

April 6, 2018

The Honorable Tom McClintock
Chairman
House Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Federal Lands
1332 Longworth House Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable Colleen Hanabusa
Ranking Member
House Natural Resources
Subcommittee on Federal Lands
1329 Longworth Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

Chairman McClintock and Ranking Member Hanabusa,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of H.R. 3045. I am Lindy Hatcher, Executive Director of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation (Trail Heritage Foundation) - a national not-for-profit organization with 30 Chapters across the U.S., ten serving states in the East. We have 1,300 members in all 50 states. We work in close partnership with the National Park Service and other federal agencies that manage the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (Trail) leveraging greater value from tax dollars spent on our trail.

The current Trail traverses 11 states from Illinois to Oregon. Proposed legislation would create 1,200 miles of additional river trail extending from Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, to Pennsylvania.

To paraphrase Indiana State Senator Ed Claire, "The story of the first great expedition is incomplete. While incredible, is missing the beginning. Trail extension will complete the story, making it possible to understand and appreciate subsequent chapters all the more."

We ask you to favorably consider H.R. 3045 for these reasons:

1. Thorough and Comprehensive Study

The National Park Service did a thorough job studying 25 proposed segments. They concluded three segments (5a, 5b, and 6) extending the Trail eastward from Wood River, Illinois (near St. Louis) to Pittsburgh were in compliance with the three laws that define trails of national significance. It took six years to reach a conclusion. They utilized a lengthy technical analysis and a public review process. We support the NPS conclusions and recommendations and urge passage of HR 3045.

2. Two Nationally Significant Components are Missing from the Current Trail – Planning and Preparation

Lewis began keeping his expedition journal in Pittsburgh – the NPS recommended eastern terminus of the extended trail, signifying the official beginning of the expedition. The segments proposed for inclusion in the trail are an important part of the expedition. They convey vital facts, events, and locations where Lewis and Clark organized, recruited and trained their men for the journey. The Corps of Discovery began working together as a team, which proved critical to the success of the western expedition. The complete story of their success cannot be properly understood without including these events and locations into the national trail.

3. Longstanding and Rich Partnerships

We have, through our Lewis and Clark Eastern Legacy Sign Program, re-invigorated and enhanced a series of partnerships involving local, state, and federal agencies and organizations developed during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration in 2003. We had nearly 100 partners and more than 35 communities located within the corridor of the proposed trail extension, joined together to provide historical and cultural programming to more than one million people. These partners continue to tell the incredible story of America's first, greatest national exploration.

The Trail Heritage Foundation provides 68,000 volunteer hours valued at over \$1.6 million annually on trail stewardship, education, and other activities along the trail and beyond. In addition, we have distributed over \$340,000 in Trail Stewardship grants across the country to support projects that develop public access to significant historical and recreational sites; promote tourism; interpret historical sites; and preserve the natural and cultural resources.

4. Limited Expense for NPS

We acknowledge there will be some costs involved in adding the three segments of the predominantly water trail. Since most partners from the Bicentennial are still managing Lewis and Clark heritage sites and the Army Corps of Engineers already manages the river and many recreational access points, we see this trail extension as a great investment and opportunity to effectively leverage federal appropriations with partner money. Partners plan to maintain their institutional independence, but would like to be noted on NPS brochures, websites, and interpretive signs. We do not anticipate new infrastructure will be needed at these established sites.

5. Benefits of Heritage and Cultural Tourism

The NPS Study concluded the proposed trail extension would likely positively impact tourism on the existing Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail as well as in the proposed segments. We concur. For example, Indiana reports heritage tourism as a \$12.2 billion industry.

Currently, Indiana is the only state in the union without a National Scenic or Historic Trail. This new designation would "put Indiana on the map" along the route where the explorers planned, recruited, and recorded the beginning of their epic journey. Segments not included are still promoted and in Trail Heritage Foundation promotional materials, websites, brochures, and through our various meetings.

We respectfully request that the following be entered into the record: National Trails System map and Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation Brochures and 2017 Annual Report.

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