

FIRST IN NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

WAR DEPARTMENT STATEMENT.

War Department Asks for Prompt Completion of Old Spanish Trail Trunklines. Best Federal Standards in Highway and Bridge Construction Urged. Highway Essential to Plans Formulated for National Defense.

The following, dated July 7, 1922, is signed by J. M. Wainwright, Acting Secretary of War, Washington, D. C.

"The highway from Pensacola through Mobile to New Orleans is considered by the War Department of first importance, and its early completion in accordance with federal standards, including necessary bridges, is urged in the interest of the national defense. A standard federal highway between Pensacola and Jacksonville is also considered important.

"In Texas the following trunk highways are considered essential from the standpoint of military operations along the border; San Antonio to the lower Rio Grande Valley; San Antonio to Laredo; San Antonio to Del Rio, with branch road to Eagle Pass; along the Rio Grande from Brownsville to Del Rio, thence westerly to Marfa and El Paso with connections southward from Marfa to Rio Grande points; also from San Antonio to Corpus Christi. Standard federal highways from San Antonio to Houston, Galveston and Orange are also regarded as important.

"A standard highway running along the Mexican border through New Mexico, Arizona, and California is also rated of first importance by the War Department.

"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."

CONGRESSIONAL DECLARATION.

Declaration Respecting the Highway From Florida to California and Mexico.

The following declaration by Senators and Congressmen of states and districts embraced by the southern national and international highway connecting Florida, California and Mexico, and known as the Old Spanish Trail, was adopted June, 1922, at Washington.

1. This highway is one of the basic trunklines of the United States system and anything that can be done to hasten its completion will be a service of national importance. It has been adopted by the states as a primary highway in the federal system for all its mileage except possibly a hundred miles still subject to decision. Tens of millions in federal, state and local monies are available and construction according to federal standards is progressing rapidly, and this despite many areas of unusual difficulty. Justice to the important construction in progress, or financed and soon to be started, calls for immediate effort in sections

still inactive that the service of an open national trunkline may not be denied because of barrier sections still unimproved.

2. The Old Spanish Trail system is a national and international tourist-way of some 4000 miles. It connects the winter playground sections popular with the American people from St. Augustine through Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Pensacola, Mobile, the Mississippi Gulf Coast, New Orleans, New Iberia, Lake Charles, Houston, Galveston, San Antonio, El Paso, Tucson, Phoenix, and Yuma to San Diego and Los Angeles, and through Texas it includes Old Mexico. Because of its winter sunshine, its gulf pleasures in summer and its background of ancient and romantic history, its development will make it the natural resort of the North American people. When the numerous highways from the North, now building, are completed this southern trunkline must absorb and care for the mass of travel that will seek these southern borderlands.

3. The primary military importance of this highway is evidenced by the fact that it embraces all the extensive military, naval and air defenses and depots of the Gulf Coast and of the Mexican border, and that it connects these with the defenses of the South Atlantic and the South Pacific seaboards. There is a larger concentration of national defenses and supplies on this highway than any other in the land. The War Department asks for the construction of this highway and its border connections.

4. Therefore, in the public interest and for the sake of the all-the-year service this highway will render to the travelers of the nation, and for its value to the military arms of the government, general co-operation and effort are urged to complete it from sea to sea in type and character equal to the service it will be called upon to render.

The above declaration is signed as follows:

Senators of OST States.—Duncan U. Fletcher, Park Trammell, O. W. Underwood, J. Thos. Heflin, John Sharp Williams, Pat Harrison, Jos. E. Ransdell, E. S. Broussard, C. A. Culberson, Morris Sheppard.

Congressmen of OST Districts.—J. H. Smithwick, Frank Clark, John McDuffie, John B. Tyson, Paul B. Johnson, W. P. Martin, H. Garland Dupre, L. Lazaro, James O'Connor, John N. Garner, John C. Box, C. B. Hudspeth, Clay Stone Briggs, Harry M. Wurzbach, Joseph J. Mansfield.

OTHER NATIONAL RECOGNITION.

The United States Bureau of Education has adopted the Old Spanish Trail in its study of the national highway movement recommended to the public schools.

The National Highways Association is preparing a map of the Old Spanish Trail as the basic southern trunkline, and indicating its feeders, and promises it will be the finest map of any national trunkline.

