National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail
Louisiana • Texas

El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail

Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment

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El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail

Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment

NATIONAL TRAILS INTERMOUNTAIN REGION

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

September 2011

Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment
El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail
U.S. Department of the Interior – National Park Service
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The purpose of this plan is to establish the administrative objectives, policies, processes, and management guidelines necessary to fulfill preservation and public-use goals for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, which the U.S. Congress added to the National Trails System on October 18, 2004. The legislation authorizing El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail identified approximately 2,580 miles of trail, extending from the Río Grande near Eagle Pass and Laredo, Texas, to Natchitoches, Louisiana. The designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail commemorates significant historic routes extending from the United States-Mexico international border at the Río Grande to the eastern boundary of the Spanish province of Texas in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana.

This plan provides a framework for the administration of the trail and a vision to be fulfilled through future, more specific resource studies and site and segment management plans. The plan was developed in consultation with state and local government agencies; interested parties, including landowners; federally recognized American Indian tribes; area residents; trail-user organizations; National Park Service program managers and resources staff; and the general public.

This document also includes a programmatic environmental assessment, which considers, at a general qualitative level, the impacts that the two alternatives could have on trail development. The environmental assessment sets the framework for future compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act for the significant resources associated with the trail. The environmental assessment also assists decision makers and the public in evaluating the relative merits and impacts of each alternative.

This plan presents two alternatives and their respective environmental consequences. Under **alternative A**, the no-action alternative, there would be no federal action except for what is required under the National Trails System Act. The adoption of alternative A would not mean that present management activities would stop, but that the National Trails Intermountain Region and on-the-ground site and segment managers and owners would respond to future needs and problems in a manner similar to the way in which they are currently operating.

Under **alternative B**, the preferred alternative, the National Trails Intermountain Region would collaborate with partners to provide the public the opportunity to enjoy and appreciate significant trail resources through high quality visitor programs while at the same time supporting research efforts to ensure that significant trail resources are identified and protected.

Partners would work cooperatively to achieve the purpose of the trail designation—to commemorate the historic development of a network of trails, based upon American Indian routes, which linked Spanish missions, presidios, and trading posts in a travel corridor from the Río Grande to Louisiana. Much of the implementation of strategies would rest with those members of the trail community willing to take the lead in proposing projects and programs that identify and protect significant trail resources and their

accurate interpretation. The National Trails Intermountain Region would provide technical assistance and a certain level of funding, as it becomes available, to eligible applications to facilitate the initiatives suggested by the trail community. It would also work closely with volunteers to achieve the purpose of the trail. Projects most likely to receive support would focus on the identification and protection of authentic resources and their interpretation. There would also be ample recreational and educational programs to provide trail users the opportunity to enjoy and understand the authentic character of the nationally significant resources associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Park Service administers El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, which was added to the National Trails System by the U.S. Congress on October 18, 2004. The legislation authorizing El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail identified approximately 2,580 miles of trail extending from the Río Grande near Eagle Pass and Laredo, Texas, to Natchitoches, Louisiana. The designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail commemorates significant historic routes extending from the United States-Mexico border at the Río Grande to the eastern boundary of the Spanish province of Texas in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. Although the period of historic significance for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail dates from 1680 to 1845—spanning Spanish, Mexican, and early American use—this plan focuses primarily on the network of roads that had been developed by the end of the Spanish Colonial period in 1821. Trail routes, as well as sites along the trail, are associated with events that made significant contributions to broad patterns of our nation's history.

The purpose of this Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment is to establish the administrative objectives, policies, processes, and management guidelines necessary to fulfill preservation and public-use goals for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. Although the act designating El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail does not specifically ask for the development of a plan, Section 5(f) of the National Trails System Act requires that a Comprehensive Management Plan be developed for all designated national historic trails. The National Trails System Act also requires the Secretary of the Interior to consult with appropriate state and local agencies in the planning and development of the trail.

This Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment provides a framework for the administration of the trail and a vision to be fulfilled through future, more specific resource studies and site and segment management plans. Administrative staff at the National Trails Intermountain Region developed the plan in consultation with state and local government agencies; interested parties, including landowners; federally recognized American Indian tribes; area residents; trail-user organizations; National Park Service program managers and resources staff; and the general public. A mutually agreed-on plan facilitates the work of partners in accomplishing specific goals.

This document also includes a programmatic environmental assessment, which considers, at a general level, the impacts that the two alternatives could have on trail development. The environmental assessment sets the framework for future compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act for the significant resources associated with the trail. The environmental assessment also assists decision makers and the public in assessing the relative merits and impacts of each alternative.

PLANNING ISSUES

The planning team traveled extensively along the trail in both Texas and Louisiana to become acquainted with issues central to the planning process. Eight scoping meetings were conducted, where input from the public, government agency representatives, federally recognized American Indian tribes, trail organizations, and individuals was systematically recorded. Other comments by letter and/or comment forms and emails were received by the planning team.

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Although the trail itself is administered by the National Trails Intermountain Region, less than 1% of the trail corridor is owned by the federal government. Given that a substantial percentage of resources is in private hands and that only a very small percentage of resources is managed by state and local entities, an effective mechanism needs to be developed to stimulate cooperative partnerships among the many stakeholders through a range of incentives. A major challenge facing trail administrators is the need for consistent preservation strategies, development, and marking of the trail as it passes through a variety of jurisdictions; other challenges include the lack of awareness about the trail and poor coordination among groups interested in trail development.

RESOURCE PROTECTION

Among the most pressing concerns in protecting resources is the need for the accurate mapping of routes and a systematic ground truthing of trail resources. There is also need for additional research on several topics. Diverse ownership of trail resources (federal, several state entities, and numerous private landowners) poses a challenge to efforts to develop trailwide strategies to preserve trail resources.

INTERPRETATION, VISITOR EXPERIENCE, AND USE

There is a general lack of coordination in getting interpretive information to the public. Interpretive facilities along the designated routes need to explain more accurately the historic developments along the trail, place them into an appropriate context, and provide the public with interesting yet relevant and authentic materials. Periodic updates of interpretive information to reflect the latest scholarship are needed, along with ways of making academic research information accessible to the general public, to teachers, and to students in grades K–12 and beyond. Finally, there is a need to foster heritage tourism programs that draw on and protect authentic, documented historic resources clearly linked to the trail.

ALTERNATIVES

As part of the planning process, two alternatives were developed. The preferred alternative will address the issues discussed above.

ALTERNATIVE A: CONTINUATION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS (NO ACTION)

This alternative is a requirement of National Environmental Policy Act and serves as a basis for comparison. Federal action would be limited to what is required under the National Trails System Act. Its adoption would not mean that present management activities would stop, but that administrative staff at the National Trails Intermountain Region and on-the-ground site and segment managers and owners would respond to future needs and problems in a manner similar to the way in which they are currently operating. Increased federal funding for trail administration activities would not occur.

ALTERNATIVE B: TRAIL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)

Under this alternative, administrative staff at the National Trails Intermountain Region would assist the trail community in achieving the purpose of the trail designation, which is to commemorate the historic development of a network of trails, based upon American Indian routes, that linked Spanish missions, presidios, and trading posts in a travel corridor from the Río Grande to Louisiana.

Under this alternative, the trail community would include, among others, the Texas Historical Commission; the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism; the State of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association; other federal entities; federally recognized tribes whose homelands are crossed by the trail in East Texas; private organizations; institutions of higher learning; museums; visitor centers; private owners of trail resources; trail scholars; public and private schools; Mexican entities (such as the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia); and all others interested in the trail.

The National Trails Intermountain Region would collaborate with partners to provide the public the opportunity to enjoy and appreciate significant trail resources through high quality visitor programs while at the same time supporting research efforts to ensure that significant trail resources are identified and protected.

The National Trails Intermountain Region would serve as an information clearinghouse for activities along the trail, coordinating efforts to ensure the most efficient use of available resources. Much of the implementation of strategies would rest with those members of the trail community willing to take the lead in proposing projects and programs that identify and protect significant trail resources and their accurate interpretation. Volunteers would work closely with the National Trails Intermountain Region to achieve the purpose of the trail.

The National Trails Intermountain Region would provide technical assistance and a certain level of funding, as it becomes available, to eligible applications, depending on allocations. Funds from the Challenge Cost Share Program that fluctuate from year to year, and possibly from other programs, would help support initiatives suggested by the trail community. Projects most likely to receive support from the National Park Service would focus on the identification and protection of authentic resources and their interpretation, and would offer trail users the opportunity to enjoy and understand the authentic character of the nationally significant resources associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.

Administrative staff at the National Trails Intermountain Region would also oversee the development of sign and interpretive standards that can be applied consistently along the trail corridor. Consistency is important because it would heighten awareness of the trail and assist trail users in finding and following the designated trail routes and significant historic sites. Consistency would also allow for a more effective development of recreational experiences around authentic resources and interpretive programs.

The National Trails Intermountain Region would place its main emphasis on working with the trail community to expand knowledge about trail resources, in particular significant sites and segments with a certain degree of historic integrity. Investigations leading to more accurate and extensive identification of high potential sites and segments and their location, condition, and priority needs will be encouraged. Research projects that aim to elucidate important aspects of trail history or topics that have not yet received adequate attention will also receive special consideration.

Under this alternative, there will be an effort to foster awareness among the trail community of the evolving nature of the trail and its associated resources. It has been argued that El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail responds to the changing conditions and the needs of the users. The trail is complex and continually evolving, and has the potential of becoming a very powerful educational tool to attract people of all ages to understand and protect it.

The National Trails Intermountain Region would encourage and assist private landowners in protecting significant trail resources and, if possible and appropriate, help such owners to make resources accessible to the public. This is an important component of this alternative because a high proportion of trail resources is privately owned. As landowners become aware of the significance of their resources, they may decide to become more interested in monitoring and protecting them.

Under this alternative, the trail community would have the opportunity to become active participants in the development of inclusive interpretive and educational programs that reflect current scholarship and offer a variety of perspectives. There would be special emphasis on compelling stories about people, places, and events, particularly those that represent the heritage of the various ethnic groups, who were central in the development of the trail.

Under this alternative, a concerted effort would be made, in cooperation with the trail community, to provide recreational experiences closely linked and compatible with the appreciation of authentic trail resources and their protection. These experiences would be strengthened by the development of a consistent accompanying interpretive program, which places the history of the trail into a broad context from which it can be better understood and appreciated, and by the use of consistent signage to facilitate public awareness of the trail and the location of its resources.

GLOSSARY

Acequia: ditch, aqueduct.

Adaesano: settler from Los Adaes who requested the Spanish government to return to the area close to their homeland in Los Adaes.

Ayuntamiento: municipal government.

Bousillage: mixture of clay and Spanish moss or grass used as plaster to fill the spaces between the structural framing of a house.

Bayou: fen, marshland, bog.

Caliche: hardened deposit of calcium carbonate.

Carretera: highway.

Corralitos: small corrals.

Cuesta: hill, knoll.

Ejido: common lands.

Empresario: a land agent or land contractor, a crucial element of the system used by the Mexican government to encourage colonization after independence from Spain.

Entrada: an exploring or reconnoitering military expedition.

Ethnography: the study and systematic recording of human cultures.

Fundos legales: mission lands.

Guerra de la pulga: war of the flea.

Hacienda: ranch estate.

Isla: island.

Jacal: a pole and daub hut or an adobe hut with a thatch roof.

Justicia: magistrate.

Labor: cultivated field.

LiDAR (Light detection and ranging): optical remote-sensing technology that measures properties of scattered light to find range and/or other information about a distant target.

Lobanillo: growth covered with bark formed either in a branch or trunk of a tree.

Ojuelo: natural spring.

Paraje: stopping place, camp site.

Presidio: garrison.

Ranchería: Spanish term for American Indian villages in this region.

Rejoneado: made out of the locally quarried sandstone.

Sitio: land measurement equal to 4,335 acres.

Troneras: gun ports.

Vara: linear measure of approximately 33 inches.

Villa: small community (village).

Visita: sub-mission; chapels without a resident priest.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PLAN

El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail became part of the National Trails System on October 18, 2004. The authorizing legislation (Public Law 108-342) identifies "approximately 2,580 miles of trail extending from the Río Grande near Eagle Pass and Laredo, Texas, to Natchitoches, Louisiana, as depicted on the maps included in the *National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment: El Camino Real de los Tejas, Texas and Louisiana* prepared by the National Park Service and dated July 1998 (see Appendix A, page 149 and Map 1-1, page 4).

BACKGROUND

The National Trails System Act of 1968 established the National Trails System

> "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."

The National Trails System is composed of statutorily created national scenic trails and national historic trails. In addition, national recreation trails and connecting-and-side trail are recognized through secretarial actions. The National Trails System Act provides for a lead federal agency to administer each national scenic and national historic trail in cooperation with a variety of partners, including other federal agencies, state and local agencies, American Indians, local communities, private landowners, and others.

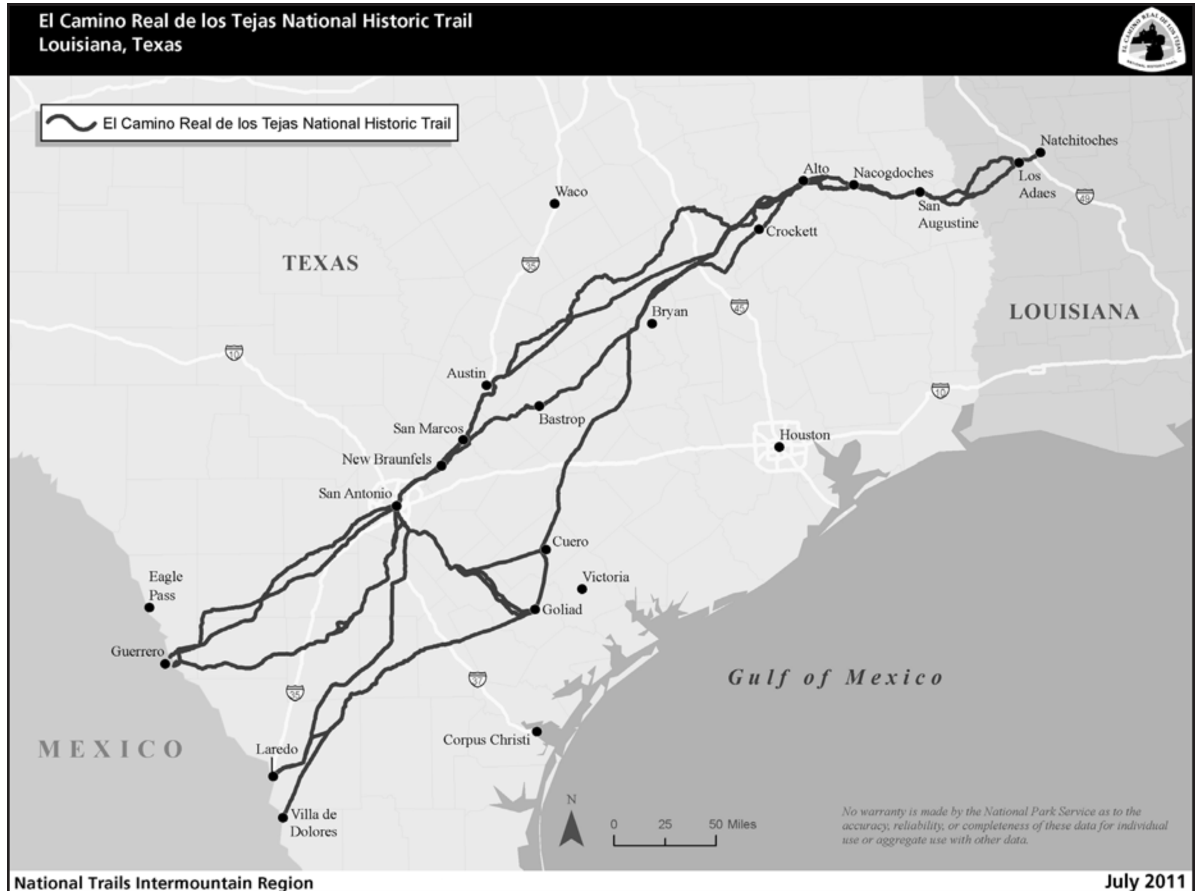
National historic trails identify and commemorate historic and prehistoric routes of travel that are of significance to the entire nation. They must meet all three criteria listed in Section 5(b) (11) of the National Trails System Act as follows:

1) 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;

2) 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;

3) It must have significant potential for public recreational use or historic interest based in 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. Such trails are established by an act of Congress. Examples include the Trail of Tears, Santa Fe, Oregon, California, Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo), and Lewis and Clark national historic trails.

Map 1-1. Congressionally Designated Routes for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail



PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Comprehensive management plans for national historic trails are long-term documents that provide a vision for the future of the trail, including a management philosophy and a framework to be used in making decisions and solving problems. This Comprehensive Management Plan will provide guidance for approximately the next 15–20 years.

The purpose of this Comprehensive Management Plan is to establish the administrative objectives, policies, processes, and management guidelines necessary to fulfill preservation and public-use goals for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, as established in the National Trails Systems Act (16 USC 1244 (a) and Public Law 108-342), titled “An Act to Amend the National Historic Trails System Act to Designate El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.”

Although the act designating El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail does not specifically ask for the development of a plan, Section 5(f) of the National Trails System Act requires that a Comprehensive Management Plan be developed for all designated national historic trails. The plan should include, but not be limited to the following items:

- specific objectives for the National Park Service, including the identification of significant ethnographic, archeological, historic, and natural resources to be protected;
- specific details of expected cooperative agreements with government agencies or private organizations or individuals;
- protection strategies for high potential sites and segments;
- user-capacity assessment; and
- implementation details

In addition, Public Law 108-342 includes the following requirements:

- The Secretary of the Interior shall administer those portions of the trail on nonfederal land only with the consent of the owner of such land and when such trail portion qualifies for certification as an officially established component of the trail;
- The designation of the trail does not authorize any person to enter private property without the consent of the owner;
- The Secretary shall consult with appropriate state and local agencies in the planning and development of the trail;
- The Secretary may coordinate with United States and Mexican public and nongovernmental organizations, academic institutions, and in consultation with the Secretary of State and the government of Mexico and its political subdivisions, for the purpose of exchanging trail information and research, fostering trail preservation and educational programs, providing technical assistance, and working to establish an international historic trail with complementary preservation and education programs in each nation; and
- The United States shall not acquire for the trail any land or interest in land outside the exterior boundary of any federally administered area without the consent of the owner of the land.

This Comprehensive Management Plan complies with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. It includes a programmatic environmental assessment as a follow-up to the 1998 National Park Service *National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment: El Camino Real de los Tejas, Texas and Louisiana,* on which Congress based its decision to establish the trail. The feasibility study provided a historic overview, a statement of significance, and offered three alternatives for future protection, interpretation, and management of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. The examined alternatives included (a) the no-action alternative, (b) the designation of routes from Paso de Francia to Natchitoches, and (c) splitting the trail into two separately designated national historic trails: El Camino Real de los Tejas and the Old San Antonio Road. The feasibility study recommended the alternative designating the routes from Paso de Francia to Natchitoches, Louisiana, as El Camino Real de los Tejas. The *National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment: El Camino Real de los Tejas, Texas and Louisiana* constituted the first phase of a planning and environmental review process. This Comprehensive Management Plan, the second phase, is a general and programmatic document that includes the level of information necessary to make broad policy and planning decisions.

NEED FOR THE PLAN

This Comprehensive Management Plan is necessary to provide long-term guidance for natural and cultural resources preservation, education, and trail-use experience along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. It provides a framework for the administration of the trail and a vision to be fulfilled through future, more specific resource studies and site and segment management plans. It was developed in consultation with state and local government agencies; stakeholders, including landowners; federally recognized American Indian tribes; area residents; trail-user organizations; National Park Service program managers and resources staff; and the general public. A mutually agreed-upon plan facilitates the work of partners in accomplishing specific goals.

The Comprehensive Management Plan describes how the national historic trail will be administered and managed and aims to accomplish the following:

- Confirms the purpose and significance of the trail;
- Describes resource conditions and visitor uses and experiences to be

achieved;
- Identifies the need for partnerships to protect trail resources efficiently and to provide appropriate trail-user services; and
- Provides a frame of reference for National Park Service administrators and its partners when making decisions about central trail issues.

Federal ownership and management of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is limited to a portion of San Antonio Missions National Historical Park in Texas. Less than 1% of the national historic trail is within the boundary of this national park unit. With the designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, those trail segments within San Antonio Missions National Historical Park have become federal protection components in compliance with section 3(a) 3 of the National Trails System Act.

The Comprehensive Management Plan outlines a process through which non-federal trail sites and segments may become official components of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail using specific development plans and implementation strategies (see section on Partnership Certification Program, page 39 and Appendix B: Partnership Certification Agreement, page 151). In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the impacts from each ensuing plan, construction project, trail program, and various other projects will be assessed, as required by the implementing regulations set forth in the Code of Federal Regulations and other applicable federal, state, and county regulations. In all cases, planning for the trail and for trail facilities will be carried out in close consultation with landowners, American Indian tribes, trail organizations, community groups, local residents, and state and local governments.

NEXT STEPS AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Comprehensive Management Plan is a long-term plan. Both National Park Service administrators and partners will take incremental steps toward reaching its goals. Additional research and resource studies and more detailed planning and environmental documentation could be completed as part of individual site and segment management plans.

Implementation of the Comprehensive Management Plan could take many years and will depend upon additional funding and the National Trails Intermountain Region's and partners' time and effort. Components of the plan need to be prioritized and implemented as funding becomes available.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND[1]

The designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail in 2004 commemorates significant historic routes extending from the international border at the Río Grande to the easternmost extent of the Spanish province of Texas in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. The period of historic significance for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail dates from 1680 to 1845; however, this plan focuses primarily on the network of roads that had been developed by the end of the Spanish Colonial period in 1821. Trail routes, as well as sites along the trail, are associated with events that contribute significantly to our understanding of broad patterns of United States history.

It is important to note that after the initial period of exploration and colonization the land along the different trail routes became home to various ethnic groups. These include Spanish (including Canary Islanders), French nationals, Mexicans, African Americans, Anglos, and a variety of different European peoples. Most of them settled along the trail and managed, to a considerable extent, to retain their cultural traditions (see section on Ethnographic Resources, page 115).

When Spanish explorers began to travel into Texas and western Louisiana in the 1680s, they followed already existing networks of American Indian trails. Representatives of the Spanish Crown used these paths to reach areas where they subsequently established missions and presidios. Eventually, armies and immigrants followed these routes, which led to Euro-American settlements across the two states. Many of these roads continued to be used in later years, forming the boundaries of early Spanish and Mexican land grants. Some of these land grants became part of modern highway systems. In many places, Spanish names for roads and landscape features have been retained and often represent the only reminder of the Spanish presence. Physical remains of the trail, such as swales and ruts, are testimony to the Spanish Colonial heritage and to significant events that occurred along the trail.

Preferred travel routes evolved through time in response to social, cultural, and environmental changes. Topography was a key factor when deciding where to locate trails: the best routes went through areas of dry, solid ground but with sufficient water resources to camp and replenish travelers and their horses and pack animals. In addition, certain routes were used seasonally to avoid natural obstacles, such as overflowing rivers and streams. As some groups moved, routes that were previously favored became less frequently used while others gained popularity. Settlements were often relocated in response to colonial policies, conflicts, and/or changing social conditions. Occasionally new routes were blazed to steer clear of dangerous obstacles.

The Spanish political agenda of the time, as well as the existing natural resources and cultural conditions among indigenous groups, directly influenced the selection of trail routes. Early missions and presidios (late 1600s–early 1700s) were established in areas near good water resources in places where Spain expected to Christianize potentially "friendly" American Indian groups and where they wished to establish strategic military defenses to counter French incursions. As a result, the earliest settlements in Texas were established among agriculturist Caddo tribes whose sedentary ways of life appealed to the Spaniards more than the nomadic American Indian groups who also populated the area.

Prehistoric American Indian trails linked a complex network of villages and important natural resources. Many of these American Indian settlements were visited repeatedly by European explorers in the years preceding the first European settlements in Texas. The routes that made

1 - Information for this section comes principally from Deirdre Morgan Remley's Cultural Resource Inventory: El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail prepared between December 2007 and September 2008 for the National Trails Intermountain Region, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

regional settlement in Texas and western Louisiana largely possible followed American Indian trails.

The main contributing factor in establishing the network of trails that became El Camino Real de los Tejas, however, was Spain's attempt to create a buffer against the French from the late 1600s on. Spaniards showed little interest in settling the area until 1685, when they received news that French explorer René Robert Cavalier Sieur de La Salle had established a colony in Matagorda Bay. Traveling both by overland routes and by sea, several Spanish parties searched for La Salle's outpost. Alonso de León made three failed attempts, but finally succeeded in finding La Salle's settlement in 1689. Accompanied by Franciscan friar Damián Massanet and guided primarily by a member of the Quems Nation, de León's party found La Salle's Fort St. Louis in ruins on the banks of Garcitas Creek (on the boundary of Victoria and Jackson counties)[2]. The search for La Salle's outpost was the beginning of an ongoing Spanish presence in East Texas, marked by expeditions and attempts at colonization.

Though the French colonization effort at Matagorda Bay was not successful, Spaniards responded by increasing their presence in East Texas to improve their ability to monitor and defend against future threats. In the year following the discovery of La Salle's settlement (1690), de León and Massanet set out for East Texas again. This time, they planned to contact the "governor" of the American Indians known as Los Tejas, to determine if his people would welcome a Spanish mission.

The people whom the Spanish called *Tejas* were the same as those the French referenced as *Les Cenis* (members and/or leaders of the Hasinai Confederation)[3]. These and other American Indian villages are depicted on several early maps, and it is likely that Luis de Moscoso's expedition party had visited them as early as 1542. A reference to "The Kingdom of the Tejas" by a Jumano Indian was recorded in Santa Fe in 1683. This may have stirred interest in the American Indian tribes of East Texas—an interest that would have been bolstered in 1689 when de León and Massanet were told that their journey had taken them near this kingdom. The following year (1690), their expedition to find the Tejas governor was a success, and marked the beginning of missionary efforts and Spanish Colonial settlement in East Texas.

Upon arriving at the village of the Tejas in 1690, Father Massanet reported that Spanish missionaries were well received and had constructed a temporary structure to hold mass. That same year, they built a more permanent log structure nearby: Mission San Francisco de los Tejas, probably in Houston County. (For a listing of Spanish missions and presidios associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, see Table 1-1, page 9) They also established Mission Santísimo Nombre de María in the same general area, but it was destroyed by flood in 1692. Even though an expedition brought supplies to Mission San Francisco de los Tejas in 1693, the mission was soon abandoned due to growing hostility from local indigenous groups.[4] Although these first attempts to found missions in East Texas failed, they mark the beginning of increased travel along the Spanish Colonial road network that would eventually link major settlements in Texas and Louisiana.

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2 - The names of the counties used in this document reflect today's geographic and political boundaries. They are meant to serve as geographical references.

3 - The term Tejas often used to describe the American Indian nation(s) for which the Spanish sought to establish a mission is a bit of misnomer. The term is based on the Caddo word Teija or Teysa meaning friend or ally, rather than referring to an actual tribe or band. The Spanish spelling and pluralization gives us the word Tejas or Texas. Throughout this document, the term Tejas is used to refer to the American Indian groups noted historically, whereas the spelling "Texas" refers to the state of Texas, unless otherwise noted.

4 - Some archeologists suggest that a handful of known archeological sites in Houston County may be associated with these missions (Krieger 1945, Tunnell 1965).

Table 1-1. Presidios and Missions Associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail (1690–1793)

1690	Mission San Francisco de los Tejas
1691	Mission Santísimo Nombre de María
1700	Mission San Juan Bautista
1700	Mission San Francisco Solano
1702	Mission San Bernardo
1703	Presidio San Juan Bautista del Río Grande
1716	Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción
1716	Mission Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe
1716	Mission San José de los Nazonis (de los Nacogdoches)
1716	Presidio Nuestra Señora de los Dolores
1717	Mission San Miguel de los Adaes
1717	Mission Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Ais
1718	Presidio San Antonio de Bexar
1718	Mission San Antonio de Valero
1720	Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo
1721	Presidio Nuestra Señora del Pilar
1722	Mission San Francisco Xavier de Nájera
1722	Mission Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga
1722	Presidio Nuestra Señora de Loreto (La Bahía)
1731	Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña
1731	Mission San Juan Capistrano
1731	Mission San Francisco de la Espada
1746	Mission San Francisco Xavier
1749	Mission San Ildefonso
1749	Mission Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria
1749	Mission Espíritu Santo de Zúñiga
1749	Presidio Nuestra Señora de Loreto
1751	Presidio San Francisco Xavier
1754	Mission Nuestra Señora del Rosario de los Cujanes
1756	Mission Nuestra Señora de la Luz
1756	Presidio San Agustín de Ahumada
1757	Presidio San Luis de las Amarillas
1757	Mission Santa Cruz de San Sabá
1762	Mission San Lorenzo de la Santa Cruz
1762	Mission Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Cañón
1793	Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio

Between 1700 and 1703, Spanish travel into East Texas was made easier by the founding of three missions (San Juan Bautista, San Francisco Solano, and San Bernardo) and a presidio (San Juan Bautista del Río Grande), all of which were located on the south side of the Río Grande, near Guerrero, Mexico. This new settlement area created a convenient waypoint in addition to already known routes across the Río Grande. In 1707, Diego Ramón, stationed at the Río Grande settlement, crossed the river into Webb and Dimmit counties to punish raiding American Indians and to gather neophytes for the missions. In 1709, the Espinosa-Olivares-Aguirre Expedition traveled to the San Antonio River in Bexar County and recommended that missions be established there. In 1713, Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, a French explorer and colonist, contacted the Tejas, then traveled southwestward through the future Bexar County to the settlement area on the south side of the Río Grande.

The Spaniards made no attempts to settle East Texas again until 1716, more than two decades after Mission San Francisco de los Tejas was abandoned. In 1716, the Ramón-Espinosa Expedition reestablished Mission San Francisco de los Tejas at a new location in Cherokee County, and then founded three additional missions and one presidio in Nacogdoches County. In 1717, two more missions were established—one in San Augustine County and one in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana (then part of the Spanish province of Texas).

In 1719, the East Texas missions were again temporarily abandoned. This time it was out of fear of a full-scale French invasion precipitated by the War of the Quadruple Alliance, which saw the French allied with Britain, Austria, and the Dutch Republic against Spain. This European conflict coincided with French exploration parties on the coast of Texas between 1719 and 1721, which underscored the need for a fortified frontier along the eastern boundary of the Spanish province of Texas.

In 1721, all of the East Texas settlements were reoccupied in or near their previous

locations. That same year, the Spanish strengthened their defenses by adding a presidio and *villa* (village) to Los Adaes. This site would serve as the capital of the Spanish province of Texas until it was abandoned in 1773, when the capital was moved to San Antonio de Bexar in Bexar County.

The East Texas settlements remained open until after the presidio in Nacogdoches County was closed in 1729. In 1730, three of the missions were temporarily moved to Austin in Travis County, and then permanently settled along the San Antonio River in Bexar County. Following the closing of the Nacogdoches County presidio and the removal of the three missions in East Texas, there remained five major sites in East Texas: the presidio, *villa*, and mission in Natchitoches Parish (Los Adaes); the mission in San Augustine County; and one mission in Nacogdoches County. These five sites remained occupied until 1773, when settlers were ordered to move to areas along the San Antonio River.

With the establishment of a mission at Los Adaes, Spanish roads and settlements were extended to the easternmost point of the province of Texas. Immediately following the establishment of the East Texas missions, the Spanish recognized the need for an intermediate station between the settlements on the Río Grande and those of East Texas. In 1718, Mission San Antonio de Valero (1718–1793) was established, along with Presidio San Antonio de Bexar and Villa de Bexar in San Antonio. During that time, Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo (1720) was founded in Bexar County. In 1722, another mission, San Francisco Xavier de Nájera, was also established in Bexar County. Although it was intended to be an independent mission, it was in fact never more than a *visita*, or sub-mission, of Mission San Antonio de Valero. It later became part of Mission San Antonio de Valero.[5] Although these two missions were moved to as many as three different locations, they remained permanent establishments in Bexar County until secularization in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Presidio San Antonio de Bexar and Villa de Bexar survived well beyond the end of the Spanish Colonial period.

Another Spanish settlement founded at the end of the retreat from East Texas included a mission and a presidio established in Victoria County in 1721. The first location of Presidio Nuestra Señora de Loreto de la Bahía was on the site of La Salle's colony on the west bank of Garcitas Creek, and the first location of Mission Nuestra Señora del Espíritu Santo (1722–1830) was nearby, probably on the east bank of Garcitas Creek. Early in 1726, the mission was moved to what is called the Tonkawa site. The same year, both the original presidio and the mission were relocated again to the bank of the Guadalupe River in Victoria County. They were moved yet again 23 years later, in 1749, to their final location in Goliad County. Also that year, a *villa* was established near the new site of the mission and presidio. All three locations would be known as the settlement area of "La Bahía" at the various times of their occupation in the Spanish Colonial period.

In summary, between 1721 and 1745, the three main settlement areas along the designated El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail included:

1) East Texas settlements from Houston County to Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana: six missions before 1730, reduced to three missions after 1730; two presidios before 1729, and one after 1729; and one *villa*;
2) Settlements in San Antonio, Bexar County: two missions prior to 1731, increased to five after 1731; one presidio; and one *villa*; and
3) La Bahía settlements in Victoria, Goliad, and probably Jackson Counties: one mission and one presidio at three locations, with a *villa* after 1749, and an additional mission after 1754. In 1746, however, Father Mariano de los Dolores would begin a

5 -*Visitas* are sometimes called "sub-missions" because they are often outlying chapels of missions. They are chapels without a resident priest that are visited by a priest from a nearby parish once or more often each year.

missionary effort in a new area on the San Xavier River (San Gabriel River).

Spanish colonization of the area presently known as Milam County began informally in 1746 as an attempt to develop a fourth major settlement area along the designated trail. Mission San Francisco Xavier de Horcasitas was founded in 1748, and by 1750 two additional missions and one presidio were established. This new settlement area was approximately midway between the San Antonio and East Texas settlements, offering a convenient waypoint. Although Spanish immigrants made no attempts at settlement in the area before 1746, they had familiarized themselves with this upper route as early as 1721, when Marqués de San Miguel de Aguayo traveled through the area and became acquainted with the local Ranchería Grande Indians. The San Xavier settlement was ultimately abandoned due to conflict with American Indians.

In 1746, after several proposals by Nuevo León governors, an order from the viceroy created the new colony or province of Nuevo Santander. This was followed by a period of exploration and establishment in 1748 of Nuevo Santander, south of the Río Grande. The new settlement area was formed along a corridor on both sides of the Río Grande, extending east to the Texas coast and north to above the Nueces River almost to the Frío River. In 1749, the governor of the new province, José de Escandón, brought 3,000 settlers and 146 soldiers to the area.

North of the Río Grande, Nuevo Santander was largely comprised of private ranches. Ranchers who lived along the Río Grande often owned large tracts of land on both sides of the river. Owners of large ranches north of the river could maintain their residence on the south side of today's international border. Many of the communities along the Río Grande evolved out of ranch headquarters. For instance, the town of Mier grew out of a ranch headquarters of 19 families that had previously been known as El Paso del Cántaro. A total of six *villas* would be settled on the Río Grande within the province of Nuevo Santander. Four of these *villas*—Reynosa, Camargo, Mier, and Revilla—were south of the Río Grande, although their ranchlands extended north of the present international border.

Only two *villas* would be located north of the river. The first was established when Escandón authorized Vásquez Borrego to expand his *hacienda* to create Villa Nuestra Señora de los Dolores in 1750, located in northwest Zapata County. Though it continued to be referred to as a *hacienda*, the officially decreed villa of Dolores would serve as an important waypoint between the Río Grande and the San Antonio and La Bahía settlements providing a ferry service as well as guards to protect both settlers and travelers across the Río Grande. In addition to serving as a river crossing, guard post, town, and ranch, Villa Nuestra Señora de los Dolores was also considered to be a *visita*. Dolores was visited by the priest of Revilla for a month each year until it received a resident priest in 1760. Although Dolores had guard posts and other defensive structures, it suffered several attacks and resulting fluctuations in population. It was completely abandoned by 1828.

The second *villa* to be established north of the Río Grande in Nuevo Santander was San Agustín de Laredo, officially founded in 1755. Like Dolores, Laredo was located at a well-known crossing of the Río Grande. It eventually replaced Dolores as the main crossing in the area, including a ferry service at least as early as 1767. Also like Dolores, Laredo grew out of an existing ranching headquarters and served the functions of a town, a guard post, and a *visita*. Laredo received a resident priest in 1759, but it did not officially become a mission.

The establishment of Nuevo Santander marks the beginning of a time when the lines between historic use types and functions for settlement sites became increasingly vague. As part of the Nuevo Santander land grants settlers provided guards, and ranch headquarters themselves

often served as de facto guard posts, or at least defensive structures constructed with fortified stone walls with gun ports and fireproof roofing materials. These defensive structures can still be seen in the Dolores ruins today. Additionally, ranch owners agreed to provide religious instruction for both the American Indians and the local Spanish population. In this way, ranching operations not only became civilian settlements but also evolved to serve functions previously performed by the military and missionaries. Such locations were usually centered on river crossings along the designated trail.

With the addition of the San Xavier settlement area and Nuevo Santander, there were now five main settlement areas along the designated trail: East Texas; San Antonio; La Bahía (in Victoria County until 1749, and Goliad County, thereafter); San Xavier in Milam County (with brief occupations in Hays and Comal counties); and Nuevo Santander. Another such settlement was located just south of present Eagle Pass in Maverick County.

All of the settlements were located along the main travel corridors used by the Spanish from at least as early as 1721, with many used even earlier, perhaps since 1691. As of 1755, these main travel routes included one corridor, which extended from the Río Grande crossings at Presidio San Juan Bautista del Río Grande northeast to San Antonio, then to the Nacogdoches area, and on to Los Adaes. A second main route crossed the Río Grande in the general area of Laredo in Webb County and extended north to San Antonio. A route that branched northeast passed through Goliad County and continued northeast, probably connecting with the upper travel corridor near the Neches or Trinity rivers in the area of Houston County, where the first mission to the Tejas was established in 1690.

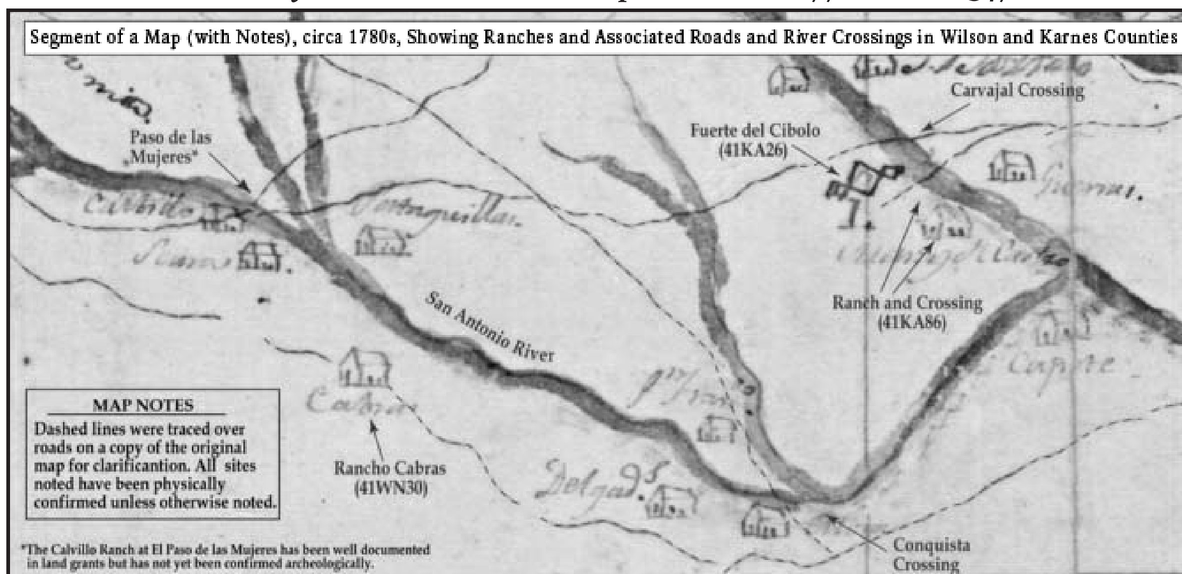
In the 1750s, the Spanish attempted to branch out, but failed due to conflicts with American Indians.[6] The Spanish Crown recognized the failure of its colonial effort along the northern frontier, at least as early as 1766, when the Marqués de Rubí was sent to inspect presidios throughout the northern frontier, including Texas and Louisiana. As a result of Rubí's inspection, all recent settlements were ordered to be abandoned, and all of their inhabitants were relocated to San Antonio and La Bahía. However, with the move to the San Antonio River valley, the extent of Spanish Colonial presence—at least for a short period of time—was effectively reduced to two major settlement areas: Bexar and La Bahía. Soon after their removal from East Texas, a group from Los Adaes, historically known as "Adaesanos," requested that they be allowed to return to an area closer to their homelands. As a result, in 1774, the Villa of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Bucareli was founded on the west bank of the Trinity River in Madison County near Paso Tomás. The Villa de Bucareli was short-lived. It was abandoned five years later, in 1779, when its inhabitants reestablished their community at the site of the former Mission Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Nacogdoches, where the mission church was still standing. Much as in Nuevo Santander, the East Texas settlement sites—reestablished by civilians—would serve as de facto presidios and missions, as well as civilian settlements with ranches. The East Texas ranches along the trail later became trading posts, where Spanish, French, American, and American Indian traders legally and illegally bartered a wide variety of merchandise.

As a result of the recommendations of Marqués de Rubí, Spanish settlement policies in the New World changed. There was no longer an emphasis on establishing

6 - Between 1756 and 1762, the Spanish created three new major settlement areas. They included missions and presidios in three areas far removed from the other settlements: 1) A settlement on the Gulf Coast, east of the present-day Houston metro area, that included Mission Nuestra Señora de la Luz de Orcoquisac (1756–1772) and Presidio San Agustín de Ahumada (1756–1770); 2) A settlement in Menard County, which included Mission Santa Cruz de San Sabá (1757–1758) and Presidio San Luis de las Amarillas (1757–1771); and 3) A settlement area known as the "El Cañon" missions, which included Mission San Lorenzo de la Santa Cruz (1762–1770) in Real County and Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Cañon (1762–1767) in Uvalde County. These new settlements represented Spanish attempts to expand the frontier, but they never succeeded and were abandoned by 1772.

missions, presidios, and scattered towns; instead, there was a reduction in the number of settlement sites and no further expansion attempts. With the exception of a small outpost of the Presidio San Antonio de Bexar (a post known as Fuerte del Cíbolo), no new official Spanish presidios and only one mission (Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio) would be founded during this period. Additionally, only four *villas* would be established—all an outgrowth of civilian ventures. The latter half of the 18th century saw a focus on civilian settlements and extended areas of mission ranches, where the lines between missionaries, military, ranchers, and general civilians became blurred. This pattern is similar to the one for Nuevo Santander, but it also seems prevalent in the settlement areas of San Antonio and La Bahía and also in East Texas after 1772. These sites played an important role in the continuation and success of the various routes of El Camino Real de los Tejas Trail because most were located at important crossings.

