



The SAN ANTONIO River Walk



Photo courtesy: San Antonio CVB

The Historic San Antonio River Walk

Robert Harvey Harold Hugman came up with his basic River Walk plan in 1929. Hotelier Jack White picked up the cause, got Hugman hired and started the process which led to the River Walk's completion in 1941. With pedestrian traffic assured by two new hotels which opened along the River Walk for HemisFair '68, San Antonio's World's Fair, River Walk development increased to the point where the River Walk is now a top tourist destination in the State of Texas. For more information about the origins of the San Antonio River Walk, scan the QR Code below or visit www.hugmantour.com.

A concerted community effort to revitalize the river began in 1998 with the creation of the San Antonio River Oversight Committee and the San Antonio River Improvements Project. The comprehensive, multi-year project is an investment by Bexar County, the City of San Antonio, the San Antonio River Authority, the U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers and the San Antonio River Foundation to restore and enhance 13 miles of the San Antonio River both north and south of downtown.



Photo courtesy San Antonio CVB



A TIMELESS CULTURAL RESOURCE

Since prehistoric times, the San Antonio River has been a vital resource to the inhabitants of the San Antonio River Watershed and has greatly contributed to the rich history of our area. Archaeological excavations have produced evidence that the first human habitation along the San Antonio River occurred as long as 10,000 years ago. Throughout the 1700s, development of what is now the City of San Antonio occurred alongside five Spanish Colonial missions established near the river.



Image courtesy of National Parks Service

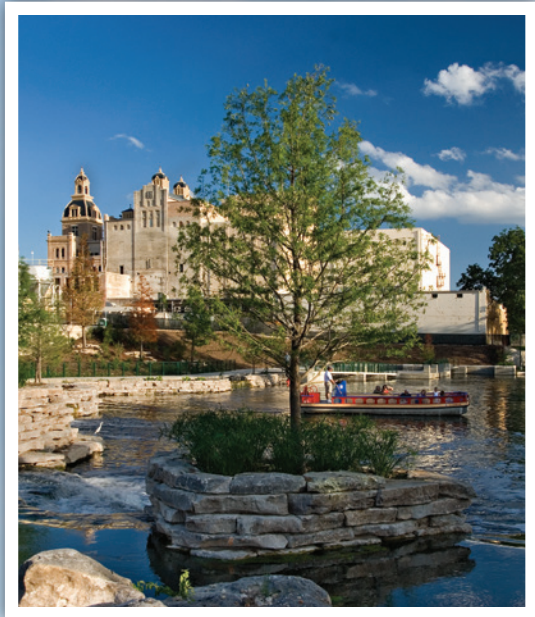


Today, four of the historic missions constructed by the Spanish along the San Antonio River are part of the San Antonio Missions National Historic Park, and, along with the Alamo and some of the remaining acequias are being nominated as a World Heritage Site. For more information about the San Antonio Missions National Historic Park, scan the QR Code or visit www.nps.gov.





The Museum Reach includes roughly 3 miles of pedestrian pathways, multiple water features and over 70,000 plants, and passes by landmarks that include the oldest VFW post in Texas, the San Antonio Museum of Art and Pearl, a private redevelopment of the former Pearl brewery.



San Antonio's famous river barges are able to gain access to the Museum Reach through the Lock and Dam complex at

Brooklyn Ave. This raises and lowers barges approximately 9 feet to allow them to travel north to Pearl.

Throughout the year, there are many attractions that you will find on the Museum Reach, including a colony of roughly 10,000 Mexican Free-tailed bats that live under the I-35 bridge from April to October, and the River of Lights that runs from the first Saturday in December through the First Saturday in January.

The City of San Antonio and Bexar County funded construction of the Museum Reach, which was managed by the San Antonio River Authority. Public artwork was funded through private donations raised by the San Antonio River Foundation.



The Mission Reach is transforming an eight mile stretch of the San Antonio River into a quality riparian woodland ecosystem and reconnecting the river to cultural and historical features. The Mission Reach begins just south of the Eagleland segment of the River Walk, which is the transition zone between the more manicured, urban park section of the River Walk and the more natural and native section of the River Walk.

The ecosystem restoration process will be accomplished over many years and includes the reestablishment of hundreds of acres of native grasses and wildflowers and the planting of over 23,000 native trees



MISSION REACH

Ecosystem Restoration and Recreation Project

and shrubs. The Mission Reach will look much different than the historic San Antonio River. Walk and the new Museum Reach area of the river north of downtown. The native



landscape will look wild rather than manicured. Grasses and wildflowers will be allowed to grow to their natural heights rather than mowed. The result will be a serene, natural landscape where visitors can enjoy the inherent beauty of the river.

