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The Complexities of Labor: A History of San Diego Indians 1770 - 1920

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The Complexities of Labor:
A History of San Diego Indians, 1770 - 1920

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Julia Logan Bourbois

August 2016

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Acknowledgments

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Shapefiles of the boundaries of the California Ranchos
provided utilized herein (Figure 6) were created by Tracey
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Dedication

I could never have completed this journey without the unconditional love and support of my family. My sons William and James have grown into amazing young men over the course of this endeavor. They have proven remarkably tolerant when this task monopolized my attention. Most importantly, the extension of gratitude to my husband and best friend Robert is insufficient. He has been my sounding board, my stalwart supporter when faith in myself was lacking, and a willing victim of early editions of the dissertation. His patience and humor in this endeavor has been truly extraordinary.
This dissertation examines the conditions under which Native peoples adopted new forms of labor, including wage labor, principally ranch and farm labor that was not precisely waged, but was a new form of exchange from older indigenous practices. I argue that while Native labor existed prior to colonization, the institutions of colonialism prompted the gradual adoption of wage labor in family economies and networks of reciprocity within the indigenous communities of Western San Diego. While scholars have noted Native engagement in labor opportunities as a means navigating the pressures of colonization elsewhere in California, few have considered native labor in Southern California beyond their exploitation and victimization in urban spaces. Equally neglected by scholars have been San Diego Indians and their critical role in the economic development of the region.
Scholars’ grasp of Luiseno and Kumeyaay past is therefore incomplete. My work aims to fill this important gap while at the same time providing a comparative case study for Native labor and economic adaptation among Native populations across California.
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Preface

This dissertation traces the economic and labor trajectory of Luiseno and Kumeyaay people of Western San Diego. I argue that while Native labor existed before colonization, it was the institutions of colonialism that prompted the gradual adoption of wage labor in family economies and networks of reciprocity within the indigenous community. This dissertation, however, neither extols the dignity of labor nor concentrates exclusively on in the victimization of Native workers. Additionally, as it bypasses much cultural, religious, and political developments of San Diego, it must not be considered a history of San Diego County either. Furthermore, this dissertation addresses labor as the interface between different cultural groups and is not a tribal history. Rather, it is a history of native people’s incorporation into foreign-imposed institutions and socio-economic constructions. These laborers became a class instrumental in the economic trajectory of a vast region with baring upon the economic
lives of Western San Diego Indians and the local
environment.
Introduction

“The Complexities of Labor: A History of San Diego Indians, 1770 – 1939,” examines the forms and trajectory of Indian labor in western San Diego County from traditional subsistence and trade activities to wage labor as the dominant means of economic support. Therein, this dissertation examines the conditions under which Native peoples adopted new forms of labor, including wage labor, principally ranch and farm labor that was not precisely waged, but which was a new form of exchange from older indigenous practices. Particular attention was given to how and under what terms San Diego Indians adapted to new technologies and spatial and economic changes. I argue that San Diego Indians’ adaptation to new technologies, to horsemanship, and to livestock husbandry not only fundamentally altered their relationship with the land, but also initiated sweeping changes to conceptions of “traditional” rancheria life and subsistence practices, as well as initiating Indian males into wage labor relationships. Further, I argue that Indian laborers responded to new social, political, and technological developments not because Catholic missionary friars coerced
them into doing so, but because these adaptations promoted their own social and economic priorities. Wage labor not only supplemented subsistence strategies but also supported their resistance to forms of exploitation - for instance, furtively reconstituting family rancherías in urban contexts by offering census takers ambiguous information about households and collectively resisting the allotment of reservation lands. Wage labor also enabled bands to maintain kinship ties and traditional movement across the landscape. This analysis both conflicts with and builds upon analyzes of preceding scholarship.

Until recently, researchers of the histories of California and the Southwest, such as John Kessell and Herbert E. Bolton, concentrated on the interactions of leading figures of Spanish missionaries and Mexican settlers. Therein, historians represented Indians as being passive participants in the functioning of political and economic institutions. Recent publications, however, are increasingly acknowledging that Indians held important roles both in and against the economic trajectory of successive institutions of colonization in California. These latter publications include Stephen W. Silliman, Lost

The first step toward this goal is to differentiate between Indian labor practices before European contact and wage labor thereafter. Silliman defines labor as “the social and material relations surrounding any activities that are designed to produce, distribute, or manipulate material items for personal use or for anyone else.”¹ As such collecting, hunting, fishing, trading, and basket and olla making were forms of Native labor. Such traditional labor practices did not disappear with the arrival of Europeans
and new forms of economic engagement. Silliman’s *Lost Laborers* effectively demonstrates, and is present in the archeological assemblages in Western San Diego, that the incorporation of European material culture, as well as foreign-imposed forms of wage labor, did not eliminate traditional labor practices. Rather wage labor was often incorporated into the family economy as an additional means of economic support. Silliman wrote,

> Although colonial labor schedules and burdens may require particular activities or may prevent individuals from enacting desired or pre-contact cultural practices, the labor regime, and its implements also provide opportunities for Native individuals to maintain social continuity or to build and express new practices.\(^2\)

Nonetheless, as Silliman observed, “[Wage]labor constituted one of the primary and most influential interpersonal and intercultural relations in pluralistic colonial communities.”\(^3\)

In San Diego, colonial economic institutions at times coerced Indians into labor activities, while at others Native people found wage labor prospects and capitalized on them to advance their own economic priorities. This adaptation is evident in the introduction and adaptation of
European horses and livestock among San Diego Indians. The introduction of horsemanship to the Indian communities in western San Diego both perpetuated and expedited traditional subsistence strategies such as hunting and prompted new economic strategies including raiding. Horsemanship also facilitated the incorporation of wage labor trades into Native family economies. By examining how Indians adjusted to the imposed work regimes and incorporated wage labor into family economies and the networks of reciprocity that sustained them, the focus of this dissertation remains upon the labor activities of the Indians rather than on the successive institutions of colonization under which economic adaptation developed.

Within a particular region such as California, the means by which Friars managed each mission and the particular economic programs they introduced shaped Missionary-Indian relations. Therefore, it is problematic to characterize the entirety of the California Missions system. Missions that concentrated on labor-intensive agriculture, such as Mission San Gabriel, developed different economic ties with neighboring Native populations than those that emphasized stock raising, as at Mission San Luis Rey and Mission San
Diego de Ayala. Owing to the environmental limitations of Western San Diego, the introduction of livestock incorporated Indians into ranching and herding enterprises as well as secondary occupations. Additionally, as the open-range pasturing typified stock raising practices in San Diego, Indian vaqueros and herdsmen had considerable latitude within the Missions’ extensive land claims that stretched from the western slopes of the Peninsular Range to the Pacific coast. With the division of Missions lands following secularization in the 1830s, Indian vaqueros and herdsmen emerged as desirable laborers as land claims transitioned from mission-ownership to privately-owned ranchos. This analysis conflicts with assertions of Robert Glass Cleland, who, in *The Cattle on a Thousand Hills* wrote that secularization “scattered the partly civilized neophytes like sheep without a shepherd.” 4 It also conflicts with those of Andrew Rolle, who, in *California: A History*, wrote: “the Indians stood apathetically by as deeply confused, helpless witnesses.” 5 Both presuppose a lack of agency among Indians, and neither explains the labor activities Indians engaged in after secularization.
Though private land grants were issued in San Diego as early as 1821, post-secularization land grants - or as George H. Phillips in *Vineyards and Vaqueros: Indian Labor and the Economic Expansion of Southern California, 1771 – 1877*, termed them, “true land grants” - were valuable and extensive lands divided among the elite Californios.\(^6\) Californio-owned ranches were significant economic institutions in San Diego before and after statehood, one that deserves greater academic attention, particularly for the unique mutual economic dependencies between owners and Indian wage laborers. Legal disputes and economic uncertainty plagued the ranchos, yet they were nonetheless societies based on the work of Indian wage laborers. However, American observers of the 1830s and 1840s were reluctant to acknowledge the vital economic role of Indian laborers. Though assessing the laborers at Rancho Cañon de Santa Ana, Brackett described typical daily labor of Indians on the Mexican ranchos:

“[t]hey could learn or have already learned to ride, to help in herding, corralling and branding cattle, and in killing and skinning them; and the Indian women and children could wash and cook and do the simple work of servants in the house.”\(^7\)
As an economic institution, the ranchos appropriated and developed upon the precedents of the Missions, but with important distinctions. As Phillips accurately asserts, "Indians on the ranchos had options, and the economic well-being of a particular rancho often hinged on what its workers chose to do or not to do." Rancho owners were less likely to rely on overt coercion to extract labor. Additionally, ranchos operated within a competitive market, which necessitated effective labor relations between the owner and the laborers. Native decisions in joining or leaving ranchos for other wage labor work affected the rancho economy.

Often, Native wage laborers molded their lives to the economic necessities of ranching. Some of the workers risked their lives defending the ranchos against Indian stock raiders, an aspect of rancho life that has largely escaped the historical consideration. Raiders typically sought horses, mules, or cattle. The loss of horses affected the management of livestock. Additionally, pursuing stock raiders was a labor-intensive activity. On a few notable occasions, particularly at ranches along the Mexican border, within the historical territory of the
southern Kumeyaay, owners abandoned their ranchos due to repeated and economically damaging raids.

After 1850, Mexicans were also on the political margins of San Diego. During the protracted and costly investigation of the Land Act of 1851, most ranchos were lost or ownership transferred to Anglo-American relatives through marriage. It is probable that the struggles and tough choices faced by their new political marginalization have rendered the post-1850 period of interest to some Hispanists. However, consistent with ethnicity in Latin culture, the delineation between Spanish-speaking San Diego Indians, Mexican Indians, and Hispanic laborers is often vague in the historical literature. Antonio Ríos-Bustamante wrote about Los Angeles, “The ethnicity of the pobladores reflected the dynamic reality of ethnic intermixture which was resulting in the formation of a new ethnicity.” His observation is equally applicable to the population of San Diego wherein Indian women often married Mexico-born Latinos and immigrant Europeans. The Federal Census of 1910 hints at the long-standing ethnic “intermixture” present in San Diego wherein Census takers identified both Native and Hispanic populations in the
Township of San Diego as “OT” or “other.” In both the inland and the urban centers of the San Diego, factors including intermarriage, bilingualism, and a lower population density contributed to an amicable relationship. Nonetheless, historians have not examined fully the intricate racial and cultural intermixtures that influenced economic development in colonial Alta California. The Hispanic-Indian interactions in San Diego remain an intriguing area for further investigation in Southern California.

Historical analysis of Indians in California labor has benefitted from significant shifts in the study of California cultures. Anthropologists and historical archeologists have broadened the scope of their investigations and have helped to make the material culture of Indians increasingly visible. The publications of anthropologist and ethnohistorian Florence Connolly Shipek (1918 – 2003) continue to shape and influence the historical literature about San Diego Indians. Among her most influential publications are *Pushed to the Rocks: Southern California Indian Land Tenure, 1796 – 1986* (1992).

In *Pushed to the Rocks*, the discussion of labor is secondary to issues of Indian space and place in the shifting territorialities prompted by the actions and inactivity of the Office of Indian Affairs and, more broadly, American political hegemony. Shipek argues, in part, against the concepts that all North American Indian groups shared the same systems of land use and that “traditional” Indian use left the land in a state of natural wilderness. Herein, traditional Native labor entwines with land usage and usufruct rights.

The publication focuses principally on the thorny issues of allotment and trust of Indian land so effectively that ethnohistorians hold the titular phrase as shorthand for discourses on the systematic dispossession of Indian lands in California. Shipek provides valuable insights into the struggles of maintaining Indian space but renders little direct consideration about how Indian utilized the land.

The story of Delfina Cuero, however, exemplifies the experiences of many Southern California Indians who were
marginalized by expanding Anglo-American settlement and opted not to enroll at the reservations in western San Diego County. As presented by Shipek, Cuero’s accounts provide significant insights into the economic lives of San Diego Indians who remained vigorously independent and endeavored to maintain elements of traditional spaces and practices, including Kumeyaay relationships with the environment and subsistence resources, through their economic agency and nuanced relationships with Anglo-American employers.

Anthropologists Alice Littlefield and Martha C. Knack, in *Native Americans and Wage Labor* (1996), found that both anthropologists and historians have neglected Native agency in wage labor participation. Knack and Littlefield write:

> Studies of North American Indian economic life had largely ignored the participation of indigenous people in wage labor, even though for over a century such participation has often been essential for the survival of Native individuals and communities. 11

Knack and Littlefield offer two principal theories for the neglect of Native wage labor in academia: 1) a historiography that has focused too narrowly on Federal Indian policy, and 2) a long-standing fascination for
authentic “nativeness” in Indian labor that subsumed other considerations of Native labor. Their critique remains a significant pivot in Native American labor studies, fostering new considerations of this aspect of Native economic life.

Stephen W. Silliman, in *Lost Laborers in Colonial California: Native Americans and the Archaeology of Rancho Petaluma* (2004), drawing from material assemblages, offers a compelling picture of Indian laborers as ranch hands on Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo’s Rancho Petaluma. Hundreds of Northern California tribal members, including Southern Patwin, Coastal Miwok, Southern Pomo and Wappo were laborers at Rancho Petaluma between 1835 and 1849. Utilizing local archives, historical archeology, and remnant material culture from assemblages on the rancho, Silliman concludes that laborers lived in two economic worlds and creatively forged a series of identities depending on the situation and the available resources. Similarly, Kent Lightfoot, in *Indians, Missionaries, and Merchants*, examines California’s mission system in Northern California in juxtaposition to neighboring Russian settlements and mercantilism. Lightfoot examines the
methods of relocation, social hierarchy, and labor to illuminate the Native perspective of wage labor. Though the institutions of colonization were present, and the development of those interactions differ regionally, these analyzes suggest a common ability among Native societies in California to incorporate new wage labor practices from the European and Anglo-American colonizing institutions.

Silliman and Lightfoot’s historical analyzes complement that of George Harwood Phillips, a leading historian in Southern California Indian studies, whose interpretation in *Vineyards & Vaqueros: Indian Labor and the Economic Expansion of Southern California, 1771 - 1877* focused principally on the trade and industry of Indians in Los Angeles County.

Phillip’s analysis of Indian economic development in *Vineyards & Vaqueros*, centers on the institutions that shaped the labor history of southern California. Phillips argues that as the historiography of Indian-Spanish relations has centered on Native victimization by colonial institutions, their economic contributions have remained unacknowledged. Phillips contends, “If Indian are perceived first as workers and then as victims, their
economic importance becomes more apparent and appreciated.” Similar to Silliman and Lightfoot’s interpretations, Native agency is central to Phillips’ analysis of Indian labor, particularly the Mexican-era ranchos wherein Native wage labor was vital to the function of these large estates. Furthermore, though the institutions of colonization are present throughout California, Phillips notes that Southern California follows a different trajectory from its northern counterpart. Certainly, some dissimilarity is attributable to significant differences in climate, topography, and population density. However, in light of the analyzes of Silliman and Lightfoot, Phillips’ assertion that, unlike their Northern counterparts, Southern California provided Southern California Indians the opportunity to retain autonomy and culture rings flat. Though Phillips’ analysis is insightful and an important element in the historical literature of Southern California Indians, it misses an opportunity to delve into how Indians integrated wage labor into family economies and traditional subsistence practices.
Influenced by Silliman, Lightfoot, Knack and Littlefield, and Shipek, it is into the niche of western San Diego County, that the historical analysis herein aims to contribute. It is argued herein that Native families gradually incorporated wage labor into traditional subsistence patterns and became reliant upon wage labor due to climatic variations and increased pressure from Anglo-American settlers. It is also argued that this incorporation of wage labor was initiated by ranching and horsemanship introduced by Spanish missionaries. These developments not only resulted in ecological change that affected traditional subsistence rounds but also served as the point of entry into the labor economy for many Luiseño and northern Kumeyaay people. Lastly, I argue that San Diego Indians incorporated wage labor into their families’ economies because it advanced their own economic goals and priorities.

Consequently, chapter 1 begins with an overview of traditional Native economies of the Luiseño and northern Kumeyaay and then addresses the role of the Spanish Missions in establishing ranching and the incorporation of Indian men as herders and vaqueros. Chapter 2 examines how
Indian vaqueros transitioned from being under the purview of the Missions to that of the elite Californios, as well as the secondary forms of ranch labor afforded by the presence of American capitalists. In chapter 3, the pressures of increased post-Civil War Anglo-American homesteading are examined as they affected Indian vaqueros, as well as traditional native rancherías. The 19th century closes in chapter 4 wherein conceptions of "Indian space," as defined by the Federal government through the reservations, is challenged by the fluid mobility of Indians between different social and economic spaces. Chapter 5 illustrates the increasingly modern world of San Diego, wherein the divergence between the inland regions and the township of San Diego is increasingly apparent. This divergence reflects differences in the wage labor employment of urban and inland Indian laborers. Though ranching and farming remained dominant economic activities for inland San Diego Indians, the urban center of San Diego offers economic stability owing to the growing waterfront, available housing, and a diverse labor sector.

Over the course of the economic developments discussed herein, the Luiseño and Kumeyaay proved vigorous in
remaining within their ancestral territories and remarkably flexible in navigating economic opportunities to facilitate independent economic self-reliance in a variety of forms. Despite the passage of approximately 150 years, Indian laborers maintained deep cultural and social ties with their environment and with each other, yet incorporated new technologies and opportunities that facilitated their own economic objectives. This plasticity renders the labor history of the Luiseño and Kumeyaay not one of declension but rather of tough choices made in difficult situations with remarkable continuity to their past and present.
2 Silliman, “Theoretical Perspectives,” 379-384
3 Silliman, “Theoretical Perspectives,” 379-384
8 Philips, *Vineyards and Vaqueros*, 26
12 Philips, *Vineyards and Vaqueros*, 19-20
Chapter 1: 1770 - 1835

"Families scattered along the stream in small rude huts"

Western San Diego County is an approximate 8,600 square kilometer swath of territory topographically defined by the Peninsular Range and the California coast. (Figure 1) This coastal space is the ancestral territory of two principal indigenous culture groups, the Kumeyaay and the Luiseño. The traditional territory of the Kumeyaay, formerly referred to as Tipai-Ipai and Diegueño in the historical literature, extended from the Agua Hedionada Creek to northern Baja and inland toward the Colorado River. The territory of the Luiseño spanned from approximately Aliso Creek or San Diego Creek, to Agua Hedionada Creek and inland through the Peninsula Range.¹ Despite successive waves of European and Anglo-American immigration, the Kumeyaay and the Luiseño have remained within their traditional territories. Historical analyses often overlook or under-represent their strong resiliency. This exclusion is readily apparent when examining the labor history of the Luiseño and Kumeyaay and the ways that they incorporated new opportunities, foreign goods, and wage labor into their economies.
The language of the Kumeyaay, linguistically referred to as “Diegueño,” is classified in the Yuman language family, Hokan stock. It is part of a family of languages spoken in Baja California, northern Sonora, and western Arizona.² Being Hokan speakers, the Kumeyaay likely originated in the western Arizona/northern Sonora Desert area where other Hokan groups reside.³ It is probable that the Kumeyaay are related to the Hohokam peoples and possibly the Hakataya culture, identified archeologically in the southeastern part of California.⁴

Linguists distinguish the coastal Kumeyaay dialect from other Yuman speakers, including those west of the Colorado River with whom the Kumeyaay were frequent trading partners. There are also linguistic differences between the two principal dialects of Diegueño: northern Kumeyaay (Ipai) and their southern counterparts (Tipai). The north-south distribution between the sub-dialects reflects differing procurement patterns among the Kumeyaay, differences in local environments, and resource availabilities for each group.⁵ Kumeyaay spoke the Ipai dialect throughout central present-day San Diego County, of which Mesa Grande, Santa Ysabel, Inaja, San Felipe, and San
Pasqual are representative communities. In the present-day Imperial Valley, toward the Colorado River, and in Baja California, as well as in communities closer to the International border such as Jamul, Campo, Manzanita, and Cuyapaipe, the Tipai dialect is dominant.

Both Diegueño-dialect speaking groups currently self-identify as Kumeyaay.

The word kumeyaa’y loosely means “the steep ones, those from the cliffs,” presumably a reference to the rugged and imposing Peninsular Range, and appears in the ethnohistorical literature in many cognates. The Kumeyaay as an ethnic group is inclusive of the Diegueño divisions formerly called Northern (or Northwestern), Coastal, and the northern parts of Western and Mountain Diegueño, which fall within the modern boundaries of San Diego County.

However, the terms Ipai (northern people) and Tipai (southern people) appear frequently in ethnohistorical literature, as does the reference “Diegueño,” which originated with Junipero Serra in 1769. Having established Mission San Diego de Alcala, Junipero Serra referred to the nearby indigenous populations as 'Dieguino' in a letter thereby establishing a reference that dominated in Spanish,
Mexican, and Anglo-American official records, memoirs, and newspapers until the end of the 19th century.\textsuperscript{10} Serra’s observation and terminology endured, distinguishing the Kumeyaay from other indigenous culture groups in southwestern California, such as their northern neighbors the Shoshone-speaking Luiseño. Although used extensively during the latter half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} and the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, as a means of distinguishing the Kumeyaay from other “Mission Indians,” “Diegueño” has dropped from favor for its connotations with Mission San Diego.\textsuperscript{11} Both “Kumeyaay” and “Diegueño” suggests a degree of sweeping cultural and social homogeneity. The Kumeyaay are, however, traditionally autonomous, semi-nomadic bands of over 30 patrilineal-patrilocal clans with significant trading relationships throughout Southern California and portions of the Southwest.

Although no comprehensive list of villages exists for the Kumeyaay, anthropologist Henry Henshaw estimated in 1879 that not fewer 60 villages existed before contact.\textsuperscript{12} Additionally, anthropologists agree on an estimated Kumeyaay population of 10,000 individuals at the time of contact based upon anthropological assemblages.\textsuperscript{13}
Settlement size appears to have varied throughout the Kumeyaay region, though larger settlements aggregated along the coast. Anthropological evidence suggests that larger settlements could comprise 200 people of 8 to 10 families.\textsuperscript{14} Other anthropologists estimate that some villages may have contained several hundred people.\textsuperscript{15} However, Kumeyaay kin groups were loosely organized, and quickly fused or fissured depending on environmental circumstances.

The local environment holds a significant and recurring role in the historical trajectory of San Diego Indians. From the Pacific, a coastal region encompasses western Kumeyaay territory, which is inclusive of coastal, riparian, chaparral, and mountainous ecologies. Inland from this coastal strip is the Peninsular Range, an uplifted granitic fault block that harbors varied local environments separated by ever-increasing elevation. Broad, flat valleys, narrow canyons, rocky hills, and flats cut the western foothills of the Peninsular Range.\textsuperscript{16} The Peninsular Range, which in turn bifurcates both San Diego County and native territories, as a significant environmental boundary. The Range separates the temperate coastal region from the extremely arid conditions to the
east and contributed to the development of subsistence strategies and trade between coastal and inland Kumeyaay bands. Subsistence strategies including seasonal rounds, movements between locations as dictated by seasonally available resources and extensive trade developed as a result of this natural boundary, which divided the coastal and interior peoples.\footnote{17}

Prior to European contact, the earliest forms of labor among the Luiseño and Kumeyaay centered on trade and subsistence strategies. Individual and communal property ownership among the Kumeyaay centered on subsistence resources. As a mode of labor, villages claimed ownership of specific hunting, collecting, and fishing areas in diverse ecological zones. Typically, these villages were located in valley bottoms, along streams, or along coastal strands near mountain ranges.\footnote{18}

Except some instances of casual agriculture, the Kumeyaay lived on semi-nomadic subsistence rotations determined by seasonally available wild plants, small game and, along the coast, fish and other littoral resources, as well as trade. Although having arid or sub-arid climates with occasional winter rains and summer droughts, local environments
provided various wild plants for food and raw materials.\textsuperscript{19} Throughout Kumeyaay territory, there existed significant regional ecological variations that fostered localized trade. Southern and inland Kumeyaay bands in Southern San Diego County and Mexico had more rabbits, birds, opuntias, yuccas, agave, and other xerophytic plants than their coastal counterparts did.\textsuperscript{20} Coastal Kumeyaay relied upon beach and marsh plants, as well as inland grasses and salvias.\textsuperscript{21} Coastal bands also utilized fish and other littoral sources, taken with bows, nets, hooks, and other fishing devices – indicating that fishing was a significant traditional labor activity. Coastal Kumeyaay subsistence strategies entailed the exploitation of at least six types of fish including California sheepshead (\textit{Semicossyphus pulcher}), cartilaginous fishes, and other bony fishes common to kelp forests and rocky reefs.\textsuperscript{22} The inclusion of marine invertebrates indicates the exploitation of species from non-rocky tide flats as well as rocky shores, particularly Scallops (\textit{Argopecten aequisulcatus}) and mollusks (\textit{Chione ssp}).\textsuperscript{23} The availability of marine and terrestrial resources likely contributed to the development of larger Indian bands along the coastal terraces, as well as labor specialization and trade.\textsuperscript{24}
Littoral use by the coastal Kumeyaay, however, extended beyond immediate consumption toward an elaborate and enduring localized economy, centered on the trade of coastal resources. Though inter-coastal trade is less well-known, localized trade among coastal Kumeyaay groups is exhibited at SDI-5017, part of the ethnohistorically recorded Kumeyaay village of Rinconada de Jamó. SDI-5017 reflects the quantity and diversity of coastal species common to the kelp beds and offshore areas. Sheepshead was the most prevalent species of the 220 bones recovered. However, recovered bones also derived from fish normally found outside the immediate environment, including the bones of species from kelp beds and open water. These finds suggest an extensive trade of coastal resources between bands along the coast during the Late Prehistoric era.\textsuperscript{25} Rays, sharks, and other elasmobranchs common to bay or estuary environments were also present in the assemblages at Rinconada (SDI-5017).\textsuperscript{26}

The pattern of fish exploitation at Rinconada appears to have similarities with that at SDI-5931, a Late Prehistoric site on the east side of the San Diego Bay in the strand-protected area. Therein, the assemblage included of bones
of elasmobranchs that inhabit bay, estuary, and mudflat environments. Additionally, a sizeable portion of the assemblage consists of fish derived from kelp beds or rocky shore areas. This distribution of coastal resources also suggests localized trade between coastal bands with kelp-adjacent settlements, such as that at Ballast Point at San Diego Bay - a site that included some bone gorges and composite hook barbs or shanks located in proximity to the kelp beds outside the bay.

As a form of labor, fishing not only served as a subsistence strategy and means of accessing trade networks, but also supported the accumulation of personal wealth. Access to preferred material goods from littoral sources reinforced the marked social stratification that existed among the pre-contact Kumeyaay. The Kwaaypaay (El capitán), religious officials, and shamans had more power than other members of local society, and may have fostered the demand for durable representations of wealth. These included shells utilized as money, shell beads, feather-decorated basket hats, and other items indicating wealth and status. Though the Kumeyaay owned subsistence resources communally, they prioritized private property.
The Kumeyaay interred personal belongings, particularly indicators of material wealth such as beads, with the deceased. The desire for material forms of wealth served to promote interregional economic interactions among Kumeyaay elites, fostered trade between regional bands, social stratification, and labor specialization.

Beyond exchanges for material wealth, the Kumeyaay traded extensively with each other, expanding their diets through the reciprocal exchange of ecologically diverse resources. Coastal Kumeyaay traded salt, dried seafood, dried greens, and abalone shells, for acorns, agave, mesquite beans, and gourds from desert-dwelling Kumeyaay.

During dry periods, when resources were relatively scarce, groups could fissure into smaller units that spread across the landscape to occupy favorable environments or to join family members in areas with better subsistence opportunities. The social plasticity and localization of economy held deep and lasting sway in later patterns of labor among the Kumeyaay.

Family economies and networks of trade enabled Southern California societies to manage the varying availability of
subsistence resources and variable climatic conditions. However, widespread regional droughts were persistent challenges for San Diego Indians. Intertribal trading networks, based on widespread trade relationships throughout the Southwest, at times channeled small refugee groups to areas with improved water resources during periods of drought. This strategy maximized the number of people who could survive during a food shortage resulting from a prolonged drought. Such strategies were necessary as San Diego Indians relied on these practices as the local environment vacillated between drought and flood conditions. Local Kumeyaay dispersal was a pre-contact strategy and adaptation to the arid and semi-arid environment of the region.

