

## EXPLORING AND TRADING ACROSS TEXAS

European Explorers, Native American Traders, El Camino Real, Missions & Forts,  
Stage Routes, Railroads, Highways

### Purpose:

- To identify historical routes of exploration and trade
- To recognize patterns of movement on the landscape over time
- To describe physical features in Texas that served as barriers and corridors for exploration, trade, and travel across Texas.
- To determine the physical characteristics of the landscapes that shape human patterns of movement over time

### TEKS Standards

#### *Grade 4 Social Studies*

(2) History. The student understands the causes and effects of European exploration and colonization of Texas and North America. The student is expected to (B) identify the accomplishments and explain the impact of significant explorers, including Cabeza de Vaca; Francisco Coronado; and René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, on the settlement of Texas; (C) explain when, where, and why the Spanish established settlements and Catholic missions in Texas as well as important individuals such as José de Escandón.

(8) Geography. The student understands the location and patterns of settlement and the geographic factors that influence where people live. The student is expected to (A) identify and explain clusters and patterns of settlement in Texas at different time periods such as prior to the Texas Revolution, after the building of the railroads, and following World War II; (C) explain the geographic factors such as landforms and climate that influence patterns of settlement and the distribution of population in Texas, past and present.

#### *Grade 7 Social Studies*

(1) History. The student understands traditional historical points of reference in Texas history. The student is expected to (A) identify the major eras in Texas history, describe their defining characteristics, and explain why historians divide the past into eras,

(8) Geography. The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data. The student is expected to (A) create and interpret thematic maps, graphs, charts, models, and databases representing various aspects of Texas during the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries

(9) Geography. The student understands the location and characteristics of places and regions of Texas. The student is expected to (A) locate the Mountains and Basins, Great Plains, North Central Plains, and Coastal Plains regions and places of importance in Texas during the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries such as major cities, rivers, natural and historic landmarks, political and cultural regions, and local points of interest; (B) compare places and regions of Texas in terms of physical and human characteristics.

**Grade Levels:** 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>

**Suggested Time:** 1-2 class periods

**Materials:** Giant Traveling Map of Texas, chains, resource maps, vinyl markers, card holders, Texas Highway Maps for each group, cones for obstacles, maps (attached)

## Instructional Information

1. Start by placing the beginning spot for each team on the map (see site noted in *italics below*)
2. Note where it is in relation to at least one other landmark students can identify. Assign two teams to the giant map at a time to trace the routes while other groups determine where their route will go. To highlight changes over time, try to assign groups in approximate chronological order or eras (possible divisions: before 1700, 1700s, 1800-1850, 1850-1910).
3. If appropriate for the students, simplify the lesson by selecting fewer routes over fewer time periods.
4. The Giant Traveling Map and the Resource Maps for each group use very different scales. Some discussion of map reading and scale may be useful. If we need to see details, we have to zoom in from our giant map.
5. Some groups have more than one route. Groups/Routes:  
**Group #1 – Spanish and French Explorers** 1500s, 1600s, 1700s (Coronado, de Vaca, la Salle), need 3 small pieces of chain (*Amarillo, Corpus Christi, Galveston*); use rivers as reference points

**Group # 2 – Spanish El Camino Real** (*Nacogdoches*) (#3 map) and Spanish Camino Real through El Paso (El Paso) Note: use some Spanish Missions as reference points

**Group #3 – Native American Trade Routes: Comanche Trails** (Palo Duro Canyon) points may include *Big Spring, Chisos Mountains, Horsehead Crossing on Pecos*

**Group #4 – Butterfield Stage Route/Santa Fe Trail** (*Fort Stockton*), Gainesville, Jacksboro may be useful reference points, El Paso

**Group #5 – Railroads** major cities may be reference points

[\[http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/connections/\]](http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/connections/),

## Student Activity/Assessment

1. Each team will use a chain to trace one of the historical routes of travel and trade on the Giant Traveling Map of Texas.
2. Begin by placing a vinyl spot marker on the Giant Map to locate a beginning site for each of the routes. Each team will study one route.
3. Study the resource maps for your group to find out more about the route your team will mark.
4. Identify 3-5 points on the routes and locate them on the Giant Map of Texas. The points will help you trace the route more accurately. Use the chain to mark the route.
5. When you are finished, look closely at the route. What are some physical features on the route? Which ones did travelers try to avoid and which ones were necessary for a successful journey? Some examples of places people avoided: rugged mountainous areas, places with no water (or too much water), places with thick vegetation, enemy territory. Some examples of places people found helpful for their journey: water wells, missions and forts for supplies, protected routes. Put a cone on two places to avoid.

