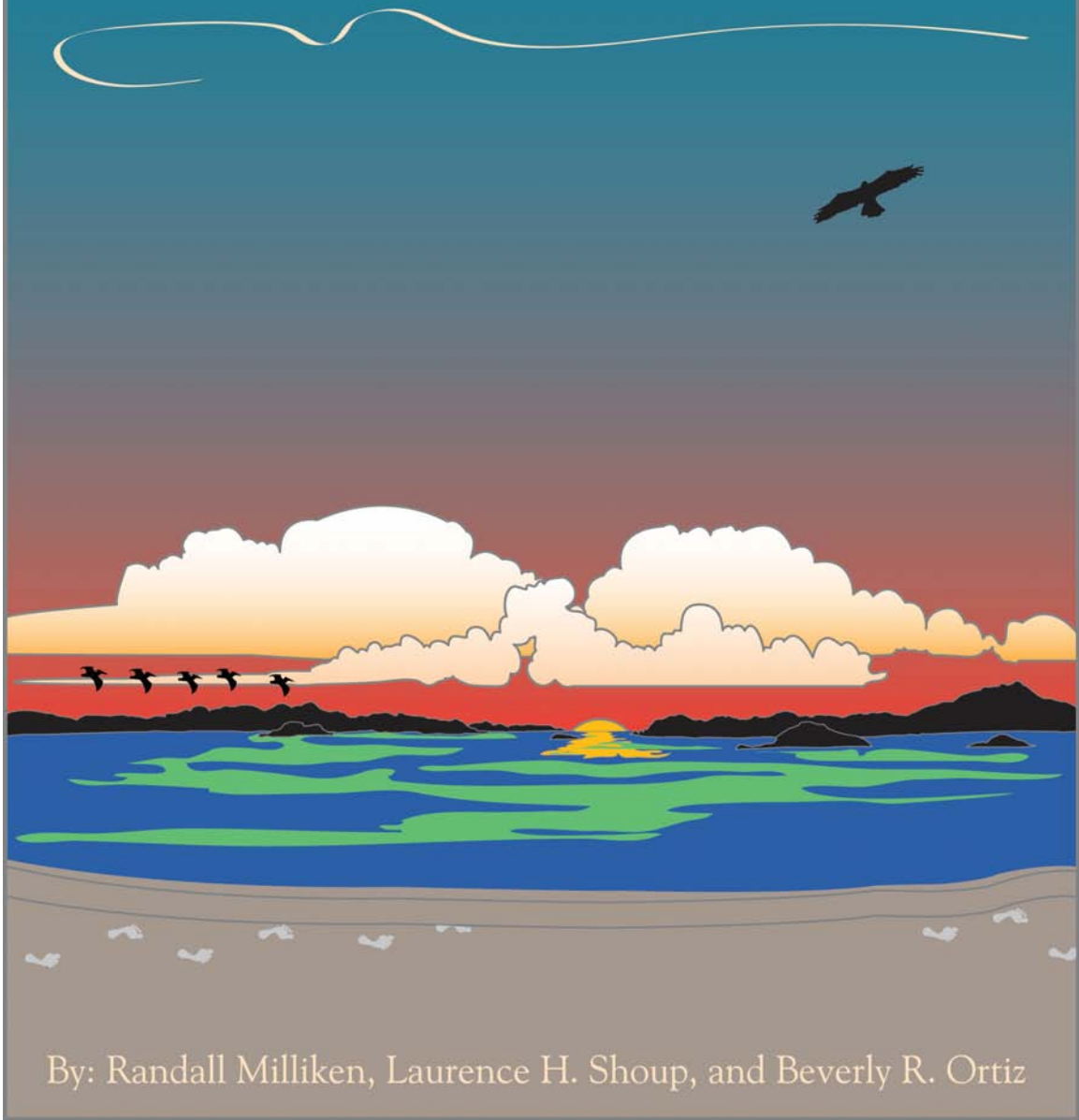


*Ohlone/Costanoan Indians
of the San Francisco Peninsula
and their Neighbors, Yesterday and Today*



By: Randall Milliken, Laurence H. Shoup, and Beverly R. Ortiz

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Prepared for:

National Park Service
Golden Gate National Recreation Area, San Francisco, California

In response to:

Solicitation No. Q8158020405

June 2009

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Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the efforts of many people who helped bring this study to completion over the five years since 2002. First, we thank the following descendants of several early Ohlone/Costanoan village communities for taking time to share their perspectives about Ohlone/Costanoan identity, history, and cultural and political involvements with us: Hank Alvarez, Theodore M. Bonillas, Theodore W. Bonillas, Lisa Carrier, Tony Cerda, Andrew Galvan, Philip Galvan, Sabrina Garibay, Dorothy Lameira, Charlie Higuera, Edward Ketchum, Jakki Kehl, Valentin Lopez, Richard Miranda, Joseph Mondragon, Paul Mondragon, Ruth Orta, Patrick Orozco, Marie Bonillas Ronquillo, Ann Marie Sayers, Kanyon Sayers-Roods, Linda Yamane, and Irene Zwierlein. Their ancestors, as the first people of this land, are the foundation of humankind's history in the San Francisco Bay and Monterey Bay areas. We could not be more grateful that that they have shared their knowledge with us.

