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CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEY

OF THE

RIVERSIDE PARK TRAILS

BROWNWOOD, TEXAS

Texas Antiquities Permit No. 3228

Jesse Todd, MS, MA

Illustrations by
Lance K. Trask

Submitted to:

CITY OF BROWNWOOD, TEXAS

511 East Adams

Brownwood, Texas 76804

Prepared by

AR CONSULTANTS, INC.

P. O. Box 820727

Dallas, Texas 75382

Cultural Resources Report 2003-40

October 7, 2003

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ABSTRACT

The City of Brownwood is proposing to create a one mile concrete hiking trail and rehabilitate a 0.7 mile nature trail in Riverside Park. Funds have been secured from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Since Brownwood is a political entity of Texas, an archaeological survey was required by the Texas Historical Commission. This report presents the results of the pedestrian cultural resources investigation which was conducted by AR Consultants, Inc. No significant cultural materials were discovered during the pedestrian survey. No artifacts were collected and no sites were found. Although there was site potential in the floodplain, archeological surveys by Whitsett and Howard indicate that sites are located on the banks adjacent to major drainages and not in the floodplain. If buried cultural resources are found during construction, work should immediately cease in that area and the Texas Historical Commission should be so advised.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

AR Consultants and the authors wish to thank everyone involved in the preparation of the report for their assistance. While we accept responsibility for the content of the report, we wish to thank the several people who showed their interest and support of our work.

In particular, we want to thank David Withers, Brownwood's Administrator for the Parks and Recreation Department, for providing project information and visiting the proposed trail routes with us.

In addition, thanks to my coworker, Lance K. Trask, for the illustrations used in this report and enjoying the mosquitoes and rain with me.

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Brownwood intends to construct a mile long concrete hiking trail and rehabilitate a 0.7 mile long nature trail in Riverside Park, Brown County, Texas. The project is also being sponsored by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Both trails are west of Pecan Bayou and approximately one-half mile north of East Commerce Street (Figure 1). The purpose of the survey was to locate any cultural resources that are present within the area of potential effect of the new trail routes and to make recommendations about their significance and how they might be impacted by construction. The scope of the study included a records check, a comprehensive survey, shovel testing to explore for buried deposits, the recording of archaeological sites, when found, and the preparation of a summary report.

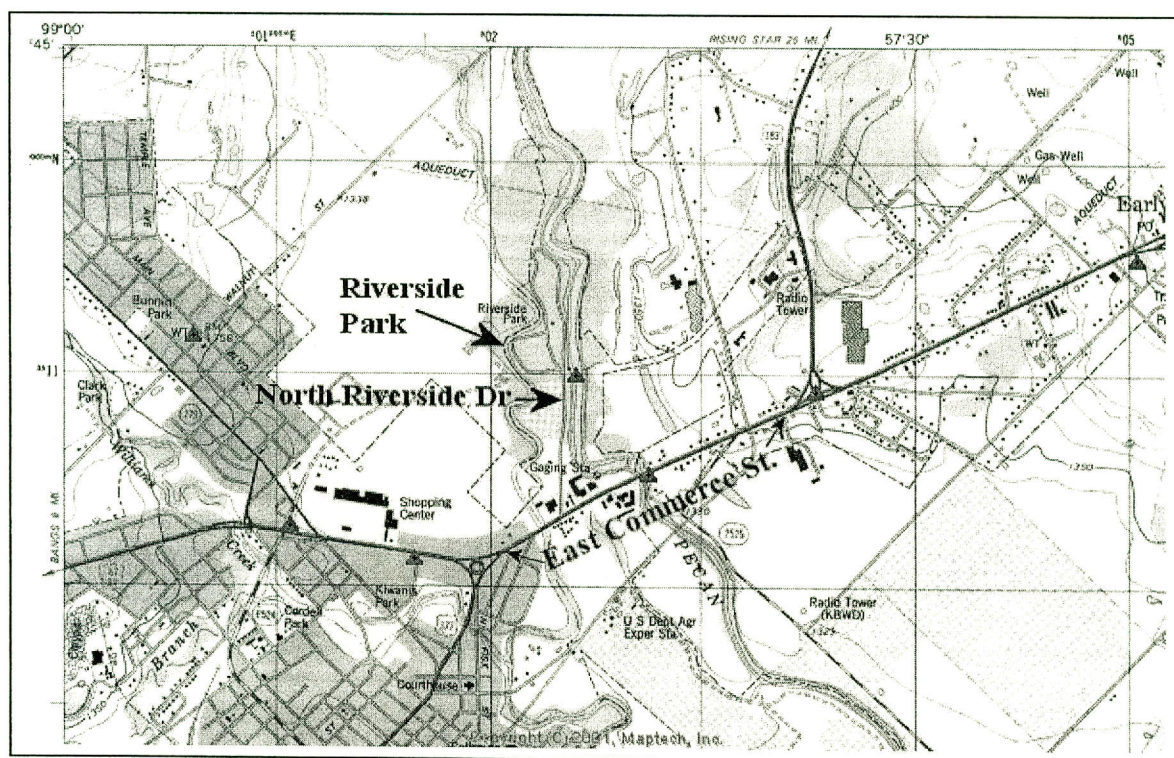


Figure 1. Riverside Park shown on a section of the Brownwood TX 7.5' USGS map.

