TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ANTIQUITIES PERMIT APPLICATION FORM
ARCHEOLOGY

GENERAL INFORMATION

I. PROPERTY TYPE AND LOCATION

Project Name (and/or Site Trinomial) County Road 176 Expansion at Ranch to Market 2243 Project
County (ies) Williamson County, Texas
USGS Quadrangle Name and Number Leander (3097-321)
UTM Coordinates Zone 14 E 617451 N 3385006.7
Location Located in western Williamson County, between RM 2243 and CR 176, roughly 0.5–mile southwest of the CR 176–Patricia Road intersection
Federal Involvement ☐ Yes ☒ No
Name of Federal Agency N/A
Agency Representative N/A

II. OWNER (OR CONTROLLING AGENCY)

Owner Williamson County, Texas
Representative Judge Dan Gattis
Address 710 Main Street
City/State/Zip Georgetown, Texas, 78626
Telephone (include area code) (512) 943-1100 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 same Rhiana D. Ward
Affiliation SWCA Environmental Consultants
Address 6200 UTSA Boulevard, Suite 102
City/State/Zip San Antonio, Texas 78248
Telephone (include area code) 210-877-2847 Email Address rward@swca.com

(OVER)

ANTIQUITIES PERMIT APPLICATION FORM (CONTINUED)

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Proposed Starting Date of Fieldwork August 1, 2016
Requested Permit Duration 2 Years 0 Months (1 year minimum)
Scope of Work (Provided an Outline of Proposed Work) SWCA will conduct an intensive survey of the project area (please refer to the attached Scope of Work for the exact parameters of the project).

III. CURATION & REPORT

Temporary Curatorial or Laboratory Facility SWCA–San Antonio
Permanent Curatorial Facility CAR–UTSA (field records and photos only; no collections planned)

IV. LAND OWNER'S CERTIFICATION

I, Judge Dan Gattis, as legal representative of the Land Owner, Williamson County, Texas, do certify that I have reviewed the plans and research design, and that no investigations will be preformed 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 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 Sponsor, Owner, and Principal Investigator are responsible for completing the terms of this permit.
Signature _____ Date _____

VI. INVESTIGATOR'S CERTIFICATION

I, Rhiana D. Ward, 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 6/21/2016

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 Division of Antiquities Protection.

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
Phone 512/463-6096
www.thc.state.tx.us

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
The State Agency for Historic Preservation

(OVER)

ANTIQUITIES PERMIT APPLICATION FORM (CONTINUED)

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Proposed Starting Date of Fieldwork August 1, 2016
Requested Permit Duration 2 Years 0 Months (1 year minimum)
Scope of Work (Provided an Outline of Proposed Work) SWCA will conduct an intensive survey of the project area (please refer to the attached Scope of Work for the exact parameters of the project).

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Signature _____ Date 06-30-2016

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SWCA
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS
Sound Science. Creative Solutions.

TEXAS ANTIQUITIES PERMIT APPLICATION:
PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK FOR AN INTENSIVE CULTURAL RESOURCES INVESTIGATIONS FOR THE COUNTY ROAD 176 EXPANSION AT RANCH TO MARKET 2243 PROJECT, WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS

Project Sponsor –Williamson County, Texas
Landowner – Williamson County, Texas
Project Consultant – SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA)
Principal Investigator – Rhiana D. Ward, M.A.
Date –June 15, 2016

INTRODUCTION

At the request of HNTB and Prime Strategies, Inc., and on behalf of Williamson County, Texas, SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) proposes to conduct an intensive cultural resources investigation of the proposed 2,000–foot (609.6[m]) extension of County Road (CR) 176 to Ranch-to-Market (RM) 2243 in Williamson County, Texas. The following scope of work provides for an intensive archaeological survey of approximately 2,000-feet (609.6 m) of realignment in western Williamson County, Texas (Figure 1). Archaeological investigations will be performed as part of the sponsor's compliance with the Antiquities Code of Texas, as the land is owned by Williamson County, a political subdivision of the State of Texas.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proposes to construct a 2,000–foot (609.6 m) extension of CR 176 to RM 2243 on behalf of Williamson County. The proposed project will be constructed within a 150-foot (75.7 m) wide project corridor, comprised of a 20–30-foot (6.1–9.1 m) wide road easement with a 60–65 foot (18.3–19.8 m) wide temporary construction easement (Figure 2). The proposed alignment extends across rural rangeland with sporadic residential complexes along CR 176 to the east and southeast. Vegetation consists of moderately dense juniper cover with areas of open grasses. Topography consists of a generally level upland formation overlooking ephemeral tributaries of South Fork San Gabriel River to the north and Brushy Creek to the southwest.

