Franklin Mountains State Park Management Plan –

This memorandum serves as an attachment to the Franklin Mountains State Park (FMSP) Management Plan (Plan) dated May, 1994, and updates certain items contained therein.

The updates include the following points:

1. The Plan (with updates) remains the guiding document for TPWD in the management and operation of FMSP. The Plan does not contain—nor can it be interpreted to contain—any provision for the plan to be suspended or “sunset.”

2. As originally stated in the Plan, TPWD will continue to pursue options for the transfer of the Castner Range from the Department of the Army to the State of Texas as a part of FMSP. The park enabling legislation allows FMSP to include Castner Range (or portions which might be conveyed) without further legislative approval.

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STATE PARK
MANAGEMENT PLAN

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Thanks the Following for their Participation

The People of the City of El Paso and surrounding communities and especially those who participated in the public workshops.

The City of El Paso
The County of El Paso
El Paso Public Service Board
Fort Bliss, Department of The Army
Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition
Wilderness Park Museum
University of Texas at El Paso
Texas Department of Transportation
Bureau of Land Management - Las Cruces, New Mexico
Sun Country Riders Club
Desert Ratz Mountain Bike Club
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Franklin Mountains
State Park
Management Plan

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Management Plan Summary

Franklin Mountains State Park was established by an act of the Texas Legislature in 1979 in response to the concern of the citizens of El Paso that the mountain range after which the State Park was named, was being slowly but irrevocably changed by the development and growth of the City. Extending from the heart of El Paso north to the Texas-New Mexico state line, the State Park preserves an outstanding example of the Chihuahuan Desert ecosystem. As the metropolitan area grows, the State Park will be increasingly appreciated for the open space it provides for area citizens.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is responsible for the management and operation of Franklin Mountains State Park, presently containing 23,744 acres. This document has been prepared to outline the direction the agency will take in order to carry out those responsibilities.

The Management Plan consists of the following six sections and appendix:

The Introduction furnishes background material, management objectives, a summary of public comment received in workshops held during the fall of 1991, and a summary of public comments received on the draft Management Plan in 1993.

* The objective of the Department is to manage the State Park in a way that will preserve its natural and cultural resources and at the same time make it available for public use.

* The comments received at the workshops were consistent in the recommendation to the Department to provide educational and informational materials, limit development, use existing roads and trails for access, and expand opportunities for access.

The Site Description and Issues section gives a general overview of the physical makeup of the State Park and provides some detail about access, acquisition and boundary issues.

* The cultural and natural resources associated with the State Park represent an important segment of the Chihuahuan Desert and deserve preservation. Prehistoric people occupied this land continuously from Paleoindian times, over 11,500 years ago, until the arrival of Europeans in the late 1500s. Numerous floral species of southwestern and northern Mexican distribution occur at the eastern extreme of their range.
Access to the State Park is now legally quite limited, but in actuality is open to trespass. The Tom Mays Unit and McKelligon Canyon City Park are currently the two main public access points. Most other access involves trespass through the Castner Range, Public Service Board lands, subdivisions or privately owned lands. The Department will seek to acquire safe and legal public access through these lands.

The legislation enacted in 1979 creating Franklin Mountains State Park (amended four times), allows the addition of the Castner Range to the State Park; however, the issue of unexploded ordnance on this former Army firing range must first be resolved. The acquisition of the Castner Range and its addition to the State Park is important in order to provide additional public access, to protect the resources, and to preserve its scenic values.

Other acquisition issues to be resolved concern the 253 acre McMath Survey (General Land Office) and the 224 acre Jobe Concrete Inc. (private) tracts. The cost of these tracts is anticipated to be high and the benefits of their acquisition will need to be well documented and justified in order to be approved.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will negotiate with the General Land Office for the acquisition of the mineral interests on approximately 5,500 leased acres for the long-term protection of those park resources.

Various suggestions have been made to modify the State Park boundary to make it follow logical topographical features and/or to protect resources. Since it would take legislative action to accomplish this, the plan does not recommend any boundary changes at this time.

The Programming section discusses the management of recreation and public use, interpretation, facility development, and resource assessment.

Recreation and public use access will be improved at the Tom Mays Unit and McKelligon Canyon City Park, and additional access is planned for the Hitt Canyon Unit and the Tin Mine Unit. Hiking trails in all areas will be improved, identified and designations of certain areas and trails will be made for equestrian use and mountain biking.

The plan calls for an ambitious program to interpret the history, prehistory, biology, and geology of the State Park. Initial efforts will focus on publications and audiovisual programs. Pending negotiations with the City of El Paso, a visitor center is planned in the vicinity of the Wilderness Park Museum.
* New and/or rehabilitated facilities such as picnic sites, parking areas and trails that will serve state park visitors are planned for the Tom Mays and Hitt Canyon Units. The Department will cooperate with the City of El Paso to improve backcountry access facilities from the McKelligon Canyon City Park. Facility development in the Tin Mine Unit probably will not occur during the life of this plan because of funding restraints and lack of access.

Using maps and graphs, the Land-Use Plan section shows specific visitor use and density for each of the proposed developed areas. The intent of facility development at the State Park is to provide a reasonable balance between recreational needs of the public and the conservation of area resources.

The Resource Management section contains an overview of Department strategies for resource inventory, resource assessment, and resource management.

* The Department will undertake a comprehensive inventory of the cultural and natural resources of the State Park in order to be able to make sound decisions about future management actions. The inventory will be accomplished by a variety of means starting with basic literature surveys, progressing up to and including systematic on-ground surveys. Much of this work will be accomplished through an agreement with the University of Texas at El Paso.

* An assessment of the resources contained within the State Park is a key component of the management of the area. The ultimate goal of all research and assessment is to evaluate the State Park's resources within the larger context of the upper Chihuahuan Desert.

* Under resource management, initial efforts will focus on monitoring, education, and restoration activities. The Department will prepare a fire management plan that will allow wildland fires to run their course only when public or private property is not threatened.

The Operational Plan section describes administration, staffing levels, the volunteer program, facility maintenance, and an

* The Department proposes to manage the three El Paso facilities (Franklin Mountains, Hueco Tanks and Magoffin Home) with one Administrative Manager for efficiency and cost savings.

* The current staffing levels at the State Park are not adequate for the job of either protecting park resources or providing the kinds of visitor services needed. Staffing increases will allow the Department to extend hours of operation and to expand interpretation and resource protection efforts.
The Department will actively recruit volunteers to help with a variety of tasks, from trail maintenance to clerical assistance to guided tours.

The Department will develop Search-and-Rescue Plans, and a Facility Maintenance Program. Consideration is being given to Department Game Wardens having primary responsibility for the enforcement of all agency regulations and laws within the State Park.

The Appendix contain details about the State Park’s legislation, a list of agencies and organizations with whom coordination work has been done, endangered species lists, projected visitation/revenue, and a utilization analysis from the 1990 Texas Outdoor Recreation Plan.
Foreword
Project Location
Objectives
Public Comment Summary
Foreword

The Franklin Mountains form a striking backdrop to the City of El Paso and constitute an area of statewide ecological and aesthetic significance. Making the mountains a park for the protection of their natural features and enjoyment of the public has long been the dream of farsighted El Paso residents as well as conservationists across the state and nation. When, in the late 1970s, developers began carving roads into these, until then, almost pristine mountains, House Bill 867 was passed in 1979 by the Texas Legislature. This Legislative Act established the Franklin Mountains as a state park and served to protect the area from further urban development.

The intent of the Legislature was to provide lasting protection to the outstanding scenic, ecological and historic features of the Franklin Mountains, so that these could be enjoyed and appreciated by present and future generations.

At present the State Park is open for limited day-use activities such as picnicking, sightseeing, and hiking. Vehicular access to the State Park is by way of the Trans Mountain Road as well as the established roads in the Tom Mays Unit of the State Park and from the City/County facilities in McKelligon Canyon. All other access points are closed to motor vehicles.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is responsible for the future development, use and management of the State Park. This document is an outline of proposed use and development based on staff input and comments received at the public workshops held in El Paso and comments received on the draft plan released in the summer of 1993. This plan will guide the management of the state park for the remainder of this century.
Objectives

In accordance with the guidelines established by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission, the Department's objectives at Franklin Mountains State Park can be stated as follows:

To conserve for present and future generations the outstanding ecological, geological, scenic, and cultural features of the Franklin Mountains; and to make available for public use the manifold recreational, educational, and scientific opportunities that exist in the State Park, insofar as such development remains consistent with the conservation of the natural and cultural features present and with the overall wilderness character of the State Park.
Public Comment Summary

WORKSHOP PARTICIPATION AND COMMENTS:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department held nine public workshops throughout the City of El Paso during September and October of 1991 with approximately 100 participants attending. The primary purpose of the workshops was to gather information, ideas, and suggestions regarding the future management and operation of Franklin Mountain State Park. These valuable information-gathering workshops were the first phase of the planning process that was undertaken by the Department to produce this management plan.

All workshop participants were given the opportunity to respond to three open-ended questions through a nominal group technique. Larger groups were divided into smaller groups of 10-15 to facilitate this process. The questions were: "What issues are important to you in the development and management of Franklin Mountains State Park," "What types of public use would you like to see in the park," and "What types of use would you not like to see in the park?"

Each person answered these questions individually, then all items were listed and discussed within each group. The items were then prioritized by voting for the items each individual felt were most important. The top items are listed on the following pages with the relative total number of votes for each item.

Several common themes became readily apparent during the analysis of the planning workshop results. They include the need for the Department to provide educational/informational material to the public, limit development, use existing roads/trails for access, and expand opportunities for access. These comments and suggestions, along with a number of similar and related issues identified by the staff over the past several years have been considered in the preparation of this management plan.
Introduction

A large variety of ideas and suggestions were elicited for each question, resulting in the following summaries which indicate the total number of participant votes for the most often-repeated responses.

Question #1: What issues are important to you in the development and management of Franklin Mountains State Park?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL GROUP</th>
<th>GROUP TOTAL</th>
<th>RESPONSES:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Include educational programs at visitor/interpretive centers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Leave park as natural as possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Limited development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Acquire remaining land within boundary (McMath/GLO).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Preserve flora and fauna; consider reintroduction of vanished species.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Add Castner Range to the park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Limit new development to already developed areas (including trails).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Provide sufficient park staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Establish buffer between park boundaries and park development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question #2: What types of public use would you like to see in the park?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL GROUP</th>
<th>GROUP TOTAL</th>
<th>RESPONSES:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>Expand existing uses/picnicking/camping/hiking trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Develop comprehensive education program including an interpretive center, field trips, and community outreach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Leave portions of park wild (wilderness). Don’t cover with trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Hiking and mountain bike trails (use existing trails and roads).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Low impact design for all development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Interpretive trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Equestrian and mountain bikes permitted on trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Convert Wilderness Park Museum into state interpretive center (acquire additional land around museum).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Introduction**

**Question #3:** What types of use would you **NOT** like to see in the park?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP TOTAL</th>
<th>GROUP VOTES</th>
<th>RESPONSES:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>No commercialization (development, enterprise).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>No motorized vehicles (4 wheelers, ATV, dirt bikes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>No motorized vehicles off pavement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>No hunting or firearms (fireworks).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>No further development of water storage towers and other utilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>No alcohol, glass, or Styrofoam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>No new paved roads or no new structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>No mining or quarrying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>No motels/concessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>No grazing leases.</td>
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* Groups varied from 5 to 15 persons each receiving more than a total of 10 votes.
Introduction

PUBLIC COMMENT ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY
OF RESPONSE TO THIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prepared by: Gregory G. Rocha, Ph.D., Assistant Professor,
Department of Political Science, University of Texas at El Paso

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department provided copies of a
draft of the Management Plan for Franklin Mountains State Park
for public review and comments during a two month period in
1993. The following is an analysis of those comments received
which were formulated and analyzed by an independent
accounting through the University of Texas at El Paso:

INTRODUCTION:

The following is an analysis of public responses to the draft of
the Franklin Mountains State Park Management Plan. The Texas
Parks and Wildlife’s request for input was made in the summer
of 1993 and the public had until September 1, 1993 to submit
comments. The response is relatively light in terms of the total
number and therefore no statistical significance is given. Still,
two points about the sample need to be made. First, those who
responded are people with an interest in parks in general, and
the Franklin Mountains in particular. Many have lived in the El
Paso area for years and have camped in and hike the area
extensively. Their input, therefore, takes on special significance.
Second, comments were submitted by various groups with
sizable memberships. In some cases, one set of comments
represents the ideas of many people. Furthermore, a number of
the comments are quite detailed and reflect a considerable
amount of work undertaken by the individuals and groups.

The sample: A total of 31 different responses were submitted,
and they represent an extensive range, both in terms of content
and the numbers of people and organizations. There is, at one
extreme, a brief letter by someone who simply writes that in his
opinion the draft is a good one and he supports it fully. By
contrast, a coalition of groups has submitted a detailed analysis
of the draft, including recommended changes in the text. In
between are a mix of comments and analyses. Additionally,
there are three pieces of correspondence containing petitions
signed by citizens. Finally, government agencies have offered
comments as well. The numerical breakdown is as follows:

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<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups/coalitions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government agencies</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petitions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The general overview: Everyone agrees that the plan needs to be put into operation and that the draft is a good one. The differences in opinion center upon how to balance ecological concerns while at the same time providing access and pleasure to a growing urban area where extensive use by a large number of people for a wide range of purposes is anticipated. Analysis of the responses follows the format of the draft.

LAND ACQUISITIONS:

Seven of the responses address this matter. Three come from groups, two from individuals, and two from petitioners.

Castner Range: Three of the responses agree with the need to acquire the Castner Range land. One individual argues that it would provide much needed lower elevation land to the park and one group believes that if purchased, it should be given serious consideration as the site for a visitor center and headquarters.

Wilderness Park: Two responses address the acquisition of Wilderness Park. One favors negotiating for its purchase because it contains the museum that was "intended to complement a large wilderness park in the Franklin Mountains." An individual respondent is more hesitant and suggests negotiations with the Army for an adjacent park for a visitors area. He believes that more construction in Wilderness Park would further diminish the area's natural resource.

McMath Survey: Two petitions that contain a total of 197 signatures request that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission "review the H.G. Foster #258 and McMath #298 surveys for purchase and inclusion" into the State Park. No mention is made of H.G. Foster #258 in the draft. Their concerns are twofold. One is that no access to the State Park from the west side now exists. Second, they request that the surveys be used to create what they call "pocket parks." It would seem that the two petitions are a coordinated effort. Another request for the inclusion of McMath #298 comes from an individual who asserts that it was an original part of the State Park and that its acquisition is necessary as a sanctuary for the birds of prey which nest and feed in that tract. And in what might be a vague reference to these tracts, one person calls for further efforts to "acquire additional lower elevation land on the west side. . . ." Finally, one group suggests a more vigorous effort in the acquisition of the McMath tract due to the upcoming deadline for the purchase.

Mineral Interests: Two respondents strongly favor securing mineral rights in order to assure long term protection of the State Park's ecosystem.
Introduction

Jobe Concrete Parcels: Two respondents agree with effort to purchase these parcels.
Easements and Rights-of-Way: One group strongly favors the language used in this section.

PROGRAMMING:

Every substantive response offered commentary about programming. Several trends can be identified. One is the strong concern toward the potential for vandalism. In fact, four individual responses address nothing but their fear that opening the State Park will only lead to the defacing of the Franklin Mountains. All base their conclusions on the vandalism they have seen at Hueco Tanks State Park, Tom Mays Park, and McKelligon Canyon. One person recommends that camping spaces, picnic tables, and other facilities be assigned to people and groups. Their names and auto-licence plates would be taken in order to track instances of vandalism. Also of interest are two letters which address concerns that the draft does not contain much in the way of programs for the elderly and disabled. On that point, one individual suggests "paving a path through the most widely used areas of the park" as a means of securing access for those groups.

Still, most of the comments discuss what activities would be available. The respondents tend to fall into two groups. On the one hand, there are those whose concerns focus on a wide range of activities that would permit wide enjoyment by the widest number of people. Their rationale is that parks exist to entertain and educate people and that extensive use assures increased fees, which in turn fund more park activities. By contrast, there are those who assert that limits need to be placed on park activities and access in order to assure that the ecosystem is preserved to the greatest extent possible. This is not to say that they are elitist. Rather, they recognize the fragility of a park, the ease with which it can be upset, and the difficulty in recapturing that natural state.

Recreational Program:

Tom Mays Unit: Three responses directly discuss Tom Mays, with the central issues being use by the public. One person suggests that overnight camping facilities, similar to those at Hueco Tanks, be installed. Another recommends that, given its current condition and its past pattern of use, it be developed for tent camping and RV use. This, he argues, would make it affordable to more of the public. Finally, one group suggests that access should be limited to West Cottonwood Springs so
that the area's ecological balance be preserved. Water from the springs could be filtered and piped for use by those in the area.

Hitt Canyon Unit: One respondent suggests that the cavern located in the Hitt Canyon Unit be protected by officials and that access be limited to those with permits.

Tin Mine Unit: Two individuals respond in somewhat similar fashion to the draft's suggestion that the Tin Mine Unit might be a location for a visitor center. They argue that the mining history should be preserved for educational purposes as well as a means for attracting tourists.

McKelligon Canyon City Park: Nothing specific was presented.

Backcountry Trails: The general trends identified in the introduction of this section can be seen here. Several respondents were concerned with what they regarded as the vagueness of the language and the overall plan in the section. Consequently, one group is concerned that it raises the possibility of "unacceptable impacts to Park resources." They urge an inventory of State Park resources be undertaken before decisions about trails and their use are made. They also suggest that the final draft make explicit that certain practices such as campfires will not be allowed in the State Park. In a similar vein, another group recommends that the creation of new trails be slowly and systematically implemented in order to balance ecological and recreational concerns. Finally, one group and several individual respondents are even more wary about new trails and argue that the existing system of trails are sufficient. More trails would lead to more environmental erosion, according to them.

Others view the section's brevity as an indicator that their interests are not given what they feel is due consideration. For instance, a group of equestrians request that equestrian trails "cover as much of the beautiful park as possible." A letter from a runners group urges development of new trails which enhance the area's "athletic climate" while at the same time are "sensible and ecologically sound."

Camping: Along with the one comment about recreational vehicle use in the Tom Mays Unit, the other recommendation from the responses urges that Texas Parks and Wildlife Department work with the private sector to develop camp sites close to the State Park but not in it. It would preserve the State Park and reduce development costs.

Caving: No specific comments were submitted.
Introduction

Hang Gliding: People are either for it or against it. Many people note that there are any number of dangers associated with gliding that could not only lead to injury but legal questions over liability. Those in favor say that if the gliding is controlled and if liability concerns are addressed then it should be permitted. No one favors the use of motorized gliders.

Hunting: All seven responses to the hunting section oppose it in any form because of the danger and the diversion of resources (i.e., patrols) it would require. In fact, all urge that firearms be banned from the State Park.

Mountain Biking and Off-Road Vehicles: Three letters concur with the draft's recommendation that no motorized bikes be permitted due to the damage they likely would cause. The remaining comment comes from a biking organization and contains an outline for which trails should be designated as either hiking only or hiking and biking trails.

Rock Climbing: The one comment about this activity urges that the State Park administration determine designated areas, register climbers, use liability releases, and undertake the steps needed to minimize damage to the State Park.

Interpretive Program:

The interpretive program received much less attention than did the recreational section. Only four reviews contain commentary, and three of those were perfunctory. All spoke of the importance of interpretation's educational purposes. In the Audubon Society's letter is an offer of assistance in the development of the programs.

Passive Interpretation: Among the recommendations are: communicative materials, presumably written and verbal, in both English and Spanish; written information (for sale) about animal, insect, and plant life in the State Park; integration of the visitor center into this section of the plan.

Active Interpretation: One person recommends that the State Park hold an occasional southwestern arts and crafts show.
Facilities Program:

Much of what might be relevant to this section, such as the location for certain buildings and the development of new trails, has been discussed in earlier sections. But in quick summary, most of the respondents are concerned with preservation of the State Park's environment and prefer new facilities to be considered only after renovation of existing buildings. Also, there is concern that the number of new trails is excessive.

