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Intensive Archeological Survey Of The Fisher Tract City Of Florence, Williamson County, Texas

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Intensive Archeological Survey Of The Fisher Tract City Of Florence, Williamson County, Texas

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Cultural Resources Survey

INTENSIVE ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE FISHER TRACT CITY OF FLORENCE, WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS

October 11, 2017

Final Report – Public Copy

Terracon Project No. 96177466A

Antiquities Permit No. 8094

Ann M. Scott, PhD, RPA, Principal Investigator



Prepared for:

Georgetown Independent School District
Georgetown, Texas

Prepared by:

Caitlin Gulihur, MA, RPA and Ann M. Scott, PhD, RPA
Terracon Consultants, Inc.
Austin, Texas

terracon.com

Terracon

Environmental



Facilities



Geotechnical



Materials

ABSTRACT

Georgetown Independent School District has proposed the Fisher Tract project where approximately 40 acres of land will be purchased northwest of Georgetown, Williamson County, Texas. Georgetown Independent School District (GISD) retained Terracon Consultants, Inc. to conduct a systematic, intensive pedestrian survey of the approximate 40-acre project area. Because GISD, a political subdivision of the State of Texas, sponsored the project, the proposed undertaking is subject to compliance with the Antiquities Code of Texas and oversight from the Texas Historical Commission. In addition, the survey meets the standards for compliance under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, should a US Army Corps of Engineer permit be necessary or federal funding be utilized for the project. The cultural resources survey was carried out in advance of ground disturbance under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8094, issued to Ann M. Scott, PhD, RPA, Principal Investigator. Fieldwork was carried out by Project Archeologist Caitlin Gulihur, MA, and Archeological Technician Juan Morlock under the supervision of Ann M. Scott. Records from the project will be curated at the Center for Archaeological Studies at Texas State University.

The 40-acre project area was considered the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Survey of the APE consisted of systematic pedestrian coverage, including discretionary shovel tests. The work was carried out on July 7, 2017. Several acres of the project area had good ground surface visibility and several more were disturbed from terracing activities. Six shovel tests were excavated in areas that had less than 30 percent ground visibility or placed in areas that appeared to be undisturbed. No artifacts were discovered during the excavation of the shovel tests. A few isolated artifacts were observed on the ground surface. No sites were recorded or revisited as a result of the survey. Therefore, there are no historic properties present within the project area. It is Terracon's recommendation that there are no historic properties eligible for State Antiquities Landmark designation or National Register for Historic Places inclusion that will be affected by future construction of GISD facilities. In the unlikely event that human remains are discovered during construction, construction should cease in the vicinity of the remains and Terracon, the Texas Historical Commission's Archeology Division, or other proper authorities should be contacted.

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INTENSIVE ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE FISHER TRACT, CITY OF FLORENCE, WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS

Terracon Project No. 96177466A

Antiquities Permit No. 8094

October 11, 2017

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

This report presents the findings from an intensive pedestrian survey of approximately 40 acres in which Georgetown Independent School District (GISD) has proposed purchasing south of Florence, Williamson County, Texas (Appendix A, Exhibits 1 and 2). The 40-acre survey was performed on behalf of GISD, a political subdivision of the State of Texas. Therefore, the project is under the purview of the Texas Historical Commission (THC) in compliance with the Antiquities Code of Texas. In addition, the survey meets the standards for compliance under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, should a US Army Corps of Engineer permit be necessary or federal funding be utilized for the project. The work described herein was performed under Texas Antiquities Permit Number 8094, issued to Ann M. Scott, PhD, RPA Principal Investigator, and in adherence to Title 13, Chapter 26 of the Texas Administrative Code. The work was carried out on July 7, 2017 by Project Archeologist Caitlin Gulihur, MA, and Archeological Technician Juan Morlock under the supervision of Ann M. Scott.

