

STATEMENT OF BILL SHADDOX, ACTING ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES, AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS, COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING H.R. 3480, TO EXPAND THE BOUNDARY OF FORT FREDERICA NATIONAL MONUMENT LOCATED IN THE STATE OF GEORGIA, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

May 24, 2016

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 3480, a bill to expand the boundary of Fort Frederica National Monument in the State of Georgia, and for other purposes.

The Department supports H.R. 3480.

H.R. 3480 would expand the authorized boundary of Fort Frederica to include four new areas containing significant historical, archeological, and natural resources, and would raise the legislated acreage cap.

In 2014, the National Park Service (NPS) completed the “Fort Frederica Boundary Study and Environmental Assessment.” This study was conducted to evaluate the potential inclusion of new areas to Fort Frederica National Monument, following a recommendation from the Monument’s 2002 General Management Plan that the NPS should consider the measures necessary to achieve the protection of nearby related sites.

The study considered three sites north of the existing boundary and one site south of the boundary that have high potential to contain archeological evidence of occupation and use by residents of the British colonial town of Frederica founded in 1736 by General James Edward Oglethorpe. The northern area (approximately 26 acres) is located adjacent to Fort Frederica National Monument’s northern boundary. This area includes three land tracts: the North Marsh (owned by St. Simons Land Trust), Christ Church, and Squire properties. The second, southern area (approximately 147 acres) has one land tract, the Allen Estate. It is located approximately 300 feet from the current park boundary. This southern area borders on the Frederica River. Both the northern and southern areas are generally undeveloped and consist of wetlands and forests and are within the viewshed of the park.

As part of the study process, the NPS considered the current boundary’s capacity to protect and preserve the cultural, natural, and scenic resources integral to the monument, and the potential for new areas to complement the park’s purpose. The NPS solicited input from land owners, community members and the interested public, and representatives of local government and other state and federal agencies. Based on this consideration and outreach, the study team developed a range of alternatives.

Under the NPS's preferred alternative, the Fort Frederica National Monument boundary would be expanded to incorporate the northern and southern areas totaling approximately 173 acres, and permit the acquisition of these areas from willing sellers. The study found that the owners of these areas were willing sellers. Under this alternative, Fort Frederica National Monument would acquire, manage, and interpret the northern and southern areas to insure their preservation and enhance opportunities for public enjoyment by preserving areas that were once a part of the Town of Frederica for research and interpretation, providing new ways to engage the public and tell the story of Fort Frederica and the township, and preserving the scenic resources associated with colonial Frederica.

The township, designed in 1736 by General James Edward Oglethorpe, used these areas for farming and garden plots by the families and soldiers who lived there. Some portions are also believed to have been used as a campground for troops in 1743. Interpretation of these significant historical and natural resources would, over the long term, enhance opportunities for public enjoyment related to park purposes. Resources associated with the garden plots, troop campground, old Frederica Road, and the colonial cannon battery, Point Battery, could provide excellent research and archeological investigation opportunities. In addition, the majority of the acreage of the Allen property is open marshland and habitat for migrating birds, as well as pristine habitat for other species of flora and fauna.

It would be feasible for Fort Frederica National Monument to administer the northern and southern areas because they are either directly adjacent or very close to the current boundary. Administrative and visitor functions could be expanded easily into these adjacent lands. Land use management would also easily be integrated into existing operations. Fort Frederica National Monument currently manages approximately 282 acres. We anticipate that the northern and southern areas could be readily incorporated into many of the regular maintenance and management activities occurring at Fort Frederica National Monument without added operational or personnel costs.

Fort Frederica National Monument has no development proposed for the study properties. Any development in the future will be kept to a minimum with the possibility of limited trails, waysides, and a small boardwalk with a viewing platform for the purposes of interpreting the significant viewshed and resources of the park. Fencing along the newly acquired properties would be installed at a cost of approximately \$5,000. The study makes no recommendations regarding treatment of structures inside the expanded boundary, because no studies have yet been done to determine whether any are historic. Any treatment recommendations for historic properties would be developed at a later date in consultation with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Officer. However, all structures are believed to be non-historic and once studies are completed to confirm this, it is likely that all or most would be removed.

At the time of the study, the estimated value of the three properties within the northern area and the property in the southern area was approximately \$3,760,000 according to the Glynn County Property Appraisal Office. Pre-acquisition costs were estimated to be approximately \$132,000. This assumes full fee acquisition by the NPS. Formal appraisals would have to be conducted should any acquisition be pursued. All funds would be subject to NPS priorities and the availability of appropriations.

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

STATEMENT OF BILL SHADDOX, ACTING ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES, AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS, CONCERNING H. R. 4202, TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO CONDUCT A SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY OF FORT ONTARIO IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

May 24, 2016

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 4202, to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of Fort Ontario in Oswego, New York.

The Department supports enactment of H.R. 4202 with amendments described later in this testimony. However, we believe that priority should be given to the 24 previously authorized studies for potential units of the National Park System, potential new National Heritage Areas, and potential additions to the National Trails System and National Wild and Scenic Rivers System that have not yet been transmitted to Congress.

