



TEXAS & TRIBES

SHARED TRADITIONS



Texas and Tribes: Shared Traditions

History was made at the Alamo, but the history of Texas did not start there. Long before French explorers, Spanish missionaries, Mexican ranchers, and American settlers, native Tribes called Texas home.

Tribes lived in Texas when it declared independence from Mexico in 1836. The fight to establish a new country, the Republic of Texas, was ultimately won by the Texan army at the Battle of San Jacinto. Their victory, however, may not have happened without the help of the Texas Tribes.



Figure 1



Figure 2

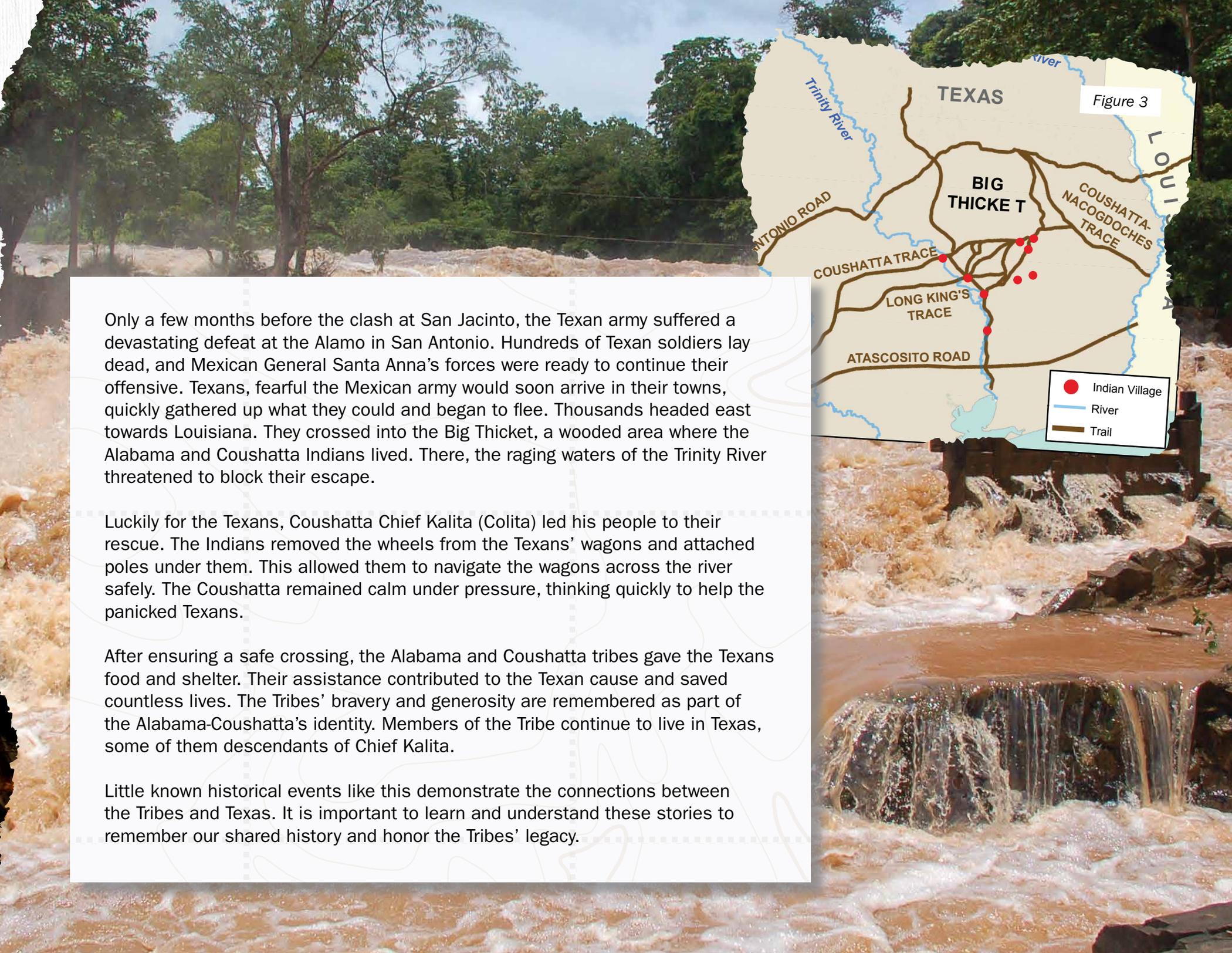


Figure 3

Only a few months before the clash at San Jacinto, the Texan army suffered a devastating defeat at the Alamo in San Antonio. Hundreds of Texan soldiers lay dead, and Mexican General Santa Anna's forces were ready to continue their offensive. Texans, fearful the Mexican army would soon arrive in their towns, quickly gathered up what they could and began to flee. Thousands headed east towards Louisiana. They crossed into the Big Thicket, a wooded area where the Alabama and Coshatta Indians lived. There, the raging waters of the Trinity River threatened to block their escape.

Luckily for the Texans, Coshatta Chief Kalita (Colita) led his people to their rescue. The Indians removed the wheels from the Texans' wagons and attached poles under them. This allowed them to navigate the wagons across the river safely. The Coshatta remained calm under pressure, thinking quickly to help the panicked Texans.

After ensuring a safe crossing, the Alabama and Coshatta tribes gave the Texans food and shelter. Their assistance contributed to the Texan cause and saved countless lives. The Tribes' bravery and generosity are remembered as part of the Alabama-Coshatta's identity. Members of the Tribe continue to live in Texas, some of them descendants of Chief Kalita.

Little known historical events like this demonstrate the connections between the Tribes and Texas. It is important to learn and understand these stories to remember our shared history and honor the Tribes' legacy.

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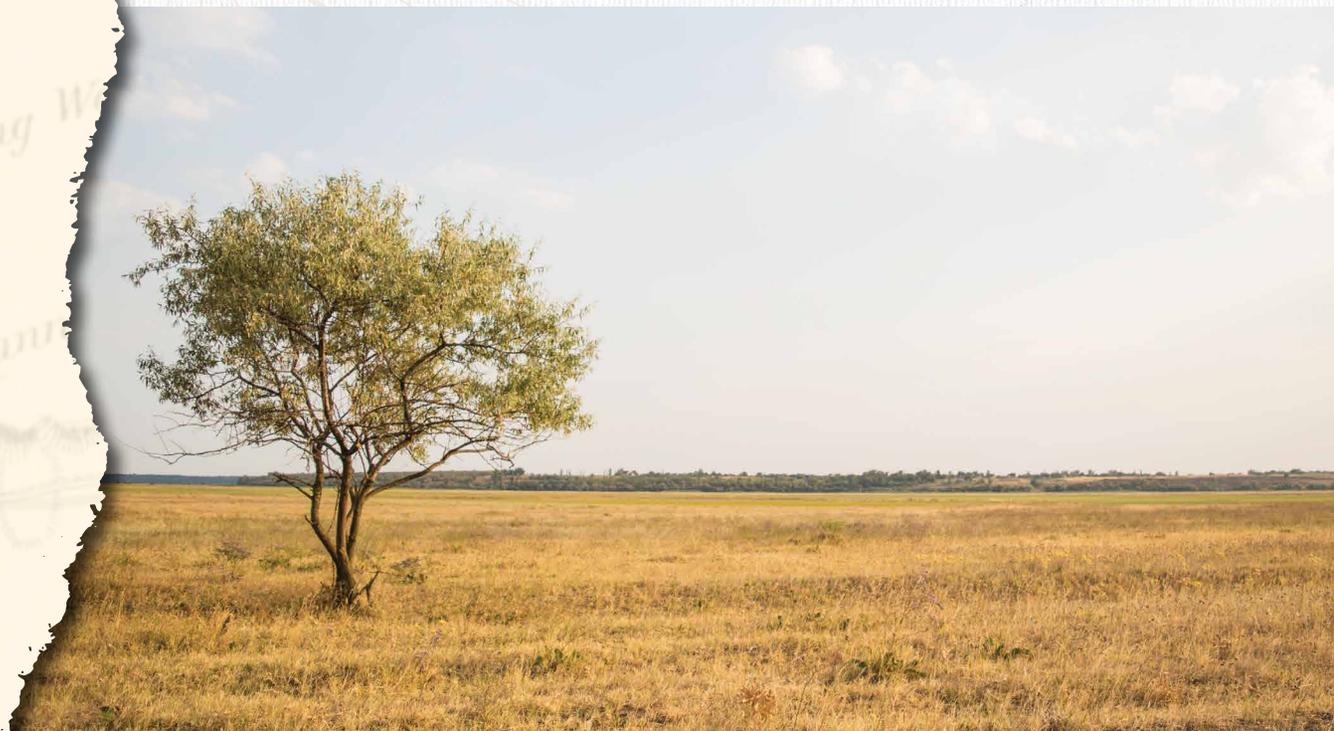
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Purpose of this Publication

Texas' long and rich cultural history is rooted in the first people who inhabited this land: Native Americans. For ten of thousands of years, Tribes explored, hunted, farmed, traded, made art, built homes, and developed unique communities.

Their ways of life were not documented on paper. Native Americans instead recorded their history and ways of life through oral traditions, spiritual practices, rock art, music, clothing, tools, and housing.

As Spanish, French, Mexican, and American people settled in Texas, they borrowed from Native American ideas. Today Texas and the Tribes share many traditions. This publication highlights the often-overlooked history of the Tribes and shows how their ways of life, foodways, and transportation routes influenced the Texas we know today.



Tribes of Texas

Ancestral

Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
Caddo Nation
Comanche Nation
Mescalero Apache Tribe
Tonkawa Tribe of Oklahoma
Wichita and Affiliated Tribes

Migrated to Texas

Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas
Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town
Cherokee Nation
Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
Delaware Nation
Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
Jicarilla Apache Nation
Kialegee Tribal Town
Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas
Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma
Kiowa Tribe
Muscogee Nation
Osage Nation
Quapaw Nation
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
Shawnee Tribe
Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians
Ysleta del Sur Pueblo

Still Reside in Texas

Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas
Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas
Ysleta del Sur Pueblo



Road to Collaboration: Working with Tribes on Planning for the Future

The United States government and Federally Recognized Tribes have a special relationship that acknowledges and protects Tribes and their ways of life. Thus, Tribes are sovereign or independent nations that are empowered to live as they did for generations before the United States was established. This also means that the U.S. government recognizes that each Tribe has their own government, and they work together to plan for the future of the country.

