

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: N/A

Other names/site number: White Rock Bluffs (preferred)Name of related multiple property listing: N/A**2. Location**Street & number: The collection of municipal parkland around 2324 N Jim Miller Road,
roughly bounded on the north by State Highway 352 and Seco Blvd to the south.City or town: DallasState: TXCounty: DallasNot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide x local

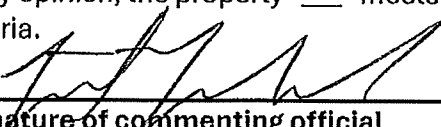
Applicable National Register Criteria:

 x A B C D

	Chief Deputy SHPO	<u>5/8/2026</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title		Date
 _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
	5/12/2020
Signature of commenting official	Date
Chairman	Comanche Nation
Title	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Martina Minthorn, Comanche Nation T#PO

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

Private: _____

Public – Local: X

Public – State : _____

Public – Federal: _____

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Category of Property

Building(s): ____

District: ____

Site: x

Structure: ____

Object: ____

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Other/ Traditional Cultural Place

Current Functions: Other/Traditional Cultural Place; Landscape/park

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

NA

Materials:

Principal exterior materials of the property: NA

Narrative Description Summary Paragraph

White Rock Bluffs is a 200-acre site in a heavily wooded escarpment on municipal parkland in Dallas, Dallas County that are associated with the Comanche Nation's (Nemaneh) beliefs, customs, and practices. Natural features that contribute to the significance of White Rock Bluffs include groves of red oak and bois d'arc trees, a 500-foot-high overlook, spring-fed stream, prairie land, outcrops of exposed limestone and Austin chalk bedrock, and the steep bluff. Comanche names for these contributing sites are Storytelling Place, Scylene Overlook, Lodge Pole Woods, Comanche Campground, and Red Oak Grove. This nomination recognizes the former location of the Comanche Indian Marker Tree, designated as such by the tribe in 1997, which was destroyed by a storm in 1998. Although modern encroachment—a 19th century rail right-of-way to the west and 20th century residential development east, north, and south—surrounds the nominated district, White Rock Bluffs has integrity as well-preserved public parkland and, since creation, has been considered Traditional Ancestral homelands by the Comanche people.¹ The Comanche Nation continues to recognize and protect White Rock Bluffs as a sacred site important to future generations of Comanche.²

Narrative Description

The nominated boundary encompasses portions of Gateway Park and Devon-Anderson Park roughly centered around North Jim Miller Road five miles southeast of downtown Dallas and five miles south of White Rock Lake. It is the northeastern section of the 6,000-

¹ Comanche Nation, "Proclamation," May 23, 2002. See Figure X.

² Comanche Nation, "Proclamation," March 5, 2013. See Figure X.

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

acre Great Trinity Forest, an urban bottomland hardwood forest along the Trinity River with numerous recreational facilities, trails, and boat launches. Contemporary suburban neighborhoods surround the Great Trinity Forest on all sides. Classified as a single site for nominating purposes, White Rock Bluffs is roughly bounded on the north by State Highway 352, DART (Dallas Area Rapid Transit) right-of-way on the west, and the Gateway and Devon-Anderson parks property lines (east and south).

White Rock Bluffs is a wooded limestone escarpment ridge of Austin Chalk above the flood basin of White Rock Creek, near its confluence with the Trinity River, overlooking the Great Trinity Forest and downtown Dallas. The nominated boundary and six contributing Comanche sites are across this ridge, the transitional zone between the ridge and the Trinity River/White Rock Creek floodplain and in areas of the floodplain. The steep-sided bluffs undulate in a southeasterly direction across the nominated area before being interrupted by the spring-fed Oak Creek, which runs in a southwesterly direction north of Piedmont Drive to the Grover Keeton Golf course on the west side of the DART rail line. The bluffs continue through the southern portion of the nominated district into Devon-Anderson Park.

Preserved as metropolitan parks, the district's historic natural landscape is an extension of the Balcones Escarpment. Towering trees includes pecans, a variety of oak species, walnut, persimmon, red cedar, and Bois D'Arc. Trout Lillies are prolific in February along the edges of the bluffs. Prairie remnants (little blue stem) and wildflower meadows are scattered on and below the escarpment. Traditional Comanche healers used medicinal plants from the prairies, cleansing them in the spring-fed creek. Wildlife in this area includes grey foxes, coyotes, racoons, opossums, rabbits; a variety of hawks and owls, blue birds, cardinals, blue jays, crows and many more birds are present. Egrets and blue heron and beavers are seen in the adjacent floodplain wetlands. Other bird species and monarch butterflies migrate though this parkland. A variety of other butterflies are present in the prairie/wildflower meadows on and below the bluffs.

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

Site Features (Map 2)

Reference No.	Feature	Other Names Used
1	Storytelling Place	Comanche Storytelling Place, A Storytelling Place
2	Scyene Overlook	
3	Lodge Pole Woods	
4	(Comanche) Indian Marker Tree	Indian Marker Tree, Gateway Park Marker Tree
5	Red Oak Grove	Red Oak Grove, The Great Trinity Forest Comanche Storytelling Place Red Oak Grove, Sacred Red Oak Grove
6	Comanche Campground	
7	Picnic Shelter	
8	Athletic Fields (2)	
9	Playground	
10	Tennis Court	

White Rock Bluffs is a single contributing site with numerous features associated with the Comanche Nation's customs, beliefs, and practices. **Scyene Overlook (# 2)** is a rocky point atop the escarpment rising 50-feet above the escarpment in the northeast part of the nominated district. Its viewshed extends over the bottomland of White Rock Creek and across the Trinity River. A grove of red cedar, called **Lodge Pole Woods (# 3)**, is at the overlook's base and a roughly 9-acre meadow is between its base and Renda St.

The land surrounding Oak Creek is a large, mostly flat and open area bound by escarpment ridges to the north and south, which widens as the creek flows toward White Rock Creek. Research and site visits in 1994-2002 by the Comanche Language and Cultural Preservation Committee, Comanche Elders Council, then-Comanche Nation THPO Jimmy Arterberry, and anthropologist Linda Pelon identified a **(Comanche) Indian Marker Tree (# 4)** that indicated the presence of a **Comanche Campground (# 6)** along Oak Creek. Essential elements of these preferred campgrounds include the spring-fed creek bottom and pecan grove with a nearby highpoint (Scyene Overlook) and proximity to a buffalo trail

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

(present-day Scyene Road). A severe storm critically damaged the marker tree, and it was cut down shortly thereafter. The Comanche Nation recognizes its known location, but it is considered a noncontributing resource for the purposes of the nomination as the tree no longer retains material integrity.

Contemporary park facilities were built by the City of Dallas adjacent to the marker tree site in the open areas around Oak Creek: picnic shelter, athletic fields, playground, and tennis court. Smaller park objects, like picnic tables, were not counted as resources.

South of Bruton Rd., the parkland runs in a long swath along the escarpment, between a residential neighborhood to the east and the same passenger rail line to the west. It terminates behind homes on Seco Blvd. and its connecting streets. The terrain drops off to the west in the direction of White Rock Creek. The rail line is lower than the parkland, cut into a steep embankment with exposed limestone rock. Moving northwest from this area is the **Red Oak Grove (# 5)** adjacent to the Comanche Storytelling Place. This grove is a collection of red oaks with the oldest being a multi-trunk specimen of advanced age. The **Comanche Storytelling Place (# 1)** is a bowl-shaped indentation on the western face of the escarpment ridge. The underlying white limestone is exposed, creating a naturally occurring amphitheater largely devoid of plant matter with a rocky surface. A tall chain link fence on a masonry wall is a short distance away forms part of the nominated boundary along the DART right-of-way.

Integrity

The Comanche Nation has enduring relationship with White Rock Bluffs, believing the nominated place is significant to honoring their ancestors' traditional cultural values and practices. White Rock Bluffs is at its original location, preserved as municipal parkland. Although suburban residential developments encroach on the north, east, and south sides, the nominated property itself and areas west retain the overall historic natural setting. The Dallas downtown skyline, however, disrupts the historic viewshed from Scyene Overlook. Relationships between the site's important features—like areas of prairieland near spring-fed creeks—retain the historic spatial “design” and are identifiable to the Comanche Nation as traditional campgrounds, medicine places, and spiritual sites. The fundamental natural landscape of the wooded limestone escarpment that characterizes White Rock Bluffs is preserved and, thus, the nominated place demonstrates material integrity. An Indian Marker Tree, destroyed by a strong storm, is the only feature associated with the Comanche Nation that does not retain its physical materiality. A preponderance of integrity of location, setting, design, and materials conveys the historical feeling and association between this Native American Tribe and traditional cultural place. White Rock

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

Bluffs is regarded by the Comanche Nation as sacred grounds important to maintaining the group's traditions, beliefs, and cultural practices.

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

Areas of Significance

Ethnic Heritage: Native American (Comanche Nation/Numunuu) (local level of significance)

Social History: Traditional Cultural History (local level of significance)

Period of Significance

Time immemorial to the present

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Native American (Comanche Nation/Numunuu)

Architect/Builder

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

White Rock Bluffs is nominated to the National Register of Historical Places as a Traditional Cultural Place under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: Native American and Social History for its association with the Comanche Nation (Numunuu) for the period time immemorial to the present. The 200-acre area, presently part of the City of Dallas park system, is the location of multiple sites important to the history and culture of the tribe. The site, which is composed of a complex of natural features, has largely been spared alteration in the subsequent years thus preserving those elements important to Comanche use and a sense of place recognized by the Comanche Nation today. It thus provides a significant example of Comanche occupation in the area of, what is now, Dallas prior to the expulsion from their ancestral lands as well as retains elements important to existing cultural practices. It is called White Rock Bluffs, a non-historic name, but one that the Comanche Nation recognizes.³

³ See Figure 1.

