

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED

DEC 21 1976

DATE ENTERED

DEC 1 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

El Camino del Diablo

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

That portion of the trail from Sonoita, Mexico to Yuma,
Arizona starting at the international boundary and ending at
Tinajas Altas

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

--- VICINITY OF

2 and 3

STATE

Arizona

CODE
04

COUNTY

Pima, Yuma

CODE

019, 027

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

Cabeza Prieta National

NAME

Wildlife Refuge / Luke Air Force Base, Arizona

STREET & NUMBER

Box 1032

CITY, TOWN

Yuma

--- VICINITY OF

STATE

Arizona

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Pima County Courthouse & Yuma County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Tucson and Yuma

STATE

Arizona

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

--- FEDERAL --- STATE --- COUNTY --- LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Camino del Diablo leads through desolate desert terrain which is still uninhabited.

It is an area of strong contrasts in both terrain and vegetation. Sharp rugged mountain ranges rise abruptly from low flat desert valleys. Some of the ranges have sharply contrasting colors because of the composition of the base rock. The Sierra Pinta, for instance, composed of dark gneisses and schists on the southern end, is sharply contrasted with the pinkish granite of the northern end of the range. Raven Butte, a black volcanic cone, stands out against the light colored granite Tinajas Altas Range containing one of the crucial watering points on the trail. If this one were dry, the travelers faced an arduous journey on to Las Tinajas (Dripping Springs). Many did not make it.

Most of the trail is on alluvium: stream gravels, alluvial fans, flood plain deposits, and some pleistocene terrace deposits. However, other portions of the trail pass over the Pinacate Lava Flow which swept north from its source in the Pinacate Range in Mexico, in the recent geologic era. It is characterized by extensive fields of stark black rocks varying in size from boulder to gravel. In other places, the trail passes across ancient dry lake beds composed of fine silt, very dusty in dry weather, turning to sticky clay in wet. The predominant vegetation in these areas is scrubby creosote bush.

Another portion of the trail passes through the treacherous Pinta Sands, a large area of drifting sand dunes difficult to traverse without frequent bogging down in the fine sands. Here broken pottery and stone tools tell us that Indians frequented the area at some time in the past.

Places of deep alluvial deposits, such at the Lechuguilla Desert where there is subsurface water, support larger plant species like mesquite and ironwood. A large ironwood tree was photographed by Carl Lumholtz in 1912. It stands today very little changed, attesting to its age as well as the slow growth pattern of plants in extremely arid areas of the world. A wide diversity of cacti species occur throughout the seemingly barren area and in the spring after a rare rain, blooming Ajo lilies are a pleasant surprise.

The trail has taken various routes at different times in history. Parts of the routes followed by Father Kino, Father Garcia, and Juan de Anza are not included in this nomination but are described in the statement of significance as all are important to the history of the trail being nominated. Only the portions on the Luke Air Force Gunnery Range and the Cabeza Prieta Game Range are included in this nomination and only the portion which was the most frequently used during its period of historic activity.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

JFT 7/10/78

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW					
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES 1699, 1774-1776, 1850s BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The notorious Camino del Diablo was opened in 1699 by Father Eusebio Kino. The route was used by the Anza expeditions of the 1770s and was sometimes traveled by gold seekers on the way to California in the 1850s.

Kino, the famous Jesuit missionary and explorer, charted the route with the help of young Juan Matheo Manje for the purpose of visiting the tribes at the mouth of the Gila. After leaving Sonoita, Mexico, the party stopped first at El Carrizal on the Sonoita River. From there they crossed into what is now Arizona. The first water supply out of El Carrizal was at Aguaje de la Luna (Heart Tank), as Kino names it, because of its striking appearance in the moonlight.

The next water stop was at Tinajas Altas (High Tanks) where a few Papago lived from time to time. Kino then went on to Las Tinajas, 15 miles southwest of Wellton. They reached the Gila finally west of the present town of Wellton at a place they called San Pedro.

On the return trip in 1700, Kino climbed the heights at Tinajas Altas and searched the landscape with his telescope to confirm his previous conclusion that Baja California was a peninsula and not an island.

