

**DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
ACQUISITION OF JASE T. RUNNELS PROPERTY
LOTS 1, 2 & 3, BLOCK 3 IN CADDELL COVE SUBDIVISION
SAM RAYBURN RESERVOIR, SAN AUGUSTINE COUNTY, TEXAS**



Prepared for

Sam Rayburn Reservoir Project Office

by

**US Army Corps of Engineers
Fort Worth District**

January, 2008

DRAFT
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

ACQUISITION OF JASE T. RUNNELS PROPERTY
LOTS 1, 2 & 3, BLOCK 3 IN CADDELL COVE SUBDIVISION
SAM RAYBURN RESERVOIR, SAN AUGUSTINE COUNTY, TEXAS

Description of Action. The purpose of the Federal action is to purchase the real property interests of Lots 1, 2 & 3, Block 3 in Caddell Cove Subdivision, which consists of approximately 0.44 acres of land located on the north end of Sam Rayburn Reservoir, San Augustine County, Texas. The proposed land acquisition by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) from Jase T. Runnels (Runnels) would secure the property as fee simple land and would resolve the Federal Government's reverse encroachment due to erosion on the Runnels property caused by high water events and wave action. Following acquisition of the subject property by the USACE, the existing 2 story home, storage shed, out-building, metal satellite dish and concrete pad, overhead utility line, and buried septic tank would be demolished and removed from the property. Implementation of the proposed action would prevent future development within 200 feet of the existing erosion line, protect the reservoir from pollutants associated with house failure and would allow the USACE to own the 0.44-acre parcel of property in fee.

Anticipated Environmental Effects. Alternatives considered include the proposed action and no action as described in the environmental assessment (EA). Following acquisition of the subject property, the USACE would demolish existing structures while the reservoir is at conservation pool to provide an approximate 50 foot buffer from existing structures to the lake and incorporate Best Management Practices, such as silt fencing, to reduce storm water run-off into the reservoir. Following demolition activities, scarified areas would be graded and planted with native grass seed and the property would be designated by the USACE as an aesthetic/ low density public use area. The no action alternative would allow Lots 1, 2 & 3, Block 3 in Caddell Cove Subdivision to remain in private ownership. The purchase of real property interests by the USACE from Runnels would not occur and the action would fail to resolve the reverse encroachment issues.

There would be no adverse impacts on the human and natural environment associated with proper implementation of the proposed action. No significant adverse environmental impacts are anticipated for geology, soil, water, biological, or cultural resources within the subject property. No adverse impact is expected to occur to plant or animal species that are proposed or listed as threatened or endangered according to the Endangered Species Act. Existing asbestos containing materials located within the structures would be removed prior to demolition and disposed of in a manner consistent with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality regulations pursuant to Title 30 Texas Administrative Code (30 TAC), Chapter 330, Special Waste Disposal.

Facts and Conclusions. Based on a review of the information contained in this EA, it is concluded that the purchase of 0.44 acres, Lots 1, 2 & 3, Block 3 in Caddell Cove Subdivision from Runnels is not a major Federal action, which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

Christopher W. Martin
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer

Date

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 AUTHORITY

The McGee Bend Dam and Reservoir was authorized by Congress in 1955 for the purposes of flood control, hydro-electric power generation, and conservation of water for municipal, industrial, agricultural, and recreational uses. In September 1963, the name was changed to Sam Rayburn Dam and Reservoir in honor of the deceased Speaker of the House of Representatives, Sam Rayburn, a long time champion of soil and water conservation. Impoundment of water began in March 1965 and the 5-year flood pool was set at 171.0 feet mean sea level (msl) with the flowage easement guide contour set at 179.0 feet msl (USACE 1973). This Environmental Assessment (EA) is being conducted under this original authority.

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED

This EA analyzes the potential impacts associated with a proposed purchase of fee simple land from Mr. Jase T. Runnels (Runnels) to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The Federal Government, acting by and through the USACE, proposes the purchase of real property interests of certain lands located in Caddell Cove Subdivision, San Augustine County, Texas (Appendix A). The real property consists of a 2 story home, estimated at 1,248 square foot, centrally located on approximately 0.44 acres of manicured lawn that is located on the north side of Sam Rayburn Reservoir and to the south of the Angelina National Forest.