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

Narrative Statement of Significance

The White Rock Bluffs parkland meets the criteria for listing as a Traditional Cultural Place under Criteria A in the area of Ethnic Heritage-Native American. Within its boundaries is the location of a Comanche campground with multiple associated features important to the history and culture of the tribe. The property, which is composed of a complex of natural features, has largely been spared alteration in the subsequent years thus preserving those elements important to Comanche use and a sense of place similar to that during its period of use from ca 1700-1850. It thus provides a significant example of native settlement prior to the expulsion from their ancestral lands as well as retaining elements important to existing cultural practices. It is unknown what the site was referred to during the initial period of use. Since a historical name is unknown, White Rock Bluffs, which has been used by local naturalists in the last few decades and accurately ties to the historic name of the adjacent creek and geology, has been used by the Comanche Nation.⁴

Ethnohistorical research methods go beyond the use of the written record and incorporate additional sources of information to create multi-faceted reconstructions of encounters between cultures. These techniques are also successfully used to reconstruct the histories of cultures without written languages. Oral historical and cartographic information, archeological evidence, and innovative techniques emerging from the discipline of historical geography (“reading the landscape”) are successfully applied to gain more complex and accurate understandings of past events, interactions, life ways, and land uses. This application will focus on features recognized by the Comanche Nation as significant to their Texas cultural heritage.

This history reflects the Comanche Nation’s perspectives because the historical and archeological data sources used to construct it were recommended and approved by Martina Minthorn, the Comanche Nation’s Historic Preservation Officer. Ms. Minthorn also provided comments on the draft report that are addressed here in the final report.

First, documentation supporting Comanche use of this area prior to 1850 will be provided. Supporting evidence will be organized by the following categories: ethnohistorical, cartographic, and geographical. Lastly, background information will be summarized documenting the contemporary relationship between the Comanche Nation and the White Rock Bluffs.

⁴ See Figure 4.

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

The Comanche

A 2021 report⁵ by the Texas Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the Tribal Preservation Office of the Comanche Nation, provides a succinct description of this group:

The Comanche, or ~~Numunuu~~ as they call themselves, speak a Central Numic language that differs only slightly from the Eastern Shoshone groups. “Comanche,” is derived from the Ute word for “anyone who wants to fight me all the time” (Powell 2014), but ~~Numunuu~~ means “the people.” The Comanche are believed to have occupied the Northern Plains during the 1500s but were found living in areas north of the Arkansas River and west of the Pecos River and the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in New Mexico by the time of European contact. Eventually, the Comanche Nation traditional territories ranged from the foothills of the Rocky Mountains to the Wind River region of Wyoming, as well as a part of the plains that extended into Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas.⁶

Anthropological evidence indicates that the Comanche were originally a mountain tribe, a branch of the Northern Shoshone, who roamed the Great Basin region of the western United States as hunters and gatherers. Comanche and Shoshone people share cultural and linguistic similarities. The Comanche language is derived from the Uto-Aztecan linguistic family...

The Comanche acquired horses sometime during the late seventeenth century, drastically altering their culture. Their transportation revolutionized, the Comanche rapidly evolved into a mounted, well-equipped, and powerful people. Their new mobility allowed them to leave their mountain home and their Shoshone neighbors and move onto the plains of eastern Colorado and western Kansas and beyond, wherever game was plentiful...

The Comanche considered bison to be a primary food source. They used both stalking and group hunting techniques that took place in late summer and fall. Comanche identified their kills by arrow marks on the bison. Hunters who made kills were given the hide. Other men could claim meat portions by counting coup after a kill was made. Other food sources included a variety of roots, tubers, berries, and beans. By the 1850s, bison began to comprise less and less of the Comanche diet, not by choice, but

⁵ TxDOT. *Tribal Histories: Comanche Nation Research Report*. Texas Department of Transportation, 2021.

⁶ (Kavanagh 2001)

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

because European invaders were exterminating the herds for their hides and later bones.

Given a subsistence based on following bison herds, the high level of mobility of the Comanche resulted in an ephemeral material culture. Comanche tools were made from wood, stone, and animal bone, while tipis and most clothing were made from tanned bison hide. The Comanche used long wooden poles as the framework for their cone-shaped tipis. Women tanned and sewed bison, or deer hides together to cover the frame. An opening at the top of the tipi allowed smoke from a fire to escape. Minor variations in tipi design or decoration distinguished one Plains Tribe from another. Today, the Comanche still use tipis for ceremonies and other occasions as well.

Other mammals and a variety of birds also provided material for clothing and domestic use. Wooden poles were used to support tipis and as travois for carrying cultural items between camps. Like most Northern Plains people, the Comanche built stone rings around their tipis....

They were also noted as digging small ditches and building a stone ring around tipi villages to channel away rainwater and snowmelt (Kavanagh 2001). Comanche also tied the tipi down using clumps of grass that were deeply rooted and dug ditches to allow water to run away from individual tipis....

On August 15, 1865, a peace treaty between the Comanche and United States was signed near the mouth of the Little Arkansas River (present-day Wichita, Kansas). A formal agreement was concluded on October 10. The treaty with the Comanche established their reservation and gave the tribe West Texas including a boundary that started at the northeastern corner of New Mexico, ran south along that territory's eastern border to its southeastern corner, cut across West Texas, reaching the Red River near the 100th Meridian before turning due north to the Cimarron River. It was literally the first time in history that Texans or Americans had recognized the Comanche claim to a homeland.

The reservation period ended in 1901, when the Comanche reservation was broken up into allotments, with each person receiving 160 acres of land, and additional acreage being set aside for church, agency, and school use. Despite protests from Comanche leaders on multiple grounds, the U.S. government upheld the allotments and those not assigned to Indians became open to the public. Whites soon outnumbered Indians on the former reservation. In the 1960s, the Comanche Nation established its own Tribal government, which operates near Lawton, Oklahoma. In 2025, the Comanche

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

Nation had an enrolled Tribal population of 17,000 scattered across the United States.⁷ The annual Comanche Fair and pow-wows, or dance gatherings, have become important methods of maintaining Comanche traditions, culture, and kinship.

A Comanche Perspective on Occupation

The first consideration is the definition of *occupation*. This is a concept that varies with cultures. For these self-titled “Lords of the South Plains,” a Comanche concept of *occupation* included seasonal use of areas more permanently settled by other tribes. Relationships with other tribes were not unlike those in Europe under the feudal system. Agricultural tribes provided buffer zones in Comanche borderlands and were trading partners.⁸ The greater Dallas area, known to early settlers as Three Forks, was documented as a peaceful trading area by European witnesses as early as 1680.⁹ Susan Starling describes it as a “meeting ground of numerous tribes”¹⁰ in her biography of early surveyor Warren Ferris.¹¹

In the Comanche language it is known as “Pih-heet Pah-e-hoona” (it translates as “Three Rivers”) whose watershed was protected and occupied by the Tribe. Both names refer to its location as the confluence of the three major branches of the Trinity River: Elm Fork, West Fork, and East Fork. Ferris reported Comanche war parties patrolling the Indian trails in the Three Forks after surveying began in the late 1830s.¹² This makes a strong case for *occupation* from a Comanche perspective because Comanche warriors only defended lands that they claimed. The Three Forks area is just north of the crossing of a major Comanche Trail connecting a Comanche center of power to frontier centers of commerce

⁷ (<https://www.comanchenation.com/about/page/history/2025>).

⁸ Wallace, Ernest and Hoebel, E. Adamson, *The Comanches, Lords of the South Plains*. (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 14.

⁹ A Stake in the Prairie: *The Mesquite Saga; From frontier prairie grasslands* (Dallas: Taylor Publishing Company, 1984), 7-11.

¹⁰ Full quote: “It was a meeting ground of numerous tribes who camped and traded along Turtle creek, at Cedar Springs, and along White Rock Creek. Two major Indian footpaths (or traces) crossed the Three Forks from the east to west.... Following these Indian routes, bands of Wichitas (called variously Keechies, Ionies, Tawakoni, and Towash), as well as Cherokees, moved through the Three Forks to camp along the tree shaded streams. The Indian traces were also a favored route for Comanche war parties that swept in off the Plains to raid isolated settlements and confront intruding surveyors bearing that hated instrument, the compass, ‘the thing that steals the land.’ ”

¹¹ Starling, Susan. *Land is the Cry; Warren Angus Ferris, Pioneer Texas Surveyor and Founder of Dallas County* (Austin: Texas Historical Association, 1998), 100.

¹² Starling, *Land is the Cry*, 100.

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(Nacogdoches, a bustling multicultural outpost of frontier commerce and a major route to San Antonio).¹³ The Wichita Trace, described by Harston as following the Trinity River, could have been used for quick and easy access to the Three Forks area from this Comanche trail.¹⁴

Cartographic Evidence

A survey of cartographic information available through libraries and directly relevant to an evaluation of Comanche presence in – and use of - the Three Forks area is summarized below:

Map of the Great Kingdom of Tejas to Accompany the History of Comanche Land (by J Harston 1963)¹⁵ **Figure 6**

This map was created by J. Emmor Harston, a source close to the last surviving Texas Comanche leaders and an adopted son of Chief Horseback. He collected information from Comanche elders starting in late 1870 at the request of Horseback. His map is a Comanche perspective of their land use in Texas. The map shows a boundary line for Comanche territory east of the Trinity River between the Neches and Sabine Rivers. Reporting information he gathered from Comanche elders in the last decades of the Nineteenth Century, Harston described “an easterly north-south trace traveled by both the Comanches and the Wichitas. From Antelope Springs, at the head of the Trinity River, a Wichita Trace led down that stream to the Neches River and on to the Gulf of Mexico. This trace was the boundary between the two tribes.”¹⁶

Map of Texas Compiled from Surveys in the Land Office (by John Arrowsmith in 1841):
Figure 5a-5b

This map documents a “Comanche Trail” running west from the Pecan River fork of the Colorado River north/northeastward to cross the Brazos River just north of a “High Peak” [now called Comanche Peak] and then east/southeast to cross Noland Creek and

¹³ The Pecan Bayou area and Santa Anna Peaks, described as a “Comanche West Point” and a training center for smoke signaling communications (Harston 1963:110-119). Santa Anna Peaks, and the adjacent town (Santa Anna, in Coleman County near Brownwood), are named for the great Comanche war chief Santa Anna or Santanna.

