

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.C.R. 22
By: Seliger
Administration
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In 1877, Charles Goodnight became the manager of the JA Ranch in the Caprock Canyonlands of the Texas Panhandle. The once-great bison herds of the area had been slaughtered almost to the point of extinction. At the urging of his wife, Mary Ann, Goodnight rounded up enough of the creatures to form a small herd, which allowed the Southern Plains Bison population to survive. In 1880, Goodnight acquired the Lazy F Ranch and renamed it "Quitaque," which he believed was an Indian word for "end of the trail." Quitaque is located on State Highway 86 in southeastern Briscoe County; when the county was organized in 1892, the townsite of Quitaque was surveyed and platted.

Caprock Canyons State Park, located approximately three miles north of Quitaque, was acquired from the estate of Theodore Geisler in May 1975. The park opened in 1982 and is the third-largest state park in Texas. The park is home to the "Official State Bison Herd of Texas." These bison are direct descendants of the last free-range Southern Plains Bison that the Goodnights saved from extinction. The herd was donated to the park in 1996 by the JA Ranch, which is the oldest privately owned ranch in the Texas Panhandle.

For many years, the citizens of Quitaque encouraged the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to establish a state park in the Quitaque area and encouraged the donation of the JA Ranch Bison Herd to the state park.

O. R. Stark Jr., born in Quitaque, understood the need for a friends group for Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway. He was instrumental in forming Caprock Partners Foundation in 1996 and served as foundation president until his death; the foundation has supported the park and its historic bison habitat as environmental and recreational treasures.

RESOLVED

That the 84th Legislature of the State of Texas designate the City of Quitaque to be the official Bison Capital of Texas.

That in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.003(e), Government Code, this designation remain in effect until the 10th anniversary of its designation.