



The Lay Of The Land

Newsletter

Volume X
Spring 1997

The Quarterly Newsletter for The Center for Land Use Interpretation (CLUI)
a nonprofit research organization dedicated to finding the common ground in issues of land use.

"The gardens of history are being replaced by the sites of time."
--Robert Smithson

Hinterland Project Examines *Exurban* Environment of Southern California

Exhibit and Bus Tour Program



The CLUI is preparing an exhibit and a tour program about rural Southern California, called *Hinterland: A Voyage Into Exurban Southern California*. The exhibit, which opens May 29 in the Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibits (LACE) space in Hollywood, will feature around 100 sites selected for their unusual and expressive qualities. Images and brief text panels will represent the locations, and a large wall map will locate them within the context of the Hinterland's geographic matrix.

In addition, a series of bus tours will take tourists into the Hinterland to visit some of the sites directly. These day-long guided tours will take place on three Saturdays during the month long exhibit (see the center section of this newsletter for tour sign-up information). A guidebook that consolidates all the Hinterland sites is due out this winter.

Organized by The Center for Land Use Interpretation, and LACE, the Hinterland show will be on display at LACE, 6522 Hollywood Boulevard, May 29 to July 6, 1997.

The Wendover Residency: A Call for Proposals

NEA Supported Program at the Wendover Exhibit Hall



The Wendover Exhibit Hall.

CLUI photo

The Center is establishing a paid residency program at The Center's Wendover Exhibit Site, located in the desert town of Wendover, Utah. The program, supported by a major grant awarded to the CLUI by the National Endowment for the Arts, will enable artists to live at the Wendover site, and produce work related to this unique and inspiring geographic region, which includes the Great Salt Lake and its desert and salt-flat environs.

The Center opened the Wendover Exhibit Hall to the public in June, 1996, as a showcase for art and other forms of research related to land use in the region. The current exhibit, "Around Wendover: An Examination of the Anthropoc Landscape Through Maps and Photographs" has been extended and updated to run through the 1997 summer season.

During the course of the residency, participants are asked to produce work that explores specific themes related to the area, work which will then be exhibited at the Wendover Exhibit Hall. Artists and other investigators interested in the landscape of the Southwest who would like to apply for the residency should write to The Center for complete program and application information.

Field Reports

The Center for Land Use Interpretation is dependent on a network of volunteers and supporters all over the world, many of whom submit information on unusual and exemplary locations they encounter in their travels. Unsolicited field reports and site characterizations are welcome, and a list of sites in specific regions that need further looking into can be sent to you if you want to volunteer some field research time. Information packets for field researchers are available by request.

A Higher Plain: The Rajneesh Ranch Revisited



Guard shack at the former Rajneesh Ranch

CLUI photo by Igor Vamos

Field Report by Igor Vamos and Melinda Stone

Tucked away in the Eastern Oregon high desert lies one of the nation's newest ghost towns, the former Rajneesh Ranch. Between 1981 and 1986 a small, desolate valley twelve miles from Antelope, Oregon was transformed into a thriving town of 3,000 residents, with a 4,500 foot paved airstrip, a 44 acre reservoir, an 88,000 square foot meeting hall, and a charismatic Indian guru who owned more than 90 Rolls Royce cars.

The Big Muddy Ranch, situated across Wasco and Jefferson counties, was bought by the Rajneesh Foundation International for \$5.75 million. At that point the town was not zoned for anything more than cattle ranching. Regardless, the Bhagwan spent \$120 million in order to ready the land for his devoted followers.

The community grew quickly in the early eighties, as followers of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh poured in from all over the world. When met by resistance from the people of nearby Antelope (with a population of forty in 1980), the Bhagwan's followers steamrolled local interests by buying enough of the town to control the vote. The town's new residents immediately renamed Antelope, which became *Rajneesh Puram* until the Bhagwan and followers were kicked out by the Justice Department in the fall of 1985, at which time the remaining locals voted the old name back in.

Today, at the Antelope General Store (which for four years was known as Zorba-the-Bhudda Rajneesh Restaurant), the storekeeper accommodates the curious by handing out copies of a hastily scrawled map leading to the dirt roads and 800,000 square feet of empty buildings at what is once again called "the Big Muddy Ranch". When asked what the commune looks like now, with a frown he replied "Do you like abandoned air bases?"

