

TRAIL OF TEARS  
NATIONAL HISTORIC  
TRAIL

**The Tennessee Portion**

# TRAIL OF TEARS NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL

## Brief Historical Overview

- U. S. Indian Removal Act passed in 1830
- Gold found on Cherokee land in Georgia same year
- Georgia passed law that no Cherokee business could be conducted in the state. Cherokee Council grounds moved to Red Clay.
- The Treaty of New Echota was passed by a small minority of Cherokee tribe. 15,000 Cherokees protested the Treaty.
- Treaty of New Echota ratified by U.S. Senate in 1836.

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## Brief Historical Overview

- May 1838, Federal troops and state militias began the round up of the Cherokees into stockades.
- 3 groups of 1,000 left in summer by water, land and rail
- 12 groups left in by November, 1838 traveling overland
- By March 1839, all the survivors reached Oklahoma, but an estimated 4, 000 Cherokees, old and young, died making the journey.
- August 1839, John Ross was elected Principal Chief and Tahlequah, OK became the new capital city.

## Trail of Tears National Historic Trail

In 1987, Congress designated the Trail of Tears a National Historic Trail with three routes identified.

- Commemorative Auto Tour Route
- Northern Route
- Water Route

# Trail of Tears National Historic Trail



# Trail of Tears National Historic Trail

## Commemorative Auto Route Tour

(follows the Trail of Tears Northern Route)

Starts at Red Clay State Park, follows State Route(SR) 60 through Cleveland to Dayton, follows SR 30 through Pikeville, SR 284 through Fall Creek Falls State Park, to SR 111 to SR 8 to McMinnville. Follows US 70S through Woodbury, Murfreesboro and then US 41 to Nashville, then US 431 to SR 76 to Port Royal State Park, then SR 238 to Kentucky.

# Trail of Tears National Historic Trail

## The Water Route

Officially starts at Ross's Landing in Chattanooga, follows the Tennessee River through Alabama and back through Tennessee to the Ohio River. Down the Ohio to the Mississippi River and then up the Arkansas River to Fort Smith, AK. The Cherokee detachments then walked overland to Oklahoma.

# Trail of Tears National Historic Trail

The National Park Service has certified seven Trail of Tears sites in Tennessee. They are:

- Red Clay State Park – Bradley County, TN
- Audubon Acres – Chattanooga, TN
- Brainerd Mission Cemetery - Chattanooga, TN
- Chattanooga Regional Museum
- Sequoyah Museum – Vonore, TN
- The Hermitage – Nashville, TN
- Port Royal State Park – Montgomery County, TN



# Trail of Tears National Historic Trail



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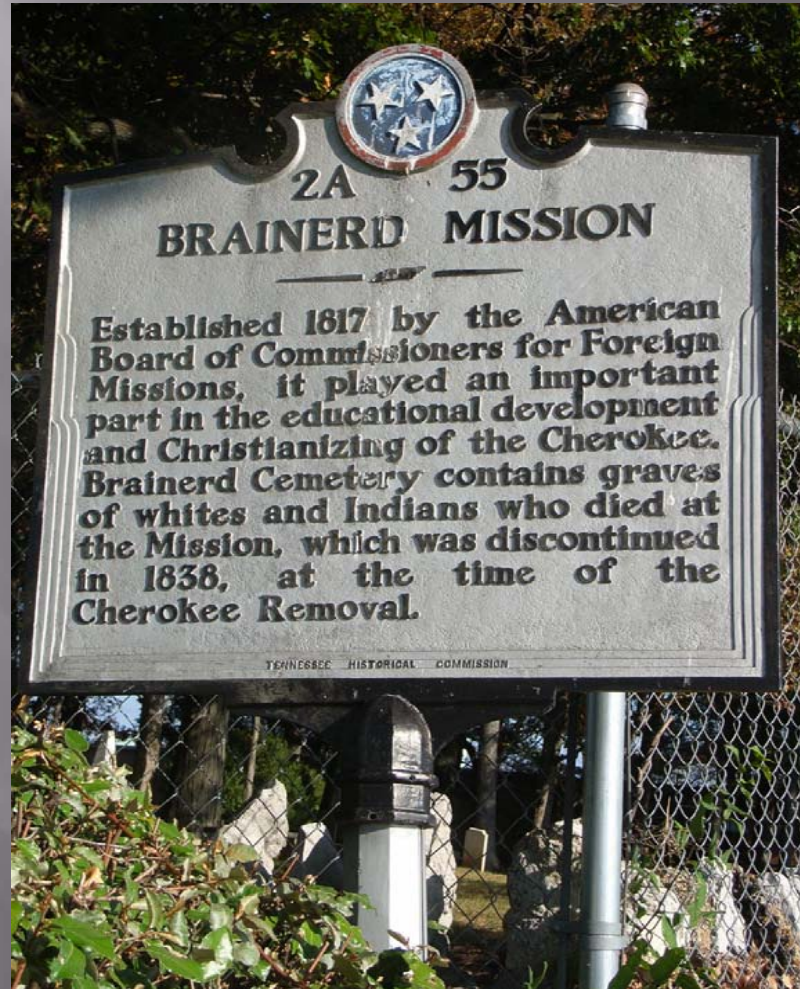
# Trail of Tears National Historic Trail



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In 2006, Congress directed the National Park Service (NPS), National Scenic and Historic Trails (NSHT) office to study the feasibility of adding the Bell and Bengé routes to the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail as officially designated trail routes.

This feasibility study is due in a large measure to the support of U.S. Representative Zach Wamp.

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In February 2007, representatives of TDEC, NPS and the National Trail of Tears Association meet with Tennessee First Lady, Andrea Conte. She had expressed an interest in the Trail of Tears to Commissioner Fyke and the meeting was arranged.

In May 2007, a new 5 year MOU was signed by the State of Tennessee and the NPS for cooperative efforts on the Trail of Tears.

In October 2007, representatives of TDEC, Trust for Public Lands, Huber Company, the Tennessee Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association and Van Buren County officials provided a tour of some of the original route of the TOTNHT in Van Buren County at the Rocky River crossing.

# Trail of Tears National Historic Trail

## Where do we go from here?

- Submitting a TDOT Transportation Enhancements grant application for replacement of Commemorative Auto Tour Route signs.
- Develop a new TOT brochure similar to the NPS brochure (4 fold, 11" x17") focusing on Tennessee.
- Cooperating with the NPS to certify additional TOT sites on public lands especially in TN State Parks.
- Working with the TN Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association(TNTOTA) to identify locations and information for interpretive signage.

# Trail of Tears National Historic Trail

For more information on the Trail of Tears  
National Historic Trail, contact:

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