

Environmental Assessment

To

**Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove
Headwalls on Runway 17/35 and
Taxiway D**

Prepared by:

Defense Support Services, LLC (DS2)

82d Civil Engineer Squadron

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**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
TO REPAIR/MODIFY DRAINAGE AND REMOVE HEADWALLS ON RUNWAY 17/35
AND TAXIWAY D AT SHEPPARD AIR FORCE BASE, TEXAS**

AGENCY: Department of the Air Force, 82d Training Wing, Sheppard Air Force Base (AFB), Texas.

PURPOSE: The 82d Training Wing (82 TRW) proposes to modify an existing drainage ditch northeast of building 1360 which continues to runway 17/35, and then moves east approximately 1630 feet towards Taxiway D. This would include removing 14 existing headwalls and constructing and enclosing the system underground by using a buried system of pipes and inlets. This Environmental Assessment (EA) is an evaluation of the proposal to modify the existing drainage system. The modification of this drainage system reduces the risk for wildlife living on or migrating through the airfield which poses a safety concern for flying operations, unclogs the drainage ditch by allowing the water to flow down a gradient, and eliminates the effects of standing water and erosion due to being exposed to the elements.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: The assessment identified no impacts related to the repair/modification of drainage and removal of headwalls, land use, hazardous materials, and waste. Potential impacts are summarized below:

Cultural/Historic/Archeological Resources: The proposed action will occur on semi undisturbed areas. There are no historical buildings in the area and currently there are no cultural/archeological sites. There will be no impacts at this particular site. However, should anything come to the surfaces the Cultural Resource Manager should be notified immediately.

Biological Resources: The proposed action will occur on semi undisturbed areas. There will be no impacts to wetlands and the requirements of Executive Order (EO) 11990, Protection of Wetlands, are not applicable. Threatened and endangered species will not be affected. Turtle mitigation is recommended before the project breaks ground. Impacts to biological resources will not be significant.

Water Resources: The repair/modification of drainage and removal of headwalls project would disturb more than 5 acres, which would require Sheppard to comply with TCEQ's Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, the Construction General Permit along with the Storm Water Pollution Plans and follow Best Management practices. Impacts will not be significant.

Air Quality: During the construction phase there would be a temporary increase in air pollutants from dust emissions, construction activities, equipment and other related vehicles. This would be a minimal increase and would quickly dissipate. This would not impact Wichita County's ability to be in an area of attainment for all national ambient air quality standards. Impacts will not be significant.

Socioeconomic and Environmental Justice Resources: Minor, temporary increases in employment are anticipated. The proposed action would not directly or indirectly impact minority or low-income populations. Impacts would be negligible.

Noise: Since there will be no change in aircraft operations, the only noise impact will be a temporary increase at the construction site which will attenuate to levels less than the thresholds of concern off-base. Noise impacts will not be significant.

Solid Waste and Hazardous Materials: There is no evidence of contamination or hazardous materials that was observed within the proposed project. Should hazardous materials be discovered as the result of the implementation of this project, they would be removed and disposed of by complying with applicable federal, state, and local laws. Impacts will not be significant.

Earth Resources (soil/geology): Implementation of best management practices by using native plants along with the water permits during construction will minimize erosion. Impacts will not be significant.

ALTERNATIVES: Three other sites were eliminated from consideration as they not did not meet all the criteria needed for this construction project. The No-Action Alternative would leave the drainage system as is. The ditch would remain clogged, erosion and wildlife concerns would still remain, increased safety issues for aircraft would remain, and grass maintenance issues would linger.

FINDING OF NO PRACTICABLE ALTERNATIVE: Taking the above information into consideration, I find there is no practicable alternative to the proposed action and that the proposed action includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to the existing environment.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: Based on information and analysis presented in the Environmental Assessment and review of governmental agency comments, I conclude that implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative would not constitute as action that significantly affects the quality of the human environmental due to the findings listed above and expanded upon in the Environmental Assessment. Accordingly, the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations, and 32 Code of Federal Regulations 989 were fulfilled, and an environmental impact statement is not warranted.



MICHAEL A. FANTINI
Brigadier General, USAF
Commander, 82d Training Wing

JUN 28 2013

Date



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND

23 May 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR 82 TRW/CES

FROM: 82 FTW/JA

SUBJECT: Review of EA for Drainage and Headwall Removal

1. BLUF: This office has reviewed the above titled proposed Environmental Assessment action and finds that contingent upon addressing the concerns identified herein is it legally sufficient.
2. 82 TRW/CES has proffered the Environmental Assessment of a proposed action which entails the repair or modification of airfield drainage, the removal of numerous headwalls and the enclosure of the drainage system such that the entire system is "closed". The primary purpose for this proposed action is airfield safety in that it removes the present structures adjacent to taxiways and runways (which are hazards in the event that an aircraft were to leave the runway in an emergency situation).
3. Applicable Law and Guidance: Environmental Assessments of Proposed Actions on Sheppard AFB, Texas are governed by AFI 32-7064, AFI 32-7065 and 32 CFR 989 as well as related case law.
4. Specific Assessments: This proposed action has been reviewed regarding its impacts on wetland and or flood plain; public interest or controversy; and its requirement of significant mitigation in order to obtain insignificant impact status. The Environmental Assessment has been reviewed for "structural" sufficiency such as whether or not there is a stated "purpose and need" for the action; the identification and analysis of Alternatives to the proposed action; the presence of an analysis regarding the affected environment including the necessary discussions and consultations; a full assessment of the Environmental Impact has been accomplished including direct effects, indirect effects*, cumulative effects*, human/occupational safety*, required pollution prevention measures, environmental justice IAW EO 128998 and energy use efficiency IAW EO 13514. All necessary notifications have been accomplished or are in the process of obtaining substantial compliance*. Furthermore, the propose FONSI has been extensively reviewed in the following areas: does the FONSI explain why the proposed action would have an insignificant impact; does it incorporate by reference the EA*; does it list the name of the action; does it discuss necessary mitigation requirements and has it been made available for adequate public review. The items asterisked will be discussed more specifically as issues of concern.

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5. Areas Requiring Specific Mentioning: The EA fails to speak to indirect effects, cumulative effects and occupational safety. Admittedly these are area or issues which one would expect that a project of this nature would pose little if any additional concern. Indirect effects are basically unintended consequences or second order effects. Cumulative effects are those which only arise when the same or very similar project is repeated for numerous iterations. Finally, occupational safety is the issue as to whether or not this project poses significant risk of injury to the persons conducting the project. There is nothing about this project which is novel or inherently risky so as to pose a greater risk to employees/workers than any other general construction project. Finally, much discussion has taken place regarding the difference between the concept of notification and consultation. Suffice to say at this point any concerns are being addressed by additional attempts and documentation of said attempts to insure that the lack of response we have received from a number of outside but possibly affected entities is properly interpreted as "no interest". This is being accomplished by simple telephone calls to document receipt of our earlier correspondence as well as inquiry as to the party's interest in further consultation. The FONSI should be amended so as to "incorporate by reference it's Environmental Analysis".
UPDATE: As of 28 May 2013, the telephone contacts have been initiated and completed; accordingly, the requirement for notification and consultation has been accomplished.

6. Recommendation: This reviewer finds the proposed EA legally sufficient contingent upon revisions as described above. If you have any questions, please contact me at 676-4262



M. Brent Boydston, GS-12 DAF
Attorney Advisor

Attachments:

MFR: Telephone Communication with the Tribes with regards to the Headwall and FAMCAMP EA's dtd: 21 May 2013,

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 General

The 82d Training Wing (82 TRW) proposes to modify an existing drainage ditch northeast of building 1360 which continues to runway 17/35, and then moves east approximately 1630 feet towards Taxiway D. This would include removing 14 existing headwalls and constructing and enclosing the system underground by using a buried system of pipes and inlets. This Environmental Assessment (EA) is an evaluation of the proposal to modify the existing drainage system. The modification of this drainage system reduces the risk for wildlife living on or migrating through the airfield which poses a safety concern for flying operations, unclogs the drainage ditch by allowing the water to flow down a gradient, and eliminates the effects of standing water and erosion due to being exposed to the elements.

Sheppard Air Force Base (SAFB) encompasses approximately 5,297 acres in north-central Texas. It is located six miles south of the Texas/Oklahoma border at an elevation of approximately 1,015 feet above mean sea level (amsl). It is adjacent to, and north, of the city of Wichita Falls in Wichita County in Texas. The western and southern portions of the base are located within the Wichita Falls city limits, and the remainder of the installation lies within unincorporated Wichita County located midway between Dallas, Texas, and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Figure 1 in Appendix A, shows Aerial imagery of the base.

The USAF and SAFB must maintain the highest level of quality education and training for its force structure. The Air Education and Training Command (AETC) is responsible for the training and education of USAF personnel. SAFB, an AETC installation, is the largest of four technical training wings within AETC and has the most diversified training mission. SAFB conducts technical training for the USAF, United States Army, United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, and several allied nations.

This EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, 42 USC § 4321 to 4370e), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (CEQ Regulations, 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), *Environmental Impact Analysis Process* (Air Force 32 CFR 989).

1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose and need of the Proposed Action is to remove the headwalls and redesign/modify the ditches to eliminate erosion, prevent standing water, and unclog the drainage ditch that moves from west to east thus providing proper flow and eliminating standing water and erosion. Standing water increases the risk for wildlife living on or migrating through the airfield thus posing a safety concern for flying operations. Currently the water in the ditches does not flow properly because the gradients have been changed by sediment eroding from the banks from the weathering process. Additionally, enclosing the drainage ditch would decrease the possibility for complete loss of life and equipment if an aircraft was to leave the runway surface. The project would be done in 4 phases or possibly all at once depending on what funding is available. If funding is to come in phases, Phase 1 would consist of the ditch area from north of the Base Operation's Apron to Taxiway A (N). Phase 2 would consist of the area from Taxiway A (N) to

Taxiway B (E). Phase 3 would be the area from Taxiway B (E) to Runway 17/35. Phase 4 would be the area from Runway 17/35 to Taxiway D. Please reference Figure 2, Appendix A.