The study was conducted at the request of the City of Brownwood because the City is a political subdivision of the State of Texas that is responsible to the terms of the Texas Antiquities Code; consequently, a Texas Antiquities Permit was required for the study. Relevant federal legislation that may apply includes the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (PL-96-515), the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

(PL-90-190), and the Archeological and Historical Preservation Act of 1974, as amended (PL-93-291).

This report has been written in accordance with the guidelines for short reports prepared by the Council of Texas Archeologists (ND). The following report presents a brief description of the natural and cultural environment of the study area and vicinity. This is followed by a description of the research design and methodology. The results of the investigation follow and constitute the body of the report. The last chapter presents recommendations that arise from the study. A list of references cited concludes the report.

Administrative Information

Sponsor:	City of Brownwood, Texas
Review Agency:	Texas Historical Commission, Archeology Division
Principal Investigator:	Jesse Todd, MS, MA
Field Crew:	Lance K. Trask and Todd
Fieldwork Dates:	September 25 and 26, 2003
Project Man-days:	2
Acres Surveyed:	approximately 2
Sites Investigated:	
Prehistoric:	None
Historic:	None
Curation Facility:	no artifacts recovered

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Brown County lies in the Rolling Plains of Texas, more specifically the Mesquite Plains (Diamond, Riskind, and Orzell 1987: Figure 1) east of the High Plains, north of the Edwards Plateau and Llano Uplift, and just west of the Live Oak-Mesquite Savanna [the Western Cross Timbers of Dyksterhuis (1948:Figure 1)]. The study area is underlain by the Pennsylvanian-aged undivided Strawn Group which includes sandstone, mudstone, limestone, shale, conglomerate and siltstone (Bureau of Economic Geology 1976). Hill tops are capped with the Lower Cretaceous-aged Travis Peak Formation which includes conglomerate, sandstone and limestone. Quaternary sediments are mapped in the Pecan Bayou valley.

The soil in the study area is mapped as the Frio-Sunev-Winters general soil association (Clower 1980: General Soil Map). Frequently flooded and occasionally flooded Frio soil is present on both sides of Pecan Bayou (Gower 1980:Sheet 29).

Brown County averages 26.75 inches of rain yearly and rain is distributed throughout the year with seven months having less than 2.0 inches of rain, one with 2.71 inches and four (May, June, September, and October) having more than three inches. Average annual temperatures at Brownwood range from to 44.7° to 84.8° F.

As indicated above, the study area is located in the Rolling Plains vegetative area of Texas. Kuchler (1969) classifies the plains as being dominated by mesquite and buffalo grass. Various other grasses also are present. Mesquite is present throughout the area due to recent invasion of this species into disturbed areas. Live oaks and red oaks are commonly found on the slopes and in the rocky uplands. The Balconian biotic zone (Blair 1950: Figure 1) includes the City of Early. This zone contains 57 species of mammals and numerous reptiles and amphibians.

CULTURE HISTORY

Brown County lies within the western part of the Central Texas archaeological culture area as defined by Suhm (1960:63-65.). The culture area includes the middle stretches of the Colorado and Brazos River watersheds. Limited professional archaeological work had been carried out in Brown County before the mid-1970s. A literature search by Campbell (1960) revealed that only seven references discuss the county, and only two are considered important. The same was also true for surrounding counties.

The first excavation in Brown County was conducted in 1919 at the Pittman site on Willis Creek by J.E. Pearce of The University of Texas. Pearce tested two unrewarding "burned rock ring middens" which he concluded were the result of the accumulation of discarded hearth debris (Campbell 1952). Shafer and others (1975a:8) note that there appear to be several different midden types which have different geographical ranges and may be associated with different functions. Shafer believes that adequate testing would result in obtaining carbonized plant remains that would help to clarify site functions.

In 1933, Cryus Ray (1933) briefly described a burial which was destroyed by road construction. Several other burials from the area are reported by word-of-mouth, but their existence is speculative.