SETTING

The project area is situated on a transitional boundary between the Edward Plateau and the Blackland Prairies ecoregions (Texas Parks and Wildlife 2016). The Edwards Plateau, also known

as the Texas Hill Country, is formed by stony hills and steep canyons carved out by many springs that host an abundance of faunal and floral species. Soils of the Edward Plateau are generally shallow, underlain by limestone formations honeycombed with thousands of karst geological formation, including large unground lakes known as aquifers. A healthy mix of open grasslands and wooded savannah make the Texas Hill Country ideal for the ranching industry. The Blackland Prairie ecoregion is characterized by generally level to gently rolling open, tallgrass prairies. Soils of the Blackland Prairie consists of dark-colored "black gumbo" alkaline clays mixed with some gray acidic sandy loams that support crop production and rangeland for cattle ranching (Texas Parks and Wildlife 2016).

The underlying geology of the project area is mapped as the Edwards and Comanche Peak Limestone, undivided (Barns 1992). Edwards Limestone is characterized by fine grained limestone, dolostone, and chert in massive to thin bedded deposits that range from 60 to 350 feet (18.3 to 106.7 m) thick. Comanche Peak limestone is defined as fine to very vine grained, hard nodular deposits that can be as much as 80 feet (24.4 m) thick (Barns 1992).

Soils of the project area are mapped as Georgetown stony clay loam with 1 to 3 percent slopes at the northern and southern ends of the alignment, with Eckrant extremely stone clay with 0 to 3 percent slopes at the medial portion of the alignment (Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS] 2016). The Georgetown series consists of moderately deep, well drained, very slowly permeable soils that have formed over indurated limestone of Cretaceous age on nearly level to very gently sloping dissected plateaus. Eckrant soils are characterized by very shallow and shallow, well drained soils formed in residuum derived from limestone on nearly level to very steep soils on summits, shoulders, and back slopes of ridges on dissected plateaus (NRCS 2016).

Previous Investigations and Recorded Sites

SWCA conducted a background review to determine if the project area has been previously surveyed for cultural resources or if any archaeological sites have been recorded within a 1–mile radius of the project area. To conduct this review an SWCA archaeologist reviewed the Leander (3097-321), Texas U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map on the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Texas Archeological Sites Atlas (Atlas; THC 2016). These sources provided information on the nature and location of previously conducted archaeological surveys, previously recorded cultural resources, locations of National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) properties, sites designated as State Antiquities Landmarks, Official Texas Historical Markers (OTHMs), Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks, cemeteries, and local neighborhood surveys. As a part of the review, an SWCA archaeologist reviewed the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Historic Overlay, a mapping/geographic information

system database with historic maps and resource information covering most portions of the state (Foster et al. 2006).

The background literature review revealed that one linear survey intersects the project area; however but no previously recorded archaeological sites or cemeteries are located within or immediately adjacent to the alignment (THC 2016). A review of the TxDOT Historic Overlay determined that two possible historic resources are located within 300 feet of the project alignment (Foster et al. 2006). Additionally, five cultural resource investigations, eleven previously recorded archaeological sites are located within a 1–mile radius of the project (Tables 1 and 2; Figure 3; THC 2016).

In 2002 a linear survey was conducted by Paul Price Associates, Inc. for the Brushy Creek Surface Water Supply System (Brushy Creek) Project (Oksanen et al. 2003). The survey encompassed 152 acres, which included 17 miles of construction easement and a 17-acre water treatment plant site. The survey documented eight new archaeological sites (41WM1066–1073) and revisited three previously recorded sites (41WM84, 41WM968, and 41WM 970). Overall, no further work was recommended for any of the newly recorded sites and none were recommended as eligible for State Antiquities Landmark (SAL) designation (Oksanen et al. 2003).

Table 1. Cultural resources investigations within a 1–mile radius of the current project

[redacted]

Table 2. Known cultural resources within a 1–mile radius of the current project area.

