



LEGISLATIVE HISTORY LEADING TO CREATION OF THE OIL REGION NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA ON DECEMBER 8, 2004

The following is a chronology of key legislative actions involving three sessions of the U.S. Congress and thus three waves of legislation.

106th Congress (1999-2000) — Bill introduced, but not passed; bill died.

107th Congress (2001-2002) — Bill introduced and passed by House and Senate, with different lists of other NHA designation sites; no agreement; bill died.

108th Congress (2003 – 2004) — Bill passed by House. Designation amended into Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2005; passed House and Senate Nov. 20, 2004; signed Dec. 7, 2004 by President George W. Bush.

106th Congress (1999-2000) — Bill Introduced, but not passed; bill died.

Details for the 106th Congress

November 9, 1999 — H.R. 3190 referred to Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands. Executive comment requested from Department of the Interior.

August 13 – 18, 2000 — Field Reconnaissance conducted in the Oil Heritage Region, including series of appointments, meetings, and visitations to key area heritage attractions, recreational facilities, oil artifacts, and an active oil lease.

September 22, 2000 — John Milner Associates, Inc. issued Field Reconnaissance Report to National Park Service, indicating the Oil Heritage Region meets and exceeds the ten criteria for National Heritage Area designation.

October 11, 2000 — National Park Service notifies House Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands Chairman James V. Hansen (via letter) that the NPS has changed its position from the June 27 hearing testimony. The new position is: the Department of the Interior has no objection to the establishment of the Oil Region National Heritage Area, and no objection to H. R. 3190 if amended to broaden membership on OHR, Inc. Board of Directors, require an update to the Management Action Plan, include a boundary map, provide criteria for the Secretary's approval of the updated management plan, and eliminate loan authority for OHR, Inc.

107th Congress (2001 – 2002) — Bill introduced and passed by House and Senate, with different lists of other NHA designation sites; no agreement; bill died

Details for the 107th Congress

January, 2001 — New legislative language acceptable to NPS and OHR, Inc. developed.

February 23, 2001 — H. R. 695 referred to Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands. Executive comment requested from Department of Interior.

June 27, 2001 — House Subcommittee considers and holds mark-up session. Orders bill (as amended) to be reported to full Committee.

July 10, 2001 — House Committee reports and approves amended version of H. R. 695; vote placed on the Union Calendar.

September 12, 2001 — H. R. 695 received in the Senate and read twice and referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

July 31, 2002 — Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee approves S. 1441 and attaches substitute amendments to rename as Omnibus National Heritage Area Act of 2002, including designations for Arabia Mountain NHA (in Georgia), Freedom's Way NHA, Great Basin NHA, National Mormon NHA, and Northern Rio

Grande NHA in addition to the Oil Region National Heritage Area (which is Title I of the composite bill).

September 17, 2002 — Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee refers the omnibus bill to full Senate.

November 20, 2002 — By unanimous consent, Senate approves S. 1441, Omnibus National Heritage Area Act of 2002 after further amending it to also add NHA designations for Atchafalaya NHA, Blue Ridge NHA, Champlain Valley NHA, Crossroads of the American Revolution NHA, and National Aviation NHA besides the sites added by the Committee, thus resulting in 11 entities being included in the bill. S. 1441 referred back to House for concurrence on language and sites included.

108th Congress (2003 – 2004) — Bill passed by House. Designation amended into Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2005; passed House and Senate Nov. 20, 2004; signed Dec. 7, 2004 by President George W. Bush

Details for the 108th Congress

April 11, 2003 — S. 912 introduced in Senate as the Oil Region National Heritage Area Act, with Sen. Rick Santorum as main sponsor and Sen. Arlen Specter as co-sponsor. Language identical to S. 1441's original wording from the 107th Congress. Referred to Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

April 29, 2003 — H. R. 1862 introduced in House, with Cong. John Peterson as main sponsor, and 14 additional co-sponsors from within the Pennsylvania delegation. Language identical to H.R. 695 from the 107th Congress. Referred to House Resources Committee.

