

BEFORE WARM SPRINGS DAM

A HISTORY OF THE LAKE SONOMA AREA

by

Mary Praetzellis
Adrian Praetzellis
Suzanne B. Stewart

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Dedicated to

BETTY MATTHEWS SNYDER

Dry Creek rancher and generous host

Preface

The Warm Springs Cultural Resources Study was one of the first large preservation projects conducted under federal preservation policies enacted in the late 1960s. A large multi-disciplinary team worked on the Warm Springs Project from 1974 to 1984. *Before Warm Springs Dam: A History of the Lake Sonoma Area* was the last of many reports produced by that team, synthesizing the material for a general audience. Unfortunately, by the time the report was completed in 1985, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had insufficient funds to distribute it as widely as intended. Funds for the envisioned future publication of the volume never materialized. A few years ago, the Anthropological Studies Center requested permission from the Corps to publish the volume elsewhere. This was granted and thus began the task of recreating a volume whose text resided on obsolete “elephant disks.” Rose White scanned the text from the original provided by the Corps. The authors proofread the text for the myriad minute errors that sneak into scanned text. Maria Ribeiro formatted the report, inserted the graphics, and made the final edits. Scotty Thompson and Richard Stradford helped us find elusive photographs.

Much as we were tempted to update the volume and revise sections we now know to be inaccurate or outdated, we agreed that such an effort would put the volume’s publication back another 15 years. So except for very minor technical edits, this is the *Before Warm Springs Dam: A History of the Lake Sonoma Area* as it was submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1985.

The Authors
December 2000

Preface - 1985

This volume is one of four summarizing cultural studies performed under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' sponsorship in connection with the construction of Warm Springs Dam-Lake Sonoma in Sonoma County, California. Using perspectives from cultural geography, demography, anthropology, and other disciplines, this volume describes the use of project land by various populations from prehistoric times up to the initiation of the Corps project. Although the volume draws from technical and professional reports, its content and style have been designed to make it appealing to a general audience.

The purpose of this volume is to synthesize and analyze the area's history, not just describe it. The authors chose to explore a number of continuing themes to present a dynamic picture of life in the Lake Sonoma Area. A benefit of this approach is that each chapter may stand alone, allowing the reader to choose those of interest without missing part of "the story."

The first chapter gives a brief overview of the cultural studies that were conducted by the Warm Springs Cultural Resources Study and its predecessors, and summarizes the most significant contributions. Chapter 2 describes the study area's environment, Chapter 3 explores what people thought and felt about that environment, while Chapter 4 recounts the history of human activities in the Lake Sonoma Area in relation to the area's natural resources. In Chapter 5, the ways in which successive occupants viewed their right to the land are examined, as well as the legal and extralegal methods they used to maintain their tenure. Settlement pattern, the ways in which human beings and activities were arranged on the landscape, is the subject of Chapters 6 and 7. The role of family and kin through time is examined in Chapter 8, which also includes the histories of four settler families. So that the Lake Sonoma Area should not appear too much like an isolated community, Chapters 9 and 10 add an essential perspective by examining its relationship with the region, the state, and the nation, through trade, recreation, travel, and a variety of other types of interactions.

Acknowledgments - 1985

It has been observed that giving credit where it is due is among an author's greatest pleasures—if one can be sure that nobody has been left out and, thereby, unintentionally slighted. Considering the number of professional studies that we have drawn on for this volume, as well as the numerous people who have helped us with sound advice along the way, we approach this task with little chance of complete success.

Various chapters and drafts of this volume were read and critiqued by our colleagues. We would like to thank them for their advice; although not all of their suggestions were followed, they were always appreciated. In particular we acknowledge the comments received from: Clinton Blount (Theodoratus Cultural Research), Mildred Dickemann (Sonoma State University), Roberta Greenwood (Greenwood and Associates), Dennis Harris (Sonoma State University), Richard Lerner (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Daniel Markwyn (Sonoma State University), David Peri (Sonoma State University), and Dorothea Theodoratus (Theodoratus Cultural Research).

When our research took us out of the Warm Springs Cultural Resources Study office to various institutions and private homes in the greater San Francisco Bay Area, we were always welcomed. Hannah Clayborn directed us around the collections of the Edwin Langhart Museum in Healdsburg and arranged for permission to reproduce photographs from the archives. The staff of the Sonoma County Room at the Central Sonoma County Library in Santa Rosa also allowed us to temporarily turn their facility into a makeshift photographic studio in order to copy photographs on file there. The authors are particularly indebted to Mrs. Betty Snyder of Santa Rosa, both for permission to use photographs and other documents in her possession and for sharing her knowledge of rural life; Mrs. Snyder's hospitality was sincerely appreciated.

Helen McCarthy of the University of California at Davis provided us with the unpublished results of the prehistoric archaeological excavations carried out in the Lake Sonoma Area, as well as with photographs of the excavations. Gene Price and Frank Norick of the Lowie Museum at the University of California at Berkeley kindly allowed us access to and guided us through the museum's collection of early California ethnographic photographs. Photographer Scott Patterson is also to be thanked for providing us with copies of some of his excellent photographs, which are reproduced in this volume.

Several "unsung heroes," employees of the Sonoma State University Academic Foundation, Inc., Rohnert Park, California, and the University's Anthropological Studies Center, provided cheerful assistance on a variety of fronts. Chief among these was Marilyn Sisler who, with the able assistance of Pat Mikkelsen, kept the administrative aspects of the project under control. Nelson "Scotty" Thompson did an admirable job preparing many of the maps and other graphics for this volume. The text was word-processed by Marsh Rose and C. Kristina Roper.

Over the two years that this volume has been in the making, the authors were fortunate in having the leadership of David A. Fredrickson, Principal Investigator of the Warm Springs Cultural Resources Study. Dr. Fredrickson's encouragement helped keep us going during periods of low morale, while his supportive attitude has made the project as a whole a most rewarding experience.

Special thanks go to Richard Lerner of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition to his extensive comments on the text and format, Dr. Lerner is also to be credited with recognizing the need for this document and arranging for it to become a reality. As a result of Dr. Lerner's support and his services as General Editor of the final report publications, both the American public and the spirit of the law have been well served.

Mary Praetzellis
Adrian Praetzellis
Suzanne B. Stewart

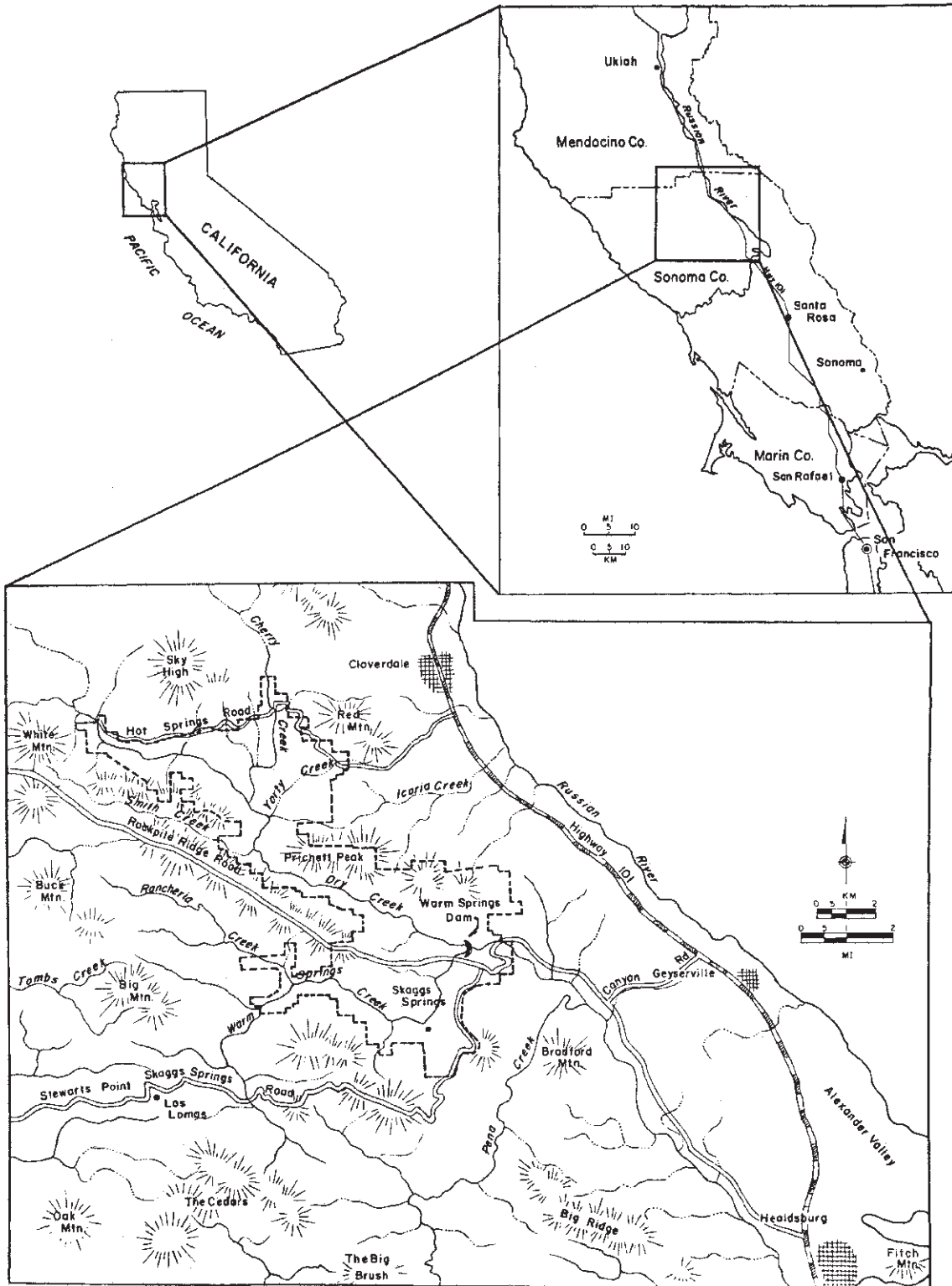
Warm Springs Cultural Resources Study

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The Warm Springs Dam-Lake Sonoma Project Area (map by Nelson Thompson)