One way our nations collaborate is through the shared goal of preserving Native American history and culture. Government agencies, like Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), work with Tribes to preserve archeological sites in Texas. Before constructing roads, TxDOT archeologists and historians look for important sites along a road project's path.

TxDOT works with almost 30 federally recognized tribal nations—a process called consultation—as part of the federal historic preservation process.

This document exists because Tribes requested during consultation that we make information about their enduring presence in Texas available to the general public and to transportation planners. Information about Tribes presented here emphasizes their ties to Texas. TxDOT must consult with Tribes during its project planning and development process. This document is part of a larger project developed during consultation that includes detailed tribal histories, maps, and exhibits.

Tribal Texas

For thousands of years before Texas was a state, the people who lived here—later called Indians or Native Americans—made alliances, traded goods, and developed complex ways of life (Figure 4). They were able to survive changing climates that affected the animals and plants they relied on as food.

Tribal Texas: Native Voices of Vision

Some of the Tribes have indigenous or ancestral ties to Texas. Others settled in Texas after they were forced out or moved from their homelands in other parts of the United States. This publication is made possible because TxDOT contacted all of the Tribes with Texas ties and consulted with several of them. Although not all Tribes chose to participate, they are still recognized here. For this publication, the participants' ideas, stories, and history books tell the story of Native Americans in Texas.

Vision Statement

Through the Tribal Texas: Native Voices of Vision collaborative project, TxDOT and Tribes envision that the people of Texas will be aware of and have appreciation for Native American Tribes' interests, history, and influence in Texas.

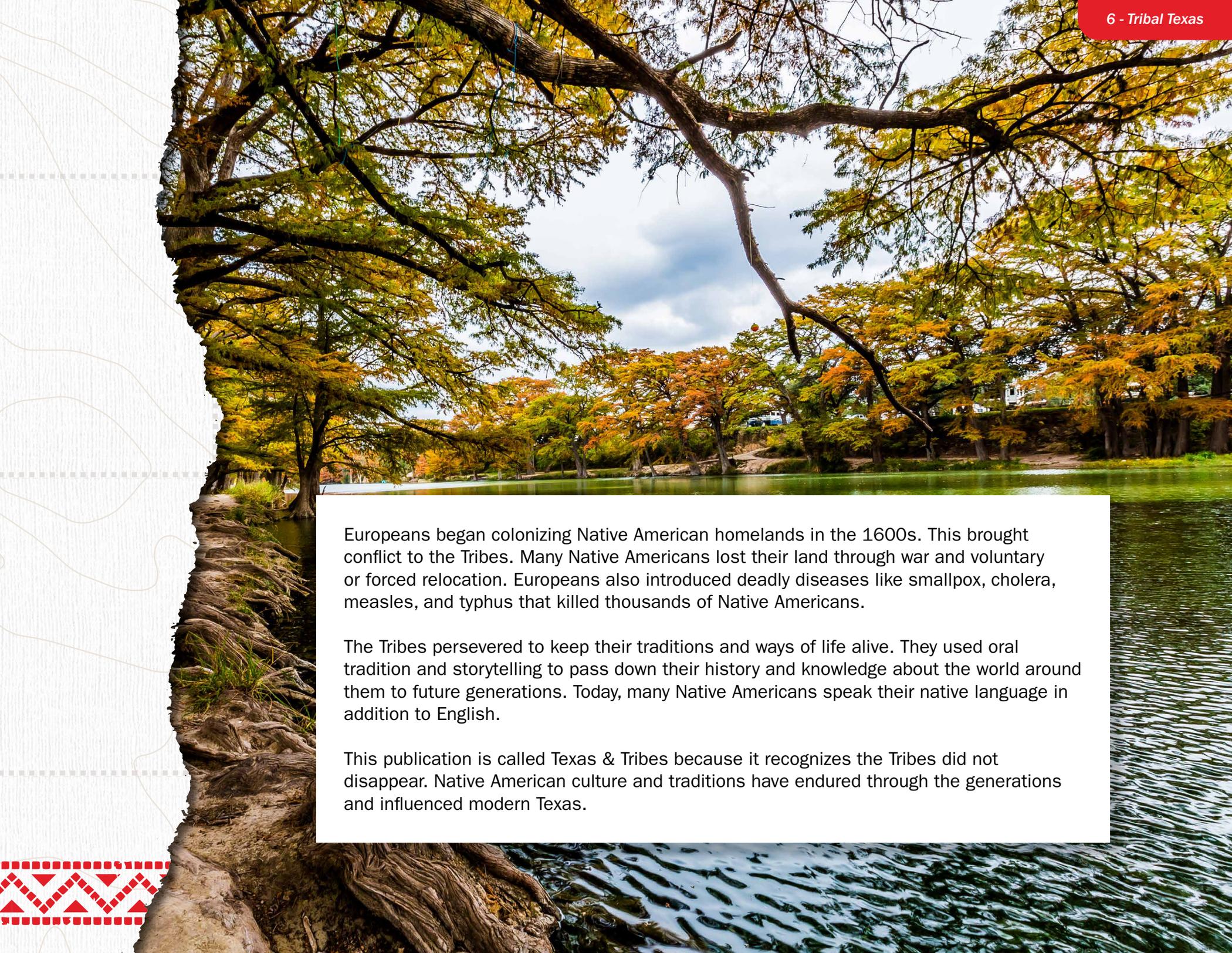
Acknowledgement

The following stories reflect the collaboration among the following federally recognized Tribes. TxDOT would like to thank the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Caddo Nation, Comanche Nation, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, Delaware Nation, Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma, Mescalero Apache Tribe, Muscogee Nation, Tonkawa Tribe, Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, and the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo for their participation in this publication.



Figure 4

The terms “Indian” and “Native American” are used interchangeably throughout this publication. Federal treaties and legislation use both terms, and more importantly, many indigenous people in the United States refer to themselves as Indian. The word Tribes refers to the official government organization of certain Native Americans.



Europeans began colonizing Native American homelands in the 1600s. This brought conflict to the Tribes. Many Native Americans lost their land through war and voluntary or forced relocation. Europeans also introduced deadly diseases like smallpox, cholera, measles, and typhus that killed thousands of Native Americans.

The Tribes persevered to keep their traditions and ways of life alive. They used oral tradition and storytelling to pass down their history and knowledge about the world around them to future generations. Today, many Native Americans speak their native language in addition to English.

This publication is called Texas & Tribes because it recognizes the Tribes did not disappear. Native American culture and traditions have endured through the generations and influenced modern Texas.

Traditions Continue

Three federally recognized Tribes have reservations in Texas: the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, and the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo. The Tigua Indians of Ysleta del Sur Pueblo were forced into Texas from New Mexico by the Spaniards during the 1680 Pueblo Revolt in Santa Fe. The Alabama, Coushatta, and Kickapoo Tribes relocated themselves to Texas in the late 1700s and early 1800s as they were forced out of their homelands. In addition to these tribes, thousands of Native Americans from various tribes live in Texas today.



Figure 5

Celice Sylestine Henry was born in Peach Tree Village, Tyler County, Texas around 1833. Near the Neches River, Peach Tree Village was two miles north of present-day Chester and was the largest and most prominent of the Alabama Indian villages. Celice Sylestine Henry was an accomplished basket maker (Figure 5) and the daughter of Alabama Chief Sylestine. She used long-leaf pine needles and reed cane for her basketry, as do contemporary Alabama-Coushatta and Coushatta basket makers.

Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas

Origins, Migrations, Relocation

The Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas were members of the Upper Creek Confederacy in present-day Alabama. Recognized as two separate tribes, the Alabamas and Coushattas have been closely associated throughout their history. Both lived in adjacent areas along tributaries of the Alabama River (Figure 6), followed similar migration routes westward after 1763 due to encroachment by Europeans and other tribes, and settled in the same area of the Big Thicket in southeastern Texas.

Prior to the Civil War, the Alabama and Coushatta Tribes had separate lands, villages, and chiefs. Trails, types of trails, connected their communities of Peach Tree Village, Fenced-In Village, and Cane Island Village. Their trails also connected them to Spanish settlements where they could trade. Although the two Tribes now share a reservation in Texas, the languages and some of the customs are still different.

Texas Reservation

The Alabamas received a land grant from the state of Texas in 1854 in Polk County. In 1855 the Texas legislature granted the Coushattas 640 acres, but the land never materialized. With the permission of the Alabamas, some of the Coushattas settled on their Polk County reservation in 1859, though most returned later to homestead their own lands in Louisiana, where their descendants formed the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana. Some Coushattas lived at Kalita's Village in San Jacinto County until 1906, when they moved to join the Alabamas.

Cultural Highlights

Twenty members of the Alabama and Coushatta Tribes volunteered for Confederate Army service in 1862. They trained as cavalry and were sent to Arkansas to join Company G of the Twenty-fourth Texas Cavalry. The Company G commander discriminated against them and discharged the warriors. They returned to Texas where 132 Alabama and Coushatta men later became part of the Sixth Brigade, Second Texas Infantry. They constructed and operated flat-bottom boats for transporting farm produce to the Confederate forces. By helping to move key military supplies, they contributed to the success of Confederate forces along the Texas Gulf Coast.



Figure 6

Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas

Origins, Migrations, Relocation

The Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas is one of the three Federally Recognized Tribes of Kickapoo people in the United States. They are an Algonkian-speaking Tribe who are originally from the Great Lakes area in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Ohio. In the late 1600s, The Kickapoo relocated to Texas in order to preserve their way of life and spiritual belief after the arrival of Europeans. By the mid-1800s, the Tribe divided into three distinct groups living in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Mexico, after Mexico granted land to the Kickapoo in 1852. The Kickapoo Tribes in Texas and Mexico are members of the same group, and many have dual citizenship. Likewise, although classified as two distinct tribes, both Kickapoo Tribes in Texas and Oklahoma recognize that culturally and spiritually, they are one.

Texas Residency

On January 8, 1983, Public Law 97-429 resolved the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas' ambiguous land situation. For many years the Tribe had set up temporary camps in Eagle Pass, Texas. They were not eligible for services in Maverick County that were provided to other Tribe members in Oklahoma. The legislation granted federal recognition to the Texas Tribe and provided that land be taken in trust by the U.S. government for their benefit. In 1983 the Kickapoo Tribal Council successfully raised \$300,000 to purchase a 125-acre tract of land in south Maverick County (see Figure 7). The Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas owns this land near El Indio thanks to the combined efforts of Nakai Breen, Kurt Blue Dog, and U.S. Rep. Abraham "Chick" Kazen.