[redacted]

A review of the TxDOT Historic Overlay determined that two possible historic resources are located within 300 feet of the project alignment. An 1893 United State Geological Survey (USGS) Map of Georgetown and a 1918 United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) Map of Georgetown illustrate no cultural resources within or adjacent to the project area. However, a 1962 USGS Map of Leander depicts one outbuilding roughly 190 feet west of the project alignment and 230 feet south of RM 2243 (Figure 4). Two residential buildings are also depicted on the 1962 USGS map, 140 feet and 740 feet east of the project alignment. The two buildings are situated along an undeveloped private drive accessed from CR 176 to the south.

SCOPE OF WORK

Based on a review of the project area soils, geology, and recorded archaeological sites, the following scope of investigations provides for an intensive pedestrian archaeological survey with subsurface investigations for the entire proposed project. The affected project area is defined as approximately 2,000 feet (609.6 m) in length and 150 foot (45.7 m) wide, or roughly 6.89 acres.

INTENSIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Once the permit is obtained, SWCA will conduct a cultural resources survey of the proposed 2,000–foot (609.6 m) long project area. The survey will be of sufficient intensity to determine the nature, extent, and possible impacts to cultural resources within the affected project area. The survey will meet all THC minimum archaeological survey standards as set forth by the Council of Texas Archaeologists (CTA) for projects such as these.

The field survey will consist of one team of two SWCA archaeologists walking a two transects within a 150-foot-wide (45.7 m) survey corridor. Subsurface explorations to be used during the survey include the excavation of shovel testing at a rate of 1 shovel test per 100 m (328 feet) along each transect. SWCA will key the utilization of shovel tests to the level of disturbance of the proposed project area and the nature of the soils, geology, and topography. If archaeologists find that they cannot adequately explore project impacts in soils with potential to contain buried archaeological materials, auger tests or backhoe trenches may be utilized.

SWCA will excavate shovel tests in 20-cm (7.9 inches) arbitrary levels to 1 m in depth or to culturally sterile deposits, whichever comes first. The matrix will be screened through ¼-inch mesh. Archaeologists will plot the location of each shovel test using a global positioning receiver (GPS) receiver, and will record each test on appropriate project field forms. Areas with previously recorded sites or other cultural resources will require additional shovel testing to explore the nature of the cultural deposits. If sites are encountered, a minimum of six shovel tests will be excavated to delineate site boundaries.

If an archaeological site is encountered in the proposed project area during the investigations, it will be explored as much as possible with consideration to land access constraints. SWCA will assess any discovered sites in regards to potential significance so that recommendations can be made for proper management (avoidance, non-avoidance, or further work). Archaeologists will conduct additional shovel tests per THC standards at any discovered sites to define horizontal and vertical boundaries. Appropriate State of Texas Archeological Site Data Forms will be filled out for each site discovered during the investigations. SWCA will produce a detailed plan map of each site and will plot locations on USGS 7.5-minute topographic maps and relevant project maps.

SWCA is proposing 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. Only especially rare artifacts or discoveries will be collected.

Reporting

Once the archaeological survey has been completed, SWCA will analyze the field data and produce a report of the investigations. Analysis of field data will include mapping, the production of official State of Texas site forms for sites, and the review, organization, and assessment of field notes. Once this is complete, SWCA will prepare a report of the investigations. The archaeological report will briefly document previous investigations in the area, background cultural and environmental settings, the methodology used in the investigations, the general nature and extent of cultural resources assessed during the archaeological survey, the level of impacts to the sites from mechanical clearing, recommendations on the need for further work or avoidance, and the potential significance of the cultural resources in regards to future development and eligibility to the NRHP. The report will include maps that illustrate all investigations and avoidance arrangements, correlating the project area and archaeological sites locations.

Draft copies of the report will be submitted to the THC for review and comment. Once this has been accomplished, any appropriate edits will be made and copies of the final report will be produced per Antiquities Code guidelines.

Curation

Per the Antiquities Code guidelines, all documents and any artifacts recovered during the investigations will be curated at an approved curatorial facility. In this case, if artifacts are recovered and curation is needed, these materials will be curated at the Center for Archaeological Research at the University of Texas at San Antonio (CAR–UTSA).

Records, samples, and artifacts from the investigations will be temporarily curated at SWCA's San Antonio office during analysis and report production. This office is located at 6200 UTSA Boulevard, Suite 102, San Antonio, Texas. Subsequently, all materials will be permanently stored at an approved curatorial facility meeting 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 79 standards in the State of Texas.

REFERENCES

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1992 *Geologic Atlas of Texas, Austin Sheet.* University of Texas, Austin.

