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Fact Sheet

TULE SPRINGS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

Tule Springs Preservation Committee

A Citizens Advisory to Floyd R. Lamb State Park

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Site Description:

- Extensive late Pleistocene deposits containing the bones of extinct mammoth, camel and horse together with evidence of early humans.

Status:

- Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, April 1979.

Significance:

- An early role in the study of the history of Nevada and the United States
- Contains intact deposits with the potential to yield new and valuable evidence on the paleontology, archaeology and chronology of North America
- Established the precedent for the multidisciplinary approach to the study of early man.

Location:

- Extreme northwest section of the City of North Las Vegas.

Ownership:

- Nevada State Parks 314 acres
- Bureau of Land Management 667 acres

Major Research Projects:

- 1933, discovered by Fenley Hunter
- 1933, Harrington, South West Museum
- 1955, Harrington and Simpson, South West Museum
- 1956, Harrington and Simpson, South West Museum
- 1962-63, Shutler, Nevada State Museum

Threats to the Site:

- Encroaching development following sales of BLM lands.
- Nevada Power 500kV transmission line proposed to be constructed through the center of the National Register site.
- Unmanaged recreational use.

L 1 of 2

February 19, 2002

Original Exhibit on file at the Legislative
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ASSEMBLY NATURAL RES., AGRICULTURE & MINING
DATE: 3/26/03 ROOM: 3161 EXHIBIT L1-2
SUBMITTED BY: Terri Robertson

The Tule Springs Archaeological Site achieved notoriety during the 1930s when the skeletal remains of a variety of extinct animals were found in association with human artifacts eroding out of the sides of a wash in the northern part of the Las Vegas valley. Subsequent field expeditions included the largest multidisciplinary research team to that date. Some of the most respected scientists in their fields worked at the site or served as the Advisory Board to the project.

Early radiocarbon dating (a revolutionary new technique at the time) dated the site to 23,000 years ago and possibly as early as 28,000 years ago. These dates gave credence to the belief of many of the scientists studying the site that the Tule Springs deposits would yield conclusive evidence of the coexistence of late Pleistocene fauna such as mammoth, giant sloth, camels and the American horse, and the earliest big game hunters.

Radiocarbon dates run more recently, firmly placed human activity at the site at almost 10,000 years ago, but not the 20,000+ years originally reported.

Only a small portion of the site has been excavated. Artifacts and bones which occasionally still extruding from the banks of the wash, indicate the potential for the site to contain rich intact deposits worthy of future study. So, while undisputable evidence of early man in North America has not yet been demonstrated at Tule Springs, the existence of such remains cannot be ruled out.

Tule Springs Preservation Committee is a citizen advisory group to Floyd R. Lamb State Park. The purpose of the committee is to provide volunteer services, facilitate fund raising efforts and carry out historical research for Floyd R. Lamb State Park. Committee goals include the restoration of the historical buildings of the National Register of Historic Places-listed Tule Springs Ranch, a visitor's center, grants for archaeological and paleontological studies, historical research on the families that have lived at and owned the park property, bird studies and compiling research for education materials for distribution to the public.

February 19, 2002