(Oct. 1990)
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Fort Travis
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: Fort Travis Seashore Park

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: State Highway 87 at Loop 108 **NOT FOR PUBLICATION:** N/A
CITY OR TOWN: Port Bolivar **VICINITY:**
STATE: Texas **CODE:** TX **COUNTY:** Galveston **CODE:** 167 **ZIP CODE:** 77650

1. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this (x nomination) (__ request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property (x meets) (_ does not meet) the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant (_ nationally) (x statewide) (_ locally). (__ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

_____ February 10, 2005
Signature of certifying official Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___meets ___does not meet the National Register criteria. (__ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

_____ _____
Signature of commenting or other official Date

_____
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
✓ entered in the National Register		
___ See continuation sheet.		
___ determined eligible for the National Register		
___ See continuation sheet		
___ determined not eligible for the National Register		
___ removed from the National Register		
___ other (explain): _____		

3/30/05

5. CLASSIFICATION

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY: Public-local

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY: District

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:

CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING	
1	3	BUILDINGS
0	0	SITES
21	1	STRUCTURES
0	0	OBJECTS
22	**4**	TOTAL

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 0

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING:

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: DEFENSE: Military Facility, Fortification

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation = park

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: NO STYLE

MATERIALS:

FOUNDATION	CONCRETE
WALLS	CONCRETE, BRICK
ROOF	CONCRETE, ASPHALT
OTHER	

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-11).

Fort Travis (Fort Travis Seashore Park) is the most complete concentration of coastal artillery batteries on the Texas Gulf Coast. Constructed between 1898 and 1943, the fort is on the southern tip of the Bolivar Peninsula and contains four principal batteries, one concrete observation post, an anti-aircraft gun emplacement, and the remains of seven concrete foundations, two concrete water tanks, one storage shed, a mobile home (used as an office), and a caretaker's house. Fort Travis originally featured enlisted men's barracks, officer quarters, and other ancillary structures. Although the historical properties at Fort Travis are at different levels of deterioration, they still retain their overall architectural and historical integrity. Batteries Davis, Ernst, Kimble and No. 236 represent three distinctive historical periods in the military history of coastal defense fortifications, and the construction and placement of the batteries exemplify military strategies and technologies typical of the period when they were constructed.

Fort Travis Seashore Park is located on 70 acres of the southern end of Bolivar Peninsula facing the Gulf Coast in Galveston County, Texas. Old Highway 87 ran through part of the fort, and a portion of the brick road remains. The area was raised approximately 17 feet with dredged soil when the seawall was constructed after the Storm of 1900. The natural soils of the area are composed primarily of medium to fine sand with interbedded lenses of marine shell overlying sand, silt, and clay deposits (Abbot 2001). The climate of the region is classified as modified humid subtropical, characterized by hot summers and mild winters. The vegetation specific to the area is consistent with the Marsh/Barrier Island vegetation community, consisting primarily of bluesteem switchgrass, Florida paspalum and brownseed paspalum (Abbot 2001).

Boundaries and Arrangement of Structures at Fort Travis Seashore Park

A chain link fence and the Gulf Coast denote the current boundaries of Fort Travis Seashore Park. The Gulf Coast denotes the south and southwest boundaries of the park. The northern boundary of the park is denoted by a wetland area on the northwest and old highway 87 on the northeast. The eastern boundary of the park is adjacent to a residential area on the northeast and the gulf coast on the southeast. In general the boundaries of the park is recognizable due to the higher elevation that it has from the surrounding area. The Parks Office is a converted mobile home located at the park entrance at the north end of the district. Behind this building is a modern wood and corrugated metal shed where maintenance vehicles are stored. To the south is a circular parking area and Battery 236. Battery Kimble is approximately 498 feet northeast of Battery 236. At the middle of the gulf side is a playground area, a small parking area, and the caretakers house. This house is adjacent to the seawall to the south and is approximately 83 feet west of Battery Davis. Public bathrooms with showers (1 noncontributing building) and a six-unit cabana (1 noncontributing building) are in a small area in the central northwest section of the park. Battery Ernst is located in the southernmost point from the entrance. The anti-aircraft gun emplacement (contributing structure) is located behind Battery Ernst. The forward observation station (contributing structure) is by the Seawall and in front of Battery No. 236; most of it is partially buried. The bathrooms and cabana building are located away from any of the historic structures and do not interfere with the view of the historic structures or general military feeling of the park.

Overview of Historical Structures at Fort Travis Seashore Park

In 1898, the federal government purchased a 97-acre site for $36,000, across the harbor entrance from Galveston Island, at the southern end of the Bolivar Peninsula. The area was named the Fort Travis Military Reservation and construction of

the fort began immediately. During the first phase of construction, batteries Davis and Ernst were completed. Command of the fort was turned over to the coast artillery on October 25, 1899 (Corps of Engineers Records 1898).

During the hurricane of 1900 (the Great Storm), Fort Travis and Galveston took considerable damage by a storm surge that destroyed most of the island and killed approximately 9,000 people. A consequence of the storm were major construction projects that raised the elevation of Galveston Island and Fort Travis by approximately 17 feet, followed by the erection of concrete seawalls facing the Gulf Coast. Instead of just raising the area that faced the Gulf Coast, the entire area of Fort Travis was raised 17 feet and a concrete seawall was built facing the Gulf Coast. Fort Travis now had the highest elevation within the Bolivar Peninsula. Raising the elevation of the fort began in earnest in 1903 and continued through 1904 (Peterson 1991). By raising the elevation of the fort, the appearance of batteries Davis and Ernst changed. Originally, both batteries stood out to any incoming ships coming from the Gulf Coast. By uniformly elevating the fort, both batteries were partially concealed. At the same time, a submerged courtyard was created behind each battery and the magazine chambers were now located underground.

The location of Fort Travis and its first two batteries corresponds with the original function of the fort and limitations of the technology that was available when the fort was originally constructed. In order to provide protection to Galveston Bay (and due to the limited range of the guns) the fort and its batteries were constructed adjacent to the shore. Battery Davis is located concentrically on the fort. This battery would have provided coverage with its guns of any ship coming towards the fort and Galveston Bay. Battery Ernst is located on the southern tip of the fort. At this location, the guns of Battery Ernst gained the maximum coverage possible to the entrance of Galveston Bay. As technology improved, the range of coastal guns increased, allowing for batteries to be built further inland. In order to compensate for the improvement in munitions, coastal fortifications such as those at Fort Travis switched from using only concrete or stone fortifications to combination of soft earthworks and concrete. This transition is seen in the batteries constructed at Fort Travis.

Battery Davis (1898) was built on wooden pilings driven in sand. When construction was completed Battery Davis was a 27.8 feet high reinforced concrete and steel beam structure. Three magazine chambers are located on the ground floor. The armament of Battery Davis was composed of two 8-inch guns of the "disappearing" type. These guns could be elevated giving them a greater range than older guns of the day. The battery had a gallery that lead to the gun emplacements, which collapsed several years ago.

The first level of the gallery is composed of the principal stations to support guns. At the northwest corner stands a small one-level square structure that is part of the battery, but with a separate roof, measuring approximately 20x20 feet. It has one doorway facing west and two windows facing north. The roof of this structure makes it distinguishable because it is not completely flat, but it rises and stretches from the battery. Plans of this battery drawn in 1939 a small semi-circular concrete medallion (no longer extant) at the center of the roof.

On the first level and inside the battery are three chambers, accessed through a corridor that runs the length of the battery. Seven doorways lead into this corridor, but none of the original doors remain. This corridor also leads to two inner staircases that lead to the two separate gun emplacements. These inner staircases were used to bring ammunition to the guns. Two of the chambers are identical in size, approximately 9x14 feet. The middle chamber measures 20x14 feet. The gun emplacements are located at both ends of the battery. The northeast gum emplacement faces the Gulf Coast. The

southwest gun emplacement faces the entrance to Galveston Bay. The 8-inch guns were removed when the Fort was decommissioned.

The structural integrity of **Battery Davis** is fair, although this battery is in a state of considerable deterioration. Records appear to indicate that by 1921 the battery was not longer in use. No doors remain, and the concrete shows many stress fractures and cracks. Part of the gallery collapsed several years ago, thus making the battery to dangerous for visitors to enter. No restoration or stabilization of this battery has been conducted due to the lack of funding. Although in a condition of disrepair, the battery still retains significant aspects of its integrity.

Battery Ernst (1898) is a reinforced concrete and steel beam structure, approximately 21.5 feet tall. The armament of Battery Ernst was comprised of three 3-inch "rapid fire" guns with searchlights. The battery has two magazine chambers below the gun emplacements and a third magazine chamber on the north side of the battery. Two of the magazine chambers still have the original steel doors. This battery has deteriorated and is currently closed to the public.

The role of Battery Ernst battery was to defend and attack any ships attempting to enter Galveston Bay. The original height of the battery was approximately 21 feet, but with the construction of the seawall is now approximately four feet above ground. Battery Ernst is one of the simplest batteries in design at the fort. Three chambers are located below ground and three gun emplacements are located on top. Two of the largest chambers are located between the gun emplacements and the third chamber, which is the smallest, is located northwest at the battery. The largest measures approximately 12x17 feet. The smallest chamber measures 7x12 feet. These chambers stored the powder and shells for the guns. The battery features three gun emplacements. The 3-inch guns were removed when the fort was decommissioned.

The structural integrity of **Battery Ernst** is good. Four steel riveted doors are still attached to their hinges in two of the magazine chambers. Although the doors display corrosion, they are in fair condition. The concrete shows some stress fractures and cracks, but not to the extent of Battery Davis. The steel support beams for the roof at the magazine chambers show some heavy corrosion. The magazine chambers have been vandalized by graffiti. No restoration or stabilization of this battery has been conducted due to the lack of funding. Overall, the battery is still in good condition and its integrity has not been affected.

Battery Kimble (1925) was built during the post World War I period, using a combination of earthworks, concrete and brick. The earthworks were placed on the side of the battery facing the Gulf Coast, providing both protection and camouflage. The battery is a reinforced concrete and steel beam structure, approximately 40.8 feet high, with brick masonry inside the shell and gunpowder chambers. The battery has two gun emplacements, a ventilation corridor, plotting rooms, officer latrines, and a large magazine divided into separate gunpowder and shell chambers. The armament of Battery Kimble was composed of two 12-inch guns, which could be elevated to gain a maximum range of 17 miles.

Battery Kimble is located in the northeastern area of the fort, away from the shore, and was built to attack ships approaching from the gulf. Placing the guns on the sides of the battery (instead of on top) helped protect them from aircraft raids, a new threat that appeared during World War I and would continue to be a threat until the end of World War II. Guns were placed in circular concrete "Panama" mounts that allowed guns to rotate 360 degrees. The gun placement thus reflected the changing nature of warfare.

Battery Kimble features a concrete gallery supported by 15 concrete columns, approximately 33 feet high. On top of the gallery are two observation stations. Battery Kimble had more than magazine chambers than the previous batteries. Underneath the soft earthworks is a large concrete chamber, measuring approximately 61x57 feet. Access to this chamber is through two large steel doors on each side of the chamber. This ventilation corridor also leads into two small control rooms, one measuring approximately 10x10 feet and the other measuring approximately 19x10 feet. The large chamber is divided into two separate chambers, 61x27 feet and 61x30 feet. Each chamber features separate brick-lined storage areas used to store powder and shells. Access between these chambers was through two large folding steel doors (extant). On the north and south sides of the large chamber are four and five smaller chambers, respectively. These chambers included electrical stations that provided power to each gun emplacement and plotting rooms.

The structural integrity of **Battery Kimble** is good. The majority of the steel riveted external doors are still in place. Although the doors display some corrosion, they are in fair condition. Observation stations on top of the battery show some deterioration visible from stress fractures and cracks on the concrete. The observation stations and other portions of this battery have been vandalized by graffiti. The concrete floor of the shell chamber shows some cracks and in one place a possible sinkhole. The brick roof over the powder chamber is in good condition. The Panama concrete gun emplacements show some minor cracks on the concrete. No restoration or stabilization of this battery has been conducted due to the lack of funding. Overall, the battery is still in good condition.

Battery 236 (1943) is located centrally, away from the shore. The battery is approximately 42 feet high, made of reinforced concrete and steel beam. This battery was built to protect the entrance to Galveston Bay from any Axis attack, including that from submarine, and was completely encased in earthworks, giving both better protection and a camouflage. This encasement was a response to the improved accuracy of ship cannons and the improved accuracy of aerial bombardment. The only areas not covered in earthworks are the three entrances, two Panama gun mounts, and the ventilation shafts located on top. The battery features two gun emplacements, a power plant, magazine chambers, crew quarters, officer quarters, control facilities, radio room and chemical decontamination facilities. The armament of Battery 236 was composed of two long range 6-inch guns.

