

ENCLOSURES

1. Introduction
2. War Department letter asserting military necessity
3. Declaration of senators and congressmen asserting national importance.

Need for southern transcontinental highway clearly defined and its completion urged as a national and military necessity.

H. B. Ayres,
Managing Director, Old Spanish Trail
Burlington Hotel, Washington, D.C. or
435 Star Building. Phone Main 5287.

July 11, 1922.

INTRODUCTION--NATIONAL IMPORTANCE SOUTHERN TRUNKLINE ANNOUNCED AT WASHINGTON

The greatest single step toward the nationalization of an American highway was made last week when the War Department, following extensive studies in the southern borderland territory, stated that the trunkline highway, known as the Old Spanish Trail, was a military necessity and should be promptly completed in the interest of the national defense. The statement which specifically mentions numerous links of first importance concludes by saying:

"Considered as a whole, the proposed transcontinental trunk highway from Jacksonville to San Diego, with its connections to border points, is an essential element in the plans being formulated by the War Department for national defense and should be completed without delay according to the best Federal standards for road construction".

The link from New Orleans to Pensacola and Jacksonville is especially urged, so also the trunklines from San Antonio to border points, and westward through New Mexico, Arizona and California to San Diego and the Pacific coast, and because of these areas of prime importance the connecting sections are also urged as essential to military operations and the protection of the nation.

Coincidentally, a statement was issued signed by Senators and Congressmen along this highway declaring the national importance of the highway and urging general effort to complete it in the public interest, "that the service of an opened national trunkline might not be denied because of barrier sections still unimproved." These senators and congressmen helped in the work that led to the War Department decision. The correctness of this decision was not questioned after a transcontinental study of the conditions was completed.

Recently the American Automobile Association in a study of national tourist travel said that the flow of traffic in winter would, as soon as the numerous north and south highways were completed, seek the Old Spanish Trail territory by the most direct route and enjoy the winter sunshine amid the sports and historical attractions of that country. The A.A.A. calculated that 9,500,000 owners of pleasure cars including the families meant fully 50,000,000 automobile travelers awaiting the completion of highways promising climatic and historical attraction.

It is this primary military importance coupled with the tourist and playground values of the territory that made possible these important pronouncements regarding this highway. More troops and equipment are kept along the southern borderlands than in any other section. Military leaders have viewed with grave concern this lack of adequate trunk highways in these areas of importance, for all the Gulf, the Mexican border and the southern Pacific defenses are embraced by this uncompleted highway project. The senators, congressmen and departmental officials who have achieved this important coordination of thought and effort are looked upon as having performed a constructive national service.