Native People: Partners with the Land

by Linda Yamane, Rumsien Ohlone Basketweaver

The National Park Service is committed to offering interpretation of the American Indian cultures through which the Anza expedition passed from the perspective of their descendants today. In this article, Linda Yamane describes an important part of the Ohlone culture that is being preserved today along the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail.

It has been more than 200 years since Anza and his companions, on their way to San Francisco Bay, traversed the countryside that skirts the Salinas Valley. For California’s native peoples, it was a time of great change, brought about by Spanish settlement and the Catholic mission churches.

In central California, this picturesque backcountry near Monterey is experiencing yet another transition. Though these rolling hills on the former Fort Ord bear the scars of many years of military activity, the land is now being put to gentler use. Acreage managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has been the focus of extensive community restoration efforts. Thousands of native plants, placed into the ground by adults and children alike, are helping to repair massive erosion caused by military roads that were carved throughout these magnificent oak-studded hills and grasslands.

Recently off-limits to all but military personnel, this land has also become accessible and essential to a small but growing number of Ohlone basketweavers who are bringing this traditional Native American art form back from near extinction. In the midst of this modern, high-tech world, we come to connect with the land and carry on the time-honored traditions of our ancestors.

Beneath the protective canopies of ancient oaks, we spend hours carefully gathering sedge rhizomes (Carex barbarae), a plant material that is essential for the continuance of our traditional basketry. Draped with pale green lichen, the massive gnarled oaks capture much-needed moisture from drifting coastal fog, diverting it, drop by drop, onto the sedges below. It is the only way this wetland plant could thrive in this otherwise dry and sandy soil. The sedges have long, slender leaves that rise from the ground in clumps, then arch gracefully toward the ground.

On hands and knees, we work among the greenery, pushing aside layers of leaves and other plant material, then probing the rich, dark soil below. Our fingers move through the earth, searching for the long rhizomes that travel beneath the surface. We then pull away the dirt, excavating the sturdy runners to their full length before clipping them free, leaving the plants to continue their growth. Slowly, over many hours, our bags begin to fill with this important harvest.

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When our work is done, we close the ground, replacing the leaves and other debris that blanketed the surface. After repairing the evidence of our intrusion, we may sprinkle water upon the plants and earth we have disturbed, if the season is dry. As we give our thanks, we sometimes leave other gifts, such as glittering bits of polished abalone shell or the tune of an ancient song.

As our ancestors before us, we must then spend hours splitting each of these runners along its entire length, and removing the bark. The woody weaving strands that remain are then ready to be bundled and dried for a period of several months. Later, each strand will be further processed prior to weaving. This involves scraping the surface free of any loose material and trimming each to a uniform thickness. Only after this careful mastication are they ready for the weaving itself.

Other native plant materials used in Ohlone basketry are willow and dogwood shoots and the runners of certain bulrushes and bracken fern. Each of these plants must be harvested in the appropriate season, then processed.

As in all of California, Ohlone baskets, whether coiled or twined, are meticulously constructed and can take hundreds of hours to complete. Certain special baskets are ornamented with pieces of abalone or olivella shell, or with feathers from the acorn woodpecker, redwing blackbird, mallard duck, or California quail. The old Ohlone baskets are quite rare, with perhaps only two or three dozen remaining throughout the world. Some of these remain in California, but many are part of European museum collections.

The rarity of Ohlone basketry makes its revival even more poignant for Ohlone descendants and the interested public. School teachers, interpreters, and environmental educators are finding this knowledge important for understanding and appreciating our history, the land, and the people of the past.

A new interpretive trail exhibit, entitled "Native People—Partners With the Land," is installed adjacent to one of the sedge beds being tended by Ohlone basketweavers. This exhibit will be a valuable means of educating visitors to BLM's Fort Ord Public Lands, informing them of the passage of the Anza party through the area, and the continuance of Ohlone basketry today. The exhibit was made possible by a National Park Service Challenge Cost Share Program grant, administered by the Return of the Natives Restoration Education Project, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management.

In the past, baskets were a necessary part of everyday life. Today, they have a different, but similarly important role. They are helping to reunite a cultural community that was disrupted and displaced by the circumstances of history. They are also emerging as an invaluable teaching tool, teaching us not only of the past, but bonding us as we deepen our relationship with each other and with the land.

Congratulations to Cost Share Program Successes

Three projects were proposed, and all were successful.

