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A Late Prehistoric Homestead on the Santa Barbara Coast

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CA-SBA-1809 is a small site with a low density of cultural materials on a small tributary of Atascadero Creek near Goleta, California (Fig. 1). Although the site contains a rather small archaeological assemblage, it appears to represent a newly recognized late prehistoric settlement type. Typically, Chumash settlements are characterized as large permanent villages, supplemented by specialized resource procurement sites and temporary encampments (Landberg 1965; Brown 1967; Glassow 1975, 1980; Grant 1978a, 1978b). The data from CA-SBa-1809 suggest the presence of another type of prehistoric settlement: a small, isolated, permanently occupied homestead. Such a settlement has not, to my knowledge, been reported for the prehistoric Santa Barbara region.

The data from CA-SBa-1809 were gathered in a series of environmental assessments that included survey and recording of the site (Rudolph 1983), an initial testing program to determine whether cultural materials were intact and significant (Moore 1986), an additional testing program to evaluate intra-site spatial patterns (Rudolph 1986), and, finally, excavations to mitigate impacts to the site (Moore and Imwalle 1987). An important point in the research was Rudolph's (1986) discovery of a burned feature. The final excavation at CA-SBa-1809 was designed to understand the nature of the feature (Moore and Imwalle 1987:1), which yielded surprising results.

THE FEATURE AND ASSOCIATED ARTIFACTS

CA-SBa-1809 contains a low-density, but surprisingly diverse, assemblage of cultural materials and a burned feature (Fig. 2) that appears to have been a small, isolated structure (Rudolph 1986; Moore and Imwalle 1987). A radiocarbon sample from the intact burned feature yielded a date of 180±60 years B.P. (Beta-17078). This converts to an uncalibrated midpoint of A.D. 1770, based on the conventional present of A.D. 1950. Alternatively, radiocarbon calibration curves (Stuiver and Pearson 1986:210) indicate that, at 180 B.P., the calibration curve crosses three calendrical dates: A.D. 1680, A.D. 1750, and A.D. 1800. Though the calibration does not result in a single, solid calendrical date, it could suggest a slightly earlier occupation at CA-SBa-1809 than does the uncalibrated radiocarbon date. The radiocarbon date is consistent with the temporally sensitive artifacts such as small projectile points, *Olivella* callus-cup beads, a *Mytilus* cylinder bead, a clam disk bead, and glass trade beads (Rogers 1929; Greenwood 1972; C. King 1982). Unfortunately, the glass beads have been melted together--probably when the structure burned--rendering them unusable for dating the site with bead typologies (e.g. Gibson 1975).

Architectural and stratigraphic characteristics of the feature and the artifacts associated with it indicate the residential nature

