

*Historical Overview*

El Camino Real de los Tejas was established in the 1680s when the Spanish began to search for the settlement that Frenchman Robert Cavalier Sieur de La Salle had founded in Garcitas Creek, near present-day Victoria.

Although this French colonization effort was not successful, in the 1690s the Spanish increased their

presence in East Texas to be able to monitor and defend against future French threats. By the 1720s they strengthened their position in the region even further by establishing a presidio and village at Los Adaes, which became the Texas capital until 1773 when it was moved to San Antonio de Bexar.

For the most part Spanish expeditions followed American Indian trails, which linked complex networks of villages and important natural resources. Travelers' accounts made references to more than 60 tribes in the region crossed by the

trail. Chief among them were the Caddo-speaking groups, all of whom were intimately connected with El Camino Real de los Tejas. Indeed, the area was named after the Tejas (Hasinai). The Spanish Colonial capital of Texas occupied the lands of the Adaes and was named after that tribe.

The Spanish began serious efforts to convert the American Indians in East Texas to Catholicism in the early 1690s when Franciscans missionaries began

building missions in the area. Although these first attempts to found missions were far from successful, they marked the beginning of increased travel.

Eventually the lands along El Camino Real de los Tejas became home to various ethnic groups. These include Spanish, such as Canary Islanders, French, Mexicans, African Americans, Anglos, and a variety of different European peoples. Most of them settled along the trail and managed, to a considerable extent, to retain their cultural traditions.



**Places to Visit and Learn about the Trail**

- 1 Paso del Indio
- 2 Jesús Treviño Fort and Ranch
- 3 San José de los Corralitos
- 4 Republic of the Rio Grande Museum
- 5 Paso de Francia
- 6 Presidio Nuestra Señora de Loreto de la Bahía
- 7 Mission Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga
- 8 Dolores-Applewhite Crossing
- 9 San Antonio Missions National Historic Park
- 10 La Villita Historic District
- 11 Yturri-Edmunds Historic Site
- 12 Mission San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo)
- 13 Comanche Lookout
- 14 Comal Springs
- 15 San Marcos Spring
- 16 Apache Pass
- 17 Sugarloaf Mountain
- 18 Rye School Swale
- 19 Caddo Mounds State Historic Site
- 20 Mission Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Ais
- 21 Lobanillo Swales
- 22 Oliphant House
- 23 Los Adaes State Historic Site
- 24 Fort Jesup State Historic Site
- 25 Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Historic Site
- 26 Fort Claiborne
- 27 Caddo Memorial Plaza

**State Parks**

- Goliad State Park
- McKinney Falls State Park
- Bastrop State Park
- Fort Boggy State Park
- Mission Tejas State Park



