

# The Apeta Momonga Mission Trail

## Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #1177



1987 Old Mission Trail Dedication

Jerome C.  
(Jerry) Daniel,  
SMMC  
Chairperson  
John  
Conse  
staffe

# **The Apeta Momonga Mission Trail**

## **Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #1177**

This presentation will cover the following topics, which were also presented to the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission in September and November of 2018:

- Statement of Significance
- Background and Site Introduction
- Summary of the approval process
- The History of the Apeta Momonga (“Trail to” Momonga)
- The History of the Mission Trail
- The Trail as it exists today

# Statement of Significance

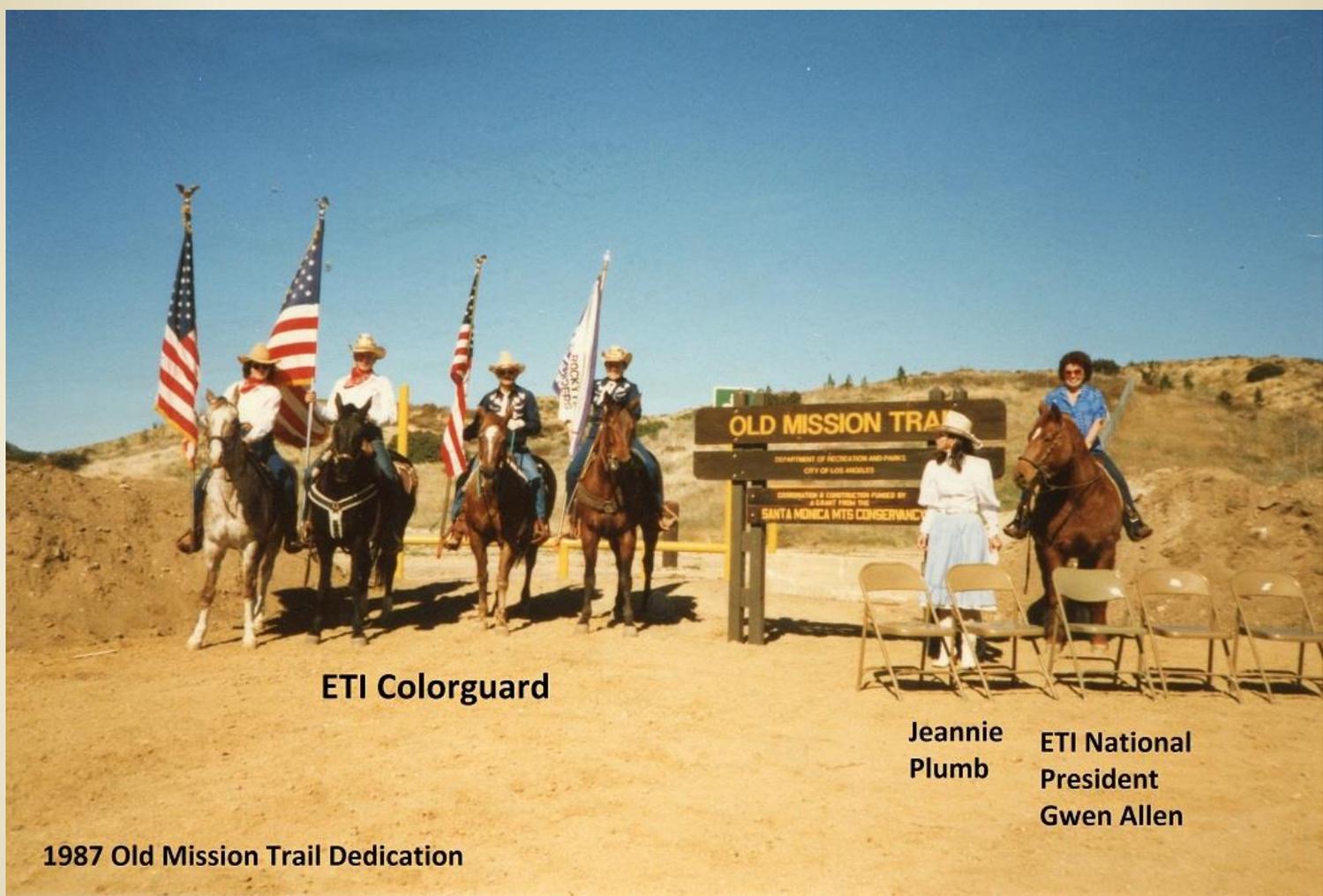
- **The Apeta Momonga Mission Trail** is an integral piece of our Native American and Spanish heritage, comprising two stories.
  - First, it was a historic trail that was used beginning at least 3,000 years ago to travel from Achoicominga (San Fernando) to the village of **Momonga** (Santa Susana Pass/Stoney Point).
  - Second, after Mission San Fernando was established in 1797, the trail was used to travel from Mission San Fernando to the Simi Adobe to Mission San Buenaventura. The **Mission Trail** became a part of the El Camino Real along the north end of the San Fernando Valley, offering safe passage to travelers along its route.

# Background

- In 1987, Los Angeles Councilmember Hal Bernson and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy dedicated the two-mile '**Old Mission Trail**' after funds were used to restore the trail and remove overgrowth.

