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

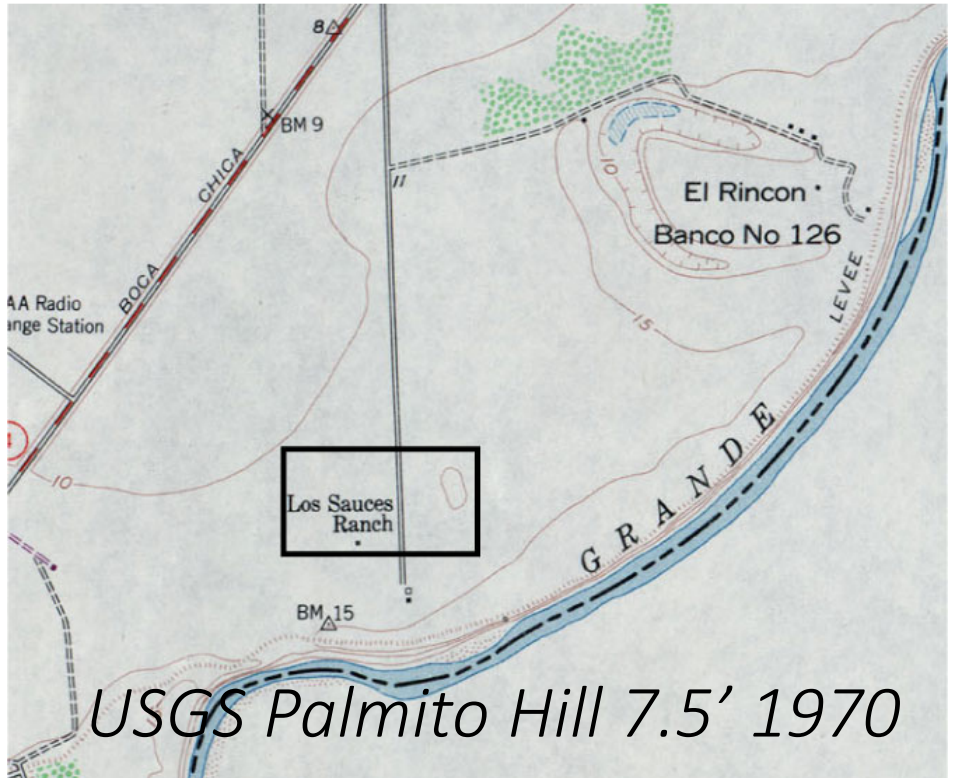
Historic Cemeteries

- 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

USGS Fort Brown 15’ 1955

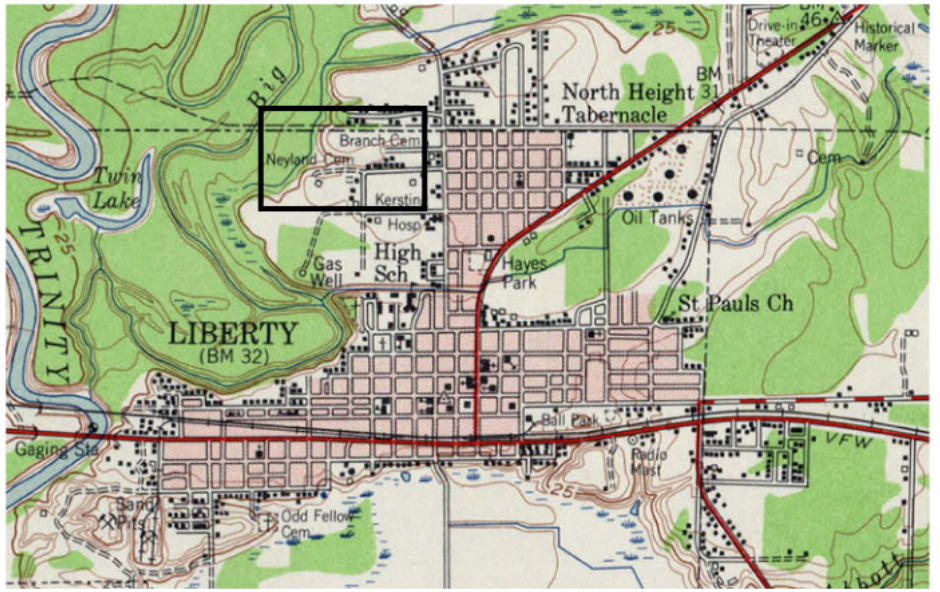


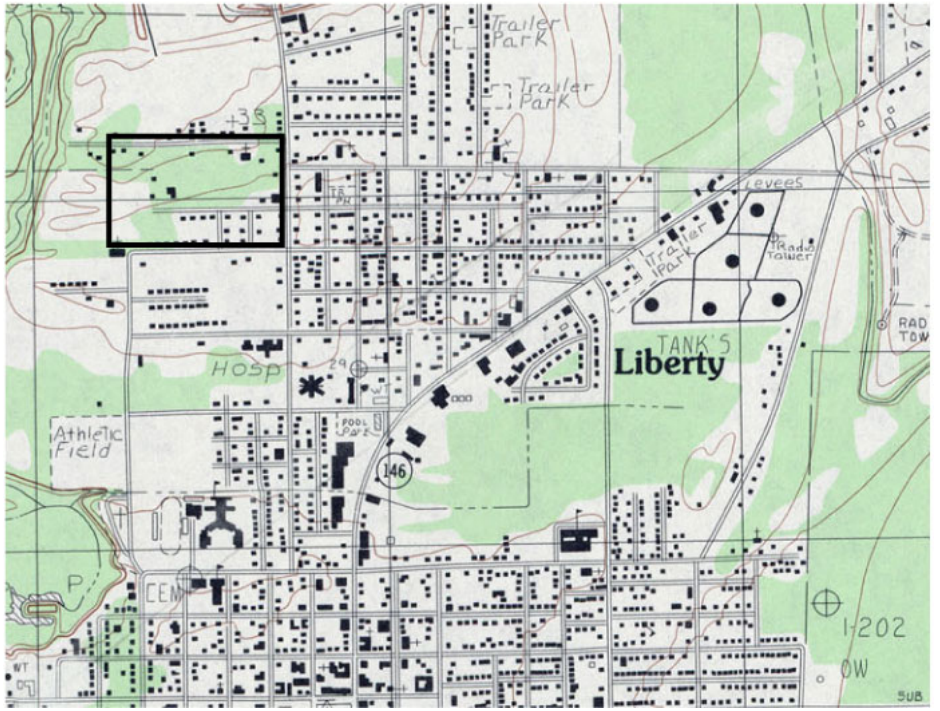
USGS Palmito Hill 7.5’ 1970

TOP: *USGS Liberty 15’ 1955*

BOTTOM: *USGS Liberty 7.5’ 1984*

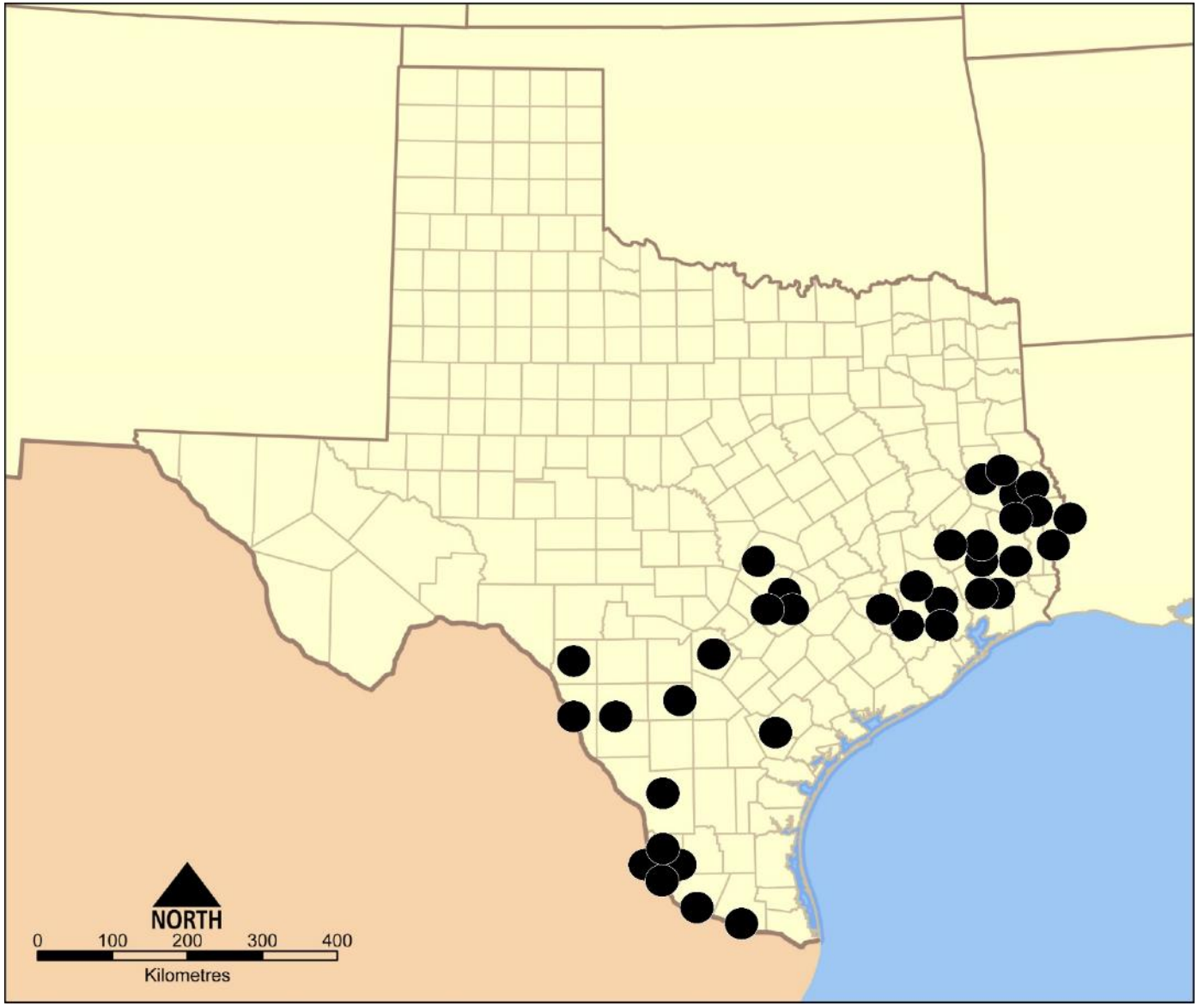
“Missing” Cemeteries





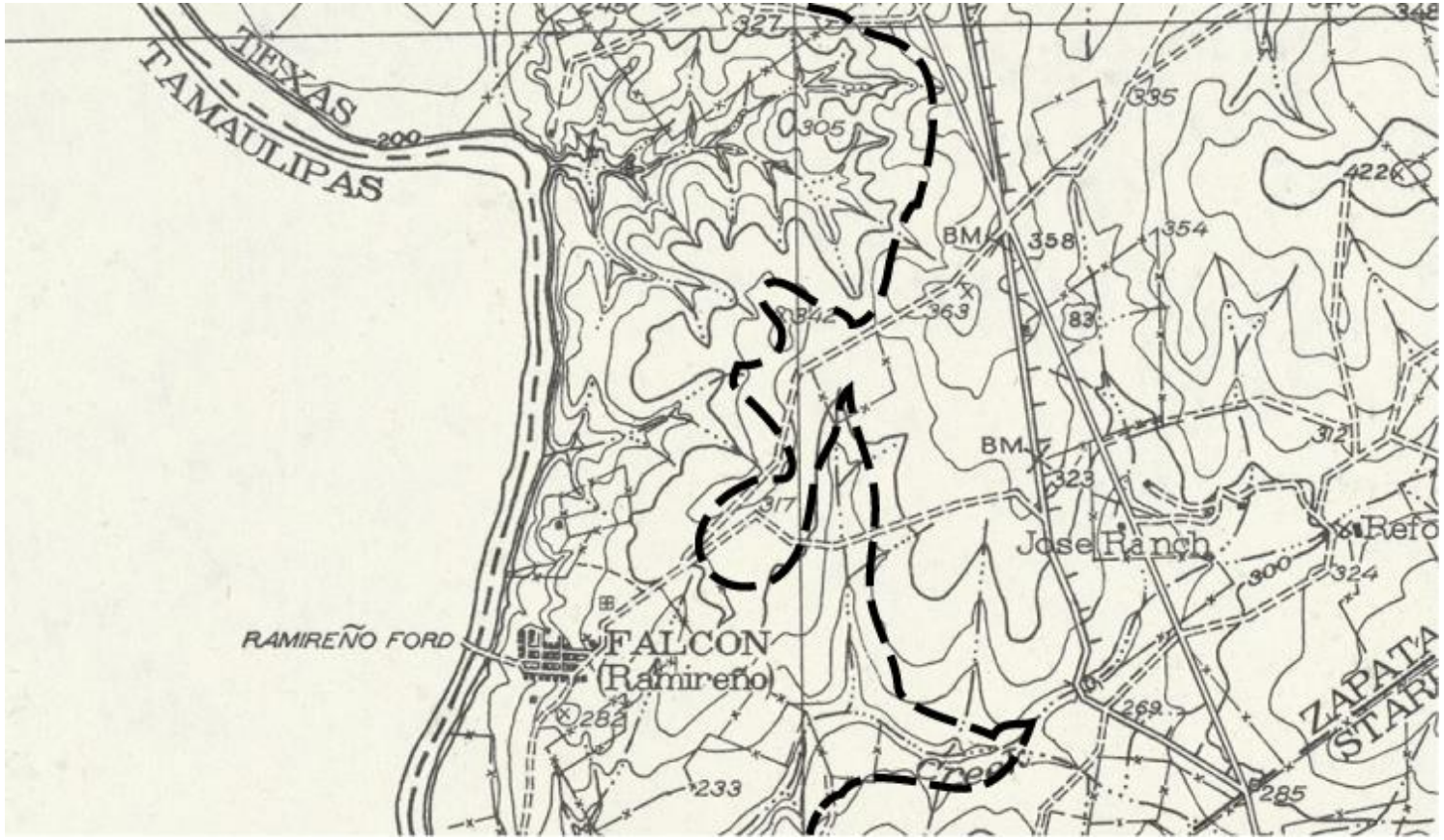
Data

- 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

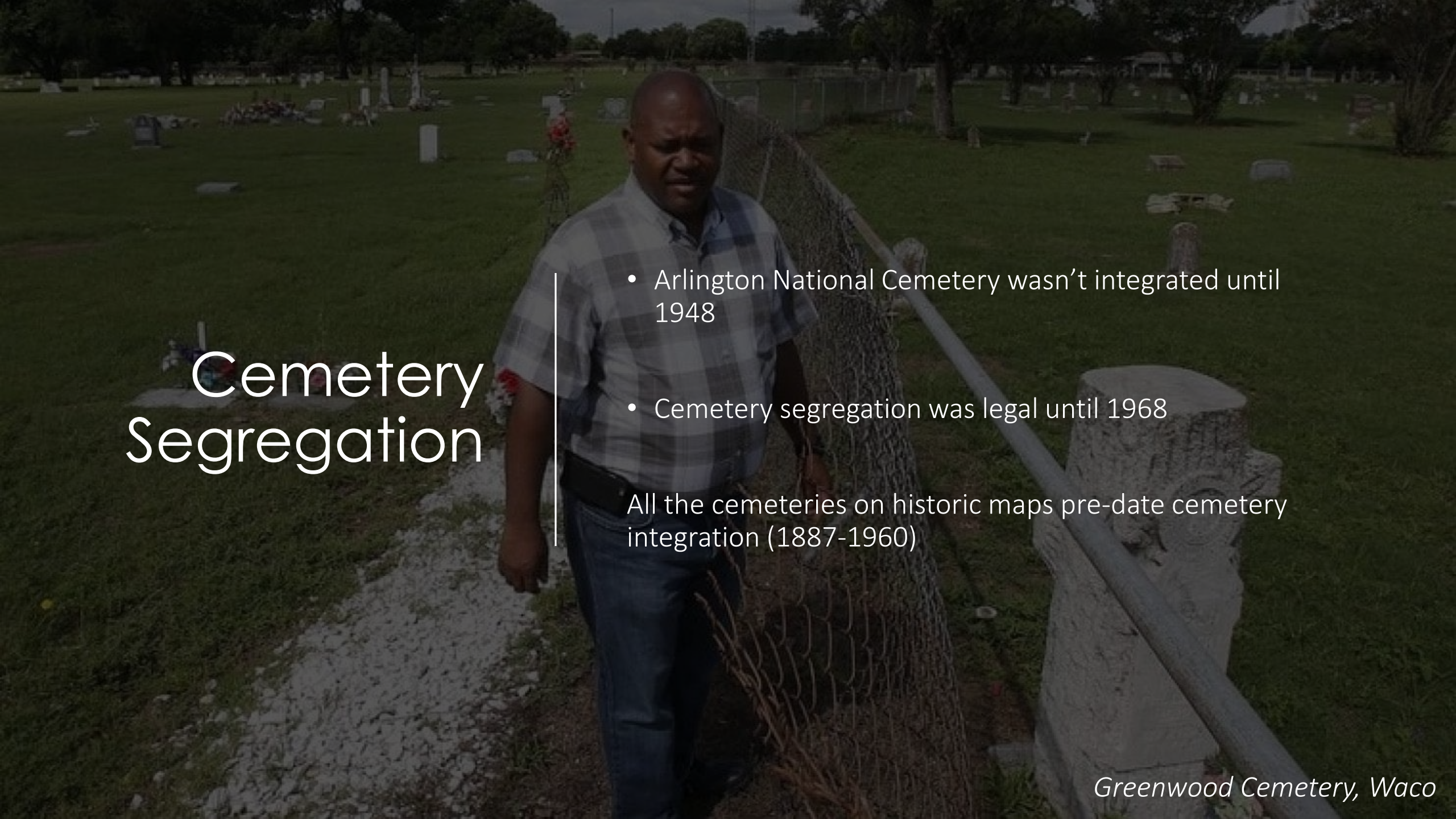


Why did some cemeteries go missing?

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

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

