

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ANTIQUITIES PERMIT APPLICATION FORM ARCHEOLOGY

GENERAL INFORMATION

I. PROPERTY TYPE AND LOCATION

Project Name (and/or Site Trinomial) Archaeological investigation of Future CR 404 Expansion Project, Williamson County, TX

County (ies) Williamson County

USGS Quadrangle Name and Number Taylor, TX USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle map

UTM Coordinates Zone 14 E 646148 N 3378396

Location 0.16 miles southeast of CR 132 and FM 3349 intersection near Taylor, Texas.

Federal Involvement ☐ Yes ☒ No

Name of Federal Agency _____

Agency Representative _____

II. OWNER (OR CONTROLLING AGENCY)

Owner Williamson County

Representative Bill Gravell Jr. (County Judge)

Address 710 South Main Street, Suite 101

City/State/Zip Georgetown, TX 78626

Telephone (include area code) 512-943-1150 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 Christopher Shelton

Affiliation SWCA Environmental Consultants

Address 4949 N Loop 1604 West, Suite 235

City/State/Zip San Antonio, TX 78249

Telephone (include area code) 210-361-0721 Email Address cshelton@swca.com

ANTIQUITIES PERMIT APPLICATION FORM (CONTINUED)

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Proposed Starting Date of Fieldwork 2/09/2023
Requested Permit Duration 5 Years 0 Months (1 year minimum)
Scope of Work (Provided an Outline of Proposed Work) see attached scope of work

III. CURATION & REPORT

Temporary Curatorial or Laboratory Facility SWCA (Austin) lab
Permanent Curatorial Facility CAR at UTSA

IV. LAND OWNER'S CERTIFICATION

I, Bill Gravell Jr. (County Judge), 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 [Signature] Date Jan 18, 2023

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, Chris Shelton, 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 [Signature] Date 01/09/2023

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 _____



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

Sound Science. Creative Solutions.®

4407 Monterey Oaks Boulevard
Building 1, Suite 110
Austin, Texas 78749
Tel 512.476.0891 Fax 512.476.0893
www.swca.com

December 9, 2022

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

**Re: Request for Antiquities Permit to Conduct an Intensive Archaeological Investigation for the Proposed Future County Road 404 Expansion Project, Williamson County, Texas
SWCA Project No. 59147-017.**

Dear Ms. Shelton:

This letter is a request for a Texas Antiquities Permit to conduct an intensive archaeological investigation for the proposed Future County Road (CR) 404 Realignment Project (project), Williamson County, Texas. The proposed CR 404 realignment was originally surveyed by SWCA in March of 2022 under Texas Antiquities Permit No. 30534. The THC concurred with the findings and recommendations of the survey and the permit was subsequently closed and curated. However, since this time, Williamson County has required an adjustment to the original alignment, and additional areas will require a cultural resources survey under a new permit. The new alignment involves approximately 6.3 acres of linear alignment that was not surveyed in previous efforts.

As the project is proposed to occur on easement granted to Williamson County, 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). To comply with requirements of the Antiquities Code of Texas (ACT), SWCA is proposing an intensive cultural resources survey with shovel testing of the project area.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (469) 955-0693 or cshelton@swca.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Shelton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a stylized "S" at the end.

Chris Shelton, M.A.
Principal Investigator

PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK FOR INTENSIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF FUTURE COUNTY ROAD 404 EXPANSION PROJECT, WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS

Project Landowner/Sponsor – Williamson County

Project Sponsor – HNTB Corporation

Project Consultant – SWCA Environmental Consultants

Principal Investigator – Chris Shelton, M.A.

Date – December 9, 2022

INTRODUCTION

On behalf of Williamson County, SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) will conduct a cultural resources survey for the proposed Future County Road (CR) and CR 404 Realignment Project (project) located approximately 4.3 miles (7 kilometers [km]) southwest of the City of Taylor in Williamson County, Texas (Figure 1). SWCA previously conducted work for the project in March of 2022 under Texas Antiquities Permit No. 30534. However, after the investigation had been concluded in May of 2022 and the permit subsequently closed, a project alignment adjustment was required. As such, portions of the new alignment were not surveyed during the initial work and will require a cultural resources survey under a new permit. The unsurveyed project area is approximately 0.6 mile (1.0 km) in length and encompasses approximately 6.3 acres (2.5 hectares [ha]), and would connect existing Farm-to-Market Road (FM) 3349 to CR 404 (Figure 2).