H.R. 4202 authorizes a special resource study of Fort Ontario in Oswego, New York. This study would determine whether this site meets the National Park Service's criteria for inclusion in the National Park System of national significance, suitability, and feasibility, and the need for National Park Service management. The study would also consider other alternatives for preservation, protection, and interpretation of the resources by the Federal government, State or local government entities, or private and non-profit entities. Alternatives might include, for example, the designation of the site as an affiliated area of the National Park Service, where the National Park Service would provide technical assistance to the site but not own or manage it. We estimate the cost of the study to range from \$200,000 to \$300,000, based on similar types of studies conducted in recent years.

The National Park Service has been asked to conduct a reconnaissance survey of Fort Ontario at by Representative John Katko, the sponsor of H.R. 4202. The NPS has authority to conduct preliminary resource assessments on potential study areas or sites without specific Congressional authorization. The term "reconnaissance survey" is used to describe this type of assessment, which provides a cursory review and analysis of available resources to determine if a more thorough analysis, provided by a special resource study, is warranted. The National Park Service's work on the reconnaissance survey, scheduled for early 2017, will provide a foundation for the special resource study, if H.R. 4202 is enacted.

Fort Ontario has played a role in virtually every major American conflict from the French and Indian War to World War II. The original earthen fort was built by the British in 1755 to protect key trade routes. Destroyed by the French the next year, it was rebuilt by the British in 1759 who abandoned it in 1778; patriot forces destroyed that fort the same year. The British built the third fort in 1792 and occupied it until 1796 after the signing of the Jay Treaty. That fort was destroyed in 1814 by the British during the War of 1812. The fourth, and current fort, was constructed beginning in 1839. Completed in 1844 as an earthen, five-bastioned, timber

revetted star fort, it was improved beginning in 1863 through the addition of masonry scarp walls. It remains in this configuration today.

During World War I, the fort and grounds were used as a training facility, and during World War II as the nation's only emergency refugee camp from 1944 to 1946. It was conveyed to the state of New York in 1946 and is now a state park. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1970.

H.R. 4202 includes certain requirements for the study, which we recommend deleting. Specifically, we urge deleting section 3(b)(5), which would require an analysis of the effect of designation as a unit of the National Park System on existing commercial and recreational activities, and on activities concerning energy production and transmission infrastructure, and on the authority of state and local governments to manage those activities. We also urge deleting section 3(b)(6), which would require an identification of any authorities that would compel or permit the Secretary of the Interior to influence or participate in local land use decisions or place restrictions on non-federal lands.

The purpose of conducting a special resource study is to determine whether a resource meets the criteria for inclusion in the National Park System and, if it does not, to provide information on alternative means to protect the resource. We believe that the special resource study requirements under existing law result in a sufficient amount of information and analysis of the effects of including a resource in the National Park System. These additional requirements could potentially increase the cost of the study and the time required to complete it.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions that you or other members of the subcommittee may have.

STATEMENT OF BILL SHADDOX, ACTING ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES, AND LANDS, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE ON FEDERAL LANDS, CONCERNING H.R. 4789, A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO ESTABLISH A STRUCTURE FOR VISITOR SERVICES ON THE ARLINGTON RIDGE TRACT, IN THE AREA OF THE U.S. MARINE CORPS WAR MEMORIAL, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

May 24, 2016

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 4789, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to establish a structure for visitor services on the Arlington Ridge tract, in the area of the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial.

The Department supports H.R. 4789.

H.R. 4789 authorizes the construction of a structure for visitor services to include a public restroom facility on the Arlington Ridge tract (Tract) in the area of the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial (Memorial), notwithstanding Section 2863(g)(1) of Public Law 107-107, which prohibits the construction of additional structures or memorials on this tract. This provision was included in P.L. 107-107 to preserve the open character of the Tract, while leaving open the option for future use of the Tract for burial space as part of Arlington National Cemetery if specifically authorized through later legislative action.

The Memorial was dedicated on November 10, 1954, to all Marines who have given their lives in defense of the United States since 1775. The Memorial is managed by the George Washington Memorial Parkway and sits within the 25.32 acre Arlington Ridge tract of National Park Service (NPS) land in Arlington County, VA. Over one million visitors visit the Memorial annually, and several special events are hosted there each year including the start/finish of the Marine Corps Marathon and weekly Sunset Parades throughout the summer. Currently, the NPS provides portable restroom facilities for visitor use at the Memorial as there are no permanent existing facilities.

H.R. 4789 would authorize the NPS to construct a small structure in the area of the Memorial that would replace the existing portable toilets and hand washing stations. The structure would primarily be used as a public restroom facility and include a small area for signage and interpretive materials about the Memorial and surrounding parkland. The construction of this facility would complement the recently announced rehabilitation of the Memorial and surrounding grounds, which have been made possible by a generous \$5.37 million donation from philanthropist David Rubenstein.

The design and construction of this facility is estimated to be less than \$1 million, and would be funded either through the donated funds, through existing NPS appropriated funds, or a combination thereof. In addition, the steps for permitting and design would follow the normal process for operational improvements to parkland in the District of Columbia and its environs, to include approvals by the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts. The proposed structure would not impact the open space of the Tract any more than the existing temporary restroom facilities.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions that you or other members of the subcommittee may have.