

Tribally Approved  
American Indian Ethnographic Analysis of the Proposed Gold Point  
Solar Energy Zone

Ethnography and Ethnographic Synthesis  
For  
Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and Solar Energy Study Areas in Portions  
of Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah

Participating Tribes

*Timbisha Shoshone Tribe, Death Valley, California*

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## GOLD POINT

The proposed Gold Point solar energy zone (SEZ) is located in Lida Valley (see Figure 1). The center of the SEZ sits approximately eight miles southeast of Lida, Nevada and three miles north of the historic mining town, Gold Point, Nevada. It is located about 15 miles west from the Nellis Air Force Bombing and Gunnery Range and 14.5 miles east from the California-Nevada border and Death Valley National Park. Jackson Wash, one of the prominent geologic features in the region traverses the Gold Point SEZ.

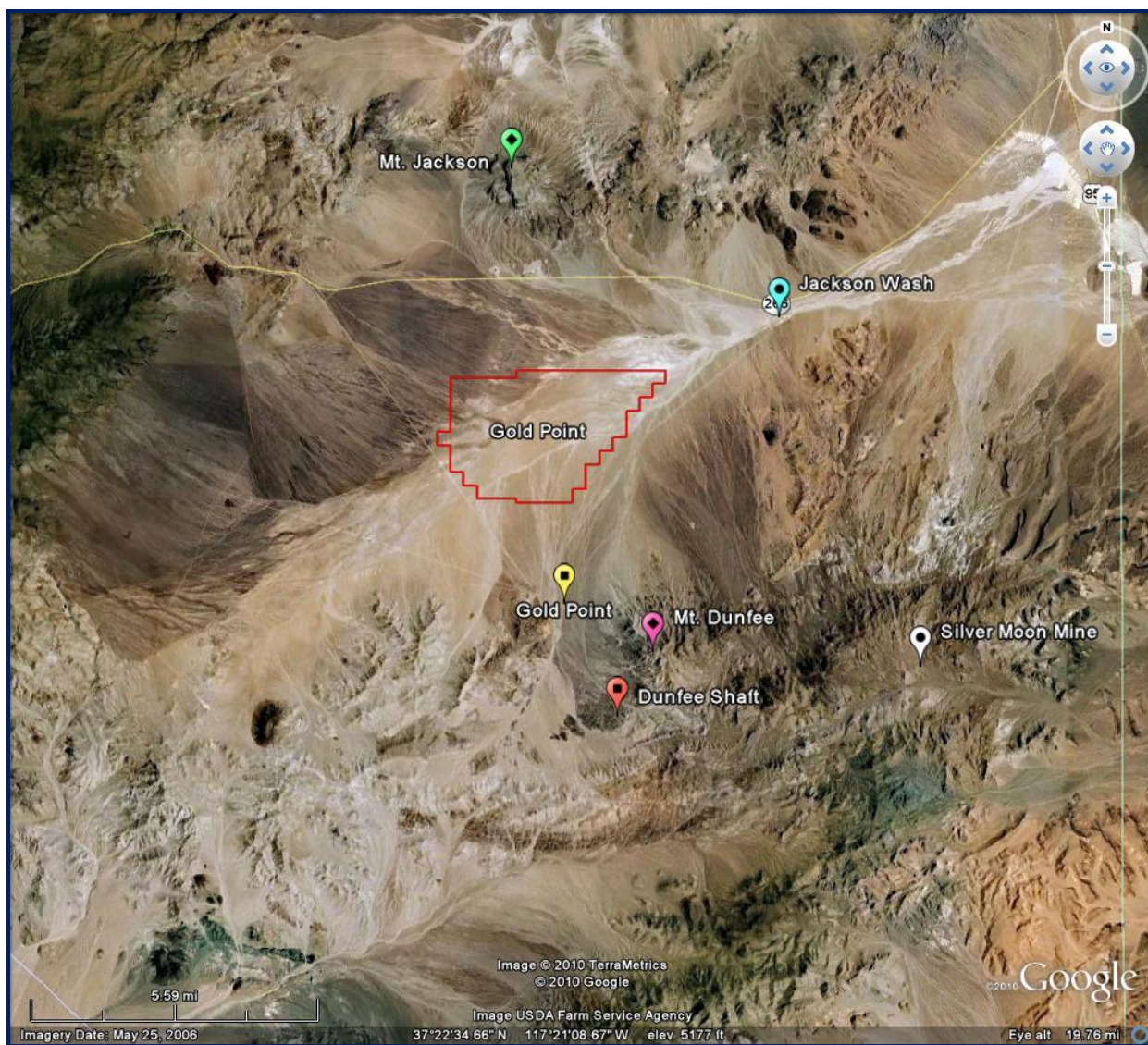


Figure 1 Google Earth Image of the Gold Point SEZ American Indian Study Area (SEZ is Outlined in Red)

The larger SEZ American Indian study area extends beyond the SEZ's boundaries because the presence of cultural resources extends into the surrounding landscape. The Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area includes plant communities, geological features and water sources located in and just outside the proposed SEZ boundaries. Traditional trail networks linked together neighboring and distant Indian communities to nearby ceremonial centers that pass

through the SEZ American Indian study area. Western Shoshone tribal representatives maintain that, in order to understand Western Shoshone connections to the proposed Gold Point SEZ, it must be placed in context with neighboring places and their associated cultural resources.

### **Summary of SEZ American Indian Study Area Significance**

The lands under consideration in the Solar PEIS Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area were traditionally occupied and used, aboriginally owned, and historically related to the Numic-speaking peoples of the Great Basin and western Colorado Plateau. Tribal representatives from the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe were involved in the Gold Point SEZ field consultations to represent the cultural interests of the Western Shoshone. These Numic-speaking peoples continue to stipulate that they are the American Indian people responsible for the cultural resources (natural and manmade) in this study area because their ancestors were placed here by the Creator. Since time immemorial, they have lived in these lands, maintaining and protecting these places, plants, animals, water sources, and the cultural signs of their occupation.

These Numic-speaking people further stipulate that because they have lived in these lands since the end of the Pleistocene and throughout the Holocene, they deeply understand dramatic shifts in climate and ecology that have occurred over these millennia. Indian lifeways were dramatically influenced by these natural shifts, but certain religious and ceremonial practices continued unchanged. These traditional ecological understandings are carried from generation to generation through the recounting of origin stories and by strict cultural and natural resource conservation rules. The involved American Indian tribal governments and their appointed representatives have participated in this PEIS in order to explain the meaning and cultural centrality of the natural and culture resources exist in these lands.

The Late Pleistocene ecology of the Great Basin region was rich in fauna and flora. Central to this supportive habitat were wet forested uplands, full grasslands, and long wetlands located along a complex network of streams feeding into medium and large lakes (Grayson 1993). American Indian people hunted, gathered, made trails, and built communities throughout this area. They engaged with this topographically interesting landscape through ceremonial activities. Large mammals, like mastodons, ranged throughout these habitats from the lowest wetlands up to 8,990 feet where the Huntington mammoth remains were found—a subalpine environment in the Late Pleistocene (Grayson 1993:165). While contemporary scholars often focus their studies on charismatic species like the mastodons, dozens of medium sized mammals have also been found, including camels, horses, ground sloths, skunks, bears, Saber-tooth cats, American lions, flat headed peccaries, muskoxen, mountain goats, pronghorn antelope and American cheetahs (Grayson 1993:159). Smaller mammals were also present. Avian species were abundant and occurred in many sizes that ranged from the largest, the incredible teratorn with a wingspan of 17 feet and the Merriam's teratorn with a wingspan of 12 feet – both related to the condors and vultures, to the smallest, humming birds (Grayson 1993:168). Other birds included flamingos, storks, shelducks, condors, vultures, hawks, eagles, caracaras, lapwings, thick-knees, jays, cowbirds, and blackbirds (Grayson 1993:167). The biodiversity of the land and air was matched by the fish species and numbers in the streams and lakes. There were at least 20 species of fish including whitefish, cisco, trout, chum, dace, shiner, sucker, and sculpin (Grayson 1993:187). The fish species traveled widely across the Great Basin through a variety of

interconnected lakes and streams. The massive Late Pleistocene Lake Bonneville was but a central portion of this hydrological network supporting fish species and by implications, great biodiversity in flora and fauna.

Grayson concluded his analysis with an ecological assessment of the late Pleistocene natural conditions in the Great Basin region (Grayson 1993:169):

