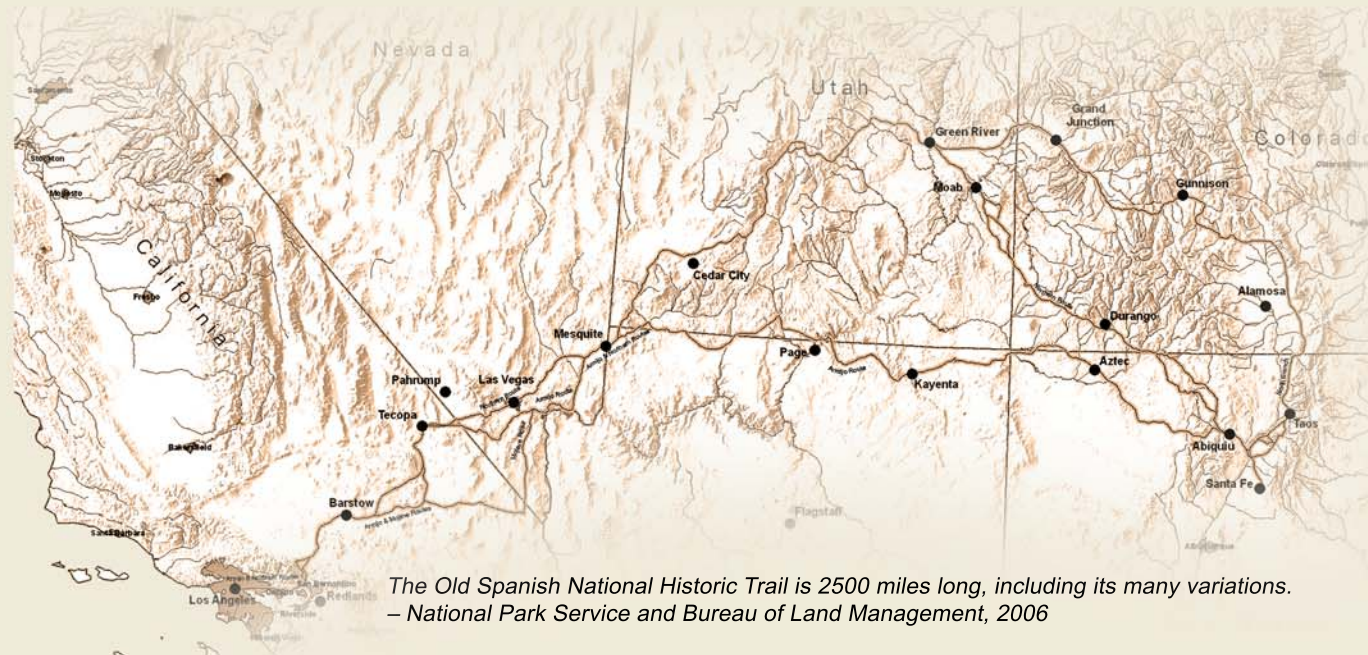


Sunset Regional Park

**“Enero 9. Al arroyo Salado sin novedad.”
January 9 [1830]. To the Salty arroyo without incident.**

These seven words describe the Duck Creek camp site of the first Mexican trade caravan to enter Las Vegas Valley. In 1829-30, Antonio Armijo pioneered the Spanish Trail between Santa Fe and Los Angeles. His route is recognized by Congress as the foundation of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail.



*The Old Spanish National Historic Trail is 2500 miles long, including its many variations.
– National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management, 2006*

Armijo led 60 men and 100 mules up Las Vegas Wash and camped along Duck Creek, a mostly dry creek that collected puddles of water from seasonal rainstorms and permanent springs. Migrating ducks and human travelers found water in or near Duck Creek, part of an Indian trail network.

Rafael Rivera was one of five scouts sent in advance of the Armijo caravan to search for water and food. He scouted the Chemehuevi and Mojave Indian villages south along the Colorado River, but entered the Las Vegas Valley with the rest of the caravan.

Although Rivera has been celebrated as the “discoverer” of Las Vegas Springs, known today as the Las Vegas Springs Preserve, neither he nor anyone from the Armijo caravan ever saw the famous big springs. The caravan visited the site of today’s Sunset Park as it followed Duck Creek and headed south to leave the valley.



*Artist rendering of a Mexican trade caravan. The members of the Antonio Armijo caravan usually walked and used mules to carry their goods.
– David Smee*



The Armijo Caravan