Figure 1-1. Ranches and Roads in Wilson and Karnes Counties (Courtesy National Archives, Map no. NWCS-077-CWMF-Q47)



The pattern of ranch headquarters being used as guard posts or stopping places along routes is illustrated in a late 18th-century map of the San Antonio River valley between the San Antonio and La Bahía settlement areas (Figure 1-1 on page 13 is a section of this map). Although the cartographer and date of this map have not yet been confirmed, correspondence from Spanish Governor Domingo Cabello to Commandant General Teodoro de Croix in 1780 provides clues to the date and subject matter. Additionally, its reliability as documentation of the relationship between river crossings, roads, and ranch headquarters can be demonstrated by modern knowledge of the locations and dispositions of several of the trail-related resources depicted on this map. Researchers have added notes to the map to show sites that have been confirmed physically and archeologically, to demonstrate the credibility of its information and to facilitate its interpretation.[7]

Figure 1-1 shows a settlement pattern of ranch headquarters clustered around one or more river crossings and houses on both sides of the river. The ranches depicted in this map are mission ranches and ranches leased from the missions, which were part of the mission lands (*fundos legales*) of the missions in San Antonio and La Bahía. These *fundos legales* included mission grounds, agricultural fields, and ranchlands. Legal documents refer to roads as ranch boundaries and several parcel

7 - Morgan-Remley conducted this investigation and added notes to the map.

corners and other boundaries being located at known river crossings. It is not clear if the pattern of ranch headquarters clustering around crossings was deliberately planned in laying out the boundaries of mission ranchlands. However, this pattern is consistent with travelers' written descriptions of *parajes* (stopping places or campsites), which noted that travel parties tried to make camp shortly after crossing a river because a heavy rain could come overnight and make it impassable. Therefore, it was important to have a *paraje* on either side of a river to facilitate whichever direction a given party would be traveling.[8] By the mid-to late 18th century, many of the ranch headquarters and towns tended to be former campsites that evolved into stopovers with more amenities.

Ranch headquarters clustered near river crossings would not only have served travelers but also local settlers by providing a community structure that facilitated sharing resources and increased defense against enemies traveling along the road. A good example of this community structure is found in the number of people recorded at Antonio Gil Y'Barbo's Rancho Lobanillo, which, as early as 1773, boasted a population of at least 65 people (made up of 14 families). Y'Barbo's ranches are also noteworthy because he was known to be a prolific trader and smuggler, and it is likely that his ranch headquarters served as a trading post.

The community structure is also evident in the multiple functions served by ranch headquarters. For instance, Rancho de las Cabras (41WN30) had a church that was visited by a priest from Mission San Francisco de la Espada in Bexar County. This church may have also served three ranches located on the west side of the river near the crossing known as Paso de las Mujeres (at the Calvillo Ranch), all of which had been leased from Mission Espada ranch lands.

In addition to serving religious and economic functions, many ranch headquarters in the Nuevo Santander area were built to be defensive structures, as were those in the San Antonio River valley. Rancho de las Cabras, for instance, had defensive walls with probable bastions around the ranch compound. Additionally, two other sites that have been confirmed archeologically in the area covered by the map segment in Figure 1-1 include a presidio outpost and a ranch headquarters with masonry structures that would have provided greater defense than the *jacales* (primitive wattle-and-daub adobe structures) often recorded along the San Antonio River. According to historical reports, additional ranches in the area with masonry structures and chapels included Rancho Pastle in Wilson County and Rancho La Mora in Karnes County, though neither of these has been confirmed archeologically. Other ranch headquarters in the San Antonio River valley between Bexar and Goliad counties may have had similar defensive and religious structures.

In 1803, the United States acquired Louisiana from France, opening the door to an influx of Anglo-Americans into Louisiana and Texas. Other newcomers were American Indian groups from the east and southeast who were being pushed westward by Anglo expansion or saw better opportunities and more game available in the Southern Plains and in Texas. Among

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8 - The term *paraje*, though often translated as campsite, is a word derived from the verb *parar*, which simply means to stop. It is from the same root word as *parador*, which is used in Spain today to refer to any place where a traveler stops overnight, such as a hostel or an inn. Therefore, although the term *paraje* has been interpreted by many researchers to mean campsite, a broader translation, such as stopover or waystation, may be more appropriate to discussing the stopping points along the trail routes as they evolved through time. That is, in the early period of the trail, the *paraje* was simply a place that travelers would record as they crossed the landscape, because it was important to note the places where one could find good water and favorable conditions to camp. However, in the later periods of the trail, especially after the expansion of private ranches near river crossings (beginning in the 1750s), *parajes* provided anything from a campsite to actual shelter and other amenities. Another example that illustrates that ranch headquarters were likely also parajes is found in an 1827 land grant in Wilson County (GLO document #103440), which states that the Flores ranch was located on the San Antonio River (Río de Bexar) at *el paraje Nombrado Chayopines*. The reference to the well-known *paraje* in defining the ranchlands demonstrates the important relationship between the trail and ranch headquarters—a relationship that likely extended well into the Mexican period and beyond.

those tribes were the Creek Alabamas and the Coushattas. They settled among the Caddo for a while, and later were granted lands by Sam Houston, first governor of the Republic of Texas. The Choctaw also moved into the Red River area and despite frictions, eventually settled among Caddo groups and other American Indians who also made their move into Louisiana and Texas during the early and mid-1800s.

Following the Louisiana Purchase, Spain gained a new rival for supremacy of lands in Texas and Louisiana: the United States. Spanish officials soon realized that the cooperation of the local tribes was essential to maintaining New Spain's ill-defined territorial borders. Trade and gift giving were once again central to Indian relations policies carried out by both Spanish and United States. Most of the traffic appears to have been between Nacogdoches and Natchitoches, but it is also clear that trade also involved other tribes and extended westward.

The boundary dispute between Spain and the United States was a complicated affair. It resulted in the establishment of a swath of territory between Nacogdoches and Natchitoches that was not under the control of either country. The boundaries of this territory, which came to be known as the Neutral Ground, were never officially described. Only the Sabine River and Arroyo Hondo were designated in the informal agreement between Lieutenant Colonel José María Herrera (the Spanish official who signed the agreement) and General James Wilkinson (the United States official who first took possession of Louisiana for the United States). The Spanish bolstered their claims by increasing troops at Bexar and Nacogdoches. More than 500 soldiers traveled from San Antonio to Nacogdoches, and in November 1806, 883 soldiers were assigned to patrol the area between Nacogdoches and Los Adaes.

This issue, which was debated from 1804 onward, was finally settled with the signing of the Adams-Onís Treaty on February 22, 1821. Although Spain asserted that the Caddo villages were located in Spanish territory, neither the groups along the Red River nor in the United States accepted that notion.

Travel through the area remained dangerous, though. Troops, settlers, traders, runaway slaves, filibusters, gangsters, and many newcomers from the East looking for easy profit and lands traveled the main road developed in the previous century. Caddo groups initially profited from the opportunity, but soon thereafter, started to suffer as the onslaught of new settlers overwhelmed them. In 1806, the warehouse at San Antonio distributed 589 three-pound tobacco twists, 1,829 knives, 938 scissors, and 3,024 small bells among 1,331 Indians of various tribes. These goods and others maintained trade relations and connections among native groups, but they did little to help these groups feel safer and offered no practical resources to help them defend their traditional lands.

The Spanish distribution of gifts was normally done through licensed traders like William Barr and Peter Samuel Davenport, while the United States used John Sibley's factory system located in Natchitoches. Unlike the Spanish traders, Sibley and others provided the native groups with weapons. Indeed, Sibley even arranged for a blacksmith to repair their weapons. Sibley was so successful that at one time as many as 700 Indians went to Natchitoches to receive gifts. This trade went a long way towards obtaining and maintaining native allegiance. It is unclear how much of this trade went through El Camino Real de los Tejas, but some certainly did.

In 1801, the Spanish government gave permission to the House of Barr and Davenport to export to Louisiana all of the livestock they obtained from the Indians in exchange for muskets, blankets, pots, and clothing. During the same year, Barr obtained permission to drive to Louisiana about 300 horses and mules so that he could purchase goods for the tribes.

Notwithstanding the tensions in the Neutral Ground, Caddo groups fared rather well until the dismantling of the Spanish

Colonial empire, which began in 1810 with the rebellion led by Father Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla and culminated in 1821 when Mexico became independent from Spain. The ensuing tumult of revolutionary movements culminated with the Texas Revolution of 1836. As Mexican General Antonio López de Santa Anna approached San Antonio to quell the Texas revolt, Caddo groups and others were again asked to take sides. This time, however, the sheer number of participants and their conflicting positions made the choices unclear for American Indians. In 1835, Caddo chiefs ceded those of their lands within United States territory and retreated westward to Texas.

As Mirabeau B. Lamar took office as president of the Republic of Texas, the situation worsened for Caddo groups and American Indians in Texas. Pushed by Lamar, many retreated into Oklahoma for a while but returned to Texas in 1839. In 1841, Sam Houston became president of the Republic of Texas and tried to find a solution. In March 1843, some Caddo groups and many other groups signed a peace treaty at the Tehuacana Creek near modern Waco, Texas. Following the treaty, the Kadohahacho, Hasinai, Nadaco, and other Caddo groups settled on the Clear Fork of the Brazos River. Sadly, the treaty did not bring about a lasting solution. In 1859, about 1,050 Caddo were removed to the Indian Territory and the Wichita agency in western Oklahoma. Today, the Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma has its tribal complex in Binger, Oklahoma.

Competition over the territory held by American Indian tribes had begun even before the end of the Spanish Colonial period. Spain recognized that immigration was the key to successful colonization and began to consider requests from Anglos, including a petition for a land grant by Moses Austin in 1820. Following Moses Austin's death the following year, his son Stephen F. Austin carried out his father's plans, receiving a land grant in 1821. This was the beginning of what would become a large-scale European and American migration into Texas.

Austin's colony was located between the Lavaca and San Jacinto rivers, south of the San Antonio Road. The San Antonio Road, referenced in several land grants, remained a well-known route into modern times. During the Mexican period (1821–1836), Texas served as a buffer between the United States and Mexico. The Mexican government recognized that populating Texas with immigrants would strengthen the buffer area, so in 1824, the Mexican state of Coahuila y Texas offered 4,428 acres of grazing land and 170 acres of farmland to new colonists. Within the next decade, more than 30,000 Anglos and 3,000 mainly African American slaves moved into Texas, primarily to the eastern section of the state. With so many new arrivals, settlements grew up in areas far removed from the main routes of the designated trail, with the result that a network of roads began to crisscross the region, especially in East Texas. Complex road networks continued to develop throughout the Mexican period, as is well documented in the 1830 minutes of the *Ayuntamiento* (City Council) of San Felipe in which Stephen F. Austin called for the construction of several new routes in the area, as well as assessments of some of the roads that predated the Mexican period.

During the Mexican and Texas Republic periods (1821–1845), existing roads in Texas were improved and additional ones developed. Even so, many of the settlements dating from this period were established along roads dating to the earlier Spanish period. But as immigration steadily increased—especially after Texas won its independence from Mexico in 1836—a complex settlement pattern and associated new roads transformed the landscape.

As the 19th century progressed, immigrants increasingly arrived by sea. Port cities, such as Indianola and Galveston, became major entry points for newcomers from all over the world. With increased population and the complex network of roads that grew in its wake, designated trail routes still bore names that referenced their Spanish Colonial beginnings, but they no

longer functioned as the major travel corridors they had been when Spain struggled to colonize Texas. With time, radical changes to the use of the road occurred and the reasons that made El Camino Real de los Tejas nationally significant diminished.

PLANNING ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Members of the planning team traveled extensively through Texas and Louisiana in 2006 and 2007 to acquaint themselves with the main resources and issues central to the planning process. The team received ideas and comments from the public during these trips. The team conducted eight scoping meetings in 2007, where input from the public, government agency representatives, federally recognized American Indian tribes, trail organizations, and individuals was systematically recorded. The planning team also received and recorded comments by letter and/or comment forms. Every comment was considered. Members of the planning team have also helped identify issues that will likely directly impact the National Trails Intermountain Region's role as administrator of the trail.

Several concerns about trail administration can appropriately be addressed here while others are beyond the scope of the Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment, or would be better handled once detailed planning is underway.

The following is a list of the principal issues identified during the process of developing this document. The issues have been grouped into three categories, but in several cases they overlap. For example, ownership of resources is an issue that has been listed under administration, but it also has implications for resource protection, interpretation, and visitor use.

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

1. There is limited public awareness of the trail.
2. The role and responsibility of National Park Service in the administration of historic trails is not well understood by the partners.
3. There is no current overall administration of the trail: a series of sites and a few segments are managed locally, but no coordinated system of routes and trail resources exists.
4. The majority of resources is in private hands. A very small number is federally owned and a variety of state and local entities manage the rest. Many of the private landowners have been reluctant to participate in the development of this plan.
5. There is a lack of adequate coordination among groups interested in trail development. Protection and use strategies are inconsistent: different levels of protection, use, and interpretation are employed, depending on the location and owner.
6. No formal mechanism for providing technical assistance for preservation and interpretation exists.
7. Financial assistance to stimulate partnerships, protect trail-related resources, and educate the public is limited.

RESOURCE PROTECTION

1. Additional routes might be identified
2. Trail routes need further study, particularly addressing the following areas:
   a. Accuracy
   b. Connecting routes
3. Ground truthing of trail resources has been completed only in certain areas; further research is necessary to add resources to the list of high potential sites and segments.
4. There is a need for additional research on the following topics and possibly others:
   a. Original Spanish government correspondence regarding the settlement of areas served by El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail;
   b. Sites and segments related to the

Caddo and other American Indian tribes with close ties to the trail;
c. The African American experience along the trail;
d. Commercial activities/trade/contraband along the trail;
e. Evolution of civilian communities (Spanish, Mexican, Anglo) along the trail (from ranchos to towns);
f. The migration experience along the San Antonio Road.
5. Trail resources are under diverse ownership (federal, several state entities, and numerous private landowners).
6. Existing strategies to preserve trail resources, such as swales or ruts, are controversial.
7. No strategy has yet been identified to protect and preserve trail resources due to neglect, ignorance of their significance, development pressures, inappropriate uses, and natural processes.
8. No formal approach to provide technical assistance for preservation and interpretation has been established.

INTERPRETATION, VISITOR EXPERIENCE, AND USE

1. Few coordinated methods of getting interpretive information to the public exist.
2. Research information needs to be made accessible to the general public, as well as to teachers and students.
3. Periodic updates of interpretive information to reflect the latest scholarship are needed.
4. No formal approach to providing technical assistance for preservation and interpretation exists.
5. Strategies for promoting public support for the preservation of trail-related resources are lacking.
6. Methods used to mark the trails are different and often incompatible.
7. Interpretive facilities along the designated routes need to explain historic developments more accurately, place them into an appropriate context, and provide the public with interesting yet relevant and authentic materials.

BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS

The designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail commemorates a significant route of travel. As in the case of all other national historic trails, the legislation does not include identification of specific legal boundaries and does not provide for federal land acquisition without the consent of the owner. The National Park Service does not identify land acquisition as a management priority for this plan.

Furthermore, most national historic trail routes are mapped at a very coarse scale and their specific historic location is often not known. The accurate identification of many of these routes will require exhaustive research and ground truthing, time-consuming tasks that will be ongoing throughout the life of this plan. It is possible that as new research reveals more accurate information, the location of the designated routes might be slightly modified. At the time this plan is being prepared, no additional routes are contemplated for inclusion. However, because of the complexity of conquest and development patterns, potential routes of travel could be identified for further study. Inclusion of such additional routes would require action by Congress. (See Appendix C for Solicitor's Opinion on adding routes not included in feasibility study, page 153).

GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

General guidance for trail planning and administration derives from the purpose of the trail, as established by Congress; the national significance of the trail and its fundamental resources and values; the primary interpretive themes that convey the trail's significance; and federal, state, and county legal and policy requirements—the more general body of laws and policies that apply to El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. These parameters guide all programs and actions recommended in the Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment and contribute to achieving the trail's purpose and other mandates.

PURPOSE OF THE TRAIL

A statement of purpose defines why a particular trail or park has received official recognition. The purpose of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is derived from the legislative history, the *National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment: El Camino Real de los Tejas, Texas and Louisiana*, and the public comments received in 2007.

The purpose of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is to commemorate the development of a network of trails, based upon American Indian routes, which linked Spanish missions, presidios and trading posts in a travel corridor from the Río Grande to Louisiana. This network of trails was used throughout the Spanish Colonial period, the Mexican period, and up to Texas nation and statehood.

To achieve the trail's stated purpose, it is essential to identify, protect, and interpret the significant resources associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, and to provide trail users with educational and recreational opportunities, so that they will understand and enjoy authentic sites and segments associated with the history of the trail. The involvement of all of those interested in the trail and in particular volunteers will be essential to accomplish the purpose of the trail.

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENTS

Significance statements reflect the trail's importance to the heritage of the United States. They serve as a tool in identifying interpretive themes and desirable visitor experiences. They help trail administrators focus on the preservation and enjoyment of those resources and values that directly contribute to the purpose of the trail and that must be protected. Significance statements describe the unique qualities of the trail's resources, both separately and as a whole, and place them within a broader regional, national, and international context.

The significance statements for El Camino Real de Tejas National Historic Trail include:

- Spanish settlement of the northeast corner of the province of New Spain was triggered by the 17th-century struggle with France for territorial control in North America: The establishment of missions and presidios along El Camino Real de los Tejas demonstrated Spain's determination to discourage French intrusion.
- The network of routes that became El Camino Real de los Tejas followed established American Indian trails. It fostered the convergence of European and Indian cultures by linking cultural and linguistic groups, introducing a foreign religious system (Catholicism), and serving as an agent for cultural diffusion, biological exchange, and communication.
- For more than 160 years, El Camino Real de los Tejas facilitated the conquest, colonization, and development of the region and was a key feature of the Spanish Colonial empire in what later became the states of Texas and Louisiana.
- The location of El Camino Real de los

Tejas shaped the physical and legal patterning of land grants, settlements, and subsequent transportation networks in Texas and Louisiana.

- El Camino Real de los Tejas served as a critical travel corridor for Mexican and Texan military forces during the first half of the 19th century.
- The Old San Antonio Road, from the Red River settlement of Natchitoches, Louisiana, to San Antonio, Texas, was the primary overland route for early 19th-century Anglo and African American migration into Texas, and supported the development of the cotton economy in eastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana.

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

Interpretive themes are the key statements defining the trail's significance and resource values. These themes identify the primary stories that best convey the trail's significance to the public. Interpretive themes connect trail resources to larger ideas, meanings, and values. They are the building blocks upon which interpretive programs are based.

• PROTECTION, CONTROL, AND DEVELOPMENT

El Camino Real de los Tejas was a line of defense for New Spain with long term consequences—modifying the landscape to meet the needs of armies and immigrants and leading to community and trade development.

• IRREVERSIBLE CHANGE

The cultural groups who traveled El Camino Real de los Tejas caused irreversible change to American Indian lifeways, affecting family and community life, religious practices, intertribal relations, and resource use.

• PATHS TRAVELED

The trail represents the lifeways of Indian groups, whose physical pathways were defined by the geographic landscape of the Tejas environment and were later adopted by Spanish, Mexican, American, and modern travelers.

• SHIFTING ROUTES

The trail was not static—varying routes were developed to meet the changing needs of travelers, who were affected by weather, Indian relations, terrain, settlement, and modes of transportation—and the multiple paths provide a visual understanding to modern travelers of the area's development through time.

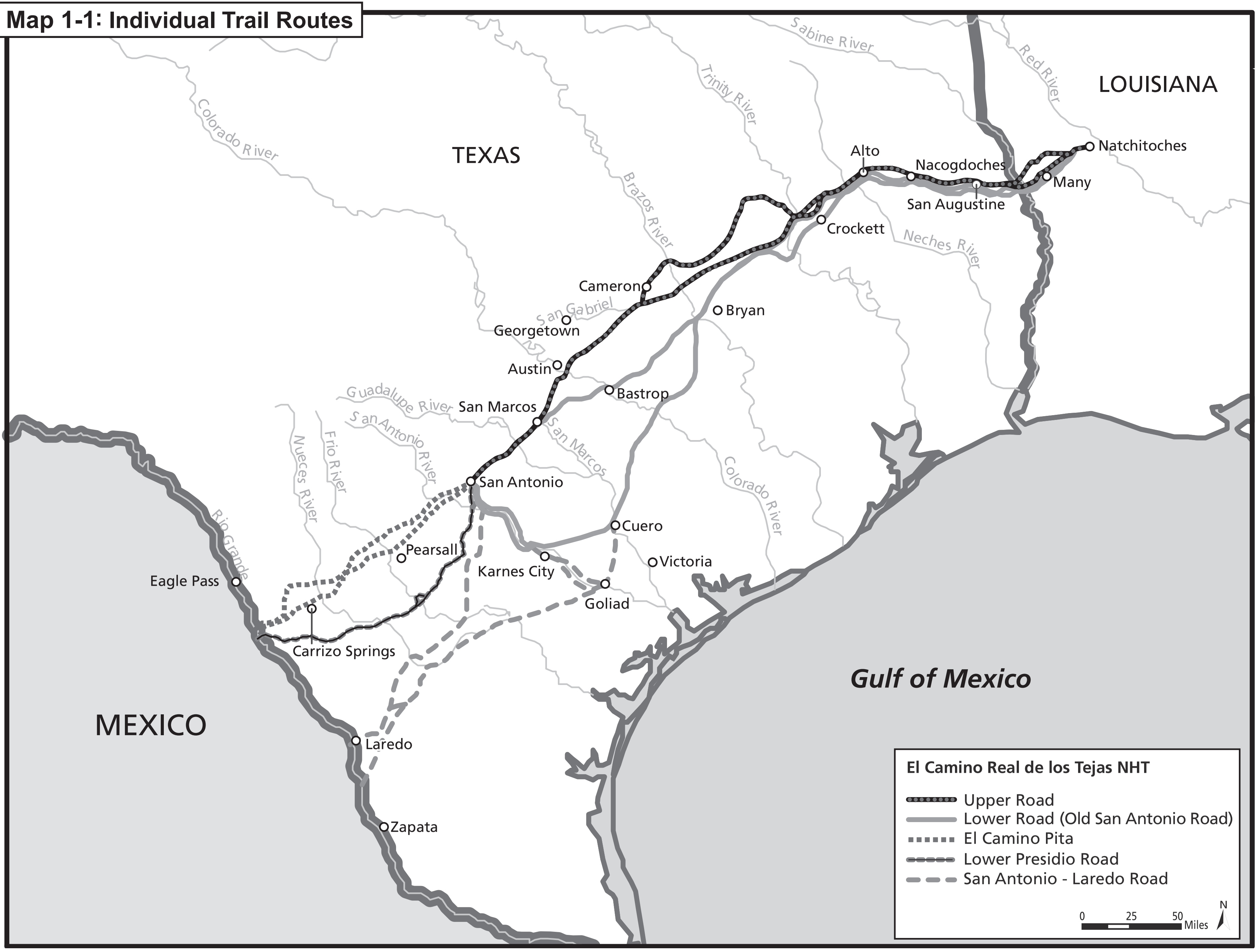
• CHANGING STATES

The trail is representative of the dramatic socioeconomic change of the 1800s, including political unrest, military action, Texas' independence from Mexico, nationhood, and entry into the United States.

HISTORIC RESOURCES ALONG THE TRAIL

DESCRIPTION OF TRAIL ROUTES

Current knowledge of El Camino Real de los Tejas is incomplete. This is evident in any attempt to clarify the complex system of routes associated with this trail (see Appendix D, page 155 for a discussion of mapping El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail). El Camino Real de los Tejas was not a single trail; instead, it was a network of regional routes that included El Camino Pita, the Upper Presidio Road, the Lower Presidio Road, El Camino de en Medio, El Camino Arriba, the San Antonio–Nacogdoches Road, La Bahía Road, El Camino Carretera, among other routes. Trail experts note, quite accurately, that throughout its long history, the trail's route alignments moved to allow travelers to avoid flooded rivers or American Indians. Even though the routes shifted with the season of the year or with time, most destinations remained constant.


Map 1-1: Individual Trail Routes
LOUISIANA
TEXAS
MEXICO
Gulf of Mexico
Natchitoches
Many
Nacogdoches
San Augustine
Alto
Crockett
Bryan
Cameron
Georgetown
Austin
Bastrop
San Marcos
San Antonio
Cuero
Victoria
Goliad
Karnes City
Pearsall
Carrizo Springs
Eagle Pass
Laredo
Zapata
Red River
Sabine River
Trinity River
Neches River
Brazos River
Colorado River
San Gabriel
Guadalupe River
San Antonio River
San Marcos
Frio River
Nueces River
Colorado River
Rio Grande
El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT
Upper Road
Lower Road (Old San Antonio Road)
El Camino Pita
Lower Presidio Road
San Antonio - Laredo Road
0
25
50
Miles
N

However, often Spanish settlements proved ephemeral. Several missions, presidios, and villages were short-lived, a testimony to the obstacles that Spain faced in colonizing such a large and harsh territory.

The *National Historic Trail Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment: El Camino Real de los Tejas, Texas and Louisiana* identified El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail routes that were designated by Congress. The study classified the routes according to their starting and ending points into routes from the Río Grande to San Antonio, and routes from San Antonio to Los Adaes.

There were three basic routes from the Río Grande to San Antonio (see Map 1-2, page 21):

1) El Camino Pita, between Paso de Francia and San Antonio, was named for a paraje (campsite) used in 1716 by the Domingo Ramón-Fray Isidro Espinosa Expedition. It remained the route of most expeditions through the 1720s, when traffic moved farther south in response to American Indian attacks.

2) The Lower Presidio Road, used primarily from 1750 to 1800, went almost directly east from Paso de Francia, before turning north to San Antonio. This route was also known as El Camino de en Medio because it was between two other roads: El Camino Pita to the north and, on the south, another main road to San Antonio that ran east from the Laredo crossing of the Río Grande.

3) Routes from the Laredo area, also called the San Antonio–Laredo Road, came into use with the founding of Villa Dolores and Laredo in the 1750s. A spur from the San Antonio Road (1750–1830) went directly north-northeast from Laredo. A second route from Laredo to San Antonio (1750–1830) ran east-northeast to La Bahía near present-day Goliad. The route then turned back to the northwest, following the San Antonio River to San Antonio. An Upper Presidio Road was opened later (1795–1850) generally following the route of the earlier Camino Pita (it is generally north of it) to a point east of the Frío River.

There were two main routes from San Antonio to Los Adaes (see Map 1-2, page 21):

1) The Upper Road or El Camino de los Tejas (1691–1800). This road went through modern New Braunfels and San Marcos, reached the Colorado River just west of Austin, and extended to the missions in eastern Texas in 1716. It was the predominant route for the explorers and early settlers of eastern Texas. Beyond a point 10 miles northeast of Austin to the San Gabriel River, this road is not well defined. From the San Gabriel River to the Trinity River, three variations are shown: one that can be partially identified from records and two other, more northerly routes.

2) The Lower Road (around 1720s–1790s). During the 1720s, the road east from San Antonio shifted south, followed the San Antonio River downstream, then turned east to cross the Guadalupe River near present-day Cuero, the Colorado River, just north of La Grange, and the Brazos near the mouth of the Little Brazos River, near Hearne. After the presidio and mission at La Bahía were moved to present Goliad in 1749, the road was extended to La Bahía, where it intersected with the Laredo Road after 1755. The Lower Road joined 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. East of the Neches, all three routes—the Upper Road (also known as El Camino Real de los Tejas), the Lower Road, and the Old San Antonio Road (also called El Camino de Arriba)—are on the same alignment.

After the closing of Los Adaes, both the Upper and Lower roads to the east continued

to be used, with the Lower Road receiving more traffic. A new mail route was pioneered in 1795, with the aim of straightening the route to East Texas. Many segments of this road—later called the Old 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 turned slightly south to avoid crossing the Comal and Blanco rivers. It then headed straight for the Brazos River crossing of the Lower Road, passing the Colorado River at Bastrop. The Old San Antonio Road followed the Upper Road from San Antonio to the New Braunfels area, where it turned slightly south to cross the Guadalupe and San Marcos rivers. It then headed through Bastrop to the Brazos River, where it crossed the same area as the Lower Road.

The Old San Antonio Road between Natchitoches, Louisiana, and San Antonio, Texas, served as one colonial route used for emigration, trade, and commerce in the early decades of the 19th century and beyond. 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.

In the state of Louisiana, State Highway 120 paralleled the original route of El Camino Real de los Tejas until the 1820s. At that time, the Americans established Fort Jesup and built what would become Louisiana State Highway 6 and the Pendleton Bridge across the Sabine River, making the ferry across the Sabine no longer necessary.

To avoid confusion, all of the congressionally designated routes are subsumed under the name El Camino Real de los Tejas.

HIGH POTENTIAL SITES AND SEGMENTS

According to Section 12 of the National Trails System Act:

a) high potential sites are 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;

b) high potential segments are those segments of a trail that afford high-quality recreation experiences along a portion of the route having greater-than-average scenic values or affording an opportunity to share vicariously the experience of the original users of a historic route.

The planning process determines if sites, trail segments, or associated resources are eligible to be included as official components of the national historic trail. High potential lists are compiled based on information available when the Comprehensive Management Plan/ Environmental Assessment is being prepared. They should not be regarded as complete, conclusive, or final. Lists may be amended to add or remove properties, as appropriate.

The process of selecting high potential sites and segments for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail required the analysis of historic and archeological information from 40 Texas counties and two Louisiana parishes. The list of high potential sites and segments was developed after analyzing more than 500 sites and involved a number of steps (see Appendix E, page 161).

Crucial input in selecting high potential sites and segments came from a number of different representatives from the trail community, including the Texas Historical Commission; the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism; the Texas Department of Transportation; Stephen F. Austin State University; El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association; and others with knowledge of trail resources. Members of

the National Trails Intermountain Region planning team, assisted by a core group of experts with extensive experience identifying high potential sites and segments, visited the majority of sites/segments included in the list and made a determination as to which should be included. In a number of instances, a resource appeared significant but its relationship to the trail was not clear; in others, there was not enough historic evidence to link the site to the trail. In many cases, a site appears to merit inclusion, but its specific location has not been clearly identified. A decision was reached to develop two lists: 1) high potential sites and segments (see Appendix E, page 161, for greater detail); and 2) those sites that might merit inclusion later on but, at this time, fail to meet some of the criteria identified in the National Trails System Act; these sites (almost 100) are included in Appendix F, page 197.

As knowledge of trail resources increases, a larger number of authentic sites and segments will become eligible for inclusion as high potential sites. However, even though some of these sites and segments may merit inclusion due to their scientific importance in understanding the history and the development of the trail, they still may not be suitable for interpretation and public access. A combination of factors, such as limited size (very short swales), location (in an area not likely to permit safe public access or underwater), landowners' wishes, and other reasons, might lead trail administrators to conclude that some sites and segments, although authentic, do not have the potential to be developed and interpreted for the benefit of the public.

For the purpose of this plan, 74 high potential sites and segments have been selected for inclusion from the state of Texas; 19 from the state of Louisiana; a total of 93 for the entire trail. Their approximate location is depicted on the maps which are included at the end of Appendix E, page 183.

Table 1-2.
High Potential Sites and Segments

State	Parish/County	Site	Segment
Louisiana			
	Natchitoches	12	4
	Sabine	2	1
	Natchitoches/ Sabine		1
		13	**5**
Texas			
	Bexar	25	1
	Brazos	1	
	Cherokee	4	
	Comal	3	
	DeWitt	1	
	Dimmitt	1	
	Frio	1	
	Goliad	6	
	Hays	5	
	Houston	2	1
	Karnes	2	
	Leon	1	
	Maverick	3	
	Milam	6	
	Nacogdoches	7	
	Rusk	1	
	Sabine	1	1
	San Augustine	2	
	Travis	1	
	Victoria	7	
	Webb	4	
	Wilson	1	
	Zapata	3	
		87	**3**
Total		**101**	**8**

GAPS IN INFORMATION AND RESEARCH NEEDS

Information for this Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment has come from documents prepared specifically for this project. They include 1) a cultural resources inventory for the trail in Texas; 2) an ethnographic overview; 3) a cultural resources inventory

for the trail in Louisiana; and 4) a natural resources overview. However, due to the considerable length of the designated route and the limited knowledge about major sections of the trail, much still remains to be learned about El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail routes and associated resources. This Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment highlights the need for continued research and study of the people and the resources associated with the trail.

For this reason, the planning team recommends that the following studies be undertaken, as time and funding become available:

1) African Americans' experience along the trail;
2) Immigration into Texas during the first half of the 19th century;
3) Development of Spanish/Mexican communities during the period of significance;
4) Systematic evaluation and identification of regional routes defining their periods of significance, associations of culture, historic properties, and their role in the development of regional histories;
5) In-depth research of economic activities along the trail;
6) On-the-ground archeological investigations to verify routes and the specific location of missions and presidios;
7) Archeological and historical investigations to identify the location of missions and presidios, and other significant resources;
8) Studies of cultural landscapes along the trail;
9) Examination of additional historic routes for future Congressional designation;
10) Development of site/segment protection strategies that take into account special environmental conditions along the trail;
11) Analysis of the relationship between route selection made by travelers and natural resources/environmental issues; and
12) Impact of the trail on indigenous communities (and vice-versa).

LEGAL AND POLICY REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the legislation designating the trail and the National Trails System Act, other federal laws apply to trail management. All trail resources and opportunities for visitor enjoyment must be managed in compliance with a large body of legal and policy requirements intended to adequately protect the nation's natural and cultural heritage and opportunities for the enjoyment of that heritage. Federal laws, regulations, and planning direction applicable to this Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Antiquities Act of 1906 (16 USC 431-433)
- Archeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (AHPA, 16 USC 469-469c)
- Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA, 16 USC 470aa)
- Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 USC 35)
- Federal Cave Protection Act of 1988 (16 USC 4301-4310)
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA 42 USC 5)
- National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA 16 USC 470)
- National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 (16 USC 1, 2, 3, and 4)
- Native American Graves and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 NAGPRA, USC 3001 *ET. SEQ.*)
-

- Executive Order No. 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," 1994
- Executive Order No. 1300, "Indian Sacred Sites," 1996
- NPS Management Policies 2006
- and relevant NPS Director's Orders

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

COUNTY LAND USE PLANS

Existing land-use plans in the trail's vicinity are numerous because the routes cross two Louisiana Parishes and 40 Texas Counties. Given the general nature of the alternatives proposed in this plan, it is not appropriate to list all such documents. However, as trail projects begin to be developed, the National Trails Intermountain Region will ensure that all pertinent local land-use plans are examined to ensure that there are no unexpected impacts or inconsistencies.

STATE

Statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plans exist for both Texas and Louisiana. In Texas, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has prepared the Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan (2005). In Louisiana, the Division of Outdoor Recreation of the Office of State Parks prepared the state's plan that was approved early in 2009. These plans identify statewide recreation demands and issues and present a strategic approach to address them. These plans are required to qualify for federal grants for outdoor recreation projects and are to be updated every five years. The alternatives proposed in this plan are in accordance with the provisions identified in these documents.

At the request of the Texas State Legislature, the Texas Department of Transportation prepared in 1991 and revised in 2001 a historic study and preservation plan for a large segment of the designated routes of El Camino Real de los Tejas. Included in *A Texas Legacy, The Old San Antonio Road and the Caminos Reales: A Tricentennial History, 1691-1991*, the preservation plan calls for the identification of historic resources, the completion and consolidation of all inventories and existing data, on-site investigation, evaluation and documentation, additional research, and the development of a management system. It identifies suitable places (the intersection of the various old routes with existing roads) for the installation of historic markers or information rest-stops for tourists. The plan also recommends the designation of the *caminos reales* as a national historic trail.

APPROPRIATE USE

Section 1.5 of Management Policies (2006), "Appropriate Use of the Parks," directs that the National Park Service must ensure that allowed park uses would not cause impairment of, or unacceptable impacts on, resources and values. In the case of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, the National Trails Intermountain Region does not own any of the resources and does not have the authority to regulate use. However, the office will make an effort to work with partners and the trail community to foster appropriate trail uses that will not result in unacceptable impacts to resources.

IMPACT TOPICS

Impact topics address those resources that could be affected by the alternatives presented in this plan. They offer a means of comparing the environmental consequences of implementing each alternative. The planning team chose topics on which to focus the environmental discussion, based on the following factors: resources and values that may be affected, federal laws and other legal requirements, the Council of Environmental Quality's guidelines for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Park Service management policies, and issues and concerns expressed during

public scoping and meetings with interested parties along the trail.

Each impact topic is identified below. The list is followed by a brief justification for dismissing certain impact topics from further consideration.

IMPACT TOPICS ANALYZED

- Cultural Resources
  - *Ethnographic*
  - *Archeologic*
  - *Historic*
- Natural Resources
  - *Vegetation*
  - *Wildlife*
- Landownership and Use
- Socioeconomic Conditions
- Visitor Use and Experience

IMPACT TOPICS DISMISSED

The decision to dismiss certain impact topics from analysis is partially based on extensive experience administering national historic trails, and knowledge of trail resources. After a systematic analysis of the alternatives, the planning team concluded that certain impact topics were not relevant to the development of this Comprehensive Management Plan/ Environmental Assessment. This decision was reached for two reasons: because implementing either alternative would have no effect or a negligible effect on the topic or resource or because the resource does not occur along the trail. The topics dismissed from further evaluation include the following:

AIR QUALITY

Trail use would have negligible short- and long-term effects on air quality. Potential sources of air-quality effects may arise from development of trailheads and vehicle emissions associated with constructing small parking areas. Each of these sources would be short-term and negligible. The proposed alternative would result in negligible adverse, short-term effects on air quality; therefore, this impact topic was dismissed.

CAVES AND KARSTS

Although there are important caves and karsts in one of the counties and one of the parishes crossed by the trail, there are no known significant caves and karsts in the proximity of the trail corridor. If any future site-specific development were to take place, a more detailed environmental study would be undertaken to identify any possible such resource that might be affected; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Although climatologists are unsure about the long-term results of global climate change, it is clear that the planet is experiencing a warming trend that affects ocean currents, sea levels, polar sea ice, and global weather patterns. Although these changes will likely affect winter precipitation patterns and amounts in the parks, it would be speculative to predict localized changes in temperature, precipitation, or other weather changes, in part because there are many variables that are not fully understood and there may be variables not currently defined. The analysis in this document is based on past and current weather patterns and not the effects of future climate changes; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Those who traveled the trail focused neither on a set of swales or ruts nor on isolated places along the way, but instead on the physical nature of the regions they traversed. Such areas are identified as cultural landscapes. The Secretary of the Interior's *Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* define a cultural landscape as "a geographic area (including both natural and cultural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein) associated with an historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values."

Cultural landscapes are particularly important in understanding Louisiana and

Texas trails because they played a fundamental role in the selection of travel routes. Seasonal variations and weather patterns combined to dictate routes. Understanding the choices trail users made requires examination of the landscapes with care. The cultural aspects of a landscape are as important as the natural features in defining management strategies.

The term "landscape" differs in meaning, usage, and importance, depending on who is using it. Ecologists often use the term "ecoregion" or "ecosystem" when they refer to landscapes. Among cultural geographers, definitions of the term "landscape" have changed dramatically during the last six decades and continue to evolve.

Although cultural landscapes have not been considered essential trail resources, they should be a high priority for present-day trail managers because they define the nature of the trail, both at the time of original use and at present. Cultural landscapes are very important trail resources and need as much attention and protection as swales and other types of specific traditional historic resources. More importantly: legally, cultural landscapes merit the same protection as other cultural resources and should receive the same treatment and protection.

The major character-defining features of cultural landscapes along historic trails depend on the local vegetation, hydrology, topography, and soil, and sometimes the human modifications of these elements. Variations in vegetation, landforms, water sources, and soils also help to identify boundaries among the various component landscapes of a linear resource.

The National Park Service has developed a sophisticated methodology for the study of cultural landscapes. As in the case of User Capacity, identifying cultural landscapes along the trail and developing strategies for their protection would require periodic, long-term access to privately owned trail resources. It is likely that cultural landscapes occur along this trail. However, the majority of them are privately owned and many landowners are not willing to grant access to their land. Furthermore, any future trail development project associated with the proposed alternative would require compliance with federal laws regarding the protection of cultural landscapes. In such cases a more detailed environmental study would be undertaken to identify any cultural landscapes that might be affected. Therefore, this topic was dismissed.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Neither alternative proposes or implies activities that would remove, erode, or contaminate soils. In more than 20 years of national historic trails administration, the National Trails Intermountain Region has undertaken no projects that would adversely impact soils and has reasonable expectation that none would occur in the future. Any individual undertaking that might be proposed in the future would be carefully analyzed with respect to soil-related impacts. Impacts to soils and geology would be negligible, if any; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

The National Park Service is one of the primary federal entities that preserves cultural and natural resources. National Park Service museum collections include diverse disciplines and represent a significant portion of the resources that the National Park Service is charged to preserve and protect. The collections are characterized as cultural, natural, and archival.

According to Director's Order #24 *Museum Collections*, the National Park Service requires the consideration of impacts on museum collections, and provides further policy guidance, standards, and requirements for preserving, protecting, documenting, and providing access to, and use of, National Park Service museum collections.

At the moment, there are no museum collections associated with El Camino Real

de los Tejas National Historic Trail. In the future, the National Trails Intermountain Region will work with existing museum facilities that have the capability of storing, curating, and displaying objects, specimens, and archives associated with the trail. A funding program, such as Challenge Cost Share, could help support museum collections in both Louisiana and Texas. Neither alternative would result in any unacceptable impacts; therefore this topic was dismissed.