The Spanish coined the designation Luiseño for coastal bands in proximity to Mission San Luís Rey de Francia, founded in 1798 by Father Fermín Francisco de Lasuén. For the Spanish friars, the term differentiated this culture group from their southern counterparts, the Diegueño or Kumeyaay, and those in proximity to Mission San Juan Capistrano. However, despite their proximity, there are significant differences between the Kumeyaay and the
Luiseño that influenced cultural and individual responses to historical developments.

The Luiseño language (along with Cupeño, Cahuilla, and Gabrielino) belongs to the Cupan subdivision within the large Northern Uto-Aztecan family of languages.\(^3^7\) (Figure 2) Uto-Aztecan comprises over 30 languages found almost entirely in the Western United States and the Aztec languages of Mexico. Consequently, it comprises widely dispersed culture groups including the Comanche, Eastern Shoshone, Hopi, Pima-Papago and coastal Luiseño. Like the Kumeyaay, the Luiseño held an extensive swath of Southern California with a varied territory divided by the Peninsular Range. Along the coast, Luiseño territory extended from the Aliso Creek to the Agua Hedionda Creek to the south. The boundary extended eastward to Santiago Peak, then across to the eastern side of the Elsinore Fault Valley, then southward to the eastern side of Palomar Mountain, around the southern slope of San Jose del Valle.\(^3^8\) As such, the Luiseño shared boundaries, as well as linguistic and cultural traditions, with the Cahuilla, Cupeño, and Gabrielino.\(^3^9\)
Figure 2 Southern California Cultures
Traditional Luiseño territory includes varied ecological zones: littoral zones, sandy beaches, shallow inlets, marshes, coastal chaparral, the drainages of the San Luís Rey and Santa Margarita Rivers, lush interior grassy valleys, extensive oak groves, and the foothills and mountains of Peninsular Range. Occupancies clustered around fresh water sources and seasonally available freshwater drainages. This diverse environment provided abundant and variable subsistence resources and contrasted with the arid and semi-arid territory of the inland Kumeyaay. Principal game found at Luiseño occupancy sites reflects the diversity of their territory, as well as the differences in food resources between inland and coastal Luiseño bands. The dominant game animals included deer, rabbit, jackrabbit, woodrat, mice and ground squirrels, antelope, valley and mountain quail, doves, and ducks – indicating that hunting and trapping were significant labor activities. Luiseño also caught trout and other fish in mountain streams. However, among Coastal Luiseño bands marine foods were also a significant subsistence resource – indicating that fishing was a important labor activity among coastal groups. These included sea mammals, fish, crustaceans, and mollusks, especially abalone. A 1963
study illustrated the extensive littoral use among the coastal Luiseño. According to the material assemblages, bands received as much as 50-60% of their food resources from fish and marine animals. Coastal bands utilized fishing equipment similar to their Kumeyaay counterparts, relying on lightweight balsa canoes for near-shore fishing. Seines, basketry fish traps, dip nets, hooks of bone or abalone (Haliotis) shell as well. However, unlike the Kumeyaay who relied on seasonal subsistence rounds and localized economies of trade, the diversity of local subsistence resources in Luiseño territory contributed to and supported sedentary and autonomous villages.

Like the Kumeyaay, the geographic or subsistence resources identified each Luiseño village; other sites may have been associated with sacred beings. An individual, a family, the chief, or the group owned each resource location collectively, which promoted reciprocity within the village. Trails, campsites, preferred hunting locations, and quarry sites the Luiseño owned communally though the village chief supervised specific areas for hunting and gathering.
The Luiseño divided into easterners (mountain-oriented peoples) and westerners (ocean-oriented peoples), reflecting significant differences in their labor, adaption to local environments, and resource-based territorialization. The archeological evidence of coastal sites, although less often considered, supports this conception of Luiseño territorialization and differentiation between bands.

A major coastal Luiseño habitation site, SDI-5313 C&D (SDM-W-143/146), known as “Rising Glen,” demonstrates resource-based territorialization and Luiseño labor adaptation to the coastal ecological setting. (Figure 3) Rising Glen was the center of an expansive Luiseño coastal occupation, from at least 2200 years ago through the founding of the Missions. A large site, Rising Glen was located on a ridge 1.6 km south of Buena Vista Lagoon, 2.5 km north of Agua Hedionda Lagoon and 2.9 km inland from the coast. Within Luiseño territory, the site is located near satellite settlements, possibly forming the protohistoric village of Palamai. It is probable that Portola noted the village of Palamai during his 1769 expedition while camped at Buena Vista Creek.
A variety of bones found in the material assemblage reflects a diet that included jackrabbit, cottontail, and brush rabbit; deer were also present. However, the remains of a robust utilization of coastal subsistence resources at Rising Glen give evidence of Luiseño adaptation to the coastal environment. Material from SDI-5213 C&D (SDM-W-143/146) includes both shell and bone fragments, including locally available terrestrial mammals. Recovered shells materials represent the utilization of more than 20 taxa at Rising Glen. The species most abundantly represented were mollusks (*Chione*), species of scallops (*Aequipecten aequisulcatus*), small seawater clams (*Donax gouldii*), and oysters (*Ostrea sp*). Shell and shell fragments were found along with bone and bone fragments of both littoral and terrestrial fauna, reflecting an extremely diverse subsistence diet. Additionally, species from kelp beds and open ocean species, including herrings, leopard sharks, and shovelnose guitarfish, as well as marine mammals such as pinniped, cetacean (porpoise-size and gray whale-size), and sea otter are also represented. These materials indicate that Luiseño both fished and collected coastal resources, possibly as two independent forms of labor. Cetacean, are
also represented in the assemblage of the related site of Ora-190.

Located on the southwestern edge of the San Joaquin Hills, overlooking the present-day city of Corona del Mar, Ora-190 is about 1.7 km from the ocean and approximately 3.3 km from Newport Bay. (Figure 3) A freshwater stream that flowed about 135 meters away from the site supported the occupation of Ora-190.\(^{57}\) Smaller than Rising Glen, Ora-190 covered an estimated 3000 square meters, and was contiguous with site Ora-189. Artifact assemblages and radiocarbon dates indicate that the Luiseño occupied Ora-190 during the Late Prehistoric period.\(^{58}\) Therein, subsistence assemblages indicate that at Ora-190, Luiseño bands encountered beached sea mammals while gathering shellfish.\(^{59}\) This form of hunting accounts for the presence of bone fragments from sea mammals in assemblages without the necessary tools for large sea mammal hunting.\(^{60}\) This conclusion is seemingly applicable to SDI-5213 C&D (SDM-W-143/146) as well and may indicate a more widespread practice among coastal groups of incorporating marine mammals into coastal subsistence strategies before and at the time of Spanish colonization and missionization.
Like the Kumeyaay, subsistence strategies and tool assemblages among coastal Luiseño differed significantly from their inland counterparts. These differences reflect local adaptations to different environments. Materials at SDI-5213 C&D (SDM-W-143/146) and Ora-190 show less reliance on hunting kits and knives in comparison to their inland counterparts. Additionally, artifacts from SDI-5213 C&D (SDM-W-143/146) and Ora-190 indicate a greater reliance on the gathering of plant resources at coastal sites, with the exception of acorns. It is uncertain how acorn collection fits into the coastal pattern. It is probable that inland Luiseño bands accessed collecting tracts on the coast. However, it is unclear whether coastal bands claimed collecting territory in inland regions where oaks grew. Such differences indicate degrees of environment-based labor specialization among coastal and inland Luiseño bands. Whereas the Kumeyaay compensated for the limits of their environment by promoting semi-nomadic subsistence rounds and extensive trade, Luiseño relied on resource-based territorialization and reciprocities between extended family members for economic support. These qualities would define characteristics of their family economies well into the era of American hegemony.
Subsistence-based territorialization dominated Luiseño labor activities and promoted family reciprocities as Luiseño villages were patrilocal, and politically and economically autonomous from neighboring groups. In the extended family economy, areas of economic responsibility were typically, though not rigidly, gendered. Men accomplished the labor of hunting most game, as well as making political decisions and handling most ceremonial affairs. Women collected and processed most plant resources and provided the family with the necessary dietary necessities, crucial to subsistence strategies. Marriage was key to meeting existing subsistence needs and advancing economic goals. Through marriage, Luiseño bands not only hoped to guarantee future generations, but also ensured territorial, ecological, and consequently economic expansion. As such, marriages were highly prioritized. The parents of children arranged marriages, sometimes at infancy, while divorce was discouraged. Additionally, as a means of localized economic and territorial development, it was important that potential spouses were not closely related. As an instrument of ecology and economics, the role of women in marriage was a crucial element in the family economy and networks of reciprocity, and linking
complementary ecological niches through marriage-based alliances. Auspicious marriages allied principal lineages and complementary ecologies. It is probable that marriage practices changed in response to the developing territorial and economic demands of the Spanish missions. However, this does not inherently nullify the social and economic significance of marriage in the historical and economic trajectory of the Luiseño. Subsistence-based territorialization, autonomous economies, the role of marriage in territorial and economic expansion, and reciprocal alliances are practices characteristic of the Luiseño economy and held profound and enduring influence in later patterns of labor and networks of reciprocity among the Luiseño.

In addition to subsistence hunting and gathering, the Luiseño and Kumeyaay engaged extensively in trade with other native groups. Three significant trails linked the coastal Kumeyaay economically with local as well as more distant eastern cultures such as the Yuman and western culture groups such as the Chumash. (Figure 4) Tom Lucas (Kwaaymi), a present-day culture bearer, described the Yuma Trail as generally running in an east-west direction from
southern San Diego to Yuma, paralleling the modern international border. Another is the Fages Trail, a circuitous route named for Pedro Fages after a 1782 campaign against Yumans.
The Fages Trail branched from the Yuma Trail to the east of the Peninsular Range and terminated at the northern end of San Diego Bay. A third trail, the Xakwinimis Trail, also described in the ethnography of the eastern Kumeyaay by Tom Lucas, transversed directly from Southern San Diego County to the southern edge of the Salton Sea (Lake Cahuilla). Tom Lucas states that the Xakwinimis Trail connected the Yuma Trail to the extensive Maricopa Trail, and that the Xakwinimis Trail was an important communication corridor between the Cuyamaca Mountains and Mason Valley. The Maricopa Trail originated in Santa Barbara and continued diagonally across Southern California to the Colorado River, connecting the Chumash to most San Diego Culture groups.

These trails enabled an extensive and dynamic interregional trade of shells as well as subsistence resources, indicating the importance of trading as a form of labor among Southern California culture groups. Materials from a Late Prehistoric site, SDI-12809, located 10 kilometers inland in the Otay River Valley along the Yuman Trail show inland Kumeyaay bands trading and consuming coastal resources. At SDI-12809, the bones of aquatic resources
were present, for which coastal Kumeyaay bands received valuable subsistence resources indicative of inland regions. Remains of littoral sources included California sheepshead, Pacific mackerel, barracuda, and surfperch.\textsuperscript{72} Indicative of coastal habitation sites, bones at SDI-12809 demonstrate that trade occurred between coastal and inland bands. These subsistence resources, available in San Diego Bay to experienced fishermen, were traded for goods available in inland regions but rare in coastal communities, supporting the west-to-east movement of goods. Extensive trading networks and subsistence strategies brought the northern Kumeyaay into contact with the Cupeño, the Cahuilla, and, most immediately, the Luiseño to the north. Subsistence practices contributed to the fluidity of cultural boundaries between the Kumeyaay, the Luiseño, and their neighbors.\textsuperscript{73}

Tribal conceptions of long-distance trading networks in California demonstrate a strong east-west orientation in the movement of goods. Tom Lucas’ insights support the assertions of James Moriarity in “The Environmental Variations of the Yuman Culture Area of Southern California,” who suggests an ecological rationale for the
east-west trading pattern, noting that the resource variability tended more east/west than north/south. Morarity wrote, “Under such conditions, important trading will develop between people having contrasting products and an available surplus of them.”

The Kumeyaay economy of coastal resources brought them into a network of regional trade, including the Kumeyaay and neighboring Cahuilla and Luiseño, as well as distant trading partners such as the Mohave, Yuma, and Shoshone. The Kumeyaay exchanged eagle feathers with the Cocopa for salt. They also secured sources of vegetal foods and eagle feathers with the Kamia (Eastern Kumeyaay) and maintained a steady source of gourd seeds by trading acorns with the Mohave and Yuma. SDI-106 and SDI-901 were meeting points in the general west-to-east trade route between the Kumeyaay and culture groups to the north and northwest, including the Chumash in Santa Barbara County.

Kumeyaay and Luiseño continued their long-established labor and economic strategies into the late pre-contact and early years of Spanish settlement, though this is under-appreciated in historical analysis. Spanish explorer Sebastián Vizcáino (1548 - 1627) in describing a Kumeyaay
ranchería, an Indian settlement of one or more villages, wrote, “The Indians came peaceably and took us to their rancherías where they were gathering their crops and where they had made their paresos of seeds like flax. They had pots in which they cooked their food, and the women dressed in skins of animals.”77 Capitan Vicente Vila, in his account in his account of the Portolá expedition of 1769-1770, estimated “[t]he Indians inhabiting [a coastal] village to the number of thirty-five or forty families scattered along the stream in small rude huts, were very friendly and gentle, abounding in various odoriferous plants, wild grapes, and game.”78 Frey Juan Crespí’s vivid description of coastal Kumeyaay before widespread contact with European cultures describes not only littoral and subsistence practices and trade, but social stratification and material wealth as well. Crespí wrote,

“Men, women, and children, they all of them were very much painted in red, black, yellow, and white, all of the men being naked, wearing only feather headdresses, the women decently covered by bunched strings in front and either a sea otter or a sea lion hide in the back. Some of the men carried the usual bow and arrows, others war clubs, still others very long fish gigs, these last being very sharp in the point, which is made of bone or shell, well-made fishing nets
of all colors that they wear tied at their waists...”  

Crespí’s descriptions of the hunting, gathering, and fishing populace living in the coastal landscapes correlate with the archeological records of the region prior to European contact. His descriptions of shells, feathers, and animal pelts reflect Kumeyaay networks of exchange of valuable littoral resources between coastal groups, particularly with those with access to kelp beds and indicates a regional economy of coastal resources.

Spanish friars were aware of the Kumeyaay who fished in and along the Bay. Franciscan priest Francisco Palóu (1723–1789) remarked, “The beach abounds in large sardines, starfish, other species of fish, and mussels. All these heathen are fishermen, and they go far to sea in rafts made of tule.” Palóu’s observations indicate that fishing and gathering along the shore were forms of Native labor that continued contemporaneously to Spanish settlement and missionization efforts. However, since tribal subsistence labor did not directly influence Spanish colonizing institutions, the friars ignored or failed to perceive the family economies and broader trade networks this activity supported.
The cycles of drought and precipitation, which had long
callenged the Luiseño and Kumeyaay, emerged as significant
obstacles to the economic success of the Missions in
Southern California. As during the pre-contact era, the
division of bands in response to environmental stressors
was an enduring practice and was observed by early Mission
fathers. “Only the sick, elderly, and very young remained
in the villages,” observed Fr. Lasuén, while able-bodied
persons scattered across their territory to maximize
subsistence opportunities.\(^{81}\) The Missions of Southern
California struggled to produce an agricultural surplus
that would entice local Indians to settle nearby. In 1770,
San Diego experienced a significant drought, which
continued through 1772 and deeply affected the economic
development of the Missions. Zephyrin Engelhardt (1851–
1934; priest and clerical historian of the Franciscan
Order) wrote, “Early in 1772, the deplorable conditions
threatened the very abandonment of the undertaking inasmuch
as it was a sheer impossibility to continue the work much
longer.”\(^{82}\) He added, “Such a state of affairs rendered the
pagan Indians only more reluctant to accept the white man’s
Religion which, they argued, provided no better than their
own for bodily needs.”\(^{83}\)
In 1786, San Diego experienced copious rainfall. However, Mission Fathers recorded the years from 1787 through 1795 as being exceptionally dry, damaging crops and well as indigenous plants.\textsuperscript{84} Under independent oversight, the policy at San Luis Rey Mission and Mission San Diego was to maintain traditional Luiseño settlement patterns rather than to foster a permanent, sedentary Indian population that would be difficult to support. The local priest, Father Peyri, visited villages to hold masses, to perform marriages, and to supervise casual agricultural activities; but traditional labor and economic methods remained the primary subsistence mode.\textsuperscript{85}

The aridity of the region prevented the local environment from supporting typical Mission agriculture programs. Fresh water was available from small aquifers formed by underground freshwater streams, however, Spanish efforts at irrigating crops through water canals were unsuccessful as these water sources were reliant on precipitation. Dependent on limited water resources, the Mission did not support any larger agriculture enterprises than that which the local environment could support. Palóu wrote, “As this mission lacks water for irrigating the extensive and
fertile land which it possesses, the inmates must suffer
want, unless the crops turn out well.” Such conditions
dramatically limited both the agricultural potential of the
Mission and fostered a distinctly decentralized settlement
pattern by Spanish colonists. Without food surpluses,
friars at Mission San Diego were unable to break the semi-
nomadic lifestyle of the Kumeyaay and had difficulty
enticing Native populations to the Mission. As a result,
livestock, namely cattle, horses and sheep, became the
primary focus of economic activities of the San Diego
Missions.

Spanish introduction of open-range livestock into San Diego
developed upon, and was consistent with, their other
colonial settlement practices conducted in other locations
in the Southwest. In 1773, Mission San Diego had forty
heads of cattle, twenty-nine horses, seventy-four sheep,
and other livestock. By 1775, these quantities had
increased noticeably. Fr. Serra, in his Informe dated
February 5, 1775, wrote, “There are fifty-four heads of
cattle, large and small, one hundred and four head of
sheep; sixty-one goats; twenty-two riding and pack mules;
nine tame horses; fifteen mares; eleven colts and fillies;
two male and one female mule; and twenty-seven pigs, large and small.” For San Diego Indians, the effects of this introduction of livestock were ecological, as well as social and cultural, affecting labor and traditional subsistence strategies.

Open-range ranching often conflicted with the traditional subsistence practices of San Diego Indians. Traditional subsistence patterns conflicted with the western ethic that stressed man’s dominance over nature. Consequently, Spanish grazing practices resulted in the destruction of many traditional Native food sources. Thorny xerophytic plants, such as California Barrel Cactus (Ferocactus cylindraceus var. cylindraceus), and invasive non-native species, including Black Mustard (Brassica nigra), and quickly replaced these native plants.

The introduction of livestock led to more severe impacts to western river ecosystems including water diversion and contamination. Herds of European draft and grazing animals slowly consumed or broke down the plants that supported the banks of local rivers and streams. As the rivers dried up, problems arising from the imposition of Spanish livestock on to the delicate ecology of Southwestern California were
soon readily apparent. Herds and seasonal rains combined to cause erosion. Gully-erosion occurred where grazing animals had eaten away indigenous vegetation and their sharp hooves compressed the soils, hindering future plant germination. Along these well-worn trails of compacted soil, seasonal rains flowed along the paths the herds created, eroding the topsoils that had lost their protective vegetation. Storm runoff eventually carved deep gullies, or arroyos (steep-sided watercourses with a nearly flat floor) that ran full in heavy rain but exposed parched, cracked earth in dry weather. The arroyos carried water away rapidly, rather than allowing it to soak into the soil, and thus lowered local water tables. Additionally, cattle and horse populations rarely declined from season to season and tended to remain in the same location. European grazing animals rearranged the local ecological mosaic, especially in the arid and ecologically fragile environments. Non-selective grazers in large herds overtaxed native flora and caused considerable disruption to the environment. In southern San Diego County and elsewhere in the Southwest, local environments diminished and, in some places, experienced desertification. Beyond the mission compound, the introduced European livestock
negatively affected the capacity of southwestern streams and rivers to support human and animal life. The presence of European livestock negatively affected traditional subsistence resources and on occasion brought Native populations in conflict with the Spanish and their imported livestock. When coastal Kumeyaay attacked Mission San Diego in 1775, in addition to burning the buildings, they also targeted livestock. Fr. Vicente Fuster wrote, “[O]ur enemies fired arrows at all the livestock both large and small and at the horses. They had not even overlooked the hogs.”

The introduction of horses also profoundly affected Indian labor strategies. Horses facilitated the hunting of medium-sized game, traditionally the labor of men and expedited travel along tradition trade networks. As vaqueros, horsemanship gave a select number of men specialized knowledge to promote subsistence strategies and traditionally gendered labor practices, as well as an opportunity to participate actively in the Spanish economy.

The horse in Southern California initiated the movement of Indians into Spanish and Mexican labor occupations. Missions relied on a few converted Indians whom they
trained in horsemanship. However, unable to entice large numbers of Indians to the Missions, the Spanish sent neophyte families from Lower California to provide labor and to teach converted local Indians the primary and secondary labors of the Missions.

“Inasmuch as this mission already has some convert Indians doing work, I assigned to it only one of the six neophyte families that had come from Lower California, in order that the woman might teach these female Indians how to spin and weave the wool which was already being gained from the sheep that the mission possessed,” wrote Fr. Palóu in his Noticias.91

By the end of 1780, Fathers Lasuén and Figuer estimated that 671 Indians “belonged” to Mission San Diego, but resided on mission grounds on a temporary basis.92 Indians were engaged in Mission labor activities, principally primary and secondary trades related to the Mission’s livestock herds.

The Mission economy quickly became dependent on burgeoning herds of open-range cattle. Friars relied upon Indian vaqueros to maintain their cattle industry. Though cattle initially served as draft animals for the Spanish friars, they were soon an easy means for missionaries to make money: selling beef, tallow, and hides for leather.
Grazing animals such as horses and cattle proved tolerant of the aridity and heat of Southern California, and rapidly spread across western San Diego. Herds prospered and soon numbered in the thousands. In his letter to Fr. Serra dated May 10, 1783, Fr Lasuén commented upon the growing need for pasturage: “This year we have seen that it is necessary to take the cattle away from the Mission in order to raise grain and fruit there. Hence the cattle had to be removed to the Valle de San Luis, where the horses were kept.” Mission herds, owned by Mission San Luis Rye and Mission San Diego soon consisted of approximately 14,000 head of cattle, 1,500 horses, and 32,000 sheep.
Figure 5 Lands utilized by Mission San Diego
Mission-owned livestock grazed on extensive land grants near existing Native rancherías. Such proximity brought increased numbers of Native peoples into primary and secondary occupations of Mission ranching. By 1794, the Indians population consisted of 862 individuals, of whom only one-half or fewer lived near the Missions, and of these a significant portion of the men cared for the livestock, or other occupations such as shoemaking, tailoring, and mechanical arts. Additionally, Mission herds were in closer proximity to inland groups, some of whom developed as mounted raiders of livestock. Such work was dangerous and underappreciated by Mission friars. Engelhardt wrote:

“The flocks had to be guarded against wild beasts that not infrequently played havoc with the cattle and especially with the sheep. Other enemies were the savages who drove in the regions east of the mission...and were often aided by deserters from the mission.”

To meet increased labor demands, horsemanship became a skill taught to younger males beyond the control of the Missions. As the pastures were distant, in widely separate valleys including the Valle de San José, and as livestock was the predominant form of mission industry, the Missions
engaged many male Indians as herders and vaqueros of the animals.\textsuperscript{97} The growing presence of Indian horsemen, however, concerned military officials. Fearing the expansion of Indian raiders in California, in August 1787, Governor Fages wrote to Fr Lasuén forbidding Indians to use horses. However, Fr Lasuén was resistant of Fages’ interference in Mission affairs and replied,

“No one is more concerned or more interested than the missionaries that the Indians should continue in his native ignorance of horsemanship. But Your Lordship is well aware of the cattle and horses, which with the King’s pleasure, every one of the missions possesses, and that horsemen are needed to look after them. And these have to be Indians, for there are no others.”\textsuperscript{98}

Government administrators and Mission officials would continue to disagree about Indian horsemen. The Spanish government considered mounted Indians a looming threat. Governor Pablo Vincente de Solá (1761 – 1826) reminded Father President Vicente Francisco de Sarria about the royal laws and regulations regarding the use and accessibility of horses to Indians.\textsuperscript{99} In a circular, Sarria instructed the missionaries to comply with the governor’s orders that the Missions keep a list of vaqueros who managed cattle and horses, and friars were to arrest
Indians found illegally mounted. However, this did not eliminate the potential for “rogue vaqueros” to become able, mounted raiders, particularly in the inland regions of Southern California over which the Missions had negligible influence. Indian men from inland culture groups became masterful horse and cattle thieves; the punishment for which was severe.  

“In September 1816, Governor Solá directed Comandante Ruiz of San Diego to apply to some Indians, who had stolen horses, a novena of twenty-five lashes... a day for nine days, then to put them in chains, and to engage them in labor at the presidio for six years,” wrote Engelhardt.  

For the Missions, Indian vaqueros were vital for the economy of the missions, tending to large herds of sheep, cattle, and horses throughout western San Diego. California Indians took advantage of the introduction of horses and other livestock and put their equestrian skills and knowledge to use in ways that promoted native labor and economic goals. At the same time, horsemanship brought serious negative consequences. Vaqueros suffered repeated exposure to Eurasian diseases and it is probable that their movements unknowingly contributed to the spread and
circulation of illnesses between the missions and inland rancherías. Once introduced, repeated outbreaks of diseases affected successive generations Southern California Indians. At Mission San Diego, mortality rates were equal to half the number of baptisms between 1769 and 1800. By 1820, introduced diseases killed 35 percent of the Native population.\textsuperscript{102}

Kumeyaay, Luiseño, Cupeño and cultural groups beyond developed as horsemen and herders, which had a lasting cultural impact on these communities.\textsuperscript{103} However, the broad adaptation of equestrian skills among culture groups also blurred the fictive geographical divide Missionaries created between the “civilized” and the “savage” of the coastal and inland communities. This construct was the earliest conception of “Indian” space in Southern California. Notions of “Indian space” reflected Missionaries’ conceptions of controlled Indian laborers in proximity to the Mission compounds were civilized, while those beyond the Mission’s scope of influence malevolent or barbarous. Raids conducted by inland Indians, in part, contributed to this fictive geographical divide between Indians in Southern California.
Wage labor as horsemen and herders came at a high price to the Native communities, however. The introduction of grazing animals not only altered labor practices between the northern Kumeyaay and Luiseño, but also created huge avenues for environmental change. The introduction of European cattle and other livestock interfered with Indian land management and traditional subsistence practices. Herds often exceeded the capacity of the land to sustain them, transforming the environment and consuming the indigenous plants that Indians of western San Diego County relied upon in traditional subsistence rounds.

Though both the Luiseño and the Kumeyaay would forge nuanced relationships with the Church, the presence of European cattle held significance beyond the missions, influencing residential, labor, and economic opportunities for Native San Diego Indians. In April 1826, French navigator Auguste Bernard Duhaut-Cilly (1790–1849), described Mission San Diego: “It is not very rich, although it numbers a thousand Indians, possesses 12,000 head of cattle, 10,000 sheep, 2,000 pigs, and a proportionate number of horses and mares.” Duhaut-Cilly’s observations reflect more closely the economic reliance of the mission
on livestock than the physical reality. According to Engelhardt, the highest number of livestock ever recorded during the Spanish rule was 9,245 head of cattle (in 1822), 19,654 sheep (in 1825), 1,230 horses (in 1830), 295 mules (in 1822), and 120 pigs (in 1815).\textsuperscript{105}

Further, in the Respuesta of 1827, Mission father stated that the Mission owned 9,120 head of cattle, 16,284 head of sheep including lambs, and 825 head of horses including jackasses and three burros with their young, though only 162 were tame.\textsuperscript{106} The Mission also owned in 1827, 82 tame mules and 54 wild mules, 234 goats, 72 pigs with no indication of the presence of feral pigs though this was certainly likely.\textsuperscript{107}

There is little evidence to suggest that native Southern California bands abandoned their pre-contact subsistence strategies as a result of their adoption of equestrian skills or of Spanish colonization and missionization. As early as 1782, Father Lasuén lamented that the Southern Kumeyaay “would [not] submit to the slightest discipline if they were denied access to [their] ….fishing.”\textsuperscript{108} The availability and use of coastal resources served to both perpetuate intertribal trade and localized economies as
well as to undermine Spanish efforts to draw local Native communities into the Mission system. The strict, sedentary mission regimen aligned poorly with the semi-nomadic lives of the Kumeyaay, resulting in enduring conflict between the Kumeyaay and the institutions of colonization. In 1781, Father Lasuén complained to Lt. Ortega, “We and you know full well that no manner of means nor efforts have availed to make them [the Kumeyaay] change their nature, so manifestly impudent, indifferent and war-like.” Lasuén’s observation, however, only partially reflects Kumeyaay experience during the early years of Spanish colonization.

