



# REAL PLACES

PRESERVING HISTORIC TEXAS  
2020 CONFERENCE

**JANUARY 29-31, AUSTIN**

## Lost and Found: The Nexus of Cemetery Identification, Archeology, Urban Planning, and Community Involvement

Andrea Stahman Burden  
Chairperson, Council of  
Texas Archeologists' Lost  
Cemeteries Task Force

Dr. Ashley Lemke  
Assistant Professor of  
Anthropology, University of Texas  
at Arlington

Dr. Andrea Roberts  
Assistant Professor of Urban  
Planning, Texas A&M University

# This Presentation

- I. The importance of cemeteries as significant places on our landscape.
- II. How do cemeteries become lost?
- III. How can we enhance pathways to identify lost cemeteries as part of the planning process?

# The Importance of Cemeteries as Significant Places on our Landscape

- Focusing on cemeteries brings visibility to previously unmapped places, freedom colonies and their constituencies
- Walking tours of freedom colony cemeteries enable mapping, reconstruction of “place”

# The Importance of Cemeteries as Significant Places on our Landscape

- Settlements and Cemeteries
  - Clear Creek Settlement & Cemetery in Jasper County, Texas
    - Descendants of those buried in Clear Creek lead tour
      - Herman Wright, splits time between Mount Union Settlement in Jasper County and Houston, TX
      - Gwen Bluiett, Magnolia Springs Settlement , Jasper County resident
    - Huff Creek Community, Jasper County, TX
    - Dixie Community, TX
- Annual homecomings and reunions times when diaspora return to help maintain cemeteries

# Clear Creek: Previously Unmapped Settlement



# Clear Creek: Previously Unmapped Settlement



# Clear Creek: Previously Unmapped Settlement





Huff Creek Community Cemetery: Black History Overshadowed by Dragging Death



# Dixie Community Cemetery & Descendants



How do cemeteries become lost?



# “LOST” CEMETERIES

Ashley Lemke

Assistant Professor of Anthropology





# Historic Cemeteries

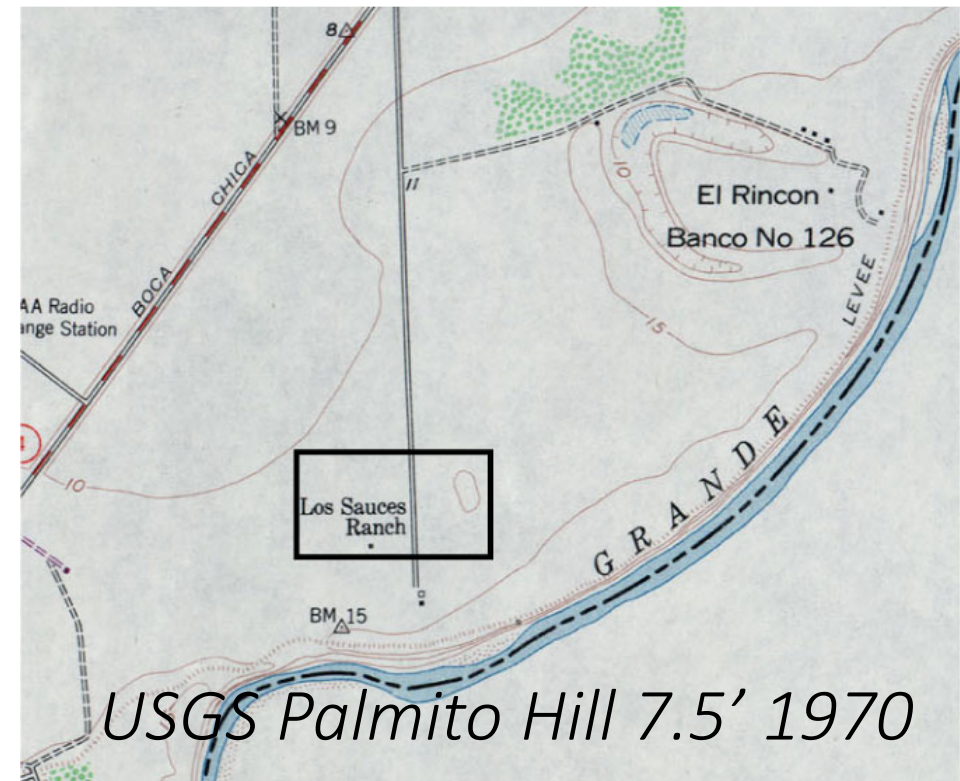
- Endangered all over the U.S.
- Minority groups: even more susceptible
  - Systematic, institutionalized racism
  - Neglect
  - Segregation
  - Gentrification
  - Unique mortuary patterns

# Historic Cemeteries

- Ignored, damaged, or “lost”
- Specific case study – historic cemeteries going “missing” from maps in Texas

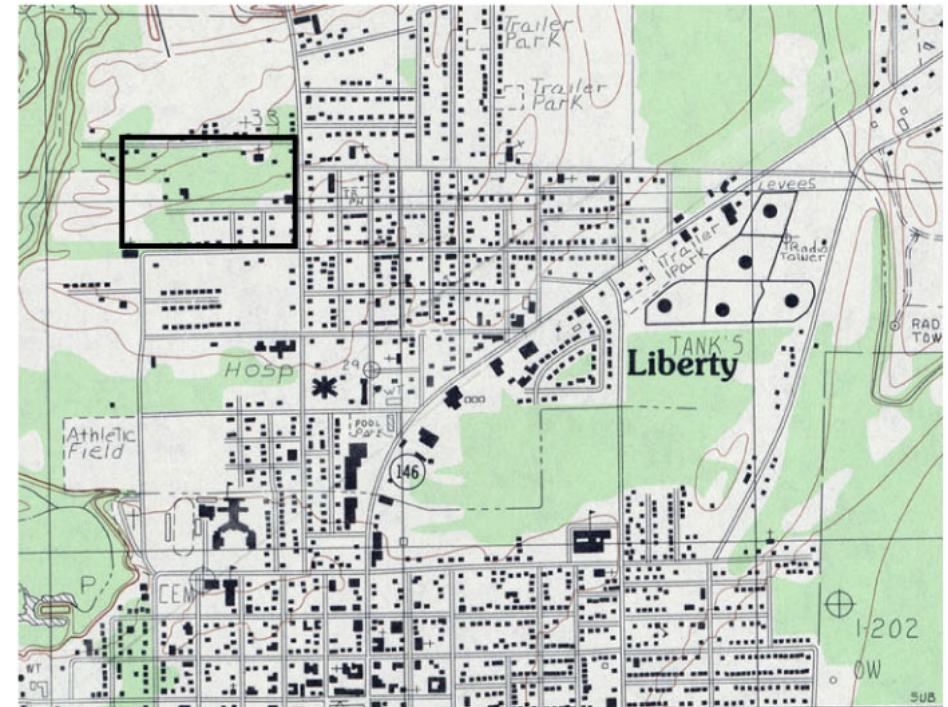
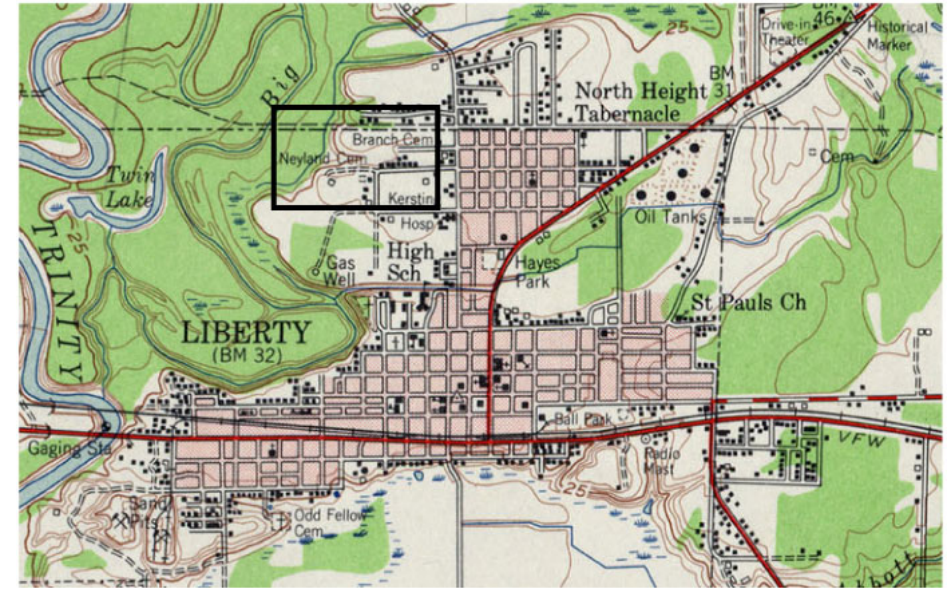
- Known & marked on “historic” maps
- Later omitted from “modern” maps