In 1701, Kino and his party built a "road" to the high tanks for the animals by filling in crevices with stones. The stones are there still. At Las Tinajas in 1702 Kino saw a comet.

Father Francisco Garces came this way from Sonoita in 1771.

In 1774 Juan Bautista de Anza, in command at the Spanish outpost of Tubac, was commissioned to find a land route to California. Anza followed much of the trail blazed by Kino. He, too, had trouble making the water in the few tanks available to the stock. At one time, the animals were without water for 54 miles and 46 hours. All of the tanks showed signs that the Papago camped there in the dry season to hunt big horn sheep. At one tank Anza was told that the Papago save the sheep horns and pile them near the water holes in order to keep the air from leaving. If the horns should be removed, the air would escape and make trouble for everyone, somewhat like the spirits of Pandora's box.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See attached sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3,000

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,2	274600	3551800	B	1,2	275200	3550650
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,2	274300	355175	D	1,2	274450	3551600
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The proposed National Register district is a 1/2 mile strip on either side of the trail as marked on the USGS map. The marking of the trail is, to some extent, arbitrary. Since much of the land traversed is open country, travelers frequently struck out on some new trail more or less parallel to the main route. This is particularly true of the trail between the border and the O'Neill Hills. This portion has been omitted since no

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
		Pima	019
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
		Yuma	027

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Marjorie Wilson, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Arizona State Parks

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

1688 West Adams Street,

TELEPHONE

(602) 271-4174

CITY OR TOWN

Phoenix

STATE

Arizona

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Dorothy A. Hall

TITLE

S.H.P.O.

DATE

10-12-76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST *Bill Labovich*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE *12/1/78*
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE *Nov 30, 1978*

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The first stop, El Carrizal, is 23 miles west of Sonoita, Mexico. The place is now called Agua Salada because of the bad water, but it was the last running water until the Gila, over 100 miles away.

About 10 miles from El Carrizal, the trail crossed the now Arizona border line approximately one and one half miles west of boundary marker #177. It then passed through the south portion of the O'Neill Hills in a pass called Puerto Blanco. The O'Neill Hills were named for a prospector, David L. O'Neill, who died in the hills and was buried there in 1916.

The trail then led along the west side of the Sierra Pinta: Heart Tank is the first water out of El Carrizal but is difficult to reach and inaccessible to stock. Therefore, the 49ers went west to Llanos del Tuzal (Plain of the Ground Squirrels) rather than northwest to Heart Tank. This led them up the east side of Tule Range to Tule Tanks between the Tule and Cabeza Prieta Mountains. The lower tank is often dry, and the upper ones are small "bowl-sized," but farther up the canyon is one containing about 100 gallons.

Tule Tank does not have permanent water, but 3 miles east is Tule Well which was first dug in the 1850s by a Mexican who hoped to sell water to travelers. He abandoned the place after two years, but the well was cleaned out in the 1890s when the United States resurveyed the Mexican boundary.

About 25 miles southeast of Tule Tank is a wide adobe flat which acts as a sink to collect runoff from the hills. Here the mesquite trees thrive, and during the wet season water can be obtained from the charcos dug in the adobe.

The Anza expedition took a route which led them to Tinajas de la Purificacion (Cabeza Prieta Tanks). The largest tank in this group was approximately 14 feet in diameter and 5-6 feet deep. Altogether, the 6 tanks probably hold about 5,000 gallons of water and are almost always full as rains occur often enough to nullify evaporation. There is much volcanic rock in this area, and Cabeza Prieta (Dark Head) is named for its striking appearance: pale granite topped with dark lava.

The next water is at Tinajas Altas, unless, like Anza, one digs pozos in the sand of the Lechuguilla Desert. Pozos de en Medio is in an arroyo

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and is often called Coyote Water because coyotes sometimes dig for water trapped by the clay bed underneath the sand. It is sometimes necessary to dig about 4 feet for the water, which has an unpleasant taste.

