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Cultural Resources Constraints Analysis of the Kentwood Manor Area, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Prepared for

Adams Environmental, Inc.

Prepared by

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February 2009



**CULTURAL RESOURCES CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS OF THE
KENTWOOD MANOR AREA
SAN ANTONIO, BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS
ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT CODE: 09-517C4-020CIPI
WBS ELEMENT: 40-00058-04-02**

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INTRODUCTION

SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted a cultural resource constraints analysis for Adams Environmental, Inc., on the City of San Antonio (COSA) Kentwood Manor project area located in northern San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas (Figure 1). The purpose of this constraints analysis is to gather available information on previously recorded archaeological surveys, archaeological sites, and historic resources within the project area and to assess the potential for the presence of significant cultural resources. The goal is to provide information for project planning and development, as well as estimates on possible future work that may be required for regulatory compliance.

This report documents the results of the cultural resources background review and assessment of possible historic property and archaeological site locations for the project area. An archaeological survey of the project area was not conducted as an element of this research. This constraints analysis does not constitute any form of archaeological clearance for the project area, but may be used to coordinate future cultural resource compliance with city and/or state agencies.

DEFINITION OF STUDY AREA

The project area is located on the eastern shoulder of US Highway 281 just south of Loop 1604 (Figures 2 and 3). Construction activities are slated to take place within a 102.8-acre area that is bordered to the west by US 281 and to the south by Thousand Oaks Drive. The project area is situated within a heavily developed residential area and is bordered to the southwest by a large commercial complex. Aerial photographs of the area indicate that the Kentwood Manor project area is 95% developed with only a small riparian corridor present along Lorence Creek located in

the southeastern portion of the project area. The project area can be found on the Longhorn, Texas United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Development or improvement projects in Texas can come under the purview of two primary cultural resource regulations, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) and the Antiquities Code of Texas. Both are administered by the Texas Historical Commission (THC) located in Austin, the State Historic Preservation Officer of Texas. If an undertaking is federally permitted, licensed, funded, or partially funded, the project must comply with Section 106 of the NHPA, as amended. Section 106 requires that every federal agency consider the undertaking's effects on historic properties. The process begins with a historic properties inventory and evaluation. Under Section 106, any property listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is considered significant. The NRHP is a historic resources inventory maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. This list includes buildings, structures, objects, sites, districts, and archaeological resources. These regulations are defined in "Protection of Historic Properties," 36 CFR 800 of the NHPA. Examples of projects in Texas requiring compliance with the NHPA include those conducted on federal lands or ones acquiring a federal permit such as a Section 404 permit from the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Cultural resource sites, historic and prehistoric, located on lands owned or controlled by the State of Texas or one of its political subdivisions are protected by the Antiquities Code of Texas (Code). The Code requires state agencies and political subdivisions of the

