

**CULTURAL RESOURCES CONSTRAINTS ANALYSIS OF THE
LOOKOUT ROAD PROJECT
SAN ANTONIO, BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS
ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT CODE: 10-519C8CIPI
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Prepared for
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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) Lookout Road study area located in northeastern 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 study 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 study area. An archaeological survey of the study area was not conducted as an element of this research. This constraints analysis does not constitute any form of archaeological clearance for the study area, but may be used to coordinate future cultural resource compliance with city and/or state agencies.

DEFINITION OF STUDY AREA

The study area is located on Lookout Road just east of its intersection with Old Judson Road (Figure 2). The project will involve improvements to Lookout Road within the existing right-of-way (ROW) on either side of the Beitel Creek tributary crossing. The study area can be found on the Schertz, 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 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

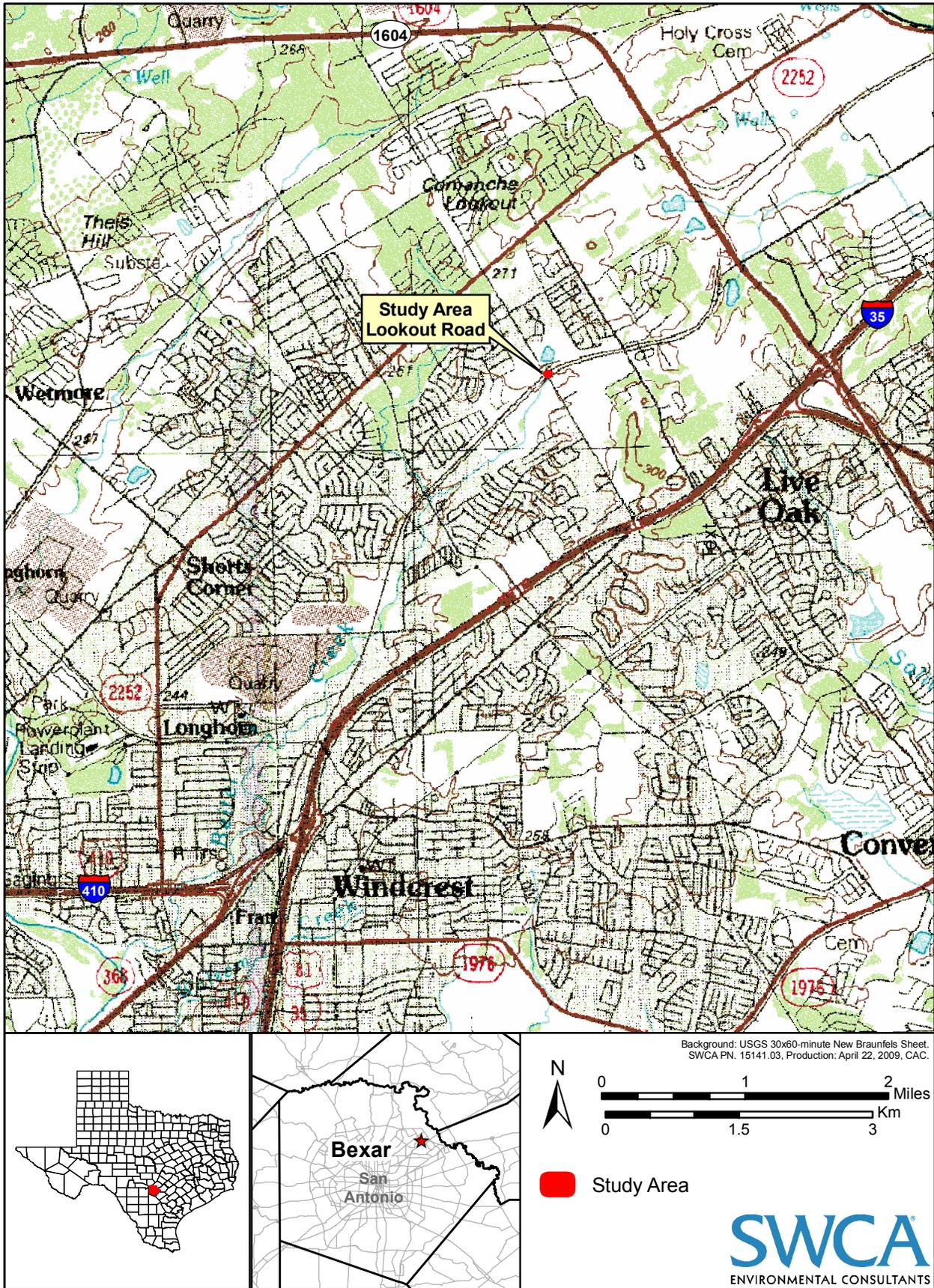


Figure 1. Vicinity Map.

