

Subcommittee on Federal Lands  
Tom McClintock, Chairman  
Hearing Memo

June 11, 2015

**To:** Federal Lands Subcommittee Members  
**From:** Terry Camp, Subcommittee Staff, x 6-7736  
**Subject:** Legislative hearing on H.R. 482, "Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2015" on **June 16, 2015 at 10:00 AM; 1324 Longworth.**

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*H.R. 482, "Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2015"*

**Bill Summary**

H.R. 482, introduced by Representative Sanford Bishop (D-GA), would re-designate the Ocmulgee National Monument in Georgia as the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park and adjust the boundary of the Historical Park to include approximately 2,100 new acres.

Additionally, H.R. 482 directs the Department of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the Ocmulgee River corridor between the cities of Macon, Georgia and Hawkinsville, Georgia, to determine: (1) the national significance of the study area; (2) the suitability and feasibility of adding lands in the study area to the National Park System; and (3) the methods and means for the protection and interpretation of the study area by the National Park Service, other federal, state, local government entities, affiliated federally recognized Indian tribes, or private or nonprofit organizations.

**Cosponsors**

Austin Scott (R-GA)

**Invited Witnesses**

*The Honorable Sanford D. Bishop Jr. (D-GA)*  
Member of Congress

*The Honorable Austin Scott (R-GA)*  
Member of Congress

## **Background**

Ocmulgee National Monument was originally authorized in 1934 to protect “lands commonly known as the ‘Old Ocmulgee Fields,’ upon which certain Indian mounds of great historical importance are located.”<sup>1</sup> The monument’s enabling legislation authorized acquisition of land for Ocmulgee National Monument by public or private donation only.<sup>2</sup> Although the enabling legislation stated that the ‘Old Ocmulgee Fields’ were comprised of “approximately two thousand acres,” local residents living during the Great Depression could only raise enough funds to procure 678 acres by the time the monument was created in 1936.<sup>3</sup> At present, Ocmulgee National Monument consists of 702 acres.<sup>4</sup>

In January 2014, the National Park Service published the findings of a boundary study and environmental assessment that examined the appropriateness of expanding the boundary of Ocmulgee National Monument. The National Park Service’s preferred alternative would authorize acquisition of land within the study area by willing donors and sellers up to approximately 2,100 acres, thus expanding the monument to approximately 2,800 acres.<sup>5</sup>

The Archeological Conservancy wishes to donate to the monument approximately 300 of the 2,100 acres studied by the National Park Service.<sup>6</sup> Other proponents of the expansion, such as the Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative, have expressed support for the monument to be further expanded between Macon, Georgia, and Hawkinsville, Georgia, to eventually include more than 40,000 acres, or enough to create Georgia’s first National Park.

Representative Sanford Bishop (D-GA) introduced a nearly identical version of this legislation in the 113th Congress as H.R. 4991, and Senator Jonny Isakson (R-GA) introduced a Senate companion as S. 2580. As of yet, no Senate companion has been introduced in the 114th Congress.

## **Administration Position**

Unknown at this time.

## **Cost**

The Congressional Budget Office has not completed a cost estimate of this bill.

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<sup>1</sup> Ocmulgee National Monument; establishment; acquisition of property, 16 U.S.C. § 447A

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> [U.S. Department of Interior: National Park Service, “Ocmulgee Old Fields Boundary Study & Environmental Assessment,” \(Macon, Georgia, 2014\), 1-1](#) (accessed June 8, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* at ii.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.* at 1-5.