

77 into the community of McFaddin is designated as Farm to Market Road 445. Its surface is still shown as bituminous. The smaller road leading from the McFaddin community into the ranch has no designation, and is noted as being a graded and drained road. In addition to a bridge across Kuy Creek, the road has several cattle guards, thus indicating that the adjacent land was used for grazing cattle. Resources listed within the McFaddin community are much the same as they had been in 1936, including a church, school, factory, and dwellings. Stock loading pens are not included on the 1956 map. Reflective of the dramatic impact that oil and gas exploration had on the Victoria County landscape over the preceding 20 years, the 1956 map includes locations of all known oil fields in the county. The McFaddin Oil Field extends roughly from Dry Kuy Creek south to the Refugio County line. The McFaddin North Oil Field begins south of Linn Lake and continues east toward Bloomington. Additionally, three petroleum pipelines are shown crossing the McFaddin Ranch; these pipelines continue to be apparent on aerial photographs taken from the mid-1960s through the early 2000s. The railroad corridor also is shown, but now bears the name Missouri Pacific Railroad, which was the successor firm to the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railroad.

A 1963 survey map (Figure 40) prepared by Byron Simpson includes the McFaddin Ranch. The only improvements shown on the map are existing fence lines and abandoned fence lines. These are unlikely to be complete illustrations of all the pasture fencing extant on the ranch in 1963, but their rectilinear placement is typical of cattle ranches as the common practice for decades has been to divide open land into grid patterns. No other improvements are shown on the map. The courses of Dry Kuy and Kuy creeks are shown, as well as Cushman and Elm Bayous. Additionally, relict riverbeds for the San Antonio and Guadalupe rivers are drawn alongside the current courses. Each river follows a meandering course that has changed over time.

Partitioning of the McFaddin Ranch by descendants of James McFaddin was recorded in 1990 (Figure 41). The map shows the boundaries of a 13,028-acre parcel that was divided from the larger ranch. This parcel contains the 9,431-acre APE and encompasses portions of the original land grants owned by Ramon, Fernet, and Vairin. Linn Lake is the principal natural feature along the property's eastern boundary, and the Guadalupe River touches the southeast corner, while US 77 is the dominant landscape feature along the western boundary. The road network through the ranch is shown as a series of dashed lines. No other improvements are depicted on the map.

## **Historic Photographs Analysis**

### ***Aerial Photographs***

Historic aerial photographs of the McFaddin Ranch were acquired from P2 Energy Solutions, a private firm that maintains the Tobin aerial photograph collection. Edward Tobin, pilot and businessman, served as a military pilot during World War I. Returning to his native San Antonio, Texas, after the war, he started the Tobin Aerial Surveys firm. He also began commercial mapping for Humble Oil and Refining Company (later Exxon) and other oil companies. At the time of his death in 1954, his company was the largest aerial mapping firm in the world (Texas State Historical Association 2008b). P2 Energy Solutions is the successor to the Tobin Aerial Surveys firm. The Tobin aerial photograph collection dates from the 1920s to the present day and is a valuable documentary source of changes to the Texas landscape over time.