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

No known significant paleontological resources are located in the proximity of the trail corridor. If any future site-specific development were to take place, a more detailed environmental study would be undertaken to identify any such resource that might be affected; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

PRIME AND/OR UNIQUE FARMLANDS

Prime farmland is defined as soil that particularly produces general crops such as common foods, forage, fiber, and oil seed; unique farmland soils produce specialty crops, such as specific fruits, vegetables, and nuts. There are no lands classified as prime and/or unique farmlands within the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail corridor. Neither of the alternatives propose land-use changes. In both cases, there will be a concerted effort to work with local landowners in implementing the provisions of this plan. Impacts to prime farmlands are expected to be negligible; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Neither alternative would result in any identifiable adverse impacts to human health or safety. Neither alternative would change sanitation levels of treated water or exposure to environmental or chemical hazards. The numbers or levels of mobility that would result from either alternative would not be detectable compared to accidents that occur every day in Texas and Louisiana; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

SOUNDSCAPES

National Park Service Management Policies 2001 and Director's Order #47, *Soundscape Preservation and Noise Management*, recognize that natural soundscapes are important park resources and call for the National Park Service to preserve, to the greatest extent possible, the natural soundscapes of parks. The policies and director's order further state that the National Park Service is to restore degraded soundscapes to their natural condition whenever possible and to protect natural soundscapes from degradation due to noise (undesirable human-caused sound).

Noise can adversely affect, directly and indirectly, the natural soundscape and other trail resources. It can also adversely impact the visitor experience. Currently, visitors to some of the sites along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail have opportunities to experience solitude and tranquility in an environment of natural sounds. However, since the preponderance of trail resources along this trail is privately owned, the National Trails Intermountain Region can only work with partners to foster appropriate uses that do not impact the natural soundscapes of the trail. Neither alternative proposes any action that could affect the trail's soundscapes; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 requires examination of impacts on all federally listed threatened, endangered, and candidate species. Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act requires all federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that any action authorized, funded, or carried out by the agency does not jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or critical habitats. In addition, the 2006 *Management*

Policies and Director's Order #77 *Natural Resources Management Guidelines* require the National Park Service to examine the impacts of federal candidate species, as well as state-listed threatened, endangered, candidate rare, declining, and sensitive species. For the purpose of this analysis, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Texas and Louisiana departments of natural resources were contacted with regards to federal and state-listed species to determine those species that could potentially occur near the project area (see Appendix K, page 237, for a listing of Special Status Species).

Preliminary consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southeastern and Southwestern regions indicates that neither alternative is likely to adversely affect any special status species in Texas or Louisiana. Both offices caution, however, that any subsequent development proposals would require further study and consultation with regard to potential impacts on such species. As stated previously, all federally funded proposals that involve development or outdoor recreation and that, therefore, could potentially impact special status species would be individually reviewed under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act. At this time, there are no specific projects that would cause any negative impact of any species of concern; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

URBAN QUALITY AND DESIGN OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Consideration of this topic is required by 40 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) 1502.16. The quality of urban areas is not a concern in this plan. Under either alternative, if new structures are proposed, vernacular architecture and compatible design would be taken into consideration. Structures, such as interpretive kiosks and restrooms, would be small and visually unobtrusive. Emphasis would be placed on designs, materials, and colors that blend in and do not detract from the natural and built environment. Appropriate actions under the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act would be taken on a case-by-case basis as site-specific projects are undertaken. Adverse impacts are anticipated to be negligible; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

VISUAL RESOURCES

Trail use would have negligible short- and long-term effects on visual resources. Visual effects may arise from development of trailheads and vehicle emissions associated with constructing small parking areas. Each of these sources would be short-term and negligible. Appropriate actions under the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act would be taken on a case-by-case basis as site-specific projects are undertaken. The proposed alternative would result in negligible, adverse, short-term effects on visual resources; therefore, the topic was dismissed.

WATER RESOURCES

Neither alternative would encourage actions that could result in an increased or decreased use of water or cause changes in the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of the water resources along the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail corridor. In more than 20 years of administering national historic trails, the National Trails Intermountain Region has never undertaken projects that would impact water resources. It is not likely that any such project would be undertaken in the future; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

WETLANDS AND FLOODPLAINS

Portions of the designated routes are located on or near floodplains and wetlands. Any federal agency involved in trail development in these areas would be mandated to follow Executive Order No. 11988, "Floodplain Management," which requires federal agencies, to the extent possible, to take into account the long- and short-term adverse impacts associated with

the occupancy and modification of floodplains wherever there is a practical alternative. Furthermore, federal policy prohibits federal agencies from taking certain actions in a 500-year floodplain. The alternatives considered in this environmental assessment do not call for any trail-related development proposals for these sensitive areas. Any future undertaking in relation to this trail would be carefully analyzed to ensure full compliance with this executive order mentioned above and any other pertinent federal policy; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

No wild and scenic rivers are located within the designated routes of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

WILDERNESS

No designated wilderness areas are located in the proximity of the trail corridor; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Executive Order No. 12898 requires all federal agencies to incorporate environmental justice into their missions by identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse effects of their actions on minorities and low-income populations and communities. The communities along the trail corridor are characterized by a mixture of incomes and ethnic backgrounds (See tables in Appendix L; page 249-page 254). The proposal in this Comprehensive Management Plan/ Environmental Assessment would not have adverse impacts on minorities and low-income populations and communities; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

ENERGY REQUIREMENTS AND CONSERVATION POTENTIAL

No facilities with inherent energy needs are proposed in the alternatives. Existing building facilities would be used for visitor orientation and interpretation. Should any of these facilities require remodeling to accommodate trail projects, sustainable design concepts would be employed. The objectives of sustainability are to minimize adverse effects on natural and cultural resources, to reflect the environmental setting, and to require the least amount of nonrenewable fuels or energy possible; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

INDIAN TRUST LANDS AND RESOURCES

There are no Indian trust lands or resources in the area crossed by the designated routes; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

ECOLOGICALLY CRITICAL AREAS AND NATIONAL NATURAL LANDMARKS

There are no ecologically critical areas and national natural landmarks in the area crossed by the designated routes; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

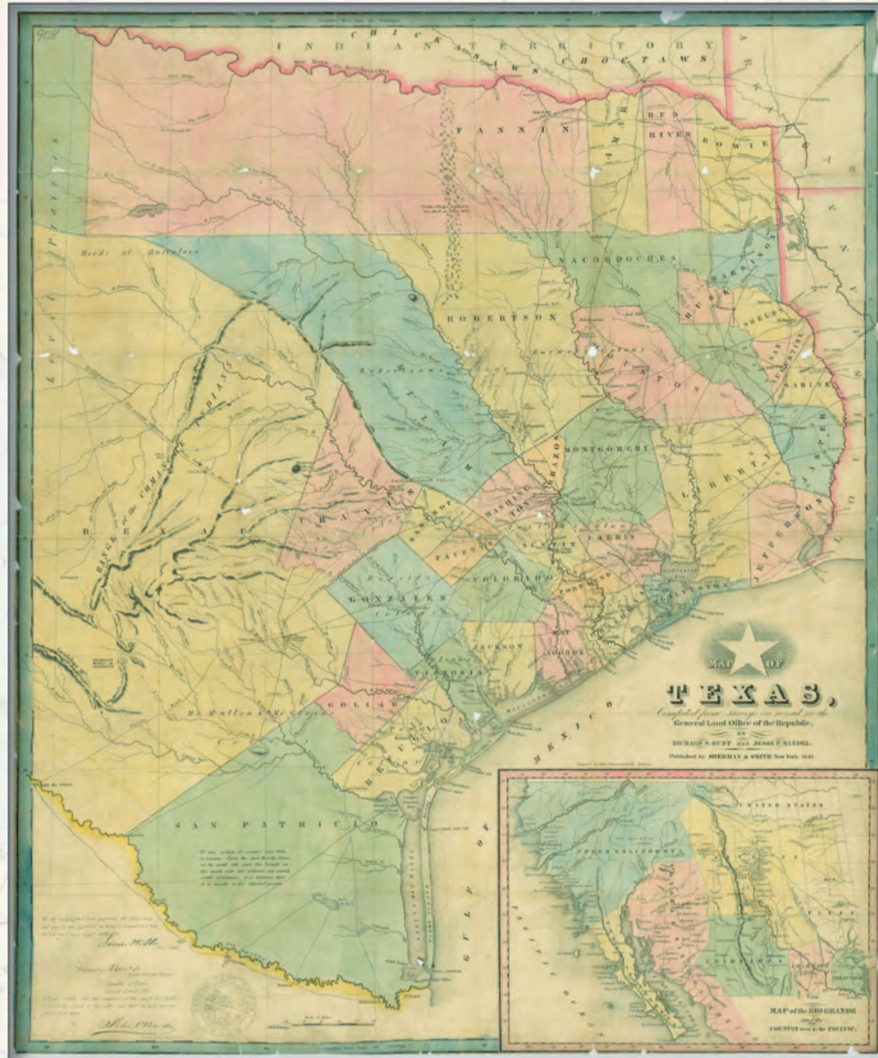
NATURAL OR DEPLETABLE RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS AND CONSERVATION POTENTIAL

Neither alternative would substantially affect energy requirements, either within national park boundaries or nonfederal lands along the trail route, because any rehabilitated buildings or new facilities would take advantage of energy-conservation methods and materials; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

POSSIBLE CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE PROPOSED ACTION AND THE OBJECTIVES OF FEDERAL, REGIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LAND-USE PLANS, POLICIES, AND CONTROLS

Most trail-related projects along the designated routes would be proposed and carried out by individual landowners and managers, often without notification to, consultation with, or assistance from the National Park Service, the designated federal lead agency. The National Park Service has no direct management authority over project type, size, and design, which would be the principal determining factor in any impacts from given projects. In addition, location-specific factors would vary considerably from site to site along the length of the national historic trail. These include habitat, vegetation, viewshed, existing uses, public sentiment, the presence of threatened and endangered species, and the presence of historic resources eligible for inclusion in the national historic register. The combined effects of all of these location- and project-specific factors cannot be fully anticipated or addressed at this time, but must be evaluated at the project level in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Consultation with federal, regional, state, and local governing entities identified no conflicts with existing land-use plans that might arise from either of the alternatives at this time; therefore, this topic was dismissed.

CHAPTER 2
ALTERNATIVES



CHAPTER 2: ALTERNATIVES

INTRODUCTION

The preferred alternative proposed in this plan (alternative B) aims to achieve a vision for the trail that emerged during the process of preparing this document. This vision entails collaborating with partners to provide the public with the opportunity to enjoy and appreciate significant trail resources through high quality visitor programs while at the same time supporting research efforts to ensure that significant trail resources are identified and protected.

The actions proposed follow a progression based on the assessment of current conditions along the trail. For example, one central concern is the need to identify and document authentic trail resources. Once this task is completed, it would then be possible to develop protection strategies appropriate to the resources identified. Before some future actions can take place, it might be crucial to complete other tasks. For example, quality interpretation is based upon knowledge of authentic trail resources and their significance. Development of projects to enhance visitor experience depends to a large extent on a quality interpretive program. Interested partners would then be able to develop appropriate recreational and heritage tourism activities.

Not all of the actions identified under the preferred alternative can take place simultaneously, particularly since sites and segments along the trail are at different stages of development. Some have been well researched and are open to the public. Others need research to clearly link them to the period of significance of the trail. Many are privately owned and of difficult access. Some important sites are important for scientific purposes, but might not be of interest to the general public. Furthermore, the length of the trail would require crafting realistic implementation strategies, which in turn would entail collaboration with all those interested in the trail, so as to make the most effective use of available human and financial resources. As knowledge of the resources and awareness of the trail expand, the potential for development programs would also increase.

Under both alternatives the National Trails Intermountain Region would be implementing the authorities of the National Trails System Act that pertain to national historic trails. Both alternatives address the required and the discretionary authorities identified in the Act.

While the provisions of the National Trail System Act and the specific trail legislation allow for the acquisition of properties from willing sellers, the National Trails Intermountain Region does not intend to acquire any trail-related sites. However, it would be willing to provide technical assistance to partners interested in acquiring properties that are threatened and/or essential to offer visitors the opportunity to enjoy and appreciate significant trail resources.

ACTIONS COMMON TO ALL ALTERNATIVES

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Within the National Trails System, the terms "administration" and "management" have specific and separate meanings to distinguish between trail-wide coordination (administration) and local ownership, protection, and interpretation (management).

ADMINISTRATION

Administration encompasses the tasks performed by the agency assigned by the Secretary of the Interior to administer the trail. For El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, that agency is the National Park Service. Subject to available funding, the administering agency exercises trail wide responsibilities under the National Trails System Act for that specific trail. Typically, such responsibilities include the following: providing technical assistance, oversight, and coordination among agencies and partnership organizations in planning, resource protection, trail marking, and interpretation; identifying high potential sites and segments, initiating and maintaining agreements (partnership, cooperative, and interagency); setting and maintaining signage and interpretive standards; helping to ensure consistent preservation, education, and public-use programs; managing the use of the official trail logo; encouraging and supporting the work of volunteers, and providing limited financial assistance to other cooperating government agencies, landowners, interest groups, and individuals.

Responsibility for the overall administration of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail rests with the superintendent of the National Trails Intermountain Region—with staff in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Salt Lake City, Utah. Current cooperative agreements with the Texas Historical Commission and El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association would continue, pending available funding.

MANAGEMENT

Management refers to those site-specific tasks carried out by various governmental, community, and private entities that own, direct, or care for lands along each national trail. Management responsibilities often include the following: inventorying resources; mapping, planning, and developing trail segments and sites; ensuring compliance with federal and state laws; providing appropriate public access; developing site interpretation; overseeing trail maintenance; carrying out trail marking; protecting resources and viewsheds; and managing visitor use.

As required by the enabling legislation, the National Trails Intermountain Region would make an effort to foster relations with individual and entities currently studying or developing compatible programs along the Mexican section of the trail, in particular members of the Instituto Nacional de Arqueología e Historia and other pertinent Mexican entities. Preliminary reconnaissance of significant sites located in Mexican territory suggests a rich potential for collaboration with Mexican authorities on both resource protection and interpretation.

RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION, PROTECTION, AND MONITORING

Both alternatives acknowledge the key role of environmental factors in the selection and use of trail routes and the identification and preservation of resources along the trail. This is significant for trail protection as historically routes were often selected because they offered the easiest way to reach a certain destination. The environmental factors that led travelers to favor certain routes still play a role in land use in modern times: historic routes were selected to facilitate travel and now their corridors have become the choice for the construction of pipelines, new highways, or

road improvements. For this reason, both alternatives consider the natural environment an integral component of high potential sites and segments.

Although a survey of historic sites (extant above grade and archeological) was carried out during the development of this plan, many sites and segments along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail are not adequately known. This Comprehensive Management Plan/ Environmental Assessment details high potential sites and segments for Louisiana and Texas derived from information on more than 500 sites (see Appendix E, page 161, for a detailed description of these sites). High potential sites and segments would receive priority both in terms of protection and interpretation.

On lands for which the National Park Service has the responsibility for the management and condition of cultural resources, such as San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, all pertinent federal laws would apply (see Chapter 1, page 25 for a list of applicable federal laws). Approaches to cultural resource research, on-the-ground route verification, planning, and stewardship would follow the National Park Service's *Director's Order 28, Cultural Resource Management Guidelines*. The National Trails Intermountain Region would also work with San Antonio Missions National Historical Park staff to carry out research to better understand the character and significance of cultural resources along the trail and the needs for protection and monitoring.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Under both alternatives, health and safety issues would be addressed as appropriate. Trail users would be warned about potential risks, such as rough terrain and low-lying vegetation that could become entangled in footwear and cause a fall. Necessary precautions would be included in brochures and other written information, such as postings on the trail's website, signs at trail sites, and other forms of interpretive media.

USER CAPACITY

The National Trail System Act requires that carrying capacity be addressed in a Comprehensive Management Plan/ Environmental Assessment. National Park Service planning guidelines have replaced the term "carrying capacity" with the term "user capacity." User capacity is defined as the type and level of visitor use that can be accommodated while sustaining the desired resource and social conditions and visitor experience that complement the purpose of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail and its desired conditions.

The ever-changing character of the 2,580 mile-long El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail presents a unique challenge to planners attempting to quantify acceptable user capacity. The trail crosses numerous old and modern landscapes and rural and urban settings. Trail boundaries are difficult to determine. While some high potential sites and segments are managed by public agencies, a substantial number are in private hands, have uncontrolled access, and serve multiple uses. The capacity of each site or segment to withstand various types of use depends on complex combinations of environmental, cultural, and social factors; these range from extremely susceptible to remarkably resistant to impacts. Land uses and visitor experiences cannot easily be monitored or controlled by any one entity. Nevertheless, a meaningful strategy is necessary to determine and evaluate sustainable uses and levels for individual sites and segments over time, thereby ensuring that the full range of the trail's most significant resources are preserved to maintain the values and characteristics for which the trail was established as part of the National Trail System.

The premise behind user capacity is that some level of impact invariably accompanies public use; therefore, public agencies must decide which level of impact is acceptable and which actions are needed to keep impacts within acceptable limits. Two important components of user capacity for any national historic trail are 1) the

condition of trail-related resources and 2) the condition of social capacity. The condition of trail-related resources includes, among other things, the visual integrity of cultural sites, the ecological integrity of the area crossed by the trail, climatic conditions, the condition of the trail surface, pedestrian traffic, and erosional patterns. Conditions of social capacity include those levels of congestion and crowding that affect solitude and the opportunity to vicariously experience the nature of the trail.

Currently most land management agencies employ user-capacity methodologies that follow the "limits of acceptable change" process developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service in the mid-1980s. The process involves the following steps:

- Develop prescriptions for resource and visitor experience conditions in various land units or zones;
- Identify indicators (measurable variables) of conditions that can be measured over time;
- Set quantifiable standards that represent minimum acceptable conditions;
- Monitor conditions in relation to indicators and standards; and
- Adopt management actions to ensure that conditions remain at or above standard.

Using this approach, it is clear that user capacity is not a set of numbers or limits, but a process that involves establishing desired conditions, monitoring, and evaluation, followed by actions to manage visitor use to ensure that trail values are protected.

This methodology would require periodic access to trail resources over the life of this plan. Given that the resources along El Camino Real de los Tejas are predominantly privately owned and that many landowners are not willing to grant access to their lands, the planning team has concluded that the National Park Service would not be able to conduct user capacity studies during the life of this plan. However, efforts would be made to collaborate with partners to periodically monitor the condition of significant trail resources and to encourage partners to pursue studies that would provide a greater understanding of user capacity issues along the trail.

TRAIL LOGO AND MARKER

The logo developed for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail would be incorporated into the standard triangular shape of the National Trails System marker (see Figure 2-1). The marker is a unifying emblem representing the trail and all of its partners. Marker use would be restricted to the National Park Service and its partners for applications that help further the purposes of the trail. As a federal insignia this marker is protected against unauthorized uses. The trail superintendent retains approval authority for all logo use along the trail.

Figure 2-1. Logo for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail

INTRODUCTION TO ALTERNATIVES

The planning team gathered ideas and concerns expressed during the public scoping process, formal and informal community discussions, conversations with private landowners, and meetings with government agency representatives to develop two draft alternatives.

ALTERNATIVE A: CONTINUATION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS (NO ACTION)

Concept

This alternative is a requirement of National Environmental Policy Act and serves as a basis for comparison. Federal actions would be limited to those required under the National Trails System Act. Its adoption would not mean that present management activities would stop, but that the National Trails Intermountain Region and on-the-ground site and segment managers and owners would respond to future needs and problems in a manner similar to the way in which they are currently operating. Federal administration would continue as it is, with levels consistent with 2010 funding.

Administration

Under this alternative the National Trails Intermountain Region would work closely with state, local agencies, and volunteers to implement the purpose of the trail and other activities as described by the National Trail System Act. It would oversee the development of sign and interpretive standards. It would also consult with state and federal agencies as well as the owners of resources to avoid incompatible uses. Efforts to cooperate with Mexican entities would be limited to responding to requests for information and providing technical assistance, as feasible based on available budgetary and staff resources.

Resource Identification, Protection, and Monitoring

The National Trails Intermountain Region would support projects that prioritize the protection of high potential sites and segments identified during the development of this plan.

A database compiled to keep track of available information on trail resources would be available for use in trail development projects although it might not be possible for the National Park Service to provide for periodic updates.

An additional database containing more than 500 bibliographical references to maps and written materials (historic, archeological, et cetera) relevant to the trail during its period of significance and relating to both Louisiana and Texas would also be available although it might not be possible to provide for periodic updates.

Partnership Certification Program

Partnership certification is a tool used by federal trail administrators, with the consent of the landowner, to officially recognize, preserve, and interpret trail resources on nonfederal lands. The product of the partnership certification program is not simply a paper certificate acknowledging a property's link to trail history, but an enduring partnership between the property owner/manager and the National Park Service to work together to benefit the trail resource and the visiting public.

Partnership certification begins with a conversation between the property owner/manager and the National Park Service about the historical significance and management needs of a particular trail-related property. As shared public recognition, preservation and public use interests emerge, the landowner/manager and the National Trails Intermountain Region may wish to enter into a voluntary partnership to manage, protect, and interpret the site for visitors. Commitment to that partnership is formalized with a simple, legally nonbinding agreement that

says that the parties would work together toward those general mutual goals (see Appendix B, page 151, for sample partnership certification agreement). The National Trails Intermountain Region can provide many forms of technical assistance, including signing and interpretation on a case-by-case basis.

In authorizing some national historic trails, Congress prohibited or severely restricted federal agencies from purchasing lands or interests in lands outside the boundaries of federal areas. However, through partnership certification, nonfederal parties may choose to work with the appropriate federal trail administrator to manage their trail properties as part of a national historic trail.

Congress has established each national historic trail for the purpose of identifying and protecting a "historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment." At the same time Congress has recognized that when deemed to be in the public interest, "such Secretary [charged with the administration of a national historic trail] 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…" [16USC1242 Section 7 (h) 1].

Partnership certification extends national trail status and protection to nonfederal trail resources. Therefore, the purpose of partnership certification is to afford protection to nonfederal trail remnants, artifacts, and interpretive sites to allow for public use and appreciation. Partnership certification is not exclusively for the benefit of the property owner/manager or even for the sole benefit of the resource, but for the public as well.

Conditions of certification should include some allowance for "public use and enjoyment"—a way for people to experience parts of the trail that otherwise would be unavailable for visitation.

Under this alternative, the National Trails Intermountain Region would assist owners of high potential sites and segments, who express an interest to participate in this program, by providing technical assistance as limited resources allow.

TRAIL USE EXPERIENCE

Interpretation/Education

The National Trails Intermountain Region would encourage local entities to develop interpretive media and education programs focusing on the interpretive themes and high potential sites and segments identified in this document. The media and programs currently offered to the general public by various public agencies or private organizations would continue. Efforts to provide opportunities for trail audiences to forge emotional and intellectual connections with the meanings of these resources would be limited, because the additional research required to enhance the current interpretive program would be left to independent researchers who might not have the necessary support to carry out long-term projects.

Recreational Activities

Existing recreational opportunities would continue to be provided at federal and state parks and other facilities along the route. At present few, if any of these facilities, offer programs that are trail related. Efforts to provide a consistent trail experience would be limited.

Trail retracement along major state highways would be possible, but would be dependent on local efforts. Trail routes following existing public roadways and providing access to high potential sites and segments would be marked to raise awareness of the trail and encourage

visitation. It would also be possible that the trail community in consultation with National Trails Intermountain Region would develop other appropriate recreational activities consistent with the provisions of the National Trail System Act.

ORIENTATION

Trail Identification: Marker and Signs

The official marker incorporating the logo, designed during the Comprehensive Management Plan development process, could be used to mark the designated trail route along major state highways (State Highway 21 in Texas and State Highway 6 in Louisiana) and at high potential sites and segments open to the public. Signs installed at these sites and segments would identify permitted trail uses, information on safety and protection of trail users, and adjacent private property. Signing would only be done as resources permit. The National Trails Intermountain Region would pursue no federal funding for signing.

COSTS

The fiscal year 2010 budget of $201,000 for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is assumed to be constant for Alternative A. Small increases over the life of this plan (about 15 years) would not be expected to keep up with inflation.

Operations

Current levels of staffing would continue. Staff that give a portion of the time to the administration of the trail would include the superintendent, chief of trail operations, cultural resources specialist, tribal liaison, interpretive specialist, and geographic information systems specialist. This staff would collaborate with partners on a limited basis to carry out the provisions of the National Trails System Act. Base funding of $201,000 would pay for annual operations, including the salary and benefits for staff, travel for routine technical assistance to partners, office equipment, supplies, phone, signs, brochures, and publications. However, the total staff time would amount to less than one full-time position. Under this alternative support for partner activities would diminish. A stagnant budget would mean long-term declines in all aspects of trail administration.

Funding

Funding for the annual operating costs would be provided by the base operating budget of the National Park Service. No increases in its base funding to meet the needs outlined in this alternative would be anticipated. Funding for brochures, other interpretive media, signs, and other needs may be available for mutually beneficial partnership projects through the competitive Challenge Cost Share Program, an appropriation from Congress that fluctuates in size from year to year and may not be available on a permanent basis. The current Challenge Cost Share Program requires partners to provide a minimum of 50% matching contribution in the form of funds, equipment, in-kind labor, or supplies from nonfederal sources.

Table 2-1. Alternative A: Annual Operations Costs (cumulative for a 10-year period)

Item	Estimated Range of Costs	FTEs	Construction/ Facility Development
Salaries and benefits	$ 90,000.00	>1	$ 0
Office equipment and supplies	$ 5,000.00		$ 0
Travel	$ 20,000.00		$ 0
Brochures, interpretive materials, signs	$ 10,000.00		$ 0
Support to partners	$ 76,000.00		$ 0
Total Annual Operations Costs	**$201,000.00**		**$ 0**

The information in this table corresponds with current fiscal year 2010 target staffing levels for the National Trails Intermountain Region.

ALTERNATIVE B: TRAIL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)

Concept

This alternative builds on a central purpose of the National Trail System Act, which is to encourage and assist volunteer citizen involvement in the administration, planning, development, maintenance, and management of trails. The trail community encompasses individuals, entities, institutions, and partners who share an interest not only in trail history, authentic trail resources and their protection, but also in interpretive and educational programs that highlight the significance of the trail. Under this alternative, the trail community would include, among others, the Texas Historical Commission; the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism; the State of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association; the Louisiana and Texas departments of transportation; Mexico's Instituto Nacional de Antroplogía e Historia; federally recognized tribes whose homelands are crossed by the trail; private organizations; institutions of higher learning; museums; visitor centers; private owners of trail resources; trail scholars; public and private educational institutions; and others interested in the trail.

To achieve the purpose of the trail, it would be essential to collaborate with partners to identify, protect, and interpret the significant resources associated with these routes, and to provide trail users with educational and recreational opportunities, so that they would understand and enjoy the authentic sites and segments associated with these routes and the history of the trail.

Under this alternative the National Trails Intermountain Region would take a more proactive approach; it would not just address the required authorities identified in the National Trails System Act, but it would also be implementing the discretionary authorities addressed in the Act, such as the development of cooperative agreements, support of volunteers, partnership certification of significant trail resources, and allowance for compatible use as necessary or required by trail partnerships.

Administration

During the scoping process, the lack of coordination among the trail stakeholders and limited awareness of the trail and of the role of the National Park Service in its administration became recurrent themes. Lack of a formal mechanism for providing technical assistance and limited financial resources to support trail projects were also mentioned as serious issues that would hinder trail development.

Under alternative B, the preferred alternative, the National Trails Intermountain Region would assist in coordinating programs and activities along the trail in part through the continuation and establishment of cooperative agreements with state and local institutions interested in the trail.

As funding allows, the current cooperative agreement with the Texas Historical Commission for the purpose of working jointly to protect and interpret significant trail resources would continue (see Appendix G, page 215, for a sample Cooperative Agreement). Collaboration also would be essential at public sites managed by the Texas Historical Commission, such as Caddo Mound State Park, which includes high potential sites and segments related both to the history of the trail and to the Caddo culture. A similar cooperation based on available funding would be envisioned for Los Adaes State Historic Park, a public site operated by Louisiana's Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, Office of State Parks, which includes trail significant resources.

Cooperative agreements with other state agencies that manage high potential sites and segments would also be initiated and/or

continued depending on available funding. Such is the case of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department that manages several significant trail resources identified as high potential sites and segments in this plan. Other important partners are the Louisiana and the Texas departments of transportation, agencies that provide signage and trail guidance materials.

Under this alternative, the National Trails Intermountain Region would encourage owners of significant resources to participate in the Partnership Certification Program as already described in this document.

Adoption of this alternative implies that its implementation would rest mainly with volunteer members of the trail community willing to take the lead in proposing projects and programs that identify and protect significant trail resources and interpret them appropriately. For that reason, this alternative proposes the development of a comprehensive volunteer training program and strongly supports the coordination of volunteer efforts. Such an approach would address issues raised in the areas of resource identification and protection as well as interpretation and raising awareness about the trail.

To facilitate the initiatives suggested by the trail community and to provide for a more formal mechanism to deliver technical assistance, the National Trails Intermountain Region would offer eligible applicants a certain level of funding through the Challenge Cost Share Program and/or similar funding sources, as they become available. The limited size of resources in these programs would not eliminate the need for the trail community to search for additional sources of funding for specific projects.

The proposals most likely to receive support from the National Trails Intermountain Region would focus on the identification and protection of authentic resources and their interpretation. Such projects would provide a solid foundation to offer trail users the opportunity to enjoy and understand the authentic character of the nationally significant resources associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. A high priority would be given to developing a strategic plan to prioritize technical and funding assistance by the National Trails Intermountain Region for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. This is a crucial element in the effective use of financial resources, given the length of the trail and the number of resources involved.

Under this alternative, the National Trails Intermountain Region would act as an information clearinghouse for activities along the trail, coordinating efforts to ensure the most efficient use of available technical and funding resources, an issue that was repeatedly raised during the scoping process. It would also oversee the development of sign and interpretive standards that can be consistently applied along the trail corridor in conjunction with the Louisiana and Texas departments of transportation and other local highway authorities. Consistency would be important in order to heighten awareness of the trail and assist trail users in finding and following the designated trail routes and significant historic sites. Consistency would also allow for the development of a variety of satisfying recreational experiences using as inspiration authentic resources and interpretive programs.

Under the preferred alternative, the National Trails Intermountain Region would work with the Mexican entities to fulfill the purpose of the legislation, "… exchanging trail information and research, fostering trail preservation and educational programs, providing technical assistance, and working to establish an international historic trail with complementary preservation and education programs in each nation."

Resource Identification, Protection, and Monitoring

The National Trails Intermountain Region would emphasize working with the trail community to expand knowledge about trail resources, in particular

significant sites and segments with a certain degree of historic integrity. Investigations that lead to more accurate and complete identification of high potential sites and segments and their location, condition, and prioritized needs would be encouraged. Research projects that aim to elucidate important aspects of trail history or topics that have not yet received adequate attention, such as the development of Hispanic communities along the trail, the relationships between various ethnic groups, the Caddo legacy, and the experience of African Americans in East Texas and western Louisiana, would also receive special consideration. Future investigations would eventually include the study of cultural landscapes and other topics of relevance (see recommendations for further study, page 25).

Under this alternative, there would be an effort to foster awareness among the trail community of the evolving nature of the trail and its associated resources. It has been argued that El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail could be considered a living organism that responds to the changing conditions and the needs of the users—an organism that is complex and continually evolving. As such, the designated trail has the potential to become a powerful educational tool, with people of all ages and cultures interested in learning about it and working to protect it.

The study and preservation of historic trails is multidisciplinary by nature. A high priority would be placed on community-initiated and supported projects that emphasize the role of environmental factors in a) the selection and use of trail routes and b) issues associated with the identification and preservation of resources along the trail. This is significant for trail protection as, historically, routes were often selected because they offered the easiest way to reach a certain destination. The environmental factors that led travelers to favor certain routes still play a role in land use in modern times: historic travel routes are often selected for the construction of pipelines, new highways, or road improvements.

To support resource identification, monitoring, and protection, the National Trails Intermountain Region and the trail community would:

- Continue to maintain and upgrade a database prepared as part of the development of this plan to compile and keep track of available information on trail resources. This alternative envisions that this easily updated database would be used to collect additional historical trail resource information as it becomes available in the future. Because of the ease with which the database can be modified, current knowledge about trail resources would be easily available. The National Trails Intermountain Region would act as the clearinghouse for this publically accessible database, which would be geo-referenced and would include a series of variables or attributes that describe each resource (site or segment) and its current condition in detail (see Appendix H, page 225, for the attribute table that has been developed as part of this planning project). This database would also include visual documentation: a series of electronic images that reflect the condition of a site or segment at a certain point in time. These two features of the database—the written description and the images—would permit a more effective monitoring program since it would facilitate the comparison of current conditions with the information stored in the database. In addition, as described later in this section, trail stewards would also assist in updating resource information. The current methods used to determine user capacity are difficult to implement, but the flexible database developed as part of this alternative, coupled with volunteers' efforts, would greatly assist the National Trails Intermountain Region in monitoring and preserving resources more effectively.
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- Continue the route-verification process that has begun in association with the development of this plan. Combining fieldwork (archeological inventories and on-the ground-verification) with archival research, this process would enhance the probability of accurately identifying authentic trail segments and clearly establishing their relationship to the trail. The process would require the integration of historic data derived from expedition diaries, maps, drawings, correspondence, reports, Government Land Office plats, and other documentary sources with archeological evidence and current physical landscape conditions data. The historic and archeological evidence would be spatially linked to satellite images, aerial photography, LiDAR, or other spatial tools, such as ground-penetrating radar, so that there is a higher probability of correctly identifying the location of trail routes. The results of this multidisplinary investigation would be eventually captured and stored in a geographic information system. This would facilitate the management of the trail-resource data because it could be easily updated as more accurate information becomes available.
- Maintain a bibliographical references database compiled in association with this project. At the time this plan is prepared, it contains more than 500 entries including maps and written materials (historic, archeological, et cetera) pertaining to Louisiana and Texas and relevant to the trail during its period of significance. This database would be periodically updated to include the latest publications, thereby supporting an interpretive program that reflects current trail scholarship.
- Strive to identify subject-matter experts currently studying or developing compatible programs along the Mexican section of the trail, in particular members of the Instituto Nacional de Arqueología e Historia and other pertinent Mexican entities. A preliminary reconnaissance of significant sites located in Mexican territory, conducted early in 2009, suggests rich potential for collaboration with Mexican authorities on resource identification, protection, and interpretation.
- Provide assistance with the development of the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultation process with the state historic preservation officers in Louisiana and Texas before starting any trail development project. The lead federal agency, or the proponent of the project, if privately funded, would have ultimate responsibility for compliance.
- Analyze resources along the trail to determine appropriate protection strategies. This alternative would support a trail-wide effort to complete periodic revisions to the trail database previously identified and to collaborate with partners in updating said database.
- Support the identification of properties potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and collaborate in preparing forms for their nomination in collaboration with the Texas Historical Commission and the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism.
- Integrate resource protection information into interpretive messages to provide an incentive for trail users to protect resources.
- Create a communication network to disseminate information about resources threats. Although the National Trails Intermountain Region has already been participating in the process to assess the potential impacts of proposed pipelines and other serious threats to trail resources, under this alternative there would be a

clearly defined process to alert all the owners of potentially threatened properties about the need to participate in the compliance process. When resource threats become known, trail resource information would be shared with all federal, state, county, and local entities and individual stakeholders.

- Encourage the participation of interested private citizens. This alternative would establish a comprehensive training program for volunteers to learn about issues related to the identification, protection, and interpretation of trail resources. Volunteer efforts in the identification and inventory of resources are crucial to the success of national historic trails. Special training would be offered to volunteers living all along the trail, under the auspices of the Texas Historical Commission, the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, as well as the National Trails Intermountain Region. This alternative envisions collaboration among institutions of higher learning and other interested groups to implement the volunteer training program.
- Create the position of volunteer “trail steward” within the trail community for each county or parish crossed by the trail. These stewards (similar to the volunteer Archeological Stewards Program that currently exists for the state of Texas) would be responsible for periodic monitoring of the resources under their jurisdiction and for assisting in providing information on trail resources for the periodic updates of the trail database. Trail stewards would also be in charge of establishing and maintaining a semiformal communication network that, among other things, would serve to identify potential threats to significant trail resources, such as upcoming construction projects. The National Trails Intermountain Region, the Texas Historical Commission, and Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism would provide technical assistance, support, and guidance to trail stewards.
- Collaborate with federally recognized tribes to identify additional sites and stories relevant to the history of the tribe that are associated with the trail.

Resource owners would be able to request technical assistance to address the following issues: accurate documentation of historic/archeological sites, physical deterioration of swales/segments, site restoration, building/ruin stabilization, among other things. The Texas Historical Commission, the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, and the National Trails Intermountain Region would assist private landowners interested in developing their trail resources to ensure that future proposed projects do not impact the visual integrity of significant sites or segments.

Collaboration among the members of the trail community would be of utmost importance given the sheer length of the 2,580-mile-long designated trail. The National Trails Intermountain Region would encourage and support a yearly conference to discuss issues related to the purpose of the trail, such as current trail scholarship, resource protection issues, new interpretive and/or educational programs, and possibly others.

Partnership Certification Program

Partnership certification is a tool used by federal trail administrators, with the consent of the landowner, to officially recognize, preserve, and interpret trail resources on nonfederal land. The product of the partnership certification program is not simply a paper certificate acknowledging a property’s link to trail history, but an enduring partnership between the property owner/manager and the National Park Service to work together to benefit the trail resource and the visiting public.

Partnership certification begins with a conversation between the property owner/manager and the National Park Service about the historical significance and management needs of a particular trail-related property. As shared public recognition, preservation, and public use interests emerge, the landowner/manager and the National Trails Intermountain Region may wish to enter into a voluntary partnership to manage, protect, and interpret the site for visitors. Commitment to that partnership is formalized with a simple, legally nonbinding agreement that says that the parties would work together toward those general mutual goals (see Appendix B, page 151, for sample partnership certification agreement). The National Trails Intermountain Region, as funding permits, provides a certificate and a national historic trail site identification sign with the official logo designating the property as a national historic trail certified site.

Through partnership certification, nonfederal parties may choose to work with the appropriate federal trail administrator to manage their trail properties as part of a national historic trail.

Congress has established each national historic trail for the purpose of identifying and protecting "historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment." At the same time Congress has established that when deemed to be in the public interest, "such Secretary [charged with the administration of a national historic trail] 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…"

Partnership certification extends national trail status to nonfederal trail resources. Therefore, the purpose of partnership certification is to allow for public use and appreciation of nonfederal trail remnants, artifacts, and interpretive sites. Partnership certification is not exclusively for the benefit of the property owner/manager or even for the sole benefit of the resource, but for the public as well. Conditions of certification should include some allowance for "public use and enjoyment"—a way for people to experience parts of the trail that otherwise would be unavailable for visitation.

Under this alternative, the National Trails Intermountain Region would make a special effort to educate private landowners about the benefits of entering into partnership certification agreements. It would encourage owners of high potential sites and segments, who express an interest, to participate in this program by providing management, planning, coordination, technical assistance, and capacity building.

User Capacity

Several proposed actions under alternative B, the preferred alternative, would help to address user capacity. The development of a flexible database that would include assessments of resource conditions as well as images and that would be updated periodically would greatly assist the trail community in monitoring resources. In addition, under this alternative, volunteer trail stewards for each county and parish would be identified. Regularly scheduled monitoring of trail resources would be one of their main responsibilities.

TRAIL USE EXPERIENCE

Interpretation/Education

Interpretation and education play a crucial role in the conservation of resources central to the trail experience: they offer visitors the opportunity to forge emotional and intellectual connections with the meanings of these resources. Only after trail users understand the significance of

sites or segments can they truly enjoy and value them and advocate for their protection. For that reason, this alternative places strong emphasis on education and interpretation programs that aim to raise awareness about the trail, its history, and its resources.

This alternative envisions the development of a high quality interpretive program, one that continually explores the relationship between the resource's tangible and intangible meanings and searches for new ways of providing opportunities for audiences to make their own intellectual and emotional connections with these resources. Interpretation programs offer trail users ways of making connections between the physical resources and their essential meanings—in effect, to comprehend the relationship between the tangible and the intangible. For example, a Spanish mission is clearly a tangible resource; however, the reasons for its construction, its relationship to those who built it and the circumstances surrounding the building are intangibles. Interpretation itself may be viewed as a dynamic, flexible, and goal-driven process, whereby interpreters use a variety of tools to educate the public about the resource, engage them, and help them understand and appreciate it, and eventually, and most importantly, commit to its long-term stewardship. By providing opportunities to connect to the meanings of resources, interpretive programs awaken visitors to the importance of what they see and encourage them to explore associations with other resources that they have experienced. Interpretation helps audiences understand their relationships to, and their impacts upon, these resources.

The alternative would offer the trail community the opportunity to become active participants in the development of inclusive interpretive and educational programs that reflect current scholarship and offer a variety of perspectives. There would be special emphasis on compelling stories about people, places, and events, particularly those that represent the heritage of the various ethnic groups who were central in the development of the trail. It is only after understanding the complex and evolving relationships among the various ethnic groups who lived along the trail and used the trail that proper interpretive and educational programs about the trail can be developed.

This document recommends the development of a comprehensive interpretive plan to improve the coordination of interpretive and educational programs.[1] This is a long trail, and its interpretive themes and potential audiences are complex; therefore, the development of an interpretive plan should be a priority. A comprehensive interpretive plan would help guide the development and implementation of trailwide education programs, encourage collaboration, and avoid costly duplication of efforts. Under this alternative there would be an effort to incorporate all of the interpretive themes in trail interpretation programs and try to identify the most appropriate locations for the interpretation of each theme.

Wayside exhibits and signs would be installed along the trail only at those sites that require interpretation for user understanding, enjoyment, and safety. The National Trails Intermountain Region would work to ensure that design guidelines are adopted along the trail to protect the visual integrity of resources. Some of the interpretive materials would be bilingual, in English and Spanish.

This alternative suggests the development of a focused marketing program to alert visitors to trail interpretive programs. Interpretive partnerships among the trail community would be critical to the support and/or delivery of interpretive services. Identification of current and

1 - The Comprehensive Interpretive Plan process is established in the National Park Service Director's Order #6. The basic planning component for interpretation, the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan is a tool for making choices. It helps parks and trails decide what their objectives are, who their audiences are, and what mix of media and personal services to use. The product is not the plan, but an effective and efficient interpretive program that achieves management goals, provides appropriate services for visitors, and promotes visitor experiences.