The project is proposed to occur on easement granted to Williamson County, a political subdivision of the state of Texas, and as such the project will require review under the Antiquities Code of Texas (ACT). To comply with requirements of the ACT, SWCA is proposing an intensive cultural resources survey with shovel testing of the project area. This scope of work presents information on the project area; potential effects, known resources; and methods of the proposed survey, reporting, and curation.

PROJECT SETTING

The Future County Road and CR 404 Realignment Project is located southwest of the City of Taylor from FM 3349 at the western extent to FM 973 on the eastern extent, for a length of approximately 0.6 miles (1.0 km) and a total footprint encompassing approximately 6.3 acres (2.5 ha). The current project includes construction of an undivided four-lane roadway. The width of the proposed unsurveyed ROW is not expected exceed 180 feet (54.9 meter [m]), and the construction impacts will not generally exceed three feet (0.9 m) in depth. Aerial imagery shows the project area is currently comprised of agricultural fields and rural residential properties, and is depicted on the *Taylor, Texas* U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map (USGS 2022a) (see Figures 1 and 2).

Geology and Soils

The recorded surface geology within the project area consists entirely of early Late Cretaceous-age Austin Chalk deposits, which consists of relatively thick massive chalk deposits with some interbeds of calcareous clay (USGS 2022b). Seven soil types were identified as underlying the proposed project area (NRCS 2022) (Table 1; Figure 3). The majority of the project area (62.7 percent) is underlain by the Burleson clay soil series. The Burleson clay series soils consist of moderately well-drained, deep to clayey alluvium. The series is formed from Pleistocene-aged calcareous clayey alluvium on terraces of Pleistocene-aged stream terraces (NRCS 2022).

Proposed Scope of Work for an Intensive Archaeological Investigation of the Future County Road 404 Expansion Project, Williamson County, Texas

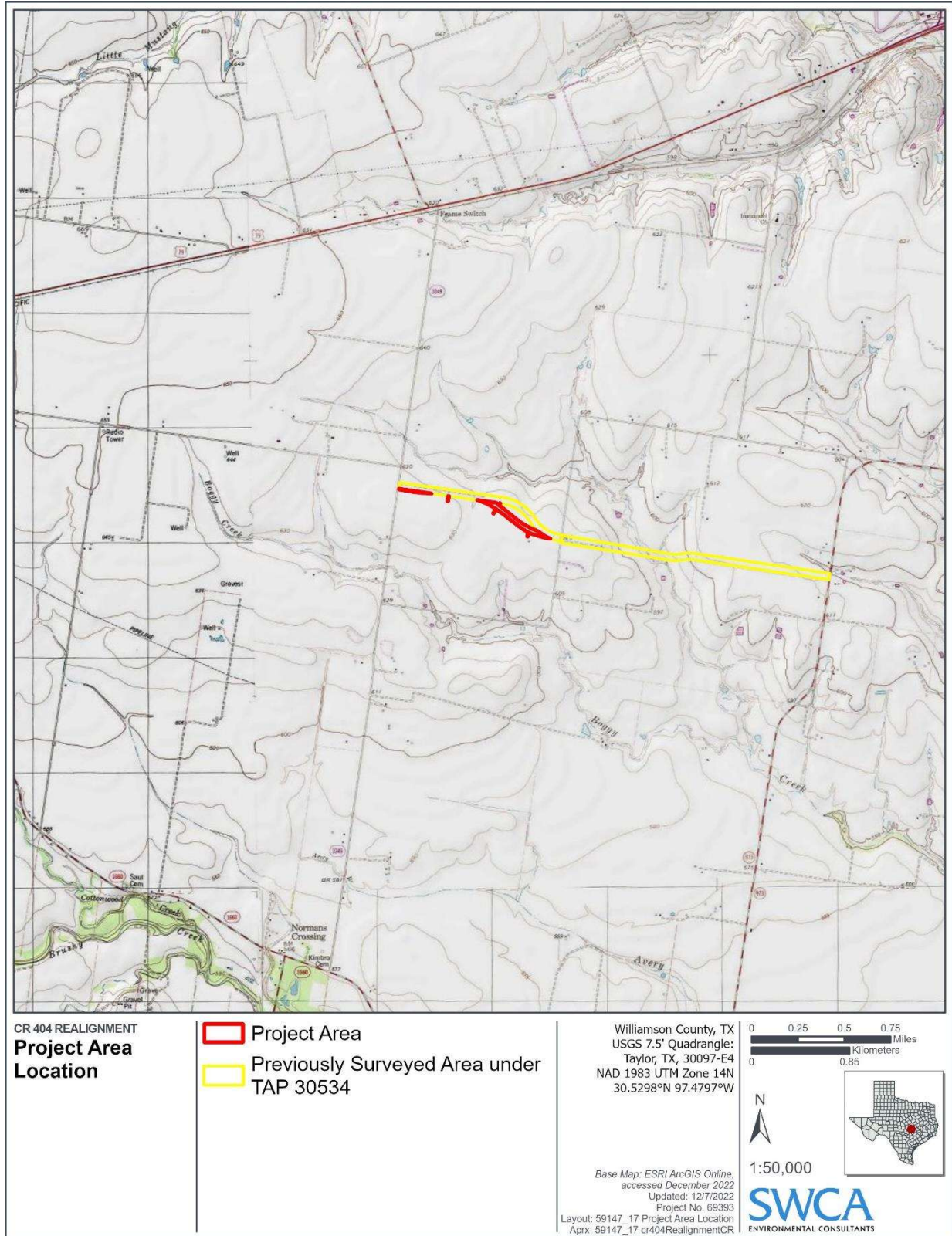


Figure 1. Project location map.

