

**SITE PLAN REVIEW SHEET
ENVIRONMENTAL VARIANCE REQUEST ONLY**

CASE: SP-2014-0465DX

ZAP COMMISSION DATE: February 16, 2016

PROJECT NAME: Bowie High School Practice Fields

APPLICANT: AISD (Florence Rice) (512)414-8950
812 San Antonio Street
Austin, TX 78703

AGENT: Chan Partners (Tom Curran P.E.) (512)480-8155
4319 James Casey, Suite 300
Austin, TX 78745

ADDRESS OF SITE: 3900 ½ Slaughter Lane

AREA: 45.5 acres

WATERSHED: Slaughter Creek, (Barton Springs Zone)

ZONING: GR-CO-MU

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

The applicant proposes to construct a multi-purpose practice field for the use of students from Bowie High School. The site is approximately 45.5 acres. Buildings will not be constructed with this project. The proposed development is in line with the agreement approved in 2012 between the City and AISD.

DESCRIPTION OF VARIANCE:

To allow approximately 17,000 square feet of a natural grass multi/sport practice field to be within the water quality transition zone of a minor classified waterway with the Barton Springs Zone watershed. [LDC Section 25-8-482(A)(1)]

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The findings of fact have not been met, however the proposed location of the field reduces the magnitude of the variance needed, eliminates encroachment into adjacent water quality controls and is consistent with the agreement between AISD and the City of Austin. Thus the variance is recommended by the Environmental Officers.

ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD ACTION:

February 3, 2016 - Approved with conditions (10-1)

1. The portion of the agreement referring to low water crossing and location of the fields shall be modified by this site plan
2. AISD students shall be encouraged to work with City of Austin staff to develop signage regarding the environmental features in the agreement.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

February 16, 2016

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STAFF: Jim Dymkowski
james.dymkoski@austintexas.gov

PHONE: (512)974-2707

CASE MANAGER: Nikki Hoelter
nikki.hoelter@austintexas.gov

PHONE: (512)974-2863

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MOTION 20160203 008c**

Date: February 3, 2016

Subject: Bowie High School Practice Fields (SP-2014-0465DX) (D-8)

Motion By: Hank Smith

Second By: Mary Ann Neely

RATIONALE:

Whereas, City staff recommends approval even though the findings of fact have not been met, however, the proposed location of the field reduces the magnitude of the variance needed, eliminates any encroachment into adjacent water quality controls, and is consistent with the agreement between AISD and the City of Austin; and

Whereas, in 2012, the City of Austin and AISD entered into an agreement to allow construction of up to two practice fields for Bowie High School on this tract with certain environmental and neighborhood protections and this variance will allow the construction of those fields in a location that has less environmental impact than originally planned.

Therefore, the Environmental Commission recommends support of a variance to allow a development other than described in Article 7, Division 1, Section 25-8-261 (Critical Water Quality Zone Restrictions). LDC Section 25-8-482(A)(1), with the following conditions:

Environmental Commission conditions: the portion of the agreement referring to low water crossing and location of the fields shall be modified by this site plan; and
-AISD students shall be encouraged to work with City of Austin staff to develop signage regarding the environmental features in the agreement.

VOTE 10-0-0-1

Recuse: None
For: Creel, Thompson, Gooch, Neely, Maxwell, H. Smith, B. Smith, Grayum, Maceo, Perales
Against: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Moya

Approved By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Gay Maxwell".

Mary Gay Maxwell, Environmental Commission Chair

**ITEM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AGENDA****BOARD MEETING****DATE REQUESTED:**

FEBRUARY 3, 2016

**NAME & NUMBER
OF PROJECT:**BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL PRACTICE FIELDS
SP-2014-0465DX**NAME OF APPLICANT
OR ORGANIZATION:**Austin Independent School District
Florence Rice – 512-414-8950**LOCATION:**

3900 - ½ West Slaughter Lane – District 8

PROJECT FILING DATE:

November 17, 2014

**DSD/ENVIRONMENTAL
STAFF:**Jim Dymkowski, 974-2707
James.Dymkowski@austintexas.gov**DSD/
CASE MANAGER:**Nikki Hoelter, 974-2863
Nikki.Hoelter@austintexas.gov**WATERSHED:**Slaughter Creek Watershed (Barton Springs Zone)
Drinking Water Protection Zone**ORDINANCE:**Watershed Protection Ordinance - (Current Code) and
The Agreement between the City of Austin and the
Austin Independent School District (1/12/2012)**REQUEST:**

