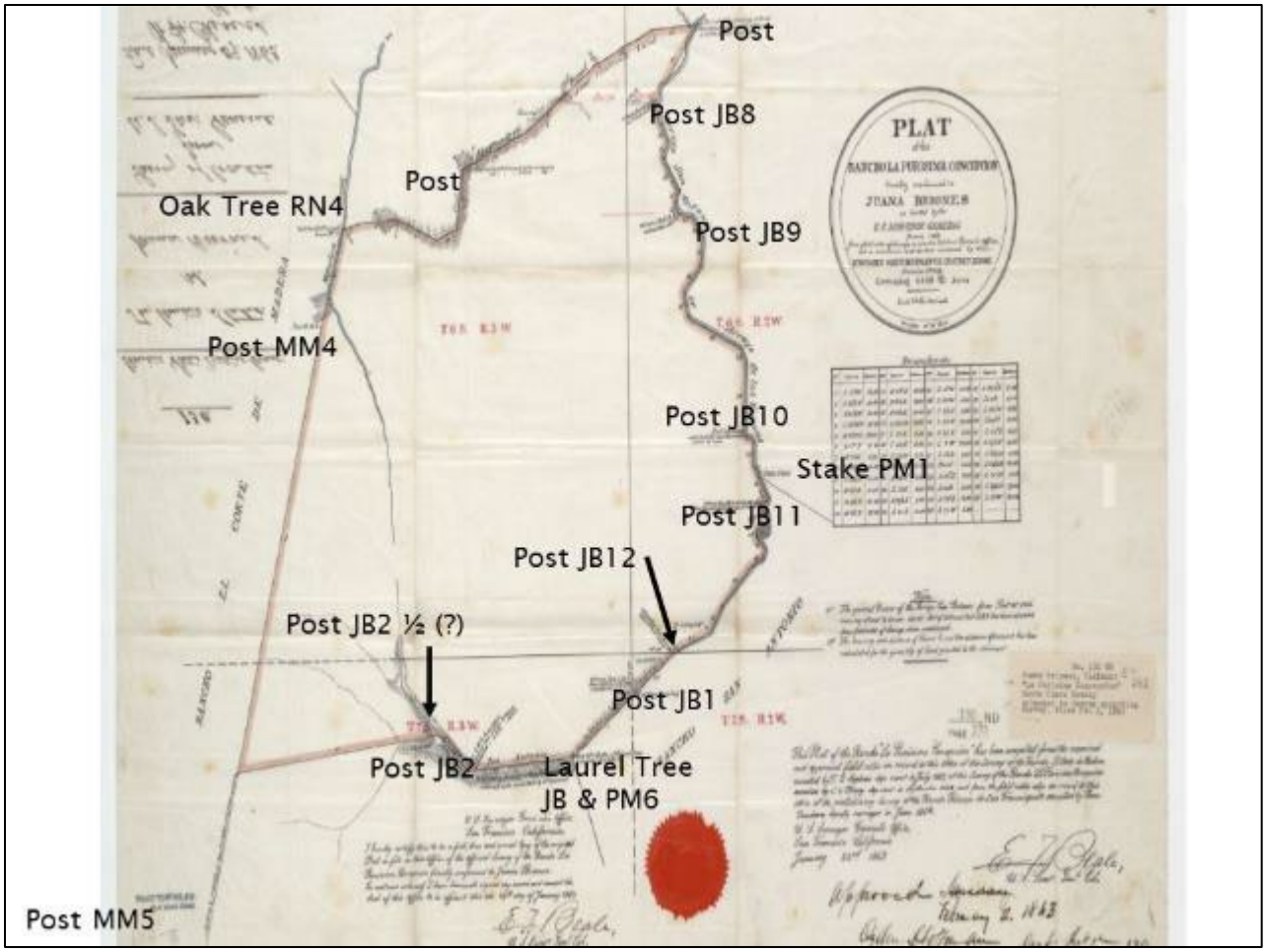


Figure 18. Plat Map of Lands of Rancho La Purisima Concepción surveyed commissioned by Juana Briones to define her lands in 1863. At this time the State of California was actively removing people from Ranchos after the Spanish-American war. The area of Hidden Villa is not designated as public land any longer, now eight years later. Post MM5 is located along the border of Rancho El Corte Madera, which extends down Los Trancos Creek Survey by Foothill students of the southern portion of the Rancho attempted to document the lower survey stakes, JB 12, and JB 2. Post JB 12 would have been at Foothill College. Post JB 2 ½ is hypothesized to be at the location where the arrow points. Former Foothill College student Joseph Hidde identified the post along Moody Court, the photo is below.

Figure 19. Location of Post JB 12 at Foothill College on north side of old Adobe Creek bed. This location is between Parking Lot 1 and the Biology building, just east of the VetTech facility. (photograph by J. Hidde)

Figure 20. The JB 2 ½ post discovered on Moody Ct. (photography by J. Hidde)

In her journals, Briones talks of hiring native Californians who already occupied the land and allowing them to keep homes on the rancho. We have found no evidence of these homes. There are other stories and histories of native people staying on and working at other ranchos in the region, or even owning ranchos themselves, despite that fact that it would have been dangerous times to be native. While it is unsurprising that we have found no records of Native American traditions and occupation of Hidden Villa, we do know that in 1857 Alex Garvey, a San Mateo County surveyor working near Skyline Boulevard came across "Indian huts" (Hylkema 2012). In addition, there are several known Native Californian bedrock grinding stone sites located on the ridge tops in Montebello OSP and Russian Ridge OSP. The site at Montebello contains two engraved carvings using an LP monogram (with the L and P overlapping possibly signifying the brand of La Purísima). This may suggest that Briones used the open fields above her lands for running cattle and that she would have likely used a path through Hidden Villa to move the cattle up into the mountains. It is highly likely that all these ranchos were using fields high in the Santa Cruz Mountains to run cattle (see Figures 21 and 22).

Figure 21. Ralph Rambo 1958 map of Santa Clara Ranchos with Rancho La Purísima Concepción and Rancho San Antonio labeled to the northwest. Open lands in the drainages of the San Antonio Creek (now Adobe Creek) and Stevens Creek watersheds in the mountains to the south of these two ranchos.

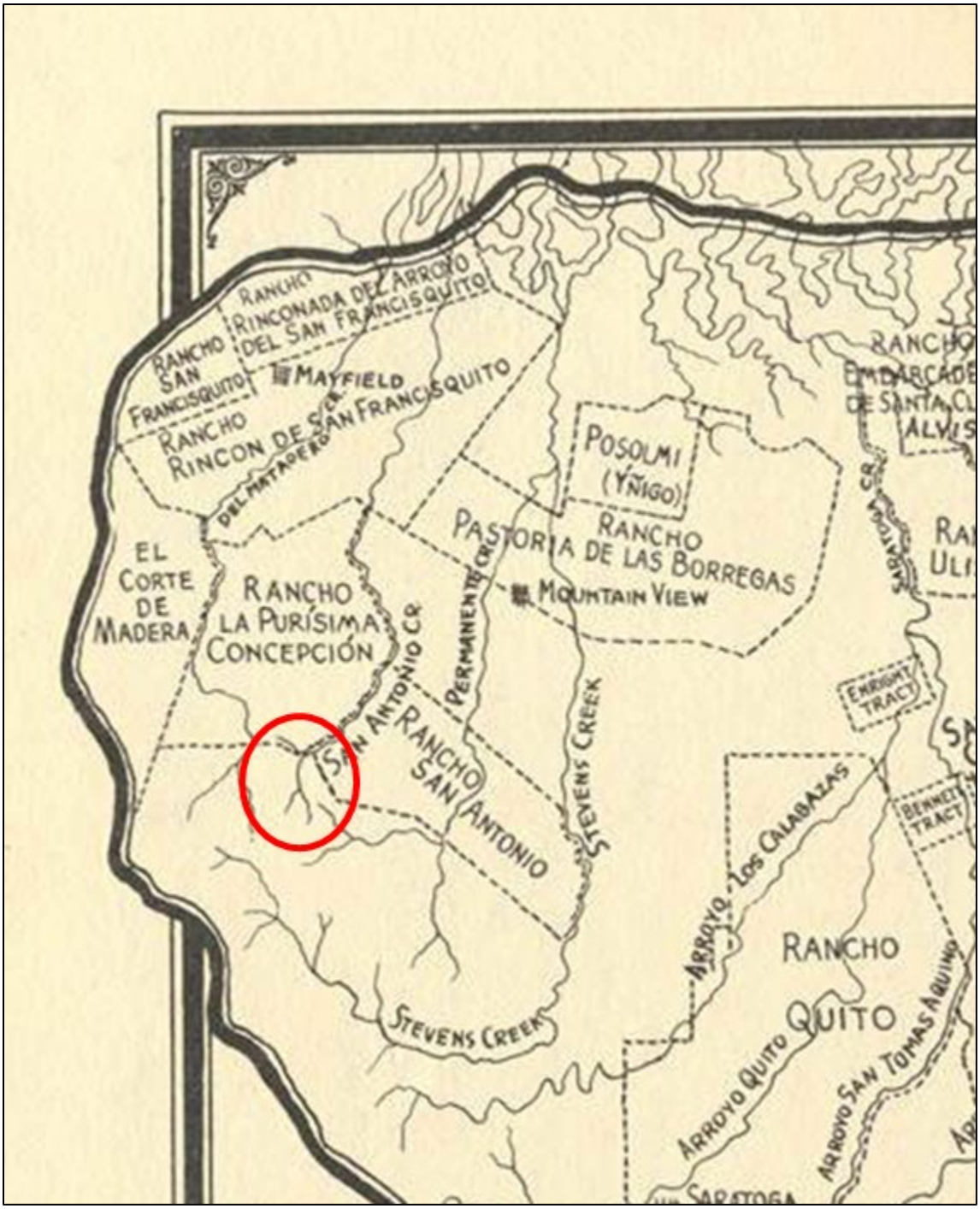


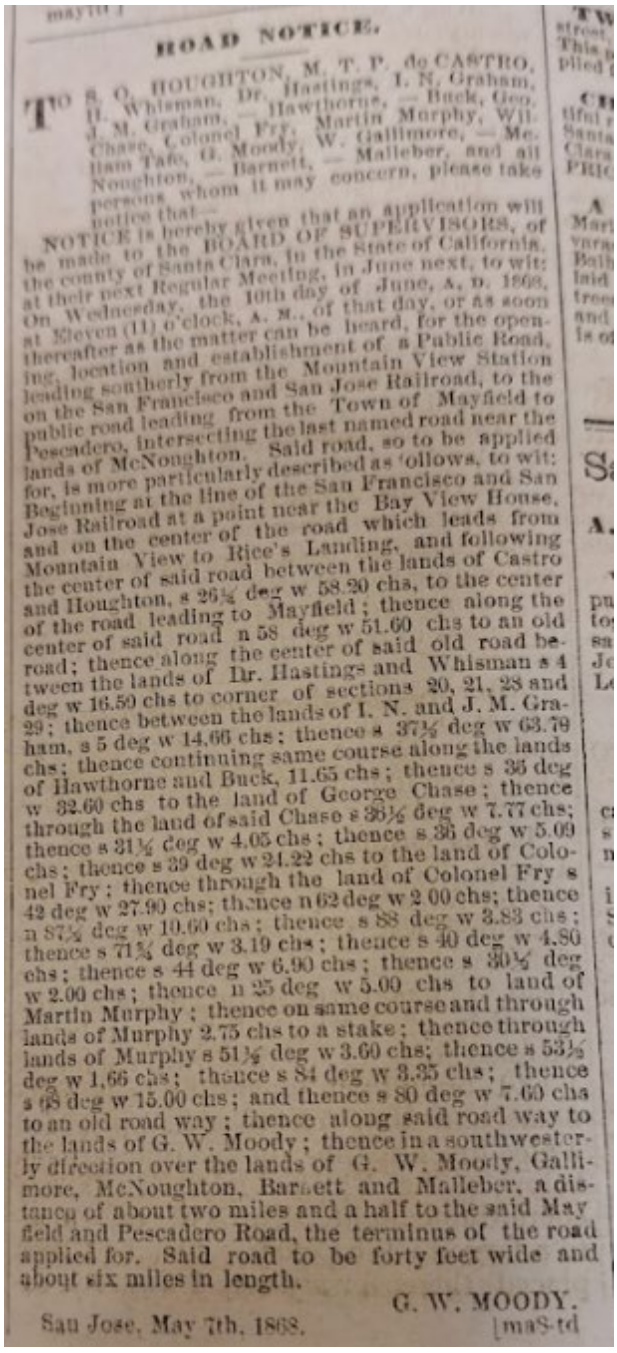
Figure 22. Hidden Villa area circled in red taken from the same Ralph Rambo map seen above. The entrance to Hidden Villa is at the southern extent of Rancho La Purísima Concepción, and is not part of the ranchos. We believe it was claimed by native people and was considered public lands.

California Period

Juana Briones sells the Rancho and Moody arrives to build a stagecoach road

Briones sold her the lands to the Murphy & Taafe families who later subdivided the rancho creating the town of Los Altos Hills. During the period of American settlement and new California statehood in 1850, an intensive period of land transformation transpired. This included the harvesting of extensive oak woodlands and redwood forest that formerly covered the valley floor and foothills. At Hidden Villa, it is believed that George Washington Moody established his homestead in the 1860s. A few years later, he wanted to build a road to the Pacific Coast and was contracted by the town of Mountain View (Figure 23). As part of this effort, he constructed the White House as a halfway house along the route between San Jose and Pescadero. This stopover provided a place to rest, stable the horses, and prepare for the final leg of the journey to the coast. Fava (1976) provides an account of a woman who fondly recalled staying overnight at the White House as a child, remembering in particular the staircase at the front of the house before continuing the journey to Pescadero the next day on the stagecoach. Moody's road for stagecoach travel and logging connected with the Mayfield to Pescadero Road (built by Page, and now called Page Mill Road. The Foothill College survey team tracked the Moody Stagecoach Road along the Adobe Creek West Fork from Hidden Villa to the Page Mill Road within the current Monte Bello Open Space Preserve. The length of our survey runs about 2.5 miles from the front of the Hidden Villa property to the Page Mill intersection, which is in line with the requested length of the road by proposed by G. W. Moody in 1868. Eric Flint and the incredible team at the Hidden Villa archives made the discovery of the Road Notice from Moody (Figure 23).

Fava also notes also that native trails passed through Hidden Villa, and we believe Moody's road was using an already heavily traveled Native Californian footpath through the mountains. Our survey work may have identified evidence of both the stagecoach road and the traditionally used footpaths. This is explained in great detail in later sections.



ROAD NOTICE.

TO S. O. HOUGHTON, M. T. P. de CASTRO, H. Whisman, Dr. Hastings, I. N. Graham, J. M. Graham, — Hawthorne, — Buck, Geo. Chase, Colonel Fry, Martin Murphy, William Tate, G. Moody, W. Gallimore, — McNoughton, — Barnett, — Malleber, and all persons whom it may concern, please take notice that—

NOTICE is hereby given that an application will be made to the BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, of the county of Santa Clara, in the State of California, at their next Regular Meeting, in June next, to wit: On Wednesday, the 10th day of June, A. D. 1868, at Eleven (11) o'clock, A. M., of that day, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, for the opening, location and establishment of a Public Road, leading southerly from the Mountain View Station on the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad, to the public road leading from the Town of Mayfield to Pescadero, intersecting the last named road near the lands of McNoughton. Said road, so to be applied for, is more particularly described as follows, to wit: Beginning at the line of the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad at a point near the Bay View House, and on the center of the road which leads from Mountain View to Rice's Landing, and following the center of said road between the lands of Castro and Houghton, s 26½ deg w 58.20 chs, to the center of the road leading to Mayfield; thence along the center of said road n 58 deg w 51.60 chs to an old road; thence along the center of said old road between the lands of Dr. Hastings and Whisman s 4 deg w 16.50 chs to corner of sections 20, 21, 28 and 29; thence between the lands of I. N. and J. M. Graham, s 5 deg w 14.66 chs; thence s 37½ deg w 63.79 chs; thence continuing same course along the lands of Hawthorne and Buck, 11.65 chs; thence s 36 deg w 32.60 chs to the land of George Chase; thence through the land of said Chase s 36½ deg w 7.77 chs; thence s 31½ deg w 4.05 chs; thence s 36 deg w 5.09 chs; thence s 39 deg w 24.22 chs to the land of Colonel Fry; thence through the land of Colonel Fry s 42 deg w 27.90 chs; thence n 62 deg w 2.00 chs; thence n 87½ deg w 10.60 chs; thence s 88 deg w 3.83 chs; thence s 71¾ deg w 3.19 chs; thence s 40 deg w 4.80 chs; thence s 44 deg w 6.90 chs; thence s 30½ deg w 2.00 chs; thence n 25 deg w 5.00 chs to land of Martin Murphy; thence on same course and through lands of Murphy 2.75 chs to a stake; thence through lands of Murphy s 51½ deg w 3.60 chs; thence s 53½ deg w 1.66 chs; thence s 84 deg w 3.35 chs; thence s 68 deg w 15.00 chs; and thence s 80 deg w 7.60 chs to an old road way; thence along said road way to the lands of G. W. Moody; thence in a southwesterly direction over the lands of G. W. Moody, Gallimore, McNoughton, Barnett and Malleber, a distance of about two miles and a half to the said Mayfield and Pescadero Road, the terminus of the road applied for. Said road to be forty feet wide and about six miles in length.

G. W. MOODY.

San Jose, May 7th, 1868. [maS-td

Figure 23. Road notice from the May 9, 1868 Santa Clara Argus (newspaper). It is a notice of construction by G. W. Moody for his stagecoach road. The notice explains that it will intersect with the Mayfield to Pescadero road, which is the current Page Mill Road. Mention is made of the road passing through the lands of Moody, Gallimore, McNoughton, Barsett, and Malleber, traveling 'a distance of about two miles and a half to the said Mayfield and Pescadero Road…. said road to be forty feet wide and about six miles in length."

While there are not any photos of the Moody Stagecoach Road, Florence Fava's book on Los Altos Hills adds a photo of an early logging road that would have been similar in nature to the stagecoach roads (Figure 24). The student led survey up the Adobe Creek West creek drainage was difficult in places, but the team managed to map the road (Figures 25 and 26).

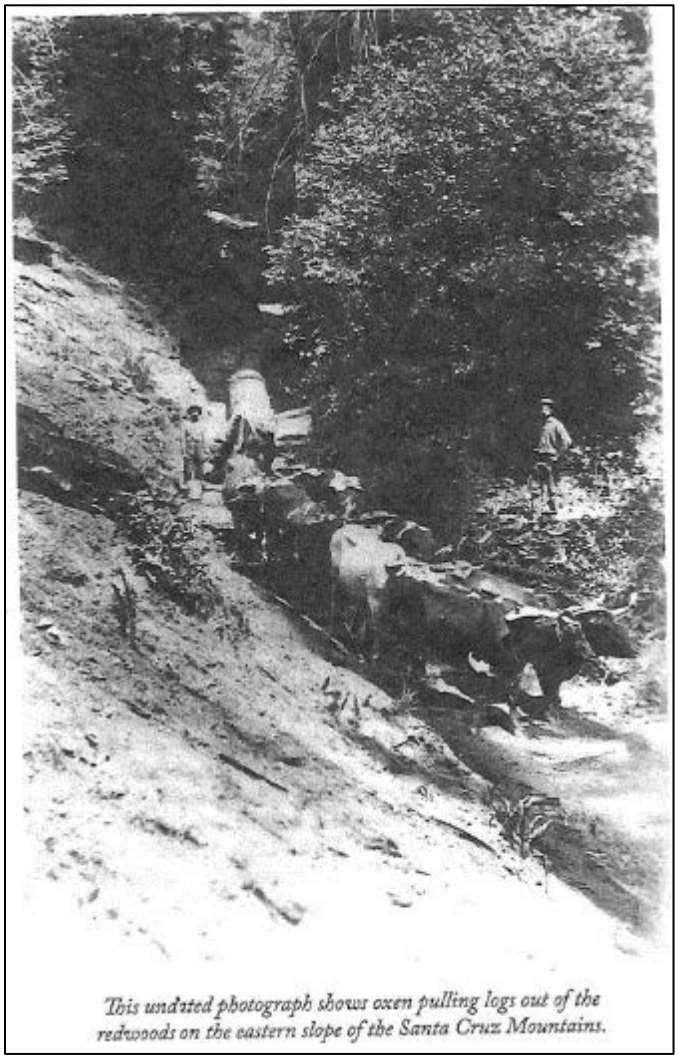


Figure 24. Roads such this logging road would have been created throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains. (McDonnell 2008:192)

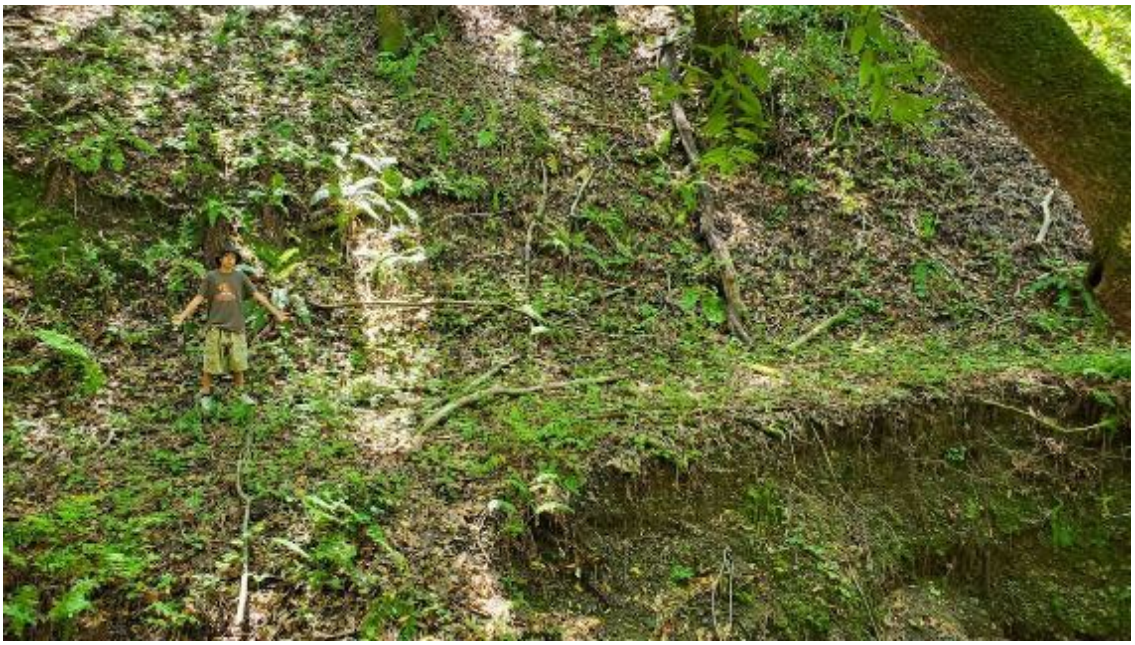


Figure 25. Evidence of early road running up Adobe Creek West Fork within the Hidden Villa property. A thirteen-year old boy stands in the photo for scale. Photograph taken from the north side of the creek looking south approximately 400 meters upstream from Girl Scout Camp site.