## Extension

1. When all routes have been marked on the map, use a map of Texas highways to locate the Interstates (IH-20, IH-30, IH-40, and IH-35). In what places do today's highways use routes similar to those in other times in history? Was that coincidence or shaped by the physical geography of Texas?
2. Write a paragraph that describes the route your team traced. In what era was this route mostly used? How does it compare to highway routes today?
3. Challenge: Here are six places that were used as landmarks by two or more historical routes. Can you locate them and explain why they were so important? Mark the routes, identify five spots along the route (bend in river, mountain, town)
  - a) Horsehead Crossing (Pecos), b) Big Spring, c) Chisos Mountains, d) Middle Concho River (Carlsbad), e) Eagles Pass, f) San Antonio de Bexar

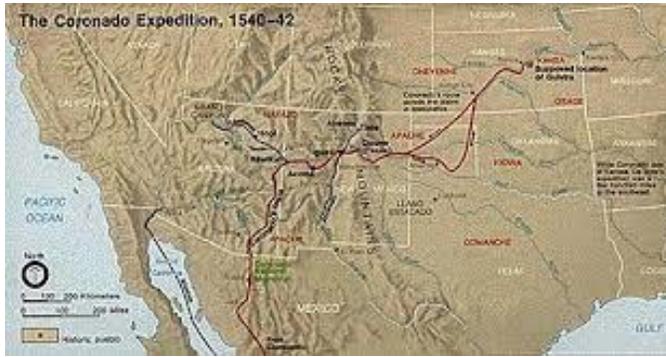
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Data Recording Sheet

Name of Route:					
Time period	Beginning Site	Three other sites on route	Places to Avoid	Places that Help	Fact about the route
<p>Write a paragraph that describes the route your team traced. In what era was this route mostly used? How does it compare to highway routes today?</p>					

## Resource Maps

### Group #1 Explorers



[https://www.nature.nps.gov/geology/parks/coro/images/coro\\_trail.jpg](https://www.nature.nps.gov/geology/parks/coro/images/coro_trail.jpg)

### Group #2 El Camino Real

#### El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail



[http://www.nps.gov/elte/planyourvisit/upload/20110316\\_ELTE\\_Overview\\_Map.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/elte/planyourvisit/upload/20110316_ELTE_Overview_Map.pdf)

Texas Missions



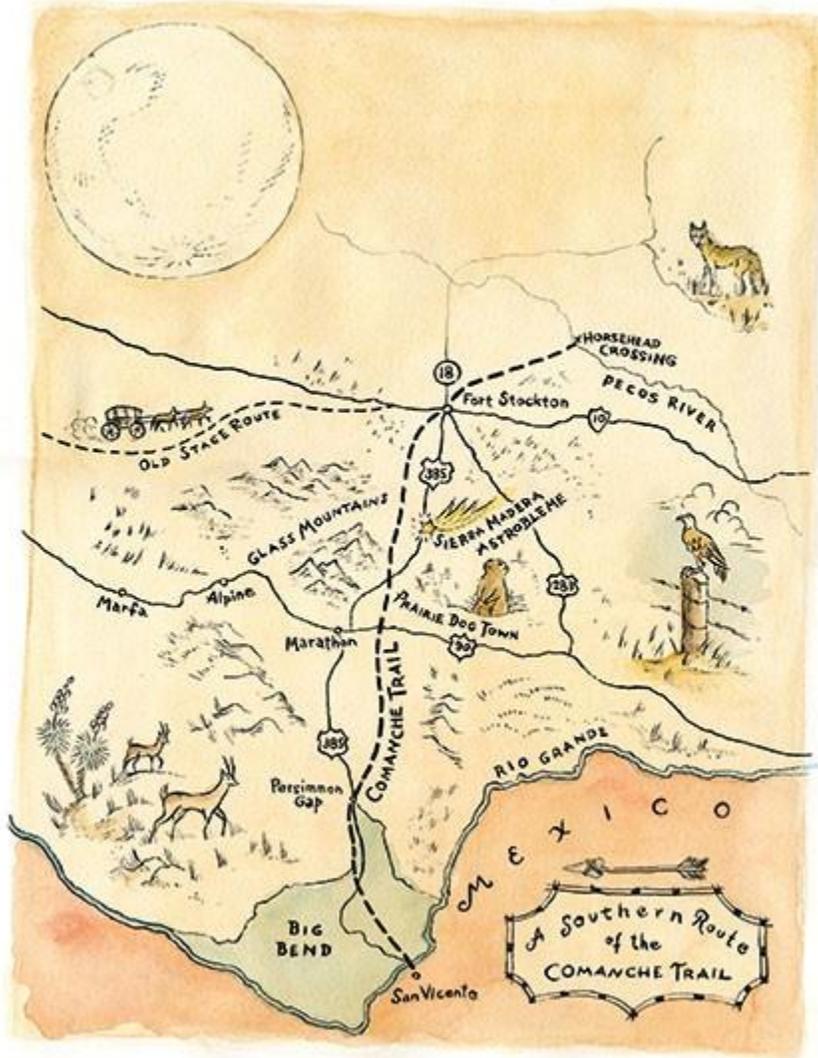
<http://texasalmanac.com/sites/default/files/images/Missions.pdf>