*Paso del Indio*



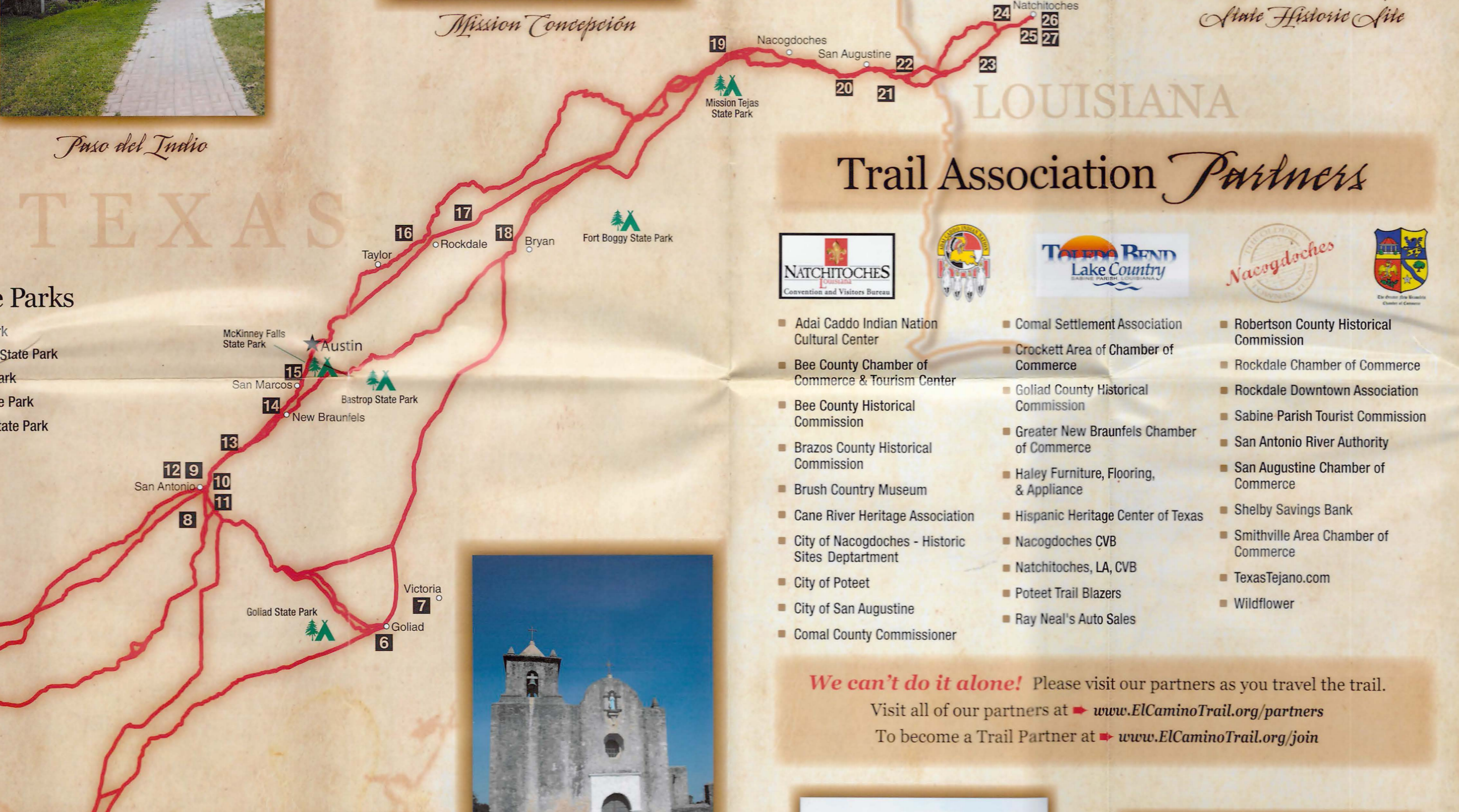
*Mission Concepción*



*Sugarloaf Mountain*



*Fort Saint Jean Baptiste State Historic Site*



**Trail Association Partners**

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|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natchitoches Convention and Visitors Bureau</li> <li>Adal Caddo Indian Nation Cultural Center</li> <li>Bee County Chamber of Commerce &amp; Tourism Center</li> <li>Bee County Historical Commission</li> <li>Brazos County Historical Commission</li> <li>Brush Country Museum</li> <li>Cane River Heritage Association</li> <li>City of Nacogdoches - Historic Sites Department</li> <li>City of Poteet</li> <li>City of San Augustine</li> <li>Comal County Commissioner</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talena Bend Lake Country</li> <li>Comal Settlement Association</li> <li>Crockett Area of Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Goliad County Historical Commission</li> <li>Greater New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Haley Furniture, Flooring, &amp; Appliance</li> <li>Hispanic Heritage Center of Texas</li> <li>Nacogdoches CVB</li> <li>Poteet Trail Blazers</li> <li>Ray Neal's Auto Sales</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nacogdoches</li> <li>Robertson County Historical Commission</li> <li>Rockdale Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Rockdale Downtown Association</li> <li>Sabine Parish Tourist Commission</li> <li>San Antonio River Authority</li> <li>San Augustine Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>Shelby Savings Bank</li> <li>Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>TexasTejano.com</li> <li>Wildflower</li> </ul> |
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**We can't do it alone!** Please visit our partners as you travel the trail.  
Visit all of our partners at [www.ElCaminoTrail.org/partners](http://www.ElCaminoTrail.org/partners)  
To become a Trail Partner at [www.ElCaminoTrail.org/join](http://www.ElCaminoTrail.org/join)



*Mission Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga*

Along the trail visitors can experience authentic sites, such as the ruins of Mission Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo, near Victoria. This location, eight miles above Victoria, is the third site of this mission. It is of particular interest because the original structure has never been restored.