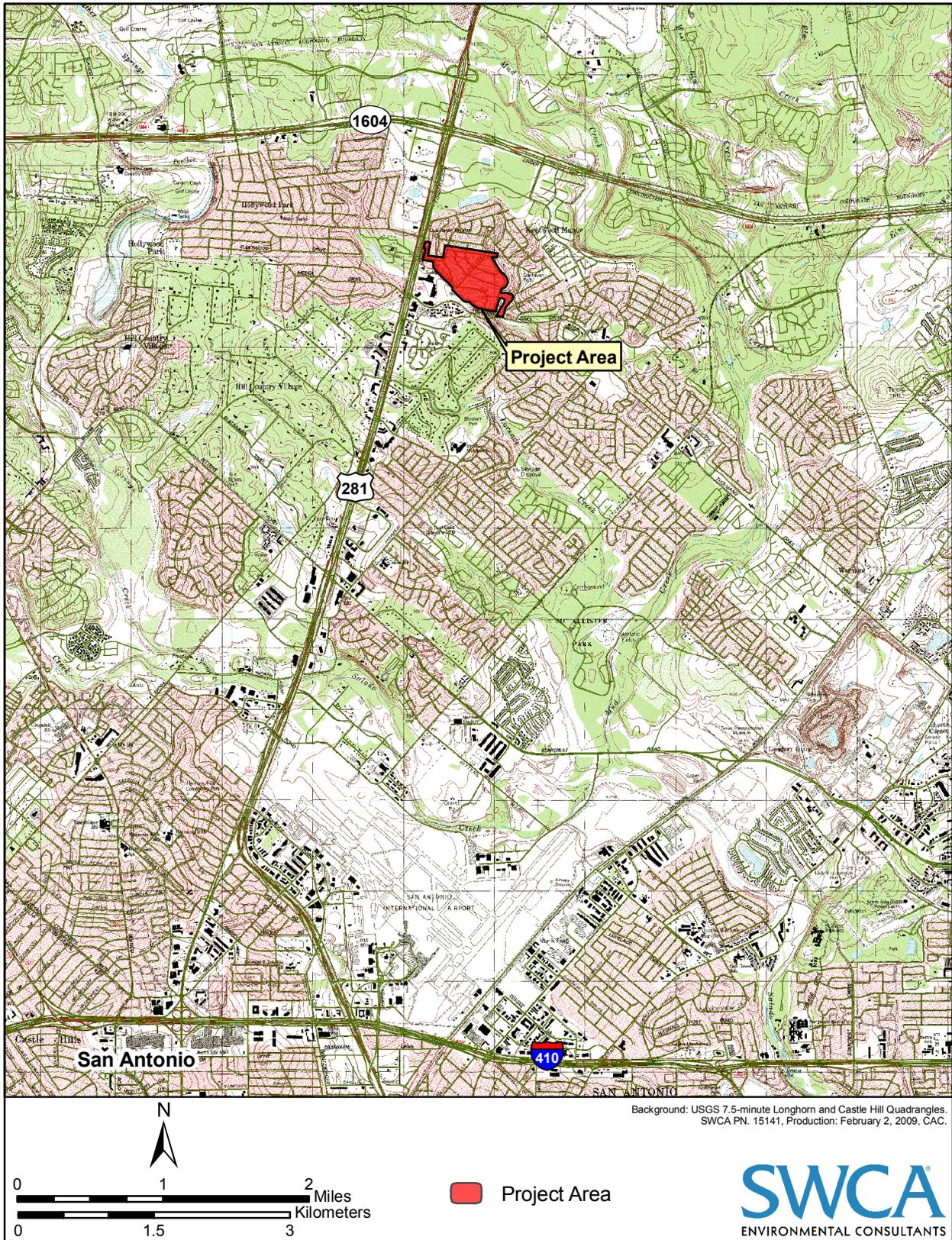


Figure 1. Project location map.

