

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 1034

WHEREAS, Hueco Tanks State Park and Historic Site is located 30 miles east of El Paso, near the northwestern tip of the Trans-Pecos; the topography includes four massive hills that comprise a natural oasis that has been a spiritual sanctuary and a place of refuge throughout the area's more than 10,000-year history of human activity; and

WHEREAS, For thousands of years, people camped among the hills and lived off of the site's diverse plant and animal resources and the natural rock pools of water, or huecos, for which the park is named and which inspired others to settle in this Chihuahuan desert oasis; and

WHEREAS, Hueco Tanks contains almost 30 archeological sites and hundreds of rock paintings that date back thousands of years; the people of the Jornada Mogollon culture built a village and farmed in the area about 1,000 years ago, and the modern settlers of the West used it as a key stop on the famous Butterfield Stage Line; and

WHEREAS, Today, the 860-acre site is still a special place for many Native American peoples who find a spiritual connection there, such as the Tiguas, Apaches, Kiowas, and Comanches, and it is valued by archeologists and historians who have documented the monumental sweep of human presence throughout millennia on the land; and

WHEREAS, The challenge for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is to preserve and protect the fragile cultural remains and remarkable rock-art imagery while allowing visitors, who come from all over the world, to explore, climb, and otherwise enjoy the park; and

WHEREAS, Striking a balance between public access and preservation of the site's irreplaceable cultural treasures is an ongoing challenge that has been managed in recent years by capping the number of visitors allowed in the park at one time, showing every visitor an orientation video, and providing visitors entry to certain areas only when accompanied by a trained guide; and

WHEREAS, The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is reviewing the park's Public Use Plan, last updated 15 years ago, to see if there are opportunities to better balance the visits to the park by climbers, archeologists, and the general public with ongoing efforts to protect this natural wonder; and

WHEREAS, The site would benefit from further protection, which could be accomplished through development of a new Public Use Plan, designation as a federal National Protected Site, recognition as a World Heritage Site, or implementation of other measures; now, therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 84th Legislature, hereby encourage all efforts to preserve the integrity, beauty, and history of Hueco Tanks State Park and Historic Site and support any acts that are necessary to forever protect this natural wonder; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared in honor of Hueco Tanks State Park and Historic Site.

Rodríguez

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on May 29, 2015.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate