

Travis County Historical Commission

Trip Report for 11/28/2017

Balcones Canyonlands Preserve

Trails End property

Bob Ward and Richard Denney of TCHC surveyed a property inside Balcones Canyonland Preserve, guided by Sally Wolfe and Linda Laack, both with Travis County's BCP. Property is known as Trails End, entrance to property is 10709 Trails End Rd. Various spellings of this are to be found in newspaper, on maps, i.e. "Trail's End", "Trails End". This property is a bit different from some of the other BCP properties in that it is currently open to some local residents, and future plan is to make it open to the public as a county park. Accordingly, considerations were given as to the balance of leaving some artifacts (the buses) vs. their removal for safety reasons. The consensus from the trip was that safety / maintenance costs of the hippie bus commune outweighed historic value; the plan is to remove these before the park opens. Given that, this trip report helps to document this site a bit before it vanishes.

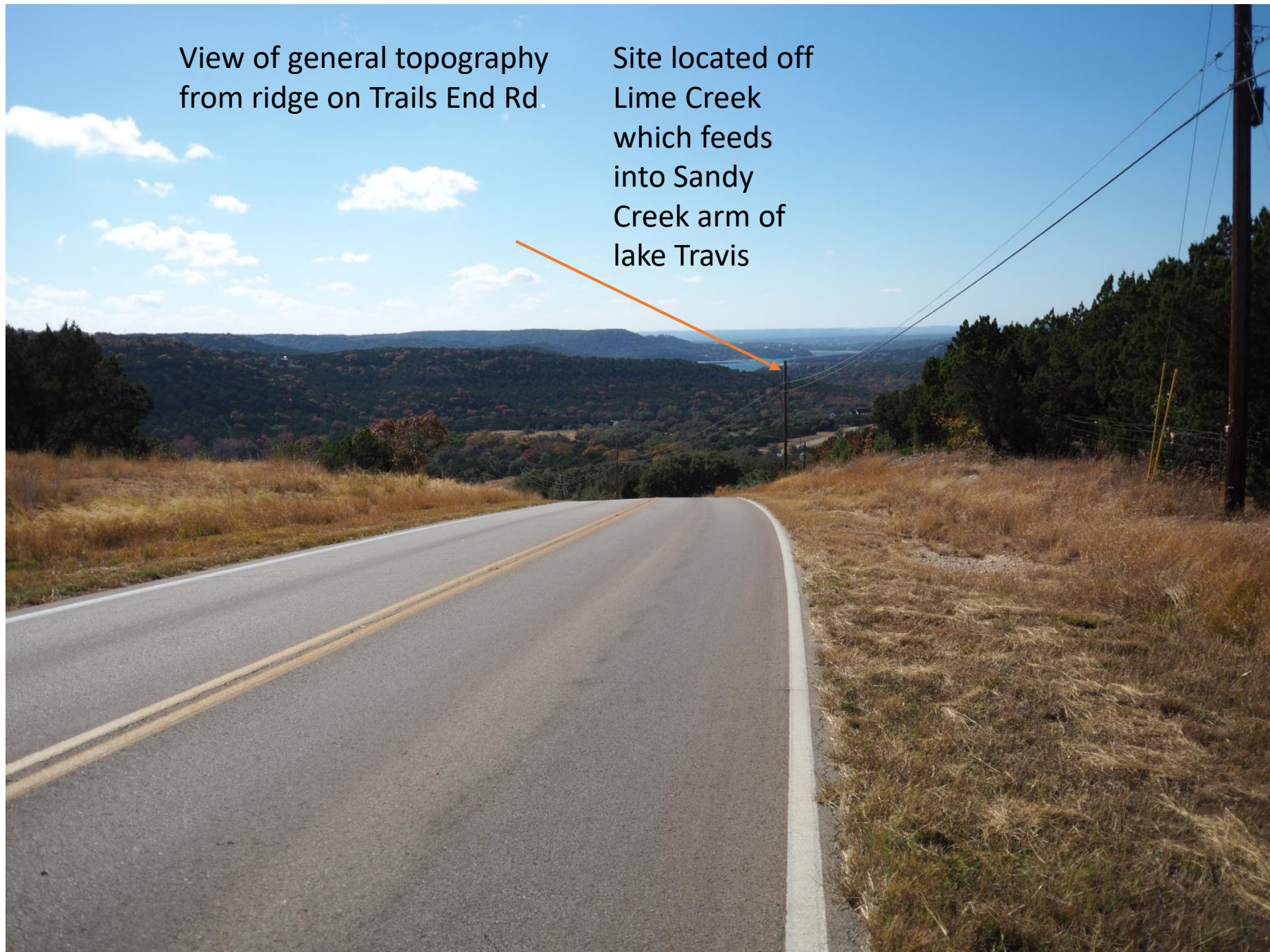
In addition to surveying the hippie bus commune camp, we also walked to the creek; close to there are what appear to be burned-rock middens which have been dug-up / looted in the past, though there may be more that are still intact. We later determined that these middens have already been recorded in the THC site atlas as archeological site 41TV547

