

Chapter 2 **ALTERNATIVES**

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains a description of the actions and prescriptions proposed to resolve issues and concerns under the three management alternatives for El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail (hereafter referred to as “the NHT” and “the trail”). The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the identification of a preferred alternative.

PROCESS USED TO FORMULATE ALTERNATIVES

The public involvement process for this planning effort began with scoping meetings held in June, July, and August 2001 in several communities along the trail. The BLM and NPS gathered the wishes, concerns, and opportunities for the NHT that were expressed during formal and informal community and governmental meetings. Also collected were ideas that were mailed or sent electronically. A series of meetings was held in October 2001 to develop possibility statements (the desired future condition) and identify ways to achieve the desired conditions for the NHT. The meetings were well attended, and resulted in the formation of several community stakeholder groups. (See Appendix D for a summary of the community meetings.)

After reviewing all of the information collected at the community meetings, the planning team developed draft versions of the purpose and significance statements. Using the purpose and significance statements, issue summary and information gathered during the community, tribal, and governmental meetings, the team developed draft alternative strategies to achieve desired conditions, set goals, and resolve issues

and concerns. Three alternatives are presented here: A Preferred Alternative, which represents the actions recommended for implementation by the planning team, in consultation with the public; Alternative A, the “no- action alternative,” which would continue existing management actions on public lands and which would not encourage development of visitor opportunities on non- federally managed lands; and Alternative B, which would focus on protecting historic resources, with off- site interpretation opportunities, but with few opportunities for trail- based recreational activities. The Preferred Alternative would emphasize visitor understanding and appreciation of the Trail’s significance, protection of high- potential sites and segments, and opportunities for trail- based recreational opportunities.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED STUDY

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

CONTINUING MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

Management of BLM- administered public lands is directed by federal laws, regulations, policy and guidelines, Executive orders, and planning documents developed with public involvement to focus on specific areas, resources, or uses. Land use allocation decisions are made at the Resource Management Plan level. Changes to land use allocations require a plan amendment. Components of the Preferred Alternative and Alternative B, as described below, relating to visual resource classifications, would amend the Taos, Mimbres and White Sands Resource Management Plans.

Grandfathered and valid existing rights would continue to be recognized on public lands.

The impacts of specific projects proposed for public lands will be evaluated and addressed through Environmental Assessments (EAs) and Best Management Practices (BMPs) as these projects are proposed. The project planning and EA/BMP development will consider and conform with existing agreements between BLM and appropriate state and county agencies for addressing non-point source water pollution issues, air quality, weed control efforts, and other natural resources, historic, and cultural resources.

High-potential historic sites and segments are referenced in the Preferred Alternative and Alternative B. Known high-potential historic sites are shown on Maps 3A-C, and listed in Appendix E. The historic sites were identified based upon the following definition derived from the National Trails System Act: “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. Future research will identify and provide confirming information for possible additional high-potential sites. Known high-potential route segments are described in Appendix F. The segments were identified based upon the following definition from the National Trails System Act: “Those segments of a trail which would afford a high-quality recreation experience in a portion of the route having greater than average scenic values or affording an opportunity to vicariously share the experience of the original users of a historic route.” See Table 3 for a summary of high-potential route mileage.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE: DESCRIPTION

The Preferred Alternative would implement the provisions of the National Trails System Act and

it would also reflect the public’s vision for the administration and management of the trail.

Camino Real Administration and its partners would undertake an ambitious program to enhance and balance resource preservation and visitor use. These actions would satisfy the dual purposes of the National Trails System Act “to provide for the outdoor recreation needs of an expanding population” and “to promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air outdoor areas and historic resources of the nation.”

In order to accomplish the desired degree of resource protection and enhanced public experience through education and direct retracing of trail segments, it is imperative for all agencies and entities associated with these trails to coordinate their work. Camino Real Administration would strive to achieve as high a level of cooperation among federal, state, and local agencies, trail associations, and private landowners as possible. Together, Camino Real Administration and its partners would establish a historic trails partnership to assist in implementing a comprehensive strategy for the administration of the NHT.

To ensure increased efficiency, closer communications, and more strategic resource protection, current federal programs would continue to be used in the administration of trail resources, but in a more formally coordinated and effective manner.

Visitors would understand the trail’s significance and appreciate its history and cultural heritage through participation in coordinated programming and activities that integrate themes, resources, and landscapes at certified or protected components. Resources that best illustrate the trail’s significance would be identified and protected on both public and private lands (high-potential historic sites and segments). Integrated interpretive and educational programming would be tied to on-the-ground trail resources. Information concerning trail-related interpretive/educational programming and activities would be promoted and shared. Certification priorities would be placed upon

sites and segments supporting interpretive/educational programming and protecting significant resources. A bi-national approach with Mexico would promote activities such as interpretation, events, and signage.

The mission of the National Historic Trail and the Camino Real International Heritage Center are closely linked. The Heritage Center would serve as a focal point for education, interpretation, information, and marketing along with others along the trail. The National Historic Trail and the International Heritage Center would have a close working relationship that complements each other's mission.

Preferred Alternative: Administration

Administration - As directed by the Secretary of the Interior, BLM and NPS would co-manage the NHT. Camino Real Administration of the trail would occur from a centralized office based in Santa Fe, NM, taking advantage of interdisciplinary subject-matter experts in the NPS's Long Distance Trails Group Office and the BLM's Division of Resource Planning, Use, and Protection. This would also allow for the equitable distribution of agency efforts along the 404 miles of the trail. The NPS Long Distance Trails Group Office would provide support services, and the BLM New Mexico State Office would provide communications (computer electronic mail, telephone services), office supplies, mail, photocopying, and graphics. Professional and support staff would encompass several disciplines, including resource management, interpretation, and design.

Information Repository - Camino Real Administration office would become the central repository for all information related to the administration of the trail. All the partners would be encouraged to submit copies of all pertinent documentation to this office, which would make these materials available upon request. When resource threats became known, information would be shared by all federal, state, and local partners, as well as by the trail associations.

