

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2276

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 14, 1998

Referred to the Committee on Resources

AN ACT

To amend the National Trails System Act to designate El Camino Real de los Tejas as a National Historic Trail.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “El Camino Real de
5 los Tejas National Historic Trail Act of 1998”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds that—

3 (1) El Camino Real de los Tejas (the Royal
4 Road to the Tejas), served as the primary route be-
5 tween the Spanish viceregal capital of Mexico City
6 and the Spanish provincial capital of Tejas at Los
7 Adaes (1721–1773) and San Antonio (1773–1821);

8 (2) the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nine-
9 teenth century rivalries among the European colo-
10 nial powers of Spain, France, and England and after
11 their independence, Mexico and the United States,
12 for dominion over lands fronting the Gulf of Mexico,
13 were played out along the evolving travel routes in
14 this immense area;

15 (3) the future of several American Indian na-
16 tions, whose prehistoric trails were later used by the
17 Spaniards for exploration and colonization, was tied
18 to these larger forces and events and the nations
19 were fully involved in and affected by the complex
20 cultural interactions that ensued;

21 (4) the Old San Antonio Road was a series of
22 routes established in the early 19th century sharing
23 the same corridor and some routes of El Camino
24 Real, and carried American immigrants from the
25 east, contributing to the formation of the Republic
26 of Texas, and its annexation to the United States;

1 (5) the exploration, conquest, colonization, set-
2 tlement, migration, military occupation, religious
3 conversion, and cultural exchange that occurred in a
4 large area of the borderland was facilitated by El
5 Camino Real de los Tejas as it carried Spanish and
6 Mexican influences northeastward, and by its succes-
7 sor, the Old San Antonio Road, which carried Amer-
8 ican influence westward, during a historic period
9 which extended from 1689 to 1850; and

10 (6) the portions of El Camino Real de los Tejas
11 in what is now the United States extended from the
12 Rio Grande near Eagle Pass and Laredo, Texas and
13 involved routes that changed through time, that
14 total almost 2,600 miles in combined length, gen-
15 erally coursing northeasterly through San Antonio,
16 Bastrop, Nacogdoches, and San Augustine in Texas
17 to Natchitoches, Louisiana, a general corridor dis-
18 tance of 550 miles.

19 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION.**

20 Section 5(a) of the National Trails System Act (16
21 U.S.C. 1244(a) is amended—

22 (1) by designating the paragraphs relating to
23 the California National Historic Trail, the Pony Ex-
24 press National Historic Trail, and the Selma to

1 Montgomery National Historic Trail as paragraphs
2 (18), (19), and (20), respectively; and

3 (2) by adding at the end the following:

4 “(22) EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS.—

5 “(A) IN GENERAL.—El Camino Real de los
6 Tejas (The Royal Road to the Tejas) National
7 Historic Trail, a combination of routes totaling
8 2,580 miles in length from the Rio Grande near
9 Eagle Pass and Laredo, Texas to Natchitoches,
10 Louisiana, and including the Old San Antonio
11 Road, as generally depicted on the maps enti-
12 tled ‘El Camino Real de los Tejas’, contained in
13 the report prepared pursuant to subsection (b)
14 entitled ‘National Historic Trail Feasibility
15 Study and Environmental Assessment: El Ca-
16 mino Real de los Tejas, Texas-Louisiana’, dated
17 ____ July 1998. A map generally depicting the
18 trail shall be on file and available for public in-
19 spection in the Office of the National Park
20 Service, Department of the Interior. The trail
21 shall be administered by the Secretary of the
22 Interior. No land or interest in land outside the
23 exterior boundaries of any federally adminis-
24 tered area may be acquired by the United

1 States for the trail except with the consent of
2 the owner of the land or interest in land.

3 “(B) COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES.—The
4 Secretary of the Interior may coordinate with
5 United States and Mexican public and non-gov-
6 ernmental organizations, academic institutions,
7 and, in consultation with the Secretary of State,
8 the government of Mexico and its political sub-
9 divisions, for the purpose of exchanging trail in-
10 formation and research, fostering trail preserva-
11 tion and educational programs, providing tech-
12 nical assistance, and working to establish an
13 international historic trail with complementary
14 preservation and education programs in each
15 nation.”.

Passed the Senate October 14 (legislative day, Octo-
ber 2), 1998.

Attest:

GARY SISCO,
Secretary.