

**CULTURAL RESOURCES CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS OF THE
ORCHARD ROAD RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT
SAN ANTONIO, BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS
ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT CODE: 02-6187C7-054CIPI
WBS ELEMENT: 40-00029**

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SWCA Project Number 15141.04-402-AUS

April 2009

INTRODUCTION

SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted a cultural resource constraints analysis for Adams Environmental, Inc., on the City of San Antonio (COSA) Orchard Road reconstruction project located in eastern San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas (Figure 1). The purpose of this constraints analysis is to gather available information on previously recorded archaeological surveys, archaeological sites, and historic resources within the project area and to assess the potential for the presence of significant cultural resources. The goal is to provide information for project planning and development, as well as estimates on possible future work that may be required for regulatory compliance.

This report documents the results of the cultural resources background review and assessment of possible historic property and archaeological site locations for the project area. An archaeological survey of the project area was not conducted as an element of this research. This constraints analysis does not constitute any form of archaeological clearance for the project area, but may be used to coordinate future cultural resource compliance with city and/or state agencies.

DEFINITION OF STUDY AREA

The project area is located along Orchard Road starting at West Hein Road and continuing east for approximately 0.5 miles and terminating at W.W. White Road (Figure 2). The project will involve improvements to Orchard Road within the existing right-of-way (ROW). The project area is bordered on both sides by residential development and some commercial development near the intersection with W.W. White Road. The project area can be found on the San Antonio East, Texas United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Development or improvement projects in Texas can come under the purview of two primary cultural resource regulations, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) and the Antiquities Code of Texas. Both are administered by the Texas Historical Commission (THC) located in Austin, the State Historic Preservation Officer of Texas. If an undertaking is federally permitted, licensed, funded, or partially funded, the project must comply with Section 106 of the NHPA, as amended. Section 106 requires that every federal agency consider the undertaking's effects on historic properties. The process begins with a historic properties inventory and evaluation. Under Section 106, any property listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is considered significant. The NRHP is a historic resources inventory maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. This list includes buildings, structures, objects, sites, districts, and archaeological resources. These regulations are defined in "Protection of Historic Properties," 36 CFR 800 of the NHPA. Examples of projects in Texas requiring compliance with the NHPA include those conducted on federal lands or ones acquiring a federal permit such as a Section 404 permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Cultural resource sites, historic and prehistoric, located on lands owned or controlled by the State of Texas or one of its political subdivisions are protected by the Antiquities Code of Texas (Code). The Code requires state agencies and political subdivisions of the state, including cities, counties, river authorities, municipal utility districts and school districts to notify the THC of any action on public land involving five or more acres of ground disturbance; 5,000 or more cubic yards of earth moving; or those that have the potential to disturb recorded archeological sites.