Cultural Highlights

The Kickapoo Trace stretched from their village near present-day Frankston in Anderson County to the Couchatta Trace in western Polk County. This trail connected the Kickapoo Indians to the Couchatta Indians along the Trinity River. The Kickapoo then accessed the Couchatta Trace for travel to the interior of Texas. The Kickapoo continue to retain their traditional culture by living in remote villages in Mexico. The Kickapoo in Texas and Oklahoma continue maintaining connections with their relatives in Kickapoo villages in Mexico today.

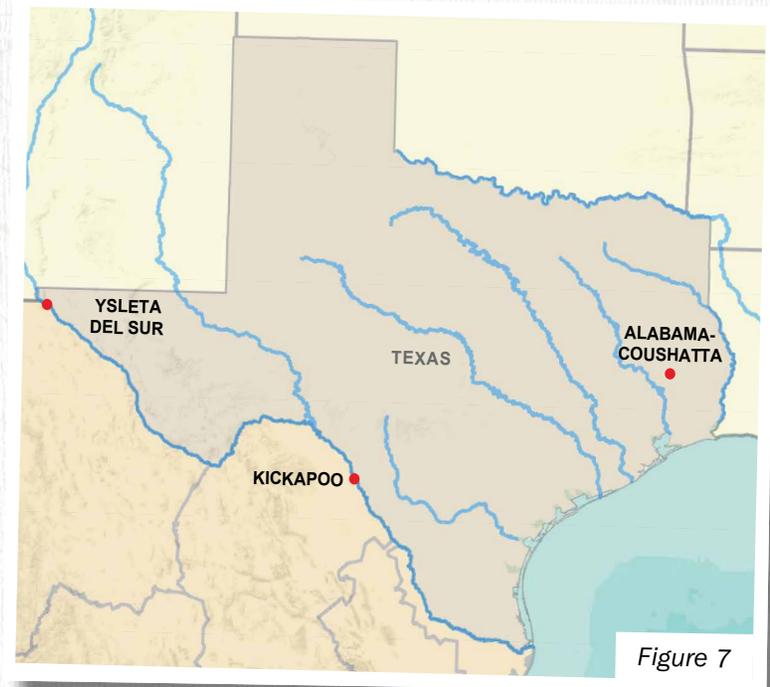


Figure 7

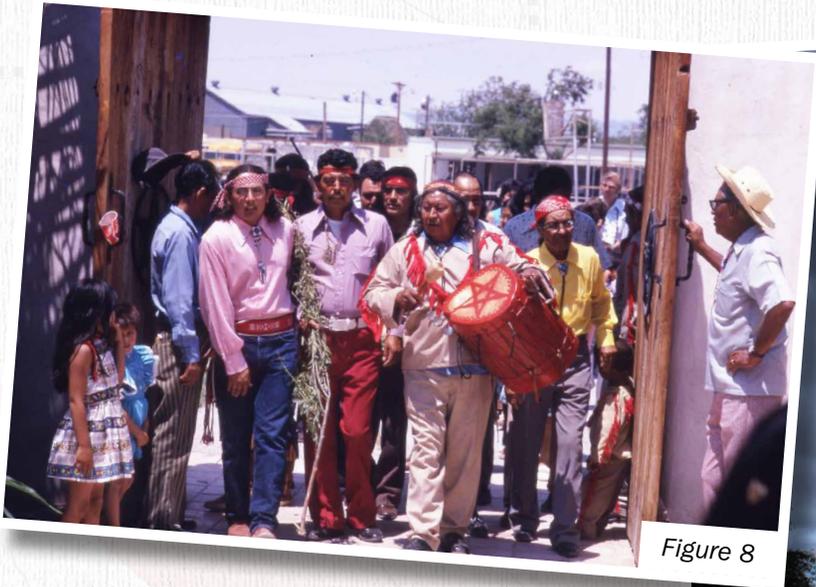


Figure 8



Figure 9

Ysleta del Sur Pueblo

Origins, Migrations, Relocation

The Tigua Indians of Ysleta del Sur Pueblo of El Paso (Figure 8) are descendants of refugees from New Mexican pueblos. Ysleta, Texas has been home to the Tigua people for more than 300 years. Their original language is Southern Tiwa. They were forced into Texas by the Spaniards after the 1680 Pueblo Revolt in Santa Fe.

Texas Residency

Tigua Indians built the Corpus Christi de la Isleta Mission in 1682 (Figure 9). In 1692 the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo was granted 21 square miles of land centered around the mission church in southern El Paso. The state of Texas recognized the grant in 1854, but never awarded the land to the Tribe. The Texas Legislature acknowledged the Tribe in 1967, and today they live on tribal land near El Paso (see Figure 7).

Cultural Highlights

Ysleta del Sur Pueblo is the oldest community in the State of Texas. The Tigua Tribal Council is the oldest government in the state. The Ysleta Mission is the oldest continuously operated Catholic parish in the State of Texas.

Timeline

What we know about the first people of Texas is based on features and artifacts that they left behind. Some of the artifacts and places that were found—called archeological sites—are more than 15,000 years old. In fact, Texas has some of the oldest sites in North America.

The archeological record tells us that for more than 15,000 years, people flourished in Texas' rich environment. They used whatever animals, plants, and water sources were around them to survive. People thrived and developed unique cultures.

Shared traditions of ancient people might still be seen in activities today, such as hunting with bows and arrows, constructing ovens in the ground to cook food, and growing foods. Many of these activities have been documented through archeology—an important way to learn about Tribes.

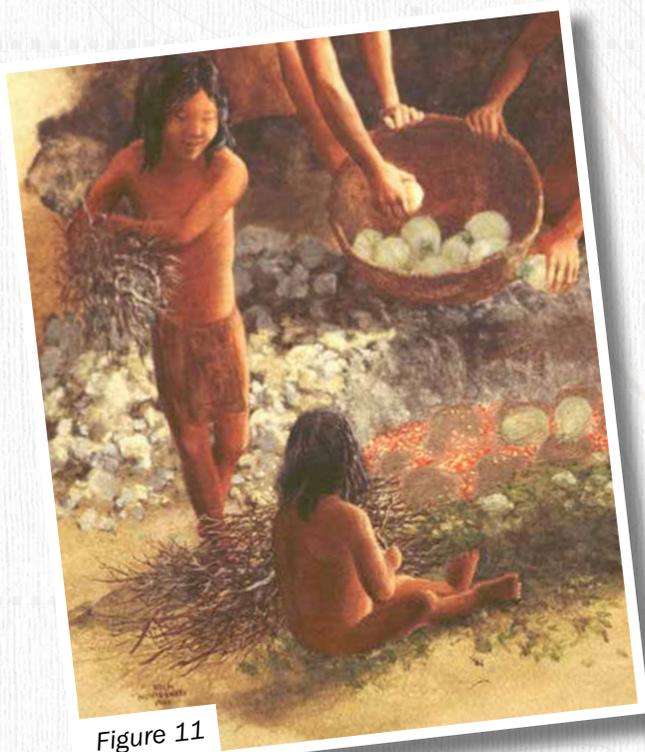
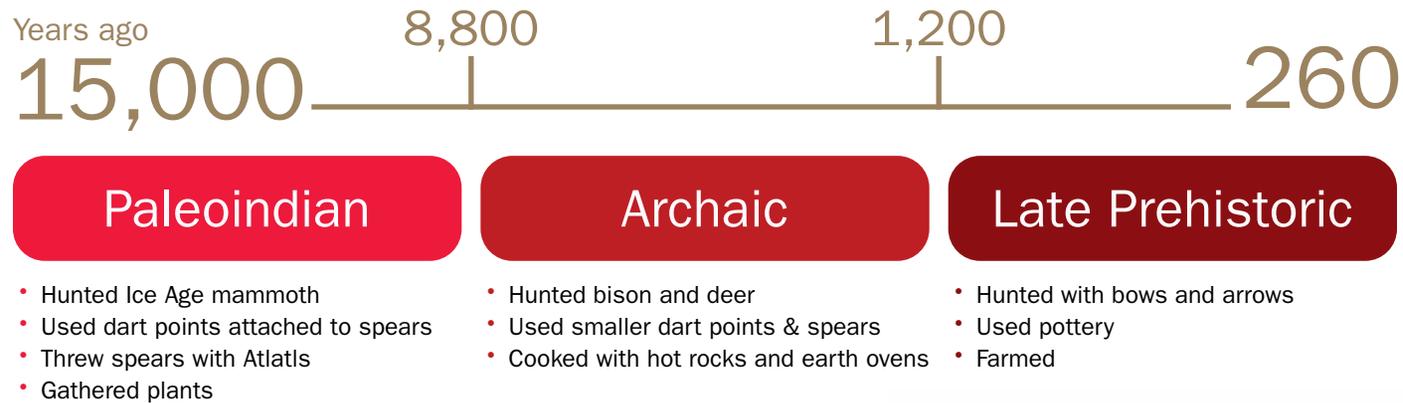


Figure 11



Figure 12

Archeologists divide the era before European contact into several time periods.



People 15,000 years ago developed and used atlatls, or spear throwers, to increase the accuracy and distance of their spears (Figure 10). They hunted mammoths before they were extinct, as well as other large animals like camels, sloths, and ancient bison.

Later, people hunted deer and a smaller, modern type of bison with spears and atlatls. They created earth ovens to bake agave stems and root foods (Figure 11).

It was only fairly recently that people hunted bison and deer with bows and arrows (Figure 12). This practice began during the thousand-year-long period right before Europeans entered Texas. Some tribes also developed pottery and started farming during this era.