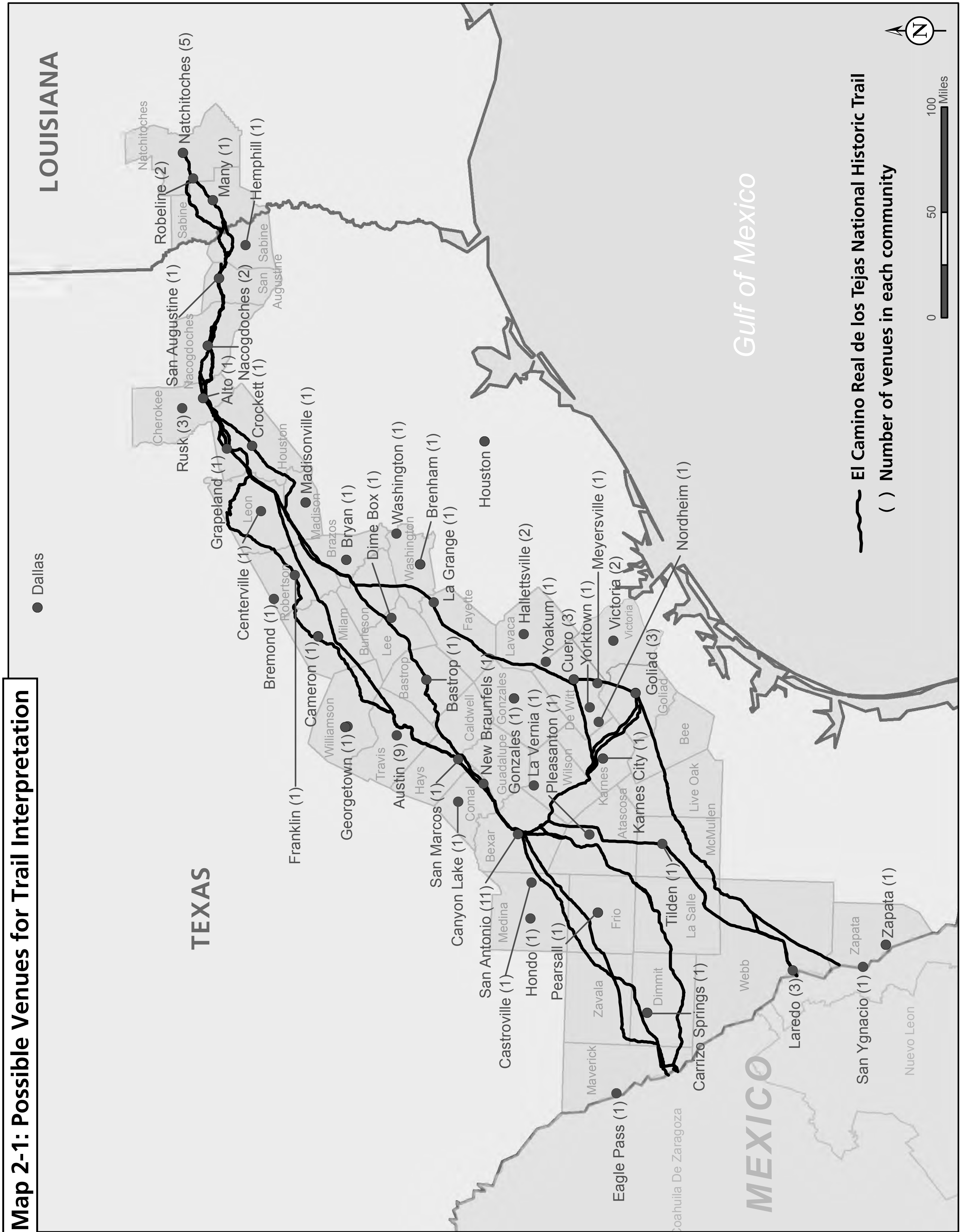
potential partners for interpretation, and the ways they can support the attainment of interpretive goals, would support efforts by staff at the National Trails Intermountain Region to employ strategic resources to serve the public and achieve desired interpretive goals.

The development and implementation of a wide range of media would be encouraged in order to engage trail users and to stimulate interest in El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail and its history. Interpretive media would be distributed at appropriate locations, with the purpose of promoting resource stewardship and to support trail-user safety, as well as their understanding and awareness of the need to preserve cultural and natural resources. Examples of media that could be used are publications (brochures, reports, and newsletters), electronic media (websites, radio broadcasts, cell phone downloads, CD rentals, and MP3/iPod downloads), wayside exhibits, audiovisual media, traveling exhibits, and indoor exhibits associated with existing museums and visitor centers. Written media should be presented bilingually, in English and Spanish. The National Trails Intermountain Region would review media and interpretative tools developed by others.

An effort would be made to cooperate with institutions of higher learning to develop training workshops for educators interested in teaching trail history. Residents in communities along the trail would also be given the opportunity to learn about and managing natural and cultural resources, by participating in programs aimed at residents of all ages, from early education to higher education and community and adult education programs. The team that developed this Comprehensive Management Plan/ Environmental Assessment envisions the trail as an "outdoor classroom," providing a land-based setting in which to learn the school curriculum. These educational experiences would serve as the basis for the creation of new career and employment opportunities in the fields of arts and culture, the environment, and sustainable economic development, where cultural conservation, building healthy communities, and environmental restoration are the goals.

This alternative would support oral presentations, such as talks, lectures, group discussions, and living-history demonstrations at local school and civic organizations by interpreters, historians, and by others with profound knowledge of the history of the trail and of the various cultural groups that participated in its development. Museums and visitor centers interested in interpreting the history of the trail and in providing a high quality interpretive experience to trail users would be given technical assistance in developing or improving existing programs. (Appendix I, page 227 and Map 2-1, page 50 identify already existing facilities in Louisiana parishes and Texas counties most likely to participate in this program. The map shows the names of the communities where the facilities are currently operating. The number of such facilities in each community is indicated in parenthesis.)

Map 2-1. Possible Venues for Trail Interpretation



RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Section 2 (a) of the National Trails System Act states that trails should be established,

> "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."

Providing memorable recreational opportunities for visitors while minimizing visual and physical encroachment is a high priority of the National Park Service. This alternative envisions offering a more meaningful trail user experience through integrated development and programming based on authentic resources and trail themes. Appropriate and consistent trail signage would facilitate visitor use and enjoyment of trail resources. A more profound understanding of significant trail-related sites and segments and enhanced cooperative efforts would result in a more meaningful experience of an entire array of trail resources. Increased cooperation among the members of the trail community would provide a more consistent and accurate message about the history of the trail and would make it easier for visitors to obtain information and to access numerous sites and segments.

One example of a recreational activity this alternative would strongly favor is "trail retracement," using existing roads that closely parallel the designated trail routes and, in some cases, roads built over the original trail alignment, such as Louisiana State Road 120 and Texas State Highway 21. Not only would such an activity not harm resources, it would offer visitors the opportunity to engage intimately with trail resources and experience vicariously what travel along the trail might have been like during the period of significance. It is essential to provide opportunities for trail audiences to forge emotional and intellectual connections with the meanings of these resources. One of the best ways to achieve this is by actually traveling along these routes.

Other sites that may offer some level of outdoor recreational opportunity include but are not limited to the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park Hike and Bike Trail in San Antonio, Texas, Los Adaes State Historic Park, in Robeline, Louisiana, and Mission Tejas State Park in Grapeland, Texas. Walking, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, camping, sightseeing, or travel by motor vehicle are all potential ways in which visitors can experience the trail corridor and its resources.

As part of this alternative, retracement trails that follow as closely as possible the historic route could be developed in cooperation with the trail community. As stated in the National Trails Systems Act, such trails are to be built and created for public use and enjoyment and to connect to historic route segments. In the case of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, such trails would be only built in public lands or in private properties where the owners agree to provide public access.

Retracement routes using existing public roadways and providing access to high potential sites and segments would be marked to raise awareness of the trail and encourage visitation. Agreements would be signed with local communities to identify such local routes. It is also possible that the trail community, in consultation with National Trails Intermountain Region, could develop other appropriate recreational activities that are consistent with the objectives of the National Trail System Act.

State and local governments, trail partners, and landowners would be encouraged to help establish, maintain, and manage trail remnants, rights-of-ways, and trail resources for the benefit of the public. Recreational opportunities and visitor enjoyment would be enhanced through increased cooperation among private landowners, the National Park Service, and other land managing agencies along the trail. Recognition through the National Park Service partnership certification program would also be another way for private landowners to share their resources with the public.

The National Trails Intermountain Region would support special cultural events sponsored by the trail community on authentic trail-related themes, as well as resource protection issues, trail awareness, and public involvement.

All trail users would be informed through written and interpretive materials, signs, and exhibits about appropriate behavior practices and protocols to minimize negative impacts to cultural and natural resources within the trail corridor and to maximize safety for trail users.

Partners might want to undertake the development of additional materials to enhance the visitor experience of specific user groups. They could prepare a series of visitor guides for hikers, equestrians, bicyclists, etc.

Communities along the trail are enthusiastic about the potential of the trail to attract visitors and have expressed strong interest in the development of a heritage tourism program. Under this alternative, El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail could become important in regional or local tourism plans. The National Trails Intermountain Region would be able to offer leadership and guidance to those groups interested in the development of heritage tourism programs, provided such programs place major emphasis on resource authenticity and the dissemination of information that is historically accurate.

ORIENTATION

Trail Identification: Marker and Signs

Developed during the Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment process, the official marker incorporating the logo would be used on signs marking the designated trail route and guiding visitor use of the trail (see Appendix I for sample of trail signs). Care would be taken to adapt logo use to the sites' signing needs. Special care should be taken to avoid visual clutter, which could impact the viewshed of the landscape along the trail. Signs installed at these sites and segments would identify permitted trail uses, information on safety and protection of trail users, and adjacent private property. Trail signs would be presented bilingually, in English and Spanish, whenever possible. Information signs, such as safety messages and property boundary markers, would also be presented bilingually, in English and Spanish, whenever possible and appropriate.

Sign specifications for marking the trail and use of the logo would be provided by the National Trails Intermountain Region, using a conceptual sign plan. This conceptual sign plan would address the design, placement, and use of the logo on a variety of signs, such as highway information and directional signs, entrance signs at parking areas, trailhead information signs, regulatory signs, directional indicators, interpretive signs and wayside exhibits, private property signs, destination signs, and trail-partner signs. The sign plan would consider using both the National Trails Intermountain Region standards on federal lands and typical approaches on national historic trails that cross many nonfederal jurisdictions. Specific signage activities would be based on sign plans developed at the local level. All signage and marking would be dependent on available funding.

To help commemorate the trail's national significance, the official marker would be placed along federal and other managed trail segments and sites, in compliance with the sign plan. The National Trails Intermountain Region would provide the markers, but local managers on nonfederal lands would install them. Markers would be placed on private property only with the consent of the landowner. Markers would identify the actual trail for individuals who want to follow the route. Furthermore, by indicating the presence of the trail, markers may help protect the trail landscape from inadvertent destruction from development.

With the cooperation and assistance of road-managing agencies, and in compliance with the sign plan, retracement route signs would be placed along state and county roads at appropriate road junctions

(consistent with the sign regulations of the managing highway department). Information signs to direct auto users to local sites or segments may also be used.

COSTS

The implementation of alternative B, the preferred alternative, would depend not only on future NPS funding and service-wide priorities, but also on partnership funds, time, and effort. The approval of alternative B would not guarantee that the funding and staffing needed to implement the plan would be forthcoming; full implementation could take many years.

Although El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is authorized to acquire land from willing sellers, no land acquisition through purchase is anticipated, and no land acquisition costs are included. All costs are in 2010 dollars.

Operations

Several members of the staff at the National Trails Intermountain Region would have responsibility for carrying out the provisions of the action alternative. They include a landscape architect, a cultural resources specialist, a planner, an interpretive specialist, a geographic information system specialist, a tribal liaison and an outreach coordinator. The trail superintendent and staff involvement in the trail would be equivalent to three full-time positions.

In addition to staff salaries and benefits operational costs include direct partner support, travel, office equipment, supplies, phone, signs, brochures, and publications.

Funding

Funding for the annual operating costs would be provided by the base operating budget of the National Park Service. To achieve a minimum base level to implement this plan the National Trails Intermountain Region would seek increases in base funding to meet some of the needs outlined in this alternative.

Funding for some technical assistance projects, brochures, other interpretive media, signs, and additional needs may be available through such funding as the competitive Challenge Cost Share Program, a yearly appropriation from Congress that requires partners to provide a minimum of 50% matching contribution in the form of funds, equipment, in-kind labor, or supplies from nonfederal sources. However, these funds may not be available every year and their amount is likely to fluctuate from year to year.

However, since alternative B places major emphasis on partnerships and effective collaboration, it might be possible to explore in conjunction with the trail community additional avenues for funding that would make possible the full implementation of this plan.

Funding for technical assistance projects beyond administrative staff capabilities would be requested from other appropriate National Park Service sources.

Funds to develop projects on nonfederal lands would be sought from state or local governments or private groups or individuals, sponsorships, or federal or state highway enhancement programs, either directly or in partnerships.

To fund cooperative preservation efforts for high potential sites and segments, aid from state and county preservation fund sources and programs as well as funds from donations, grants, and other sources would be sought. Funds would be used to supplement existing data about high potential sites and segments and to stabilize or conduct physical activities to conserve resources.

Table 2-2.
Alternative B: Annual Estimated Costs

Item	Estimated Range of Costs	FTEs	Construction/ Facility Development
Salaries and benefits	$280,000–300,000	<3	$ 0
Office equipment and supplies	$5,000–10,000		$ 0
Travel	$30,000–40,000		$ 0
Brochures, interpretive materials, signs	$20,000–30,000		$ 0
Support to Partners	$156,000		$ 0
Total Annual Operations Costs	**$491,000–$536,000**		**$ 0**

Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Study

No additional alternatives were identified or considered by the public or the planning team.

SUMMARY: ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

HOW THE ACTION ALTERNATIVE MEETS THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment is twofold: to establish administrative objectives, policies, processes, and management guidelines necessary to fulfill preservation and public-use goals for El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, as established in the National Trails Systems Act, and to provide a framework to be used in making decisions and solving problems. The preferred alternative presented in this document strongly involves state and local agencies, as well as the entire trail community, in planning and developing the trail. It encourages the involvement of private landowners and fosters trail protection and interpretation and education programs, both in the states crossed by the trail and in developing future activities in collaboration with Mexican public, nongovernmental organizations, and academic institutions.

ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The National Park Service Director's Order # 12 (Section 2.7) requires that an environmental assessment identify an environmentally preferred alternative. The Council on Environmental Quality defines the environmentally preferred as "the alternative that will promote the national environmental policy as expressed in the National Environmental Policy Act's Section 101." Section 101 of the National Environmental Policy Act states that it is the continuing responsibility of the federal government to:

- Fulfill the responsibilities of each generation as trustee of the environment for succeeding generations;
- Ensure safe, healthy, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings;
- Attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation, risk of health or safety, or undesirable and unintended consequences;
- Preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage and maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and variety of individual choice;
- Achieve a balance between population and resource use that will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life's amenities; and
- Enhance the quality of renewable resources and approach the maximum attainable recycling of depletable resources.

Alternative A, continuation of current conditions, would minimally meet the criteria listed above. Alternative B, the preferred alternative, is the environmentally preferred alternative because it goes beyond the no action alternative in attaining the full range of national environmental policy goals. It provides a higher level of protection of cultural and natural resources, while also proposing a wider range of neutral and beneficial uses of the environment. This alternative supports programs that enhance cultural diversity. It integrates resource protection with an appropriate and more diverse range of uses than the no action alternative.

Table 2-3: Comparison of Alternatives

Table 2-3	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
CONCEPT	This alternative, a requirement of National Environmental Policy Act, serves as a basis for comparison. Federal actions would be limited to those required under the National Trails System Act. Its adoption would not mean that present management activities would stop, but that the National Trails Intermountain Region and on-the-ground site and segment managers and owners would respond to future needs and problems in a manner similar to the way in which they are currently operating. Federal administration would continue as it is, with levels consistent with 2010 funding.	This alternative encourages and assists volunteer citizen involvement in the planning, development, maintenance, and management of trails. The trail community encompasses individuals, entities, institutions, or partners who share an interest in trail history, authentic trail resources and their protection as well as in interpretive and educational programs, which highlight the significance of the trail. Under this alternative, the National Trails Intermountain Region would not just address the required authorities identified in the National Trails System Act, but it would also be implementing the discretionary authorities addressed in the Act, such as the development of cooperative agreements, support of volunteers, partnership certification of significant trail resources, and allowance for compatible use as necessary or required by trail partnerships.

Table 2-3	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
ADMINISTRATION	The National Trails Intermountain Region would work closely with state, local agencies, and volunteers to implement the purpose of the trail and other activities as described by the National Trail System Act. It would oversee the development of sign and interpretive standards and would consult with state and federal agencies as well as the owners of resources to avoid incompatible uses. Efforts to cooperate with Mexican entities would be limited to responding to requests for information and providing technical assistance, as feasible, based on available budgetary and staff resources.	The National Trails Intermountain Region would assist the trail community in achieving the purpose of the trail designation, which is to commemorate the development of a network of trails, based upon American Indian routes that linked Spanish missions and posts in a travel corridor from the Río Grande to Louisiana. Much of the implementation of strategies would rest with those members of the trail community, including volunteers, willing to take the lead in proposing projects and programs that identify and protect significant trail resources and their accurate interpretation. The National Trails Intermountain Region would continue current cooperative agreements and the signing of other cooperative agreements with state agencies that manage high potential sites and segments looking for more effective project coordination and use of financial resources. Cooperative agreements with federally recognized tribes would also be developed as appropriate. The National Trails Intermountain Region would work with Mexican entities to fulfill the purpose of the legislation "… exchanging trail information and research, fostering trail preservation and educational programs, providing technical assistance, and working to establish an international historic trail with complementary preservation and education programs in each nation."
RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION, PROTECTION AND MONITORING	The National Trails Intermountain Region administration would support projects that aim to protect the high potential sites and segments identified in conjunction with the development of this plan. There would be limited opportunity for research projects that explore topics that have not yet received adequate attention through the development of this plan.	Paramount emphasis will be placed on working with the trail community to expand knowledge about trail resources, in particular significant sites and segments with a degree of historic integrity. Investigations leading to more accurate and extensive identification of high potential sites and segments and their location, condition and priority needs will be encouraged. Research projects that aim to elucidate important aspects of trail history or topics that have not yet received adequate attention will also receive special consideration.

Table 2-3	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
PARTNERSHIP CERTIFICATION PROGRAM	Under this alternative, the National Trails Intermountain Region would provide technical assistance to owners of high potential sites and segments, who express an interest to participate in this program.	Under this alternative the National Trails Intermountain Region would make a special effort to educate private landowners about the benefits of entering into partnership certification agreements. It would encourage owners of high potential sites and segments, who express an interest, to participate in this program by providing management, planning, coordination, technical assistance, and capacity building.
USER CAPACITY	Efforts would be made to collaborate with partners to periodically monitor the condition of significant trail resources and to encourage partners to pursue studies that would provide a greater understanding of user capacity issues along the trail.	In addition, for this alternative the development of a flexible database that would include assessments of resource conditions as well as images that would be updated periodically would greatly assist the trail community in resource monitoring. In addition, under this alternative the volunteer trail stewards for each county and parish would be responsible for regularly scheduled monitoring and updating information on trail resources.

Table 2-3	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
	TRAIL USE EXPERIENCE	
INTERPRETATION/EDUCATION	The National Trails Intermountain Region would encourage local entities to develop interpretive media and education programs focusing on the interpretive themes and high potential sites and segments identified in this document. The media and programs currently offered to the general public by various public agencies or private organizations would continue. Efforts to provide opportunities for trail audiences to forge emotional and intellectual connections with the meanings of these resources would be limited, because the additional research required to enhance the current interpretive program would be left to independent researchers who might not have the necessary support to carry out such projects.	This alternative would offer the trail community the opportunity to become active participants in the development of inclusive interpretive and educational programs that reflect current scholarship and offer a variety of perspectives. There would be special emphasis on worthy stories, particularly those that represent the heritage of the various ethnic groups who were central in the development of the trail. It is only after understanding the complex and evolving relationship among the various ethnic groups who lived and used the trail that proper interpretive and educational programs about the trail can be developed. This alternative suggests the development of an aggressive marketing strategy for interpretive programs. Partnerships among the trail community would be critical to the support and/or delivery of interpretive services. Identification of current and potential partners for interpretation, and the ways they can support the attainment of interpretive goals, would enhance the National Trails Intermountain Region's ability to strategically use resources to serve the public and achieve desired interpretive goals.

Table 2-3	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
TRAIL USE EXPERIENCE, CONTINUED		
RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	Existing recreational opportunities would continue to be provided at federal and state parks and facilities along the route. At present few, if any of them, provide activities that are trail related. Trail retracement along major state highways would be possible, but would be dependent on local efforts. Trail routes following existing public roadways and providing access to high potential sites and segments would be marked to raise awareness of the trail and encourage visitation.	This alternative envisions providing a more meaningful trail user experience through integrated development and programming. Trail retracement and development would enhance opportunities for public use and enjoyment of authentic trail resources. Appropriate and consistent trail signage would facilitate visitor use and enjoyment of trail resources. A more profound understanding of significant trail-related sites and segments would result in an added appreciation of the heritage of the trail. Enhanced cooperative efforts would result in a more meaningful opportunity to experience an entire array of trail resources. Increased cooperation among the members of the trail community would provide a more consistent and accurate message about the history of the trail and would make it easier for visitors to obtain information and to access numerous sites and segments.
ORIENTATION		
TRAIL IDENTIFICATION: MARKER AND SIGNS	The official marker incorporating the logo, designed during the preparation of the Comprehensive Management Plan, would be used to mark the designated trail route along major state highways, such as State Highway 21 in Texas and State Highway 6 in Louisiana, and at high potential sites and segments open to the public. Signs installed at these sites and segments would identify permitted trail uses, information on safety and protection of trail users, and adjacent private property. Signing would only be done as resources permit. The National Trails Intermountain Region would pursue no federal funding for signing.	Sign specifications for marking the trail and use of the logo will be provided by the National Trails Intermountain Region through a sign plan. This sign plan would address the design, placement and use of the logo on a variety of signs, such as highway information and directional signs, entrance signs at parking areas, trailhead information signs, regulatory signs, directional indicators, interpretive signs and wayside exhibits, private property signs, destination signs and trail partner signs. The sign plan would consider using both the National Trails Intermountain Region standards on federal lands and typical approaches on national historic trails that cross many nonfederal jurisdictions.

Table 2-3	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
OPERATIONS	Current levels of staffing would continue. Staff that give a portion of the time to the administration of the trail would include the superintendent, the chief of trail operations, a cultural resources specialist, a tribal liaison, an interpretive specialist, and a geographic information systems specialist. They would collaborate with partners on a limited basis to carry out the provisions of the National Trails System Act.	Members of the staff at the National Trails Intermountain Region that would have responsibility for carrying out the provisions of the preferred alternative include a landscape architect, a cultural resources specialist, a planner, an interpretive specialist, a geographic information system specialist, a tribal liaison, and an outreach coordinator. To achieve minimum level of operations in implementing this plan, the Superintendent and staff involvement in the trail would be equivalent to three full-time positions.
ANNUAL ESTIMATED COST	$201,000 (1 FTE)	$ 491,000 – 536,000 (3 FTEs)

Table 2-4. Comparison of Impacts of Alternatives

Table 2-4, summarizes the anticipated environmental impacts for alternatives A and B. Only those impact topics that have been carried forward for further analysis are included in this table. Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences, provides a detailed explanation of these impacts.

Table 2-4	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
ETHNOGRAPHIC RESOURCES	Trail-related ethnographic resources on private lands could be impacted by urban development and could also continue to be affected by private projects, such as the construction of oil and gas pipelines. American Indian trail routes and associated resources closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they might also be impacted by road enhancement projects as well as by increases in agricultural activities and livestock grazing. This alternative would add a minor degree to the overall cumulative impacts on ethnographic resources. Alternative A would have a minor, long-term, and indirect adverse impact because of the limited awareness of the resources that could be impacted. It would have negligible effects on American Indian concerns about the interpretation of the stories associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. Cumulatively, this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall effect on ethnographic resources. Resource impacts would be local, on or near the trail.	Trail-related ethnographic resources on private lands would continue to be impacted by urban development, such as housing, commercial businesses, and highways. However, at a minimum greater awareness of ethnographic resources would lessen the likelihood of impacts from nonfederal projects. American Indian trail routes and associated resources closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they would be likely impacted by road enhancement projects as well as by increases in agriculture and livestock grazing. However, this alternative would result in minor cumulative impacts on ethnographic resources because greater awareness of resources would be more likely to prevent projects that might cause negative impacts. Alternative B would have minor, long-term, and indirect beneficial impacts because there would be greater awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. This alternative might have negligible effects on American Indian concerns about the interpretation of the stories associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail; however, the efforts to highlight the contribution of American Indians to the development of this trail would bring about more awareness of the significance of resources and would be more likely to lead to their protection. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action on ethnographic resources would not add impacts to the overall effect on ethnographic resources. The trail would bring about more awareness of the significance of resources and would be more likely to lead to their protection. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action on ethnographic resources would not add impacts to the overall effect on ethnographic resources.

Table 2-4	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES	Trail-related archeological resources on private lands could be impacted by urban development. They would also continue to be affected by private projects, such as the construction of oil and gas pipelines. Historic trail routes and associated resources closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they might also be impacted by road enhancement projects as well as by increases in agricultural activities and livestock grazing. This alternative would incrementally add a minor degree to the overall cumulative impacts on archeological resources. It would have minor, long-term, and indirect adverse impacts on archeological resources because there would be little awareness of the existence and location of the resources. For that reason they would be more likely to be impacted. Cumulatively, this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall cumulative effect on archeological resources.	A few trail-related archeological resources on private lands could be gradually lost to development; but under this alternative the losses would be considerably smaller. Increased knowledge about trail resources, heightened awareness of their nature, and the substantial involvement of volunteers along the trail—both in the identification and protection of resources—would significantly improve the ability to protect significant trail resources and prevent their disappearance due to the trends identified under the cumulative impacts scenario. This alternative would result in long-term beneficial minor impacts on archeological resources because there would be greater awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. Increased knowledge about trail resources and compliance with Section 106 would result in beneficial impacts to archeological resources. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall cumulative effect on ethnographic resources.

Table 2-4	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
HISTORIC RESOURCES	Historic trail resources on nonfederal lands would continue to be impacted by increased urban development, such as housing, commercial businesses, and highways. They would also continue to be affected by private development, such as the construction of oil and gas pipelines. Trail routes and associated historic resources closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they would be likely impacted by economic development activities, such as urban development as well as increases in agriculture and livestock grazing. This alternative would result in minor, long-term, and indirect cumulative impacts on historic resources. Alternative A may have a moderate, long-term, and indirect adverse cumulative impact on historic resources because there would be little awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. Cumulatively, the minor adverse effect of this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall cumulative effect on historic resources.	Trail-related historic resources on private lands could continue to be impacted by development, such as housing, commercial businesses, and highways; however, under this alternative, the losses would be considerably smaller. Increased knowledge about trail resources, heightened awareness of their nature, and the substantial involvement of volunteers along the trail, both in the identification and protection of resources and in preventing projects that might cause adverse impacts, would significantly improve the ability to prevent their disappearance. This alternative would result in long-term beneficial minor cumulative impacts on historic resources. Alternative B would have minor, long-term, and indirect beneficial impacts on historic resources because there would be greater awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action on historic resources would add a minor degree of impact to the overall effect on historic resources. Cumulative impacts would have minor, long-term, and indirect widespread beneficial impacts on historic resources.

Table 2-4	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
NATURAL RESOURCES: VEGETATION	Natural resources on private lands could continue to be impacted by increased urban development and the construction of oil and gas pipelines. Trail routes closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they would be likely impacted by a variety of economic development activities. This alternative would result in minor, long-term, and adverse cumulative impacts on native vegetation. Alternative A would have a minor, long-term, and indirect adverse impact on native vegetation because there would be little awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. Cumulatively, the minor adverse effect of this action on native vegetation would only incrementally add a minor degree of impact to the overall impact on natural resources.	Heightened awareness of development opportunities from increased visitation might result in an expansion of retail trade and visitor services. However, under this alternative there would be a greater understanding of the need to protect the historic setting of trail resources and this would minimize the negative impacts of development associated with expanding services. The preferred alternative would cause minor, long-term beneficial, and indirect effects because the majority of developers would be more cognizant of the impacts of their actions on trail resources. Furthermore, any federal project resulting directly from the implementation of Alternative B would undergo site-specific environmental analysis, and care would be taken to avoid and minimize impacts to these resources. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall impact on natural vegetation.

Table 2-4	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
NATURAL RESOURCES: WILDLIFE	During the last two centuries, major changes in wildlife habitat have occurred throughout the counties and parishes crossed by the trail. Agriculture has led to large areas being converted from wildlife habitat to croplands and/or pastures of nonnative grasses. Timber harvesting for fuel or lumber has removed the extensive woodlands that covered the eastern sections of the trail, and livestock grazing has reduced animal densities in some areas and changed the composition of animal communities. Extensive residential, commercial, energy, and road-associated development have removed wildlife habitat. Natural resources on private lands could continue to be impacted by increased urban development and the construction of oil and gas pipelines. Trail routes closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they would be likely impacted by a variety of economic development activities. This alternative would result in minor, long-term, and adverse cumulative impacts on native fauna. Alternative A would have a minor, long-term, and indirect adverse impact on wildlife because there would be little awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. Cumulatively, the minor adverse effect of this action on native fauna would only incrementally add a minor degree of impact to the overall impact on natural resources.	Because of raised awareness about trail resources, it is possible that some property owners might choose not to initiate activities, such as development or land clearing, which might impact native wildlife. In such cases, the impact of this alternative would be local and beneficial to natural fauna. Heightened awareness of development opportunities from increased visitation might result in an expansion of retail trade and visitor services. However, under this alternative there would be a greater understanding of the need to protect the historic setting of trail resources and this would minimize the negative impacts of development associated with expanding services. The preferred alternative would cause minor, long-term beneficial, and indirect effects because the majority of developers would be more cognizant of the impacts of their actions on trail resources, such as wildlife habitat. Furthermore, any federal project resulting directly from the implementation of Alternative B would undergo site-specific environmental analysis, and care would be taken to avoid and minimize impacts to these resources. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall impact on natural wildlife.

Table 2-4	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
VISITOR USE AND EXPERIENCE	Development projects that aim to attract large number of visitors, but that do not consider the need to retain the historic fabric of trail-related resources would detract from a high-quality experience. Increased urban growth, including housing, commercial business, and highway projects would limit geographical opportunities of providing a rewarding trail experience. All these factors would add a minor cumulative impact on the visitor experience. Under Alternative A developing an interpretive program and appropriate visitor access, and installing trail signs would result in minor beneficial effects. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this alternative on the visitor experience would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall cumulative effect on the current visitor use and experience.	The high quality visitor experience that would result from the implementation of Alternative B is likely to foster widespread interest in the trail and its resources among a broader spectrum of society than exists at the time this document is being prepared. Such interest would heighten awareness of the potential damage that unrestricted development and changes in land use could cause to trail resources. Other projects identified in the cumulative impact scenario, such as increase in heritage tourism and increase in websites, exhibits, and facilities that offer the opportunity to learn about and appreciate trail resources, would have minor beneficial impacts. The preferred alternative would cause moderate beneficial effects because a larger and more diverse audience would be able to learn about and appreciate trail resources. Cumulatively, the minor adverse effect of this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall cumulative effect on the visitor experience and would result in moderate, long-term beneficial and indirect impacts.

Table 2-4	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
LANDOWNERSHIP AND USE	Several trends identified in the cumulative impact scenario are closely associated with landownership and use. However, at the time this document is being prepared, the planning team is not aware of any specific project that would have an overall negative effect on landownership and use along the trail. Alternative A would have negligible cumulative impacts on landownership and use. Although the participation of landowners would be voluntary, it is likely that the trail designation would raise awareness of issues associated with the impact of incompatible land uses on the trail. No additional impacts on landownership and use would result from the implementation of this alternative. Alternative A would have minor, beneficial, and indirect effects on ownership and use along the trail corridor.	Although increased urban development would not necessarily decline due to the trail designation, greater awareness of trail resources might result in less detectable changes in land use. The same would be true for other forms of development described in the cumulative impact scenario. Alternative B would encourage more interest in the protection of resources along the trail, which could entail changes in land use and development trends. These cumulative impacts would be moderate and beneficial. The trends identified under the cumulative impacts scenario have the potential to impact land use along the trail. However, at the time this plan is being prepared there are no specific development projects being considered that would have major impacts on landownership and use. Alternative B would result in moderate, beneficial, and indirect cumulative impacts on landownership and use along the trail.

Table 2-4	Alternative A: Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)	Alternative B, Preferred Alternative: Trail Development Through Partnerships
SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS	Several projects identified in the cumulative impact scenario have the potential to impact socioeconomic conditions along the trail. However, at the time this document is being prepared, there is no information on specific projects that would have any type of impact on socioeconomic conditions along the trail. At this time it is not possible to speculate on the overall cumulative effect that these projects would have on such conditions. Some minor socioeconomic benefits are likely to result from trail development activities, increased visitation, and government expenditures associated with the development of this alternative. Alternative A would result in minor, long-term, and indirect beneficial impacts on socioeconomic conditions along the trail.	Several projects identified in the cumulative impact scenario have the potential to impact socioeconomic conditions along the trail. However, at the time this document is being prepared, there is no information on specific projects that would have any type of impact on socioeconomic conditions along the trail. Implementing this alternative is likely to strengthen the regional and state economies through increased tourism revenues. Increased visitation to trail-related sites, segments, and establishments would result in minor growth in economic activity not only in those communities along the trail corridor, but possibly in Texas and Louisiana as a whole, because visitors might extend their stay in the trail area if there are additional opportunities to learn about natural and cultural history and to search for the trail. Federal expenditures would be slightly larger and possibly less circumscribed geographically. While there would be a beneficial impact from such expenditures, it would be minor. Alternative B would result in minor, beneficial, long-term, and indirect cumulative impacts on socioeconomic conditions along the trail

CHAPTER 3
AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

CHAPTER 3: AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the physical, biological, cultural, and social environments of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, including topics that could be affected from implementing the alternatives described in the previous chapter. However, this section of the plan also includes materials that were identified as important by the public and the planning team during the scoping process as well as environmental background data relevant to readers, site managers, and trail administrators.

To assist in the preparation of this section of the Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment, four studies were completed: 1) an ethnohistory of the general area encompassed in the designated routes; 2) an inventory of the cultural resources in Texas along the congressionally designated routes; 3) an inventory of cultural resources in Louisiana along the congressionally designated routes; and 4) a data acquisition study for the major natural resources topics.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

ETHNOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

American Indian groups were central to the development of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail and greatly influenced Spanish efforts to discourage French intrusion and to create viable communities. They continued to play a major role in historical developments along the trail through the first half of the 19th century.

The Caddo

The ethnographic landscape the Spanish encountered, beginning in the 1680s, was highly complex: records of the early expeditions reveal close to 60 different groups of American Indians. Chief among them were the Caddo-speaking groups in the Neches-Angelina areas and along the Red River. All Caddo groups were intimately connected with El Camino Real de los Tejas; indeed, El Camino Real de los Tejas was named after the Tejas (Hasinai). Moreover, the seat of the Spanish Colonial capital of Texas occupied the lands of the Adaes (Adais) and was named after the tribe.

The Caddo lived in farmsteads dispersed across the landscape but located close to their agricultural fields. They were unified by a common language and by a structured cosmology, which was reflected in the arrangement of their settlements with specific locations for places of worship, burials, and the dwellings of spiritual and civil leaders. In the 17th and 18th centuries, Caddo speakers in Texas and Louisiana were organized in three major groupings, sometimes called confederacies: the Hasinai, Kadohadacho, and Natchitoches.

In their reports and correspondence, Spanish missionaries described the Hasinai Supreme Being, the Ayo-Caddi-Aymay, and the hierarchical system of religious and political leadership in a village, represented by a high priest (*xinesí*), a number of village leaders (*caddices*), and a council of elders (*canahas*). Caddices and cahanas were associated with specific Hasinai communities, but the xinesi exercised overall spiritual authority over most of the Hasinai. The xinesi superseded others whose functions included medicine men or shamans (*conna*), town criers (*tanmas*), and warriors (*amayxovas*), whose practices were important to the daily activities of the Hasinai. The xinesi established, maintained, and monitored communications between human beings and the spiritual realm and was responsible for ceremonies and objects designed to guarantee the well-being of the Hasinai in all its aspects; the xinesi was the unifying element in Hasinai communities.

This religious/political hierarchy was supported by the commoners through a well-organized system of reciprocal exchange between members of the human community and spiritual beings. This

interweaving of daily activities with spiritual ones, as well as a traditional settlement pattern that included productive farms, ceremonial centers, and burial grounds, made it difficult for Hasinai communities to accept the conditions the friars wanted to impose on them. Not only were the Hasinai expected to accept a different religion, but they were also required to congregate in *pueblos*, or villages, and change the physical arrangement of their settlements. At the end of the 17th century, the Hasinai had not accepted these Spanish-imposed changes.

Caddo groups maintained social, political, and trade relationships with other native groups and with the French and the Spanish government forces throughout the colonial period. Trade connections extended well beyond the modern boundaries of Texas and Louisiana. Inquiries made by Spanish authorities after the attack on San Sabá mission uncovered the widespread smuggling of weapons and ammunition along El Camino Real de los Tejas, an illegal trade of which military officials were fully aware, and indeed, from which they profited. These official Spanish inquiries, as well as the earlier arrest of French traders at the mouth of the Trinity River in 1754, made clear to government officials that, in order to have and keep the friendship of native groups, they either had to close their eyes to the contraband or compete against it.

From the late 1760s onward, by order of the Spanish Crown, Spain changed its colonizing tactics and implemented a policy of gift giving to the native tribes, which simultaneously provided goods for trade while binding the recipient to reciprocity obligations. The presence of Anglo-American traders in Louisiana and in Texas complicated Spanish relations with native people though. This was particularly true after France ceded Louisiana to Spain in 1762.

In 1778, Frenchman Athanase de Mézières, lieutenant governor of Louisiana, was appointed by Spanish authorities to manage gift giving and trade and to control contraband. The Caddo, Bidai, Comanche, Taovaya, Tawakoni, Wichita, and other Indian tribes participated in this trade, which was centered in Natchitoches and involved both French and Spanish traders as well as Anglo-Americans. The following year, de Mézières traveled along El Camino Real to visit most of the Indian tribes involved. His goal was to ascertain the condition of the tribes following a devastating epidemic in 1777, elicit their goodwill, and evaluate the extent of the trade. During this journey, de Mézières noted the remarkable Indian mounds east of the Neches River. He crossed the river and visited the village of San Pedro de los Nabedachos, already important historically, as it was the site of the first mission in Texas.

The large number of gifts given to the Caddo and other tribes only added to the vibrant underground economy, which developed first with the acquisition of contraband and swelled with the introduction of gift giving. By the end of the 1700s, there was little distinction between either practice. Spanish settlers and soldiers continued to visit the Caddo villages between San Antonio and Nacogdoches, and the movement of goods and people probably intensified considerably from the 1760s to the 1780s.

In 1773, in an effort to limit the underground economy, Spain closed the mission and presidio of Los Adaes and moved the seat of government to San Antonio. Despite this action, the following year Spanish authorities noted that French traders continued to trade in guns, powder, and balls, and owed their suppliers more than 600 horses. The increased Caddo dependence upon the Spanish could not have come at a worse time. Weakened by epidemics and the continued wars with the Osage, their ancestral enemies, Caddo groups were forced to regroup and seek alliances, but they were still unable to mount an effective attack against the Osage.

Throughout the late 1770s, some Caddo groups sought an alliance with the Apache. In spite of old and ingrained enmities, their mutual interest in trade

items, particularly guns and ammunition, which the Apache needed and the Caddos could supply, made an alliance increasingly likely. New Spain was vehemently opposed. In 1780, Domingo Cabello, governor of Texas, held a meeting with the Hasinai at Presidio La Bahía. When the Lipan Apache arrived, aiming to hold peace talks with the Hasinai, Cabello refused to allow the Apache inside the fort. Barred from entry, the Lipans shouted over the walls that they would give the Hasinai horses, guns, even women in exchange for an alliance. Notwithstanding Spanish efforts, in 1782, the Apache and Hasinai made a peace agreement, and soon after, a huge trade fair was held on the Guadalupe River, at which the Apaches traded 1,000 Spanish horses to a group of Tonkawas, Hasinais, Bidais, and others in return for 270 guns.

Trade with the Apache continued for the next four years, but the Spanish authorities were determined to stop it. Spain tried several different approaches, even halting the gift giving until the Caddo groups gave in. Harassed by the Osage and diminished in numbers by epidemics and conflict, the Kadohadacho moved south to Caddo Lake in 1800; however, most of the other Caddo-speaking groups remained in their homelands until their final removal in 1859.

Nomadic American Indian Tribes

The story of nomadic Indian groups along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is equally complex. The information obtained from archival sources and supported by archeological studies indicates that most indigenous groups subsisted by hunting and gathering, traveling through vast expanses of land, and using widely dispersed native plants and animals. The historical evidence indicates that geographic and resource areas were recognized by individual tribal groups and that sanctions were applied to trespassers, not so much due to the violation of geographical borders but because land resources were used without permission. Some areas can be assumed to be part of a native group's territory due to historical reports of repeated encounters with that group in the same general area and, sometimes, because of specific statements made by travelers. Two obvious cases are the Paquache, who were consistently encountered between the Nueces and Frío rivers, and the Payaya, who were repeatedly found in the greater San Antonio area. It is hard to match up native groups and territories along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historical Trail with complete certainty: tribal members may have just been visiting certain regions and their land-use territories may have been located far from trail routes, despite encounters with Europeans.

The historical and archeological data suggest that these groups were organized into small to medium-sized bands of 25 to 50 people, although some appear to have included 300 to 500 people. These groups, comprised of extended families related by blood or marriage, scheduled their gatherings to trade, to prepare for war and make war alliances, to perform ceremonies, to find mates, and to socialize in general, at times and places where food resources were known or expected to be abundant during different seasons of the year. Obviously, these were times when there were many mouths to feed, but it is also clear that some of the resources were to be used by those going to war and to guarantee the welfare of those staying behind.

Although little is known about the social organization of these hunting and gathering groups in Texas, the evidence indicates that spokespersons, generally male, represented and acted in the name of the group and, in some cases, also were prominent warriors. Male, and possibly female, shamans were engaged in healing and mediation rituals. Shamans were the mediators between human beings and the spiritual world. As part of curing ceremonies they used natural objects, such as plants for infusions and stones to which special powers were attributed. Curing and removal of malefic objects located in the body was facilitated by blowing over the affected area, laying on hands and sucking out objects such as stones, arrows, and hair that had

penetrated the body and were supposed to have caused the disease. Shamans were reimbursed for their services. They could be killed if the patient did not recover or if it was thought that the shaman was at fault.

