H.R. 1456 and H.R. 1814

LEGISLATIVE HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, RECREATION, AND PUBLIC LANDS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

July 24, 2001

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HEARING ON H.R. 1456, TO EXPAND THE BOUNDARY OF THE BOOKER T. WASHINGTON NATIONAL MONUMENT, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES; AND H.R. 1814, TO AMEND THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM ACT TO DESIGNATE THE METACOMET-MONADNOCK-SUNAPEE-MATTABESETT TRAIL EXTENDING THROUGH WESTERN NEW HAMPSHIRE, WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS AND CENTRAL CONNECTICUT FOR STUDY FOR POTENTIAL ADDITION TO THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM.

Tuesday, July 24, 2001
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands
Committee on Resources
Washington, DC

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:04 a.m., in Room 1324, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Joel Hefley [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOEL HEFLEY, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS, RECREATION, AND PUBLIC LANDS

Mr. HEFLEY. The Committee will come to order.

Good morning. Welcome to the hearing today.

This morning, the Subcommittee on Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands will hear testimony on two bills, H.R. 1456 and H.R. 1814.

H.R. 1456, introduced by Congressman Virgil Goode from Virginia, would expand the boundary of the Booker T. Washington National Monument in southwestern Virginia through the purchase of 15 acres adjacent to the existing monument.

Mr. HEFLEY. H.R. 1814 was introduced by Congressman John Olver of Massachusetts. This bill would amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett trail extending through western New Hampshire,

western Massachusetts, and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Olver, is there anyway we could name that the Olver-Hefley Trail and just—

[Laughter.]

Mr. OLVER. Well, it all lies within the Silvio Conte Fish and Wildlife Refuge, so it might be appropriately the Conte Trail, if you would prefer.

[Laughter.]

Mr. HEFLEY. Whatever. We need to do that or get a smarter Chairman who can pronounce the name better.

[Laughter.]

At this time, I would like to ask unanimous consent that Congressmen Goode and Olver be permitted to sit at the dais, following their statements, if they would like to. And you are welcome to do that. Without objection, so ordered.

I would like to thank our witnesses for being here today to testify on these bills.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hefley follows:]

Statement of The Honorable Joel Hefley, Chairman, Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands, on H.R. 1456 and H.R. 1814

Good morning and welcome to the hearing today. This morning, the Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands will hear testimony on two bills—H.R. 1456 and H.R. 1814.

H.R. 1456, introduced by Congressman Virgil Goode of Virginia, would expand the boundary of the Booker T. Washington National Monument in southwestern Virginia through the purchase of fifteen acres adjacent to the existing monument.

H.R. 1814 was introduced by Congressman John Olver of Massachusetts. This bill would amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Met-a-comet - Manad-nock Sen-a-pee - Matt-a-be-sit Trail extending through western New Hampshire, western Massachusetts, and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System.

At this time, I would like to ask unanimous consent that Congressmen Goode and Olver be permitted to sit on the dias following their statements. Without objection, so ordered.

I would like to thank all of our witnesses for being here today to testify on these bills and now turn to the Ranking Member, Ms. Christensen.

Mr. HEFLEY. And I wonder, Mr. McGovern, do you have any comments you would like to make?

Well, then let's go ahead with the witnesses, beginning with Virgil.

Mr. Goode, would you like to start?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE VIRGIL GOODE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

Mr. GOODE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank you, your Committee, and your staff for all of the courtesy and kindness that you have extended to us in preparing for this hearing.

We are here today on behalf of H.R. 1456. H.R. 1456 would expand the boundary of the Booker T. Washington National Monument located in Hardy, Virginia.

That is the county of Franklin. I am a native and lifelong resident of Franklin County, and I have personal knowledge and familiarity with the monument and the surrounding area.

I can attest to the rapid growth that the area has experienced over the past few years. Ten years ago, there was no stoplight in the vicinity of Booker T. Washington National Monument. Now, less than a half mile down the road, there is a stoplight.

In the last 6 months, we have seen a huge building-supply store go up. And the growth and development on Smith Mountain Lake is going to engulf Booker T. Washington National Monument.

And the addition of 15 acres would help preserve the quality of the Booker T. Washington National Monument and preserve it for future generations.

The 15 acres adjacent to the monument has been put up for sale by the owner, and we have the desire to maintain the rural, pastoral character of the Booker T. Washington National Monument and to prevent the adjacent property from being developed.

This bill would facilitate the expansion of the monument boundary and the purchase of this property by the National Park Service.

We will hear from others testifying today that Booker T. Washington National Monument is a wonderful national memorial to Booker T. Washington. The 224-acre park is comprised of rolling hills, woodlands, fields, the Burroughs house, the Big House, the two slave cabin sites.

The park portrays what Booker T. Washington's rural life on a small tobacco farm was like, and the rural character is critical to the park's interpretation of his life as an enslaved child during the Civil War.

It also is important to note that seven of the 15 acres, which this legislation would expand to include, were part of the original farm.

And I hope that we can maintain the rural character of Booker T. Washington National Monument, and I hope that it will be the pleasure of this Committee to favorably report H.R. 1456.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Goode follows:]

Statement of The Honorable Virgil H. Goode, Jr. a Representative in Congress from the State of Virginia, on H.R. 1456

Dear Mr. Chairman:

First, let me thank you and all of the members of the subcommittee for having a hearing on H.R. 1456 and for allowing me the opportunity to speak on behalf of the bill.

H.R. 1456 would expand the boundary of the Booker T. Washington National Monument located in Hardy, Virginia in Franklin County, Virginia. I am a native and life-long resident of Franklin County, so I have some personal knowledge and familiarity with the monument and the surrounding area. I can attest to the rapid growth that this area has experienced over the past few years. The proximity of the monument to Smith Mountain Lake poses a real threat to the character and pastoral nature of the Booker T. Washington National Monument.

Smith Mountain Lake is a rapidly growing area. It is a popular place for new homes, vacationers, boaters, fishermen and the like. The increase in residents and visitors brings increased development, business, and traffic. As pictures taken from the boundary of the monument show, development is already within sight of the property.

A parcel of land, totaling 15 acres, adjacent to the monument has been put up for sale by the owner. Due to the desire to maintain the rural, pastoral character of the Booker T. Washington National Monument and to prevent the adjacent property from being developed, I introduced H.R. 1456 to facilitate the expansion of the

monument boundary and the purchase of this property by the National Park Service.

As we will hear/have heard from others testifying today, the Booker T. Washington National Monument is a wonderful national memorial to Booker T. Washington. The 224 acre park is comprised of rolling hills, woodlands, fields, the Burrough's house, or "Big House," and two slave cabin sites. The park portrays what Washington's rural life on a small tobacco farm was like and the rural character is critical to the park's interpretation of his life as an enslaved child during the Civil War. It is also important to note that seven of the 15 acres that this legislation would expand the park to include, were part of the original farm.

I hope that we can maintain the rural character of the Booker T. Washington National Monument. I believe that this is a worthwhile endeavor for the National Park Service and I hope that you will show this legislation favorable consideration.

Mr. HEFLEY. Thank you, Virgil.

Mr. Olver?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOHN OLVER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. OLVER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to thank you for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to appear before the Committee.

I am here to ask for your support on H.R. 1814, a bill to study the feasibility of establishing a Monadnock-Sunapee greenway, the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail, the Metacomet Trail, and the Mattabesett Trail, and additional potential trails as a 250-mile National Scenic Trail from the Long Island Sound to a junction with Appalachian Trail in New Hampshire.

Let me begin by thanking the folks on the ground, the many volunteers and paid staff of the trail groups in New England who have worked hard to support this bipartisan bill, which is sponsored by every Member who has part of the proposed trail in his or her district.

In Massachusetts, I want to thank particularly members of the Berkshire chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club, including Pat Fletcher, Pete Westover, and Chris Ryan.

In Connecticut, I want to thank the Connecticut Forest and Parks Association; Ann Colson, who is here with us today and will speak later; and Patty Pendergast; as well as other members of the association who have worked tirelessly to bring key stakeholders together for this study.

Without people like Ann and Patty and Pat and Pete and Chris, we would never have the recreational opportunities available to us today.

In New Hampshire, our colleague Mr. Bass is also leading the way, and I thank him for his support.