Annual Operating Costs - The estimated annual operating costs for Camino Real Administration office to administer the trail would be \$475,000, based on 2002 dollars. This amount would provide for co-administrators, administrative support, and interdisciplinary staff, including interpretation and resource management. This amount would be used for site certification, cooperative agreements, technical assistance, partner support, travel, Challenge Cost-Share projects and support, and special projects such as mapping and media production. Operational costs such as trail marking, brochure development and printing, newsletters, and other publications and interpretive media would also be covered. BLM and NPS would support efforts to enable a coordinated budget process for the NHT.

Funding - Funding for Camino Real Administration office would principally come from the base operation budget of NPS and BLM. Special funding sources would be sought for particular projects, such as technical assistance, resource preservation, and planning.

Coordination of Activities - Successful administration of the trail will require enhancing and more effectively coordinating the activities of a trail association; private landowners; and federal, state, and local agencies. Efficient cooperation would result in a historic trail partnership that would assist in implementing the comprehensive strategy for resource protection.

Federal-level Partners - Federal agencies would manage their lands for the protection and interpretation of trail-related resources. Use of trail-related resources would be restricted to necessary protection and monitoring activities. Interpretation and public appreciation of the resources would be encouraged through site displays, activities, and educational opportunities.

State-level Partners and Tribal Partners - State and tribal resource management agencies, including state and tribal historic preservation offices, museums, libraries and archives, archeological and historic research units, and other appropriate agencies would support ongoing trail preservation efforts by assisting with the

various elements of the protection plan, particularly the identification of high-potential sites and segments, the inventory of trail resources, the identification of research needs and the coordination of research projects, the identification of management units, and opportunities for interpretation and visitor understanding. These management agencies would also help monitor commemorative events and develop action plans to address potential threats.

Local-level Partners - Initiatives at the local level could greatly enhance trail resource protection. These initiatives might include commenting on utility licensing, cell towers, surface and subsurface mineral extraction permits, cultural and natural resource preservation laws, ordinances, and related measures. Counties and cities would be encouraged to support resource protection by integrating nearby NHT designations in local land management and interpretive plans. For example, farmland at certain points along the routes of the trails might meet the requirements for agricultural preservation zones established under state or county regulations. These preservation zones have been set up to keep prime farmland assessed at a low valuation or in active agricultural production, or to keep grazing land in continued use. Efforts by local governments and private parties to acquire land would be essential tools for preserving trail resources. These efforts would supplement land protection efforts by federal agencies.

Non-governmental Organization Partners - Land preservation groups would also be encouraged to work closely with state and federal agencies to preserve undeveloped areas while maintaining such areas under private ownership. Owners and communities could both benefit from potential tax advantages available through cooperative efforts to preserve open space. Lands would remain on the local tax rolls, but would be taxed at the lower undeveloped-parcel rate. Thus, landowners would not be forced by rising taxable property values to sell to developers or to subdivide and develop land that was suitable for farming or ranching. Working with land preservation groups, such as The Nature Conservancy, could provide a great opportunity to preserve trail resources. The acquisition of properties, pur-

chases of conservation easements, or other arrangements could produce important results.

Trail Association - A trail association would be essential for the successful administration of the NHT. An association such as El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Association would provide a powerful and effective constituency for trail resource preservation. Association support and involvement would be an essential element of the historic trails partnership. A trail association would be encouraged to assist Camino Real Administration by sharing information on historic routes, significant historic archeological resources, historic diaries, and other pertinent data. A trail association could further help land managers in the administration of the trail by creating cooperating associations, friends groups, or similar organizations to help protect and enhance lands under the jurisdiction of these federal agencies. This organization could also encourage volunteer activity to assist with trail corridor monitoring, and protection and interpretation, and they could help build greater public support for historic trail preservation and use, as well as persuading local landowners who own significant trail resources to participate in the trails' certification program. A trail association would also be encouraged to assist federal, state, and local parks and museums in acquiring important objects for their collections, such as journals, letters, and travelers' personal effects.

Recognition Programs - Such programs would also be an important tool for rewarding special partners, and would provide an incentive for others to join in the cooperative effort.

Trail Mapping - Currently, paper maps exist at varying scales ranging from 1:24,000 to 1:1,000,000. As part of this alternative, Geographic Information System (GIS) maps would continue to be generated at 1:100,000 scale, with protection sites and segments identified for each quadrangle. Even though the digitized routes and some of the site locations have not been field-tested, this effort constitutes the first attempt to bring together route information for this trail. Maps at this scale are limited in their locational accuracy for trail resources and their applicability for on-the-ground management, yet the mapping project demonstrates the

need to systematize current information and to make it available to all the partners and other interested parties.

Effectively integrating GIS into the management of NHT resources requires long-term technical support, with additional funding and staffing. The database generated for this project can be effectively integrated with databases from other agencies and partners to provide easy access to one reliable source of information for all trail-related resources.

Camino Real Administration would require long-term technical support to develop a GIS database. Obtaining GIS information would be a priority. Professional support for the GIS database for the trails would be provided by Camino Real Administration staff, or by specialists under contract. This would not only require GIS professionals, but computer workstations equipped with appropriate software.

Memorandum of Understanding -

Cooperative actions related to the Memorandum of Understanding (2001) among the NPS, BLM, USDA Forest Service, Federal Highways Administration, and National Endowment for the Arts would emphasize a concerted effort on the part of trail managers to effectively implement as many provisions as possible.

Cooperative Management Agreements -

Camino Real Administration would develop memorandums of understanding, cooperative agreements, and interagency agreements. A cooperative agreement among the federal agencies would be developed and implemented that specifically related to the trail. (See sample agreement in Appendix I.)

Site Certification - National Historic Trails identify high-potential historic sites and segments. Those portions of the trail that are under federal ownership are recognized as official protection components of the NHT. Privately-owned high-potential historic sites and segments can also be recognized through the site certification process. The certification program is one of the most important ways in which federal administering agencies can foster partner-

ships with non-federal landowners throughout the trail corridor. Certification agreements are written and agreed upon by the private landowner and the Camino Real Administration Office to preserve, interpret, and provide for public access to high-potential historic sites and segments. The certification program is an entirely voluntary one; although property owners can benefit from the availability of challenge cost-share funds, agency expertise, and the increased awareness of their resources by the public, property owners are not obliged to enter into certification agreements.