Spanish Missions and Presidios



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish\\_missions\\_in\\_Texas#/media/File:Spanish\\_Missions\\_in\\_Texas.JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spanish_missions_in_Texas#/media/File:Spanish_Missions_in_Texas.JPG)

Group #3 Comanche



<http://www.texashighways.com/culture-lifestyle/item/7583-under-the-comanche-moon>



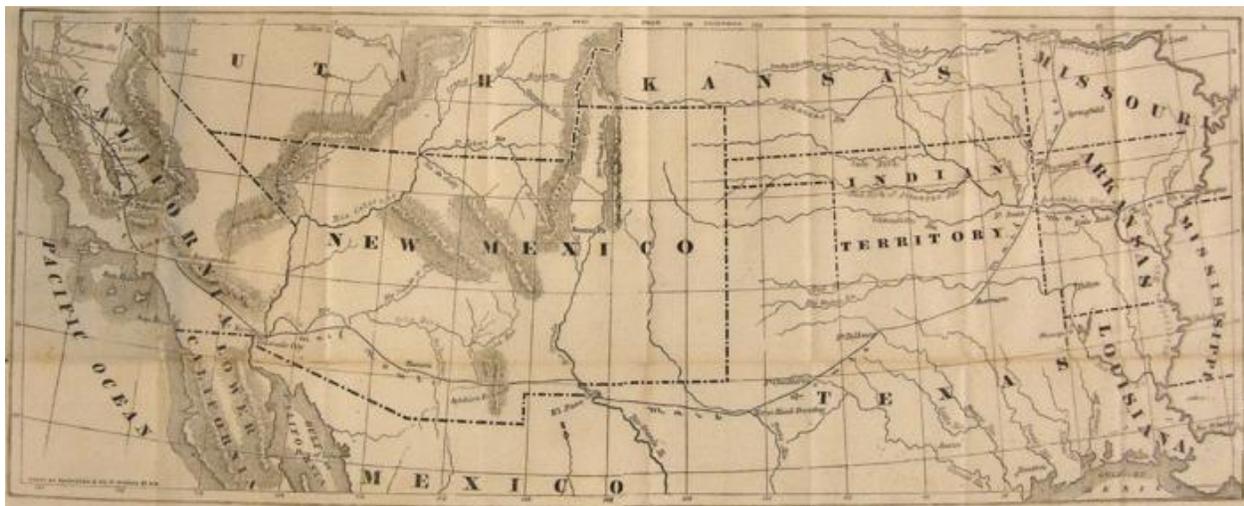
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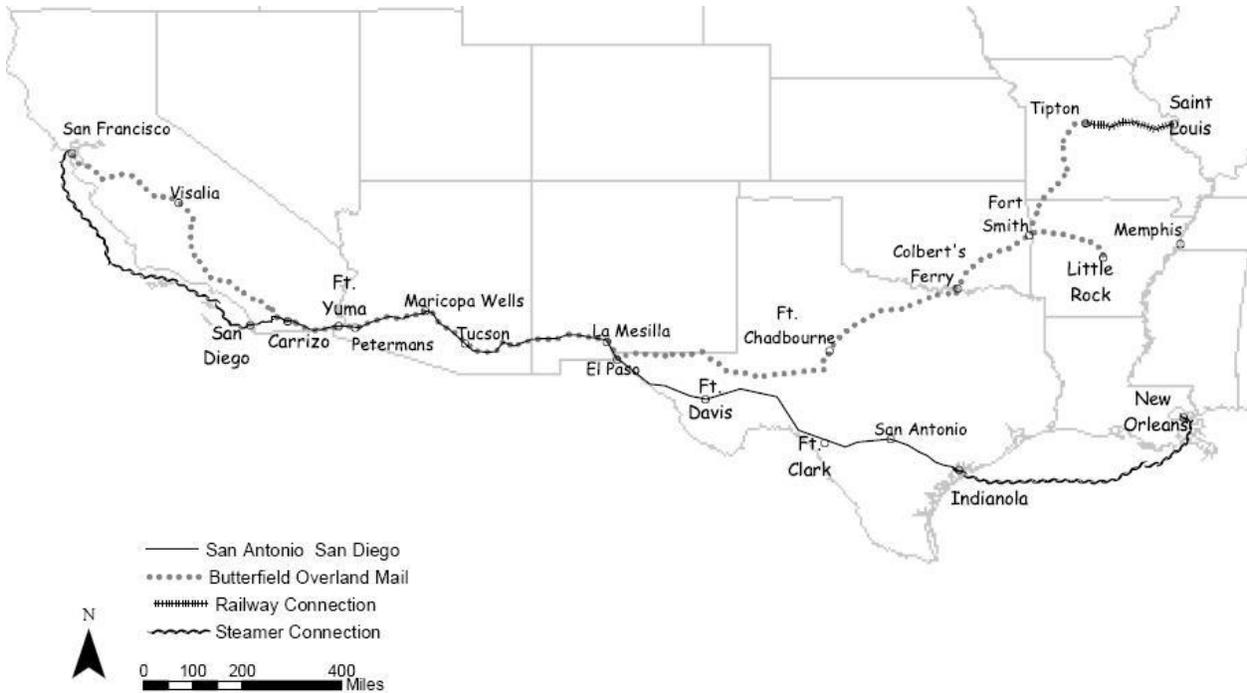
Group #4 Stage Route/Santa Fe Trail



