

# Nearby Indian Reservations and their Peoples

## The Indians of San Diego County

"Four tribal groupings make up the indigenous Indians of San Diego County: the Kumeyaay/Diegueño, the Luiseño, the Cupeño, and the Cahuilla. "

Information on contemporary reservations below from:

Dolan H. Eargle, Jr..

*Native California Guide. Weaving Past & Present.*  
San Francisco: Tree Company Press, 2000.



## KUMEYAAY

(kú-me-yai) also KÁMIA (Spanish spelling)

THE INDIAN PEOPLE OF southern San Diego County were once called "Diegueño" by the Spanish and anthropologists, after the San Diego Mission. In actuality, two culturally similar groups traditionally occupied this land, the *Ipai* and the *Tipai* (local names for person). In recent times the Tipai especially have preferred the name *Kumeyaay* or Kamia for themselves. (The Ipai designation is for the reservations and people of the northwestern corner of San Diego county between La Jolla and the San Luis Rey River.) The name Tipai is still preferred by the Kamia families living in Baja California Norte, México.

The Kumeyaay people are located on Campo, Eviiiaa-paayp (Spanish, Cuyapaípe), Barona, Viejas-Capitan Grande, La Posta, Manzanita, Sycuan, and Jamul Reservations. The bands (or tribes, in California BIA nomenclature), although geographically practically adjacent to one another, have maintained considerable independence, owing in no small part to their

historic isolation and rivalry. Consequently, though in a similar ecologic region, and bearing a common history and families, temperaments among the bands have varied vastly.

The Kumeyaay people have a long history of fierce independence. Even when Spanish troops were rounding up natives for the coastal missions some 200 years ago, those who could fled to these desolate hills. The same was true of their avoidance of the U.S. Cavalry.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TRIBES suffered the same American rejection of the terms of the 18 treaties of 1851, similar to the rest of the state. Originally, a large portion of the south had been set aside for reservation lands. The lack of their legal status caused Native American claims not to be recognized. Settlers moved into Indian lands with impunity, knowing that their land patents were quite "legal". Struggling along on their own for decades, land was finally acquired, or rather, restored, in a series of suits against the government .

They have emerged from relative seclusion with much difficulty and without much enthusiasm. Considering the massive assault on Indian life for those 200 years, we can see why it's appealing to disregard the temptations of modern life and live unmolested on a remote reservation. That is, until certain entitlements and opportunities of modern life like casinos present themselves.

In a new-found spirit of cooperation, three of the Kumeyaay reservations with large casinos have begun to unite their peoples in a common economic bond. Barona, Sycuán, and Viejas all have very popular gaming establishments, and as reservations operate in complementary fashion to each other. For instances, when the Barona Labor Day weekend Powwow is swarming with thousands of campers and participants, the well-equipped and well-respected Sycuán Reservation Fire Department joins the Barona fire crew with full gear. One small reservation has been the grateful recipient of help from other well-off reservations---after all, many family members share relatives on all of them.

SOME RESIDENTS OF THE Kumeyaay reservations exercise a right that few other Native Americans possess---dual United States and Mexican citizenship. The original territory of the Tipai peoples straddled the political division of these two modern nations, so their descendants are free to move

about from homes of relatives on either "side" of the border.

The Kumeyaay continue ancient cultural ties with the Colorado River peoples, who, in earlier times would often move toward the Jacumba Mountains through the dry Imperial Valley to avoid the blistering heat. Occasional fiestas are held at Campo, usually tied to church festival days such as the All Saints Day Barbeque. Many older tribal customs are still kept such as native languages, gourd dances, and epic songs (bird songs). Archeological sites in the area are known and revered, but since they are undeveloped and unprotected, they must remain confidential.

THE COASTAL VILLAGES first felt the impact when the inhabitants were forced into the Spanish domain. The padres attempted to obliterate their customs and traditions, but were not completely successful--especially since many of the people fled to mountains and arid areas outside the mission system, where language and traditions could persist. When the American period began, the people were still in remote places that had few resources. Since gold prospecting was not a factor they were left pretty much alone, except when the better land became coveted by American settlers. Assimilation was never complete.

I see old churches and missions with their burial grounds---the clapboard chapels of Sycuán Campo and Jamul, the Spanish missions of Santa Ysabel, La Jolla, Barona, and Pala. And I see the flower-decked adobe homes of La Jolla and Pauma, the many little wooden houses erected so long ago, where the heritage of tribe and tradition continue. New mobile homes and new government-built homes add to the air of progress. Off the main highways, new cars, and sometimes horses, cows, and goats compete for road space.

THIS IS THE KUMEYAAY environment. To know the Indian people of today, go to some of these places to better understand their life. Attend a Powwow to learn the songs and dances and the culture. Go with an attitude of wanting to learn. Someone will help you; it is amazing the number of people eager to show you. It was my distinct pleasure to share a bleacher bench at the Barona Powwow with Larry Banegas, Southern California Resource Consultant and Barona Tribal Council member.\* Larry was kind in sharing his knowledge of his people with me.

Kumeyaay comes from a word meaning "the ledge"---the people at the edge of the ocean. Mr. Banegas told me of culture classes on Barona--he wants to

make his a living culture. To help do this, he leads a very popular summer school course on Indian history of the region.

*\*Some of the above information was drawn from literature furnished me by Mr. Banegas, including articles by Florence Sbipek: "An example of intensive plant husbandry--- the Kumeyaaay of Southern California" from Foraging and Farming, D.R Harris and G. C Hillman, Eds., Unwin Hyman, London (ca. 1984) and 'Mission Indians and California Land Claims', American Indian Quarterly, Vol. XIII, No. 4, (1989).*

Many of the exhibits in Barona's outstanding Kumeyaay museum, as much as a third of the collection, come from the Squier family of the Cuyamaca area. Mr. Squier was a collector from 1914 to the present, initially in an era when few people respected the ancient Indian objects found in the area (mortars, pottery, etc.). Once people realized what he was doing, he was presented with many artifacts, and the collection grew, but had no home. *[Aside from the occasionally-displayed artifacts at the Museum of Man in San Diego.]* This is now the place to come for specific information on the Kumeyaay tribes.

He told me of the people's use of acorns, *shawee*, a preparation somewhat different from that of northern California. Agriculture, as practiced by the Kumeyaay, consisted largely of plant husbandry, the "manipulation of the natural ecosystem by substituting domesticated for wild species, especially where a new species would produce food". This required a complex knowledge of plant biology and experimentation to determine in which eco-niche a species would thrive. Stream banks were planted with erosion-reducing trees, and fire was used to control excess growth. Plants used in the essential art of basketry were carefully planted and maintained. They still are. Grapes, agave, yucca, and sage required special supervision because they are fire susceptible.

LARRY TOLD ME of the traditional tribal structure of the Kumeyaay peoples. The setup was notably different from other peoples of California, partly in response to the climactic and geographic differences. For instance, there were a series of runners for maintaining joint communication between the bands. The Primary subjects for conferences were on agriculture and the resolution of political disputes. The meeting had a *kwaaypaay*, headman, and each band was represented by a *kuchut kwataay*, or second-in-

command. In addition, there were persons with special talents who adopted certain tasks, like one in charge of arranging ceremonies, one to care for the fires, one to direct the planting and harvesting of crops (especially agave), one to give medicine.

Each village had at least one storyteller, someone to recount long songs---the thread which preserves traditions and entertains. And still today, fragments of the old culture remain, and the tribe is making every effort to preserve what it can of these customs.

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## BARONA RESERVATION

*Kumeyaay (Tipai)* (1932) San Diego County

1095 Barona Rd.,  
Lakeside, CA 92040  
(619) 443-6612

The Barona Reservation, like the Viejas, occupies a wide, fertile, highland valley of 5,181 acres near the Cleveland National Forest. This is not the unproductive wasteland pawned off on powerless people---here are several ranches, much cleared land, some small farms, clusters of comfortable homes for its 300 residents, a mission-style chapel with meeting hall, a tribal office and community center (built in 1997) of remarkable southwestern style architecture, indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, including a fine ball park, used also for the Powwow. I had never seen the host drum on a pitcher's mound before, and when the Grand Entry began, the bases were loaded.