Abiding by standards set forth by the Council of Texas Archaeologists (CTA) for short reports, this negative findings report includes introduction and management summary, defining the area of potential effects, methods, results, and recommendations. The report was authored by Caitlin Gulihur, Project Archeologist, and Ann M. Scott, Principal Investigator.

2.0 DEFINING THE AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS

The project area, which is the same as the area of potential effect (APE), is approximately 40 acres. The project area is located west of Ranch Road 2338, south of Florence, Texas (See Appendix A, Exhibits 1 and 2). The proposed project consists of the potential purchasing of land by GISD for future facilities. As exact design plans for facilities and potential impacts to the property are unknown at this time, the entire 40-acre tract is considered the APE.

3.0 RESEARCH AND SURVEY METHODS

The methods described below were employed to identify and characterize cultural resources present within the APE to the extent practicable. Desktop review focused on identifying previously

known cultural materials and understanding the site setting, while fieldwork was used to both search for unknown cultural resources and gather more information based on the desktop review.

3.1 Desktop Review

Prior to fieldwork, and as part of the Antiquities Code of Texas permit application, background research and a literature search was conducted. This effort included desktop review of mapped geology and soils, search for previously recorded sites and investigations, a review of historic designations such as Registered Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs), State Antiquities Landmarks (SALs), National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and historical markers, and an examination of historic maps and aerials for evidence that the APE may have exhibited buildings or other features that may be considered historic (at least 50 years old).

3.2 Intensive Pedestrian Survey

In order to examine the 40-acre APE for previously unknown cultural resources, an intensive pedestrian survey was conducted. The ground surface in the APE was systematically inspected by archeologists walking parallel transects spaced not more than 15 meters (49 feet) apart, for 100 percent coverage. The survey was augmented by shovel testing and six shovel tests were excavated within the APE.

As a general method, shovel tests are excavated to varying depths that target Holocene-aged soils. Sediment was excavated in arbitrary 20-cm levels to depth and passed through ¼-inch hardware mesh. Characteristics and contents of shovel tests are recorded with photographs, forms and notes, and a hand-held global positioning system (GPS) unit; upon completion of excavation and documentation, the unit holes and artifacts, if present, are backfilled. Cultural materials encountered through the course of shovel test excavations are described and returned to their approximate origin. Archeological sites, if encountered, would be recorded with the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory and be assessed for eligibility for inclusion in the NRHP or designation as a SAL as appropriate. This survey has a “no-collection” policy; therefore, diagnostic artifacts (if encountered) would be documented in the field and not collected. Records will be temporarily housed in Terracon’s office in Austin and will be permanently curated by the Center for Archaeological Studies (CAS) at Texas State University upon completion of the project.

3.3 National Register of Historic Places and State Antiquities Landmark Criteria

For a historic resource to be deemed eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the resource must be at least 50 years old and must possess significance and integrity. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and:

- a. That are associated with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

- b. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d. That have yielded, or may likely to yield, information important in our prehistory or history (36 CFR 60.4).

Additionally, the State of Texas affords important cultural resources a level of protection beyond that of NRHP status if the resource meets the criteria for listing as a SAL. SAL criteria are divided into four categories based on the type of resource: archaeological site, shipwreck, cache and collection, and historic structure. The criteria for archaeological sites are:

- 1) The site has the potential to contribute to a better understanding of the prehistory and/or history of Texas by the addition of new and important information;
- 2) The site's archeological deposits and the artifacts within the site are preserved and intact, thereby supporting the research potential or preservation interest of the site;
- 3) The site possesses unique or rare attributes concerning Texas prehistory and/or history;
- 4) The study of the site offers the opportunity to test theories and methods of preservation, thereby contributing to new scientific knowledge; and
- 5) There is a high likelihood that vandalism and relic collecting has occurred or could occur, and official landmark designation is needed to ensure maximum legal protection, or alternatively, further investigations are needed to mitigate the effects of vandalism and relic collecting when the site cannot be protected (Title 13, Rule 26.10).

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Desktop Review

Results of the Desktop Review are detailed below.