Camino Real Administration will build and maintain a database of high-potential historic sites and segments. A sample certification agreement is in Appendix I.

Under this alternative, certification emphasis would be directed toward protection and interpretation. The proposed certification process for El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT is as follows:

- Camino Real Administration would pursue early coordination with potential applicants to ensure that they fully understand site/segment certification procedures, and to aid in their application efforts.
- Applicants would be required to document their resources and interpretive programs. Environmental or other compliance procedures would have to be completed.
- Camino Real Administration would provide technical assistance on issues related to cultural or natural resource compliance.
- Camino Real Administration and the applicants would determine management objectives for the site/segment, and management responsibilities would be outlined. For smaller sites/segments, the application could replace more detailed management planning and formal cooperative agreements.

- In addition to historic sites and segments, extant interpretive facilities would be certified as components of the NHT. Potential facilities include, but are not limited to, the Geronimo Springs Museum in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico; National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico; New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum in Las Cruces; and El Camino Real International Heritage Center south of Socorro, New Mexico.

On completion of official certification, the public would be informed through appropriate trail information programs that the site or segment was available for public use and enjoyment. Certification is not permanent; it can be renewed subject to satisfactory performance of the terms of the agreement. De-certification would result in the removal of a site or segment from trail information programs and the removal of trail logo markers. Other actions might be taken as well, depending on the terms of certification.

Challenge Cost-Share Programs - Challenge cost-share programs were developed to increase and strengthen partnerships in the preservation and improvement of cultural, natural, and recreational resources for which federal land-managing agencies are responsible. Each agency's program is slightly different. Camino Real Administration would provide federal cost-sharing funds according to policy and regulation to expedite and complete mutually beneficial projects. The program requires the partner to provide matching share contributions, such as funds, equipment, supplies, and in-kind labor, from non-federal sources. Partners include non-federal entities such as individuals, educational institutions, private non-profit organizations, philanthropic organizations, charitable groups, or non-federal (i.e., state, local, or tribal) agencies or governments. The current maximum amount that can be awarded to a project in any given year is \$30,000.

Public Awareness - Raising public awareness about trails, and building support for their continued protection would continue to be impor-

tant goals of the trail partners. The higher level of cooperation between Camino Real Administration and its partners under this alternative would allow for new and better opportunities to achieve these goals.

Some of the following proposals and opportunities would go beyond those that could be achieved under current management conditions.

NHT Website - This Internet website would provide news and information on the Camino Real NHT, and it would be shared by the various trails organizations and any affected federal or state agencies that wished to participate. Specific items available to users of the website would include: information on certified sites and segments, auto tour routes, historic-trail and auto tour, interpretive materials and programs, resource threats, and trail-related special events. This site would link to other Camino Real and appropriate tourism and visitor information websites.

Trail Promotion - Camino Real Administration would encourage the development of a promotion plan to foster public awareness of the trail and its resources. This action would be consistent with the intent of the National Trails System Act to "provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding population" and "the enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air outdoors areas and historic resources of the Nation." Recreational opportunities for visitors would be coordinated in a trail promotional strategy with local, regional, and state tourism bureaus. Local chambers of commerce, convention and visitor bureaus, and other interested parties would be encouraged to work together in the development of a tourism plan.

If interest were strong, Camino Real Administration would encourage the establishment of an interstate trail-promotion task force. Its role would be to promote appropriate activities and events along the NHT to local and state communities, as well as to out-of-state and foreign visitors. If established, Camino Real Administration would negotiate an agreement with the task force to address how the agency and the

task force could assist one another. Actions that might be undertaken by Camino Real Administration include the following:

- Coordinate interpretive efforts with the promotional activities of the task force.
- Provide assistance so that the task force would have accurate information for promotional efforts.
- Provide the task force with trail brochures or other materials.
- Inform task force members how to obtain permission to use the official trail marker symbol for appropriate purposes.

Actions that might be undertaken by the task force to assist Camino Real Administration include the following:

- Assist the land- managing entities to encourage visitor respect for the appropriate use of trail resources, especially those on private property
- Help control trail and site promotion to protect less developed or fragile resources from overuse and adverse impacts.
- Help protect and enhance visual quality along the trail.

The task force would work to promote the NHT as a single, integrated trail system. Within that overall system, the task force might also provide for a coordinated series of regionally oriented auto tour- route brochures that provide visitors with more detailed information about activities and support services. A videotape or slide show could be produced to interpret the trails and related sites for use at travel shows, group meetings, schools, and other occasions.

In cooperation with local managers, Camino Real Administration might authorize the limited use of trail markers for select special events, if the event would help advance the objectives of

the trails in a substantial way and if there were no liability consequences.

Camino Real Administration would encourage all NHT advocates to stress trail protection and conservation in their promotions. Local promotional efforts might involve state historic register plaques, plaques for local historic sites, walking or driving tours of state and local areas of interest, and special events fashioned around themes relating to the NHT.

Corporations might be encouraged to “adopt-a- site,” contributing funding and volunteers to work on resource preservation, to develop sites, and to promote high- potential sites or segments. Such sponsors would be expected to adhere to all local management and NPS and BLM standards for development and interpretation, and to comply with federal resource preservation statutes.

Volunteers and Liability - Federal partners would develop a coordinated program to enhance the efficiency of volunteer activities. Volunteers would be of particular assistance in protecting NHT resources by entering data and updating information related to the trail’s RMPs. They could also assist with NHT marking and with other activities associated with the administration and protection of trail resources. The Volunteers in the Parks and in the Forests Act of 1969 and the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 would continue to provide a means for the federal government to protect cooperating landowners and other partners from liability claims.

Trail Marking / Signage - Camino Real Administration and its partners would cooperate to complete a sign plan for certified sites, segments, and federal protection components. This plan would enable NHT administration and partners to reduce the amount of existing sign clutter, and would ensure that new signs were placed in appropriate locations. The plan would also foster the use of consistent materials and designs (see Appendix G).

Research - A research- needs plan will be developed by Camino Real scholars to direct future historical, social, and route location aspects of the NHT.



Petroglyphs along Camino Real.