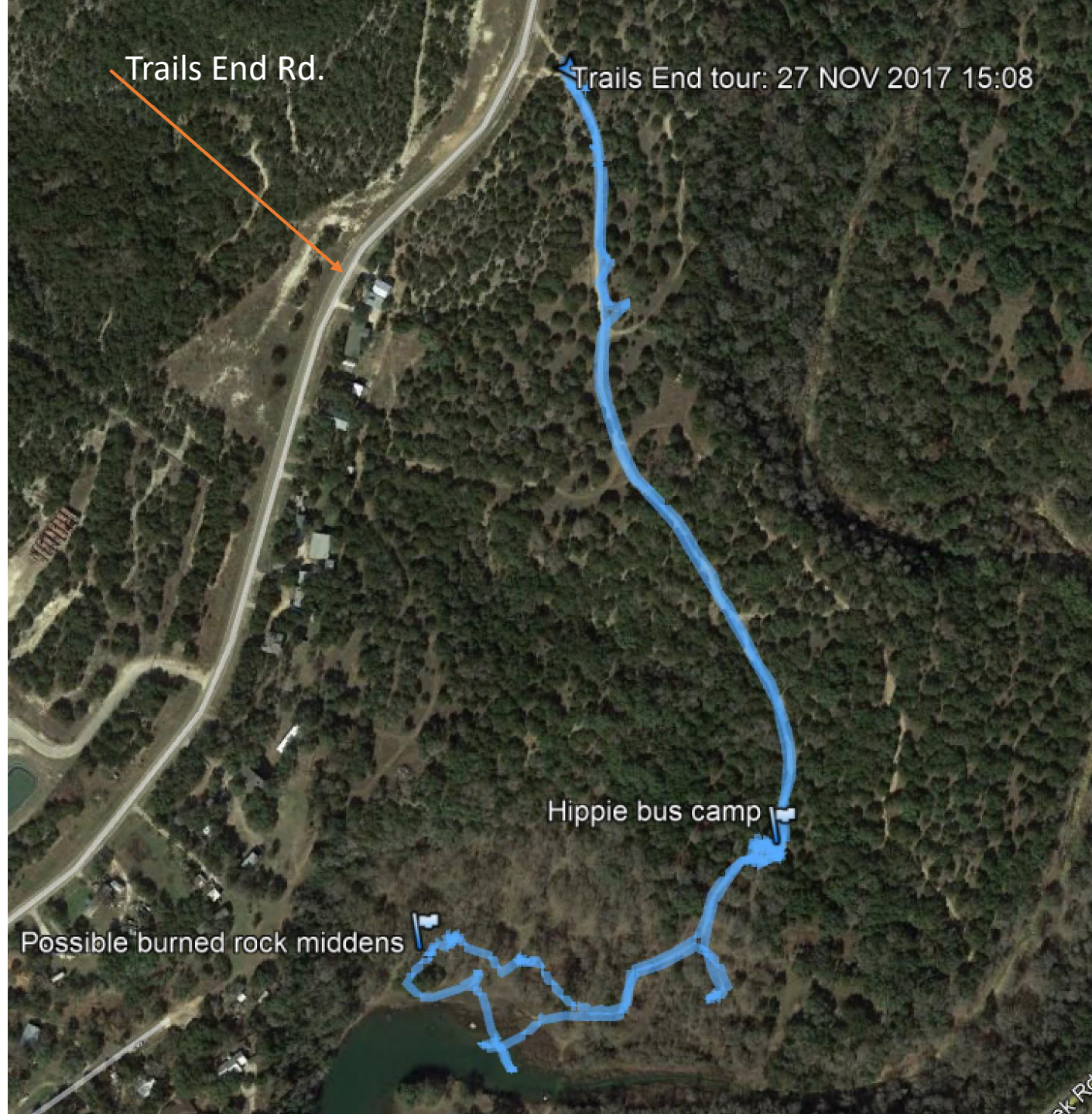


BCP guide
Sally Wolfe,
Balcones
Canyonlands
Preserve

View of general topography
from ridge on Trails End Rd.

