

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
FOR THE RESERVE AT TOWNE CROSSING  
PROJECT IN EAST-CENTRAL GREGG COUNTY  
TEXAS**



by

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Contract Report Number 229**

**2010**

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY FOR THE RESERVE AT TOWNE CROSSING  
PROJECT IN EAST-CENTRAL GREGG COUNTY, TEXAS

BVRA Project Number 10-01

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2010

## **ABSTRACT**

An archaeological survey for the proposed Reserve at Towne Crossing project (13.650 acres) in east-central Gregg County, Texas was performed by Brazos Valley Research Associates (BVRA) on January 18, 2010. The lead agency for this project is the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the regulatory agency for overseeing this archaeological investigation is the Texas Historical Commission (THC), Archeology Division. William E. Moore was the Principal Investigator, and he was assisted by Randall Anderson. The project area was investigated by a 100% Pedestrian Survey supported by shovel testing. No evidence of a prehistoric or historic site was found, and no artifacts were collected. Much of the project area appeared to have been disturbed.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I am appreciative of the assistance provided by Bob Pruett of Bury and Partners-DFW, Inc., and Brenda O. Perry of the HFC Funding Corporation. They provided maps and were supportive throughout the project. Randall Anderson assisted with the field survey. The background research was performed by Jean Hughes, Assistant Curator of Records at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL). Lili G. Lyddon of L. L. Technical Services prepared the maps and figures that appear in this report, and she served as the editor.

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## INTRODUCTION

Longview MF, LLC plans to construct affordable housing in the form of an apartment complex at the northwest quadrant of United States Highway 259 and Janet Kay Drive just outside the city limits of Longview, Texas (Figure 1). On the north the site is bounded by private property, on the south it is bounded by The University of Texas at Austin Longview Center, on the east it is bounded by United States Highway 259, and on the west it is bounded by private property. The new apartment complex will consist of nine three-story wood-framed apartment buildings, a clubhouse, associated pavement for driving lanes and parking, and two swimming pools. Currently, the site is vacant land that has been partially cleared. The east side of the site slopes to the north and west, and the western portion of the site drains to the west. There is about 26 feet of relief between extreme elevations on the site. Some cutting and filling will be necessary to achieve the planned finished floor elevations with a maximum cut of six feet in buildings 4-6 and a maximum fill of nine feet in Building 8. When finished, the entire 13.650 acre tract will be affected. The Federal agency involved in this project is the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The results of this archaeological study are subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Following a review of the proposed project by the THC, an archaeological survey was considered necessary because “the tract proposed for development is situated in a setting with a high probability for buried cultural resources.” In order to satisfy this requirement, the Client retained BVRA to conduct an archaeological survey designed to meet the minimum archeological survey standards as posted on line at [www.thc.state.us](http://www.thc.state.us). The project area consists of 13.650 acres and is depicted on the topographic quadrangle Longview Heights (3294-312) (Figure 2).