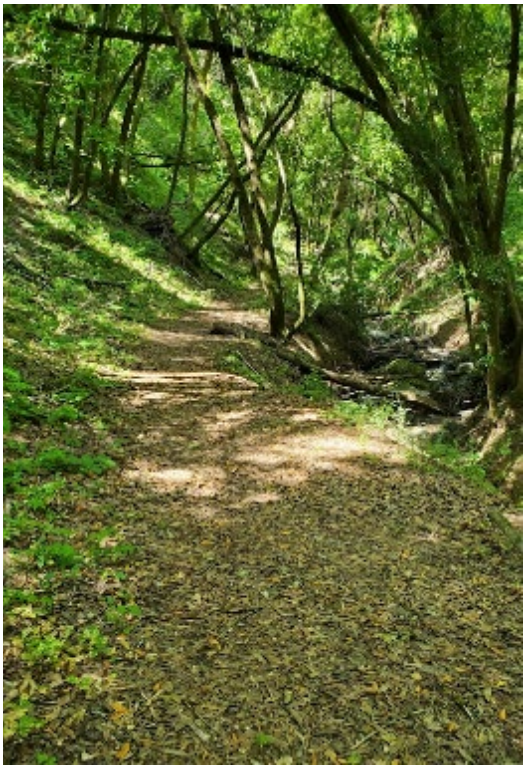


Figure 26. View south-southwest of Stagecoach road heading up the east side of Adobe Creek West Fork from the location called Moody Cabin or Girl Scout Camp.

The Moody family sold Hidden Villa and a series of landowners took over the farm in the late 1800s and early 1900s, to include Adolfo Berson (1871-1882), Robert Walkinshaw (1882-1887), Otto and Katherine Arnold (1887-1903), J. Henry Meyer (1903-1906), and finally Charles H. Deering and Frederic R. King (1906-1921). Then, in the early 1920s, Frank and Josephine Duveneck spied a hidden valley while traveling along the Page Mill Road and luckily inquired about its ownership or maybe even saw a for-sale sign at the entrance as it went into foreclosure. They bought Hidden Villa in 1923 and the rest is history to say the least.

Further reviews of maps can provide clues about the where people were living and working on the property through time, to include identifications of early structures and activity areas. Maps available in the Rumsey Map collection from 1876 of Santa Clara territories depict an earlier version of Moody Road turning into Hidden Villa on the west side of Adobe Creek and passing through the current location of Duveneck house before heading along the northern fork of the Adobe Creek (Bunny Creek) and connecting to the Page Mill Road (Figures 27, 28, & 29, see the David Rumsey Map collection). Today the road does not pass through the property and a new Moody extension climbs sharply along its current path. Fava (1976) notes that Otto Arnold petitioned to have it end at the Hidden Villa property boundary, so it is at the front gate where it was redirected west and up to Page Mill in its current form.

Another important thing to note on these maps are the ranchos connected to Native Californian interests such as the property at current day Moffett Field owned by Lopez Yngo (Figure 27, labeled Inigo Reservation). He was a chief able to hold on to his land longer than anyone else because it was connected to the ancestrally important shell mound at that place. The Rancho La Purísima Concepción is not labeled on these maps, but the land has not been carved up by the government.

Both the White Barn and White House have placards upon them stating they were built in 1861. We do not know how these dates were determined. The White Barn was built with no nails, and lore at Hidden Villa suggests it was built by itinerant Mormon groups who were passing through.

Adobe creek is variability labeled San Antonio Creek on several maps. Santa Clara No. 4 (also 1876) it is also called Veyuas or San Antonio or Doby Creek. The significance of these many different names has yet to be determined. The map states that “J.B. de Briones de Miranda” owns 788a (acres) of “La Purissima Conception”, while Martin Murphy now has 3000 acres. Briones still owns the land adjacent north of Hidden Villa. By this point A. Berson is primary landowner with 136 acres at the front part of Hidden Villa and 326 acres at the back, no structures are shown on the valley floor but a structure with a small orchard is shown along the east fork of Adobe Creek, at the location of the abandoned Ewing Cabin and vineyards. The Santa Clara No4 map (1876) has this listed as the property of C. A. Rodoni (Figures 28 & 29).

This moment in 1876 reflects the period of time when the State of California subdivided ranchos, effectively ending the Rancho system. As stated above, we do see that Inigo and Briones are allowed to keep there land, but unclaimed lands like the Hidden Villa valley are carved up and parceled. The earliest USGS maps from 1899 and 1902 (Figures 30, 31, & 32)

were intended to provide a more accurate topography of the valley. They clearly show the Moody Road now traveling along its current route with the older section through Hidden Villa closed off. According to Eric Flint (pers comm), Otto Arnold wanted to be paid for use of the road and Mountain View declined, so he closed the road and the city built a new section up the hill to connect with Page Mill at a lower location. The Adobe Creek and its forks are not correctly depicted, however, several of the early structures in the Hidden Villa valley are noted, to include a small structure at the back of the property close to the wooden bridges. Lastly, two maps with less than secure provenience were studied (Figures 33 and 34). Both maps were annotated later, which make them harder to analyze. On the map titled "Taaffe Partition in the Rancho Purissima Concepcion" someone clearly wrote Ohlone Village Site and Mesa Knoll on the right hand side. This is in the location on Adobe Creek of the previously discussion village site that Fava helped to excavate (Figure 33). The second map called "1868 Map of Moody Road spur route to George Thisleton cabin/sawmill (across Hidden Villa)" has been extensively annotated for tourist value. The map depicts Moody's cabin at the back of the property on the knoll above the intersection of three Adobe Creek forks. In addition, it suggests that the Ewing and Thistleton cabins are located along Adobe Creek East Fork several kilometers up stream (Figure 34). The archivists found a better version of the same map without annotations and arrows (Figure 35). The authors of this volume to the liberty to provide our own annotation of the words. The key thing to not is that there are two layers of original annotations with original map having smaller cursive letters and the later additions written in bold blocky letters. Lastly, Eric Flint collected aerial photography of the region from a 1930 fly over which highlights features from the farm just five years after the Duvenecks purchased the land (Figure 36).

Figure 27. Version of 1876 map with land parcels numbered individually as Map No. Four, south of Adobe Creek, which is here labeled San Antonio Creek. In addition, San Antonio Rancho and El Corte Madera Ranches are labeled but not Rancho La Purisima Concepcion, which is in the process of being sold and divided up as Los Altos Hills and parts of Los Altos. Inigo Reservation is still labeled, which is today part of Moffett Field and the Foothill College Sunnyvale Center. (internet access: https://www.oldmapsonline.org/maps/fed9e434-5888-554d-876a-1a8affd7f87a/view#604336215534)

Figure 28. Santa Clara No. 4 map from the David Rumsey College. Dated to 1876 the map shows Moody Road passing through the Hidden Villa valley and climbing to Page Mile Road through Chandler's Property (passes through the M and O in the image), which is the north fork of Adobe Creek (called Bunny Creek today). Land tracts on this map are owned by Berson, Chandler, Rodoni, Murphy, Spencer, Wilson and Appleby. No white barn or white house are visible on this map, though both should be on the Berson 136 acre lot. The current Moody Road travels in the direction of the red arrow.

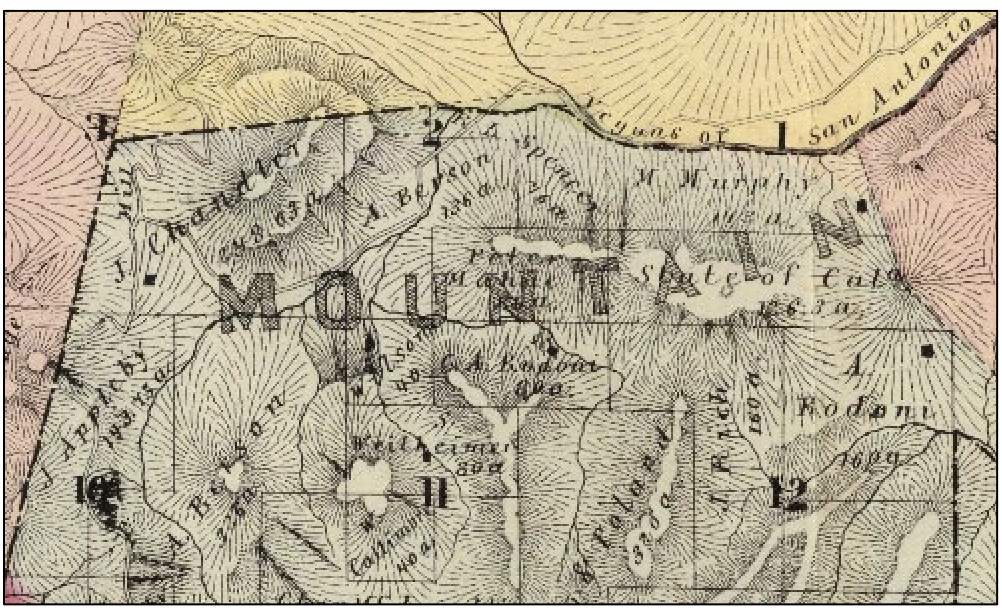


Figure 29. Closer view of (Farm) map no. four (Santa Clara Co., California). (with) Map of the property of Santa Clara Homestead Assocn. (with) Plat of Evergreen. (with) Plat of Saratoga, as resurveyed Dec. 1863 by C.T. Healey & on file at the County Recorders Office as McCarthysville. (Thompson & West, San Francisco, Cala. 1876) accessed from Old Maps

Online 6.15.24. Note the errors in rendering of Adobe Creek tributaries. The Stage Coach Road is here shown passing through the M and O and clearly not going up the West Fork of Adobe Creek through the J. Appleby and A. Berson properties. Later surveys below show that a road did indeed climb to the ridge tops via the west fork.

Figure 30. 1902 USGS 1:50,000 topographic map. Note La Purisima Concepcion is labeled here to north of San Antonio Creek (currently Adobe Creek). Moody Road now avoids Hidden Villa valley and travels due west to intersect with Page Mill Boulevard in the current location. Inside the blue circle note the single structure at the back of the Hidden Villa farm.

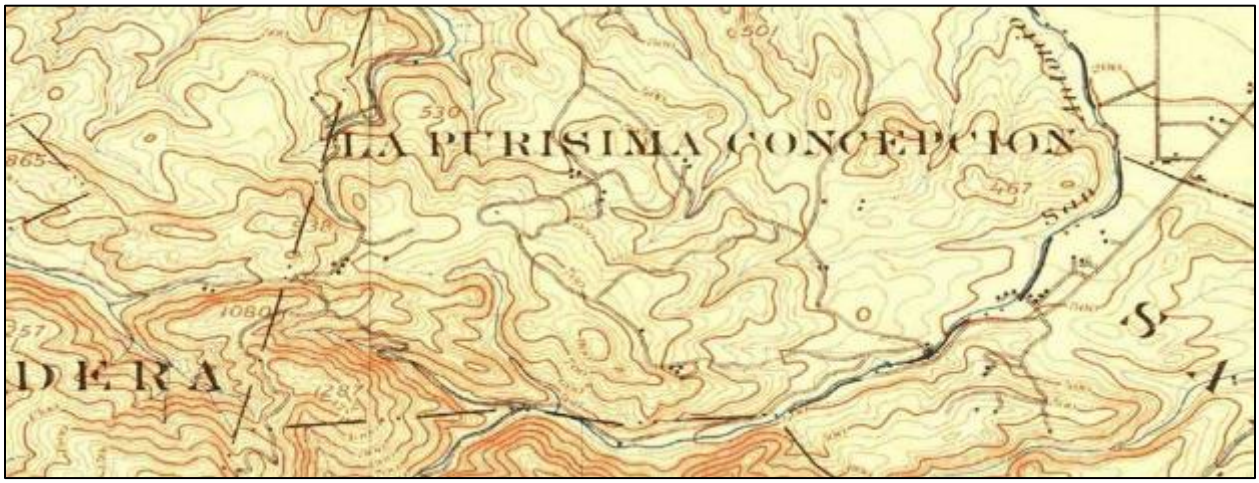


Figure 31. Close-up of 1899 Palo Alto map, which Moody Road in its current position.

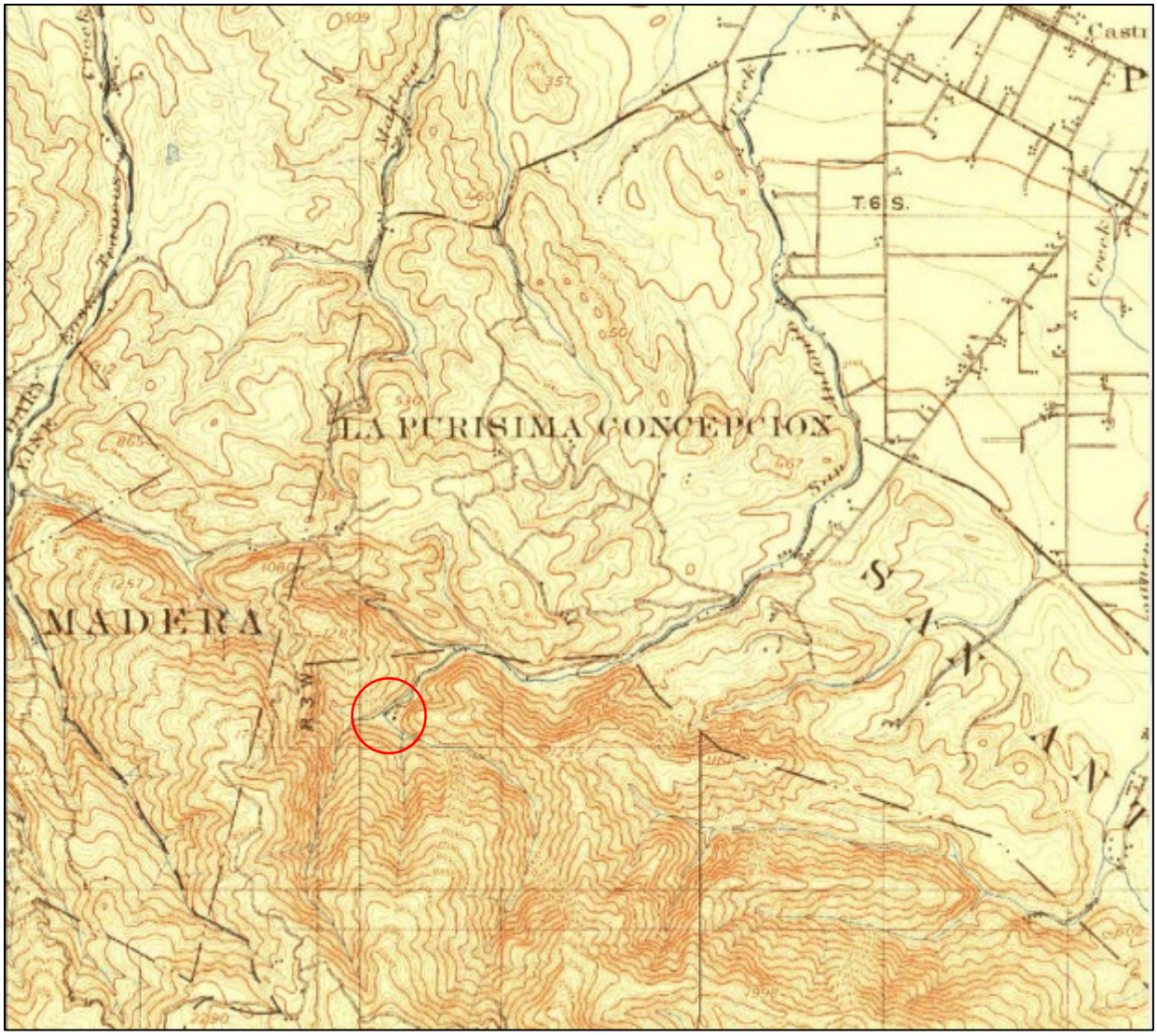


Figure 32. USGS Palo Alto, CA, 1897 edition. Scale 1:62500. Note in the red circle the road at the back of Hidden Villa bifurcates. Old topography of the area was misidentified. The Adobe Creek tributaries are not correct, however we can assume there were two buildings in 1897. The position of the buildings is curiously to the east of the creek.

Figure 33. Map of Taafe Partition 1904 reproduced in Fava's book (1976), shows 'Ohlone Village Site' in the location of SCL-354 and the Prado Mesa knoll labeled here 'Mesa Knoll'.

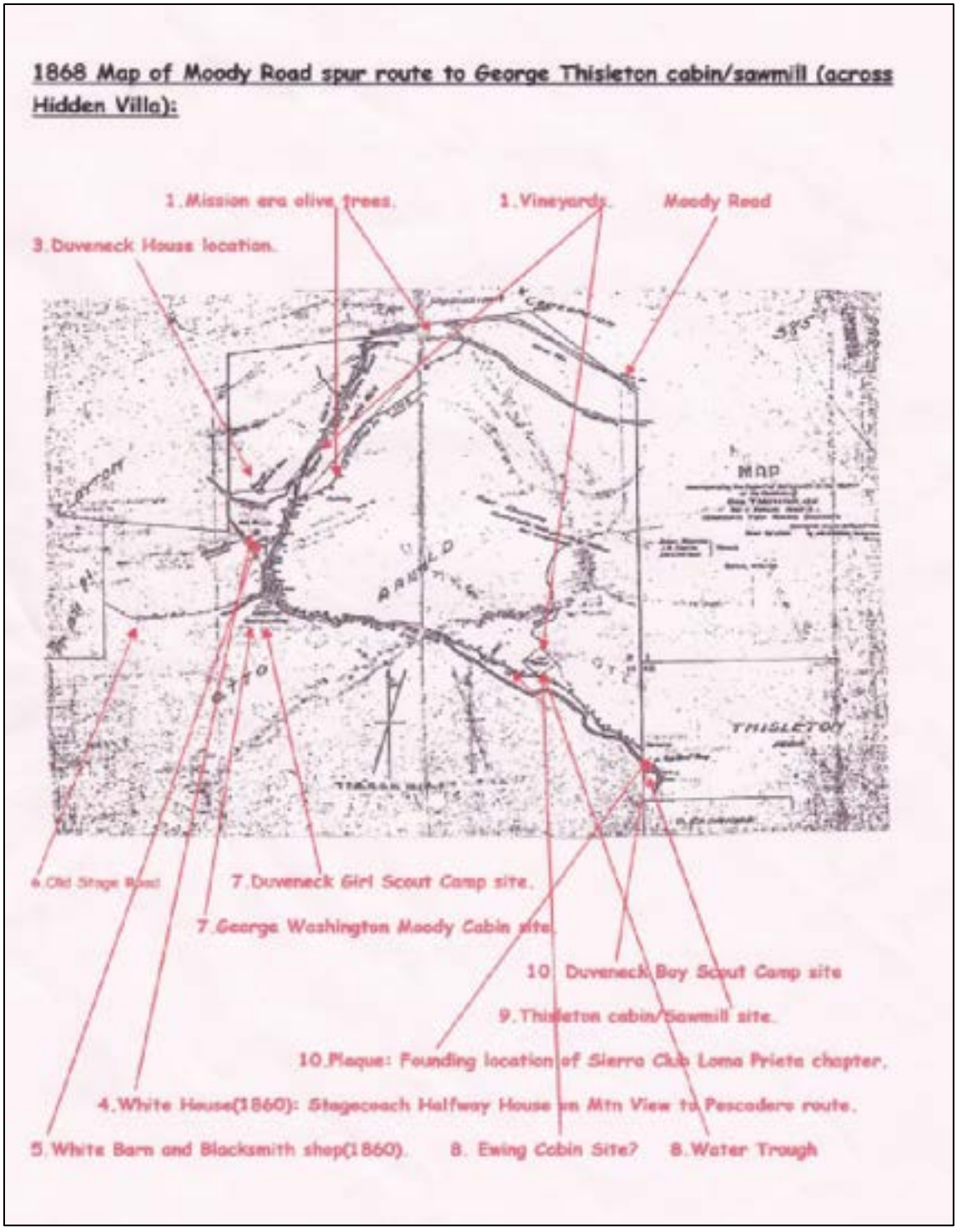


Figure 34. Map of unknown origin with a date of 1868, no provenience. Supplied by the staff of Hidden Villa.

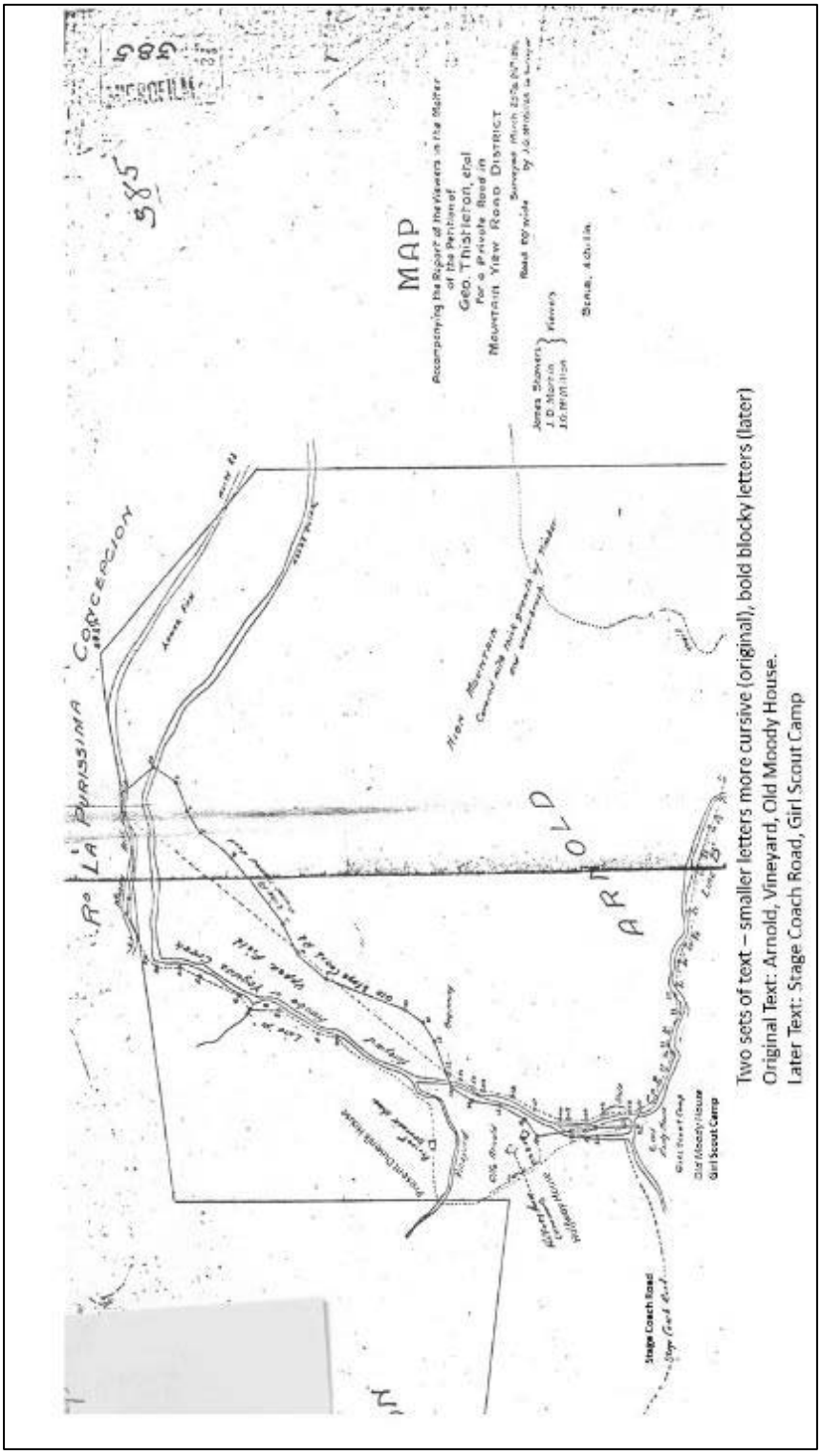


Figure 35. Above map magnification with important text translated. Note the original versus the later added text.

