

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Date: August 7, 2012

To: Mr. Alfred C. Dumaul
Environmental Protection Agency
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, TX 75202

Re: Supplemental Information on Three Historic Cemeteries:
Lone Star NGL Mont Belvieu, L.P.
Mont Belvieu Fractionator # 2 Project
Chambers County, Texas

Dear Mr. Dumaul:

This letter provides additional cultural resources information as requested by your office during our telephone conversation of August 3, 2012. It examines the potential of the proposed Lone Star NGL Mont Belvieu Fractionator #2 project to impact three historic cemeteries: the Fisher Cemetery; Williams Cemetery and an unknown cemetery (see Figures 1 and 2). All are located in Chambers County, Texas and are situated roughly 0.75 miles from the proposed Lone Star project.

The potential National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility of these three known cemeteries was researched by URS. Cemeteries are not generally eligible for listing on the NRHP as archaeological sites, as noted in the National Park Service publications *Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Archaeological Properties* (2000) and *Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places* (1992). However, a cemetery can be considered historic if it meets one or more of the NRHP Criteria of Significance (36 CFR 60.4):

- (a) it associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of U.S. history;
- (b) associated with the lives of persons significant to the past at the local, state or federal level;
- (c) it embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- or (d) it has the potential to yield information important to prehistory or history.

The data on these three cemeteries on file at the Texas Historical Commission (THC) via the online Texas Archeological Sites Atlas indicates that a formal evaluation of the NRHP-eligibility has not been conducted. For this evaluation, URS researched other resources, including the online NRHP database and the resources listed below to supplement the information recorded at the THC. The potential of the project to directly or indirectly affect these cemeteries was also assessed by URS as part of this process.

Fisher Cemetery (THC identifier: CH-C017)

The Texas Archeological Site Atlas states the Fisher Cemetery is located on the west side of Hwy 146 within the confines of an oil company complex. It is within a maintained fenced area within the facility, accessible through a locked gate (Figure 3). The same source states the headstones are limited to a smaller fenced area in the center of the fenced area. There are ten known burials at this cemetery according to a amateur inventories conducted from 2009 to 2012 (Find a Grave 2012a). The dates of

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internment range from 1869 to 2010, indicating that the cemetery is still active. Eight of these individuals belong to the Fisher family, while the other two are of later descendants attributed to the Crenshaw and Smith families. The ten known individuals are:

Fisher, Amos (b. Nov. 26, 1845 d. Jun. 5, 1869)
 Fisher, Vivian Adrian (b. Nov. 6, 1887 d. Jul. 23, 1898)
 Fisher, Sarah Ann Barrow (b. Jul. 1, 1826 d. Aug. 3, 1898)
 Fisher, Jeremiah Conrad (b. Nov. 13, 1819 d. Nov. 30, 1899)
 Fisher, Alma Merritt (b. Jun. 13, 1854 d. May 19, 1902)
 Fisher, Solomon Amos (b. Jun. 8, 1841 d. Sep. 3, 1923)
 Fisher, Elizabeth Sophia Smith (b. Nov. 20, 1852 d. Aug. 31, 1947)
 Fisher, Edgar Charles (b. Jul. 19, 1885 d. Jun. 10, 1957)
 Crenshaw, Erline Fisher (b. Jul. 25, 1915 d. Aug. 23, 1976)
 Smith, Winston Gordon (b. Jun. 5, 1926 d. Jan. 1, 2010)

The only specific information that was found for the individuals interred at the Fisher cemetery was for the most Mr. Winston Smith. His online obituary (Find a Grave 2012a) reads as follows:

Winston Gordon Smith, 83, died on January 1, 2010 at his home in Hardin, Texas. He was born June 5, 1926 in Mont Belvieu, Chambers County, Texas, a son of Mosie Edna Barrow and Willie Celestine Smith. He was the descendant of several old pioneer families of Chambers County, TX, including Solomon and Elizabeth (Winfrey) Barrow and Joseph and Henrietta (Fisher) Lawrence, who settled there in 1824. His father was descended from Wilhelm Carl Schmidt and his wife Elizabeth Paop, who came from Germany and settled at Barbers Hill in 1848. They changed their name to Smith when they came here. He had one brother, 1st Lt. Lawrence William Smith (1919-1944), who served in the U.S. Army-Air Corps. He was killed in the China-Burma-India Theater while flying over the Himalayas during World War II. After attending public schools in Barbers Hill, Winston completed his college studies at Howard Payne University and taught briefly in San Angelo. He returned to Barbers Hill to teach business classes including accounting, shorthand, and typing. He remained with Barbers Hill until 1964 when he moved to Hardin and accepted a similar teaching assignment there. He was one of the most effective and popular teachers in the Hardin school system and coached many of his students to the state finals in UIL contests. He also served as sponsor of the school yearbook for many years. He retired in 1989. He was characterized by a wry sense of humor, a kind and caring heart, and a generous spirit. He was very well known for raising multitudes of African violets over the course of several decades. These included the Wrangler's Series and Maverick's Series of variegated African violets, which he hybridized during the 1970s and 1980s. His hobbies also included raising antique roses and cocker spaniels. His brother, his parents, and his close friend, Miss Lily Hilliard, preceded him in death. Survivors include several cousins: Betty Vee Wilson Hearne, Nita Kay Strimmac, George Henry, Ben Smith, Glenda Barrow Enderli, Colleen Meadows, Kathy Johnson and Madeline Jeffus. He is also survived by many close friends, former students, fellow teachers and associates who felt a special kinship with him. Graveside funeral services for Winston Smith were held at Fisher Chapel [Methodist] Cemetery in Mont Belvieu on Tuesday, January 5, 2010. Rev. Gideon Watson, pastor of the Hardin United Methodist Church and a former teaching colleague, officiated at the service. Arrangements were under the direction of Sterling Funeral Home of Dayton.

Williams Cemetery (THC identifier: CH-C018)

The Texas Archeological Site Atlas states the Williams Cemetery is located on the west side of Hwy Spur 207, at the rear of the Church of Christ in Mont Belvieu. It does not specify the number of grave sites, although the aerial photograph (see Figure 4) suggests that it is currently maintained and active, with at least 50 individuals interred there. Given the results of research described below, it is believed by URS that the Texas Archeological Site Atlas has accidentally reversed the information for the Williams and Unknown, or Unnamed cemetery described below. No specific information on the individuals buried at the Church of Christ was located during our brief records review.

“Unnamed” Cemetery (THC identifier: CH-C019)

As noted above, based on the research conducted by URS, it is likely that the Texas Archeological Site Atlas has accidentally mixed up in their GIS system this cemetery with the Williams Cemetery. Based on online research (Chambers County 2010; Ladd 2012; Mayfield 20092) this cemetery designated as unknown in the Texas Archeological Site Atlas is the First United Methodist Church and Cemetery of Mont Belvieu, located on the east side of Loop 207 at Avenue A in Mont Belvieu (Figure 5). Other online records (Find a Grave 2012b) indicate that members of the Fisher family are interred at this location and associate it with this location, also designated the Amos Barber cemetery.

According to the various online sources, about 155 individuals have been interred at the cemetery. The earliest marked grave belongs to Elizabeth Mary Hodges, who died on November 22, 1829. The last burials were Dewey Glen Riggins and his daughter Tiffany, who died on July 28, 2012. The cemetery is therefore in current use.

Amos Barber, the first settler in the area, constructed a two-story dog trot cabin on the site in 1849. Barber, his wife, and numerous family members were buried in the nearby family cemetery. The Mont Belvieu Church of Christ acquired the land containing the home site in 1974, which was adjacent to an earlier portion gifted to the church by Barber’s eldest daughter and her husband, Amanda Melissa and Marion Williams. The transaction most likely in the early 1900s, or at least by their deaths in the early 1930s.

A Texas Historical Commission Historical Marker (ID number 9122) was erected by the state in 1979 for the Amos Barber Homesite and Cemetery. It reads:

“After Amos and Ann Barber settled in the vicinity in 1849, the village became known as Barbers Hill. Early preaching services were held in the Barbers' home. Captain Robert S. Dingham, a seaman, began a Sunday School and preached in the area. In 1877 "Barbers Chapel" was officially organized as a Methodist Episcopal Church, south. The Barbers gave four acres for a church house and school building. In 1878 the 17 charter members erected the schoolhouse which also served for worship and as a community center. The Rev. P. E. Nicholson was the first pastor and Captain Dingham was officially licensed to preach. The original church site was traded for this location in 1895. A 30' x 40' church house was completed in 1897. Because the Fisher family made the largest contribution toward the new structure, the church was known for a time as "Fisher's Chapel." While the church house was being built, a family needed a burial site for a child and the cemetery was opened. There are 495 gravesites with 245 interments. This sanctuary was erected in 1932 by adding onto the existing structure. The fellowship hall was built in 1945 and the education wing in 1957”.

Results of Records Review and Recommendation:

URS conducted a brief records review using available online sources to provide information on three cemeteries located approximately 0.75 miles from the proposed project area. Based on this research, the NRHP-eligibility of the three cemeteries cannot be assessed. The Fisher cemetery is a local family cemetery that contains at least ten individuals, and was in use from 1869 to as recently as 2010. We believe that information in the Texas Archeological Site Atlas for the cemetery designated “Unknown” (CH-C019) and for the Williams cemetery (CH-C018) has been reversed. The Fisher cemetery appears to be associated with the First United Methodist Church and Cemetery of Mont Belvieu and have originated circa 1829 and continues to be used. It has been recognized by the State of Texas as a significant historic resource based on the erection of a State Historic Marker in 1979. Based on aerial photographs the other cemetery, located nearby to the south behind the Church of Christ in Mont Belvieu is also maintained and active, and contains the internment of over 50 individuals of unknown age.