Variance requests are as follows:

1. To allow approximately 17,000 square feet of a natural grass multi-sport/practice field to be within the water quality transition zone of a minor classified waterway within a Barton Springs Zone watershed. LDC Section 25-8-482 (A) (1)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION: Findings of fact have not been met; however, the proposed location of the field reduces the magnitude of the variance needed, encroachment into adjacent water quality controls, and is consistent with the agreement between AISD and the City of Austin. Thus the variance is recommended by the Environmental Officer.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mary Gay Maxwell, Chairperson and Members of the Environmental Commission

FROM: Jim Dymkowski, Environmental Review Specialist Senior
Development Review Services Department

DATE: February 3, 2016

SUBJECT: Bowie High School Practice Fields – SP-2014-0465DX

On the February 3rd agenda is a request for the consideration of one variance; To allow approximately 17,000 square feet of a natural grass multi-sport practice field to be within the water quality transition zone of a minor classified waterway within a Barton Springs Zone watershed. LDC Section 25-8-482 (A) (1)

Description of Property

The property consists of approximately 45 acres of undisturbed land owned by the Austin Independent School District at the north side of the intersection of Slaughter Lane and Wolftrap Drive. It is located in the Slaughter Creek Watershed, which is classified as Barton Springs Zone within the Drinking Water Protection Zone. It is within the City of Austin full purpose jurisdiction. It does lie within the Edward's Aquifer Recharge Zone. An unnamed natural channel of a minor classified waterway of Slaughter Creek traverses the site. The confluence of this tributary and Slaughter Creek is approximately 2.5 miles southeast of the site. The property is bordered to the north by City of Austin Preserve land, to the south by Slaughter Lane, to the east by commercial development, and to the west by multi-family development. Water service is provided by the City of Austin. There is no wastewater service to the site as it is not permitted through a 2012 site specific interlocal agreement between the City and the Austin Independent School District (AISD).

In 2012 AISD and the City of Austin entered into an additional site specific interlocal agreement (see applicant's backup) establishing the development standards for the potential construction of up to two practice fields on the Bowie site as the existing interlocal agreement for school development did not include this property or this type

of development. AISD in turn agreed to construct an iron fence to separate and protect the City of Austin Jody Cave Preserve tract, prohibit vehicular access on the AISD property, along with other efforts to preserve the tract to the greatest extent feasible. This agreement included a potential location of up to two fields north of the minor waterway and the current proposed location. It allowed the additional construction of a pedestrian crossing within the minor waterway and its buffer setbacks, and an emergency access drive access from Brodie Lane to the east that needed no waterway crossing to service the fields. The agreement did not specifically grant any field construction within the waterway buffers but did not prohibit AISD from pursuing a variance under applicable City regulations.

Existing Topography/Soil Characteristics/Vegetation

The site is within the Fredericksburg soils group, which is comprised of shallow clay soils overlying limestone. The land is relatively flat with slope in the 1-3 percent range sloping toward the classified waterway. Predominant trees onsite are Live oak, Cedar elm, and Ashe Juniper. There are numerous heritage and protected trees onsite. The 45-acre site is more heavily wooded in the northeast quadrant, which is outside of any proposed activity. The City Arborist has administratively approved the removal of one heritage size Live oak at 27.5 inches in diameter and the project proposes the removal of 110.5 inches of protected sized (19 – 23.9 inch) trees.

Critical Environmental Features/Endangered Species

As listed in the applicant's Environmental Resource Inventory, there are seven critical environmental features (CEF's) identified on the site consisting of five karst recharge features and two wetland features. Of these onsite features, the one directly adjacent to the project is wetland feature G12. Current code requires a 150 foot buffer on this feature. The project has requested and received administrative approval to reduce the buffer width directly adjacent to the project but increasing the buffer width in other areas therefore maintaining the same overall buffer area. As this feature also falls within the limits of the onsite classified waterway it is also protected by the standard fifty foot critical water quality and 100 foot water quality transition zone waterway buffers. Two additional karst recharge features and one wetland feature were found within 150 feet of the property. There is also an unused water well approximately 100 feet outside of the project boundary.

