



Alameda Corridor-East Construction Authority

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ARCHAEOLOGISTS UNCOVER HISTORIC ARTIFACTS FROM THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY DURING EXCAVATION AT RAILROAD SITE

*Dig near San Gabriel Mission offers rare glimpse to
region's past*

The Alameda Corridor-East Construction Authority (ACE) today announced that archaeologists have found thousands of historic artifacts while excavating in the railroad right-of-way near the San Gabriel Mission, founded in 1771. The excavation is part of the ongoing preparatory work prior to the construction of the San Gabriel Trench grade separation project set to begin later this year.

The newly found cultural resources uncovered during the archaeological excavation adjacent to Main Street between Mission Road and Ramona Street in the City of San Gabriel include remnants of a "mill race" or water-course channel that powered a water-wheel grist mill built in the 1820s, the foundation of an adobe building dating from the early 1800s, an 1816 silver coin depicting King Ferdinand VII of Spain minted in Lima, Peru, a copper alloy religious medallion depicting the Virgin with Child, Native American shell and European glass beads, pottery sherds, and thousands of other artifacts from California's Mission period and later. Numerous artifacts have been cataloged and the foundations of several structures have been exposed. Previous exploratory work had uncovered nearly 20,000 items, including pottery, glass, beads, bricks, horseshoes, Native American stone tools and animal bones.

"The archaeological finds are an exciting link to the region's past and shed insight on the important history of the San Gabriel Mission, the City of San Gabriel and the Gabrieleno Tongva Tribe," said ACE Board Chairman and San Gabriel Mayor David Gutierrez.

In December, archaeologists began excavation in search of artifacts and items at the site that was once part of the extended grounds of the San Gabriel Mission. The historic mission was the center of a large agricultural community of Native Americans and Spaniards which predated the settlement of the City of Los Angeles.

The 2.2-mile San Gabriel Trench grade separation project will result in the lowering of a 1.4-mile section of Union Pacific railroad track in a trench through the City of San Gabriel with bridges constructed at Ramona Street, Mission Road, Del Mar Avenue and San Gabriel Boulevard, allowing vehicles and pedestrians to pass over the tracks. Once completed, the grade separation project will eliminate congestion, emissions from idling vehicles, train warning horn and bell noise, delays for emergency responders and the potential for deadly crossing collisions.

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