ELIGIBILITY, FEASIBILITY, HISTORY, AND SIGNIFICANCE

ELIGIBILITY

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

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

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

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

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

Many segments of the original routes and the sites associated with El Camino Real and the Old San Antonio Road have been identified. Some segments could be used to interpret the history of Spanish Texas and the Texas Republic; segments in northeastern Texas and northwestern

Louisiana could contribute to the interpretation of the broad historic theme, “migration to new places” (that is, the history of immigration in America). The route segments also could be used for recreational retracement by hikers, horseback riders, or wagons drawn by horses, mules, or oxen. (See the “Alternatives” chapter, p. 64, and the “Landownership” section, p. 58, for more detailed discussion.) Criterion A is met.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FEASIBILITY AND DESIRABILITY

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

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

Whether or not it would be physically possible to develop a national historic trail along the route of El Camino Real would depend on the ability to identify the historic route across the

landscape. It also would depend on the possibility of providing for public use and enjoyment through the establishment of a network of existing or proposed recreational facilities and interpretive sites where visitors could see and travel remnants of the trail. Each of these elements is addressed in the criteria below and in alternative 1.

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

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

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

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

The willingness and interest of public agencies, private organizations, and individuals to participate in the protection, interpretation, development, and management of the trail has been demonstrated by many activities and projects that are underway or have been completed. Those activities are directly related to the protection and interpretation of significant resources related to El Camino Real. As is outlined in this study, there is high potential for public recreation and historical interpretation along El Camino Real.

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

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

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

> the proposed route of such trail, including maps and illustrations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

> the plans and costs for developing and maintaining the trail

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

> the proposed federal administering agency

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

affected by such actions of local governments. The owners of adjacent property might benefit from such land use actions.

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

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

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

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Period of Spanish Exploration

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

In eastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana the Euro-Americans met settled Caddoan-speaking groups such as the Adaes, Doustioni, Natchitoches, Ouachita, and Yatasi. These groups appear to have been part of three vast intertribal confederacies. In eastern Texas the Ais, Anadarko, Hainai, Hasinai, Nabiti, Nacogdoches, and Nabedache were also part of a large confederacy led by the Hasinai (Webb and Gregory 1986, 18).[10] Some groups in northwestern Louisiana had elaborate ceremonial centers with mounds.

Indian guides led the Spanish explorers over previously established trails that connected cultural groups, villages, trading areas, campsites, and waterholes. Cabeza de Vaca learned from his Indian captors the locations of corridors of travel, river crossings, and topographical features. Later, Spanish explorers, assisted by Indian guides, adapted these prehistoric trails for

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

horseback and cart travel, even constructing bridges for their military and missionary needs and to further economic development. These trails, and eventually El Camino Real, ran through the Gilmore Corridor, which divided the "broken hills of the Edwards Plateau and the coastal prairie" of Texas and afforded travelers both water and relatively level terrain (Swanson 1981, 13).

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

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

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

Colonization

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

colonial road network, which came to be known as El Camino de los Tejas (Corbin 1991, 191).[11]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

diplomatic skills enable him to negotiate with Spanish leaders, but he successfully courted and married the step-granddaughter of Capt. Diego Ramón.

St. Denis accompanied the 1716–17 Spanish expedition to eastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana, where six missions and two presidios (Los Tejas and Los Adaes) had been established in a line between the Neches River and present Robeline, Louisiana (Avery 1995, 11; Clark 1991, 191). The five missions were San Francisco de los Tejas, La Purísima Concepción, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Dolores de los Ais, San Miguel de Linares de los Adaes[14] and San José de los Nasonis.

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

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

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

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

Aguayo continued during the early 1720s to direct changes in the establishment of Texas from his base at San Antonio. The presidio and mission at La Bahía were established by the spring of 1722. In all, Aguayo left 10 missions where there had been 7 and four presidios where there had been only two. Spanish claims to the area were strengthened by the establishment of posts

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

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

at San Antonio and La Bahía and by the reestablishment of missions among the Tejas and the reoccupation of Los Adaes near Natchitoches (Castañeda, 1936, vol. 2, 139–41).

