ADDITIONAL STORIES ABOUT THE RABBIT DRIVE TRAIL

Ethnohistoric And Ethnographic Study,
El Camino Real De Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail, U.S.-Mexico Border
Supplementary Interviews and Findings

Report prepared for:

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Findings Summary Narrative

This brief report has been prepared in fulfillment of contract terms related to Western National Parks Association Research Grant #22-07 in cooperation with Chamizal National Memorial. The work is an add-on related to the Chamizal National Memorial, National Park Service Research Grant entitled: *Ethnohistoric and Ethnographic Study of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT Along U.S.-Mexican Border* (Grant # P20AC00979), undertaken with the History Department, University of Texas, El Paso. The objective has been to research and document the ethnography from local communities and the ethnohistory of the region associated with El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (Royal Road of the Interior Lands) from Juárez, Mexico through far West Texas to southeastern New Mexico. An ethnographic landscape framework has been employed. The Field Investigator, Deni Seymour, conducted the work in collaboration Jeffrey Shepherd, with the UTEP Department of History through the Desert Southwest Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units (CESU) Network.

The goal has been to document the stories of knowledgeable American Indians who have historical ties to this portion of the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro (ELCA) and to the physical character and features of the landscape, including water sources. Native Americans were given priority in interviews since their views had yet to be incorporated in a meaningful way into Camino Real studies. Research has identified knowledgeable descendants of several local tribes who have participated in the research, including the Piro, Manso, Suma, Jumano, Tompiro, Jano, Lipan, and Jocome. Two interviewees were of Hispanic heritage. The main activity associated with this grant involved collecting oral histories from additional people who have historic and cultural ties to this area. Further activities included conducting research using primary and secondary sources and photographic documentation. This document and the results of this grant are subsets of what will be reported in the project report as a whole: *The Rabbit Drive Trail: Native Perceptions and Origins of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro in the El Paso\Las Cruces Corridor*.[1]

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Introduction

The following is presented as four themes for several reasons, not least of which is the brief nature of this report. First, the interviews should not stand alone, but rather are best seen as a body of knowledge that is continually accumulating and in which new and deeper understandings are made possible as further research is conducted. Also, while each interview may be viewed as complete in and of itself, certain concepts are shared across interviews and interviewees. Moreover, the project and the researchers had questions that stitch the interviews together and, while in many contexts this thread may not always be apparent, the presentation as themes herein helps make greater sense of the undertaking's results. It is also true that through time the interviews built on one another, adding to the knowledge conveyed in one, then built on by another. But also, as the researchers' knowledge and understanding deepened some of the implications and relationships between kernels of information became more apparent.

Studies such as this are reliant on the information possessed by the interviewees just as they depend on the content provided by historical accounts, etc. Throughout this research process there has been an interplay between historical documentary sources, historian's reports, archaeological knowledge, and modern and historic ethnographic and oral historic information. One source is used to assess and to deepen understanding of the next.

Importantly, not all information from the past is equally accessible. Individuals and communities value certain types of information and so this information is retained, repeated, reproduced, and repurposed. This information that is currently and has been valued in the past may differ from the types of information sought and valued by present day researchers. Because not

everything can be accessed during the research endeavor, the objective is to recognize the strength of the interviewed population, to recognize the types of information available, to notice which research questions can be addressed and focus on those and probe others. Yet, when information is not available, recognize that it is best to move on to what information is obtainable, to move seamlessly on to the topics that are being made available. When probing in areas where information is lacking, one can often sense the reaction—varying from frustration, guilt, resentment, and even irritation at times—of the interviewee who cannot address those inquiries. But if we desire to move beyond what is already known, to obtain valuable information that has not already been recorded, it is important to continue to probe the boundaries, and to really listen, to actually hear what messages these people want to convey, want us to learn, and are willing to divulge. A good example of this was conveyed by a Manso descendant, Cruz Camargo when he was asked why this information was not already known, given how many interviews had been conducted with him previously. Such a rich body of information was available that had yet to be recorded. He responded that no one had asked before. While others had come, and asked similar questions, they had apparently quickly moved on once completing a short interview. In this light, the goal of this project has been to sit as long and as many times as the interviewee felt inclined to convey new information or information in a new way, to show places on the landscape, and to discuss their ideas in relation to what other sources convey. We spoke about an innumerable range of topics, from how men would cover their private parts, prohibitions about menstruation, clubbing enemies in the head, how to cook fish in clay wrappings, recipes for cooking rabbit and for making glue, and painting their hair red to avoid being carried off by eagles.

This has been a team effort to probe more deeply, to ask new questions, and to exchange ideas on how one party views the topic or issue and how this relates to how they hear, how they interpret, and what they understand. The method has been to pursue even those areas where answers had been given, reexamine the answers to make sure we both fully understood the responses and implications, and to use archaeological and historical information to flush out the connection between sources and the potential other meanings behind what was being said. In some cases, differences in the use of language were discovered which led to new understandings of landscape use and to identification of specific places on the landscape. In other instances, the information that was conveyed about the past was identified as coming from older historical or anthropological accounts; in some instances, the interpretations in these older accounts have since been eclipsed with new understandings. In other cases, the information contained in these older accounts is all that remains of that specific form of knowledge, for example, the full set of Manso words known today were recorded by Adolph Francis Alphonse Bandelier in the late 1800s.[2] Not all of these issues are discussed in this brief report, but these ideas convey the nature of the research. The goal of the research was to capture local Native American views of the landscape in the area that was later traversed by the Camino Real. In the view of this author, the results obtained are beyond measure, especially since at least one interviewee has passed on since the last discussion.

The first two topics discussed in relation to the interviews are about modern sensibilities. Some Natives are drawn to reconnecting with their heritage and being formally recognized as maintaining an ancestral embeddedness in the region. A second topic relates to how their lineal connection to the land and the region is visible in the uniqueness of choices and responses of their ancestors as historical events unfolded. The third topic focuses on the Manso Indian presence in the area, the original inhabitants of the area in the historic period. Some of what we have learned far exceeds expectations. The final topic discussed is how inquiry about the knowledge of archaic Spanish as well as local and regional use of the Spanish language has helped reinterpret the meanings of certain passages in sixteenth century historical documents.