In the mid-1970s, archaeologists from Texas A & M University conducted archaeological surveys of proposed floodwater retarding structures throughout Brown County (Baxter and Shafer 1975; Shafer 1975; Shafer, Baxter, and Dering 1975a, 1975b; Shafer, Baxter, and Stearns 1976). These surveys recorded lithic scatters, burned rock middens, a lithic quarry site, a "burial shelter", two small shelters, and a habitation site. Shafer is rightly cautious in developing models of subsistence and habitation for the area, but he feels that excavations and surveys in nearby counties provided sufficient data to construct an hypothetical pattern of adaptation for Late Prehistoric times (Shafer and others 1975a:8). This very general open-ended settlement model specifies that:

1. Activities were concentrated along the better watered streams;
2. Most campsites are open, but bluffs and rockshelters were utilized;
3. There appears to be less intensive use of the smaller tributaries with only occasional or intermittent use of the upper tributaries;
4. Exploitation of lithic resource outcrops in the uplands is a possibility;
5. Bison were a possible food resource; and,
6. Plants probably played an important subsistence role, perhaps even greater than that of animals.

Interested amateur archaeologists have contributed to the recording of archaeological materials in the county. Bransford Eubanks (1976) reported a collection of projectile points from a site in the northern part of the county. The collection was dominated by Archaic dart points but it also contained Late prehistoric arrow points. Several Paleo-Indian points were also noted.

Paleo-Indian Period

The Late Pleistocene marks the earliest occurrences of man in Central Texas. Numerous surface finds of Clovis, Folsom, Plainview, and Angustora points indicate kill sites or campsites. The best *in situ* assemblage comes from the Horn Shelter No. 2 in Bosque County where a Brazos Fishtail occupation is associated with radiocarbon dates about 8,000 B.C. (Watt 1978; Redder 1985).

Archaic Period

Pre-ceramic materials characterized by burned rock middens (mounds) and dating from approximately 7000 B.C. to A.D. 500 mark the Archaic Period. Little is known about the Archaic in Brown County other than to be confident that evidence of it exists. Burned rock middens, a common site feature, were recently discussed at a spring meeting of the Council of Texas Archeologists (Hester 1991).

Late Prehistoric Period

The Late Prehistoric is comprised of late complexes distinguished by the presence of some pottery and arrow points (Shafer 1977). Kelley first recognized the Austin and Toyah foci which have been refined by Jelks (1962) based on work at the Kyle site at Lake Whitney. The Henrietta focus described by Krieger (1946:87-159) as a culture with an agriculture/hunting economic base is another Late Prehistoric complex of the region. This focus spans a period from the mid-fifteenth into the sixteenth centuries, but probably began during prehistoric times.

Shafer's Late Prehistoric model described above builds on a shift from chronology building to settlement/subsistence models such as those developed at DeCordova Bend Reservoir (Skinner 1971) and at Hog Creek in Bosque County (see Henry 1995).

Historic Native American Occupation

Historic sources mentioned a variety of Native American tribes and groups that either occupied or passed through the county (Havins 1958). Spanish documents from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries suggest that Lipans or Eastern Apaches may have occupied parts of the county. By the mid-eighteenth century, the Penatekas [south band of the Comanches] inhabited parts of the county. In 1851, Captain R.B. March reported that the streams flowing through the region drained by Pecan Bayou were a favorite locality for Native American habitation (Havins 1958). Unfortunately, little is known about historic Native American sites in the county regardless of the reported presence of Native American groups.

Recent paleoenvironmental reconstructions in adjacent areas such as the Southern High Plains (Johnson and Holiday 1995) and the Upper Colorado River Basin (Lintz et al.

1993:261-343) should be useful in developing local models of the changing environment when excavations are conducted.

Brown County History

A brief review of the history of the county follows but readers are referred to the following sources for more detail: Havins (1931, 1932, 1937, 1958); House (1949); Hunter (1950); Smith (1956); White (1941); and Wise (1926).

Mid-eighteenth century documents state that this area was within the territory of the southern Comanches. Before 1846, several small armed forces or posses passed through Brown County in pursuit of Comanche groups. Besides the small forces, it is quite possible that a few early explorers passed through the area before 1846. Between 1846 and 1856, at least nine survey parties visited the area.

Permanent settlers are not known to have entered the area before 1856. In 1856, two families settled in the area. At about the same time, the Texas Legislature created Brown County with the purpose of restraining roving Native American groups. News of the new county brought nearly 50 families within the next few years. By 1859, Brownwood had been established as the county seat.

