TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ANTIQUITIES PERMIT APPLICATION FORM ARCHEOLOGY

GENERAL INFORMATION

I. PROPERTY TYPE AND LOCATION

Project Name (and/or Site Trinomial) Seward Junction Loop North
County (ies) Williamson
USGS Quadrangle Name and Number Liberty Hill (3097-331), and Leander NE (3097-324)

UTM Coordinates Zone 14 E 606804 N 3392174
Location Liberty Hill, TX
Federal Involvement ❑ Yes ☒ No
Name of Federal Agency N/A
Agency Representative N/A

II. OWNER (OR CONTROLLING AGENCY)

Owner Williamson County
Representative Bill Gravell Jr. (County Judge)
Address 710 Main Street, Suite 101
City/State/Zip Georgetown, TX 78626
Telephone (include area code) 512 943-1550 Email Address ctyjudge@wilco.org

III. PROJECT SPONSOR (IF DIFFERENT FROM OWNER)

Sponsor
Representative
Address
City/State/Zip
Telephone (include area code) Email Address

PROJECT INFORMATION

I. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (ARCHEOLOGIST)

Name Analise Hollingshead
Affiliation SWCA Environmental Consultants
Address 4407 Monterey Oaks Blvd Building 1, Suite 110
City/State/Zip Austin, Texas 78749
Telephone (include area code) 512-476-0891 Email Address analise.hollingshead@swca.com

(OVER)

ANTIQUITIES PERMIT APPLICATION FORM (CONTINUED)

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Proposed Starting Date of Fieldwork September 1, 2023

Requested Permit Duration 3 Years 0 Months (1 year minimum)
Scope of Work (Provided an Outline of Proposed Work) Please see the attached scope of work for detailed pedestrian survey and shovel testing of public lands. In addition, additional survey might be conducted depending on Aquatics survey of potential jurisdictional waterways/intermittent streams.

III. CURATION & REPORT

Temporary Curatorial or Laboratory Facility SWCA Austin
Permanent Curatorial Facility CAR-Center for Archaeological Research, San Antonio

IV. LAND OWNER'S CERTIFICATION

I, _____, as legal representative of the Land Owner, Williamson County, do certify that I have reviewed the plans and research design, and that no investigations will be performed prior to the issuance of a permit by the Texas Historical Commission. Furthermore, I understand that the Owner, Sponsor, and Principal Investigator are responsible for completing the terms of the permit.
Signature _____ Date _____

V. SPONSOR'S CERTIFICATION

I, _____, as legal representative of the Sponsor, _____, do certify that I have review the plans and research design, and that no investigations will be performed prior to the issuance of a permit by the Texas Historical Commission. Furthermore, I understand that the Sponsor, Owner, and Principal Investigator are responsible for completing the terms of this permit.
Signature _____ Date _____

VI. INVESTIGATOR'S CERTIFICATION

I, Analise Hollingshead, as Principal Investigator employed by SWCA Environmental Consultants (Investigative Firm), do certify that I will execute this project according to the submitted plans and research design, and will not conduct any work prior to the issuance of a permit by the Texas Historical Commission. Furthermore, I understand that the Principal Investigator (and the Investigative Firm), as well as the Owner and Sponsor, are responsible for completing the terms of this permit.

Signature _____ Date 8.29.2023

Principal Investigator must attach a research design, a copy of the USGS quadrangle showing project boundaries, and any additional pertinent information. Curriculum vita must be on file with the Archeology Division.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Reviewer _____ Date Permit Issues _____
Permit Number _____ Permit Expiration Date _____
Type of Permit _____ Date Received for Data Entry _____

Texas Historical Commission
Archeology Division
P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276

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PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK FOR AN INTENSIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE SEWARD JUNCTION LOOP NORTH IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS

Project Landowner – Williamson County
Project Sponsor – Williamson County
Project Consultant – SWCA Environmental Consultants
Principal Investigator – Analise Hollingshead, M.S., RPA
Date – October 12, 2023

INTRODUCTION

At the request of Williamson County, SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) proposes to conduct an intensive cultural resources survey of approximately 44.85 acres (18.15 hectares [ha]) of roadway in support of the Seward Junction Loop North Improvement Project (project) in Liberty Hill, Williamson County, Texas. This project represents approximately 2.15 miles (3.46 kilometers [km]) of roadway (including spurs at Sunset Ridge Drive) and will include six-lane main lanes from United States Highway (US) 183 on the west to State Highway (SH) 29 to Williamson County Road (CR) 260 on the east. The right-of-way (ROW) width for the project will be approximately 150 feet (46 meters [m]) (Figures 1 and 2). Because the project involves lands owned or controlled by Williamson County (a subdivision of the state), the project will be subject to review under the Antiquities Code of Texas (ACT), and the archaeological field investigation will require a Texas Antiquities Permit; therefore, the investigations proposed below are designed to comply with the requirements of the ACT.

In addition, portions of the project are located on private lands that may intersect or be located adjacent to potential anticipated United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) jurisdictional waterways that may be subject to USACE permitting (i.e., permit review areas [PRAs]). Future cultural resources investigations, if required, would be intended to satisfy regulatory obligations related to the potential acquisition of a USACE Section 404 permit in accordance with 33 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 325, Appendix C, and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA).

SWCA proposes to conduct an intensive pedestrian survey with subsurface testing of the entire 44.85-acre (18.15-ha) project area. Potential future surveys may be conducted depending on the results of an Aquatic delineation survey. The goal of the work will be to locate any previously recorded prehistoric and historic-age archaeological sites in the project area; locate any previously undiscovered archaeological sites in the project area; establish vertical and horizontal site boundaries, as appropriate with regard to the project area; and evaluate the significance and eligibility of any site recorded in the project area for eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and for designation as a State Antiquities Landmark (SAL). All work will be conducted in accordance with both the ACT and Section 106 of the NHPA.

