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Cultural Resources Survey of the Oak Glen/Haskin Low Water Crossing Project in Bexar County, Texas

**Environmental Project Code: 10-583E1-023CIPI
WBS Element: 40-00061-04-02**

Prepared for

Adams Environmental, Inc.

Prepared by

Laura I. Acuña and Abigail Peyton

Texas Antiquities Permit 5309

SWCA Cultural Resources Report No. 09-193

August 2009



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ADAMS ENVIRONMENTAL, INC.

12018 Las Nubes
San Antonio, Texas 78233

Prepared by

Laura I. Acuña and Abigail Peyton

SWCA ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

4407 Monterey Oaks Blvd.
Building 1, Suite 110
Austin, Texas 78749
www.swca.com

Principal Investigator

Abigail Peyton, MA, RPA

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ABSTRACT

On behalf of the City of San Antonio (COSA), in coordination with Adams Environmental, Inc., SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) conducted an intensive cultural resources survey of the Oak Glen/Haskin Low Water Crossing Project area in northeastern Bexar County, Texas. The project entails the reconstruction a 0.13-mile section of Haskin Road from Cave Lane to Oak Glen Drive with appropriate drainage improvements as well as the installation of a 0.18-acre engineered outfall area connecting an unnamed tributary of Salado Creek to the northern terminus of the project area. In all, the area of potential effect (APE) totals approximately 1.0 acres. Construction impacts for this type of project are typically 3 to 4 feet in depth. Cultural resource investigations were conducted to satisfy the requirements of the Antiquities Code of Texas (Permit No. 5309) and San Antonio Historic Preservation Office (HPO) per the City of San Antonio Historic Preservation and Design Section of the Unified Development Code (Article 6 35-630 to 35-634). These investigations included a background and archival review and a pedestrian survey with subsurface investigations.

The purpose of the work was to locate and identify all prehistoric and historic archaeological sites in the project area, establish vertical and horizontal site boundaries as appropriate with regard to the project area, and evaluate the significance and eligibility of any site recorded within the property for State Archaeological Landmark (SAL) and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). SWCA archaeologists Laura I. Acuña and Mercedes Cody conducted the fieldwork on June 24, 2009.

The background review determined that the project area has not been surveyed for cultural resources and no cultural resource sites are located within or directly adjacent to the project area boundaries. The entire project area is within a residential neighborhood and contains various buried and overhead utilities. The residential impacts within the APE are extensive and include property fence lines, driveways, landscaped lawns, and sprinkler systems. Overhead utilities consist of a transmission line along the eastern right-of-way of the APE. Buried utilities include an electric cable and water lines at the northern portion of the project area. The disturbances within the APE have completely eliminated the potential for encountering intact cultural resources as impacts have altered subsurface setting and landscape. Based on the nature of extensive disturbances, shovel tests were not conducted. Accordingly, no intact significant cultural resources will be affected by any construction activities within the project area. SWCA recommends no further archeological investigations within the project area.

INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the City of San Antonio (COSA), in coordination with Adams Environmental, Inc., SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) conducted an intensive cultural resources survey of the Oak Glen/Haskin Low Water Crossing Project area located in northeastern Bexar County, Texas (Figure 1). Cultural resource investigations were conducted to satisfy the requirements of the San Antonio Historic Preservation Office (HPO) per the City of San Antonio Historic Preservation and Design Section of the Unified Development Code (Article 6 35-630 to 35-634) and the Antiquities Code of Texas (Permit No. 5309). These investigations included a background review and a pedestrian survey with subsurface investigations.

The purpose of the work was to locate and identify all prehistoric and historic archaeological sites in the area of potential effects (APE), establish vertical and horizontal site boundaries as appropriate with regard to the project area, and evaluate the significance and eligibility of any site recorded within the property for eligibility for State Archaeological Landmark (SAL). SWCA archaeologists Laura I. Acuña and Mercedes Cody conducted the fieldwork on June 24, 2009.

DEFINITION OF STUDY AREA

The Oak Glen/Haskin Low Water Crossing Project is located primarily along Haskin Road in northeastern San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas. The project proposes to reconstruct a 0.13 mile long stretch of Haskin Road between Cave Lane and Oak Glen Drive. Additional improvements will take place within an 0.18-acre outfall area that will connect an unnamed tributary of Salado Creek to the northern terminus of the Haskin Road portion of the project area (Figure 2). In all, the APE totals approximately 1.0 acres.

The purpose of the project is to reconstruct this section of Haskin Road with appropriate drainage improvements and facilitate storm-water run off from the residential area to the unnamed tributary of Salado Creek via the outfall area. Construction impacts for this type of project are typically 3 to 4 feet in depth. The project area is located within a residential area with single-family homes lining both sides of the road where construction activities are slated to take place. The residential development has significantly modified the original landscape. Disturbances within the project area include overhead and underground utilities within the APE, driveways, landscaping, and ongoing repair of roads.