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Understanding the Desire for Federal Recognition

I begin this report with a discussion of the legitimacy of the locals to address Native issues about the Camino Real. This seems necessary because this is a persistent theme in the research area that defines relationships between Native factions and between Native and non-Native peoples. Now, as for millennia, El Paso serves as crossroads of people of many nationalities and ethnicities. This is precisely why the Camino Real went through this region. This aspect of the local heritage mix was accelerated by the retraction of Spanish and Native populations during the 1680 Pueblo Revolt that intensified, diversified, and increased the density of interethnic interaction. Recognizing these tensions, many locals say, as does Cruz Camargo, that we are all the same, all related (Recordings 397, 401, 413, 414), acknowledging the amount of intermarriage that has taken place, and because of co-residence, the intermingling or sharing of traditions from many diverse groups. When a ceremony was lost by one group, owing to any number of factors, they may borrow from another and then take ownership, incorporating it into their customs, as has occurred over millennia. Yet, tension exists between Native groups and non-Natives with respect to how Indian they are, that is, how traditional individuals are and whether they retain their culture and whether they maintain a distinction that would allow them to seek and rightfully claim federal recognition as a tribe. There is also a tension between different factions, some claiming to be the true successors of a specific ancestry or the rightful faction to pursue federal recognition. Within the local community, this is the *elephant in the room*. Nonetheless, comments are often enough raised and, as such, are maintained as a point of contention, and are often transformed into or thrown about in hurtful discourse. Many other times they are raised with a laugh, in a friendly sort of way that nonetheless betrays the depth of the obstacle for local tribal members. For example, Sam Sanchez (Recording 676, 677), commented about a local, saying:

> "I used to say 'I knew Gilbert before he was an Indian,' you know, he went into it with all things, he was very proud to claim that he was Native American. [Laughs.] I used to tease him 'I knew you…before you were an Indian.' [Laughs]

Some of this confusion about heritage in relation to tribal affiliation was conveyed by Nancy Lopez (Recording 647):

> "After we became band members in 2016, I had a second cousin reach out to me, and I guess the way she worded it, its like: 'So when did I become Apache?,' and I was just laughing, I'm like, 'Well, either conception or birth, pick one.' And she just started laughing and she's like, 'I get it. I get it now.' I said, 'you've always been Apache. Do you mean when we became band members?' She's like, 'Yes. I guess I should have worded it that way.'"

The struggle between definitions of what makes one a Native person or a Native person of a specific heritage is distinct from the question of tribal association and federal recognition. The latter provides confirmation after many centuries of difficulty which is why it is so vigorously sought. On the other hand, there are those of a different opinion, such as Chiso-Concho descendant Xoxi Nayapiltzin, who said: "I don't recognize the government as the proper authority to authenticate my ethnicity" (Recording 575). Nonetheless, for our purposes, this topic is relevant because it goes to the issue of who has a right to comment on Native views and customs related to the Camino Real and whose views will be valued by the community at large. These difficult issues are important to discuss given the fact that most of these groups that are in legal limbo regarding federal recognition are

focused in this Las Cruces/ El Paso area, which is partially why so members have made themselves available for interviews.

A valuable perspective was provided on disenfranchised Natives by a Chihene Apache (The Chihene Nde Nation of New Mexico member), whose tribe is seeking to reestablish their roots in the area and to investigate a breadth of topics related to their history and heritage. This area was within their documented homeland and many members of this band of the Chiricahua Apache were sent to prison and then reservations, while some remained free, and others chose not to go to reservations when released. Strong views circulate about whether locals are real Indians because they do not live on reservations and also because, to protect their lives and increase economic opportunities, many of these tribal peoples hid within the local Mexican population, often living in enclaves within larger cities.[3] Regarding this point of relearning and reconstructing her heritage and family history in relation to indigenous past, Nancy Lopez (Recording 647) provided the following insight:

> NL: "I did not know any of this stuff. It's neat to be able to find [the information] and then pass it on to other family members, you know, this is what I found, look, this is so cool, because it shows the relationships between the bands, between the tribes, and to what extent it was. So, I guess in a sense me finding this information, I am making the stories, I don't know if that makes sense, but even though it's their story, I'm finding it, and then being able to revive it somewhat, and presenting, look, look what I found. This is so cool.
>
> DS: Well, isn't that what this whole federal recognition thing is partially about, I know there is more to it than this, but really isn't it about [Recording 647] you've been Californians, you've been Arizonans, El Pasoans, you've been Mexicans, or Mexican Americans, Hispanics. Whatever labels you want to put on…just Americans, …so basically, part of that, I think, … is about taking pieces here and there and recreating who you were as a tribal person, as an Apache, as a native. Is that accurate?
>
> NL: Yes
>
> DS: That's … what I'm doing as a scholar, trying to reconstruct what these Native groups were like in this area using all the sources available.
> How does that fit with federal recognition? Don't you have to already have that [knowledge] or is it okay to…
>
> NL: Well what I think, what I think is that with the US military, the Mexican military, the Spaniards, you know, trying to annihilate, and/or make these *savages* into productive human beings, well taking these little pieces and showing, we're showing that not only have, are we productive human beings, but we, we have managed to live and survive by the tools that were given to us by the Spaniards, the Mexicans, the US military and we've become what, [rather] we want to reclaim what is ours but we're showing you, yes we've become upstanding citizens of the United States and, now we want federal recognition. This was your goal. This is what was presented, by putting folks on the reservation, you know by, teaching them to farm, teaching them, basically, how to be a citizen, in whatever role-- minus the genocide part. So here we are, we are productive citizens and showing that this is what we've done or where we've been or how we've lived using their rules--they being United States' rules boundaries-- we've

become this, and now we want federal recognition because we've done what you've asked us to do. My opinion.

While these highlighted interviews just touch the surface of this topic, it is one that was continually raised during the interview process with many consultants. They maintain a deep connection to the land whether it is because they have lived here through the centuries or come back to understand more about their ancestors that live, toiled, and were buried here.

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Forms of Resistance

While communities with competing interests have occupied the study area for millennia, it was not until well into the historic period that the incompatibilities inherent in the intricacies of the accompanying powerplays become apparent and comprehendible to us as modern scholars. Native occupants of the region had at one time access to all of the land along the river and its adjacent environs. Certainly, there were intertribal and intervillage conflicts and daily activity might be restricted by resource availability, river flow, or the presence of enemies, but the land was not fenced nor the world organized by an overarching set of foreign laws, bisected by the royal road and railroad tracks, or overpowered by fast-changing and imposing technologies. Through time possession of portions of these lands gradually shifted into Spanish, Mexican, and then Anglo-American hands to where now, very little of the land in southern New Mexico and West Texas is occupied by tribes. Things might have been different, with the landscape being carved up initially in somewhat different shapes. For example, at one time a Manso land grant reservation was proposed straddling the Rio Grande that would have encompassed modern day El Paso and Cuidad Juarez and cordoned off much of that land for the Manso (Figure 1).[4] When asked why they did not agree to the creation of the reservation Camargo said that they had no desire to be restricted to a small area and being forced to live in one place.

With review of the historical sequence, it becomes clear that new forms of law and societal organization, as they related to or ultimately impacted land use, were not consistent with or comprehendible within Native perspectives. The foreign and cunning nature of the schemes that worked on and against resident populations who were, by design, situated within a place of disadvantage, were made potent because of the lack of understanding of and legitimate access to the legal structure being imposed, and the powerful and unscrupulous forces behind it. Thus, local Native American populations formulated unique and region-specific, sometimes community-specific, responses.