Site located off
Lime Creek
which feeds
into Sandy
Creek arm of
lake Travis





GPS track of what we walked;
what terrain looks like today on
Google Earth.



1964 Historic Aerials.com
view of the area surveyed.

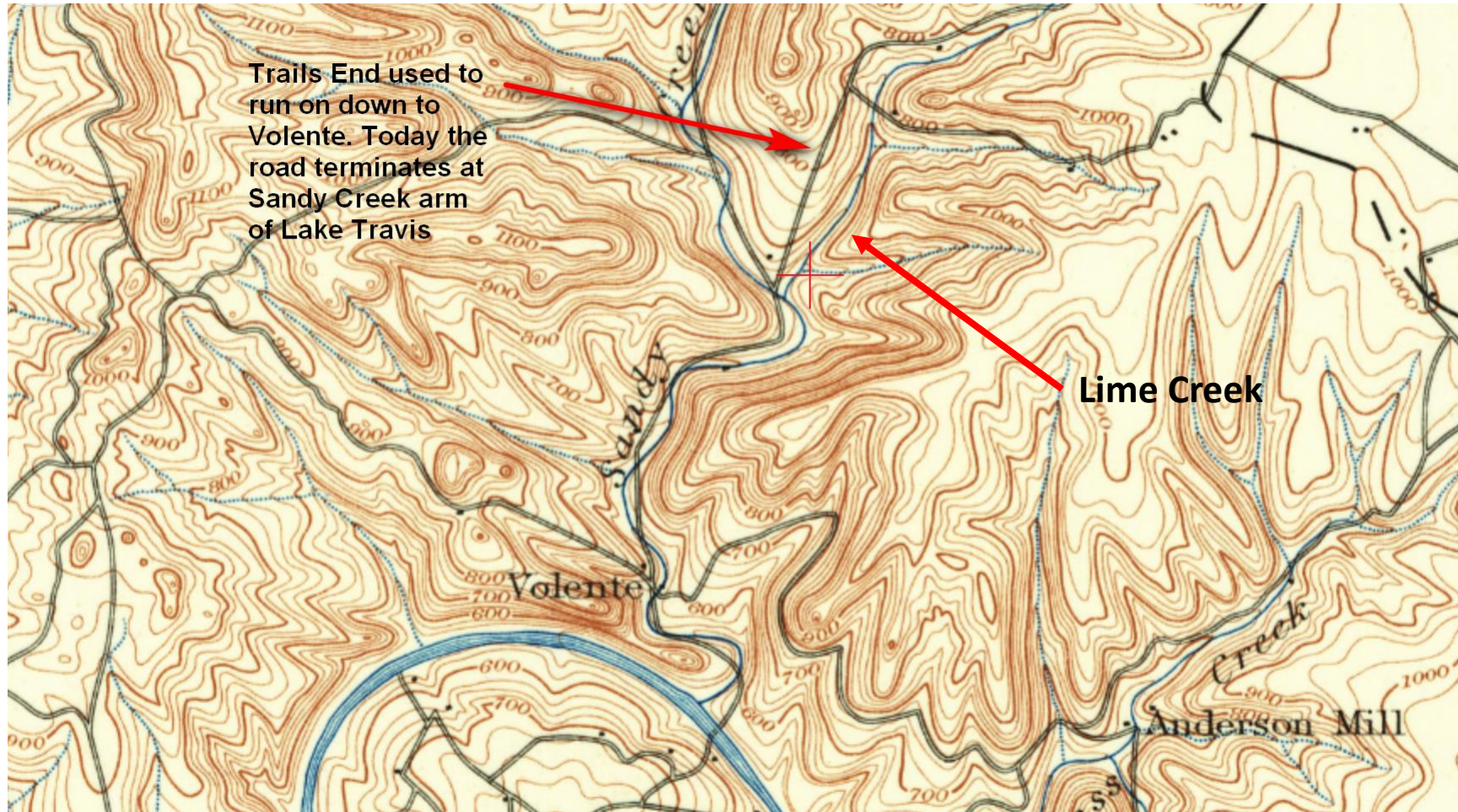
GPS coordinates:

Hippie bus camp not
visible; perhaps setup
later; perhaps under trees.
Newspaper reports
discussed later indicate it
was in use in 1971
N30.48007° W97.90274°

Possible burned-rock
middens that have been
partially excavated by pot
hunters N30.47945°
W97.90514°

In 1964 there was a
house/structure shown we
did not investigate
30.479822, -97.902213

Low water crossing bridge
is still there; predates 1964



Trails End used to run on down to Volente. Today the road terminates at Sandy Creek arm of Lake Travis

Lime Creek

1896 USGS topo show what is today's Trails End Rd. Before Lake Travis it intersected with a road that then continued on to Volente. Today the road dead ends into the Sandy Creek arm of Lake Travis. Lime Creek visible in 1896 topo.

Anderson Mill visible bottom right.



The main site we were reviewing was as a newspaper described a “commune-style camp” made of two school buses joined together with a wooden “house”.

Following are photos of the buses, house, etc.. The main site we went out to review.

The side of one bus appears to read West Portland School District; a school bus. Just doing a quick Google search, the buses look similar to those produced by Crown Motor Coaches, a supplier of school buses. See:

<http://www.curbsideclassic.com/bus-stop-classic/crown-motor-coaches-california-royalty/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crown_Supercoach



Close-up showing the little house built to join the two buses





Side of bus
appears to
read West
Portland
School
District; a
school bus







Bob Ward
inspecting
inside of one
bus



Shower that
was built
into one of
the buses







Looking
toward
front of
one bus;
handle to
open door
still visible



Front of
one bus;
handle that
opens door
visible.
Bob's
backpack
outside
shows
where trail
runs by
camp



Back end
of second
bus
connects
to the
house that
was built
to connect
both buses







Fence posts visible to left of bus; sample of barb wire collected for possible dating.



Truck of unknown date on site; almost wonder if predates hippy camp. In 1964 aerial photo there are trails/roads visible around the trees. Maybe a "shade tree" mechanic spot?





What follows are several newspaper articles that seem relevant to the history of this property. The articles about “long-haired” residents of a “commune-style camp” off Trails End Road surely refer to the site we visited and provide a date of 1971 for when it was being occupied. References to “nude swimming” probably relate to Lime Creek and the wonderful waterfall / swimming hole there.

Audubon Program Sunday

The Travis Audubon Society Sunday will conduct field trips on its newly-acquired wildlife sanctuary in the hills 20 miles northwest of Austin.

The outing, beginning at 8:30 a.m. and continuing into the afternoon, includes a picnic lunch at 1 p.m. Members are reminded to wear suitable clothing for hiking and to bring a picnic lunch.

The 94-acre tract, bordered one one side by Lime Creek, has a heavily wooded area with many kinds of trees. A portion of it is open country covered with grass and a variety of wildflowers.

More than 30 species of birds and a number of wild animals have been observed on the sanctuary. The habitat of the area is that required by the Golden-cheeked Warbler, which nests only in the Edwards Plateau country. This is the first Audubon Sanctuary established principally for the preservation of the Golden-cheeked Warbler, now a threatened species by reason of habitat changes.

The Audubon Society has given these directions for reaching the sanctuary: take Highway 183 (Burnet Road) to just past Cedar Park, turn left on Ranch Road 1431 (Jonestown Road) and continue about four miles. At "Trails End" sign turn left and continue for about one mile, turn left at "Red Wagon Ranchettes" sign and continue for about half a mile. Turn right between first two cottages, continue about one block and cross the creek on a flat rock surface.

This is sanctuary property. Turn sharply to the left after crossing the creek and follow the road. An Audubon member will direct parking.

Six Charged With Having Marijuana

Six persons were arrested for possession of marijuana late Wednesday night by Precinct 4 Constable Gene Collier on private property near Cedar Park off Trails End Road.

Collier said he had earlier arrested several persons for nude swimming in the same area, including two children of a couple later arrested for possession of marijuana.

The six arrests were made by Collier and two deputies, Bobby White and Tommy Simon, he reported. Charges were filed against the six Thursday morning, but their names and ages were not immediately available.

A quantity of suspected LSD and a suspected marijuana plant, along with several suspected potted marijuana plants were confiscated by the constable and his men.