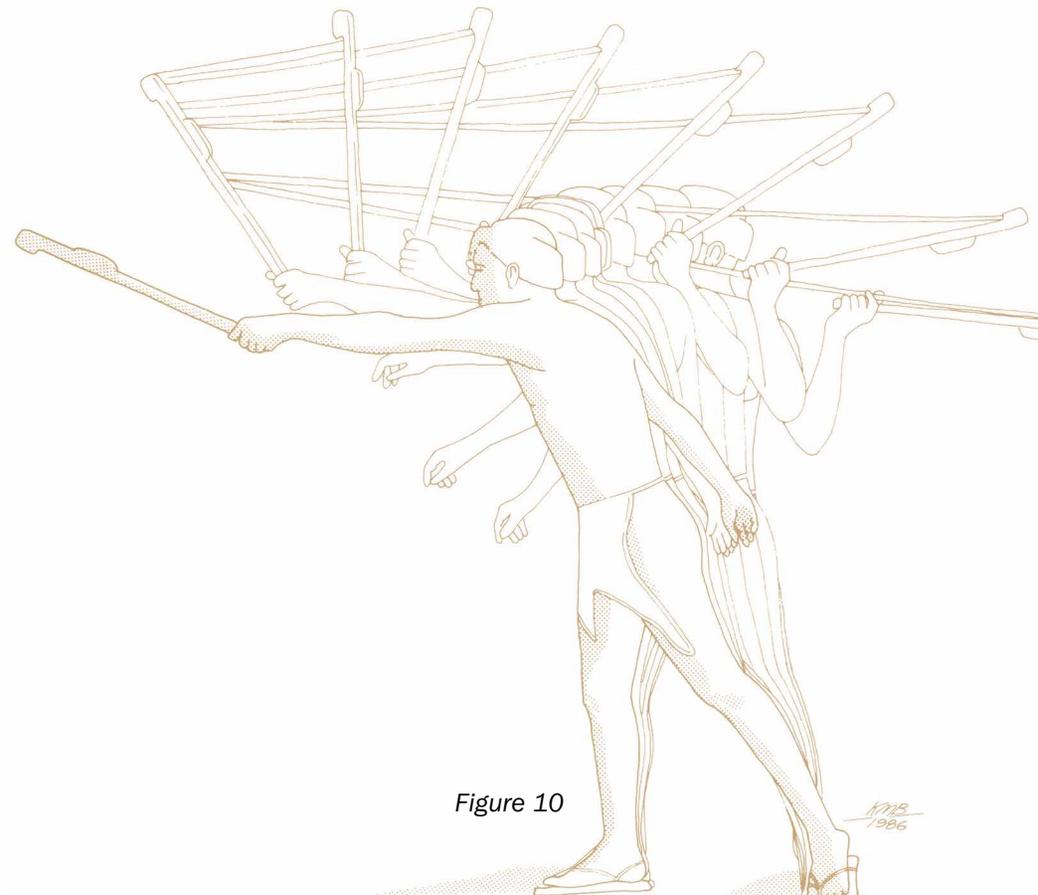


Figure 10

1985
1986

Changing the Lives of Texas Indians

Many different Tribes with a variety of languages, customs, and beliefs lived in Texas for at least 15,000 years before the arrival of Europeans. Tribes met some of the first Europeans in Texas when Spanish explorers came to El Paso (called El Paso del Norte) in 1591.

The Spanish launched several expeditions from Mexico City north into Texas where they encountered different native groups. These explorations helped the Spanish choose locations to establish missions, or settlements where priests attempted to convert local Tribes to Christianity and convince them to become loyal Spanish subjects. Some missions failed while others, like the five around what became San Antonio, thrived.

American and European settlers arrived in Texas in waves after Mexican independence from Spain in 1821. Different ideas about land ownership and cultural traditions impacted relations between settlers and the Tribes. Most settlers believed they were racially and culturally superior to Native Americans. They stole tribal land, destroyed villages, kidnapped tribal members, and killed them. The Tribes found it increasingly difficult to hunt and maintain their traditional ways of life as new settlements spread across Texas. Violent conflicts and disease also killed thousands of Native Americans.



Formation of Texas, Fall of Tribes

Settlers established the Republic of Texas as its own country. Later, Texas joined the United States in 1845.

This tragic history is now part of the stories Tribes share generation after generation. Their traditions endure today despite all odds. Their native languages are still spoken by Tribes throughout Texas who continue to pass along their oral histories and traditional knowledge.

It is estimated that millions of Native Americans, belonging to thousands of different Tribes lived in North America when it was colonized by Europeans. In Texas, multiple Tribes lived along the Rio Grande River. Throughout Texas each Tribe had its own culture. Some were coastal groups that mostly fished, some grew crops further inland, and others on the Texas plains adopted riding horses after the Spanish brought horses to North America.



Figure 13

Comanches are Plains Indians who conquered most of western Texas from horseback. They were some of the first Tribes to ride horses. They became expert riders and legendary traders who moved often from place to place. They lived in tipis made of poles and animal hides they could easily carry when they moved.

In the 1850s, Comanche Indians watched from high ground as the world changed below them. They regularly patrolled the limestone bluffs along the Edwards Plateau. They stood atop Mount Bonnell over the Colorado River and looked towards the new settlement of Austin. From this height, Comanche warriors could monitor people and animals moving across the prairie.

From Mount Bonnell, they saw history in the making: the building of the second capitol of Texas. They watched as engineers and stone masons built the structure that was in the middle of Austin (Figure 13). The stone capitol signaled the vast changes to come.



Tribal languages are still evident in place names found throughout Texas.

- Texas comes from the Caddo word “Tejas,” which means “friend.”
- The name of Waxahachie, Texas come from various tribal languages and words. “Waks`aheits`l” is a Wichita-Caddoan word meaning “fat carnivore,” while “wa-kasi” and “hah-chi” are Koasati- Muskogean (Coushatta) words, meaning “calf,” and “stream,” respectively.

Adaption

Tribes adapted to their environment whether it was familiar or new. For example, the Jumano adapted and thrived in the different environments within their homelands of the Trans-Pecos region of west Texas. Nomadic Jumanos hunted bison in the plateaus and canyon lands, while Jumanos along the Rio Grande and Concho River were successful farmers. (Figure 15). When the Alabama and Coushatta Tribes migrated from Alabama and settled in East Texas, they continued to live in small farming villages in a familiar pine forest setting. Early maps show Texas Indian villages and territories throughout the state (Figure 14).

To avoid the invading settlers, some Tribes like the Kickapoo Indians continued to migrate south into Mexico. They were able to preserve their culture by adapting to their new home (Figure 16). However, the nomadic Comanche way of life was completely changed when they adopted the Spanish horse. The Comanche quickly became skilled horsemen. Long-established hunting trails from Texas to Mexico became successful war trails, along which the Comanche raided Spanish villages and missions. (Figure 17).

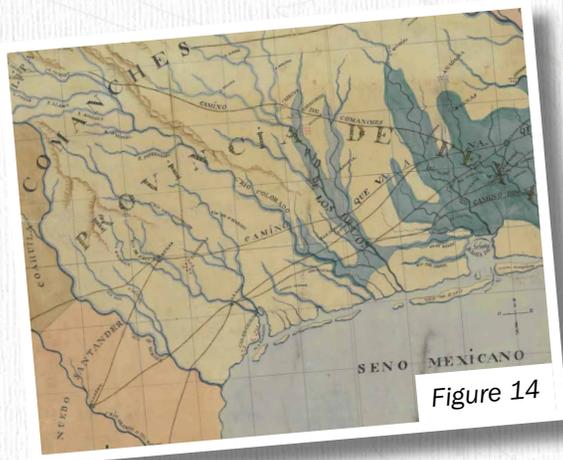


Figure 14

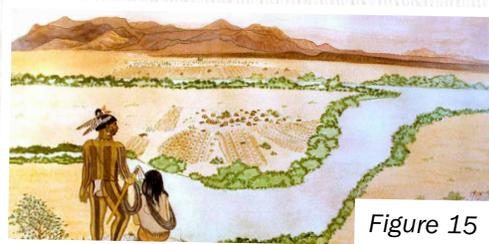


Figure 15

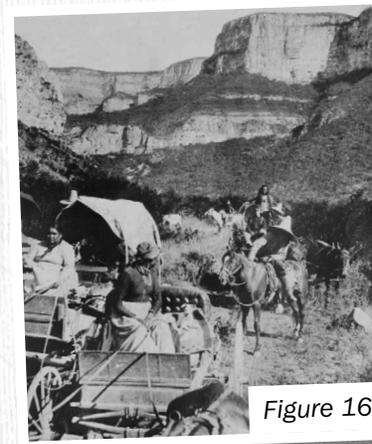


Figure 16

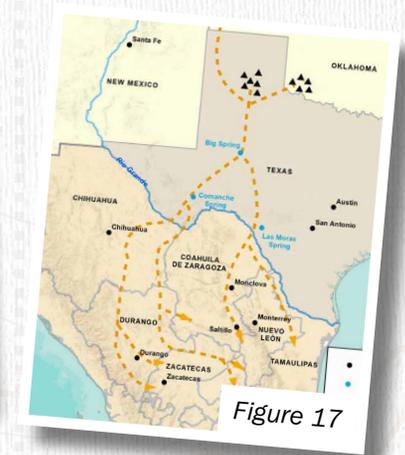


Figure 17



Figure 18

Endurance

By the 1890s, the U.S. government had forced most remaining Texas Indians onto reservations in present-day Oklahoma. Despite being forcibly relocated to Oklahoma, Tribal nations maintained their traditions, including an ongoing interest in Texas. Their ancestors' village locations and campsites are still considered important to these tribes today. There are currently three reservations in Texas for the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, and the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (Figure 18).

Many Native American tribes like the Caddo, Coushatta, Muscogee, Alabama-Coushatta, Mescalero Apache, and Tonkawa have a matrilineal kinship system. This means that people trace their family through their mother's side and not their father's side, as is more common with European-Americans. For example, members of the Muscogee Nation inherit their clan from their mother. Matrilineal Tribes also passed inheritance and property through the mother's line. When a couple married, they were traditionally members of different clans and went to live with the bride's side of the family.



Figure 19

Lifeways

Home Sweet Home

Tribes in Texas had various ways of building a home. They used different materials and ways to build based on their lifestyle, available raw materials, and the climate. Some Tribes carried traditions from their ancestors.

Spanish, French, and Anglo-American explorers and settlers copied some Native American customs in order to adapt to Texas. For example, the Alabama and Coushatta Indians lived in log cabins. Nearby settlers used this method of building homes too. Modern living still reflects some of the practices that came from Texas Indians. Many tribes built separate winter and summer homes, like some people do today.



Caddo Grass House

Caddo Indians have been in Texas for thousands of years. Their traditional homeland includes the piney woods of northeastern Texas, as well as throughout central and eastern Texas. Europeans referred to the Caddo groups as the Hasinai, Kadohadacho, and Natchitoches confederacies. These were kin-based, affiliated groups or bands of Caddo communities. They farmed, hunted and created permanent villages to support tribal members. The villages included grass houses and open-air shade structures.

The Caddo built their homes out of grass, using long tree branches for the frame (Figures 19 and 22). The grass houses reached 40 to 50 feet high. They designed the grass houses in the shape of a beehive by placing the wooden frames in a circle, which made their houses sturdy. They tied rows of bundled grass, called thatch, to the wood frame. The Caddo developed a technique to repel rain by starting the thatch at the bottom and working upwards. Each row of thatch overlapped the row below it. Modern roofers apply shingles using the same overlapping technique.