¹⁴ Harston, J. Emmor. *Comanche Land* (San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1963), p110-119.

¹⁵ Harston informs the reader that “Tejas,” [or “Te-ich-as”] is a Comanche word meaning “eater.” He also reports that Comanche bands were named by what they eat—buffalo eaters, honey eaters, antelope eaters, etc.

¹⁶ Harston, *Comanche Land*, 201.

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

eastward to cross the Trinity River below the Three Forks just south of Cedar Creek and then east to an “Indian Village” on the Neches River. From there the trail splits and one branch heads east to “Cherokee Cross” south of Cypress Bayou. A more southern fork heads south/southeast and ends at the “Road from Bexar to Nacogdoches” just west of Nacogdoches.

Map of Texas Compiled from Surveys and Records in the General Land Office of the Republic (by Hunt and Randal in 1845):

This detailed map of Texas (found in UTA’s map collection) also includes an east/west “Comanche Trail” running from the headwaters of Pecan River (a fork of the Colorado River),¹⁷ crossing the upper Brazos River and then the Trinity River to the south of the Three Forks area in what is now northern Ellis County. From there it continues eastward to an “Indian Village” on the Neches River. This trail then splits into a trail headed east/northeast to the “Cherokee Crossing” of the Neches River. The southern fork of the trail heads south/southeast and ends near Nacogdoches.

Comanche Nation Traditional Territories (by Jimmy W. Arterberry) **Fig. 4**

Perhaps the map most immediately relevant to this study, in context of the recognition and protection of Comanche cultural resources and for consideration for National Register eligibility, is the map published in *Tribal Histories: Comanche Nation Research Report* produced by the Texas Department of Transportation. This map, *Comanche Nation Traditional Territories*, includes the entire Trinity River watershed. This map is consistent with information provided by historic maps.

White Rock Bluffs

It is ironic and appropriate that the feature that refocused attention on the White Rock Bluffs was an “Indian Marker Tree,” since one of the primary purposes of these trees was to mark a preferred Comanche location or resource.¹⁸ In 1995, after seeing a photograph in *Famous Trees of Texas*, anthropologist Linda Pelon realized that a pecan tree fitting this description survived in Dallas along the White Rock Bluffs.¹⁹

¹⁷ This area, also called Pecan Bayou, was the central place for the powerful Penatuhkah Comanche Band in the middle of the Nineteenth Century. The importance of this area is well documented in a thesis by Linda Pelon in 1993, *Issues in Penatuhkah Comanche Ethnohistory*.

¹⁸ Houser, Steven; Pelon, Linda; Arterberry, Jimmy. *Comanche Marker Trees of Texas* (A&M University Press: College Station, 2016), 41.

¹⁹ Texas Forest Service. *Famous Trees of Texas* (Texas A&M University System, 1982), 177.

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

For their book *Comanche Marker Trees of Texas*, Steven Houser, Linda Pelon, and Jimmy Arterberry consulted with arborists and Dallas' regional forester who determined the Gateway Marker Tree was over 150 years old.²⁰ The area in the vicinity of the tree was explored from a Comanche cultural perspective by Comanche Tribe members and was found to contain a treasure trove of resources important to the lifestyle of this nomadic people. In fact, the site, a protected level area surrounding a spring fed creek, fits the template for a preferred Comanche campsite.²¹ Descriptions of large Comanche encampments from the historic record include many references to campgrounds meandering for miles along spring fed, tree shaded creeks. Nearby ridges or other highpoints necessary for surveillance, camp security, and smoke signaling are associated with these camps.²² Tribal members have identified a number of historical and futuristic resources including timber, water, medicinal plants, minerals, nuts, berries, fish, and game.

Comanche Nation Chairman Wallace Coffee signed an proclamation on April 7, 1997, recognizing the Indian Marker Tree as "a living monument to our historic presence in the great state of Texas" and noting "the importance of this tree to Native American cultural heritage." Juanita Pahdopony, Comanche poet and educator, served as the Tribal at the marker tree's dedication ceremony on April 26, 1997. *The Dallas Morning News* quoted Pahdopony, "[The Marker Tree] represents a continuation of [Comanche] culture. We are one with nature. This tree has a lot of stories to tell. It is too bad we have not been here to hear them."²³ Unfortunately, the tree was destroyed in a Memorial Day thunderstorm in 1998.

An abundance of food sources are present in the area including pecans (*Carya illinoensis*), deer, plums (*Prunus* Spp.), persimmons (*Diospyros virginiana*), grapes (*Vitis mustangensis*), and turkey. The extensive groves of native pecan trees would have enhanced the appeal as a preferred Comanche campsite for the autumn trade fair, which is also the season for gathering pecans.²⁴ Also present in this area are building materials including Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), used for lodge poles, cradleboards, and Bois d'arc (*Maclura pomifera*), which was used for making weapons. Buffalo were once present in this area possibly moving along the old buffalo trail that is now much of modern Scyene

²⁰ Houser, Pelon, Arterberry, *Comanche Marker Trees of Texas*, 100.

²¹ Houser, Pelon, Arterberry, *Comanche Marker Trees of Texas*, 99.

²² Pelon, Linda. "Issues In Penatuhkah Comanche Ethnohistory" thesis, MA anthropology, (University of Texas at Arlington, 1993), 113-116.

²³B. Delgado, "Indian Marker Tree Ceremony Conjures Visions of Past," *Dallas Morning News*, April 26, 1997, p35A.

²⁴ Grant Hall. "Pecans and People in Central Texas Prehistory." (Santa Anna, Tx: *Santa Anna News*, June 15, 1995).

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

Rd., close to the site.²⁵ The creek bottoms likely also provided superior forage for horses or other livestock. Early settler James J Beeman, who's original land claim bordered the site of the Indian Marker Tree at Gateway Park, noted in his memoirs that: "The range in the river and creek bottoms was all one's heart could wish for. The wild rye was thick and plenty and green as the finest wheat fields could be all winter."²⁶

Native roads were also documented within the Three Forks area by Warren Ferris, creator of the first surveys of the Three Forks. These roads were described in contemporary terms by Dallas historian Homer DeGolyer²⁷ and reported by Ferris' biographer, Susan Starling. This includes one passing through the White Rock Bluffs area known as the Kickapoo Trace which would provide convenient access as a campsite.²⁸ Portions of this trail likely compromise part of the historic Bird's Fort Trail, an Indian trail traveled by Sam Houston to negotiate peace with Texas Indians in 1843. Edward Parkinson accompanied Houston on this journey and kept a journal. He wrote, after fording the East Fork of the Trinity River, "We encamped that night at the White Rock Springs' so called for the calcareous nature of the rocks (Austin chalk) abundant here about one mile from the White Rock Fork of the Trinity River." He then wrote that they continued their march and forded White Rock Creek where they found a colonist cabin (Beeman Stockade).²⁹ Based on his account, it likely ran west from modern day Seagoville, to the edge of the White Rock Creek bottoms, near the Trinity River, thence north along the White Rock Bluffs to a crossing of White Rock Creek near the modern day location of Military Parkway. It then crossed modern Dallas to the California Crossing, a historic low water crossing of the Trinity River, where an additional Comanche marker tree has been identified.³⁰

²⁵ Houser, Pelon, Arterberry, *Comanche Marker Trees of Texas*, 101.

²⁶ James J. Beeman, *Memoirs of James J Beeman, Dec 24, 1886*. 1886

²⁷ The DeGolyer Western History Library at SMU is named for him and his papers are archived there.

²⁸ Starling states it "entered present Dallas County from the Southeast, near modern Seagoville, and proceeded to a ford across the Trinity, at approximately the junction of Commerce Street and Industrial Boulevard in the present city of Dallas. From there the trace continued west, skirting the outcropping of Chalk Hill in Modern Oak Cliff, crossing Mountain Creek to the Indian campsites on Village Creek in present Tarrant County." (Starling, *Land is the Cry*, 100) The Kickapoo Trace is described by Starling as "roughly following U.S. Hwy 175 to the three Forks region." (Starling, *Land is the Cry*, 105) Starling, *Land is the Cry*, 105.

²⁹ Parkinson, Edward W. *Parkinson Diary. a sketch of a trip to the wilderness and forks of the Trinity River*. 1843, 10.

³⁰ Houser, Pelon, Arterberry, *Comanche Marker Trees of Texas*, 63.

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

The ridgeline/bluffs in this area would have provided both lookouts and windbreaks--highly valued amenities to Comanche campsites.³¹ A variety of lookout points create multi-directional panoramic views in several directions, some perhaps for 30 miles by estimation of Comanche Billie Kreger during a 2002 visit. The overlook facing south/southwest, referred to as Scyene Overlook, just off what is now Scyene Road, would have been uniquely valuable because it provides a clear view all the way west to Cedar Ridge and Cedar Hill, where another Comanche marker tree has been identified.³² This overlook could have provided a critical communication point for receiving and relaying smoke signals, a communication strategy used by Comanches.³³ These signals communicated information necessary for the civil defense of campsites, as well as a wide range of other information.

