

A PHASE I ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF A PROPOSED SEWER LINE
AND LIFT STATION FOR THE TRADITION GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB AT
UNIVERSITY RANCH IN CENTRAL BRAZOS COUNTY, TEXAS

Texas Antiquities Permit Number 2498



by

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A PHASE I ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF A PROPOSED SEWER LINE AND LIFT
STATION FOR THE TRADITION GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB AT UNIVERSITY
RANCH IN CENTRAL BRAZOS COUNTY, TEXAS

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Project Number 00-16

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ABSTRACT

An archaeological survey of a sewer line and lift station (approximately 211 acres) in central Brazos County, Texas was conducted in November 2000 and February 2001 by Brazos Valley Research Associates of Bryan, Texas under Texas Antiquities Permit 2498. The area was investigated by shovel testing and probing. No archaeological sites were found in the project area, and it is recommended that the City of Bryan be allowed to proceed with construction as planned. Copies of the report are on file at the Archeology Division, Texas Historical Commission and the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory in Austin, Texas; the City of Bryan; and Brazos Valley Research Associates.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Brazos Valley Research Associates is appreciative of the assistance provided by CSC Engineering & Environmental Consultants, Inc. throughout this project. William R. Cullen, P.E. and Scott A. Schautschick, Environmental Specialist, provided maps and obtained right-of-way permission from the landowners to examine the various tracts of land in the project area. City of Bryan representative Tom G. Coyle (Project Director) was also very supportive. The Principal Investigator is grateful to James E. Warren, Project Archeologist, and the field survey crew, Bobby Jemison, Arthur F. Romine, and Tom McMasters, for their participation in this project. William A. Martin at the Texas Historical Commission, Archeology Division, served as the reviewer for this project, and his input was valuable to the successful outcome of this investigation. All figures appearing in this report were prepared by Lili Lyddon of Lyddon Illustrations.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING	4
ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	5
FIELD METHODS	6
RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS	7
RECOMMENDATIONS	8
REFERENCES CITED	9

Appendix I: Shovel Test Log

Figures

Figure 1. General Location Map	2
Figure 2. Project Area on Topographic Map.....	3
Figure 3. Soils in the Project Area	8

INTRODUCTION

Brazos Valley Research Associates was retained by the City of Bryan through CSC Engineering & Environmental Consultants, Inc. to conduct a Phase I cultural resources survey of a proposed sewer line and lift station (approximately 211 acres) that will service the Tradition Golf and Country Club at University Ranch in central Brazos County (Figure 1). The project area is depicted on United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographical map Chances Store dated 1962 and photorevised 1980 (Figure 2). The sewer line parallels Turkey Creek and one of its tributaries and connects with the site of the lift station on a sandy hill overlooking a bend of Turkey Creek (Figure 2). The sewer line will be placed in a 10-15 foot deep trench with a width of 6 feet. A permanent utility easement of 15 feet will be retained on either side of the centerline. The lift station will be approximately 50 x 50 feet in size.

Based on an examination of the route of the sewer line and probable location of the lift station as depicted on the topographic map, parts of the project area were considered to be medium to high probability areas in terms of containing significant prehistoric and/or historic sites, thereby warranting an archaeological survey. Since a local municipality will finance the construction of this project, an Antiquities Permit was required, and permit number 2498 was assigned to this project. The field survey was accomplished on November 26 and 27, 2000 and February 13-15, 2001. In all, 96 person hours were necessary to complete the field survey portion of this project.

