



SUPPORT H.R. 3979/National Defense Authorization Act for FY15

December 8, 2014

Dear Senator,

Since 1919, the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) has been the leading voice of the American people in protecting and enhancing our National Park System. On behalf of our more than one million members and supporters nationwide, I urge you to support H.R. 3979, the Carl Levin and Howard P. 'Buck' McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for FY15. TITLE 30 of the bill: Natural Resources Related General Provisions, would enhance the National Park System more than has been done in decades. It would be a remarkable achievement for the 113th Congress and a gift to the American people in advance of the Centennial of the National Park System.

Among the provisions included in Title 30 are two dozen bills that will enhance our national heritage and highlight our collective history. New national park units would be established that would preserve and interpret the multilayered story of the **Manhattan Project** and its lasting impact on world history; explore the fearless life of one of our nation's greatest heroes, **Harriet Tubman**; and allow visitors to experience the living landscape of the "Birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution" at **Blackstone River Valley**. Title 30 also includes measures that would expand existing National Park Service sites, such as adding the historic Gettysburg train station which had its most famous moment when Abraham Lincoln arrived to deliver his seminal address, to **Gettysburg National Military Park**; expanding boundaries at **San Antonio Missions National Historical Park** to preserve cultural and historic resources from the Spanish Colonial era; and adding core battlefield land to **Vicksburg National Military Park** that will enhance visitors' understanding of the military campaign and 41-day Union siege.

Additional provisions in Title 30 would direct the National Park Service to study potential sites for inclusion in the System, like **Mill Springs Battlefield** in Kentucky, site of the North's first Civil War victory; and stories of the **Buffalo Soldiers**, the African-American troops who were the original guardians or rangers at Yosemite and Sequoia national parks. The legislation would also protect critical habitat next to Glacier National Park that supports an unmatched diversity of wildlife by withdrawing federal land from future mining and drilling in the **North Fork Flathead River Valley**.

NPCA considers this a momentous vote to protect America's priceless heritage found in our national parks, and may use it in our biennial "**Friend of the National Parks**" scorecard for the 113th Congress. Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Clark Bunting
President and CEO