4.1.1 Mapped Geology and Soils

The bedrock geology of the project area is identified Edwards and Comanche limestones, undivided (Phanerozoic | Mesozoic | Cretaceous-Early periods) (Kec) and Walnut Clay (Phanerozoic | Mesozoic | Cretaceous-Early periods) (Kwa). Edwards and Comanche limestones, undivided, consists of limestone and dolostone with abundant chert nodules. Walnut Clay consists of claystone, limestone, and shale (Barnes 1992). Three soils are mapped within the APE (Appendix A, Exhibit 3) (USDA NRCS 2017; Werchan and Coker 1983). Doss silty clay, moist, 1 to 5 percent slopes (DoC) is a shallow (48 inches to bedrock, with weakly cemented limestone at 19 inches), well-drained soil which occurs on hillslopes. Fairlie clay, 1 to 2 percent slopes (FaB) is a deep (60 inches to bedrock), moderately well-drained soil which occurs on ridges. Denton

silty clay, 1 to 3 percent slopes (DnB) is a deep (70 inches to bedrock), well-drained soil located on hillslopes.

4.1.2 Previous Investigations, Recorded Sites, and Designations

Review of the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas (Atlas) and THC geospatial data using a 0.5-mile search buffer shows that none of the proposed project area has likely been previously surveyed. No archeological sites or other cultural resources have been recorded in the project APE. No previously recorded archeological sites are located within the 0.5-mile buffer.

No previously designated RTHLs, SALs, or NRHP listed or District properties are present within the 0.5-mile search area.

4.1.3 Historic Imagery and Maps

Historic-period topographic maps dating back over 100 years cover the project area. Several years were examined including 1885, 1962, and 1976. No historic structures were observed within the APE. Historic aeriels were also reviewed, the earliest of which was dated 1941. Others were dated 1953, 1964, 1976, 1981, 1988, 1996, 2004, 2014. No historic structures were observed within the APE.

4.2 Intensive Pedestrian Survey

The intensive pedestrian survey of the APE resulted in thorough coverage of the parcel at 10 to 15 m transect intervals and the excavation of six shovel tests (Appendix A, Exhibit 4). The APE was located west of RM 2338 and was relatively flat in topography. The APE was covered in short, local grasses and woodland vegetation in areas; overall ground surface visibility varied widely. In the southwestern portion of the project area, ground visibility varied from 0 to 70 percent, depending on the amount of leaf litter in an area (Appendix B, Photo 1). The southeastern and central portions of the project area had ground surface visibility that averaged 50 percent (Appendix B, Photo 2). The central portion of the project area was also disturbed from artificial terracing, from the previous use of the project area as agricultural fields (Appendix B, Photo 3). The northern portion of the project area generally had poor ground surface visibility (Appendix B, Photo 4). Several piles of modern trash were located throughout the project area (Appendix B, Photo 5). Six shovel tests were placed in areas that appeared undisturbed and had less than 30 percent visibility (Appendix B, Photo 6) (see Appendix C for shovel test log). No cultural materials were observed during shovel testing.

Two isolated finds were observed on the ground surface during the survey (see Appendix A, Exhibit 4). Isolated find (IF) 1 is a small chert flake, which is possibly cultural (Appendix B, Photo 7). IF 2 consists of four, possibly historic glass containers, which are surrounded by modern trash (Appendix B, Photo 8). The first container is a clear, cylindrical bottle with a wide mouth screw top and a collar near the lip (Appendix B, Photo 9). The bottle is marked with “64 FL OZ (2 QT)”

and “DISPOSE OF PROPERLY” on the shoulder. No distinctive maker’s marks were noted on this bottle. The second container is a clear cylindrical jar, with decoration near the lip and a fluted round base (Appendix B, Photo 10). No distinctive maker’s marks were noted on this jar.