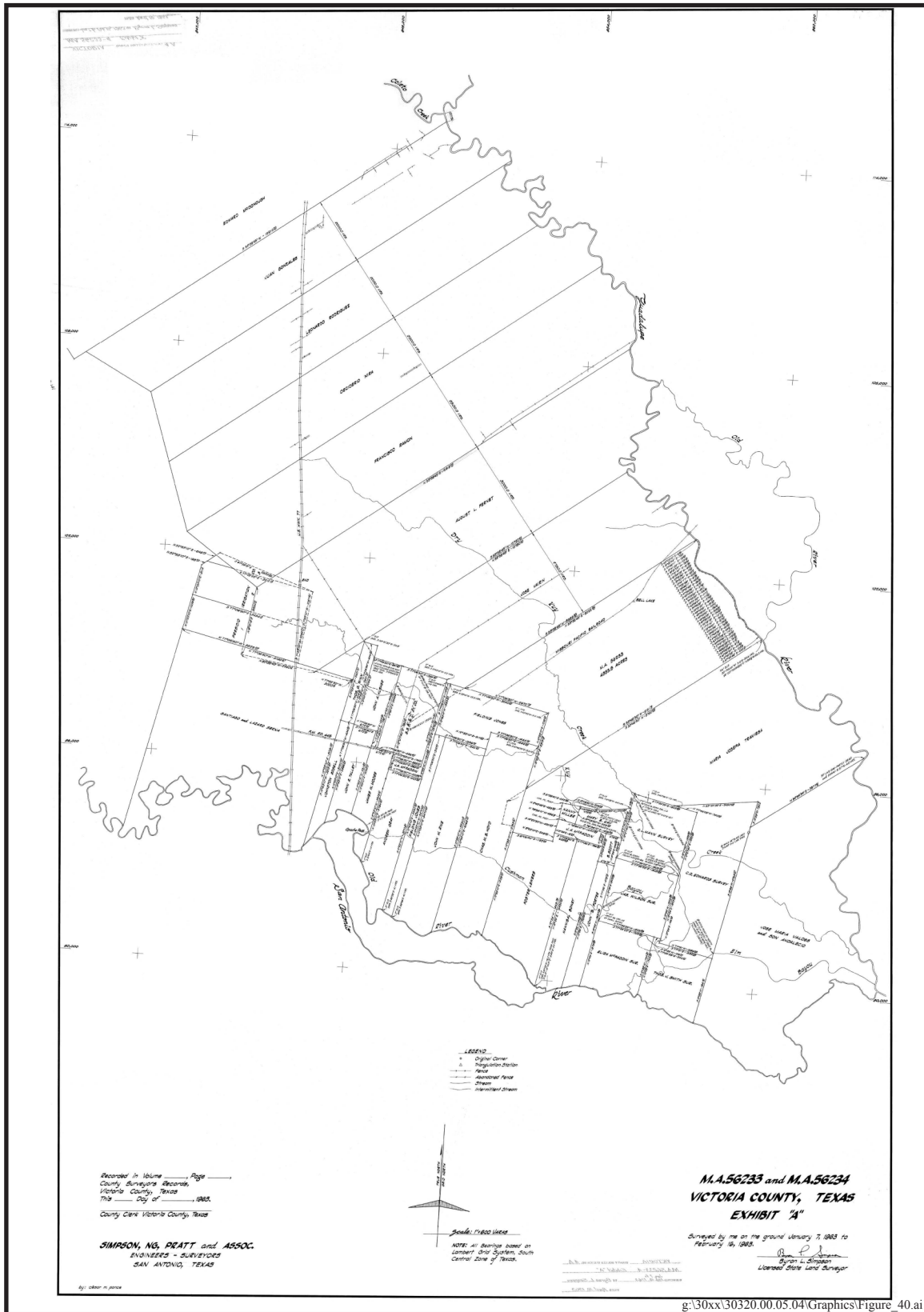


Figure 40. 1963 Victoria County rolled sketch survey map including McFaddin Ranch (Simpson 1963).



Tobin aerial photographs of the 9,431-acre APE within the McFaddin Ranch date from 1965, 1976, and 1988 (Figures 42–45). Taken 25 October, the 1965 aerial photographs (see Figures 42 and 43) are at a scale of 1 inch equal to 6,300 feet (P2 Energy Solutions 1965). The photographs show that the 9,431-acre portion consists almost entirely of open pastures and fields. Linn Lake forms the eastern boundary of the larger McFaddin Ranch, while Kuy Creek cuts through the southwestern corner of the parcel. Trees are located along the edges of both waterways and in the bottomlands alongside the streams. Drainages provided by intermittent creeks and streams run in a generally northwest to southeast direction. The most prominent of these is Dry Kuy Creek, a landscape feature that is still readily visible. A large wetland area that appears to be naturally occurring is visible on the aerial photograph as well. The road network is very similar to the series of roadways extant today. One exception is that a road once passed along the southwest perimeter of the aforementioned wetland area. This road no longer is apparent and a newer road extends along the northeast edge of the wetland. A county road shown on the 1936, 1956, and 1963 highway maps is depicted on the aerial photograph as well. It leads from the McFaddin community across Kuy Creek in a northeasterly direction through the ranch, then turns north for a short distance before arcing northwest to meet US 77. Pipeline corridors that first appeared on the 1956 highway map are visible as diagonal lines cutting across the landscape in a southwest to northeast direction. No large buildings can be seen on the aerial photographs, but numerous small structures and sheds are found alongside the roads. The greatest concentration of structures is in the southern portion of the ranch parcel, in an area identified on the 1956 highway map as being part of the McFaddin Oil Field. A railroad line cuts across the landscape from southwest to northeast. The locations of two railroad overpasses can be inferred from where the rail corridor crosses Kuy Creek and a smaller intermittent stream.

Taken 28 May, the 1976 aerial photograph (see Figure 44) was taken at a scale of 1 inch equal to 5,280 feet (P2 Energy Solutions 1976). The major landscape features described above have not changed significantly during the interim between 1965 and 1976. In the northeastern quadrant of the 9,431-acre APE, a complex of buildings stands near the bluffs overlooking Linn Lake. This is the ranch foreman's complex, much of which was constructed during the late 1960s (Fagan, personal communication 2008). A more extensive road network exists in this quadrant as well, and gas drilling equipment has been installed at the ends of short tracks leading from the main road. Some of the original equipment is extant, although in derelict condition. Along the borders of Linn Lake, newer gas equipment has been installed and extraction continues today.