- The History Museums of San Jose proposes to educate the public about the founding of California's first city, El Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe, by Anza expedition members. HMSJ staff and consultants will prepare an interpretive exhibit at the Peralta Adobe, "matching" $5,390 of federal funds with $9,805 of local funds.

- HMSJ staff will coordinate with Santa Clara University, another CCSP winner. As part of the sesquicentennial celebration of the founding of the university, anthropologists, historians, and museum professionals will develop a marked interpretive trail with six bilingual signs and an accompanying multilingual brochure. The university is a partner with the Smithsonian Center for Material Research and Education to study and publicly present information on the region's rich Hispanic, Mexican, and Latino past. The university will "match" $14,600 of federal funds with $21,000.

- North East Trees will continue its work along the Los Angeles River by creating two murals, one installed on the concrete river channel and one in the L.A. River Center, and an interpretive sign to be installed at the confluence of the Los Angeles River and the Arroyo Seco.

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The project will match $12,500 of federal funds with an equal amount provided by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, Los Angeles County Prop A, and youth volunteers.

Recently, North East Trees completed a CCSP project to install an interpretive exhibit along the Los Angeles River near Los Osos Street. [See “Along the Trail.”] Also, this year, another exhibit depicting families camping near Picacho Peak was installed at Picacho Peak State Park in Arizona.

Auto Route Signs

In December 1999, the NPS received $200,000 in Federal Lands Highways funds to mark the Anza Trail auto route in California only. Half will go to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to manufacture all the signs and install those on Caltrans rights-of-way. Some will go to a contractor to install signs on county rights-of-way.

With any remainder, we hope to prepare a trail guide so that people following the route will know what to visit. All together, about 525 signs will be installed. These signs should raise public awareness of the trail.

VIP Report

The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail thrives to the degree that volunteers participate along the trail. Joan Throgmorton served as task-force co-chair for Santa Clara County during preparation of the Comprehensive Management and Use Plan and continues her support of the Anza Trail with her fellow Amigos—Ruby Domino, Chere Barger, and Phyllis Drake. They provide the local eyes and ears that all along the trail keep the NPS in touch with threats and opportunities.

Here is an excerpt from Joan’s 1999 Volunteer In the Park (VIP) report:

On-going during the year we prune, correct erosion, remove down trees. A culvert is needed as well as barriers for the switchbacks. I hope to get a trail crew going—maybe 4-Hers for community service and the San Martin Horsemen. A few of us are card holding trained crew leaders, and Coe has the tools we need.

Every year in April we open up the Oristimba Wilderness by lottery draw for a weekend and have about 1000 people. We equestrians set up a booth to explain our duties and display and pass out information on the Anza Trail.

While on patrol we sometimes have the opportunity to tell park users about the trail. Once a year we lead an interpretive ride and tell fellow horsemen about the trail.

Once a year the new Coe volunteer trainees go on a tour of the park. We explain the extra equestrian qualifications to the group, which includes regular volunteers as well, and tell a little about Anza and pass out the brochures.

Chere Barger leads an interpretive ride on the Anza Trail in Henry W. Coe Park.
Making the event a success were several community organizations, including the Green Valley News, Chamber of Commerce, Bashaw's, Safeway, Wal-Mart, Rural Metro, S.A.V. (Sheriff's Auxiliary Volunteers), F.I.C.O., Sahuarita Police Dept., Pima County Parks Maintenance Department, The Dorn Properties, Casa de Esperanza, and others. Some provided water stops for hikers and horses.

Participant hikers, bikers and equestrians came from such groups as the County Line Riders, Tucson Saddle Club, Catalina Riders, Pima Trails, Greater Arizona Bicycle Association, Sonoran International Mountain Bike Association, Santa Cruz Valley Horsemen's Club, Desert Sky Riders, Green Valley Hiking Club, Anza Trail of Arizona Coalition, the Green Valley based Anza Park committee, Santa Cruz Valley Equestrian Center, and several local residents.

Participants contributed food items for the Green Valley Food Bank. Finishers received a full color National Park Service logo of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, one of the nation's recognized Millennium Trails.

In Green Valley, the Anza Park at the Springs Committee is helping to complete the park and rest stop on Abrego, supported by the Valley Verde Rotary and the Green Valley Rotary Clubs, Pima County Parks and Recreation, and collection of residents, community organizations and leaders. A participant survey provided information to the Anza Park Committee, showing the preferences concerning various aspects of the Anza Park and the trail itself.