The acquisition of the 0.44-acre parcel of land would be purchased as a solution to the Federal Government's encroachment on private property. The wave action has caused the sandy, loam soil shoreline to erode beyond the government boundary line and beneath the porch of the 2 story summer home owned by Runnels. Continued erosion may result in bank failure and loss of the house and associated structures into the lake. The purchase of the property from Runnels would remedy the reverse encroachment and protect the reservoir from possible pollutants due to house failure.

The purpose of this EA is to identify and evaluate the environmental aspects of implementing the proposed plan in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], parts 1500-1508), and Engineering Regulation (ER) 200-2-2. The objective of NEPA is to ensure consideration of the environmental aspects of proposed actions in the Federal decision-making process and to make environmental information available to the public before decisions are made and actions taken. The findings and conclusions in this EA will also be used to assist the Federal Government in making decisions regarding the acquisition of the subject property.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

2.1 PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action alternative is the fee acquisition of the 0.44-acre parcel of land within Lots 1, 2 & 3, Block 3 in Caddell Cove Subdivision located on the north end of Sam Rayburn Reservoir, San Augustine County, Texas from Runnels. Following land acquisition, the USACE would demolish existing structures from the subject property consisting of a 2-story home, storage shed, out-building, metal satellite dish with concrete pad, overhead utility line, and buried septic tank. The USACE would dispose of all buildings, supplies and other materials associated with the property utilizing Best Management Practices (BMP) as outlined by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) policy standards. Silt fences would be utilized during demolition activities to protect the lake from potential run-off and the area of disturbance would be replanted with appropriate native grass seed upon completion of demolition.

Following completion of acquisition and demolition activities, the USACE would change the land use designation of the subject property from privately owned residence to an aesthetic/ low density public use area. Acquisition and subsequent demolition of structures within the subject property would correct the reverse encroachment caused by erosion and bank failure, prevent future development on the subject property, and provide for the proper disposal of the house and building materials for protection of Sam Rayburn Reservoir.

2.2 NO ACTION

The no action alternative would result in not acquiring the approximate 0.44-acre parcel of land from Runnels. Fee ownership of the subject property would remain with Runnels and the Federal Government's reverse encroachment would remain. Under this alternative, future erosion would continue and the risk of house failure would remain, subjecting Sam Rayburn Reservoir to potential pollutants associated with building materials and supplies. This alternative would allow for additional structures to be built on the property furthering the risk of future property loss and potential contaminants eroding into Sam Rayburn Reservoir.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section describes the existing environment and resources that could affect or be affected by the proposed action and alternatives. The subject property consists of a 0.44 acre parcel of developed land located in a residential subdivision in an unincorporated area of San Augustine County, Texas, approximately 8 miles southeast of the town of Broaddus, Texas (Appendix A). The property is on the north side of Sam Rayburn Lake and in the middle of the Angelina National Forest. Primary access to the property is from local Farm-to-Market roads that serve the area. The geographical coordinates of the subject property are approximately 31° 12' 15.89" North latitude and 94 ° 14' 47.72" West longitude.

The subject project is situated in the south central portion of the Western Gulf Coastal Plain Physiographic province. The area is within the transition zone between the hilly region of the province to the north and the relatively flat, featureless gulf coast region to the south. The rainfall

averages 46 inches, evenly distributed throughout the year, in this humid sub-tropic region. Topographically, the area is gently rolling with local relief generally less than 50 feet.

Observations made during site reconnaissance determined that the subject property contained minimal biological resources due to the parcels being located in a residential subdivision with manicured lawns, houses and roads surrounding the property. Although several oak and pine trees are situated on the property, none are anticipated to be impacted during proposed demolition activities and future USACE land use designation would allow for natural succession of native vegetation.

3.1 LAND USE

Historical use of the subject property was determined from review of historical records, interviews with knowledgeable persons and observations from the site reconnaissance. The house was constructed in the early 1970's after impoundment of Sam Rayburn Reservoir and utilized as a residence until 1990. According to County Deed records, Lot 1, 2 and 3 was conveyed from Gary K. Hahne to Jase T. Runnels on September 4, 1990. Since 1990, the subject property has been owned and maintained by Runnels as a summer home. The subject property can be characterized as a manicured Saint Augustine lawn that contains a 2 story home (estimated at 1248 Square Foot), a 20 x 40 ft storage shed and a 5 x 8 ft out-building (Appendix C). A metal satellite dish and concrete pad have eroded into the lake bed. An overhead utility line supplies electrical power to the house and a security light. A buried septic tank is adjacent to the back corner of the house.