## “Missing” Cemeteries



TOP: USGS Liberty 15' 1955

BOTTOM: USGS Liberty 7.5' 1984

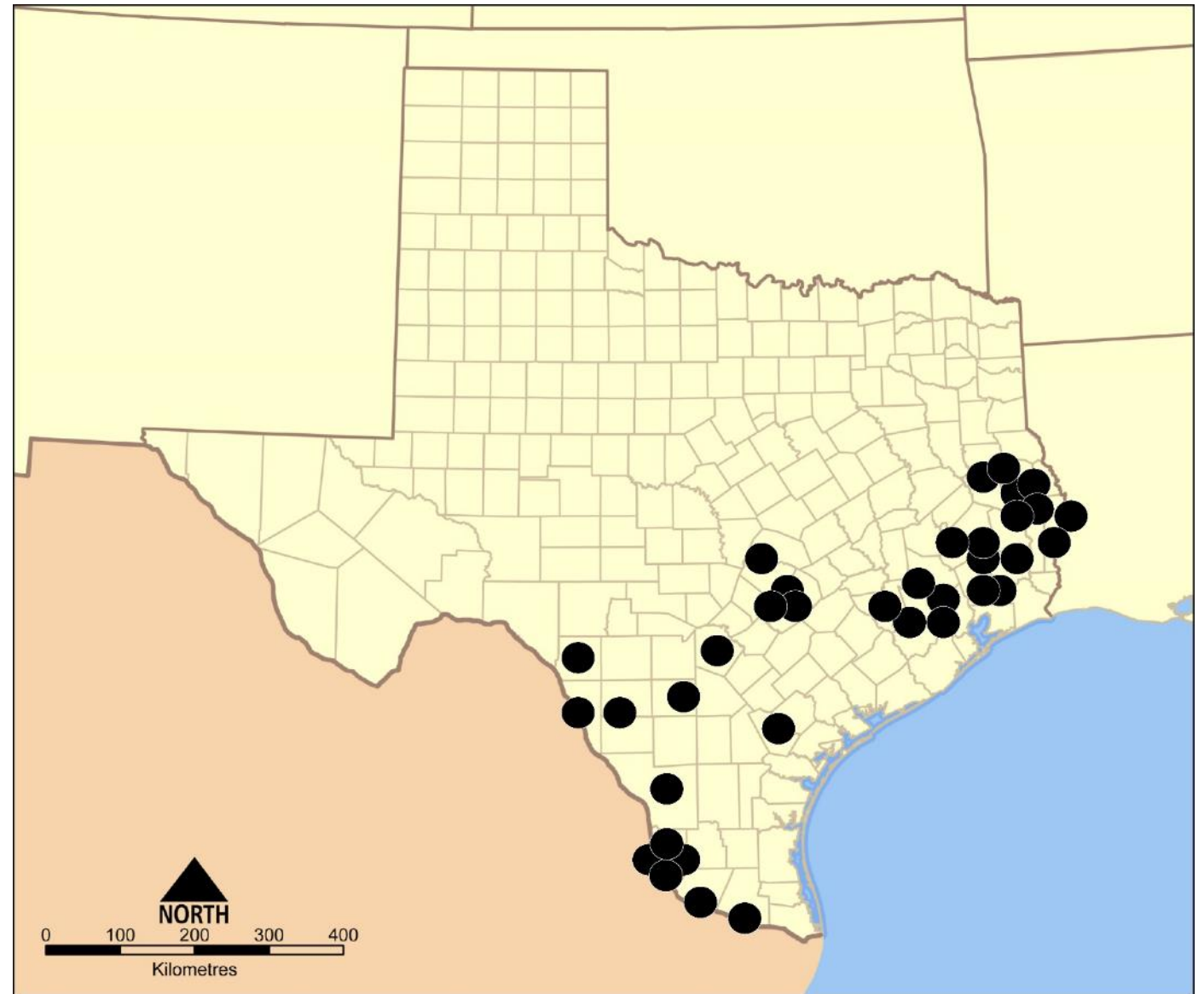


“Missing” Cemeteries

# Data

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- Over half of the THC maps were analyzed (n=245 out of 453)
- 123 no cemeteries
- 122 had one or more cemeteries
- 29 of these had missing cemeteries
- 36 total cemeteries “missing” from modern 7.5’ quads

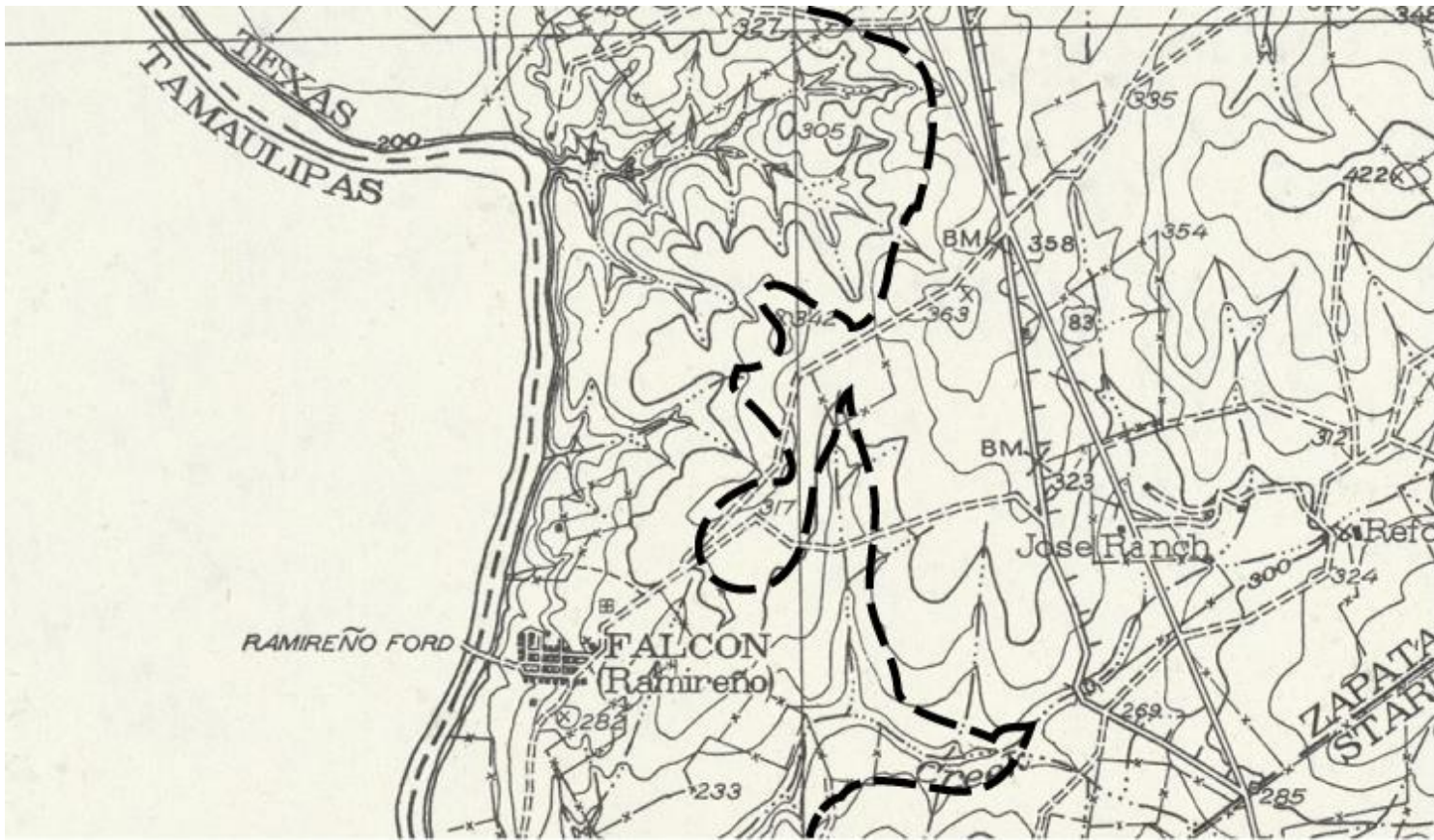






# Fallen off maps

- Significant discrepancy
- Leaves these “lost” cemeteries vulnerable
- **Every** map with a missing cemetery had other cemeteries — only **certain** cemeteries went missing



- One case of destruction
- One case of relocation
- One case of flooding beneath Falcon Reservoir
- Other factors?

Why did some  
cemeteries go missing?

# Why did some cemeteries go missing?

VARIABLE	CONTRIBUTES TO MISSING CEMETERIES?
Cemetery Size	No
Cemetery Location	No
Grave Markers	Yes
Ownership	Yes
Cemetery Segregation	Yes



# Cemetery Segregation

- Arlington National Cemetery wasn't integrated until 1948
- Cemetery segregation was legal until 1968

All the cemeteries on historic maps pre-date cemetery integration (1887-1960)



# “Minority” Cemeteries

- Particularly African/African-American
- History of damage & destruction during construction projects

# A Plan of the City of New York from an actual Survey Anno Domini MDC

By T. Kiersehatch City



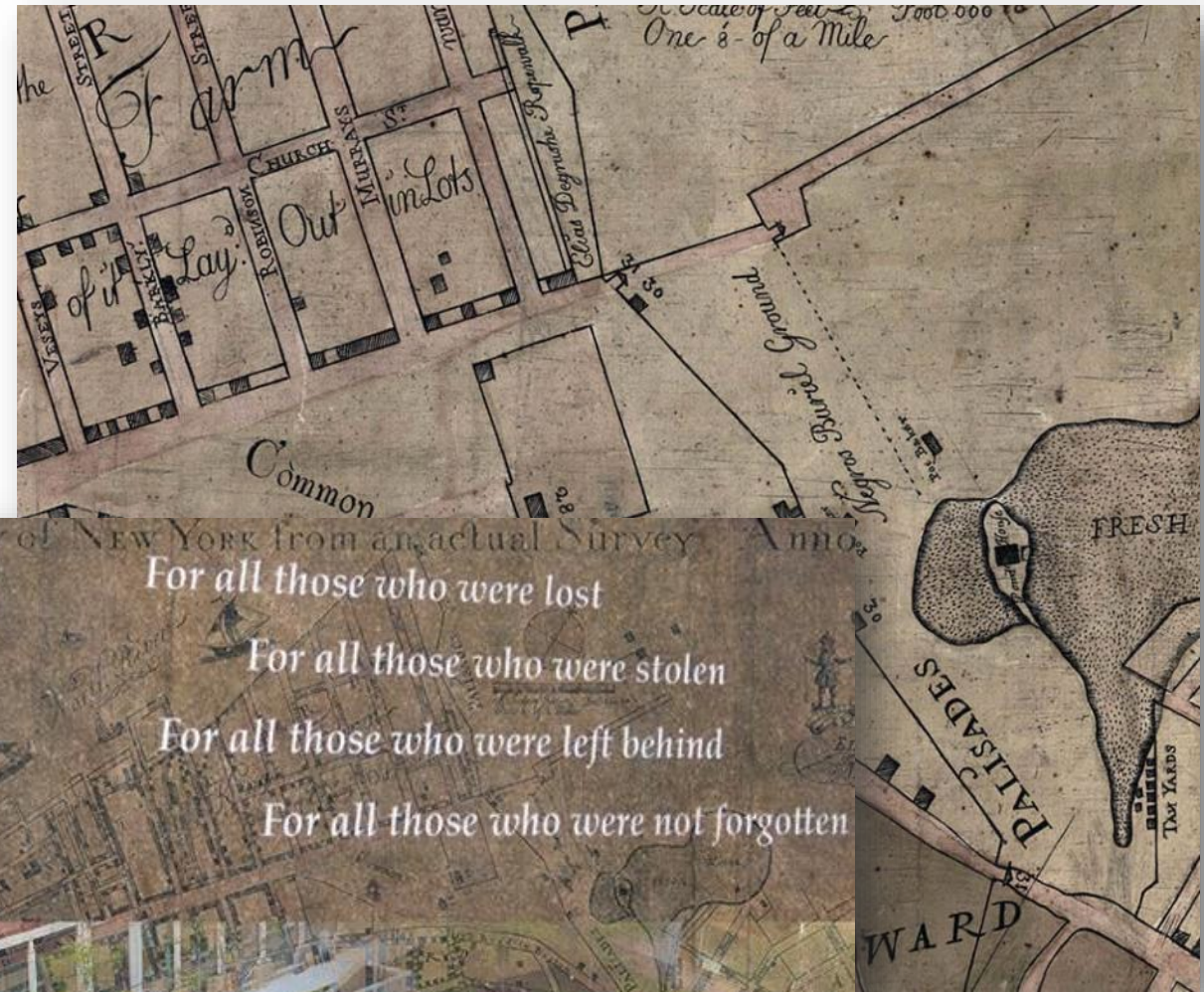
- |                       |                          |                          |                      |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| A. The Fort           | n. Mariner Meeting       | 10. Legal Market         | 22. The Kings Dr.    |
| B. Trinity Church     | 11. New Lutheran Meeting | 11. Frye Market          | 23. Rob. & Griffiths |
| C. Old Dutch Church   | 12. Governor House       | 12. Durans Market        | 24. Mrs. Pindling    |
| D. French Church      | 13. Secretary Office     | 13. Orange Market        | 25. John Burling     |
| E. St. Pauls Church   | 14. Custom House         | 14. English free School  | 26. Mrs. Leake       |
| F. Populonian Meeting | 15. New York & Co. Store | 15. Dutch free School    | 27. Benj. Blagden    |
| G. Quakers Meeting    | 16. City Hall            | 16. St. Cornelius Church | 28. John Durand      |
| H. Baptist Meeting    | 17. Sugar House          | 17. Joseph Gogwils Store | 29. Thom. House      |
| I. Lutheran Church    | 18. Exchange             | 18. Mill House           | 30. Broder Ho        |
| K. Jews Synagogue     | 19. Fish Market          | 19. White Livestock      | 31. Black Hole       |
| L. George Chappels    | 20. The Ship Market      | 20. Kellers In Camp D.   | 32. Galen            |