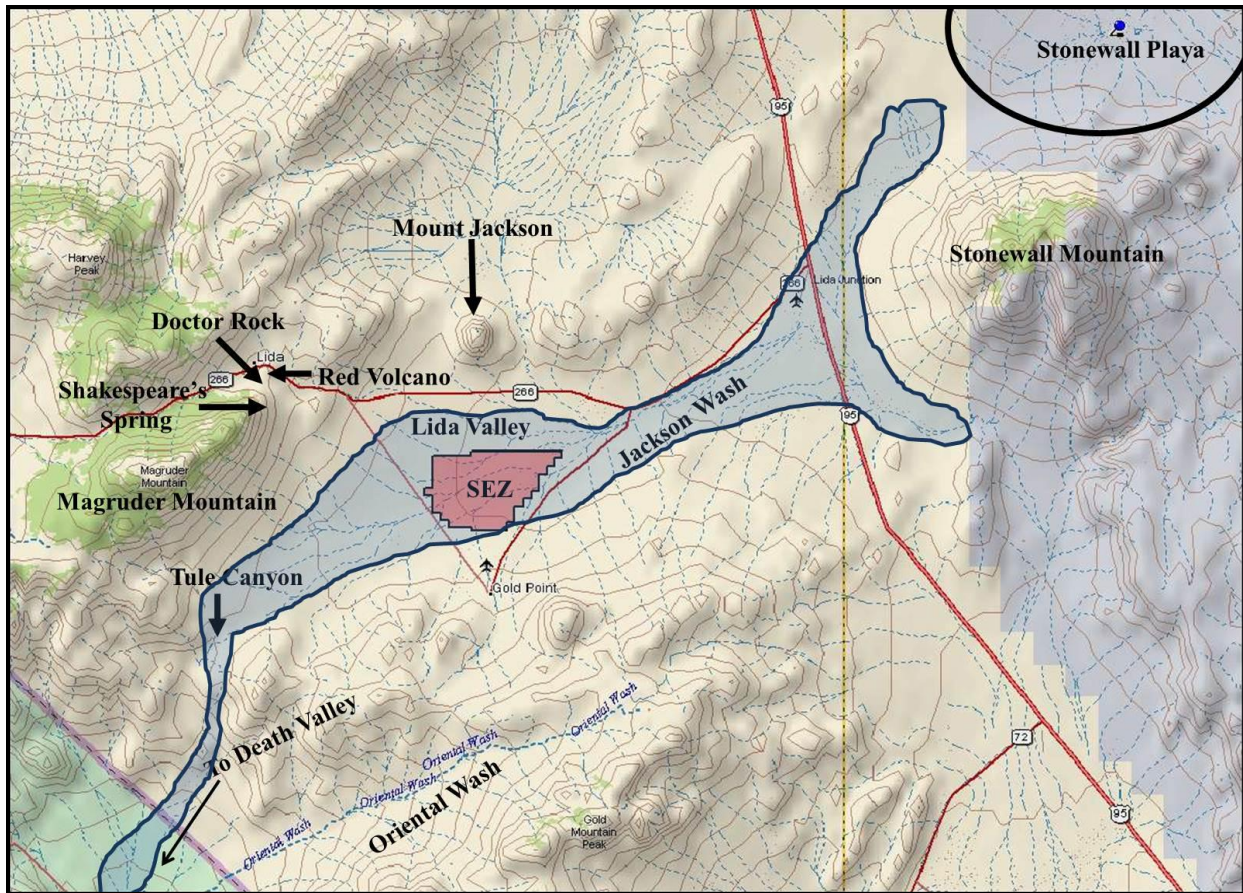
The large number of species of vultures, condors, and teratorns in the Late Pleistocene Great Basin raises a number of interesting ecological questions [...] the fact that there were so many species of these birds here suggests that the mammal fauna of the time was not only rich in species, but also rich in number of individual animals.

Naturally, the American Indian populations were also well supported by this bounty of nature.

The Pleistocene environment in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area differed greatly from what is seen today. An essential difference lies in the far greater presence of water during the wetter Pleistocene period. The Fish Lake Valley represented a predominant hydrological feature in this area. During this period, the valley was filled by the Pluvial Lake Rennie. At its peak 770,000 years ago, Lake Rennie covered an area between 400 and 500 km<sup>2</sup>, with a maximum depth of approximately 250 meters (Reheis et al. 1993). Depending on the height of the lake, Lake Rennie may have periodically connected with northern pluvial Lake Columbus in Columbus Salt Marsh. Lake Rennie is believed to have supported fish life when full, including a native subspecies of chub (Hubbs and Miller 1948).

Another central feature of the region was Lake Manly, a pluvial lake that filled Death Valley during various geological periods. Lake Manly existed between approximately 186,000 and 120,000 years ago and had a maximum depth of 600 feet and a length of 96 miles (Grayson 2011, Pavlik 2008). A shallower Lake Manly existed between approximately 35,000 and 10,000 years ago. Lake Manly and Lake Rennie were two of over 20 large freshwater Pleistocene lakes found near the Nevada-California border, many of which were connected by a network of ancient rivers (Pavlik 2008). The network of pluvial lakes was interspersed with Pleistocene wetland environments, such as the spring-fed wetland found in Stonewall Flat, northeast of the SEZ American Indian study area (Dickerson 2008). Water flowed from Stonewall Flat westward through Jackson Wash and into Lake Manly (Map 1). In concert with the warmer temperatures and higher precipitation, the presence of these abundant water features in the region created a highly productive environment.

The following Pleistocene map was developed by superimposing images of the Jackson Wash hydrological system onto topographical maps of the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area by using image-manipulation software (see Map 1). It is important to note that this map is does not present definitive boundaries of the Pleistocene hydrological system. This map is designed to contextualize geographically this hydrological system and its role in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area.



**Map 1 The Jackson Wash Hydrological System Showing the Flow into Lake Manley (Death Valley)**

Western Shoshone peoples utilized these plentiful resources and developed complex irrigated agriculture throughout their traditional homelands. In Oasis Valley and Fish Lake Valley, recent archaeological studies date irrigated agriculture back between 700 to 1000 AD (Tonopah BLM Personal Communication 2011). Although the environmental setting of the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area has changed dramatically over the geologic timescales of Western Shoshone use and inhabitation, the Western Shoshone people have thrived. Countless shifts in the plant and animal communities have been met with constant co-adaptation. Traditional ecological knowledge is continuously developed and maintained in harmony with the natural setting. Ultimately, the sustainability of the landscape is ensured through the implementation of thoughtful, active management as a part of the Western Shoshone sacred ecology.

### **Special Features**

The Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area contains numerous cultural features that contribute to Western Shoshone history and long-term continued use (see Table 1). The SEZ American Indian study area extends beyond the boundaries of the SEZ because of the existence of cultural resources in the surrounding landscape. The Timbisha Shoshone field consultations summarized here represents the cultural interests of the Western Shoshone people. This SEZ American Indian study area is culturally important due to the presence of water, plants, animals,

geologic features, and associated Indian history. The Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area is central to the lives of Western Shoshone people because they have a deeply rooted spiritual connection to the land that weaves stories and songs into the landscape, connecting all elements of the universe.

| Feature Type                    | Special Feature  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Evidence of Previous Indian Use | ➤ Trails in all directions, Doctor Rock                                |
| Geological Features             | ➤ Magruder Mountain, Mount Jackson, Stonewall Mountain, Red Volcano    |
| Source for Water                | ➤ Nearby springs, Stonewall Mountain Hydrological System               |
| Source for Plants               | ➤ Berries, spinach, seed plants, and other traditional use plants      |
| Source for Animals              | ➤ Antelope, rabbits, squirrel, deer, mountain sheep, and other animals |
| Indian History                  | ➤ Pigeon Spring Round Dance, Villages- Lida, Shakespeare’s Spring      |

**Table 1 Special Features Identified in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian Study Area**

During the ethnographic field sessions, tribal representatives identified the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area as being part of a large ceremonial landscape. Places like the Doctor Rock and the Red Volcano were recognized as being used in traditional doctoring and healing activities. Regional and world balancing ceremonies occurred at Pigeon Spring and possibly at Indian Spring. Other areas like Mount Jackson and Stonewall Mountain were identified as places visited for power acquisition (see Map 2). The SEZ American Indian study area contains the presence of volcanism which contributes to the region’s continued cultural significance to Western Shoshone people.

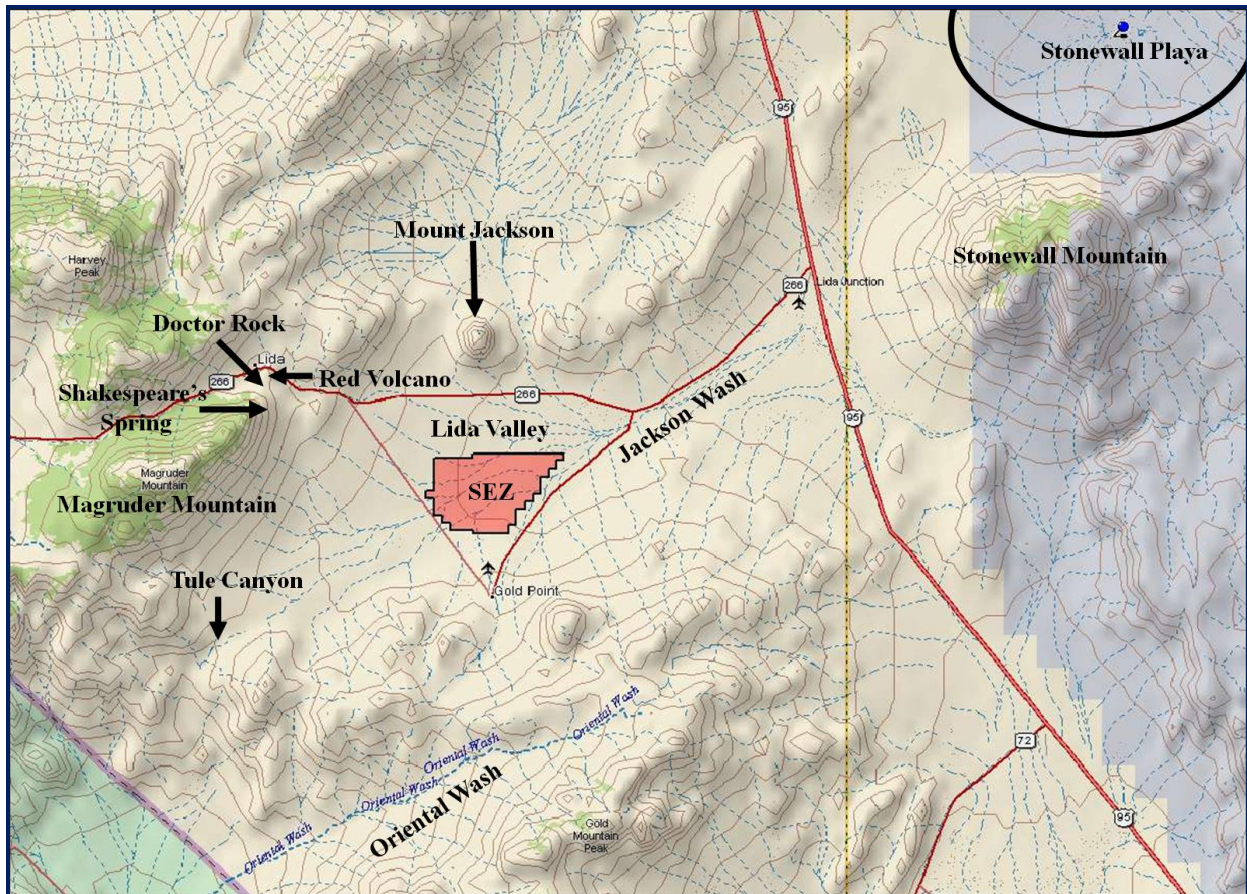


**Figure 2 UofA Ethnographer and Tribal Representatives at the Gold Point SEZ American Indian Study Area**

Western Shoshone representatives noted that water is an important feature within the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area. This hydrological system flows through the SEZ American Indian study area and ultimately into Death Valley. Stonewall Mountain, a powerful

volcano, serves as the headwaters of this hydrological system. The flow of water from this volcanic mountain links places together as *Puha*, or power, distributes across this landscape from Stonewall Mountain and into Death Valley

During multiple field visits, tribal representatives identified 21 traditional use plants and 24 traditional use animals within the SEZ American Indian study area. The presence of these plants and animals add to the study area's cultural importance because they are associated with medicine, ceremony, and Creation



Map 2 Close-Up of SEZ American Indian Study Area with Places Visited During 2010-2011 Field Sessions

Additionally, Shoshone villages were located throughout the Lida Valley, particularly near Lida Spring and along the southeastern flank of Magruder Mountain. These communities were agricultural centers that supported people who traveled into the area for ceremony such as doctoring, vision questing, and large scale balancing ceremonies. In addition to the dependence of agriculture, wild plant and animal resources were also utilized in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area.

