

**Our Purpose:** To Establish federal designation of the Pike National Historic Trail A Charitable nonprofit organization [zebulonpike.org](http://zebulonpike.org)



## Annual Member and Board Meeting- April 22 & 23, 2010 [Thurs & Fri]

The Pike NHT Association Annual Meeting will be held at the Royal Gorge's Bighorn Mountaintop Lodge outside Cañon City, Colorado on Friday April 23rd. Please contact the Association with confirmation - 303/816-7424.

We plan to arrive on Thursday afternoon to share a meal and warm conversation.

There will be an evening presentation and lively debate regarding Pike legislation and Pike Interpretive sites.

Lodging will be available that evening in the warm Lodge. We had a wonderful experience in this facility last year!



## Pike National Historic Trail letter We received this open support letter.

I strongly support the Pike National Historic Trail as our next National Historic Trail.

My purpose here is to introduce the public effort to establish the **Pike National Historic Trail** as a National Historic Trail. The steps to accomplish establishment begins with Feasibility Study legislation. Future Pike legislation would seek to accomplish connecting of undesignated portions of the 1806-7 Pike Southwest Expedition with 5 existing, designated National Historic Trails with which it would be contiguous for 53% of the Pike route. The **Pike National Historic Trail** will be a remarkable, multi-use trail accessible to urban and rural areas alike in America's Great Plains and Southwest.

The National Trails System currently has two categories of significant long-distance trails which are the National Historic Trails [currently 19 of them] and National Scenic Trails [currently 11 of them]. The National Recreational Trails are a third class of shorter trails.

The **Pike National Historic Trail**, like all 19 National Historic trails would not be placed on the actual Pike path to protect it's historic, educational and cultural aspects. All National Historic Trails utilize already existing right-of-ways on public lands and public roads to travel to view different sites rather than wagon ruts or path. The costs of National Historic Trails, therefore, have historically been low.

The **Pike National Historic Trail** will include National Park hiking trails, National Forest logging roads, sections of other historic routes, country roads, and small town sidewalks all coordinated to create a Pike 'living tour' for the recreational and touring public.

Americans have enjoyed using our nation's trail system for more than 42 years for outdoor recreation, exercise, educational pursuits, historic study and preservation, and general enjoyment of the natural beauty our country has to offer. Numbers of studies have shown that there is a positive impact on quality of life, real estate property values, small businesses, tourism, and even some corporate relocations with the presence of trails close to or easily available to people.

The **Pike National Historic Trail** will connect people to large and small towns, historic sites and natural wonders near the route Zebulon Montgomery Pike explored in 1806-7. It will provide millions of people greater access to the Nat. Trail Sys. that can be utilized for any period of time. Educators will enjoy resources being made available to interpret Pike sites.

**Pike Explores the Valley**

When Zebulon Montgomery Pike explored the valley in 1806-7, he discovered a rich and diverse landscape. The valley is a treasure trove of history, culture, and natural beauty. Today, the valley is a thriving community with a rich heritage and a bright future. The valley is a place where history and nature meet, and where the past is always present.

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The time has come to recognize Pike for his amazing accomplishments. The time has come to expand the national trails system with the establishment of the **Pike National Historic Trail**, linking community to community and providing trail users the opportunity to journey into the heart of all that is uniquely American--its culture, heritage, landscape, and spirit.