These bluffs/highpoints are also important to the sacred topography/geography of the Comanche people as they used such places as vision quest sites and medicine places. Elders identified many plants and trees, on and below the ridges, that were a significant part of their culture, including many "Medicine Plants" near Scyene Overlook that are used by traditional Comanche healers, during a June 2022 visit by the Comanche Language and Cultural Preservation Committee. Some of this plant material, including Evening Nightshade³⁴ and Texas Buckeye (*Aesculus glabra*) seeds,³⁵ contain chemical compounds producing altered states of consciousness associated with shamanic activities. The presence of these plants increases the probability that some of these isolated highpoints would have been considered sacred sites. A necessary component for a Comanche

³¹ Gelo, Daniel J. "Comanche Land and Ever Has Been: A Native Geography of the Nineteenth-Century Comancheria." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*. CIII, No.3 (January 2000) 301-305.

³² Houser, Pelon, *Arterberry, Comanche Marker Trees of Texas*, 63.

³³ Gelo, Daniel J. "Comanche Land and Ever Has Been: A Native Geography of the Nineteenth-Century Comancheria." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*. CIII, No.3 (January 2000) 305-307.

³⁴ Devereux 1997:117-118 [regarding species of *datura*, belonging to the Nightshade family] The genus has had an even wider ceremonial application in the Americas, where it has been used for prophecy, divination, diagnosing illness (by providing access to spirit knowledge), medicine (to relieve swellings and to ease the pains of childbirth and rheumatism), in puberty initiation rites, and for the production of visionary states, as it characteristically tends to generate the classic shamanic experiences of spirit flight and transformation into animal form.

³⁵ Devereux 1997:107 He reports that Texas and Mexican Buckeye have been found at Fate Bell Shelter, a site believed to have been used for shamanic purposes. "Texas Buckeye seeds are genuinely hallucinogenic and have been found with *Saphora secundiflora* seeds [mescal bean] in other, similar archeological contexts, and also with finds of peyote dating to 5000 B.C. in one rock shelter."

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

Medicine Place, the presence of a continuously flowing spring-fed stream, is contained in this landscape.³⁶

The Storytelling Place

The Storytelling Place, located on a high ridge with a panoramic view of the forest and river valley, is located in the realm of the sacred from the point of view of a Comanche spiritual topography. It is above and apart from the nearby springs and creeks that define the preferred camping areas. The mixed hardwood forest and the prairie grass/wildflower meadows on the ridge provide habitat for wildlife associated with spiritual power and plants with the power to heal and/or to access altered states of consciousness associated with shamanic activities. Bears, hawks, coyotes, owls, foxes, and bobcats are some of the animals known to have roamed this area and most are still present. These spiritually powerful animals are the main characters in many Comanche stories.

The physical characteristics of this natural feature make it uniquely functional as a place to tell stories. It is a bowl-shaped indentation—a naturally occurring amphitheater in the white rock bluff. It glows in the moonlight. The Comanche Language and Culture Preservation Committee visited in June of 2002 and attended a picnic with local communities and preservation advocates before visiting the Storytelling Place. Later that evening, Comanche Elders fluent in the Comanche language told Comanche stories under a full moon in both English and in the Comanche Language at the Story Telling Place. It was noted that the facial expressions of storytellers could be clearly seen in the moonlight illuminating this geological feature. Many important Comanche stories have a Giant Owl as the main character. He lives on the moon and comes down to earth to eat people and he interacts with the animals of the forest. These stories are told on limestone, per Jimmy W. Arterberry, former Comanche Tribal Historic Preservation Officer. Stories told with a full moon above, and the surrounding forest populated with the animals in the stories were very powerful teaching tools. While this is not information that Comanche tradition bearers share with outsiders, there are many ethnographies that document the teaching strategies of cultures whose traditions are transmitted orally. Places that create dramatic and lasting impressions--and sometimes altered states of consciousness--are often associated with strategies for passing on information vital to individual and cultural survival.³⁷

³⁷ Phieffer, John. *The Creative Explosion; An Inquiry into the Origins of Art and Religion*, (New York: Cornell University Press, 1982)

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

According to Arterberry, a Comanche Nation Elder and former THPO:

In the oral tradition of creation, migration and shared relationships, Comanche people identify the importance of time, place and social purpose. Life for a child starts exactly as the ancestors did, by oral instruction and visual aid. Comanche culture relies on the ability to identify the elements of a social structure and the understanding of those relationships. Storytelling places are conducive to the psychological and physiological training of Comanche children and considered primary to the overall well-being of man and nature.

Consensus of the Comanche people, to the location of storytelling places, enters into sacred dimensions, which are to be discussed only by the Comanche people. The Trinity Forest storytelling place is located within the bounds of the required elemental characteristics for determining the location of a preferred campsite. Water supply, food sources, shelter, safety and access to forage for horses are required characteristics, for such a site.³⁸

Shared elemental components are expressed through idioms used in all stories of the Comanche people, emphasizing the importance of relationships between man and nature. The limestone component found at the Great Trinity Forest Storytelling Place, located on the ridgeline in Devon Anderson Park, determines the type and amount of information that is to be presented, and at what time of the day and year that information could and would be made available. There are many traditional ways, in making the determination as to where and when these lessons should and could occur. Relationships between all of the elemental components, the receiving component included, would be defined and refined through the use of storytelling at the chose location.

The Comanche Nation's Contemporary Relationship White Rock Bluffs Area

In addition to cartographic, historical, and geographical documentation, cultural information about traditional places is also preserved through stories, art, song, family histories, and in many other ways. Some of these traditional ways of knowing may have intuitive, unconscious, or spiritual dimensions to them. These sources of information are often dismissed by the empirically oriented "scientific" mind; and some traditional ways of knowing are not shared with outsiders. Sufficient information has been presented to document the importance of the White Rock Bluffs as a traditional cultural place from a Comanche perspective. However, it should not be assumed that all information has, or

³⁸ Wallace & Hoebel, *The Comanches, Lords of the South Plains*, 14.

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

should, be shared. The significance of a Traditional Cultural Place is best determined by leaders, elders, and other tradition bearers who are the heirs to those traditions. Arguably, once a threshold of evidence sufficient to document “occupation” has been met, a sovereign nation should be allowed to identify Traditional Cultural Places by their own criteria for recognizing such sites.

The presence of Comanche people in the state of Texas and particularly in the Dallas area, in relation to this writing, has been illusive to the scientific communities in recent times, although descendants of the former inhabitants recognized by the aforementioned in their previous processes continue to exercise inherent values described in relation to the geography. Comanche people inherently conceive the importance of honoring the traditional values of their ancestors. Without defined relationships and traditional values, nature will not survive man, man will not survive nature, and the results shall be exact, furthering the significance of identifying and protecting such a site. The Comanche Nation Tribal Council has recognized officially the ‘White Rock Bluffs’ as a traditional sacred site and cultural property pursuant to the National Register criterion.

Today, White Rock Bluffs continues to hold cultural significance to the Comanche. Without sharing details, Arterberry states the important practices from this place continue to live on in Comanche discourse and practice despite displacement, and even when apart from White Rock Bluffs:

The Comanche people have never ceded their traditional places of religious, funerary, or culture related activity locations, via treaty or executive order. During the years 1680 to 1867 a period covering more than a century and a half, Comanche’s have engaged in 62 peace negotiations, compacts, truce’s and/or treaty agreements. The Traditional Territories map **[Fig. 4]**, created by [myself], for and used by the Comanche Nation delineates the boundaries in which Comanche people have lived, worshiped, and performed activities associated with the culture throughout their history. Prior to the signing of the last treaty in 1867, Comanche people have lived in and around the area of the White Rock Bluffs and have continued to utilize Comanche resources of the area. The White Rock Bluffs are important to Comanche Nation traditional practices and cultural activities (stories, songs, medicinal/sustenance plant collection, etc.,) which continue to occur at this location today, as in the past.³⁹

³⁹ Email message, Arterberry to Texas Historical Commission, Oct. 22, 2025.

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

Conclusion

White Rock Bluffs, a 200-acre wooded escarpment on City of Dallas parkland, is significant as a Traditional Cultural Place associated with the Comanche Nation's (Numanuu) enduring beliefs, customs, and practices from time immemorial to the present. Its natural features—including oak and bois d'arc groves, a 500-foot overlook, spring-fed stream, prairie land, and exposed limestone—along with named sites such as Storytelling Place and Comanche Campground, embody the landscape's cultural meaning. Despite surrounding modern development, the area retains integrity as well-preserved ancestral homelands. Recognized under Criterion A in Ethnic Heritage: Native American and Social History, White Rock Bluffs preserves the natural elements central to Comanche identity and remains protected by the Nation as a sacred place vital to future generations.

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

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Phieffer, John. *The Creative Explosion; An Inquiry into the Origins of Art and Religion*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1982.

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Texas Department of Transportation. *Comanche Nation Research Report*. December 2021. <https://ftp.txdot.gov/pub/txdot-info/env/toolkit/415-03-rpt.pdf> (Accessed December 14, 2024).

Texas Forest Service. *Famous Trees of Texas*. Texas A&M University System, 1982.

