

TEP – Silverbell Road Power Line Relocation Project

Topic: Cultural Resources; Additional content to be provided by Ian Milliken at Design Review Board Hearing scheduled for October 22, 2021

Source: Results of a Class III Cultural Resources Survey Along the Silverbell Road Corridor from Grant Road to Ina Road within the City Of Tucson, Town of Marana, and Unincorporated Pima County, Arizona. SWCA Environmental Consultants, 2010.

A SWCA Environmental Consultants 2010 Final Report of Class III Cultural Resources Survey along the Silverbell Road Corridor from Grant Road to Ina Road, was prepared for the City of Tucson and is the guiding document for consideration of cultural resources within the Silverbell Road project area.

SWCA's Class III Report investigated a 400 foot wide Area of Potential Effect (APE) along Silverbell Road through archival record search, field survey, and evaluation of archaeological sites for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places, also addressing mitigation options for sites falling within the APE.

New findings listed in the 2010 report included 35 contributing (eligible to the NRHP) sites which constitute the Silverbell Archaeological District; 4 ineligible sites, historic road segments and a multitude of isolated artifacts were also recorded. Twenty-seven previously recorded sites are within the APE. As stated in the report, the findings record a nearly "uninterrupted deposit of cultural resources between the west bank of the Santa Cruz River and the toe of the Tucson Mountains". Recommendations discuss avoidance of adverse impacts be considered at project design phase, and provides a list of recommended stakeholders for consultation. This list includes US Army Corps of Engineers, Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, Tohono O'odham Nation, Pima County, City of Tucson, Town of Marana, Arizona State Museum, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. A complete list of tribal stakeholders will be provided from Pima County.

Tucson Basin's human occupation ranges from about 12,000 years ago to the present day. Some notable sites related directly to the Silverbell corridor and vicinity include Los Pozos, along the east bank of the Santa Cruz River, and Las Capas, along the Santa Cruz River near the confluence with Canada del Oro Wash. Other well-known sites represented in the Silverbell vicinity are the Dairy Site, Los Morteros, and Las Capas, which provided immeasurable wealth of data related to crop cultivation and irrigation, food storage and processing, habitation, ritual and burial, and lifeways up to the historic period. Nine Mile Water Hole, an historic site along Silverbell, is a representative of historic stage stops along well-traveled stage routes.