September 16, 2003 — House Resources Committee's National Parks Subcommittee conducts hearing re. H.B. 1862 and several other national heritage area study and/or designation bills [HR 280 – National Aviation NHA; HR 1594 – Study of possible St. Croix NHA; and HR 1618 – Arabia Mountain NHA]. Cong. Peterson attended and gave remarks. Testifiers were Robert Murray and Roxanne Hitchcock; Executive Director Marilyn Black was also present, as were staff members for Cong. Peterson and the National Park Service. Spokespersons for a conservative tax group and a landowners rights organization both testified, opposing any new NHA designations because they would increase the deficit in the federal budget.

October, 2003 — Two more co-sponsors sign on to HB 1862, including a Utah representative, thus making 16 co-sponsors.

October 16, 2003 — During hearing by National Parks Subcommittee, National Park Service testimony is provided by DeTeel Patterson Tiller, Acting Associate Director, Cultural Resources, NHA, who recommends deferring any individual NHA designations until after introduction and passage of a bill to establish legislatively standard procedures for studying and designating National Heritage Areas.

October 21, 2003 — National Parks Subcommittee marks up H.B. 1862, inserting several clauses to assure rights of private property owners and to allow an owner to 'opt out' of ORNHA programs. Bill referred to full House Resources Committee.

October 29, 2003 — House Resources Committee concurs with language of H.B. 1862 and approves bill, thus forwarding it to the full House of Representatives.

November 18, 2003 — House amends H.B. 1862 as Title VII onto H. B. 280, the National Aviation Heritage Area Act, thus renaming it the Omnibus National Heritage Area Act of 2003. This composite bill has these sections: I — National Aviation Heritage Area Act (Akron, Ohio and adjacent parts of Indiana); II — Update study of Wright Company Factory in Dayton, Ohio; III — Steel Industry National Historic Site Act (re. Homestead steel plant site in Pennsylvania); IV — Study to determine if St. Croix NHA should be designated; V — Arabia Mountain NHA Act (Georgia); VI — Upper Housatonic Valley NHA (western Massachusetts and northwestern Connecticut); and VII — Oil Region National Heritage Area Act. House then in voice vote by unanimous consent approves H.B. 280. H.B. 280 is referred to the Senate.

November 19, 2003 — H.B. 280 is referred to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, the same committee which earlier received S. 912, the Oil Region National Heritage Area Act.

April 30, 2004 — Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee's Subcommittee on National Parks holds an Oversight Hearing to receive report by the General Accounting Office regarding the current National Heritage Areas (<http://www.gao.gov>, scroll down to number 4 under testimonies, report number GAO-04-593T), and to receive draft legislation prepared by the National Park Service regarding criteria for and procedures for

designation of new National Heritage Areas (<http://www.cr.nps.gov/heritageareas/>).

June 2, 2004 — HR 4492 introduced by Rep. Ralph Regula from Ohio, including as Title VI the ORNHA. Referred to House Committee on Resources.

June 17, 2004 — Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee approves S. 2543 by Senator Craig Thomas (Chairman of the National Parks Subcommittee) to standardize procedures for designating new NHAreas.

September 15, 2004 — Senate approves S. 2543 by unanimous consent; legislation forwarded to House and there referred to House Committee on Resources. Senate also approves S. 211 to establish Northern Rio Grande NHA, S. 323 to establish Atchafalaya NHA, and S. 180 to establish National Aviation Heritage Area.

October 14, 2004 — ORNHA included (along with 15 other new NHAs) in package of amendments prepared for S. 1521, legislation initially dealing with federal land transfer in Nevada to an American Legion Post. However, one Senator asks for hold due to a different NHA on the list; therefore, amendment package not introduced in House after all.

November 20, 2004 — Senate and House both approve HR 4818, Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY 2005. Within Section J

(Other Matters) of that massive bill is the designation of three new National Heritage Areas — Oil Region National Heritage Area in northwestern Pa., National Aviation Heritage Area in southwest Ohio, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area in southern Mississippi; legislation authorizes FY 2005 start-up funding of \$500,000 combined for the new areas, so estimate \$160,000 for ORNHA. The language for ORNHA is identical to that in HR 280.

December 6 and 7, 2004 — Senate and House both reopen HR 4818 for changes not affecting the NHA items; technical amendments made and approved by both bodies. HR 4818 forwarded to President Bush for signature.

December 8, 2004 — President George W. Bush signs HR 4818. Oil Region National Heritage Area is officially designated.

December 9, 2004 — National Park Service assigns liaison personnel from NPS office in Philadelphia. First step will be to develop formal Cooperative Agreement between OHR and NPS.

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