See
Eb Chapter 2:
Auto Tour Route
HighPotential Historic
Sites
Maps 3A through 3G

Preferred Alternative : Resource Protection

Resource protection objectives and actions would include the following:

High-Potential Historic Sites and Segments - Section 5 of the National Trails System Act requires “a protection plan for any high- potential historic sites or high- potential route segments.” Protection actions and plans for particular resources will be developed as part of future plan implementation efforts. Elements to be included in protection plans were described earlier in this document. These include the development of federal, state, and local partners, including the Trail Association, recognition programs, trail mapping, site certification, and increasing public awareness of trail resources, as well as specific physical protection measures. Protection through this management plan would be limited largely to the identification of sites and segments, with general recommendations for their administration. The following criteria, based on the National Register of Historic Places and the National Trails System Act, would be used to identify additional resources:

- Significance to the trail (based on documentation and/or archeological research)
- Integrity of the physical remains
- Integrity and quality of the setting
- Opportunity for high- quality recreation evoking the historic trail experience
- Opportunity to interpret the primary period of trail use

Camino Real Administration would gather new information on additional high- potential historic sites and segments, and would cooperate with other federal managers, trail associations, trail scholars, and state historic preservation offices in adding, deleting, or modifying the list of sites. The criteria used to identify the initial list of high- potential historic sites would also be

used to make these changes. In addition, Camino Real Administration would work with interested trail associations to convene representatives of the various historic trail communities, as well as federal, state, and local managers, state historic preservation offices, and individual scholars, to review and make recommendations regarding additions, deletions, and modifications to the lists of high- potential sites and segments.

Some trail resources might not meet the criteria for inclusion on the lists of high- potential sites and segments. Their visual integrity might be compromised, they might have incomplete historic documentation, or there might not be enough evidence to assess their significance. As the status of these resources is reassessed or clarified, they could be considered for additional protection measures.

Non-Federal Lands - High- potential historic sites and segments would be proactively managed by willing owners in partnership with trail administrators. Protection on private lands would be accomplished through a variety of means, including, but not limited to: certification, cooperative agreements, easements, local regulations, and fee simple purchases or exchange by willing sellers where lands could be efficiently managed. A site steward program could provide for the active monitoring and patrolling of certified sites and segments, and sites and segments on BLM- administered lands.

Protection efforts would help ensure that resources related to the NHT are preserved and sections of the historic route are maintained as natural or cultural landscapes. Camino Real Administration would encourage management of the historic and recreational trail routes to preserve scenic values and qualities, thereby helping to ensure high- quality recreational and interpretive experiences. Camino Real Administration would encourage protection of the remaining historic landscape settings that are not now protected under federal, state, or local management, in cooperation with land managers along the route and with the review of the state historic preservation offices.

An interdisciplinary research program would be coordinated to support visitor use and interpretive/educational programming and activities. Camino Real Administration would continue to inventory and analyze cultural and natural resources along the trail route to determine appropriate preservation techniques and the potential to accommodate visitor use and interpretation. Priorities would be established for protecting additional sites, trail segments, scenic and natural values according to their significance, potential for visitor use, contribution to linking trail segments, interpretive value, and threats to integrity.

Due to the complex landownership crossing through both rural and urban areas, resource protection techniques would vary from area to area and between the states of New Mexico and Texas. Ties would be established with local agencies and support groups to monitor activities along the route. Several resource protection techniques are available to address goals and objectives for the NHT, as addressed above in the “Administration” section.

Public Lands - Routes (areas) on BLM-administered lands where the physical integrity of high-potential sites and segments and the surrounding visible landscape would be negatively impacted would be closed. No specific route closures are proposed under this alternative. Although no immediate threats have been identified OHV designations will be reviewed in the upcoming RMP revisions or upgrades. Those areas on BLM-administered lands that are visible within approximately 5 miles of high-potential sites and segments, and also in relatively undisturbed areas, would be designated Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class II as shown on Maps 4A- C and 5 (see Appendix H for management class definitions). Five (5) miles is considered the foreground/middle-ground visual zone. Approximately 903 acres of VRM Class III and 97,873 acres of VRM Class IV within the La Jornada del Muerto area would be converted to VRM Class II; 998 acres in the Santa Fe River canyon area that are currently unclassified would be converted to VRM Class II (see Maps 4 and 5). These changes in VRM classes would amend the Taos and Mimbres,

and White Sands Resource Management Plans. The area surrounding the International Heritage Center would continue to be managed under VRM Class I and II guidelines.

Monitoring Sites - Under this alternative, there would be scheduled site monitoring of high-potential or other important sites on BLM-administered lands and certified sites by agency personnel.

Inventory and Research - A coordinated research program would be conducted to support preservation activities, and for media in support of off-site understanding (such as oral histories). Camino Real Administration would continue to inventory and analyze cultural and natural resources along the trail route to determine appropriate preservation techniques. Priorities would be established for protecting additional sites, trail segments, scenic and natural values according to their significance, contribution to linking trail segments, and threats to integrity. Camino Real Administration will build and maintain a database of potential high-potential sites and segments. Camino Real Administration would work with appropriate technical staff to incorporate the databases generated during the course of the planning process into the GIS system used to map the routes and trail resources.

Carrying Capacity - The National Trails System Act requires that comprehensive management and use plans provide “an identified carrying capacity of the trail and a plan for its implementation.” This provision of the legislation has not been implemented in individual plans. To do so would require an agreement among the partners about what constitutes a trail resource and about a methodology to assess carrying capacity, as well as a high level of coordination and cooperation among the managers of trail resources. In addition, due to the site-specific nature of visitor use along a NHT, it would not be feasible to prescribe a trail-wide carrying capacity. There are currently no plans to carry out this type of analysis.

Preferred Alternative : ***Visitor Experience***

There would be a unified effort by Camino Real Administration and partners to provide a developed, coordinated visitor experience along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT. The visitor experience would be comprised of activities and programming emphasizing the trail's significance, history, and natural and cultural heritage. Visitors would be able to participate in coordinated programming that brings themed interpretation/education together with trail resources and landscapes—on the ground along the NHT at federal protection components and certified sites, segments, and interpretive facilities (for examples, see Chapter 3). The availability and number of options for trail-related facilities, media, and interpretive/educational programming would increase through strong partnerships.