Like chess, games of strategy characterized the interactions between the powerful and powerless. This is apparent, for example, in the events leading up to the Salt War, where laws enacted, behind closed doors by the powerful, placed what had been communally available salt beds into the hands of private ownership. Resources and places accessible since time immemorial were now blocked, with restrictions reinforced with threat of harm.

In this same vein, Native residents remember very specific events that led to them being cheated out of land. They tell detailed stories within their own family's and community's histories about losing land to swindling lawyers. One story that conveys this most effectively is by Juan Benavides who notes: "It was their farms although it was taken away from them. It seems, the white people (no offense to you) wanted this land. They would tell the Natives from here that it wasn't fair where a few people owned all the land and others didn't have none at all" (Recording 606). Colonel Albert Jennings Fountain was one of apparently several lawyers (Recording 607) who were always taking Native "people who had land to court so they would have to get a lawyer to defend him. So

that is the way they were taking them [the land] by having them get a lawyer to defend them" (Recording 608). "My grandpa had 140 acres, but by the time he died he only had 45 acres; he had to sell. And like I said before, they would take him to court for something that they were accused, that they had stolen something or killed somebody; they had to go to court. That's another way of taking their land away." They would have to sell the land to pay for lawyers: "The cost of the lawyers mostly, they lost the land by paying the lawyers trying to defend themselves or one of their sons" (Recording 608). Also, since they did not speak English they were at a disadvantage in courts (Recording 435). Connected to Fountain's effort to swindle Natives out of their land, Benavides tells a story from his family of how men, women, children, and babies were killed behind Chopes Bar and Grill, and few survived the killing. After this his great great grandfather (Durateo Saenz Sr), who had survived, was loaded onto the railroad under the guise of bringing him to jail in Concordia, but along the way, deemed too dangerous, he was killed (Recordings 606, 607). Another way they would get land is by marrying a Native woman who had lots of land (Recording 607, 608).

The theme of uniquely generated responses within the backdrop of the local environmental, political, and transnational setting is nowhere more apparent than the story told about smuggling. Camargo tells a story of sly responses to law enforcement interfering with economic prosperity during prohibition. Community members who did not have access to other ways to prosper and whose land-based identity and mode of livelihood had been severed, maneuvered outside the law. The story is that his grandfather made whiskey and mescal and would load mules with liquor that were trained to cross the border by themselves, and it would find its way to the northern destination, where it would be shipped to Chicago or St Louis on the railroad. (Recording 8Y8A1484 and personal communication)

Another way of avoiding the oppressive impacts of a changed political scene was that many locals moved away. As Camargo noted:

> I've been in ceremonies in Denver Colorado with the Lakotas and some other places some of the elders kept told me that they used to live in this area, some of their ancestors, and they migrated all the way up north because escaping from the Spaniards, you know, because they used to force them to work, to make them like slaves, slavery and all that, forcing, not fed them nothing, good enough, they wanted to be free, they wanted to hunt, they wanted to do their own way, but they were like prisoners, so they revolted against the Spaniards, against the church, kill the clergy or the friars and all that, a lot of the natives got killed, some others died of disease, the diseases that they brought. (Recording 403).

People have migrated for millennia to avoid the onslaught of various forms of change that are viewed as intolerable. But avoidance was not chosen by everyone, and many stayed. Those who stayed, however, continue, even today, to face oppressive actions from those in positions of power. Carmargo explains this clearly, that when they finished the restoration of Socorro Mission:

> "I told the priest, you know, we want to make a ceremony because these missions were built by the Natives, by the people, especially, you know, the Piros in this area of Socorro…We want to do a ceremonial dance and all that, to celebrate the restoration. And he said, 'No you have to ask permission to the bishop'
>
> 'Okay.' I went to talk to the bishop in El Paso. And I told him we wanted to do a ceremony.

> They said, 'No, you cannot do that. We have matachines. We have matachines to celebrate.'
>
> 'Yes, but we are natives, we are descendants of the people who built this mission. Then I told him, I am Manso, I am a direct descendant of the Manso people of this area, and I know there are some Piro people, Piro descendants. And we all want to get together to do this celebration, this ceremony.'
>
> 'No, they don't exist no more. The only ones here is the Tiguas, in Ysleta.'
>
> And I told, 'Yah, no, we are still here. No. We want to do that...
>
> 'No, you cannot do that.'
>
> You know that there are Mansos and Piros and descendants of these tribes.'
>
> 'No, no more. There are no more.'
>
> Then I told him, 'You are an ignorant.' He got so mad at me…
> And, I'm going to…This common guy…[indistinct and broken discussion in Spanish]
>
> I told him, 'Do whatever you want to do. That's fine, you can… This happened. And I told him, 'We're going to do it.' 'well, you're going to get in trouble.' 'That's fine; we've been getting in trouble all the time, my ancestors…That's fine, that's part of our history.'
>
> We all got together, we made the circle, we did the blessing. We started doing, you know, the welcome dance, that we used to do in the missions. It was prayers, like catholic connection, you know, like Christian rituals… (Recording 401, 402)

The story continued, and while they celebrated the priests did not let the other people stay with them to observe the dancing outside the church. Parishioners and dignitaries were called inside and told to forget about the Indians. The dancers finished and then went into the church, started the procession, and then knelt in front of the altar. The people in the front rows, stood up and told the *rebellious* Natives to sit there. The bishop got so mad, Camargo recalls. The people then asked many questions, infuriating the bishop and other dignitaries (Recording 401, 402). This shows one way the local Natives stood up to authority when that authority denied them the validity of their own heritage and existence. By such modern-day acts, one can imagine the actions of the ancestors as they too were introduced to unfamiliar ways. As Camargo commented, the clergy built the churches on the kivas because the people would come to these old places but would not otherwise come to the churches. That's how they tricked them to come.

Forms of locally generated resistance are also apparent in a story told by Juan Benavides regarding drumming. Drumming was used through the ages to call community members to a meeting or to organize them into action. The drum message was passed all the way from Paso del Norte up to Socorro, New Mexico. In fact, they used the drum on behalf of Confederate soldiers during the Civil War because of the trouble local tribes were having with the Blue Coats (Union soldiers). As a result, the drum was outlawed in the late 1800s because they could rapidly organize and foment rebellions by the sound of the drum (Recording 607). According to Cruz Camargo, for centuries, drumming had

been a way of calling people together, of conveying information, such as the onslaught of the flow of the mighty Río Grande which allowed residents to vacate valley homes and move to the foothills before the flood waters arrived. Drums also voiced the seasonal arrival of the acorns via the flow of the river and the arrival of visitors from the north. (Recording 404).