The geology of the project area is exclusively mapped as Upper Cretaceous-age Pecan Gap Chalk formation (Barnes 1992). This formation consists of chalk and chalky marl with an average thickness of 100–400 feet.

The soils of the project area are mapped as Austin-Tarrant soil association. These soils generally consist of moderately deep and very shallow clayey soils over chalk and marl. Specifically, soils mapped within the project area consist of Austin silty clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes and Trinity and Frio soils, frequently flooded (Taylor et al. 1991).

METHODS

BACKGROUND REVIEW

SWCA conducted a thorough background cultural resources 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 (TARL) and searched the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Texas Archeological Sites Atlas (Atlas) online database for any previously recorded surveys and historic or

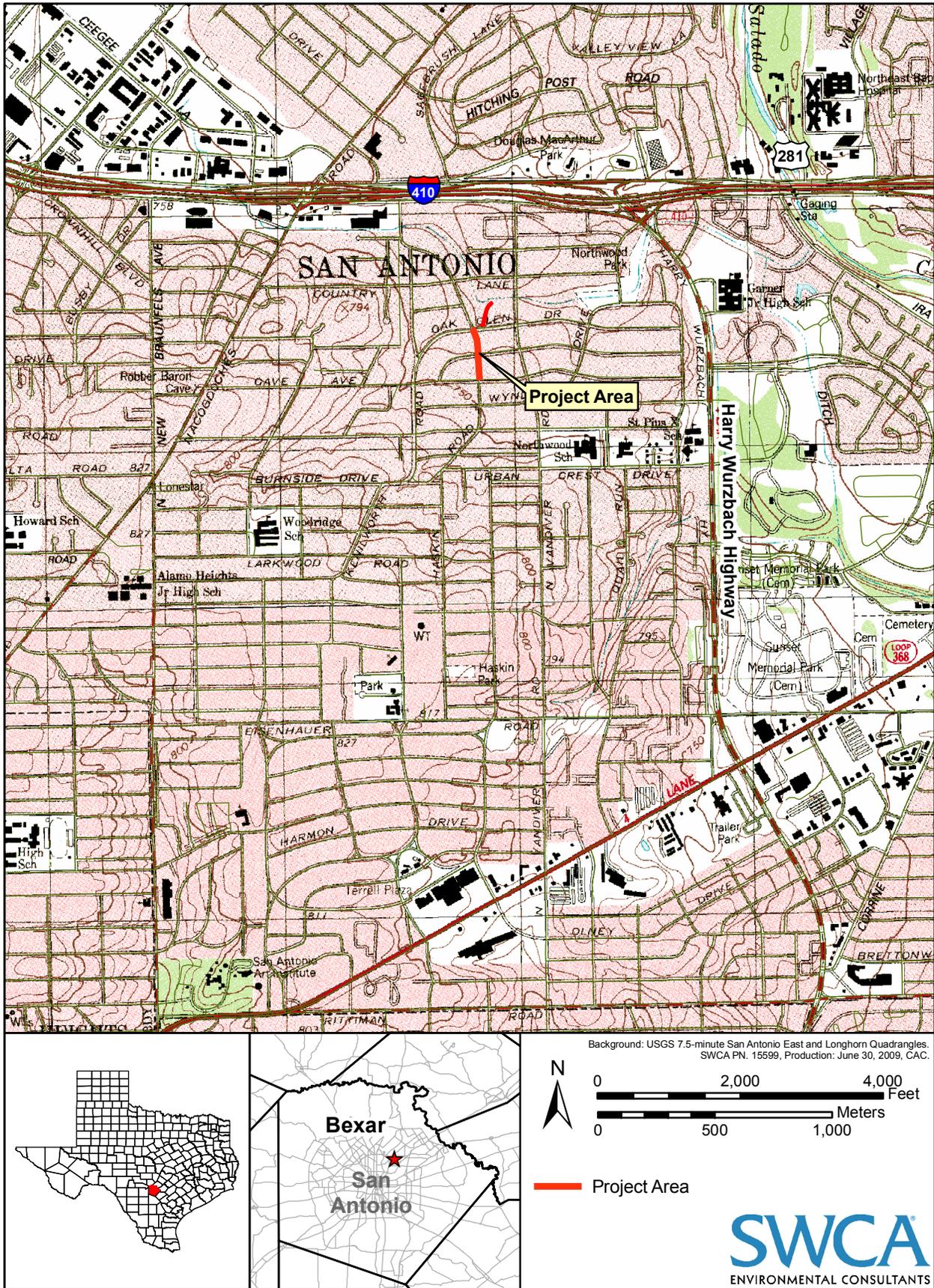


Figure 1. Project Location Map.

