

National Historic Trail Feasibility Study
and Environmental Assessment

El Camino Real de los Tejas

Texas • Louisiana

Cover Photo: Rio Grande at Paso de Francia looking up stream (Mexico on left, U.S. on right) Note Rocky Shoals that are conducive to wagon crossing



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National Historic Trail Feasibility Study
and Environmental Assessment

April 1998

EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS

Texas • Louisiana

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the feasibility and desirability of designating El Camino Real de los Tejas as a national historic trail under the study provisions of the National Trails System Act (Public Law 90-543, 16 USC 1241 et seq.). El Camino Real de los Tejas and variations in the primary route were used for more than 150 years as the principal route between Mexico City, Saltillo, Monclova, and respective presidios, and the missions near the present Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico, on the Rio Grande and Los Adaes in what is now northwestern Louisiana.

This study documents the international significance of the entire route from Mexico City to the Spanish provincial capital of Los Adaes and on to Natchitoches, Louisiana. It also documents the national significance of the Old San Antonio Road, which coincides with El Camino Real in many segments. The emphasis of the study is on the part of the trail that is in the United States from the Rio Grande in Maverick County, Texas, to Natchitoches, Louisiana.

El Camino Real de los Tejas is composed of several routes, some of which overlap in alignment; others have distinctively different alignments. This illustrates different regional and international influences on the preferred route. In some cases different names were applied to the same route. Some routes had distinctively different names. The routes that make up El Camino Real de los Tejas are Camino Pita, Upper Presidio Road, Upper Road, Lower Road, Lower Presidio Road, Camino de en Medio, and the Laredo Road. The Old San Antonio Road is a separate road system that in part followed El Camino Real and overlaps it in many segments.

In addition, this study documents that El Camino Real de los Tejas meets the criteria of section 5(b) of the National Trails System Act for feasibility and desirability. The study also addresses each of the required elements that are listed in the National Trails System Act, section 5(b).

El Camino Real de los Tejas is nationally significant because of its use for exploration, conquest, missionary supply, settlement, cultural exchange, and military campaigns. This study contains descriptions of the cultural and natural resources along the trail route, as well as descriptions of public use sites.

Groups, organizations, and public agencies have demonstrated a great deal of interest and support for commemorating, researching, and identifying the route over the past several years. This study has been prepared with the cooperation of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) of the government of Mexico. Although there is no legislation in Mexico comparable to the National Trails System Act, INAH has been active in documenting and preserving sites related to El Camino Real.

The study presents three alternatives. Alternative 1 would involve the designation of 2,500 miles of the changing routes of El Camino Real de los Tejas in Texas and 80 miles in

SUMMARY

Louisiana. In alternative 2, two national historic trails would be designated: El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Old San Antonio Road. The same number of miles would be designated in alternative 2 as in alternative 1. Under alternative 3 there would be no further federal involvement, and the routes would not become components of the national trails system.

If designated by Congress as a national historic trail, El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Old San Antonio Road would be managed through cooperative partnerships with public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and landowners. The federal role would be to set and maintain standards, provide technical and limited financial assistance to partners, and help ensure consistent preservation, education, and public use programs. There would be little, if any, federal acquisition of private land. It is recommended that authorities be enacted so that land would be acquired only from willing sellers.

The designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas as a unit of the national trails system would make possible the coordination of activities along the length of the trail. It also would mean increased opportunities for coordination with the Mexican government on respective resource preservation and research, as well as enhanced opportunities for cooperative educational programs and tourism related to El Camino Real de los Tejas.

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the feasibility and suitability of designating El Camino Real de los Tejas (Royal Road to the Tejas¹) a national historic trail under the feasibility study provisions of the National Trails System Act (PL 90-543, 16 USC 1241 et seq.). The legislation authorizing this study (PL 103-145, El Camino Real para los Texas Study Act of 1993) resulted from work by specialists of different disciplines possessing a keen interest in the heritage of Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana (see appendix A). The act uses the term, *El Camino Real* to refer to the route.

The legislation authorizing this study is based on the following findings by Congress, as enumerated in PL 103-145.

- (1) El Camino Real para los Texas was the Spanish road established to connect a series of missions and posts extending from Monclova, Mexico, to the mission and later Presidio Nuestra de Pilar de los Adaes, which served as the Spanish capital of the province of Texas from 1722 to 1772;
- (2) El Camino Real, over time, comprised an approximately 1,000-mile long corridor of changing routes from Saltillo through Monclova and Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico; San Antonio and Nacogdoches, Texas and then easterly to the vicinity of Los Adaes in present-day Louisiana; and constituted the only significant overland route from the Rio Grande to the Red River Valley during the Spanish Colonial Period;
- (3) the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth century rivalries among the European colonial powers of Spain, France, and England and after their independence, Mexico and the United States, for dominion over lands fronting the Gulf of Mexico were played out along the evolving travel routes across this immense area; and, as well, the future of several American Indian nations were tied to these larger forces and events;
- (4) El Camino Real and the subsequent San Antonio Road witnessed a competition that helped determine the United States southern and western boundaries; and
- (5) the San Antonio Road, like El Camino Real, was a series of routes established over the same corridor but was not necessarily the same as El Camino Real; and that from the 1830s, waves of American immigrants, many using the Natchez Trace, travelled west to Texas via the San Antonio

1. *Tejas* refers to the Tejas Indians and the lands where they lived in what is now east Texas and northwestern Louisiana.

The term *El Camino Real de los Tejas* was first applied, in the early years of the 18th century, only to the route used by the Spanish to go from Coahuila to east Texas, the Pita Road and Upper Road of this study. The Spanish road system in Texas then evolved and expanded as other routes were opened. For the purposes of this study the term *El Camino Real de los Tejas* is used to describe the entire Camino Real system within the modern states of Texas and Louisiana, including Camino Pita, Upper Presidio Road, Lower Presidio Road, Camino de en Medio, Camino de Arriba, Lower Road, Upper Road, and the Old San Antonio Road. Where it can be accurately defined as a separate entity, the term *Old San Antonio Road* will be used for the route between Natchitoches and San Antonio.

The name of the trail used in this study, El Camino Real de los Tejas, is different from that used in the authorizing legislation. This name is used to correct the Spanish grammar and to reflect a more accurate historical name. The term "El Camino Real para los Texas" will be used only to refer to the legislation authorizing this study.

Road, as did Native Americans attempting to relocate away from the pressures of European settlement.

Public, scholarly, and state interest in El Camino Real in Louisiana and Texas was the basis for the legislation to study the feasibility of designating the route as a national historic trail. The sponsorship of and attendance at an international conference in 1992 at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana, demonstrated public, academic, and state of Louisiana interest in El Camino Real de los Tejas. The conference addressed identification, evaluation, and protection alternatives for resources related to historic trails.

In response to a 1989 resolution passed by the Texas legislature, the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation (now known as the Texas Department of Transportation, or TXDOT) began research to commemorate the significance of El Camino Real corridor and to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the route. The Texas legislature also authorized the creation of a nine-member Old San Antonio Road Preservation Commission and an advisory committee to provide support and advice for the project. The resulting report, *A Texas Legacy: The Old San Antonio Road and the Caminos Reales: A Tricentennial History: 1691–1991*, was based on extensive archival research and on-the-ground verification of remnant archeological and historical sites associated with the road corridor.

During the mid-1970s the “Gateway Project” was developed to identify, recognize, and honor the common heritage of Mexico and the United States and to strengthen the bonds of international friendship. The project included a joint archeological and ethnohistorical study of the 18th century mission and presidio complex of San Juan Bautista at Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico. The study was conducted by the University of Texas at San Antonio and INAH Monumentos Coloniales in Mexico City. For more than 120 years, the San Juan Bautista complex was one of the key points along El Camino Real, serving as a rendezvous point for exploration, military campaigns, and frontier expansion into what is now the United States.

El Camino Real para los Texas Study Act authorizes the secretary of the interior to study the feasibility of designating the Texas and Louisiana portions of the route as a national historic trail. The act also includes the following specific provisions to be addressed in this study:

- ◆ examine the changing roads within the historic corridor
- ◆ examine the major connecting branch routes
- ◆ determine the individual or combined suitability and feasibility of routes for potential national historic trail designation
- ◆ consider the preservation heritage plan developed by TXDOT entitled *A Texas Legacy: The Old San Antonio Road and the Caminos Reales*, dated January, 1991
- ◆ make recommendations concerning the suitability and feasibility of establishing an international historical park where the trail crosses the United States-Mexico border at Maverick County, Texas, and Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico
- ◆ consider alternative name designations for the trail

The legislation also specifies that the study shall be undertaken in consultation with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development and the Texas Department of Transportation. El Camino Real de los Tejas extends from the U.S.-Mexico border south to Saltillo, where it connects with other roads to Mexico City; therefore, the legislation for this study also authorizes the secretary of the interior to work in cooperation with the Mexican government (including technical assistance) to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing an international historic route. The significance, history, and culture of the part of the route in the United States cannot be fully understood without consideration of the entire route, including the Mexican portions.

This feasibility study will be submitted to Congress. Any future federal involvement in El Camino Real as a national historic trail must be based on a specific congressional authorization.

NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM AND NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

The national trails system was established by the National Trails System Act of 1968 “to provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding population and to promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open air, outdoor areas and historic resources of the Nation.”

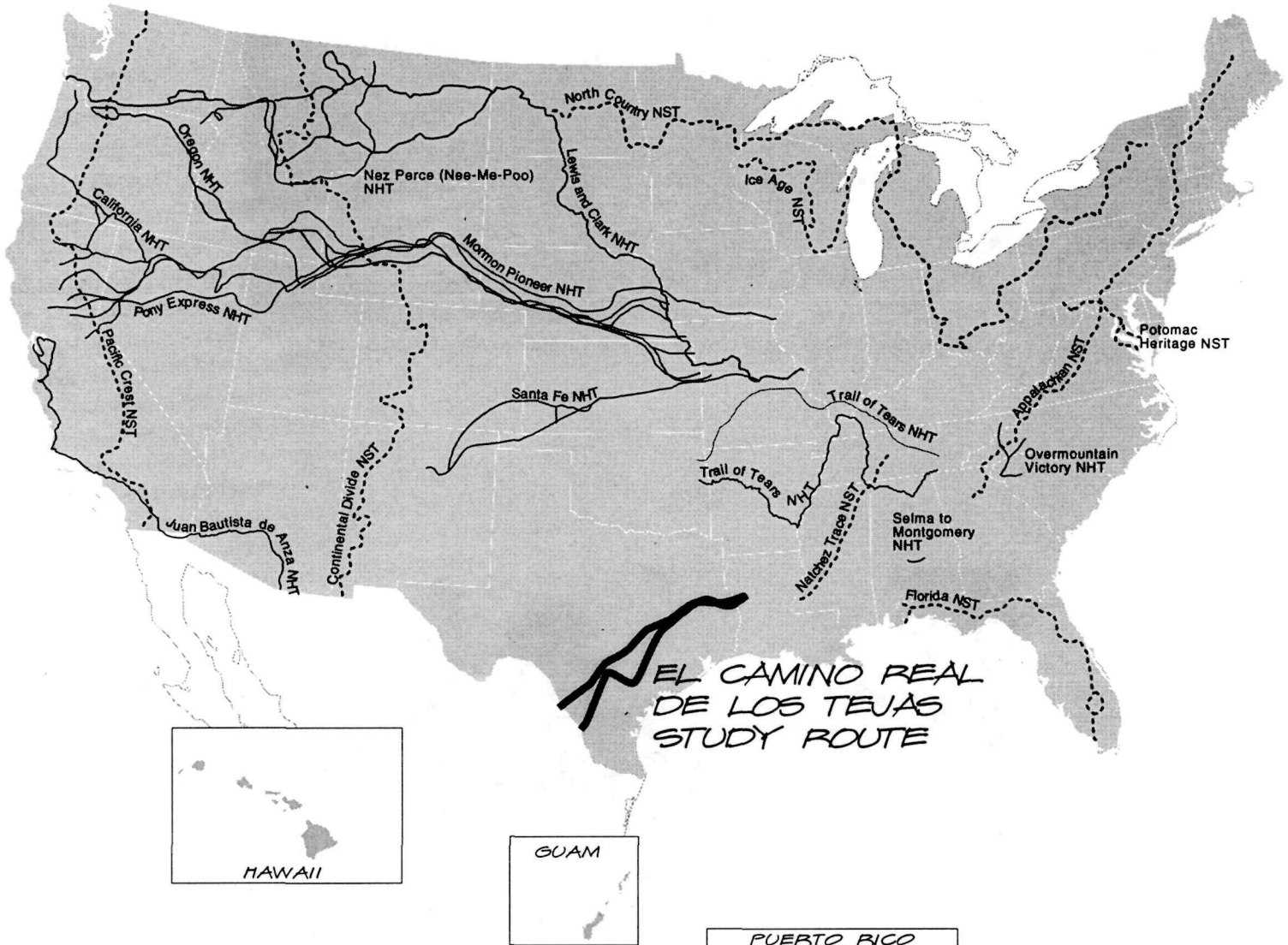
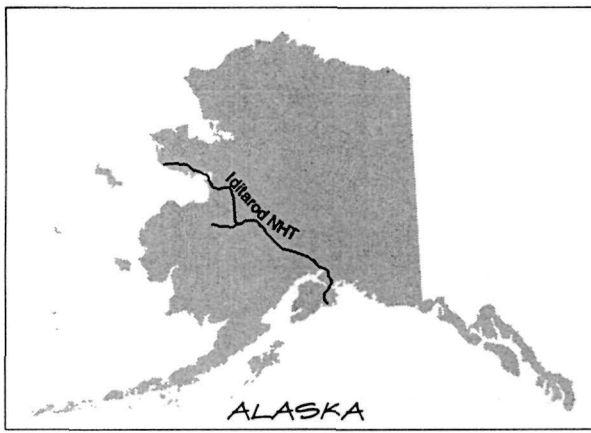
In the national trails system are congressionally designated national scenic trails, national historic trails, and national recreation trails. National scenic trails are continuous protected scenic corridors for outdoor recreation, such as the Appalachian or Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails. Recreational use is intended to be continuous, allowing uninterrupted travel from end to end. National recreation trails offer a variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation in or reasonably accessible to urban areas. Such trails are established and maintained by others, with “national” designation conferred by the secretary of the interior. The National Trails System Act provides for a lead federal agency to administer each national scenic and national historic trail in perpetuity, in cooperation with a variety of partners, including other federal agencies, state and local agencies, American Indians, local communities, private landowners, and others.

The purpose of national historic trails is the identification and protection of the historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment. National historic trails are extended trails that follow as closely as possible and practicable the original routes of travel that are historically significant. The designation of such trails or routes is to be continuous, but the established or developed trails are not necessarily continuous land areas; they may include portions or sections of land areas, land and water segments, or other specific sites. Together these qualifying entities form a chain or network of areas that may be included as components of a national historic trail. National historic trail authorization would require federal funds for the planning, development, research, and/or management of the trail and related trail activities. Some of the existing authorized national historic trails are the Santa Fe, Oregon, Pony Express, Mormon Pioneer, and Lewis and Clark trails (see the National Trails System map).

INTRODUCTION

The National Trails System Act establishes additional criteria for a national historic trail. These criteria are listed and discussed in the next chapter under "Feasibility and Desirability" (p. 26). If Congress authorized a national historic trail, a management plan would have to be prepared to guide the preservation and public use of the trail, as well as education and partnership efforts. Existing trail segments already in federal ownership could become the initial components of the national trail. Other trail segments could be developed and protected through various means such as cooperative and certification agreements, easements, and actions by nonprofit organizations.

National trails are managed through cooperative partnerships among public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and landowners. The federal role is one of setting and maintaining standards, providing incentives like technical and limited financial assistance to partners, helping to ensure consistent preservation, education, and public use programs, and managing the use of the official trail logo for marking and other appropriate purposes.



———— NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL
 - - - - - NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL



National Trails System

EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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Paso de Francia - looking from Mexico north across the Rio Grande to the United States



Los Adaes- showing outline and structures

DEFINITION AND DOCUMENTATION OF EL CAMINO REAL

DEFINITION

Four main royal roads led to Mexico City during the Spanish period. One ran from Veracruz in the east, another from Acapulco via Chilpanzingo in the west, a third crossed into Oaxaca from Guatemala in the south, and the fourth road traversed the interior of Mexico to Santa Fe in the faraway northern province of New Mexico. These four capitals connected with the viceregal capital in Mexico City, in keeping with the traditional relationship established under Spanish custom and practice governing royal roads in Europe and the New World. Historically, a *camino real* (royal road) is defined as a road that connects Spanish capital with Spanish capital, a distinction not shared with roads connecting ordinary Spanish or Indian villages.

The term *Camino Real* implied that the status and privileges granted to the villas and capitals it connected were extended to the main routes of travel through use by officials and others acting in the interest of the crown (see maps: El Camino Real, United States and Mexico, and U.S. Portion of El Camino Real). Unlike ordinary Indian and Spanish villages, villas like San Antonio and others along the route had charters that prescribed royal privileges (*reales* and *regalias*). An important factor under which a town received a set of privileges was its economic importance to a region, province, or colony. Similarly, the main road through the villa or series of villas enjoyed the privileges granted. Historically, royal roads connected economically important Spanish towns, capitals of provinces, and mines that possessed a charter prescribing royal privileges.²

As defined in the enabling legislation, El Camino Real de los Tejas was established to connect a series of Spanish missions and posts between Monclova, Mexico, and Los Adaes, the first capital of the province of Texas (in what is now northwestern Louisiana). The legislation also defines El Camino Real as an approximately 1,000-mile long corridor of changing routes from Saltillo through Monclova and Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico; San Antonio and Nacogdoches, Texas, and then east to the vicinity of Los Adaes in what is now Louisiana. It constituted the only primary overland route from the Rio Grande to the Red River Valley in Louisiana during the Spanish Colonial Period.

Over time, geographic, religious, political, economic, and military factors resulted in the evolution of the early routes of El Camino Real into a series of changing roadways and

2. A more detailed discussion of the definition of a *camino real* is available in the unpublished paper, "Toward a Definition of the Spanish *Camino Real*: *Cabañas*, Villas, Armies, and the Spanish Crown," by Joseph P. Sánchez, María Luisa Pérez González, and Bruce A. Erickson. That report is on file at the Spanish Colonial Research Center of the National Park Service (NPS), at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, and at the NPS Long Distance Trails Group Office in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

trails.³ Although the legislation authorizing this study recognizes these changing routes as components of El Camino Real, each route has its own distinctive history and nomenclature. The Old San Antonio Road, one of the better known of these changing routes, was used from about 1795 to 1850 as the primary migration route from the east to what is now Texas.

DESCRIPTION OF ROUTES

The road from the Rio Grande to Los Adaes, near Robeline, Louisiana, must be considered in two segments separated by San Antonio. Ordered geographically and chronologically, the first extended (in the United States) from the Rio Grande to San Antonio. From 1721 through 1772, El Camino Real ran from the present state of Coahuila, Mexico, through San Antonio to Los Adaes, the first capital of Spanish Texas, near Natchitoches, Louisiana. When San Antonio was the capital of Texas (1772–1821) it was the terminus for El Camino Real from the Rio Grande and points south (see maps: El Camino Real de los Tejas in the United States, segments 1–4, beginning on page 13).

Rio Grande to San Antonio

The three basic routes between the Rio Grande and San Antonio were the Pita Road, the Lower Presidio Road, and routes from the Laredo area. The first Spanish expeditions into Texas from Monclova, Coahuila, crossed the Rio Grande at fords long used by the indigenous people of the area. Later, the *presidio de San Juan Bautista* and its associated missions were established near modern Guerrero, Coahuila. Of the several fords in this area, Paso de Francia was most commonly noted by travelers. Starting in 1689 El Camino Real between Paso de Francia and San Antonio evolved, gradually becoming known as the "*Camino Pita*," or the Pita Road, named for a campsite first used in 1716. These roads, which went northeast from Paso de Francia and then east toward San Antonio, were used by the first Spanish explorers and settlers of Texas. This remained the set route of subsequent expeditions through the 1720s, until Indian conflicts forced traffic to move farther south. Detailed records and site investigations for a segment of the route near the current intersection of Maverick, Zavala, and Dimmit counties are not available, so that segment is shown as a dashed line.

The second, later route, used primarily from 1750 to 1800, was known as the Lower Presidio Road. It went almost straight east from Paso de Francia before turning north to San Antonio. This route was also known as Camino de en Medio (see map: U.S. Portion of El Camino Real) because the route was between two other roads, the Pita Road to the

3. Many of these roads were not contemporaneous. For contemporary routes, the traveler's choice of a route often depended on the seasons and natural conditions (McGraw 1991, 4). For example, alternate routes may have been used when nonmission Indians were in the area or during wet or dry seasons so that travelers could avoid flooded streams or find adequate water supplies.

United States

Mexico

El Camino Real
de Tierra Adentro

El Camino Real
de los Tejas

SAN JUAN PUEBLO
ALBUQUERQUE

SANTA FE

JUAREZ

EL PASO

CHIHUAHUA

EL PARRAL

ALLENDE

SEA
OF
CORTEZ

DURANGO

CORRALITOS

MONTCLOVA

GUERRERO

SALTILLO

MONTERREY

ZACATECAS

AGUASCALIENTES

LASOS

GUANAJUATO

GUADALAJARA

MEXICO CITY

ACAPULCO

LOS ADAS

NACOGDOCHES

NATCHITOCHE

CROCKETT

BRYAN

BASTROP

AUSTIN

SAN ANTONIO

LA BAHIA

LAREDO

GULF OF MEXICO

VERACRUZ

OAXACA

NORTH

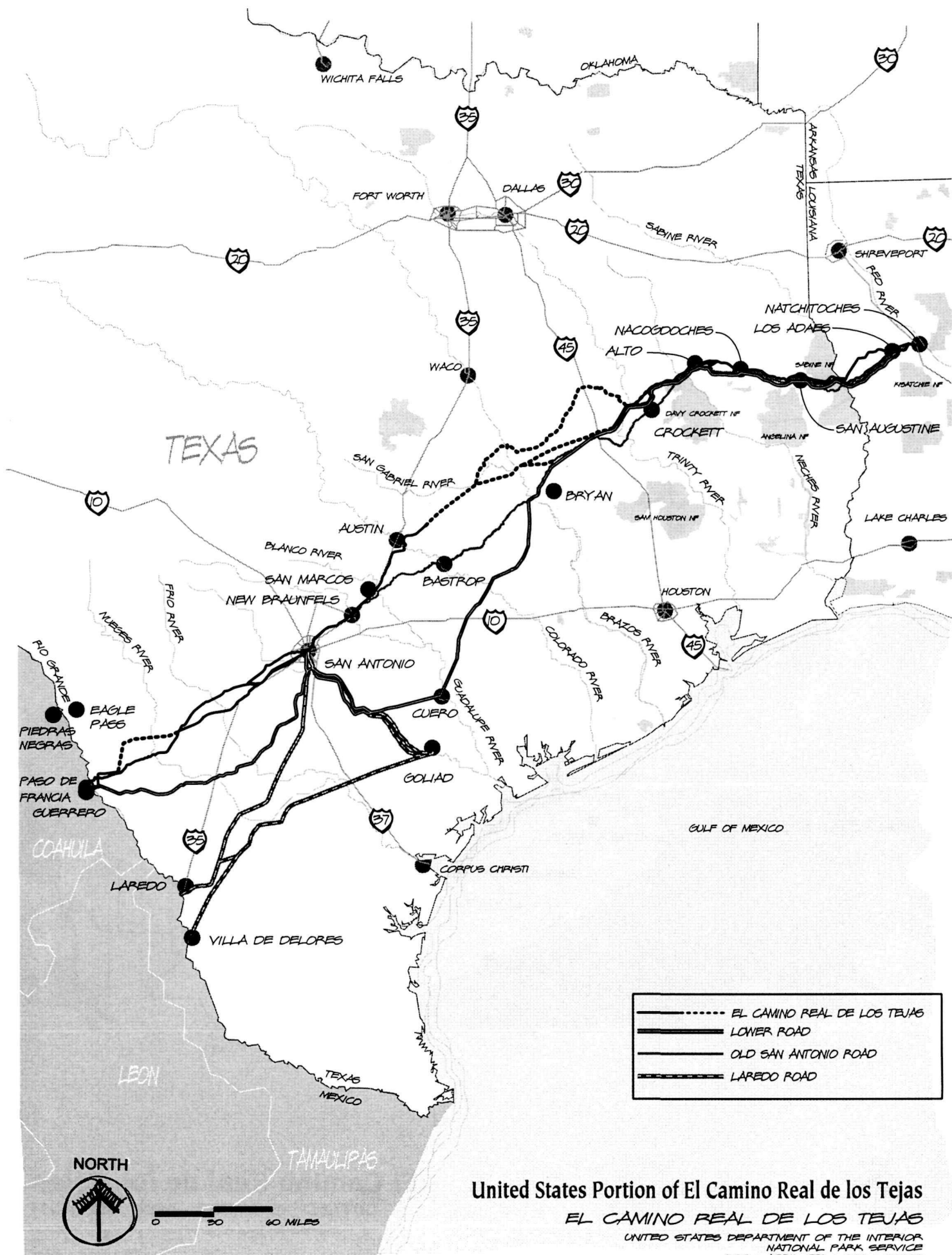


No scale

El Camino Real de los Tejas

UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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United States Portion of El Camino Real de los Tejas

EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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north and, on the south, another main road to San Antonio that ran east from the Laredo crossing of the Rio Grande.

The third route between the Rio Grande and San Antonio came into use with the founding of the *villas* of Dolores and Laredo in the 1750s and the requirement that they provide boats for travelers to cross the river. By the late 1760s many official expeditions to Texas crossed at one of these new *villas*. The routes from Laredo to San Antonio and Los Adaes connected to Monclova and Saltillo, just as the earlier routes had done. A spur from Antonio Road (1750–1830) goes directly north-northeast from Laredo. A second route from Laredo to San Antonio (1750–1830) ran east-northeast to La Bahía, near the present Goliad, Texas. The route then turned back to the northwest, following the San Antonio River to San Antonio.

Later, an “Upper Presidio Road” was opened (1795–1850). That road generally followed the route of the earlier *Camino Pita* to a point east of the Frio River, a short distance west of San Antonio, where the two roads diverged (see map: U.S. Portion of El Camino Real).

Together, these roads from San Juan Bautista to San Antonio represent continuous use across the centuries. Segments of the roads were used by indigenous people when the first Spaniards followed them to cross the Rio Grande and settle in Texas, and the roads were used intermittently and in changing patterns over the years.

San Antonio to Los Adaes

During the 18th century there were two main routes between San Antonio and Los Adaes, the Upper Road, or the *Camino de los Tejas* (1691–1800) and the Lower Road (1730s–90s). The Upper Road through or near modern New Braunfels and San Marcos reached the Colorado River just east of Austin and extended to the missions in eastern Texas in 1716. With some variations, the Upper Road was the predominant route for the explorers and early settlers of eastern Texas. Even after use of the Upper Road decreased, it remained an alternate route to the east.

The Upper Road is not well defined from a point about 10 miles northeast of Austin to the San Gabriel River. From the San Gabriel River to the Trinity River, variations are shown, one that can be identified from records and other, more northerly routes that are shown as dashed lines on the route maps. Diaries, chronicles, records, and onsite investigations do not provide sufficient information at this time to locate the dashed routes on the ground.

During the 1720s the road east from San Antonio shifted south to avoid conflicts with Indians. The Lower Road (circa 1730–90s) followed the Rio San Antonio downstream and turned east to cross the Guadalupe River near the present Cuero, Texas, the Colorado River just north of La Grange, and the Brazos at the mouth of the Little Brazos River, near Hearne. It joined with the northern route before their common crossing of the Trinity River. Most traffic, and especially official expeditions, followed the Lower Road between 1727 and the closing of Los Adaes in 1773. The Lower Road’s significance lies in its

being the primary route to Los Adaes over most of the 52-year period in which Los Adaes was the capital.

East of the Neches River, all three routes, the Upper Road (also known as El Camino Real de los Tejas), the Lower Road, and the Old San Antonio Road (which was sometimes called Camino de Arriba), are all on the same general alignment, with a few variations.

San Antonio to Natchitoches, Louisiana

After the presidio at Los Adaes was closed and the capital moved to San Antonio, Spanish residence and interest in eastern Texas declined but did not end. Both the Upper Road and the Lower Road to the east continued in use, with the Lower Road receiving more traffic. In the interest of straightening the route to East Texas, a new mail road was pioneered in 1795. Many segments of the new road, which Anglo-American immigrants would later call the San Antonio Road, are the same as the Upper Road; other segments are the same as the Lower Road. In the area of New Braunfels, the San Antonio Road turns slightly south to avoid crossing the Comal and Blanco Rivers. It then headed straight for the Brazos crossing of the Lower Road, passing the Colorado River at Bastrop. The Old San Antonio Road follows the Upper Road from San Antonio to the New Braunfels area where it turns slightly south to cross the Guadalupe and San Marcos Rivers. It then heads through Bastrop to the Brazos River, where it crosses in the same area as the Lower Road.