1.3 Scope and Analysis

This Environmental Assessment (EA) identifies, describes, and evaluates the potential environmental impacts that may result from the construction of the drainage ditch with its preferred modifications, three alternative modifications, and the No Action-alternative. As appropriate, the affected environment and environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and alternatives are described in terms of site-specific descriptions or a regional overview. Finally, the EA identifies measures to reduce impacts or best management practices to prevent or minimize less than significant environmental impacts, if required.

The resources that could be impacted have been analyzed in this EA and include land use, noise, air resources, hazardous materials and waste, utilities and infrastructure, geology and soils, water resources, natural resources, cultural resources, socioeconomics (including environmental justice), and health and safety.

Other actions or potential actions that may be concurrent with the Proposed Action could contribute to cumulative impacts. The environmental impacts of these other actions are addressed in this EA only in the “impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of which agency (federal or non-federal) or person is undertaking such actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively, significant actions taking place over a period of time.”

The resource that will not be impacted by this project is Climate.

1.4 Public Involvement

On 5 January 2013, the Draft Environmental Assessment was sent to 13 governmental agencies with an accompanying memorandum requesting their review and comments (The memorandum, distribution list, and complete agency responses are provided in Appendix B). Responses were received from two agencies. Their responses are summarized below:

- Texas Historical Commission (THC) - Moving forward with the project, if cultural resources that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places are located in the project area during the investigation, please notify the THC so we may have the opportunity to provide comment.¹
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality-No anticipated significant long term environmental impacts from this project as long as construction and waste disposal activities associated with it are completed in accordance with applicable local, state and federal environmental permits, statutes and regulations. Best Management Practices (BMP) are recommended to be used to control runoff from the construction sites to prevent detrimental impact to surface and ground water.

¹ On 2 February 2013, SAFB contacted THC’s Mr. McWhorter to clarify statement. Mr. McWhorter simply stated, “That if anything was to be found during the course of the project that THC would need to be notified.”

- Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) - Supports the proposal to minimize impacts to turtles in the project area. TPWD recommends turtles be removed from the ditches prior to soil disturbing activities and relocated to an area that would provide suitable habitat for these species. TPWD recommends project activities be conducted during the summer periods of low or no rainfall when little water persist in the ditches and turtles will be easier to find and relocate. If box turtles are observed in the project area or elsewhere on SAFB, TPWD request the location of the observation be submitted to the Texas Nature Trackers: Box Turtle Survey Project.

The draft EA was also placed in the Wichita Falls Public Library to give the citizens around the area a chance to review and comment on the project.

- No responses were received from the public.

2.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Action including No Action

2.1 Alternatives to the Propose Action

A number of screening criteria have been developed for the purpose of establishing suitable modifications for the drainage ditch. These screening criteria, all of which must be met for a modification to be utilized are listed and discussed below.

SAFB developed screening criteria (Table 1) to determine if the Proposed Action meets the projects purpose and need. This is a critical element in choosing the best potential modification for the project. The formulation of alternatives was structured around the specific criteria required by the installation. Modifications not meeting the criteria were eliminated from further analyses.

The Criteria specifies that the site must:

- Be supportive of the installations mission
- Be clear of topographical and other obstacles to the location
- Be able to reduce the risk of wildlife living on or migrating through the airfield
- Be able to reduce the risk of equipment, damage, and loss of life if an aircraft was to leave the runway or taxiways
- Be able to reduce the amount of standing water and erosion
- Be able to unclog the ditch
- Be able to reduce maintenance issues

Table 1: Screening Criteria

Screening Criteria:	Support Training Mission	Clear of Obstacles	Reduce Wildlife Risk	Reduce Loss of Aircraft Risk	Reduce Standing Water	Unclog Ditch	Reduce Maintenance Issues
Proposed Action (Buried Drainage System)	**	++	++	++	++	++	++
No Action	**	+	--	--	--	--	--
Modification 1 (Open Grass Channel)	**	+	-	-	+	+	-
Modification 2 (Open Concrete Channel)	**	+	-	-	+	+	++
Modification 3 (Partial Open Grass Channel and Buried System)	**	-	+	+	+	+	+

** Screening criteria is an absolute

++ Meets screening criteria the best

+ Meets screening criteria adequately

~ Neutral

-- Does not meet screening criteria

- Does not meet screening criteria well

2.2 Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration

Under modification option 1 (**Figure 3, Appendix B**) the ditch would be unclogged/clear and graded thus eliminating erosion issues and standing water concerns. However, the open ditch would still present safety concerns in the event that a plane left the runway or taxiway surface. Moreover, the grass lined ditch would be difficult for the maintenance contractor to maintain the grass at the necessary heights. Even though this option meets some of the screening criteria, it must be removed from consideration because it does not meet all of the necessary screening criteria.

Under modification option 2 (**Figure 4, Appendix A**) the ditch would be unclogged/clear, graded, and lined with concrete thus eliminating erosion, standing water, and maintenance concerns. However, the open ditch would still present safety concerns in the event that a plane left the runway or taxiway surface. This option meets more of the screening criteria than option 1, but it does not meet all of the screening criteria so it must be removed from consideration.

Under modification option 3 (**Figure 5, Appendix A**) the ditch would be unclogged/clear, graded, and grass lined for a portion and enclosed in another portion. Erosion concerns and

standing water issues would be eliminated along the entire portion of the ditch, and safety concerns along the enclosed portion would be greatly reduced. However, safety concerns and maintenance issues would still exist in the open channel portion. Overall, safety issues would be reduced, but they would not be reduced to the extent that would be under the proposed option. Therefore, this option must be removed from consideration because it does not meet all the screening criteria

2.3 The Proposed Action

Under the Proposed Action (**Figure 6, Appendix A**), the ditch would be unclogged/clear, graded, and enclosed. Erosion concerns and standing water issues would be eliminated. Safety concerns would be greatly reduced, and maintenance issues would be resolved. Therefore, this action is the best modification that could be made to the drainage system.

2.4 No Action

Under the No Action-Alternative, the drainage system would remain the same. The ditch would remain clogged, erosion and wildlife concerns would still remain, increased safety issues for aircraft would remain, and grass maintenance issues would linger.

The No-Action alternative is, however, examined for environmental impacts as fully as the Proposed Action in accordance with Air Force NEPA guidance (32 CFR 989) as a baseline for comparing the effects of the other alternatives.

3.0 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

The affected environment is the baseline against which potential impacts caused by the Proposed Action and Alternative Actions (including the No Action-Alternative) are assessed. This section focuses on the human environment that has the potential to be affected by the design/modification of the ditches and removal of the headwalls. As stated in 40 CFR 1508.14, the potential affected human environment is interpreted comprehensively to include the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with the environment. Relevant natural and physical resources were selected for description in this section based on categories that would be affected by this proposal of the design/modification of the ditches and removal of the headwalls. Information is presented in this section to the level of detail necessary to support the analysis of potential impacts in Section 4, Environmental Consequences.

The following subsections describe the existing conditions of the resource areas that would potentially be affected by the Proposed Action.

The No-Action Alternatives for all the categories below will have “No Impact” and these categories would stay the same.

3.1 Cultural/Historic/Archeological Resources

Cultural resource management at Air Force installations is established in AFI 32-7065, Cultural Resources Management. AFI 32-7065 details compliance requirements for protecting cultural resources through an Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP). Sheppard AFB updated the ICRMP February 2012.

Surveys evaluating historic buildings, structures and landscapes at Sheppard AFB were conducted in 1993 and 2002 and the Base recently completed an Inventory and Assessment of Select Building and Structures (Dating Through 1976) June 2012.

The archaeological assessment of the Base in 1993 covered the northwestern part of the base and open areas, including the area that was the parasail training area, the physical training area, civil engineering training area, and the pastures associated with the saddle club. Observations of existing developed areas and ongoing construction-related activities indicated that there was an extremely low probability of any intact cultural deposits within the Base.

The Base's Real Property Inventory listing was reviewed for the period from 1928 to 1950 to identify any buildings or structures that might meet the eligibility requirements for listing on the NRHP. During this survey, the Kell Field Air Terminal Building was the only building determined eligible for both the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and State register. The Kell Field Air Terminal was formerly listed as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark by the Texas Historical Commission in 1981. No archaeological resources were identified and it was recommended no further archaeological investigations be required.

In 1994, a second archaeological survey was also conducted and focused on the Sheppard AFB Recreational Area (Sheppard AFBRA). An initial literature and archival search was conducted to establish the presence of any previously recorded sites on the Sheppard AFBRA property. Information was found on two previously recorded sites (4IGSIIS and 41GS26). Both are usually completely submerged in Lake Texoma; consequently, they have not been investigated. No archaeological resource sites were located during the 1994 survey, and no sites eligible for nomination to the NRHP were found. SHPO concurred with these findings. If there are any inadvertent discoveries, the SHPO will be notified and impacts to any historic resources will be evaluated to determine if they are eligible for inclusion in the NRHP per AFI 32-7065.

A Cold War inventory was conducted in 2002. Of the 256 buildings and structures at Sheppard that were constructed on the Base during the Cold War period, only two (Buildings 2560 and 2130) were recommended eligible for NRHP listing as Cold War resources. Building 2130, also known as the Little Adobe, was built circa 1928, was dedicated as a recorded Texas Historical Landmark in November 1981, and is currently used as a historical museum (Heritage Center). Building 2560 and the Alert Apron were used during the Cold War as the Strategic Air Command (SAC) facilities.

The Inventory and Assessment of Select Buildings and Structures (Dating Through 1976) was conducted in June 2012. None of the 133 buildings were found to be eligible for NRHP. Building 2560 and the Alert Apron are located approximately two miles north northeast of the proposed ditch modification location.