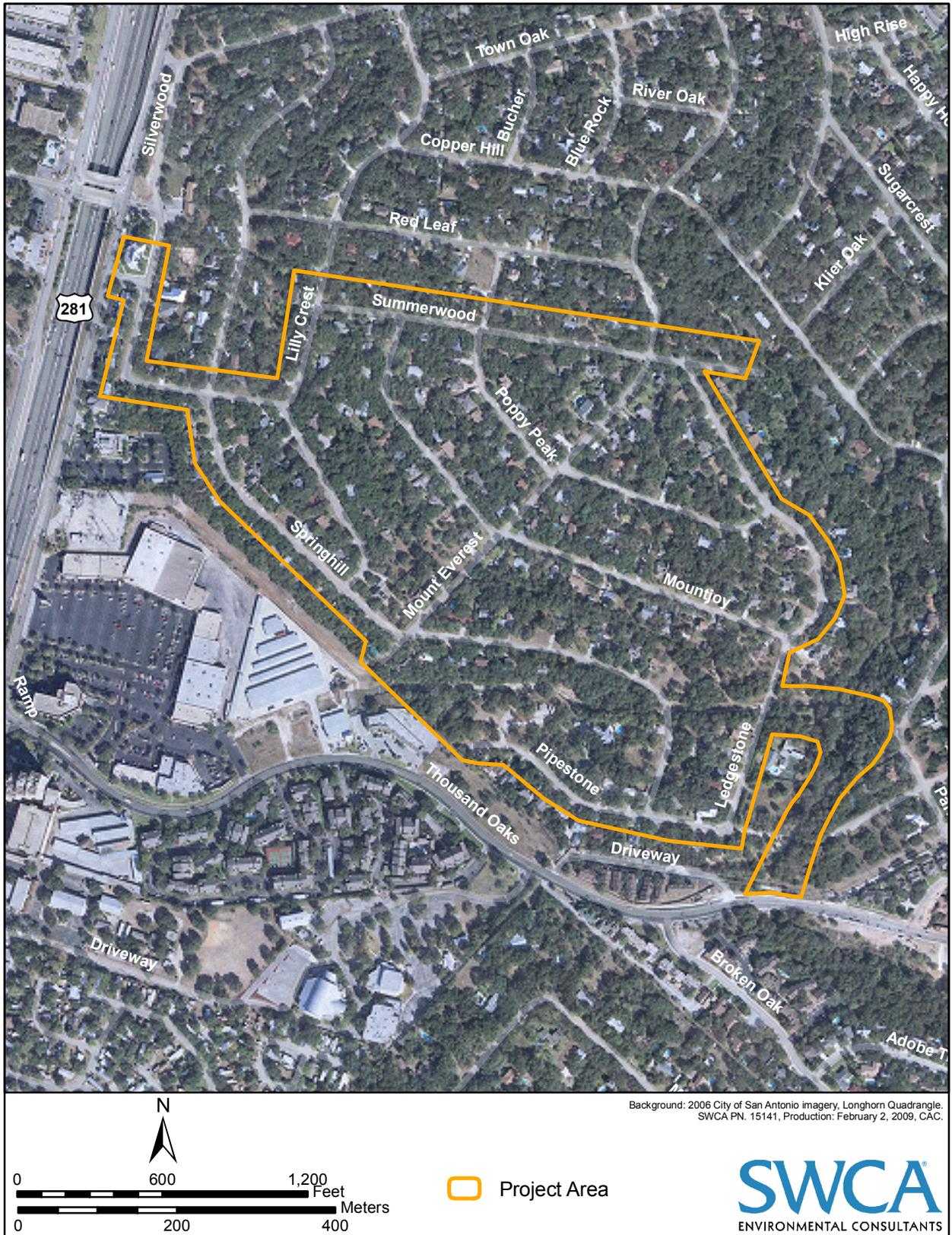


Figure 1. Project location map.

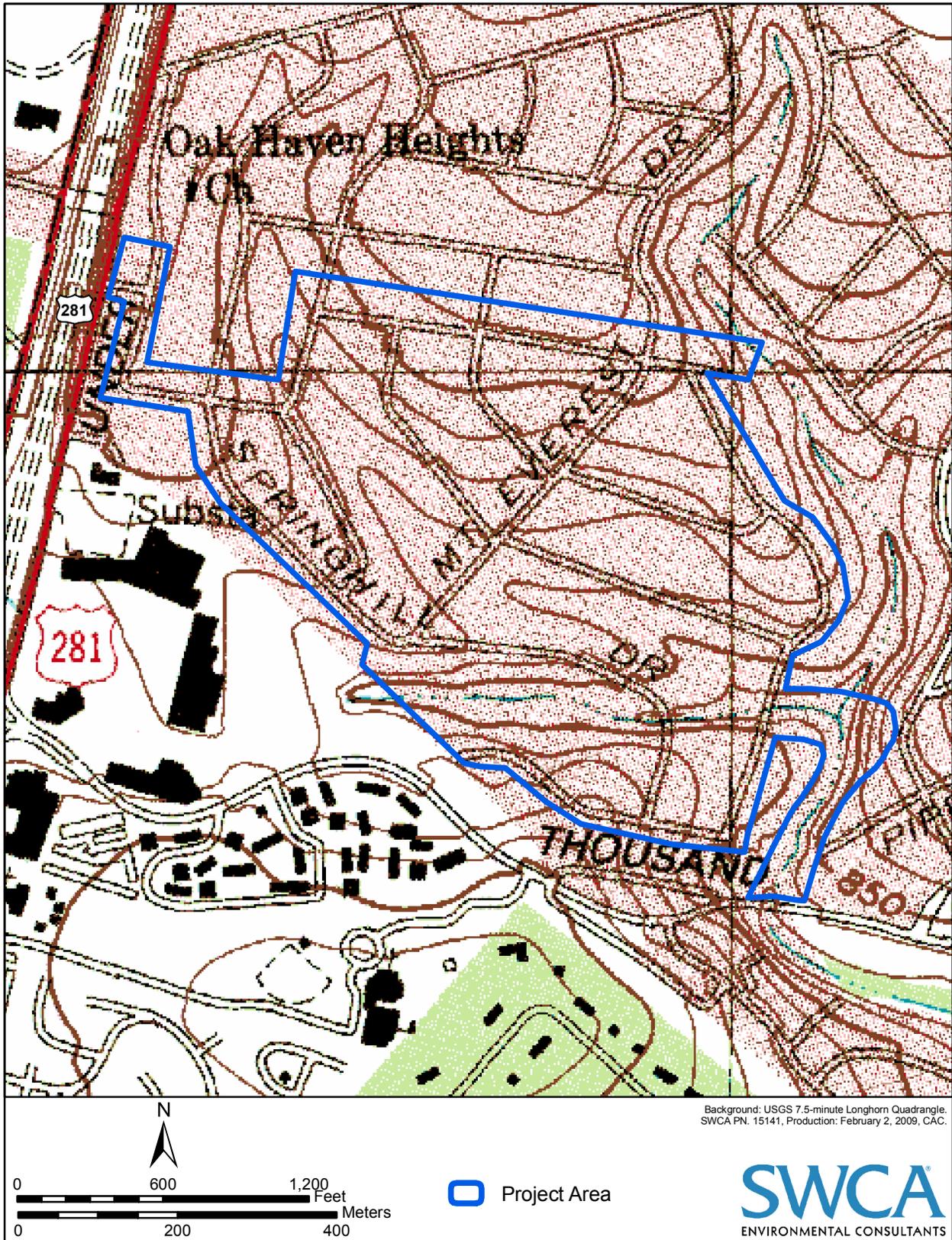


Figure 3. Kentwood Manor Tract.

state, including cities, counties, river authorities, municipal utility districts and school districts to notify the THC of any action on public land involving five or more acres of ground disturbance; 5,000 or more cubic yards of earth moving; or those that have the potential to disturb recorded archeological sites. The THC's Archeology Division manages compliance with the Code, including the issuance of formal Antiquities Permits, which stipulate the conditions under which scientific investigations will occur. Under the Code, any historic or prehistoric property located on state land may be determined eligible as a State Archeological Landmark (SAL). Projects in Texas that typically necessitate compliance with the Code include entities such as the Texas Department of Transportation, cities such as San Antonio, counties, and others such as the San Antonio Water System (SAWS).

Finally, in Bexar County and the City of San Antonio, the Historic Preservation and Design Section of the City of San Antonio's Unified Development Code (Article 6 35-360 to 35-634) mandates various levels of historic preservation applicable to many development projects. This regulation allows for the review of projects by the City of San Antonio Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) to assess a project's potential effects to known cultural resources.

METHODS

The cultural resources constraints analysis consisted of a background cultural resource and environmental literature search of the project area. An SWCA archaeologist reviewed the Longhorn, Texas USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory and searched the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas online database for any previously recorded surveys and historic or prehistoric archaeological sites located in or near the project area. Previous cul-

tural resource investigations listed on the Atlas are limited to projects under purview of the Antiquities Code of Texas or the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Also, projects under these regulations may not be posted on Atlas due to a delay in the completion of field work and the completion of the report. In addition to identifying recorded archaeological sites, the review included information on the following types of cultural resources: NRHP properties, SALs, Official Texas Historical Markers, Registered Texas Historic Landmarks, cemeteries, and local neighborhood surveys. The archaeologist also examined the following sources: the *Soil Survey of Bexar County, Texas* (Taylor et al. 1991) and the *Geologic Atlas of Texas-San Antonio Sheet* (Barnes 1983).

Utilizing this information, the project area was assessed for the potential to contain archaeological and/or historical materials. The project area was then divided into high, medium, and low-probability areas, based on the potential to contain archaeological and historical resources. High-probability areas are defined as locales that possess or have a high likelihood of containing significant cultural resources. These areas are generally identified by distinct landforms and deposits that have been shown in other regional surveys to contain archaeological sites. In the case of historic resources, high-probability areas are identified by the presence of historic-age properties within project area. Moderate or low-probability areas are defined as locales where archaeological and/or historical resources are likely absent or have limited potential to be preserved or significant (e.g., upland settings or areas with intensive development).

