

Pike National Historic Trail Association Newsletter

Our Purpose: To Establish federal designation of the Pike National Historic Trail

May-June 2011 Vol. 5 No 5

We are a Charitable nonprofit organization Our website is www.zebulonpike.org
"Zebulon Pike was an American hero, a patriot who lived and died for his country." -Thomas Jefferson



- **Duckett Fire**- 650 people fought the Duckett Fire 8 miles NW of Westcliffe CO which started 6/12/2011. They were housed at the fair grounds near Westcliffe. There

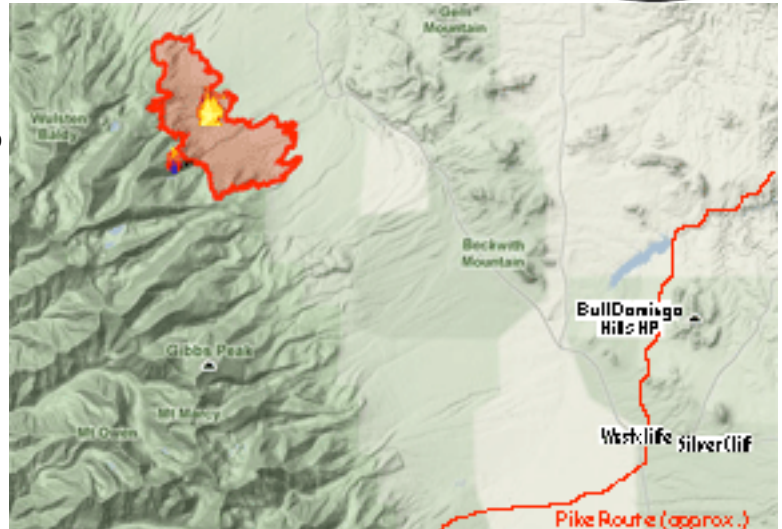


is only 160 men left to fight the remaining fire which is 80% contained as of June 29th. The fire began at a lutheran camp [possibly from a campfire.] 1 plane, 4 helicopters, bulldozers and other equipment were used to

fight the fire at an estimated cost of \$5.2M. 5000 acres will be involved. Pike traveled in 1806 close to the area (see map.)

June 30 - UPDATE - In spite of hot and dry weather on Wednesday, crews were able to prevent any significant growth of the fire, and fire size remains at 4,607 acres. Hand lines on the southwest flank near the Brush Creek subdivision continue to be reinforced. Helicopters continue to drop water on burning areas on the western flank, limiting any further expansion to the west. Due to the inaccessible terrain on the west flank, aerial attack will continue as the primary firefighting strategy, and the fire will remain at 80% containment for some time.

A red flag warning is in effect for gusty winds, low humidity, and dry lightning in the fire area as well as southeast Colorado, indicating that weather conditions are conducive for fire ignition and rapid spread.



- **Pike's Experiences in May 1807 México-Fandangoes and Little water, Jiménez, Mapimi, Parras, Monclova**- by Allan Vainley

During the month of May 1807, after leaving Chihuahua, Zebulon Montgomery Pike and his men:

- Were being escorted by the Spanish through New Spain/Mexico
 - Southeast toward the frontiers of Old Mexico from Jiménez to Mapimi on what is called today the **El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro**, from May 1st to May 11, traveling through arid country west of the Bolson de Mapimi,
 - Then east toward Torreón, Parras and Saltillo from the 12th to the 20th on what we chose to call **The Monterrey Road** to avoid Old Mexico,
 - And Northeast toward Monclova and the Texas border from the 21st to June 1 on what we chose to call **The San Antonio Road**,
- The escort was switched from Lt. Malgares to Captain Barelo on the Florida River after crossing the Conchos River,
- They were greeted with several fandangoes- PARTY TIME,
- Visited some pleasant green areas, some very poor "miserable" villages, and copper mining areas without water for several days,
- Continued to collect impressions and information in conversations,
- Camped just short of the Rio Grande River to begin on what today is called the **El Camino Real de Los Tejas** on June 1.