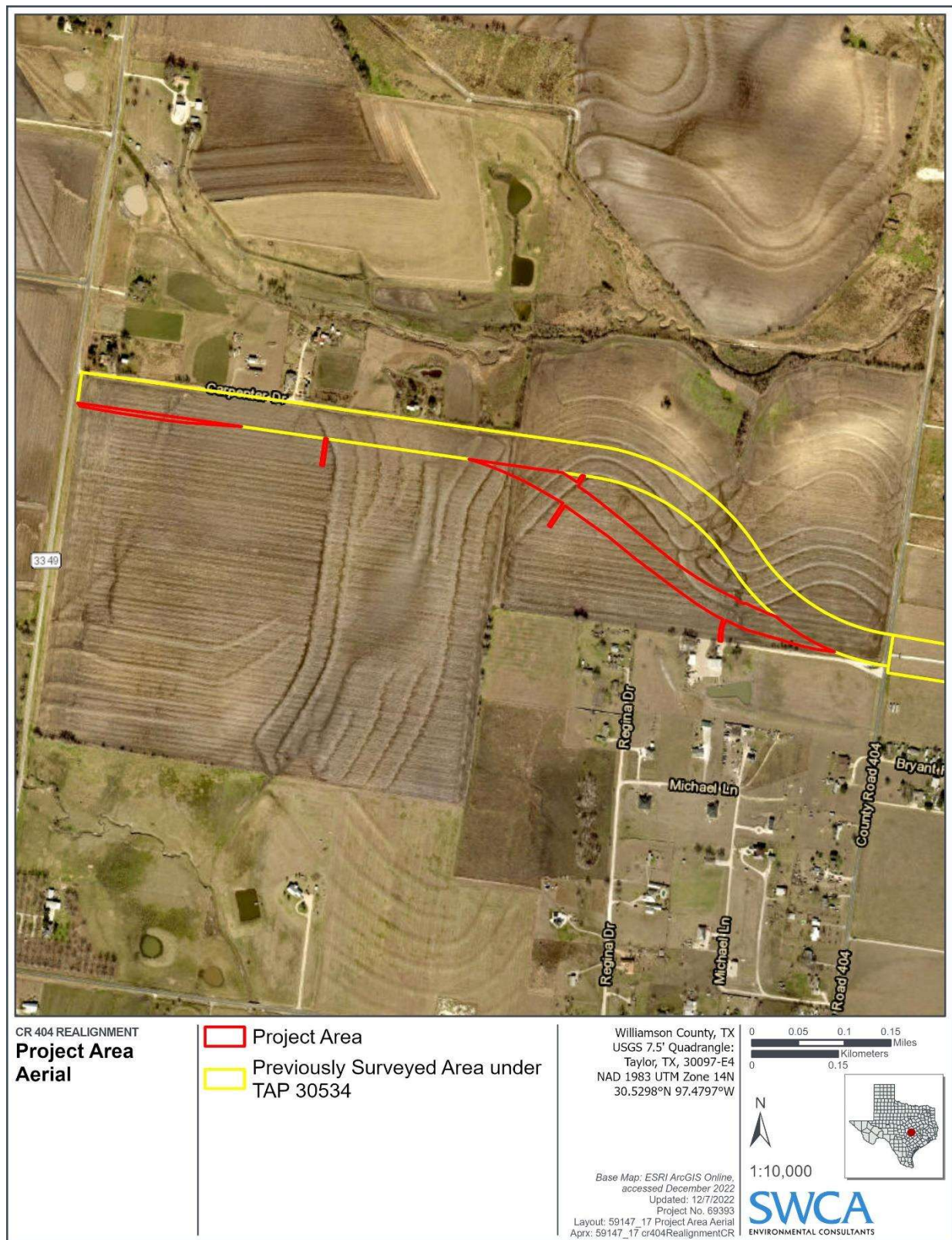


Figure 2. Project area map.