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN FOR AND SOLD BY G. GUTTENBERG

# Minority Cemeteries

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- History of damage & destruction
- Often sites are located on historic maps *after the fact*
- Examples throughout Texas



# “Lost” Cemeteries

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Archaeological processes  
(preservation bias, taphonomy)

Anthropological processes (spatial  
segregation, structural racism)

Although “lost” to historic &  
archaeological records; may not  
be lost to local people and/or  
descendant communities





# CEMETERY MAPPING IN TEXAS FREEDOM COLONIES

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ANDREA R. ROBERTS, PHD

Texas A & M University

Assistant Professor, Urban Planning

Founder, Texas Freedom Colonies

Project



# How Do Freedom Colony Cemeteries Become Lost ?

- Outmigration
- Low population
- No perpetual care
- Mutual aid societies dispersed
- Dispersed constituents, descendants



# Texas Freedom Colonies

- ◇ 1865-1920
- ◇ Black Codes, violence, terror,
- ◇ Clusters of landowners (2%, 31%)
- ◇ Squatting, adverse possession
- ◇ Railroads, mills, “bottoms”
- ◇ Cemeteries, few structures remain in some settlements

“These were dispersed communities—“settlements,” Southerners often called them—places unplatted and unincorporated, individually **unified only by church and school and residents' collective belief** that a community existed...”

*Freedom Colonies Independent Black Texans in the Time of Jim Crow,* Thad Sitton & James H. Conrad, 2005

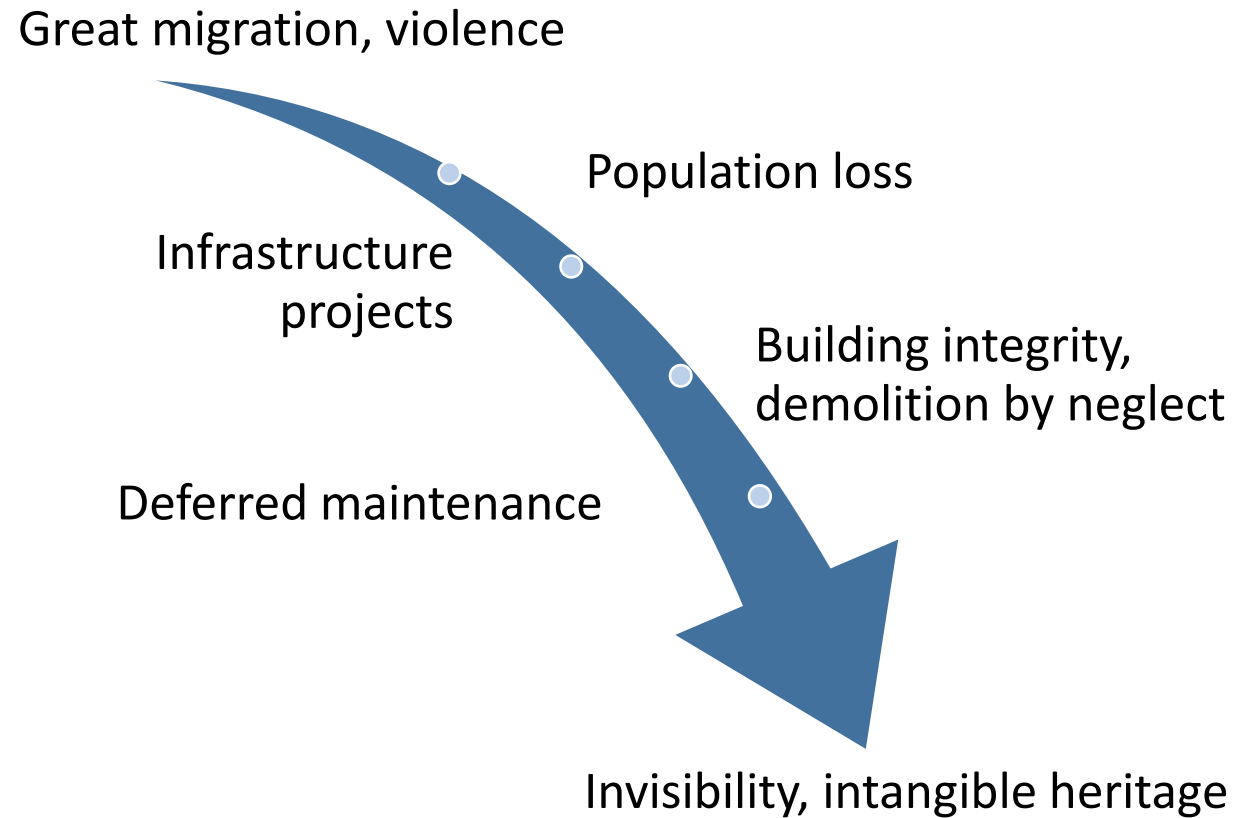


Rock Hill Settlement School

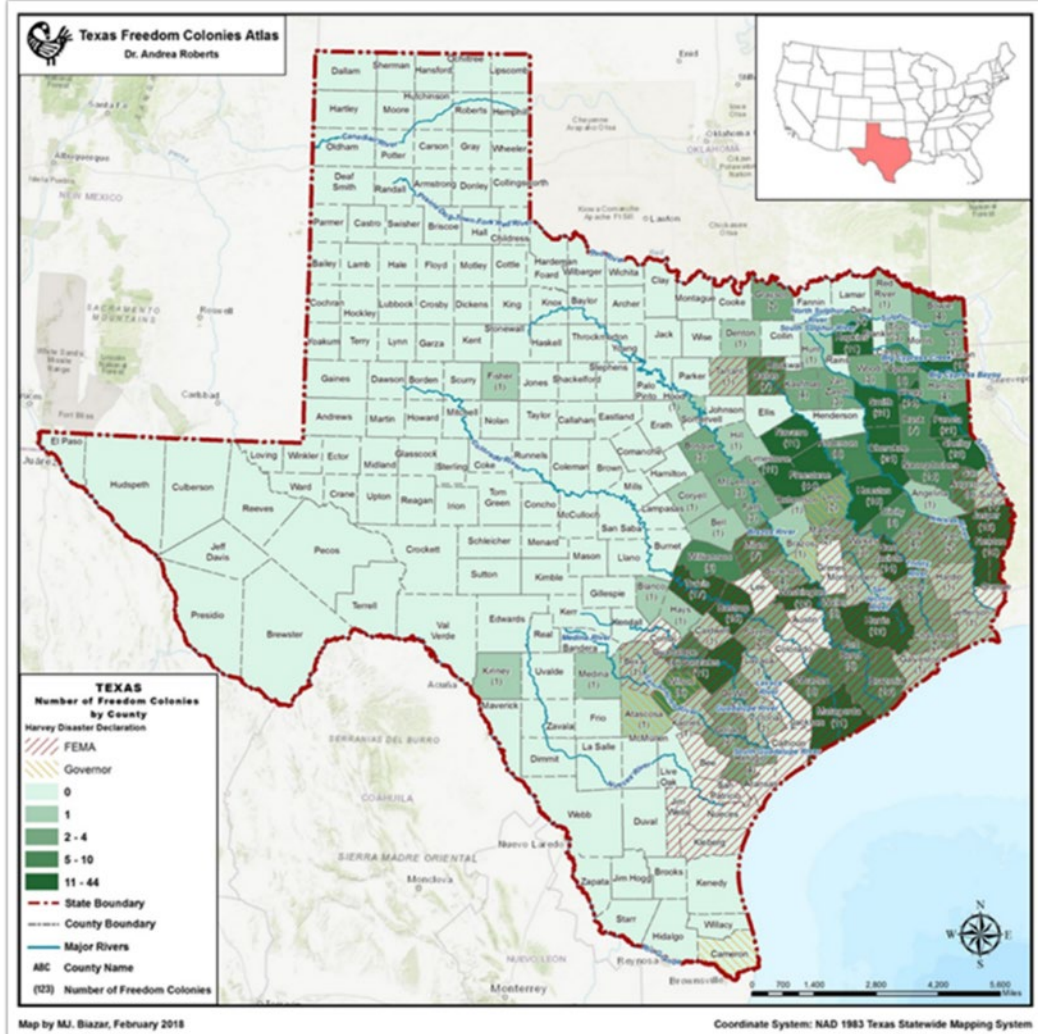


Pleasant Hill Settlement Church

# Causes of Texas Freedom Colony Decline



# Threats to Texas Freedom Colonies' Cultural Resources: Growth, Disinvestment, & Ecological Destruction



Environment  
justice in  
America  
Texas

**'America's dirty little secret': the Texas town that has been without running water for decades**



Oliver Milman in Sandbranch, Texas

@olliemilman

Thu 23 Nov 2017 07:00 EST



Enhancing pathways to identify lost  
cemeteries as part of the project  
planning process

# Human remains found in Belterra, linked to 1800s

TED OBERG INVESTIGATES  
A grave mistake: Possible slave cemetery

SHARE TWEET EMAIL



# Human remains found during construction on mall property



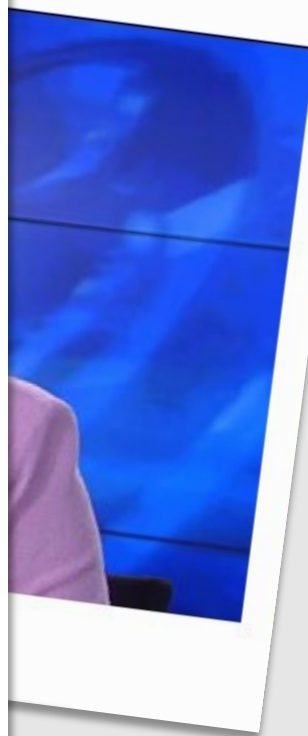
<https://www.chron.com/neighborhood/fortbend/news/article/Historic-cemetery-found-on-construction-site-of-12818838.php>

