



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

APR 04 2014

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
Chairman, Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair:

I am pleased to transmit to Congress the *Newtonia Battlefields Special Resource Study*. The study was completed pursuant to Public Law 110-229. The act directed the Secretary of the Interior to study the Newtonia Battlefields in Newtonia, Missouri, as a potential new unit of the National Park System and as a potential addition to the existing Wilson's Creek National Battlefield in Republic, Missouri.

Newtonia was the site of two Civil War battles. The first, in 1862, had relatively minor consequences for the war, but was notable in that regiments of American Indian soldiers fought on both sides of the battle. The second, in 1864, was the final full-scale battle of the Civil War in Missouri and the end of the Missouri Expedition of Confederate General Sterling Price. The battlefields total 712 acres. Lands within the battlefields are primarily privately owned, and the Newtonia Battlefields Preservation Association owns and protects approximately 25 acres. Portions of the battlefields are currently open to the public and interpreted for visitors.

National Park Service (NPS) historians considered independent research to determine if the Newtonia Battlefields met the Congressionally-established criterion of national significance for new units of the National Park System. Currently the battlefields are listed in the National Register of Historic Places at only the state level of significance. There was not consensus on the national significance of the battles, but there was consensus that the themes which are a major part of this story are already well represented in the National Park System and in the National Historic Landmark (NHL) program. For example, involvement of American Indian combatants on both sides was the major theme in the recent designation of Honey Springs Battlefield (Oklahoma) as well as at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. The association of the battles with these themes, although already represented in the National Park System and NHL designations, could support NPS affiliation with this site to broaden interpretation of these stories.

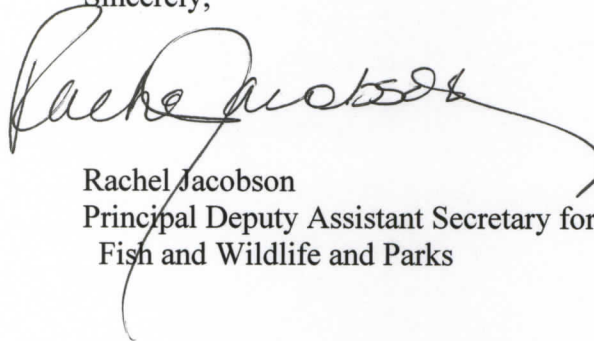
The study further finds that the battlefields do not meet the criteria for addition to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. For an area to be appropriate for addition to an existing park, it must (1) protect significant resources or enhance opportunities for public enjoyment, (2) address operational and management issues of the existing park site, or (3) protect critical park resources.

The added lands must also be feasible to administer, and there must be no other adequate alternatives for management and resource protection. The battlefields fail to meet these criteria as they are 50 miles distant from, and only tangentially related to, the existing unit.

Although the criteria for adding the Newtonia Battlefields to the National Park System as a new unit or under a boundary adjustment to an existing unit are not met, we believe that it would be appropriate to consider the site for designation as an affiliated area of the National Park System. We would be pleased to work with the private owners and the Newtonia Battlefields Protection Association to achieve that goal. This designation would allow for enhanced coordination with the NPS, as well as educational programming.

An identical letter is being sent to the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; the Honorable Doc Hastings, Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives; and the Honorable Peter DeFazio, Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives. The Missouri delegation will also receive a copy of the report and this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rachel Jacobson", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Rachel Jacobson
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Fish and Wildlife and Parks

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Claire McCaskill
The Honorable Roy Blunt
The Honorable Billy Long



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

Dear Senator Murkowski:

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National Park Service (NPS) historians considered independent research to determine if the Newtonia Battlefields met the Congressionally-established criterion of national significance for new units of the National Park System. Currently the battlefields are listed in the National Register of Historic Places at only the state level of significance. There was not consensus on the national significance of the battles, but there was consensus that the themes which are a major part of this story are already well represented in the National Park System and in the National Historic Landmark (NHL) program. For example, involvement of American Indian combatants on both sides was the major theme in the recent designation of Honey Springs Battlefield (Oklahoma) as well as at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. I believe that the association of the battles with these themes, although already represented in the National Park System and NHL designations, could support NPS affiliation with this site to broaden interpretation of these stories.

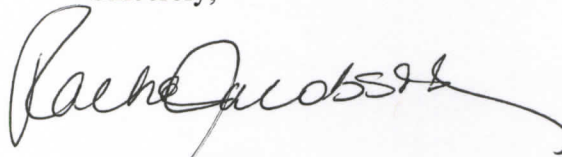
The study further finds that the battlefields do not meet the criteria for addition to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. For an area to be appropriate for addition to an existing park, it must (1) protect significant resources or enhance opportunities for public enjoyment, (2) address operational and management issues of the existing park site, or (3) protect critical park resources.

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The Honorable Doc Hastings
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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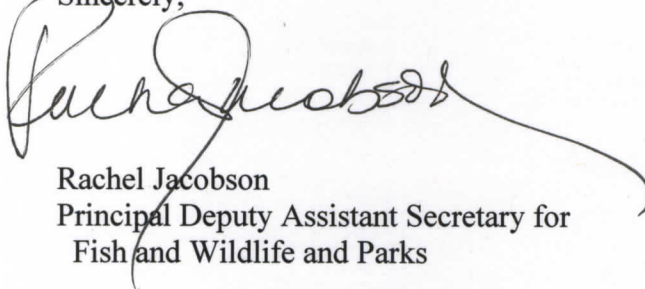
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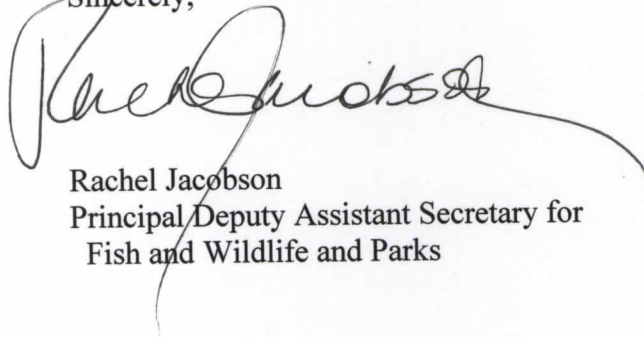
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