Despite the imposition of Spanish settlement, the Kumeyaay continued to utilize extensively the traditional long-distance trade routes from the late 1790s in to the 1830s. It is probable that Spanish and European beads found in contemporary material assemblages are the result of the wage labor arrangements between Spanish missionaries and Native workers, including horsemen and herders, as well as those engaged in secondary occupations. These small, colored glass beads typically entered Native economies at points of initial contact, through trade and diplomatic
exchanges, and in payment for labor services indicating proactive Indian agency in the colonial period.\textsuperscript{110}

During the early 1800s, the Kumeyaay developed a more northwesterly-southeasterly orientation in their trade routes, trading with Chumash, Gabrielino, Cahuilla, and Luiseño neighbors via a longer interior route from the Los Angeles basin to the eastern slopes of the Peninsular Range. While the Kumeyaay traded extensively with neighboring groups to the east before the arrival of Spanish settlers, archeologists propose that the advent of distinctly northwest-southeast trade routes was probably a response to increased Spanish and later Anglo-American settlement. However, this route crossed through the developing regions Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley, and the San Gabriel Valley facilitating trade with Chumash, Tongva, Serrano, and perhaps raiding groups including the Mojave, as well as Paiute and Utes. The modification of trade networks suggests that traditional labor opportunities expanded, rather than contracted, during Spanish colonization.

By the 1820s the Missions’ enormous herds raised principally for their hides and their numbers greatly
exceeded local consumption needs. At this time, American merchants entered freely into San Diego Bay and engaged economically and socially with Mission friars. Providing uncured leather to New England’s booming leather industry, San Diego developed into a pseudo-satellite state in America’s expanding international economy, bridging Spanish mercantilism and American capitalism, while avoiding direct political rule by either power. Hides, one of the few items San Diego missions and early ranchos produced in abundance, were suddenly in high demand. Additionally, cattle cost little to raise, slaughter, and sell as uncured hides. American merchants exported an estimated 40,000 cattle hides from Southern California annually. American merchants brought wealth to the missions and contributed indirectly to an increased land value. Californios desired increased access to land and the lucrative hide trade, though the missions owned the most advantageous sections of grazing land.

The rise of the Hide Trade coincided with the Mexican War of Independence (1810 –1821). The revolution was inspired by the ideals of the Age of Enlightenment and the liberal revolutions of the last quarter of the 18th century. Though
direct influence of the armed conflict was little felt in San Diego, the revolution contributed to the rise in social and political influence of the elite Californios and the decline of the Church. The rise of the Californio aristocracy also held political ramifications. The pueblo of San Diego comprised little more than the twice-relocated Mission and the presidio from its founding until the 1820s. The pueblo of San Diego had primarily served as a military establishment, a link the chain missions and fortifications that served as the façade of Spanish settlement, though settlement in California as a whole comprised no more than 3,270 Spanish and Mexican-born inhabitants. Nonetheless, on February 22, 1833, six of San Diego’s leading citizens requested approval for the recognition of San Diego as a pueblo, thus with a local government to manage affairs. Residents, principally the descendants of Presidio soldiers-turn-Californios, asserted that the rule of the Presidio over San Diego’s residents had discouraged prospective newcomers from settling. On August 6, 1834, San Diego was officially established as a pueblo. Its representatives dealt with local problems as well as the administration of the economic affairs of the Pueblo. In 1835, Juan María Osuna (former corporal at the Presidio and
owner of Rancho San Dieguito), Juan Maria Marrón (son-in-law of Juan María Osuna and owner Rancho Cuerros de Venado), and Henry D. Fitch (a merchant deeply involved in the hide and otter fur trade and owner of Rancho Sotoyome) emerged as Pueblo officials.\textsuperscript{114}

Enlightenment ideals and the War also contributed to advancement of secularization of the California Missions and the division of Mission land and property. In anticipation of secularization, Missionaries in San Diego contracted vaqueros and \textit{gente de razón} to slaughter cattle to sell their hides, ostensibly for the economic benefit of the neophytes.\textsuperscript{115}

After 1833, Mission lands passed into private ownership as California governors granted extensive land holdings to well-connected Californios. Large estates of grazing land passed from Mission ownership into the hands of San Diego’s ranchero elite.\textsuperscript{116} The disposition of former Mission livestock, however, is dubious. Of those not destroyed, the enormous herds of cattle, sheep, and horse either dispersed or were appropriated. Undoubtedly, several hundred head of livestock became feral. It is also probable that the cattle and horse thieves, including
inland Kumeyaay and Cahuilla, captured many. Still others likely were incorporated into the herds of the Californios. After Secularization in 1835, the missions were no longer the economic beneficiaries of the hide trade. Californios quickly replaced the missions in lucrative hide production. As Indian ranch hands and vaqueros transitioned from tending to the mission herds to the herds of the Californios, they emerged as central participants in the hide trade.

As ranch owners, Californios benefitted from the existing body of skilled laborers. An 1835 census of the Kumeyaay ranchería in San Pascual, situated along the San Dieguito River reflects the primary and secondary forms of wage labor during the Californios. Among the thirty-four men listed in the census, many pursued occupations connected directly or indirectly with horse culture and ranching. Primary occupations included vaqueros and muleteers. Secondary occupations included a blacksmith, weavers, millers, and a carder of wool, farmer, and a cheese maker.117

Few Indians entered fully into the mainstream of Mexican culture as owners of property.118 Notable exceptions were
Andres and José Manuel, local Indians - possibly Luiseños - who petitioned unsuccessfully for Rancho Guajome, and an Indian named Felipe, who petitioned for Rancho Buena Vista.\textsuperscript{119} Others also likely protested the territorialization of land represented by the land grants. Additionally, it is probable that some of the former residents of the Mission lands became mountain fugitives or inhabitants of coastal enclaves continuing subsistence strategies with the additions of useful tools, resources, and labor strategies. These included the utilization of casual agriculture of wheat and corn, orchards, and the integration of livestock. Others, however, became the laborers of the new ranchos and resided in the corners of the extensive land claims. The incorporation of Kumeyaay and Luiseño populations during the Mexican era as wage laborers for the rancheros further altered the historical trajectory of San Diego Indians.

\textsuperscript{1}Recently, Kumeyaay has come to replace Tipai and Ipai, reflecting the absence of a standard term to express twentieth-century tribalism and seemingly a desire for a collective socio-political identity. (See Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” \textit{Handbook of North American Indians}, (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), Vol. 8, 1978, 592)
\textsuperscript{3}Alexander Neal Kirkish, “Bead Exchange among the Historic Kumeyaay Indians.” (PhD Dissertation, University of Leicester, 2013), 33
\textsuperscript{4}Kirkish, “Bead Exchange,” 19
\textsuperscript{5}Kirkish, “Bead Exchange,” 25
8 Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 593 and 605
9 Margaret Langdon, “Kamia and Kumeyaay: A Linguistic Perspective.” The Journal of California Anthropology, 2, no. 1, (July 1, 1975), 68
10 Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 592
16 Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 593
17 Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 559
19 Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 593
20 Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 594
21 Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 594
23 Garcia-Herbst, “Conservation of a Significant Prehistoric Archaeological Site,” 4
26 Noah, “Prehistoric Fishing,” 11
27 Noah, “Prehistoric Fishing,” 11
28 Shipek, “Adaptation to Drought,” 299 – 300
29 Shipek, “Adaptation to Drought,” 299 – 300
30 Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 198 and 604 – 605
32 Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 601
33 Littoral foods were also exchanged in an extensive intertribal network, which included all of Southern California, the Great Basin and parts of the Southwest. Kumeyaay utilized these routes in the exchange of a variety of goods and materials between trading partners. See Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 601
This is not to argue that a cultural system could be reconstructed on the basis of an assemblage from a single site, merely to support that this theory of territorialization and band differentiation is possible.

In "Prehistoric Fishing," Anna C. Noah states, "These include, by count, 21 per cent surfperches, 21 per cent herring family (presumably sardines), 13 percent leopard shark family, 12 per cent shovelnose guitarfish, and 6 per cent bat ray. Out of a total of 897 identified fish elements, only 15, or less than 2 per cent, represent sheepshead." (Noah, "Prehistoric Fishing," 10)
70 Cline and Lucas, The Kwaaymi, 21
71 Cline and Lucas, The Kwaaymi, 21
72 Noah, “Prehistoric Fishing,” 12
73 Luomala, “Tipai and Ipai,” 593
75 Cline and Lucas, The Kwaaymi, 3
78 Engelhardt, 11
83 Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 42
85 Bean and Shipek, “Luiseño,” 55,
86 Fr. Palóu, Informe, December 10, 1773
87 Lawrence J. Jelinek, Harvest Empire: A History of California Agriculture. (San Francisco: Boyd and Fraser Publishing Co., 1979), 13
88 Fr. Junipero Serra, Informe, February 5, 1775, Santa Barbara Archives
89 Sue Wade, Stephen Van Wormer, and Heather Thomson, “240 Years of Ranching: Historical Research, Field Surveys, Oral Interviews, Significance Criteria, and Management Recommendations for Ranching Districts and Sites in the San Diego Region.” California State Parks, September 8, 2009, 85
90 Fr. Fermin de Lasuen, , and Zephyrin Engelhardt. “Fr. Lasuen to Fr. Junipero Serra, Dated May 10, 1773,” Bancroft Library, 212
91 Palóu, Noticias, vol. I, 264-265
92 Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 125
93 Fr. Fermin de Lasuen, , and Zephyrin Engelhardt. “Fr. Lasuen to Fr. Junipero Serra, Dated May 10, 1773,” Bancroft Library,130
94 Wade et al., “240 Years,” 16
95 Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 147
96 Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 302
97 Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 302
99 Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 29
The theft of horses and livestock was a regional problem in Southern California, but also contributed to kin-based economic networks. As such, it merits further dedicated academic consideration.

Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 185
Wade et al, “240 Years,” 18
Wade et al, “240 Years,” 17
Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 216
Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 224
Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 224
Kenneally, “Fermin de Lasuen,” 81
Tómas W. Temple “Two Letters from Sergeant Jose Francisco Ortega to Governor Felipe de Neve, September 4 and 5, 1781.” Southern California Quarterly, 1940, 124-125
Farmer and La Rose, “CA-SDI-39,” 3
Wade et al., “240 Years,” 20
Wade et al., “240 Years,” 20
Jelinek, Harvest Empire, 15
Alfred Robinson, Life in California Before the Conquest (San Francisco: Thomas C. Russel, 1925), 20
George H. Phillips, Vineyards and Vaqueros. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 156
Wade et al., “240 Years,” 18
Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 211
Bean and Shipek, “Luiseno,” 558
Engelhardt, “Mission San Diego,” 267
Chapter 2: 1835 to 1865

“The Indians well content with this pay, better than they can get at any other kind of employment”

In 1834, Indians formerly employed by the Missions transferred their labor expertise to the ranchos or the developing urban space of the San Diego Township. The development of the ranchos incorporated greater numbers of Indians as temporary and daily laborers in primary and secondary occupations associated with the ranch economy. Therein, San Diego Indians continued to employ horsemanship and raising livestock, the very skills in demand on ranches, to support their own economies and subsistence strategies. However, this period of mutual economic dependence was followed by a politically and economically tumultuous era. Shifting political alliances resulting from post-U.S.-Mexico War immigration contributed to a decline in the Californio-owned ranchos, a critical source of employment of San Diego Indians, and the usurpation of public lands upon which San Diego Indians resided. These dual forces compelled some San Diego Indians to engage in wage labor in San Diego.
Despite the terms of the secularization, San Diego Indians had little recourse in the dispossession of mission lands. For instance, on July 18, 1840, Indians of Santa Ysabel protested against the grant of missions lands, inclusive of the Santa Ysabel rancherías, by the governor to Joaquin Ortega. Engelhardt observed, “Ortega had been an administrator of Mission San Diego and thus he utilized his information of the best pieces of land; whether the Indians fared well or badly was no consideration.”¹ By 1846, elite Californios divided mission lands among thirty grants in the western San Diego County where water and pasturage were most readily available.² (Figure 6)
Figure 6 Land Grants in San Diego
The ranchos were avenues through which many Western San Diego Indians entered the labor sector, incorporating men and women into primary and secondary occupations of the ranchos, though with more latitude than allowed by the Missions. The labor and social construction of the ranchos developed from Mission precedents. Like the Missions, the patriarchs of Californio families controlled large tracts of land, as well as numerous Indian vaqueros and servants.³ Furthermore, life for Indian laborers on the ranchos was highly regulated. José del Carmen Lugo, although living in Rancho San Antonio in present-day Los Angeles County, described a typical labor routine on a Southern California rancho:

At three o’clock in the morning the entire family was summoned to their prayers. After this, the women betook themselves to the kitchen and domestic tasks, such as sweeping, cleaning, dusting, and so on. The men went to their labors in the field – some to herd cattle, others to look after the horses. The milking of the cows was done by the men or the Indian servants. Ordinarily some women had charge of the milking to see that the milk was clean and strained. [...] The women’s labors lasted till seven or eight in the morning. After that they were busy cooking, sewing, or washing."
The creation of the Mexican land grants also imposed new conceptions of land ownership that overlay traditional Indian spaces. Indian rancherías were enclosed by the perimeters of vast land grants. Indian laborers often resided at the edges and in the pockets of land grants. Though seldom represented on land grant desiños, the Desiño del Rancho Milijo, a hand-drawn map illustrating the geological features and boundaries of the ranch, noted the presence of a Kumeyaay rancheria near the mouth of an arroyo, likely the arroyo for the Tijuana River.\(^5\)

There were also important differences from the Mission precedent. In 1845 the Proclamation for the Sale of the Missions during the tenure of Governor Pío Pico, offered substantive change to the labor conditions of Indians. Indian wage laborers were “not obliged to serve the renters (of mission lands), but they may engage themselves to them, on being paid for their labor, and they will be subject to the authorities and to the local police.”\(^6\) This section of the 1845 Proclamation promoted forms of “at will” labor rather than coercion. Consequently, vaqueros and other laborers were legally entitled to leave working conditions
that they considered unacceptable and could relocate to other ranchos or other wage employment without punishment.

These changes in the conditions of wage labor employment came at a critical juncture. During the 1840s, the trade of uncurved hides for finished goods continued to dominate the economy of San Diego. As wage laborers, San Diego Indians engaged in primary and secondary trades associated with the California hide trade. Coastal Indians operated and commanded large schooners and launches for the hides and tallow. In his autobiographical narrative, *Two Years before the Mast*, published in 1840, Richard Henry Dana, Jr. recorded valuable observations of various aspects of the cultural and economic behavior of California Mexican and Indian laborers. Dana wrote, “large boats [are] manned by Indians and [are] capable of carrying nearly a thousand hides apiece, [they] are … sent down to the vessels with hides, to bring away goods in return.” Working as transporters, Indians moved cowhides to American ships, contributed to a vast international exchange in raw, and were well-positioned to garner finished goods as payment or in trade. In addition to imported foods such as coffee and sugar, American merchants exchanged boots, calicos, pins,
combs, awls, necklaces, and jewelry among other finished goods.  Though historical documents recorded thinly the terms of payment, San Diego Indians incorporated the finished products from the Boston traders into Native family economies and traded extensively along traditional trails.  Sites such SDI-106 illustrate the incorporation of foreign finished goods along the traditional trade routes and in the economies of San Diego Indians.  Finished goods including buttons and knives were interred with deceased individuals as personal objects of wealth.  The utilization of wages and goods to trade or to supplement subsistence economies indicates a lasting and profound impact on the development of Native economies in Southern California.

Such early forms of maritime labor also integrated coastal San Diego Indians into new social and economic spheres on San Diego’s waterfront.  Distinct socio-symbolic pressures accompanied the societal spaces of mariners into which Native laborers were incorporated.  Alcohol consumption among mariners was both recreational and symbolic, reflecting maritime communalism and fraternity in a distinctly multiethnic environment, and as Dana recalled, “For drink you must, every time, and if you drink with one
and not with another, it is always taken as an insult,” recalled Dana.\textsuperscript{9} American seamen lived on the outmost periphery of society - a position reinforced by the transiency of their lives, and tended to congregate with others, including Native Californians, at that fringe. “It is the universal custom with sailors for each one, in turn, to treat the whole, calling for a glass all round, and obliging everyone who is present, even the keeper of the shop, to take a glass with him,” stated Dana.\textsuperscript{10} The San Diego waterfront emerged as an inclusive social environment; Native inclusion in mariner’s consumption of alcohol placed them on equal footing to their nautical peers. Dana noted the presence of Native Californians in this social context of the waterfront. He recalled at La Playa how crewmembers “were moored, stem and stern, in a grog-shop, making a great noise, with a crowd of Indians and hungry half-breeds about them.”\textsuperscript{11}

The California economy, like other Latin American markets in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, was dependent on the export of a single product controlled by foreign merchants and reliant on the needs of a distant market.\textsuperscript{12} It was not until the 1840s and the U.S.-Mexican War that civil strife and droughts caused
a decline in the hide trade. The commerce and the exchange of goods for finished products did not cease entirely until the outbreak of the war in 1846.\textsuperscript{13}

During the U.S. Mexican War, Indian vaqueros earned the esteem of American forces. Edwin Bryant, whose enlistment resulted in a military tour in California from 1846 – 1847 including San Diego, wrote of Indian vaqueros:

The men are almost constantly on horseback, and as horsemen excel any I have seen in other parts of the world. From the nature of their pursuits and amusements, they have brought horsemanship to a perfection challenging admiration and exciting astonishment. They are trained to the horse and use of the lasso (riata, as it is here called,) from their infancy.\textsuperscript{14}

In 1850, statehood shoved the Californios of San Diego into the multifaceted economy of American capitalism.\textsuperscript{15} Bryant presented a bleak description of San Diego and its economic prospects. “The country back of it is described by those who have traveled through it as sandy and arid, and incapable of supporting any considerable population,” Bryant wrote, though he also noted “rich mines of quicksilver, copper, gold, and coal, in the neighborhood, which, if such be the fact, will before long render the place one of considerable importance.”\textsuperscript{16}
For nearly 30 years after statehood, San Diego remained an unimportant, decidedly Hispanic and Indian region of Southern California. San Diego Indians received little direct attention from the U.S. government. Some San Diego Indians continued traditional economies and subsistence strategies throughout the area. Others were occupants of the foothills around San Diego or inhabitants of coastal enclaves, who supplemented traditional family economies by incorporating farming, herding, and various forms of wage labor from the ranchos, day and daily employment.

The US Federal Census of San Diego for 1850 presents a rare window into the lives of Western San Diego Indians. The Census illustrates the ongoing significance of ranch wage labor for many bands that resided in proximity to the ranchos and were employed on a day or daily basis. Census takers identified enumerated Indians as simply “laborers,” presumably on the ranchos - the dominant profitable industry in the region.

Ranchos would have new needs of workers following the discovery of gold in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in 1848 and the subsequent mass immigration of prospectors to Northern California. In the early 1850s
the sudden demand for beef in Northern California likely resulted in an increase of Indian laborers employed as vaqueros and ranch hands on San Diego ranchos. The Federal Census also indicated that the number of livestock in San Diego County owned by Californios increased to include 5,164 cattle, 1,172 sheep, 1,767 horses, 2,962 mules, and 904 cows. Also, herds of cattle were imported from Baja California and driven north by Indian vaqueros. In August 1853, Indian vaqueros working for Abel Stearns, brother-in-law of Cave J. Couts, drove in a herd of 400 head of cattle from Baja California. Stearns sold the herd to Don Santiago Arguello of Rancho La Punta for $12,000. In June 1855, vaqueros drove 150 head of cattle from the ranch of Juan Bandini in Baja California to San Francisco. The long drives of cattle to Northern California proved lucrative.

However, the economic boom in San Diego’s cattle industry had unexpected consequences. With the growth of livestock herds were increased raids by inland Native groups. Additionally, as rancheros dedicated their land entirely to the valuable livestock, owners became dependent on their Indian laborers for supplies of foodstuffs. Judge Benjamin
Hayes, a local magistrate and an astute observer of the social and economic developments in San Diego County, wrote:

The California Spaniard loves his fiery steed – not the plough. Many such a ranchero, rich in cattle and goodly acres by the ten thousand, must go to his Indian neighbor hard by on the ranch, if he would dine today on his maize and frijoles! This remark is made, subject only to isolated exceptions, and as authorizing a general inference much more favorable to the Indian than my incidental description of him, merely, as a farmer-laborer; for, in a multitude of instances on the numerous ranchos, even when he neither owns land, nor claims more than a casual occupancy, he is more than a peon. A very independent and useful producer is the Mission Indian, in such case, whose house and furniture need no insurance, but without whom a ranchero would eat much less bread and vegetables!  

That the ranchos relied heavily on Indian-produced vegetables and crops was in part, the result of the gold rush that placed such a great demand for beef that the ranchero dedicated most of his lands to it. Rancheros did not reserve land for cultivation because the price of cattle was so high. A protracted drought that settled in Southern California beginning in 1850 further diminished the ability of the few farms to meet local demand. For the years 1850 and 1851, San Diego received 7.84 and 7.49
inches of rain, respectively, far below the average rainfall for a typical year.\textsuperscript{22} This drought negatively affected the availability of both crops from local farms and the casual agriculture practiced by local Indians. Indian engaged as wage laborers on ranchos to ameliorate the gaps in the family economy or to purchase foods or finished goods.

The 1850 census also provides some insight into the residency patterns of Western San Diego Indians. Among enumerated laboring Indians, 20.4\% lived with their employers, indicating that ranch owners continued to reserve space for rancherías as an enticement to retain Indian laborers. Traditional rancherías remained the dominant foci of Native social and residential life. The importance of the ranchería extended to the San Diego Township wherein Indians resided primarily or partially on an unnamed Indian ranchería within the San Diego Township. A modest 15\% were considered to be living as families, though how the census taker defined a Native family is unclear. A mere 2.2\% did not reside with other Indians. Most interestingly, 40.9\% of wage labor Indians within the San Diego Township lived with a mix of other laborers based
on a profession wherein no children were present. These were Indians who fissured from their traditional bands temporarily to optimize their economic opportunities as mobile laborers.

Despite the prosperity that rancheros enjoyed during the 1850s, annexation by the U.S. resulted in a protracted economic decline for the ranchos that affected Indian laborers. Whereas Californios enjoyed their brief mercantile supremacy, American capitalism proved aggressive and foreign. Mass migrations, language barriers, and political marginalization further contributed to the decline of the Californio ranchos. Many Californios and their descendants lost their large ranchos, while others retained their land grants by passing ownership into the hands of American sons-in-law.

Another factor that brought hardship to Indian ranch hands was a dramatic decline in cattle prices during the second half of the 1850s. By 1855, livestock prices dropped as sheep and cattle herds from Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona were driven to Northern California, undermining the principal market for San Diego cattle, and nearly halting the south-to-north cattle drives that supported the San
Diego cattle industry. The Indian ranch laborers, vaqueros, and domestic servants of local rancheros sought other forms of wage employment as the Mexican ranchos declined.

Indians seeking employment in the Pueblo did so for the same reasons others worked on the ranches – to obtain material items that they could not produce. American capitalists established new enterprises in San Diego during the mid-19th century that afforded seasonal wage labor opportunities for San Diego Indians. A shore whaling enterprise in San Diego was established by East Coast whalemen and proved modestly successful. Before the arrival of American whalemen in San Diego, whale oil was neither used nor sold. William Smythe, a local San Diego historian, opined,

"The Spanish population never pursued the chase, either by land or sea, with noteworthy daring and vigor(....) Such things were left to the restless and incomprehensible Americans."  

By operating from the Pacific coast, relocated east coast ship-owners saved not only time, but also avoided the added risk of pounding through the heavy seas of Cape Horn. The transition began a period of florescence for Pacific shore
whaling, incorporating coastal San Diego Indians into another regional and transoceanic economy prompted by American capitalists.

Similar to other wage labor opportunities for Indians in San Diego, shore-whaling stations operated seasonally, from December to April. As such, shore whaling enabled its crews to have other economic pursuits such as ranching, farming, or the opportunity to re-join their bands at seasonal rancherías and participate in traditional subsistence rounds. However, several elements distinguished shore whaling from other forms of wage employment. For instance, shore whaling operated from a fixed locality, while the whaleboats cruised within a radius of about ten miles. Within this predation zone, shore whalen men focused on the California gray (*Eschrichtius robustus*) and the humpback (*Megaptera novaengliae*), though they would hunt other species of whale if given the opportunity.

An additional practice of east coast whaling had a positive impact on San Diego Native labor. As a form of contracted labor, company owners paid whaling crews vis-à-vis “lays” or “shares” of the voyage profits, according to shipboard
rank rather than race. Judge Hayes observed that Indian crews in San Diego received $15 a month to crew on the whaling ship Ocean and the same amount to work as blubber renderers at a whaling camp on nearby Ballast Point. 29 “Both these companies employ chiefly Indian hands (...) The work is measurably light, and the Indians well content with this pay, better than they can get at any other kind of employment,” wrote Judge Hayes. 30 Though Judge Hayes’ assertion that the arduous task of rendering blubber was light work is unconvincing, his observation suggests that, at least at its inception, there was limited competition for employment in whaling crews in San Diego, which contributed to Indians being able to garner favorable salaries. Like ranching, wages from the whaling industry likely supplemented traditional economies. The proceeds from whalemen’s labor contributed to family economies and networks of sharing and reciprocity among larger sectors of the Native community as cash or goods. 31

Though salaries on whaling ships were high, the work was rigorous and often dangerous. Few crews did not experience losses. "In the course of voyages, there was hardly a ship's crew that did not experience many changes; men were
lost through casualties, died of disease, drowned, deserted, were exchanged, and sometimes discharged," wrote Charles Scammon in *The Marine Mammals of the North-western Coast of North America: Together with an Account of the American Whale-fishery.* During the hunt itself, crews in the small whaling boats were often caught “foul of the line” and submerging whales dragged men under. In whaling vessels, men thrown overboard often simply drowned, as many were unable to swim, were often heavily dressed due to the season, and sank immediately.

Despite the hazards, in general, the whaling industry depended on a labor force of inexperienced hands or “green hands,” to whom captains and owners paid minimal shares in order to maximize their profits. Prospective green hands were typically inexperienced young men with little money and poor economic prospects ashore. In his account, Dana wrote that the whaling industry in San Diego relied on inexperienced crews that typically acted and appeared more like fishermen and farmers than sailors. Though Dana’s characterization was consistent with broader conceptions of the whaling industry, this was a misrepresentation of San Diego’s Indian whalemen. There is intriguing evidence
represented in the assemblages at Ora-190 and SDM-W-143/146 (SDI-5213 C&D) of Cetacea utilization in precontact and early historic subsistence strategies. The material assemblages along the San Diego coast indicate that Coastal San Diego Indians likely had some experience with beached whales before the establishment of a shore whaling industry. As such, shore whaling was a continuation and adaptation of pre-contact practices among San Diego Indians and facilitated the maintenance of coastal rancherias and family economies.

Over-predation, however, became a serious concern for increasing numbers of novice whalemen who engaged in shore whaling because of its relatively low financial costs and potentially high returns. As early as the 1850s, Judge Hayes expressed concern with the overhunting of whales in San Diego. In his autobiographical narrative, he noted, "Captain Packard considers that he has done well, but thinks the large number of ships that will come here next season on hearing of the success of his venture will seriously interfere with the proceeds of those who operate on land and will soon destroy the whales." The overcrowding of the California coast by novice whalemen
brought new challenges and a kaleidoscope of sailing ships along the shore. Fleets of boats lying in wait along the line of kelp displayed markings to distinguish themselves. Though the kaleidoscope of sails suggested a booming industry for San Diego, it also resulted in increased competition among laborers, resulting in the devaluing of contracted labor and the marginalization of Indian whalemen.

The economic changes affecting San Diego Indians developed without the oversight of the Office of Indians Affairs. The earliest report by the OIA regarding San Diego Indians dates to 1852. That report expressed concern about the decline of San Diego Indians - estimated to be at not more than 7000 individuals. The continued influence of diseases, the ecological impact of cattle on traditional subsistence practices, and the movement of Indians to other areas for wage labor contributed to the decline of the Indian population.

