Chapter 12: Cultural Resources

This chapter describes the cultural resources in the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill (CHRLF) vicinity, and the potential for affecting these resources by implementing any of the alternatives.

The environmental review determined that no significant unavoidable adverse impacts to cultural resources are anticipated during construction or operation of any of the alternatives.

12.1 Affected Environment

The area in which the CHRLF is located was developed in large part due to timber production and mining. Archaeologists assessed the CHRLF vicinity for cultural resources by reviewing existing applicable literature and conducting a field survey.

The results (NWAA 2009) of the archival and literature review indicated that the landform that includes the project area (the landfill and the 1,000-foot-wide buffer), has a low probability for the presence of archaeological resources, historic buildings, or traditional cultural properties. Because most of the project area has been cleared, graded, or used as landfill, only two areas have potential for containing cultural resources – the western and southern sides of the buffer. The buffer, in turn, contains areas that are disturbed, although to a lesser degree. Data from previous archaeological studies, ethnographic evidence, and historical information suggest that human use of the area has been minimal.

There have been 23 cultural resource surveys conducted within 2 miles of the landfill. Based on these surveys, the nearest recorded site is 0.9 miles west of the landfill – the Cedar Mountain Bridge and Ramp. Archaeologists also identified a fluted projectile point of a type associated with hunting camps as old as 11,000 years in a peat bog 2 miles west of CHRLF. While the peat bog setting is quite different from the hilltop landform of the landfill, the find indicates that very old sites may be located in the vicinity of the landfill. Other probable archaeological resource types to be expected in the vicinity of the landfill are upland special-purpose sites associated with hunting or plant collecting. These site types are most likely located on the topographic high point of the landform.

Ethnographic evidence indicates that local tribes had a hunter-gatherer mode of existence. The Duwamish people had longhouses in several places along the Cedar River; the nearest location was 4 miles west of the landfill at the town of Elliott. The Duwamish people also had an elaborate ceremonial complex that included the Duwamish spirit canoe ritual. After the ceremony, Indian doctors who participated in the soul recovery disposed of the spirit canoes and other paraphernalia in trees in remote places away from the village. The landfill site is far enough removed from the former village at Elliott to have served for such a practice. If the CHRLF site had been used for this purpose, it is unlikely that any of the paraphernalia or the trees that held the artifacts would still exist.

A cultural resource survey conducted within the western and southern sides of the buffer included the survey of 12 groups of 100-meter sections using four transects spaced 25 meters apart (Robbins et al. 1996). Archaeologists excavated shovel test probes at approximately 20-meter intervals along each transect, and screened the dirt from those probes dug in areas considered to have a higher probability for containing cultural resources,

such as level, dryer, upland areas. Field reconnaissance did not yield any significant cultural resources.

Archaeologists also conducted a cultural resources survey on April 20 and 21, 2009, on 4.3 acres in the southeastern corner of the buffer where maintenance and administrative facilities may be relocated under Alternatives 3 and 5 (see Figure 12-1). No cultural resource materials were found during the survey. A copy of the report (NWAA 2009) is on file with KCSWD.

12.2 Environmental Impacts

12.2.1 Direct Impacts

For all alternatives, no cultural resources in the project area would be affected because no cultural resources have been identified on the project site.

12.2.2 Indirect and Cumulative Impacts

Because there would be no direct impacts to cultural resources, no indirect or cumulative impacts would be anticipated for any of the alternatives.

12.3 Mitigation Measures

Because no cultural resources were identified on the project site and no impacts to cultural resources would occur under any of the alternatives, no mitigation would be necessary. If cultural resources were encountered during construction of any of the action alternatives, construction would be halted in that area and the appropriate surveys, notifications, and corrective actions would occur.

12.4 Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts

None of the alternatives would result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts on cultural resources.

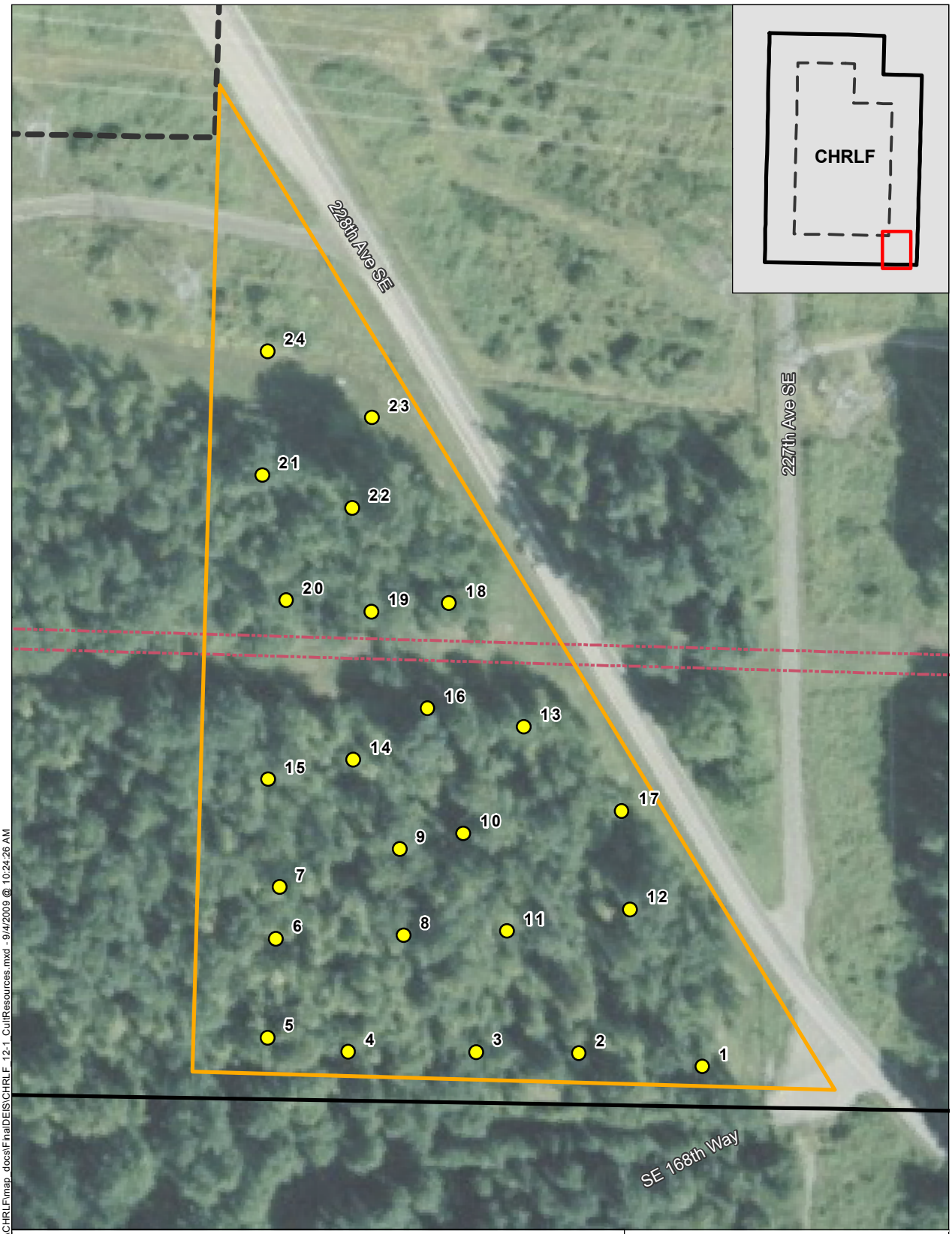

FIGURE 12-1
Cultural Resources Survey Area