Bradle, M. and G. Bernhardt
2008 *Archaeological survey of the Escalera Elevated Storage Tank Project for the City of Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas*. Report of Investigations No. 149. American Archaeology Group LLC, Lampasas.

Foster, T. R., T. Summerville, and T. Brown
2006 The Texas Historic Overlay: A Geographic Information System of Historic Map Images for Planning Transportation Projects in Texas. Prepared for the Texas Department of Transportation by PBS&J, Austin.

Nash. M
2008 *A Cultural Resources Survey of the Leander Independent School District's Proposed Elementary School No. 20, Williamson County, Texas*. PBS&J Document No. 070165. PBS&J, Austin.

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2016 *Web Soil Survey*. Web tool. Available at: http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/. Accessed May 10, 2016.

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2003 *Cultural Resources Survey of the Proposed Brushy Creek Surface Water Supply System, Williamson County, Texas*. PPA Cultural Resources Report No. 354. Paul Price Associates, Inc., Austin.

Stotts, M.C. and B. Young
2015 *Intensive Cultural Resources Survey fo the 545-Acre Garey Park Project, Williamson County, Texas*. SWCA Cultural Resources Report No. 15-45. SWCA Environmental Consultants, Austin.

Texas Historical Commission (THC)
2016 Texas Archaeological Site Atlas, restricted database, Texas Historical Commission. Available at: http://pedernales.thc. state.tx.us/. Accessed May 10, 2016.

Texas Parks and Wildlife
2016 Texas Ecoregions. Electronic document, https://tpwd.texas.gov/education/hunter-education/online-course/wildlife-conservation/texas-ecoregions, accessed May 10, 2016.