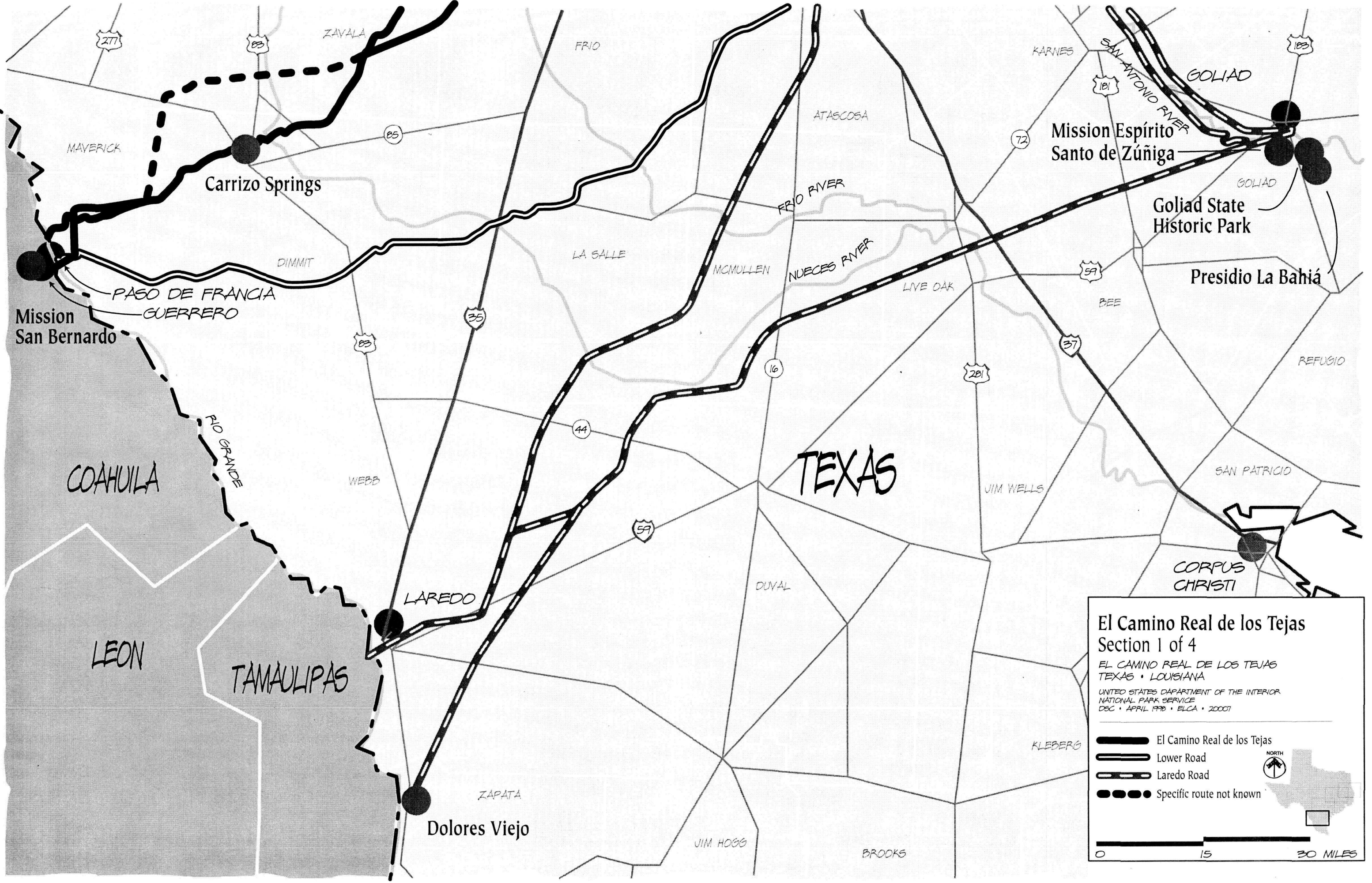
The earlier and later roads coincide in some places in Louisiana and Texas; in others, the routes changed through time. The establishment of ferries also helped to change regional transportation patterns. In what is now Leon County, Texas, parts of El Camino Real were essentially abandoned when Robbins' Ferry (across the Trinity River) and other downstream ferries (on the Sabine River) were built (Texas Parks and Wildlife 1994, 13).

Summary

Together these segments joined to form the long corridor known as El Camino Real de los Tejas and the later immigration and trade route that is now identified as the Old San Antonio Road. El Camino Real and its variations, along with the Old San Antonio Road, contributed to the settlement and development of the Texas frontier during the Spanish, Mexican, and Anglo-American periods.

The historic routes across south central Texas and northwestern Louisiana can be divided into two general categories on the basis of their locations, periods of use, and primary functions. In this feasibility study, the term El Camino Real de los Tejas will be used for the various routes between the Rio Grande in Maverick and Webb counties and Los Adaes, Louisiana. These routes were used by early explorers, missionaries, soldiers, and Spanish and Mexican settlers during the period from 1680 to 1821.

The term "Old San Antonio Road" will be used to describe the 19th century route between San Antonio and Natchitoches, Louisiana. The primary uses of this route were for emigra-



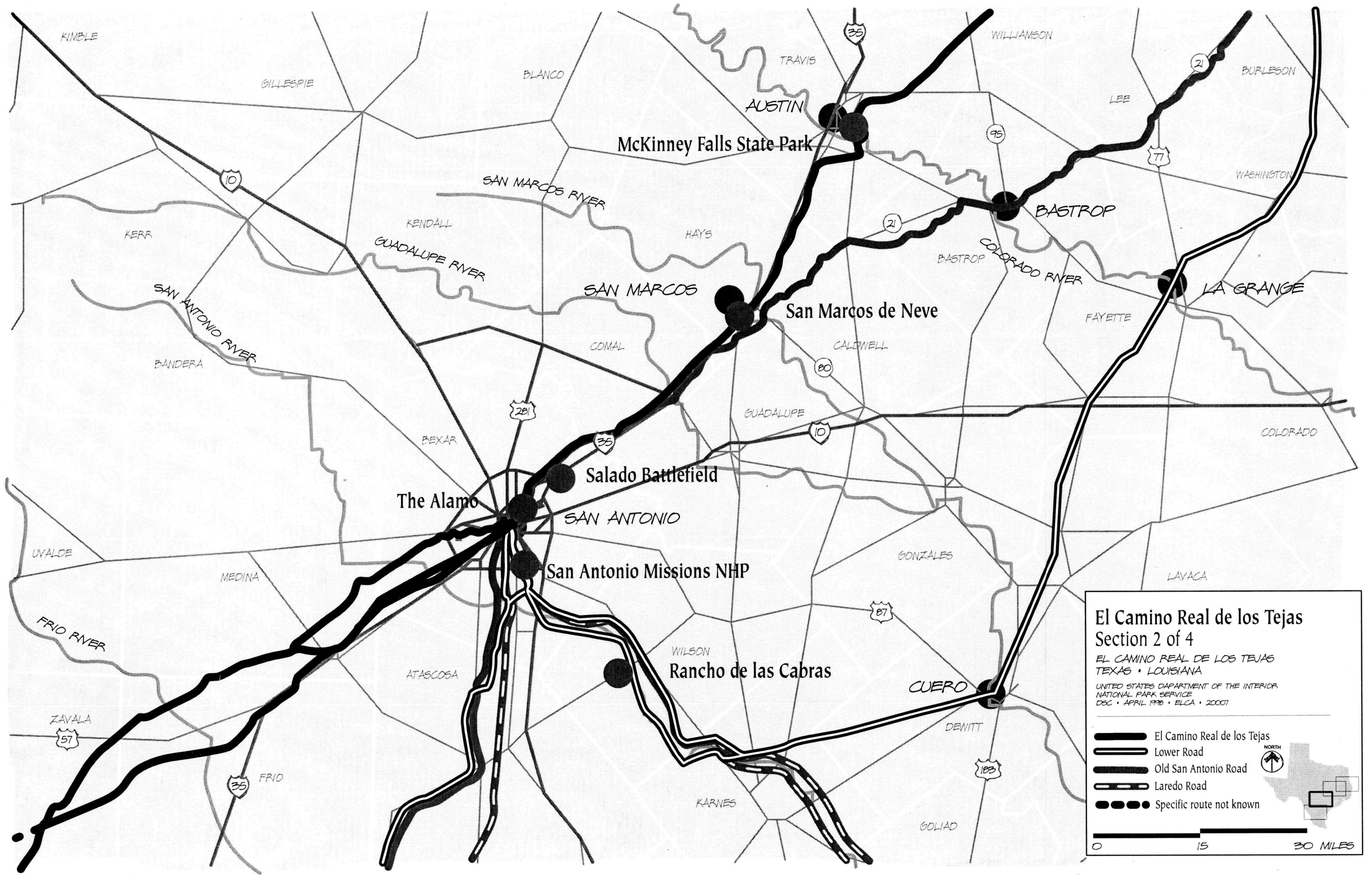
El Camino Real de los Tejas
 Section 1 of 4

EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS
 TEXAS • LOUISIANA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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- El Camino Real de los Tejas
- Lower Road
- Laredo Road
- Specific route not known

0 15 30 MILES



El Camino Real de los Tejas
Section 2 of 4

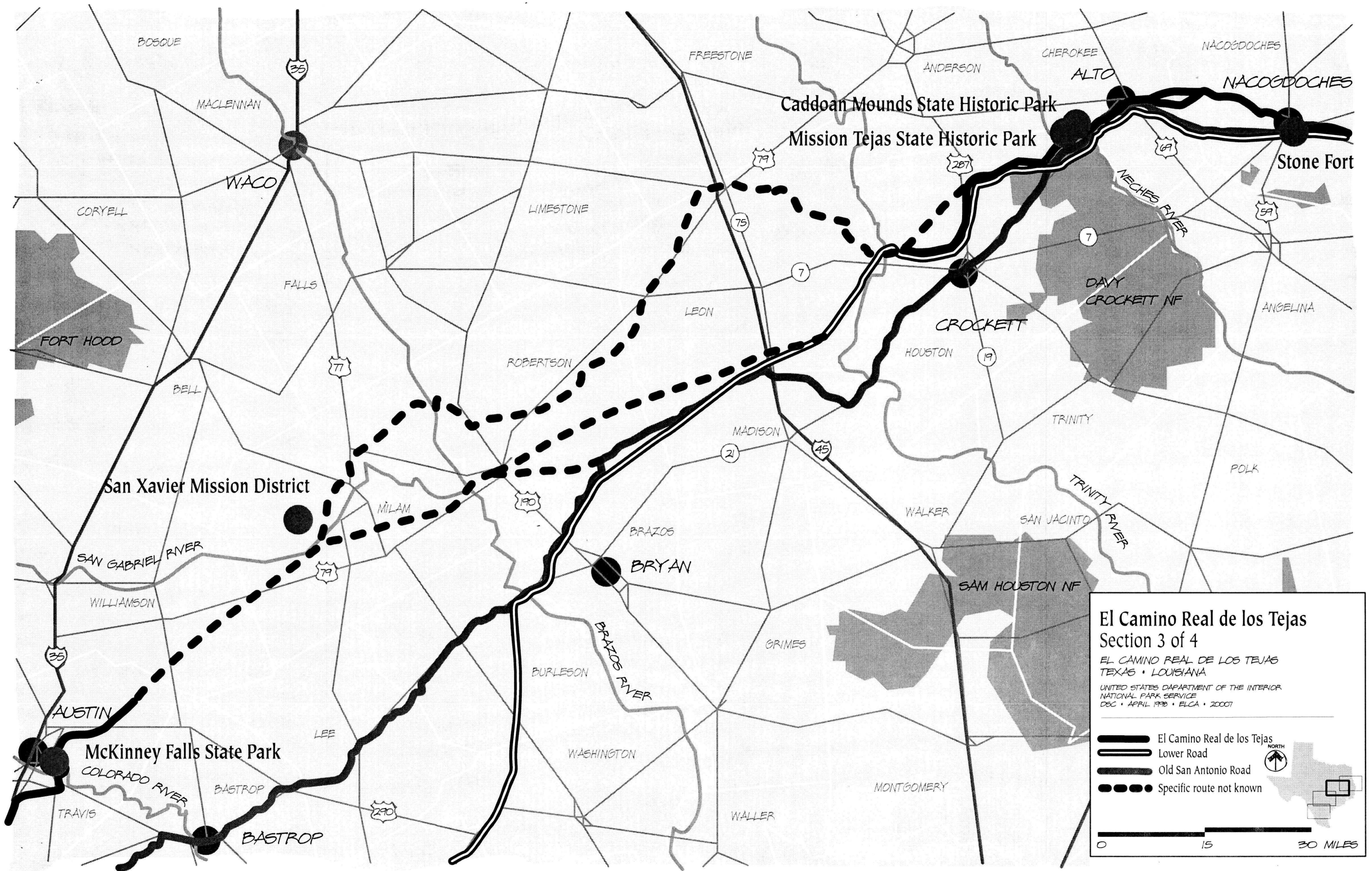
EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS
TEXAS • LOUISIANA

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- El Camino Real de los Tejas
- Lower Road
- Old San Antonio Road
- Laredo Road
- Specific route not known

0 15 30 MILES

NORTH



El Camino Real de los Tejas
Section 3 of 4

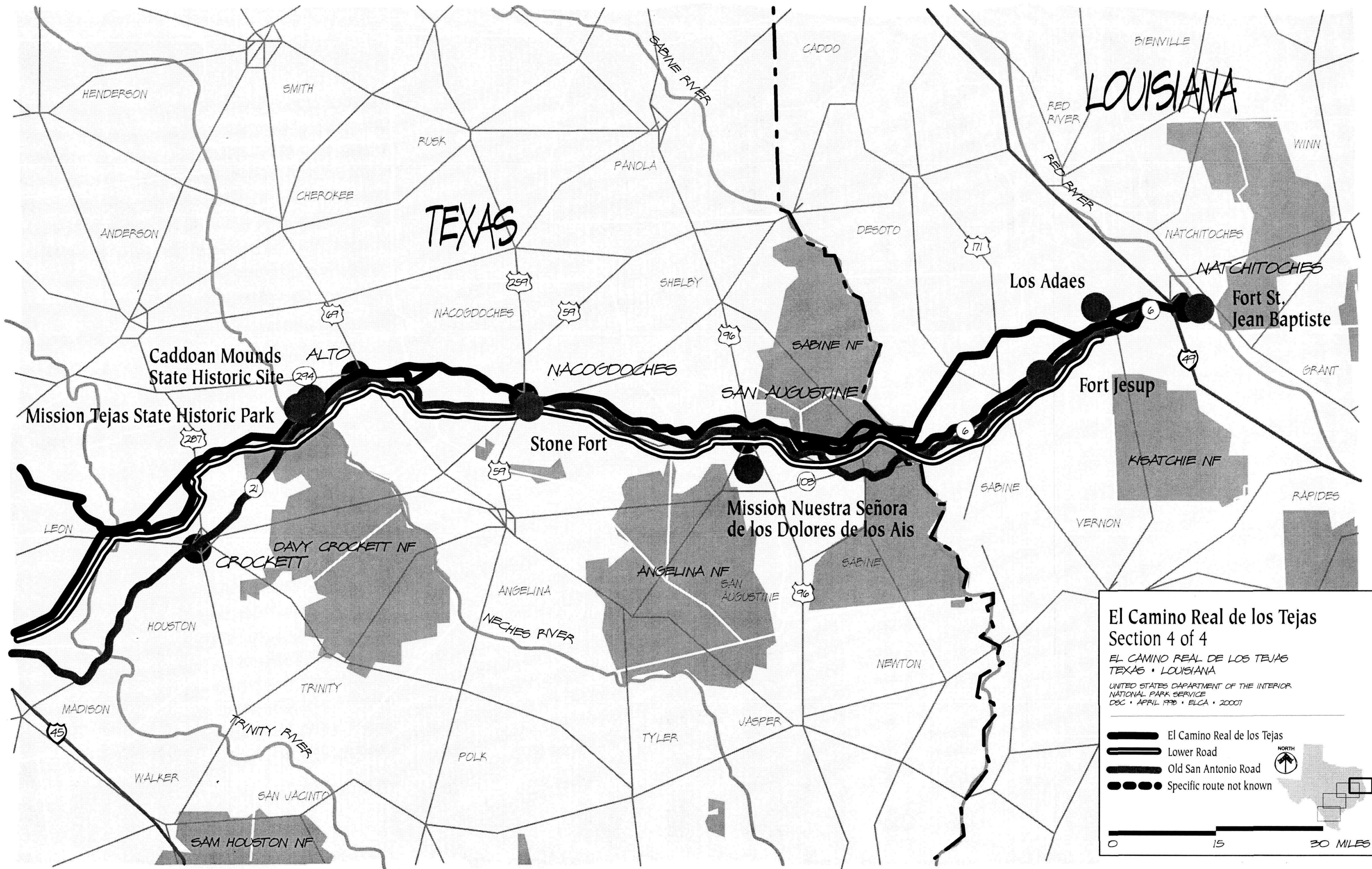
EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS
TEXAS • LOUISIANA

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— El Camino Real de los Tejas
== Lower Road
--- Old San Antonio Road
... Specific route not known

0 15 30 MILES

NORTH



El Camino Real de los Tejas Section 4 of 4

EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS
TEXAS • LOUISIANA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
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- El Camino Real de los Tejas
- Lower Road
- Old San Antonio Road
- Specific route not known

0 15 30 MILES

tion, trade, and commerce. The Old San Antonio Road also provided an important transportation corridor for military activities during the Texas Revolution and the war between Mexico and the United States.

DOCUMENTATION

The identification of the route of El Camino Real de los Tejas and its early variants was based largely on travel diaries, chronicles, and records of Spanish explorers. After missions and presidios were established in the province of Texas, other 18th-century travelers used much the same routes, bringing supplies to the fledgling missions, opening the area to trade, and making regular inspections of Spanish facilities.

More recently, historians and archeologists have studied prehistoric and historic trails followed by Spanish and French explorers, seeking to identify these early routes. Researchers have also studied the Indian names for streams and landmarks that are mentioned in travelers' journals (Johnson and McGraw 1991, 121–8; McGraw 1991a, 115–20). Journals kept by these early travelers contain a wealth of information about the indigenous people they encountered, as well as the landscape, the topography, the plants, and the animals. The Spaniards assigned place names to rivers, crossings, and *parajes* (campsites) along the routes. In many cases the early Indian meaning that described a locale or feature was later translated into Spanish and remains as a commonplace name today.

These descriptions, which document the routes that would become known as El Camino Real, include the following published transcriptions and translations of travelers' accounts:

- Alonso de León, 1689, 1690 (Canedo 1968; West 1905; Bolton 1908)⁴
- Domingo Terán de los Ríos, 1691–92 (Canedo 1968; Hatcher and Foik 1932)⁵
- Gregorio de Salinas Varona, 1693 (Canedo 1968; Foster, Jackson, and Brierley 1993)
- Fray Isidro de Espinosa, Fray Antonio de Olivares, and Capt. Pedro de Aguirre, 1709 (Tous 1930)
- Domingo Ramón, 1716 (Foik 1933; Tous 1930)⁶
- Martín de Alarcón, 1718 (Hoffman 1935, 1938)⁷
- Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo, 1721–22 (*Documentos para la Historia Eclesiástica y Civil de la Provincia de Texas o Nuevas Philipinas 1720–1779* [1961], Santos 1981)⁸
- Pedro de Rivera, 1727 (Alessio Robles 1946; Jackson and Foster 1995)

4. Massanet also described this expedition (Canedo 1968).

5. Accounts of this expedition were kept by both Terán and Massanet. The two documents can be found in both Canedo (1968) and Hatcher and Foik (1932).

6. Accounts of this expedition were kept by both Ramón and Espinosa.

7. Alarcón's journey was documented by the diary accounts of Fray Francisco Céliz (Hoffman 1935) and Fray Pedro Pérez de Mezquía (Hoffman 1938).

8. The only known diary of this expedition was kept by Padre Juan Antonio de la Peña.

Marqués de Rubí, 1767 (Jackson and Foster 1995; Alessio Robles 1939; Kinnaird 1958)⁹
 Fray Gaspar José de Solís, 1767–68 (Forrestal 1931; Kress 1931)
 Fray Juan Agustín de Morfi, 1777–78 (Alessio Robles 1935; McLean and del Hoyo 1967)

New routes such as the Old San Antonio Road (known in Louisiana as the Texas Road or the Road to San Antonio) developed between communities that had been linked by El Camino Real. In some cases the new routes incorporated segments of the earlier route. The following are some of these later travelers' accounts:

W. C. C. Claiborne, early 19th century
 Frederic Gaillardet, early 19th century (Gaillardet 1966)
 William Dunbar, 1804–05 (Dunbar 1904)
 Henry Brackenridge, 1810–11 (Brackenridge 1962)
 Amos Stoddard, early 19th century (Stoddard 1812)
 William Darby, early 19th century (Darby 1817)
 Timothy Flint, early 1820s (Flint 1968)
 Jean Louis Berlandier, 1830 (Berlandier and Chovel 1850)
 José María Sánchez, 1828 (Translated by Castañeda 1939)
 Randolph Marcy and G. B. McClellan, early 1850s (Marcy and McClellan, edited by Foreman, 1968)
 Frederick Law Olmsted, 1850s (Olmsted 1857)
 Zebulon Pike (Pike 1810; 1966 reprint)
 Gen. Adrian Woll 1846 (Kinsall 1996)
 Capt. George W. Hughes (1846)

The early historic use of El Camino Real has been described in the *Draft Historical Geographical Dictionary of El Camino Real para los Texas*, which was compiled by the Spanish Colonial Research Center of the National Park Service (NPS 1997). The dictionary contains abstracts of information from the journals and reports of explorers, missionaries, and soldiers, written official documents, and records of travelers. Research into these accounts, dating between the late 1600s and about 1854, has documented sites, communities, and places associated with El Camino Real. The Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) also documented the early camino routes in a 1991 study. TXDOT researchers used a wide variety of resources and methods, including review of the route surveyed by V. N. Zivley in 1915–16 and markers subsequently placed by the Daughters of the American Revolution (Clark and McGraw 1991, 11 et seq.).

The Old San Antonio Road was designated as one of Texas's historic trails in 1929, and much of the route is still in use as Texas Highway 21 and related county roads (McGraw 1991b, 3). Using county survey maps from the Texas General Land Office, The Texas Department of Transportation identified land grants in which El Camino Real formed a

9. A translation of Rubí's own journal was published by Jackson and Foster (1995); that of the expedition's engineer, Nicolás de Lafora, was published in the original Spanish by Alessio Robles (1939) and in English translation by Kinnaird (1958).

grant boundary or was otherwise described. To aid in plotting routes on 7.5-minute maps and 1:100,000 scale USGS survey maps, the researchers also used early journals and explorers' accounts, identification of landmarks, and Spanish Colonial names, historic maps, aerial photographs, file searches, and onsite inspections of archeological and historic sites (Clark and McGraw 1991, 11–15).

A number of researchers have compiled additional data on route segments and sites related to El Camino Real. These researchers include James Corbin (Stephen F. Austin University), Pete Gregory and George Avery (Northwestern State University in Louisiana), W. C. Foster (Cuero, Texas), Tommy G. Johnson, (Natchitoches, Louisiana), and Jack Jackson (Austin, Texas).

In a 1981 study of “El Camino Real and the Great Migration Route,” prepared by Mark Swanson of New World Research for Bovay Engineers, the 18th and early 19th century roads in Louisiana were examined. This study was based on area geography, contemporary travel narratives, and other primary sources, including original maps of the region and old plat and grant maps. This study identified and mapped known historic and prehistoric sites 5 miles on either side of the selected route. Swanson discusses Louisiana sections of the camino using a wide variety of maps, including the LaFon maps of 1806, the Darby map of 1816, and the Tanner map of 1820 (Swanson 1981, 20–4, 91–119).

Lawrence E. L’Herisson’s 1981 thesis examined the evolution of the Texas Road and the subsequent settlement of the area between Natchitoches and the Sabine River. L’Herisson used oral histories, surveys, and land grant records to document segments of El Camino Real (L’Herisson 1981).

ELIGIBILITY, FEASIBILITY, HISTORY, AND SIGNIFICANCE

ELIGIBILITY

To be a component of the national trails system, the National Trails System Act (16 USC 1241 et seq.) requires that trails be “extended trails,” which means they should be at least 100 miles long. The segments of El Camino Real de los Tejas that are being considered for designation generally extend between an area bounded by the Rio Grande and Natchitoches, Louisiana, about 550 miles. Because of the multiple route alignments that are being studied, as much as 2,580 miles could be designated. About 2,500 miles of the route are in Texas; the remaining 80 miles are in Louisiana. The segment of El Camino Real from the Rio Grande to Mexico City, which is a significant part of the route but beyond the scope of this study, is about 750 miles long.

The determination of the eligibility of a route as a national historic trail is based on the criteria set forth in the National Trails System Act. Section 5 of the act provides three broad criteria that a trail must meet to qualify for designation. The act also requires recommendations as to the desirability of trail designation. The criteria are quoted below, followed by an analysis of El Camino Real de los Tejas for each criterion.

- (A) It must be a trail or route established by historic use and must be historically significant as a result of that use. The route need not currently exist as a discernible trail to qualify, but its location must be sufficiently known to permit evaluation of public recreation and historical interest potential. A designated trail should generally accurately follow the historic route, but may deviate somewhat on occasion of necessity to avoid difficult routing through subsequent development or to provide some route variations offering a more pleasurable recreational experience. Such deviations shall be so noted on site. Trail segments no longer possible to travel by trail due to subsequent development as motorized transportation routes may be designated and marked onsite as segments which link to the historic trail.

Long before Spanish entradas (first explorations) into what has become the American Southwest, Indian trails traversed what are now Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana. From the late 17th century through the early 19th century, Spaniards used prehistoric trails for exploration and colonization in what was to become the province of Texas. Some of the same routes became known as the Old San Antonio Road and provided access to this vast area for traders, soldiers, and immigrants from the east. Various segments were used for different time periods and purposes, but El Camino Real was used from the first explorations of the late 17th century through the period of immigration from the east during the 19th century. Many of the segments overlap in places and share several destination points along the route.

For a summary of the national significance of El Camino Real, see the section that follows “(B),” below. For a more detailed account of historical events see “Historical Overview” (p. 30) and “Significance” (p. 40).

Many segments of the original routes and the sites associated with El Camino Real and the Old San Antonio Road have been identified. Some segments could be used to interpret the history of Spanish Texas and the Texas Republic; segments in northeastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana could contribute to the interpretation of the broad historic theme, “migration to new places” (that is, the history of immigration in America). The route segments also could be used for recreational retracement by hikers, horseback riders, or wagons drawn by horses, mules, or oxen. (See the “Alternatives” chapter, p. 64, and the “Landownership” section, p. 58, for more detailed discussion.) Criterion A is met.

- (B) It must be of national significance with respect to any of several broad facets of American history, such as trade and commerce, exploration, migration and settlement, or military campaigns. To qualify as nationally significant, historic use of the trail must have had a far reaching effect on broad patterns of American culture. Trails significant in the history of American Indians may be included.

Long-standing rivalries of European colonial powers for control of lands in the New World were played out along evolving travel routes that became known as El Camino Real de los Tejas. In the late 17th century, French interests expanded westward from the Mississippi River Valley into Spanish Texas. The official Spanish response was retaliatory. From Coahuila, Mexico, the route was extended north and east as far as Louisiana to counter and contain French intrusions into the northern fringes of Spain’s frontier. The Spanish quickly established missions and forts around which towns later grew. In time these towns along El Camino Real de los Tejas attracted Anglo-American immigration from the United States. El Camino Real de los Tejas transcends three historical periods, the Spanish colonial period, the Mexican period, and the Anglo-American period. The futures of several American Indian nations were tied to these larger forces and events.

In the middle 1680s French intrusions into Texas led Spanish officials to launch several large-scale military expeditions. By 1690 Spanish exploration of eastern Texas resulted in the establishment of missions in strategic areas to counter the French threat. Later travelers to eastern Texas explored new route variations for different segments. The outcome of their combined efforts helped to determine the southern and western boundaries of the United States and Mexico.

El Camino Real de los Tejas became a conduit for trade, migration, and settlement and their attendant cultural influences. El Camino Real “became the first route of evangelization across Texas to Christianize Indian groups from the Rio Grande to the Red River” and later led to the “uneasy buffer” zone between three divergent cultures — French, Spanish, and Indian (information from Texas Department of Transportation).

In time, El Camino Real helped to establish settlement patterns that continued, in some cases, to the present and created some of the oldest cities in Texas and Louisiana. Such urban areas as San Antonio, Nacogdoches, and Laredo were founded along El Camino Real de los Tejas, and segments of the *caminos* have become part of the modern highway system.

During the first half of the 19th century Spanish, Mexican, and American forces engaged in military activities ranging from small uprisings and skirmishes to pitched battles. These forces often relied on the Spanish roads to move armies and equipment.

Throughout the 19th century, portions of El Camino Real became known as the Old San Antonio Road and were used as immigration routes for people coming from the United States. As an avenue for continuity and change, El Camino Real and the Old San Antonio Road brought cultural innovations from the north, as it had earlier brought Spanish-Mexican institutions from the south. Many of the Spanish institutions and industries such as cattle ranching, agriculture, and religion endured the passage of time to become integral parts of the cultural blend of modern Texas.

Research conducted independently by the Texas Department of Transportation, the Spanish Colonial Research Center of the National Park Service, and a number of individuals and institutions has further documented the national significance and integrity of the route. Such research provides a substantial basis for the routes that are included in this feasibility study. Criterion B is met.

- (C) It must have significant potential for public recreational use or historical interest based on historic interpretation and appreciation. The potential for such use is generally greater along roadless segments developed as historic trails and at historic sites associated with the trail. The presence of recreation potential not related to historic appreciation is not sufficient justification for designation under this category.

El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Old San Antonio Road have high potential for recreational use and historical interest. A number of existing historic sites and potential interpretive facilities along the trail provide opportunities to continue existing programs and to develop new ones to foster historical appreciation and interpretation based on the history and culture of El Camino Real. Much of the original route can be identified, as can the locations of many river crossings and sites associated with the trail. In Texas, land records maintained by the General Land Office clearly show the routes through much of the state. The route alignments can be clearly identified in many counties where the route coincides with property lines. There are opportunities for retracing the trail on public lands and rights-of-way, and the potential exists for developing additional areas of public access on public and private lands with the permission and cooperation of the landowners (see the discussion of alternative 1, p. 64, for more details on recreational opportunities). Criterion C is met.

FEASIBILITY AND DESIRABILITY

Section 5 (b) of the National Trails System Act requires that other elements of a trail designation be explored in a trail study. The National Trails System Act contains the following language:

The feasibility of designating a trail shall be determined on the basis of an evaluation of whether or not it is physically possible to develop a trail along a route being studied, and whether the development of a trail would be financially feasible.

Whether or not it would be physically possible to develop a national historic trail along the route of El Camino Real would depend on the ability to identify the historic route across the landscape. It also would depend on the possibility of providing for public use and enjoyment through the establishment of a network of existing or proposed recreational facilities and interpretive sites where visitors could see and travel remnants of the trail. Each of these elements is addressed in the criteria below and in alternative 1.

To determine the financial feasibility, consideration must be given to the cost of a management plan, operational costs, and partnership involvement. There are several different approaches to determining the financial feasibility of El Camino Real de los Tejas as a national historic trail. The initial funding needed for a new trail would be for the development of a comprehensive management and use plan. In the past, the development of such plans for existing national historic trails has cost approximately \$250,000 each. If both El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Old San Antonio Road were designated as two separate but overlapping national historic trails, a combined management plan could be prepared for about \$315,000.

