

**Archaeological Survey of the
Evers Tract Development, Bexar County, Texas**

By

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Abstract

Abasolo Archaeological Consultants conducted an archeological survey of the 150 acres in the Evers Tract Development for Frost Geosciences and the City of San Antonio during the first week of December, 2005. The assessment was carried out to identify any prehistoric or historic archaeological sites and to assess the significance of any cultural resources that might warrant consideration for nomination to National Register of Historic Places. The field team consisted of Drs. Harry Shafer and Thomas Hester, and Steve Frost of Frost GeoSciences. A surface survey was conducted over the entire property and all landforms and soil conditions were inspected for evidence of archaeological sites and prehistoric activity. Natural outcrops of chert were found to have been rarely used sometime during the human prehistoric past, but no diagnostic artifacts or archaeological sites were found on the property. No further archaeological investigations are recommended.

Introduction and Background

Abasolo Archaeological Consultants conducted an archeological survey of the 150 acres in the Evers Tract Development for Frost Geosciences and the City of San Antonio during the first week of December, 2005. The assessment was carried out in accordance with the "Archeological Survey Standards for Texas" in order to identify the presence of any prehistoric or historic cultural resources.

The field team consisted of Drs. Harry Shafer and Thomas Hester, and Steve Frost of Frost GeoSciences. A surface survey was conducted over the entire property and all landforms and soil conditions were inspected for evidence of archaeological sites and prehistoric activity. The survey also looked for any material remains related to important Historic structures or features.

The Evers Tract is located south of Culebra Road and just east of the Bexar-Medina County line (Figs.1 and 2). The land is located on the divide between upper Culebra Creek and San Geronimo Creek. Most of the property has been in recent cultivation and the uncultivated or wooded portion and fallow fields were recently used as pasture (Fig 3). The upland soils consist of four series: Houston black clay (HtA, 0-1 percent slope) in the far northern portion of the survey area, Lewisville silty clay (LvB, 1 to 3 percent slope) in most of the central area, Tarrant soils (TaB) in the far northwestern portion near the residences, and Patrick soils (PaB, 1 to 3 percent slope) occur along the western margins of the survey area (Fig. 4; Taylor et al., 1991). The relatively flat nature of the terrain is reflected in the soil types and slope. Of significance are the surface exposures of Uvalde gravels in the Houston black and Lewisville soils. Excellent quality chert (flint) occurs in these ancient gravels, and at some time in the prehistoric past Native Americans infrequently and expediently utilized these resources.

Archaeological Setting

Our knowledge of the archaeology of Bexar County is based on a record of some 1400-1600 prehistoric archaeological and Historic sites found on the Texas Archeological Site Atlas (Texas Historical Commission and Texas Archeological Research Laboratory). Additionally, excavations at several dozen sites have provided insights into the nature of human utilization of the region since at least 11,500 years ago. Medina County, immediately adjacent (to the west) to the Evers Tract is less well known, with only a couple of hundred sites recorded and very few excavations. Nonetheless, the regional culture history can be broken up into four segments of time: **Paleoindian** (11,500-8500 Years ago), **Archaic** (8500-1500 years ago), **Late Prehistoric** (1500-400 years ago), and **Historic** (establishment of first European settlements, ca. A.D. 1700). Notable traits of the three prehistoric time periods include (Hester 2004): Paleoindian: late Ice Age occupations, into the onset of modern climates; distinctive spear points such as Clovis, Folsom, Golondrina and others (Turner and Hester 1993); small, mobile populations that first hunted now-extinct species of bison, elephant, and other

animals, and by 10,000 years ago, fauna that are essentially of modern types. Archaic: growth of populations in the region, based on a systematic hunting and gathering way of life; large numbers of sites and a great variety of artifacts chipped from flint or chert (these are often time-specific spear point types that allow archaeologists to organize the Archaic into smaller temporal units); specialized earth-oven cooking technologies for much of the time period, resulting in burned rock middens, a site type common in north Bexar County; Late Prehistoric: continuing hunting and gathering but with the introduction of the bow and arrow around A.D. 500-700, and a specialized pattern of buffalo hunting and processing seen in the Toyah culture in the last part of this period); Historic: arrival of the Spanish into Bexar County, especially after A.D. 1700, establishment of missions and ranchos; incursion of Comanche and Lipan Apache tribes not native to the area (1720-1750); and expanded Anglo-European farming and ranching activities in the 19th century that left distinctive stone buildings and other features.

In the area near the Evers Tract, a number of archaeological surveys have been carried out on Culebra Creek. Notable is the Remuda Ranch survey (Shafer and Hester 2005), where cultural materials of ancient Native Americans ranged from 10,500 years ago to the early Historic period. Additionally, a number of early to mid 19th century farm and ranch complexes have been documented, including 41BX711 (at Remuda Ranch Development), and 41BX1618 and 1619, on the Kallison Ranch development (Texas Archeological Site Atlas). Site types represented in the Evers Tract area (based on the Texas Archeological Site Atlas) include chert (flint) “quarries” (areas where raw materials were procured and initially processed; e.g., 41BX721, near Highway 211), burned rock middens (41BX845, Highway 211 area), rockshelters (in the bluffs of San Geronimo Creek; 41BX888), and open campsites (41ME38; Highway 211).

