

## A POSSIBLE CUYACAMA COMPLEX SITE AT CA-SDI-945, CAMP HAUL-CU-CUISH, CUYAMACA RANCHO STATE PARK, CALIFORNIA

MONICA GUERRERO

*This paper compares the types of artifacts at CA-SDI-945 to the artifact assemblage for the Cuyamaca Complex type site, CA-SDI-860. By comparing the artifacts from these two sites, I show that the SDI-945 artifacts are similar to SDI-860, tentatively indicating that CA-SDI-945 may be attributable to the Cuyamaca Complex.*

The goal of this paper is to compare the types of artifacts at CA-SDI-945, also known as Camp Hual-Cu-Cuish, to the artifact assemblage for the Cuyamaca Complex type site, CA-SDI-860, also known as Dripping Springs. By comparing the artifacts from these two sites, I will illustrate how SDI-945 has similar patterns to SDI-860, a late prehistoric and historic summer village site located in the East Mesa area of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, is considered to be one of the largest sites in the region (True 1970:11). Past researchers state that the cultural material associated with this complex is confined to this region of San Diego; however, the geographic extent of the Cuyamaca Complex is not known (True 1970:54).

During test excavations in 1999, five units were excavated at SDI-945 (see Gamble, this volume, pp. 71-84). I will examine only units 1, 2, 3, and 4 in this paper. Information on Unit 5 is not available, as it was not completely excavated in 1999 due to time constraints. Unit 5 was reopened in 2000, and the recovered items from this unit and as four additional ones (units 6, 7, 8, and 9) are currently being analyzed. This paper will examine artifact types that exemplify the similarities that SDI-945 and SDI-860 share. Artifact types included in this discussion are ceramics, chipped stone, steatite, and shell items. Disturbance at this site is seen in the form of bioturbation by gophers and ground squirrels, road construction, and campfires by the Boy Scouts who had previously used this property (Schwaderer *et al.* 1999).

### CERAMICS

Ceramics are a temporal indicator in that they were not in use in the region until approximately A.D.

1000 (Hildebrand *et al.* n.d.). At approximately A.D. 1000-1500, during the Patayan II period, the use of ceramics spread west towards the Peninsular Range. Some traits that are indicative of this period include recurved rims and a wider variety of vessel forms (Waters 1982:287). Ceramics are thought to have been used in this region for cooking, storage, and burial practices (Davis 1967:61; True 1970). At SDI-945 there is a high concentration of ceramics on the surface, and they are present in all levels of the excavation units. Of the artifacts recovered from the excavations, ceramics had the second largest concentration, except for bone artifacts, while the majority of surface artifacts collected were ceramics. Because there are ceramics present in every level, this is not thought to be a pre-ceramic site. It is possible, however, that if other units are opened in different areas of the site, ceramics may not be found in all levels. Tentatively, it can be stated that the past occupation of this site may be as early as A.D. 1000 when considering the ubiquitous presence of ceramics on the surface and in the excavated units.

True (1966, 1970) states that an emphasis on the use of ceramics is a trait typical of the Cuyamaca Complex. He distinguishes this complex from the San Luis Rey Complex, where there are lower concentrations and less variety of ceramics found in the artifact assemblage (True 1966; True *et al.* 1973, 1991). In the Cuyamaca region, ceramics can be found in a wide range of forms varying from basic ollas to effigy forms (True 1970:54). At SDI-860, the most common type of diagnostic sherd found was incised body and rim sherds and worked irregular forms. Other, less common types were fragments of miniature vessels, clay pipes (bow pipes), clay rattles, effigies, and clay figurines.

Charts 1 through 4 (Figure 1, A-D) show the counts of bone, ceramics, chipped stone, and ground stone in each of the units. In Unit 1, ceramics are present in every level, with the highest concentration between 40 and 50 cm. The number of artifacts appears to be larger in the lower levels of this unit. A similar pattern exists for Unit 2, where ceramics are present in all levels and a greater concentration of the four artifact types is seen in 30 to 50 cm. Ceramics are present in all levels of Unit 3, with a heavier distribution in the upper levels. Unit 4 is very different from the other units in that bone is only present in the first two levels and it is low in frequency; nevertheless, every level the unit contains ceramics.

