



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

MAY 04 2016

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 *Ste. Genevieve Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment*, and the accompanying *Finding of No Significant Impact*. The study was completed pursuant to Public Law 109-319, the Ste. Genevieve County National Historic Site Study Act of 2005, signed on October 11, 2006. The act directed the Secretary of the Interior to evaluate an area that includes the Bequette-Ribault, St. Gemme Amoureux, and Wilhauk homes, and the related and supporting historical assets located in Ste. Genevieve County, Missouri, to see if it meets the criteria for addition to the national park system.

Section 100507 of Title 54, United States Code, establishes the criteria to be considered in the study of an area for potential inclusion in the national park system. A study area must possess nationally significant natural or cultural resources and represent one of the most important examples of a particular resource type in the country; be suitable and feasible for addition to the system; and appropriate for direct National Park Service (NPS) management.

The NPS finds that certain resources in Ste. Genevieve, including the properties listed above, meet the established criteria for inclusion in the national park system. Ste. Genevieve has long been recognized as a nationally important collection of French vertical log architecture, and a portion was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1960. In the *Ste. Genevieve Special Resource Study*, the NPS affirms this national significance and identifies an expanded area of national significance, including significant French vernacular landscape features and contemporaneous examples of British American and German American architecture.

The NPS determined that the nationally significant area exemplifies an important aspect of American history not adequately represented and protected elsewhere, therefore meeting national park system suitability criteria. The NPS found that a subset of resources within the study area would be feasible to manage. It also found there is a need for NPS management to support improved resource management of certain properties and coordinated interpretation of the nationally historic area as a whole.

The study team evaluated several management alternatives and found that the most effective and efficient alternative would be to establish a new unit of the national park system and an affiliated


area encompassing the national historic landmark district (Alternative C). The boundary of the potential NPS unit would include a cluster of seven historic and non-historic properties at one edge of the district, as well as a noncontiguous historic property two miles south of the district. These resources would provide a venue for interpretation of Ste. Genevieve's significant French vernacular architecture and the history of 18th century French settlement. Within the affiliated area, formal agreements with other entities would allow the NPS to provide special recognition and technical assistance beyond the boundaries of the potential new unit.

The Department of the Interior's preferred management option for these resources is Alternative C. Alternative C would enable the NPS to provide protection and visitor enjoyment where needed and partner with other entities, while identifying a discrete area for direct NPS management. A smaller configuration of the boundary of the potential new unit could also be a viable option.

The study included opportunities for public involvement with local governments, private property owners, related organizations, and community members. Comments received during the study's public review period indicate strong local support for the establishment of a new unit of the national park system, and present the possibility for partnerships in managing a potential new unit.

An identical letter is 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 M. Grijalva, Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources, House of Representatives. The affected Missouri delegations will also receive a copy of the report and this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Bean".

Michael Bean
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

Enclosures



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Ranking Member,
Committee on Energy
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Washington, D.C. 20510

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Michael Bean
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MAY 04 2016

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House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop:

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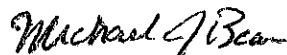
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Michael Bean
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