**Please send your letter of Support- All you have to say is:**  
**"I support the establishment of the Pike National Historic Trail."**  
**to:** The Pike National Historic Trail Association  
 10060 Blue Sky Trail Conifer, CO 80433

The Pike NHT Association is assembling an inventory of known Pike sites and memorials AND potential sites. The Bicentennial celebration heralded community efforts to remember Pike and memorialize his 1806 Expedition. New sites are now being erected. Volunteers are improving existing sites and new proposals are being made. New Pike commemorative plaques [one of which is pictured on page 1] were recently placed near the Christmas site by the Collegiate Peaks Byway as well as over 30 in or near the Wet Mountain Valley, CO. Proposed Pike sites are being forwarded in the Arkansas watershed. **Please help us in this effort by emailing [harv.pike@gmail.com](mailto:harv.pike@gmail.com) with your list of existing or potential sites.**

Zebulon Pike's 1810 Report on New Spain's Mexico  
 ZEBULON MONTGOMERY PIKE'S REPORT ON THE INTERNAL PROVINCES OF NEW SPAIN, 1810. PART 1  
 Originally published in El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Association's [Carta] *Chronicles* V3#3 Summer 2007 by Leo E. Oliva, editor Santa Fe Trail Association Quarterly, *Wagon Tracks*, and member of the Pike Bicentennial Commission.

INTRODUCTION

Zebulon Montgomery Pike provided detailed reports of his two exploring expeditions [Mississippi and SW] to Secretary of War Henry Dearborn in January 1808. The journals and reports were published in 1810 under the lengthy title, *An Account of Expeditions to the Sources of the Mississippi, and Through the Western Parts of Louisiana, to the Sources of the Arkansas, Kans, La Platte, and Pierre Joun, Rivers; Performed by Order of the Government of the United States During the Years 1805, 1806, and 1807, and a Tour Through the Interior Parts of New Spain, When Conducted Through These Provinces, By Order of the Captain-General, in the year 1807.*

An appendix to the journals, portions of which are reprinted here (in two parts in this and the next issue and in future NM & TX articles), include Pike's report on the "Internal Provinces" of New Spain. Selections from this appendix, especially the sections with information on Chihuahua, and Durango, along with "general remarks," are reprinted. The text is from the 1810 edition.

It is important to remember that Pike and his small band of soldiers were taken by Spanish troops from their winter stockade on the Rio Conejos, tributary of the Rio Grande, near present Alamosa, Colorado, in February 1807. Pike believed he was on the headwaters of the Red River because of the incorrect maps he carried, showing the Red River rising in the Rocky Mountains between the Arkansas and Rio Grande. When told he was on the Rio Grande, Pike requested of New Mexico Governor Joaquín Real de Alencaster that his party be escorted directly to the Red River and not taken to Santa Fe. That request was denied, and Pike and his men were escorted to Santa Fe and beyond to Chihuahua to meet there with Commandant-General Nemesio Salcedo. From there Pike and a portion of his troops were escorted across Texas to the U.S. post at Natchitoches, Louisiana, where they arrived July 1, 1807. Several of Pike's soldiers were detained in New Spain for a longer period of time. Pike saw the major settlements throughout the provinces he traveled in northern New Spain. For four months Pike was a guest of Spanish officials and parish priests, some of whom provided him with detailed information about the geography, economy, population, culture, and military force of the region. With that information, Pike provided reports on areas and people (especially Indian tribes) he had not visited and included detailed reports on the army and religion. Clearly,

Provinces and places.	Disciplined and regular European troops.			Regular troops of the country.			Militia with regular field offic. and under pay.			Probable Armed citizens.	
	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Infantry.	Fire arms	Bows, arrows, and lances
	Xalapa Ina. Vera Cruz, Vera Cruz and sea ports, Mexico,	200	800	2000	2000	.	.	3000	.	1000	.
Different provinces and vicerealty, New Mexico,	1000	.	.	.	.	.	1000	3400	1000	.	.
Biscay,	.	.	.	1100	.	.	.	.	.	15000	80000
Senora,	.	.	.	900	.	200	.	.	.	10000	40000
Sinaloa,	.	.	.	100	.	.	.	.	.	5000	8000
Cogquilla,	.	.	.	400	.	.	.	.	.	5000	8000
Texas,	.	.	.	488	.	.	.	.	.	1000	2000
Total	1000	1000	4000	5088	.	.	1200	7000	1000	30500	109000

European	Cavalry.	Artillery.	Infantry.	Cavalry,	13088
Regular troops Mex.	5088	.	1200	Artillery,	2000
Trained militia,	7000	1000	3000	Infantry,	8200
Total	13088	2000	8200	Total	23288 disciplined and effective force.
					30500 undisciplined militia.
					109000 bow, arrow, and lance men.
					162788 total force.