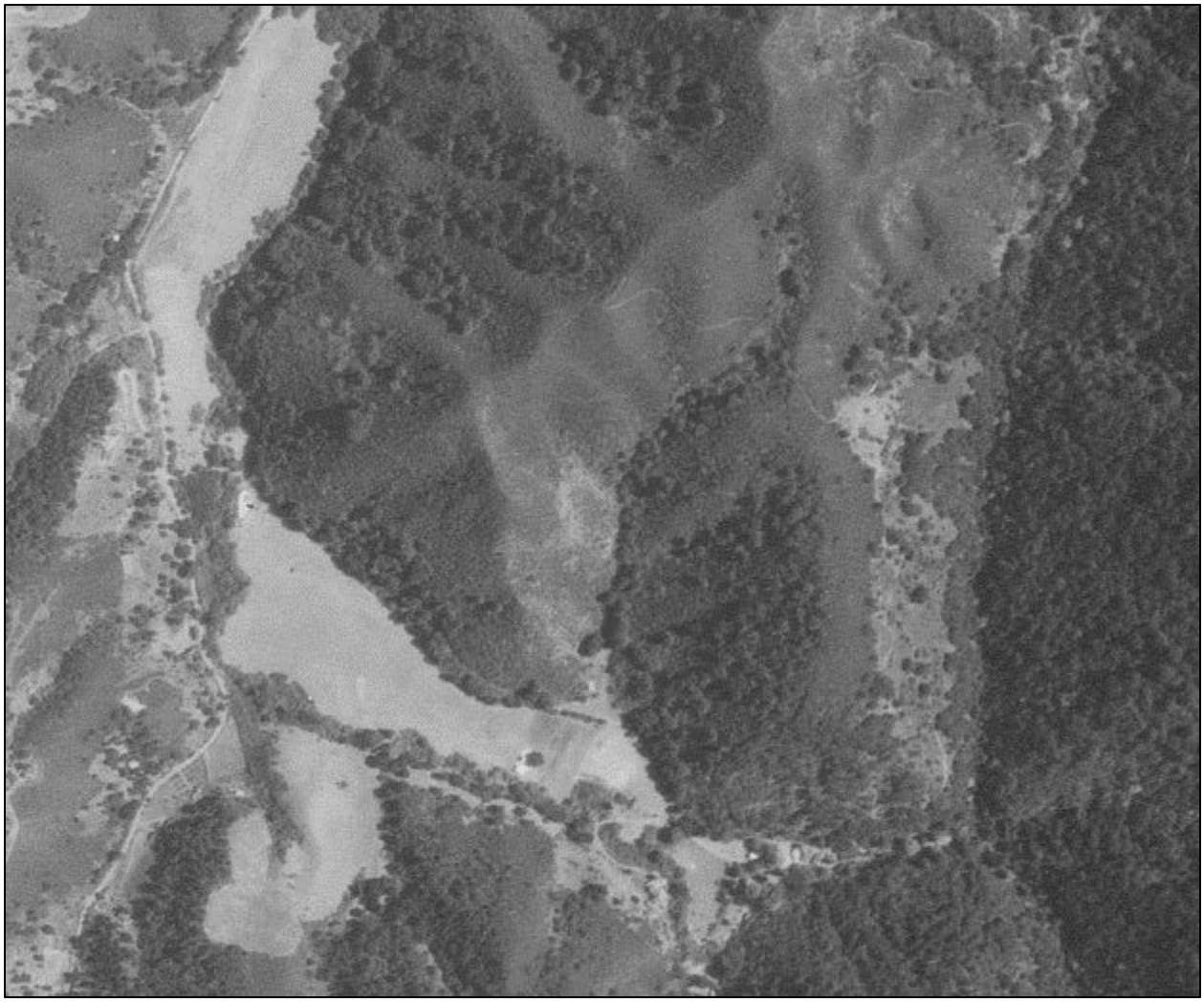


Figure 36. Cropped image from 1930 aerial photographs of Hidden Villa. North is left. Moody Road is running on left side of the image. On the farm, the Duveneck home may be under construction with a road across the creek north of the home. Photo collected from Santa Barbara archives. Flight C-1180, 10/6/1930, 1:21,600 Ground Scale = 39664.

Archaeology Field Seasons: Survey

The Foothill College Department of Anthropology began a series of short field seasons with field school students in April 2023. This report was generated by the Foothill College Center for Applied Anthropology as a direct result of these field school projects which conducted reconnaissance, survey, and excavations at Hidden Villa during these field projects. Student groups typically were at Hidden Villa for seven or eight successive Fridays on each project.

On April 21, 2023 the field school students walked field transects in the northeastern field quadrants of the Hidden Villa property just south of Moody Road, north of Adobe Creek and west of adjacent parcels (Figures 37, 38, & 39). Students walked transects at 5m spacing in cleared fields without extensive ground cover or plantings. Findings included modern trash and discarded faunal materials. In the southeast corner of the furthest field, adjacent to the creek, students identified shell fragments in rodent dirt, strewn up from burrowing. Interviews with the Garth Harwood, chief naturalist at Hidden Villa, suggest that there were dumping grounds alongside the creek bed. Later surveys of the area could not identify trash deposits in the creek bed, but more surveys are necessary.

Figure 37. Hidden Villa survey along Moody Road, with specific location of shell concentration labeled in white.

Figure 38. Student team walking the fields on April 21, 2023.

Figure 39. View from Moody Road looking into property with Adobe Creek in the far background running along the base of the hill. Students are walking in transects spaced five-meters apart.

Local long-time residents have stated that the extensive amounts of earth may have been trucked in from elsewhere to cover the fields, likely during the construction of Foothill College and Interstate 280. It is believed that local farmers who wanted fill and earth were helped out. We know that many coastal midden deposits and shell mounds were dismantled for their valuable dirt rich in organics.

Another field team of 30+ students walked 2m spaced transects in the olive grove to the west of the Hidden Villa entrance road and bridge on October 6, 2023. Nothing of significance was identified. Several students expressed interest in a study of olive trees at Hidden Villa to determine whether they were originally from the mission period, which is an unsubstantiated claim found in the literature. No documents explain when the first fields at Hidden Villa were cultivated, but there is evidence in other areas close by that Native Californians affiliated with the missions were assigned these duties. Thus these very old olive groves may have been originally cultivated during the early 1800s by people affiliated with the Rancho La Purísima Concepción.

Drone and LiDAR based mapping

Foothill students worked closely with the Las Positas College Drone Mapping Program to produce several images and produced hi-resolution drone maps of the interior of the property (Figures 40-45). LiDAR imagery provided by the USGS National Map Viewer also provided some evidence of the stagecoach route up the Adobe Creek West Creek, however, the resolution is limited (see section below).

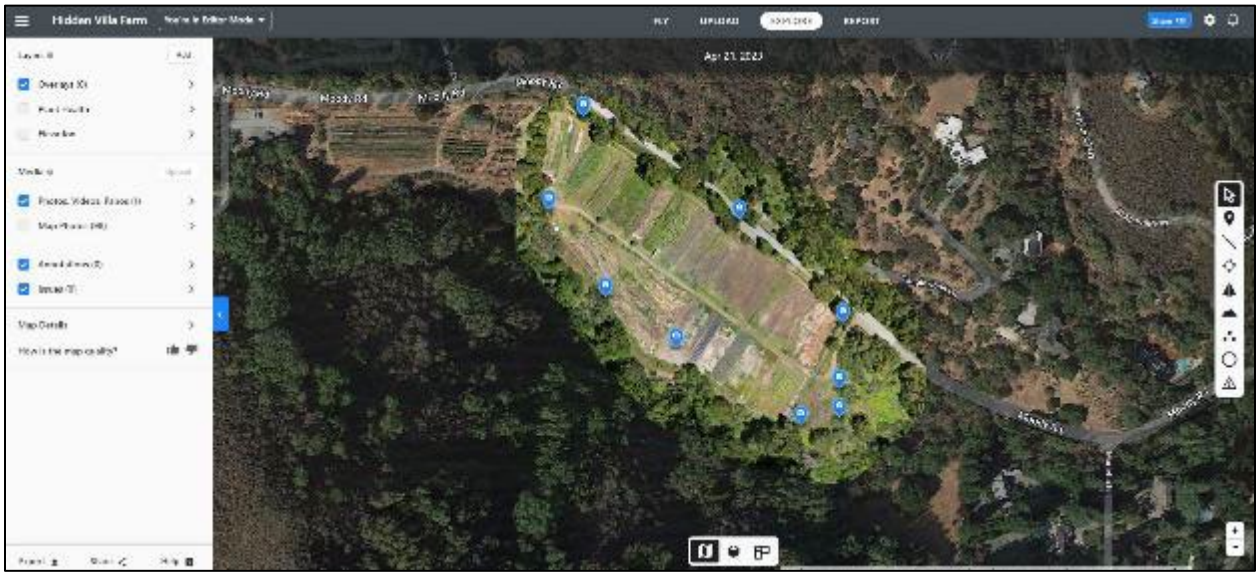


Figure 40. Drone photographs of north fields along Moody Road. Data collected and stitched together by student Niel Rones.

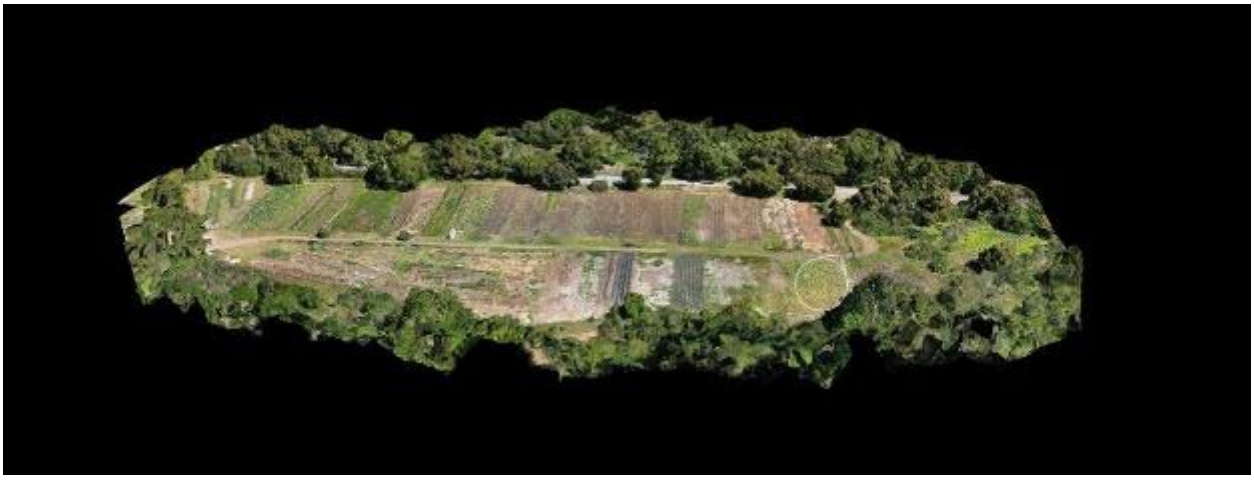


Figure 41. Isometric drone image of lower fields with shell concentration circled. Moody Road running in the background and Adobe Creek in the foreground. View North. (Niel Rones)

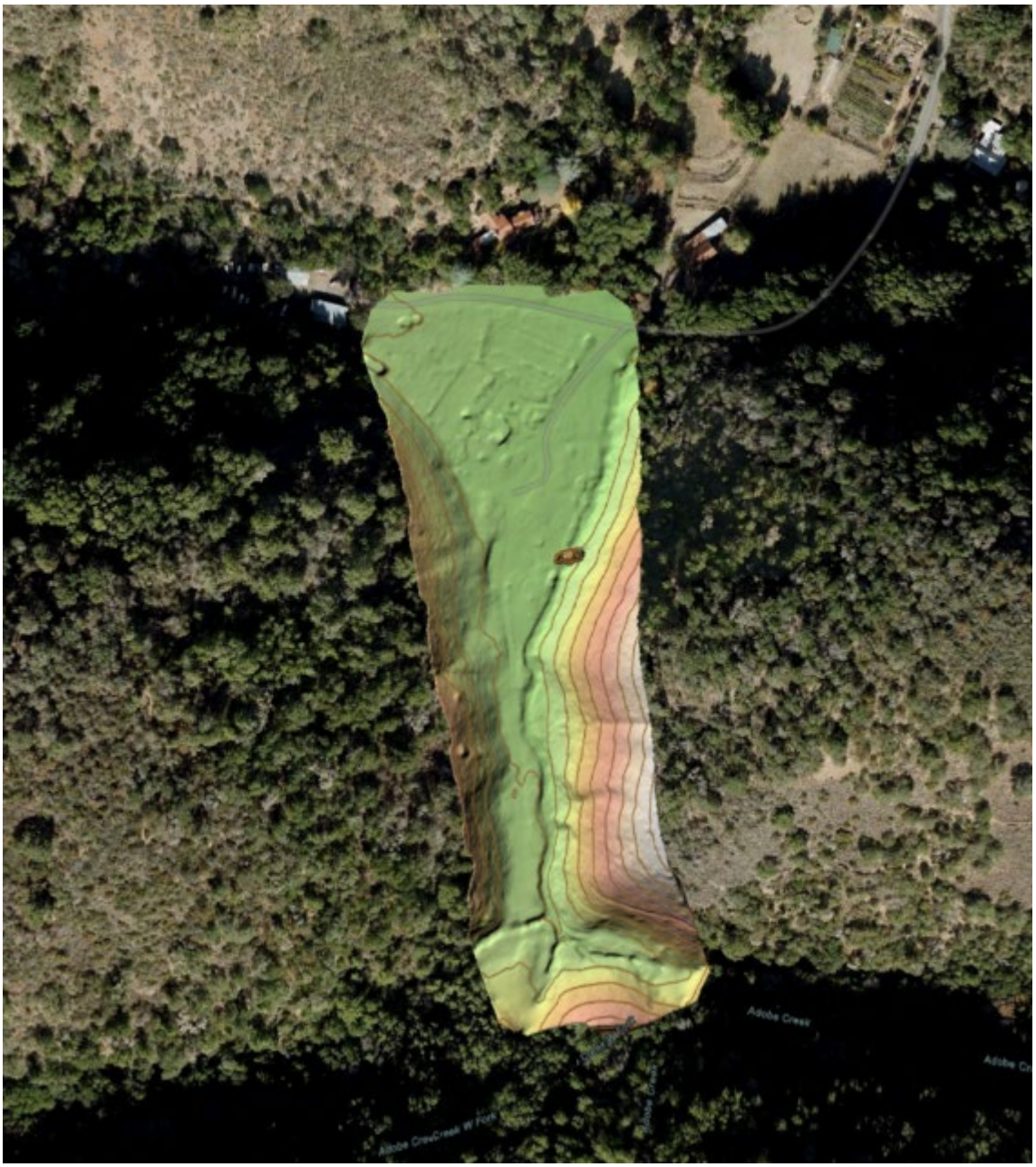


Figure 43. LiDAR Imaging generates high-resolution digital elevation (DEM) maps in spite of forest canopy along Adobe Creek. Prepared by Daniel Cearley from Las Positas College.

Figure 44. Professor Daniel Cearley showing students the LiDAR flight program and analytical tools.

Figure 45. Drone based photography reproduces a panoramic photograph from above the Duveneck House around 1935

Lower Adobe Creek Survey

During the first several weeks of the Spring 2023 field season, several students surveyed the Adobe Creek bed beginning at the confluence of the three Adobe Creek forks at the Girl Scout Camp site and ending at the entrance bridge. The survey recovered scattered faunal remains and artifacts. During this field season the creek was dry (note that in Spring 2024 it was still flowing following two consecutive years of rain). All cultural material was point plotted using a GPS and collected for analysis. A concentration of artifacts was found alongside the backyard of the Green House adjacent to the creek just upstream from the old White Barn (Figure 46). The team identified a trash dump in the walls of the creek. Old bottles and metal containers were eroding out of the creek walls. Salvage excavations began on a small portion of the trash dump in order to ascertain the date of the artifact deposit. These are units 6 and 10 described below. Initial survey and mapping of the artifact scatter in the creek bed documented the density of artifacts and collection was made of diagnostic material.

Figure 46. Survey team mapping artifacts found in the creek bed. Note the pin flags showing the artifacts and long meter tape used to make the map. View north with Green House background left.

Survey at Moody Cabin and Girl Scout Camp Site

The project team also surveyed areas labeled on an early map provided by Hidden Villa staff (Figure 34). The document states it is made in 1868, but the Hidden Villa's archivist, Eric Flint, argues the original map was commissioned in 1891 by Rodini who wanted to build a road to his farm on the Adobe Creek East Fork (Figure 35). Flint found the original map and had it

scanned. There are two sets of handwriting on the map. The map has an earlier cursive hand, which is the mapmaker notes. He labeled the Moody Cabin site in the same location as the more recent Girl Scout Camp which is also on the map – both are now labeled as #7. This Rodini 1891 map has the outline of a structure placed on the rise between the east and west forks of the creek, which actually head down stream in a bifurcated manner until they hit the White Barn area. The dual channels of the Adobe Creek are not currently visible. The western channel has been filled in by the landowners over time or it was a road that is mistaken to be a creek in the map.

Knowing that there is a Girl Scout Camp and maybe the original Moody Cabin, we began a detailed survey of the location, which sits on a rise just to the west of the south fork of the creek (not labeled on some maps), and south of the west fork which is always labeled on maps. To the south are several massive upright greenstone boulders set into the hillside (Figure 47). They dominate the current landscape and would have done so in the past. In addition, the base of an old campsite fire place was documented, which is similar to other standing at parks in the region (Figure 48). Running to the north of the small rise is the west fork of the creek alongside which an old logging road or stagecoach road is readily identifiable on the ground (Figure 26). This is now has been definitively mapped as the Moody Stagecoach Road.

Figure 47. Girl Scout Camp Site with fireplace feature in the foreground left, and large boulders in the background. Survey team conducting a geophysical survey of the Moody Cabin area using the gradiometer, which measure subtle changes in the earth's magnetic field.

Figure 48. Example of an original fireplace at the Memorial Park Campground is on the Pescadero Creek in San Mateo County (photo provided by Tom Waschura, April 2025).

Adobe Creek Surveys: Finding Moody's Stagecoach Road

A series of surveys documented the three intersecting forks of the Adobe Creek at the back of the Hidden Villa farm. The west fork was surveyed to identify and map the potential Moody Stagecoach Road feature. In addition, it was determined that there may be an indigenous trail running in parallel to the stagecoach road. The south or central fork was also preliminarily surveyed by a student team in 2023. Lastly, several survey teams investigated the east fork of Adobe Creek in order to identify architectural evidence of the Thistleton cabin mentioned on several maps.

Stagecoach Road Documentation along the West Fork of Adobe Creek

The Fall 2023 survey team provided an initial mapping of the stagecoach road up the west fork for 1000 meters, but was deterred by downed trees. In many places the road is washed out, but can be found again a few meters upstream. In the Fall 2024 field season Foothill College students were able to map the entire Moody Stagecoach Road until connects with Page Mill

Road along the northwest corner of the Montebello Open Space Preserve trail marked Adobe Creek West Trail. The road consistently runs several meters away from the creek bed. In one location the road fords the creek, and in other locations there is evidence of retaining features used to maintain the road. Extensive erosion and tree fall made the survey difficult in places, but the teams managed to follow the road up to Page Mill Road.

Finding evidence of the road is important because it supports the assertion that George Washington Moody did build a stagecoach road, and that the White House did function as a boarding house from its inception. Fava (1976) recounts and interview with someone who was a small child in the 1880s when the White House was a weigh station for a stagecoach out of San Jose towards Pescadero.

The stagecoach road is identifiable on the USGS National Map Viewer LiDAR imagery (Figure 49). It begins on the south and east side of the Adobe Creek West fork and then crosses over to the west side during the middle section before crossing back to the east side again (Figure 50). The survey teams used the Avenza Mapping program app on their phones to take points along the survey route. Afterwards they were able to upload the points to a Google Earth Pro Map as .kmz files that tracked the route. In addition, they were able to add photographs of key places and artifacts found on the survey (Figures 51 & 52). Photography of the road usually documented from the opposite ridge slope for better visibility clearly shows that the slope of the stagecoach road is consistent for the entire length of the creek bed (Figures 53 & 54). In places the architectural features and landscape modifications were documented in more detail, including the cutting back of bedrock features and the crossing features that allowed coaches to ford the creek (Figures 55 & 56). At the end of the road, the last section curls back up the ridge to connect to the Page Mill Road at location that is currently at the upper corner of the Montebello OSP (Figure 57).

A second, and potentially more significant, discovery came during mapping of the southern section of the stagecoach road. Here evidence of a deep trail or footpath is seen cross-cutting the stagecoach road. We think this is evidence of an earlier trail used by native people that continues up the Adobe Creek drainage. The linear feature has tell-tale signs of being a footpath, with a sunken treadway and rounded sides created from heavy use. In future seasons this will be documented further (Figure 58 & 59). Both the end of the stagecoach road and the footpath are seen in the USGS DEM (Figure 60).