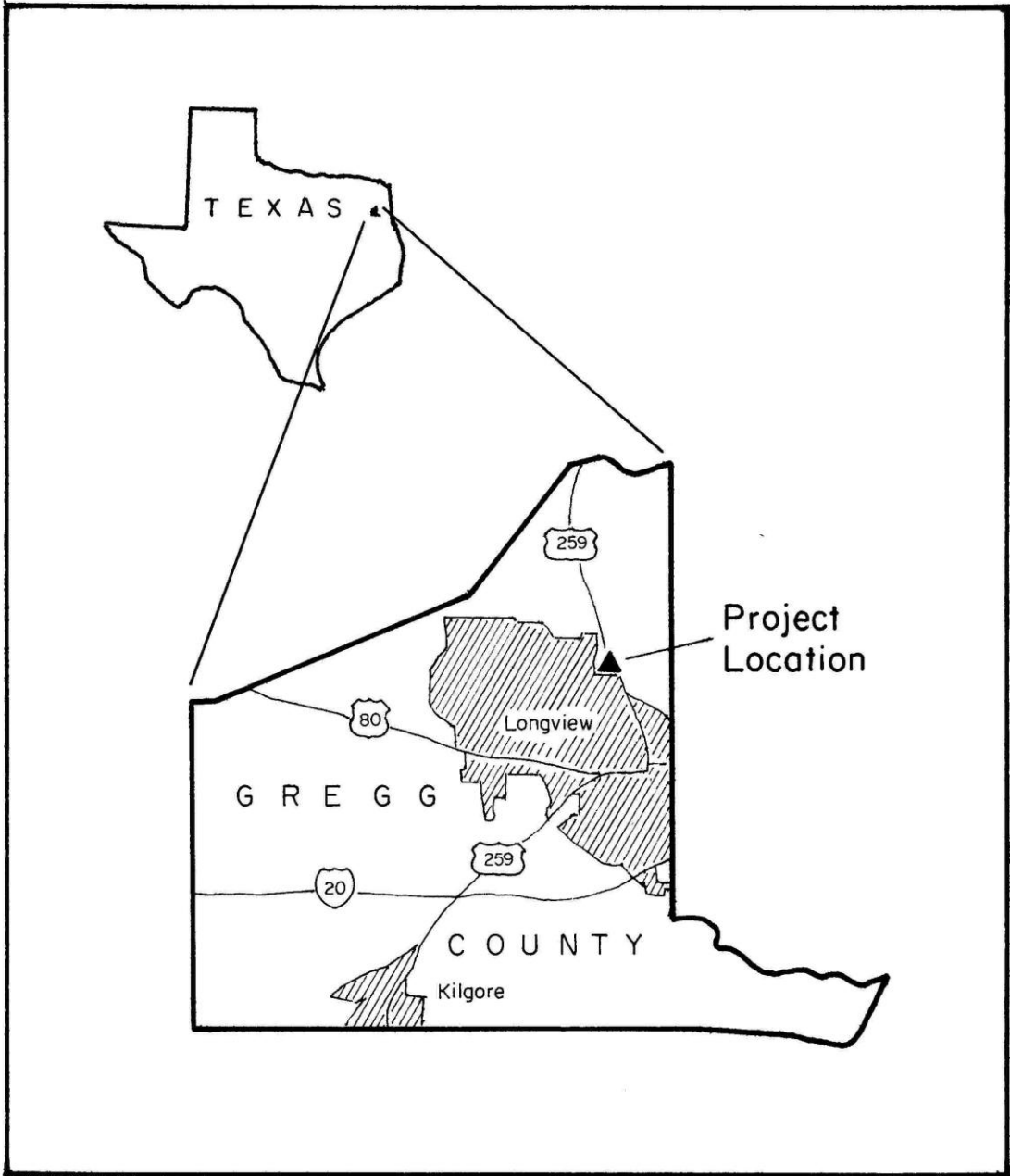


Figure 1. General Location

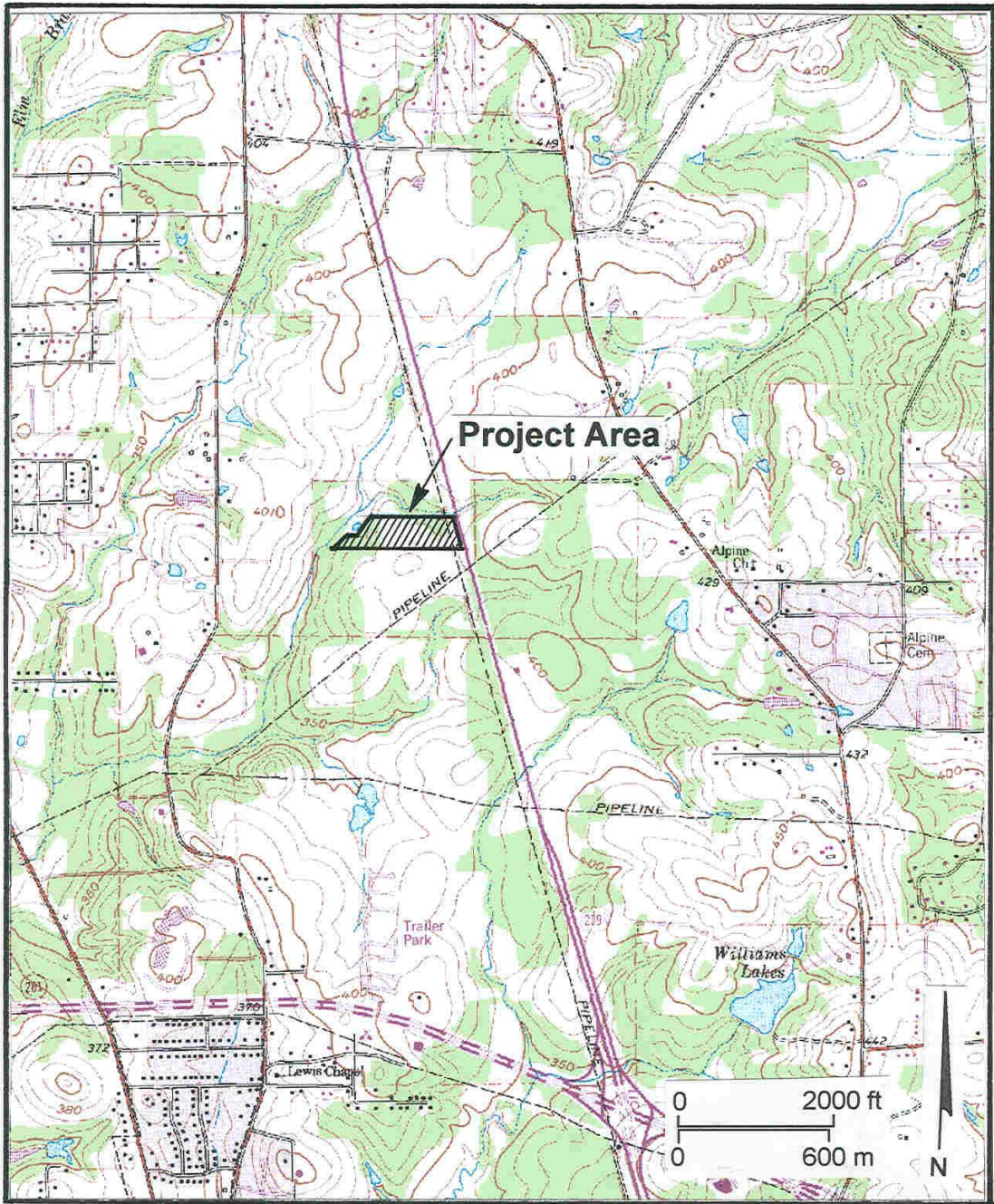


Figure 2. Project Area on Topographic Quadrangle



## PROJECT AREA SOILS

According to the General Soil Map in the soil survey for Gregg County (Roberts 1983), the project area is located within the Darcos series that consists of gently sloping to moderately steep well-drained, sandy soils on uplands. The specific soil map unit for the project area is Lilbert loamy fine sand, 2 to 5 percent slopes (LbC). This soil is described by Roberts (1983:24) as a gently sloping soil on uplands. Mapped areas are broad and irregular in shape and are located on broad interstream divides and slightly convex ridges. Typically, the surface layer is brown loamy fine sand about six inches thick. The subsurface layer, which extends to a depth of 30 inches, is pale brown loamy fine sand. The upper part of the subsoil, to a depth of 48 inches, is yellowish-brown sandy clay. The lower part of the subsoil, to a depth of 72 inches, is mottled red, gray, and brown sandy clay loam. It is well drained, runoff is slow, and permeability is moderately slow. Available water capacity is medium. The root zone is deep, but roots are restricted in the lower layers. Mixed hardwoods and pines are suited to this soil. According to a geo-technical report (Terracon Consultants, Inc. 2009), soil borings in the project area revealed sandy soils to a depth of two feet. Sixteen borings were drilled on August 02, 2009 at the approximate location of each proposed apartment building.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

According to a recently published planning document for the Eastern Planning Region of Texas (Kenmotsu and Perttula 1993:Figure 1.1.2), Gregg County is situated within the Northeast Texas archeological study region (Figure 3). The first sites in the county were recorded in the 1930s, and several sites were recorded between 1939 and 1959. Currently, Gregg County has 106 recorded sites. The majority of sites in the county (n=56) were recorded by avocational archaeologists. While a high school student in Kilgore, Jack T. Hughes located and recorded 20 sites (41GG4 - 41GG20 and 41GG35 - 41GG37). An additional 36 sites were added to the database for Gregg County by archaeological stewards Bo Nelson, Mark Walters, and Bryan Boyd. The other 47 sites were found as a result of various cultural resource surveys for state and federally funded projects.