On May 1- "*Finding that a new species of discipline had taken place and that the suspicions of my friend Malgares were very much more acute than ever.*" they concealed what papers they had hiding them in gun barrels and on themselves.

Sunday, May 3, Captain Barelo joined the escort. "*At night the officers gave a ball, at which appeared at least sixty women, ten or a dozen of whom were very handsome.*"

On the 6th Lt. Malgares departed. "*to whom we bade an eternal adieu, if war does not bring us together in the field of battle opposed as the most deadly enemies, when our hearts acknowledge the greatest friendship.*"

Mapimi, "*a village situated at the foot of mountains of minerals, where they worked eight or nine mines. The mass of the people were naked and starved wretches.*" Three miles further they arrived at gardens. On May 11, "*We obliged the inhabitants with a ball, who expressed great anxiety for a relief from their present depressed state, and a change in government.*" [continued on page 2]

Barelo had not communicated well with Zebulon when they arrived at Mapimi. Pike's men attempted to go to town [Mapimi] to purchase provisions, were intercepted and brought back to camp. Pike ordered his men them to go again. *"...I conceived it was the duty of the captain to explain his orders [from Chihuahua] relative to me, which he had not done; and I conceived that this would bring on an explanation."*

"As I had mentioned my intention of sending my men to town after some stores to Captain Barelo, and he had not made any objections, I conceived it was acting with duplicity to send men to watch the movements of my messengers." Pike challenged Barelo, *"and the affair never interrupted our harmony."*

They turned east apparently the shorter route was avoided because of Apaches and lack of water. On the 13th another fandango was given *"on the green"* at Rancho de St. Antonio on the Rio Nazas.

On the 14th the temperature was 99 1/2° F and there was no water.

Again on the 17th near Parras they stayed with *"a young priest, who was extremely anxious for a change of government."*

Heading north on the 21st and they crossed Three Rivers Pass, 9 miles short of Monclova, on the 24th. On the 28th they met an American, an Army deserter. *"He expressed great satisfaction at meeting a countryman, and we had a great deal of conversation."*

Having crossed the Sabinas River southeast of Sabinas, Mex on the 29th, the party found itself camped at the end of the month about to cross the Rio Grande and the ride on what today is called the El Camino Real de Los Tejas on their way to San Antonio.

• *Pike's Experiences in June 1807 Texas-San Antonio, Nacogtoches and HOME* by Allan Vainley

During the month of June 1807, Zebulon Montgomery Pike with his men:

- ☉ Crossed the Rio Grande and by the end of the month were back in the United States in Natchitoches, LA,
- ☉ Were the first official, legitimate Americans to cross the Spanish territory of Texas,
- ☉ Spent 6 days in San Antonio from June 7-12,
- ☉ Arrived at Nacogtoches 8:30 pm 6/24. Remained until 6/26
- ☉ Crossed the Sabine River on June 29 and arrived in Natchitoches, LA at 4 pm on July 1, 1807.