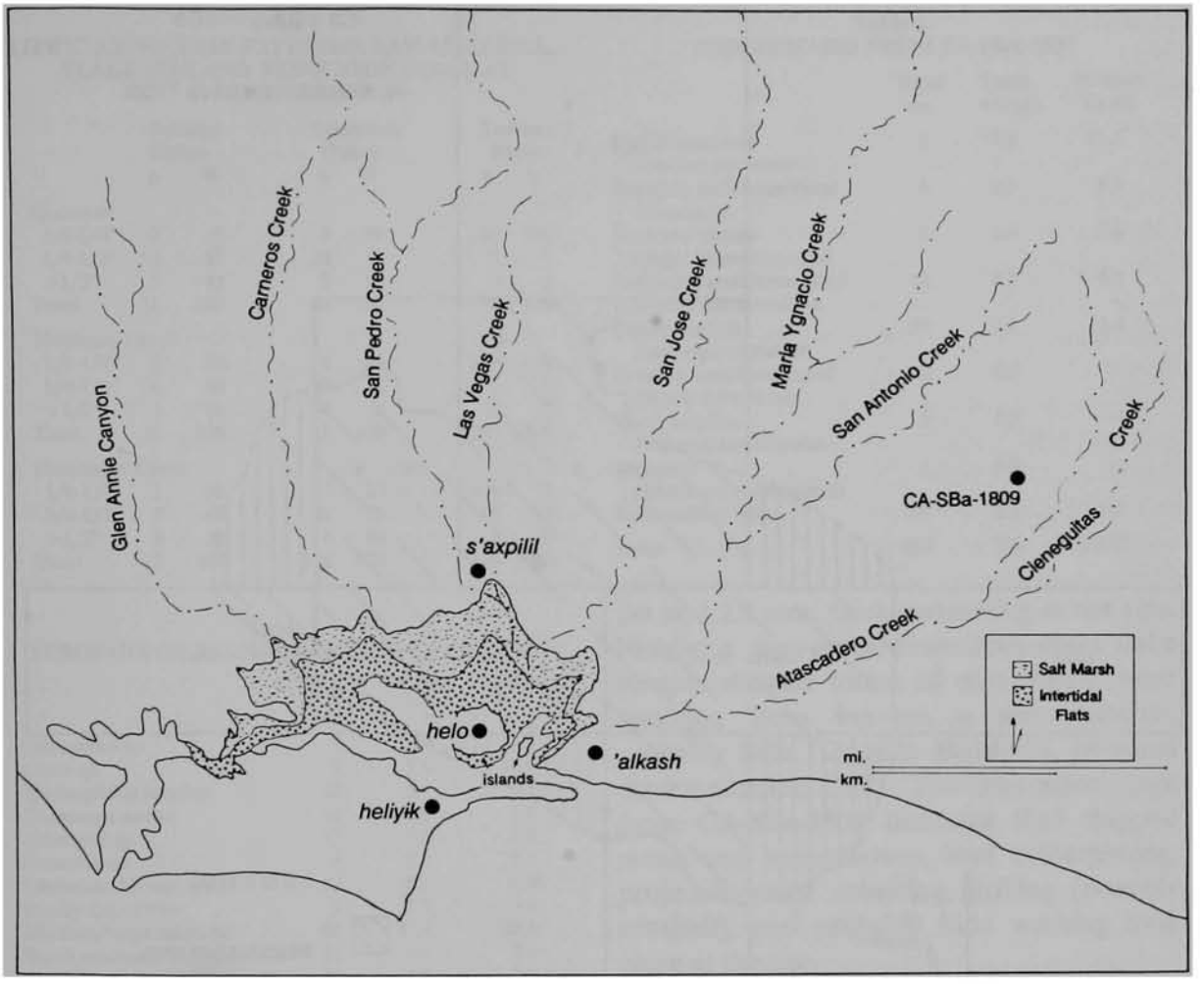

Fig. 1. CA-SBa-1809, major Chumash villages, and environment, ca. A.D. 1770.

of CA-SBa-1809. The structure measures approximately 2.65 X 1.25 m. and is elliptical in outline. The burned feature was encountered between 70 and 100 cm. below the current ground surface. In cross section, there was a deposit of fire-reddened earth, ash, and charcoal that was 30 cm. thick in the center, thinning to 5 cm. on the periphery. Analysis of the fire-reddened earth indicated that the feature reached temperatures of 510°C. (Stanley Cisowski, personal communication 1987).

Cultural materials associated with the feature suggest that a range of activities took place at CA-SBa-1809. Manufacture of chipped stone tools is indicated by the quartzite, Monterey chert, and Franciscan chert debitage recovered from the site (Table 1). The relatively high proportion of large quartzite primary flakes indicates quartzite cobbles were knapped at the site. Conversely, the majority of Monterey chert flakes were small, tertiary flakes, suggesting that initial lithic reduction occurred away from CA-SBa-1809, although the inhabitants of the site retouched and resharpened Monterey chert tools.