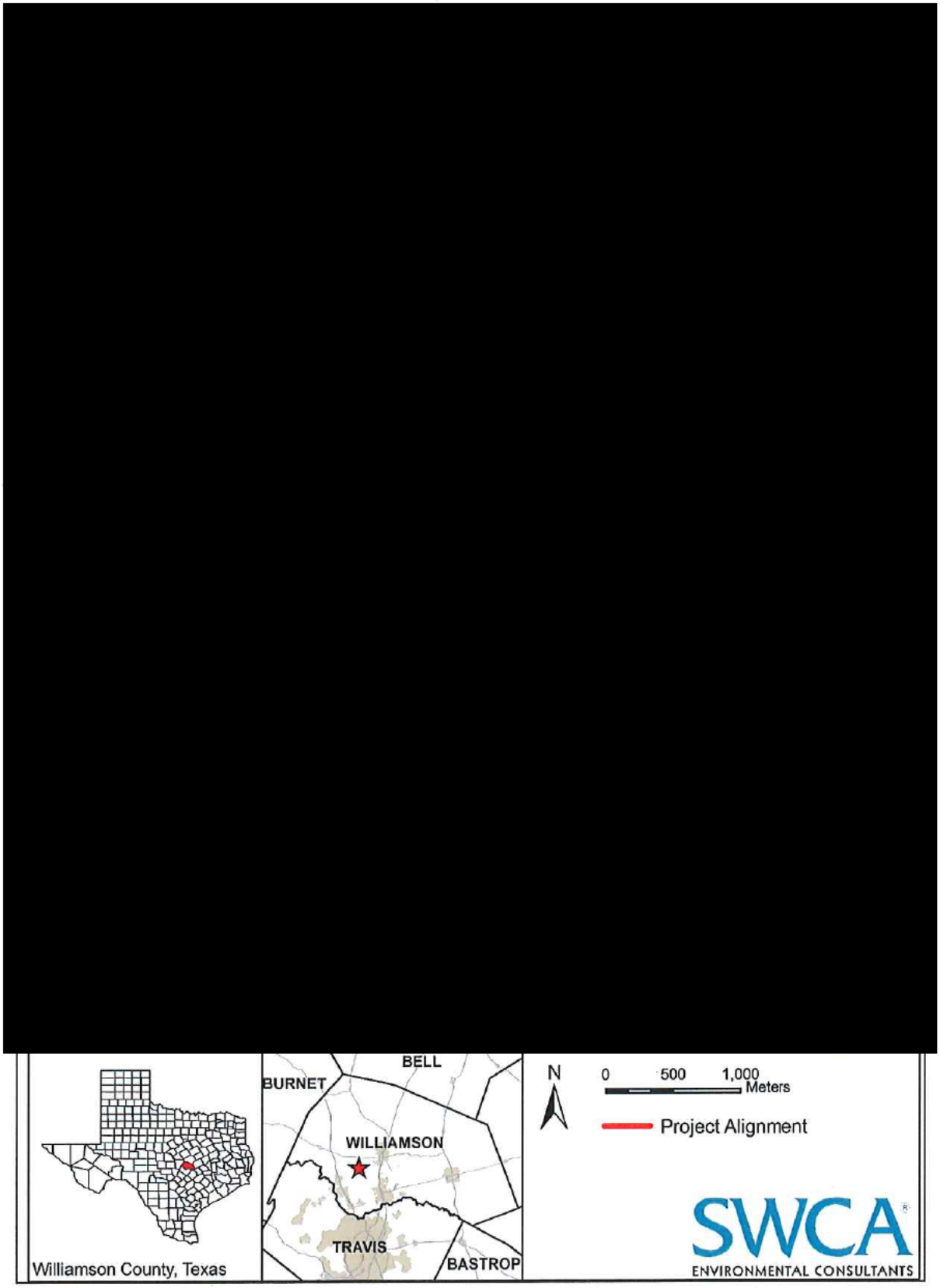

Figure 1. Project location.