1987 Dedication Photos  
courtesy Millie Trafton

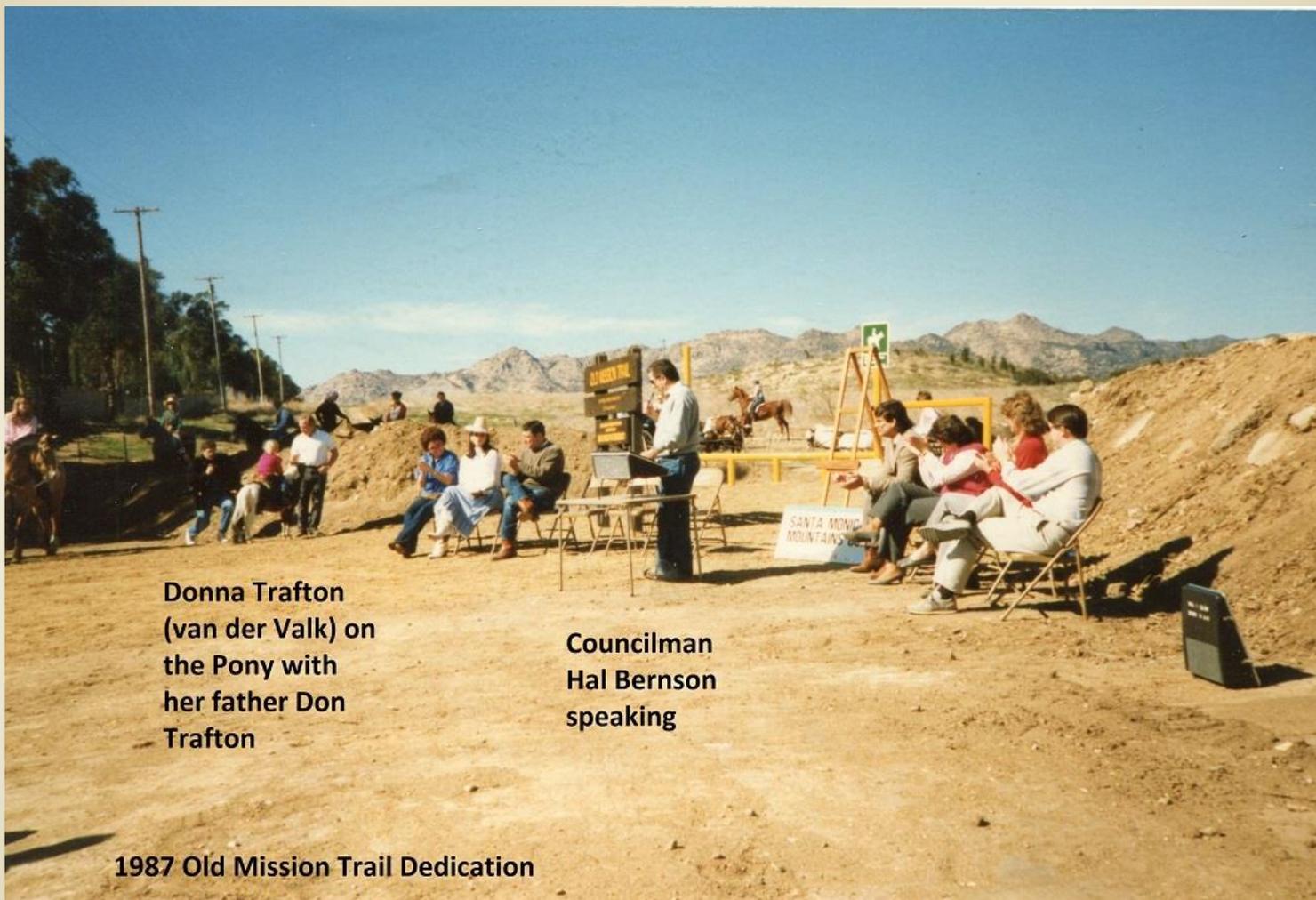




**ETI Colorguard**

**Jeannie Plumb**      **ETI National President**  
**Gwen Allen**

**1987 Old Mission Trail Dedication**



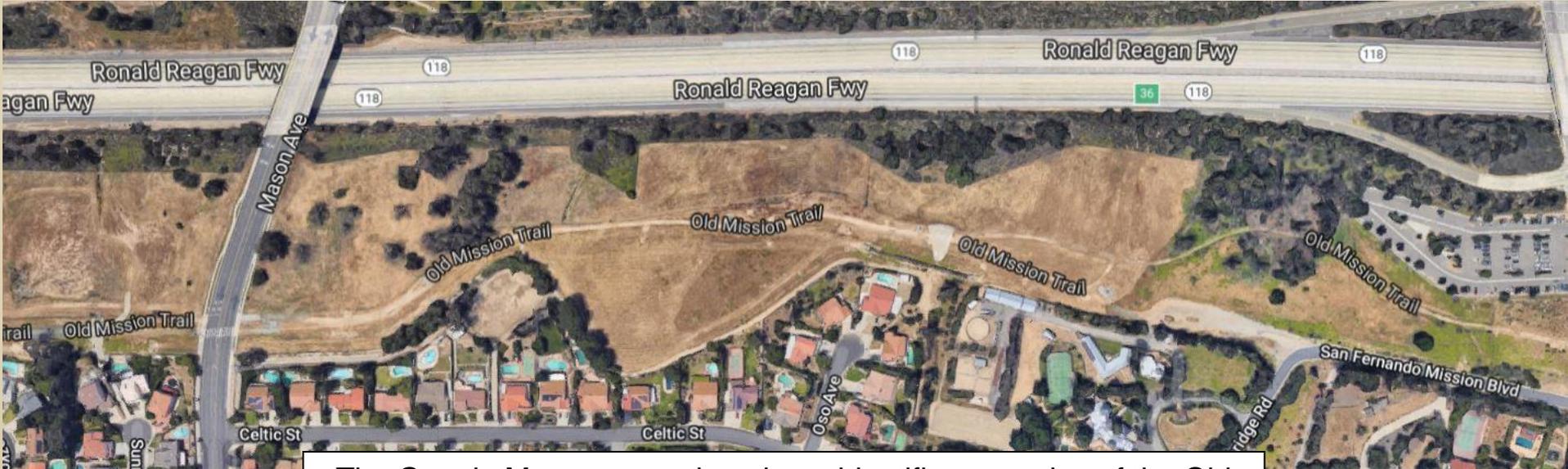
**Donna Trafton  
(van der Valk) on  
the Pony with  
her father Don  
Trafton**

**Councilman  
Hal Bernson  
speaking**

**1987 Old Mission Trail Dedication**

# Site Location

- The trail runs from De Soto to Tampa, following a path parallel and just south of the 118 freeway. The trail remains a simple equestrian and hiking trail, with a view of the broad San Fernando Valley to the south.



The Google Maps screenshot above identifies a section of the Old Mission Trail, from Mason Ave to Porter Ranch Drive

# Site Location



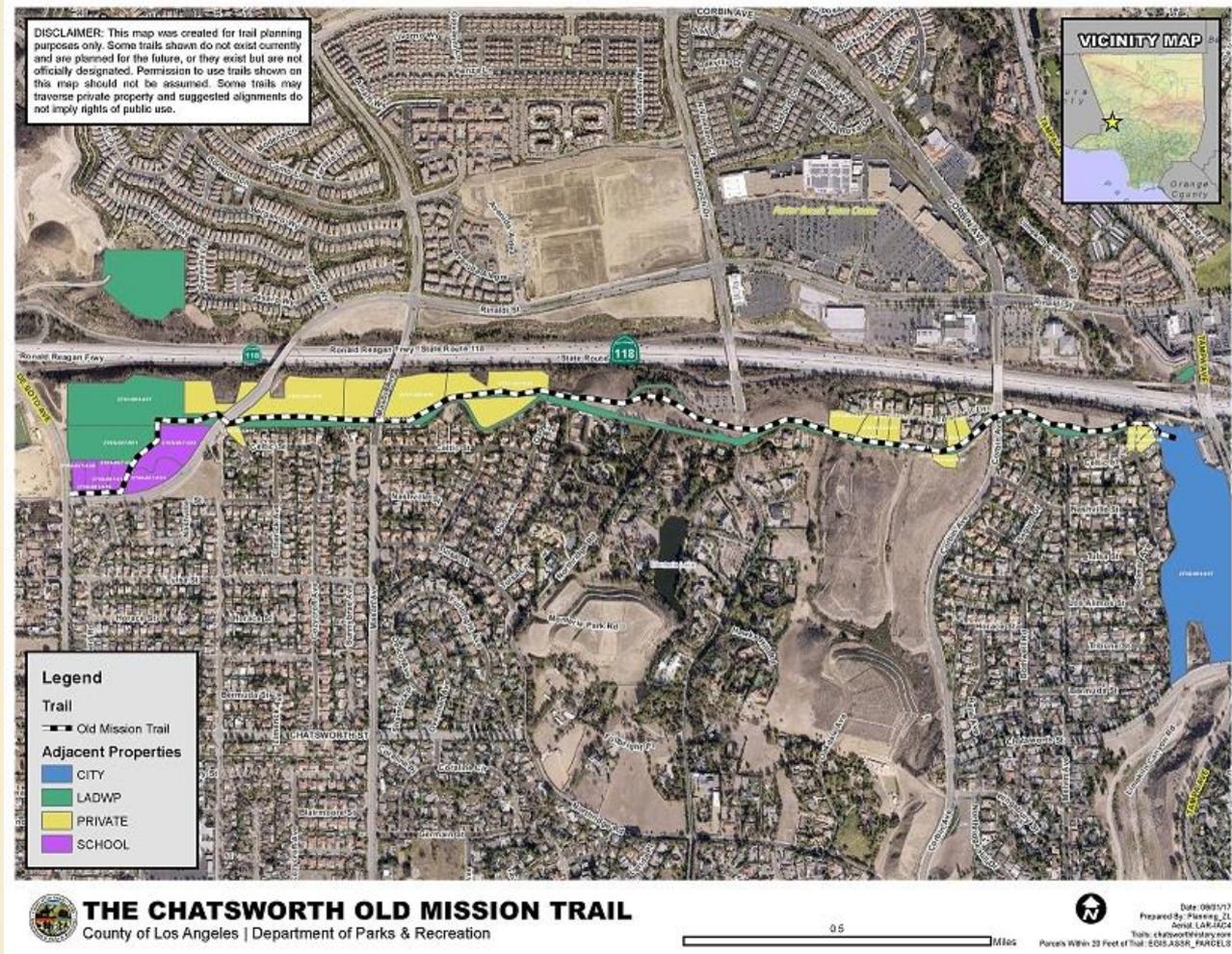
- The 2 mile trail passes through 34 parcels, including a recently approved 37 home development between Rinaldi and Porter Ranch Drive.

An August 2017 Map of the Old Mission Trail, prepared by the LA County Department of Parks and Recreation



# Site Location

- The equestrian and hiking trail provides trail connectivity from Chatsworth trails west of DeSoto to Limekiln Canyon Trail to Mormon Canyon Loop to Brown's Canyon.



# Historic-Cultural Monument Approval Process

- In Sept 2018, a PowerPoint presentation was made at City Hall to the Cultural Heritage Commission by Dean Wageman and Ray Vincent, with Darlene Wageman and Ann Vincent also attending. At that meeting, the Commission voted to take the property, “The Chatsworth Old Mission Trail” under consideration.
- The Commission conducted a site inspection in October.
- Also in October, we met with the Fernandño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians. The discussion centered around the naming of the Trail, and we agreed that the initial HCM name did not reflect the history of trail usage by Native Americans. As a result, we proposed that the monument name be changed to include the village site Momonga, which was a significant ceremonial site with extensive rock art, and would have been a destination point on the trail.
- In Nov 2018, a second PowerPoint presentation was made at City Hall, proposing a name change from “The Chatsworth Old Mission Trail”, to “The Chatsworth/Momonga Mission Trail”. At that meeting, the Commission approved the Monument, and voted to name the trail “The Apeta Momonga Mission Trail”.
- It was approved by the PLUM (Planning and Land Use Management) Committee on Feb 26th, then approved by the City Council on Feb 27th, 2019.

# Trail History Before Spanish Contact

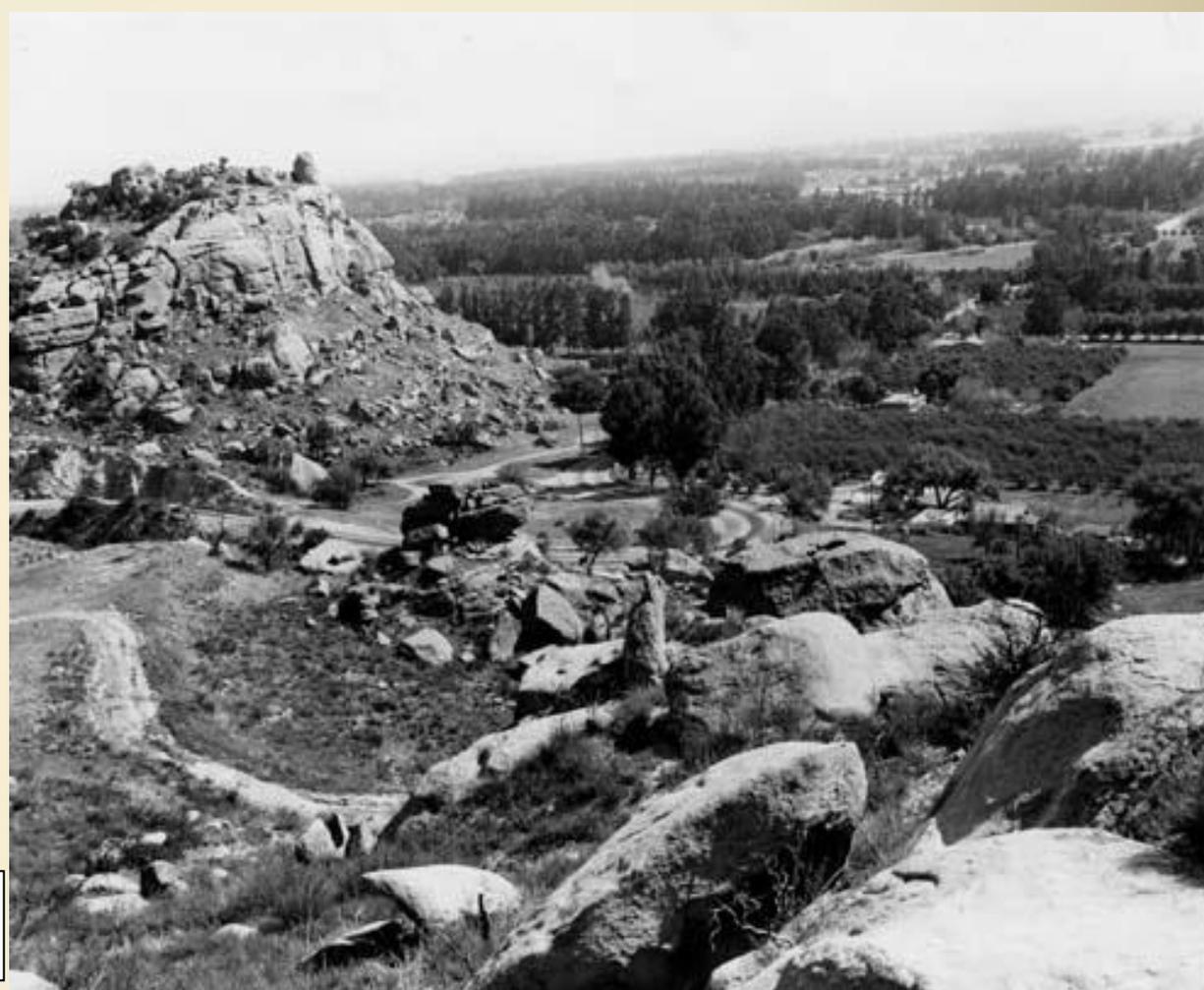
- Before Mission San Fernando was established in 1797, there was a trail connecting the village of Achoicominga (San Fernando) with the village of Momonga (Santa Susana Pass/Stoney Point).
- At the time, Momonga was the largest community in the Santa Susana Pass area and represented an intersection between three regional tribes, the Ventureño Chumash, the Tataviam, and the Gabrieliño/Tongva.
- Archaeological information suggests that Momonga was occupied from the Middle Period (1500 B.C. to 500 A.D.) until contact with the Spanish. The extensive rock art at the site suggests that it had a significant ceremonial component which distinguished it from other villages.
- Momonga was referred to as the Ranchería de la Piedras (Village of the Stones) in the Mission San Fernando registers.
- Momonga was one of several Native American communities later incorporated into the Mission San Fernando.

# Momonga

## Ranchería de las Piedras (Village of the Stones)

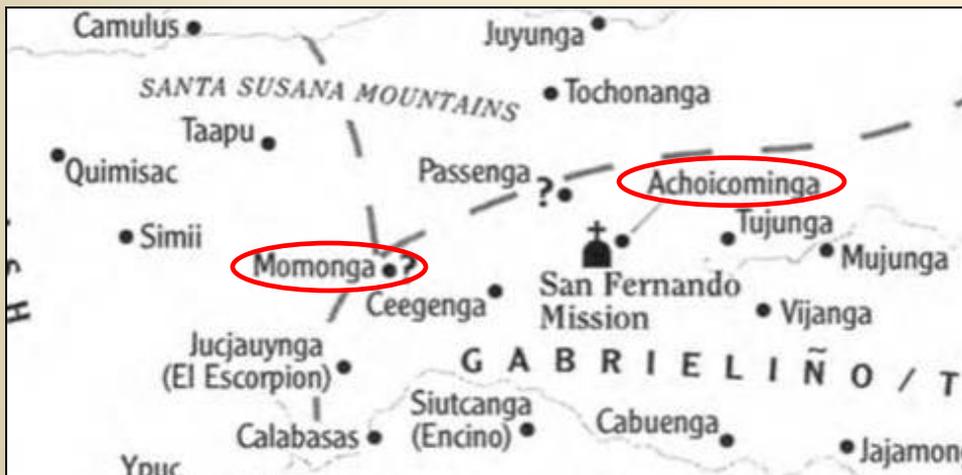
The striking rock formations located all along the eastern flank of the Simi Hills, between Chatsworth Reservoir and the Santa Susana Pass, are best illustrated by Stoney Point.

Stoney Point Outcroppings  
L.A. Historic-Cultural Monument #132

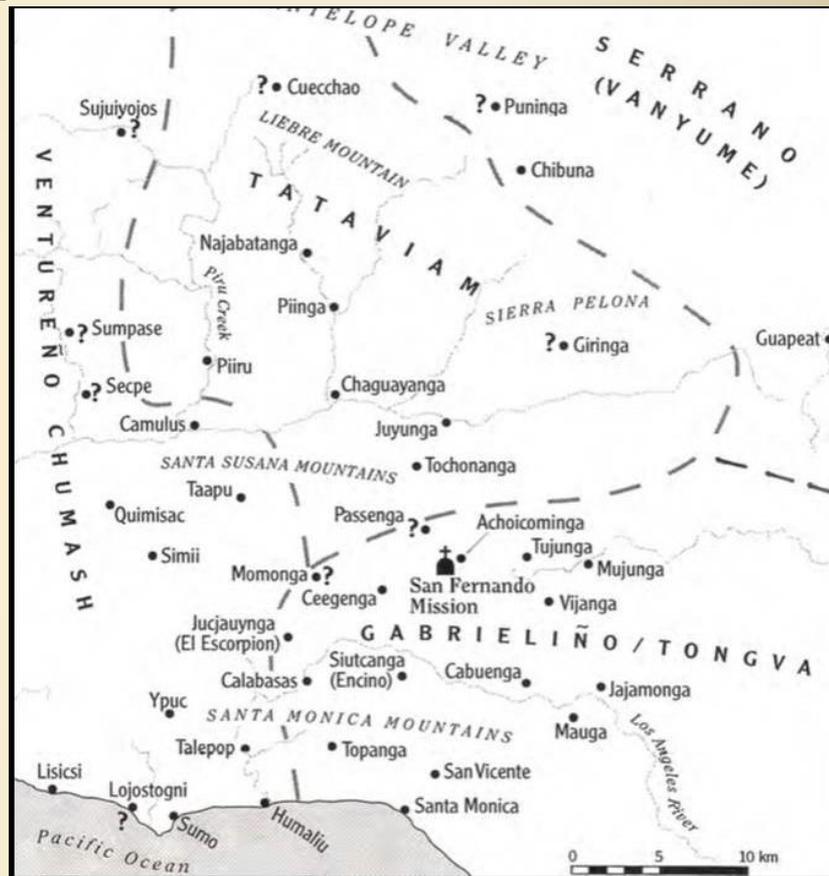


# Trail History Before Spanish Contact

Documented village names from Mission baptismal, marriage, and burial records identified Momonga and Achoicominga.



Source: Santa Susana Pass Ethnohistoric Study,  
John Johnson



# Momonga Rock Art

- The most striking example of the extensive rock art at the site is the Chatsworth Main Panel.
- The paintings are located in a very shallow sandstone rock shelter that is not well-protected from the elements, and most of the panel has eroded away and is difficult to see.
- When it was new and fresh, the main panel may have been as impressive as the main panel at Burro Flats Painted Cave, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Given the size and shape of the rock face, it appears that the main panel was once 3 meters wide and one meter in height



Chatsworth Site Main Panel  
(digitally enhanced using D-Stretch) Source: Knight 2018

# Momonga Rock Art

- Excavations at the Chatsworth Site took place during 1970-1974, and later in 1976, and are curated at Pierce College.
- Recovered artifacts include bone awls, steatite bowl fragments, manos, pestles, metate fragments, blades, choppers, beads (Olivella and steatite), pendants, and projectile points made from rhyolite, fused shale, chert, chalcedony and obsidian.
- The presence of a sulfur spring -- often considered sacred and medicinal -- coupled with the extensive presence of rock art, clearly establishes a sacred/ceremonial value to this site...



Chatsworth Site Main Panel  
(digitally enhanced using D-Stretch) Source: Knight 2018

# History of the Mission Trail

- In 1542, California was claimed by the Spanish empire by Juan Cabrillo. It would be another 227 years until Spain began to colonize California, to counter Russian exploration and their early settlements in Northern California.
- The Spanish Colonial Period of Alta California began in 1769, with the first Mission in San Diego in that same year.
- By 1823, the chain of Missions grew to 21 missions, 4 presidios (forts) and 3 pueblos.
- The road linking the missions, presidios and pueblos was known as the “El Camino Real” (The Royal Road, or the King’s Highway).
- **Travel along the road was mostly by foot, burro or horseback, on uneven terrain. The use of the El Camino Real was important, as it connected travel and trade along the entire coast, and also provided safe passage in an otherwise dangerous wilderness.**
- The San Fernando Mission has a separate room with beds for travelers.