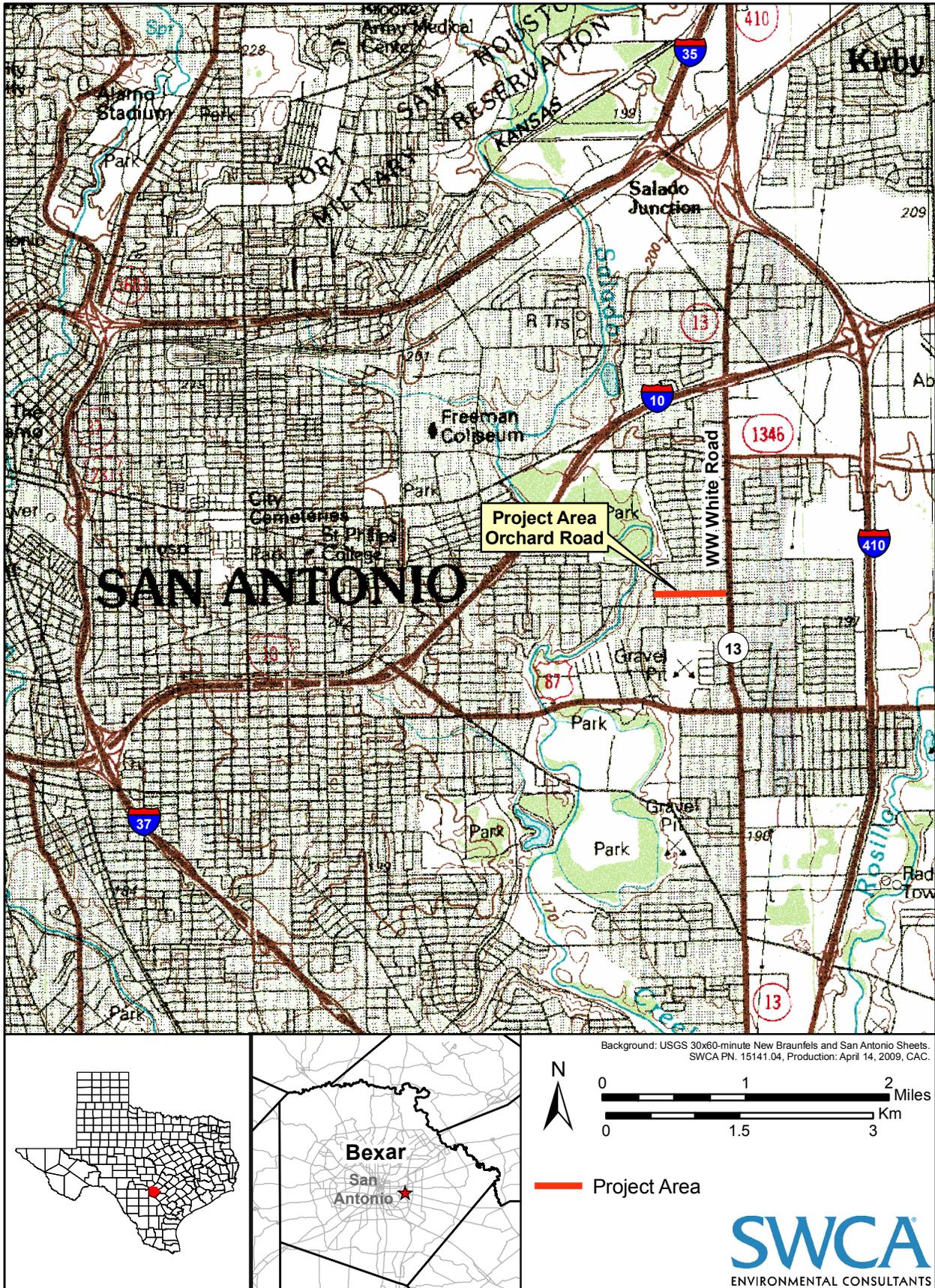


Figure 1. Vicinity Map.



Figure 2. Project Location Map.

The THC's Archeology Division manages compliance with the Code, including the issuance of formal Antiquities Permits, which stipulate the conditions under which scientific investigations will occur. Under the Code, any historic or prehistoric property located on state land may be determined eligible as a State Archeological Landmark (SAL). Projects in Texas that typically necessitate compliance with the Code include entities such as the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), cities such as San Antonio, counties, and others such as the San Antonio Water System (SAWS).

Finally, in Bexar County and the City of San Antonio, the Historic Preservation and Design Section of the City of San Antonio's Unified Development Code (Article 6 35-360 to 35-634) mandates various levels of historic preservation applicable to many development projects. This regulation allows for the review of projects by the City of San Antonio Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) to assess a project's potential effects to known cultural resources.

METHODS

The cultural resources constraints analysis consisted of a background cultural resource and environmental literature search of the project area. An SWCA archaeologist reviewed the San Antonio East, Texas USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL) and searched the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas online database for any previously recorded surveys and historic or prehistoric archaeological sites located in or near the project area. Previous cultural resource investigations listed on the Atlas are limited to projects under purview of the Antiquities Code of Texas or the NHPA, as amended. Also, projects under these regulations may not be posted on Atlas due to a delay in the completion of field work

and the completion of the report. In addition to identifying recorded archaeological sites, the review included information on the following types of cultural resources: NRHP properties, SALs, Official Texas Historical Markers, Registered Texas Historic Landmarks, cemeteries, and local neighborhood surveys. The archaeologist also examined the following sources: the *Soil Survey of Bexar County, Texas* (Taylor et al. 1991) and the *Geologic Atlas of Texas-San Antonio Sheet* (Fisher 1983).

Utilizing this information, the project area was assessed for the potential to contain archaeological and/or historical materials. The project area was then divided into high, medium, and low-probability areas, based on the potential to contain archaeological and historical resources. High-probability areas are defined as locales that possess or have a high likelihood of containing significant cultural resources. These areas are generally identified by distinct landforms and deposits that have been shown in other regional surveys to contain archaeological sites. In the case of historic resources, high-probability areas are identified by the presence of historic-age properties within project area. Moderate or low-probability areas are defined as locales where archaeological and/or historical resources are likely absent or have limited potential to be preserved or significant (e.g., upland settings or areas with intensive development).