## Historic cemetery found on construction site of FBISD center

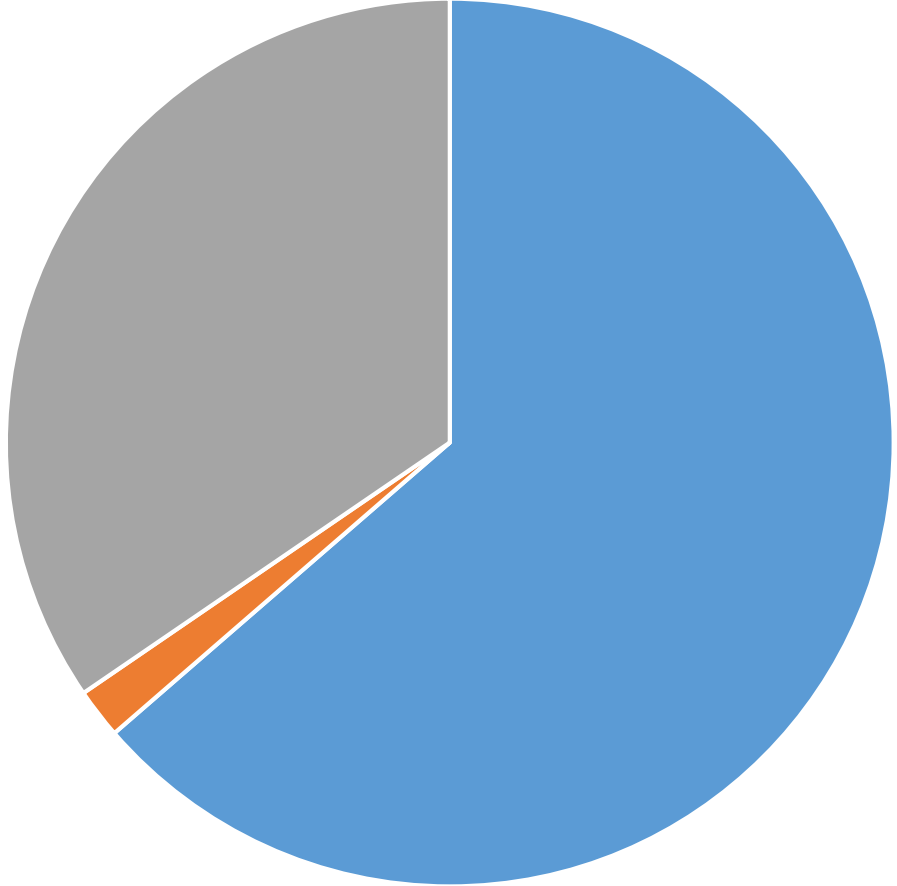
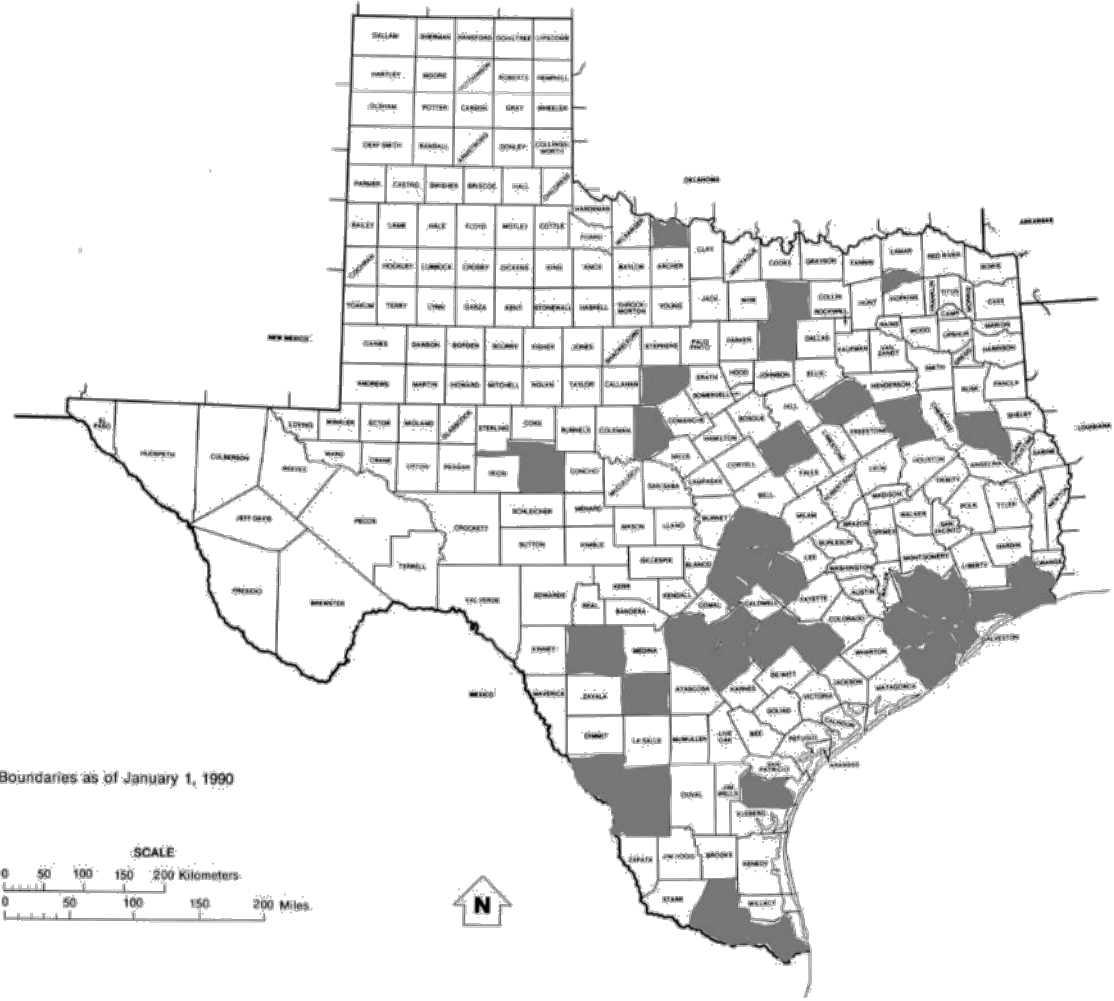
By **Brooke A. Lewis** Updated 12:50 pm CDT, Tuesday, April 10, 2018



IMAGE 1 OF 4



# Inadvertent Lost Cemetery Discoveries in TX 1871-2018 (n=67 across 33 counties)



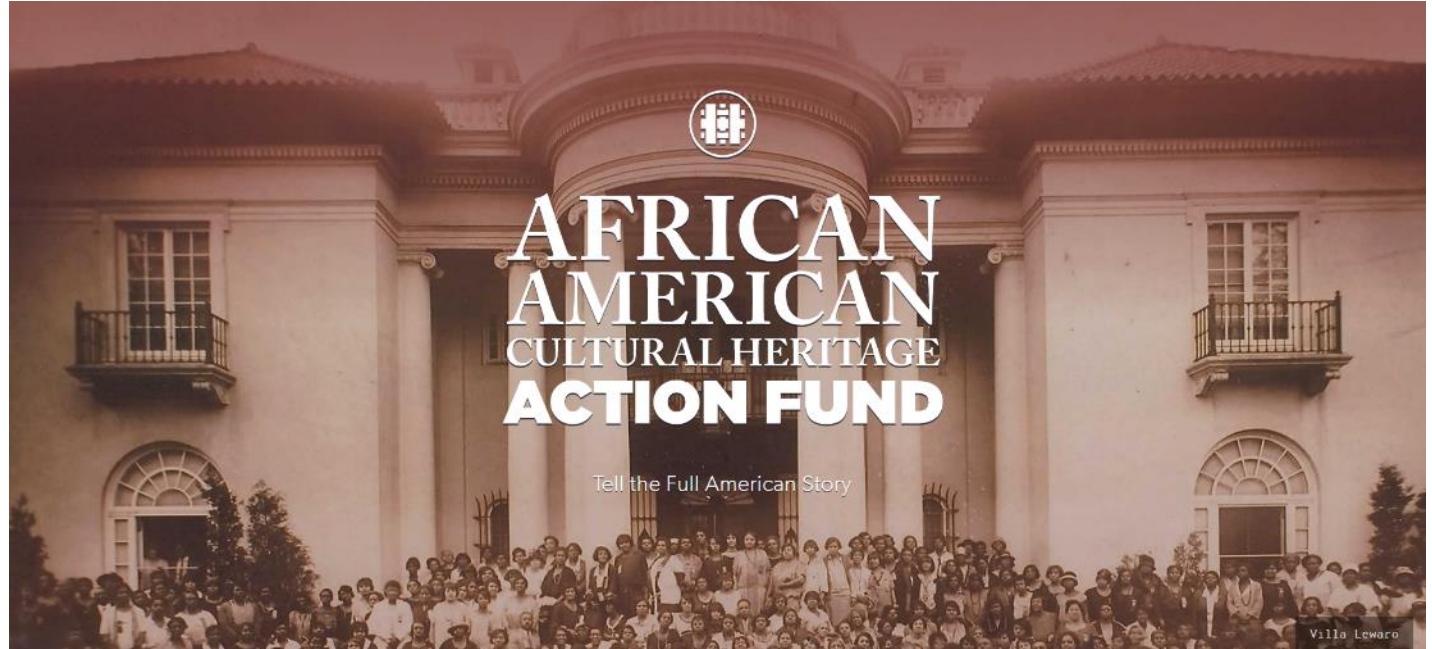
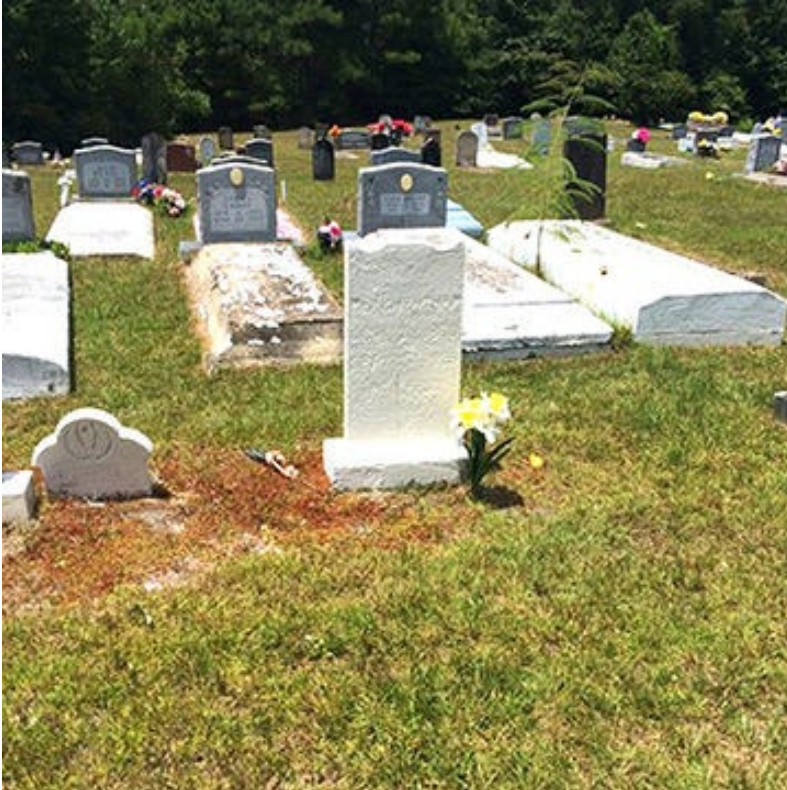
■ Private Sponsor    ■ Government Sponsor (Federal)    ■ Government Sponsor (State)



# The Regulatory Process as It Applies to Cultural Resources

- National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106
- Antiquities Code of Texas
- Texas Health and Safety Code, Section 711

# Awarded National Trust for History Preservation: Cemetery & Settlement Atlas Planning Grant (2019)



- Expand technological, storage capacity
- Mobile upload survey, assessment
- Planning with descendants (community engagement)

# The Texas Freedom Colonies Project: Who We Are

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**Texas Freedom Colonies Project** is an evolving, social justice initiative, which celebrates, researches, and documents historic Black settlements' landscapes, heritage, & grassroots placemaking and preservation practice.