In 1852, Native wage labor still centered on primary and secondary trades associated with the ranchos. The ranchos were the beneficiaries of skilled Indian herdsmen who had gained experience under mission tutelage. “Under the rule
of the missions, they were taught to do all the farm work, also the trades, as ... weavers, saddlers, shepherds, vineros, and vaqueros,” explained an Agent.35 His observation reflected the continuing influence of the initial entry of many San Diego Indians into wage labor sectors through occupations associated with the missions’ extensive ranching activities. However, with increased Anglo-American immigration Indians laborers began to experience economic inequalities. Though Indian laborers were the majority of all laborers, mechanics and servants in Southern California, with few exceptions they earned approximately half of their Anglo-American counterparts. “They are willing to work and do only about half as much as a good white man and expect only half as much pay: $8 to $10 per month being wages, and about $1 per day in towns,” wrote an Agent.36 The estimate of $8 to $10 per month, equating to $0.26 - $0.33 per day in the 30-day month, was substantially lower than the $1.05 with board national average for nonfarm labor in 1850.37 In 1853, San Diego entered into a short period of generally dry weather receiving 7.88 inches of annual precipitation, which stressed farming and ranching enterprises. The years
of 1854 and 1855, however, proved wet, with San Diego receiving 11.63 and 11.15 inches of precipitation respectively. These wet years aided both traditional subsistence strategies, with the growth of native plants and casual agriculture, and open-range livestock. In thinly settled San Diego County, the large ranchos remained dependent upon Indian labor to stay functioning enterprises, perpetuating a mutually beneficial economic relationship between ranch owners and western San Diego County Indians.

The temporarily beneficent San Diego environment, however, attracted the attention of ranchers in Los Angeles. In the spring of 1856, Los Angeles suffered a significant drought. Writing on April 26, 1856, the San Diego Union reported that cattle in inland Los Angeles County were dying for want of food. Los Angeles ranchers began herding their cattle to the pastures of western San Diego. However, the drought expanded and the additional heads of cattle overwhelmed the pasturage in northern and western San Diego. A regional drought worsened conditions. Panicked ranchers sold livestock at any price. The San Diego Herald reported that cattle were so cheap it did not pay to feed
Consequently, ranchers abandoned many heads of cattle in the foothills and canyons of western San Diego where they died, became feral, or were appropriated by inland Indians.\textsuperscript{40} A few ranchers supplemented their income by working as sub-Agents for the Office of Indian Affairs. Cave Johnson Couts, an Anglo-American who acquired land in western San Diego through his marriage to Ysidora Bandini, daughter of Juan Bandini of San Diego, resided on the coastal Guajome land grant that neighbored Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores, a gift to his wife from her brother-in-law, Abel Stearns.\textsuperscript{41} Couts supplemented his income by working as a sub-Agent for the Office of Indian Affairs. On July 7, 1856, Couts reported his observations of the Indians who worked on his land grant to Thomas J. Henley, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in California. Couts wrote, “The inhabited portion of this country is infested with two tribes of Indians known as the San Luisenians [sic] and Dieguinos, [sic] according to the mission to whom they respectively belong, and number about 2,500 each.”\textsuperscript{42} Couts’ letter provides additional intriguing insights into the conditions of coastal bands of Luiseño and Kumeyaay
during the mid-1850s. Couts noted, “[Kumeyaay] are in the southern part of the county, and extend from the coast to the desert, where they naturally blend with the Yumas, with whom they are on very friendly terms.”\textsuperscript{43} Couts’ description suggests that the Kumeyaay continued to trade with the Yuma, with whom they had long-standing socio-cultural, linguistic, and economic ties well into the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Couts was disapproving, however, of the independent, nearly autonomous, nature of the Kumeyaay. “The [Kumeyaay],” he wrote, “Although reared in an adjoining mission, are inferior to the San Luisenians. They lack nothing of that laziness and indolence proverbial to all Indian tribes, and live principally by cattle stealing, and on acorns.”\textsuperscript{44} Couts’ own land claim lay within traditional Luiseño territory. Consequently, his information regarding the Kumeyaay likely reflected the biases of other wealthy landowners with economic ties to Southern San Diego, such as John Bandini, with whom Couts had contact. Regardless, his comments suggest that the Kumeyaay in Southern San Diego remained fiercely independent of Anglo-American economic hegemony. Additionally, Couts’ remarks shed light on the role of cattle raiding in the Kumeyaay economy. In
Southern San Diego where Mexican and Anglo-American ranchers had repeatedly endeavored to establish ranches, only to be undermined economically by repeated Indian, probably Kumeyaay, raids. Consequently, in contrast to the establishment of ranching elsewhere in western San Diego County during the mission era, ranching south and east of Cuyamaca Peak was predicated on Indian removal rather than inclusion. The Kumeyaay continued to inhabit the Peninsula Range south of Cuyamaca Peak and throughout the western Colorado Desert, continued well into the 19th century. Don Juan Bandini, who established a ranch at Tecate in 1830, complained that eastern Kumeyaay stole livestock from his ranch.45 It is likely that the introduction of cattle into the Kumeyaay economy compensated for losses to their traditional subsistence rounds. Eastern Kumeyaay developed a taste for livestock, procured through raids or found wandering in the chaparral.46 Eastern Kumeyaay likely also acquired livestock from Rancho Cuyamaca, a land grant of 8 square leagues the California government granted to Augustine Olvera on August 11, 1845, shortly before U.S. military troops occupied San Diego on July 29, 1846.47
In contrast to his opinions of the Kumeyaay, Couts’ views of the Luiseños were more positive, noting that the Luiseño remained in the northern part of the county, including the principal chain of mountains. Couts emphasized that, “These Indians … require but little attention with proper management.”

Couts was at pains to emphasize that San Diego Indians, owing to the lack of reservations, were beyond the scope of the OIA. Additionally, Couts’ observations substantiate that Luiseños were still incorporating wage labor into their subsistence strategies and family economies. The Luiseño were practicing forms of casual agriculture, collecting or exchanging for acorns, and engaging with landowners such as Couts for wage labor opportunities as vaqueros. Indeed, Couts readily obtained all the cheap labor he needed for the improvement and maintenance of his extensive ranch.

Even as he employed Luiseño laborers, Couts was aware of the mutual economic dependence that underlay the success of the ranches. Reliant on his laborers, Couts noted, “They understand the cultivation of the soil, and are the main dependence of our rancheros for vaqueros. They live comfortably in their rancheros of tule (some few in adobes)
on what they gather from their wheat and barley fields, gardens, acorns, and cattle stealing.” In consideration of the severe drought of 1856 and standard practice of open-range grazing in San Diego, it seems unlikely the Couts could have proven his assertion that local Indians stole cattle from him. In consideration of his dependency on Indian labor, Couts certainly did not seek greater OIA involvement with area Indians. However, as a subagent Couts was in an excellent position to influence future Indian policy in San Diego. Couts’ observations compliment those of John Rains, a sub-agent located in Northern Luiseño territory.

In his communiqué to Thomas J. Henley, Superintendent of Indian Affairs in California, John Rains described Luiseño social and political structure as little changed from the Spanish colonial period. Rains, whose observations of the northern Luiseño were included in the “State of California” Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs of 1856, complemented Couts’ account.

Rains wrote, “Of the San Luis Rey Indians, they are in all between twenty-five and twenty-eight hundred; they all live in nineteen different rancherías, having a [captain] and
[an] alcalde in each, and one headman overall.” Rains, similarly to Couts, also noted the enduring presence of Luiseños in traditional lands and their border with other indigenous culture groups. “The country of the San Luis Rey Indians,” Rains wrote, “is joined by the country of the Cowela [sic: Cahuilla] and Diegans [sic] Indians. They are about six thousand, all told.” Rains’ mention of the Cahuilla hints at the politically and economically influential presence of the Mountain Cahuilla over inland ranches in San Diego and Los Angeles County. Rains also wrote on the pervasive role wage labor, ranching and horsemanship, as a key economic activity among the Luiseño. He wrote, “[They are] raised to work ... all are good horsemen, and make good servants.” However, many Luiseño depended on their own ranching and stock raising activities.

Additionally, some fostered reliance upon traditional subsistence strategies, which were vulnerable during droughts. Rains wrote, “This year their crops failed, owing to the want of water. There are some of them in a starving condition, and are obliged to steal to maintain themselves and families.”
The failure of crops in 1856 foreshadowed a devastating drought from 1857 to 1859. During these three years, San Diego received 6.15, 7.55, and 6.10 inches of precipitation annually. In September of 1857, the drought developed into a prolonged regional crisis that devastated Indian communities. In a report to J. W. Denver, Commissioner of Indians Affairs, dated September 4, 1857, Superintendent Thomas J. Henley wrote,

“From the San Joaquin to the extreme southern boundary of the State an unusual drought has prevailed during the past season, cutting short the resources of Indian subsistence, nuts, berries, grass seeds, and other natural articles of food, upon which they have hitherto relief for a scanty and precarious support.”

San Diego Indians relied upon traditional strategies to cope with the pervasive drought. Bands fissured and spread broadly across Southern California to optimize traditional subsistence strategies, but also sought wage labor opportunities. This strategy brought them into competition with the cattle herds and horses of the ranchos. Luiseños and western Kumeyaay, on whose traditional lands Anglo-American and Mexican ranchos were established, relied on wage labor to contribute cash to the family economy, to acquire foodstuffs, and to enable reciprocal exchanges.
Several years of drought brought other consequences for San Diego Indians. Birth rates did not exceed rates of death, causing a dual population decline. Movements of refugees to areas with more available water added to the decline. Though Henley did not note population movements, he was alarmed by the obvious decline among San Diego Indians that resulted.

“In the county of San Diego it is believed that much suffering, and perhaps, starvation and death in many instances, will ensure from this [drought]... Every effort in my power has been and is being made to remedy, as far as possible, this state of things... it is hoped a sufficiency may be provided to avert the danger of starvation to which circumstances give a somewhat threatening appearance,” stated Henley.\(^{58}\)

Despite Henley’s assurances, it is unclear what Federal aid San Diego Indians received as they remained beyond the scope of the OIA. Undoubtedly, any aid would have arrived too late for many vulnerable victims. During the extended drought, 1857 to 1859 proved the driest period with only 6.15 and 6.10 inches respectively. Native populations, cattle, sheep, and horses, all of whom competed for available water and indigenous plants in the San Diego chaparral, were affected.\(^{59}\)
By 1860, San Diego Indians included individuals who engaged in the adaptation of traditional subsistence strategies in order to maximize labor opportunities and to contribute to family economies. Others sought wage employment as an integral component of the collective economic well-being of the family and community.

It is probable that the extended drought and its effect on ranching and traditional subsistence practices contributed to Indian laborers seeking economic opportunities in the Township of San Diego. Wage labor in the San Diego Township afforded Indians a wide variety of economic options through which day or daily wage employment could help support family economies and networks of reciprocity of cash and goods. In 1860, San Diego Census takers documented male Indians working as laborers and shepherds, likely as daily laborers for nearby ranchos. Additionally, Census takers also identified male Indians as non-ranching laborers and as “monthly laborers,” a phrase possibly borrowed from immigrant European groups in San Diego.

Few forms of wage labor were open to both genders but domestic labor was a notable exception. Both men and women worked as domestic servants. Some Indians did not provide
any employment information to Census takers, but were likely engaged in seasonal, daily, or gray wage labor.

Though California rancheros experienced economic instability as a result of a fluctuating demand for beef or the misfortune of the local environment, many maintained the wealthy lifestyle of the elite Californios. This included employing servants. The 1860 Census takers noted the presence of children and teenagers in the households of San Diego’s affluent ranching families, though Census takers did not specify either their professional or personal role in the household. Their ambiguous labor position in these households illustrates the ability of wealthy residents to exploit San Diego Indians after 1848. Stacey Smith in *Freedom’s Frontier: California and the Struggle Over Unfree Labor* notes, “For women and girls, labor exploitation and sexual exploitation frequently went hand in hand. Diverse Californians bought and sold women as domestic servants and as forced sexual partners, prostitutes, concubines, and wives.”60 Also, wealthy Californians, including the rancheros, exploited section three of the 1850 Act for the Government and Protection of Indians, which enabled non-Indian families to claim Native
American children as wards and, ultimately, exploit them as unfree domestic labor.\textsuperscript{61} Josefa, 6, appears in the 1860 Census as the only Indian in the household of Francesca M Lopez for unclear purposes. Miguela, 15, resided in the household of Andrew Cassidy, a tide-gauger and Irish immigrant, for unspecified reasons. Manuel Marshall, 9, was at the ranch of Philip Crosthwaite for vague reasons, and Juliana, 19, was in the household of Julio Osuna for unstated purposes as well. Maria, 20, and her three children were in the household of Innocencia Osuna, identified by Census takers as a vaquero. Maria likely had an informal martial relationship with Innocencia.

These arrangements extended to the households of widows and single women landowners in western San Diego as well. Pablo, 16, was in the household of Juliana Osuna, while Josefa, 8, Bacora, 11, and Salvadora, 20, were servants in the household of Felipa Marrón.\textsuperscript{62} In \textit{Conquests and Historical Identities in California 1769 - 1936}, Lisbeth Haas wrote, “In their narratives, widowed and single women landowners and married women did not differ substantially in their relationship to authority and property. Felipa Marrón spoke of ‘nuestro’ rancho when referring to the
property she occupied with her husband and family, and of ‘mi serviente,’ to her servant.”

Juliana Osuna and Felipa Marrón derived their sense of entitlement to property from social practices established prior to 1850 and represent the competing social and cultural context in which Indian wage labor developed, as well as the notion of Indian laborers as property. By 1860, Crosthwaite, Felipa Marrón, Jose M Nichuchaya, and the Osuna family were leading employers of Indian laborers in San Diego.

Though the Census of 1860 illustrates that labor opportunities in western San Diego County continued to radiate from the ranches, the Census also indicates that traditional Native rancherías remained the foci of social and cultural cohesion among San Diego Indians. A sizable portion of Indians enumerated in the 1860 census lived in the “San Pasqual Ranchería.” Others resided in the “San Diego Village” or “San Diego Tribe” Ranchería while some lived on unnamed rancherías within the San Diego Township. However, some San Diego Indians lived with their employers, indicating that rooming options were important considerations in attracting and retaining Indian laborers. Throughout western San Diego, however,
rancherías typified Native residences, indicating social, political, and economic continuity between the Mission and early American eras.

The economic trajectory of Indian laborers and the incorporation of wage labor into their economic strategies occurred without the paternalistic OIA oversight that typified Anglo and Indian relations in other parts of the U.S. OIA officials were ambivalent about the economic and social conditions of San Diego Indians. “The Indians are now indebted to the forbearance and generosity of the community among whom they live,” observed an Agent who misconstrued Anglo-American and Hispanic reliance on Indian wage laborers as philanthropy. In general, the OIA was unaware or uninterested in the labor and economies of San Diego Indians. Such lack of interest, however, shaped relations between Southern California Indians and the Federal government, and allowed San Diego Indians to remain largely outside the purview of the Federal government. The absence of reservations in Southern California curtailed OIA authority over the economic development of San Diego Indians. Lacking reservations for OIA Agents oversee, Agents in the region could serve only as advisors. This
anomalous situation meant a degree of economic autonomy for San Diego’s Native people.

The drought of 1856-1861 ended with long winter rains of 11.59 inches in 1862. Many of the cattle that had survived previous years of drought drowned in this massive deluge.\textsuperscript{69} Moreover, 1863 proved a dramatic return to drought conditions with only 3.02 inches of precipitation.\textsuperscript{70} This regional drought persisted for eight more years. These conditions devastated San Diego’s ranching industry and likely rendered San Diego less appealing to Anglo-American farmer-settlers.\textsuperscript{71} Southern California Indians knitted together an economy based on wage labor and traditional subsistence strategies, an economic and labor strategy that could be nuanced to shifting environmental and economic circumstances.

The drought of the 1860s came in the midst of the protracted litigation resulting from the 1851 Land Act affecting the ranchos. The Land Act of 1851 required an examination of the legitimacy of all land claims granted during Mexican rule. The costly ordeal of the investigation and confirmation often took decades. While under the confirmation process, claimants could not sell
their land, forcing many ranchers, Californio and Anglo-American alike, to borrow money and mortgage their property to pay for legal representation.\textsuperscript{72} The ranchers of San Diego would retain their properties and maintain a lifestyle based on cheap Indian labor longer than their northern counterparts did.\textsuperscript{73} However, this uncertainty affected Indian laborers whose day and daily wage labor as manual laborers, vaqueros, and domestic servants ebbed with the financial well-being of the ranchos. A drought from 1862 to 1864 further undermined many of the ranches that had remained solvent, ending the economic supremacy of the cattle industry in San Diego for the remainder of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{74}

Ranching and farming sectors in San Diego rebounded slightly with 7.61 and 7.52 inches of precipitation in 1864 and 1865 respectively. Improved environmental conditions supported farming and ranching activities in inland San Diego and contributed some economic stability to Indian wage laborers and their families. However, a series of droughts undermined the welfare of livestock in the 1860s. After the Civil War, sheep, initially introduced by Franciscan missionaries, gradually replaced cattle as the
dominant livestock in San Diego.\(^75\) Sheep proved slightly more drought tolerant than cattle, but required fewer herders – likely increasing Indian unemployment. Additionally, an influx of American settlers after 1865 created a third wave of mass immigration that resulted in shifting political dynamics, which affected most Southern California Indians. With an increased Anglo-American population demanding public land for farms, supported by the Homestead Act, California’s Anglo-American politicians were less concerned with protecting California Indians, their lands, or the ranches of the Californios. Florence Shipek in *Pushed into the Rocks: Southern California Indian Land Tenure, 1769-1986*, wrote, “Inasmuch as Indian-occupied lands were technically public lands open to preemption and homestead settlement, settlers began taking the best, well-watered Indian lands, and dispossessing the Indians.”\(^76\) After the Civil War, the California government did not protect Native usufruct land rights.\(^77\) Though a special commission convened to determine Indian land rights, it largely ignored Indian complainants.\(^78\) Increased numbers of Anglo-American settlers in San Diego pressed upon Indian communities as well as ranches. Anglo-American farmers
usurped the claims and usufruct practices of both Indians and ranchers, and divided many ranches into smaller farming parcels, curtailing both seasonal subsistence rounds and open-range pasture. Differing constructs of land ownership and resulting political and economic marginalization, as well as the presence of settlers and vagabond whites, contributed to a downward socio-economic spiral for many San Diego County Indian communities.

Local Anglo-American officials ascribed the consumption of whiskey and petty crime to the influence of the vagabond Anglo-Americans, whom they viewed as likely former Confederate soldiers. “In nearly all the rancherías of the Indians are found strolling vagabond whites who, disloyal to their country, have been teaching the most pernicious doctrines to the Mission Indians, cohabiting with their women, fond of intoxicating drinks, and rebels at heart,” wrote an Agent.79 Indian leadership was unable or unwilling to extract the vagabonds from their communities. The added and unexpected intrusion of Anglo-Americans undoubtedly proved a drain on the economies of the Indians with whom the vagabonds reportedly resided. Under the prevailing economic conditions of the 1860s, it is unlikely that
Native bands could have readily accommodated an increased population that contributed little to the broader Indian economy.

The influx of suspected Rebel-sympathizers into Indian communities alarmed Federal Commissioner of Indian Affairs Dennis Nelson Cooley. On October 31, 1865, Cooley wrote, “Unscrupulous white men seem to be interfering with their rights in a very unjustifiable manner, and it is time that protection was extended to them.” Cooley’s comments acknowledged that dishonest Anglo-American newcomers set aside Native usufruct rights, were illegally displacing Southern California Indians, and imposing themselves upon Indian rancherías. Cooley exploited the influx of immigrants as a pretext for introducing the idea of relocating Southern California Indians, whom Cooley termed “Mission Indians,” to reservations. Cooley estimated that Mission Indians contributed significantly to the estimated 30,000 Indians in the state who did not reside on reservations by 1865. This population estimate did not distinguish between Indians who had successfully incorporated wage labor into their family economies and the displaced, economically isolated Indians forced from their
lands. Cooley set in motion a marked shift in the Federal approach to Southern California Indians that would alter the historical and economic trajectory of the San Diego Indians. After 1865, the OIA considered Mission Indians a population awaiting reservations and, owing to their ethnicity, considered them inherently within the purview of the OIA.\textsuperscript{82}

In 1865, an Agent traveled from the OIA office in San Francisco to assess the plausibility of establishing a reservation in Southern California. Concurrently, Indians throughout Southern California continued to navigate the labor opportunities and limitations of American economic hegemony. The lack of apparent territorial and economic stability endured by many Southern California Indians led to a large meeting in Temecula between representatives of Luiseño and Cahuilla bands and an Agent on May 4-6, 1865. Luiseño and Cahuilla attendees came forward at the meeting to state their complaints and grievances.\textsuperscript{83} Rather than economic instability, the conflicting conceptions of territoriality underlay Indian grievances in Southern California. The Agent wrote that:
“The Cohuillas [sic], of San Timoteo, during the existence of the small-pox two or three years ago, fled in dismay, leaving their lands, not with the intention of abandoning them, but from fear of the epidemic. The white settlers near the Indians lands immediately took forcible possession of them and had positively refused to give them up.”

The anecdote illustrated the differences in territoriality between Anglo-Americans and San Diego Indians. Leaving the lands in which the epidemic occurred was consistent with traditional practices and did not constitute an explicit abandonment of territory. Anglo-Americans, drawing from the Homestead Act of 1862, claimed unappropriated public land. Consequently, Anglo-American settlements conflicted with Indian rancherías that were also located on public lands. According to the Agent, as a result of American homesteading, approximately nine hundred Cahuilla were displaced from their traditional territories and nearly all Luiseño and Kumeyaay in Western San Diego County were affected.

Anglo-American settlers, however, could rely on Congressional Acts and public officials to support their territorial claims. Others endeavored to “purchase” land from local Indians. The Frank Clarks homestead in
Terwilliger Valley, located in the southeastern corner of present-day Los Coyotes Reservation, was reportedly bought from an Indian to whom Clarks paid five head of cattle and a horse. Frank Clarks would go on to become a prominent San Diego rancher and employer of Indian ranch hands. In other instances, Anglo-American newcomers forcibly removed Indians. At Pajamo, nine miles from Temecula, when the Indians left for their summer grounds, some Anglo-Americans, headed by two men named Breeze and Woolfe, burned the Indians’ homes and took forcible possession of their lands and irrigation ditches. Such extralegal means of appropriating lands marginalized many Indian bands throughout Southern California.

The 1865 Temecula meeting also provides insights into Luiseño rancherías in northern San Diego County in the mid-1860s. (Figure 7) Despite pressures from Anglo-American settlers, Southern California Indians remained economically self-reliant, often relying on traditional subsistence rounds into which they incorporated cattle, sheep, other livestock, or daily wage labor at neighboring ranches. The role of Indian vaqueros fostered a new relationship with the land – a relationship in which domesticated animals,
especially horses, reshaped the lives of San Diego’s inland indigenous peoples. Horses contributed to the expansion of casual agriculture, trade, herding, as well as access to ranching wage labor.

The Temecula meeting also demonstrated the continued Native practice of casual agriculture. Orchards of stone fruit trees such as peaches, plums, or apricots and vineyards were pervasive among the Luiseños and the Cahuilla; though, there was variation between the rancherías. Though rancherías shared similar economic activities of varying scale, they differentiated principally in their incorporation of wage labor, typically from nearby ranches.

Smaller rancherias of less than 100 individuals dotted inland San Diego. The ranchería San Ygnacio comprised only fifteen men and nine women. Their economic activities included ranching and casual agriculture, as they owned six cows and horses, and fifty fruit trees. The Luiseño community of ranchería San Luis Rey, possibly also known as the San Luis Rey Band, comprised of seventy-five men, women, and children. The community engaged in ranching, owning sixty-two heads of cattle and forty-five sheep. No mention was made of fruit trees, grape vines, or other
plants suggesting casual agriculture. This may indicate that the San Luis Rey Band relied on indigenous plants or traded for such items with neighboring groups. Another small rancheria was Ancorga Grande, a community comprised of thirty-four men and fifty women and children. Residents of Ancorga Grande tended to nine head of cattle, sixteen horses and mares, but were particularly successful in casual agriculture suggesting that the livestock were utilized to expand their agricultural activities. Ancorga Grande residents tended to 700 grapevines and 400 fruit-trees and relied on a combination of casual agriculture and traditional subsistence strategies. Similarly, Puerta Chiquita was comprised of eighty men, women, and children. The community was engaged in small-scale ranching, owning fourteen animals of “all kinds,” as well as casual agriculture, owning twenty-two peach trees and thirty grape vines. These selected agricultural practices indicate that the residents of Puerta Chiquita traded or sold their surplus crops to obtain goods they did not make. Similarly, rancheria Coyote was comprised of eighty men and sixty women and children. The Luiseño of Coyote reported owning neither horses nor cattle, nor plants such as fruit
trees or vines indicating casual agriculture as among their economic pursuits. While it is possible that the residents of Coyote remained entirely engaged in traditional subsistence practices, it is likely that residents of Coyote simply chose not to share information about their labor activities. The ranchería Cholo, comprised of forty-two men and sixty-seven women and children was a successful community whose economy drew upon both agriculture - including fifty fruit trees and 300 grapevines - and ranching, including eighty-eight oxen and cows and eighteen mares.
Figure 7 Indian Rancherias, ca. 1865
In contrast, it is probable that the community of La Puerta de la Cruz, located in the northern portion of San Jose del Valle, incorporated significant wage labor into the economy of the ranchería. Comprised of eighty-four men, women, and children, La Puerta de la Cruz engaged in limited casual agriculture, owning only fifty grapevines. Additionally, La Puerta de la Cruz owned just six cows, two yokes of oxen, five horses, and six mares. Given their limited ranching and agriculture it seems likely that residents of La Puerta de la Cruz relied on wage labor as vaqueros and ranch hands for nearby Rancho San Jose del Valle. This small community represents an intriguing variation in the prevailing tribal economic strategies as they incorporated wages to supplement their family economies and networks of reciprocity.

The rancherías of Potrero, Yapiche, and La Jolla were all located within the boundaries of Rancho Cuca, on the northern slope of the San Luis Rey River. Ranchería Potrero was a community of significant size, comprised of eighty men and ninety-seven women and children in 1865. Residents of Potrero were deeply engaged in both casual agriculture and ranching, maintaining 143 head of cattle,
145 horses and mares, sixteen jacks (seemingly lacking mares), and 200 sheep. The community also tended to 200 fruit-trees and 1907 grapevines. In consideration of its proximity to Rancho Cuca, it is probable that residents of Potrero also incorporated wages from ranching labor opportunities. Similarly, Luiseños of the ranchería La Jolla engaged in ranching, owning 135 cows and 50 mares, as well as casual agriculture – with 180 peach, fig, and pear trees. La Jolla, near the convergence of the San Luis Rey River and Cedar Creek, was a significant community of 82 men, and 93 women and children. La Jolla residents incorporated wage labor from local ranches, including that of Cave J. Couts for whom they often served as wage laborers and who claimed ownership of their territory as part of the Guajome grant. Collectively, Rancho Cuca (Cuka) was a significant social and economic center among San Diego native rancherías at this time.

Other large rancherías, including Pala, showed further variations in tribal economies. The ranchería of Pala, located in the middle of the San Luis Rey Valley between Rancho Monserate and Rancho Pauma, was comprised of seventy-three men and eighty-nine women and children.
Similarly to La Jolla, Pala residents engaged in both ranching, owning fifty-six heads of cattle, fifty-seven horses and mares, and seventy sheep, as well as casual agriculture with fifty-six fruit-trees. A neighboring ranchería, Pauma, was also a large community, surrounded by Rancho Pauma, comprised of 106 men women and children. The community engaged primarily in ranching, owning forty-three heads of cattle, fourteen horses, and forty-six sheep. Representatives of Pauma made no mention of fruit trees or grapevines suggesting casual agricultural activities. The community likely collected, purchased, or traded for such foodstuffs. Additionally, Rancho Pauma undoubtedly drew wage laborers from the ranchería.