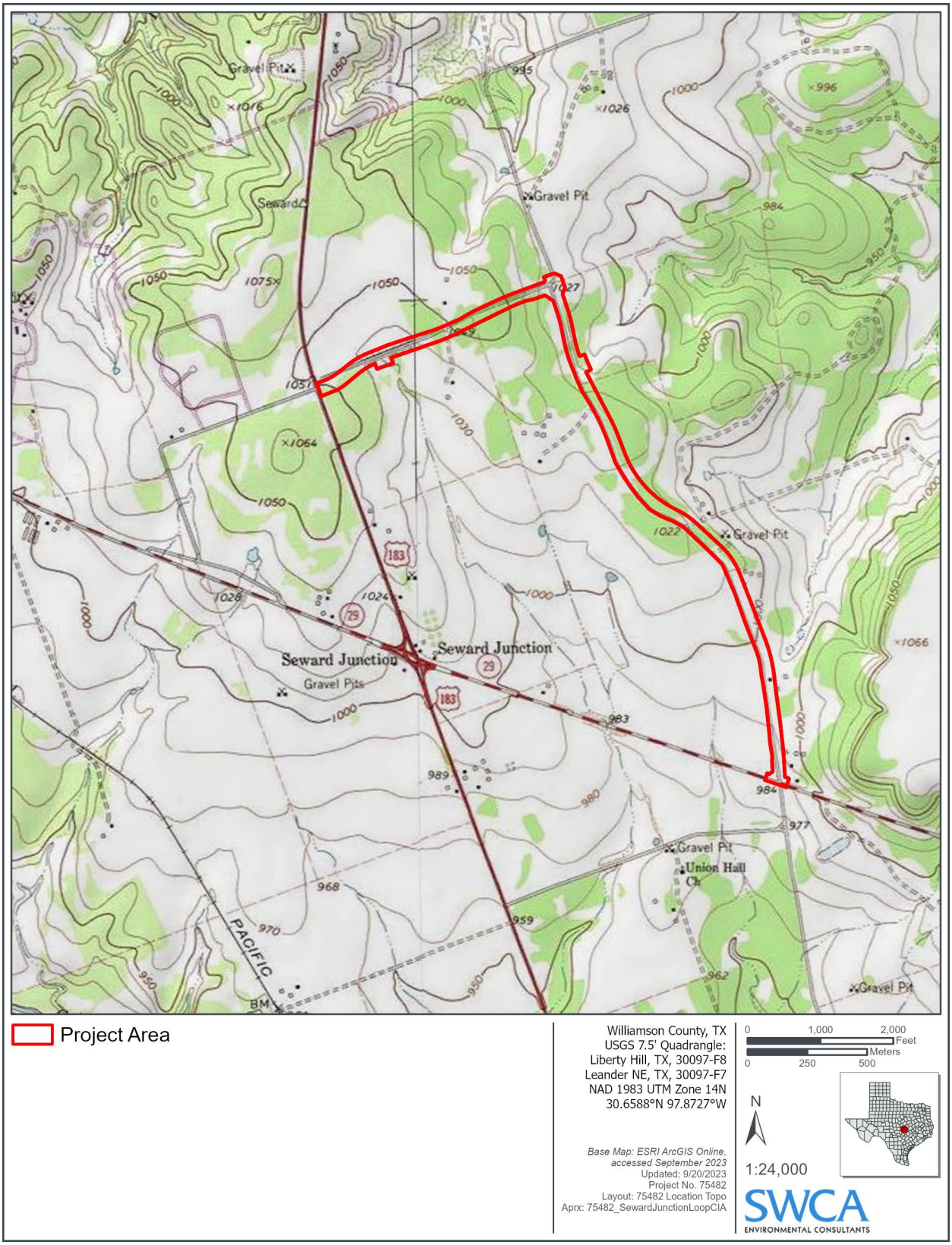

Figure 1. Project location map.

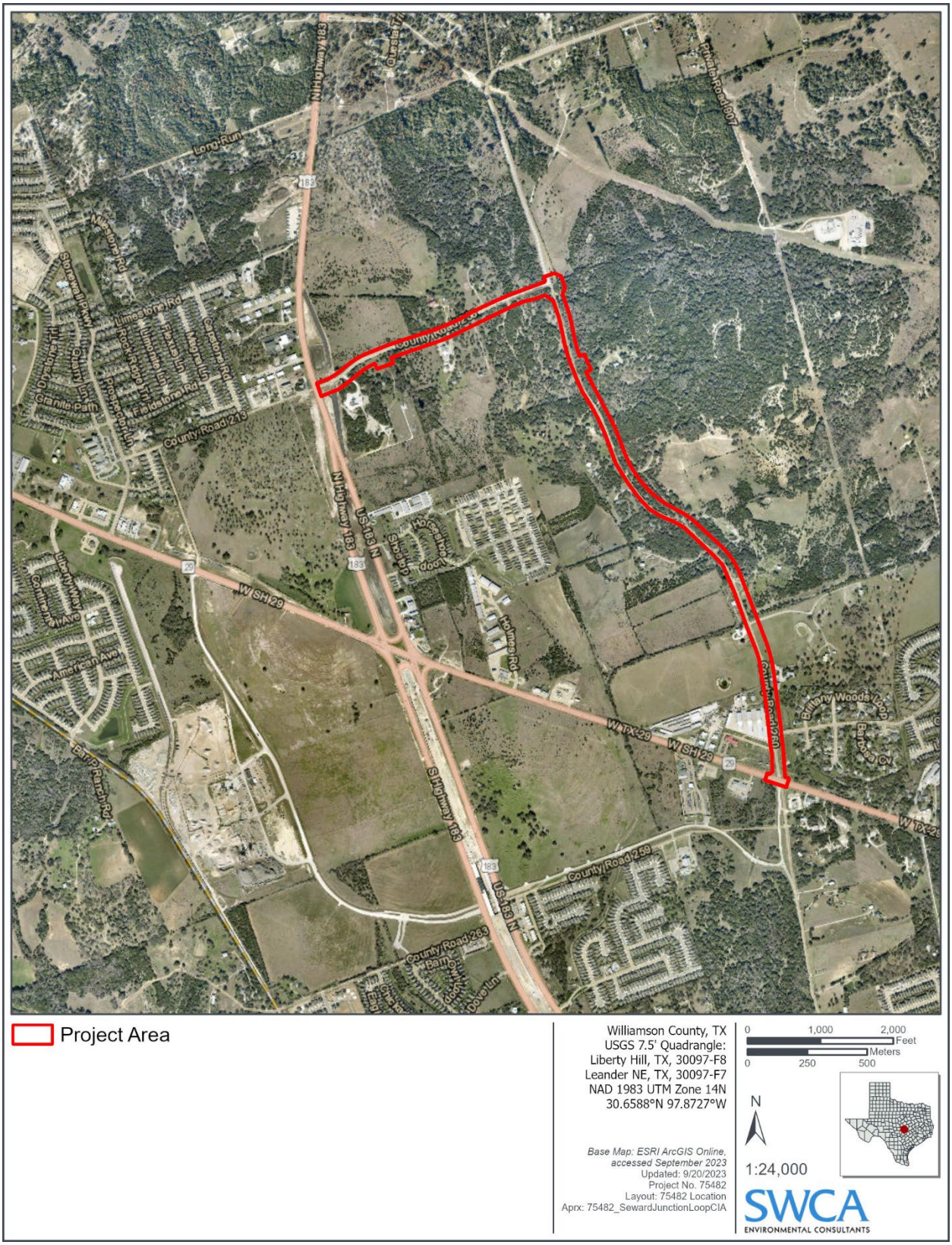

Figure 2. Project area overview map.

