

STATEMENT OF HERBERT C. FROST, REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR INTERIOR REGIONS 3, 4 & 5, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS CONCERNING H.R. 6142, A BILL TO AMEND THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM ACT TO DIRECT THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON THE FEASIBILITY OF DESIGNATING THE BUCKEYE TRAIL AS A NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL.

February 3, 2022

Chairman Neguse, Ranking Member Fulcher, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 6142, a bill to amend the National Trails System Act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study on the feasibility of designating the Buckeye Trail as a National Scenic Trail.

The Department supports H.R. 6142 with amendments described later in this testimony. We would like to note that there are currently 23 previously authorized studies for potential units of the National Park System, potential new National Heritage Areas, and potential additions to the National Trails System that have not yet been transmitted to Congress.

The National Trails System currently includes 30 congressionally designated national scenic trails and national historic trails spanning over 55,000 miles across the nation. National scenic trails display significant characteristics of the nation's physiographic regions. They provide for outdoor recreation and for the conservation and enjoyment of scenic, historic, natural or cultural qualities.

The Buckeye Trail is comprised of a system of routes creating a loop extending approximately 1,454 miles from Lake Erie to the Ohio River, through the farmland of northwest Ohio, the hills of Appalachia, the Black Hand sandstone cliffs of the Hocking Hills region, and the Bluegrass region of southwest Ohio. H.R. 6142 would authorize a study of the Buckeye Trail to be conducted in accordance with the criteria for national scenic trail studies under the National Trails System Act and would include a determination as to whether it would be physically and financially feasible to develop a trail along the route being studied.

While the Department supports authorizing this feasibility study, we would appreciate the opportunity to work with the bill sponsor and the Subcommittee to ensure that the bill provides the necessary flexibility to assign responsibility for the study to the appropriate Federal land management agency and to consider the most appropriate options for the potential administration of the trail. A significant portion of the Buckeye Trail in Ohio overlaps with the authorized route of the existing North Country National Scenic Trail that is administered by the National Park Service. A portion of the trail route is also located on lands owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service. Regardless of which agency conducts the study, that agency will be required to consult with all other affected land management agencies, as provided for in the National Trails System Act.

We would be happy to work with the bill sponsor, the Subcommittee, and our colleagues with the U.S. Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture to determine what, if any, amendments may be needed to provide the necessary flexibility in the bill language.

Chairman Neguse, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

STATEMENT OF HERBERT C. FROST, REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR INTERIOR REGIONS 3, 4 & 5, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS CONCERNING H.R. 6199, A BILL TO REVISE THE BOUNDARY OF THE STE. GENEVIEVE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK IN THE STATE OF MISSOURI, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

February 3, 2022

Chairman Neguse, Ranking Member Fulcher, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 6199, a bill to revise the boundary of the Ste. Genevieve National Historical Park in the state of Missouri, and for other purposes.

The Department supports H.R. 6199.

H.R. 6199 would amend the legislation authorizing the establishment of Ste. Genevieve National Historical Park to authorize the acquisition of the property currently owned by the City of Ste. Genevieve and in use as the park's Visitor Center.

Congress authorized the establishment of Ste. Genevieve National Historical Park in March 2018 as a unit of the National Park System to preserve, protect, and interpret the themes of French Settlement, vernacular architecture, and community form and farming on the frontier. The establishment was subject to the Secretary of the Interior's determination that sufficient land had been acquired to constitute a manageable unit and written agreements had been entered into providing that land owned by the State of Missouri, the city of Ste. Genevieve, or another entity within the National Historic District be managed consistent with the purposes of the Act. Those requirements have been met, and the Secretary established Ste. Genevieve National Historical Park in October 2020.

The establishing legislation authorizes the National Park Service to acquire any land or interest in land located within the boundary of the National Historical Park or any property within the Ste. Genevieve National Historic District National Historic Landmark that was identified as nationally significant in the Ste. Genevieve Final Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment of May 2016. The city of Ste. Genevieve and the National Park Service entered into a General Agreement that allows the National Park Service to use the city-owned Welcome Center as a visitor center for the park. The city wishes to donate that property, approximately 1 acre in size, to the National Park Service. However, the current land acquisition authorities in the statute would not apply as the property was not identified as nationally significant in the Special Resource Study. Rather, it is a more modern property, better suited for the functions of the visitor center and administrative purposes. This legislation would authorize the NPS to add this property to the Historical Park boundary and accept the donation of land and improvements.

The NPS appreciates that H.R. 6199 would provide the authority to acquire the welcome center for its visitor center. The NPS is mindful of future needs for administrative facilities to support the park, and as such, would welcome additional conversations with the Committee about these needs.

