

By: Isaac

H.R. No. 792

R E S O L U T I O N

1           WHEREAS, Cape's Dam and Mill Race on the San Marcos River is  
2 150 years old in 2017, and this is a fitting opportunity to  
3 celebrate this unique structure's importance to the history and  
4 recreational culture of the region; and

5           WHEREAS, The dam and the mill race were constructed on the  
6 river in 1867 by William Alexander Thompson, an early pioneer in  
7 Hays County; the dam earned its name from a subsequent owner, John  
8 Matthew Cape, and it represents one of the earliest industrial  
9 enterprises in the county; it remains historically significant as  
10 one of the few 19th-century mill sites still extant in Texas; and

11           WHEREAS, The dam was built using an existing slough, creating  
12 three islands known as Thompson's Islands between the San Marcos  
13 River and the mill race; in the years since, these islands have  
14 become a sanctuary for a variety of wildlife and flora, and the  
15 river and the mill race are part of a federally designated habitat  
16 for three of the five endangered species in the San Marcos and Comal  
17 river basin; and

18           WHEREAS, The mill race and the 14-foot waterfall where it  
19 reconnects with the river's main channel create a popular swimming  
20 hole at Stokes Park, and each year, thousands of Texans enjoy the  
21 recreational opportunities afforded by the site; the mill race has  
22 also become a place of healing for wounded veterans who visit each  
23 week from VA medical centers, as well as for veterans from Brooke  
24 Army Medical Center in San Antonio, who kayak there for

1 rehabilitation; and

2           WHEREAS, The site has likewise become a mecca for competitive  
3 kayakers and has been used for training by 10 international teams,  
4 17 Olympians, 8 Olympic coaches, and 2 Paralympians; these include  
5 10 world champions, 2 Olympic medalists, and 64 national team  
6 members; in addition, the slow portions of the race provide a safe  
7 place for less experienced paddlers, such as Boy Scout troops and  
8 other youth groups, to hone their skills; and

9           WHEREAS, In 1985, the National Park Service determined that  
10 Cape's Dam and Mill Race were eligible for the National Register of  
11 Historic Places, and the site is home to three Official Texas State  
12 Historical Markers; and

13           WHEREAS, A century and a half ago, early settlers in Hays  
14 County created Cape's Dam and Mill Race to help establish commerce  
15 in the region, and in the years since, it has become an important  
16 monument to the area's heritage as well as a vital recreational  
17 resource; now, therefore, be it

18           RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas  
19 Legislature hereby commemorate the 150th anniversary of Cape's Dam  
20 and Mill Race and celebrate the historical significance of this  
21 landmark site.