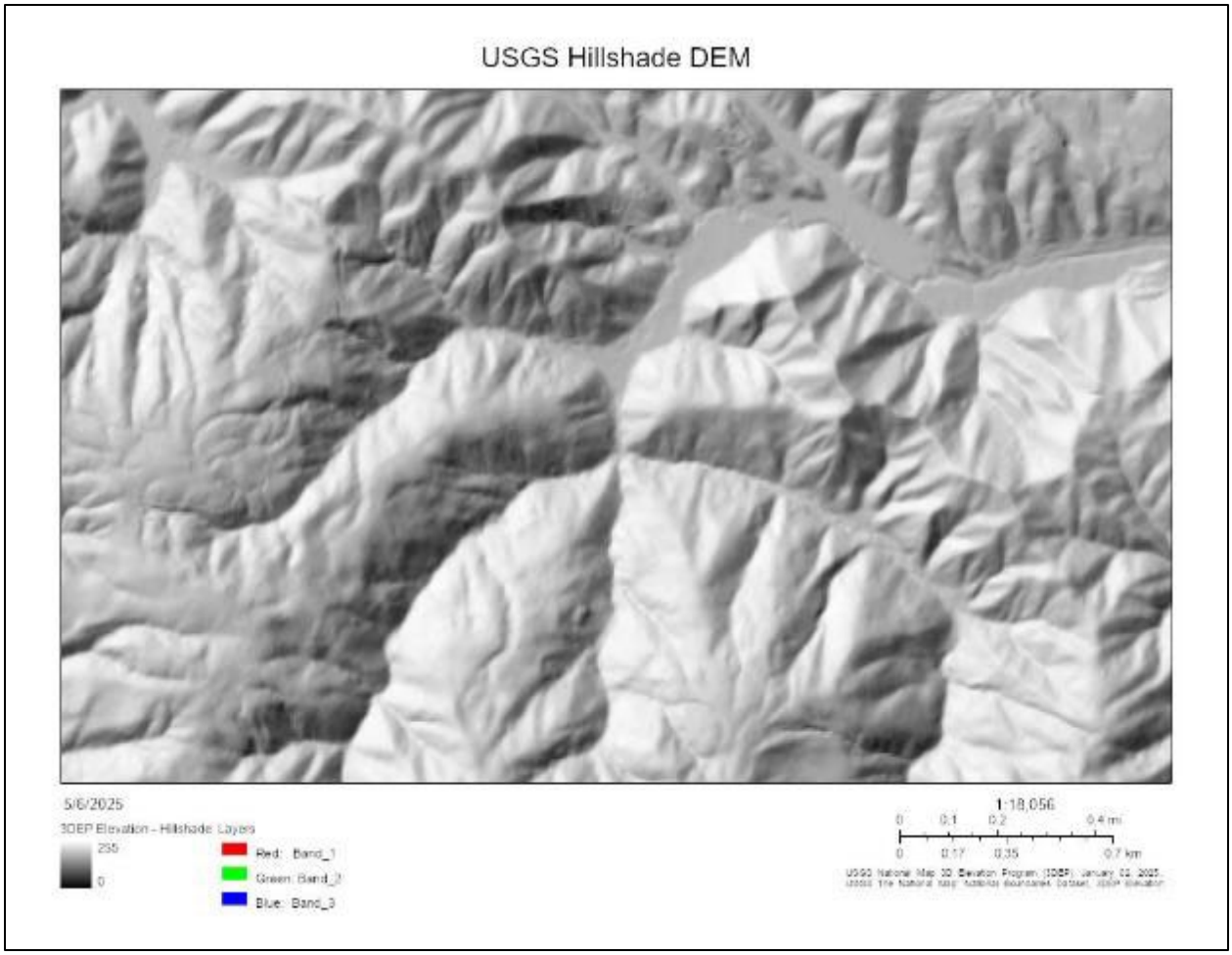


Figure 49. USGS National Map Viewer using the Hillshade DEM layer. This depicts Hidden Villa and the three Adobe Creek tributaries. The stagecoach route follows up the west fork.

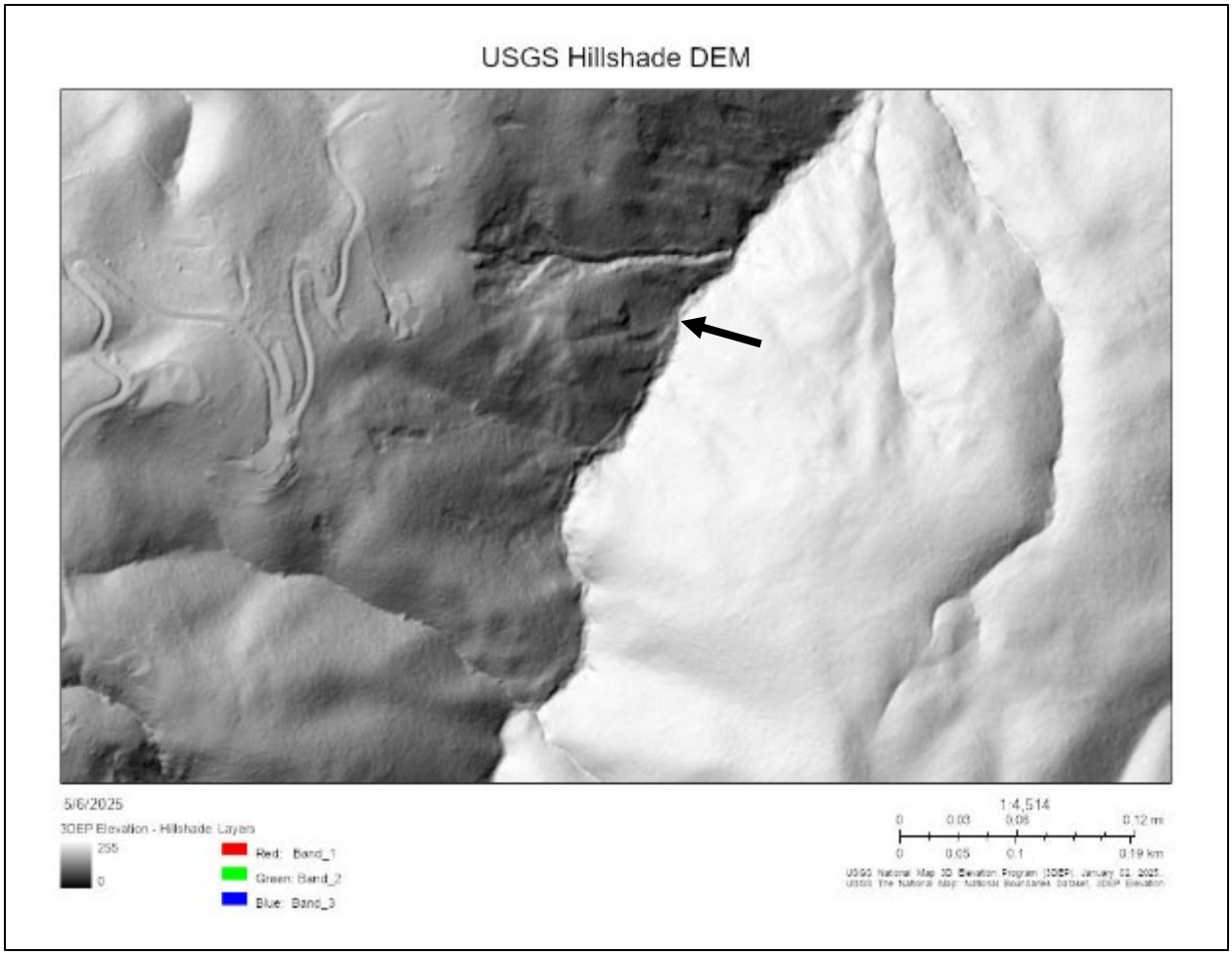


Figure 50. Closer resolution image of Hillshade DEM of Adobe Creek West fork about half of the way up the stagecoach route. Notice that the road travels north to south and begins in this image on the right hand side of the creek (east side) and then crosses to the left hand side (west side). Arrow points to location where the road crosses the creek.

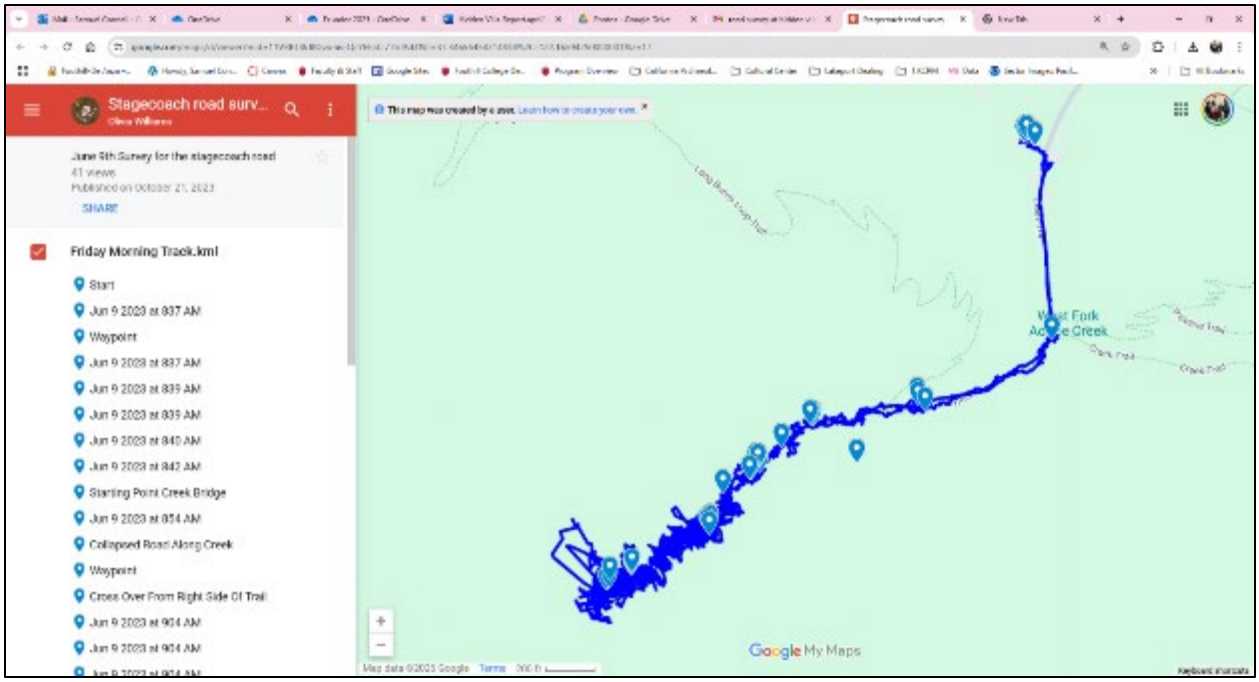


Figure 51. Initial survey map Fall 2023 field season.

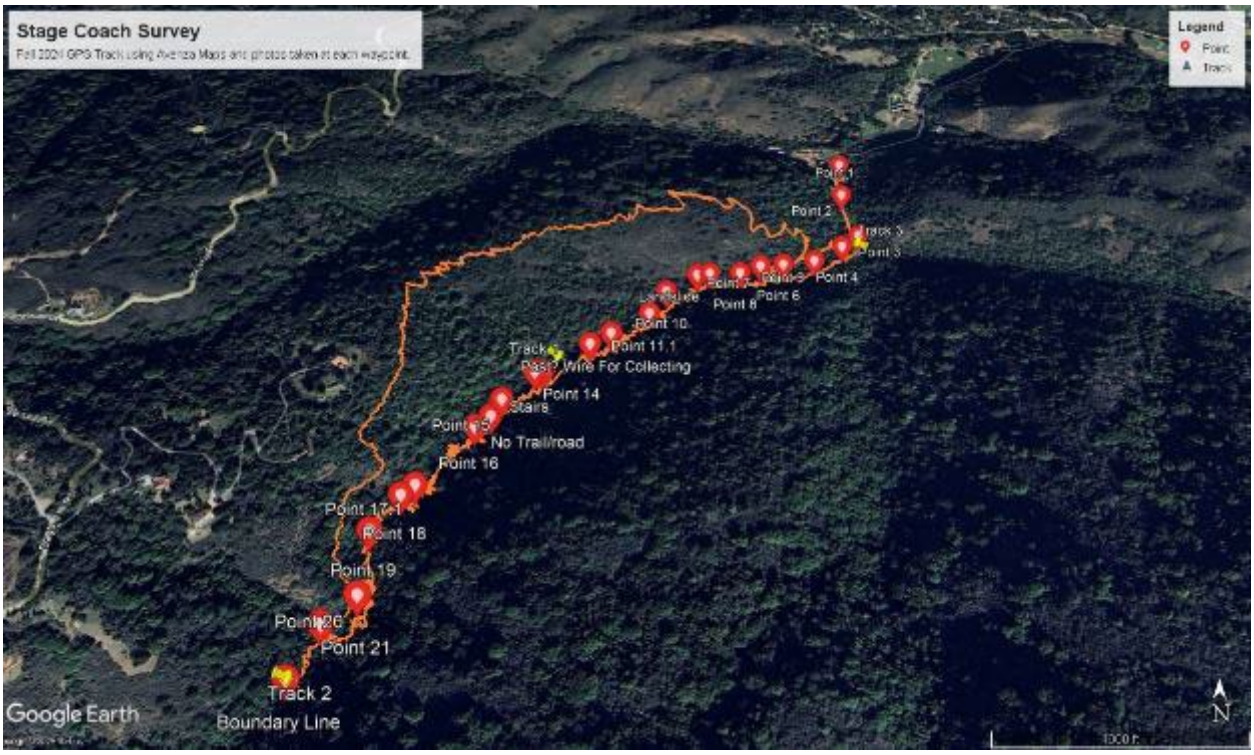


Figure 52. Survey work completed Fall 2024 focusing on the upper limits of the stagecoach road.

Figure 53. Stagecoach road, view south from Hidden Villa farm on the way to the Moody Cabin site with Adobe Creek on the east.

Figure 54. The slope of the road is consistent throughout the almost two-mile climb to Page Mill Road.

Figure 55. Survey members Fall 2024 mapping stagecoach road. Note modifications to large stone on the left for roadway.

Figure 56. Location of road crossing the west fork of the Adobe Creek. Loose stones are suggestive of a shallow ford constructed with angular stream cobbles.

Figure 57. Foothill students on the upper portion of the stagecoach road as it curls up to Page Mill Road from the Adobe Creek West Fork. This portion is currently the Adobe Creek trail in the Montebello Open Space District.

Figure 58. Students on possible native trail that runs along west side of Adobe Creek West Fork. This feature is narrow and sunken from use as a trail over time.

Figure 59. Survey team during October 2024 coverage of Montebello Open Space Preserve.

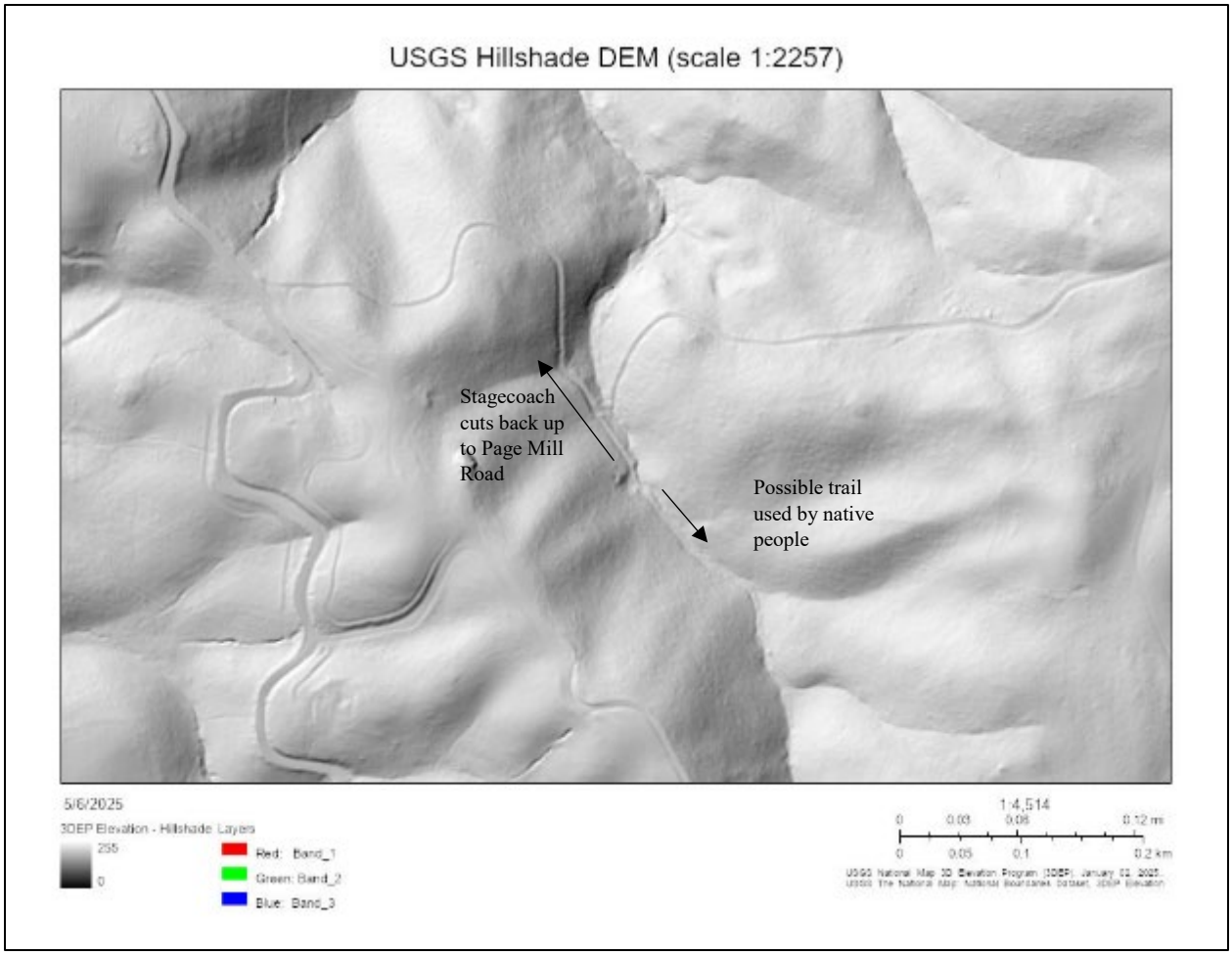


Figure 60. Location in the middle of the image where the survey finds that the stagecoach road travels out of the creek, but the possible trail used by native people continues further south and enters into what is currently the Montebello OSP.

Geophysics and Mapping

Student teams conducted remote sensing surveys with the ground–penetrating radar (GPR) equipment in the flat areas throughout the Hidden Villa Farm. Some surveys were conducted to find old water pipes, others were designed to find early architectural features such as privies and construction walls. Several surveys were performed around the White House in open spaces both to the east and west of the main structure. In addition, surveys were conducted to the north of the White Barn. In each case, student Alex Apffel performed the survey and processed the data. Significant anomalies were identified in the location 5 m east of the White House adjacent to the large spruce tree. Eric Flint had identified an early aerial photo of the area with a pond in the location, and several employees mentioned knowing about a holding pond for water moved from the springheads to the house.

GPR transects were walked behind the forge building to identify possible subsurface features. Several profile scans do show the high degree of disturbance in this area and anthropomorphic soil depositions. We assume that the creek is constantly trying to move west and landowners have been shoring up the banks of the creek for the past 150 years.

Lastly, extensive geophysical work was conducted at the Moody Cabin site on the hummock labeled the Girl Scout Camp. Over the past several years the college students have done metal detecting, GPR, and magnetometry to identify possible locations of the Moody Cabin (Figures 61, 62, & 63).

Figure 61. Students in Fall 2024 surveying Moody Cabin area with the Ground-penetrating Radar (GPR). Orange flags represent locations where anomalies were identified.

Figure 62. Student in Spring 2023 using metal detector to scan for artifacts at Moody Cabin site.

Figure 63. Results of metal detection survey at Moody Cabin site area. Note even spread of metal objects subsurface. No concentration.

Mapping

A preliminary mapping program gathered three-dimensional data on the locations of our test excavations and architecture. The team used a laser theodolite or Total Station to record data points as well as datums that we can return to in future years. Existing structures were connected to archaeology excavations in an effort to tie aerial and satellite photography to the research. We analyzed changes over time in the vegetation and cultural features at the farm. For example, the barn and white house are fixed points through time, so they can be tied to our data through time. Our fixed datum is the alongside the south corner of the white house due south, so the team can return and set up the Total Station to continue work in future field seasons.

Excavation

Limited testing was conducted in each of the four field seasons (Spring/Fall 2023 & Spring/Fall 2024). A total of 21 test units were excavated in three areas that we have given very unoriginal names: A) the Barn and Forge Area; B) the White House Area, and C) the Moody Cabin Area (Figure 64). The following is description of each excavation.

The Barn and Forge Area

The first excavations opened at Hidden Villa were north of the white barn behind the metal smith shop (forge). Students felt that this would have been an excellent location for trash deposits. Preliminary survey at the creek edge did recover some evidence of historic era trash, including square nails that are usually indicative of the late 1800s.

Overall, the three units uncovered artifactual evidence of typical farming and forging activity over time (Figure 65). In addition, we identified evidence of alluvial creek deposits and efforts at shoring up the ground at the back of the barn. An undated black and white photograph taken from the north looking south at the barn depicts the east side of the barn getting down-cut over time by the water from the creek.

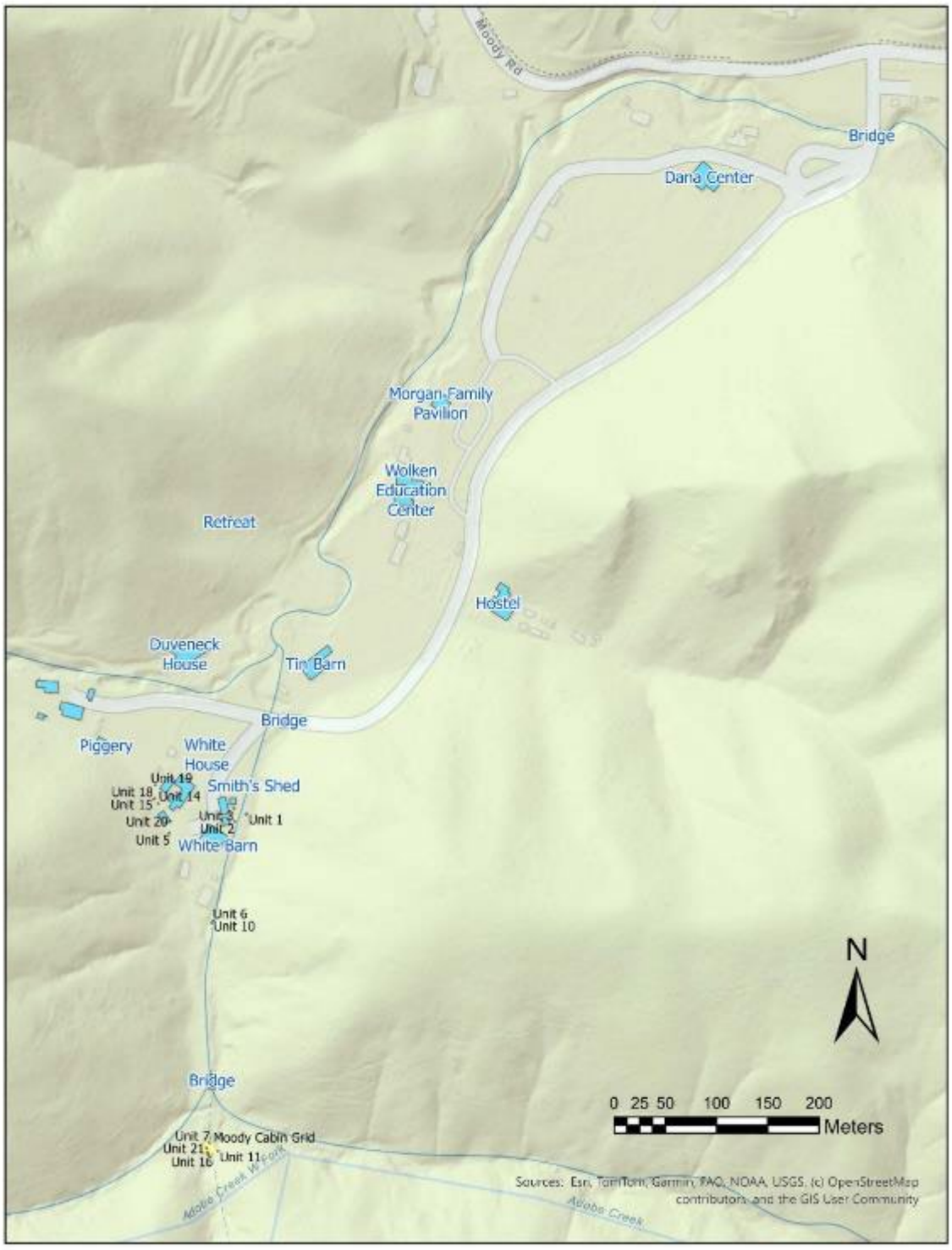


Figure 64. Locations of all excavations at Hidden Villa conducted through Fall 2024.