Perhaps it is in this section that the issue of garbage collection and disposal should be presented. Four respondents propose that details be given about how existing and future garbage would be removed from the area. Specifically, they urge that bins be placed along the trails and that a system of trash collection by park personnel be made explicit. One person suggests that only food and drink sold by the State Park be permitted on the premises. This, in his opinion, would reduce the amount of garbage and litter.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

As in the case of the draft's interpretive program, many people expressed concern about the matter, but only four offered substantive commentary to this section. The Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition's is without question the most thorough analysis and therefore contains most of the commentary contained by the other participants; however, there are some unique comments that should be recognized.

Exotic Species Concerns: One person recommends developing an explicit policy about encounters between game and people. He suggests that, should this occur, it be State Park policy to drug the animal and remove it to a safer haven. Killing, he believes, is unnecessary, cruel, and runs counter to the overall policy of protection of the habitat.

Restoration: One respondent is particularly concerned with the restoration component of the draft. He assumes the draft plans to "bring the mountain back to what it was like in pre-European days." He suggests that further historical study would show that the vegetation in the Franklins before 1657 was similar to that of the Organ Mountains farther north. He suggests a reseeding program that would return more trees to the area. He is willing to contribute $250 to the effort. Also, he urges consideration be given to returning large wildlife, particularly certain species of deer, into the State Park.

Another respondent, arguing that few if any people are authorities, cautions against assuming what is regarded as indigenous for purposes of restoration. More study should be made.
Introduction

Wildland Fire Management: In contrast to the more systematic concern for fire management by the Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition, one group recommends that all fires be extinguished as quickly as possible due to the severe damage they can have on plant life in general and cacti in particular.

LAND-USE PLAN:

As stated above, a major concern among most respondents is that the final draft for the State Park minimize the creation of new trails or buildings. Only five offered particular commentary about the usage beyond that which has already been presented, and that pertains to hiking trails. Again the effort should be to minimize the formation of new trails. But the commentaries are especially valuable because they identify which proposed trails would be not only difficult to create but potentially dangerous. These include:

Ridge Trail: It would require in some cases very steep climbs to reach it, as would be the case near the Fusselman Canyon Trailhead. Also, there are a number of very steep precipices that would be difficult for hikers to traverse. One group urges not building that section of the trail between Smugglers Pass to McKelligon Canyon.

Hitt Canyon Unit: Two groups oppose building the trail that connects Hitt Canyon with Sotol Canyon.

East Cottonwood Springs: Should be designated as a hike/bike trail rather than a hiking-only trail.

Communication Towers: One person suggests that the towers on North Franklin be removed and placed south of Trans Mountain road.

OPERATIONAL PLAN:

A number of people addressed the issue of operating the park, with special emphasis placed on personnel. Three respondents support increased personnel, especially rangers, to oversee the day-to-day operation of the park. Two respondents believe that the volunteer component is worthy of consideration because it would reduce cost and give some enthusiasts the chance to be involved in the operation of the State Park. Finally, one person suggests that a grievance policy be established should someone have a complaint against the State Park.
CONCLUSION:

A number of distinct trends among the responses can be identified. First, all are in favor of the creation of the State Park. Differences arise over questions of access and infrastructure. Second, all show a concern for minimizing any alterations to the State Park's ecosystem. That is, planning should be premised upon how best to either keep the land as it is or to restore it to the habitat of an earlier time. Most are opposed to alterations that would hurt the State Park's existing environment. Third, there is special concern that steps be taken to reduce the chances of vandalism and destruction by neglect of the users. Finally, most urge a systematic evolution of the development of the State Park.
SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT PLAN MODIFICATIONS

Numerous editorial changes to achieve consistency and clarify and a few substantive changes have been made to the final version of this document. Many of the substantive changes reflect opinions from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department staff and the interested public during the planning process. The substantive changes include the following:

p. 12-19 - Public Comment Analysis and Summary of Response to this Management Plan. Added this detailed analysis of public review and comments.

p. 30, paragraph 5 - Added sentence stating that Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will work closely with Texas Department of Transportation to ensure that the use of Trans Mountain Road remains compatible with the park.

p. 33, paragraphs 1,2,3 - These paragraphs were rewritten to reflect staff recommendations that a Visitor Center and State Park Headquarters be located on the Wilderness Park Museum property or on adjacent Castner Range land.

p. 37, paragraph 1 - Added sentence to reflect efforts to make all facilities accessible under the ADA.

p. 38 - New section entitled Recreational Activities added.
paragraph 2 - This paragraph expanded to allow multi-use of trails and for monitoring and possible closure of trails to protect resources. Also, sentence added stating that backcountry trails will be designated, not constructed.
paragraph 3 - New paragraph discussing only hiking trails.

p. 39, paragraphs 1 and 2 - New paragraphs discussing only biking and equestrian trails.

p. 40, paragraph 2 - Hunting section rewritten to reflect classification system mandated by Legislature.

p. 47, paragraph 1 - New paragraph reflecting department’s long-term commitment to resource stewardship.

p. 51 - Resource Management section rewritten to more clearly state how cultural and natural resources will be managed.

p. 51, paragraph 3 - This paragraph rewritten to include dates for completion of a resource management plan.

p. 53, paragraph 5 - Added to explain Texas Parks and Wildlife Department actions to remove non-historic debris and structures when they are not culturally significant.

p. 54 - New section added to detail elements of wildland fire management.

p. 56, paragraph 1 - Sentences added to point out this part of plan projects further into the future and is thus more conceptual than other parts of the plan.
History
Natural Resources
Cultural Resources
Physical Inventory/Land Ownership
Access Issues
Boundary/Acquisition Issues
General Site Overview

Overlooking El Paso-Juarez and the surrounding satellite communities, Franklin Mountains State Park extends north some 15 miles from the heart of the City of El Paso to the Texas-New Mexico state line. The State Park protects an outstanding natural area of almost 24,000 acres and offers a unique opportunity for outdoor recreational and educational experiences in the midst of urban development.

The Franklin Mountains south of Trans Mountain Road have been greatly affected by urbanization. Developments reach up the mountain slopes from the surrounding desert floor and numerous communication towers have been placed along the ridge. However, the mountains north of this highway remain virtually undeveloped, except for a few utility easements and two small communication transmitters, along with evidence of past and present mineral exploration.

Meanwhile, ongoing and future development from the east and west will predictably surround the mountain range and envelop the State Park. The current estimated population of the El Paso-Juarez metroplex is over 2 million (El Paso 540,000; Juarez 1.5 million). It is projected to increase to 3.5 million by 2010. Population growth is also occurring in southern New Mexico, and the corridor between El Paso and Las Cruces, New Mexico, is developing rapidly. The State Park provides critical open space today; it will be even more critical in the future.

Franklin Mountains State Park is unique not only as the largest urban state park in Texas but as the largest park anywhere in the world that is entirely within a city’s limits. The State Park consists of an entire Chihuahuan Desert mountain range soaring to an elevation of 7,192 feet (2,192 meters) at the summit of North Franklin Peak, some 3,000 feet (914 meters) above the City of El Paso.

Due to its size, the diversity of its landforms, and its far west Texas location, the park is an important reservoir of biological diversity in Texas. It provides habitat to numerous Chihuahuan Desert plants, such as sotol, lechuguilla, ocotillo, several yuccas and numerous cacti. The Franklins are the only known location in Texas for a number of plant species, including the southwest barrel cactus. Numerous birds, reptiles and small and large mammals are at home in the park. The area is one of great geological interest and it encompasses many archeological as well as some historical remains.
History Overview

Overlooking the Rio Grande, the Franklin Mountains are the northern ramparts of the Paso del Norte (Pass of the North), leading from Mexico into what are now the United States. For thousands of years, native Americans, and for the last four centuries, soldiers, priests, traders, adventurers, gold-seekers, entrepreneurs, and just plain folk have passed through the gap in both directions in an endless procession of expansion, settlement, raiding, and conquest.

Native American groups made the area home, utilizing the plant and animal resources of the Franklins for over 12,000 years, until their forced removal during the late 19th century. These people left their marks upon the rocks of the Franklins - colorful pictographs on boulders and in rock shelters, and deep mortar pits in rock outcrops near scattered water sources.

Beginning in the 1580s, less than a century after Columbus, Spanish conquistadors and priests passed beneath the peaks of the Franklins on their mission to conquer and colonize the Puebloan villages in present-day New Mexico. The first permanent European settlements in the nearby Rio Grande bottomlands, San Elizario and Ysleta, were established in 1681, soon after the Spanish had been driven from New Mexico by the Pueblo Rebellion. Although claimed by the Republic of Texas, the Spanish Mexican hold on the Paso del Norte survived until 1847, when during the Mexican-American War, a victorious American army marched through the pass on its way to Chihuahua.

Anglo settlement on the north bank of the river began shortly after the war with Mexico. Among the earliest Anglo villages was Franklin, founded by Benjamin Franklin Coons and from which the mountain range received its name. El Paso del Norte, as the group of settlements came to be known, soon emerged as a major western crossroads, with California-bound gold-seekers, heading west from the Texas interior, crossing paths with Santa Fe-Chihuahua traders, who had been passing through, north-to-south, for over two decades. The booming settlement along both sides of the river rapidly became the social and commercial center of the region and has since remained so.

Like most desert mountain ranges, the Franklins do not possess sufficient water for broad use or development. Herders and ranchers from the surrounding lowlands grazed their livestock periodically on the slopes and in some of the canyons. The only physical remains of a livestock operation are in Hitt
Site Description and Issues

Canyon near the north end of the range. Minerals, and the potential for great and sudden wealth, drew the greatest attention in the late 19th and 20th centuries.

The Franklins are rife with tales of buried treasure and lost gold and silver mines. Although unconfirmed accounts of mining date to the 1850s, official claim and prospect documents filed with the county date no earlier than 1880. Scattered all along the range, claims were filed for gold, silver, copper, iron and tin until the 1930s and for uranium in the mid-1950s. Physical evidence of many of these prospects still scar the hills and mountainsides. Of all the hopes and dreams of the prospectors, only tin was found in sufficient quantities to warrant the development of a mining operation.

A prospector found indications of tin ore near Mundy Spring in the early 1890s, but was unable to locate the source. The source was discovered a few years later and in 1899, the Florilla Mining Company was formed. After attempting to raise funds, the company foundered. Finally, in 1910, the first and only tin mining, milling and smelting operation in the United States opened on the east side of North Franklin Mountain under the name El Paso Tin Mining and Smelting Company. The operation was productive, but never profitable to its investors. Disagreement among company officers, the low price of tin and the failure to locate new and richer veins of ore caused the company to cease operation in 1915. In 1942, during World War II, the mines were reopened briefly, with the ore sent to Texas City, Texas, for processing, but the thinness of the deposits soon doomed this short-lived revival. Testing the economic viability of the deposits in the mine area in 1977 threatened to delay the creation of the park.

The high elevation of the peaks in the range make them ideal for communications installations. The first airplane radio beacon between Kansas City and Los Angeles was erected on one of the peaks in 1928 and remained in operation in 1960. Today a host of communications towers top the Franklins’ lofty heights.

Beginning in World War II, a large section of the eastern flank of the Franklins was used by the U. S. Army at Fort Bliss as an artillery firing range. This parcel, called the Castner Range, is no longer used for that purpose and has been declared surplus to the needs of the Department of Defense. The Castner Range is bisected by Trans Mountain Road, which breaches the entire Franklin range at its midriff, connecting eastern El Paso with the communities along the river to the west.

Natural Resources Overview

The slanted block of rocks, bordered by a deep fault on either side, that constitutes the Franklin Mountains, was upthrust about 20 or so million years ago. The upthrown rock layers and their contained fossils, however, record some 1.1 billion (1,100 million) years of time. During that immense span, the El Paso area witnessed many alternating periods of marine invasion, continental uplift and erosion, culminating—during the last 50 million years—in dramatic mountain building, volcanism, and rifting of the crust.

Wildlife, though secretive, is remarkably diverse. Species characteristic of the Chihuahuan Desert are blended with those of Sonoran affinities on the eastern extreme of their range as well as with species of dry, relatively low elevation mountain habitats. Among the faunal specialties are desert shrews, several bats, pocket gophers, various rats and a number of lizards and snakes. The avifauna is especially diverse.

The vegetation type can be described as desert scrub. An important component is a shrub suite of rock-loving species, some of which are endemic. Relict oak and juniper woodlands have limited distribution as do riparian woodlands, restricted to spring-fed canyon habitats.

Numerous floral species of southwestern and northern Mexican distribution occur at the eastern extreme of their range in the Franklin Mountains. Most species are Pleistocene remnants of formerly more widespread communities.

The size of Franklin Mountains State Park and its location next to the extensive wildlands of the Organ Mountains Recreation Area managed by the Bureau of Land Management under the U.S. Department of Interior in New Mexico contribute importantly to its biological values. Compared to similar but smaller and more fragmented areas, large natural areas such as Franklins Mountains State Park are richer in plant and animal species, less prone to localized extinctions, and support a wider range of genetic variability.
Cultural Resources Overview

Franklin Mountains State Park, located in the northern portion of the Chihuahuan Desert, creates a formidable barrier between the Rio Grande Valley to the west and the sand-floored desert basin to the east. Prehistoric people occupied this land continuously from Paleoindian times, over 11,500 years ago, until the intrusion of Europeans in the late 1500s.

Existing vegetation typifies the northern Chihuahuan Desert with lechuguilla, sotol, yucca and a variety of cacti occupying the lower slopes and a sparse but hardy assemblage of shrubs and grasses on the mountain tops. Several springs flank the mountains, each providing an oasis for cottonwood, netleaf hackberry, damiana, canyon grape, waferash, western soapberry, and Wright’s silktassel. Dozens of species of mammals, birds, reptiles and invertebrates are documented, including mule deer, black bear, mountain lion, bats, game birds, and snails. All provided food resources for early native Americans.

But of an even greater importance to Amerindian hunters and gatherers was the endless variety of lithic or stone resources to be found in the Franklins. The complicated geology of the mountains has produced a number of stone types of interest to prehistoric people. Among these are various cherts or flints used to produce projectile points, various igneous bodies (including porphyritic andesites) used to produce grinding stones (such as manos and metates) and many other minerals used to make pigments for the many rock paintings found throughout the area. Rock debris produced during tool manufacture along with stone artifacts can be found strewn across the desert floor in close association with the living sites of various ancient people.

The earliest occupational sites in El Paso County consist of scatters of lithic materials washed out of deflated and eroded open sites. The recognizable artifacts, all Paleindian projectile points and associated diagnostic tools, suggest a rich distribution of people across the flanks of local mountains and their associated interior basins (called bolsons) dating from about 11,500 Y.B.P.(Years Before the Present) through 8,000 Y.B.P. These data provide little means for reconstruction of early lifeways; however, archeologists assume that small groups of mobile hunters and gatherers took advantage of the late Pleistocene megafauna (horse, camel, mammoth, and ancient bison) for food resources and that these same people probably also relied heavily on processing wild plants on a seasonal basis.
Site Description and Issues

After the extinction of most of the large Ice Age mammals, between 8,000 and about 4,300 Y.B.P., a new lifestyle evolved. This period saw a continuation of hunting and gathering methods used by earlier people, but modified to adapt to the changes in the ecosystem brought about by the end of the glacial era. These changes saw a greater reliance on processed desert plants, as demonstrated from the existence of burned rock piles marking the former presence of large earth ovens. The ovens are presumed to have been constructed to reduce the bulk of the gathered plant material through cooking. Habitation sites show an increase in population and remnants of the first semi-subterranean pit houses appear. Associated with these early formative villages are various plant materials and some pollen grains that may represent early corn agriculture. This new lifeway developed between about 4500 and 3800 Y.B.P. During this period, rockshelters served for habitation as demonstrated by the presence of perishable remains of sandals, wood, basketry, and food plants. Rock art panels associated with such occupations depict geometric forms as well as bighorn sheep and other animals.

With the advent of pottery and the bow and arrow came advanced house construction, larger, more sedentary villages, indications of fully developed corn agriculture and more sophisticated rock art motifs. Three phases of culture—Mesilla (approximately 400 to 1050 A.D.), Dona Ana (950 to 1100 A.D.) and El Paso (1100 to 1375 A.D.)—are recognized. Extensive trading is evidenced by exotic imported pottery, seashell jewelry and turquoise beads, while rock art motifs show a rich ideological exchange with the south, west and north. Dry-terrace farming of the bolsons, coupled with ongoing hunting and gathering created new highs in population density.

These desert-adapted people, known by archeologists as the Jornada Branch of the Mogollon, evidently could not survive the drying trends and the severe droughts (documented in 1050 and 1300 A.D.) since their cultural remains disappear from the El Paso area by 1375 A.D. Perhaps some survived by reverting to the hunting and gathering lifeways of their ancestors, but most moved on, possibly forming what are now the Hopi tribes. When the first Spanish explorers entered the area in the late 1500s, only scattered remnants of small family units were reported to be living along the banks of the Rio Grande.

While the rugged slopes of the Franklins do not provide ideal sites for modern living, they have been the scene of various ranching, mining and military activities for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The mining industry is well...
represented by open mine shafts on both the east and west sides of the mountains, a large concrete foundation of a tin ore processing mill on the east side and open gravel and quartz quarries in the north and south. The ruins of a small sheep-ranching complex can be seen in the Hitt Canyon drainage and wire fences are found throughout the park. No really detailed history of the Franklins exists and most of the information remains to be gathered by way of archeological and historical/archival research.
Physical Inventory/Land Ownership

Considering Franklin Mountains State Park’s proximity to the El Paso metropolitan area, the State Park is relatively free of structures and other physical remains of recent human activity. The most prominent of these include the numerous communications towers that are situated along the crest of the mountain range south of Trans Mountain Road and that road itself. A brief description of the physical inventory for the entire State Park follows.

The Tom Mays Unit, formerly an El Paso County Park, is located on the west side of the State Park, just off Trans Mountain Road. It contains 2.5 miles of paved roads, parking areas for approximately 100 vehicles, 22 picnic shelters and 5 pit toilets. It is the primary destination and access point to the State Park for its visitors. McKelligon Canyon, a county property, has picnic facilities, an amphitheater, a group facility with roads and parking which are operated and managed by the City of El Paso as a city park.

There are no roads in the State Park south of Trans Mountain Road and only approximately 10.25 miles of unmaintained trails are in existence. However, numerous communications towers are situated along the crest of the mountain and nearly 13.25 miles of power and other utility lines exist.

North of Trans Mountain Road there are approximately 10.4 miles of unmaintained roads, passable by 4 x 4 or high clearance vehicles, and approximately 30.5 miles of unmaintained trails. Two small solar-powered communication installations are located on North Franklin Peak. There are approximately 32.25 miles of transmission/power lines and 13.75 miles of gas lines that exist in established rights-of-way.

Texas Parks and Wildlife has acquired title to 5,500.965 acres through transfer or donation from the City of El Paso and El Paso County and title to 12,748.7366 acres through purchase or condemnation. The Department currently leases 5,494.77 acres from the General Land Office. Total acreage managed by the Department to date is approximately 23,744.
Access Issues

EXISTING SITUATION:

At this time, open and safe public access to Franklin Mountains State Park (Map #2) is limited to the Tom Mays Unit (Map #5) of the State Park and through the McKelligon Canyon City Park (Map #6). These are both day-use areas that include picnic sites and provide an assortment of parking and informal trailheads for hiker access to the backcountry. McKelligon Canyon City Park is also the permanent home of the Viva El Paso theater production.

The Castner Range, a 7,000+ acre abandoned military firing range, located on the eastern slope of the mountains and contiguous to the State Park, is being considered for acquisition.

The Wilderness Park Museum (Map #4) is located at the base of Franklin Mountains on the east side. This 17 acre tract is within the Castner Range and is owned and operated by the City of El Paso. In addition to the museum which contains exhibits, there are picnic sites and nature trails.