Survey Results

The archaeological fieldwork at the Evers Tract began with the knowledge that certain site types might be present, such as lithic “quarries,” burned rock middens, and open campsites. Additionally, based on studies along Culebra Creek, Historic sites could also be present.

However, as a result of an intensive surface survey, we can report that no archaeological sites were found during the course of the survey. The only trace of prehistoric activity noted was infrequent testing or reduction of chert nodules (Fig. 5) in the Uvalde gravels associated with Houston black and Lewisville soils, and a trace of fire cracked rock around an apparent natural sink. The evidence of prehistoric chert resource exploitation was noted along the northeastern, eastern, and southeastern portions of the property. Cores, early stage bifaces, and flakes were noted (Figs. 6), but no diagnostic artifacts were observed.

One curious geological formation was noted in the west central part of the property (see Fig. 1). This is a possible natural sink that has been modified in the past century by the excavation of a stock tank. The depression is outlined by a natural rim, and it was on the south and western edges of this rim that the only fire cracked rock was noted. No fire

cracked rock concentrations or hearth features were observed, however, to suggest concentrated prehistoric human activity. There is a much more distinct depression or large sinkhole to the north of FM471, near the Evers Tract. Sites have reportedly been documented around the edges of this feature, and thus we made a careful search for similar sites at Evers Tract. None were observed.

The survey party also noted a storage or disposal area for discarded farm equipment and vehicles (Fig. 7). This disposal area contains some very interesting implements that date back to the first half of the 20th century.

Summary and Conclusions

An examination of the Evers Tract for the presence of prehistoric or historic archaeological sites failed to reveal any significant resources. In the fields and pastures, where Uvalde gravels can be found in abundance, we noted the occasional use of this raw material. Such utilization was infrequent and widely scattered, including the test of cobbles for chert quality, and the preparation (and discard) of cores and bifaces. A cluster of farm implements, an old Ford pickup, and other equipment was also observed. While a number of the implements are well over 50 years old, the cluster does not constitute a significant Historic site. No further research into the cultural resources of the Evers Tract is warranted.

References Cited

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1993 *Guide to Stone Artifacts of Texas Indians*. 2nd ed. Gulf Publishing, Houston.

Figures



Figure 1. Aerial map showing the survey area; natural sink labeled (image provided by Frost GeoSciences).