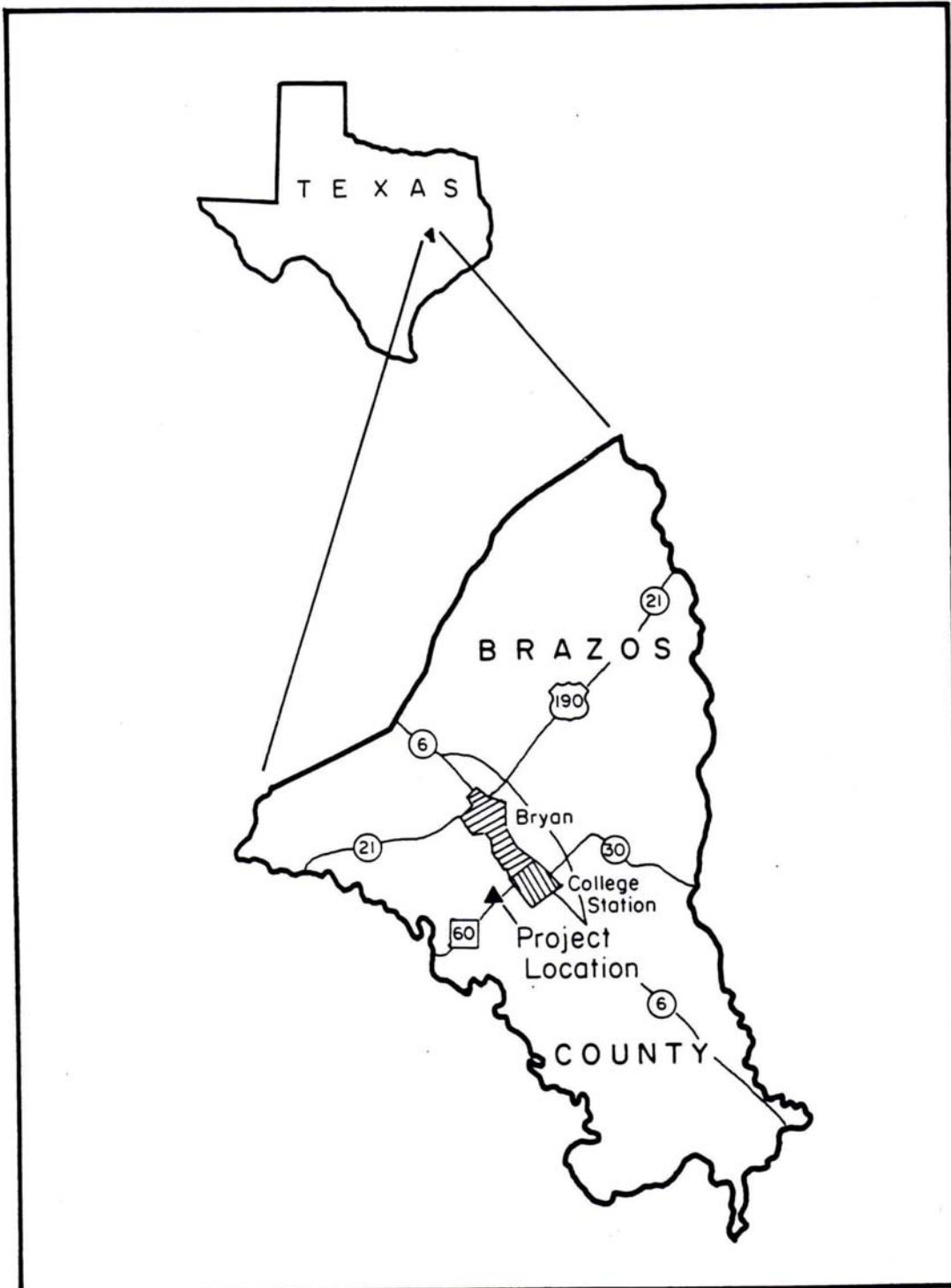


Figure 1. General Location Map

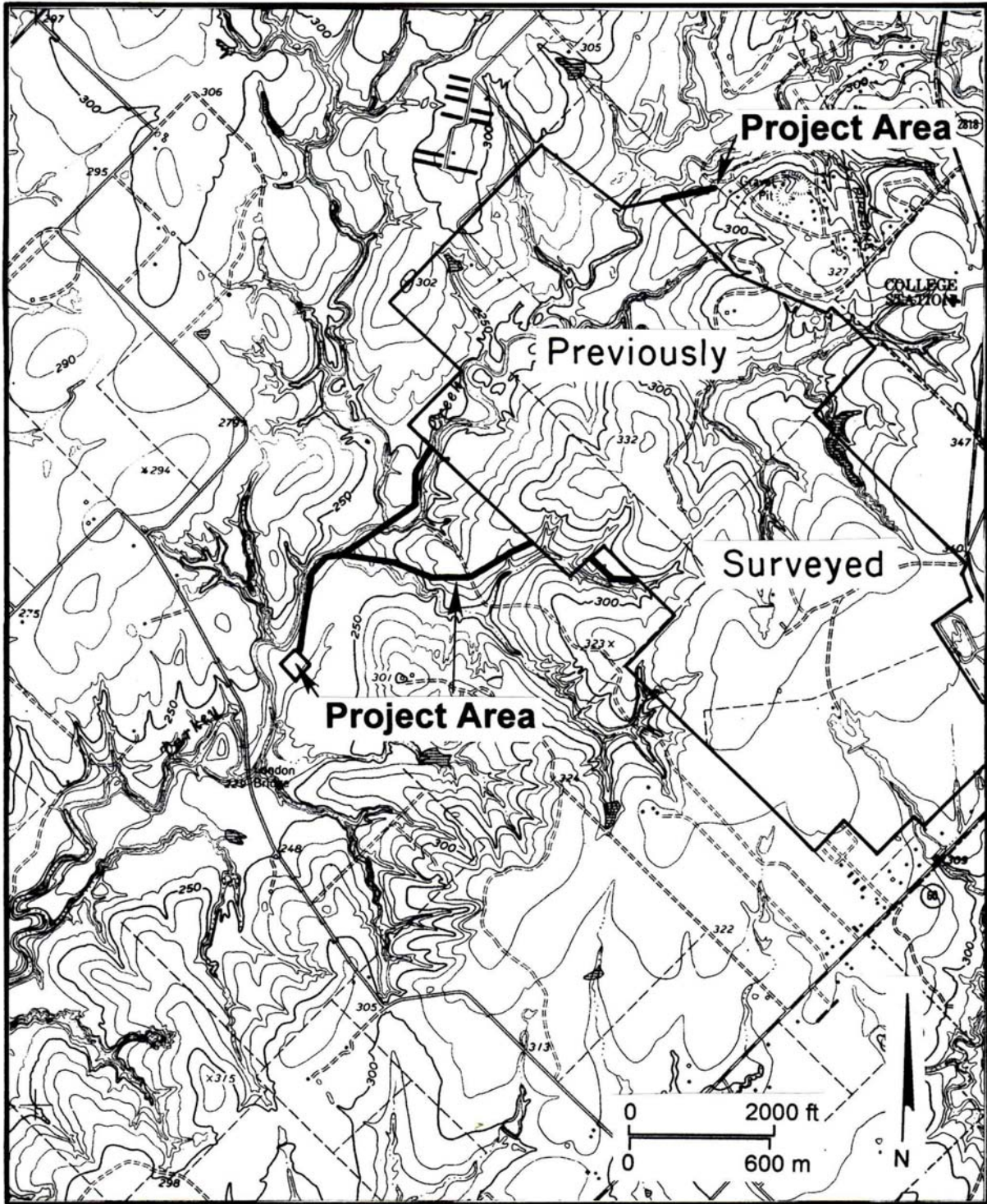


Figure 2. Project Area on Topographic Map

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The project area is located within the West Gulf Coastal Plain section of the Coastal Plain physiographic province as defined by Fenneman (1938:100-120). This physiographic section is subdivided according to the age of the geological formations (Gulf series) that roughly parallel the Texas coastline. The area is hilly and situated within the East Texas timber belt. Gould (1969) describes it as an area characterized by gently rolling to hilly topography with light colored soils that are acidic sandy loams or sands. The climate is subhumid to humid, and the weather is considered to be predominately warm. Annual rainfall for the county is 39.21 inches. A January minimum temperature of 42 degrees and a July maximum temperature of 95 degrees combine to produce a growing season of 274 days (Kingston and Harris 1983:180). The altitude varies from 200-400 feet. No soils book is currently available for Brazos County. Soils data were obtained from the local field office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Bryan. Specific soil types encountered in the project area are discussed in the *Results and Conclusions* section of this report.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A check of the records at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory in Austin, Texas revealed no archeological sites have been recorded within the current project area. It was discovered that significant sites have been recorded in Brazos County. Prehistoric sites in this area are typically found on sandy ridges and uplands in close proximity to dependable sources of water such as creeks and rivers. No prehistoric sites in the county have been reported on clay hills or in active floodplains.

During a recent survey of the Tradition Golf and Country Club at University Ranch (Moore 2000) one previously unrecorded prehistoric site with a historic component (41BZ131) and three previously unrecorded prehistoric sites (41BZ132 - 41BZ134) were recorded. All of the prehistoric sites were situated in a deep sandy mantle and considered not significant by the Texas Historical Commission. These sites are located on sandy hills overlooking Turkey Creek and its tributaries in an adjacent tract to the northeast.

Brazos County also contains sites of historical significance. The Richard Carter site (41BZ74) represents the earliest historic settlement in the county at circa 1831 (Carlson 1983, 1987). The town of Boonville (41BZ91), including Boonville Cemetery, was the first county seat of Brazos County and was established in 1841 (Webb 1952:188).