Chairman Neguse, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

STATEMENT OF HERBERT C. FROST, REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR INTERIOR REGIONS 3, 4 & 5, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS CONCERNING H.R. 6337, A BILL TO REQUIRE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR AND THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE TO DEVELOP LONG-DISTANCE BIKE TRAILS ON FEDERAL LAND, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

February 3, 2022

Chairman Neguse, Ranking Member Fulcher, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 6337, a bill to require the Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to develop long-distance bike trails on Federal land, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6337 requires the Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Agriculture to identify no less than 10 existing long-distance bike trails and 10 areas presenting an opportunity to develop or complete long-distance bike trails. The long-distance trails would cross no less than 80 miles of lands managed by the Department of the Interior and National Forest System Lands to provide opportunities for mountain biking, road biking, touring, and gravel biking. H.R. 6337 directs the long-distance trails to be consistent with the management requirements of the Federal lands crossed and requires coordination with stakeholders to evaluate resources and feasibility. Further, Federal agencies may publish maps, install signage, and issue promotional materials for any identified long-distance bike trails under the bill. Lastly, H.R. 6337 requires the Secretaries, in partnership with interested organizations, to prepare and publish a report listing the trails within two years.

The Department supports the goals of establishing additional opportunities for bicycling on Federal lands. The diverse lands managed by the various agencies of the Department provide tremendous opportunities for cycling. The BLM, for example, has a longstanding partnership with external organizations to provide information, GPS trail maps, and interactive virtual tours for mountain biking on public lands, and promotes the “Top 20 Mountain Biking Opportunities” on BLM-managed lands.

We would also welcome the opportunity to work with the sponsor and the Committee on some of the bill’s provisions. For example, we would like clarification regarding each Secretary’s responsibilities toward achieving the number of identified areas conducive to long-distance bike trails and opportunities for developing trails. Additionally, the Department notes that some of the best opportunities for developing long-distance bike trail routes could likely traverse non-Federal lands, and we would like to work with the sponsor to allow for the inclusion of non-Federal land segments in the trails. We would also like to ensure sufficient time and resources are provided in the bill for stakeholder outreach, coordination of public input on the feasibility of the trails, completing environmental analyses and any changes to local land use plans – as well as for managing and maintaining the trails upon their establishment. Finally, the Department would like to discuss further with the sponsor how to best define the intended use of these trail

segments, including how uses such as electric bicycles would affect that use and the management of other uses, such as hiking, or off-highway vehicles, as appropriate.

Chairman Neguse, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

STATEMENT OF HERBERT C. FROST, REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR INTERIOR REGIONS 3, 4 & 5, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND PUBLIC LANDS CONCERNING H.R. 6451, A BILL TO ESTABLISH THE CHIRICAHUA NATIONAL PARK IN THE STATE OF ARIZONA AS A UNIT OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

February 3, 2022

Chairman Neguse, Ranking Member Fulcher, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R. 6451, a bill to establish the Chiricahua National Park in the state of Arizona as a unit of the National Park System, and for other purposes.

The Department supports H.R. 6451 and would like to work with the sponsor on potential clarifying amendments.

H.R. 6451 would redesignate Chiricahua National Monument in Arizona as Chiricahua National Park.

H.R. 6451 would direct the Secretary of the Interior (Secretary), in consultation with Indian Tribes, to ensure the protection of, and access to, traditional cultural and religious sites in Chiricahua National Park, and to temporarily close specific portions of the park to protect traditional cultural and customary uses by members of Indian Tribes. The bill stipulates that these activities would be conducted in accordance with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act.

H.R. 6451 would allow members of culturally affiliated Indian Tribes to collect plant and mineral resources for non-commercial uses within the park. These activities would be subject to applicable laws and subject to conditions that the Secretary deems necessary to protect the resources and values of the park, with the exception that any quantity limitation in current regulations would not apply. The bill provides the Secretary the authority to limit the quantity of resources collected if it is determined, through consultation with the park's Tribal Commission, that the limitation is necessary to protect the resources and values of the park.

H.R. 6451 would also direct the Secretary to establish a Tribal Commission for the park, comprised of one representative designated by the governing body of each Indian Tribe with a historical association with the area. The Commission would provide guidance and recommendations on the development and implementation of management plans and policies for the park. The bill would require the Secretary to provide a written explanation to the Commission if they chose not to incorporate a recommendation that the Commission provided in writing.

Finally, H.R. 6451 would withdraw the land located within the boundaries of the National Park from Federal mining and leasing laws, subject to existing rights.

Chiricahua National Monument was established on April 18, 1924, by President Calvin Coolidge by presidential proclamation. The monument is located in Cochise County, approximately 37 miles southeast of Willcox, Arizona. It is located at the intersection of the Chihuahuan and Sonoran deserts, the southern Rocky Mountains, and the northern Sierra Madre.

