

Investigating Sites in Anderson County

Anderson County, Tyler District

19th and 20th Century Farmsteads

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Tyler District is dedicated to enhancing mobility projects to ensure the safety of the traveling public. The US 175 project is divided into several construction phases and would widen the current two lane road into a four lane divided highway.

In addition to pre-contact Caddo sites, TxDOT is also investigating two historic-age sites along the same road. TxDOT will excavate these sites and preserve its information as part of the historic preservation process. Our historians are also digging deeper to examine the historical significance of the first African American high school in the Frankston Independent School District (ISD). Find out more below!

SITE 41AN216

An agricultural community established in 1880 (approximately 2 miles east of Frankston) flourished with a gristmill, sawmill, and cotton gins by the early twentieth century. The community had a historically racially mixed population. Artifacts found at this site include glass fragments of windows and bottles, and decorated and colored glass. Records indicate that this property was owned by an African American family, Newt and Sarah Ray Ewell, in 1929. The family played an important role in the community and development of the local school, and their daughter Yvonne later served as the associated superintendent of the Dallas Independent School District. The farmstead remained deeded to Ewell family descendants until the property was acquired by TxDOT for the US 175 Widening Project.

FORMER AFRICAN AMERICAN CARVER SCHOOL BUILDING

Built in c. 1937, the former African American Carver School building is significant for its association with rural, segregated, early- to mid-twentieth century African American education in the former Sand Flat community of Anderson County. The construction of the school was a direct response to early twentieth century trends in state-wide educational improvement. The building was relocated to its current site shortly after the school closed in 1958. As a former barbeque restaurant and now vacant, the Carver School is an intact example of the type of modest school building that once dotted the landscape (but has largely disappeared).

SITE 41AN214

Dr. W.A. Ayres settled in Texas around 1883 or 1884 on an old Kickapoo Settlement. He practiced medicine throughout Anderson and Cherokee counties and moved to Frankston in the early 1900s (the city of Frankston was originally named Ayres). At the time of his death in 1936, Dr. Ayres had nine surviving children, the descendants of which may still live in the area. Archival records suggest that the property had a hand-dug water well, but that it may pre-date Dr. Ayres settlement in the area. Artifacts are dated to the late 19th and early 20th century.



Dr. Ayres Grave near Frankston

Read more about the stories TxDOT has uncovered along the road.

Visit www.txdot.gov,
Keyword: "Beyond the Road."

ARCHEOLOGY CONTACTS:

Laura Cruzada
Public Involvement Specialist
(512) 416-2638
laura.cruzada@txdot.gov

Scott Pletka
Deputy Director of Cultural
Resources Management
(512) 416-2631
scott.pletka@txdot.gov

Waldo Troell
Project Archeologist
(512) 626-9730
waldo.troell@txdot.gov

Renee Benn
Project Historian
(409) 898-5717
renee.benn@txdot.gov



Sample Mitigation Efforts

Creative Mitigation

The outcome of the Section 106 process is not predetermined. It is the interaction among the participants involved in this consultative process that determines the outcome (with the Federal agency making the final decision). As a result, there are many opportunities for creative and innovative approaches to fulfilling the requirements of Section 106. This is especially the case in resolving adverse effects.

We want to hear your ideas including: mitigation banking, training/field work and peer exchanges, outreach, reports, videos, publications, conservation plans, landscape surveys, GIS models, language programs, etc.

Final outcomes will depend on budget, timing and contracting constraints, and outcomes will be conducted in consultation with all consulting parties.