An unknown but significant level of access to the State Park is occurring from random stops along Trans Mountain Road, through the Castner Range, through subdivisions and from a myriad of roads that crisscross undeveloped lands adjacent to the park. The use of the Castner Range for access is illegal and unsafe; stopping on Trans Mountain Road is also not very safe and the legality of access through undeveloped lands on undedicated roads is open to question, as is access through subdivisions.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department does not condone any access to Franklin Mountains State Park that is not legal or considered safe. The Department will seek safe and legal public access to the State Park at a variety of locations that are appropriate and complimentary to visitor enjoyment of the area.

PROPOSED ADDITIONAL ACCESS POINTS:

Tin Mine - The general area known as the Tin Mine (Map #7) has been designated as an area suitable for modest development in future years. Remains of past mining works are of historical interest and can provide an interesting focal point for interpretive activities. In addition, recent road construction and work related to subdivision development in that area can be converted to trails and trailhead parking at a very low cost.
Access to the Tin Mine is contingent upon the acquisition of the Castner Range, or a right-of-way through it, or Public Service Board land to the east. Texas Parks and Wildlife will seek to acquire vehicular access to the area of the Tin Mine from Trans Mountain Road in the vicinity of the Wilderness Park Museum. This will provide the most aesthetically pleasing approach to that area and at the same time allow some level of control to be retained over public use.

Hitt Canyon - Hitt Canyon (Map #6) and the northern portion of the State Park, has been identified as an area that would be appropriate for equestrian as well as other uses. Remains of a livestock operation from an earlier era tie into this activity.

Texas Parks and Wildlife will seek to acquire a dedicated right-of-way to Hitt Canyon either from the east, off War Road, or from the north, off New Mexico State Route 404, through land administered by the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of Interior. Alternately, access to the east end of Hitt Canyon might be reserved for vehicles while access to the west end might be for hikers.

Trans Mountain Road - Trans Mountain Road, administered by the Texas Department of Transportation, bisects the Franklin Mountains and provides the easiest vehicular access into the interior of the State Park. This road runs through the Castner Range for a distance of 4 miles on the east and through land administered by TPWD for a distance of 3 miles from a point near the summit on the east to the Tom Mays Unit. Trans Mountain Road can provide unequalled access to higher portions of the State Park.

Texas Parks and Wildlife will work cooperatively with the Texas Department of Transportation to establish appropriate pull-outs and parking areas along Trans Mountain Road and to allow safe access to the State Park from this road. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will also seek acquisition of the Castner Range in order to expand access opportunities to the State Park from Trans Mountain Road. Finally, TPWD will work closely with the Texas Department of Transportation and the City of El Paso’s Planning Department to ensure that use of Trans Mountain Road remains compatible with the State Park and that uses damaging to the State Park, such as heavy volumes of truck traffic, do not occur.

Vinton/Avispa/Bone Canyons - These three canyons lie north of the Tom Mays Unit on the western flank of the State Park. It is anticipated that, in coming years, the entire area between I-10 and the park boundary and between Trans Mountain Road and the New Mexico state line will be developed to some degree. Such development will possibly affect access to Vinton, Avispa and Bone Canyons.
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will initially provide nonmotorized access to these canyons from the Tom Mays Unit through lands administered by the Department. Additional access possibilities will be evaluated in the future as development progresses.

**Developments and Subdivisions** - Random access to the State Park is possible through a number of developments and subdivisions that abut the park boundary. These are located primarily south of Trans Mountain Road wrapping around the State Park from the south edge of the Castner Range to Casitas Coronado on the west. One small development is located just north of the Castner Range off Patriot Freeway.

It is now and will be in the future virtually impossible to control access to the State Park from these areas given current or anticipated staffing levels. Uncontrolled access in itself is not a problem, but the impacts of such access are largely unknown and should be monitored. A second concern will be more difficult to resolve and this relates to access by the "general public" through neighborhoods and subdivisions. Except for North Hills, these neighborhoods and subdivisions were in place before the State Park was established and no provision has been made for public access through them. Consequently, a certain portion of Franklin Mountains State Park is land-locked and not easily accessible.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will undertake several management actions regarding access from developments and subdivisions. First, the Department will implement a system for monitoring impacts in those areas that are immediately adjacent to developments. This will provide the basis for any mitigating measures that might be necessary.

Second, the Department will look at the possibility of situting access points in established developments. This will require careful analysis in order to locate access points that are not only appropriate for park use but would, at the same time, protect established neighborhood values.

Third, the Department will work cooperatively with city planners and developers to ensure that access to the State Park is considered early in the planning stages for new projects. One concept that could be considered is the establishment of small access parks ("pocket parks") adjacent to the State Park's boundary. These could be placed in locations where they would compliment access to the State Park and serve local neighborhood needs.
Boundary/Acquisition Issues

Franklin Mountains State Park was created by an act of the Texas Legislature in 1979. The initial legislation was amended by the Legislature four times, in 1981, 1985, 1987 and 1989 (see plat of exclusions and permitted additions at the end of this section). Franklin Mountains State Park is one of 18 state parks established by the Legislature.

The language of the legislation creating Franklin Mountains State Park distinguishes it as unique among the other statutory parks. The boundaries of the park were established in the legislation and no discretionary power was given to the Department or the Commission to include other property outside those boundaries except for two tracts, the Castner Range and the tract commonly known as the McMath Survey. Furthermore, the Legislature in its amendments to the initial legislation specifically excluded certain inholding and easements from acquisition, giving no discretionary power to the Department or the Commission to acquire those inholdings should conditions change in the future. Moreover, no discretionary power was allowed the Department or the Commission to decline to acquire any of the indicated property except for the McMath Survey tract. Finally, it should be noted that, if the United States at some future time no longer needs the Federal Aviation Administration and Department of Justice tower sites, those exclusions shall, by statute, be reincluded in the State Park.

This means, then, that all proposals to add land to Franklin Mountains State Park outside of its established boundaries, other than described above, must first have Legislative approval.

Castner Range - The legislation allows Franklin Mountains State Park to include whatever portion of the 11 sections of land making up the Castner Range that the United States of America (Department of the Army) might convey to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The Department is not required to acquire this land; its acquisition and subsequent boundary changes are contingent upon what the Army wishes to convey to the Department. The issue of unexploded ordnance must be addressed before any portion of Castner Range can be transferred to the State for use as a state park.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will pursue the option of transferring the Castner Range to the State of Texas as a part of Franklin Mountains State Park. The Castner Range has, by default, preserved an impressive natural corridor from the crest of the Franklin Mountains to its foothills and remains, for now, a vignette of an earlier era. With its transfer to the State, visitors will be provided with additional access opportunities and unobstructed entry to the Franklin Mountains. Trans Mountain Road will retain its appeal as a scenic drive and the Wilderness Park Museum can be directly linked to a major metropolitan state park.
Wilderness Park Museum - A 17 acre tract of land located near the junction of Trans Mountain Road and the Patriot Freeway, was formerly a part of the Castner Range and is now owned by the City of El Paso. The Wilderness Park Museum, owned and operated by the City, is located on this tract. The privately owned Border Patrol Museum is on two acres within this tract that are leased from the City. The area in the vicinity of the Wilderness Park Museum is a logical site for a State Park headquarters and visitor contact facility.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department favors locating a Visitor Center and State Park Headquarters either on the Wilderness Park Museum property or on adjacent Castner Range land. The Department will continue to negotiate with the City of El Paso regarding possible joint use of the museum facilities or some arrangement to establish a Visitor Center near the museum. At the same time, it will pursue with the Department of Defense the possibility of expedited conveyance to Texas Parks and Wildlife of Castner Range lands adjacent to the museum property.

Since the museum property is no longer part of the Castner Range and title is held by the City, legislative action would probably be required to allow its addition to the State Park. The Department will not seek legislative action to have the Wilderness Park Museum property added to the State Park unless required to do so by technicalities involved in facility construction or with an agreement with the City of El Paso.

McMath Survey - In 1981, the Legislature excluded from the State Park 434 acres of State-owned land in the A.G. McMath Survey 298. In 1989, the State Legislature placed a 253.14 acre portion of that land back in the State Park, but only conditionally. If the Department does not acquire title to the 253.14 acres by September 1, 1999, then Franklin Mountains State Park will no longer, after the end of that period, include that land.

Considering that this property will undoubtedly receive a high appraisal, acquisition will require complete justification with a clear demonstration of its benefit to the State Park.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will pursue with the General Land Office the possibility of acquisition of the McMath Survey. If this acquisition is proposed, it will require Parks and Wildlife Commission approval.

Scenic Drive - Suggestions have been made to add land to the State Park at the south toe of the Franklin Mountains, southward to Scenic Drive. This land is outside of the boundaries described by the Legislature. It would take legislative action to allow the addition of this land to the State Park.
Ranger Peak - Although connected with the rest of the State Park in the initial enabling legislation, a parcel of State Park property east of Ranger Peak became isolated when Ranger Peak and adjacent lands along the ridgeline were excluded from the State Park in 1981 (see Tri-State Broadcasting exclusion on plat).

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department recognizes there may be long-term benefits to include lands in the vicinity of Scenic Drive and Ranger Peak in the State Park, but high acquisition costs and lack of support preclude any such action at this time. Should conditions change in the future, the Department would only seek legislative action to extend the park boundaries if there were full agreement to do so among the Department, the Parks and Wildlife Commission, affected landowners and any other affected parties.

McKelligon Canyon - The Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition has suggested adding the facilities in McKelligon Canyon, described and excluded from the State Park by the Legislature in 1981. It would take Legislative Action to allow the addition of these facilities to the State Park.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will work cooperatively with the City of El Paso and El Paso County to address the park management concerns associated with McKelligon Canyon City Park. It is anticipated that a Memorandum of Understanding would be signed by the participants to spell out the details of any cooperative effort. The Department will not seek Legislative Action to add the facilities in McKelligon Canyon to the State Park.

Mineral Interests - Concerns have been raised recently about possible mining activity in Hitt Canyon. This land is part of 5,494.77 surface acres that Texas Parks and Wildlife Department currently leases from the General Land Office, at an annual cost of 10 cents per acre.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will negotiate with the General Land Office for the outstanding mineral interest contained within the State Park. The acquisition of these interests is imperative for the long term protection of the State Park's resources.

Jobe Concrete Products, Inc. (Formerly El Paso Rock Quarry, Inc.) - Two parcels of this corporation's land, totalling 223.95 acres, are within the boundary of the State Park as defined by the Legislature. An active part of the quarry, sitting on a 67.39 acre tract, was excluded from acquisition by the Legislature in 1981 (see E. D. Strong 221 exclusion on plat). The Department has not yet begun negotiations for these tracts.
The Department recognizes the importance of the 223.95 acres, all high elevation lands, to the integrity of the State Park and will explore with the landowner and the City of El Paso an appropriate mechanism for conveying these lands to the Department.

**General Boundary Adjustment** - Various sources have suggested adding land on the east and west sides of the mountains to the State Park, up to the limit of current residential development. Such land is outside of the boundaries described in the Act. It would take legislative action to allow the addition of such a buffer to the State Park.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will evaluate the current park boundary and will make recommendations for minor revisions as needed. Any revisions proposed will be done with the full cooperation of the affected land owners and will require Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission approval.

**Easements and Rights-of-Way** - Considering the multitude of exclusions allowed by the Legislature for transmission facilities (and access to same), highways, utility lines and mining interests, it will be the policy of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to prohibit any new easements, rights-of-way, transmission facilities, water storage facilities, highways, or mining on land it owns or leases for the Franklin Mountains State Park.
Exclusions & Permitted Additions Plat (1981-89)

- State Park land
- permitted additions
- absolute exclusions

El Paso Public Service Board compromise (1987)

Wilderness Park Museum

Castner Range

A. G. McMath 298
Hugh G. Foster 260
McKelligon Canyon facilities

Justice Dept. facilities
Missionary Radio Evangelism facilities
Walton Enterprises facilities

E. D. Strong 221

Tri-State Broadcasting Company facilities
Recreational (Public Use)
Interpretive
Facilities
Recreational Program
(Public Use)

The purpose of this section is to outline the kinds of recreational activities that will be encouraged in Franklin Mountains State Park. The goal will be to provide an array of active and passive recreational opportunities that preserve the natural and cultural resources of the delicately balanced Chihuahuan Desert environment. This will be achieved by encouraging the use of the existing facilities, roads and trails, supported by the addition of some carefully placed facilities as described in the appropriate sections that follow. All reasonable efforts will be made to make existing facilities as well as new facilities accessible under the American Disabilities Act (ADA).

Initial access will occur at four primary locations. These proposed locations are indicated on the Land Use Plan (Map #2). A brief description of each of these areas follows:

**TOM MAYS UNIT:**

The Tom Mays Unit (Map #5) will continue to be managed primarily as a day-use facility, with an emphasis on picnicking and serving as a trailhead for backcountry access. The possibility of providing recreational vehicle camping in this area was investigated, but was rejected based on high initial construction costs and the fact that other locations in the State Park are more desirable for this type activity.

**HITT CANYON UNIT:**

The Hitt Canyon Unit (Map #6) will provide visitor access to the northern section of the State Park and to portions of the Bureau of Land Management lands in New Mexico which adjoin the State Park on the north. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department proposes to develop trailhead facilities for access to multi-use trails in this area. Road and trail access to this area will be negotiated through a Cooperative Management Agreement with the Bureau of Land Management.

**TIN MINE UNIT/VISITOR CENTER:**

The Tin Mine area (Map #7) and adjacent Wilderness Park Museum (Map #4) have great potential to provide access to the State Park as well as visitor activities and facilities. This area is an ideal location for a visitor center providing park orientation and educational information. Limited overnight facilities as well as trailhead access to the remainder of the State Park could also be included. Future development in this area will largely depend upon an agreement with the City of El Paso concerning the museum, acquisition of access across the Castner Range and the availability of capital development funds.
McKelligon Canyon City Park:

McKelligon Canyon (Map #8) will continue to provide multiple visitor uses and serve as the major access to the southern portion of the State Park. Picnicking and outdoor theater productions will be managed by the City of El Paso. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will pursue an agreement with the City to provide educational information, trail access and improved visitor services.

Recreational Activities:

Backcountry Trails: A great deal of public use will occur outside the specific areas described above. A network of trails (Map #2) will provide opportunities for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding. The activities will be provided at access points at various locations around the State Park and as the Department is able to manage these functions. Approximately 85% of the trail system will take advantage of already impacted areas following existing roads and trails. Backcountry trail routes will be designated (marked for location - not constructed) and carefully chosen to protect park resources and cause the least amount of impact as practical. With the exception of trails providing primary access to interpretive facilities and where needed to provide access under the American Disabilities Act, trail routes will be chosen to take advantage of existing trails and roads in lieu of constructing new trails. Backcountry and trail users' guidelines will be developed for the State Park and enforced by the staff. Designated trails will be monitored for impacts to resources and rerouting or closure will be initiated if necessary. Initially, some trails are proposed for multi-use to be shared between hikers, bikers and equestrians while others are designated for single use only. Use patterns and trail safety will be monitored and changes in trail designations as to expansion or decrease of user types, etc. will be initiated as appropriate.

Hiking Trails: The hiking trails indicated on the Land-Use Plan (Map #2) are acceptable designated routes. These trails form a network of looping trail systems which create a variety of hiking opportunities, from short trips of an hour or two, to overnight backcountry experiences which bring about a feeling of isolation in the midst of urbanization. Approximately 125 miles of trails will be available for hiking. Trail maps (brochures) will depict routes, while actual marking of the trails will be accomplished by providing minimal signage (such as intersections). The use of natural features, cairns (stacked stones depicting a landmark), and the impacted trail path will alert the user to the trail's existing route. Any trail construction and/or maintenance will be limited to minimize resource impacts and to control erosion, as necessary. Trail routes and alternative routes will be monitored and used as appropriate or as required on a seasonal basis. Hikers as volunteers can be a great asset to overall maintenance and monitoring of the trail system; the
Department expects to work closely with those individuals and groups desiring to assist the Department with our overall trail program (ground-truthing and mapping).

**Biking Trails:** Whether biking for pure pleasure or sport, mountain biking can and will be an exciting experience. The biking trails indicated on the Land-Use Plan (Map #2) will provide a variety of terrain challenges for the novice as well as the experienced biker. Approximately 73 miles of trails will be available to mountain bikers. While the presently indicated trail routes are shared with other trail user types, possible future expansions or designations of trails for training/challenge courses or biking only will be considered based on resource evaluations and clearance. Careful monitoring of biker usage to minimize resource impacts will be required. Both seasonal and wet-weather conditions may limit trail usage. Assistance in designating mountain biking trails (ground-truthing and mapping) as well as help from volunteers as individuals or in groups for trail maintenance and monitoring of impacts will be very helpful to the Department.

**Equestrian Trails:** Equestrian use of the Franklin Mountains is an exciting as well as an exhilarating way to experience this desert mountain range. The designated trail routes on the Land-Use Plan (Map #2) indicate an acceptable network of interlooping trail routes. While at present 22 miles of horseback trails are designated, possible future expansion into other areas of the mountain range as well as open range usage will be considered based on resource evaluations and clearance. Trail usage by equestrians will require careful monitoring to minimize resource impacts. Also, seasonal and wet-weather conditions may limit trail usage. The Department believes the equestrians as individuals and in groups will be very helpful as volunteers to assist with designation of equestrian trail routes (ground-truthing and mapping) as well as with maintenance and monitoring impacts.

**Camping:** There are currently no facilities, development funds or staff to provide camping activities in the State Park. Initially, a backcountry permit system will be established to accommodate limited primitive camping. Eventually, limited campsites with utilities could be established in the Tin Mine Unit and possibly the Hitt Canyon Unit depending on funding, further resource evaluation and staffing available. Any backcountry camping allowed will be managed to minimize resource damage through a policy of "pack-in/pack-out/no ground fires."

**Caving:** Numerous natural caves and mine shafts exist throughout the State Park. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will seek the cooperation of interested organizations and individuals to assist in the identification and location of these features. Guidelines for access and use of these caves will then be developed with the assistance of appropriate groups.
Hang Gliding: Hang gliding will be permitted in appropriate locations in the State Park; however, no special provisions or vehicular access will be permitted to launch sites or landing areas. Visitors will be required to sign a liability waiver to participate in this activity.

Hunting: Public hunting may be permitted in certain areas of the State Park. This issue will be addressed in the Department's public lands classification system which must be developed by August 31, 1995. This classification system was mandated by the 73rd Legislature and must be approved by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission. Since a large part of the State Park lies within the city limits of El Paso, an agreement with the City will be necessary prior to initiating hunting on those lands.

Rock Climbing: Rock climbing has been practiced to a limited extent in the State Park. Continuation of this activity, designation of appropriate locations, and guidelines for use will depend upon resource evaluation and clearance. The Department will seek the guidance and assistance of qualified personnel and organizations in developing these criteria.
Interpretive Program

Because of its location in a major transportation corridor and its accessibility to the hundreds of thousands of residents in the El Paso metropolitan area, Franklin Mountains State Park is ideally suited to provide an important link between the public and the natural and cultural resources of the region represented in the State Park. Interpretation, in the lexicon of park activities, is the art of imparting information and understanding about those resources to park visitors. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will undertake an ambitious program to interpret the history, prehistory, biology and geology of the Franklin Mountains.

The interpretive program at Franklin Mountains State Park will consist of all the standard media and methods available for interpretive presentations. The immense diversity of topics suitable for interpretation and myriad locations ideal for interpretive activities demand both active interpretation (conveyed through personal contact) and passive interpretation (conveyed through exhibits, audiovisual and publications). Communication barriers and accessible interpretation will be prepared taking into consideration the guidelines of the American Disabilities Act (ADA). Information and interpretation will be provided for Spanish speaking visitors.

PASSIVE INTERPRETATION:

Initial interpretive efforts will focus on publications, and audiovisual programs produced by the Department and others. As access to the parklands is established, development accomplished and security from vandalism assured, wayside exhibits will be installed at appropriate convenient locations within the State Park.

