



Rain and Mud

We don't want to complain about rain in California, but it sure would be nice to get it a little at a time and not all at once.



Zia alerting to human remains scent in very saturated soil.

We are finding ourselves, more and more, working in less-than-ideal conditions. Sometimes the situation of the request cannot wait for better weather. Rubber boots now live in the vehicle next to our work boots. In the past, we avoided working in standing water and mud. It's still not our favorite way to search but weather patterns of late do not allow the soil to dry out before another series of rain storms move in.

We are learning more about how scent works in saturated soils. Actually, we have been very intrigued with how much scent is available. Moist soil has always been our go-to best condition. You can see from the pictures above and below that this is not moist soil; this is standing water.

The requests for our services have changed over the years. When we first started in 2000 we worked mostly cemeteries, looking for boundaries and unmarked graves. We now work mostly construction projects where the goal is to identify burials so they can be avoided and protected.



Zia working the mud, amazingly her white feet are white by the time I get home, but the car not so much.

Jazz and Lynne working in the background.

Climate Change Archaeology

Climate change is causing damage, not only to where we live and drive, but to sacred sites. Archaeologists are being requested to help locate, and preserve, cultural sites and burials along ocean shores, cliffs and riverbanks that are eroding. ICF is being requested, more and more, to assist in these "rescue missions" as archaeologists are attempting to protect burials that are in eminent danger of being washed away.

~Adela~



As ocean levels rise and cliff banks are crumbling into the ocean, rescue missions are becoming more common.



Piper alerts under a eroding burial on a river bank.

Combining Tools

Excavation trenches are an important tool for archeologists, they can see how deep the fill soil is, the layers or history and if there is cultural material mixed with the soil. We are often asked to use our dogs to check soil that has been removed or excavation trenches to see if they detect human remains scent.



Cliodhna (Clio) working a dirt pile at a construction site. Even our dogs wear high-visibility vests when working on construction sites.



Quincy searches a spoils pile after it has been excavated. She also checks for scent from a trench that has been dug. This gives our clients information about what is going on in the ground.



Jazz checking soil from an excavation and Zia checks for scent from a deep excavation.



SCA Annual Meeting March 7th - 10th at the Riverside Convention Center
ICF will be in the Vendor Room at the upcoming **2024 58th Annual Meeting**,
Please come on by and visit.



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We are happy to talk with you about your project and how our dogs might help locate human remains or burials. Call, email, or check us out on Facebook or our website. (You can find past newsletters there, too.)

Please feel free to pass this newsletter along to anyone who might be interested.

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