Besides the migration of people from east Texas, land agents and glowing publicity attracted many immigrants to Central Texas. One of the largest land agencies at the time was the DeCordova and Frazier Agency. DeCordova wrote several books and stressed the positive aspects of each region in Texas. In his book *Texas, Her Resources and Her Public Men*, DeCordova (1858) describes Brown County as:

This county, on account of its position, is sparsely settled; but the day is not far distant when its fine lands, pure water, and mountain air will attract innumerable settlers, especially when the Pacific Railway progresses, as it must inevitably pass through this county. None of your dreary, flat, miserable level plains that require the aid of man to become anyway interesting or attractive. No, here you will find majestic hills rising gradually from her blooming valleys, which, while they enhance the grandeur and beauty of the scene, form an inexhaustible mine of all the elements requisite to preserve and increase the fertility of the lowlands.

Henry Ford, an early local historian, collected information at the turn of the century from older residents concerning the early settlement of the county. According to Hunter (1950), Ford's work suggests that the early settlers built log homes of the double-log house style, which Jordan (1978) would refer to as two-pen log houses. Clap boards were used for shingles, and floors were whip-sawed hardwood lumber or hewn split logs. Furniture was simple and homemade. The early frontier settler's meal usually consisted of some of the following items: cornbread, milk, butter, wild honey, bacon, beef, coffee, sugar, a variety of homegrown vegetables, wild game, fowl, or fish (Hunter 1950).

At the beginning of the War Between the States, Brown County had 109 names registered on the tax roles and a population of several hundred. David Baugh settled in the vicinity of Lake Brownwood at this time (Kirby and Moir 1976). The Reconstruction Era brought instability to Texas but by 1870, the state was regaining its stability and organization. Brown County had a population of about 500 by 1870 and this shows the little growth had occurred in the previous decade. There was significant population growth between 1870 and 1880. The population increased by more than 700 people a year, reaching nearly 8,000 by 1880. Most new families were seeking land for ranching and farming.

Prior to 1880, most settlers raised cattle. A small amount of farming was done, but usually only for home consumption. Before 1870, there had been fewer than six cultivated tracts in the entire county. Before barbed wire arrived in the early 1880s, only cultivated land was enclosed with rail or stone fences (Havins 1958).

In the early twentieth century, several new factors affected Brown County farmers. Cotton had been the most important crop since the 1890s, but by 1913, the boll weevil and the introduction of the tractor, wheat and oats, soon replaced cotton. Population growth and farming tapered off during the second quarter of the twentieth century. The cattle industry declined from 52,000 head in 1879 to only 10,000 head in 1956 [partially due to a drought in the mid-1950s]. Population shifted within the county with rural areas losing families and Brownwood gaining residents during the mid-twentieth century

Previous Archaeological Investigations

Numerous small scale surveys and one large survey have been conducted nearby in Brown County. A survey conducted for the Texas Water Development Board in 1978 by Hayden Whitsett recorded several sites along the banks of Pecan Bayou to the south of the pipeline crossing. The sites included surface deposits, and, in fact, each of the sites was exposed on the bank or on the surface and all are in the bayou bank area. The bank sites are generally recognized by the presence of mussel shell as well as by lithic debris and fire-cracked rock. Margaret Howard recorded several sites in this same area downstream and these sites are also exposed on the surface Texas Archeological Sites Atlas, hereafter TASA (TASA 2003).

Jerry Henderson, the archaeologist for the Texas Water Development Board, recorded two prehistoric open campsites, 41BR497 and 498 in the northern part of Riverside Park during test trenching for a pipeline. A site was discovered on each bank of Adam's Branch, but none were discovered on the banks of Pecan Bayou (TASA 2003).

METHODOLOGY

Prior to our investigation, the records review as well as review of published documents led to the recognition that surface and buried site deposits were to be expected along the edges of Pecan Bayou. However, since the impact of trail construction was to be shallow, the focus was on the floodplain surface. It was expected that prehistoric sites might be discovered if there were elevations above flooding adjacent to Pecan Bayou.

The length of the two trails totaled 1.7 miles and only the hiking trail, which is to be a mile, was to be excavated to a depth of 4 inches below the ground surface. Both trails are to be 8 feet wide.

Shovel testing, at first, was to be done following the guidelines of the Council of Texas Archeologists (2002) and adopted by the Texas Historical Commission. However, once the study area was visited and the disturbances were noted, shovel testing was done on a judgmental basis, basically in areas where there was no disturbance. The clay was manually inspected for cultural materials and the pit walls were examined closely for artifacts. Notes on the soils, vegetation, landforms and other relevant material were taken as well as photographs.

Backhoe trenching was not done since the maximum impact would be only 30 centimeters below the present surface, well within shovel testing depths.