Conch shell trumpets were also used, traded in from other areas. Their sound traveled farther than other sounds and so were used to communicate, to call for ceremonies, a prayer, or sweat lodge (Recording 8Y8A1494). The Manso ancestors used a conch shell to call everyone to a gathering, to wake them up if having a sunrise ceremony. Camargo tells a story that when in Mexico they were participating in a ceremony, and they blew this conch shell trumpet. The entire Apache town awoke and came down to the *placita*. Surprised at this response, Camargo asked why everyone had gathered. They told him that he had called them with the conch and drums. It had been a long time since they had been called to a ceremony like this. The Mexican government had prohibited ceremonies, because in order to obtain land the Natives had to identify as Mexicans and cease their traditional ways. Nonetheless, this knowledge had passed on from previous generations, and they knew the call of the conch shell and drum. (Recordings 8Y8A1494, 595).

Stories about the old ways that have been retained through the ages, and the continuation of these practices well into the historic period, provide a glimpse into the unique heritage of those whose neighborhoods bordered and were crossed by the Camino Real. All of these stories speak to maneuvering around the law or authorities as a way to maintain a livelihood and express their heritage in a changed world. They show us the character of living resistance, and how certain individuals who have valued their own history and culture make it comprehensible to us all, in understanding the unique character of this region.

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Manso Landscape Use

The goal of this project as a whole and this grant has been to document the stories of knowledgeable American Indians with specific emphasis on recording what local people know of the names, events, and places involving the character of the landscape. The richest and most in-depth information obtained regarding this research theme was from a Manso descendant, Cruz Camargo. Days were spent collecting his knowledge while at his home or at important locations, and in casual conversations over lunch. Prior to these interviews, the Manso were one of the least understood culture groups in the area, especially with respect to their historical origins and character.[5] This is important since they were the original inhabitants of the river margins and its vicinity along this segment of the river at the time of first European contact in the 1500s. They are thought to have descended directly from the prehistoric Jornada Mogollon. Much of the information discussed in these sessions is new and has not been heard before, while other stories he told related to discussing content transmitted by historical 16th century chroniclers. Only a small fraction of the information captured can be conveyed here.

The Manso derive their name from don Juan de Oñate's 1598 expedition to colonize New Mexico. They were called "peaceful"[6] because this is what they called out to indicate that they were not going to attack. They then showed their hospitality by sharing food and assisting the Spaniards across the river at modern day El Paso. We do not know their original name for themselves. Earlier explorers referred to them in Spanish as the *Tanpachoas*. Asked about the meaning of the name, Camargo explained:

> "They lived here; it was their land. And they used to farm. They used to farm in the valley. There used to be islands, but sometimes with the floods and all that, will take

> all the islands. But they know how to manage, how to make the river change the flow. They used to make like islands, blocking the flow of the river, making it change the flow to other parts, and all that. And that's why they were called tan pachos. Tan pacho comes from the from the …word tan panco. The blockers. They were the blockers of the river. That's why they got that name. Tan pachos, Tanpachoas and all that. But you know some of the old Spanish is different…" (Recording 398)

Knowledge of this name came from his father, while other information was passed down directly from his grandfather, as did much of the information conveyed during these interviews. Other information was obtained from other knowledgeable people of other tribes and from historical, archaeological, and ethnographic sources.

One particularly informative result is that the Camino Real was initially animal trails that the Natives followed to locate water and when hunting game. They used the trail system to go between villages, including on especially long trips when visiting other villages for social events, such as coming of age ceremonies. When annually they went to visit these other villages all the people would get together and do a rabbit drive, and those rabbits and other animals killed during the drive would be cooked and eaten during the feast as an important part of the festival. For this reason, the trail that would eventually become the Camino Real was called by the Manso the Rabbit Drive Trail (Recordings 398, 402, 403, 405, 413, 414). This is the route the first Europeans traveled as they moved north into the present-day United States.

Relevant to the official crossing of these first colonizers on the Camino Real, Carmargo noted that from the place where they originally encountered the river the thick mud required the earliest explorers to move along the high ground on the south side of the river. This is why they crossed at the rocky area first named *El Paso del Rio del Norte* (The Pass of the River from the North). (Recordings 8Y8A1129, 8Y81130). While humans could walk across the clay, heavy livestock and wagons would become mired, even swallowed up in the thick mud. It might look dry on top, but underneath it was wet, and they would sink, so they crossed on solid ground where it was rocky and not too wide. He told a story: "In some areas, where it was like quicksand, and they used to dance, I remember in some banks of the river, my father used to make us dance, on top of the sand, and then the water would start coming out, and then we would collect the water and drink it." They would jump and dance and the vibration would make the water come up. It was not a rain dance, just the movement. (Recordings 398, 406).

Areas where water was available on the surface, such as Keystone Park, became a *paradero* (*parada*, stopping place)[7] for travelers where water was on surface. Here surface water seeped from the Franklin Mountains, once called the *Sierra de los Mansos* because this was within the homeland of the Manso Indians. There are numerous, but a limited number, of water sources, that is artesian wells, in the floodplain of the valley and he pointed out most of those important to local history. *Paraderos*, communities, and missions were placed in these locations where water was perennially available between floods. These are also the most likely locations at which natives were seen in the earliest accounts.

At length we discussed landscape use and how they used different portions of the valley. The dunes at the margin of the river were referred to as foothills, and while the foothills of the mountains were used, these dunal "foothills" were also the focus of habitation and resource exploitation. This is an important understanding of word use in relation to terrain features because it helps us connect ancestral behavior found in the archaeological record and in historical sources to present day conversations. They would use the valley bottoms to live near their fields. The irrigated fields were situated on islands in the river channel and so would be swept away seasonally. As the seasonal flood waters approached, the villages upriver would drum or blow their trumpets, warning those

downstream to flee their river valley homes (Recording 404). Residents would grab their possessions and move to the foothills, either among the dunes or in the mountains. They would also watch the donkeys and wild animals that would know if the water was coming. They would raise their noses, sniffing the air, and start heading away from the river to the hills and the people would follow because they knew something was going to happen, something is coming, so they would leave the area and follow the wild animals. They knew the actions of the wild animals (Recording 406). They would have already brought large pottery vessels filled with riverine produce to be stored for use when in those areas (Recording 596). Like certain of the Tohono O'odham of Arizona, the Manso seem to have hunted and gathered for a portion of the year and then farmed, moving their villages to accommodate this.

Natives have been cut off from many locations important to their ancestors owing to private ownership and fences (Recording 408). Consequently, Camargo explained, many of those locations have been lost, both with respect to access and knowledge about them. He nonetheless took me to the foothill locations he did remember, that are accessible and, in some instances, where ceremonies still take place (Figure 2). No specific evidence of ancestral Manso use was discernible in these places. Reuse was so extensive in these areas that no obvious evidence of ancestral camp sites was apparent, although permits were not obtained to do an official survey which might have revealed evidence of a more subtle nature. This currently held knowledge that was passed down, when combined with historical information on village locations and information from other informants, revealed a rough sketch of Manso landscape use.