The property does lie within the endangered species survey areas and the applicant was notified to contact the appropriate agency for the potential of additional permitting through those agencies.

Description of Project

The proposed project includes the construction of one natural grass multi-sport practice field, a second partial natural grass practice field, Save Our Springs (SOS) code

compliant retention/water quality infiltration areas, and a new cross walk at the intersection of Slaughter Lane and Wolftrap Drive.

Environmental Code Variance Request

The following variance to the land development code is being requested to allow approximately 17,000 square feet of a natural grass multi-sport/practice field to be within the water quality transition zone of a minor classified waterway within a Barton Springs Zone watershed.

1. To allow a development other than that described in Article 7, Division 1, 25-8-261 (Critical Water Quality Zone Restrictions). LDC Section 25-8-482 (A) (1)

Recommendation

The Findings of Fact have not been met (see attached Findings), however, the agreement between AISD and the City of Austin contemplated locating fields in a location on the property that has a greater overall environmental impact the Environmental Officer is recommending approval of the variance (see attached memo)



**Development Review Services Department
Staff Recommendations Concerning Required Findings
Water Quality Variances**

Project:	Bowie High School Practice Fields - SP-2014-0465DX
Ordinance Standard:	Land Development Code Section 25-8-482 (A) (1)
Variance Request:	To allow approximately 17,000 square feet of a natural grass full size multi-sport/practice field to be within the water quality transition zone of a minor classified waterway within a Barton Springs Zone watershed

Justification:

A. Land Use Commission variance determinations from Chapter 25-8, Subchapter A – Water Quality of the City Code:

1. The requirement will deprive the applicant of a privilege or the safety of property given to owners of other similarly situated property with approximately contemporaneous development.

No. Currently, Bowie High School immediately south of the project, maintains two full sized multi-sport fields. The project could be sited to further limit water quality transition zone encroachment by limiting the project to one practice field.

2. The variance:

- a) Is not based on a condition caused by the method chosen by the applicant to develop the property, unless the development method provides greater overall environmental protection than is achievable without the variance;

Yes. The variance is caused by the method chosen by the applicant. The number of fields requires encroachment into the water quality transition zone of the minor classified waterway that traverses the property. This is not the location proposed in the 2012 site specific interlocal agreement between the City and AISD. But, this location does propose less overall site disturbance, reduces potential heritage and protected sized tree removal, and provides

additional undisturbed land adjacent to critical environmental features and preserve lands.

- b) Is the minimum change necessary to avoid the deprivation of a privilege given to other property owners and to allow a reasonable use of the property;

No. Currently, Bowie High School immediately south of the project, maintains two full sized multi-sport fields. The project could be designed to further limit water quality transition zone encroachment by limiting the project to one practice field.

- c) Does not create a significant probability of harmful environmental consequences; and

Yes. The proposed use is a low impact type that is providing SOS standard water quality for the development and has agreed to an IPM plan to prohibit fertilizers and pesticides.

3. Development with the variance will result in water quality that is at least equal to the water quality achievable without the variance.

Yes. Development with the variance will result in water quality that is at least equal to the water quality achievable without the variance. The project will comply with SOS standards for the two practice fields.

- B. Additional Land Use Commission variance determinations for a requirement of Section 25-8-393 (Water Quality Transition Zone), Section 25-8-423 (Water Quality Transition Zone), Section 25-8-453 (Water Quality Transition Zone), or Article 7, Division 1 (Critical Water Quality Zone Restrictions):

1. The above criteria for granting a variance are met;

No, conditions of Article 7, Division 1, are not being met unless the variance is granted.

2. The requirement for which a variance is requested prevents a reasonable, economic use of the entire property; and

No. Currently, Bowie High School immediately south of the project, maintains two full sized multi-sport fields. Staff believes this project could be sited to further limit water quality transition zone encroachment by limiting the project to one practice field.

3. The variance is the minimum change necessary to allow a reasonable, economic use of the entire property.

No. Currently, Bowie High School immediately south of the project, maintains two full sized multi-sport fields. Staff believes this project could be sited to further limit water quality transition zone encroachment by limiting the project to one practice field.

Environmental Reviewer:


Jim Dymkowski

Environmental Program Coordinator:


Sue Barnett

Environmental Officer:


Chuck Lesniak

Date: 1/26/16

Staff may recommend approval of a variance after answering all applicable determinations in the affirmative (YES).