### Evidence of Previous Indian Use

The Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area has been an area of long-term use for the Western Shoshone peoples. Their cultural ties to this landscape are confirmed by the

presence of a doctor rock, numerous ceremonial-use places, and sacred mountains. The Doctor Rock and Red Volcano, the neighboring volcanic knoll were features of particular interest to the Timbisha tribal representatives.

The Doctor Rock (Figure 3) was formed when the Red Volcano erupted and unleashed materials in the form of volcanic bombs. This event likely occurred several thousand years ago. Places like these are considered sacred and powerful locations because they are formed directly from volcanic activity. Numic-speaking peoples understand that there are moments when Puha deep inside the Earth is brought to the surface and the Earth renews itself; the Earth is reborn. Even though the Red Volcano has not erupted in recent years, the movement of magma continues underground. This movement allows Puha to follow the flow of magma and defuse to other places similarly to how above ground, Puha follows the flow of water and distributes itself across a landscape. The Doctor Rock serves as the outlet for the Puha that flows from deep within the Red Volcano to come to the surface. The flow of Puha geologically and culturally links these landscape features together.



**Figure 3 The Doctor Rock**

Western Shoshone medicine men or *puha'gants* to heal and rebalance an ill individual used the Doctor Rock. The Puha'gant would use his or her Puha and the Puha of the rock and the volcano to aid in the curing ceremonies.

Arrowhead and pottery pieces were found along the top of Mount Jackson, an area associated with vision questing and ceremonial activity. The neighboring Magruder Mountain was also identified as a ceremonial-use area because it is hydrologically connected to the Round Dance grounds at Pigeon Spring. A further discussion of the Round Dance can be found in the Indian History section that appears later in this text.

## **Geology**

The Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area contains evidence of volcanism that contributes to the cultural significance of the study area's geological features. Places that contain



the presence of volcanic activity are considered sacred and powerful locations. Western Shoshone people believe that volcanic events are moments when Puha deep inside the Earth is brought to the surface as a way for the land to renew itself or to be reborn. Volcanism is also a way for Puha to be distributed across a landscape. Above ground, Puha follows the flow of water and distributes itself across a landscape. This distribution occurs similarly below the surface, where Puha follows the flow of magma rather than water. As Puha moves through underground channels, it distributes itself and connects volcanic places over vast distances. The Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area includes volcanic features such as Mount Jackson and Mount Jackson Ridge to the north, Magruder Mountains to the west and Mount Dunfee to the southeast.

The valley basin is filled with alluvial fan deposits that have runoff from the surrounding mountains. The surface sentiment includes aeolian sands (dunes), playa deposits (salts), limestone and volcanic rhyolite outcrops. Jackson Wash cuts through the SEZ American Indian study area and drains into Lida Valley.

## Water

The Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area is located in a complex hydrological system that connects the local high volcanic mountains with the northern end of Death Valley. Tribal representatives identified trails along the Jackson Wash hydrological system that connects Death Valley to ceremonial areas in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area. These trails also connected Shoshone communities throughout the Lida Valley. Because Shoshone people believe that the flow of Puha mimics the flow of water across a landscape, understanding the hydrology associated with the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area is important to understanding Shoshone connections to this area.



**Figure 4 Mount Jackson with Jackson Wash and the SEZ in the Foreground**

Jackson Wash (Figure 4) is the predominant hydrological feature in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area. This drainage begins at the top of Stonewall Mountain, which is located approximately 20 miles to the east. Water flows from the top of this volcanic mountain into a small playa that was likely a lake during the Late Pleistocene. The drainage crosses

Highway 95 and then runs parallel to Highway 266. The drainage intersects the proposed SEZ boundaries. Once the drainage exits the study area, it flows southwest where it intersects with Tule Canyon and then travels into northern Death Valley past a unique landscape feature, Ubehebe Crater.

The Lida Valley contains numerous springs that feed into Jackson Wash. The springs provided stable water sources for the Shoshone communities in the area. The water was used for agriculture and for daily activity. Early ethnographic accounts and census data document Shoshone people living at one of the springs at the base of Magruder Mountain and at spring near the present day town of Lida. The spring at the base of Magruder Mountain is closely associated with the Shakespeares, a Western Shoshone family (Figure 5). People traveling along the region's complex trail system also used the springs.



Figure 5 Timbisha Shoshone Representative and UofA Ethnographer at Shakespeare's Spring

### Ecology – Plants and Animals

The Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area is located within the Central Basin and Range Level III ecoregion, which is a part of the Great Basin desertscrub biome. This ecoregion is internally drained and defined by arid basins, mountains, and salt flats. Located within a valley, the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area is found in a shrub/grass community, predominantly dominated by sagebrush and saltbush-greasewood communities. Within the greater Central Basin and Range ecoregion, the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area lies within the Tonopah Basin Level IV ecoregion. Sparse shadscale communities codominating with other drought tolerant shrubs like saltbush define this ecoregion. The understory is comprised mostly of warm season grasses such as Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum*) and galleta grass (*Pleuraphis jamesii*). A pervasive ecoregion surrounding the SEZ American Indian study area is the Tonopah Sagebrush Foothills Level IV, supporting other shrubs such as black sagebrush (*Artemisia nova*), Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*), and cholla (*Cylindropuntia* sp.). The

predominant ground cover in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area is Inter-Mountain Basins Mixed Salt Desert Scrub, characterized as a low, flat, shrubland with open to moderate density shrub communities.

During multiple field visits, Native American representatives identified 21 traditional use plants within the proposed project boundary. Table 2 provides readers with common, Western Shoshone, and scientific names for each plant identified.

| Common Name                              | Indian Name   | Scientific Name                |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Anderson's wolfberry                     | huupi   | <i>Lycium andersonii</i>       |
| Big Sagebrush                            | povi, pohovi  | <i>Artemisia tridentata</i>    |
| Buckbrush                                | hunavi  | <i>Purshia glandulosa</i>      |
| Bud sagebrush                            | povi, pohovi  | <i>Picrothamnus desertorum</i> |
| Creosote                                 | yatumbi   | <i>Larrea tridentata</i>       |
| Desert Indian paintbrush                 |   | <i>Castilleja angustifolia</i> |
| Desert prince's plume,<br>Indian spinach | tuhuara, tu'mara,<br>woy-boh-numb                             | <i>Stanleya pinnata</i>        |
| Fourwing saltbush                        | noo-roon-up   | <i>Atriplex canescens</i>      |
| Gold cholla, silver cholla               |   | <i>Opuntia echinocarpa</i>     |
| Hairspine pricklypear                    |   | <i>Opuntia polyacantha</i>     |
| Horsebrush                               | coo-see see-bup,<br>coo-see see-bup-e                         | <i>Tetradymia</i> sp.          |
| Indian ricegrass                         | wai   | <i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i>  |
| Indian tea                               | too-roombe, too-toom-be,<br>tutumbi                           | <i>Ephedra viridis</i>         |
| Joshua tree                              | umpu  | <i>Yucca brevifolia</i>        |
| Locoweed                                 | tim-bah-hay nut-zoo,<br>coopi-joomb, gup-wuh-ghu,<br>tok-quee | <i>Astragalus</i> sp.          |
| Nevada Indian tea                        | coo-see too-roombe, tutumbi,<br>turundi                       | <i>Ephedra nevadensis</i>      |
| Orange Lichen                            |   | <i>Caloplaca trachyphylla</i>  |
| Rattlesnake weed                         |   |                                |
| Rubber rabbitbrush                       | see-bape, su'pimba  | <i>Ericameria nauseosa</i>     |
| Shadscale                                |   | <i>Atriplex confertifolia</i>  |
| Spiny Menodora                           |   | <i>Menodora spinescens</i>     |

**Table 2 Traditional Use Plants Identified in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian Study Area**

The presence of animals in an area contributes to the overall cultural importance of the area to Indian people. In Western Shoshone culture, animals factor significantly in songs, stories, and ceremonies. Animals were also important food sources and their fur, bones, and feathers were used in construction of use items. In total, 24 animals were identified as inhabiting the SEZ American Indian study area. Some of these animals may physically live in the area or they may

be spiritually present. Table 3 provides readers with common, Western Shoshone, and scientific names for each animal identified.

| Common Name                       | Indian Name  | Scientific Name                  |
|-----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Mammals</b>                    |  |                                  |
| Badger                            | Ho'-nah, Hoo'-nah, Hoo-nah,<br>Ho'-nan                   | <i>Taxidea taxus</i>             |
| Jack Rabbit                       | Kamusi, Tavusi   | <i>Lepus</i> sp.                 |
| Chipmunks                         | Woi', Wah'-oi, Woh'-oi,<br>Wo-i'-tsi                     | <i>Tamias</i> spp.               |
| Cottontail                        | Dah-woo  | <i>Silvilagus</i> sp.            |
| Coyote                            | Ē-jap'-pah, E-jah, E'-chah,<br>It'-za'                   | <i>Canis latrans</i>             |
| Gray Fox                          |  | <i>Urocyon cinereoargenteus</i>  |
| Kangaroo Rats                     | Bi'-e, Pi'-yu  | <i>Dipodomys</i> spp.            |
| Kit Fox                           | Kuida moss-suguee  | <i>Vulpes macotis</i>            |
| Mule Deer                         | Dū'-he, Tū-hě'-yah,<br>Toó-ho'-yah                       | <i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>       |
| Pocket Mice                       |  | <i>Perognathus</i> spp.          |
| Porcupine                         | Yen", Yū'-hū, Yo'-hah,<br>Tsa'-gwit                      | <i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>        |
| White-tailed Antelope<br>Squirrel |  | <i>Ammospermophilus leucurus</i> |
| Woodrat                           | Kah'   | <i>Neotoma</i> spp.              |
| <b>Birds</b>                      |  |                                  |
| American Kestrel                  | Ku-ti'-ta  | <i>Falco sparverius</i>          |
| Burrowing Owl                     | Ku'-hu   | <i>Athene cunicular</i>          |
| Common Raven                      |  | <i>Corvus corax</i>              |
| Golden Eagle                      |  | <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>         |
| Killdeer                          | Bah-zah-wee  | <i>Charadrius vociferus</i>      |
| Great Horned Owl                  |  | <i>Bubo virginianus</i>          |
| Northern Mockingbird              |  | <i>Mimus polyglottos</i>         |
| Red-tailed Hawk                   |  | <i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>         |
| <b>Reptiles</b>                   |  |                                  |
| Desert Horned Lizard              | Mon-tah-gay  | <i>Phrynosoma platyrhinos</i>    |
| Long-nosed Leopard Lizard         | Sow'-we-vah, Sah'-we-vah                                 | <i>Gambelia wislizenii</i>       |
| Rattlesnake                       | To-to'-a, Do-gowah,<br>To'-gwah, To-qo'-ah,<br>To'-go-ah | <i>Crotalus</i> sp.              |

Table 3 Traditional Use Animals in Gold Point SEZ American Indian Study Area

One animal that drew particular interest from the cultural representatives in this SEZ American Indian study area was the Desert Horned Lizard, also commonly known as a horned toad (Figure 6). The Western Shoshone believe the horned lizard is associated with medicine and healing. They have a song that describes this relationship. The following is a discussion of that song told by Corbin Harney, a Shoshone religious leader:

*I'm singing about the Mon-tah-gay. In my lingo, it's the horned toad and how important the horned toad was for us at one time. It bleeds us and makes us healthy again, like you're sickly and have too much blood in you. It can bring your blood for you and then it can relieve that ay-be feeling you have when you bleed yourself even sometimes...that's the reason I'm singing about him. That he's over his land, he's jumping up and down. So, when you see him, he raises his head up and down. That's a horned toad...that's how important that little creature is at one time but he disappeared but he's coming back now I see. So because we should appreciate him and sing to him, it makes him happy when we sing about the little creature.*

Also, it is important to note that the horned lizard is a culturally central animal to all Numic-speaking peoples because the horned lizard features in many Creation stories



**Figure 6 Desert Horned Lizard at Shakespeare's Spring**

## **Indian History**

The Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area is also located near mountains used in vision questing and ceremony. Timbisha representatives pointed out that top of Mount Jackson contained ritually deposited items like arrow heads and pieces of pottery. These types of

materials located on high points such as Mount Jackson are associated with vision questing and ceremonial activity. Neighboring Magruder Mountain also was identified as a ceremonial area. It is the headwaters for the hydrological system that flows towards the Round Dance grounds at Pigeon Spring.

In the winter of 1890, Shoshone and Paiute people gathered at Pigeon Spring to perform a large-scale ceremonial round dance used for balancing the world. Omer Stewart recorded the name, *conavinokai*, for this special ceremony (Stewart 1941). People performed this ceremony in the hopes that they could restore balance to the world that had experienced rapid massive change during Euro-American encroachment.

Tribal representatives also noted that another spring to the east of Pigeon Spring also was used for round dance activities. The exact location was unclear during field visits, but they believed that these events occurred in or around Indian Spring, which is approximately three miles east of the dance grounds. Indian Spring is also part of the Magruder Mountain watershed.



**Figure 7** Timbisha Shoshone Representatives Examining Watercress at Pigeon Spring

A key component to ceremonial activity is the presence of a stable support community. For ceremonial participants, in and around the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, the Shoshone village of Lida served this purpose. Lida has been a well-documented place associated with Indian activity. In the 1930s, Julian Steward (1938:68-70) described the area as a hub that connected places such as Fish Lake Valley, Gold Mountain, Stonewall Valley, and Clayton Valley. Contemporary ethnographic studies link the Lida community with Tule Canyon and Pigeon Spring. The people of Lida frequently traveled the ten-mile trail between these places for economic and ceremonial purposes.

## Native American Comments

Tribal representatives from the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe visited the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area during December 2010 and April 2011 field sessions. During these visits, 33 interviews were conducted. This total includes four Native American Cultural Resources forms, four Cultural Landscape forms, and 25 personal statements from the involved tribal representatives.

The following statements are observations and personal statements made by Timbisha Shoshone Tribal Representatives (Figures 2, 7, and 8). These statements reflect the cultural significance of resources associated with the SEZ American Indian study area.

- *There are cattle here and antelope.*
- *There were Indian people who had mines here at Gold Point and they had two daughters; Myrtle and someone else. I can't remember the other person's name.*
- *Yucca trees are higher up. Those are edible too. Yeah, when they bloom, we eat something off them.*
- *There are crows here and I saw the squirrels and the rabbit up there.*
- *This is all over grazed. The berry bushes are gone. There used to be berry bushes here. There are also Quitches, little birds.*
- *I know at one time that there was a brothel that used to be there right at the junction. It was called, The Cottontail. The lady (the madam) who ran it was connected to the mayor. There were some legal matters that came along so they had problems.*
- *I don't know if Steward from Steward Spring was Indian, but you can see when we were up here that the Indians had lived here.*
- *They say that Gold Mountain in the background there, that it is a spiritual mountain. I was told to not go up there. That's what I was told. But I forget what happened to people that went up there to the mountain. Some people, even though they were told not to go, went up there anyway. There was some kind of disaster that happened up there. It has an Indian name but I can't remember what it is.*
- *That's the mountain [Gold Mountain] where Mervin Hess went hunting that time and broke his leg. My elders said, "Well that's what he gets for going up there. You're not supposed to do any hunting. You can hunt all over through here, but not that way."*
- *Tin Mountain, which is further down the length of the valley, is the mountain that you go hunting on. That's where the bighorn sheep are.*

- *There's a shelter up around Bonnie Claire kind of north where Scotty's Castle is right now, northeast I would say. Real high, hard to get to. Indians had lived there and then the mining people found that place and they went up in there. Now there's an old prospectors camp up there also.*
- *From Lida, Indian people would come over the mountain and use this valley (Lida Valley) for rabbit drives and gathering; that's what the valleys were used for, and to pick seeds, berries, and stuff like that. Also to gather things that grow up in a higher elevation.*
- *With overgrazing, they've taken over the sagebrush now it's sick. That really hurt my elders when they found out, when we said we're losing the sagebrush. Right there and even in Fish Lake Valley, you can see it. It was a habitat for the mountain birds and their eggs, their nests. When we were kids we used to go in there and look at them and we were told not to touch them or their eggs. There is high sage there. And when we did live over there, the high sage was like a shelter for us too.*
- *There was a big dispute that came through here about water. Everybody got involved. Maggie Shaw fought over her spring over in Lida. She won the case, but after that something else came up, I think it was that mining law. Ted Shaw's father, Eddie Shaw, said that they were forced to move out of there because were being abused, abusing the women. The kids also had to go to school. So then they moved to Deep Springs, where there was a school. And, like I said, [Jim Nevaris] who was my mother's first cousin, he was married to one of the Shaws and they had a daughter. Then they moved to Deep Springs so she could go to school there. She used to show me pictures of that little school, the school children there, where she went to school. I think the Shaws went to school there for a while too but then they moved.*
- *When they hunt rabbits and gather berries in the valley they had some kind of recreation going all the time, gambling or whatever.*
- *I was always told that people go out there and do the netting, to gather up all the rabbits. Then they would club them and that kind of stuff. This was mainly for the rabbit fur, so they could make rabbit-blankets.*
- *When they were hunting rabbits, if they were going to have a gathering, it would probably have been in Lida. They'd all take the rabbits up there, then take them home.*
- *Lida was a permanent camp; they'd use the same camp over and over again. But, during the winter months when the weather got too harsh for them they would drop down into the valley. They would go to these other spring sites that were lower. They'd turn around and go down into the valley. There are spring sites that are lower for winter camps, or they would go down directly into Fish Lake Valley where they have old sites too. Most of the people that came here were just like everybody else; so many families were based permanently in certain areas. Then other people would come across this area, relatives of theirs and all that, to collect resources, to hunt, or to have some kind of gatherings with their family. That happened all over.*



- *Well we had a major spring here. The family that owned it was Swiss-Italian-Indian, the Cottonwood family, but it wasn't really actually where they lived. You could see where the Indians used to live and where they used to have their other camps. That was their main camp and then from there they would go up into the other canyons to collect pine nuts or whatever they were going to gather. Down in the valley there, they had some berry bushes that they used and seeds of certain kinds of grasses. They used those. It was first an Indian settlement of one family and then the Strosies, a Swiss-Italian guy came along and he settled in with her and raised a family there.*
- *The Indians did have gardens. And everywhere they lived, they were always growing something. They did it here in Lida.*
- *I know Maggie had a garden because I've seen it. She grew corn and some stuff on the ground, all green. I guess it was watermelon, or cucumbers or something. She had a pretty big garden. There was a pretty good growing season up here, even this far north.*
- *There are deer, mountain sheep, antelope right here where we are, and cottontails.*
- *There's a migratory path through here that connects to Death Valley. It goes through Scotty's Castle and comes up through this valley. You can actually see these trails today, but I was told, "Don't ever tell anyone. Don't go there," because elders don't want anybody to go up there and mess around with the trail. You're not supposed to; you have to stay out of there. But there are some young people that know about it. Their father said that he let them know where it is because he taught them how to respect the area. There are migratory paths all over. People talk about bird life too, the migratory birds that we used, such as doves. They used doves in areas like this where they were picking seeds and berries. They are mourning doves. There are a lot of doves at springs; that's where they water. The Indians depended a lot on the quails too, valley quail and mountain quail. Then they had the squirrels, different types of squirrels depending on the location. They talk about wai [Indian ricegrass]. Now it's gone and elders blame cattle overgrazing for it.*
- *The cattle are the ones that eat the food. In Death Valley, going towards Lone Pine, you'll see a lot of Indian ricegrass there because there are no cattle in that area. But here in Nevada, there are cattle all over, and they eat up all the food.*
- *Another thing elders always talk about is the areas where the Joshua trees are growing. That area is all gone now. The miners were cutting them down and using them for wood and all that kind of stuff. They would pull them out from their natural location and put them by their homes. That was going on for quite a while. So we miss those in certain areas.*
- *My brother told me that there are Joshua trees down here. He talked about where there was a place, like this, with a trough and a pipe going to it. They saw big deer laying around close to the Joshua trees in the sun. They hunted all over these mountains, the*