Although the amount of ceramics decreases with depth in each unit, it is important to note that both bone and chipped stone also decrease. This may indicate that the site was occupied to a lesser extent earlier in time, rather than an absence of ceramics. In the lowest levels of each of these units, ceramics are still present, but in smaller quantities, which also supports the postulation that this site did not have a pre-ceramic occupation.

From our initial stages of analysis on the ceramics it has been determined that there are two wares present at SDI-945. These are variations of brown wares and buff wares. Brown wares can be divided into two groups, those from the desert and those from the mountains. Desert brown wares are called Salton Brown Wares and originate from sedimentary clays, while Tizon Brown Wares are mountain brown wares that originate from residual clays (Rogers 1936:5; Treganza 1942:158; Van Camp 1979:47; Hildebrand *et al.* n.d.). Both wares have inclusions of mica, but only Tizon Brown Wares contain inclusions of amphibole. (In rare instances amphibole is evident in some Salton Brown Wares.) By analyzing the different mineral compositions of the sherds from SDI-945, a distinction can be made in regards to the origins of the clay sources. This type of hand-specimen analysis is currently being performed on the sherds recovered from both 1999 and 2000 field seasons, and the data are not yet available for discussion in this paper. John Hildebrand is also conducting trace element studies, where 20 sherds from SDI-945 are being examined with a technique called Neutron Activation Analysis (NAA). To date the results from this process are not yet available.

Presently, analysis has been completed on distinguishing the brown wares from buff wares. The results from this identification revealed that 99.9 percent of the sherds are brown wares and only 0.1

percent are buff ware. At SDI-860, 98 percent of the sherds were brown wares and only 2 percent were buff wares. Although the quantity of sherds found at SDI-945 is much lower than what was found at SDI-860, it is important to remember that SDI-860 is a much larger site with living, milling, and cemetery areas. Even with the difference in site size, the percentages for the amount of brown wares and buff wares are very similar.

At SDI-945 various types of diagnostic sherds have been recovered. One basket-impressed sherd was found in the 30-40cm level of Unit 1, one incised rim sherd was found in the 30-40cm level of Unit 5, and one incised body sherd was found in the 1999 surface collection. Additionally, all three sherds were made from brown wares. At SDI-860, 47 incised sherds were recovered from True's (1970) surface collection and excavations. Forty-five of these sherds were made from brown ware and four were made from buff wares. Seventeen basket-impressed sherds were also found, and all were made from brown wares.

Another type of ceramic artifact found at SDI-945 are clay discs. These discs are approximately 1 cm in diameter and 0.5 cm in thickness. True and other scholars state that these discs may have been used as gaming pieces, ornaments, patches on vessels, or even as buttons (True 1970:43; Van Camp 1979:60). Two discs were found in the upper levels of Unit 5, and a third disc was collected during the 2000 surface collections. At Dripping Springs, five clay discs were recovered from the surface collection and excavations. One final note on ceramics is in regard to a fragment of an incised clay pipe that was found in the upper level of Unit 1. Sixty-one clay pipe fragments were found at Dripping Springs. There is a good possibility that the pipe fragment from Camp Hual-Cu-Cuish is part of a bow pipe, which is considered to be the most common type of pipe in the Cuyamaca region. Occasionally straight tubular pipes or fragments of this type are found; however, these are believed to be associated with the Luiseño or Cahuilla cultures (Van Camp 1979:60).

## CHIPPED STONE

A total of 11 projectile points was recovered from the 1999 surface collection and excavation at SDI-945. We were able to determine that eight of these were variations of Cottonwood and Desert Side-notched; the other three were non-diagnostic. Beginning with the Cottonwood type, we have collected one metavolcanic, one obsidian, and one quartz. These

points occur at the surface, and in the upper and lower levels of units 2, 3, and 5. Cottonwood points are common in the late prehistoric record in southern California and the Great Basin area and occur at the same time as Desert Side-notched types (Heizer and Hester 1978:11).

The second type of projectile point found at SDI-945 is the Desert Side-notched. One metavolcanic, one quartz, and three obsidian points of this type were recovered, and all were found in the mid to upper levels of units 2 and 3. Desert Side-notched points are commonly seen in late sites of many regions of Southern California, such as Death Valley, Panamint Valley and here in the Cuyamaca region. At SDI-945, 62 percent of the points found are Desert Side-notched and the other 38 percent are Cottonwood. At SDI-860, 54 percent of the points are Cottonwood and 46 percent are Desert Side-notched. Both of the types of points found at SDI-860 were found in the upper to lower levels, with a higher frequency of points in the upper levels.