RESULTS

The results chapter consists of a description of each proposed trail route and the archaeological survey of that area and conclusions derived from the investigations. The Nature Trail route is discussed first even though it is the northernmost route because the Hiking Trail was being re-measured when the archaeological survey began. The proposed trail routes had been flagged by the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Brownwood. Shovel tests discussed in the text are described generally, but specific information is provided in Table 1 at the end of the chapter. Shovel test locations are shown on Figure 2.

Nature Trail

The proposed Nature Trail will be 0.7 mile long (approximately 1232 meters). The proposed route is the trail which splits off from the Hiking Trail that is parallel to North Riverside Drive as shown in Figure 2. The first 700 meters of the trail route consists of a gravel two-track road that runs north of the hiking trail which crosses a buried pipeline. At the end of the gravel trail the road turns into a dirt, two-track road that goes up a hill, turns west and then comes down the hill, rejoining the main road. The trail is bordered to the east by a narrow forested floodplain area which is adjacent to Pecan Bayou. The forested area includes pecan and elm trees along with saw greenbriar and various grass species. Pecan Bayou is 15+ meters wide and its banks are vertical. It is 3 to 5+ meters from the bank tops to the water. The depth of the water could not be determined because it was muddy. West of the road was another narrow forested area containing a levee. Unimproved pasture is west of the levee.

At the end of the gravel road, the proposed trail route follows a dirt, two-track road north for approximately 532 meters. The proposed trail route is bordered by a narrow forested area on the east and north adjacent to Pecan Bayou and an unimproved pasture to the west. The proposed trail route turns slightly east and rises at about 15 degrees to the summit of the hill and slopes down to the gravel road at about 15 degrees. The proposed trail route that follows the existing dirt, two-track road forms a tear-dropped shape. Occasionally, gravel piles were noticed along the dirt road. At the beginning of the dirt trail there is a pecan tree that is probably a hundred years old, but surrounding trees are probably between 25 and 50 years old. Trees include elms and numerous pecans. Understory vegetation includes saw greenbriar, tickle grass and various other grass species. The area had been disturbed as shown by scars from previous bull dozing activities. In addition, the dirt, two-track road had been bladed because the road was one-half meter lower than the surrounding land. The exposed soil was inspected for cultural materials but none were found.

Shovel testing was conducted although ground visibility and eye-height visibility were 100 percent and the only impact would be to the ground surface. The shovel tests were placed approximately 100 meters apart in the proposed trail route to explore for buried cultural deposits. None of the shovel tests encountered cultural