Publications

Initially, at least four publications will be provided for public consumption: one general-use brochure and three special interest brochures. Assistance in writing two of the three special interest pieces will be solicited from interested groups. Distribution of the brochures should be as widespread as possible.

General Park Use Guide - This brochure will outline park activities, with an overall map of the State Park and detailed maps of the three major activity areas (Tom Mays, Hitt Canyon and Tin Mine). This publication will be prepared by TPWD, and will contain little, if any, interpretation.
Prehistory and History - The story of cultural activities in the Franklin Mountains will be interpreted in this Texas Parks and Wildlife Department prepared brochure. It will focus on prehistoric native American culture in the area and Anglo-American mining and ranching.

Geology - The geologic history of the Franklin Mountains will be the subject of a single special interest brochure. Assistance in its preparation will be solicited from interested parties.

Trail Guide(s) - The special-use trails in the park will be presented in either one comprehensive trail-use brochure, or three separate brochures, one for each special use: hiking, biking and equestrian. Assistance will be solicited from these special interest groups in the preparation of the brochure material.

Longer term, the Department envisions additional publications relating to the State Park, perhaps published by the newly established Texas Parks and Wildlife Press. As an example, one such project might be a book on the natural history and ecology of the Franklin Mountains.

Audiovisual Programs

An undetermined number of audiovisual programs will be developed to orient the public to the park, advise backcountry users of preferred safety measures and general conduct regulations and interpret those cultural and natural resources of the park best presented by this medium.

Interpretive Wayside Exhibits

Several facets of the cultural and natural history resources within Franklin Mountains State Park are ideal for interpretation through wayside exhibits:

Mining - The most visible and most important historic activity in the Franklin Mountains is associated with the search for and extraction of minerals. Many scars of prospects dot the rugged landscape, but the ideal location for interpreting this topic is in the Tin Mine Unit (Map #7).

Prehistory - The native Americans who utilized the resources of the Franklin Mountains will be interpreted with a wayside exhibit located at a site offering a panoramic view of the lowlands to the east, an ideal vantage point for interpreting native Americans. Identification of specific archeological sites will be reserved for guided tours or other forms of active interpretation.

Ranching - Livestock ranching and grazing is a notable facet of the recent history of the Franklin Mountains. The ideal location for site-specific interpretation is the sheep camp in Hitt Canyon (Map #6).
Geology - The exposed geology of the Franklin Mountains is distinctly different on each flank of the range. Consequently, this subject will be interpreted on both sides of the State Park: in the Tom Mays Unit (west - Map #5), and in the Tin Mine Unit (east - Map #7).

Biology - Interpretation of the diverse biology of the Franklin Mountains may be better disseminated through a publication. However, if interpreted through wayside exhibits, displays will be installed on both flanks of the range.

Aztec Cave - The story of Aztec Cave will be told at a suitable location in the Tom Mays Unit, along or adjacent to the trail to the cave.

El Paso del Norte - A brief and general accounting of the historic parade of cultures, armies and people that passed through El Paso del Norte over the past several centuries will be interpreted at the Texas Department of Transportation overlook just west of Smuggler's Gap on Trans Mountain Road.

Fusselman Canyon - The story of Fusselman Canyon will be interpreted along Trans Mountain Road at a pull-off overlooking the canyon.

McKelligon Canyon - Wayside exhibits interpreting the natural history and mining activities in the area south of Trans Mountain Road will be installed at an appropriate location in McKelligon Canyon City Park (Map #8).

Visitor Center

When negotiations for access to the eastern side of the Franklin Mountains through the Castner Range have been completed, a visitor center will be established in the Wilderness Park Museum area, either through a cooperative agreement with the Wilderness Park Museum or by construction of a new facility. The visitor center will serve as a visitor contact point and staging area for active interpretive programs and will house interpretive exhibits. It will complement and supplement the interpretive exhibits and programs of the Wilderness Park Museum.

ACTIVE INTERPRETATION:

Active interpretation, that conveyed through personal contact, will be made available through guided tours led by TPWD personnel and/or "permitted," or licensed, guides with interpretive expertise from interested organizations or a volunteer park support group. An organized tour program will offer easier general public access to remote areas and encourage
greater public interest in cultural and natural resources. The program could be structured to include hiking, biking, equestrian and vehicular tours and draw upon those interest groups for guides. Participation in program activities in the State Park will require a Texas Conservation Passport (TCP).

An extension of the tour program will be the development of an environmental education program designed for outreach into local school systems. This program could be administered by a volunteer support coalition of interested organizations following guidelines established by the Department.
Facilities Program

Development of facilities to serve park visitors and for administrative purposes at the State Park, as previously noted, will be greatly dependent upon funding availability and successful negotiation for access to key locations. In general, facility development will be focused initially in areas within the State Park where improvements to the existing infrastructure are needed. The kinds of facility development that the Department proposes to pursue are listed below in order of priority:

**Tom Mays Unit** - The existing facilities (Map #5) are in need of major rehabilitation or replacement. In addition, a new Visitor Contact/Entry Station should be constructed. New facilities for picnicking along with parking space for visitor vehicles need to be defined and expanded and trailheads which accommodate both day-users and overnight tent campers and backcountry hikers provided. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will undertake a program to evaluate and renovate the existing picnic sites, restrooms and trailhead parking areas with the objective of bringing these up to state park standards. The Department will design and construct a Visitor Contact Station for activities related to orientation, distribution of information, fee collection and permit issuing. The existing network of trails leading from the unit will be evaluated and formally established as required, to facilitate access to the interior of the State Park.

**Visitor Center/Headquarters** - The Department proposes to construct this new facility (Map #4) to be located on the east side of the mountain range off Trans Mountain Road in the vicinity of the Wilderness Park Museum. It will serve as the major visitor orientation facility for the State Park and will contain exhibits about the park’s resources, an auditorium for orientation and educational media, an outlet for the distribution and sales of informational literature and related administrative offices. As previously noted, this construction will be dependent upon availability of funding and coming to some agreement with the City of El Paso regarding the Wilderness Park Museum or the Department of Defense regarding the Castner Range.

**Maintenance Complex** - This facility will be located on the east side of the mountain range. It may be developed in combination with the Visitor Center/Headquarters or more ideally in a less environmentally sensitive area such as a site adjacent to the Texas Department of Transportation Maintenance Complex at the corner of Hondo Pass Drive and Patriot Freeway. It will provide for the general maintenance and service of vehicles and for storage of equipment and supplies.
McKelligon Canyon City Park - The Department proposes to cooperate with the City of El Paso, through a Memorandum of Understanding, to enhance access opportunities and provide educational/interpretive information about the State Park at this location (Map #8). This could include assistance with facility design of picnic sites and shelters to construction of trailhead information shelters and the establishment of a formal trail system leading from the canyon area to other portions of the State Park.

Hitt Canyon Unit - The Department proposes to establish limited access over existing roads (high ground clearance) to this unit (Map #6) to provide an equestrian staging area for day-use and trailhead access. Only limited facilities such as designated parking and toilets are planned. Some provision for overnight use may be made in future years depending on an assessment of potential impacts.

Tin Mine Unit - In all probability, facility development in this unit (Map #7) will not occur during the life of this plan because of funding restraints and roadblocks associated with access issues.

Park in General - The Department will pursue the following facility renovation and construction projects as funding permits:

Boundary - Clearly visible boundary markers designating the State Park property lines will be put in place. Boundary fencing may be installed in critical areas to protect resources.

Fences - All cross fencing within the park boundary will be removed where it is not necessary to the function of the State Park and is not of historical significance.

Roads - Interior roads which are not necessary to the recreational or operational functions of the State Park will be reclaimed and revegetated with native plant material. Road barrier gates will be located as necessary to control access.

Trails - The existing and proposed network of trails will be evaluated (ground-truthed and mapped) for their function and usefulness for the access and enjoyment of the State Park. Backcountry trail routes will be designated (marked for location - not constructed) and carefully chosen to protect park resources and cause the least amount of impact as practical. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will continue to seek assistance with this evaluation from individuals, groups and organizations interested in trails. Recommendations about trail use levels and types of use and as well as assistance with a trail maintenance and monitoring program will be sought.

"...existing and proposed network of trails will be evaluated (ground-truthed and mapped)...."
Resource Inventory
Resource Assessment
Resource Management
Resource Management Program

Long-term, the Department's most important role in the Franklin Mountains is one of stewardship, protecting the integrity of the State Park's biological, geological and cultural resources. An effective Resource Management Program is essential to meeting the Department's objectives for the State Park.

In order for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to make sound decisions about the future management and development of the State Park, it is important for the agency to: (1) have a clear understanding of what is known about the area's resources and (2) have a good plan for developing systematic inventories that can fill the voids and (3) a management program to insure that these resources are conserved, restored and protected. The following section contains an overview of inventory, assessment and mitigation strategies that will be followed by the Department.

RESOURCE INVENTORY:

The natural and cultural resources of the Franklin Mountains are remarkably well known, due in large measure to its easy access for research and study by staff and students of the University of Texas-El Paso (UTEP). The Franklin Mountain Wilderness Coalition's sustained interest in protecting the area's resources has served to increase knowledge about the State Park's resources. Moreover, Texas Park and Wildlife Department has invested considerable time in generating a general characterization of natural and historical resources for the area through the Department's Land Inventory Program. Accordingly, developing an effective management plan will depend on synthesizing the varied resource assessments made to date for the mountain range.

This task will be accomplished through a comprehensive literature survey, with a bibliography as the work product. The bibliography will have a summary of each citation with essential resource data highlighted. Because there are extensive natural history collections as well, repository data bases will also be queried and relevant data sets extracted.

The extensive geological literature and complexity of this special material demand that the geological synthesis be accomplished by a professional geologist.

Natural Resources

The natural resource inventory will consist of two broad categories: One encompassing the faunal data and the other synthesizing the botanical information.
The most expeditious approach will be through an interagency contract with UTEP made possible by the Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the Department signed in June 1993.

**Rare and Endangered Species** - The Department has been tracking a number of federal and state listed species (See Appendix) from the Franklin Mountains. Some species are already under study, e.g. the Sneeds Cory Cactus, and status surveys and monitoring protocols are in preparation. The tracking of listed species is ongoing, but increased utilization and potential for “plant rustling” (cacti especially) may require more formal monitoring methods (See Appendix).

**Cultural Resources**

**Research to Date** - Previous research within the boundaries of the park consist of two formal studies and numerous freelance recording projects. In 1976, the University of Texas at Austin, utilizing the facilities at the El Paso Centennial Museum for a laboratory and staging area, sampled 10% of an area then designated “The Franklin Mountain Wilderness Park.” Eight stratified ecological niches were delineated and subdivided into 12 sampling units. A sampling unit was 400 hectares or 0.25 square miles. Each unit could be covered by two people in one day and was presumed to have one or more archeological sites contained completely within it. Within the ten units surveyed, 21 new sites were recorded, substantiating the original hypothesis of at least one site per unit. A report was submitted to the Natural Area Survey but was never published. Notes and maps pertaining to this 1976 survey are on file at the Centennial Museum.

During the summer of 1986, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, working in conjunction with the Texas Archeological Society, ran a week-long survey of lands proposed for development. Five crews were used, one in the Hitt Canyon drainage, one in the Tin Mine area, and one in the Tom Mays Unit, together with a roving crew and a rock art recording crew.

This survey revisited several previously recorded sites, recorded seven new sites and completed a multimedia recording of two rock art localities.

Probably the most diligent researcher to work the area is Mike Bilbo, now with the Bureau of Land Management. Bilbo (unpublished manuscript, A High Elevation Survey of Castner Range, Ft. Bliss, Texas, 1975) independently recorded dozens of historic and prehistoric sites on the lower slopes as well as the rugged mountain tops. His studies of the main springs remain the only documentation of the use of these resources by early people.
Finally, several large-area total inventory surveys have been completed in the area surrounding the park by such investigators as Cosgrove (1947), Lehner (1948), Human Systems Research (1973), Gerald (1975) and Whalen (1976, 1978). These excavations have helped to define historic and prehistoric lifeways in the El Paso area through time.

**Inventory Methods** - To insure good stewardship of the significant cultural resources in Franklin Mountains State Park, an archeological and historical inventory of the entire State Park will be undertaken as part of overall land use and operational planning. Whenever possible a resource inventory will be completed prior to beginning any development for formal public use and all proposed recreational or land-disturbing activities will be weighed against the loss of nonrenewable cultural properties. The ultimate goal of a complete inventory is to preserve and protect, through recording, stabilization or avoidance, all significant archeological sites found in the State Park.

The inventory data will then be stored in a complete and easily accessible database, built and maintained for the use of the State Park's managers, resource specialists, land-use planners and scientific researchers, both within the Department and at area academic institutions or other legitimate entities. This database will use the new and rapidly expanding Geographic Information System (GIS), recently installed in the Department regional office and linked to an Austin Headquarters workstation. As the GIS database grows, planners will be more able to assess potential impact of proposed activities and development in the early stages of planning and to modify projects to protect significant resources. Due to the high costs of conducting intensive cultural resource surveys, areas slated for first-phase development or visitor use will be surveyed first and, whenever possible, work will be done with qualified volunteers acting under the direction of the Department staff or other similarly qualified principal investigators.

**RESOURCE ASSESSMENT:**

As stated in the previous sections, many of the State Park's natural resources are generally well known because of the proximity of the site to a major university and through the efforts of groups like the Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's own resource staff. There are, however, some less accessible areas such as Anthony's Nose which have not been adequately assessed for the status of any resource class.
Additionally, specific resource locational data are not available for many areas of the State Park making it impossible at this time to make informed decisions about the possible impacts of proposed development through direct ground disturbance or through related public use.

By using the resource inventory and accompanying bibliography mentioned earlier, gaps in our detailed knowledge of the State Park's significant resources will be identified by the Regional Resource Specialist and other interested scientists. Once these gaps are known, research projects designed to fill the gaps will be offered to faculty, staff and students at the University of Texas at El Paso through a cooperative agreement already in place. Research efforts will be prioritized as follows:

1. A comprehensive study of fire ecology on the east side of the Franklins in and around the June 1993 fire site with recommendations for possible restoration or mitigation projects where feasible and identification of other potential wildfire sites throughout the State Park.

2. Intensive biological, botanical and archeological surveys in areas proposed for development or heavy public use (such as major hiking, biking or equestrian trails with easy access and the Tom Mays Unit).

3. Botanical surveys to identify and devise protective measures for the "best" examples of all significant plant communities/habitat types as identified by recognized researchers and the Department's Natural Heritage Program.

4. An assessment of potential and actual bat habitat throughout the State Park but concentrating on the east side in the Tin Mine Unit. Recommendations concerning mine shaft closure designs and general bat habitat protective measures will be sought from this study.

5. Archeological and botanical surveys around the boundary of the State Park to identify and devise protective or mitigation measures for significant resources which are difficult to monitor due to inaccessibility or inadequate staffing.

The ultimate goal of all the research listed above is to find and evaluate within the larger context of Franklin Mountains State Park and the upper Chihuahuan Desert, the most significant cultural and natural resources found in the State Park and to devise ways to protect them while allowing public educational and recreational activities to continue at a reasonable level.
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will insure that the resources contained within the State Park are preserved, restored and protected. Cultural resource management will emphasize preservation and protection of all significant archeological sites in the State Park. Natural resource management will emphasize maintaining the integrity of natural communities and the full range of biological diversity in the State Park, allowing natural ecological processes to proceed with minimal human interference, and restoring natural communities that have been degraded.

Initial efforts will focus on a monitoring program to determine if and at what level impacts are occurring to all significant resources. An educational and volunteer program will be established in conjunction with resource monitoring to inform the public about the importance of understanding the value of the fragile cultural and natural resources that occur within the state park. Emphasis will be focused on the restoration of areas within the State Park where past uses have caused significant impact. Development of partnerships with city, county, universities and nongovernment organizations is vital to the successful implementation of the resources program for Franklin Mountains State Park.

Program Organization

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has recently reorganized its approach to resources management for areas such as Franklin Mountains State Park. This involves assigning coordination and support responsibility for this activity to the Resource Management Specialist in the Regional Office in Fort Davis. When the State Park becomes fully operational, the park staff will assume much of this role. A cultural and natural resources management plan for Franklin Mountains State Park is expected to begin March 1, 1997 and be completed November 15, 1997.

- The Department will support and promote research opportunities to document change to the landscape and cultural resources through a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Texas, El Paso.

- Through planning, the Department will assure minimum resource impact by reutilization and adaptive use of previously disturbed sites.

- The Department will promote the use and dedication of existing roadway and utility (including public service) corridors, avoiding the development of new corridors.

- To protect resource integrity and wilderness character, the Department will aggressively pursue acquisition of outstanding mineral rights.
Resource Management

Resource Monitoring

An effective monitoring program will ensure that State Park resources are not being degraded and provide an early warning system when resource degradation does begin to occur, so that appropriate corrective measures can be taken. The Department will emphasize resource monitoring in the following areas:

**Public Use Areas** - Units such as Tom Mays and McKelligon Canyon currently are experiencing moderate to heavy visitor use. Mitigation measures will be taken to correct potential problems resulting from visitor use such as improper vehicle parking/driving, multiple trail development and spill over sprawl at designated picnic sites.

**Sensitive Areas** - A number of locations within the State Park are particularly sensitive, either because they have unique resources (e.g. springs, populations of rare plants, raptor nest sites, archeological sites, caves), or because they are highly susceptible to disturbance, or both. The staff will identify these sites and develop appropriate strategies for their protection. These could include an array of actions such as education, trail routing or closures or other use restrictions.

**Boundary Areas** - Franklin Mountains State Park has an exterior boundary of approximately 45 miles. Most of it is unmarked, unfenced and otherwise ill-defined. The Department will identify the State Park boundary and monitor use and encroachments that might occur along that boundary. Particular emphasis will be placed on monitoring areas of highest potential impact such as subdivisions and roads and trailheads that lead into the State Park.

**Interior Roads and Trails** - There are approximately 200 combined miles of roads and trails within the State Park currently receiving light to heavy levels of visitor use. The Department will monitor their use and determine what impacts are occurring. Attention will be directed toward areas receiving the highest use and appropriate mitigating measures such as education and better trail designation will be implemented. The Department will designate roads and trails to be closed and restored. Appropriate restoration efforts using native material will be proposed.

Resource Management Education

Public education stressing the importance of preserving and protecting the resources of the State Park will be an integral part of the resources management function of the Department, and all park staff will be involved in this effort. This aspect of the program will take on increasing importance as the El Paso area grows and demands for recreational opportunities become more intense..."
intense and focused on the Franklin Mountains. The State Park will be the largest provider of resource based outdoor recreation opportunity in the immediate region.

The Department proposes to establish a staff position(s) at Franklin Mountains State Park that will coordinate resource management and interpretive activities. (See related discussion under Operational Plan) A key component of this effort will be to enlist the assistance and cooperation of other agencies and institutions such as the City of El Paso, The University of Texas at El Paso, the Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition and others. Ultimately, given the magnitude and importance of resource management and interpretation, these functions will be separated and assigned to two positions.

Resource Restoration

In some areas of the State Park, natural conditions have been severely modified by past actions of man. Soil has been removed for fill, rock has been quarried, arroyos have been blocked and roads have been built that may not serve future park purposes. The Department will evaluate these disturbed areas and develop restoration plans that will strive to return them to their natural condition.

Only indigenous plant species will be utilized for restoration/stabilization efforts. The Department will work closely with the Soil Conservation Service, other appropriate agencies and local authorities on the Franklin Mountains flora to insure appropriate species are selected.

All management/restoration activities will be consistent with The Department's Environmental Policy as well as in compliance with the Texas Antiquities Code.

In areas where abandoned vehicles, junked material or other recent debris left by humans is present, the Department, in cooperation with the Texas Historical Commission, will evaluate such material for historic significance and remove from the State Park all debris judged not significant. In areas where structures are present that are incompatible with State Park purposes, the Department will conduct a similar evaluation and remove from the State Park those structures judged to have no historic significance and that are no longer needed.