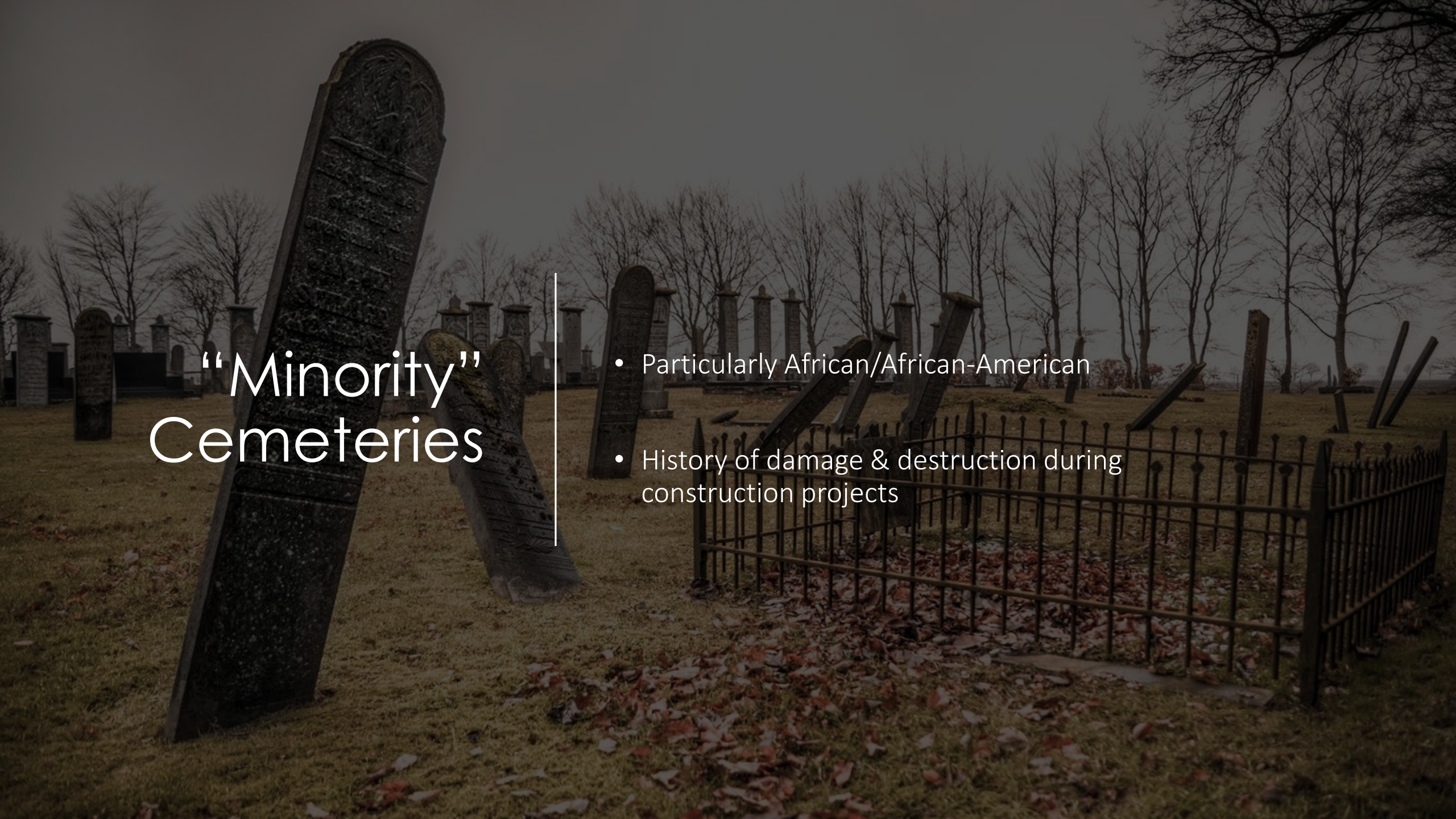


Cemetery Segregation

- 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)

Greenwood Cemetery, Waco



“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 M C

By F. Maerschalck City

Minority Cemeteries

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

“Lost” Cemeteries

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

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

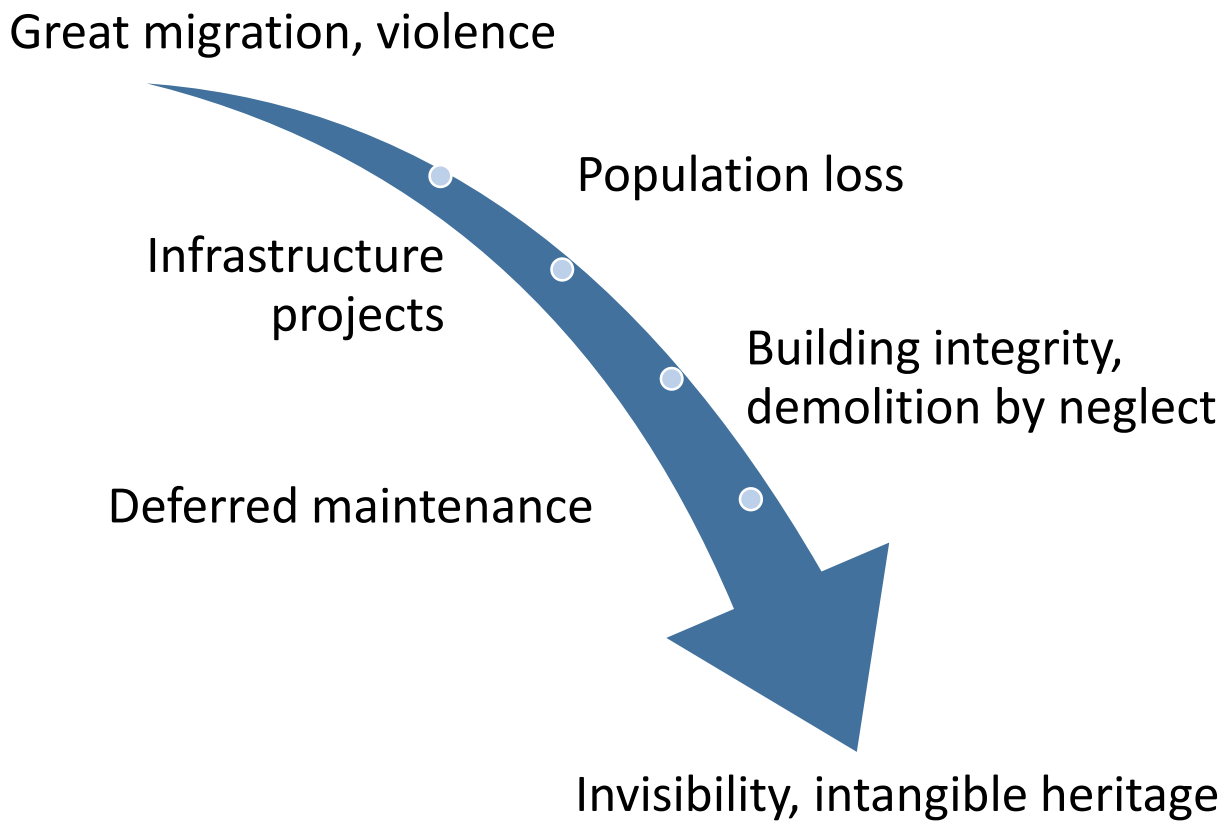
“These were dispersed communities—"settlements," Southerners often called them—places unplatted and unincorporated, individually **unified only by church and school and residents' collective belief** that a community existed…“

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

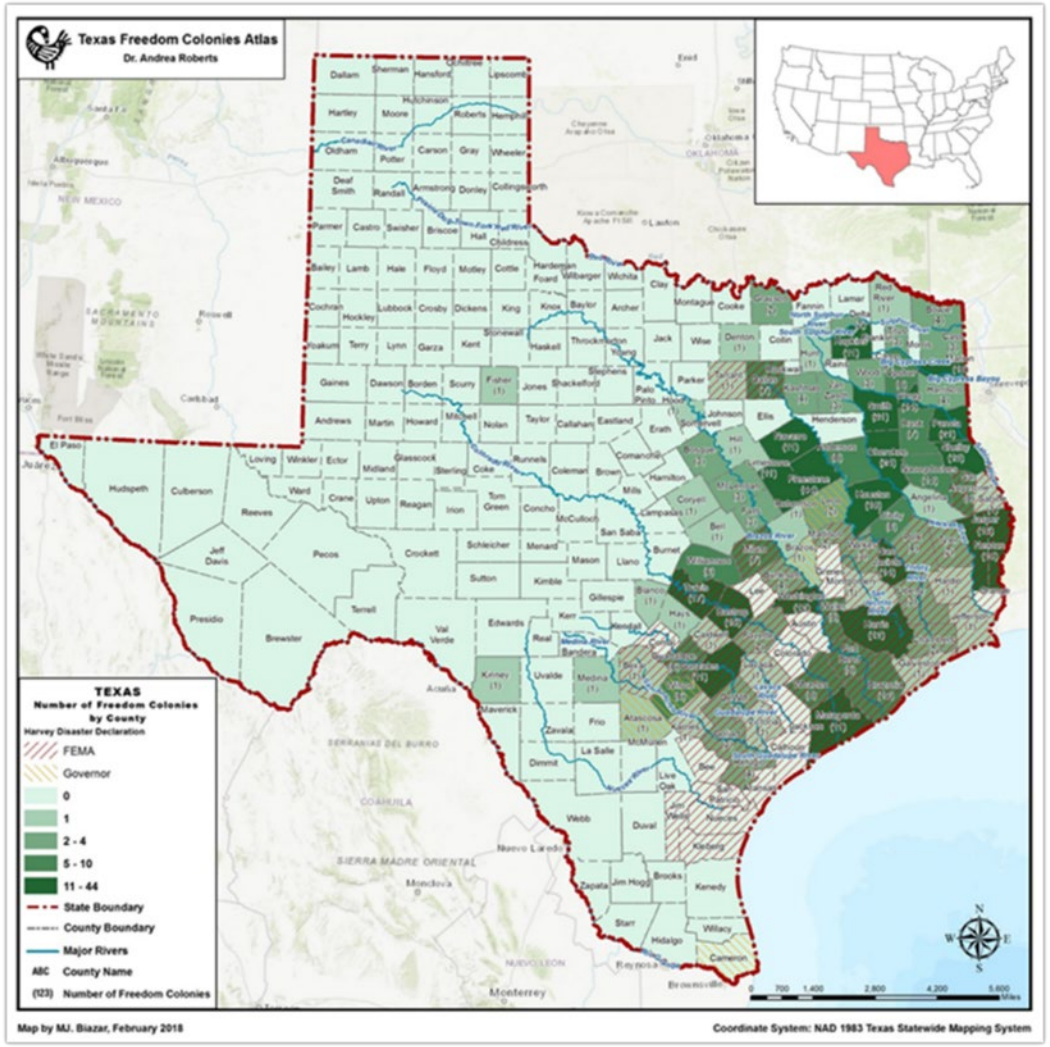
Rock Hill Settlement School

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

31k

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

kxan

NEWS WEATHER TRAFFIC INVESTIGATIONS REPORT IT

AUSTIN

Human remains found in Belterra, linked to 1800s

Human remains found during construction on mall property

TED OBERG INVESTIGATES

A grave mistake: Possible slave cemet

SHARE TWEET EMAIL

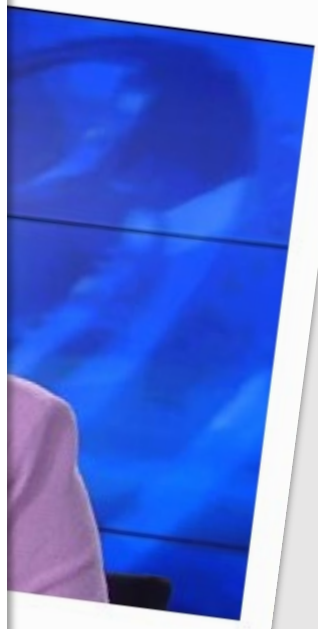
Chron

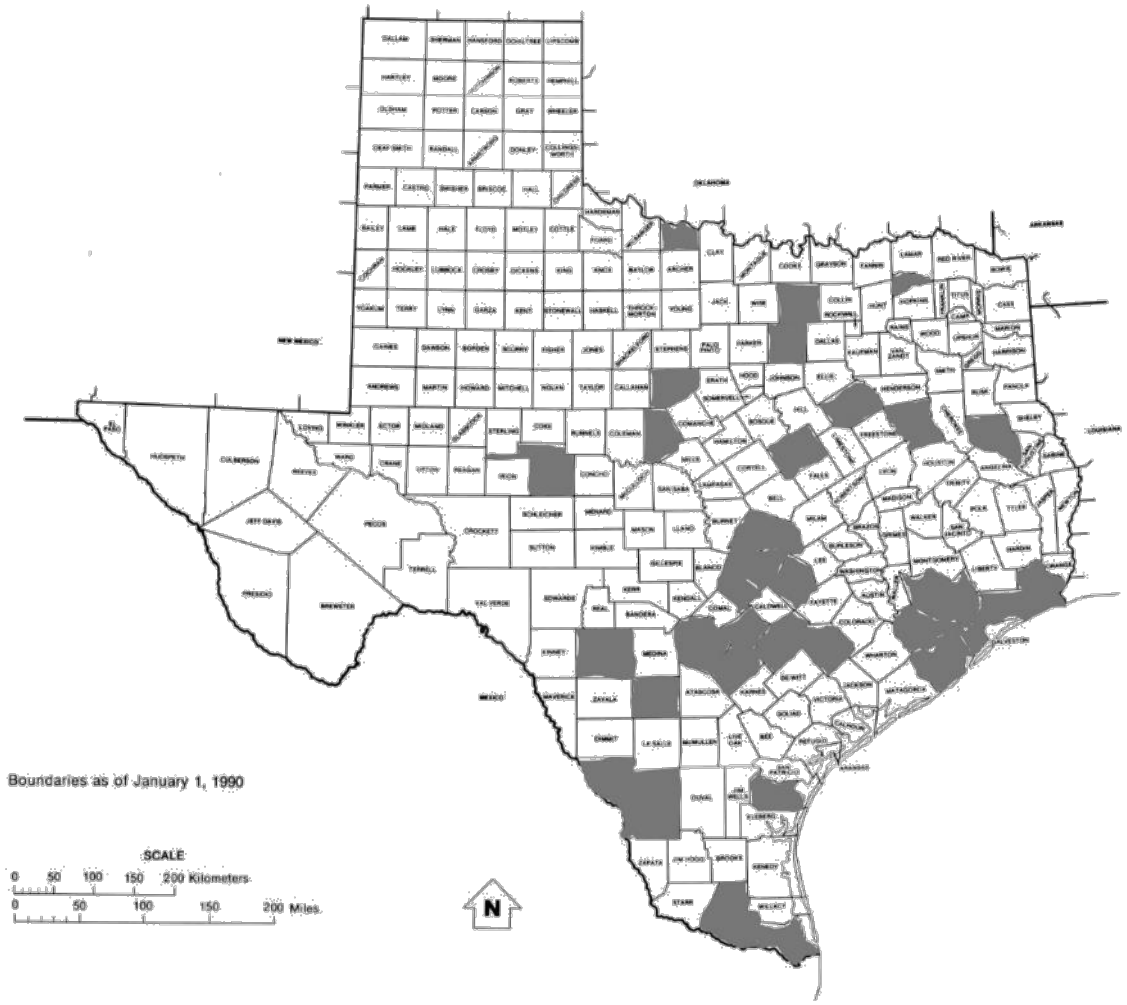
https://www.chron.com/neighborhood/fortbend/news/article/Historic-cemetery-found-on-construction-site-of-12818838.php