Women raised children; gathered food, water, and wood; and often engaged in trading. There is evidence that, in some cases, women acted as peace negotiators. The roles of warrior and hunter were very important to the stability and defense of the group, as well as to the balance of relations with other groups. But the role of women as procreators and nurturers was essential. Information on child rearing and the roles children played in society is scant.

Nomadic hunter-gatherer groups set up temporary camps known as *rancherías*, where dwellings were generally made of bent poles or tree limbs, covered with brush and bison or deer pelts. Most of the evidence related to these *rancherías* is associated with the harvest and seasonal native use of specific resources, such as the fruit of the prickly pear, mesquite beans, mescal, wild berries, and nuts, such as pecans and acorns. Faunal resources, such as bison and deer, were procured at specific times of the year. They were important not just as sources of meat, marrow, and fat and pelts for clothing, shoes, and dwelling covers but also for glue to haft projectile points, and for other uses. Floral and faunal resources that were available only at specific times of the year and in specific locations required the timely arrival of native groups to harvest them, and native groups scheduled their movements and programmed their subsistence rounds to profit from those resources. The nomadic groups in Texas and Louisiana complemented their diets with small mammals, rodents, birds, snakes, snails, turtles, freshwater fish, shellfish, insects, birds' eggs, and other animal protein sources, which were generally available throughout the year and not concentrated in geographical patches.

Like inland bands, hunter-gatherer groups living along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico also procured deer, and bison, and native plants seasonally, but they also benefited from being able to rely on an abundant marine and estuary resource base that provided water roots, fish, shellfish, and sea mammals. Temporary camps used by coastal groups have been uncovered that reflect seasonal travel between the coast and the mainland to obtain resources. Native groups living along the Gulf Coast often built atop large shell mounds, which had accumulated over years of shellfish and shell consumption. The archeological evidence indicates that significant changes took place in the centuries prior to European arrival (the Proto-historic or Late Prehistoric period), although the overall patterns of resource selection and resource utilization did not vary much between the Proto-historic period and the arrival of Europeans.

Other American Indian Tribes

At other times, several other American Indian groups occupied the territory traversed by the trail. Among them are the Alabama-Coushatta, Apache, Bidai, Cherokee, Choctaw, Comanche, Delaware, Karankawa, Kickapoo, Kiowa, Seminole, Shawnee, and Tonkawa tribes.

The Alabama-Coushatta

The Alabama-Coushatta were part of the mound-building cultures of the Southeast, which included the Creeks, Cherokees, Caddo, Natchez, Choctaw, Muscogee, and others. All of these tribes shared a common religion, with the same basic beliefs, ceremonies, and traditions, but each tribe interpreted it slightly differently.

The record of the first contact with the Alabama people comes from the Hernando de Soto Expedition in 1641. Hernando de Soto came upon the "Alibamo" tribe in central Mississippi and attacked and killed many of them in a fierce battle. Later the Alabama people moved east, to present-day Alabama, where they lived at the junction of the Coosa and Tallapoosa rivers. De Soto also found the Coushata living along the Tennessee River. By the 1780s, pressure

on their lands from westward-migrating Americans forced the Alabama to move back west across the Mississippi River, into the Opelousa area of Louisiana. Around 1803, they moved west again, across the Sabine River into north East Texas.

In 1805, approximately 1,000 Alabamas came to Tyler County's Peach Tree Village. The Coushattas were already in East Texas, having arrived into the Big Thicket area sometime after 1795. Their intertribal friendship became even stronger as they roamed and hunted this new land together.

Although the Republic of Texas Congress had granted each tribe two leagues of land along the Trinity River in 1840, their land was soon taken over by white settlers, leaving them homeless. In 1853, the Texas legislature purchased 1,110 acres for the Alabamas. Two years later (1855), it set aside 640 acres for the Coushattas. However, the land allocated for the Coushattas was never plotted or surveyed, but either through marriage or special permission, Coushattas ended up moving onto Alabama territory, and eventually the tribe became known as the Alabama-Coushatta.

The Apache

Apaches had been present in the modern territory of Texas since the 1680s, but had remained mostly in or above the Hill Country until the Europeans settled San Antonio. That settlement, and the enhanced Spanish presence, affirmed Spanish intentions of colonization, particularly after the Aguayo Expedition in 1721, and frequently engendered violent Apache reactions. The Apache put Spanish settlers on notice when they left arrow shafts with red flags attached to them in the ground near San Antonio Presidio. Beginning in the 1720s, Apache groups, particularly the Lipan Apache, began attacking mule-train convoys along El Camino Real de los Tejas, successfully raiding the livestock herds of the missions and threatening San Antonio. As a result, travel along the trail became increasingly dangerous, particularly between the Río Grande and San Antonio.

Apache groups were displeased with the increased Spanish presence but took full advantage of raids on European supply convoys along El Camino Real de los Tejas to seize coveted horses and items to trade. European goods and local products sustained a native exchange and trade economy, which maintained a network of connections and alliances among groups and enhanced the prestige of individuals involved in it.

Conversely, attacks on convoys along El Camino Real de los Tejas killed or angered the Spanish settlers as well as taking a toll on native groups. The Apache were always viewed as the principal foe of the missions and settlers who were engaged in what has been called *la guerra de la pulga* (the war of the flea). The Apache utilized guerrilla-war strategies that used the main arteries of communication and travel corridors, such as El Camino Real de los Tejas, to counterbalance the superior military power of the colonizers. Local Apache successes enhanced their prestige among other Apache groups and made them doubly feared by the local native groups, whose small numbers and lack of skill in warfare made them vulnerable to both the Apache and the Spanish.

In the 1720s and 1730s, Apache attacks in San Antonio and along El Camino Real de los Tejas led the military and the citizenry to conduct punitive counterattacks on Apache raiders. These punitive expeditions resulted in considerable booty in pelts, saddles, iron implements, and horses. In this way, horses presumably stolen in Apache raids along El Camino Real de los Tejas were returned to San Antonio. These raids also brought Apache slaves to San Antonio, mostly women and children who either served the Spanish as domestic and field help or were taken along El Camino Real de los Tejas to be traded south of the Río Grande to Mexico. The pattern of Apache raids and Spanish punitive counterattacks was interspersed with peace negotiations, often initiated and mediated by Apache women. The

Spanish used Apache hostages to press the Apache into peace treaties; however, the policy was ill advised and not successful until the 1740s, when the Apache felt squeezed between the Comanche from the north and the Spanish in the south. The pattern of use, enslavement, or "adoption" of Apache women and children by Spaniards continued into the late 1700s.

Even as the San Antonio missions suffered Apache hit-and-run attacks and the loss of cattle, goats, sheep, and horses, they gained new converts from local native groups, who joined forces with Spanish settlers against their mutual enemy. Between 1746 and 1752, the three San Xavier missions on the San Gabriel River, near present-day Rockdale, Texas, were founded in this way. The location of these missions on good buffalo hunting grounds further angered the Apache, who began harassing the native populations even before the missions were built. It is ironic, then, that property from the San Xavier missions, which were abandoned in 1752, was used to help establish the Nueces River missions for the Apache at El Cañón in Real County in 1762, following a peace treaty. Earlier attempts were made to establish missions for the Apache on the south side of the Río Grande (1754) and at San Sabá (1757–1758), but only the later Upper Nueces missions were marginally successful.

The Bidai

The Bidai people lived along the lower Trinity River, south of El Camino Real de los Tejas, and were a friendly group. They traded with the Hasinai over the Bidai Trail, which led from the lower Trinity River to the vicinity of Nacogdoches. The Bidai had sporadic relations with the Karankawa groups, especially the Coco, as well as with the Tonkawa, the Wichita groups, the Comanche, and with the Lipan Apache, with whom they traded. Later on, the Bidai apparently intermarried with Coushatta people living along the Trinity River.

When Stephen F. Austin established his colony on the lower Brazos River in the early 1820s, the Bidai often mingled with the American settlers asking for food. Subsequently, the Bidai experienced great difficulties and suffered at least one major typhoid fever epidemic. In 1836, they were once again receiving gifts from Anglo-Americans.

The Cherokee

The Cherokee moved into Texas during the early 19th century. In 1822, they traveled to San Antonio to sign an agreement with the Mexican governor of Texas José Felix Trespalacios and obtained permission to settle in Texas. In 1836, they met with Sam Houston to sign a treaty requesting formal title to the lands they occupied. At that time, they resided along the Angelina, Neches, and Sabine rivers near Nacogdoches, and appeared interested in taking the lead in forming a union of different tribes in Texas. Unfortunately, frictions with European settlers and concern about the Cherokee's influence on other smaller tribes led the senate of the Republic of Texas to nullify the treaty. Three years later, the Texan government had still not ratified Cherokee claims, and it became clear that the tribe would be removed from Texas territory. In July 1839, President Mirabeau Lamar dispatched 900 soldiers to the Cherokee village. After a battle that left 100 Cherokee and two Texas soldiers dead, the Cherokee fled to Indian Territory.

The Choctaw

The first few Choctaw people in Texas settled among the Caddo-speaking group in 1807, when John Sibley brokered a peace agreement between representatives of the two tribes. Permission was given, despite deep-seated resentments and unresolved conflicts between the two tribes.

After 1819, the United States pressured the rest of the Choctaw to move westward from their original homelands in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia to Indian Territory in Arkansas and Oklahoma. The Choctaw were the first of the Southeast's Five Civilized Tribes (the

Choctaw, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole) to be removed to Indian Territory along what came to be known as the Trail of Tears. By 1836, the year the Choctaw signed a treaty with the Republic of Texas, around 40 Choctaw and some Chickasaw had been living in Nacogdoches and Shelby counties for about two years. The majority of the Choctaw, however, never moved to Texas and remained on Choctaw Nation lands in Indian Territory. Any problems between settlers and the Choctaw usually involved depredations by Texas troops or citizens crossing north of the Red River onto Choctaw Nation lands.

The Comanche

The Comanche began their forays into north and central Texas in late 1729 in an effort to displace the Apache from the southern plains and north-central Texas. Comanche economic life was centered on the buffalo, which they hunted, processed in great quantities, and bartered for any other products they required. The acquisition of horses and guns from Europeans enhanced Comanche prowess on the battlefield, enabling them to obtain war booty and more guns and horses and become a formidable force.

During the early period, Spanish Colonial settlers felt the impact of the Comanche presence indirectly, mostly through increased Apache activity, but the 1758 attack on Mission San Sabá changed the situation. The dominance of the Comanche, multiplied by alliances with the Tejas, Taovaya, and Wichita tribes, changed the power dynamics in the territory surrounding El Camino Real de los Tejas. In the 1760s and 1770s, a succession of attacks by the Comanche and allied tribes on the Apache during buffalo hunts, as well as on the Nueces River missions, effectively positioned the Comanche to play a central role in political affairs. As a rule, the Comanche preferred to remain above the Red River. There is little evidence of their presence along El Camino Real de Tejas, except when they came to San Antonio to trade or meet with the Spanish officials, when they would frequently raid horse herds at the Bexar settlement and the missions.

Comanche raids often resulted in the kidnapping of Spanish women and children. In the fall of 1773, the Comanche mounted one of the largest and fiercest raids ever experienced by the settlement of Bexar. Raids on Laredo during the same year added 350 horses to the Comanche spoils. The hit-and-run attacks continued, often targeting ranches along the Río Grande and the presidio of San Juan Bautista. In 1778–1779, the Comanche set their sights on the Bucareli settlement on the Trinity River. Successive Comanche attacks, along with the devastation caused by a 1777 epidemic and a flood, led to Bucareli's abandonment.

In the 1780s, the Comanche established *rancherías* on the Medina River, north of Bexar, and at Arroyo Blanco on the Guadalupe River. These *rancherías* were part of a new strategy that connected the Comanche with the Texas road network and commerce along those roads. Even so, most Comanche remained in North Texas.

Multiple attempts to establish an enduring peace with the Comanche were only partially successful. The Comanche promised they would refrain from attacking settlements and taking horses only to repeat the depredations. For instance, during peace treaty negotiations in 1785, Comanche chiefs promised to stop raiding, but only after two raiding parties stole horses from San Antonio and La Bahía. After the treaty was signed, the Spanish supplied gifts to the Comanche. This established a regular routine, whereby Comanche groups often came to Bexar to collect their gifts, traveling across portions of El Camino Real de los Tejas, and often raiding the outlying settlements. Kavanagh (1999) has pointed out that warfare was embedded in the Comanche social structure and way of living.

While the 1785 peace treaty reduced the Comanche threat for Texas settlements, it did not eliminate it, and confrontations between Spanish settlers and the

Comanche continued into the 1790s. During the revolutionary events of the early 19th century, including the Hidalgo revolt in 1810 and the Gutiérrez-Magee revolt in 1812–1813, the Comanche played all sides off one another and benefited from trade with the Anglo-Americans who were moving in from the East. Kavanagh (1999) points out that, between 1786 and 1820, the Comanche prospered as never before, expanding their range from Santa Fe to San Antonio and from Natchitoches to Chihuahua; however, the chaos of the collapse of the Spanish empire and the advance of the Anglo-Americans altered their way of life considerably.

During the Mexican period, Comanche attacks throughout Texas and Mexico led to the 1822 treaty between the Comanche and the Mexican government. During the negotiations, one of the Mexican officials stated that the Comanche's wealth was in "good horses and arms" and that in their trade they had made "a well worn road through the unsettled regions towards Natchitoches." By 1825, the conditions of the treaty had already been violated, and fear and unrest reigned among settlers.

During the following decades, the Comanche were either friends or foes, depending on the time and place. For instance, the Comanche were considered important allies in the struggle between Mexico and the Anglo-Americans who revolted against Mexican President Antonio López de Santa Anna in 1835, but they were feared foes when, in 1836, they attacked the caravan of settlers from Villa Dolores Colony on the Río Grande. These settlers had abandoned their colony precisely because of rumors of an impending Comanche attack.

The political changes in Texas and the establishment of the *empresario* colonies led to increased friction between Anglo and European colonists and American Indian tribes. In 1838, another peace treaty was signed with the Comanche aimed at protecting the new colonists. Central to the peace treaty was a Comanche request that a demarcating line be established, dividing American Indian territory from the region southward occupied by the colonists. According to the wishes of the Comanche, this line was to run between the Hill Country and San Antonio, to allow the tribe to hunt buffalo. However, the creation of such a demarcating line was not in the interest or the plans of the citizenry, particularly the new colonists, and the issue was postponed indefinitely. The treaty languished until, finally, at the 1844 Council at the Falls-of-the-Brazos, the Comanche and other groups informed Sam Houston, president of the Republic of Texas, that they would not accept the conditions of the treaty without the promised demarcation line. The treaty was signed on October 9, 1844, but no line was established. In 1847, the Society of German Noblemen purchased the Fisher-Miller *empresario* land grant, and surveyors entered Comanche hunting grounds. Despite agreements and promises of gifts, the Comanche held their ground and continued to oppose the extension of the settlement.

As settlers encroached further on native lands, they competed for resources and conflicts multiplied. In January 1840, a group of Comanche traveled to San Antonio, presumably to trade, and became embroiled in what became known as the Council House Fight—a violent conflict that became deeply etched in the memories of the Comanche and the citizens of Bexar. The preponderance of conflicts signaled the reluctance of Comanche and citizens alike to abide by agreements. In August, the Comanche attacked Victoria and Linneville; in turn, the Comanche were attacked near Lockhart and lost many warriors.

The Delaware

Some members of the Delaware tribe moved into Texas in the early 19th century and lived near the Shawnee; however, by the 1820s, most of them had moved onto the Brazos Reserve among the Caddo. In 1836, the Delaware signed a treaty with Texas that placed them on Cherokee land. When combined with the Shawnee, they

were said to number 500 people. In general, the Delaware and the Shawnee managed to avoid conflicts with the white settlers.

In 1842, fears of alliances between the Mexican government and several native tribes, including the Delaware and the Shawnee, increased. The following year, representatives of both tribes met at the Tehuacana Indian Council. Roasting Ear, the Delaware chief, delivered the opening statement, followed by Linney, the Shawnee chief. In September of the same year, these tribes signed a peace treaty with the Republic of Texas. As interpreters, guides, trackers, pack drivers, warriors, and hunters, the Delaware traversed a broad territorial expanse. Their presence is mentioned from the Río Grande to the Canadian River, as they were heavy users of the network of roads that became El Camino Real de los Tejas. In the 1850s, the few Delaware who remained in Texas were on the Brazos Reserve, among the Caddo and the Wichita, and in 1859, they moved to Indian Territory with those groups.

The Karankawa

The name Karankawa (Carancagua) identifies a specific Texas coastal group, but it is often used to include five different groups: the Karankawa proper, the Coco, the Cujane, the Guapite, and the Copane. These groups likely spoke dialects of the same language, and the Karankawa proper and the Coco apparently spoke the same language. The Karankawa language has not been linked to any other language family. Some of these coastal groups also had friendly relations with the Akokisa (Orcoquisa) and the Atakapa who also lived farther to the east, on the coastal area. None of these groups were in the vicinity of El Camino Real de los Tejas, but they had had close interactions with the Spanish since the expedition of 1689 that searched for La Salle's settlement. During that expedition, Alonso de León traveled to Garcitas Creek, explored Matagorda Bay, and reported seeing native *rancherías*, likely belonging to any of the groups subsumed under the designation of Karankawa.

In 1721, the Spanish founded the Presidio of Nuestra Señora de Loreto on Garcitas Creek, on the former site of Fort St. Louis. Across the creek the next year, the Franciscans established Mission Nuestra Señora del Espiritu Santo de Zuñiga hoping to attract coastal groups.

In 1726, the mission was moved inland to the Guadalupe River, then moved again, in 1749, to the San Antonio River at modern Goliad. In 1745, when the Franciscans founded the missions on the San Gabriel River (San Xavier Missions), the Coco were one of the groups at the missions.

In 1754, the Franciscans established Mission Nuestra Señora del Rosario for the Cujane. Four years later, 21 natives had been baptized but all in *artículo mortis* (on their deathbed). The coastal missions owned large livestock herds and were raided by native groups, including the Karankawa, who took horses and cattle. During the 1770s and 1780s, the Karankawa were particularly active in raiding and were said to be well armed. They were involved in trade with other coastal groups, such as the Orcoquisa, as well as with inland groups. In 1774, the Coco and the Karankawa were living near the mouth of the Trinity River, where French and English settlers came to trade for horses and mules stolen from Presidio La Bahía. In 1780, General Teodoro de Croix commented that the Karankawa where living on the mainland and on the nearby islands and that they deserved to be exterminated because of their cruelty.

By the 1780s, Mission Rosario was abandoned, partly because of attacks and raids on the livestock and partly because of native revolts. In 1791, the Franciscans established Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio as a last effort to convert the Karankawa. Circumstances had changed. This time the Karankawa accepted the coastal mission, viewing it as a refuge, a useful location for fishing in time of need, and because it was far from their enemies, the Comanche. During the 1790s, the Karankawa appeared consistently in Mission Refugio censuses. In the early 1800s, the Karankawa,

Coco, and Cujane were still mentioned in the records, but many perished in conflicts with the white settlers.

The Keechi

The Keechi lived in the Red River area in the first decades of the 18th century and were mentioned as early as 1687 as Caddo allies. In 1745, Fr. Xavier Ortiz placed the Keechi in the area of the upper Trinity, Brazos, and Red River areas. In 1770, Athanase de Mézières visited the Kadohadacho on the Natchitoches River and met the chiefs of several Nations of the North (Norteños), including the Keechi. The following year, they signed a treaty with the Spanish.

In 1772, de Mézières visited the Keechi village on the Upper Brazos and Trinity rivers. De Mézières reported that the Keechi traded buffalo and deer skins for guns and ammunition with the inhabitants of Natchitoches. He also noted that the Keechi had only played a small role in the hostilities waged against the *presidios* although they had taken part in the Mission San Sabá attack. In 1775, de Mézières followed El Camino Real de los Tejas from Nacogdoches, left the highway at Bucareli, and reached the Keechi village on the Trinity River, near modern Palestine, Texas. During the first decades of the 19th century, the Keechi maintained their association with the Cadohadacho, traded at Nacogdoches, and remained east of the Trinity River.

In 1843, the Keechi were present at the Tehuacana Creek Council. They signed a peace agreement with the Republic of Texas, as part of the Wichita confederation under the leadership of A-cah-quash, the Waco chief. In 1846, the Keechi signed the Treaty of Council Springs, which placed them under the protection of the United States. Frictions with settlers and Keechi horse stealing led to several confrontations. In 1850, 200 Keechi moved to Indian Territory, where they settled near the confluence of the Canadian River and Choteau Creek. Finally, in 1859, the remaining Keechi were removed to Indian Territory as part of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes.

The Kickapoo

After ceding their native lands in Illinois in 1819, a large number of Kickapoo moved to Texas, where they lived among the Cherokee until 1839, when the Cherokee were forced to leave. Stephen F. Austin's 1829 map shows the Kickapoo on the Upper Trinity River. In February 1836, the Kickapoo signed a peace treaty with Texas, but after it became known that the Kickapoo sided with Mexico, relations with the fledgling republic broke down. Late that year, after the Kadohadacho and Kickapoo had attacked settlements on the Brazos River, Texas Rangers mounted a successful attack against them on Elm Creek, east of Austin. In 1839, when Mirabeau Lamar ordered that the Kickapoo be removed from Texas, many of the Kickapoo fled to Matamoros, Mexico, and later to Morelos in Coahuila province. Some Kickapoo joined the Seminole leader Wild Cat's Mexican settlement. They were granted lands on condition that they join the Mexican Army, which required them to fight the Apache, the Comanche, and others. Unhappy with the conditions of the agreement, these Kickapoo crossed the border at Eagle Pass and returned to Kansas, with only a few remaining in Morelos. Today, the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas lives on a small reservation immediately south of Eagle Pass on the Río Grande. These Kickapoo are the descendants of tribal members who returned to Texas from Kansas in 1864.

Like the Delaware and Shawnee, the Kickapoo were employed as interpreters, guides, scouts, and hunters. In the 1840s, Kickapoo parties were sometimes reported hunting in Texas. In 1848, Commissioner George W. Bonnell's survey of American Indians listed 1,200 Kickapoo.

The Kiowa

Spanish sources place the Kiowa in the central plains in the first decades of the

18th century and in the southern plains at the beginning of the 19th century. According to J. H. Gunnerson and D. A. Gunnerson, the Plains Apache joined the Kiowa sometime around 1700. As a band of the Kiowa, the Kiowa-Apache (still often called the Plains Apache) moved onto the southern plains in the late 18th century. In 1806, perhaps earlier, the Kiowa allied with the Comanche; the Kiowa-Comanche alliance persisted into the reservation period of the late 19th century.

Throughout the late 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries, the Kiowa remained mostly north of the Red and Arkansas rivers, but in association with the Comanche and other groups, they raided into Texas in the early 1800s, trading weapons and ammunition with people from Natchitoches and Nacogdoches, and trading and receiving gifts from Anglo-Americans. In 1836, representatives of the Republic of Texas visited the Kiowa and the Comanche to negotiate and trade. Even so, in 1843 and 1844, the list of goods specifically indicated for the Kiowa was insignificant.

In June 1844, Kinney Ranch near Corpus Christi was attacked. The attackers were presumably Kiowa, but it was attributed to several other groups. In October 1844, at the Council at the Falls-on-the-Brazos, Sam Houston asked the Comanche to keep the Kiowa away from Texas because the Kiowa were at war. Comanche Chief Pochanaquarhip replied that the Kiowa were stronger and the Comanche (or his band) feared them. Sam Houston asked Pochanaquarhip to send a runner with a white flag to warn the people in San Antonio anytime the Kiowa were approaching. Houston added, "If the Kiowa come in, the people not knowing, will say they are Comanche. We thought you all one people." As clarification, Pochanaquarhip explained that nine tribes had not made peace with the Texans; these included the Kiowa, Lipan Apache, and Cheyenne.

In 1849, Robert Neighbors, the Indian agent for the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, listed 1,500 Kiowa warriors, the third largest native group in Texas in terms of population. Regarding several groups, including the Kiowa, Neighbors also stated that "our intercourse has been extremely limited, for the want of proper means." Kiowa relationship connections with El Camino Real de los Tejas appear to be slight, although their relationships with the Comanche and the Wichita groups complicate the issue. Today, the Kiowa live near Carnegie in Caddo County, Oklahoma.

The Seminole and Seminole Maroon

The Seminole came to Texas after their removal to Indian Territory from Florida in the 1830s and 1840s. Like the Cherokee, the Creek, and the Choctaw, the Seminole were slave owners, a fact that had important repercussions on their move to Texas and Mexico. Seminole slavery followed social patterns and relationships that are quite unlike those practiced by other slave-owning American Indian tribes and by Western societies. Although culturally and linguistically different, the Black Seminole, often called the Seminole Maroons were, and are, descendants of African populations enslaved by the Seminole.

The key figure in the Seminole move to Texas and to northern Mexico was the Seminole Chief Cooacoochee, known as Wild Cat. Cooacoochee was a member of the 1846 Butler and Lewis Expedition to the Comanche and used this opportunity and others to explore the Southwest. He also explored the Brazos River area and made contacts with the Kickapoo, Caddo, and other groups. The events and legal issues connected with the Seminole recovery of their slaves after their removal from the Southeast are beyond the scope of this plan but, in 1849, the Seminole received 260 former black slaves. While the Seminole Maroon were hoping for freedom from their Seminole masters, they also had to contend with other native groups and with the white settlers who were ready to acquire them as slaves.

The solution for the Seminole and the Seminole Maroon was to emigrate to Mexico, which they eventually did in 1850.

That year, the Seminole and the Seminole Maroon stopped on Cow Bayou near Waco and at the Llano River to rest and raise crops before continuing the journey south. At these stops, Wild Cat promoted his Mexican colony, but he only managed to entice some Kickapoo to move southward. As representative of the Seminole, Seminole Maroon, and Kickapoo, Wild Cat signed an agreement with the Mexican government that provided them with about 7,000 acres of land: half of the land was at the headwaters of the Río San Antonio and the other half at the headwaters of the Río San Rodrigo. In return, all three groups were to patrol the border and provide warriors to fight off other tribes such as the Apache and the Comanche who continuously harassed the citizens of northern Mexico. The Seminole settled at San Fernando de Rosas (modern Zaragoza), the Seminole Maroon at El Moral, and the Kickapoo at Tuillo (modern Guerrero).

Wild Cat and his fellow Seminole and Seminole Maroon were a serious problem for the United States, particularly regarding runaway slaves. Wild Cat was described as “an arch intriguer” and Texas officials often participated in or ordered the pursuit and apprehension of those thought to be runaway slaves. Many slaves used Eagle Pass to escape into Mexico, and so did the parties of slave hunters who pursued them. In the late 1860s, several requests were made to the Mexican authorities regarding border attacks and depredations committed by Seminole, Kickapoo, Delaware, Lipan Apache, and other groups who had sought refuge south of the border. In 1851, as mentioned above, the majority of the Kickapoo left Mexico; those few who remained settled in Morelos. That same year, the Seminole and the Seminole Maroon moved to lands granted at the hacienda El Nacimiento although they settled apart. In 1859, most Seminole left Mexico for the Indian Territory, but some of the Seminole Maroon stayed.

The Shawnee

The Shawnee settled in Texas south of the Red River in 1822. In 1824, they obtained a temporary Mexican land grant and, by 1826, 5,000 Shawnee and Delaware families had settled the land. The southwestern bands became known as the Absentee Shawnee, but they chose different settlement areas. One band settled on the Canadian River; another joined the Cherokee on the Sabine River in 1839; and yet another joined the Caddo groups on the Brazos Reserve. Like the Delaware, with whom they were often associated, the Shawnee were hired as interpreters, guides, scouts, traders, and hunters. In the 1830s, the Villa de Dolores settlers on the Río Grande hired Shawnee hunters because the colonists feared attacks by the Comanche. In fact, there were reports of the Shawnee hunting beaver for pelts at Las Moras Creek, and on the Río Escondido, south of the border. In 1836, and under the leadership of the Cherokee, the Shawnee signed a peace treaty with the Republic of Texas. In 1837, the Shawnee were living in the area of Nacogdoches, although their status as residents was not clear. Two years later, some Shawnee decided to disassociate from the Cherokee, citing the latter’s agreements with Mexico and the political situation in Texas under Mirabeau Lamar; others departed with the Cherokee and received compensation for lost property.

In 1843, the Shawnee were present at the Tehuacana Creek Council near modern Waco. The gift list included 13 Shawnee, with nine warriors under the leadership of Black Cat. The following year, the Shawnee were also present at Tehuacana Creek. In 1849, Indian Agent Robert Neighbors listed the Shawnee with the Delaware: together, they numbered 650 people and 130 warriors. From the 1840s through the 1860s, the Shawnee (and the Delaware) settled along the Brazos and Bosque rivers. In 1861, the Absentee Shawnee who had been removed to the Wichita-Caddo reservation made a treaty with the Confederacy, and some Shawnee served in the Confederate Army.

The Tonkawa

Earlier interpretations and analyses described the Tonkawa as native to Texas; however, the work of William Newcomb and Thomas Campbell conclusively demonstrated that the Tonkawa were first recorded in 1601, when they were living in Oklahoma. During a battle with the Aquacade, the Spaniards captured an Indian called Miguel. Miguel was taken to Mexico City, where he related that, while still a boy, he had been captured by Aquacade and that his own people lived at a place called Tanoak. A map drawn following Miguel's instructions placed Tanoak west of the Aquacade territory, somewhere between the Salt Fork and Medicine Lodge rivers in north-central Oklahoma. During the middle to late 17th century, some of these groups moved south and probably remained around the Red River region for several decades. In 1691, the Tonkawa (Tamaqua) and the Youjuane (Diujuan) lived along the Neches and Angelina rivers. A couple of decades later—in 1719, and again in 1723—French explorers mentioned the Tonkawa in the Red River area. In the middle of the 18th century, the Tonkawa appear to have ranged between the Colorado and the Trinity rivers, above El Camino Real de los Tejas leading from San Antonio to Los Adaes.

In the 1740s, the Franciscans founded the San Xavier missions near present-day Rockdale, in Milam County. The registers of Mission San Francisco Xavier de Horcasitas indicate that there were 11 Yojuane at the mission but only one Tonkawa. Indeed, the Tonkawa seem to have studiously avoided mission life. The Tonkawa were part of the native attacking force that destroyed Mission San Sabá in 1758. The Spanish punitive expedition meant to avenge the San Sabá outrage was a failure, but during the trip they encountered a large camp of Yojuane, and few natives survived the attack. Weakened, the Yojuane joined the Tonkawa.

In 1770, when Athanase de Mézières visited the Cadohadacho village on the Natchitoches River, the Tonkawa were expected to join the meeting but did not. Two years later, de Mézières traveled from Natchitoches to visit the native nations on the Upper Trinity and Brazos rivers. His report on the Tonkawa refers to a war alliance between the Yojuane and the Mayeye, which was mostly in place to fend off the Apache and the Osage. De Mézières mentioned that the Tonkawa had joined the Mission San Xavier briefly but had soon abandoned it. He stressed that they lived between the Trinity and the Brazos rivers, were prolific hunters, and traded their pelts at the Tawakoni village. In fact, the Tonkawa, Mayeye, and Yujuane generally set up camp four leagues (about 12 miles) beyond the beginning of the Monte Grande, near a spring called Las Puentecitas.

Despite Mézières's efforts, the Tonkawa never formally agreed to peace: in 1777, they campaigned against the Osage and were said to have 300 warriors. The Spanish continuously entreated and threatened the Tonkawa to change their nomadic way of life, settle in a village, and deliver the apostates who left the missions. In 1779, Mézières remarked that the Tonkawa had maintained 150 warriors on their rolls since the last epidemic. That same year, de Mézières met with the Tonkawa and Tawakoni chiefs and distributed gifts. The Tonkawa chief was El Mocho, alias Tosche [or Tosque], a Lipan Apache adoptee who became leader of the Tonkawa. By the 1790s, however, the Tonkawa were stealing horses from the Lipan Apache.

Pressure from the Spanish authorities and evolving political conditions must have convinced the Tonkawa to settle down because, in 1828, Jean Louis Berlandier recorded visiting a Tonkawa village located midway between the Guadalupe and Colorado rivers. At this time, the Tonkawa were allied with the Lipan Apache, who were suffering from the dearth of buffalo and the presence of the Comanche. Anglo settlers decided to remove the Tonkawa from the area; however, Stephen F. Austin informed the settlers that the Lipan Apache had agreed to take charge of the Tonkawa instead, and took them to an area between the upper

Nueces River and the Río Grande, where they remained for a couple of years.

The Tonkawa and the Lipan Apache fought as allies alongside the Texans against Mexico. In 1843, the Tonkawa endured a serious epidemic and continued to suffer a declining population due to intertribal conflict. The following year, the Tonkawa and the Lipan Apache camped near Cedar Creek to hunt, and both tribes were reported to make sporadic raids on cattle belonging to Texans. In May 1846, the Tonkawa signed a peace treaty with the United States at Council Springs. The terms of the treaty provided trade goods and protection to the tribes; in return, the signatory tribes were to return prisoners and captives and cease attacking and horse stealing. But impoverished by loss of lands and declining resources, and used to providing for themselves, proud tribal members frequently had no other choice but to continue to raid livestock from settlers to keep from starving. Many Tonkawa sought the promised help from the United States in the 1850s, often gravitating toward Fort Inge and Fort Clark. In the mid-1850s, the Tonkawa were sent to the Brazos Reserve, and in 1859 they were removed from Texas and settled on the Wichita Reserve in Indian Territory. Today, the Tonkawa live near Tonkawa, Oklahoma.

The Tawakoni (Wichita)

From the 16th through the 18th centuries, the Tawakoni moved gradually away from the Arkansas River into the Wichita Mountains and the area north of the Red River. Before 1835, the Iscani, Keechi, (Kitsai) Taovaya, Tawakoni, Waco, and the Wichita proper were politically autonomous groups that shared linguistic and cultural characteristics. After signing The Treaty of Camp Holmes with the United States, in 1835, these groups became collectively known as the Wichita. Still, unlike the Caddo in Texas and Louisiana, the Wichita groups generally remained peripheral to Texas until the late Spanish Colonial period.

In the 1740s, Wichita-speaking groups located in northern Oklahoma were engaged in profitable and intense trade with French settlers and other American Indian tribes, including the Comanche, with whom they had established peace. In the 1750s, these groups had moved to the Red River and by 1758, some were involved in the attack and destruction of Mission San Sabá. That attack was perpetrated with the Comanche and the Texas Caddo and was meant to dissuade the Spanish from protecting the Lipan Apache. The following year, the Spanish mounted a punitive counter-attack against a fortified Taovaya village on the Red River. Colonel Diego Ortiz Parrilla led 600 men who were soundly defeated and had to flee for their lives.

In 1770, Athanase de Mézières visited the Cadohadacho, Taovaya, Tawakoni, Iscani, and Keechi on the Red River, although these groups also maintained a village along the Sabine River. The chiefs of these groups made clear that, prior to that date, the Tawakoni and the Iscani had settled between Bexar and San Sabá but had now moved to the Sabine River, where they intended to remain. Mézières confirmed that the Taovaya had abandoned their fortified village and had moved south. They also stated they were at war with the Lipan Apache, and that the Comanche were at war with them.

In 1771, the Taovaya agreed to a peace treaty with Spain. According to the terms of this treaty, the Taovaya would not travel farther south than the Bexar Presidio, would return captives, and would persuade the Comanche to refrain from committing hostile acts. At that time, the Taovaya were said to have between 2,000 and 3,000 warriors. A year later, Mézières again visited the Wichita groups. The Tawakoni village was located west of the Trinity River, but the Iscani lived in dispersed, smaller settlements about 20 miles from the Keechi. Mézières also learned that the Tawakoni had established another village on the Brazos River. In 1777, the Wichita tribes suffered an epidemic that affected many other tribes in East Texas, particularly the

Tawakoni. The following year, the Taovaya had returned to the fortified village on the Red River. During Mézières' 1779 visit to the Taovaya fortified villages, he estimated that there were 800 men and many children at the Taovaya villages.

In 1801, the Taovaya again suffered a smallpox epidemic that reduced their adult male population to 400. At this time, the Iscani, Taovaya, and Tawakoni were living in villages located on both sides of the Red River. Their principal chief was Awakahea (or Awahakei) of the Tawakoni village, who died in 1811. When the tribes could not agree on a successor, the groups dispersed. The Tawakoni, or part of the tribe, moved south.

The Keechi, Tawakoni, Waco, and Wichita proper were present at the Tehuacana Creek Council of 1843, where it was agreed that all hostilities were to cease, trade would take place at the Brazos trading post, and if a treaty was to be concluded there would be mutual exchange of prisoners or captives. Chief Acaquash signed for all the tribes. The Republic of Texas, the Keechi, the Tawakoni, and the Waco signed a peace treaty at Bird's Fort on the Trinity River in September 1843.

But horse stealing continued, despite the treaties and the goodwill, angering settlers and leading to the killing of Wichita people. At the next Tehuacana Council, the chiefs of other groups repeatedly admonished the Tawakoni to listen to and uphold the recommendations of the council in order that they could be happy and freely travel without fear of reprisals. In 1846, the Keechi, Tawakoni, Taovaya, and Waco signed an agreement with the United States to cease mutual hostilities. As pressures mounted, white settlement expanded, and resources decreased, American Indian tribes, such as the Wichita, resorted once more to raiding. Ultimately, in 1859, the last of the Wichita groups were removed to Indian Territory.

African Americans

Africans could be found living all along the El Camino Real de los Tejas corridor, particularly after the late 1680s. Some came with the Spanish expeditions; many more trickled in via the Texas-Louisiana border.

In 1783, 19% of the Texas population was classified as "colored," terms that also included mestizo and mulatto, or mixed race, and anyone who did not fit well in other race categories. The figures in Texas slowly rose each subsequent year: 20% in 1784 and 21%; by 1790, though, it had dropped to 12%. Within Texas, 29% of the population of San Antonio was classified as African American in 1780; by 1790, that percentage had risen to 37%. At La Bahía, 36% of the population was classified as colored in 1780; by 1790 that percentage had decreased to 19%. Skewing the numbers, however, is the fact that many light-skinned people with African ancestry were quite often classified as Spaniards, not mestizo or mulatto.

Africans occupied all sorts of trades and, while some were sold into slavery, others were free. Records show that Pedro Ramírez was a ranch hand in San Antonio, but Felipe Ulúa, who had bought his own freedom, owned property and raised crops. Still, their historical traces are difficult to find because they did not advertise their presence for fear of enslavement and persecution, particularly after the 1800s, when British and Anglo-American pro-slavery policies affected the South.

Some surviving records document the presence of African Americans during the early 1800s. For example, Kiamata Long was a slave girl who traveled to Texas with James Long from Louisiana and nursed his children. After his death in Mexico, Kiamata and Long's wife and children became part of Stephen F. Austin's colony. Kiamata and her children served the Long family throughout their lives. Moses Austin, Stephen's father, had an African slave, and so did many other Anglos in the Texas colonies. Although Mexico abolished slavery after it gained its independence from Spain in 1821, Texas colonists obtained an exemption from the abolition law and continued to own slaves during the Mexican period. James

Fannin, for instance, smuggled in 153 African slaves from Cuba in 1833. In 1825, the Austin colony had 443 slaves owned by 69 slaveholders. By 1836, this figure had swelled to 5,000 slaves; just four years later, the figure was 11,323. Most of the slaves worked as field hands in the cotton fields of East Texas or on the coast.

During the Texas Revolution, or War for Texas Independence (1835–1836), several Africans fought alongside the Texans to gain independence from Mexico. Unfortunately, although they were successful, the change in regime did not favor Africans; under the Republic of Texas, the lot of Africans, freed or enslaved, did not improve.

William Goyens, a light-skinned African, was an exception. Goyens lived in Nacogdoches in 1820 and became wealthy as a blacksmith, wagon manufacturer, and freight hauler between Nacogdoches and Natchitoches. He also owned his land, a mill, and traded in real estate. In 1832, Goyens bought a track of land on El Camino Real de los Tejas, four miles west of Nacogdoches. During the Texas Revolution, Sam Houston used Goyens as an emissary, requesting that the Cherokee not side with Mexican forces.

Samuel McCullough, another free African American, was wounded trying to repel Mexican troops during the Battle of Goliad in October 1835. When the Texas Revolution was over, McCullough feared being deported. He successfully requested special permission to remain in Texas on the basis of his service to the republic. Hendrick Arnold was in a similar situation. Arnold fought with Colonel Ben Milam in San Antonio in 1835, and although, as a freed man he was supposed to leave the country, he and his family remained in San Antonio, where he was given land and operated a gristmill near Mission San Juan Capistrano. It is perhaps significant that both McCullough and Goyens were married to white women.

During the mid-1800s, many freed and fugitive slaves crossed Texas along El Camino Real de los Tejas, en route to Mexico, where they joined communities of Seminole Maroons, or Black Seminole. Others remained in Texas and made their name working on ranches as cowhands.

Other Ethnic Groups

Beginning in the 18th century with Canary Islanders, El Camino Real de los Tejas served as a migratory route for many European ethnic groups. After the 1840s, Belgians, Czechs, Frenchmen, Germans, Greeks, Hungarians, Italians, Irishmen, Norwegians, Poles, and Swedes settled along the trail corridor although most arrived by sea. Many of these communities still retain major elements of their ancestors' culture.

HISTORIC/ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Information in this section is drawn from inventories of cultural resources along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail carried out during the planning effort for this Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment. The report and database of cultural resources along the Texas portion of the trail includes close to 300 sites. A similar report and database for the Louisiana portion of El Camino Real de los Tejas includes 208 potential sites and segments. Because many of the resources are privately owned, specific geographical details are not available to the public. No systematic field investigations were conducted in obtaining trail-related data. The data for these inventories were gathered from existing secondary sources, in addition to some primary sources. A database of more than 500 references used to document trail-related resources was also compiled in the course of preparing this plan. Both of these databases will be updated and expanded as new information is uncovered about trail-related resources.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

For decades, researchers have documented cultural resources associated with El Camino Real de los

Tejas National Historic Trail. Records used to study Spanish Colonial history and resources include travelers' diaries, historic maps, General Land Office maps and land-grant documents, military records, legal documents, memoirs, and archeological and historical resource site forms prepared by historic preservation professionals. Many reports and books summarize these primary sources.