Manso territory spanned the distance between Arrey on the north and about San Elizario on the south (Figure 3). They would move up and down the valley seasonally. This presents a different image of Manso residence patterns, as had been gleaned from some of the earliest historical records in the area. For example, Bandelier cited Pedro de Rivera's 1726 text about the location of Ranchería (Rancheria Grande), a large but abandoned Manso settlement, being 21 leagues north of El Paso in the Fort Selden area and from this he stated: "That the Mansos did not live at El Paso originally is clearly proved." This is an example of how something that seems so obvious can lead to an incorrect interpretation that, in turn, can have important implications for land claims. In this, Bandelier fails to take note of the fact that the entire area was Manso homeland. Nor does he consider their partially mobile lifeway and the intricacies of their settlement pattern. In a mobile lifeway, there may be places that were used on a regular basis, but people were not in any one location year-round. There are also different types of places. Some were used for daily habitation for a few weeks while gathering, others were base camps used for months during certain seasons, like for farming the valley bottom fields, while others were places where many people who normally lived separately, came together for a feast or ceremony. Thus, some places may appear abandoned when their residents were simply away for the season. Visitors may have passed through when Manso residents were settled away from the river, as part of their seasonal settlement pattern. They moved between the south-facing mountain canyons (including Mckelligon, Tom Mays, Dripping Springs, and a rock shelter hear Transmountain Pass (Recordings 397, 406, 407, 596), which they occupied for ceremonies and in the winter, and in the other months they lived as close to the river as possible, in the valley and on the sand ridges.

Another aspect of the Manso settlement pattern and seasonal movements must be taken into account when considering their visibility in any specific area and when countering Bandelier's inference. Camargo stated that there is a 10 degrees difference in temperature between the Hatch area and the lower valley at El Paso and San Elizario. Knowing this, the Manso would also shift in a north-south pattern throughout the year to take advantage of temperature differences. Movement occurred between the El Paso lower valley and areas to the north, including the Mesilla valley and areas around Hatch and Arrey.

Most relevant to this discussion, however, is the fact that Pedro de Rivera was discussing a place called Ranchería because, he said, "which they call ranchería; for having been, the most frequent habitation of the Mansos Indians, before being reduced to [the] pueblo." This statement has a very different intended meaning than that the Mansos occupied this single location as settled Puebloan people before being reduced to the mission and pueblo at El Paso del Norte. Rather, this place called Ranchería by the Spaniards was a favored location and highlights another aspect of the Manso settlement system. At various times of the year, they would come together for ceremonies, and many different families and bands would congregate. It is likely that Ranchería Grande or La Ranchería is one of these favored locations where multiple local groups converged, to socialize and attend to the important ceremonial cycle. [The traditional cycle has been melded with or in some instances replaced by that relevant to the Catholic church and do celebrations coincide with feast days of saints, different ones for different communities.[8] La Ranchería was no longer used (or was used less frequently) after they were reduced, that is, moved to the vicinity of Mission Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe del Paso del Norte. Ranchería and Ranchería Grande, which are likely the same place, are names that are consistent with a place that was favored for occupation and so was returned to seasonally when many people gathered. Both are shown on the 1758 Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco map (Figures 4 and 5). The location is plotted between Mesilla and Doña Ana and the description states that it is 15 or 16 leagues from El Paso (del Norte), on the opposite side of the river from Mesilla, although Pedro de Rivera records 21 leagues travel from El Paso del Norte presidio. Its approximate location is plotted in Figure 5, as Ranchería Grande, which is a name that is consistent with a place that was favored for occupation.

Throughout our time together, Camargo told about how they built their houses, including the materials used. We visited places on the river where these materials could be obtained. One of the most interesting details is that they built houses in pits (pit houses) when in the valleys that required one to crouch when entering, which made enemies especially vulnerable to being clubbed on the head (Figure 6; Recording 408, 416). They placed these pit houses, *chozas*, on somewhat high ground and then surrounded them with a berm or levy of sticks, wood, rocks, and dirt to protect the living area from floods, so that the water would go around, but if there was too much water they had to run away up to the hills (Recording 415, 416). In the mountains they built more flimsy brush structures (Recording 415). He discussed how they made a living by fishing (for fish, turtles, crawfish, bullfrogs, crabs, snails, clams, water rats, beaver) with nets, baskets, lances, and atlatls, trapping birds (ducks, heron, etc.) in basket traps and also raising them (Recordings 399, 406, 417, 591), in fact, he even made part of a fishing net to show how it was traditionally done (Figure 7). He and others provided recipes for cooking food, including the mice they would eat as children after cooking them over the open fire. He told how they stored food in underground holes to preserve it in the cool soil. He told about how they prepared their fields for farming. His Suma grandmother was a potter, so he knew one location where the clay came from at Cristo del Rey (Recording 418).

We also discussed aspects of their attire and personal adornment conveyed in the earliest documents. He was unaware of his ancestors having worn ribbons on their private parts; he was never told about it (Recording 416, 593), which prompted a rereading of the original handwritten document (Diego Pérez de Luxán of the Espejo expedition of 1582) and an analysis of early dictionary usages. Originally translated as: "they tie their privy parts with a small ribbon,"[9] that is, with a "una çintilla pequeña," a new translation revealed *cintilla* means "sash" in early Spanish. It is likely that "a small little sash" meant that they wore loin cloths to cover their private parts, not ribbons on their genitals.

On a hot summer day, while huddling in the coolness of a rock shelter, we discussed the petroglyphs pecked long ago, perhaps by his ancestors and the continued sacredness of this place (Figure 8). During this trip I asked about red color on the hair. His grandmother said that the Manso mimicked their natural-world neighbors in applying red paint to adorn their bodies to keep themselves

safe. Huge Royal eagles, with wingspans several meters across, swooped down and carried off game animals and humans. The early Manso would paint themselves red, like the bugs (ladybugs, chiggers, and small milkweed bugs), to ward off these eagles (Recording 413). Many animals exhibit aposematism (warning traits), such as conspicuous coloration, sounds, odors, or other characteristics, to signal a warning to potential predators of their toxicity, venom, foul taste or smell, sharp spines, or aggressive nature. The red pigment was likely obtained from cochineal bugs mixed with clay.

A wealth of information has been obtained from this interviewee. Repeated interviews that explored the details of what he was saying opened up an entirely new understanding of the Manso.

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Reinterpretation of Historical Documents

Another aspect of this research has involved examination of and retranslation of key historical resources from sixteenth-century Spanish explorers. These sources are valuable because they provide glimpses into the region—its character and the Native residents—at and near first contact. Some of these accounts have either not made sense or hinted that there was more to know if one were to dig more deeply. This is the case with an account from Diego Perez de Luxan of the 1582 Antonio de Espejo expedition:

> binieron gran cantidad de indios e yndias de otra naçion que se llaman tanpachoas e ofreçieron en seis o siete dias que alli holgamos por reformar los caballos gran cantidad de mesquitamal y pescado, porque era mucho lo que pescaban con unos chinchorros pequeños en los charcos.