*Beatty people and the Death Valley people, even some people came from Saline Valley. It was quite a ways for them but they still hunted here. If they couldn't find anything over there in Saline Valley, they would come over here. They were related to the people here; the old people were. The Hanson family from Panamint Valley, from the Indian ranch there, used to come over by horse to hunt at Tin Mountain. Then over in here there's a canyon they call Tule Canyon. One of my elders told me that's where Tule George got his name because he was always camping up there.*

- *That other trail going west of Tonopah, going into Smokey Valley; they used that route too. Tonopah is a thorny bush. They named it after the thorns on the bush.*
- *Lida was the big town up here for Indian people because of the mountains with the good pine nuts and it was sort of centralized too, for all the Shoshones. One of my cousins was born up here, in Lida, one of the Patterson bunch. Lida was first an Indian town. There was a settlement of people there; they had a name, just like the people in other areas. Like us guys they call Timbisha tsiema. But there were people here before the miners came. That's been proven by many people who have done studies. Clear around to the other side of Lida, there are old camps out there, around the spring sites. There are Indian artifacts there. Then of course, there's a house standing there when the miners came in. There are a bunch of springs at Lida. Indian people lived there forever. I've walked around there and seen pieces of where they lived.*



**Figure 8 Timbisha Shoshone Representatives and UofA Ethnographers**

During the Solar PEIS field visits, tribal representatives were interviewed with the Native American cultural resources and the cultural landscape forms. The following comments are organized by form and location.

## Gold Point SEZ American Indian Study Area – Native American Cultural Resources Interviews

The following comments were recorded during interviews with Timbisha Shoshone tribal representatives using the Native American Cultural Resources survey instrument.

When asked to describe the geography of this area or elements that stand out, Native American representatives responded:

- *The valley surrounded by the mountains stands out to me.*
- *The mountains here stand out in this area.*
- *Indian people have been here for a long time, since the beginning of time. Then there's one place in there where they actually can see Tin Mountain and almost see Stovepipe Wells on those mountains. We have a camp up there. You could almost see Stovepipe Wells from there and Tin Mountain on a clear day. In the old days, it used to be clear but I don't know about now. I haven't been up to that camp for a long time.*

When asked if Indian people would have used the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, Native American Representatives responded:

- *Yes they would have; the area would have been used for hunting, seasonal camping, ceremony/power, gathering food, and other things. The area also was used for migrating trails for people and animals. It is also nearby to a spiritual mountain – in all directions.*
- *This area would also have been used for migratory and hunting trails for people.*

When asked if the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area is part of a group of connected places, Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes it is. All the mountains and wildlife connect this place to others.*
- *Yes, this area is connected by the mountains and the animals here.*

When asked if Indian people would have used water sources within the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes, the people would have used the water in the Gold Point area.*
- *Yes, the water sources would have been used by plants, animals, trails, and birds.*

When asked how Indian people would have used water sources in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, Native American Representatives replied:

- *Water in the Gold Point area was used for drinking, medicine, ceremony, animals, food plants, birds, and other things.*
- *If there is going to be a project done here, they're going to have to the water. What I'm hearing is that this town over here gets its water from Lida Ranch.*
- *There's a spring actually up on the side of the mountain here.*

When asked to evaluate the condition of water sources in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, Native American Representatives replied:

- *The condition of water sources at the site is poor. The site is being impacted by overgrazing and lack of water.*
- *The lack of water and overuse of the valley by cows is impacting the condition of water sources here.*

When asked if Indian people would have used plants in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes, they would have. Plants here would have been used for food, medicine, ceremony, and making things.*

When asked to evaluate the condition of plants in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, Native American Representatives replied:

- *The condition of the plants here is poor. The presence of cattle and people in this area are affecting the condition of the plants.*

When asked if Indian people would have used the animals in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes they would have. The animals would have been used for food, medicine, ceremony, clothing, tools, and other things.*
- *The antelope in this area, they crossed back and forth over here, so there are some springs back up in there, along those hills. When we were doing the homeland act, they should have gone all the way up and that should have been part of our land, the spring, but they didn't. They knew about them. That's why they did it that way.*
- *I've seen pronghorn up this high and around on the other side of this hill. They water right over...it's right through here, down below this way. This goes right over on the other side of Lida – Lida's right over there and then you can go right down this way and there's where the water comes out by that spring.*

- *The abundance was great before the 1840s, but then you had Europeans with sheep that came in and they used to shoot antelope out there. My dad told me that over there by Stonewall, they just slaughtered a whole bunch of them. They just left them laying out there because they were trying to create food for the sheep. When the disease was hitting the Shoshones and the indigenous populations, there was also that disease that was spread from the sheep that was going to the pronghorn, to the bighorn, which almost knocked out 90 to 100 percent of the bighorn. If you take away that big food supply, what is it going to leave the people to eat. You had people that just went from a good life, from the 1840s, to just hardship. You had a large community with healthy people that all the sudden had nothing really to rely on for a food source. Healthy food, these big animals – my dad talks about the roundups that they did. Twice a year they rounded up the pronghorn and put them in corrals over there. There are canyons over there, natural corrals that they put them in. The population just went from – Indians and animals from the 1840s on – just started declining fast. It didn't take that long, especially when you had these big outbreaks of diseases, plus no food available.*

When asked to evaluate the condition of animals and habitat in Gold Point the SEZ American Indian study area, Native American Representatives replied:

- *The condition is poor. The lack of shrubs and the activities of cattle and humans are impacting the condition of animals and habitat in the area.*
- *The condition of the animals and habitat here is poor. The lack of bushes and the activities of cattle and humans are impacting the condition.*
- *Those animals are hard to come by now – not like it used to be. There used to be a lot of chuckwalla around Beatty. You don't see them now, hardly. There used to be some on the other side of this mountain, over in here. There used to be a lot of them, but they're not there anymore either. You know that road going over towards Scotty's Castle? Right into that valley there used to be a lot of chuckwalla. If you go to Eureka Valley and that area, you'll find them over there. That's pretty close to Fish Lake, only about twelve miles away. People moved back then; they were healthy people then.*

When asked if Indian people would have used the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area and artifacts found here, Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes, they would have. The site and artifacts here would have been used for living, hunting, gathering, camping, ceremony/power, and other things.*
- *Yes, they would have. The site and artifacts here would have been used for living, hunting, gathering, camping, ceremony/power, and other things.*

When asked to evaluate the condition of the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area and artifacts here, Native American Representatives replied:

- *The condition of the Gold Point area and artifacts are poor. The presence of cattle, power lines, and the overall overuse of the site are affecting its condition.*
- *The condition of the site and artifacts is poor. The presence of cows, humans, and general overuse is impacting the area's condition.*

When asked if Indian people would have used geological resources within the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes, they would have. The geological features in the Gold Point area would have been used for seeking knowledge and power, communicating with other Indians, ceremony, communicating with spiritual beings, teaching other Indians, marking territory, and other things.*

When asked to evaluate the condition of geological features in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, Native American Representatives replied:

- *The condition of geological features here is poor.*

When asked to evaluate the condition of the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area overall, Native American Representatives replied:

- *Overall, the condition of Gold Point area is poor.*
- *Things looking dead and not growing properly; it's because those people aren't managing it like it's supposed to. Around the late 1800s they stopped Indian people from burning – doing burns. Down in here my father told me that they used to do big burns at certain times of the year, just before everything starts growing. When you burn all that off you create food, not only for human consumption, but for the animals. The main thing was making sure that there was food for the animals because you want good strong herds. In that area down there was a big area for the pronghorn – big herds a long time ago. You don't see those herds because the food's not there, because they're not managing the area like it's supposed to be. When you go out there now and look at the area, from what people me from a long time ago, it's totally changed. My father talks about up here the grass here used to be, probably two feet high. Now you go out here, you don't see that grass and when I was a kid I remember seeing that grass in certain areas where it was two feet high. You don't see that now. But that's the impact; that's the different impacts that you're seeing. Why is the brush growing like it is; because it's just like trimming the tree outside. You know, if you want it to be full, or you want it to produce fruit, you trim it, you take care of it, you make sure it's healthy, and that's what they did with the land here.*

## The Doctor Rock and the Red Volcano

The Doctor Rock and the Red Volcano are located in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area. Tribal representatives identified this place as being culturally sensitive and important to Western Shoshone people. During discussions at the Doctor Rock, representatives said that a medicine man would bring sick people to the rock to heal them. Representatives also shared their thoughts on protecting this place.

