

OLD ALTON BRIDGE

DENTON, TEXAS

Historical Narrative researched and written by June Elaine Tyler for National Register of Historic Places Application, 1986, and Texas Historical Commission THC Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Marker Application. Denton County. 2010

We have as our purpose the preservation of a Pratt Truss Bridge which we call Old Alton Bridge. We wish to enlist the help of all political officials, commissions and agencies in our efforts to save Old Alton Bridge. See petition enclosed as an Exhibit.

Old Alton Bridge is a Pratt Truss Bridge that spans Hickory Creek in Denton County, Texas. A date inscription of 1887 on the superstructure of the bridge probably indicates the date it was built. The bridge is owned by Denton County but it is located on land owned by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. See the Exhibits for maps indicating the location of the bridge. The deck of the bridge is approximately 146 feet long and the superstructure is approximately 17 feet high. See the Exhibits for copies of engineers' remarks and field notes and photographs of the bridge. As indicated by the color photographs, Old Alton Bridge has high aesthetic value.

Old Alton Bridge is presently being used as a vehicle, equestrian and pedestrian crossing across Hickory Creek. In May 1983, as indicated by articles and maps included as Exhibits, area horse owners petitioned the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to establish horse riding trails in the Hickory Creek Area of Lewisville Lake. A horse trailer parking lot was built on the south side of Hickory

Creek and horse trails were marked on the north and south sides of Hickory Creek. The horse trails on the north side of Hickory Creek are accessed from the south side of Hickory Creek and the horse trailer parking lot by crossing Old Alton Bridge. Fishermen and Hikers also use Old Alton Bridge to cross Hickory Creek.

County Commissioner Lee Walker has applied for federal funds for a new bridge across Hickory Creek. Because Old Alton Bridge is one lane, vehicle traffic moves across the bridge at a very slow rate. Vehicle traffic would cross a new bridge at much higher speeds. This would cause a safety hazard to horses and riders and people walking who also want to cross Hickory Creek on a bridge. Therefore, in the interest of all bridge users, it would be wise to leave Old Alton Bridge in place for use as a horse and foot bridge and to have vehicle traffic use the new bridge.

According to Gary McKean, Civil Engineer, Old Alton Bridge is presently in good condition. Denton County will save the cost of removing the bridge if it is left in place. And some of the future bridge maintenance could be done by area residents as part of Lake Shore Clean-up Day. Both Gary McKean, Telephone # 817-334-4646, and Skipper Scott, Telephone #817-334-2681, have stated that because Old Alton Bridge is on U. S. Army Corps of Engineers land, Denton County must have a U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Permit before they can remove the bridge.

He said that Old Alton Bridge has spanned Hickory Creek for as long as he can remember.

Included as an Exhibit are copies of the minutes of 19th century Commissioners' Court Meetings authorizing the purchase of bridges. Old Alton Bridge was probably one of the bridges purchased. Of the nine iron bridges Denton County owned in the 19th century, Old Alton Bridge is probably the only one that still exists in usable condition.

