

106TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

**H. R. 2271**

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**AN ACT**

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



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## AN ACT

To amend the National Trails System Act to designate El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro 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 Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 The Congress finds the following:

6 (1) El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (the  
7 Royal Road of the Interior), served as the primary  
8 route between the colonial Spanish capital of Mexico  
9 City and the Spanish provincial capitals at San Juan  
10 de Los Caballeros (1598–1600), San Gabriel (1600–  
11 1609) and then Santa Fe (1610–1821).

12 (2) The portion of El Camino Real de Tierra  
13 Adentro that resided in what is now the United  
14 States extended between El Paso, Texas and present  
15 San Juan Pueblo, New Mexico, a distance of 404  
16 miles;

17 (3) El Camino Real is a symbol of the cultural  
18 interaction between nations and ethnic groups and  
19 of the commercial exchange that made possible the  
20 development and growth of the borderland;

21 (4) American Indian groups, especially the  
22 Pueblo Indians of the Rio Grande, developed trails  
23 for trade long before Europeans arrived;

24 (5) In 1598, Juan de Oñate led a Spanish mili-  
25 tary expedition along those trails to establish the  
26 northern portion of El Camino Real;

1           (6) During the Mexican National Period and  
2 part of the U.S. Territorial Period, El Camino Real  
3 de Tierra Adentro facilitated the emigration of peo-  
4 ple to New Mexico and other areas that would be-  
5 come the United States;

6           (7) The exploration, conquest, colonization, set-  
7 tlement, religious conversion, and military occupa-  
8 tion of a large area of the borderlands was made  
9 possible by this route, whose historical period ex-  
10 tended from 1598 to 1882;

11           (8) American Indians, European emigrants,  
12 miners, ranchers, soldiers, and missionaries used El  
13 Camino Real during the historic development of the  
14 borderlands. These travelers promoted cultural inter-  
15 action among Spaniards, other Europeans, American  
16 Indians, Mexicans, and Americans;

17           (9) El Camino Real fostered the spread of Ca-  
18 tholicism, mining, an extensive network of com-  
19 merce, and ethnic and cultural traditions including  
20 music, folklore, medicine, foods, architecture, lan-  
21 guage, place names, irrigation systems, and Spanish  
22 law.

23 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION.**

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

1           (1) by designating the paragraphs relating to  
2 the California National Historic Trail, the Pony Ex-  
3 press National Historic Trail, and the Selma to  
4 Montgomery National Historic Trail as paragraphs  
5 (18), (19), and (20), respectively; and

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

7           “(21) EL CAMINO REAL DE TIERRA ADENTRO.—

8           “(A) El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (the  
9 Royal Road of the Interior) National Historic Trail,  
10 a 404 mile long trail from the Rio Grande near El  
11 Paso, Texas to San Juan Pueblo, New Mexico, as  
12 generally depicted on the maps entitled ‘United  
13 States Route: El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro’,  
14 contained in the report prepared pursuant to sub-  
15 section (b) entitled ‘National Historic Trail Feasi-  
16 bility Study and Environmental Assessment: El Ca-  
17 mino Real de Tierra Adentro, Texas-New Mexico’,  
18 dated March 1997.

19           “(B) MAP.—A map generally depicting the trail  
20 shall be on file and available for public inspection in  
21 the Office of the National Park Service, Department  
22 of Interior.

23           “(C) ADMINISTRATION.—The trail shall be ad-  
24 ministered by the Secretary of the Interior.

1           “(D) LAND ACQUISITION.—No lands or inter-  
2           ests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any  
3           federally administered area may be acquired by the  
4           Federal Government for El Camino Real de Tierra  
5           Adentro.

6           “(E) VOLUNTEER GROUPS; CONSULTATION.—  
7           The Secretary of the Interior shall—

8                   “(i) encourage volunteer trail groups to  
9                   participate in the development and maintenance  
10                  of the trail; and

11                   “(ii) consult with other affected Federal,  
12                   State, local governmental, and tribal agencies in  
13                   the administration of the trail.

14           “(F) COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES.—The Sec-  
15           retary of the Interior may coordinate with United  
16           States and Mexican public and non-governmental or-  
17           ganizations, academic institutions, and, in consulta-  
18           tion with the Secretary of State, the Government of  
19           Mexico and its political subdivisions, for the purpose  
20           of exchanging trail information and research, fos-  
21           tering trail preservation and educational programs,  
22           providing technical assistance, and working to estab-  
23           lish an international historic trail with complemen-

1 tary preservation and education programs in each  
2 nation.”.

Passed the House of Representatives September 18,  
2000.

Attest:

*Clerk.*