In 1991, the ranch was purchased for \$3.65 million by Dennis Washington, a Montana rancher and owner of the Anaconda Copper Mine. Since then, Mr. Washington has grazed several hundred head of cattle on the property while trying to give it to the State of Oregon, or anyone who can accept a charitable donation. While the State has considered turning the nearly new abandoned town into a labor camp for boys, this use appears unlikely due to local resistance. The Nature Conservancy, when offered the land, had to refuse due liabilities associated with the structures at the site, most of which were built without any regard to building codes. Rumors circulate of below-ground tunnels, toxic waste, and undiscovered stockpiles of weapons.

The American Sanitary Plumbing Museum Unusual Exhibit Features the Fixtures at the *Business End* of the Pipe



American Sanitary Plumbing Museum

Photo courtesy of ASPM

Field Report by John McVey

The American Sanitary Plumbing Museum is located in an area of Worcester, Massachusetts in which plumbing supply houses seem much in evidence, and is an offshoot of one plumbing distributor there, Charles Manoog, Inc.. The main (second) story of this two-story building houses a collection of plumbing contraptions of all kinds, such as wooden water mains, toilets, elaborate showerheads, water heaters, sitz & foot baths, bath tubs, basins, examples of complex under-the-sink drain configurations, & toilet-paper dispensers, all from before our time. Here too are a very impressive run of a plumbing trade magazine from the teens well into the thirties of this century, and a library of plumbing supply catalogues and books on sanitary plumbing. The curator, Bettejane Manoog, confesses to reading the old magazines with understandable interest when the press of visitors slackens.

The lower floor of the Museum contains other household sanitation devices, including a very early Kohler dishwasher, but is devoted mostly to the tools of the plumbing trade, including manual and motor-driven pipe threaders, wrenches, leadworking tools, and fittings.

The Museum honors a trade, and is only incidentally (but not unconsciously) about the curiosity of using water to dispose of human waste. The Museum also plays a role in the education of future plumbers at area trade schools. The directors of the Museum are in contact with other of the world's plumbing-related museums in Europe and, notably, India.

The Museum is open Tuesday through Thursday, 10-2, or by appointment.

A number of items from the American Sanitary Plumbing Museum collection were on display in an exhibit at the MIT List Museum in 1992, entitled *The Process of Elimination: the Kitchen, the Bathroom, and the Aesthetics of Waste*, curated by Ellen Lupton & J. Abbott Miller.

Hinterland: A Voyage into Exurban Southern California

Southern California's Hinterland is the "exurban" area that lies beyond the mountains that ring the urban megalopoli. It is a region that accommodates extremes: proving grounds, heavy industry, waste sites, and recreational sacrifice zones. It tolerates a kind of freedom that expands the margins of society, and is often refuge for truly radical visionaries and rebels, who create inspirational monuments of individual endeavor. This desert landscape is indeed, in the words of land managers, "a land of many uses", and it is also one that engenders a full spectrum of perceptions...



Felicity: The Center of the World

Inside the pyramid in the town of Felicity is a time capsule and a plaque indicating the exact center of the world. Though it could be said that the surface of a spherical planet has an infinite number of "centers", this is the only Center of the World officially recognized as such by the Imperial County Board of Supervisors. The town, located on the Interstate west of Yuma, was founded in 1985 by Jacques-Andre Istel, a French financier, who in addition to being an authority on the philosophy of *centers*, is also known as one of the fathers of recreational parachuting.



Solar Two Experimental Solar Facility

An experimental solar facility operated by the Department of Energy, Solar Two is unique in this country as the only major solar power-generating plant with a central collecting tower. The central receiver is a 200 foot tall tower onto which nearly 2,000 reflectors focus the sun's energy, heating up a nitrate brine which produces steam and then electricity. Each of the reflectors is positioned automatically with a heliostat to track the moving sun.



Rice Army Airfield

A large concrete pad, littered with shell casings and blasted debris, is nearly all that remains of the World War Two training base at the remote desert town of Rice. The rest of the town has been abandoned, and vandalized into nonexistence by passers-by, mostly weekend warriors on the road between LA and the popular recreation areas of Lake Havasu. Rice is also the location of a recent cargo train wreck.



