



San Antonio Missions

Texas, United States of America

Nomination to the World Heritage List by the United States of America

JANUARY 2014



San Antonio Missions

Nomination for Inscription on the World Heritage List



Executive Summary

State Party

State

Name of Property

Geographical Coordinates

Textual Description

A4 (Letter) Size Map

Criteria Under Which Property is Nominated

Draft Statement of Outstanding
Universal Value

Name and Contact Information
of Official Local Institution

Executive Summary

State Party: United States of America

State: Texas

Name of Property: San Antonio Missions

The San Antonio Missions is a serial nomination that refers collectively to five frontier mission complexes (see TABLE 1.1), and a geographically separated ranch founded in the present-day United States of America during the early 18th century by Franciscan missionaries along the banks of the San Antonio River. Although each was founded independently, the missions were tied together by the river and its waters, the sharing of production and expertise, and the need for defense. These mission complexes formed the foundation of the modern city of San Antonio.

SERIAL COMPONENTS OF THE SAN ANTONIO MISSIONS

FULL NAME	POPULAR NAME	AREA (IN HA.)
Mission San Francisco de la Espada	Mission Espada	94.7
<i>Rancho de las Cabras</i>	<i>Rancho de las Cabras</i>	40.0
Mission San Juan Capistrano	Mission San Juan	130.5
Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo	Mission San José	20.6
Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepción de Acuña	Mission Concepción	13.3
Mission San Antonio de Valero	Mission Valero / The Alamo	1.7

All serial components, with the exception of Mission Espada's ranch (*Rancho de las Cabras*), are located in the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas, United States of America. The ranch is located 37.1 kilometers (23 miles) south of Mission Espada in Wilson County, Texas, United States of America.

GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES TO THE NEAREST SECOND

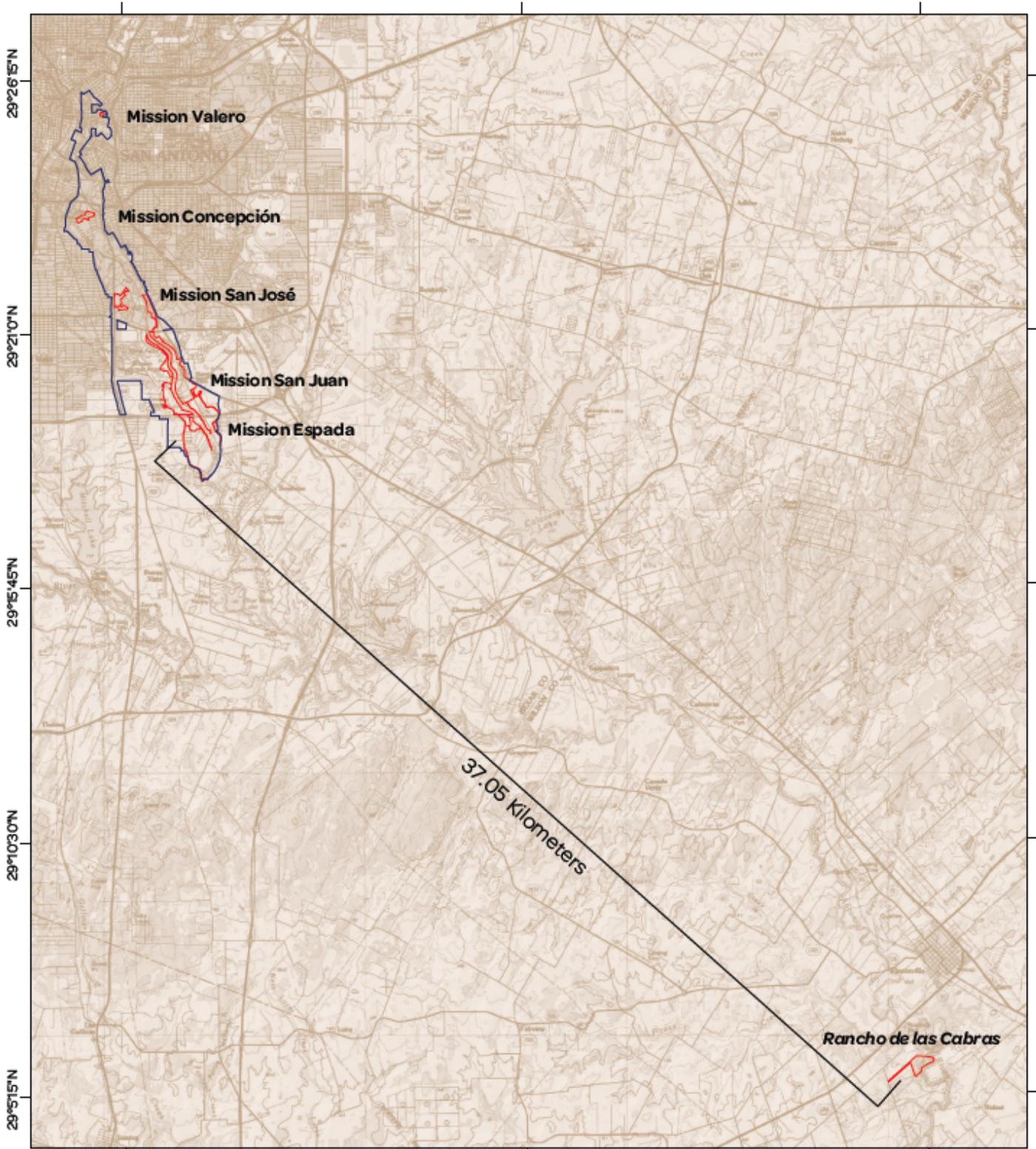
SERIAL COMPONENT	GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES
Mission Espada	W 98° 27' 27" N 29° 19' 41"
<i>Rancho de las Cabras</i>	W 98° 9' 58" N 29° 5' 50"
Mission San Juan	W 98° 27' 24" N 29° 20' 18"
Mission San José	W 98° 28' 44" N 29° 21' 42"
Mission Concepción	W 98° 29' 33" N 29° 23' 26"
Mission Valero / The Alamo	W 98° 29' 9" N 29° 25' 33"

Textual Description of the Boundaries of the Nominated Property

The boundary of the nominated serial property coincides with the publicly owned property of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park and of the Alamo Complex. The total area is 300.8 hectares (743.3 acres).

A buffer zone surrounds the nominated property following the boundaries set up in the various city ordinances, including RIO Overlay Districts 3-6, Mission Historic District, and the Alamo Historic District. The buffer zone runs from Travis Street in the north to Camino Coahuilteca on the south, Presa Street on the east and Mission Road and Roosevelt Avenue on the west. The total area of the buffer zone is 2,068 hectares (5,110 acres).

A4 (Letter) Size Map of the Nominated Property, Showing Boundaries and Buffer Zone



Legend
[Red outline] Nominated Property
[Blue outline] Buffer Zone



0 25 5 10 Kilometers

Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: North America 1983
Date: August 2013

Criteria Under Which Property is Nominated

Criterion (ii): exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design

Criterion (iii): bear a unique or at least an exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared

Criterion (iv): be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history

Draft Statement of Outstanding Universal Value

BRIEF SYNTHESIS

Situated along a 12.4-kilometer (7.7-mile) stretch of the San Antonio River basin in southern Texas are five Spanish colonial mission complexes built in the early eighteenth century. This ensemble is the most complete and most intact example of the Spanish Crown's efforts to colonize, evangelize, and defend the northern frontier of New Spain during the period when Spain controlled the largest empire in the world. These missions were the center of efforts to evangelize the area's indigenous population into converts loyal to the Catholic Church; they also include all the components required to establish self-sustaining, socio-economic units comprised of Spanish-speaking subjects loyal to the Crown. The missions' more than fifty standing structures, archaeological resources, and landscape features include *labores*, a *rancho*, residences, a grist mill, granaries, workshops, wells, lime kilns, churches, *conventos*, and perimeter walls for protection. The ensemble of missions includes extensive irrigation systems of *acequias* (one operating continuously for more than 265 years), dams, and an aqueduct that enabled agricultural independence. These water distribution systems are a clear demonstration of the exceptionally inventive interchange that occurred between indigenous peoples, missionaries, and colonizers that contributed to a fundamental and permanent change in the cultures and values of all involved, but most dramatically in those of the Coahuiltecos and other indigenous hunter-gatherers who, in a matter of one generation, became successful settled agriculturists. The enclosed layout of each mission complex and their proximity to each other, the intensive communal activities such as construction and farming undertaken there, the widespread sharing of knowledge and skills among their inhabitants, and the early adoption of a common language and religion resulted in a people and culture with an identity neither wholly indigenous nor wholly Spanish that has proven exceptionally persistent and pervasive.

JUSTIFICATION FOR CRITERIA

Criterion (ii): The substantial remains of the extensive water distribution systems constructed to irrigate the *labores* at the San Antonio Mission complexes eminently illustrate an exceptionally important interchange between indigenous peoples, missionaries, and colonizers that contributed to a fundamental and permanent change in the cultures and values of all involved, but most dramatically in those of the Coahuiltecos and other indigenous hunter-gatherers who, in a matter of one generation, became successful settled agriculturists.

Criterion (iii): The rapid interweaving of diverse peoples and cultures from two continents was advanced by the physical layouts of the five San Antonio Missions, which are inward-focused and located in close proximity to each other; the intensive communal activities such as construction and farming undertaken there; the widespread sharing of knowledge and skills among their inhabitants; and the early adoption of a common language and religion; all of which resulted in an identity neither wholly indigenous nor wholly Spanish that has proven exceptionally persistent and pervasive.



Criterion (iv): These five closely located eighteenth-century mission complexes, whose more than fifty standing structures, archaeological resources, and landscape features are unmatched in number and diversity among surviving Spanish colonial missions, is the most complete extant example of the Spanish Crown's global effort to colonize, evangelize, and defend its colonial empire, the largest in the world at that time. An outstanding illustration of a significant stage in human history, the San Antonio Missions fully and evocatively illustrate Spain's goal of creating secular, self-supporting communities of Spanish subjects loyal to the Crown and to the Roman Catholic Church.

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

Within the boundary of this 300.8-hectare (743.3-acre) serial property are all the attributes necessary to sustain its Outstanding Universal Value. These include the *labores*, *rancho*, granaries, grist mill, workshops, wells, a quarry, lime kilns, and *acequias* (two operating, one for more than 265 years, along with a dam and aqueduct) required to support the colonization goals of socio-economic independence; the churches and other ecclesiastical buildings required to support the religious goals of evangelization; and the defensive structures necessary to protect the inhabitants. The property is of sufficient size to adequately ensure the complete representation of the features and processes that convey the property's significance. There is a 2,068-hectare (5110.1 acre) buffer zone for the property. The property does not suffer from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.

STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

The San Antonio Missions are authentic to an extraordinary extent in terms of their locations and settings, forms and designs, materials and substance, and use and function. The locations for the five mission complexes that make up this property along the San Antonio River are unquestionably authentic. The two most southerly complexes in the 12.4-kilometer (7.7-mile) long chain of missions, Missions Espada and San Juan, are located in remarkably rural settings. In form and design, the missions' traditional Benedictine plan for convents, modified by the Franciscans into a friary plan enclosed within defensive walls, has remained intact. The predominant materials likewise are authentic, including micritic limestone, which was soft enough to be cut with woodworking tools when first quarried. Four of the five mission churches remain in use today as active Roman Catholic parishes, with a number of parishioners tracing their roots to the original mission inhabitants. Mission Espada's *acequia* and aqueduct still carry water to serve the area of the mission, as they have done continuously for more than 265 years. The overall state of conservation of the property is very good and its condition is stable. Various restoration and reconstruction activities have taken place at the mission complexes over the centuries; for example, the iconic church at Mission Valero/The Alamo has been the subject of significant restoration because of the ravages of war and time. For decades the State of Texas and the United States National Park Service have employed internationally recognized scientific standards and techniques when undertaking interventions at the San Antonio Missions.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