Wallace, Ernest and Hoebel, E. Adamson. *The Comanches, Lords of the South Plains*. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986. 14.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☒ Other State agency: Texas Department of Transportation
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other: Comanche Tribal Historic Preservation Office

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: approx. 200 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 32.763420 | Longitude: -96.712238 |
| 2. Latitude: 32.760434 | Longitude: -96.699642 |
| 3. Latitude: 32.739445 | Longitude: -96.705526 |
| 4. Latitude: 32.739965 | Longitude: -96.709575 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated boundary is comprised of three Dallas park properties known as Devon-Anderson Park, Gateway Park, and portions of the White Rock Creek Greenbelt located east of the DART light rail line ROW. The five legal descriptions that comprise the three parks are as follows: BLK 6119 ACS 34.6766 (ID00000513835000000); BLK 6119 TR 5 ACS 105.62 (0000051385000000); BRUTON RIDGE ESTATES BLK 6230 ACS 32.5834 (ID 00623000000000000); EAST CLIFF 2 BLK 6231 ACS 13.7404 (ID00000545069000000); and 12.08 ACS BROCKHAM CIRCLE (ID0000054511000000). The boundary is sketched on page 28.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary was selected by evaluating three main factors: the physical limits of the bluffs, location of specific Comanche resources, and physical integrity of place. While the bluffs are a part of a larger section of limestone escarpment in Dallas County, the proposed boundaries of the TCP were narrowed to a section of parkland with a recognized history of Comanche Indian occupation that has largely escaped the devastation of urban development over the past 150 years. A now deceased Indian Marker Tree, located in Gateway Park near Oak Creek, Storytelling Place, and other factors indicate this area was a Comanche campground.

The landscape of the parkland has escaped major alteration with the exception of roadways and a few athletic facilities, thus retaining a high degree of its original character. This is supported by

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

the survival of the Indian Marker Tree into the 1990s and the Red Oak Grove which would have likely been lost had the area been clearcut for agriculture. This was also improbable as the rough terrain is unsuitable for row crops and not preferable for livestock. Photographic aerials from the 1930s and onward show the steepest portions tree covered. Multiple features important to a campground; including a lodgepole woods of red cedar, medical meadows, spring fed streams, level area for camping, food sources, and lookout points fall within this area.

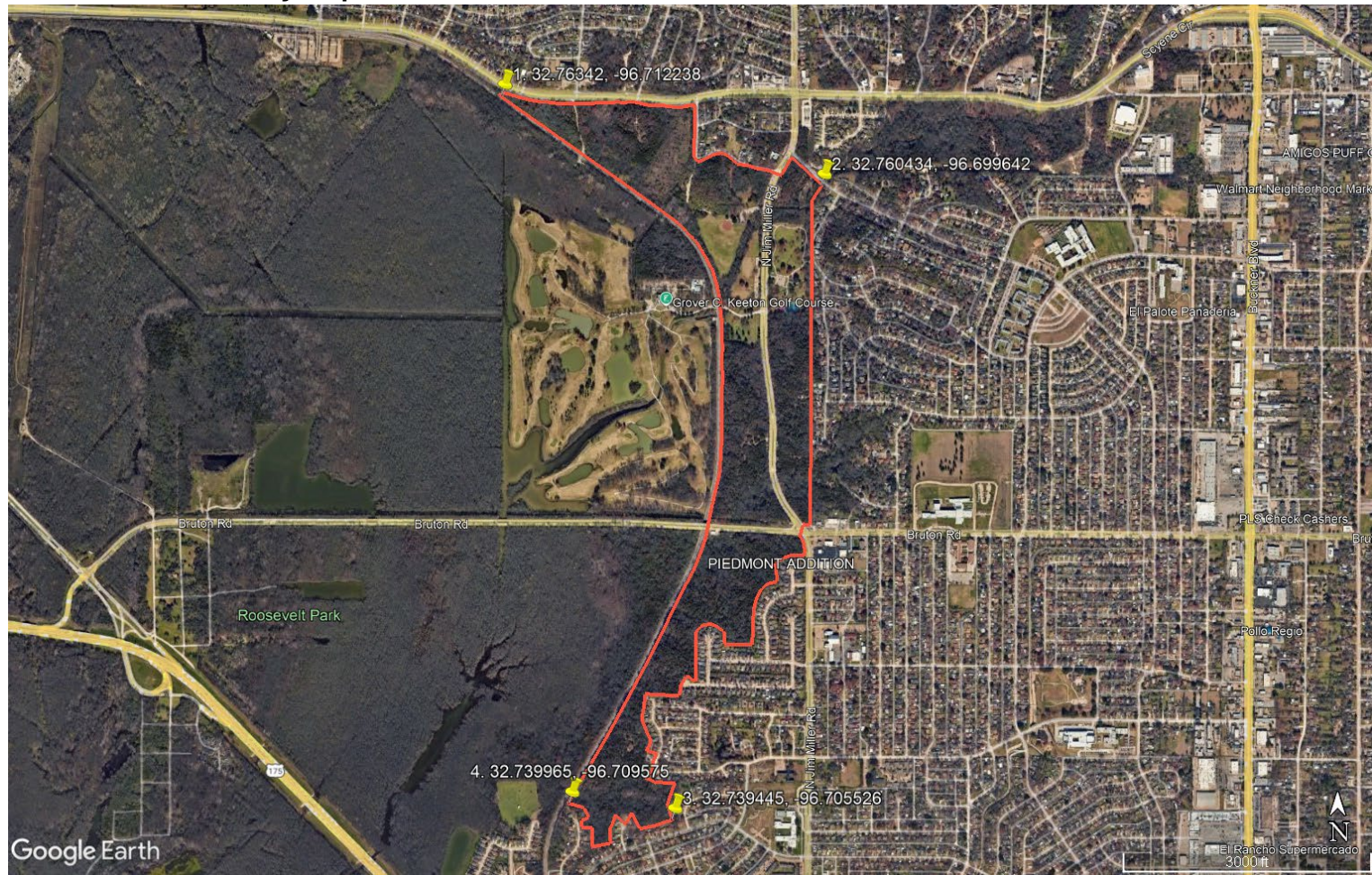
As with many natural features, it is sometime difficult to determine an exact boundary. In this case, a man-made boundary overlaps with the approximate western edge of the bluffs. The DART light rail line ROW closely follows the base of the bluffs as the original rails were sited to be just above the adjacent floodplain along White Rock Creek. In addition to loosely forming the geological edge of the feature, it creates a significant physical boundary due to the construction of the fenced railway. In the vicinity of Oak Creek, the highest edge of the bluffs is located further from the edge of the rail line. It is in this area, where the Indian Marker Tree was located in Gateway Park that the preferred campsite may have been centered.

The eastern boundary of the bluffs is much more difficult to define as the highest elevations gradually transition into the plains to the east. Suburban residential development has occurred on various portions of this, making a geological boundary less important as these areas no longer retain the same level of integrity as the parkland space due to it being severely altered. Therefore, the outer property lines of the parkland serve as a logical boundary.

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Section 10 – Boundary Map



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Matthew Jacobs, RA; Linda Pelon, Anthropologist/Ethnohistorian; Martina Minthorn, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), Comanche Nation; Jimmy W. Arterberry, Tribal Elder and former Comanche Nation THPO

Organization: NA

Street & number: 3015 Nutting Drive

City or Town: Dallas State: Texas Zip Code: 75227

Email: ferrumstrategies@gmail.com

Telephone: 502-536-9397

Date: 8/28/24

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets MAP-30 through MAP-33)

Additional items (see continuation sheets FIGURE-34 through FIGURE-40)

Photographs (see continuation sheets PHOTO-41 through PHOTO-66)

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

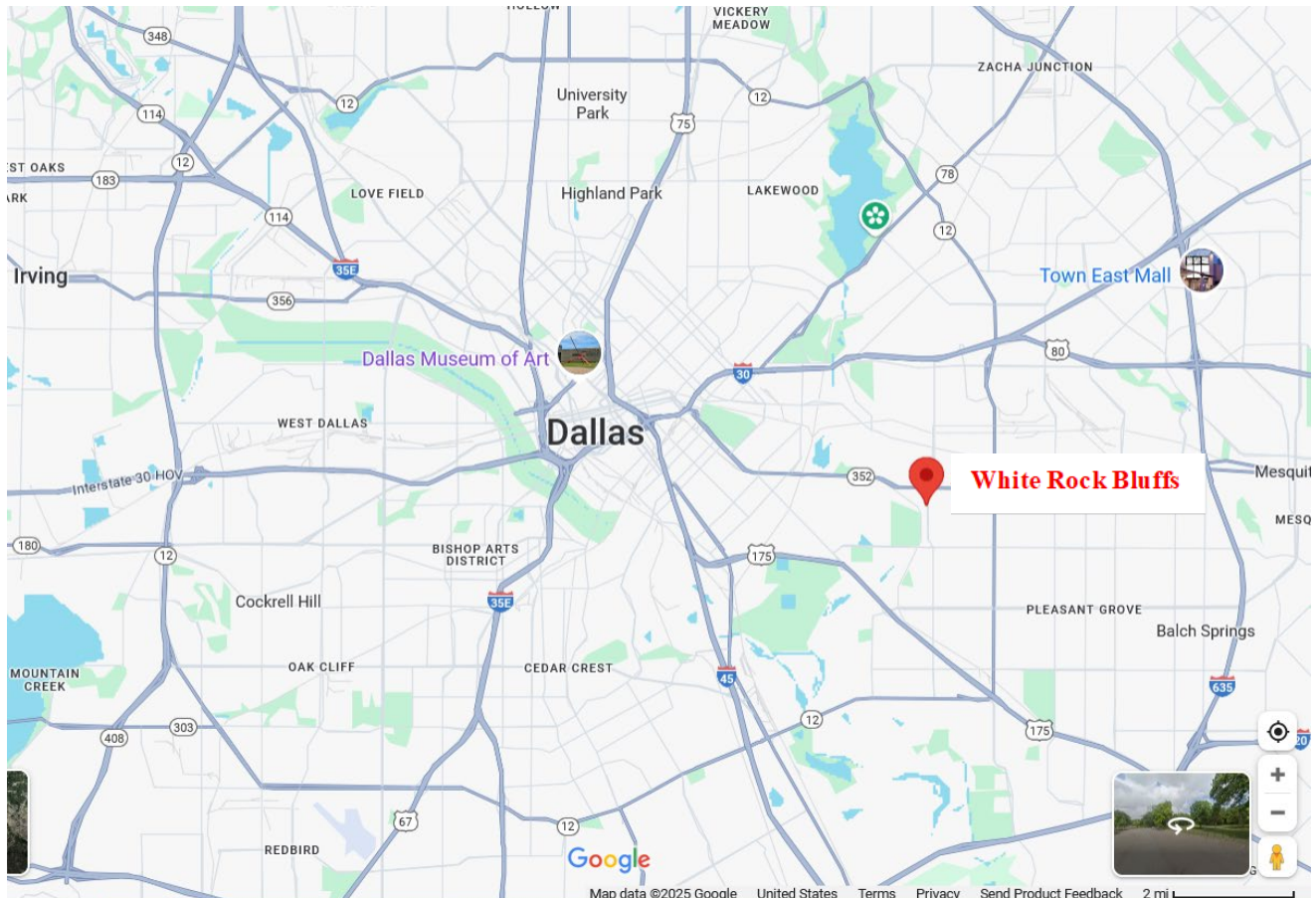
The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Maps

Map 1: Red icon showing White Rock Bluffs, Dallas, Texas. Source: Google Maps (5/23/25)



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Map 2: Map of features (corresponding table on next page).