3.1.1 No Action

Under the no action alternative, the subject property would remain in private ownership and allow for future development and potential land use changes that could conflict with the existing reverse encroachment issue.

3.1.2 Proposed Action

Implementation of the proposed action alternative would allow the Federal Government to acquire the subject property in fee. Following demolition of existing structures, the subject property would be seeded with native grass species and the land use designation would be changed from a privately owned residence to a public use area. The property will be allowed to grow naturally; however, private landowners adjacent to USACE property may apply for a mowing permit under the Shoreline Management Program at the Sam Rayburn Lake Office.

3.2 HISTORIC RESOURCES

No cultural or archeological features have been documented on the subject property. The approximate 0.44 acre parcel of land that would be purchased in fee interest from Runnels to USACE would be maintained as a Public Use Area for Sam Rayburn Reservoir and as such would not be developed or disturbed in the future. Existing cultural and archeological sites within the vicinity of the subject property were identified for Sam Rayburn Reservoir. No cultural or archeological features were identified on the subject property through field assessments and review of existing sites. The Texas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

has indicated that future development on the subject property would not likely disturb any cultural resource sites (Appendix D).

3.2.1 No Action

Under the no action alternative, the existing home would remain intact and any unidentified cultural or archeological resources would not be disturbed.

3.2.2 Proposed Action

Real Estate activities have been coordinated through SHPO (Appendix D) and no impacts to cultural or archaeological resources are anticipated because all activities are taking place on previously disturbed land due to construction of a home site . Additionally, the home has no historical significance because it was built in the early 1970's and renovated in 1988. In the event that cultural or archeological resources are encountered during demolition activities, all actions within the immediate area would cease, accidental discovery procedures would be implemented in accordance with the SHPO, and a thorough investigation would be coordinated to determine the presence and type of cultural resources that could be impacted by demolition in the area.

3.3 WATER RESOURCES

The nearest named surface water feature is Sam Rayburn Reservoir, which is located approximately 50 feet south of the subject property. No surface water features were identified on the subject property in the database review and site reconnaissance. Usable water-bearing aquifers in the study area include the Catahoula aquifer and Sparta, Yegua and Jackson Formations. Aquifer recharge is primarily from infiltration of precipitation, as seepage of Sam Rayburn Reservoir appears minimal due to a lack of direct contact and the cementation of sands. Information from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) indicated that the depth to the water table is more than 80 inches below land surface

3.3.1 No Action

Failure to implement the proposed action alternative would result in existing management activities continuing on the subject property. The no action alternative would likely result in negative impacts to surface water resources from continued erosion and failure of building materials into the reservoir. No significant impacts to ground water resources would occur with implementation of the no action alternative.

3.3.2 Proposed Action

No significant surface water resources are located on the subject property. The proposed action would not have any negative impacts to ground water or surrounding surface water resources with implementation of BMP's during demolition of structures. Demolition would take place with the lake at conservation pool providing more than a 50 foot buffer from building materials to the lake, silt fencing would be utilized to prevent stormwater run-off into the reservoir as outlined by EPA policy standards, and scarified areas would be graded and planted with native grass seed.

3.4 SOCIOECONOMICS

The socioeconomics of the subject property was determined from the review of San Augustine County Tax Records. The home is currently owned by Runnels and utilized as a summer home.

3.4.1 No Action

Under the no action alternative, Runnels would continue to own the property and San Augustine County would continue to receive annual tax revenues of approximately \$1,000.

3.4.2 Proposed Action

The concern from a socioeconomic stand point is the loss of county tax revenue by transferring the subject property from private ownership to fee simple land owned by the federal government. Annual tax revenues from the subject property to San Augustine County are less than \$1,000. However, the liability associated with house failure and subsequent contamination of surface water and increased boating hazards outweighs the loss of revenue to the county.

3.5 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

A review of records from 8 Federal ASTM Standard and 13 Federal ASTM Supplemental databases was conducted to examine potential environmental concerns associated with the subject property and adjacent lands (EDR 2007). A search radius of 1.0 mile from the center of the subject property was used to locate possible environmental concerns. No significant hazardous material concerns were identified in relation to the subject property.

