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November 5, 2024

Rebecca Shelton
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711-2276

Re: Request for Antiquities Permit to Conduct Cultural Resources Investigations for the County Road 214 Extension Project, Williamson County, Texas / SWCA Project No. 87699-005

Dear Rebecca Shelton:

This letter is a request for a Texas Antiquities Permit to conduct cultural resources investigations for the County Road 214 Extension Project (project), Williamson County, Texas. The proposed project for Freese and Nichols Inc., on behalf of Williamson County, Texas, consists of approximately 22.5 acres, including portions on county-owned/managed property. As the project is sponsored by a political subdivision of the State of Texas, a Texas Antiquities Permit is required in accordance with the Antiquities Code of Texas (Texas Natural Resource Code, Title 9, Chapter 191) and accompanying Rules of Practice and Procedure (Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Chapter 26).

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (512) 476-0891 or cnielsen@swca.com.

Sincerely,

Christina Nielsen, M.A.

Principal Investigator

PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES INVESTIGATIONS FOR THE COUNTY ROAD 214 EXTENSION PROJECT, WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS

*Project Landowner – Williamson County
Project Sponsor – Freese and Nichols Inc.*

Date – November 5, 2024

*Project Consultant – SWCA Environmental Consultants
Principal Investigator – Christina Nielsen, M.A.*

*Project Subconsultant – Legacy Cultural Resources
Project Historian – Nesta Anderson, M.A.*

INTRODUCTION

SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) was contracted by Freese and Nichols Inc., on behalf of Williamson County, to conduct cultural resources investigations for the County Road (CR) 214 Extension Project (project) in Williamson County, Texas. The project involves the installation of a 0.9-mile-long (1.5-kilometer [km]-long) new right-of-way (ROW) alignment for the proposed CR 214 extension and an approximately 0.6-mile-long (1.0-km-long) alignment for Corridor I, both within a 120-foot-wide (36.5-meter [m]-wide) corridor, totaling an area of approximately 22.5 acres (9.1 hectares [ha]) (project area) (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The project area extends from the proposed intersection of U.S. Highway (US) 183 and CR 214 approximately 0.6 mile (1.0 km) west/northwest and 0.9 mile (1.5 km) south, creating a 1.5-mile-long (1.6-km-long) corridor. The corridor transverses the North Fork San Gabriel River. The proposed alignment will connect CR 214 to US 183 approximately 0.2 mile (0.4 km) north of the intersection of US 183 and CR 3405.

SWCA understands that the project is being developed by Williamson County and that portions of the project cross county-owned/managed property. Therefore, this project falls under the provisions of the Antiquities Code of Texas (ACT), which requires review by the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and issuance of an Antiquities Permit. The investigation proposed below is therefore intended to comply with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 United States Code 306108) and its implementing regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] 800), and the ACT.

SWCA proposes to conduct an intensive archaeological pedestrian survey with subsurface testing of the entire 22.5-acre (9.1-ha) project (i.e., the direct area of potential effects [APE]) (see Figure 2). The goal of the work will be to relocate any previously recorded prehistoric and historic-age archaeological sites in the APE; locate any previously undiscovered archaeological sites; establish vertical and horizontal site boundaries, as appropriate with regard to the APE; and evaluate the significance and eligibility of any site recorded 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.

SWCA also proposes to complete a reconnaissance-level historic resources survey in accordance with Section 106 of the NHPA. The historic resources survey will document and evaluate all historic-age resources built in or before 1979 (45 years prior to the let-date of 2024) within intersecting parcels 300 feet (91.5 m) on either side of the proposed project alignment (i.e., indirect APE). Historic-age resources within the APE will be documented and evaluated for NRHP eligibility and assessed for potential effects (if applicable).

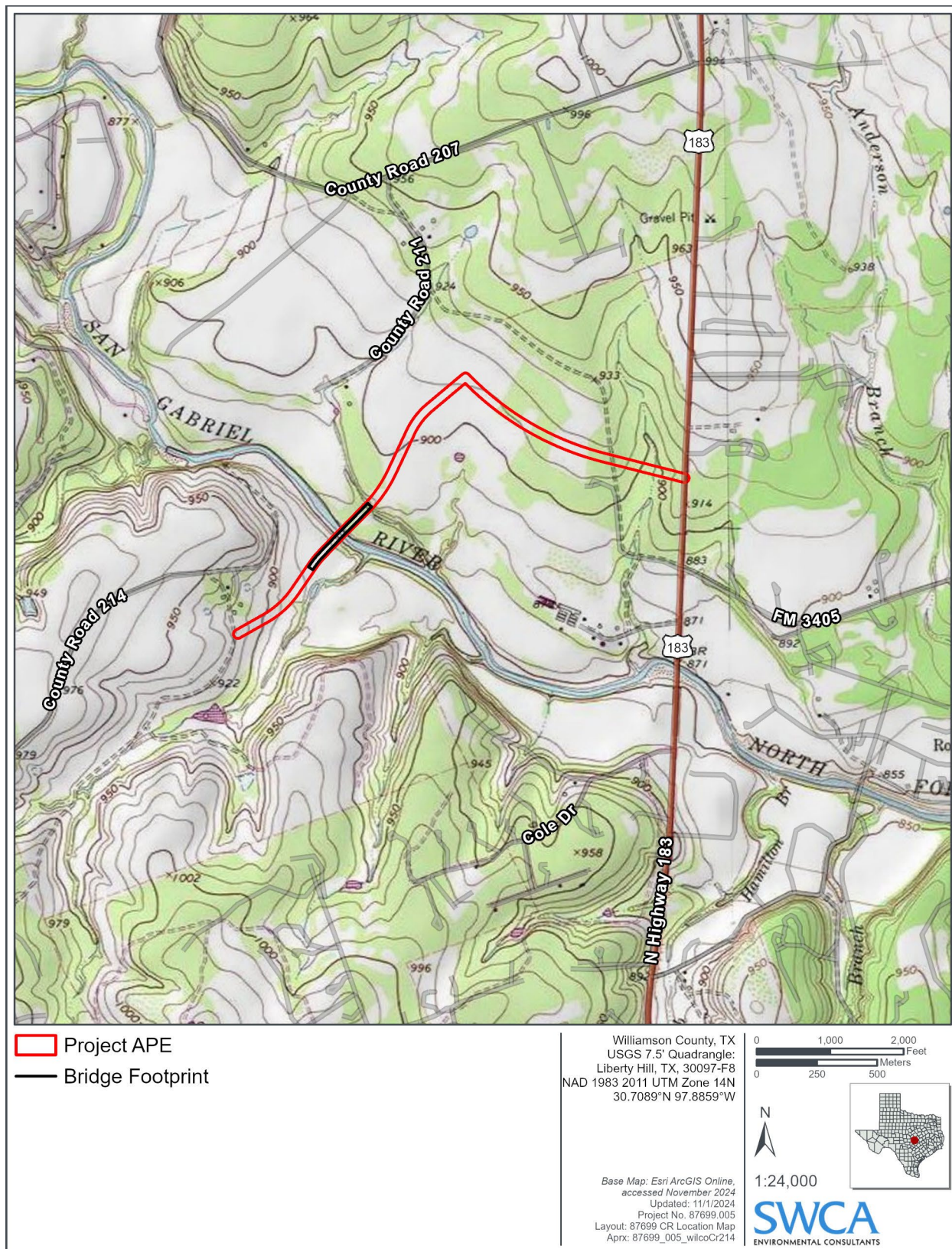


Figure 1. Project location.

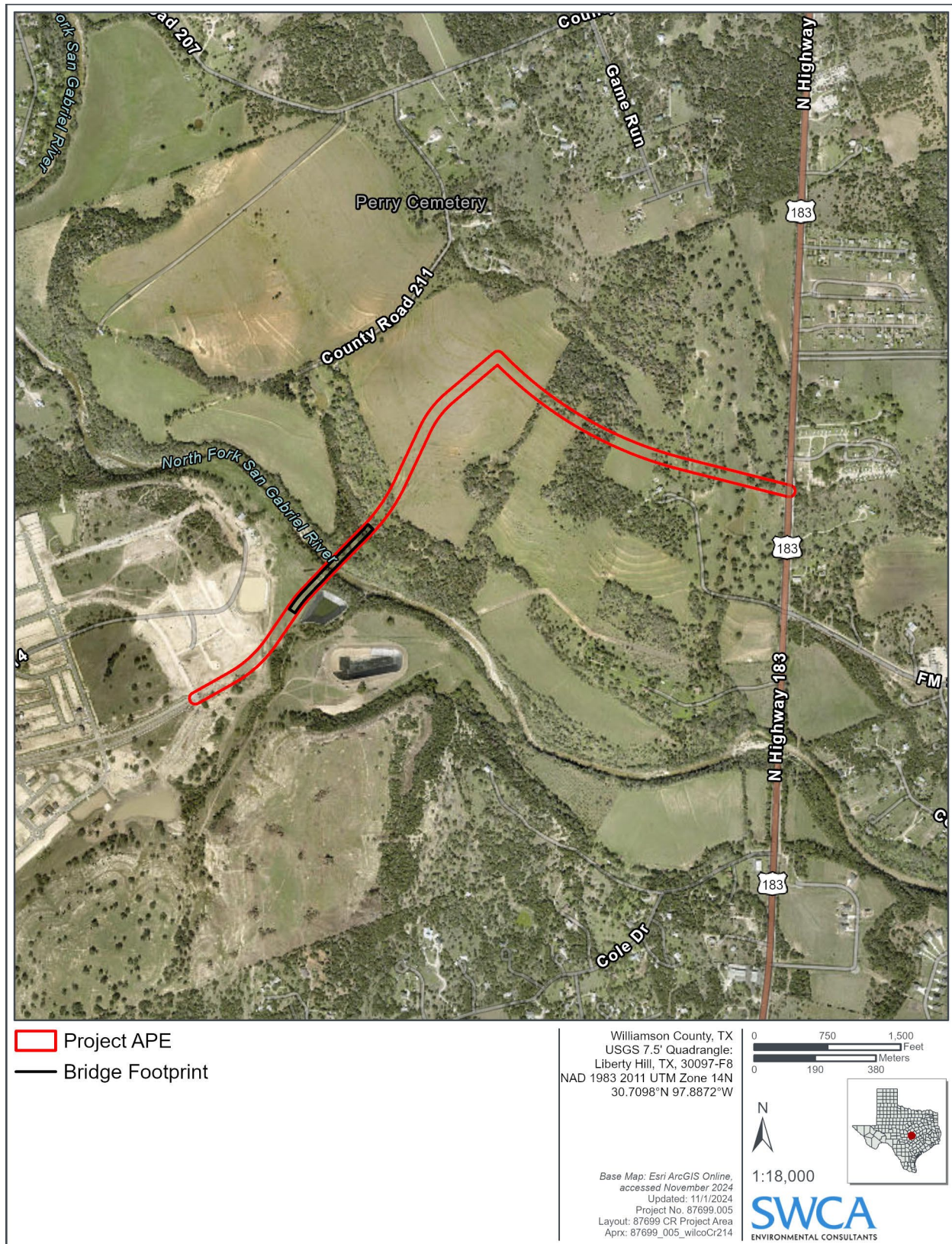


Figure 2. Project APE overview.