Tinajas Altas (in the mountain range of the same name) is a series of tanks cut by water in dense tilted granite. Together, 9 major tanks hold 8-10,000 gallons, the distance between the top and bottom tanks being about 500 feet. The lowest tank is usually filled with sand, but it is possible to dig for water. The higher tanks are difficult to reach, and numbers of travelers lost their lives through lack of strength to climb to them. At one time, there was steel cable to assist climbers to the second and third tanks. The water is usually liberally spiced with dead bees, and there is always the possibility of pollution from drowned mountain sheep. Raphael Pumpelly, arriving at Tinajas Altas by moonlight in 1862 with Charles Poston found the trail to the water lined with the ghostly mummified carcasses of horses, sheep, and cattle. His pack animals took fright and bolted. Carl Lumholtz in 1912 counted 54 graves at the site.

The tanks had been an Indian campground for many centuries. There are hundreds of bedrock metates, 128 in one rock alone, some of them a foot or more in depth. They are used for grinding mesquite beans. Nearby there are petroglyphs and pictographs.

The top of the ridge just east of Tinajas Altas was leveled in the 1940s and used as a check post against hoof and moth disease. This action obliterated many of the pioneer graves.

The next water was at Las Tinajas (Dripping Springs) 15 miles southwest of Wellton. Kino thought the tanks here looked like baptismal fonts.

The Camino is clearly visible and, though still dangerous, attracts a variety of desert rats, prospectors, rockhounds, and border patrolmen. Permits must be obtained from the Border Patrol, and most of the desolate area is closed, because it is in the Luke Air Force Range or the Cabeza Prieta National Game Range. Near the Mexican border, the trail becomes a crisscross of roads frequently used by Mexican Nationals in the search for large trees for use in carving and for firewood.

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At one spot in the Lechuguilla Desert, Anza's men successfully dug pozos in the sand and found water. After crossing this desert, Anza departed from Kino's trail and went up the west, rather than the east, side of the mountains toward the Gila.

On this expedition, Anza found most of the Yuma Indians, who frequented the area of the Colorado River, to be friendly, an essential condition if a trail to California were to be maintained.

The success of the first expedition led to Anza's commission in 1775 to lead a group of colonists and soldiers over the same route in order to establish a colony at Monterey and a presidio at San Francisco. This was accomplished, and Anza returned over the trail in 1776, traveling at night much of the time.

When the Yuma Indians rose against the Spanish in 1781, Pedro Fages led 64 ransomed settlers back to Sonora over the Camino.

After the Yuma Rebellion, the trail was closed and seldom used until the 1840s and 1850s. The California Gold Rush attracted a stream of people, many of whom returned discouraged along the same route. Scores of others died on the way. The boundary survey of 1855 found the road marked by the bones and carcasses of horses and cattle and met many disappointed gold-seekers returning from California.

In March of 1857 Henry A. Crabb led his ill-advised and ill-fated filibustering expedition from San Francisco to Caborca over the Camino. There were 89 in the party which lost several mules and horses on the way.

In the 1860s the Gold Rush was to the Gila and Colorado River mining camps, and the casualties continued. The boundary survey of the 1890s counted 65 graves in one 30-mile stretch. By the 1870s, the trail was seldom used, because the safer (though longer) Santa Cruz-Gila River route was preferred.

The Camino del Diablo strengthened and increased the Spanish foothold in California at a crucial time. It provided an Apache-free trail to the California goldfields in the 1850s and to the Gila and Colorado mines in the 1860s. As other routes became safer and faster, it was abandoned as a major route. In 1854 with the Gadsden Purchase, it became a part of the

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Arizona Territory. Since the establishment of the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge (1939) and the Luke Air Force Gunnery Range (1941-1942), public use is by permit only.

Recently Mexico established the Pinacate National Park adjacent to the subject areas.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

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CONTINUATION SHEET Geographical D. ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

path is more clearly marked than any other in this area. The latter part of the trail, from Tinajas Altas to Wellton, is similarly vague and no attempt has been made to mark it here. In addition, there are variations between the O'Neill Hills and Tinajas Altas. Some travelers, for example, detoured to Heart Tank and Coyote Water, most did not.

The UTM references are for the "beginning" of the trail (near the border) and the "end" of the trail (at Tinajas Altas) and Tule Well.