*Presidio Nuestra Señora de Loreto de la Bahía*

Late in 1749, both the Presidio La Bahía and the Mission Espíritu Santo relocated to the San Antonio River south of present day Goliad. The Presidio Chapel was built between 1775 and 1790, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This complex of buildings is considered to be the finest example in the country of a Spanish Presidio.



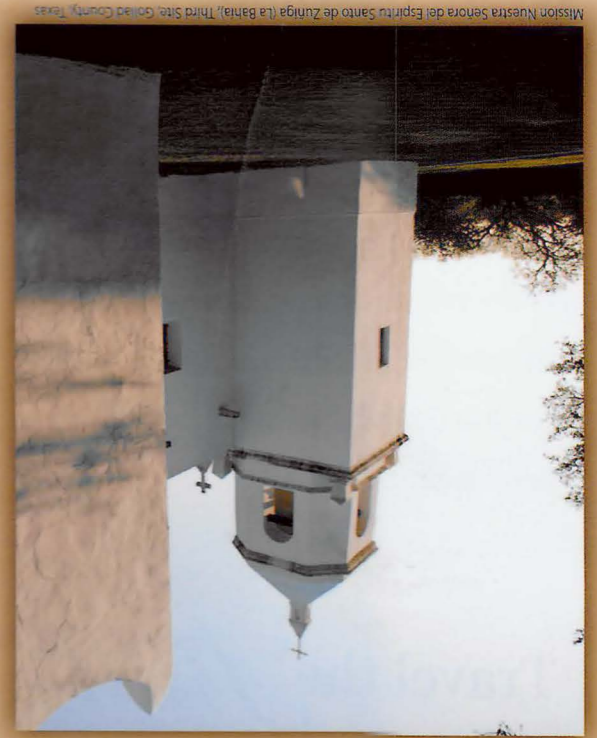
*Caddo Mounds State Historic Site*

Modern-day travelers will find a variety of sites along the route. Caddo mounds, missions, presidios, trail swales, historic structures, river crossings, museums, and others offer visitors plenty of opportunity to learn about and enjoy the rich heritage of the trail.



*Mission Tejas State Park*

Numerous sites along the trail are open to the public and offer great recreational opportunities. Visitors can walk on some of the traces left by the original users of the trail.



NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL  
*de los Tejas*  
*Camino Real*



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El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting and conserving El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.

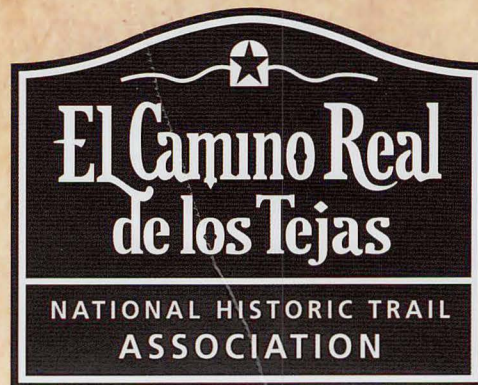
The Association seeks to protect the historic integrity of the trail, its contributions to tourism and economic development along its path, and to educate the public about its resources and opportunities.

**Join Us**

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Or contact us at (512) 850-9073 or (800) 913-8727

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El Camino Real de los Tejas, Texas' Royal Road, is crucial to understanding the rich heritage of the region as it commemorates significant historic routes from the Rio Grande to Natchitoches, Louisiana.

## Travel the *Trail*

Walk in the footsteps of history! Visit missions, presidios, river crossings, trail segments and many other authentic historic sites.

To plan your trip, peruse our extensive collection of maps and photos at:

➤ [www.ElCaminoTrail.org](http://www.ElCaminoTrail.org)

## Join the *Trail*

As a member or sponsor of the Association, you will be fostering knowledge, awareness, and protection of the trail for present and future generations.

Help your community and others by keeping the trail history animated and inspiring. Join this exciting organization and learn about our mission by visiting:

➤ [www.ElCaminoTrail.org/join](http://www.ElCaminoTrail.org/join)



*El Camino Real de los Tejas*  
NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL

