



Figure 9. View toward the STP site from FM 521, looking west at a distance of 4.0 miles (Note: STP Site is not visible).



Figure 10. View toward the STP site from FM 521, looking west at a distance of 5.25 miles (Note: STP Site is not visible).



Figure 11. View toward the STP site from Gilmore Road, looking southwest at a distance of 6.7 miles.



Figure 12. View toward the STP site from Gilmore Road, looking southwest at a distance of 6.7 miles, at 12x optical zoom.



Figure 13. View toward the STP site from FM 2668, looking southwest at a distance of 11.0 miles (Note: STP Site is not visible).



Figure 14. View toward the Victoria County Station project site from US 77, looking north-northeast at a distance of 12.8 miles.



Figure 15. View toward the Victoria County Station project site from SH 239, looking northeast at a distance of 11.2 miles.



Figure 16. View toward the Victoria County Station project site from US 59 Business, looking southeast at a distance of 9.2 miles.



Figure 17. View toward the Victoria County Station project site from US 59, looking south-southwest at a distance of 10.8 miles.



Figure 18. View toward the Victoria County Station project site from FM 1090 at Kemper Road, looking west at a distance of 13.8 miles.



Figure 19. View toward the Victoria County Station project site from FM 2433 at SH 35, looking west-northwest at a distance of 14.9 miles.



Figure 20. View toward the Victoria County Station project site from SH 185 at South Dryer Road, looking northwest at a distance of 10.6 miles.

Based on the very limited visibility of the 200-foot STP site structures at approximately seven miles, and similar landscape surrounding the proposed Victoria County Station site, GMI staff concluded that an APE of 10-miles surrounding the proposed project site for the visual impact analysis would remain sufficient for a building 250 feet in height. Visibility of the proposed towers from a distance of 10 miles would be extremely limited or would not occur at all.

### **Historic Resources Survey Procedure**

Although a number of historic-era resources were discovered during the Phase Ia investigations, the Phase Ib survey was a more intensive survey effort intended to assure the inventory of any remaining historic resources. In order to manage the survey effort in the APE, the survey radius was divided into quadrants—northwest, northeast, southeast, and southwest. The Phase Ib survey included a survey of areas serviced by all navigable, accessible roads within those quadrants. All resources that appeared to be 50 years of age or older were photographed and documented according to the standards of the THC. A THC Historic Resources Survey form was filled out for each recorded historic resource. Various sources, including county tax appraisal records and maps, were examined to determine construction dates for recorded historic resources, as well as other pertinent information required for completion of the THC survey forms.

The procedure for identifying potential historic properties (i.e., cultural resources eligible for inclusion in the NRHP) within the 10-mile survey radius consisted of an examination of the THC's Historic Sites Atlas for previously recorded historic sites in Victoria, Refugio, and Calhoun counties and a survey of the 10-mile radius surrounding the project/survey area. THC's Historic Sites Atlas is an online database that contains records of previously recorded historic sites, including Registered Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs) and resources listed on the NRHP. Currently, there are 26 previously recorded historic sites located within the 10-mile survey radius, consisting primarily of small cemeteries and historic markers. Three RTHLs are located within the survey radius, all within the town of McFaddin. There are no properties listed on the NRHP within the 10-mile survey radius.

Each historic resource was plotted and recorded with photographs and field notes. For recording resources and views, a Canon PowerShot A530 digital camera was used. For individual resources such as single buildings with no ancillary structures, two photos (a photo of the front elevation and an oblique photo depicting the front and one side elevation) were taken when possible. For resources such as ranching complexes and farmsteads, overview photographs documenting the entire complex were taken as well as photographs of each individual resource comprising the complex. Additional photographs of details or alterations were taken when warranted. As architectural historians did not have right-of-entry onto privately owned property, all photos were taken from public roads and rights-of-way. In some instances, it was not possible to capture the desired angle for every resource, but detailed field notes were maintained to supplement the photographic documentation and aid in the completion of the THC Historic Resources Survey forms.

## **Visual Impact Analysis Procedure**

The visual impact analysis was based on the concept of “viewshed,” which is defined as “the entire area an individual can see from a given point” (Institute of Water Research, Michigan State University 1997) and which constitutes the setting of a resource. Analysis of the impact of the proposed project, (including proposed building heights of 166 feet and 250 feet in height), as well as the steam plume, the height of which would range from 160 feet in summer to 544 feet in winter, on the settings of historic resources took place at those properties recommended eligible for the listing in the NRHP. In assessing the potential effects of the proposed Victoria County Station on a potential historic property’s setting, three main criteria were considered: (1) topography, with special attention to elevation and any variations between the resource or vantage point and the proposed structures; (2) vegetation, its presence, density, and height; and (3) distance between a resource or vantage point and the proposed structures. Maps created using ESRI’s ArcGIS 9.3 software were used in the field to aid in the visual impact analysis. Combined with field notes and photography, the maps were used to assist in navigation and to evaluate potential visual impacts.

Although the proposed Victoria County Station structures introduce a modern, or nonhistoric, feature into the viewshed of potential historic properties and the surrounding cultural landscape, visibility of the structures and steam plume in and of itself, does not merit an adverse effect. Careful consideration was given to surrounding vegetation, distance, and orientation to determine whether or not the introduction of the proposed structures into the cultural landscape was disruptive to the setting and feeling of individual properties. Consideration was also given to the fact that the setting and feeling of the 10-mile area have already been affected by the Dupont-Invista Plant, as well as a number of communications towers.

An effect on NRHP-eligible properties within the 10-mile radius was considered to be adverse in those instances in which the proposed structures and steam plume would not only be visible, but would also impact the property’s ability to convey its historic setting and feeling, two of the seven aspects of integrity delineated by the NPS. A visual impact is considered to be adverse when the visibility of the proposed structures and the steam plume would affect an eligible property’s setting by altering the relationship of the property to the features and open space that surround it. A property’s setting and feeling would be impacted in an instance where the presence of the proposed structures and steam plume would introduce a feature whose presence detracts from the property’s historic character.