There remains the potential for one or more of the cemeteries to be NRHP-eligible depending on the formational history of each and the local, state or federal historical significance of the individuals interred. All three cemeteries would require additional, in-depth research on the history of their formation

as well as genealogical research on the individuals interred in order to determine whether each would be NRHP-eligible. However, all three cemeteries are located well away from the proposed Lone Star Fractionator project. Based on an evaluation of the defined project activities as fully described in other project documents, there is no potential for any of the three cemeteries to be impacted through direct action associated with the project's construction and operation, or indirectly through viewshed or air emissions.

As the proposed project does not have the potential to adversely affect these three cemeteries, it is our opinion that a full determination of NRHP-eligibility by Lone Star is not warranted. We therefore recommend that no further cultural resource studies be required at the cemeteries for the project. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 225-935-2974 or Brian Mehok at 713-914-6490.

Respectfully yours,



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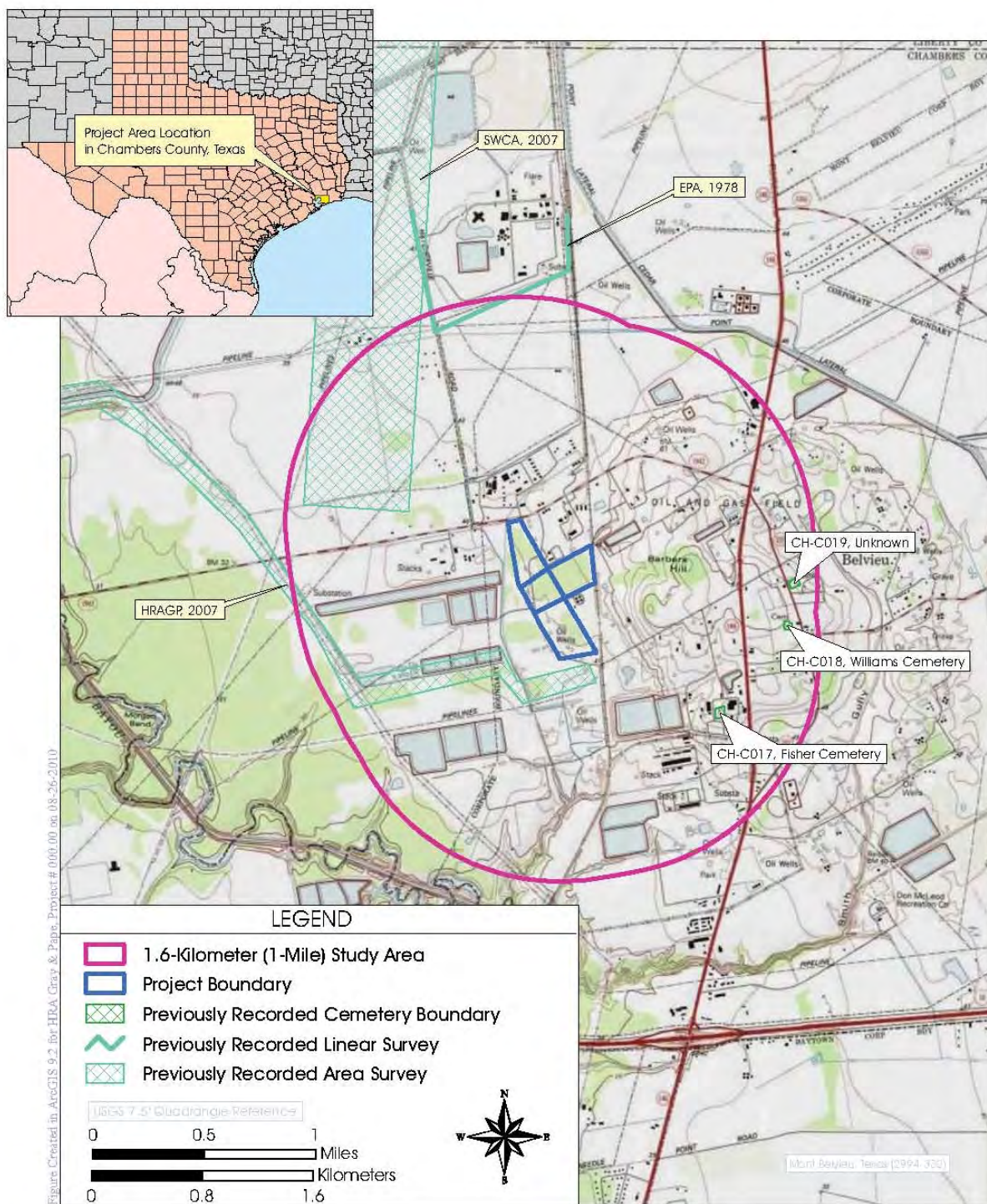
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**Figure 2: Locations of Cemeteries Discussed
(from Figure 1; HRA Gray and Paper 2010:2)**



**Figure 3: Aerial photograph of Fisher Cemetery
(from Texas Site Archeological Atlas)**



**Figure 4: Aerial photograph of Williams Cemetery (possibly Unnamed Cemetery)
(from Texas Site Archeological Atlas)**



**Figure 5: Aerial photograph of Unnamed Cemetery (possibly Williams Cemetery)
(from Texas Site Archeological Atlas)**

Texas Archeological Sites Atlas



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