It is unknown if there are cultural resources located at the proposed site, or adjacent to, or in the vicinity of the proposed area at the airfield as it has never had test plots done. Observance of the area would not show evidence of cultural resources if it was buried. It is highly unlikely there are any cultural artifacts in the area as none have ever been found on Sheppard AFB; however, precautions should be taken when removing dirt around areas not developed. Therefore, the Proposed Action is believed to have no impact on any cultural resources. The No-Action Alternative would also have no impact on cultural resources.

3.2 Natural Resources

3.2.1 Flora

The Proposed Action would occur on a virtually undisturbed area within the developed area of the base. The proposed project area is composed of grasses that are periodically mowed including Bermuda (*Cynodon dactylon*), buffalo grass (*Buchloe dactyloides*), Texas wintergrass (*Stipa leucotricha*), Johnson grass (*Sorghum halepense*), and purple three-awn (*Aristida purpurea*) to name a few. (Refer to table 2 for all grasses species in the area)

Impacts to vegetation communities would be due to surface disturbances such as widening the ditches to allow piping to be set, heavy machinery tearing up the soil, and removing the headwalls.

Table 2.

Grasses in the Vicinity of Drainage/Headwall Project				
Common Name	Scientific Name	Native	TYPE	BASH Perspective
Annual Foxtail-Giant/Green/Yellow	<i>Alopecurus L.</i>	Yes	Annual/Perennial	Worst
Barnyard Grass	<i>Echinochloa crus-galli</i>	No	Annual	Worst
Bermuda	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	No	Perennial	Best
Blue Grama	<i>Bouteloua gracilis</i>	Yes	Perennial	Best
Buffalo Grass	<i>Bouteloua dactyloides</i>	Yes	Perennial	Best
Dallis Grass	<i>Paspalum dilatatum Poir</i>	No	Perennial	Worst
Johnson	<i>Sorghum halepense</i>	No	Perennial	Worst
Purple Three-awn	<i>Aristida purpurea</i>	Yes	Perennial	Best
Perennial Rye	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	No	Perennial	Best
Silver Bluestem	<i>Bothriochloa saccharoides</i>	Yes	Perennial	Fair
Texas Grama	<i>Bouteloua rigidiseta</i> (Steud.) Hitchc.	Yes	Perennial	Fair
Texas Wintergrass (Spear Grass)	<i>Nassella leuotricha</i>	Yes	Perennial	Best
Tumble Windmill	<i>Chloris verticillata Nutt</i>	Yes	Perennial	Best
White Tridens	<i>Tridens albescens (Vasey) Woot. & Standl</i>	Yes	Perennial	Worst
OLD World Bluestems	<i>Bothriochloa ischaemum</i>	No	Perennial	Best
KR Blue Stem	<i>Bothriochloa ischaemum var. songarica</i>	No	Perennial	Best
Plains		No	Perennial	Best
WW Spar		No	Winter	Best

Re-vegetation of disturbed areas would be in compliance with the Executive Memorandum on Beneficial Landscaping (26/Apr/94) and the Executive Order on Invasive Species (EO 13112). Regionally native and non-invasive plants will be used to the extent practical in landscaping and re-vegetation. On this project, re-vegetation will consist of approved mixtures of grass species. Periodically, herbicide would need to be applied as necessary to control undesirable plant species. There are no trees on the airfield so replacing of any tree would be unnecessary.

In order to mitigate the area of grasses it is recommended that the areas be planted with Common Bermuda, WW Sparr, Buffalo, Blue grama, and purple three-awn as soon as the project is complete. This would ensure that all soil types and terrain have at least one grass species that will establish.

3.2.2 Fauna

A survey of the proposed project was performed on 18 Oct 2012 by 82 CES/DS2 staff. Presence of listed species was not observed during the site inspection of the project area. The following table lists these 15 species, their protected status, and whether habitat is located within the proposed project area.

Table 3. Wichita County Threatened and Endangered Species.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Presence of Suitable Habitat	Federal Status	State Status
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	No	DL	T
Interior Least Tern	<i>Sterna antillarum athalassos</i>	No	LE	E
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus anatum (American)</i>	No	DL	E
	<i>Falco peregrinus tundrius (Arctic)</i>	No	DL	T
Whooping Crane	<i>Grus Americana</i>	No	LE	E
Gray Wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>	No	LE	E
Red Wolf	<i>Canis rufus</i>	No	LE	E
Texas Horned Lizard	<i>Phrynosoma cornutum</i>	No	-	T
Texas Kangaroo Rat	<i>Dipodomys elator</i>	No	-	T
Baird's Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus bairdii</i>	No	-	SOC
Mountain Plover	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	No	-	SOC
Western Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	No	-	SOC
Black-tailed Prairie Dog	<i>Cynomys ludovicianus</i>	No	-	SOC
Cave Myotis Bat	<i>Myotis velifer</i>	No	-	SOC
Plains Spotted Skunk	<i>Spilogale putorius interrupta</i>	No	-	SOC

Federal: (E): Endangered, (T): Threatened, (PT): Proposed threatened, (C): Candidate, (DL): Delisted, (LE): Listed Endangered

State: (T): Threatened, (E): Endangered, (SOC): Species of Concern

**Listed species whose migratory routes cross Wichita County; ^winter residents of Wichita County

The Texas Horned Lizard has been observed on the Base, primarily in the area of the northern ends of the airfield, but it has also been observed at the former Saddle Club area and a trend has been seen as the lizard has shown signs of slowly heading south. The site visit determined that the project had some areas of suitable habitat to support the Texas Horned Lizard; however it is believed that the Texas Horned Lizard has not moved that far south due to the difference in vegetation constantly changing along the way. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Natural Diversity Database (TPWD NDD) comments provided in conjunction with the SAFB Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan dated March 2012, revealed occurrences of the Texas Kangaroo Rat (EOD 3126, EOD 8871) less than a mile of the proposed project area. The site visit determined that the project area lacked suitable habitat to support the Texas kangaroo Rat. No mesquite communities with dense clay soils were located within the project vicinity. The TPWD NDD data is used for potential presence data and cannot be interpreted as

presence/absence data. There would be no potential to affect federal and state listed species occurring on or near the base from either the Proposed Action or the No-Action alternative.

Representative mammal species occurring in the area include the Eastern Cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), and Black-Tailed Jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*).

Representative avian species occurring in the area include the Red-Tailed Hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*), Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*), Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), Western and Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*/*Sturnella magna*), Killdeer (*Chadrius vociferous*), Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*), Upland Sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*), American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), Common Grackle (*Quiscalus quiscula*) and several other black bird species.

Representative reptile species include the Red-eared Slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*), the occasional Ornate Box Turtle (*Terrapene ornate ornate*) and Common Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*).

The Proposed Action could interfere with the reptiles (turtles) in the ditches and it is recommended some type of mitigation should be done before digging started if feasible.

The Proposed Action on terrestrial and avian biota would have minimal impact, as those animals are able to adapt to the changes. Therefore, the Proposed Action would have a minor impact on native species.

The No-Action Alternative would have no impacts to the local flora or fauna.

3.2.3 Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The project area at this time does not have structures containing migratory birds or indications of nesting migratory birds. Several species such as the Barn Swallow, Upland Sandpiper, Swainson's Hawk, Cattle Egret, and Western Kingbird all migrate to and from the area at different times of the year. Migratory birds may arrive in the project area to breed during the spring and summer while others come during the winter months.

Measures would be taken to avoid the taking of migratory birds, their occupied nests, eggs, or young, in accordance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, through phasing of work or preventative measures. SAFB follows strict procedures to adhere with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

3.3 Visual

The aesthetic effect of this project would be equal to or better than the existing land use. Once the project is complete the proposed area would look like the rest of the airfield.

3.4 Water Resources

The proposed project is located in the Red River Basin. Storm water runoff in the project area would flow to Bear Creek which then flows to the Wichita River then to the Red River. The existing conditions from the last headwall at Taxiway D to the outfall will not change due to this project. This project would not require a United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) Section 404 Permit because it would not result in the placement of temporary or permanent dredge or fill material into potentially jurisdictional waters of the U.S. Currently two (2) 66" reinforced concrete pipes run under Taxiway D to the outfall. These pipes currently restrict the flow of this drainage system and will continue to do so after all the phases are complete. Therefore, the flow at the outfall will neither increase nor decrease significantly. During construction, the contractor will be required to implement and maintain storm water pollution prevention measures to eliminate any sediment runoff. Finally, enclosing this drainage system would eliminate the scouring effect thus eliminating any potential sediment runoff in this drainage system.

3.4.1 Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act

Runoff from this project would not discharge directly into Section 303 (d) listed threatened or impaired water, or into a stream within 5 miles upstream of a Section 303(d) listed threatened or impaired water. The 2012 Clean Water Act 303(d) list was utilized in this assessment.

3.4.2 Section 402 of the Clean Water Act: TPDES, Construction General Permit

The Proposed Action to remove the headwalls and redesign/modify the ditches project would disturb more than 5 acres. SAFB would comply with TCEQ's Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Construction General Permit (CGP). Permit coverage would be required. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWP3) would be prepared and implemented. A Notice of Intent (NOI) would be submitted to TCEQ. The NOI and the site notice would also be posted at the project site where it can be seen easily by the public on base.

3.4. Section 402 of the Clean Water Act: TPDES, MS4

This project is located within the boundaries of Sheppard AFB's Phase II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) and would comply with the applicable MS4 requirements. The contractor would be required to read all applicable permits required on SAFB prior to construction start up.

3.4.5 Floodplains

The Proposed Action to remove the headwalls and redesign/modify the ditches project is not located within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designated 100-year floodplain. The proposed project would not increase base flood elevation to a level that would violate applicable floodplain regulations and ordinances. Coordination with the local Floodplain Administrator would not be required.

3.4.6 Wetlands

Wetlands are defined as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas (33 CFR 328.3, 8b).