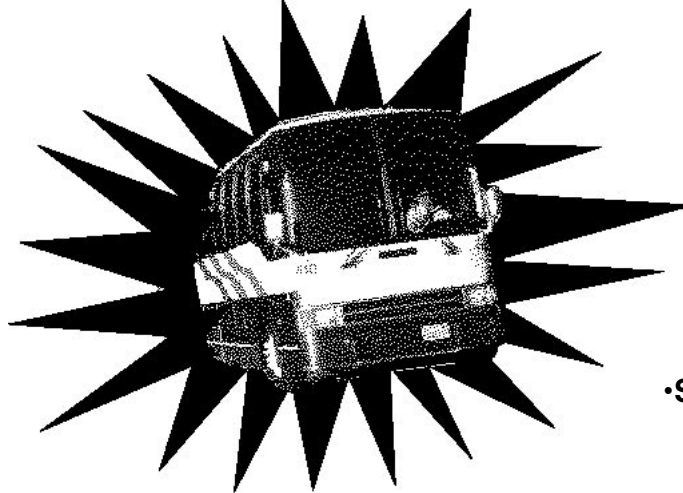
Desert Center

Hundreds of tall date palm trees have been planted in unusual patterns at the Interstate town of Desert Center. The project was started a few years ago by the owner of the town, Stanley Ragsdale, who trucked the trees from a date farm near Indio, 50 miles away. Many of the 70 foot tall trees, which were originally grown by King Gillette, inventor of the safety razor, are now dying due to irrigation problems.

These sites, and many more, will be featured in the Hinterland exhibit at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, May 29 to July 6, 1997, at 6522 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles.

Get Out of Town!

Explore the
Hinterland
of Southern
California



- Military Sites
- Aerospace R&D
- Land Art
- Industrial Sites
- Hazardous Waste
- Spiritual Landmarks

A series of bus tours takes citizens "out there" as part of the Center for Land Use Interpretation's exhibition *Hinterland: A Voyage Into Exurban Southern California*, on display at the LACE gallery in Hollywood from May 29 to July 6, 1997. Tours will take place on three Saturdays during the exhibition, and will be conducted from luxury motor coaches, with stops at selected locations. A video program will also be presented during the tour.

Choose one, two, or all three of the tours. Each is unique!

NORTH

May 31

**Antelope Valley:
The Cradle of Aerospace**

Visit active military bases and secret test sites, and see where the Stealth Bomber is made. This tour also includes superlative industrialized-desert locations, such as the world's largest borate mine, and the world's largest solar array.

EAST

June 14

**East Desert/San Bernardino County:
The Desert Proper**

Plunging into the core of the Mojave, this tour visits unusual spiritual and revelatory locations, and sites of bare abandonment and destruction. Open water flows through this arid land in the form of the Colorado River Aqueduct, which is visited on the tour, along with a proposed mega-landfill in a remote open pit mine.

SOUTH

June 28

**The Salton Sea and Imperial Valley:
The Land of Arid Water**

This tour visits the unusual communities, industries, and sights within the fraying, salt-encrusted perimeter of the Salton Sea. Along with abandoned resorts and proving grounds, we'll drive through a vast geothermal complex, and visit Salvation Mountain, where a man has been painting a hillside for over a decade.

Sign up now! It's the only way to guarantee a space!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

The price of each tour is \$15.00 per person - or sign up for all three for \$40.00 per person.

Check the tours you would like to attend:

NORTH____ EAST____ SOUTH____
number of seats____ number of seats____ number of seats____

Please send payment to:

The CLUI, 9331 Venice Boulevard, Culver City, CA, 90232

A card confirming your reservation will be sent to you within five days of receiving payment.

Tours depart from the Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) Gallery in Hollywood (6522 Hollywood Boulevard) at 9:00 a.m., and return by 7:00 p.m.

Bring spending money, as all tours will have a lunch stop at a restaurant, with meal prices around \$6.00.

Reservations are recommended. All proceeds pay for the tour buses and related expenses. Both The CLUI and LACE are nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations. Neither The CLUI nor LACE is responsible for any incident that transpires while on the tour. For further information call the CLUI at (310) 839-5722, or LACE at (213) 957-1777.

Big Film Sunk Ships Sets Stand Out On Land

New Thematic CLUI Project Examines Film Locations



Titanic looms over Mexican soundstages at new movie maquiladora.

CLUI photo by Melinda Stone

The west coast of Baja California, Mexico, is the location of one of two remarkable movie sites uncovered recently in The Center's new thematic film location research project. A 600-foot long model of the Titanic has been built by the Twentieth Century Fox Company for a film drama about the Titanic disaster, due out this Fall (the nearly \$200 million production is the most expensive movie ever made). The 4/5ths-scale model of the famous ocean-liner, complete with billowing smokestacks, lurches on a massive hydraulic system, and rests in a newly built, eight acre, 18 million gallon pool, one of the largest open air tanks in the world. The tank was built at the edge of the ocean, so that the ship appears to be at sea in the film (open ocean locations are dependent on the weather, and therefore unpredictable, something that the director, James Cameron, perhaps learned while shooting his 1989 film, *The Abyss*).

The tank is part of the new Baja Studios, being built at what a year ago was the small fishing community of Popotla, 25 miles south of Tijuana, Mexico. The site for the new "movie maquiladora" was selected by Fox to take advantage of lower Mexican labor rates, and the freedom from many of the regulations and restrictions that complicate United States-based production. The facility employs up to 2,000 people, and includes three large sound stages within its restricted-entry perimeter.



One of these things is not like the other: high and dry Waterworld supertanker model in aircraft scrap yard at Mojave Airport.

CLUI photo

Another remarkable "faux bateau" site is the model of the oil tanker Exxon Valdez, which rests amongst the scrap of the airplane graveyard in Mojave, California. It is left over from a major land-locked boat movie location, used for the all-wet, \$120 million-plus epic "Waterworld", released in 1996, which until *iTitanic*, was the most expensive movie ever made. The Mojave Airport location is a desert site two hours north of Los Angeles, where many of the scenes featuring the supertanker were shot, including the fiery sinking of the ship.

The Mojave Airport is a popular film location site, and has been used for the movies "Speed", "Diehard II", and "Batman II". It is an unusual small airport, with almost no passenger-related aviation. Instead, it is home to the National Test Pilot School, and experimental aircraft design companies, such as Scaled Composites, and military contractors such as GE and Tracor. Many commercial airliners are stored here when they are in need of serious repairs, or are between owners.

Water Fountain Installed in Desert Dunes Could it be a Mirage?



Remote Imperial Dunes water fountain. Inset: It actually works!

CLUI photos

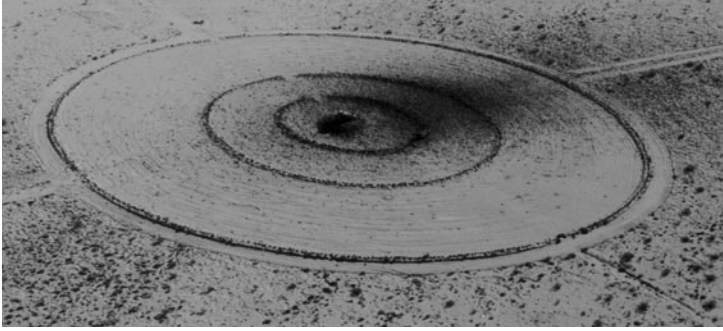
A water fountain was recently installed in the Imperial Dunes of Southern California, offering a refreshing oasis for passers by in an otherwise featureless expanse of sand. The installation of the fully functional fountain took place in January, 1997, conducted by an anonymous, San Diego-based group.

Since the installation, periodic visits to the fountain have been made by members of the group, to replace the batteries which maintain the water pressure in the system, and to replenish the supply of purified water in the holding tank, which is buried in the sand beneath the fountain.

The Imperial Dunes is the largest dune field in California, and is the nation's largest Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) recreation area, used by as many as 20,000 OHV riders at a time. Some of them, no doubt, develop a thirst within sight of the newly installed water fountain.

The Bombing Targets of the Imperial Valley: Military Jets Zoom In On Pummeled Mounds

Bombing targets are located throughout the country, on lands closed to public access, though the group of targets operated by the Navy in the Imperial Valley, at the southeastern corner of California, are unique in a number of respects, most noticeably their even, circular form.



Navy Target 103: The westernmost target, located northwest of Plaster City. Features include a tank target at the top of the bulls-eye mound, and a heavy blast shadow.