Trails require a base operating budget for the federal administering agency. On the basis of current national historic trail operations, it is estimated that \$250,000 annually would be required to provide a minimum level of professional staff and support services to operate a national historic trail. A budget of \$300,000 would also allow funding for several small-scale cost-share projects for interpretation, visitor use, and resource preservation per year. If both El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Old San Antonio Road were designated as two separate but overlapping national historic trails, the annual operating budget would be about \$375,000. Funding levels would not include large-scale projects such as video or film productions, major exhibit design and production packages, or extensive resource preservation. These kinds of projects would have to be funded through line item congressional appropriations or fund-raising efforts.

In the designation of a route as a national historic trail, consideration must be given to (a) the need for overall federal coordination and assistance and (b) the willingness of public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and individuals to participate in the protection, interpretation, and management of the trail.

Federal coordination of and assistance with visitor use and preservation is addressed in the "Alternatives" and "Environmental Consequences" chapters.

The willingness and interest of public agencies, private organizations, and individuals to participate in the protection, interpretation, development, and management of the trail has been demonstrated by many activities and projects that are underway or have been completed. Those activities are directly related to the protection and interpretation of significant

resources related to El Camino Real. As is outlined in this study, there is high potential for public recreation and historical interpretation along El Camino Real.

The need for overall federal coordination and assistance is demonstrated by the number and variety of ongoing activities that have been initiated at the federal, state, and local government levels and by academic institutions and nonprofit groups (see "Partnerships," p. 45).

It is desirable to designate El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Old San Antonio Road as part of the national trails system to commemorate the significant role this route played in history. Designation also would advance opportunities for international historic trail designation and for more cooperation with the government of Mexico and others to identify, study, interpret, and protect the nations' respective trail-related resources.

Section 5 (b) of the trail act also requires that the feasibility study address the following elements. Following each element is a description of how these requirements are being carried out.

the proposed route of such trail, including maps and illustrations

See the segment maps beginning on page 13 and the photos in this document.

the areas adjacent to such trails, to be used for scenic, historic, natural, cultural, or developmental purposes

The significant natural and cultural resources associated with El Camino Real are described in this study. If it was designated a national historic trail, only the route segments and sites that have a direct and significant tie to the historic period would be developed for public use or be eligible for preservation assistance in cooperation with landowners and land managers.

the characteristics which, in the judgment of the appropriate secretary, make the proposed trail worthy of designation as a national scenic or national historic trail; and in the case of national historic trails, the report shall include the recommendation of the secretary of the interior's National Park System Advisory Board as to the national historic significance based on the criteria developed under the Historic Sites Act of 1935. (40 Stat. 666, 16 USC 461)

The route of El Camino Real demonstrates the historical values associated with the national historic trails and provides opportunities to preserve representative cultural and natural resources (see "Significance," p. 40).

the current status of landownership and current and potential use along the designated route

Approximately half of the multiple routes of El Camino Real are within state or county road rights-of-way. Approximately 72 miles of the route are on federal lands; the rest is on private lands. The land use along the route alignments varies from arid lands to grasslands and dense woodlands, from intensive agriculture and grazing to low-density rural residential, to urban and industrial uses.

the estimated cost of acquisition of land or interest in land, if any

Little or no federal land acquisition is anticipated. The management of the national historic trail would depend on cooperative partnerships among the administering federal agency, interested property owners or land managers, and other entities.

the plans and costs for developing and maintaining the trail

See the "Alternatives" chapter, page 64, for costs.

the proposed federal administering agency

The National Park Service would be the proposed administering agency. The National Park Service, through the Long Distance Trails Group Office in Santa Fe, New Mexico, administers national historic trails in the Southwest, including the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. The lead federal administering agency would work in partnership with key trail-managing federal agencies (such as the U.S. Forest Service), with the states of Louisiana and Texas, and with organizations and individuals to protect the resources along El Camino Real de los Tejas.

The extent to which a state or its political subdivisions and public and private organizations might reasonably be expected to participate in acquiring the necessary land and in the administration thereof

Because little or no land acquisition is envisioned, there would be a limited role in land acquisition by the states or other political subdivisions. However, based on state, regional, and local support, states and counties, as well as nonprofit and other public organizations, would become more supportive in the subsequent management of the national historic trail. As is mentioned under "Partnerships" (p. 45), there is a growing commitment and involvement of the states of Louisiana and Texas, universities, nonprofit organizations, and the communities along El Camino Real de los Tejas.

The relative uses of the land involved, including the number of anticipated visitor-days for the entire length of, as well as for segments of, such a trail; the number of months that such trail, or segments thereof, will be open for recreation purposes; the economic and social benefits which might accrue from alternate land uses; and the estimated man-years of civilian employment and expenditures expected for the purposes of maintenance, supervision and regulation of such trail.

The designation of El Camino de los Tejas as a national historic trail probably would lead to increases in visitation and tourism revenues. These increases would not be significant on a regional and statewide scale. Tourism could increase in local communities along the trail corridor. Other federal, state, local, and private entities would benefit from the overall coordination of activities to preserve and protect trail-related resources, to interpret the trail, and to provide consistent opportunities for visitor use. The coordination of visitor services and interpretation could potentially increase tourism revenue.

Designation would have locally beneficial effects on the socioeconomic environment. Local communities would benefit from increased recognition and possibly greater understanding of cultural heritage, as well as from greater opportunities to interpret the trail.

The effects on land values resulting from designation would be few and limited. Little land acquisition, if any, would be recommended. Restrictive language in the actual trail designation legislation, as has been done for other national historic trails, could limit federal land acquisition to willing sellers only. Some landowners would benefit from the sale of lands and easements. It is possible that local municipalities would prohibit incompatible development that would adversely affect trail resources. Landowners and developers could be adversely affected by such actions of local governments. The owners of adjacent property might benefit from such land use actions.

Protected trail segments with recreational values might increase nearby residential property values. In some cases there could be a loss in property values because of visitor use on adjacent properties. Adverse impacts would be mitigated by involving affected landowners and other interests in the protection of the trail and the natural and cultural landscapes that are near the trail.

The anticipated impact of public outdoor recreation use on the preservation of a proposed national historic trail and its related historic and archeological features and settings, including the measures proposed to ensure evaluation and preservation of the values that contribute to their national historical significance.

If El Camino Real de los Tejas was designated as a national historic trail, a comprehensive management and use plan would be prepared that would address the locations and levels of recreational use. Mitigating measures would be adopted to ensure that there would not be any degradation of resources. Public use levels would be managed so that resources would not be adversely affected.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Period of Spanish Exploration

American Indians. Spanish *entradas* encountered many different American Indian groups, including Coahuiltecan speakers whose territory was spread across northern Mexico and Texas south of the Balcones escarpment. The missionization of these mobile bands of linguistically and culturally diverse hunters and gatherers began in the latter part of the 17th century. At the same time, warfare and disease began to sharply reduce their numbers.

In eastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana the Euro-Americans met settled Caddoan-speaking groups such as the Adaes, Doustioni, Natchitoches, Ouachita, and Yatasi. These groups appear to have been part of three vast intertribal confederacies. In eastern Texas the Ais, Anadarko, Hainai, Hasinai, Nabiti, Nacogdoches, and Nabadache were also part of a

large confederacy led by the Hasinai (Webb and Gregory 1986, 18).¹⁰ Some groups in northwestern Louisiana had elaborate ceremonial centers with mounds.

Indian guides led the Spanish explorers over previously established trails that connected cultural groups, villages, trading areas, campsites, and waterholes. Cabeza de Vaca learned from his Indian captors the locations of corridors of travel, river crossings, and topographical features. Later, Spanish explorers, assisted by Indian guides, adapted these prehistoric trails for horseback and cart travel, even constructing bridges for their military and missionary needs and to further economic development. These trails, and eventually El Camino Real, ran through the Gilmore Corridor, which divided the “broken hills of the Edwards Plateau and the coastal prairie” of Texas and afforded travelers both water and relatively level terrain (Swanson 1981, 13).

French-Spanish Conflict. The development of El Camino Real was triggered by the 17th century power struggle among England, Spain, and France — both for power in Europe and for the lands and peoples of the North American continent. England began in the late 1500s and early 1600s to establish colonies along the Eastern Seaboard. France also sent traders and missionaries far into the interior, asserting its claim to the entire length of the rich Mississippi River drainage. By the early 1500s Spain had established a strong presence in the Caribbean and Mexico and had begun looking northward to unexplored areas of the North American continent, seeking to extend its American empire northward from Mexico City.

Perhaps hoping to extend the French empire south and west, René Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, established a French fort and settlement on the southern coast of Texas in 1685, on land claimed by Spain (L’Herisson 1981, 10). Between 1686 and 1690 Alonso de León, the Spanish Governor of Coahuila, conducted four overland expeditions to locate and destroy the French Fort St. Louis. However, the fort had already been laid waste by Indians and internal dissent, and the surviving French settlers scattered as captives to all points on the compass (Bannon 1970, 100). Accompanied by Fray Damian Massanet, León led his fourth expedition from Monclova in 1689, using information provided by Jean Jarri or Géry, a survivor of the La Salle expedition who had been living with the Indians since before the destruction of the fort (Bannon 1970, 100–2).

León also proposed to establish a line of forts in the area to support the missions. Father Massanet countered with a proposal to establish only one Spanish settlement on the Guadalupe River and seven additional missions. The missionary approach was appealing largely because it appeared to be a more effective way of controlling a frontier far from centers of military strength and supply by (it was hoped) creating a loyal subject native population that would counter French incursions and those of other rivals in the area.

10. The confederation of the Hasinai were also known as the Tejas, Tayshas, Taychas, Tehas, Textia, Teisa, Teyans, or Teyens (Harrigan 1991, 113).

Colonization

To counter further French encroachments, León returned to eastern Texas in 1690 to establish missions among the Caddoan-speaking Indian groups farming the lands along the middle Trinity and tributaries of the Neches, Angelina, Attoyac, and Sabine Rivers. The missions of San Francisco de los Tejas and Santísimo Nombre de María were built “on or near San Pedro Creek, a western tributary of the Neches River” to serve these Indian groups (Corbin 1991, 191). León’s 1689 and 1690 expeditions from the San Antonio River eastward into the Hasinai, or southern Caddo, country of eastern Texas established the corridor of the future colonial road network, which came to be known as El Camino de los Tejas (Corbin 1991, 191).¹¹

In 1691 the Provincia de Texas was created as a frontier province with Domingo de Terán de los Ríos as its first governor (Bannon 1970, 100–2). Terán’s followup expedition to the newly created province in 1691–92 followed generally known routes but tried to establish a more direct line northeast toward the Tejas missions in eastern Texas. As Terán’s expedition passed through the future site of San Antonio, they named the area and river San Antonio de Padua.

The establishment of a missionary field in eastern Texas was difficult. Dissension between Terán de los Ríos and Massanet, low morale, lack of supplies, extreme cold winter weather, and the growing hostility of the Indians placed almost unbearable burdens on missionaries and soldiers alike. After suffering untold misery, Terán de los Ríos returned to Mexico, leaving the missionaries and nine soldiers to run the East Texas missions.

In response to requests from the mission priests for supplies, in 1693 Governor Gregorio Salinas Varona organized a relief expedition to Mission San Francisco de los Tejas. Despite resupply of the mission, it was abandoned four months later because of illness, environmental hardships, distance from Mexico City, and “the recalcitrance of the local Hasinai Indians” (L’Herisson 1981, 10; Castañeda 1936, 373, quoted in Clark 1991, 191).

Spanish officials continued to hear rumors of French traders among the Indians of eastern Texas. In 1700 and 1701 Frenchman Louis Juchereau de St. Denis explored along the Red River and visited the Natchitoches area, where he consummated “an early trade in livestock and salt with the Natchitoches” (L’Herisson 1981, 11).¹²

11. Historically, the term “Caddo” included a number of different American Indian groups with related languages. In Northwestern Louisiana these groups are the Adaes, Natchitoches, Doustioni, Ouachita, Yatasi, and Kadohadacho (Avery 1995, 6).

William C. Foster (1995, 31, 48–9) charted León’s 1689 and 1690 expeditions. The León Expedition encountered Indians who greeted them with the word *Techas* or *Teyas*, which, according to Massanet, meant “friends.” The greeting became associated with the word *Texas*.

12. A local salt source was situated just east of the Sabine River near the current alignment of Louisiana Highway 6.

In 1713 St. Denis established a trading post, Fort St. Jean Baptiste aux Natchitos, among the Natchitoches Indians on the Red River.¹³ The next year he traveled to the Spanish settlements on the Rio Grande, where he met presidial captain Diego Ramón (Castañeda 1936, vol. 2, 20). Despite the Spanish edict forbidding trade between the Spanish colonies and foreigners, St. Denis envisioned great profits for French Louisiana if the Spanish built settlements in eastern Texas (Fehrenbach 1968, 42). However, he was placed under house arrest because French trade was illegal under Spanish rules (Castañeda 1936, vol. 2, 31). Not only did St. Denis's diplomatic skills enable him to negotiate with Spanish leaders, but he successfully courted and married the step-granddaughter of Capt. Diego Ramón.

St. Denis accompanied the 1716–17 Spanish expedition to eastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana, where six missions and two presidios (Los Tejas and Los Adaes) had been established in a line between the Neches River and present Robeline, Louisiana (Avery 1995, 11; Clark 1991, 191). The five missions were San Francisco de los Tejas, La Purísima Concepción, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Dolores de los Ais, San Miguel de Linares de los Adaes¹⁴ and San José de los Nasonis.

The Spanish desire to strengthen claims to Texas resulted in the establishment of Presidio San Antonio de Béxar near the headwaters of the San Antonio River in 1718. A veteran missionary to Texas, Fray Antonio de San Buenaventura Olivares, helped to establish the Villa de Béxar and Mission San Antonio de Valero, later dubbed the Alamo (Castañeda 1936, vol 2, 93). By 1731 new immigrants from the Canary Islands also settled in San Antonio.

Meanwhile, the presence of the East Texas missions and a garrison among them appeared to counter French threats. However, when Alarcón inspected the missions in 1718, he observed tremendous hardships approaching crisis proportions. Even supplies essential for the celebration of the mass were unavailable.

War broke out in Europe between Spain and France in 1719, and the French captured Pensacola, Florida (Avery 1995, 11). In the same year a tiny contingent of French soldiers from Fort St. Jean Baptiste in Natchitoches captured one Spanish soldier, a missionary, and some chickens at Los Adaes. Word spread about the French “invasion.” The Spanish again evacuated the eastern frontier (L’Herisson 1981, 17–18).¹⁵

13. During the late 17th and early 18th centuries there was a great demand in Europe for deer hides. An 1804 report from Nacogdoches noted that 50,000 deer hides per year were traded along El Camino Real and other roads to French traders in Louisiana. The Caddo Indians were a vital part of the trade, exchanging deer hides for metal goods, cloth, and firearms. The Caddo were one of the primary groups that moved horses east along El Camino Real to French and English traders east of the Mississippi (Texas Historical Commission n.d.).

14. Los Adaes was only 21 miles west of the French post of Natchitoches. Despite the restrictions on trade with the French, the priest at Los Adaes often journeyed to Natchitoches to obtain provisions and to minister to the faithful (L’Herisson 1981, 16).

15. In the end, however, the newly established missions would be abandoned because of illness, the harsh environment, the remoteness, and a lack of cooperation from the local Indian groups.

In 1720 Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo organized a large expedition of people and livestock to reinforce the military command in eastern Texas. This expedition established a post at Espíritu Santo, sent a force to San Antonio to reinforce the settlements, and met with the Neches and Tejas Indians, as well as with St. Denis, now commander of Natchitoches (Castañeda 1936, vol. 2, 139–40). During this expedition, Aguayo also helped to found the mission of San José in San Antonio.

Aguayo continued during the early 1720s to direct changes in the establishment of Texas from his base at San Antonio. The presidio and mission at La Bahía were established by the spring of 1722. In all, Aguayo left 10 missions where there had been 7 and four presidios where there had been only two. Spanish claims to the area were strengthened by the establishment of posts at San Antonio and La Bahía and by the reestablishment of missions among the Tejas and the reoccupation of Los Adaes near Natchitoches (Castañeda, 1936, vol. 2, 139–41).

The post at Los Adaes was rebuilt about 1.5 miles east of the old mission site, and in October 1721 the Presidio Nuestra Señora del Pilar de los Adaes was dedicated as the new capital of Texas. The Misión de San Miguel de los Adaes was built nearby (Castañeda 1936, vol. 2, 147).¹⁶ The Adaes (Adais) Indians were encouraged to settle around the mission, but most continued to live in their own villages (Avery 1995, 11). The significance of Los Adaes was twofold: it represented the Spanish occupation of the entire province of the Tejas, and it served as the capital of the province of Texas.

However, French influence in the Los Adaes area continued, and St. Denis established many alliances among Caddoan groups (Avery 1995, 6). St. Denis's trading post at present-day Natchitoches was the first permanent French settlement in Louisiana. The isolation of Los Adaes and the fact that the French were more interested in trading than in fighting resulted in a relationship characterized by "cooperation and mutual support [between the French and the Spanish]" in the Los Adaes area (Avery 1995, 12).¹⁷

The difficulty of transporting supplies overland from Saltillo, epidemics and mistrust among the Indian converts, the lack of discipline among the soldiers, the harshness of the land, and reductions in funding and in the number of available military and religious personnel continued to plague the Spanish settlements, forts, and missions in East Texas. Crop failures between 1735 and 1773 resulted in increased contraband trade between the Adaesaños (people of Los Adaes), the French, and Indian groups.

16. Avery suggests that Los Adaes became the official capital of the province of Texas in 1731, following the closure of Dolores in 1729 (Avery 1995, 12). Historical maps indicate three "locales" in the vicinity of Robeline, Louisiana, for Los Adaes: the fort of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de los Adaes (1721), the mission of San Miguel de Linares de los Adaes (1717), and the settlement of Los Adaes (1721). The Adaes village site was also referred to as "Old Spanish Town" near the "Village of Adois" (Avery 1995, 17).

17. By 1723 Los Adaes had become an "Indian dominated community," with various tribes living there off and on (Webb and Gregory 1986, 31–3). The presidio of Los Adaes "became a hub for clandestine traders — French, Indian, and Spanish — and lasted for some 50 years. . . .Horses, cattle, and Lipan Apache . . . slaves were traded via Los Adaes." (Ibid., 23). Many descendants of the Adaes may have been absorbed into the general population of northwestern Louisiana today (Ibid., 33).

Within a year and a half after the establishment of the Tejas missions and presidios, Spanish officials began to reconsider the cost of maintaining these outposts in eastern Texas. In the viceroy's view, the missions had pacified the area, the presidios had stopped French incursions, Indian hostilities had ceased, and the area had become sufficiently populated so that it no longer needed protection.

Brig. Gen. Pedro de Rivera conducted an inspection of the presidios throughout the entire northern frontier of New Spain as part of a plan to reconceptualize the way Spain dealt with northern New Spain, including mapping and a redesign of the presidial system to create a more efficient military, determine which posts were needed, and to deal with reported abuses and corruption. Rivera's 1727 inspection resulted in the abolishment of the presidio of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores and the removal of the escort guards at Saltillo, San Antonio, and San Juan Bautista. The garrisons at Los Adaes, La Bahía, and San Antonio de Béxar were reduced.

Yet between 1731 and the 1770s the Spanish authorities embarked on an expansion of the missions, presidios, and civilian settlements in other parts of the province of Texas. Several East Texas missions were moved to the San Antonio River and reestablished as the missions of San Francisco de la Espada, San Juan Capistrano, and Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña. New settlements, including Dolores and Laredo, were built on the lower Rio Grande and along the Rio Grande from San Juan Bautista to El Paso. Among those were the short-lived missions at Presidio and at Junta de los Ríos. The San Xavier and San Sabá missions also were created.

Spanish Colonial Reorganization

In 1762 Spain became allied with the Bourbon French in the Seven Years War against England. When France lost the war, the 1763 Treaty of Paris transferred French Louisiana to Spain. Although the need for the presidio at Los Adaes ceased when Spain acquired Louisiana, the capital was retained there until 1773, and effective Spanish control of Louisiana "commenced first at Natchitoches" (L'Herisson 1981, 38). During this time Carlos III ordered a reassessment of all Spanish defenses in the New World. The order resulted in the 1766–68 inspection of the entire presidio system by the Marqués de Rubí and his staff (Sánchez 1990, 5). Rubí's men visited every outpost between San Sabá and Los Adaes to gather economic, geographic, political, social and ethnological information.

In 1768 Friar Gaspar José de Solís inspected the Texas missions lying between the Rio Grande and the Tejas country near Los Adaes. On the basis of the Solís and Rubí surveys, reforms were instituted to strengthen the economic, political, and military aspects of Spanish institutions in the Americas (Sánchez 1990, 3–4). The East Texas presidios and missions were abandoned because the inspections found that the East Texas missions could show very few converts, thus not justifying their considerable expense to the crown.

The East Texas mission settlers were removed in 1773 to the new capital of San Antonio, where they were given lands.¹⁸ Almost 100 of the Adaesaños died on the journey to San Antonio; others hid to avoid being removed to San Antonio. A number of Adaesaños never left Los Adaes, and others returned and eventually settled in and around the village of Adaes and the Spanish Lake community. Some may have resettled in the present-day Caddo Adai Indian community (Avery 1995, 15). By the late 18th century the remnants of the Caddoan-speaking groups of eastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana began to consolidate near modern Caddo Station. Some Adaesaños were given permission to settle at Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli, but Bucareli (at El Camino Real crossing of the Trinity River) was abandoned in 1779 because of Comanche attacks, flooding, and crop failures.

Settlers from Bucareli established the town of Nacogdoches in 1779. Nacogdoches and Natchitoches “became the twin settlements of the contraband commerce,” and a network of traces paralleling what would later become the Old San Antonio Road grew between the towns (L’Herisson 1981, 42).

The Reglamento de 1772, a set of military regulations that provided a plan of defense, as well as rules for military personnel, was established to set the tone and pattern of military administration on New Spain’s frontier. These military reforms included the establishment of new presidios in a line to form a cordon across New Spain and the establishment of forts where needed (Sánchez 1990, 6). When Los Adaes was abandoned in 1773, El Camino Real continued to be used for trade and travel, although it no longer possessed the “royal road” imprimatur.

From 1779 to 1782 some 9,000 head of cattle were driven by Spanish Texas rancheros and escorted by Spanish soldiers along the Lower Road from La Bahía to Nacogdoches, Natchitoches, and Opelousas to help feed the Spanish forces of General Bernardo de Gálvez, who defeated the British along the Gulf Coast during the American Revolution (Thonhoff 1981; Jackson 1986). This assistance from the Spanish colonials to the English colonials helped to prevent British control of Mississippi River and the Gulf Coast.

Events in Europe again would cause shifts in the New World. Spain transferred Louisiana to France in 1800; France in turn sold the vast domain to the United States in 1803.

At the time of the Louisiana Purchase, the French of Louisiana had disputed the eastern boundary of New Spain, claiming territory all the way west to the Sabine and Brazos Rivers. Spanish claims extended east to the Red River. To settle the dispute, an informal agreement (the Neutral-Ground Accord, 1806–1821) was reached between the American General Wilkinson and the Spanish General Herrera: Spanish civil and military activities would remain west of the Sabine, and the Americans would operate east of the original Spanish-French boundary along the Arroyo Hondo near Natchitoches. The intervening area,

18. Solís’s trek across the Rio Grande added more information about the land and the route within the corridor of other expeditions to San Antonio and beyond to Los Adaes.

known as the Neutral Ground, was “soon frequented by outlaws and highwaymen who robbed with impunity along the [Old] San Antonio Road” and in Spanish Texas and moved contraband along Nolan’s Trace and other roads paralleling El Camino Real (Swanson 1981, 9, 34–5).

The Neutral Ground was also being used as a staging ground for “filibusters,” including a number of Anglo-Americans (Chipman 1992, 235).¹⁹ The American filibusters, seeking to annex Texas to the United States, were joined by revolutionaries from Mexico. These filibusters used the San Antonio Road to move their expeditions into and through Texas, eventually taking Nacogdoches, La Bahía, and San Antonio from the Spanish. In April 1813 a self-styled “Republican Army of the North” temporarily controlled Texas and issued a “Declaration of Independence of the State of Texas.” The “army” suffered a devastating defeat by Spanish forces at the Medina River that September, and its members were forced to retreat to the Neutral Ground.

The surprising success of filibusters into Texas, even if short-lived, was an indication of larger problems within Spain’s new world empire. Revolutions within Spain’s dominions had broken out during the first years of the 19th century and all but eliminated Spain’s presence in Latin America by mid-century. The Mexican independence movement (1810–21) ended Spanish monarchy in New Spain, now Mexico.

Mexican Period and American Emigration to Texas

In 1821 Mexico achieved independence from Spain, and Stephen F. Austin secured approval from Spanish (and later Mexican) officials to bring American settlers to the Austin colony land grant. This was the beginning of what would become large-scale migration into Texas. Austin sent letters to newspapers requesting settlers to join him. In Little Rock, a town Austin had helped found three years earlier, the *Arkansas Gazette* of October 6, 1821, published his letter with advice for emigrants to come down the Mississippi River to the Red River and up to Natchitoches, Louisiana. From there they would head west along the road to San Antonio, the former Camino Real (Barker 1926, *passim*).

While Austin’s colony was settling along and below the old Camino Real, in 1824 the government of Coahuila y Texas offered a phenomenal 4,428 acres of grazing land and 170 acres of farmland to colonists. Within a decade more than 30,000 Anglo-Americans and 3,000 slaves had moved into Texas, mostly in the eastern section, which was isolated from the predominantly Hispanic settlements of San Antonio and Goliad. This area had an estimated population of 4,000 (White 1991, 65).

Most of the settlers came from the states of Louisiana, Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee and followed the road from Natchitoches to Nacogdoches, Bastrop, and San Antonio. The

19. The term *filibuster* in this usage referred to “a military adventurer”; in this sense, to *filibuster* meant to carry out insurrectionist or revolutionary activity in a foreign country.

Old San Antonio Road that ran through Nacogdoches became, in the words of one contemporary, “the great thoroughfare of emigrants to Texas” (Holley 1836, 112).

Many factors led up to a conflict and then revolution of the new colonists against the central government in Mexico. After the disastrous siege at the Alamo and the massacre at Goliad, the brief Texas Revolution of 1835–36 succeeded on April 21, 1836, at San Jacinto with the defeat of the Mexican army under President and General Antonio López de Santa Anna. Gen. Sam Houston also captured Santa Anna on the battlefield and subsequently forced the Mexican president, under obvious duress, to sign a treaty supporting the independence of Texas (Weber 1982, 158–78).

American emigration was further stimulated by the news of the independence of Texas and the additional generosity of its constitution in continuing the Spanish and Mexican land grant traditions by awarding large tracts of lands to settlers. The editor of the Memphis, Tennessee, *Enquirer* wrote on September 9, 1837, that 6,000 people had passed through town that summer headed west. He added, “The whole world is moving into Texas . . . there is scarce elbow-room left in our streets and highways leading into town on account of the constant pouring in of horses and wagons and the helter-skelter melee of immigrating paraphernalia.”

This influx caused the population of Texas to skyrocket to 142,000 in 1846, when it entered the union, and then to 212,000 in 1850. This migration of people was the first of three great 19th century thrusts of American settlers into the West, first into Texas, then Oregon, and finally, California (Billington, 1967, 507).

Individuals and communities made improvements along the Old San Antonio Road during this period. Ferries were established at major river crossings, such as Crow’s ferry and the Gaines ferries, both across the Sabine River. Mail contractors or stage companies such as the San Antonio-Natchitoches Coach Line improved sections of road. Wooden bridges were built. Freighters used the road, especially in East Texas, where the expanding cotton production was shipped to the steamboat landing on the Red River at Natchitoches (Hogan 1946, 53–68).

However, in some places the Old San Antonio Road remained only a meandering path or masses of ruts. Frederick Law Olmsted traversed the route and noted that “the road could hardly be called a road.” West of Natchitoches, he wrote, “Each man had taken such a path as suited him, turning aside to avoid, on high ground, the sand, on low ground, the mud” (Olmsted 1857, 55). Migration was the dominant use of the road in the east, but the road served military campaigns in the west.

The annexation of Texas by the United States, along with other events, led to the war with Mexico. The American Army established posts during and after the war (1846–48). The army made further improvements to the Old San Antonio Road to move munitions into Texas and defend it.

Early in the war Lt. Col. William Selby Harney and his command left San Antonio along the Presidio Road (old El Camino Real), crossed the Rio Grande, and captured Guerrero without a fight. Gen. John Wool and 3,400 troops followed in September 1846, marching along the road used by Mexican Gen. Adrian Woll into Mexico and on to Saltillo. Nearby, at the battle of Buena Vista, Wool joined with Gen. Zachary Taylor to defeat Mexican troops under Santa Anna on February 22–23, 1847. The battle of Buena Vista and the campaign in northern Mexico was a significant victory for the United States, which held the region for the rest of the war (Bauer 1974, 208–22; Carter and Carter 1963, 349–53).

San Antonio became the military headquarters for Texas. The old Camino Real to the west was used to supply troops and the war effort, which moved farther into Mexico. After Gen. Winfield Scott's troops marched inland from Vera Cruz and captured Mexico City, hostilities ended on February 2, 1848, with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. (Carter and Carter 1963, 369)

During the war the supply line to San Antonio shifted to Galveston Bay, away from the Old San Antonio Road east of town. More importantly, with the development of new towns such as Austin (which was selected as the capital of the Texas republic in 1839) and the growth of Galveston and Houston, the importance of the Old San Antonio Road diminished as travelers followed new routes across Texas.

After the war the growth of ranching and farming, especially cotton production, caused further changes in transportation routes. Texas cotton production jumped from 58,000 bales in 1849 to 431,463 bales in 1859. The Old San Antonio Road was used as an important trade route for cotton bound for the navigable Red River from eastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana. But most of the Texas cotton, which was produced farther south of the route, went via Galveston Bay to world markets (Calvert and De Leon 1996, 112–15).

The first railroad in the state opened in 1853 at Harrisburg, near Houston. Thirty-one years later that rail corridor would become part of the transcontinental Sunset Route. Railroads extended out from Houston to tap inland markets by 1860, and a railroad was under construction toward San Antonio (which was reached in 1877). New roads, the development of the Texas railroad net, and economic shifts before the Civil War ended the primacy of the Old San Antonio Road as a route for immigration, for commerce, and for the military (Calvert and De Leon 1996, 115–16, 171; Spratt 1955, 25–7).