Project Description

The APE appears on the *Liberty Hill, Texas* (30096-F8), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map. The APE is located approximately 4.2 miles (6.7 km) north of Liberty Hill, Texas. The proposed CR 214 roadway will connect to US 183 approximately 3.9 miles (6.3 km) north of the intersection of US 183 and State Highway (SH) 29 in Liberty Hill, Texas. The proposed project would extend the existing two-lane roadway of CR 214 approximately 0.9 mile (1.5 km) north (CR 214 Alignment) and 0.5 mile (0.8 km) east (Corridor 1 Alignment), with US 183 as the project's eastern terminus. The project would be constructed within an approximately 120-foot-wide (36.5-m) ROW. Overall, the direct APE encompasses approximately 22.5 acres (9.1 ha) (see Figure 2). The depth of impacts will generally range from 2 to 4 feet (0.6 to 1.2 m) throughout the majority of the APE, with impacts extending up to 80 feet (24.4 m) for bridge column/foundations and up to 8 feet (2.4 m) for illumination pole foundations, if illumination is proposed.

PROJECT SETTING

The APE 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 and Soils

The APE is underlain by Late Cretaceous-age Upper Glen Rose formations and some Holocene and Pleistocene-age terrace deposits (Figure 3) (Barnes 1974; USGS 2024a). The Upper Glen Rose formation consists predominantly of continuous limestone strata, and it covers approximately 15.3 acres (6.3 ha, 68.1%) of the APE. Approximately 4.2 acres (1.7 ha, 18.7%) of the APE is underlain by Pleistocene-age terrace deposits. Approximately 3.0 acres (1.2 ha, 13%) of the APE is underlain by alluvial Holocene deposits. These deposits are composed of gravel and sand formed from large floodplains. Based on the age of the underlying geology, there is moderate to high potential for deeply buried archaeological resources within the Holocene and Pleistocene deposits, and low potential in the Late Cretaceous-age deposits.

According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (2024), there are six soil series mapped within the APE (see Figure 3; Table 1). Most of the project area (approximately 70 percent) is dominated by the Sunev and Eckrant soil series. The Sunev soil series consists of very deep, well-drained soils that form in loamy alluvium derived from Holocene-age terrace deposits (NRCS 2024). This soil occurs on stream terraces and foot slopes of valleys and ridges on undulating plateaus. In total, Sunev soils cover approximately 37.4 acres (15.1 ha, 37.4%) of the APE. The Eckrant soil series consists of very deep, moderately well-drained, moderately slowly permeable soils that are very shallow over indurating limestone bedrock (NRCS 2024). In total, Eckrant soils cover approximately 7.4 acres (3.0 ha, 32.8%) of the APE.

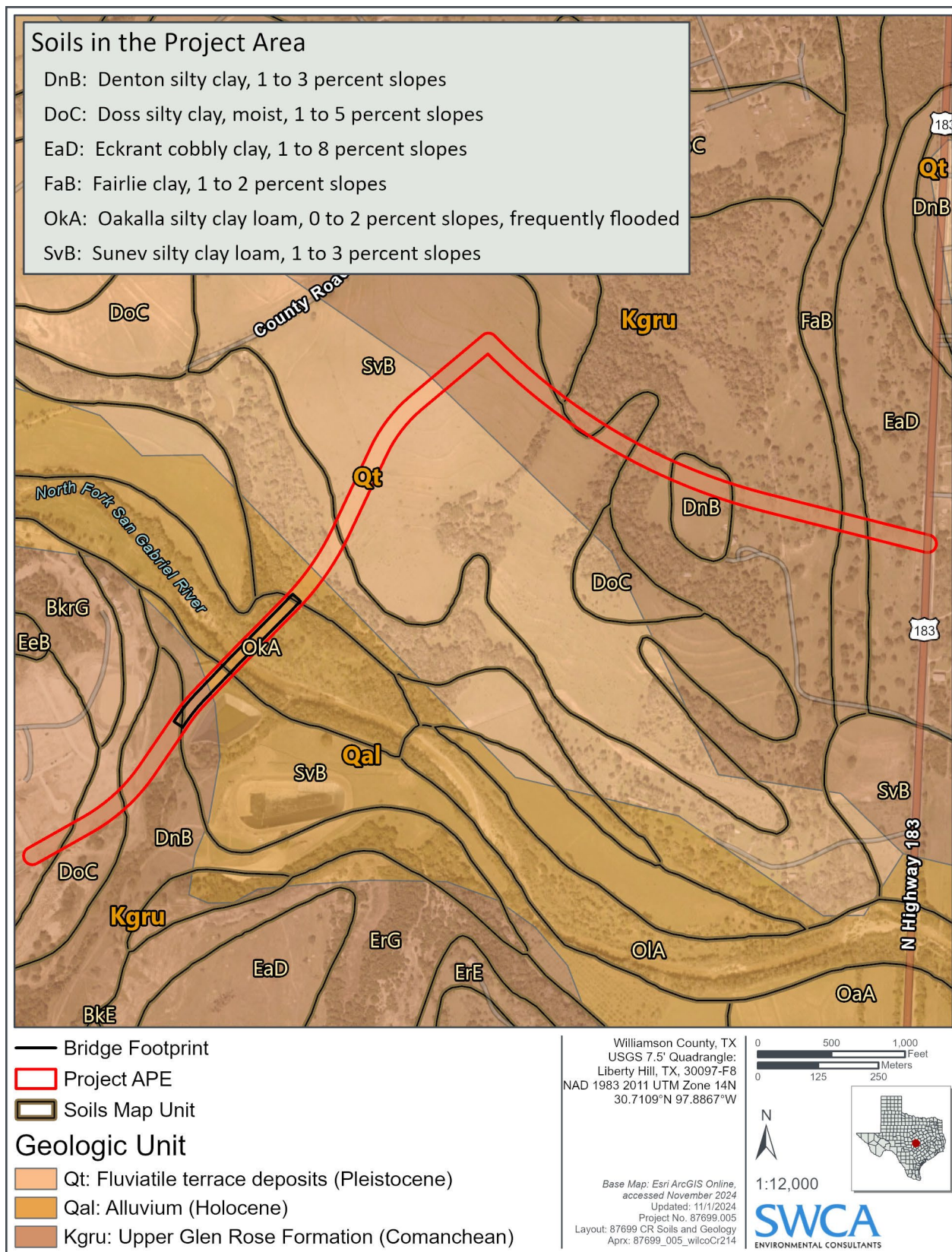


Figure 3. Geology and soils in the project APE.