G. E. Arnold, working with The University of Texas at Austin, visited much of East Texas and documented sites in many counties between 1939 and 1940. Arnold did not conduct shovel testing, took few notes, and assigned field numbers to each site. His plotting in some cases are suspect. The location of site 41GG2, for example, is described in the TARK site records as uncertain and possibly the same as site 41GG8 to the north. In 1940, he was in Gregg County where he recorded two sites (41GG2 and 41GG3).

According to Nancy Kenmotsu and Timothy K. Perttula (1993), notable prehistoric sites are present in Gregg County. They include important hunter-gatherer sites, significant Caddo Period sites, and one Critical Resource Zone containing sites that are relevant to the research on the development of agriculture prior to A.D. 1600. Sites with excellent faunal and floral preservation have not been identified, and no sites with mounds are known. Also, Gregg County ranks low in terms of density of known human burials and number of archaeological sites with burials. The period of European contact is represented by several sites containing historic burials, trade beads, iron knives and arrow points, steel adzes, and a copper wire coil.

The interested reader is advised to consult the planning document by Kenmotsu and Perttula for an in-depth discussion of the archaeology of Northeast Texas. Other relevant sources of information are an archaeological bibliography for the Northeastern Region of Texas (Martin 1990) and the Abstracts in Texas Contract Archeology published by the THC. No previously recorded sites are in close proximity to the project area. There have been two archaeological surveys in the area. Both were negative in terms of recording sites. The only available report was by Perttula and Nelson (2002) reporting the results of their survey for a sewer line for the City of Kilgore.