Battery 236 has three entrances, at the north, west and east sides. The north entrance faces the interior of Fort Travis. The east and west entrances lead respectively to the east and west gun emplacements. All the chambers are accessed through two main north-south and east-west corridors. The north-south corridor terminates at the east-west corridor at a T intersection. The east-west corridor terminates at the west entrance. The north-south corridor is approximately 10 feet high by 4.6 feet wide. Through this corridor military personnel would have access to operational chambers inside the battery. The east-west corridor is approximately 10 feet high by 6 feet wide. Through this corridor military personnel had access to storage chambers that would hold the powder and shells for the guns - one of the reasons why this corridor was wider than the north-south corridor.

The generator room is one of the largest chambers within the battery, approximately 20x40 feet, with a 15-foot ceiling. This chamber still has three foundations where three generators were located. The dimensions of the adjacent storage room is approximately 12x10 feet, with a 15-foot ceiling. The next chamber encountered through the north-south corridor is the decontamination chamber. This room is divided into two separate sections. One section contains chemical filtration tanks, which are still in place, and the section contains showers which would decontaminate individuals. It appears that

tanks were use for chemical air filtration. The dimensions of this room are approximately 10x15 feet, with a ceiling 10 feet high. The next chamber encountered through the north-south corridor is the operations chamber. The dimensions of this room are approximately 12x15 feet, with a 10-foot ceiling. This room leads to the officers quarters, a smaller room with no doors. The dimensions of this room are approximately 8x15 feet, with a 10-foot ceiling.

The east-west corridor gives access to storage chambers. These chambers vary in shape and some could not be fully examined because concrete floor slabs have been moved. Tunnels below the battery (not currently accessible) had wiring and pipes. Some of the original equipment still in place, including the chemical filtration tanks, water tanks and circuit breakers, but all of the wiring leading to the guns has been removed. Battery 236 was armed with two long-range 6- inch guns, which were removed when the fort was decommissioned.

The structural integrity of **Battery 236** is very good. All the external steel doors at Battery 236 have corrosion and are deteriorating, but are still functional. The majority of interior steel doors and their locking mechanisms are in good condition. Although light fixtures have been placed inside Battery Ernst by the Galveston County Beach and Parks Department, some of the original light fixtures are still functional (Russell 2003). The filtration tanks for airborne chemicals are still there inside this battery. Battery 236 is in very good condition and its integrity has not been affected.

Secondary Properties

With the exception of the Keeper's House, none of the ancillary buildings associated with the fort (including barracks, officer quarters, officers service club, mess hall, HQ dispensary, motor pool office, motor pool shed, administration and supply, fire house, battery carpenter shop, and latrines) remain, although twelve building foundations are extant. Several mission-related structures and buildings are in place, and are listed below.

The **anti-aircraft gun emplacement** (contributing) is located behind Battery Ernst on an earth mound that rises approximately 5 feet above the ground. The gun emplacement is approximately 4 feet high by 7x6 feet. This gun emplacement is a concrete semi-square, with stairs leading up to it. It appears that this gun emplacement may have had a searchlight. The gun (of undetermined caliber) was removed when the fort was decommissioned, if not earlier.

The **forward observation station** (contributing) is a small concrete structure measuring approximately 7x6x6 feet. The structure is partially below ground and rises only 4 feet above ground. The structure has a slit facing the gulf coast where an individual would watch for incoming ships. Access to this structure was made from the ground level through a set of stairs.

The **keeper's house** (contributing) is a square one-story building. The dimensions of this structure are approximately 13x15 feet. This house is of brick construction with a shingle roof. The front of the house faces the Gulf Coast and has a porch with four brick columns. The house has brick a chimney. The house appears to have been constructed in the early 1940s.

The **bathroom facility** (noncontributing) is a building measuring approximately 24x12 feet. The bathrooms are divided into two separate areas for women and men. Each area has showers, restrooms and sinks. This building is modern in design and was built when the Fort Travis became Fort Travis Seashore Park.

The **cabana facility** (noncontributing) is a rectangular building measuring approximately 30x15 feet. This building features six units, each measuring approximately 7½x7 ½ feet, and featuring a sink and a small picnic table. Larger picnic tables are located in front of each unit.

The **park office** (noncontributing) is a mobile office measuring approximately 16x10 feet. This office is primarily composed of corrugated metal, with a small wooden porch with stairs.

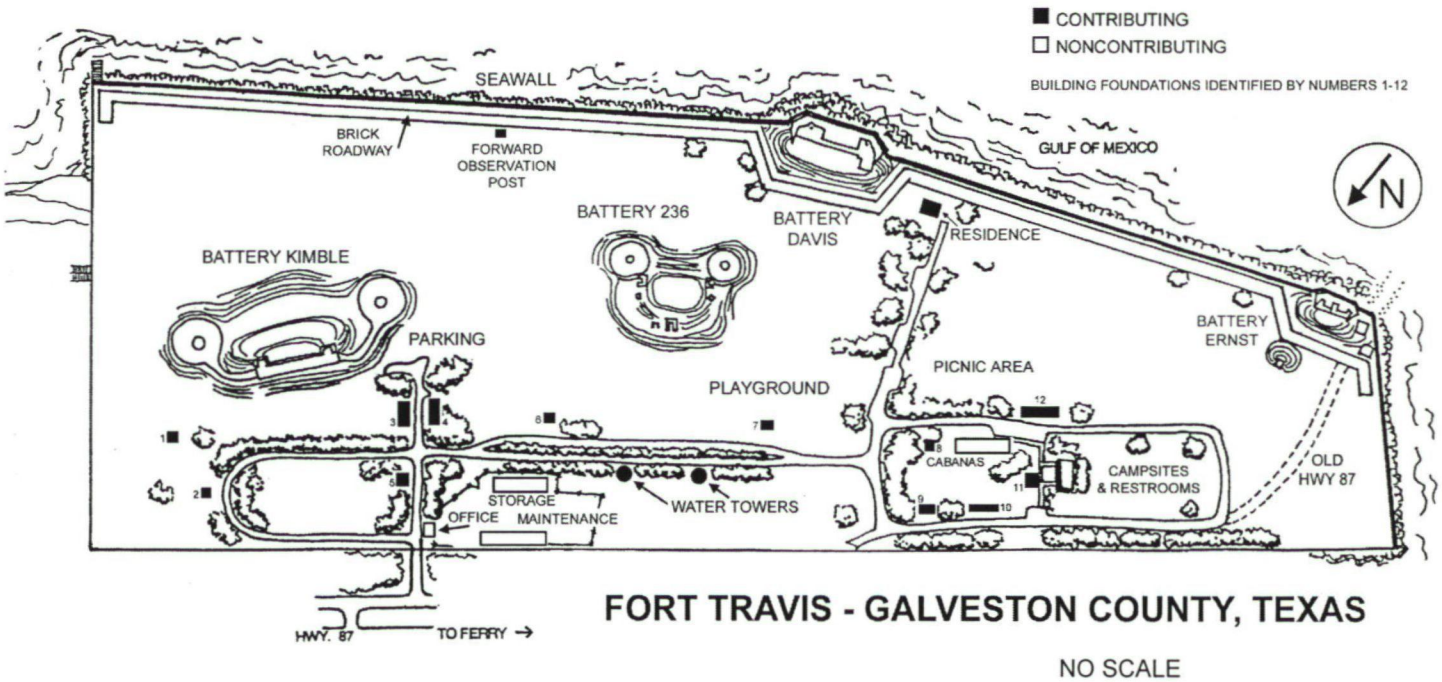
The **storage shed** (noncontributing) measures approximately 42x12 feet, and is a 3-wall structure composed of corrugated sheet metal with wooden beams. This structure is used primarily to store maintenance vehicles. Chain link fencing surrounds the area.

Integrity of Historical Properties at Fort Travis Seashore Park

Although time and vandalism have contributed to the deterioration of Fort Travis, structures representing the military history of the fort retain their integrity. This overall planning is a major contributing component of Fort Travis Seashore Park. Battery Davis has the highest level of deterioration followed by Battery Ernst, then Battery Kimble and ultimately Battery No. 236. None of the historical structures at Fort Travis are at a stage of deterioration which would disqualify the structure from contributing to the historical significance of the fort.

Table 1. Properties at Fort Travis Seashore Park

	Property	Type	Date	Status
1	Battery Davis	Structure	1898 (alt. 1903)	C
2	Battery Ernst	Structure	1898 (alt. 1903)	C
3	Battery Kimble	Structure	1921	C
4	Battery #236	Structure	1943	C
5	Forward Observation Station	Structure	1942	C
6	Anti-Aircraft Emplacement	Structure	c.1918	C
7	Keeper's House	Building	1940	C
8	Storage Shed	Structure	1975	NC
9	Parks Office (mobile home)	Building	1975	NC
10	Cabana Building	Building	1975	NC
11	Old Highway 87 (brick road)	Structure	c. 1920	C
12	Bathrooms	Building	1975	NC
13	Water tank 1	Structure	c.1940	C
14	Water tank 2	Structure	c.1940	C
15-27	12 building foundations	12 Structures	c.1940	C



8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

x **A** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH EVENTS THAT HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE BROAD PATTERNS OF OUR HISTORY.

___ **B** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIVES OF PERSONS SIGNIFICANT IN OUR PAST.

x **C** PROPERTY EMBODIES THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TYPE, PERIOD, OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION OR REPRESENTS THE WORK OF A MASTER, OR POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUE, OR REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT AND DISTINGUISHABLE ENTITY WHOSE COMPONENTS LACK INDIVIDUAL DISTINCTION.

___ **D** PROPERTY HAS YIELDED, OR IS LIKELY TO YIELD, INFORMATION IMPORTANT IN PREHISTORY OR HISTORY.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS: N/A

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Military, Engineering

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1898-1949

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1898, 1900, 1942

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: unknown

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-12 through 8-16).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see continuation sheets 9-17 through 9-18).

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

_ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
_ previously listed in the National Register
_ previously determined eligible by the National Register
_ designated a National Historic Landmark
_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:

x State historic preservation office *(Texas Historical Commission)*
_ Other state agency
_ Federal agency
_ Local government
_ University
x Other -- Specify Repository: *National Archives, Western District, Fort Worth*
Rosenberg Library, Galveston

Fort Travis is the most complete concentration of coastal artillery batteries on the Texas Gulf Coast. It is located on the southern tip of the Bolivar Peninsula and contains four principal batteries and the remains of seven concrete foundations, two concrete water tanks, and a caretakers house. The historic resources of Fort Travis were constructed between the years of 1898 and 1943. In its original state, Fort Travis was comprised of coastal batteries, magazine bunkers, anti-aircraft gun emplacements, enlisted man barracks, officer quarters, and other ancillary structures. Today, the only mission-critical historic properties standing are the four main batteries, a forward observation post, and an anti-aircraft gun emplacement.

These batteries represent three distinctive historical periods within the military history of coastal fortifications: batteries Ernst and Davies were built during the Endicott period (1885-1910); Battery Kimble was constructed during the Post-World War I period (1918-1936); and Battery 236 was constructed during the World War II era (1937-1945). The construction and placement of the batteries represent different military strategies and technologies followed at the time of construction, and each reflects distinctive technologies and military tactics in the history of coastal artilleries. Evaluated within the contexts of the history of coastal artillery fortifications, military tactics, Fort Travis is nominated under Criteria A and C in the areas of Military and Engineering. As the only property of its type on the Texas Gulf Coast, and as a facility that contributed to the security of Texas during its period of significance, the property is nominated at the state level of significance.

Early Military History of Fort Travis Area

The original Fort Travis was established on the eastern end of Galveston Island in 1836 to protect the entrance to Galveston harbor, and was originally called Fort Point. The fort was later renamed for William Barrett Travis, commander at the Alamo (Burns Peterson 1991). Fort Travis was composed of an octagonal structure mounted with six pound and twelve pound guns taken from the ship Cayuga (Webb and Carroll 2000). When construction began in April 1836, the nearby construction camp was called Camp Travis. The garrison of Fort Travis in Galveston Island was withdrawn in 1844. During the Civil War, Fort Green was established on the Bolivar Peninsula. This fort was built in Bolivar point and might have been located on or close to the area that later became Fort Travis. Fort Green was a semi-triangular fortification. No records have been found pertaining to the abandonment period of Fort Green. Fort Green most likely was destroyed by Confederate troops when they surrendered Galveston and the surrounding area to Union troops.