Project Description

The project area appears on the *Liberty Hill* (3097-331), and *Leander NE* (3097-324)*, Texas* U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle maps. The project area is located approximately 2.7 miles (4.4 km) east of Liberty Hill, Texas, and approximately 4.6 miles (7.4 km) north of Leander, Texas. The project area consists of the expansion of existing two-lane asphalt roadway and construction of new roadway, which will be expanded to six-lane main lanes from US 183 on the west to SH 29 to CR 260 on the east. The project will be constructed within an approximately 150-foot-wide (46-m) ROW. Overall, the project area encompasses approximately 44.85 acres (18.15 ha) (see Figure 2).

PROJECT SETTING

The project area crosses the Balcones Canyonlands subregion within the Edwards Plateau ecoregion (Griffith et al. 2007). The physiography of the area is described as dissected plateaus and escarpments with stair-stepped topography. Additionally, physiography includes moderate to high gradient streams with bedrock, cobble, and gravel substrates (Griffith et al. 2007:63).

Geology

The underlying geology throughout the project area consists predominantly of Cretaceous-age Walnut Clay formations including Cedar Park (19.75 acres [7.99 ha]), Bee Cave Marl (14.39 acres [5.82 ha]), and the Upper Glen Rose Limestone formation (0.33 acres [0.13 ha]) (Figure 3) (Barnes 1974; USGS 2023a). These marl formations are typically soft, white marls containing megafossils. The Upper Glen Rose Limestone formation consists of alternating beds of limestone, dolomite, and marl in a resistant and recessive pattern to form a stair-stepped topography. The upper part of this formation consists of thin beds with the lower part of the formation consisting of thicker fossiliferous beds (USGS 2023a). The remaining 10.40 acres (4.21 ha) consist of Fluviatile terrace deposits located around waterways.

Soils

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (2023), there are five soil series mapped within the project area including: the Fairlie clay; Doss silty clay, moist; Eckrant cobbly clay; Denton silty clay; and Georgetown clay loam (Figure 4; Table 1). None of these soils are alluvial or aggrading, suggesting almost no potential to contain buried archaeological resources; these soils include the following:

- The Fairlie clay, 0 to 2 percent slopes soil series consists of deep, moderately well-drained soils that formed on nearly level to gently sloping uplands. The slope is typically 1 to 3 percent but ranges for 0 to 5 percent (NRCS 2023).

- The Doss silty clay, moist, 1 to 5 percent slopes soil series consists of shallow to weakly cemented limestone. The series is a well-drained, moderately slow permeable soil that forms in calcareous loamy and clayey residuum derived from marls and limestone. These gently to moderately sloping soils occur on hill slopes on dissected plateaus (NRCS 2023).

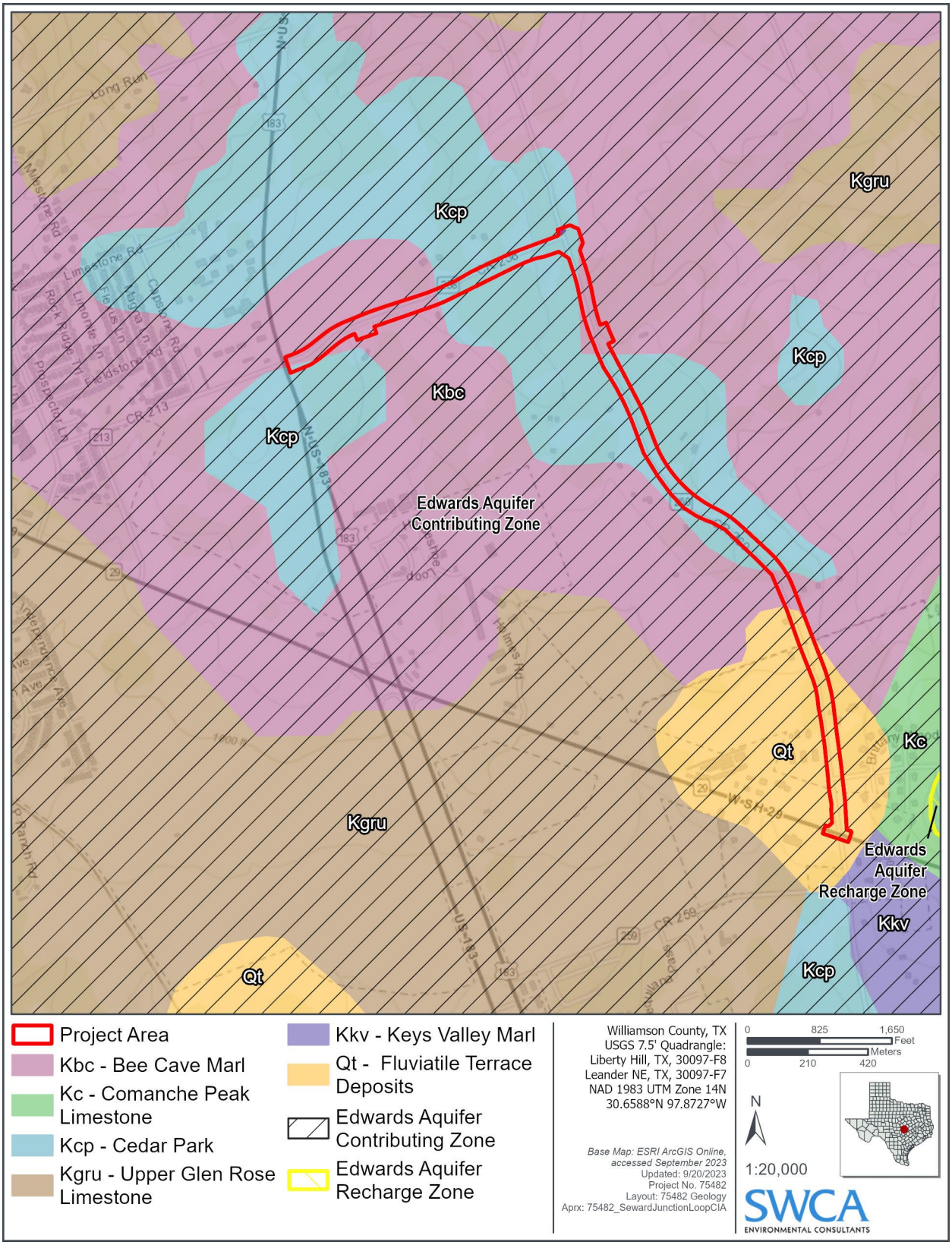

Figure 3. Project area geology map.