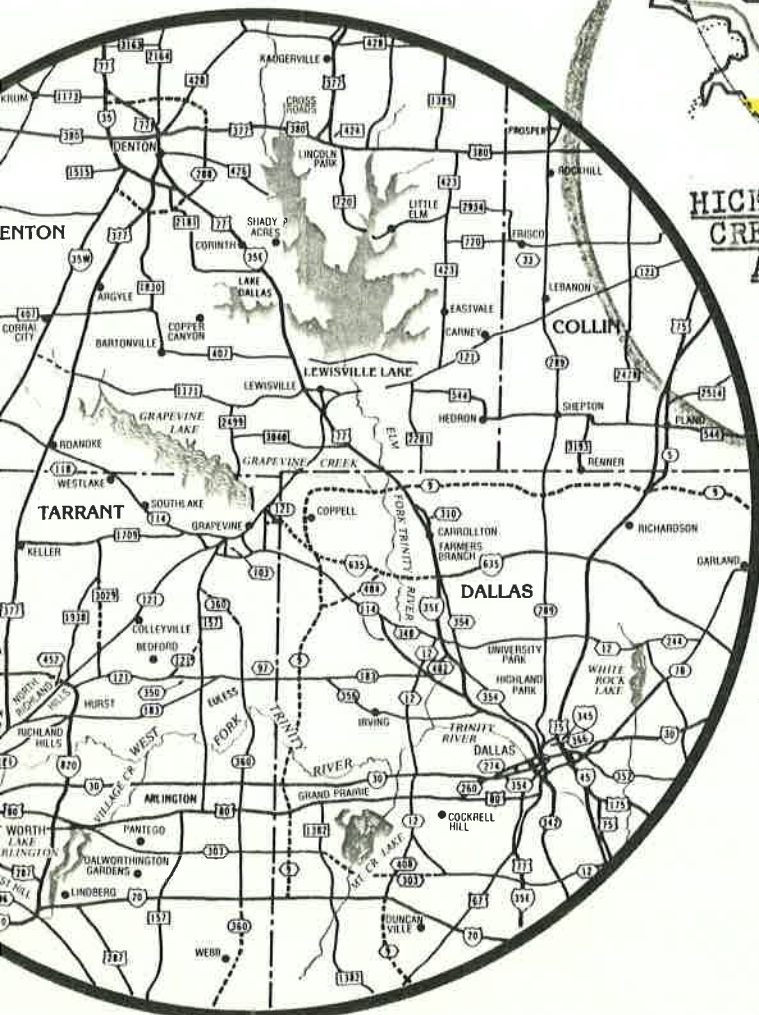
Based upon the above information, we would like the Denton County Historical Commission to nominate Old Alton Bridge for a listing in the National Register of Historic Places Inventory.

Author: June Elaine Tyler, C. P. A.  
RR #2, Lot #12, Mobile Drive  
Lewisville, Texas 75067

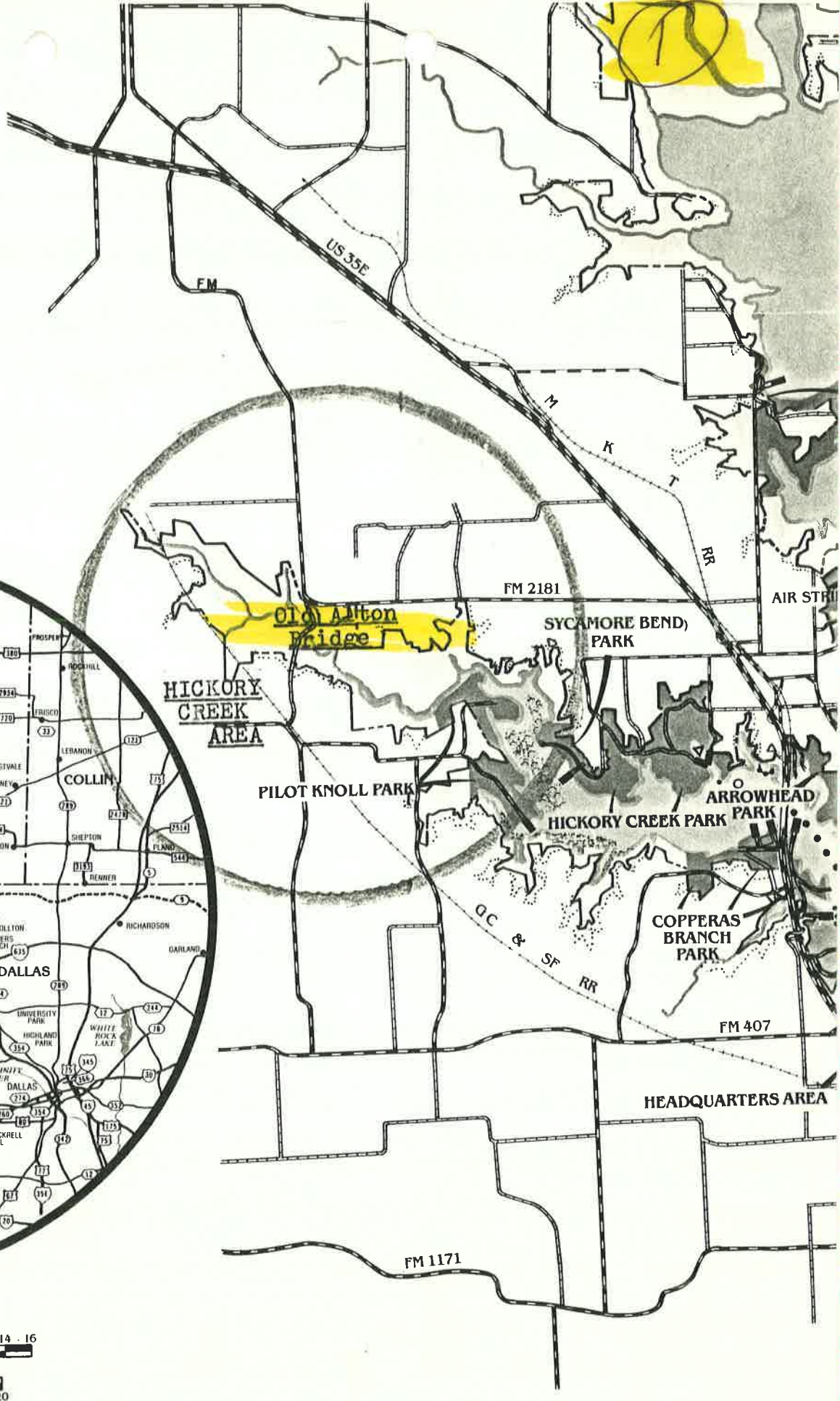
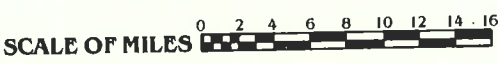
## EXHIBITS