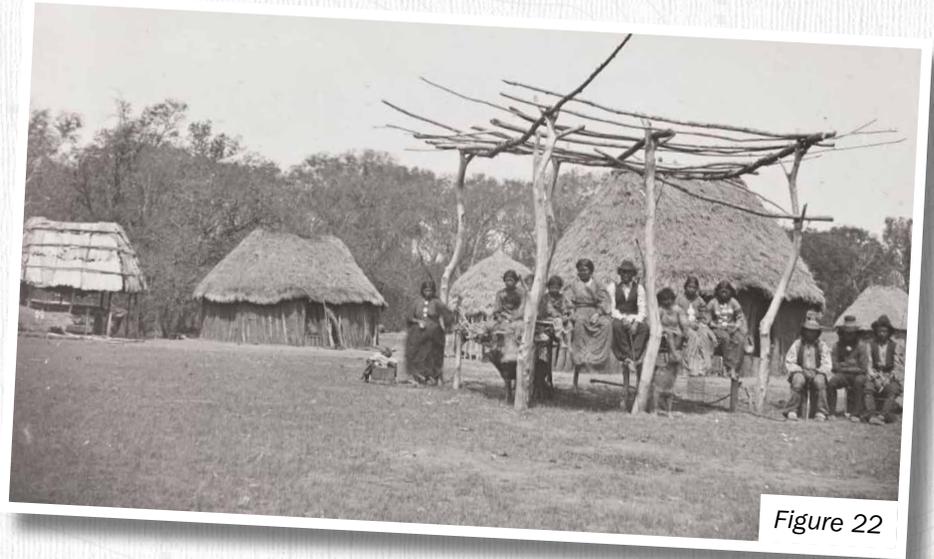


Figure 22

Tipis of the Plains Indians

Tipis are the traditional home of nomadic or travelling plains Indians in Texas like the Kiowa, Tonkawa, Comanche, and Apache. (Figures 20 and 21). These hunters and gatherers chose tipis because their lifestyle meant they were constantly moving. They followed herds of bison or traveled where food, water, and other materials were readily available. Even today, campers use tents that are similarly made of lightweight poles and fabric, which are easily transported from campsite to campsite.

The Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache used long wooden poles as the framework for their cone-shaped tipis. Tribal members tanned and sewed bison or deer hides together to cover the frame. An opening at the top of the tipi allowed smoke from a fire to escape. Some tribes used only three tipi poles, while others used four or more. Minor variations in tipi design or decoration distinguished one Tribe from another. The Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache still use tipis for ceremonies.

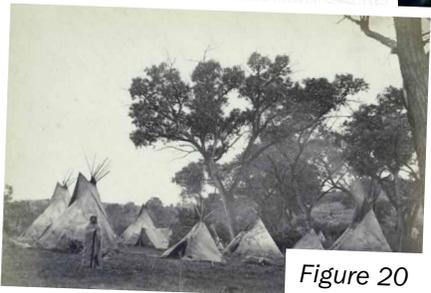


Figure 20



Figure 21

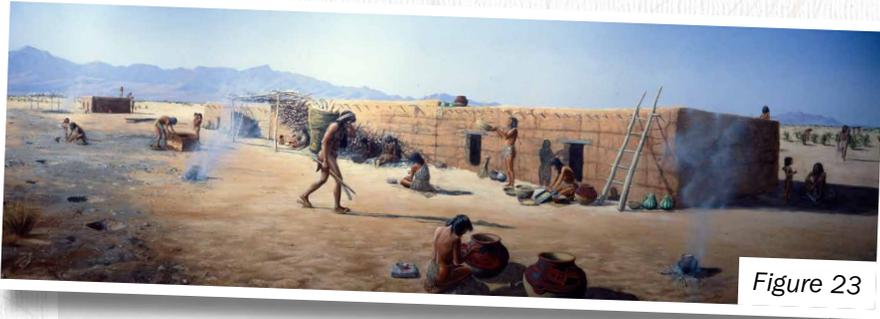


Figure 23



Figure 24

Kickapoo Wikiup

The Kickapoo tribe's ancestral homes are near the Great Lakes in the Midwest of the United States. As they migrated to Texas, the Kickapoo had to change how they built houses. Today, they still make winter and summer houses in Oklahoma, southern Texas, and Mexico.

The Tribe made small, dome-shaped houses called "wikiups." They built the house and roof with wooden poles (Figure 25). When the Kickapoo lived near the Great Lakes, they covered wikiups in birch tree bark. After they migrated to the southern plains where birch trees were not available, they adapted to their new environment by using woven mats made of cattails and grasses to cover the frame instead.

Pueblo Adobe Houses

"Pueblo" is a Spanish word meaning "town." However, Native Americans who lived in the desert region of the southwest created adobe (dried mud) bricks long before the Spanish arrived. Their communities are called pueblos. The Tigua Indians of Ysleta del Sur Pueblo near El Paso still use adobe brick construction (Figure 23).

People living in the dry desert climate of western and southwestern Texas did not have access to tall grasses and bison hides to build their homes. Instead, they used local materials like dirt, rock, and straw to make adobe bricks, which they stacked to make walls and rooms. They scattered their adobe communities, or pueblos, across the desert. Some pueblos only had a few rooms, while others housed multiple families in more than 100 rooms each (Figure 24).

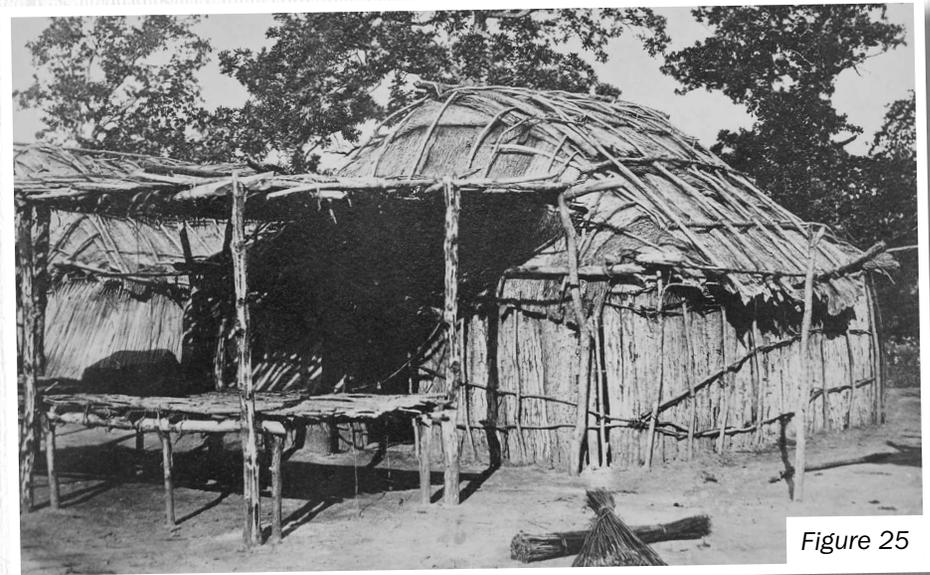


Figure 25



Figure 26

Tribal Life

Despite the rigors of life in Texas, Tribes expressed their culture and lifestyle through art, music, and games. As early as 4,000 years ago, Texas Indians depicted life and recorded their history on rocks and canyons in western Texas (Figure 26), on Paint Rock near San Angelo and at Hueco Tanks near El Paso, among at least 250 other places in Texas. Through archeological artifacts and studying Tribal practices today, you can see how people of the past influenced Texas culture.



Figure 27



Figure 28

Stickball

When certain Tribes had disputes, they played stickball to resolve them without having to go to war. In stickball, players used two sticks to throw and carry a hide-covered rock. Tribes made their sticks from hickory branches by bending a branch at one end to shape a cup for a sinew (tendon) pocket. Modern lacrosse is based on this sport.

The Muscogee Nation hosted a stickball game in 1938 (Figure 27). Alabama and Coushatta Tribe members played stickball at the Texas Folklife Festival in 1974 with the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (Figure 28), and currently host inter-tribal stickball tournaments. Today, the Muscogee Nation continues to play stickball in their traditional manner. The Cherokee Nation hosts stickball exhibition games during their annual national holiday celebration, while the Choctaw Nation competes yearly in a World Series of Stickball.

Music

Tribes in Texas made flutes using hollow bird bones, wood, and reeds (Figures 29). They often decorated flutes with carved patterns. Tigua drums are an important part of life and ceremonies today at Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (Figure 30). The Mescalero Apache made rattles out of deer legs and hooves, and still use them in modern day ceremonies. They played a fiddle, which was made from an agave stalk with a stringed bow made from animal hair (Figure 31).

Figure 29

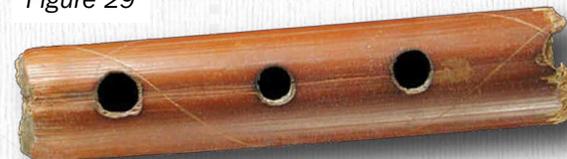


Figure 30

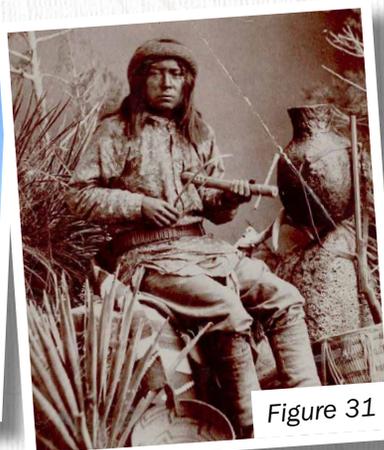


Figure 31

The Caddo Culture Club preserves the culture and traditions of the Caddo People. The club hosts an Annual Caddo Culture Day at the Caddo Mounds State Historic Site in Alto, Texas. In other Tribes, elders host special events for the youth to learn traditional songs and dances. Caddo women today continue their tradition of dancing from noon until the following sunrise. Caddo men are drummers but are invited to dance during specific songs. Music, song, and dance continue to be integral parts of the religion, tradition, and oral history of not only Texas Tribes, but of all Texans.

