

ASSESSMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES
IN CERTAIN AREAS OF THE ALLENS CREEK
WATERSHED, AUSTIN COUNTY, TEXAS

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Center for Archaeological Research
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PREFACE

The Center for Archaeological Research at The University of Texas at San Antonio was created during the summer of 1974. Three major objectives guide the activities of the Center:

1. To provide archaeological training for graduate students in anthropology at The University of Texas at San Antonio.
2. To further archaeological research in the south and south central Texas area by archaeologists within, and associated with, The University of Texas at San Antonio.
3. To create a research unit which can provide qualified personnel and an organizational context for doing contract archaeology generated through federal legislation, and to further provide these services in response to state and local needs.

Among the initial projects of the Center was an archaeological survey of parts of the Allens Creek Watershed in Austin County, Texas, under an agreement, AG-48-scs-02241, with the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. The present report, authored by graduate student Feris A. Bass, Jr., is presented in fulfillment of this agreement.

Thomas R. Hester, Director
The Center for Archaeological Research

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with an agreement between the Soil Conservation Service (United States Department of Agriculture) and the Center for Archaeological Research of The University of Texas at San Antonio, an archaeological survey was carried out in certain portions of the Allens Creek Watershed, Austin County, Texas. Fieldwork was conducted in late August, 1974, by Feris A. Bass, Jr., Research Associate of the Center. Dr. Thomas R. Hester, Director of the Center, was in overall supervision of the project.

The survey encompassed 20 ditch segments (see Map 1) with a total linear distance of 33 miles and covering 618 acres. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain the existence of any historic or archaeological data which should be preserved in the public interest. Further requirements under the agreement with the Soil Conservation Service were:

1. Determine if archaeological resources exist within the area slated for modification.
2. If resources were found, to identify and appraise the significance of resources.
3. Evaluate the impact of project installation on each resource.
4. Provide the result in recommendations for mitigation of adverse impacts anticipated.
5. Provide estimate of costs required for mitigation (salvage, protection, etc.)

THE SURVEY

Prior to the actual fieldwork, the site records of the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (The University of Texas at Austin) were examined to see whether or not archaeological resources had been previously reported from the survey area. Additionally, a report by Dillehay et al. (1972), dealing with archaeological reconnaissance in other areas of the Allens Creek Watershed, was consulted. Once in the field, Mr. James R. Grounds, the District Conservationist, was contacted and arrangements were made for access to the properties involved.

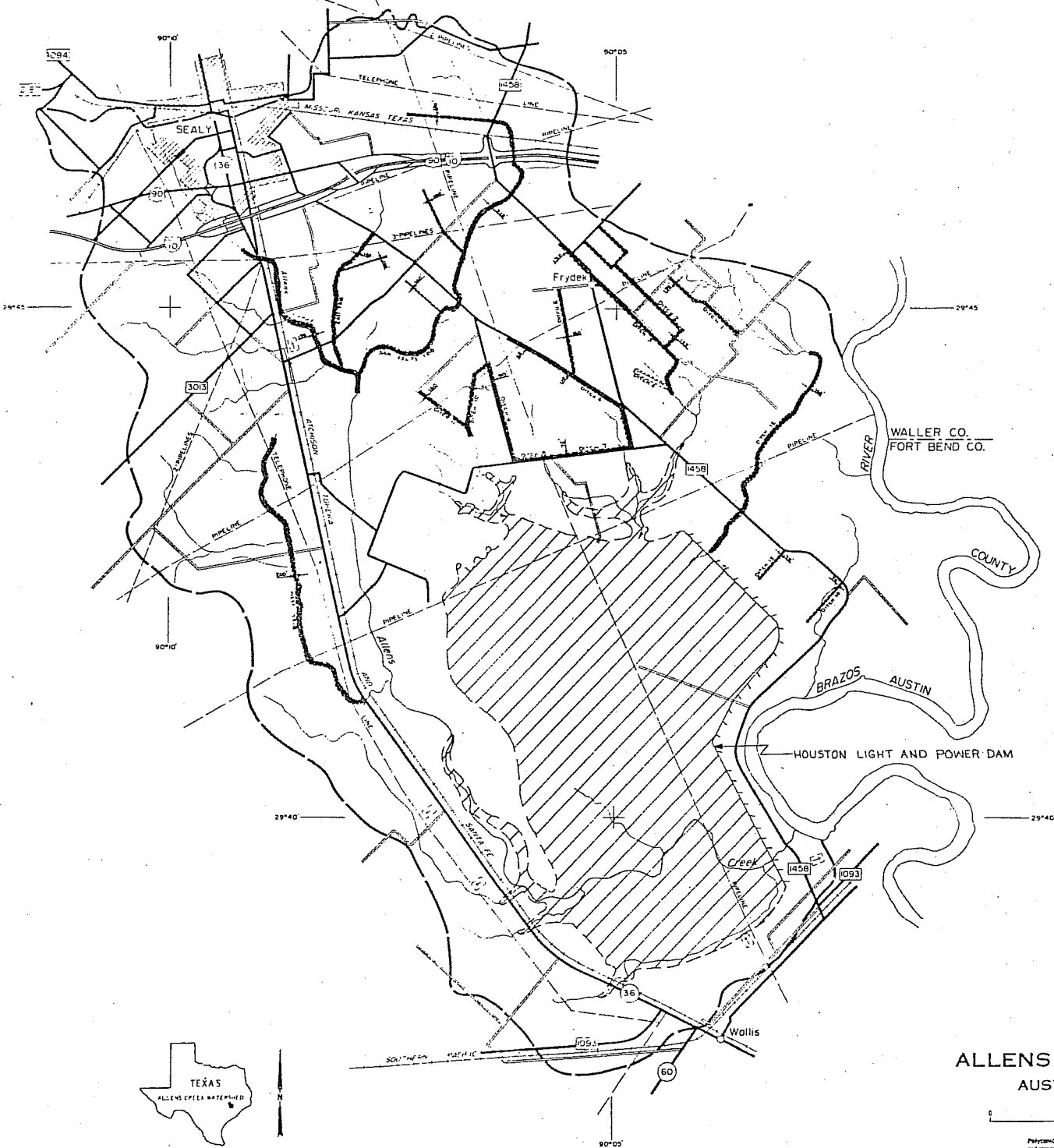
The survey was conducted, where possible, by walking through the area indicated for each proposed watercourse. In some instances the nature of the terrain and vegetation made close surficial inspection impossible. In such cases, checks were made along the proposed modification route to the extent that we are confident that no significant data were overlooked.

