

PRESS RELEASE

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Event: Historic Spring Grand Opening

The Big Spring Convention and Visitors Bureau, together with the City of Big Spring, Kelly Cook of KDC Associates & Tommy Hawkins Construction announces the Grand Opening of the Historic Spring on **Thursday, November 16, 2017 at 4:30 p.m.** After 3 years of planning and almost a year of construction, we are excited to open the area to the public.

The project uses construction materials featuring native stone and CCC style architecture that blend with the construction used in the park area. It is fully handicapped accessible and includes a new plaza area with seating capability for 1,000+ with full electrical hookups and performance stage. 8 large (5 ft. x 10 ft.) story boards made of engraved corten metal with a limestone block background are displayed in the plaza area. These story boards depict the significant historical periods of Big Spring History and are surrounded by native plants. A widened trail has been added along with additional lighting and security cameras as well as emergency vehicle access. New low-maintenance planting areas were added as well as thinning in some areas for visibility, appeal and safety. There are 3 observation decks overlooking areas of waterfalls and surrounded by native plants. There is an area devoted to the Native American history of our area and a replica of a ranch dugout has also been added to represent the importance of our ranching heritage.

The focus of the project are educational components that will inform visitors about the significant history of the Spring, not only to the development of Big Spring, but to areas west of Big Spring. From a historical standpoint, the “big spring” of Howard County is one of the most significant springs in Texas, and arguably, the United States. Studies have found that the spring was an important watering hole in West Texas prior to man setting foot in the region. Mastodon, woolly mammoth, saber-toothed tiger, and the remnants of many other now extinct species have been found near the spring, suggesting that this was an important watering hole for many thousands of years. Cabeza De Vaca documented he visited the site in 1535. The site was a meeting place for the Comanche Tribes as they set out on the Great Comanche War Trail. The site is designated by the State of Texas as a Historical Site where Captain Randolph Marcy stopped on his journey from Ft. Smith Arkansas to El Paso. The Spring became so important to the development of the railroad in West Texas, many cities in the area were formed along the rail line. The Bankhead Highway was eventually built adjacent to the rail line and ultimately became the route of Interstate 20.

We feel the importance of the Spring should be shared with visitors and local residents and our project will make this site a stopping point for many who pass through.

Thanks to the following partners; SM Energy, Permian Basin Area Foundation, TXU, Union Pacific Foundation, and HEB Phase 2 of the project is now in the planning stages and will consist of a large open air pavilion, additional parking and bridge connecting the pavilion to the Plaza area.

The Grand Opening of the Historic Spring will be held on Thursday, November 16 at 4:30PM at the Historical Spring in Comanche Trail Park.