The vast Luiseño ranchería Temecula, located within Rancho Temecula, was comprised of 196 men and 192 women and children. This Luiseño ranchería was an especially successful ranching community with 225 heads of cattle, 150 heads of horses, and 163 sheep. Representatives made no mention of fruit trees or other plants that would suggest casual agricultural practices, indicating that ranching was the principal economic activity for the ranchería’s inhabitants. The community received wages as ranch hands.
and cash for selling their cattle, and in turn traded or purchased agricultural goods. It is probable that the economic success of the ranchería garnered the unwanted attention of grasping Anglo-American ranchers. The accounts of the attendees at the 1865 Temecula meeting illustrate that by the mid-1860s western San Diego Indians engaged in forms of economic hybridity, incorporating wages from employment into the tribal economies.

In 1865, San Diego experienced a modest rate of precipitation of 7.52 inches, perpetuating drought conditions. However, from 1866 – 1869, the economic success of many of the rancherías in northern San Diego County was sustained by temperate weather that supported traditional indigenous subsistence rounds, casual agriculture, and pasture for livestock. In 1866, San Diego received 12.31 inches of rain. This was followed by 15.72 and 11.16 inches of rain in 1867 and 1868, respectively. Such rates of precipitation supported the continuation of hybrid economies in Indian communities. Greater diversity in economic resources including ranching and casual agricultural pursuits enabled Native peoples to increase their economic security. However, smaller
communities faced an uncertain future. It is possible Ancorga Grande, Puerta Chiquita, and Cholo shattered or relocated due to environmental pressures and limited economic diversification during the 1860s.

Despite the 1865 Conference being well-attended by northern San Diego Indians, the resulting account by the Indian agent reflected neither the southernmost nor the coastal Luiseño and Kumeyaay communities.

“There were ten rancherías of the San Diego Indians unable to be present, because of the great distance to be traveled in going to Temecula. These should be called together at some convenient time, and their condition ascertained. From their chief, Tomas, I learned they were in about the same state and as numerous as the average of the rancherías present at the gathering,” wrote an Agent.98

As indicated by the 1865 Temecula report, the disposition of ranching Indians along the foothills of the Peninsula Range was the principal focus of the OIA. Away from the urban township, Agents considered inland Indians particularly vulnerable to interference from vagabonds, miners, and squatters.99 Furthermore, as US officials resolved the Mexican Land Claims, rancherías located within ranchos were also threatened. California land policy
favored Midwestern and Eastern settlement patterns consisting of small farms, and threatened the large ranchos that struggled to maintain ownership of their grants. The coastal ranches, upon which many Indians relied for labor, were often divided and homesteaded by American farming families. These farmlands were the former free-range livestock pastures of the Spanish and Californio settlers. To pasture their cattle, ranchers developed a circuitous route across western San Diego County.

The immediate threat developed into an enduring uncertainty. Though ranching would remain a major economic enterprise in western San Diego County, some San Diego Indians gravitated to other forms of wage labor as the regional economy of western San Diego shifted.
2 Sue Wade, Stephen Van Wormer, and Heather Thomson, “240 Years of Ranching: Historical Research, Field Surveys, Oral Interviews, Significance Criteria, and Management Recommendations for Ranching Districts and Sites in the San Diego Region.” California State Parks, September 8, 2009, 18
3 Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 20
4 José del Carmen Lugo. Life of a Rancher. (N.p., 1877), 215-216
5 Pen-and-ink on tracing paper, U.S. District Court, California, Southern District Land Case 91 SD, page 116, land case B-1073. Bancroft Library
8 Dana, Two Years before the Mast, location 96-97
9 Dana, Two Years before the Mast, location 1784
10 Dana, Two Years before the Mast, location 1781
11 Dana, Two Years before the Mast, location 3544
12 Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 20
13 Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 20
15 Wade et al, “240 Years of Ranching,” 21
16 Bryant, Journal of a Tour, 407
17 Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 21
19 Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 22
20 n.a., “[no Title],” San Diego Herald, June 16, 1855, San Diego History Center.
21 Benjamin Hayes quoted in John Walton, ed. The Indians of Southern California in 1852. The B.D. Wilson Report and a Selection of Contemporary Comment. (The Huntington Library, 1952), 60
23 George H. Phillips, Vineyards and Vaqueros. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 88
24 William Ellsworth Smythe, History of San Diego, 1542-1908: The Modern City. (History Co., 1907), 109


Benjamin Hayes, Notes from the Diaries of Judge Benjamin Hayes. Edited by Majorie Tisdale Wolcott. (Los Angeles: Private Printing, 1929), 234


Scammon, American Whale-Fishery, 255

Dana, Two Years before the Mast, Location 3180

Hayes, Notes, 234

Wilson, “Report on Indian Affairs in San Diego and Los Angeles Counties in 1852.” 20

Wilson, “Report on Indian Affairs in San Diego and Los Angeles Counties in 1852,” 20


n.a., “[no Title],” San Diego Herald, April 26, 1856, sec. 2, San Diego History Center., 1

n.a., “[no Title],” San Diego Union, April 11, 1857, San Diego History Center.

Smythe, History of San Diego, 268-269


Goodall, “California,” 236-260

Goodall, “California,” 236-260

Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 83

Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 84

Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 84
Juliana Osuna inherited Rancho San Dieguito after the suicide of her son, Leandro Osuna whose unpredictable temperament and cruel treatment of Indians was notorious. Rumor that his Indian servants poisoned him, leading to his suicide, became an enduring story in San Diego.


Dole, “California Superintendency,” 144

Phillips, *Vineyards and Vaqueros*, 301
76 Florence Connolly Shipek, Pushed into the Rocks: Southern California Indian Land Tenure, 1769-1986 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 34
77 Shipek, Pushed into the Rocks, 34
78 Shipek, Pushed into the Rocks, 34
81 Cooley, “Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,” 13
82 Dole, “California Superintendency,” 144
83 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 122
84 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 122
85 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 122
86 Heather Thomson and Sue Wade, Attachment I: San Diego County Ranching Interviews, California State Parks (Sacramento: California State Parks, 2009), 53
87 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 122
88 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 124
89 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 124
90 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 124
91 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 124
93 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 124
94 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 124
95 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 124
96 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 124
98 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 124 – 125
99 Stanley, “California Superintendency,” 126
Chapter 3: 1865 - 1882

"Many of them are employed by whites as laborers"

In 1865, Anglo-Americans settlers flooded into Southern California, usurping Native assertions of property ownership as well as causing broad social and economic instability. Anglo-American settlers seized Indian land as Southern California experienced a series of economic booms that drove up the cost of land per acre and put a premium on any so-called unoccupied lands. Anglo-American newcomers cast aside Native inhabitants in a melee for land and economic opportunity, ushering in a new, chaotic period during which San Diego Indians had little legal recourse. The influx of Anglo-Americans also contributed to an abrupt shift in Office of Indian Affairs (OIA) policy toward Southern California Indians after 1866. Concurrently, wage labor comprised an increasing percentage of the Indian family economy as other means of support became less certain.

Indians residing in rancherias near developing townships garnered little consideration from the OIA beyond a concern for Native exposure to the corrupting influence of Anglo-
American vagabonds. The reported the influence of American and Mexican vagabonds and squatters kept alive OIA interest in the idea of a Southern California reservation. Writing on October 22, 1866, Federal Commissioner of Indian Affairs Dennis N. Cooley pressed for a reservation in Southern California. He wrote:

“Some arrangement in behalf of the Mission Indians in the extreme south, near the coast, will be found necessary, and can be effected at small cost, as the Indians of the region are somewhat advanced in civilization and abundantly able and willing to provide their own subsistence if they can be secured in the occupancy of sufficient land, and be assisted occasionally by a distribution of seeds and agricultural implements.”

Commissioner Cooley took a myopic view of Indian economies and failed to recognize Native abilities to provide for their economic needs through wage labor including ranching and other employment opportunities. Rather, following the standard policy for Indians across the U.S., the OIA promoted agricultural pursuits for San Diego Indians that would be subsequent to Indian removal to inland territories that were less desirable to American settlers. In 1866, Cooley estimated 3,300 Mission Indians resided throughout Southern California, over whom the OIA held no authority.
Cooley felt, however, the local Indian population needed protection from Anglo-American newcomers.\textsuperscript{3} “I can suggest no remedy, except a reservation, from which all lawless persons could be excluded. There has been some trouble among the Cahuillas, and the difficulties can nearly all be traced to the influence of bad white men,” wrote Cooley.\textsuperscript{4} Cooley seemed unaware that isolation on reservations would shift San Diego Indian economies from self-reliance to dependency on the Federal government.

Writing from San Francisco, Cooley understood neither the economic relationship between San Diego Indians and Anglo-Americans nor the traditional subsistence practices that many western San Diego Indians continued to practice in some form. “The Indians...are tolerated on account of the labor they perform for the whites: their conditions [are] deplorable and pitiful in the extreme; they are demoralized both physically and morally,” wrote Cooley.\textsuperscript{5}

Yet, the OIA was unable to break the economic relationship between Indian laborers and Anglo-American employers in San Diego. Thus, the reservation question remained unresolved. From 1866 through 1869, the general economic and social conditions of western San Diego Indians were unchanged,
owing in part to abundant precipitation. However, the OIA continue to complain that the economic conditions and labor practices of the San Diego Indians did not align with OIA conceptions. “The Mission Indians (so-called) are badly scattered through Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Bernardino Counties, and at present are much impoverished. They number about three thousand. But little can be done for them by the government unless they are collected on a reservation,” wrote an Agent on August 15, 1869. Agents did not recognize the “badly scattered” Indians as reflecting Native economic strategies, especially in times of drought. Moreover, Agents failed to understand that Anglo-American and Mexican relations with San Diego Indians were based principally on mutual economic dependence. Nonetheless, Indian laborers were vulnerable to exploitation and theft by Anglo-American settlers.

While San Diego Indians remained economically independent and beyond the authority of the OIA, Anglo-American settlers used various pretenses to rob Indians of private property. Southern California Indians experienced the theft of their horses, oxen, cows, and stock cattle. Indian-owned herds were also vulnerable to the fluctuating
environment. Nonetheless, the presence of livestock indicates that stock raising and ranching continued to feature prominently in Indian economies. At the same time, their inability to protect their property underscores the changing reality of life under the American regime.

In 1870, San Diego received only 4.37 inches of precipitation, but ranching remained a prominent form of wage employment in the economic development of western San Diego County. In 1870, livestock in the county included 19,556 cattle, 16,443 sheep, 5,687 horses, 723 mules, and 1,268 cows. Despite the lack of precipitation in 1870, livestock found adequate pasturage in San Diego while other parts of the state were dry. Dry conditions prevailed in 1871 and 1872 as well, with 5.64 and 5.07 inches respectively. For Western San Diego Indians, these years of drought taxed both casual agriculture, including stone fruit trees and vineyards, as well as the grazing lands that were dependent on precipitation.

A serious additional challenge emerged in the 1870s. Livestock throughout western San Diego was impacted dramatically by new illnesses attributed to the introduction of Texas and Arizona stock. These included
the so-called Texas fever and blackleg hemorrhagic septicemia. Before 1868, there was little mention of sickness among California cattle, likely owing to their isolation. However, from 1870 to 1884 various illnesses from livestock recently introduced to the region diminished herds of cattle throughout San Diego. According to Sue Wade, Stephen Van Wormer, and Heather Thomson, in “240 Years of Ranching: Historical Research, Field Surveys, Oral Interviews, Significance Criteria, and Management Recommendations for Ranching Districts and Sites in the San Diego Region”:

“The greatest scourge of diseases among California herds was that of Texas or Southern fever. Almost equal in its destruction was blackleg hemorrhagic septicemia, which attacked only fat young cattle. The lean, tough lanky cattle of San Diego had not been susceptible to it, but with the crossing of those cattle with more flesh producing strains in the 1850s, that immunity was lost. Anthrax was also a problem during this period,” write Wade et al.

It is probable that the spread of disease among San Diego herds undermined the economies of some rancherías and contributed to the disappearance of others. The economic effects of disease on livestock may explain the apparent disappearance of Native rancherías such as Angora Grande,
Puerta Chiquita, and Cholo, which do not appear in the records after 1865. Undoubtedly, the combined effects of the drought and the diseases among the cattle pressured native populations. Some members of the Indian community, relying on traditional practices, would have left the affected area for locales with more reliable water supplies or to attempt to obtain undiseased livestock. The spread of diseases among livestock may thus have contributed to the appearance of scattered Indian populations.

Though Agents advocated for the establishment of reservations, Anglo-American residents of San Diego contested the creation of reservations for a variety of reasons. Though their reasons were many, mutual economic dependency was central. The economic development of western San Diego County had drawn directly from Mexican and Spanish precedents and relied on a Native labor force. As illustrated by ranching, though Western San Diego had shifted between mercantilism and capitalism, local industries continued to rely on Indian communities to supply inexpensive wage laborers. Native people had adapted wage employment to suit their economic needs also. Consequently, unlike other regions of the continent, Indian
removal to reservations threatened the economic interests of Anglo-Americans in San Diego as well as the family economies of San Diego Indians. This mutual labor dependence served as the basis of Anglo-American and Indian resistance to the reservations scheme. Non-Indian residents at Pala and San Pasqual relied upon Indian wage laborers and allied against the OIA. “As soon as it became known to the settlers at Pala and San Pasqual that those valleys had been set apart as reservations,” wrote an Agent, “[t]hey subscribed their names to a paper agreeing to pay $25 each, making up a purse of $500, and employed a lawyer in San Diego by name of Taggart, who…agreed to have the reservation order set aside.”¹⁴ Though Taggart acted on behalf of Anglo-American squatters intent on remaining in the set-aside inland valleys, strong resistance also came from Luiseños.

The proposal of reservations divided the broader community of Southern California Indians, particularly the western Luiseños, and objections to the reservation scheme were diverse. Organized Luiseño resistance began in 1870. The offer of reservations in San Diego offered a different social and economic frame for Indian life ways that
proposed sedentary stability at the expense of traditional subsistence rounds and wage labor.

A portion of the Luiseño community rejected the leadership of longtime Captain Manuel “Manuelito” Cota as a result of his support for reservations. Cota reported to OIA officials that San Diego judge had appointed a man named Olegario as the new leader of the Luiseños. The appointment of a new Luiseño captain by a county judge was the result of the fracturing of the Indian community. “The new general has commanded the Indians not to obey the orders of Manuelito [Manuel] Cota or those of the agent, as they have no authority outside of the reservations,” wrote an Agent.¹⁵ The observation demonstrated Luiseños were aware the OIA conducted their power on and through reservations and also indicates that San Diego Indians possessed greater political acumen than OIA agents had previously supposed. Both Manuel and Olegario exploited their relationships with Anglo-American officials to advance their own objectives. Additionally, on the reservations, Indians realized they would lose ownership of their lands and would function as tenant farmers and ranchers on government land. Cota’s support of the scheme
and reliance upon OIA officials for political support undermined Luiseño confidence in his leadership. “Most Indians and other sympathizers were, however, convinced that the few Indians, such as Manuel Cota, who favored this reservation scheme, were henchmen of the rancho grant owners seeking to dispossess the Indians of their land use but retain them as laborers,” wrote Florence Shipeck In Pushed to the Rocks. Still others objected to losing their land and residents of Pala and San Pasqual feared their lands would be overrun by displaced Indians.

An Agent reported that Manuel Cota, “chief of the Mission Indians,” believed his people had been deceived to object to the reservations. Additionally, it was reported that Cota was overthrown by Indians under Olegario’s direction and Cota formally protested the appointment and commission of Olegario, a local Luiseño, by a local judge. On August 6th, Olegario and his supporters, assaulted and beat Manuel Cota. On August 11th, Olegario announced his tent to kill Manuel Cota, who found refuge at the ranch of Cave J. Couts. Couts telegraphed the OIA Agent, giving a brief history of the difficulties, but also asserting falsely that Olegario and Manuel Largo, “chief” of the Cahuilla,
were in collusion. On September 9, 1871, a large meeting was held at Pala to settle the conflict between Manuel Cota, Olegario, their supporters, and the local OIA Agent. Also in attendance were local ranchers and a large contingent of Cahuilla led by Manuel Largo, suggesting that broader economic and intertribal considerations hinged on the result of the meeting. The local Agent requested the formal resignation of Manuel Cota as “chief” citing that his life was threatened by the party opposed to a reservation. Illustrating the central role that livestock held in Indian economies, Manuel Cota requested compensation for the cattle and sheep he had killed to feed starving Indians. The Agent appointed Joe Antonio Sal as “general” over the Mission Indians and Manuel Largo remained the “chief” of the Cahuilla, their respective jurisdictions separated by the San Jacinto Mountains. The presence of Manuel Largo and local ranchers at this meeting indicates that at least some Indian vaqueros and ranch hands were Cahuilla laborers on whom San Diego ranch-owners employed intermittently. An Agent observed that in the case of Mountain Cahuillas, ranchers had to tread a fine line when it came to dealing with their chief. This
observation suggests that Cahuilla leaders negotiated labor relationships with Anglo-American employers.

Wage labor played a central role in the political leadership of both the Luiseno and mountain Cahuilla. Native and Anglo-American observers perceived the establishment of reservations as a threat to the continuation of wage labor. By 1871, San Diego Indians were widely acknowledged by both local and national figures as comprising the principal wage labor force in Southern California. Male San Diego Indians were employed as ranch hands, vaqueros, and herders, but also in construction, and tending to vineyards and orchards. “The Mission Indians proper comprise those living in San Pasqual and Pala Valley, San Luis Rey, Temecula, and other localities in their vicinity. Many of them are employed by whites as laborers,” observed an Agent on October 1, 1871.21 These localities were centers of ranching, a continuation of residential and economic patterns from previous decades. In proximity to Rancho Santa Rosa, Rancho Temecula, and Rancho Pauba, Temecula was the center of Northern San Diego County ranching. Pala was nearly equidistant to both Rancho Monserate and Rancho Pauma. Indian laborers at San
Luis Rey were near Rancho Santa Margarita y Las Flores, Rancho Guajome (owned by Cave J. Couts), Rancho Buena Vista, and Rancho Agua Hedionda. San Pasqual Valley was near several ranchos: Rancho San Bernardo, Rancho Rincon del Diablo, and Rancho Los Vallecitos de San Marcos. Warner Springs, located in the San Jose del Valle, included several significant rancherías and numerous Indian residences. Ranching continued to engage laborers from local rancherías, galvanizing the role wages in the economies of Western San Diego Indians. Moreover, Anglo-American employers were unwilling to lose the labor on which they had come to rely. Indeed, much of the economic development of Southern California hinged on the availability of Indian wage laborers. Concurrently, wages played an increasingly significant role in the family economy of San Diego Indians as the local environment reverted to dry conditions, 6.80 inches in 1874, and labor opportunities abounded.22

To the OIA, however, the lack of reservations in Southern California perpetuated economic exploitation, rather than economic inclusion, of Indians by Anglo-American settlers. Living conditions of rancherías often reflected traditional
housing, which the OIA considered a significant encumbrance to Native social development and eventual assimilation. OIA authority over Indians, however, was principally through reservation land.

Agent John G. Ames visited several Indian leaders, including Manuel Largo of the Mountain Cahuilla. Ames stated that Indians had allegedly told him of their willingness to labor and to be not a burden to the Government.23 “If the opportunity afforded them, they will themselves soon defray all the expenses of the agency charged with their care,” claimed Ames.24 Though Ames’ recommendation carried the purported support of the Cahuilla leader Manuel Largo and other seemingly anonymous Indian leaders, San Diegans contested his recommendations. Ames’ statements are difficult to reconcile with the Cahuillas’ active role as wage laborers in the inland ranches. Their wage labor practices, relative isolation, and reluctance toward Federal dependency, would seemingly demonstrate disinclination toward reservation life. Additionally, San Diego residents continued to oppose any plan for creating reservations. On January 23, 1874, the Daily Union questioned the feasibility of placing Indians
on reservations in the rugged foothills of inland San Diego predicting, "Mr. Ames could not coax twenty Indians upon it." The *Daily Union* also questioned whether it was necessary to place Indians on a reserve when they already were self-supporting and aptly anticipated: "The Indians then would not live on the reserve, and could not if they would, without Government assistance." Life on the reservations would isolate Indians from most forms of wage labor, assuring dependency on Federal sources for food, shelter, and health care. Many Anglo-American residents of San Diego opposed the establishment of the reservations for such the economic dependencies and low standards of living for Native peoples.

Additionally, OIA envisioned transitioning Indian agriculture to forms resembling Eastern and Midwestern practices of Anglo-American farmers - entailing labor-intensive grain production and extensive irrigation. Though Southern California Indians practiced casual agriculture, often including vineyards and fruit trees these required little maintenance. There was little likelihood that the rugged foothills of the Peninsular Range would support the agricultural goals of the OIA. The
lack of adequate water to support a sedentary population as well as agricultural pursuits was also an impediment to the scheme.

Concurrently, employment was readily available to Indian laborers on Anglo-American and Mexican-owned ranchos; putting local labor needs at odds with OIA’s plans for reservations. The Daily Union wrote, "[Indians] would soon leave the reserve and disperse through the country; going to Los Angeles or San Bernardino or elsewhere where they could get work. Most of the young Indians go to those points now and remain two-thirds of the year, laboring." 27 The San Diego Union, protesting the renewed intent of establishing reservations in San Diego, indicated that by 1874, Anglo-Americans engaged a significant portion of male Indians as mobile wage laborers during much of the year. Presumably, the very young and the elderly remained at home. Such activities suggest the continued adaptation of traditional labor practices to the evolving economic environment. The wage labor practices among San Diego Indians related to broader labor practices among American Indians, which the OIA disregarded in forming Indian policy.
Nationally, nearly forty-three thousand Indian households, and nearly the same number of independent males, were engaged in wage labor as the principal means of economic support. Such economic activities were counter to the prioritization of agriculture as the gateway to civilization; and the OIA disregarded them as “awkward.” “A portion of them have labored awkwardly enough, and with little profit to themselves, except that which comes from the effort, but the majority of these laborers have procured the larger portion of their means of living,” wrote an Agent.28

Ranching continued to prove a viable industry in San Diego County and western and northern San Diego Indians were directly responsible for its continued success. However, ranching did not come to the Southern and Eastern Kumeyaay until after the American Civil War. Following the Civil War, ranchers and homesteaders moved into the Laguna, Campo, and Jacumba areas, though the southern Kumeyaay still actively occupied these lands.29 Rather than their economic incorporation into wage labor, ranching in eastern and southern San Diego depended on the removal and economic marginalization of southern Kumeyaay from valuable
pasturage.\textsuperscript{30} Within twelve years, the Kumeyaay population in the Jacumba-Campo area lived in destitution as Anglo-American settlers seized their lands for livestock grazing.\textsuperscript{31} An Executive Order in 1875 established the first Kumeyaay reservations, which centered on existing native villages. These reservations proved inadequate to support continued residency and on May 3, 1877, the lands reverted to the public domain.\textsuperscript{32} Any Kumeyaay who relocated to the reservations was as vulnerable to displacement and marginalization as before the 1875 Executive Order. Such capriciousness by the Executive Office and the OIA likely undermined Native confidence in the reservation scheme. Anglo-Americans in San Diego were concerned by the OIA’s neglect of Kumeyaay Indians in southern San Diego County. On March 18, 1880, the San Diego Union published an open letter regarding the Kumeyaay at and south of the Cuyamaca mountains. Expressing concern for the welfare of the Kumeyaay, the letter stated in part, “We have heard that there is an Indian agent somewhere in San Bernardino but he does not appear to be aware of any Indians on this side of the county line.”\textsuperscript{33} Though the Agent was active in the northern portion of San Diego County, in the opinion of the Agent, the native inhabitants of present-day southeastern
San Diego County were not the responsibility of the United States Government and were rebel Indians that belonged to Mexico. On May 20, 1877, the San Diego Union noted that stockmen from outside the area, presumably from Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley, were looking for grazing land in the Cuyamacas, located due east of the San Diego River.\textsuperscript{34} Again cattle ranchers were in close contact with the southern Kumeyaay who at times acquired livestock to supplement deficiencies in subsistence strategies. In 1881, the Agent continued to claim that Indians living in the Colorado Desert were a “renegade class” unconnected with the Mission Indians.\textsuperscript{35} However, in 1888, the OIA recognized the hundred and fifty remaining eastern Kumeyaay as “Diegueno” and included them in the Indian Census of the Mission Indians.\textsuperscript{36}

In the northern and inland areas of San Diego, ranching remained a reliable means of economic self-sufficiency for Indian wage laborers. Local Indians incorporated livestock and casual farming endeavors into traditional subsistence rounds. However, an increased reliance on wage labor was a response to environmental variation in San Diego, the economic growth of San Diego County, limitations imposed by
shifting territorialities, and the unreliability of the OIA.

Cattle remained significant to the broader San Diego economy as well. In the late 1870s, ranching in San Diego experienced another fluorescence. Though diseases posed a constant threat to livestock from the 1870s through the 1890s, its effects were buffered by wet seasons. Annual precipitation for 1878 in San Diego totaled 13.87 inches, and 14.71 inches in 1879. Such conditions supported farming and ranching, and fostered the growth of cattle herds. The rains also contributed indirectly to greater wage labor opportunities for Native peoples. San Diego Indians who lived on or about the ranches and farms of Anglo-Americans obtained about one dollar per day for their daily labor, noted an Agent on August 15, 1877.

“Most of the larger ranchmen have about them one or several families, whom they permit to build their slight houses on the corners of the ranch, or on grounds adjoining, and in addition allow the use of water sufficient to irrigate a garden, which such Indians often cultivate. These Indians do most of the ordinary work of the ranches... they live more or less comfortably, as the proprietor of the ranch to which they are attached is a humane or just man, or hard-hearted and a cheat... The interests of the ranchman
generally dictate treatment at least fair enough to prevent his Indians from moving away from him. This class of Indians is pretty large. They have no difficulty in securing enough food and comfortable clothing, and some of them have learned to be thrifty and prudent," observed an Agent in 1877.  

Though the Agent’s observations ignored the finer mutual economic dependencies between Indian wage laborers and rancho owners, his observations suggest a degree of economic and housing security for ranch workers that may not have extended to other employment sectors. Despite mutual economic dependency, the labor relationships between Indians and Anglo-Americans were fraught with irregularities. Though many San Diego Indians were wage laborers, it was not a panacea for the economic marginalization of all San Diego Indians. The means and amount employers paid Indian wage laborers varied significantly. Some employers exploited Indian laborers with little accountability. Before 1879, OIA Agents gave little regard to Indian wages. How and when employers compensated Indians laborers was less well-documented. Employers often cheated Indians of their pay for their labor or paid them with cheap products that contributed to demoralization and had limited utilization within the
family economy. Employers also victimized Indian laborers by taking advantage of their unfamiliarity with keeping records of time and in computing accounts. Underpayment of wages was among the most common deceptive practices committed against Southern California Indians.

“Employers, in many instances, practice the grossest frauds in the payment of their wages. In some cases, goods of one kind or other were given them in lieu of money, at such prices as to make the price of a day’s labor to the employers not exceed ten cents,” wrote an Agent. 41

Nonetheless, the economic exploitation of Indian laborers concerned few Agents. Undoubtedly, the financial mistreatment of Indian laborers contributed to the poverty and destitution many experienced. One Agent hoped to curtail the economic abuse of Indian laborers writing:

“By close and diligent inquiry as to the wages they received, and the method of payment, I discovered the dishonest tricksters, and by enforcing just and honest payment, when it was refused, as well as by publishing the rascalities practiced by certain parties who employed them in considerable numbers, I have succeeded in a great measure in securing just and fair dealing, so much so that few complaints of this character come to me now.” 42

The Agent’s actions illustrate the complexities of the OIA presence and were an example of how the Federal system
could benefit Native people in important ways. The actions of the Agent were an initial step in addressing the economic exploitation of Indian laborers, though abuses continued through the 1880s. Employers often had no conscience about defrauding Indians of their wages.\textsuperscript{43} Fraudulent methods of employers in paying Indian laborers undermined the family economies of San Diego Indians. At times, employers used violent against Indian laborers. In 1880 an Agent reported,

"An Indian having labored at cutting wood for six days, earning, at the wages agreed upon, the sum of $2.50, received in part payment two bottles of wine for which he was charged $1, and upon demanding the balance of $1.50 in money, he was ordered to leave the premises. The Indian refusing to go without his money, the man took down his shotgun and discharged a load of buck-shot into the Indian’s face, destroying the sight of an eye and otherwise disfiguring his face. The next day this employer boasted to an acquaintance how he had settled a bill of $1.50 with an Indian by paying him with buckshot. Subsequently, I had the man arrested."\textsuperscript{44}

Owing to such flagrant abuse, Agents were at times advocates for Southern California Indians, endeavoring to protect and empower Indian wage laborers. Receiving wages, as agreed upon, was a marked improvement for laboring Indians, securing a greater degree of economic stability.
Moreover, the Agent endeavored to empower Indians as a laboring community.