A number of property owners and local residents were contacted and were interviewed regarding the existence of historical or archaeological sites in the areas concerned. In no instance were we able to obtain useful information from these sources as all disclaimed knowledge of such sites.

SURVEY RESULTS

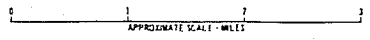
1. West Tributary

In the survey of the West Tributary, lying along the west side of Texas Highway 36, it was possible to walk the entire area. The



- LEGEND**
- Interstate Highway
 - U.S. Highway
 - State Highway
 - Farm to Market Road
 - Divided Highway
 - Paved Road
 - Secondary Road
 - Town
 - City Limits
 - County Line
 - Cemetery
 - Railroad
 - Drainage
 - Watershed Boundary

MAP I
ALLENS CREEK WATERSHED
AUSTIN COUNTY, TEXAS



Photocopy Projection compiled and reproduced at 1:31,680 (1" = 1 Mile) and reproduced at 1:63,360 (1/2" = 1 Mile) for maximum legibility as this sheet is to be used.
Data compiled from Census of Highway Map, 1972, Division, Texas State Highway Dept. and U.S.G.C., Bureau of Public Roads.



presently existing watercourse is the result of previous channel excavation and consists of a ditch bordered by spoil dumps resulting from the excavation. The whole area is covered by a heavy stand of grass, which coupled with the excavated and disturbed earth, made surface examination difficult. However, the location of the ditch in marshy ground and the absence of visible artifacts or structures would lead to the conclusion that no significant archaeological material exists along this portion of the project.

2. Upper Allen's Creek Watershed

This portion of the project just east of Highway 36 and consisting of Allen Creek and the East Tributary was surveyed by walking along both sides of the proposed route. Here it was also noted that extensive ditching had been previously accomplished and the spoil deposited along both sides of the existing watercourses. Except for some portions of Allen Creek, both branches were covered with heavy grass or vegetation which hampered surface examination. However, it was possible to examine enough of the terrain to conclude that no historic or archaeological materials would be affected by the proposed construction.

3. San Felipe Tributary

This portion of the project lies in marshy ground covered by water and heavy vegetation. Where it was possible spot checks were made along this watercourse, but no archaeological remains were observed.

4. Ditches 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10, and 11.

These proposed structures lie along the sides of existing roads or traverse cultivated land, existing buildings and residential lawns. The construction of the roads, the cultivation of the fields and the erection of buildings would have disturbed any archaeological materials that may have once existed. However, our inspection did not reveal the presence of archaeological resources.

5. Ditch No. 12

This proposed feature follows the course of an unnamed stream which borders the lower edge of what natives refer to as the "bluff". This physiographic feature is actually a sloping elevation rising to a height of 30 to 40 feet along a line northwest of the existing stream bed. This area was examined by walking along the sides of the existing watercourse. As in the other cases, examination of the surface was hindered by heavy grass and vegetation. The portion of the proposed ditch that would extend southeast of FM 1458 enters an area that has been recently excavated with massive displacement of the surface materials. No historical or archaeological materials were found along this watercourse.

6. Ditch 13 and 14

These ditches were closely examined. However, no archaeological materials were observed.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Areas slated for modification within portions of the Allens Creek Watershed have been carefully examined for the presence of archaeological and historical resources. A thorough reconnaissance was carried out by the Center for Archaeological Research, and it was found that such resources do not exist within the project areas. It is the conclusion of this report that the modifications proposed by the Soil Conservation Service will have no impact or adverse affect on archaeological and historical materials. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological work be carried out within these particular areas.

REFERENCE CITED

- Dillehay, T. D., M. J. O'Brien, M. G. Mallouf and D. S. Dibble
1972 An Archeological Reconnaissance of Areas to be
Affected by the Proposed Nuclear Power Plant,
Austin County, Texas, and Associated Power Transmission
Lines in Austin, Waller, Fort Bend, and Harris Counties,
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Report, No. 16. Austin.

