

California - San Luis Obispo County



Legend



Historic Route. The historic route enters San Luis Obispo County nearly on the alignment of state highway 1, passes Oso Flaco Lake, and continues along the coast for several miles before turning inland at Price Canyon. It follows Price Canyon Road and state route 227 to reach the mission. The historic route then followed San Luis Creek upstream to the top of Cuesta Grade and then Santa Margarita Creek to the Salinas River. Today, this stretch is paralleled by U.S. 101 from San Luis Obispo through Atascadero to Paso Robles. There the historic route turns northwest on county road G14 to pass through Camp Roberts en route to the Monterey County line.

Federal Components

Camp Roberts

High Potential Route Segments

Trails within Nipomo Dunes
Stagecoach Road up Cuesta Grade
Cuesta Springs Road on north side of Cuesta Grade

Historic Sites

Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa.
Nipomo Dunes (NNL)
Granary Trees, Santa Margarita/Atascadero/ Paso Robles area

Interpretive Sites

Pismo Beach State Park
Pismo Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area
Camp #81, *El Buchon*
Dallidet Adobe
Cuesta Canyon County Park
Santa Margarita Asistencia
Camp #83, *Assumpcion* (Assuncion)
Wranglerette Arena

Recreational Trail

The Anza route has potential to become a bicycle route and perhaps a hiking and equestrian route. This route could include Stagecoach Road, Cuesta Springs Road, trails within Los Padres National Forest on both the east and west sides of highway 101 at Cuesta Grade, and the Jim Green Trail in Heilmann County Park.

Auto Route (marked)

The auto route, recognized in the County of San Luis Obispo Trails Plan, closely follows the historic route: highway 1 to Price Canyon Road to highway 227 (Edna Road), past the mission on Monterey Street to connect with U.S. 101, to Paso Robles, turning northwest on County Road G14 to Monterey County.

Rail Tour

Amtrak's Coast Starlight route from Guadalupe to Paso Robles is on the historic route.

Auto Tour (guide book)

The county task force identified a scenic route off Highway 101 from north of Cuesta Grade to Paso Robles which more nearly follows the historic route along the Salinas River and links interpretive sites and points of interest.

(Directions are given south to north.) From Highway 101, take Highway 58 east through the town of Santa Margarita and turn north on El Camino Real, noting the Asistencia and Community of Garden Farms on the west side. In Atascadero, take Viejo Camino east and then Halcyon Road to get an open view and access to the Salinas River.

Return to El Camino Real in Atascadero, turn east on Curbaril Avenue and follow it toward the Salinas River. Turn right on Gabarda Road, then left on Tampico Road which ends at the Wranglerette Arena. Return to Curbaril Avenue, and before the bridge over the Salinas River, turn left onto Sycamore Road (Highway 41) and follow it northwest

along the river. Passing under the railroad tracks, turn right on Ensenada Avenue, then right on Via Avenue, and right again onto Traffic Way; follow it northwest along the river. Note the site of Camp #83, *Assumpcion*, on the right in the vicinity of Ferrocarril Road. Continue along Traffic Way, turning left onto Carrizo Road, turn right on El Camino Real, and then enter highway 101 north.

From highway 101 north, take the Vineyard Drive exit east across the Salinas River, turn left on El Pomar Drive, left on Neal Springs Road, and left again onto South River Road.

Follow River Road north to highway 46, turning left on County Road G14 to rejoin the marked auto route in Paso Robles.

Agency/Organization Coordination

Atascadero Land Preservation Society

Camp Roberts

Chumash representatives

Cities of

Arroyo Grande

Atascadero

Grover Beach

Paso Robles

Pismo Beach

San Luis Obispo

County of San Luis Obispo

- Parks, Open Space, and Cultural Resources
- Planning Department
- Parks & Recreation Commission

Diocese of Monterey

Landowners

Nature Conservancy

Salinan Indian Tribe

San Luis Obispo Council of Governments

San Luis Obispo County Land Conservancy

San Luis Obispo Parks, Open Space, & Trail Foundation (SLOPOST)

State of California

- Caltrans
- Department of Fish and Game
- Department of Parks & Recreation
- Native American Heritage Commission
- Office of Historic Preservation
- Office of Tourism
- State Lands Commission

South San Luis Obispo County: Guadalupe to Pismo

Most of the vegetation and wildlife have been modified by human activity, but the Nipomo dunes are ... being protected and vehicles removed. Maybe someday bears will inhabit the Oso Flaco Lake area once again.