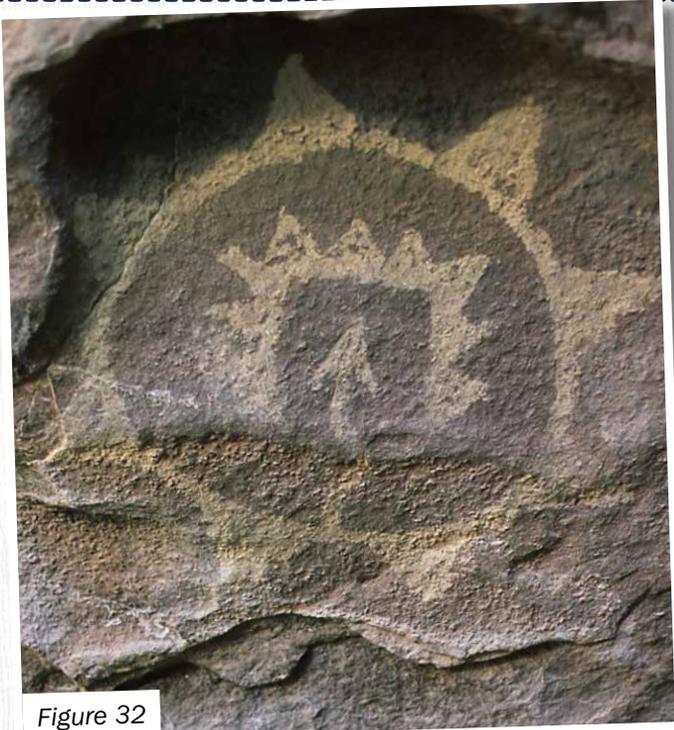


Figure 32



Figure 34



Figure 33

Rock Images

If you go to Hueco Tanks State Park and Historic Site in West Texas, you will see more than 5,000 pictographs on boulders and rock shelters. The sun symbol used by the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo today is based on a pictograph at Hueco Tanks (Figure 32). Rock art is sacred to Native Americans, because it is a visual story of their history and culture. Some rock art images like kokopelli (a southwestern deity representing the spirit of music) are a familiar part of popular culture.

Rock art includes:

Pictographs—painted images

Petroglyphs—carved images (Figure 33)

Painted pebbles (Figure 34)

Hueco Tanks has plants, animals, and good water sources even though it is in the desert. Texas Indians knew this and lived there to survive. They established a trail through Hueco Tanks towards water and salt sources to the east. Beginning in 1692, their descendants guided military scouts and travelers along this path.

Crafting History

Native Americans created baskets and ceramic pots that revolutionized the way food is gathered, cooked, served, and stored. Baskets and pots are still being used in Texas homes today. Tribes continue to pass on the art of making pottery and weaving baskets to future generations.

Figure 35



Figure 36

Basket Making

Basketry is a textile art practiced by Native Americans that included matting and bagging (Figure 35). They would begin by carefully choosing, drying, and preparing plant materials for weaving. Then basket makers would weave or coil the baskets, using natural dyes to decorate them. Coushatta women still weave effigy baskets, or baskets that look like an animal.

Apache Indians applied pine pitch to the exterior of baskets for waterproofing and made handles to be used with tump lines. Tump lines are straps that can be placed across the head to carry heavy loads. Apaches used tump lines to carry large baskets of firewood (Figure 36). The Alabama and Coushatta Tribes in Texas and Louisiana continue to use long-leaf pine needles and river cane reeds for their traditional basketry (see Figure 35).

Pottery

Native Americans created pottery to cook, serve, and store food. They created various forms and shapes to fit their specific uses. Some of these forms continue to exist in the bowls, jars, and bottles that we use today.

Caddo Indians made pottery as early as 1,000 years ago. Caddo pot makers usually engraved their ceramic pots with parallel lines, cross-hatching, and curvilinear patterns (Figure 37). Jereldine Redcorn revived the making of traditional Caddo pottery in the 1990s, and she continues to make it today.

Figure 37



To make pottery, Native Americans mixed clay with temper such as sand, crushed bone, or shell fragments that helped the clay stick together. Coiling a rolled strip of clay, potters built the body of the pot, smoothing the vessel with their fingers or a small tool. They then placed the ceramic pot on an open flame to harden.



Figure 38

Clothing

Tribes had unique clothing styles. Tribes used various cuts, colors, and decorations like embroidery, beadwork, feathers, claws, hoofs, shells, and teeth. Some leaders wore elaborate, highly decorated clothing to set themselves apart. Others, like the leaders of the Coshatta, dressed in a plainer style like their fellow Tribe members. Native Americans mostly made their clothing from animal hides. They eventually adopted European wool, cotton, linen, ribbons, and beads to use for their own clothing, but their clothing styles remained unchanged (Figure 38). Tribes today wear traditional clothing or regalia for ceremonies and powwows.

Cradle Boards

Have you ever seen a parent carrying a child on their back while hiking? Tribes were the first to carry their babies this way while traveling or working. Most Tribes wrapped the baby in a blanket and tied the child to a wooden frame, known as a cradle board. Women then wrapped the frame in fur, cloth, or hide. Mothers attached the cradle to their back so they could use their hands for other tasks. They built cradle boards with a footrest, a pillow, and a hood for shade to help keep the baby comfortable. Comanche women used similar cradle boards during the day, but for overnight sleeping they wrapped their babies in night cradles that had no frames (Figure 39).

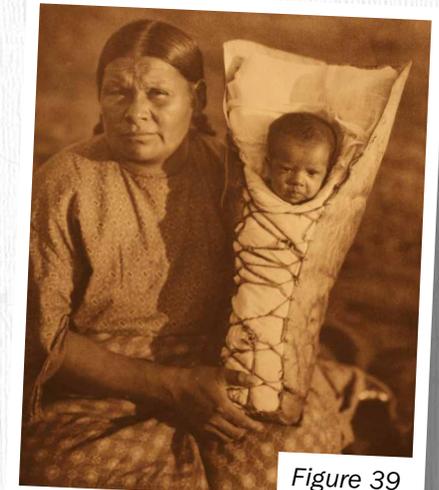


Figure 39

Foodways

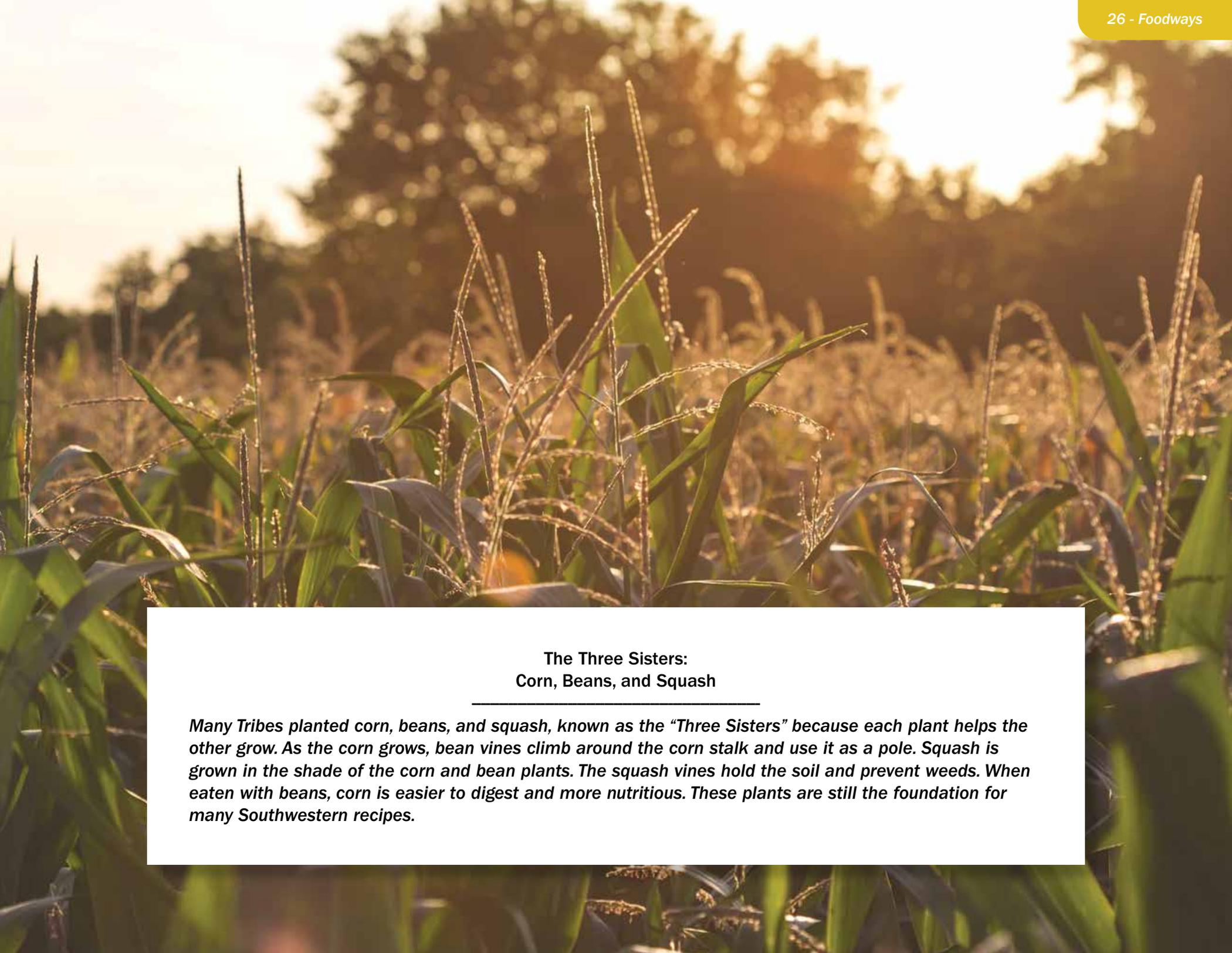
Living off the Land

The way we eat, prepare, and store our food is called our “foodways.” Just like European explorers adopted many Native American “lifeways,” or ways of living, Texas settlers adapted to their new land by adopting many of the Native American foodways.



Farming

The Caddo Indians in central, eastern, and northeastern Texas, the Jumano in western Texas, the Tonkawa in central Texas, and the Alabama and Coushatta Tribes in eastern Texas lived in villages (Figure 40). Instead of searching for wild plants to eat, people planted and farmed much of the food they ate. They grew corn, beans, and squash, which were the most important crops for their tribes. Some Tribes also grew tomatoes, potatoes, chili peppers, sunflowers seeds, peanuts, and pumpkins. Some of their farming tools included bison shoulder bones for digging and sharpened sticks for planting seeds.