Recreation - Under this alternative, recreational activities with interpretive and/or educational components would be encouraged and supported on the NHT. Companion trails for hiking, biking, or horseback use would be established on appropriate trail segments. These would offer representative experiences of original trail travelers in settings similar to those once existing along the Camino Real.

Trail-related recreational uses would be encouraged through directional and interpretive signage and brochures. Kiosks, trailheads, and trails to support recreation development would be encouraged, and access to the trail route or viewpoints would be developed. Messages regarding responsible recreation on public lands and respect for private landownership would be emphasized and supported.

- ***Auto Tour Route*** - An auto tour route generally following the course of the Camino Real would be developed to encourage visitation and promote the trail, and to provide a “user-friendly” avenue for visitors to find trail-related resources. This activity would occur on all-weather roads for two-wheel-drive use year-round. Highway and road signs

would identify the route, and maps would be provided for visitors. An array of accompanying interpretive materials would be provided, including tour-route guides identifying trail-related resources and interpretive facilities. Camino Real Administration would consult with the state departments of transportation in both New Mexico and Texas, and would coordinate the auto tour route's development in partnership with tourism, historic preservation agencies and groups, chambers of commerce, and other civic organizations. Close coordination would also take place with New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department and Texas Department of Transportation with respective scenic byway programs. The route would be identified subsequently on state and commercial highway maps.

- ***Special Events*** - Special and cultural events directly tied to trail significance would be promoted and supported. The NHT logo could be used on a request-permission basis in association with such events.

Proposed projects on BLM-administered lands in New Mexico fall on the Jornada del Muerto section of the trail. These projects include:

- ***I-25 at Upham Exit*** - A small pullout parking area would be developed along the county road, and information would be provided about travel conditions to the north. Visitors would be alerted that travel on the county road is not recommended for trailers over 15 feet, motor homes, or low-clearance vehicles, and that no water or other services are available for 35 miles.
- ***San Diego*** - The Paraje de San Diego is the southernmost camping site in the Jornada del Muerto. The Cerro San Diego was a landmark on the trail. A pullout parking area with interpretive signs would be developed on a county

road away from the site. A trail would be developed to a short segment of the Camino Real, just north of the Detroit Well site. Interpretation of San Diego could also be offered at the Interstate 25 rest stop.

- **Ojo de Perrillo/Point of Rocks** - The paraje of Perrillo got its name from a dog sighting during the Oñate expedition in May 1598. Its muddy feet indicated nearby water. A pullout parking area would be developed, with a short trail with interpretive signs to an overlook of the paraje area.
- **Yost Escarpment** - There are Camino Real trail ruts in this area. A pullout parking area would be developed. A short trail with interpretive signs would lead to an overlook of the ruts.
- **Companion Trail** - A 5- to 10- mile companion trail for hiking, biking, and horseback riding could be developed in the Jornada, parallel to the Camino Real along a county road. Safety and interpretive messages would be provided. This development would be demand- driven only.
- **Teypama Site** - A pullout parking area would be developed with interpretive signs near the pueblo ruin.
- **La Cieneguilla** - The BLM is currently working with community members and North American Indian Pueblos to plan for visitor use and resource protection at the site. No actions are proposed at this time in connection with the NHT.

Interpretation/Education - Under this alternative, trail- related interpretation and education opportunities would emphasize the full range of interpretive themes. Development of new facilities such as visitor centers or museums by the private sector would be supported. Interpretive and education programs currently being provided along the trail would continue and be strengthened, and new interpretive and

educational programming would be developed and provided on federal protection components, and at certified sites, segments, and interpretive facilities. New kiosks and trailheads along interpretive trails would be encouraged to support recreation development. Trail guides would identify and interpret Camino Real resources.

Interpretive Themes: The establishment of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT provides an opportunity to interpret and educate visitors to the rich history of New Mexico and western Texas in relation to the Camino Real. Historic sites and interpretive facilities along the trail can tell stories that illustrate the evolving relationship between landscape and cultures.

Themes are the key ideas for visitor understanding of the trail's history and significance. They serve as broad unifying concepts about the trail that form the foundation of interpretive and educational programs and media. They will apply regardless of the agency, organization, group, or individual responsible for developing interpretive and educational materials in association with the NHT.

The following themes are not a comprehensive listing of possible interpretive topics, and are not in any priority order. Under the Preferred Alternative, an overview of all the themes would be presented to visitors through a variety of educational programs and interpretive media and programs.

- For centuries, indigenous peoples used trails linking Pueblo and other tribal villages for trade, agriculture, and exchange of food; the Camino Real incorporated portions of these trails thus continuing patterns of human interaction.
- The Camino Real was the primary route for the settlement, trade, conquest, military operations, and supply of northern Mexico and the southwestern United States for more than 300 years; the people who traveled this lifeline between Mexico City and northern New Mexico changed the course of North American history and culture.

- The Pueblo peoples of the Río Grande Valley were transformed through contact with European diseases, religion, warfare, material culture, and domestic crops and animals introduced via the Camino Real.
- The physical nature of the trail routing evolved with time due to weather and river movement, as well as with changing conditions and the needs of north-south trade and traffic; today, remaining evidence of Camino Real routes reflects both past use and the on-going shifting of landscape.
- The Camino Real facilitated cultural exchange and change among North American Indians, Spaniards, Mexicans, and Anglos, and represents the shared patrimony of nations and cultures.
- Human activity, movement, and settlement along the Camino Real forever altered the physical environment of the Río Grande Valley and uplands.
- Activities and personal interaction along the Camino Real (Interstate 25) continue to eliminate cultural barriers and enrich the lives of people on both sides of the American/Mexican border.
- Camino Real resources link the past with the present; tangible artifacts, structures, and landscapes, together with intangible aspects of cultural heritage and cultural heritage and community lifeways, represent fragile connections that require vigilance and foresight to protect, preserve, and perpetuate for the generations to come.

In this alternative, all the themes would be emphasized and would be presented to visitors through a variety of educational programs and interpretive media and programs.

A multi-national approach (American, Mexican, and possibly Spanish) to interpretation would be taken. Multiple points of view

and perspectives would be presented, and wherever possible, interpretive messages would be presented in both the Spanish and English languages.