Table 1. Project APE Soils

Soil Name	Symbol	Acres	Percentage
Sunev silty clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	SvB	8.4	37.4
Eckrant cobbly clay, 1 to 8 percent slopes	EaD	7.4	32.8
Denton silty clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes	DnB	3.1	13.7
Oakalla silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded	OkA	1.8	8.1
Doss silty clay, moist, 1 to 5 percent slopes	DoC	1.3	5.8
Fairlie clay, 1 to 2 percent slopes	FaB	0.5	0.2
Total		22.5	100.0

Source: NRCS (2024).

BACKGROUND REVIEW

An SWCA archaeologist researched the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas (Atlas), a restricted, online database maintained by the THC and the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory, for any previously recorded surveys and archaeological sites located in or within 0.6 mile (1.0 km) of the APE (study area) (Figure 4) (THC 2024a). In addition to identifying previously recorded archaeological sites, the Atlas review includes the following types of information: NRHP districts and properties, SALs, Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs), Official Texas Historical Markers (OTHMs), 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 in the APE.

An SWCA architectural historian reviewed the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Historic Resources Aggregator (Aggregator), which maps resources and districts determined eligible for the NRHP, National Historic Landmarks (NHLs), and local historic districts (TxDOT 2024). The Aggregator also has a data set 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 2024; Wilson and Smith 2018). SWCA also reviewed the study area for Family Land Heritage (FLH) Centennial Farms identified by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and locations in the Texas Freedom Colonies Project (TDA 2024; Texas Freedom Colonies Project 2024). No freedom colonies are in the study area per the Texas Freedom Colonies Project Atlas 2.1 (Texas Freedom Colonies Project 2024).

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 2024b), and historical aerial photography contained on the Nationwide Environmental Title Research (NETR) Historic Aerials website (NETR 2024) to determine if any historic-age (built in 1979 [45 years] or earlier) resources such as potential historical features and/or potential historical structures (PHSs) are located within the project or study area. SWCA reviewed historical maps from 1893 to 1962.

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Figure 4. Cultural resources background and historical map review results map.

The background review determined that two cultural resources surveys were conducted within the study area, but neither occurred within or adjacent to (i.e., within 300 feet [91.4 m] of) the APE. There are five archaeological sites within the study area, none of which are located within the APE. Additionally, the historical map review identified a total of 39 PHSs. None of the PHSs are within the APE, but one PHS, a structure still extant from 1962, is within 300 feet (91.4 m) of the APE. There is also one NHL property (i.e., The Rock House Community) and three cemeteries (i.e., Smith Triplets [Vicinity Cemetery], Foster [Vicinity Cemetery], and Perry Cemetery) within the study area. No NRHP-listed eligible districts or properties, local historic districts, sites designated as SALs, historical markers, FLH Centennial Farms, freedom colonies, or neighborhood surveys were identified within the study area or APE.

Previously Conducted Archaeological Surveys

Two previously conducted cultural resources surveys were identified within the study area, but neither occurred within the APE (see Figure 4). The surveys were conducted in 1965 and 2008 (Table 2). There were no cultural resources identified in the APE as a result of the surveys. Table 2 provides information about surveys previously conducted in the area.

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

Year	Survey Type	Distance to APE	Atlas No.	TAC Permit	Investigating Firm	Agency	Comments
1965	Area Survey	Within 0.6 mile (1 km)	8500004621	4621	n/a	Corps of Engineers-Fort Worth District	Survey conducted prior to construction of park/greenbelt along North Fork San Gabriel River.
2008	Area Survey	Within 0.6 mile (1 km)	8500016119	4987	SWCA	Williamson County	Survey conducted for proposed CR 214.

Source: THC (2024a).

Previously Recorded Archaeological Sites

Five previously recorded archaeological sites were identified within the study area (see Figure 4). None of the sites intersect or are immediately adjacent to (within 300 feet [91.4 m] of) the APE. All five sites (i.e., 41WM221, 41WM222, 41WM223, 41WM224, and 41WM947) lack official NRHP eligibility determinations and are currently undetermined (THC 2024a). See Table 3 for site details.