At the local level, knowledge about the trail has been transmitted through oral tradition; however, corroborating historical and archeological evidence is often limited. Avocational and professional historians and archeologists have examined primary sources and conducted field research to document the history of the trail, often finding physical evidence of swales, ruts, and related river crossings, camps, missions, *presidios*, battlefields, civilian settlements, ranches, and other artifacts.

On a broader scale, state agencies have documented the history of the trail throughout Texas. For example, the Texas Department of Transportation has collected and documented trail-related historical information throughout the state, including several counties through which the Texas Department of Transportation right-of-way encompasses much of the original alignment of the trail's main routes. Several books have been published that interpret many of the historic documents and diaries. They provide clues to the locations of the routes as they may be found on modern landscapes. Such research and publications can help clarify the locations of various segments, and improve our general understanding of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail and its varying routes through time and across the landscape.

Several reports and publications summarizing various aspects of trail history exist, but there has been no comprehensive effort to collect all of the data in one place. Often, data are found in unpublished sources, such as the notes of researchers, for which the original source data is not known. The planning team recognizes that a handful of researchers have spent decades investigating trail-related cultural resources, and that this research will probably be ongoing for decades. As mentioned above, during the course of preparing this plan, the planning team made a strong effort to summarize and organize all data into a comprehensive database that can be easily accessed for research purposes and expanded and updated.

An analysis of the geographic distribution of historic resources along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail suggests some interesting patterns. While some counties had no trail-related sites previously recorded, other counties had dozens of potential trail-related sites for which studies were readily available. For example, more than 70 Spanish Colonial and historic American Indian sites were recorded for Bexar County. This is the result of three main factors:

1) Extensive urban development in Bexar County has resulted in required archeological studies to comply with federal and state regulations;

2) Several groups in Bexar County, including the NPS and other government entities and academic institutions, have devoted resources to the professional study and preservation of a number of Spanish Colonial period sites; and

3) The area was geographically located at the intersection of several Spanish Colonial roads.

The inventory of trail-related resources focused primarily on previously recorded sites. It was not an exhaustive search for all possible resources; therefore, it represents only a sampling of the total number of potential resources. This sample is neither systematic nor random, and it is heavily skewed by the fact that some areas have been studied intensively by historians and archeologists, while others have not. As a general rule, more professional studies have been conducted in counties where

major settlements, such as missions and *presidios*, are known to exist and more is known about resources in these counties.

Trail Segments Retaining Physical Integrity

In some places, physical evidence of the trail has been obliterated or obscured by development and other man-made changes in the landscape, such as agricultural activities or tree harvesting; however, numerous original segments still survive and anyone with a small amount of training in landscape surveying should be able to follow them. Slight to extreme linear depressions, approximately 1 to 2 meters (3.3 to 6.6 feet) wide, may appear in undisturbed locations. In those cases where the depressions cannot be explained by natural processes such as erosion or by modern farming, hunting, logging, or forest management activities, and if the depressions remain consistent in width, the depressions could be the result of the natural wearing of carts, wagons, oxen, or foot traffic—in other words, they could be remaining traces of the trail. Archeological research would then be necessary to associate the trace, rut or swales with a period of time when the trail was in use.

Researchers have identified intact trail segments in Bexar, Houston and Sabine counties and in Natchitoches Parish. Segments in Brazos, Karnes, Nacogdoches, Robertson, San Augustine, and Wilson counties have been physically identified, but their relationship to the period of significance for the trail has not yet been confirmed.

Some segments of the original trail have been upgraded into modern dirt roads; in some cases, they have been paved. Such is the case with Louisiana State Highway 120. It roughly follows the original route used by traffic crossing the Sabine River before 1822, when Fort Jesup was established and El Camino Real de los Tejas alignment was no longer the only route from Texas to Natchitoches. Others, like Ormigas Road, the Texas Star Road, and the Camino Carretera have been upgraded to allow for modern travel, but they still retain a considerable integrity of setting.

River Crossings and Parajes

River and creek crossings, as well as *parajes* (traveler's campsites, or more broadly, stopping places), would have existed in all of the counties crossed by the trail, including the counties where travelers would have passed through on their way to major destinations; yet, relatively few of these fords (and the likely *parajes* associated with them) have been documented. In some of these "pass-through" counties, documentation of resources was often accidental.

During the Spanish Colonial period, travelers mostly crossed the river at fords that were, by definition, shallow and did not require a ferry or bridge structure. However, some places where travelers crossed the river were deep enough to require simple bridge structures, such as fallen trees that were laid across the river, and there are occasional references to the use of rafts along the trail, indicating deep-water crossings. It has been documented that people made river crossings at each of the dams serving the five missions in Bexar County. It is clear that, although favored places to cross the river were typically undeveloped fords, deeper waters in other areas may have necessitated man-made structures to accomplish the river crossing.

While most maps show trails intersecting at roughly perpendicular angles to rivers, crossing the river using a ford often required following a river for some distance **away** from the main trail, locating the ford and using it to cross the river, then traveling back to the main trail, a fact corroborated by travel narratives. The location of fords along the trail is important in trail documentation because such locations help in mapping trail routes. Furthermore, *parajes* were located next to many places where river crossings were made and can provide clues to life on the trail. In a previous study of trail routes (McGraw et al 1991), dozens of fords and river crossing places were recorded. Many of these were

confirmed by the use of a combination of aerial photography and field investigations.

Most *parajes* along the trail were simple campsites, usually located near river and creek crossing places, where travelers could find good water near the trail. Some, however, included American Indian villages, where travelers would receive hospitality and may have traded goods. Additionally, missions, *presidios*, *villas*, and ranch headquarters often served the functions of *parajes* along the trail. For the following discussion, however, *parajes* refer to relatively isolated campsites, and those stopping places along the trail that were settlements are noted under other historic-use categories.

Information regarding several known river crossing places and their associated *parajes* was entered into the trail database. Many of these *parajes* were noted in several different diaries and itineraries throughout the period of significance of the trail, but not all of these campsites have been confirmed archeologically.

American Indian Villages

In the 17th century, Spanish explorers making the earliest *entradas* (exploring military expeditions) into the future states of Texas and Louisiana, along routes that would become El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, noted in their journals that they accepted hospitality from several American Indian villages, or *rancherías*. Some of these *rancherías* were referenced repeatedly as stopping places, or *parajes*, along the various routes. For instance, the paraje known as Indian Mounds is well documented as being at or near present-day Caddo Mounds State Park, and a Kickapoo village was located at a well-known crossing on the Trinity River.

Spanish Missions

Spanish missions were established for the religious and social conversion of American Indians. Because many missions were short lived, some of them were never comprised of more than a few *jacales*, primitive wattle-and-daub structures made of poles and mud with a thatch roof. Some of these unsuccessful missions were abandoned, never having accomplished their goal of converting American Indians to Christianity, while others were reestablished at new locations, in the hopes that Christianizing American Indians would be more successful in different environs. Despite moving to new locations, often changing names as they did so, the majority of Spanish missions in Texas were unsuccessful in their efforts to convert American Indians to Christianity.

Some missions grew large enough to warrant the construction of elaborate stonemasonry buildings and structures and finely engineered *acequia* systems, becoming a major part of the landscape with dense archeological deposits. Often when missions were deemed a success, they were secularized, or transferred from ecclesiastical to civil or lay use, and the mission lands turned over to the neophytes, or new converts, at the missions. Secularization occurred only in the settlements in Bexar and Goliad counties, beginning with the secularization of Mission San Antonio de Valero in 1793.

Some of the buildings and structures of the more elaborate missions still retain much of their physical integrity, and they serve as representations of the esthetics that have become inextricably linked with the Spanish mission period over time. Other Spanish mission sites are now represented only by archeological remains and would require intensive study to properly understand their historic significance. Mission locations along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail include a combination of cultural resource types that have been recorded as archeological sites, historic buildings, historic structures, historic districts, and cultural landscapes.

When reestablishing a mission in a new location, missionaries brought with them everything that defined the mission as a religious entity. This included supplies, furnishings, and religious vestments that had originally been brought along the main

branch of El Camino Real de los Tejas, as well as converts from the previous mission. The multiple locations of certain missions are closely related to the changing routes of the Spanish trails, and they serve as reminders of the state of social flux in which the trails developed. One mission may have been located in several different places over time, and the physical evidence of a particular mission may be found at each of these locations along the designated trail. Many mission locations, however, have not yet been confirmed archeologically.

Presidios, Military Outposts, and Forts

Beginning with the first mission to the Tejas in 1690, fortified settlements manned by soldiers were an inseparable part of the Spanish colonial missionary effort along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. With the founding of the first *presidios*, or garrisons along the trail—Bexar County in 1718, Victoria County in 1721, and Los Adaes in 1721—the Spanish government increased its military defenses to protect missions and *villas*. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, the military presence along the trail increased to include outposts of the *presidios* and other military posts, such as informal guard stations staffed by civilian soldiers from nearby settlements. Like the missions, *presidios* sometimes moved locations, so multiple sites along the trail may be associated with a single presidio.

After Louisiana became part of the United States, following the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, several military installations were built along the trail to deter Spanish intrusions into American territory. For example, the U.S. Army at Fort Jesup built Louisiana State Highway 6 using a trail blazed by General James Wilkinson in 1808 to avoid confrontations with the Spanish. In 1812, the U.S. Army built the Texas Star Road, as a route between Fort Claiborne and Belmont under army observation to prevent aid from the west reaching Spanish settlers living in the Bayou Pierre community.

Spanish Villas

Civilian settlements were established at several areas along the designated trail, beginning with the *villas* of Bexar and Los Adaes in the early 1700s. Earlier *villas* were usually established to help support Spanish soldiers, and to a lesser degree, to support the missionaries and their converts. After the 1750s—especially after the founding of Nuevo Santander, a primarily civilian venture—the trail saw an increase in civilian settlements. Unlike the military and missionary settlements, *villas* often received little or no financial assistance from the Spanish crown, and they actually served as a tax base upon which the Spanish government could fund religious conversion and military efforts.

Other Historic Sites

Further research is necessary to better understand how other sites, such as quarries and ranch headquarters, are related to the development of the trail.

National Historic Districts

The rich history of the areas crossed by the trail is reflected in a number of national historic districts:

- San Antonio River Valley (West of Goliad) Rural National Historic District
- Goliad State Park National Historic District
- Mission Parkway Historic and Archeological District
- San Antonio Missions National Historic District
- San José de Palafox National Historic District
- San Xavier Mission Complex Archeological District

State Archeological Landmarks

There are several state archeological landmarks along the trail corridor. Among them are the following two properties in Bexar County:

- Pérez Cemetery/Rancho de Pérez
- Sabinitas/Jett/Palo Alto Crossing,

Natural Landmarks

Natural landmarks were very important, as their appearance in the landscape reassured travelers that they were following the right routes. They are often mentioned in documents establishing boundaries between properties. One such landmark is Loma Alta, identified in the 1765 legal case between Fray Pedro Ramírez de Arellano and Domingo Castelo regarding Rancho San Lucas.

Commemorative Historic Markers

Commemorative historic markers are common along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. They are important artifacts associated with the rich history of organizations such as the Daughters of the American Revolution, and have served to highlight some of the major trail alignments. In the early 20th century, the Daughters of the American Revolution lobbied both their organization and the state of Texas to have the route of El Camino Real de los Tejas recognized and commemorated. The route was surveyed by V. N. Zivley and was identified by granite markers every five miles inscribed with "Camino Real" and "King's Highway." In 1918, the markers and identification of the route were formally presented to the state of Texas and were enthusiastically accepted. In 1929, Senate Bill No. 570 formally identified the route, its significance, and towns along the way. The bill declared the trail to be "a historic road of Texas" and authorized the newly formed State Highway Department to identify, preserve, and maintain the historic route. This law is still in effect and was reaffirmed by Senate Concurrent resolution No. 2 in July 1989. Today, State Highway 21 in Texas mostly follows the Daughters of the American Revolution routes, except where signed Old San Antonio Road.

A similar effort took place in Louisiana during the 1950s. The Daughters of the American Revolution erected comparable markers made of pink granite to commemorate the route of El Camino Real de los Tejas following today's SR6.

Other commemorative monuments and markers have been established by the Texas Historical Commission along the trail during the 20th century. Today, the commission continues to install markers providing historic information at many sites related to El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.

Cemeteries

There are hundreds of burial sites along the various routes of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. They reflect the ethnic and religious diversity of settlements along the trail and provide an important link to the trail's human use and formal development as communities and towns emerged along the trail.

NATURAL RESOURCES

This section addresses the affected natural resources along the trail as it moves from the United States-Mexico border in South Texas; through south-central Texas, from San Antonio to Austin, into East Texas; eventually ending in Natchitoches, Louisiana. This section focuses on geology and soil, caves and karsts, paleontological resources, water resources, vegetation communities, special-status species, air quality and visual resources, and land use.

In general, the region changes climatically from a dry to a subhumid climate, as it moves east from Texas to Louisiana, with brushy vegetation in the southwest portion of the trail, followed by a wetter regime containing oak savannas and piney woods on its eastern end. The trail follows a segment of a geologic split created by an ancient mountain uplift that now lies buried beneath sedimentary deposits from the Gulf of Mexico. The United States portion of the trail begins at the Río Grande and ends at the Red River in Louisiana, crossing many major rivers along its route. Land use generally varies along the trail, depending on climate variations, available water, and both natural and mineral resources. Much of the landscape of El Camino Real de los Tejas has changed since its historic use, with increased urban development from central Texas eastward and conversion of prairie land, forest lands, and fertile riverbottom lands to agricultural production.

El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail encompasses a huge study area, so the planning team used U.S. Environmental Protection Agency maps as references for discussion of natural resources, including vegetation, geologic, and other divisions as appropriate for discussion of the natural resources along the trail (see Appendix L: Map L-3, page 241). Ecoregions are defined as landscapes exhibiting similarities in the mosaic of environmental resources, ecosystems, and effects of humans. This approach is very useful for environmental and resource managers, as the maps allow for a seamless and holistic description of ecosystems as they cross geographical boundaries. They can help establish patterns otherwise not easily discernible. The map elements include not only vegetation but physiography, soils, climate, geology, wildlife, hydrology, and current land uses.

VEGETATION COMMUNITIES

The study area in general is ecologically and biologically diverse. El Camino Real de los Tejas passes through dry and subhumid climate zones in the Southwest to a wetter climate as the trail heads eastward through the Deep South near the Gulf of Mexico. The trail crosses numerous rivers, including major watercourses such as the Colorado, Guadalupe, San Antonio, and Sabine rivers. Outside the major watercourses, vegetation changes from generally brushy plains in the southwest portion of the trail to post oak savanna in the east-central portion and piney woods in the east. For this project, a vegetation map delineating ecoregions and major rivers along the trail corridor was prepared based on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency data (see Appendix L: Map L-3, page 241).

South Texas

South Texas Plains (Level III)

El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail has several branches in the South Texas plains; routes crossing at the Mexican border were all located at the old Mission San Bernardo, near Guerrero, Mexico, or farther to the south in or near Laredo. The trails move to the northeast in this region of shrub-dominated grasslands, commonly referred to as brush country. The region historically contained vast grasslands with low-growing shrubs in a savanna-type structure. A natural fire regime kept the domination of brush species to a minimum. Increased livestock grazing, decreased fires, and drought have altered the vegetation of the region to one that is shrub dominated. The terrain is primarily flat alluvial plains. In spite of their aridity, parts of the region contain numerous streams and springs. Some of the land, primarily near urban

centers, contains irrigated agricultural fields, where crops such as corn and grains are grown. The more arid region is largely dominated by livestock grazing. The area of the South Texas plains crossed by the trail contains two major Level IV ecoregions: the Texas-Tamaulipan thornscrub and the Northern Nueces alluvial plains.

Texas-Tamaulipan Thornscrub

The dominant ecoregion of the South Texas portion of the trail, near the Mexican border, is the Texas-Tamaulipan thornscrub, commonly known as brush country. This vast area is diverse, as it is a transitional zone between the arid Chihuahuan Desert, the subtropical woodlands and thornscrub of the Río Grande, and the coastal grasslands near the Gulf of Mexico. Precipitation is erratic and droughts are common, leading to a domination of drought-tolerant, primarily thorny species such as honey mesquite. Some areas contain dense understory of granjeno, kidneywood, and Texas paloverde. Mid and short grasses found in this region include sideoats grama, bristlegrass, lovegrass, tridens and Tobosa. Most of the area is open rangeland grazed by cattle.

Northern Nueces Alluvial Plains

The Northern Nueces alluvial plains cover the area northeast of Carrizo Springs. The region contains numerous streams and springs and has higher precipitation levels than surrounding areas. As a result, more land is used for agricultural purposes. Some open grasslands of little bluestem, sideoats grama, and lovegrass tridens contain scattered honey mesquite and plateau live oak; other grasslands in shallower soils contain low-growing brush such as guajillo, blackbrush, and kidneywood. Floodplain forests of the region may contain hackberry, plateau live oak, pecan and cedar elm, with black willow and cottonwood along streambanks.

East Central Texas

East Central Texas has branches of the trail that begin roughly at San Antonio, head northeast to near Crockett, and continue north past Bryan along the southern route from Goliad; the trails converge at Crockett. The area lies within two Level III ecoregions: the Texas Blackland Prairies and East Central Texas Plains. Overall, the region can be generally classified as oak woods and prairie. This ecologically diverse area of post oak woods and savannas, intermixed with prairie and pockets of brush country, typifies the landscape. The savanna landscape historically was characterized by grasses such as little bluestem, silver bluestem, and brownseed paspalum amongst clumps of post oak trees. Other trees, including blackjack oak, water oak, winged elm, hackberry, and yaupon, are found in this region as well. Bottomland forests contain water oak, post oak, willow oak, green ash, and eastern cottonwoods. The planting of nonnative grasses or overgrazing has caused the loss of much of the native prairie vegetation. Several major watercourses cross this area of east-central Texas, including the Guadalupe, San Marcos, Colorado, Brazos, and Trinity rivers.

Texas Blackland Prairies (Level III)

This ecoregion typifies the landscape around the northern route of the trail, including the trail from San Antonio to Austin and beyond to the northeast. The region was historically dominated by prairie grasses such as little bluestem, big bluestem, yellow Indiangrass, and switchgrass, found on rolling to nearly level plains (Griffith et al., 2004). The prairies have now largely been converted to cropland, nonnative pasture, or urban development.

East Central Texas Plains (Level III)

This ecoregion typifies the landscape around the Lower Road branch of the trail, in the area between Goliad and Bryan and beyond to the northeast. The area is more forested than the surrounding prairie ecoregions: it contains hardwood forests and savannahs of post oak and some areas of invasive mesquite in the southern regions. The floodplains of the major watercourses in this area are broad and are primarily croplands, with water oak, post oak, green ash,

cottonwoods, and hackberry dominating the forested portions of the bottomlands.

East Texas, West Louisiana

South Central Plains (Level III)

The trail branches generally converge at the Trinity River along the eastward route of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail and enter the ecoregion known as the South-Central Plains. This region covers the route from approximately the Trinity River in East Texas to the end of the trail in Natchitoches, Louisiana. Commonly known as the piney woods, it was historically pine and hardwood forests in the North and longleaf pine woodlands and savannas in the South. Pines dominated the uplands, while hardwoods dominated the bottomlands. The area has been largely replanted with plantations of loblolly pine and shortleaf pine or converted to pasture. Several major watercourses cross the trail in this area, and include the Trinity, Neches, and Sabine rivers, ending at the Red River. Other croplands are limited primarily to the floodplains of the Red River.

There are three Level IV ecoregions within this portion of the trail, as follows:

Tertiary Uplands

The tertiary uplands are gently to moderately sloping plains that cover the majority of the eastern portion of the trail. It is a region that historically contained loblolly pine, shortleaf pine, southern red oak, post oak, white oak, hickory, and sweetgum. The western portion of this region is drier, resulting in more oak/pine, oak/hickory forests, and pasture landscapes. Many areas have been replanted with loblolly pine plantations, and much of the region has been converted to livestock pastures; therefore, very little hardwood species remain.

Southern Tertiary Uplands

The southern tertiary uplands historically were covered primarily in longleaf pine forests. In more mesic, or moderately moist, areas, American beech or magnolia-beech-loblolly pine forests were commonly found. Shortleaf pine/hardwood, calcareous, mixed hardwood/loblolly pine forests, and hardwood-dominated forests, and other forest types occur in this region. Patches of prairie support herbaceous species, including many rare plants associated with calcareous soils. The region's vegetation cover currently is more pine forest than oak/pine or pastureland.

Floodplains and Low Terraces

Floodplains and low terraces are nearly level, frequently flooded, and vegetated by forested alluvial wetlands. The bottomland forests are comprised of mixed hardwood flanking large river systems and are maintained by a natural hydrologic regime of alternating wet and dry periods that follow seasonal flooding events. Water oak, willow oak, sweetgum, American elm, and red maple are some of the tree species represented in this ecoregion. Thousands of acres of bottomland forests have been lost due to conversion to agricultural production and reservoir construction.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Texas has a wide array of natural geologic resources, ranging from the oil and gas fields to salt, sulfur, lignite, building stone, sandstone, gravel, sand, clay, uranium, other minerals, and water.

A geologic split in the shape of an "S" runs across the center of the state and represents a geological rift zone formed by the ancient uplift and folding of the Ouachita Mountains to the west, and the eventual erosion and burial of that mountain range, primarily by sedimentary deposits from the downward tipping of the Gulf Coast to the south. The San Antonio and Austin areas are near this split, where a shift in geological age is also roughly defined. The geological age of the area crossed by the trail gets younger as it gets closer to the Gulf of Mexico. The area around San Antonio and Austin falls within the Cretaceous Period (145 to 65 million years ago), whereas the branches of the trail to the south and east (the Laredo Road) have rocks associated with the

Tertiary Period (65 to 1.5 million years ago). The geology of the trail in Texas varies from tropical sand barriers along the Gulf Coast to limestone plateaus that sweep across the south central part of the state.

The last uplift of the area—approximately 10 million years ago, during the Tertiary Period of the most recent Cenozoic Era (65 million years ago to the present)—formed the Edwards Plateau. The fracture line of the plateau is known as the Balcones fault zone. It passes through San Antonio and naturally follows the trending line of the buried Ouachita Range.

As the seas rose and fell over the low-lying Louisiana region, throughout the Tertiary and later Quaternary periods, some version of the Mississippi River was carrying vast sediment loads from the center of the North American continent and depositing them on the rim of the Gulf of Mexico. The Holocene epoch of the Quaternary Period represents only the last 10,000 years of Earth's history, but during the two million years of the Pleistocene epoch that preceded it, the river wandered over the whole region, shifting course throughout time. As a result of the river's peripatetic wanderings and deposition pattern, beneath the surface of Louisiana lie younger gray Holocene epoch alluvial deposits, laid down in or adjacent to rivers and deltas during the Quaternary Period, while most surface exposures are composed of older Pleistocene Period sediments, a reversal of the usual older-to-younger deposition of strata, readily observed at highly eroded canyons such as Arizona's Grand Canyon.

Soils along the trail corridor closely follow the geological patterns and, in turn, contribute to vegetation patterns. For example, the pine forests of the eastern region follow the sandy ridges of Tertiary Period rocks in the area, whereas the live oaks of the central portion of Texas prefer the calcareous soils found on the Edwards Plateau, which is predominantly limestone. For consistency's sake, and because of the close relationships among the geology, soils, and vegetation of the area, the divisions of ecoregions discussed in the **Vegetation Communities** section (page 94) are also used here.

South Texas

South Texas Plains

Two major branches of the trail move to the northeast from the Mexican border in this subhumid to dry region of flat alluvial plains and sandstone. Some portions of the region, although arid, contain numerous streams and springs. Soils of the region are mostly clay, clay loam, and sandy clay loam and range from alkaline to slightly acidic. Rivers, tributaries, and other areas within floodplains of the region contain alluvium soils composed of floodplain deposits of clay, silt, sand, gravel, and organic matter.

Texas-Tamaulipan Thornscrub

Caliche outcroppings and graveled ridges and drainage divides are common in this arid region of the plains. The underlying bedrock is generally Eocene Period sandstone and mudstone that formed one phase of Gulf Coast margin sedimentation about 50 million years ago. Soils are varied and include hyperthermic Alfisols, Aridisols, Mollisols, and Vertisols. The soils are varied and complex, ranging from deep sands to clays and clay loams and they also range from alkaline to slightly acidic.

Northern Nueces Alluvial Plains

The Northern Nueces alluvial plains cover the area of the trail northeast of Carrizo Springs. Alluvial fans and other alluvial plain deposits from the Holocene and later Quaternary periods characterize this area of the trail. Numerous streams and springs are contained in this region of erratic precipitation.

East Central Texas

The East Central Texas region covers branches of the trail from approximately San Antonio northeast to near Crockett, and along the southern route from near Goliad north past Bryan, and up to Crockett, where the trails converge.

Irregular plains, commonly underlain with clay pan, characterize the area. Soils tend to be acidic and vary between the upland ridges and the low-lying valley areas. Sands and sandy loams dominate the uplands, while clay to clay loams are found in the low areas.

The area between Goliad and Bryan is primarily comprised of flat coastal plain terrain, although the area around Goliad contains an upland margin where Goliad sandstone is found. This is a formation of gray, cemented, pebbly sandstone from the Pliocene epoch. Goliad sandstone is used for construction materials in many historical buildings in the area. Common soils of the Goliad area are clay, sandstone, marl, caliche, and limestone and are underlain by Miocene, Oligocene, Eocene, and Paleocene epoch sediments.

Texas Blackland Prairies

The Texas Blackland Prairies region typifies the landscape around the northern route of the trail, including the trail from San Antonio to Austin and beyond to the northeast. San Antonio is unique in that the nearly 30-mile-wide Balcones fault system cuts through the city from northeast to southwest, following the buried Ouachita Range. The area is a zone of stair-stepping faults, leaving a trail of limestone blocks and fault slices. Cretaceous Period limestone has been quarried in San Antonio for centuries, and many of the historic buildings of the city were constructed with the sturdy blocks. Soils are diverse but obviously divided in the city: the southern part of San Antonio contains fluviatile terrace deposits; in the northern part, various limestones and chalks are common. Austin is also near the Balcones fault system and straddles two geologic provinces. To the west of Austin is the uplifted plateau of Cretaceous Period limestone and to the east is the lowland Blackland Prairie country. Fractures, cracks, and cavities in the limestone of the region force waterways to surface; as a result, springs are common to this portion of the trail. Soil types are typically fine-textured, dark, calcareous, and productive Vertisols. Rivers along the trail are typically composed of alluvium floodplain deposits; however, fluviatile terrace deposits dominate the soil type of the Colorado River in the area around Austin and the San Marcos River, southeast of San Marcos.

East Texas, West Louisiana

South Central Plains

Several branches of El Camino de los Tejas National Historic Trail generally converge at the Trinity River, along the eastward route of the trail, and enter an area of rolling plains with nearly flat fluvial terraces, bottomlands, sandy low hills, and low *cuestas* (hills). The uplands are underlain mainly by poorly consolidated Tertiary Period coastal plain deposits, and the bottomlands and terraces are veneered with Quaternary Period alluvium, terrace deposits, or loess (wind-blown deposits). This region covers the route from approximately the Trinity River to the end of the trail in Natchitoches. This area, known as the piney woods, was historically pine forests and woodlands and other vegetation, which prefer soils that are thin, sandy to sandy loam, silt loam, and sandy clay loam.

Tertiary Uplands

The tertiary uplands area of gently to moderately sloping plains covers most of the eastern portion of the trail. It contains Tertiary Period deposits that are mostly Eocene epoch clays, silts, and sands, with some Paleocene epoch sediment. Soils are mostly well- or moderately well-drained Ultisols and Alfisols, typically with sandy and loamy surface textures.

Southern Tertiary Uplands

The southern tertiary uplands contain soils that are generally well drained over permeable sediments. Soils are silt-loam to loamy-sand Ultisols and Alfisols. It is a region of siltstones, sandstones, and calcareous and acidic clay.

Floodplains and Low Terraces

The floodplains and low terraces are nearly level, veneered by Holocene epoch

alluvium and is frequently flooded. Soils include Alfisols, Inceptisols, and Entisols. Soils are generally somewhat poorly drained to very poorly drained heavy clay and loam.

AIR QUALITY AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Air quality in the region of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is distinguished by those areas that meet or exceed National Ambient Air Quality Standards for criteria pollutants. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has designated the following pollutants as indicators of air quality for the National Ambient Air Quality Standards: 1-hour ozone, 8-hour ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter (PM)-10, PM-2.5, and lead. These pollutants have been evaluated for the maximum concentration whereby adverse effects will occur to human health. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, in conjunction with individual states, measures areas for these pollutants. When an area does not meet the air quality standard for one of the criteria pollutants, it may be subject to the formal rule-making process that designates it as a “nonattainment area.” Those nonattainment areas that do not meet (or that contribute to inferior ambient air quality in a nearby area) may be subjected to control measures using the national primary or secondary air quality standards for a pollutant. “Attainment areas” are those areas that do meet the primary or secondary ambient air quality standard for the pollutant. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency national maps for the criteria pollutants, there are no areas along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail that are currently considered nonattainment areas. State monitoring stations are located at various sections along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, primarily near large cities, and are discussed further below.

El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail itself is a visual resource that is designated a national historic trail under the National Trails System Act of 1968. The Act, among other things, aims to promote the preservation of the historic and scenic values of historic travel routes across the nation. El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail crosses many historical districts that contain viewshed protections. Increased urban development has posed challenges to viewshed preservation of historical districts, leading to increased municipal regulations for historical areas, and other landmarks and significant landforms. Still other areas of the trail contain land uses, such as timber harvesting or industrial developments, that have altered viewsheds over time.

Visual resources are varied; however, since topographical changes are slight in most of the region, no dramatic changes may be detected across the landscape as a whole. The areas surrounding San Antonio and Austin have the largest change in topography, as the cities are within the heavily visited scenic region of the Texas Hill Country.

South Texas: *Air Quality*

The portion of the trail that includes South Texas, from the United States-Mexico border northeast to San Antonio, has no areas of nonattainment, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency national maps for the criteria pollutants. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality collects air data from 20 air monitoring stations in the region. The majority of these sites are located within Bexar County, near San Antonio. The sites are grouped by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality into regions and are rated daily on a scale based on the National Air Ambient Quality Standards. The sites in Bexar County are within Region 13. One air monitoring site is located in Maverick County, and three are located within the Laredo City area of Webb County. These sites are grouped within Region 16.

South Texas: Visual Resources

The topography in this region is relatively flat until reaching the vicinity of

San Antonio; therefore, the visual resources in this area would not be expected to provide a dramatic effect from a change in elevation. Historic towns in this region include Laredo, Carrizo Springs, Goliad, and San Antonio, and most have preservation guidelines for the historic districts that include visual resources. San Antonio has many historical sites, and the city has implemented visual resource protection regulations in order to "protect, preserve and enhance views and vistas" surrounding their historic districts.

East Central Texas: Air Quality

This portion of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail has no areas of nonattainment according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency national maps. East Central Texas has 12 air monitoring sites, with six of the sites located in the Austin-San Marcos area (Region 11, which includes Travis, Bastrop, and Hays counties). Other counties with air monitoring sites are Comal and Fayette.

East Central Texas: Visual Resources

East Central Texas contains the most varied topography of the trail, thus creating more opportunities for visual impact. Towns and cities with historic districts or significant landmarks of this area include New Braunfels, San Marcos, Austin, Bastrop, and Bryan. Austin has ordinances in place to protect the views as seen from its Hill Country roadways and help preserve the scenic values of the corridor parkways.

East Texas, West Louisiana: Air Quality

This portion of the trail has no areas of nonattainment. East Texas and West Louisiana have no air monitoring sites.

East Texas, West Louisiana: Visual Resources

The topography of this region is relatively flat; therefore, the visual resources in this area would not be expected to change dramatically due to shifts in elevation. Valuable scenic visual resources can still abound in this region as evidenced by places such as the Toledo-Bend Reservoir, where the large body of water provides open and expansive vistas of the landscape. Towns and cities with historic districts or significant landmarks include Crockett, Alto, Nacogdoches, San Augustine, and Natchitoches, Louisiana.

PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Modern mammals, birds, and flowering plants began to appear during the Cretaceous Period, from 145 to 65 million years ago. By the end of the Cretaceous Period, changes in climate, the breakup of the supercontinent Pangaea, and regional differences contributed to the mass extinction of many organisms, including dinosaurs (U.S. Geological Survey, www.usgs.gov/states/texas). Much of the central Texas portion of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is composed of Cretaceous Period rock. Exotic dinosaurs, such as the mososaur, lived in the oceans of the Cretaceous Period in Texas. Skeletons of the large serpentlike creature were found in Onion Creek, and the fossilized skeletons of ancient amphibians such as the Eryops megacephalus were found in Archer County, Texas.

Tertiary Period materials dominate the southern route of the trail through Texas and into western Louisiana and contain a rich vertebrate fossil record. After the extinction of dinosaurs, mammalian diversity exploded as new species evolved (The Paleontology Portal, www.paleoportal.org). Massive amounts of eroded sediments, washed down from the rising Rocky Mountains to the northwest, were deposited across Texas and in the Gulf of Mexico.

Many paleontological resources are found in caves and karsts. Over time, such environments become filled with species that have either fallen into the underground locations, been eaten, or denned in the dark caverns. Approximately 25 caves in Texas have yielded important fossils of

vertebrate animals, including the scimitar cat, a slender subspecies of the extinct saber-toothed tiger, which lived in North America until approximately 10,000 years ago. A nearly complete set of fossil remains of the scimitar cat have been found in Friesenhahn Cave near San Antonio. Alongside the cat's fossilized remains were the bones of its prey, including baby mammoths, which the cat would attack and drag to the cave. Friesenhahn Cave has yielded a variety of Pleistocene Period vertebrate fossils, including the bones and teeth of more than 30 genera of mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and birds.

Other caves in Central Texas contain important paleontological resources. Natural Bridges Caverns near San Antonio contains not only human artifacts but faunal remains, including species that became extinct 12,000 years ago. Many of the well-preserved animal bones found in the caverns were transported there through paleolithic human activity, such as hunting and butchering, and have provided insight into the diets of prehistoric peoples of the area.

Louisiana's geological strata are relatively young, making it difficult for paleontologists to uncover fossil remains. There are a few sites, however, with very important paleontological resources that have been exposed in rare outcroppings or through road cuts. One such site, the Cane River Site, is in the vicinity of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail as it passes near Natchitoches. The sedimentary Cane River Formation, ranging in age from 44.5 to 46.5 million years, was fortuitously exposed by a road construction project and contains some of the oldest and best-preserved marine fossils found in Louisiana. The diversity of marine fossils found at the site is outstanding and includes dozens of macroscopic (easily seen with the naked eye) and microscopic species, such as oysters, clams, corals, amoebas, even shark's teeth. The fossil record uncovered at this site supports the geological record that indicates the region was covered by a shallow ocean at a time when the climate was tropical to subtropical during the Late Cretaceous Period.

CAVES AND KARSTS

Karst is a terrain formed by the dissolution of carbonate bedrock by acidic groundwater, and is generally characterized by sinkholes and caves that channel water underground. Most of the caves and karst resources near El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail are found along the Central Texas portion of the trail. The following discussion will focus only on these areas.

Caves in Texas follow the geologic "S" shape of the buried ancestral Ouachita Range across the central part of the state and are relatively uncommon near the coastal areas. In the largely sedimentary central Texas region, with its preponderance of limestone and dolomite, at least 9,500 caves, sinkholes, and springs have been found. The nearest major karst to El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is the Balcones Fault System, where the Cretaceous Period limestone cave system contains many unique and diverse resources. Hundreds of ancient species, specially adapted to an energy efficient life in permanent darkness, live in these cave environments, and many are endangered. Cave-adapted species include salamander, catfish, shrimp, isopod, amphipod, snail, spider, harvestmen, pseudoscorpion, beetle, millipede, and centipede. Some caves become temporary seasonal homes for other species, with nothing short of spectacular results. Bracken Bat Cave, for example, is located approximately 20 miles northeast of San Antonio and is a summer breeding ground for at least 20 million Mexican free-tailed bats, the largest known mammal colony in the world.

The discovery of the Texas blind salamander (*Eurycea rathbuni*) in the water-filled caves of the Edwards Aquifer near San Marcos, in 1896, boosted cave research in that state. It is still not known how many of these endangered salamanders exist; they have only been recorded at this one location. The artesian

well at San Marcos also contains at least one unusual cave formation. The Balcones Fault Line Cave in San Marcos is one of the country's more unusual caves: it was formed by an earthquake.

Natural Bridge Caverns is one of the largest caverns in Texas. It contains visibly distinct strata of Cretaceous Period limestone. The natural bridge (a span carved by a water source) cited in the cavern name was formed in Kainer Limestone and spans water-carved passages in the cavern. Natural Bridge Caverns is listed in the National Register of Historical Places due to its cultural significance. As mentioned earlier, many artifacts have been uncovered here, including projectile points, charred plants, and stone tools, as well as valuable paleontological resources that became extinct 12,000 years ago, during the late Pleistocene Period.

WATER RESOURCES

Regional water plans affected by El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment show existing water resources in a state of flux as traditional uses of water change. Fluctuations in groundwater levels accompany population dynamics, climate conditions, and land-use changes. Drought and other climatic conditions directly affect available water supply, and many of the regions the trail traverses, particularly Central Texas, are also being impacted by urban development, with the draw-down of regional aquifers as population increases. This is not set in stone, however; water supplies in some areas may actually increase as agricultural land use decreases.

Water sources for South Texas are primarily associated with surface water resources; Central Texas water sources are a combination of surface and groundwater; and East Texas and West Louisiana primarily rely on surface water. Most, if not all, of the rivers that cross the trail are linked to reservoirs that supply water primarily for agricultural and urban uses. Along the eastern portion of the trail, water resources are also used for timber processing and petrochemical industries.

El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail generally passes from a drier regime to a wetter regime as the trail travels west to east from the Mexican border in the southwest to the end at Natchitoches, Louisiana. The trail crosses 13 major rivers, including the two endpoints of the trail: the Río Grande at the United States-Mexico border and the Red River in Natchitoches, Louisiana (see Appendix L; Map L-4 page 242 for a location of the rivers and Table 3-1, page 103 for a listing of them).

The trail crosses almost every major river basin in Texas before reaching the Louisiana state line; in Louisiana, the trail ends in the Red River Basin. These basins are a function of many factors, but one of the most important is precipitation. The average annual runoff from precipitation varies from 0.2 inches along the South Texas portion of the trail to 11 inches or more along the eastern portion of the trail in Louisiana.

Texas has 196 major reservoirs. The trail crosses several of these, including the largest reservoir in the south: Toledo Bend Reservoir. This massive reservoir is located along the Texas-Louisiana border and has a storage capacity of more than four million acre-feet.

Table 3-1: Major Rivers along El Camino Real de Los Tejas National Historic Trail

River	Region
Río Grande	South Texas (United States-Mexico border)
Nueces	South Texas
Frío	South Texas
San Antonio	East Central Texas
Medina	East Central Texas
Guadalupe	East Central Texas
San Marcos	East Central Texas
Colorado	East Central Texas
San Gabriel	East Central Texas
Brazos	East Central Texas
Trinity	East Texas
Neches	East Texas
Sabine	Texas-Louisiana border
Red	Louisiana (Natchitoches)

The trail crosses four major aquifers in Texas and Louisiana: the Carrizo-Wilcox (outcrop and subsurface), Edwards (Balcones Fault Zone), the Trinity (outcrop and substrate), and the Gulf Coast aquifers. Several minor aquifers are located along or near the trail. Many areas along the trail route are experiencing a decline in the water level of the major aquifers. Declines range from less than 50 feet to greater than 200 feet in some areas.

South Texas

From the United States-Mexico border north to San Antonio and south to Laredo and Goliad the arid landscape contains three major rivers. Major water resources come from the Río Grande and the Nueces River Basin, with interbasin transfers from the Lavaca Region to the east. The trail in this area crosses the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer and the Gulf Coast Aquifer. These are major aquifers, with the Carrizo-Wilcox outcrop covering an area of 11,186 square miles and the Gulf Coast Aquifer area covering 41,879 square miles. The trail begins to cross two other major aquifers—the Edwards (Balcones Fault Zone) and the Trinity aquifers—in this region. The Edwards Aquifer outcrop area covers 5,560 square miles, with a subsurface area of 2,314 square miles. The Trinity Aquifer covers 10,652 square miles, with a subsurface area of 21,308 square miles. The Trinity Aquifer is composed of several individual aquifers contained within the Trinity Group.

East Central Texas

The East Central portion of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail includes the area east of San Antonio to east of Bryan, Texas, and crosses six major rivers. Water resources along this part of the trail are a complex blend of surface and groundwater resources. The trail crosses a network of interwoven aquifers, including the four above-referenced major aquifers, as well as four minor aquifers: the Queen City Aquifer (outcrop and subsurface), the Sparta Aquifer (outcrop and subsurface), the Brazos River Alluvium Aquifer, and the Yegua-Jackson Aquifer.

East Texas-West Louisiana

The trail continues northeastward through East Texas, crossing three more major rivers, until it reaches its terminus at the Red River in West Louisiana. Major water resources are centered on these rivers and their associated reservoirs. The trail crosses two major aquifers: the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer (outcrop and subsurface) and the Gulf Coast Aquifer. The end of the trail is within the Red River Alluvial Aquifer.

SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Due to the size of the study area, the trail is divided into three sections based on maps from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that provide descriptions of the vegetation classifications found within the study area. County lists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are included within each of the three divisions. Species counts and comparisons of state listed species and federally listed species were made using the databases maintained by the Texas Parks and Wildlife and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife &

Fisheries; however, only federally listed species are included in Appendix K.page 237

The study area, in general, is ecologically and biologically diverse and rich in species diversity. There are 52 federally listed species within the counties where the trail corridor is located, and 16 species have designated critical habitat. The species with critical habitat designations vary from invertebrates that spend their lives underground in mesocaverns (humanly impassable voids in karst limestone) and caves to species confined to springs or other isolated waterways. Nine listed invertebrates with designated critical habitat are underground cave dwellers and four of the nine occur in only one cave. Two insects (the Comal Springs dryopid beetle and the Comal Springs riffle beetle) and one crustaceous species (the Peck's cave amphipod) have designated habitat in two springs in Comal and Hays counties, Texas. San Marcos, in Hays County, also contains critical habitat designations for four other floral and faunal species: Texas wild rice, San Marcos salamander, fountain darter, and the San Marcos Gambosia. Bastrop and Burleson counties contain critical habitat for the Houston toad, with prime habitat located near the town of Bastrop.