Hammond and Rey (1966:169) translate a passage as follows:

> A large number of Indian men and women from another nation, called tanpachoas, come to this place. During the six or seven days that we rested there in order to refresh our horses, they brought us a large quantity of mesquite, corn, and fish, for they fish much in the pools with small dragnets.

Yet, there are a couple of aspects of this sentence (underlined) that can now be retranslated and reinterpreted based on information obtained and verified as a result of this project.

Luxan mentioned that the local Natives (who scholars agree were likely Manso), ate *mesquitamal*. As shown in the quotation above, previous scholars have translated this as mesquite and *amal* or corn, but this seems to be contraction of mesquit tamal (the latter originating as a Nahuatl term, *tamalli*). A *tamale*, or *tamal* in Spanish, is a traditional Mesoamerican dish made of masa, a dough made from nixtamalized[10] corn, which is steamed in a corn husk or banana leaf. Pablo Martinez (Chihene Apache; Recording 443) explained that this new interpretation is appropriate: "tamal is actually the maize, once you process the corn. Corn on the cob let to dry, once it dries, dries in the fall, becomes maize, as opposed to just corn, *elote* in Spanish, it becomes an *elote* once dries as opposed to fresh." The process is that you take dried kernels off the cob by hitting together and the [dried] maize falls off, "then they boil it with lime in order to make it soft so they can put it through the grinder. Well, the same process was done with the mesquite bean. The mesquite bean was very indigenous to the Apache and other indigenous tribes because it makes flour so if you do the same process with that it would be called *mesquitamal*." He noted that locals have used this word and process for generations. It refers to ground or floured mesquite, mesquite flour or mesquite cakes. Moreover, tamal can mean tamales, "but it is basically the process of the grinding, the process of where it becomes

into a dough. That would be the same thing with mesquite." Thus, Martinez has confirmed that *mesquitamal* refers to ground mesquite or mesquite dough cooked into cakes, much like those made later in time. As Camargo recalls, "they used to grind the mesquite and make like a cookie out of it, a cookie or it was like a tamal too, because tamal was made out of corn, and the *galleta* we call it, or cookie, made out of mesquite, was made the same way because they would grind mesquite and then cook it on a grill something like that, on a hot rock and make like some corn bread but made out of mesquite…They used to make like a *tomal*, but made out of mesquite…a mesquite cake" (Recording 592)

It would also be the basis for porridge. Juan Benavides' (Tompiro and Ysletean) "grandma, Juanita, used to make like an *atoli* (ah-toh-leh) with mesquite." "She would grind the mesquite [pods and beans]. And she would dry it and put it in jars. And also, the corn meal. And she would dry green chili. Then when they had to travel like to Juarez is to El Paso--at that time going to El Paso was a long way…it probably took all day to get to El Paso. They would stop and she would take out these canisters, boil water and pour whatever it is into the boiling water. And that is how they would eat." (Recordings 611, 612). Later he noted, "she would make a fire, boil the water, pour the corn meal to the water. Another one is dried chili and dried meat. She would put the meat out into the sun to dry, and would make *carne cochada* (crushed meat to be boiled).[11] She would put that *carne cochada* in hot water and that is how they would eat chili. Mesquite too." That was a staple for his people (recording 612).

Given this information, a more accurate translation of this historical passage written by Luxan is as follows:

> Many Indian men and women from another nation, called tanpachoas, came here. And in the six or seven days that we rested to refresh the horses they offered a lot of mesquitamal (mesquite tamal or ground mesquite meal or cakes) and fish, because they fished a lot with small dragnets in the pools. (My translation)

The accurate translation of this term, *mesquitamal*, is important because it tells us the Spaniards were given mesquite, probably in cake form, rather than mesquite *and corn*. From an anthropological perspective, this is important because if the Manso had corn there is a possibility that they were growing it,[12] and if they were growing corn then this potentially implies a series of other related adaptations. This single word has tremendous implications for archaeologists and their interpretation of the archaeological record and has formed the basis of many scholarly arguments. Reexamination of this term, as found in this document from 1582, indicates that the early Spaniards were being offered only ground mesquite. This is consistent with local understanding of the use of the term *mesquitamal*, the preparation process it implies, as well as the traditional use of ground mesquite as well as ground corn, both in porridge and formed into dough and cooked.

One might consider this subsistence issue settled as a result of this clear understanding by locals about what this word means. This would be the case were it not for several other hints that indicate that the Manso might have also been irrigation farmers and so might have grown corn at this early date, as they did later after considerable cultural contact. When first encountered by the Spaniards the name for people along the Río Grande in what was later recognized as Manso territory seems to derive from their practice of agriculture involving the diversion of water.

Their name in these early documents, Tanpachoa, derives from their practice of diverting river water into channels to water their mid-channel fields, as Camargo, a Manso descendant, conveyed. They blocked the water, hence, *tan pachado*, often pronounced *pa-chow*, meaning much blocked, as confirmed by a Spanish-speaking Piro descendant, Tonio LeFebre. Camargo talked about the origin of this name:

> "They used to farm in the valley. There used to be islands, but sometimes with the floods and all that, will take all the islands. But they know how to manage, how to make the river change the flow. They used to make like islands, blocking the flow of the river, making it change the flow to other parts, and all that. And that's why they were called tan pachos. Tan pacho comes from the from the…word tan panco. The blockers. They were the blockers of the river. That's why they got that name. Tan pachos, Tanpachoas and all that." (Recording 398; also Recordings 406, 416)

Interestingly, Camargo's father also told him that sometimes fish would flow into the fields in the river water and would provide fertilizer for the plants as the water receded and the fish were trapped. Like most Southwestern farmers, and the Jornada Mogollon before them, the Manso grew corn, beans, and squash, among other plants.

It may be that corn and other cultivated products were not observed in 1582 because the Espejo party, of which Luxan was a member, visited in January when the corn may have had been used up or the previous season's crops had failed. Thus, all they had to offer was mesquite cakes. This is a real possibility given descriptions by Camargo about residents that were living and farming in the valley having to run to the foothills when notified by upriver residents that the Rio Grande flow was approaching.

The inference that the Manso farmed is consistent with Bandelier's observations. He stated that the Manso "tilled the soil to a limited extent." Unfortunately, he provided no more detail to assess the degree and nature of this subsistence activity. Later he added what seems to be a contradictory statement: "They remember through the sayings of the oldest men (folk-tales), that their people formerly lived in huts of reeds and of boughs, that they were as wild as the Apaches, and knew not how to dwell in houses nor how to irrigate and till the land as they do now." Gaspar Pérez de Villagrá also wrote in 1610 that these people had "no knowledge whatsoever of agriculture…no fixed home, or ranches."[13] It would seem that the name provided to them by the earliest European explorers may provide a resolution to this stalemate. They seem to have farmed, but only in a limited way, on islands in the middle of the Rio Grande, as Camargo indicates.