With time the Old San Antonio Road became immortalized through the memoirs and reminiscences of the first settlers of Texas from the United States. The writings of the young journalist Edward King exemplify how quickly the Old San Antonio Road had become a part of idealized history, a symbol and a legend by 1874. In his words, "Across the plains runs the famous 'old San Antonio road,' which for 150 years, has been the most romantic route upon the western continent" (King 1874, 87).

Serious study of El Camino Real and the Old San Antonio Road began in the early 20th century. At the behest of governor James E. "Pa" Ferguson, V. N. Zivley surveyed a historic route of the Old San Antonio Road / El Camino Real. As a commemorative effort,

elected officials and preservationists joined to have the route marked and a new highway, Texas Route 21, designated along Zivley's route, for the most part, from the Louisiana border to the Rio Grande. Interest continues in the historic route, as exemplified by the recent efforts of the Texas State Department of Highways and Public Transportation to study, identify, and plan for the preservation of the Old San Antonio Road / El Camino Real (McGraw, Clark, and Robbins 1991, *passim*).

SIGNIFICANCE

Eligibility for Designation

The routes of the trail proposed for designation are described beginning on page 8.

El Camino Real de los Tejas is of national significance and possesses great value in illustrating America's cultural themes. The Spanish explorers' routes that would later become El Camino Real followed established Indian trails and trade routes between prehistoric communities and trading areas, continuing a long-standing tradition of communication, travel, and trade.

The development of the route(s) had irreversible consequences in the lives of native peoples. American Indian family and community life, religious practices, intertribal relations, and resource use and technology underwent significant changes as a result of the establishment of El Camino Real. Traditional tribal areas were depopulated by disease, military activities, relocation, and resettlement. New intertribal alliances and enmities developed, and in some instances survivors from two or more tribal groups banded together. The establishment of the missions and El Camino Real also had a "domino" effect on some groups: as areas were depopulated other tribal groups moved into the vacated lands. Tribes that once moved from place to place harvesting resources over the course of the year became sedentary farmers as they were concentrated in the newly established missions.

The route also played an important role in the convergence of European and Indian cultures in the New World by linking previously unconnected cultural and linguistic groups, introducing a foreign religious system (Catholicism) to groups along the route, and serving as an agent for cultural diffusion, biological exchange, and communication. In turn, American Indians contributed their knowledge of their culture — food, clothing, drugs, medicines — to the newcomers. Ethnic communities such as Spanish Lake, Louisiana, document the intermixing of these several different cultures. The richness of these local and regional cultures contributes to the historical significance of El Camino Real de los Tejas.

The development of the trail was triggered by the 17th century power struggle among England, Spain, and France for control of the lands and peoples of the North American continent. The Spanish entradas and the establishment of missions and presidios along the original route(s) made Spanish claims to the entire area unmistakably clear to the French

and the English. It was French and English intervention that stimulated Spanish efforts to “control the territory far earlier than they would have otherwise” (Clark 1991, 27).

The development and maintenance of the route across vast distances and difficult terrain illustrates a major commitment of Spanish resources and human energy. Thus the route not only was nationally important, but it played a vital role in international relations, expansion and imperialism, commerce, and immigration. The Spanish entradas prepared the way for Euro-American occupation of the area by documenting the previously unknown geography, topography, climate, fauna, flora, cultures, and mineral riches of this area. The outcome of their combined efforts helped to determine the southern and western boundaries of the United States and Mexico. Explorers’ and colonists’ diaries provided the earliest known documentation of this vast area.

El Camino Real was the lifeline between settlements in New Spain and the northeastern frontier, connecting “by little more than a mule trail, the fragile frontier missions of an unexplored province to distant colonial settlements south of the Rio Grande” (McGraw 1991a, 3) Because “most seaborne contacts with Mexico were not established until the 19th century,” the route was “the only form of overland travel available” and “the only means of communication between Texas and the rest of New Spain” (de la Teja 1991, 43). It was a post road long before the Republic of Texas established its mail service.

With the establishment of the missions, El Camino Real became the main thoroughfare for colonial traffic and trade to and from the missions and presidios of the province. It became a critical component in the economic and demographic development of the Spanish and French frontiers as the route evolved into a vital overland trade route carrying both lawful and illicit goods among the residents of Spanish Texas, Mexico, and French Louisiana.²⁰ According to de la Teja, El Camino was “the sole avenue of commerce throughout the colonial period” (1991, 48). The route and the adjoining settlements allowed the movement of people and goods through areas of difficult terrain such as the swamps and woodlands of eastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana.

Throughout the Spanish period, El Camino Real de los Tejas became a conduit for trade, migration, settlement, acculturation, and military expeditions and their attendant cultural influences. In time settlement patterns were established that continued, in some cases, to the present. Such urban areas as San Antonio, Nacogdoches, and Laredo were founded along El Camino Real de los Tejas.

El Camino Real was the “artery of international transactions” and a primary route for the movement of cattle and other livestock. This trade route set the stage for the development of the cattlemen’s empire on the Great Plains.²¹ El Camino Real, which “was a cattle trail a century before the Chisholm Trail opened,” was a vital element in the development of the agriculture, production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services in the

20. Many of the smugglers’ routes paralleled the camino, but today they are poorly documented.

21. Cattle raising was “firmly established” along El Camino Real at San Antonio by 1731 (L’Herisson 1981, 49).

southern Texas plains and the woodlands of Louisiana (de la Teja 1991, 48). It channeled entrepreneurs and traders into the area.

The physical and legal patterning of land grants, settlements, and subsequent transportation patterns in Texas and Louisiana were shaped by the location of El Camino Real, a convenient and recognized landmark. Grant boundaries followed the route of El Camino Real, an express route that helped to establish land use patterns that are extant in both Texas and Louisiana today. Spanish claims were chosen by virtue of their being adjacent to, or straddled by, the Old San Antonio Road (Louisiana Highway 6) (L'Herisson 1981, 99). The "royal road," or the road to Nacogdoches or to San Antonio, is mentioned or shown in a number of grants and claims in both Texas and Louisiana.²²

The Villa de Dolores, established in 1750 on the north side of the Rio Grande, downstream of present-day Laredo, became the northernmost outpost of Nuevo Santander. As a result a new crossing of the river came into use. This crossing provided a route to San Antonio and Los Adaes with less risk of Indian attack. By 1755 almost all the traffic bound from the interior to La Bahía, San Antonio, and Los Adaes crossed the Rio Grande at Dolores (Weddle 1968). Because of its strategic importance at the time of its founding, Dolores was given the status as *villa* despite its being, in reality, a rancho or estancia.

After its 1755 founding at Paso de Jacinto of the Rio Grande, Laredo attracted most of that traffic. Although Dolores remained a principal crossing for only a short time, it set a precedent for traffic turning east from the Rio Salado rather than continuing north to San Juan Bautista. Thus, it set the stage for the emergence of Laredo as a major transit point for traffic between Mexico and Texas.

The Laredo to San Antonio road(s) also played an important role in settlement of Nuevo Santander, part of which is now encompassed by southern Texas. Emigration from central Mexico and from the presidios in the northern province to this area was encouraged by liberal land grants.²³ However, unlike the mission communities of eastern Texas, Nuevo Santander along the lower Rio Grande was characterized by including a civil settlement.

For more than 150 years (1690 to about 1850) El Camino Real provided access, both east and west, to many different armies: Spanish, French, Mexican, Republic of Texas, and American. The roadway was one of the most significant factors contributing to the conquest, colonization, and development of a province, a republic, and later, the largest of the contiguous states. The locations of the changing routes of the road through several centuries directly influenced the establishment of many Texas towns and ultimately the modern network of state highways (McGraw, Clark, and Robbins 1991, xix).

22. For example, see Murphy's Special Grant west of Natchitoches, LaNana Grant (bisected by the Texas Road), and the Miguel Crow Claim.

23. This previously unexplored area was colonized by José de Escandón in the mid-1750s.

El Camino Real routes through Laredo were important military transportation routes across the borderlands. They were used by the Mexican insurgents during the war against Spain, and again during the 1840s as routes for the Texas volunteers who planned to invade Mexico.

Historically, people are primary agents of change. Many different figures are associated with the establishment and use of El Camino Real, including the early Spanish and French explorers listed beginning on page 21, as well as later travelers such as Zebulon Pike, Jean Louis Berlandier, Stephen F. Austin, and Frederick Law Olmsted.

From 1779 to 1782 some 9,000 head of cattle were driven by Spanish Texas rancheros and escorted by Spanish soldiers along the Lower Road from La Bahía to Nacogdoches, Natchitoches, and Opelousas to help feed the Spanish forces of General Bernardo de Gálvez, who defeated the British along the Gulf Coast during the American Revolution (Thonhoff 1981; Jackson 1986). This assistance from the Spanish colonials to the English colonials helped to prevent British control of Mississippi River and the Gulf Coast.

By the middle of the 19th century El Camino Real came to be known as the Old San Antonio Road, with the route evolving as sections improved with use or routes were changed to meet the needs of travelers or the new American settlers. Westward expansion is a primary theme in the history of the United States. During the period of great migrations, in the 25 years after 1825 there were three main thrusts of settlement westward, first to Texas, then to Oregon, and, finally, to California. The Old San Antonio Road from the Red River settlement of Natchitoches, Louisiana, west to San Antonio was the primary thoroughfare for early immigration into Texas, especially to the rich farmlands of the coastal plains. From an estimated population of 7,000 in 1830, predominantly Hispanic, the state skyrocketed to 212,000 residents within two decades.

The Old San Antonio Road was an avenue of change. The expansionist Jacksonian era politicians who moved to the unstable Mexican Republic brought about, because of various reasons or rationales, the independence of Texas and, subsequently, its annexation into the United States. Two prominent examples of Jacksonian politicians and expansionists are Sam Houston, confidant of President Andrew Jackson, former governor and congressman from Tennessee and a lawyer at Nacogdoches when the rebellion began, and David Crockett, former Tennessee congressman who followed the route to San Antonio and met his death at the Alamo.

The Texas annexation of 1845 was the major step toward the war between the United States and Mexico in 1846–48. Again the Old San Antonio Road was used as one of the supply lines and troop movement routes within Texas and into Mexico. Parts of the route would continue to serve military purposes after the war ended with the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

As a result of annexation and war, Spanish and Mexican traditions, laws, and cultures mixed with those of Americans; each would evolve into something new and different. The mixing of cultures occurred along the Old San Antonio Road, from Louisiana to San

Antonio. Obvious examples of mixing are the Spanish place names (adapted to English pronunciation); more subtle are the boundaries of old land grants that still define the landscape or the extant examples of early Hispanic structures or building traditions. San Antonio, especially, would come to represent and celebrate the blending of cultures.

The road also served as an avenue of commerce and trade. As the cotton economy in eastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana developed, the road was used by freighters to carry the crop to steamboats on the Red River for transshipment to market. The rise of plantation slavery in the coastal plain would link Texas more to the deep South than to the West or border states by the time of the Civil War. By then the primacy of the Old San Antonio Road as a route for trade, immigration and cultural change had passed.

El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Old San Antonio Road are of national significance, individually and collectively, under the terms of the established criteria. El Camino Real de los Tejas evolved and shifted during a period of more than 100 years of Spanish exploration and settlement. Some parts of El Camino Real are followed by modern highways; other segments traverse uninhabited areas. In general, the routes of El Camino Real are sufficiently well known to permit the evaluation of their historic interest and importance. The Old San Antonio Road, as defined first by Zivley and later by the Texas Department of Transportation, follows existing highways. Signs erected by the state highway department and by communities help to interpret the historical importance of the routes to travelers.

INTEGRITY OF RESOURCES

From even a brief view of the natural setting encountered by early travelers along the routes of the Old San Antonio Road, it is obvious that the countryside seen today beyond the ribbon of the modern highways bears little resemblance to what Del Weniger once called "the original, natural Texas." (McGraw, Clark, and Robbins 1991)

Although it is generally believed that the predominance of the region's thornbush is the result of modern land use patterns, the SHPO's [state historic preservation officer's] review of the early diaries has shown that this vegetation was extensive even in the 17th and early 18th centuries. (McGraw, Clark, and Robbins 1991)

The natural landscape of Texas has changed over the last few centuries as a result of human settlement, crop production, and ranching. However, modern travelers along the southwestern portion of the trail can experience some aspects of the landscape that early travelers saw. For example, the vast shortgrass plains and the dense thorny brushlands recorded by early travelers still exist to a limited extent in the Brushy Plains region of west Texas. The Paso de Francia area at the Rio Grande appears to have changed little in the past few centuries. Today's travelers can experience the rocky, eroded hills of the river valley and see willows like those recorded in early observations along the Rio Grande.

The Edwards Plateau, a landscape feature north of the trail, was referred to by early travelers as Lomeria Grande (large hills). Other landscape features, including the rivers and geologic features noted by the Spaniards, can still be identified by today's travelers.

In contrast, it is more difficult to experience the trail in its historic natural setting along its more densely populated northeastern portions, where the landscape has been altered to a greater degree by human settlement, agriculture, and urban expansion. However, the northeastern part of the trail has a number of historic sites and structures significant to the trail, and local and Forest Service roads through the Texas and Louisiana pinelands evoke a sense of the timbered landscape encountered by early travelers.

A number of trail-related archeological resources retain their integrity. In addition, traces of El Camino Real de los Tejas can be seen in selected segments of the route, generally at stream crossing points. Some places where wagon ruts can be seen are in the sandstone at Peña Creek in Dimmit County, in the San Antonio and San Marcos areas, at Los Adaes, and in San Augustine. Some current highways parallel or cover El Camino Real routes, and a number of historic ruts and sites are within state highway rights-of-way (see "Archeological and Historic Resources," p. 49, and "Cultural Landscapes," p. 56, for more information).

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

There are many opportunities for partnerships in the planning and management for El Camino Real de los Tejas, should it be designated as a national historic trail.

Natchitoches, Louisiana, actively protects and promotes its historic resources, including the replica of Fort Jean Baptiste and a designated historic district that contains many historic residences and commercial structures.

The Cane River Heritage Area in Louisiana was designated by Congress in 1994 (PL 103-449). It was established to recognize and protect the Creole heritage of the Cane River region, including the Natchitoches National Historic Landmark District. The heritage area also includes Fort Jesup and Los Adaes.

Adaes State Commemorative Area is a 50-acre archeological site managed by the Louisiana Office of State Parks. The site includes the remains of the *Presidio de los Adaes* and other structures. Plans are being developed for enhanced public use of the site.

Louisiana's comprehensive statewide historic preservation plan (Louisiana Dept. of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism 1996a) was developed to provide the state with a logical and coherent framework to guide the broad range of preservation activities. The plan also serves as a guide to influence agencies whose ongoing work affects cultural resources. The goal of the plan is to preserve Louisiana sites, structures, and districts deemed significant in the broad historical development of the United States and Louisiana through direct action and through influencing the actions of others.

The city of San Augustine, Texas, is constructing a visitor center that will contain an archival research library and an archeological laboratory adjacent to the archeological remains of El Camino Real and Mission Dolores.

There are opportunities to cooperate in the management and use of 72 miles of route that are within the Sabine and Davy Crockett National Forests, Texas. In addition, the routes pass near Angelina National Forest.

The Texas Department of Transportation has produced more than 50 commemorative roadside monuments on which appear maps, photographs, and the history of El Camino Real de los Tejas. The department also has prepared a similar informational brochure. About half the multiple routes of El Camino Real are within state highway rights-of-way, providing opportunities for public use.

In a 1991 study, TXDOT researchers defined a preservation plan for El Camino Real (McGraw, Clark, and Robbins 1991, 299–352). The plan defined preservation goals and recommended that the route be designated a unit of the national trails system.

The Texas Historical Commission has developed a regional preservation plan for archeological resources in East Texas (Kenmotsu and Perttula 1993). This document defines the historic contexts for these resources and outlines the threats to archeological resources and the goals for their preservation.

Mission Tejas State Historical Park and Caddoan Mounds State Historic Site, which are along the route, offer opportunities to interpret and understand El Camino Real de los Tejas.

The Alamo Area Council of Governments in Texas (AACOG) has identified the multiple route segments of El Camino Real for three counties. This research has been published in *The Traveler's Guide to the Caminos Reales in Atascosa, Medina, and Frio Counties* (AACOG 1996.) The council is working actively with municipalities to identify, protect, and interpret trail-related resources. The communities between San Antonio and Goliad are working with the council to identify, protect, and promote heritage based-tourism and development for a program known as the Alamo-La Bahía Corridor.

San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, which is made up of sites directly related to El Camino Real, provides opportunities for partnerships, interpretation, research, and public use.

The “Adopt a Work of Art” program is an international effort to identify, protect, and interpret sites that have been significant in the development of Texas and Coahuila. Through this group, a visitor center and museum are being developed in Guerrero that will interpret the structures and sites of the presidio and mission. Guerrero, Coahuila, is actively working with the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia and the Adopt a Work of Art program to protect sites and provide information and facilities for tourists.

Laredo, San Marcos, Crockett, Bastrop, and Nacogdoches, Texas, are other communities that are active in identifying, protecting, and interpreting historical resources.

Private landowners of trail-related resources would have the opportunity to certify sites through voluntary partnerships or cooperative agreements that have the flexibility to meet the landowner's needs while ensuring protection and appropriate public use. Certified trail properties would be nonfederal historic sites, trail segments, and interpretive facilities that met the standards of the administering agency for resource preservation and public enjoyment.

POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL TRAIL DESIGNATION

The legislation authorizing this study provides a possibility of designating El Camino Real as an international historic trail to recognize the origin and purpose of El Camino Real de los Tejas. The National Park Service has worked with the staff of INAH from the state of Coahuila, Mexico, in the preparation of this study and in organizing past and present trail-related activities. Although there is no authorization from the government of Mexico for the designation of national historic trails, the National Park Service, subject to congressional authorization, would continue to work with officials from Mexico to conduct research on the history and culture of El Camino Real de los Tejas and to assist, as appropriate, in the identification, interpretation, and protection of sites in the United States and Mexico related to the trail. There are opportunities to work with the city of Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico (which is the site of the mission of San Juan Bautista, founded in 1699) to protect trail-related sites and provide for public use. Two later missions also established in the Guerrero area were San Francisco Solano and San Bernardo. All three collectively are known as the "gateway" missions, along with the Presidio San Juan Bautista. These sites, along with a visitor center, are available for public use and education.



El Camino Real de los Tejas near San Marcos

DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCES

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Among the significant cultural resources associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas are archeological and historic sites, road traces, cultural landscapes, and sites with high potential for public benefit, which were identified in accordance with the National Trails System Act, sections 12(1) and 12(2). The sites and structures that are directly related to the trail, both physically and thematically, are described below.

Archeological and Historic Resources (Including Road Segments)

Over the years travelers on El Camino Real de los Tejas have left behind many traces of their journeys: road cuts and river crossings, artifacts, campsites, and buildings. These physical remains visibly document the route and its travelers and provide a unique insight into American history. Mission and presidio sites linked by El Camino Real, along with 19th century sites along the Old San Antonio Road provide insight into the lives of the people, both European and American Indian, who settled the province of Texas.

Most of the sites described in this section are not managed for public use. Some archeological resources on public and private lands potentially could be made available for public use, provided such use could be managed to avoid resource degradation. Many of the archeological sites associated with the route were identified during past surveys of road corridors or development areas. The following section describes these archeological sites and historic resources. Further information on many of these sites is included in "Public Use Sites," page 58.

Los Adaes State Commemorative Area is a major archeological site associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas, and several segments of El Camino Real are still visible west, north, and east of the area. The site is a potential national historic landmark.

Fort Jesup was established in 1822 by Gen. Zachary Taylor as the southernmost and first in the string of frontier forts stretching from Louisiana northward to Canada along the "permanent" Indian frontier. It operated as a military reservation until the late 1840s. Later known as the "Cradle of the Mexican War," the area is now preserved as one of the Louisiana state parks. The 22-acre site contains a reconstructed officers' quarters with a museum, conference rooms, and offices. There are extensive archeological remains and building foundations on the site, as well as the original mess kitchen, built circa 1822. This building has been refurbished for interpretation. The fort is a national historic landmark.

The Stoker House, a national register property dating to the late 1840s, is situated on El Camino Real (Louisiana Highway 6) in the vicinity of Fort Jesup. This architecturally significant log house (the oldest in Sabine Parish) illustrates typical change through time.

The Stoker farm furnished produce to Fort Jesup and played a significant role in the development of the area's history.

Near Geneva, Texas, El Lobanillo Ranch has been continuously occupied since the mid-1700s. It was established by Antonio Gil Ybarbo, who lived here until the presidios and missions of East Texas were evacuated in the 1770s.

Several archeological investigations have documented the mission of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Ais and the adjacent segment of El Camino Real de los Tejas in San Augustine, Texas (Corbin, Kalina, and Alex 1980). These investigations recovered archeological data illustrating about 50 years of occupation by Spanish colonists and the historic Caddo mission Indians in the piney woods of eastern Texas (Corbin, Kalina, and Alex 1980, 84).

Excavations conducted in 1973 and 1974 by North Texas State University uncovered remains of the church and the cemetery of Mission Rosario, Goliad County, Texas. Excavations at the nearby La Bahía mission and presidio also uncovered numerous artifacts documenting 19th century use of the Spanish colonial fortification (Fox 1983, 88).

Beginning in 1966 and continuing until the present, controlled archeological investigations of the San Antonio Missions have revealed a great deal about the early structures, food, tools, subsistence, American Indian workshops, water supplies (acequias), American Indian apartments and living areas, and quarries. Thousands of artifacts related to the long history of these sites and their Indian and Spanish occupants have been recovered. (Further description of these missions and the various excavations can be found in Fox 1983, 98–116.)

At least six known archeological sites in San Antonio Missions National Historical Park represent prehistoric occupation of the area. Dozens of other archeological sites in the San Antonio area date to the Spanish Colonial period in Texas. These sites contain extensive archeological remains, including burial middens, structural remains, irrigation systems, etc. These sites include the mission ranchos that raised livestock to supply and support the missions.

Another trail-related site is the Rancho de las Cabras, the Spanish rancho directly related to one of five San Antonio missions, about 25 miles southeast of San Antonio, near Floresville. The site, which has recently been added to San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It contains the archeological remains of diamond-shaped ramparts with rooms along the walls.

The remains at Las Cabras may include archeological evidence of the Coahuilteco Indians "as well as *Ladinos* who had been Hispanicized at Mission Espada and its ranch" (Fox 1983, 114). In addition to cattle production, the ranch was intended to provide inhabitants security from Indian raids (Briggs 1989, 4).

The Pérez cemetery is a state archeological landmark near San Antonio on the north bank of the Medina River. The 100-meter-square cemetery is within the boundaries of Rancho de Pérez, the Spanish land grant ranch of the Perez family that is privately owned and has been maintained by the family for more than 100 years. The cemetery is significant for its association with the family and for site features that may have existed as early as 1800.

San Pedro Park is a 40-acre municipal park surrounding the source of San Pedro Springs, the original site of the present city of San Antonio. Prehistorically the area was the village of Yanaguana, which belonged to a tribe known as the Payayas. The area was first identified by the Espinosa-Olivares-Aguerra Expedition in 1709 as Agua de San Pedro. In 1718 the site was chosen for the first presidio and Villa de Béxar. (The Mission San Antonio de Valero and the fort Presidio de Béxar were constructed in this area.) The Spanish government dedicated the springs as a public space in 1729, and the site has functioned as a park continuously since then. Civilian settlers were brought to this area from the Canary Islands in 1731 and assigned temporary farming lands. The remains of their stone-lined acequias can still be found in the park. During the Mexican period the site was still frequented by Indian tribes, and a trading post operated at the springs. The site is listed on both the national and state historic registers.

Another Bexar County site, a state archeological landmark near the Medina River, contains both prehistoric remains and the remnants of a historic occupation dating to between 1830 and 1860. The site appears to be the remains of a small rural farmstead from the Texas Republic and early statehood periods.

TXDOT archeologists determined that a segment of the Laredo-San Antonio Road used during the early 19th century followed Somerset Road, west of the community of Somerset (TXDOT 1995, 5). Research for a road improvement project in Bexar County indicated that much of F.M. 2790 (a Farm-to-Market road) between Somerset Road and the Atascosa county line was within the mission ranch of El Atascosa, owned and operated by Mission San José. Research also indicated that part of the Laredo to San Antonio Road followed Somerset Road in the early 19th century (TXDOT 1995, 5).

A well-preserved segment of the Old San Antonio Road parallels an existing road right-of-way within the city of San Marcos, and extensive ruts parallel nearby county roads. The crossing of the Old San Antonio Road at Willow Springs Creek has also been identified and recorded. Aerial photographs show the segment of historic road and a fork in the road that may have led to the San Marcos River. A route that connected El Camino Real to Nacogdoches ran through the Olmos Basin from the present Olmos Dam to Hildebrand Avenue; an old Spanish outpost was situated just north of the dam.

Several early Spanish maps of Texas show El Camino Real passing through the southern part of the present Dimmit County. Zivley's "Kings Highway Field Notes" identifies the location of El Camino Real as being just south of Caterina, Texas. According to Zivley, the trail continued southwest past the pools of Barrera, Caterina Creek, and Lomas Bonitas before turning northwest at Toya Tank to access the Paso de Francia ford of the Rio Grande to reach San Juan de Bautista.

The San Xavier Mission Complex Archeological District contains five contiguous and related sites belonging to the era of Spanish colonization of central Texas in the middle 18th century (1745–55). The district, which is near the San Gabriel River in Milam County, contains three mission sites: San Francisco Xavier de Horcasitas (for the Tonkawa groups — the Mayeye, the Yerbipame, and the Yojaune), San Ildefonso (for the Atakapan groups — the Orcoquisac, the Deadose and the Bidais), and Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria (for the coastal groups, including the Coco). The other two sites are related to the Spanish Colonial occupation of the valley. The 10-year existence of these missions (1745–55) was “one of overwhelming hardship, discouragement, harassment by the Apaches, murder, and eventual abandonment of the area (National Register 1973). The district is listed on the national register of historic places. Minimal archeological investigation has been conducted in this area (Fox 1983, 91).

A number of river crossings have been documented archeologically and are tentatively identified as El Camino Real crossings. These sites are as follows:

- a site on the Medina river south of Garza’s crossing
- sites at the Old Palo Alto crossing near modern Texas Highway 16 and the Medina River
- a Texas state landmark known as the Dolores/Perez/Applewhite Crossing of the Medina River.

According to Hubbard and Fox (1990, 6) the crossings associated with the Woll and Presidio Roads, which ran between Guerrero and San Antonio, “are still visible as deeply eroded, linear scars near Cuervo and Tovar Creeks on the Texas side.” Farther west in Dimmit County, wagon ruts from the trail have been etched into the sandstone at Peña Creek. There is a historic river crossing, marked by bank depressions, on the Guadalupe River immediately upstream from the bridge on Texas 183; the crossing, which is known locally as the Santa Anna crossing, was used historically by travelers going to and from Gonzales to the south.

The archeological site of El Fuerte de Santa Cruz (also known as El Fuerte del Cíbolo, Fort Cíbolo, Santa Cruz de Cíbolo, and Carvajal Crossing) lies on the west bank of Cíbolo Creek at the location of a natural ford where the La Bahía road crossed. The Presidio de San Antonio de Béxar first established a garrison here about 1735 to guard the road and the surrounding cattle ranches. It was abandoned in 1737. El Fuerte del Cíbolo was established in 1771 and continued to function until around 1782 (Herrington 1984, 1).²⁴

The Reading Site, near the Brazos River crossing on Texas Highway 21, is related to the early Spanish river crossing as well as to Moseley’s Ferry, which operated in the area between 1846 and 1912 (Carlson 1984, 1–2). Maps and land records housed in the Texas

24. More information on El Fuerte de Santa Cruz is available in Robert Thonhoff, *El Fuerte del Cíbolo: Sentinel of the Béxar: La Bahía Ranches* (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 1992).

General Land Office indicate that the Camino Real formed the northern boundary of Brazos County (Hartmann and Hailey 1993, 3).

Only a few sites occupied during the Mexican Revolution and the period when the Republic of Texas existed have been located and tested. TXDOT archeologists have located the archeological remains of the Villa San Marcos de Neve. San Marcos de Neve was a small Spanish settlement established in 1808 on the San Marcos River as one of the civilian settlements meant to act as a barrier to American encroachment. A small military post was at or near the settlement. Plagued by harsh winters and drought, Indian raids, and revolution elsewhere in New Spain, the Tejanos abandoned the fledgling settlement in 1812 following the siege of La Bahía (TXDOT, John W. Clark Jr., pers. comm. to Diane Rhodes, NPS, 1996). Today only the recorded archeological site remains. In 1835 Thomas McGeehee settled his family near the Old San Antonio Road crossing. The route of the road is known in this area from historic maps and from features on topographic maps.

Archeologists also have uncovered evidence of the 1836 battle at the Alamo and have excavated parts of La Villita (the small village of settlers and military families that was occupied during the Spanish Colonial and Mexican periods). Numerous sites of Austin's and DeWitt's colonists and of ferry landings have been unearthed during reservoir surveys (Fox 1983). In the San Antonio area, the ruins of an Anglo-American ranch dating from the 1840s (the Walker Ranch ruins) were found near Panther Springs Creek.

The site of the 1813 Battle of Medina is just south of San Antonio. Here Royalist troops led by Gen. Joaquín Arredondo decimated some 1,400 American filibusters and Spanish rebels. The battle at the Medina River "effectively destroyed the Republican cause in Texas" (Fehrenbach 1968, 126).

The archeological ruins of Villa de Dolores, 23 miles south of Laredo on U.S. Highway 83, illustrate the civil settlement of Nuevo Santander. Dolores was established in 1750 and thrived for some time as an important cattle ranch. "Dolores and Laredo . . . remain as the most significant reminders of the Spanish colonial era in Texas relative to the last effort at colonization. . . . Dolores is the only [extant] ranch from this period on the United States side of the River" (National Register 1973, 8).

In the Bastrop area, the Old San Antonio Road followed the San Antonio Prairie along the route of modern Texas Highway 21 from San Marcos to Bastrop to Caldwell. The earliest settlement in the county apparently was a stockaded military garrison, the Puesto del Colorado, established at the present site of Bastrop (and the Colorado River ford) by Cordero y Bustamante. Troops were stationed here in 1806 to protect commerce on the trail. Zebulon Pike recorded the Puesto as a small Spanish station in the early 1800s.