# History of the Mission Trail

- As missions were added, the El Camino Real would be altered to include the new Mission on the trail.
- In 1782, travel from San Gabriel Mission (est. 1771) or Pueblo de Los Angeles (est. 1781) to San Buenaventura Mission (est. 1782) followed the route that is today's highway 101, between Cahuenga Pass and the city of Ventura.
- Fifteen years later, in 1797, when the San Fernando Mission was established, the route was altered to travel north from San Gabriel or Los Angeles to San Fernando, then to the Simi House (est. 1795), then to San Buenaventura.
- When the mission chain was completed, the distance between each mission was roughly one day's travel (the average distance was 39 miles, with only a few 60 miles apart)
- The distance between San Fernando and San Buenaventura was 62 miles; however a stop at the Simi House (seen on the following map) made travel easier.

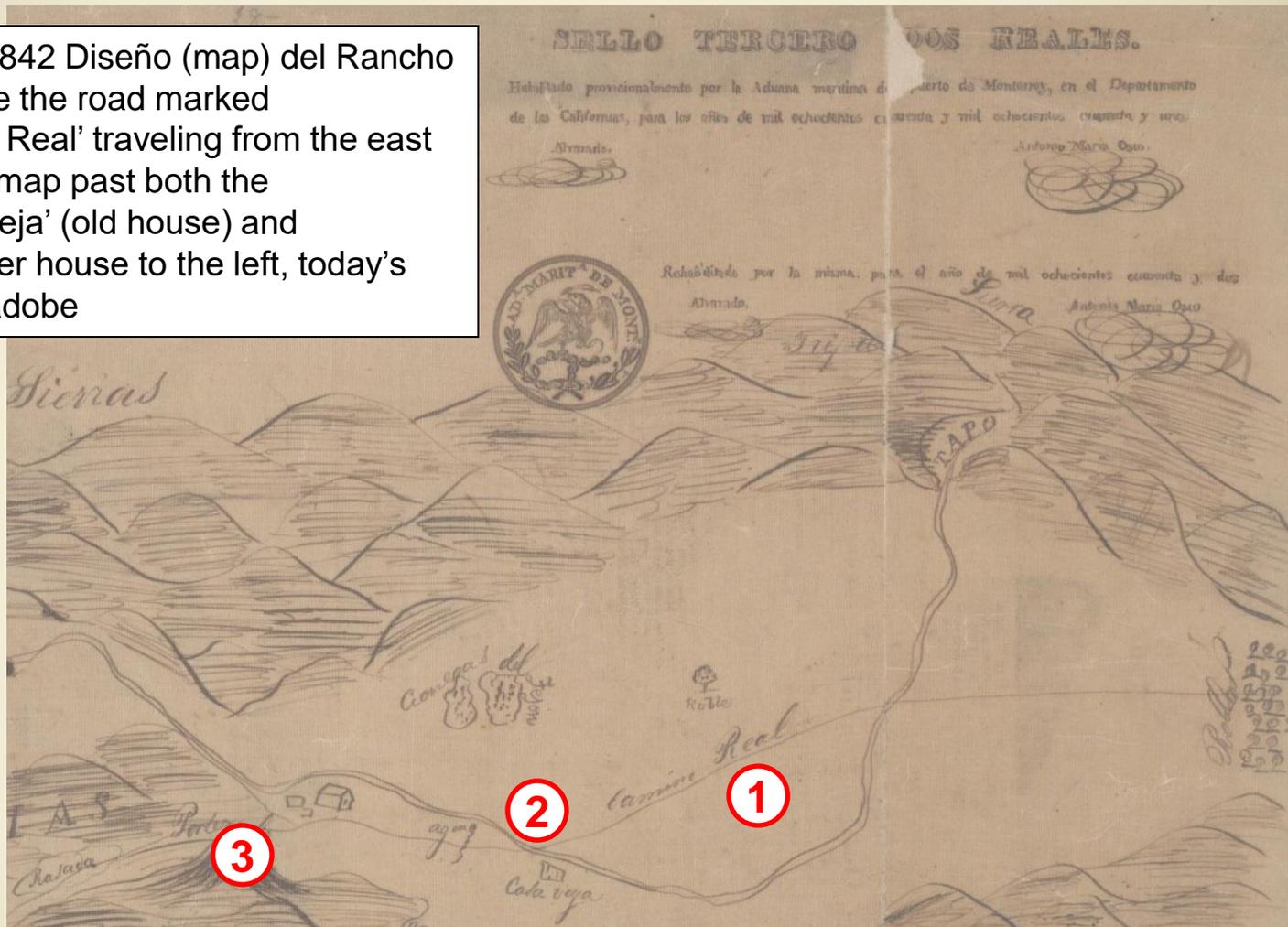


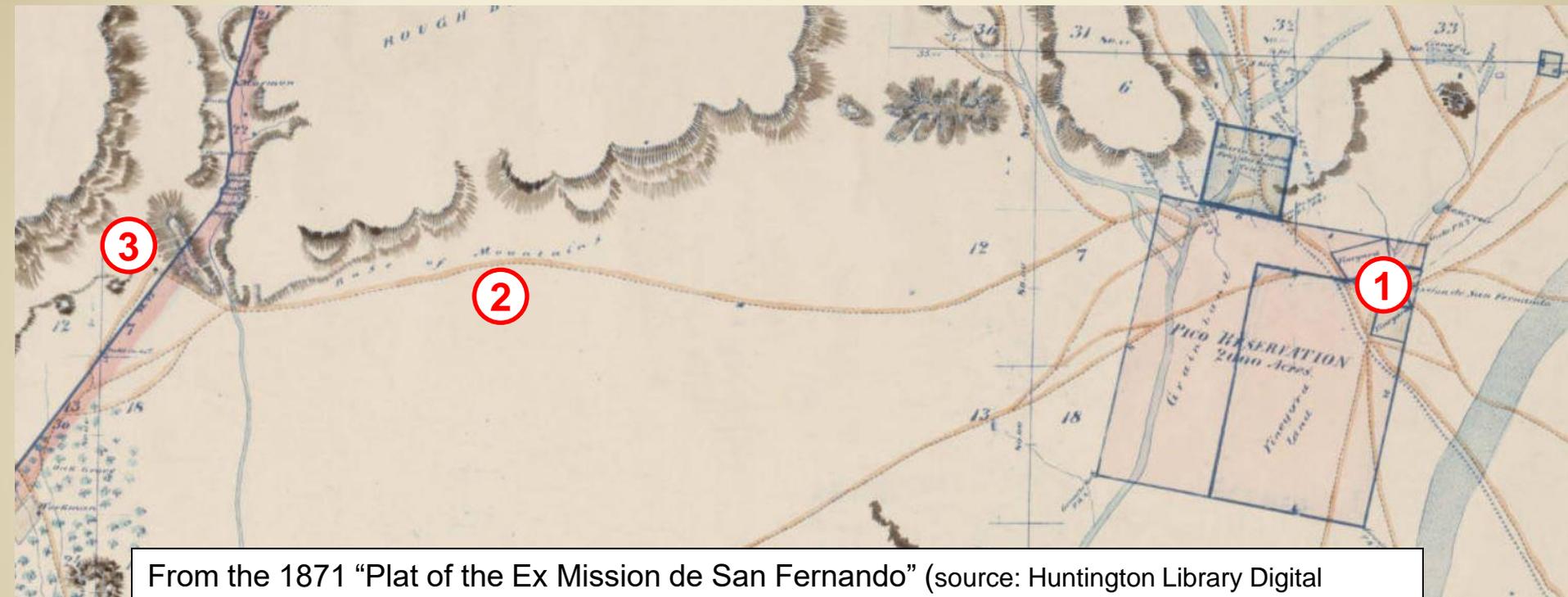
From the Mexican era 1844 Duflot de Mofras map above, the dashed line (highlighted in red) links:

1. Mission San Gabriel to
2. Pueblo de Los Angeles to
3. Mission San Fernando to
4. Simi House to
5. Mission San Buenaventura

From the 1842 Diseño (map) del Rancho Simi, notice the road marked

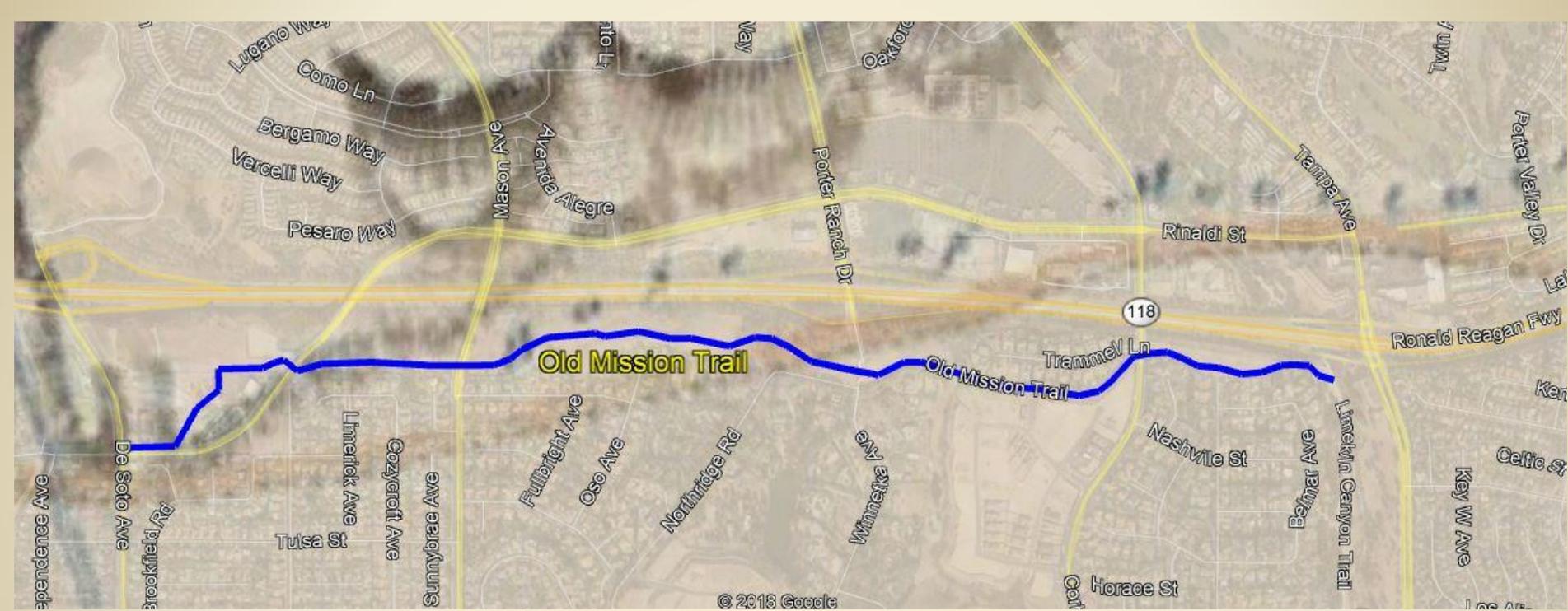
1. 'Camino Real' traveling from the east end of the map past both the
2. 'Casa Vieja' (old house) and
3. The larger house to the left, today's Strathern adobe





From the 1871 “Plat of the Ex Mission de San Fernando” (source: Huntington Library Digital Archives), note:

1. San Fernando Mission (previously Achoicominga)
2. Mission Trail to Simi Valley and San Buenaventura in brown at ‘Base of Mountains’
3. Stoney Point and the Fernandeano village known as *Momonga* listed in the Mission registers, also known as *Ranchería de las Piedras* (*Village of the Stones*)



The picture above is an overlay of the 1871 Map on a 2018 Google Earth Map, with current streets identified in yellow with names in white, and today's Old Mission trail in blue. Notice that today's 'Old Mission Trail' highlighted in blue follows the 1871 map overlay, with trail in brown.

# The Trail as it exists today

- Sierra Canyon School enthusiastically supported Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument status to The Apeta Momonga Mission Trail.



The photo above looking north from Rinaldi St, showing the state-of-the-art 12 foot wide horse trail passing through the parking lot entrance of Sierra Canyon School's Upper Campus.

# April 2018 Trail Ride on the Chatsworth Old Mission Trail

- The following slides show some scenes from a video of a Trail Ride coordinated and sponsored by ETI Corral 54, on the Chatsworth Old Mission Trail
- Courtesy of Dean and Darlene Wageman
- The video is available on YouTube, search for “Chatsworth Old Mission Trail”