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**Founded 2014**

Andrea R. Roberts, PhD, Founder

Affiliations at Texas A&M University – College of Architecture

Department of Landscape Architecture and Urban Planning

Center for Housing and Urban Development

Institute for Sustainable Communities

Center for Heritage Conservation





# THE TEXAS FREEDOM COLONIES PROJECT

*Preservation. Education. Service. Transformation*

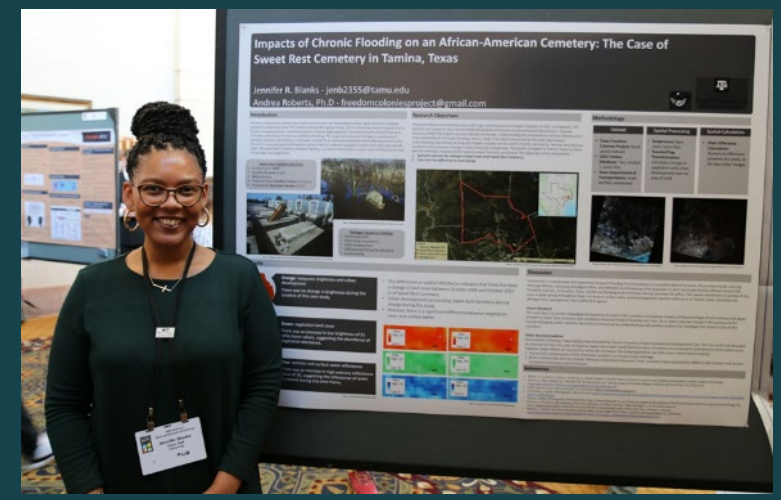
Texas Freedom Colonies Project is an evolving, social justice initiative, which celebrates, researches, & documents historic Black settlements' landscapes, heritage, & grassroots preservation practice.



Record, Analyze Placemaking  
Stories & Planning Histories



Develop Evidence-Based Community  
Resilience Strategies through Participatory  
Research



Build Atlas & Database of  
Texas FC Locations

# The Texas Freedom Colonies Atlas 2.0

<http://bit.ly/txfcpatlastwo>



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Texas Freedom Colonies Atlas & Study website. At the top, the title "Texas Freedom Colonies Atlas & Study" is displayed in white on a dark blue background. To the right of the title are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and a link icon, along with a small bird logo. Below the title is a navigation bar with six menu items: "WELCOME - HOW TO USE THE ATLAS" (highlighted in teal), "ATLAS (VERSION 2.0)", "TELL YOUR STORY", "TAKE THE BLACK SETTLEMENTS STUDY SURVEY", "ATLAS GUIDEBOOK", and "ABOUT THE PROJECT". The main content area features a large background image of a person in a white t-shirt looking out a window of a wooden building. Overlaid on this image is a semi-transparent white box containing the text "Welcome to the Texas Freedom Colonies Project Atlas (2.0)" in a large, black, sans-serif font. Below this text, in a smaller font, is the instruction "Scroll down to learn how to use the Atlas." A white downward-pointing arrow is centered at the bottom of the image area.

Texas Freedom Colonies Atlas & Study

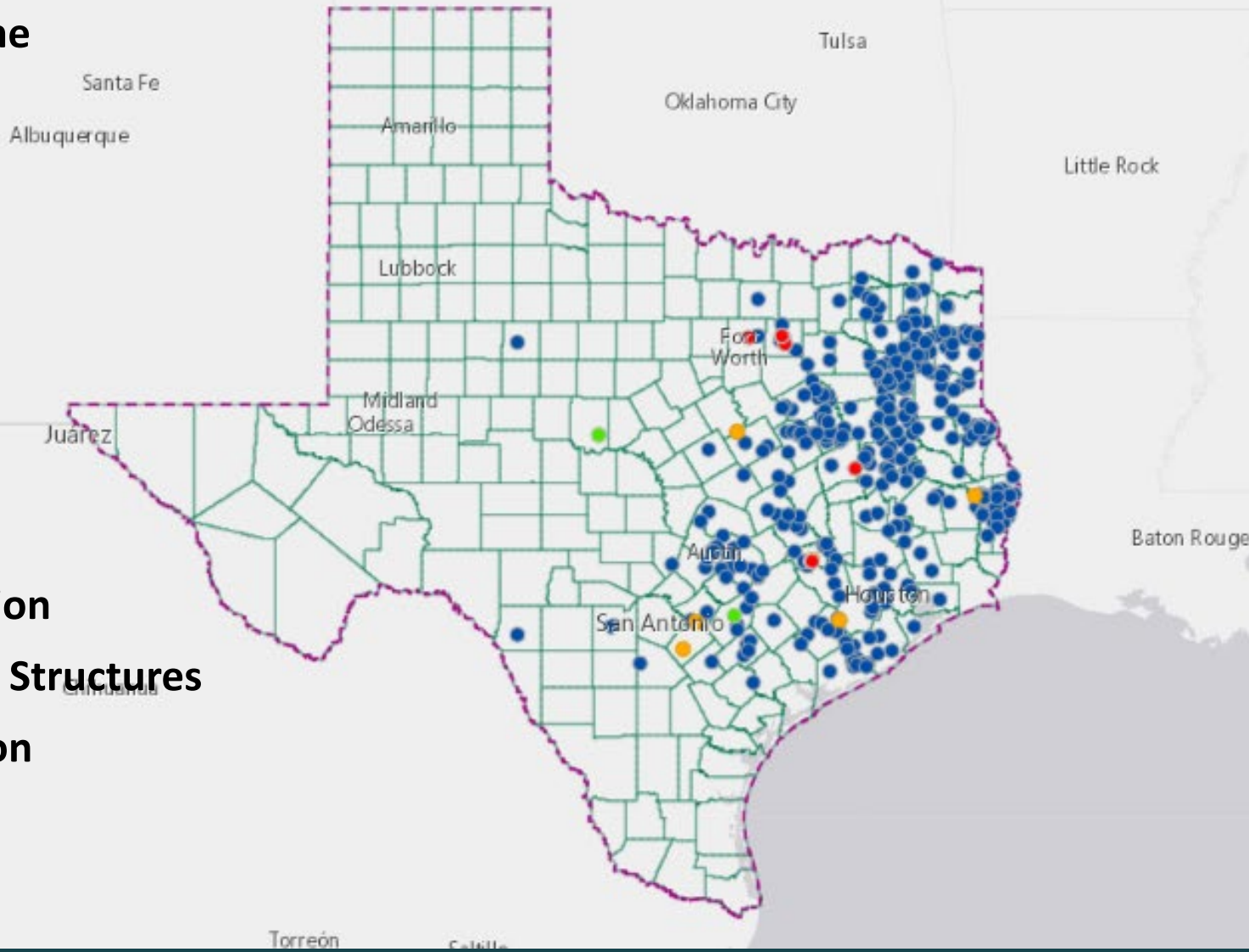
WELCOME - HOW TO USE THE ATLAS | ATLAS (VERSION 2.0) | TELL YOUR STORY | TAKE THE BLACK SETTLEMENTS STUDY SURVEY | ATLAS GUIDEBOOK | ABOUT THE PROJECT


## Welcome to the Texas Freedom Colonies Project Atlas (2.0)

Scroll down to learn how to use the Atlas.

# Maps Locations, Stores “Feature Types, including Cemeteries”

- Freedom Colony Name
- Origin Story
- Alias
- County
- Nearest Major City
- Region (COG)
- Status
- Year Established
- Census 2010 Population
- Existing Features and Structures
- Additional Information
- Related Links
- Attachments



  
**The Texas Freedom Colonies Project**  
**Located Freedom Colonies**

**Freedom Colony Name**  
Tunis

**Origin Story**

Alias:  
County: **Burleson**  
Nearest Major City:  
Region (COG): **BVCOG**  
Legal Status:  
Year Established:  
Census 2010 Population:

**Existing Features and Structures**

USGS Feature Type: **Populated Place**  
USGS Feature Name: **Tunis**  
National Register:  
Historical Marker:  
Cemetery:  
School:  
Church:  
Structure:  
Site:  
Park/Public Space:  
Object:

**Additional Information**

Family Names:  
Contact Email:

**Related Links**

[Public History](#)  
[Community History](#)  
[Event Calendar](#)

Attachments:  
No attachments found

Zoom to ...

