

**STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER K. JARVI, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,
PARTNERSHIPS AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON
NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL
RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 1388, TO AMEND THE NATIONAL TRAILS
SYSTEM ACT TO DESIGNATE THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER TRAIL IN THE
STATES OF MARYLAND AND VIRGINIA AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA AS A
NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL.**

May 15, 2007

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 1388, a bill to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Star-Spangled Banner Trail as a National Historic Trail.

The Department supports H.R. 1388 with three amendments.

H.R. 1388 would designate an approximately 290-mile land and water trail extending from Tangier Island in Virginia, through southern Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Virginia within the Chesapeake Bay, Patuxent River, Potomac River and north to the Patapsco River and Baltimore, Maryland. The land routes would follow existing public roads, along which British and American troops traveled. The bill would require the Secretary to encourage public participation and consult with landowners, as well as Federal, State, and local agencies on the administration of the trail. The bill would prohibit land or interest in land outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area from being acquired for the trail without the consent of the owner. Finally, the Secretary would be authorized to provide interpretive programs and services, and technical assistance to State and local governments and non-profit organizations.

In 1999, the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Study Act (Public Law 106-135) was enacted authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to study the potential route of a Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail. The history, background, integrity, and national significance of the trail were researched and analyzed. The criteria for national trails, set forth in the National Trails Systems Act, were applied, and five of the eight trail study segments were found to meet the necessary criteria. The proposed 290-mile trail would only include these five segments.

Providing conservation and enjoyment of, public access to, and interpretation of the historic route and its resources has been a growing focus of both public and private initiatives in recent years as the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 approaches. In Maryland, a grassroots initiative was undertaken to raise public awareness of the important events that occurred in the Chesapeake region in the summer of 1814 during the War of 1812. Historians and regional groups recognized the untold stories and legacy of the events of the Chesapeake Campaign and the need for protection and interpretation of related historical resources.

The proposed National Historic Trail would commemorate the events leading up to the writing of “The Star-Spangled Banner” during the Chesapeake Campaign of the War of 1812. These events include the British invasion of Maryland, the Battle of Bladensburg, the burning of the White House and the Capitol, the burning of the Washington Navy Yard, and the Battle for Baltimore in the summer of 1814. The route of the invasion is known and documented, and the proposed trail would follow it as closely as practical.

The War of 1812 and the Chesapeake Campaign of 1814 had long-lasting and far-reaching effects on the United States and American culture. It represented the first major test of our infant democracy, contributed to the formation of a national identity, and demonstrated the importance of

a strong military and the need for coastal defenses. During the campaign, other events occurred that are significant to our nation's heritage, particularly the writing of the poem commemorating a key battle -- the Battle for Baltimore. Francis Scott Key's poem, the words of which comprise our National Anthem, celebrated the resiliency of the young nation and the flag he described as "The Star-Spangled Banner" during the successful defense of Fort McHenry. The events provide important testimony, too, about the roles of the enslaved and civilians in the early defense of the nation.

Should H.R. 1388 be enacted, the National Park Service would prepare a comprehensive management plan, in consultation with Federal agencies, State and local governments and private organizations, and with widespread public participation, to identify the goals and objectives for trail preservation, research, interpretation, public use, trail marking, and cooperative management. The bill recognizes the advantages offered by the regional nature of the trail and the many organizations interested in and associated with the history of the Chesapeake Campaign. Several key trail-related resources, such as Fort McHenry and the White House, are owned by the Federal government. We anticipate that other trail-related resources such as structures within Old Town Alexandria in Virginia or Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum in Maryland will remain in local or private ownership.

In addition, an early step after establishment would be the appointment of a federal advisory council, as stipulated under section 5(d) of the National Trails System Act. The Secretary shall consult with such a council from time to time with respect to matters relating to the trail, including the selection of right-of-way, standards for the erection and maintenance of markers along the trail, and the administration of the trail.

The proposed trail represents an opportunity for an effective partnership among Federal, State, and local governments, a dedicated trail organization, and the many public and private site managers to administer and maintain a federally designated commemorative trail along the historic routes of the Chesapeake Campaign. Because of its emphasis on partnerships, this approach provides the greatest flexibility for resource protection while creating a framework for interpretation and visitor experience. The cost associated with implementation of the comprehensive management plan could be shared by relevant State and local governments and private organizations, which generally helps to limit Federal expenditures for national trails.

The Department recommends three amendments to the bill. First, during the 109th Congress, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail was the 25th national trail to be designated as part of the National Trails System so this bill would need to be amended to make it the 26th national trail. Second, the trail description should more accurately reflect that the trail would begin at Tangier Island and encompass water routes through the Chesapeake Bay and the Patuxent, Potomac, and Patapsco Rivers. Third, the bill is drafted with the Secretary providing interpretive programs and services, and Fort McHenry providing technical assistance only. We wish to clarify that Fort McHenry would be authorized, based on the availability of funds, to provide interpretive programs and services as well as technical assistance.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my remarks and I would be happy to respond to any questions that you and the committee may have.

Proposed Amendment to H.R. 1388, Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Act

On p. 2, line 5, strike “(25)” and insert “(26)”.

