



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, D.C. 20240

FEB 27 2018

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
Chairman, Committee on Energy  
and Natural Resources  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Murkowski:

I am pleased to transmit to Congress the final *Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Extension Study*, also known as the “Eastern Legacy” study. The study was completed pursuant to Public Law 110-229, the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008, signed on May 8, 2008. The purpose of the study was to evaluate sites and segments in the eastern United States associated with the Lewis and Clark Expedition, as directed by Congress, to determine whether those sites and segments should be added to the existing Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.

The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (Trail) begins at Wood River, Illinois, at the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers and extends west to the Pacific Ocean. The established Trail is approximately 3,700 miles long and passes through 11 states. Congress directed this study to assess the suitability and feasibility of extending the existing Trail to include Eastern Legacy sites and route segments associated with the preparation and return phases of the historic Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery Expedition.

The study area includes portions of the Mississippi River and the Ohio River, as well as multiple sites and overland routes totaling approximately 7,400 miles passing through 14 states and the District of Columbia.

The National Park Service (NPS) conducted the study in accordance with the National Trails System Act (16 USC 1244(b)) (NTSA). According to the NTSA, trail segments must be nationally significant to be added to the National Trails System. The trail segments must also be a feasible and suitable addition to the system. National significance, suitability, and feasibility are the key criteria for determining the eligibility of any potential addition to the National Trails System.

The NPS finds that of the 25 trail segments evaluated, 3 were deemed nationally significant with respect to the Lewis and Clark expedition. Together, these three segments follow the routes of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to Wood River, Illinois. These three river routes were critical precursors to the main expedition, and are described extensively in the study.

The NPS finds that the remaining 22 segments studied do not have the same level of significance as the routes of the established Trail and do not meet the criteria for national significance established by the NTSA. Many of the remaining 22 study segments have important local or regional significance and may be significant for reasons other than their association with Lewis and Clark. The importance of these segments is derived from uses outside the key period of Lewis and Clark's journeys from 1803 to 1807. The NPS finds that these 22 segments are more appropriately recognized at the state and local level.

The NPS further finds that the three segments found to be nationally significant also meet the criteria for suitability and feasibility, only if their partnership potential is realized. The other 22 segments studied would not be suitable additions, or feasible to manage, as part of the established Trail.

The study included a national public involvement process from 2009 to 2016. The draft study was released to the public for a 45-day comment period in the fall of 2016, and generated over 300 responses. Comments received during the review period indicated strong support for the extension of the Trail, and presented the possibility for partnerships in its management. The NPS has now finalized the study following public review.

Based on the NPS findings and the public support, the Department of the Interior (DOI) recommends Alternative B as its preferred management option, to extend the designation of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Wood River, Illinois. However, due to the \$11.6 billion deferred maintenance backlog within NPS, the DOI does not support an extension at this time.

This letter is also being sent to the Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; the Honorable Rob Bishop, Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives; and the Honorable Raúl Grijalva, Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jason Larrabee', written over a horizontal line.

Jason Larrabee  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks  
Exercising the Authority of the Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

Enclosure



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FEB 27 2018

The Honorable Rob Bishop  
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop:

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The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (Trail) begins at Wood River, Illinois, at the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers and extends west to the Pacific Ocean. The established Trail is approximately 3,700 miles long and passes through 11 states. Congress directed this study to assess the suitability and feasibility of extending the existing Trail to include Eastern Legacy sites and route segments associated with the preparation and return phases of the historic Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery Expedition.

The study area includes portions of the Mississippi River and the Ohio River, as well as multiple sites and overland routes totaling approximately 7,400 miles passing through 14 states and the District of Columbia.

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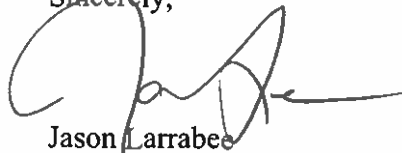
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Sincerely,



Jason Larrabee  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks  
Exercising the Authority of the Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

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**FEB 27 2018**

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Ranking Member, Committee on Energy  
and Natural Resources  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Ranking Member Cantwell:

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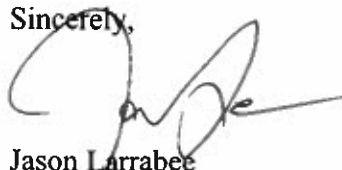
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Jason Larrabee  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks  
Exercising the Authority of the Assistant Secretary  
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

Enclosure



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FEB 27 2013

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Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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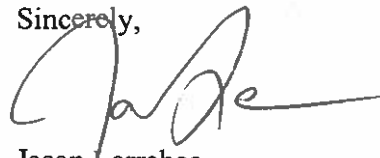
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Jason Larrabee

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