

Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological data recovery project for the NM 44-North highway improvement project in Sandoval and San Juan counties (NMSHTD Project No. SP-44-2 [226] 85, CN; 3525). A cultural resource survey previously completed for the project revealed 21 cultural resources within or adjacent to NM 44 (Marshall 1997). Subsequent review by the project engineers and the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department (NMSHTD) Environmental Section revealed that only three of these resources would be affected by the proposed construction. Data recovery at these locations was authorized and a research design and data recovery plan was completed by Cibola Research Consultants (Brown 1998).

The NM-44 North project was conducted with the use of federal funding. Data recovery at the three sites was conducted in compliance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended through 1992, and applicable regulations. This report is consistent with applicable federal and state standards for cultural resource management.

The archaeological excavations were conducted in September and October of 1998. Permits to excavate LA 50460 (the Tancosa site) on Jicarilla Apache tribal lands were obtained from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Permit No. BIA-AAO-98-004) and the Jicarilla Tribe. Permits to

excavate LA 45961 (the Venado site) and LA 119580 (the Upper Kimbeto site) on Navajo tribal lands were obtained from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (NAO-98-009) and the Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department (Permit No. C9822). The excavations were completed under the direction of Michael P. Marshall, Director of Archaeological Projects, Cibola Research Consultants.

All cultural remains identified within the NM 44-North project area have been excavated, and the research potential of each site within the highway right-of-way has been exhausted. The results of this data recovery project are presented in this report.

All three archaeological sites that were excavated are lithic artifact scatters of Archaic and early Formative period affinity with only limited to moderate research value. The data recovery project addressed research issues relating to cultural chronology and affiliation, site function, trade and exchange patterns, and subsistence and settlement systems. Information relevant to these research issues was obtained from the site excavations and is addressed primarily in Chapters 5 and 12. Various analytical methods were employed in the study. The ones that produced the most important results include the study of bone material from LA 50460 and the study of the botanical materials from the early component at LA 45961. Also of considerable

interest were the sixth millennium BC radiocarbon dates obtained from LA 50460.

Volume 1 of this report presents the results of the data recovery excavations and analysis of the materials recovered from LA 50460, LA 45961 and LA 119580. Volume 2, which has been placed on file in the New Mexico Cultural Resources Information System (NMCRIIS) at the Laboratory of Anthropology in Santa Fe, includes updated site forms and site location maps. All other data, maps, and photographs have also been placed on file with NMCRIIS. Artifacts recovered from the excavations have been curated by the Museum of New Mexico.