The climate is a Mediterranean type with mild winters and summers with a great deal of sea mist especially in summer. The dune vegetation seems little disturbed by our recent

seven year drought.

The Willow-Wax Myrtle community predominates in pockets of the dunes.... Former swamp land east of the Santa Maria River outlet and Oso Flaco Lake have been converted to agricultural lands with apparent little effort to prevent soil erosion and contributing to the 90+% loss of California wetlands. Cattle graze in the wetlands adjacent to the estuary at the mouth of the Santa Maria River and are very destructive to the wetlands. Vehicles in the State Vehicle Recreation Area (SVRA) have completely destroyed the foredunes and the vegetation which held them in place. Removal of the vehicles would permit recovery of the foredunes in a decade or two.

This will be an excellent trail going from Guadalupe to the ocean and along the beach and into the dunes where permitted along the way and then on to Pismo Beach and Price Canyon.

—*Bill Denneen. Information provided in the San Luis Obispo County Task Force Report to the NPS, May 1993*

Natural History in North San Luis Obispo County

After Anza's group had passed inland, through the hills inland from Pismo Beach, they bogged down in mud southeast of San Luis Obispo. These may have been vernal pools. From Mission San Luis Obispo, they traveled along San Luis Creek, a Coast Live Oak-Riparian Forest that was probably bordered with native grasslands that are now mostly nonnative grasslands as well as serpentine rock outcrops that still do support native perennial species.

Going up over Cuesta Pass, they probably did not go through the Sargent Cypress grove, but through a lower point in the Serpentine Chaparral and Serpentine Digger Pine-Chaparral. At their high point on Cuesta Pass, they probably traveled through Coast Live Oak Woodland, Coast Live Oak Forest, and down into Valley Oak Woodland and Central Coast Live Oak Riparian Forest, and other riparian communities. They followed the Salinas River, traveling through a savannah of Valley and Blue Oaks mixed with grassland species.

North of Paso Robles, they arrived at the Nacimiento River which is dominated by willows, sycamores, and cottonwoods. The hills north of the Nacimiento River (southern Monterey County) are typically covered with grassland, blue oaks, and chaparral species growing on sedimentary soils.

—*Lynne Dee Oyler, Field Ecologist. Information provided in the San Luis Obispo County Task Force Report to the NPS, May 1993*

Effect of Spanish Colonization on Native Vegetation

Native plants were mostly perennial (plants that have live roots year round) and were probably invaded by plants from the Mediterranean region even before Juan Bautista de

Anza passed this way. Studies of plant remains found in adobe bricks used in constructing the oldest buildings at the earliest missions indicate that three species—red-stem filaree, curly dock and prickly sow thistle—may have preceded Europeans to California.

These plants are highly adapted for dissemination by wind or by animals and can move for long distances. Man may also have aided this early distribution directly. Spanish and other navigators touched shore at various points on the California coast in 1542 and afterwards. Although their activities on this land were limited, introduction of plants such as those mentioned above was quite possible.

Further evidence from plant materials in adobe bricks indicates the probable introduction of at least 15 additional species of weeds between 1769 and 1824. All of them are now widespread in the state and some are very troublesome.

All the alien plants can't be regarded as weeds, particularly those which became established on rangelands. Wild oats, soft chess, perennial and Italian ryegrasses, bur clover, the filarees and others have well-recognized forage and wildlife values.

—Bill Weitcamp, Farm Advisor, Cooperative Extension University of California. Information provided in the San Luis Obispo County Task Force Report to the NPS, May 1993.

A Recommended Interpretive Site

[The campsite called "El Buchon" by the Spanish] was one of the many Chumash village sites in the area around San Luis Obispo Bay. Buchon was the Wot (chieftain) of a vast area. When Señor Portola's first expedition came, Buchon lived there. When Anza arrived in 1776, one of his principal wives still lived there.

The Chumash thrived in this area. Clams, fish (both freshwater and saltwater), game, acorns and other seeds and plants provided abundant food. Broken clam shells, left in piles at village sites, are found through the area. Because acorns were an important part of their diet, the Chumash tended groves of oak trees to get a good crop. They also tended other communities of plants used for food and medicine.

Price Canyon would be a good place for interpretation of the Chumash culture....

—from the San Luis Obispo County Task Force Report to the NPS, May, 1993