The Endicott Board and Coastal Fortifications[1]

The period following the Civil War saw revolutionary improvements in artillery, including breechloading steel guns and smokeless powder. Annual reports of the U.S. chief of engineers in the early 1880s reflect the opinion that these new weapons had made American coast defenses, once the strongest in the world, obsolete. Congress added a provision to its 1885 Fortifications Appropriation Act requiring the president to appoint a special board to study the issue of coastal defense. In May of that year, President Grover Cleveland appointed Secretary of War William C. Endicott to head such a board, which included civilians as well as military and naval officers.

[1] http://www.fortadams.org/history.htm, accessed September 29, 2003.

In January 1886, the Endicott Board recommended a comprehensive upgrading of harbor defenses nationwide, specifying the need for a coastal defense system of modern ordnance mounted in concrete fortifications. The cost of implementing the board's recommendations was estimated at over $126 million. Congress did not immediately appropriate funds for the proposed changes, but work had commenced by the early 1890s. The outbreak of the Spanish-American War and threats of bombardment by the Spanish fleet along the eastern seaboard accelerated implementation of the program. As tensions with Spain escalated in early 1898, Congress appropriated $50 million for national defense, much of which was applied to coastal fortifications.

The engineers were forced to balance cost against protection in designing the new forts, rejecting armored casemates and turrets (which afforded gun crews protection) in favor of open emplacements of concrete banked on the sides facing the enemy. This type of fortification offered reasonable protection from direct fire, and had the added advantage of being very difficult to spot from the sea. The disappearing carriage gun mount allowed a gun's barrel to project over a high concrete parapet for firing, and the recoil caused it to descend below the parapet where the crew could load the next round. In the loading position, the crew was protected from direct fire by the concrete parapet and as much as forty feet of sand and earth.

The Endicott Board recommended twenty-seven ports be protected under the new system, which provided comprehensive, concealed protection against attack from the sea. All emplacements were sited to provide maximum coverage of harbor approaches. It was the most comprehensive American coast defense system yet built. The Endicott system's only major weakness was a complete lack of defense against attack from the land. They were also unprotected against air attack, although the airplane was developed after the Endicott system was complete.

Founding and Development of Fort Travis on the Bolivar Peninsula

In 1898, the federal government purchased a 97-acre tract at the southern end of the Bolivar Peninsula (Peterson 1991) on which it would establish Fort Travis. Under this plan, Fort Point (later known as Fort San Jacinto) and Fort Travis would together protect the entrance to Galveston Bay, including the control of naval traffic and maintenance of mine and torpedo defenses (Wilson 1898a). Fort Crockett, on Galveston Island, would serve as general headquarters of the entire harbor defense system and protect southern approaches to the island. During the first phase of construction batteries Davis and Ernst were completed. Battery Davies was named after Lieutenant Thomas Davies of the United States Mounted Rifles. Lieutenant Davies was killed in the Mexican War (1847). Battery Ernst was named after Second Lieutenant Rudolph Ernst of the United States Sixth Infantry. Second Lieutenant Ernst was also killed during the Mexican War (1847). Command of Fort Travis was turned over to the coast artillery on October 25, 1898.

The character-defining elements of coastal fortifications built during the Endicott Period include dispersing guns, widely separated concrete emplacements, underground magazines, and concrete parapets designed to blend in with their surroundings. All of these elements are present at Fort Travis. During this period concrete became the material of choice for all modern work, rapidly replacing stone as a choice in commercial building and paving, and was ideal for the type of defenses contemplated by the Endicott Board. Concrete was the hallmark of the new fortifications, and it made the break with all previous techniques of fortification (Mallory and Ottar 1973). Batteries Davis and Ernst were reinforced concrete and steel structures. Because the elevation of the fort was raised, the magazine chambers for both batteries were located

underground. The armament of Battery Davis was composed of two 8-inch guns of the "disappearing" type. These guns could be elevated giving them a greater range than older guns. The armament of Battery Ernst was composed of three 3-inch "rapid fire" guns equipped with searchlights.

Facilities for planting, retrieving, storing, and controlling mines were installed at many locations during this period; Fort Travis controlled the Galveston Bay mines during the Spanish-American War. Coastal minefields required protection, and some batteries occupied locations chosen for their view of the mine fields rather than positions from which they could bombard vessels (Freeman *et al.* 1999). Battery Ernst was located close to the narrowest area of the harbor entrance, in part to protect the minefields on both sides of the harbor entrance. Electrical cables connected the mines to the shore, and the mines could be detonated remotely. (Wilson 1898).

During the hurricane of 1900, Fort Travis and Galveston took considerable damage. In order to prevent damage from future hurricanes, a 17-foot seawall was constructed facing the gulf coast, and the subsequent filling raised the entire elevation of Fort Travis.

Fort Travis Between the World Wars

After World War I, many coastal defense forts were put on caretaker status, maintained by a small number of soldiers, and used as summer training camps for Military Reserves, National Guard, Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC), and Civilian Military Training corps (CMTC) units. Those coastal defenses deemed "critical" received new batteries and guns, including the new long-range 12-inch and 16-inch guns. Magazines were hidden in heavy concrete-and-earth bunkers, but the guns were set on open concrete platforms known as "Panama" mounts, due to their extensive use in the Panama Canal Zone. These guns could be elevated to gain a maximum range of 17 miles. Although the airplane was recognized as a threat, these new emplacements only partially protected against attack by air. The growing threat of aircraft as an offensive weapon, however, resulted in the formation of specialized anti-aircraft units, designated as the Coast Artillery Corps. A number of antiaircraft guns were installed at all harbor defense reservations during World War I and continued through the following years (Berthow 2002).

During this period, a number of harbor defense construction plans were drawn, but few new batteries were actually built (Berthow 2002). Fort Travis was one of the few coastal fortifications where a battery was constructed during this period. Battery Kimble (1925) was named after Major Edwin R. Kimble, a Galveston native killed in World War I. At this time, the plan of new batteries nationwide shifted from two guns in a single emplacement, to two guns in separate emplacements, and the design of individual structures shifted from simple storage to sophisticated specialization (Freeman *et al.* 1999). Other character-defining elements typical of period batteries – including the use of permanent earthworks to encase the magazine chamber, and the construction of a chemical decontamination chamber or chemical filtration system within the battery – are also present in Battery Kimble. After the extensive use of chemical warfare during World War I, chemical decontamination chambers or chemical filtration systems became a necessity in military fortifications. Two sets of large steel riveted doors are still intact within this battery. These doors would separate the powder magazine from the shell magazine. Also, Battery Kimble was constructed further inland – a characteristic that began in the Post-World War I period and would continue in later periods.

Fort Travis During World War II

Congress authorized a full construction program for coastal defenses in September of 1940. The program called for new defense at 19 harbors along both coasts of North America (Barthow 2002). The fortifications were built using two standardized designs, a two-gun 16-inch battery (or in some cases remodeled 12-inch batteries) and a two-gun 6-inch battery (or in some cases 8-inch batteries), along with their supporting command and observation stations. By the onset of World War II, this system was completed, and disappearing guns and other earlier guns were scrapped to support the war effort. During the war, the fear of a possible invasion or attack at major naval ports within the United States caused an increase in the construction of batteries and other structures at key coastal defense installations. Construction of Battery 236 was completed in 1943, and during the war 27 buildings (including barracks for enlisted men, officers, and noncommissioned officers; a mess hall, and other ancillary frame buildings) were constructed to support the 2,500 troops stationed there. A number of German prisoners of war were interned in Fort Travis.

Battery 236 was encased completely by soft earthworks and then reinforced concrete. During the 1930s and 1940s methods for pouring concrete had changed. Plywood panels replaced the use of individual form boards, and specialized hardware helped speed the erection of the formwork when pouring concrete (Freeman *et al.* 1999), and this technology is evident in Battery 236. The battery also has components introduced during the World War II period. During this period, gun batteries were pushed further outward, as were the proliferating numbers of fire control and support stations now required for the long-range cannon (Freeman *et al.* 1999). This battery was self-sufficient, having an internal power plant, crew quarters, officers quarters, control facilities, radio room, and a chemical filtration system. The armament of Battery 236 was characteristic of the period, composed of two long-range 6-inch guns mounted on Panama mounts.

Decommission of Fort Travis and the Establishment of Fort Travis Seashore Park

In 1949, Fort Travis was declared war surplus and sold to the M and M Building Corporation, a private developer, with the stipulation that the former batteries would be made available to the public during hurricane emergencies (Peterson 1991). In the late 1950s gambling syndicates hid their slot machines within the batteries, and at one point Attorney General Will Wilson's crackdown on illegal gambling led to the discovery of 550 slot machines at Fort Travis (Miller 1985). In 1960 the fort was designated an official civil-defense shelter and sold to C. Pat Lumpkin Associates of Houston. In 1962 Hurricane Carla hit the area and residents of Bolivar Peninsula, along with some of their livestock, took refuge within the fortifications. Newspaper records indicate that Fort Travis could shelter up to 1,750 persons for seven days (Johnston 1965). In 1973, the Galveston County Commissioners Court purchased the site for use as a public park. .

Summary of Criteria

Fort Travis is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A and C, in the areas of Military and Engineering, because it represents a time when an military attack to the coasts of the United States was a very real threat, as well as the changing strategies and technologies applied to coastal defense between the 1890s and 1940s. Fort Travis embodies the characteristics of three periods in the history of coastal fortifications. Batteries Davis and Ernst are typical of the Endicott period and show characteristics that were introduced in the construction of coastal fortifications at that time, including the

use of concrete as the primary material and the placement of the batteries. Battery Kimble is typical of Post World War I coastal fortifications, in the use of Panama gun emplacements, its encasement in permanent earthworks and concrete, and location away from the shore. Battery 236 is typical of World War II era coastal fortifications, as it is completely encased in permanent earthworks and concrete, and it featured a chemical filtration system, generators and other facilities which would allow the battery to function independently from other batteries within the fort.

Fort Travis is nominated at the state level for its role in protecting two of the most strategically sensitive areas of Texas – the Port of Galveston and the lower terminus of the Houston Ship Channel – and as the last intact fortification of its type on the Texas gulf coast. Nearby Fort San Jacinto has fallen into serious disrepair and has been partially destroyed leaving only one gun emplacement partially intact, thus losing much of its overall integrity. Although Corpus Christi was protected by a small set of batteries in Port Aransas, the major coastal fortifications in Texas during the periods in question were built in or around the Galveston area (Miller 1985).

While Criterion D is not claimed in this nomination, Fort Travis is likely to contain numerous archeological sites , including the remains of Fort Green, a Confederate installation. Original plans of the fort before the seawall was constructed indicate several buildings and a small network of railroad lines that linked batteries Davies and Ernst, and other buildings. Although Fort Travis never fired its guns in defense of Galveston Bay, activity within the fort, as with any historical or archaeological site, is likely to have deposited material remains, which eventually could have been buried. This material remains is likely to yield information that can contribute to the history of the area, the fort, and the activities its personnel conducted within the fort. Very little subsurface disturbance has occurred since Galveston County Beach and Parks Department acquired the fort. There is a strong possibility that materials remain *in situ,* which could contribute to the historical understanding of the fort. Personal interviews with park caretakers indicate that there are possible tunnels and buried military equipment within the park. At the same time, there are seven large foundations within one of the barrack areas of the fort. Excavations around this area could yield artifacts that could help in understanding behavior of the personnel that lived in the fort and manned the batteries.

Several venues of archaeological studies should be conducted at Fort Travis Seashore Park. The location of Fort Green could be tested through remote sensing or archival means. The park area should be systematically surveyed to determine the complete layout of this military installation throughout its history, as archival records are sporadic regarding the exact layout. Oral history indicates that tunnels and possible military equipment was buried on several locations within the park, and existence of these tunnels or military equipment could be determined through remote sensing. Also through a systematic survey of the park, life within the military installation could be examined. Everyday items buried within the site can give us an insight into the life of the personnel that lived at the fort.

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Map
1910 Fort Travis Plane view

Map
1919 Fort Travis Plane view

Map
1921 Fort Travis Plane view

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1898a Letter dated April 19, from Brig. Gen. John L. Wilson to Lt. C. L. Riche, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A.