Under sections 301 and 502 of the Clean Water Act, any discharge of dredged or fill materials into "waters of the United States," including wetlands, is forbidden unless authorized by a permit issued by the USACE pursuant to section 404. All discharge of fill or dredged material affecting the bottom elevation of a jurisdictional water of the U.S. require a permit from USACE. These permits are an essential part of protecting wetlands, which are often filled by land developers. Wetlands are vital to the ecosystem in filtering streams and rivers and providing habitat for wildlife.

There are no designated wetland areas within the project site. The closest wetlands are approximately two miles north from the proposed site and approximately a mile southeast of the site. Therefore, there would be no impacts to wetlands from the Proposed Action, and a Section 404 permit would not be required for this project. The No-Action alternative would also have no impact to the wetlands.

3.4 National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)

The ambient air quality in an area can be characterized in terms of whether or not it complies with the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) (40 CFR 50 and CAA §108). The EPA has established NAAQS for six air pollutants: Ozone, Lead, Carbon Monoxide, Sulfur Dioxide, Nitrogen Dioxide, and Respirable Particulate Matter. Texas has adopted the NAAQS as its state ambient air quality standards under TAC §30.1.101.21. The EPA is tasked with constantly reviewing the NAAQS and recommending changes based on improved scientific knowledge and understanding of how these pollutants impact health and the environment. The project is located in Wichita County, Texas, which is an area of attainment of all NAAQS; therefore, a conformity determination under the Clean Air Act conformity rules is not required.

3.5 Environmental Justice

Executive Order (EO) 12898 "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Population" requires each federal agency to make "achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities on minority populations and low-income populations." The Proposed Action would not directly or indirectly impact minority or low-income populations; therefore, no further environmental justice analysis is warranted.

3.6 Socioeconomic Resources

The impact of the modification/construction of the ditches will have no affect on the Socioeconomics. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not impact local business.

3.7 Community Impacts

Community cohesion is a term that refers to an aggregate quality of a residential area. Cohesion is a social attribute that indicates a sense of community, common responsibility, and social interaction within limited geographic areas. The project is located on a federal installation. There are no residences adjacent to the proposed project site. The proposed project would require no relocations. No adverse impacts to any neighborhoods, communities, or other social units are anticipated as a result of the proposed project.

Given the nature of the project vicinity, this project would not divide, separate, or isolate any neighborhood or community, nor would it increase through traffic. No negative impact on community cohesion is expected from either the Proposed Action or the No-Action alternative.

3.8 Noise

The Proposed Action would be near the runways. The minimal changes to the area would add low levels of noise. However, these low-levels would not reasonably increase the ambient noise level. Noise impacts related to the project would only be temporary and would not have any effect on the area. The Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) noise level zone for the proposed site according to the AICUZ maps range from 65 dB to 75dB. The closer to the runways the dB level will increase. This project, however, would have little to no noise impacts to the day to day activity of the military installation

3.9 Existing Hazardous Materials

Based on the proposed activity to modify/construct and remove the headwalls an Initial Site Assessment (ISA) was conducted to identify potential hazardous materials in the project area. The ISA consisted of the following actions: design review, map review, regulatory database review, and a project site visit. This project does not involve known hazardous material impacts that could be anticipated to adversely affect construction (e.g. cannot resolve before bidding or during construction).

The area surrounding the proposed modification/construction of the ditches is composed of land that was at one time agricultural lands, and believed to be used for grazing cattle. No evidence of contamination or hazardous materials was observed within the proposed project vicinity during the ISA. The local Installation Restoration Program (IRP) site map revealed two IRP sites in the general area. According to the IRP map the two sites are outside the project area. The IRP site closest to the project area on the North West (Site1) was an area where an abandoned underground storage tank was found (Figure 7, Appendix A). In 1989 the tank was removed and the area was excavated to remove any contaminated soil. No further action was required once the contaminated soil was removed. The site was closed in 1990. Digging in the area will not have any effect on the closed IRP site. A check of the USEPA Enviromapper website revealed that there were no toxic release sites, no hazardous waste sites, and no Superfund sites, in or adjacent, to the proposed project area. A review of the TCEQ petroleum storage tanks (PSTs) registration database did not reveal any other tanks in the area.

Should hazardous materials be discovered as the result of the implementation of this project, they would be removed. The removal and disposal process would comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

The contractor will take appropriate measures to prevent, minimize, and control the spill of hazardous materials in the construction staging area. All spills, including those of less than 25 gallons would be cleaned immediately and any contaminated soil would be immediately removed from the site and disposed of properly.

3.10 Geology and Soils

Sheppard AFB is located in the Central Rolling Red Plains of the Redbeds Plains unit of the Central Lowland physiographic province. Much of the land at SAFB is characterized as semi-improved or improved. The soil belt formed here is known as the Kamay-Bluegrove-Deandale Association. This association consists of loamy soils that formed in red-bed clay, shale or sandstone, or in old alluvium derived from red-bed clay and shale. Common soil series include Kamay, Bluegrove, and Deandale.

Soils at Sheppard AFB are generally characterized as reddish-brown sandy loam, highly susceptible to wind and water erosion, underlain with red clay-to-clay loam. In certain areas, red-bed shale and sandstone are near the surface. The general area where the modification/construction to the ditch is in an area of Kamay-Urban land complex that have a zero to three percent slope. From there the area turns into Kamay silt loam that is one to three percent slope and finally turns into urban land as it reaches the runways (Figure 8 A, B, C, Appendix A). Adequate landscaping is required to maintain soil stability at the Base; regionally native and non-invasive plants will be used to the extent practicable in landscaping and re-vegetation. On this project, re-vegetation will consist of approved mixtures of grass species. Periodically, herbicide may be applied as necessary to control undesirable plant species.

4.0 Conclusion

The impact to the environment from the proposed construction of modifying the ditch and removing the headwalls has been assessed. Two different alternatives (the Proposed Action, and the No Action-alternative) were examined. No cumulative impacts to the environment were identified for the Proposed Action, and the No-Action Alternative showed that “No Impact” would occur if the project was not supported.

No significant environmental issues were determined through this Environmental Assessment that indicates a requirement to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement as required by 32 CFR 989, and the National Environmental Policy Act.

5.0 References

- EnviroMapper, U.S. EPA Environmental Data, <http://www.epa.gov/emefdata/em4ef.home>
- PST Registration Database, TECQ, 16 Nov 2012, http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/permitting/registration/pst/pst_query.html
- Red River Authority of Texas, 2012, Basin Highlights Reports, <http://www.rra.dst.tx.us/Publications/CRP/crp2012/2012%20BHR.pdf>
- USAF, 2012 Intergraded Cultural Resource Management Plan, Sheppard AFB, February 2012
- USAF, 2012 Intergraded Natural Resource Management Plan, Sheppard AFB, March 2012
- USAF, 1998. United States Air Force, Environmental Assessment for Installation Development, Sheppard AFB, September 1998.

6.0 List of Preparers

Peña, Leslie (82 CES/DS2/CEIV) Environmental Tech II-Intergraded Natural/Cultural Resource, GGP, and EIAP Program Manager

Baumer, Robert (82 CES/DS2/CEP) Civil Engineer

7.0 Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination for Environmental Planning

Agencies/Organizations Sent Copies of the Assessment

As part of the CEQ Regulations on the National Environmental Policy Act, SAFB will circulate the Draft EA, to the following agencies, organizations, and individuals. Copies of all correspondence will be included in Appendix A.

Mr. Michael Burgess
Chairman
Comanche Nation
HC-35, Box 1720
Lawton, OK 73502

Tom Cloud
Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
2005 NE Green Oaks Blvd., Suite 140
Arlington, TX 76006

Denise S. Francis
Director, State Grants Team
Governor's Office of Budget and Planning
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711

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Quality
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Mr. Donald Patterson
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Ms. Leslie Standing
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Dr. Donald Tofpi
Chairman
Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
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Julie C. Wicker
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Wildlife Division-Habitat Assessment Program
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Dennis Wilde
Nortex Regional Planning Commission
4309 Jacksboro Hwy, Suite 200
Wichita Falls, TX 76302

William A. McWhorter
Program Coordinator
Military Sites Program
History Programs Division
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, TX 78711-2276