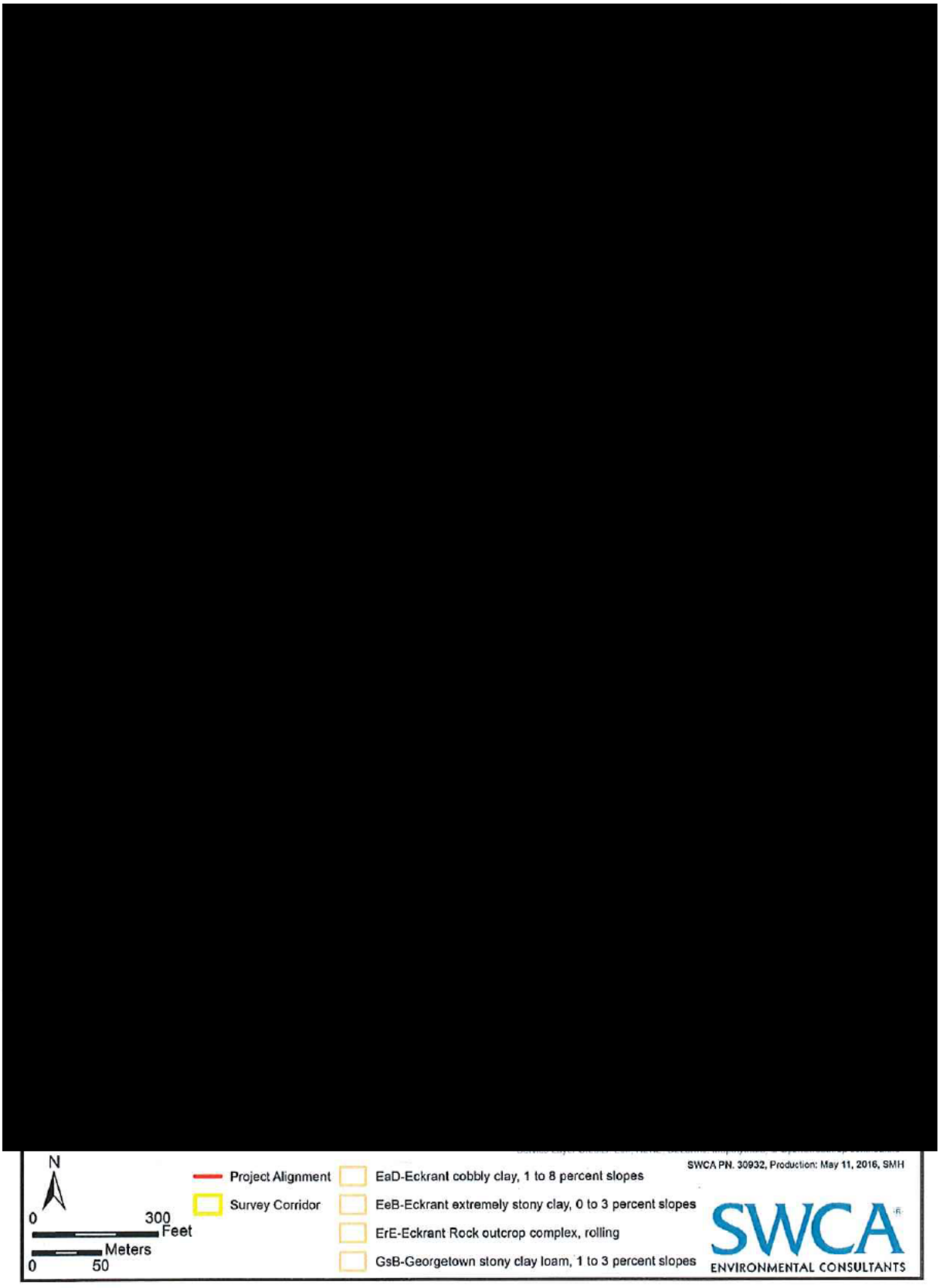

Figure 2. Project area overview with soils overlay.

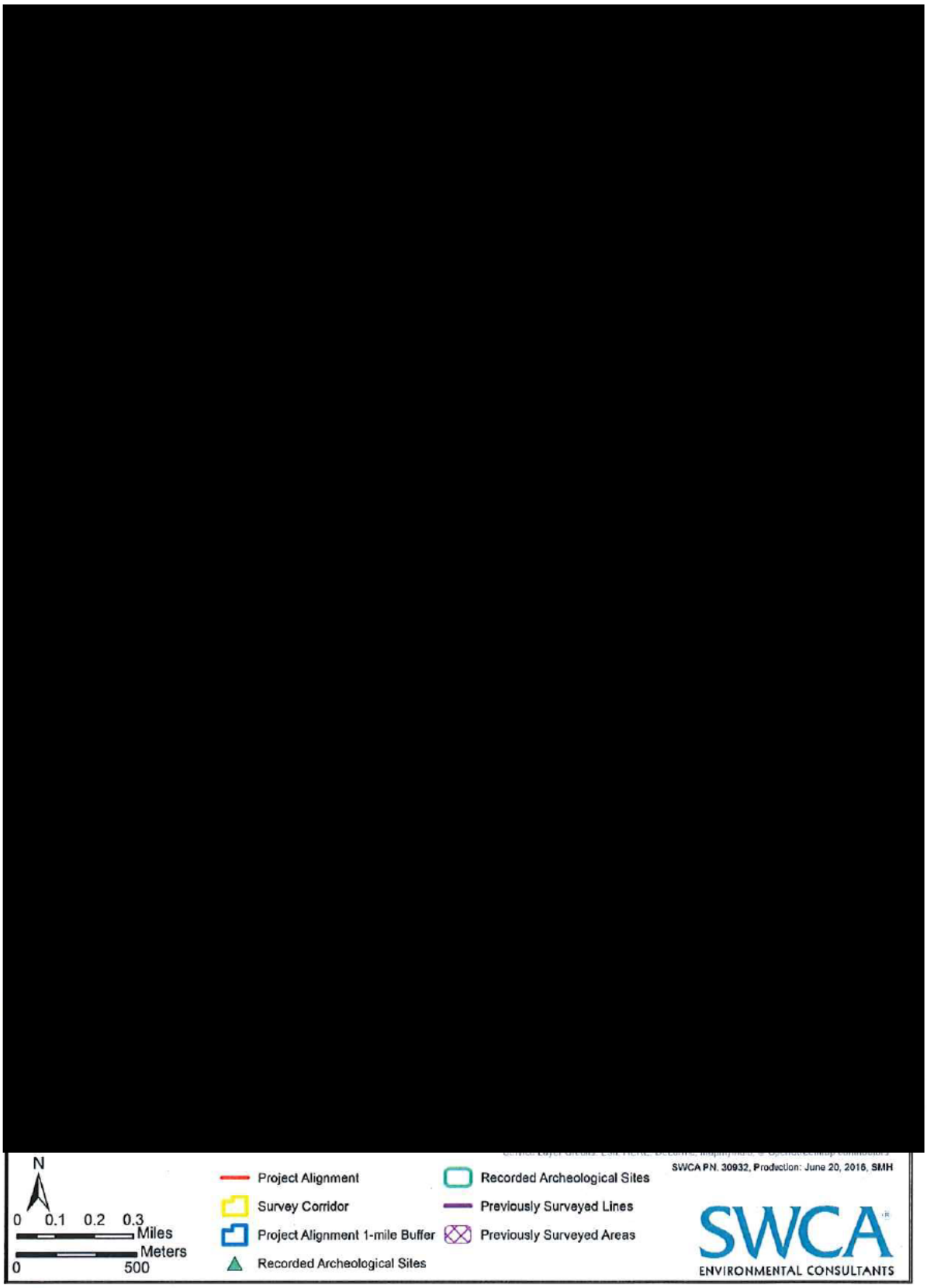

Figure 3. Cultural resources and previous cultural resources investigations within a 1–mile radius of project area.

