

CANAL Brazos River Navigation		STATUS Abandoned		ACS
STATE/PROVINCE: Texas				HAER
COUNTIES:				
LOCATION (Endpoints of Canal): Waco to Gulf of Mexico		DATES IN USE: 1917-1922		LIFT LOCKS No./ SIZE: 1/55x140'
TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS: See text.		ENLARGEMENTS: 2		LIFT LOCKS No./ SIZE: 2/55x170'
		3		
		4		

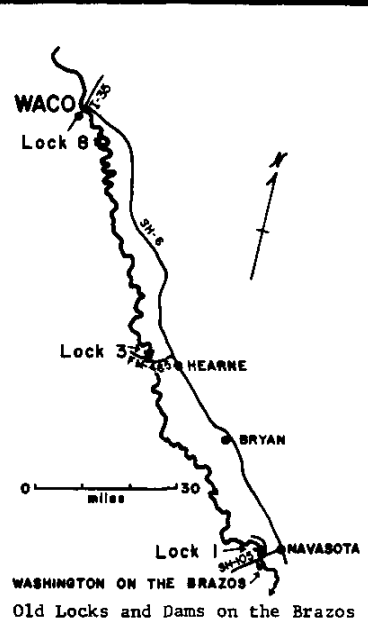
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

There were two lock-and-dam systems in Texas, both begun in the early 1900's and abandoned unfinished in 1922, leaving ten locks, all of which are still intact. Work on the BRAZOS RIVER NAVIGATION was begun by the Corps of Engineers in 1905, with the object of making the river navigable up to Waco, 430 miles from the Gulf. Eight concrete locks and dams were planned, all between Waco and the Hidalgo Falls near Navasota, a distance of 176 miles. However, even though a Waco baseball team was called the "Navigators," severe floods in 1913 and 1921, and the suspension of work during WWI, led to the final abandonment in 1922 with only 3 locks begun. Today the locks are still in good condition, but without the gates and without some of the metalwork, salvaged during WWII. Lock 8, below Waco, was left in the middle of a field by a shift in the river during the 1921 flood, but locks 1 and 3 are still in the river bed and are valuable future park or open space sites, deserving particular attention.

Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park, four miles downstream on the W bank, where the state has begun an extensive restoration of the town of Washington, site of the first capitol of the Republic of Texas, as it stood in 1836. It will have a museum and camping facilities. We urge the state to put a stern-wheeler on the river at the park, with regular excursions up to Lock 1, a relic of steamboat days, which could become the centerpiece of an exciting historic riverside park.

For a history of steamboating on the Brazos see SANDBARS AND STERN-WHEELERS: STEAM NAVIGATION ON THE BRAZOS, by P.A. Puryear and Nath Winfield, Jr., \$10 ppd. from Texas A&M Univ. Press, Drawer C, College Station TX 77843. Also of interest is "The Brazos: A Plan for Navigation," by Jerrie Berryhill (unpublished Geology 101 thesis, Baylor University, Waco TX, 1974).

UTM, Lock 1, 14.771700.3364650, Millican TX; Lock 3, 14.720600.3417100, Gause TX; Lock 8, 14.686730.3484100, Robinson TX.



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NAMES & ADDRESSES OF GROUPS CONCERNED WITH CANALS PRESERVATION/RESTORATION:

Fort Worth District, Corps of Engineers, Box 17300, Fort Worth, TX 76102

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY:

Fort Worth & Galveston District histories; Annual Reports of the Chief of Engineers. See The American Canal Guide for more details. Good material in Sandbars and Sternwheelers (see above).

UNPUBLISHED RECORDS, PHOTOS, DRAWINGS (CEHR, HAER, HABS, Local or Regional Historical Societies, Libraries, etc.):

Field work for ACS by Milton Huggett of Texas A&M University, College Station.

EXISTING OR RECOMMENDED LANDMARK STATUS (CEHR, National Register, etc.):

Lock 1 should be made part of Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park; this or one of the other Brazos locks should be on the National Register.

REPORTER'S NAME & ADDRESS: W.E. Trout, III, 1932 Cinco Robles Drive, Duarte CA 91010

DATE: 8 Oct 81

RETURN TO: CANAL INDEX COMMITTEE, c/o P.H. STOTT, HAINES ROAD, MOUNT KISCO, NY 10549