With your help and with the Committee's help, I am hopeful that the feasibility study will be conducted and will involve the maintaining clubs and associations, as they will be key to eventual success.

Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this bill is to conduct a study to determine the suitability for inclusion in the National Trails System of this 260-mile extended trail.

And I have a whole series of letters, which I will present to you. There are about 30 of them from conservation groups, from state

and municipal officials, and from some individuals along the length of the trail in support of it.

I have hiked every mile of the proposed trail in Massachusetts. And while some segments are well-protected, others are subject to serious encroachment.

In my district, local trail groups, land trusts, and conservation organizations are excited and supportive of the study, and they look forward to working with the National Park Service.

I have a map which I have put together, and I would ask your indulgence, because I think it is easier if I bring it forward and show you some of the key features of this.

This shows where the Appalachian Trail itself comes through from Pennsylvania, New York, just touches the very northeastern corner of Connecticut, and then crosses catty-corner and goes off in a northeasterly direction to Mount Katahdin in Maine.

And then these series of trails, the Mattabesett is here. The Metacomet-Monadnock goes from Meriden, Connecticut, all the way through Connecticut, up through Massachusetts, to Mount Monadnock in New Hampshire. And then the Monadnock-Mount Sunapee connection goes to within about 25 crow-fly miles of connection with the Appalachian Trail.

And there is an additional New Hampshire state park, Cardigan State Park, with a lovely mountain with exceptionally good views that is only 6 miles from the Appalachian Trail.

The northern portion of this is a series of Monadnocks. Monadnocks are isolated peaks left from glaciation, from the major ice ages, where the glaciers scoop large amounts of earth. And the top of Mount Monadnock, the last most of 1,000 feet, is rock with extensive slickensides showing in various places on the mountain. It is a very interesting geological feature.

Monadnock is over 3,000 feet high. It is 2,500 feet above the valley floors of the Merrimack and Connecticut Rivers to the east and to the west.

Mount Cardigan in the area, the feasibility would ask whether it can reach the Appalachian Trail, is also in Monadnock. There are several mountains down to a section, to a point about here in the lower southern part of Massachusetts, where almost the whole rest of this, all of the named trails and the established trails, are on a volcanic basalt ridge, which was created 250 million years ago, all of it. And it shows in the pictures here, until one gets down to the southern end of the Mattabesett Trail, which is only 6 crow-fly miles from Long Island Sound.

So at the Long Island Sound, just a few miles east, if you can reach it, if it is feasible to do so, within a few miles of New Haven. It passes through the metropolitan areas of Hartford, with Meriden and New Britain, the major cities in Connecticut, in this area. And then it passes right through the western metropolitan area, the Springfield-Holyoke-Chicopee metropolitan area, with about a quarter of the population to the north and west of the trail, which is, at that range, about 1,000 feet above the valley floor and very sharply delineated by the kind of geology.

And then on through New Hampshire on the Monadnocks.

And I have this series of pictures. This shows part of the 360-degree view. Quite spectacular. From Sunapee, from Monadnock, which I have described.

Grand Monadnock is a mountain. Probably has the largest number of people climbing that mountain of any mountain of any significant size in the United States. Every year, hundreds of thousands of people make it up Mount Monadnock. And the skyline of Boston is visible 60 miles away from there.

And these are views, again, from Erving, Massachusetts, showing the top of the basalt ridge, which is quite sharply delineated, quite sharp escarpment on the north and west side of that whole ridge.

This is a view from Mount Tom, just west of Holyoke, and the view westward over to the small city of Easthampton, again showing the nature of the basalt rock.

This is the view southward. This you have to imagine. I could see the skyline of both Springfield, Massachusetts, 150,000, and Hartford, Connecticut, in this picture. You would have to imagine it, from what shows up in the graininess of the film.

And then these pictures are the southern end of that basalt ridge, because the basalt ridge goes all the way to very southern extremity of the Mattabesett Trail, 6 miles from the Long Island Sound.

And I will leave this, of course, for your perusal, if you wish to do so.

And I thank you very much for allowing me to go a few minutes longer with the picture show. And I appreciate very much your consideration. And we have a number of our Member supporters here to speak on behalf of the proposal.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Olver follows:]

Statement of The Honorable John Olver, a Representative in Congress from the State of Massachusetts, on H.R. 1814

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing and for the opportunity to appear before you and the Committee. I am here to ask for your support of H.R. 1814, a bill to study the feasibility of establishing the Monadnock–Sunapee Greenway, Metacomet–Monadnock Trail, Metacomet Trail, Mattabesett Trail, and additional potential trails as a 250 mile National Scenic Trail from the Long Island Sound to a junction with the Appalachian Trail in New Hampshire.

Let me begin by thanking the folks on the ground—the many volunteers and paid staff of the trail groups in New England who have worked hard to support this bipartisan bill which is sponsored by every Member who has part of the proposed trail in their district.

In Massachusetts, I want to particularly thank Members of the Berkshire Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club—including Pat Fletcher, Pete Westover, and Chris Ryan.

In Connecticut I would like to thank the CT Forest and Parks Association. Ann Colson, who is here with us today, and Patty Pendergast—as well as other members of the Association have worked tirelessly to bring together key stakeholders of this study. Without people like Ann and Patty we would never have the recreational opportunities available to us today.

I have here several letters of support which I would like to submit for the record.

In New Hampshire—our colleague Mr. Bass is also leading the way and I thank him for his support. With your help I am hopeful the feasibility study would be conducted in a manner that involves the maintaining clubs and associations—as they will be key to our success.

Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this bill is to conduct a study to determine the suitability for inclusion in the National Trails System of this 260-mile extended trail. I have hiked every mile of the proposed trail in Massachusetts and while some segments are well protected, others are subject to serious encroachment. In my district—local trail groups, land trusts, and conservation organizations are excited and

supportive of this study and look forward to working the National Park Service. Using this map and photos I'd briefly like to orient the Committee and point out some of the highlights.

The trail could eventually connect here with the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in New Hampshire. The trail would then largely follow existing trails through the Monadnock–Sunapee Greenway Trail.

Shown here are:

(1) Mt. Sunapee and

(2) a view from Mt. Monadnock which offers a grand 360 degree view.

The trail would then connect to the Metacomet–Monadnock Trail in Massachusetts.

Shown here are:

(3) a view from Erving and

(4) a scene from the end of the trap rock ridge

Continuing down through Massachusetts are

(5) a view from Mt. Holyoke and

(6) a view from Mt. Tom

Incidently, I might point out that the Mt. Tom range was recently recognized as one of only ten of this country's Last Chance Landscapes.

(7) Still in Massachusetts, this shot shows the CT river and both the cities of Hartford and Springfield.

Continuing down into the state of Connecticut

(8) This photo shows Castle Craig in Meriden. Castle Craig, a Norman-style tower overlooks the Elmere Reservoir in Meriden. Hikers on the Metacomet Trail pass the castle as they hike from East Peak (976 feet) to West Peak (1074 feet).

(9) Also from the Metacomet, two young hikers survey the view of South Mountain and Lamentation Mountain, traprock ridges on the trail.

(10) Finally, this is a view from Bluff Head, North Guilford. On a clear day you can see Long Island Sound on the horizon, only 6 or 8 miles as the crow flies.

Ideally we hope that the trail could extend down to Long Island Sound.

Mr. Chairman, I know that I am running out of time so I will leave the details to your expert witnesses. I would just like to quickly say that through this bill I only hope to provide an opportunity for these groups—these volunteers and dedicated employees—to allow for the possibility to one day establish permanent protection for this treasure and for our country's citizens to enjoy. Throughout my life I have enjoyed day hiking, long distance back-packing, and serious mountaineering. I simply want to help make sure these opportunities—which I have had to pleasure to enjoy, remain available for future generations.

Thank you

[The letters submitted for the record by Mr. Olver follow:]

Town Office Building

TOWN OF KILLINGWORTH

SELECTMAN'S OFFICE
323 ROUTE 81
KILLINGWORTH, CT 06419-1298

W. David LeVasseur
First Selectman

August 4, 2000

Mr. John Hibbard
Connecticut Forest & Park Association, Inc.
16 Meriden Road
Middlefield, CT 06481-2961

Re: Proposal of trails network from Long Island Sound to Canada

Dear John:

It was with great enthusiasm that I learned of a proposal for an interlocking trails network that would extend from Long Island Sound to Canada. As you know, we are working in conjunction with representatives from interested organizations from the towns of Clinton and Madison in order to establish first a continuous greenway and then a trail leading up the Hammonasset River from Long Island Sound to Durham. With just a short link this could connect with the Mattabassett Trail which currently connects with other trails that ultimately reach Massachusetts.