**The Three Sisters:
Corn, Beans, and Squash**

Many Tribes planted corn, beans, and squash, known as the “Three Sisters” because each plant helps the other grow. As the corn grows, bean vines climb around the corn stalk and use it as a pole. Squash is grown in the shade of the corn and bean plants. The squash vines hold the soil and prevent weeds. When eaten with beans, corn is easier to digest and more nutritious. These plants are still the foundation for many Southwestern recipes.

Hunting Tools

Hunting is at least a 15,000-year-old tradition in Texas, started by the first people who lived here. They made hunting tools, like spears and darts (Figure 41), to kill huge animals, like the mammoth during the Ice Age. As glaciers melted, the climate changed and so did the types of animals that people in Texas hunted. To hunt smaller-sized animals like bison, deer, and rabbits, people invented new tools like the bow and arrow. Compared to dart points, arrow points are small and thin, and typically made of locally available rocks. Some Tribes later took advantage of European trade goods and made arrow points out of metal and glass. Arrow shafts and bows were made of wood.

Spears were preferred on the open plains, but hunting in a densely wooded forest was easier with bows and arrows, which were more accurate. Because bows and arrows were lightweight, fast, and stealthy, their invention was as important to hunting as the invention of gunpowder. Today, archery is an Olympic sport and bowhunting is a popular hobby.

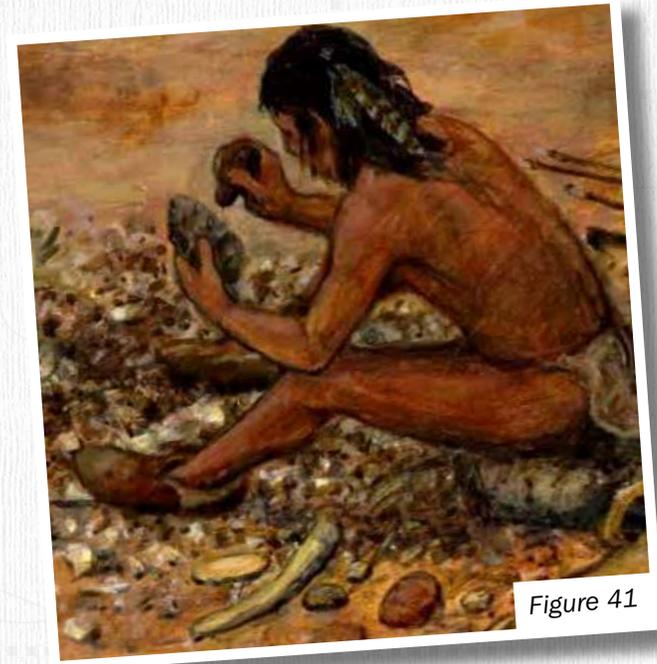


Figure 41



Figure 42

Jerky, Trail Mix, and Snack Bars

After a successful hunt, Texas Indians often saved the extra meat to eat later. They made jerky by drying the meat in the sun or using fire to smoke it (Figure 42). The chopped jerky was often added to a trail mix including fruits and berries, called pemmican. People would make snack bars with the mixture by adding fat. The resulting trail mix, or snack bar could be eaten easily during travel.



Figure 43



Figure 44

Bison Hunting

Native Americans relied on bison for food and wasted no part of the animal (Figures 43, 44). They made robes and blankets from the fur, while the skins covered houses and beds.

- Horns became ladles and spoons.
- Bones became war clubs, tools for scraping hides, and hoes for farming.
- Tendons became bow strings and thread to sew.
- Hooves became glue for fastening arrow points.
- Hair became braided horse halters.

Large-scale hunting by non-Indians using guns in the 1800s was part of a deliberate effort to destroy the Native Americans' food source and their traditional way of life. White settlers purposely reduced bison herds to near extinction.

Fast Facts About Native Foods

Did you know that many of the foods that we associate with European and Asian cultures are indigenous to the Americas? Native Americans were the first to grow foods such as the tomatoes used in many Italian dishes, the chili peppers in Thai and Tex-Mex foods, and the potatoes in Irish recipes. Today more than half of the world's diet consists of foods that originated in the Americas.



Figure 45

Salt

Salt is tasty and necessary for good health. Texas Indians also used it to preserve meat and fish without refrigeration and as a trade item. The Caddo, who lived in central, eastern, and northeastern Texas where saltwater naturally seeps to the surface, became expert salt makers (Figure 45). They collected the saltwater into large ceramic pans and boiled it until it evaporated and crystallized, leaving salt behind.

Chiltepin (Chile Tepin)

Chiltepin (chile tepin) grows wild in Texas and are designated as the official state native pepper. Texas Indians have been eating them for thousands of years. In addition to adding spice to foods, peppers are a great source of vitamins and minerals.

Wild Onion

Texas Indians baked wild onion bulbs in earth ovens for a couple days until the heat converted the onion's carbohydrates into delicious (and nutritious) sugar.



Pecan



Pecan trees produce nuts that Texas Indians have been eating for thousands of years. Native pecan trees grow best in deep soils along the streams in eastern and central Texas, but also line the creek and river terraces of southern Texas. These trees were a regular stop on the seasonal rounds of hunters and gatherers.

Archeologists have excavated thick layers of pecan shells in Baker Cave near Del Rio that were more than 5,000 years old. Pecan shells have also been found at several Caddo archeological sites in eastern Texas. The Comanche ate pecans fresh and stored them for winter use. Spanish traveler Cabeza de Vaca ate and wrote about pecans along the lower San Antonio and Guadalupe Rivers near Goliad. “Pecan” is derived from “paccane,” an Algonquian term meaning “nut.” The word first appears in early 1700s French records from the Mississippi River region.

Squash

Texas Indians often grew squash with maize and beans (the “Three Sisters”). The corn provided a structure for the beans to climb, and beans gave nitrogen to the soil to fertilize corn and squash. Wichita women grew a variety of squash, including pumpkins (Figure 46) and gourds for containers. The Wichita preserved the dried flesh of the squash by braiding strips of the dried squash into a mat-like form.

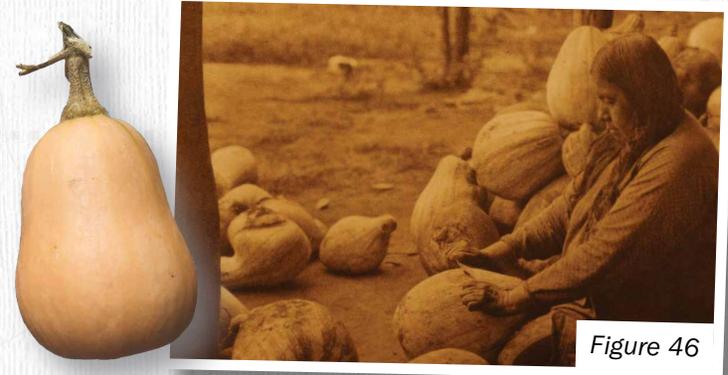


Figure 46

Maize (Corn)

Mayan and Olmec people in Mexico developed maize, which spread throughout the Americas around 4,500 years ago. People in Texas began growing corn in the far western part of the Trans-Pecos region between 2,000 and 3,000 years ago. Corn was the most common and important crop in the Trans-Pecos, but beans, squash, amaranth, cotton, and tobacco were also grown. Agriculture meant people could remain living in one place and by 800 to 1,000 years ago villages were scattered across the western Trans-Pecos and in the vicinity of La Junta del los Rios in the Big Bend where the Rios Grande and Conchos meet. These farmers stored food and developed larger-scale societies that interacted through trade and social alliances. Native Americans ate fresh corn, dried the kernels for storage, and ground dried kernels into corn meal. They used husks to make baskets, mats, and moccasins. The Caddo grew several varieties of corn including “little” corn that ripened in the summer and “flour” or “great” corn that ripened in the fall. They dried corn on the cob and stored them in raised granaries to keep them dry and protected. The Caddo always saved their best corn to use as seed for the next crop.

Food Preparation and Cooking

Most Tribes moved often and had to create a new “kitchen” each time they camped. Some of the ways they prepared and cooked food are still used today.

Mescal (Agave)

Mescalero Apache people got their name from the Mescal plant because of its importance in their history and culture. They still use earth ovens to roast mescal (or agave) stems for traditional tribal ceremonies (Figures 47 and 48). After roasting mescal for several days, the stems are sweet.



Figure 47

Earth Ovens

Tough, thorny-leaved plants like agave, yucca, and sotol, as well as wild onions and prickly pear, were important foods for early people of Texas. Thousands of years ago, people learned to cook these plants using fire-heated rocks inside earth ovens. They made earth ovens by digging a hole in the ground, lining it with rocks, and building a fire on top of the rocks. The food sat on top of the heated rocks and cooked slowly. Once the fire gave out, they placed the food on top of the hot rocks and covered it with plants like cactus pads and dirt to keep the heat inside.

Earth ovens cooked food slowly. People waited two or three days before their meals were ready!



Figure 48



Figure 49

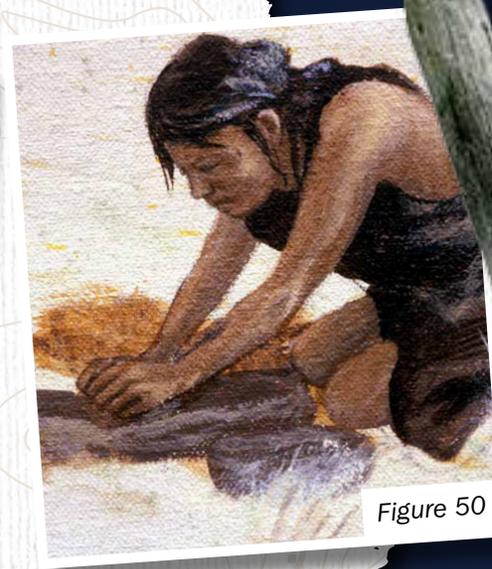


Figure 50

Food Processors

Tribes invented stone tools to grind seeds, nuts, and grains. Mano comes from the Spanish word for “hand,” because people grasped the stones in their hands and used them to grind food on the flat, rough stone slab called a metate, a Nahuatl (Aztec) word (Figure 49). They also used a bowl-shaped mortar to hold the food and a pestle (a wooden stick or a stone) to grind it. Women ground permanent mortar holes into large rocks or exposed bedrock, while other mortars were wooden and portable, resembling butter churns (Figures 50 and 51).