Appendix A

FIGURES

FIGURE 1- Sheppard AFB Arial

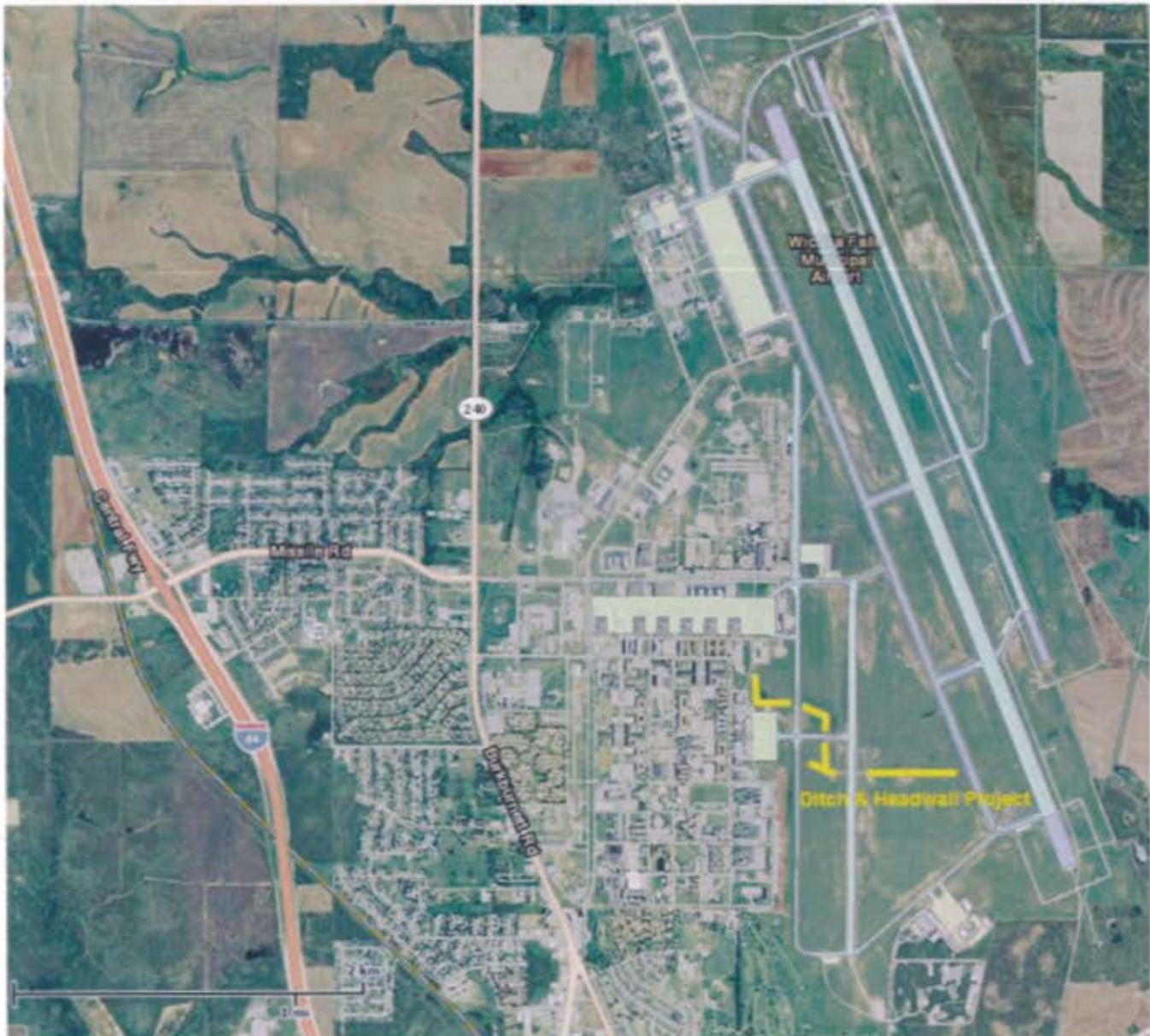


FIGURE 2- Proposed Construction Phases



FIGURE 4- Option 2, Concrete Lined Drainage Ditch

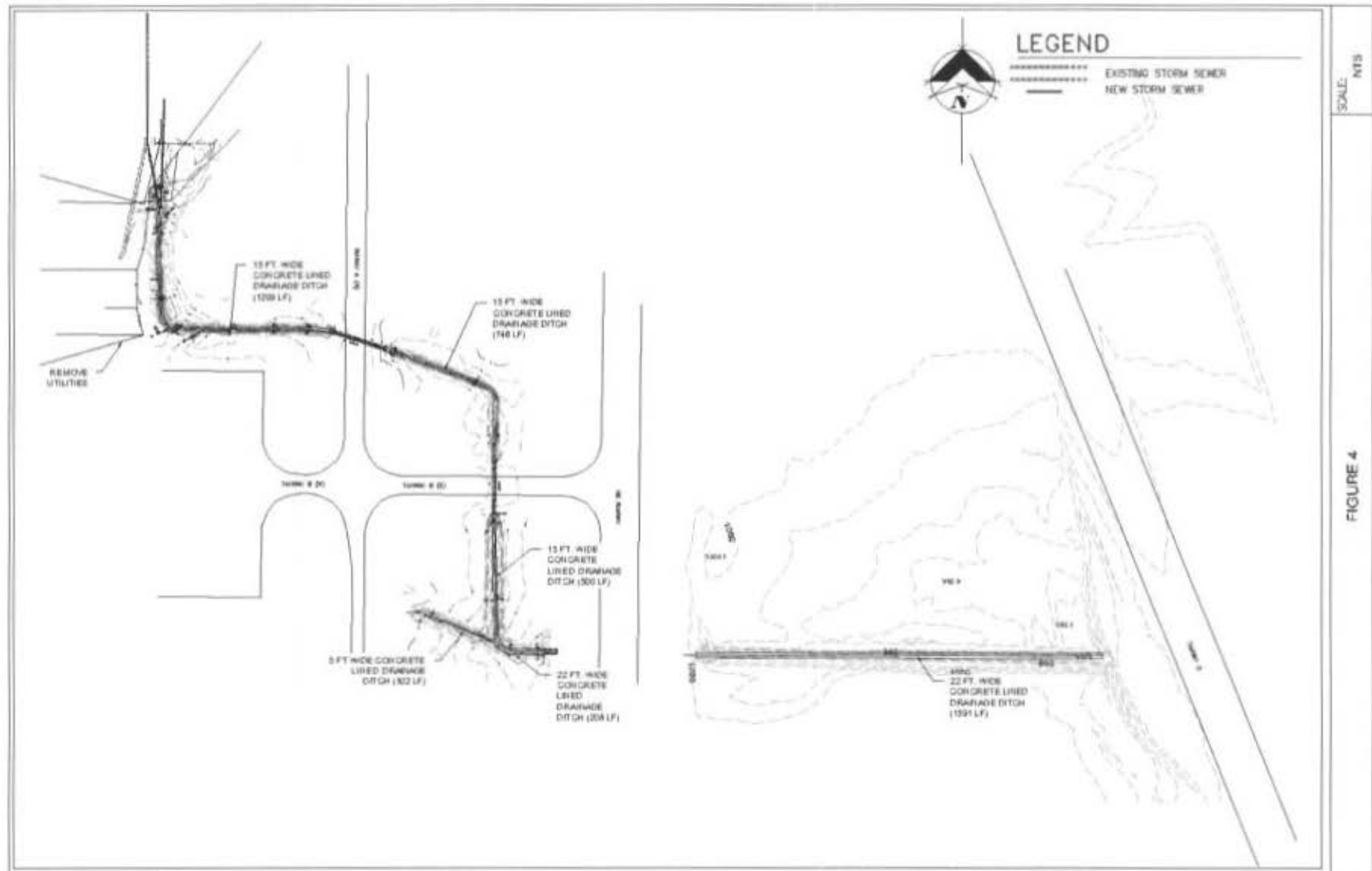


FIGURE 5- Option3, Partial Open Grass Channel and Buried System