Attachments

- A Driving Directions
- B Location Map
- C Environmental Features Map
- D Site Photographs

Attachment A**Bowie High School Practice Fields Driving Directions**

From City Hall, go west on Cesar Chavez St. merge onto TX-1 Loop S - 5 min (2.1 mi)

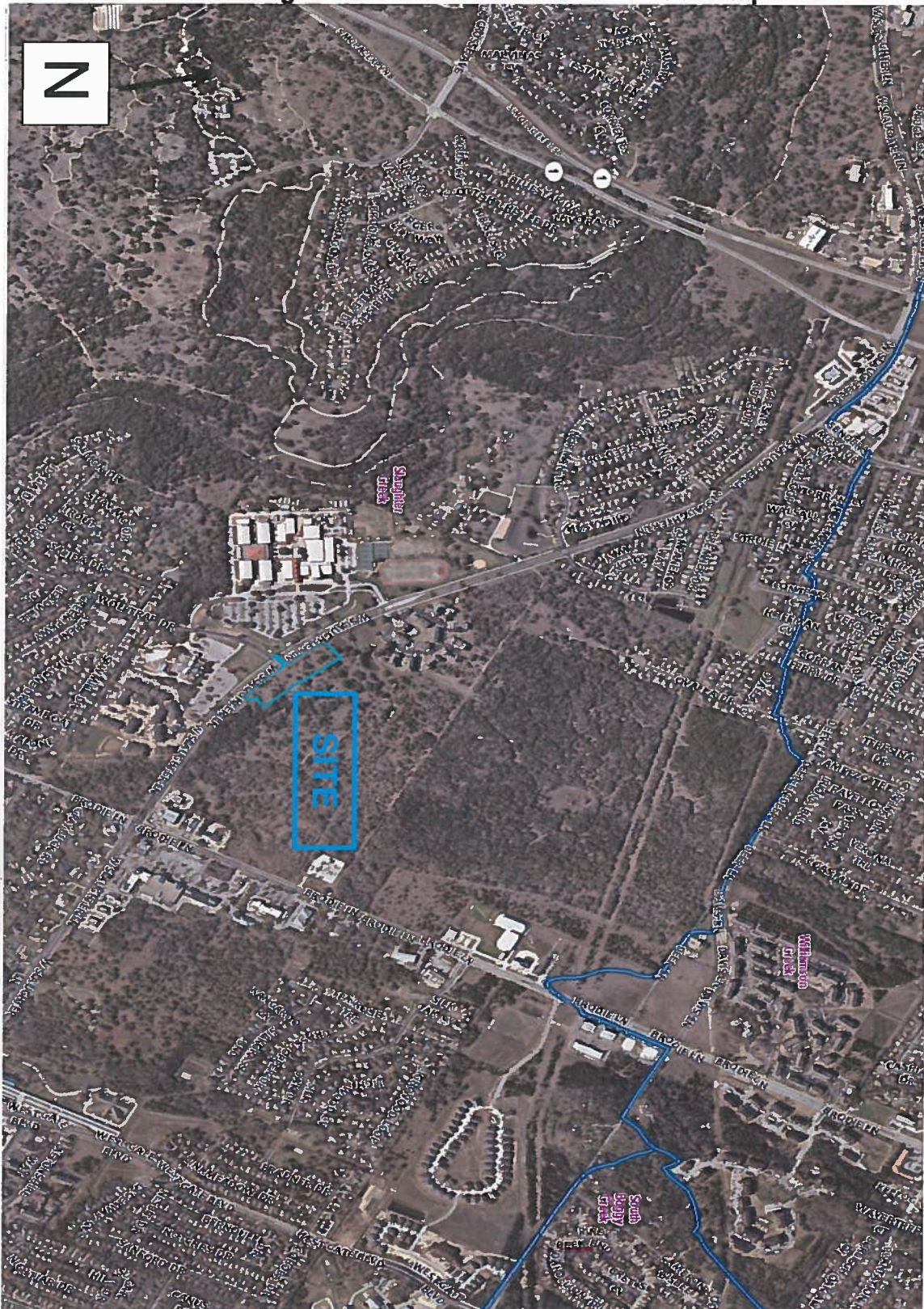
Follow TX-1 Loop S to W Slaughter Ln take exit and go left back over TX-1 - 9 min (8.0 mi)