Despite the tendency towards the Cottonwood type at SDI-860, the majority of other sites in the Cuyamaca region have more of a preference for Desert Side-notched points (True 1970:45). True saw this preference for these types of points as another factor that differentiated the Cuyamaca Complex from the San Luis Rey Complex. Within the San Luis Rey artifact assemblage there is a higher frequency for variations of Cottonwood points (True *et al.* 1974,1991). This inclination for Desert Side-notched points at other Cuyamaca sites is similar to what we are finding at SDI-945.

The material source for quartz points can be found locally at both SDI-945 and SDI-860. However, two points from SDI-945 and 30 points from SDI-860 are made from a metavolcanic material that is not found locally. Trade or travel to areas such as Jacumba were necessary to obtain this material (Tim Gross, personal communication). Seven points found at SDI-945 and 66 points from SDI-860 were made of obsidian, and this also cannot be found locally. Dr. Steven Shackley at U.C. Berkeley performed obsidian sourcing analysis on 10 samples. It was ascertained in his analysis that the source for this material is Obsidian Butte. Obsidian Butte is located 80 km northeast of the Cuyamaca Mountains in Imperial County, in Lake Cahuilla.

The route of the Colorado River would at times flow directly into the Gulf of California and at other times it would be redirected into the Salton Trough which then formed into Lake Cahuilla (Wilke 1978). When the Colorado River changed course and flowed

directly into the Gulf of California, Lake Cahuilla would dry out. The lake has had intervals of filling in the past, with the most recent occurring between A.D.1625 and 1640 (Hildebrand and Hagstrum 1995:94). When the lake was not filled, it was possible to access obsidian from Obsidian Butte.

The obsidian found in the levels of the excavated units at SDI-945 occurs in the same levels as do ceramics. This leads me to believe that it is plausible that the obsidian found at this site was most likely obtained after approximately A.D. 1000. This is the approximate inception of ceramic use, while post-A.D. 1640 is the next approximate dry interval of Lake Cahuilla that is historically confirmed (Hildebrand and Hagstrum 1995:94; Hildebrand *et al.* n.d.). This would then support the idea that SDI-945 is a late prehistoric site and that it did not have a prior, pre-ceramic occupation.

Another indicator of the Cuyamaca Complex is a worked piece of a metavolcanic material that is thought to be a drill implement. This artifact was found in the upper level of Unit 3. True tentatively describes six types of drill implements made from either metavolcanic stone or quartz that were recovered from SDI-860. Type 6 in True's monograph of the Cuyamaca Rancho State Park is very similar in appearance to what we have found at SDI-945. This object is described as triangular in form, with a concave base, an asymmetrical cross section, and a prominent bulge on one side. However, the drill implement from SDI-945 and the Type-6 drill implement from SDI-860 may actually be preforms of projectile points.

## STEATITE AND SHELL

Thirty-five shell beads were found at SDI-860, while two fragments and one whole shell bead were found at SDI-945. The whole bead from SDI-945 appears to be similar to True's description of a Type-3 bead found at SDI-860. This type is described as a medium to large disc bead made from the curved side sections of the Olivella shell (True 1970:39-40). Shell beads are the most common type found at both sites. The presence of coastal objects such as these infers trade with the coastal groups, or group movement to the coast (Shipek 1991:32).

At SDI-945, one worked piece of steatite was found in the upper levels of Unit 2, and 23 fragments of steatite were found in units 1, 2, 3, and 5. One stone disc bead that is presumed to be made of steatite was found in Unit 3 in the 10-20 cm level, and another in Unit 5 in the 30-40 cm level. A fragment of a steatite

