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THE CALIFORNIA SECTOR
— A NARRATIVE AND A GUIDE —
From the California-Nevada State Line to Cajon Canyon

Reaching what is now the boundary of California — the proverbial land of milk and honey — did not necessarily present a rosier travel outlook. The Mojave Desert stretched hundreds of miles further and this segment had to be negotiated before the topographic and climatic advantages of the Golden State could be enjoyed.

It has been shown that defining the trace of the Old Spanish Trail across the Mojave Desert can be a fairly straightforward process. Intuition, combined with prudent research, plus the desert's inherent ability to preserve history, permits one to define the trace of a trail with a high degree of confidence. As expected, dynamic natural forces such as drainage patterns obscure parts of the old Trail but, unfortunately, damage by natural forces has been minor when compared with capricious damage by man. Nowhere is this more evident than in eastern California adjacent to the state line.

POI N47/C1 - Nevada/California State Line (Map pages 157 & 158): See the previous section for a discussion of this POI.

POI C2 - Across Pahrump Valley (Map page 158): From the site of Centennial Marker No. 27 near Stump Spring, the Old Spanish Trail continued on a general bearing of 260° magnetic for about 1.8 miles to the California state line. Just before reaching the state line, the Old Spanish Trail is truncated by the NE/SW runway of an abandoned dirt airstrip built to support the development of a desert community in California called Charleston View. In addition to the airstrip, the development included a large grid of NS/EW roads that have obliterated much of the Trail across this part of the Pahrump Valley.

Dedicated explorers can still find traces of the Trail on the opposite side of the airstrip continuing in a southwest direction. But it is hard. Grading for the roads has disturbed the soil and much of the area is powdered lake bottom. Fragments of the Trail are very faint and can best be identified by variations in vegetation.