Wildland Fire Management

In the past, numerous wildland fires have occurred within the State Park. The Department recognizes wildland fire as a natural, and even a necessary factor in maintaining ecological balance; however, the Department also acknowledges the
concerns of those adjacent to the State Park who could be affected by wildfires. The Department will develop a fire management plan and a cooperative agreement with the City and County of El Paso that will provide for suppression of human-caused fires and allow natural wildland fires to run their course only when public or private property or specific sensitive State Park resources are not threatened. The plan will be fully coordinated with the City and County of El Paso and other agencies as appropriate.

The Wildland Fire Management Plan will incorporate the following elements:

- The plan will be based on a careful analysis of the fire history of the State Park to determine the natural role of fire within the State Park. The plan's objective will be to allow natural ecological processes to shape the Franklin Mountains landscape as much as possible, consistent with protection of public and private property.

- The plan will have a strong research component.

- The plan will distinguish between natural and human-caused fires.

- The plan will provide for allowing natural fires to burn under prescribed conditions but be suppressed if those conditions are exceeded.

- The plan will provide for the possibility of limited human-ignited prescribed fires, depending on results of the fire-research program. Such fires might serve to reduce fuel buildup in selected areas, simulate natural fire, promote specific plant associations, or further research on effects of fire in the State Park.

- The plan will provide for identification of zones where, for maintenance of specific plant associations or protection of property, both human-caused and natural fires should be suppressed.

- The plan will incorporate the results of the fire ecology studies into the interpretive program for the State Park.

- The plan will provide for establishing a trained volunteer group to assist with fire management activities in the State Park.

- The plan will be developed with full opportunity for public input.
Exotic Species Concerns - Exotic and feral wildlife will be managed with a goal of "0" population level.

Alien plant species will be removed with the most practicable, environmentally sound, efficient method. Alien species will not be introduced for landscaping purposes.
Land-Use Plan
  Backcountry Trails - Map #2
  Zone Map-Index - Map #3
Visitor Center/Headquarters - Map #4
Tom Mays Unit - Map #5
Hitt Canyon Unit - Map #6
Tin Mine Unit - Map #7
McKelligon Canyon City Park - Map #8
Land-Use Plan

The Land-Use Plan (Map #2) shows the transition from planning to development and the adaptive reuse of existing facilities along with potential new facility placement. This plan and the associated zone maps (Maps #4, 5, 6, 7, and 8) show specific potential use and density for each area indicated. The Land-Use Plan looks farther into the future than other sections of the Management Plan and thus is less certain. The trails and potential facilities are shown as conceptual at this stage. They may be modified, or not built at all, if more detailed study indicates incompatibility with State Park objectives.

To maximize the recreational experience and develop carrying capacities in keeping with the limited resources available, an effort will be made to maintain the proposed and existing facilities at maximum efficiency. Facilities will be developed only to the extent that a balance between recreation and conservation of the resources can be maintained. Operating and maintaining these facilities within the intent and spirit of the Management Plan is vital to the overall success of recreational experience at the State Park.

The opportunity for nature study and environmental appreciation will provide recreation for a large volume of park visitors. Only by controlling access to the recreational areas can the park visitor be provided with a unique recreational experience and ensure protection of the State Park from overuse. It is the intent of the Management Plan that Franklin Mountains State Park will conserve and provide a unique "outdoor experience" for generations to come.

The Department is currently undertaking a system-wide evaluation of state parks, state natural areas and state wildlife management areas to consider possible changes in their classifications. It is anticipated that the park lands outside the areas proposed in the Land-Use Plan for developed facilities will be designated as natural areas or their equivalent.

PROPOSED ACTIONS:

Current Public Use

The potential for Franklin Mountains State Park to become the greatest asset to the urban environment of El Paso is locked into its integrity as an open-space feature of that community. Only that way can the State Park provide the human connection with nature and provide the solitude necessary in an increasingly crowded environment.

To let this rich resource remain as it is now is one approach to the preservation of this majestic desert mountain range. Yet, human impact on its resources has taken its toll and in many cases even time will not erase these old historic scars. The intent then is to learn from those previous misuses and not to repeat them.
However, continuing to provide public use through day-use of the Tom Mays Unit only with limited protection of the State Park's resources, fulfills neither the potential for public use nor does it provide reasonable resource protection. Over time, interpretive/recreational activities, both passive and active, should lead to a knowledgeable populace that understands that the State Park's unique resources have to be protected not to benefit just its natural and cultural resources but also the human community.

Proposed Management Plan/Minimum Development:

Under the proposed management plan, uncontrolled access to many areas of the State Park will be minimized and opportunities for public use will increase, especially as related to the variety of planned interpretive and recreational activities which include day use as well as overnight use. The primary operational function of the State Park will be to provide environmental awareness and education, associated with the protection of the State Park's unique resources, by way of controlled use and access.

Expansion of development in the future -- such as for camping or picnicking -- to accommodate increasing annual visitation and changes in work and leisure recreational trends will need to be weighted against internal impacts on the State Park's resources. In order to maximize the recreational experience and develop full carrying capacities for the limited resources available, maximum efficiency for all existing and proposed facilities is the goal. Operating and maintaining these facilities within the intent and spirit of this Management Plan is vital to the overall success of the State Park's intended recreational function.

Large Scale Development/Revenue Generation:

Some possibilities exist to work in partnership with private enterprise, developers, the city or other governmental agencies to develop cooperative ventures on the fringe of the State Park. These might include: additional access points associated with recreational facilities, private campgrounds, various environmental educational centers, bike rental shops, riding stables, hotel resort type facilities, eating establishments, etc. All of these possible ventures will require careful planning to assess their impact on the State Park. Yet, it is inconceivable that the park eventually will be completely surrounded by a wall of privacy fences bordering the backyards of suburbia.

Obviously these partnerships with private enterprise and other agencies will have to benefit the State Park monetarily or in some other way to help the Department carry out its mission in providing public use while preserving and protecting Franklin Mountains State Park.
BACKCOUNTRY TRAILS - 125 MILES
FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS STATE PARK
MAP #2

NORTH OF TRANS MOUNTAIN ROAD

MAIN LOOP TRAIL - 20 MILES  (Mundys Gap through Hitt Canyon)
(For Hiking and Biking, with Equestrian use over 7.7 miles from Soto Canyon through Hitt Canyon to Vinton Canyon)

RIDGE TRAIL - 12 MILES
(For Hiking and Climbing only)

LOOP TRAILS - 19 MILES TOTAL
(For Hiking and Biking, unless designated for Equestrian Use)
Mines Ridge 2.5 miles
Sotol Canyon 3.0 miles (equestrian allowed)
Anthony’s Pass 8.1 miles (equestrian allowed)
Foothills of 3.0 miles (equestrian allowed)
Vinton Canyon 2.8 miles
Avispa Canyon

SPUR TRAILS - 36 miles TOTAL
(For Hiking, unless designated as to other use)
Smugglers Pass 3.0 miles (biking allowed)
West Ridge 1.0 miles
Whispering Springs 2.5 miles
Oak Tree 1.7 miles
White Rock 1.2 miles
Indian Springs 1.2 miles (biking allowed)
Apache Springs 3.0 miles (biking allowed)
North Franklin 2.2 miles (biking allowed)
East Cottonwood 1.2 miles
Tin Canyon
Tin Mine .4 miles
Mine Shaft Ridge 3.6 miles (biking allowed)
Sotol 1.5 miles
Hitt Ridge 1.4 miles
Hitt Canyon Access 2.4 miles (biking allowed)
Anthony’s Gap Cave 1.0 miles
Anthony’s Pass Access 1.0 miles
Vinton Canyon 1.2 miles
Avispa Canyon 1.2 miles
Aztec Cave 1.1 miles
Thunderbird Rock 1.2 miles
West Cottonwood 1.7 miles

NOTE: - Trail mileage is approximate.
- Approximately 87 miles of designated trails are proposed north of Trans Mountain Road.

- Continued on next page -
SOUTH OF TRANS MOUNTAIN ROAD

MAIN LOOP TRAIL - 8 MILES  (Fusselman Canyon to McKelligon Canyon -
For Hiking and Biking Use)

RIDGE TRAIL - 15 MILES   (For Hiking and Climbing Only)

LOOP TRAILS - 6 MILES TOTAL   (For Hiking and Biking Use)
- Fusselman Canyon 2.6 miles
- Castner Range 3.1 miles

SPUR TRAILS - 9 miles TOTAL   (For Hiking, unless designated as to other use)
- Whispering Springs 4 miles (biking allowed)
- Oak Tree 7 miles (biking allowed)
- Fusselman 1.2 miles (biking allowed)
- White Rock 1.7 miles (biking allowed)
- South Franklin Eastridge 0.5 miles
- South Franklin Westridge 1.0 miles
- McKelligon Canyon Ridge Access
  - Mt. Franklin-North 1.2 miles
  - Mt. Franklin-South 1.5 miles
  - Sugarloaf Mt.-North 0.5 miles
  - Sugarloaf Mt.-South 0.5 miles

*NOTE:  Trail mileage is approximate.
- Approximately 38 miles of designated trails are proposed south of Trans
  Mountain Road.

TRAILHEAD/ACCESS POINTS

8 Locations outside Park Units
Each provided with:
- "Iron Ranger" Entry Sign - 1
- Wayside Display - 1
- Parking - 10 cars
- 2 cars w/trailers or buses

TRANS MOUNTAIN ROAD
- Smugglers Pass (Scenic Overlook - West)
- Fusselman Canyon
- Whispering Springs Canyon
- Oak Tree Canyon
- White Rock (Scenic Overlook - East)

McKELLOGON CANYON
- City Park

NEW MEXICO/BLM LANDS OFF S.H. 404
- Hitt Canyon
- Anthony's Pass

<table>
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<tr>
<th>TRAIL TYPE SUMMARY*</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Each side of Trans Mountain Road</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>32 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hike/Bike</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hike/Bike/Equestrian</td>
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NOTE: Unlimited options are available to the hiker as to access
to the State Park. The designated trails are for
convenience and safety. Equestrians and bikers are
limited to the designated trails for such use.
VISITOR CENTER/HEADQUARTERS COMPLEX
FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS STATE PARK
MAP #4

VISITOR CENTER/HEADQUARTERS

Visitor Center/Headquarters Bldg. - 1400 SF
Interpretive/Education Center and 50 Seat Auditorium - 1000 SF
Entrance Portal - 4 miles
Access Road - 20 ft.
Parking - 20 cars
- 6 cars with trailers or buses
- 6 personnel

Trailer Dump (duplex)

SERVICE/MAINTENANCE FACILITY

Service/Maintenance Bldg. - 1200 SF
Covered Parking/Storage - 4 bay/1440 SF
Service Yard Paving - 1200 SY
Parking - 10 personnel
TOM MAYS UNIT
FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS STATE PARK
MAP #5

AREA "A" - ENTRANCE PORTAL (EXISTING)

MAIN PARK ROAD - 20 ft. - 2.5 miles (renovate)
Access from Trans Mountain Road
VISITOR CONTACT/ENTRY STATION - 600 SF
Parking - 8 cars
- 2 cars w/trailers or buses
- 4 personnel

AREA "B" - DAY-USE AREA

Picnic Sites - 5 w/shelters (renovate)
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Unisex Toilet (Biodegradable) - 1 (renovate or replace)
Parking - 20 cars
Road - 18 ft. - .4 miles
Access Trail - .4 miles

AREA "C" - DAY-USE AREA (COTTONWOOD SPRINGS CANYON)

Trailhead (Main Looptrail to North Franklin and through Mundy's Gap
to Tin Mine Unit)
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Picnic Sites - 5 w/shelters (renovate)
- 5 w/shelters (add)
Unisex Toilets (Biodegradable) - 2 (renovate or replace with one)
Parking - 20 cars
- 6 cars w/trailers or buses
Access Trail - .4 miles

AREA "D" - BACKCOUNTRY ACCESS

Access to North Franklin and Mundy's Gap
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Camping - designated tent area at trailhead
(No specified number of sites)
Unisex Toilet (Biodegradable) - 1
Parking - 16 cars
- 2 cars w/trailers or buses
Access Trails - .3 miles
Backcountry Camping - along trails at designated areas
(No specified number of sites)

AREA "E" - BACKCOUNTRY ACCESS

Access to Avispa, Vinton and Hitt Canyon
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Camping - designated tent area at trailhead
(No specified number of sites)
Unisex Toilet (Biodegradable) - 1
Parking - 16 cars
- 2 cars w/trailers or buses
Access Trails - .3 miles
Backcountry Camping - along trails at designated areas
(No specified number of sites)

AREA "F" - DAY-USE AREA (AVISPA CANYON OVERLOOK)

Trailhead (Main Loop Trail to Avispa, Vinton and Hitt Canyons)
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Picnic Sites - 7 w/shelters (renovate)
Group Facility - 30 w/shelters (add)
Unisex Toilet (Biodegradable) - 3 (renovate or replace)
Parking - 55 cars
- 10 cars w/trailers or buses
Access Trail - .7 miles
Small Playground - 1
Trailhead/Thunderbird Rock
(Entry for rock climbing and viewing)
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Parking - 10 cars
- 2 cars w/trailers or buses
Trailhead/Aztec Cave
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Picnic Sites - 2 w/shelter (renovate)
Parking - 10 cars
- 2 cars w/trailers or buses
HITT CANYON UNIT
FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS STATE PARK
MAP #6

VISITOR CONTACT "IRON RANGER" ENTRY SIGN

MAIN PARK ROAD
Access from New Mexico S. H. 404 - 3 miles
"Iron Ranger" Entry Sign - 1

TRAILHEAD
Interpretive Display Shelter - 2 (isolated)
Parking - 1 at each
- 10 cars w/trailers or buses at each

EQUESTRIAN STAGING AREA

DAY USE
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Duplex Toilet (Biodegradable) - 1
Parking - 20 cars
Road - 18 ft. - .4 miles
Access Trail - .4 miles
*(NOTE: Can provide for overnight overflow)*

CAMPING
Designated Areas - 30 (high density)
Road - 18 ft. - .5 miles
Parking - 14 overflow
TIN MINE UNIT (Future Development)
FRANKLIN MOUNTAINS STATE PARK
MAP #7

MAIN PARK ROAD - 20 ft.
- 5 miles
Access from Trans Mountain Road adjacent to the Wilderness Park Museum
TRAILHEAD
- 2 (isolated)
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1 at each
Picnic Sites - 2 w/shelters at each
Parking - 10 cars at each
- 2 cars w/trailers or buses at each

AREA "A" - BACKCOUNTRY ACCESS
(Access to North Franklin and Mundy's Gap)
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Camping - designated tent area at trailhead
(No specified number of sites)
Unisex Toilet (Biodegradable) - 1
Parking - 24 cars
- 4 cars w/trailers or buses
Access Trail - .6 miles
Backcountry Camping - along trails at designated areas
(No specified number of sites)

AREA "B" - DAY-USE AREA (TIN CANYON)
LOWER CANYON
Trailhead (Main Loop Trail to North Franklin and through Mundy's Gap to Tom Mays Unit)
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Picnic Sites - 10 w/shelters
Unisex Toilet (Biodegradable) - 1
Parking - 20 cars
- 6 cars w/trailers or buses
Access Trail - .4 miles
Small Playground - 1

UPPER CANYON
Park Road - 16 ft.
- 1 mile (one-way loop)
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Picnic Sites - 20 w/shelters
Unisex Toilet (Biodegradable) - 1
Parking - 30 cars
- 6 cars w/trailers or buses
Access Trail - .6 miles

AREA "C" - TIN MINE INTERPRETATION/DAY-USE AREA
Interpretive/Visitor Facility - Mine Ruins
(Day Use Facilities Each Side of Ruins)
Picnic Sites - 30 w/shelters
Group Facility - 50 people
Interpretive Display Shelters - 2
Overlook - 1
Duplex Toilet (Biodegradable) - 2
Parking - 60 cars
- 10 cars w/trailers or buses
Interpretive/Access Trail - 1 mile (ADA)

AREA "D" - MINES INTERPRETATION AREA
(Mines North of Ruins, accessible by Trail)
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Parking - 6 cars
Interpretive/Access Trails - .4 miles

AREA "E" - MULTI-USE CAMPING
Multi-Use Campsites (High Density) - 50 w/shelters
Duplex Toilet (Biodegradable) - 1
Road - 18 ft.
- .6 miles
Parking - 12 Cars
Access Trails - .7 Miles
Small Playground - 1
McKelligon Canyon City Park  
Franklin Mountains State Park  
MAP #8

TPWD Trailhead

"Iron Ranger" Entry Sign - 1
Interpretive Display Shelter - 1
Parking - 10 cars
- 2 cars w/trailers or buses

City Park Facilities

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department may assist the City of El Paso in determining the planning needs for the development of existing facilities and with the placement of new facilities in McKelligon Canyon.

Existing City facilities consist of the following:

Amphitheater Complex - Viva El Paso
Group Facility
Picnic Areas
Toilet Facilities
Caretaker Residence
Water Supply System
Trailheads (informal)
Trails (informal)
Administration
Current Staffing
Proposed Staffing
Volunteer Program
Visitor Protection/Safety
Facility Maintenance
Education, Interpretation and Resource Management
Operational Plan

ADMINISTRATION:

Franklin Mountains State Park is currently managed by a Park Superintendent I, a Park Ranger II and several seasonal employees.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department proposes to manage Franklin Mountains State Park under a cluster concept that will merge three park operations under one Conservation Outdoor Recreational Specialist (C.O.R.S.) VI Administrative Manager. The cluster concept is suitable for Franklin Mountains due to its geographical proximity to two other Department sites in and around El Paso. This will provide for more efficient and uniform management of these areas, will be cost effective and will ensure quality public service. The C.O.R.S. VI will supervise, manage and be directly responsible to the Regional Director for the day-to-day operation of all three sites. The following parks comprise the park cluster: Franklin Mountains State Park, Hueco Tanks State Historical Park and the Magoffin Home State Historical Site.

The Department intends to establish an administrative headquarters for Franklin Mountains State Park in the vicinity of the Wilderness Park Museum in conjunction with a proposed park visitor center for that location. Availability of utilities and a central location with easy access to both I-10 and the Patriot Freeway are important considerations for an administrative headquarters. It is equally important for these offices to be easily accessible to the public.

CURRENT STAFFING AT PRESENT PARK SITES:

C.O.R.S. III and IV: (formerly called Park Superintendent III and IV):
As Park Manager responsible to the Regional Director for operation and maintenance.

Park Ranger II and III: Under the supervision of the Park Manager, performs routine cleaning, maintenance of park grounds, facilities and equipment.

Accounting Clerk II: Under direct supervision of Park Manager, responsible for day-to-day administration and clerical duties.

Hourly Worker III: Under the supervision of the Park Manager, assist in the performance of administrative duties.

Hourly Worker II: Assists Park Ranger(s) in routine cleaning and maintenance of park grounds, facilities and equipment.
PROPOSED STAFFING FOR CLUSTER OPERATION:

1 C.O.R.S. VI .............. El Paso Complex Cluster Manager
1 Administrative Technician II . El Paso Complex Office
2 Accounting Clerk III ...... El Paso Complex Office
1 C.O.R.S. III ............. Franklin Mountain State Park Manager
1 C.O.R.S. III ............. Hueco Tanks State Park Manager
1 C.O.R.S. III ............. Magoffin Home Historical Site Manager
6 Park Ranger III .......... (2) Interpretation and Education Resource
                          (2) Maintenance
                          (2) Maintenance and P.P.O.
2 Park Ranger II .......... (2) Maintenance
6 Seasonal .................. 064

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will develop criteria and guidelines to establish a volunteer program for the El Paso cluster of parks. These will include an application and selection process, the description and monitoring of tasks to be performed along with details about insurance, compensation for incidental expenses, uniforms, etc.