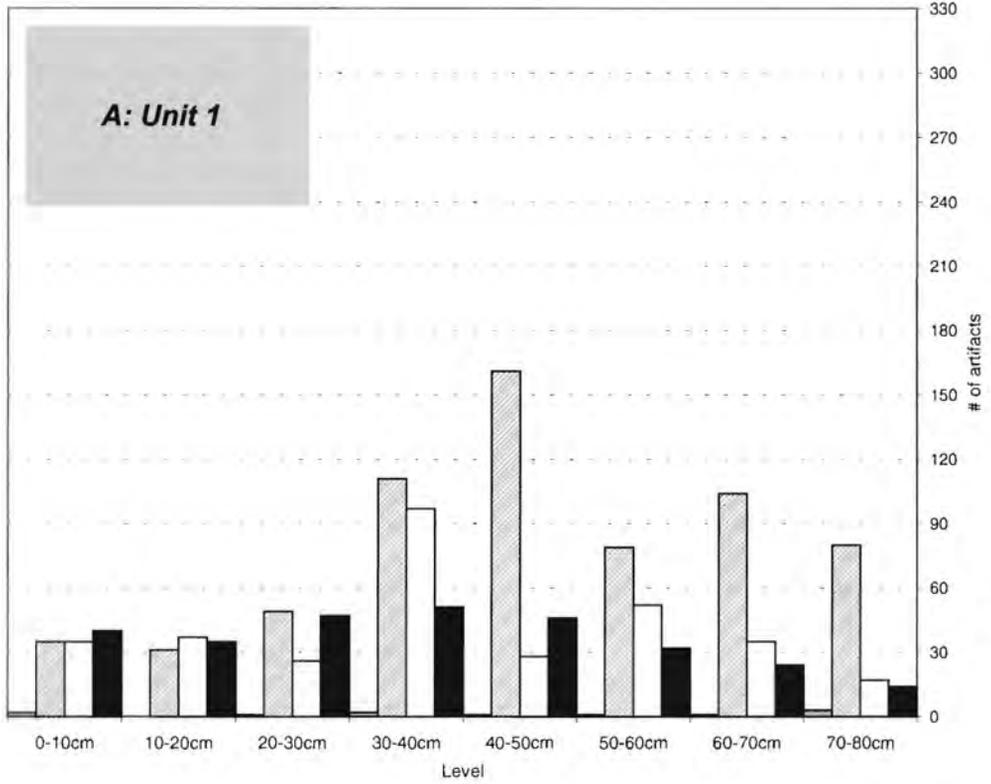
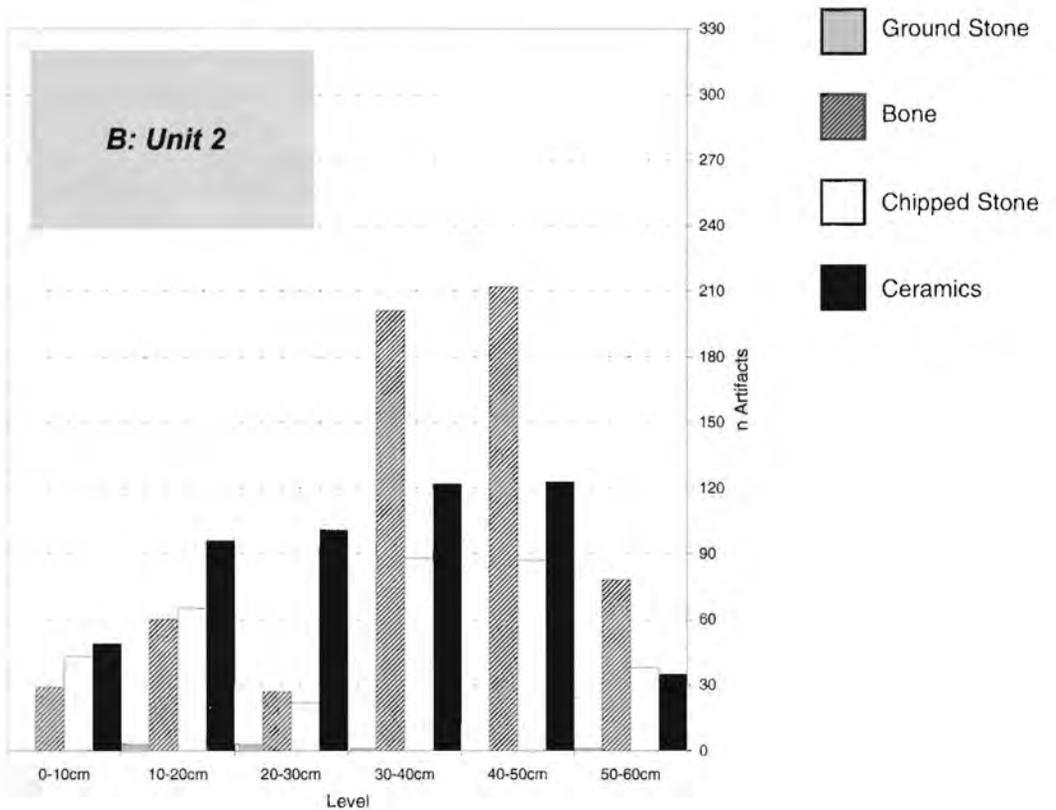