**County and Park Committee Meet**

Steve Anderson, key coordinator for the trails activities for the Pima County Parks & Recreation Department, met with the newly appointed landscape architect, Don McGann of McGann & Associates, their designer, James English, and Mikel Schilling, Pima Parks Commission member and Vice President of the Green Valley Community Coordinating Council. Equestrians relax after the ride.

Mikel and other members of the Anza Park at the Springs in Green Valley Committee attended to provide on site commentary and review the specifications for the park's imminent development. Jim Di Giacomo, and Dick Roberts, both representing local Rotary Clubs, promised financial support for the construction of the educational ramada/restroom.

Also attending were Chuck Townsend, from the Santa Cruz Valley Horseman's group, and Julia Grounds representing her brother Dave Grounds of Dorn Properties. Anza Trail Coalition of Arizona President Don Kucera, and Phil English, Pima County Volunteer Coordinator and El Pliego editor, represented the Anza Trail volunteers. The group spent two hours walking the 4.3 acre site, examining trail placement options, access and egress questions, the location and impact of the building, picnic tables, ramada design options, the trail and road access and horse-trailer parking areas, water taps, gate monument, security, maintenance, lighting and other concerns.

A most welcome, very brief and sparse, forty-drop rain shower lightened the oppressive 105°F heat of the afternoon meeting. The group adjourned to the nearby Torres Blancas Golf Course clubhouse for some welcome ice tea and lemonade. The meeting accomplished action on the final design plan phase, financial resource progress plans and further actions to make the Anza Park a reality in the coming months. This park will be a welcome addition to the Anza Trail in the years ahead as it stretches across the southern portion of Pima County.
Amigos de Anza hosted the Fifth World Conference on Juan Bautista de Anza as a National Millennium Trails event at the Presidio of San Francisco on June 26-28. The conference opened with a welcome by Peter Cole, President of Amigos. Jeanie Gillen of Riverside County Amigos presented "The Anza Trail Now and Then" based on her experiences with Nancy DuPont conducting the 1996 Commemorative Relay from Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico to San Francisco. Leo Barker, Presidio of San Francisco archeologist, conducted a tour of the recent digs that have contributed new knowledge of the Presidio's Spanish beginnings. Along the way, volunteers under the direction of the University of California Archeology Department interpreted original foundations made of boulders they had unearthed. The first day concluded with a wine and cheese reception in the conference headquarters, the Chapel of our Lady, built in 1864.

On day two, the Millennium Anza Expedition paraded in full costume to Pershing Square on the Presidio parade ground to participate in the annual June 27 Los Californianos San Francisco birthday commemoration. Following a seven-flag color guard were Anza, Moraga, Font, Vidal, Grijalva, several soldados de cuera, and six year old Zoe Inglis, standing in for the expedition children. Also included were five mounted horses from Rancho del Sueno of Mokelumne Hill, full-blooded descendants of Father Kino's horse herd.

Members of Los Californianos, descendants of early Spanish settlers of California, honored their ancestors by placing flowers in a screen as the expedition role was called. The conference then adjourned to the Golden Gate Club for lunch and an afternoon program, presided over by Norman Sims, President of the California State Horsemen.

Flying in from Washington D.C. was keynote speaker Jeff Olson, consultant to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. Accompanying him was Ms. Pat Reed of the American Express Company, funding sponsor of the White House Millennium Program. Jeff presented millennium flags to the Consul General of Spain, the National Park Service, George Cardinet, and Amigos de Anza county chairpersons present: Paul Trujillo, Monterey County; Joe Adamo, Santa Clara County; Sue Sheehan, San Mateo County; Marilyn Mendez, Santa Barbara County; and Jeanie Gillen, Riverside County.

Afternoon speakers were Maurice Bandy, President of Los Californianos; Betty Watts, Los Californianos Chairperson; Peter Cole; Brother Gwire Cleary, Curator of Mission Dolores; Steve Haller, Presidio historian; Ron Kessinger, speaking on Anza's tenure as Governor of New Mexico; Phil Kessinger demonstrating Web de Anza; and Mary Wasik, a teacher, showing how her students used web-based materials to create an astrolabe and determine latitudes as Father Font did.

At dinner, Oscar Sanchez of Mexicali, Baja California discussed the Anza route through Baja California. Paul Trujillo translated. Eddie Grijalva of Orange County, a sixth generation descendent of Anza's Sergeant, spoke movingly on the life of his ancestor.

