



The interior of the mission building demonstrates the handcrafted style so characteristic of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

FIND RUSTIC BEAUTY AND TRANQUILITY SET IN THE HILLS OF THE EAST TEXAS PINEYWOODS WHERE THE CADDO INDIAN FARMSTEADS ONCE DOTTED THE LANDSCAPE. A BUILDING COMMEMORATING A SPANISH MISSION AND A LOG HOUSE TAKE YOU TO TEXAS'S PAST. ENJOY NATURE WHILE CAMPING, PICNICKING, AND HIKING AMONG TALL PINES AT THIS 1930S ERA CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC) CAMP.



NEARBY POINTS OF INTEREST

Davy Crockett National Forest
Caddo Mounds State Historic Site
Rusk Depot Campground
The Texas State Railroad

PARK LOCATION

Mission Tejas State Park is located 21 miles northeast of Crockett and 12 miles southwest of Alto on SH 21 (the Old San Antonio Road). The park entrance is near Weches, where Park Road 44 intersects with SH 21. The park is open throughout the year. Call in advance to schedule school or group tours of the historic structures.

NOTE: Texas state law makes it unlawful for anyone to disturb in any way historic or prehistoric, archeological or paleontological sites, or any historical marker situated on lands controlled by the state of Texas.

NUMBERS TO CALL

For all reservations, call (512) 389-8900
For information only, call (936) 687-2394

Mission Tejas State Park
19343 State Highway 21 East
Grapeland, TX 75844
(936) 687-2394
www.tpwd.texas.gov/missiontejas/



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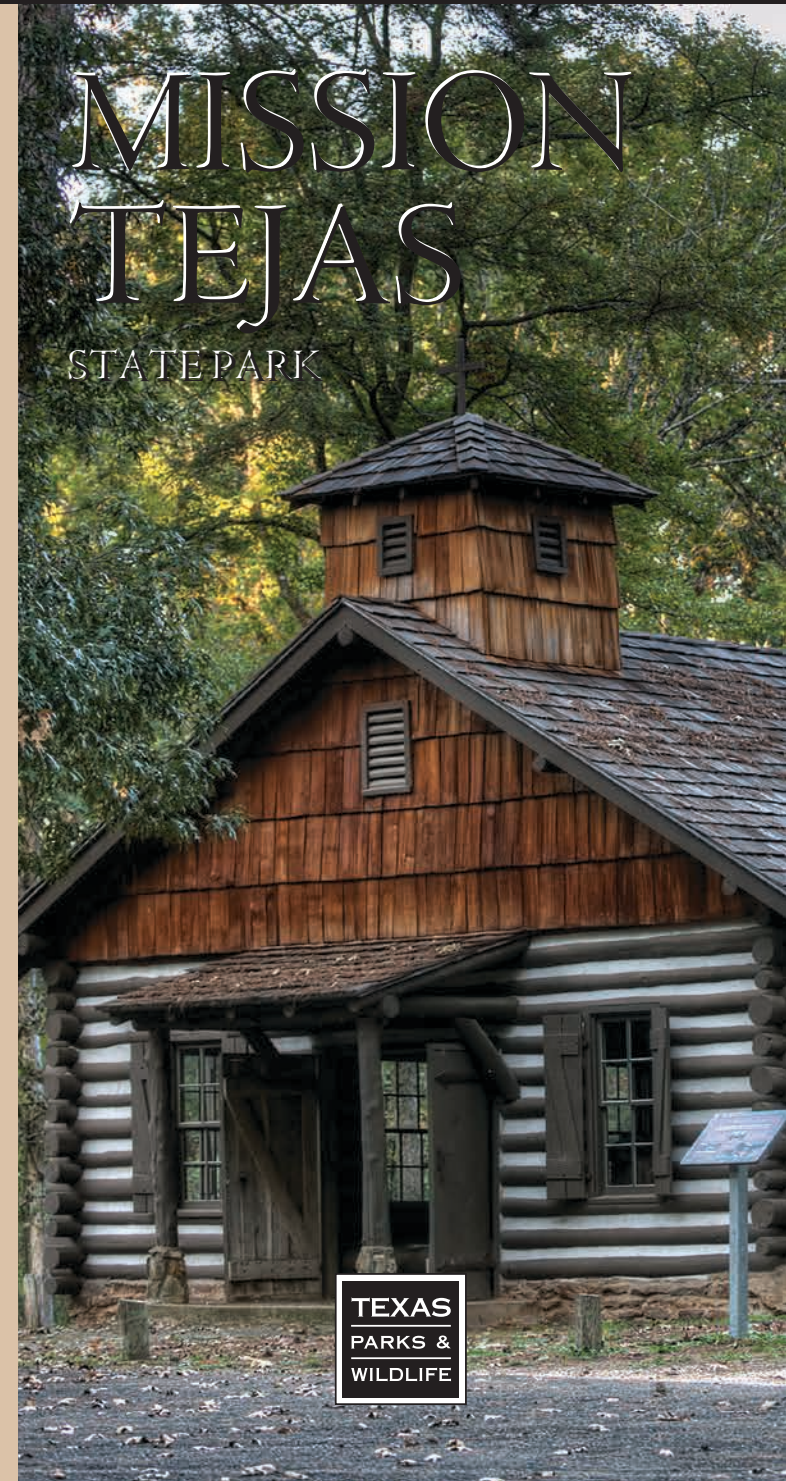
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Texas State Parks is a division of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.



