

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT  
OF  
OLD SURVEY ROAD 97**

**BY**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this report is to provide a historic significance assessment of Old Survey Road 97 in San Diego County. This historic roadbed connects the San Pasqual and Santa Maria Valleys. Its northern end in the San Pasqual Valley is at about 400 feet elevation above mean sea level (AMSL). In the course of about three miles it climbs to approximately 1330 feet AMSL to its southern end in the Santa Maria Valley. As the last physical manifestation of the San Pasqual to Santa Maria Valley grade, Old Survey Road 97 is a historically significant resource eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historic Resources, and the San Diego County Local Register of Historical Resources at the local level of significance. In addition the road is a significant cultural resource under the San Diego County Resource Protection Ordinance.

## **HISTORIC BACKGROUND**

The trail from San Pasqual to Santa Maria was established in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Father Juan Mariner of San Mission Diego and Captain Juan Pablo Grijalva of the San Diego Presidio followed the route to the San Jose' Valley at present day Warner's Ranch in 1795 during an exploratory expedition (Pourade 1961:115; Roth 1981:179; Hill 1927: Apdx. I). By the 1820s San Diego and San Luis Rey missions used the San José valley to graze cattle and sheep (Engelhardt 1920:223-225; Pourade 1961:122). It was not until Mexican military parties began to travel on to the desert that a route would be opened from the mountains to the Colorado River linking the San Pasqual – Santa Maria road with the San José Valley and the desert.

In the 1820s explorations established San Jose' Valley as a gateway through the mountains for an overland trail to Sonora and the Mexican interior. In 1825 San Diego Presidio Alferes Santiago Arguello, while in pursuit of Indian horse thieves,

discovered the pass leading from Valle de San Jose' to the desert via San Felipe Valley. Later, Jose' Romero, captain of the Tucson Presidio, and Lt. of Engineers Romualdo Pacheco delineated the trail via the San Jose' Valley through Santa Ysabel and to San Diego via Santa Maria, San Pasqual and Los Peñasquitos as the official route for overland travel from Sonora to California. An alternative route for travelers wishing to bypass San Diego and reach the coast at a more northerly point led from El Valle de San Jose' through Puerta La Cruz, Cañada Aguanga, and Temecula to San Gabriel and Los Angeles. This would become the main branch of the Southern Overland trail 20 years later (Warner 1886:3; Beattie 1925, 1933; Pourade 1961:174). In spite of establishment of the route, travel between California and Sonora remained infrequent through the 1820s (Tamplin 1979:11-23). The last official use of the road took place in 1834 when Rafael Amador carried dispatches from Mexican President Santa Ana to California governor Figueroa (Hutchinson 1969:65).

In the early 1830s the Sonora trail became the path of overland traders. In 1832 the Jackson-Young party from Santa Fe, New Mexico followed the trail along the Gila River, through present day central Arizona, to its junction with the Colorado. They then crossed the desert along the route established by Romero and Pacheco to the San Jose' Valley and continued to Los Angeles. As a member of this expedition Jonathan Trumbull Warner first crossed the valley that would later commonly be known as his ranch. Jackson returned by the same route with 600 mules and 100 horses. Traffic increased during the 1830s and 40s as livestock traders drove herds of horses eastward to Sonora and New Mexico and the route between the Colorado River and Warner's Ranch became permanently established (Beattie 1925; Cleland 1963:236-237; Weber 1982:135). Water holes were discovered and maintained, and the names by which many are still known assigned. West of the river the most difficult part of the trail lay across the Colorado Desert, until the waters of Carrizo Creek were reached. The 90 mile stretch of wind blown sand drifts, stone covered terraces, and salt flats with little to no vegetation had no permanent sources of running water. Documentation of

the use of the cut off to San Diego via Santa Ysabel, Santa Maria and San Pasqual during this period is scanty. However, when American armies invaded Mexico in 1846 they found the route via San Pasqual and Santa Maria to be well established and the main trail to San Diego. This provides evidence of its continued use during the previous decades. It was the fact that a band of Mexican guerrilla fighters camped at San Pasqual blocked the main trail to San Diego that prompted General Kearny to attack on the morning of December 6, 1846, resulting in the battle of San Pasqual.

Beginning with the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848 and until the completion of the Southern Pacific Railroad in the mid 1870s, the route to San Diego via Santa Maria and San Pasqual became part of a major passage for overland migration and communication along the Southern Overland Trail.

Following earlier trails established by Spanish and Mexican explorers and Sonora and Santa Fe traders, invading American armies marching to California established an overland route from Texas through Arizona along the Gila River to where it joined the Colorado at present day Yuma, Arizona (Trafzer 1980). From the junction of the two rivers, the trail followed the already well-established route across the Colorado Desert and northward along the east side of the Peninsular Range through the Carrizo Corridor, San Felipe Valley, Warner's Pass, and San Jose' Valley. The trail to San Diego forked to the southwest at this point, running through Santa Ysabel, while the main road continued northward to Temecula and Los Angeles (Warner 1886:1-6, 19-20; Bibb 1995). General Stephen W. Kearny's Army of the West crossed the desert between the Colorado River and Warner's Ranch in early December 1846 (Tamplin 1979:24-34; Pourade 1963:124; Beattie 1925, 1933).

