

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4202

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of Fort Ontario in the State of New York.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 9, 2015

Mr. KATKO (for himself and Mr. HANNA) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of Fort Ontario in the State of New York.

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 “Fort Ontario Study
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) From 1755 until 1814, Fort Ontario and
9 three previous fortifications built on the site of the
10 Fort in Oswego, New York, on the shore of Lake

1 Ontario were used as military installations during
2 the French and Indian War, the Revolutionary War,
3 and the War of 1812.

4 (2) The original fort, erected by the British in
5 1755, was destroyed by French forces in 1756. The
6 fort was rebuilt and subsequently destroyed during
7 both the American Revolution and the War of 1812.
8 The star-shaped fort was constructed on the site of
9 the original fortifications in the 1840s, with im-
10 provements made from 1863 through 1872.

11 (3) The United States Armed Forces began ex-
12 panding Fort Ontario in the early 20th century and
13 by 1941, approximately 125 buildings stood at the
14 fort.

15 (4) On June 9, 1944, President Franklin D.
16 Roosevelt announced that Fort Ontario would serve
17 as the Nation's only Emergency Refugee Camp dur-
18 ing World War II. From August of 1944 until Feb-
19 ruary 1946, nearly 1,000 refugees were sheltered at
20 Fort Ontario.

21 (5) Fort Ontario was conveyed from the Fed-
22 eral Government to the State of New York in 1946;
23 it was used to house World War II veterans and
24 their families and then converted to a State historic
25 site in 1953.

1 (6) A post cemetery containing the graves of 77
2 officers, soldiers, women, and children who served at
3 Fort Ontario in war and peace is situated on the
4 grounds of the fort.

5 (7) In 1970, Fort Ontario was placed on the
6 National Register of Historic Places.

7 **SEC. 3. FORT ONTARIO SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY.**

8 (a) STUDY.—The Secretary of the Interior (referred
9 to in this section as the “Secretary”) shall conduct a spe-
10 cial resource study of Fort Ontario in Oswego, New York.

11 (b) CONTENTS.—In conducting the study under sub-
12 section (a), the Secretary shall—

13 (1) evaluate the national significance of the
14 site;

15 (2) determine the suitability and feasibility of
16 designating the site as a unit of the National Park
17 System;

18 (3) consider other alternatives for preservation,
19 protection, and interpretation of the lands by Fed-
20 eral, State, or local governmental entities, or private
21 and nonprofit organizations;

22 (4) consult with interested Federal, State, or
23 local governmental entities, private and nonprofit or-
24 ganizations or any other interested individuals;

1 (5) determine the effect of the designation of
2 the site as a unit of the National Park System on
3 existing commercial and recreational uses and the
4 effect on State and local governments to manage
5 those activities;

6 (6) identify any authorities, including con-
7 demnation, that may compel or allow the Secretary
8 to influence or participate in local land use decisions
9 (such as zoning) or place restrictions on non-Federal
10 land if the site is designated a unit of the National
11 Park System; and

12 (7) identify cost estimates for any Federal ac-
13 quisition, development, interpretation, operation, and
14 maintenance associated with the alternatives.

15 (c) APPLICABLE LAW.—The study authorized under
16 subsection (a) shall be conducted in accordance with sec-
17 tion 100507 of title 54, United States Code.

18 (d) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after the date
19 on which funds are first made available for the study
20 under subsection (a), the Secretary shall submit to the
21 Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Rep-
22 resentatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural
23 Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

24 (1) the findings of the study; and

- 1 (2) any conclusions and recommendations of the
- 2 Secretary.

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