The American Automobile Association has declared it a nationally important tourist route, and the artery of a national playground country.

FOUR IMPORTANT CONVENTIONS IN ONE

New Orleans, March 26-28, 1923

1. THE OLD SPANISH TRAIL CONVENTION must handle many important questions associated with the development of that great southern borderland highway and its plans to open a new playground country to the people.

Included with the Convention are:

2. THE GULF BOULEVARD CONFERENCE—for co-ordinating the factors of four states, New Orleans to Pensacola, and producing a paved highway to the Gulf Coast, and on to Pensacola. This is half financed for paving now.

3. THE SOUTHERN ROAD CONGRESS—For co-ordinating the Old Spanish Trail and the important trunklines from the North into a "Southern Trunkline System," which shall receive interstate indorsement, and get finished.

4. THE PARLIAMENT OF WOMEN ON HIGHWAY BEAUTIFICATION—to organize the various Women's Clubs in all states against the roadside advertising nuisance, and actively for protection and planting of trees and flowering shrubs, and for tourist camps, and the development of park reservations for the people.

The success of this combined convention will give force and direction to this highway movement and soon make this South country the Midland Playground of the Nation.

GULF COUNTRY A NEW NATIONAL PLAYGROUND.

Concerted Plan to Open Connecting Trunklines.

What promises to be the greatest gathering of the highway leaders ever assembled in the South is planned at New Orleans the last week in March. Representatives of many national highways are expected, and the southern highway commissioners and engineers are giving their support. It is necessary that certain essential trunklines be completed and opened to let the mass of automobile travel into the southern states, and also that highway departments be clothed with authority to protect the great highways from advertising encroachments, despoilment, ill-advised promotions and other evils. The women will gather to take up questions of highway beautification.

The following has been issued:

Proposed Southern Trunkline System.

The Old Spanish Trail believes the auto travelers of the United States and the people of the southern border states will be served best by the immediate development of the Old Spanish Trail and of the nationally recognized trunk-

lines from the North that feed into it. Highway departments are not financially able to build at once all the highway projects that are promoted. Therefore, at the convention at New Orleans a Southern Road Congress is called for conference and action respecting a connecting trunkline system that will be recognized by the highway commissioners as of first importance, and that will enlist the support of the people behind the officials and the program.

To this end the Old Spanish Trail, together with the Association of Commerce and the citizen's committees of New Orleans and the Motor League of Louisiana, are inviting to this Convention the representatives of the North and South national highways of recognized standing.

The program will be developed in cooperation with the highway commissioners and the highway leaders of the Southern border states. The aim will be to formulate policies that will draw the people and the highway departments together for the common good.

A connected system, not a conflicting system, is the objective; therefore the identity of other highways ceases upon reaching the Old Spanish Trail. A strong, nationally known trunkline across the bottom of the continent will be of more service to the people and to the highways from the North than the confusions resulting from a medley of claims and pretensions by highway promoters.

The Old Spanish Trail aims to develop its territory south to all Gulf and border points as the playground of the people who seek the South. It reaches no arm northward but offers its cooperation that vital trunklines may be completed and maintained equal to the demand of the traveler.

National Highways Suggested for Inclusion in a Connected Southern Trunkline system.

COASTAL HIGHWAY—Along the Atlantic ocean.

DIXIE HIGHWAY—Reaches Old Spanish Trail at Tallahassee, Lake City, and Jacksonville, Florida, and serves South Florida.

BEE LINE HIGHWAY—Main trunkline through Alabama, reaches Old Spanish Trail at Marianna, Florida, and by branch extensions should serve Pensacola and Mobile.

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY HIGHWAY—From the northwest with main trunkline through Mississippi, and with terminals at Mobile and Gulfport, and over Old Spanish Trail to New Orleans.

JEFFERSON HIGHWAY—Winnipeg to New Orleans. JACKSON HIGHWAY—From Chicago to New Orleans, entering Louisiana over the Old Spanish Trail.

PERSHING HIGHWAY—Winnipeg, and through Louisiana to the Old Spanish Trail at Lafayette.

HIGHWAY NO. 7—West Louisiana to Lake Charles.

(Other highways westward to be included.)