In addition, you should be aware that we are very close to completing the necessary linkages to create an east-west greenway to link the Hammonasset River with State Forest parcels located in Chester, Deep River and Westbrook. These linkages could be built upon to ultimately reach the Connecticut River and possibly Long Island Sound in Westbrook and/or Old Saybrook.

Please consider this letter to be evidence of both our enthusiasm for and willingness to work toward this goal.

Very truly yours,

W. David LeVasseur
First Selectman

First Selectman's Office (860) 663-1765 Fax # (860) 663-3305

THE OLD STONE HOUSE

TOWN OF GUILFORD
31 Park Street
GUILFORD, CONNECTICUT 06437
SETTLED IN 1639

TELEPHONE 453-8015
FAX 453-8467

18 August, 2000

Patty Pendergast
16 Meriden Rd.
Rockfall, CT 06481

Dear Patty,

Guilford's Land Acquisition Committee, a committee representing 12 Guilford boards, commissions, and non-profits, voted unanimously at its July 31 meeting to endorse and support Connecticut Forest and Parks Association's efforts on the Canada to Long Island Sound trail.

Guilford has recently approved a Town Plan for Open Space and Municipal Lands. Among other things, this plan works to protect contiguous important areas of town for conservation and recreation. The plan specifically mentions CFPA's Blue Trail and incorporates future acquisition of lands adjacent to the Guilford section of the trail. Currently, Guilford is actively purchasing a parcel of land that will help connect the trail along the Broomstick Ledges southward. The Town and the Guilford Land Acquisition Trust have hopes to eventually connect other State, Town and land trust owned parcels along the eastern boundary of town all the way to Guilford Harbor and Long Island Sound.

We would be interested in meeting with CFPA on the prospect of this exciting trail concept. If we can be of any further assistance, please don't hesitate to call us.

Thanks for all CFPA's effort's in preserving Connecticut's natural heritage for all of us to enjoy.

Sincerely,

Leslie Kane
Chairman
Guilford Land Acquisition Committee

Town of
AMHERST Massachusetts

TOWN HALL
4 BOLTWOOD AVENUE
AMHERST, MA 01002-2351

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
AND
CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT
(413) 256-4045

MAY 01 2001

April 24, 2001

Congressman John Olver
1027 Longworth Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Support for National Scenic Trail Status for M&M Trail Corridor

Dear Cong. Olver:

This is to express strong support for your proposal to explore possible congressional creation of a north-south National Scenic Trail corridor in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.

As I understand the idea, the National Scenic Trail corridor would follow the present Metacomet Trail in Connecticut, the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail in Massachusetts, and the Sunapee Greenway in New Hampshire, with a possible further extension northward.

This particular route is scenically outstanding and traverses some of New England's most beautiful agricultural terrain. Many dramatic traprock ledges and summits provide tremendous views of the Connecticut River Valley, with some of the best farmland soils in the world.

The route also passes dozens of scenic waterfalls, natural areas, and wildlife viewing spots. Much of the land along the corridor has been protected by purchases accomplished by state and local governments and private conservation land trusts.

I am confident that there will be widespread support among trail managers and trail users throughout the region for this ambitious proposal. I would be glad to participate in planning talks for the proposal if the occasion arises and would be willing to talk to others in our area about assistance and support.

Sincerely,

Pete Westover

Pete Westover, Conservation Director, Town of Amherst

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
251 Causeway Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114-2119

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GOVERNOR

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SECRETARY

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MAY 0 8 2001

May 2, 2001

Congressman John Olver
U.S. House of Representatives
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear John:

I am writing to offer my strong support for the proposed feasibility study by the U.S. Park Service of a multi-state trail across the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.

As you know, the Metacomet-Monadnock trail passes through a number of state facilities here in Massachusetts. The 117-mile trail is an important recreational, scenic, and historic resource to the Commonwealth that could be significantly enhanced by this project.

I look forward to working with you on this matter. Please feel free to call me if I can be of any assistance.

Very truly yours,

Bob Durand

Congressman Olver-Metacomet Trail.doc

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New England Wild Flower Society

Congressman John Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515-2101

MAY 1 5 2001

10 May 2001

Dear Congressman Olver:

I write as a biologist and as a resident of western Massachusetts to support your efforts to gain a National Scenic Trail designation for the Metacomet/Metacomet-Monadnock/ Monadnock -Sunapee Greenway Trail. I perform ecological research on the southern, traprock portion of this greenway, and lead educational hikes for many groups throughout the area. I, and scores of Massachusetts citizens, recognize its clear importance on the landscape. The proposed trail, which traverses three states, is a critical habitat area as well as a keystone of New England's natural heritage. I applaud your efforts to work toward this designation and hope that you can pass needed legislation to fund the National Park Service's feasibility study toward that end.

Thank you for your support of the natural resources of the region.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Farnsworth, Ph.D.

Conservation Planning Coordinator

180 Hemenway Road • Framingham, MA 01701-2699
508/877-7630 • Fax 508/877-3658 • E-mail newfs@newfs.org • Website www.newfs.org

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MAY 15 2001

May 11, 2001

U.S. Representative John W. Olver
c/o Abbie Meador - Legislative Assistant
1027 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515-2101

Re: Support for the Northeast Scenic Trail feasibility study

Dear Representative Olver:

I am writing to express the endorsement of The Trustees of Reservations for legislation to authorize a feasibility study for a Northeast Scenic Trail. The Trustees of Reservations ("The Trustees") is a statewide, nonprofit land conservation organization in Massachusetts that protects over 34,000 acres across the commonwealth. One of the 89 properties that we protect for public use and enjoyment is Roylaston Falls Reservation, which is crossed by the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail. I understand from your staff member that the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail is part of the proposed Northeast Scenic Trail.

The goals of the study are commendable – to examine the trail network that provide the Northeast with approximately 200 miles of cultural, historic, recreational, and scenic trails. The Trustees is currently working to help expand the protection around the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail in Royalston, Massachusetts as well as the adjoining Tully Trail. We welcome the interest and support of the National Park Service to conduct the feasibility study, and if the report is favorable, for Congress to consider legislation to establish the trail.

Again, I am pleased that we can offer our endorsement of the legislation to initiate the feasibility study for a Northeast Scenic Trail.

Sincerely yours,

Wesley Ward

Wesley T. Ward
Director of Land Conservation

Central Regional Office • Doyle Reservation • 325 Lindell Avenue • Leominster, Massachusetts 01453-5414
TELEPHONE 978/840-4446 • FACSIMILE 978/840-0022 • EMAIL central@ttor.org • www.thetrustees.org

MAY 1 5 2001

THE KESTREL TRUST

Post Office Box 1016, Amherst, Massachusetts 01004

May 9, 2001

The Honorable John Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515-2101

REGARDING: National Scenic Trail designation for the M & M Trail

Dear Congressman Olver:

The members of the Board applaud your efforts to gain a National Scenic Trail designation for the Metacomet/Metacomet-Monadnock/Monadnock-Sunapee Greenway Trail. Although it may well be a long process, the only way to begin is to begin! If a National Park Service feasibility study is the first step, you certainly have the support of the Trust and our donors in getting that study completed.

As you know, the Holyoke and Mount Tom Ranges received Scenic America's "Last Chance Landscape" designation last year. The Ranges and the vista from the trail are threatened, but communities on and off the Ranges are rallying to find ways to protect them. Just two weeks ago at "The Summit on the Range"160 citizens devoted a Saturday to exploring ways they could ensure appropriate protection and uses for these mountains. Many others were unable to attend but are finding ways to "plug into" the task force action groups that resulted from the Summit. Both past and current efforts to study and protect the values along the trail are legion. To name a few: The Sierra Club study twenty years ago; the Mount Tom Assessment Protection Project, headed by Mass Audubon and MACC with help from local land trusts; ongoing studies by members of the five college community; Save the Mountain's recent fight to protect the integrity of the Holyoke Range; multiple town conservation and land trust purchases in the vicinity of the trail. All attest to the value the local citizenry place on this trail system and the adjacent areas.