CLUI photo

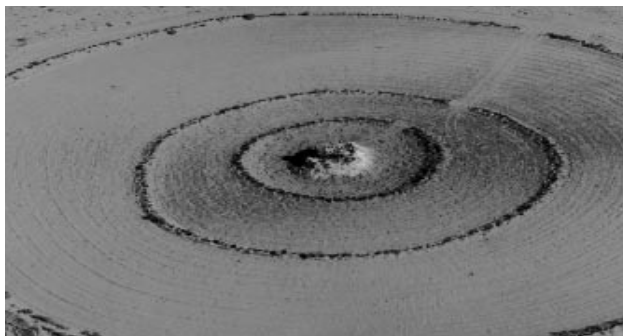
The targets are managed by El Centro Naval Air Station, west of the nearby agricultural town of El Centro, but are used by jets from all branches of the armed services, and from all over the country. The Marine Corps Station in Yuma, Arizona is a regular user of the targets, and aircraft from Lemoore Naval Air Station, in California's Central Valley, and Miramar Naval Air Station, in San Diego County, are also frequent visitors.



Navy Target 101, located on the north side of the superstition mountains, has recently been cleaned up, and has a fresh coating of white powder on the central mound.

CLUI photo by Walt Cotten

In use since the 1960's, these five separate targets are grouped in four distinct restricted areas, two on the east side of the valley, and two on the west side. Each target is approximately 300 feet across, and consists of three concentric circles, made of dirt and old tires, that surround a central "bullseye" mound. Some of the center mounds are topped with target objects, such as the hulks of tanks and other military vehicles, or large metal objects, like water tanks.



This target is located west of the Range Control Center for the training and gunnery ranges on the west side of the Imperial Valley. Like Target 103, it too has a tank hulk on the center mound.

CLUI photo by Walt Cotten



Navy Target 95 is located next to the Mammoth Wash Off-Highway Vehicle Area, on the eastern side of the Imperial Valley.

CLUI photo

All of the targets are located in restricted areas adjacent to designated off-highway vehicle recreation zones. Signage, and in some cases fencing, protect the targets from inadvertent intrusion. However, scrappers and trophy hunters do visit these locations, with few reports of incidents. Much of the lands beyond and between the targets have been used for bombing practice by the military since World War Two, and unexploded ordnance, as well as bomb fragments and debris, are occasionally discovered on public land.

Despite almost continuous daily use during all but the summer months, the targets maintain their form because the bombs dropped on them are inert. These practice bombs (mostly Mk 76's, Mk 83's and BDU 45's and 48's, and small blue practice bombs), are either empty casings or casings filled with cement. Upon impact, a small indicator charge on the tip of the bomb emits a puff of smoke, so observers can pinpoint the location of impact. The targets are also strafed with 20mm and 50 caliber machine gun fire from passing aircraft.



Navy Target 68 is a few miles south of State Highway 78, next to the Imperial Sand Dunes. Apparently the least tended of the five Imperial Valley targets, the land around the target is littered with hundreds of bomb casings.

CLUI photo

-Books, *Noted*-

Visions of America: Landscape as Metaphor in the Late 20th Century, 1994

A large format book of a 1994 exhibition called Landscape As Metaphor, organized by the Denver Art Museum and the Columbus Museum of Art, featuring the work of Meg Webster, Bill Viola, Richard Misrach, Ed Ruscha, and others. Essays by the likes of Rebecca Solnit, John Beardsley, and Lucinda Furlong.

Paydirt: The Spirit of Canadian Mining, Iona Wright and Charles Pelley, 1996

A wonderful, lucid photo and text look at the contemporary mining scene in Canada.

Walking the Line: Travels Along the Canadian/American Border, Marion Botsford Fraser, 1989

A well researched and observant account of 18 months the author spent exploring the international boundary, noting both the physical characteristics and the social context of the entire length of the border.

Interpretation of Historic Sites, Second Edition, William T. Alderson and Shirley Payne Low, 1985

A handbook for designers and managers of interpretive, historical exhibits. The only book of its kind.

Between the Fences, Gregory K. Dreicer, editor, 1996

A thin but indispensable history of fences, published by Princeton and the National Building Museum.

Once Upon A Desert, Patricia Jernigan Keeling, Editor, 1976/1994

A book about the social and industrial history of Mojave Desert. A compilation, really, of assorted brief historical accounts, mostly by local folks. Nothing like it, that's for sure. Published by the Mojave River Valley Museum, in Barstow, California.

Collaborative Communities: Cohousing, Central Living, And Other New Forms of Housing With Shared Facilities, Dorit Fromm, 1991

An interesting look at the subject, with many national and international case studies.

Landscape and Memory, Simon Schama, 1995

A romantic intellectual account of the history of landscape awareness. A handsome volume.