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




Boundaries as of January 1, 1990
SCALE
0 50 100 150 200 Kilometers
0 50 100 150 200 Miles
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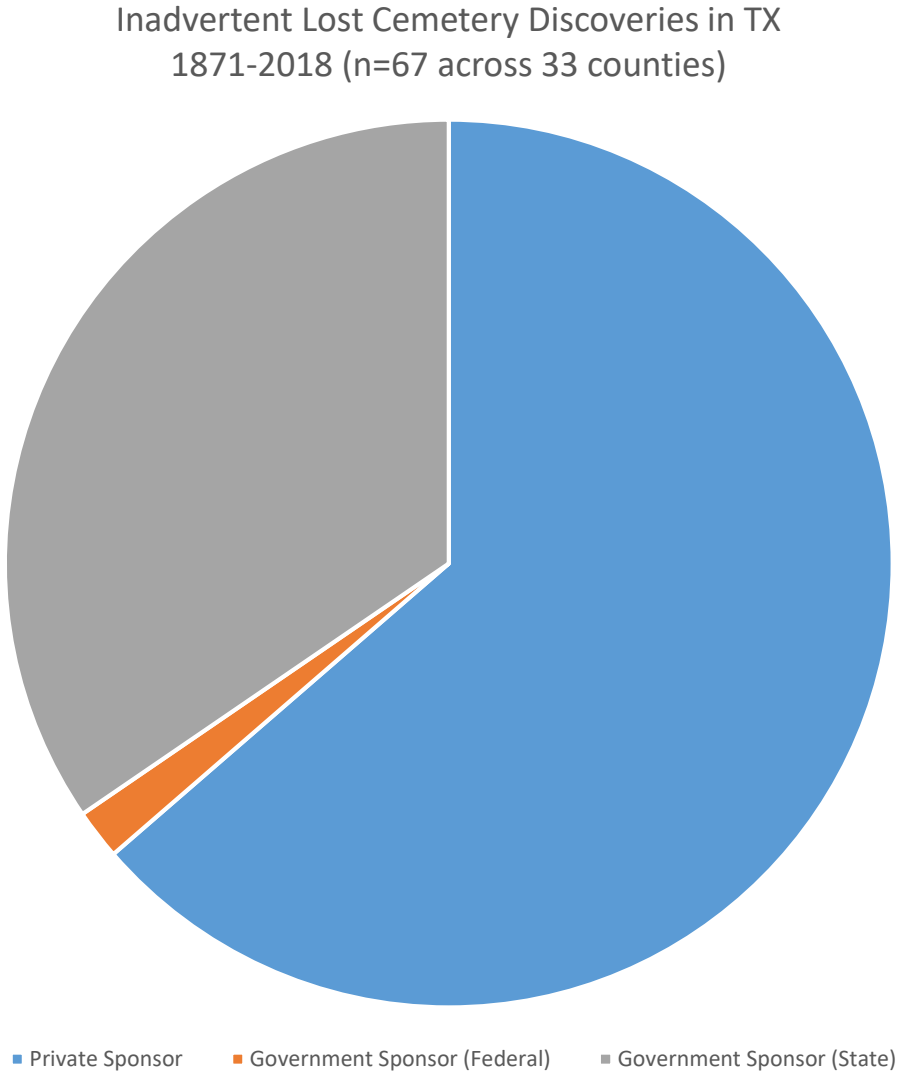
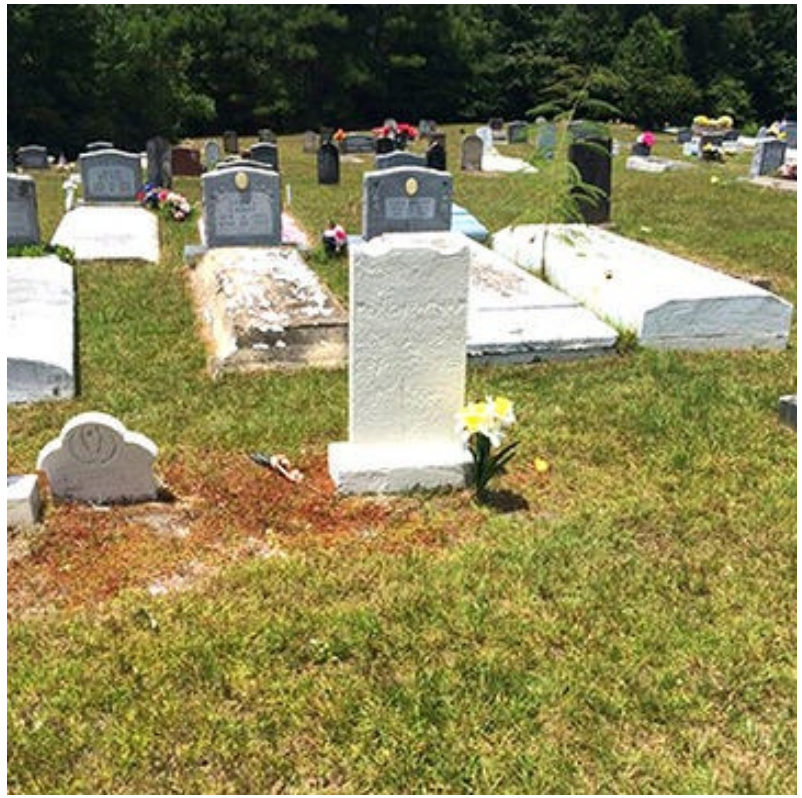
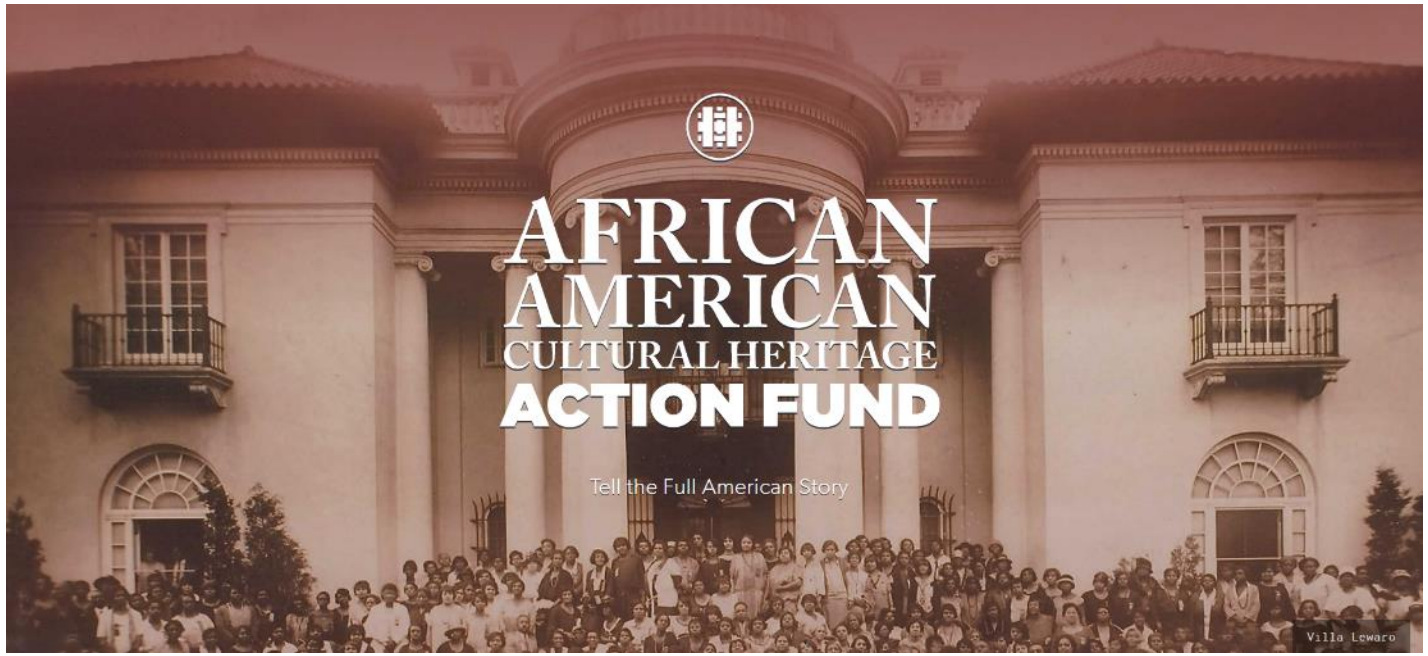

Inadvertent Lost Cemetery Discoveries in TX
1871-2018 (n=67 across 33 counties)
Private Sponsor
Government Sponsor (Federal)
Government Sponsor (State)

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

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.

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

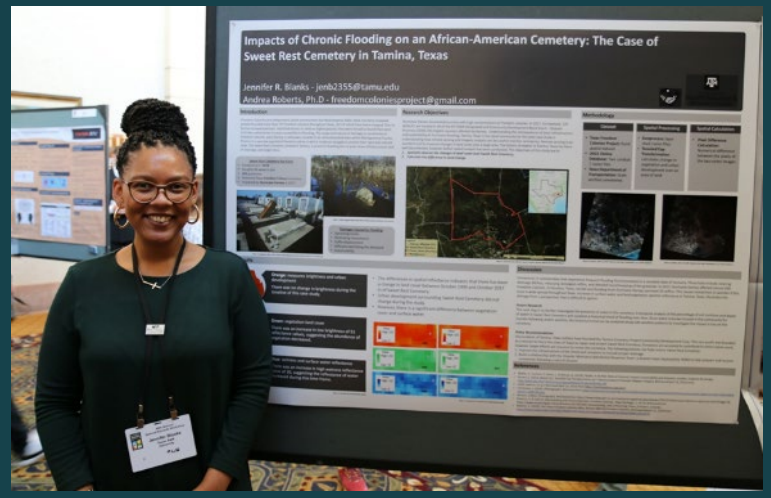
THE TEXAS FREEDOM COLONIES PROJECT

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



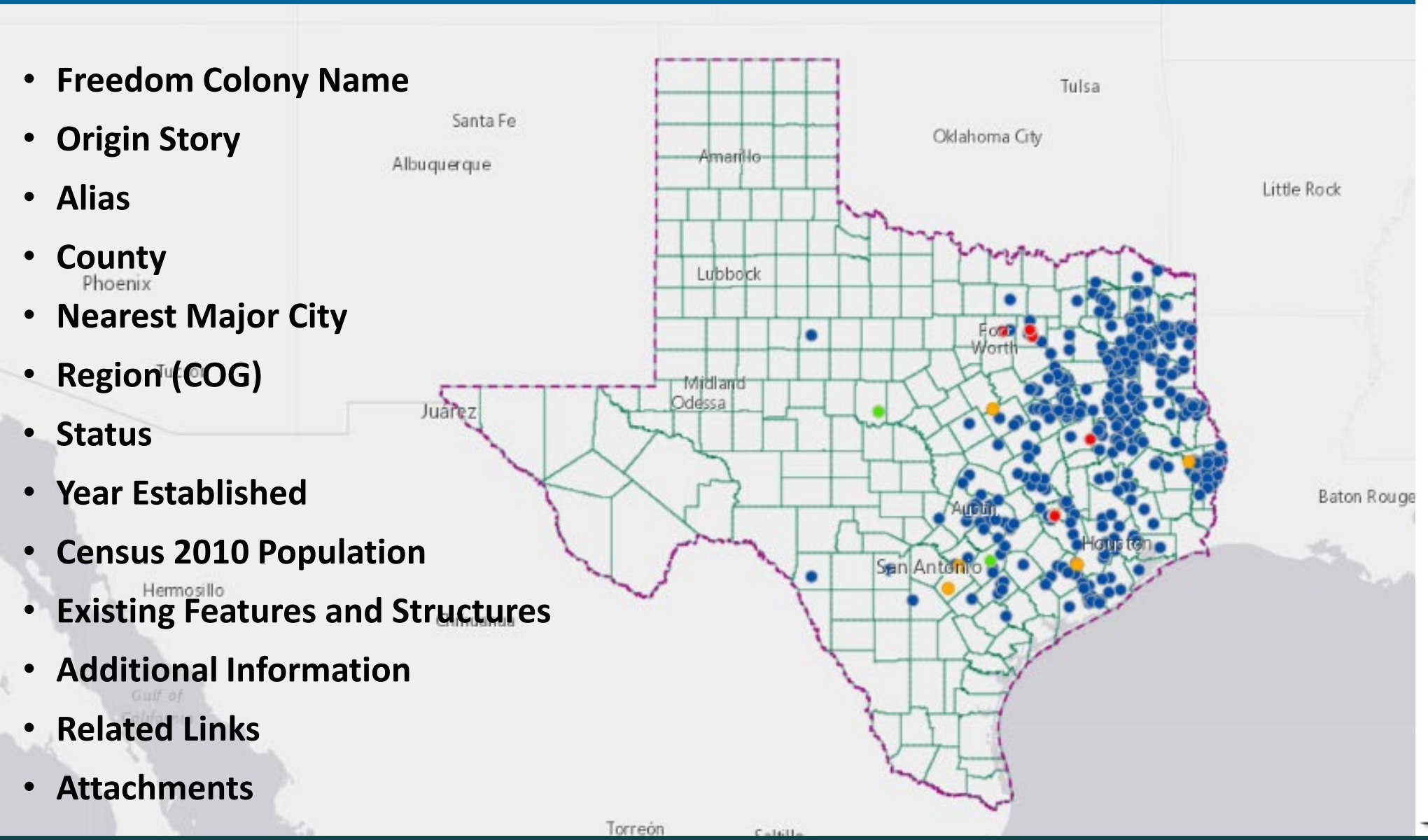
Build Atlas & Database of Texas FC Locations