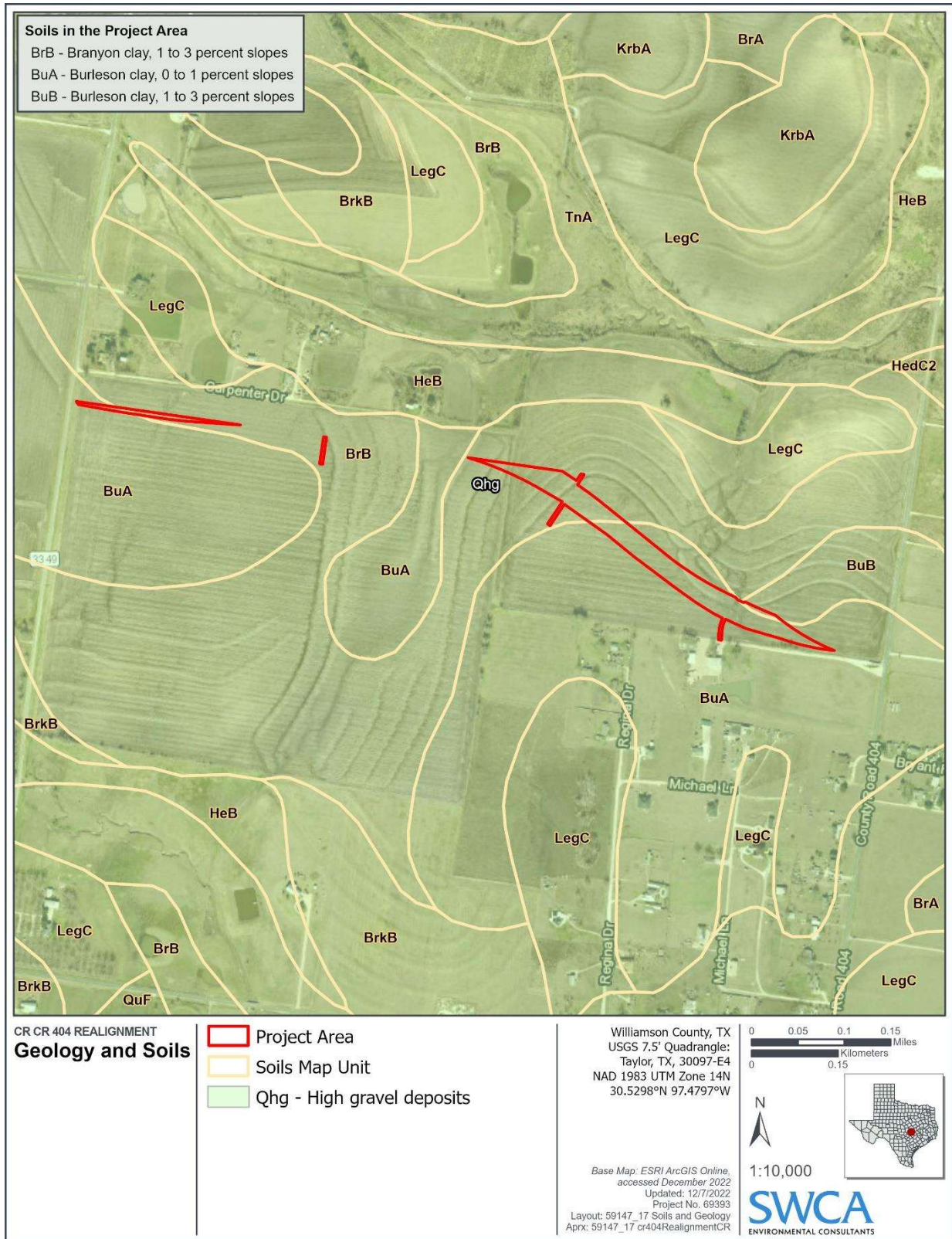


Figure 3. Project area soils map.

Table 1. Project Area Soils

Soil Name	Acreage	Percent of Project Area
Burleson clay, 0 to 1 percent slopes	3.8	60.6%
Branyon clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes	2.3	37.3%
Burleson clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes	0.1	2.1%
Total	6.3	100.0%

Source: NRCS (2022).

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 1 km (0.6 mile) of the project area. In addition to identifying previously recorded archeological sites, the Atlas review includes the following types of information: National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) districts and properties, State Antiquities Landmarks (SALs), Official Texas Historical Markers (OTHM), Registered Texas Historic Landmarks, cemeteries, and local neighborhood surveys. Listings in Atlas are limited to projects under purview of the ACT or the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966; therefore, all previous work conducted in an area may not be available. However, SWCA made a concerted effort to obtain reports for all previous cultural resources work conducted in the project area.

On December 2, 2022, SWCA completed a desktop review of the project. The review includes the approximately 6.3-acre (2.5-ha) project area and an additional 0.6-mile (1-km) radius around the project components (i.e., study area) (Figure 4). The review used the Atlas online database (THC 2022) to identify previously conducted surveys and known sites within the study area. The review also consulted historical topographic maps available through the USGS Historical Topographic Map Explorer (USGS 2022a), the Texas Historic Overlay (Foster et al. 2006), and modern aerial imagery to identify land use practices that may indicate the potential for or presence of cultural resources within the project area.

Previous Cultural Resources Surveys

The file search and literature review identified two previous cultural resources surveys which intersect proposed project area. As previously described, much of the currently proposed alignment was surveyed under Texas Antiquities Permit No. 30534 in early 2022 (Morton 2022). The survey intersecting the western terminus of the project area currently has no further information is available on the Atlas, but appears to be associated with Farm-to-Market 3349 (THC 2022).

Previously Recorded Cultural Resource Sites

A review of the study area determined there are three previously recorded archaeological sites within 0.6 mile (1 km) of the project area, including one site documented by SWCA archaeologists during the previous survey for the CR 404 project (i.e., 41WM1422, 41WM1445, and 41WM1469). Site 41WM1445 is located approximately 0.3 mile (0.4 km) south of the eastern terminus of the project area and was recorded in 2021 by AmaTerra Environmental, Inc. (THC 2022). The site was described as the remnants of an early to mid-twentieth century farmstead. The site consists of a historical debris field with concrete building foundations and was recommended as ineligible for the NRHP. In August of 2021, the THC reviewed the site and concurred with the recommendation of the investigators (THC 2022).

Restricted Information
Not for Public Disclosure

Figure 4. Background review results map.

Previously recorded site 41WM1422 is located approximately 0.5 mile (0.7 km) south of the eastern terminus of the project area and was recorded in 2020 by Cox McLain Environmental Consulting (THC 2022). The site was described as a brick well and metal well house surrounded by historical artifacts on the surface. The well and artifacts are thought to be associated with a homestead inhabited from the late nineteenth century to mid-twentieth century. Although the site has been determined to be ineligible for the NRHP within the surveyed ROW by the THC, the entirety of the site has yet to be surveyed and the NRHP eligibility remains undetermined (THC 2022).