- [Would the Doctor Rock be something that a future generation or even people sooner than that would come back to this place?] *Sometimes a spiritual person, or what you may call a shaman, is going to go to these places. They may go to a place that's already established, but then that calling may call him somewhere else. There might be a new place that he's supposed to go to, somewhere that isn't marked, that isn't talked about, but it's his calling and he's supposed to go there. Sometimes you get that calling, it comes to you in a dream or something. My grandfather's story, my father told me, when he got that calling from the bighorn. Every time that they came to him, each night with a better song, what he wanted to do and doctor and all of that. You never know where a person is supposed to go or what places are going to be sacred or spiritual. So it's really hard to say if this is the place, but if it has been in the past you want to make sure that it's protected. It was somebody's calling. We don't know if it still has power. I couldn't say that because I'm not a doctor, but somebody coming down the line, they don't know they're going to be one until either their born into it, or they get that calling somewhere along the line and they're told that they have to go to these areas.*
- *We want to protect the Doctor Rock, regardless. I don't see the need to improve this road. This road, you're going past the cemetery, and going past this, and other sites. It would be our recommendation for them to use that other road.*

## Indian History

In the early 20th century, a Western Shoshone family lived near one of the springs located in the western portion of the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area. The Timbisha tribal representatives recalled the time when Shakespeare and his family lived at the spring and they shared how they believe the land still belongs to his descendants. The following comments concern the Shakespeare family who lived in the Lida-Gold Point area:

- *I remember visiting the Shakespeare family when I was very young. I came up with my mom, who was related to the family. They had lived up there for a long time and I'm sure they had two daughters. They went to school in Steward, Nevada. The family had a house by the spring, and it collapsed. They had two houses, though, and they moved back and forth between the two. I don't know where they were getting their water, maybe from that spring. They would bring water down to this pass and sell it.*
- *Shakespeare lived in Lida. He lived down below those cottonwood trees there. We lived there too. I remember going over to Maggie Shaw's when they were wallpapering their trailer or house, whatever it was. But Shakespeare's got that place there and that's the*

*reason why I always think that land must be his and that's why they won't put anything on it.*

- *I'm trying to think of that man who had a house there, right under those cottonwoods where eventually it became the site for the store and the filling station. He lived there. And his little house used to stand there and that's the only Indian house that I ever saw really, you know, in my life. Cause by that time there was a lot of white people. But his house was still standing there.*

## **Gold Point SEZ American Indian Study Area- Landscape Interviews**

The Native American cultural landscape survey is used to document cultural connections between places, people, and resources. Timbisha Shoshone representatives were interviewed with this form during their two field sessions and their comments are in the following sections.

When asked if there were Native American Villages in relation to the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes.*

When asked if these villages were connected to villages elsewhere, and if so how, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes, they are connected to villages elsewhere in Northern and Southern Nevada, California, and Utah. They are connected through the Western Shoshone Nation.*
- *Yes. People married into different areas. Some camps were permanent and some were temporary camps that were used to gather food and medicine. These villages were also connected to sustain their way of living.*

When asked if there were seasonal Indian camps in relation to the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes.*

When asked if these camps were connected to camps elsewhere, and if so how, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes, these camps were connected by trade activities, social gatherings, food, and life itself.*
- *Yes. Camps were connected through the sharing of their ways, traditions, and healing by powerful, spiritual medicine bordering their territorial boundaries. They traveled great distances for cultural purposes.*



- *They were connected to the Paiutes too.*

When asked what Native Americans would have done in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes, they farmed, gathered plants, gambled, conducted ceremonies, and had political meetings.*
- *They farmed and gathered plants, held ceremonies and political meetings, gambled, and had spiritual and medicinal healings.*
- *They lived, they got food, they gathered – they lived their lives.*
- *They came to gather food, pine nuts, meat, and they did all kinds of things.*
- *Now farming, that category, the way I understand with my father talking to me about the animals and stuff is that's considered farming too, right? Because they did the animals just like a rancher would do cattle. They did selective, on which animals they were taking, and all of that stuff. The pronghorn they did the roundups and put them in pens and were very selective with them. The deer, the same, but they were more in the mountains but before it seems like bighorn had a bigger population than then mule deer, but now it's not that way because of the disease that was brought in by the domestic sheep. But they seem to be coming back pretty good though, in some areas. [Was it your father that was an antelope manager or your grandfather?] It was his grandfather. His grandfather was the one that tamed the bighorn, probably one of the last ones. The bighorn used to come down to where they were, their village. My dad remembers that; he remembers that ram coming in all the time, and they'd feed him and all that stuff. But there was a special ceremony when they did that with that animal and only certain people were allowed to go to those areas. [So it was your dad's dad?] It was my dad's grandfather. [But your dad had a relationship with animals too didn't he?] Yeah, he was out there hunting them. We were eating them. Things kind of changed with European contact. You couldn't really do the things that you used to do with the animals like before Europeans came in. Europeans kind of considered those animals wild but if you listen to the stories the people were right there with the animals. They were like their cattle because my dad talks about his grandmother feeding the quail with feed and all that, and they used to come right in. They'd take a couple birds here and there but they would always come around. That was the quail. Chukar, they're a new bird. They came in about the 1880s, brought in from somewhere, my dad said. So they're not indigenous, but I think they ran out the sage grouse. Those were real tame because people fed them and did things with them; they were like chickens to the Indians. But they were so easy to get, that's why they were almost exterminated too, because they were so tame. That's up here, yeah. There's a place where my dad says that they celebrate over there – there used to be a spot over there going toward White Mountain, he calls it the Black Rock area. They celebrate because the males – you can always tell the males from the females at this time – and that's when the Indians went and got the males because they didn't want to kill the females. But then they do all the dancing, and puff up and look real elegant for them. You*

*don't see them anymore, not in this area. You'll hear chukar when you're in the mountains, but you won't see sage grouse. Sometimes you'll see a mountain quail up here, once in a while, but not like it used to be. I think the cattle did a lot of damage to the area.*

When asked if there were any songs associated with the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Travel songs and ceremony songs for rain, snow, pine nuts, etc. are associated with this area.*
- *I don't know.*
- *I don't really know any songs, but I heard my dad sing songs. I don't know them personally, though. Some would be traveling, some would be ceremony, some would be for the pine nuts, and some would be for the snow, some would be for the rain; they had a song for everything. Ceremony could be like rain, snow. They did animal songs, pine nut songs for the pine nuts, all different things, and death. They did the death song, which you guys call the Ghost Dance, that's the one I was thinking of, because the way my dad says that one is they're preparing themselves for what was coming. It didn't start out like the way everybody talks about it now, like the balance and all of that. It was preparing themselves for what was coming because they had shamans that had already seen what was coming. They had seen death coming. They had seen Europeans coming. They had seen, because their animals were disappearing already. That's the way he puts it. When they do a Cry dance, that's the song they're doing, pretty much, is that they're singing for their people to go on their journey, and that's what they were doing, because people were dying so fast. You couldn't imagine a wave of disease coming in and just going through like wildfire. Plus your animals were gone, disappearing*

When asked if there were any ceremonies associated with the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes.*
- *If you're gonna cook pine nuts out there where people are gathering. Well that to me is a traditional way of giving thanks to Mother Earth or thanks to the Creator for the pine nuts and all that. So the person that's going to do the cooking or handling the food, any kind of food, would sit back and go and do something else. Go gather wood or something else like that. Not to touch the foods of any sort. Only touch the food that she is going to use for herself. And not to pass this food on to other people. It's just for her own self...They would specialize in maybe one or two certain spring areas, depending on where they're going to be doing this, to have this kind of ceremony. I call it sort of a Thanksgiving ceremony after you do your harvest and all that. And after they get through dancing and all that or their blessings or whatever you might call it, their traditional ways, they would start sorta do a good time thing like gambling and dancing together,*

*eating together. They turned it into that kind of a gathering after they go through this first part. These kinds of gatherings or ceremonies after harvest, when the time came for them just to celebrate, just to have good times, this is when their families got together and performed what they wanted to do with their children. Like if they had a daughter and they want to find a husband for their daughter, probably the neighbor next door or a neighbor somewhere had a son. How would you feel if your son would marry my daughter? They would choose mates for their offspring. That happened then.*

- *When you're doing things in the mountains, the Indian people always did their prayers, all the time. Morning, you know, first thing when they got up they talked to the sun, which they call their father and they pray to him. Then when he goes down they pray to him. They're always doing something, but then you do have those little special ceremonies. Every day is being in church, I guess you have to say, for them.*
- *This is what my dad was talking about where his dad was talking to him about was what they call the Ghost Dance. He said, "I don't know where that 'ghost' came from, how that got into the whole equation." My understanding is, when my dad and them were talking about it, Wovoka comes from up north, around the Yerington area, and he comes from a Christian background, also. That's what I heard. When he took it from here, this area, that's what I understand, he changed it too.*
- *[That flat topped mountain, when did they have a ceremony on it?] That flat rock? My dad calls it Eagle Mountain, but I'm not sure what the real name of it is. That's when the soldiers chased them up there, because the soldiers wanted to kill them and rape the women, so that's why they went to that mountain there, to get away from the soldiers. The flat top there, see how steep it is? The soldiers couldn't get up there, and the men would come across and down off that hill and go get water at night and then go back up. Then supposedly the wind was blowing and there are holes in those rocks up there and it started whistling and all of that. [That's Mount Jackson] See, then there's an eagle's nest up there, on that mountain. Then the soldiers got scared off because of that whistling and those things and then they left. My dad said that's all the soldiers were there for, to rape the women, because there was nothing going on. I don't know if they had a ceremony up there or not, I think they went up there to get away. My dad said there's a lot of stuff up there, like ground stone, and pottery, arrow heads, and all kinds of stuff up top, but it's a hike up there. I always wanted to go up there and look around. You have to go up there with a good heart, and tell them why you're going up there. Not to go mess around or anything, but just to go up there and see. He said they get feathers over there too, from the eagles. He said they could even catch those eagles, when they eat rabbits, they're so full that they can't fly. They can't get off the ground because they gorged themselves. That's when they could catch them. [Did they keep them?] They had pets. More that they had as pets was probably the [cockey] and the magpie. That's because they talked. You could get them to talk. My aunt used to have one, a [cockey] and he talked. But then one bad thing about him is that he likes all kinds of shiny stuff, so after he got a certain age he'd steal all her little goodies and go stash them away. But yeah, those one people down there by Oasis, where I live, they got all freaked out because those magpies were talking over there because the Indians taught them how to talk English too, and they just tripped*