Bastrop was at the western edge of Stephen F. Austin's original colony, which was granted in 1821. El Camino Real was used as a boundary for Austin's Little Colony (1827), which was also in the Bastrop vicinity. The Little Colony was established along the banks of the Colorado River, where the river was crossed by the road leading from Bexar to Nacogdoches (El Camino Real). The grant boundary went up the Colorado for 15 leagues, thence

east on a line that ran parallel with El Camino Real to the dividing ridge of the waters of the Brazos and Colorado Rivers. From there it followed the line of the Nashville Company colony to El Camino Real and then went south to the place of beginning.

Pioneers began to settle on the prairie east of Austin in the 1820s and 1830s. During the 1830s Tumlinson's Blockhouse was built in the northwesternmost part of Austin's Colony on Blockhouse Creek south of Leander. Shortly thereafter the settlement of Waterloo was founded on the Colorado River at the present site of Austin. Austin became the capital of the Republic of Texas in 1839, and Travis County was created from Bastrop County in 1840 (Hubbard, Brown, and Jackson 1984, 9-10).

The Paso de Francia crossing of the Rio Grande, near Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico, was used by early Spanish entradas and also by later explorers and military men such as Antonio López de Santa Anna. Part of Santa Anna's army crossed the river on its way to the Alamo.

Laredo was founded in 1755, the last of the towns and missions established in Nuevo Santander under the direction of José de Escandón. It was a villa on the north bank of the Rio Grande near a ford. The area was subject to numerous Lipan Apache and Comanche raids through the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In 1849 Camp Crawford (also called Camp Laredo) was established in this area. When a new post was built in 1850, the name was changed to Fort McIntosh. The remains, now an archeological site, are situated on the grounds of Laredo State College.

Ethnographic Resources

French and Spanish explorers encountered many different American Indian tribes in the area that is now Texas and Louisiana. The Karankawan Indians were first documented by the French when the ill-fated Narvaez expedition landed on the Texas coast in 1528. The Karankawans were later responsible for the destruction of Fort St. Louis. The original mission of Espíritu Santo de Zuñiga was built for the Karankawa.

The Spaniards encountered and described a number of Coahuiltecan bands, including the Payayas at San Antonio, the Aranamas (south of the Payayas, between the San Antonio and Guadalupe Rivers) and the Tamiques and the Orejones (along the lower Nueces). The San Antonio missions were built to serve substantial populations of Coahuiltecan groups living along the San Antonio River and its tributaries. In 1749 Espíritu Santo de Zuñiga mission and Fort La Bahía were moved to Goliad to serve both the Karankawa and Coahuiltecan Indians.

A group of small tribes in central Texas known as the Tonkawa were first described by the Spanish explorers in 1691. In the mid-1700s some of the Tonkawa became associated with the San Xavier missions on the San Gabriel River.

Spanish and French explorers in western Louisiana and eastern Texas met the Atakapa, a sedentary group of tribes that included the Deadose, Bidai, and Patiri.

The Caddoan-speaking tribes of east Texas and western Louisiana comprised the Adaes (the Adai and their linguistic relatives, the Eyeish), the Doustioni, Natchitoches, Ouachita, and Yatasi, most of whom were living in the vicinity of Natchitoches, Mansfield, Monroe, Robeline, and along the Sabine River in Louisiana (Webb and Gregory 1986, 18).²⁵

The Hasinai, a Caddoan confederacy of small tribes (including the Anadarko, Ais, Hainai, Hasinai, Nabiti, Nacogdoches, and Nabadache) resided along the upper Neches, Trinity, and Angelina Rivers. The Ka'dohadacho, the largest of the southern Caddoan confederacies, which included the Petit Caddo, Nasoni, Nanatsoho, and Upper Natchitoches, originally settled along the Red River in northeastern Texas and southwestern Arkansas. Pressure from the Osage caused members of this confederation to migrate southward, settling north of the Yatasi near Caddo Prairie and Caddo Lake, Louisiana. The missions of Los Adaes and Nuestra Señora de los Ais were established to serve some of these Caddoan groups.

Tribes such as the Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache were highly mobile hunters who used horses acquired from the Spanish to follow bison herds across the southern plains. As the original tribes inhabiting southern Texas were gathered into missions, the Plains groups quickly moved southward, hunting and raiding. Although missions were also established for some of the Plains tribes during the mid-1700s, the Spanish missionaries usually were not successful in converting these nonsedentary groups.

Over time the Indian population of the area that is now Texas and Louisiana was sharply reduced by disease, raiding, and warfare. By the early 1800s most of the Coahuiltecan groups in south Texas had disappeared, either dead from disease or absorbed into the Mexican population. The same was true for the Atakapan Indian groups living along the Neches, Trinity, and Colorado Rivers. They had sold most of their land and had been assimilated, although a few "Sabines" claim Atakapan ancestry (Johnson 1994, 60). The Muskogean-speaking Alabama and Coushatta tribes (originally from Alabama and part of the Upper Creek Confederacy) migrated into what is now east Texas in the 1700s.

Although abortive attempts were made to establish reservations for the Southern Comanches, Anadarkos, Caddos, Tawakonis, and Tonkawas on the Brazos River, the state of Texas "acknowledged no Indian ownership" (Utley 1984, 55–6). Federal relocation policies forced these tribes to move to Indian Territory north of the Red River after 1867. The present-day Kiowa, Apache, and Comanche tribes jointly own land in Caddo County, Oklahoma. The Tonkawa live on their reservation in Kay County, Oklahoma. Because of their history of peaceful relations, the Alabama-Coushatta were allowed to remain in southeast Texas when the other tribes were relocated to Oklahoma (Tiller 1996, 565).

25. Their aboriginal territory stretched from the Ouachita River south to the mouth of the Cane River and west to the Sabine River (Webb and Gregory 1986, 18).

DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCES

Most of the Caddoan groups in eastern Texas were also removed to Indian Territory in Oklahoma. Their descendants now reside on lands held in common with the Wichita and Delawares near Bingham, Oklahoma. Post-1763 Choctaw incursions into northwestern Louisiana resulted in a resident population (the Ebarb Choctaw-Apache) centered in the small rural community of Ebarb in Sabine Parish (Gregory 1992).

Many of the Adaes “may have been absorbed . . . into the general *mestizo* population at Los Adaes and still have descendants in northwestern Louisiana” (Webb and Gregory 1986, 33). Other descendants of the original inhabitants of Louisiana and east Texas live in the communities surrounding Spanish Lake, Louisiana.

Cultural Landscapes

In several areas the landforms and vegetation and the general configuration of the road appear to approximate early travelers’ descriptions. Areas such as the Paso de Francia crossing of the Rio Grande near Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico, the open plains of West Texas, and the wall of forest and underbrush along the narrow, winding roads in Louisiana are evocative of the historic landscape traveled by early explorers and settlers. The near foreground viewsheds of the San Antonio Missions and San Juan Bautista also retain much of their historic ambiance, which gives visitors a strong sense of what the area must have been like during the 1700s and 1800s.

Researchers have identified a small prairie in Houston County (now known as Murchison’s Prairie) as the “Prairie called Castano,” a *paraje* mentioned in the early Spanish narratives. This identification was based on an analysis of a late 1800s geologic study of the county, historic maps, travelers’ accounts, and grant documents (TXDOT, Corbin, pers. comm. Nov. 21, 1997). A small relic pine population west of the Trinity River also helped define the early route through the Hurricane-Kickapoo Shoals river crossing (TXDOT, Corbin, pers. comm. Nov. 21, 1997).

The Arroyo Hondo is a significant cultural landmark. It was noted in early journals, and it was the international boundary between the French and Spanish territories from 1721 to 1762 and the boundary between Spanish Texas and Spanish Louisiana from 1762 through 1803. The river separated Spanish Texas and American Louisiana from 1803 to 1819 and was the eastern boundary of the Neutral Ground from 1806 to 1819 (L’Herisson 1981, 94).

El Camino Real travelers’ accounts describe a natural landmark that probably is the feature known today as Sugar Loaf Mountain, which is near the Brazos River crossing in the vicinity of Hearne, Texas (TXDOT, Corbin, pers. comm. Nov. 21, 1997).

NATURAL RESOURCES

The natural resources of the area are described in appendix B.

SOCIOECONOMIC RESOURCES

Various segments of El Camino Real de los Tejas pass through the Texas counties listed in the next paragraph, along with the Louisiana parishes of Sabine and Natchitoches. The route traverses two metropolitan areas, San Antonio (population 1,490,000) and Austin (1,041,000), and several smaller cities: Laredo (165,000), New Braunfels (34,000), San Marcos (35,000), Bryan-College Station (combined population 117,000), and Nacogdoches (31,200). It also passes through small communities of western Louisiana, ending near Natchitoches (population 17,300). With the exception of Laredo, the southwestern part of the trail is fairly undeveloped in comparison with the northeastern part.

Texas Counties through Which Parts of El Camino Real de los Tejas Pass

Atascosa	DeWitt	La Salle	Milam	Williamson
Bastrop	Dimmit	Lavaca	Nacogdoches	Wilson
Bee	Fayette	Lee	Robertson	Zapata
Bexar	Frio	Leon	Sabine	Zavala
Brazos	Goliad	Live Oak	San Augustine	
Burleson	Guadalupe	Madison	Travis	
Caldwell	Hays	Maverick	Victoria	
Cherokee	Houston	McMullen	Walker	
Comal	Karnes	Medina	Webb	

Across the border from Laredo, Texas, is Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico, which has a population of approximately 350,000. Across the border from Eagle Pass, Texas, is Piedras Negras, Coahuila, Mexico, approximate population 33,000. Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico, a small community about 25 miles downstream of Eagle Pass, has been considered "the gateway to Texas" by historians. The town is active in the preservation of the historic plaza, surrounding buildings, and the remains of Misión San Bernardo and the Presidio de San Juan Bautista.

The Texas economy is supported by the natural resources of cattle, cotton, forestry and forest products, and oil and gas, as well as by service industries, tourism, and high technology industries such as computers, semiconductors, and instruments. Tourism is the third largest industry in Texas. In 1995 direct tourism-related spending generated \$25.4 billion for the state, representing 5.5% of the overall revenue (information supplied by Texas Department of Economic Development, Tourism Division).

Oil, gas, and petrochemical production play a major role in the Louisiana economy. Agriculture is also an important industry, producing sweet potatoes, sugar cane, rice, cotton, pecans, and soybeans. The tourism industry affects at least one out of every 10 people in the state (information supplied by Louisiana Tourism Division).

LANDOWNERSHIP AND LAND USE

Approximately half of the multiple routes of El Camino Real are within state or county road rights-of-way. Approximately 72 miles of the route are on federal lands. The rest of the route is on private lands. The land use along the route alignments varies from arid lands to grasslands and dense woodlands, intensive agriculture, grazing, low-density rural residential, to urban and industrial uses.

PUBLIC USE SITES

There are many existing public use sites along El Camino Real de los Tejas, including state and national parks, state historic sites, state monuments, highway historical markers, recreation areas, historic districts, campgrounds, picnic areas, national forests, scenic roads, and various museums (see appendix C). A number of these public use sites (such as state and national parks, historical markers, and museums) have some thematic relationship either directly or indirectly to El Camino Real. Others (such as picnic areas) do not relate directly to the history of El Camino Real but could offer opportunities for the public to learn about, see, experience, and appreciate the trail. Not all public use sites would qualify as officially certified or federal components of a national historic trail (see the description of alternative 1, p. 64, for a discussion of certified sites).

National Park System Units

The National Park Service manages San Antonio Missions National Historical Park under a series of cooperative agreements with the Catholic Archdiocese of San Antonio, the state of Texas, and others. The park contains four frontier Spanish Missions: Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña, Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo, Mission San Juan Capistrano, and Mission San Francisco de la Espada.²⁶ These missions, which are situated in a north-south corridor along the San Antonio River, formed the foundation for the city of San Antonio. Also in the park is the Rancho de las Cabras, which is about 25 miles southeast of San Antonio.

Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo was established in 1720 on the east bank of the San Antonio River about 5 miles south of Mission San Antonio de Valero. It was intended to serve several Coahuiltecan Indian bands. Sometime between 1724 and 1727 Mission San José was moved to its present location on the west side of the river; an intermediate site may have been occupied for a short time. Eventually San José became the largest and best known of the Texas missions. By 1791 the Indian population had begun to decline, and in 1794 the mission properties were divided among the remaining Indians. The church was placed under the control of the local priest in 1824 (Hard et al. 1995, 2–3). San

26. Mission San Antonio de Valero (the Alamo), built in 1718, is not part of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. For a description of the Alamo, see the section on “State and Local Parks,” p. 60.

José was the oldest, largest, and most successful of the four missions now in the park. Extensive reconstruction in the 1930s replicated many features of the original compound. The mill at San José, built circa 1794 and reconstructed in the 1930s, is undergoing restoration.

Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña hosted religious festivals since 1731, when it was transferred to the Río San Antonio. The church remains an important symbol of the Spanish mission program. The original mission included numerous buildings, walls, a farm, an orchard, a ranch, and an acequia system. Today only the church and the convento remain. However, with its decorative architecture and remnant wall and ceiling decorations, the church looks essentially as it did more than 200 years ago, when it was at the center of local religious activity.

Mission San Juan Capistrano, originally known as San José de los Nazonis while in East Texas, was established about 2.5 miles south of Mission San José in 1731. The rich mission farm and pasturelands and the work of various American Indian artisans made the mission a self-sustaining community. With its surplus, San Juan established a trade network stretching east to Louisiana and south to Coahuila, Mexico. The mission also supported local settlers and presidios by trading foodstuffs and finished products to them. A substantial part of the mission compound is in ruins, but a planned demonstration farm will illustrate to visitors the mission's former importance as an economic center.

Mission San Francisco de la Espada was originally Mission San Francisco de los Tejas. After their retreat from eastern Texas in 1731, the mission was relocated to the San Antonio River and renamed. Espada is an excellent example of a mission where Indians were trained in a trade so that once the mission program was completed, the parishioners could maintain a livelihood within the Spanish frontier society. The southernmost of the San Antonio chain of missions, Espada is surrounded by farmlands, fields, and a small residential area.

A part of ***Rancho de las Cabras*** has been preserved within the park as an archeological site. A plan is being prepared for the rancho that addresses preservation, visitor use, and facility needs.

Irrigation systems were a vital part of these farming and ranching activities. Historic water control and irrigation features in the park are Acequia de San José, Acequia de San Juan, Espada Dam, Espada Aqueduct, and Acequia de Espada. The Espada dam and aqueduct and the Espada and San Juan acequias depict actively used components of what was originally part of an elaborate complex of irrigation ditches used to water the extensive farmlands belonging to the missions. The Espada Dam, completed by 1740, is one of the oldest stone dams still functioning in the United States. The Espada Aqueduct, one of the oldest arched Spanish aqueducts in the United States, still serves its original purpose as part of the Espada Acequia, carrying water over Piedras Creek. It is the only Spanish-built aqueduct continuing in use today.

The mission churches, which continue to function as places of worship, are open to visitors. Rancho de las Cabras has limited visitation by guided tours only. In the past the missions cultivated gardens (*huertas*) adjacent to the mission compounds, as well as large outlying farms (*labores*) and ranches. Some of the historic farmlands on the *labores* of San Juan and Espada are still under cultivation or used for grazing animals.

All four missions, Rancho de las Cabras, the Espada Dam, the Espada Aqueduct, and the San Juan Acequia are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Missions San José and Concepción and the Espada Dam, Acequia, and Aqueduct are national historic landmarks. The area that encompasses the missions that are part of the park has been recognized as a historic district by the city of San Antonio and by inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

National Forests

The *Angelina*, *Sabine*, and *Davy Crockett* National Forests in Texas and the Kisatchie National Forest in Louisiana contain segments of the trail and offer a variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation.

State and Local Parks, Monuments, and Sites

Sites in Louisiana. The earliest permanent European settlement in northwestern Louisiana was *Natchitoches*, Louisiana, which was founded in 1714 (Webb and Gregory 1986, 22). Old sections of the city are included in the Natchitoches Historic District, which became a national historic landmark in 1984. The district, which contains a mixture of businesses and residences, is in multiple ownership (city and private individuals). The Kate Chopin House — Bayou Folk Museum — in Cloutierville, in the southern tip of the Cane River Heritage Area, also is national historic landmark. It is owned by the Association of Natchitoches Women for the Preservation of Historic Natchitoches.

The *Colonial Gateway Corral* is a hill situated on the campus of Northwestern State University in Natchitoches. It was first described by St. Denis and Bienville in 1700. It later became St. Denis's *vacherie* (cattle enclosure). Several trails are said to converge at this spot, including trails from El Camino Real on which cattle and horses were brought from the west. St. Denis's home is also here, as are the route of flatboats to New Orleans (to the east) and a road to Fort St. Jean Baptiste (to the north).

Also in Natchitoches is the site of *Fort Claiborne*, which was named after the governor of territorial Louisiana. It was built in 1804 to protect U.S. interests on the southwestern frontier. The fort was garrisoned almost continuously until Fort Jesup was established in 1822. An interpretive sign marks the site.

The site of **Fort Selden** is about 2 miles northwest of Natchitoches on Louisiana Highway 6. It was occupied in 1816–17 and 1819–22 to police the southwestern frontier and guard the Red River and Bayou Pierre. For a short time the commander of the Western Department, Gen. Edmund P. Gaines, occupied the fort. A historical marker identifies the site of the fort.

Fort St. Jean Baptiste aux Natchitos was built in 1716 on an island in the Red River (now Cane River Lake) at the request of St. Denis. It was to serve as a deterrent to Spanish eastward expansion (Webb and Gregory 1986, 22). The double-palisaded fort was later moved to the west bank and became the nucleus of the earliest European settlement in northwestern Louisiana. Fort St. Jean, abandoned after 1803, was demolished. It was replaced by nearby Fort Claiborne. In 1971 or 1972 the Louisiana Office of State Parks bought the site. The construction of the replica fort, which was based on the original plans of French architect-engineer Ignace F. Broutin, was completed in 1981 and is open to the public.

Los Adaes State Commemorative Area contains the Spanish colonial sites of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Los Adaes Presidio and Mission San Miguel de Los Adaes (dating between 1721 and 1773) and segments of El Camino Real. Los Adaes was founded in 1721 to check French expansion into eastern Texas. It served as the capital of the province of Texas for more than 50 years before abandonment in 1773, and it helped maintain the international balance of power between France and Spain (Avery 1995, 1). The 50-acre site is readily accessible from Louisiana Highway 6 and is open to visitation via guided tours. The area's significant resources include extensive subsurface archeological remains of the presidio and visible traces of El Camino Real.

Fort Jesup State Commemorative Area was established in 1957. Fort Jesup, on the Old San Antonio Road, was established in 1822. The fort, which later became known as "the cradle of the Mexican War," was the most southwesterly military outpost in the United States from 1822 until the Mexican-American War. It was the major American fortification on the southwestern frontier, but after the Mexican-American War Gen. Zachary Taylor abandoned it. The fort originally contained a complex of 82 stone and log garrison buildings, which were sold at auctions between 1850 and 1885. By 1929 only the kitchen-mess hall remained. Local supporters helped to restore this building and refurnish it with period reproductions. The site includes stone pillars and archeological remains that mark the locations of other buildings. There is also a reconstructed officers' quarters (used as a visitor center), a museum, and a park administrative office.

A research program has been established through a cooperative agreement among the Louisiana Office of State Parks, Northwestern State University at Natchitoches, and the Louisiana Division of Archeology. An archeological laboratory has been built on the site. Los Adaes offers opportunities to study, research, and interpret life at a Spanish colonial frontier settlement (NPS 1993, 14). The site is owned and maintained by the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism.

The *Louisiana Colonial Trails*, a network of designated highways linking more than 100 historic sites and points of interest across the state, contains segments of El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Old San Antonio Road west of Natchitoches.

The *Toledo Bend Forest Scenic Byway* runs from Many, Louisiana, west to Toledo Bend Reservoir along Louisiana Highway 6 (Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism 1996b).

Drake's Salt Works, one of the oldest salt wells in Louisiana, was used prehistorically by a number of Indian groups. Bienville first noted the location of the salt works in 1700. It served as a major source of salt for Confederate forces. The site is situated off Louisiana Highway 156 in Natchitoches Parish. Portions of the site have been acquired by the Kisatchie National Forest and are open to the public.

Sites in Texas. *McKinney Falls State Park* in Austin contains the Onion Creek crossing of El Camino Real and the adjacent property and ruins of Thomas F. McKinney's home and mill. McKinney was one of Stephen F. Austin's original colonists.

Mission Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Ais, in San Augustine, was established in 1717 by the Ramón expedition to convert the Ais Caddo Indians. The mission was occupied for only a short time before abandonment. The Aguayo expedition reestablished the mission at a different location in 1722 (Fox 1983, 82). It was "a small struggling settlement that apparently barely managed to survive until 1773" (Fox 1983, 82). The Indians refused to live at the mission; instead, they occupied scattered villages in the surrounding pine woods of East Texas. Few were ever baptized. The site is owned by the city of San Augustine, which is constructing a visitor center, hiking trails, and interpretive signs.

Mission San Antonio de Valero, better known as the Alamo, was the first Spanish settlement to be established (1718) on the San Antonio River. It served as a way station between Mission San Juan Bautista on the Rio Grande and the missions in East Texas. The site was the scene of the Battle of the Alamo in 1836. The church structure that stands today was begun about 1755. Much of the mission compound was destroyed after the battle. The U.S. Army established a quartermaster depot in 1847 in the remaining stone buildings. However, archeological excavations revealed the original walled perimeter of the compound. The Daughters of the Republic of Texas operate this reconstructed state historic site, a major tourist attraction in downtown San Antonio. It is a national historic landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The *Spanish Governor's Palace* originally was a part of the Presidio de San Antonio de Béxar, whose function was to guard the San Antonio missions and colony. The site, which is now operated by the city of San Antonio, was used during the time San Antonio was the capital of the Spanish province of Texas.

The stone ruin at *Berg's Mill*, a property of the city of San Antonio, probably is associated with one of the milling operations once located in the vicinity. Most of these features lie

within Espada and Acequia Parks in the Mission Historic District. The mill is a post-colonial structure.

San Pedro Park, a city park in San Antonio, was the original site of the present city of San Antonio. The site, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was dedicated as a public space by the Spanish government in 1729. It has a long history of military and public recreational use. (More information is available on page 51.)

The ***University of Texas Institute of Texas Cultures*** is a museum in San Antonio interpreting the major cultural groups that have settled and developed the state.

Many museums in San Antonio and scattered along the route commemorate the history of Texas and Louisiana, but none are specifically associated with El Camino Real.

ALTERNATIVES

ACTIONS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

The law that directed the preparation of this feasibility study includes the provision that the study is to “make recommendations concerning the suitability and feasibility of establishing an international historical park where the trail crosses the United States-Mexico border at Maverick County, Texas, and Guerrero, Mexico” (National Trails System Act, section 5(c)(36)(B)(v)).

The University of Texas conducted studies in the mid-1970s to understand the archeology and ethnohistory of the 18th century mission complex of San Juan Bautista at what today is Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico. An international committee is now working to protect and interpret the sites in Guerrero. On the basis of this research (known as the “Gateway Project”), there has been interest in a proposed Gateway Park in the Guerrero-Maverick County area.

The routes of El Camino Real in Maverick County are entirely on private lands. There are no published surveys identifying trail-related resources on these private lands. Archeological sites have been identified on private lands, but the landowners do not want any public use of the sites.

A trail-related facility could be developed in Eagle Pass in association with Fort Duncan, where there are a number of tourism and interpretive opportunities. However, such facilities would not be certified by the National Park Service because there are no sites directly related to El Camino Real in Eagle Pass.

There also are opportunities to work with Mexico to locate an international historical park in that country. The National Park Service would work with landowners on both sides of the border to identify, document, and protect trail-related resources and, where appropriate, provide opportunities for public use.

If congressional legislation is proposed to designate El Camino Real de los Tejas or the Old San Antonio Road, or both, as national historic trails, it is recommended that such a proposal include a provision limiting any future federal land acquisition along the route to a willing seller basis. Such a provision was included in the legislation designating the Santa Fe National Historic Trail, as well as in the legislation designating other national historic trails. Little, if any, federal land acquisition is anticipated at this time.

ALTERNATIVE 1: DESIGNATE ROUTES FROM PASO DE FRANCIA TO NATCHITOCHE

The overall approach of alternative 1 would be to designate the routes from the Rio Grande (Maverick, Webb, and Zapata Counties, Texas) to Los Adaes, the first provincial capital of

Texas, and on to Natchitoches, Louisiana (see alternative 1 map). This network of roads formed the major transportation corridor across south central Texas and northwestern Louisiana from the late 1600s to the mid-1800s. As El Camino Real, and including the later Old San Antonio Road, the routes illustrate a historical continuum of the nation's transportation and communication network set in the broad context of national and international politics and rivalries, exploration, acculturation, immigration, and settlement. The routes have national significance and extant resources with integrity, and they meet the eligibility criteria of the National Trails System Act.

Rationale and Significance

The route that is now known as El Camino Real de los Tejas began in 1689 as Spanish soldiers seeking to counter French intrusions into the reaches of Spain's frontier followed their Indian guides northeast from Paso de Francia. El Camino Real remained the route of subsequent expeditions through the 1720s and evolved over time as it was used by indigenous peoples, missionaries, settlers, and soldiers.

The segment known as the "Camino Pita," which extended from the Rio Grande to San Antonio, was used primarily from 1689 to 1727. Later several segments of the Pita Road became the Upper Presidio Road (1800–40).²⁷ Beyond San Antonio the route, which in this area was known as the Upper Road and El Camino de los Tejas, continued northeast through the current cities of New Braunfels and San Marcos. The Spanish first crossed the Colorado River just east of Austin in 1709, and by 1716 the route had been extended to enable the establishment of the missions in East Texas. The importance of this route lies in its having been the route used by explorers, early Texas settlers, and the founders and suppliers of the first missions and presidios. It is also important because it passed through the first capital of Los Adaes and the later capital of San Antonio.

In the 1720s the threat of Indian attacks forced Pita Road traffic to a route farther south. This new route, known as the Lower Presidio Road (1750–1800), went almost straight east from Paso de Francia before turning north to San Antonio, paralleling the Pita Road. The Lower Presidio Road was also known as Camino de en Medio because it lay between the Camino Pita and the Laredo-San Antonio Road.

During the 1720s the route east of San Antonio also began to shift south. This route, which became known as the Lower Road, followed the Rio de San Antonio downstream and turned east to cross the Guadalupe River near present day Cuero, joining with the Upper Road before their common crossing of the Trinidad. The Lower Road to Los Adaes continued to be the main route to the northeast almost to the end of the 18th century, serving as a conduit for settlers, commerce, military units, missionaries, and Spanish culture. Collectively the Upper Road and the Lower Road formed the eastern part of El Camino Real.

27. Santa Anna followed the Upper Presidio Road in 1836 as he approached San Antonio and the Alamo.

Alternative 1 would include the designation of the two routes between Laredo and San Antonio, reflecting the shift of trade and traffic and the development of Laredo as a major center of trade and transportation. The routes from Laredo to San Antonio and Los Adaes connected to Monclova and Saltillo, just as did the earlier routes. Of the two routes between Laredo and San Antonio, one joined the Lower Presidio Road before approaching San Antonio; the other went first to La Bahía on the lower San Antonio River and then followed the river to San Antonio. In addition, a route from Villa de Dolores connected to the Laredo Road, which was a major route in the 1750s.

In 1795 a new mail road was opened from San Antonio to the northeast in the interest of straightening the route. This new, more direct route became known as the San Antonio Road (1795–1850).²⁸ The San Antonio Road used portions of both the earlier El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Upper and Lower roads but diverged from the older roads in places (particularly between San Marcos and Bryan and in Houston County).

The Old San Antonio Road is significant because of its vital role as a part of the longer immigration route that extended from the north and east (such as the Natchez Trace) and helped to open Texas to Euro-American settlement from 1795 to 1850. The road carried farm goods and livestock from the fledgling Texas settlements and brought in people, goods, and services. The Old San Antonio Road was also an important conduit for the military activities of Spain, Mexico, France, and the United States.

Together these multiple routes are known as El Camino Real de los Tejas. These routes reflect a broad spectrum of American history, beginning in the late 1600s and continuing to the mid-1800s. El Camino Real and its variations were the critical transportation corridors that enabled the settlement and development of the Spanish and French frontiers during the Spanish, Mexican, and early Anglo-American periods.

Management

Preservation strategies under alternative 1 would be focused on El Camino Real routes.²⁹ Many segments of the route of El Camino Real de los Tejas remain much as they were in the past. Trail remnants can be seen in some places, and trail river and stream crossings and major physical landmarks can also be identified. Along these routes are many resources, represented by archeological and historical sites related to civilian, religious, indigenous, and military life. Also included are natural and historic landscapes dating from the late 17th century to the mid-19th century. These archeological sites, ruts, and standing structures retain the integrity of place and feeling associated with the historic camino. However, across much of the area dense vegetation, tilled fields, and urban development have destroyed evidence of the trail.

28. The route was also known as Camino de Arriba.

29. Specific route segments varied to adapt to the terrain and settlements.

When designating the route, Congress also would identify a lead federal agency to administer the trail in cooperation with a variety of day-to-day management partners, including state, local, and other federal agencies, American Indian tribes, local communities, private landowners, and others. El Camino Real de los Tejas would be managed through the National Park Service's Long Distance Trails Group Office in Santa Fe, which is a field unit of the NPS Intermountain Region. This Long Distance Trails Group Office manages the Santa Fe Trail, which passes through five states, and the Trail of Tears, which passes through nine states. The office also directs national historic trail feasibility studies. About 95% of the routes that are being considered for designation are in Texas, which is part of the NPS Intermountain Region.

The administrative activities would comprise preparing a comprehensive management and use plan; identifying sites and segments with significant potential for public use, recreational retracement, or historical interest; developing cooperative agreements; certifying qualified sites upon the request of site owners or managers; and stimulating, assisting, and coordinating preservation and interpretive activities of various government and nongovernmental organizations and private entities.

The administering agency also would develop a uniform marker and, where appropriate, mark the trail and an auto tour route; provide technical and limited financial assistance; assist with or conduct historical and archeological research; carry out monitoring and take actions to help ensure the preservation and quality of certified sites, segments, and facilities; manage the official logo for proper use; establish approaches to interpretation; and prepare interpretive materials.