Wilson, John L.
1898b Letter dated May 13, from Brig. Gen. John L. Wilson to Lt. C. L. Riche, Corps of Engineers, U.S.A.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY: approximately 70 acres

UTM REFERENCES	Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	15	328930	3249307
2.	15	329573	3249894
3.	15	329784	3249650
4.	15	329160	3249096

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: (see continuation sheet 10-19)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION: (see continuation sheet 10-19)

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE: Jorge Garcia-Herrerros, Principal Investigator

ORGANIZATION: Perennial Environmental Services, Inc. **DATE:** February 12, 2003

STREET & NUMBER: 625 West 17th Street **TELEPHONE:** (713) 703-9252

CITY OR TOWN: Houston **STATE:** Texas **ZIP CODE:** 77008

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS (see continuation sheet 7-11)

PHOTOGRAPHS (see continuation sheet Photo-20 and Photo 21)

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

PROPERTY OWNER

NAME: Galveston County Beach and Parks Department

STREET & NUMBER: 4102 FM 519 **TELEPHONE:** (409) 934-8114

CITY OR TOWN: Lamarque **STATE:** Texas **ZIP CODE:** 77568

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of Fort Travis during its period of significance is the current boundary of Fort Travis Seashore Park. The boundaries of Fort Travis Seashore Park are delineated by the Gulf Coast on the south and west sides, old highway 87 on the north side and a small beach on the east side. Part of the west boundary has become a wetland area. The boundary area of Fort Travis Seashore Park is easily differentiated due to the rise in elevation of the fort area.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary for the area to be nominated on the National Register of Historic Places is based on the current property boundaries owned by the Galveston County Beach and Parks Department and the known historical area that was Fort Travis. The known historical area of Fort Travis centered on the four batteries that through several distinct historical periods were part of the fort. The area of Fort Travis, aside of containing the batteries also contained other ancillary structures that supported the coastal artillery. Although, the caretaker's house was not demolished, the majority of these ancillary structures were destroyed. Subsurface material remains pertaining to these structures and the activities within the fort might still be *in situ.* These remains might contribute to the military history of the fort, the history of the area, and the history of coastal fortifications.

Photo Log

Fort Travis
Port Bolivar, Galveston County, Texas
Photographed by Jorge Garcia-Herrerros
Summer 2003
Negatives on file with Galveston County Beach and Parks Department

Photo 1
Battery Davis and Caretakers house taken from Battery Ernst.
Camera facing east

Photo 2
Battery Kimble in the background and portion of Battery 236 on the left corner. Taken from the seawall.
Camera facing north

Photo 3
Battery Kimble taken from the seawall.
Camera facing northwest

Photo 4
Battery 236 taken south and from the seawall.
Camera facing north

Photo 5
Forward observation post taken from the seawall.
Camera facing northwest

Photo 6
Antiaircraft gun emplacement located behind Battery Ernst, taken from behind the gun emplacement.
Camera facing south

Photo 7
Courtyard, Battery Ernst, from northwest
Camera facing southeast

Photo 8
Courtyard, Battery Ernst, from southwest
Camera facing northeast

Photo 9
Courtyard, Battery Ernst, from top of battery
Camera facing west

Photo 10
Caretakers House, from seawall
Camera facing northeast

Photo 11
"North entrance" at Battery No. 236.
Camera facing south

Photo 12
West Entrance to Battery No. 236.
Camera facing east

Photo 13
North observation post on top of the gallery for Battery Kimble.
Camera facing south

Photo 14
Southern "Panama" mount at Battery Kimble.
Camera facing south

Photo 15
Inside the gallery at Battery Kimble.
Camera facing north.

Photo 16
Gallery at Battery Kimble. Note Battery 236 on the right corner of the plate.
Camera facing south

Photo 17
Foundation adjacent Battery Kimble
Camera facing south

Photo 18
Battery 236, taken from playground. Note concrete foundation possibly used to hold gas tank
Camera facing south

(1)

PHOTO 1 of 18
FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TX
Photo 2 of 18

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO., TEXAS
PHOTO 3 of 18

(4)

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 4 of 18

(5)

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 5 of 18

(6)

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 6 OF 18

(7)

FORT TRAVIS
FORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 7 of 18

(8)

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 8 of 18

(9)

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 9 of 18

10

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO, TEXAS
PHOTO 10 of 18


BATTERY
942
NORTH ENTRANCE

(11)

FORT TRAVIS
FORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 11 of 18


WEST ENTRANCE

12

FORT TRAVIS
FORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 12 of 18

13

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 13 of 18

14

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 14 of 18

(15)

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO, TEXAS
PHOTO 15 of 18

16

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 16 of 18

(17)

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 17 of 18

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR VIC.
GALVESTON CO. TEXAS
PHOTO 18 of 18

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

FORT TRAVIS
PORT BOLIVAR, GALVESTON CO., TEXAS
ZONE 15
1. 328930E 3249307N
2. 329573E 3249894N
3. 329784E 3249650N
4. 329160E 3249096N

GALVESTON QUADRANGLE
TEXAS–GALVESTON CO.
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

94°52′30″
29°22′30″
50′00″
47′30″
94°45′00″
20′00″
17′30″
29°15′00″
3 350 000 FEET
580 000 FEET
540 000 FEET
3 320 000 FEET
Shoal Point
Levee
TEXAS CITY DIKE
Lawrence Beach Park
TEXAS CITY CORPORATE BOUNDARY
TEXAS CITY CHANNEL
GALVESTON CORP BDY
GALVESTON BAY
HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL
Cable Area
Goat Island
INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY
Port Bolivar
Horseshoe Lake
BOLIVAR PENINSULA
Lighthouse (Aband)
Mobile Home Park
Fort Travis Seashore Park
FERRY CHANNEL
BOLIVAR ROADS
GALVESTON CORPORATE BOUNDARY
BOLIVAR ROADS CHANNEL (INDEFINITE)
INNER BAR CHANNEL
TEXAS CITY CORPORATE BOUNDARY
GALVESTON CORPORATE BOUNDARY
Tidal Flat
PELICAN ISLAND
Gas Well
Rd On Levee
SEAWOLF PARKWAY
Texas A & M University at Galveston
Seawolf Park
Fort Point
US Coast Guard Station
OLD FORT SAN JACINTO (Site)
Radio Facility
Lagoon
The Seawall
GALVESTON CHANNEL
Cable and Pipeline Area
University of Texas Medical Branch
Lindale Park
Heliport
STRAND
Customs Bldg
Moody Sch
Rosenburg Sch
St Marys Sch
Trinity Sch
Courthouse
City Hall
Sheppard Park
Water Tanks
Central Sch
San Jacinto Park
San Jacinto Sch
O'Connell Sch
Austin Sch
Wright Cuney Park
BROADWAY
City Cem
Grace Ch
Kempner Park
Morgan Sch
Central Ch
Ball High Sch
Lasker Park
Galveston College
Menard Park
Gaging Station
Stewart Beach Park
EAST BEACH
SEAWALL BLVD
GALVESTON
GALVESTON ISLAND
Sewage Disposal Plant
INDUSTRIAL BLVD
PORT
Cable and Area Pipeline
Chimneys
Mobile Home Park
Washington Pk
Boat Ramp
OFFATTS BAYOU
Alamo Park
Alamo Sch
Travis Sch
Burnet Sch
Crockett Park
Galveston College (Fort Crockett)
Texas A & M Univ (Fort Crockett)
Fort Crockett Seawall Park
Lakeview Cem
Calvary Cem
Jones Park
Gladnieo Parker Sch
HEARDS LANE
Moody Gardens
Runway Light Pier
Scholes Field Airport
Radio Tower
Water Tank
Footbridges
Sydnor Bayou
Golf Course
Swimming Pools
Grete Oppe Sch
Schreiber Park
Weis Sch
STEWART RD
Seawall
WEST BEACH
GULF OF MEXICO

INTERIOR–GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1994

PRODUCED BY THE UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
CONTROL BY .... USGS, NOS/NOAA
COMPILED FROM AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN 1987
FIELD CHECKED .... 1989. MAP EDITED 1994
PROJECTION .... LAMBERT CONFORMAL CONIC
GRID: BLUE 1000-METER UNIVERSAL TRANSVERSE MERCATOR TICKS . ZONE 15
10 000-FOOT STATE GRID TICKS .... TEXAS, SOUTH CENTRAL ZONE
UTM GRID DECLINATION .... 0°53′ WEST
1994 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION .... 5°00′ EAST
VERTICAL DATUM .... NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
HORIZONTAL DATUM .... NORTH AMERICAN DATUM OF 1927 (NAD 27)
Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS/NOAA Chart 11324 (1992). This information is not intended for navigational purposes
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of any Federal and State reservations shown on this map
Gray tint indicates area in which selected buildings are shown
This map covers an active subsidence area. Evaluate relief and elevation information based on recent sources

NORTH

PROVISIONAL MAP
Produced from original manuscript drawings. Information shown as of date of photography. 1

94°52′30″

SCALE 1:24 000

KILOMETERS: 1 .5 0 1 2
METERS: 1000 0 1000 2000
MILES: 1 .5 0 1
FEET: 1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 8000 9000 10 000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808
To convert feet to meters multiply by .3048

SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 1 FOOT

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225 OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

TEXAS
QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3	1 Texas City 2 Port Bolivar 3 Flake 4 Virginia Point 5 The Jetties 6 Lake Como 7 8
4		5	
6	7	8	

ADJOINING 7.5′ QUADRANGLE NAMES

2994–231

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface ......
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface ...
Secondary highway, hard surface ......
Unimproved road ...
Interstate Route
U. S. Route
State Route

GALVESTON, TEXAS
PROVISIONAL EDITION 1994
29094-C7-TF-024

05000247

NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Fort Travis (amendment to document additional resources)
Other name/site number: Fort Travis Seashore Park
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: State Highway 87 at Loop 108
City or town: Port Bolivar State: Texas County: Galveston 167
Not for publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☑ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☑ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
☐ national ☑ statewide ☐ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ☑ A ☐ B ☑ C ☐ D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer 6/14/13
Signature of certifying official / Title **Date**

Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official **Date**

State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

✓ entered in the National Register 3.30.05
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register.
___ removed from the National Register
✓ other, explain: Additional Documentation Approved

per Edson W. Beall 8.20.13
Signature of the Keeper **Date of Action**

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

	Private
x	Public - Local
	Public - State
	Public - Federal

Category of Property

	building(s)
x	district
	site
	structure
	object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	4	buildings
31	1	sites
30	2	structures
0	1	objects
62	8	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 22 (as part of 2005 nomination)

6. Function or Use (unchanged from 2005 nomination)

Historic Functions: DEFENSE: Military Facility, Fortification

Current Functions: RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation = park

7. Description (unchanged from 2005 nomination)

Architectural Classification: NO STYLE

Principal Exterior Materials: CONCRETE, BRICK, ASPHALT

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-8 through 7-17)

8. Statement of Significance (unchanged from 2005 nomination)

Applicable National Register Criteria

x	**A**	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	B	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
x	**C**	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
	D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Military, Engineering

Period of Significance: 1898-1949

Significant Dates: 1898, 1900, 1942

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 8-18 through 8-22)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheets 9-23 through 9-24)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- _ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- _ previously listed in the National Register
- _ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- _ designated a National Historic Landmark
- _ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- _ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:
- x State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission*, Austin)
- _ Other state agency
- _ Federal agency
- _ Local government
- _ University
- x Other -- Specify Repository: *National Archives, Western District, Fort Worth; Rosenberg Library, Galveston*

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

10. Geographical Data (unchanged from 2005 nomination)

Acreage of Property: approximately 70 acres

Coordinates (either UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates)

UTM References

NAD 1927 ☐ NAD 1983 ☑

Zone: 15

1. Easting: 328930 Northing: 3249307
2. Easting: 329573 Northing: 3249894
3. Easting: 329784 Northing: 3249650
4. Easting: 329160 Northing: 3249096

Verbal Boundary Description: (see continuation sheet 10-25)

Boundary Justification: (see continuation sheet 10-25)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Jorge Garcia-Herrerros, Principal Investigator
Organization: Perennial Environmental Services, Inc.
Street & number: 625 West 17th Street
City or Town: Houston State: Texas Zip Code:77008
Email:
Telephone: (713) 703-9252
Date: February 12, 2003

Update prepared by:

Name/title: Grace Cynkar and Anna Mod
Organization: SWCA Environmental Consultants, Inc.
Street & number: 7255 Langtry Suite 100
City or Town: Houston State: Texas Zip Code: 77006
Email: gcynkar@swca.com
Telephone: (713)934-9900
Date: December 21, 2012

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheet Map-26 through Map-28)

Photographs (see continuation sheet Photo-5 through Photo-7)

Photographs

Fort Travis Seashore Park
Galveston, Galveston County, Texas
Photographed by Grace Cynkar, September 18, 2012