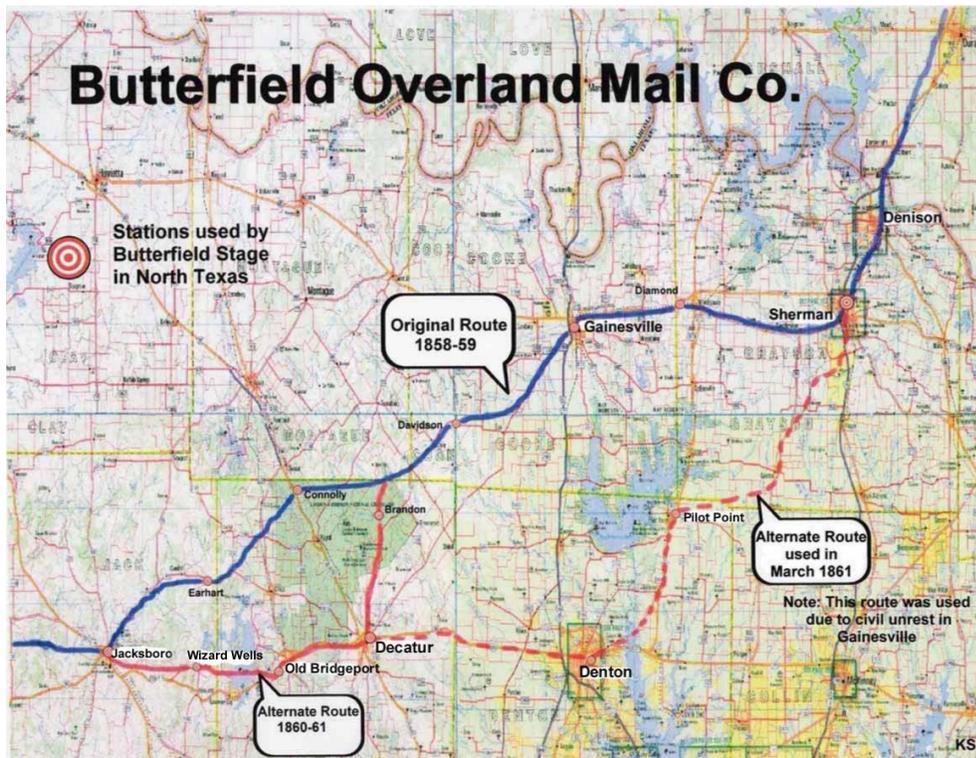
<http://www.santafetrail.org/images/trail-map1.jpg>