"Heretofore the Indian laborer would accept without a murmur what his employers would give him, and seemed to feel himself favored if he received anything; but now, if the dealing does not strike him as being just and right, he will say to his employers, 'I will go and see the agent, if he says it is right, I am satisfied'," reported an Agent.\(^{45}\)

In addition to reflecting the ongoing central role of wage labor in the family economies of San Diego Indians, such accounts also marked a new step in Indian economies in San Diego. Previously, though Agents were aware of Indian laborers, they did little to facilitate the laborer’s navigation of employment opportunities. Reliance on, or threat of, recourse to the Indian Agent, gave some Native laborers the means necessary to avoid exploitation.

During the 1870s and 1880s, sheep dominated the livestock industry as the number of cattle in the county had fallen to 10,124 while the number of sheep peaked at 148,252, horses numbered 4,782. Other livestock included 350 mules and 3662 cows.\(^ {46}\) Concurrently, homesteading Americans pushed ranchers further inland from the coast, occupying large tracts near the mountain and foothill residences of
Luiseño and Cahuilla Indians. Ranching at Jamul, Cuyamaca, Laguna, Santa Marina (Ramona), San Vicente, Valle de San José (including Warner’s Springs), and neighboring San Felipe Valley wherein Indian men worked as ranch hands and vaqueros in the large cattle enterprises of the late 19th century. The economic influence of these changes were a push and pull upon Indian wage laborers. However, the closer proximity of ranches to reservation dwelling Indians facilitated labor opportunities as well as grazing opportunities on Indian lands. Often Anglo-American ranchers hired Indians who were tribal members as farm laborers, ranch hands, and shepherds. In some instances, European-immigrant ranchers married into ranching Indian communities in inland San Diego. There was considerable fluidity between Anglo-American and Indian spaces and families. Consequently, ranching in San Diego was increasingly an industry that relied on family members and close acquaintances of Indian, European, and Anglo-American ancestry.

In 1883, the OIA re-established Capitan Grande and Mesa Grande as reservations. Writing on August 13, 1883, an Agent commented upon the insufficiencies of the
reservations established in the foothills of the Peninsular Range. “The Indians of this agency sustain themselves by labor, no subsistence being issued to them except as a gratuity to such sick or infirm and destitute ones as apply for aid,” wrote an Agent.⁴⁹

A dry winter in 1883, 8.01 inches of precipitation for the year, compounded the dry period over the past three years, and led to poor irrigation prospects and a decline in agricultural productivity on the reservations in San Diego. It is probable that, as a result tribal members shifted to a greater reliance on wage labor opportunities including ranching.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the failure of Anglo-American style farming on the reservations dramatically illustrated the disconnection between OIA policy and local environmental conditions. The lack of precipitation and precipitation-dependent irrigation infrastructure revealed the environmental limitations of the land set aside as reservations. Due to the dependency on the environment, economies quickly plummeted for families engaged principally in farming on reservations. The lack of irrigation economically devastated tribal members on reservations. Additionally, the OIA would not compensate
Indians for their economic loss. Economic necessity compelled tribal members to find off-reservation wage labor.

Concurrently, many non-enrolled Indians in Southern California were uncounted after 1883, reversing previous assertions by the OIA that all Indians were within the purview of the OIA based on ethnicity. Changes in Indian enumeration could be attributed to several factors: that Indians who moved away from the reservations were so numerous as to be incalculable, that Indian economic mobility between Anglo-American and Indian spaces was too vague to enumerate successfully, or that the OIA had resolved that Indians who achieved economic self-sufficiency were beyond their purview. Though the OIA did not track Indian laborers while off the reservations, their role remained vital in the family economies of reservation Indians. “Those who do not subsist themselves by labor on the reservations go out as laborers among the whites in adjoining settlements, where their labor is in demand at remunerative wages,” wrote an Agent.  

On August 22, 1884, the viability of the reservation scheme was openly questioned. “The Indians have not the capital
or the enterprise to bring water on [reservation] lands. [The lands] are therefore useless to them now, and would likely continue to be, at least until the next generation," observed an Agent.\(^52\) Despite the efforts of the OIA, in September of 1885 San Diego Indians continued to live in approximately thirty-two villages and rancherías, suggesting that labor opportunities enabled Indians to perpetuate traditional residency practices. Populations of the villages and rancherías varied from 236 to 18.\(^53\) With an average population of 127 individuals per ranchería, a population estimate would indicate that at least 4,826 Indians continued to live in traditional rancherías in 1885; an estimate reflected an increase of 200 persons in the San Diego Indian population since 1880. This enumeration reflects the economic success of incorporating labor opportunities into family economies and the continued maintenance of rancherías as the foci of Native life. Additionally, approximately ninety-seven additional Indians who lived near or in the City of San Diego were enumerated who had not been counted previously.\(^54\) These were either highly mobile coastal Kumeyaay who traveled between San Diego and Baja to optimize wage employment and traditional
subsistence strategies or the “renegades” discredited by a previous Agent.

Throughout western San Diego County, Indians were experiencing a period of economic success during the mid to late 1880s. In 1885, Indian laborers wrote the contracts for their labor as well as for the sale of their own products, which the local Courts upheld. Agents continued to advise Indian laborers when deemed necessary and endeavored to ensure that employers did not defraud Indian laborers of their wages.55 Such efforts promoted the economic success and independence of Indian laborers.

A generally beneficent environment supported the economic success of San Diego Indians. The year 1886 yielded 15.35 inches of precipitation, the third in a series of years with dramatically fluctuating precipitation varying from 27.59 inches in 1884 to 5.73 inches in 1885. The precipitation supported casual agriculture, farming, as well as ranching enterprises, industries that typically engaged Indian wage laborers.56 The following year provided 10.45 inches of rain to the local rivers and underground aquifers that supported ranching and supplied San Diego’s municipal water.57
The rains made the region appear bucolic and more capable of supporting a growing population than it in fact was. In the midst of an Anglo-American immigration swell and economic boom, San Diego’s infrastructure strained to meet the demands of a growing population. By midsummer of 1887, the San Diego Chamber of Commerce reported that 41,356 people had arrived, and only 18,155 had departed during the fiscal year from June 30, 1886, to July 1, 1887. The result was a net population increase of over 23,000 newcomers to the San Diego Township. Projects aimed at expanding local infrastructure relied principally on the local Indian population for labor, increasing wage employment opportunities. For some Indians, however, the increased population was an unwelcome prospect. A burgeoning population pressured Indians who were previously on the economic and territorial periphery of the urban environment. It is probable that the increased population contributed to the dissolution or relation of rancherías and created new barriers to maintaining traditional subsistence strategies.

In 1887, the local environment continued to play an influential role in the lives of San Diego Indians who
resided on reservations. The environmental inadequacies of the San Diego reservations, remarked upon in 1885 by an Agent, were now acutely problematic. “There are nearly 200,000 acres of land embraced in the reservations set aside for the Mission Indians. There are not 500 acres of this vast domain on which a decent living can be made without irrigation,” wrote an Agent on August 17, 1887.\footnote{59}

In establishing the reservations, Agents did not consider topography or local environmental conditions. The OIA established reservations in San Diego at locales distinctly ill-suited to commercial farming, though ranching fared better. “The farming operations among the Indians for the past year have not been, on the whole, a great success. This has resulted, in part, from the exceeding dryness of the winter and spring, and absence of all facilities for irrigation,” wrote an Agent.\footnote{60}

Despite the failure of agricultural efforts during the previous year, the OIA called for the collection of all Indians on to one or more reservations, the allotment of these lands in severalty, and the furnishing of each family with a horse, a cow, and some agricultural implements.\footnote{61} Reservations were “a solution to the Indian Problem,”
according to one Agent, but failed to acknowledge San Diego Indians as central participants in San Diego’s economy.\textsuperscript{62}

The repeated failures of the reservation scheme contributed to a decline of economies of tribal members and affected their families. The failures of the reservations prompted increased financial dependency upon wages from outside the reservations to support family economies. The collapse of the reservations in 1887 placed renewed pressure on laboring tribal members to contribute wages to family economies and extended networks of reciprocity. Indian laborers gained wage labor experience from Mission and Californio ranching. However, homesteading pushed further inland affecting open-range grazing as well as Indian laborers and their traditional rancherías. In San Diego County’s northern and inland areas, ranch owners employed Indians in primary and secondary occupations at the ranches. As labor opportunities became more limited due to competition, some Indians wage laborers sought wage labor opportunities in the developing urban space of the San Diego Township.

The Township of San Diego developed separately from the ranching economy of northern and inland San Diego County.
The Pueblo Lands, the Mission San Diego land grant, and Rancho La Nacion, became the Township of San Diego. The township became the focus of American mercantilism and consequently experienced a different course of economic development.

In the 1880s, the Township remained without an industrial manufacturing sector; seasonal and temporary wage labor opportunities dominated Indian employment as indicated in the 1880 Census. According to the 1880 US Census for the San Diego Township, 38.6% of urban Indians males identified simply as “laborer,” though there was no indication as to which economic sectors these male laborers labored. Though employers offered gendered laborer opportunities in San Diego County, both women and men worked as domestic servants in the township of San Diego. Also, many Indians in the township of San Diego were either unemployed, or engaged in seasonal or gray labor. Some gravitated to the waterfront.

By the mid-1880s, the waterfront was one of the most ethnically diverse and economically dynamic regions in Southern California. Within it, however, urban San Diego Indians resided under a much closer gaze than their inland
counterparts did. Despite endemic impropriety in the township, Anglo-Americans in San Diego projected much of the social ills of the urban environment onto Native women. Rather than viewing Native women as the victims of economic and political marginalization, editorial in San Diego newspapers complained bitterly of the presence of intoxicated Native women wandering the streets of San Diego. On March 22, 1882, an editorial in the San Diego Union exemplified the Anglo-American bias toward Indian women whom they viewed as embodying the vice of society. The San Diego Union reported, "True, the saloons and stores along Fifth Street were closed. Even 'Stingaree' block was as silent as the grave. Not an Indian or squaw to be seen, and ladies and children could walk down the lower part of Fifth Street to the steamer wharf without these disgusting sights that have presented themselves on every Sunday for the past two or three years." Local papers highlighted the 'vagrancy' of Native women as a public worriment that needed immediate action. On July 1, 1884, the San Diego Union lamented, "So long as the drunken Indian squaws are allowed to roam our streets, just so long will it be necessary for the police to taken them in charge. Constable Palmer yesterday arrested two of them and lodged
them in jail, where they will be maintained by the county for the next two or three months."\(^6\) On November 22, 1884 an editorial in the San Diego Union endeavored to further demean the presence of Native women in the waterfront for its readers and refocus the problem of vice upon Native people; “The squaws frequent the back streets after night for the purpose of indulging in immoral practices for gain.”\(^6\) Native women in the waterfront were a statistical minority, but census records in the late 19\(^\text{th}\) century suggest a growing presence, possibly indicating the growth of the waterfront as a social and economic whirlpool for disenfranchised people. However, Indians resided locally at the coastal rancherías, particularly the large Indian ranchería located at 5th and the waterfront. The ranchería at 5\(^\text{th}\) and the waterfront fostered access to social and wage labor opportunities as well as the subsistence resources of the bay; it’s proximity to urban San Diego was the result of a waterfront community that developed around and between Indian rancherías.

Within the Pueblo Lands of San Diego, Native rancherías remained the social and residential center of Indian life. Though the San Pasqual ranchería and the San Diego Village,
which dominated the 1860 census as the foci of Native social space, were no longer in existence in 1880, 85% of enumerated urban Indians continued to live in a ranchería. For instance, a ranchería existed on 19th Street in Old Town San Diego, comprising over one-quarter of the enumerated urban Indian population. A slightly smaller ranchería on Point Loma comprised 21.9% of the enumerated urban Indian population. A thinly documented ranchería in the city of San Diego and a ranchería on Front Street accounted for 12.8% and 12.1% of the local population respectively. Another ranchería on State Street comprised 11.3% of the local Indian population. The remaining 15% lived on the waterfront, most of whom (10.6%) resided at the ranchería at 5th and the waterfront. A minority of Indians lived in other waterfront rancherias, exclusive of the Stingaree District.

In the San Diego Township, or “Old Town San Diego,” Indians maintained cultural elements despite the profound social, territorial, and economic changes that surrounded them. Mrs. Anna Whaley, the wife of San Diego businessman Thomas Whaley, recalled in the late 1890s, “There was an Indian ranchería near the palm trees in Old Town where they were
accustomed to hold dances, which she likened to an old-fashioned spelling bee.” As Mrs. Whaley described the dances, “The Indians would stand up in two long rows and dance, and the one of each opposite pair that could dance best won the other’s clothes.” On another occasion, Mrs. Mary Chase Walker Morse, the second wife of Ephraim Morse, was particularly fascinated by “Wild [male] Indians, nude, with the exception of a cloth about the loins… [who] stalked majestically across the plaza, their long hair streaming in the wind.” It is likely that both of these events involved Indians who resided at the large ranchería on 19\textsuperscript{th} St. The Whaley residence was as little as 0.13 of a mile from the ranchería and the Plaza of Old Town, where local Indians held dances, was only 0.30 of a mile. The ladies’ casual, cursory descriptions suggesting that such public performances were common is not surprising and seemingly no effort was made by Indian participants to reconcile their traditional practices. Their descriptions are insufficient to determine with certainty what ceremonies the urban Indians performed; however, they do demonstrate that Indian and Anglo-American life intermingled readily in San Diego – the result of the city developing among the rancherías of San Diego Indians.
By the early 1880s, Indian laborers were able to earn a consistent living through daily wage labor. Importantly, Indian laborers earned “as that man white people under the same conditions and circumstances,” observed an Agent. 71 That Indians were earning wages on par with their Anglo-American counterparts was a significant step in the trajectory of economic development of Southern California Indians. A growing Anglo-American population in urban San Diego contributed to greater demands for the expansion of infrastructure, goods, and materials contributing to the need for wage laborers. The sudden decline of Chinese labor, resulting from the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, further compounded labor demands. 72 “Indian labor in Southern California, on farms, in constructing irrigation canals..., under the prospective absence of Chinese labor, in railway construction and repairs, will always be in demand at remunerative wages,” wrote an Agent. 73 The decline in labor competition resulted in an increased demand for wage laborers in road and rail construction, as well as irrigation canals and the expansion of the city’s water system. For the OIA, the pressing question was whether Indian laborers, being economically self-reliant, would
enter into the reservation scheme when reliable means of employment were readily available.

“On this may be observed, that this class of the Mission Indian are not clamoring for land, and it may well be doubted, owing to their past habits of labor, which as a rule brings its reward in silver dollars at the close of the week, whether they would be willing to settle upon land to cultivate it and await the slow and sometimes uncertain results of their labor,” wrote one Agent.74

Indian laborers were successfully navigating the economic opportunities of urban centers in Southern California. Concern as to whether the considerable urban population of Indians laborers would trade the economic security of wages for the uncertainties of agriculture and reservation life was reasonable.
3. Cooley, “California Superintendency,” (1866), 102
4. Cooley, “California Superintendency,” (1866), 102
5. Cooley, “California Superintendency,” (1866), 94
7. McIntosh, “California Superintendency,” 183 – 184
10. Sue Wade, Van Wormer, Stephen, and Thomson, Heather, “240 Years of Ranching: Historical Research, Field Surveys, Oral Interviews, Significance Criteria, and Management Recommendations for Ranching Districts and Sites in the San Diego Region” (California State Parks, September 8, 2009), 31
12. Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 27
13. Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 27
15. Greene, “California Superintendency,” 73
17. It is probable this is the same Olegario, a Luiseño from San Diego County, who worked for Wolf Kalisher in 1861 in Los Angeles County and from whom Olegario gained detailed knowledge about the American political system. Olegario later worked for Matthew Keller who maintained a large vineyard and orchard near Los Angeles. See George H. Phillips, Vineyards and Vaqueros (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 283-284.
18. B.C. Whiting, “Office of the Superintendent of Indian Affairs,” in Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs [Appendix], San
Francisco, 1871, http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/History/History-
.

19 Cahuilla also raised livestock including 60 horses and cows, and 200
head of sheep, noted in W. E. Lovett, “Letter from W. E. Lovett,
Special Indian Agent, to Superintendent of Indian Affairs Austin
Wiley,” in Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Washington,

20 W. E. Lovett, “Letter from W. E. Lovett, Special Indian Agent, to
Superintendent of Indian Affairs Austin Wiley,” in Reports of the
Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing
Office, 1865), 124

21 Vincent Colyer, “Third Annual Report of the Board of Indian
Commissioners” (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, December
12, 1871), http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/History/History-
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23 John Ames, “Report of Special Agent John Ames in Regard to the
Condition of the Missions Indians of California, with Recommendations,”
in Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary
of the Interior for the Year 1873 (U.S. Govt. print. off., 1873), 29 -
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Ames’ Report and Recommendations – The People of San Diego County
Dissent,” January 23, 1874

26 The Daily Union, January 23, 1874

27 The Daily Union, January 23, 1874

28 John Q. Smith, “Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,” in
Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Washington, D.C.,
1875), http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/History/History-
.

29 Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 88

30 Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 84

31 Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 89

32 Executive orders, establishing, enlarging, or reducing Indians
reservations, also restoring certain Indian reservations to the public
domain, January 11, 1875 to September 29, 1877, 238

33 n.a., “Campo - The Diegueno Indians,” San Diego Union, March 18,
1880, sec. 1, Union-Tribune Archives.

34 n.a., “The Latest News,” San Diego Union, May 20, 1877, sec. 1,
Union-Tribune Archives.

35 S. S. Lawson, “Reports of Agents in California,” in Annual Reports of
the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Washington, D.C.: Government
Printing Office, 1881), http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-
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36 Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 90
Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 27
J. E. Colburn, “Letter from J. E. Colburn to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,” in Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs (San Bernardino, CA, 1877), 36
Lawson, “Reports of the Agents in California,” 15
Lawson, “Reports of the Agents in California,” 13
Lawson, “Reports of Agents in California,” [1880], 13
Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 2
Bureau of the Census, “Tenth Census of the United States, 1880” [San Luis Rey]
McCallum, “Reports of Agents in California.” [1885], 8
McCallum, “Reports of Agents in California.” [1885], 8
McCallum, “Reports of Agents in California.” [1885], 10
Ward, “Reports of the Agents in California,” [1887], 11
Ward, “Reports of the Agents in California,” [1887], 11
Ward, “Reports of the Agents in California,” [1887], 11
Full percentages are as follows: 0.7% farm labor, 3.0% ranch hands or shepherd, 38.6% laborers, 6.0% male laborers, 17.4% female domestic servants, 0.7% mariners, and 33.3% no employment information. See Bureau of the Census, “Tenth Census of the United States, 1880” [San Diego Township]

n.a., “Not Quite Correct,” San Diego Union, March 22, 1882, Union-Tribune Archives.
n.a., “[no Title],” San Diego Union, July 1, 1884, Union-Tribune Archives.
n.a., “Keep the Indians Out of Town After Night,” San Diego Union, November 22, 1884, 3


Mrs. Whaley as quoted in William Ellsworth Smythe, History of San Diego, 1542-1908: The Modern City, vol. 1 (History Co., 1907), 196

Mrs. Whaley as quoted in Smythe, History of San Diego, 196

Smythe, History of San Diego, 197


Chinese Exclusion Act, signed by President Chester A. Arthur, on May 6, 1882

Lawson, “Reports of the Agents in California,” [1882], 11

Lawson, “Reports of the Agents in California,” [1882], 11
Chapter 4: 1888 – 1900

“The Indians are very restless and constantly shifting, 'here today, there tomorrow,'”

Between 1888 and 1903, the Office of Indian Affairs (OIA) established the last of the Southern California Indian Reservations, which defined “Indian” space as separate from the centers of economic development in San Diego. The reservations became an important influence in evolving Indian wage labor patterns. Indian laborers aligned with one of three principal economic modes. First, Indian laborers engaged with the ranches in the north and western foothills of San Diego County, and, second, there were also mobile laborers who traveled with their families in employment and subsistence rounds. The third locality for labor involved laborers who resided in urban spaces with their economic dependents. Concurrently, a pervasive drought and economic instability fostered Indian economic self-reliance. These forces shaped Indian wage labor in San Diego into the early 20th century.

The mutual economic dependence between San Diego ranchers, entrepreneurs, and Indian laborers, as well as the fluidity of tribal members between Indian spaces and those of Anglo-
American employers were well-established by 1888. “Many of the younger ones work out among the whites and obtain good wages,” wrote an Agent on August 20, 1888.¹ Such observations not only reflected Indian wage labor and mobility, but also illustrate the limited ability of the reservations to foster economic independence. To “work out,” as one Agent termed it, was to work outside of the reservation and thus, outside the purview of the OIA. San Diego Indians continued to comprise a majority of laborers in San Diego County and to supplement family economies and networks of reciprocity with goods and cash.

Ranching and other forms of wage labor, formed a critical component of the family economies of San Diego Indians. In 1888, Indians readily found wage employment in the ranching and farming sectors, industries supported by the positive effects of 11.57 inches of precipitation in 1888.² Increased precipitation supported the growth of herds and by extension increased Indian employment. In 1888, reservation-dwelling Indians owned 100 hogs, 725 horses, 750 cattle, 475 sheep, and 200 goats.³ Off-reservation, labor-intensive cattle herds grew during the 1880s and by 1890 numbered 40,973 while the number of sheep in the
county had fallen to 26,990. Other livestock, however, swelled to comprise 11,280 horses, 700 mules, and 6,722 cows. In ranching and herding, Indian wage laborers experienced relative economic stability. However, during the late 1880s through the early 1900s, there were new obstacles to maintaining a viable ranching enterprise in San Diego County. Ranching, like Indian laborers, necessitated near constant flexibility, negotiation, and adaptation.

One enduring obstacle was the necessity of pasturing cattle. Ranchers moved herds seasonally through valleys and pastures that they owned or leased. Such practices mirrored the practices of San Diego Indians that optimized traditional subsistence rounds. Ranchers often hired Indian hands and moved herds through Indian spaces that they leased for grazing purposes. This mutually beneficial arrangement brought income and employment to inland tribal members and vital pasture to ranchers. Working for wealthy Anglo-American ranchers formed one the economic opportunities for which Indians left reservations.

By 1890, the OIA estimated that 924 of approximately 2895 tribal members in San Diego, or nearly 31%, were mobile
wage laborers, moving fluidly on and off the reservations. Many men and women, industrious but poorly paid, labored on ranches, in mines, and in towns, returning with wages and goods to supplement the family economy and to contribute to the reciprocal networks of economic support for economically dependent individuals. “Everywhere I found them engaged more or less in manual labor. They cultivate the land; they tend their flocks; they engage, where opportunities offer, in various occupations for wages among white men, and there is everywhere, almost without exception, a desire to improve their condition," wrote Commissioner Thomas Jefferson Morgan on December 8, 1890. OIA Agents correctly surmised Indian wage laborers and their dependents who resided entirely in urban centers experienced a higher standard of living with greater economic security than those who remained on the reservations. Indeed, reservations in San Diego County were among the last to receive electricity or basic housing. Los Coyotes Reservation, established in 1889 by Executive Action, which features prominently in the history of San Diego cattle ranching, lacked basic utilities and was for generations associated with deep-rooted poverty. In contrast, OIA agents considered Indians in the city of
San Diego as achieving degrees of economic self-determination. “[Indians] are today nearly self-supporting,” observed an Agent. OIA Agents presumed urban laborers were more likely to secure permanent forms of labor than their inland counterparts did. However, Agents often failed to perceive the mobility of laborers between these environments or the economic relationships that connected them.

Indians also continued to reside independently in the coastal spaces of San Diego County and navigated both the increased pressures of Anglo-American settlement and OIA’s drive to re-settle tribal members on reservations. The continued residency of Indians in San Diego’s coastal spaces in the 1890s was due, in part, to the Native perceptions of the reservations and the availability of day and daily wage labor. Families, such as that of Delfina Cuero (Kumeyaay, c. 1900 – May 1972) illustrate the fluidity of Indians through multiple conceptions of space as they maintained traditional lifestyles in the increasingly urbanized context of the city of San Diego. As San Diego increasingly viewed its waterfront as the keystone to its economic development, waterfront spaces
became challenging areas for Native peoples to maintain traditional rancherías.

In her autobiography, *Delfina Cuero, Autobiography, an Account of Her Last Years*, Cuero provides insight into Native perceptions of the reservation system in Southern California. She also documented the continued residence of Indians throughout the periphery of San Diego Bay, exclusive of the Stingaree, and described the means that coastal Kumeyaay employed to continue to remain in their traditional spaces. The Cuero family was not alone in their tenacious hold on to traditional Indian spaces along the waterfront. Cuero wrote, “There were always lots of other Indians living the same way we were.”\(^1\) Despite the urban setting, larger rancherías in the City of San Diego were located at 13th and K Street, 17th and K Street, at the foot of 5th Street at the waterfront, along the Silver Strand of Coronado, at the foot of Rose Canyon, along Ocean Beach, throughout Mission [False] Bay, and in Mission Valley.\(^2\) These rancherías provided coastal Indians with access to wage labor prospects and traditional subsistence strategies offered by proximity to the coastal environment.\(^3\)
Cuero’s parents maintained the traditional seasonal rounds of the coastal Kumeyaay, to which they incorporated wages and goods from seasonal or day labor. “My mother and father went to one village, and then the next one, and on and on...[...] They lived around wherever there was work or wild food to be gathered,” wrote Cuero. Their mobility permitted Cuero’s parents to engage in traditional subsistence rounds and to take advantage of wage labor opportunities in southwestern San Diego County. The Cuero family traveled across an area of approximately 22 miles before their permanent relocation to Ha-a, twenty miles south of Tecate. Native peoples residing near San Diego Bay utilized this combination of labor mobility and traditional subsistence activities well into the early 1900s.

Cuero also provided valuable insights into Kumeyaay coastal subsistence strategies. Cuero recalled:

“We caught fish and cleaned them... I would clean the fish and boil it to eat... We used cactus thorns on a long stick to spear fish. We also made traps out of agave fiber. We put traps in the ocean, put a piece of rabbit meat in it and could come back later to get the [predatory] fish. We made nets out of tall grasses; ropes and nets were made of agave too.”
Tidewaters and the marshy fringes of San Diego’s waterfront remained critical locations in traditional native subsistence strategies. Coastal Kumeyaay rancherías continued traditional subsistence rounds as documented in early historical occupancy sites along the coast, including hunting for fish and gathering varieties of shellfish. Cuero’s account echoes the archeological evidence of occupancy sites along the coast that reveal evidence of continuous fishing and shellfish gathering.

Reflecting their continued occupancy and use of the coast, coastal Kumeyaay maintained their use of traditional place names that demonstrate their acute knowledge of microenvironments and resource availability. Cuero wrote, “The Indians had names for every little spot. Many names meant something about the place.” For instance, u’tay (Otay) and xamu’i (Jamul) were named for the type of weeds that grew in those locations, si* was the place name for a spot at the southern end of San Diego Bay where Indians obtained salt for preserving fish. (Figure 8)
To supplement the family’s subsistence economy, Cuero’s father engaged in seasonal or temporary wage labor at locations throughout southwestern San Diego County. Cuero recalled in particular her father working for George Maxfield, an individual who employed a significant number of mobile wage laborers to care for his vineyard. As a mobile wage laborer, Cuero’s father took his family to his labor locations, but the family continued to construct and reside in traditional dwellings. Cuero recalled:

“[Maxfield] gave us a little place where we could stay while we worked for him, a place to build our semay-ewa (little Indian house of willows and other brush). The men put up two posts and tied a beam between them with fibers stripped from yucca leaves. The reeds or brush were tied to the beam. It looked kind of like a small tent. We used tamu (reeds) when we could get it otherwise we used xatamu [Hazardia squarrosa]. Then the men put four posts to make a square and on them we made a ramamda beside the house.”