White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

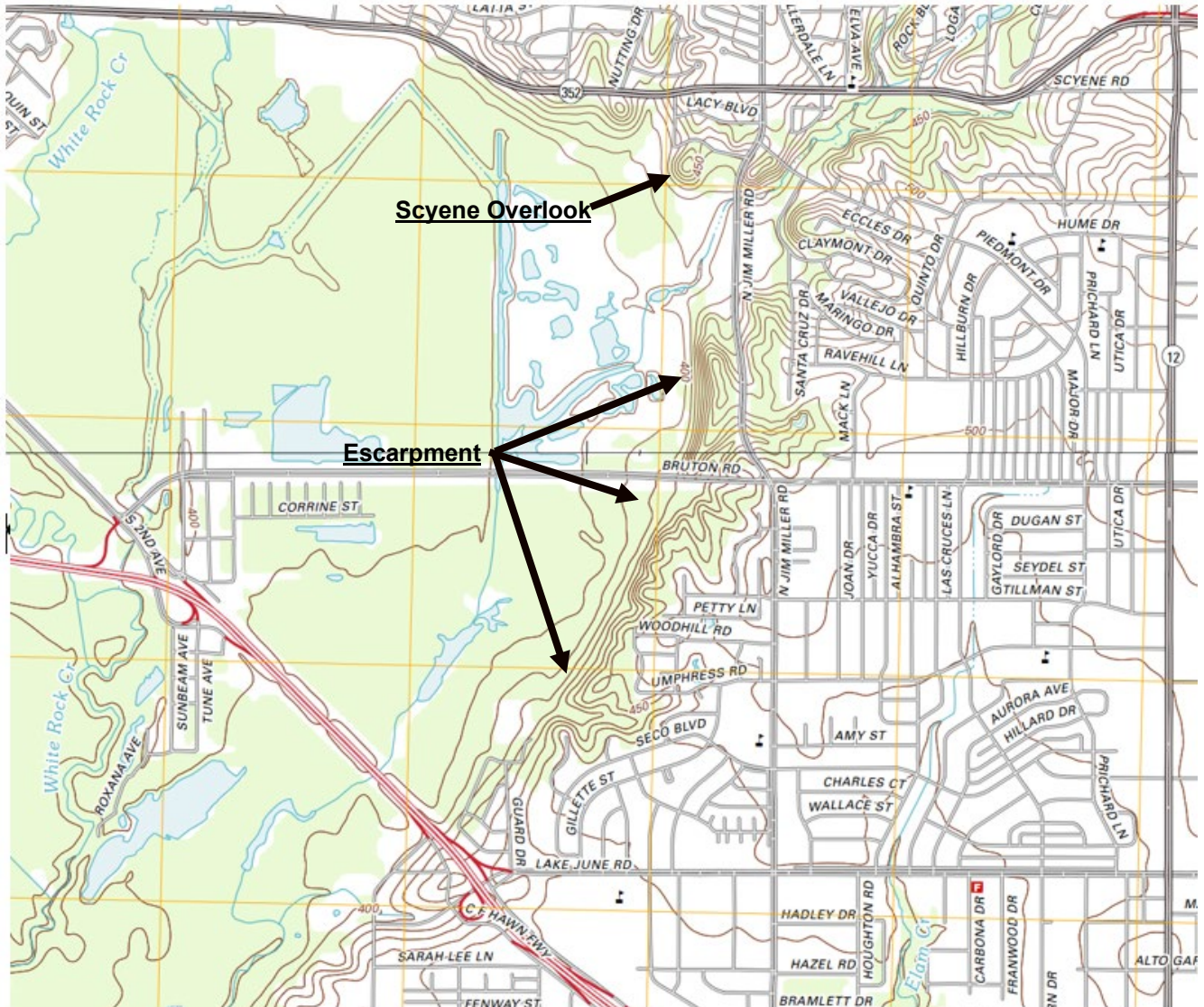
	Feature	Other Names Used
1	Storytelling Place	Comanche Storytelling Place, A Storytelling Place
2	Scyene Overlook	
3	Lodgepole Woods	
4	(Comanche) Indian Marker Tree	Indian Marker Tree, Gateway Park Marker Tree
5	Red Oak Grove	Red Oak Grove, The Great Trinity Forest Comanche Storytelling Place Red Oak Grove, Sacred Red Oak Grove
6	Comanche Campground	
7	Picnic Shelter	
8	Athletic Fields	
9	Playground	
10	Tennis Court	

Oak Creek is indicated by a red-dashed line across the map.

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Map 3: Topographic map showing escarpment and Scyene Overlook. Source: (Author stitched the following two topo maps together) United States Geological Survey . *Hutchings Quadrangle* [map] 1:24,000. 7.5 Minute Series (Topographic), Hutchins, TX, 2012 and United States Geological Survey . *White Rock Lake Quadrangle* [map] 1:24,000. 7.5 Minute Series (Topographic), White Rock Lake, TX, 2012.

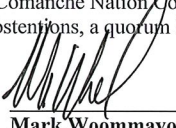
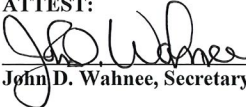


White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Figures

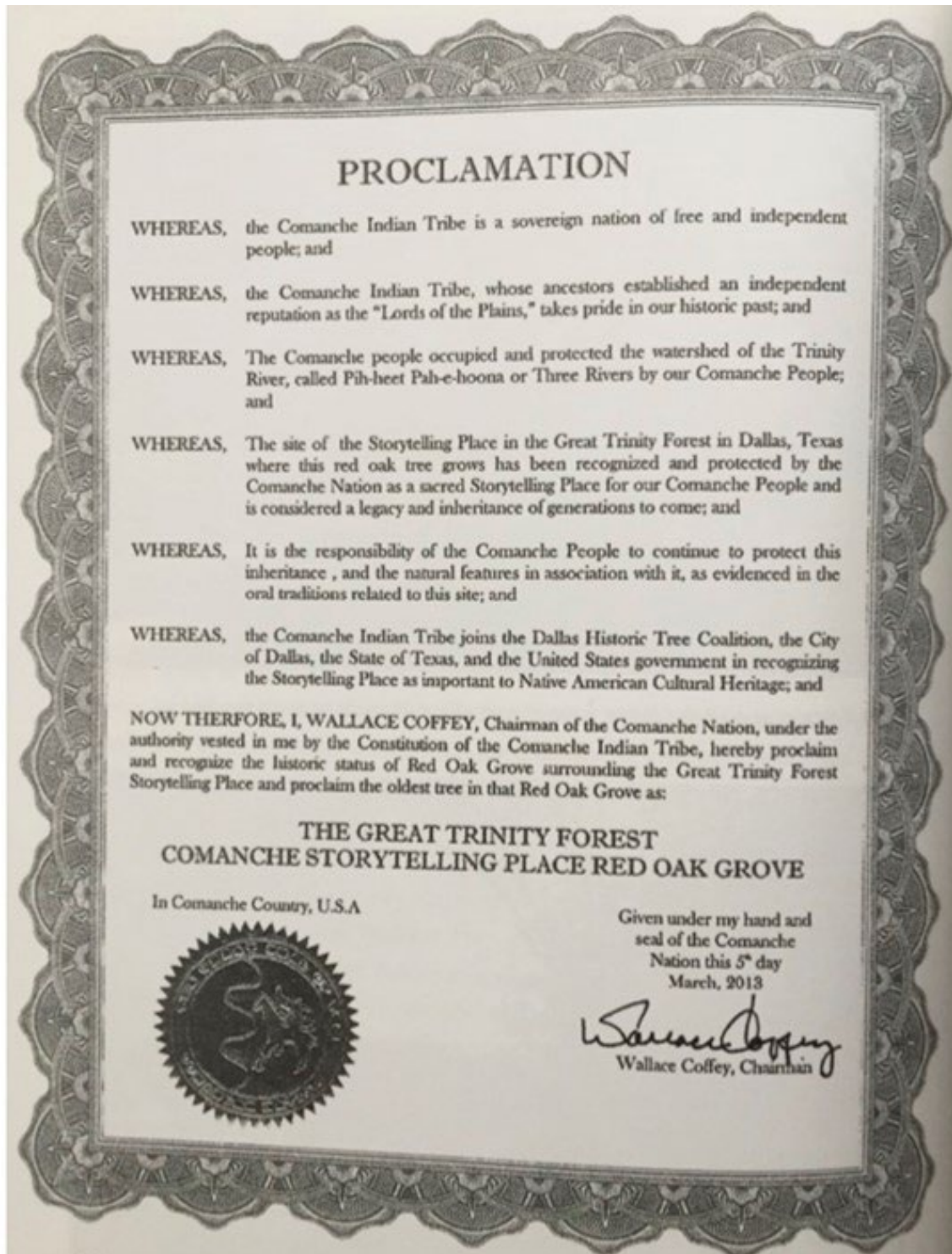
Figure 1: Comanche Nation Resolution No. 169-2022, supporting National Register designation. 12/3/2022