The third container is a clear octagonal jar, with a screw top and decoration near the shoulder and insweep (Appendix B, Photo 11). The maker’s mark in the center of the jar base indicates that it was manufactured by the Glass Container Corp. between 1967 and 1987 (Appendix B, Photo 12) (Lockhart et al. 2015). The other markings on the base likely indicate factory and mold numbers.

The fourth container is a clear, flask style bottle with a round base. Markings on the body of the bottle read “ONE HALF GALLON” and “ESTABLISHED-ASTI-1881”. Other body markings include a crest symbol and a diamond pattern along the insweep (Appendix B, Photo 13). On the base of the bottle, the phrases “UNITED VINTNERS, INC.” and “REFILLING PROHIBITED” appear (Appendix B, Photo 14). The maker’s mark indicates the bottle was made by the Thatcher Glass Manufacturing Company between 1944 and 1985 (Lockhart et al. 2007). The number “69” on the base may indicate a manufacturing date of 1969. Given that these bottles were surrounded by modern trash it is possible that they were ‘heirlooms’, which were deposited in their current location relatively recently.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Terracon archaeologists conducted an intensive pedestrian survey of an approximate 40-acre APE in advance of the acquisition of the Fisher Tract by Georgetown Independent School District in Florence, Williamson County, Texas. The project area was systematically surveyed and six shovel tests were placed within the APE. No archeological sites were recorded.

It is Terracon’s opinion that there are no historic properties in the APE eligible for listing on the NRHP or designation as a SAL. Therefore, Terracon recommends that the project be allowed to proceed as future construction of facilities will not affect historic properties. In the unlikely event that human remains or intact cultural resources are discovered during construction, construction should cease in the vicinity of the discovery and Terracon, the Texas Historical Commission’s Archeology Division, or other proper authorities should be contacted.

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Cultural Resources Services

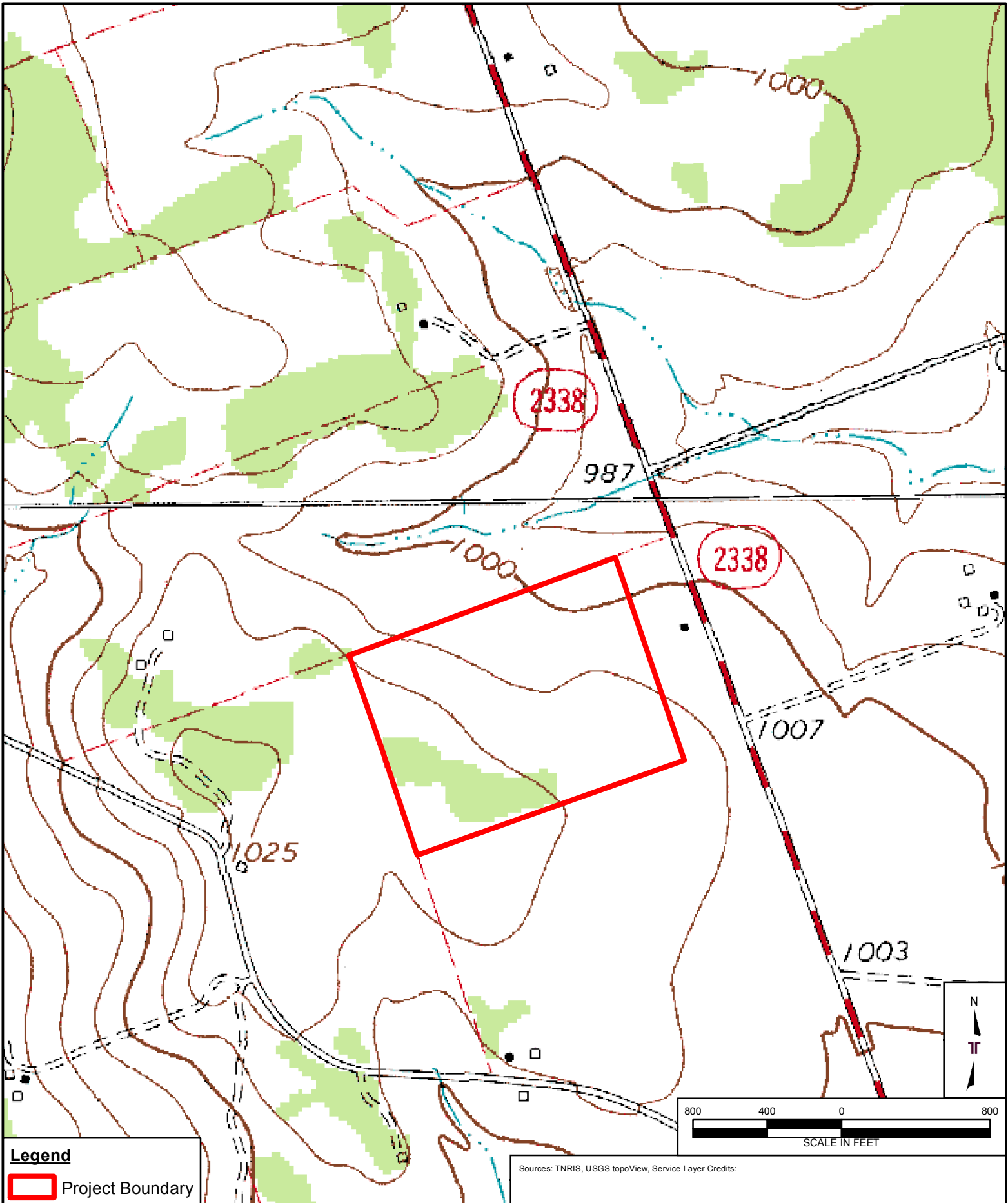
The Fisher Tract ■ Florence, Williamson County, Texas

