

**TEXAS HERITAGE TRAILS PROGRAM**  
A PROGRAM OF THE TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The Texas Heritage Trails *are* “mission critical” in our treasured State of Texas, especially in our challenging economy. The 10 independent non-profit regional organizations that make up the Texas Heritage Trails Program work on community development and promote tourism across the state. These regionally-based organizations effectively and efficiently utilize public/private dollars.

The Texas Heritage Trails Program is a nationally recognized heritage tourism program: an effective and efficient regionally-based public/private partnership. In May of 2005, the Texas Heritage Trails Program received a *Preserve America* Presidential Award from President and Mrs. George W. Bush. The program received one of only two national awards for heritage tourism.

Texas Brazos Trail Region  
Texas Forts Trail Region  
Texas Lakes Trail Region  
Texas Plains Trail Region  
Texas Pecos Trail Region

Texas Forest Trail Region  
Texas Hill Country Trail Region  
Texas Mountain Trail Region  
Texas Independence Trail Region  
Texas Tropical Trail Region

- 1) **The Heritage Trails Program *brings dollars* to our Texas communities** by promoting our beautiful state to the traveler, helping visitors find the uniqueness of Texas, and encouraging appreciation of our heritage, culture, natural beauty, and adventure that’s available *HERE*. The Trails work with small communities and large, with hotels and RV parks, restaurants and gas stations, as well as museums and historic sites, chambers of commerce and national and state parks.
- 2) **This program is a quiet, but effective, economic driver for all communities across all 254 counties. Instead of being part of a drain on state funds, we’re producing income.** Heritage tourism is a \$5 billion per year segment of the state travel market. The state comptroller reports that for every \$1 spent on tourism marketing, the state receives \$7 in taxes. That’s a great investment; a terrific return on investment in a sagging economy.
- 3) **The proposed elimination of the Texas Heritage Trails program means that already committed federal funds slated for Texas will never reach here.** Created with federal transportation enhancement funds, part of the agreement requires a 20 percent match from the state. If the required 20% annual match of \$356,000 is not funded by the legislature then \$1,780,000 of federal dollars will be left on the table in each of the two years of the biennium. If this program is not in the state budget, Texas WILL lose the opportunity to turn that money into jobs and tax revenue for the state.

**In short, eliminating this program will inflict additional damage on the Texas economy.**