The purpose of the comprehensive management and use plan would be to help achieve consistent and effective preservation, public use, and interpretive strategies. Section 5 (f) of the National Trails System Act identifies the following items to be addressed by the comprehensive management and use plan:

- (1) specific objectives and practices to be observed in the management of the trail, including the identification of all significant natural, historical, and cultural resources to be preserved (along with high potential historic sites and high potential route segments in the case of national historic trails), details of anticipated cooperative agreements to be consummated with other entities, and an identified carrying capacity of the trail and a plan for its implementation;
- (2) the process to be followed by the appropriate Secretary to implement the marking requirements established in . . . this act;
- (3) a protection plan for any high potential historic sites or high potential route segments; and
- (4) general and site-specific development plans, including anticipated costs.

The comprehensive management and use plan would include provisions to work cooperatively with state and local governments and landowners to help preserve the natural and cultural landscapes and resources along El Camino Real. These efforts could include the encouragement of continued cattle grazing and land uses that have helped to protect the

undeveloped appearance of El Camino Real. In addition, the administering agency could offer programs to qualified organizations and property owners for any of the following purposes related to national historic trail designation:

- preservation
- research
- interpretation
- technical assistance
- limited financial assistance
- recognition programs for partners
- appropriate public use of sites
- volunteers in parks status for liability protection for qualifying landowners
- trail marking

The voluntary process for certifying sites along the proposed El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail would be similar to the process used for other national historic trails. Certified trail properties would be nonfederal historic sites, trail segments, and interpretive facilities that met the standards of the administering agency for resource preservation and public enjoyment. Certification is a partnership or a type of cooperative agreement that has the flexibility to meet the landowner's needs while ensuring protection and appropriate public use.

Specific actions on private lands would depend on efforts by the federal administering agency or other partners to provide incentives and on the interest of landowners and other partners in the development, protection, and interpretation of sites along the trail. The public lands along the trail offer many opportunities to provide for public use and the appreciation and enjoyment of El Camino Real de los Tejas.

The designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas would offer important preservation opportunities resulting from some provisions of the National Trails System Act. Designation would encourage further research to improve the knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of trail segments and related sites and would promote the overall commemoration of the national significance of the trail. Technical assistance might be provided for documenting the significance of sites and identifying the most appropriate preservation techniques for preserving significant sites. Other assistance would help to stabilize and, where appropriate, restore significant resources for protection and interpretation.

The designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas as a unit of the national trails system would lead to opportunities to coordinate activities along the length of the trail. Designation also would enhance NPS efforts to coordinate with the Mexican and Spanish governments and others that might be interested in developing appropriate preservation and educational programs for trail resources, conducting research, and exchanging information and knowledge.

Interpretation

Interpretation refers to activities designed to convey important information, to educate, to reveal relationships related to natural and cultural resources, and to foster further inquiry, appreciation, and stewardship. The interpretation of El Camino Real de los Tejas would focus on three areas: the story and significance, the place and the landscape, and the people. Story and significance are listed together because they are essentially inseparable. The trail is significant because of its story. Whether stories are recorded in histories, oral traditions, memories, or customs, they are cultural resources.

From a distance a few significant segments of the landscape of the route of El Camino Real de los Tejas today generally resemble its appearance during the 18th and early 19th centuries. Designation as a national historic trail would give visitors the opportunity to retrace the historic route and see the similar patterns in the landscape today. River crossings would be some of the significant sites that could be accessible to visitors so that they would be able to appreciate what the early travelers of the route experienced.

The third focus for interpretation could be the stories of people. Oral histories, diaries, and historical research would be used to document more about the personal experiences of travelers along the routes.

Interpretive Themes. The following interpretive themes are the ideas, concepts, and stories that are central to the history, identity, and significance of El Camino Real de los Tejas. These are the primary, most important themes that could be used in interpretive programs so that all visitors would understand them. In addition to these themes, many other topics and stories would be interpreted.

- ◆ The trail was a major route for the settlement, acculturation, trade, military operations, and immigration from both the south and the east. The nature of trail activities and the specific route evolved with time to accommodate changing conditions and needs. El Camino Real was the route used for more than 150 years for Spanish exploration, settlement, military, and missionary travel into the areas that are now Texas and north-western Louisiana. The Old San Antonio Road was used for more than 50 years for migration from the East to Texas.
- ◆ Indigenous people used the route of El Camino Real for more than 1,000 years. Archeological sites document that the trail was a major travel and transportation corridor between North America and Mesoamerica. Segments of what was to become El Camino Real were used extensively by various indigenous groups. The Spanish culture brought many benefits to indigenous people but also led to the loss of many aspects of those indigenous cultures. Spanish and indigenous cultures also blended, incorporating aspects from both into a new culture.
- ◆ The trail facilitated cultural exchange, diffusion, communication, and conflict among American Indians, Spanish, French, Mexicans, English, and Anglo-Americans. It represents the shared patrimony of nations and cultures.

- ◆ The evolving routes of El Camino Real were used to seek control of the lands adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico. The issue of control was not resolved until the southern and western boundaries of the United States were determined.

Interpretive Facilities and Media. Future planning efforts would identify interpretive facilities and media. Consistency would be needed in information, design, and visitor use guidelines. Media and program design should be accomplished with the involvement of interested and knowledgeable groups and individuals.

Facilities might include visitor centers, contact stations, and unattended kiosks. The federal administering agency normally would not construct or operate visitor facilities for the trail. The federal agency could provide interpretive media assistance (such as exhibits) if it was done in partnership with appropriate state and private organizations with broad public support and a demonstrated ability to raise the funds needed to build and operate such facilities. On the basis of the availability of funds the federal agency could provide technical and financial assistance to others in the planning, development, and overall approach to interpretation.

Exhibits would be an important means of telling the interpretive story. Exhibits could display and explain original and replica objects associated with the trail. Graphics could show various and distant landscapes and illustrate changes over centuries. Audiovisual programs, computers, interactive devices, models, dioramas, topographic models, or other media might join with objects, text, and graphics to tell stories and excite interest.

In partnership with others, the federal administering agency would develop an interpretive wayside exhibit system with waysides to be placed at appropriate points along the trail. A standardized exhibit design would be used to reflect the flavor of El Camino Real de los Tejas and to help reinforce the public's perception of an integrated national trail system. Wayside exhibits are outdoor panels that generally contain text and graphics. Waysides would be considered at any locations that met the following criteria: something important and interesting happened here, was here, or is visible from here; and the location is accessible and safe for visitors. Waysides could be placed at road pullouts, vistas, historic sites or features, or trailheads and along trails.

A variety of books, pamphlets, and site folders exist that interpret El Camino Real and related topics. Some advantages of publications are that they can be taken home after a visit, can be enjoyed at one's own pace, can interpret complex and sequential stories, and are often shared with others. Publications would be developed through partnerships and other arrangements.

Visitor Use Opportunities. A range of visitor use opportunities could be developed on public lands and private properties that have been certified with landowner concurrence with terms for public use. Such use would be managed so that there would not be any degradation of archeological or historic sites. Existing trail systems could be expanded for hiking, wagon tours, and horseback riding. In addition, an auto tour route could be marked along parallel roads and highways.

Visitors could have opportunities east of San Antonio to drive on state highways (Texas Highway 21; Louisiana Highway 6) that in many places are in the same alignments as El Camino Real de los Tejas. West of San Antonio and at other points along the route, there are opportunities to see where the trail crossed major streams. These points are characterized by shoals or bedrock and less steep stream banks that facilitated crossing the stream.

Audiocassette tapes or special radio programs could be made available to help motorists better appreciate the history of the areas while driving.

Another opportunity would be to record and document the oral histories of families that are descendants of the travelers and settlers who used El Camino Real de los Tejas. Oral histories and ethnographic interviews would provide the connection to the families and the personal stories of people who traveled the trail, as well as those of indigenous people who have been affected by El Camino Real de los Tejas.

Besides retracing the trail, additional methods of experiencing El Camino Real de los Tejas could be explored. For example, areas of difficult access could be documented in video form and shared with people who are unable or unwilling to endure trail travel. Local community groups could become more involved in educating the public and promoting the preservation and appropriate use of resources associated with the trail. The public would have opportunities to take part in the following activities:

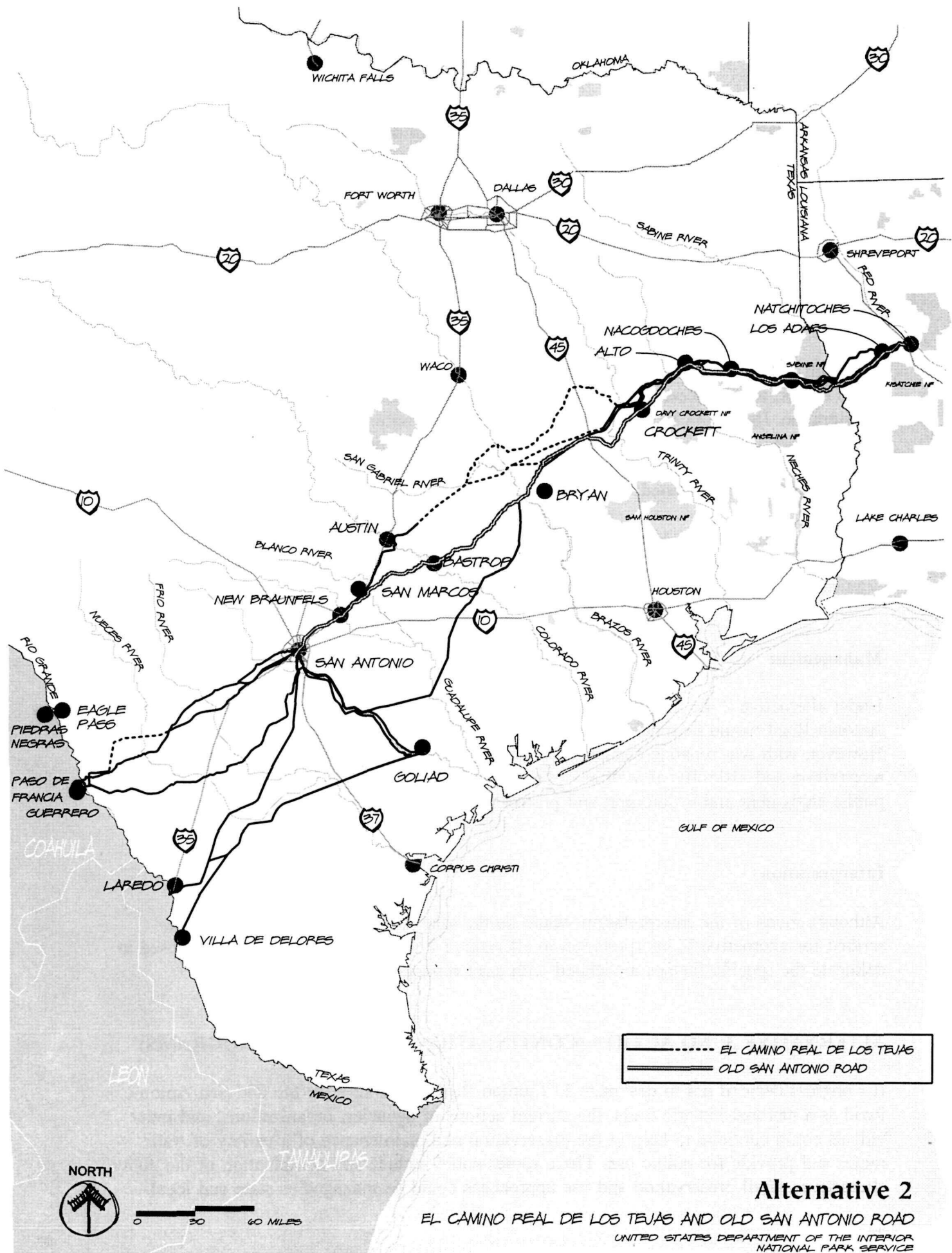
- retrace the trail in the United States at appropriate places by historic means: hiking, horseback riding, or riding in wagons, provided there would not be any adverse impact on trail resources

- participate in costumed interpretive programs and festivals

ALTERNATIVE 2: DESIGNATE TWO SEPARATE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS, EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS AND OLD SAN ANTONIO ROAD

Two separate trails would be proposed for designation under alternative 2: El Camino Real de los Tejas from the Rio Grande to Los Adaes and the Old San Antonio Road from Natchitoches to San Antonio. The overall approach of this alternative would be to separate the two distinctively different major themes, the time periods of significance, and the names for immigration, settlement, and travel across Texas and northwestern Louisiana (see Alternative 2 map; further detail is available in the separate segment maps that begin on page 13).

Each route that would be designated under this alternative is individually nationally significant and would qualify for designation as a national historic trail. The Laredo to San Antonio routes would be included as part of El Camino Real de los Tejas. Alternative 2 reflects the technical definition of El Camino Real and not any later interpretations or uses of the route. It also would permit a clear separation of the Old San Antonio Road and its significance to the nation's history.



Route descriptions and a discussion of the overall significance of El Camino Real and the Old San Antonio Road were included in alternative 1. In alternative 2 each route would be considered separately, each with its own significance, resources, interpretation, and management. In this alternative El Camino Real is seen as a product of Spanish exploration and colonization between the 1680s and 1821. Spain dedicated a great deal of its resources and human energy to create and develop the route. In turn, the road network permitted the Spanish to assert control over the borderlands, both during the entradas and later as the missions and presidios and settlements were built. The route is significant because of the impacts of Spanish settlement and Christianization of American Indians.

Although some of the routes that would become the Old San Antonio Road were pioneered much earlier, this 19th century route is significant for its role in communication, trade, and immigration. Its significance is also tied to the connection to a much longer road system that was part of the peopling of Texas and northwestern Louisiana. The Old San Antonio Road played a vital role in the development of the Republic of Texas, the War with Mexico, and Texas statehood.

The distinction that would be afforded by the designation of two separate historic trails would offer a clearer way to tell the story of their respective histories. The overlapping segments could be managed as an integrated system.

Management

Under alternative 2 the management of El Camino Real de los Tejas and of the Old San Antonio Road would be much the same as the management described for alternative 1. However, with two separate designated national historic trails there would be increased recognition and visibility, as well as opportunities to work with partners to provide for public enjoyment and to interpret and protect segments of the routes.

Interpretation

Although much of the interpretation would be the same for this alternative as that described for alternative 1, interpretation in alternative 2 would be more narrowly focused to delineate the specific themes associated with each separate route.

ALTERNATIVE 3: NO ACTION (CONTINUATION OF EXISTING PROGRAMS)

If Congress decided not to designate El Camino Real de los Tejas or the Old San Antonio Road as a national historic trails, the current actions of agencies, organizations, and individuals could continue to help in the preservation and maintenance of a variety of trail routes and provide for public use. These routes could include any combination of the above alternatives. Trail preservation and use approaches could be managed as state and local

governments were able, but the level of coordination and protection would be less than in the designation alternatives because there would not be a single agency directed and funded to help coordinate and protect the sites and segments of El Camino Real de los Tejas in Texas and Louisiana. Statewide initiatives such as the Texas heritage tourism program would help protect resources and provide for education.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED

Several additional routes were considered to be recommended for designation, but each was rejected for reasons briefly mentioned below (see map: Alternative Routes Considered but Rejected).

The road to San Sabá from San Antonio (that is, the route to the San Sabá Mission) was considered for inclusion in this study, but that possibility was rejected. The route does not connect Spanish provincial capitals and was used over a very short time, from about 1750 to 1760.

The road from Natchitoches to Natchez was one of the principal routes for immigration and trade that connected to El Camino Real de los Tejas. Further research would be required to document the location of this route and to identify archeological and historic sites directly associated with the route.

Connecting routes to Los Adaes extended north and northwest, but these routes would not have been El Camino Real. The road north from Los Adaes is one of the Caddo Indian routes that appears on a 1767 map of the Los Adaes area (Avery 1995, 13). At this time, not enough is known about the specific location of these routes to be included in this study. Other 16th century routes extended to the northwest. (Also see Kelley 1995, 32, and Geographical, Statistical, and Historical map 1832.)

The road from La Bahía to Orcoquisac was used to bring supplies to the coastal mission of Orcoquisac. While this colonial road was important, it did not connect Spanish provincial capitals, it was not used over a long period of time, and it is not nationally significant.

A 17th century exploration route (the upper extension of La Bahía Road) meets the Old San Antonio Road at Midway and Lower Camino Real at La Grange. This segment was an Indian trail that was followed by 17th century explorations, but it did not become part of the 18th century Camino Real. It came to be used again in the 19th century as part of La Bahía Road, but it was separate from the Old San Antonio Road.

Many of these routes may have local and regional significance as historic routes, but they are not nationally significant because of having been used for a limited time or infrequently or because the types of use were limited. It would have been more difficult to explain and convey to visitors the significance of the Rio Grande to Natchitoches segment of El Camino Real de los Tejas because of the number of other routes that would have been designated. If El Camino Real de los Tejas was designated, interpretation could address the

historical development of the colonial network of roads that connected with El Camino Real de los Tejas. The story of the trail could emphasize the network of routes that connected colonial sites in a wide region. Individual segments of this colonial road network that have direct association with El Camino Real de los Tejas might be locally marked and associated with national historic trail programs.

RECOMMENDED NAME FOR THE ROUTE

The legislation authorizing this study directed that the study “consider alternative name designations for the trail.” Factors to be considered were how widespread was the historical use of the name, how well does the name describe the route proposed for designation and differentiate the proposed route from other routes, and how well would the proposed trail name would fit on a standard national historic trail sign.

Several names were considered for recommendation: Camino de los Tejas, El Camino Real, Pita Road, Lower Presidio Road, Upper Presidio Road, Camino de en Medio, Camino de Arriba, and the Old San Antonio Road.

El Camino Real alone is a general and widely used term. Some of the above names would have been favored by different travelers during the various periods of trail use. Some names referred to specific geographic segments. For example, El Camino de la Plata was used exclusively in Mexico north of Mexico City for the route to the silver mines of Guanajuato, Zacatecas, and Durango; the name never applied to the segment under study. El Camino Real is the name that New Mexican Governor Vargas called the road in 1692. El Camino Real de los Tejas was used to differentiate this route from other royal routes to California and New Mexico.

It is recommended that the trail name be “El Camino Real de los Tejas,” a title that is more grammatically correct than “El Camino Real para los Texas” (the name that was used in the legislation that authorized this study). The research for this study has indicated that this is the most common and appropriate name for this route. Referring to the road as “Camino Real” after 1821 is technically incorrect because the route was no longer a Spanish royal road. However, the overall significance of the trail and its human interaction evolved from the Spanish colonial period, so for the purpose of naming the national historic trail, “El Camino Real de los Tejas” is most appropriate.

The period of significance for the trail extends from just before European exploration and settlement to a period after the independence of Mexico from Spain in 1821. The names of the trail that were used after Mexican independence would be part of the interpretive story of El Camino Real de los Tejas.

The recommended name differentiates the routes in Texas and Louisiana from other *caminos reales* that may be considered for possible designation as national historic trails, such as El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (in New Mexico and western Texas). If Congress chooses to designate El Camino Real de los Tejas as a national historic trail, the comprehensive management and use plan would include consideration of a variety of trail logo designs incorporating the name (possibly abbreviated) within the size limitations of the design format for the standard national historic trail marker.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter contains a description of the environmental consequences that would result from the alternative concepts described in this feasibility study. The alternatives are conceptual and do not include any development activities or any specific federal actions. Therefore, the potential impacts are addressed conceptually.

IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 1

The designation of routes from the Rio Grande to Natchitoches, Louisiana, as the national historic trail called El Camino Real de los Tejas would help ensure the protection and interpretation of the trail in a consistent and coordinated manner. Present and future generations would benefit from the protection of El Camino Real sites and segments. The focus on overall interpretive themes would enable a wide range of the public to appreciate and understand the evolving significance and importance of El Camino Real de los Tejas over time.

With designation as a national historic trail, the continuum of history would be interpreted. The complexity of history would be addressed through interpretation of the evolving routes. Interpretation would have the flexibility to emphasize different aspects of the interpretive story in order to focus on particular events, audiences, or places. Some public support could be lost if public interest groups disagreed with the interpretive focus.

Cultural and Natural Resources

The designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas as a national historic trail would encourage additional protection of resources by promoting public interests; encouraging grassroots management, study, and research regarding the significance of sites and segments; and providing for public use (where appropriate). The protection of resources also would be stimulated through technical assistance for preservation, coordination, and potential funding. The resources on federal lands would receive increased protection, and designation would lead to additional mechanisms, incentives, and opportunities to protect resources on nonfederal lands.

The designation of this route as a national historic trail also would encourage increased awareness and recognition by landowners, managers, and the public; this would help to ensure greater protection of resources. People might become more familiar and connected to their cultural heritage and therefore might be more likely to participate in protecting the resources.

Designation as proposed in alternative 1 would help to meet the needs of visitors along El Camino Real and promote the maintenance of a high-quality experience. Interpretive programs would give visitors the opportunity to learn about the significant role the trail played

in the development of the Southwest and Mexico, as well as the importance of local historic sites. Designating an auto-tour route would allow visitors to follow the approximate route of the trail on adjacent highways and to find opportunities to experience actual trail resources. Programs, facilities, and recreational opportunities would be designed and structured to provide varying levels of information about El Camino Real for visitors seeking a wide range of information about the history of the trail.

The designation of the trail would result in increased visitation. With proper management, such an increase would not be likely to cause adverse impacts on trail resources. However, if visitor facilities and visitor opportunities were expanded without sound planning and effective coordination there would be a potential for both natural and cultural resources to be adversely affected. Vegetation, wildlife, air and water quality, woodlands, soils, threatened and endangered species, critical habitat, floodplains, wetlands, prime farmlands, and historic and archeological resources could be negatively affected by development and visitors. If any developments were considered or proposed for these resource areas, further analysis would be done on a site-specific basis in consultation with affected parties to mitigate any impacts.

The availability of information about trail-related resources would increase the probability that sites could be vandalized and destroyed. Adverse impacts would be avoided through proper site selection, proper design, management of visitor use, law enforcement, site stewardship programs, and consultation with state historic preservation offices and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Designation and subsequent certification as a national historic trail would provide the opportunity for landowners and local governments to receive technical assistance in preserving and protecting their resources. This would help avert impacts from development and visitors on trail resources on nonfederal lands. Public access to sites would depend on agreements with partners and landowners.

Socioeconomic Environment

The designation of El Camino de los Tejas as a national historic trail probably would lead to increases in visitation and tourism revenues. These increases would not be significant on a regional and statewide scale. Tourism could increase in local communities along the trail corridor. Other federal, state, local, and private entities would benefit from the overall coordination of activities to preserve and protect trail-related resources, to interpret the trail, and to provide consistent opportunities for visitor use. The coordination of visitor services and interpretation could potentially increase tourism revenue.

Designation would have locally beneficial effects on the socioeconomic environment. Local communities would benefit from increased recognition and possibly greater understanding of cultural heritage, as well as from greater opportunities to interpret the trail.

Some communities could benefit from increased trail visitation through low to modest tourism expenditures as a result of trail programs, activities, and special events. Such benefits generally would be diffused along the length of the trail.

The effects on land values resulting from designation would be few and limited. Little land acquisition, if any, would be recommended. Restrictive language in the actual trail designation legislation, as has been done for other national historic trails, could limit federal land acquisition to willing sellers only. Some landowners would benefit from the sale of lands and easements. It is possible that local municipalities would prohibit incompatible development that would adversely affect trail resources. Landowners and developers could be adversely affected by such actions of local governments. The owners of adjacent property might benefit from such land use actions.

Protected trail segments with recreational values might increase nearby residential property values. In some cases there could be a loss in property values because of visitor use on adjacent properties. Adverse impacts would be mitigated by involving affected landowners and other interests in the protection of the trail and the natural and cultural landscapes that are near the trail. Public access to private lands would be allowed only if there was an agreement with the landowner.

IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 2

The designation of two national historic trails as El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Old San Antonio Road would provide for specific recognition and interpretation of the distinctively different themes of the overlapping routes. El Camino Real de los Tejas reflects the exploration, missionary activities, and settlement of northwest Louisiana and Texas as a colony of Spain. The Old San Antonio Road represents the westward migration and settlement of Texas by Anglo-Americans.

The management of two national historic trails, even with the same alignments as the single national historic trail proposed in alternative 1, would increase administrative and management costs. There might be increased opportunities for cooperative agreements with other public and private land managers and owners due to increased interest by particular trail constituencies that might have specific aspects of the routes. The designation of two overlapping routes would provide for the equal emphasis on the national significance of both trails.

Alternative 2 could lead to some confusion about the starting point of the Old San Antonio Road. Immigrants who used the trail came from the eastern United States. Many used the Natchez Trace to Natchez and then traveled on to Natchitoches, one of the many supply and collecting points along the Old San Antonio Road.

Cultural and Natural Resources

The level of resource protection provided by the designation of two national historic trails would be similar to that of alternative 1.

Socioeconomic Environment

The effects of alternative 2 on socioeconomic resources would be similar to those described for alternative 1.

IMPACTS OF ALTERNATIVE 3

Cultural and Natural Resources

Without designation as a national historic trail, the resources of the trail being studied would not receive overall coordination by a lead federal agency. State, local, and private entities would continue to manage trail-related resources as they do now. The absence of coordination and technical assistance by a federal agency would mean that protection would be afforded to fewer resources than would be protected by the designation of the trail as a national historic trail. Without designation, national recognition and increased awareness of the values of trail resources would be diminished, which also would mean less protection of resources. In addition, without the overall interpretive focus that would be provided with designation, fewer people living near the trail corridor and fewer people from throughout the nation would understand the significance and importance of El Camino Real de los Tejas.

It is likely that cultural resources could be destroyed inadvertently because less information would be available about the significance of these sites. There also would be less law enforcement and fewer volunteer activities to protect sites.

Socioeconomic Environment

There would be no significant change in the socioeconomic environment under alternative 3. State, local, and private trail activities would continue. Visitation and public use opportunities and coordination of tourism efforts would continue. Some activities and tourism opportunities might not occur because of the lack of designation, federal coordination, technical assistance, and opportunities for funding.

Some confusion and misunderstanding by residents and tourists would result from the absence of coordination of interpretive programs and the likelihood that there would continue to be different and sometimes widely varying interpretations of history. It is likely that there would be local designation of sites and segments that may not have been a part of El Camino Real. It is also likely that the identification and explanation of the effects of the conquest, settlement, and cultural exchanges would not necessarily be explained with the perspectives of different ethnic groups, including the descendants of indigenous people, hispanics, and others.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

During the preparation of this feasibility study the National Park Service has consulted with affected public agencies, organizations, and individuals.

The primary method of working with agencies and American Indian tribes has been through the establishment of an agency coordinating team. The team has met to ensure that there is an understanding of the goals of this study and the procedures for conducting it. Meetings also were useful in exchanging information about related projects and programs. The team consists of representatives of federal, state, and local agencies, independent researchers, and individuals from private organizations and American Indian tribes. The technical team met to initially identify issues that the study should address, to review historical research and alternatives, and to review draft materials. A full list of all agencies and organizations that were invited to meetings of the technical team is presented under "Consultants" (p. 122).

A scoping newsletter was prepared and distributed in the fall of 1996. The newsletter, which included a summary of the purpose and scope of this study and the process used in its preparation, contained a response form to facilitate input and comment. The National Park Service distributed about 300 newsletters, and about 70 responses were received. Most of the responses were supportive of the designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas as a national historic trail, the protection of resources, and programs to help communities better appreciate their heritage. Two comments were received opposing the designation of El Camino Real. The commenters indicated that their opposition was due to the chance that private property rights could be lost, and they opposed the possible cost to government.

The National Park Service subsequently met with several representatives of groups with private property rights interests. Preliminary responses indicated that the group members favored the voluntary certification aspects of national historic trail administration. They supported legislative language that would prohibit the use of federal eminent domain authority by limiting any federal acquisition to properties with willing sellers. New commenters identified the following reasons for favoring designation:

- the rich cultural history along the route
- the significance and integrity of existing sites
- public appreciation, education and understanding of the history of Mexico, Texas, and Louisiana
- increased opportunities for cooperation between Texas and Mexico and for understanding the common heritage
- economic benefits
- increased tourism revenues

Questions and concerns were identified that have been addressed in this study.

Will local historians be involved?

Will key areas be identified?
How will the study be conducted?
Will everyone get to see the study?
What are the time projections for completing the study?
Cost versus returns — is it worth it?
Southern Goliad route should be included.
International park should be a priority.
Would like nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and nomination as a national landmark to be included in the study.
Need markers on the roads used today to Eagle Pass and Guerrero.
The broad scope of the study should not obliterate the differences among cultural groups.
Landowners would be displaced because of rising property costs.
Privately owned land should not be designated.
Do not encroach on border ranches, it will be the death knell of the trail.
The costs are not worth it.

Letters were sent to American Indian tribes in Oklahoma and Louisiana. The National Park Service has made followup telephone calls to tribes.

To understand the significance of the part of the route that is in the United States, the National Park Service has conducted and compiled research on the entire route from Los Adaes, Louisiana, to Mexico City. The Mexican government has cooperated in the preparation of this study through the participation of the director of the Coahuila office of the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

The National Park Service has consulted and coordinated with federal, state, and local officials in the preparation of this draft. In addition, historians have reviewed the preliminary draft to ensure accuracy and fairness in discussion of the historical events and places.

APPENDIX A: NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM ACT

[NOTE: See section 5(a)(15) for specific language about the Santa Fe Trail and section 5(c)(36) for specific language about the Camino Real para los Texas.]

NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM ACT
Public Law 90-543
(16 USC 1241 et seq.)
as amended
through PL 104-333, November 12, 1996

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SHORT TITLE

SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as the “National Trails System Act.”

STATEMENT OF POLICY

SEC. 2. (a) In order to provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding population and in order to promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air, outdoor areas and historic resources of the Nation, trails should be established (i) primarily, near the urban areas of the Nation, and (ii) secondarily, within scenic areas and along historic travel routes of the Nation which are often more remotely located.

(b) The purpose of this Act is to provide the means for attaining these objectives by instituting a national system of recreation, scenic and historic trails, by designating the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail as the initial components of that system, and by prescribing the methods by which, and standards according to which, additional components may be added to the system.