Crossing Corbin



Crossing Corbin



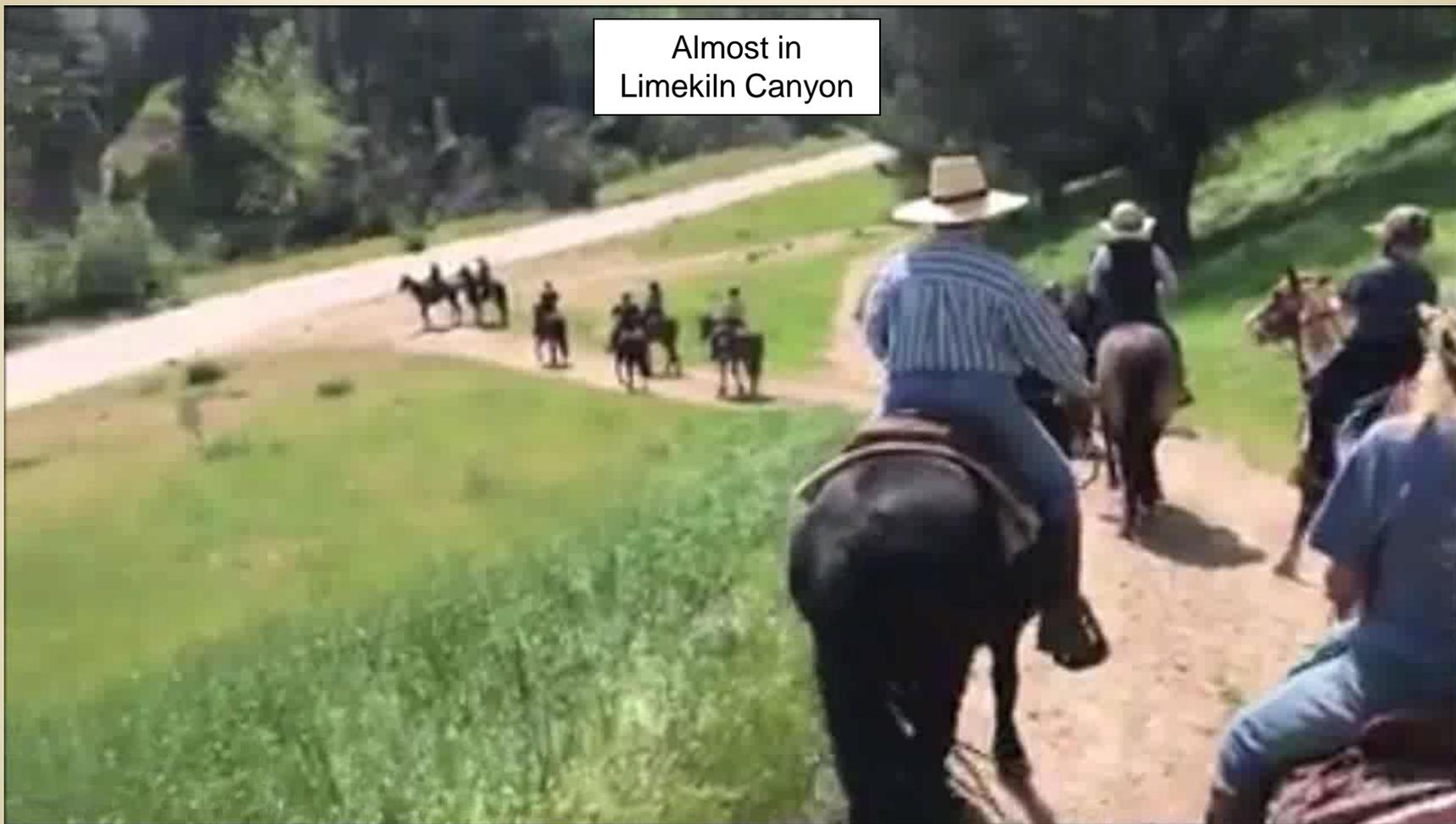
Heading to  
Limekiln Canyon



Heading to  
Limekiln Canyon



Almost in  
Limekiln Canyon



In  
Limekiln Canyon



# Oct. 11, 2018 site tour by the Cultural Heritage Commission

(photographs from the staff report)



1. The first stop was at Sierra Canyon's Upper Campus
2. The second stop was at the Porter Ranch Drive Park & Ride

**Legend**

**Trail**

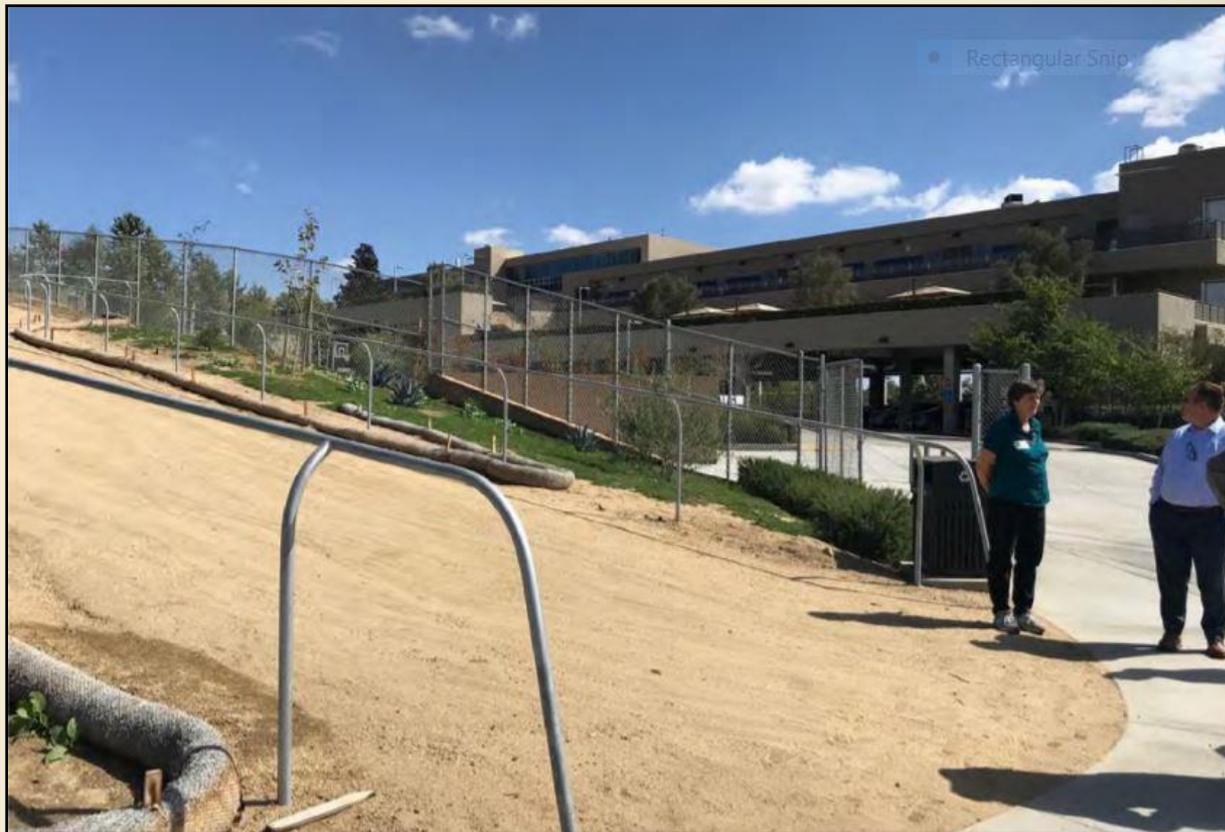
- Old Mission Trail

**Adjacent Properties**

- CITY
- LADWP
- PRIVATE
- SCHOOL

# Oct. 11, 2018 site tour by the Cultural Heritage Commission (photographs from the staff report)

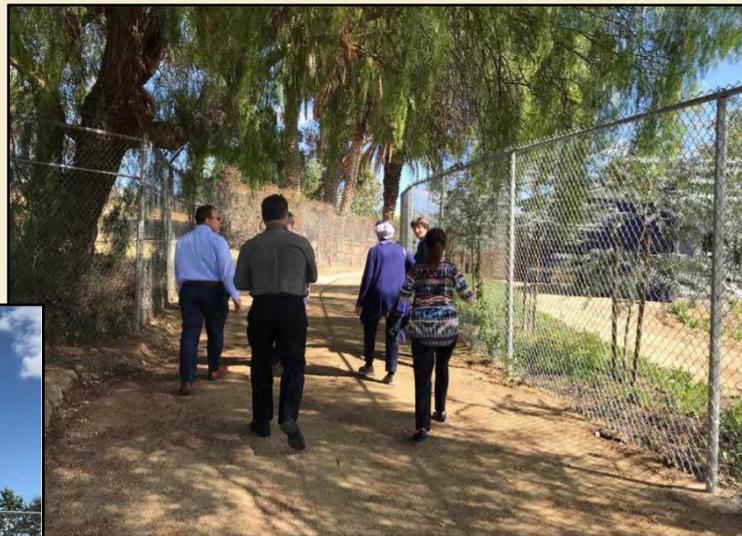
The first stop was at Sierra Canyon Upper Campus, we were met by Shelley Deutsch. (Ann Vincent and a commission member in photo)



# Oct. 11, 2018 site tour by the Cultural Heritage Commission

(photographs from the staff report)

Hiking up the trail at  
Sierra Canyon  
Upper Campus.