Cuero’s family was representative of Indian laborers who blended two economic systems, supplementing subsistence rounds with periods of temporary wage employment. Cuero’s father also worked as a ranch hand in El Cajon and in Jamul, where ranching continued to dominate the local economy.
Cuero’s account also illustrates that differences existed between tribal members and non-members that influenced Native perceptions of the reservations. Cuero wrote, "Except for a few who had married into reservation families, the majority did not feel free to move into the Indian villages on the Southern California reservations. They were not related, nor invited." Cuero’s statement illustrates how kinship ties were a central and overlooked factor that underlay OIA efforts to resettle Southern California Indians. Kinship was a key factor for many Indians in deciding to whether to resettle on the reservations. Cuero states, "We knew there were people ... living on what ...you call reservations. But nobody ever said we could go to a place like that. In those days when you were with one group, you stick with that group. You can't go in with another group." Cuero’s statements illustrate the important social networks that continued to shape Southern California Indians social and economic decisions. Her observation illuminates the fact that band allegiance remained central to social and economic decisions among San Diego Indians. However, as non-enrolled Southern California Indians, the economic
activities of families such as Cuero’s remained outside the purview of the OIA.

In contrast, wage labor activities among tribal members, principally when on the reservations, were a pressing concern to OIA Agents. “[Their industry] is best evidenced by more continuous labor both at home and when given employment by their white neighbors. Their custom has been to work well for a few days and then lie idle until all their earnings were spent,” wrote an Agent on September 7, 1892. It is probable that the Agent in fact observed classic subsistence agrarian society – periods of intensive labor activity accompanied by times of rest – central to subsistence economies. Moreover, the report failed to acknowledge both the aridity that plagued the reservations and the comparatively successful efforts at ranching that entailed seasons of greater activity. Though the Agent’s observations suggest multiple interpretations, the accusation of indolence imply that Indians had not achieved the progressive goals set and defined by the OIA.

In 1892, San Diego was in the third of three consecutive dry years, receiving only 9.09 inches of rain. As the county’s economy relied directly and indirectly on
precipitation, the dry years would influence the economic trajectory of the region. The drought affected wage labor opportunities by diminishing the harvests and livestock, and increasing competition among laborers. Nonetheless, Indians earned between $1.50 and $1.75 per day during the orchard and vineyards harvests. These wages illustrate an important aspect of demand in the borderlands where laborers typically garnered higher salaries. Nationally, non-farming labor averaged $1.39 per day in 1889 and $1.41 per day in 1899.

As mobile wage laborers were beyond the purview of the OIA, Agents knew little of the employment of Indians in Southern California beyond the reservations. Male Indian laborers were in demand as orchard hands and as section hands for the Southern Pacific in addition to laboring as ranch and farm hands. Moreover, some wealthy families throughout San Diego employed female laborers as domestic servants.

However, the drought worsened the arid conditions on reservations, such as at Pala in Northern San Diego County. "This reservation I find contains only 160 acres of land, 54 acres of which are worthless," wrote an Agent. Similarly, Santa Ysabel, which was entirely mountainous,
supported only casual fruit-tree culture. In 1893, San Diego received 10.29 inches of rain, though it did little to aid residents of reservations where irrigation was inadequate.

In contrast, Mesa Grande, Soboba, and Capitan Grande Reservations had varying infrastructures for irrigation. Indians at Capitan Grande comprised both Conejos and Kumeyaay. Capitan Grande had one of the few excellent sources of water, which supported farming and ranching activities. Tribal members at Mesa Grade were economically self-supporting as farmers and stock-raisers, despite the lack of water infrastructure.

Access to water during the 1890s was among the most critical factors for the financial success of reservation dwelling tribal members as the Indian Agents defined success, yet varied greatly among reservations. One Agent wrote:

“I find a good supply of water on many of the reservations; on others the water supply is very short. The uncertainties of water supplies threatened on-reservation the cattle that were in danger of suffering for water. In all cases, the water supply is in a primitive condition and needs immediate attention and improvement.”
Tremendous variation existed in the water supply at reservations for San Diego Indians, though the lack of sufficient irrigation was a commonality. Where the reservations lacked water, the aridity of the environment limited economic opportunities. The result of varying infrastructure for irrigation was differing degrees of economic self-reliance between the reservations. When San Diego experienced a sudden drought in 1894, receiving only 4.35 inches of rain for the year, the lack of reservation-based options resulted in more tribal members engaging in off-reservation labor to achieve a degree of economic stability for a broad network of economic dependents made larger due to economic hard times. In times of drought, wages no longer supplemented family economies; they became the principal component of economic life and family economies. By the early 20th century, reservations with improved irrigation resources emerged as among the centers of wage employment for San Diego Indians.

The OIA did little to support tribal members. In 1895, San Diego Indians were to receive an appropriation of $10,000 - earmarked for medicines and medical supplies, subsistence supplies, agricultural and miscellaneous supplies.
However, this sum was also to pay the expenses of the temporary and regular OIA employees including traveling expenses of agents, office rent, fuel, lights, and stationery.\textsuperscript{34} After distribution to pay such costs, it is probable that little remained to meet the needs of reservation dwelling Indians.

The lack of water for irrigation on nearly all reservations remained a significant deterrent to the general success of reservation ranching and farming.

\begin{quote}
\textit{\textquotedblleft The want of water for irrigation is probably the most serious drawback they have to contend with, nearly every reservation of the agency being in the same condition to some extent. This has been brought about by the white settlers diverting the waters of streams and otherwise using the flow of springs and water supplies that fed the streams from which the Indians obtained their supply of water,\textquotedblright} wrote an Agent in August of 1897.\textsuperscript{35}
\end{quote}

Though Anglo-American settlers were diverting the water and jeopardizing the reservations, the OIA was seemingly without recourse to reinstate access. A devastating dry season worsened the effects of water diversion, though San Diego County received 8.93 inches of rain in 1897.\textsuperscript{36} In response, a growing number of tribal members shifted their
economic interests to raising livestock, which was less vulnerable to the dry seasons.\textsuperscript{37}

The parched conditions that settled upon San Diego in 1898 hampered the economic success of precipitation-dependent economic activities. The rain total for 1898 did not exceed 4.67 inches of precipitation.\textsuperscript{38} Conditions would remain dry through 1899, during which San Diego received 6.08 inches of rain, dramatically affecting all laborers.\textsuperscript{39}

The drought affected the farming and ranching industries, principal economic sectors for Indian wage laborers, and increased competition for available labor opportunities. In turn, Indian laborers remitted less cash and fewer goods to extended family members, likely exacerbating the extreme conditions of vulnerable dependents. “Overall this arid region there now exists a period of drought. For three successive years both whites and Indians have been compelled to endure this water famine,” wrote an Agent.\textsuperscript{40}

With curtailed employment, Indian laborers were less able to meet the needs of the family economies adequately or to supplement those of relatives through networks of reciprocity.
It is probable that environmental conditions prompted
increased fluidity between the reservations and the labor
opportunities. Some Indian laborers accepted piecemeal
work when daily or day wage labor was unavailable.
“Employers paid principally for piecework. [Indians] shear
sheep at so much per head; gather fruit at so much per box,
cut fruit... per pound, and cut cord wood at a fixed price
per cord,” noted an Agent.41 Piecemeal work was among the
most exploitative forms of labor and did little to promote
Native economic self-sufficiency. The re-emergence of
piecemeal wage labor indicates a significant weakening of
Native economic security. Exploitative piecemeal labor
maintained the low social and economic status of Indian
laborers in San Diego while supporting the dominance of
their employers.

Also problematic was the accounting of earned income by
tribal members. Despite the frequency of labor abuses
involved in off-reservation employment, many Native people
continued and sought waged employment outside the purview
of the Agent. This enabled Indian wage laborers to retain
their wages and to be able to spend them as they saw fit.
The OIA report of 1899 supports this shift in economic
self-sufficiency. The Agent reported as no wage income for tribal members. The desire to retain wages was influenced by the Agents’ authority to control how these funds were disbursed - for worthwhile, Bureau-approved purchases such as agricultural equipment or seed. In spite of low pay and dishonest employers, many Indians preferred to work for wages that would remain in Indian hands, reflecting the desire for economic independence.

Tribal members engaged in ranching on reservation lands found little succor, except for their continued resistance to the OIA’s allotment scheme. “[The allotments] are the same as last year, no additions having been made during the fiscal year 1899. The same is true of patents, none having been issued since my last annual report,” wrote an Agent. Collective Native resistance toward allotment was important for several reasons, including maintaining collective land ownership and resisting American capitalism and its attending forms of private land ownership. There were also practical economic considerations. If the OIA divided lands according to the allotment standard of 80 acers per head of household, an individual rancher could not support more than 45 head of cattle under optimal environmental
However, optimal conditions did not prevail as the OIA had established reservations without consideration of topography or environment. Unallotted land enabled Indians to optimize ranching activities on the reservations and graze at the maximum head of cattle that reservation pasturage could support. The dry conditions that prevailed in San Diego likely necessitated the continuation of this strategy as San Diego would remain parched in 1900, receiving only 5.77 inches of rain.

It is also probable that the drought fostered the continued fluidity of tribal members between the reservations and off-reservation locations of wage labor opportunity.

"The Indians are very restless and constantly shifting, 'here today, there tomorrow,' like gypsies, many of them, traveling over the country to obtain employment, and 'home is wherever the night overtakes them'," observed an Agent on September 20, 1901.

The mobility of Indian laborers was a necessity to support family economies. Census takers, however, did not account for mobile wage laborers, such as the parents of Delfina Cuero, though they remained an important component of the labor force in Southern California.
In 1901, the economy and annual precipitation rates in San Diego County steadily recovered; receiving 9.49 inches of rain, a modest increase over the previous season, but insufficient to compensate for the protracted drought. A greater number of tribal members sought off-reservation wage labor opportunities.

“The Mission Indians as a class are industrious, and during seasons when labor can be obtained very few are found idle. At least 75 percent of the younger Indians support themselves and their families by labor in civilized pursuits,” reported an Agent.

This dramatic shift to wage labor was, in part, the result of fruitless toil upon unproductive reservation lands and steadily improving wage employment opportunities in San Diego County. Reservation land proved worthless and unproductive for farming. Repeated crop failures made tribal members discouraged and indifferent to agriculture. Indians increasingly decided to forgo the insecurities of farming for the comparative stability of wage labor. Wages from tribal members who “worked out” brought necessary economic support to family economies and economically dependent relatives.
Indian reliance on wage labor opportunities, once an adaptation to temporary subsistence economy crises, was by 1901 a central feature of the family economy. With greater fluidity between labor and reservation-defined Indian “spaces,” mobile laborers returned to reservations, villages, and rancherías only for the distribution of cash and goods. In her report on the condition of Mission Indians in Southern California in 1901, Anthropologist Constance Goddard DuBois described the crucial role of wage laborers and the networks of reciprocity. “If the Indians had no opportunities of going away to work, I do not know of any [reservation] which would be adequate... [...] I have seen old Indians lying dying on the ground, with their head on a stone, ragged, absolutely without provision... [...] The young are miles away from home getting what work they can,” wrote DuBois.50 Her description, intended to shame the OIA for their neglect of Southern California Indians, also exposed the frailties of the networks of reciprocity to provide economic and social support to the vulnerable members of Native society. Illustrating the pressure under which Indians sought wage labor opportunities, should they fail to supply goods and cash to
the vulnerable members of the community, there were few other means of support.

In 1902, tribal members remained vulnerable. Deaths outpaced births 116:77, indicating a dual reservation population decline, likely the result of inadequate housing, water, poor diets, and lack of health care.\textsuperscript{51} Additionally, though San Diego received 11.49 inches of rain, for many it arrived too late to affect the conditions of farms or subsistence sources.\textsuperscript{52} “Southern California has had five successive years of severe drought, and in consequence many industrious white men have been compelled to abandon their homes and seek a more favored locality. We cannot expect Indians to be successful in farming where white men... have failed,” wrote an Agent.\textsuperscript{53} The OIA’s reduction of rations for the aged, sick, and destitute fostered the necessity of tribal members to off-reservation residences. Collectively, these conditions supported the pull of tribal members and their families from the reservation to locations with employment opportunities. “At least 75 percent of the Mission Indians support themselves and families by labor for white people in civilized pursuits. To my certain knowledge many Indians
travel over 100 miles in search of work, taking their families, including their children, with them,” estimated an Agent in 1902.⁵⁴ Though previously itinerant laborers, such as the Cuero family, had traveled together in rounds of seasonal and temporary employment without having resided previously on reservations, in the first decade of the 20th century a majority of tribal members transitioned to these forms of economic support. Moreover, the range of mobile laborers and their dependent families dramatically increased, likely a response to increased competition and the economic development of inland Los Angeles and recently formed Riverside County (1893). However, some mobile Indian laborers traveled as many as 100 miles, indicating that San Diego Indians secured work between Los Angeles and Ensenada, and as far east as Palm Springs. That Indians would seek employment opportunities at greater distances indicates increased employment competition in western San Diego County as more Indians and Anglo-Americans competed for wage labor opportunities.

The long-standing mutual economic dependence between Indian laborers and Anglo-American employers underlay the development of western San Diego County. “The people in
these regions depend upon the Indians for their labor, and it is a mutual benefit. They receive fair compensation for their work,” wrote an Agent in 1903.\textsuperscript{55} However, for those that traveled between the reservations and urban centers, mobility resulted in limited contact with family members, which presumably strained family bonds and community obligations. One Agent observed that, “Infirm Indians who cannot work ... must depend upon the charity of others for their support.”\textsuperscript{56}

Like their rural counterparts, urban-dwelling Indians were challenged by an evolving labor economy. Beyond the purview of the OIA, however, the documentation of their economic activities relies in part on the Federal Census. However, the 1900 Federal Census left the activities of Indian laborers less well documented than in previous decades, though the influence of the economic recession and drought are apparent.

According to the 1900 Census, the number of Indians enumerated in the city of San Diego was a mere 3.78% of the 1880 total, a drop of 96%, which seemingly reflects increased mobility among Indian laborers.\textsuperscript{57} As such, it is probable that the Census reflected the economic recession
as it negatively influenced Native labor choices in the Township of San Diego. For the very few urban Indians enumerated, employment opportunities seem extremely limited; 60% were domestic servants and presumably lived with their employers, indicating that boarding was an important, cost-saving strategy in considering employment opportunities in the urban environment.\textsuperscript{58} Though San Diego had grown significantly during the mid-1800s, the economic recessions of the 1880s and 1890s delayed the development of an industrial anchor for its economic progress. The lack of local industry contributed to the deficiency of stable economic opportunities within the city of San Diego. Among those enumerated and dwelling with his employer was Martin Costo (Cahuilla, 1881 - 1922) who resided with, and was a consultant for, David Barrows.\textsuperscript{59} Barrows was an anthropologist whose doctoral work focused on the tribes of Southern California and the Colorado Desert. His thesis was entitled, \textit{The Ethno-Botany of the Coahuilla (sic) Indians of Southern California}.\textsuperscript{60} Costo was one of a growing number of tribal members who balanced life between the reservation and wage labor opportunities. However, unlike other Indians in urban San Diego, Barrows employed
Costo for his specialized knowledge. The Foreword in Barrows’ dissertation reads in part:

“It would be a great pleasure to mention by name the many Cahuilla friends whose interest and assistance have made this study possible. One of them, my friend and inmate of my home, Martin Costa, had read nearly the entire manuscript and made numerous corrections.”  

In 1900, no enumeration was made of local rancherías in the township of San Diego. Though it is reasonable to assume that some rancherías may have disbanded or relocated owing to the pressures of continued Anglo-American settlement and the economic recession, this does not fully explain the 91.1% decrease of enumerated Indian laborers between 1880 and 1900. Rather, this was a consequence of instructions given to census takers in 1900. Census takers were to enumerate neither “transients” nor “transient housing.” Likewise, residences were not to be enumerated if another location in the U.S. might be considered their home. Seemingly, Census takers considered rancherías to be “transient” forms of housing. Additionally, Census takers were not to enumerate “transient” laborers. Consequently, Census takers simply did not enumerate rancherías in the urban spaces of San Diego County, including those at 13th
and K Street, 17th and K Street, at the foot of 5th Street at the waterfront, along the Silver Strand of Coronado, at the foot of Rose Canyon, along Ocean Beach, throughout Mission [False] Bay, and in Mission Valley. 63 Anglo-Americans in San Diego, however, noted the continued, if temporary, residency of San Diego Indians along the seashore. “One of the customs of the Mission Indians... was to camp on the seashore near Ocean Beach, about the time of Lent, and remain till Easter, drying mussels, clams, and fish,” observed William Smythe. 64

Economic responsibility to the broader Indian community compelled laborers to either function as mobile laborer in the economic rounds between the reservations and urban centers, or leave the reservations entirely to take up the social and economic opportunities of western San Diego County. However, for many San Diego Indians, particularly those engaged in ranching, there was greater fluidity between Indian “space,” represented by the reservations, and the labor opportunities, particularly in San Diego County’s inland and backcountry.
3 Preston, “Reports of Agents in California,” 16
5 Sue Wade, Van Wormer, Stephen, and Thomson, Heather, “240 Years of Ranching: Historical Research, Field Surveys, Oral Interviews, Significance Criteria, and Management Recommendations for Ranching Districts and Sites in the San Diego Region” (California State Parks, September 8, 2009), 3
10 Rust, “Reports of Agents in California,” [1890], 17
12 Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 9
13 Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 9
14 Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 24
15 Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 26
16 Some traditional subsistence strategies were gender-specific. See Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 29
17 Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 27-28
18 Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 23
19 Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 24
20 Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 25
21 Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 10
22 Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 26

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Estudillo, “Reports of Agents in California,” 127


Estudillo, “Reports of Agents in California,” 127

Estudillo, “Reports of Agents in California,” 127

Estudillo, “Reports of Agents in California”, 127 and 128


Wright, “Reports of Agents in California,” [1897], 117


Wright, “Reports Concerning Indians in California,” [1889], 172

NRCS of the USDA recommends 1.8 acres per head of cattle as a guideline. Ncrs.usda.gov accessed August 2, 2015


1890 Census for California was lost in a fire

Bureau of the Census, “Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900” (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1900), [San Diego, CA]

Martin Costo was the uncle of Rupert Costo, who endowed the Rupert Costo Fellowship for American Indian Studies at University of California Riverside.

The David P. Barrows Papers, 1890 – 1954 are at the Bancroft Library, BANC MSS C-B 1005.

David Prescott Barrows, The Ethno-Botany of the Coahuilla Indians of Southern California (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1900), http://dx.doi.org/10.5962/bhl.title.19178


Cuero and Shipek, Delfina Cuero, 9

William Ellsworth Smythe, History of San Diego, 1542–1908: The Modern City, vol. 1 (History Co., 1907), 193


Chapter 5: 1903 – 1920

"These Indians are and have always been self-supporting”

Beginning in 1903, shifting economic opportunities lead to greater distinction between the inland and urban labor environments in western San Diego County. In inland San Diego, Indian laborers remained deeply engaged in the principal economic sectors of farming and ranching. By the first decade of the 20th century cattle were again the leading livestock in San Diego County, indicating the growth of ranching. The management of bovine disease and the addition of water well helped stabilize the industry as fluctuating precipitation rates continued to play a determining role in the development of the industry.¹ Concurrently, the City of San Diego developed as the dominating urban area and attracted Indian laborers who engaged in a variety of industries relating to the waterfront. In both environments, nascent Indian mobility for wage labor opportunities came to typify wage labor practices among San Diego Indians.

The relationship between tribal members and the OIA ebbed in 1903. Tribal members temporarily ceased working for on-
reservation projects owing to a labor dispute that entailed both unpaid wages and an attempt by a local Agent to defraud Indian laborers by reducing their daily rate by approximately 17%. The OIA owed tribal members approximately $4000 in unpaid wages for work performed in July, August, and September of 1903. Additionally, the Agent endeavored to swindle workers, reducing the agreed upon daily wages from $1.50 to $1.25. Though a new local Agent resolved this conflict in 1903, such attempts aimed at defrauding Indian laborers of their wages further undermined tribal confidence in the OIA.

Tribal confidence further eroded as a result of long-standing OIA policies. The OIA continued to advocate for farming enterprises upon reservations, even though Agents acknowledged the environmental inadequacies of the reservations by 1903. Both 1903 and 1904 proved to be dry years; western San Diego County received 6.09 inches and 6.61 inches, respectively, of precipitation. The drought affected all farmers and ranchers who relied on either precipitation directly or on precipitation-based irrigation systems. This included Indians on San Diego reservations who were attempting to farm. The dry conditions resulted
in the failure of crops intended either for sale or subsistence. As during the late 19th century, the lack of adequate and consistent irrigation on reservations contributed to the collapse of reservation-based farming enterprise. Such dry conditions extended to ranching enterprises as well and undermined the well-being of herds throughout San Diego County.

As a result of the drought, the economic security of tribal members was in doubt. As in past decades, tribal members residing on reservations were unlikely to receive direct, immediate economic aid from the OIA. However, OIA officials such as Agent Shell believed the development of irrigation infrastructure would resolve the economic insecurities posed by the local environment. “Our chief hope for bettering the condition of the Indians and making them self-supporting, lives along the line of developing water, where this can be done,” wrote Shell.5 This approach was problematic for several reasons. First, the construction of irrigation infrastructure would be a time-consuming task and would provide no immediate aid to affected reservations. Additionally, the irrigation of reservations was dependent upon precipitation, which varied
considerably in western San Diego County. Further, as in previous decades, neighboring Anglo-American ranchers and farmers had simply redirected irrigation canals with impunity before the water could reach Reservation lands. The OIA had proven unwilling or unable to protect the water rights of tribal members, even though the lack of water on San Diego reservations undermined their stated goal of agribusiness as a means of Indian economic self-sufficiency. Lastly, the growing city of San Diego placed a mounting demand on local water resources. San Diego officials readily placed the needs of its urban population above those in the inland regions, Indian and non-Indian alike. The urban population of San Diego City ballooned from 17,770 in 1900 to 39,578 in 1910. Because of its population growth, San Diego initiated a long-standing reliance upon importing water from local sources. These conditions rendered the prospect of irrigation as the solution to the inadequacies of the reservations ever more dubious. Rather, as in past years, tribal members who resided on reservations derived economic support from those who “worked out” of the reservation and remitted goods and cash vis-à-vis networks of reciprocity.
The drought abated in 1905 with 16.36 inches of rain that resulted in tillable lands on several reservations sufficient to yield a harvest, as well as supporting livestock and ranching. However, the rains only temporarily abated the serious environmental barriers to commercial agriculture on the reservations. When established, OIA officials had taken neither the local terrain nor the climate into account and these conditions remained significant curbs to sustained agricultural productivity. Such limitations were readily apparent with the transformation of the reservations resulting from the 1905 rainfall. The deluge demonstrated that commercial agriculture was only achievable under ideal environmental conditions and extraordinary precipitation. Additionally, only a fraction of the rugged reservation topography could accommodate agricultural enterprises. “Only a small portion of the land is fit for cultivation, because of the fact that the Indians’ lands largely consist of dry hills and mountains, the level portions lack sufficient water for irrigation, which is indispensable,” wrote an Agent.\textsuperscript{7} Even under optimal climate conditions, the terrain limited the productive potential of the reservations.\textsuperscript{8}
Some tribal members left the uncertainties of dirt farming on reservations for comparatively more reliable forms of wage employment, including day and daily wage labor opportunities in western San Diego County. In 1905, 75% of all economic support for tribal members residing on reservations was derived from the wages of mobile laborers. “The Mission Indians obtain at least 75 percent of their own and their families’ maintenance by working for white people in civilized pursuits,” observed Agent Wright. This estimate indicates that commercial farming on the reservations fell far short of the funds necessary to promote economic self-sufficiency.

OIA’s scanty economic support of Indian reservations extended to health and welfare. The lack of funds meant that the OIA failed to meet basic health care needs. “Since December 1, 1904, the Government has not furnished any medical service to these Indians, on account of lack of funds. The sick have either gone without treatment or accepted the treatment of the ‘witch doctors,’” observed an Agent. The tribal healers provided medical care, utilized native plants in their treatments, and embodied important cultural ties to traditional subsistence economies. Tribal
healers were, however, not only healers, but were central religious figures in the Indian community. Tom Lucas, the last tribal member of the Kumiiay (eastern Kumeyaay), stated, "The Shaman was depended upon heavily for his guidance and inner visions and wisdom."\(^{11}\) Tribal healers also assisted communities with funerals and mourning ceremonies.\(^{12}\)

Though OIA officials were scornful of tribal healers, they offered little as an alternative. In general, the OIA retained a physician only after a serious epidemic of infectious disease threatened the larger non-Indian community. Such was the case in 1905 when a smallpox epidemic broke out at the Rincon Reservation. "A physician was sent among them to vaccinate all who needed vaccination," wrote an Agent.\(^{13}\) This action was reactive rather than preventative and illustrated the passive willingness of the OIA to leave much of the daily health care of tribal members to tribal healers.

The lack of support from the OIA, the continued role of tribal healers, and the economic dependence of tribal members on the wage labor of family members caused Agent Charles Shell to reconsider OIA conceptions of Indian
economic self-sufficiency. In 1906, Agent Shell revised his assessment of tribal members residing on the reservations of San Diego.

“These Indians are and have always been self-supporting. Although many of the reservations are nearly worthless, the Indians manage to cultivate almost every foot of tillable land, and the products, together with such work as they can get outside with farmers and stockmen, provide a fair subsistence,” wrote Agent Shell on July 20, 1906.  

Such candor from an OIA Agent is surprising, yet accurate. Though the environmental and topographic conditions could not support agribusiness on the reservations, the OIA consistently refused to provide adequate supplemental goods to reservation residents. Indian wage laborers, whether on the reservation or as itinerant laborers “working out,” were supporting the greater Indian economy. Indians readily found daily wage labor with their Anglo-American counterparts at harvests of orchards and vineyards, and in ranching. For this work, Indian laborers were paid $2 to $2.50 per day for such employment.

By 1906, more Indians shifted their wage labor activities to opportunities away from the reservations. “[Some] withdraw from the reservations and become independent
citizens. Some of these are doing well, others only fair, while still others are leading a vagabond existence,” observed an Agent.\textsuperscript{16} The mobility of tribal members between the reservations and off-reservation wage labor opportunities not only met the economic needs of tribal members residing on reservations, but also pulled greater numbers of tribal members into various forms of wage employment in the northern and inland regions of San Diego County, as well as into the City of San Diego.

Ranching remained one of Southern California’s leading economic activities, inclusive of Indians on and off the reservations. San Diego tribal members remained active ranchers in 1909, collectively owning: horses, 956; cattle, 773; domestic fowl, 2290; goats, 150; hogs, 257; burros, 26; and sheep, 202.\textsuperscript{17} Ranching required significant acreage and water. The division of land under allotment was counter to the needs of most Native ranchers and was a constant threat to their economic strength since the establishment of the reservations. As in past decades, tribal members resisted OIA overtures for allotment of reservation land. Consequently, allotment of reservation
land remained stagnant from one generation to the next.

One Agent wrote:

“No allotments have been made during the year [1906], although toward the end of the year a number of Pala signified their willingness to take allotments. It seems that several years ago, allotments were made to the Pechanga, Pala, Rincon, and Capitan Grande Indians, but only the Pechanga and Pala were approved. Many of the allottees have since died and the land is being used by the heirs.”

By resisting allotment, tribal members perpetuated communal land ownership and provided some stability for ranchers. Their collective resistance to allotment eventually contributed to sweeping changes initiated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (formerly the Office of Indian Affairs) to the allotment scheme.

Based on the experiences of the San Diego Indians at Pala, the OIA introduced a new form of conceptualizing allotment that was potentially applicable to all reservations. On September 15, 1909, Commissioner Robert G. Valentine announced:

“When the subject of allotting the Pala Indians was first taken up, the usual procedure was proposed of dividing their reservation into a certain number of areas, giving each Indian one of these plots. [However,] the Indians were living
in a village with small gardens around each house and larger gardens in close proximity in the valley of the creek, and they shared the grazing lands out on the hillsides. The allotment plan was changed to preserve this normal way of living.” 19

Decades of collective resistance to allotment by tribal members of San Diego reservations had resulted in new policies that more accurately reflected tribal life on Southern California reservations. Valentine supported this instance of changing the allotment scheme to meet the needs and circumstances of Indians. This was a significant and unique achievement for tribal members who desired to preserve elements of traditional property ownership and particularly for those who engaged in open-range pasturing of livestock on the reservations. Other Native groups in the U.S., including the Northern Plains reservations and those of the Woodland of the Upper Great Lakes continued to have their land allotted and appropriated.