Interpretive Media: Under this alternative interpretive media would be developed through coordinated, collaborative efforts (Camino Real Administration and partners) to interpret all of the trail's themes and promote visitor understanding of the trail's significance and resources. Media would be provided at federal protection components, as well as certified sites, segments, and interpretive facilities off the trail. Use of a wide range of media (including oral histories) would be encouraged to engage visitors and stimulate interest in the trail and its history:

- **Audiovisual Media** - Appropriate audiovisual productions would be used to orient visitors to the NHT and its resources. Camino Real Administration would lend assistance to partners proposing to develop new audiovisual programs to be presented on federal protection components, and at certified sites, segments, and interpretive facilities. These programs would present aspects of the trail's themes best conveyed by this media type.
- **Indoor Exhibits** - Museum and visitor center exhibits would assist with providing visitors with context and meanings associated with the Camino Real's significance and resources. Camino Real Administration would provide interpretive assistance for the development of any new or revised exhibits on federal protection components, and at certified sites, segments, and interpretive facilities. Exhibit text would provide an overall view of all the trail's themes.
- **Wayside Exhibits** - Under this alternative, Camino Real Administration would support an interpretive wayside exhibit system for use at appropriate places on the NHT. The use of a standardized exhibit design (following wayside exhibit guidelines and standards) would

reflect the flavor of the Camino Real, and would promote the integration of interpretive messages offered along the NHT. The Camino Real's name and logo would be used on all NHT-related wayside exhibits. Camino Real Administration would coordinate with private landowners and public land managers to promote the development of a consistent wayside exhibit system to blend with existing signs.

- **Traveling Exhibits** - Traveling exhibits would be developed to present various interpretive and educational materials off-site. Under this alternative, traveling exhibits would offer an overview of the trail's themes, and would reach many people beyond the bi-state area.
- **Publications** - Camino Real Administration and partners would develop brochures and other publications. An overview of all the trail's themes would be provided. An official map and guide would be developed to provide overall orientation and information about the significance and resources of the NHT.
- **Websites** - The development of new interpretive websites about the Camino Real would be encouraged, and all the trail's themes would be emphasized. New site development would be coordinated to prevent repetitive information; extant sites would remain on-line. A possibility exists for the development of a website that centralizes educational resources along the trail.
- **Interpretive Facilities** - Camino Real Administration would not construct or operate facilities. However, the BLM and the Museum of New Mexico State Monuments Division will continue to develop a new interpretive facility—El Camino Real International Heritage Center—currently nearing completion south of Socorro, New Mexico. The Center will offer interpretive media and

educational programs about the trail. The heritage center is a separate, but complementary project, and will serve as a focal point for trail-related interpretation and education with emphasis on the southern portion of the trail.

- **Programs** - Support would be provided for developing new interpretive programs to bring together themes, resources, and landscapes for visitor understanding. The possibilities for theme-related programs to be available both on and off the trail are endless. Hands-on activities directly tied to trail-related resources on federal protection components, and at certified sites, segments, and interpretive facilities, would be emphasized and supported.

Community Involvement - Opportunities to engage community people along the Camino Real in cultural education and interpretation would include:

- Habitat Chat, a school-to-school internet communication program, among sister communities along the NHT, using interactive media.
- Study of history, culture, science, and math through hands-on museum and school activities.
- Grant writing to obtain funding for writing and publishing local history documents along the trail.
- Oral history programs.

Interpretive Plan - Camino Real Administration and trail partners would prepare an interpretive plan for the length of El Camino Real de Tierra NHT. The plan would describe the desired visitor experiences, and set goals, articulate trail-long and regional themes and sub-themes, and ensure that programs at related sites complemented each other. The interpretive plan would prescribe the appropriate interpretive services, including possibilities for

non-personal services such as museum exhibits, traveling exhibits, audiovisual programs, wayside exhibits, and publications, as well as personal services such as guided interpretive walks and talks, and educational programs. A strategy for implementation would be developed.

Educational Programs - Camino Real Administration would support the development of new educational programs for the trail, and would encourage programs to meet state teaching standards in New Mexico and Texas.

Under this alternative, new education materials and packages would be based on all of the trail's themes, and would promote understanding of and appreciation for the trail's significance and history

Heritage Tourism - Heritage tourism would entail traveling to historic and cultural attractions to learn about the past in an enjoyable manner, but would not allow for the decline of the very resources that attracts visitors in the first place. Heritage tourism would be strongly encouraged as a new type of visitor use opportunity, as well as an excellent tool to assist in the promotion of historic trails. Heritage tourism would be sensitive to environmental issues, and would be designed to allow people to experience resources with an ecologically and culturally sensitive frame of mind and a leave-no-trace emphasis.

Camino Real Administration, in cooperation with state departments of tourism, would encourage and assist trail communities in becoming gradually involved in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's heritage tourism program. Camino Real Administration would also be available to facilitate and guide the development of local or regional tourism programs that followed the general principles of heritage tourism.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has identified the following five principles to create a sustainable heritage tourism program. These principles follow closely the criteria set in the National Trails System Act:

- Focus on the authenticity and quality of the experience
- Preserve and protect resources
- Make sites come alive
- Find a fit between a community or region and tourism
- Cooperate

Interpretation Program Assistance - Camino Real Administration would develop, and would encourage and support others to develop, a range of media to appeal to different learning styles and levels of ability. The range of program assistance from Camino Real Administration would include:

- Interpretive planning
- Development of new publications (research, writing, illustrations)
- Planning and design of new media (exhibits, wayside exhibits, audiovisual, etc.)
- Review of draft interpretive text for an array of projects
- Development of web-based programs
- Workshop facilitation

ALTERNATIVE A: DESCRIPTION

Alternative A is a "no action" alternative that would have the effect of continuing current management practices on public (federally-managed) lands. No additional programs or new projects will be initiated on federally-managed lands, nor will programs or projects be supported by Camino Real Administration for trail resources on non-federally-managed lands. There would be no directed strategy for preservation or visitor use and interpretation, and Camino Real Administration will not coordinate or facilitate sharing of interpretive or

educational information along the trail. The site certification program will not be implemented.