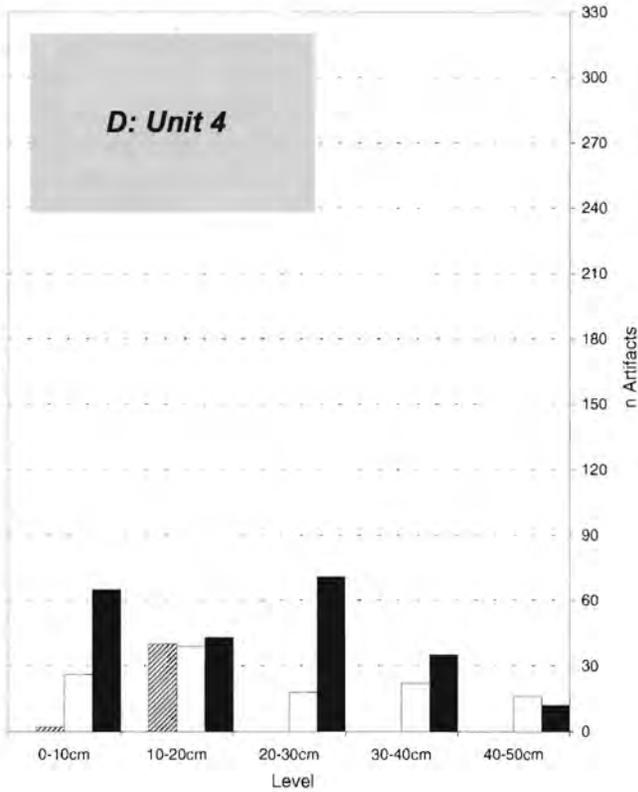
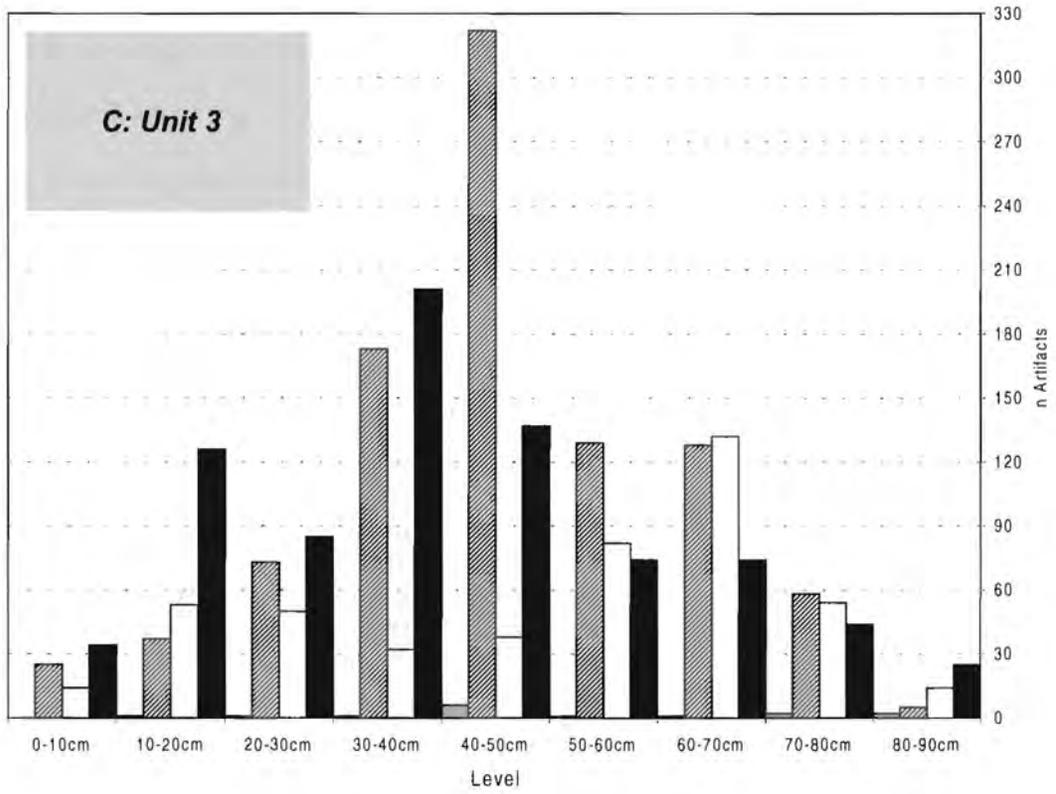