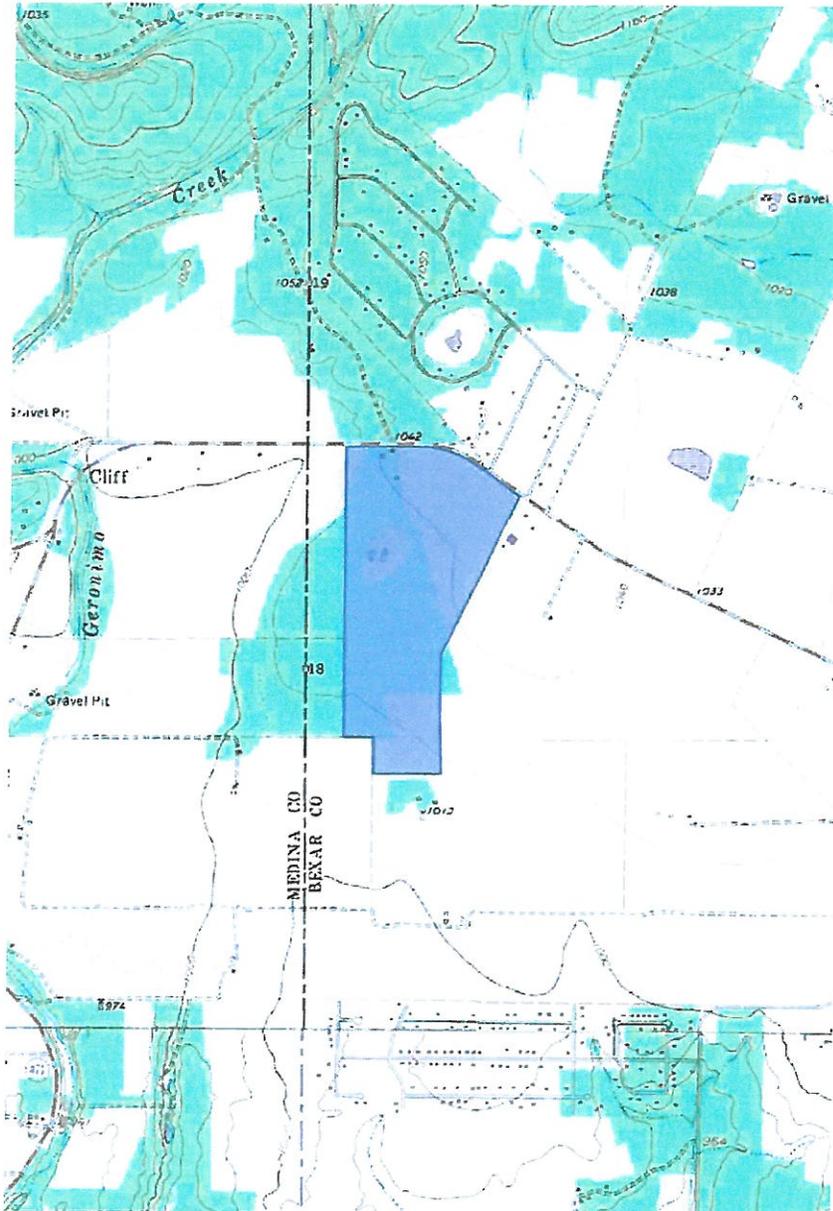


Figure 2. Topo map showing location near Medina County line (image provided by Frost GeoSciences).



Figure 3. Two views of the survey area. Top view shows cultivated fields in northeastern sector, and bottom shows wooded pasture in southwestern section.

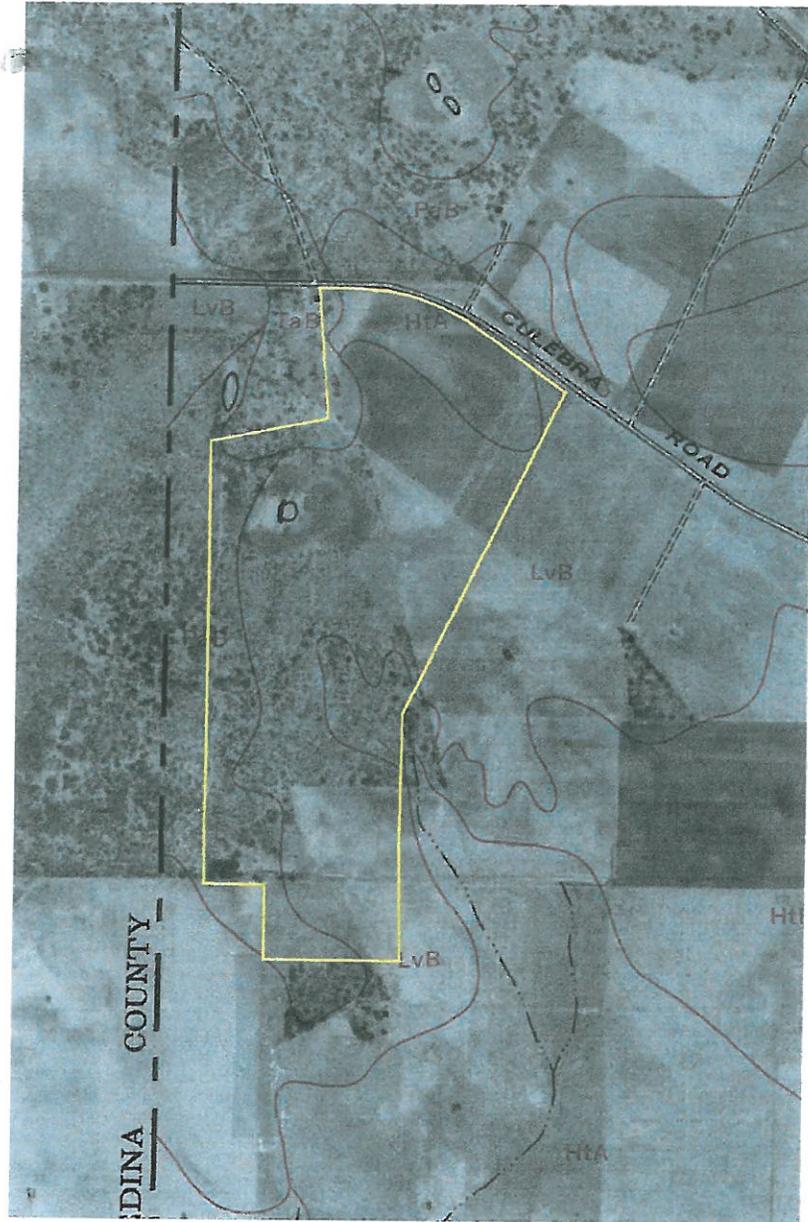


Figure 4. Soils map (image provided by Frost GeoSciences).



Figure 5. Tested chert cobble from Field at Evers Tract. A prehistoric flintknapper removed this single flake to examine the quality of the raw material.



A



B



C



D

Figure 6. Cores, flake, and early stage biface. A, B, cores; C, primary flake; D, early stage biface.



Figure 7 Old Ford truck and other farm equipment.