Taken 21 February, the 1988 aerial photograph (see Figure 45) was taken at a scale of 1 inch equal to 5,000 feet (P2 Energy Solutions 1988). Few extensive changes have taken place to the landscape since the mid-1970s. The road network remains much the same, although a road that once led around the south edge of a wetland has been abandoned and a newer road curves around the wetland's north side. Also by this time, the northwesternmost portion of the county road shown on the 1966 aerial photograph has been abandoned and the road no longer connects to US 77. Some of the natural gas extraction equipment in the northeast quadrant of the survey area has been removed, while newer gas drilling operations are occurring slightly southwest of the center of the survey area. The road network in this area has been modified accordingly. What appears to be a pipeline corridor also cuts across this area in a southeasterly direction; if indeed it is a pipeline, it does not appear on more recent aerial photographs nor is it shown on topographic maps. The northwestern corner of the survey area is darker in color than the remainder of the landscape. The geometrical outline of the darker area suggests it was fenced. Close examination of the photograph provides no explanation for the dark color as the visible vegetation and landscape features are much the same as exist elsewhere in the survey area. No other significant changes to the landscape are readily apparent on the 1988 aerial photograph.



Figure 42. 1965 aerial photograph of Victoria County (P2 Energy Solutions 1965).



Figure 43. 1965 aerial photograph of Victoria County (P2 Energy Solutions 1965).

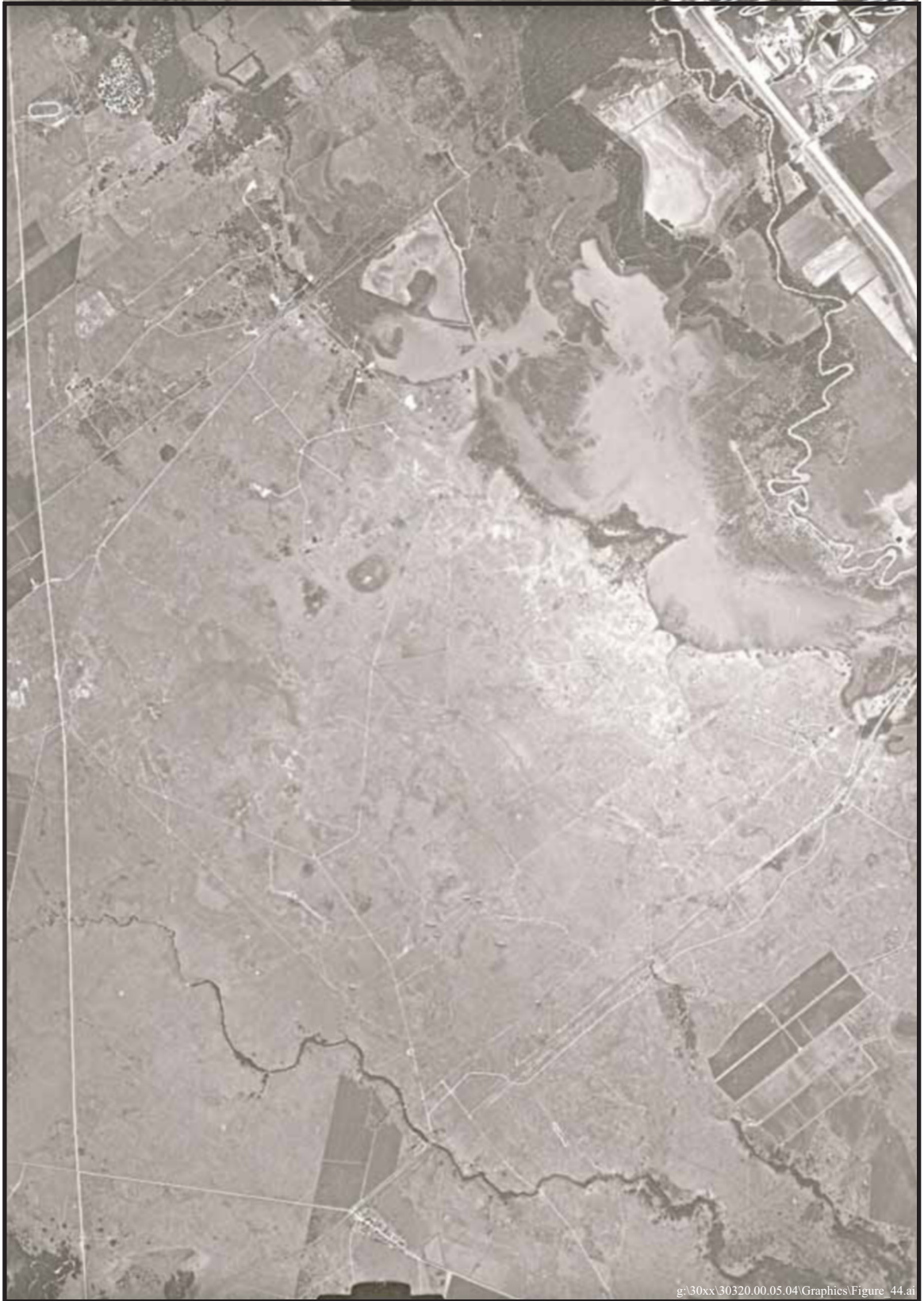


Figure 44. 1976 aerial photograph of Victoria County (P2 Energy Solutions 1976).



Figure 45. 1988 aerial photograph of Victoria County (P2 Energy Solutions 1988).