The Fort Worth District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Design Branch (CESWF-PER-D) conducted a regulated materials survey during November 2007 for hazardous building materials. The purpose of the survey was to characterize the debris to be generated from demolition of structures prior to disposal. The structures were inspected for the presence of asbestos containing materials (ACM), lead containing paint (LCP), and other regulated materials (ORM). The ACM inspection included collection of bulk samples of suspect material for laboratory analysis. Samples are considered positive for asbestos where laboratory analysis by polarized light microscopy (PLM) indicated the material contains more than 1% asbestos. Analytical results were positive for non-friable ACM in samples taken from Window Caulking, Gypsum Board and Flooring Shingles, all located on the second floor of the structure. There is also a storage shed located 10 feet from the backside (west) of the original structure. This structure was also inspected for the presence of Lead / Asbestos and no positive results were observed (RMS 2007).

The LCP inspection included screening of painted surfaces with an X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analyzer to indicate the presence of lead and collection of a composite sample of paint chips for laboratory analyses of total concentrations of Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) metals. The screening results produced no positive readings therefore no TCLP or Total RCRA Metals were taken for analysis (RMS 2007).

3.5.1 No Action

The no action alternative would allow the ACM's to remain in their current status. In addition,

there would be the risk of these contaminants entering Sam Rayburn Reservoir due to continued reverse encroachment and potential house failure.

3.5.2 Proposed Action

The proposed action would have minor consequences to the environment due to the low volume, proper management and disposal of the asbestos identified in the structure. The ACM's would be removed from the home prior to demolition and disposed of in a manner consistent with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) regulations pursuant to Title 30 Texas Administrative Code (30 TAC), Chapter 330, Special Waste Disposal.

3.3 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The subject property is underlain by the Catahoula Formation, which consists of sand, sandstone, clay and silt, somewhat tuffaceous, and contains fullers earth (USACE 1999). Information from the hazardous materials database search and the NRCS National Cooperative Soil Survey (NCSS) indicated that Cuthbert soil components characterized as a fine sandy loam are located on the subject property. The database search and site reconnaissance also indicated that the soil properties on the subject property do not meet the requirements for a hydric soil.

3.3.1 No Action

The no action alternative would allow the subject property to remain in its current status. The no action alternative would fail to address the USACE's need to correct the reverse encroachment issue. Soil erosion would likely continue under the no action alternative with the possibility of house failure into the reservoir.

3.3.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action would have minor consequences to geology and soil resources on the subject property with implementation of the BMP's listed in the Water Resources Section of this document. The land that USACE is acquiring from Runnels would continue to erode; however, the proposed action would prevent building materials from failing into the reservoir and protect existing soils through grading and seeding of disturbed land.

4.0 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The proposed alternatives for the purchase of 0.44 acres from Runnels to USACE have been evaluated in this EA. No significant impacts to the human or natural environment were identified from this assessment. There were no known wetlands or habitat for threatened or endangered species noted on the subject property. No significant historical, architectural or archeological properties were identified on the subject property. With implementation of proposed BMP's and management measures, there would be no significant adverse impacts to soils and water resources. Identified ACM's would be removed from the home prior to demolition and disposed of in a manner consistent with TCEQ waste disposal regulations.

Implementation of the proposed action would meet the USACE's objective of correcting the reverse encroachment created from erosion on private property. This alternative would also prevent future buildings from occupying this property. Additionally, this alternative would

prevent potential pollution from failure of structures into the reservoir. Based on the findings of the EA, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) would not be necessary. Therefore, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was prepared for the proposed actions.

5.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

5.1 AGENCY COORDINATION

This section discusses consultation and coordination that occurred during preparation of this document. This includes contacts made during development of the proposed action, other alternatives considered, and writing of the EA. Copies of agency coordination letters are presented in Appendix D. Formal and informal coordination has been conducted with the following agencies:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE, Fort Worth District),
- State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO),
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS),
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD),
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA),
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).

5.2 PUBLIC INFORMATION AND REVIEW

The draft version of this document is available for public review at the Sam Rayburn Lake Project Office at Sam Rayburn Reservoir and the Jasper Public Library. In accordance with NEPA, a 30-day review period of the draft EA was provided via a Notice of Availability in the San Augustine and Lufkin newspapers. Public comments and responses to comments will be presented in Appendix E of this document.

6.0 REFERENCES

San Augustine County, Texas. 1990. Trustees Foreclosure Deed, Real Property Records, Number 6860 (Volume 271 Page 393).