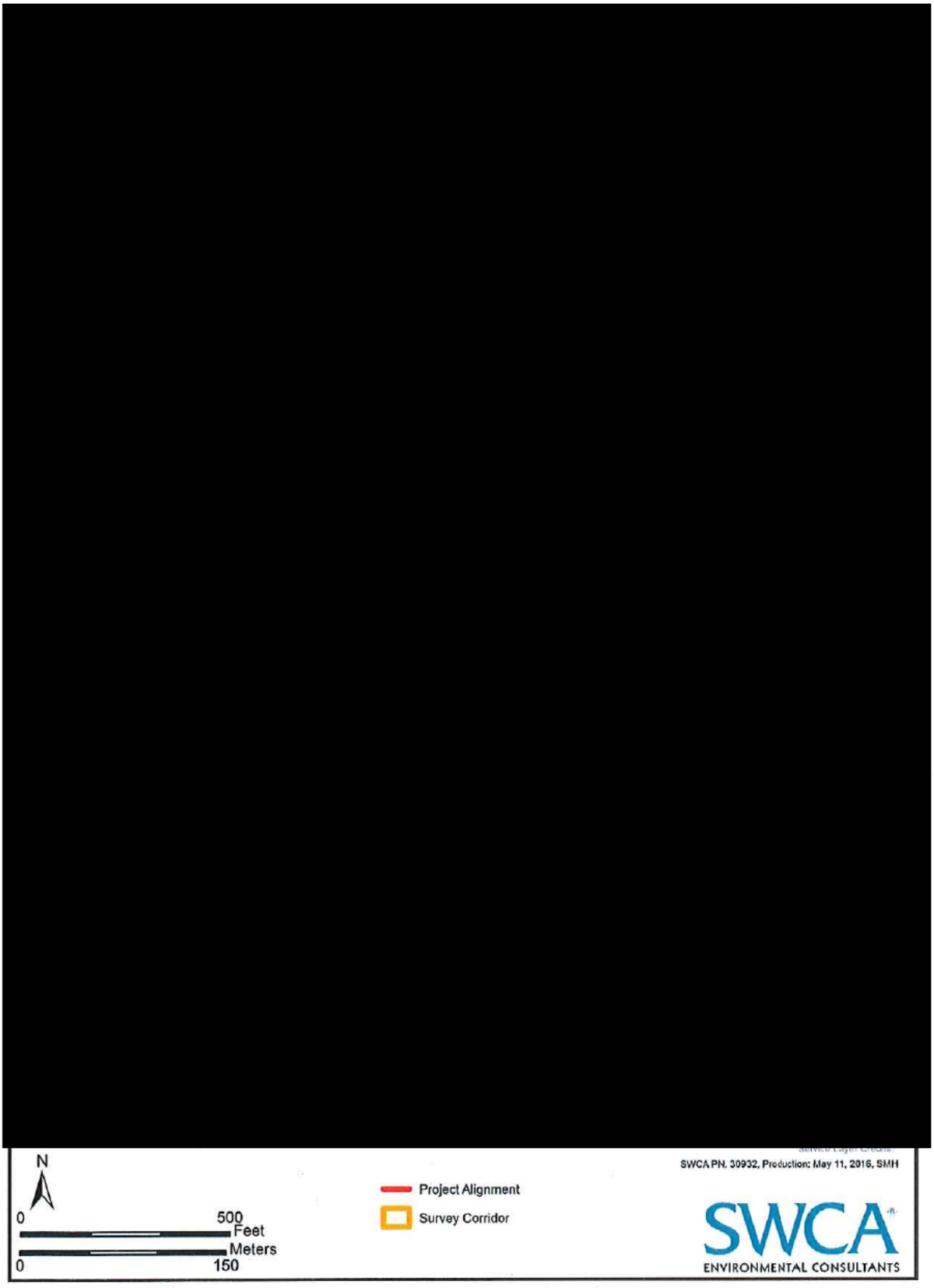

Figure 4. Project area on 1962 USGS Map of Leander.