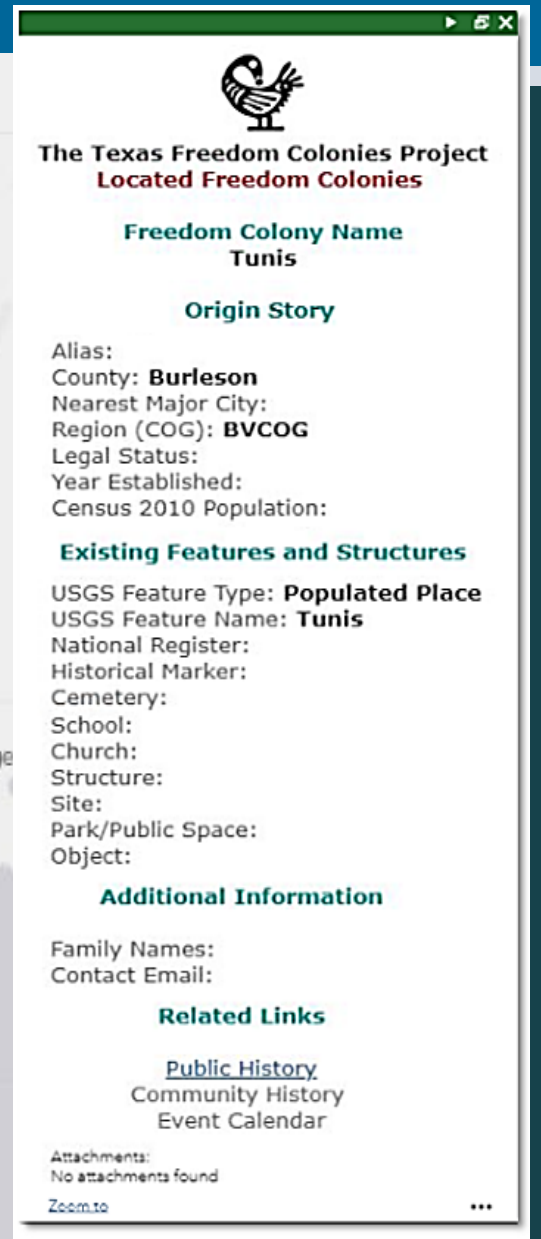
The Texas Freedom Colonies Atlas 2.0

http://bit.ly/txfcpatlastwo

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

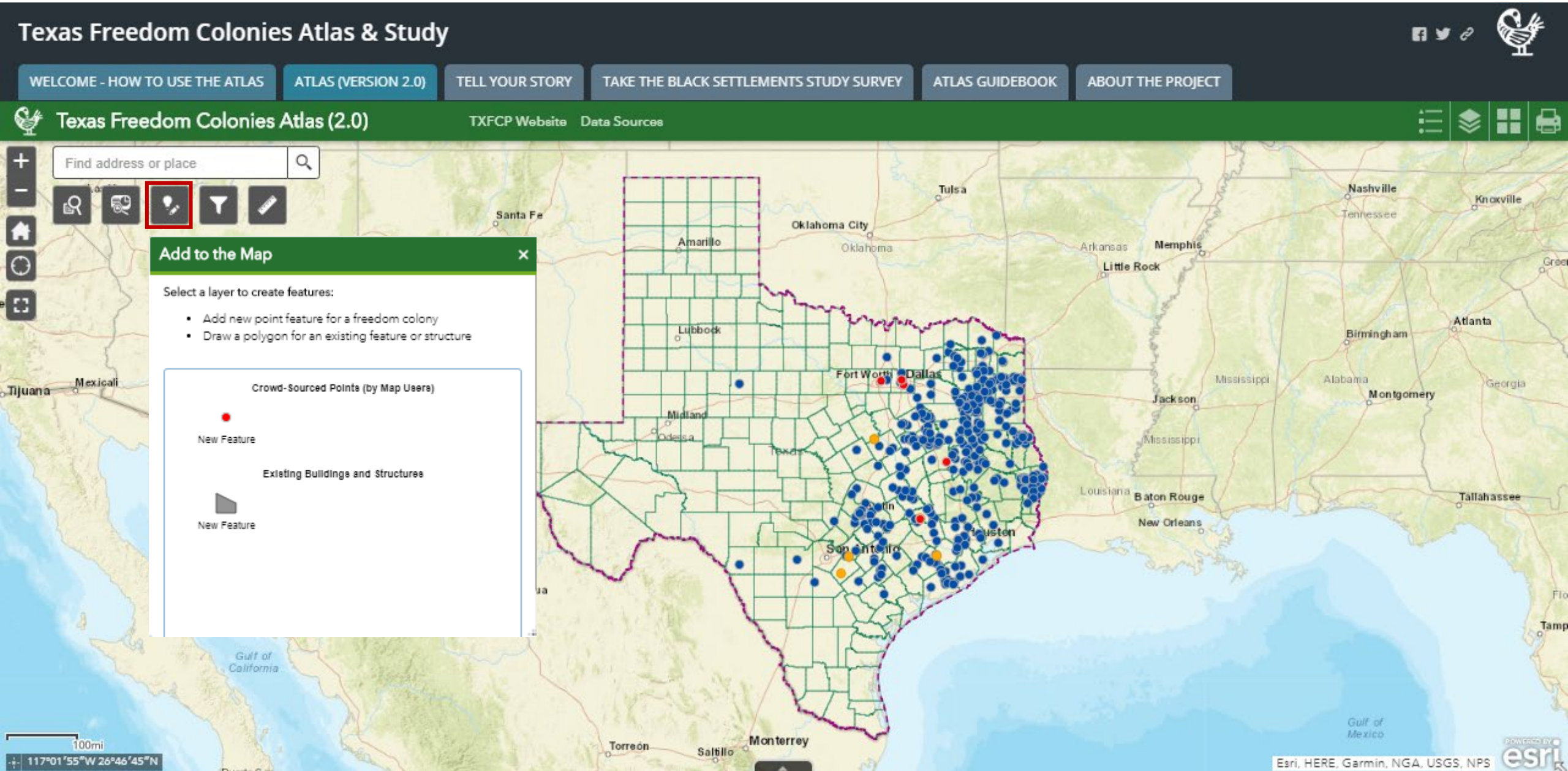
Family Names:
Contact Email:

Related Links

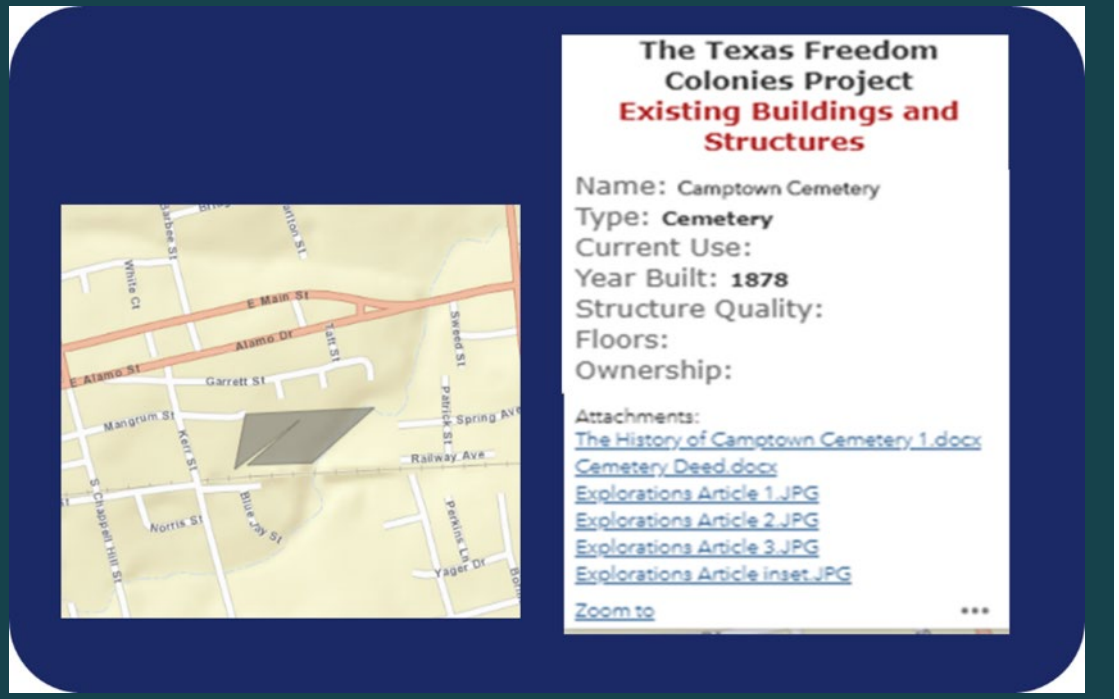
Public History
Community History
Event Calendar

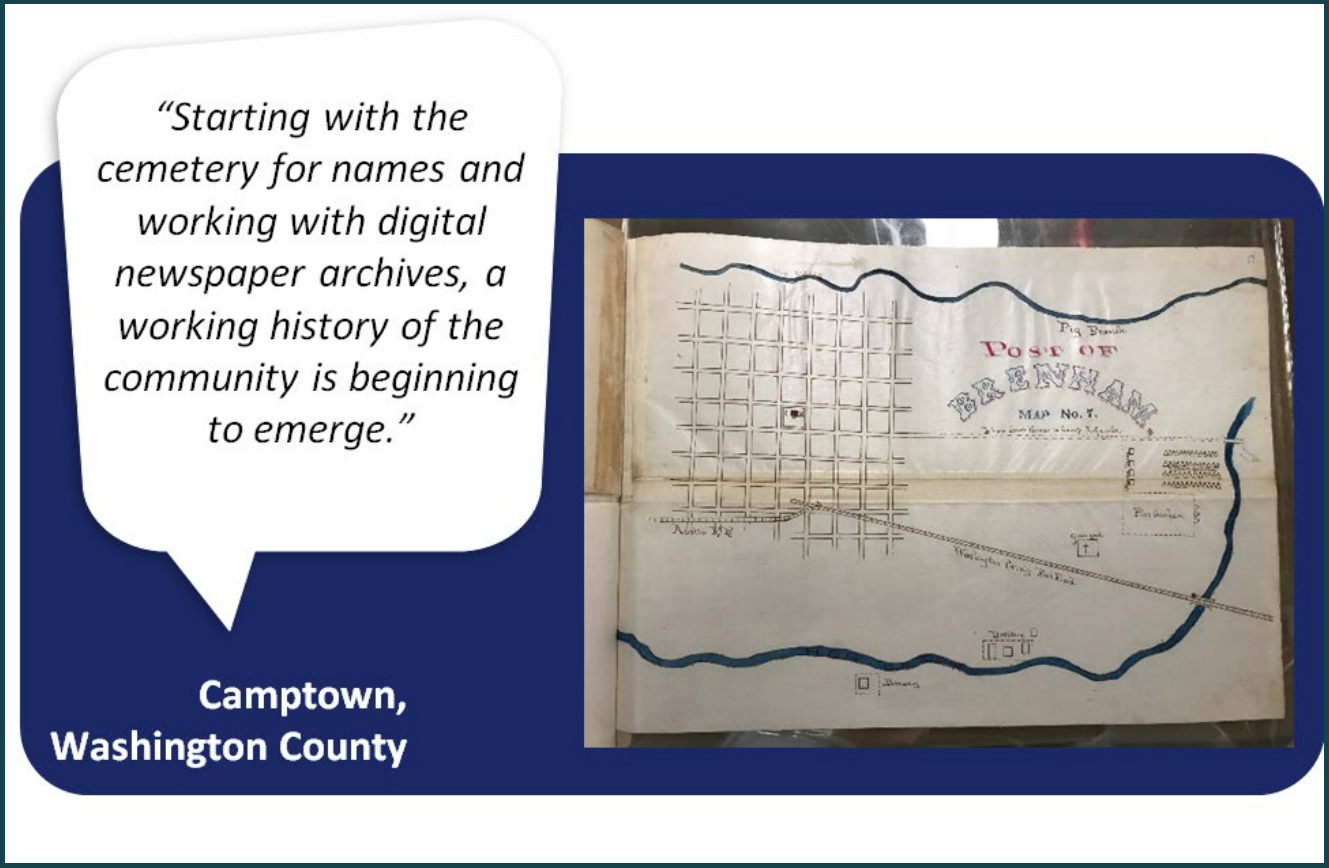
Attachments:
No attachments found
Zoom to

Maps Locations, Stores “Feature Types, including Cemeteries”