On p. 2, delete lines 7-12, and insert the following:

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, a trail consisting of water and overland routes totaling approximately 290 miles extending from Tangier Island, Virginia, through southern Maryland, the District of Columbia, and northern Virginia in the Chesapeake Bay, Patuxent River, Potomac River and north to the Patapsco River and Baltimore, Maryland.”.

On pgs. 3-4, strike subparagraph (F) and insert new subparagraph (F) as follows:

“(F) INTERPRETATION AND ASSISTANCE.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary of the Interior, through Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, may provide to State and local governments and nonprofit organizations interpretive programs and services, and technical assistance for use in carrying out preservation and development of, and education relating to the War of 1812 along, the trail.”.

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NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS AND PUBLIC LANDS, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL
RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 1483, TO AMEND THE OMNIBUS PARKS AND
PUBLIC LANDS MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1996 TO EXTEND THE AUTHORIZATION
FOR CERTAIN NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

May 15, 2007

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 1483, a bill to amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 to extend the authorization for certain national heritage areas.

H.R. 1483 has four main provisions. Section 1(a) would extend the authorization for federal funding for nine national heritage areas, designated in 1996, by an additional 15 years and \$10 million each. Section 1(b) would make several technical corrections to the Ohio & Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor including a name change for the area and the deauthorization of the Ohio & Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor Committee, whose duties have already been assumed by a non-profit management entity. Section 1(c) would make several technical corrections to the National Coal Heritage Area and authorize the transition of the management entity to a new public entity, the National Coal Heritage Area Authority. Finally, section 1(e) would add Berkeley County to the South Carolina Heritage Area.

The Department opposes section 1(a) that extends the authorization for federal funding for the nine national heritage areas. The Department supports the rest of the provisions of H.R. 1483 with some technical corrections described in our testimony.

Less than a year ago, there were 27 heritage areas. Today, there are 37. Our understanding is that national heritage areas are locally driven grassroots efforts to preserve resources that were intended to operate independent of federal funding at the end of the authorization period. While the National Park Service would continue to support the heritage areas through technical assistance, the heritage areas were to be largely self-sufficient after an initial period of financial assistance from NPS. This was the understanding, particularly for those heritage areas created in 1996 and the more recently designated heritage areas.

H.R. 1483 would increase the authorization ceiling for appropriations to each area from \$10,000,000 to \$20,000,000 and extend the termination date of the Secretary of the Interior's financial commitment from September 30, 2012 to September 30, 2027. These provisions are inconsistent with the national heritage area program legislation passed by the Senate last year and supported by the Administration. In addition, the extensions for each of the nine national heritage areas provided for in the bill would seem to be premature since each of these areas has an additional five years left of their authorization to receive federal funding.

Since being designated, these nine national heritage areas have proven to be very successful in accomplishing partnership projects and leveraging funding. For example, the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor has developed an innovative regional approach to tourism to help

visitors navigate the historic, cultural and scenic resources of the region through a network of visitor centers, interpretive sites and travel guides. Known as the “Corridor Discovery System” this strategy implements one of the goals of the heritage corridor’s management plan to use the region’s heritage as a tool to promote rural economic development. The partners include members of local communities and heritage businesses, local and regional tourism boards, local governments, and the state of South Carolina who provided bond funding to construct three discovery centers and fund annual operational costs. Grants of \$1.8 million from the heritage area have leveraged over \$30 million in public and private funds for site enhancements.

In the Ohio and Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor, the management entity has worked with more than 90 partners to develop a 101-mile towpath trail that runs through 42 communities, four counties and Cuyahoga Valley National Park. The trail attracts people to walk, hike and bike, and has also attracted corporate sponsors interested in supporting healthier lifestyles and quality-of-life amenities. Funding from the National Park Service has leveraged \$14.5 million in other federal funds, \$14.5 million in local government funding, and \$10.4 million from private investment.

The Essex National Heritage Area, which commemorates 400 years of maritime history and tradition, works in close partnership with Salem Maritime National Historic Site. Joint initiatives include a visitor center in historic downtown Salem that orients tourists and residents to the region’s history and educational outreach programs, and the construction of a full-rigged merchant sailing ship *Friendship of Salem*. Together, the heritage area and the national historic site link the heritage stories of the region and have leveraged significant money and goodwill.

In order for these nine national heritage areas to prepare for the cessation of the authorization of federal funding in 2012, the Department would recommend that the bill be amended to include an additional requirement for a separate evaluation to be conducted by the Secretary, three years prior to the cessation of federal funding, for each national heritage area. The evaluation would examine the accomplishments of each heritage area in meeting the goals of the management plan; analyze the leveraging and impact of investments to the heritage area; identify the critical components of the management structure and sustainability of the heritage area; and recommend what future role, if any, the National Park Service should have with respect to the heritage area.

The Department would welcome the opportunity to work with the committee to make several technical corrections to the bill relating to the Ohio and Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor, and the addition of a new section to require the completion of an evaluation by the Secretary for each of the nine national heritage areas three years before the cessation of federal funding, as described above.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to comment. This concludes my prepared remarks and I will be happy to answer any questions you or other committee members might have.