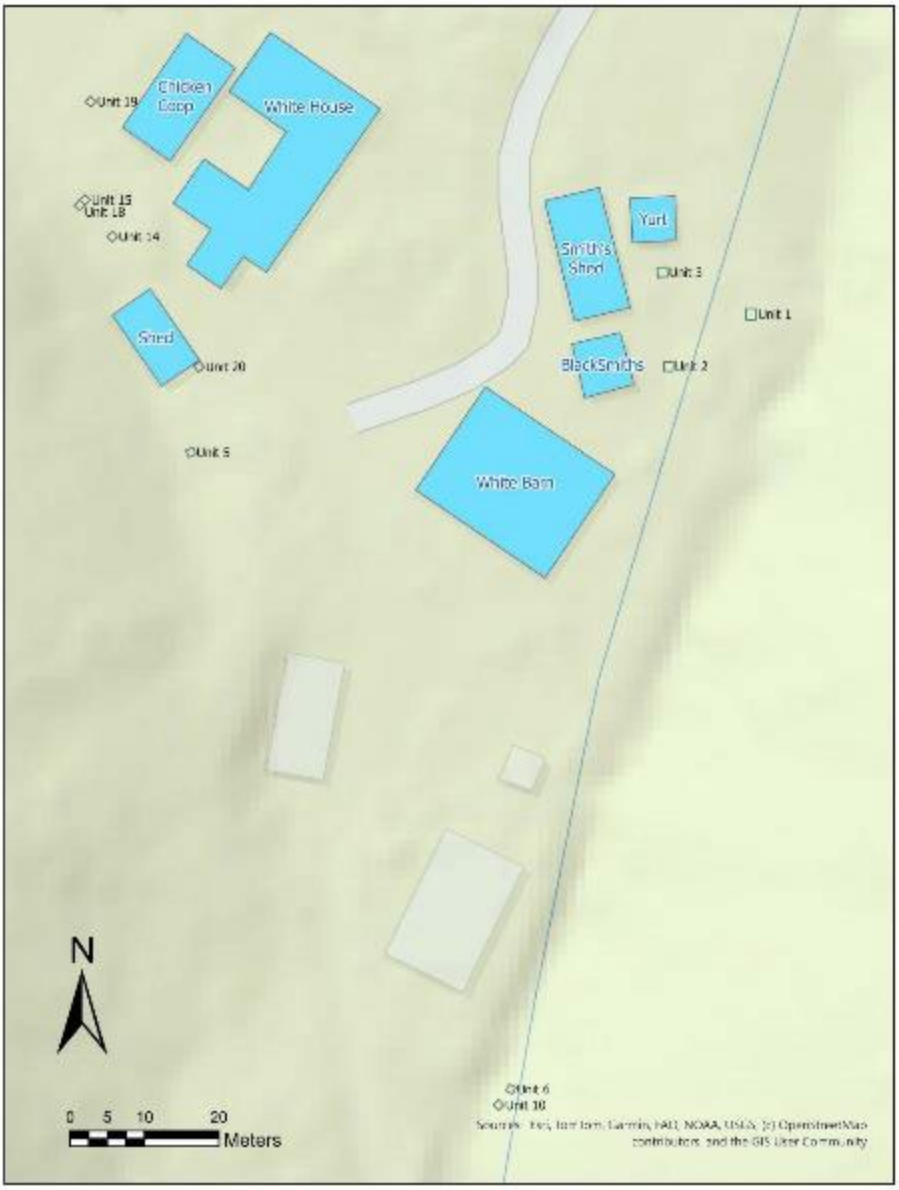


Figure 65. Excavations in White House and Barn Area.

Unit 1

Unit 1, measuring 1-x-1-m, was located adjacent to the creek edge east of a low wooden tent platform. Survey collections recovered scattered nails and old glass in this location which prompted the placement of the unit in this location. The unit levels were characterized by loose sand and gravel deposits which were continuously collapsing into the bottom of the unit from the sidewalls. Eventually the unit was terminated when the last level was sterile. Efforts to keep the sidewalls of the unit intact were untenable and the unit was closed. A small rabbit skeleton was

recovered in silty gravel at 40cm below ground surface in unit 1. The animal was not eaten or processed, so we guess it drowned during a storm or was trapped in a burrow. In each level a small assortment of modern and historic era trash was recovered until the lower levels which were sandy alluvial deposits (Figure 66).

Figure 66. Spring 2023 excavations at Unit 1. Note the orange-brown overburden deposited above natural matrix, which was excavated in Fall 2023.

Unit 2

Unit 2, measuring 1-x-1-m, is located close to the northeast corner of the barn (Figure 67). Excavated to a depth of 145 centimeters below ground surface, the team exposed multiple levels of gravel deposits with various degrees of compactness (strata A-F in Figure 68). Within stratum A charcoal or slag evidence was identified, indicating evidence for activity at the forge. Stratum B is likely overburden deposited by farmers perhaps to shore up the ground surface. There is a buried A horizon between Stats B and C (stratum G) below which were recovered small carbon chunks (Figure 69). Strata C, D, E, and F are different alluvial deposits with alternating amounts of rounded and subanglar cobbles, sand and clay deposits. They range in coloration and compactness as well. In the final analysis, with the help of geologists, these lower strata are interpreted to be alluvial creek deposits. The unit was finished below stratum F at a layer of large cobbles that appear very similar to the cobble river bottom in the current Adobe Creek bed. This suggests that the greenstone shelf of Franciscan deposit does underlie the riverbed.

A combination of lower gravel deposits from the creek and higher fill deposits suggests that farmers took protective measures to protect the barn and forge from the flooding creek. During our time at Hidden Villa the farm workers dumped deposits of dirt in this area on several occasions. We assume this is common cultural practice at the farm many decades in the making. For example, the north wall profile (Figure 69) shows evidence of the overburden, which is a fill deposit from a deeper excavation elsewhere (Stratum B) covering the Buried A horizon (Stratum G). Soil layers labeled 'A horizons' typically indicated are organic rich humus layers where leaf litter and other organic materials are deposited over time to make dark rich soils.

Strata C, D, E, and F are distinctive phases of alluvial deposition on top of bed of river cobbles at the base of excavations. While stratum C contained a few artifacts, the rest of the stratum are sterile soils with no cultural material. There are very likely more than five depositional events but these excavations could not distinguish any. The stratigraphic descriptions follow. Stratum A is a 10YR3/2 silty clay loam with rocky sediments and scatter slag deposits that came from the forge. Stratum B is a more orange-red silt (10YR 3/6-4/6) characterized as much lighter in color than stratum A above. This is a deposit of fill from elsewhere on the farm. It does not have slag deposits and lacks cultural material. Stratum G is a buried A horizon (see above) which was covered. It contains some artifacts and is a darker brown sandy silt loam (10YR3/2) with many carbon deposits suggesting a burning episode. Stratum C is a dark brown (10YR3/2) silt with some carbon pieces among roots and rocks. Stratum D is a 10YR4/3 silty loam, with larger rocks in higher densities and more roots than C. Stratum E is the same color as D with more colorful stones. The larger rocks are on the top level and more roots as well but the inclusions taper off towards the bottom of the stratum. Stratum F is a silty sand and gravel stratum with fewer inclusions that sits on a river cobble bed. It is more orange red in coloration (10YR4/6). Several soil samples were taken from the unit for flotation, which has not been performed as of this writing.

The patterning of cultural material found in the unit suggests two phases of deposition with the earlier phase in Strat G and C (level 4) and the later deposit above Stratum B (levels 1 and 2), with no cultural material below Stratum C. Photogrammetry images produced by a colleague at Stanford University also show the same patterning (Figure 70). At its lowest depth of 140 cm the unit exposes early riverbed cobbles (Figure 71). We added a table of artifact analysis for unit 2 in order to show the reduction in artifacts at 60-70bgs.

Figure 67. Unit 2 in foreground after re-excavation in October 2024 view North. Unit 1 was located to the right of the wooden tent platform just off the corner next to the creek. Unit 3 was located background center in line with the doorway of the yurt.

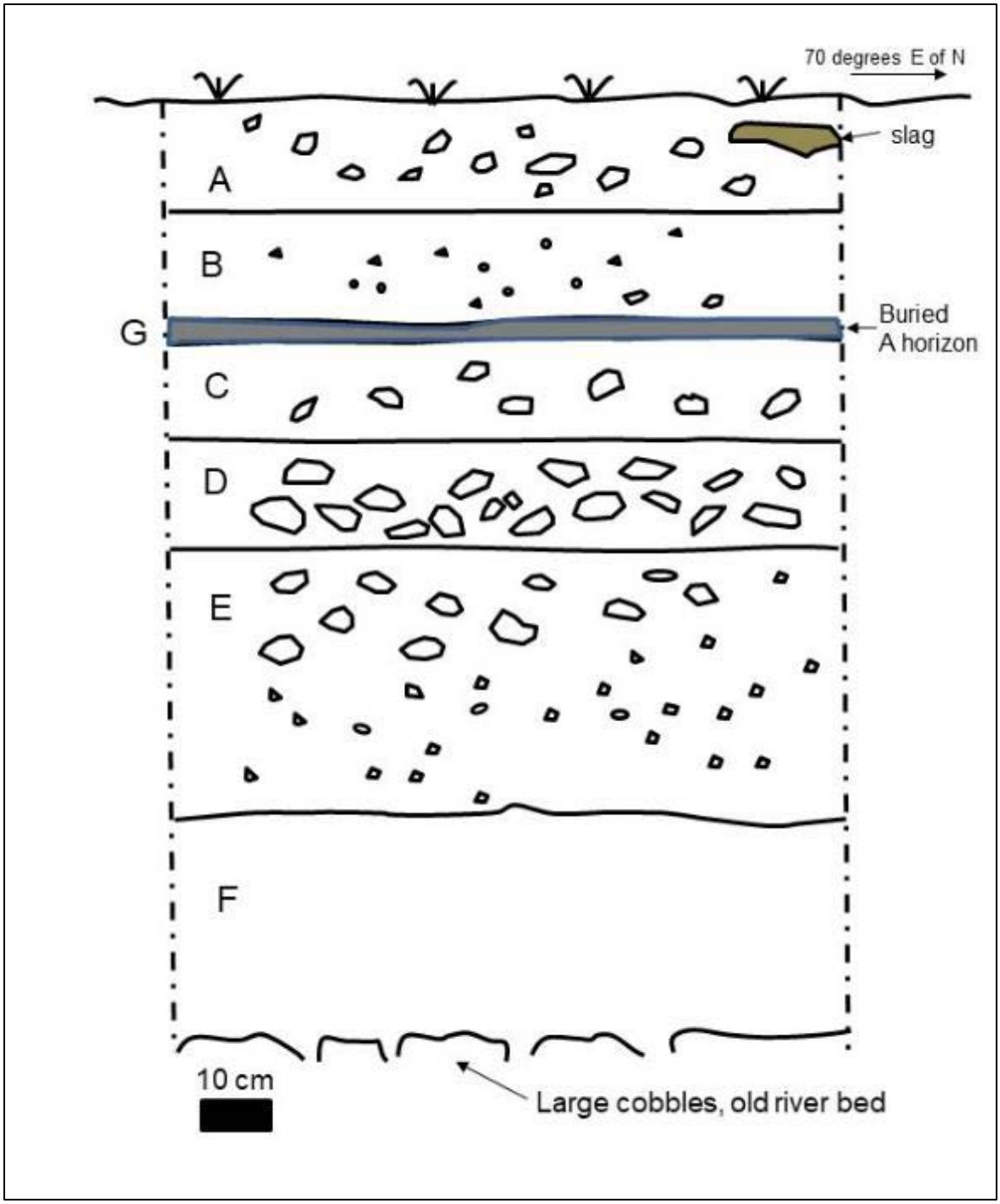


Figure 68. Unit 2, North Wall Profile. Excavation to 140 cm below ground surface.

Figure 69. North wall of Unit 2 with the finger pointing to the interface between the orange deposit of fill and browner top of the original ground surface.

Figure 70. Three dimensional coverage of unit 2 in progress from Fall 2023 excavations. Map generated by John Rick from Stanford University. Note four clearly differentiated strata on the profile, a combination of anthropogenic and alluvial deposits that are to be expected alongside an active creek.

Figure 71. Subangular stones in sandy matrix near base of unit, creek deposit.

Table 1. Unit 2 artifact catalog. Example of a typical looking laboratory catalog after processing.

Catalog #	Unit	Level	Depth (cm)	Excavation Date	Material Classification	Artifact Description	Count	Weight(g)
1	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Bone	fragments of bone	2	1
7	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Bone	Faunal, sawed	1	2.5
8	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Bone	Faunal bone fragment	2	0.3
15	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Building Material	Brick	1	25.7
14	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Ceramic	Body sherd, undecorated	3	6.2
5	2	1	0-12	5/19/2023	Enamel	Snap button cover	1	0.01
11	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Glass	Body shard	1	1.3
2	2	1	0-12	5/19/2023	Metal	Nail	1	1.4
3	2	1	0-12	5/19/2023	Metal	Nail	1	5.1
6	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Metal	Nail	1	1.09
9	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Metal	Staple	1	3.1
10	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Metal	bullet casing	1	0.6
13	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Metal	Fragment	1	0.8
12	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Plastic	Fragment	2	1.5
4	2	1	0-12	5/26/2023	Shell	Fragment	1	0.01
745	2	2	12-22	6/2/23	Building Material	brick and mortar	1	
17	2	2	12-22	6/2/2023	Ceramic	Rim sherd, undecorated	1	1.3
19	2	2	12-22	6/2/2023	Glass	Body shard	1	0.01
18	2	2	12-22	6/2/2023	Metal	Coin	1	2.1
21	2	2	12-22	6/2/2023	Metal	Nail	1	1
23	2	2	12-22	6/2/2023	Metal	Bolt	1	17.8
24	2	2	12-22	6/2/2023	Metal	Slag	40	11.8
741	2	2	12-22	6/2/24	Metal	fragment	4	<0.1
742	2	2	12-22	5/17/24	Other	Yarn	2	0.01
26	2	3	22-44	6/16/2023	Glass	Body shard, undecorated	5	16.7
25	2	3	22-44	6/9/2023	Metal	Fragment	4	1.1
27	2	3	22-44	6/9/2023	Metal	Eye hook	1	2.2
28	2	3	22-44	6/9/2023	Metal	Bolt	1	0.7

29	2	3	22-44	6/9/2023	Other	Yarn	2	1.2
31	2	4	44-60	6/23/2023	Ceramic	Body sherd	1	1
37	2	4	44-60	6/23/23	Charcoal	Charcoal	27	8.7
30	2	4	44-60	6/23/2023	Metal	Nail	8	10
33	2	4	44-60	6/16/2023	Metal	Fragment	30	6
32	2	4	44-60	6/16/2023	Shell	Fragment	1	0.4
744	2	6	40-50	10/13/23	Bone	bone	1	2.3
624	2	7	60-70	10/13/23	Bone		4	0.5
625	2	7	60-70	10/13/23	Bone	Faunal	1	<0.1
652	2	7	60-70	10/20/23	Bone	Bone	2	5.9
743	2	7	60-70	10/13/23	Bone	bone	1	0.6
623	2	7	60-70	10/13/23	Charcoal	Charcoal fragments	14	0.2
420	2	10		6/28/23	Charcoal	charcoal pieces	10	3
914	2	12	120-130	n/a	Building Material	mortar	1	3.9
913	2	12	120-130	n/a	Ceramic	fragment	1	0.2
912	2	12	120-130	n/a	Charcoal	charcoal fragments	2	0.9
414	2	Backfill		6/28/23	Bone	Bone Fragment	1	0.6

Unit 3

Measuring 1-x-1-m, Unit 3 is located behind or east of the forge and north of unit 2. The unit was characterized by a thick gravel layer above an orange clay deposit that was spread over the area (Figure 72). Later it was cut through to install a metal pipe. Unit 3 was terminated prior to sterile levels because it was heavily disturbed orange matrix similar to what was previously identified in Unit 2 as Stratum B (Figures 73 & 74). Pieces of deteriorating metal were found throughout that appeared to be slag from the forge.

Figure 72. Unit 3, level 4 with orange stratum showing on east side, extremely hard packed with no artifacts.

Figure 73. Base of unit 3. Closing photograph view north. Area on west was thought to be excavated into the orange layer to place a pipe. However, we now know that the orange feature is secondary fill placed here (from unit 2 stratigraphy).

Figure 74. Orange stratum clearly shown to be piled up and then later cut into.

GPR Survey between Units 2 and 3.

A 5-x-10-meter survey grid for the ground-penetrating radar was set up between Units 2 and 3 (Figure 75). The survey preliminarily identified the wave signature of the orange-red overburden found in both units (Figure 76). This suggests that a large amount of extra soil was brought here and spread out over the area, maybe as part of an effort to keep the creek in its current location (Figure 77). In addition, the location of several metal pipes was identified.

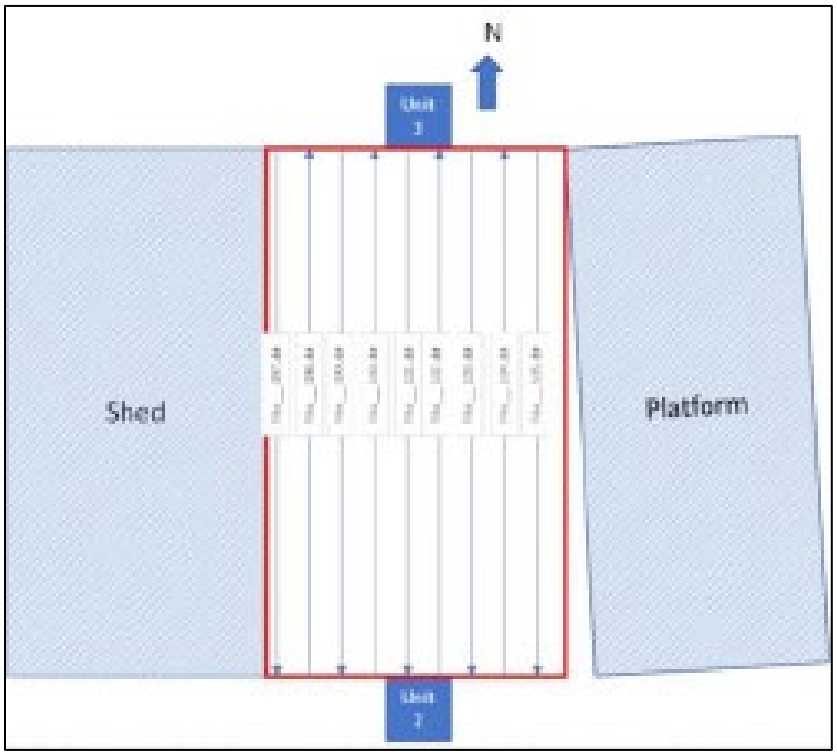


Figure 75. Approximate location of units, shed, and platform features relative to the radar scans.

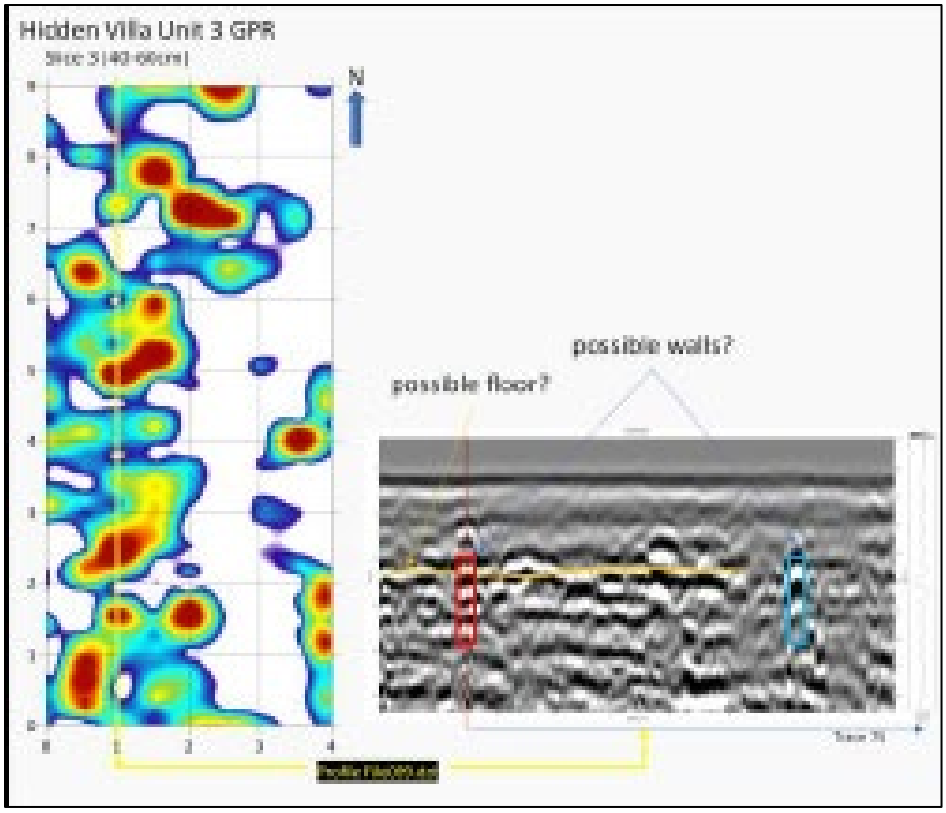


Figure 76. Possible floor labeled here is likely the hard packed orange clay deposits at approximately 35cm bgs. The possible walls are metal pipes.

Figure 77. Unit 3 south wall. Note the orange-red overburden on the left which was cut into by a later trench.