Chart copied from Pike, Appendix III, p. 40.

report, just as Pike did. Pike reported to General Wilkinson, soon after his arrival at Natchitoches, "I have been able to collect (I make bold to assert) a correct account of their military force, regular and irregular; also, important and interesting information on geographical situations, political sentiments,

much of what Pike described came from Spanish officials and clergy who apparently had few reservations about sharing such information with an officer of the U. S. Army. Spanish officers who had fought against the Apaches regaled Pike with stories of battles in which they or their comrades had engaged, and they provided details about the organization and strength of the army in New Spain. From conversations with priests, Pike predicted that the clergy would provide leadership for an independence movement, and this proved to be the case in less than five years after he was there. Pike's reports show much more interest in the independence of Mexico from Spain than any thought of the United States conquering the territory. Because Pike clearly encouraged Mexican independence, it is no wonder that Spanish officials were alarmed by his reports and feared an invading force from the United States would arrive in northern New Spain at any time. General James Wilkinson had sent Pike on his western exploring expedition with these instructions: "In the course of your tour, you are to remark particularly upon the geographical structure, the natural history and population of the country through which you may pass. . .?" Any army officer, given those instructions and escorted through large portions of northern New Spain, would have prepared a

and dispositions of the people of every class, manners, arts, resources, riches, revenues, value and productions of their mines, situation, &c.”<sup>3</sup>

This was important information for the United States because Pike was the first representative of the government to witness and report on conditions in the “internal provinces.” What he reported, although it seems quite sketchy and occasionally misinformed when compared to later reports, stimulated interest in trade with New Mexico and settlement in Texas, both of which began successfully in 1821, the year Mexico won independence from Spain and, at least partly because of Pike, welcomed these contacts with U.S. citizens. Facundo Melgares, a lieutenant in the Spanish army when Pike was in New Spain in 1807 and with whom Pike became a good friend, was governor of New Mexico in November 1821 when he welcomed William Becknell and five companions from Missouri to trade in Santa Fe. The Santa Fe Trail, which became an important link to El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, quickly became an international route of commerce.

Pike’s report provided the first information by an official observer to be published in the United States. His observations on trade and commerce quickly stimulated commercial ventures from the Missouri Valley to New Mexico, all of which failed until Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821. This makes Pike’s report on the “internal provinces” a significant historical document, a foundation piece in the relationship between Mexico and the United States that eventually saw the development of the Santa Fe trade after 1821 (which extended into other interior provinces via El Camino Real), settlement of Texas that led to independence (1836) and statehood (1845), and the war between the U.S. and Mexico (1846-1848) by which the U.S. acquired more than half of Mexico. Thus the importance of Pike’s report on the “internal provinces” (New Mexico, Biscay, Sonora, Coahuila, Sinaloa, and Texas, with “general remarks on New Spain”), of which the sections on New Mexico, Biscay, Texas, and “general remarks” are reprinted here as they appeared in 1810. The omitted sections about Sonora, Coahuila, and Sinaloa are very sketchy and contain information similar to what appears in the other parts. Pike’s reports are reprinted with original spelling and inserts and corrections are in brackets.

**Biscay, present states of Durango and Chihuahua**

**Geography.**—Biscay lies between 33° and 24° N. latitude and 105° and 111° W. longitude, is bounded on the north by New Mexico, on the west by Senora and Sinaloa, and on the east by New Leon and Cogquilla. It is 600 miles in length from northwest to south-east, and 400 miles in width from east to west, taking it at its greatest extent.