Photo 1
- Battery Davis (ID 1), north elevation; camera facing southeast
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0001

Photo 2
- Battery Ernst (ID 2), north elevation; camera facing southeast
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0002

Photo 3
- Foundation Slab (ID 32), detail; camera facing south
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0003

Photo 4
- Anti-Aircraft Gun Emplacement (ID 5), north elevation; camera facing south
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0004

Photo 5
- Battery 236 (ID 4) overall with Keeper's House (ID 7) visible left and a Foundation Slab (ID 26) visible in the foreground; camera facing west
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0005

Photo 6
- Battery Kimble (ID 3), north elevation; camera facing south
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0006

Photo 7
- Battery Kimble (ID 3) north and east elevations with Radio Tower Foundation Slab (ID 11) in the foreground and Battery 236 (ID 4) visible to the right; camera facing southwest
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0007

Photo 8
- Cabana (ID 61) and Bathroom (ID 60) Facility, east and south elevations; camera facing northwest
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0008

Photo 9
- Keeper's House (ID 7), south and west elevations; camera facing northeast
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0009

Photo 10
- Seawall Walkway (ID 68) and Seawall (ID 67), detail; camera facing northeast
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0010

Photo 11
- Picnic Pavilion (ID 64), south elevation; camera facing northwest
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0011

Photo 12
- Foundation Slab (ID 10) and Park Office (ID 62), south and east elevations; camera facing northwest
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0012

Photo 13
- Water Tanks (ID 34 in foreground and ID 35 behind); camera facing northeast
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0013

Photo 14
- Foundation Slab (ID 15) and Battery 236 (ID 4), north and east elevations; camera facing southwest
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0014

Photo 15
- Foundation Slab (ID 19) and Cabana Facility (ID 61), south and west elevations; camera facing northeast
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0015

Photo 16
- Foundation Slabs (ID 20 in the foreground and ID 22 behind), detail; camera facing northeast
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0016

Photo 17
- Foundation Slab (ID 23) with Headwall and Culvert (ID 55) visible left and the Playground (ID 65) visible right; camera facing south
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0017

Photo 18
- Cistern (ID 39) and Foundation Slab (ID 13) with the Maintenance Shed (ID 63) and Water Tank (ID 35) visible left and the Parks Office (ID 62) visible right; camera facing northwest
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0018

Photo 19
- Foundation Slab (ID 26) and Battery 236 (ID 4); camera facing northeast
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0019

Photo 20
- Forward Observation Station (ID 6) and Battery Kimble (ID 3), south and west elevations; camera facing northeast
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0020

Photo 21

- Cistern (ID 41) in the foreground with an Equipment Cradle (ID 44), Foundation Slab (ID 18) and Battery Kimble (ID 3) visible in the background; camera facing northeast
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0021

Photo 22

- Culvert with Headwall (ID 46) with Foundation Slab (ID 18) and Battery 236 (ID 4) visible left and Battery Davis (ID 1) visible right, north elevations; camera facing south
- TX_Galveston County_Fort Travis Historic District Amendment_0022

Purpose and Scope of this Nomination Amendment

This nomination amends the 2005 National Register nomination of Fort Travis, incorporating the original text and adding additional sections to reflect an updated resource count. An architectural historian reviewed the original nomination and supplemental documents, surveyed the site, and added information regarding previously-unidentified resources, recent construction, and archaeological surveys. A total of 44 additional properties are identified in this amendment. Wherever possible the new information and written sections are identified as products of the recent research. The boundary, criteria, areas of significance, and functions are unchanged from the original nomination.

Narrative Description

Fort Travis (Fort Travis Seashore Park) is the most complete concentration of coastal artillery batteries on the Texas Gulf Coast. Constructed between 1898 and 1943, the fort is on the southern tip of the Bolivar Peninsula and includes buildings, structures, sites, and one object, in addition to the four principal batteries. These resources are associated with either the property's use as a fort, as a park, or are general infrastructure elements (see Table 1 for full inventory). Fort Travis originally featured barracks for enlisted men, officer quarters, and other ancillary structures. Although the historical properties at Fort Travis are at different levels of deterioration, they still retain their overall architectural and historical integrity. Batteries Davis, Ernst, Kimble and No. 236 represent three distinct historical periods in the military history of coastal defense fortifications. The construction and placement of the batteries exemplify military strategies and technologies typical of the period during which each was constructed.

Fort Travis Seashore Park is located on 70 acres at the southern end of the Bolivar Peninsula facing southeast onto the entrance to Galveston Bay and the Gulf of Mexico in Galveston County, Texas (see Map 1 or insert map). The entire park site is surrounded by a perimeter Seawall, constructed in 1904. Directly to the northwest of the park is a wetland area. The eastern boundary of the park is adjacent to a residential area on the northeast and the Gulf of Mexico is to the southeast. In general the boundaries of the park are recognizable due to the higher elevation that it has from the surrounding area, the result of a Seawall and perimeter retaining wall (1904) that also raised the site approximately 17 feet with dredged soil. The natural soils of the area are composed primarily of medium to fine sand with interbedded lenses of marine shell overlying sand, silt, and clay deposits (Abbot 2001). The climate of the region is classified as modified humid subtropical characterized by hot summers and mild winters. The vegetation specific to the area is consistent with the Marsh/Barrier Island vegetation community, consisting primarily of blue stem switchgrass, Florida paspalum and brownseed paspalum (Abbot 2001).

Boundaries and Arrangement of Structures at Fort Travis Seashore Park

A chain link fence and the Gulf Coast denote the current boundaries of Fort Travis Seashore Park. The Gulf Coast denotes the south and southwest boundaries of the park. The northern boundary of the park is denoted by a wetland area on the northwest and a residential neighborhood on the northeast. The eastern boundary of the park is adjacent to a residential area on the northeast and the gulf coast on the southeast. In general the boundaries of the park are recognizable due to the higher elevation that it has from the surrounding area. The parks office is a converted mobile home located at the park entrance at the north end of the site. Behind this building is a modern wood and corrugated metal shed where maintenance vehicles are stored. To the south is a circular parking area and Battery 236. Battery Kimble is approximately 498 feet northeast of Battery 236. At the middle of the gulf side is a playground area, a small parking area, and the caretaker's house. This house is adjacent to the seawall to the south and is approximately 83 feet west of Battery Davis. Public bathrooms with showers (noncontributing building) and a six-unit cabana (noncontributing building) are in a small area in the central northwest section of the park. Battery

Ernst is located at the southernmost point from the entrance. The anti-aircraft gun emplacement (contributing structure) is located behind Battery Ernst. The forward observation station (contributing structure) is by the Seawall and in front of Battery No. 236; most of it is partially buried. The bathrooms and cabana building are located away from any of the historic structures and do not interfere with the view of the historic structures or general military feeling of the park.

Overview of Resources at Fort Travis Seashore Park

Principal Batteries

In 1898, the federal government purchased a 97-acre site for $36,000, across the harbor entrance from Galveston Island, at the southern end of the Bolivar Peninsula. The area was named the 'Fort Travis Military Reservation' and construction of the fort began immediately. During the first phase of construction, batteries Davis and Ernst were completed. Command of the fort was turned over to the coast artillery on October 25, 1899 (Corps of Engineers Records 1898).

During the hurricane of 1900 (the Great Storm), Fort Travis and Galveston took considerable damage by a storm surge that destroyed most of the island and killed approximately 9,000 people. A consequence of the storm was major construction projects that raised the elevation of Galveston Island and Fort Travis by approximately 17 feet, followed by the erection of concrete seawalls facing the Gulf Coast. Instead of just raising the area that faced the Gulf Coast, the entire area of Fort Travis was raised 17 feet and a concrete seawall was built facing the Gulf Coast. Fort Travis now had the highest elevation within the Bolivar Peninsula. Raising the elevation of the fort began in earnest in 1903 and continued through 1904 (Peterson 1991). By raising the elevation of the fort, the appearance of batteries Davis and Ernst changed. Originally, both batteries stood out to any incoming ships coming from the Gulf Coast. By uniformly elevating the fort, both batteries were partially concealed. At the same time, a submerged courtyard was created behind each battery and the magazine chambers were now located underground.

The location of Fort Travis and its first two batteries corresponds with the original function of the fort and limitations of the technology that was available when the fort was originally constructed. In order to provide protection to Galveston Bay (and due to the limited range of the guns) the fort and its batteries were constructed adjacent to the shore. Battery Davis is located concentrically on the fort. This battery would have provided coverage with its guns of any ship coming towards the fort and Galveston Bay. Battery Ernst is located on the southern tip of the fort. At this location, the guns of Battery Ernst gained the maximum coverage possible to the entrance of Galveston Bay. As technology improved, the range of coastal guns increased, allowing for batteries to be built further inland. In order to compensate for the improvement in munitions, coastal fortifications such as those at Fort Travis switched from using only concrete or stone fortifications to a combination of soft earthworks and concrete. This transition is seen in the batteries constructed at Fort Travis.

Battery Davis (1898) was built on wooden pilings driven in sand. When construction was completed Battery Davis was a 27.8 feet high reinforced concrete and steel beam structure. Three magazine chambers are located on the ground floor. The armament of Battery Davis was composed of two 8-inclt guns of the "disappearing" type. These guns could be elevated giving them a greater range than older guns of the day. The battery had a gallery that lead to the gun emplacements, which collapsed several years ago.

The first level of the gallery is composed of the principal stations to support guns. At the northwest corner stands a small one-level square structure that is part of the battery, but with a separate roof, measuring approximately 20 x 20 feet. It has one doorway facing west and two windows facing north. The roof of this structure makes it

distinguishable because it is not completely flat, but it rises and stretches from the battery. Plans of this battery, drawn in 1939, show a small semi-circular concrete medallion (no longer extant) at the center of the roof.

On the first level and inside the battery are three chambers, accessed through a corridor that runs the length of the battery. Seven doorways lead into this corridor, but none of the original doors remain. This corridor also leads to two inner staircases that lead to the two separate gun emplacements. These inner staircases were used to bring ammunition to the guns. Two of the chambers are identical in size, approximately 9 x 14 feet. The middle chamber measures 20 x 14 feet. The gun emplacements are located at both ends of the battery. The northeast gum emplacement faces the Gulf Coast. The southwest gun emplacement faces the entrance to Galveston Bay. The 8-inch guns were removed when the fort was decommissioned.

The structural integrity of Battery Davis is fair, although this battery is in a state of considerable deterioration. Records appear to indicate that by 1921 the battery was no longer in use. No doors remain, and the concrete shows many stress fractures and cracks. Part of the gallery collapsed several years ago, thus making the battery too dangerous for visitors to enter. No restoration or stabilization of this battery has been conducted due to the lack of funding. Although in a condition of disrepair, the battery still retains significant aspects of its integrity.

Battery Ernst (1898) is a reinforced concrete and steel beam structure, approximately 21.5 feet tall. The armament of Battery Ernst was comprised of three 3-inch "rapid fire" guns with searchlights. The battery has two magazine chambers below the gun emplacements and a third magazine chamber on the north side of the battery. Two of the magazine chambers still have the original steel doors. This battery has deteriorated and is currently closed to the public.

The role of Battery Ernst was to defend and attack any ships attempting to enter Galveston Bay. The original height of the battery was approximately 21 feet, but with the construction of the seawall is now approximately four feet above ground. Battery Ernst is one of the simplest batteries in design at the fort. Three chambers are located below ground and three gun emplacements are located on top. Two of the largest chambers are located between the gun emplacements while the third, smallest chamber is located northwest of the battery. The largest room measures approximately 12 x 17 feet. The smallest chamber measures 7 x 12 feet. These chambers stored the powder and shells for the guns. The battery features three gun emplacements. The 3-inch guns were removed when the fort was decommissioned.

The structural integrity of Battery Ernst is good. Four steel riveted doors are still attached to their hinges in two of the magazine chambers. Although the doors display corrosion, they are in fair condition. The concrete shows some stress fractures and cracks, but not to the extent of Battery Davis. The steel support beams for the roofs of the magazine chambers show some heavy corrosion. The magazine chambers have been vandalized with graffiti. No restoration or stabilization of this battery has been conducted due to the lack of funding. Overall, the battery is still in good condition and its integrity has not been affected.

Battery Kimble (1925) was built during the post-World War I period, using a combination of earthworks, concrete and brick. The earthworks were placed on the side of the battery facing the Gulf Coast, providing both protection and camouflage. The battery is a reinforced concrete and steel beam structure, approximately 40.8 feet high, with brick masonry inside the shell and gunpowder chambers. The battery has two gun emplacements, a ventilation corridor, plotting rooms, officer latrines, and a large magazine divided into separate gunpowder and shell chambers. The armament of Battery Kimble was composed of two 12-inch guns, which could be elevated to gain a maximum range of 17 miles.