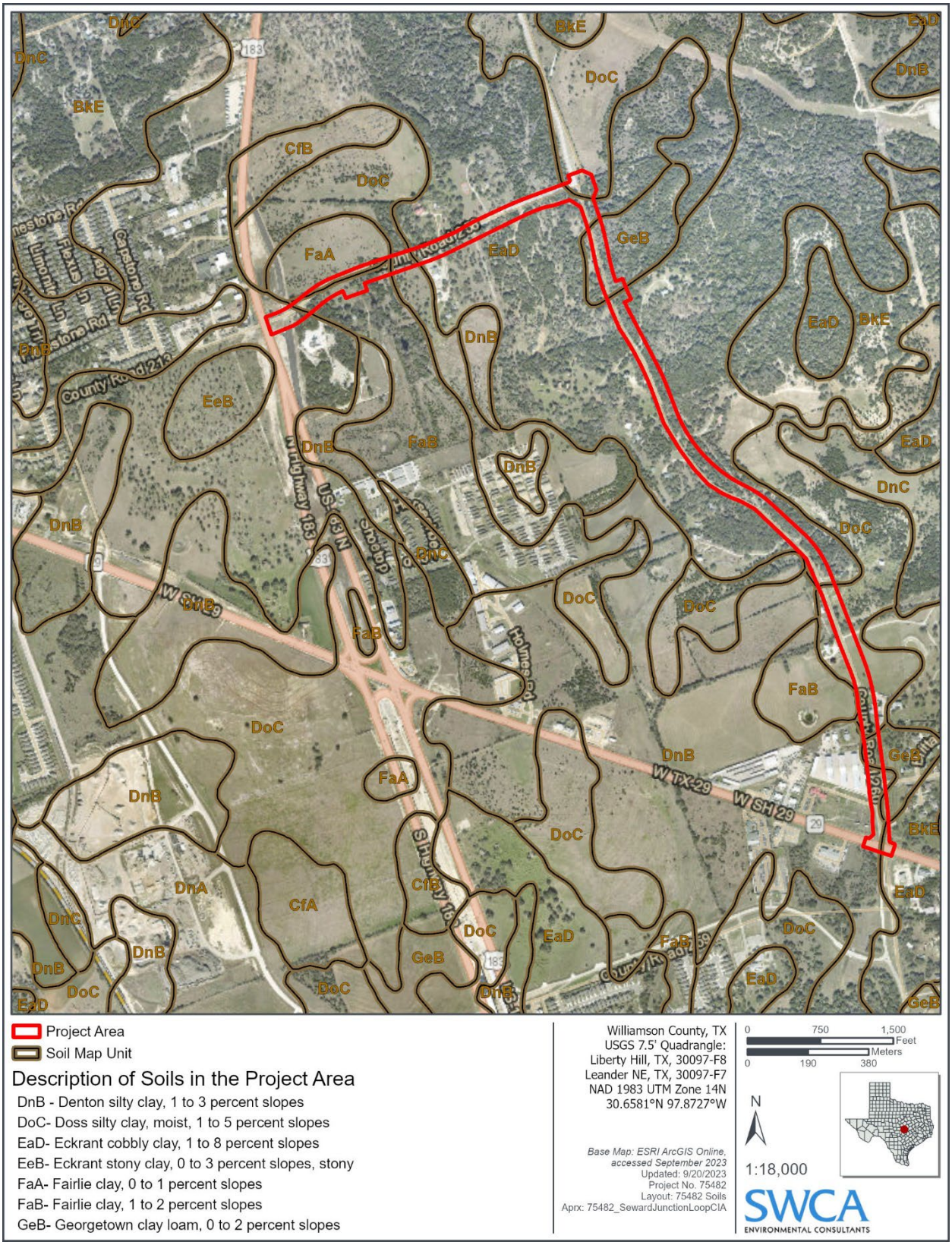

Figure 4. Project area soils map.

- The Eckrant series consists of a well-drained, moderately slowly permeable soils that are very shallow to shallow over indurated limestone bedrock. These soils are nearly level to very steep and form in residuum derived from limestone. These soils occur on summits, shoulders, and backslopes of ridges on dissected plateaus (NRCS 2023).

- The Denton silty clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes consists of deep, well-drained, slowly permeable soils located on gently sloping backslopes and footslopes of ridges. They formed in clayey materials derived from weathered residuum over limestone bedrock (NRCS 2023).

- Finally, the Georgetown clay loam, 1 to 8 percent slopes consists of moderately deep, well drained, very slowly permeable soils located on nearly level to very gently sloping dissected plateaus. They formed over indurated limestone of Cretaceous age (NRCS 2023).

Table 1. Project Area Soils

Name	Symbol	Acres	Percentage
Eckrant cobbly clay, 1 to 8 percent slopes	EaD	24.4	54.3
Doss silty clay, moist, 1 to 5 percent slopes	DoC	8.7	19.4
Georgetown clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	GeB	4.4	9.8
Fairlie clay, 1 to 2 percent slopes	FaB	3.4	7.7
Denton silty clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes	DnB	2.7	6.0
Fairlie clay, 0 to 1 percent slopes	FaA	1.3	2.8
Total		**44.8**	**100**

Source: NRCS (2023).

BACKGROUND REVIEW

An SWCA archaeologist researched the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas (Atlas), a restricted, online database maintained by the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory, for any previously recorded surveys and historic or prehistoric archaeological sites located in or within 0.6 mile (1.0 km) of the project area (THC 2023). In addition to identifying previously recorded archaeological sites, the Atlas review includes the following types of information: NRHP districts and properties, SALs, Official Texas Historical Markers, Registered Texas Historic Landmarks, cemeteries, and local neighborhood surveys. Listings in Atlas are limited to projects under purview of the ACT or the NHPA; therefore, the Atlas does not necessarily list all previous work conducted within a specific area. However, SWCA made a concerted effort to obtain reports for all previous cultural resources work conducted in the project area. The background review included a review of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Aggregator (Aggregator), which maps resources and districts determined eligible for the NRHP, National Historic Landmarks (NHLs), Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs), and local historic districts (TxDOT 2023). The Aggregator also has a dataset for the 1936 Texas Centennial Markers, which are eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A for Social History in the *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial Multiple Property Submission* (MPS) *Documentation Form* (TxDOT 2023, Wilson and Smith 2018).

There is one designated historic property in the study area, a 1936 Centennial Marker (#5491009093) honoring Manuel Flores which is determined eligible for the NRHP (Figure 4). The marker is directly adjacent to the project area, southeast of the intersection of CR 260 and Rieti Parkway. Within the study area, there is one cemetery, one gravesite, and one OTHM. No NRHP districts or properties, sites designated as RTHLs, SALs, historic trails, neighborhood surveys, local landmarks, or local historic districts were identified within or immediately adjacent (i.e., within 300 feet [91.4 m]) to the proposed project area or within the study area. The 1872 John G. Matthews House, an RTHL (#5491009296), is the nearest historic property to the proposed project (TxDOT 2023). The historic center-passage limestone house and farmstead is 1.4 miles (2.3 km) southwest of the project location, outside of the study area.

