



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Joe Manchin III
Chairman, Committee on Energy
and Natural Resources
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to transmit the enclosed *1908 Springfield Race Riot Special Resource Study*. The study was conducted pursuant to Public Law 116-260, Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, which authorized the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study (SRS) of the Archeological Site near Madison Street and the 10th Street Rail Corridor to evaluate the national significance of the Archeological Site and other historic sites and the suitability and feasibility of designating them as a unit of the national park system. The study provides detailed historical documentation, analysis, and potential options for Congress to consider in recognizing the 1908 Springfield Race Riot.

The 1908 Springfield Race Riot was one of many late 19th and early 20th-century race riots — large racial terror events where White mobs violently targeted Black communities. The deadly riot in Springfield captured national attention because it took place in Abraham Lincoln's hometown and highlighted how little progress had been made in race relations a century after Lincoln's birth. The riot proved to be one of the critical factors in the establishment of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The five home foundations at the Archeological Site and the artifacts excavated show how residents of a predominantly Black neighborhood called the "Badlands" lived. The site is very near where the riot started, and the archeological evidence shows the buildings were burned in the riot and never reoccupied. The site is a rare surviving resource directly associated with race riots in America.

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. To be recommended as a new unit, 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 be appropriate for direct National Park Service (NPS) management.

Based on the analysis performed through this special resource study, **the National Park Service concludes that the 1908 Springfield Race Riot study area meets all criteria necessary to be eligible for designation as a new unit of the national park system.** The landowners, the City

of Springfield, the NAACP, and local community organizations have expressed strong support for a national park designation and for future partnerships with the NPS to protect and manage the study area resources.

The study area was found to be nationally significant under criterion 1 for its association with a deadly race riot in the hometown of Abraham Lincoln that was widely reported in the national media and was a precipitating event for the formation of the NAACP. The properties that both contribute to the national significance of the study area and retain integrity to convey that significance are the Badlands Riot Area (including archeological deposits from the period of significance); the Archeological Site; Firehouse No. 5; and the Executive Mansion.

While the NPS manages sites that protect stories and resources associated with the founding of other civil rights organizations, none commemorate the founding of the NAACP and, specifically, the horrifically violent event that helped precipitate its founding. Furthermore, the study area is powerful as a place that can contextualize systemic anti-Black violence and, in particular, Jim Crow-era race riots. Very few such sites exist, and none are known that include intact resources from the riot or whose settings retain integrity to convey a sense of the violent destruction. Based on this comparative analysis with sites that preserve similar resources inside and outside the national park system, the four properties found to be nationally significant above are also found collectively to meet the SRS criteria for suitability.

The Archeological Site meets all the factors considered under the analysis of feasibility. The site is of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor access. Property owners and the public have demonstrated strong support for a potential designation. Current land ownership patterns, economic and socioeconomic impacts, and potential threats to the resources do not appear to preclude the study area from potentially becoming a new unit of the national park system. The property owners have documented their intent to donate property in support of a potential designation. The NPS evaluated a smaller and larger footprint and determined that proper management of the site can be fulfilled reasonably in either option. The site would require new infrastructure to support visitation and resource protection, but the infrastructure is expected to be limited and could be scaled to meet visitor needs, available space, and funding. Along with the strong community support, the NAACP, City of Springfield, Hospital Sisters Health System St. John's Hospital, and other local organizations are willing to develop partnerships in support of the site.

The study finds that direct NPS management of the Archeological Site is necessary to ensure the long-term protection of resources. NPS management is necessary to provide a more cohesive management approach with interpretation and visitor opportunities. Both landowners, the public, and local community organizations have expressed strong support for the designation of a new national park unit.

The study concluded that there are two options, a smaller and a larger boundary, in which the NPS could reasonably manage the Archeological Site and meet resource protection and visitor experience objectives. There is a high potential for partnerships which may be a factor in the level to which additional visitor service can be provided. The larger boundary would likely be the most effective and efficient alternative if the site were managed in a collaborative manner

with a robust group of partners. In this case, the expanded area would allow for a wider range of visitor experiences and services. A smaller boundary would likely be the most effective and efficient alternative if partnerships were less viable or if it was determined that most visitor services and experiences could be addressed off-site.

A similar letter is being sent to the Honorable John Barrasso, Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; the Honorable Bruce Westerman, Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources, U.S. House of Representatives; and the Honorable Raúl Grijalva, Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources, U.S. House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

 Date: 2023.06.05
17:10:02 -04'00'

Shannon A. Estenoz
Assistant Secretary
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Tammy Duckworth
The Honorable Dick Durbin
The Honorable Nikki Budzinski (IL-13)
The Honorable Darin LaHood (IL-18)



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Washington, DC 20240

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

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to transmit the enclosed *1908 Springfield Race Riot Special Resource Study*. The study was conducted pursuant to Public Law 116-260, Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, which authorized the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study (SRS) of the Archeological Site near Madison Street and the 10th Street Rail Corridor to evaluate the national significance of the Archeological Site and other historic sites and the suitability and feasibility of designating them as a unit of the national park system. The study provides detailed historical documentation, analysis, and potential options for Congress to consider in recognizing the 1908 Springfield Race Riot.