Chipped stone tool artifacts associated

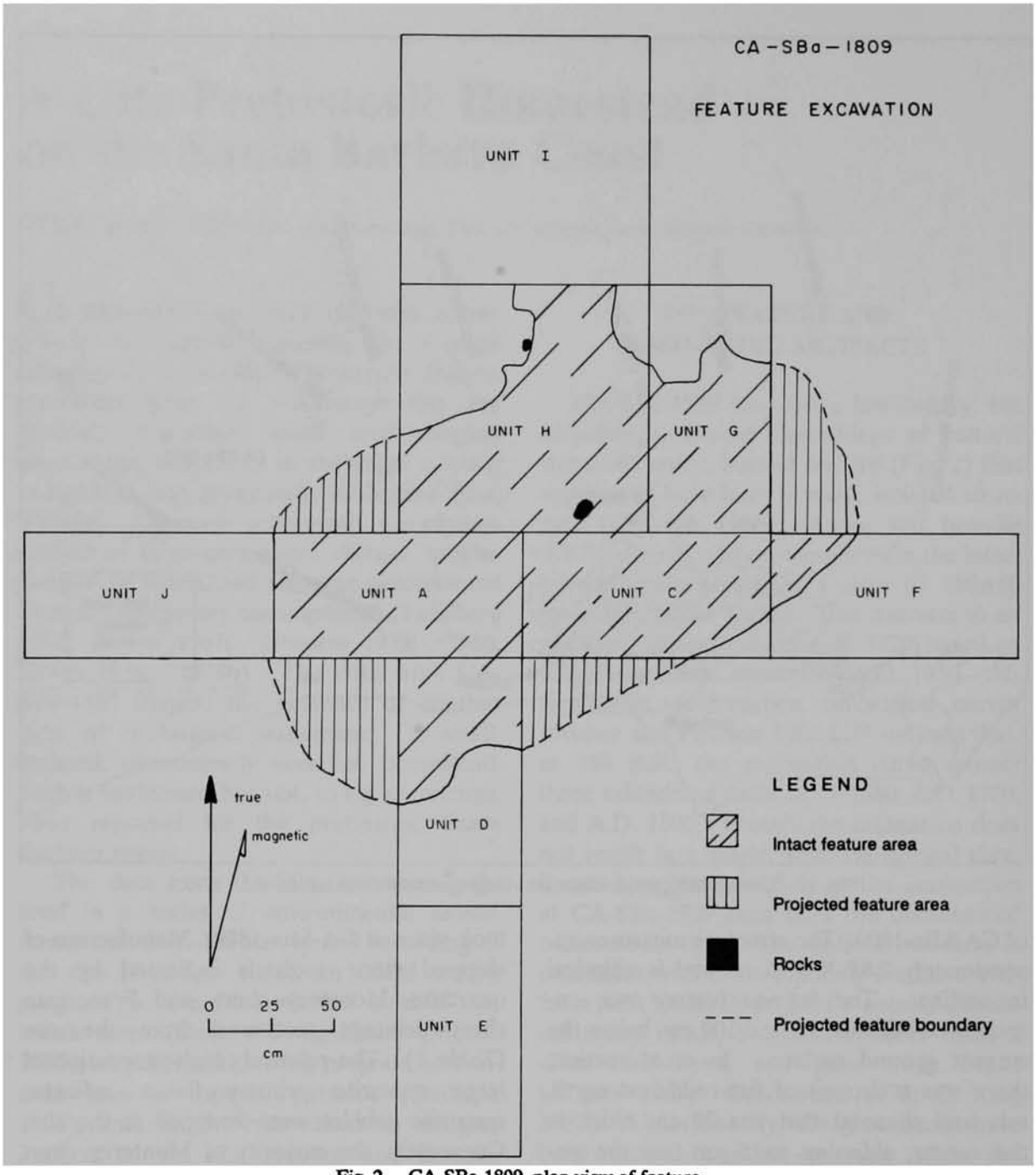

Fig. 2. CA-SBa-1809, plan view of feature.

with the structure include (1) a complete concave-based Monterey chert projectile point (15.1 mm. long, 10.2 mm. basal width); (2) a basal fragment of a concave-based Monterey chert projectile point (12.6 mm. basal width); (3) the tip of a large Franciscan chert point (possibly a knife); (4) a small Franciscan chert point tip; and (5) the