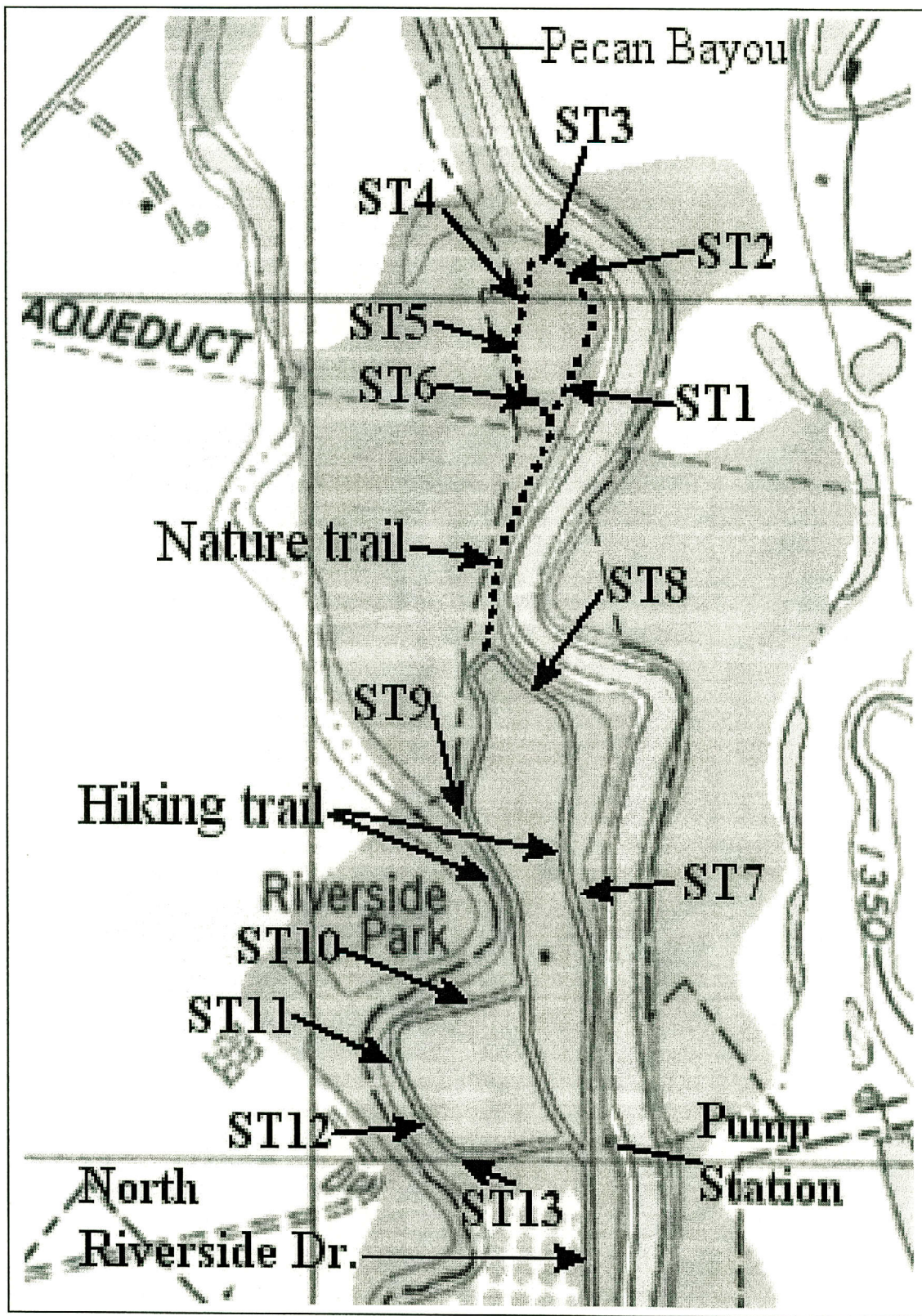


Figure 2. Shovel test locations and areas discussed in the text.

materials. Shovel test 1 was placed 50 meters from where the dirt trail bifurcated and the land rose. The shovel test encountered sandy clay overlying sandy silt at 25 centimeters below the surface. Shovel tests 2 and 3 encountered the same soils as shovel test 1, but the contacts were at 30 and 37 centimeters, respectively. Shovel test 4 was placed where the trail sloped downward and encountered sandy clay overlying asphalt and limestone gravel at 24 centimeters below the surface. Shovel test 5 encountered 33+ centimeters of sandy clay, and shovel test 6 encountered sandy clay overlying limestone gravel at 3 centimeters below the surface.

Hiking Trail

The proposed hiking trail route begins approximately 100 meters north of the park entrance and on the east side of the North Riverside Drive. The proposed trail route parallels North Riverside Drive north, turns west and then turns south. The trail route leaves North Riverside Drive and parallels a park road from which it also departs across an open area to rejoin the beginning of the proposed trail route east of North Riverside Drive. A Brown County Water District pump station is located 20 meters north of the beginning of the proposed route and is 17 meters long. The buried pipeline to the pump station continues 200 meters north of the pump station and the proposed hiking trail route is to be placed on top of the excavated pipeline route. The proposed trail route turns northwest from the pipeline route after 200 meters and shovel test 7 was placed 100 meters northwest of that deviation and encountered 38+ centimeters of sterile silty clay. The proposed route is to be placed parallel to an existing metal and cable fence approximately 50 meters from shovel test 7 (Figure 3). No shovel tests were placed in the disturbed sediments and there was greater than 30 percent ground visibility.