# Maps Locations, Stores “Feature Types, including Cemeteries”

## Texas Freedom Colonies Atlas & Study



WELCOME - HOW TO USE THE ATLAS

ATLAS (VERSION 2.0)

TELL YOUR STORY

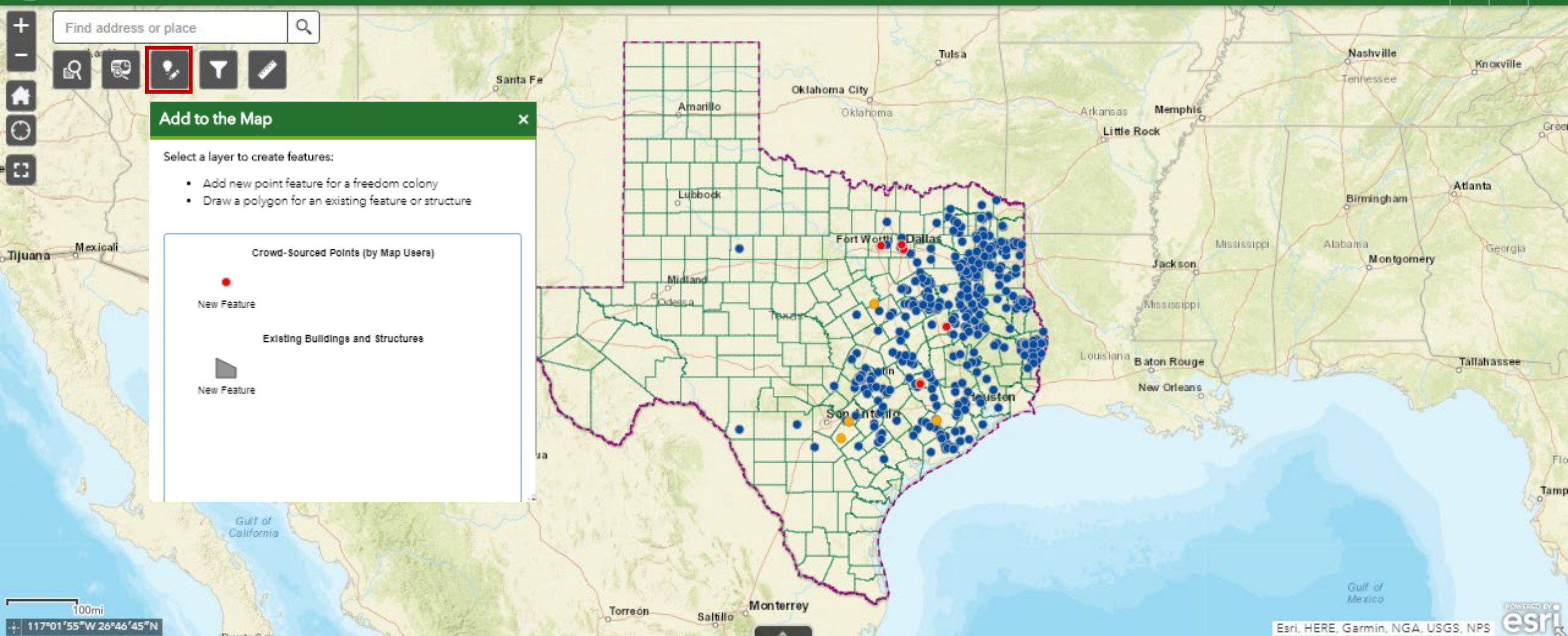
TAKE THE BLACK SETTLEMENTS STUDY SURVEY

ATLAS GUIDEBOOK


ABOUT THE PROJECT

## Texas Freedom Colonies Atlas (2.0)

TXFCP Website Data Sources



# The Texas Freedom Colonies Atlas 2.0: Crowdsources Cemetery History, Maps, Data



The map shows a street grid in a rural area. A grey shaded area represents the cemetery. Street names include White Ct, E Main St, Alamo Dr, Garrett St, Spring Ave, Railway Ave, Blue Jay St, and Yager Dr.

**The Texas Freedom Colonies Project**  
**Existing Buildings and Structures**

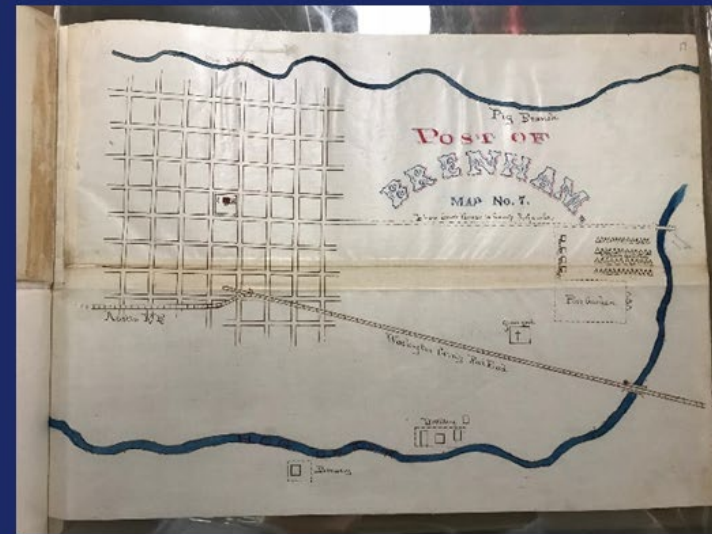
Name: Camptown Cemetery  
Type: Cemetery  
Current Use:  
Year Built: 1878  
Structure Quality:  
Floors:  
Ownership:

Attachments:  
[The History of Camptown Cemetery 1.docx](#)  
[Cemetery Deed.docx](#)  
[Explorations Article 1.JPG](#)  
[Explorations Article 2.JPG](#)  
[Explorations Article 3.JPG](#)  
[Explorations Article inset.JPG](#)

[Zoom to](#) ...

*“Starting with the cemetery for names and working with digital newspaper archives, a working history of the community is beginning to emerge.”*

**Camptown,  
Washington County**





# Andrea R. Roberts, PhD

Founder, Texas Freedom Colonies Project

[freedomcoloniesproject@gmail.com](mailto:freedomcoloniesproject@gmail.com)



*PUTTING FREEDOM COLONIES  
ON THE MAP, ON POLICY AGENDAS,  
AND AT THE CENTER OF TEXAS HISTORY.*

**ADD A COLONY TO THE ATLAS!**

<https://arcg.is/09vnS5>

**FIND US ON FACEBOOK**

@TheTexasFreedomColoniesProject

**STAY CONNECTED!**

[www.thetexasfreedomcoloniesproject.com](http://www.thetexasfreedomcoloniesproject.com)

**CONTACT US**

[freedomcoloniesproject@gmail.com](mailto:freedomcoloniesproject@gmail.com)

**TELL YOUR STORY  
SHARE YOUR COMMUNITY'S STORY!**

HERITAGE ENGAGEMENT PRESERVATION ADVOCACY

# Council of Texas Archeologists' Lost Cemeteries Task

1. Identify steps to enhance desktop reviews
2. Prioritize “high-risk locations” of the state
3. Implementation via the Texas Historical Commission’s Archeological Sites Atlas

# Enhancing Desktop Reviews

Log in - Atlas: Texas Historical Co x +

atlas.thc.state.tx.us/Account/Login?Length=5

Apps Time Entry for Andr... Bookmarks Imported From IE Time Entry for Andr... Sesame Street: Co... Breathing Butterfly... Alliance GPS Collec... Other bookmarks

TEXAS HISTORIC SITES  
**ATLAS**

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
REAL PLACES TELLING REAL STORIES

HOME · ATLAS MAP · ADVANCED SEARCH · ABOUT ATLAS · DOWNLOADS

Texas Archeological Sites Atlas  
Restricted Information Access

Sign in below only if you are authorized to enter this site and agree to be bound by our [terms and conditions of access](#). All access attempts are logged.

If you are having trouble logging in please [click here](#) for instructions on clearing your cache.

By clicking the "Enter" button below, you agree to our [terms and conditions of access](#), including, but not limited to:

- You understand that portions of the information contained in this database are confidential under state (§191.004 Texas Natural Resources Code (VTCA 1995)) and federal (Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, 16 USC §470aa et. seq.) laws
- You will supply one (1) copy of any publication resulting from the use of the Texas Archeological Sites Atlas to the Archeology Division of the Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, Texas 78711-2276
- You will not discuss or divulge any system access codes (including my user name and password) to any third party
- You agree to use the information for the specific purpose intended and not to distribute or publish the information in its original form

To login, enter your Texas Archeological Sites Atlas user name and password at the bottom of this page and click the "Enter" button to access the database.

Username or Email Address

Password

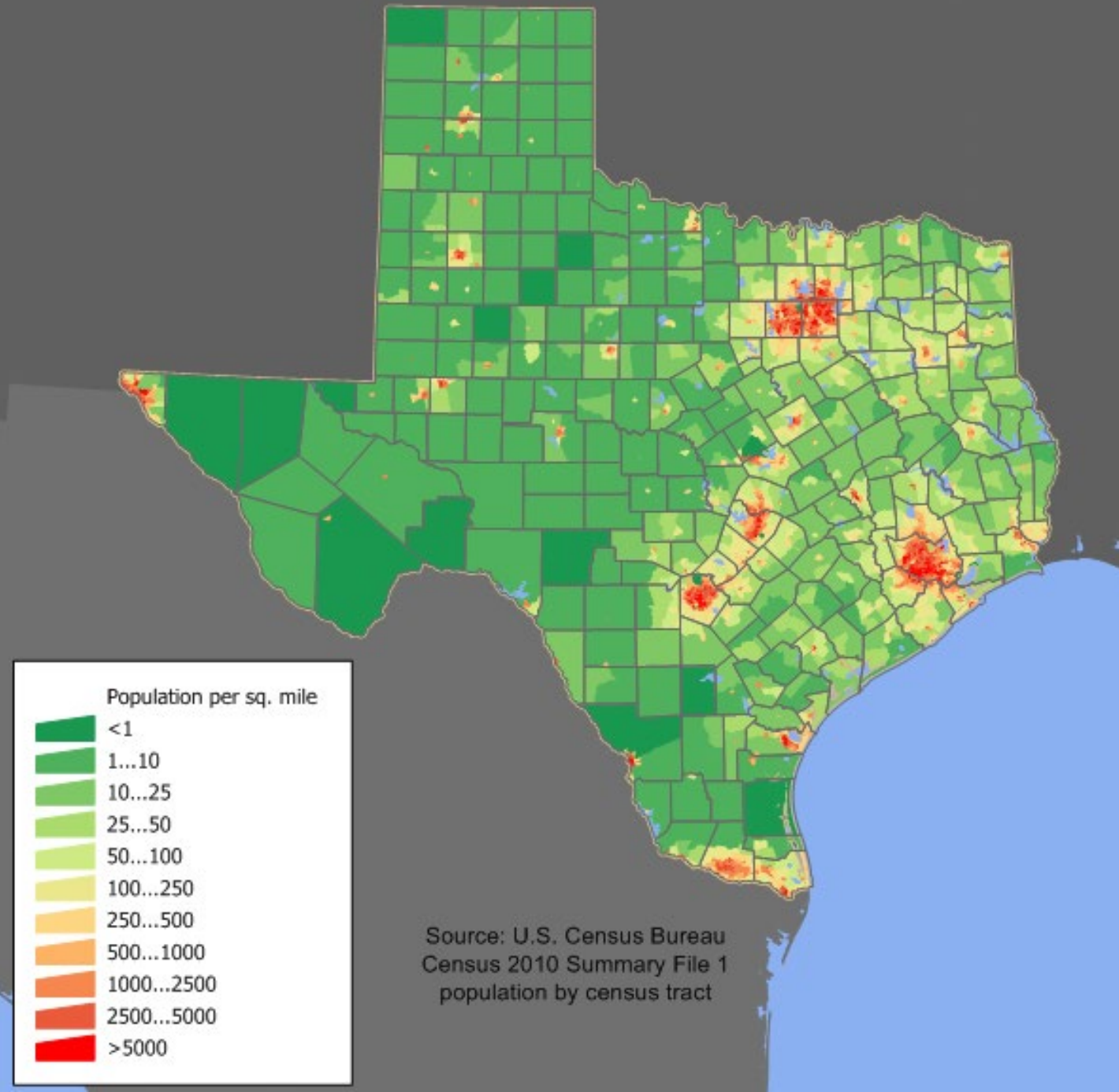
Enter

Type here to search

8:21 AM  
1/27/2020

- Use of georeferenced historical maps
- adding locations of “discovered” cemeteries to an accessible web-based GIS application (e.g., the Atlas)

