

Soils in the area of the well pad are described as Largo complex, with a 0-5 percent slope. This soil is usually occurs on upland alluvial fans and is slightly eroded. Largo soils consist of deep reddish-brown, calcareous, gently sloping soils that developed in alluvium derived from sedimentary materials. The surface layer of the Largo complex is characterized as a sandy loam up to 4 inches thick. The ground surface is described as billowy to hummocky, with hummocks reaching from 1-3 feet in height. Sub-soils (up to a depth of usually 47 inches) are described as silty loams. The surface layer is moderately permeable to water and subject to wind and rain erosion, but the lower layer of soil, usually up to 47 inches deep holds water well in the occasional rains of the area. The area usually receives 10-14 inches of rain annually and has a mean annual temperature of 60°-64° Fahrenheit (Chugg 1971).

The elevation of the well pad is approximately 3,750 feet amsl. The closest water sources in the area are Cedar Lake Draw, and Taylor Draw (1.2, and 2.5 miles away, respectively). Although these water resources are seasonal, the moderate water holding capacity of the underlying soils of the Largo complex may have provided a good water source for the prehistoric inhabitants of the area.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Prior to conducting archaeological survey, a records search was conducted by Martin Goetz using the Archaeological Records Management System (ARMS) on August 2, 2000. Chris Lowry performed a pre-field check at the Carlsbad Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on July 31, 2000. The search was conducted for the immediate area surrounding the proposed well pad, Township 17 south, Range 31 east, Sections 16-18, 19-21 and 28-30. Seven sites were discovered within .25 miles of the proposed well pad. Table 1 provides a summary of these sites including Laboratory of Anthropology Number, legal descriptions, cultural/temporal affiliations and site characteristics.

METHODS

Archaeologist Chris Lowry performed a Class III pedestrian survey of the Oxy USA Rocky Road #1 well pad and access road. A total of 3.70 acres was surveyed. All four corners and the center stake of the project area were marked with lath stakes under the direction of the Basin Surveys.