At Franklin Mountains State Park, the Department will encourage organizations, societies, clubs and the private sector to participate in a variety of projects that will assist the Department in the maintenance and operation of the area. These projects could include such activities as roads and trails work, assistance with guided tours and the operation of visitor information facilities. Other projects could entail assistance with the preparation of educational material and organizing a reference library at the site. A Volunteer Program Coordinator will be designated to manage this function.
VISITOR PROTECTION/SAFETY:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will develop a management program to provide for the protection and safety of visitors to the State Parks. A Search-and-Rescue Plan, guidelines for dealing with emergency situations, law enforcement protocols and a park-wide safety plan will all be prepared under this program.

Franklin Mountains State Park is contiguous to a variety of political jurisdictions and will be dependent on these outside agencies for assistance with such activities as search-and-rescue, fire control, and law enforcement. The Department will enter into formal agreements with the appropriate agencies to delineate what is to be done and who is responsible for any given task. This will eliminate misunderstanding and confusion about jurisdictional questions.

A designated Park Ranger III will be responsible for coordinating the management of the State Park’s visitor protection and safety programs. Consideration is being given to Department Game Wardens having primary responsibility for the enforcement of all agency regulations and laws within the State Park.

FACILITY MAINTENANCE:

At the present time, the park staff’s maintenance efforts are focused on the Tom Mays Unit. This area of approximately 1,000 acres was developed as a county park and contains 25 picnic sites, 2.5 miles of surfaced roads, various shelters, pit privies, parking areas and random trails. Other facilities associated with the State Park, located at the Wilderness Park Museum and in McKelligon Canyon, are administered and managed by the City of El Paso.

The facility maintenance program at Franklin Mountains State Park will be expanded as additional facilities are added. Also to be addressed is the maintenance of the existing informal trail system that covers the entire area. Backcountry trails will be designated (marked for location - not constructed) and carefully chosen to protect park resources and cause the least amount of impact as practical. The Department will identify present and future repair and maintenance that is required through a formalized maintenance management program.

A designated Park Ranger III will be assigned the responsibility for facility maintenance.
EDUCATION, INTERPRETATION, AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will employ a variety of methods to convey an understanding of the natural and cultural resources and history of Franklin Mountains State Park. Included will be such traditional activities as on-and-off-site educational programs conducted by park staff, as well as making available publications, videos, and other media to reach various sectors of the population. The details of this program have been previously described.

Resource management is an emerging facet of park operations that will take some nurturing before it is incorporated into the state park system at the field level. The Department envisions Franklin Mountains State Park being in the vanguard of expanded resource management efforts system wide.

The link between education and the State Park's resources is critical to the preservation of those resources. Because of limited finances and staff shortages, neither of these activities have been given much attention to date.

The Department proposed initially to combine the functions of education and resource management at the State Park and to assign responsibility for these programs to one person. This will provide a single level of direction and emphasis for these activities. In the future, as these programs develop and expand, the Department expects to assign additional personnel to them.
Legislation
Coordination with Other Agencies and Organizations
Special Species and Natural Communities
Projected Visitation/Revenue
Utilization Analysis - 1990 TORP/Region 8
Climatological Data
Legislation

Establishment and Status - Franklin Mountains State Park was created by an act of the Texas Legislature in 1979. The initial legislation was amended by the Legislature four times, in 1981, 1985, 1987, and 1989. Franklin Mountains State Park is one of 18 state parks established by the Legislature.

Name - Because it was named by the Legislature, the basic name, "Franklin Mountains," is probably unchangeable. Since the Franklin Mountains are the single most significant natural feature about the park, there is little reason to change this name anyway.

Classification - Its classification as a "state park" is another matter. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Code, §13.001(b), gives the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission authority to "establish a classification system for state parks that categorizes parks or a portion of parks as recreational areas, natural areas, or historical areas." Although the Commission has authority to designate portions of state park units differently from the rest of the unit, to date the Commission has chosen not to categorize anything less than an entire park.

The Commission established a policy for the classification of units of the state park system in 1975. "State Park" and "State Natural Area" are two of the categories of state park units provided for in that policy. The Franklin Mountains could justifiably be classified in either category.

It appears then that the Commission has latitude to classify the Franklin Mountains however appropriate. So far, in all matters that have come before the Commission relating to the Franklin Mountains, it has used the classification designated by the Legislature – Franklin Mountains State Park. To change that will require an action by the Commission. However, in response to the 73rd Legislative Session, S.B. 179 was enacted under which the Department will be undertaking a system-wide evaluation of state parks, state natural areas and state wildlife management areas to consider possible changes in their classification by August 31, 1995.

Analysis of the Act and Its Amendments - The original 1979 Act established the State Park, directed how the Department shall acquire the land, forbade the expenditure of any funds for the operation and maintenance of the State Park, gave the Department the power of eminent domain even against other state and local governmental agencies in acquiring land for the State Park, and established the boundaries of the State Park (see Appendix B, Map 1).

The 1981 amendment to the Act gave the Department authority to lease land instead of purchasing it, gave the Department authority to acquire mineral interests, changed the boundaries of the park (see Appendix B, Maps 2 & 3), described 11 absolute
exclusions from the park, described two sets of permanent easements within the park, and allowed a conditional addition to the park (Castner Range). Two of the eleven "absolute" exclusions from the Park (for the FAA and DOJ facilities) include provisions for possible future re-inclusion in the Park.

The 1985 amendment to the Act allowed the expenditure of Department funds for the operation and maintenance of the State Park.

The 1987 amendment to the Act exempted the El Paso Public Service Board compromise lands from the State Park. This was originally attached to Section 1 of the Act.

The 1989 amendment to the Act moved the El Paso Public Service Board compromise land from Section 1 to Section 2 of the Act with the other absolute exclusions from the State Park. It also divided the A. G. McMath Survey 298 absolute exclusion into an absolute exclusion and a conditional addition. In addition, the Natural Resources Code was amended giving the Department a preferential right to purchase General Land Office State School Board land located within or adjacent to Department land, but for no less than the fair market value of the land, as determined by the Board.

**Boundaries** - Section 1 of the Act creating the Franklin Mountains State Park, as subsequently amended, appears as Chapter 22 ("State Parks"), Subchapter P ("Franklin Mountains State Park"), §§22.221, 22.222, and 22.223, of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code (see Appendix A).

Subsection 22.222(a) of the Code says, "The department shall acquire by purchase, gift, lease, or condemnation all of the land described in Section 2 of the Act that added this subchapter to this code." Although Section 2 of the Act was not added to the Code, this in no way diminishes its standing as legally binding upon the Department.

Section 2 of the Act, as amended, comprises 17 subsections. The first subsection (2(a)) defines the boundaries of the park; the other 16 subsections (2(b) through 2(q)) modify those boundaries. The wording of the boundary description is clear, "Except as otherwise provided by this section, the Franklin Mountains State Park ... shall consist of the following described land: ... ."

This wording means that the legal descriptions of the lands added to or excluded from the park by Subsections 2(b) through 2(q) prevail over the legal description of the land included in the park by the boundary description in Subsection 2(a). In other words, the boundary description is subordinate to all the subsections that follow it because those latter subsections in effect amend the boundary description; those lands described in subsequent subsections which would otherwise be included within the boundary are specifically excluded, or they are included or excluded upon a specified contingency.

There has been considerable discussion over the legal meanings of the phrases, "shall," "shall not," "may," and "may not," in the
descriptions of the boundaries, exclusions, and contingent properties, particularly the many properties that are here classified as specifically excluded. For instance, compare the wording of §22.222 (a) of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code:

"The department shall acquire by purchase, gift, lease, or condemnation all of the land described in Section 2 of the Act that added this subchapter to this code. The department may acquire the mineral interests in the land to be acquired."

It appears that "shall" is a requirement imposed by the Legislature; the Department is not allowed any discretion to decline to fulfill the action described. "May" indicates permission from the Legislature to proceed at the Department's discretion; the Department is allowed to decline to fulfill the action described if it chooses.

Now compare the opening and closing sentences of Subsection 2(p), as amended in 1989:

"If the Parks and Wildlife Department does not acquire title by purchase to the following described land before September 1, 1999, then the Franklin Mountains State Park shall not, after the end of that period, consist of that land: ... The General Land Office may not, during the prescribed 10-year period, sell the described land to any entity other than the Parks and Wildlife Department."

In the above example, it cannot be construed to mean that the described land can be added to the Franklin Mountains State Park at the discretion of the Department if the Department fails to meet the prescribed conditions. Therefore, "shall not" in the Act must be construed as an absolute exclusion; no discretion is allowed. Similarly, "may not" must be construed to mean that permission is not granted by the Legislature; again, no discretion is allowed.

Of the 16 subsections, 2(b) through 2(q), one describes a conditional addition to the park, one describes a conditional exclusion from the park, two describe permanent easements, and the remaining twelve describe absolute exclusions from the State Park.

It has been suggested by some that the boundary description in Subsection 2(a) may not necessarily be an absolute boundary limitation on the Department's ability to acquire property. However, Subsection 2(g), that allows Franklin Mountains State Park to consist of whatever portion of the Castner Range the United States of America might convey to the State of Texas, includes the following:

"This subsection does not require the Parks and Wildlife Department to acquire that land but merely provides a contingent boundary change to accommodate whatever portion of that land might be conveyed."
It appears, then, that the boundary description in Subsection 2(a) is an absolute boundary limitation on the Department’s ability to add property outside that boundary to the State Park without specific legislative approval.

This does not preclude the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department from acquiring additional property adjacent to the Franklin Mountains State Park, including any of those properties specifically excluded by this Act, but under no circumstances may any property not included by the Act be added to the Franklin Mountains State Park except by legislative action.

**Boundary Modifications** - Subsections 2(b) through 2(o) were added to the Act in 1981. Subsections 2(p) and 2(q) were added to the Act in 1989 when Subsection 2(m) was also modified.

- **(Subsection 2(b))** The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of the following facilities and tracts of land amounting to 102.8708 acres in McKelligon Canyon:
  - **(Subsection 2(b)(1))** The road leading into McKelligon Canyon. As described in the legislation, this tract contains 13.3158 acres and is approximately 50 feet wide. It also includes all the area within the loop at the end of the road.
  - **(Subsection 2(b)(2))** A 67.002 acre parcel of land near the mouth of McKelligon Canyon that includes the Dam.
  - **(Subsection 2(b)(3))** A 19.994 acre parcel of land that includes the Amphitheater in McKelligon Canyon, lying southwest of the McKelligon Canyon road with 1299.98 feet of common boundary with the right-of-way of that road.
  - **(Subsection 2(b)(4))** A 1.863 acre parcel of land that includes the Pavilion in McKelligon Canyon, lying southwest of the McKelligon Canyon road with 342.27 feet of common boundary with the right-of-way of that road.
  - **(Subsection 2(b)(5))** The caretaker’s house in McKelligon Canyon, along with 0.651 acres of land on which the house sits northeast of the McKelligon Canyon road with 110 feet of common boundary with the right-of-way of that road.
  - **(Subsection 2(b)(6))** A circular parcel of land 50 feet in diameter centered upon the water tank approximately 600 feet northwest of the caretaker’s house.
  - **(Subsection 2(c))** The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of the right-of-way for the Trans Mountain Road, Loop 375.
(Subsection 2(d)) The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of those interests in 10.8630 acres of land granted the United States of America (Federal Aviation Administration) on South Franklin Mountain, so long as the FAA continues to use those interests. If the U.S. ceases to use those interests, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department shall incorporate that property into the Franklin Mountains State Park, remove the facilities and restore those lands as nearly as possible to their natural condition. Specifically mentioned as being excluded from the Franklin Mountains State Park are:

(Subsection 2(d)(1)) A 0.820 acre tract known as the Lower Site;

(Subsection 2(d)(2)) A 400-square-foot tract known as the Intermediate Site;

(Subsections 2(d)(3) and 2(d)(4)) A 3.302 acre tract of land in two parcels known as the Upper Site;

(Subsection 2(d)(5)) A 3.39 acre, 50-foot right-of-way for the tram connecting the upper and lower sites, overlapping both of those and including all of the intermediate site; and

(Subsection 2(d)(6)) A 3.3418 acre right-of-way for the power line connecting the upper and lower sites, lying just to the north of the tram right-of-way and overlapping the latter near the upper site, but leaving a thin sliver of state-owned land between it and the tram right-of-way near the lower site.

(Subsection 2(e)) Texas Parks and Wildlife Department shall grant to the United States of America (FAA) a permanent easement for the use and maintenance of the existing access road to the land described immediately above. It shall also grant to El Paso Electric Company and Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company a permanent easement for the operation and maintenance of the existing power line and communication line to the land described immediately above.

(Subsection 2(f)) The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of those interests granted the United States of America (Department of Justice) for its facilities on Mount Franklin, so long as the Justice Department continues to use those interests. If the U.S. ceases to use these interests, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department shall incorporate the property into the Franklin Mountains State Park. Specifically mentioned as being excluded from the Franklin Mountains State Park are:

(Subsection 2(f)(1)) A 7.1052-acre tract including the Repeater on top of Mount Franklin; and

(Subsection 2(f)(2)) The power line right-of-way to that site.
• (Subsection 2(p)) The Franklin Mountains State Park shall consist of whatever portion of the 11 sections of land making up the Castner Range that the United States of America (Department of the Army) might convey to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The department is not required to acquire this land; its acquisition and subsequent boundary changes are contingent upon what the Army wishes to convey to the department.

• (Subsection 2(h)) The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of two parcels of land containing 196.0704 acres owned by Tri-State Broadcasting Company and including their facilities near Ranger Peak.

• (Subsection 2(i)) The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of two pieces of property including the facilities of Missionary Radio Evangelism, Inc., about 0.6 miles northwest of Ranger Peak. Specifically:

  • (Subsection 2(i)(1)) A 3.42 acre parcel containing the Equipment Building; and

  • (Subsection 2(i)(2)) A circular parcel, 40 feet in diameter, centered on their Microwave tower. The location of this parcel was to be located by Missionary Radio Evangelism, Inc., anywhere on or near the crest of the Franklin Mountains within 1,400 feet of the existing equipment building and to be done prior to the acquisition of the surrounding land by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

• (Subsection 2(j)) Texas Parks and Wildlife Department shall reserve to Missionary Radio Evangelism, Inc.:

  • (Subsection 2(j)(1)) A permanent easement for the operation and maintenance of a power line from the equipment building to the microwave site, the power line to be in compliance with safety standards to be established by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department;

  • (Subsection 2(j)(2)) A permanent easement for a pedestrian way which coincides in location with the power line easement above, the easement not to be improved in any way but only walked on;

  • (Subsection 2(j)(3)) Whatever interests it might own which constitute an easement to use the existing access road to the lower terminus of the Walton Tram;

  • (Subsection 2(j)(4)) A permanent easement for a pedestrian way from the lower terminus of the Walton Tram to the equipment building, the easement not to be improved in any way but only walked on; and
• **(Subsection 2(i)(5))** Whatever easements they own for power and communication serving their equipment building and microwave tower.

• **(Subsection 2(k))** The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of the following properties of Walton Enterprises, Inc.:

  • **(Subsection 2(k)(1))** The Tower and Upper Tram site adjacent to the south side of the equipment building parcel of Missionary Radio Evangelism, Inc., consisting of 2.59 acres;

  • **(Subsection 2(k)(2))** The Lower Tram site some 1500 feet or so due west of the upper site;

  • **(Subsection 2(k)(3))** A 30-foot right-of-way for the Tram connecting the two sites;

  • **(Subsection 2(k)(4))** Whatever interests it might own which constitute an easement to use the existing access road to the lower terminus of the Walton Tram;

  • **(Subsection 2(k)(5))** Whatever easements they own for power and communication serving their upper and lower sites.

• **(Subsection 2(l))** The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of any land or interest therein presently owned by the El Paso Electric Company. The bill that added this subsection to the Act became effective August 31, 1981. "Presently" must therefore mean August 31, 1981.

• **(Subsection 2(m))** The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of a 176.83 acre tract at the northwest end of the A. G. McMath Survey 298.

The 1981 amendment to the Act excluded 433.972 acres out of the A. G. McMath Survey 298 from the park, leaving something over 200 acres of Survey 298 within the park. This was amended in 1989 to exclude absolutely only the 176.83 acre tract at the northwest end. The Department was given a time limit for acquiring a 253.14 acre tract that was designated as Subsection 2(p). The 1989 amendment failed to mention the remaining 4.002 acres at a southwest corner of the A. G. McMath Survey 298 which constitute Unit Nine of the Coronado Country Club Estates on the east side of Thunderbird Drive.

Inasmuch as the 1981 amendment excluded this 4.002 acre tract as part of the 433.972 acre exclusion, and it was not specifically reincluded in the conditional inclusion of Subsection 2(p), this undesignated 4.002-acre tract can be excluded by implication, even though it sits within the boundaries defined by Subsection 2(a). Should there be any future legislative action on the Franklin Mountains, it would be good to have this undesignated parcel specifically excluded.
• (Subsection 2(n)) The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of a 134.142 acre tract of land along the west side of Hugh G. Foster Survey 260 (Farah Estate & Mortgage Investment Corp.).

• (Subsection 2(o)) The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of a 67.39 acre tract of land in E. D. Strong Survey 221 west of the El Paso Rock Quarry.

• (Subsection 2(p)) Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has until September 1, 1999, to purchase a 253.14 acre tract out of the A. G. McMath Survey 298 from the General Land Office (this tract is different from and adjacent to the 176.83 acre tract excluded above). If the department does not acquire title before that time then the Franklin Mountains State Park shall not, after the end of that period, consist of that land. See the discussion under Subsection 2(m) above. This subsection was added to the Act in 1989.

• (Subsection 2(q)) The Franklin Mountains State Park shall not consist of certain eastern portions of sections 24, 17, 16, 9, and 4, of Block 81, Township 1, Texas and Pacific Railway Company Survey, extending from the Castner Range northward to the New Mexico state line. This subsection was added to the Act in 1989.

Other Acquisition Issues - The Franklin Mountains Wilderness Coalition has suggested some other areas for acquisition:

• The Wilderness Park Museum is a City of El Paso facility that sits on a 17 acre inholding within the Castner Range. It is a logical site for a park headquarters and visitor contact facility. If title to the property vests in the City, it would take legislative action to allow the addition of it to the State Park.

• The Coalition has suggested a 106 acre addition just north of the Castner Range in Sections 23 and 24 of Block 81, Township 1. The 56.5 acres of this tract in Section 24 were formerly in the Park but were excluded by the 1987 amendment involving the Public Service Board compromise lands. The 49.5 acres in Section 23 have never been within the Park boundaries. It would take legislative action to allow the addition of the 106 acre parcel to the Park.

• The Coalition has suggested an 80 acre addition on the west, about 40 acres lying within the tract specifically excluded by Subsection 2(m), the remaining 40 acres lying within H. G. Foster Survey 258 outside of the legal boundaries of the State Park. Furthermore, this 80 acre tract's only contact with the current boundaries of the State Park is with that portion of the A. G. McMath Survey 298 that is described in Subsection 2(p). If the Department and the GLO are unable to reach agreement on fair market value of this tract before September 1, 1999, then that tract shall not be a part of the State Park and the suggested 80 acre tract will be isolated from the rest of the park. It would take legislative action to allow the addition of this parcel to the State Park. Further,
should the Commission in its discretion decline to acquire the
253 acre portion of the McMath Survey 298, this 80 acre tract
would be isolated from the rest of the State Park.

• The Coalition has suggested adding the facilities in
McKelligon Canyon described and excluded from the park by
Subsection 2(b) and the larger of the two Tri-State
Broadcasting Company tracts described and excluded from
the park by Subsection 2(h). It would take legislative action
to allow the addition of these parcels to the State Park,
although a long-term lease or memorandum of
understanding, etc. could possibly be implemented.

• Staff has suggested adding land to the park at the south toe
of the Franklin Mountains southward to Scenic Drive. This
land is outside of the boundaries described in the Act. It
would take legislative action to allow the addition of this land
to the State Park.