The M&M Trail of course runs through these fabulous mountains and right through many of the Kestrel Trust's nine member towns—among them Hadley, South Hadley, Amherst, Belchertown, and Pelham. Maintaining the trail and protecting the scenic quality of the surrounding area while ensuring that the public can use these lands appropriately is part of the Trust's mandate. A National Scenic Trail designation will receive wide-spread support here in the Connecticut Valley. Not only would it underscore what most of us already know about the area's rare habitat and scenic values, but the economic value of maintaining the area as a tourist destination of incomparable beauty and accessibility is a relatively easy argument to make to anyone who looks up at the hills surrounding them.

As one of the organizers of the Summit and as project manager for the Mt. Tom Protection Project, I will certainly encourage attendees and members to support your efforts. The other members of the Board also stand ready to assist in any way possible.

Sincerely,

Judith S. Eiseman, Vice Chair

The Nature Conservancy®
Saving the Last Great Places

Massachusetts Chapter
205 Portland Street, Suite 400
Boston, MA 02114-1708
617.227.7017/Voice · 617.227.7688/Fax

MAY 22 2001

May 18, 2001

The Honorable John W. Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Representative Olver:

Through this letter, the Massachusetts Chapter of The Nature Conservancy wishes to express strong support of your efforts on behalf of the Northeast Trail Feasibility Study. We endorse action by the National Park Service to examine the Metacomet Monadnock Trail and its connections with its extensions in New Hampshire and Connecticut – the Monadnock Sunapee Greenway and the Metacomet Trail respectively. We support Congressional authorization of a feasibility study through an amendment to the National Trails System Act and pending a favorable report, successful legislation to establish the trail. We are aware of the benefits that such designation can bring to a fragile area under threat of development and would look forward to increased land protection funding and technical expertise that designation would bring.

The Nature Conservancy is dedicated to the protection of biodiversity and functional landscapes in the Commonwealth. To date we have completed several projects within the trail corridor, particularly at Mt Tom and Mt Toby where we retain and manage Green Swamp as a nature preserve. We intend to look more closely at the significance of trap rock ridges, the elongated rust colored cliffs that parallel the trail from Connecticut into the Holyoke Range, and its associated rare and representative plant communities. Although scenic designations are not our expertise, we know that this is one of the state's best areas for spectacular views and the feeling of a wild experience.

Thank you for your leadership on this initiative and for the opportunity to support it.

Sincerely,

Wayne Klockner
State Director

MAY 23 2001

Appalachian Mountain Club-Berkshire Chapter

Thursday, May 10, 2001

Congressman Olver
1027 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Olver;

I would like you to seek National Scenic Trail Status for the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail on behalf of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail Committee. This 117 mile trail links the Metacomet blue blaze trail in Conn. to Mt. Monadnock in southern New Hampshire and has been a valuable recreational resource since the 1950's, while provided countless people with a chance to hike and view wild life.
Mention by Benton McKay The father of the Appalachian Trail in his book, The New Exploration, A Philosophy of Regional Planning in the early 1900's, the trap rock ridges of the Conn. River valley or the Connecticut Valley Highlands as he called them are a buffer to urban spread or a way to control the Metropolitan envision.
They were also a scared place for the American Indians tribes of this region.
The Committee has produced the ninth edition of a guidebook for this trail that was first published by Professor Walter Banfield, the acknowledged father of this trail. We also coordinate the dozens of volunteers that maintain and love this trail.

Respectfully yours,

Patrick H Fletcher

Patrick H. Fletcher, Trails Chairman, MM Trail Comm. &
Berkshire Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club
20 Linda Drive
Westfield, MA 01085

printed on recycled paper

CONNECTICUT FOREST and PARK ASSOCIATION
Middlefield, 16 Meriden Road, Rockfall, CT 06481-2961
Telephone (860) 346-2372; FAX (860) 347-7463

May 25, 2001

The Honorable John Olver
Longworth House Office Building
Room 1027
Washington, DC, 20515

Dear Congressman Olver,

I am writing in support of HR 1814, a proposal to "amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett Trail extending through western New Hampshire, western Massachusetts, and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System."

The Mattabesett and Metacomet trails in Connecticut are managed by the Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA), a private, nonprofit conservation organization formed in 1895. Both trails, which traverse the center of our state, are key components in CFPA's long-range trail protection program.

Established in 1931, the Mattabesett Trail is an integral part of the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System, a 700-mile statewide network of trails maintained entirely by CFPA volunteers. From North Guilford, where it offers distant views of Long Island Sound, the Mattabesett Trail meanders northeast along scenic agricultural lands and rolling hills to the Connecticut River in Middletown, and northwest to Lamentation Mountain, a level traprock ridge in Meriden that is perhaps the most scenic ridgetop walk in the state.

From the Mattabesett Trail's terminus, a short road walk (0.7 mile) takes the hiker to the Metacomet Trail, whose route was laid out by CFPA in 1934. It begins in the central, urbanized City of Berlin, rising to the striking traprock range running from the Hanging Hills of Meriden to the Massachusetts line for approximately 51 miles. The trail continues across Massachusetts to Mt. Monadnock in New Hampshire.

From high ledges and bald knobs, the Mattabesett and Metacomet trails bisect the state of Connecticut, providing unsurpassed vistas and a picturesque terrain of tumbled ledges, farmlands, forests, frequent brooks, ponds, and shallow bogs. The trails offer some of the finest ridge walking and cliff views in the state.

Not only do these trails provide a unique recreational opportunity for Connecticut residents, their existence also has harbored a largely unfragmented wildlife corridor and greenway in an increasingly urbanized environment. In addition, Connecticut's traprock ridges provide critical habitat for a variety of plant and animal species that are found nowhere else in the state.

These magnificent traprock ridges and the trails that traverse them are indeed a jewel running through the very heart of Connecticut, providing important recreational and environmental benefits for the public. We at CFPA feel that HR 1814 will help to make certain the Metacomet Trail and Mattabesett Trail remain a vital part of our ecological heritage, ensuring the access enjoyed by our forebears will remain available to future generations.

Thank you for your interest in and support for Connecticut's Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails.

Sincerely,

Ann Colson

Ann T. Colson
Director of Volunteers & Trails Coordinator
c:
Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, Congressman John Larson, Congresswoman Nancy Johnson, Congressman James Maloney, Connecticut; Congressman Richard Neal, Massachusetts; Congressman Charles Bass, New Hampshire

e-mail:
conn.forest.assoc@snet.net

Web site:
www.ctwoodlands.org

The Nature Conservancy®
of New Hampshire
Saving the Last Great Places

22 Bridge Street
4th Floor
Concord, New Hampshire
03301-4987

TEL 603 224-5853
FAX 603 228-2459

International Headquarters
Arlington, Virginia
TEL 703 841-5300

June 19, 2001

JUN 2 5 2001

The Honorable John W. Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Re: Northeast Scenic Trail Feasibility Study Act

Dear Representative Olver:

The New Hampshire Chapter of The Nature Conservancy would like to express its support for your sponsorship of the Metacomet-Mondadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett Trail Study Act of 2001 (H.R. 1814). New Hampshire is the fastest growing state in the Northeast, and it is increasingly apparent that accelerating development threatens the scenic, recreational, and ecological values of the southwestern highlands. As you know, the Mondadnock-Sunapee portion of the feasibility study passes through the district of New Hampshire Congressman Charlie Bass, who has agreed to co-sponsor H.R. 1814. The Nature Conservancy endorses Congressional authorization for the National Park Service to conduct a scenic trail system feasibility study of the Mondadnock-Sunapee trail corridor and its connecting trail systems in Massachusetts and Connecticut, through an amendment to the National Trails System Act. The feasibility study will help to inform New Hampshire citizens on the potential for securing enduring land protection along the Monadnock-Sunapee greenway corridor.

The Nature Conservancy is dedicated to preserving the plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. In close collaboration with our conservation partners, we are working on a voluntary basis with willing landowners and local communities to protect functional landscapes in the vicinity of the proposed scenic trail corridor, and currently own and manage nature preserves with trail systems open to the public at Otter Brook, Loverens Mill Cedar Swamp, and along the Pack Monadnock ridgeline.

Thank you for giving The Nature Conservancy the opportunity to support this initiative.