**Air and Climate.**—The air is dry and the heat very great at that season of the year, which precedes the rainy season, which commences in June and continues until September by light showers. During the other part of the year there is not the least rain or snow to moisten the earth. The atmosphere had therefore become so electrified, that when we halted at night, in taking off our blankets the electric fluid would almost cover them with sparks, and in Chihuahua we prepared a bottle with gold-leaf, as a receiver, and collection sufficient of the electric fluid from a bear-skin to give a considerable shock to a number of persons. This phenomenon was more conspicuous in the vicinity of Chihuahua than in any other part that we passed over.

**Mines and Minerals.**—This province abounds in silver and gold mines, which yield an immense quantity of those metals, but not so great a revenue to the king as those which are nearer the mint, and consequently present a greater facility to coinage. I am not acquainted with the proportion of the metals which the mineral yields in any instance, except in one of the silver mines at Chihuahua, which belonged to a friend of mine, who informed me that his mine yielded him 13 1-2 dollars per cwt. I one day, with Robinson, went through many of these furnaces and noticed the manner which they pursued in analyzing the mineral and extracting the metals, but, as I had previously asked several Spanish officers to accompany me, who had always declined or deferred it to a future period, I conceived it probable it was too delicate a subject to make a minute inquiry into. I, however, so far observed the process as to learn that the mineral was brought from the mines in bags, on mules, to the furnace: it was then ground or pounded into small lumps, not more than the size of a nut, and precipitated into water, in a sieve which permitted the smaller particles to escape into a tub, through several progressive operations. From the small particles which remained at the bottom of the tubs, after it had been purified of the earthy qualities, there was a proportion of metal extracted by a nicer process; but the larger parts were put into a furnace similar to our iron furnaces, and when it was in a state of fusion, it was let out into a bed of sand prepared for it which formed it into bars about the size of our common pig iron, averaged in value at about 2,500 dollars. The gold was cast into a mould similar to a bowl and stamped, as was each bar of silver, by the king’s assayer [assayer] of metals, with its value. They were worth from 8 to 10,000 dollars. These masses of silver and gold are then received into the king’s treasury in payment, and in fact have a currency through the kingdom; but there are vast speculations made on the coinage, as people who have not large capitals prefer selling their bullion, in the internal provinces, at a considerable discount, to being obliged to transport it to Mexico, in order to have it converted into specie. The present C— — —, I was informed, was engaged in this traffic, on which, from the province of Senora, he sometimes made 25 per cent. Numbers of the proprietors who have no immediate use for their bullion put it into their cellars, where it remains piled up for their posterity, of no service to themselves or the community. There are at Chihuahua and its vicinity fifteen mines, thirteen silver, one gold, and one copper, the furnaces of all of which are situated round the town and suburbs, and present, except on Sundays, volumes of smoke arising to the eye in every direction, which can be seen from a distance long before the spires of the city strike the view. It is incredible the quantity of cinders which surround the city in piles ten to fifteen feet high: next [to] the creek they have formed a bank of it to check the encroachments of the stream, and it presents an effectual barrier. [Continued in the March Newsletter Oliva- Part 2]

RANK.	Amount of pay per annum. Dollars.	REMARKS.
Colonel,	4,500	With this pay they find their own clothes, provisions, arms, accoutrements, &c. after the first equipments.
Lieutenant Colonel,	4,000	
Major,	3,000	
Captain,	2,400	
First Lieutenant,	1,500	
Second Lieutenant,	1,000	
Ensign,	800	
Sergeant,	350	
Corporal,	300	
Private,	200	

Chart copied from Pike, Appendix III, p. 43.

Sources 1. Zebulon M. Pike, *An Account...*; (Philadelphia: C. & A. Conrad, 1810.)  
 2. James Wilkinson to Zebulon M. Pike, June 24, 1806, *ibid.*, 108. 3. Pike to Wilkinson, July 5, 1807, *ibid.*, Appendix to Part III, 60.