Camped with Kearny at Santa Maria on the evening of December 4, 1846 Major Emory noted "We were now on the main road to San Diego . . . and it was

therefore deemed necessary to attack the enemy and force a passage . . . .” (Emory 1848:108).

As they marched to engage their adversaries during the early morning of December 6, Lt. Gillespie recorded “Our road lay over a mountain which divides the valleys of San Pasqual from that of Santa Maria, and is about six miles in length. The ascent is quite regular, the road smooth, and has been used by the native Californians for carts” (Gillespie 1846).

At the end of the American Conquest, on January 24, 1848, gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in northern California, launching the California Gold Rush. Nine days later on February 2, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo transferred ownership of California along with territory that included the present states of Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado, and Utah to the United States. The Mexican Republic had lost approximately one third of its territory to the forces of Manifest Destiny.

The discovery of gold dramatically changed dynamics of overland travel along the Gila River and Sonora trails. Within a year 80,000 people had traveled to California from around the world (Greeley 1987:14). Thousands of gold rush emigrants from the U.S. and Mexico used the Gila River route. Mexicans were among the first to learn of the strike, receiving the news from passing ships. Exact numbers are difficult to estimate. Some sources claim that between six and ten thousand Sonorans from Mexico followed the route during 1849 and 1850. Traveling in family groups, many migrated to the Northern California gold fields each spring and returned to Sonora in the fall (Roske 1963:198-199; Beattie 1925; Kenny 1967). Another source says that over 12,000 Argonauts followed the route in 1849 (Pourade 1963:142). Dr. A.L. Lincoln, who had established a ferry to cross the Colorado River at its junction with the Gila, claimed that in three months during 1850 he crossed over 20,000 people (Roth 1981). This would have averaged over 200 a day.

Many emigrants, exhausted and out of supplies, left the main overland trail and headed west to San Diego, where they could get a ship to San Francisco or resupply and head northward up the coast to rejoin the trail to the gold fields at Los Angeles. Between Carrizo Creek and Warner's Ranch were four distinct cutoffs to San Diego: one left the trail at Carrizo Creek, one at Oriflamme Canyon just north of El Puerto, one at San Felipe, and one at Warner's Ranch.

The trail from Warner's Ranch via Santa Ysabel and the San Pasqual Valley to San Diego was the only way to get wagons from the desert to San Diego. In September 1849 Lt. Cave J. Coats, commanding Company A of the First Dragoons, pioneered an alternate road from Mission San Diego via El Cajon (Santa Monica) to Rancho Santa Maria, at present-day Ramona, which intersected the trail to Warner's Ranch and shortened the trip (Bibb 1995; Ellis 1995b:29). The San Pasqual Valley trail, however, remained the main wagon road, and was later used by the overland stage (*San Francisco Herald* 11-25-1857).

The San Pasqual – Santa Maria route to the desert remained so important, in fact, that in 1854 it was the first in San Diego County to be declared a public road by the County Board of Supervisors. It was described as “from the Ranch Soledad via Peñasquitos, San Pasqual, San Ysabel, Warner’s, San Phillippe [Felipe] and Vallecito to Ft. Yuma on the Colorado River” (Board of Supervisors 1854: Vol. 1 page 28).

From 1857 to 1861 the Gila Trail was used by the overland mail service. First carried by the San Antonio and San Diego Mail Line, from July 1857 through August 1858, and then the Butterfield Overland Mail Company, from September 1858 through June 1861, establishment of the Overland Mail constituted the first regular communication and transportation service across the continental United States, 12 years before completion of the transcontinental railroad.



The San Antonio San Diego mail company used two routes to get to the desert. "Light covered coaches" followed the traditional wagon road through San Pasqual, Santa Ysabel, and Warner's Ranch (*Sacramento Union* 1-11-1858; Johnson 1938:64). By the alternate route, passengers traveled in vehicles to Lassitor's ranch, and then traveled 18 miles down Oriflamme Canyon to Vallecito on mule back. The price of passage was \$35 to Fort Yuma, \$75 to Tucson, \$120 to El Paso, and \$150 to San Antonio (*San Diego Herald* 11-21-1857). On January 9, 1858 the *San Diego Herald* praised the line:

The overland mail from San Antonio arrived on the 8<sup>th</sup> inst., in 29 days. Considering the length of the route, the longest uninterrupted line in the U. States, if not in the world, it is worthy of remark that the contractors have never failed to make their schedule time since the second mail run. They have lost animals, wagons, and men, fought Indians, and conquered the desert, but they always bring their mails along inside of time. This shows the right kind of energy (*San Diego Herald* 1-9-1858).

A correspondent for the *San Francisco Herald* traveled the route by way of San Pasqual in November 1857. After leaving San Diego (Old Town) they followed a "very good road for twenty miles" and then stopped at Peñasquitos Rancho for "dinner." Continuing on:

At night we reached San Pasqual, a battle ground where a few Americans were killed in 1845 (sic) . . . Our coaches were heavily laden, each having about 1500 pound of freight . . . We remained three days at San Pasqual, waiting for mules from a neighboring rancho. The mules were all *muy broncos*, and the drivers had an exciting time breaking them to harness. In crossing the mountain, when in front of San Pasqual, one of the stages broke down and

had to return to San Diego for repairs. With the others we moved on . . . (*San Francisco Herald* 11-25-1857).