Sincerely,

Daryl Burtnett
State Director

Cc: Representative Charles F. Bass

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION
PVPC

Timothy W. Brennan, Executive Director
26 Central Street, West Springfield
Massachusetts 01089-2787
Tel.: (413) 781-6045
Fax: (413) 732-2593
www.pvpc.org

JUL 0 0 2001

July 3, 2001

The Honorable John Olver
U.S. House of Representatives
Longworth House Office Building, Room 1027
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Olver:

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission is writing in support of HR1814, a proposal to "amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett Trail extending through western New Hampshire, western Massachusetts and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System".

On June 28th 2001, PVPC's Executive Committee voted unanimously:

> 'to express its endorsement and support for enactment of pending federal legislation (i.e. H.R.1814) which, if enacted, will provide federal funding needed to launch a comprehensive feasibility study of a proposed Northeast Scenic Trail System that would include the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail within our planning region. Further, it is agreed and made known that the PVPC's position in support of this proposed legislation shall be communicated to the Congressional delegations of Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire as well as others as appropriate."

The Metacomet-Monadnock Trail runs for much of its length through the Pioneer Valley region, and traverses some of the most scenically outstanding terrain in New England. We look forward to working with you in support of this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Timothy W. Brennan (c.c.)

Timothy W. Brennan
Executive Director

TWB/jd

EDWARD A. RICHARDSON
693 CHESTNUT HILL ROAD
GLASTONBURY, CONNECTICUT 06033
860-633-7764

July 9, 2001

Congressman John W. Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Olver:

This afternoon I attended a public meeting called by Congresswoman Nancy Johnson of Connecticut, the subject of which was a proposal for a feasibility study as to the merits of including the Metacomet-Mattabesett-Monadnock-Sunapee Trail in the National Trail System. Some 40 attendees from many affected towns seemed to be unanimously in favor of this study.

I agree wholeheartedly. The proposed trail, which may one day stretch from Long Island Sound to the Canadian border, is a vision crying to be realized. In Connecticut only about a quarter of the present trail is on permanently protected land, with the rest subject to the whims of the market. Permanent protection of this marvelous natural resource is a necessity, and the sooner the better.

Please do your best to push the process.

Sincerely,

Edward A. Richardson

Edward A. Richardson

cc: Congresswoman Nancy Johnson
Congressman John Larson

✓ Ann + Patty

TOWN OF BERLIN
Office of the Mayor
Town Hall • Berlin, CT 06037

Thomas J. Veronesi
Mayor

July 10, 2001

The Honorable John Olver
Longworth House Office Building
Room 1027
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Olver:

The Berlin Town Council is in support of the legislation to authorize a National Trail System feasibility study. Several miles of the beautiful Metacomet trail runs along the Berlin and Southington border, with the trail looping back into Berlin and continuing on throughout the southern most part of Town. Connecting the Metacomet Trail to the Mattabesett Trail would result in a continuous trail extending from Long Island Sound to the Massachusetts border.

The Council and I feel that the preservation of these trails and the open space around them is important. The connecting of Connecticut's trails with those of states to our north will enhance and protect these passive recreational areas for future generations.

The Town of Berlin supports and endorses the legislation to initiate the feasibility for a Northeast Scenic Trail.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Veronesi
Mayor

240 KENSINGTON ROAD
BERLIN, CT 06037

Richard S. Don
70 Cliffside Drive Unit C
Manchester, Connecticut 06040

Congressman John Olver
1027 Longworth House
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman,
I am writing in support of HR 1814. I am Chairman of the East of the River Hiking Group which is a committee of the the executive branch of the Appalanchian Mountain Club (AMC). Not only do I personally enjoy hiking on the Metacomet and Mattabasett trails but I know the rest of our hiking group also take pleasure in walking those trails.

We all look forward to learning of your success with the passage of HR 1814.

Sincerely,

Richard S. Don, Chair: EOR

cc: Congresswoman Nancy Johnson
CFPA

Meador, Abbie

From: Niedzielski, Jon
Sent: Thursday, July 12, 2001 2:13 PM
To: Meador, Abbie
Subject: FW: M-M Trail

Unknown Document

I don't know if you've seen the document below - but it appears to be of Holyoke kids cleaning up Mt. Tom.

-----Original Message-----
From: E B Bowler [mailto:treble@javanet.com]
Sent: Thursday, July 12, 2001 1:32 PM
To: Niedzielski, Jon; Judith Eiseman
Subject: M-M Trail

July 12, 2001

John Olver, Congressman
District Office
57 Suffolk st., Suite 310
Holyoke, MA 01040

Dear Congressman Olver:

As a Holyoke resident who spends considerable time encouraging inner-city teens to get involved with the Mt. Tom Range, one who leads weekly awareness hikes and otherwise promotes passive recreational use of over 30 miles of trails on the range, the M-M Trail ranks rather high on my priority list.

Over the last three years Holyoke School Department, Holyoke Boys and Girls Clubs, Holyoke Street School and agencies under the umbrella of Nueva Esperanza, have done considerable trail work at Mt. Tom. Holyoke Conservation and Planning Departments have also been very active in supporting trail programs — as has past and present Mayors and our City Council. And, let's not forget DEM. They have been tremendous partners in projects at Mt. Tom State Reservation. The list of public interest groups, residents from Holyoke and far beyond, who help in one way or another is equally impressive.

John, you are one of the last people who needs to be told that the Mt. Tom Range is a key recreational resource. To preserve the M-M Trail for generations of passive recreational users, to protect one of New England's largest concentration of endangered species, the sensitive habitat that supports them, will take an on-going and significant commitment from the public and private sector.

Surely I speak for lots of folks when I urge passage of the legislation to authorize an NPS study on the M-M Trail!

Sincerely,

Elbert J. Bowler
Resident of Holyoke

The Nature Conservancy®
CONNECTICUT CHAPTER
Saving the Last Great Places

55 High Street
Middletown, Connecticut
06457-3788

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International Headquarters
Arlington, Virginia
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STATE DIRECTOR
Dennis J. McGrath

July 17, 2001

Representative Nancy Johnson
2113 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Johnson,

On behalf of The Nature Conservancy's 23,000 members in Connecticut, I want to express our appreciation and support for your efforts to gain approval of HR 1814, the Metacomet-Manadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett Trail Study Act.

Connecticut's traprock ridges, along which much of the Mattabesett Trail runs, are important and unique ecological resources. The acidic talus slopes that descend from the ridgetops contain rare natural communities in need of protection.

If a study were to culminate in a favorable recommendation for, and Congressional approval of, inclusion of the trails in the National Trails System, the resulting comprehensive management and use plan would provide a valuable opportunity to examine ways in which trails could be planned and routed to reduce damage to sensitive plant communities.

Thanks very much for your work on this initiative.

Sincerely,

Dennis McGrath

Dennis McGrath
Executive Director

recycled paper

JUL 0 2 2001

Suzanne May Garber
2205 Boston Road ~~[illegible]~~ N132
Wilbraham, MA 01095

June 26, 2001

Dear Congressman Olver,

Re: Feasibility study for trails

Please press on with your initiative for a feasibility study for all those "M" trails (Metacomet, Massabesic, Monadnock etc.) !

We need them! Our children and grand children need them!

Sincerely,
Suzanne M. Garber

JUL 0 3 2001

June 26, 2001

To: Congressman John W. Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-2101

From: Elizabeth Terp
PO Box 135
Sunderland, MA 01375

Re: Monandnock-Sunapee-Mattabeset Feasibility Study

Dear Congressman Olver:

Thank you for your efforts to fill in the gaps and make this proposed 200 mile trail a National Scenic Trail. I think that anything we can do to protect hiking trails, and provide opportunities for people to experience the renewal and friendship inspired by such trails is vital to our very existence.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Terp

Elizabeth A. Terp

THE OLD STONE HOUSE

Town of Guilford

JUL 1 9 200

31 Park Street, Guilford, Connecticut 06437

Conservation Commission
William Johnson, Chairman, 203-457-0505

July 12, 2001

The Honorable John Olver
Longworth House Office Building
Room 1027
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Olver:

I am writing in support of HR 1814, a proposal to "amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett Trail…for study for potential addition to the National Trails System".