Battery Kimble is located in the northeastern area of the fort, away from the shore, and was built to attack ships approaching from the gulf. Placing the guns on the sides of the battery (instead of on top) helped protect them from aircraft raids, a new threat that appeared during World War I and would continue to be a threat until the end of World War II. Guns were placed in circular concrete "Panama" mounts that allowed guns to rotate 360 degrees. The gun placement thus reflected the changing nature of warfare.
Battery Kimble features a concrete gallery supported by 15 concrete columns, approximately 33 feet high. On top of the gallery are two observation stations. Battery Kimble had more than magazine chambers than the previous batteries. Underneath the soft earthworks is a large concrete chamber, measuring approximately 61 x 57 feet. Access to this chamber is through two large steel doors on each side of the chamber. This ventilation corridor also leads into two small control rooms, one measuring approximately 10 x 10 feet and the other measuring approximately 19 x10 feet. The large chamber is divided into two separate chambers, 61 x 27 feet and 61 x 30 feet. Each chamber features separate brick-lined storage areas used to store powder and shells. Access between these chambers was through two large folding steel doors (extant). On the north and south sides of the large chamber are four and five smaller chambers, respectively. These chambers included electrical stations that provided power to each gun emplacement and plotting rooms.

The structural integrity of Battery Kimble is good. The majority of the steel riveted external doors are still in place. Although the doors display some corrosion, they are in fair condition. Observation stations on top of the battery show some deterioration including stress fractures and cracks on the concrete. The observation stations and other portions of this battery have been vandalized with graffiti. The concrete floor of the shell chamber shows some cracks and a possible sinkhole in one place. The brick roof over the powder chamber is in good condition. The Panama concrete gun emplacements show some minor cracks on the concrete. No restoration or stabilization of this battery has been conducted due to the lack of funding. Overall, the battery is still in good condition.

Battery 236 (1943) is located centrally, away from the shore. The battery is approximately 42 feet high, made of reinforced concrete and steel beam. This battery was built to protect the entrance to Galveston Bay from any Axis attack, including that from submarine, and was completely encased in earthworks, giving both better protection and a camouflage. This encasement was a response to the improved accuracy of ship cannons and the improved accuracy of aerial bombardment. The only areas not covered in earthworks are the three entrances, two Panama gun mounts, and the ventilation shafts located on top. The battery features two gun emplacements, a power plant, magazine chambers, crew quarters, officer quarters, control facilities, radio room and chemical decontamination facilities. Battery 236 was armed with two long range 6-inch guns.

Battery 236 has three entrances, at the north, west and east sides. The north entrance faces the interior of Fort Travis. The east and west entrances lead respectively to the east and west gun emplacements. All the chambers are accessed through two main north-south and east-west corridors. The north-south corridor terminates at the east-west corridor in a 'T' intersection. The east-west corridor runs the length of the battery. The north-south corridor is approximately 10 feet high by 4.6 feet wide. Through this corridor military personnel would have access to operational chambers inside the battery. The east-west corridor is approximately 10 feet high by 6 feet wide. Through this corridor military personnel had access to storage chambers that would hold the powder and shells for the guns - one of the reasons why this corridor was wider than the north-south corridor.

The generator room is one of the largest chambers within the battery, approximately 20 x 40 feet, with a 15-foot ceiling. This chamber still has three foundations where three generators were located. The dimensions of the adjacent storage room are approximately 12 x 10 feet, with a 15-foot ceiling. The next chamber encountered through the north-south corridor is the decontamination chamber. This room is divided into two separate sections. One section contains chemical filtration tanks, which are still in place, and the other section contains showers which would decontaminate individuals. It appears that tanks were used for chemical air filtration. The dimensions of

this room are approximately 10 x 15 feet, with a 10-foot ceiling. The next chamber encountered through the north-south corridor is the operations chamber. The dimensions of this room are approximately 12x15 feet, with a I0-foot ceiling. This room leads to the officers' quarters, a smaller room with no doors. The dimensions of this room are approximately 8 x 15 feet, with a 10-foot ceiling.

The east-west corridor gives access to storage chambers. These chambers vary in shape and some could not be fully examined because concrete floor slabs have been moved. Tunnels below the battery (not currently accessible) had wiring and pipes. Some of the original equipment is still in place, including the chemical filtration tanks, water tanks and circuit breakers, but all of the wiring leading to the guns has been removed. Battery 236 was armed with two long-range 6-inch guns, which were removed when the fort was decommissioned.

The structural integrity of Battery 236 is very good. All the external steel doors at Battery 236 have corrosion and are deteriorating, but are still functional. The majority of interior steel doors and their locking mechanisms are in good condition. Although light fixtures have been placed inside Battery Ernst by the Galveston County Beach and Parks Department, some of the original light fixtures are still functional (Russell2003). The filtration tanks for airborne chemicals are still there inside this battery. Battery 236 is in very good condition and its integrity has not been affected.

Secondary Resources Associated with the Fort (1898-1949)

With the exception of the Keeper's House, none of the ancillary buildings associated with the fort (including barracks, officer quarters, officers service club, mess hall, HQ dispensary, motor pool office, motor pool shed, administration and supply, fire house, battery carpenter shop, and latrines) remain, although twenty-five building foundations are extant. Several mission-related structures and buildings are in place, and are listed below.

The **Anti-Aircraft Gun Emplacement** (contributing; Resource ID 5) is located behind Battery Ernst on an earth mound that rises approximately 5 feet above the ground. The gun emplacement is approximately 4 feet high by 7 x 6 feet. This gun emplacement is a concrete semi-square, with stairs leading up to it. It appears that this gun emplacement may have had a searchlight. The gun (of undetermined caliber) was removed when the fort was decommissioned, if not earlier.

The **Forward Observation Station** (contributing; Resource ID 6) is a small concrete structure measuring approximately 7 x 6 x 6 feet. The structure is partially below ground and rises only 4 feet above ground. The structure has a slit facing the gulf coast where an individual would watch for incoming ships. Access to this structure was made from the ground level through a set of stairs.

The **Keeper's House** (contributing; Resource ID 7) is a square one-story building. The dimensions of this structure are approximately l13 x 15 feet. This house is of brick construction with a shingle roof. The front of the house faces the Gulf Coast and has a porch with four brick columns. The house has brick a chimney. The house appears to have been constructed in the early 1940s.

The following resources associated with the fort were identified and added to the inventory during the 2012 update. All of them are considered contributing to the National Register district as remnants of the property's use as Fort Travis.

- Twenty-six **Foundation Slabs** (Resource IDs 8-33) were identified throughout the park. For the most part, it is unknown exactly which slab supported which building. Several, however, have been identified. IDs 8-9, as shown on MAP 4 and Table 1, were concrete foundations for generators. ID 10 served as the foundation for a

building housing toilets and showers and ID 11 is the foundation for a radio tower. The remaining foundations are unidentified but could have held buildings such as barracks, officer quarters, an officers' service club, a mess hall, an HQ dispensary, an administration and supply building, a fire house, and a battery carpenter shop. Although the exact construction dates for all of these foundations are unknown, all of them were built prior to the fort's decommissioning in 1949. No construction occurred on the property from that time to its opening as a park by Galveston County in 1973. As they are not park-related resources, they are therefore associated with the fort and are considered contributing to the National Register district.

- Two, circular-plan, concrete **Water Tanks** (Resource IDs 34-35), both partially buried, are located north of Battery 236 and directly west of the Maintenance Shed. The west tank (ID 34) is smaller more deeply buried than its counterpart (ID 35).

- A concrete and metal **Well** (Resource ID 36) sits approximately 33 feet west of ID 35 and between the two water tanks. It is surrounded by a heavily overgrown chain link fence and is not easily visible or identifiable.

- Five **Cisterns** (Resource IDs 37-41) were identified at various locations throughout the property **(see MAP 4)**. All of these structures are buried with only a rectangular concrete slab and boarded-up square openings visible on the surface.

- A **Swale** (Resource ID 42) marking a former roadbed runs between Battery 236 and Battery Kimble. It begins approximately 31 feet northwest of the Seawall Walkway and runs north for approximately 380 feet. Although overgrown with grass, the path and shape of the original leveled road are still discernible.

- A concrete, square-plan **Flagpole Base** (Resource ID 43) is located approximately 18 feet north of the Cabana Facility in the center of what was once a courtyard but is now a grouping of foundation slabs.

- Two, concrete, semi-circular **Equipment Cradles** (Resource IDs 44-45) are located on the property. The first (ID 44) is located approximately 410 feet west of Battery Davis and approximately 234 feet southwest of Battery 236. The second (ID 45) is located approximately 32 feet west of the Bathroom Facility.

- Fourteen **culverts** were identified on the property, seven of which have headwalls (Resource IDs 46-52) and seven (Resource IDs 53-59) of which do not.

Resources Associated with the Park

The **Bathroom Facility** (noncontributing; Resource ID 60) is a building measuring approximately 24 x 12 feet. The bathrooms are divided into two separate areas for women and men. Each area has showers, restrooms and sinks. This building is modern in design and was built when the Fort Travis became Fort Travis Seashore Park.

The **Cabana Facility** (noncontributing; Resource ID 61) is a rectangular building measuring approximately 30 x 15 feet. This building features six units, each measuring approximately 7.5 x 7.5 feet, and featuring a sink and a small picnic table. Larger picnic tables are located in front of each unit.

The **Park Office** (noncontributing; Resource ID 62) is a mobile office measuring approximately 11 x 10 feet. This office is primarily composed of corrugated metal, with a small wooden porch with stairs.

The **Maintenance Shed** (noncontributing; Resource ID 63) measures approximately 42 x 12 feet, and is a 3-wall structure composed of corrugated sheet metal with wooden beams. This structure is used primarily to store maintenance vehicles. Chain link fencing surrounds the area.

The following resources and descriptions were added during the 2012 update. All of them were built after the period of significance and are considered non-contributing to the National Register district.

- Eight, identical **Picnic Pavilions** (Resource ID 64) are located along the Seawall Walkway and along the northwest side of the park, facing onto the marsh. Each pavilion consists of a concrete slab covered by a pyramidal-roofed canopy supported by metal columns. Two metal picnic tables are located underneath the canopy and a metal, charcoal grill is located just outside.

- A metal and plastic **Playground** (Resource ID 65) is located approximately 142 southeast of the Cabana Facility and sits on a mulch base.

- A **Modern Transformer** (Resource ID 66) sits directly west of the Bathroom Facility.

Other Resources

The following four resources were added during the 2012 update. Although they are all significant, none have a direct association with either the fort or the park. The Seawall, the Seawall Walkway, and Old State Highway 87 are considered contributing to the National Register district for their role in the development and continued use of the property.

- The reinforced concrete **Seawall** (Resource ID 67) was built from 1903-1904 following the 1900 Hurricane. It extends across the southeast boundary of the property and faces the Gulf. A concrete retaining wall abuts the Seawall in in front of Battery Ernst and Battery Davis and continues to encircle the entire site.

- The **Seawall Walkway** (Resource ID 68) was built c. 1938 and begins in the southwest corner of the park. There are two 90 degree turns as it negotiates around Battery Ernst and then runs parallel to the Seawall in a northeasterly direction. It turns again to travel around Battery Davis and terminates in the southeast corner of the park. The walkway is composed of a packed sand base with brick pavers. The pavers are set in a regular staggered stretcher bond pattern perpendicular to the Seawall and adjacent concrete sidewalks. The brick pattern changes to diagonal as it negotiates the corners and then resumes its regular perpendicular pattern. In addition, a concrete sidewalk is located between the Seawall and the Seawall Walkway. Concrete curbs are on each side of the walkway.

- A Texas Historical Commission (THC) **Subject Marker** (Resource ID 69), erected in 1993, is located approximately 144 feet north of the Gun Emplacement [Resource ID 5]. It discusses the history of an earlier 1836 Fort Travis, located on the Galveston Island side of the Galveston Bay entrance as well as the 1898 Fort Travis.

- A portion of **Old State Highway 87** (Resource ID 70) runs through the park and once connected an earlier ferry crossing located adjacent to Battery Ernst with the rest of the Bolivar Peninsula.