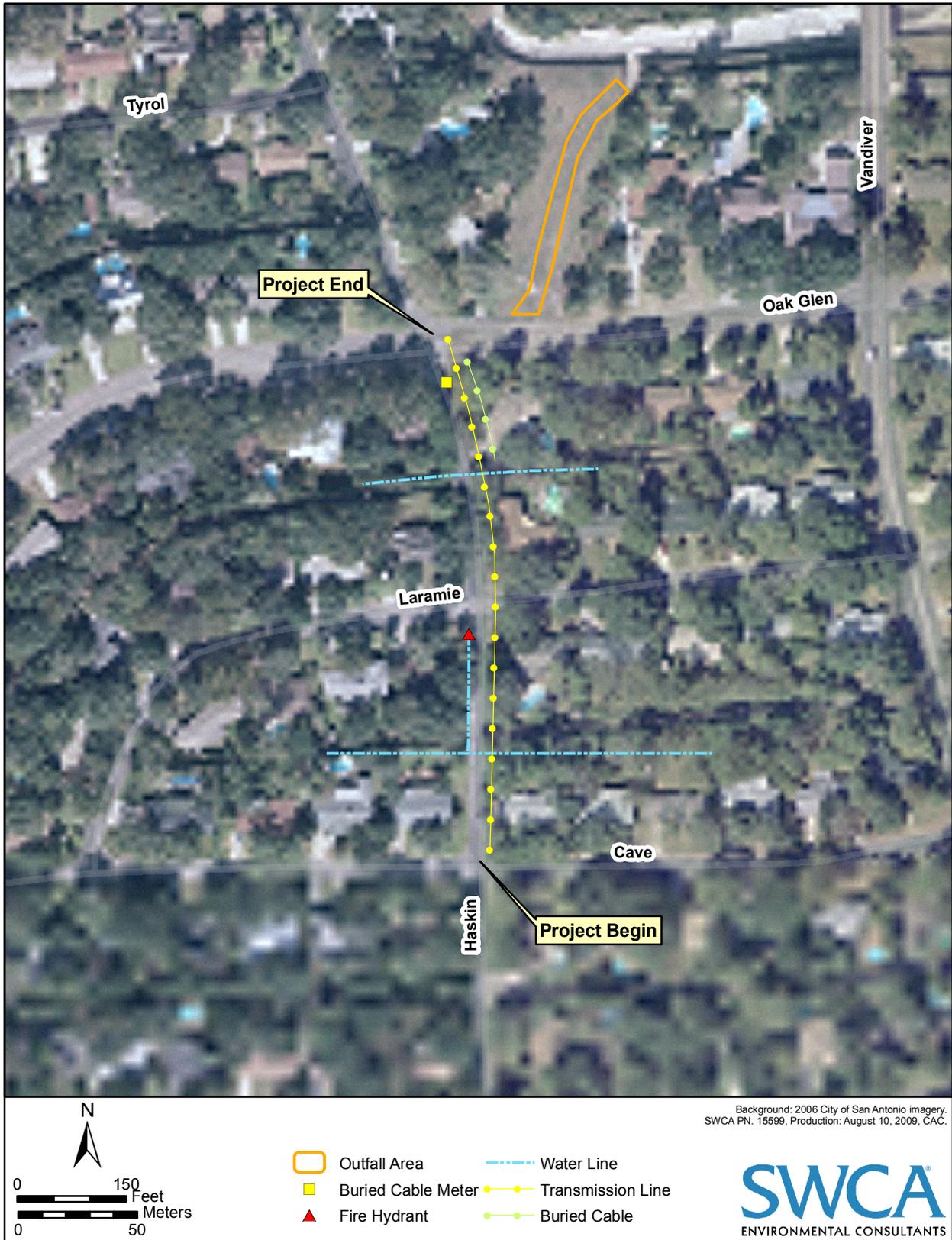


Figure 2. Aerial view of project area with disturbances.

prehistoric archaeological sites located in or near the project area. 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 (OTHM), Registered Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs), cemeteries, and local neighborhood surveys. The archaeologist also examined the *Soil Survey of Bexar County, Texas* (Taylor et al. 1991) and the *Geologic Atlas of Texas, San Antonio Sheet* (Barnes 1992). Aerial photographs were reviewed to assist in identifying any disturbances.

FIELD METHODS

SWCA's investigations consisted of an intensive pedestrian survey. Archaeologists examined the ground surface and extensive erosional profiles and exposures for cultural resources. Subsurface investigations were planned in settings with the potential to contain buried cultural materials. However, no shovel tests were conducted due to the highly modified landscape. Archaeologists documented and photographed the extensive nature of disturbances within the APE.