At its June 2001 meeting, the Guilford Conservation Commission voted unanimously to support the study phase of this process. The NTS designation would seem to dovetail nicely with our town's preservation and recreation goals, and we would certainly welcome further study.

The Mattabesett Trail extends into the north end of our town and has long been recognized as a tremendous asset to the people in the region. Trails in general have the effect of inspiring citizens to support or get involved with conservation. Our community has invested a great deal of time and money toward the preservation of the trail corridor in Guilford, and continues to be vigilant in this regard, but we could use all the help we can get. It is believed that an extension of the trail further south to Long Island Sound is not only possible, but that the community would pull together to make it happen. There is already a substantial north-south greenway in existence here, and we are adding to it year by year. It is exciting to think that our town could provide the last link in what could be a long-distance hiking route from the Sound to Canada.

We of the Conservation Commission see this as a unique and exciting opportunity, and we encourage you to persevere in this initiative.

Very Truly Yours,

William M. Johnson

William M. Johnson (K.S)
Chairman
203-457-0505
wjohnson01@msn.com

CONNECTICUT FOREST and PARK ASSOCIATION
Middlefield, 16 Meriden Road, Rockfall, CT 06481-2961 Telephone (860) 346-2372 / 346-TREE

July 14, 2001

JUL 19 2001

U.S. Representative John W. Olver
c/o Abbie Meador – Legislative Assistant
1027 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515-2101

Re: Support of H.R. 1814, the Northeast Scenic Trail feasibility study.

Dear Representative Olver:

I am writing in support of H.R. 1814 to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett trail for study for potential addition.

I am a trail manager for Connecticut Forest and Park Association (CFPA) and speak on behalf of the 100 plus current trail managers who **volunteered 9,889 hours** in 1999 to ensure that the trails in CT could be safely enjoyed by the many users. For 100 plus years, CFPA volunteers have willingly donated countless hours in these efforts.

The subject trail is probably one of the most scenic trails in the country. In CT, it traverses the central trap-rock ridge with outstanding views to the east and to the west. As the chief of the roving trail crew for CFPA, I am proud to report that we were able to re-open two scenic sections on this trail which had been closed by previous landowners. The re-openings were made possible through the diligent efforts of CFPA and the local town officials in Meriden on West Peak and in Durham on Mt. Pisgah. These efforts were typical of the efforts that CFPA expends on an almost daily basis with town officials and property owners to ensure the continuity of these trails.

Passage of this bill will greatly facilitate the future efforts of trail maintenance volunteers and the resultant enjoyment of outdoor citizens who enjoy nature at its finest.

Thank you for your much-appreciated efforts in this matter.

Sincerely,

George T. Arthur

George T. Arthur
Chief of the Roving Trail Crew

C:
Congresswoman Nancy Johnson, Ann Colson (CFPA)

JUL 19 2001

TOWN OF EAST GRANBY

INCORPORATED 1858

EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT 06026

OFFICE OF SELECTMEN
PHONE 653-2576
FAX 653-4017

July 16, 2001

The Honorable John Olver
Representative, United States Congress
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Olver:

Re: HR 1814, The Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett Trail Study Act of 2001

I am writing in strong support of HR 1814, a proposal to study the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett Trail for potential inclusion in the National Trails System.

The Metacomet Trail runs through East Granby for over five miles along a traprock ridgeline, offering excellent views of the Farmington River Valley, western Connecticut and southern Massachusetts. The Trail provides a north-south link from southern Connecticut, picking up where the Mattabasett ends, into central Massachusetts and serves day- and distance hikers. It's an important recreation and tourist resource for our region. In fact, East Granby residents feel so strongly about the Trail that they overwhelmingly supported the Town's purchase, three years ago, of park land that includes about one-and-a-half miles of its length.

Thank you for your initiative and leadership in putting forth this legislation. Please feel free to call me if I can be of any help to you in moving it forward.

Sincerely,

David K. Kilbon
First Selectman

cc: Representative Nancy L. Johnson
Patricia Pendergast, Connecticut Forest and Park Association
Rosalie McKenney, Chair, East Granby Parks & Recreation Commission

FARMINGTON RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION, INC.
749 HOPMEADOW STREET • SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

July 18, 2001

The Honorable John W. Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: H.R. 1814 request of Feasibility Study for National Trails System Designation

Dear Congressman Olver:

On behalf of the Farmington River Watershed Association I am writing in support of H.R. 1814 a proposal to "amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett Trail extending through western New Hampshire, western Massachusetts, and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System."

The mission of the Farmington River Watershed Association is to protect and preserve the natural resources of the Farmington River Watershed. This area includes communities both in western Massachusetts and northwest Connecticut. A defining feature of the watershed is the Metacomet ridge that forms the eastern border of the watershed. This ridgeline not only provides the corridor for the Metacomet trail, it also provides the aesthetic and cultural setting for communities of the Farmington River Valley. As such the study of this area, along with other trail corridors in New England, for possible inclusion in the National Trails System, would bring much needed attention to the unique resources of the ridgelines and the need for their long-term protection.

It is important to also recognize that these trail corridors are not only important for their natural and cultural significance, but also their economic significance. I personally have been very active with the local visitors association in the Farmington Valley, whose has for the last two years been focused on promoting the trails system of the Farmington River Valley. They recognize a major economic stimulus for the Farmington Valley is tourism and the major tourist attraction is the trails systems of the area. Again, this underscores the need for a comprehensive look at the trail corridor, its many resources, and the management strategies necessary to ensure this multi-faceted asset is conserved for generations to come.

Thank you for your leadership on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Case
Executive Director

CC: Congresswoman Nancy Johnson

860) 658-4442 • Fax (860) 651-7519 Printed on Recycled Paper frwa@snet.net www.frwa.org

THE TOWN OF FARMINGTON

INCORPORATED 1645

TOWN HALL
1 MONTEITH DRIVE
FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06032-1053
INFORMATION (860) 675-2300
FAX (860) 675-7140
"TOWN TALK" (860) 675-2301

Congressman John Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Olver,

I am writing to inform you that the Farmington Town Council strongly supports HR 1841, a proposal to "amend the National Trails System to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabessett Trail extending through western New Hampshire, western Massachusetts, and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System." The Metacomet Trail, which passes through the Town of Farmington, provides an invaluable recreational resource that is certainly worthy of preservation. In the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development, which was adopted in 1995, the Metacomet Trail is listed in the Future Open Space section, which identifies areas that should be considered for preservation or acquisition. In reference to the Metacomet Trail, the Plan cites:

> *"Such a trail system would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to reestablish today. Farmington, therefore, possesses a trail of great importance not only to its own residents, but to Connecticut as a whole. For most of its length through Farmington the trail exists due to the willingness and support of private property owners. The continued support of these private property owners should be encouraged, while conservation easements or open space acquisition should be considered in some cases to ensure the trail's permanent protection."*

Since the adoption of this plan, the Town of Farmington has established conservation easements over 3 segments of the trail, and has purchased 105 acres of traprock ridge habitat surrounding another section of the trail. Each steps brings the trail closer to being permanently protected for future enjoyment.

Farmington supports and applauds your efforts to further protect this valuable recreational and ecological resource.

Sincerely,

Kathleen A Eagen

Kathleen A. Eagen
Town Manager

cc: Congresswoman Nancy Johnson
Connecticut Forest And Parks Association

Meador, Abbie

From: Niedzielski, Jon
Sent: Monday, July 23, 2001 9:24 AM
To: 'Kristin DeBoer'
Cc: Meador, Abbie
Subject: RE: National Scenic Trail Letter of Support

Thanks so much, Kristin. We'll certainly keep you updated on the progress of the Congressman's legislation!

Jon Niedzielski
District Director
Congressman John W. Olver
57 Suffolk Street, Suite 310
Holyoke, MA 01040
413-532-7010
jon.niedzielski@mail.house.gov

-----Original Message-----
From: Kristin DeBoer [mailto:kdeboer@restore.org]
Sent: Friday, July 20, 2001 1:27 PM
To: Niedzielski, Jon
Subject: National Scenic Trail Letter of Support

To: Jon Niedzielski, Congressman Olver's Office
From: Kristin DeBoer, RESTORE: The North Woods
Subject: National Scenic Trail
Date: July 20, 2001

Please accept this letter of support for Congressman Olver's initiative to protect the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee trail systems as a National Scenic Trail. I have also sent you a hard copy in the mail. Thank you.