Table 3. Previously Recorded Cultural Resources within the Study Area

Site Trinomial	Time Period	Distance to APE	Comments	NRHP Eligibility
41WM221	Unknown	Within 0.6 mile (1 km)	The site was documented in January 1964 during a surface reconnaissance survey as a part of the Preston Millican Site 1 project. Surveyors documented two shallow burned rock midden features.	Undetermined
41WM222	Unknown	Within 0.6 mile (1 km)	The site was documented in January 1964 during a surface reconnaissance survey as a part of the Preston Millican Site 3 project. The surveyors observed a small, burned rock midden as well as a dart point stem and other lithic debitage which were collected by Millican.	Undetermined

Site Trinomial	Time Period	Distance to APE	Comments	NRHP Eligibility
41WM223	Unknown	Within 0.6 mile (1 km)	The site was documented in January 1964 during a surface reconnaissance survey as a part of the Preston Millican Site 3 project. The surveyors conducted a test excavation and described the midden as destroyed. Millican recommended the site be tested by professionals. The site is along the boundary of Smith Triplets Vicinity Cemetery.	Undetermined
41WM224	Unknown	Within 0.6 mile (1 km)	The site was documented in January 1964 during a surface reconnaissance survey as a part of the Preston Millican Site 4 project. The surveyors observed a very large midden.	Undetermined
41WM947	Unknown, possibly prehistoric	Within 0.6 mile (1 km)	The site was documented in October 1999 by the Lower Colorado River Authority during a linear survey for the Andice to Leander Transmission Line project (Permit No. 2103). The surveyors observed a surficial upland lithic scatter with approximately seven secondary and tertiary flakes observed on or near the surface in an open field. The site had poor preservation due to previous land-clearing activities and poor integrity due to shallowly buried deposits (0–2 cmbs). The site was recommended ineligible for listing in the NRHP or as a SAL. No formal NRHP determination has been made by the THC.	Undetermined

Source: THC (2024a).

Cemeteries

The background review indicated that one cemetery and two vicinity cemeteries are mapped within the study area, one of which (i.e., the Foster [Vicinity Cemetery]) intersects the APE (see Figure 4) (THC 2024a). The Perry Cemetery is a designated Historic Texas Cemetery (HTC). The Foster Vicinity Cemetery area will require additional archival research, metal detection, and scraping investigations to determine if graves are present within the APE; background on this cemetery and proposed methodology of investigations is provided in the scope of work section below. See Table 4 for additional details surrounding the cemeteries located within the study area.

Table 4. Cemeteries within the Study Area

Cemetery Name	THC Atlas Cemetery No.	Designation	Find A Grave Cemetery ID	Distance to APE	Time Period	Comments
Smith Triplets (Vicinity Cemetery)	WM-C121	None	2114	Within 0.6 mile (1 km)	Mid-Nineteenth Century to Mid-Twentieth Century (1876–1945)	24 total memorials. Also referred to as Anderson Cemetery, or Smith Infants Cemetery.
Foster (Vicinity Cemetery)	WM-C123	None	2360366	Intersects	Possibly pre-1870	Seven memorials, no birth or death dates on Find a Grave.
Perry Cemetery	WM-C122	HTC	184659	Within 0.6 mile (1 km)	Late Nineteenth Century to Early Twentieth Century (1867–1928)	22 memorials.

Note: Bold rows indicate previously recorded cemeteries within the APE.

Sources: Find a Grave (2000a, 2000b, 2010); THC (2024a).

Historical Map Review

SWCA performed a historical map review of the study area and the APE to determine whether any historic-age resources, such as PHSs or features, are located within these areas (see Figure 4). Historical maps and imagery reviewed dated between 1893 and 1962 (NETR 2024; USGS 2024b).

According to historical maps and current aerial maps, the study area and the APE was utilized as a roadway and for agricultural use prior to suburban development in Williamson County during and after the early 1960s (NETR 2024; USGS 2024b). According to historical topographic maps dating from the 1890s to the 1960s, the study area and the APE consisted of multiple private parcels that have historically been used for agricultural and ranching activities (USGS 2024b). Early maps (circa 1893) show many paved roads along what now are major streets, one of which travels from the populated city of Liberty Hill northeast through the study area just east of the APE. The series of clustered PHSs in this area could be associated with this early road. Along the surrounding roads were residences and farms. In the 1950s, US 183 was constructed just east of the old roadway and travelling more directly south than the previous roadway. By the 1960s, there were a few complexes of structures mapped within the study area, represented by approximately 39 PHSs. No major development occurred in the area prior to the development of modern housing (Google Earth 2024; NETR 2024).

A review of historical maps identified 39 PHSs within the study area; none are located within the APE, but one PHS is within 300 feet (91.4 m) of the APE (see Figure 4). PHSs are found throughout the study area and are associated with rural development in Williamson County. PHSs are entirely composed of buildings/structures. Current aerial imagery indicates that 32 PHSs within the APE area are no longer extant (Google Earth 2024). Seven structures appear extant on current satellite imagery. It is important to note that the historical map review may not accurately reflect the total number of PHSs currently within the APE and study areas as some of the structures may have been heavily modified or completely removed from their original context. In such circumstances, however, historic-age archaeological deposits may remain wherever historical structures formerly stood.

PRELIMINARY FOSTER CEMETERY ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

Methods

The project historian consulted Williamson County Deed Records (WCDR) available online at the Williamson County Clerk's Online Services page. Deed records for the land tract where the Foster Cemetery is thought to be located were traced back from current landowners to sovereignty to create a chain of title. These records were supplemented with Williamson County Census Records (WCCR) available online at Ancestry.com. Legacy staff were able to talk with Mr. Tim Stickley, a descendant of the Perry family, to learn more about the Perry family and the Foster Cemetery location.

Results

The Foster Cemetery consists of a small, family cemetery that is no longer visible on the landscape. According to the Foster Cemetery entry on Find-a-grave.com, the cemetery was located in a pasture on the banks of the North San Gabriel River and was impacted by a flood in 1957 (Find A Grave 2010). The flood evidently washed away markers for the interments in the cemetery. At least seven burials are reported to have been interred in the Foster Cemetery, including Charlie Foster, Edsell (sic) Foster, Mrs. Edsell (sic) Foster, Louis Foster, Mollie Foster, Infant Perry, and Infant Williams (Find A Grave 2010). This information may have been recorded from memory, as there are no birth and death dates or photographs of markers for any of these individuals. As a result, the number and ages of individuals

buried in the Foster Cemetery remain unknown. The date the cemetery was established also remains unknown.