# Prioritizing Areas of the State



# Heat Maps

SEARCH **HEAT MAPS** LAYERS COMPARE

Select:

Labor Force

Demographic Data

Consumer Expenditures

Category: Total Households

Data Point: Households

● VALUE

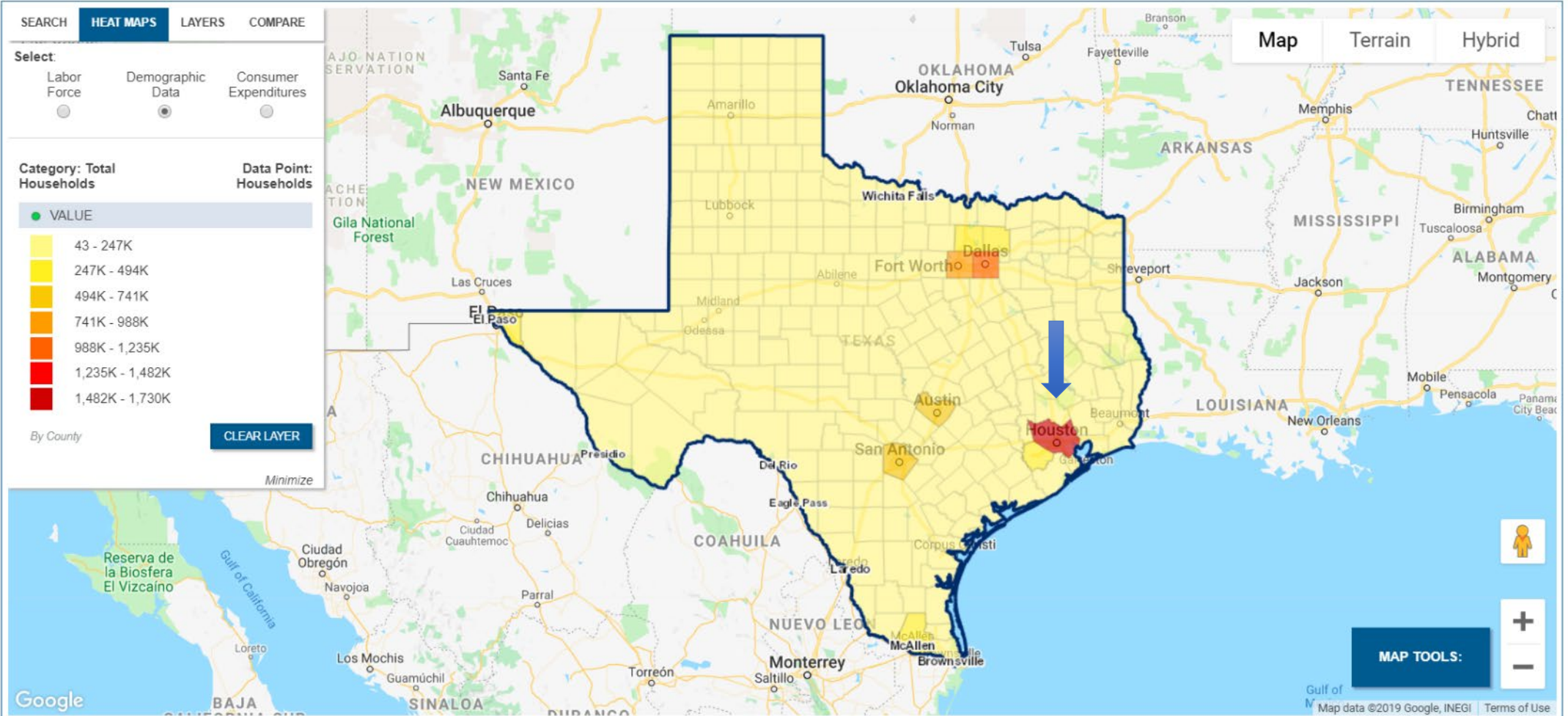
- 43 - 247K
- 247K - 494K
- 494K - 741K
- 741K - 988K
- 988K - 1,235K
- 1,235K - 1,482K
- 1,482K - 1,730K

By County

CLEAR LAYER

Minimize

Map Terrain Hybrid



MAP TOOLS:

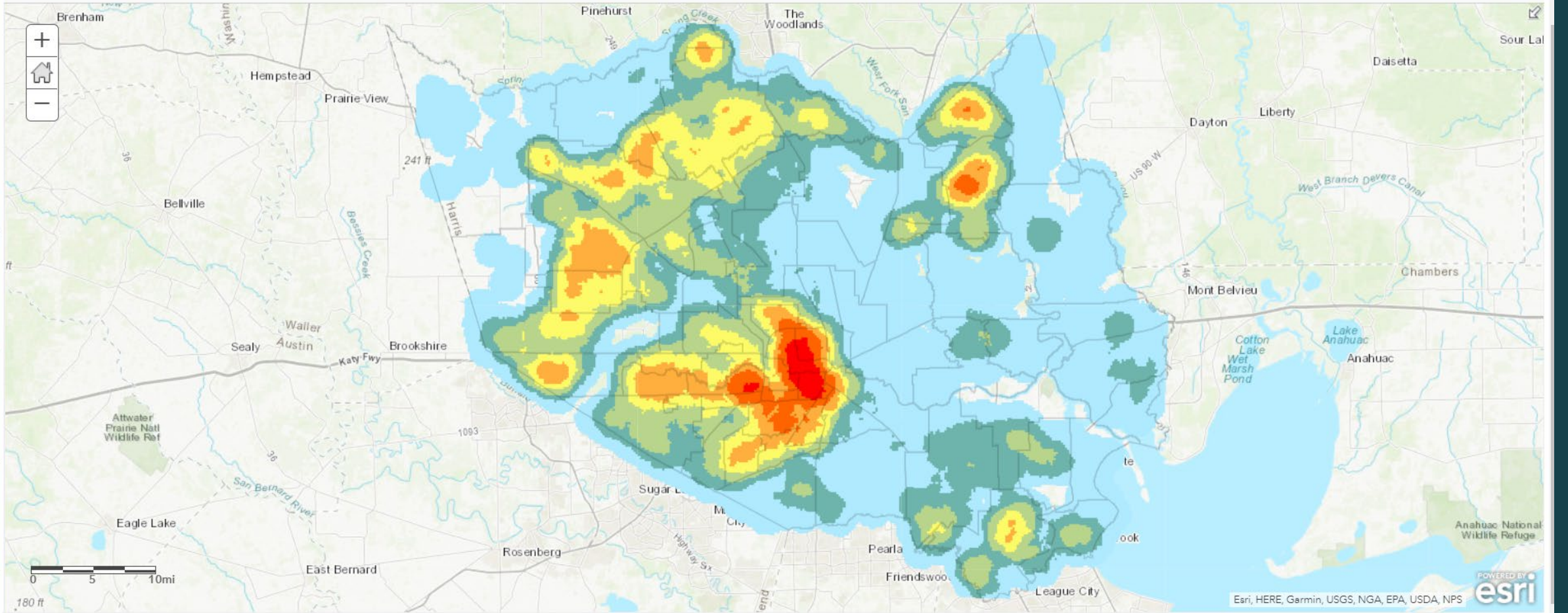
2014

Home ▾ Recent Residential Traditional and Foreclosure Sales (Click content to see map layers)

👤 Sign In

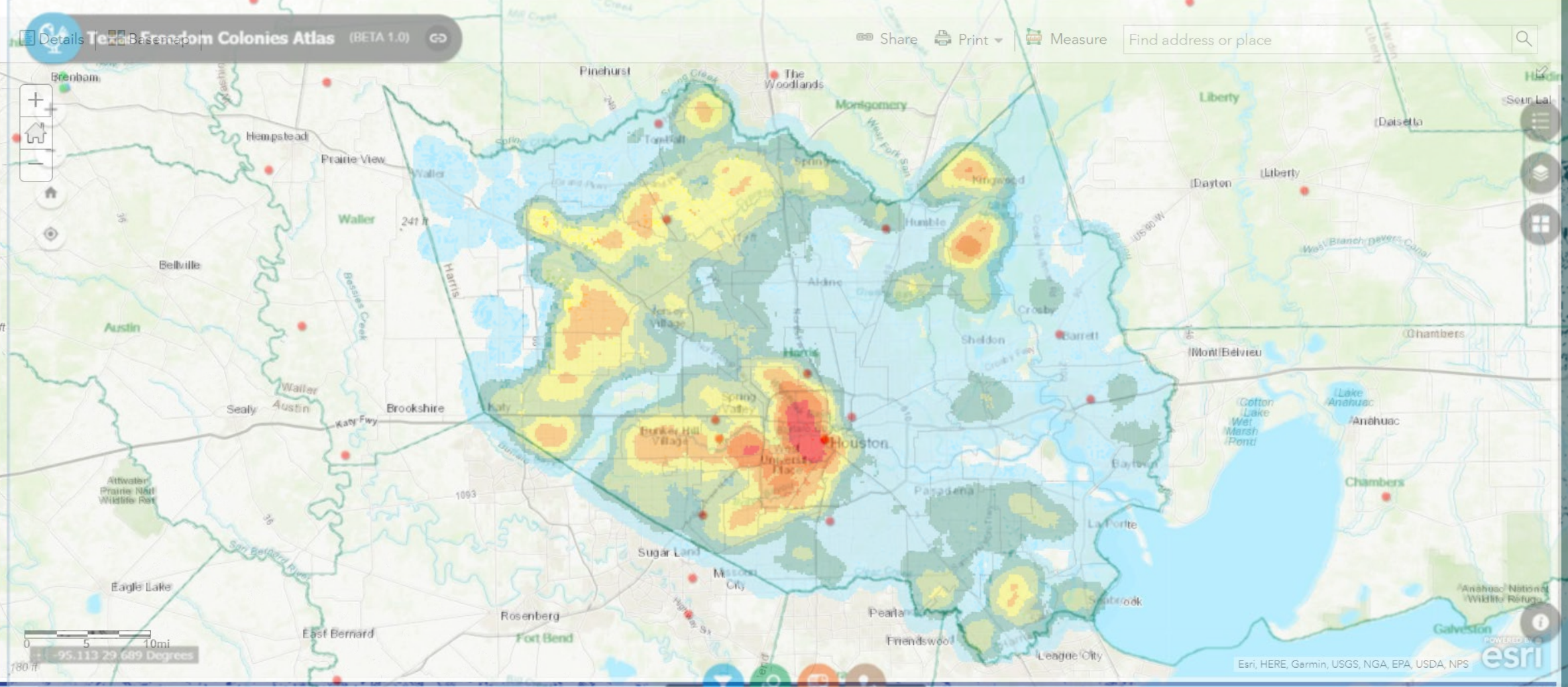
📄 Details | 🗺 Basemap |

🔗 Share 🖨 Print ▾ 📏 Measure 🔍 Find address or place



2014

Home Recent Residential Traditional and Foreclosure Sales (Click content to see map layers)