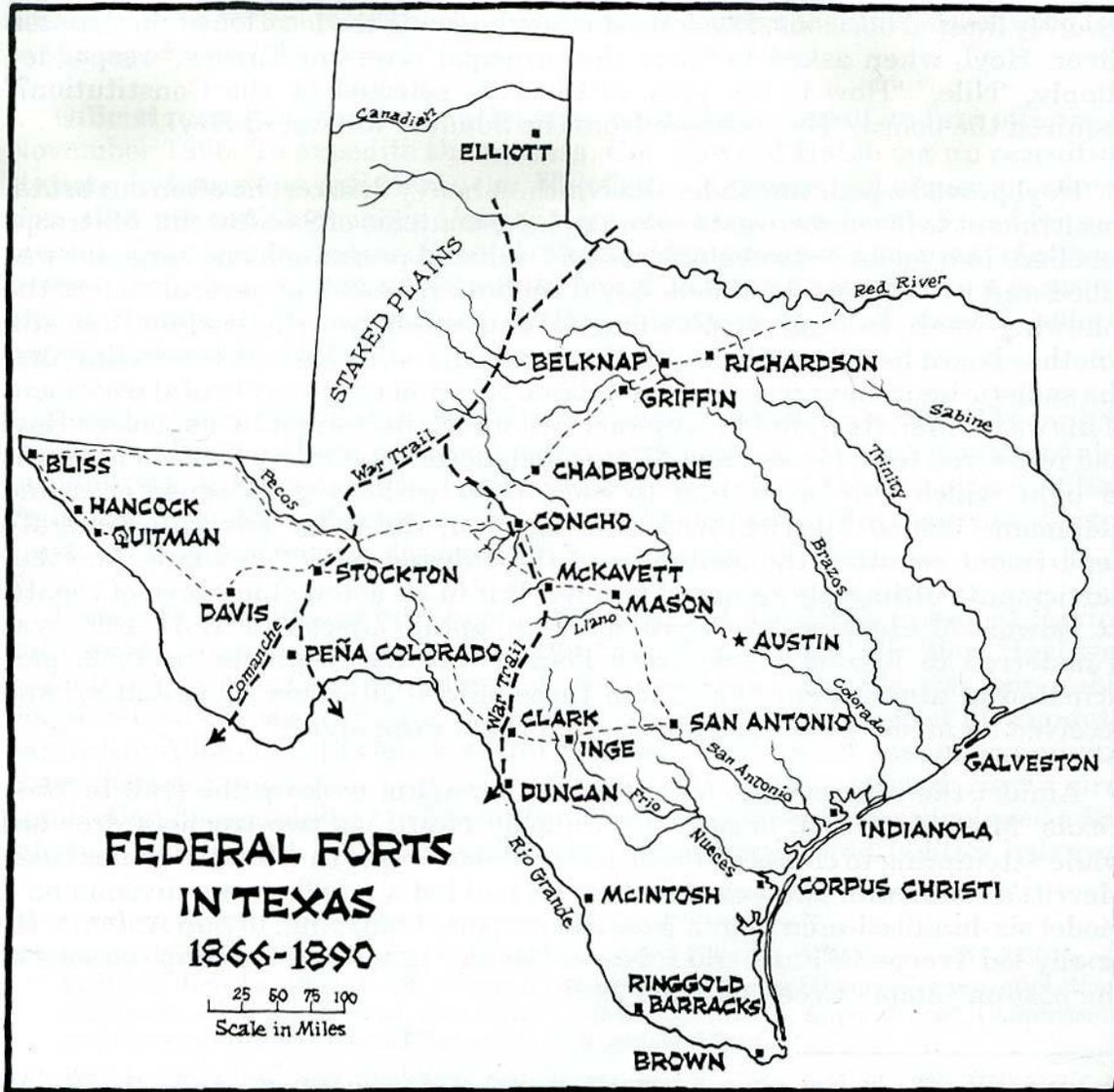
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[http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/22491/images/routes\\_san\\_antonio\\_san\\_diego\\_butterfield\\_overland\\_mail\\_map.jpg](http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/22491/images/routes_san_antonio_san_diego_butterfield_overland_mail_map.jpg)