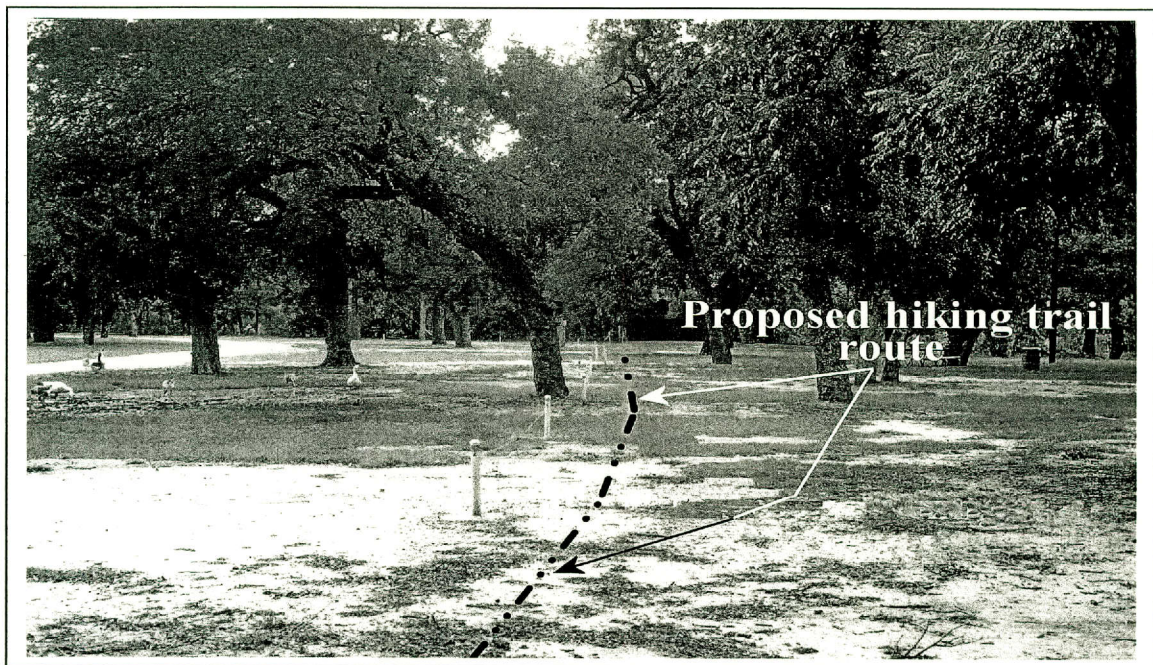


Figure 3. The proposed trail route is east of the existing metal and cable fence. View is to the northwest.

The fence continues northwest and terminates where the proposed trail route will turn west. Shovel test 8 was placed in what appeared to be undisturbed sediments at the bend in the trail and encountered 38+centimeters of silty clay. Limestone gravel and broken glass was found in the last 3 centimeters.

From the turn, the proposed trail route goes west, paralleling the north side of North Riverside Drive, and is in the easement of the park road. Limestone gravel is abundant and there is a two-track road or pull-off area in the eastern portion of the proposed route. The entrance to the proposed nature trail is in the western portion of the proposed route. No shovel tests were placed in this disturbed area.

After passing the entrance to the proposed nature trail, the proposed route turns south and parallels the existing road on the west side. The proposed trail route is to be placed on an existing two-track road in a pull-off area. Shovel test 9 was placed in what appeared to be undisturbed sediments south of the pull-off area and adjacent to a bend in the road. The shovel test encountered 34+ centimeters of sterile silty clay.

From shovel test 9, the proposed trail route continues south and was placed in the narrow existing park road easement which contained limestone gravel on the surface. South of the bend in the road, the proposed trail will cross a disturbed area and runs in front of a public restroom (Figure 4). No shovel tests were placed in these areas.