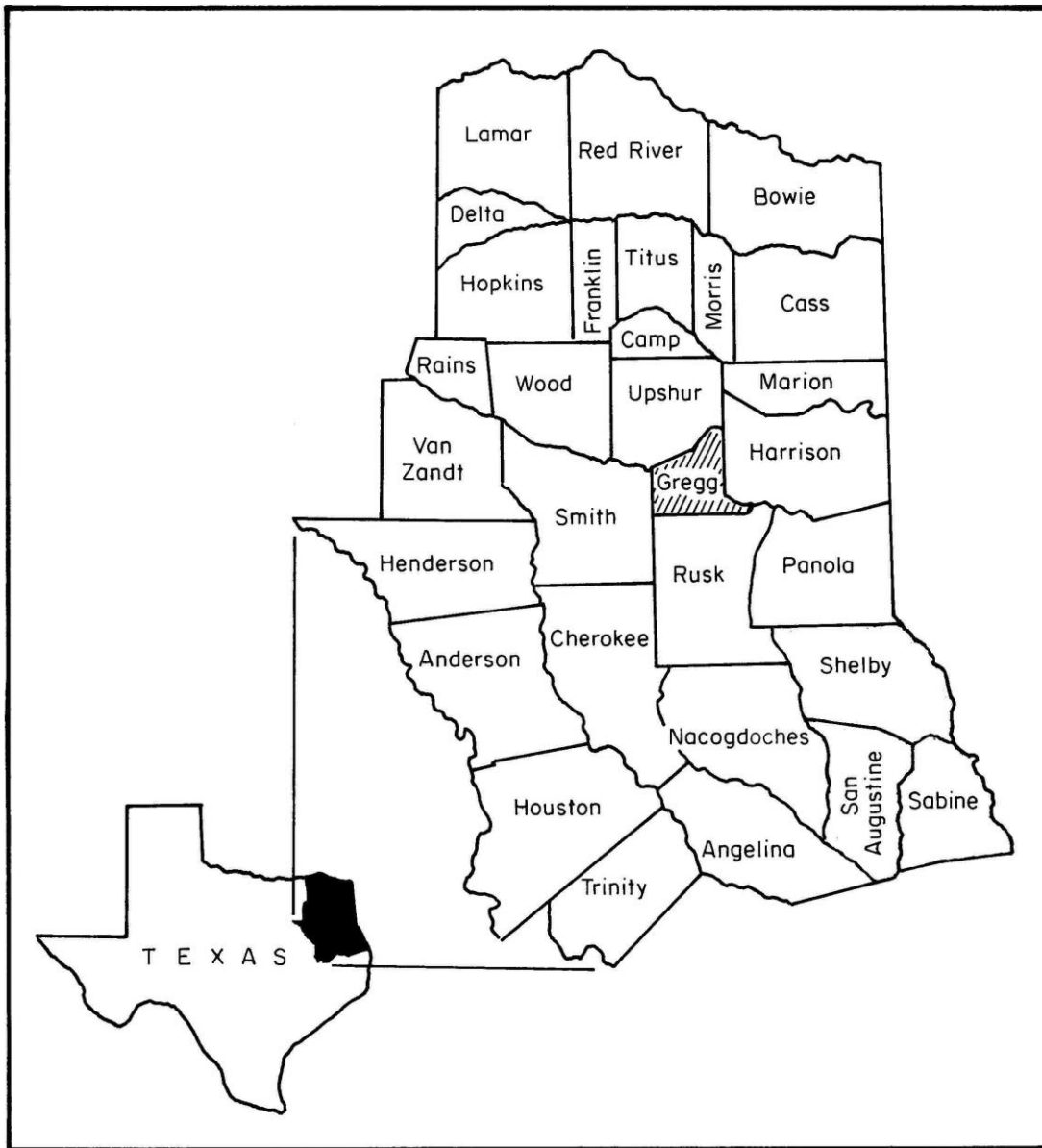


Figure 3. Northeastern Region of Texas  
(After Martin 1990)

## METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

### Background Research

The field survey was supplemented by an examination of site records and other documents at TARL in Austin, Texas for previously recorded sites in the project area and vicinity. In addition, the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas was checked for previous surveys by professional archaeologists.

### Field Survey

The project area was covered with vegetation, mainly low grasses, briars and a few trees. The main portion had been cleared in the past, and the ground cover present represents secondary growth. According to the image presented by the topographic quadrangle, we expected a uniform hill over most of the site area, but this was not the case. Much of the area appeared to be disturbed as the surface was undulating. The only high ground that we believe may be natural was two prominent high points in the approximate center of the tract. To the west and northwest, the tract sloped to the creek and its floodplain. Figure 4 shows the high ground in the distance. The reddish color is the large patch of briars, and the lighter color is the grass. This photo was taken from the south, and the high ground shown in the foreground is outside the project area.

The entire area was walked in an attempt to observe surface evidence of a historic site such as bricks or foundations that might indicate the location of a former structure. Due to the thick ground cover and lack of exposed soil, the only method possible to identify a prehistoric site was through shovel testing, and the tests were concentrated on the two high points that appeared to be the only undisturbed portions of the tract. All excavated earth was screened through quarter-inch hardware cloth. Data obtained from shovel tests were recorded on a shovel test log (Appendix I). In all, eleven shovel tests were excavated (Figure 5). This figure depicts the eleven shovel tests, but it does not show contours that illustrate the nature of the surface. The depth of the tests averaged 58.8 cm below the existing ground surface, and they were dug through sandy soil and terminated when clay or standing water was encountered. The project was also documented through digital photography. Shovel testing was not considered necessary in the low areas away from the two high points.