The final day started with a sacred walk along the recently marked Anza Trail on the Presidio between Battery Godfrey and Fort Point. Conducted by Ann-Marie Sayers, the walk entails a prayer at each step for those who have gone before and those who will come. After a box lunch at Mountain Lake, the conference concluded with a tour of Mission Dolores led by Brother Gwire Cleary.
**Along the Trail**

**Agreements**

- The National Park Service signed an agreement with Santa Barbara County to mark and interpret the Anza Trail within its jurisdiction. **Wilson Hubblell**, Senior Environmental Planner in the Department of Public Works, shepherded the agreement through the board of supervisors and is leading the marking of 35 miles of trail and three county park facilities. So far, 13 miles of the south coast are marked. Eighteen miles of the Gaviota coast await trail construction: Congresswoman **Lois Capps** and Assemblywoman **Hannah Beth Jackson** support funding for completion of a multi-use off-road trail from Goleta to Gaviota State Beach, connecting the urban area with three state beaches, all along the Anza Trail. Four miles in the north county await marking. The National Park Service needs to sign agreements with the cities of Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, and Guadalupe before marking in the entire county can be completed.

- The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) signed an agreement in support of marking and interpreting the Anza Trail within the county and agreed to act as coordinator with the county and the cities. SLOCOG staff person **Steve Devencenzi** helped. The NPS will still need to sign agreements with the local jurisdictions before the trail can be marked.

- A subcommittee of Amigos de Anza of San Luis Obispo County is working with **Rob Rossi**, owner of the Santa Margarita Ranch, to preserve the historic corridor of the Anza Trail within the ranch as part of Rossi's agreement with the Rangeland Trust. The committee is also working on Anza Trail connections over Cuesta Grade north of San Luis Obispo. Members include **Myra Douglass**, **Lindsay Hampton**, **Eric Greening**, **Dorothy Jennings**—all Amigos de Anza—and **Richard Murphy** of SLOCOG, **George Sullivan** of the County Park and Recreation Commission, **Marcie Osborn** of the County Trails Committee, and **John French**, consultant to Rob Rossi.

**Happenings**

Indian drums and a sacred walk initiated the opening to public use of a 3.5-mile segment of the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail in San Benito County, California, along Old Stage Road on October 24, 1999. The county abandoned vehicular use of this unpaved road to create a pathway for walkers, horseback riders, and bicyclists. Three local construction companies will cooperate in maintaining the trial over the next ten years. The sacred walk—every step a prayer for the ancestors—was led by **Ann-Marie Sayers**, tribal chair of Indian Canyon. **Paul Trujillo**, portraying Anza, led horseback riders in period uniforms from Monterey using the new public pathway. **Margaret Cheney** and **Ruth Keslar** organized the day. About 100 people attended the dedication ceremony including Congressman **Sam Farr**, **Ken Gray**, representing the Anza Trail in Camp Roberts sponsored by Amigos de Anza and the Atascadero Horsemen.

In April **Myra Douglass** participated in a local call-in radio show called "Sound Off," answering many questions about the Anza Trail. She also spearheaded a work party to replace markers and trailhead signs. **Nicole Cowert**, **Jim Erickson**, **Glorian Mitchell**, and **Goeff English**, City staff person, helped.

- The Anza Trail through Camp Roberts was dedicated on March 5 at a ceremony in the community hall on the base. The New World Baroque Orchestra played pieces from the late 18th century, and students from Atascadero High School read Anza's diary in Spanish and English for the days that he passed through the area in 1776. Meredith Kaplan, NPS trail su-

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**Noticias de Anza**

**Ann-Marie Sayers**

**Atascadero High School students (l. to r.)**

Breana Dixon, Jennifer Clay, Jessica Nicholson, Megan Lemke, and Rebeccah Sousa at the Camp Roberts trail dedication.
Anuncios

Events

September 9
Sesquicentennial celebration at Peralta adobe in San José, California, with site dedication and installation of wayside exhibit. Contact: Wells Twombly, 408-993-8182

October 21-22
Annual Anza Days at Tubac Presidio State Historical Park. Contact Cindy Krug, Park Manager, 520-398-2252

October 22
Annual celebration at Old Stage Road in San Juan Bautista, California. Contact: June Ely, 831-726-2884

October 31
Reenactment at Casa Grande Ruins with participation of O’odham and a presentation by Bernard Fontana. Contact: Don Kucera, 510-792-0554

November 11-12
Official National Millennium Trail Event at Yuma to include living history, performances of music and dance by the New World Baroque Orchestra, and reenactments of the expedition arriving in Yuma and crossing of the Colorado River. Most events will be held at Yuma Crossing State Park. Contact Don Kucera: 510-792-0554.

