

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 412

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Western Reserve Heritage Area.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 26, 2005

Mr. RYAN of Ohio introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Western Reserve Heritage Area.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Western Reserve Her-
5 itage Areas Study Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE STUDY REGARDING THE**
7 **WESTERN RESERVE, OHIO.**

8 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The area that encompasses the modern-day
2 counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Por-
3 tage, Geagua, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina,
4 Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland in Ohio
5 with the rich history in what was once the Western
6 Reserve, has made a unique contribution to the cul-
7 tural, political and industrial development of the
8 United States.

9 (2) The Western Reserve is distinctive as the
10 land settled by the people of Connecticut after the
11 Revolutionary War. The Western Reserve holds a
12 unique mark as the original wilderness land of the
13 West that many settlers migrated to in order to
14 begin life outside of the original 13 colonies.

15 (3) The Western Reserve played a significant
16 role in providing land to the people of Connecticut
17 whose property and land was destroyed during the
18 Revolution. These settlers were descendants of the
19 brave immigrants who came to the Americas in the
20 17th century.

21 (4) The Western Reserve offered a new destina-
22 tion for those who moved west in search of land and
23 prosperity. The agricultural and industrial base that
24 began in the Western Reserve still lives strong in
25 these prosperous and historical counties.

1 (5) The heritage of the Western Reserve re-
2 mains transfixed in the counties of Trumbull,
3 Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geagua, Lake, Cuya-
4 hoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ot-
5 tawa, and Ashland in Ohio. The people of these
6 counties are proud of their heritage as shown
7 through the unwavering attempts to preserve agri-
8 cultural land and the industrial foundation that has
9 been embedded in this region since the establishment
10 of the Western Reserve. Throughout these counties,
11 historical sites, and markers preserve the unique tra-
12 ditions and customs of its original heritage.

13 (6) The counties that encompass the Western
14 Reserve continue to maintain a strong connection to
15 its historic past as seen through its preservation of
16 its local heritage, including historic homes, buildings,
17 and centers of public gatherings.

18 (7) There is a need for assistance for the pres-
19 ervation and promotion of the significance of the
20 Western Reserve as the natural, historic and cul-
21 tural heritage of the counties of Trumbull,
22 Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geagua, Lake, Cuya-
23 hoga, Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa
24 and Ashland in Ohio.

1 (8) The Department of the Interior is respon-
2 sible for protecting the Nation's cultural and histor-
3 ical resources. There are significant examples of
4 such resources within these counties and what was
5 once the Western Reserve to merit the involvement
6 of the Federal Government in the development of
7 programs and projects, in cooperation with the State
8 of Ohio and other local governmental entities, to
9 adequately conserve, protect, and interpret this her-
10 itage for future generations, while providing oppor-
11 tunities for education and revitalization.

12 (b) STUDY.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting
14 through the National Park Service Rivers, Trails,
15 and Conservation Assistance Program, Midwest Re-
16 gion, and in consultation with the State of Ohio, the
17 counties of Trumbull, Mahoning, Ashtabula, Por-
18 tage, Geagua, Lake, Cuyahoga, Summit, Medina,
19 Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ashland, and
20 other appropriate organizations, shall carry out a
21 study regarding the suitability and feasibility of es-
22 tablishing the Western Reserve Heritage Area in
23 these counties in Ohio.

1 (2) CONTENTS.—The study shall include anal-
2 ysis and documentation regarding whether the Study
3 Area—

4 (A) has an assemblage of natural, historic,
5 and cultural resources that together represent
6 distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy
7 of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and
8 continuing use, and are best managed through
9 partnerships among public and private entities
10 and by combining diverse and sometimes non-
11 contiguous resources and active communities;

12 (B) reflects traditions, customs, beliefs,
13 and folklife that are a valuable part of the na-
14 tional story;

15 (C) provides outstanding opportunities to
16 conserve natural, historic, cultural, or scenic
17 features;

18 (D) provides outstanding recreational and
19 educational opportunities;

20 (E) contains resources important to the
21 identified theme or themes of the Study Area
22 that retain a degree of integrity capable of sup-
23 porting interpretation;

24 (F) includes residents, business interests,
25 nonprofit organizations, and local and State

1 governments that are involved in the planning,
2 have developed a conceptual financial plan that
3 outlines the roles for all participants, including
4 the Federal Government, and have dem-
5 onstrated support for the concept of a national
6 heritage area;

7 (G) has a potential management entity to
8 work in partnership with residents, business in-
9 terests, nonprofit organizations, and local and
10 State governments to develop a national herit-
11 age area consistent with continued local and
12 State economic activity;

13 (H) has a conceptual boundary map that is
14 supported by the public; and

15 (I) has potential or actual impact on pri-
16 vate property located within or abutting the
17 Study Area.

18 (c) BOUNDARIES OF THE STUDY AREA.—The Study
19 Area shall be comprised of the counties of Trumbull,
20 Mahoning, Ashtabula, Portage, Geagua, Lake, Cuyahoga,
21 Summit, Medina, Huron, Lorain, Erie, Ottawa, and Ash-
22 land in Ohio.

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