Ten previously conducted archaeological surveys and six previously recorded archaeological sites are in the study area. Five mapped previously conducted archaeological surveys and two previously recorded archaeological sites are within 300 feet (91.4 m) of the project area. Three of the previously conducted archaeological surveys are not mapped on the Atlas, but they are listed on previously recorded archaeological site forms; the location and extent of these surveys is unknown. One historic resources survey intersects the project area along the US 183 corridor.

As part of the review, SWCA also examined the TxDOT Historic Overlay, a mapping/geographic information system (GIS) data set with historical maps and resource information covering most portions of the state (Foster et al. 2006), historical USGS quadrangle maps available on the USGS TopoView website (USGS 2023b), and historical aerial photography contained on the Historic Aerials website (Historic Aerials 2023) to determine if any historic-age resources such as potential historical features and/or potential historical structures (PHSs) are located within the project or study area. There are 34 potential historical linear features and 80 PHSs within the study area, based on historical map analysis (see Figure 5) (THC 2023). Fifteen PHSs are located within or immediately adjacent (i.e., within 300 feet) to the project area.

Previous Cultural Resources Surveys

During the background review, 10 previously conducted archaeological surveys were identified within the study area, five of which intersect the project area (see Figure 4) (THC 2023). As previously mentioned, three of the previously conducted archaeological surveys are not mapped on the Atlas, but they are listed on previously recorded archaeological site forms. The surveys were conducted between 2005 and 2021, although the year is unknown for one of the surveys (Table 2). Five of the surveys recorded or revisited the previously recorded archaeological sites within the study area. A historic resources survey for the 183A Project completed by TxDOT and the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA) was completed in 2019 by Cox McLain Environmental Consulting (Riddle et al. 2019). The 183A Project affirmed the NRHP status of the 1872 Bryson Farmstead (RTHL #5491009323), which was determined eligible for the NRHP in 2006 under Criterion A for Agriculture and Criterion C for Architecture, both at the local level. The 2019 report recommended an additional agricultural resource, a ca. 1890 trough, as a contributing resource to the historic property, as well as the significance area for Criterion A to be changed to Exploration and Settlement (Riddle et al. 2019; Atlas No. 8500082312). No other surveyed resources were recommended eligible for the NRHP (Riddle et al. 2019; Atlas No. 8500082312).

Previously Recorded Archaeological Sites

Six previously recorded archaeological sites (i.e., 41WM458, 41WM782, 41WM1154, 41WM1439, 41WM1440, and 41WM1461) were identified within the study area (see Figure 4; Table 3) (THC 2023). Of these, one site (i.e., 41WM782) intersects the project area, and another site (i.e., 41WM1440) is immediately adjacent (i.e., within 300 feet [91.4 m]) to the project area. Three of the sites (i.e.,

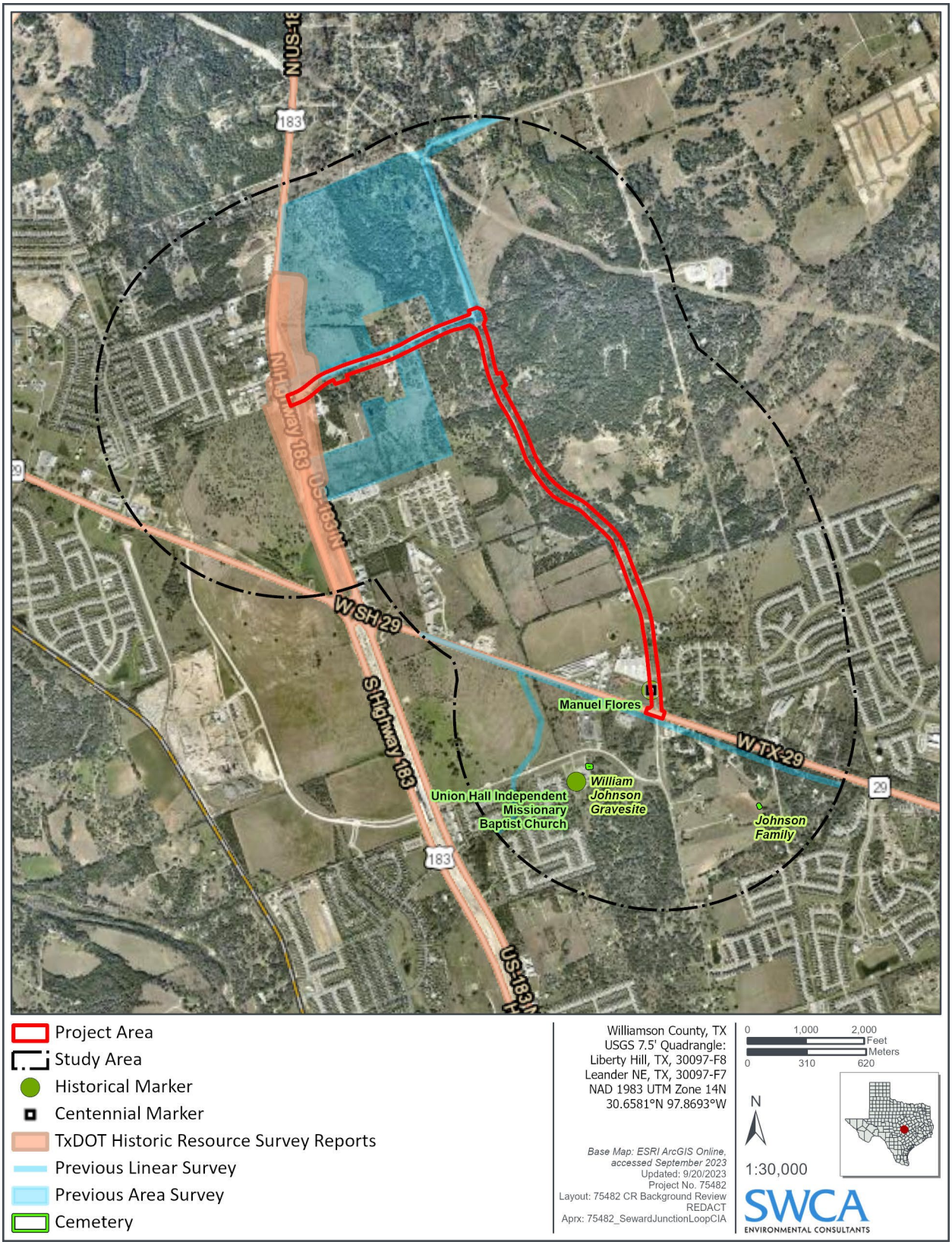

Figure 4. Cultural resources background review results map.