Unit 4

Unit 4 is a 1-x-1-m excavation square placed adjacent to the white house and aligned with its eastern wall spaced 2 meters (Figure 78). The specific location of the unit was determined by the identification of several surface artifacts (small shell fragment and a piece of pottery). A small single course rock wall was exposed at 20 cm bgs (Figures 79 & 80)). The rock wall is familiar to anyone who walks the gardens around the white house. Garden plots are lined with

rock walls to delineate pathways for people to walk on the grounds (Figure 81). The wall had been buried during a more recent construction episode. Long time Hidden Villa employees explained that a lily pond lay between the house and the road, and that unit 4 was close to the edge of the pond. The entire fishpond has been filled and covered, as well as a rock pile which was adjacent to the pond. Current topography suggests that the pond was covered with enough earth to create a small hillock (Figure 82). Unit 4 was terminated at the base of the low stone wall when evidence of a gravel pathway was also exposed on the east side of the unit. This architectural feature was part of a relatively recent construction episode covered after the filled in small lily or frog pond.

Figure 78. Unit 4, view north with White House on left side. Screening and tarp are placed on top of a small earthen mound that covers a small pond that was filled in.

Figure 79. Unit 4 closing photograph. Note the tamped earthen pathway lined with one course of faced stones likely taken from the creek bed. East side of unit shown here with a deposit of pebbles.

Figure 80. Stratigraphic profile of south wall of Unit 4.

Figure 81. White House from the northeast, view southwest. Front porch and walkway from the road. Arrow points to a single course rock wall that lines both sides of walkway and is similar to what was found in Unit 4 at a depth of 20 cms.

Figure 82. Mapping the location of Unit 4 with the Total Station and simultaneously using the Ground-penetrating radar to scan for more evidence of the pathway and wall – which was not found in the scans (it likely ends or turns toward the house). Total station is located on the site datum. UTM Location of Site Datum is 10S 4133931N 574137E, Elevation 106 meters above sea level.

Unit 5 and the Toy Pistol

Unit 5 was a 1-x-1-m test excavation placed amid a surface deposit of historic era trash that included animal bones, a Mason jar and a fragment of a 78 record (Figures 83& 84). A student was using the metal detector to scan an area to the east of the small shed that is located south of the white house and adjacent to its parking area. After a preliminary drawing was made, the unit was placed on a concentration of faunal material. Unit 5 was on a slight slope to rising to the south. Shallow excavations exposed a dense concentration of artifacts with heavy amounts of faunal remains, and associated metal and glass artifacts, to include nails. Laboratory analysis of the artifact collections in the two levels excavated suggests the possibility that there are two phases of deposition in this unit (Figures 85 & 86). Kit Waffle, a student from Winter 2024 lab class prepared a detailed analysis of Unit 5, which is provided in a subsequent section of this report (see below). There are two phases of deposition in the unit, which was later identified in Spring 2024 at Units 14 and 15 located west of the wooden shed feature. Upper loam stratum with a high density of recent historic items from the farm under which we recovered a layer of artifacts from the later 1800s. The areas along the base of the ridge slope were apparently early dumping grounds that later were covered with earth overburden washing downslope (Waffle 2024). Further work in 2025 is intended to identify these two depositional phases.

Several unique finds were recovered during this test unit. A fossil was identified that appears to display pachyostosis, which is the densification of bone typical of some aquatic vertebrates

(Figures 87 & 88). This piece was probably collected by someone and thrown into the trash deposit.

On the last day of excavation, the same student with the metal detector uncovered a toy gun on the slopes behind the shed. According to old maps a small level area housed a water tank on the hill behind the shed. The toy gun was probably hidden under the platform or stairway (Figures # - #). Incredibly, the archival team recovered old photographs from 1947 which show children playing with the very same gun. This is a special find that connects to a moment when Hidden Villa was providing access to the summer camp for people of all backgrounds.

A student, Kit Waffle, wrote a report of the findings at Unit 5 during the Winter 2024 lab season at Foothill College. The following are excerpts from their report.

"The area of Unit 5 lies behind the old white house, east of the two-door shed and along the hillslope. During Foothill College's summer field school, students informally surveyed the area and noted a surface deposit with significant faunal remains, with rusted hardware, vinyl record fragments, wine bottles, and glass scattered across the slope. These finds attested to the historic nature of the trash deposit . The team hoped that excavation to deeper levels might yield information regarding the occupants of the white house pre-1920. The excavation team located a test pit unit where faunal remains were highly concentrated, sketching the relative locations of significant surface finds nearby.

The team established a 1x1 m test pit for Unit 5 and set up a 2x4 m survey unit around it for surface collection. The test pit was excavated in 20 cm arbitrary levels to a depth of 40 cm. Soil was screened, and the levels were mapped and drawn. In the lab, materials were processed and catalogued for this report.

The trash pit behind Hidden Villa's white house gives evidence of two phases of activity. Glass bottles, cans, and vinyl record fragments suggest a 1960s period of recreational enjoyment by young adults, perhaps camp and farm staff. Lower levels suggest a trash deposit coming from the forge and barn area in the 1940-50s. The results from excavations key in on two levels.

Figure 83. Survey mapping and collection of artifacts found in a 1-x-3-meter area identified by metal detection.

Figure 84. Unit 5 initial opening level. Note the faunal material.

Figure 85. Completed unit 5 at closing. A dense deposit of faunal remains and associated artifacts was found adjacent to the hill slope in the area west of the barn and south of the white house.

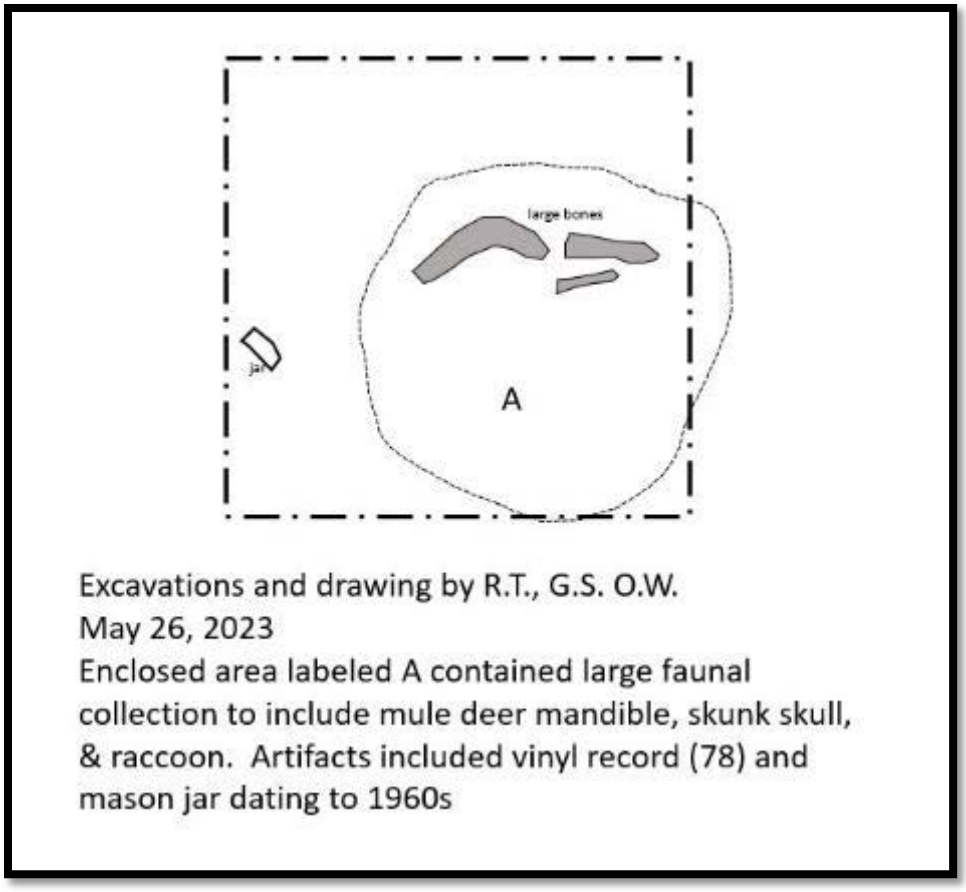


Figure 86. Unit 5 plan drawing with location of jar and large bones (including the fossil object). Area A, as noted, encircled the concentration of cultural material. North is bottom right corner.

Figure 87. Fossilized tusk found adjacent to unit 5.

Figure 88. This photograph of the tusk shows the diagenesis process.

Figure 89. Metal detector survey around unit 5 identified a toy gun buried on the hillslope behind the white house in an area that may have housed a water tank.

Figure 90. Toy gun in the process of excavation.

Figure 91. Toy gun in laboratory

Figure 92. Toy gun for sale

Figure 93. Archival box July 1947

Figure 94. Toy gun in the hands of a camper in 1947

Figure 95. A second camper photograph.

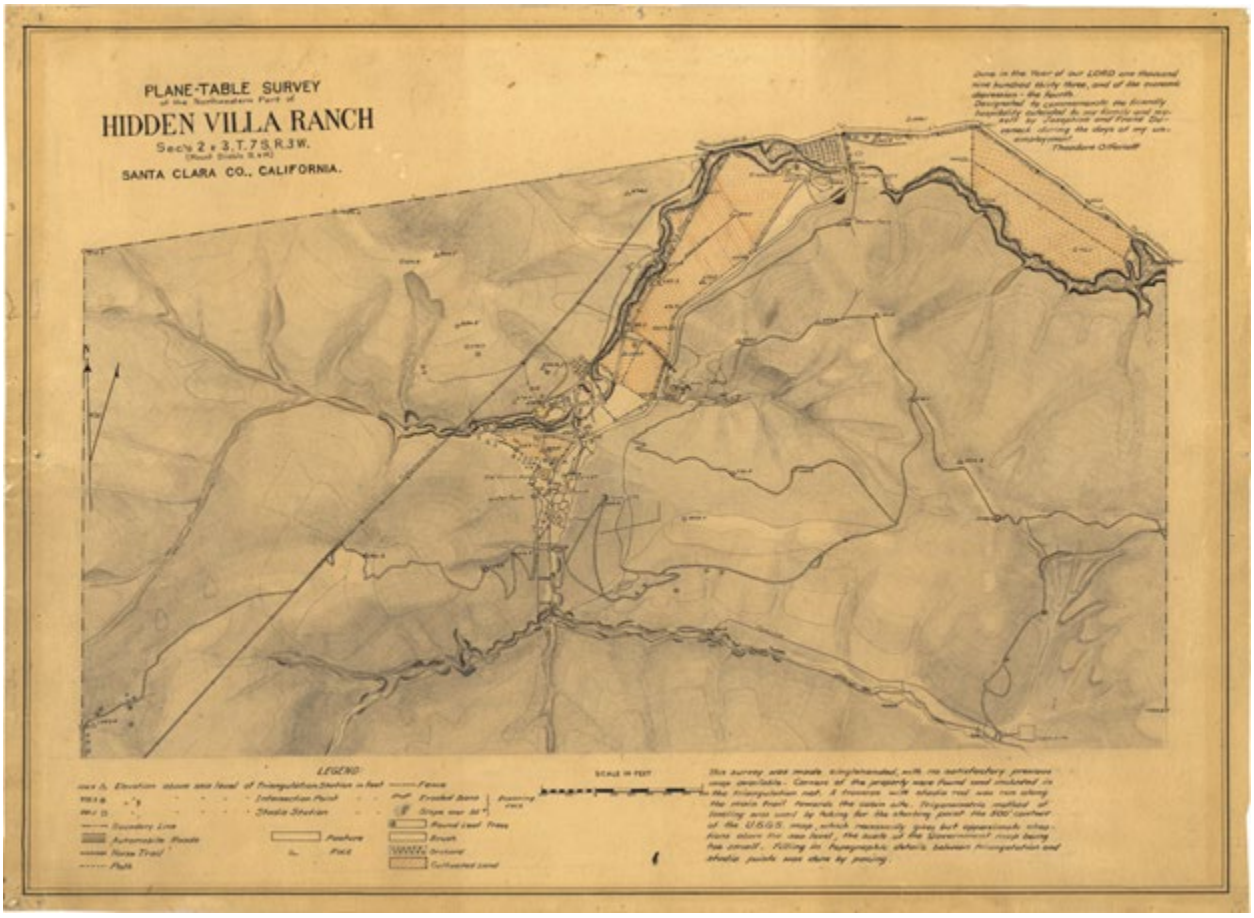


Figure 97. Map of Hidden Villa drafted in 1933 during the Great Depression by a guest of the Duvenecks, Theodore Olferioff who had free time and wanted to help out.

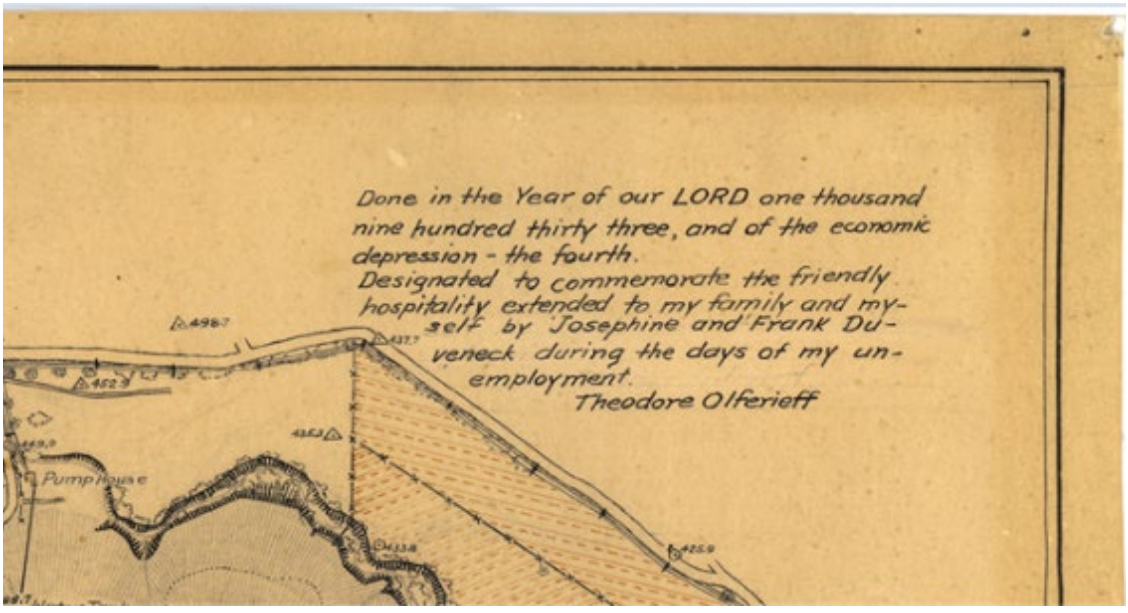


Figure 98. Descriptive text from Olferieff explaining why he made the map.

Figure 99. Details of farm during the Great Depression. Note the water tank behind the shed to the south of the 'Old Ranch House'. The toy pistol and Unit 5 are just north of the water tank.

Figure 100. View southwest with shed at right. The toy gun was found on hillside behind the shed. Maybe it was hidden by a camper underneath the tank platform or stairs leading to the tank.

Figure 101. Area behind the shed where tank once stood and the toy gun was recovered using metal detector.

Units 6 and 10

Units 6 and 10 were each 1-x-1-m units placed on the west bank of the Adobe Creek in a location where the survey team discovered a dense deposit of historic era artifacts (Figure 102). The team first mapped the area and collected significant diagnostic artifacts. Next, the team laid out two units along the embankment that aligned to the sidewalls of the creek (Figure 103). Unit 6 was to the south, and then Unit 10 was spaced one-meter to the north, leaving a space of one-meter between (Figure 104). The students worked on these units over the span of two field seasons. A detailed report of the artifacts recovered in Unit 6 was prepared by Maia Rubin. Both excavations recovered dense deposits of intact glass, ceramic, and metal objects in high densities, with smaller artifacts such as bone and nails also recovered. Detailed analysis of metal oil containers was conducted in the laboratory by Serena Wang, who determined that many of the large cans placed into the creek banks were very old Standard Oil containers which likely were used for the tractors on the farm. In addition, wine bottles and other evidence of German Origin suggest the possibility that trash was placed here from the period of farm ownership under Otto Arnold (Figures 105 and 106). Trash was placed into the creek bank as ballast against a roaring and constantly moving Adobe Creek that was pressing into the lands behind the green

cabin. We again are seeing evidence of efforts to create levees and borders so that the creek would not impinge on architecture. By forcing the creek to stay on the east side the farmers were able to maximize the amount of space they could utilize.

There is strong evidence for large-scale earth movement by farmers. It also looks like the western ridge slopes were carved out during the historic era in an effort to collect earthen matrix to control the creek flow. We have identified a series of earth carve-outs along the old road leading back to Moody Cabin and the intersection of the three Adobe Creek tributaries at the back of the farm.

Figure 102. Artifact deposit found in the western embankment of the creek behind the green painted home that is south of the old barn. Note the ceramic container labeled as German Selters mineral water.

Figure 103. Units 6 and 10 during excavations.

Figure 104. Unit 10 excavations in process. Note the large oilcans visible jutting out of the sidewall. The tops of the cans were cut off and large stones were placed inside to weigh them down. This is clear evidence that oilcans were used as ballast to control the flow of the creek.

Figure 105. A salt glazed stoneware crock with a blue floral painted design found in Unit 6.

Figure 106. A floral china teacup, discovered in Unit 6 and pieced together in the lab.

Moody Cabin Investigations

At the back of the farm there are large upright boulders set into the ridge slopes on a raised area at the confluence of the three Adobe Creek tributaries. Early maps suggest that a cabin built by George Washington Moody is located on this raised area and potentially the Moody stagecoach road passed in front of the place. Initial survey of the area in 2014 identified indicators of construction, including square nails that date to the late 1800s. Old maps also mention a Girls Scout Camp in this location, supported by the discovery of a stone lined fireplace feature.

At various times, the location was used to instruct students on the use of the Ground-penetrating radar, but it was thought to be too disturbed to offer any positive results. However, in the past few seasons, the technicians have improved our ability to identify anomalies subsurface. Based on the results of the metal detection and GPR survey, excavation units were laid out on the grid system (Figure 107).

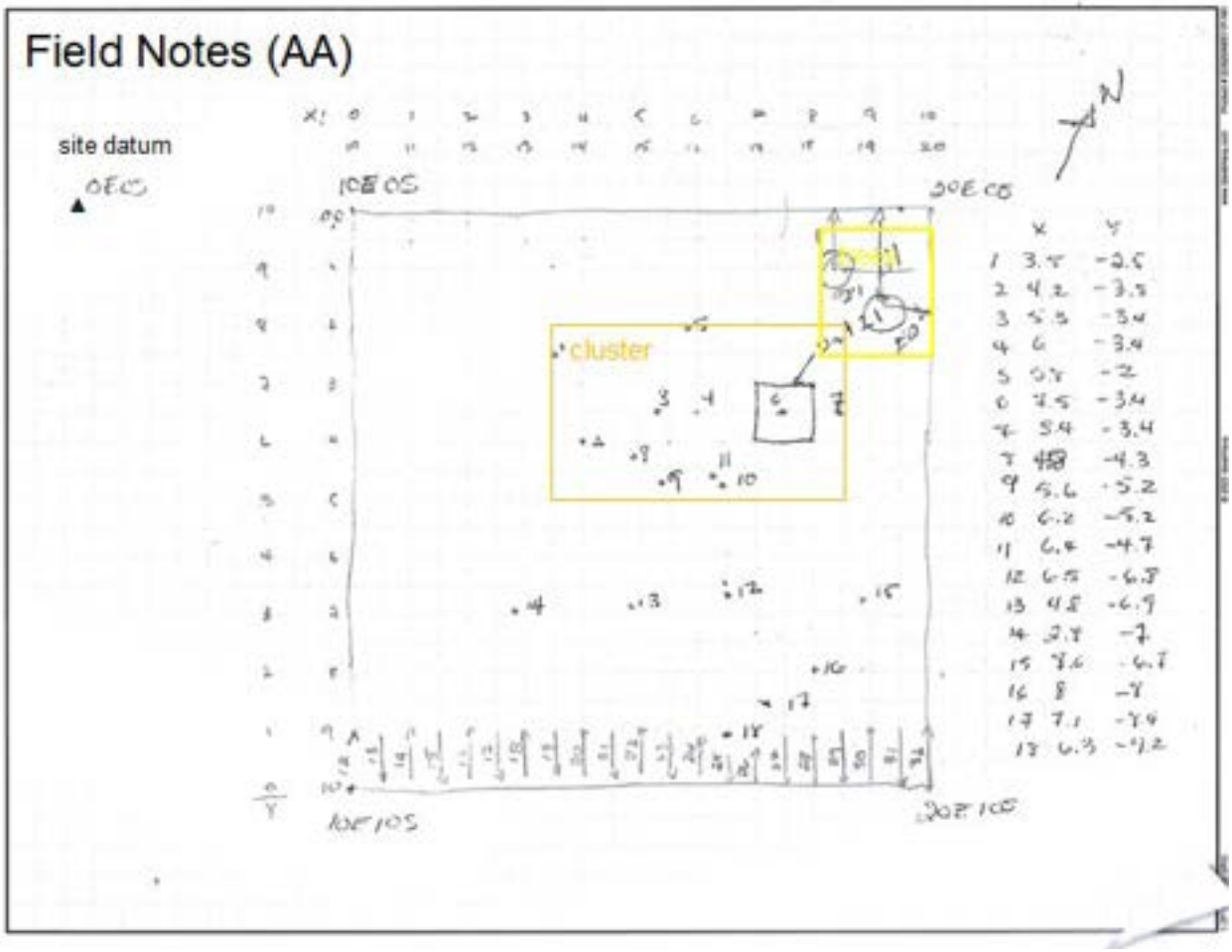


Figure 107. Detailed set of field notes from 2024 GPR survey.

Unit 7: Girl Scout Fireplace

Several excavation units were completed at the Moody Cabin area during the field seasons (Figure 108). On the north side of the raised area, a stone and cement feature was identified that appears to mark the base of a former campfire or cooking stove. Unit 7 was excavated on the south side of this feature (Figure 109). The construction of the cooking stove feature used cement to support the basal dimensions. The artifacts collected were primarily from the 20th Century, including modern glass and .22 shells. We know that Josephine Duveneck was deeply involved in the creation of the first Girl Scout Troops in the 1920s and that she invited groups out for Girl Scout camp. Further research into Girl Scout camps in the last century shows that girls were commonly trained to shoot .22 rifles in the early part of last century (Figure 110). The high density of this type of shell casing found in unit 7 in the upper levels would support this idea (Figures 111 & 112).