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





Andrea R. Roberts, PhD

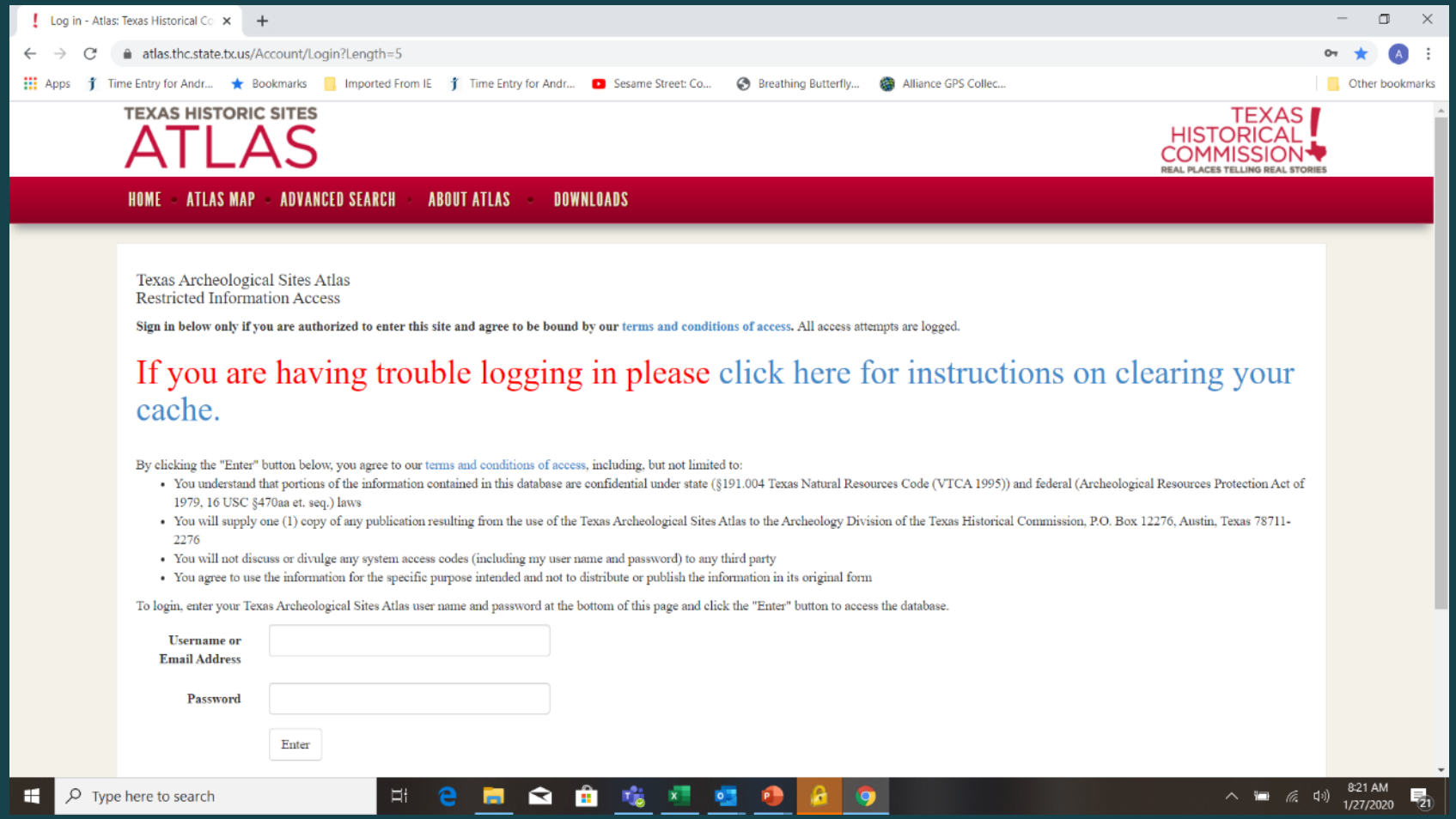
Founder, Texas Freedom Colonies Project

freedomcoloniesproject@gmail.com

Council of Texas Archeologists' Lost Cemeteries Task

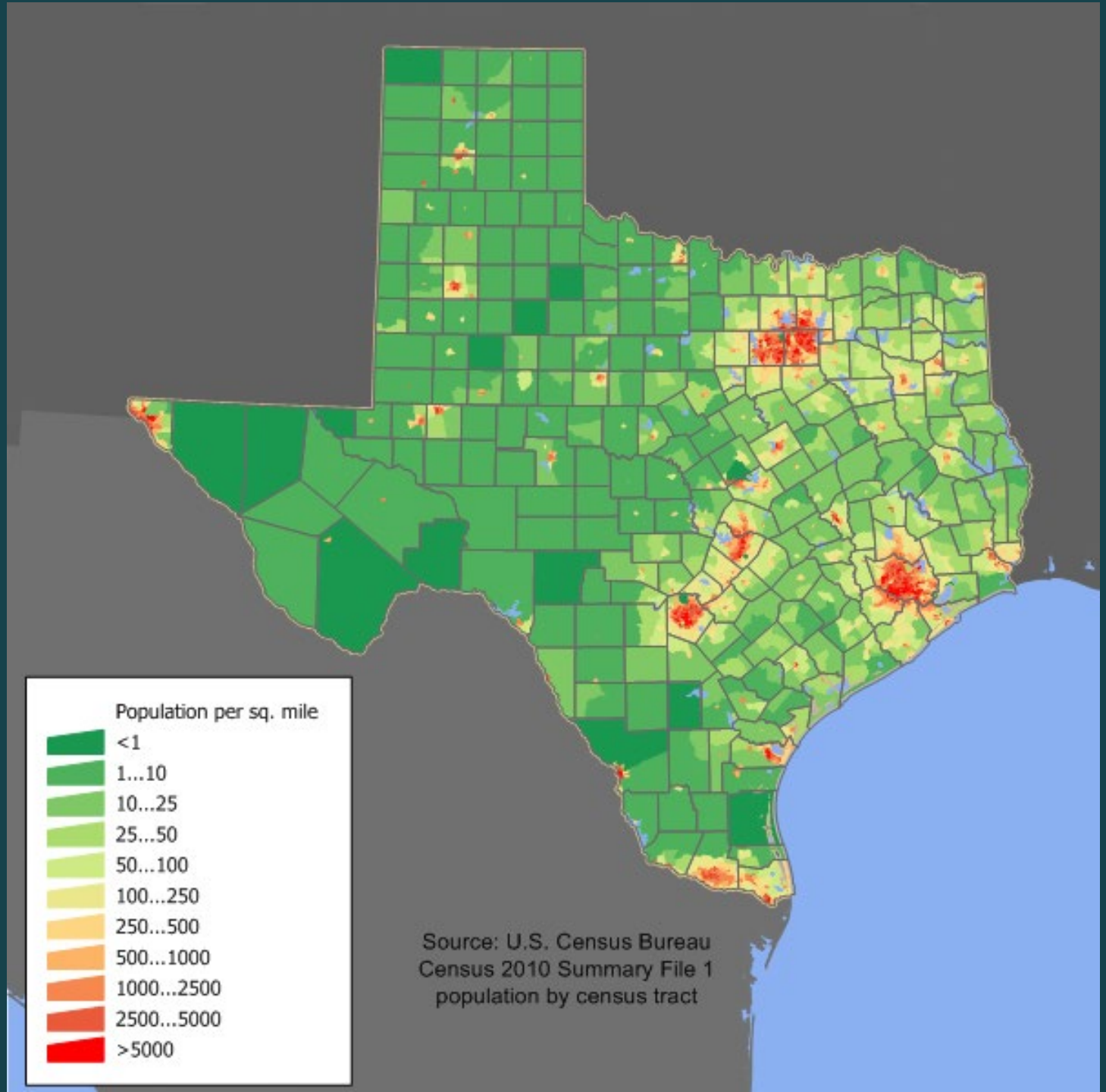
1. Identify steps to enhance desktop reviews
2. Prioritize "high-risk locations" of the state
3. Implementation via the Texas Historical Commission's Archeological Sites Atlas

Enhancing Desktop Reviews

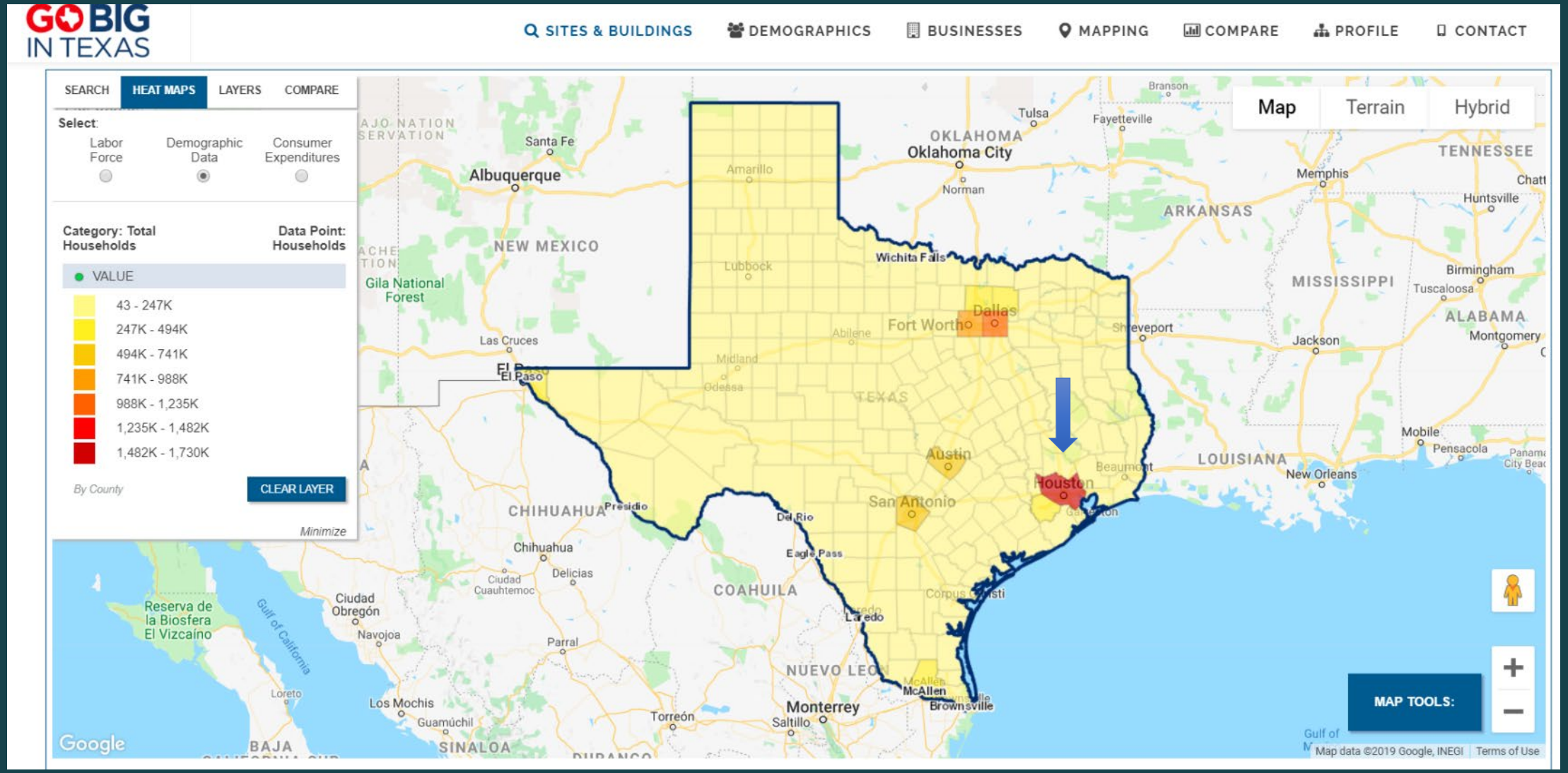


- Use of georeferenced historical maps
- adding locations of "discovered" cemeteries to an accessible web-based GIS application (e.g., the Atlas)