October 11, 2017 ■ Terracon Project No. 96177466A



APPENDIX A

Exhibit Maps



Legend
 Project Boundary

Sources: TNRIS, USGS topoView, Service Layer Credits:

Project Mngr:	AS
Drawn By:	Terracon
Checked By:	CG
Approved By:	AS

Project No.	96177466A
Scale:	AS SHOWN
File No.:	96177466A
Date:	Jun 29, 2017


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1995 USGS Topographic Maps: Leander NE and Florence
 Fisher Tract Survey
 10431 RM 2338
 Florence, Williamson County, Texas

EXHIBIT
1



Legend

 Project Boundary

Sources: TNRIS, USGS topoView, Service Layer Credits:

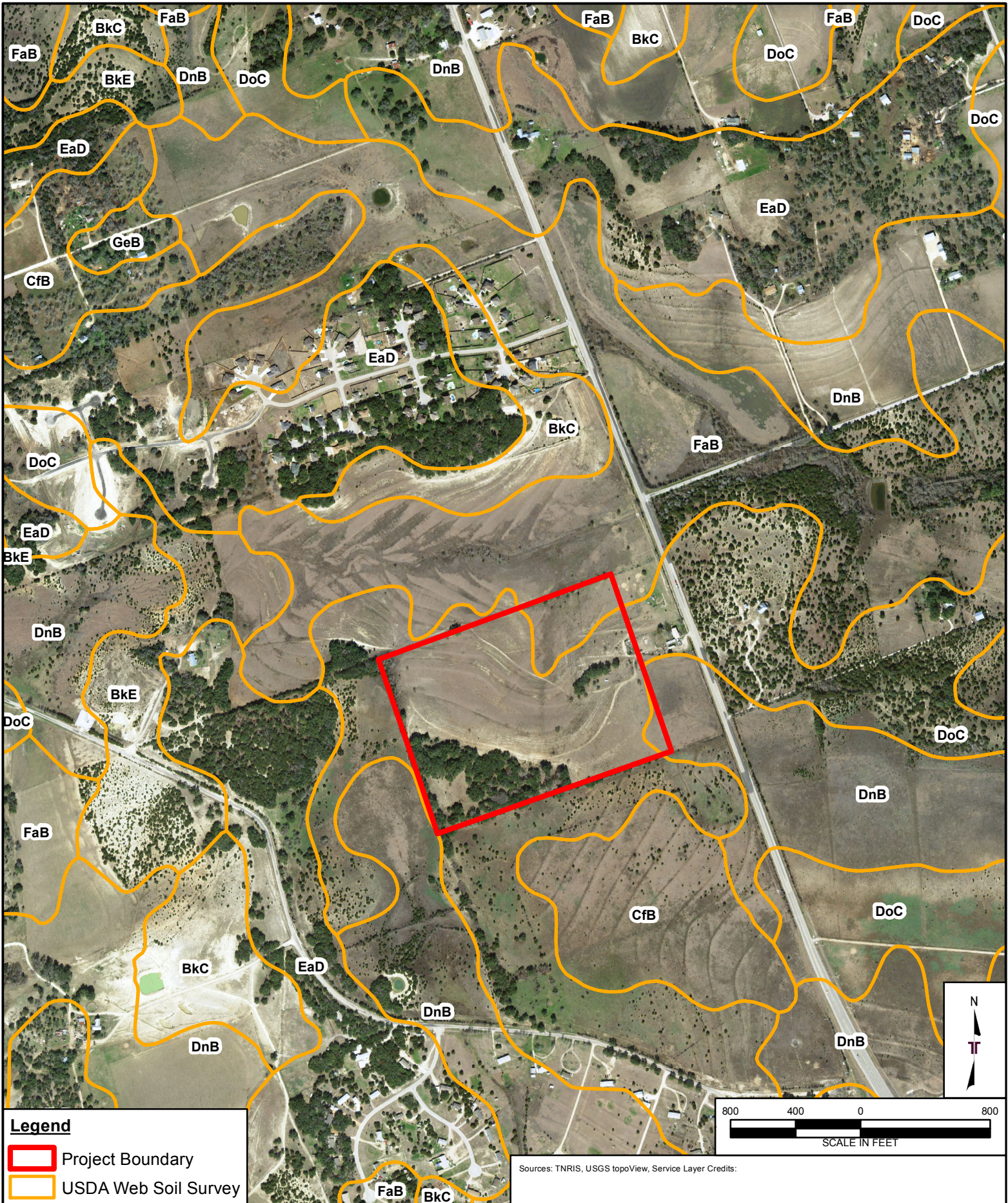
Project Mngr:	AS
Drawn By:	Terracon
Checked By:	CG
Approved By:	AS

Project No.	96177466A
Scale:	AS SHOWN
File No.:	96177466A
Date:	Jun 29, 2017

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2015 Aerial Photograph
 Fisher Tract Survey
 10431 RM 2338
 Florence, Williamson County, Texas

EXHIBIT
 2



Legend

- Project Boundary
- USDA Web Soil Survey

Sources: TNRIS, USGS topoView, Service Layer Credits:

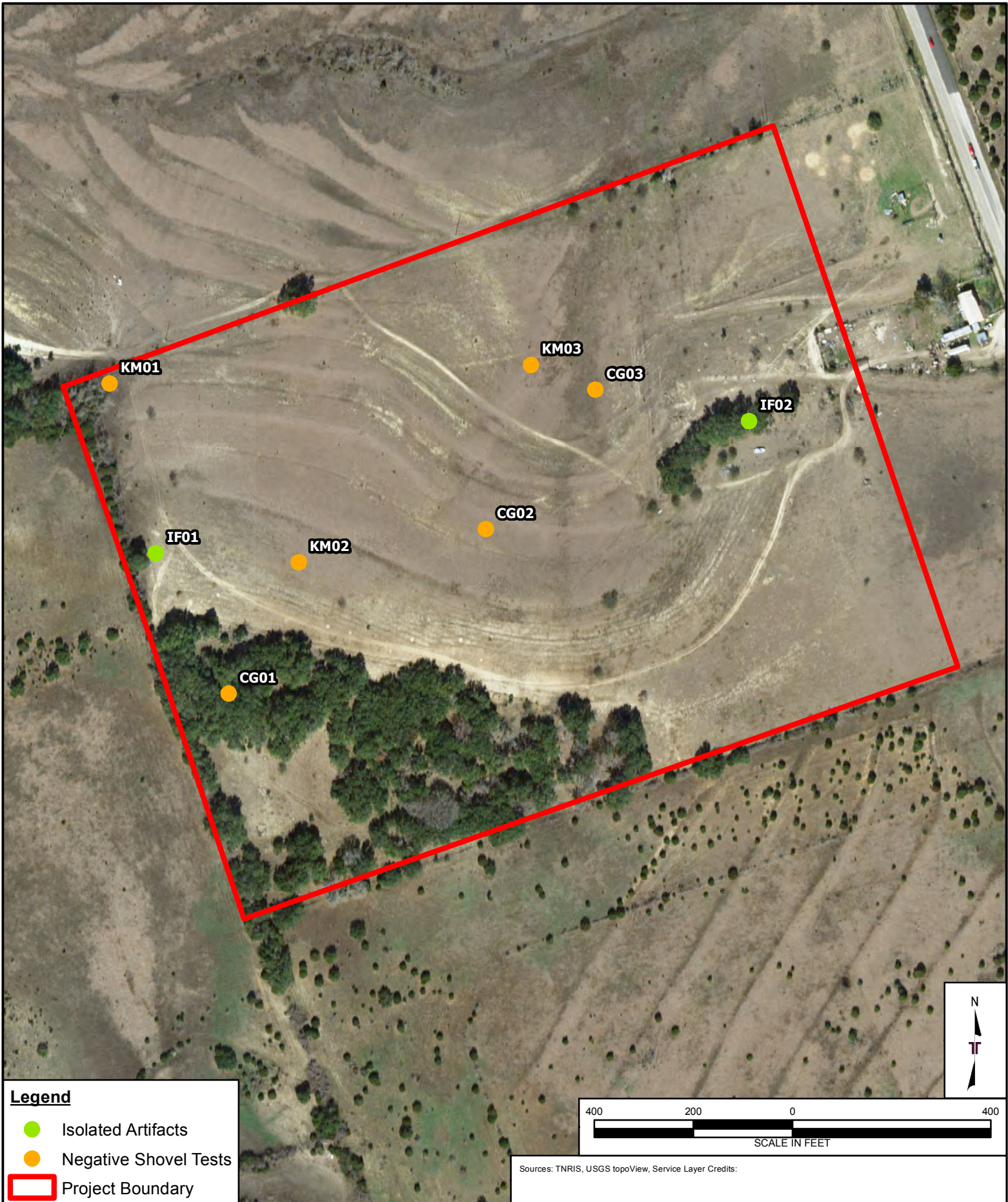
Project Mngr:	AS
Drawn By:	Terracon
Checked By:	CG
Approved By:	AS

Project No:	96177466A
Scale:	AS SHOWN
File No.:	96177466A
Date:	Jun 29, 2017

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USDA Web Soil Survey
 Fisher Tract Survey
 10431 RM 2338
 Florence, Williamson County, Texas

EXHIBIT
 3



Legend

- Isolated Artifacts
- Negative Shovel Tests
- Project Boundary



Sources: TNRIS, USGS topoView, Service Layer Credits:

Project Mngr:	AS
Drawn By:	Terracon
Checked By:	CG
Approved By:	AS

Project No.	96177466A
Scale:	AS SHOWN
File No.:	96177466A
Date:	Jul 10, 2017

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Results Map
 Fisher Tract Survey
 10431 RM 2338
 Florence, Williamson County, Texas

EXHIBIT
4

Cultural Resources Services

The Fisher Tract ■ Florence, Williamson County, Texas

October 11, 2017 ■ Terracon Project No. 96177466A



APPENDIX B

Photographs

Cultural Resources Services

The Fisher Tract ■ Florence, Williamson County, Texas

Terracon Project No. 96177466A ■ Photos taken July 7, 2017



Photo 1. Southwest corner of the project area, near CG01. Note poor ground visibility due to leaf litter. View to the northwest.