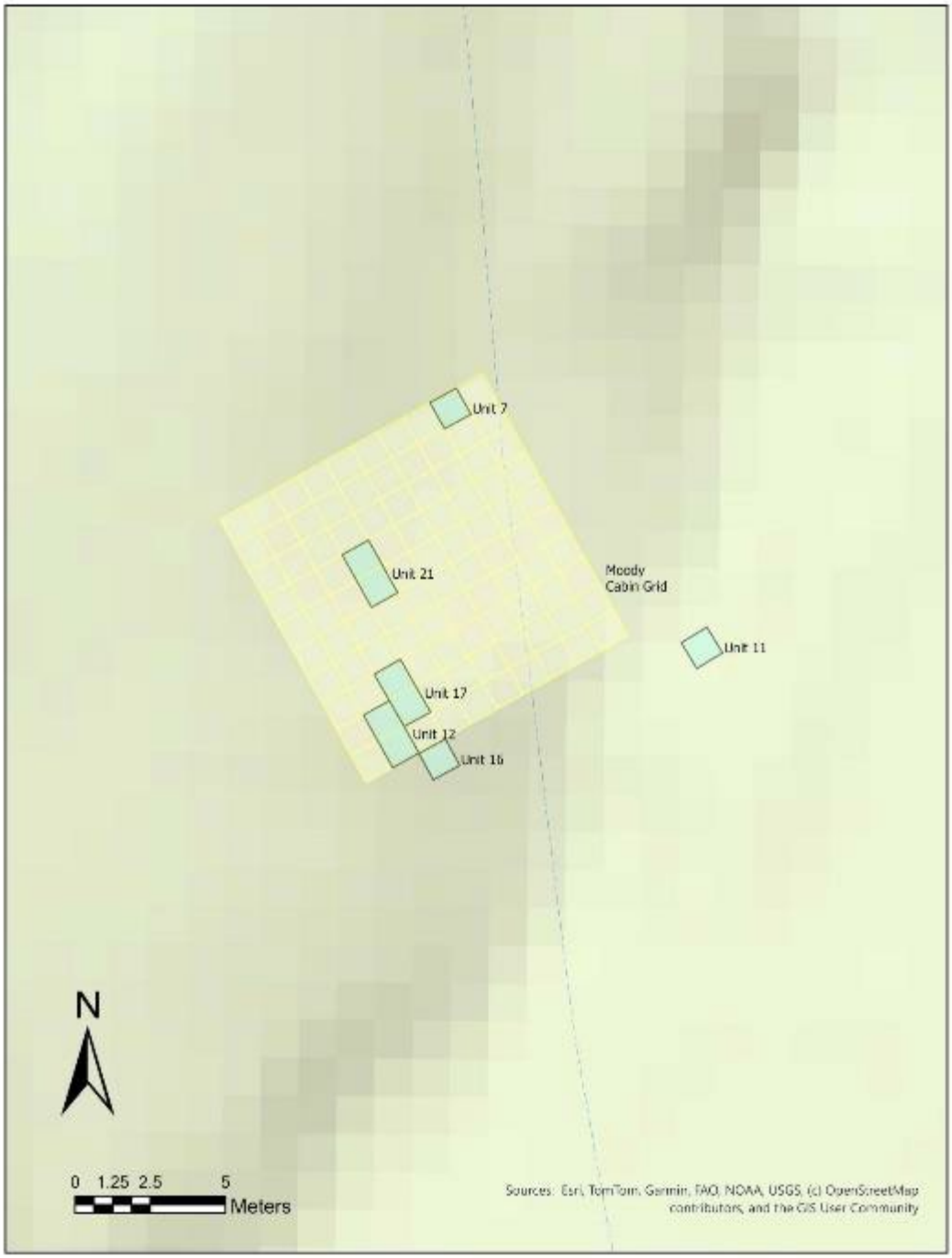


Figure 108. Units excavated at Moody Cabin Site from Fall 2023 to Fall 2024.

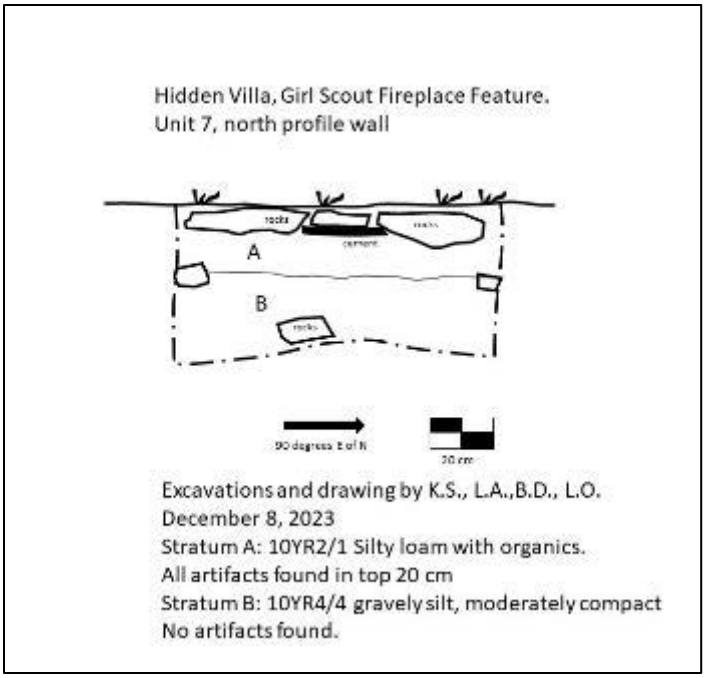


Figure 109. Unit 7 north wall profile. Note the cement material that the flat cobbles are laid into. This is the basal course of the Girl Scout Fireplace.

Figure 110. Girl Scouts shooting target practice in 1920 (Slate online magazine. https://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2012/03/09/girl_scouts_100th_anniversary_juliette_gordon_low_s_group_has_always_been_ahead_of_its_time_.html . Accessed June 1, 2025.

Figure 111. Unit 7 opening excavations. Note the likely Girl Scout Campground Firepit feature at the left.

Figure 112. Unit 7 cleaning up first level. Note the Girl Scout fireplace basal stones at left.

Unit 11

A surface survey of the surrounding area using metal detection, revealed a concentration of artifacts along the southeastern slope leading down to the south fork of the creek. Artifacts recovered include square nails, blown glass, and other materials dating to the 1800s. To investigate further, Unit 11 was placed on a gentle downslope in the area with the highest surface artifact density (Figure 113). Preliminary analysis of Unit 11 suggests the presence of domestic debris from the late 1800s, indicating a possible nearby habitation site tied to Moody Cabin. Other units focused on pinpointing the exact location of the associated cabin. Overall, evidence from the excavated units 7 and 11 suggests two main periods of occupation in the area: an earlier phase associated with the Moody Cabin and a later phase linked to the Girl Scout camp.

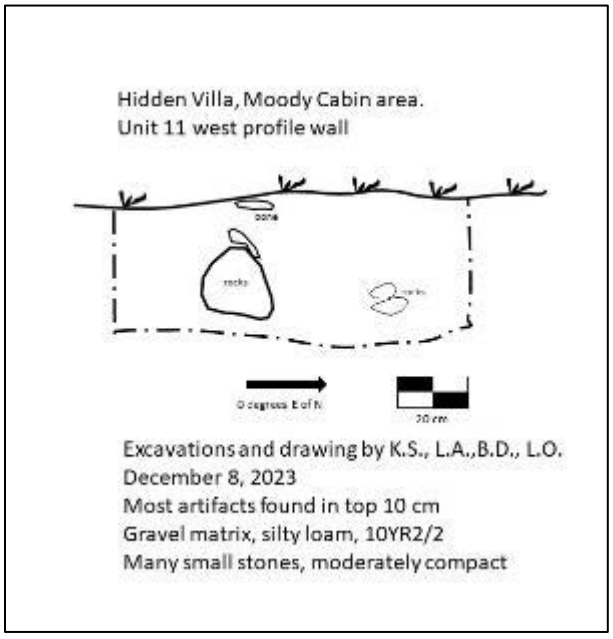


Figure 113. Unit 11 profile drawing.

Units 12, 16, and 17

During the Spring 2024 field season three units were excavated in the southern portion of the Moody Cabin Site grid (Figure 114). The excavations were initiated in order to expose river cobbles that were found at surface level. Upon exposure, the cobbles exhibited a northerly facing alignment. Dense deposits of square head nails were recovered. In the northern section of unit 12 a dense carbon deposit was found in front of the cobbles. The burned feature was likely a buried plank that had burned *in situ* and crossed both units 12 and 17. Most of the charcoal was left intact and collected later for radiocarbon dating. The stratigraphy was very shallow in these units. Most artifacts were found near surface in a darker A horizon and above the burned episode. Below the charcoal the soil matrix turns gravely and is lighter in color with no artifacts (Figures 115, 116 & 117).

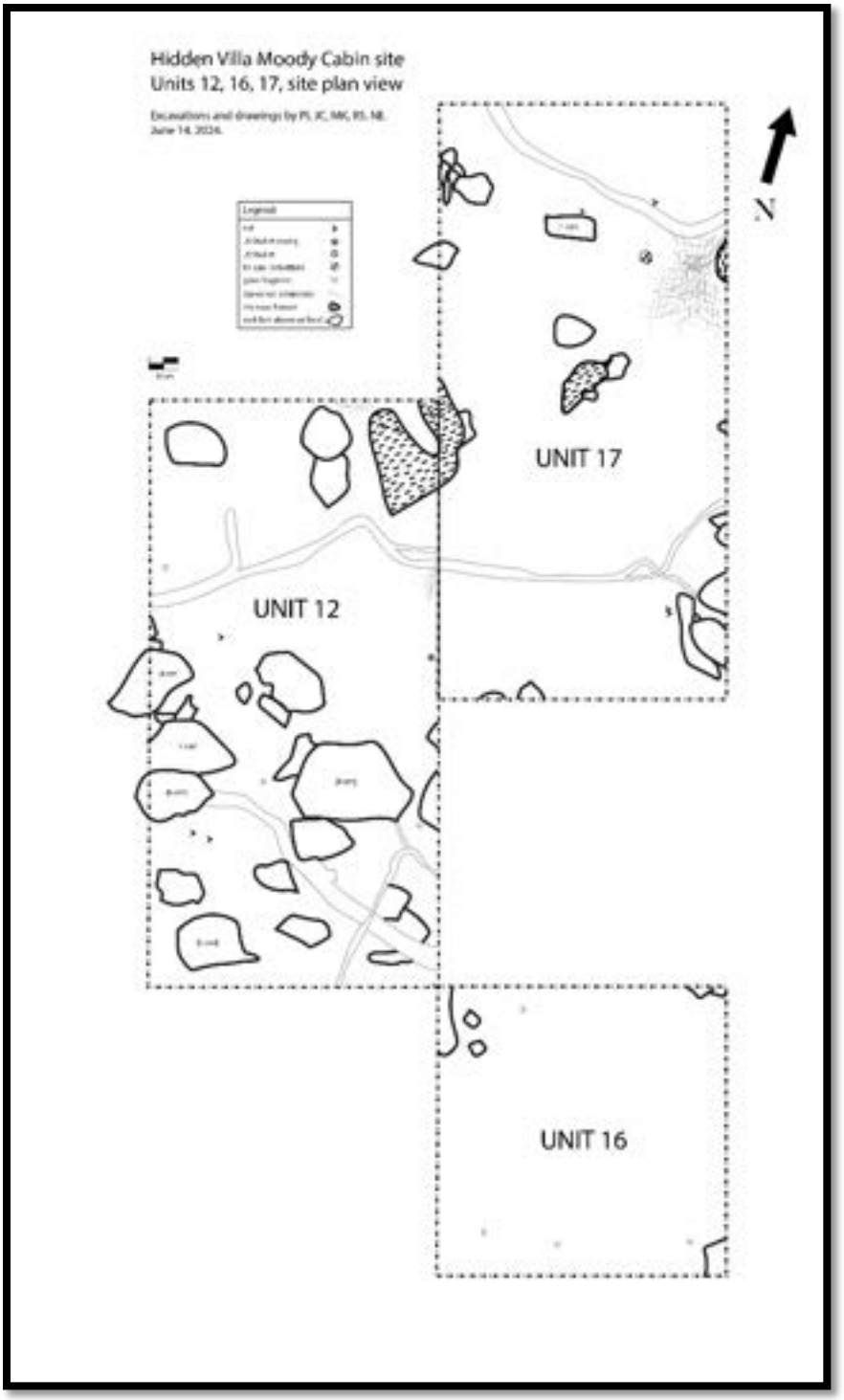


Figure 114. Plan view of Units 12, 16 and 17. The burned plank would have stretched from the north side of unit 12 diagonally into unit 17 in the areas where the burned carbon were exposed.

Figure 115. Unit 12 Cleaning, with Unit 16 at right, photo taken facing east.

Figure 116. Setting up unit 17 with unit 16 at right and unit 12 foreground. The burned wood feature which is now a carbon deposit is seen in the upper left corner of the front unit (#12). Taken facing east.

Figure 117. Unit 17 excavation at right, with unit 12 being cleaned at left. The burned beam or board extended into unit 17. If this is evidence of Moody Cabin, it would be adjacent to the stagecoach route which is seen in the background. Taken facing northwest.

Unit 21 *(Leslie Nguyen)*

Further intensive GPR work identified an anomaly to the north of Unit 17. Unit 21 was a 1-x-2-m unit placed to test the GPR data (Figure 118). A small architectural feature was uncovered on the north end of the unit. The excavation was in three 10 centimeter levels using screens in order to separate artifacts, and recording any perceived changes in soil that we encountered. When artifacts were encountered, we would catalog them by material and bag them. When all the artifacts were bagged and labeled we took them back to the lab to clean and catalog each by material. A complete ArcGIS story map was created by Stella Loh (https://arcg.is/1TWvSH0)

The majority of the artifacts were found in the first level to include bullet casings, nails, glass, rusted metal, charcoal, a church key, and a metal hook (Figure 119). There was a large concentration of charcoal labeled Feature 1. In level 2, the artifact density was much lower with only a few nails and some charcoal. There were no artifacts found in level 3, only charcoal. Feature 2 was a grouping of three larger rocks. the top of which was visible from the ground surface. By the beginning of level 3 the three rocks were uncovered completely (Figures 120-126). We believe the feature is an architectural feature such as a stone pier that would support wooden crossbeams, perhaps on a porch or patio, and possibly Moody's cabin.

The first layer of our unit consisted of loose, dark loamy soil (2.5y 3/1 Munsell). The matrix was darker in some areas where charcoal was concentrated. The soil became lighter in

color (10YR 3/3 Munsell) in level 2 and much rockier, with acorn to softball-size rocks and pebbles. The dirt in level 2 maintained the same loose consistency. Layer 3 had lighter, moist soil with the same Munsell as the previous layer. Larger rocks emerged, revealing the completed rock feature, which we believe to be a cabin foundation (stone pier). By the time we were done with level 2, we came to the conclusion that the three large rocks in our feature were likely a part of the foundation of Moody's cabin due to its unnatural placement and cut. Feature 2 was most likely the front facing, northeast corner of Moody's cabin. The creek would be running down on the left side of the cabin with a stagecoach road on the left. Moody would have had an elevated view of the landscape from where his cabin is.

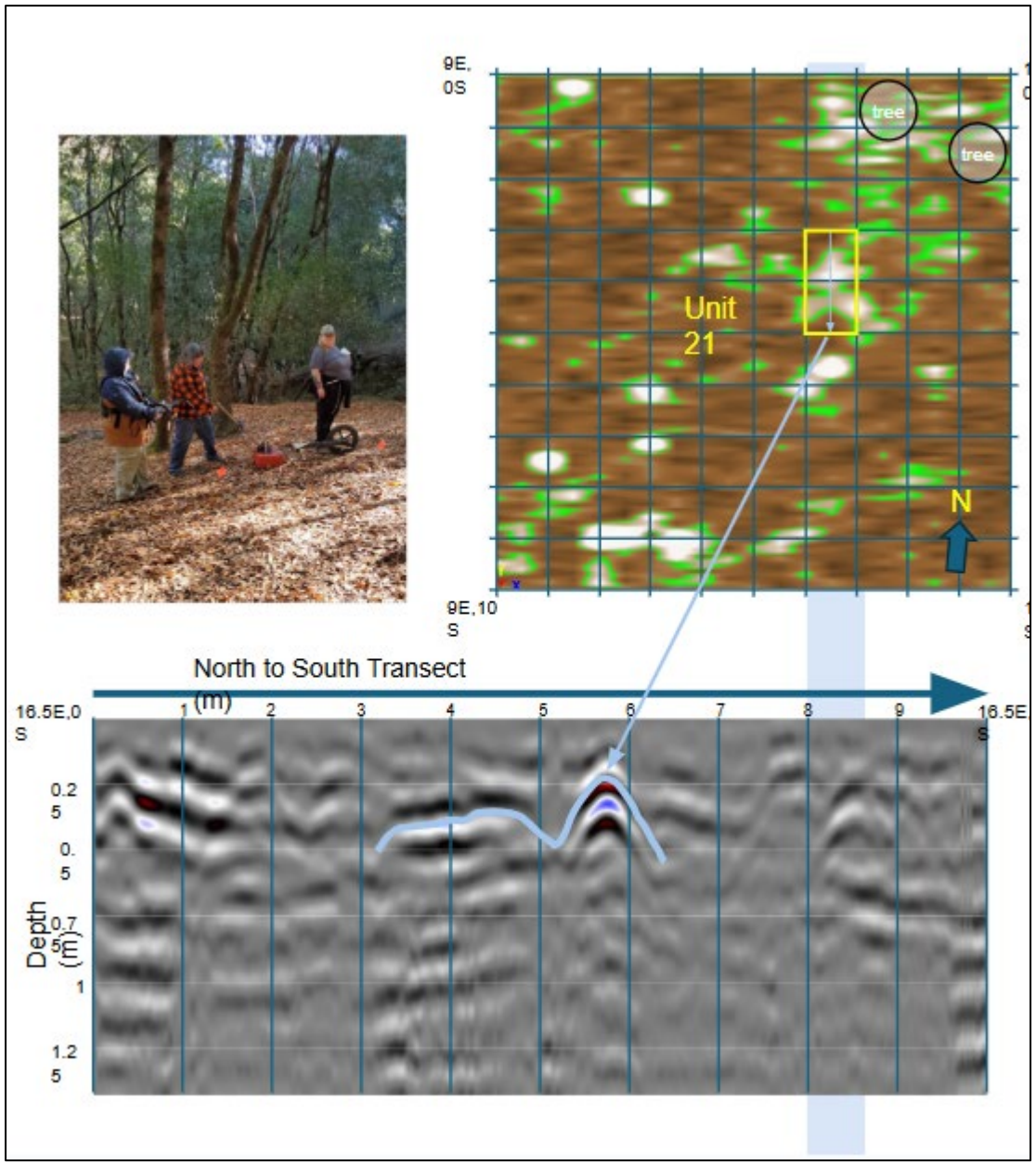


Figure 118. Ground-penetrating radar survey of the Moody Cabin area. This is a 10-x-10-m grid. This image shows how the decision-making process was carried out for determining excavation locations.

Figure 119. Typical artifact photo of a church key that would have been used to open tins of food.


Figure 120. Opening photograph of Unit 21, view south.

Figure 121. Exposure of Features 1 (background) and 2 (foreground) during excavation of level 1. View south.

Figure 121. Feature 2 (cabin foundation) at Level 2

Figure 123. Base of level 2 in Unit 21.

Feature 124. Feature 2 at Level 3 base. Closing of unit 21.

Feature 125. Photogrammetry of northwest corner of unit with Feature 2, a proposed architectural feature aligned north-northeast, a possible corner feature for a basal risers of a cabin (name of feature escapes me now). Image generated in 3D Viewer using Sketch Fab data gathered using Apple IPhone 16 Pro.

Figure 126. Image from the internet of a typical pier and beam construction on an old cabin.

Units 14, 15, 18, 19, & 20

A series of units placed at the back of the White House were an attempt to document phases of trash deposition over time (Figure 65).

Units 14, 15, and 18 were placed along a pathway from the shed to the side yard of the White House as one walks towards the pig shed (Figure 127). These units were placed in line with the front of the shed at a distance of 8m and 13m from the north corner of the shed (which is the right side as you face the front of the shed). Along the pathway many artifacts were identified on the surface, such as ceramic fine ware, nails, and glass. Much of the area of excavation was covered with vegetation (miner's lettuce) and decomposing logs.

Excavation levels of 10 cm depth were carried out in unit 14 with moderate density of historic era artifacts recovered. The unit was closed at 60 cm below ground surface as the excavations entered into a lighter colored gravel soil (Figure 128). The highest density of artifacts was at the base of level 3 at approximately 30 cm bgs (Figure 129). Most of the artifacts were found with decomposing redwood planks that were also part of the trash feature.

Units 15 and 18 were adjacent 1-x-1-m squares (Figure 130). Unit 18 was placed further south and upslope from unit 15 in order to expose the trash deposit. Each unit was excavated to a depth between 50 and 60 cm below ground surface (Figure 131). Although some artifacts were recovered, the density was not as extensive as unit 14.

Unit 19 was placed in the side yard over an anomaly identified by GPR. It proved to be an water pipe and the unit did not recover anything else significant. It was a learning tool for identifying uninteresting PVC pipes (Figure 132).

Unit 20 was placed just to the east-southeast of the storage shed because an old photo of a summer camper with a horse showed a small privy-like structure alongside the shed (Figure 133). The matrix in this unit was very hard packed and it was hard to excavate. It consisted primarily of hard gravel that contained no artifacts (Figure 134). The hope of finding a privy was not realized.

Overall, these units did not clearly distinguish distinct midden layers. While there was sufficient amounts of trash recovered within a level of burning, it was not stratigraphically distinctive. We did not identify earlier ground surface deposits. Nevertheless, we will be able to summarize some of the activities in the area after further laboratory analysis.

Figure 127. Units 14, 15, and 18 between the wood shed and the white house seen to the right.

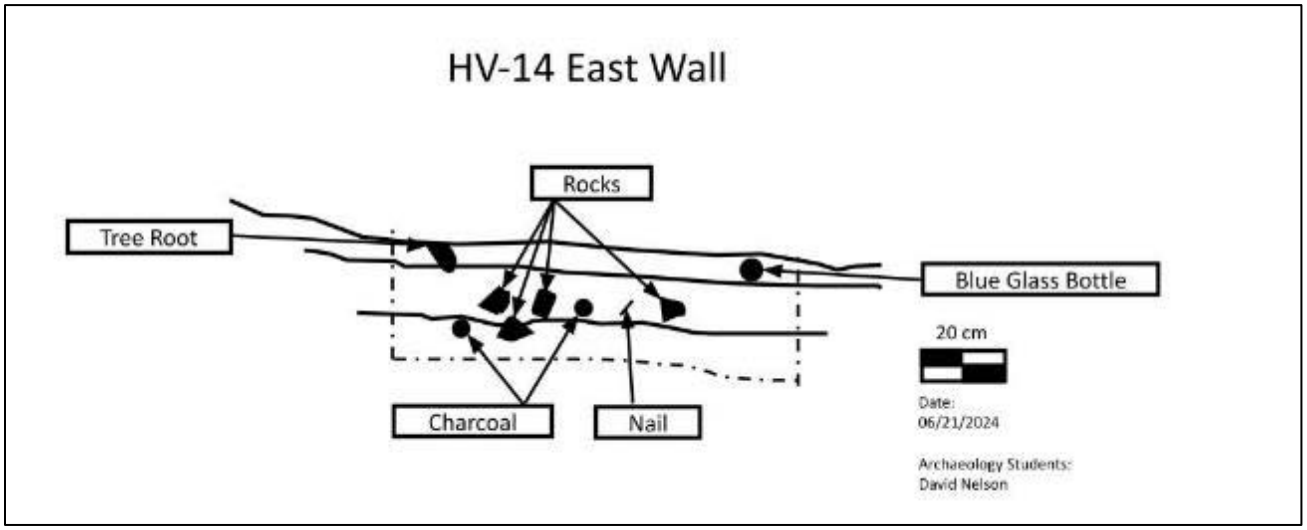


Figure 128. East wall profile of Unit 14 (produced by David Nelson)

Figure 129. Unit 14 closing photograph.