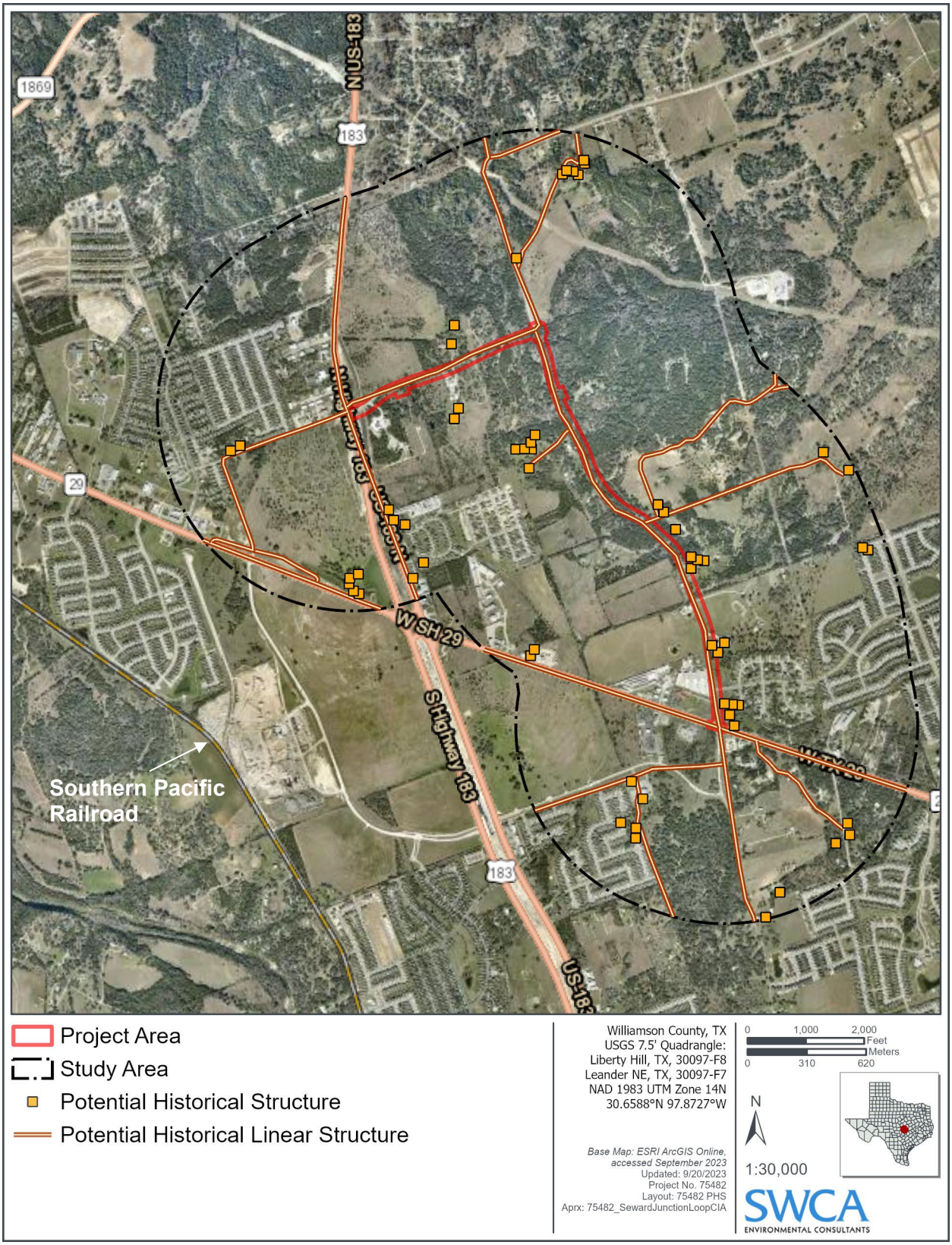

Figure 5. Map of potential historical features and structures within the study area.

Table 2. Previously Conducted Cultural Resources Surveys within the Study Area.

Atlas No.	Distance	Year	Type	ACT Permit No.	Project	Investigators	Agency/Sponsor	Comments
8400004226	Intersects	n/a	Linear Survey	-	-	-	-	No cultural resources recorded within current project area during investigations.
-	-	1999	Linear Survey	2103	Andice to Leander Transmission Line Rebuild Project	Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA)	LCRA	41WM458 revisited during investigations. Survey not mapped on the Atlas.
8500011956	Intersects	2005	Area Survey	3825	Archaeological Survey of Williamson County Road 258 Improvement Project: A 1.5-mile Segment, North of Seward Junction	Archaeological & Cultural Sciences Group (AGSG)	Williamson County	No cultural resources recorded during investigations.
-	-	2007	n/a	4248	Archeological Investigations of US 183 Improvements from US 183/US 183-A Interchange to SH 29	Hick & Company	Texas Department of Transportation/ Federal Highway Administration	Site 41WM1154 recorded during survey. Survey not mapped on the Atlas.
8500019360	Within 1 km	2010	Area Survey	5775	Cultural Resources Survey of Proposed Liberty Hill Gravity Flow Wastewater System	Cedar Valley Environmental Services	Environmental Protection Agency, Texas Water Development Board, and City of Liberty Hill	No cultural resources recorded during investigations.
8500020659	Within 1 km	2012	Area Survey	6344	Intensive Archeological Survey of Proposed Improvements to County Road 258 from Sunset Ridge to Ronald Reagan Boulevard	Blanton & Associates	Williamson County	No cultural resources recorded during investigations.
8500082312	Intersects	2019	Historic Resources Survey	N/A	Reconnaissance historic resources survey of US 183 from Hero Way to SH 29	Cox McLain Environmental Consulting	TxDOT/CTRMA	Made recommendations to the Bryson Farmstead NRHP property. CSJ: 0914-05-192
8500082167	Intersects	2021	Area Survey	9799	Archeological Survey of the Proposed Liberty Hill ISD	Tejas Archaeology.	Liberty Hill Independent School District	Site 41WM1439 and 41WM1440 recorded during survey.

Atlas No.	Distance	Year	Type	ACT Permit No.	Project	Investigators	Agency/Sponsor	Comments
					New School Expansions			
-	Within 1 km	2021	n/a	30325	Butler Farms Offsite Cultural Resources Survey	Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc.	Texas Department of Transportation	Site 41WM458 revisited and not relocated within project area during survey. Survey not mapped on the Atlas.
8500082248	Intersects	2021	Area Survey	30389	Archaeological Survey of the Proposed Liberty Hill ISD 95.61-Acres New School Expansions	Tejas Archaeology	Liberty Hill Independent School District	Site 41WM1461 recorded during survey.
8500082446	Intersects	2021	Area Survey	30390	Archaeological Survey of the Proposed Liberty Hill ISD 79.23-Acres New School Expansions	Tejas Archaeology	Liberty Hill Independent School District	No cultural resources recorded during investigations.