New Book

The Census of 1790, A Demographic History of Colonial California by William Marvin Mason, a Ballena Press publication. The book provides lists of members of the two colonizing expeditions that followed the Anza Trail, Anza’s own and one led by Rivera in 1781. The census, along with mission records, offers “much about early California that has not been made evident, such as the geographic origins of the colonials, their racial composition, ratio of men to women, marriage patterns, relative ages of husbands and wives, cross-caste marriage incidence, and other factors, relative percentage of Europeans in the adult population, and the relative number of married to unmarried men, for example.” The census dispels myths that California was either peopled by “old Spanish blood” or by ne’er-do-wells, convicts, and rascals. It also shows that the majority of California’s colonial population came from Sinaloa, southern Sonora, and the lower half of Baja California. The author suggests that the speech, folktales, idioms, and culture of early California may still be preserved in the town of Sinaloa today.

perintendent recognized Lt. Col. Lawrence W. Kimmel, Commander, and Brian Duke, Environmental Officer at Camp Roberts for their work to recognize and mark the Anza Trail. Also recognized for their continuing contributions to the Anza Trail were Myra Douglass (San Luis Obispo County) and Paul Trujillo (Monterey County) of Amigos de Anza.

A blessing by the Gabrieleno-Tongva opened the dedication of a wayside exhibit for the Anza Trail on February 19, 2000, at a mini-park along the Los Angeles River at Oros Street in a largely Latino area. Called “Families on the Move,” the exhibit depicts and notes that the Anza expedition was comprised of families, many with young children, of mixed European, African, and Indian ancestry. Later, some of these same settlers helped found the pueblo of Los Angeles. North East Trees, a non-profit group, received Challenge Cost Share Program funds to prepare the exhibit. Speaking at the dedication were staff for Congressman Xavier Becerra, state Senator Richard Polanco, Assemblyman Antonio Villaraigosa, Mayor Richard Riordan, and Meredith Kaplan, trail superintendent. The mayor and city councilwoman Jackie Goldberg recognized the National Park Service with certificates.

An interpretive marker for Anza campsite #76 was dedicated on March 19 along the Atascadero Bikeway near Goleta, California. Joining the ceremony were Los Soldados de Presidio de Santa Barbara led by Jim Martinez, Presidio Mounted Soldiers led by David Goena, and Native Sons of the Golden West. Recognized by the trail superintendent for their work in seeing the Anza Trail marked through the county were County Supervisor Susan Rose, County Public Works planner Wilson Hubbell, and Amigos de Anza members Vivian and George Obern. The Santa Barbara Trails Council newsletter quotes from Time-Life Books, “As a soldier, explorer and provincial governor, Anza was to prove one of the most intelligent and able men ever to serve Spain in the New World.” (continued on last page)
On June 3, National Trails Day, the NPS dedicated two wayside exhibits at Natividad Park in the City of Salinas and on Fort Ord Public Lands managed by BLM. Both interpret the Chumash culture at the time of the Anza expedition. Linda Yamane, a Rumsien Ohlone basket weaver and a descendant of the Anza expedition, prepared the exhibits. Also present was Carmen Fernandez, the great granddaughter of Viviana Soto who recorded songs in 1902 with Alfred Krober. Linda sang some of these songs. Descendants of seven expedition families participated in the day and interpreted the significance of the expedition to attendees. BLM staff Eric Morgan, Meg Pearson, and Erik Zaborsky along with three expedition descendants and the Anza Trail superintendent completed marking of seven miles of the Anza Trail as part of the ceremonies. The exhibits were funded through a Challenge Cost Share Program match with Return of the Natives and the City of Salinas.

Marking

Vandenberg Air Force Base and the Channel Coast District of California State Parks are marking their portions of the Anza Trail. Vandenberg is open to the public through tours. The state beaches involved are Rincon, Carpinteria, El Capitan, Refugio, and Gaviota.

Four expedition descendants overlook the wayside exhibit at the sedge beds on Fort Ord Public Lands. L to r. Laura Roach (Pacheco), Linda Yamane (Soto), Howard Strohn (Sanchez, Soto, Alviso), and Greg Smestad (Bernal).

Archeologists Larry Spanne and James Carucci install an Anza Trail marker at the golf clubhouse on Vandenberg Air Force Base.