*out, couldn't believe that those birds were talking. There are no magpies left in Fish Lake now. I haven't seen one for a long time. One came around when one of my kids was going to be born, and then I've never seen them again. There used to be a lot over there, but now you don't see them. I don't see any nests anymore, they're just gone. I think it's all the pesticides that they use on the alfalfa and stuff. It kills their food and kills them because their eating those bugs out there. There still over in Big Pine; I've seen them over there though. In Indian stories, they go back and say that all the animals used to talk. When you hear the stories, the old people talk about the stories, lizards and everybody is talking. So maybe they did talk back then, you know, then they quit talking. But the birds are the only ones still talking*

When asked if this was a Creation place of their people, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes.*
- *Yes, Death Valley, Nevada. We call it Timbisha. It's named after red ochre in the black halls. That ochre is supposed to be very powerful, recognized by other Shoshones in the surrounding areas... Between Death Valley is Saline Valley where really the creation of the Shoshone people is from there. It's a powerful valley, the Saline Valley. You don't go into Saline Valley without first being acknowledge. You have to do that even before you get into the trees. You're supposed to get in there with a proper spirit, with a proper mind and not to be thinking about bad things and all that kind of stuff.*

When asked if this they knew of any other Creation places of their people and if yes, where, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes.*
- *Yes, Saline Valley.*

When asked if there were any historical events associated with the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes, in Jackson.*
- *There was gradual encroachment into Maggie Shaw springs. Gold Point and Tule Canyon were discovered by Indian men. Legends are connected to mineral areas.*
- *[The military campaign would have been U.S. Army, maybe in the 1870s?] In the 1870s or 1880s, I don't know, when there was probably still a lot of Shoshones here. My dad told me that they went on a campaign in Death Valley one time and an old woman was there, and she told everyone to leave because she knew what they were there for; they were there to rape the women. That's what they always said. They'd rape the pretty women, and then a lot of the women killed themselves after that, after they were violated.*

*But they were just there for that. They weren't there because of something going on. It was their extermination policies to get rid of the people off the land so they could take it. They didn't come into this area for a long time because I think the Shoshone were pretty strong in those early days because there were a lot of Shoshone. But then once you have diseases, and you have diseases that are going through the animals and all of that, and everything is dying off, you have no food, you have nothing, and you're sick, then you're an easy target, then things kind of spiral, and that's probably when they started to do that Ghost Dance. They said they had seen that coming. My dad talked about the spiritual person, he went into his vision state, then he told everyone what was coming. He said, "This is coming. This disease is coming. Our people are going to die," and all this stuff. Then they said, "Ok this is what we need to do to prepare for it and how we need to prepare for it because this is coming, hard times."*

- *There was so much that they wanted when you're talking about the resources and the plant life and all the things that were there for the European people to go crazy on, things that they had never had before. When you look at it, 2/3 of the agriculture that's grown in today's world and consumed by the world today, comes from Native Americans. That's 2/3 of the world's food. That speaks volumes about what Native Americans have given to the world, but yet they demean it like Native Americans didn't have anything to offer. With tobacco they got carried away. If you do things in moderation it's probably quite alright, but when you do it in excess, then it's probably not so good. They say a little smoke is good for you. That's what the old people say, when they get to the mountains they have to let smoke fly.*
- *I was talking to one of the ladies about that rock that you guys were looking at earlier, down here below us, because you know how the elders, they talk about something, it makes it sound like it's just that one thing, like that one rock is the power, but they're not talking about just that rock. They're talking about, what I was thinking, is that whole mountain right there, that red rock, because that rock comes off that mountain. That's where that power is coming from. So it's not just that one rock that's on the side of the road, but that whole thing, maybe. It's not just confined to that one rock and around that rock, but that whole area. I was saying earlier too, my dad said that, I believe it was Ike Shaw, used to get his power up there at Black Mountain, but it wasn't just one specific spot that he got it from. [From up here you can see that it's a unique volcano.] Yeah, so that's why I kind of think that when they were talking about it, maybe it was kind of mistranslated down the line and it's not just confined to that one rock, but that central area right there, because of it standing out so differently. Sitting up here you can really see it. You can see how red it is. It's different than the rest of the landscape if you look around.*

*[We just finished a project and that same conversation came up about their volcanoes at Santa Clara. They call them, when they have a collapsed caldera like Black Mountain; they call them 'earth navels,' where the earth is reborn.] It is. Mother Earth renews itself. That's why our culture is totally different from European concepts, but the way I've heard, Europeans have the same concepts, but it got left when Christianity came in, their attachment to the Earth was just kind of wiped out because they just started killing their*

women that talked that way. I have an Irish friend and she was telling me that and she was telling me about this mountain over there in Ireland and they had some belief in that mountain because it was shaped like a woman's bosom, her breast, and they talked about it kind of the same way. And I said, "Hey, that's interesting, because it kind of goes with something that we talk about. We talk about the earth being the mother of all life because that's what we all have in common, is the earth. We all come from the earth, plants, and animals. So that's when you hear Native Americans pray, we talk about all our relations because all our relations are things that come from the earth, the plants and animals and everything, and we're related to the earth because the earth is our mother. You even hear in South America, people talk about the mother earth. You hear that a lot because that is what it is. You can't get away from that no matter what you do. So when you're out there digging for gold and destroying stuff, you're just raping your mother so to speak, which doesn't sound good when you put it that way.

- *What we do here, those things that we're talking about that are happening in other countries or in the oceans are going to have an effect on us here. What we do here, whatever our footprint is here, has an effect somewhere else or can affect how things are going. So you can't just look at this small area and say, "Well this is only going to affect this area when you have to look at the larger picture of how it's going to affect somewhere else. Solar could be a positive thing, it could be the right thing to do because of fossil fuels, it could be something that, okay if we do it right, there could be a positive on it because then you bring down the emissions and all of those things. But just looking at what we do out there, how we affect the water – you have to look at the water because we're in the desert. If we're drilling the water and pumping that water down that has an effect because those aquifers that is underneath us, what happens when we empty those things and there are empty caverns. You would think that that water is possibly holding those up. What if it gets hollow, does that change things. [Then you have sinkholes.] Yeah, how does that change things and what effect does it have on us as humans? What effect does it have on the plants? If we pump the water and send it over there, what does it do to these springs in the general area. Do the springs go dry, and then what about the animals; where do they get their water? You see it in mining communities; you just have to go just outside of Big Smoky Valley. You have that big mining thing going on over there. They're pumping that water at 12,000 gallons to 70,000 gallons a minute just so they can go down under the water table to get to the gold. You have to think about those things. What are we doing? What's the cost going to be when you come right down to it. Mining a hundred years ago, they were pulling all the gold and silver out, but what is it costing the government now to close those mine holes, and clean them up, and make them safe, and clean the water? It's costing the government more than what those guys made off getting that gold. If the water is destroyed there's no drinking water for the animals, for the people. Where are people going to get their water? They talk about sustainable and stuff like that. You have to talk 1,000 years at least, to really think about sustainability and how to protect the environment to make sure it's safe for our future generations*

When asked if there were any connections between the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area and the surrounding mountains and if so, which ones and how, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes. The area is connected to Stonewall, Kawich, and non-Indian Lida.*
- *All those mountains are very spiritual and they are connected. Tin Mountain...that's a very spiritual place...There is a name for it but I can't remember it. Each spring does have a name, a proper name, but I can't remember them. I've forgotten.*
- *I can't think of that mountain's name over there on the other side, in the Silver Peak Range. There's another mountain over there that's really important, the one I was talking about this morning where the bighorn cross over to. I can't remember that name now, Lone Mountain – I don't know, Lone Mountain or something like that.*

When asked if there were any connections between the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area and the surrounding rivers, creeks, springs and washes and if so which ones and how, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes, the study area is connected to all of the springs in and around Lida.*
- *This place is connected to Shakespeare's Spring and many other water sources.*

When asked if there were any Indian trails connected to the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes, the Indian trails went all over. They were used for seasonal travel and were very special. Lida to Kawich to Black Mountain. Ash Meadows, Death Valley, Love Pine, Smoky Valley, Tonopah, Silver Peak Range, Last Chance.*
- *They use the same trails for different seasons. Some of these trails go in different directions.*
- *They went to Death Valley for winter and to Fish Lake for summer.*

When asked if the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area was connected to any other place or event that had not been previously discussed, the Native American Representatives replied:

- *Yes. Fish Lake was used for ceremonies and gatherings. Owens Valley was also used for ceremonies and gatherings.*

## **Ethnographic Comments**

The following ethnographic comments are provided to help contextualize the major features at the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area. This section covers three major themes that were highlighted by tribal representatives during field visits.

### **Trails**

Numerous trail systems intersect the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area. These trails were used for a variety of purposes. They connected traditional communities in the Lida Valley with communities in Death Valley, Fish Lake Valley, and Oasis Valley. There were also trails in and around the SEZ that connected these communities to ceremonial places like Mount Jackson and the Doctor Rock. Trails connect places and at some level integrate landscapes by defining the physical and spiritual relationships between people, place, and the spaces that are traversed in order to move from place to place. For people like the Western Shoshone and other Numic-speaking peoples who have lived on these lands for many generations, trails and the movements along them can be understood as being both real and symbolic linkages between places and people. The act of traveling along a trail can be seen as a reenactment of the relationships between people, place, and objects.

### **The Doctor Rock and the Red Volcano**

The Doctor Rock and the Red Volcano are two key cultural features in and around the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area. Doctoring areas such as these are unique places found within lands traditionally held by Numic-speaking peoples. These are types of resources used by specially trained medicine men/women, Puha'gants. Doctoring places like this one are used for healing an individual as opposed to round dance areas, which are used in ceremonies that restore balance and heal people, place, and objects on a regional or global scale.

Doctoring rocks tend to be volcanic and come in many shapes and sizes. They range from a volcanic neck located in the middle of the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon to flat tonal rocks with offering holes located on the Nevada Test Site (NTS). The Doctor Rock is not the only doctoring rock found near a proposed SEZ American Indian study area; the Southern Paiutes and Goshutes have a Doctor Rock located in the Escalante Valley SEZ American Indian study area discussed elsewhere in this report.

### **Indian History**

Traditionally, Western Shoshone people have used the Lida Valley area since Creation. Western Shoshone people have a long, complex history with the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area, and its meaning, use, and connections to other traditional use areas. These areas have frequently been discussed in oral history interviews.