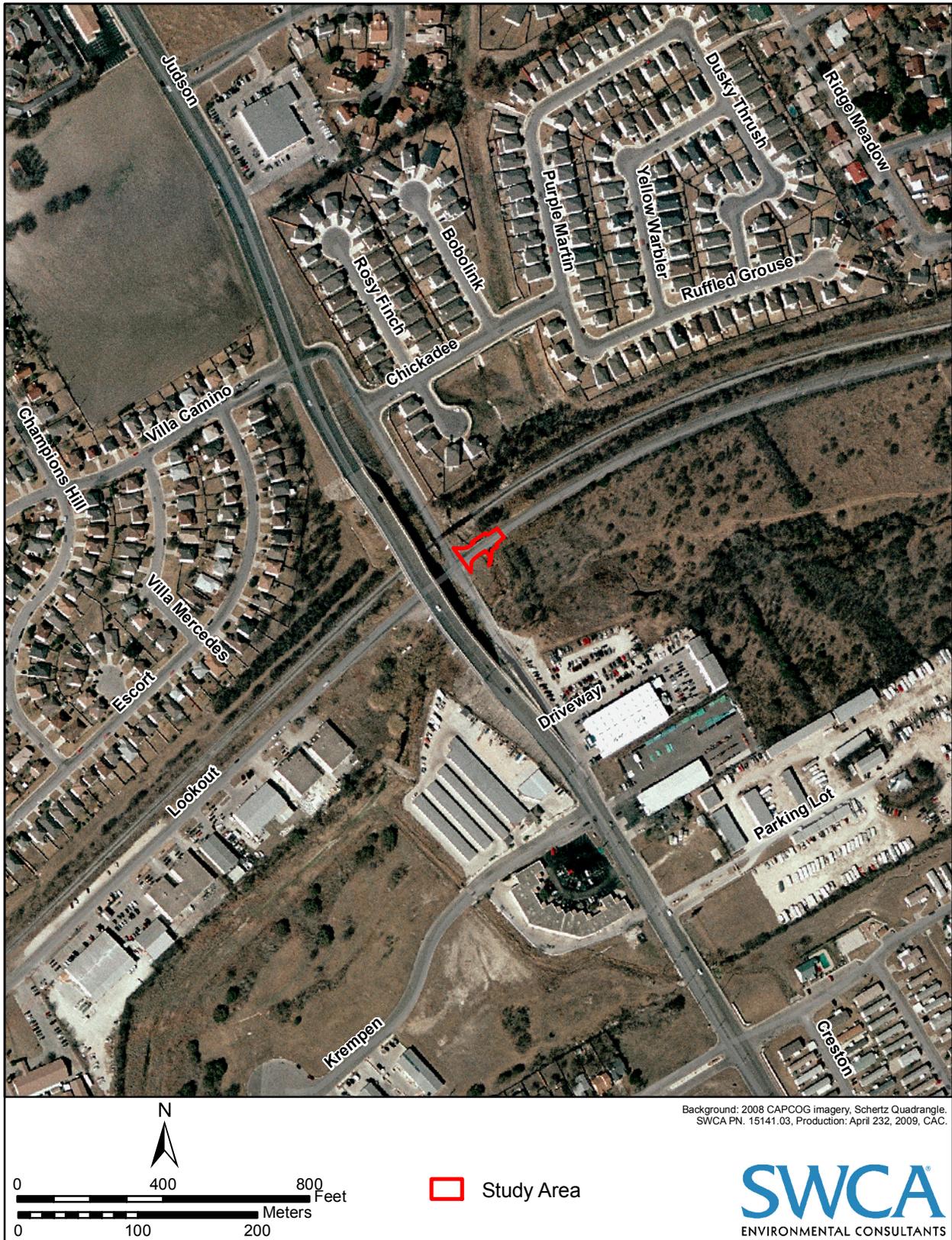


Figure 2. Project Location Map.