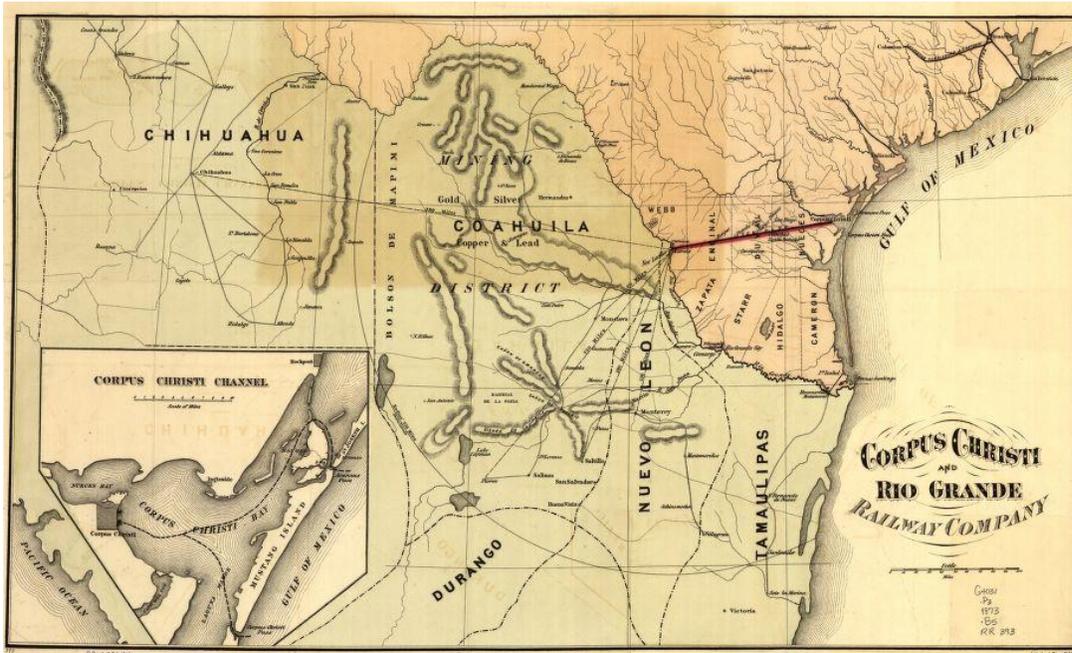


<http://www.bridgeportxhistorical.org/Images/Butterfield%20Stage%20Days/North%20Texas%20Stage%20Routes.jpg>

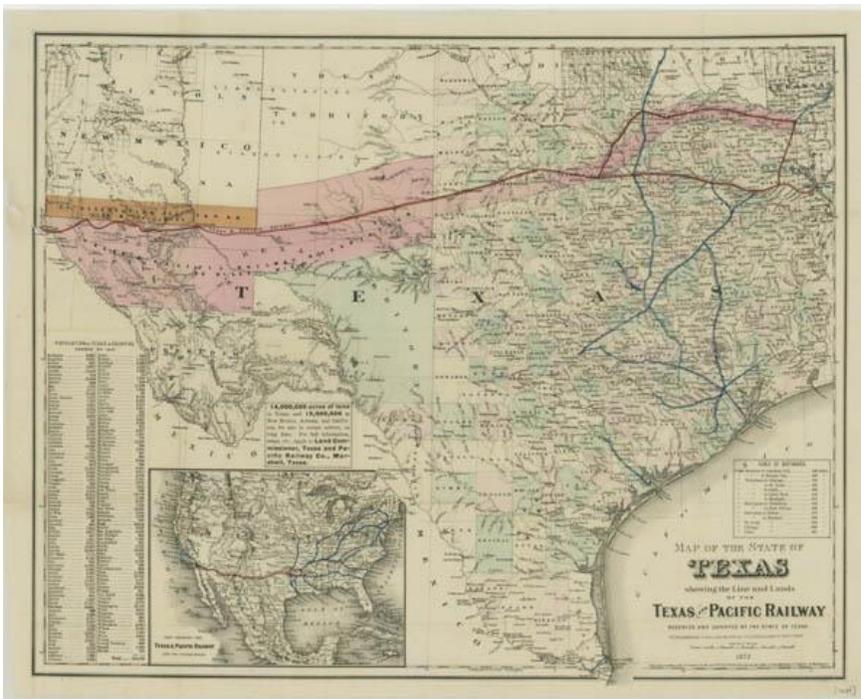


[https://lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/tex\\_fedforts\\_1848.jpg](https://lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/tex_fedforts_1848.jpg)