The steep grade between San Pasqual and Santa Maria was one of the more difficult portions of the road. The road was so steep that passengers were often forced to walk, and horses were unable to negotiate the grade when heavily loaded (Telfer 1951).

With inauguration of Butterfield's Overland Mail Company service, the San Antonio and San Diego became two short branch lines at either end of the nation's southwest border. On October 22, 1858 the Postmaster General discontinued service between El Paso and Fort Yuma where it overlapped the Butterfield's Missouri to San Francisco route. The stages of the San Antonio and San Diego now provided connections from these two cities to the transcontinental Overland Mail. In compensation, the Post Office department upgraded operations on the two branches to a weekly service (Tamplin 1979:88; Johnson 1938:27). In 1859 the San Antonio San Diego had "50 fine new coaches, 400 mules, and 64 men." Drivers maintained an average speed of 6 miles an hour (Banning Notes 1928). Newspapers in San Francisco and Sacramento, both connected to the Overland Mail, resented continuation of the San Antonio San Diego in even this limited form, dubbing it the "San Antonio & San Diego Jackass Overland Mail Route" and demanding that Congress "lop off this useless mail" (*Sacramento Union* 11-15-1859; Banning Notes 1928). It was this attack that gave the line its nick name, "Jackass Mail." On April 1, 1860 the Post Office Department reduced the line even farther and discontinued service between Fort Yuma and San Diego (Tamplin 1979:89).

Although the overland mail coaches no longer used the road, the San Pasqual - Santa Maria route remained part of San Diego's link to the Southern Overland Trail. The road continued to be used by local residents and to be an important immigrant route to the coast. In 1864 the Board of Supervisors approved the use

of funds to repair the road (Board of Supervisors 7-5-1864 Vol. 1:268). In spite of advocates who wanted to improve the route via El Cajon and Santa Maria, the San Pasqual – Santa Maria Road remained the main wagon road east from San Diego until the late 1860s (*San Diego Herald* 3-5-1858; Rusling 1867:339).

In 1869 John G. Capron began running stages between San Diego and Yuma by an alternate route that ran along the Tijuana River Valley to Tecate and then to Campo, Jacumba, and Mountain Springs, intersecting the Southern Overland Trail at Sackets Wells, north of present-day Plaster City (Telfer 1951: Rusling 1867:339; *San Diego Weekly Union* 2-27-69). Although travel to the desert had shifted to the more southern route by the late 1860s, in the early 1870s the San Pasqual – Santa Maria road gained renewed importance as part of the route from San Diego to the mining boom town of Julian.

In 1869 gold was discovered in present-day Coleman Creek northeast of Santa Ysabel, resulting in establishment of the boom towns of Julian and Banner. By the summer of 1872, Julian had 50 houses, 3 hotels, 4 stores, 2 restaurants, 1 schoolhouse and the numerous saloons to service an estimated 300 miners working in the area. In 1879 the whole Julian and Banner mining area yielded an estimated \$4 to \$5 million dollars in gold ore from the hard rock mines in the district.

By May 1870 William Tweed had established a regular passenger and mail line between San Diego and Julian (*San Diego Union* 5-4-1871; *San Diego Weekly Union* 4:1; 7-14-70, 2:4). On July 20<sup>th</sup> the newspaper reported that the San Diego to Julian line was doing a brisk business, 12 passengers had gone to Julian by stage on the previous day and five were already booked for the next trip (*San Diego Weekly Union* 7-20-71 3:2). Tweed's business continued to grow. In February 1872 he expanded his runs from once to twice a week (*San Diego Union* 2-15-72 3:2). By June he had expanded his teams from four to six horses (*San Diego Union* 6-13-1872 3:1).

That same month a competitor appeared. Edward R. Stokes received a government contract to carry the U.S. Mail between San Diego and Julian (*San Diego Union* 6-20-1872 2:3). A friendly rivalry began between Tweed and Stokes that continued to improve service. By the end of the month Tweed had expanded his runs from two to three times a week, “making the trip in one day instead of two as before” (*San Diego Union* 6-27-72 3:1). By the middle of July Stokes was also running three stages a week (*San Diego Union* 7-14-1872 2:2).

The two stage lines began to contend for the fastest time between San Diego and Julian. The *San Diego Union* closely followed the rivalry. During the first week of July Tweed’s assistant driver, George Warring, made the trip in 12 hours (*San Diego Union* 7-3-72 3:2). On the following trip Tweed made the trip in 10 hours and 40 minutes, beating Stokes’ coach with the U.S. mail by half an hour. On July 9 Tweed’s coach left Julian at 6:30 and completed the run in 7 and a half hours, reaching San Diego at 2 pm (*San Diego Union* 7-10-72: 2, 3:2). This appeared to be the best time recorded. On July 11 the *San Diego Union* noted that Tweed had made his next run in 10 hours and 40 minutes, but had been beaten by Stokes by half an hour (*San Diego Union* 7-11-72 3:3). On July 26<sup>th</sup> Tweed regained his lead and beat Stokes’ coach by an hour and a half. Stokes took the lead again the following day making the return trip in six hours, and beating Tweed’s teams by 30 minutes (*San Diego Union* 7-28-72 3:1). On September 10, Tweed’s driver George Warring beat Stokes’ coach by just a few minutes. By this time the two lines were also engaged in a price war. By July 25, a round trip ticket between San Diego and Julian could be purchased for two dollars (*San Diego Union* 9-11-72 3:1; 9-25-1872 3:3). By December the paper described the rivalry between the two lines as a “friendly competition.” Both now charged \$5.00 for a one way ticket (*San Diego Union* 12-16-72 3:5). The stages left downtown San Diego and traveled through Mission Valley, past the San Diego Mission, and on to Poway, continuing northward to San Pasqual and Santa Maria. One rider remarked on the break neck, haphazard mode of travel:

Before you get half a dozen miles you will have realized one feature of your trip that will accompany you to the end. . . (A) Fly walking on the ceiling is the only fitting parallel to stage riding in California. You have a narrow patch of road, just about sufficient to take the wheels, and if the driver's good right hand for a moment forgets its running, God help you. But it never does. . . .

If you are so unhappy as to meet an opposing coach on a road that is barely wide enough to admit one, why it gives opportunity for the exercise of Tweeds ingenuity, which take our word for it, will never fail him. On the road between San Diego and Julian we plunged off-hand down a thousand nearly perpendicular places, and not in one instance did his infallible instinct and tact fail him. At least a thousand times we committed our soul in pious fear to God, and we always came out scathe less. We consequently believe in Tweed. . . . ( *Weekly World* 10-5-1872 2:1).

The same observer described the road between San Pasqual and Santa Maria:

A drive of some miles, we care not to number them, the prospect was so inviting, brought us to the top of a high mountain from which you could look left into the head of the San Pasqual Valley . . . A particularity of the outlook from the mountain overlooking the San Pasqual is that with one sweep of the eye you can take in a panorama of unrivaled desolation and of smiling beauty. The San Pasqual Valley lies vernal and lovely to the left, under the same sun that lights up the ghastly deformity of the hills straight ahead. . . . Purple and rocky disfigurations stand upon every square foot. ( *Weekly World* 10-5-1872 2:1).

With the emphasis on travel between San Diego and Julian, the San Pasqual – Santa Maria route continued to be as important, if not more so, as it had been during the days of the Gold Rush immigration and the Overland Mail. In 1872 the Board of Supervisors allocated \$50.00 for road repair along the route (Board of Supervisors 1872 Vol. 3:102). The step grades, heavy traffic, and winter storms kept maintenance of the road challenging. In December 1873 the *San Diego Union* reported:

The stage road to Julian was badly washed in the late storm, and has yet been only partially repaired. This road has more freight and passenger travel than any other out of San Diego, and its serviceable condition is a matter of some importance to us as to the people along the line at the mines. . . . . The road over the Santa Maria Hill is in horrible condition; it is the worst place between Julian and San Diego. Repairs are very much needed through Poway . . . It has been suggested that it would save distance and be an economical plan to build a new piece of road direct from Poway to Santa Maria, instead of going around as now by way of San Pasqual. This would avoid three bad hills, would lessen the distance several miles, and would save some three hundred dollars a year in repairs (*San Diego Union* 12-30-1873).

A year later, in February 1874 the paper again reported:

Between San Diego and Julian the road is in a terrible condition; road masters, with few exceptions, do not know of their appointment; James Hamilton, of Hamilton's express reports the regular road is impassible; he worked five days repairing bad places in order to get over; attention of authorities should be called to this (*San Diego Union* 2-3-74 3:1)

In 1875, for a second time, the road was declared a public highway (Board of Supervisors 1-15-1875 Vol. 3:412-413).

Not surprisingly, bad road conditions, bad weather, and racing stage coaches caused accidents. In May 1871 Tweed's stage overturned on the grade a quarter of mile out of Julian. Softening of the road by heavy rains was blamed. No one was hurt (*San Diego Weekly Union* 5-4-1871 4:1.) In August 1872 the "line leaders" of Tweed's team broke loose and ran away. Once again no one was injured (*San Diego Union* 8-10-1872 3:3). The following month bad road conditions on Mission Grade caused a stage coach accident (*San Diego Union* 9-11-1872 3:1). While traversing the steep grade between San Pasqual and Santa Maria on February 11, 1873 the stage overturned and the "passengers had a narrow escape." The conduct of the driver "Mr. Tweed" was praised (*San Diego Union* 2-12-1873). Tragedy struck later that month when Tweed's stage became mired in Colmen Creek, outside of Julian, during a storm and two women passengers drowned (*San Diego Union* 2-27-73:3:1).

By 1874 other entrepreneurs had entered the Julian to San Diego stage market. In June it was announced that there would be a tri-weekly stage to Julian and San Bernardino. Wells Fargo and Company had contracted with A.L. Seeley to run his coaches on the route carrying Wells Fargo Express and passengers (*San Diego Union* 6-13-74 3:1).

Seeley's line began running on July 6<sup>th</sup>. Stages left San Diego on Mondays and Fridays, departing at 6 in the morning. After arriving at Julian, the stages continued to Banner, then to Warner's Ranch, presumably by continuing east to the Southern Overland Trail near present-day Scissors Crossing and then north along that trail. Continuing north via Oak Grove and Temecula, the coaches arrived at San Bernardino on Wednesdays and Mondays. Overnight stops were at Julian and Temecula (*San Diego Union* 7-4-74 3:3).

