

Subcommittee on Federal Lands
Tom McClintock, Chairman
Hearing Memorandum

February 9, 2016

To: All Subcommittee on Federal Lands Members

From: Majority Committee Staff -- Aniela Butler and Terry Camp
Subcommittee on Federal Lands (x 6-7736)

Hearing: Legislative hearing on H.R. 87 (Rep. Marsha Blackburn), To modify the boundary of the Shiloh National Military Park located in Tennessee and Mississippi, to establish Parker's Crossroads Battlefield as an affiliated area of the National Park System, and for other purposes.
February 11, 2016 at 10:00 AM; 1324 Longworth HOB.

H.R. 87 (Rep. Marsha Blackburn), “*Shiloh National Military Park Boundary Adjustment and Parker's Crossroads Battlefield Designation Act*”

Bill Summary

H.R. 87, introduced by Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn (R-TN-7), is a bill that expands the Shiloh National Military Park to include three new battlefields. Additionally, the bill establishes Parker’s Crossroads Battlefield as an affiliated area of the National Park System.

Invited Witnesses

The Honorable Marsha Blackburn (R-TN-7)
Member of Congress

Mr. Tom Gilmore, Real Estate Director
The Civil War Trust
Washington, D.C.

Background

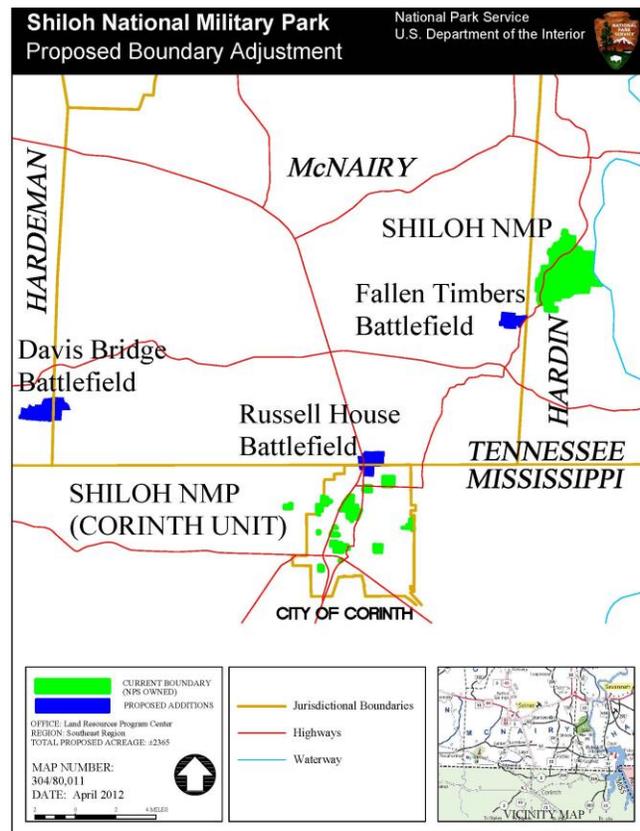
Corinth, Mississippi was a flashpoint in the Western Theatre during the Civil War. Located between the junction of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad and the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, the town served as a critical point for “communications, commerce, and transportation.”¹ Starting in April 1862 with the Battle of Shiloh, Union and Confederate forces battled for control of this strategic town with the Union Army ultimately prevailing and controlling Corinth until 1864. Shiloh National Military Park (NMP) was established in December 1894 and currently houses “over 450 historic plaques, 151 monuments, 217 cannon” as well as unmarked graves, cemeteries, and mass burial trenches commemorating the Battle of

¹ NPS, “Corinth Civil War Boundary Adjustment Study Environment Assessment,” March 2004, <http://www.nps.gov/shil/learn/management/upload/Corinth%20BAS-Final%20EA-Sections1-2.pdf>, p. 18.

Shiloh.² In 2000, the NMP expanded to include the Corinth Unit to preserve more battle sites associated with the Siege of Corinth.

H.R. 87 expands Shiloh NMP by approximately 2,126 acres to include the Fallen Timbers, Russell House, and Davis Bridge Battlefields. The Fallen Timbers Battlefield is a 470 acre parcel that marked the beginning of the Siege of Corinth after a Union brigade attacked a Confederate field hospital on April 8, 1862, causing the Confederate forces to retreat to Corinth.³ The Russell House Battlefield is 695 acres on the border of Mississippi and Tennessee and served as a strategic high ground for Union forces around the Phillips and Bridge Creeks to drive the Confederate Army deeper into Corinth.⁴ Davis Bridge Battlefield is 961 acres and the location of the battle between Van Dorn's Army of the West and Union forces. After Van Dorn's defeat, there were no Confederate offensives in Mississippi for the remainder of the war.⁵ NPS determined that each site retains a "fair to high degree of integrity" and either provides extensive opportunities for visitor use and interpretation or the potential for archaeological research.⁶

The bill also designates Parker's Crossroads Battlefield, located in Henderson County, Tennessee, as an affiliated area of the National Park System. As an affiliate of NPS, the area would be privately owned; however, it would be eligible for technical assistance and interpretative services provided by NPS.



Administration Position

The administration testified in support of a similar bill in the 113th Congress during a Senate Energy and Natural Resources hearing.⁷

Cost

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

² Ibid., p. 19

³ Ibid., p. 36.

⁴ Ibid., p. 38.

⁵ Ibid., p. 46.

⁶ Ibid., p. 36.

⁷ Goldfuss, Christina, Senate Energy and Mineral Resources Committee, National Parks Subcommittee, http://www.energy.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=6898341f-71e6-45ee-b47b-57cb2ddd80dd.