Comanche Nation Resolution No. <u>169-2022</u>  COMANCHE Resolution WHEREAS, the Comanche Nation is a sovereign nation of free and independent people; and WHEREAS, the Comanche Nation, whose ancestors established an international reputation as the "Lords of the Plains," takes pride in our historic past; and WHEREAS, the White Rock Bluffs in Southeast Dallas, Texas holds numerous Comanche traditional cultural properties identified within the last 25 years, which includes: The Gateway Park Comanche Marker Tree, the Comanche Storytelling Place, the Scylene Overlook, and The Lodge Pole Woods; and WHEREAS, the Comanche Business Committee joins the Dallas Indian Community, the Dallas City Council, and the City of Dallas City Council in recognizing the importance of the adding White Rock Bluffs in Southeast Dallas, Texas to the National Register of Historic Places; and WHEREAS, the Comanche Business Committee recognizes the White Rock Bluffs in Southeast Dallas, Texas as a traditional Comanche sacred site; and NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Comanche Business Committee, a duly elected official body designated to conduct business for and on behalf of the Comanche Nation, certifies the support of White Rock Bluffs. CERTIFICATION The above resolution was adopted at a regular monthly meeting of the Comanche Business Committee, held on Saturday, December 3, 2022, at the Comanche Nation Complex, Lawton, Oklahoma, by a majority vote of <u>6</u> for, <u>0</u> against, and <u>0</u> abstentions, a quorum being present.  Mark Woommavovah, Chairman ATTEST:  John D. Wahnee, Secretary/Treasurer COMANCHE NATION PHONE: (580) 492-3240 PO BOX 908/LAWTON, OK 73502 TOLL FREE: 1 (877) 492-4988 FAX: (580) 492-3796
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White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Figure 2: Comanche Nation Proclamation re: Red Oak Grove, March 5, 2013.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

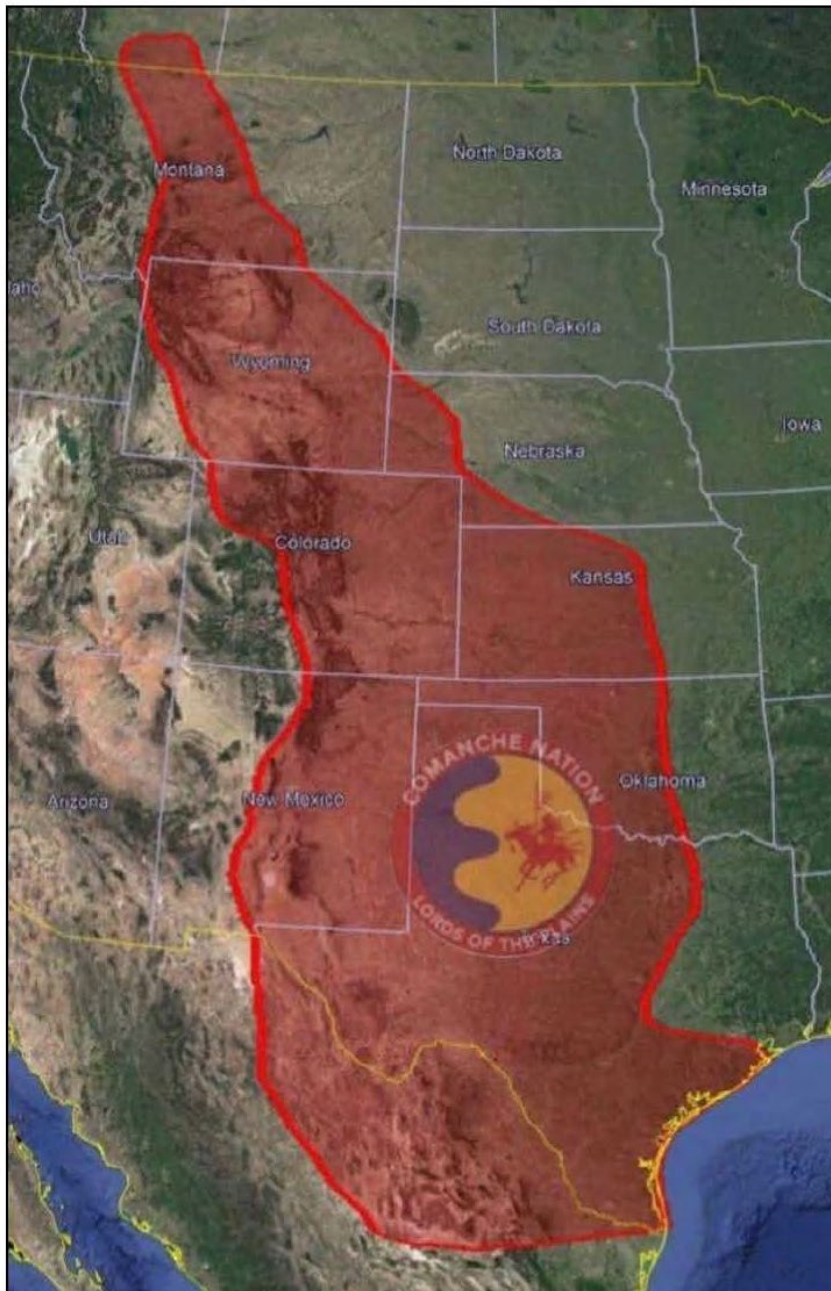
Figure 3: Comanche Nation Proclamation re: Comanche Storytelling Place, May 23, 2002.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Figure 4: Comanche Nation traditional territories. Original map created by former Comanche THPO Jimmy W. Arterberry and reproduced with permission.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Figure 5a: Full map with red box showing inset detailed in Figure 5b. Arrowsmith, John. Map of Texas, map, August 1, 1960;

<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metapht493675/m1/1/>: accessed November 11, 2025), University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Hardin-Simmons University Library.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

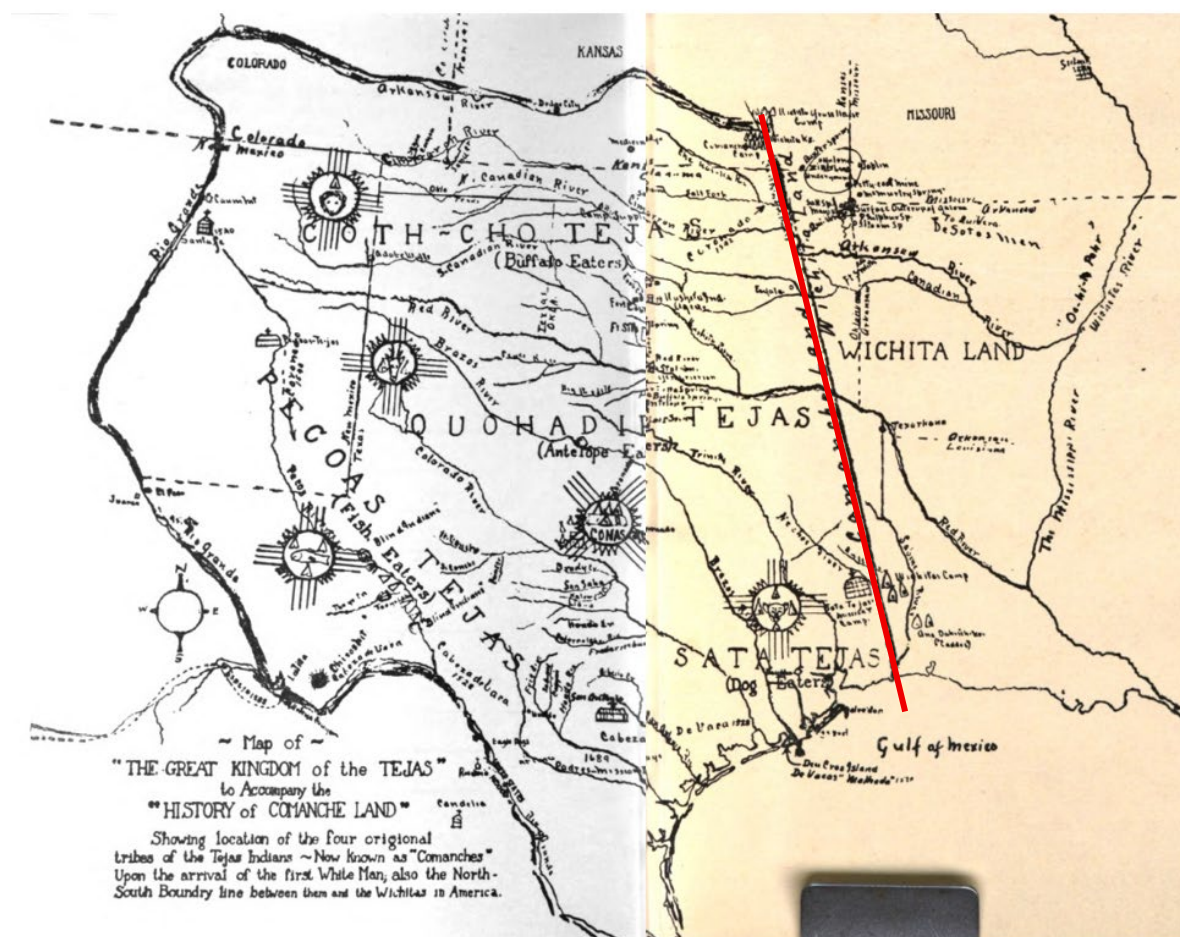
Figure 5b: Detail. This map documents a “Comanche Trail” (red arrow) running west from the Pecan River fork of the Colorado River north/northeastward to cross the Brazos River just north of a “High Peak” [now called Comanche Peak] and then east/southeast to cross Noland Creek and eastward to cross the Trinity River below the Three Forks just south of Cedar Creek and then east to an “Indian Village” on the Neches River. From there the trail splits and one branch heads east to “Cherokee Cross” south of Cypress Bayou. A more southern fork heads south/southeast and ends at the “Road from Bexar to Nacogdoches” just west of Nacogdoches.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Figure 6: This map was created by J. Emmor Harston, a source close to the last surviving Texas Comanche leaders and an adopted son of Chief Horseback. He collected information from Comanche elders starting in the late 1870 at the request of Horseback. His map is a Comanche perspective of their land use in Texas. The map shows a boundary line (in red) for Comanche territory east of the Trinity River between the Neches and Sabine Rivers.⁴⁰ Reporting information he gathered from Comanche elders in the last decades of the Nineteenth Century, Harston described “an easterly north-south trace traveled by both the Comanches and the Wichitas. From Antelope Springs, at the head of the Trinity River, a Wichita Trace led down that stream to the Neches River and on to the Gulf of Mexico. This trace was the boundary between the two tribes.” Source: Harston, J Emmor, 1864-1955. *Comanche Land*. San Antonio: Naylor Co, 1963, pg. 246-247.