Prioritizing Areas of the State



Heat Maps


GO BIG IN TEXAS
SITES & BUILDINGS
DEMOGRAPHICS
BUSINESSES
MAPPING
COMPARE
PROFILE
CONTACT
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:
Albuquerque
Santa Fe
Amarillo
Lubbock
Wichita Falls
Dallas
Fort Worth
Abilene
Midland
Odessa
El Paso
Las Cruces
Gila National Forest
NEW MEXICO
TEXAS
OKLAHOMA
Oklahoma City
Tulsa
Norman
Fayetteville
ARKANSAS
Memphis
TENNESSEE
Huntsville
MISSISSIPPI
Birmingham
Tuscaloosa
ALABAMA
Montgomery
Jackson
Shreveport
LOUISIANA
New Orleans
Mobile
Pensacola
Beaumont
Houston
Galveston
Austin
San Antonio
Corpus Christi
Laredo
Eagle Pass
Del Rio
Presidio
CHIHUAHUA
Chihuahua
Ciudad Cuauhtemoc
Delicias
COAHUILA
Ciudad Obregón
Navojoa
Reserva de la Biosfera El Vizcaíno
Gulf of California
Loreto
Parral
NUEVO LEON
Monterrey
Saltillo
Torreón
McAllen
Brownsville
Los Mochis
Guamúchil
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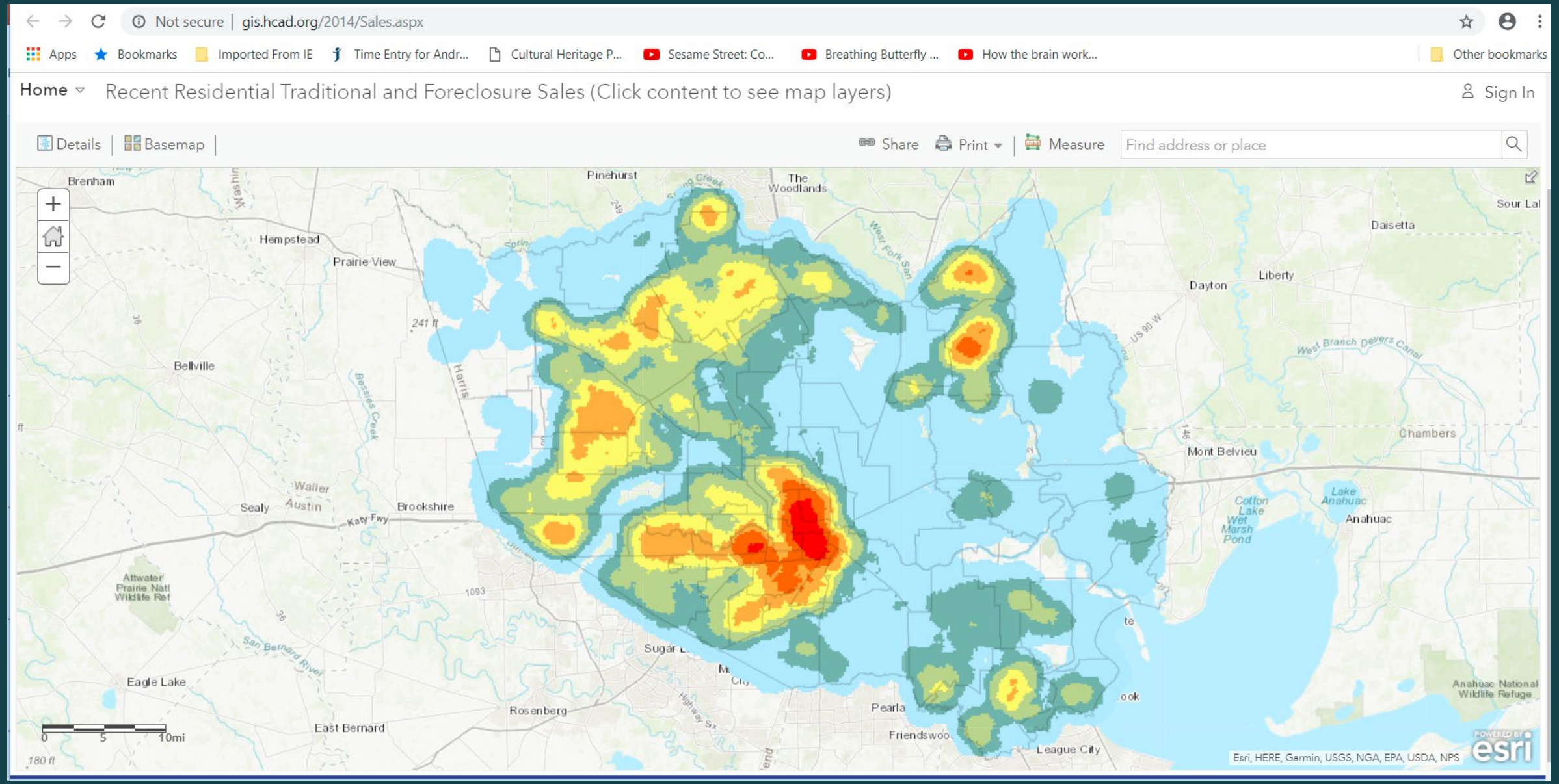
2014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Cultural Heritage P...
Sesame Street: Co...
Breathing Butterfly ...
How the brain work...
Other bookmarks
Home
Recent Residential Traditional and Foreclosure Sales (Click content to see map layers)
Sign In
Details
Basemap
Share
Print
Measure
Find address or place
Brenham
Hempstead
Prairie View
Pinehurst
The Woodlands
Daisetta
Liberty
Dayton
Bellville
Waller
Sealy
Austin
Brookshire
Katy Fwy
Chambers
Mont Belvieu
Cotton Lake Wet Marsh Pond
Lake Anahuac
Anahuac
Attwater Prairie Natl Wildlife Ref
Eagle Lake
East Bernard
Rosenberg
Pearla
League City
Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge
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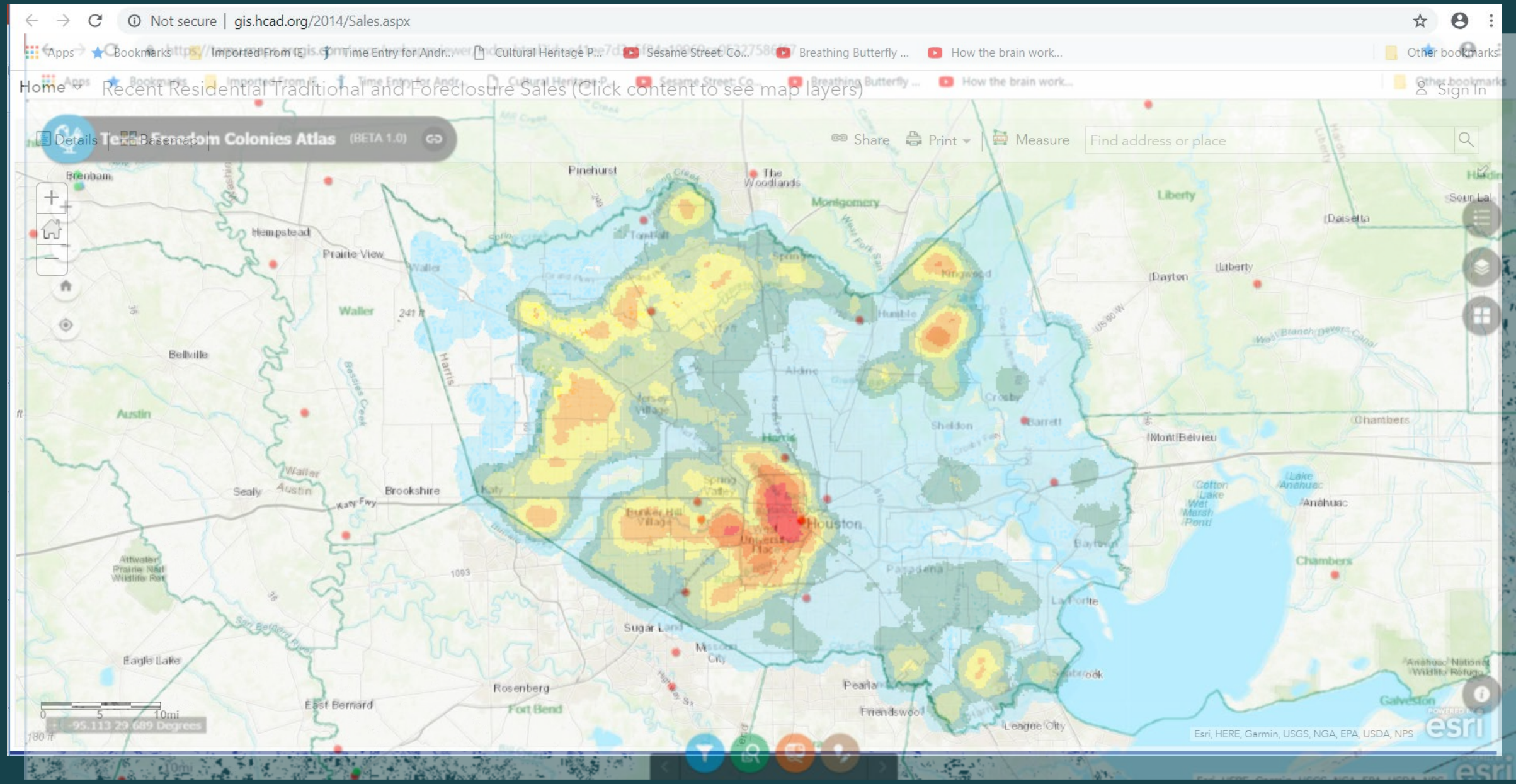
Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NGA, EPA, USDA, NPS
esri

2014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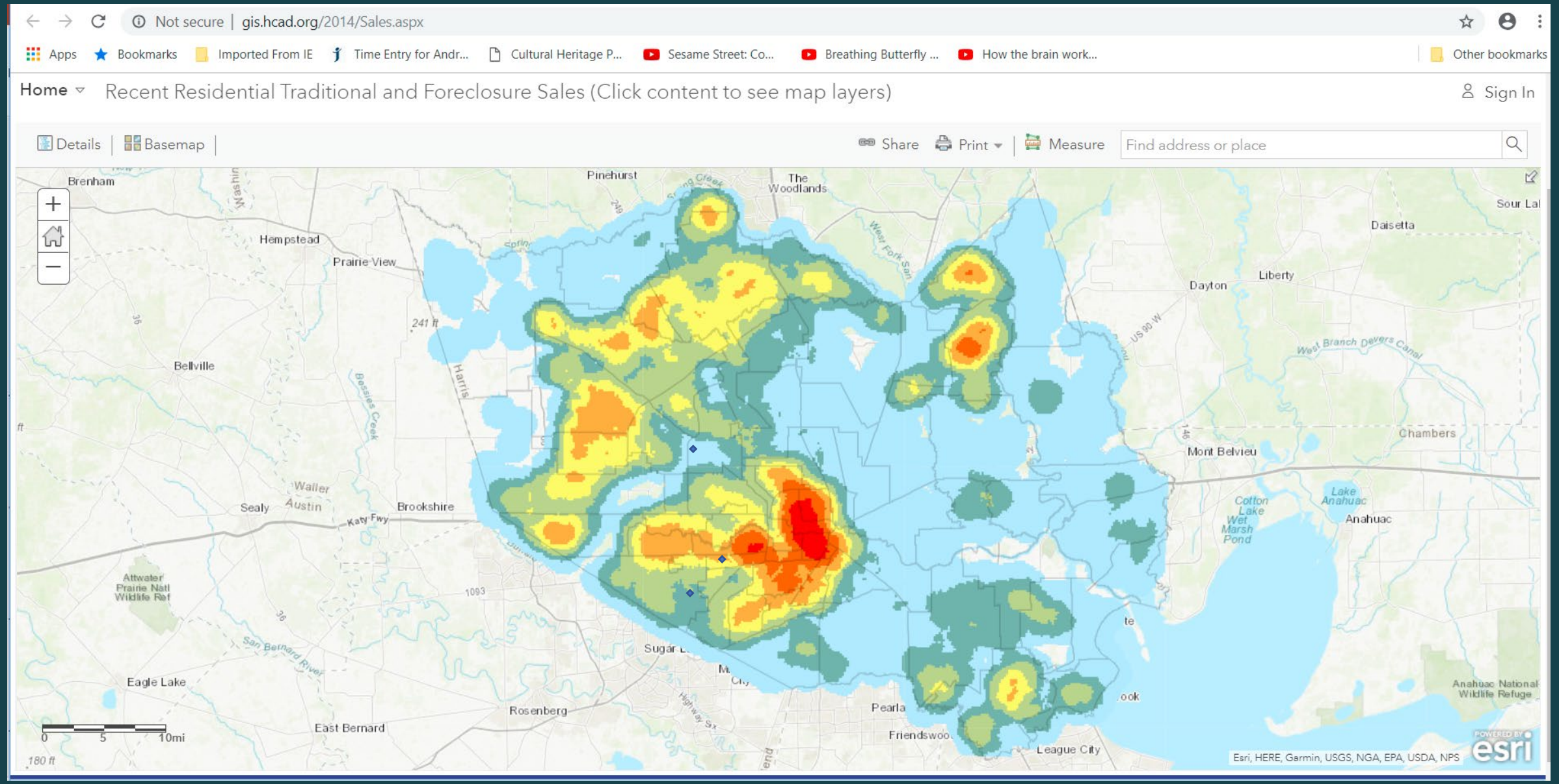
Home
Recent Residential Traditional and Foreclosure Sales (Click content to see map layers)
Sign In
Details
Basemap
Texas Freedom Colonies Atlas (BETA 1.0)
Share
Print
Measure
Find address or place
Houston
Pinehurst
The Woodlands
Montgomery
Liberty
Dayton
Hempstead
Prairie View
Waller
Bellville
Austin
Sealy
Brookshire
Katy
Sugar Land
Pearland
Friendswood
League City
Rosenberg
East Bernard
Eagle Lake
Anahuac
Chambers
Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NGA, EPA, USDA, NPS