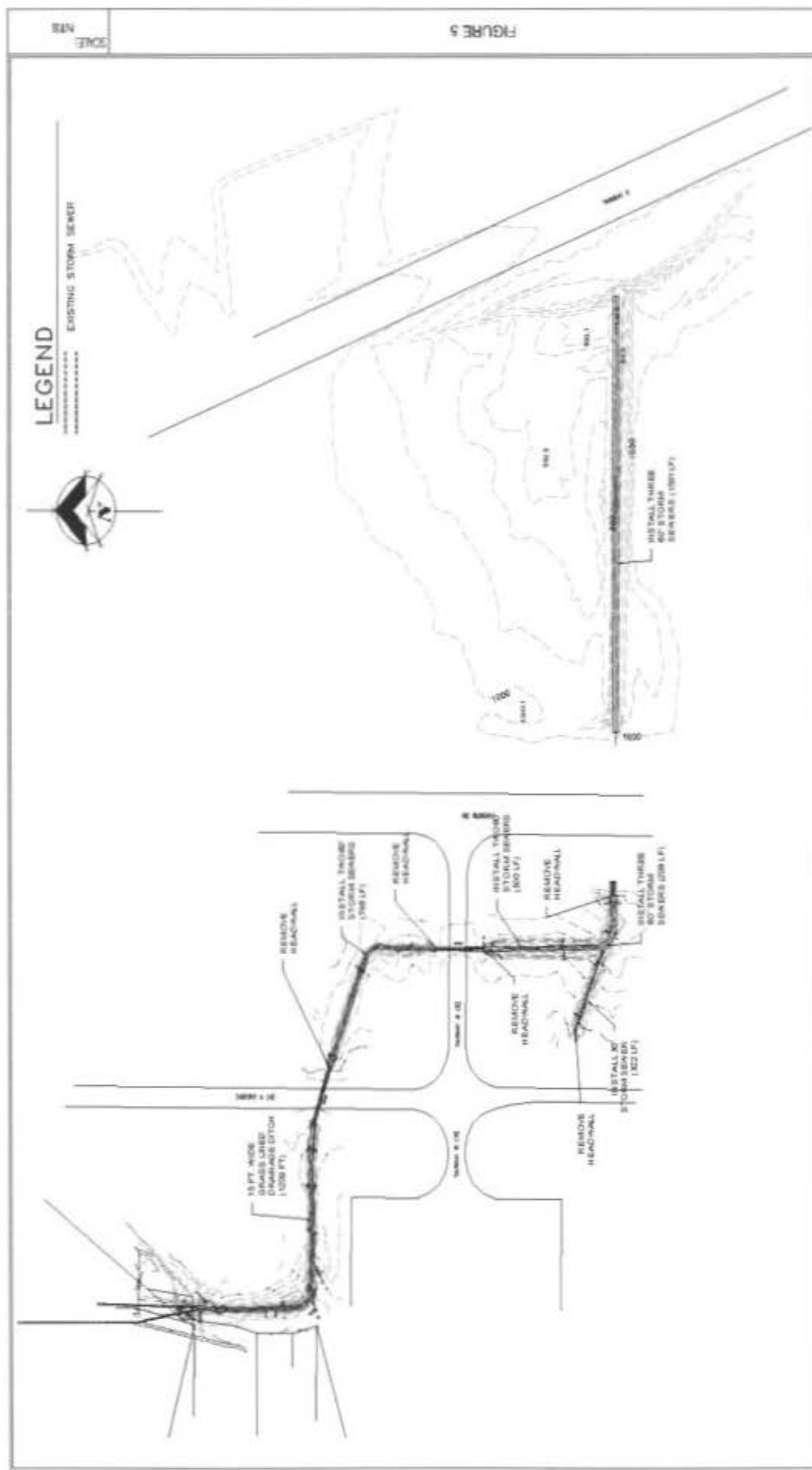


FIGURE 6- Proposed Action

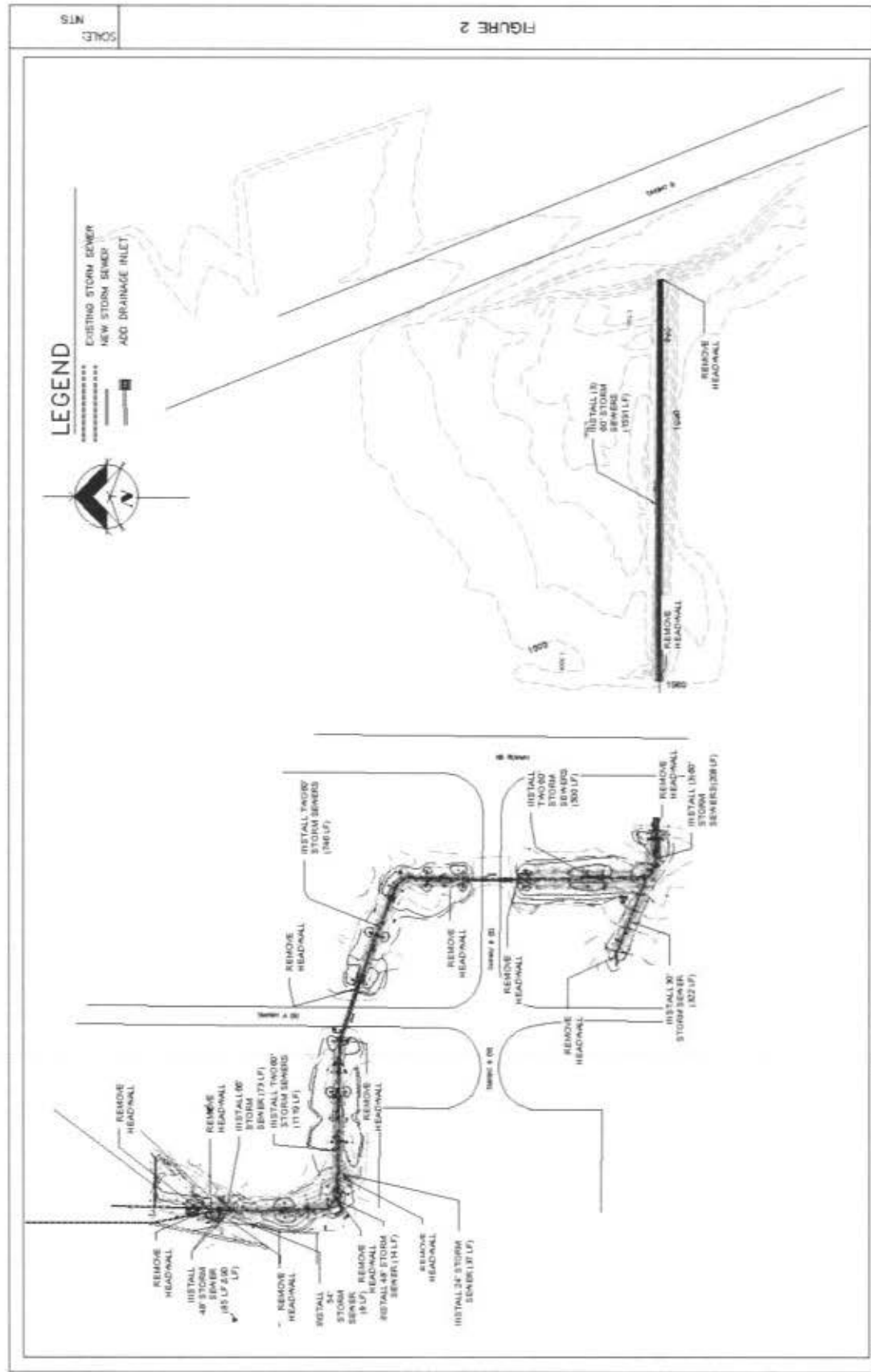


FIGURE 7- IRP Sites in Vicinity of Project



FIGURE 8A- SOIL MAP

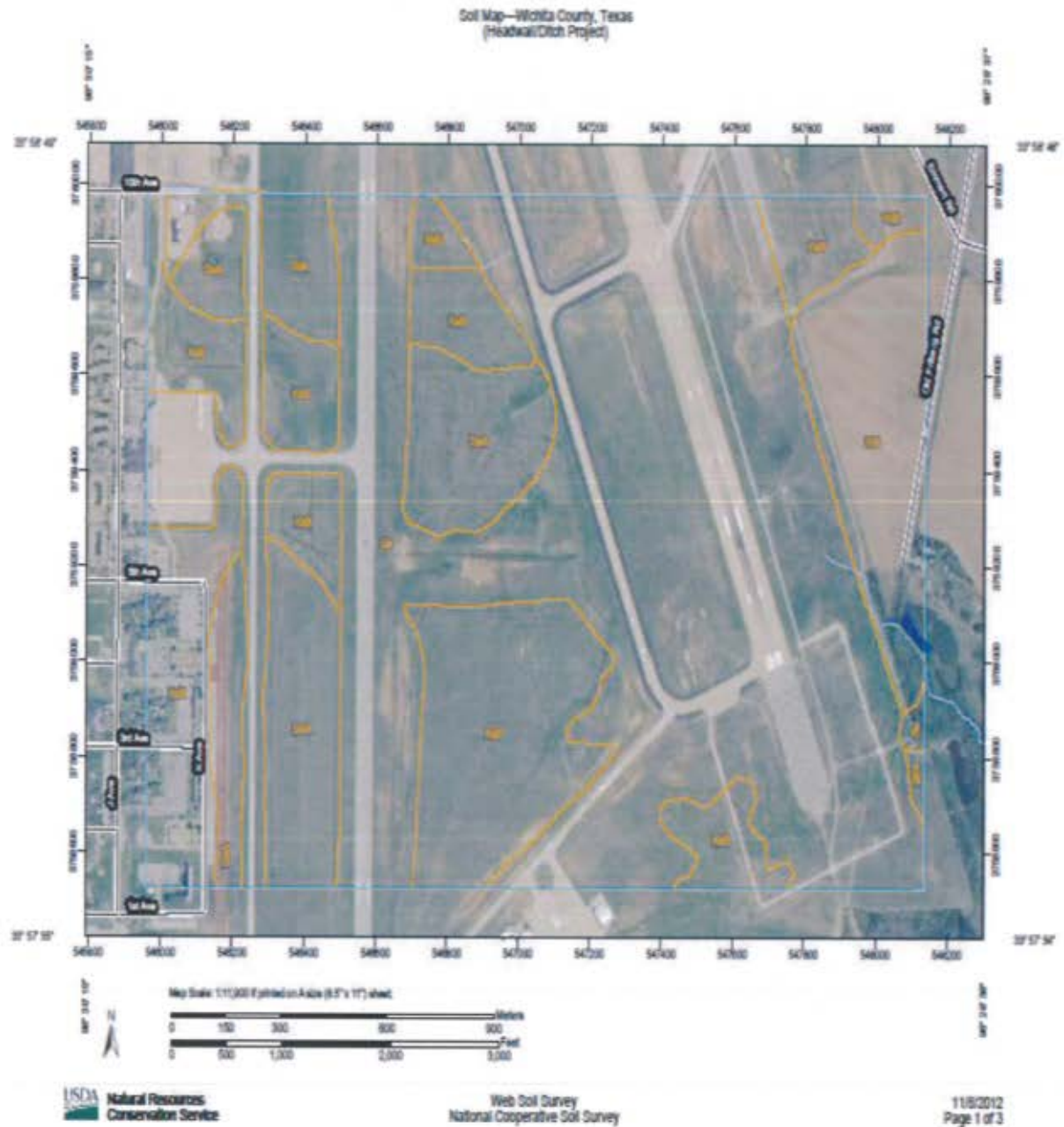


FIGURE 8B

Soil Map—Wichita County, Texas
(Headwall/Ditch Project)