INTERPRETIVE GUIDE

MISSION TEJAS STATE PARK





The Rice family home is a good example of a restored pioneer log home that evolved over time. Despite having been moved to this site, it remains as one of the oldest structures in this area.

EARLY SETTLEMENT

Caddo tribes established agricultural societies in East Texas. Their settlements date from the 800s to the 1830s and included farmsteads spread over an area of 78 miles. The Caddo people lived in thatched buildings spaced between cultivated and non-cultivated areas. They raised crops of corn, beans, melons, squash, sunflowers, and tobacco.

FRANCE AND SPAIN STAKE THEIR CLAIM

In the late 1600s, rival European powers competed to gain control of Texas. René de la Salle led a group of French colonists who arrived on the Texas coast in 1685 and built a makeshift settlement. As news of it spread, the Spanish sought to remove the French, whom they considered intruders.

Captain Alonso de León and Fray Damián Massanet led an expedition to counter the French settlement. They built the first mission in the province of Texas among a village of the Caddo Indians. Three Spanish priests, three soldiers, and supplies remained at the new mission on June 1, 1690, and completed a cluster of crude wooden buildings.

A smallpox epidemic in the winter of 1690 killed almost 300 people near the mission and 3,000 others in the area. The Caddo associated the disease with the Spaniards and their baptismal water. They became disenchanted with the Spanish and plotted to get rid of them. Father Massanet learned of a planned attack on October 6, 1693. The Spaniards then buried heavy items, burned the mission, and retreated to Mexico.

The Spanish never achieved the level of success in East Texas that they desired. Spanish friars returned to rebuild the mission in 1716. But renewed conflict between France and Spain caused them to again abandon it in 1719.

WITH HELP FROM THE CCC

In 1934 the citizens of Houston County purchased land and erected a marker to commemorate the Mission San Francisco de los Tejas. The federal government chose the site for a CCC project. Young men of the 200-strong CCC Company 888 worked under army officers to build the park and reclaim the land. They received food, clothing, pay, and educational benefits for the work. For many unskilled young men during the Great Depression, the CCC offered a chance for a better life. The company completed its work and disbanded in 1935.

The Texas Forest Service continued to manage the forest here until 1957. Today, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department practices sound resource management to promote stewardship and provide a safe family atmosphere at a park rich in history.



EL CAMINO REAL

From 1686 to 1692 the Spanish began building a 2500 mile road from Guerrero Mexico to Louisiana. It passed through Laredo, San Antonio, and what is now



this park. It received the name El Camino Real: the Royal Road. Generations of people used the road for commerce and to find a new life in Texas. It began to pass out of use as people traveled to Texas settlements off its route, by other means during the 1800s. Modern highways Texas 21 and Louisiana 6 follow much of the old path of El Camino Real. In 2004, it became El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.

In 1828, Joseph and Willie Masters Rice built a log home near a section of El Camino Real in this area. In 1973, the Rice family donated the old log home to the State of Texas, and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department moved the historic structure to its present location at Mission Tejas State Park.

El Camino Real