Group #5 Railroads

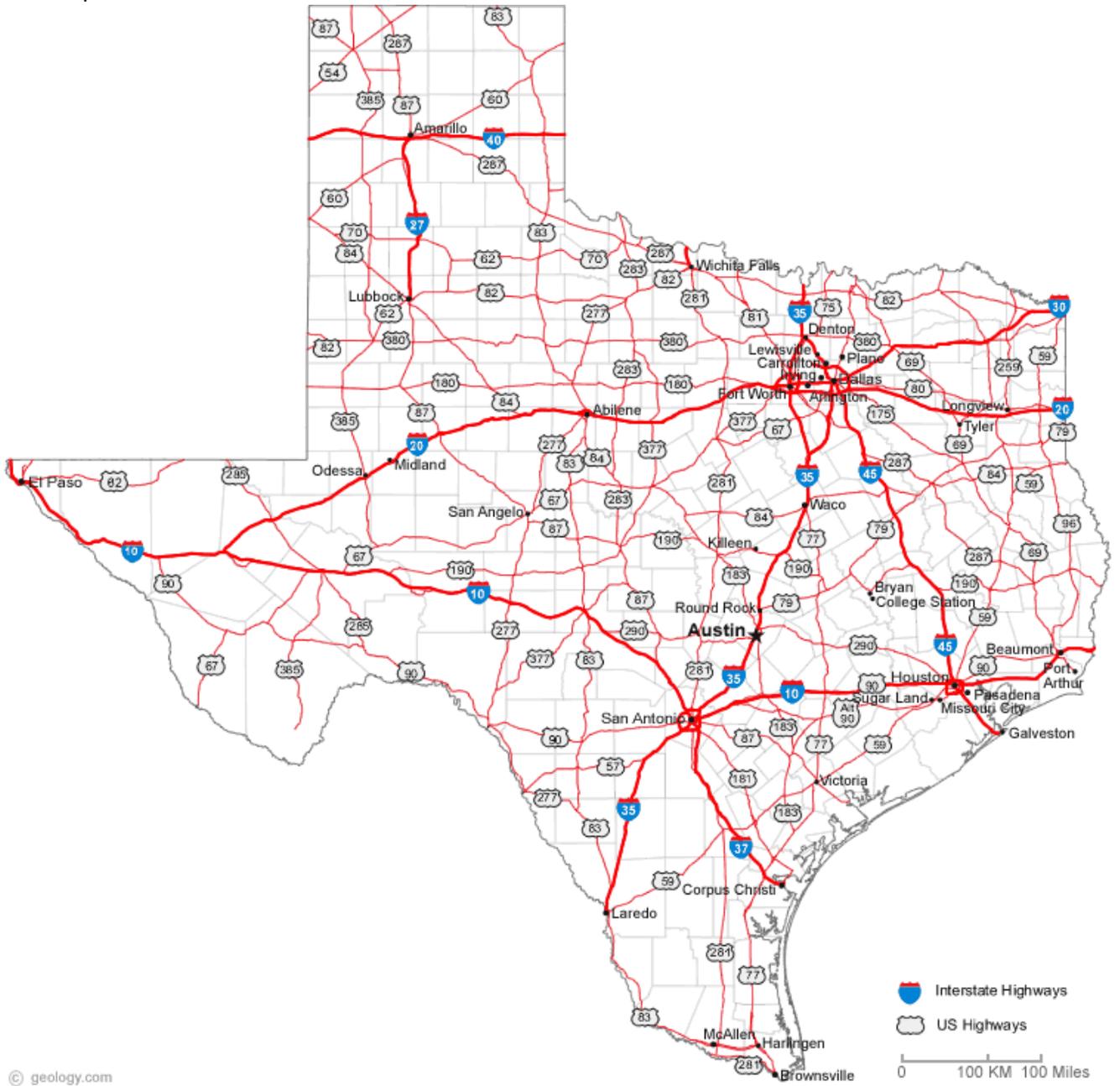


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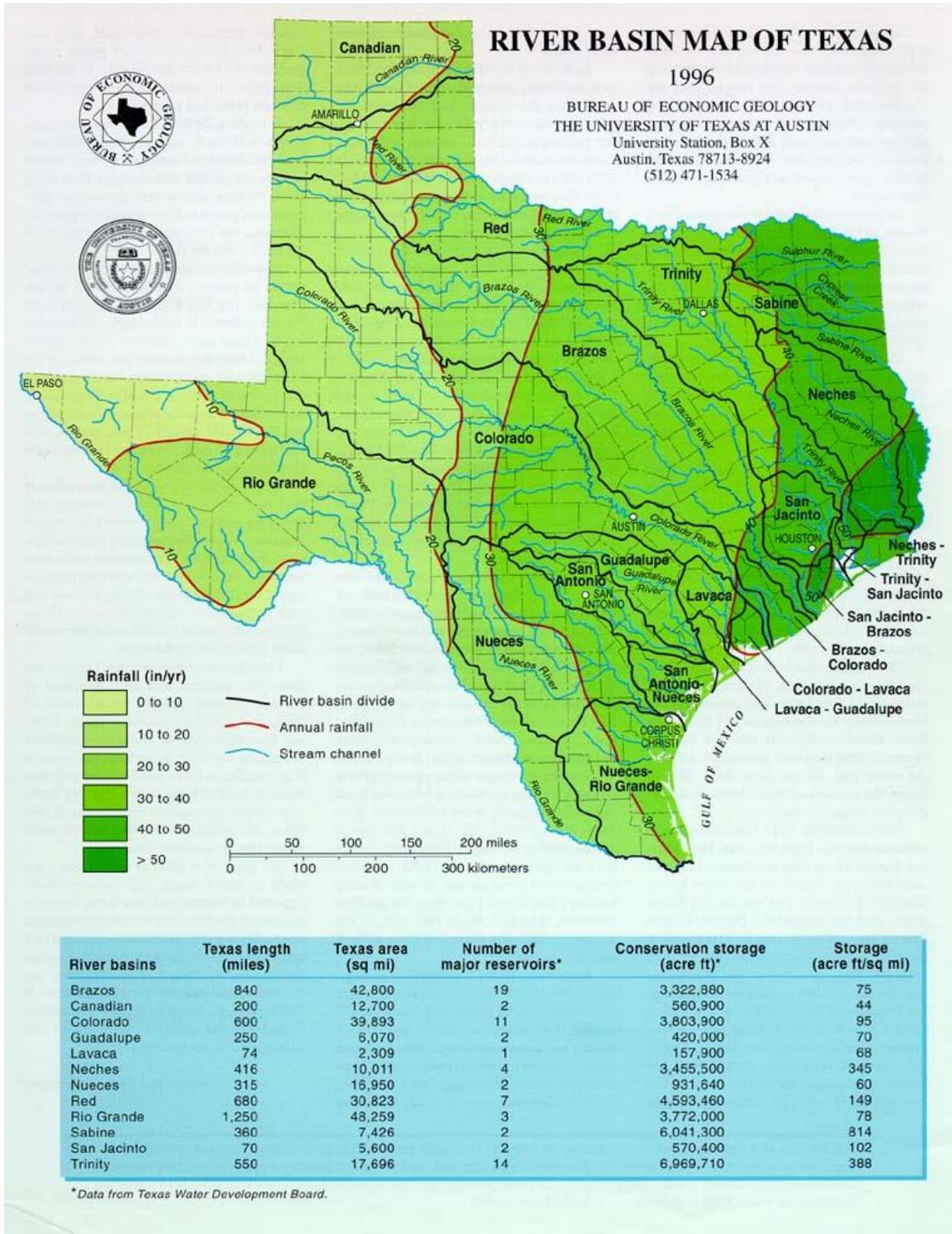
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All Groups



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<http://geology.com/state-map/maps/texas-road-map.gif>



<https://www.lib.utexas.edu/d7/sites/default/files/branch/geology/river-basin-map-of-texas-1996.jpg>