RESULTS

GEOLOGY/ SOILS

The geology of the project area is mapped as Pleistocene-age fluvial terrace deposits and consists of gravel, sand, silt and clay located generally above floodplains along entrenched streams (Fisher 1983).

The soils of the project area are mapped as Lewisville silty clay, 0 to 1 percent slopes

(Taylor et al. 1991). These soils are of the Houston Black-Houston association and consist of deep clayey soils over calcareous clay and marl (Taylor et al. 1991).

BACKGROUND REVIEW

The results of the background review determined that the project area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources and no previously recorded sites are located within or directly adjacent to the project area.

A total of five archeological surveys, one archeological site, and one historical marker are located within one mile of the project area.

The previous investigations within one mile of the project area consist of two linear surveys and three small acreage area surveys located west of the project area primarily along Salado Creek. The first linear survey was conducted along Salado Creek on behalf of TxDOT in 2002 by the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) and is located 0.2 miles west of the project area. The second linear survey was conducted in 1983 on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Texas Department of Water Resources (TDWR). The north-south running survey is located approximately 0.5 miles southwest of the project area.

The remaining three area surveys straddle Salado Creek and consist of a small acreage surveys conducted by Raba-Kistner Consultants on behalf of SAWS in 2007, UTSA on behalf of TxDOT in 2008, and the City of San Antonio in 1973. Site 41BX64 was recorded as a result of the 1973 survey and is an Archaic-age campsite. Little information was available regarding the 1973 survey or site 41BX64 on the Atlas website.

One historical marker is located approximately 0.9 miles southwest of the project area.

The marker commemorates the campsite of Stephen F. Austin during the Texas revolution in 1835.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

The project area is situated within a rural residential area consisting of larger acreage home sites and some open space along the road ROW. Analysis of aerial photography indicates that disturbances to the ROW consist primarily of the construction of the roadway itself along with numerous private driveways. It is highly likely that utilities serving the residential homes are buried within the ROW. In this area, the bordering home sites are off-set from the roadway and in some places stands of large trees surround the residential complexes.

Archeological deposits are commonly found in alluvial landforms adjacent to waterways. No waterways traverse the project area, and as such the probability for intact, buried cultural deposits is significantly decreased due to the distance from substantial waterways as well as a relative increase in construction-related disturbances, particularly near the intersection with W.W. White Road. Based upon the soils, geology, topography of the landscape, and background research, there is generally a low probability that significant archeological resources will be present in the road ROW project area.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted a cultural resource constraints analysis for Adams Environmental, Inc., on the COSA Orchard Road project area in eastern San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas. The purpose of the constraints analysis was to gather available information on previously recorded archaeological surveys, archaeological sites, and historic resources within the property and to as-

sess the potential for the presence of significant cultural resources.

The background review determined that the project area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources and no archeological sites are located within or immediately adjacent to the project area. Orchard Road is a low traffic roadway that is bordered for the entirety of its length by larger acreage home sites. Disturbances within the road ROW consist predominately of the construction of the roadway itself as well as intersecting private driveways and buried utilities. The project area is underlain by silty clays with the closest waterway being Salado Creek located approximately 0.2 miles west of the project area. While Salado Creek is located in close proximity to the project area, any remnant alluvial landforms associated with Salado Creek likely do not stretch into the project area. Additionally, the project area is underlain by soils belonging to the Houston-Black-Houston association, which are generally not associated with alluvial settings. Given the amount of disturbances coupled with the nature of the local geology and soils, the potential for archeological sites within the project area is considered low. As such, it is unlikely that an archeological survey will be necessary or required by the regulatory agencies.

Should compliance with cultural resource regulations such as the National Historic Preservation Act or the Antiquities Code of Texas be required for any future development of the property, an exact scope of any requisite cultural resource investigations would need to be developed in coordination with the involved regulatory agency, likely the THC or HPO.

REFERENCES CITED

Fisher, W.L.

1983 *Geologic Atlas of Texas, San Antonio Sheet*. Bureau of Economic Geology, The University of Texas at Austin.

Taylor, F. B., R. B. Hailey, and D. L. Richmond

1991 *Soil Survey of Bexar County, Texas*. United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.