Chiricahua National Monument is known as a “Wonderland of Rocks” because of its distinctive pinnacle formations. These formations are the result of powerful volcanic events combined with geologic erosive forces over time creating the rhyolitic rock formations in the monument. The Madrean Sky Island ecosystem of the monument protects a great diversity of flora and fauna as well as critical habitat for threatened, endangered, and endemic species.

Chiricahua National Monument also preserves evidence of diverse human history spanning thousands of years, including prehistoric indigenous peoples, Chiricahua Apaches, Buffalo Soldiers, European American pioneers and ranchers, and the 1930’s Civilian Conservation Corps. The monument’s Faraway Ranch Historic District includes structures, resources, and landscapes associated with the former pioneer homestead and working cattle ranch. Stories and evidence of struggle, perseverance, stewardship, and connection to the land unite the experiences of each of these groups which left a lasting legacy on the land and our country.

Re-designating the monument as Chiricahua National Park is consistent with the nomenclature patterns of the National Park System. Units designated as national parks generally contain a variety of resources and encompass a large land or water area to help provide adequate protection of the resources. With its wealth of both natural and cultural resources over a large land mass of approximately 12,025 acres, it is appropriate to designate this unit as a national park.

The Department would like to work with the sponsor on potential amendments for clarification of how the Commission would function and how this legislation would work relative to some existing regulations and statutes, including those concerning access and closure, hunting, and plant and mineral gathering. We would also like to revise the bill so that if it were to become law, it would clarify the status of the previous park establishment provisions including the Chiricahua National Monument Proclamation.

Chairman Neguse, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

STATEMENT OF HERBERT C. FROST, REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR INTERIOR REGIONS 3, 4 & 5, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, FORESTS, AND FEDERAL LANDS, CONCERNING H.R. 6434, A BILL TO AMEND TITLE 54 UNITED STATES CODE, TO ESTABLISH WITHIN THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, THE JAPANESE AMERICAN WORLD WAR II HISTORY NETWORK, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

February 3, 2022

Chairman Neguse, Ranking Member Fulcher, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 6434, a bill to amend Title 54 United States Code, to establish within the National Park Service, the Japanese American World War II History Network, and for other purposes.

The Department supports H.R. 6434 with recommended amendments.

H.R. 6434 would establish within the National Park Service, the Japanese American World War II History Network. The bill would direct the Secretary of the Interior to review studies and disseminate educational materials relating to Japanese American history and experiences during the war, provide technical assistance to network members, and create an official uniform symbol for the network. The bill describes which entities would be included in the network and authorizes the Secretary to enter into cooperative agreements and memoranda of understanding with Federal, state, and local governments; Tribes; and private entities to achieve the purposes of the network.

Since 1992, when Manzanar National Historic Site was established, the National Park Service has been managing sites where Japanese Americans were incarcerated during WWII. Minidoka National Historic Site, Manzanar National Historic Site, Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, Tule Lake National Monument, Honouliuli National Historic Site, Wing Luke Museum Affiliated Area, and the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During WWII in Washington DC are all currently under management or co-management by the National Park Service. Each of these sites helps tell a more complete story of the impacts and injustice of the incarceration experience.

In 2009, Congress established the Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) Grant Program within the National Park Service “to encourage, support, recognize, and work in partnership with citizens, Federal agencies, State, local, and tribal governments, other public entities, educational institutions, and private nonprofit organizations for the purpose of identifying, researching, evaluating, interpreting, protecting, restoring, repairing, and acquiring historic confinement sites in order that present and future generations may learn and gain inspiration from these sites and that these sites will demonstrate the Nation’s commitment to equal justice under the law”.

Since its creation, the JACS Grant Program has awarded 269 grants for projects to private nonprofit organizations; educational institutions; state, local, and tribal governments; and other

public entities for the preservation and interpretation of confinement sites where Japanese Americans were incarcerated during World War II. The projects, across 25 states and the District of Columbia, include oral histories, preservation of camp artifacts and buildings, documentaries and educational curricula, and exhibits and memorials that preserve what remains of the confinement sites and honor the people who were incarcerated there by sharing their experiences.

The National Park Service manages existing networks that are similar to the one being proposed by H.R. 6434. These include the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, the Reconstruction Era National Historical Network, and the African American Civil Rights Network. These networks are successful collaborations with local, state, and Federal entities, individuals, and organizations, who work to preserve, promote, and honor important stories in our nation's history

We welcome the opportunity to work with the bill sponsor and the Committee on amendments that would include stakeholder engagement and collaboration for the legislation's implementation and address coordinating the new Japanese American World War II History Network with the existing units of the national park system associated with the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II and the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program.

Chairman Neguse, this concludes my testimony. I would be glad to answer any questions that you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.