Some species, such as the whooping crane, are listed in several counties. During annual migrations, whooping cranes stop in flooded playas, wetlands, or fields, and near rivers or lakes, to feed or rest, but not necessarily to reside. Other species also have specific requirements related to seasonal fluctuations in precipitation and soil type. The Neches River rose-mallow is listed in Houston County and requires seasonally wet soils. Sites where the mallow may be found are typically flooded during late winter and early spring, but the surface soils are often quite dry by late summer.

Little is known about some of the other species listed in counties that the trail crosses. The jaguarundi, for example, is one of the rarest cats in Texas, and much of the data available on its existence along the trail is gathered from anecdotal or historical writings. Jaguarundi habitat is thought to occur in dense thorny shrublands of the Río Grande Valley, although sightings of the cat have not been reported for several years. Much of the habitat of listed species has been fragmented as a result of development for agricultural or other purposes. As a result, species that once claimed large territories are now confined to remnant pieces of the original habitat type. The ocelot for example, is now only known to occur at or near Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, where its habitat of dense, thorny shrubs remains intact.

Conversely, some listed species may now be on the increase in areas the trail once crossed. The Louisiana black bear, one of 16 subspecies of the American black bear, historically roamed most of East Texas, thriving in swamps, thickets, bottomland hardwood forests, and other forest types. The black bear is now known mostly within the Atchafalaya River and Tensas River basins in Louisiana. Neighboring populations in Arkansas and Oklahoma are stable or increasing. This has resulted in more sightings of black bears in East Texas, suggesting that populations are on the rise.

LAND USE

Land uses along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail generally change with variations in landscape, water resources, and climate. Land use in more arid South Texas is dominated by livestock grazing on vast, largely empty rangelands, where the human population density is relatively low compared with other areas of the trail. Land uses in the region also include oil and natural gas production, and many of the ranches supplement their income by issuing hunting licenses. Agricultural lands are located in the area north and northwest of Carrizo Springs, where irrigated crops of corn, cotton, small grains, and vegetables are grown.

In East Central Texas, much of the prairie has been converted to cropland. This region has a higher population density than other areas of the trail, and urban development is displacing croplands at an increasing rate. The post

oak savanna vegetation zone, south of the cities of San Antonio and Austin, has irregular topography, and land use is dominated by livestock grazing.

East Texas and West Louisiana lie within the piney woods vegetation zone, where the major industry is lumber and wood-pulp production. Other land uses include poultry rearing, oil and gas production, and livestock grazing. The fertile bottomlands of the Red River basin near Natchitoches, Louisiana, are used for croplands.

Land uses within towns and cities along the trail include residential, commercial, light industrial, public, agricultural, and transportation. Portions of the trail are now existing roads or highways, or are crossed or paralleled by railroads and highways. Many towns and cities along the trail are steeped in history, and preserved landmarks are a valuable resource for attracting tourism to the area. Not surprisingly, then, much of the trail route has areas with historical designations.

El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail does not cross any designated wild and scenic rivers, nor does it cross any designated wildernesses or public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The only lands managed by the U.S.D.A. Forest Service crossed by the trail are in East Texas.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The data for this section is derived from the latest census information available at the county and parish level in 2000, except for population growth, where the information comes from returns for 1990 and 2000. It is clear to the planning team that substantial changes are likely to have taken place in the last nine years. Unfortunately, there is no way to extrapolate trends at the state levels with any accuracy, given the variability among the counties and parishes crossed by the trail. The variables selected for analysis appear to be good indicators of socioeconomic conditions along the trail. Income, education, and employment are generally considered to be among the best gauges of such circumstances. An analysis of ethnicity was conducted to satisfy the requirements of Executive Order 12898, “General Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations.”

POPULATION GROWTH

With the exception of Zavala and Dimmit counties, all the counties and parishes crossed by the trail experienced population growth. In 14 instances the growth was moderate, less than 10%, with Natchitoches and Sabine parishes in Louisiana included in this group. The most dramatic increase in population was found in two Texas counties, Comal and Williamson, where populations grew more than 75% between 1990 and 2000. Bastrop, Guadalupe, Hays, Medina, Travis, and Webb counties also registered major demographic growth spurts. Appendix L , Table L-2, page 250 and Map L-5, page 243 show an interesting pattern of major growth linked with geographic location occurring in areas around Austin, the San Antonio suburbs, and the some of the counties along the Mexican border.

INCOME/POVERTY RATE BY COUNTY/PARISH

An examination of the census data reveals very significant inequality in levels of income and poverty among the different counties/parishes (see Appendix L; Table L-1, page 249 and Map L-6, page 244). One way to establish a meaningful assessment is to compare the data for each county and parish with the average for the state as a whole. In both Texas and Louisiana, it should be noted, the state median household income is below the national average. Only the two Louisiana parishes and seven of the 40 Texas counties reported a median household income above the state average. In the case of Williamson County, the median household income was twice the state average.

Another census index that offers insight into socioeconomic conditions is the percentage of families below the poverty line—the average reported poverty rates for both Texas and Louisiana were substantially below the national average (see Appendix L; Table L-1 page 249, and Map L-7, page 245). Fourteen Texas counties out of 40 had a higher poverty rate than the state average. Conversely, eight Texas counties out of 40 reported rates of more than 20% higher than the state average. In analyzing the data, it becomes clear that most of the counties and parishes crossed by the trail rank considerably below the state average, both in terms of median household income and percentage of families below the poverty line. The areas around the cities of Austin, San Marcos, Bastrop, San Antonio, and Victoria show robust economic circumstances; the rest of the counties and parishes crossed by the trail, particularly those near the United States-Mexico border, appear to experience substantially less desirable conditions.

EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

In the category of employment, the percentage of civilian population employed varied between 74% and 40%, with most of the counties and parishes clustering quite closely (see Appendix L; Table L-3, page 251 and Map L-8, page 246). In 2006, Texas reported an employment rate above the national average; Louisiana was five percentage points below the national average, and both Sabine and Natchitoches parishes recorded employment levels below the Louisiana average. Once again, the data strongly suggests that the majority of counties and the two parishes crossed by the trail are experiencing harsh economic circumstances.

With regard to education, the pattern is similar to that of other variables (see Appendix L; Table L-3, page 251, and Map L-9, page 246). Both Louisiana and Texas report lower rates of high-school graduation than the national average. The counties and parishes the trail crosses exhibit substantial differences, with some counties reporting a 40% graduation rate and others twice that rate. In both Texas and Louisiana, there were 10 counties below the average for those states. A similar geographic distribution pattern emerges from an analysis of these two variables. Austin and its surrounding region (Travis and Williamson counties) and San Marcos (Hays County) report percentages that exceed the state and national averages. These two examples highlight, once again, a major imbalance in socioeconomic resources in the counties and parishes crossed by the trail.

ETHNICITY

The 2000 U.S. census data reveal a fairly complex picture of ethnicity (see Appendix L; Table L-4, page 252, and Map L-10, page 248)[1]. For all the political entities crossed by the trail, the percentage of whites (76.4) is slightly higher, but quite close to the national average (75.1). In Texas, Webb County is 97% white, while at the other extreme, Zavala is only 65.1% white. Natchitoches Parish has the lowest percentage of white population for all the counties and parishes crossed by the trail at 57.9%.

Overall the percentage of African Americans (9.7) is slightly lower than the national average (12.3). However, there are major discrepancies in values, and the average obscures the fact that the percentage of African Americans range from 0.3% in Atascosa County to 27.9% in San Augustine. The ratio of African Americans is much higher than the national average in the two Louisiana parishes, with 38.4 and 16.9 in Natchitoches and Sabine parishes, respectively.

The most dramatic difference from ethnic group composition at the national level revealed in these census data involves the Hispano population. In Louisiana, the number of Hispanos is substantially below the national average. In 2000, Sabine Parish reported 2.7% of its population was of

1 - Census data consider "hispano" a subset of white. The percentage figures in Table L-4 report the information as presented by the Census Bureau.

Hispanic origins; Natchitoches Parish, a mere 1.4%. In Texas, the situation is dramatically different, but the data show major discrepancies. Six counties report that Hispanos constitute more than 75% of their population, in the case of Maverick reaching 95%. At the other extreme, Sabine, San Augustine, Houston, and Leon counties show percentages of Hispanos well below the national average.

LANDOWNERSHIP

Landownership along the trail is predominantly private and closely parallels overall landownership patterns in Louisiana and Texas. Slightly more than 1% of the land crossed by the trail in Texas is owned by federal or state government; in Louisiana, slightly less than 1% of the land is government owned.

VISITOR USE AND EXPERIENCE

Although El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail has had a tremendous influence on the shaping of Texas and Louisiana history, few visitors are familiar with the story of the trail and its resources. Interpreting El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, and providing access to its resources, is particularly challenging, because the majority of the designated trail routes (more than 98%) cross privately owned land. This poses a challenge not only in interpreting and administering the trail but also in gaining public access to valuable trail resources.

Despite the large percentage of privately owned land, visitors can still see and experience historic sites and segments located along the trail. Opportunities to retrace the trail are readily available along public lands and rights-of-way, and trail users may potentially access trail sites and segments on private lands, with the consent and cooperation of the landowner.

There are currently no federal scenic/historic byway designations in Texas, or along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail's main route through Louisiana. However, many segments of the trail either parallel existing roads or have become a part of the modern highway system, meaning drivers can get a sense of what it was like to travel these routes. This is especially true on rural roads, where much of the original landscape has been preserved.

In addition to segments and rights-of-way, opportunities to experience and learn about the trail can also be found at publicly accessible historic sites and national, state, and county parks and other facilities, such as museums and visitor centers. Alternative B, the preferred alternative, supports the enhancement of interpretive and educational programs about the trail in existing museums and visitor centers. Information on the trail is also available online on both private and government-run websites as well as through publications and other media, and are listed below.

Orientation/Information: Orientation to and information about El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail are currently available in the following formats:

- A government-run website hosted by the National Park Service/ National Trails Intermountain Region at http://www.nps.gov/elte
- A privately run website hosted by El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association at http://elcaminorealdelostejas.org
- A colorful, 15-page brochure produced by the Texas Department of Transportation
- A DVD, On the Road to Partnerships, produced by the National Park Service/ National Trails Intermountain Region.

Interpretation/Education: Facilities/parks that currently offer some interpretation of the trail include but are not limited to:

- San Antonio Missions National Historical Park – San Antonio, Texas
- Fort St. Jean Baptiste State Historic Site – Natchitoches, Louisiana

- Goliad State Park and Historic Site – Goliad, Texas
- Los Adaes State Historic Park- Robeline, Louisiana
- Mission Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de los Ais – San Augustine, Texas
- Mission Tejas State Park – Grapeland, Texas
- Caddo Mounds State Historic Site – Alto, Texas
- Casa Navarro State Historic Site – San Antonio, Texas
- Stone Fort Museum – Nacogdoches, Texas

TRAIL-RELATED SITES AND SEGMENTS

Sites and segments related to the trail and open to the public include, but are not limited to, the following locations:

Mission Tejas State Park – Grapeland, Texas

Los Adaes State Historic Park – Robeline, Louisiana

The exact numbers of visitors to trail resources is very difficult to compile since most of these facilities seldom offer a possibility to indicate the purpose of the visit. However, Table 3-7 shows the latest visitation data available for trail-related parks and sites along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.

TOURISM

Tourism is a major national industry. Heritage tourism is becoming a significant part of this industry, contributing to both local and regional economies.

Heritage tourism dollars generate sales for travel-related retail and service businesses, support job growth, and contribute tax revenue to local and state governments. El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is an important asset to the states of Louisiana and Texas and is expected to contribute to the travel and tourism sectors by attracting regional, national, and international visitors.

LOUISIANA TOURISM SUMMARY FOR 2007[2]

- Total Louisiana visitor spending for 2007 was $9 billion
- More than 143,000 Louisiana residents were directly employed in the travel and tourism industry in 2007. This implies that the travel and tourism industry directly employed 7.7% of the Louisiana workforce in 2007
- $5.6 billion of 2007 Louisiana production (2.6% of gross state product) was directly attributable to expenditures in the travel and tourism industry
- In terms of taxes, fees, and license revenues, visitor spending accounted for $782 million of 2007 Louisiana revenues, or 8.7% of this major revenue category.

TEXAS TOURISM SUMMARY FOR 2007[3]

- Total direct travel spending in Texas was $56.7 billion in 2007. This represents a 5.4% increase over the preceding year. In constant (inflation-adjusted) dollars, travel spending increased by 2% from 2006 to 2007.
- Increased room rates and motor fuel prices were the primary inflationary factors in the travel industry.
- Local and state tax revenues directly generated by travel spending were $3.8 billion in 2007, not including property tax payments. This represents approximately 8% of all local and state tax revenues, not including property taxes. Travel spending generated an additional $3.6 billion

2 - Extracted from The 2007 Louisiana Tourism Satellite Account, An Update by the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. Web site: www.crt.state.la.us

3 - Extracted from The Economic Impact of Travel on Texas, August 2008 by Dean Runyan Associates. Website: www.deanrunyan.com

in federal tax receipts. The total tax revenues of $7.4 billion are equivalent to $880 for each Texas household.

- Visitors who stayed overnight in commercial lodging (hotels, motels, resorts, bed and breakfasts) spent $25.8 billion in 2007. This represents more than one-half of all visitors spending at destinations in the state.
- During 2007, travel spending in Texas directly supported 534,000 jobs, with earnings of $16.3 billion. About three-quarters of these jobs were in the leisure and hospitality sector (accommodations, food services, arts, entertainment, and recreation).
- Travel spending supported jobs in other industries through the recirculation of travel dollars among local businesses and individuals, creating a multiplier effect. The secondary impacts in 2007 were 469,000 jobs and $16.3 billion in earnings.
- The gross domestic product of the Texas travel industry was $23.1 billion in 2007. This is similar to other export-oriented industries, such as microelectronics and agriculture/food production. Only oil and gas production and related manufacturing has a significantly greater gross domestic product.
- Even though most of the travel spending and travel-generated impacts occur in the larger metropolitan areas of Texas, this is misleading: travel is actually more important for many of the non-metropolitan areas in the state. In terms of the relative importance of travel-generated employment, six of the top 10 counties in Texas are in non-metropolitan areas.

CHAPTER 4
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

CHAPTER 4: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

INTRODUCTION

This section analyzes the potential environmental consequences or impacts associated with the implementation of the alternatives presented. The alternatives offer general strategies for the long-term administration and protection of trail resources and related visitor use. They are conceptual in nature and do not include any specific development activities or any site-specific action. Because no site-specific actions, such as major construction projects or specific land purchases, are proposed in the alternatives, the analysis of impacts consists of an overview of the potential impacts of implementing each alternative. And because of the broad nature of the alternatives, the analysis of environmental consequences is equally broad. This section also describes generalized measures to minimize potential impacts, but this plan does not suggest that these measures would work for every site, or that they should be applied without further study of specific development projects.

The parties responsible for the protection of cultural resources in both the states of Louisiana and Texas concurred at the beginning of the planning process that the project did not meet the criteria of a federal undertaking. Nevertheless, consistent with National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106, any federally proposed action in the future would require specific compliance for each site or segment along the congressionally designated routes and may require consultation with the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Louisiana and Texas departments of transportation, state historic preservation officers, federally recognized American Indian tribes, and other state and federal agencies.

Chapter 3 covered the Affected Environment and identified the existing conditions for all impact topics that are analyzed and provide additional information that could prove useful in the future administration of the trail. Impact topics were selected based on federal laws, orders, and regulations, National Park Service management policies, and issues and concerns expressed during public scoping. Impact topics allow for a standardized comparison of the potential environmental consequences that each alternative could trigger. Selected impact topics considered relevant to this plan include cultural resources (ethnographic, archeologic, and historic resources), natural resources (vegetation and wildlife), visitor use and experience, landownership and use, and socioeconomic conditions.

METHODOLOGY

Impact analyses are presented in this document by describing the impacts of each alternative on each resource topic. Each impact topic includes a description of the impact of the alternative, a discussion of cumulative effects, and a conclusion.

Several factors inform impact analyses and conclusions. They include National Park Service staff knowledge of resources, the project area, and administration and management of other national historic trails and a review of existing literature and information provided by experts in the National Park Service, other agencies or organizations, or knowledgeable individuals. Any effects described in this section are based on the proposals for the alternatives and the reasonable expectations of the impacts they might have; therefore, the best professional judgment was used in determining potential effects.

IMPACT TERMINOLOGY

Using the guidelines from the National Environmental Policy Act, the potential consequences of the actions in the alternatives are discussed and analyzed. Direct, indirect, and cumulative effects are analyzed for each resource topic carried forward. Potential impacts are described in terms of type, context, duration, and intensity. General definitions are defined below, while more specific impact thresholds are identified for each resource at the beginning of each resource section.

Type describes the classification of the impact as either beneficial or adverse, direct or indirect:

Beneficial: A positive change in the condition or appearance of the resource or a change that moves the resource toward a desired condition.

Adverse: A change that moves the resource away from a desired condition or detracts from its appearance or condition.

Direct: An effect that is caused by an action, and occurs in the same time and place.

Indirect: An effect that is caused by an action but is later in time or farther removed in distance, but is still reasonably foreseeable.

Context describes the area or location in which the impact will occur

Duration describes the length of time an effect will occur, either short term or long term:

-*Short-term impacts* generally last only during construction, and the resources resume their preconstruction conditions following construction.

-*Long-term impacts* last beyond the construction period, and the resources may not resume their preconstruction conditions for a longer period of time following construction.

Intensity describes the degree, level, or strength of an impact. For this analysis, intensity has been categorized into negligible, minor, moderate, and major. Because definitions of intensity vary by resource topic, intensity definitions are provided separately for each impact topic analyzed in this environmental assessment.

CUMULATIVE IMPACT SCENARIO

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, which implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 USC 4321 et seq.), require assessment of cumulative impacts in the decision-making process for federal projects. Cumulative impacts are defined as "the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or nonfederal) or person undertakes such other actions" (40 CFR 1508.7). Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. Cumulative impacts are considered for both the no action and preferred alternative.

The alternatives presented in this plan were also evaluated based on external factors that, together with the actions of each alternative, could have cumulative impacts. External factors consist largely of the independent land-use decisions of possibly thousands of private, state, county, and municipal property owners along close to 2,600 miles of designated trail routes. Some of these decisions may be somewhat influenced by the trail designation, but they are most likely driven by local economic factors and community values, which can be expected to vary across the two parishes and 40 counties crossed by the designated routes. Another factor is the degree to which the tourism and the hospitality industries would participate in trail promotion and in encouraging visitation.

Several trends along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail have been identified for conducting the cumulative effects analysis:

- Increased urban development, particularly housing, commercial businesses, and highways
- Energy development projects, such as the construction of gas and oil pipelines
- Private individual development projects that aim to attract visitors but do not consider the need to retain the historic fabric of trail-related resources
- Major changes in the ecoregions as a result of changes in land use, such as:
    - large timber industry operations in Louisiana and East Texas
    - agricultural activities
    - livestock grazing
    - large hunting preserves in South Texas
- Increase in heritage tourism in Texas and Louisiana, expanding opportunities for retail trade and visitor services
- Increase in websites, exhibits, and facilities that offer visitors the opportunity to learn and appreciate trail resources along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail

INFORMATION SOURCES AND GAPS

The impact analysis and conclusions are based on information available in the literature; data from studies, records, and information provided by experts, other agencies, and nonprofit groups; and field work conducted by the planning team. In addition, relevant laws, regulations, and National Park Service management policies were used in analyzing impacts.

In association with the preparation of the document, several studies, mentioned in the Affected Environment chapter, were completed. However, due to the length of the corridor, the long period of significance, and the complex history of the areas crossed by the trail, it will be crucial that additional research projects be undertaken. A list of such projects has been identified in Chapter 1, under Gaps in Information and Research Needs, page 24.

IMPACTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES

National historic trails are conceived and designated as routes with beginning and end points, but lack formally defined corridor-edge boundaries. They allow for—but do not require or legislatively establish—public access, ownership, easements, or rights-of-way to trail segments for outdoor recreation purposes. Landowners and land managers along the designated routes retain full ownership and control of their lands, can continue to use and develop their property as they wish, and are not required to open their lands to the public. They are offered opportunities to cooperate voluntarily with the trail's designated federal lead agency, to provide for public access, resource protection, interpretation, and limited development. In the case of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, the designated federal lead agency is the National Park Service. The role of the National Park Service is to set and maintain signage and interpretive standards; help ensure consistent preservation, education, and public-use programs; manage the use of the official trail logo; and provide technical and limited financial assistance to partners. The impacts of any alternative depend upon the interest of state and local landowners in initiating projects and working with the National Park Service to provide for trail visitation and interpretation, as well as in the interest of local businesses in promoting trail-related heritage tourism activities.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources that may be affected by the alternatives include ethnographic, archeological, and historic resources.

Ethnographic Resources

The National Park Service defines ethnographic resources as any "site, structure, object, landscape, or natural

resource feature assigned traditional legendary, religious, subsistence, or other significance in the cultural system of a group traditionally associated with it." El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail consists of routes that were developed by American Indian tribes who occupied lands along the trail corridor. In the 19th century, several of these groups were forced by the federal government to relocate to Oklahoma; however, these lands and their resources along the trail corridor still hold great cultural significance for many of the federally designated tribes associated with this project.

Consulting tribes are also extremely concerned about how stories about the trail are interpreted. Because their ancestors played a key role in the development of trade networks and because they were the focus of Spanish missionary activities, tribal members often regard these stories as deeply meaningful on personal, spiritual, political, and cultural levels. Affected tribes take a deep interest in how they and their ancestors are portrayed to the public. Federal and most state agencies are required to consult with affected tribes on such matters; however, local and private landowners are not.

Methodology

Among the issues of concern to American Indian tribes are public knowledge of significant American Indian sites, potential impacts to physical ethnographic resources, and whether ethnographic information concerning the events and impacts to affected tribes would be considered in developing interpretive media for public use.

Effects on ethnographic resources can be beneficial or adverse, direct or indirect, short or long term. For the purposes of this analysis, levels of impact to ethnographic resources were defined as follows:

Negligible: Impacts would be barely perceptible and would neither alter resource conditions, such as traditional access or site preservation, nor the relationship between the resource and the affiliated group's body of practices and beliefs.

Minor: Impacts would be minor but noticeable, but would neither appreciably alter resource conditions, such as traditional access or site preservation, nor the relationship between the resources and the affiliated group's body of practices and beliefs.

Moderate: Impacts would be apparent and would alter resource conditions and interfere with traditional access, site preservation, or the relationship between the resources and the affiliated group's practices and beliefs, even though the group's practices would survive.

Major: Impacts would alter resource conditions and/or block or greatly affect traditional access, site preservation, or the relationship between the resource and the affiliated group's practices and beliefs, to the extent that the survival of the group's practices and beliefs would be jeopardized.

Alternative A. Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)

Under this alternative, National Park Service activities, including federally mandated government-to-government relations with federally recognized Indian tribes, would continue.

The National Trails Intermountain Region would have limited opportunity to increase current knowledge about the relationship between American Indian groups and trail resources; they would not be incorporated into the management of the trail high potential sites and segments associated with the various tribes who played a key role in the development of El Camino Real de los Tejas. Lack of knowledge about the specific location of sacred sites together with the absence of a communication network would result in impacts, resulting from the construction of oil and gas pipelines, and possibly private development projects designed to attract visitors.

Public awareness of ethnographic

resources would continue to be limited to special interest groups and motivated individuals. It is quite likely that some landowners, nonprofit historic preservation and/or conservation groups, and even some local governments would take action to identify, interpret, and protect ethnographic trail resources that have not been yet recognized. Interpretation of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, as it relates to American Indians who lived along the trail corridor during various periods, would involve discussing cultures, actions, and the motivations of these groups. As mentioned before, individual landowners and local governments are not required legally to consult American Indian tribes regarding interpretation of their history, the cultural and personal consequences of the removal of the tribes to Oklahoma, or potential impacts to culturally significant resources. Moreover, even well-meaning individuals often fail to understand that their efforts at recognizing American Indian contributions can cause adverse impacts to ethnographic resources. There is also a real danger that such programs would not present accurate interpretation of these groups' experiences.

Cumulative Effects: Trail-related ethnographic resources on private lands could be impacted by urban development, such as housing, commercial businesses, and highways. They could also continue to be affected by private projects, such as the construction of oil and gas pipelines, which are often planned with limited awareness of the existence and significance of these resources. American Indian trail routes and associated resources closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they might also be impacted by road enhancement projects as well as by increases in agricultural activities and livestock grazing. This alternative would add a minor degree to the overall cumulative impacts on ethnographic resources.

Conclusion: Alternative A would have a minor, long-term, and indirect adverse impact on ethnographic resources because of the limited awareness of the resources that could be impacted. This alternative would have negligible effects on American Indian concerns about the interpretation of the stories associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail. Cumulatively, this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall effect on ethnographic resources.

Alternative B, Preferred Alternative. Trail Development through Partnerships

This alternative places emphasis on enhancing knowledge about trail resources, particularly the relationships among these resources and various American Indians tribes. The National Park Service would make a serious effort to identify, protect, and interpret high potential sites associated with those tribes who played a key role in the development of El Camino Real de los Tejas. Impacts could still result due to the lack of information about the specific location of some sacred sites and due to incompatible use practices, such as the construction of oil and gas pipelines. However, on-the-ground trail stewards and the communication network associated with this alternative would help identify such projects early on, and as a result, construction would be more likely rerouted to less sensitive areas. Advance notice of these projects would also allow for the implementation of proper mitigation.

Public awareness of ethnographic resources would be greatly enhanced, since this alternative emphasizes research on trail-related issues that have received limited attention. It is still likely that some landowners, nonprofit historic preservation and/or conservation groups, and even some local governments would take action to identify, interpret, and protect ethnographic trail resources without consulting with appropriate American Indian tribes. However, given the emphasis on landowner education, such actions would be less likely to occur under Alternative B.

The enhanced interpretive program this alternative envisions would involve

discussions about the cultures, actions, and motivations of the American Indian tribes who lived along the El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail corridor. Under Alternative B, it is unlikely that interpretive programs would present inaccurate information about the experiences of these groups and their role in the development of the trail.

Cumulative Effects: Trail-related ethnographic resources on private lands would continue to be impacted by urban development, such as housing, commercial businesses, and highways. However, at a minimum greater awareness of ethnographic resources would lessen the likelihood of impacts from nonfederal projects, such as the construction of oil and gas pipelines, which are often planned with limited awareness of the existence and significance of these resources. American Indian trail routes and associated resources closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they would be likely impacted by road enhancement projects as well as by increases in agriculture and livestock grazing. However, this alternative would result in minor cumulative impacts on ethnographic resources, because the greater awareness of resources would be more likely to prevent projects that might cause negative impacts.

Conclusion: Alternative B would have minor, long-term, and indirect beneficial impacts on ethnographic resources because there would be greater awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. This alternative might have negligible effects on American Indian concerns about the interpretation of the stories associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail; however, the efforts to highlight the contribution of American Indians to the development of this trail would bring about more awareness of the significance of resources and would be more likely to lead to their protection. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action on ethnographic resources would not add impacts to the overall effect on ethnographic resources.

Archeological Resources

Methodology

The National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their actions on properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The process begins with the identification and evaluation of cultural resources for national register eligibility, followed by an assessment of the effects the proposed undertaking might have on those eligible resources. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act provides criteria for evaluating the kind of effect, if any, an undertaking might have on historic resources.

If a federal undertaking has no potential to change the characteristics that qualify the resource for inclusion in the national register, then it is considered to have *no effect* on the historic property. If the undertaking could change those characteristics, then it is considered to have an effect, which could be adverse or not adverse. *No adverse effect* means that the effect would not be harmful (it could be benign or beneficial) to those characteristics that qualify the resource for the national register. *Adverse effect* means that the undertaking could diminish the integrity of those characteristics.

Effects on archeological resources can be beneficial or adverse, direct or indirect, short or long term. For the purposes of this analysis, levels of impact to archeological resources were defined as follows:

Negligible: Impact is at the lowest levels of detection, with neither adverse nor beneficial consequences.

Minor: *Adverse*–Disturbance of site results in little, if any, loss of integrity. No adverse effect.
Beneficial–Maintenance and preservation of the site. No adverse effect.

Moderate: *Adverse*–Disturbance results in loss of integrity. Determination would be adverse effect. If so, a memorandum of agreement would be executed between the National Park Service and the state historic preservation officer, and, if necessary, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. A memorandum of agreement identifies measure(s) to minimize or mitigate adverse impacts and reduce intensity from major to moderate.
Beneficial–Site stabilization. The determination would be no adverse effect.

Major: *Adverse*–Disturbance results in loss of integrity. Determination would be adverse effect. Measures to minimize or mitigate cannot be agreed upon, and no memorandum of agreement is executed.
Beneficial–Active intervention to preserve site. Determination would be no adverse effect.

Alternative A. Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)

Under this alternative, the National Park Service would continue to work with resource owners to protect high potential sites and segments associated with the trail, to place signs along trail routes, to develop appropriate visitor access and interpretation, and to help protect other trail-related historic properties. Land use-related activities and practices, with potential to affect archeological resources, would continue at current levels.

Any proposed National Park Service funded undertaking on any lands, private or public, must comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, which requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on archeological properties. It should be noted, however, that after more than 20 years of managing historic trails, the National Park Service has undertaken no trail-related project that resulted in adverse effects to archeological resources.

Individual landowners, nonprofit preservation and conservation groups, and local governments would be at liberty to independently recognize, interpret, and protect trail resources. These activities often involve the installation of structures that might impair significant resources, and can also entail roadside or interpretive signs, increased visitation, guided tours, maintenance, and protection of archeological remains and historic buildings, and possibly other activities. Sometimes a local government will establish a park, roadside pullout, or walking trail. Such on-site activities could affect, either beneficially or adversely, trail-related archeological properties with characteristics that make them eligible for listing on the National Register for Historic Places. However, as such nonfederal projects are beyond the boundaries of federal lands and without federal support or permitting, such independent activities typically receive no review from archeological-resource professionals, state historic preservation officers, or others qualified to evaluate and develop appropriate mitigation for effects on such properties.

The National Park Service, the lead federal agency for the trail, has no oversight authority over these types of landowner activities. Since most of the trail routes associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail are in private hands, this could become a problem. A general lack of awareness about trail resources, their fragile nature, and the subtle characteristics that imbue them with meaning would possibly contribute to continued misguided development. The current lack of a trailwide communications network to warn about projects, such as the construction of oil and gas pipelines that would harm trail resources, would mean that many archeological resources could be either lost or adversely affected.

Cumulative Effects: Trail-related archeological resources on private lands could be impacted by urban development, such as housing, commercial businesses, and highways.

They would also continue to be affected by private projects, such as the construction of oil and gas pipelines, which are often planned with limited awareness of the existence and significance of these resources. Historic trail routes and associated resources closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they might also be impacted by road enhancement projects as well as by increases in agricultural activities and livestock grazing. This alternative would incrementally add a minor degree to the overall cumulative impacts on archeological resources.

Conclusion: Alternative A would have minor, long-term, and indirect adverse impacts on archeological resources because there would be little awareness of the existence and location of the resources. For that reason they would be more likely to be impacted. Cumulatively, this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall cumulative effect on ethnographic resources.

Alternative B, Preferred Alternative. Trail Development through Partnerships

Under this alternative the National Park Service, as the lead federal agency, would interact more regularly with landowners, encouraging land-management practices that protect archeological resources. The National Park Service would work with individual landowners and nonfederal land managers along the trail corridor to develop appropriate visitor access, public education opportunities, and interpretation of significant resources. These activities would enhance knowledge of the trail, would promote awareness of trail-related sites and segments, and foster interest in and concern for their protection.

Under this alternative, the National Park Service would encourage continued research to verify trail routes and to identify additional sites and segments that have not yet received attention from investigators. The National Park Service would sponsor activities, such as conferences, to provide a forum for scholars interested in exploring issues associated with the history of the trail that have yet to deserve proper attention. This would be part of the effort to raise awareness about the trail.

Even with increased awareness, it is possible that individual landowners, nonprofit historic preservation and conservation groups, and local governments would still undertake projects that might adversely impact archeological resources. The National Park Service still would have no oversight authority over these types of landowner activities. Most of the trail routes associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail routes are in private hands, so this could still become a serious problem. A general lack of awareness about trail resources, their fragile nature, and the subtle characteristics that imbue them with meaning would contribute to continued misguided development.

It is likely, however, that it would be far easier to prevent loss of resources or adverse effects if there were an active trailwide communications network to warn about potentially harmful projects undertaken by private landowners or by private corporations. It is also likely that, with increased awareness about trail resources, landowners would be more likely to work jointly with the trail administration to take advantage of the technical and limited financial assistance offered by the National Trails Intermountain Region. Such partnerships would offer National Trails Intermountain Region staff, in consultation with the two state historic preservation officers, an opportunity to identify potential adverse effects and to propose avoidance or mitigation measures.

Any proposed National Park Service funded undertaking on any lands, private or public, would have to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, which requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties. Typically, National Park Service-supported activities along historic trails that have the potential

to affect archeological resources include the following: small-scale site development to improve visitor access and interpretation; trail marking; site protection and stabilization; outdoor interpretation projects; rehabilitation, renovation, and maintenance of historic buildings and structures; and development of exhibits and programs in already existing facilities. If some of these projects are carried out, there may be an increase in visitation and activities and increased interest in the trail and related National Park Service programs. It is also possible that, by studying new trail-related sites, there may be greater opportunities to enter into partnership agreements. Greater interest in trail resources is likely to result in enhanced interpretation and education programs, higher-quality exhibits, and other projects, which would have little or no potential to affect archeological resources.

Cumulative Effects: A few trail-related archeological resources on private lands could be gradually lost to development, such as housing, commercial businesses, and highways; but under this alternative, the losses would be considerably smaller. Increased knowledge about trail resources, heightened awareness of their nature, and the substantial involvement of volunteers along the trail—both in the identification and protection of resources—would significantly improve the ability to protect significant trail resources and prevent their disappearance due to the trends identified under the cumulative impacts scenario. This alternative would result in long-term beneficial minor impacts on archeological resources, because there would be a greater awareness of the resources likely to be impacted.

Conclusion: Alternative B would have minor, long-term, and indirect beneficial impacts on archeological resources since there would be greater awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. Increased knowledge about trail resources and compliance with Section 106 would result in beneficial impacts to archeological resources. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall cumulative effect on ethnographic resources.

Historic Resources

Methodology

The National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their actions on properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The process begins with the identification and evaluation of cultural resources for national register eligibility, followed by an assessment of the effects the proposed undertaking might have on those eligible resources. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act provides criteria for evaluating the kind of effect, if any an undertaking might have on historic resources.

If a federal undertaking has no potential to change the characteristics that qualify the resource for inclusion in the national register, then it is considered to have *no effect* on the historic property. If the undertaking could change those characteristics, then it is considered to have an effect, which could be adverse or not adverse. *No adverse effect* means that the effect would not be harmful (it could be benign or beneficial) to those characteristics that qualify the resource for the national register. *Adverse effect* means that the undertaking could diminish the integrity of those characteristics.

Effects on historic resources can be beneficial or adverse, direct or indirect, short or long term. For the purposes of this analysis, levels of impact to historic resources were defined as follows:

Negligible: Impact is at the lowest levels of detection, with neither adverse nor beneficial consequences.

Minor: *Adverse*–Disturbance of site results in little, if any, loss of integrity. No adverse effect.
Beneficial–Maintenance and preservation of the site. No adverse effect.

Moderate: *Adverse*–Disturbance results in loss of integrity. Determination would be adverse effect. If so, a memorandum of agreement would be executed between the National Park Service and the state historic preservation officer, and, if necessary, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. A memorandum of agreement identifies measure(s) to minimize or mitigate adverse impacts and reduce intensity from major to moderate.
Beneficial–Site stabilization. The determination would be no adverse effect.

Major: *Adverse*–Disturbance results in loss of integrity. Determination would be adverse effect. Measures to minimize or mitigate cannot be agreed upon, and no memorandum of agreement is executed.
Beneficial–Active intervention to preserve site. Determination would be no adverse effect.

Alternative A. Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)

Under this alternative, the National Park Service would continue to work with resource owners to protect high potential sites and segments associated with the trail, to place signs along trail routes, to develop appropriate visitor access and interpretation, and to help protect other trail-related historic properties. Those land use-related activities and practices, with potential to affect historic resources, would continue at current levels.

Any proposed National Park Service funded undertaking on any lands, private or public, must comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, which requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties. It should be noted, however, that after more than 20 years of managing historic trails, the National Park Service has undertaken no trail-related project that resulted in adverse effects to historic resources.

Individual landowners, nonprofit historic preservation and conservation groups, and local governments can independently recognize, interpret, and protect trail resources. These activities often involve the installation of structures that might impair significant resources, and can also entail roadside or interpretive signs, increased visitation, guided tours, maintenance and protection of historic buildings, and possibly other activities. Sometimes a local government will establish a park, roadside pullout, or walking trail. Such on-site activities could affect, either beneficially or adversely, trail-related historic properties with characteristics that make them eligible for listing on the National Register for Historic Places. However, as such nonfederal projects are beyond the boundaries of federal lands and without federal support or permitting, such independent activities typically receive no review from historic-resource professionals, state historic preservation officers, or others qualified to evaluate and develop appropriate mitigation for effects on such properties.

The National Park Service, the federal lead agency for the trail, has no oversight authority over these types of landowner activities. Since most of the trail routes associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail are in private hands, this could become a problem. A general lack of awareness about trail resources, their fragile nature, and the subtle characteristics that imbue them with meaning would contribute to continued misguided development. The current lack of a trailwide communications network to warn about projects, such as oil and gas pipelines projects that would harm trail resources, would mean that many historic resources would be either lost or adversely affected.

Cumulative Effects: Historic trail resources on nonfederal lands would continue to be impacted by increased urban development, such as housing, commercial businesses, and highways. They would also continue to be affected by private development, such as the construction of oil and gas pipelines which are often planned with limited awareness of the significance of these

resources. Trail routes and associated historic resources closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they would be likely impacted by economic development activities, such as urban development as well as increases in agriculture and livestock grazing. This alternative would result in minor, long-term, and indirect cumulative impacts on historic resources.

Conclusion: Alternative A may have a moderate, long-term, and indirect adverse cumulative impact on historic resources since there would be little awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. Cumulatively, the minor adverse effect of this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall cumulative effect on historic resources.

Alternative B, Preferred Alternative. Trail Development through Partnerships

Under this alternative, the National Park Service, as the federal lead agency, would interact more regularly with landowners, encouraging land-management practices that protect historic resources. The National Park Service would work with individual landowners and nonfederal land managers along the trail corridor to develop appropriate visitor access, public education opportunities, and interpretation of significant trail resources. These activities would enhance awareness of the trail, promote awareness of trail-related sites and segments, and foster interest in and concern for their protection.

Under this alternative, the National Park Service would also encourage continued research to verify trail routes and to identify additional sites and segments that have not yet received attention from investigators. The National Park Service would sponsor activities, such as conferences, to provide a forum for scholars interested in exploring issues associated with the history of the trail that have not yet received the attention they deserve. This would be part of the effort to raise awareness about the trail.

Even with increased awareness, it is possible that individual landowners, nonprofit historic preservation and conservation groups, and local governments would still undertake projects that might adversely impact historic resources. The National Park Service still would have no oversight authority over these types of landowner activities. Most of the trail routes associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail routes are in private hands, so this could still become a problem. A general lack of awareness about trail resources, their fragile nature, and the subtle characteristics that imbue them with meaning in the historical record would contribute to continued misguided development.

It is likely, however, that it would be far easier to prevent loss of resources or adverse effects if there were an active trailwide communications network to warn about potentially harmful projects undertaken by private landowners or by private corporations. It is also likely that, with increased awareness about trail resources, landowners would be more likely to take advantage of the technical and financial assistance offered by the National Trails Intermountain Region. Such partnerships would offer National Trails Intermountain Region staff, in consultation with the two state historic preservation officers, an opportunity to identify potential adverse effects and to propose avoidance or mitigation measures.

Any proposed National Park Service funded undertaking on any lands, private or public, would have to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, which requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties. Typically, National Park Service-supported activities along historic trails that have the potential to affect historic resources include the following: small-scale site development to improve visitor access and interpretation; trail marking; site protection and stabilization; outdoor interpretation projects; rehabilitation, renovation, and maintenance of historic buildings and structures; and development of exhibits and

programs in already existing facilities. If some of these projects were to be carried out, there may be an increase in visitation and activities and increased interest in the trail and related National Park Service programs. It is also possible that, by studying new trail-related sites, there may be an increase in partnership opportunities. Greater interest in trail resources is likely to result in enhanced exhibits and interpretation and education programs and other educational projects, which have little or no potential to affect historic resources.

Cumulative Effects: Trail-related historic resources on private lands could continue to be impacted by development, such as housing, commercial businesses, and highways; however, under this alternative, the losses would be considerably smaller. Increased knowledge about trail resources, heightened awareness of their nature, and the substantial involvement of volunteers along the trail, both in the identification and protection of resources and in preventing projects that might cause adverse impacts, would significantly improve the ability to prevent their disappearance. This alternative would result in long-term beneficial minor cumulative impacts on historic resources.

Conclusion: Alternative B would have minor, long-term, and indirect beneficial impacts on historic resources because there would be greater awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action on historic resources would add a minor degree of impact to the overall effect on historic resources. Cumulative impacts would have minor, long-term, and indirect widespread beneficial impacts on historic resources.

Natural Resources: Native Vegetation

Methodology

Issues of concern with regard to native vegetation may be associated with the removal of vegetative cover in association with trail-related development and visitor-use activities.

Effects on natural resources can be beneficial or adverse, direct or indirect, short or long term. For the purposes of this analysis, levels of impact to natural resources (vegetation) were defined as follows:

Negligible: Individual native plants may be affected, but measurable or perceptible changes in plant community size, integrity, or continuity would not occur.

Minor: Effects on native plants would be measurable or perceptible, but would be localized within a small geographic area. The viability to the plant community would not be affected, and if left alone, the community would recover.

Moderate: Changes would occur over a relatively large area in the native plant communities that would be readily measurable in terms of abundance, distribution, quantity, or quality. Mitigation measures would probably be necessary to offset adverse effects, but would likely be successful.

Major: Effects on native plant communities would be readily apparent and would substantially change community types over a large geographic area. Extensive mitigation would be needed to offset adverse effects, and its success would not be assured.

Alternative A. Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)

Under this alternative, the National Park Service would continue working with landowners to place signs along trail routes, develop appropriate visitor access and interpretation, and help protect trail-related sites. These land-related activities would continue at current levels. Any National Park Service-supported activities that might disturb lands or increase visitation to sensitive natural areas or wildlife populations would undergo additional environmental analysis to evaluate impacts. Based on current information, it is highly

unlikely that trail-related projects would have adverse impacts on any natural resource along the designated trail routes.