1. U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' Map of Lewisville Lake with the Hickory Creek Area circled in red and the Old Alton Bridge location marked.
2. Map of the Hickory Creek Area of Lewisville Lake detailing the proposed petitioned location of FM 2499 and the existing horse trails.
3. Copy of letter to Gary McKean, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, requesting engineering information on Old Alton Bridge and Mr. McKean's remarks.
4. Copies of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' field notes on Old Alton Bridge.
5. Black and white and color photographs of Old Alton Bridge.
6. Copy of Petitions containing over 100 signatures detailing a location and method of construction for the proposed FM 2499 and requesting that Old Alton Bridge be retained as a horse and foot crossing across Hickory Creek which was presented to the Denton County Commissioners.
7. An article and map about the Hickory Creek Area Horse Trails.
8. Copy of a Lewisville News article dated April 27, 1984 about the Hickory Creek Area Horse Trails.
9. Copy of a Lewisville News article dated October 25, 1985 about the Denton County Road Plan.
10. Copies of the minutes of 19th century Commissioners' Court meetings authorizing the purchase of bridges.
11. Copies of pages 16, 17, 60-63 of the Book, History and Reminiscences of Denton County, by Ed. F. Bates.
12. Copies of pages 60-69 of the Book, History of Denton, Texas from its Beginning to 1960, by C. A. Bridges.