Photo 2. South central part of project area. Note good ground surface visibility. View to the southeast.

Cultural Resources Services

The Fisher Tract ■ Florence, Williamson County, Texas
Terracon Project No. 96177466A ■ Photos taken July 7, 2017



Photo 3. Central part of project area. Note ground disturbances from artificial terracing. View to the east.



Photo 4. Northern portion of project area, near KM01. Note poor ground surface visibility. View to the east.

Cultural Resources Services

The Fisher Tract ■ Florence, Williamson County, Texas
Terracon Project No. 96177466A ■ Photos taken July 7, 2017



Photo 5. Modern trash pile near small wooded area and IF02, in the central portion of project area. View to the south.



Photo 6. View of shovel test CG02.

Responsive ■ Resourceful ■ Reliable



Photo 7. Small flake of chert, possibly cultural. Marked as IF01.



Photo 8. Four possibly historic glass containers. Marked as IF02.



Photo 9. First glass container, a bottle, from IF02.



Photo 10. Second glass container, a jar, from IF02.



Photo 11. Third glass container, a jar, from IF02.



Photo 12. Base of third glass container, a jar, from IF02. Note maker's mark in center of base.



Photo 13. Fourth glass container, a bottle, from IF02.



Photo 14. Base of fourth glass container, a bottle, from IF02. Note maker's mark on right side of base.

Cultural Resources Services

The Fisher Tract ■ Florence, Williamson County, Texas

October 11, 2017 ■ Terracon Project No. 96177466A



APPENDIX C

Shovel Test Log

Cultural Resources Services (Shovel Test Log)

The Fisher Tract ■ Florence, Williamson County, Texas

Shovel Tests from July 7, 2017 ■ Terracon Project No. 96177466A



ST ID #	Depth cmbs	+/-	Ground cover	Munsell & Color	Texture	% Gravels	Comments
KM01	0-15	-	100%	5YR 2.5/1 Black	Silty clay	0-10%	Compact dry clay. Small rootlets from grass
KM01	15-30	-	-	7.5YR 3/2 Dark brown	Clay	0-10%	Compact dry clay. Small rootlets. Terminated due to presence of calcium carbonate nodules.
CG01	0-25	-	100%	5YR 3/1 Very dark grey	Clay	0-20% at top; 50-75% near bottom	Terminated due to decomposing bedrock starting around 20 cmbs
KM02	0-15	-	100%	7.5YR 2.5/1 Black	Silty clay	0-10%	Compact dry clay with rootlets.
KM02	15-35	-	-	7.5YR 4/2 Dark reddish gray	Silty clay	0-10%	Compact dry clay. Terminated due to presence of calcium carbonate nodules.
CG02	0-25	-	80%	2.5YR 2.5/1 Black	Clay	10-20%	Compact clay. Gradual change to lower, lighter color.
CG02	25-30	-	-	7.5YR 4/3 Reddish brown	Clay	50-60%	Terminated due to presence of decomposing bedrock.
KM03	0-40	-	100%	10YR 4/2 Dark grayish brown	Silty clay	0-10%	No clear soil color change. Terminated due to presence of calcium carbonate nodules.

Cultural Resources Services (Shovel Test Log)

The Fisher Tract ■ Florence, Williamson County, Texas

Shovel Tests from July 7, 2017 ■ Terracon Project No. 96177466A



ST ID #	Depth cmbs	+/-	Ground cover	Munsell & Color	Texture	% Gravels	Comments
CG03	0-35	-	90%	7.5YR 4/1 Dark gray	Clay	0-5%	Compact clay
CG03	35-40	-	-	10YR 5/2 Grayish brown	Clay	5-10%	Compact clay. Terminated due to presence of calcium carbonate nodules.