By the end of the month Seeley had resigned from the line, and Treanor and Tweed assumed management on August 1 (*San Diego Union* 7-31-74 3:1; 8-1-74 3:1). They expanded the service to three trips a week, leaving San Diego on Mondays, Wednesday's and Fridays and San Bernardino on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays (*San Diego Union* 8-1-74 3:1).

Meanwhile, Adolph Stokes continued his San Diego to Julian run announcing in the paper in July 1874:

#### STAGE LINE SAN DIEGO AND JULIAN - CARRYING U.S. MAIL

The undersigned Proprietor of the line of Stages that runs between the City of San Diego and the mineral regions of Julian City, offers to the public the most commodious as well as safest way of traveling between these places. Stages leave San Diego every Monday and Thursday at 9 am; returning leave Julian Tuesdays and Fridays at 1 pm invariably. For passage and freight apply in San Diego at Gordon & Hazard's store and in Julian at the store of Solomon Schultz. None but obliging and careful drivers employed.

Adolfo Stokes, Proprietor (*San Diego Union* 7-5-1874 4:4).

In September 1874, the competition became even more crowded with the announcement that "a new line of stages to Julian would soon be established charging \$3.00 each way" (*San Diego Union* 9-22-74 2:3). The new proprietor, A.K. Cravath, had his coaches on the road by the end of the month, taking passengers to Julian and Banner (*San Diego Union* 9-29-74 2:4). The same month Knight and Deanor advertised their stage line to Julian making three trips a week (*San Diego Union* 9- 3-74 2:3; 9-6-74 3:2).



Stage coaches did not constitute the only traffic on the Julian to San Diego road. Freight wagons and vehicle and foot traffic of individual travelers were also heavy users of the route. In 1874 the warehouse of W.W. Stewart and Company shipped nearly 8,000 pounds to the Julian – Banner district “each working day” (*San Diego Union* 11-14-74 3:2).

In 1876 the County Board of Supervisors ordered that H. Spratt, the overseer of the road from “San Pasqual Valley to its intersection of San Diego and Julian road is hereby authorized to complete the grade upon said road providing the cost of the same does not exceed the sum of 150 dollars” (Board of Supervisors 1-5-1876 Vol. 4:64). In 1880 additional work was authorized to repair the road from the foot of San Pasqual Grade in San Pasqual Valley and “via said grade and over the road leading to Santa Maria Ranch . . .” (Board of Supervisors 1-17-1880 Vol. 5:78).

By 1882 travel had shifted from the San Pasqual Santa - Maria route in favor of the road through El Cajon and Santa Maria to Julian. By February of that year Frank P. Frary of Julian was running a tri-weekly stage via that route to San Diego (*San Diego Union* 6-23-82 2:2; 1-2-83 4:7; 7-1-83 4:7).

The San Pasqual – Santa Maria Road still remained an important route for travelers in San Diego’s north county region to access the back country. A correspondent for the *San Diego Union* traveled the route in April 1885 for an article describing the back country valleys (*San Diego Union* 4-24-1885).

With establishment of the towns of Ramona in the Santa Maria Valley, and Escondido, northeast of San Pasqual, in the late 1880s, the route once again became important as a link between these two communities. In July 1887 residents of the two villages petitioned the Board of Supervisors “praying that a practical wagon road be constructed between the towns . . . by way of the San Pasqual Valley.” J.S. Somers and A. Montgomery were appointed to locate and

survey the road (Board of Supervisors 7-30-1887 Vol. 8:241). A map was filed with the county in March 1888 (Old Road Survey 1888). This was the genesis of the road now known as Old Survey 97. It would be the last manifestation of the route from the San Pasqual and Santa Maria Valleys that had been so vital to overland travel east from San Diego for almost 100 years. On September 9, 1888, L.W. Toddard, T.S. Summers and A.K. Cravath were again appointed to view, survey, and locate the road (Board of Supervisors 5-9-1888 Vol. 9:47), and on the same day the board approved a petition from the residents of the San Pasqual Road District that the San Pasqual and Ramona Road be opened as surveyed (Board of Supervisors 5-9-1888 Vol. 9:47). Additional work continued. In October 1889 a survey report by S.L. Ward was accepted, and stakes reset (Board of Supervisors 10-14-1888 9:260, 10:97 4-4-1889). The road remained the main route between Ramona and Escondido until 1902 when work was undertaken to improve Clevenger Grade (*San Diego Union* 2-24-1902: 8:1). The Clevenger Grade route replaced the Old San Pasqual Grade road and in 1930, under orders of the County Board of Supervisors, Old Survey 97 was vacated and abandoned (Board Of Supervisors 62:74 9-29-1930).

## **PHYSICAL CONDITION OF OLD SURVEY 97**

### **Location**

The location of Old Survey Road 97 is shown as a dotted black line on the map in Figure 1. The road begins at the southern edge of the San Pasqual Valley in the Northeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section Three, Township 13

South, Range One West (U.S.G.S. 1954). The road runs in a southeast direction switch backing along hills and ridges adjacent to a canyon formed by San Vicente Creek and climbing out of San Pasqual Valley through Sections 2, 11, and 12, until reaching the top of the ridges and the Santa Maria Valley in the Southwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter of Section 12, Township 13South

Range 1 West. The length of the roadbed is approximately three miles. The Old Survey Road is accessed at its northern end by Bandy Canyon Road in San Pasqual Valley, and at its southern end from Rangeland Road in Ramona.