July 20, 2001

Congressman John Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-2101

Dear Congressman Olver,

RESTORE: The North Woods wishes to extend our full support for the proposal to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett trail systems as a National Scenic Trail. RESTORE is a non-profit conservation organization based in Concord, Massachusetts that represents over 1,500 members throughout New England.

RESTORE's mission is to preserve, restore, and defend the ecological integrity of the North Woods of New England through public awareness and citizen activism. Our major campaigns include the creation of a new Maine Woods National Park, the recovery of endangered wildlife, and the protection of our public lands for the public good. In Massachusetts, we have worked with a coalition of groups to win protection for the largest remaining old-growth forest from a poorly planned ski area development on Wachusett Mountain State Reservation.

In order to offer permanent protection of our regional natural wonders, and to provide recreation and educational opportunities to the public now and in the future, we believe it is critical for certain areas to be

afforded national protection. Through our campaign to create a new unit of our national park system in northern Maine, we have come to appreciate that the National Park Service is the agency best suited to protect ecological integrity, as well as guarantee public access for future generations.

The National Park Service has the longest record of proven success of any approach to land protection. This is why we believe that National Scenic Trail status is the key to long term preservation of this trail system in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. We hope we can count on your support when the time comes to pass congressional legislation for a new Maine Woods National Park as well.

The Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee trail system is an area that deserves national recognition. This trail joins two hundred miles of continuous trails extending from Connecticut, through Massachusetts, and into New Hampshire. By designating these trails as a National Scenic Trail, the people of the Northeast will be presented with two hundred miles of cultural, educational, recreational, and scenic opportunities for generations to come. Without such designation the fate of these trails is questionable, due to increasing threats of development throughout this region.

Our national park system offers many benefits to the natural ecosystem as well as to the public. National Parks preserve our natural heritage, they connect us to our history, offer us solitude and quality recreation, they educate us, and they create jobs. As a National Scenic Trail this area could be provided with many desirable amenities including federal funding, technical assistance, mitigation efforts, educational interpretation, and land acquisition programs.

RESTORE understands that the first step towards achieving National Scenic Trail designation is a feasibility study. However, this challenging task is often times the most significant step. We would like to thank you, Congressman Olver, for your efforts to conserve this trail and wish you the best of luck in this endeavor. The staff of RESTORE has had extensive experience with the National Park System, and would be glad to assist you in any way possible. Please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Kristin DeBoer
Program Coordinator
RESTORE: The North Woods

Kristin DeBoer
RESTORE: The North Woods
PO Box 1099
Concord, MA 01742
413-253-6720 (phone-Home Office)
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"I long for wildness... woods where the wood thrush forever sings."
-Henry David Thoreau

JUL 23 2001

FARMINGTON RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION, INC.
749 HOPMEADOW STREET • SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

July 18, 2001

The Honorable John W. Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: H.R. 1814 request of Feasibility Study for National Trails System Designation

Dear Congressman Olver:

On behalf of the Farmington River Watershed Association I am writing in support of H.R. 1814 a proposal to "amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett Trail extending through western New Hampshire, western Massachusetts, and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System."

The mission of the Farmington River Watershed Association is to protect and preserve the natural resources of the Farmington River Watershed. This area includes communities both in western Massachusetts and northwest Connecticut. A defining feature of the watershed is the Metacomet ridge that forms the eastern border of the watershed. This ridgeline not only provides the corridor for the Metacomet trail, it also provides the aesthetic and cultural setting for communities of the Farmington River Valley. As such the study of this area, along with other trail corridors in New England, for possible inclusion in the National Trails System, would bring much needed attention to the unique resources of the ridgelines and the need for their long-term protection.

It is important to also recognize that these trail corridors are not only important for their natural and cultural significance, but also their economic significance. I personally have been very active with the local visitors association in the Farmington Valley, whose has for the last two years been focused on promoting the trails system of the Farmington River Valley. They recognize a major economic stimulus for the Farmington Valley is tourism and the major tourist attraction is the trails systems of the area. Again, this underscores the need for a comprehensive look at the trail corridor, its many resources, and the management strategies necessary to ensure this multi-faceted asset is conserved for generations to come.

Thank you for your leadership on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Case
Executive Director

CC: Congresswoman Nancy Johnson

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THE TOWN OF FARMINGTON

INCORPORATED 1645

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INFORMATION (860) 675-2300
FAX (860) 675-7140
"TOWN TALK" (860) 675-2301

Congressman John Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Olver,

I am writing to inform you that the Farmington Town Council strongly supports HR 1841, a proposal to "amend the National Trails System to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabessett Trail extending through western New Hampshire, western Massachusetts, and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System." The Metacomet Trail, which passes through the Town of Farmington, provides an invaluable recreational resource that is certainly worthy of preservation. In the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development, which was adopted in 1995, the Metacomet Trail is listed in the Future Open Space section, which identifies areas that should be considered for preservation or acquisition. In reference to the Metacomet Trail, the Plan cites:

> *"Such a trail system would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to reestablish today. Farmington, therefore, possesses a trail of great importance not only to its own residents, but to Connecticut as a whole. For most of its length through Farmington the trail exists due to the willingness and support of private property owners. The continued support of these private property owners should be encouraged, while conservation easements or open space acquisition should be considered in some cases to ensure the trail's permanent protection."*

Since the adoption of this plan, the Town of Farmington has established conservation easements over 3 segments of the trail, and has purchased 105 acres of traprock ridge habitat surrounding another section of the trail. Each steps brings the trail closer to being permanently protected for future enjoyment.

Farmington supports and applauds your efforts to further protect this valuable recreational and ecological resource.

Sincerely,

Kathleen A Eagen

Kathleen A. Eagen
Town Manager

cc: Congresswoman Nancy Johnson
Connecticut Forest And Parks Association

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

The Valley Land Fund, Inc.
P.O. Box 522
Hadley, MA 01035

JUL 24 2001

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Congressman John W. Olver
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

July 18, 2001

RE: Northeast Scenic Trail feasibility study

Dear Congressman Olver:

I am writing to convey Valley Land Fund's support for conduct of a feasibility study covering the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail in Massachusetts along with two other New England long-distance trails.

Since its founding in 1986, Valley Land Fund -- serving Hampshire, Hampden, and Franklin Counties in Western Massachusetts -- has protected over 5,000 acres of land in the Connecticut River Valley and surrounding hills. Among these acres are included recreational resources from canoe launch sites to local conservation areas enjoyed by sportsmen and birdwatchers alike. However, among our most travelled achievements have been the portions of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail along the Holyoke Range which we permanently secured with the financial assistance of the Appalachian Mountain Club.

As the population of the Connecticut River Valley grows, both the demand for and the threats to its recreational resources increase. Anecdotes about trail access points lost, or backyards encroaching on scenic sections of the trail are all too common, and increasing. It is imperative that these resources be mapped, understood, and protected before the task of securing them becomes impossible -- or impossibly expensive. Therefore, we wholeheartedly endorse legislation authorizing the Northeast Scenic Trail feasibility study. Thank you for your initiative in this matter.

Sincerely,

Gerrit Stover, Clerk
For the Board of Directors

July 15, 2001

Congressman John Olver

U.S. House of Representatives

1027 Longworth House Office Bldg.

Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Support for National Scenic Trail Status/ H.R. 1814

For the last decade the Meriden Conservation Commission has been a leader in the effort to protect the state's trap-rock ridges. As a former chairperson of that commission I can attest to the fact that safeguarding the blue-blazed trail system that meanders along the Metacomet Ridge is a major goal of the board.

In 1990, the Meriden Conservation Commission along with the Middletown and Berlin Conservation Commissions helped to start the Lamentation Mountain Tri-Town Project, a cooperative venture designed to preserve key resources on that significant natural feature,including the Mattabeset Trail.

1998 brought the signing of the Metacomet Ridge Conservation Compact, an environmental treaty between 17 towns crafted to protect this crucial mountain range which extends from Long Island Sound to the Massachusetts border.

In 1999, the Meriden Conservation Commission began the South Mountain Preservation Project to acquire watershed lands atop one of the most scenic vistas in Connecticut. The blue-blazed Metacomet Trail winds its way across this ridge and is a major recreational asset.

