



**HERITAGE
RESEARCH**
ASSOCIATES, INC.

ARCHAEOLOGY
AND HISTORY

August 30, 2023

RESPONSE TO VILLAGE TESTIMONY

Prepared by Kathryn Toepel

Testimony submitted by the Cottrell CPO and Patricia Fiedler suggest that as a result of the proximity of Johnson Creek, the filtration facility may be a Native American village site and that additional archaeological investigations should be done to determine whether an archaeological settlement, in fact, exists in this area.

The term "village" implies substantial occupation in the form of houses and other features such as hearths and firepits which would typically be indicated by the presence of fire-cracked rock and as well as an abundance of artifacts and other materials that would be the by-products of living activities. No such rock or other artifactual materials were observed during the archaeological survey, nor was fire-cracked rock or the remnants of fire pits or other living features mentioned in the neighbors' accounts of cultural materials reportedly found on or near the property. Native American villages were routinely located along rivers and streams where water and other concentrated food resources (such as salmon) were available for the inhabitants.

Despite being near the headwaters of Johnson Creek, no water sources are present in the project area. The term "headwaters" is somewhat misleading in this situation as it does not refer to a ready source of water such as a spring. Instead, runoff from the proposed site and the surrounding uplands filters down to feed the intermittent stream channel of Johnson Creek some distance below the proposed site.

The types of artifacts in the collections of neighboring landowners (e.g., projectile points and bifaces) are characteristic of short-term activities, namely hunting, and very likely reflect transient use by people passing through the area.

As detailed in our earlier report, the archaeological survey, carried out under favorable conditions for seeing the ground surface, produced no evidence of the presence of Native Americans in the project area. Assessment of claims by neighboring landowners did not support the idea that the artifacts in the collections were actually found in the project area rather than somewhere on the neighboring properties, some of which provide much better access to

water than the proposed site. The claims that numerous artifacts were found in the project area many decades ago are contradicted by an absence of evidence today.

As previously discussed, a program of archaeological monitoring has been recommended, to include close observation of ground exposures by archaeologists during the initial ground clearing activities when construction commences. Artifacts were previously collected in the project vicinity when the ground was churned by plowing and tilling of the soil for agricultural purposes. Further finds of artifacts, with possible discovery of precontact sites (if present), will likely require ground disturbance on a similar scale, as carried out during earth-moving associated with construction.