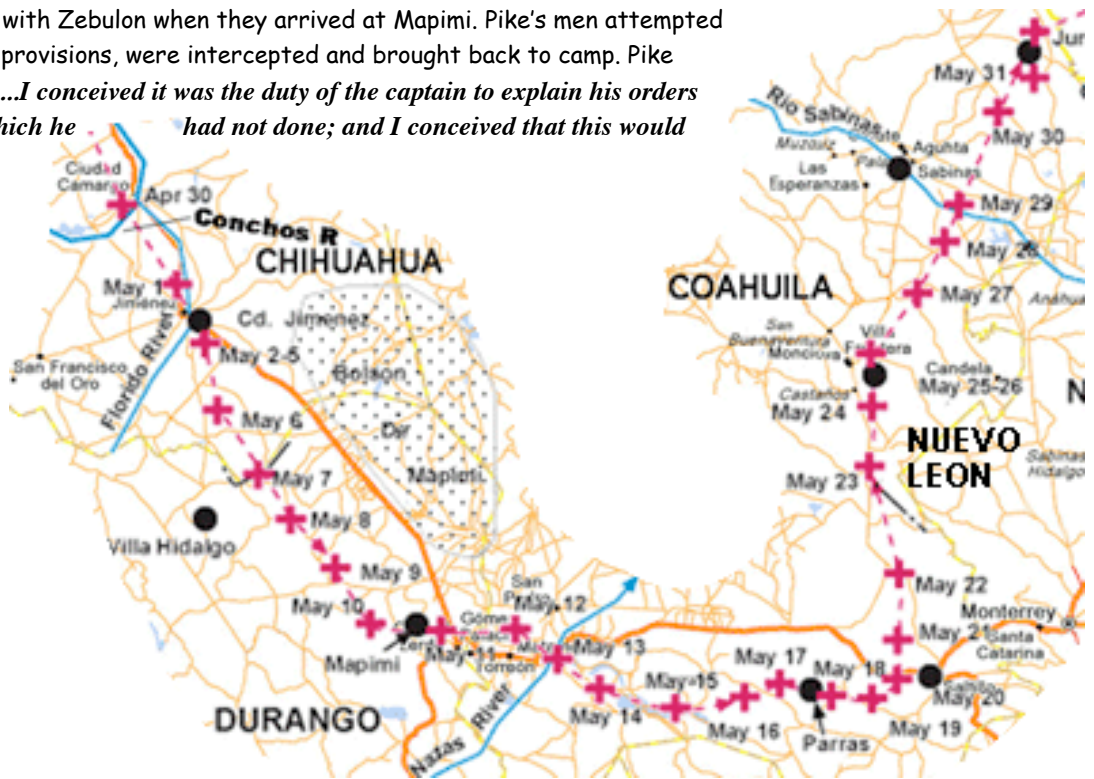
Pike apparently crossed the Rio Grande 40 miles south of Eagle Pass on June 2. There is some confusion about where they crossed as Pike's map and journal are difficult to match. Most believe it was just northeast of Guerrero, Mexico.

"Monday, June 1st. Arrived at the Presidio Rio Grande at eight o'clock. This place to which our friend Barelo had been ordered." On the 2nd Pikes party and Barelo separated *"with regrets and assurances of remembrance."* The party was now being escorted by an Ensign and his men.

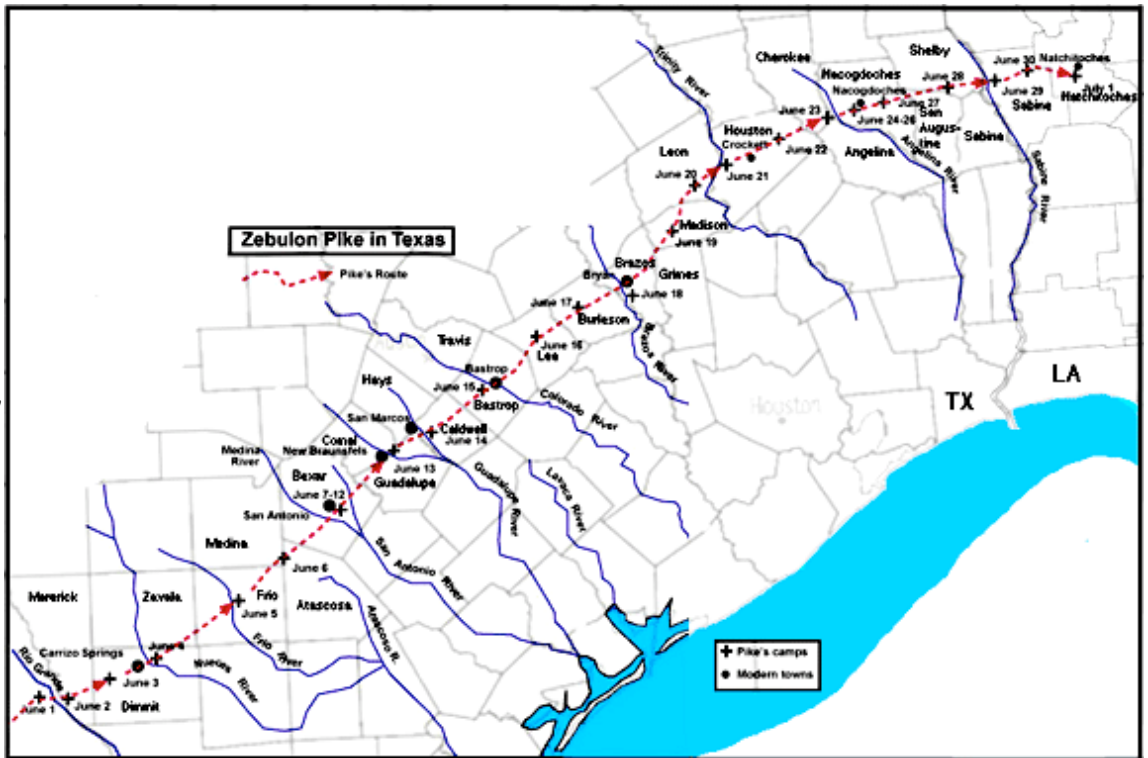
General Salcedo, in Chihuahua, *"informed me that an American had arrived at the Presidio Rio Grande in the last year."* Pike interviewed the man and after finding the truth *"concluded that he was an agent of Burr's."*