For assistance in our information-gathering efforts at their institutions, we thank the staffs at the Bancroft Library, California State Archives, California State Library, National Archives San Bruno Office, Northern Regional Library Facility in Richmond, San Francisco Archdiocese Archives, San Mateo County Recorder's Office, and San Mateo Historical Association Office in Redwood City. Catherine Callaghan, professor emeritus at Ohio State University, and Victor Golla, professor at Humboldt State University, provided input for the linguistic conclusions herein. Dr. Callaghan, especially, shared with us the results of her latest research on the Costanoan languages through extensive email correspondence. Larry Myers and Debbie Treadway of the Native American Heritage Commission in the California Governor's Office elaborated for us the Commission's role working with Ohlone/Costanoan people within the context of modern environmental laws. Alan Leventhal, historian of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, provided copies of archival documents pertaining to the tribe's emergence from the Mission San Jose experience and its modern history from the 1980s forward. The chapter concerning post-1928 history greatly benefited from access to newspaper clippings about contemporary Ohlone/Costanoan cultural involvements that were saved over many years and shared by the late Marion Steinbach, a Lafayette resident interested in California Indian history, and by Ned McKay, a former local park district public information officer.

We are also grateful to those who edited and produced this document. Dorine Waidtlow, wife of author Randall Milliken, and Suzanne Baker, wife of author Laurence H. Shoup, edited extensive sections of text to strengthen presentation and prose. The report was produced by Heather Baron and Tammara Norton of the Production Department at Far Western Anthropological Research Group, Inc., in Davis, California. Tammara prepared original report maps from sketches by Randall Milliken. Heather did the final copy editing of the manuscript, then designed and set up the layout for the final document. Peter Mundwiller of Far Western designed the striking cover, with subtle additions by Tammara and Heather.

Finally, we thank Paul Scolari of the National Park Service, who envisioned this project, obtained the funds necessary to implement it, and guided it to completion. We appreciate Paul's patience over the years since 2002 as we researched and compiled the information necessary to address the complex and nuanced question of Ohlone/Costanoan cultural associations with Golden Gate National Recreation Area lands in San Francisco and San Mateo counties.

Chapter 1. Introduction

This study responds to a complex historical and anthropological question posed by the staff of the National Park Service's Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA):

Analyze and synthesize sources identifying the Ohlone/Costanoan tribal groups that inhabited [federal] parklands in San Francisco and San Mateo Counties prior to Spanish colonization, and... document the cultural ties among these earlier native people and members of the present-day community of Ohlone/Costanoans (Scolari 2002:4).

Today's Ohlone/Costanoan people are the descendants of speakers of six related Costanoan languages that were spoken in west central California, from San Francisco Bay to Monterey Bay, when Spanish missionaries and settlers arrived in the 1770s. The San Francisco Peninsula lands of the Golden Gate Recreation Area (GGNRA) are within the territory of one of those six languages, San Francisco Bay Costanoan. In this study we describe the prehistoric and contact-period culture of the San Francisco Bay Costanoans and compare their culture to the cultures of surrounding language groups (other Costanoan language groups and non-Costanoan language groups of adjacent west-Central California areas). We then trace the Mission Period history and modern history of the San Francisco Bay Costanoan descendants, as well as of the descendants of the other Costanoan language speakers. Finally, we assess the degree of historic cultural affinity among today's separate descendant groups, people variously called Ohlone/Costanoans, Ohlones, or Costanoans.

In preparing our response to the GGNRA's research question, we found ourselves examining multiple study areas and utilizing the perspectives of numerous intellectual disciplines. This opening chapter provides an overview of those overlapping study areas and research approaches. The first section provides a capsule history of the people whose cultural relationships we are asked to consider. The next section describes six levels of study area that we have woven together in our response to the question. Then follows a section that describes our single most important data set for the historic period, the Franciscan mission registers. The last section of this opening chapter lays out our report organization and provides general information about its multiple research approaches.

PAST AND PRESENT OHLONE/COSTANOANS

The San Francisco Peninsula is a 35 mile long spur of land, bordered on the west by the Pacific Coast, on the east by San Francisco Bay, and on the north by the