Table 1
LITHIC REDUCTION PATTERNS: RAW MATERIAL, FLAKE SIZE AND REDUCTION STAGE AT CA-SBA-1809

	Primary Flakes		Secondary Flakes		Tertiary Flakes	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Quartzite						
1/8-1/4"	0	0	8	19	56	100
1/4-1/2"	12	57	30	70	0	0
>1/2"	9	43	5	11	0	0
Total	21	100	43	100	56	100
Monterey Chert						
1/8-1/4"	9	56	8	29	249	100
1/4-1/2"	6	38	20	71	0	0
>1/2"	1	06	0	0	0	0
Total	16	100	28	100	249	100
Franciscan Chert						
1/8-1/4"	1	08	27	23	408	94
1/4-1/2"	9	69	84	73	28	16
>1/2"	3	23	4	04	0	0
Total	13	100	115	100	436	100

Table 2
SUMMARY OF FAUNAL REMAINS, CA-SBA-1809

	Freq.	Wt. (g.)	% by Wt.
Odocoileus sp.	1	2.7	1.7
Canis sp.	1	0.4	0.2
Spermophilus beecheyi	18	3.4	2.1
Thomomys bottae	20	2.3	1.4
Sylvilagus sp.	13	1.0	0.6
Neotoma sp.	4	0.3	0.1
Microtids: Mouse, vole	12	0.1	0.06
Family Leporidae	5	5.0	3.1
Medium/large mammal	96	37.2	23.5
Burnt medium/large mammal	12	4.7	3.0
Small/medium mammal	26	4.6	2.9
Burnt small/medium mammal	2	0.4	0.3
Small mammal	170	7.0	4.4
Burnt small mammal	14	0.7	0.4
Mammal	432	32.6	20.6
Burnt mammal	41	3.3	2.0
Snake	28	2.0-	1.2
Fish	259	7.2	4.5
Bird	143	4.6+	2.9
Burnt bird	23	0.7+	0.4
Small fauna	448	10.6	6.7
Burnt small fauna	68	1.6	1.0
Unidentified bone	662	23.0	14.5
Burnt unidentified bone	82	3.3+	2.0
Total	2601	158.7	99.56

tip of a finely flaked chalcedony triangular shaped point. In addition to the projectile points, two Monterey chert bladelet drills were found. One drill was 9.4 mm. long, the other 7.3 mm. long, and both were between

Table 3
FISH REMAINS FROM CA-SBA-1809

	Total no.	Total wt. (g.)	Percent by wt.
Pacific mackerel *Scomber japonicus*	8	0.8	11.1
Rockfish undifferentiated *Sebastes* sp.	4	0.5	6.9
Rays and sharks Order Elasmobranchii	8	0.4	5.6
Surfperch undifferentiated Family Embiotocidae	12	0.3	4.2
Pacific sardine *Sardinops caeruleus*	35	0.1	1.4
Croaker undifferentiated Family Sciaenidae	2	0.0	–
Giant kelpfish *Heterostichus rostratus*	2	0.0	–
Jacksmelt *Atherinops californiensis*	1	0.0	–
Unidentified fish	187	5.1	70.8
Total	259	7.2	100.0

1.0 and 2.5 mm. thick, narrowing at the tips. Finally, a grey-green Franciscan chert flake scraper showed traces of microscopic wear resulting from use on a soft material, probably hide (Douglas Bamforth, personal communication 1987). The lithic assemblage from CA-SBa-1809 indicates that chipped stone tool manufacture, tool resharpening, projectile point rehafting, drilling (possibly of shell), and probably hide working took place at the site.

Bone from CA-SBa-1809 was very fragmented. No sea mammal bone was recovered from the site, and much of the bone from small mammals represents modern burrowing rodents (Table 2). But this is not true of the mule deer remains or the eight classes of fish found at CA-SBa-1809. Fish bone from CA-SBa-1809 consists primarily of teleost vertebrae, and teeth in the case of some sharks (Table 3). The mix of species at the site indicates fishing in habitats close to the shore and in the offshore kelp beds using both nets and hook and line.

Finally, miscellaneous artifacts suggest some of the other activities that may have taken place at CA-SBa-1809. Tarring pebbles

suggest that baskets were made there (Rudolph 1986:34-35). Two small cobble hammerstones were recovered. A small unfinished clam disk bead and the small stone drills described above suggest that bead making occurred. A small piece of asphaltum has a basketry impression on its concave inner surface. The impression appears to be from a twined basket, perhaps using two-strand twining (Moore and Imwalle 1987: 64-67).