Figure 4. Project Area Showing High Ground in Distance

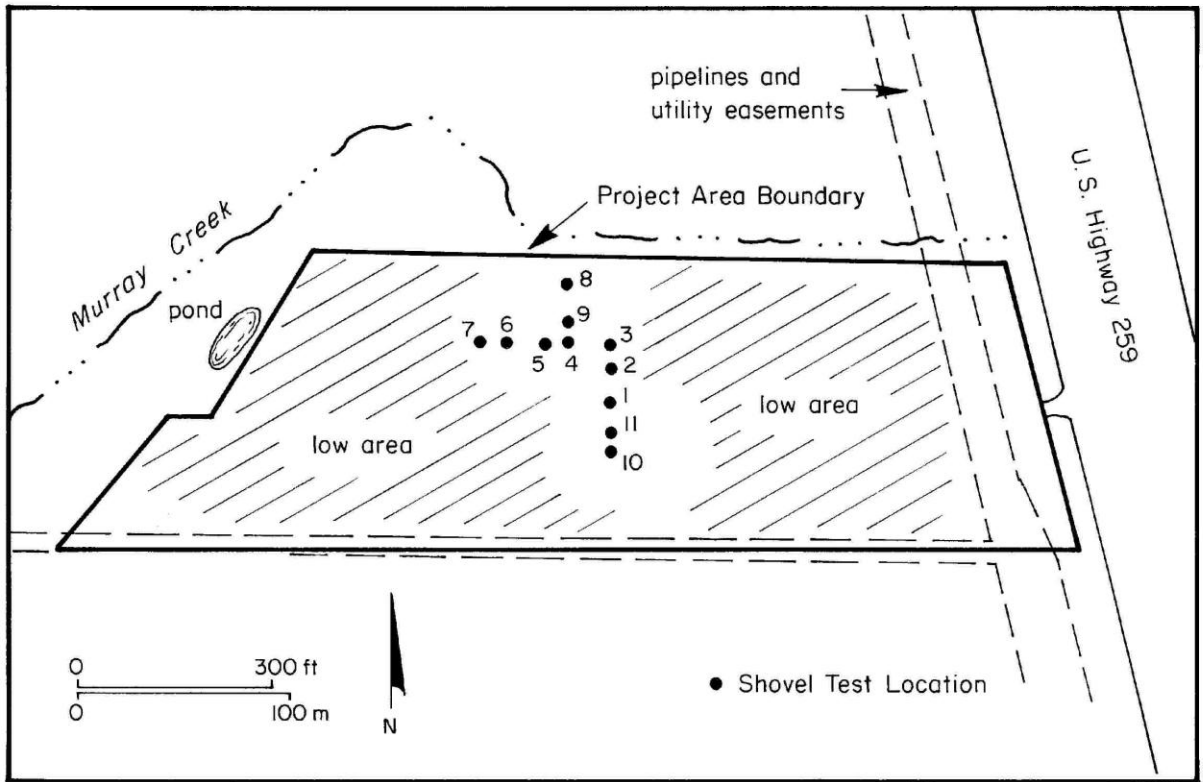


Figure 5. Shovel Test Locations

## **RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **Background Research**

Examination of the site files at TARL and the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas revealed that no sites have been recorded in the project area or Area of Potential Effect (APE). Also, no part of the APE has been investigated by a professional archaeologist.

### **Field Survey**

The majority of the project area was found to be in a cleared area with a few oak trees and low grasses and briars on a sandy hill overlooking Murray Creek to the west and an unnamed tributary of Murray Creek to the north. Although I was not able to find documentation of past disturbance to the site except for clearing of vegetation, part of the ground surface did not appear to be natural. Much of the site was considerably lower than the two prominent hills in the center, and the area was undulating. A portion of the eastern end of the project area had been disturbed through the construction of a pipeline and miscellaneous utilities. The shovel tests revealed the presence of clay and standing water at an average depth of 58.8 cm below the existing ground surface, and no cultural materials were observed. Just above the underlying clay stratum we encountered numerous pebbles, often an indication of the presence of clay. The eleven shovel tests excavated in the project area exceeds the amount required by the "Minimum Survey Standards" for project areas of 200 acres or less.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

No archaeological sites were found within the project area. It is, therefore, recommended that the project proceed without further consultation with the THC relative to cultural resources. Should evidence of an archaeological site be encountered during construction, all work must be temporarily suspended in the area of the find until assessed by a professional archeologist in consultation with the THC. Also, should additional acreage be added to the project area, this change must be reported to the THC as this agency may require an investigation of this area by a professional archaeologist.



## REFERENCES CITED

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## APPENDIX I: SHOVEL TEST LOG

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TEST	DEPTH	SOIL	COMMENTS
01	62	sandy loam	terminated due to water
02	58	sandy loam	terminated due to water
03	53	sandy loam	terminated due to clay
04	60	sandy loam	terminated due to clay
05	60	sandy loam	terminated due to clay
06	60	sandy loam	terminated due to clay
07	58	sandy loam	terminated due to clay (dug on slope)
08	60	sandy loam	terminated due to clay (highest point in project area)
09	60	sandy loam	terminated due to clay
10	64	sandy loam	terminated due to clay (dug on slope)
11	59	sandy loam	terminated due to clay

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