• Various sources have suggested adding land on the east and
west sides of the mountains to the park up to the limit of
current residential development. Such land is outside of the
boundaries described in the Act. It would take legislative
action to allow the addition of this land to the State Park.

**Cost:** To date, the Department has acquired 5,500.965 acres at no
cost through transfer or donation from the City of El Paso and
El Paso County.

To date, the Department has acquired 12,748.7366 acres through
purchase or condemnation at a cost of $24,551,809.42, including
appraisals, surveys, and all associated trial costs. This
represents an average cost of $1,925.82 per acre, not counting the
donations and transfers.

The Department currently leases 5,494.77 surface acres from the
General Land Office and an annual cost of 10¢ per acre.

The Department is in litigation with Missionary Radio Evange-
list, Inc., over the Department's condemnation of 56.57 acres.
That court case has been continued until January 1993.

That leaves only two parcels totalling 223.95 acres owned by
Jobe Concrete Products, Inc. (formerly El Paso Rock Quarry,
Inc.) within the boundary of the park yet to be acquired by the
Department. The Department has not yet begun negotiations for
these tracts.
Coordination with other Agencies and Organizations

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has and will seek the assistance and cooperation of a number of agencies and organizations in the greater El Paso area in order to operate and manage Franklin Mountains State Park effectively and efficiently. Coordination with others will run the gamut from formal written agreements to an informal handshake. The following is a list of agencies and organizations that the Department has worked with to date:

Local Federal, State, City, and County Officials.

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management/Las Cruces, New Mexico

U. S. Department of Justice
Border Patrol/El Paso Sector

U. S. Department of the Army
Ft. Bliss/El Paso

National Park Service
Chamizal National Memorial/El Paso

Texas Forest Service
The Texas A & M University Service/El Paso

Texas Department of Public Safety
Sub-District #4A1/El Paso

Texas Department of Transportation
District #24/El Paso

City of El Paso
El Paso Department of Planning, Research, and Development
El Paso Parks and Recreation
El Paso Police Department/Westside and Northeast Office
El Paso Public Service Board
Wilderness Park Museum/El Paso

County of El Paso
El Paso County Parks and Recreation
El Paso County Sheriff's Department/Law Enforcement & Search and Rescue
El Paso County Road Engineer

El Paso Community College
El Paso Independent School District
Ysleta Independent School District

University of Texas at El Paso
Girl Scouts Rio Grande Council/El Paso

Boy Scouts of America Yucca Council/El Paso

Franklin Mountain Wilderness Coalition/El Paso
   Desert Ratz Mountain Bike Club/El Paso
   District IV of the League of United Latin American Citizens/El Paso
   El Paso Archaeological Society/El Paso
   El Paso Cactus and Rock Club/El Paso
   El Paso Herpetological Society/El Paso
   El Paso Native Plant Society
   El Paso Regional Group of the Sierra Club
   El Paso/Trans Pecos Audubon Society
   El Paso Wilderness Preservation Committee
   El Paso Women's Political Caucus
   Friends of the Franklins/El Paso
   League of Women Voters of El Paso
   Mesilla Valley Audubon Society/Las Cruces, New Mexico
   Mountain Park Community Association
   Northeast El Paso Civic Association
   Southern New Mexico Group of the Sierra Club

Sun Country Riders/El Paso and Chapparal, New Mexico

Chihuahuan Desert Wildlife Rescue/El Paso

Greater El Paso S.E.R.

Arts Resources of El Paso

West Texas Community Service and Restitution Program
Special Species and Natural Communities

A search of the Texas Natural Heritage Program (TXNHP) information system revealed special species and natural communities presently known and possibly occurring in Franklin Mountains State Park. The following are brief habitat descriptions for each.

Federal and State Endangered--

**Coryphantha sneedii** var. sneedii (Sneed pincushion cactus)
G2T2 S2 - Limestone outcrops on rocky slopes in desert mountains, in Chihuahuan Desert scrub or grassland, with creosote, ocotillo, lechuguilla, sotol, and various cacti; flowering April-September

Federal Category 2 and State Threatened--

**Phrynosoma cornutum** (Texas horned lizard) G5 S4 - open, arid and semi-arid regions with sparse vegetation, including grass, cactus, scattered brush or scrubby trees; soil may vary in texture from sandy to rocky; burrows into soil, enters rodent burrows, or hides under rock when inactive; breeds March-September

Federal Category 2--

**Sonorella metcalfi** (Franklin Mountain talus snail) G1 S1 - data not yet included in TXNHP information system

**Opuntia arenaria** (sand prickly-pear) G2 S2 - deep loose sands in thinly vegetated dune or sandhill areas; flowering May-June

**Coryphantha dasycantha** var. dasycantha (dense cory cactus) G3T2 S2 - endemic; grasslands and open oak woodlands over igneous soils and perhaps limestone in moderate elevation (2500-6000 ft.) in Chihuahuan Desert mountains

**Cereus greggii** var. greggii (desert night-blooming cactus) G4T2 S2 - shrublands in lower elevation desert flats and washes; flowering concentrated during a few nights in late May to late June

State Threatened--

**Phrynosoma douglasii hernandezii** (Mountain short-horned lizard) G5T5 S3 - Texas west of the Pecos River; generally a montane grassland form, but also occurs in low hills and shrub-desert-grasslands on broad, elevated intermountain plains; active at cooler temperatures than many other lizards

**Trimorphodon biscutatus wilkinsoni** (Texas lyre snake) G5T4 S3 - Big Bend and far west Texas; rocky areas with plenty of crevices and fissures; desert flats, succulent and scrub, and mountain canyons to about 6000 feet; virtually any type of wet or moist habitat, including irrigation canals and riparian-corridor farmlands; individual home ranges average about two acres

Other Special Species--

**Silene plancki** (Plank's catchfly) G2 S1 - crevices on shaded igneous (rhyolite, quartzite) cliff faces at moderate to high elevations in desert mountains; flowering late July-September
Brickellia baccharidea (resin-leaf brickellbush) G2 S1 - in Texas, found only in the Franklin Mountains; mixed shrublands on gravelly soils derived from limestone and perhaps from igneous rocks, on bajada slopes and arroyos; flowering summer-fall

Cryptantha paysonii (Payson’s hiddenflower) G3 S1 - rocky slopes in mountains of the Trans-Pecos; flowering April-June

Salvia summa (mountain sage) G2 S2 - shallow, rocky calcareous soils on limestone outcrops in mountains; flowering April-May

Thamnophis sirtalis dorsalis (New Mexico garter snake) G5 T3 S1 - a New Mexico extension known only from El Paso; may already be extinct from Texas; diurnal; can be active year-round during warm weather

Natural Communities-

Sideoats Grama-Black Grama Series G4 S3 - midgrass-dominated semi-desert grassland inhabiting moderate elevations (3500-5200 ft.) of the Trans-Pecos mountains and plateaus; composition varies with abiotic factors and grazing history; intermixed with or grades into pinyon-oak-juniper woodlands at higher elevations or succulent desert shrubland on dry slopes

Oneseed Juniper Series G4 S4 - evergreen shrubland occurring primarily in the northern Trans-Pecos and High Plains, usually over shallow soils and on slopes; intermixed with midgrass grasslands on surrounding deeper-soiled flats

Apache-Blume Series G4 S4 - deciduous shrubland occurring primarily along arroyos in the Trans-Pecos; soils and drainage are variable, and composition varies with these plus elevation and cultural influences

Scrub Oak-Mountain Mahogany Series G4 S4 - mainly evergreen shrubland restricted to mid-elevation areas (4500-5500 ft.) in the mountains of the Trans-Pecos; occupies slopes that are pinyon-oak-juniper communities further north; intermixed with succulent desert shrubland and semi-desert grassland

Lechuguilla-Sotol Series G4 S4 - succulent xeromorphic shrubland inhabiting slopes, usually with shallow, rocky soils, at low to moderate elevations (below 4500 ft.) in the Trans-Pecos; may grade into semi-desert grassland upslope and other desert shrublands downslope

Creosote-Mariola Series G5 S5 - desert shrubland inhabiting low elevations (3500 ft.) in the Chihuahuan Desert in the Trans-Pecos

The Heritage Program information included here is based on the best data currently available to the state regarding threatened, endangered, or otherwise sensitive species. However, these data do not provide a definite statement as to the presence or absence of special species or natural communities within Franklin Mountains State Park, nor can these data substitute for an on-site evaluation by qualified biologists.
# Projected Visitation/Revenue

Franklin Mountains State Park

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PARK SITE</th>
<th>Projected Visitation</th>
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<th>Est. Day-Use Revenue</th>
<th>Est. Overnight Revenue</th>
<th>Est. Total Revenue</th>
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<td>Overnight</td>
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Estimated revenues are based upon: $5 day-use  
$9 overnight (average)

Each visitation category was divided by the calculated number in each "user group" by facility and factored by estimated Texas Conservation Passport (TCP) holders to arrive at the estimated revenue figure.
Issue: Lack of Funds for Parks and Recreation

Recreation providers state that the statewide economic recession has had a severe impact on park and recreation programs in region 8. Falling tax revenues have necessitated cuts in staff, services, and new development. Many local park departments, whose budgets are often lean in prosperous times, have found themselves financially strapped, yet elected officials may be reluctant to raise taxes during a recession. Some communities have even been forced to cut back on maintenance, but this can be far more expensive over the long run.

A related development is declining revenues for park grant programs. Appropriations to the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund have been very limited in recent years, so the state's Local Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Fund has borne much of the burden. However, because of falling cigarette tax revenues and steadily growing numbers of grant applications, funding from this program is becoming tighter and more difficult to obtain. Even with these programs, smaller communities still can't afford the money for the match. (Also, see State Summary, "Financing Parks and Recreation" under "Issues and Recommendations."

Recommendations:
For recreation providers:

Make maximum use of federal, state, local government, and private grant and assistance programs.

Seek and investigate alternative funding sources, such as donations, fee systems, and other fundraising ideas. Consider private foundations as a way of supporting specific projects or even entire park systems. Examine leases or easements as alternatives to outright purchases.

Support federal legislation to establish a trust, or similar mechanism, to provide funding for outdoor recreation.

Share ideas, solutions, and facilities as much as possible with other agencies, school districts, civic organizations, activity groups, institutions, and the private sector to maximize recreational opportunities at the lowest cost.

Concentrate on operating and maintaining existing areas. Open newly acquired areas to the public as soon as possible. Keep local officials and citizens up-to-date on plans in progress.

When feasible, emphasize development of multiple-use facilities and facilities that achieve multiple objectives, such as recreation, access, preservation, etc.

Design parks and facilities to minimize operation and maintenance costs. Contract maintenance work when it is cost beneficial to do so.

Encourage volunteer help and use it to the fullest.

For federal, state, and local governments:

Consider establishing management teams composed of representatives of the different agencies or levels of government that face common problems managing common areas, such as the Big Bend region. Develop a teamwork approach to recreation and resource management by means of cooperative agreements, memorandums of understanding, mutual aid agreements, etc.
PLANNING REGIONS

1. Panhandle
2. South Plains
3. North Texas
4. North Central Texas
5. North East Texas
6. East Texas
7. West Central Texas
8. Upper Rio Grande
9. Permian Basin
10. Concho Valley
11. Heart of Texas
12. Brazos Valley
13. Deep East Texas
14. South East Texas
15. Gulf Coast
16. Golden Crescent
17. Alamo
18. South Texas
19. Coastal Bend
20. Lower Rio Grande Valley
21. Texoma
22. Middle Rio Grande

Franklin Mountains State Park Management Plan
For the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department:
Consider input and suggestions on the open project selection process (Land and Water Conservation Fund and Local Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Fund) from all sources.
Continue to serve as a clearinghouse for information on federal, state, and private grants and assistance programs.

**Issue: Vandalism**

Although vandalism seems to be more prevalent in local parks, federal, state, and commercial park operators and managers also complain of this persistent, frustrating problem. Vandalism occurs not only in region 8, but everywhere in Texas. Large, remote parks like Big Bend and Hueco Tanks are difficult to monitor and protect. Local parks like Ascarate in El Paso are much smaller, but the heavy visitation makes them difficult to supervise. Vandalism is costly in tax dollars and lost recreation opportunities. Money used to repair damaged facilities could be spent to provide new ones, and vandalized facilities are unattractive and often unusable.

The motives for vandalism can vary greatly. Frequently, it is simply mischievous behavior or due to alcohol abuse. Or, it may be an expression of dissatisfaction with existing facilities. Vandalized facilities that aren’t repaired invite more vandalism. Facilities neglected due to lack of maintenance are also targets of vandals. Knowing the reasons for vandalism can sometimes provide insights into solving the problem.

Landowners report vandalism to private property, trespassing, and poaching. Unfortunately, the recreation-seeking public is too often the culprit. Recreationists who damage private property cause great expense for landowners and create a negative image of all recreationists, including those who respect private property and the environment. This results in ill will between landowners and the recreating public and establishes barriers to resolving the problems. (Also see State Summary, “Managing Visitors and Recreational Use” under “Issues and Recommendations.”)

**Recommendations:**

For educators and recreation providers:
Stress education as a means of deterring vandalism. Teach, as part of the curriculum in public education, attitudes that foster appreciation and respect for private property and natural resources. Educate the public on the anti-social nature of vandalism and its cost in tax dollars and lost recreation opportunities.

For recreation providers:
Encourage and foster cooperative, community-wide efforts to create awareness of vandalism, prevent it, and apprehend offenders. Work closely with law enforcement agencies and private security firms. Establish community “parkwatch” and “adopt-a-park” programs.

Attempt to discover the causes or motives for vandalism in specific areas or instances as a means of stopping or preventing it.

Initiate or try various approaches or combinations of approaches to deal with or discourage vandalism, including fee systems, increased surveillance, requiring offenders to repair or clean up the damage, on-site volunteers, murals, vandal-resistant fixtures, and immediate repair of vandalized facilities.

**Issue: Protection and Management of Fragile Backcountry Areas and Resources**

This huge, spectacular region contains vast acreages of public parks, natural areas, and wildlife management areas. According to parkland recreation managers, human impacts are the major problem here, but controlling recreational use of these areas is difficult because of their size and inaccessibility. Heavy recreational use and limited water for vegetation recovery result in damage to fragile resources. Other human impact problems include improper camping practices, litter, illegal fires, destruction of vegetation, volunteer trails, and damage by off-road vehicles. River corridor impacts on the Rio Grande could become significant as more people use the river. Increased park visitation and limited staff have aggravated these problems. (Also see State Summary, “Managing Visitors and Recreational Use” and “Conserving Natural Resources for Recreational Use” under “Issues and Recommendations.”)

**Recommendations:**

For recreation providers:
Determine and establish carrying capacities for backcountry areas and fragile resources, and set limits of acceptable use. Regulate or control use when visitation reaches critical limits. Explain the purpose of visitor restrictions and why they are necessary to secure public cooperation and support. If possible, rotate facilities to new areas to allow impacted areas to recover.

Develop education programs to instruct visitors in the proper use of backcountry and fragile areas. Encourage an ethic that fosters respect for natural resources.

Consider permit systems for areas not now regulated to control backcountry use and limit impacts, especially for fragile resources.

For the federal government:
Encourage further discussions with Mexico on protecting the Mexican side of the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River.

**Issue: Changing Land Uses**

Changing land uses throughout the Upper Rio Grande region are affecting area parks and resources according to regional park managers. Large commercial and subdivision developments in the Big Bend area require roads, water, utilities, and sewage disposal systems. These significantly increase human impacts, require scarce water resources, and may have adverse environmental effects over the long term. The National Park Service reports that the introduction of exotic species on area ranches for commercial hunting purposes has affected native species. Because exotics compete with native wildlife for food and may carry diseases and parasites, the park service is considering fencing some federal areas. Harmful, non-native plants, such as tamarisk, or salt cedar, have invaded Big Bend and begun to
Air pollution in region 8 can originate from hundreds of miles away.

appear in areas in the Guadalupe Mountains National Park. Plans for development and commercialization in Mexico across from Big Bend could significantly increase traffic through the park and have adverse impacts on it. There are also plans to preserve certain areas. One such proposal by Mexico is the establishment of the Madera del Carmen National Park, a 1.25 million-acre protected area adjacent to Big Bend National Park in the state of Coahuila. (Also see State Summary, “Conserving Natural Resources for Recreational Use” under “Issues and Recommendations.”)

Recommendations:

For recreation providers:

Plan future development carefully and assess all possible impacts to ensure that the natural resources and attractions that draw visitors are protected from damage by overuse or human impacts. Closely monitor existing developments over the long term to be sure no environmental damage is now occurring.

For the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and state universities:

Continue to research and monitor the introduction of exotics to assess the impacts. Where possible, take action to prevent environmental damage or harm to native species. Discourage and prevent the introduction of harmful, non-native species.

For the federal and state governments:

Continue and encourage further dialogue with Mexico on development issues in the Big Bend area. Assess all possible impacts that might occur from different types and intensities of development. Keep communications open and negotiate if necessary. Consider establishing joint management teams—the U.S., Mexico, Texas, and Coahuila-to manage common protected areas and resources.

Issue: Air Pollution

Air pollution affects visibility and the quality of the recreation experience, and may be harmful to water supplies, plants, and wildlife. Region 8 park administrators say that much air pollution in the region originates in the El Paso-Juarez area, but other large urban industrial areas in Texas (some as far away as Houston), adjacent states, and Mexico also contribute. (Also, see State Summary, “Conserving Natural Resources for Recreational Use” under “Issues and Recommendations.”)

Recommendations:

For federal, state, and local air quality protection agencies:

Continue to monitor air pollution and conduct research to determine its impacts on water sources, vegetation, and wildlife.

Initiate legal action against polluters in the U.S. to stop further pollution. Continue to require urban areas to develop plans and meet deadlines for cleaning the air.

For the federal government:

Enter discussions with Mexico on air pollution issues.
issue: Crime in Parks

Local park providers and law enforcement agencies report that heavily used urban parks frequently suffer from crime, such as assault, vandalism, theft, or worse. Because of crime, people may become intimidated and afraid to visit parks. When this happens, parks lose the reasons for their existence and fail to serve their purpose. Large federal and state parks are also targets of criminal activity because of their size and inaccessibility. The smuggling of drugs, firearms, and illegal aliens is common along the Rio Grande. Plant and wildlife poaching frequently occur in the national parks. Rare or endangered plants and animals, such as cactus, candelilla, and snakes, are harvested for their commercial value. Such illegal activities can decimate or entirely eliminate plant and animal populations. Theft and destruction of artifacts and antiquities is also a great concern. (Also see State Summary, "Managing Visitors and Recreational Use" under "Issues and Recommendations.")

Recommendations:

For recreation providers:

Focus on increased surveillance of parks to combat crime.

For recreation providers, park staffs, visitors, and citizens:

Help combat crime by being vigilant and reporting violations, or suspicious activities. Establish "park watch" programs to prevent crime and vandalism.

For federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies and the courts:

Communicate frequently and cooperate closely to present a united front and strengthen crime-fighting efforts. Vigorously prosecute perpetrators of vandalism, poaching, and other criminal acts and mete out appropriate punishments.

For the Texas Legislature:

Consider strengthening poaching laws to include asset seizure and forfeiture to better protect fish, wildlife and plant species, especially rare and endangered plants and animals and entire habitats.

Vandalism is costly and results in lost recreation opportunities.

Increase funding for enforcement and surveillance to prevent the theft and destruction of artifacts and antiquities.

For parks and law enforcement officials:

Organize a regional conference of federal, state, and local park administrators, elected officials, law enforcement officers, and representatives from Mexico to discuss the problem of crime in parks and develop solutions.

issue: Economic Benefits of Recreation and Tourism

The Upper Rio Grande region is already a major state and national tourist attraction because of its vast number of unique natural attractions, its historic sites, the types of activities it offers, and the acres of public land it contains. The attractions continue to increase, however, and there is potential for many more. Accordingly, regional and local officials voice much interest in recreation and tourism in region 8 because of the economic benefits they provide. The recreation and tourism industries create jobs and encourage a more diversified economy, and thus help moderate recessions. Money spent by visitors strengthens local and area economies. (Also see State Summary, "Tourism and Outdoor Recreation" under "Issues and Recommendations.")

