

Committee on Natural Resources

Rob Bishop, Chairman
Markup Memorandum

June 13, 2016

To: All Natural Resources Committee Members

From: Majority Committee Staff, Terry Camp
Subcommittee on Federal Lands (x6-7736)

Mark-Up: H.R. 3480 (Rep. Buddy Carter, R-GA), To expand the boundary of Fort Frederica National Monument in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes.
June 14 & 15, 2016; 1324 Longworth HOB.

H.R. 3480 (Rep. Buddy Carter, R-GA), “Fort Frederica National Monument Boundary Expansion Act of 2015”

Summary of the Bill

H.R. 3480, introduced by Rep. Buddy Carter (R-GA) and cosponsored by the entire Georgia delegation, expands the boundary of the Fort Frederica National Monument on St. Simons Island, Georgia by increasing the maximum acreage from 250 to 525 acres.

Cosponsors

Rep. Sanford Bishop (D-GA-2), Rep. Lynn Westmoreland (R-GA-3), Rep. Hank Johnson (D-GA-4), Rep. John Lewis (D-GA-5), Rep. Tom Price (R-GA-6), Rep. Rob Woodall (R-GA-7), Rep. Austin Scott (R-GA-8), Rep. Doug Collins (R-GA-9), Rep. Jody Hice (R-GA-10), Rep. Barry Loudermilk (R-GA-11), Rep. Rick Allen (R-GA-12), Rep. David Scott (D-GA-13), Rep. Tom Graves (R-GA-14).

Background

Fort Frederica National Monument, on St. Simons Island, Georgia, preserves the archaeological remnants of a fort established in 1736 by James Oglethorpe. Oglethorpe built the fort to protect the southern boundary of his new colony of Georgia from the Spanish in Florida. Named for Frederick Louis, the Prince of Wales (1702-1754), Frederica consisted of a fort and town fortified by a palisade wall and earthen rampart. The fort's location on the Frederica River allowed it to control ship travel.¹

Oglethorpe's foresight in establishing Fort Frederica was rewarded in 1742 when Spanish and British forces clashed on St. Simons Island. Fort Frederica's troops defeated the Spanish in

¹ National Park Service, “Fort Frederica: History & Culture,”
<https://www.nps.gov/fofr/learn/historyculture/index.htm>

the Battle of Bloody Marsh. The British victory not only confirmed that Georgia was British territory, but also signaled the end for Fort Frederica. In 1749, Fort Frederica's regiment disbanded and eventually the town fell into decline.²

On May 26, 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established Fort Frederica as a National Monument. The National Park Service (NPS) owns and preserves the archeological remains of Fort Frederica.

St. Simons Island Land Trust (Land Trust) owns a portion of the acreage (20.852 acres) authorized by H.R. 3480 to be included in the boundary of Fort Frederica. The Land Trust, a 501(c)(3) tax exempt charity, plans to steward the property until NPS can acquire it. As the Land Trust is a tax exempt, Glynn County, where the property is located, will not lose any tax revenue should ownership be transferred to NPS. Additionally, Glynn County, the Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce, and the Glynn County Board of Education have submitted letters to Representative Carter in support of the boundary expansion.

Cost

A Congressional Budget Office cost estimate has not yet been completed for this bill.

Administration Position

The National Park Service testified in support of this bill during a Subcommittee on Federal Lands legislative hearing on May 24, 2016.³

Anticipated Amendments

Rep. Hice will offer an amendment to modify the bill by reducing the maximum amount of acreage that can be acquired. With the amendment, the bill will authorize acquisition of up to 21 acres (250 to 271) rather than 275 acres (250 to 525) as included in the bill as introduced. This change reflects conversations with adjacent land owners who have not expressed interest in selling or donating their property at this time.

Effect on Current Law (Ramseyer):

Showing Current Law as Amended by H.R. 3480

[new text highlighted in yellow; text to be deleted in brackets and highlighted in blue]

Section 1 of the Act of May 26, 1936 (16 U.S.C. 433g)

§433g. Fort Frederica National Monument; establishment

² Ibid.

³ Testimony of Mr. Bill Shaddox on H.R. 4789, Subcommittee on Federal Lands Legislative Hearing on May 24, 2016, http://naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/testimony_shaddox.pdf

When title to the site of Fort Frederica, on Saint Simon Island, Georgia, and such other related sites located thereon, as may be designated by the Secretary of the Interior, in the exercise of his discretion, as necessary or desirable for national-monument purposes, shall have been vested in the United States, said area not to exceed [two hundred and fifty acres] 525 acres shall be, and is, set apart as a national monument for the benefit and inspiration of the people, and shall be called the "Fort Frederica National Monument."