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

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

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

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

Brig. Gen. Pedro de Rivera conducted an inspection of the presidios throughout the entire northern frontier of New Spain as part of a plan to reconceptualize the way Spain dealt with northern New Spain, including mapping and a redesign of the presidial system to create a more efficient military, determine which posts were needed, and to deal with reported abuses and corruption. Rivera's 1727 inspection resulted in the abolishment of the presidio of Nuestra

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

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

Señora de los Dolores and the removal of the escort guards at Saltillo, San Antonio, and San Juan Bautista. The garrisons at Los Adaes, La Bahía, and San Antonio de Béxar were reduced.

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

Spanish Colonial Reorganization

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

At the time of the Louisiana Purchase, the French of Louisiana had disputed the eastern boundary of New Spain, claiming territory all the way west to the Sabine and Brazos Rivers. Spanish claims extended east to the Red River. To settle the dispute, an informal agreement (the Neutral-Ground Accord, 1806–1821) was reached between the American General Wilkinson and the Spanish General Herrera: Spanish civil and military activities would remain west of the Sabine, and the Americans would operate east of the original Spanish-French boundary along the Arroyo Hondo near Natchitoches. The intervening area, known as the Neutral Ground, was "soon frequented by outlaws and highwaymen who robbed with impunity along the [Old] San Antonio Road" and in Spanish Texas and moved contraband along Nolan's Trace and other roads paralleling El Camino Real (Swanson 1981, 9, 34–5).

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

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

by Spanish forces at the Medina River that September, and its members were forced to retreat to the Neutral Ground.

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

Mexican Period and American Emigration to Texas

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

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

Most of the settlers came from the states of Louisiana, Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee and followed the road from Natchitoches to Nacogdoches, Bastrop, and San Antonio. The Old San Antonio Road that ran through Nacogdoches became, in the words of one contemporary, "the great thoroughfare of emigrants to Texas" (Holley 1836, 112).

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

American emigration was further stimulated by the news of the independence of Texas and the additional generosity of its constitution in continuing the Spanish and Mexican land grant traditions by awarding large tracts of lands to settlers. The editor of the Memphis, Tennessee, *Enquirer* wrote on September 9, 1837, that 6,000 people had passed through town that summer

headed west. He added, "The whole world is moving into Texas . . . there is scarce elbow-room left in our streets and highways leading into town on account of the constant pouring in of horses and wagons and the helter-skelter melee of immigrating paraphernalia."

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

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

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

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

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

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

During the war the supply line to San Antonio shifted to Galveston Bay, away from the Old San Antonio Road east of town. More importantly, with the development of new towns such as

Austin (which was selected as the capital of the Texas republic in 1839) and the growth of Galveston and Houston, the importance of the Old San Antonio Road diminished as travelers followed new routes across Texas.

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

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

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

Serious study of El Camino Real and the Old San Antonio Road began in the early 20th century. At the behest of governor James E. “Pa” Ferguson, V. N. Zivley surveyed a historic route of the Old San Antonio Road / El Camino Real. As a commemorative effort, elected officials and preservationists joined to have the route marked and a new highway, Texas Route 21, designated along Zivley's route, for the most part, from the Louisiana border to the Rio Grande. Interest continues in the historic route, as exemplified by the recent efforts of the Texas State Department of Highways and Public Transportation to study, identify, and plan for the preservation of the Old San Antonio Road / El Camino Real (McGraw, Clark, and Robbins 1991, passim).

SIGNIFICANCE

Eligibility for Designation

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

El Camino Real de los Tejas is of national significance and possesses great value in illustrating America’s cultural themes. The Spanish explorers’ routes that would later become El Camino

Real followed established Indian trails and trade routes between prehistoric communities and trading areas, continuing a long-standing tradition of communication, travel, and trade.

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

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

The development of the trail was triggered by the 17th century power struggle among England, Spain, and France for control of the lands and peoples of the North American continent. The Spanish entradas and the establishment of missions and presidios along the original route(s) made Spanish claims to the entire area unmistakably clear to the French and the English. It was French and English intervention that stimulated Spanish efforts to "control the territory far earlier than they would have otherwise" (Clark 1991, 27).

