Sapphos environmental inc.



Archaeological Resources

Field and Compliance Services

- Expertise in precontact and historic period archaeology
- Intensive and Reconnaissance Archaeological Surveys
- GIS Predictive Modeling and Probabilistic Surveys
- Buried Sites Sensitivity Assessments
- Curation and Museum Collections Management
- Database and data dictionary design
- Rock art recording and preservation
- Specialty lab analysis (i.e., macrowear ground stone, archaeobotany, shell bead analysis, lithic studies, and historic artifact typology and analysis)
- Complex resource mapping and mitigation services
- CEQA, NEPA, and NHPA Section 106 regulatory compliance support
- Cultural Resource Treatment Plans
- Cultural Resource Monitoring and Mitigation Plans and implementation
- Construction monitoring and reporting
- Evaluation of eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historical Resources, and local landmark/designation programs under historic preservation ordinances
- Preparation of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Memoranda of Agreement (MOA)
- Federal technical report and documentation peer-review
- Preparation of California Department of Parks and Recreation 523 Forms
- Compliance with Caltrans, BLM, BOR, High-Speed Rail, LA Metro, and USFS requirements
- Agency coordination and consultation
- Native American support services

The Sapphos Environmental, Inc. (SEI) Archaeological Resources team, led by Diana Dyste, RPA, is fully qualified under the Secretary of the Interior's *Professional Qualifications Standards* for Archaeology and History, with decades of practical and applied experience in managing simple to complex cultural resource projects. SEI offers a full suite of services, from intensive pedestrian surveys to data recovery to documentation and reporting in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). SEI is fully able to scale the range of its services to help meet project cost and time efficiency goals.

SEI's Archaeological Resources team is supported by state-of-the-art digital photography, drone, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology and experts, with the capacity to expand services to include geophysical analysis (ground penetrating radar or magnetometry survey). The team comprises experts in historic artifact typology and dating, as well as lab specialists in precontact ground stone macrowear, archaeobotanical (plant remains), shell bead analyses, and standard archaeological materials processing and museum curation services. SEI principal and senior archaeologists are experts in archaeological taphonomy (the formation of site deposits over time) and buried sites sensitivity analysis in urban, suburban, coastal, and mountain settings. The team has deep knowledge of precontact and historic archaeological cultural material and settlement patterns spanning the entire state, with decades of outstanding mitigation services throughout the Southern California region.

Most importantly, SEI understands the needs of its clients, from local homeowners wanting to develop their property, to large-scale renewable energy applicants who require several thousand acres of survey in expedited timeframes. SEI is dedicated to accurate and thorough recording of resources and works closely with project proponents and interested Native American groups to achieve a successful balance between project needs, resource protection, and Native American interests. SEI has cultivated and continues to maintain strong positive relationships with key State Historic Preservation Officers, the California State Lands Commission, local and state historic commissions and advocacy groups, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, federal agency cultural resource managers, and members of the Native American Heritage Commission and local Tribes. SEI's expertise covers a broad range of CEQA, NEPA, and NHPA Section 106 regulatory compliance studies with expertise in Caltrans, U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), PG&E and SCE, Federal Highway Administration, and Department of Defense archaeological identification and reporting procedures.

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Architectural History

Pre-Construction and Planning Services

- Built environment compliance with CEQA, NHPA Section 106, and NEPA
- Compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, including Design Review and Certificates of Appropriateness
- Specific Plan historic resource chapters
- Programmatic Agreements (PA) and Memoranda of Agreement (MOA)
- Preparation of Historic Context Statements
- Preparation of California Department of Parks and Recreation 523 Forms
- Preparation of NRHP historic district nominations
- Design guidelines
- GIS-based historic resource and historic district mapping
- Preparation of Historic Structure Reports (HSR), Historic Resource Assessment Reports (HRAR), Historic Resource Evaluation Reports (HRER), Historic Property Survey Reports (HPSR), Historic Property Evaluation Reports (HPER), and Findings of Effect
- Historic American Buildings Surveys (HABS), Historic Architecture Engineering Records (HAER), and Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS)-level documentation including measured drawings and large-format photography
- Reconnaissance and intensive-level surveys
- Evaluation of eligibility for NRHP, CRHR, and local landmark/designation programs under historic preservation ordinances
- Engaged community outreach process
- Qualified representation at local City Commissions and Heritage Council meetings
- Historic building, structure, and landscape documentation (existing conditions, photographic documentation pre- and post-construction, archival research, primary source analysis)
- Relocation Feasibility Studies
- Mills Act Applications and Program support

The Sapphos Environmental, Inc. (SEI) Architectural History team specializes in the preservation of historic resources and historic properties, developing historic contexts, and supporting a wide range of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 compliance efforts. SEI's talented team of architectural historians works closely with applicants and agencies to creatively find solutions to historic preservation needs in ways that successfully meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties while supporting property owners and planning efforts. The firm's success is closely tied to strong professional relationships with State Historic Preservation Officers, the Native American Heritage Commission, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, federal agency cultural resource managers, local agency staff, and advocacy organizations.

SEI understands the need for timely and accurate historic resource documentation, as well as adaptive reuse of historic resources. SEI seeks to achieve a balanced understanding between new design ideas and the preservation of character-defining features through a variety of digital tools such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for real-time data collection and spatial mapping, drones to capture historical landscapes, and high-quality photography of character-defining features. In addition, SEI operates a unique system of rapid resource recording that enables successful support of cities and agencies in meeting tight timelines at an efficient cost when applications or projects involve large numbers of buildings and structures that require assessments of significance.

SEI's approach to environmental compliance for architectural history is demonstrated through award-winning historic context statements and decades-long support of city and county staff throughout Los Angeles County, Southern California, and the Central Valley.

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Native American Support

AB 52 Support Services

- Instruction on best practices for the AB 52 process
- Cultural sensitivity training
- Identification and recording of Tribal Cultural Places for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and TCRs for the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR)
- Submission of Native American Heritage Commission Sacred Lands File search and request for AB 52 Native American contacts list
- Conducting phone, hardcopy, and email follow-up with tribal representatives
- Coordination with appointed tribal representatives
- Certified AB 52 Project Notification Letters
- Certified AB 52 Invitation to Consult Letters
- TCR and Cultural Resource presentations at consultation meetings on behalf of the County, City or municipality
- Consultation meeting facilitation, including logistical support, material preparation, and note taking
- Native American Communication Log tracking
- Preparation of an Administrative Record for Native American communication and consultation events
- Support in drafting mitigation measures for TCRs
- Preparation of TCR sections for Initial Studies/Mitigated Negative Declarations and Environmental Impact Reports pursuant to CEQA
- Initial response to inadvertent discovery of tribal/cultural resources
- MOUs or MOAs concerning TCRs

Tribal Support Services

- Respectful recordation of Native American oral histories, with or without video
- Synthesizing prior ethnographic studies for educational use by Tribes
- Conducting new ethnography or oral history recording for Tribes
- Drafting Historic Context Statements centered on Tribe themes and periods
- Support in creating Tribe-centered mitigation for TCRs or culturally sensitive biological landscapes
- Facilitating tribal-led workshops and training sessions
- Conducting cultural, plant, and sensitive species surveys on reservation or tribal-held lands

Sapphos Environmental, Inc. (SEI) provides culturally sensitive Native American support services for Tribes, federal and state agencies, and local municipalities. SEI has maintained strong positive relationships with local Native American tribal leaders for decades. Success in supporting agencies and tribes is rooted in clear communication and timely responsiveness. The SEI team has a firm understanding of the Native American consultation process under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA); the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA); the American Indian Religious Freedom Act; and executive orders requiring a clear process of federal engagement with Native American tribes. The firm's senior staff are experienced in assisting federal agencies with preparing draft Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) or Agreement (MOA) concerning Tribal Cultural Places for consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer.

SEI has been at the forefront of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Assembly Bill (AB) 52 since its implementation in July 2015, providing state and local agencies with critical training in the AB 52 process, regulations, best practices, and administrative record keeping. AB 52 training offered by SEI includes virtual or in-person coursework in AB 52 regulations, key terms, process, and best practices. SEI is experienced in professional planning and facilitation of Native American consultation meetings, site visits, and participation in Tribe-hosted ceremonies related to project implementation. Staff have expertise in the preparation of legally defensible environmental compliance documents for Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs), including CEQA documentation, Memoranda of Findings, design and tracking of Native American communication logs, and AB 52 Notification and Consultation Letters.

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Paleontological Resources

Pre-Construction and Planning Services

- Paleontological Resource Assessments (PRA) and desktop studies
- Literature and records searches
- Paleontological Records Search Reports
- Geological mapping and sensitivity analysis
- Paleontological Resource Mitigation Plans (PRMPs)
- CEQA/NEPA environmental document support (i.e., Initial Studies, Mitigated Negative Declarations, Environmental Assessments, Environmental Impact Reports, Environmental Impact Statements)
- Federal, state, and local agency coordination and consultation

Field Services

- Construction monitoring (full-time, part-time, spot-check)
- On-call services for discoveries during construction
- Pre-Construction Surveys
- Worker Environmental Awareness Program (WEAP) training
- Fossil discovery and salvage with report (data recovery)
- Field documentation (Daily/Weekly/Monthly Monitoring Logs) and stratigraphic logging

Laboratory & Curation Services

- Fossil preparation and stabilization
- Identification and taxonomic analysis
- Cataloging and database management
- Coordination with accredited repositories/museums for permanent curation of recovered specimens
- Curation Reports and Repository Acceptance Documentation

Sapphos Environmental, Inc. (SEI) specializes in paleontological services designed to help developers, agencies, and contractors comply with federal and state requirements while minimizing project delays. SEI combines regulatory expertise, scientific expertise, and practical field experience to identify fossil-bearing rock formations, assess paleontological sensitivity, and implement effective mitigation strategies. SEI offers rapid mobilization for active construction sites and utilizes close ties to Southern California museums and repositories to quickly find long-term curation facilities.

Whether the project involves infrastructure, renewable energy, residential development, or linear construction, SEI provides end-to-end support—from desktop assessments and permitting phase technical studies to on-site monitoring and final reporting. SEI's approach emphasizes compliance, efficiency, and clear communication with lead agencies, ensuring that projects run smoothly while protecting valuable paleontological resources.

SEI has expert knowledge of paleontological laws, regulations, and guidelines at the federal, state, and local levels. Clients can rely on SEI to efficiently help with navigating regulatory requirements. Key regulations SEI can assist with include, but are not limited to:

- Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (PRPA) – The primary federal law applicable to fossils mandating protection and curation of "scientifically significant" fossils.
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – Requires environmental review for paleontological resources as part of a geologic assessment.
- Antiquities Act – Largely superseded by the PRPA, still relevant to monument lands and for enforcement of paleontological protection.
- Additional federal agency guidelines, e.g., Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service Paleontological Fossil Yield Classification systems (PFYC)
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Appendix G – Requires analysis of "unique" paleontological resources, defines thresholds, and can lead to mitigation measures such as monitoring, recovery, and curation.
- Public Resources Code Section 5097.5 – Protects vertebrate fossils on state lands and requires permits for excavation and/or collection.
- Local Ordinances – Many counties and cities in Central and Southern California have additional ordinances that require surveys, monitoring, or data recovery in areas determined to have high sensitivity (e.g., Kern, Tulare, Fresno, and San Joaquin Counties require compliance with CEQA and Appendix G, while Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties require compliance with additional—and sometimes more stringent—local paleontological ordinances).

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