Landscape in America, George F. Thompson, Editor, 1995

An interesting collection of contemporary essays about the American Landscape, and perceptions thereof.

The City, Los Angeles and Urban Theory at the End of the Twentieth Century, Edited by Allen J. Scott and Edward W. Soja, 1996

New, eclectic, lefty, and meaty book of essays on LA, mostly from a political and social academic point of view. 13 essays by Edward Soja, Mike Davis, and others, including the blockbuster "High Technology Industrial Development in the San Fernando Valley and Ventura County: Observations on Economic Growth and the Evolution of Urban Form."

Raw Creation: Outsider art and Beyond, John Maizels, 1996

Perhaps the best anthology and history of "outsider art" and "visionary environments".

Desert Shadows, A True Story of the Manson Family in Death Valley, Bob Murphy, 1993

Offers a wonderful account of the Family's activities in the desert. Written by a National Park Service officer involved in tracking the Family in the Death Valley region.

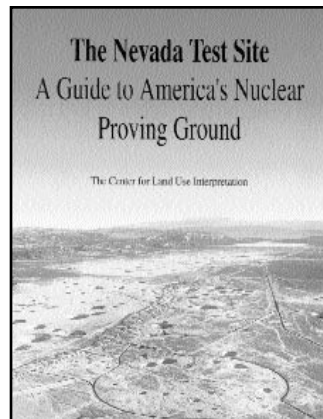
World Guide to Nude Beaches, Lee Baxandall, 1991

Self explanatory. And yes, it's illustrated.

Paid Summer Internship Position Open

Getty Grant Awarded to The CLUI to Support a 10 Week Multicultural Internship

The Center received a grant from the Getty Grant Program of Los Angeles to support a multicultural internship position for the summer. The intern will work at The Center's Los Angeles office, assisting with research and archiving related to the Land Use Database and on-line resources, and will assist with the production of new exhibits for the Wendover Exhibit Hall and elsewhere. Applicants need to be enrolled in an undergraduate program in a Los Angeles area university. Call or email The CLUI for more information.



The Nevada Test Site: A Guide to America's Nuclear Proving Ground

The only book available that describes the nation's foremost weapons and R&D field test facility. Praised by both antinuclear activists and Department of Energy officials! Published by the CLUI.

60 pages, with fold-out map and over 100 illustrations and original CLUI photographs. **\$12.50**

Miniature Tourist View Cameras Limited Supply Collectors Item \$10 each

PhotoSpot Tourist View Camera
Offers views of 14 of the CLUI's Suggested PhotoSpots!

Nevada Test Site Tour View Camera
Tour the Nevada Test Site from the safety of home with this little viewing camera. 14 different *points of interest* at the Test Site are shown. Original CLUI photos!



Products Available from the CLUI Help support The Center with your purchase of these unique items!

PhotoSpot T Shirt **\$15**

Features the Photospot sign reproduced on a shirt. Be a walking Photospot.

The PhotoSpot Project Video **\$15**

The video of the CLUI's Photospot Project, by Melinda Stone. (15 minutes)

Other CLUI Videos **\$15 each**

Various titles from the CLUI-produced are available. These are mostly stylized documentary-type productions, made by CLUI members, usually as part of individual Site Extrapolation projects. Call for a listing of titles and availability information.

Ordering Information:

Please add \$3.00 shipping and handling for the first item, and \$1.00 for each additional item, and 8.25% tax if ordering in California.

Make checks or money orders payable to The CLUI. Mail to:

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a nonprofit research organization dedicated to finding the common ground in issues of land use.

About This Issue:

One of the reasons for relocating The Center's main offices to Los Angeles recently was because of the incredible variety and array of unusual and interesting land use phenomena in the Southern California region, and the huge population to be served (20 million!). Since the move, efforts have been made to examine this environment, and much of this research will be presented to the public through the Hinterland projects introduced and described in this issue of *The Lay of the Land*. Hinterland projects include an exhibit and bus tour program taking place this summer, as well as a book we expect to publish this winter and an on-line regional database. Some of the sites uncovered in the Hinterland are also featured in this issue.

The Center for Land Use Interpretation is a nonprofit research organization dedicated to improving the collective understanding of the human/land dialectic. **If you would like to assist with any of the projects mentioned in this newsletter, or any other project mentioned in CLUI literature, please contact The Center. All gifts are tax-deductible.**

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Newsletters are distributed quarterly to interested parties.

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