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

El Camino Real was the lifeline between settlements in New Spain and the northeastern frontier, connecting "by little more than a mule trail, the fragile frontier missions of an unexplored province to distant colonial settlements south of the Rio Grande" (McGraw 1991a, 3) Because "most seaborne contacts with Mexico were not established until the 19th century," the route was "the only form of overland travel available" and "the only means of communication

between Texas and the rest of New Spain" (de la Teja 1991, 43). It was a post road long before the Republic of Texas established its mail service.

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

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

El Camino Real was the "artery of international transactions" and a primary route for the movement of cattle and other livestock. This trade route set the stage for the development of the cattlemen's empire on the Great Plains.[21] El Camino Real, which "was a cattle trail a century before the Chisholm Trail opened," was a vital element in the development of the agriculture, production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services in the southern Texas plains and the woodlands of Louisiana (de la Teja 1991, 48). It channeled entrepreneurs and traders into the area.

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

The Villa de Dolores, established in 1750 on the north side of the Rio Grande, downstream of present-day Laredo, became the northernmost outpost of Nuevo Santander. As a result a new crossing of the river came into use. This crossing provided a route to San Antonio and Los Adaes with less risk of Indian attack. By 1755 almost all the traffic bound from the interior to

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

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

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

La Bahía, San Antonio, and Los Adaes crossed the Rio Grande at Dolores (Weddle 1968). Because of its strategic importance at the time of its founding, Dolores was given the status as *villa* despite its being, in reality, a rancho or estancia.

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

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

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

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

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

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

By the middle of the 19th century El Camino Real came to be known as the Old San Antonio Road, with the route evolving as sections improved with use or routes were changed to meet the needs of travelers or the new American settlers. Westward expansion is a primary theme in

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

the history of the United States. During the period of great migrations, in the 25 years after 1825 there were three main thrusts of settlement westward, first to Texas, then to Oregon, and, finally, to California. The Old San Antonio Road from the Red River settlement of Natchitoches, Louisiana, west to San Antonio was the primary thoroughfare for early immigration into Texas, especially to the rich farmlands of the coastal plains. From an estimated population of 7,000 in 1830, predominantly Hispanic, the state skyrocketed to 212,000 residents within two decades.

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

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

As a result of annexation and war, Spanish and Mexican traditions, laws, and cultures mixed with those of Americans; each would evolve into something new and different. The mixing of cultures occurred along the Old San Antonio Road, from Louisiana to San Antonio. Obvious examples of mixing are the Spanish place names (adapted to English pronunciation); more subtle are the boundaries of old land grants that still define the landscape or the extant examples of early Hispanic structures or building traditions. San Antonio, especially, would come to represent and celebrate the blending of cultures.

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

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

existing highways. Signs erected by the state highway department and by communities help to interpret the historical importance of the routes to travelers.

INTEGRITY OF RESOURCES

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

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

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

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

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

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

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL TRAIL DESIGNATION

The legislation authorizing this study provides a possibility of designating El Camino Real as an international historic trail to recognize the origin and purpose of El Camino Real de los Tejas. The National Park Service has worked with the staff of INAH from the state of Coahuila, Mexico, in the preparation of this study and in organizing past and present trail-related activities. Although there is no authorization from the government of Mexico for the designation of national historic trails, the National Park Service, subject to congressional authorization, would continue to work with officials from Mexico to conduct research on the history and culture of El Camino Real de los Tejas and to assist, as appropriate, in the

identification, interpretation, and protection of sites in the United States and Mexico related to the trail. There are opportunities to work with the city of Guerrero, Coahuila, Mexico (which is the site of the mission of San Juan Bautista, founded in 1699) to protect trail-related sites and provide for public use. Two later missions also established in the Guerrero area were San Francisco Solano and San Bernardo. All three collectively are known as the "gateway" missions, along with the Presidio San Juan Bautista. These sites, along with a visitor center, are available for public use and education.