Previously recorded site 41WM1469 is located within 300 feet (91.4 m) north of the project area and was recorded in 2022 by SWCA during the previous investigation for the CR 404 realignment project (THC 2022; Morton 2022). The site was described as a diffuse, historic surface scatter consisting of glass and ceramic fragments within an agricultural field. Due to the lack of features, paucity of artifacts, and lack of subsurface deposits, the site was recommended ineligible for the NRHP, concurred by the THC (THC 2022; Morton 2022).

Historical Map Review

The historical map review revealed the Camino Real de los Tejas historical trail is mapped within the 0.6-mile (1.0-km) review area (THC 2022). The Camino Real de los Tejas is a series of historical trails and roadways established by the Spanish, likely from preexisting Native American trails, in the early eighteenth century (Texas State Historical Association [TSHA] 2022). The roadway served as a vital artery for early Texas history for centuries; including, a supply line to Spanish missions, a route to connect centers of commerce, and as an immigration route from lands to the north and east (TSHA 2022). In 1915, the Texas legislature commissioned a study and survey to establish the likely position of the historic roadway and map the original route (TSHA 2022). The historical map review consisted of historical maps dating to 1964 (Foster et al., 2006; USGS 2022a). The review identified a total of 30 potential historical standing structures within the 0.6-mile (1-km) study area; of those potentially historical structures, none are depicted within the project area (Foster et al., 2006; USGS 2022c) (Figure 5).

PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK

Once an Antiquities Permit has been obtained, SWCA will implement field survey methods that comply with technical standards and requirements established by the THC and the Council of Texas Archeologists (CTA). Because much of the proposed road alignment was surveyed in early 2022, SWCA is proposing to survey only those portions (approximately 6.3 acres) of the new alignment that are previously unsurveyed. Two SWCA professional archaeologists will conduct a pedestrian survey of the project area using systematic transects spaced no more than 98.4 feet (30 m) apart. This procedure will examine visible ground surfaces for cultural materials and aboveground features. Visual examination will be supplemented through shovel tests hand-excavated within the property. Shovel testing will be conducted in areas that hold potential for intact, subsurface archaeological resources. Shovel tests will not be conducted and/or will be limited in areas within pre-existing utility ROWs, disturbed by modern homestead development, or in upland settings lacking soils or displaying bedrock exposures. Shovel tests will be excavated according to THC standards. Linear projects require at least one survey transect for every 98 feet (30 m) of corridor width, with at least one shovel test excavated per 328 linear feet (100 linear meters) on each transect. As such, SWCA estimates a minimum of 18 shovel tests will be required to complete the linear survey of the previously unsurveyed portions of the project alignment.