Much of the new construction is a result of the huge success of the equally huge casino on the south end of the Barona Valley. Here, as on all Indian reservations, the gaming activities (consisting of a gymnasium-sized central arena, with operations wings and two or three ballpark-sized parking areas) are confined to a specific, remote segment of the reservation. It is always clear that this is a separate function, not part of the community life.

Located in the tribal offices and meeting building is the striking KUMEYAAY CULTURAL CENTER, a museum and center for learning of the Indian peoples of the region. You will find signs of prosperity, comfort, and respect for the

older times as you traverse the eight miles of Barona/Wildcat Canyon Rd.

*Northbound: from El Cajon, Hwy. 67 to N side of the San Diego R. arroyo, right at casino signs onto Willow Rd., left at Wildcat Cyn. Rd., then about 5 mi to the reservation on Barona Rd. Southbound: from Ramona, San Vicente Rd. 5 mi to Wildcat Cyn. Rd., R to Barona.*

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## SYCUAN RESERVATION

KUMEYAAY (*Tipai*) (1875) San Diego County

5459 Dehesa Rd.,  
El Cajon, CA 92021  
(619) 445-2613

At the head of a narrow, chaparral-coated valley, surrounded by a scatter of sun-seeking tract developments, lies this, the oldest reservation of the Kumeyaay. The center of tribal activity is on a small hill overlooking the several older homes and trailers. Nearly hidden by a clump of trees is a pretty clapboard chapel; nearby is the large gaming hall and a couple of fire engines. The fire department is operated in conjunction with the regional fire protection network, and the firefighters at Sycuan and Barona Reservations are well-known for their skill at extinguishing summer brush fires. The community center and tribal offices for the 640-acre reservation are on the hill, too. Down the far slope of the quiet valley is the ever-present reminder of the past, the cemetery.

*E of El Cajon on 1-8, take the Alpine-Tavern Rd. Exit, go S on Tavern Rd. to Dehesa Rd. Then about 3 mi to the Dehesa Fire Dept., R on paved road following the casino signs.*

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[Exhibit J](#), "The Sequan Indians", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

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## CAPITÁN GRANDE RESERVATION

*Kumeyaay (Tipai) (1875) San Diego County*

The large, bare mountainous region east of Barona Reservation is the uninhabited Capitan Grande. This 15,753-acre mass of dry mountain and chapparal was judged uninhabitable by the bands which now live in the lower, wetter, fertile valleys. The countryside to the east and south of the San Diego River was the land of group known as the *Guatay* or Los Conejos; the land to the west were the *Coapan* (Spanish "capitan").

Capitan Grande, situated in the center of the present Cleveland National Forest, west of the 6,500-foot Cuyamaca Peak, is bisected by El Capitan Reservoir, taken from the Kumeyaay by forced sale for water for San Diego, and whose construction submerged the little habitable land here. With the money from the sale, the Coapan group bought the land today called Viejas; the Guatay group bought the land today called Barona. (An early ranchero occupying this region was named Baron Long.)

Capitan Grande itself is presently jointly administered through the Viejas Reservation and the Barona Reservation. As an essentially undeveloped area, it is a continuing portion of ecological preserve.

*Capitan Grande: N of Alpine (off 1-8), flanking the upper stretches of El Capitan Reservoir.*

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[Exhibit I](#), "Capitan Grande", and [Exhibit K](#), "The Conejos", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

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## VIEJAS RESERVATION

*Kumeyaay (Tipai) (1939) San Diego County*

P.O. Box 908,  
Alpine, CA 92001  
(619) 445-3810

The upland plateaus and wide valleys of the Coast Range east of San Diego inhabited in the past by impermanent bands of Native Americans---small groups that camped for a few years or less, while foraging for local plants and animals. Occasionally, however, certain areas make excellent long-term living sites. The 1,609-acre Viejas Reservation occupies the end of one such place. Oaks dot the valley floor with open green to brown pastures. Farther up the slopes of the low mountains, scrub oaks appear, then give way to chaparral and live granite rock. On the back loop road stands an old, very attractive church and the reservation cemetery. Alongside, a dirt road winds into the far distance toward Capitan Grande, apparently occupied by no humans.

The Spanish named it El Valle de Las Viejas ("The Valley of the Old Women"), for when a party of them approached the valley, searching for persons to populate the coastal missions, they found only old women. The men had fled to hide and fight another day.

Today, back in the oaks of the valley head, residents run an RV park and campground for the general public. Occasional cows and other tame animals wander the area, while wild ones forage the hills beyond. The RV management can point out *Ma-Tar-Awa*, an ancient archaeological site.

Along Interstate 5, the most evident indication of change is the large casino complex on the frontage road. The casino has funded both the modern homes sprouting up all over the valley, and a short distance away, the very attractive and well-equipped southwestern-style Indian Health Service clinic--built as a cooperative effort for the nearby tribes.

The tribe holds two annual ceremonies: "Clearing of the Cemetery", a time when the members clean and tend to their two cemeteries, and Dia de las Animas, "All Souls Day".

*East of San Diego, from 1-8, the E. Willows Rd. Exit (between Descanso and Alpine).*

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JAMUL INDIAN VILLAGE  
*Kumeyaay (Tipai)* (1912, 1975) San Diego County

Box 612,



Jamul, CA 91935  
(619) 669-0301

Sixty-five years ago a small band of Kumeyaay found six acres upon which to settle---a tiny plot in the rolling hills east of the town of Jamul. The village is a random assembly, and most of the houses are old; nevertheless, there is a great feeling of community.

The winter Sunday I first arrived, the sky was cold and wet, the one dirt road nearly impassable. But in the air was a feeling of excitement---these friendly people were gathered in an old meeting hall to hear what new things their newly-attained status was to bring them. The village had just become a full-fledged reservation, and everyone seemed pleased that 65 years of "squatting" and tenacious endurance were finally being rewarded. This was 1981.

In 1997, the picturesque chapel of St. Francis Xavier (1926) still stands, carefully repainted, and is a tribute to the labors of the past; its colorful cemetery will not slide down the hillside, thanks to a new retaining wall. Sadly, the old meeting hall was lost to fire. Nevertheless, the roads are now paved; the tribal office and new meeting hall are in a real office building, and things are a lot more prosperous than 16 years ago.

One summer afternoon in 1997, I snagged Kenny Meza, Tribal Chair, Jamul Band of Mission Indians, from his seemingly perpetual duties to tell me a little bit about Jamul and its plans.

Mr. Meza told me that Jamul's new council of 1997 is changing things for the better. [*I noted that many things were already different. He concurred.*] Jamul is able to share a certain amount of revenue from sister Kumeyaay reservations with large casinos---Barona, Viejas, and Sycuan. Jamul's people have very little access to Federal funds. Although some are forthcoming, it is hardly enough to do anything other than simply survive. The extra amount helps a lot to fund the everyday running of this small band of six or seven families, which consists of about 20 persons.

The place is run like the large family that it is. Mr. Meza was involved in procuring a bookcase for one resident, seeing about getting some plumbing installed for another, trying to rectify some bookkeeping mistakes for another, and answering my questions all the while.

THE LAND UPON WHICH THE ORIGINAL residents settled was owned in the late 1800s by Maus Spreckels, sugar baron and builder of the San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railroad. He gave back the 6-1/2 acres to the Indian tribe in 1912, but the Federal government refused to recognize its existence until that cold day in 1981. The only adequate thing they had had all that time was a water supply.

Jamul is trying for a grant for land acquisition to expand its tribal housing. But the locals are opposed, saying it will just bring another gaming establishment into the area. Meza counters, saying that although they might not like it, gaming seems to be the only solution to providing sufficient housing for the 30 tribal members still without space on the reservation.

Mr. Meza also said funding earmarked for Native American education in the local schools is not always properly applied. Kids seldom get any information about their heritage there. Kumeyaay language teaching is, however, available at Sycuan, some 10 miles north.

AS I LEFT, I NOTICED a large bulletin board filled with flyers of Native American activities in the region. Yes, Meza said, many of our tribal members are very involved in a lot of these activities and gatherings.

*[In February, 1998, Meza was very happy to tell me that the tribe had acquired 4 additional acres, including the fire station next door.]*

The culture is far from vanishing.