⁴⁰ Figure 7.

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

Photograph Log

White Rock Bluffs

Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

Photographed by Matthew Jacobs 10/16/23 except as noted

All photographs reflect the current appearance of White Rock Bluffs in 2026.

(#1) View of woods looking south, just southeast of the intersection of DART rail line and Bruton Rd.

(#2) View from top of bluff near Bruton Rd, looking west over Grover C. Keeton Golf Course. Downtown Dallas in the distance.

(#3) View east in Gateway Park section between rail line and Jim Miller Rd.

(#4) View north in Gateway Park section between rail line and Jim Miller Rd.

(#5) View looking west from proposed boundary near Petty Ln.

(#6) View west over proposed boundary near Storytelling Place. Taken from top of bluff with DART rail in lower corner.

(#7) View of woods in Devon Anderson section looking south.

(#8) Storytelling Place looking east.

(#9) Storytelling Place looking east.

(#10) western side of Sacred Red Oak Grove. Date 11/14/2020.

(#11) View of Jim Miller Rd looking northwest in Gateway Park section. Noncontributing structure.

(#12) View southeast from Gateway Park parking lot, east of Jim Miller Rd.. Noncontributing structures.

(#13) View southwest from Gateway Park parking lot, east of Jim Miller Rd.

White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

(#14) Oak Creek looking northeast in Gateway Park section east of Jim Miller Rd. Area under drought conditions.

(#15) Gateway Park looking south. Area of Marker Tree to the far left.

(#16) Pecan grove where Gateway Park Marker Tree was located.

(#17) View southwest along Jim Miller Rd towards entrance of Grover Keeton Golf Course. Bluff rises in center background.

(#18) View southeast of bluff rising to the south of level area around Oak Creek.

(#19) View south atop bluff.

(#20) View east of large meadow between Scyene Overlook and Lacywood Ln. Date 1/18/2021.

(#21) View of Lodgepole Woods looking east. Date 12/7/23 by Linda Pelon.

(#22) Scyene overlook, looking southwest. Date 12/7/23 by Linda Pelon.

(#23) View of Sycene Overlook via drone looking north. Date 3/27/23 by Ryan Garcia.

(#24) View above Scyene Overlook via drone looking southeast. Meadow from picture 20 in bottom left. Gateway Park baseball field center left. Bluffs rising back right. Date 3/27/23 by Ryan Garcia.

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

Photographs

White Rock Bluffs

Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

Photographed by Matthew Jacobs 10/16/23 except as noted

All photographs reflect the current appearance of White Rock Bluffs in 2026.

(#1) View of woods looking south, just southeast of the intersection of DART rail line and Bruton Rd.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

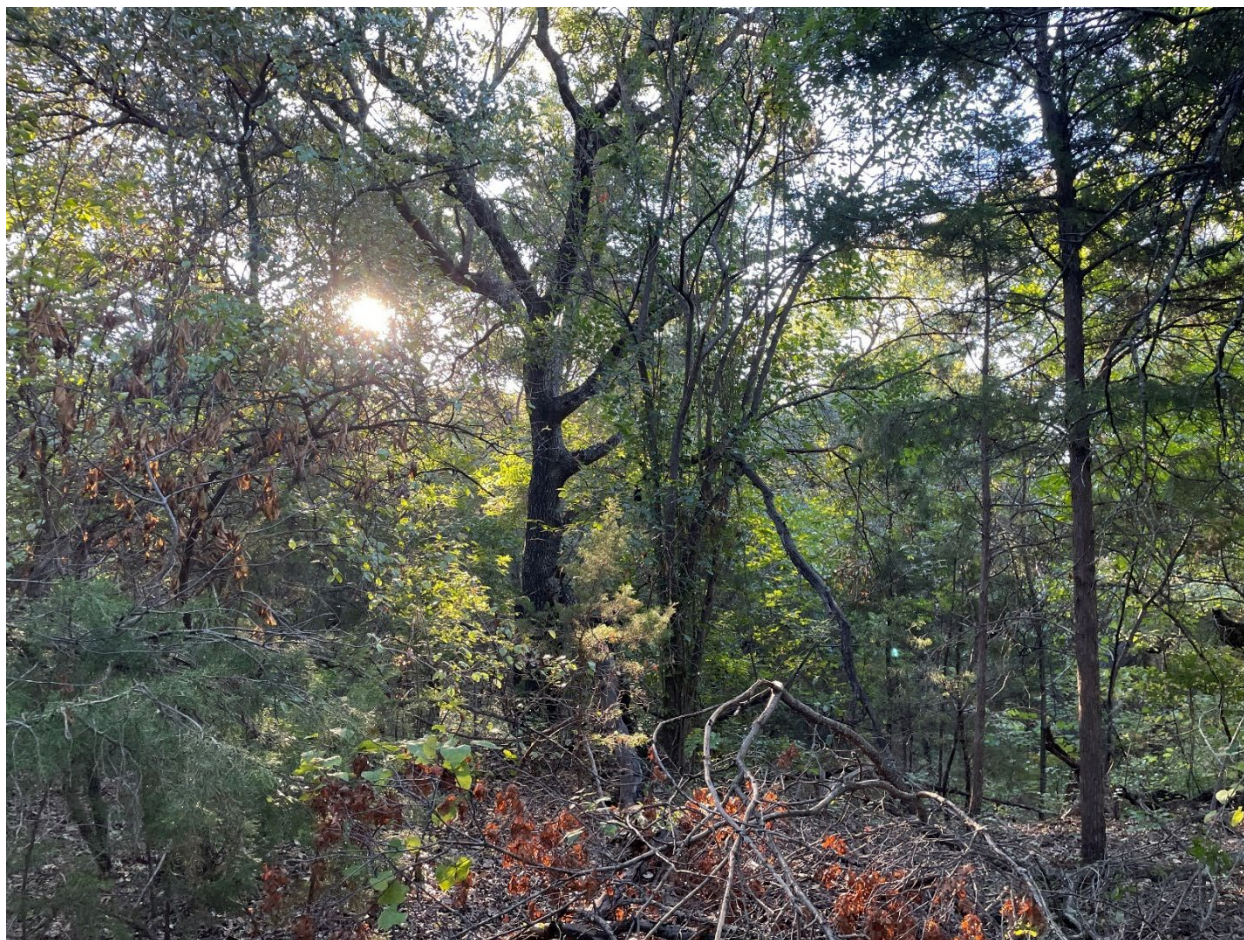
(#2) View from top of bluff near Bruton Rd, looking west over Grover C. Keeton Golf Course.
Downtown Dallas in the distance.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#3) View east in Gateway Park section between rail line and Jim Miller Rd.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#4) View north in Gateway Park section between rail line and Jim Miller Rd.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#5) View looking west from proposed boundary near Petty Ln.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#6) View west over proposed boundary near Storytelling Place. Taken from top of bluff with DART rail in lower corner.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#7) View of woods in Devon Anderson section looking south.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#8) Storytelling Place looking east.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#9) Storytelling Place looking east.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#10) western side of Sacred Red Oak Grove. Date 11/14/2020.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#11) View of Jim Miller Rd looking northwest in Gateway Park section. Noncontributing structure.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#12) View southeast from Gateway Park parking lot, east of Jim Miller Rd.. Noncontributing structures.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#13) View southwest from Gateway Park parking lot, east of Jim Miller Rd.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#14) Oak Creek looking northeast in Gateway Park section east of Jim Miller Rd. Area under drought conditions.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#15) Gateway Park looking south. Area of Marker Tree to the far left.



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Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#16) Pecan grove where Gateway Park Marker Tree was located.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#17) View southwest along Jim Miller Rd towards entrance of Grover Keeton Golf Course.
Bluff rises in center background.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#18) View southeast of bluff rising to the south of level area around Oak Creek.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#19) View south atop bluff.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#20) View east of large meadow between Scyene Overlook and Lacywood Ln. Date
1/18/2021.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#21) View of Lodgepole Woods looking east. Date 12/7/23 by Linda Pelon.



Section PHOTO, page 63

White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#22) Scyene overlook, looking southwest. Date 12/7/23 by Linda Pelon.



White Rock Bluffs
Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County
County and State

(#23) View of Sycene Overlook via drone looking north. Date 3/27/23 by Ryan Garcia.



White Rock Bluffs

Name of Property

Dallas, Dallas County

County and State

(#24) View above Scylene Overlook via drone looking southeast. Meadow from picture 20 in bottom left. Gateway Park baseball field center left. Bluffs rising back right. Date 3/27/23 by Ryan Garcia



end