(c) The Congress recognizes the valuable contributions that volunteers and private, nonprofit trail groups have made to the development and maintenance of the Nation’s trails. In recognition of these contributions, it is further the purpose of this Act to encourage and assist volunteer citizen involvement in the planning, development, maintenance, and management, where appropriate, of trails.

NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM

SEC. 3. (a) The national system of trails shall be composed of the following:

(1) National recreation trails, established as provided in section 4 of this Act, which will provide a variety of outdoor recreation uses in or reasonably accessible to urban areas.

(2) National scenic trails, established as provided in section 5 of this Act, which will be extended trails so located as to provide for maximum outdoor recreation potential and for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, or cultural qualities of the areas through which such trails may pass. National scenic trails may be located so

as to represent desert, marsh, grassland, mountain, canyon, river, forest, and other areas, as well as landforms which exhibit significant characteristics of the physiographic regions of the Nation.

(3) National historic trails, established as provided in section 5 of this Act, which will be extended trails which follow as closely as possible and practicable the original trails or routes of travel of national historic significance. Designation of such trails or routes shall be continuous, but the established or developed trail, and the acquisition thereof, need not be continuous onsite. National historic trails shall have as their purpose the identification and protection of the historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment. Only those selected land and water based components of a historic trail which are on federally owned lands and which meet the national historic trail criteria established in this Act are included as Federal protection components of a national historic trail. The appropriate Secretary may certify other lands as protected segments of an historic trail upon application from State or local governmental agencies or private interests involved if such segments meet the national historic trail criteria established in this Act and such criteria supplementary thereto as the appropriate Secretary may prescribe, and are administered by such agencies or interests without expense to the United States.

(4) Connecting or side trails, established as provided in section 6 of this Act, which will provide additional points of public access to national recreation, national scenic or national historic trails or which will provide connections between such trails.

The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with appropriate governmental agencies and public and private organizations, shall establish a uniform marker for the national trails system.

(b) For purposes of this section, the term 'extended trails' means trails or trail segments which total at least one hundred miles in length, except that historic trails of less than one hundred miles may be designated as extended trails. While it is desirable that extended trails be continuous, studies of such trails may conclude that it is feasible to propose one or more trail segments which, in the aggregate, constitute at least one hundred miles in length.

(c) On October 1, 1982, and at the beginning of each odd numbered fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and to the President of the United States Senate, an initial and revised (respectively) National Trails System plan. Such comprehensive plan shall indicate the scope and extent of a completed nationwide system of trails, to include (1) desirable nationally significant scenic and historic components which are considered necessary to complete a comprehensive national system, and (2) other trails which would balance out a complete and comprehensive nationwide system of trails. Such plan, and the periodic revisions thereto, shall be prepared in full consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, the Governors of the various States, and the trails community.

NATIONAL RECREATION TRAILS

SEC. 4. (a) The Secretary of the Interior, or the Secretary of Agriculture where lands administered by him are involved, may establish and designate national recreation trails, with the consent of the Federal agency, State, or political subdivision having jurisdiction over the lands involved, upon finding that--

- (i) such trails are reasonably accessible to urban areas, and, or
- (ii) such trails meet the criteria established in this Act and such supplementary criteria as he may prescribe.

(b) As provided in this section, trails within park, forest, and other recreation areas administered by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture or in other federally administered areas may be established and designated as "National Recreation Trails" by the appropriate Secretary and, when no Federal land acquisition is involved —

(i) trails in or reasonably accessible to urban areas may be designated as "National Recreation Trails" by the appropriate Secretary with the consent of the States, their political subdivisions, or other appropriate administering agencies;

(ii) trails within park, forest, and other recreation areas owned or administered by States may be designated as "National Recreation Trails" by the appropriate Secretary with the consent of the State; and

(iii) trails on privately owned lands may be designated "National Recreation Trails" by the appropriate Secretary with the written consent of the owner of the property involved.

NATIONAL SCENIC AND NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

SEC.5.(a) National scenic and national historic trails shall be authorized and designated only by Act of Congress. There are hereby established the following National Scenic and National Historic Trails:

[Paragraphs naming 19 trails have been deleted.]

(15) The Santa Fe National Historic Trail, a trail of approximately 950 miles from a point near Old Franklin, Missouri, through Kansas, Oklahoma, and Colorado to Santa Fe, New Mexico, as generally depicted on a map entitled "The Santa Fe Trail" contained in the Final Report of the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, dated July 1976. The map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the office of the Director of the National Park Service, Washington, District of Columbia. The trail shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior. No lands or interests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area may be acquired by the Federal Government for the Santa Fe Trail except with the consent of the owner thereof. Before acquiring any easement or entering into any cooperative agreement with a private landowner with respect to the trail, the Secretary shall notify the landowner of the potential liability, if any, for injury to the public resulting from physical conditions which may be on the landowner's land. The United States shall not be held liable by reason of such notice or failure to provide such notice to the landowner. So that significant route segments and sites recognized as associated with the Santa Fe Trail may be distinguished by suitable markers, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to accept the donation of suitable markers for placement at appropriate locations.

(b) The Secretary of the Interior, through the agency most likely to administer such trail, and the Secretary of Agriculture where lands administered by him are involved, shall make such additional studies as are herein or may hereafter be authorized by the Congress for the purpose of determining the feasibility and desirability of designating other trails as national scenic or national historic trails. Such studies shall be made in consultation with the heads of other Federal agencies administering lands through which such additional proposed trails would pass and in cooperation with interested interstate, State, and local governmental agencies, public and private organizations, and landowners and land users concerned. The feasibility of designating a trail shall be determined on the basis of an evaluation of whether or not it is physically possible to develop a trail along a route being studied, and whether the development of a trail would be financially feasible. The studies listed in subsection (c) of this section shall be completed and submitted to the Congress, with recommendations as to the suitability of trail designation, not later than three complete fiscal years from the date of enactment of their addition to this subsection, or from the date of enactment

of this sentence, whichever is later. Such studies, when submitted, shall be printed as a House or Senate document, and shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) the proposed route of such trail (including maps and illustrations);
- (2) the areas adjacent to such trails, to be utilized for scenic, historic, natural, cultural, or developmental, purposes;
- (3) the characteristics which, in the judgment of the appropriate Secretary, make the proposed trail worthy of designation as a national scenic or national historic trail; and in the case of national historic trails the report shall include the recommendation of the Secretary of the Interior's National Park System Advisory Board as to the national historic significance based on the criteria developed under the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (40 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461);
- (4) the current status of land ownership and current and potential use along the designated route;
- (5) the estimated cost of acquisition of lands or interest in lands, if any;
- (6) the plans for developing and maintaining the trail and the cost thereof;
- (7) the proposed Federal administering agency (which, in the case of a national scenic trail wholly or substantially within a national forest, shall be the Department of Agriculture);
- (8) the extent to which a State or its political subdivisions and public and private organizations might reasonably be expected to participate in acquiring the necessary lands and in the administration thereof;
- (9) the relative uses of the lands involved, including: the number of anticipated visitor-days for the entire length of, as well as for segments of, such trail; the number of months which such trail, or segments thereof, will be open for recreation purposes; the economic and social benefits which might accrue from alternate land uses; and the estimated man-years of civilian employment and expenditures expected for the purposes of maintenance, supervision, and regulation of such trail;
- (10) the anticipated impact of public outdoor recreation use on the preservation of a proposed national historic trail and its related historic and archeological features and settings, including the measures proposed to ensure evaluation and preservation of the values that contribute to their national historic significance; and
- (11) To qualify for designation as a national historic trail, a trail must meet all three of the following criteria:
 - (A) It must be a trail or route established by historic use and must be historically significant as a result of that use. The route need not currently exist as a discernible trail to qualify, but its location must be sufficiently known to permit evaluation of public recreation and historical interest potential. A designated trail should generally accurately follow the historic route, but may deviate somewhat on occasion of necessity to avoid difficult routing through subsequent development, or to provide some route variations offering a more pleasurable recreational experience. Such deviations shall be so noted on site. Trail segments no longer possible to travel by trail due to subsequent development as motorized transportation routes may be designated and marked onsite as segments which link to the historic trail.

(B) It must be of national significance with respect to any of several broad facets of American history, such as trade and commerce, exploration, migration and settlement, or military campaigns. To qualify as nationally significant, historic use of the trail must have had a far reaching effect on broad patterns of American culture. Trails significant in the history of native Americans may be included.

(C) It must have significant potential for public recreational use or historical interest based on historic interpretation and appreciation. The potential for such use is generally greater along roadless segments developed as historic trails and at historic sites associated with the trail. The presence of recreation potential not related to historic appreciation is not sufficient justification for designation under this category.

(c) The following routes shall be studied in accordance with the objectives outlined in subsection (b) of this section.

[paragraphs naming 38 trails have been deleted]

(36)³⁰ (A) El Camino Real Para Los Texas, the approximate series of routes from Saltillo, Monclova, and Guerrero, Mexico across Texas through San Antonio and Nacogdoches, to the vicinity of Los Adaes, Louisiana, together with the evolving routes later known as the San Antonio Road.

(B) The study shall —

- (i) examine the changing roads within the historic corridor;
- (ii) examine the major connecting branch routes;
- (iii) determine the individual or combined suitability and feasibility of routes for potential national historic trail designation;
- (iv) consider the preservation heritage plan developed by the Texas Department of Transportation entitled “A Texas Legacy: The Old San Antonio Road and the Caminos Reales,” dated January, 1991; and
- (v) make recommendations concerning the suitability and feasibility of establishing an international historical park where the trail crosses the United States-Mexico border at Maverick County, Texas, and Guerrero, Mexico.

(C) The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to work in cooperation with the government of Mexico (including, but not limited to providing technical assistance) to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing an international historic trail long the El Camino Real Para Los Texas.

(D) The study shall be undertaken in consultation with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development and the Texas Department of Transportation.

(E) The study shall consider alternative name designations for the trail.

(F) The study shall be completed no later than two years after the date funds are made available for the study.

30. Two separate bills amending the National Trails System Act to authorize studies of potential National Scenic or National Historic Trails were enacted on November 17, 1993: Public Law 103-144, the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Study Act of 1993, and Public Law 103-145, the El Camino Real Para Los Texas Study Act of 1993. Both laws numbered the paragraph being amended into section 5(c) as “(36).” This paragraph should have been numbered (37).

(a) the current status of land ownership and current and potential use along the designated route;

(b) the estimated cost of acquisition of lands or interests in lands, if any; and

(c) an examination of the appropriateness of motorized trail use along the trail.

(d) The Secretary charged with the administration of each respective trail shall, within one year of the date of the addition of any national scenic or national historic trail to the system, and within sixty days of the enactment of this sentence for the Appalachian and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails, establish an advisory council for each such trail, each of which councils shall expire ten years from the date of its establishment, except that the Advisory Council established for the Iditarod Historic Trail shall expire twenty years from the date of its establishment. If the appropriate Secretary is unable to establish such an advisory council because of the lack of adequate public interest, the Secretary shall so advise the appropriate committees of the Congress. The appropriate Secretary shall consult with such council from time to time with respect to matters relating to the trail, including the selection of rights-of-way, standards for the erection and maintenance of markers along the trail, and the administration of the trail. The members of each advisory council, which shall not exceed thirty-five in number, shall serve for a term of two years and without compensation as such, but the Secretary may pay, upon vouchers signed by the chairman of the council, the expenses reasonably incurred by the council and its members in carrying out their responsibilities under this section. Members of each council shall be appointed by the appropriate Secretary as follows:

(1) the head of each Federal department or independent agency administering lands through which the trail route passes, or his designee;

(2) a member appointed to represent each State through which the trail passes, and such appointments shall be made from recommendations of the Governors of such States;

(3) one or more members appointed to represent private organizations, including corporate and individual landowners and land users, which in the opinion of the Secretary, have an established and recognized interest in the trail, and such appointments shall be made from recommendations of the heads of such organizations: *Provided*, That the Appalachian Trail Conference shall be represented by a sufficient number of persons to represent the various sections of the country through which the Appalachian Trail passes; and

(4) the Secretary shall designate one member to be chairman and shall fill vacancies in the same manner as the original appointment.

(e) Within two complete fiscal years of the date of enactment of legislation designating a national scenic trail, except for the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the North Country National Scenic Trail, as part of the system, and within two complete fiscal years of the date of enactment of this subsection for the Pacific Crest and Appalachian Trails, the responsible Secretary shall, after full consultation with affected Federal land managing agencies, the Governors of the affected States, the relevant advisory council established pursuant to section 5(d), and the Appalachian Trail Conference in the case of the Appalachian Trail, submit to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, a comprehensive plan for the acquisition, management, development, and use of the trail, including but not limited to, the following items:

(1) specific objectives and practices to be observed in the management of the trail, including the identification of all significant natural, historical, and cultural resources to be preserved (along with high potential historic sites and high potential route segments in the case of national historic trails), details of anticipated cooperative agreements to be consummated with other entities, and an identified carrying capacity of the trail and a plan for its implementation;

(2) an acquisition or protection plan, by fiscal year, for all lands to be acquired by fee title or lesser interest, along with detailed explanation of anticipated necessary cooperative agreements for any lands not to be acquired; and

(3) general and site-specific development plans including anticipated costs.

(f) Within two complete fiscal years of the date of enactment of legislation designating a national historic trail or the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail or the North Country National Scenic Trail as part of the system, the responsible Secretary shall, after full consultation with affected Federal land managing agencies, the Governors of the affected States, and the relevant Advisory Council established pursuant to section 5(d) of this Act, submit to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, a comprehensive plan for the management, and use of the trail, including but not limited to, the following items:

(1) specific objectives and practices to be observed in the management of the trail, including the identification of all significant natural, historical, and cultural resources to be preserved, details of any anticipated cooperative agreements to be consummated with State and local government agencies or private interests, and for national scenic or national historic trails an identified carrying capacity of the trail and a plan for its implementation;

(2) the process to be followed by the appropriate Secretary to implement the marking requirements established in section 7(c) of this Act;

(3) a protection plan for any high potential historic sites or high potential route segments; and

(4) general and site-specific development plans, including anticipated costs.

CONNECTING AND SIDE TRAILS

SEC. 6. Connecting or side trails within park, forest, and other recreation areas administered by the Secretary of the Interior or Secretary of Agriculture may be established, designated, and marked by the appropriate Secretary as components of a national recreation, national scenic or national historic trail. When no Federal land acquisition is involved, connecting or side trails may be located across lands administered by interstate, State, or local governmental agencies with their consent, or, where the appropriate Secretary deems necessary or desirable, on privately owned lands with the consent of the landowners. Applications for approval and designation of connecting and side trails on non-Federal lands shall be submitted to the appropriate Secretary.

ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

SEC. 7. (a)(1)(A) The Secretary charged with the overall administration of a trail pursuant to section 5(a) shall, in administering and managing the trail, consult with the heads of all other affected State and Federal agencies. Nothing contained in this Act shall be deemed to transfer among Federal agencies any management responsibilities established under any other law for federally administered lands which are components of the National Trails System. Any transfer of

management responsibilities may be carried out between the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture only as provided under subparagraph (B).

(B) The Secretary charged with the overall administration of any trail pursuant to section 5(a) may transfer management of any specified trail segment of such trail to the other appropriate Secretary pursuant to a joint memorandum of agreement containing such terms and conditions as the Secretaries consider most appropriate to accomplish the purposes of this Act. During any period in which management responsibilities for any trail segment are transferred under such an agreement, the management of any such segment shall be subject to the laws, rules, and regulations of the Secretary provided with the management authority under the agreement except to such extent as the agreement may otherwise expressly provide.

(2) Pursuant to section 5(a), the appropriate Secretary shall select the rights-of-way for national scenic and national historic trails and shall publish notice thereof of the availability of appropriate maps or descriptions in the Federal Register; *Provided*, That in selecting the rights-of-way full consideration shall be given to minimizing the adverse effects upon the adjacent landowner or user and his operation. Development and management of each segment of the National Trails System shall be designed to harmonize with and complement any established multiple-use plans for the specific area in order to insure continued maximum benefits from the land. The location and width of such rights-of-way across Federal lands under the jurisdiction of another Federal agency shall be by agreement between the head of that agency and the appropriate Secretary. In selecting rights-of-way for trail purposes, the Secretary shall obtain the advice and assistance of the States, local governments, private organizations, and landowners and land users concerned.

(b) After publication of notice of the availability of appropriate maps or descriptions in the Federal Register, the Secretary charged with the administration of a national scenic or national historic trail may relocate segments of a national scenic or national historic trail right-of-way, with the concurrence of the head of the Federal agency having jurisdiction over the lands involved, upon a determination that: (i) Such a relocation is necessary to preserve the purposes for which the trail was established, or (ii) the relocation is necessary to promote a sound land management program in accordance with established multiple-use principles; *Provided*, That a substantial relocation of the rights-of-way for such trail shall be by Act of Congress.

(c) National scenic or national historic trails may contain campsites, shelters, and related public use facilities. Other uses along the trail, which will not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail, may be permitted by the Secretary charged with the administration of the trail. Reasonable efforts shall be made to provide sufficient access opportunities to such trails and, to the extent practicable, efforts be made to avoid activities incompatible with the purposes for which such trails were established. The use of motorized vehicles by the general public along any national scenic trail shall be prohibited and nothing in this Act shall be construed as authorizing the use of motorized vehicles within the natural and historical areas of the national park system, the national wildlife refuge system, the national wilderness preservation system where they are presently prohibited or on other Federal lands where trails are designated as being closed to such use by the appropriate Secretary; *Provided*, That the Secretary charged with the administration of such trail shall establish regulations which shall authorize the use of motorized vehicles when, in his judgment, such vehicles are necessary to meet emergencies or to enable adjacent landowners or land users to have reasonable access to their lands or timber rights; *Provided further*, That private lands included in the national recreation, national scenic, or national historic trails by cooperative agreement of a landowner shall not preclude such owner from using motorized vehicles on or across such trails or adjacent lands from time to time in accordance with regulations to be established by the appropriate Secretary. Where a national historic trail follows existing public roads, developed rights-of-way or waterways, and similar features of man's nonhistorically related development,

approximating the original location of a historic route, such segments may be marked to facilitate retracement of the historic route, and where a national historic trail parallels an existing public road, such road may be marked to commemorate the historic route. Other uses along the historic trails and the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, which will not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail, and which, at the time of designation, are allowed by administrative regulations, including the use of motorized vehicles, shall be permitted by the Secretary charged with administration of the trail. The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, in consultation with appropriate governmental agencies and public and private organizations, shall establish a uniform marker, including thereon an appropriate and distinctive symbol for each national recreation, national scenic, and national historic trail. Where the trails cross lands administered by Federal agencies such markers shall be erected at appropriate points along the trails and maintained by the Federal agency administering the trail in accordance with standards established by the appropriate Secretary and where the trails cross non-Federal lands, in accordance with written cooperative agreements, the appropriate Secretary shall provide such uniform markers to cooperating agencies and shall require such agencies to erect and maintain them in accordance with the standards established. The appropriate Secretary may also provide for trail interpretation sites, which shall be located at historic sites along the route of any national scenic or national historic trail, in order to present information to the public about the trail, at the lowest possible cost, with emphasis on the portion of the trail passing through the State in which the site is located. Wherever possible, the sites shall be maintained by a State agency under a cooperative agreement between the appropriate Secretary and the State agency.

(d) Within the exterior boundaries of areas under their administration that are included in the right-of-way selected for a national recreation, national scenic, or national historic trail, the heads of Federal agencies may use lands for trail purposes and may acquire lands or interests in lands by written cooperative agreement, donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds or exchange.

(e) Where the lands included in a national scenic or national historic trail right-of-way are outside of the exterior boundaries of federally administered areas, the Secretary charged with the administration of such trail shall encourage the States or local governments involved (1) to enter into written cooperative agreements with landowners, private organizations, and individuals to provide the necessary trail right-of-way, or (2) to acquire such lands or interests therein to be utilized as segments of the national scenic or national historic trail: *Provided*, That if the State or local governments fail to enter into such written cooperative agreements or to acquire such lands or interests therein after notice of the selection of the right-of-way is published, the appropriate Secretary, may (i) enter into such agreements with landowners, States, local governments, private organizations, and individuals for the use of lands for trail purposes, or (ii) acquire private lands or interests therein by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds or exchange in accordance with the provisions of subsection (f) of this section: *Provided further*, That the appropriate Secretary may acquire lands or interests therein from local governments or governmental corporations with the consent of such entities. The lands involved in such rights-of-way should be acquired in fee, if other methods of public control are not sufficient to assure their use for the purpose for which they are acquired: *Provided*, That if the Secretary charged with the administration of such trail permanently relocates the right-of-way and disposes of all title or interest in the land, the original owner, or his heirs or assigns, shall be offered, by notice given at the former owner's last known address, the right of first refusal at the fair market price.

(f)(1) The Secretary of the Interior, in the exercise of his exchange authority, may accept title to any non-Federal property within the right-of-way and in exchange therefor he may convey to the grantor of such property any federally owned property under his jurisdiction which is located in the State wherein such property is located and which he classifies as suitable for exchange or other disposal. The values of the properties so exchanged either shall be approximately equal, or if they are not approximately equal the values shall be equalized by the payment of cash to the grantor or to

the Secretary as the circumstances require. The Secretary of Agriculture, in the exercise of his exchange authority, may utilize authorities and procedures available to him in connection with exchanges of national forest lands.

(2) In acquiring lands or interests therein for a National Scenic or Historic Trail, the appropriate Secretary may, with consent of a landowner, acquire whole tracts notwithstanding that parts of such tracts may lie outside the area of trail acquisition. In furtherance of the purposes of this act, lands so acquired outside the area of trail acquisition may be exchanged for any non-Federal lands or interests therein within the trail right-of-way, or disposed of in accordance with such procedures or regulations as the appropriate Secretary shall prescribe, including: (i) provisions for conveyance of such acquired lands or interests therein at not less than fair market value to the highest bidder, and (ii) provisions for allowing the last owners of record a right to purchase said acquired lands or interests therein upon payment or agreement to pay an amount equal to the highest bid price. For lands designated for exchange or disposal, the appropriate Secretary may convey these lands with any reservations or covenants deemed desirable to further the purposes of this Act. The proceeds from any disposal shall be credited to the appropriation bearing the costs of land acquisition for the affected trail.

(g) The appropriate Secretary may utilize condemnation proceedings without the consent of the owner to acquire private lands or interests, therein pursuant to this section only in cases where, in his judgment, all reasonable efforts to acquire such lands or interest therein by negotiation have failed, and in such cases he shall acquire only such title as, in his judgment, is reasonably necessary to provide passage across such lands: *Provided*, That condemnation proceedings may not be utilized to acquire fee title or lesser interests to more than an average of one hundred and twenty-five acres per mile. Money appropriated for Federal purposes from the land and water conservation fund shall, without prejudice to appropriations from other sources, be available to Federal departments for the acquisition of lands or interests in lands for the purposes of this Act. For national historic trails, direct Federal acquisition for trail purposes shall be limited to those areas indicated by the study report or by the comprehensive plan as high potential route segments or high potential historic sites. Except for designated protected components of the trail, no land or site located along a designated national historic trail or along the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail shall be subject to the provisions of section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. 1653(f)) unless such land or site is deemed to be of historical significance under appropriate historical site criteria such as those for the National Register of Historic Places.

(h)(1) The Secretary charged with the administration of a national recreation, national scenic, or national historic trail shall provide for the development and maintenance of such trails within federally administered areas and shall cooperate with and encourage the States to operate, develop, and maintain portions of such trails which are located outside the boundaries of federally administered areas. When deemed to be in the public interest, such Secretary may enter written cooperative agreements with the States or their political subdivisions, landowners, private organizations, or individuals to operate, develop, and maintain any portion of such a trail either within or outside a federally administered area. Such agreements may include provisions for limited financial assistance to encourage participation in the acquisition, protection, operation, development, or maintenance of such trails, provisions providing volunteer in the park or volunteer in the forest status (in accordance with the Volunteers in the Parks Act of 1969 and the Volunteers in the Forests Act of 1972) to individuals, private organizations, or landowners participating in such activities, or provisions of both types. The appropriate Secretary shall also initiate consultations with affected States and their political subdivisions to encourage —

(A) the development and implementation by such entities of appropriate measures to protect private landowners from trespass resulting from trail use and from unreasonable personal liability and property damage caused by trail use, and

(B) the development and implementation by such entities of provisions for land practices, compatible with the purposes of this Act,

for property within or adjacent to trail rights-of-way. After consulting with States and their political subdivisions under the preceding sentence, the Secretary may provide assistance to such entities under appropriate cooperative agreements in the manner provided by this subsection.

(2) Whenever the Secretary of the Interior makes any conveyance of land under any of the public land laws, he may reserve a right-of-way for trails to the extent he deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

(i) The appropriate Secretary, with the concurrence of the heads of any other Federal agencies administering lands through which a national recreation, national scenic, or national historic trail passes, and after consultation with the States, local governments, and organizations concerned, may issue regulations, which may be revised from time to time, governing the use, protection, management, development, and administration of trails of the national trails system. In order to maintain good conduct on and along the trails located within federally administered areas and to provide for the proper government and protection of such trails, the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture shall prescribe and publish such uniform regulations as they deem necessary and any person who violates such regulations shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and may be punished by a fine of not more \$500, or by imprisonment not exceeding six months, or by both such fine and imprisonment. The Secretary responsible for the administration of any segment of any component of the National Trails System (as determined in a manner consistent with subsection (a)(1) of this section) may also utilize authorities related to units of the national park system or the national forest system, as the case may be, in carrying out his administrative responsibilities for such component.

(j) Potential trail uses allowed on designated components of the national trails system may include, but are not limited to, the following: bicycling, cross-country skiing, day hiking, equestrian activities, jogging or similar fitness activities, trail biking, overnight and long-distance backpacking, snowmobiling, and surface water and underwater activities. Vehicles which may be permitted on certain trails may include, but need not be limited to, motorcycles, bicycles, four-wheel drive or all-terrain off-road vehicles. In addition, trail access for handicapped individuals may be provided. The provisions of this subsection shall not supersede any other provisions of this Act or other Federal laws, or any State or local laws.

(k) For the conservation purpose of preserving or enhancing the recreational, scenic, natural, or historical values of components of the national trails system, and environs thereof as determined by the appropriate Secretary, landowners are authorized to donate or otherwise convey qualified real property interests to qualified organizations consistent with section 170(h)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, including, but not limited to, right-of-way, open space, scenic, or conservation easements, without regard to any limitation on the nature of the estate or interest otherwise transferable within the jurisdiction where the land is located. The conveyance of any such interest in land in accordance with this subsection shall be deemed to further a Federal conservation policy and yield a significant public benefit for purposes of section 6 of Public Law 96-541.

STATE AND METROPOLITAN AREA TRAILS

SEC. 8. (a) The Secretary of the Interior is directed to encourage States to consider, in their comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plans and proposals for financial assistance for State and local projects submitted pursuant to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, needs and opportunities for establishing park, forest, and other recreation and historic trails on lands owned or administered by States, and recreation and historic trails on lands in or near urban areas. The Secre-

tary is also directed to encourage States to consider, in their comprehensive statewide historic preservation plans and proposals for financial assistance for State, local, and private projects submitted pursuant to the Act of October 15, 1966 (80 Stat. 915), as amended, needs and opportunities for establishing historic trails. He is further directed in accordance with the authority contained in the Act of May 28, 1963 (77 Stat. 49), to encourage States, political subdivisions, and private interests, including nonprofit organizations, to establish such trails.

(b) The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development is directed, in administering the program of comprehensive urban planning and assistance under section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954, to encourage the planning of recreation trails in connection with the recreation and transportation planning for metropolitan and other urban areas. He is further directed, in administering the urban open space program under title VII of the Housing Act of 1961, to encourage such recreation trails.

(c) The Secretary of Agriculture is directed, in accordance with authority vested in him, to encourage States and local agencies and private interests to establish such trails.

(d) The Secretary of Transportation, the Chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the Secretary of the Interior, in administering the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976, shall encourage State and local agencies and private interests to establish appropriate trails using the provisions of such programs. Consistent with the purposes of that Act, and in furtherance of the national policy to preserve established railroad rights-of-way for future reactivation of rail service, to protect rail transportation corridors, and to encourage energy efficient transportation use, in the case of interim use of any established railroad rights-of-way pursuant to donation, transfer, lease, sale, or otherwise in a manner consistent with the National Trails System Act, if such interim use is subject to restoration or reconstruction for railroad purposes, such interim use shall not be treated, for purposes of any law or rule of law, as an abandonment of the use of such rights-of-way for railroad purposes. If a State, political subdivision, or qualified private organization is prepared to assume full responsibility for management of such rights-of-way and for any legal liability arising out of such transfer or use, and for the payment of any and all taxes that may be levied or assessed against such rights-of-way, then the Commission shall impose such terms and conditions as a requirement of any transfer or conveyance for interim use in a manner consistent with this Act, and shall not permit abandonment or discontinuance inconsistent or disruptive of such use.

(e) Such trails may be designated and suitably marked as parts of the nationwide system of trails by the States, their political subdivisions, or other appropriate administering agencies with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior.

RIGHTS-OF-WAY AND OTHER PROPERTIES

SEC. 9. (a) The Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture as the case may be, may grant easements and rights-of-way upon, over, under, across, or along any component of the national trails system in accordance with the laws applicable to the national park system and the national forest system, respectively: *Provided*, That any conditions contained in such easements and rights-of-way shall be related to the policy and purposes of this Act.

(b) The Department of Defense, the Department of Transportation, the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, the Federal Power Commission, and other Federal agencies having jurisdiction or control over or information concerning the use, abandonment, or disposition of roadways, utility rights-of-way, or other properties which may be suitable for the purpose of improving or expanding the national trails system shall cooperate with the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture in order to assure, to the extent prac-

licable, that any such properties having values suitable for trail purposes may be made available for such use.

(c) Commencing upon the date of enactment of this subsection, any and all right, title, interest, and estate of the United States in all rights-of-way of the type described in the Act of March 8, 1922 (43 U.S.C. 912), shall remain in the United States upon the abandonment or forfeiture of such rights-of-way, or portions thereof, except to the extent that any such right-of-way, or portion thereof, is embraced within a public highway no later than one year after a determination of abandonment or forfeiture, as provided under such Act.

(d)(I) All rights-of-way, or portions thereof, retained by the United States pursuant to subsection (c) which are located within the boundaries of a conservation system unit or a National Forest shall be added to and incorporated within such unit or National Forest and managed in accordance with applicable provisions of law, including this Act.

(2) All such retained rights-of-way, or portions thereof, which are located outside the boundaries of a conservation system unit or a National Forest but adjacent to or contiguous with any portion of the public lands shall be managed pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and other applicable law, including this section.

(3) All such retained rights-of-way, or portions thereof, which are located outside the boundaries of a conservation system unit or National Forest which the Secretary of the Interior determines suitable for use as a public recreational trail or other recreational purposes shall be managed by the Secretary for such uses, as well as for such other uses as the Secretary determines to be appropriate pursuant to applicable laws, as long as such uses do not preclude trail use.

(e)(I) The Secretary of the Interior is authorized where appropriate to release and quitclaim to a unit of government or to another entity meeting the requirements of this subsection any and all right, title, and interest in the surface estate of any portion of any right-of-way to the extent any such right, title, and interest was retained by the United States pursuant to subsection (c), if such portion is not located within the boundaries of any conservation system unit or National Forest. Such release and quitclaim shall be made only in response to an application therefor by a unit of State or local government or another entity which the Secretary of the Interior determines to be legally and financially qualified to manage the relevant portion for public recreational purposes. Upon receipt of such an application, the Secretary shall publish a notice concerning such application in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where the relevant portion is located. Such release and quitclaim shall be on the following conditions:

(A) If such unit or entity attempts to sell, convey, or otherwise transfer such right, title, or interest or attempts to permit the use of any part of such portion for any purpose incompatible with its use for public recreation, then any and all right, title, and interest released and quitclaimed by the Secretary pursuant to this subsection shall revert to the United States.

(B) Such unit or entity shall assume full responsibility and hold the United States harmless for any legal liability which might arise with respect to the transfer, possession, use, release, or quitclaim of such right-of-way.

(C) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the United States shall be under no duty to inspect such portion prior to such release and quitclaim, and shall incur no legal liability with respect to any hazard or any unsafe condition existing on such portion at the time of such release and quitclaim.

(2) The Secretary is authorized to sell any portion of a right-of-way retained by the United States pursuant to subsection (c) located outside the boundaries of a conservation system unit or National Forest if any such portion is —

(A) not adjacent to or contiguous with any portion of the public lands; or

(B) determined by the Secretary, pursuant to the disposal criteria established by section 203 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, to be suitable for sale.

Prior to conducting any such sale, the Secretary shall take appropriate steps to afford a unit of State or local government or any other entity an opportunity to seek to obtain such portion pursuant to paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(3) All proceeds from sales of such retained rights of way shall be deposited into the Treasury of the United States and credited to the Land and Water Conservation Fund as provided in section 2 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965.

(4) The Secretary of the Interior shall annually report to the Congress the total proceeds from sales under paragraph (2) during the preceding fiscal year. Such report shall be included in the President's annual budget submitted to the Congress.

(f) As used in this section —

(1) The term "conservation system unit" has the same meaning given such term in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (Public Law 96-487; 94 Stat. 2371 et seq.), except that such term shall also include units outside Alaska.

(2) The term "public lands" has the same meaning given such term in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 10. (a)(1) There are hereby authorized to be appropriated for the acquisition of lands or interests in lands not more than \$5,000,000 for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and not more than \$500,000 for the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. From the appropriations authorized for fiscal year 1979 and succeeding fiscal years pursuant to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (78 Stat. 897), as amended, not more than the following amounts may be expended for the acquisition of lands and interests in lands authorized to be acquired pursuant to the provisions of this Act: for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, not to exceed \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 1979, \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 1980, and \$30,000,000 for fiscal year 1981, except that the difference between the foregoing amounts and the actual appropriations in any one fiscal year shall be available for appropriation in subsequent fiscal years.

(2) It is the express intent of the Congress that the Secretary should substantially complete the land acquisition program necessary to insure the protection of the Appalachian Trail within three complete fiscal years following the date of enactment of this sentence. Until the entire acquisition program is completed, he shall transmit in writing at the close of each fiscal year the following information to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives:

(A) the amount of land acquired during the fiscal year and the amount expended therefor;

(B) the estimated amount of land remaining to be acquired; and

(C) the amount of land planned for acquisition in the ensuing fiscal year and the estimated cost thereof.

(b) For the purposes of Public Law 95-42 (91 Stat. 211), the lands and interests therein acquired pursuant to this section shall be deemed to qualify for funding under the provisions of section 1, clause 2, of said Act.

(c)(1) There is hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act relating to the trails designated by paragraphs 5(a)(3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9) and (10): *Provided*, That no such funds are authorized to be appropriated prior to October 1, 1978: *And provided further*, That notwithstanding any other provisions of this Act or any other provisions of law, no funds may be expended by Federal agencies for the acquisition of lands or interests in lands outside the exterior boundaries of existing Federal areas for the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, the North Country National Scenic Trail, The Ice Age National Scenic Trail, the Oregon National Historic Trail, the Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail, the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, and the Iditarod National Historic Trail, except that funds may be expended for the acquisition of lands or interests therein for the purpose of providing for one trail interpretation site, as described in section 7(c), along with such trail in each State crossed by the trail.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in this Act, there is authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act relating to the trails designated by section 5(a). Not more than \$500,000 may be appropriated for the purposes of acquisition of land and interests therein for the trail designated by section 5(a)(12) of this Act, and not more than \$2,000,000 may be appropriated for the purposes of the development of such trail. The administering agency for the trail shall encourage volunteer trail groups to participate in the development of the trail.

VOLUNTEER TRAILS ASSISTANCE

SEC. 11. (a)(1) In addition to the cooperative agreement and other authorities contained in this Act, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the head of any Federal agency administering Federal lands, are authorized to encourage volunteers and volunteer organizations to plan, develop, maintain, and manage, where appropriate, trails throughout the Nation.

(2) Wherever appropriate in furtherance of the purposes of this Act, the Secretaries are authorized and encouraged to utilize the Volunteers in the Parks Act of 1969, the Volunteers in the Forests Act of 1972, and section 6 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (relating to the development of Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans).

(b) Each Secretary or the head of any Federal land managing agency, may assist volunteers and volunteers organizations in planning, developing, maintaining, and managing trails. Volunteer work may include, but need not be limited to —

(1) planning, developing, maintaining, or managing (A) trails which are components of the national trails system, or (B) trails which, if so developed and maintained, could qualify for designation as components of the national trails system; or

(2) operating programs to organize and supervise volunteer trail building efforts with respect to the trails referred to in paragraph (1), conducting trail-related research projects, or providing education and training to volunteers on methods of trails planning, construction, and maintenance.

(c) The appropriate Secretary or the head of any Federal land managing agency may utilize and make available Federal facilities, equipment, tools, and technical assistance to volunteers and volunteer organizations, subject to such limitations and restrictions as the appropriate Secretary or the head of any Federal land managing agency deems necessary or desirable.

SEC. 12. As used in this Act:

(1) The term “high potential historic sites” means those historic sites related to the route, or sites in close proximity thereto, which provide opportunity to interpret the historic significance of the trail during the period of its major use. Criteria for consideration as high potential sites include historic significance, presence of visible historic remnants, scenic quality, and relative freedom from intrusion.

(2) The term “high potential route segments” means those segments of a trail which would afford high quality recreation experience in a portion of the route having greater than average scenic values or affording an opportunity to vicariously share the experience of the original users of a historic route.

(3) The term “State” means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

(4) The term “without expense to the United States” means that no funds may be expended by Federal agencies for the development of trail related facilities or for the acquisition of lands or interest in lands outside the exterior boundaries of Federal areas. For the purposes of the preceding sentence, amounts made available to any State or political subdivision under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 or any other provision of law shall not be treated as an expense to the United States.

APPENDIX B: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

PHYSIOGRAPHY

El Camino Real de los Tejas runs from southwestern Texas in a northeasterly direction through the central eastern border of Texas and into western Louisiana. This historic route stretches across 3 of the 12 physiographic provinces in Texas: the Rio Grande Embayment, the Blackland Belt, and the Gulf Coastal Plains (Stevens and Holmes 1989). It covers 4 of Texas's 12 geographic regions: the South Texas Plain, the Post Oak Belt, the Blackland Prairie, and the Pine Woods Region (TX Bureau of Business Research 1973) and 3 of 14 general soil areas: the Rio Grande Plain, the Blackland Prairie, and the East Texas Timberland (TX Bureau of Business Research 1973). It also passes through 4 of the 11 native plant regions in Texas: the South Texas Brushy Plains, the Post Oak Belt, the Blackland Prairie, and the Piney Woods (Stevens and Holmes 1989). The section of trail in Louisiana is similar to the Piney Woods of Texas. The above lists are ordered from southwest to northeast; if two regions are near or directly above one another, the southernmost one is mentioned first.

Almost the entire trail overlies the Carrizo-Wilcox aquifer (Kier, Garner, and Brown 1977), and the surface geology of the land under and surrounding the trail was formed during the Tertiary period, over four epochs that stretched from 53 million years ago to 2 million years ago (from the Eocene to the Pliocene) (McKnight 1987; Kier, Garner, and Brown 1977). All the major drainages in the geographic area traversed by the trail appear to run parallel to one another and toward the Gulf of Mexico in a southeasterly direction. From southwest to northeast, the trail traverses the following river basins: Rio Grande, Nueces, San Antonio, Guadalupe, Colorado, Brazos, Trinity, Neches, and the Sabine.

The elevational gradient along the trail can range from 1,000 feet above sea level in the vicinity of the southwestern end to near or at sea level at the central eastern end, but most of the trail runs between 250 and 500 feet above sea level. Generally the gradient runs from higher to lower as one travels northeast (Godfrey, McKee and Oakes 1973).

SOILS

The general soils of the Rio Grande Plains area are separated into two types: uplands and bottomlands. The uplands are composed of dark calcareous to neutral clays and clay loams, reddish brown neutral to slightly acid sandy loams, grayish brown neutral sandy loams, and clay loams. The bottomlands are made up of brown to dark gray calcareous clay loams and clays and some saline soils.

The Blackland Prairie soils are also divided into uplands and bottomlands. The uplands are mostly composed of dark colored calcareous clays, some grayish brown acid sandy loams, and clay loams. The bottomlands have dark gray to reddish brown calcareous clay loams and clays.

Soils in the East Texas Timberland region, again separated into uplands and bottomlands, are characterized by light colored acid sandy loams, mixed sands, and some red soils in the uplands. The bottomlands are mainly light brown to dark gray acid sandy loams, clay loams, and some clays.

NATIVE PLANT REGIONS

The dominant plant communities in the eastern part of the South Texas Brushy Plains are coarse bunch grasses and shorter grasses such as grama and curly mesquite, which are mixed with occasional thickets of prickly pear and other xeric plants armed with thorns and spines. As one travels west, scattered post oak and live oak appear, giving way in turn to thorny plants such as mesquite trees, huisache, catclaw, and yucca.

The Post Oak Belt is formed mostly of post oak, blackjack oak, and hickory. The Blackland Prairie consists of bunch grasses, mainly andropogons, grama, bluestem and shorter buffalo grasses. Stream channels in this region are often colonized by extensions of adjacent hardwood forests.

Shortleaf pine and scattered hardwoods, mostly oak, dominate the northern part of the Piney Woods; shortleaf, longleaf, and loblolly pines are found in the southern part.

Dominant plant communities in Louisiana are similar to the Piney Woods region of Texas. Sabine Parish, Louisiana, consists mainly of oak-hickory-shortleaf pine forest and longleaf pine forests, and Natchitoches Parish consists of longleaf pine forest and oak, hickory, and shortleaf pine forests, bottomland hardwoods of cottonwood and sycamore, and willow and cypress forests.

CLIMATE

The average annual rainfall along the route increases steadily from 20 inches at the southwestern border at Maverick County, Texas, to 52 inches at the eastern end near Natchitoches, Louisiana. Mean annual temperatures decrease from 72 at the southwestern end to 66 degrees at Natchitoches, Louisiana. The number of frost-free days decreases from 305 at the southwest end to 275 at the central eastern end. Relative humidity (from west to east) at 6 P.M. commonly ranges from less than 30% to 70% (Godfrey, McKee, and Oakes 1973).

ANIMALS OF THE REGION

Common mammals in this area are ground squirrel, cottontail, jackrabbit, raccoon, badger, beaver, skunk, fox, coyote, and white-tailed deer. Numerous birds, both seasonal and year-round residents, are found along the trail: turkey vulture; several species of hawk, quail, owl, flycatcher, wren, thrasher, and dove; also roadrunner, raven, and sparrow. Some reptiles and amphibians that inhabit this area are yellow mud turtle, western box turtle, Texas banded gecko, Couch's spadefoot toad, Texas toad, bullfrog, Texas horned lizard, checkered garter snake, coachwhip, racer, copperhead, and western diamondback rattler.

APPENDIX C: PUBLIC USE AREAS

<i>Louisiana</i>	
Parish	Public Use Area
General	Historical markers and interpretive signs have been placed along some of Louisiana's highways to mark the route of El Camino Real.
Natchitoches	<p>Fort Jean Baptiste State Commemorative Area, in the city of Natchitoches, is a reconstruction of the 1732 French fort and trading post. The site, which includes barracks, a warehouse, a chapel, the commandant's house, and Indian huts, is available for guided tours. Older sections of Natchitoches are included in the Natchitoches Historic District (a national historic landmark district). The Lemee House, the Museum of Historic Natchitoches, and the Old Court House Museum are of historical interest.</p> <p>Los Adaes State Commemorative Area is a 50-acre site at the location of a Spanish fort from the early 1700s. In 1721 Spain designated Los Adaes the capital of the province of Texas. Los Adaes was the official residence of the governor, and a house was built for him within the presidio. Archeological excavations have provided significant information about the site, which includes an archeological laboratory. Guided tours are offered to visitors.</p> <p>The Kisatchie National Forest, which is in the vicinity of the Old San Antonio Road, offers a variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation.</p>
Sabine	<p>Fort Jesup, on the Old San Antonio Road, was established in 1822 and abandoned after the Mexican-American War. The fort originally contained a complex of 82 stone and log garrison buildings, which were sold at auctions between 1850 and 1885. By 1929 only the kitchen-mess hall remained. Local supporters helped to restore this building and refurnish it with period reproductions, and in 1957 the 20.5-acre Fort Jesup State Commemorative Area was established. The site includes stone pillars and archeological remains that mark the locations of other buildings. There is also a reconstructed officers' quarters (used as a visitor center), a museum, and a park administrative office.</p> <p>Fort Jesup State Park, in Many, Louisiana, became a national historic landmark in 1986. The state-owned site, just off Louisiana Highway 6, is open to the public, and guided tours are available.</p> <p>Cane River Creole National Historical Park, which contains several historic plantations, serves as the focus of interpretive and educational programs on the history of the Cane River.</p> <p>The Sabine River has been dammed to form North Toledo Bend Reservoir, a state recreation area offering a visitor center and playgrounds, as well as opportunities for fishing, water sports, camping, picnicking, wildlife observation, and canoeing. The 3,000-acre North Toledo Wildlife Management Area on the Toledo Bend Reservoir was established to create and restore waterfowl breeding and wintering habitat. The project includes a 500-acre impoundment to provide habitat for migrating waterfowl.</p>

<i>Texas</i>	
County	Public Use Area
General	<p>The Texas Department of Transportation has placed roadside historical markers containing interpretive information about El Camino Real de los Tejas in Robertson County at the intersection of state highway 6 and the Old San Antonio Road and along Texas Highway 21 in Brazos, Burleson, Houston, and Lee Counties. The Old San Antonio Road is marked in Lee County east of the intersection of U.S. 290 and Texas Highway 21, in Leon County near Normangee, and in San Antonio (Bexar County) at Loop 410 and Nacogdoches Road. [NOTE: Marker locations and historical information are available in <i>Why Stop? A Guide to Texas Historical Roadside Markers</i> (Dooley, Dooley, and TX Hist. Comm. 1985) and <i>A Guide to Hispanic Texas</i> (Simons and Hoyt 1992)].</p>
Bastrop	<p>More than 125 historic structures in the town of Bastrop are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These include restaurants, antique shops, and specialty shops along the historic main street.</p> <p>A roadside sign in Bastrop County, 1.5 miles east of Bastrop on Texas Highway 71, marks the location of El Camino Real near where the trail leading north from San Antonio crossed the Colorado River. The crossing was the site of a Spanish stockade called Puesta del Colorado.</p>
Bexar	<p>San Antonio, a major stop on El Camino Real, contains many historic sites that have been preserved for public education and appreciation. These are listed below.</p> <p>The Mission Parkway Historic/Archeological District along the San Antonio River is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.</p> <p>The HemisFair Park in San Antonio, operated by the Institute of Texan Cultures, features 26 ethnic and cultural groups in a variety of exhibits.</p> <p>The Alamo in downtown San Antonio is now a museum administered by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. This national historic landmark is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The surrounding plaza was originally the courtyard of Mission San Antonio de Valero.</p> <p>The Presidio de Béxar was relocated to the Military Plaza in 1722 from its original site farther north. The plaza served as a drilling ground for troops stationed at the presidio.</p> <p>San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, contains four of the five San Antonio missions: Mission Concepción, Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo, Mission San Juan Capistrano, and Mission San Francisco de la Espada. Each mission has an active parish church. Franciscan Friars established this chain of missions along the San Antonio River in the early 18th century. The missions are a reminder of one of Spain's most successful attempts to extend its New World dominion northward from Mexico.</p> <p>The San Antonio Missions were dependent on the planting and harvesting of crops. Once part of the irrigation system serving the San Antonio missions, Espada Aqueduct, the only remaining Spanish structure of its type in the United States, is a national historic landmark.</p> <p>Mission Concepción, first established in East Texas, was moved to the Austin area in 1730 and then to San Antonio in 1731. The church, under construction for 20 years, was finally completed in 1755. The adjacent cloister arcade has been partly reconstructed.</p> <p>Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo, which was established in 1720 and was relocated to its present site sometime between 1724 and 1727. The entire mission compound has been reconstructed, including the outer wall with Indian quarters, workshops, and the granary.</p>

Texas (continued)	
County	Public Use Area
Bexar (continued)	<p>Mission San Juan Capistrano, founded in 1731, was the successor to the East Texas mission San José de los Nazonis (1716). The church, the convent, and a granary of local limestone date from 1756. There are ruins of a large church and Indian quarters. The chapel, the priests' quarters, and other structures were repaired and stabilized in the 1960s.</p> <p>Mission San Francisco de la Espada was moved from eastern Texas in 1729 and established in San Antonio in 1731, serving the needs of the Coahuiltecan Indians until 1794. The dominant feature of this mission is a little stone chapel thought to have been originally built in the mid-1700s. Parts of this chapel, as well as other features such as the walls, the convento, and Indian quarters, were reconstructed beginning in the late 1800s and continuing well into the 20th century. The site also includes the southeast bastion, or fortified tower, the foundation of a granary, and the ruins of walls that once surrounded the mission compound.</p> <p>The Spanish Governor's Palace in San Antonio became the seat of Spanish government in 1772. The building was used as the <i>comandancia</i>, or headquarters, and was the residence of the captain of the presidio of San Antonio B́exar, as well as governors, captains of the garrison, and civil <i>alcaldes</i>. This large Spanish colonial townhouse, the only remaining example in Texas of an 18th century Spanish official residence, is a national historic landmark. The palace is open to visitors as a museum.</p> <p>The Springs Park contains both prehistoric and historic archeological remains. San Pedro Springs influenced the decision to locate the villa of San Fernando de B́exar and Mission San Antonio de Valero nearby. In 1729 the springs were designated as a public space.</p> <p>The Old Spanish Missions Historical Research Library at Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio contains special collections relating to missions and the Spanish Colonial period.</p>
Cherokee	Caddoan Mounds State Historic Site, near Alto, contains temple and burial mounds that are remnants of a prehistoric ceremonial and political center. The site offers a visitor center, interpretive audiovisual programs, a replica of a Caddoan house, a museum, and an interpretive walking trail.
Comal	<p>The Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture in New Braunfels is housed in the historic 1858 Andreas Breustedt home. It features furniture handcrafted in Texas during the 1800s.</p> <p>The Sophienburg Museum, which contains Indian artifacts and household items of the pioneer era, is on the site where Prince Carl of Solms-Braunfels built a log fortress.</p>
Goliad	Goliad State Park is a 2,208-acre park featuring the restored Mission Esṕritu Santo, the ruins of Mission Nuestra Seńora del Rosario de los Cujanes, and Presidio La Bahía, a national historic landmark. The presidio was restored in 1963–67 to its 1836 appearance, including officers' quarters, barracks, a guardhouse, and bastions. There is an active chapel inside the presidio walls. Public and private sources funded the reconstruction and preservation of the mission and the presidio, which are open to the public as historical parks. The park also includes the Aranama Nature Trail, the ruins of an old quarry (thought to date to the early mission period), a brick kiln, a museum, and camping and recreational facilities. The birthplace of Gen. Ignacio Zaragoza is nearby.

<i>Texas</i> (continued)	
County	Public Use Area
Hays	<p>Aquarena Springs is owned by Southwest Texas State University, which is in the process of developing a research and interpretive center about the springs. The area includes a 100 year old gristmill, a Spanish mission, and a frontier home. Aquarena Springs Archeological District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.</p> <p>The village of Gruene, established by German immigrants before 1850, contains historic structures such as stores, art galleries, a winery, an ice cream parlor, and a beer hall.</p>
Houston	<p>Mission Tejas State Historic Park, covering 118 acres, commemorates Mission San Francisco de los Tejas, the first Spanish mission in East Texas. The León expedition established the mission in 1690 near site of the present Weches. The mission, abandoned in 1693 following epidemics and crop failures, was reestablished in 1716 on the Neches River as Nuestro Padre San Francisco de los Tejas. This site was an estimated 10 miles east of its original location. Abandoned again during the war between Spain and France, the mission was reestablished as Mission San Francisco de los Neches in 1721. It was moved temporarily to the Austin area in 1730, then relocated to the San Antonio area, where it became known as San Francisco de la Espada (Swanton 1979, 99; W. Foster 1995, 128–9; Simons and Hoyt 1992, 220).</p> <p>Included in Mission Tejas State Historic Park is the Rice family log home and stagecoach inn, one of many established along El Camino Real. The log house, originally built between 1828 and 1838, was located 16 miles from the park near Crockett. The inn was used by travelers along the Old San Antonio Road. Camping, picnicking, hiking, and nature study are available in the park.</p> <p>Davy Crockett National Forest, the largest national forest in Texas, is crossed in its northern corner by Texas Highway 21, which generally follows the route of El Camino Real. The forest offers a wide variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation, including canoeing, swimming, and hiking. The Four C Hiking Trail, 20 miles long, one of only two national recreation trails in Texas, runs through the forest between Ratcliff Lake and Neches Bluff Overlook. The Pine Springs Campground and springs mark the possible location of an 18th century campsite that was used in turn by explorers, priests, traders, and armies moving along El Camino Real.</p>
Maverick	<p>Eagle Pass is a major point of entry across the Rio Grande from Piedras Negras, Mexico. The town of Eagle Pass developed around Fort Duncan, which was established in 1849 and occupied by three companies of the 1st U.S. Infantry Regiment. The military road from Fort Duncan to San Antonio attracted merchants and traders and encouraged border trade. Many restored stone buildings, including Fort Duncan Historical Museum, form the center of the municipal park in Eagle Pass. Fort Duncan is on the National Register of Historic Places.</p>
Medina	<p>The Landmark Inn, a state historic structure in Castroville, served stagecoach passengers in the 1800s. Modern travelers can rent rooms at the historic inn. The complex is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.</p>
Nacogdoches	<p>The historic and architectural resources of Nacogdoches comprise a number of historic sites, structures, and districts that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as described below.</p> <p>The Sterne-Hoya Home was built in 1828 by Adolphus Sterne, a pioneer merchant who was active in the Fredonia Rebellion of 1826–27 and who helped to found the Republic of Texas. The house was later acquired by the Hoya family. The Adolphus Sterne house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.</p> <p>Millard's Crossing is a group of 19th century buildings furnished with antiques and pioneer memorabilia.</p>

Texas (continued)	
County	Public Use Area
Nacogdoches (continued)	<p>The Mission Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe was founded in 1716 for the Nacodoches Indians. This and other East Texas missions were abandoned in 1773.</p> <p>The Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de los Hasinai was founded in 1716, abandoned in 1719, and reestablished in 1721. A marker at the site commemorates the mission. In 1730 it was moved to the Austin area and then to San Antonio, where it was rededicated as mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña. It is a national historic landmark.</p> <p>The Stone Fort Museum at the Stephen F. Austin State University campus in Nacogdoches is a 1936 replica of a stone house originally built by Antonio Gil Ybarbo in 1779 as a Spanish trading post.</p> <p>A roadside marker indicates the former location of Presidio Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Tejas. The presidio, which was originally established in 1717 near mission San Francisco de los Tejas, was abandoned in 1719, then reestablished near Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de los Hasinai, and abolished in 1779.</p>
Sabine	<p>The Sabine National Forest encompasses 188,220 acres, primarily in Sabine and Shelby Counties. The scenic forest drive on Texas Highway 184 runs through stands of long-leaf pine. A 28-mile hiking trail extends through the national forest from Lakeview Recreation Area on Toledo Bend Reservoir to U.S. 96 near the eastern-most point of Sam Rayburn Reservoir. Signs on Texas Highway 21 mark the Sabine River crossing of El Camino Real de los Tejas and the locations of two early ferry crossings associated with El Camino Real, Michael Crow's ferry (1797) and Gaines Ferry (1812). [NOTE: Gaines, for whom the ferry is named, participated in the Gutiérrez-Magee Rebellion of 1812–1813.]</p>
Shelby	<p>Sabine National Forest, described above, is in Shelby County as well as Sabine County.</p>
Travis	<p>Barton Springs was occupied prehistorically and is thought to have been used by local missions during the 1700s. Anglo settlement in the area began in the 1830s, when William Barton patented the land. Barton Springs had become a popular recreational spot by 1871, and in the 20th century it was donated to the city of Austin as part of Zilker Park. Barton Springs Archeological and Historic District and the Zilker Park Historic District are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.</p> <p>The French Legation in Austin was built in 1840 by Comte Alphonse de Saligny, French chargé d'affaires to the Republic of Texas. The architecture is Creole, the building has period furnishings.</p> <p>The Texas state capitol, a classic statehouse, and its complex occupy 46 acres of landscaped grounds.</p> <p>McKinney Falls State Park includes the Onion Creek Crossing of El Camino Real and the ruins of pioneer Thomas F. McKinney's home and mill. The McKinney homestead is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.</p>
Webb	<p>Laredo is a major U.S. port of entry across from Nuevo Laredo, Mexico. The community was founded in 1755 by Don Tomas Sánchez, an officer of the Royal Army of Spain. The Republic of the Rio Grande Museum contains artifacts of the Republic of the Rio Grande period (1839–41). The building was used as the capitol of the proposed independent nation, which was to include the southern part of Texas and the three northern states of Mexico. The museum, which is housed in a circa 1830s building in a historic section of Laredo, contains historic period rooms and furnishings. The museum sponsors walking tours through the San Agustín Laredo Historic District, which encompasses the nucleus of the original city.</p>

<i>Texas</i> (continued)	
County	Public Use Area
Wilson	The Rancho de las Cabras unit of San Antonio Missions National Historical Park is approximately 25 miles southeast of San Antonio, about 3 miles southwest of Floresville. The 100-acre site contains the ruins of the rancho's defensive compound and a small part of what was its surrounding grazing land. Each of the San Antonio missions had distant ranchos to provide essential livestock. Rancho de las Cabras raised livestock for the support of Mission Espada. Guided tours of the site are available.
<i>Mexico</i> (outside of study area)	
State	Public Use Area
Coahuila	The townsite of Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico, and the Mission San Bernardo and its associated presidio are open to the public. Guerrero, which is thought of as "the Gateway to Texas," is about 30 miles from Eagle Pass, Texas.

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STUDY TEAM AND CONSULTANTS

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE STUDY TEAM

Denver Service Center

Lawrence Beal, Community Planner, Job Captain
David Hesker, Visual Information Specialist
Holly Kirchner, Natural Resource Specialist
Lou Layman, Writer-Editor
Michael LeBorgne, Project Manager
William Patrick O'Brien, Historian
Diane Rhodes, Archeologist
Dick Williams, Geographic Information Systems

San Antonio Missions National Historical Park

Cherry Payne, Chief of Interpretation
Rosalind Rock, Historian

Long Distance Trails Group Office, Santa Fe

David Gaines, Superintendent

Spanish Colonial Research Center, Albuquerque

Joseph P. Sánchez, Superintendent
Bruce A. Erickson, Historian

Intermountain Support Office, Santa Fe

Robert Spude, Historian

CONSULTANTS, TECHNICAL TEAM

Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

John Ippolito, Archeologist, Supervisor's Office, Lufkin, Texas

State of Texas

John Clark, Archeologist, Department of Highways and Public Transportation
Nancy Kenmotsu, Archeologist, Department of Highways and Public Transportation
Al McGraw, Archeologist, Department of Highways and Public Transportation
Patricia Mercado-Allinger, State Archeologist
Mario L. Sánchez, Texas Historical Commission
Bob Skiles, Archeologist, General Land Office

State of Louisiana

Sharon Calcote, Department of Tourism
Department of Transportation
Office of Historic Preservation

American Indian Groups

Caddo Tribe, Oklahoma
Chief Rufus Davis, Caddo Tribe, Louisiana

Alamo Area Council of Governments

Burma Hyde, San Antonio, TX

Mexico

Eduardo Enriquez Terasas, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Coahuila

OTHER CONSULTANTS

Felix D. Almaraz Jr., University of Texas at San Antonio
George Avery, Archeologist, Los Adaes State Commemorative Area, Louisiana
Mark R. Barnes, Senior Archeologist, National Park Service, Atlanta, Georgia
Donald Chipman, Historian
James E. Corbin, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, TX
Jesús Frank de la Teja, Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, TX
William C. Foster, Cuero, Texas
Hiram F. Gregory, Northwestern Louisiana State University, Natchitoches, LA
Thomas R. Hester, Director, Texas Archeological Research Laboratory
Jack Jackson, Austin, Texas
Tommy Johnson, President, El Camino East/West Corridor Association, Natchitoches, LA
James R. Kimmel, Southwest Texas State University, San Marcos, TX
Robert H. Thonhoff, Karnes City, Texas



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

