

SV Archaeological Find At New City Hall Site

By DENISE SIEBENTHAL

Sentinel Staff Writer

Carbon desposits from cooking fires and projectile points used by Indians probably some 4,000 years ago have been identified by an archaeologist at the site of a new Scotts Valley City Hall.

However, archaeologist Robert Cartier of San Jose said no human remains, pottery or evidence of buildings were found. He added that studies now being done of the artifacts will

provide an accurate date of their existence, within 300 years.

Carbon deposits from cooking fires and rotting wood are tested to determine the age of the culture, Cartier explained. He's estimated the culture goes back several thousand years because of the eight-foot depth of the find and because of the type of projectile points uncovered. He said pottery wasn't being used 4,000 years ago and the absence of buildings shows people lived outdoors at that time.

Cartier is studying the site as part of the initial environmental study being done by Scotts Valley on the potential environmental impact of building a new city hall off Scotts Valley Drive. He is testing the site to help the city decide where to locate the new city hall.

Cartier doesn't plan to recommend against SV building the new city hall on top of the archaeological discoveries, but would recommend against excavation in areas where evidence of the prehistoric culture exists.

Cartier said the find is significant because "it's one of the first opportunities we've had to understand the archaeology of Scotts Valley."

If the carbon tests prove out his estimation of the age of the culture, the cultures will be one of the oldest known in this county. Another find elsewhere in the county showed that there were people living here some 5,000 years ago, he explained.

"This looks to be part of a complex that takes in other areas of Scotts Valley as well,"

Cartier said of the find. "It's one piece of this prehistoric culture."

Cartier said that discoveries in the area show that the prehistoric people who lived there settled on the site because it was near a spring.

"It indicates that they were involved in both hunting and food gathering activities and were living off the small spring on the property.

"The hunting is indicated by spear points and it appears they were cooking vegetable foods because of the discovery of fire-altered rock," he said.

Cartier is being aided in his work by the Ohlone Indian Cultural Association of Watsonville.

His work was ordered by SV City Administrator Bob Rockett after the initial environmental study of the area indicated archaeological deposits. It will be part of an extended environmental study which eventually will go to the City Council. From its information, the council will decide whether to have an environmental impact report done before the new City Hall is built.

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