## *Western Shoshone Communities in the Lida Valley*

Prior to the development of a Western economy, the people of Lida relied upon a subsistence economy that was similar to that used by the people living in Fish Lake Valley. Plants and small game formed the most essential parts of their diet. Although large game such as antelope was hunted, it was relatively scarce in the early 20th century, and thus there was a focus on smaller animals such as rabbits and traditional seeds, greens, and roots. Pine nuts perhaps were the most important source of food throughout much of central Nevada. Pine nuts usually were available in relative abundance immediately around Lida, as well as in the vicinity of Pigeon Spring. In the event of resource scarcity at these places, the people of Lida would travel as far as Silver Peak, Grapevine, or Kawich to secure seeds, nuts, berries, roots, and game (Steward 1938:70). The families living at Stonewall Mountain, *Tumbasai'uwi*, often gathered many of their seeds from the region of Corral Springs (Steward 1938:69), and people from Lida also regularly visited the camp known as *Tsaiiyugwi* (Cow Camp or Tule Sitting) for seeds as well as *Lycium* berries.

In addition to optimizing their resource bases by using a vast territory, the people of Lida and surrounding regions actively altered their ecosystem through the use of swidden farming. This burning technique stimulated the growth of *Uyup*: (Chenopodium), *Waiyabi* (Wheat Grass), *Waciup* (unidentified seed), and *Tui* (unidentified root). Each fall, the residents of Lida would burn the brush upon Magruder Mountain (Steward 1938:70) and return to tend and harvest each plant during the appropriate season. Lida residents typically gathered their pine nut stores at places located within a ten-mile radius of their homes.

On occasion, people from the Kawich Mountains would harvest pine nuts in the vicinity of Lida, and vice versa. These settlements were separated by a distance of almost 70 miles, therefore the shared use of pine nut stands between these groups tended to be the exception rather than the rule. Lida residents typically traveled an average of 19 miles to harvest other traditional plants within their territory, including roots, seeds, and berries. In the local areas around Lida and Magruder Mountain, ranging between under a mile to four miles, local residents used a wide array of traditional grasses and roots. At more distant locations, ranging from 18 to 68 miles, other types of seeds, nuts, and berries could be acquired. Given the longer distances involved in traveling to Grapevine, Corral Springs, and the Kawich Mountains (40-68 miles), it is probable that Lida residents developed elaborate systems for monitoring the seasonal availability of resources within each region.

### *Pigeon Spring and the 1890 Round Dance Ceremony*

Between Palmetto and Sylvania is a small spring that would support a stamp mill, saloon, store, and a roadhouse. The promised post office never materialized and after little more than a decade (late 1880s to 1900), the mill was abandoned due to the closing of local mines. This place, which was called Pigeon Spring by Euro-Americans and *Tu'nava* by the Indian people, was never especially important to outsiders. Without question, it continues to be a place of central importance in Indian culture.

Julian Steward was fortunate to have found a person who remembered a great deal of information about Pigeon Spring (*Tu'nava*). This woman (MH) had resided there for much of her

life, and was never far removed after that. The demographic information Steward gathered about Tu'nava defines it as a central place:

Within the vicinity of Tu'nava MH identified 31 persons living in four settlements: Tu'nava, at Pigeon Spring, several springs at 6,200 to 6,500 feet in the mountains at the eastern end of Fish Lake Valley. This was advantageously located in the midst of pine-nut country.

In one [settlement lived] the chief, his wife from Palmetto, a son and a daughter, both of whom died before they were married, and a daughter whose husband came from *Panwihumadu*, Hot Creek, in Long Valley to Tunava. In the second, the chief's sister, her husband from Tu'nava, their daughter, her husband from Panwihumadu [Hot Creek in Long Valley] or Benton, and their three children who have subsequently married. [At] the third [settlement lived], the chief's older brother, his wife from *Sohoduhatu* [Oasis], their daughter, their son, and his Shoshoni wife from Lida Valley to Tule Canyon. [At] the fourth [settlement lived], the chief's younger brother, his Shoshoni wife from Lida Valley, their oldest daughter and her Shoshone husband from Grapevine Spring Canyon, and their three children. A second daughter, her Shoshoni husband from Lida Valley, and their two children. And a third, unmarried daughter with her child (Steward 1938:63).

Using Steward's retrospective census from MH, the community of Tu'nava can be profiled and compared with other Indian communities in Fish Lake Valley.

The 1880 US census indicated an even lower population of 30 for Fish Lake Valley. In 1900, U.S. census recorders indicated that 96 person were living in the Fish Lake Valley, with 68 persons in Fish Lake Valley Precinct and 28 persons living in the Palmetto Precinct. These data indicate a total population that again approaches that of Steward's 1872 estimates, with the Palmetto population beginning at about the same size. There are a number of ways of speculating about these population figures, but if the latter figures are accurate, they indicate a movement of families out of the region or declining populations. Such a movement would probably involve pull factors, such as whole families moving away to more distant mining camps in order to acquire work. Push factors would include the movement of Indian people out of labor camps associated with Euro-American mines or ranches. A third factor entails declining populations resulting from an increased death rate, decreased birth rate, or a combination of the two. Declining populations due to diseases cannot be ruled out; according to MH, the largest village in Fish Lake Valley (*Sohoduhatu* or Oasis Ranch) experienced a great number of deaths due to gonorrhoea (Steward 1938:64).

Considered collectively, these census figures indicate a decline in population within the Fish Lake Valley region that ranged between 50 and 73 percent between the late 1870s and 1880. While Steward (1938:62) noted that the people of Fish Lake Valley had always been mobile, such large fluctuations in the population cannot be explained through the seasonal migrations of people alone. Census figures also indicate that birthrates remained low between 1870 and 1910. The ratio of adults to children ranged from between 2:1 and 4:1, indicating that disease,

malnutrition, and/or social disruption contributed to long-term population declines. When considered in conjunction with studies conducted by Stoffle, Dobyns, and Jones (1995) on virgin soil epidemics, vast reductions in Paiute and Shoshone populations through disease become quite tenable.

During the 1890s, many Paiutes and Shoshones developed several collective responses to the ongoing disruptions that accompanied Euro-American ranching and mining. Shoshone and Paiute residents adapted to these cumulative stresses by regularly performing a special round dance at places of power. Pigeon Spring was such a place (Figure 9). This small spring is located between Palmetto and Sylvania and it is approximately 29 miles west of Lida. Hershell Knapp, a prospector and miner who had lived in a cabin in this region, identified a special round dance ground on a low hill across from Pigeon Spring. Rock peckings near the ancient petroglyphs indicate that Indian people visited Pigeon Spring for ceremonial purposes in the late 1880s, as well as in 1912 (Zedeno, Carroll, and Stoffle 2003).



**Figure 9 Western Shoshone Representatives at Pigeon Spring**

Many Indian people also attempted to adapt to these changes by securing work in the mines or on the ranches of Euro-Americans. Lingenfelter (1986:103), however, indicates that mining activities in Palmetto and nearby regions were highly sporadic. A mill opened at Pigeon Spring in 1868 was abandoned in 1869, and the revival of once defunct camps in Lida, Palmetto, Sylvania, Gold Mountain, Tule Canyon, and Tecopa between the 1880s and 1890 equally were short lived. Consequently, Paiutes and Shoshones working at these operations alternately were denied regular employment or cash remuneration for their labor (Zanjani 1994). Yet due to changes in their traditional resource bases, they were dependent nonetheless upon the Euro-American economy.

In the winter of 1890-1891, a large, world-balancing round dance also took place near the town of Independence, California (Zanjani 1988:54). In response to this activity, local Euro-American ranchers and miners allegedly increased their surveillance and prepared themselves for physical confrontations (Zanjani 1988:54-55). According to Zanjani (1988:57), this culminated in the workers' revolt. While the chain of causality is not fully known, it is significant that Euro-Americans responded to the ceremony's social solidarity and increased organization with alarm, resulting in preparations for physical violence. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that news of the workers' wage revolt was kept surprisingly quiet in comparison with the more heavily reported fact that just across the Nevada-California border, large round dance ceremonies involving as many as 200-300 Indians were occurring. This uneven reporting suggests an effort on the part of Euro-Americans to quiet a movement of Indian people that was beginning to employ a more directly confrontational approach to Euro-American economic domination.

### **Potential SEZ Impacts-Tribal Recommendations**

During the December 2010 and April 2011 field visits, tribal representatives expressed concern over the current environmental and cultural conditions of the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area. During interviews, they provided management recommendations for Native American resources and for potential solar energy development.

#### **Solar Recommendations**

- Tribal representatives believe that solar energy development in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area will adversely impact the identified special features (see Table 1).
- Tribal representatives state they want to be involved in a co-management relationship with the Bureau of Land Management in traditionally manage the cultural and natural resources in the Gold Point SEZ and the SEZ American Indian study area.
- Tribal representatives stipulate that the cultural resources in the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area are important to understanding their past, their present, and their future. They stipulate that these resources will always be culturally important to Indian people.
- Tribal representatives believe that the culturally significant places mentioned in the above text should be considered for tribal declarations as Sacred Sites (Executive Order 13007) and nominations as Traditional Cultural Properties (Bulletin 38) to the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Bureau of Land Management Recommendations**

The consulting tribe believes that the Gold Point SEZ American Indian study area should be managed as an integrated spiritual cultural landscape. To accomplish this goal, Timbisha Shoshone tribal representatives should be brought together with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to develop an integrated cultural landscape management plan.

- Tribal representatives believe that the culturally significant places mentioned in the above text should be considered for tribal declarations as Sacred Sites (Executive Order 13007) and nominations as Traditional Cultural Properties (Bulletin 38) to the National Register of Historic Places.
  
- The consulting tribes desire to be formally contacted on a government to government basis whenever projects or proposed land management actions occur on and/or near the following topographic areas:
  - Ceremonial Complex – Doctor Rock and Red Volcano
  - Magruder Mountain
  - Stonewall Mountain
  - Mount Jackson
  - Pigeon Springs
  - Shakespeare’s Spring
  - Lida, Nevada