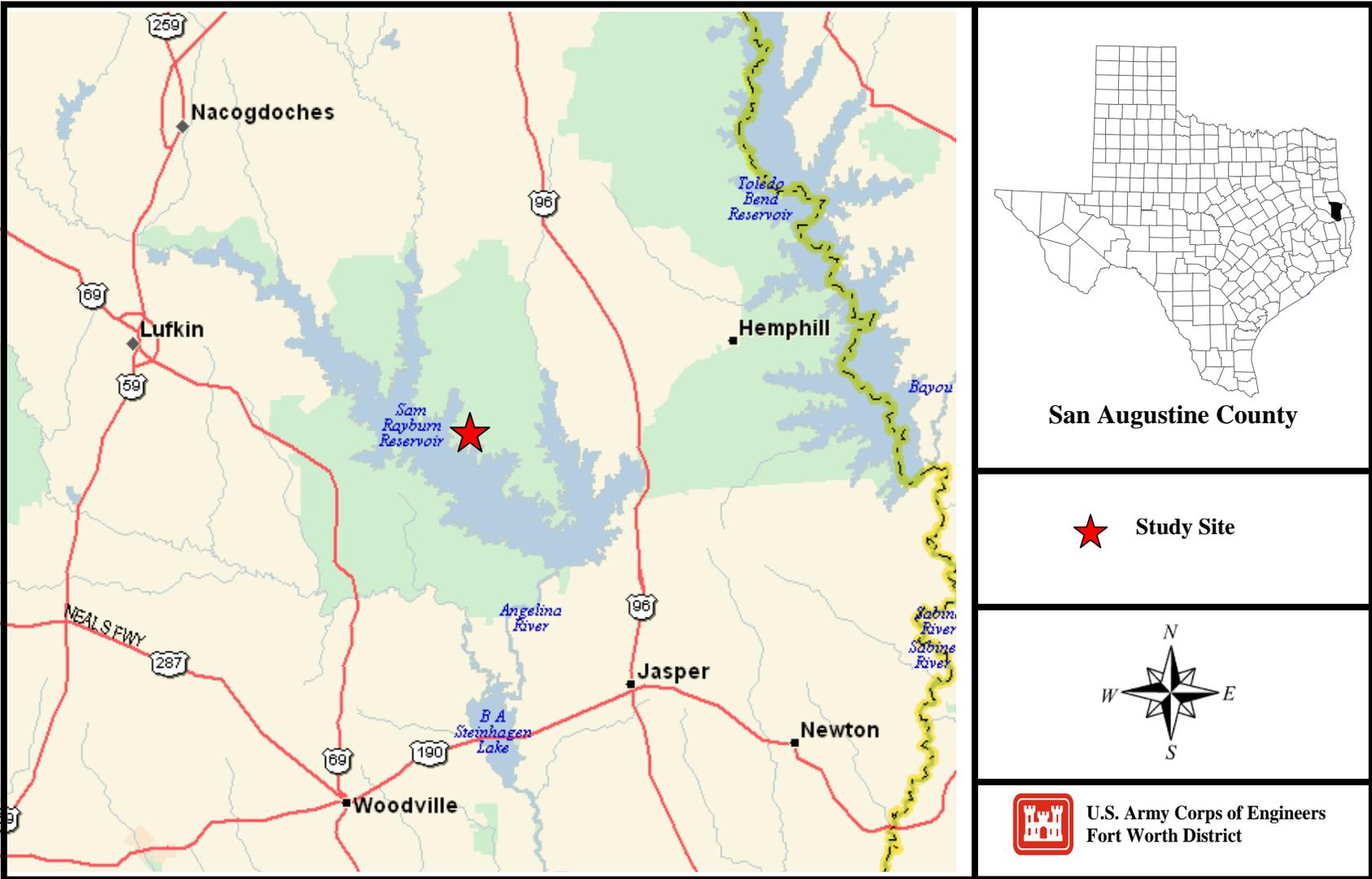
Environmental Data Resources, Incorporated. 2007. The Runnels Erosion Project, Sam Rayburn Reservoir, Broadus, Texas 75929 (Inquiry Number 1972836.3s). Prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District (USACE-SWF). 1977. Operation and Maintenance Programs, Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, Town Bluff and Sam Rayburn Dam and Reservoir, Texas.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District. 2007. Regulated Materials Survey Report, Runnels Reverse Encroachment, Sam Rayburn Reservoir, San Augustine County, Texas.