Drive to W Slaughter Ln - 4 min (1.7 mi)

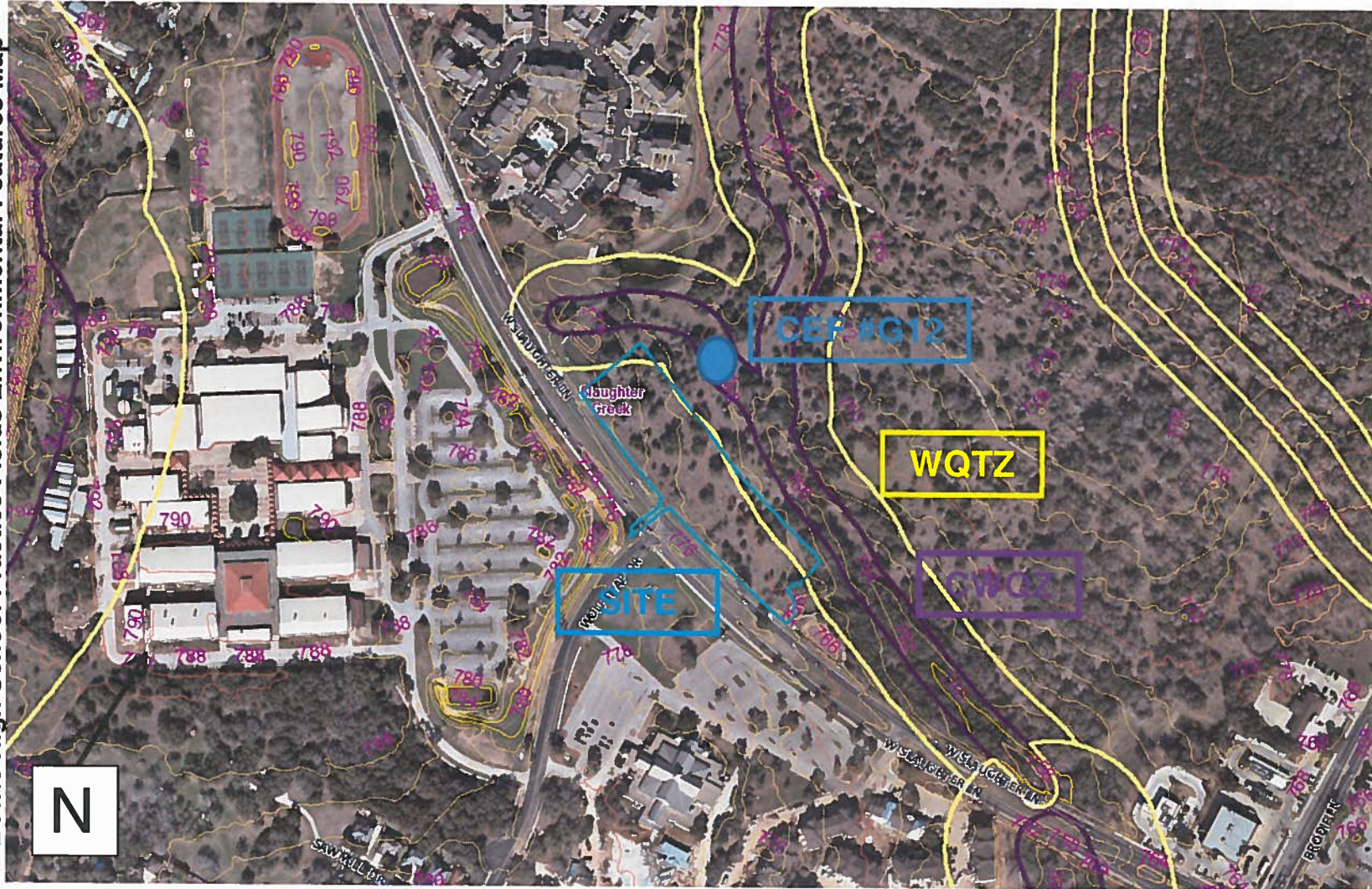
Site will be on left directly across from Bowie High School