Instead of carrying these heavy tools, Native Americans would often store metates, leaving them upside down when they moved from the site. While machines now grind corn, people still prefer to process foods like cacao and chili peppers using a mano and molcajete, or stone bowl. Delicious mole sauces are created this way today.



Figure 51



Transportation Traditions

Today Texas has more than 80,000 miles of roadways. But in the early days, Texas Indians created a series of travel and trade networks. They used trails and river crossings for access to food, shelter, and trade items. For example, elders passed their knowledge about when foods were ripe, where bison migrations occurred, and how to locate trade items utilizing their transportation system. The Spanish and French explorers also used these existing trails once they arrived. The networks of Native American trails are the foundation for Texas' modern road and highway system.



European explorers noted Texas Indian territories on maps like this 1718 French map showing Caddo villages in Texas (Figure 52). Early map makers used rivers and mountains to define Texas Indian territories. The territory of the mobile Plains Indian groups might resemble two locations connected by a travel corridor because they had different summer and winter homes. The Caddo worked hard to maintain the boundaries of their ancestral lands in central, eastern, and northeastern Texas. Their trade routes connected them to the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, South America, and Canada.





By Land

Many early Native routes followed the paths made by game animals. These paths often led to water and became the earliest tribal roads crisscrossing the state. The Alabama and Couthatta Indians blazed trails throughout eastern Texas. These roads were called “traces,” and they connected the Alabama and Couthatta villages to Spanish and French settlements. Roadways, train tracks, bus routes, sidewalks, and bicycle trails are routes we use to travel by land today.

By Water

The Alabama-Couthatta made boats for traveling and moving things they would trade. They made different boats depending on the materials they had on hand. The most common types of boats in Texas were rafts and dugout canoes. A dugout canoe similar to the one pictured here eroded from a bank along the Red River (Figure 53). People used dugout canoes to trade woven mats and ceramic pots. Today we still move goods by boats on rivers or through seaports.



Figure 53

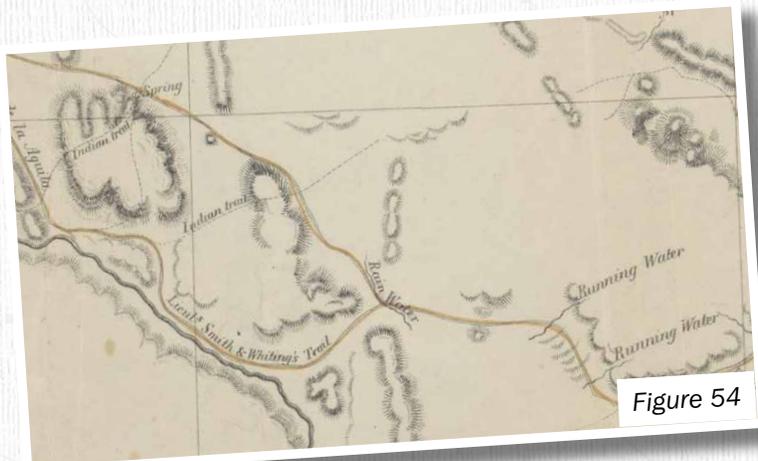


Figure 54

Springs: Following the Flow

Tribes created trails and roads close to water sources like creeks, rivers, and natural springs. People relied on the natural springs that existed throughout Texas during their travels across the state. Artifacts at places like San Antonio Springs, San Marcos Springs, and Indian Hot Springs in the Trans-Pecos region in west Texas tell us that people used those water sources during their long journeys. Later explorers recorded on a map the springs and running water sources along with routes and trails from San Antonio to El Paso (Figure 54). Fresh water is still a critical resource for all communities.

Drive Through History

Camino Real and Old San Antonio Road (State Highway 21 and Interstate 10)

The Camino Real (Spanish for “Royal Road”) was later known to English-speakers as the King’s Highway or Old San Antonio Road (Figure 55). It was a network of Texas Indian trails, natural stream crossings, and exploration routes. Some of the earliest segments of the road linked various tribal settlements. The Camino Real was the only way to travel from Louisiana to Mexico by land in the 1700s.

- Spanish use: Connected missions and presidios; ranchers drove cattle.
- American use: Enabled immigration and settlement of colonists.
- Civil War use: Allowed transportation of contraband cotton to Mexico.



Figure 55

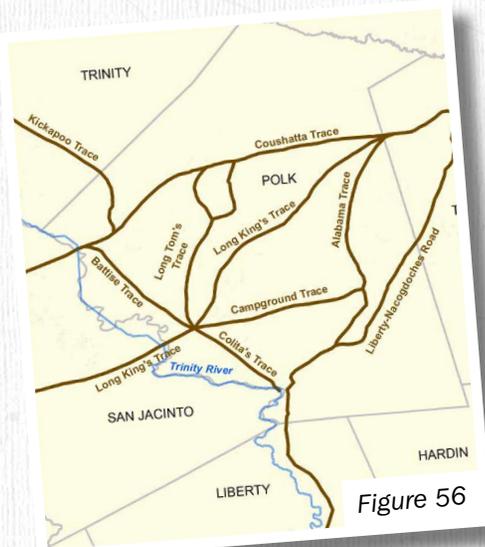


Figure 56

Chisholm Trail (Interstate 35)

Texas ranchers used the Chisholm Trail from 1867 to 1884 to drive longhorn cattle to market in Kansas. The trail is named for Jesse Chisholm, a Cherokee trader, guide, and interpreter. He established the northern end of the Chisholm Trail using long-traveled Native American trails.

Alabama and Coughatta Traces (Farm-to-Market Road 350)

The Coughatta Trace (Figure 56) began in Louisiana. Coughatta Indians used it for hunting and trading as early as the late 1700s when they entered Texas.

The Alabama Trace extended from the Old San Antonio Road near present-day San Augustine, Texas to the Lower Coughatta Village on the Trinity River. It passed through four Alabama Indian village sites in Angelina, Tyler, and Polk counties.

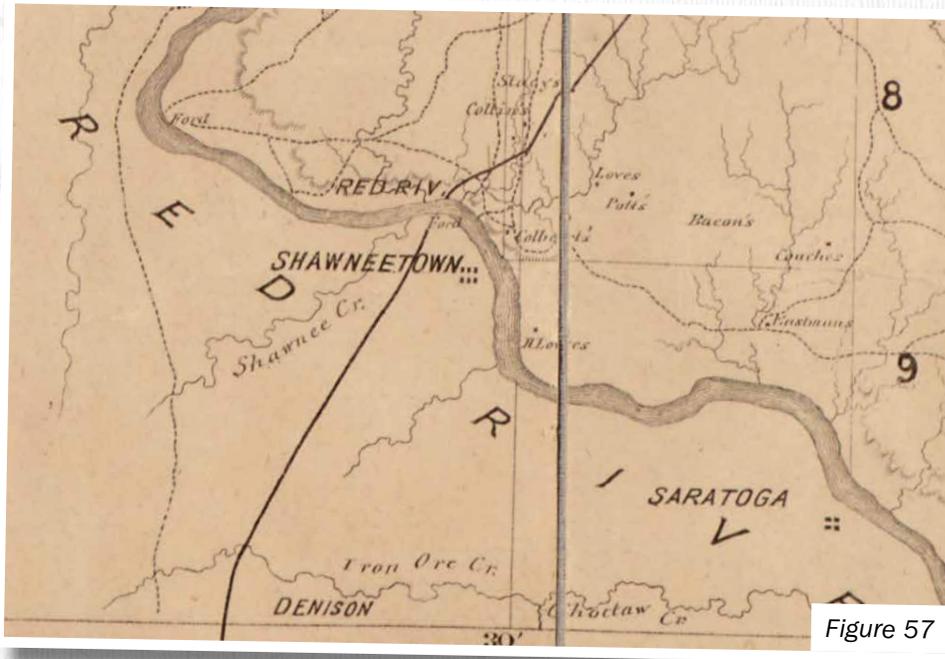


Figure 57

Shawnee Trail

The Shawnee Indians immigrated to Texas from Kentucky. “Shawnee” means “southerner” and identifies them as the southernmost Algonkian speakers. Tribes used the Shawnee Trail long before it became the first longhorn cattle trail. South Texas, the cradle of longhorn cattle, was the origin of all cattle drives. The Shawnee Trail connected Austin, Waco, and Dallas before crossing the Red River in central northern Texas. A Shawnee village (Shawneetown) is depicted at the Red River crossing on an 1877 map (Figure 57).

Learn More



Texas’ long and rich cultural history is rooted in these first residents. These traditions are still celebrated today through ceremonies, at historic sites, and by the Tribes. Visit Tribal websites to learn more about their history, language, and culture. Attend a powwow. Read more about some Texas Tribes through TxDOT’s Tribal History project (www.txdot.gov, keyword “tribal histories”). Research Tribes that once lived in your area. Visit Tribal cultural centers or museums on your next trip. Share this booklet with someone else!



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- Figure 36.** Camillus Sidney Fly photographer. Detail of Group in Native Dress, Collecting Wood n.d., 02010400, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.
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- Figure 38.** Delaware Indian Jennie Bobb and her daughter Nellie Longhat wearing clothes and jewelry that they crafted, circa 1910. Negative 56928, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.
- Figure 39.** Edward S. Curtis photographer. "A Comanche woman," from The North American Indian. Portfolio 19, page plate 685. Courtesy Northwestern University Library.
- Figure 40.** Map showing farming communities of Jumano of Trans-Pecos region of west Texas, Caddo Indians in central, eastern, and northeastern Texas, Tonkawa near San Marcos, and the Alabama and Coshatta Tribes in eastern Texas.
- Figure 41.** Making stone tools. Painting by Frank Weir, courtesy of the artist.
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- Figure 47.** Mescalero Apache Tribe processing mescal. Photo by Holly Houghton. <https://www.abqjournal.com/193606/mescal-roast-returns-to-mountains.html>
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- Figure 54.** Whiting, William Henry Chase, 1824-1865. Detail of Reconnaissances of routes from San Antonio de Bexar to El Paso del Norte, Including the reconnaissance of Lt. W.H.C. Whiting, U.S. Engr., 1849; Philadelphia. University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, crediting University of Texas at Arlington Library.
- Figure 55.** U.S. National Park Service, El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail.
- Figure 56.** Adapted from Abernathy, Francis E. (editor), 1967:37, Tales from the Big Thicket. University of North Texas Press, Denton.
- Figure 57.** Ruffner, E. H. Detail of Map of the Chickasaw country and contiguous portions of the Indian Territory. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Military Division of the Missouri, 1872.