Alternative A: Administration

Land- managing federal agencies with NHT lands would continue to manage their lands based upon their existing management plans. There would be no overall administration or coordination of the NHT. Coordination of the activities of an NHT association; private landowners; and federal, state, and local agencies and resource protection would be limited to efforts of the International Heritage Center and others. No uniform system of signage would be designated for any components of the NHT.

Alternative A: Resource Protection

No special efforts would be made to identify archeological and historic sites and visible trail route segments. There would be no directed strategy for research related to the NHT. Use of off- highway vehicles (OHV) on BLM- administered lands would continue under the present course of action. Management of visual resources on BLM- administered lands would continue under the present course of action.

Alternative A: Visitor Experience

There would be no unified effort by Camino Real Administration to provide a developed, coordinated visitor experience along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT. Current activities commemorating or interpreting the trail would continue, but would remain limited in scope and would not be related to or recognized as part of the NHT. The general public would encounter markers, identification signs, or interpretive and educational programs through serendipity.

Recreation - Camino Real Administration would not encourage new recreational development on the NHT. Generally, existing recreational opportunities available along the trail would continue to be provided by the International Heritage Center, private landowners or various agencies and organiza-

tions. These opportunities would not be related to or recognized as part of the NHT.

An auto tour route generally following the historic trail would not be designated. Visitors would continue to drive the existing scenic byway.

Special events related to the NHT would not be encouraged. Current trail- related activities and commemorative events provided by various agencies or organizations would continue, but would not be related to or recognized as part of the NHT.

Interpretation /Education - There would be no unified effort by Camino Real Administration to interpret the NHT along its length in any sort of coordinated way. Facilities and programs currently staffed and offered by the International Heritage Center and various agencies or organizations would continue.

Likewise, Camino Real Administration would not encourage the development of interpretive media and educational programs in relation to the NHT. Various media and programs currently offered to the general public by various agencies or organizations about the Camino Real would continue.

ALTERNATIVE B: DESCRIPTION

Alternative B provides protection for high- potential sites and segments, but only limited opportunities for additional, coordinated interpretive and educational programs. Trail resources (historical, cultural, natural, and viewshed) would be protected through ongoing stewardship efforts. Visitors would have the opportunity to experience trail resources in an off- site setting. Trail resources (natural, cultural, historical, and viewshed) would be identified and protected on federal land. Significant trail resources on private land would be protected through certification, and volunteer efforts at high- potential sites and segments. Administration would be directed toward resource

protection activities. Certification priorities would protect threatened trail resources.

Alternative B: Administration

Administration: Camino Real Administration would occur as in the Preferred Alternative.

Certification - Under Alternative B, certification would be directed toward protection of sites rather than toward interpretation.

Alternative B: Resource Protection

Resource protection objectives and actions would include the following:

High-potential Historic Sites and Segments - Section 5 of the National Trails System Act requires “a protection plan for any high- potential historic sites or high- potential route segments.” In the Preferred Alternative, resource protection will be achieved, in part, through the development of partnered efforts to increase public appreciation of trail resources and public involvement in protection through site stewardship programs, interpretive and educational programs, and the development of trail- related visitation opportunities. Under Alternative B, protection would be limited largely to the identification of sites and segments, with general recommendations for their administration. Interpretation will take place off- site to protect trail resources. The following criteria would be used to identify additional resources, based on the National Register of Historic Places and the National Trails System Act:

- Significance to the trail (based on documentation and/or archeological research)
- Integrity of the physical remains
- Integrity and quality of the setting
- Opportunity for high- quality recreation evoking the historic trail experience
- Opportunity to interpret the primary period of trail use

Camino Real Administration would gather new information on additional high- potential historic sites and segments, and would cooperate with federal, state, and local governments, trail associations, trail scholars, and state historic preservation offices in adding, deleting, or modifying the list of sites. The criteria used to identify the initial list of high- potential sites would also be used to make these changes. In addition, Camino Real Administration would work with interested trail associations to convene representatives of the various historic trail communities, as well as federal, state, and local managers, state historic preservation offices, and individual scholars, to review and make recommendations regarding additions, deletions, and modifications to the lists of high- potential historic sites and segments. Some trail resources might not meet the criteria for inclusion on the lists of high- potential sites and segments. Their visual integrity might be compromised, they might have incomplete historic documentation, or there might not be enough evidence to assess their significance. As the status of these resources is reassessed or clarified, they could be considered for additional protection measures.

Non-Federal and Tribal Lands - Protection on non- Federal and Tribal lands would be accomplished through a variety of means, including, but not limited to: certification, cooperative agreements, easements, local regulations, and fee simple purchases or exchange by willing sellers where lands could be efficiently managed. Protection efforts would help ensure that resources related to the trail are preserved and sections of the historic route are maintained as natural or cultural landscapes. Camino Real Administration would encourage management of the historic and recreational trail routes to preserve scenic values and qualities, thereby helping ensure high- quality recreational and interpretive experiences. Camino Real Administration would encourage protection of the remaining historic landscape settings that are not now protected under federal, state, or local management, in cooperation with land managers along the route and with the review of the state historic preservation office. Due to the complex landownership crossing through both rural and urban areas, resource protection

techniques would vary from area to area and between the states of New Mexico and Texas. Ties would be established with local agencies and support groups to monitor activities along the route.

Public Lands - OHV routes on BLM- administered lands where protected archeological and historic sites and trail route segments would be negatively impacted would be closed. No specific route closures are proposed under this alternative. Although no immediate threats have been identified OHV designations will be reviewed in upcoming RMP revisions or updates. Management of visual resources on BLM- administered lands would continue under the present course of action.

Monitoring Sites - Under this alternative, there would be scheduled site monitoring of high- potential or other important sites on BLM- administered lands and certified sites by agency personnel.

Inventory and Research - A coordinated research program would be conducted to support preservation activities, and for media in support of off- site understanding (such as oral histories). Camino Real Administration would continue to inventory and analyze cultural and natural resources along the trail route to determine appropriate preservation techniques. Priorities would be established for protecting additional sites, trail segments, scenic and natural values according to their significance, contribution to linking trail segments, and threats to integrity. Camino Real Administration will build and maintain a database of potential high- potential sites and segments. Camino Real Administration would work with appropriate technical staff to incorporate the databases generated during the course of the planning process into the GIS system used to map the routes and trail resources.