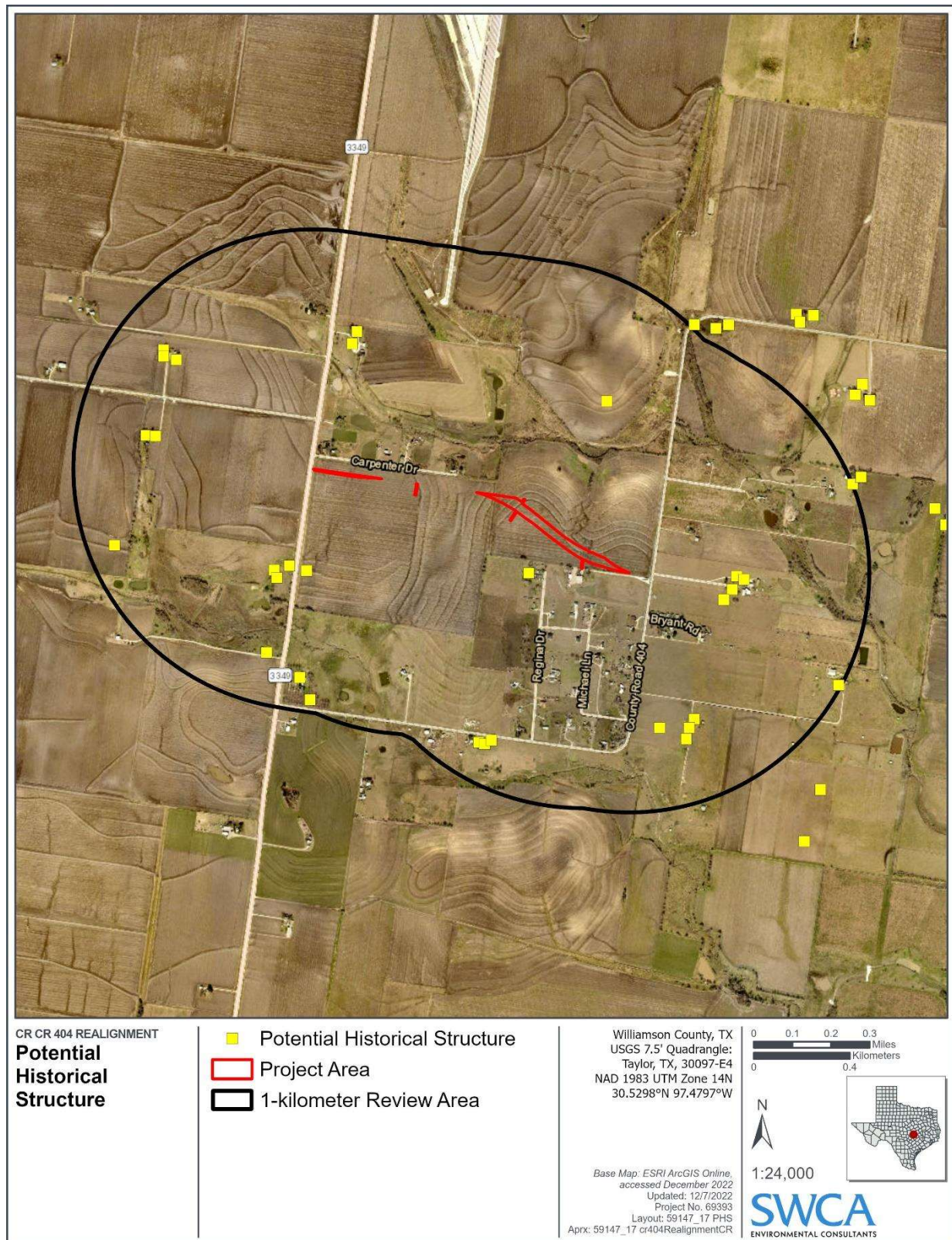


Figure 5. Potential historical structures within 0.6 mile (1 km) of the project area.

SWCA will excavate shovel tests in 8 inch (20-centimeter [cm]) arbitrary levels to 31.5 inches (80 cm) in depth, impervious surfaces, groundwater, or to culturally sterile deposits, whichever comes first. The matrix will be screened through ¼-inch mesh. Archaeologists will plot each shovel test using a global positioning system (GPS) receiver and will record each test on appropriate project field forms. Areas with cultural resources will require additional shovel testing at closer spacing to delineate the boundaries of buried cultural materials.

The potential for deeply buried cultural deposits is interpreted as moderate to low based in part on the previously discussed soils and geology information. Additionally, the cutbanks for this crossing appear to be five feet (1.5 m) or less in height indicating that prominent alluvial terraces containing deeply buried cultural deposits is not probable. Accordingly, this crossing has a low potential to contain deeply buried cultural deposits and deep mechanical investigations is not warranted. The field assessment will further define the potential of a site and methods will be adjusted accordingly.

Previously identified resources (e.g., Camino Real de los Tejas Historic Trail) as well as any newly identified archaeological sites will be explored as much as possible with consideration to the boundaries of the project. All discovered sites will be assessed regarding their potential significance, so that recommendations can be made for proper management (i.e., avoidance, non-avoidance, or further work), and will be assessed for SAL and NRHP eligibility. Shovel tests will be excavated per THC/CTA standards to define horizontal and vertical site boundaries.