- PROPERTY & LINE
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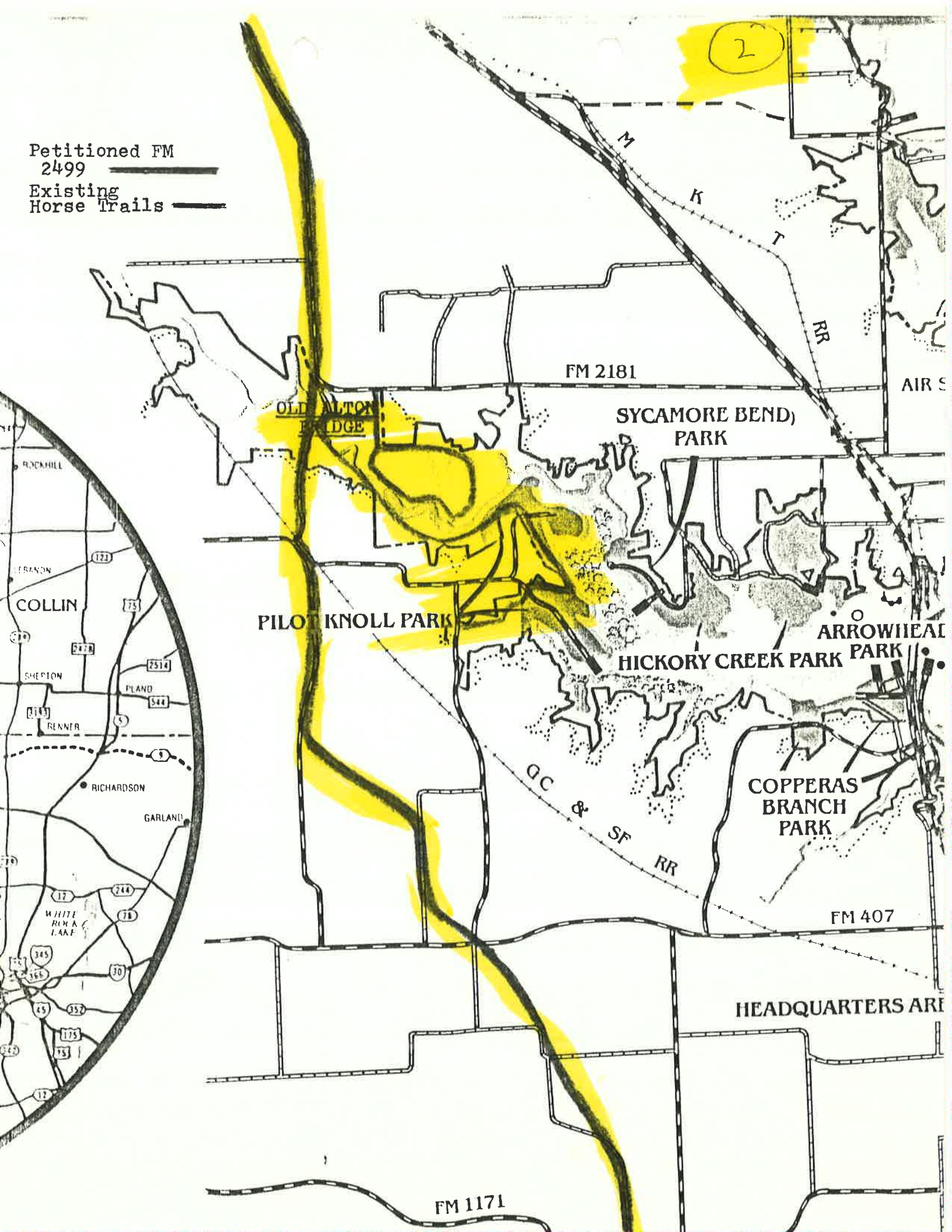


VICINITY MAP



Petitioned FM  
2499

Existing  
Horse Trails



CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT  
RURAL ROUTE 2, LOT 12  
MOBILE DRIVE  
LEWISVILLE, TEXAS 75067  
TELEPHONE (817) 455-2423

October 25, 1985

Gary McKean  
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers  
P. O. Box 17300  
819 Taylor Street  
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

Dear Gary:

Lee Walker has applied for federal funds to replace Old Alton Bridge, the 19th century bridge that spans Hickory Creek on the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers land. In order to save the bridge from destruction, we need to have it listed in the National Register of Historic Places. To obtain this listing, we need certain engineering information about the bridge. We are hoping that you would be willing to provide us with this information. We need to know

1. Type of bridge ( i. e. suspension, truss ? ) and engineering design period. *PRATT TRUSS - 1887*
2. Substruction construction ( structure below the deck)
  - a. Number of abutments and/or piers *2 sets of piers & abutments*
  - b. Construction material *IRON & STEEL*
3. Superstructure construction (structure above the deck)
  - a. Construction material *IRON & STEEL*
  - b. Types of truss(es), arch(es) etc. *PIN-CONNECTED HIGH TRUSSES*
4. Overall condition of bridge *GOOD*

We will be meeting with the Denton County Historical Commission on November 7, 1985 to present our application.