Mr. Tim Stickley, a descendant of the Perry family who eventually bought the property from the Fosters, remembers seeing headstones for both the Perry and Williams infants, and last visited the cemetery property in the 1980s. He recalls the cemetery being situated closer to the river, about 30 to 40 yards prior to the bluff drop-off down to the water (personal communication, Tim Stickley, July 11, 2024). SWCA made a recent field visit to the potential location of the Foster Cemetery with the current landowner, Mr. Warren, and observed that there were two markers present, neither of which was *in situ*. One was uninscribed and in a push pile. The other was for Melvina Williams, the daughter of J.H. and S.E. Williams, who was a 3-month-old infant at the time of her death. This marker was lying on the ground surface, but the property owner had picked it up and propped it against a tree.

The land on which the Foster Cemetery is located was initially occupied by Isaac Casner and his family sometime after 1841 (Rootsweb 2023). The Casners kept the property in the family, passing it to their children, one of whom (Mary Elizabeth) married Elkin T. Foster and lived on the property. Melvina Williams's headstone indicates the cemetery was present by 1869, the same year that Mary Casner died. This suggests the cemetery could have been established by Isaac and Mary Casner. An 1879 deed record indicates that more than one burial was present and notes the cemetery consists of "one half acre of ground in a square shape" (WCCR 21:185). However, no boundaries or landmarks are included for the cemetery tract or the larger tract that was being conveyed. This cemetery description remains consistent in subsequent transactions.

In addition to the Williams family burying their daughter at the Foster Cemetery, it is likely that other neighbors may have interred relatives in the cemetery. For example, Mr. Stickley clarified that the infant Perry interred in the cemetery was a child of Benjamin and Hannah Perry, who were living nearby at least in 1880 and perhaps earlier (WCCR 1880). In addition, it is possible that David Roberts, who received 160 acres of Foster's land in the 1879 transaction and lived nearby (WCCR 1880), could have buried family members in the cemetery. Other potential interments include farmhands employed by the Fosters and who were listed as members of the Foster household (WCCR 1880). Mr. Stickley mentioned that at one time there were four to five sharecropper cabins located on the property (personal communication, Tim Stickley, July 11, 2024), supporting this idea.

J.W. Perry acquired Roberts' 160 acres in 1883 (WCCR 32:422) and J.W.'s son O.O. Perry acquired another 200 acres from the Fosters in 1891 (WCCR 58:338). The Perrys also established their own cemetery in 1891 on a parcel of land adjacent to the one containing the Foster Cemetery. The Perrys kept the Foster tracts within their family until 1984 (WCCR 1010:507). While the Perry family may have buried additional family members in the Foster Cemetery prior to establishing the Perry Cemetery in 1891, these burials would most likely have been infants who were born between census years. A comprehensive account of the Perry family interments has been completed and suggests those family members who survived to adulthood are interred in the Perry Cemetery (Nichols and Anderson 2024).

PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK

Intensive Archaeological Survey

Once an Antiquities Permit has been obtained, SWCA will conduct an archaeological field survey of the 1.5-mile-long (2.5-km-long) project within an approximately 120-foot-wide (35.5-m-wide) ROW; the total acreage of the APE is 22.5 acres (9.1 ha). The field survey will be performed by a team of two SWCA archaeologists walking the proposed APE. SWCA will incorporate approximately 100-foot-wide (30.5-m-wide) 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 APE. 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 APE 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 unless the bottom of Holocene deposits in depositional areas, subsoil in upland areas, or bedrock are encountered which preclude reaching that depth. The matrix will be screened through 0.25-inch mesh. The location of each shovel test will be plotted using a submeter-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-wide) 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 26 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 ACT permit amendment detailing this proposed methodology would be submitted to the THC for review and approval.

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, submeter 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 indirect APE will be photographed and documented. A review of historical aerial maps will be conducted, and a preliminary assessment of the structures will be conducted by a Secretary of the Interior (SOI)-qualified architectural historian to determine their potential significance and age. The analysis will follow National Park Service (NPS) guidelines (Little et al. 2000; NPS 1983).

All discovered cultural resources will be delineated and recorded following CTA standards promulgated by the THC. Upon encountering an archaeological site in the proposed APE, 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). 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 Finds (IFs). As such, IFs 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 2024b) will be followed for any historic-age sites documented within the APE.

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.

Foster Cemetery Investigations

This scope of work includes preliminary investigations for the Foster Cemetery, focused on determining areas with the highest potential for graves. Freese and Nichols Inc. and Williamson County intend to avoid any human internments; therefore, two alternative routes (Alternative Options 1 and 2 in Figure 5) have been established and will be investigated solely as part of the cemetery investigations.

Additional Archival Research

The project historian will conduct additional research for the Foster Cemetery, including a review of genealogy and census research available online at Ancestry.com and Find-a-grave.com, to help identify potential interments in the cemetery. The historian may also consult tax records available online through the Texas State Library and Archives. The additional archival research for the Foster Cemetery will attempt to identify the number and names of potential burials within the cemetery. Infants and children born between census years will likely be excluded from this research.

Metal Detection Survey

Based on the results of the preliminary archival research, landowner interviews, and soils and geology of the project area, graves associated with the Foster Cemetery are assumed to be located within a 2.8-acre (1.1-ha) area within the project area (see "Metal Detection Survey Area" in Figure 5). Prior to any mechanical scraping investigations, an intensive pedestrian and metal detection survey will be performed within this survey area to identify headstones, grave markers, coffin material, hardware, and/or cemetery fencing that will help focus future mechanical scraping efforts.