Extensive testing has shown that there are no other structures or dense midden deposits at CA-SBa-1809. Though burrowing rodents have moved materials, all of the artifacts described above are associated with the burned feature. These cultural materials suggest that the following activities took place at CA-SBa-1809: (1) stone tools were made and maintained; (2) arrows were rehafted; (3) hides were worked; (4) fish, shellfish, and deer were eaten; and (5) baskets and shell beads may have been manufactured on a limited basis. These materials point to group maintenance activities and suggest the residential nature of the site. Other types of Chumash structures, known from ethnohistoric and ethnographic data (Hudson and Blackburn 1983, 1986), can be eliminated as candidates for alternative interpretations (Table 4; a detailed discussion is presented in Moore and Imwalle [1987:82-95]). For example, the feature is not an intrusive pit, nor is there fire-cracked stone that would be associated with a roasting pit. Burned clay features have been described as the physical remains of ritual mourning offerings (L. King 1982:102-106; Martz 1984:148-154). These features, however, are associated with cemeteries and major villages, and CA-SBa-1809 was neither.

It is improbable that the burned feature was either a large sweathouse, a small sweathouse, or a smokehouse, given the evidence for a variety of activities at CA-SBa-1809. It is difficult to imagine resharpening a projectile point or making a bead in either a sweathouse or a smokehouse, at least not while they were filled with steam or smoke. Ethnohistoric descriptions of sweatlodges indicate that they often were partially excavated into a streambank, which was not the case at this site.

The burned area at SBa-1809 is too small to have been a large tule house. These were up to 20 feet in diameter and housed as many as 60 people. Other structures used by the Chumash have been described, but most of them were insubstantial constructions (e.g., windbreaks, ramadas, or menstrual huts) that would not have resulted in the thick deposit of fire-reddened earth, ash, and charcoal that characterizes CA-SBa-1809. In sum, the size of the feature, the associated artifacts, and the stratigraphy suggest that the feature represents a small residential structure.

LATE PREHISTORIC SETTLEMENT PATTERNS AND SBA-1809

While archaeological data indicate the residential nature of CA-SBa-1809, obviously the site never was a village, nor was it a specialized temporary encampment associated with extraction of nearby resources. A number of essential resources (fish, shellfish, asphaltum) were acquired away from the site, as were the Monterey cherts obtained and initially reduced elsewhere (Moore and Imwalle 1987). Rather, the data indicate that CA-SBa-1809 was a small isolated homestead.

Small Chumash homesteads have been reported only from the historic period. Two sets of Chumash homesteads persisted into the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: *'alikon* located at Indian Orchard on Maria Ygnacio Creek, and *kasw'a* at Cieneguitas (Rogers 1929; Schaaf 1980; Johnson et

Table 4
MATERIAL CORRELATES OF CHUMASH STRUCTURES AND FEATURES

	Shelters:			Ritual Structures:				Food Preparation Facilities and Structures:		
	Tulehouse	**Ramada**	**Windbreak**	**Small Sweathouse**	**Large Sweathouse**	**Menstrual Hut**	**Male Puberty Hut**	**Smokehouse**	**Pit Oven**	**Hearth**
Setting	settlement	settlement	settlement	settlement (streambank)	settlement (near water)	isolated	isolated	settlement	?	settlement
Diameter	12 - 20 ft.	?	?	<10 ft.	10-15 ft.	8 ft.	?	<10 ft.	3-8 ft.	variable
Posthole pattern	circular	rectangular	linear	semi-circular	circular	circular	?	semi-circular	N/A	N/A
Post size	medium/large	medium	small	medium/large	medium/large	small/medium	?	medium/large	N/A	N/A
Floors	+	?	?	+	+	+	+	+	-	N/A
Daub	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	-	N/A
Hearth	+	-	-	+	+	+	?	+	N/A	N/A
(Size)			2 ft.	6 x 2-3 ft.	?	?	2 ft.	N/A	N/A	
(Depth)			1 ft.	1 ft.	?	?	1 ft.	N/A	N/A	
(Location)			by door	center	?	?	by door	N/A	N/A	
Ash	extensive	moderate	slight	extensive	extensive	moderate	?	extensive	extensive	moderate
Charcoal	small-large	small-medium	small	small-large	medium-large	small	?	small-large	small-large	small-large
Firecracked rock	few	?	-	-	-	+	?	-	extensive	extensive
Other	food prep. tool making tool main.	food prep. tool making tool main.	food prep. tool making tool main.	no other activities	no other activities	no remains of land animals	no remains of land animals	faunal remains? butchering tools?	N/A	variable