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Final Statement: Recommendations for Future Related Projects

The Rio Grande Valley between Hatch and San Elizario was the homeland of many historic tribes but initially was Manso territory in the post 1400 period. Many other groups either migrated in or lived in zones away from the river and therefore away from the Camino Real. Less is known about the Manso than many of the other regional groups so a fundamental portion of this project was focused on a descendant of that group who retained information from his father and from historical sources. Other groups investigated and interviewed included the Piro, Tompiro, Ysleta, Suma, Chihene Apache, Lipan Apache, and Chiso-Concho, as well as two knowledgeable Hispanics.

There is so much more to be told, but the stories and information collected far exceed the limits of this short report. Many more in-depth interviews with people of these tribes will be of value. The greatest value for the next steps will be to diversify the interview pool, by interviewing people from these tribes that represent different factions. Access to different factions will provide different stories and family histories and different perspectives on some of the historical political factors that have shaped the region. It will also be of benefit to investigate the Suma more thoroughly as this group is poorly known and local researchers and the public have many conflicting ideas about this group.

To date, no direct descendants of the Suma have been identified other than Cruz Camargo, whose grandmother was Suma. A translated document in the land claims papers provides insightful information on the Suma just south of El Paso, filling in a gap in knowledge. A Spanish transcription of this file is has been obtained and a fresh translation of this will be of value. For the current project some of the locational information and social/tribal and adaptational inferences about the group have been updated to conform to more current information from anthropological analysis. We were unable to identify those individuals of differing perspectives that lived in the portion of the valley north of Las Cruces, in part because the contact that knew them and had intended to provide the introductions is now deceased.

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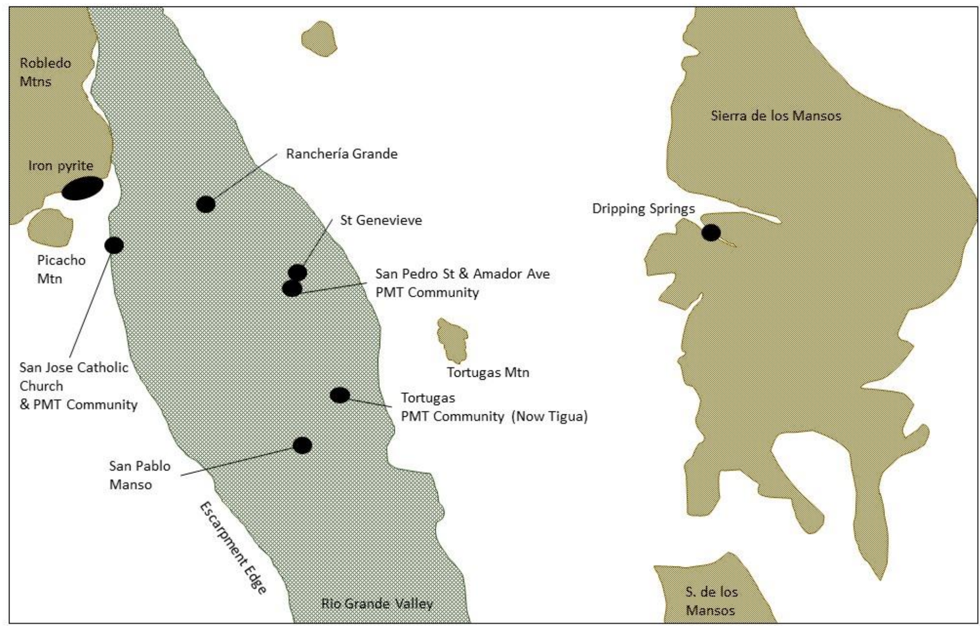
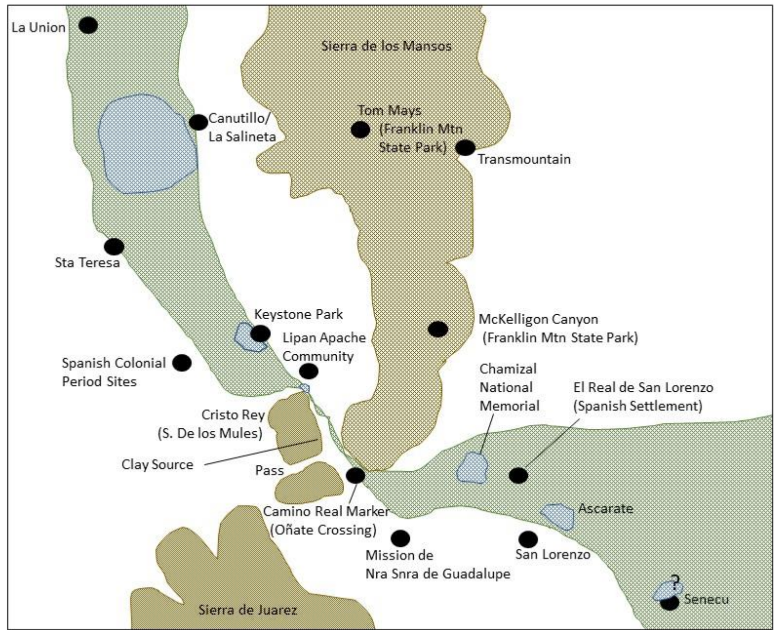
Interpretation-Related Product

The content of this report provides a sample of the types of information that will be included in a public-oriented digital booklet.[14] The booklet will be submitted by fall of this year, closing down this phase of the project. Thus, this report is a subset of that larger report. I have also included some of this material on a web page (especially see the Manso/Tanpachoa section; https://www.deni-seymour.com/manso-tanpachoa), and various videos are being prepared on a subset of the content (link to YouTube), including one submitted as part of this WNPA grant. Substantial footage was shot with the intent of creating short videos to highlight the value of this historical research and the interesting nature of the Native residents whose ancestors shaped the area and laid the foundations for the Camino Real. Journal articles are being prepared as well, to report on the important findings of this project. Further lectures with Native participants contributing to the presentation are also in the works.

Appendix A: Maps and Photographs

Figure 1: Proposed Spanish Period Manso Land Grant.





Figures 2a and b: Foothill Locations Used by the Manso. (A) Places Near Las Cruces. (B) Places Near El Paso. Maps drawn by Deni Seymour.