*E of San Diego on Hwy. 94, one mile E of the Jamul junction with Proctor Rd. and one block E of Jamul Fire Station.*

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## EWIIAAPAAYP RESERVATION

*[eweé-aa-pipe]*

[Spanish spelling: Cuyapaípe (quí-a-pipe)]

*Kumeyaay* (1893) San Diego County

P.O. Box 471,  
Alpine, CA 92001  
(619) 445-6315

The pines and evergreens of the south slopes of Mt. Laguna overlap a bit

onto the remote lands of the Ewiiapaayp. The three families who live here are hidden in the shade of a remote, wooded valley, surrounded by low, rocky mountains. As with much other reservation land, this place was at one time considered nearly valueless, but the real value, solitude and fastness, has been preserved for centuries. The land is as it was from the beginning--beautiful. Its 4,100 acres, as is true of many reservations, are not "developed".

One can only walk in-on paths that are known only to the families in residence and a few locals of Mt. Laguna. It is obviously private. Do not enter unless you call beforehand.

MR. JIM PENNEY, Business Manager of the Ewiiapaayp Reservation was kind enough to fill us in with a few comments. The 13 residents at the ranch live in 7 houses on the expansive 4,100 acres. The main enterprise that has supported the people here for many years is breeding horses. This is an occupation of long hours and tedious work, but one that continues to provide a profitable existence on the wide expanse of the reservation.

However, the tribe is beginning a new venture. This place is endowed with a good, pure, and tasty water source. Bottled H<sub>2</sub>O from their well will be marketed under the name "Leaning Rock", which, not incidentally, is the translation of that long vowel-rich word that is the name of this place. The spelling is the true phonetic rendition of the name. We honor their request. Yes, there is a leaning rock nearby.

This small band of people opens their gates to the public once a year for a free three-day gathering, complete with camping, birdsongs, demonstrations of medicinal herbs, basketweaving and *shawee* (acorn) demonstrations, *peon* (hand) games, and barbeque.

*For the annual (public) Ewiiapaayp Gathering, the last week in July, the gates at the Thing Valley ranch toward the end of La Posta Truck Trail, 10 mi. off old U.S. Hwy. 80 are opened. Other times, the gates are locked. Call if you have business.*

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## CAMPO RESERVATION

*Kumeyaay (Tipai) (1893) San Diego County*

36190 Church Rd.,  
Campo, CA 91901

The 15,000-acre Campo Reservation lies high on a 4,000-foot plateau in the Laguna Mountains east of San Diego, endowed with powderings of winter snow and cooler breezes in summer. The hills are rocky and naturally covered with chaparral, but many clearings offer land for grazing and small farms; taller oaks shade the valleys.

On the north part of the reservation are a motel, store, and trailer park in Live Oak Springs (some businesses are non-Indian owned). The tribal administrative center is on the south end of the reservation, where one finds a neat, modern community center, health services, and tribal office, adjacent to an exceptionally colorful old church and Indian cemetery. A visit to this site might give one a good experience of the patterns of life in the Kumeyaay community.

NOTE: The scenic San Diego & Arizona Eastern Railroad main yard is in the town of Campo, on Highway 94, and winds through the rez.

*Tribal offices are located on a hillside on Church Rd., right alongside State Rte. 94, between Campo and Jacumba. Some dirt roads traverse the reservation, but it must be remembered that this is private property!*

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## MANZANITA RESERVATION

*Kumeyaay (Tipai) (1893) San Diego County*

P.O Box 1302,  
Boulevard, CA 91905  
(619) 766-4930

The Manzanita, named for the brushy bush so common over drier California, occupies a 3,580-acre rectangle of infertile upland valleys and meadows in the western part of the Carrizo Desert.

Homes of the residents are widely scattered, tucked behind boulders and hillsides for protection from the uncompromising summer sun. As residents have been troubled by inconsiderate and trespassing scofflaws, they prefer no off-road visitors.

*E of San Diego, Live Oak Rd. from Live Oak Springs is a southern public access road to parts of Anza-Borrego State Park, passing through the reservation, but heed the preceding sentence.*

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## LA POSTA RESERVATION

*Kumeyaay (Tipai) (1893) San Diego County*

P.O. Box 154,  
Boulevard, CA 91905  
(619) 561-9294

Under the shadow of 6,270-foot-high Mt. Laguna and at the eastern edge of Cleveland National Forest lies this 3,672-acre park-like highland. La Posta has occasional residents, who value and guard their privacy. The one entry road is dusty or muddy, and is fenced off from intruders.

*The almost vacant countryside with grand vistas of mountains and valleys, E of San Diego, may be seen only by taking the La Posta Rd. Exit N off 1-8 (the same exit S is Hwy. 80 E to Live Oak Springs). Vistas from a nearby hilltop overlook. Information:*

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## IPAII LANGUAGE

Ipai language is a northern dialect of the Ipai-Tipai language group, known further south as Kumeyaay. Sketches of Ipai reservations follow.

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## INAJA-COSMIT RESERVATIONS

*Ipai-Tipai (Kumeyaay) (1875) San Diego County*

P.O. Box 186,  
Santa Ysabel, CA 92070  
(619) 789-8581

These are two parcels of rather remote and inaccessible land under the silhouette of Cuyamaca Peak. At present there are no permanent inhabitants of these 852 acres, although some remodeling of older homes is underway

on Inaja. Deep winter snows and lack of facilities make these locations inhospitable to all but the hardiest.

Many years ago, I am told, there were residents on Cosmit, and once there were fiestas and dances. Time has changed modes of existence.

*W of the intersection of Hwy. 79 with County Rd. S-1, N of Cuyamaca Reservoir, 7 mi S of Julian.*

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## SAN PASCUAL RESERVATION

*Ipai (1910) San Diego County*

P.O. Box 365,  
Valley Center, CA 92082  
(619) 749-3200

Although one of the later-acquired reservations in southern California, much of this reservation has been removed from its original location. The original parcels are now occupied by Lake Wohlford and by an organization dedicated to the preservation of nature, the San Diego Wild Animal Park.

COMPENSATORY LAND is now in five parcels, totalling 1,500 acres, on the dry, scrub oak hills east of Valley Center. At least the lake provides the residents with some water that they would not otherwise have had. Other compensations include a large tract of modern homes to replace the tired dwellings of the early 1900s.

Indian activity is centered at the pleasantly constructed tribal hall and education center, marked with a fine carved-wood sign.

*Take the Lake Wohlford exit from County Rd. S-6 on the north end of Valley Center, about 1-1/2 mi. to the San Pascual Tribal Hall sign. The other parcels nestle nearby.*

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## SANTA YSABEL RESERVATION

*Ipai (1875) San Diego County*

P.O. Box 130,  
Santa Ysabel, CA 92070

(619) 765-0845

Santa Ysabel occupies the slopes of the wooded and rugged Volcan Mountains, rising to nearly 4500 feet. This rural area is home to numerous wildlife, and the people here enjoy solitude.

The homes on these 15,527 acres are mostly older ones, as are the tribal and educational buildings. An old wooden structure standing near the highway is for the Indian equivalent of ceremonies like "wakes and showers", one resident told me. November 14th is the big feast day for the mission, founded in 1818.

*Entrance is E off Hwy. 79 on Schoolhouse Cyn. Rd., 1/4 mi N of Mesa Grande Rd. intersection and about 2 mi N of the town of Santa Ysabel (NE of Ramona).*

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[Exhibit G](#), "The Santa Ysabel Ranch", and [Exhibit Q](#), "Proposition for the Sale of the Santa Ysabeol Ranch to the United States Governement" from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

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## MESA GRANDE RESERVATION

*Ipai* (1875) San Diego County

P.O. Box 270,  
Santa Ysabel, CA 92070

Although closely related to and only a couple of miles distant from Santa Ysabel, the Mesa Grande band is one of those groups that cherishes a singular independence. The reservation land itself has been disputed among its families. In any event, the place is rather remote, very quiet, and scenic, high on a group of hills above the forests of Black Canyon (part of Cleveland National Forest). In winter it is often covered with a mantle of snow.

For their living during the year, the thirty-odd residents keep some horses, cows, and a few simple farms in mostly wooden structures-on the 120 acres of land (2 parcels).



*From Hwy 79, 1-1/2 mi. N of Santa Ysabel, go W on Mesa Grande Rd. about 5 mi to intersection with Black Canyon Rd. at several abandoned stone buildings. Black Canyon Road, a steep, winding, dirt road, passes through an unoccupied portion of the reservation by the National Forest. The habitations, on private land, are off a paved farm road 0.7 mi E of this intersection.*

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[Exhibit H](#), "Mesa Grande", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

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## AJACHEMEM & LUISEÑO (AJACHEMEM ALSO KNOWN AS JUANEÑO)

PRACTICALLY INDISTINGUISHABLE from their Luiseño neighbors in custom, tradition, and language, the Juaneños do have differing family backgrounds. The names of both groups derive from the missions San Juan Capistrano and San Luis Rey. Both territories shared a coastal environment, and dwellers settled along the low coastal shelf into the Santa Ana Mountains. Both lands extended up into this loose chain of Coast Range mountains.

The variety of wildlife and flora allowed the people to settle into relatively small areas and remain more or less in one village, without having to roam for food. As reliable water supplies were necessary, most villages were located on higher knolls of the flood plains of the rivers. These rises turned out to be ideal locations for the Spanish ranchos, since they did not flood in the winter rains. Today, among the few vestiges of early Indian presence in the L.A. Basin are the sites of these ranchos, in whose gardens can be found large sprinklings of abalone and clam shells from the middens.

Clan and family were extremely important, as was the territory of each family. Owing to various functions, such as monitoring and use of sensitive archeological sites, the knowledge of these territories and their boundaries is still important. *Ching-ich-ngish* was and is their revered supreme being

## JUANEÑO



Juaneño territory extends up the coast more or less to the Santa Ana River, though the springs at Puvungna, on the northwest corner of the grounds of California State University, Long Beach (alongside the San Gabriel River) are held sacred by both the Juaneño and the Tongva. San Marco Canyon (by Camp Pendleton), Bolsa Chica, and Aliso-Wood Canyon are areas carefully watched by the Natives (Juaneño and Luiseño alike) as pristine vestiges of their ancestral heritages. Acjacheme is the name of the main Native village near Misión San Juan Capistrano; the name is preserved by a street sign on the north side of the mission complex.

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## AJACHEMEM NATION

(AK-HÓSH-MEM) *Juaneño* Orange, Riverside, and San Diego Counties

David Belardes, Chair,  
32161 Avenida Los Amigos,  
San Juan Capistrano 92675  
(714) 493-0959

For many reasons, many Natives of this region have grown up here without benefit of reservation status. That leaves them without much say in the councils of those who have land. Therefore, the Ajachmem Nation was organized to give assistance to these people and to provide a group in which to retain traditions and customs of their ancestors.

Most of these families are descendants of both the Spanish settlers and equally, the local Indians. Consequently, most are connected to both cultures.

Here, as in the rest of Mexico, the Indian religious system was transformed by name and function into the Spanish religion. *Ching-ich-ngish* took on the appearance of the Catholic God, and names of other religious beings and ceremonies changed.

The chair of the Ajachemem Nation, David Belardes, told me of his dual, rather than conflicting, faith. One half of his family is descended from two of the original Spanish (one of whom arrived with Portolá), Belardes and Yorba, the other half is Juaneño Indian. During a *Velório* (candlelight ceremony), he recalls the songs of his father and grandfather---Indian songs translated into Spanish, but Indian nevertheless.

Tribal applications have been submitted for Federal recognition, but the BIA is making glacial progress.

The tribe does its best to attempt to preserve what few remnants of the past are still extant. They volunteer to help with Native American interpretation at the Blas Aguilar Museum, located in an old building across the street from the San Juan Capistrano Mission. They gather at the Puvungna Spring and village site in public ceremonies that observe spring and fall equinoxes. Belardes' son has learned a number of Indian dances (including intertribals).

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## LUISEÑO

The Luiseño people suffered less from Spanish rule than the Ajachemem. For some reason the padres allowed the Luiseño to live normal lives in their own villages. Nevertheless, when other whites arrived, they were evicted from their lands, and ended up in a few settlements, which eventually became the reservations of today. Large numbers of the people were left outside the reservation, where their descendants still live.

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## PALA RESERVATION

*Luiseño, Ipai, and Cupeño (1875) San Diego County*

P.O. Box 43,  
Pala, CA 92059  
(619) 742-3784

Groups from three distinct people live on the ancient Luiseño territory that is the Pala Reservation: the Luiseño (named for their proximity to Misión San Luis Rey, and includes some people from Misión San Juan Capistrano (earlier called Juaneño); the Ipai (part of a group earlier called Diegueño, from Misión San Diego) are descendants of people brought here from several miles to the south; and the Cupeño (p. 243) whose fathers were tragically dispossessed of land in and around what is now Los Coyotes Reservation (see p. 240), about 40 miles to the east of here.

In family customs, ceremonies, and language, the three groups maintain

some distinctiveness to this day. Intermarriage, proximity, and common religion have tended to blur most differences, however.

The interesting village consists of a large assemblage of older houses gathered about the reconstructed Misión San Antonio de Pala Asistència (*App. II, 243*), decorated with ancient Indian motifs and flanked by the Indian cemetery. In the village center are small stores and the Cupa Cultural Center, focus for activities of the Cupeño people, and an adult learning center. Further out in the 11,600-acre reservation are a ballpark, school, and various government (HUD-type) homes, mobile homes, and small farms. Some income is derived from avocado farming and a gaming hall. Cupa Days Festival is the first week in May.

The former Mission Reserve Reservation, a rocky, chaparral-covered uninhabited mountain of 9,500 acres is attached to and part of the east side of Pala Reservation. Who knows what some early bureaucrat thought when he assigned such an uninhabitable rock for a reservation?

*The village of Pala is at the intersection of Hwy. S-16 and Hwy. 76, about 25 mi E of Oceanside.*

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[Exhibit L](#), "Pala and its Neighborhood", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*. (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

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## LA JOLLA RESERVATION

*Luiseño* (1875) San Diego County

Star Rte. Box 158,  
Valley Center, CA 92082  
(619) 742-3771

State Highway 76 passes through La Jolla and its verdant forest, a contrast in this dry region of brush and chaparral. In the valley, we go back in time. La Jolla Reservation hugs the wooded, southern slopes of Mt. Palomar and descends in cascading terraces to the cool forests of the upper reaches of

the San Luis Rey River.

Along the creek, the reservation offers public campgrounds, access to river fishing and swimming/splashing at the cool San Luis Rey River water park. The campgrounds here and at nearby Los Coyotes are superb locales to explore and experience these ancient Indian lands.

Almost hidden in the flanks of the mountain are the scatter of homes, many with orchards and small cattle ranches. From the highway, a careful eye can pick out several adobe homes with yards adorned by flowers and cacti. The quiet, undeveloped beauty of these shady acres truly makes this a jewel, one of the original meanings of the Spanish La Jolla.

At milepost 40, a small dirt road leads up the mountainside to the reservation center---a small mission with its ancient Indian cemetery, a tribal center, and recreation fields.

*About 2 mi E of the Mt. Palomar Observatory road on both sides of Hwy. 76*

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[Exhibit L](#), "Pala and its Neighborhood", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*. (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

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## RINCON RESERVATION

*Luiseño* or WA\$XATAM (1875) San Diego County

P.O Box 68,  
Valley Center, CA 92082 (619) 749-1051

Probably the best term for this reservation is "bustling." Although the reservation is more than a century old, there are new buildings for Health Services, an Indian Action Team (security), a fire department, and an Indian Education Center and Tribal Hall, entitled *wa\$xayam pomki* ("Place of the Washxayam"---the Luiseños' name for themselves). The orthography (writing and spelling) above is theirs.

Scattered over the 3,960 acres are old and new homes, athletic fields, Catholic and Protestant chapels, and, in this green valley of spectacular vistas of Mt. Palomar, orange orchards, small farms, and even prickly pear cactus cultivation. Signs marking the reservation boundaries bear prohibitions against trespassing off the highway; the reservation has had trouble with people seriously damaging their fragile ecology. Roads and buildings are strictly for persons on business. However, the public is invited to the gaming hall.