The road as it exists follows the 1888 survey map exactly except in Sections 11 and 12 where it is about one quarter to one half mile west of the survey location (Map). However it occupies the same cut and route that is shown in 1928 aerial photographs of the area (Aerial Photographs 1928). It would appear that when the road was laid out the final grade was placed to the west of where the original survey projected its route in 1888. The current roadbed was certainly in existence and well traveled by the 1920s and probably has retained its present configuration since its original construction.

### **Relation to Previous Roads**

Old Road Survey 97 was the last physical manifestation of the San Pasqual to Santa Maria Valley grade. Although the actual tracks of the road varied over time, the climb from San Pasqual to Santa Maria remained a crucial and prominent feature of the route to San Diego County's backcountry from its use as an overland trail beginning in the 1820s, through its continued importance as the main road to Julian during the early 1870s, and finally as the road between the towns of Ramona and Escondido, and northern San Diego County in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The earliest map of the trail is from Lt. Emory's notes, taken while marching with Kearney's Army of the West. He shows the road to the east of Old Survey 97. The route is shown as a solid black line in Figure 1. This track essentially came across the ridge that the Old Survey Road curves around at its northern end. The original route then continued in a more easterly direction, while later roads turned toward the south (Emory 1848; State Parks No Date). By 1874 another road had been established (General Land Office 1874; Beasley 1888). This is

shown in Figure 1 as a dashed black line. This track came across the northern ridge as before, then continued to follow ridge tops to the south. For its last (southern most) mile, Old Survey Road 97 joins and follows this trail. Although its southern portions are slightly to the west of the older tracks, Old Survey Road 97 is traversing the same route and terrain in its ascent from San Pasqual to the Santa Maria Valley as earlier trails, and is the last physical manifestation of a route that had become established at least as early as the mid 1820s.

### **Existing Conditions.**

From its intersection with Bandy Canyon Road, Old Survey 97 forms an elongated S as it trends in a southeasterly direction for about three quarters of a mile as it follows the base of a step ridge. The original overland trail went across the top of this ridge approximately one quarter to one eighth of a mile to the north. In this first section the road is used for access to houses in the lower foothills of the San Pasqual Valley and it has been widened and graded (Figures 2-5). Approximately 25 to 30 feet in width, the roadbed along this section is much wider than originally laid out. Upon crossing the eastern boundary of Section 3, the road veers to the south in a sideways “U” curve and then continues south and east along the edges of ridges and hills for slightly over a mile as it climbs toward the Santa Maria Valley. Here the roadbed retains most of its original configuration and layout. Approximately 15 to 20 feet in width, it is much narrower than in the lower section where it has had recent grading. At places where it crosses small drainages, remains of original dry stacked cobble retaining walls can be seen. In addition, spectacular views of San Pasqual Valley and San Vicente Creek canyon are afforded (Figures 6-16).

South of the northern boundary of Section 11, the tops of the ridges are reached and the roadbed becomes less steep. Here it parallels an earlier road shown on an 1874 General Land Office Map, and 1889 map of San Diego County, as it continues for the last mile in a more southerly direction amongst oak trees

bordering the eastern bank of San Vicente Creek, until the northern boundary of the Santa Maria Land Grant is reached at present day Rangeland Road (Figures 17-19).