Table 3. Previously Recorded Cultural Resources within the Study Area

Site Trinomial/ Name	Distance	Type	Time Period	NRHP/SAL Eligibility	Comments
41WM458	Within 1 km	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter	Unknown Prehistoric	Recommended Not Eligible (THC Determination n/a)	Recorded as lithic procurement site utilizing local tabular chert with cores, flakes, and chunks. Not relocated within project area during 2021 revisit, destroyed by SH 29 and parking lot.
41WM782	**Intersects**	**Prehistoric Lithic Quarry Site**	**Unknown Prehistoric**	**Undetermined (THC Determination n/a)**	**Prehistoric lithic scatter lacking cultural features or temporally diagnostic artifacts.**
41WM1154	Within 1 km	Historic Debris Scatter	Early Twentieth Century	Not Eligible within ROW (THC 8/15/2007)	Contains two large limestone rock piles of undetermined use. Historic-age debris scatter with few temporally diagnostic artifacts including purpled or manganese-bleached glass predating WWI and clear or arsenic-bleached glass manufactured after WWII to present day. East half of site destroyed by US 183.
41WM1439	Within 1 km	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter and Historic Artifact Scatter	Unknown Prehistoric and Late Nineteenth to Twentieth Century	Not Eligible (THC 5/7/2021)	Prehistoric lithic scatter lacking cultural features or temporally diagnostic artifacts. Historic-age artifact scatter associated with an 1870s house site.
41WM1440	**Within 300 feet**	**Prehistoric Lithic Scatter**	**Unknown Prehistoric**	Not Eligible **(THC 5/7/2021)**	**Shallowly buried prehistoric lithic scatter lacking cultural features or temporally diagnostic artifacts.**

Site Trinomial/ Name	Distance	Type	Time Period	NRHP/SAL Eligibility	Comments
41WM1461	Within 300 feet	Prehistoric Lithic Scatter	Unknown Prehistoric	Not Eligible (THC 12/21/2021)	Shallowly buried prehistoric lithic scatter lacking cultural features or temporally diagnostic artifacts.
Manuel Flores	**Within 300 feet**	**Object/ Centennial Marker**	**Historic**	**Eligible**	**A 1936 Texas Centennial Marker honoring the 1839 death of Mexican emissary Manuel Flores.**
Johnson Family Cemetery	Within 1 km	Site/ Cemetery	Historic	Undetermined	A mid-nineteenth to twentieth century family cemetery.
William Johnson Gravesite	Within 1 km	Site/ Grave	Historic	Undetermined	An 1888 gravesite of William Johnson.
Union Hall Independent Missionary Baptist Church	Within 1 km	Building/ OTHM	Historic	Undetermined	A 1924 Baptist church with a congregation dating to 1888.

Source: THC (2023).

Note: Bold rows indicate previously recorded sites within or immediately adjacent (i.e., within 300 feet) to the project area.

41WM1439, 41WM1440, and 41WM1461) have been determined not eligible for the NRHP or designation as an SAL (THC 2023). The remaining three sites were recommended not eligible within a previous project's ROW (i.e., 41WM1154) but are undetermined outside that ROW or lack official determinations (i.e., 41WM458 and 41WM782). Sites 41WM458 and 41WM782 are considered undetermined regarding their NRHP and SAL eligibility. All these sites warrant avoidance or further investigations except for the three sites determined not eligible for the NRHP.

Cemeteries/Gravesites

Two burial sites are in the study area but are not within or adjacent (within 300 feet) to the project area (see Figure 4). Neither site is a Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC) or has any other historic designation.

The Johnson Family Cemetery (WM-C051, Atlas #7491005103) at 9975 SH 29, east of Seward Junction between the Highline ROW and CR 266, dates to the mid-nineteenth century (THC 2023; Find A Grave 2007). The site is several hundred yards south of a residence accessed from SH 29 (Find A Grave 2007). The cemetery has 14 known graves (Find A Grave 2007).

The William Johnson gravesite (WM-C050, Atlas #7491005003) is 185 feet (56.4 m) south of CR 259 northeast of the Union Hall Baptist Church (THC 2023). Following the Civil War, Johnson (1804–1888) established a community camp at this site, later donating 7.5 acres (3.0 ha) for a church and school (Find A Grave 2010).

Historical Markers

Two historical markers are located within the study area, one of which is immediately adjacent to the project area (see Figure 4). The markers commemorate the early settlement history in the area (see below).

Centennial Marker

The Manuel Flores historical marker is immediately adjacent (i.e., within 1.5 feet [0.5 m]) to the project area situated along CR 260 (THC 2023). The gray granite slab (subtype #2) historical marker was erected in 1936 and reads as follows:

> "In this vicinity, Manuel Flores, an emissary of the Mexican government, with a small group of men conveying ammunition to the Indians on the Lampasas River, was surprised by Rangers under Lieutenant J. O. Rice in May 1839 and killed." (# 5491009093).

Almost 500 Centennial Markers were erected throughout the state to celebrate the centennial of the 1836 Republic of Texas. This Centennial Marker is eligible for the NRHP under Criterion A for Social History at the state level of significance in the *Monuments and Buildings of the Texas Centennial MPS* (TxDOT 2023, Wilson and Smith 2018).

OTHM

An OTHM for the 1924 Union Hall Independent Missionary Baptist Church (OTHM # 5507015115) is within the study area. The historical marker was erected in 1986 (THC 2023). During the late-nineteenth century, a group of Liberty Hill Baptists built a schoolhouse in this location called Union Hall (THC 2023). In 1888, a church was built next to the schoolhouse, which was later rebuilt in 1924 (HMDB 2023). The William Johnson gravesite is also on the grounds of the historical property.

Historical Map Review

Sixty PHSs were identified within the study area (Figure 5). Fifteen PHSs were identified immediately adjacent (i.e., within 300 feet [91.4 m]) to the project area; this includes one gravel pit. One PHS was identified within the project area. All structures are depicted on reviewed historical maps dating from 1893 to 1966 (see Figure 5) (Foster et al. 2006; Historic Aerials 2023; USGS 2023b). Note that the overall total includes five gravel pits, the Union Hall Church, and a windmill.