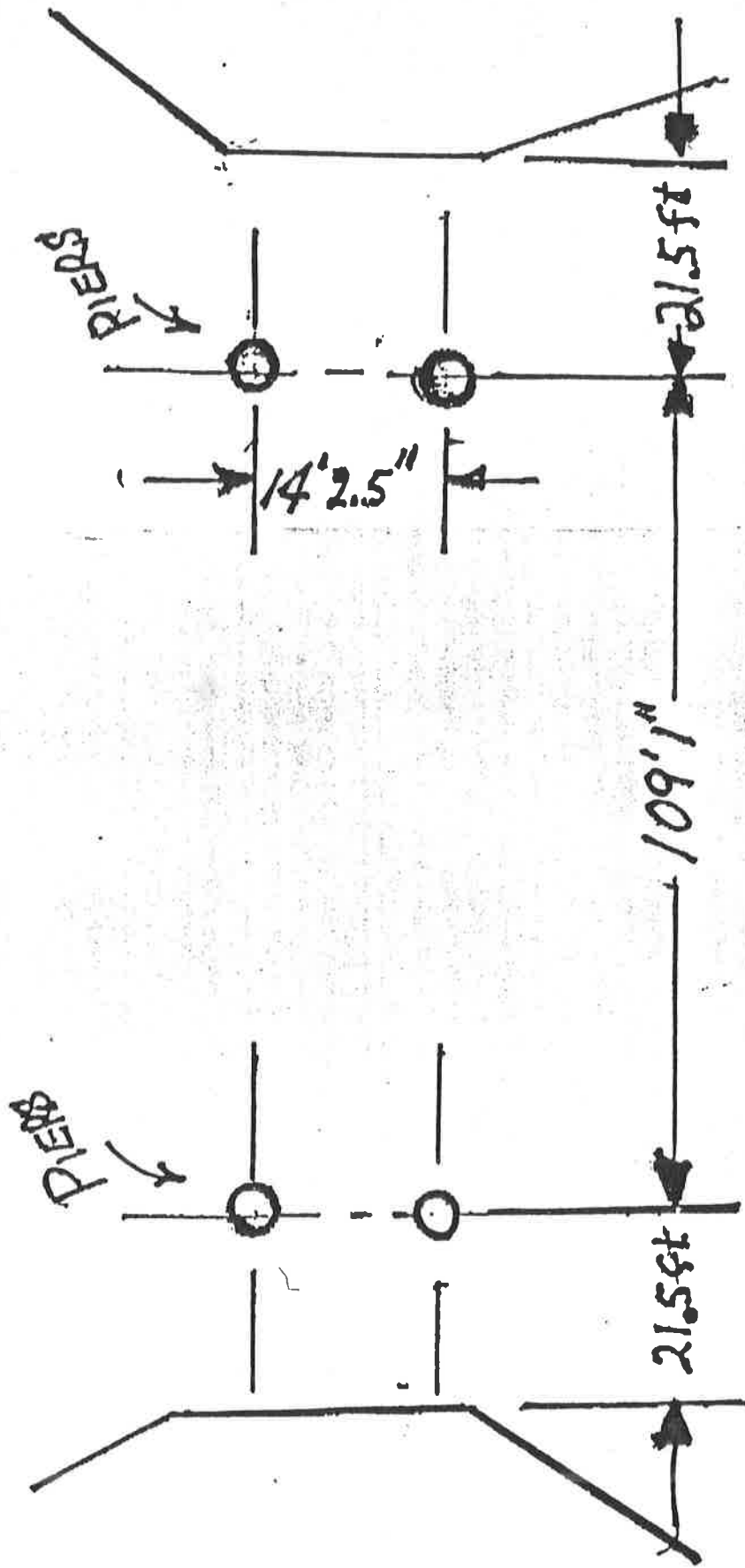
Sincerely yours,

*June Tyler*  
June Tyler

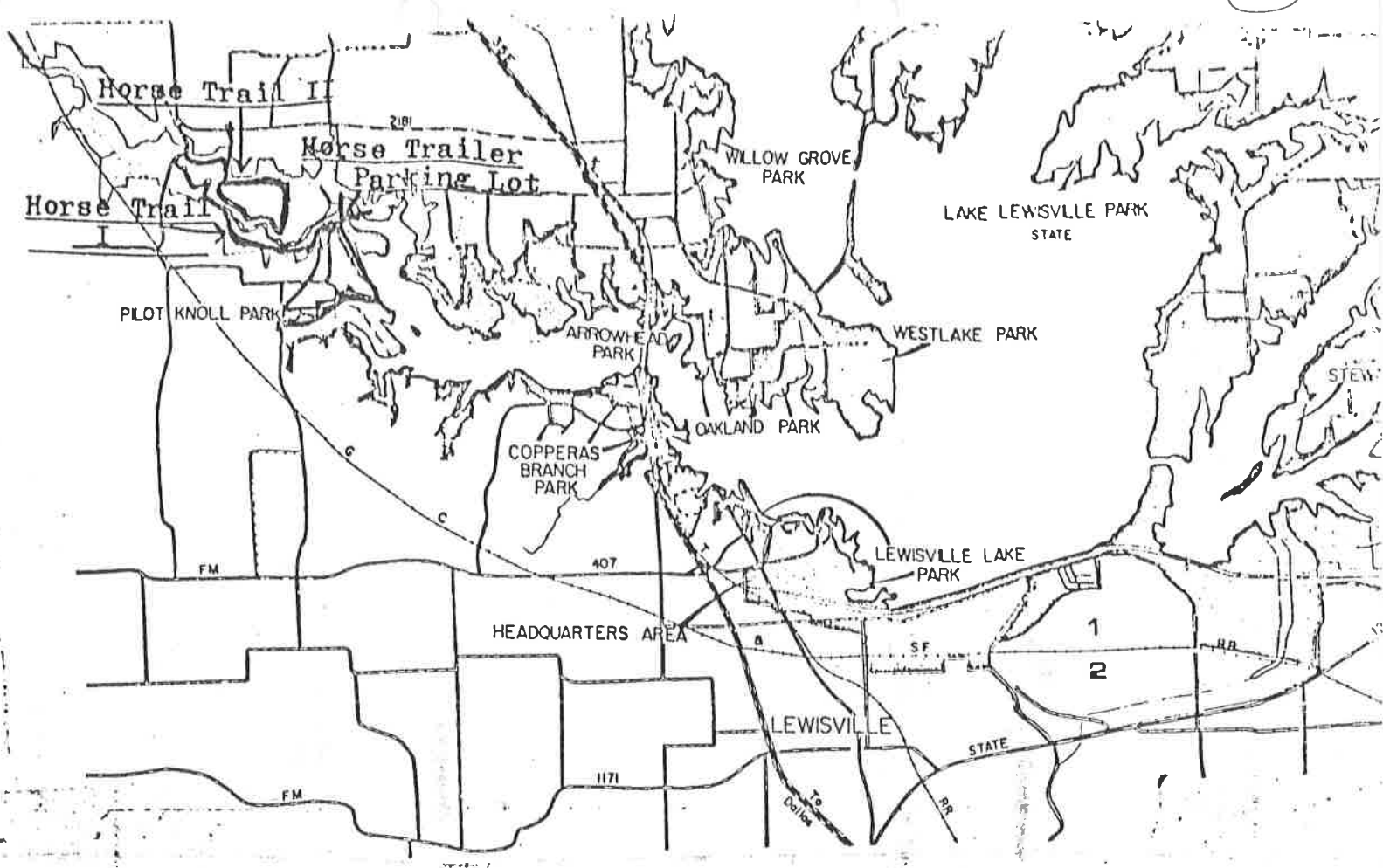
*11/4/85*

*June,*  
*Skippers Scott in Permits Section is looking into this and may be at the mtg on 11/7/85. The Corps is interested in saving it, if possible. Jerry*





HICKORY CREEK BRIDGE  
(OLD ALTON BRIDGE)



Congressman Tom Vandergriff, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and a group of North Texas horse owners working together have created an unique recreation facility for horse and rider. The facility consists of two horse trails marked with "Trail" signs and/or white dots and a horse trailer parking lot in the Hickory Creek area of Lewisville Lake as indicated on the above map.

Horse Trail I is on the south side of Hickory Creek and can be accessed from the Horse Trailer Parking Lot and at the main entrance to Pilot Knoll Park. To access from the Horse Trailer Parking Lot, look for the low place in the barricade that encloses the parking lot and have your horse step over it. Please stay on the Horse Trail when riding in Pilot Knoll Park. Horses are not permitted in the camping, picnic or the other developed areas of the park.

Horse Trail II is on the north side of Hickory Creek. It can be accessed near the south east corner of the bridge that crosses Hickory Creek on Copper Canyon Road or over a two foot post and rail jump on the south side of FTMR 2181 (Teasley Lane). There is room from parking horse trailers on the sides of Copper Canyon Road and FTMR 2181 (Teasley Lane).

Also, please do not ride on private property.