Attachment B

Bowie High School Practice Fields Location Map



Attachment C
Bowie High School Practice Fields Environmental Features Map



Attachment D
Bowie High School Practice Fields Site Photos



Slaughter Ln. looking northwest into site at west grass partial practice field

Attachment D - Continued
Bowie High School Practice Fields Site Photos



Slaughter Ln. looking northeast into site at proposed full size grass practice field

Attachment D - Continued
Bowie High School Practice Fields Site Photos



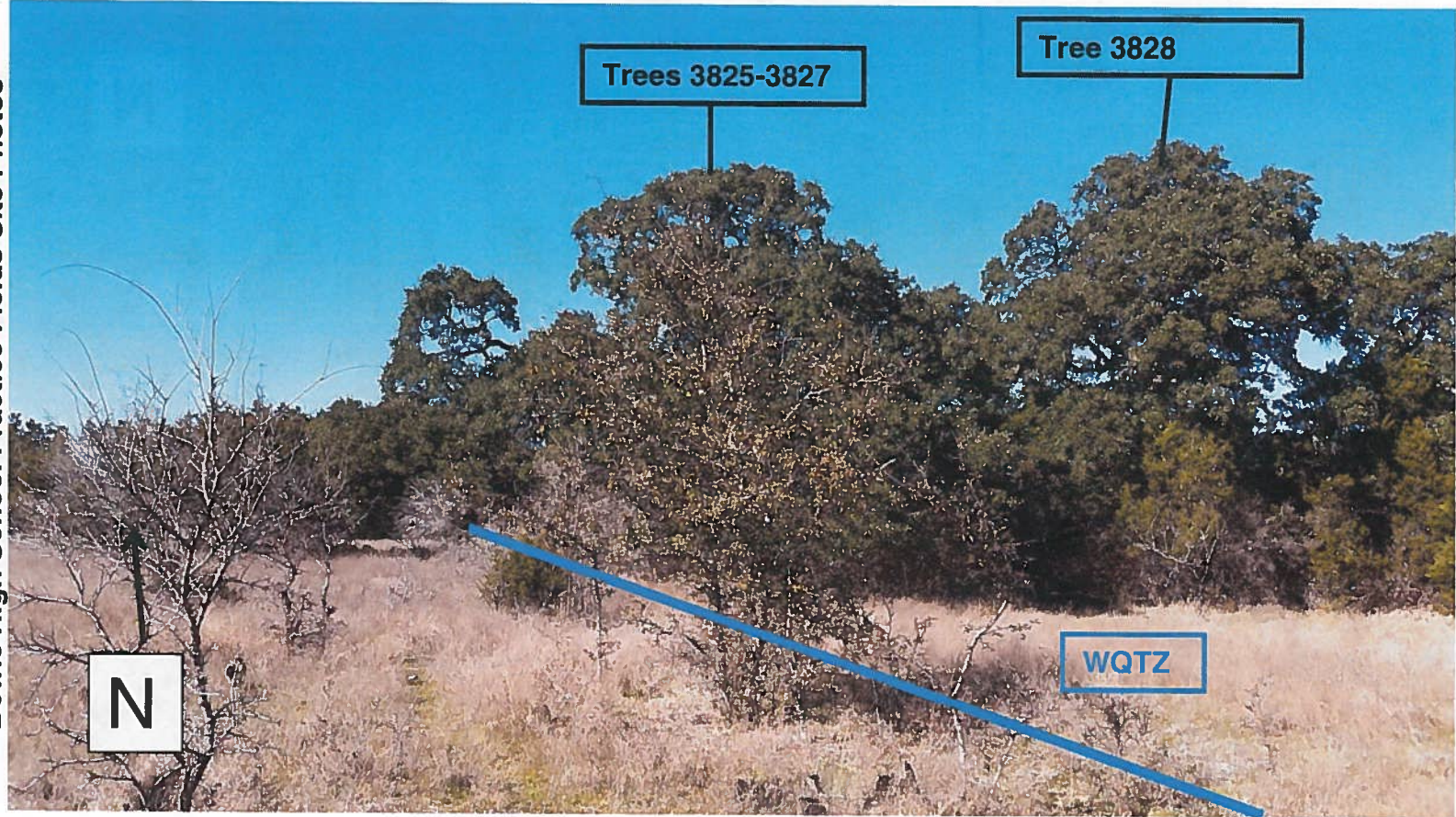
Wetland Critical Environmental Feature (CEF) #G12 within minor classified waterway onsite

Attachment D - Continued
Bowie High School Practice Fields Site Photos



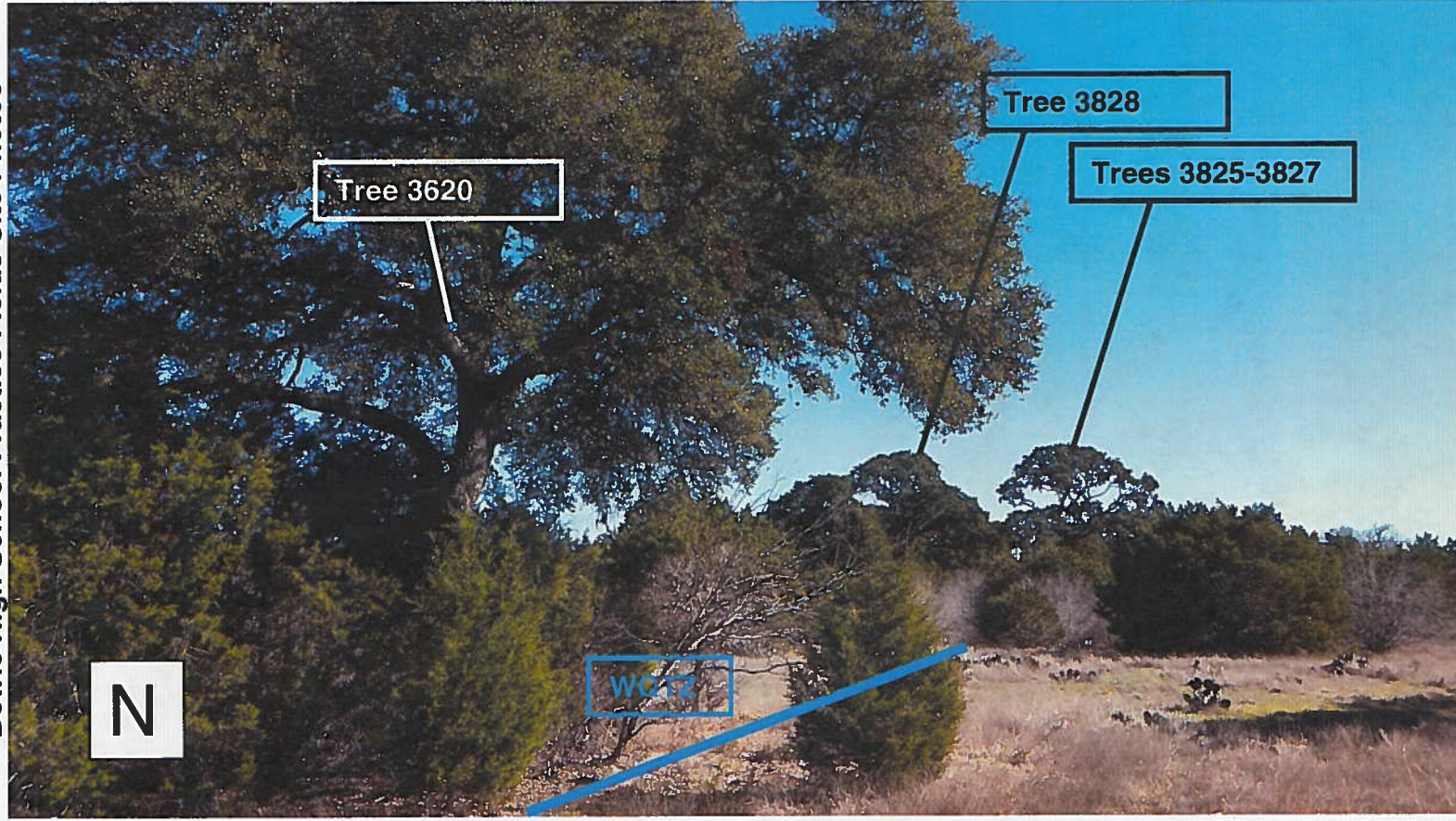
Minor classified waterway running through site

Attachment D - Continued
Bowie High School Practice Fields Site Photos



View of grass field location in the water quality transition zone looking west

Attachment D - Continued
Bowie High School Practice Fields Site Photos



View of grass field location in the water quality transition zone looking east