Outside of the reservation, increased settlement and limited water availability hemmed ranching activities in Northern and Western San Diego County. To pasture livestock, non-Indian ranchers pressed into Indian space, leasing land on reservations, and pushing into the forest
of the Peninsula Range. The formation of the Cleveland National Forest in 1909, to protect the watershed in San Diego, Orange, and Riverside counties, further limited the availability of grazing lands. Two principal concerns accompanied watershed protection: fire and overgrazing.\textsuperscript{20} As in previous decades, livestock affected the local environment. As ranchers pushed into the forest, stockmen regularly burned brush to improve future forage. Burning brush allowed easier access for livestock and promoted the germination of grass. It was the custom among many ranchers to use a range for four years, abandon it for several years, and then return to re-burn the land to promote pasture.\textsuperscript{21} Though prohibited in the Cleveland Forest, such burn practices remained common in 1911. In 1911, forty-eight fires were set in the National Forest, of which cattlemen and ranchers purposely set six and observers attributed an additional 24 to them.\textsuperscript{22} As a result, the Forest Service set limits on the number of heads of livestock that ranchers could graze on forestland. In 1911, a maximum of 500 sheep and 5,000 head of cattle were established for the entire forest, a fraction of the 48,154 heads of cattle present in 1910.\textsuperscript{23}
Despite the limitations to grazing cattle in the Cleveland Forest, the number of livestock in the county multiplied. The Federal government estimated that approximately 50,000 head of cattle resided in San Diego County in 1911, an increase of 117% from 1890. Other livestock included 11,498 horses, 766 mules, and 10,633 cows. Ranchers pastured their livestock on a combination of private and public lands including reservations. By 1912, it was clear that overgrazing had a detrimental effect on the inland regions of San Diego. A report in 1912 stated that no new oak seedlings were found in the Laguna Mountains, the result of intensive livestock grazing.

Ranching remained a dominant enterprise for the regional economy, though in many locales, farming accounted for an increasing portion of the wage labor opportunities for Native people. In rural Escondido, for instance, of male Indians, 27.2% were farmhands. Men also worked as miners and as non-farm laborers, presumably on local ranches. El Cajon, a location once dominated by ranching and raising livestock, farm labor (inclusive of vineyards and orchard harvesting) was also a prominent economic sector. Similarly, at San Luis Rey, 28.5% of male Indians were farm
laborers “working out,” indicating that a considerable portion of the Native population were tribal members supporting family economies.

Mobile Indian laborers moved principally west and southwest through San Diego County to engage in wage labor opportunities, though a few relocated to Riverside and inland Los Angeles County. As in the 1900 census, many workers were undocumented by either the OIA or the Federal Census owing to their mobility and lack of permanent residency. (Figure 9)
Figure 9 Economic Network of San Diego Indians, ca. 1910
The Federal Census of 1910 also indicates a pervasive tendency among Indians in inland San Diego to utilize their relative economic stability to reconstruct extended family housing off the reservations. In rural Escondido, for example, a majority of laborers (87.0%) resided with relatives, while significantly fewer (6.4%) resided as “boarders” with other San Diego Indians who were probably kin. Lastly, a small number (5.1%) of enumerated laborers resided in the households of their employers, or within a work camp. Similarly, in El Cajon, the majority of laborers (75.7%) were identified by Census takers as residing with close family members, defined in application as spouses, children, and grandparents, while fewer (15.1%) were indicated as “borders” though residing with more distant family relatives, including aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins. Of the remaining population, a small number of enumerated Indians (6%) lived in a work camp and very few (3%) resided with their employers. At San Luis Rey, however, 100% of the enumerated Indian population resided with family members. These consistencies between distant inland locations suggest a common effort among San Diego Indians to resist American social and cultural constructions of the family by exploiting and utilizing
vague Anglo-American differentiations between household members and boarders. It is probable that this Census data reflects a strong preference to continue to reside with kinship members off the reservations, constituting passive resistance to Anglo-American cultural hegemony.

As in previous decades, Census takers did not document mobile wage Indians who lacked permanent residencies, though they were undoubtedly present and were significant contributors to the local economy. The totality of Indian residents and their economic participation were likely under-represented in the 1910 Census of San Luis Rey. Such irregularities result in only a partial assessment of economic life for Indian laborers.

However, in other regards differences do emerge among Native American wage laborers in these inland areas. In particular, San Luis Rey differs from other economic centers in intriguing ways. The recorded percentage of widows and widowers in the enumerated population was a stunning 21.4%, six to seven times the average at other inland locations. It is probable that this was another example of Census takers endeavoring to shape Native households into Anglo-American conceptions. Single headed
households headed by widows and widowers likely indicated homes of temporary wage laborers engaged in seasonal movements. Such individuals likely had social and family ties to nearby Indian populations, including the Reservations, and relocated temporarily to best exploit labor opportunities.

Concurrently, ranching on reservations received little interest or material support from the OIA and often suffered for the want of irrigation. In 1915, however, OIA official endeavored to develop Indian-owned herds as a means of economic improvement and OIA intrusion. To up-build Indian-owned herds, Federal Commissioner of Indian Affairs Cato Sells announced new national guidelines in 1915. Agents were to prohibit the sale of any heifers, and to encourage the elimination of all old or lowbred bulls and rams. Indian ranchers were to fatten and sell old bulls. Additionally, Indian herds were to be placed under direct Government supervision. In 1916, OIA stock experts compared the estimated market value of livestock owned by tribal members in 1913 and 1915, with those of high-grade “farm stock.” Nationally, the average values of Indian-owned livestock in 1913 were $24.95 per head of cattle and
$1.87 per sheep, whereas in 1915, stockmen appraised nonreservation cattle were at $40.30 per head and sheep at $1.90. The average value of farm stock in 1916, however, was $60 per head of cattle and $4 per sheep. This indicates that cattle from Native ranchers garnered only 67% of the value of non-Indian cattle and sheep earned approximately 47.5% of their Anglo-American-owned competitors. The price differences likely illustrate the inequitable resources, including adequate pasture and water, available to reservation livestock. Nonetheless, Sells believed that the growth and increased market value of reservation stock would lead to improved economic conditions for reservations. Commissioner Sells stated:

“It is a beginning toward remedying an economic crime…[...] It costs as much to feed a worthless animal as it does a good one. Such a condition involved not only waste for the Indian but loss to the nation.”

Under this new program, seemingly developed separately from the pressures of World War I, reservation Indians were to give their agricultural lands over to ranching efforts, in theory enabling reservations to carry larger herds and potentially greater income. Each San Diego reservation, however, presented unique challenges.
Pasturage and water security remained the pressing concerns for cattlemen both on and off the reservations. While Sells advocated a renewed interest in reservation ranching nationally, San Diego experienced a significant drought receiving only 7.3 inches of precipitation for the year, which affected San Diego livestock. Indian ranchers lost additional livestock as a result of the January 1916 flooding.32

The vulnerability of the environment remained apparent with the deluge of January 1916. The monotony of cycles of drought and moderate rainfall in San Diego resulted in a region ill-prepared for significant flooding. In 1916 heavy rain swept through San Diego County, converting streams into torrents and devastating wide swaths of the County.33 The rain more dramatically affected San Diego than any other county in Southern California. Twenty-two individuals drowned who were living in the Otay Valley and the Mission Valley along the San Luis Rey River – both areas of long-standing Indian residency.

Indian reservations experienced devastation from the rain and subsequent flooding.34 A United States Geological Survey (USGS) report noted the damage done to the mission
ditch at Pala, which the flood washed out in some places. The lack of documentation about the San Luis Rey River at Pala posed additional governmental problems.

"About 30 days after the flood, Mr. C. H. Southworth, United States Indian Irrigation Service, measured cross-section and slope at this point and computed the maximum discharge for January 27, as mean discharge 75,300 second-feet," reported the USGS Agents. \(^35\)

Additionally, on the afternoon of January 27, 1916, the dam located on Capitan Grande Indian Reservation failed in two parts, hurling water downstream at 6.5 feet per second. \(^36\)

The USGS estimated the total discharge of the Capitan Grande Dam at 34,000-second-feet, or 183 second-feet per square mile of drainage area. \(^37\) The floods of 1916 washed away the remains of many Kumeyaay sites. \(^38\) Tom Lucas of the Kumiiay recalled the subsistence resources destroyed by the flood:

"Before the flood in 1916, there was a lake at the east end of San Felipe Valley which had formed behind a natural dam in Sentenac Canyon. There was also a swamp which is now a lake in the Laguna meadow area, it was at these two places where the Indians hunted migrating ducks and geese," recalled Tom Lucas (Kumiiay). \(^39\)

The flooding similarly affected areas with high-Indian residency off the reservations, most critically the
elaborate irrigation canals that support farming and ranching activities where Indian laborers were employed. At Escondido mud and landslides destroyed part of the canal. “The principal damage was caused by slides which either filled or destroyed sections of the canal,” reported the USGS. In El Cajon, the Mission dam failed as well. “The high water removed practically all brush and trees along both banks and left the channel clean and smooth,” stated the USGS. The damages resulting from the flooding undoubtedly devastated Indian laborers on and off the reservations.

Though Indian laborers moved fluidly between Indian spaces, oft-represented as reservations, and economic centers with high Indian populations, from 1904 – 1919 an economic rift between the inland regions of San Diego County and the City of San Diego continued to broaden. Urban San Diego fostered wage labor opportunities that addressed the needs of the growing metropolitan area, while inland San Diego County ranchers and farmers maintained an enduring relationship between the environment, the laborers, and the seasons.
The 1910 Census of the City of San Diego reveals additional information about Native experience in the city. One important difference was the social construction of “Indians” in urban San Diego that is evident in the census. In contrast to northern and inland communities, Census takers in the City of San Diego enumerated few Indians. Though the city of San Diego was the principal economic center of western San Diego County, it reflected an Indian population that was only 18% that of the inland city of San Luis Rey. These differences reflected the practices of Census takers in urban San Diego who conflated language and ethnicity, creating a vague yet enormous body of people represented as “OT,” or “other,” as Anglo-American Census takers struggled to comprehend California diversity. Census takers designated all Hispanics and the majority of Indians as either “white” or “OT,” with their origin or their parents’ origin being “Spanish” or “California,” indicating that Census takers believed they were not born in Mexico.

Census also made notes in the margins of the census describing all Hispanics as “Mex,” though the rationale for this is not clear. Additionally, they represented many
Indians as “Mex” as well, although not as consistently as Hispanics. Census takers also identified Indians as “white,” “OT,” or more rarely “In,” often varying between generations and genders within the same household. This social environment is singular to Western San Diego County in 1910, the product of politicized notions of “whiteness” in the growing city’s social environment. The city reflected the broader practice in California politics that distinguished between “white” and “non-white” in the eligibility of rights and citizenship. The result was the near erasure of Indians as an ethnicity from the City of San Diego in 1910.

Unlike inland spaces of San Diego County, no single profession emerged to dominate the labor market in the City of San Diego. Employers hired male Indians as longshoremen, railroad workers, and manual laborers. Some Anglo-American employers were outspoken in their preference for Indian laborers. On August 13, 1911, the San Diego Union reported the partiality of Superintendent Johnson of Road Camp No. 5, one of several on-going road construction projects in urban San Diego: "Johnson's partiality for the noble red man is so strong, that according to [M.C.] Neal
"... He will employ no white men as long as he can find an Indian to do the work." Such labor preferences are not surprising, as Anglo-Americans in San Diego had employed Indians as laborers for generations. With the growth of the waterfront, Indian wage laborers found a growing variety of employment opportunities that provided new sources of income. Waterfront industries, including the canneries and shipping employed Indians. Because of the economic development of the waterfront, Native people found moderately improved employment opportunities. These supplemented family economies and networks of reciprocity among Indian communities, and supported the established pattern of Native mobility.

Despite the near erasure of Native people in San Diego in the 1910 Census, urban Indians still resided in small pockets along San Diego’s waterfront. A small community of Indians lived to the south of the local Italian fishing community and directly east of the fish markets – then located between Ash and G St. along the waterfront. These men would prove to be the vanguard of many San Diego Indians who took to maritime trades for economic stability. Indians became part of the economic and social
spheres of maritime laborers of various kinds: stevedores, sailors, and fishermen. The San Diego Union put forth romanticized conceptions of maritime labor, describing maritime workers as "distinct and apart from the generality of mankind, they are happy nowhere but near the water." Such conceptions, however, ignored the exploitative labor practices endemic to maritime labor during the pre-World War I years.

During these years, Martin Costo (Cahuilla) boarded at the home of David Barrows - less than a mile the waterfront in San Diego. Costo was one of a growing number of Indians who balanced life between the reservation and the waterfront. Martin Costo was also among the first San Diego Indians to enlist in the US Navy in the first decade of the 1900s. By 1910, Costo had enlisted and was serving on an armored cruiser, the USS Tennessee (ACR-10) as an Able Seaman, a designation that indicates he had previous, though undocumented, maritime experience before his enlistment. As an Able Seaman, Costo was an experienced seaman who performed all regular and emergency duties required in the deck department of a ship: handled sail, stood watch, communicated information to the bridge,
steered the vessel as directed by the Mate, made minor repairs to deck and deck equipment. Among Indian and “Mulatto” seaman serving in the US Navy in 1910, Able Seamen comprised a selective 1.7% of the Navy. Members of the Deck Crew, Able Seamen, Boatswains, Ordinary Seamen, and Mates comprised 6.1% of total naval personnel in 1910. Admission to the Deck Crew was more selective than either the Engineering Crews, which compromised 12% of naval personnel or the Steward Crews, which encompassed 74% of personnel and which typically comprised of the most ethnic minorities who enlisted in the Navy, including Filipinos, Hispanics, African-Americans, and Indians.

Young men looking to escape the economically depressed Reservations found that enlistment provided medical care, housing, and a consistent salary. Enlistment afforded Costa a consistent income and the ability to supplement family income of his relatives who remained at the Cahuilla Agency. Martin Costa was one of a growing number of San Diego Indians who worked as maritime laborers along the waterfront of San Diego. In subsequent decades, the US Navy became an increasingly prominent economic, social, and political presence in San Diego Bay. Its importance among
San Diego Indians grew, as did its footprint within the Bay. The U.S. Navy integrated San Diego Indians into the economic and social environments of their fellow maritime workers.

Neighboring the U.S. Navy in San Diego Bay was the developing San Diego fishery. During World War I, the fishing industry also afforded San Diego Indians expanded wage labor opportunities on the waterfront, often as processors in the canning industry. Indian laborers were part of an ethnically diverse workforce, working alongside Italian, Filipino, and Japanese crews. Employment in the canneries enabled Indian laborers to support family economies and to contribute to the kinship-based networks of reciprocity on the reservation.

Joseph (Jose) Carlos Calac (Luiseño) exemplifies the tribal members who transitioned from ranching to waterfront laborer. Born on February 18, 1873 on the Rincon Reservation in San Diego, Joseph Calac was one of (Maria) Concepcion Calac’s several children. The 1910 Indian Census for Rincon shows that Concepcion experienced modest economic success on the Rincon Reservation, owning two horses and fourteen heads of cattle, as well as growing
wheat and corn. However, the Federal Census for 1910 also shows that Joseph Calac moved to Fallbrook with his wife Clementa (La Jolla), while his two eldest children attended the Perris Indian School, a Federal Indian boarding school later relocated to Riverside as the Sherman Indian Institute. In Fallbrook, Calac worked as a farm laborer, though his later economic behavior suggests he likely maintained economic and social ties with his widowed mother and siblings who continued to live on the Rincon Reservation.

Like other mobile laborers, it is probable that Calac moved to urban San Diego specifically to access new labor opportunities. The Normandy Seafood Company employed Calac as a laborer - likely as a processor in the cannery. Located at the foot of Dewey Street, Normandy Seafood was one of several sardine and tuna canneries established on the San Diego waterfront. The move to the City of San Diego enabled Joseph and Clementa Calac to rent their home at 2253 National Ave in the San Diego neighborhood of Barrio Logan. Their were children attended local schools, rather than distance boarding schools, and Calac likely remitted economic support to his mother at Rincon as he
continued to appear in Indian Census Rolls, in Federal Census records, and in the local San Diego directories. Calac illustrates the fluid movement of tribal members throughout Western San Diego in pursuit of labor opportunities. The growth of the canneries fostered permanent, local residency for canny workers. The families became part of a maritime community, sharing experiences as part of a particular maritime sector, while socializing at churches, schools, and recreational activities outside of the canneries.

The canneries of San Diego had little labor regulation in the early 20th century. Though San Diego’s fishery lagged behind more established canneries such as those at San Francisco and Monterey, it became a critical, if loosely regulated, a participant in the broader economic development of the San Diego waterfront. The canneries were typically highly exploitative of their wage laborers. On January 26, 1912, the Evening Tribune reported, “Hours are more irregular than in any other industry. A working week may be made up of 14, 8, 7, and 15 hours per day or it may be a steady drive from 1 to 13 hours a day for seven days for there is no law against Sunday work.”
Furthermore, canneries pushed their employees to process the fish as it arrived, and there was little predictability as to the tonnage received on a daily basis. The irregularity of tonnage resulted in widely fluctuating hours and incomes for cannery workers. In some cases, cannery employees worked strikingly long hours.

"Over one-half of the individual workers questioned had had maximum weeks of 72 hours or over, the hours running up in some cases to 98 a week. The California canneries contend that the long drives are absolutely necessary because of the highly perish-ability," reported the Evening Tribune on January 26, 1912.\(^49\)

In some instances, cannery owners locked workers in the factory until they processed the tonnage.\(^50\) Such working conditions also formed part of the labor experience of urban Indians.

With the advent of American participation in World War I, greater numbers of Indian laborers relocated to the urban spaces of San Diego as its labor opportunities expanded. However, social and economic conditions resulting from the advent of World War I also affected Indian political and economic status, and brought to the fore complicated issues of race and citizenship for San Diego Indians.
Issues involving Indian citizenship became newly significant with the advent of World War I. Any Indian or tribal member “working out” in San Diego County was a citizen as defined in the Dawes Act of 1887. In the decades following the passage of this statute, state courts and subsequent legislation further defined the conditions for Indian citizenship. The California Supreme Court found in Anderson v. Mathews (1917) that Indian citizenship was based on two-part qualification. First, any Indian born in California, after its admission into the Union would be eligible. Secondly, the Indian had to be living among the surviving remnant of a tribe that never made any treaty with the U.S., which inherently included all California Indians as the U.S. Congress had failed to ratify the Treaties with California Indians from the 1850s. California Indians were thus an anomaly for which the OIA and Federal Commissioner Sells were ill-equipped to handle. Commissioner Sells endeavored to have tribal members avoid the Draft entirely, advising OIA Agents to urge Indians to claim an exemption from service on the grounds of non-citizenship. Additionally, some OIA Agents submitted Draft registration cards selectively. As citizens, San Diego
Indians were obliged to register with the Selective Service.

Selective Service Registration Cards from 1917 and 1918 provide a unique, yet incomplete, window into the economic lives of San Diego Indians, which tended to reflect the long-time strategy of selective wage labor and mobility between labor sites and reservations. It also shows the continued distribution of resources through family networks and addition of new types of labor. (Figure 10)
Figure 10 Economic network of San Diego Indians, ca. 1917
Native registrants tended to hold relatively permanent employment, though Selective Service cards do not reflect the entirety of the eligible male Indian population. Likely reasons for this exclusion are diverse. Laborers in the inland regions of San Diego County were harder to register and remained either unregistered or avoided the registration by choice.

The majority of Selective Service registrations documented Indians as employed laborers. Among those registered, 45.9% were single, while 21.3% were married. For nearly 1/3 (32.7%) of Indians were married, though this question was not included in all versions of the registration cards. Additionally, World War I Selective Service Draft Registration Cards show that Indian laborers found a wide variety of employment in western San Diego County. Among registrants, permanent residence for 39.3% were the reservations but they worked at off-reservations locales, 26.2% lived and worked at two or more inland locations, and 34.4% resided and worked in the same place whether inland or urban. Those that lived and worked in the same community tended to reside in communities with traditionally high Indian populations, including as Pala,
Overall, however, nearly 36% of those registered noted their personal responsibility for economically supporting relatives. The registration cards also reveal that throughout western San Diego County, farming and ranching continued to dominate the employment of local Native men, comprising 39.3%, and 8.1%, respectively, of those registered. Men also identified simply as laborers. The cards also reflected the changing economy of western San Diego. Escondido Mutual Water and the Volcan Land and Water companies employed male Indian laborers, while others worked in road construction for the County of San Diego. Others found employment niches as vineyard laborers, bookkeepers, craftsmen, and apiarists.

Shortly before and after World War I, San Diego County offered Indian laborers two increasingly distinct work environments. In the northern and inland recesses of the County, Indian herders and ranchers perpetuated in the ranching and pasturing traditions that had become deeply ingrained with social, economic, familial relevance, with attendant spacial and historical continuities. Conversely, the urban environment of the City of San Diego, offered a
more dynamic space wherein laborers could more readily change occupations, residences, and social and economic relationships. During the years of World War I, San Diego’s waterfront swelled with new laborers, increased labor competition, and higher salaries. Some Indian laborers, as exemplified by Joseph Calac and Martin Costo utilized maritime employment to advance their own economic goals while continuing to help support family members who resided on Southern California reservations.

Wage labor opportunities and the decisions of when and how to adapt new ways challenged Indian laborers continuously. Typically, such adaptations advanced their own economic goals. This was no less true during the post-World War I era. Indian laborers found increased diversity of labor opportunities, including ranching and the military, as well as niche occupations in San Diego County.
Sue Wade, Van Wormer, Stephen, and Thomson, Heather, “240 Years of Ranching: Historical Research, Field Surveys, Oral Interviews, Significance Criteria, and Management Recommendations for Ranching Districts and Sites in the San Diego Region” (California State Parks, September 8, 2009), 31


Shell, “Report of School Superintendent,” [1904], 165


Shell, “Report of School Superintendent,” 170

Riley Woffatt, Population of Western U.S. Cities and Towns, 1850 to 1900 (Scarcecrow Press, 1996), 54


Wright, “Report of Superintendent in Charge of Mission Indians,” [1905], 189

Wright, “Report of Superintendent in Charge of Mission Indians,” [1905], 193

Wright, “Report of Superintendent in Charge of Mission Indians,” [1905], 189


Cline and Lucas, The Kwaaymi, 80-81

Wright, “Report of Superintendent in Charge of Mission Indians,” [1905], 189


Shell, “Report of School Superintendent,” [1906], 205

Shell, “Report of School Superintendent,” [1906], 205


Valentine, “Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,” 37

Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 32

Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 33

Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 33

Wade et al., “240 Years of Ranching,” 33
Beginning in 1910, the Indian population in San Diego began to include a miniscule percentage of Indians from outside the state, though economic development in San Diego was not sufficient to prompt a dramatic increase in Indian immigration from beyond Southern California.
Conclusion

“The Complexities of Labor: A History of San Diego Indians, 1770 - 1920” examines how the advent of wage labor influenced the economic trajectory of San Diego Indians. Therein, the changing social and economic environments in Western San Diego offered new opportunities and challenges to Native Americans. Decisions of when and how to adopt new forms of economic support challenged Indian communities continuously, yet typically served to advance their own economic goals. San Diego Indians’ adaptation to horsemanship and to livestock husbandry not only fundamentally altered their relationship with the land, but also initiated sweeping changes to conceptions of “traditional” rancheria life and subsistence practices, as well as initiating Indian males into wage labor relationships. This led, ultimately, to the commodification of new and existing labor skills into wages and the pervasive incorporation of wage labor into family economies of San Diego Indians.

In San Diego, colonial economic institutions at times coerced Indians into labor activities, while at other times
Native people found wage labor opportunities and capitalized on them to advance their own economic priorities. The introduction of European livestock into Southern California in the 1770s initiated the movement of Indians in western San Diego County into wage labor sectors. This adaptation is evident in the introduction and adaptation of European horses and livestock among San Diego Indians. The introduction of horsemanship to the Indian communities in western San Diego both perpetuated and expedited traditional subsistence strategies, such as hunting, and prompted new economic strategies, including raiding. Horsemanship also facilitated the incorporation of wage labor opportunities into Native family economies.

Yet laboring as vaqueros also fostered new conceptions about San Diego Indians. Spanish friars considered Indians who had adopted both European-based forms of labor and livestock husbandry to be civilized, while those who only adopted equestrian skills remained, in Spanish eyes, barbarous inland tribes. This imagined divide served to both differentiate the western San Diego Indians from neighboring culture groups, and to separate Spanish controlled territory from uncontrolled Indian spaces.
With the division of Missions lands following secularization in the 1830s, Indian vaqueros and herdsmen emerged as desirable laborers as land claims transitioned from mission-ownership to ranchos owned privately by Californios. During the era of Mexican land grants, the delineation between Indian and non-Indian economic and residential spaces blurred. Often Indian rancherías remained within the perimeters of the vast rancheros, reflecting the close mutual reliance between Indians and rancho owners.

Californio-owned ranches were significant economic institutions in San Diego before and after statehood. As an economic institution, the Californios appropriated and developed upon the precedents of the Missions, but with important distinctions. Rancho owners were less likely to rely on overt coercion to extract labor. Additionally, ranchos operated within a competitive market, which necessitated effective labor relations between the owner and the laborers. Native decisions in joining or leaving ranchos for other economic opportunities affected the ranchos, which curtailed the authority the owner. The era of Mexican land grants deserves greater academic attention,
particularly for the unique mutual economic dependencies between owners and Indian laborers.

After 1850, Mexican land grant owners were also on the political margins of San Diego. Beginning in the 1880s, however, American homesteaders pressured and displaced both ranchers and Indians. Ranchers pushed further inland, in closer proximity to Indian residences, and into the National Forest.

During the late 19th and early 20th century, the Office of Indian Affairs (OIA) established conceptions of Indian space through the establishment of reservations and the processes of tribal enrollment. Conducting their influence through the reservations, OIA Agents were empowered to distinguish between tribal members, over whom they asserted paternalistic authority, and non-enrolled San Diego Indians over whom OIA Agents held no influence. The story of Delfina Cuero is an important counter-point to reservation-centered histories of Native Americans. Delfina Cuero’s family exemplifies the experiences of many Southern California Indians who were marginalized by both expanding Anglo-American settlement and the creation of the reservations, and who opted not to enroll at the
reservations in western San Diego County. Cuero’s accounts provide significant insights into the lives of San Diego Indians who remained vigorously independent and optimized their economic agency to endeavor to maintain elements of traditional spaces and practices, including Kumeyaay relationships with the environment and subsistence resources, and a nuanced relationship with employers.

The formation of reservations imposed not only new perimeters of territoriality in San Diego, but also notions of “Indian space.” For many San Diego Indians, reservations replaced the rancheria as the foci of social, political, and economic life. As such, for many Indians, economic mobility and labor opportunities were established in relationship to the reservations, often as mobile laborers whose wages were crucial to supporting the reservation-dwelling relatives.

In time, increasing numbers of Indian wage laborers transitioned to the urban sectors of San Diego, which some Agents heartedly encouraged, for reasons similar to that of Indian laborers of northern and inland San Diego – to advance their economic goals and to support relatives through networks of reciprocity. Eventually, some tribal
members held occupations, such as in the military and the fish canneries, which held little economic relevance to the reservation environment but which continued to supplement family economies. While San Diego City centered its economic development on the waterfront, many urban Indians gained labor skills that were of little relevance to the inland regions or the reservations, but comprised a critical element in the labor experience of San Diego Indians.

Wage labor not only supplemented family economies but also supported their resistance to forms of exploitation. Reservation-dwelling Indians were able to protest unfair labor practices in 1903 and they collectively resisted the allotment of reservation lands through the aid of networks of mutual economic support. Yet off-reservation wage labor opportunities also enabled Native families to reconstitute furtive family rancherías in urban contexts by exploiting Census takers’ ambiguous terminology in describing Native households.

Over the course of labor history discussed herein, the Luiseño and Kumeyaay proved both vigorous in remaining within their ancestral territories and remarkably flexible
in navigating economic opportunities to facilitate independent economic self-reliance in a variety of forms. Despite the passage of approximately 150 years, Indian laborers maintained both deep cultural and social ties with each other and incorporated new technologies and opportunities that facilitated their own economic objectives. This plasticity renders the labor history of the Luiseño and Kumeyaay not one of declension but rather of tough choices made in difficult situations with remarkable continuity between the past and present.
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