Carrying Capacity - The National Trails System Act requires that comprehensive management and use plans provide “an identified carrying capacity of the trail and a plan for its implementation.” This provision of the legislation has not been implemented in individual

plans. To do so would require an agreement among the partners about what constitutes a trail resource and about a methodology to assess carrying capacity, as well as a high level of coordination and cooperation among the managers of trail resources. In addition, due to the site- specific nature of visitor use along a NHT, it would not be feasible to prescribe a trail- wide carrying capacity. There are currently no plans to carry out this type of analysis.

Alternative B: Visitor Experience

As in the Preferred Alternative, there would be a unified effort by Camino Real Administration and partners to provide a developed, coordinated visitor experience along El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT. The visitor experience would be structured to promote public understanding and appreciation of NHT- related resources. Awareness of resource protection needs and challenges would be a central tenet of all activities and interpretation/education programs related to the NHT.

Under this alternative, the majority of visitor activities would occur away from the trail- related resources. Occasional “hands- on” protection activities would be provided wherein visitors would actively engaged in resource protection, but visitors would be encouraged to learn about the trail through off- site facilities in order to lessen on- site impacts to resources. Visitors would also be provided with information needed to practice appropriate, safe, and minimum- impact use while on the NHT.

Current activities and interpretive and educational programs offered by various agencies, organizations, or institutions would continue to be provided. Additional opportunities would be offered at site, segments, and interpretive facilities becoming part of the NHT through the certification process.

Recreation - As in Alternative A, Camino Real Administration would not encourage recreational development on the NHT. Existing recreational opportunities provided by private landowners and various agencies and organizations that are not trail- related would continue.

- **Auto Tour Route** - As in the Preferred Alternative, an auto tour route following the course of the Camino Real would be developed, signed, and interpreted.
- **Special Events** - Special or cultural events focusing on NHT- related resource protection would be promoted. As in the Preferred Alternative, the NHT logo could be used on a request-permission basis in association with such events.

Interpretation /Education - As in Alternative A, Camino Real Administration would not encourage development of new interpretive facilities along the NHT. However, coordinated, collaborative efforts would be made to improve existing facilities, with a local/regional content emphasis on Camino Real history and culture. A broad resource protection and advocacy strategy through activities such as partnerships, interpretive media, and educational programs would be encouraged.

As in the Preferred Alternative, interpretive themes illustrating the significance and meaning of the Camino Real would serve as a foundation for developing coordinated interpretive and educational materials in association with the NHT.

An overview of all the themes would be presented to visitors through a variety of educational programs and interpretive media and programs; however, under this alternative, the resource stewardship theme would be emphasized.

Interpretive Media - As in the Preferred Alternative, a range of interpretive media would be developed through coordinated, collaborative efforts (Camino Real Administration and partners) to promote resource stewardship, and to support visitor understanding of preservation efforts. Under this alternative, only certified interpretive facilities, away from actual trail resources, would offer a wide variety of media (including oral histories) to engage visitors and stimulate interest in resource protection. The range of interpretive media includes:

- **Audiovisual Media** - Appropriate audiovisual programs would be used to orient visitors to the NHT and its resources. Under this alternative, Camino Real Administration would lend assistance to partners proposing to develop audiovisual programs supporting interpretive opportunities. Site-specific audiovisual programs could be developed for major (certified) trail sites.
- **Outdoor Exhibits** - Museum and visitor center exhibits would provide visitors with context and meanings associated with the Camino Real's significance and resources. Camino Real Administration would provide assistance for developing new or revised exhibits at federal protection components, and at certified interpretive facilities. Exhibit text would emphasize resource protection and preservation.
- **Wayside Exhibits** - This type of medium would not be a preferred choice under this alternative, because wayside exhibits are most effective when interpreting and tying messages directly to resources. Because the majority of visitor use would occur away from resources on the trail, other types of media, such as indoor exhibits, audiovisual programs, and publications would be more effective.
- **Traveling Exhibits** - Traveling exhibits would be developed to present various interpretive and educational materials off- site. Under this alternative, with its emphasis on off- site learning and use, traveling exhibits would be a preferred medium, and would reach many people throughout the trail corridor with protection and preservation messages.
- **Publications** - Camino Real Administration and partners would develop brochures and other publications to emphasize trail- related resource stewardship. An official map and guide would be developed to pro-

vide overall orientation and information about the significance and resources of the NHT. Resource stewardship messages would be included.

- **Websites** - Extant interpretive websites about the Camino Real would be enhanced through the addition of interpretive features regarding trail resource management.
- **Interpretive Facilities** - Under this alternative, the development of new interpretive facilities in connection with the NHT would not be supported. BLM and the Museum of New Mexico State Monuments Division are developing a new interpretive facility south of Socorro, New Mexico. El Camino Real International Heritage Center will offer interpretive media and educational programs relating to the trail. Even though this project was started before the national designation and was not specifically linked in the NHT legislation, the new facility will serve as a focal point for trail-related interpretation and education.
- **Programs** - As in the Preferred Alternative, Camino Real Administration would provide assistance for federal protection components, and certified interpretive facilities or landowners of certified properties wishing to develop new trail-related interpretive programs. Emphasis would be placed on programs emphasizing resource protection.
- **Interpretive Plan** - As in the Preferred Alternative, Camino Real Administration and trail partners would prepare an interpretive plan for the length of the NHT.
- **Educational Programs** - As in the Preferred Alternative, Camino Real Administration would support the development of new educational programs for the NHT, and would encourage programs to meet state teaching standards in New Mexico and Texas. Under this alternative, the development of new education materials and activities promoting trail resource protection and stewardship would be emphasized. The development of "hands-on" programs for active resource protection would be encouraged.
- **Heritage Tourism** - Heritage tourism under this alternative would be oriented toward learning about the past in an enjoyable manner, but would not allow for decline of the very heritage that attracts visitors in the first place. Heritage tourism would be strongly encouraged as a new type of visitor use opportunity, as well as an excellent tool to assist in the promotion of historic trails. Heritage tourism would be sensitive to environmental issues, and would be designed to allow people to experience resources with an ecologically and culturally sensitive frame of mind and a leave-no-trace emphasis.