Resource Inventory

The following is an updated inventory of Fort Travis. The numbering system has changed slightly to reflect the different uses of the resources. Those resources associated with the site's use as a fort are listed first, followed by those associated with the park, and those resources that serve as general infrastructure elements. A total of 70 resources have been identified on the site, 62 of which are contributing and 8 of which are noncontributing. Of these 60 contributing resources, 22 were identified in the 2012 update. The precise dates of the majority of contributing foundation slabs are unknown, but they were built by the U.S. Army during the period of significance to serve the mission of the fort.

ID	Name	Description	Date	Materials	Status
1	Battery Davis	Structure	1898	Reinforced Concrete	C
2	Battery Ernst	Structure	1898	Reinforced Concrete	C
3	Battery Kimble	Structure	1925	Reinforced Concrete	C
4	Battery 236	Structure	1943	Reinforced Concrete	C
5	Anti-Aircraft Gun Emplacement	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
6	Forward Observation Station	Structure	unknown	Concrete	C
7	Keeper's House	Building	1940	Brick	C
8	Foundation slab – generator	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
9	Foundation slab – generator	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
10	Foundation slab - toilets and showers	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
11	Foundation slab – radio tower	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
12	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
13	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
14	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
15	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
16	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
17	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
18	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
19	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
20	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
21	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
22	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
23	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
24	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
25	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
26	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
27	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
28	Foundation perimeter grade beam	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
29	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
30	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
31	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
32	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
33	Foundation slab	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
34	Water tank – in ground	Structure	unknown	Concrete	C
35	Water tank – in ground	Structure	unknown	Concrete	C
36	Well	Site	unknown	Concrete/metal	C
37	Cistern – in ground	Structure	unknown	Concrete; wood planks on top	C
38	Cistern – in ground	Structure	unknown	Concrete; wood planks on top	C

ID	Name	Description	Date	Materials	Status
39	Cistern – in ground	Structure	unknown	Concrete; wood planks on top	C
40	Cistern – in ground	Structure	unknown	Concrete; wood planks on top	C
41	Cistern – in ground	Structure	unknown	Concrete; wood planks on top	C
42	Swale - roadbed	Structure	unknown	Grass	C
43	Flagpole base	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
44	Equipment Cradle	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
45	Equipment Cradle	Site	unknown	Concrete	C
46	Headwall and culvert	Structure	unknown	Concrete	C
47	Headwall and culvert	Structure	unknown	Concrete	C
48	Headwall and culvert	Structure	unknown	Concrete	C
49	Headwall and culvert	Structure	unknown	Concrete	C
50	Headwall and culvert	Structure	unknown	Concrete	C
51	Headwall and culvert	Structure	unknown	Concrete	C
52	Headwall and culvert	Structure	unknown	Concrete	C
53	Culvert without headwall	Structure	c. 1943	Concrete	C
54	Culvert without headwall	Structure	c. 1943	Concrete	C
55	Culvert without headwall	Structure	c. 1943	Concrete	C
56	Culvert without headwall	Structure	c. 1943	Concrete	C
57	Culvert without headwall	Structure	c. 1943	Concrete	C
58	Culvert without headwall	Structure	c. 1943	Concrete	C
59	Culvert without headwall	Structure	c. 1943	Concrete	C
60	Bathroom Facility	Building	1975	CMU	NC
61	Cabana Facility	Building	1975	CMU	NC
62	Park Office	Building	unknown	Prefab	NC
63	Maintenance shed	Building	unknown	Sheet metal	NC
64	Picnic Pavilion	Structure	1990s	Wood/Metal	NC
65	Playground	Site	unknown	Wood/Metal, Composite	NC
66	Modern transformer	Structure	unknown	Metal	NC
67	Seawall	Structure	1903	Concrete	C
68	Seawall walkway	Structure	1930s	Brick	C
69	Subject Marker	Object		Cast metal	NC
70	Old State Highway 87	Structure	1930s	Asphalt	C

Integrity of Historical Properties at Fort Travis Seashore Park

Although time and vandalism have contributed to the deterioration of Fort Travis, structures representing the military history of the fort retain their integrity. This overall planning is a major contributing component of Fort Travis Seashore Park. Battery Davis has the highest level of deterioration followed by Battery Ernst, then Battery Kimble and ultimately Battery No. 236. None of the historic structures at Fort Travis are at a stage of deterioration which would district the structure from contributing to the historical significance of the fort.

Recent Construction and Cultural Resource Investigations

The following investigations and construction activities occurred after the original 2005 nomination.

In 2012, the County of Galveston made improvements to the roads and parking facilities at Fort Travis Seashore Park. The work included paving existing roadways and parking areas as well as the addition of an approximately one acre new parking lot and 1,600 feet of concrete sidewalk. As part of the Texas Antiquities Permit application, the County hired SWCA to perform a cultural resource investigation including both an archeological and above-ground surveys. The archeological survey included: an intensive pedestrian survey of the 20-acre area affected by the project, the excavation of twenty-nine shovel tests, and, a metal detector survey of approximately 5.4 acres. Some of the materials recovered consisted primarily of wire nails, bolts, and other undetermined ferrous metal fragments. The above-ground survey covered the entire 70-acre park and identified sixty resources, twenty-two of which were identified in the original 2005 NRHP nomination. SWCA concluded that seven culverts would be impacted by the project. This 2012 update to the 2005 NRHP nomination serves as mitigation for these impacts.

In addition to the parking and roadway improvements, the County began a major rehabilitation of the Seawall Walkway in 2012 using FEMA funds. Hurricane Ike (2008) damaged the walkway causing portions of it to buckle or collapse due to erosion caused by the storm surge. The 2012 repair work included the removal or large portions of the damaged areas and its rehabilitation. The project reused as many of the original bricks as possible and salvaged pavers that closely matched the originals in size, dimensions, texture, weight and color were purchased for the remaining repairs. The project is expected to be completed in 2013.

Statement of Significance

Fort Travis is the most complete concentration of coastal artillery batteries on the Texas Gulf Coast. It is located on the southern tip of the Bolivar Peninsula and contains four principal batteries and the remains of seven concrete foundations, two concrete water tanks, and a caretaker's house. The historic resources of Fort Travis were constructed between the years of 1898 and 1943. In its original state, Fort Travis was comprised of coastal batteries, magazine bunkers, anti- aircraft gun emplacements, enlisted man barracks, officer quarters, and other ancillary structures. Today, the only mission-critical historic properties standing are the four main batteries, a forward observation post, and an anti-aircraft gun emplacement. These batteries represent three distinctive historical periods within the military history of coastal fortifications: batteries Ernst and Davies were built during the Endicott period (1885-1910); Battery Kimble was constructed during the Post- World War I period (1918-1936); and Battery 236 was constructed during the World War II era (1937-1945). The construction and placement of the batteries represent different military strategies and technologies followed at the time of construction, and each reflects distinctive technologies and military tactics in the history of coastal artilleries. Evaluated within the contexts of the history of coastal artillery fortifications, military tactics, Fort Travis is nominated under Criteria A and C in the areas of Military and Engineering. As the only property of its type on the Texas Gulf Coast, and as a facility that contributed to the security of Texas during its period of significance, the property is nominated at the state level of significance.

Early Military History of Fort Travis Area

The original Fort Travis was established on the eastern end of Galveston Island in 1836 to protect the entrance to Galveston harbor, and was originally called Fort Point. The fort was later renamed for William Barrett Travis, commander at the Alamo (Burns Peterson 1991). Fort Travis was composed of an octagonal structure mounted with six pound and twelve pound guns taken from the ship Cayuga (Webb and Carroll 2000). When construction began in April 1836, the nearby construction camp was called Camp Travis. The garrison of Fort Travis in Galveston Island was withdrawn in 1844. During the Civil War, Fort Green was established on the Bolivar Peninsula. This fort was built in Bolivar point and might have been located on or close to the area that later became Fort Travis. Fort Green was a semi- triangular fortification. No records have been found pertaining to the abandonment period of Fort Green. Fort Green most likely was destroyed by Confederate troops when they surrendered Galveston and the surrounding area to Union troops.

The Endicott Board and Coastal Fortifications[1]

The period following the Civil War saw revolutionary improvements in artillery, including breech loading steel guns and smokeless powder. Annual reports of the U.S. chief of engineers in the early 1880s reflect the opinion that these new weapons had made American coast defenses, once the strongest in the world, obsolete. Congress added a provision to its 1885 Fortifications Appropriation Act requiring the president to appoint a special board to study the issue of coastal defense. In May of that year, President Grover Cleveland appointed Secretary of War William C. Endicott to head such a board, which included civilians as well as military and naval officers.
In January 1886, the Endicott Board recommended a comprehensive upgrading of harbor defenses nationwide, specifying the need for a coastal defense system of modern ordnance mounted in concrete fortifications. The cost of implementing the board's recommendations was estimated at over $126 million. Congress did not immediately appropriate funds for the proposed changes, but work had commenced by the early 1890s. The outbreak of the Spanish-American War and threats of bombardment by the Spanish fleet along the eastern seaboard accelerated

[1] http://www.fortadams.org/history.htm, accessed September 29, 2003.

implementation of the program. As tensions with Spain escalated in early 1898, Congress appropriated $50 million for national defense, much of which was applied to coastal fortifications.

The engineers were forced to balance cost against protection in designing the new forts, rejecting armored casemates and turrets (which afforded gun crews protection) in favor of open emplacements of concrete banked on the sides facing the enemy. This type of fortification offered reasonable protection from direct fire, and had the added advantage of being very difficult to spot from the sea. The disappearing carriage gun mount allowed a gun's barrel to project over a high concrete parapet for firing, and the recoil caused it to descend below the parapet where the crew could load the next round. In the loading position, the crew was protected from direct fire by the concrete parapet and as much as forty feet of sand and earth.

The Endicott Board recommended twenty-seven ports be protected under the new system, which provided comprehensive, concealed protection against attack from the sea. All emplacements were sited to provide maximum coverage of harbor approaches. It was the most comprehensive American coast defense system yet built. The Endicott system's only major weakness was a complete lack of defense against attack from the land. They were also unprotected against air attack, although the airplane was developed after the Endicott system was complete.

Founding and Development of Fort Travis on the Bolivar Peninsula

In 1898, the federal government purchased a 97-acre tract at the southern end of the Bolivar Peninsula (Peterson 1991) on which it would establish Fort Travis. Under this plan, Fort Point (later known as Fort San Jacinto) and Fort Travis would together protect the entrance to Galveston Bay, including the control of naval traffic and maintenance of mine and torpedo defenses (Wilson 1898a). Fort Crockett, on Galveston Island, would serve as general headquarters of the entire harbor defense system and protect southern approaches to the island. During the first phase of construction batteries Davis and Ernst were completed. Battery Davies was named after Lieutenant Thomas Davies of the United States Mounted Rifles. Lieutenant Davies was killed in the Mexican War (1847). Battery Ernst was named after Second Lieutenant Rudolph Ernst of the United States Sixth Infantry. Second Lieutenant Ernst was also killed during the Mexican War (1847). Command of Fort Travis was turned over to the coast artillery on October 25, 1898.

The character-defining elements of coastal fortifications built during the Endicott Period include dispersing guns, widely separated concrete emplacements, underground magazines, and concrete parapets designed to blend in with their surroundings. All of these elements are present at Fort Travis. During this period concrete became the material of choice for all modern work, rapidly replacing stone as a choice in commercial building and paving, and was ideal for the type of defenses contemplated by the Endicott Board. Concrete was the hallmark of the new fortifications, and it made the break with all previous techniques of fortification (Mallory and Ottar 1973). Batteries Davis and Ernst were reinforced concrete and steel structures. Because the elevation of the fort was raised, the magazine chambers for both batteries were located underground. The armament of Battery Davis was composed of two 8-inch guns of the "disappearing" type. These guns could be elevated giving them a greater range than older guns. The armament of Battery Ernst was composed of three 3- inch "rapid fire" guns equipped with searchlights.

Facilities for planting, retrieving, storing, and controlling mines were installed at many locations during this period; Fort Travis controlled the Galveston Bay mines during the Spanish-American War. Coastal minefields required protection, and some batteries occupied locations chosen for their view of the mine fields rather than positions from which they could bombard vessels (Freeman et a/. 1999). Battery Ernst was located close to the narrowest area of the harbor entrance, in part to protect the minefields on both sides of the harbor entrance. Electrical cables connected the mines to the shore, and the mines could be detonated remotely. (Wilson 1898).

During the hurricane of 1900, Fort Travis and Galveston took considerable damage. In order to prevent damage from future hurricanes, a 17-foot seawall was constructed facing the gulf coast, and the subsequent filling raised the entire elevation of Fort Travis.

