

A History Snippet of Native Americans in this area

The Native Americans who inhabited East County in the 1800's mainly were from five tribes. Most prominent of these tribes was the Yokuts. Their villages were located in the Vasco Road and Marsh Creek Road areas (including the Vasco Caves). Both Vasco Road and Marsh Creek Road were well-known Indian trails.

The Yokut homes were made of twigs and located in or near caves. Their food consisted of seeds, roots, and flat worms used in their bread. They ate water fowl, salmon, deer, fish and antelope. Acorns were served at almost every meal.

The men pierced their noses with bone and tattooed their faces using sharp stones to cut the skin rubbing charcoal into the cuts. The male Indian wore no clothes in the summertime. The female wore skirts made of bark fabric and tops made from deer hides. In the winter, clothes were made from hides of deer, wildcat and other animals of the area.

Kit Carson is said to have explored this area and found in 1828 that there were many Indian villages of 300 or more, but a cholera epidemic in 1833 decimated the indigenous people. By 1900, the Indian population in the State of California dropped from 150,000 to 16,000.

When the Los Vaqueros Reservoir was being constructed, 180 bodies of Native Americans were unearthed and it was discovered that Indians had inhabited this area more than 2,000 years ago.