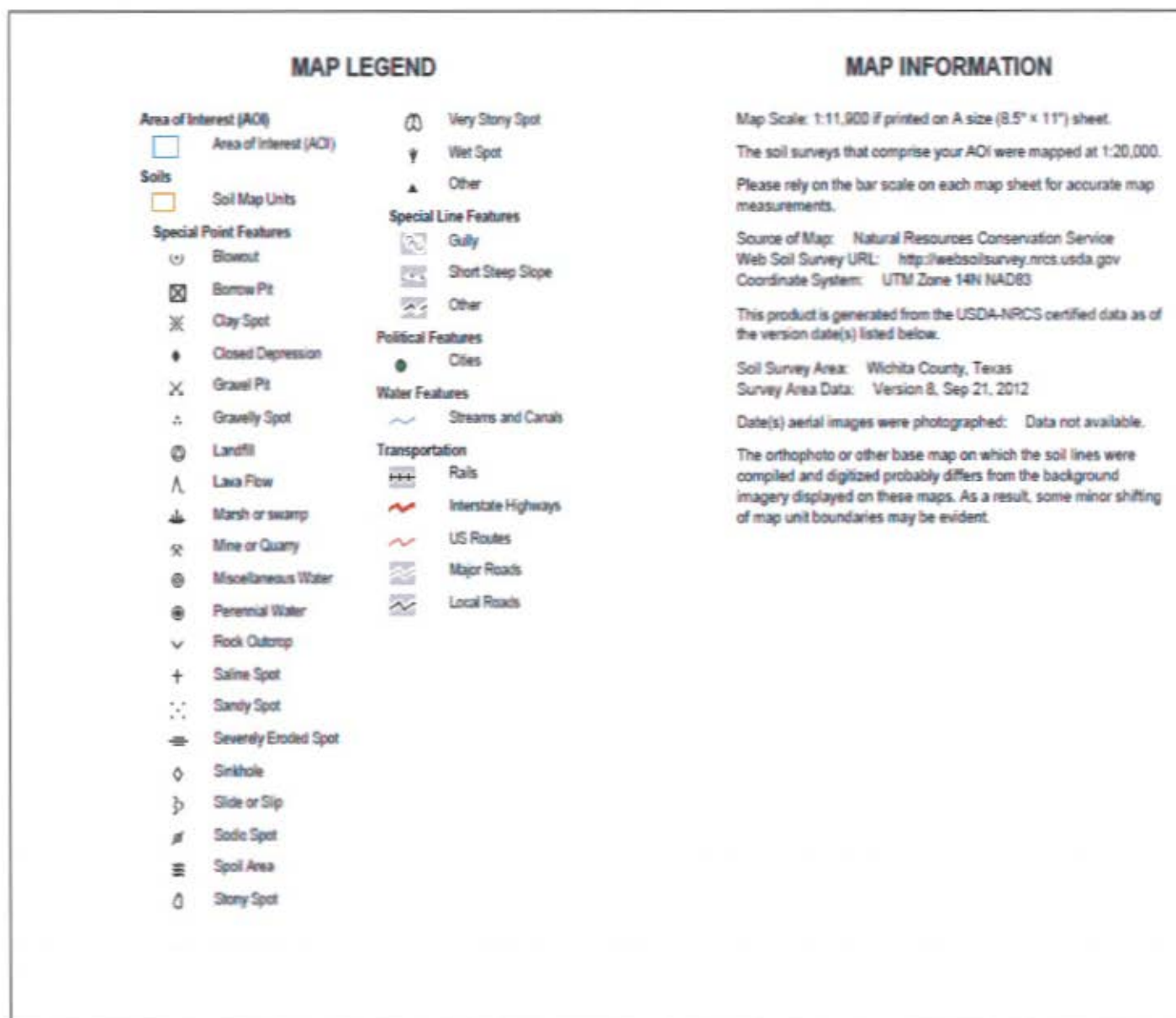


FIGURE 8C

Map Unit Legend

Wichita County, Texas (TX485)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres In AOI	Percent of AOI
Aw	Wheatwood and Port soils, frequently flooded	1.7	0.2%
BeB	Bluegrove loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	5.1	0.6%
DaA	Deandale silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	105.2	13.4%
FrB	Franklin loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	58.7	7.5%
KaB	Kamay silt loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	127.2	16.2%
KcB	Kamay-Urban land complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes	55.6	7.1%
Ua	Urban land	426.3	54.4%
VcB	Vernon clay loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes	4.4	0.6%
Totals for Area of Interest		784.1	100.0%

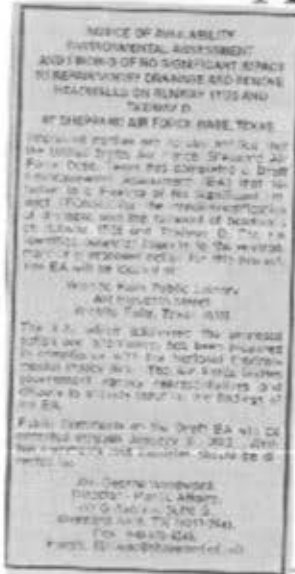
Appendix B

Notice of Availability for Public Comment Interagency/Intergovernmental Coordination

Affidavit of Publication

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF WICHITA

#287263



On this 3rd day of January 2013 A D...
personally appeared before me, the undersigned authority
Kathy Salan, Sales Assistant for the Times Publishing
Company of Wichita Falls, publishers of the Wichita Falls
Times/Record News, a newspaper published at Wichita Falls in
Wichita County, Texas, and upon being duly sworn by me, on
oath states that the attached advertisement is a true and
correct copy of advertising published in 1 days (1) issues hereof
on the following date:

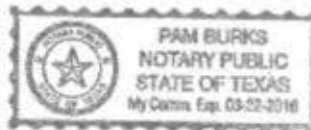
December 30, 2012

Kathy Salan

Sales Assistant for Times Publishing Company of Wichita Falls

Subscribed and sworn to before me this the day and year first above written:

Pam Burks





DEFENSE SUPPORT SERVICES LLC

January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Mr. Michael Burgess
Chairman
Comanche Nation
HC-35, Box 1720
Lawton, OK 73502

Dear Sir,

The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 And Taxiway D at Sheppard Air Force Base (AFB) is attached for your review and comment. This document addresses the manner in which the base proposes to develop the base.

A copy of the Draft EA that analyzes the proposal and alternatives is enclosed for your review and comment. A listing of the other agencies contacted is also included. The comment period for this EA is 30 calendar days from the date of this letter. If we do not receive a response by 2 February 2013, we will proceed with signature of the Finding of No Significant Impact/Finding of No Practical Alternative associated with this EA. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (940) 676-7481.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leslie Peña".

Leslie Peña
Environmental Tech II
EIAP Program Manager

Attachments:

1. EA for the proposed Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 And Taxiway D at Sheppard AFB
2. List of agencies contacted



DEFENSE SUPPORT SERVICES LLC

January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Tom Cloud
Field Supervisor
ATTN: Sean Edwards
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
2005 NE Green Oaks Blvd., Suite 140
Arlington, TX 76006

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January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Denise S. Francis
Director, State Grants Team
Governor's Office of Budget and Planning
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Madam,

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January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Susana M. Hildebrand, MC-168
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, TX 78711-3087

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231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
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Mr. Jeff Houser
Chairman
Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
RT. 2, Box 121
Apache, OK 73006

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January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Mr. Donald Patterson
President
Tonkawa Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
1 Rush Buffalo Road
Tonkawa, OK 74653-4449

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DEFENSE SUPPORT SERVICES LLC

January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Russell Schreiber
Director of Public Works
1300 7th St. Room 402
Wichita Falls, Texas 76301

Dear Sir,

The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 And Taxiway D at Sheppard Air Force Base (AFB) is attached for your review and comment. This document addresses the manner in which the base proposes to develop the base.

A copy of the Draft EA that analyzes the proposal and alternatives is enclosed for your review and comment. A listing of the other agencies contacted is also included. The comment period for this EA is 30 calendar days from the date of this letter. If we do not receive a response by 2 February 2013 we will proceed with signature of the Finding of No Significant Impact/Finding of No Practical Alternative associated with this EA. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at (940) 676-7481.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leslie Peña".

Leslie Peña
Environmental Tech II
EIAP Program Manager

Attachments:

1. EA for the proposed Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 And Taxiway D at Sheppard AFB
2. List of agencies contacted



DEFENSE SUPPORT SERVICES LLC

January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Ms. Leslie Standing
Wichita and Affiliated Tribes
P.O. Box 729
Anadarko, OK 73005

Dear Madam,

The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 And Taxiway D at Sheppard Air Force Base (AFB) is attached for your review and comment. This document addresses the manner in which the base proposes to develop the base.

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Leslie Peña
Environmental Tech II
EIAP Program Manager

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DEFENSE SUPPORT SERVICES LLC

January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Dr. Donald Tofpi
Chairman
Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 369
Carnegie, OK 73015

Dear Sir,

The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 And Taxiway D at Sheppard Air Force Base (AFB) is attached for your review and comment. This document addresses the manner in which the base proposes to develop the base.

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Leslie Peña
Environmental Tech II
EIAP Program Manager

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2. List of agencies contacted



DEFENSE SUPPORT SERVICES LLC

January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Julie C. Wicker
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Wildlife Division-Habitat Assessment Program
4200 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744

Dear Julie,

The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 And Taxiway D at Sheppard Air Force Base (AFB) is attached for your review and comment. This document addresses the manner in which the base proposes to develop the base.

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Leslie Peña
Environmental Tech II
EIAP Program Manager

Attachments:

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2. List of agencies contacted



DEFENSE SUPPORT SERVICES LLC

January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Dennis Wilde
Nortex Regional Planning Commission
4309 Jacksboro Hwy,
Suite 200
Wichita Falls, TX 76302

Dear Sir,

The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 And Taxiway D at Sheppard Air Force Base (AFB) is attached for your review and comment. This document addresses the manner in which the base proposes to develop the base.

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Sincerely,

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Leslie Peña
Environmental Tech II
EIAP Program Manager

Attachments:

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2. List of agencies contacted



DEFENSE SUPPORT SERVICES LLC

January 2, 2013

82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

William A. McWhorter
Program Coordinator
Military Sites Program
History Programs Division
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, TX 78711-2276

Dear William,

The Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 And Taxiway D at Sheppard Air Force Base (AFB) is attached for your review and comment. This document addresses the manner in which the base proposes to develop the base.

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Sincerely,

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Leslie Peña
Environmental Tech II
EIAP Program Manager

Attachments:

1. EA for the proposed Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 And Taxiway D at Sheppard AFB
2. List of agencies contacted

Appendix C
Governmental Agency/Public Comments

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

January 16, 2013

Ms. Leslie Peña
Environmental Tech II
ELAP Program Manager
82CJS/DS2/CHV
231 9th Avenue, Building 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment to Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 and Taxiway D at Sheppard Air Force Base, Wichita Falls, Texas (Wichita County)

Dear Ms. Peña:

Thank you for your correspondence describing the above referenced project. This letter serves as comment on the proposed undertaking from the State Historic Preservation Officer, the Executive Director of the Texas Historical Commission (THC).

Our review staff, led by Mr. William McWhorter, has reviewed the above mentioned consultation from your office for this project's proposed undertaking to "Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 and Taxiway D at Sheppard Air Force Base." Moving forward, if cultural resources that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places are located in the project area during your investigation, please notify the THC so we may have the opportunity to provide comment.

Thank you for your cooperation in this state and federal review process, and for your efforts to preserve the irreplaceable heritage of Texas. If you have any questions concerning our review or if we may be of further assistance, please contact Mr. William McWhorter at 512/463-5833.