Recommendations:

For park and recreation providers, tourism development agencies, and chambers of commerce:

Improve coordination and continue to promote regional and local attractions and events to foster the recreation and tourism industries.

Continually seek to improve the marketing and packaging of events, sites, and attractions. Examine the possibilities of developing new activities, attractions, and events to draw additional visitors.

Study the feasibility of establishing a regionwide agency to promote and coordinate recreation and tourism throughout the Upper Rio Grande region.

Work closely with Mexico to promote regional tourism.

Increase emphasis on trails, interpretation, and historical and archeological sites as additional facets of tourism that can attract new and different markets.
Population Trends

Region 8's population is projected to reach 662 thousand by 1995, an increase of 13 percent over the 1986 population of 587 thousand people (figure 1 and table A1). Most of the population of this geographically large region is in El Paso, which accounts for 85 percent of the regional population (table A2). Consequently, El Pasoans have a significant impact on the region's parks and recreation facilities, as well as nearby recreation areas in New Mexico. Other cities in the region and rural areas make up the remaining 15 percent of the population.

The El Paso MSA is projected to show steady, consistent growth up to the year 2000 (table A1). This future growth should ensure a continuing demand for outdoor recreation in region 8 and nearby regions.

Resource Attractions

Region 8 is blessed with an abundance of unique, scenic parks and recreation areas that draw people from across the state and nation (figure 1). Federally administered parks include Big Bend National Park, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Fort Davis National Historic Site, and Chamizal National Memorial. Major state parks are the Davis Mountains State Park, Fort Leaton State Historical Park, Franklin Mountains State Park, Hueco Tanks State Historical Park, the Magoffin Home State Historical Park, and the newly acquired Big Bend Ranch State Natural Area. In addition, the state owns four wildlife management areas in the region.

Although small, Ascarate Lake provides abundant recreation opportunities for citizens of El Paso and El Paso County. Another major water resource, the Rio Grande, borders the entire region on the south. A portion of this great river makes up the federally administered Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River.

Recreation Supply

There are nearly 1.5 million acres of recreation land in region 8 in 176 parks (table 1). The region easily ranks first among the twenty-four regions in acres of recreation land per thousand population with 2,432 acres per thousand (table A3). It also ranks well above the statewide average of 209 acres per thousand population.

The federal government is the largest supplier of recreation land with over 800 thousand acres, 54 percent of the total (table 1). The state is the next largest with 29 percent. This is followed by the private sector with 16 percent. Of

---

**Figure 1**

Region 8 Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GEOGRAPHY</th>
<th>MAJOR RECREATION ATTRACTIONS/RESOURCES</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parks and Recreation Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counties</td>
<td>Recreation land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,491,469 acres</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land Area</td>
<td>Developed recreation land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21,049 square miles</td>
<td>5,255 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevation</td>
<td>Big Bend National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.355° - 8.749°</td>
<td>Big Bend Ranch State Natural Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual rainfall</td>
<td>Black Gap Wildlife Management Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.8 - 18.7 inches</td>
<td>Chamizal National Memorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January minimum temperature</td>
<td>Davis Mountains State Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 - 53°F</td>
<td>Elephant Mountain State Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July maximum temperature</td>
<td>Elephant Mountain Wildlife Management Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82 - 100°F</td>
<td>Fort Davis National Historical Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growing season</td>
<td>Fort Leaton State Historical Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>209 - 248 days</td>
<td>Franklin Mountains State Park</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guadalupe Mountains National Park</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hueco Tanks State Historical Park</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Magoffin Home State Historical Park</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ocotillo Wildlife Management Area</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rio Grande National Wild and Scenic River</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sierra Diablo Wildlife Management Area</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POPULATION 1986</th>
<th>Lakes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Surface acres</td>
</tr>
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<td>587,195</td>
<td>55</td>
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<td>Counties</td>
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<tr>
<td>El Paso</td>
<td>Ascarate Lake</td>
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<td>567,036</td>
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<td>Brewer</td>
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<td>7,957</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Presidio</td>
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<td>5,107</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Culberson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>3,119</td>
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<td>Hudspeth</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,237</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Davis</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,799</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>1995 PROJECTED POPULATION</th>
<th>Surface Acres</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>662,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People per square mile</td>
<td>31.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnic composition:</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>68%</td>
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</table>

| Sources: 1988-89 Texas Almanac; 1986 O-D Participation Survey, TORIS, Texas Lakes Inventory - CPS, OPB, Parks Division, TPWD; *Estimates of the Total Populations of Counties and Places in Texas for July 1, 1986* - Department of Rural Sociology, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, Texas A&M University; and Texas Department of Health Population Data System, July, 1986. |
the 238 thousand acres that are private, about 200 thousand are in one ranch-resort. Local governments supply less than 1 percent of the land, but furnish the greatest number of parks at 128. They also provide most of the facilities, except for campsites, and hikings, horseback riding, and multi-use trails.

Potential and Proposed Resources

When open at some future date, the Big Bend Ranch State Natural Area will be an outstanding educational, recreational, and tourist attraction for region 8. The park, which will increase the region's park acreage by over two hundred thousand acres, will offer a number of unique scenic, geologic, natural, and archeological features and take in some fifteen miles of Rio Grande frontage, including Colorado Canyon.

The National Park Service reports that a potential resource with a high priority for acquisition is the dunes area just west of Guadalupe Mountains National Park. This proposed acquisition consists of 10,123 acres and would become part of the national park. Recognized as a Texas natural landmark, the dunes contain archeological sites and rare, endangered plants and animals. The addition of the Harte Ranch (Northern Rosillos Mountain Preserve) to Big Bend National Park in 1986 increased that park's size by 67,125 acres and is an outstanding acquisition.

The partial listing of recreational attractions and resources shown in Figure 1, conservation information maintained by the Texas Natural Heritage Program of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and other references, such as open space plans, should all receive consideration as potential resources to guide the planning and provision of outdoor recreation opportunities and other development.

Table 1
1986 Supply of Parks/Recreation Areas: Land, Facilities, and Water in Region 8, by Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility/Resource</th>
<th>FEDERAL</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>REG.</th>
<th>LOCAL</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Parks/Rec. Areas</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Parkland Acres</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>234833</td>
<td>200335</td>
<td>6556</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developed Land Acres</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39417</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>Developable Land Acres</td>
<td>2216</td>
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<td>22808</td>
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<td>Preserved or Unsuitable for Development (Acres)</td>
<td>809488</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>211784</td>
<td>200318</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility/Resource</th>
<th>FEDERAL</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>REG.</th>
<th>LOCAL</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tr>
<td>Baseball Fields</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basketball Goals</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boat Ramp Lanes, FW</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boat Ramp Lanes, SW</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>108</td>
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<td>Campsites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fishing Bank Access, FW Lin. Yd.</td>
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<td>Fishing Structures, FW Lin. Yd.</td>
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<td>Fishing Structures, SW Lin. Yd.</td>
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<td>Golf Courses</td>
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<td>Horseback Riding Trail Miles</td>
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<td>Lake Acres (BFS Suitable), FW</td>
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<td>Off-road Vehicle Riding Acres</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swimming, FW Sq. Yd.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swimming, SW Sq. Yd.</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swimming, Pool Sq. Yd.</td>
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<td>Trail Miles, Multi-use (Walk, Bike, Jog)</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>0</td>
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Notes: See Appendix B for key points to interpret this table and an explanation of research methods. See Appendix 0 for an explanation of terms.
### Table 2
Projected 1995 Per Capita Outdoor Recreation Participation
Generated by Residents of Region 8 and Texans
(in Annual User Occasions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Facility Use</th>
<th>Residents of Region 8</th>
<th>All 24 Regions</th>
<th>All Texans</th>
<th>Statewide Avg.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Region 8 Only</td>
<td>All 24 Regions</td>
<td>All Texans</td>
<td>Statewide Avg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat Ramp Lanes, FW</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boat Ramp Lanes, SW</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating (Pleasure), FW</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating (Pleasure), SW</td>
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<td>*</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<td>Fishing, FW</td>
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<td>0.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fishing from Banks</td>
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<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing from Boats</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fishing from Structures</td>
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<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing, SW</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing from Boats</td>
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<td>*</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing from Shore</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td>0.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing from Structures</td>
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<td>Hiking</td>
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<td>2.2</td>
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<td>4.8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming, Pool</td>
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<td>6.4</td>
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<td>Tennis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking (Pleasure/Exercise)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walking on Trails</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Asterisks indicate value is less than .1 occasion per capita.


Notes: See Appendix B for key points to interpret this table and figure and an explanation of research methods. See Appendix D for an explanation of terms.

---

### Popular Activities

The five most popular activities in 1995, as measured by the percentage of the population participating, will be walking, pool swimming, picnicking, playground use, and bicycling (figure 2). Statewide, the top five activities are projected to be walking, pool swimming, picnicking, playground use, and open space activities (figure 4.1).

The most popular activities in region 8 are games and sports, family-oriented activities, and those that promote physical fitness. Activities that are projected to exceed the statewide rate in 1995 in per capita participation are hiking, baseball, basketball, bicycling, football, jogging-running, off-road vehicle riding, playground use, soccer, pool swimming, and walking (table 2).

---

### Figure 2
Region 8 Projected 1995 Percentage of Population Participating

- Saltwater Boating: 0%
- Saltwater Fishing: 2%
- Freshwater Boating: 4%
- Freshwater Swimming: 1%
- Hunting: 8%
- Golf: 8%
- Nature Study: 9%
- Freshwater Swimming: 10%
- Freshwater Fishing: 11%
- Soccer: 11%
- Baseball: 11%
- Horseback Riding: 11%
- Tennis: 12%
- Football: 13%
- Hiking: 14%
- Off-road Vehicle Riding: 14%
- Softball: 16%
- Camping: 17%
- Basketball: 18%
- Jogging: 26%
- Open Space Activities: 32%
- Bicycling: 35%
- Playground Use: 42%
- Picnicking: 43%
- Pool Swimming: 44%
- Walking for Pleasure: 62%
### Table 3
Projected Outdoor Recreation Participation in Region 8 by Region 8 Residents, Texans from Outside Region 8, and Regional Totals, 1990, 1995, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boat Ramp Lanes, FW</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>217</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
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<td>507</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>1567</td>
<td>1694</td>
<td>1822</td>
<td>2033</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>171</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fishing from Boats</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing from Structures</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>119</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>879</td>
<td>944</td>
<td>1107</td>
<td>1197</td>
<td>1286</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>437</td>
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<td>Lake Use (BFS Suitable), FW</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nature Study</td>
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<td>371</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>693</td>
<td>750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pincnicking</td>
<td>1165</td>
<td>1248</td>
<td>1331</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>1267</td>
<td>1359</td>
<td>1450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming, FW</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>386</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Figure 3
Destinations of Region 8 Residents for Resource-based Activities

4,320 Annual User Occasions (000's)
Generated by Region 8 Residents, 1995

### Figure 4
Origins of Participants Who Recreated in Region 8 for Resource-based Activities

6,757 Annual User Occasions (000's)
Occurring in Region 8, 1995

Notes: Activities include camping, pincnicking, hiking, nature study, freshwater swimming, freshwater fishing, freshwater boating, saltwater swimming, saltwater fishing, saltwater boating, and hunting.


Notes: See Appendix B for key points to interpret this table and these figures and an explanation of research methods. See Appendix D for an explanation of terms.
Recreation Travel Patterns

Figure 3 shows destination regions for participation in resource-based activities by region 8 residents. The top destination region for residents in 1995 is projected to be region 8, their home region, with 80 percent of the participation. The next most popular regions are expected to be 18, 9, 21, and 20, each with 3 percent; region 16, 2 percent; and all other regions combined, 6 percent.

Origin regions for all resource-based participation projected to occur in region 8 in 1995 from all over the state are shown in figure 4. Fifty-one percent of the participation will be by region 8 residents, followed by regions 16, 18 percent; 4, 11 percent; 9, 7 percent; 18, 4 percent; 12, 2 percent; and all others combined, 8 percent. The relatively large percentages from distant regions with large urban populations, such as 16, 18, 12, and 4, demonstrates the attractiveness region 8 has for much of the state.

Projected Participation

The five activities that are projected to have the highest total participation occurring in region 8 by 1995 include walking, bicycling, jogging-running, pool swimming, and playground use (tables 3 and 4). Table 3 shows that participation by visitors will exceed that of residents for boating, camping, and hiking. This reflects the large visitation from other parts of the state to region 8's national and state parks, where such activities typically occur.

Table 4
Projected Outdoor Recreation Participation in Region 8 by Residents of Region 8, 1990, 1995, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Facility Use</th>
<th>Projected Participation (in 000's Annual User Occasions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>1149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>1233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td>7517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling on Trails</td>
<td>451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseback Riding</td>
<td>450</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horseback Riding on Trails</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jogging/Running</td>
<td>4453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jogging/Running on Trails</td>
<td>1272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-road Vehicle Riding</td>
<td>931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORV Riding on Trails</td>
<td>182</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Space Activities</td>
<td>1559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground Use</td>
<td>3515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>1034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>1143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming, Pool</td>
<td>4014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking (Pleasure/Exercise)</td>
<td>9531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking on Trails</td>
<td>2177</td>
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</tbody>
</table>


Notes: See Appendix B for key points to interpret this table and an explanation of research methods. See Appendix D for an explanation of terms.

Activities like softball are very popular with region 8 residents.
Needed Facilities and Resources

Facilities that will be needed in 1995 are, in order of priority, multi-use trail miles, soccer/football fields, playground areas, freshwater swimming, softball fields, and campsites (tables 5 and 6). These are followed by swimming pools, lake acres, tennis courts, boat ramp lanes, baseball fields, fishing structures, basketball goals, golf holes, and picnic tables.

A comparison of resource/facility needs per thousand population shows that region 8 is expected to exceed the statewide average for 1995 for twelve of the eighteen facilities (table A4). These are: baseball fields, camp sites, freshwater fishing structures, golf holes, lake acres, picnic tables, playground areas, soccer/football fields, softball fields, swimming pools, tennis courts, and multi-use trails.

Needs for some facilities may not appear on a regional basis because of inadequate distribution or other reasons. However, this does not preclude them being needed for a given facility within some specific area, locality, or community.

Providers' Responsibilities

The National Park Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department should help supply the 1995 needs for camp sites, fishing structures, picnic tables, playground areas, and multi-use trail miles (table 7).

In general, city and county governments should have the major responsibility for meeting the needs for local facilities including baseball fields, basketball goals, boat ramp lanes, playground areas, soccer/football fields, softball fields, freshwater swimming, pool swimming, tennis courts, and multi-use trails. Local governments should also help supply the needs for fishing structures, picnic tables, and campsites.

The private sector should provide facilities which are potentially profitable or which support other profit-making facilities. In region 8, the commercial sector should be the primary supplier of campsites, fishing structures, and golf holes, and should be a secondary provider of baseball fields, playground areas, soccer/football fields, softball fields, freshwater swimming, and tennis courts.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseball Fields</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball Goals</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat Ramp Lanes, FW</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campsites</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>2402</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fishing Structures, FW Lin.Yd.</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>781</td>
<td>880</td>
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<td>Golf Holes</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hiking Trail Miles</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>4   *</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horseback Riding Trail Miles</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Acres (BFS Suitable), FW</td>
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<td>567</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>655</td>
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<tr>
<td>Off-road Vehicle Riding Acres</td>
<td>1831</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>25</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic Tables</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>229</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Playground Areas, Equipped</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer/Softball Fields</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Softball Fields</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming, FW Sq.Yd. (000)</td>
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<td>84</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Swimming, Pool Sq.Yd. (000)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennis Courts</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>139</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trail Miles, Multi-use (Walk, Bike, Jog)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>68</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Land Acres</td>
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</table>

Notes: Asterisks indicate no needs exist based on a regional analysis of supply and participation; however, needs may exist locally within the region due to inadequate distribution of existing facilities.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need Rank</th>
<th>Facility/Resource</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Trail Miles, Multi-Use(Walk, Bike, Jog)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Soccer/ Football Fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Playground Areas, Equipped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Swimming, FW Sq.Yd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Softball Fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Campsites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Swimming, Pool Sq. Yd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Lake Acres (BFS Suitable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Tennis Courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Boat Ramp Lanes, FW</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Baseball Fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Fishing Struct., FW Lin.Yd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Basketball Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Golf Holes</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Picnic Tables</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Hiking Trail Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Horseback Riding Trail Miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Off-Road Vehicle Riding Acres</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: CPS, OPB, Parks Division, TPWD, 1988.

Notes: See Appendix B for key points to interpret these tables and an explanation of research methods. See Appendix D for an explanation of terms.
### Table 7
Recommendations to Meet 1995 Outdoor Recreation Facility/Resource Needs in Region 8, by Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility/Resource</th>
<th>Needs Through 1995</th>
<th>FEDERAL</th>
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<th>REG.</th>
<th>LOCAL</th>
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<td>US Forest Service</td>
<td>Tpwd State Park System</td>
<td>Tpwd Wildlife Management Areas</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basketball Goals</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Hiking Trail Miles</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Horseback Riding Trail Miles</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>(Walk, Bike, Jog)</td>
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<tr>
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Source: CPS, CPB, Parks Division, TPWD, 1998.

Notes: See Appendix B for key points to interpret this table and an explanation of research methods. See Appendix D for an explanation of terms.
El Paso County

El Paso

Annual Climatic Profile

Temperature
Daily maximum: 78°F
Daily minimum: 49°F
Mean: 63°F
Number of days of 90°F and above: 106
Number of days of 32°F and below: 63
Heating degree-days: 2660
Cooling degree-days: 2100

Precipitation
Mean: 7.8"
Record: 18.17" in 1881
Number of days with 0.1" or more: 20
Mean relative humidity (CST)
6:00 a.m. 35 %
Noon 27 %
6:00 p.m. 43 %

Winter Temperatures are mild and nights are clear and cool in this arid, subtropical climate. Infrequent cold spells occur when exceptionally strong outbreaks of polar air sweep southward across the mountain states, but sunshine brings quick moderation.

Summer Daytime temperatures are hot, but the heat is not considered oppressive because of the low humidity. Nights are pleasantly cool.

Spring/Fall Are pleasant seasons at El Paso, with mild, sunny days and crisp, cool nights.

Winds Are northerly October through February, west-southwesterly March through May, and southerly June through September.

Thunderstorms Occur on an average of 35 days in the year, most of them from April through October, peaking in July and August.

Growing Season Averages 248 days in the year. The frost-free period extends from March 9 to November 12.

County Statistics (1980)
Population: 479,899
Average annual rate of population change, 1970 to 1980: 2.9 percent
Density: 473.3 persons per square mile
Median age: 25.0 years
Median family income: $15,300

County Seat: El Paso

County Economic Characteristics The Fort Bliss Army reservation and other federal institutions occupy a sizable portion of the county and are the major economic factor in El Paso county. Tourism, trade, and manufacturing contribute other income.

Physical Features The terrain of this westernmost county in Texas ranges from the fertile Rio Grande Valley to 7,000-foot mountains. The lowest-altitude pass through the Rocky Mountains is here. Desert vegetation predominates except on 8,100 irrigated acres planted mostly with cotton.

First-order Station: El Paso

Climatic Division: Trans-Pecos (5)

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## Station: EL PASO

### Lat.(N) 31°43' Long.(W) 106°24'

**Elevation 3,918'**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Daily maximum</th>
<th>Daily minimum</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Record highest</th>
<th>Record lowest</th>
<th>Mean degree-days 1951-80</th>
<th>Precipitation totals inches</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Greatest daily</th>
<th>Greatest monthly</th>
<th>Precip. of 0.1&quot; or more</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
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*Also see earlier dates

**Mean number of days**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Precip. of 0.1&quot; or more</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
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### Mean Precipitation

![Mean Precipitation Chart]

### Mean Temperature

![Mean Temperature Chart]