

Focus on Historic Resources

Learn About the State Antiquities Landmarks in Your County

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County Historical Commission appointees are encouraged to become familiar with the State Antiquities Landmarks (SAL) in their county and let the Texas Historical Commission (THC) know if they see signs of deterioration or modification of the properties. SALs receive legal protection under the Antiquities Code of Texas.

Before they can be designated as SALs, buildings must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). However, NRHP listing is not required for archeological sites. The Antiquities Code defines all cultural resources on non-federal public lands in Texas as eligible to be designated as SALs.

The SAL designation requires property owners to consult with the THC through a permitting process prior to altering or destroying any part of the property or building. This process enables THC staff to work with property owners to preserve the characteristics that make a site or building worthy of the SAL designation.

The THC website explains SAL designation and permitting procedures, and includes links to the Antiquities Code. This

information is available at www.thc.state.tx.us/sal.

Many Texas courthouses carry the SAL designation, but the Texas Government Code protects those that do not. Courthouse protection was included in these statutes because the Texas Legislature realized that courthouses—some of our state's most important cultural resources—were being damaged or destroyed.

The Texas Administrative Code includes the rules for implementing THC statutes that protect courthouses. Information is available at www.thc.state.tx.us/courthouseprotectioncode.

The THC recommends that property owners and interested citizens contact agency staff to discuss proposed changes to SALs and courthouses, as well as concerns related to their deteriorated or altered state. Proposed work to courthouse grounds should also be discussed with staff.

SAL archeological sites are not publicized in order to prevent potential looting, but you can use the

THC's Texas Historic Sites Atlas at atlas.thc.state.tx.us to see if SAL buildings are located in your county. For questions about SALs, please contact the THC's Architecture Division at 512.463.6094 or the Archeology Division at 512.463.6096. ★



Above: THC staff member Rob Hodges reads a THC marker on the grounds of Fayette County Courthouse, a State Antiquities Landmark.

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Our Mission

To protect and preserve the state's historic and prehistoric resources for the use, education, enjoyment, and economic benefit of present and future generations.