RESULTS

GEOLOGY/ SOILS

The geology of the project area is mapped as Lower Cretaceous-age Edwards Limestone (Barnes 1983). These deposits are characterized as coarse to fine grained cherts that range from 300 to 500 feet thick.

The soils of the project area are mapped as Crawford and Bexar stony soils and Tinn and Frio soils, 0 to 1% slopes, frequently flooded (Taylor et al. 1991). These soils are of the Crawford-Bexar association and consist of moderately deep stony soils over limestone (Taylor et al. 1991).

BACKGROUND REVIEW

The results of the background review determined that the project area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources. Additionally, no archeological sites are located within or directly adjacent to the project area boundary.

A total of six archeological surveys and ten previously recorded sites are located within one mile of the project area.

The previously conducted surveys within one mile are primarily investigations performed on behalf of the Federal Highway Works Administration via the Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT, formally State Department of Highways and Public Transportation) or the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in the 1970s and 1980s. A more recent survey conducted by the Center for Archeological Research (CAR) at the University of Texas – San Antonio in 2007 follows the southern shoulder of Loop 1604. Another area survey is located 0.5 miles south of the project area and was conducted by CAR in 2003.

The ten previously recorded archeological sites located within one mile of the project area consist of three prehistoric lithic scatters (41BX67, 41BX450, and 41BX451), four prehistoric lithic procurement areas/quarries (41BX275, 41BX276, 41BX1612, and 41BX1666), two prehistoric rockshelters (41BX452 and 41BX570) and one historic site (41BX20). None of these sites were recommended as eligible for listing on the NRHP or as designation as a SAL.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

In general, the project area is situated within a residential neighborhood and is underlain by shallow stony soils. Such soil types typically confine archeological materials to surface contexts. Had any prehistoric or historic cultural resources once been located within the project area, they would have been destroyed long ago by construction activities associated with the development of the Kentwood Manor neighborhood. Several unnamed ephemeral tributaries and Lorence Creek traverse the southern portion of the project area. Archeological deposits are commonly found in alluvial landforms adjacent to waterways. However in this case, the probability for intact, buried cultural resources along the tributaries or Lorence Creek is considered low due to the prevalence of shallow rocky soils and widespread development. In general, waterways in residential areas such as the Kentwood Manor project area are heavily modified in order to properly divert and control stormwater surges. Analysis of the aerial photography indicated that there are virtually no intact areas within the project area as single-family homes and associated infrastructure dominate the entirety of the proposed development tract. Based on the review of the geology, soils, previous work, and a visual examination of aerial photos, the project area has a very low potential for containing significant archeological sites.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted a cultural resource constraints analysis for Adams Environmental, Inc., on the COSA Kentwood Manor project area in northern San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas. The purpose of the constraints analysis was to gather available information on previously recorded archaeological surveys, archaeological sites, and historic resources within the property and to assess the potential for the presence of significant cultural resources.

The background review determined that the project area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources and no archeological sites are located within or directly adjacent to the project area boundary. The project area is situated within a heavily developed residential area with only a narrow riparian corridor present along Lorence Creek. An in fact, analysis of the aerial photography indicates that this waterway is flanked on both sides by single-family homes and likely has been modified in order to facilitate stormwater run-off. As shallow stony soils dominate the area, it is unlikely that any intact, buried cultural resources are located within the project area. Given the amount of disturbances coupled with the nature of the local geology and soils, the potential for archeological sites within the project area is considered low. As such, it is unlikely that an archeological survey will be necessary or required by the regulatory agencies.

Should compliance with cultural resource regulations such as the National Historic Preservation Act or the Antiquities Code of Texas be required for any future development of the property, an exact scope of any requisite cultural resource investigations would need to be developed in coordination with the involved regulatory agency, likely the THC or HPO. These entities would need to take SWCA's

recommendation into account in determining the need for cultural resource investigations.

REFERENCES CITED

Barnes, V. E.

1983 *Geologic Atlas of Texas, San Antonio Sheet*. Bureau of Economic Geology, The University of Texas at Austin.

Taylor, F. B., R. B. Hailey, and D. L. Richmond

1991 *Soil Survey of Bexar County, Texas*. United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.