*Both sides of County Rd. S-6 (Valley Center Rd.), about 10 miles NE of Escondido. Signs mark entrance to reservation lands.*

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[Exhibit L](#), "Pala and its Neighborhood", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

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## PAUMA-YUIMA RESERVATION

*Luiseño (1892) San Diego County*

P.O. Box 86,  
Pauma Valley, CA 92061  
(619) 742-1289

The area of these two segments of Mt. Palomar totals nearly 6,000 acres. Yuima is high on the Mt. Palomar slope; it has no residents. Pauma's ninety-odd residents live along Pauma Reservation Rd. The reservation is a settlement that has much of the character of a Mexican village---an earth-brown stucco chapel and Spanish-style tribal hall, all set in citrus groves and dissolving adobe ruins.

The Pauma Valley, the valley of the San Luis Rey River and its tributaries, lie in the shadow of the huge mountain. The seems to be of another era, not so touched by modernity. On the north, orange orchards striping the gentle western slope of the mountain produce some agricultural income.

*On Pauma Reservation Rd., off State Rte. 76, 1 1/2 mi. N of the*

*town of Pauma Valley (30 miles E of Oceanside).*

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[Exhibit P](#), "The Pauma Ranch", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

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## PECHANGA RESERVATION

*Luiseño (1882) Riverside County*

P.O. Box 477,  
Temecula, CA 92593

The broad, highland mountain basin, sometimes gently watered and sometimes inundated by the Temecula River accommodates several ranches, some housing developments, and the 4,094 acres of the Pechanga Reservation.

FOR MANY YEARS ALL "development" was strictly individual, with some comfortable homes, many tiny ones, and some clutter. The roads were mostly unpaved, winding around the old clapboard chapel on a low hillside and the picturesque old wooden tribal hall. The residents wanted it this way--they'd rather not be saddled with paved roads and bulldozed countryside. It was this way for a century, so why change?

But the lure of the casino took over. The building rose like a modern mammoth, as did the income. Now much of the place looks not unlike Rancho Murietta, just up the road. But it is still comfortable.

On the west side of Highway S-16 lies the Pechanga burial ground and the remains of Juan Diego, hero of Helen Hunt Jackson's novel "Ramona"---an exposé of the terrible Indian conditions of the last century.

*Pechanga Rd. (47,000-block) off County Rd. S 16, just S of the intersection with Hwy. 79 (at Rancho California).*

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[Exhibit M](#), "The Pachanga Indians", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California,*

*Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)*

[Temecula Indian Eviction](#). Tom Hudson (1974)

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## SOBOBA RESERVATION

*Luiseño and Cahuilla (1883) Riverside Co.*

P.O. Box 487,  
San Jacinto, CA 92581  
(714) 654-2765

Where the San Jacinto River at one time spread out over this wide valley, its currents cutting terraces at the edges of the low mountains, we find the Soboba Reservation's 5,036 acres. The arroyo bears enough water to support a few feathery trees, but not much else. However, the rough, colorful banded-rock countryside gives the eye plenty to admire. Although first a Cahuilla reservation, most of the people who live here now are Luiseño, quite a distance from their original territory and the other Luiseño reservations.

Along the rocky mesa are a few horse ranches, some newer and some elderly homes, an old chapel and cemetery, and fine offices in the *Ahmium* tribal hall and education center. Here, as well, are located dental and medical clinics. There are some archaeological displays in the tribal hall---relics retrieved from the hills and mountains of the area.

Soboba is the site for occasional powwows. A few miles away at Ramona Bowl, in April and May the Ramona Pageant tells the story of the terrible struggles of southern California's native population in the last century.

Probably the most obvious part of the rez is the gaming center. Don't stop there if you want to experience the reservation.

*East on Main St. in San Jacinto, cross the arroyo to Soboba Rd., R 1 mi to tribal center.*

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[Exhibit B](#), "Saboba", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of*



*the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)*

[At the Cahuilla Indian Reservation, Banning, California](#)

"At the Cahuilla Indian Reservation, Banning, California. Hours she sits by the window. Reading. Taking notes."

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## SAN LUIS REY BAND OF MISSION INDIANS

*Luiseño* San Diego County

Carmen Mojado, co-chair,  
Oceanside, CA  
(760) 724-8505

In the late 1800s, the Natives of northern San Diego County were being gathered up by the American government to put onto reservations. However, a very large number (about 4,000) of those known as Luiseño were missed or overlooked in the big sweep. These people stayed prudently quiet for many decades, but have decided that now is a good time to come forward to be recognized.

The tribe's annual public offering is their festival Powwow on the San Luis Rey Mission grounds, 2nd weekend in June, on the green in front of the mission, near the Lavanderia, the old Indian laundry facility on the banks of the San Luis Rey River.

*The Misión San Luis Rey de Francia is located 5 mi. E of Oceanside (nr. Camp Pendleton) on St. Hwy. 76.*

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## PEOPLE OF THE MOJAVE DESERT, COACHELLA VALLEY, & COLORADO RIVER

### SHOSHONEAN LANGUAGES

Shoshonean is one of a large group of Uto-Aztecan languages spoken in the Great Basin, including eastern and southern California, also by the Comanches, and the Aztecs of Mexico. The



tribes of Southeastern California are the Chemehuvi (Southern Paiute) (Numic). Takic speakers (a subgroup of the Shoshonean languages) are spoken by Serrano, Vanyume, Cahuilla, and Cupeño peoples.

## NUMIC

### CHEMEHUEVI (SOUTHERN PAIUTE)

THE CHEMEHUEVI are a branch of the Southern Paiute. Their ancestral land extended from the Colorado River (in California) up to the Las Vegas area of Nevada, and westward into the desert a hundred or so miles, as far as Death Valley. As a Paiute people, their traditions were almost identical to bands further to the east. However, their Colorado River lands in California were once Mohave, who were displaced in the last century. Indeed, vocabulary and several customs, such as semi-permanent houses and riverine farming, were seen similar to the Mohave of earlier days.

As a people at the edge of the desert, the Chemehuevi found it necessary to hunt in the outlying lands, bringing them in cultural contact with the bordering peoples. As a desert people, they also needed light travelling materials, so their basketry became an important part of their culture.

One of the most important Paiute ceremonies is the "Cry" or "Mourning", which is sung in honor of the dead of the past year, and is accompanied by cremation and ceremonial burning of wealth. As in other desert tribes, many of the songs came from "dreaming", a trance state assisted by datura (p. 24).

Spanish incursion into Arizona only marginally affected this part of the Colorado river peoples. The worst effect was that of the introduction of European disease epidemics. That was followed by slave raiding into Paiute country by both whites and Utes. Mormon settlements stopped this practice, but their presence also unravelled Paiute traditions, as did removal to reservations.

The Chemehuevi had a reputation for not being overly pleased with reservation life, either on the Colorado River Reservation, where they were in too-close contact with the Mohave, or in Twenty-Nine Palms, where there tended to be very little water (see below). Some persons did remain at

Torres-Martinez Reservation (Cahuilla, at the Salton Sea).

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## CHEMEHUEVI RESERVATION

*Chemehuevi* [Ché-me-way-vy] Paiute or *ně-wě-wě*,  
(1870s, 1930s) San Bernardino County

P.O. Box 1826,  
Havasupai Lake, CA 92363  
(619) 858-4531

This is ancient territory of the *Halchidboma*, who abandoned it in the early 1800s. It was subsequently occupied by the Mohave, then more recently by the Chemehuevi in the late 1800s. Most of the reservation as such is relatively new. In 1938, as the backwaters of the newly-constructed Parker Dam on the Colorado River began flooding the rich, flat lands south of Mohave Canyon, the residents of this remote stretch of river, the Chemehuevi, were obliged to disperse. Some went to Los Angeles, some to the Colorado River Reservation in Parker, Arizona, others to Torres-Martinez Reservation, a few to Twentynine Palms (who later left there for other reasons) and a very few remained on the dry, forbidding, higher terraces nearby.

Things have radically changed for them in the last few years. Between 1970 and 1982, more than \$6 million of development was invested in the reservation, now called the west bank of Lake Havasu, the upgraded backwaters of Parker Dam. Since the sandy, sloping, and mountainous land is unsuitable for agriculture, development has been in the form of recreational facilities for the general public---long-lease, fully-equipped homesites, marinas, campgrounds, a motel, restaurant, store, and even a passenger ferry to Lake Havasu City, Arizona, and London Bridge, across the river. These sun belt developments have enabled the Chemehuevi to become highly self-sufficient, so much so that many dispersed families are returning to their homeland.