Whether on foot, bicycle or boat, there is plenty to see and do as you recreate along the San Antonio River Walk. The River Walk follows the San Antonio River as it meanders through the heart of the 7th-largest city in the United States. From its northern to southern limits, the River Walk is over 15 miles in length and connects to over 2,000 acres of public park land, making it one of the nation's finest linear, urban parks.



Photo courtesy San Antonio CVB

The entire 15 miles of the River Walk is pedestrian friendly and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The historic downtown River Walk is lined with restaurants, shops, hotels and more. It connects the major tourist draws in the downtown area including the Alamo, Rivercenter Mall, Arneson River Theatre and La Villita. North of downtown, the Museum Reach links several downtown historic, commercial and cultural institutions, including VFW Post 76, which is the oldest VFW Post in Texas, the San Antonio Museum of Art, Pearl (a restored former brewery and stables) Witte Museum, Brackenridge Park and the San Antonio Zoo.



South of downtown, improvements to aquatic and riparian habitat along Eagleland and the Mission Reach will bring an anticipated increase in the numbers of native wildlife species.

That means fisherman, birdwatchers and other nature enthusiasts will have increased opportunity to enjoy wildlife in the area. The Mission Reach also has Mission Portals that connect four of San Antonio's historic missions – Mission Concepción, Mission San José, Mission San Juan and Mission Espada – to the San Antonio River. These connections feature historic and artistic interpretations of the story of the missions and highlight their social and cultural importance to the area.



Photo courtesy of City of San Antonio Office of Sustainability by Fred Gonzales

Bicycling is discouraged in the Downtown Reach due to the narrower sidewalks of the original River Walk and heavy pedestrian traffic in this area; however, bicycling is a wonderful way to experience the rest of the River Walk. For those visitors to the River Walk who do not have their own bicycle, there are numerous San Antonio B-cycle Stations along the River Walk for quick and easy bicycle rental.



For more information about San Antonio B-cycle, scan the QR Code or visit www.sanantonio.bcycle.com.

Visitors can also experience the River Walk by boat, either by barge in the Downtown area and Museum Reach or by paddling a canoe or kayak south of downtown. Rio San Antonio Cruises offers guided river barge tours daily from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the downtown area. The Rio San Antonio Cruises Rio Taxi service travels continuously from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. throughout the Downtown Reach and into the Museum Reach. For more information about Rio



San Antonio Cruises, scan the QR Code or visit online www.RioSanAntonio.com.

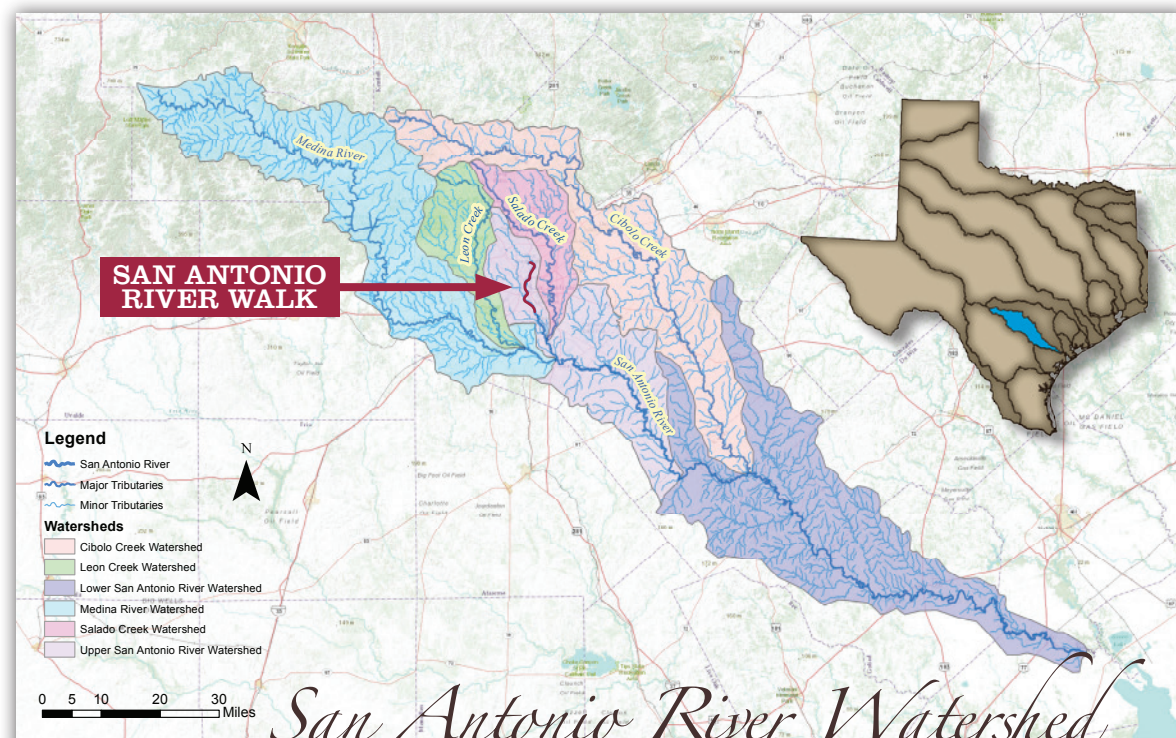


The River Walk is home to numerous works of public art funded by the San Antonio River Foundation, a non-profit organization created by the San Antonio River Authority. The Museum Reach contains 11 works of public art created by local, national and internationally-known artists. Integrating artistic expression with the natural beauty of the river itself, the Museum Reach

is a vibrant daytime stroll that becomes more magical at night as the spark of artistic genius reflects off the rivers rippling surface. The Mission Reach has been enhanced by adding educational and recreational opportunities and artistic strokes to the environmental restoration including beautiful and inspiring public art to add attractive new appeal to the area. To learn more about the San Antonio River Foundation and how you can contribute to public art and education along the River Walk, scan the QR Code or visit online at www.sariverfoundation.org.



Photo courtesy San Antonio CVB



The 15 miles of the San Antonio River Walk are part of the larger San Antonio River Watershed. The San Antonio River flows 240 miles through Bexar, Wilson, Karnes, Goliad and Refugio counties, converging with the Guadalupe River before finally flowing into the San Antonio Bay on the Gulf

of Mexico. The San Antonio River Watershed contains over 8,800 miles of streams, including major tributaries: Medina River, Leon Creek, Salado Creek and Cibolo Creek. For more information about the San Antonio River, scan the QR Code or visit www.sara-tx.org.



THE San Antonio RIVER WALK



It is important to remember that the River Walk is part of the San Antonio River Watershed. Please help keep the San Antonio River enjoyable for everyone by properly disposing of your litter or even picking up litter you may see on the trails. Be a responsible pet owner and pick up after your pet. Being so close to the river means that everything left behind goes straight into the river. This is not only unsightly, but can also be a health hazard to those using the river for contact recreation. And please, do not feed the wildlife.



The San Antonio Convention & Visitors Bureau (scan the QR Code below or visit www.visitsanantonio.com)

has more information about the world-renowned restaurants, shops and hotels found along the historic downtown section of the River Walk. For more information about special events taking place along the historic



downtown section of the River Walk, please visit the Paseo del Rio Association by scanning the QR Code to the

left or visiting online at www.thesanantoniowalk.com.

After you have enjoyed all the great restaurants and shopped until your heart's content, you can relax along the River Walk and experience the beauty of the flora and fauna of the San Antonio River. Over 70,000 plants were established along the Museum Reach. To learn more about the plants along



the Museum Reach, scan the QR Code or visit online at www.sanantoniowalk.org/museum_reach/museum_reach_plants.php.

The Mission Reach includes the restoration of approximately 334 acres of riparian woodland habitat. The restoration along eight miles of

the river will be done by using over 10,000 pounds of seeds containing over 60 native grass and wildflower species and by planting over 23,000 young trees and shrubs (over 30 native tree and shrub species). To learn more about the plants along the Mission



Reach, scan the QR Code or visit www.sanantoniowalk.org/mission_reach/native_plants.php.

The San Antonio River, including the River Walk, serves as an important habitat corridor that supports numerous native plants, migratory birds and other wildlife. The San Antonio River Basin Field Guide was



created to serve as a resource to better understand the plant and animal life within the San Antonio River Basin. The Guide includes descriptions and photos of many native and non-native plant and animal species that can be found in the Basin, with a focus on the more common species that might be encountered. To view the San Antonio



River Basin Field Guide, scan the QR Code or visit: www.sara-tx.org/public_resources/field_guide.

River Walk Tips:

- Use your smart phone to scan QR codes along the way for information about that particular location
 - *Open a “barcode scanner” application on your smartphone (these applications are generally free and available for all smartphone platforms)*
 - *Point your phone’s camera at the code and click to scan*
- Historical markers and plaques help you uncover the city’s past
- Informational signage points you in the right direction
- Ambassador Amigos, knowledgeable folks sporting brightly colored shirts and straw hats, can provide assistance as you explore