FIELD METHODS

The project area was first examined on November 26 and 27, 2000. At that time the proposed sewer line and lift station were in a location that was different from the currently proposed alignment. Because of landowner and access issues, the field survey was delayed until February when the site of the sewer line and lift station had been moved to its current location. On February 13-15, 2001, the field crew returned to the project area and conducted a pedestrian survey.

The entire route was walked by the field crew and examined by shovel tests and probes. Prior to the field survey, sections of the sewer line route were considered to be medium to high probability areas for the presence of archaeological sites. This assessment was based on the route as depicted on the topographic map. However, in the field it was discovered that most of the sewer line route was in low-lying, frequently flooded areas adjacent to the creek. One hill that appeared to be a good location on the topographic map contained very shallow soils over dense red clay found by shovel probing to be about 20 cm below the sandy stratum. Except for one low sandy hill along the sewer line that was shovel tested, this area was examined by visual inspection and shovel probes. Shovel probes were used to identify areas where clay was at or very near the surface. Probes differ from tests in that they are not screened. Shovel tests were concentrated in areas where sandy soil was present, with the main concentration in the area of the proposed lift station. The location of the lift station as depicted on the topographic map (Figure 2) is approximate. Therefore, all sandy hills adjacent to the lift station and in the immediate vicinity were tested. Shovel tests were dug to clay when possible. The size of each test was 30 x 50 cm and varied in depth from 15 to 100 cm below the existing ground surface. All excavated fill was screened through 1/4 inch hardware cloth. Data obtained from shovel testing were recorded on a shovel test log (Appendix I). In all, 25 shovel tests were dug. Fourteen tests were excavated in the vicinity of the proposed lift station, and 11 tests were excavated along the sewer line in sandy areas. The rest of the area was examined by visual inspection and shovel probes (n=20).

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Examination of the files at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory in Austin, Texas revealed no sites have been recorded in the project area. There was also no indication that any part of the project area had been surveyed by professional archaeologists. The records search revealed the presence of prehistoric and historic utilization in the area (see *Archaeological Background* above) as evidenced by prehistoric sites in the adjacent golf course tract, the nearby town of Boonville (1841), and the Richard Carter homestead (circa 1830s).

As stated above, most of the route of the sewer line follows the main channel of Turkey Creek and a tributary much of which is in low lying, frequently flooded areas. The entire route of the sewer line is viewed as very low probability for archaeological sites. Several sandy hills were observed in the area of the proposed lift station. Shovel tests and examination of exposed cutbanks did not produce any cultural materials. According to the soils sheet, seven soils are present in the project area (Figure 3). These are Chazos loamy fine sand, 1 to 5 percent slopes (ChC), Gredge fine sandy loam, 1 to 5 percent slopes (GrC), Gredge fine sandy loam, 5 to 8 percent slopes (GrD), Robco loamy fine sand, 1 to 3 percent slopes (RoB), Sandow loam, frequently flooded (Sa) and Uhland loam, frequently flooded (Uh), and Zack fine sandy loam, 5 to 8 percent slopes (ZaD).

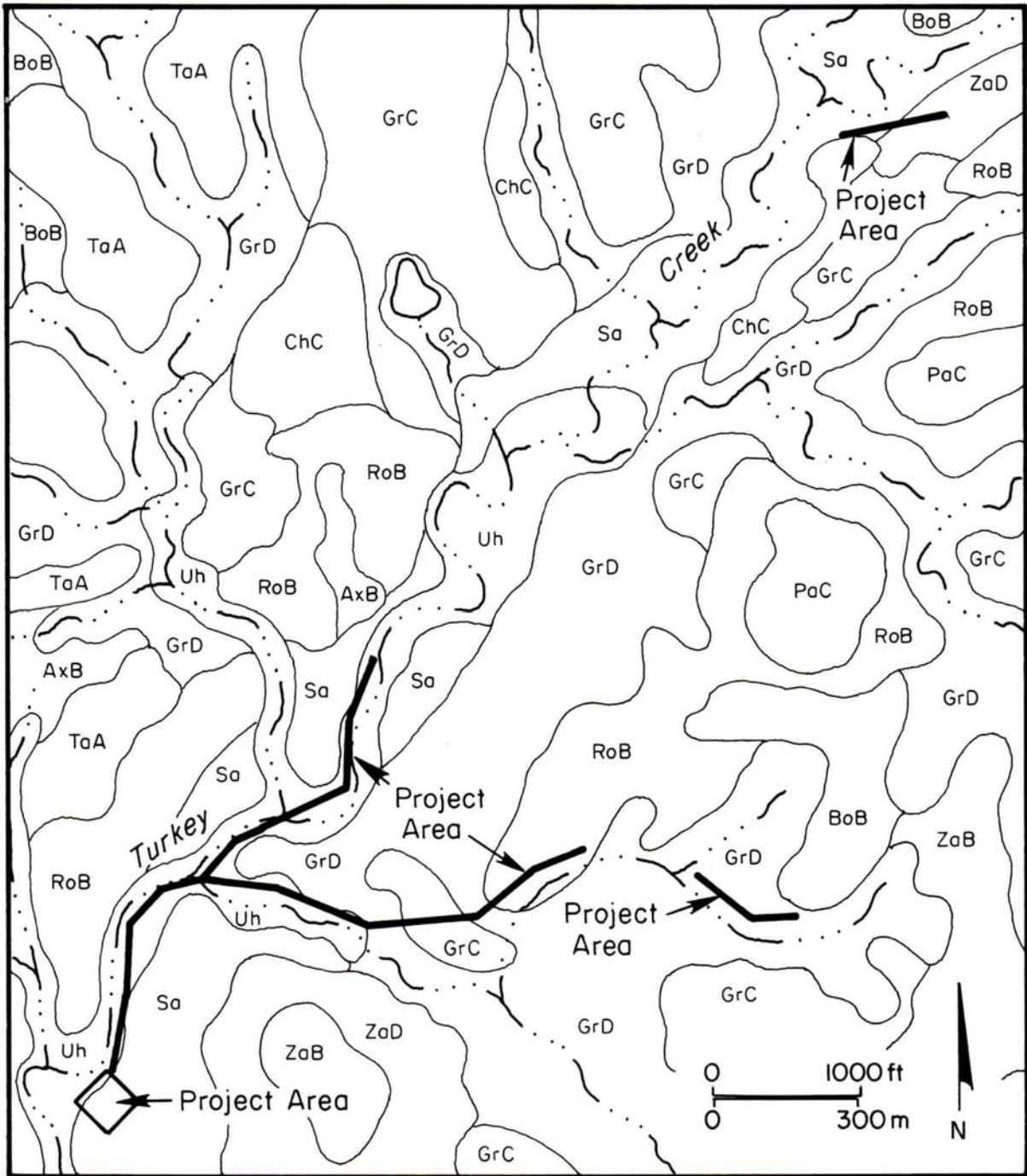


Figure 3. Soils in the Project Area

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the opinion of Brazos Valley Research Associates that there are no archaeological sites within the current project area. Therefore, it is recommended that construction be allowed to proceed as planned. It is always possible that archaeological sites are missed during any cultural resources survey. Should areas containing prehistoric or historic artifacts not discussed in this report be discovered during construction, the Archeology Division, Texas Historical Commission, must be notified immediately and all work stopped in the area of concern until the situation can be evaluated.

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APPENDIX I: SHOVEL TEST LOG

Shovel Test 1 was dug through a fine sandy loam (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 25 cm. It was excavated to red clay (10YR 2/5) and was sterile.

Shovel Test 2 was dug through loamy fine sand (10YR 3/8) to a depth of 40 cm. It was dug through 10 cm of gray clay (10YR 3/2) to a final depth of 50 cm and was sterile.

Shovel Test 3 was dug through loamy fine sand (10YR 3/3) to a depth of 25 cm. It was excavated to red clay (10YR 2/5) and was sterile.

Shovel Test 4 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 30 cm when red clay (10YR 2/5) was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 5 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 15 cm. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 6 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 30 cm where red clay (10YR 2/5) was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 7 was dug through a thin stratum of fine sandy loam (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 20 cm where red clay (10YR 2/5) was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 8 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 90 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 9 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 100 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 10 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 100 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 11 was dug through sandy clay (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 30 cm. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 12 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 80 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 13 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 90 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 14 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 70 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 15 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 50 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 16 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 3/2) to a depth of 50 cm where sandy clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 17 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 90 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 18 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 90 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 19 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 100 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 20 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 90 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 21 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 80 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 22 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 80 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 23 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 100 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 24 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 90 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.

Shovel Test 25 was dug through fine sandy loam (10YR 4/3) to a depth of 90 cm. No clay was encountered. It was sterile.