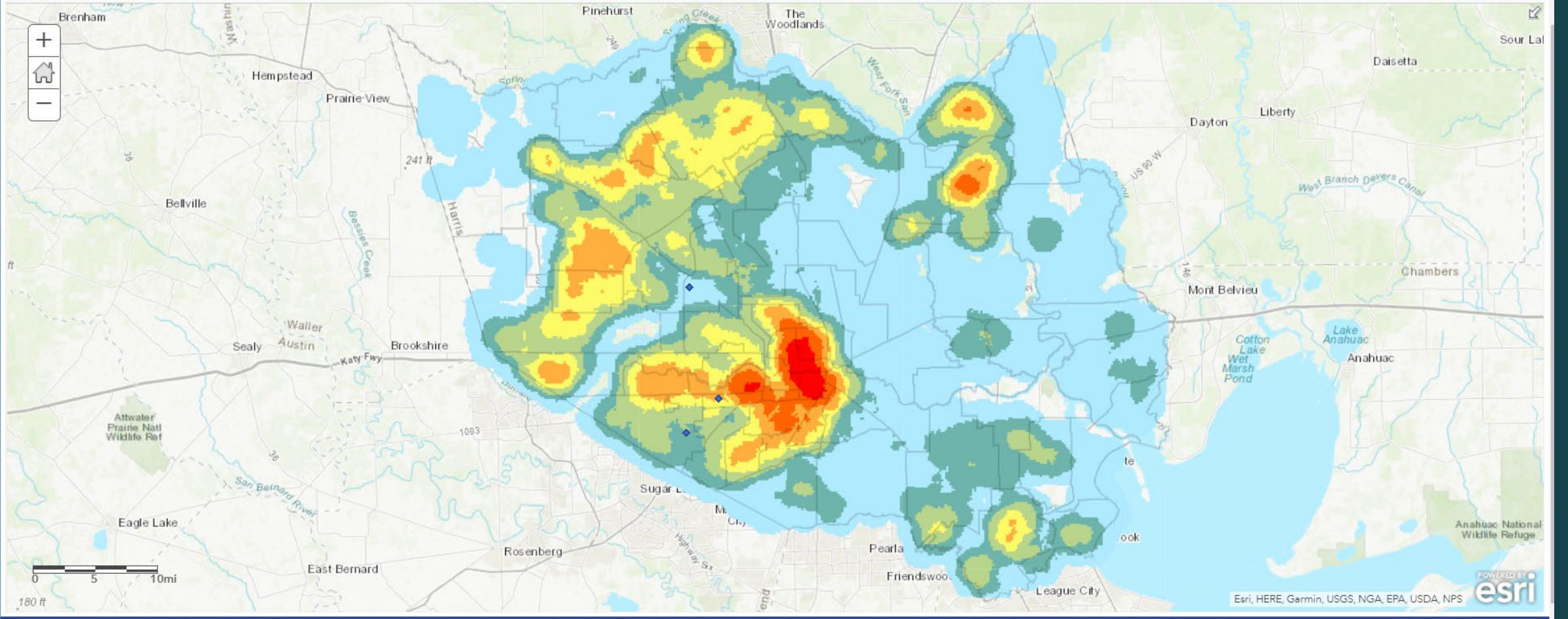
2014

Home ▾ Recent Residential Traditional and Foreclosure Sales (Click content to see map layers)

👤 Sign In

📄 Details | 🗺 Basemap

🔗 Share 🖨 Print ▾ 📏 Measure 🔍 Find address or place





# Lost Cemeteries Task Force Core Team

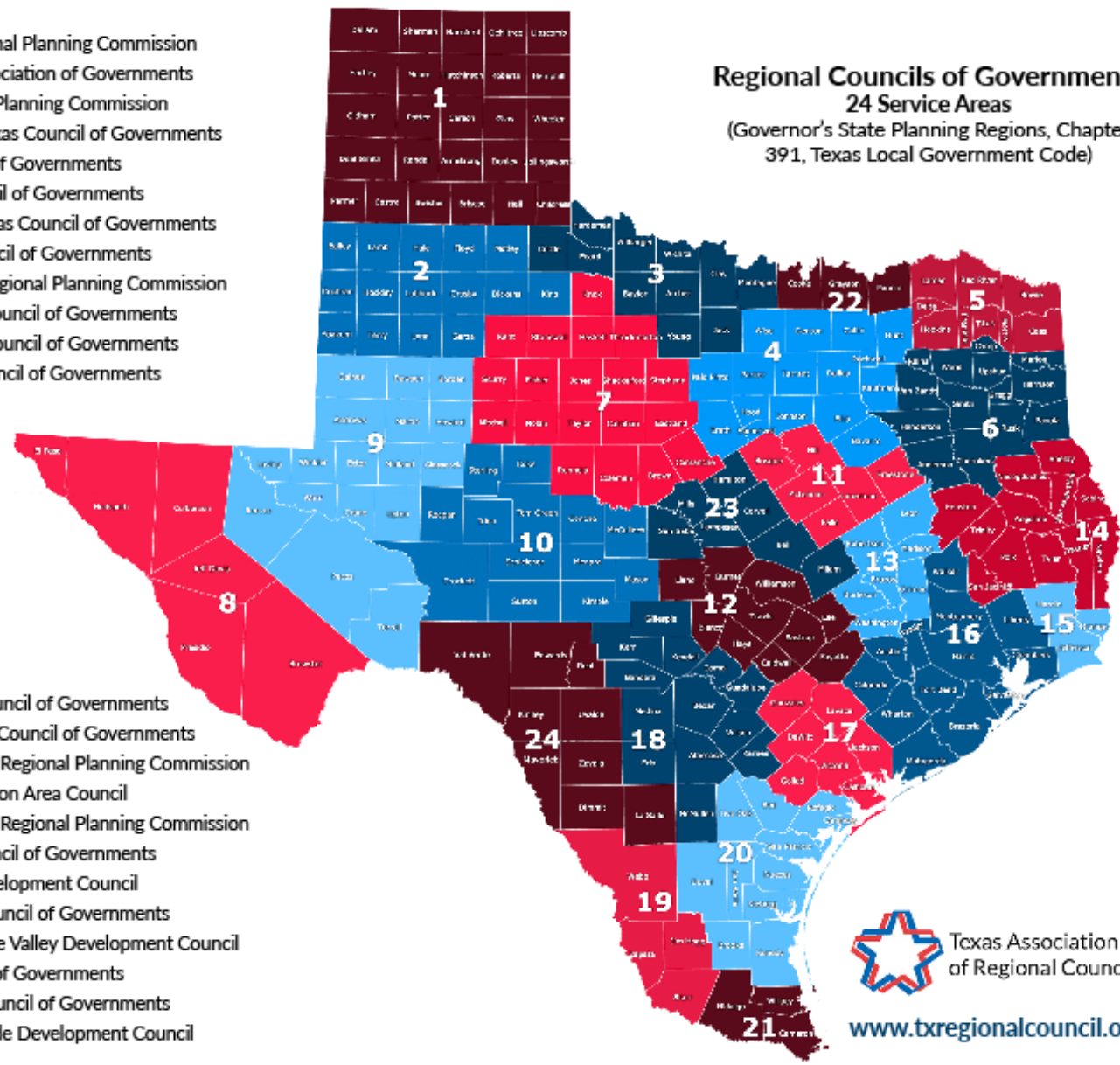
- GIS Specialists
- Historians, archeologists with expertise in identifying lost cemeteries using GIS-enabled historic records databases
- THC Archeology Division Representative
- THC History Programs/Cemeteries Representative

# Task Force Advisors/Partners

- County Historical Commissions
- County Site Stewards
- Researchers
- Cemetery Preservation Advocacy Groups
- Urban planners
- Chairs of Area Councils of Government

# Regional Councils of Governments

1. Panhandle Regional Planning Commission
2. South Plains Association of Governments
3. Nortex Regional Planning Commission
4. North Central Texas Council of Governments
5. Ark-Tex Council of Governments
6. East Texas Council of Governments
7. West Central Texas Council of Governments
8. Rio Grande Council of Governments
9. Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission
10. Concho Valley Council of Governments
11. Heart of Texas Council of Governments
12. Capital Area Council of Governments



13. Brazos Valley Council of Governments
14. Deep East Texas Council of Governments
15. South East Texas Regional Planning Commission
16. Houston-Galveston Area Council
17. Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission
18. Alamo Area Council of Governments
19. South Texas Development Council
20. Coastal Bend Council of Governments
21. Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council
22. Texoma Council of Governments
23. Central Texas Council of Governments
24. Middle Rio Grande Development Council

**Regional Councils of Governments**  
**24 Service Areas**  
 (Governor's State Planning Regions, Chapter 391, Texas Local Government Code)

A man in a light-colored suit jacket, dark shirt, and tie is sitting on a brick wall in a cemetery. He has a red boutonniere on his lapel and is looking down. The background shows a grassy area with several tombstones and a chain-link fence.

# Preservation is Interdisciplinary

- Archival research
- Archaeological investigations of cemeteries
- Anthropological understanding of mortuary customs

*Reginald Moore, Old Imperial Farm Cemetery, Sugarland*

# Preservation is Collaborative

- Local & Descendant Communities
- Underrepresented sites in American history
- New legislation

NEW AT 6:00

**REPAIR FOR CEMETERIES**

AFRICAN-AMERICAN BURIAL GROUNDS NETWORK ACT



WTVR-TV RICHMOND

# Preservation is Participatory

- Project planning involving impacted communities should consider dispersed nature of black descendants of those buried
- Atlas, Mapping Tools that encourage public participation
  - Engagement
  - Crowdsourcing
  - National Trust Grant

NEW AT 6:00

**REPAIR FOR CEMETERIES**

AFRICAN-AMERICAN BURIAL GROUNDS NETWORK ACT



WTVR-TV RICHMOND

# REAL PLACES

PRESERVING HISTORIC TEXAS 2020 CONFERENCE

*Thank you*

**Rebecca Shelton, Texas Historical  
Commission, Archeology Division**

**Jennifer McWilliams, Texas Historical  
Commission, History Programs, Cemetery  
Coordinator**

**Dr. Andrea Roberts, Texas A&M University**

**The Council of Texas Archeologists**

**All other members of the Lost Cemeteries  
Task Force**

Lemke *In Press* "Missing Cemeteries" and Structural Racism: Historic Maps (1887-1960) and Endangered African/African-American and Hispanic Mortuary Customs in Texas. *Historical Archaeology*.