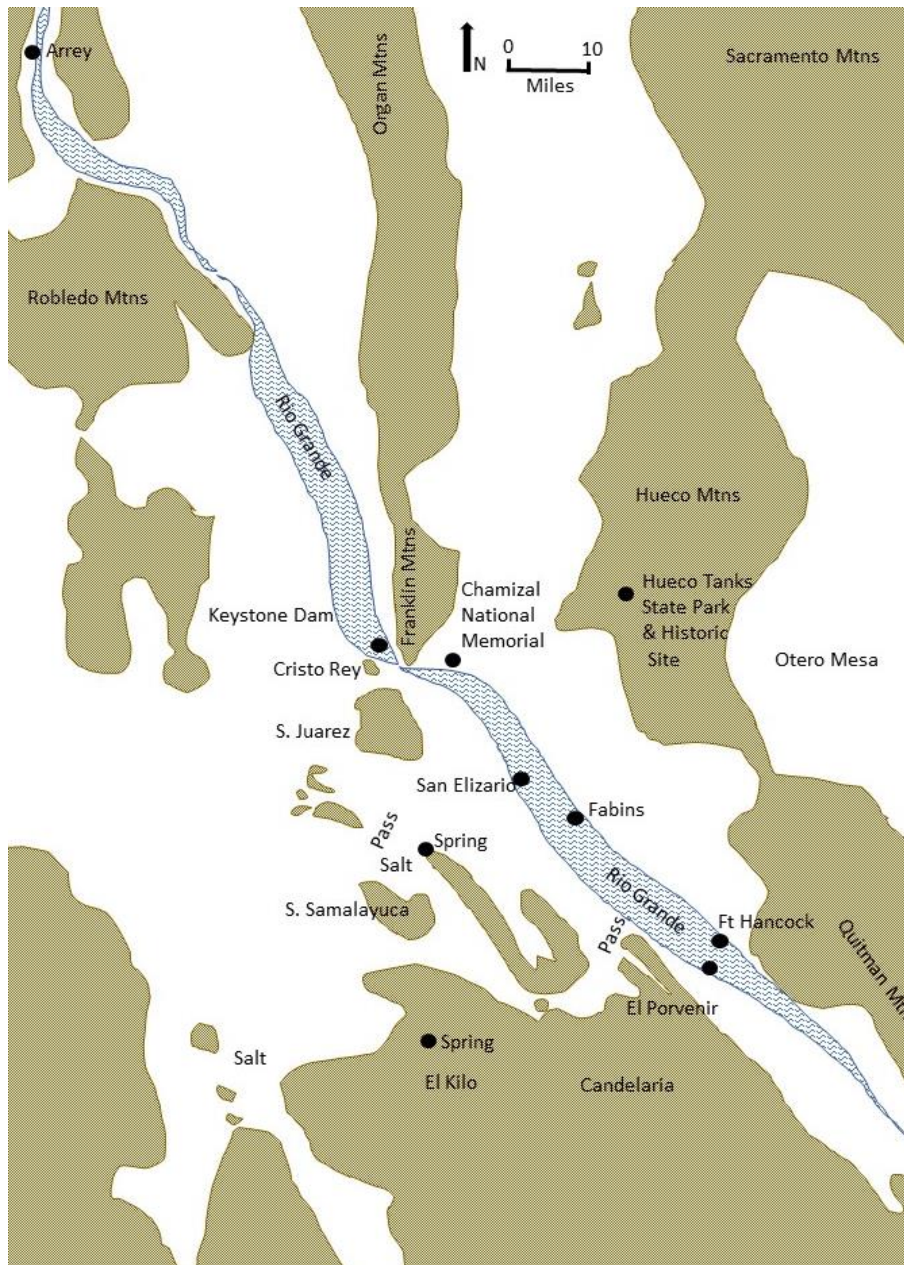


Figure 3: The Manso Homeland and the area of the Rabbit Drive Trail. Map drawn by Deni Seymour.

Figure 4 Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco’s 1758 map. Public Domain.

Figure 5: Another Versión of Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco’s 1758 map. Public Domain.

Figure 6: Natividad Camargo in the Doorway to His Choza.
Photograph courtesy of Cruz Camargo.

Figure 7: Manso Descendant, Cruz Camargo Making a Fishing Net in the Traditional Way. Photograph by Deni Seymour.

Figure 8: Manso Descendant, Cruz Camargo in Rock Shelter with Petroglyphs. Photograph by Deni Seymour.

Notes

[1] Deni J. Seymour, 2023, *The Rabbit Drive Trail: Native Perceptions and Origins of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro in the El Paso\Las Cruces Corridor*. Final Report for Ethnohistoric and Ethnographic Study of the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Along the U.S.- Mexican Border, Grant # P20AC00979. Chamizal National Memorial, El Paso, Texas.
[2] A.F. Bandelier, 1890, Final report of investigations among the Indians of the southwestern United States, carried on mainly in the years from 1880 to 1885. Final Report on Investigations in the Southwest. Part I. Archaeological Institute of America. John Wilson and Son, Cambridge:165n1.
[3] Scott C. Comar, 2015, *The Tigua Indians of Ysleta del Sur: A Borderlands Community*. PhD Dissertation, History Department. University of Texas at El Paso.
B. Sunday Eiselt, 2012, *Becoming White Clay: A History and Archaeology of Jicarilla Apache Enclavement*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
Oscar Rodriguez and Deni J. Seymour, 2017, Embracing A Mobile Heritage: Federal Recognition and Lipan Apache Enclavement. Chapter 6 in *Fierce and Indomitable: The Protohistoric Non-Pueblo World*, edited by Deni J. Seymour, pp. 77-88. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.
[4] See Figure 1; Indios del Rio Grande: 1598-1690. From Microfilm 554, Tom Diamond files, University of Texas, El Paso.
[5] Rex E. Gerald, 1974, The Manso Indians of the Paso del Norte Area. Aboriginal Use and Occupation by Tigua, Manso, and Suma Indians, in American Indian Ethnohistory: Indians of the Southwest, edited by David Agree Horr, pp. 115-125. Garland Publishing Inc. New York and London.
[6] The word can be translated in a number of ways, including meek, tame, gentile, or friendly but they all convey a peaceful nature.
[7] Called *parajes* in New Mexico Spanish, apparently paradero is the local name or at least the name conveyed in Camargo's family. These differences in language usage help us understand they variable ways locals perceive the landscape.
[8] also see Terry R. Reynolds and Mary Taylor, "The History, Organization, and Customs of the San Juan de Guadalupe Tiwa, Las Cruces, New Mexico," (Unpublished Report, Boulder, Co., Native American Rights Fund, 1981), 32-33, YDSPA: TDF, UTEPL, MF 554, R 2 of 5, f 4256:24.
[9] George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey, 1966, *The Rediscovery of New Mexico:1580-1594*. The University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque:169
[10] Nixtamalization (/nɪʃtəməlaɪˈzeɪʃən/) is a process for the preparation of maize (corn), or other grain, in which the corn is soaked and cooked in an alkaline solution, usually limewater (but sometimes aqueous potassium carbonate), washed, and then hulled.
[11] In Spanish *cochada* is a dirty word, but in Indian, Benavides says, it is just a word, not a dirty word.
[12] Of course, there are documented instances of mobile people who do not farm, trading resources for corn with other groups.
[13] Gaspar Pérez de Villagrá's 1610 epic poem "La Historia de la Nueva México" chronicles the Oñate expedition.
G. Pérez de Villagrá, 1993, Historia de la Nueva México del capitán Gaspar de Villagrá. Instituto Nacional de Antropología, Mexico City.
[14] The Rabbit Drive Trail: Native Perceptions and Origins of El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro in the El Paso\Las Cruces Corridor. See above.