Figure 1: Depth Distribution of Constituents by Unit, CA-SDI-945.





effigy that appears to be in the shape of a seal head was discovered on the surface near units 1,2,3, and 5. At SDI-860, two steatite beads were also found, as well as 14 worked steatite fragments. Steatite and ceramic effigies were not found at SDI-860, but they are found at other sites in the Cuyamaca region. These effigies are thought to represent sea mammal and bird figures (True 1970:40).

Steatite for effigies and other cultural items can be obtained from quarries which are located in different areas of San Diego. The first is Stonewall Peak in the Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, another is a region in Jacumba Valley near the opening of Carrizo Gorge, and a third source is at Boiling Springs in the Laguna Mountains (Parkman 1983:140; Polk 1972:7-8). True (1970:53) suggests that some items may have originated from the Channel Islands and, therefore, there may have been ties with the Chumash. Still, more investigations into the Cuyamaca steatite industry are needed to provide support for this assumption.

The importance of the evidence of steatite (worked or non-worked pieces) is that it is considered to be a defining characteristic of the Cuyamaca Complex and it is not commonly seen in the artifact assemblage for the San Luis Rey Complex. Sites SDI-682 and SDI-308 together, which are the artifact assemblages for the San Luis Rey Complex, contain one piece of worked steatite (True 1970; True *et al.* 1974, 1991) indicating little to no reliance on this material.

## CONCLUSION

The following are some of the traits considered to be indicative of the Cuyamaca Complex (True 1970:53-54):

1. A high frequency of ceramics;
2. A presence of both brown and buff wares, with a higher frequency of brown wares;
3. The use of both Cottonwood and Desert Sided-notched points, with a preference for the latter;
4. A higher frequency of shell beads than stone beads;
5. The use of steatite;
6. The presence of carved steatite and ceramic effigies;
7. Separated living and cemetery areas;
8. Utilization of grave markers;
9. Cremations placed in urns; and
10. Specially-made mortuary offerings.

According to our preliminary analysis, many of the above traits are seen at SDI-945. The large concentration of ceramic artifacts present at SDI-945 plays an important factor in associating this site with SDI-860. We have found a high concentration of ceramics in every level of units 1, 2, 3, and 5, and a variety of sherds are present at this site. Because of the occurrence of ceramics in every level, it is assumed that this is a late prehistoric site, as is SDI-860. Finally, there is a striking similarity in the higher frequency of brown wares than buff wares found at both SDI-860 and SDI-945.

Although projectile points found at SDI-945 include a higher frequency of Desert Side-notched, and SDI-860 had a higher frequency of Cottonwood points, True (1970:45) states that the majority of sites in the Cuyamaca region have a higher frequency for the Desert Side-notched points. For both SDI-860 and SDI-945, there is more of a tendency for shell beads than for stone (steatite) beads. Lastly, as with SDI-860, steatite is present at SDI-945, which may indicate a late prehistoric steatite industry. This last comparison needs further investigation in regards to the quarries from which these steatite artifacts may have derived.

From the initial investigations that have been carried out at this site, it is tentatively concluded that SDI-945 is a late prehistoric site that displays many of the characteristics that are believed to be a part of the Cuyamaca Complex. Further analysis is needed for lithic, ceramic, and steatite artifacts from both the 1999 and 2000 field seasons. One final note in regard to the artifacts found at SDI-945 is that the sample sizes from SDI-945 and SDI-860 are not similar. For 1999 and 2000, we have excavated nine 1x0.5-m units, while True (1970:11) excavated 31 5x5-foot units. Because of this, it is not possible to state whether or not SDI-945 is a component of the Cuyamaca Complex. In reality, we can only examine the two sites to produce comparisons on the similarities and differences between the two. Future research is

needed on other sites in the region, which will provide more data on the artifact assemblages and the geographic extent of this complex. Through analysis of this site and others, more knowledge will be available to support or negate the idea of the Cuyamaca Complex.

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