Prior to the metal detection survey, overview photographs will be taken of the metal detection survey area, and any vegetation that could be indicative of cemeteries will be mapped in with a submeter GPS. According to the THC, periwinkle (*Vinca* spp.) is found often in cemeteries, especially in shadier areas where it can survive (personal communication, Jenny McWilliams, THC Cemetery Preservation Program Coordinator, June 2024). However, periwinkle can move from one shady area to another as trees die out and new ones provide shade; therefore, it may no longer be growing at the exact location of a cemetery.

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Figure 5. Foster Vicinity Cemetery area overview with metal detection survey area, aerial view.

Once the setting and vegetation is thoroughly documented, a weedwhacker or similar tool will be used to remove taller vegetation within the metal detection survey area to facilitate easier use of the metal detectors. No trees will be removed or vegetation dug up; however, a rake may be used to gently clear away debris once the area has been inspected for surface artifacts. Once this has been accomplished, 15-foot-wide (4.6-m-wide) metal detector survey transects perpendicular to the project corridor will be established with plastic pin flags and measuring tapes. The transects will be laid out with plastic pin flags at the corners of each transect with flags in between, forming a line along each transect edge. A total of 37, 15-foot-wide (4.6-m-wide) transects will be investigated within the 545-foot-long (166-m-long) metal detection survey area. Each metal detection hit will be immediately marked with a pin flag, and the transect survey will continue until two full transects are complete.

The crew will return to each hit locale and carefully excavate a probe to retrieve the item, noting the depth at which the item was recovered. All non-modern items will be recorded with a submeter-accurate GPS and recorded in a logbook. Each artifact will be thoroughly documented with notes, measurements, and photographs, and then returned to the find location. Any non-metal items associated with the hit that are historic-age artifacts or potentially diagnostic will also be documented with notes, measurements, and photographs, and then returned to the find location. Modern refuse items will be removed from the project area and disposed of and not be recorded. However, investigators will keep a count of the number of “hits” that recovered modern refuse.

The metal detectors utilized will be very low frequency (VLF) detectors, or induction balance detectors, that have an exterior transmitter coil and an interior receiver coil. The transmitter coil generates the magnetic field and transmits it into the ground. Any conductive objects in the ground (i.e., metal objects) generate a weak magnetic field in response, and that field is picked up by the receiver coil. The signal is then interpreted by the unit and transmitted to the operator through audible tones. The depth of the magnetic field generated by a VLF detector is variable based on soil conditions, but the typical depth of the magnetic field is 15 inches (~38 cm).

The VLF metal detectors that will be used during the survey have discriminator settings that can be switched back and forth, including a pinpoint setting and an iron setting. A discriminator setting adjusts the phase shifting of the metal detector, which is the difference between the transmitter coil frequency and the frequency of the target object, which give off varying frequencies based on material type. A discriminator narrows the field of detection to eliminate certain frequencies such as the level of conductivity in the soil itself or the frequency of iron or steel. These metal detector discriminators will be set to low, as some or most artifacts are expected to be iron items. The Garrett Ace 300 metal detectors that are used by SWCA have a display which indicates the specific frequency range of the detected object and the probable metal type; field testing of this feature has shown it to be reasonably accurate. This may help identify modern trash, which can be expected to skew heavily towards aluminum beverage cans, pull tabs, and foil food bags and wrappers. Hits indicated to be aluminum will be flagged and investigated in the same manner as other hits.

Once the cemetery-intensive pedestrian and metal detection investigations have been completed, SWCA will analyze the field and additional archival data and prepare a Texas Antiquities Permit Amendment. The amendment will include proposed methodology for mechanical cemetery scraping investigations which will focus on areas identified as having high potential for graves based on results of the initial cemetery field investigations and archival research from Legacy as well as any additional locations of interest depicted in LiDAR data. All cemetery investigations will be included in the overall draft report of investigations for the project.

Historic Resources Survey

SWCA will complete a reconnaissance-level historic resources survey of all historic-age (built in 1979 or earlier) resources within the APE. Historic-age resources include any districts, buildings, structures, objects, and sites identified in the APE. An assessment of effects will be completed for historic-age properties and/or districts that are recommended eligible for the NRHP.

The historic resources will be completed in accordance with TxDOT documentation standards and will adhere to THC and NPS professional standards. The direct APE is the proposed project footprint, including the proposed ROW and any permanent or temporary easements. The indirect APE will be 300 feet (91.4 m) on either side of proposed new ROW along the new alignment in addition to any temporary/permanent easements (Figure 6). Williamson Central Appraisal District (CAD) parcels that intersect the indirect APE will be surveyed for historic resources.

Resource Documentation

Per TxDOT standards, an SWCA architectural historian who meets the SOI Professional Qualifications (36 CFR Part 61) will document historic-age resources on intersecting parcels within the APE, and they will document nonhistoric-age resources on historic-age resource parcels with the primary historic-age resource record. Resource documentation will adhere to the following parameters:

- Agricultural complexes will be documented according to the *Agricultural Theme Study of Central Texas*, in that they will include extant domestic and agricultural work zones.
- Surveyed parcels will follow CAD parcels and will include “donut-hole” parcels from historical agricultural complexes to ensure capture of all associated resources within the complex.
- Each historic-age resource will have at least two photographs. Nonhistoric-age resources will have at least one photograph. Photographs will have a resolution of 1200x1600. A front façade and oblique photograph will be taken of each historic-age resource and will be captioned with photographic direction. Aerial imagery will be used to supplement documentation of obstructed resources.
- Each historic-age resource will be documented on an inventory form with at least two photographs. Nonhistoric-age resources will be documented alongside the primary historic-age resource.
- Livestock tanks will only be documented if they are part of a historic-age agricultural complex.
- Resources will be numbered from west to east. For parcels with multiple resources, the primary historic-age resource will be numbered ‘1A’ and subordinate and/or nonhistoric-age resources will be numbered subsequently (i.e., 1B, 1C, etc.).
- Survey results will have corresponding map figures which will include the project location, the APE and intersecting parcels, and surveyed resources. If a resource is recommended eligible for the NRHP, a map figure depicting the recommended NRHP boundary for the resource and contributing/noncontributing resources to the NRHP property or district will be provided.

