

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1628

AN ACT

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

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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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “El Camino Real de
3 los Tejas National Historic Trail Act of 2001”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds that—

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

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

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

24 (4) the Old San Antonio Road was a series of
25 routes established in the early 19th century sharing
26 the same corridor and some routes of El Camino

1 Real, and carried American immigrants from the
2 east, contributing to the formation of the Republic
3 of Texas, and its annexation to the United States;

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

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

22 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION.**

23 Section 5(a) of the National Trails System Act (16
24 U.S.C. 1244(a) is amended as follows:

1 (1) By designating the paragraph relating to
2 the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail as para-
3 graph (21).

4 (2) By adding at the end the following:

5 “(23) EL CAMINO REAL DE LOS TEJAS.—

6 “(A) IN GENERAL.—El Camino Real de los
7 Tejas (The Royal Road to the Tejas) National
8 Historic Trail, a combination of routes totaling
9 2,580 miles in length from the Rio Grande near
10 Eagle Pass and Laredo, Texas to Natchitoches,
11 Louisiana, and including the Old San Antonio
12 Road, as generally depicted on the maps enti-
13 tled ‘El Camino Real de los Tejas’, contained in
14 the report prepared pursuant to subsection (b)
15 entitled ‘National Historic Trail Feasibility
16 Study and Environmental Assessment: El Ca-
17 mino Real de los Tejas, Texas-Louisiana’, dated
18 July 1998. A map generally depicting the trail
19 shall be on file and available for public inspec-
20 tion in the Office of the National Park Service,
21 Department of the Interior. The trail shall be
22 administered by the Secretary of the Interior.

23 “(B) COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES.—The
24 Secretary of the Interior may coordinate with
25 United States and Mexican public and non-gov-

1 ernmental organizations, academic institutions,
2 and, in consultation with the Secretary of State,
3 the Government of Mexico and its political sub-
4 divisions, for the purpose of exchanging trail in-
5 formation and research, fostering trail preserva-
6 tion and educational programs, providing tech-
7 nical assistance, and working to establish an
8 international historic trail with complementary
9 preservation and education programs in each
10 nation.”.

11 **SEC. 4. PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS PROTECTION.**

12 Designation of El Camino Real de los Tejas under
13 this Act does not itself confer any additional authority to
14 apply other existing Federal laws and regulations on non-
15 Federal lands along the trail. Laws or regulations requir-
16 ing public entities and agencies to take into consideration
17 a national historic trail shall continue to apply notwith-
18 standing the foregoing. On non-Federal lands, the na-
19 tional historic trail shall be established only when land-
20 owners voluntarily request certification of their sites and
21 segments of the trail consistent with section 3(a)(3) of the
22 National Trails System Act. Notwithstanding section 7(g)
23 of such Act, the United States is authorized to acquire
24 privately-owned real property or an interest in such prop-
25 erty for purposes of the trail only with the willing consent

1 of the owner of such property and shall have no authority
2 to condemn or otherwise appropriate privately-owned real
3 property or an interest in such property for the purposes
4 of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.

Passed the House of Representatives September 10,
2001.

Attest:

Clerk.