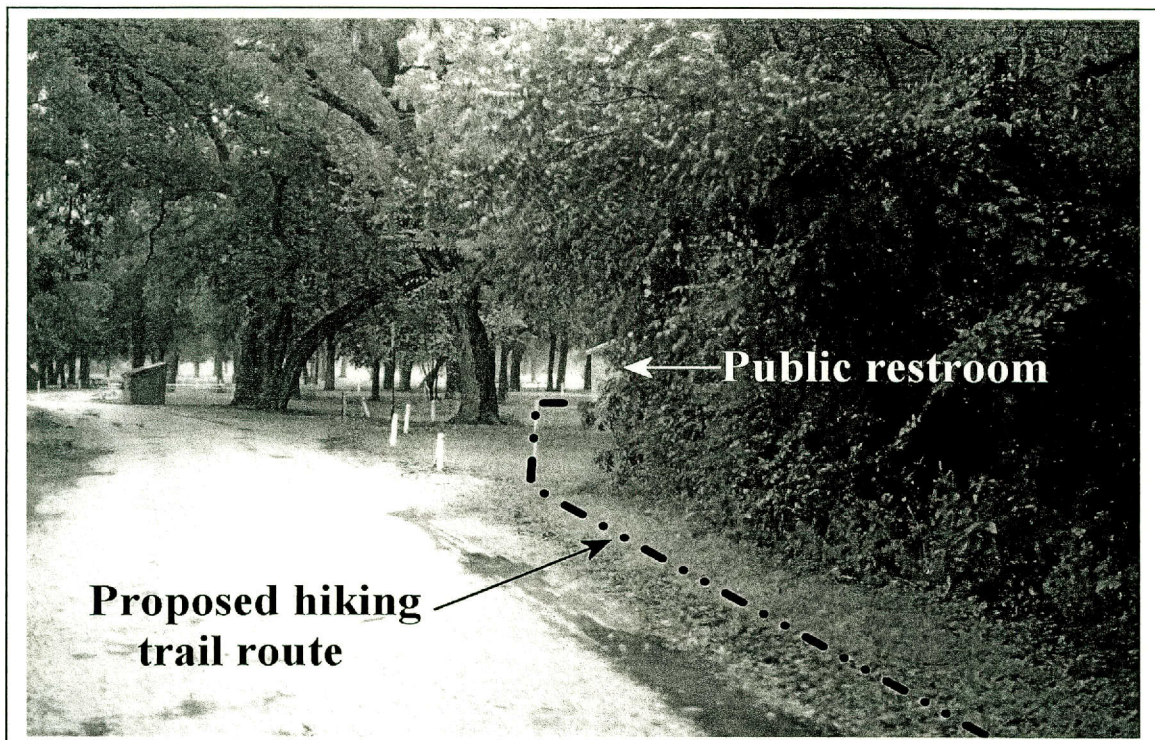


Figure 4. Proposed trail crossing area between existing park road and in front of public restroom. View is to the southeast.

South of the public restroom, the proposed trail route turns southwest and follows an existing park road. Shovel test 10 was placed approximately 30 meters southwest of the public restroom in what appeared to be undisturbed sediments. The shovel test encountered 28 centimeters of sterile silty clay overlying sterile sandy clay. The trail crosses a gravel entrance to a park table and then turns southeast. Shovel test 11 was placed at the bend in the proposed trail and uncovered 34+ centimeters of sterile sandy clay.

The proposed route continues for approximately 100 meters south from shovel test 11 and then turns east. The route parallels the existing park road to the west for approximately 75 meters and then continues another 25 meters before turning east. Shovel test 12 was placed on the only high ground along the proposed trail approximately 50 meters south of shovel test 11. Shovel test 12 was excavated to 37 centimeters. The shovel test encountered sterile silty clay. Shovel test 13 was placed where the route turns east and encountered 31 centimeters of sterile silty clay.

From where the proposed trail route turns east, the route continues across a grassy field but there is an artificial hill created around a large pipe half-way between where the proposed route turns and where the trail begins. No shovel tests were placed in this portion of the proposed route.

Conclusions

No significant cultural materials were discovered during the pedestrian survey or in the 13 shovel tests of the archaeological survey conducted at Riverside Park. The only area expected to contain cultural materials in the floodplain, the hiking area, did not. The rest of the hiking trail and the nature trail were either disturbed by construction of park roads, fences and buildings or were in areas not likely for prehistoric occupation.

Not finding prehistoric cultural materials in the floodplain does not mean they are not present. Henderson encountered cultural materials at 57 centimeters below the surface, but the deepest shovel test excavated in this investigation was to 40 centimeters. The potential area for sites is along the bank of Pecan Bayou as seen in Whitsett's and Henderson's surveys. Only 200 meters of the proposed route is adjacent to Pecan Bayou and that had been disturbed by excavation for a pipeline. In addition, Henderson examined the area west of Pecan Bayou in the nature trail area, but did not find any cultural materials.

Table 1. Shovel test descriptions.

ST	Depth (cm)	Description*
1	0 – 29 29 – 32+	Very dark grayish brown (10YR3/2) silty clay Yellowish brown (10YR5/8) very fine sandy silt, also have laminae of yellowish brown very fine sandy silt and dark yellowish brown (10YR4/4) very fine sandy silt
2	0 – 30 30 – 33+	Very dark grayish brown silty clay Yellowish brown very fine sandy silt
3	0 – 37 37 – 43+	Very dark grayish brown silty clay Yellowish brown very fine sandy silt, also have laminae of yellowish brown very fine sandy silt and dark yellowish brown very fine sandy silt
4	0 – 24 24 – 25+	Very dark grayish brown silty clay Limestone gravel and tar
5	0 – 33+	Very dark grayish brown silty clay
6	0 – 3 3 – 9+	Very dark grayish brown silty clay Limestone gravel
7	0 – 34+	Dark yellowish brown (10YR3/4) silty clay
8	0 – 35 35 – 38+	Dark yellowish brown silty clay Limestone gravel and glass
9	0 – 34	Dark yellowish brown silty clay
10	0 – 23 23 – 40+	Dark yellowish brown silty clay Dark brown (10YR3/3) fine sandy clay
11	0 – 37+	Dark brown fine sandy clay
12	0 – 34+	Dark brown fine sandy clay
13	0 – 31+	Dark yellowish brown silty clay

* Munsell color chart numbers are listed only the first time used.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the pedestrian survey, AR Consultants recommends that further cultural resource investigations are unwarranted in conjunction with the creation of the hiking trail and rehabilitation of the nature trail in Riverside Park, Brownwood, Texas.

If unknown cultural resources are uncovered during construction, work should immediately cease in that area, and the Texas Historical Commission and the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Brownwood should be so advised.

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