The 1908 Springfield Race Riot was one of many late 19th and early 20th-century race riots — large racial terror events where White mobs violently targeted Black communities. The deadly riot in Springfield captured national attention because it took place in Abraham Lincoln's hometown and highlighted how little progress had been made in race relations a century after Lincoln's birth. The riot proved to be one of the critical factors in the establishment of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The five home foundations at the Archeological Site and the artifacts excavated show how residents of a predominantly Black neighborhood called the "Badlands" lived. The site is very near where the riot started, and the archeological evidence shows the buildings were burned in the riot and never reoccupied. The site is a rare surviving resource directly associated with race riots in America.

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. To be recommended as a new unit, 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 be appropriate for direct National Park Service (NPS) management.

Based on the analysis performed through this special resource study, **the National Park Service concludes that the 1908 Springfield Race Riot study area meets all criteria necessary to be eligible for designation as a new unit of the national park system.** The landowners, the City

of Springfield, the NAACP, and local community organizations have expressed strong support for a national park designation and for future partnerships with the NPS to protect and manage the study area resources.

The study area was found to be nationally significant under criterion 1 for its association with a deadly race riot in the hometown of Abraham Lincoln that was widely reported in the national media and was a precipitating event for the formation of the NAACP. The properties that both contribute to the national significance of the study area and retain integrity to convey that significance are the Badlands Riot Area (including archeological deposits from the period of significance); the Archeological Site; Firehouse No. 5; and the Executive Mansion.

While the NPS manages sites that protect stories and resources associated with the founding of other civil rights organizations, none commemorate the founding of the NAACP and, specifically, the horrifically violent event that helped precipitate its founding. Furthermore, the study area is powerful as a place that can contextualize systemic anti-Black violence and, in particular, Jim Crow-era race riots. Very few such sites exist, and none are known that include intact resources from the riot or whose settings retain integrity to convey a sense of the violent destruction. Based on this comparative analysis with sites that preserve similar resources inside and outside the national park system, the four properties found to be nationally significant above are also found collectively to meet the SRS criteria for suitability.

The Archeological Site meets all the factors considered under the analysis of feasibility. The site is of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor access. Property owners and the public have demonstrated strong support for a potential designation. Current land ownership patterns, economic and socioeconomic impacts, and potential threats to the resources do not appear to preclude the study area from potentially becoming a new unit of the national park system. The property owners have documented their intent to donate property in support of a potential designation. The NPS evaluated a smaller and larger footprint and determined that proper management of the site can be fulfilled reasonably in either option. The site would require new infrastructure to support visitation and resource protection, but the infrastructure is expected to be limited and could be scaled to meet visitor needs, available space, and funding. Along with the strong community support, the NAACP, City of Springfield, Hospital Sisters Health System St. John's Hospital, and other local organizations are willing to develop partnerships in support of the site.

The study finds that direct NPS management of the Archeological Site is necessary to ensure the long-term protection of resources. NPS management is necessary to provide a more cohesive management approach with interpretation and visitor opportunities. Both landowners, the public, and local community organizations have expressed strong support for the designation of a new national park unit.

The study concluded that there are two options, a smaller and a larger boundary, in which the NPS could reasonably manage the Archeological Site and meet resource protection and visitor experience objectives. There is a high potential for partnerships which may be a factor in the level to which additional visitor service can be provided. The larger boundary would likely be the most effective and efficient alternative if the site were managed in a collaborative manner

with a robust group of partners. In this case, the expanded area would allow for a wider range of visitor experiences and services. A smaller boundary would likely be the most effective and efficient alternative if partnerships were less viable or if it was determined that most visitor services and experiences could be addressed off-site.

A similar letter is being sent to the Honorable Joe Manchin III, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; the Honorable John Barrasso, Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, United States Senate; and the Honorable Raúl Grijalva, Ranking Member, Committee on Natural Resources, U.S. House of Representatives.

Sincerely,



Date: 2023.06.05
17:10:37 -04'00'

Shannon A. Estenoz
Assistant Secretary
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Tammy Duckworth
The Honorable Dick Durbin
The Honorable Nikki Budzinski (IL-13)
The Honorable Darin LaHood (IL-18)



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Raúl M. Grijalva
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Grijalva:

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17:10:54 -04'00'

Shannon A. Estenoz
Assistant Secretary
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Tammy Duckworth
The Honorable Dick Durbin
The Honorable Nikki Budzinski (IL-13)
The Honorable Darin LaHood (IL-18)



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Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate
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Sincerely,

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17:10:19 -04'00'

Shannon A. Estenoz
Assistant Secretary
for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

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