# Oct. 11, 2018 site tour by the Cultural Heritage Commission (photographs from the staff report)

Greeted by an equestrian (a surprise to us all), and we watched as the rider crossed Rinaldi.



# Oct. 11, 2018 site tour by the Cultural Heritage Commission (photographs from the staff report)



Picture left looking west,  
above on the trail, at  
right looking east.



# Oct. 11, 2018 site tour by the Cultural Heritage Commission

(photographs from the staff report)

The second stop was at the Park & Ride at Porter Ranch Drive.



View looking east.



We hiked west about 1/3 of a mile.

# Oct. 11, 2018 site tour by the Cultural Heritage Commission

(photographs from the staff report)



Approaching and entering a fenced part of the trail hiking west.

Looking back (east) at the fenced part of the trail.

# Oct. 11, 2018 site tour by the Cultural Heritage Commission

(photographs from the staff report)



Continuing west along the trail



The 37 homes will begin just past the concrete swale in center of above picture

# Oct. 11, 2018 site tour by the Cultural Heritage Commission (photographs from the staff report)



1. The first stop was at Sierra Canyon's Upper Campus
2. The second stop was at the Porter Ranch Drive Park & Ride

**Legend**

**Trail**

- Old Mission Trail

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# Cultural Heritage Commission Files

City of Los Angeles [US] | https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=17-0436-S1

Bookmarks Terri Davis Family H... Ancestry® | Geneal... Ring.com Garage D...

## LACityClerk Connect Council File Management System

**Council File: 17-0436-S1**

**Initiated by**  
Cultural Heritage Commission

**File Activities**

Date	Activity
03/01/2019	Council action final.
02/27/2019	Council adopted item, subject to reconsideration, pursuant to Council Rule 51.
02/26/2019	Planning and Land Use Management Committee approved item(s) .
02/22/2019	Planning and Land Use Management Committee scheduled item for committee meeting on February 26, 2019.
02/12/2019	Planning and Land Use Management Committee continued item to/for February 26, 2019 .
08/2019	Planning and Land Use Management Committee scheduled item for committee meeting on February 12, 2019.
05/2019	Planning and Land Use Management Committee continued item to/for February 12, 2019 .
29/2019	Planning and Land Use Management Committee continued item to/for February 5, 2019 .
25/2019	Planning and Land Use Management Committee scheduled item for committee meeting on January 29, 2019.
07/2018	Cultural Heritage Commission document(s) referred to Planning and Land Use Management Committee.
12/06/2018	Document(s) submitted by Cultural Heritage Commission, as follows:  Cultural Heritage Commission report, dated December 4, 2018, relative to including the Apeta Momonga Mission Trail located at 20765-20855 West Rinaldi Street; 11026-11050 North De Soto Avenue; 11100-11101 North Lurline Avenue; 11200 North Porter Ranch Drive in the list of Historic-Cultural Monuments.

**Online Documents (Doc)**

Title	Doc Date
Council Action	03/01/2019
Communication(s) from Public	02/27/2019
Speaker Card(s)	02/27/2019
Communication from Council	02/26/2019

**Council Vote Information**

Meeting Date: 02/27/2019  
 Meeting Type: Regular  
 Vote Action: Adopted  
 Vote Given: (13 - 0 - 2)

Member Name	CD	Vote
BOB BLUMENFIELD	3	YES
MIKE BONIN	11	YES
JOE BUSCAINO	15	YES
GILBERT A. CEDILLO	1	YES
MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON	8	YES
JOSE HUIZAR	14	YES
PAUL KORETZ	5	ABSENT
PAUL KREKORIAN	2	YES
NURY MARTINEZ	6	YES
MITCH O'FARRELL	13	YES
CURREN D. PRICE	9	YES
MONICA RODRIGUEZ	7	YES
DAVID RYU	4	ABSENT
GREIG SMITH	12	YES
HERB WESSON	10	YES

- Documents of the entire process are available at cityclerk.lacity.org
- Council File 17-0436-S1

# Cultural Heritage Commission Files

Audio recordings, agendas, and minutes can be found at [planning.lacity.org](http://planning.lacity.org), Commissions and Hearings, Cultural Heritage Commission.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar at [planning.lacity.org](http://planning.lacity.org). The browser tabs include "Davis Family H...", "Ancestry® | Geneal...", and "Ring.com Garage D...". The main content area displays search results for the Cultural Heritage Commission. Each result includes a date, type, board name, address, and a note. There are also icons for "AGENDA", "ADD'L DOCS", "AUDIO", and "MINUTES" associated with each result.

Date	Type	Board Name	Address	Note
11/15/2018	Cultural Heritage Commission		900-930 North Highland Avenue   20765-20855 W Rinaldi Street; 11026-11050 N De Soto Avenue; 11100-11101 N Lurline Avenue; 11200 N Porter Ranch Dr   5040 W Pico Blvd   1110-1116 S Abbot Kinney Blvd	Cultural Heritage Commission
11/1/2018	Cultural Heritage Commission		225 East 5th Street   12833-12835 Ventura Boulevard; 4218-4220 N Coldwater Canyon Avenue   8150 Sunset Boulevard   840 South Fairfax Avenue   1832 Cherokee Avenue	Cultural Heritage Commission

# Sources/Acknowledgements

- Dean and Darlene Wageman, applicants for this Historic-Cultural Monument.
- Knight, Albert, 2018 Rock Art at Momonga (CA-LAN-357) July 20, 2018 (available at academia.edu)
- Johnson, John, 1997 The Indians of Mission San Fernando Southern California Quarterly, Vol. 79, No. 3, Mission San Fernando Rey de España 1797-; 1997 (Fall 1997), pp. 249-290 (available at JSTOR.org)
- Johnson, John, 2006 Ethnohistoric Overview for the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park, Cultural Resources Inventory Project. June 2006 Prepared for Southern Service Center State of California Department of Parks and Recreation <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/21299/files/sspsph%20ethnohistory-complete.pdf>
- Knight, Albert, 2012 Three Chumash-Style Pictograph Sites in Fernandeno Territory, Albert Knight, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, SCA Proceedings, Volume 26 (available at academia.edu)

Prepared by Ann & Ray Vincent, Chatsworth Historical Society, April 2019