

# *This Land Is Your Land*



Laurence Parent

**Guadalupe Mountains National Park:** Rising above the Chihuahuan Desert is an ancient coral reef that includes Guadalupe Peak — Texas' tallest mountain. Once a Mescalero Apache stronghold, the area was later home to the Butterfield Overland Mail stagecoach route and African-American Buffalo Soldiers. Two historic ranches in the park recall the settlers who raised livestock here starting in the 1870s.



Courtesy of National Park Service



George H.H. Huey/Alamy

**San Antonio Missions National Historical Park:** The Espada Aqueduct, far left, has supplied river water to nearby farms in San Antonio, Texas, for more than 270 years. Built by Spanish missionaries and Coahuiltecan Indians, it was part of a network of dams and acequias — irrigation ditches — that powered a mill and irrigated 3,500 acres on the frontier of New Spain. The aqueduct and four missions, including Mission San José, left, are part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



In the summer of 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed acts that created two lasting American institutions — the Farm Credit System and the National Park Service.

As Farm Credit celebrates our centennial year, we salute the National Park Service for preserving places of great beauty and cultural significance. These include national parks, monuments, historic sites, parkways, scenic trails and more.

At the sites on these pages, history, heritage and agriculture are all intertwined. ■ CF

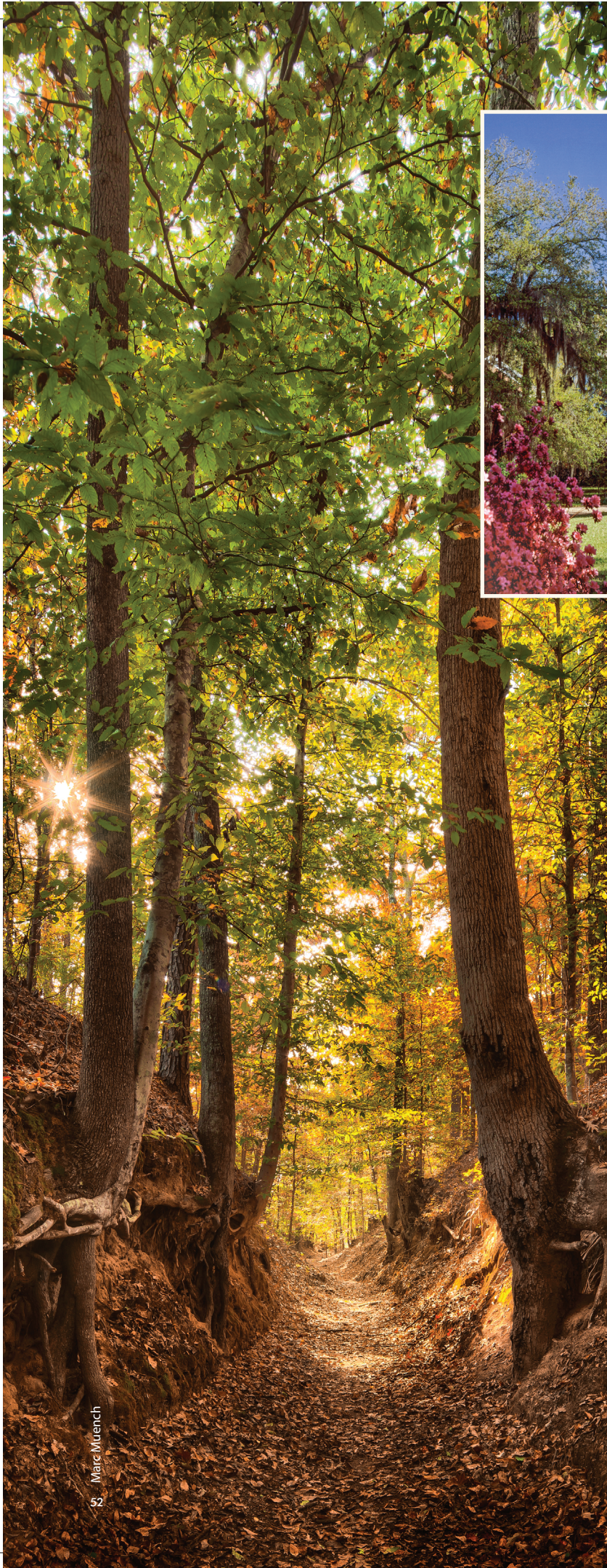


**Bandelier National Monument:** The canyons and mesas west of Santa Fe, N.M., were first visited nearly 11,000 years ago by ancestors of today's Pueblo people. They later traded the nomadic life for agriculture, farming corn, beans and squash, and leaving behind stone buildings, cave dwellings and rock art.



**El Morro National Monument:** About 2,000 carvings cover Inscription Rock, a sandstone promontory in west-central New Mexico with the only reliable water source for miles. Ancestors of the Zuñi Indians irrigated crops with the water and left their mark on the rocks a thousand years ago, followed by conquistador Don Juan de Oñate in 1605, missionaries, soldiers, gold-seekers and ranchers.





Marc Muench



Dennis Hamilton/Alamy

**Natchez National Historical Park:** This park captures the history and cultural diversity of Natchez, Miss., which celebrated its 300th anniversary this year. It includes two homes — the 80-acre Melrose estate, above, built by wealthy cotton planters in the 1840s, and the house of a former slave who became a successful entrepreneur.



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**Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site:** This site on the Tuskegee University campus in Alabama includes a museum, above, honoring agricultural scientist George Washington Carver, who taught African-American students and poor farmers about soil fertility, farming methods and alternative crops. The innovator developed hundreds of uses for peanuts, sweet potatoes and other crops in the early 20th century.

**Natchez Trace Parkway:** This scenic byway through Mississippi, Alabama and Tennessee began as a Native American footpath and pioneer road. At the 20-foot-deep “sunken” trail near Natchez, Miss., left, visitors can follow in the footsteps of the Kaintuck boatmen who floated agricultural products from the Ohio Valley to Natchez and New Orleans 200 years ago, then walked back on the 450-mile Natchez Trace.





John Elk III/Alamy



Courtesy of National Park Service

**Cane River Creole National Historical Park:** Two historic French Creole cotton plantations are preserved near Natchitoches, La., the first permanent European settlement in Louisiana Purchase Territory. Each was a complete community, with traditions rooted in European, Native American and African cultures. French wine bottles have lined the gardens at Oakland Plantation, above and at right, for nearly 200 years.



**Atchafalaya National Heritage Area:** This naturally and culturally rich area in south-central Louisiana extends from the junction of the Atchafalaya and Mississippi rivers to the Gulf of Mexico. Spanning 14 parishes and 10,400 square miles, it encompasses the state capital, small towns, sugar cane and rice fields, prairies, wildlife areas and the nation's largest river swamp, below.