Cumulative Effects: During the last two centuries, major changes in vegetative cover have occurred throughout the counties and parishes crossed by the trail. The practice of agriculture has led to large areas being converted from native vegetation to croplands and/or pastures of nonnative grasses. Timber harvesting for fuel or lumber has removed the extensive woodlands that covered the eastern sections of the trail, and livestock grazing has reduced native plant densities in some areas and changed the composition of native vegetation communities. Extensive residential, commercial, energy, and road-associated development have removed native vegetation habitat. However, some communities of native plant species continue to exist, particularly within protected public lands.

Natural resources on private lands could continue to be impacted by increased urban development and the construction of oil and gas pipelines, projects that tend to show little awareness of the importance of preserving the native vegetation and wildlife. Trail routes closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they would be likely impacted by a variety of economic development activities. This alternative would result in minor, long-term and adverse cumulative impacts on native vegetation

Conclusion: Alternative A would have a minor, long-term, and indirect adverse impact on native vegetation since there would be little awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. Cumulatively, the minor adverse effect of this action on native vegetation would only incrementally add a minor degree of impact to the overall impact on natural resources.

Alternative B, Preferred Alternative. Trail Development through Partnerships

Habitat loss, such as its reduction due to road construction or improvements, could be a factor in jeopardizing the native flora, and represents a potentially serious threat to the long-term survival of endangered or threatened species. Before any kind of undertaking, a comprehensive survey and consultation would be conducted with the appropriate U.S. Fish and Wildlife office. Exhibits and/or trails would be sited to avoid habitats of native wildlife. Some small-scale construction might occur, but it would be carefully designed to avoid impacts to native vegetation and its critical habitat. To confirm the presence of a species, it would be normal practice to conduct species surveys of suspected associated habitats. If a population were to be detected at the project location, or within the affected area, mitigation measures would be incorporated into the project proposals in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Louisiana and Texas departments of natural resources.

Under this alternative, National Park Service would continue working with landowners to place signs along trail routes, develop appropriate visitor access and interpretation, and help protect trail-related sites. These land-related activities would continue at current levels. Any National Park Service-supported activity that might disturb land or increase visitation to sensitive natural areas would undergo additional environmental analysis to evaluate impacts. Based on current information, it is highly unlikely that trail-related projects would have adverse impact on any natural resource along the designated trail routes.

Typical trail activities that have the potential to impact vegetation include collaborative projects with landowners to provide for appropriate visitor access and use, the development of outdoor interpretive trails and exhibits, and collaboration with landowners to protect trail resources. Impacts of native vegetation

from these activities would be rare and negligible, if they occur at all.

Increased recreational uses, such as hiking and biking, that might result in some areas under Alternative B could adversely impact native vegetation. Such potential impacts would be reviewed and carefully considered under a separate National Environmental Policy Act process, so that any adverse effects to natural resources would be avoided or mitigated.

Cumulative Effects: Because of raised awareness about trail resources, it is possible that some property owners might choose not to initiate activities, such as development or land clearing, which might impact vegetation. In such cases, the impact of this alternative would be local and beneficial to the native flora.

Heightened awareness of development opportunities from increased visitation might result in an expansion of retail trade and visitor services. However, under this alternative, there would be a greater understanding of the need to protect the historic setting of trail resources and this would minimize the negative impacts of development associated with expanding services.

Conclusion: The preferred alternative would cause minor, long-term beneficial, and indirect effects because the majority of developers would be more cognizant of the impacts of their actions on trail resources. Furthermore, any federal project resulting directly from the implementation of Alternative B would undergo site-specific environmental analysis, and care would be taken to avoid and minimize impacts to these resources. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall impact on natural vegetation.

Natural Resources: Wildlife

Methodology

Issues of concern with regard to native fauna may be associated with the disturbance of wildlife habitat in association with trail-related development and visitor-use activities.

Effects on natural resources can be beneficial or adverse, direct or indirect, short or long term. For the purposes of this analysis, levels of impact to natural resources (wildlife) were defined as follows:

Negligible: Individual wildlife may be affected, but measurable or perceptible changes in plant community size, integrity, or continuity would not occur.

Minor: Effects on wildlife would be measurable or perceptible, but would be localized within a small geographic area. The viability of the animal community would not be affected, and if left alone, the community would recover.

Moderate: Changes would occur over a relatively large area in the wildlife communities that would be readily measurable in terms of abundance, distribution, quantity, or quality. Mitigation measures would probably be necessary to offset adverse effects, but would likely be successful.

Major: Effects on native fauna would be readily apparent and would substantially change community types over a large geographic area. Extensive mitigation would be needed to offset adverse effects, and its success would not be assured.

Alternative A. Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)

Under this alternative, the National Park Service would continue working with landowners to place signs along trail routes, develop appropriate visitor access and interpretation, and help protect trail-related sites. These land-related activities would continue at current levels. Any National Park Service-supported activities that might disturb lands or increase visitation to sensitive natural areas would undergo additional environmental analysis to evaluate impacts. Based on current information, it is highly unlikely that trail-related projects would have adverse

impacts on any natural resource along the designated trail routes.

Cumulative Effects: During the last two centuries, major changes in wildlife habitat have occurred throughout the counties and parishes crossed by the trail. The practice of agriculture has led to large areas being converted from wildlife habitat to croplands and/or pastures of nonnative grasses. Timber harvesting for fuel or lumber has removed the extensive woodlands that covered the eastern sections of the trail, and livestock grazing has reduced animal densities in some areas and changed the composition of animal communities. Extensive residential, commercial, energy, and road-associated development have removed wildlife habitat. However, some communities of native animal species continue to exist, particularly within protected public lands.

Natural resources on private lands could continue to be impacted by increased urban development and the construction of oil and gas pipelines, projects that tend to show little awareness of the importance of preserving the native wildlife. Trail routes closely parallel major state and federal highways, so they would likely be impacted by a variety of economic development activities. This alternative would result in minor, long-term and adverse cumulative impacts on native fauna.

Conclusion: Alternative A would have a minor, long-term, and indirect adverse impact on wildlife since there would be little awareness of the resources likely to be impacted. Cumulatively, the minor adverse effect of this action on native fauna would only incrementally add a minor degree of impact to the overall impact on natural resources.

Alternative B, Preferred Alternative. Trail Development through Partnerships

Habitat loss, such as its reduction due to road construction or improvements, could be a factor in jeopardizing native wildlife. Some small-scale construction might occur, but it would be carefully designed to avoid impacts to native wildlife and its critical habitat. To confirm the presence of a species, it would be normal practice to conduct species surveys of suspected associated habitats. If a population were to be detected at the project location, or within the affected area, mitigation measures would be incorporated into the project proposals in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Louisiana and Texas departments of natural resources.

In addition, when potential projects along specific segments of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail are proposed, project information would be submitted to the Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program for comments and recommendations regarding potential impacts to wildlife habitat and potential impacts to state listed rare, threatened, and endangered species.

Under this alternative, National Park Service would continue working with landowners to place signs along trail routes, develop appropriate visitor access and interpretation, and help protect trail-related sites. These land-related activities would continue at current levels. Any National Park Service-supported activity that might disturb land or increase visitation to sensitive wildlife habitat areas would undergo additional environmental analysis to evaluate impacts. Based on current information, it is highly unlikely that trail-related projects would have adverse impact on any natural resource along the designated trail routes.

Typical trail activities that have the potential to impact native fauna include collaborative projects with landowners to provide for appropriate visitor access and use, the development of outdoor interpretive trails and exhibits, and collaboration with landowners to protect trail resources. Impacts on native wildlife from these activities would be rare and negligible, if they occur at all.

Increased recreational uses, such as hiking and biking, that might result in some

areas under Alternative B could adversely impact native wildlife. Such potential impacts would be reviewed and carefully considered under a separate National Environmental Policy Act process, so that any adverse effects to natural resources would be avoided or mitigated.

Cumulative Effects: Because of raised awareness about trail resources, it is possible that some property owners might choose not to initiate activities, such as development or land clearing, which might impact native wildlife. In such cases, the impact of this alternative would be local and beneficial to natural fauna.

Heightened awareness of development opportunities from increased visitation might result in an expansion of retail trade and visitor services. However, under this alternative there would be a greater understanding of the need to protect the historic setting of trail resources and this would minimize the negative impacts of development associated with expanding services.

Conclusion: The preferred alternative would cause minor, long-term beneficial and indirect effects because the majority of developers would be more cognizant of the impacts of their actions on trail resources. Furthermore, any federal project resulting directly from the implementation of Alternative B would undergo site-specific environmental analysis, and care would be taken to avoid and minimize impacts to these resources. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall impact on natural wildlife.

Visitor Use and Experience

Methodology

Visitor use and experience along a national historic trail is made up of three fundamental components: social, recreational, and intellectual/emotional. The social aspects of user experience include, among others, crowding or the perception of crowding. Recreation aspects include the range of experiences available. The intellectual/emotional aspects of user experience include the absence or presence and quality of information, interpretation, and education and the opportunities to understand the significance of the trail.

The potential for change in user experience under each alternative was evaluated by identifying projected increases or decreases in user experience and enjoyment, and determining how these projected changes would affect the desired user experience and to what degree.

Effects on visitor use and experience can be beneficial or adverse, direct or indirect, short or long term. For the purposes of this analysis, levels of impact associated with visitor use and experience were defined as follows:

Negligible: No noticeable change in visitor use or experience or in indicators of visitor satisfaction or behavior.

Minor: *Adverse*–Slight, detectable changes in visitor use and/or experience, but the changes would not appreciably alter characteristics of the visitor experience.
Beneficial–Effects would be noticeable and would somewhat enhance critical characteristics of the visitor experience.

Moderate: *Adverse*–Critical characteristics of the desired experience would be changed, or the number of participants engaging in an activity would be substantially altered. Visitor satisfaction would change as a result of this alternative.
Beneficial–Effects would substantially enhance visitor satisfaction.

Major: Multiple critical characteristics of the desired experience would be impacted.
Adverse–Effects would detract from visitor satisfaction. Participation in desired experiences would be considerably reduced and would result in substantial changes in defined indicators of visitor satisfaction or behavior.
Beneficial–Effects would add to or

enhance visitor satisfaction. Participation in desired experiences would result in substantial changes in defined indicators.

Alternative A. Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)

Under this alternative, the National Trails Intermountain Region would continue to work with resource owners, particularly state or local agencies, to develop trail-related interpretive programs, install trail signage, and develop appropriate visitor access. There would be potential to raise awareness of the trail and to increase public understanding of its significance. Although only a relatively small percentage of the designated routes are accessible to the public, visitor use and enjoyment of significant trail resources would still be available at state parks and some privately owned heritage sites and museums.

Overall, existing interpretive and education programs would be enhanced, and there would be potential for slight increases in visitation and for greater visitor satisfaction. Trail awareness among visitors would also increase due to signage along trail routes. Expected minor increases in visitation would not likely impact social conditions and would not be likely to result in crowding. Appropriate signage and interpretation would result in minor beneficial impacts to the visitor experience. The potential to visit some protected sites and segments that are interpreted and monitored would provide a long-term minor beneficial effect to the visitor experience.

Cumulative Impacts: Development projects that attract large numbers of visitors, but that do not consider the need to retain the historic fabric of trail-related resources would detract from a high-quality experience. Increased urban growth, including housing, commercial business, and highway projects would limit geographical opportunities of providing a rewarding trail experience. All these factors would add a minor cumulative impact on the visitor experience.

Conclusion: Under Alternative A, developing an interpretive program and appropriate visitor access, and installing trail signs would result in minor beneficial effects. Cumulatively, the minor beneficial effect of this alternative on the visitor experience would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall cumulative effect on the current visitor use and experience.

Alternative B, Preferred Alternative. Trail Development through Partnerships

Under this alternative, the National Park Service, as the federal lead agency, would facilitate a coordinated effort by the trail community to provide a high quality experience that would promote public understanding and appreciation of cultural and natural resources along the designated route. The quality of the interpretation and educational programs that are currently being offered would be greatly enhanced by working cooperatively with entities that own high potential sites and segments along the designated trail, such as San Antonio Mission National Historical Park, and state agencies, such as the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Historical Commission.

There are large numbers of Hispanic residents along certain sections of the trail and the trail has the potential to attract visitors from Mexico. The emphasis on bilingual interpretation and education programs would serve the needs of this audience, which has not been effectively targeted in the past. Bilingual brochures and other interpretive media could be made available and shared with public and private schools.

The experiences of African Americans and American Indian tribes would also be emphasized in the enhanced interpretation program developed under this alternative. This would help spotlight the contribution of these groups to the history of the trail and likely result in increased visitation and awareness both on the part of visitors and African-Americans and American Indian tribes.

All of the public sites along the trail currently experience low levels of visitation (see Appendix L; Table L-6, page 254); therefore, it is highly unlikely that the implementation of this alternative would result in overcrowding. Moreover, some of the provisions—for example, the development of a flexible and easily updatable database in conjunction with the work of local trail stewards—would make it easier and more effective to monitor the condition of resources. In some ways, this approach would replace the current process used to assess user capacity, which was designed to be applied to public lands of limited size, with well-defined public access and clearly established boundaries, where closures or other management actions are possible.

A meaningful and up-to-date interpretation of historic developments along the trail, as provided under this alternative, would allow visitors to forge emotional and intellectual connections with trail resources. Such engagement can only have a positive effect on the long-term protection of the resources, as visitors become personally committed to the future of trail resources. A variety of media, from print materials to computer programs, would be used to reach different age groups. It is also to be expected that, by providing technical assistance to visitor centers and museums to expand and improve their current interpretive program, more visitors would be attracted to visiting trail sites. The development of a sign and interpretive plan would enhance the visitor experience because it would improve the ability to retrace a substantial portion of the original routes. The preferred alternative's emphasis on recreational activities, such as trail retracement, would offer visitors the opportunity to engage intimately with trail resources and experience vicariously what travel along the trail might have been like during the period of significance. It would help to provide opportunities for trail audiences to forge emotional and intellectual connections with the meanings of those resources by actually travelling along these routes. This level of engagement would result in long-term minor beneficial effect to the visitor experience.

Cumulative Impacts: The high quality visitor experience that would result from the implementation of Alternative B is likely to foster widespread interest in the trail and its resources among a broader spectrum of society than at the time this document is being prepared. Such interest would heighten awareness of the potential damage that unrestricted development and changes in land use could cause to trail resources. Other projects identified in the cumulative impact scenario, such as increase in heritage tourism and increase in websites, exhibits, and facilities that offer the opportunity to learn and appreciate about trail resources, would have minor beneficial impacts.

Conclusion: The preferred alternative would cause moderate beneficial effects, because a larger and more diverse audience would be able to learn and appreciate trail resources. Recreational activities would provide opportunities for trail audiences to establish meaningful connections with the resources and will result in long-term beneficial effects to the visitor experience. Cumulatively, the minor adverse effect of this action would only add a minor degree of impact to the overall cumulative effect on the visitor experience and would result in moderate, long-term beneficial, and indirect impacts.

LANDOWNERSHIP AND USE

Impacts on land ownership and use are addressed in this section of the document because of the initial concern among owners of property along the trail that designation might in some way affect property rights. The enabling legislation, however, makes it clear that this is not the case. It includes, among other requirements, the following guidelines regarding land acquisition:

- The Secretary of the Interior shall administer those portions of the trail

on nonfederal land only with the consent of the owner of such land and when such trail portion qualifies for certification as an officially established component of the trail;

- The designation of the trail does not authorize any person to enter private property without the consent of the owner;
- The United States shall not acquire for the trail any land or interest in land outside the exterior boundary of any federally administered area without the consent of the owner of the land.

Issues of concern on this topic expressed by private landowners include the possibility of changes in landownership and use practices; however, the National Park Service would not be acquiring any properties, even on a willing-seller basis.

Methodology

More than 2,500 miles of the designated routes of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail are privately owned. Because of the sheer scale of the trail and the diversity of ownership, it has not been possible as part of the analysis for this Comprehensive Management Plan/ Environmental Assessment to acquire data on the ownership and use of specific properties and address issues individually. Several general issues of concern have been expressed by landowners, however, including how trail designation would affect their ability to use their lands and the effect of trail designation on real estate values and potential future sale of land or easements along the trail.

Effects on visitor use and experience can be beneficial or adverse, direct or indirect, short or long term. For the purposes of this analysis, levels of impact associated with visitor use and experience were defined as follows:

Negligible: Changes in land ownership and use patterns are not detectable or cannot be attributed to the trail designation.

Minor: Changes in land ownership and use patterns may be detectable and appear likely to have resulted from the trail designation. They occur locally along trail routes and impact a few properties.

Moderate: Changes in land ownership and use patterns are apparent and are clearly attributable to the trail designation. They occur locally along trail routes and impact a number of properties along the designated routes.

Major: Changes in land ownership and use patterns are apparent and are clearly attributable to trail designation. They occur locally along trail routes and impact a substantial number of properties along designated routes.

Alternative A. Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)

Participation of landowners in activities associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is voluntary. The National Park Service would continue to work with local governments and local landowners to place signs along trail routes, develop appropriate visitor access and interpretation of trail sites, and help protect trail-related resources.

The presence of trail-related site or segments on privately owned land along other National Park Service-administered historic trails has rarely influenced property sales or proposed private developments. Real estate values have seldom been significantly influenced by the presence of trail sites or segments; instead, they have been based on the intended use of the property and the value and use of neighboring real estate.

The National Park Service would not be acquiring any land even on a willing-seller basis, so there is no anticipated impact to landownership and use resulting from alternative A.

Cumulative Impacts: Several trends identified in the cumulative impact scenario are closely associated with landownership and use. However, at the

time this document is being prepared the planning team is not aware of any specific project that would have an overall negative effect on landownership and use along the trail. Alternative A would have negligible cumulative impacts on landownership and use.

Conclusion: Although the participation of landowners would be voluntary, it is likely that the trail designation would raise awareness of issues associated with the impact of incompatible land uses on the trail. No additional impacts on landownership and use would result from the implementation of this alternative. Alternative A would have minor, beneficial, and indirect effects on ownership and use along the trail corridor.

Alternative B, Preferred Alternative. Trail Development through Partnerships

Along all of the historic trails it manages, the National Park Service actively works with private landowners to install trail site signs, mark trail routes, establish opportunities for trail retracement and install signs to facilitate this activity, develop appropriate visitor access and interpretation, and help protect trail-related resources. These projects are supported through the Challenge Cost Share Program, an appropriation from Congress that may not be available every year and THAT requires partners to provide a minimum of 50% matching contribution in the form of funds, equipment, in-kind labor, or supplies from nonfederal sources. Interest in this program is likely to increase—at least temporarily—as publicity associated with the authorization of the trail creates interest in trail-related National Park Service programs and as new partnership opportunities arise. However, changes in land use as a result of these activities are likely to be rare and minor. Furthermore, as these projects are initiated by landowners, they tend to be compatible with existing land-use practices and are viewed both by landowners and the National Park Service as beneficial.

The partnership certification program is another tool that can be used to encourage landowners to protect the integrity of their properties. It is likely that because of the heightened public awareness along the trail associated with Alternative B, there would be a surge in partnership certifications. Still, because this is a program that is initiated by the landowners and tends to be used in conjunction with existing land-use practices, it would be viewed both by the landowner and the National Park Service as beneficial.

After a national historic trail has been authorized by Congress, local governments along the trail corridor will often establish parks, roadside pullouts, or trails for educational and recreational purposes. Such activities coincide with the designation of the trail and are compatible with continuing agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial, and other ongoing land uses. They are viewed as beneficial by landowners, governments, the general public, and the National Park Service. Some landowners may benefit from the sale of land or easements used for resource protection or for trail-related cultural, recreational, or educational facilities. Under this alternative, these activities are expected to increase slightly because of heightened awareness of the trail and greater public interest in the trail and its resources.

Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the National Park Service is required to consider the effects of undertakings on public properties. The development of a trail generally increases public awareness of the routes and associated resources, and with that awareness comes an increased sensitivity to activities that might affect trail resources, encouraging managers to review more carefully any potential impacts.

Programs that increase awareness about the existence of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail may lead to the development of guidelines designed to reduce visual and physical impacts from development along the trail, helping managers accommodate recreational

motorized use, hiking, bicycling, equestrian, and other activities along the route. Under this alternative, there would be additional funding available for trail-related protection and recreation projects. The National Park Service views practices that enhance protection of trail resources as beneficial.

Cumulative Impacts: Although increased urban development would not necessarily decline due to the trail designation, greater awareness of trail resources might result in less detectable changes in land use. The same would be true for other forms of development described in the cumulative impact scenario. Alternative B would encourage more interest in the protection of resources along the trail, which could entail changes in land use and development trends. These cumulative impacts would be moderate and beneficial.

Conclusion: The trends identified under the cumulative impacts scenario have the potential to impact land use along the trail. However, at the time this plan is being prepared there are no specific development projects being considered that would have major impacts on landownership and use. Alternative B would result in moderate, beneficial, and indirect cumulative impacts on landownership and use along the trail.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Socioeconomic factors include the trail's effects on social and economic conditions in counties and parishes crossed by the trail and on landownership.

Methodology

Socioeconomic data derived from the United States Census (see Appendix L; Tables L1-L3, page 249-page 251) and the latest available tourism information for the states of Louisiana and Texas (see Chapter 3, Affected Environment, Section on Tourism, page 108) were used to identify and discuss potential impacts.

Clear and consistent hard data about the economic impact of historic trail designations are not available. The only existing study concerns the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, where the data suggest that the biggest beneficiaries of trail designation are establishments serving food and beverages and the retail and lodging industries along the trail route. Issues of concern include opportunities to create jobs related to tourism and hospitality and federal government expenditures associated with the administration of the funds, such as Challenge Cost Share, an appropriation from Congress that may not be available every year. This program requires partners to provide a minimum of 50% matching contribution in the form of funds, equipment, in-kind labor, or supplies from nonfederal sources.

Socioeconomic impacts were determined based on professional expertise and judgment. A qualitative analysis is sufficient to compare the alternatives for decision-making purposes.

The thresholds of change for the intensity of impacts on socioeconomic conditions are defined as follows:

Negligible: Socioeconomic conditions would not be affected, or effects would not be measurable, or any changes would not be related to the trail.

Minor: Changes in socioeconomic conditions would be noticeable and measurable. They would be linked to the designation of the trail and associated interpretation and development and would affect a small percentage of households in the counties and parishes crossed by the trail.
Adverse–Impacts would slightly diminish median household income and employment opportunities.
Beneficial–Impacts would result in enhanced median household income and employment opportunities and possibly a slight increase in high school graduation levels.

Moderate: Changes in economic conditions would be very apparent and

widespread within many of the counties and parishes and would be closely linked to trail development.
Adverse–Impacts would substantially reduce median household income and employment opportunities in various counties and parishes.
Beneficial–Impacts would substantially increase median household income and employment opportunities in various counties and parishes.

Major: Changes would be readily apparent and clearly attributable to development associated with the trail. It would substantially change socioeconomic conditions, median household income, and employment opportunities in most of the area crossed by the trail.
Adverse–Impacts would greatly reduce median household income and employment opportunities in various counties and parishes.
Beneficial–Impacts would greatly increase median household income and employment opportunities in various counties and parishes.

Alternative A. Continuation of Current Conditions (No Action)

With the exception of San Antonio Missions National Historical Park and The Alamo, most sites along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail receive relatively few visitors. Total visitation figures for all 15 state sites and museums for which data are available (see Chapter 3, Affected Environment, Table L-6, page 254) indicate a total of slightly in excess of one-quarter million visitors a year, but many of those visits are not associated with the designated trail. Visitors are mostly attracted to the recreational opportunities offered by sites along the trail, and even though several of these facilities have trail resources, few have interpretation programs that are specifically trail related.

Trail development activities, such as the installation of signage and expansion of interpretation programs, have the potential to attract additional visitors to the trail. Increased visitation is likely to result in small increases in revenues and employment associated with expanded opportunities to provide services and retail trade to visitors in the communities crossed by the trail. Work opportunities in the heritage tourism program and associated industries would increase slightly. The percentage of the population interested in furthering their education might increase slightly, since the heritage tourism industry would require a certain level of education and knowledge about the trail.

A very slight impact on economic conditions might result from direct government expenditures associated with the administration of the trail. Under this alternative, such expenditures would be relatively small and geographically circumscribed.

Cumulative Impacts: Several projects identified in the cumulative impact scenario have the potential to impact socioeconomic conditions along the trail. However, at the time this document is being prepared, there is no information on specific projects that would have any type of impact on socioeconomic conditions along the trail. At this time, it is not possible to speculate on the overall cumulative effect that these projects would have on such conditions.

Conclusion: Some minor socioeconomic benefits are likely to result from trail development activities: increased visitation and government expenditures associated with the development of this alternative. Alternative A would result in minor, long-term, and indirect beneficial impacts on socioeconomic conditions along the trail.

Alternative B, Preferred Alternative. Trail Development through Partnerships

Efforts to protect, develop, maintain, and interpret the trail would create some new localized and relatively minor spending. Expenditures for labor and materials would be short term and would accrue to a few individuals or firms. Some

of the small communities along the trail would likely benefit from increased visitation and related expenditures. Local businesses, such as food service, lodging, camping stores, sporting goods, and bookstores would receive some benefits from sales to visitors. It would be possible that small bed and breakfast establishments operated by private landowners would open as a result.

With the exception of San Antonio Missions National Historical Park and The Alamo, most sites along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail receive relatively few visitors. Total visitation figures for all 15 state sites and museums for which data are available (see Appendix L, Table L-6, page 254) indicate a total of slightly in excess of one-quarter million visitors a year. It should be noted that many of those visits are not triggered by the presence of the designated trail. Visitors are mostly attracted to the recreational opportunities offered by sites along the trail, and even though many of these facilities have trail resources, few have any interpretation program that is specifically trail related.

Cumulative Impacts: Several projects identified in the cumulative impact scenario have the potential to impact socioeconomic conditions along the trail. However, at the time this document is being prepared, there is no information on specific projects that would have any type of impact on socioeconomic conditions along the trail. At this time it is not possible to speculate on the overall cumulative effect that these projects would have on such conditions.

Conclusion: Implementing this alternative is likely to strengthen the regional and state economies through increased tourism revenues. Increased visitation to trail-related sites, segments, and establishments would result in minor growth in economic activity not only in those communities along the trail corridor but possibly in Texas and Louisiana as a whole, because visitors might extend their stay in the trail area if there are additional opportunities to learn about natural and cultural history and to search for the trail. Federal expenditures under this alternative would be greater and possibly less circumscribed geographically. While there would be a beneficial impact from such expenditures, it would be minor. Alternative B would result in minor, beneficial, long-term, and indirect cumulative impacts on socioeconomic conditions along the trail

UNACCEPTABLE IMPACTS

The National Park Service must prevent any activities that would impair park resources and values. The impact threshold at which impairment occurs is not always readily apparent. Therefore, the National Park Service applies standards that offer greater assurance that impairment will not occur. The National Park Service will do this by avoiding impacts that it determines to be unacceptable. These are impacts that fall short of impairment, but are still not acceptable within a particular park's environment. Park managers must not allow uses that would cause unacceptable impacts; they must evaluate existing or proposed uses and determine whether the associated impacts on resources and values are acceptable.

To determine if unacceptable impacts could occur to the resources and values of El Camino Real de los Tejas, the impacts of the proposed actions in this environmental assessment were evaluated based on monitoring information, published research, and professional expertise, and compared to the guidance on unacceptable impacts provided in *Management Policies* 1.4.7.1 that defines unacceptable impacts as impacts that, individually or cumulatively, would:

- Be inconsistent with a trail's purposes or values, or
- Impede the attainment of a trail's desired future conditions for natural and cultural resources as identified through the trail's planning process, or

- Create an unsafe or unhealthful environment for visitors or employees, or
- Diminish opportunities for current or future generations to enjoy, learn about, or be inspired by trail resources or values, or
- Unreasonably interfere with:
  - trail programs or activities, or
  - an appropriate use, or
  - the atmosphere of peace and tranquility, or the natural soundscape maintained in wilderness and natural, historic, or commemorative locations along the trail.

By preventing unacceptable impacts, trail administrators work with partners to ensure that the proposed use of trail resources will not conflict with the conservation of those resources. In this manner, the trail administrators ensure compliance with the National Park Service Organic Act's separate mandate to conserve resources and values. Using the guidance above (see bullets), the following text analyzes the potential for unacceptable impacts for all alternatives carried forward in this Environmental Assessment.

- Both alternatives are consistent with the trail's purposes and values. The trail was established with the purpose of identifying and protecting a "historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment." If Alternative A were selected, this might result in the loss of resources, a loss that would increase with the passage of time. This loss would limit opportunities for the public to use the trail and enjoy its resources. If Alternative B, the preferred alternative, were selected, the trail administration would be better able to prevent the loss of resources and would be better equipped to provide for public use and enjoyment.
- Neither alternative would impede the attainment of desired future conditions for natural and cultural resources along the trail. Alternative A would be less likely to enhance research and foster the development of more adequate protection strategies.
- Neither alternative would create an unsafe or unhealthful environment for visitors or employees. Under Alternative B, trail development projects would be more likely to enhance visitor safety by providing adequate parking and safe access to resources.
- Under either alternative, visitors would continue to have opportunities to enjoy, learn about, or be inspired by trail resources and values. Neither alternative would change the overall opportunities available to visitors. Alternative A would maintain visitor use and experience exactly as it is now. Alternative B would substantially enhance opportunities for visitors to understand and appreciate resources and would provide enhanced recreational opportunities.
- Neither alternative would interfere with programs or activities, appropriate uses, or an atmosphere of peace and tranquility along the trail. Alternative B, through its emphasis on partnerships, would enhance all trail programs. Through its emphasis on trail awareness it would tend to maintain an atmosphere of peace and tranquility along the designated routes and would be more likely to encourage appropriate uses.

Overall, the analysis of effects on trail resources, interpretation, and visitor use indicates that there are no major adverse effects under either alternative; effects were analyzed as negligible to moderate. Based on this, and the above analysis, there would be no unacceptable impacts from Alternative A (No Action) or Alternative B (Preferred)

IMPAIRMENT

Impairment is an impact that in the professional judgment of responsible National Park Service's managers would harm the integrity of resources and values. National Park Service's *Management Policies, 2006* require the analysis of potential effects to determine whether or not actions would impair resources. The fundamental purpose of the National Park System, established by the Organic Act and reaffirmed by the General Authorities Act, as amended, begins with a mandate to conserve resources and values. National Park Service managers must always seek ways to avoid, or to minimize to the greatest degree practicable, adversely impacting resources and values.

However, the laws do give the National Park Service management discretion to allow impacts to resources and values when necessary and appropriate, as long as the impact does not constitute impairment of the affected resources and values. Although Congress has given the National Park Service the management discretion to allow certain impacts, that discretion is limited by the statutory requirement that the National Park Service must leave resources and values unimpaired, unless a particular law directly and specifically provides otherwise. An impact to any resource or value may, but does not necessarily, constitute an impairment, but an impact would be more likely to constitute an impairment when there is a major or severe adverse effect upon a resource or value whose conservation is:

- necessary to fulfill specific purposes identified in the establishing legislation;
- key to the natural or cultural integrity of the trail; or
- identified as a goal in the trail's general management plan or other relevant National Park Service planning documents.

The National Park Service's threshold for considering whether there could be an impairment is based on whether an action would have major or significant effects. This Environmental Assessment identifies less than major effects for all resource topics. Guided by this analysis and the Superintendent's professional judgment, there would be no impairment of trail resources and values from the implementation of either alternative.

CHAPTER 5
CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

CHAPTER 5: CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

INTRODUCTION

SCOPING MEETINGS

During the scoping process, the planning team informed local, state, and federal agencies and the public about the development of the Comprehensive Management Plan/Environmental Assessment and solicited their comments in order to identify issues and questions to consider when developing the management plan. The 60-day scoping period took place between March 28 and May 31, 2007.

The scoping meetings were announced through media releases, in two different websites, and in a newsletter specifying local schedules and meeting venues. The Texas Historical Commission assisted by announcing the scoping meetings and the scoping process through their listserv at www.heritage-tourism-list-l@lists.thc.state.tx.us

Chambers of commerce in individual communities also released scoping meeting information. Eight public meetings took place in locations along the trail, from Laredo, Texas, to Natchitoches, Louisiana. The meetings were attended by nearly 200 people. Among the attendees were representatives from 60 private, state, and federal entities. Written and verbal comments are summarized and available at www.nps.gov/elte

A series of planning issues, posed as the questions listed below, were presented to the public for consideration, both in the newsletter and in the public meetings:

1) How will trail-related resources, including historic buildings and sites, archeological resources, and cultural landscapes be identified and protected?
2) How will visitors learn about and be directed to trail-related cultural and recreational activities?
3) How will coordinated trailwide interpretation and education be provided to visitors and local residents?
4) How will the perspectives of all people associated with the trail's history be included in interpretive and educational materials?
5) How can American and Mexican perspectives on the trail be increased?
6) What is the most effective use of partnerships to achieve goals for the trail's future?

Verbal and written comments received during the scoping period and during these meetings were considered in the development of the alternatives presented in this draft.

FEDERAL AGENCIES

Less than 1% of land along El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is publicly owned. Aside from San Antonio Missions National Historical Park and Cane River Creole National Historical Park, which are managed by the National Park Service, the only other public lands adjacent to the trail are portions of lands managed by the U.S.D.A. Forest Service. U.S.D.A. Forest Service personnel were contacted during the early stage of the planning process. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service scientists from the Southwest and Southeast regional offices were consulted about federally listed threatened and endangered species found along the trail corridor.

STATE AND LOCAL AGENCIES

This document was developed in close consultation with the Texas Historical Commission, the agency designatedas a key partner in this project by the Texas State Legislature. Staff from the Texas Division of Archeology at the Texas Historical Commission offered valuable assistance in identifying high potential sites and segments. The National Trails Intermountain Region has also taken the lead in highlighting possible construction projects that might adversely impact significant trail resources. The Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism has been equally helpful.

The Texas Historical Commission also conducted a preliminary survey of information on resources associated with the trail. The information received was voluminous and demonstrated widespread enthusiasm for the trail. It included documentation on museums, visitor centers, community events, and festivals, as well as the description of numerous sites and segments. These materials were compiled and were of assistance to the contractor who developed the historic resource database for the state of Texas.

Both the Texas and the Louisiana departments of transportation have been important partners in developing this plan. They will continue to collaborate with the National Trails Intermountain Region to develop signage plans and other pertinent projects.

The planning team received great support during this process by staff from McKinney Falls, Fort Boggy, and Mission Tejas state parks, managed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and Caddo Mounds State Historic Park, managed by the Texas Historical Commission; these are all public parks with significant trail resources. Staff from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Division of Historic Sites also joined the planning team in assessing high potential sites and segments. They have worked closely with the National Trails Intermountain Region and will become an important partner in the implementation phase of the plan.

Interested landowners, members of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association, and other trail advocates also assisted the team in providing access to significant sites or important information.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The planning team developed a list of contacts of nearly 1,000 individuals and entities who have received newsletters and other pertinent materials, such as a DVD, *On the Road to Partnerships*, prepared to support the planning effort.

The planning team traveled the entire length of the trail several times. Concerted efforts to assess resources and to gather input from interested trail advocates and landowners took place throughout the process. Starting in the fall of 2007, several trips were made to Louisiana and East and South Texas to meet with interested parties, discuss trail-related issues, and develop familiarity with the resources. Meetings took place in Yorktown (DeWitt County), Pearsall (Frio County), Victoria (Victoria County), Goliad, Bryan/College Station (Brazos County), Rockdale (Milam County), and many other locations. Presentations at professional meetings and workshops also attempted to provide the public with updates about the planning document.

In Louisiana, members of the planning team also met with representatives of two state-recognized tribes: the Adai Indian Nation and the Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb.

ORGANIZATIONS

El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association played a key role in the development of this draft plan. Members contributed information and assisted the planning team in identifying resources of significance and arranging for landowners to become involved in this planning effort. County and parish historic commissions were also important in providing information and assisting in organizing meetings and visiting sites.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

There are several institutions of higher learning along the trail. An effort was made throughout this planning effort to contact those faculty members who are recognized trail experts or who could make a sizable contribution to this project.

CONSULTATION WITH AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES

GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

Government-to-government consultation is the basic means by which American Indian tribes and federal agencies approach and resolve differences in the application of policies and regulations. Government-to-government consultation recognizes that tribes are sovereign nations within the United States and that there is a unique legal and historic relationship between the United States government and Indian tribes, shaped by treaties, congressional acts, court decisions, executive orders, and other actions of the Executive Branch.

Numerous laws require agencies to consult with American Indian tribes on federal actions. Federal actions are defined as projects, activities, or programs funded in whole or in part under the direct or indirect jurisdiction of a federal agency, including those carried out by or on behalf of a federal agency; those carried out with federal financial assistance; those requiring a federal permit, license, or approval; and those subject to state or local regulation, pursuant to a delegation or approval by a federal agency. The decision for an agency to enter into government-to-government consultation with American Indian tribes depends upon the agency's adherence to federal law, regulation, and agency policy, as well as on the nature and scale of the project. Tribal governments may also, at their discretion, request formal consultation on issues of interest.

The challenge for administrators of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail is that, historically, Louisiana and Texas, the states through which the trail passes, had a very aggressive policy of removing American Indian tribes from their native lands. Federal removal programs in the 19th century required many American tribes to move to lands that were not their home. Such was the case for the Caddo, Wichita, Tonkawa, Comanche, and other tribes. Some tribes voluntarily removed to other states. Today, many of their descendants have still not been granted federal recognition as American Indian tribes, even though they are acknowledged as "State Recognized Tribes" in the state where they live.

It is the policy of the National Trails Intermountain Region to abide by the language contained in the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470w):

> An Indian tribe means an Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group of community, including a Native Village, Regional Corporation or Village Corporation, as those terms are defined in Section 3 of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1602), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

The key word in this law is "recognized," meaning federally recognized tribes. It is the policy of the National Trails Intermountain Region to abide by a government-to-government relationship with federally recognized tribes; however, this government-to-government relationship does not apply to groups who are not federally recognized.

Methodology

Recognizing the important role played by American Indian groups in establishing routes that later became El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, the planning team made a special effort to engage all potentially affected American Indian groups in the planning process.

Formal consultation began in October 2007. All federally recognized tribes in Texas and Louisiana were contacted. Some of these tribes reside in Texas and Louisiana, while others are located in Oklahoma. The former include the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, the Louisiana Coushatta Indian Tribe, the Louisiana Jena Band of Choctaw Indians,

the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, and the Louisiana Tunica-Biloxi Tribe. Federally recognized tribes residing in Oklahoma include the Caddo, the Comanche, the Tonkawa, the Kiowa, and the Wichita & Affiliated tribes.

After initial phone contacts, members of the planning team made visits to a number of these groups: the Kickapoo in April 2008; the Caddo in October 2007, February and March 2008, and March 2009; and the Comanche, the Tonkawa, and the Wichita & Affiliated tribes in October 2007.

In an effort to solicit input from as many associated and interested parties as possible, the planning team also met with representatives from two non-federally recognized tribal entities in Louisiana in September 2007. These meetings did not represent government-to-government consultation. And, although the representatives expressed interest in participating in the project, the input they offered for incorporation in this plan was limited, due to changes in personnel or other issues. The planning team will continue to work with these groups, as their perspectives are key in the future interpretive program for the trail.

On March 2009, at a meeting with the Caddo Nation Tribal Council in Binger, Oklahoma, further government-to-government consultation took place, and focused on the development of this document. Several issues were discussed, among them the identification of sites, landmarks, and sacred places along the trail-designated routes that are important to the Caddo Nation.

The discussion also focused on the development of an oral history program to record stories from tribal elders before they pass on. The Caddo Tribal Council expressed interest in working with the National Trails Intermountain Region to tell the ”real” stories of the Caddo and El Camino Real. The tribal council viewed the opportunity to participate in the development of this document as a way to allow the Caddo Nation to partner in developing interpretive materials that reflect the Caddo's perspective.

The Caddo Tribal Council also expressed support for signage and interpretation programs along the trail, particularly at Caddo sites. The tribal council reminded the National Trails Intermountain Region that all Caddo site are sacred and should be accorded that recognition in resource management and interpretation activities.

The executive director of the Comanche Nation of Oklahoma has also expressed interest in participating in the development of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.

TRIBAL LISTENING SESSIONS

Tribal listening sessions in association with public review of the Comprehensive Management Plan for El Camino Real los Tejas National Historic Trail took place in Austin, Texas (August 31-September 1, 2010) and in Lawton, Oklahoma (December 9, 2010).

The overall objective of these sessions was to encourage the participation of the federally recognized tribes in planning for the future development of the trail and to help them understand the role of trail administration, the strength of partnership efforts, and how the National Park Service can support such efforts.

The specific objectives of the listening sessions included the following:

• Explain the designation of a national historic trail and the role of the National Trails Intermountain Region office in administering trails;

• Explain the role of partnerships in trail administration using El Camino Real de Los Tejas National Historic Trail Association as an example;

• Provide opportunities for dialogue among tribes, the National Park Service and the trail association;

• Explain the Challenge Cost Share Program and the process of Cooperative Agreements and how this would benefit the tribes;

• request tribal response to the following questions:

a. How can we actively involve the tribes?

b. How can we incorporate tribal interests in resource identification and protection as well as education?

c. How can we include tribal perspectives in telling the story of El Camino Real de Los Tejas National Historic Trail?

All federally recognized tribes identified in this document as associated with the trail were invited. The Superintendent of the National Trails Intermountain Region, who attended both sessions, highlighted the crucial role of establishing a dialogue with federally recognized American Indian tribes early on in the process of trail administration. He stressed that tribal involvement is highly essential in identifying and protecting resources, including traditional cultural properties, as well as in the development of educational opportunities.

He also explained the potential for technical assistance to the tribes through the Challenge Cost Share Program as well as interpretive/educational programs that would highlight the American Indian perspective in narrating the history of the American Indian peoples and their association to the trail. The tribal representatives who attended these sessions believe that archival materials on which history is based, quite often only present one point of view and fail to accurately reflect the whole truth and, in particular, the perspective of the tribes.

Tribal representatives also expressed the need to develop a relationship of trust. All participants acknowledged that building trust would take considerable time and effort on the part of the American Indians as well as the National Trails Intermountain Region staff and the members of the trail association.

Both listening sessions ended with a series of recommendations that would foster better communication between the National Park Service and the tribes, lead to more effective cooperation, and eventually bring about a level of confidence and trust among a wide array of trail partners.