Although it is good to see the welfare of the people improving, with "progress," little time is left for tradition---no dances or festivals are held here. There are activities for the Chemehuevi people, but they are held to

the south on the Colorado River Reservation. What will happen to the Chemehuevis as a people, a tradition, when "civilization" takes over?

Developed only along the Colorado River bank, the reservation occupies some 28,000 acres of mostly dry desert and treeless mountains. Though not available to the general public, such features as petroglyphs, pictographs, grinding rocks, turquoise mines, and sleeping circles (low, round rock walls for wind and weather protection) abound, both on reservation land and in ancestral lands. Birds, coyotes, and wild burros roam free, but too many of the burros are destroying the few trees and spoiling wells and water holes.

Project offices and a wildlife protection and security office are near the new boat landing, but modern council offices and most Indian homes are located on a secluded northern end of the reservation. A visitor gets no feeling of "Indianness" here, but the realization that human needs are being cared for as never before is welcome.

An extremely important development is happening in the desert just west of the Chemehuevi Reservation: the possible installation of a nuclear waste dump. Details are in the section on land use.

*The tribal offices and development area: an unnumbered turnoff with sign to "Lake Havasu". on U.S. 95, about 17 mi S of Needles. Proceed E about 15 mi to a guardhouse at the boat landing. Maps of the reservation are available at the Reservation project office.*

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## TWENTYNINE PALMS RESERVATION

(originally *Serrano*) Chemehuevi (1895) San Bernardino County

c/o Dean Mike  
555 S. Sunrise Hwy., Ste. 200,  
Palms Springs, CA 92262

This is a 402-acre rocky hillside reservation, settled in 1868 as a Chemehuevi refuge from a war with the Mohave, far from their Colorado River home, on land that was formerly a Serrano camp. Currently there are no residents; after the famous Willie Boy incident in 1909,\* residents drifted away to other nearby reservations. The oasis which supplied their water is now part of the Joshua Tree National Park. A few persons associated with

the tribe use the land for gatherings. On Adobe Street in the town is a well-kept Chemehuevi burial ground with unmarked graves, as tradition dictates. Although unsettled, the land is not unoccupied. The Twentynine Palms gaming hall is prominent on the site, bringing sorely-needed income to the tribe.

*Adobe Rd., S of Hwy. 62, to a corner of Josbua Tree National Monument.*

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*\*Fell Them Willie Boy is Here* is a 1969 movie with Robert Redford and Katherine Ross. The story was faithfully based on an incident in 1909 on the Morongo Reservation in which a young Chemehuevi man from Twentynine Palms killed the father of his lover in self-defense. Nearly the entire county sheriff's office went on a manhunt for the boy and his girl, who had fled into the hills, evading capture for many weeks. Because the President was travelling through the area, the press whipped up a massive anti-Indian campaign, claiming all Indians to be dangerous. An Indian was found (who was not Willie Boy), shot, and his body shown in triumph. Most Chemehuevis in the area found subsequent life uncomfortable, and fled to Torres-Martinez. Willie Boy stayed hidden.

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TAKIC.

## KITANEMUK

### KITANEMUK TRIBE OF TEJON INDIANS

*Kitanemuk & Tejon Indians, Yowlumni, & "Interior" Chumasb* (Kern County)

A previously Federally recognized tribe seeking rerecognition.

Chair: Dee Dominguez  
981 N. Virginia,  
Covina, CA 91722

Ft. Tejon and the Tejon Reservation were the "repository" for Kitanemuk along with a group of Chumash from the interior regions around Mt. Pinos (a Chumash sacred place, from which a immense land area can be viewed) and the Cuyama area. Other tribes of the Tehachapi Mountains were gathered

here too, including Yowlumni Yokuts.

The small Kitanemuk tribe occupied a region in the Tehachapi Mountains from about the Grapevine (on I-5) eastward into the Mojave to about Lancaster. Their traditions and customs were quite similar (though their language was not) to the nearby tribes of Chumash, Yowlumni Yokuts, Tongva, and Tataviam. The Yowlumni (*Yawelmani*) were the Valley people just to their north, occupying the Tehachapis to the Kern River Valley.

Following the dissolution of the reservation in 1864, many of these people migrated northward toward Bakersfield, whence many went or were sent to the Tule River Reservation. Still others dispersed into the countryside. Nevertheless, 450 modern descendants of predominantly Kitanemuk and Yowlumni families from Tejon have been able to trace their lineages to the present. They were recognized as a tribe early in this century by the BIA, but like eight others, were "administratively ignored", then required to resubmit all their papers, as if they had never been recognized.

THE TRIBE has been intensely interested and involved in ecological protection in and of their ancestral area. The former San Emigdio, Ranch land just to the west of the Grapevine is currently owned and administered by a nature conservation organization. As a number of members are basketweavers, one project involves restoration and planting of basketmaking material on this land which was formerly used for cattle.

The same area is adjacent to the Sespe Condor Sanctuary, also of intense interest to the tribe. The large Tejon Ranch (the former Tejon Reservation, bought from the government by its first supervisor, Lt. Beale) is the site of a Kitanemuk cemetery and numerous rock art sites. The Kitanemuk need special permission to visit their old lands. Tejon Ranch says that the condors are not welcome either.

Yet another concern is an attempt by Occidental Oil Company to drill in the old government Elk Hills Petroleum Reserve---reserved for emergency use during World War II, but never completely exploited. Occidental wants to punch wells in this land, despoiling much of the remaining Yowlumni lands and artifacts next to what is left of the old Buena Vista Lake.

Several elder speakers of Kitanemuk have contributed to a written language dictionary.

---much of the above was contributed by Ms. Dee Dominguez, whose grandparents were residents on the Tejon Ranch.

*Tejon Ranch is located on the SE side of 1-5, just N of Lebec, Kern Co., Ft. Tejon State Park is 1 mi. N of the Ranch, Ft. Tejon exit.*

TEJON RANCH: former Kitanemuk, Yowlumni, Interior Chumash reservation lands.

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## SERRANO & VANYUME

A long tongue of Shoshonean language-related peoples, reaching from the Great Basin into the Los Angeles Basin, includes the Serrano people of the San Bernardino Mountains and its northern hills, plus the small band of Mojave River dwellers, the *Vanyume*. Serrano is Spanish for "people of the mountains"; indeed, the early Serrano people lived among the peaks, valleys, and deserts of the San Bernardino Mountains, from Victorville to Twentynine Palms. The Vanyume survived the Mojave Desert only along its one intermittent river, from Victorville to Barstow.

As Dry California dwellers, existence of both groups was difficult---acorns and piñon or cactus for the main course; roots, bulbs, chia, maybe dates or mesquite berries for side dishes. Of course, villages were only where water was available. Deer, antelope, birds, and various rodents of the desert were fair game. The mountains (some 11,000 feet) furnished a source of water for people, plants, and game, with the latter two furnishing housing, food, and craft materials. Basketry was a fine craft among the Serrano, and many examples survive.

Today's Serrano live predominantly on the San Manuel Reservation near by Patton, and the Morongo Reservation (along with Cahuilla, and others) in Banning. Other tribal members live in nearby communities. The Vanyume people have long been absorbed into the larger communities.

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## SAN MANUEL RESERVATION

*Serrano (1893) San Bernardino County*

P.O. Box 266,  
Patton, CA 92369  
(714) 862-8933

Most present-day Serrano live on or near their ancestral lands on San Manuel or Morongo reservation.

The 653 acres of San Manuel are arrayed along a foothill of the San Bernardino Mountains near Riverside. The approach to the hill is lined with ancient eucalyptus shading the southwestern rancho-style Serrano Cultural Center at the base of the foothill. However, the first manmade structure you see is the colossal casino and its asphalt-ocean parking lot. As the gaming hall closest to L.A., it is consequently the most immense. The fortunes of the tribe have changed in the last decade. Once San Manuel was an isolated refuge; today fortunes flow into this reservation.

On the slopes and the terrace above are older homes, as well as much larger, newer homes, a few adobe ruins, an ancient functioning acequia [canal], some storehouses, and the quiet of a burial ground-all with vistas of mountains to the north and the orange smog-veiled valley of San Bernardino to the south.

The cultural center displays some articles of archaeological and ethnological interest. Educational and tribal functions are also held in the building, while well-cared-for athletic fields and sports areas are outside.

*In Highland, take Highland Ave. to Victoria Ave., go uphill to the Center.*

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## CAHUILLA

The Cahuilla have occupied a large portion of San Diego County forever. Their assortment of geography, though in Dry California, gave them a decided advantage---a extensive variety of climates and its accompanying benefits. The highest mountain in the region is above 10,000 feet, the lowest basin below sea level. The Cahuilla sacred center is 8,900-foot *Tahquitz* (pronounced "tá-kwish") Peak, an outstanding granite cone near Idyllwild.

The location of the tribe between the coast and the Colorado River was

ideally situated for trade in both directions. Food was probably not plentiful, but their skillful land management made it much easier to obtain. The Cahuilla were clever people (still are).

Too often we read about "hunter-gatherers" as if the people simply went out and took what they could find. The Cahuilla did hunt, but took great care not to deplete the game and carefully watched over the grazing lands. They gathered, but so does anyone who picks their garden produce. Even today, remnants can be seen in Cahuilla territory of their hillside erosion prevention techniques---stones and branches used in arroyos and gulches to stem the washing of soil, forming a small dam, and diversion channels dug to collect and distribute water to their plantings. These barriers become habitats for small animals and birds, as well as giving a little more water for their thickets of bushes and trees to grow.

THE CAHUILLA PRACTICED WATER conservation in other ways not commonly seen among California tribes. Utilizing the art of pottery-making, they made large cisterns for water storage, and dug deep wells for access to the desert's deepwater sources.

Many hundreds of years in the past they built fish traps along the shores of ancient Lake Cahuilla (*see p. 240, p. 246, Antiquities*), the huge forerunner of the Salton Sea. This lake was full in a much wetter age, and its shoreline can still be detected along its western shore near the modern reservoir also called Lake Cahuilla.

Cahuilla-made baskets are among the finest and most diversified. Baskets were and are made for daily subsistence uses and other uses: acorn leaching, sifting, seed gathering, brush gathering, bowls, scoops, jars, dry food storage, hats, memorials, gifts. They are also commonly a source of income when sold to the public as beautiful artwork. Their designs include Cahuilla cosmological symbols, anthropomorphic figures, many stylized animal forms, and imaginative abstractions.

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CAHUILLA RESERVATION  
*Cahuilla* [ka-wé-a], (1875) Riverside County

P.O. Box 391760,



Anza, CA 92539-1760  
(909) 763-5549

Many high, upland plains of the southern Coast Range are dry, as is the Cahuilla Reservation. At 4,000 feet, it is relatively cool---between the towering hulk of Mt. Palomar (6,126 feet) to the west and San Jacinto Peak (10,800 feet) to the east. The Cahuilla people here are one group among many who have preferred to allow their 18,272 acres to remain more or less as they have always been.

The scrub brush, granite boulders, gentle hills, and dry washes support several dozen persons on a few widely-scattered ranches. A few dirt roads wind about the desert-like landscape; the silence is broken only by the wind, a few birds, and the whine of high-speed motors on the highway.

A primitive old schoolhouse in a clump of pines beside the road is the tribal hall. I took refuge behind a large rock at the adjoining burial ground one windy day to feel the spirits. They were there.

*Four mi W of the settlement of Anza on Hwy. 371 (about 30 mi W of Palm Desert).*

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[Exhibit C](#), "The Cahuilla Reservation", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*. (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

"[Cahuilla](#)" from the Riverside County Dictionary of Names

#### [Cahuilla information](#)

"The Cahuilla Indians have inhabited the area from Borrego to Riverside for more than 2000 years, an area of about 2,400 square miles."

#### [Cahuilla-Volume 15](#)

"Cahuilla---Volume 15, Notes from The North American Indian by Edward S. Curtis"

#### [Cahuilla Creek Restaurant & Casino](#)

"Complete description, including map and available pictures, of

## Cahuilla Creek Restaurant & Casino..."

### [Cahuilla Bird singers and dancers](#)

"Cahuilla Bird singers and dancers Cahuilla Bird Singers and Dancers The Cahuilla Bird Singers and Dancers led by Anthony Andreas, were organized to provide an opportunity for Cahuilla young people to learn their traditional dances and songs."

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## RAMONA RESERVATION

*Cahuilla* administration (1893) Riverside County

3940 Cary Rd.,  
Anza, CA 92539-0439

Out on that big plain mentioned earlier in the Cahuilla Reservation (above) lie 560 uninhabited acres of this reservation, mostly chaparral. It is administered by the Hamilton family of the Cahuilla people.

*Access by dirt road, NW from Hwy. 371, about 1 mi W of the intersection of Hwy. 371 and Hwy. 74.*

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## SANTA ROSA RESERVATION

*Cahuilla* (1907) Riverside County

325 N. Western St.,  
Hemet, CA 92343

Ten miles east of here in the Coachella Valley lies one of the hottest, driest deserts in California. But the 5,000-foot altitude of the Santa Rosa Valley is watered by some rain and snow snatched from the clouds passing around nearby 8,000-ft. Santa Rosa Peak, one of several in the San Bernardino National Forest.

The 11,293 acres of the Santa Rosa Reservation are thinly populated, with a few ranch houses scattered along a dirt road in a long, narrow valley. The mountainsides are dashed with Jeffrey, sugar, and yellow pines, as well as other greenery--- a refreshing contrast to the desert in the surrounding lowlands. The people here are in concert with the conservancy groups trying to keep the Santa Rosa Plateau a wilderness. Beautiful as it is, the people

want to keep it that way, so have subtly suggested that the public stay away by erecting a series of unmistakable "No Trespassing" signs.

*Private road about 4 mi E of intersection of Hwy. 371 and Hwy. 74 (E of Palm Desert). Hwy. 74 actually passes right through the reservation, but there are no signs indicating it.*

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## LOS COYOTES RESERVATION

*Cahuilla* (originally partly *Cupeño*) (1889) San Diego County

P.O. Box 249,  
Warner Springs, CA 92086  
(619) 782-3269

In spite of their past tribulations, some 60 Cahuillas now live (mostly during the summer) on the spacious 25,000 acres of low mountain land above the hot springs (which were the Cupeño life-blood until 1903), and have made part of their magnificently scenic homeland accessible to the public for year-round camping and exploring. Follow the paved, winding road leading up into the mountains overlooking the Valle de San José and Mt. Palomar in the distance. At the top of a hill, further in, sits a tiny, solitary chapel with its separate bell tower, reminding me more of Peru than California. In a high valley on Los Tules Rd., a ranch house serves as tribal hall.

*Warner Springs, on Hwy. 79. Entrance sign on the highway, 6 mi to a campground via Camino San Ignacio and Los Tules Roads.*

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[Exhibit F](#), "Los Coyotes", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

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## TORRES-MARTINEZ RESERVATION

*Cahuilla* (1876) Riverside County

66-725 Martinez Rd.,  
Thermal, CA 92274

In the last century, in the course of making large land allotments (e.g., railroad grants, national forests, public lands, certain Indian reservations), it was popular to set aside alternate sections of land, that is, every other square mile (640 acres). That is why the Torres-Martinez, Ft. Mojave, Morongo, and Agua Caliente Reservations look like checkerboards.

In this very flat, hot, dry (if it's without irrigation), scrubby portion of the Coachella Valley, the Cahuilla people have elected (or have been forced by economics, as in many other places) not to develop much of their checkerboard reservation. In the midst of shady, stately rows of date palms with citrus groves on all sides, brown Chocolate Mountains rising up close by, the Torres-Martinez remains much as it always has been, a desert. More than 10 square miles lie under the waters of the Salton Sea, flooded by accident in 1905. The flooding Colorado River broke a weak levee constructed by the Southern Pacific Railroad, forming the below-sea-level lake before the levee could be plugged. Most of the rest of the dry land is covered with only greasewood scrub, although some land is leased to agribusiness---dates, alfalfa, other legumes. A few people seem to work the land of the reservation's 24,823 acres.

The tree-shaded ruins of the old government Indian Agency, a national landmark, are interesting in their decrepitude. In the same yard under some palms is a little brick tribal hall with grinding rock relics out in front. A well-staffed Riverside-San Bernardino Indian Health clinic serves the region from here. A baseball field and swimming pool adjoin.