The framework for the protection and management of the San Antonio Missions contains a broad set of laws promulgated by the federal, state, and local governments. In addition, the Texas Historical Commission, an agency of the State of Texas, must review in advance any modifications proposed for the structural elements located in the nominated property. All of these mechanisms have been adopted and implemented to protect the attributes that sustain the Outstanding Universal Value of the nominated property. Supporting these laws and the Commission is a suite of overarching and detailed management plans and systems.

The United States National Park Service manages all the property within the boundaries of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, which was established under Public Law 95-629 (1978) and Public Law 101-628 (1990). The four mission churches within the National Historical Park are owned and operated by the Archdiocese of San Antonio. The State of Texas owns the property of Mission Valero/The Alamo. The Daughters

of the Republic of Texas, a private, not-for-profit corporation, manages it on behalf of the State of Texas General Land Office. The 2,068-hectare (5110.1-acre) buffer zone is owned by various public and private entities and is managed by a set of City of San Antonio ordinances, guidelines, and plans.

The San Antonio Missions nominated property is fully protected through the application of all the relevant legislative instruments that are available in this jurisdiction. It is protected at the federal level under the Historic Sites Act of 1935, the federal Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 as amended, and the Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR 65); at the state level under the State of Texas Natural Resource Code of 1977; and at the municipal level under the City of San Antonio Unified Development Code (2010). In addition, a number of the individual elements in this serial property are protected as a National Historic Landmark, National Historic Site, Texas State Historic Site, State Antiquities Landmark, and/or Local Landmark.

The San Antonio Missions nominated property is managed by means of a comprehensive management plan (adopted in December 2013) that brings together the key property owners into a unified body to coordinate the management of all components of this serial property (see Appendix A), and by detailed plans specific to various components and activities. The management of the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park is directed by its General Management Plan and Development Concept Plan (1982; 1998), Resources Management Plan (2001), and draft Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (2002). Management of Mission Valero/The Alamo is directed by The Alamo Master Plan (2012).

There is continual monitoring for potential threats to the property to ensure none jeopardize the attributes that sustain the property's Outstanding Universal Value. Perhaps the most significant potential threat is the rapid growth and development of the City of San Antonio. Protection against this potential threat is in place, and organizations such as the San Antonio Conservation Society, the Bexar County Historical Commission, and the San Antonio Missions World Heritage Advisory Committee are vigilant to identify, eliminate or mitigate this and any additional potential risks.

Long-term challenges are posed by some situations that are beyond the control of individuals or institutions. For example, the climate is semi-arid and hot, and the harsh weather and temperatures could potentially have a negative impact on the elements within the property. Likewise, ground water has the potential to damage walls through rising damp. Other challenges include water run-off into the historic *acequias* and protection of historic viewsheds. In all these situations, proactive monitoring and appropriate conservation activities eliminate or mitigate damage.

Funding from federal, state, county, and municipal governments, the Archdiocese of San Antonio, not-for-profit organizations, and private donations is adequate at the present time. Community support for the San Antonio Missions is extremely positive, and the missions' management works to nurture this positive attitude.

Name and Contact Information of Official Local Institution

Office of International Affairs	San Antonio Missions National Historical Park
United States National Park Service	United States National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW (0050)	2202 Roosevelt Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20005	San Antonio, Texas 78210
United States of America	United States of America
(Stephen Morris, 202-354-1800, Stephen_Morris@nps.gov)	(Susan Snow, 210-534-8875, Susan_Snow@nps.gov)
www.nps.gov/oia	www.missionsofsanantonio.org
	www.nps.gov/saan