2014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Sesame Street: Co...
Breathing Butterfly ...
How the brain work...
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Recent Residential Traditional and Foreclosure Sales (Click content to see map layers)
Sign In
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Brenham
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Pinehurst
The Woodlands
Daisetta
Liberty
Dayton
Bellville
Waller
Sealy
Austin
Brookshire
Katy Fwy
Chambers
Mont Belvieu
Cotton Lake Wet Marsh Pond
Lake Anahuac
Anahuac
Attwater Prairie Natl Wildlife Ref
Eagle Lake
East Bernard
Rosenberg
Pearla
League City
Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge
West Branch Devers Canal
241 ft
180 ft
0
5
10mi
Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, NGA, EPA, USDA, NPS
esri

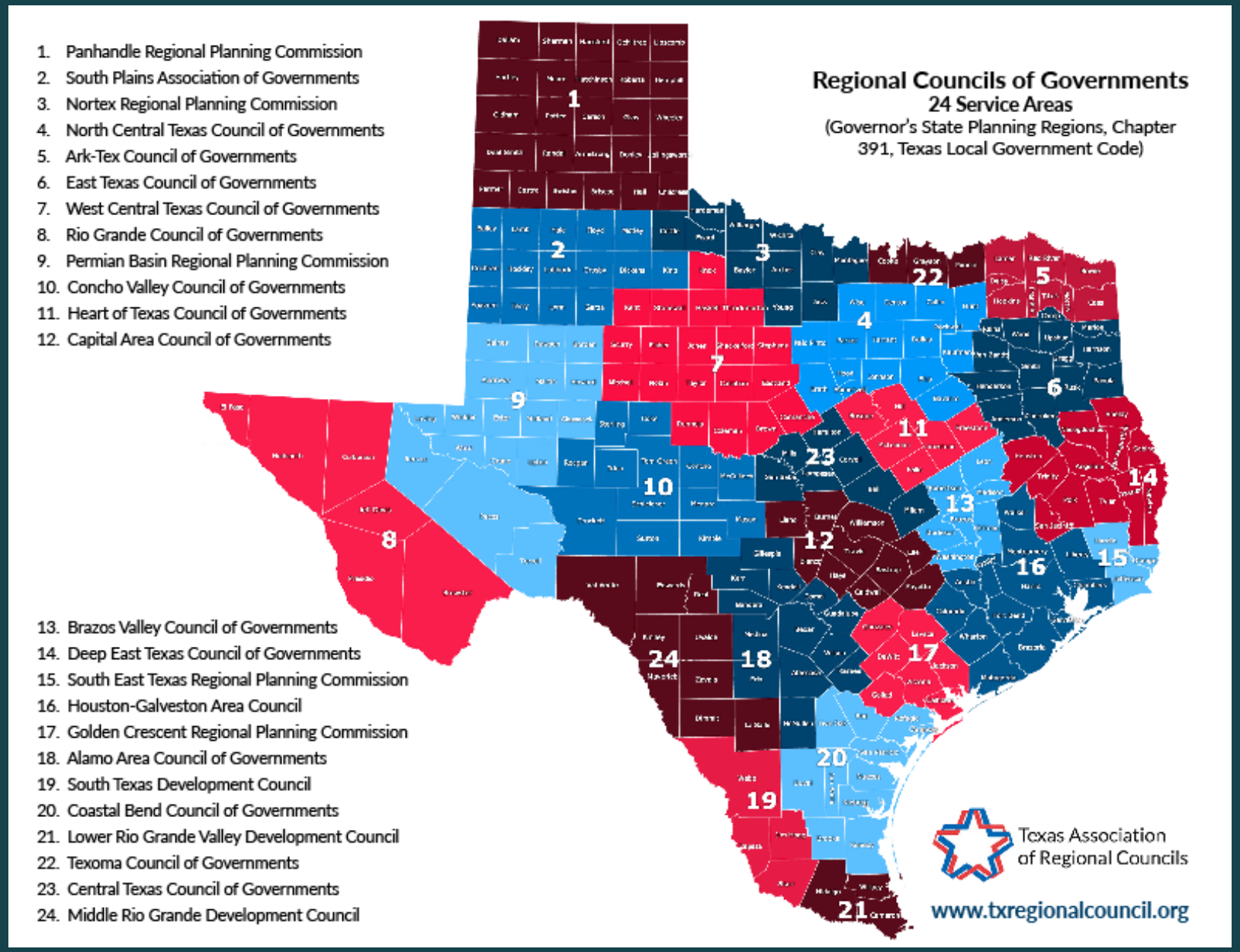
Lost Cemeteries Task Force Core Team

- 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



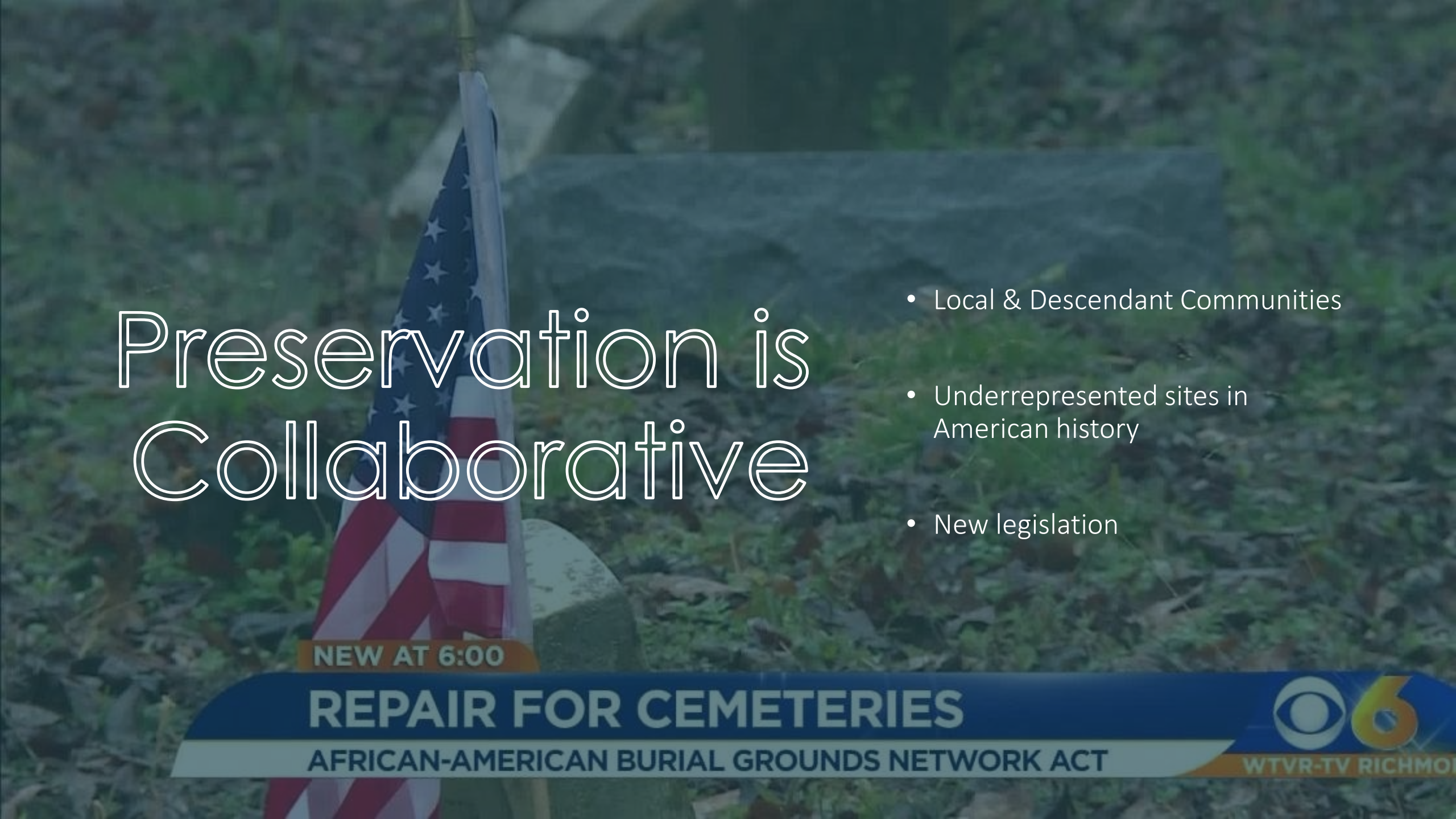
Preservation is Interdisciplinary

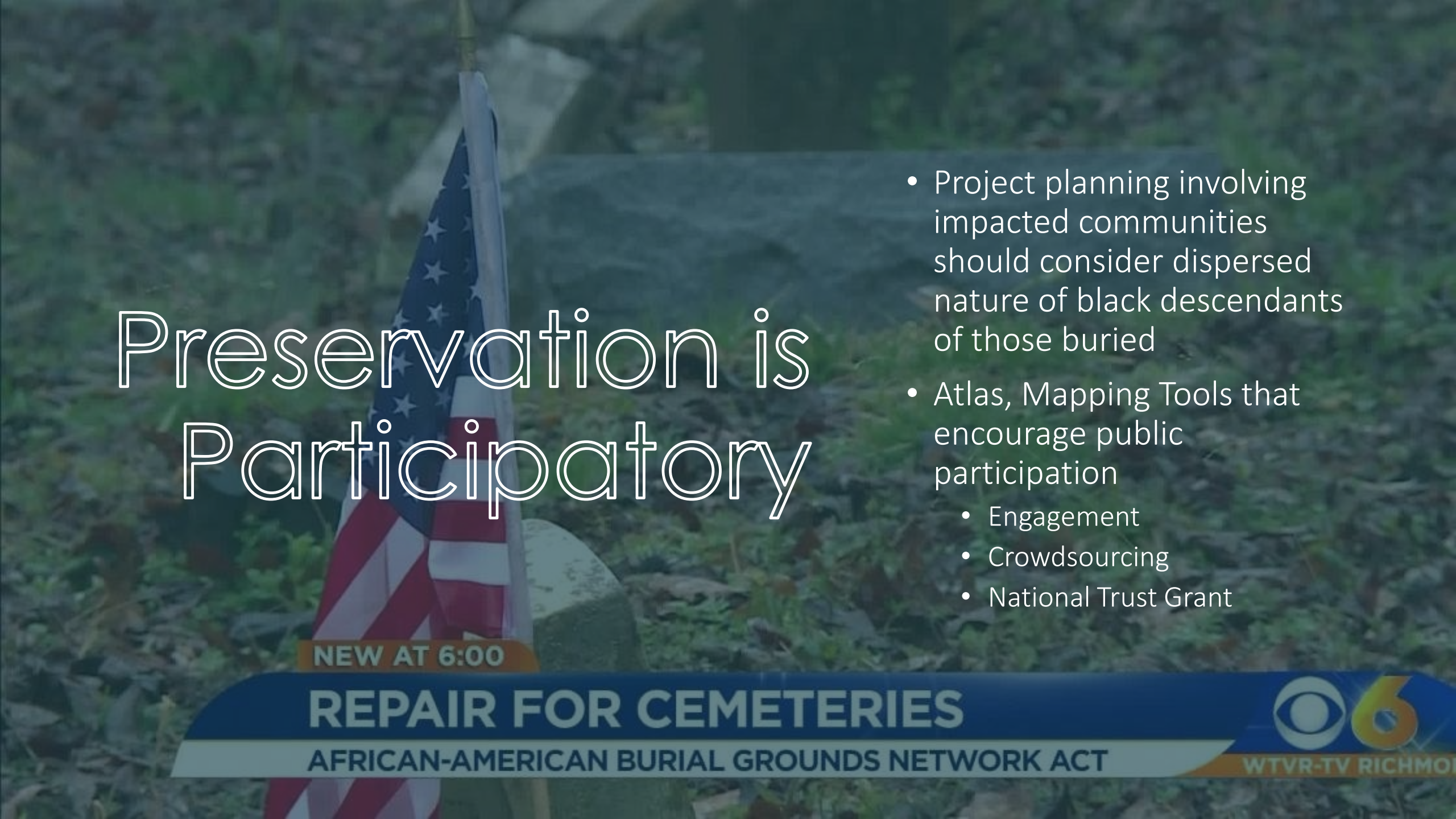
- Archival research
- Archaeological investigations of cemeteries
- Anthropological understanding of mortuary customs

Reginald Moore, Old Imperial Farm Cemetery, Sugarland

Preservation is Collaborative

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





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

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*.