N/A = not applicable.

al. 1982:26-27, Table 6). The two areas, located, respectively, 0.8 miles (1.29 km.) northwest and 0.75 miles (1.21 km.) southeast of CA-SBa-1809, were occupied by small groups of Chumash living in independent households strung along the drainages. However, it is not clear whether these small historic households resulted from demographic collapse, forced resettlement, cultural marginalization (Moore and Imwalle 1987:17-19), or the other post-Contact processes that irreparably changed Chumash culture.

There are a number of reasons why settlements of this type are unreported for the prehistoric or early historic periods of the Santa Barbara region. First, small isolated homesteads are easily overlooked because they have such low densities of prehistoric debris associated with them. Second, if other settlements similar to CA-SBa-1809 were located on stream banks, they may have been covered by alluvium in active floodplains. Third, such settlements may have been present in the early historic period, but ignored by the Spaniards. Spanish sources emphasize the locations and populations of villages (Brown 1967; King 1971; Johnson et al. 1982; Johnson 1983). The Spaniards wanted to know where large concentrations of Chumash were located because they wanted both converts and laborers, and missions were specifically located in reference to large Chumash villages. It is no surprise that small isolated settlements were ignored.

Another possibility is more subtle. Small settlements may have been subsumed under the names of larger communities even though they were spatially separate (John Johnson, personal communication 1987). For example, Pantoja y Arriaga's 1783 map of Chumash communities around the Goleta Slough shows seven small clusters of huts, even though there are only four named settlements in the area (Johnson et al. 1982:13-18). Johnson et al. (1982:15) wrote, "Chumash rancherias were frequently composed of more than one spatially discrete community of household." However, these household sets that comprised the Goleta towns were still within hailing distance, analogous to those Chumash communities where different moieties occupied opposite stream banks (Brown 1967:5).

The discovery of CA-SBa-1809 suggests that small settlements were even more dispersed, though it is reasonable to infer that their inhabitants participated in larger social networks. Although CA-SBa-1809 was an isolated homestead, it was located within 2 miles (3.22 km.) of one of the most densely inhabited regions of aboriginal California. Figure 1 illustrates the approximate locations and populations of Chumash villages contemporary with, and close to, CA-SBa-1809. Certainly the inhabitants of that site participated in the larger economic, ritual, and social networks found at those larger settlements.

SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The research at CA-SBa-1809 is important because it identifies a previously unknown class of late prehistoric settlement. It provides an empirical basis for asking additional questions about this type of site:

(a) Were isolated homesteads common during the Late Period or is CA-SBa-1809 anomalous?

(b) Are similar settlements present in earlier prehistoric periods or are they only associated with the late prehistory of the Santa Barbara region?

(c) What range of activities occurred at small isolated homesteads--ritual activities, economic exchanges, or just basic maintenance and subsistence activities?

These initial questions will be modified and added to as research progresses. The site, however, has additional implications for future research. For example, surface indications of cultural remains may not be a good way to find sites in active floodplains, a simple, but not insignificant, point.

Perhaps the most significant implication of the site, however, is that it highlights the need to examine prehistoric networks in the Santa Barbara region. In spite of ample data outlining the existence of inter-village exchange (C. King 1971), intermarriage (Johnson et al. 1982; Johnson 1983), and complex political institutions (Blackburn 1975:12-13, 1976:237), archaeological approaches have not dealt with prehistoric networks in a consistently satisfying manner. Archaeological research remains site-specific, and it is rare when larger systems are investigated (however, see Arnold [1983], Erlandson [1983], and Macko [1983]). Archaeological data from CA-SBa-1809 suggest that networks of interaction involved a variety of prehistoric settlements in the Santa Barbara region, including small isolated homesteads, and underscore our need to understand them.

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