Collier said an area resident who lives nearby said she had seen the long-haired occupants of a commune-type camp "watering a pig pen," but "there weren't any pigs in it."

It turned out, Collier said, that was where the suspected marijuana plant was growing.

2 Arrested For Drugs Still in Jail

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Aug 27, 1971;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Austin American Statesman

pg. 14

2 Arrested For Drugs Still in Jail

Two of five persons charged Thursday with possession of marijuana remained in Travis County Jail Friday morning.

Named in the narcotics complaints were Earlynn McEntyre, 25, Marvin Francis Musgrove, 29, Barbara Arlene Musgrove, 29, Judy E. Miller, 23, and Tommy E. Culp, 20, all of 1006 W. 22nd St., and Steward Howard Adams, 23, of Canada, no city indicated.

All but Culp and Adams were free on \$1,000 bonds set by Justice of the Peace Jim Dear. Culp remained in jail in lieu of a total of \$2,700 in bonds. Bond for Adams, who also was charged with possession of LSD, totalled \$2,000.

The five were arrested about 11:30 p.m. Wednesday at a commune-style camp off Trails End Road near Cedar Park by Precinct 4 Constable Gene Collier.

Sixty-three suspected marijuana plants and a quantity of LSD was confiscated by Collier, two deputies and a Department of Public Safety narcotics agent.

After surveying the bus camp we walked to
Lime Creek



Boat that was either abandoned, or left inland during some past flood. Appears on some aerial photos I looked at.

Plan is to dispose of boat.



Lime Creek waterfall. Bridge crossing creek just upstream. Downstream creek empties into Sandy Creek arm of Lake Travis. This swimming hole probably figures into stories of “nude swimming” by member of “commune-style” hippie camp (“long haired”) .. See news articles later.





Low water crossing bridge. Shows as existent in 1964 aerial photo. Some maps show this as a ford. Looking at old USGS topos this was a road before dam was built (as memory serves).



After visiting the creek we walked back up into a nearby wooded area where there appear to be burned-rock middens that have been partially looted or otherwise dug-up. Subsequent research shows this site has already be recorded in the THC site atlas as archeological site 41TV547

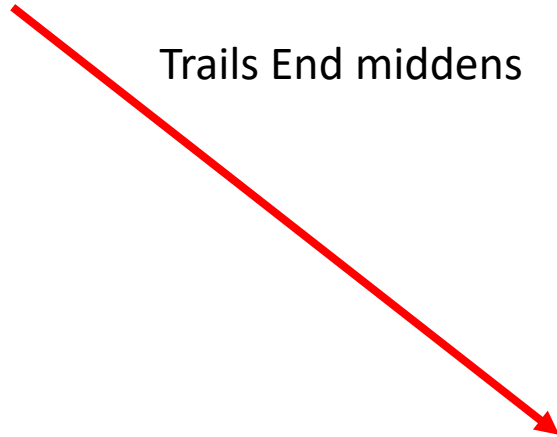
Other archeological sites in the area ...

As an example of other archeological sites in the area, see BCRUA Regional Water Supply Project, Phase 2 Deep Water Intake System, section 2.1.6 Historical and Archeological Resources, by Brushy Creek Regional Utility Authority, March 2014

Table 2-4. Sites located within one mile of the APE

Site	Prehistoric/Historic	Site Type	Eligibility	Comments
41TV29	Prehistoric	Camp site	Unknown	Inundated by Lake Travis. Recorded in 1938 as part of the Marshall Ford Lake project.
41TV33	Prehistoric	Midden	Unknown	Inundated by Lake Travis. Recorded in 1938 as part of the Marshall Ford Lake project.
41TV37	Prehistoric	Burned rock midden and camp site	Unknown	Inundated by Lake Travis. Recorded in 1938 as part of the Marshall Ford Lake project.
41TV233	Prehistoric	Midden	Unknown	Inundated by Lake Travis. Recorded in 1939 as part of the Marshall Ford Lake project.
41TV547	Prehistoric, possibly Archaic	Burned rock midden and camp site	Unknown	Middens have been partially excavated/looted. Recorded by an avocational archeologist.
41TV2107	Prehistoric, Archaic	Lithic procurement site and camp site	Potentially eligible	Recorded by the LCRA, TAC 3325.

Trails End middens





Odd tree among the middens area. Photos of middens and diggings follow ..