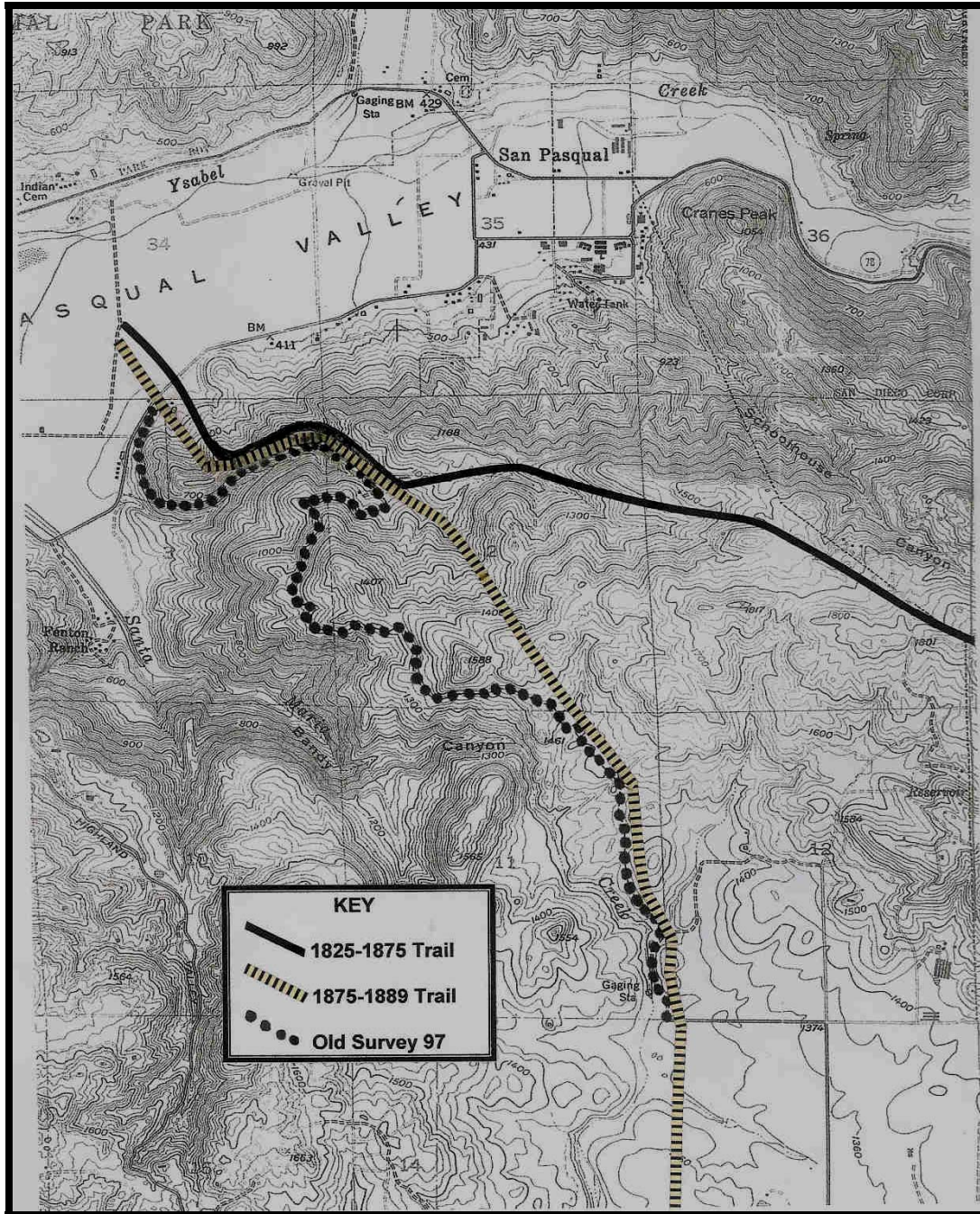


Figure 1: Location of Old Survey Road 97 and earlier San Pasqual to Santa Maria Trails plotted on the U.S.G.S. San Pasqual 1954 (Updated 1988) Quadrangle.





**Figure 2: The northern end of Old Survey Road 97 at its intersection with Bandy Canyon Road. The road here is much wider than originally laid out due to recent grading. The original 1820s trail climbed the hill to the left until it reached the ridge top.**



**Figure 3: The road as it continues around the base of a high ridge. The original overland trail crossed the top of this ridge.**





**Figure 4: Another example of modern grading along the northern end of Old Survey Road 97. The original trails followed the ridges to the left, designated by the solid arrows. The 1840s trail and then veered east, while the trail in existence by 1874 turned southeast and went behind the ridges to the right designated by dotted arrows. The Old Survey Road, indicated by the dashed arrows, runs below the ridge.**



**Figure 5: Overview from the south. The recently graded portion Old Survey Road 97 along the base of the ridge is marked with dashed arrows. Solid arrows indicate the routes of original overland trails along the top of the ridge.**



**Figure 6: Old Survey Road 97 about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from the intersection with Bandy Canyon Road. Here the old road bed has not been impacted by modern grading and is closer to its original width and grade.**





**Figure 7: The old road bed continues southeasterly through private property.**



**Figure 8: The old road bed switch backing along hills and ridges as it climbs toward Santa Maria Valley.**



**Figure 9: A view of San Pasqual Valley and the mouth of the canyon formed by San Vicente Creek from the Old Survey Road 97 road bed.**





**Figure 10: A dry masonry retaining wall reinforcing the old road bed where it crosses a small drainage.**



**Figure 11: Road bed detail. The grade, width, and depth of the road in this section appear to be very close to its original layout.**





**Figure 12: Another road bed detail view.**



**Figure 13: A second dry stacked stone retaining wall supporting the road.**





**Figure 14: Overview of a segment of Old Survey Road 97 as it crosses the base of a hill.**



**Figure 15: Road bed detail in foreground and overview in back ground. It is at about this point that Old Survey 97 rejoins the more easterly 1874 road from San Pasqual to Santa Maria. Dashed arrows point to Old Survey Road 97. Solid arrows show the route of the earlier road to the east (right) of the ridge in the center of the photograph.**





**Figure 16: View of San Vicente Creek canyon.**



**Figure 17: At approximately one mile from its southern end the road reaches the mesa top on the southern edge of the Santa Maria Valley. At this point it is following the earlier road established by 1875.**





**Figure 18: As it enters the Santa Maria Valley Old Survey Road 97 passes through shaded oak groves.**



**Figure 19: Oaks along the eastern edge of San Vicente Creek at the southern end of Old Survey Road 97. This view is looking north as the road bed continues toward the San Pasqual Valley.**



## NATIONAL REGISTER SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Survey Road 97 roadbed was evaluated for significance using standards for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historic Resources, and San Diego County Local Register of Historical Resources. To qualify for these listings a property must meet at least one of the following four criteria:

A (1) That are associated with events that make a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

B (2) That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

C (3) That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D (4) That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history (National Park Service 1991; County of San Diego 2007).

