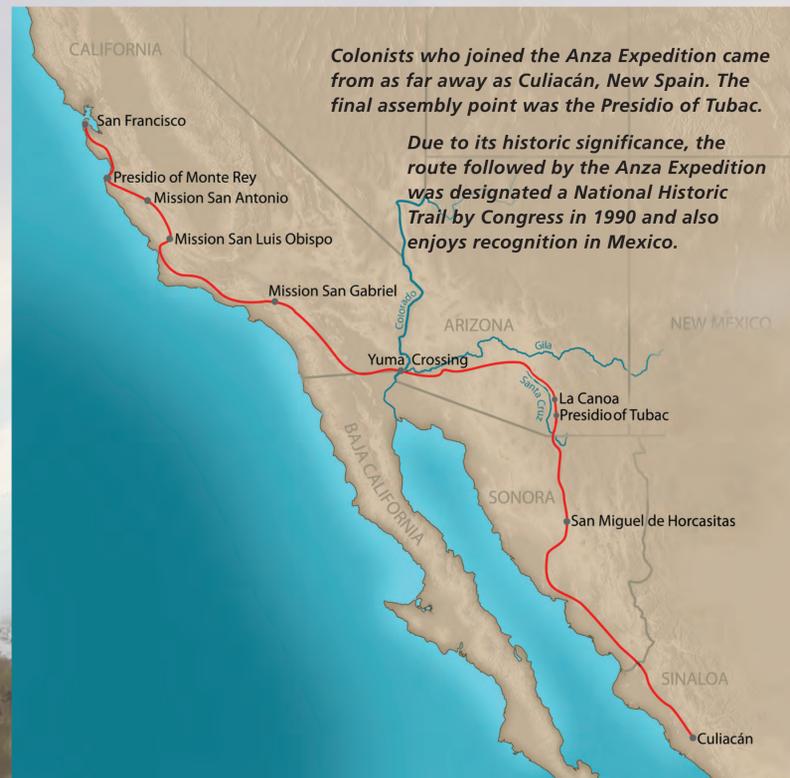


JUAN BAUTISTA DE ANZA EXPEDITION



With funding from the Viceroy of New Spain, Juan Bautista de Anza enlisted soldiers from Culiacán, Sonora and communities to the north, most with their families, to establish a new, 1,200-mile overland trail and help found a mission and presidio at the port of San Francisco.

IN MARCH OF 1775, Antonio Mariá Bucareli y Ursúa, Viceroy of New Spain, directed Lieutenant-Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza to lead an expedition of settlers and soldiers from the Presidio of Tubac in Sonora to the harbor of San Francisco. The year before, Anza, then captain of the small Tubac Presidio, had successfully explored the overland trail for Bucareli. He was attempting to find a reliable trade route from New Spain to the missions in Alta California. The route would ensure regular supplies of goods and support Spanish control of the area.

It took seven months for Anza to recruit 30 soldiers and their families, purchase 1,000 head of horses, mules, and cattle, and lay in supplies for the arduous journey. On October 23, 1775, Anza, his military escort, and more than 240 adults and children departed from Tubac. Their first overnight camp was made at La Canoa.

Ahead of the expedition lay 1,200 miles of travel on foot or horseback across deserts, mountains, rugged terrain, and streams and rivers without established fords. They would endure a lack of water and food and press forward through mud, sand, and snow with life threatening weather and their animals weakened and dying. Astonishingly, only one person died on the expedition – Manuela Piñuelas Feliz who died in childbirth at La Canoa.

On his first exploration of the overland route, Anza had established an amicable and respectful relationship with the Yuma Tribe. Without their assistance and that of other Native Americans, the expedition would have been doomed. Five months later, the expedition arrived at the Presidio of Monte Rey on March 10, 1776. Anza's second in command, Lieutenant José Joaquin Moraga, led the settlers on to San Francisco. This remarkably strong and determined group of people went on to successfully establish the mission and colony for which they had risked their lives.