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 (TxDOT), 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 study area. An SWCA archaeologist reviewed the Schertz, Texas USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle map at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL) 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 study area. Previous cultural 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* (Fisher 1983).

Utilizing this information, the study area was assessed for the potential to contain archaeological and/or historical materials. The study 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 study 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 study area is mapped as Upper Cretaceous-age Pecan Gap Chalk formation and consists of chalk and chalky marl with an average thickness of 100–400 feet (Fisher 1983).

The soils of the study area are mapped as Trinity and Frio soils, frequently flooded (Taylor et al. 1991). These soils are of the Austin-Tarrant association and consist of moderately deep and very shallow clayey soils over chalk and marl (Taylor et al. 1991).

BACKGROUND REVIEW

The results of the background review determined that the study area has been previously surveyed for cultural resources on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1977. The study area consisted of a linear survey that followed Lookout Road for approximately 1.15 miles and turned south following Topperwein Road for 0.3 miles and turned west traversing an open field for approximately 1.1 miles. The survey ultimately makes a rectangle terminating at Lookout Road and resulted in the documentation of site 41BX318. Site 41BX318 is a large prehistoric lithic procurement site that straddles Judson Road immediately south of its intersection with Lookout Road. This site is mapped as being within the current study area boundaries. The site was revisited in 1991 during the survey of Judson Road on behalf of TxDOT (formally State Department of Highways and Public Transportation) in 1991. Cultural materials such as flakes, cores, and bifacial tools were identified on the surface on the slopes of Beitel Creek and adjacent uplands. The boundaries of the site were not fully delineated but were estimated to measure approximately 300 m N/S by 300 m E/W. Artifacts were noted as being sparsely scattered across the landscape with no diagnostic artifacts or cultural features identified. The site was recommended as ineligible for listing on the NRHP or as designation as a SAL.

Two additional surveys and one cemetery are located within one mile of the study area. These surveys consist of a linear survey conducted along Nacagdoches Road on behalf of

the FHWA in 1986 and a large area survey conducted on behalf of the City of San Antonio in 1997. The Agnes Hurst Cemetery is located approximately 0.5 miles south of the study area

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

The study area consists of improvements along Lookout Road on either side of Beitel Creek. The study area spans only approximately 150 feet and construction activities will take place within the existing ROW. Lookout Road in this area is bordered to the south by an open field, to the west by Old Judson Road, and to the north by the Missouri-Texas-Kansas Railroad. While Beitel Creek traverses the study area, it is unlikely that substantial alluvial landforms will be present as the area is underlain by shallow rocky clayey soils. Such soils types typically confine archeological materials to surface contexts. As all work is slated to take place within the existing ROW, any surface artifacts have likely been severely disturbed by activities associated with the original construction and ongoing maintenance of Lookout Road.

The background review of the study area determined that the study area has been previously surveyed for cultural resources and in fact site 41BX318 currently extends into the study area. Site 41BX318 is a surficial lithic procurement site that occupies the slopes of Beitel Creek and the adjacent uplands. Shovel testing efforts in the area were generally terminated at shallow depths due to the presence of extremely rocky soils attesting to the lack of deep subsurface deposits in the area. No further work has been recommended at this site.

Based upon the soils, geology, topography of the landscape, and background research, there is generally a very low possibility that intact,

buried archeological deposits will be present in the study area.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SWCA Environmental Consultants conducted a cultural resource constraints analysis for Adams Environmental, Inc., on the COSA Lookout Road study area in northeastern 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 study area was previously surveyed for cultural resources on behalf of the EPA in 1977. This survey, along with an adjacent survey conducted along Judson Road in 1991, resulted in the documentation and re-visit of site 41BX318. Site 41BX318 was determined to be ineligible for listing on the NRHP or as designation as a SAL due to the disturbed and surficial nature of the artifact assemblage.

In general, the study area is within the existing Lookout Road ROW and is underlain by rocky clayey sediments with little potential to harbor buried, intact archeological deposits, and has been previously surveyed for cultural resources. Based on the results of this constraints analysis, an archeological survey of the study area is not recommended and it is unlikely to be 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, specifically the THC.

REFERENCES CITED

Fisher, W.L.

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.