Site Documentation

SWCA will complete appropriate State of Texas Archaeological Site Data Forms for each site discovered during the investigations. SWCA will produce a detailed plan map of each site and plot locations on USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangles and relevant project maps. Unless otherwise required by the THC, SWCA will conduct a non-collection survey, where artifacts will be tabulated, analyzed, photographed, and documented in the field. Field notes will be kept at the SWCA Austin location. If the survey data allows, SWCA archaeologists will make a significance determination using the criteria listed in 36 CFR 60.4. If determined to be potentially significant and eligible for listing on the NRHP or as an SAL, additional work may be required to study or mitigate the resource prior to any construction.

During the survey, the field team will also plot, record, and photograph any buildings or structures within or directly adjacent to the area of potential effect that appear to be more than 45 years in age. These potential historical features will be evaluated by a U.S. Secretary of the Interior-qualified architectural historian to identify if they are potentially eligible for listing on the NRHP. The architectural evaluation will use standard industry-recognized methods in the analysis, including National Park Service National Register Bulletins 15 and 39. The report will include an evaluation of the resources using the NRHP criteria of evaluation (36 CFR 60.4)

Reporting and Curation

Once the cultural resources survey has been completed, SWCA will prepare a report for review by Williamson County and the THC. The report of the investigations will conform to the CTA and THC standards and guidelines. The report will include the results of the background review and the field survey. Specifically, the report will provide the methodology used in the investigations, the presence and condition of previously recorded sites located in the project area, photographs illustrating the environment and setting, a description of cultural resources encountered during the survey, recommendations for management of those cultural resources, and recommendations for additional investigations and the

potential significance of the cultural resources regarding future development and SAL and NRHP status, if warranted.

SWCA will submit a draft digital 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 on-line. Field records and artifacts, if collected, 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.

UNANTICIPATED DISCOVERY OF HUMAN REMAINS

In the event of unexpected discovery of human remains or funerary objects/contexts during the survey, SWCA will comply with all applicable state laws (Texas Health and Safety Code Section 711 and the Texas Administrative Code Title 13, Chapter 22, Sections 22.1 through 22.6.), as well as taking into account the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's 2007 Policy Statement on the Treatment of Burial Sites. Any human skeletal remains that may be discovered will, at all times, be treated with dignity and respect. If human remains are uncovered during investigations, the following steps will be taken:

- SWCA will halt excavation of the remains and shall notify the Williamson County sheriff and the THC. The sheriff will be requested to contact the coroner/medical examiner. After examining the human remains, if the sheriff and coroner determine the remains are modern, then the sheriff or coroner will assume responsibility for the remains.
- Appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that the remains are protected and not disturbed prior to the conclusion of investigation by law enforcement and consultation with appropriate groups to determine next steps (if needed).
- Excavations (e.g., shovel testing) within 328 feet (100 m) of the find will be halted until the THC authorizes continued work in those areas; however, surveys will continue elsewhere in the project area.

If the county sheriff and coroner determine that the remains are not modern or a crime scene, thereby relinquishing their jurisdiction over the remains, SWCA will coordinate with the project and THC to determine the appropriate course of action and file *Notice of the Existence of a Cemetery*.

REFERENCES CITED

ESRI

- 2022 *World Imagery by ESRI*. Online database available at https://services.arcgisonline.com/ArcGIS/rest/services/World_Imagery/MapServer. Accessed December 2022.

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.

Morton, Benjamin.

- 2022 *Intensive Cultural Resources Survey of the Proposed County Road 401 and 404 Realignment Project, Williamson County, Texas*. Prepared for Williamson County by SWCA Environmental Consultants, Austin.

Natural Resources Soil Service (NRCS)

- 2022 Web Soil Survey. Online database available at <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/HomePage.htm>. Accessed December 2022.

Texas Historical Commission

- 2022 Texas Archeological Sites Atlas restricted database, Texas Historical Commission. Available at: <http://atlas.thc.texas.gov>. Accessed December 2022.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

- 2022a The National Geologic Map Database (TopoView). Historical topographic map collection. Available at: <http://ngmdb.usgs.gov/maps/TopoView/>. Accessed December 2022.
- 2022b Texas Geology Web Map Viewer. Available at: <https://txpub.usgs.gov/txgeology/>. Accessed December 2022.