"In the afternoon [of June 6] struck the woodland, which was the first we had been in from the time we left the Osage nation."

[continued on page 3]



They arrived in San Antonio on June 7th and remained until the 12th being wined and dined by Governor Cordero with a visiting Spanish Governor Herrera. General Wilkinson's name came up. Governor Cordero had received "the information of my intended expedition of the commandant-general as early as July [1806], the same month that I took my departure. His information was received via Natchez." Wilkinson, a double spy, was responsible for that area. Nice guy.



Lieutenant Jn. Echarraria and Captain Eugene Marchon of New Orleans now led the escort into sparsely then populated Texas reaching Texas' Colorado River on the 16th. The route south of Austin (see map on page 2) was taken.

After crossing several rivers with difficulty they arrived at the Trinity River (then the Rio Trinidad) on Sunday June 21st. "Met a number of runaway negroes, some French, and Irishmen. Received information of Lieutenant Wilkinson's safe arrival." Recall that, as Pike went up the Arkansas from Great Bend, KS, and the young Wilkinson went downstream.

After being wined and dined in Nacogtoches with toasts to "1st toast, 'The President of the United States'; 2d, 'The King of Spain'; 3d, 'Governors Herrera and Cordero.'" they left escorted by Lt. Guodiana's men on Sunday, June 28th. About 9 miles from the border they met another American and a French family. "When we began conversing with them they were much alarmed, thinking we had come to examine them, and expressed great attachment to the Spanish government. They were somewhat astonished to find I was an American officer; and on my companions stepping out, expressed themselves in strong terms of hatred to the Spanish nation. I excused them for their weakness, and gave them a caution."

They arrived in Natchitoches, LA, thirteen days scarce of a year after leaving St. Louis, having traveled at least 3664 miles. "Language cannot express the gayety of my heart when I once more beheld the standard of my country waved aloft. 'All hail!' cried I, 'the ever sacred name of country, in which is embraced that of kindred, friends, and every other tie which is dear to the soul of man!' Was affectionately received by Colonel Freeman, Captains Strong and Woolstonsraft, Lt. Smith and all the [other] officers of the post."

Captain Zebulon Montgomery Pike had led an epoch expedition of the American Southwest and northern Mexico with far-reaching consequences and practical purpose. They discovered the headwaters of the Arkansas, and South Platte Rivers (after finding the Mississippi River headwaters in 1805.) Pike is recognized as the Father of the Santa Fe Trail. They understood Mexican desire for independence which came in 1821, later encouraged by the United States. Pike's work provided information about the three boundaries of the 1803 Louisiana Purchase. The information about Santa Fe, El Paso, Chihuahua as well as Texas was undoubtedly used during the Mexican American War by General Kearney and Alexander Donophan and by those fighting at the Alamo in San Antonio and for Texas independence.

Next issue [July-August]- *Pike's Experiences in July 1806 and in August 1806.*

Space permitting we will continue our Series on Rivers introduced in the March 2011 issue.

Please consider joining us with your membership. The membership form is on our website or contact us at 303/816-7424.

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