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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Yolo County District Attorney Files Suit Against Land Developers That Bulldozed Native American Burial Grounds

Woodland, CA – July 13, 2018 – Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced today the filing of a civil suit against four companies that bulldozed Native American human remains in West Sacramento. The four defendants— Albert D. Seeno Construction Co., Discovery Builders, Inc., Seecon Financial & Construction Co., Inc., and A-S Pipelines, Inc.—disturbed the Native American cemeteries during the construction of a large residential development.

According to the complaint, the defendants have known for nearly two decades that the lands underlying their proposed residential development were suspected to hold Native American remains as well as other archaeological resources. Materials prepared for the proposed development in 1998, for example, informed the defendants that there “are significant cultural or archaeological sites identified in the . . . the project area.” And the defendants’ early development of the project confirmed the presence of Native American remains on the property, when the defendants found a Native American burial in 2001.

Despite having this information, the defendants declined to inform those performing earthmoving work for the project that archaeological resources could be present on site. And when one of defendants’ subcontractors found human remains in 2015, the defendants instructed the subcontractor not to contact the police and to hide the remains.

In the end, City of West Sacramento staff learned of the remains through other avenues, and then promptly requested an archaeological review of the site. When archaeologists finally surveyed the site in late 2015, they saw the result of the defendants’ previous misconduct: multiple human remains had been unearthed by prior construction and scattered across a widespread area.

“The defendants’ unlawful conduct has resulted in the destruction and damage of countless Native American remains,” said District Attorney Reisig. “The flagrant disregard of the sanctity of the burial site is indefensible and deeply offensive.”

The suit seeks civil penalties against the defendants and a court order that ensures that disturbed remains are properly reinterred and that bars the defendants from further unlawfully disturbing Native American remains.

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