

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND¹

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

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

When Spanish explorers began to travel into Texas and western Louisiana in the 1680s, they followed already existing networks of American Indian trails. Representatives of the Spanish Crown used these paths to reach areas where they subsequently established missions and presidios. Eventually, armies and immigrants followed these routes, which led to Euro-American settlements across the two states. Many of these roads continued to be used in later years, forming the boundaries of early Spanish and Mexican land grants. Some of these land grants became part of modern highway

systems. In many places, Spanish names for roads and landscape features have been retained and often represent the only reminder of the Spanish presence. Physical remains of the trail, such as swales and ruts, are testimony to the Spanish Colonial heritage and to significant events that occurred along the trail.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The people whom the Spanish called *Tejas* were the same as those the French referenced as *Les Cenís* (members and/or leaders of the Hasinai Confederation)³.

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

3 - The term *Tejas* often used to describe the American Indian nation(s) for which the Spanish sought to establish a mission is a bit of misnomer. The term is based on the Caddo word *Teija* or *Teysa* meaning friend

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

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

or ally, rather than referring to an actual tribe or band. The Spanish spelling and pluralization gives us the word *Tejas* or *Texas*. Throughout this document, the term *Tejas* is used to refer to the American Indian groups noted historically, whereas the spelling "Texas" refers to the state of Texas, unless otherwise noted.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

locations, they remained permanent establishments in Bexar County until secularization in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Presidio San Antonio de Bexar and Villa de Bexar survived well beyond the end of the Spanish Colonial period.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

settled on the Río Grande within the province of Nuevo Santander. Four of these *villas*—Reynosa, Camargo, Mier, and Revilla—were south of the Río Grande, although their ranchlands extended north of the present international border.

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

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

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

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

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

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

In the 1750s, the Spanish attempted to branch out, but failed due to conflicts with American Indians.⁶ The Spanish Crown

6 - Between 1756 and 1762, the Spanish created three new major settlement areas. They included missions and presidios in three areas far removed from the other settlements: 1) A settlement on the Gulf Coast, east of the

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

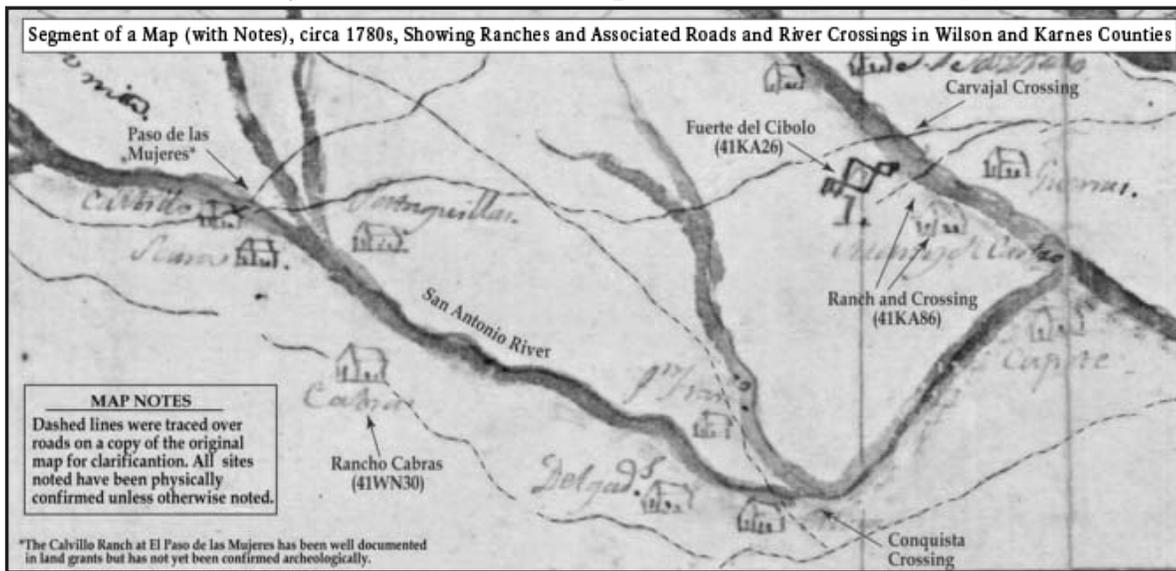
As a result of the recommendations of Marqués de Rubí, Spanish settlement policies in the New World changed. There was no longer an emphasis on establishing

present-day Houston metro area, that included Mission Nuestra Señora de la Luz de Orcoquisac (1756–1772) and Presidio San Agustín de Ahumada (1756–1770); 2) A settlement in Menard County, which included Mission Santa Cruz de San Sabá (1757–1758) and Presidio San Luis de las Amarillas (1757–1771); and 3) A settlement area known as the “El Cañon” missions, which included Mission San Lorenzo de la Santa Cruz (1762–1770) in Real County and Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria del Cañon (1762–1767) in Uvalde County. These new settlements represented Spanish attempts to expand the frontier, but they never succeeded and were abandoned by 1772.

missions, presidios, and scattered towns; instead, there was a reduction in the number of settlement sites and no further expansion attempts. With the exception of a small outpost of the Presidio San Antonio de Bexar (a post known as Fuerte del Cibolo), no new official Spanish presidios and only one mission (Mission Nuestra Señora del Refugio) would be founded during this period. Additionally, only four

cartographer and date of this map have not yet been confirmed, correspondence from Spanish Governor Domingo Cabello to Commandant General Teodoro de Croix in 1780 provides clues to the date and subject matter. Additionally, its reliability as documentation of the relationship between river crossings, roads, and ranch headquarters can be demonstrated by modern knowledge of the locations and

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



villas would be established—all an outgrowth of civilian ventures. The latter half of the 18th century saw a focus on civilian settlements and extended areas of mission ranches, where the lines between missionaries, military, ranchers, and general civilians became blurred. This pattern is similar to the one for Nuevo Santander, but it also seems prevalent in the settlement areas of San Antonio and La Bahía and also in East Texas after 1772. These sites played an important role in the continuation and success of the various routes of El Camino Real de los Tejas Trail because most were located at important crossings.

The pattern of ranch headquarters being used as guard posts or stopping places along routes is illustrated in a late 18th-century map of the San Antonio River valley between the San Antonio and La Bahía settlement areas (Figure 1-1 on page 13 is a section of this map). Although the

dispositions of several of the trail-related resources depicted on this map. Researchers have added notes to the map to show sites that have been confirmed physically and archeologically, to demonstrate the credibility of its information and to facilitate its interpretation.⁷

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

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

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

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

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

because he was known to be a prolific trader and smuggler, and it is likely that his ranch headquarters served as a trading post.

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

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

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

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

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

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

This issue, which was debated from 1804 onward, was finally settled with the signing of the Adams-Onís Treaty on February 22, 1821. Although Spain asserted that the Caddo villages were located in Spanish

territory, neither the groups along the Red River nor in the United States accepted that notion.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PLANNING ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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

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

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

ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

1. There is limited public awareness of the trail.

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

RESOURCE PROTECTION

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