Sincerely,

William McWhorter

for
Mark Wolfe,
Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Office



ROCK PERRY, GOVERNOR • MATTHEW F. KREISLE, III, CHAIRMAN • MARK WOLFE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
P.O. BOX 12276 • AUSTIN, TEXAS • 78711-2276 • P. 512.463.6100 • F. 512.475.4872 • TDD 1.800.735.2989 • www.thc.state.tx.us

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., Chairman
Carlos Rabinovich, Commissioner
Toby Baker, Commissioner
Zak Cozart, Executive Director



TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution

January 18, 2013

Ms. Leslie Pena
Defense Support Services, LLC
82CFS/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Bldg. 1402
Sheppard AFB, Texas 76311-3333

Re: TCEQ Grant and Texas Review and Comment System (TRACS) #2013-114, Sheppard AFB, Wichita County, Repair/modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/15 and Taxiway

Dear Ms. Pena,

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has reviewed the above-referenced project and offers the following comments:

A review of the project for general conformity impact in accordance with 40 CFR Part 93 indicates that the proposed action is located in Wichita County, which is currently unclassified or in attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for all six criteria air pollutants. Therefore, general conformity rules do not apply.

Although any demolition, construction, rehabilitation or repair project may produce dust and particulate emissions, these actions are not anticipated to result in a significant impact upon air quality standards. Any dust and particulate emission should be easily controlled by using standard dust mitigation techniques. Any debris or waste disposal should be at an appropriately authorized facility.

We do not anticipate significant long term environmental impacts from this project as long as construction and waste disposal activities associated with it are completed in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal environmental permits, statutes, and regulations. We recommend that the applicant take necessary steps to ensure that best management practices are used to control runoff from construction sites to prevent detrimental impact to surface and ground water.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Melanie Aldana at (512) 239-1622 or melanie.aldana@tceq.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Susana M. Hildebrand".

Susana M. Hildebrand, P.E.
Chief Engineer

P.O. Box 13087 • Austin, Texas 78711-3087 • 512-239-1000 • www.tceq.state.tx.us
Visit our customer service? www.tceq.state.tx.us/goin/customerurvey



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Commissioners

T. Dan Fritch
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Dan Allen Hughes, Jr.
Brewville

Bill Jones
Austin

Margaret Martin
Boerne

S. Reed Marlon
Houston

Dick Scott
Wimberley

Lee M. Bass
Chairman-Emeritus
Fort Worth

Carter P. Smith
Executive Director

January 31, 2013

Ms. Leslie Peña
82CES/DS2/CEV
231 9th Avenue, Building 1402
Sheppard AFB, TX 76311-3333

RE: Sheppard Air Force Base Draft Environmental Assessment to
Repair/Modify Drainage and Remove Headwalls on Runway 17/35 and
Taxiway D, Wichita County

Dear Ms. Peña:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) received the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the above-referenced project. TPWD staff has reviewed the information provided and offers the following comments concerning this project.

Please be aware that a written response to a TPWD recommendation or informational comment received by a state governmental agency may be required by state law. For further guidance, see the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code, Section 12.0011, which can be found online at <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/PW/htm/PW.12.htm#12.0011>. For tracking purposes, please refer to TPWD project number ERCS-4387 in any return correspondence regarding this project.

Project Description

The proposed action would consist of modifying an existing drainage ditch by removing 14 existing headwalls and constructing an enclosed system underground using a buried system of pipes and inlets. The purpose of the proposed project is to remove the headwalls and redesign/modify the ditches to eliminate erosion, prevent standing water, and unclog drainage ditches by correcting gradients to provide proper flow. The project may be done in four phases or all at once depending on the availability of funding.

Because the project activities would be located in an area consisting of regularly mowed grasses including non-native species, adverse impacts to fish and wildlife resources would be minimized. The following information is provided to assist in further minimizing impacts to wildlife in the project area.

Section 3.2.2: Fauna

Section 3.2.2 of the draft EA states that representative reptile species in the project area include the Red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*), the occasional Ornate box turtle (*Terrapene ornata*), and the Common snapping turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*). The EA also states that the proposed

4100 SMITH SCHOOL ROAD
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78744-3291
503.286.4800
www.tpwd.state.tx.us

To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Ms. Leslie Peña
Page 2
January 31, 2013

action could interfere with the turtles in the ditches and some type of mitigation should be done prior to digging if feasible.

Recommendation: TPWD supports the proposal to minimize impacts to turtles in the project area. TPWD recommends turtles be removed from the ditches prior to soil disturbing activities and relocated to an area that would provide suitable habitat for these species. Please note that aquatic turtles like Red-eared sliders may brumate in deep water during the winter months. If deep water is present in the ditches, relocation of turtles during the winter months may be more difficult than in summer when turtles are more likely to be at the surface. If possible, TPWD recommends project activities be conducted during periods of low or no rainfall when little water persists in the ditches and turtles will be easier to find and relocate.

If box turtles are observed in the project area or elsewhere on Sheppard Air Force Base, TPWD requests the location of the observation be submitted to the Texas Nature Trackers: Box Turtle Survey Project. Box turtles may be declining in numbers, and the Box Turtle Survey Project was designed to help scientists and managers understand population trends and management needs by reporting sightings of these species. A reporting form is attached, and additional information about this project can be found online at http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/texas_nature_trackers/box_turtle_survey/.

I appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on this project. Please contact me at (512) 389-4579 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Julie C. Wicker
Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program
Wildlife Division

JCW:gg.ERCS-4387

Attachment



BOX TURTLE SIGHTING REPORT FORM

Please complete one form for each box turtle sighted.

Name: _____ Affiliation: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Species: ☐ Eastern Box Turtle ☐ Ornate Box Turtle Status: ☐ Dead ☐ Alive

Size - maximum plastron (lower shell) length: _____ ☐ in. ☐ mm.

Sex (see information for characteristics): ☐ Male ☐ Female

Location: County: _____

Site (particular WMA, county road, etc.): _____

Distance & direction from nearest town: _____

Lat-Long: _____

Temperature: _____ ☐ F° ☐ C°

Rainfall amount during previous 24 hours: _____ ☐ in. ☐ mm.

Habitat where turtle was found (select one):

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ native grassland | ☐ improved grassland |
| ☐ mixed grass/shrubs | ☐ predominantly shrubland |
| ☐ mainly deciduous woodland/forest | ☐ mainly evergreen woodland/forest |
| ☐ desert scrub | ☐ agricultural land |
| ☐ paved road | ☐ unpaved road |
| ☐ other: _____ | |

Dominant habitat in surrounding area (select up to three):

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ native grassland | ☐ improved grassland |
| ☐ mixed grass/shrubs | ☐ predominantly shrubland |
| ☐ mainly deciduous woodland/forest | ☐ mainly evergreen woodland/forest |
| ☐ desert scrub | ☐ agricultural land |
| ☐ other: _____ | |

Dominant land use in surrounding area (select one):

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ residential | ☐ ranching |
| ☐ agriculture | ☐ timber production |
| ☐ park land/preserve | ☐ not in current use |
| ☐ other: _____ | |

Other notes: _____

Information on Box Turtles in Texas

Box Turtles (*genus Emys*) can be distinguished from other native Texas turtles by having a single large scute at the front of the lower shell (plastron), allowing them to fold it up and closing the front of the shell entirely; thus the common name of "Box turtle." Box turtles also have a beaked upper jaw ("beak") that is lacking in other Texas turtles. The only other land turtle in Texas is the Texas Tortoise; it lacks any hinges on the plastron, has a head entirely covered with scales rather than having skin, and has a very rough upper shell (carapace). Male box turtles have red eyes (females yellow or golden), a longer tail with a thick base (females shorter and thinner), and a somewhat concave plastron (females have a flat one).

See reverse side for more information on the Eastern and Ornate Box Turtles.

Questions?

Contact (800) 792-1112 x8722,
andyl@state.texas.gov or
laura@state.texas.gov

Please return form to:

Texas Nature Trackers
TPWD
6390 Smith School Road
Austin, TX 78744

For additional forms, visit:

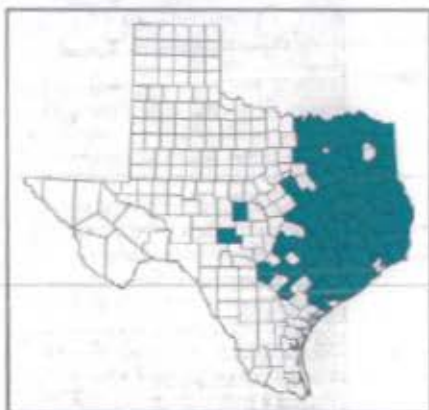
www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/

Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission solicits the information submitted through this form. This law enforcement agency is permitted to be utilized as a source of information on wildlife. Under Section 552.001 and 552.002 of the Texas Government Code, you are not entitled to receive and review the information. Under Section 552.004, you are not entitled to receive the information submitted. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 6390 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744. 1-800-PWD-1112. www.tpwd.state.tx.us

Form 008-0002-0002

Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina*)

The carapace of the Eastern Box Turtle is noticeably longer than wide, domed with a narrow keel lengthwise down the center, and has some flaring at the rear edge. The tallest point of the shell is well back towards the tail, so viewed sideways it'll be tallest at the back of the turtle. The carapace is light brown to tan with a few dark flecks on it. The plastron is normally solid yellow without any markings, although the edges individual plates may be dark. Orange, yellow or red spots sometimes visible on head and forelegs. The subspecies in Texas (*trunguis*) almost always has **three toes** on each hind foot.



Ornate Box Turtle (*Terrapene ornata*)

The carapace of the Ornate Box Turtle is relatively broad and oval, usually slightly flattened at the top, and lacks both a narrow keel lengthwise down the center and any flaring at the rear edge. The tallest point of the shell is just in front of the hinge on the plastron, so viewed sideways it'll be tallest at the front of the turtle. The carapace is dark with many yellow lines, sometimes grouped into "starbursts" radiating downward, and the plastron is dark brown or black with a pattern similar to the carapace. There are almost always **four toes** on each hind foot.