An architectural historian conducted a desktop review using Google Street View to identify historical resources adjacent to the project area (Google Earth 2023). Preliminary analysis identified a ca. 1945 Minimal Traditional-style house at 340 CR 260 that would be directly impacted from the project. A ca. 1930 pyramidal cottage and associated agricultural resources at 450 CR 260, adjacent to the project area, is another possible constraint if determined eligible for the NRHP. Additional resources adjacent to the project area may also possess significance and may be recommended eligible for the NRHP following a historic resources survey.

Ten potential historical linear features were identified that intersect the project area (see Figure 5). All 10 are formerly mapped unimproved roads, levees, and primary or secondary highways identified on historical topographic maps from 1962 (USGS 1962). These linear features consist of former road infrastructure that have significantly changed since 1962 (Google Earth 2023).

PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK

Once an Antiquities Permit has been obtained, SWCA will conduct an archaeological field survey of the portions of the 2.15-mile-long (3.46-km-long) project area on state lands; the total acreage of the survey area is 44.85 acres (18.15ha). The field survey will be performed by a team of SWCA archaeologists walking the proposed project area. SWCA will incorporate approximately 100-foot-wide (30.5-m) transects with archaeologists examining the ground surface for artifacts and features. The survey will be of sufficient

intensity to determine the nature, extent, and, if possible, potential significance of any cultural resources located within the proposed project area. Subsurface explorations will be accomplished through shovel testing. The placement and quantity of these excavations will depend on the level of disturbance within the proposed project boundary and the nature of the soils, geology, and topography.

Shovel tests will be approximately 12 inches (30 centimeters [cm]) in diameter and excavated in arbitrary 8-inch (20-cm) levels to 31 inches (80 cm) below surface or culturally sterile deposits, whichever comes first. The matrix will be screened through ¼-inch mesh. The location of each shovel test will be plotted using a sub-meter accurate GPS receiver, and each test will be recorded on appropriate project field forms. Shovel tests will be excavated according to THC standards. For linear projects, THC standards require a minimum of 16 shovel tests per linear mile of approximately 100-foot-wide (30.5-m) ROW. Any deviations from these standards will be clearly discussed and explained in the resulting report for the investigation. Based on these standards, a minimum of 80 shovel tests will be required for this project. Areas with previously recorded sites or other cultural resources revealed in the archival research will require additional shovel testing to explore the nature of the cultural deposits. In the event that shovel test excavations determine the potential for cultural deposits deeper than 31 inches (80 cm) below surface, SWCA will make recommendations for any areas that would require deep testing (i.e., backhoe trenching) if future impacts from the proposed project are anticipated to be deeper than 31 inches (80 cm) below surface. If deep testing is determined to be necessary, an amendment detailing this proposed methodology would be submitted to this ACT permit.

A review conducted by SWCA geoarchaeologist, Analise Hollingshead, M.S., determined that no crossings warranting deep test investigations are present within the proposed project area. The project area is located within a broad, dissected limestone plateau located east of the drainage divide between the major Colorado and Brazos Rivers. The soils and geology data do not indicate the presence of deep Holocene-aged deposits, but rather shallow, rocky soils primarily derived from colluvial slope wash overlying shallowly buried bedrock.

Site Documentation

If an archaeological site is encountered during the investigation, it will be explored as much as possible with consideration to land access constraints. All recorded sites will be mapped in detail and plotted on USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle maps with a hand-held, sub-meter accurate GPS unit and appropriate project maps for planning purposes. All discovered sites will be assessed regarding potential significance so that recommendations can be made for property management (i.e., avoidance, non-avoidance, or further work). Existing standing structures more than 45 years in age within the project area viewshed will be photographed and documented. A review of historic aerial maps will be conducted, and a preliminary assessment of the structures will be conducted by a Secretary of the Interior-qualified architectural historian to determine their potential significance and age. The analysis will follow National Park Service (NPS) guidelines (NPS 1983, Little et al. 2000).

All discovered cultural resources will be delineated and recorded following CTA standards promulgated by the THC. Upon encountering an archaeological site in the proposed project area, it will be explored as much as possible with consideration of land access constraints. An archaeological site is defined as physical evidence of human activity that is at least 50 years old and contain, or are characterized, by one or more of the following criteria:

- Ten or more artifacts (of any class and type) within a 50-foot (15-m) diameter area. Fire-cracked rock or artifacts that all appear to originate from a single source (e.g., one ceramic pot drop, one broken glass bottle) are not considered a site; however, discrete, single knapping episodes (activity areas) are also treated as a site.

- One or more datable archaeological features (with or without associated artifacts);
- Two or more undatable archaeological features within 100 feet (30.5 m) of each other; or
- A single undatable feature with associated artifacts.

If an archaeological site is discovered during the investigation, SWCA will excavate a minimum of six shovel tests within the site and two delineation shovel tests that are negative for cultural material in each cardinal direction (n=8). All discovered sites will be assessed for their potential significance so that recommendations can be made for proper management (i.e., avoidance, non-avoidance, or further work). Cultural manifestations observed greater than 100 feet (30.5 m) apart will be considered spatially unrelated, and cultural materials that do not fit within the aforementioned archaeological site criteria will be considered Isolated Occurrences (IO). As such, occurrences will be recorded noting the type and quantity of materials, as well as the size and shape of any features, architectural/construction details, possible function, and any potential relationship to nearby cultural materials. Additionally, guidelines set forth by the THC's *Guidance for Studying Late 19th-Century and Early 20th-Century Sites* (THC 2023b) will be followed for any historic-age sites documented within the project area.

SWCA proposes a non-collection survey. Artifacts will be tabulated, analyzed, and documented in the field, but not collected. Temporally diagnostic artifacts will be described in detail and photographed in the field. This policy will reduce curation costs once the fieldwork is concluded; however, as per the stipulations of the Antiquities Permit, all paperwork and photographs generated during the field investigation must be curated at an approved repository.

Reporting and Curation

SWCA will prepare a draft report of the investigation within 4 weeks of completion of the field survey. The archaeological report will conform to THC and CTA reporting standards. The report will document the general nature of the project area, the methodology used in the investigation, the presence and condition of any previously recorded sites revealed in the records review, the general nature and extent of cultural resources encountered during the archaeological survey, recommendations on the need for further work, and the potential significance of the cultural resources regarding future development and SAL status.

SWCA will submit a digital draft copy of the report to Williamson County for review and comment. Once this has been accomplished, SWCA will incorporate any appropriate edits and will submit a final draft report to the THC for review and comment. As part of completing Antiquities Permit requirements, SWCA will furnish two electronic copies of the final report on a tagged PDF formatted CD, as well as project area shapefiles, to the THC, and complete an Abstracts in Texas Contract Archeology Summary form and abstract text online. Field records will be curated at an approved curatorial facility which, in this case, is the Center for Archaeological Research at The University of Texas at San Antonio, per requirements of the ACT.

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