Approximately two survey locations with historic-age resources have been identified. SWCA anticipates the historic-age resources within the APE to have associations with agricultural, domestic, funerary, and landscape uses.

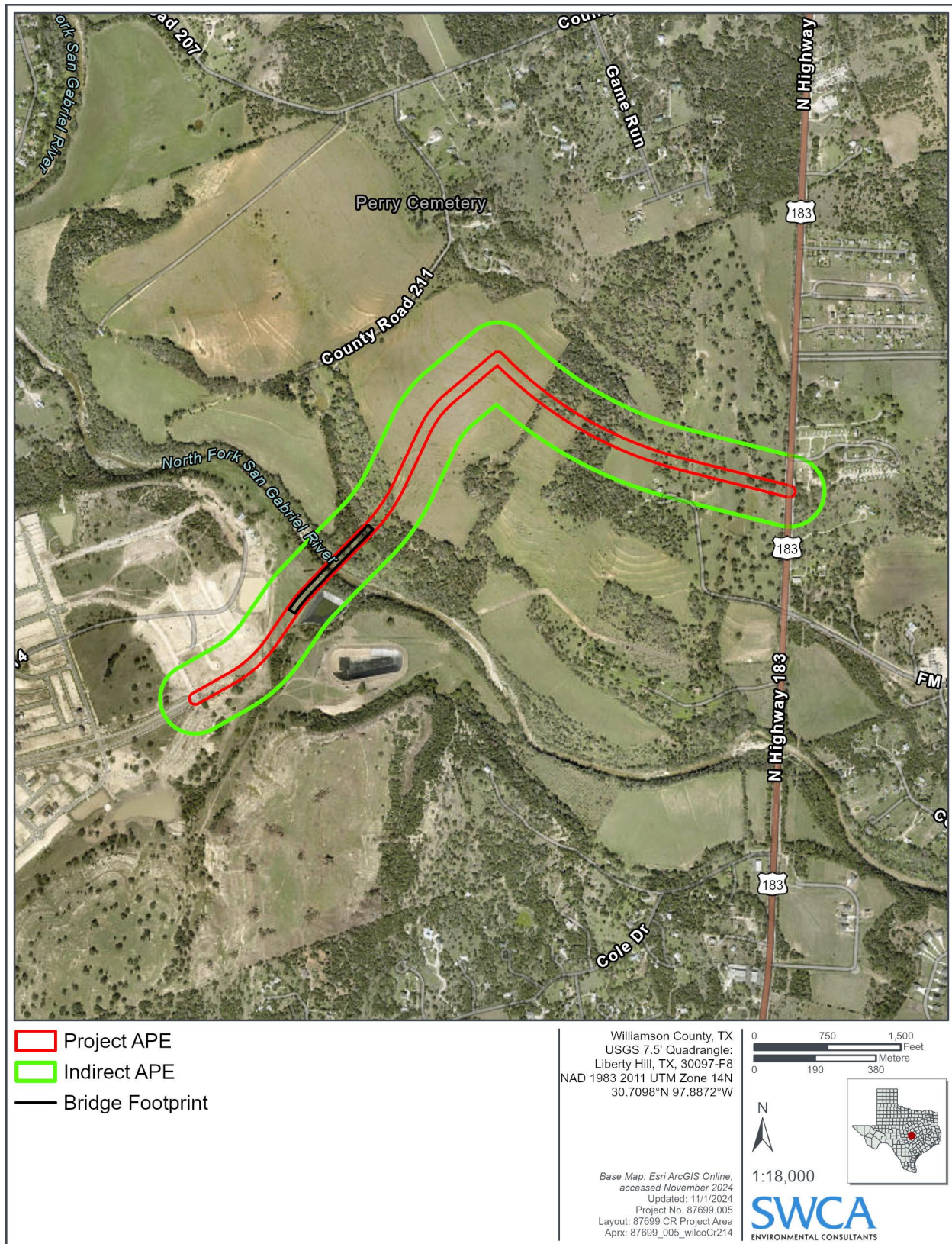


Figure 6. Indirect APE map.

Reporting and Curation

SWCA will prepare a single draft report of the investigation detailing the results of the archaeological, cemetery, and historic resources surveys. The report will conform to Section 106 of the NHPA, THC, and CTA reporting standards. The report will document the general nature of the APE, 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 NRHP/SAL status. This report will also include recommendations, and if applicable, an assessment of effects in regard to the historic resources. SWCA will summarize each documented historic-age resource with a brief architectural description, research findings, integrity assessment, and an NRHP evaluation. Although no historic context will be drafted for this survey, SWCA will use the following literature review to guide documentation and evaluation efforts:

- *A Field Guide to American Houses (Revised): The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture* by Virginia Savage McAlester (McAlester 2015)
- *Agricultural Theme Study for Central Texas* by David W. Moore Jr., Martha Freeman, and Maryellen Russo (Moore et al. 2013)
- *German Seed in Texas Soil: Immigrant Farmers in Nineteenth-Century Texas* by Terry Jordan (Jordan 1994)
- *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* by NPS Cultural Resources (NPS 1997)
- *National Register Bulletin 30: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes* by Linda Flint McClelland, J. Timothy Keller, Genevieve P. Keller, and Robert Z. Melnick (McClelland et al. 1999)

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 APE 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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