This reservation has also been refuge for several Chemehuevi families for many years. When conditions became bad for them along the Colorado River and later at Twentynine Palms, they settled here.

There has been some progress. On a westerly bloc of land against the mountains, near the Fish Traps, the tribe has acquired 40 modern permanent homes with magnificent vistas of the stark Santa Rosa Mountains. This is the first real community of the reservation in many years.

*North of the Salton Sea, off 66th St., between Mecca and Valerie Jean at a point halfway between Hwy. 86 and Hwy. 195, is the paved entrance, S, to ancient palms of the Agency and the tribal office. The homes are W of Valerie Jean. Date shops are near here.*

## AUGUSTINE RESERVATION

*Cahuilla* (1893) Riverside County

1185 N. Hargrave St,  
Banning, CA 92220

Lying between 54th Ave. and Airport Blvd., State Highway 86 and Van Buren St., south of Coachella, is a square mile of nearly uninhabited chaparral, called a reservation. Yet, it is reserve land, an ecological preserve of sorts.

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## CABAZON RESERVATION

*Cahuilla* (1876) Riverside County

84-245 Indio Springs Drive,  
Indio, CA 92201

Cabazon shares with Agua Caliente the dubious distinction of being an urban reservation---a real oddity in California. There's not much to look at---but the 1,452 acres (in two parcels) are extremely neat, made up of a collection of homes-in a grove lying at the edge of Coachella. That's it for this side of I-10.

The most prominent part of the rez, however, is the Cabazon Indian Casino, right on I-10. You can't miss it. After a tough duel with the law, this became California's first tribe to successfully introduce high stakes (and tribal income-producing) gaming. Their continuing business acumen established, they are venturing into other areas such as energy co-generation, if permits can be obtained. Gaming income produces health and education benefits for all.

*Interstate 10 at Dillon Rd. is Cabazon. Residences just E of railroad tracks.*

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### [Cabazon Band of Mission Indians](#)

"The Coachella Valley of the Colorado Desert in Southern California is the home of the descendants of Cahuilla Indian Chief Cabazon."

[Exhibit N](#), "The Desert Indians", from *Report on the Conditions and*

*Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)*

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## AGUA CALIENTE RESERVATION

*Cahuilla* (1896) Riverside County

960 E. Tahquitz Way #106,  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Many centuries ago, the Cahuilla found the springs that greened some of the few native palm stands in the West. From watering holes like these have come the life source of all desert peoples. But in the 1930s, a life force alien to this desert came here---the wealthy, who wanted a winter playground. Thus, an Indian reservation came to be in the middle of one of the richest communities in the state, Palm Springs.

How do you tell reservation from the rest of the town? Sometimes you can't. The reservation was established in 1876 and is a checkerboard of 50 one-mile squares, totalling 24,463 acres. Some portions have been sold off, but nearly half of what you see in Palm Springs is on long lease land, making this tribe possibly the best off in California.

Come and visit the well-preserved ancient canyons of the region: Andreas, Murray, Palm (with Trading Post), and Tahquitz (by permit). These resources are administered by the tribal office (see below). Hiking, horseback riding, and picnicking are encouraged in these superb palm oases. The tribal office is a big building, and the tribe is rather independent of the BIA.

Realizing that the tribe was fast losing its cultural traditions, one of the families now sponsors a public festival in mid-April with Cahuilla and other Indian dances and traditions (*especially "bird songs", a type of song in which a story is told, see Music and Dance, p. 75*). The festival, which is held on the tribal dance ground on Palm Canyon Rd., includes an Indian Market for local and visiting crafts makers.

*Location: Palm Springs.*

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[Agua Caliente Tribal Home Page](http://personal.linkline.com/shoe62/anza/rez.html)

"Palm Springs, Ca - Centuries ago, ancestors of the Agua Caliente Cahuilla Indians settled in the Palm Springs area. "

[Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians](#)

"The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians donated more than one million dollars to Palms Springs and Coachella Valley..."

[Agua Caliente Cultural Museum, Palm Springs, California](#)

"Agua Caliente Cultural Museum, Palm Springs, California"

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## MORONGO RESERVATION

*Cahuilla, Serrano, Cupeño, and Chemehuevi*  
(1877) Riverside County

11581 Potrero Rd.,  
Banning, CA 92220

The Morongo is one of the few reservations in California that is impossible to miss. Interstate 10 passes right through it at Banning and San Geronio Pass (2600 feet). Signboards point out the local casino and the Malki Museum. I had the distinct honor of visiting the former director of the museum, Mrs. Jane Penn. She came from her sickbed to tell me of names. "*Malki*," she said, "was a sly way for the people here to fool the Indian agents, who asked what their tribal name was. In reality, 'Malki' means 'dodging. Even '*Morongo*','" she added with a twinkle, "is a misnomer." In their haste to name the place, the agents gave it the name of a family who lived some distance away. With Mrs. Penn's untiring help, this museum became one of the more complete collections representing local Indian cultures in California. [*Jane Penn passed on about a year after I spoke with her.*] Her work was pursued by Ms. Katherine Siva Saubel, the most valuable person imaginable.

The 32,248-acre reservation is a well-developed community of some 300 persons, with a good-sized health clinic, tribal offices and hall, substantial homes, ranches, farms, and an historical Moravian church dating back to the **1890s**. Movie and TV films are made here occasionally, owing to the very scenic nature of the location. Gaming at the Morongo is prominent, but



isolated, right on the Interstate.

In May the residents present a festival and barbeque with some ceremonies and dancing centered around the adobe Museum, which is situated in the dry, often windy, open fields looking up to the towering 10,800-foot San Jacinto Peak.

Morongo has become home for Cahuilla, Serrano (from the north of here), Cupeño (from Los Coyotes and Pala), and Chemehuevi (from the Colorado River area), enriching the variety of traditions to be found in this part of California.

*Field Rd. exit from 1-10 at Cabazon is the road to the Malki Museum. Potrero Rd. is where the tribal offices are.*

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[Exhibit O](#), "The San Gorgonio Reservation", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.* (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

#### [Morongo Band of Cahuilla Indians](#)

"Approaches to Waste Issues in Indian Country Reprinted from the Fall 1997 Garbage Gazette EPA Region 9 newsletter By Jim Fletcher, Environmental..."

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## CUPEÑO

Near the head of the San Luis Rey River, Lake Henshaw covers the lush marshes that once sustained bands of Luiseño, Ipai, and the Cupeño, whose permanent village of Kupa was by the bubbling hot springs. The hot springs (today, Warner's Hot Springs) at the edge of Los Coyotes Reservation have occasioned several episodes of relatively recent history.

The Cupeños were a very small tribal group; they spoke a Uto-Aztecan language somewhat related to Cahuilla. They have in common some religious customs related to their Luiseño neighbors to the west, principally



## *Chi-ngich-ngish* .

Originally the center of Cupeño life, the springs and adjacent fertile lands were appropriated by the San Luis Rey and San Diego Missions. Later, one Jonathan Trumbull (aka Juan José Warner) acquired possession and established a ranch here in 1844, giving succor to Col. Stephen W. Kearny (on his way to take Los Angeles from the Mexican Army, 1846), and later to Butterfield stages passing east-west. Fed up with appropriation of land and resources, one Juan Antonio Garrá, a Cupeño clan leader attempted a revolt against the white oppressors in 1850. The revolt failed; the village of Kupa was burned; Garrá and followers were executed.

After this time the Cupeños had been "allowed" to live nearby, and somehow felt this was still their land. But, by a California Supreme Court decision in 1903, they were removed in one of the State's many "trails of tears" to Pala Reservation (p. 36). Meanwhile, a resort was built at the springs, and today, the valley's water quenches throats and yards of San Diegans and their suburbanites.

The Cupeños survive today on the Pala Reservation somewhat apart from the other two tribal entities there. A Cupa Day celebration is held the first weekend in May.

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[Exhibit D](#), "The Warner's Ranch Indians", from *Report on the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California, Made by Special Agents Helen Jackson and Abbot Kinney, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*. (Colorado Springs, Col., July 13th, 1883.)

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 [People of Anza](#)

 [Kamp Anza](#)