RESULTS

BACKGROUND REVIEW

The background review determined that the project area has not been surveyed for cultural resources and no cultural resource sites have been identified within the project area. The background research also determined that five previously recorded sites, two previous archaeological surveys, and one cemetery are located within one mile of the project area.

The five previously recorded sites are all located approximately 0.9 miles northwest and north of the current project area on the banks of Salado Creek. Sites 41BX473, 41BX474,

41BX475, and 41BX476 are prehistoric lithic scatters originally recorded in 1977 during a linear survey of the Tobins Oakwell Farm project. Site 41BX1007 is a late prehistoric open campsite that was recorded in 1994. The eligibility status of these sites is undetermined and recommendations for further work were not given. The remaining previous investigation follows Salado Creek and was conducted by the University of Texas at San Antonio on behalf of the City of San Antonio in 2008. The Sunset Memorial Cemetery is located approximately 0.9 miles southeast of the project area.

FIELD SURVEY

On June 24, 2009 two SWCA archaeologists conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of the Oak Glen/Haskin Low Water Crossing Project. The project area was divided into two separate areas consisting of the Haskin Road improvement area and the outfall area. The Haskin Road improvement area is located within a high-density residential area with property fence lines, driveways, and landscaped lawns present along the roadway (Figures 3 and 4). Additional subsurface disturbances include waterlines and buried utilities within the southern and northern portion of the project area (Figure 5). At the time of survey, vegetation within the APE consisted of manicured lawns with ornamental plants and mixed hardwoods. Some areas of the right-of-way contained 100 percent ground surface visibility revealing gravelly clay loam (Figure 6). Based on the nature of extensive disturbances, shovel tests were not warranted.

The proposed outfall area consists of a shallow drainage way that begins at the heavily modified unnamed tributary of Salado Creek and continues south to intersect with Oak Glen Drive (Figures 7 and 8). The proposed outfall area has also been impacted in the past as



Figure 3. Facing north, at intersection of Haskins Road and Cave Lane, overview of residential impacts.



Figure 4. Facing southeast, from intersection of Haskins Road and Oak Glen Drive, view of buried utility meter, landscaping, and transmission line pole.



Figure 5. Facing west, overview of intersecting water line within APE with drainage.



Figure 6. Facing north, along eastern right-of-way of APE, overview of 100 percent ground surface visibility consisting of gravelly clay loam.



Figure 7. Facing north, overview of the proposed outfall area



Figure 8. Facing north, view of rocky ground surface within the proposed outfall area

evidenced by the presence of large back dirt piles, overhead utilities, the construction of the bridge, and Oak Glen Drive. Additionally, limestone bedrock is present in surface contexts within and adjacent to the drainage swale with little to no alluvial deposition noted. The proposed outfall area has been cleared and graded numerous times in the past and as such it is improbable that any archeological sites, if present, remain intact in this area. Shovel testing efforts were also not warranted within the proposed outfall area due to the nature of the near-surface bedrock, which offered nearly 100% surface visibility, as well as the impacts to the area which essentially eliminated the potential for intact archeological resources in the drainage.

The THC's survey standards require 16 shovel tests per mile when the ROW measures 100 feet wide. The ROW for the project area measures approximately 75 feet wide, thus requiring a minimum of 2 shovel tests along the 0.19 mile long project area. No shovel tests were excavated within the current project area due to the severity of the disturbances both within the Haskin Road ROW and the proposed outfall area. The visual inspection and pedestrian survey of the APE resulted entirely in negative findings. In general, residential development and municipal upkeep within the project area have essentially eliminated the potential for cultural resources as virtually no areas of the project area remains intact.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SWCA conducted an intensive cultural resources survey of the Oak Glen/Haskin Low Water Crossing Project in Bexar County, Texas. Cultural resource investigations were conducted to satisfy the requirements of the Antiquities Code of Texas (Permit No. 5309) and the San Antonio Historic Preservation Office (HPO) per the City of San Antonio His-

toric Preservation and Design Section of the Unified Development Code (Article 6 35-630 to 35-634).

The background review revealed that no previously recorded archaeological sites are present in the project area. Five previously recorded sites and one cemetery are located within one mile of the project. The project area has not been previously surveyed; however, two previous archeological surveys are located within one mile the project area.

Overall, intensive survey revealed that the project area is within a highly urbanized setting bordered by extensive residential development as well as various subsurface and overhead utilities. The extensive nature of the disturbances has eliminated the potential for encountering significant cultural resources within the project area. Accordingly, no intact significant cultural resources will be affected by any construction activities within the project area. SWCA recommends no further archaeological investigations within the project area.

REFERENCES

Barnes, V. E.

1992 *Geologic Atlas of Texas, San Antonio Sheet*. The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Economic Geology.

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

1991 *Soil Survey of Bexar County, Texas*. National Resources Conservation Service, United States Department of Agriculture.