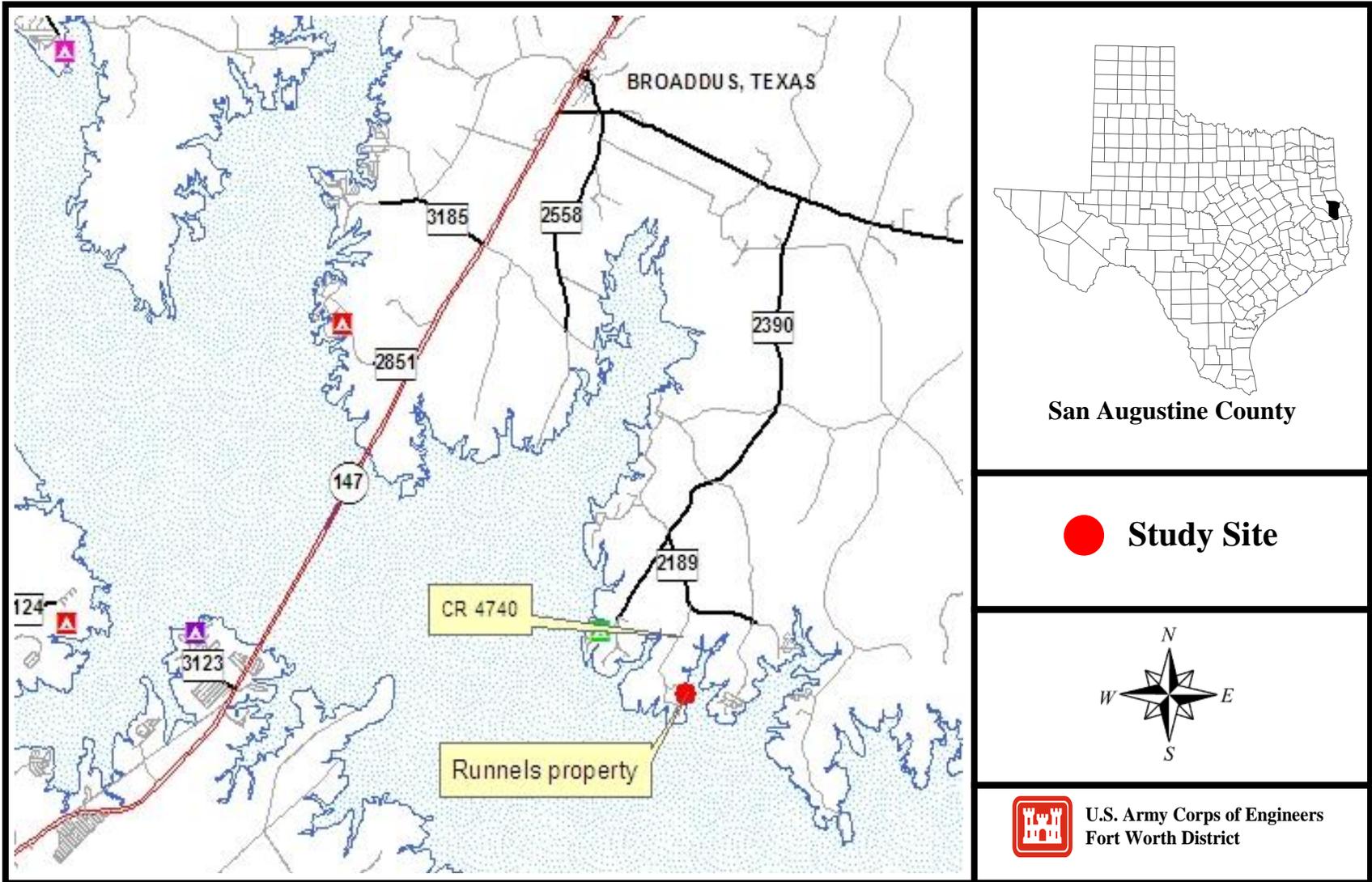
APPENDIX A

VICINITY MAP



APPENDIX B

SITE MAP



APPENDIX C

FEATURE AND VICINITY PICTURES



View of the home and erosion from the shoreline



Picture of the boat storage shed located on property

APPENDIX D
AGENCY COORDINATION



APPENDIX E
PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

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