Fort Travis between the World Wars

After World War I, many coastal defense forts were put on caretaker status, maintained by a small number of soldiers, and used as summer training camps for Military Reserves, National Guard, Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC), and Civilian Military Training corps (CMTC) units. Those coastal defenses deemed "critical" received new batteries and guns, including the new long-range 12-inch and 16-inch guns. Magazines were hidden in heavy concrete-and-earth bunkers, but the guns were set on open concrete platforms known as "Panama" mounts, due to their extensive use in the Panama Canal Zone. These guns could be elevated to gain a maximum range of 17 miles. Although the airplane was recognized as a threat, these new emplacements only partially protected against attack by air. The growing threat of aircraft as an offensive weapon, however, resulted in the formation of specialized anti-aircraft units, designated as the Coast Artillery Corps. A number of antiaircraft guns were installed at all harbor defense reservations during World War I and continued through the following years (Berthow 2002). During this period, a number of harbor defense construction plans were drawn, but few new batteries were actually built (Berthow 2002). Fort Travis was one of the few coastal fortifications where a battery was constructed during this period. Battery Kimble (1925) was named after Major Edwin R. Kimble, a Galveston native killed in World War I. At this time, the plan of new batteries nationwide shifted from two guns in a single emplacement, to two guns in separate emplacements, and the design of individual structures shifted from simple storage to sophisticated specialization (Freeman eta/. 1999). Other character-defining elements typical of period batteries- including the use of permanent earthworks to encase the magazine chamber, and the construction of a chemical decontamination chamber or chemical filtration system within the battery- are also present in Battery Kimble. After the extensive use of chemical warfare during World War I, chemical decontamination chambers or chemical filtration systems became a necessity in military fortifications. Two sets of large steel riveted doors are still intact within this battery. These doors would separate the powder magazine from the shell magazine. Also, Battery Kimble was constructed further inland- a characteristic that began in the Post-World War I period and would continue in later periods.

Fort Travis during World War II

Congress authorized a full construction program for coastal defenses in September of 1940. The program called for new defense at 19 harbors along both coasts of North America (Barthow 2002). The fortifications were built using two standardized designs, a two-gun 16-inch battery (or in some cases remodeled 12-inch batteries) and a two-gun 6-inch battery (or in some cases 8-inch batteries), along with their supporting command and observation stations. By the onset of World War II, this system was completed, and disappearing guns and other earlier guns were scrapped to support the war effort. During the war, the fear of a possible invasion or attack at major naval ports within the United States caused an increase in the construction of batteries and other structures at key coastal defense installations. Construction of Battery 236 was completed in 1943, and during the war 27 buildings (including barracks for enlisted men, officers, and noncommissioned officers; a mess hall, and other ancillary frame buildings) were constructed to support the 2,500 troops stationed there. A number of German prisoners of war were interned in Fort Travis.

Battery 236 was encased completely by soft earth works and then reinforced concrete. During the 1930s and 1940s methods for pouring concrete had changed. Plywood panels replaced the use of individual form boards, and specialized hardware helped speed the erection of the formwork when pouring concrete (Freeman eta/. 1999), and this technology is evident in Battery 236. The battery also has components introduced during the World War II period. During this period, gun batteries were pushed further outward, as were the proliferating numbers of fire control and support stations now required for the long-range cannon (Freeman eta/. 1999). This battery was self-

sufficient, having an internal power plant, crew quarters, officers' quarters, control facilities, radio room, and a chemical filtration system. The armament of Battery 236 was characteristic of the period, composed of two long-range 6-inch guns mounted on Panama mounts.

Decommission of Fort Travis and the Establishment of Fort Travis Seashore Park

In 1949, Fort Travis was declared war surplus and sold to the M and M Building Corporation, a private developer, with the stipulation that the former batteries would be made available to the public during hurricane emergencies (Peterson 1991). In the late 1950s gambling syndicates hid their slot machines within the batteries, and at one point Attorney General Will Wilson's crackdown on illegal gambling led to the discovery of 550 slot machines at Fort Travis (Miller 1985). In 1960 the fort was designated an official civil-defense shelter and sold to C. Pat Lumpkin Associates of Houston. In 1962 Hurricane Carla hit the area and residents of Bolivar Peninsula, along with some of their livestock, took refuge within the fortifications. Newspaper records indicate that Fort Travis could shelter up to 1,750 persons for seven days (Johnston 1965). In 1973, the Galveston County Commissioners Court purchased the site for use as a public park.

Fort Travis Seashore Park - *The following information was added after the 2012 survey.*

Fort Travis has been in use as a park since the County's purchase of it in 1973. The County built a Cabana Facility, a Bathroom Facility, a Playground, and Picnic Pavilions to support the recreational use. In addition, signage has been added to the property, alerting visitors to the history of the fort and its remaining historic resources. As of this 2012 update, the fort is still in use as a park with recent construction activity including new paving and the rehabilitation of the Seawall Walkway.

Summary of Criteria

Fort Travis is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A and C, in the areas of Military and Engineering, because it represents a time when an military attack to the coasts of the United States was a very real threat, as well as the changing strategies and technologies applied to coastal defense between the 1890s and 1940s. Fort Travis embodies the characteristics of three periods in the history of coastal fortifications. Batteries Davis and Ernst are typical of the Endicott period and show characteristics that were introduced in the construction of coastal fortifications at that time, including the use of concrete as the primary material and the placement of the batteries. Battery Kimble is typical of Post-World War I coastal fortifications, in the use of Panama gun emplacements, its encasement in permanent eat1hworks and concrete, and location away from the shore. Battery 236 is typical of World War II era coastal fortifications, as it is completely encased in permanent earthworks and concrete, and it featured a chemical filtration system, generators and other facilities which would allow the battery to function independently from other batteries within the fort.

Fort Travis is nominated at the state level for its role in protecting two of the most strategically sensitive areas of Texas- the Port of Galveston and the lower terminus of the Houston Ship Channel- and as the last intact fortification of its type on the Texas gulf coast. Nearby Fort San Jacinto has fallen into serious disrepair and has been partially destroyed leaving only one gun emplacement partially intact, thus losing much of its overall integrity. Although Corpus Christi was protected by a small set of batteries in Port Aransas, the major coastal fortifications in Texas during the periods in question were built in or around the Galveston area (Miller 1985).

While Criterion D is not claimed in this nomination, Fort Travis is likely to contain numerous archeological sites, including the remains of Fort Green, a Confederate installation. Original plans of the fort before the seawall was constructed indicate several buildings and a small network of railroad lines that linked batteries Davies and Ernst, and other buildings. Although Fort Travis never fired its guns in defense of Galveston Bay, activity within the fort,

as with any historical or archaeological site, is likely to have deposited material remains, which eventually could have been buried. This material remains is likely to yield information that can contribute to the history of the area, the fort, and the activities its personnel conducted within the fort. Very little subsurface disturbance has occurred since Galveston County Beach and Parks Department acquired the fort. There is a strong possibility that materials remain in situ, which could contribute to the historical understanding of the fort. Personal interviews with park caretakers indicate that there are possible tunnels and buried military equipment within the park. At the same time, there are seven large foundations within one of the barrack areas of the fort. Excavations around this area could yield artifacts that could help in understanding behavior of the personnel that lived in the fort and manned the batteries.

Several venues of archaeological studies should be conducted at Fort Travis Seashore Park. The location of Fort Green could be tested through remote sensing or archival means. The park area should be systematically surveyed to determine the complete layout of this military installation throughout its history, as archival records are sporadic regarding the exact layout. Oral history indicates that tunnels and possible military equipment was buried on several locations within the park, and existence of these tunnels or military equipment could be determined through remote sensing. Also through a systematic survey of the park, life within the military installation could be examined. Everyday items buried within the site can give us an insight into the life of the personnel that lived at the fort.

The following information was added after the 2012 survey.

Both archeological and above-ground resource surveys have occurred since the original 2005 nomination. In 2012, the County of Galveston made improvements to the roads and parking facilities at Fort Travis Seashore Park. The work included paving existing roadways and parking areas as well as the addition of an approximately one acre new parking lot and 1,600 feet of concrete sidewalk. As part of the Texas Antiquities Permit application, the County hired SWCA to perform a cultural resource investigation including both an archeological and above-ground surveys. The archeological survey included: an intensive pedestrian survey of the 20-acre area affected by the project, the excavation of twenty-nine shovel tests, and, a metal detector survey of approximately 5.4 acres. Some of the materials recovered consisted primarily of wire nails, bolts, and other undetermined ferrous metal fragments. The above-ground survey covered the entire 70-acre park and identified sixty resources, twenty-two of which were identified in the original 2005 NRHP nomination. SWCA concluded that seven culverts would be impacted by the project. This 2012 update to the 2005 NRHP nomination serves as mitigation for these impacts.

In addition to the parking and roadway improvements, the County began a major rehabilitation of the Seawall Walkway in 2012 using FEMA funds. Hurricane Ike (2008) damaged the walkway causing portions of it to buckle or collapse due to erosion caused by the storm surge. The 2012 repair work included the removal or large portions of the damaged areas and its rehabilitation. The project reused as many of the original bricks as possible and salvaged pavers that closely matched the originals in size, dimensions, texture, weight and color were purchased for the remaining repairs. The project is expected to be completed by the spring of 2013.

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Map
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Map
1919 Fort Travis Plane view

Map
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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (unchanged from 2005 nomination)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of Fort Travis during its period of significance is the current boundary of Fort Travis Seashore Park. The boundaries of Fort Travis Seashore Park are delineated by the Gulf Coast on the south and west sides, old highway 87 on the north side and a small beach on the east side. Part of the west boundary has become a wetland area. The boundary area of Fort Travis Seashore Park is easily differentiated due to the rise in elevation of the fort area.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary for the area to be nominated on the National Register of Historic Places is based on the current property boundaries owned by the Galveston County Beach and Parks Department and the known historical area that was Fort Travis. The known historical area of Fort Travis centered on the four batteries that through several distinct historical periods were part of the fort. The area of Fort Travis, aside of containing the batteries also contained other ancillary structures that supported the coastal artillery. Although, the caretaker's house was not demolished, the majority of these ancillary structures were destroyed. Subsurface material remains pertaining to these structures and the activities within the fort might still be *in situ*. These remains might contribute to the military history of the fort, the history of the area, and the history of 'coastal fortifications.

Ft. Travis in relation to Houston and Galveston Island

Ft. Travis and Port Bolivar, Texas Map

Contributing and Noncontributing Resources in Ft. Travis Seashore Park


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Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Fort Travis

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Galveston

DATE RECEIVED: 2/15/05 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/10/05
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/25/05 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/31/05
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 05000247

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

✓ ACCEPT ___ RETURN ___ REJECT 3/30/05 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA_____

REVIEWER_____ DISCIPLINE_____

TELEPHONE_____ DATE_____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

TO: Linda McClelland
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Gregory W. Smith, National Register Coordinator
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Fort Travis, Port Bolivar, Galveston County, Texas

DATE: February 10, 2005

The following materials are submitted regarding: Fort Travis

X	Original National Register of Historic Places form
	___ Resubmitted nomination
	Multiple Property nomination form
X	Photographs
X	USGS map
	Correspondence
	Other:

COMMENTS:

____ SHPO requests substantive review

____ The enclosed owner objections (do__) (do not__) constitute a majority of property owners

____ Other: _____

Correspondence

associated with the Additional Documentation

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Fort Travis

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Galveston

DATE RECEIVED: 7/05/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/21/13
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 05000247

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

✓ ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT 8.28.13 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Additional Documentation Approved

RECOM./CRITERIA_____

REVIEWER_____ DISCIPLINE_____

TELEPHONE_____ DATE_____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories

TO: Edson Beall
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)
Washington , DC 20005

FROM: Gregory Smith
National Register Coordinator
Texas Historical Commission

RE: Fort Travis (amendment), Port Bolivar, Galveston County, Texas

DATE: June 26, 2013

The following materials are submitted:

X	Original National Register of Historic Places form on disk. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for Fort Travis (amendment to document additional resources) to the National Register of Historic Places.
	Resubmitted nomination.
X	Original NRHP signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
	Multiple Property Documentation form on disk.
	Resubmitted form.
	Original MPDF signature page signed by the Texas SHPO.
X	CD with TIFF photograph files and KMZ file
	Correspondence

COMMENTS:

___ SHPO requests substantive review (cover letter from SHPO attached)
___ The enclosed owner objections (do__) (do not__) constitute a majority of property owners
___ Other:

RICK PERRY, GOVERNOR • MATTHEW F. KREISLE, III, CHAIRMAN • MARK WOLFE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
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