

5-26-1994

Interview no. 859

Juan D. Hernández

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Juan D. Hernández

INTERVIEWER: John R. Moore

PROJECT: Big Bend National Park Oral History Project

DATE OF INTERVIEW: May 26, 1994

TERMS OF USE: Unrestricted

TAPE NO: 859

TRANSCRIPT NO: _____

TRANSCRIBER: _____

BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Please see attached.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Please see attached.

Length of Interview: 50 minutes Length of Transcript

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
ORAL HISTORY INSTITUTE

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT, 1994

INTERVIEWEE/ADDRESS: Juan D. Hernandez, P.O. Box 220, Big Bend National Park, Big Bend, Tx. 79834.

INTERVIEW BY: John R. Moore

DATE: May 26, 1994

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW: 50 minutes/English

SUMMARY: Hernandez was born in Boquillas, Tx., in 1933. His mother was a U.S. citizen; his father was not. Hernandez recalls how his father regularly shifted his residence from Boquillas, Tx., to Boquillas, Mexico, to avoid immigration authorities. Hernandez currently resides in Boquillas, Mexico, across the Rio Grande from Rio Grande Village in Big Bend National Park. He is employed by the park concessionaire at Rio Grande Village.

Hernandez discusses the various families and residents of the Boquillas area, Hot Springs, San Vicente and area mining communities and their lifestyles on the international border.

He recalls extensive farming in the Boquillas, Tx., area and remembers specific farmers and says that beans, corn and cotton were grown in fields now occupied by the Rio Grande Village campgrounds.

Hernandez discusses acquisition of land by the U.S. government for inclusion in Big Bend National Park. He recalls removal from the area of Mexican and Mexican-American residents who were not paid for the property they held because, according to Hernandez, they were illiterate and confused by the government papers they signed. (Guadalupe Celaya, another person interviewed in this project, mentioned a similar situation involving Mexican-American residents of the San Vicente community.)