Figure 130. Units 15 and 18 being shown to a group of children visiting the farm.

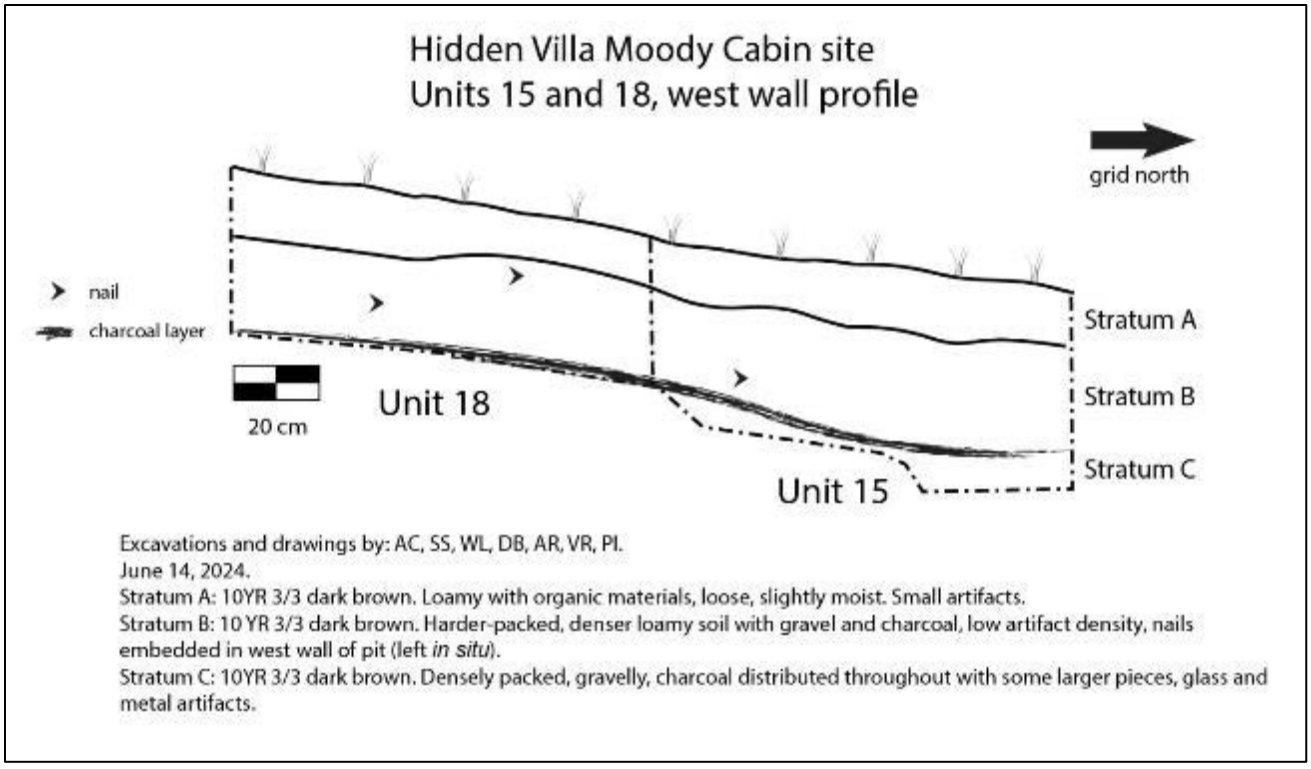


Figure 131. Profile of Units 15 and 18.

Figure 132. Unit 19 closing image. Plastic PVC pipe is bottom left. Two auger holes documented sterile soil to a depth of 100cm.

Figure 133. Visible in the background of this undated photograph are several small structures alongside the shed.

Figure 134. Profile of Unit 20 showing the gravel matrix below an orange brown deposit similar to that seen in Units 2 and 3 near the barn. Very few artifacts were found in this unit.

Archival Work *(Eric Flint and Mike Huggins)*

Working in conjunction with the History Department, the new Archival Lab was opened at Foothill College with the first project focusing on the trove of documents from Hidden Villa. The archival work from Hidden Villa consists of pictures, maps and other documents with history and anthropology students combing through to identify key features, and storing this data away to enable future investigation. We have also found the benefits of leveraging existing archival data; utilizing older pictures and newspapers from long ago to guide today's fieldwork; and, compiling newsletter data from Hidden Villa to summarize information regarding indigenous groups, individuals, and practices, to benefit researchers and community members alike. Hidden Villa also has a rich trove of documents including, pictures and negatives, letters, and other correspondence. At the Archives the contents are studied, places and people identified, and details logged meticulously into a database whose contents are double checked for accuracy. To date, thousands of documents have been identified, logged, QA'd and digitized. The work is ongoing to take some of these documents and digitize them,. This allows the loose documents to be safely stored away while the database and digitized copies are available for use by anyone wishing to study Hidden Villa, Mountain View history, history of summer camps, Cesar Chavez, and the National Farm Workers Movement, or any number of other keywords that have some connection with life at Hidden Villa over the years.

Laboratory Analysis

During the Winter Quarters 2024 and 2025, the Foothill student teams processed and analyzed the assemblage from Hidden Villa. The cultural material from each unit was summarized (Figures 135 & 136).

 F

Figure 135. Spring 2023 team of students processing artifacts in the afternoons.

Figure 136. Analysis of faunal remains found at base of Unit 1, likely a small rabbit deposited in the riverbank and subsequently buried and preserved.

Example laboratory analysis: Bullet casings by Stella Loh

By the end of Fall 2024, a total of 40 bullet-related artifacts were found and cataloged, such as a shot gun pellet, a bullet, a bullet hole through a tin can, and various sizes of bullet casings (Figure 137), with a majority being .22 rimfire casings.

The shot gun pellet (#1.5 Buckshot), bullet, bullet hole, along with unidentifiable headstamp casings of sizes .22 rimfire, 9mm, and 14mm centerfire cannot be dated. Among all the casings, 33 of them could be identified by 5 different headstamps, with 32 of them being .22 rimfire (left four), and 1 of them 12 gauge shot shell (right most). The .22 rimfire came in different lengths and the casings found in our sites are in majority .22 LR/L and some .22 short.

Figure 137. Examples of bullet casings recovered at Hidden Villa

Historical Context of Bullets

The following is an example of the information Stella Loh gathered on the bullets recovered through Spring 2024 (see Figure 138). The .22 short was first introduced in 1857, used mainly as an inexpensive, quiet round for practice by recreational shooters. It was also used in pocket pistols and mini-revolvers and was popular during the American Civil War, carried as personal weapons by soldiers on both sides. A long version (.22 Long) was developed around 1871 to increase the power of the .22 Short by increasing the powder capacity (Figure 139). It could be chambered in a large number of pistols and rifles. The .22 Long Rifle (.22 LR) was an old cartridge developed by Peters Cartridge in 1887, and practically every type of rifle and handgun is offered in the .22 LR. It was adapted to both rifles and pistols, and became the most popular sporting and target shooting cartridge in the world. It was also popular for small game hunting.

The 12-gauge shotgun is useful in hunting various types of game (mostly small game like waterfowl), home defense, and sport shooting. The #1.5 Buckshot (shot gun pellet, cannot be dated) can be used for home defense, or for hunting medium to large games like deer or elk. The 14mm centerfire (cannot be dated) can be used for either rifles or shotguns. The 9mm bullet (cannot be dated) can be used for handguns or rifles.

The distribution of bullet related artifacts at Hidden Villa was documented by density per unit (Figure 140). Units 7, 12, 16, 17 and 21 at the Old Moody House site have the majority of .22 bullet-casing findings (29 out of 33 identified).

Bullet casings in general are hard to date, due to their extremely long shelf lives. However, it is possible to determine their manufacturing dates by the headstamps, materials used, and ammunition box design. In our case, there are no ammunition boxes that survived, and the material used (copper/brass/nickel) is hard to determine visually. The date range of the manufacturing date is used for reference. The date range of the specific headstamps are referenced from data provided by professional cartridge collectors on an auction site, shown in figures below, and the date range of the units can be narrowed down (Figures 138-142).

As can be seen, the units in the Old Moody House site are dated to mostly after 1931, as the "Super-X" headstamp casings (manufactured year 1931~1991) were only found in this area, but not around the White House area. The #1.5 Buckshot pellet was also found here. On the other hand, the shot shell and the "US" headstamp casing dated to 1890~1910/1926 were found in the White House area.

Both the 14mm casing and 12 gauge shot shell were found in unit 15 & 18 (adjacent), and a total of 5 .22 rimfire (including unidentified) were found near the White House.

Hidden Villa - Bullets Related Findings Summary

Unit Number	Level	Unidentified	.22 "U"	.22 "H"	.22 "super X"	.22 "US"	9mm	14mm	12 gauge (21mm)	Bullets	Bullet Hole	TOTAL	Notes
2	0-12cm		1									1	• 15mm (.22 long/LR)
4	0-10cm					1						1	• US Casing - 10mm (.22 short) • Bullet - 18mm (.22 short)
	10-20cm									0.22			
5	Surface										1	0	• Hole < 10mm
6	Surface	1										1	• Missing from storage
14	20-30cm		1									1	• U - 15mm (.22 long/LR)
15	20-40cm								1			1	• No length
18	20-40cm						1					2	• 20mm length - not identifiable
	40-50cm							1					• 50mm long
19	0-10cm	1										1	• 15mm (.22 long/LR)
7	0-20cm		7		2	2						13	• U - 15mm x 7 (.22 long/LR) • X - 15mm x 2 (.22 long/LR) • US - 15mm x 2 (.22 long/LR)
	20-40cm		1		1								• U - 15mm x 1 (.22 long/LR) • X - 10mm? (eroded)
12	0-10cm		1		1					Shot Gun Pellet		2	• Pellet ~8mm • U - 10mm (.22 short) • X - 15mm (.22 long/LR)
16	0-10cm		1									1	• U - 10mm (.22 short)
17	0-10cm		1		3							4	• X - 15mm x 3 (.22 long/LR) • U - eroded 5mm left
21	0-10cm		6	1	2							9	• X - 15mm x 2 (.22 long/LR) • U - 15mm x 3, 1cm x 1, 2 unknown (both size) • H - 10mm x 1 (.22 short)
TOTAL		2	19	1	9	3	1	1	1	2	1		

Near Old Moody House Within 30 yards of Stagecoach Halfway House 15 & 18 Adjacent Unit

Figure 138. Excerpt of database with firearm related artifacts.

Figure 139. .22 Bullet

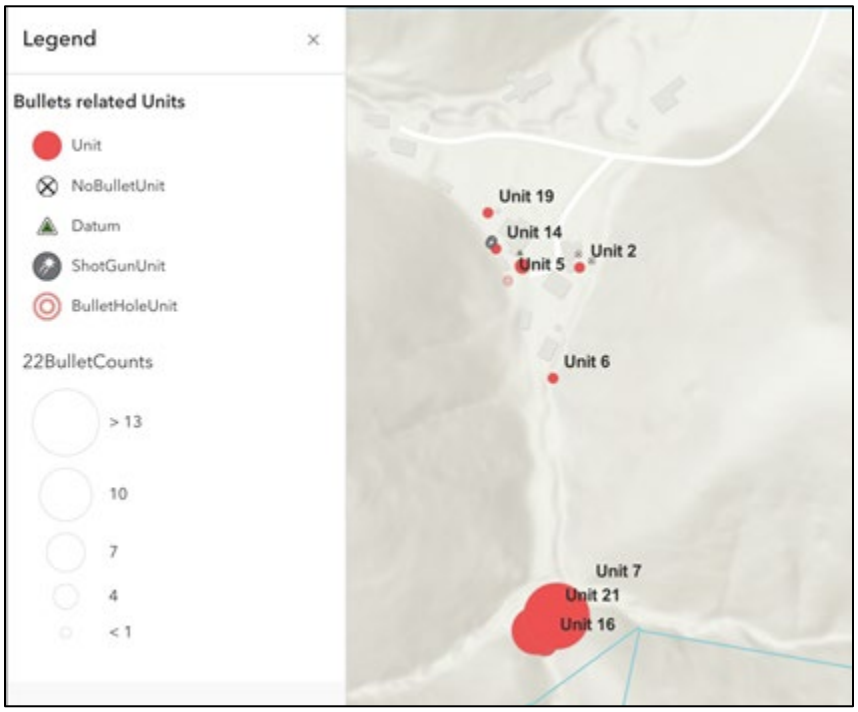


Figure 140. Density map of bullet related artifacts.

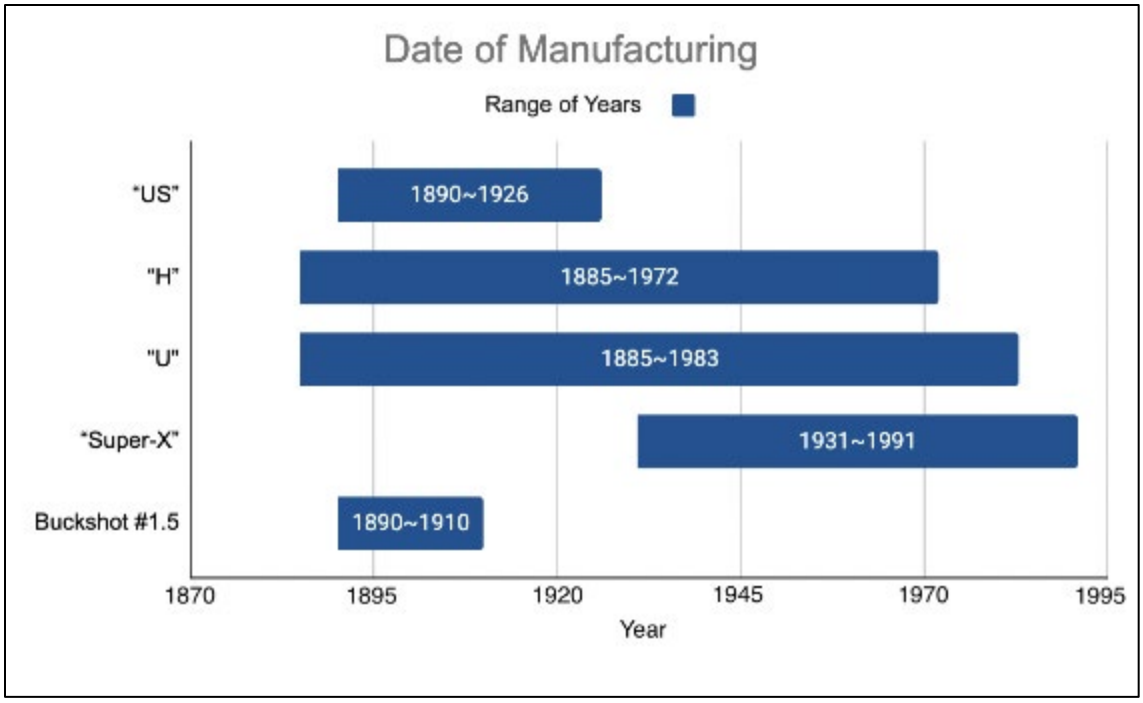


Figure 141. Date of manufacture based on headstamps.

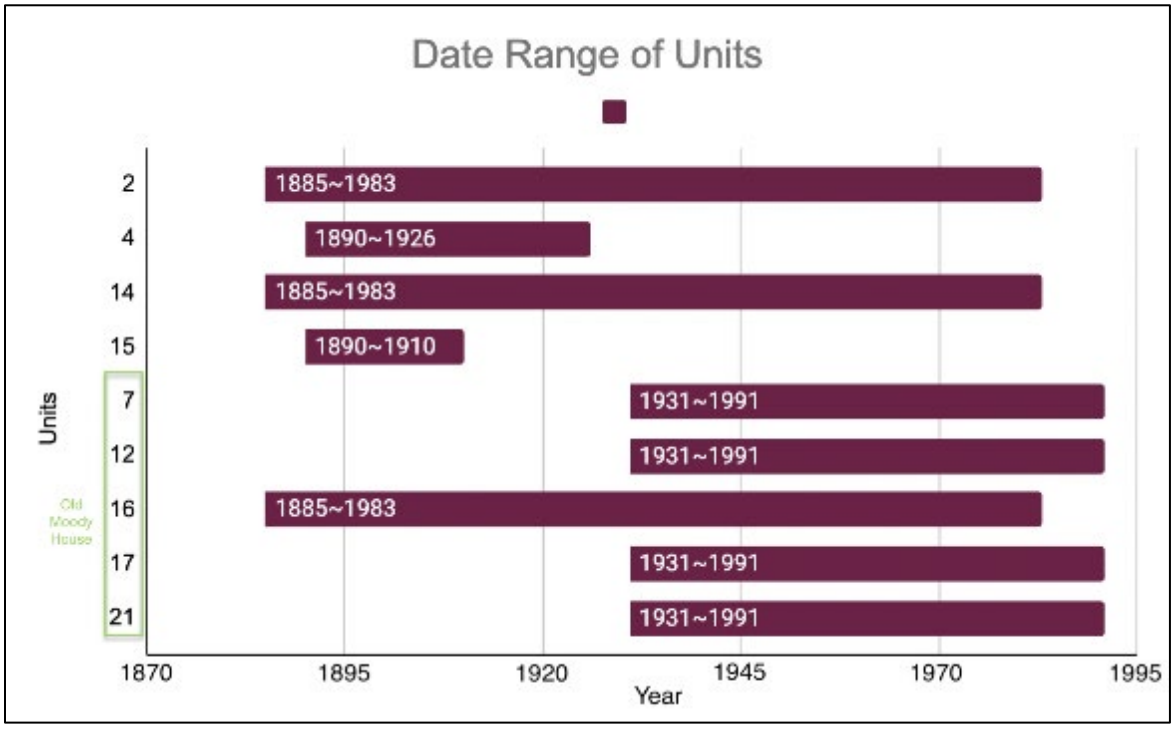


Figure 142. Date range of excavation units based on the bullet analysis. This shows two generalized episodes of deposition.

Catalog and Database

Laboratory processing of all artifact finds was conducted by the students at the Foothill College Laboratory. The artifacts were washed, counted, weighed, given a catalog number, and bagged with a tag for future analysis. This 'first pass' at lab analysis is an initial sorting that gives the students experience and classifies the artifacts according to material and form. In the following photograph (Figure 143) the tag next to the bullet casing states 018-010, which indicates that the Hidden Villa is accession number 018 at Foothill College, and this is the 10th artifact in the catalog

Figure 143. Typical photograph of an artifact. Here shown is a bullet casing. This is the 10th artifact recorded from the Hidden Villa area, which was given accession number '018' in the lab. All artifact catalog numbers begin with 018. In addition, we know that the artifact was found in Unit 2, level 1, which was between 0-12 centimeters below ground surface.

Service Projects at Hidden Villa

During each field season, the student group conducted service work with the Hidden Villa staff. On different occasions, the students helped with trail maintenance, making raised beds in the garden, clearing out debris from the cement lined ponds, cleaning the front of the stone terracing next to the Duveneck home, digging a trench at the new chicken coop, and many more things. It is important for the group to experience volunteering for the Hidden Villa organization, because so much of what we do is predicated on 'career advancement' we then fail to take moments to do the good work of helping others. Foothill College and our students are dedicated to being of service to others and these were amazing opportunities. Thanks to the staff for making this happen at the farm.

The service work in the Fall of 2023 was in several stages. First, some archaeology work was performed adjacent to the Duveneck home in order to clear up questions about associated architecture features. The team was asked by the owners to document both terrace walls and an

old lily pond. First, a shallow terrace wall was cleared of debris and Unit 8 was dug, a 1-x-2-m excavation placed on top of an old terrace wall built next to the Duveneck home (Figures 144-148). Unit 8 cleared several courses of the rock wall that was designed to retain earth that was coming off the hill slope. The unit was terminated following the cleaning of the stone architecture and then mapped.

Next, a cement lined lily pond was cleared of debris (Figures 149 & 150). The pond was adjacent to Adobe Creek and was fed by small access channels. The creek has cut much lower into its channel since construction and does not flow into the pond which was filled with earth. Our service project team managed to remove about half of the rich organic earth for the farm.

During another field season students helped construct wire mesh cages to place inside raised agricultural beds to stop rodents from damaging the crops (Figure 151). More students dug out rectangular areas for the beds (Figures 152-154). That season another team recovered old PVC piping used for previous iterations of the spring fed water system. In the Fall of 2024 the team dug trenches around the base of the new hen house to be filled in with gravel (Figure 155). All this was incredibly rewarding. Students were fulfilled by helping the Hidden Villa staff.

Conclusion

Many students begin the Foothill College archaeology program hoping to get training that will help them transition to jobs in the fields of archaeology (Figure 156), yet because of Hidden Villa they leave with a fuller appreciation of service and connection to the land. Some of their projects go deeper in terms of land stewardship. For example, two students designed a website and database to help the farm identify plants and trees on the property. Adrienne Rodriguez and Lynn Porcedda were able to document all the exotic trees around the White House (Figure 157). Other students joined together to make posters and present at the Society for California Archaeology (Figure 158). The work and learning at Hidden Villa has become a launching pad for so many careers in archaeology (Figure 159). The Farm should be very proud of this accomplishment, something in the long tradition of successes with the community. Happily, the field programs at Hidden Villa are continuing. Our experiences have been incredibly positive. Many exciting stories can be told about the history of this place. We have learned so much and are continuing to learn.

Figure 144. Approximate location of Unit 8 prior to start. Terrace walls alongside Duveneck home are being exposed. Adobe Creek is background right.

Figure 145. Eric Flint standing in front of exposed terrace architecture. The Duveneck house is seen background left.

Figure 146. Students measuring out unit 8 over the terrace wall.

Figure 147. Unit 8 was excavated in front of the terrace wall to document the architecture.

Figure 148. Final photograph of Unit 8 in front of the terrace walls next to the Duveneck home.

Figure 149. Measuring and mapping the lily pond adjacent to the Duveneck home.

Figure 150. Excavating the lily ponds that were built by the Duvenecks near their house.

Figure 151. Cutting wire mesh for planter boxes.

Figure 152. Digging planter boxes.

Figure 153. Digging for planter boxes.

Figure 154. Helping in the Teaching Garden to make raised planter beds.

Figure 155. Digging a trench at the base of the new chicken coop just to the west of the white house during the Fall 2024 work project.

Figure 156. Every student is preparing for the workforce. Many are being hired by local CRM firms (Cultural Resource Management) based on their experiences at Hidden Villa. Here they are learning the total station mapping device.

Figure 157. Plant Database by Adrienne Rodriguez and Lynn Porcedda.

Figure 158. Student posters are being presented at conferences in California.

Figure 159. Lectures with students often take place in a circle in back of the White House. The open-air classroom and land-based education fit so well with archaeology training.

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