In addition a property must retain sufficient integrity of its historic qualities to convey its significance. Integrity is assessed on seven distinct characteristics that include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association (National Park Service 1991).

The resources were also evaluated for significance under the County of San Diego Resource Protection Ordinance (RPO). Under the RPO:

o). "Significant Prehistoric or Historic Sites": Sites that provide information regarding important scientific research questions about prehistoric or historic activities that have scientific, religious, or other ethnic value of local, regional, state, or federal importance. Such locations shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) Any prehistoric or historic district, site, interrelated collection of features or artifacts, building, structure, or object either:

(aa) Formally determined eligible or listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register; or

(bb) To which the Historic Resource ("H" Designator) Special Area Regulations have been applied; or

(2) One-of-a-kind, locally unique, or regionally unique cultural resources which contain a significant volume and range of data and materials; and

(3) Any location of past or current sacred religious or ceremonial observances (RPO 2009).

## **Significance Statement**

The road bed of Old Survey Road 97 is a historically significant resource eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and California Register of Historic Resources, and San Diego County Local Register of Historical Resources.

As the last physical manifestation of the San Pasqual to Santa Maria Valley grade, the road qualifies for listing at the local level of significance. Although the actual tracks of the road varied over time, the climb from San Pasqual to Santa

Maria remained a crucial and prominent feature of the route from its use as an overland trail beginning in the 1820s, through its continued importance as the main road to Julian during the early 1870s, and finally as the road between the town of Ramona and northern San Diego County in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although its southern portions are slightly to the west of the older tracks, Old Survey Road 97 is traversing the same route and terrain in its ascent from the San Pasqual to the Santa Maria Valleys as earlier trails. As such it is eligible under Criterion A for its association with the numerous aspects of overland travel the route experienced in its over 100 years of use, as well as Criterion C for its retention of original road bed, and cobble retaining walls. The period of significance is from 1825 to 1930. This encompasses its establishment as a portion of an overland trail to the desert in the mid 1820s to its final disuse and abandonment as a county road in 1930.

The resources also retain a sufficient degree of integrity. The Old Survey 97 roadbed retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association:

#### Location

The Old Survey 97 Roadbed retains a high degree of integrity of location. The roadbed is on the same locations as shown on historic maps in original survey maps and in 1928 aerial photographs.

#### Setting

Setting is defined as the “physical environment of a historic property” (Andrus & Shrimpton 2002). The setting of the district is relatively unchanged from its period of significance. Some modern homes and horse barns have been constructed along the first mile at the northern end, where the road has also undergone modern grading. These, however, are for the most part away from the roadway. Overall, the road has the same rural feel and look as it had prior to 1930.

## Design

Design is defined as the “combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of property.” It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of the property (Andrus & Shrimpton 2002). The road bed retains its original design in that it occupies the same alignments as when originally laid out and shown in historic maps and photographs. The erosion control structures also retain their original design as constructed. Modern grading and widening on the northern 1 mile of the road have compromised the original width and depth of bank cuts, but even here the road follows its original alignment and remains unpaved so that a feel for its original ambiance is still clear.

## Materials

Materials are “the physical elements that were combined during a particular period of time in a particular pattern of construction to form a historic property” (Andrus & Shrimpton 2002). The road retains original materials in the form of dirt road beds and dry stacked fieldstone retaining walls.

## Workmanship

Workmanship is the “physical evidence of crafts of a particular culture or people” (Andrus & Shrimpton 2002). Good integrity of design and materials, as discussed above, combine to give good integrity of workmanship for the elements of the district.

## Feeling and Association

Feeling is defined as “a property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time” (Andrus & Shrimpton 2002). It results from the presence of historic features that together convey the property’s historic character. Association is the “direct link between an important historic event and a historic property.” The combination of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship discussed above combine to give the Old Survey

Road 97 roadbed a strong feeling and association for early transportation routes to San Diego County's Backcountry via the San Pasqual to Santa Maria Valley segment of the Overland Trail.

In addition the district is a significant cultural resource under the San Diego County Resource Protection Ordinance as identified under Definition 2, in that it is a "One-of-a-kind, locally unique" cultural resource "which contain a significant volume and range of data and materials" (RPO 2009)

### **Significance Summary**

As the last physical manifestation of the San Pasqual to Santa Maria Valley grade, Old Survey Road 97 is a historically significant resource eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historic Resources, and the San Diego County Local Register of Historical Resources at the local level of significance. It is eligible under Criterion A for its association with the numerous aspects of overland travel the route experienced in its over 100 years of use, as well as Criterion C for its retention of original road bed, and fieldstone retaining walls. The period of significance is from 1825 to 1930. This encompasses its establishment as a portion of an overland trail to the desert in the mid 1820s to its final disuse and abandonment as a county road in 1930. In addition the road retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and workmanship which combine to give the Old Survey 97 Roadbed a strong feeling and association for early transportation routes to San Diego County's Backcountry through the San Pasqual to Santa Maria Valley segment of the Overland Trail. In addition the road is a significant cultural resource under the San Diego County Resource Protection Ordinance as identified under Definition 2, in that it is a "One-of-a-kind, locally unique" cultural resource "which contain a significant volume and range of data and materials" (RPO 2009).

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