The Meriden Conservation Commission has a long history of supporting regional cooperative efforts to preserve the Metacomet Ridge and the extensive trail system that thrives along its uplands. As a private citizen and environmental advocate for the trap-rock ridges, I wholeheartedly endorse the concept of a permanently protected trail network stretching from Long Island Sound to the Massachusetts state line and eventually to the Canadian border. Many of us have envisioned this coming to fruition someday. Strong voices like retired D.E.P. land acquisition specialist Jos. Hickey have kept this dream alive. It is encouraging to know that the National Park Service has taken an interest in this visionary goal and now there is H.R. 1814 that you have so graciously sponsored. You and your colleague's efforts are commendable. Thank you so much.

In conclusion, it is vital that a coordinated effort between federal, state, local and private conservation organizations begin immediately to initiate a comprehensive plan to preserve the blue-blazed trail which bisects the region. This trail system is not only significant recreationally, but environmentally as well, considering that it traverses major wildlife corridors, watershed areas and wilderness pockets. Aesthetically, the trail serves to provide access to some of the most spectacular vistas in the Connecticut. The Metacomet Ridge has been called Connecticut's "Central Park" for good reason; it is a massive green-belt that runs through the state's urban center with a trail network that provides a natural sanctuary to thousands of nearby residents. It is truly a unique wilderness in an urban setting that deserves special status. The first step to safeguarding this regional green-way is to achieve permanent protection for the blue-blazed trail. If we all pull together,this laudable mission can be realized and I have the utmost confidence that it will ultimately succeed.

Sincerely,

Norm Zimmer
117 Brookview Lane
Middletown, Ct 06457

Mr. HEFLEY. Well, thank you very much. That was very helpful. Mrs. Johnson? Nancy?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE NANCY JOHNSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Mrs. JOHNSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, for holding this hearing and for hearing us out.

The Metacomet and Mattabesett trails, part of the 700 miles of the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System, follow a stunning path up the center of Connecticut, providing breathtaking views of Connecticut's diverse landscape.

From urban centers to atop sheer cliff faces, these trails meander through the State of Connecticut before joining the Sunapee and Monadnock trails, which terminate at Mount Monadnock in New Hampshire.

Unfortunately, these trails are threatened and future generations may not have the opportunity to hike along these footpaths. Currently only 25 percent of the trail is on publicly held land. The remainder is on private land that depends on the benevolence of property owners.

Increasing development in formerly marginal areas threatens the trails. Designation as a National Scenic Trail will enhance protection efforts.

This bill provided funding for a 2-year feasibility study for potential addition to the National Trails System. Yet even with passage of this bill, these trails will not be able to receive this designated status for another 10 years. If we do not begin this process immediately, these trails will simply disappear.

This bill is important for all residents of New England. As you saw from Representative Olver's maps, an entire trail system from the Canadian border to Long Island Sound would enable public access from the last of New England's wildest places to the most densely populated estuary in the United States.

The trails afford everyone the chance to visit some of the most beautiful areas in New England. Through footpaths, the public is afforded a peaceful outdoors experience, away from the harried urban environment that presses in so closely in this region.

Designation as a National Scenic Trail also ensures that these beautiful areas receive proper environmental protections. Hiking along designated footpaths has the least impact of any outdoor recreational experience.

For these reasons, a change in the trail's designation is the perfect solution to public access and protection along Connecticut's Metacomet Traprock Ridge.

This incredible basalt ridge is the only one its kind in the East, and you have to go west of Wyoming to find similar geographic structures. The footpaths take the public through incredible natural formations that are rare in our region.

Without protection, this area could face severe environmental degradation.

In order to complete the last 11 miles to connect the Mattabesett to the sound, several coastal towns in Connecticut have put a

potential trail system into their municipal plans of development and are actively buying property to create the greenway that will harbor the Blue-Blazed hiking trail extension to Long Island Sound.

Forty-six people showed up at a public hearing I held in my district on extremely short notice, demonstrating the great interest that residents of Connecticut have in protecting these trails. These interested parties included municipal officials, regional planning agencies, hikers, land trusts representatives, and other nonprofit representatives.

In Connecticut, we receive relatively few Federal dollars for lands. Though I worked for over 16 years with the Appropriations Committee to complete purchase of the parcels that compose the Appalachian Trail in the western part of my district, and another 10 years will all of you to get the Farmington River designated a National Wild and Scenic River, very little Federal activity is actually present in Connecticut.

But because of our past successes, and because we are losing so much of our open space to development, interest is intense and high in Federal assistance on this project.

Of course, in Connecticut there are the same concerns with eminent domain and Federal control. But it is through knowledge and this kind of study that all of the communities get to think through jointly the benefits of trail protection, and the vitality it will restore to central Connecticut, and the opportunity to all of New England to connect the Canadian border with the Long Island Sound and the great wildernesses of the Northeast with the urban population centers.

So I thank you for your consideration. I urge your support of what I consider to be a very sensitive and important bill. And I thank you for this opportunity to testify.

[The prepared statement of Mrs. Johnson follows:]

Statement of The Honorable Nancy L. Johnson, a Representative in Congress from the State of Connecticut, on H.R. 1814

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing today, and for your interest in this legislation.

The Metacomet and Mattabesett Trails (part of the 700 mile of the Blue–Blazed Hiking Trail System) follow a stunning path up the center of Connecticut, providing breathtaking views of Connecticut's diverse landscape. From urban centers to atop sheer cliff faces, these trails meander through the state of Connecticut before joining the Sunapee and Monadnock trails which terminate at Mount Monadnock in New Hampshire.

Unfortunately, these trails are threatened and future generations may not have the opportunity to hike along these foot paths. Currently only 25% of the trail is on publicly held land. The remainder exists on private land that depends on the benevolence of property owners. Increasing development in formerly marginal areas threatens the trail. Designation as a National Scenic Trail will enhance protection efforts.

This bill provides funding for a two year feasibility study for potential addition to the National Trails System. Yet even with passage of this bill, these trails will still not be able to receive the elevated status for another ten years. If we do not begin this process immediately, these trails may disappear.

This bill is important for all of the residents of New England. An entire trail system from the Canadian border to Long Island Sound would enable public access from the last of New England's wildest places to the most densely populated estuary in the United States. The trails afford everyone the chance to visit some of the most beautiful places in New England. As footpaths, the public is afforded a peaceful outdoors experience away from the harried urban environment.

Designation as a National Scenic Trail also ensures that these beautiful areas are receive proper environmental protections. Hiking along designated footpaths has the least impact of any outdoor recreational experience. For this reason, a change in the trail's designation is the perfect solution to public access and protection along Connecticut's Metacomet Traprock Ridge. This incredible basalt ridge is the only one of its kind in the East—you have to go out west to Wyoming to find similar geographic structures. The footpaths take the public through incredible natural communities that rare to the region. Without protection, this area could face severe environmental degradation.

In order to complete the last eleven miles to connect the Mattabesett to the Sound, several coastal towns in Connecticut (Guilford and Killingworth) have put a potential trail system into their Municipal Plans of Development and are actively buying property to create the greenway that will harbor the Blue–Blazed Hiking Trail extension to Long Island Sound. Forty-six people showed up at a hearing I held in my district on extremely short notice demonstrating the great interest that the residents of Connecticut have in protecting these trails. These interested parties included municipal officials, regional planning agencies, hikers, land trusts and other nonprofits. In Connecticut, because we are losing so much open space to development, concerns about federal assistance and eminent domain do resonate as loudly as they do in other places.

I urge your support for this time sensitive legislation. Thank you for your attention on this matter.

Mr. HEFLEY. Thank you, Nancy.

Mr. Maloney?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES MALONEY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Mr. MALONEY. Thank you, Chairman Hefley and members of the Committee.

I am here to testify in support of H.R. 1814. And first I want to thank all of my colleagues from New England, and especially my partner on this bill, Mr. Olver, for providing leadership on this issue.

John has been a true champion of the environment and has worked very, very hard on this legislation.

There are indeed approximately 700 miles of Blue-Blazed hiking trails in Connecticut. Recently the entire Blue-Blazed system in Connecticut was designated an official state greenway. That speaks to the interest of the State of Connecticut in maintaining this trail system, in expanding it, and enhancing it. And there are people here from Connecticut who will testify in addition later on in your hearing this morning.

The center point of these trails is located in my district at the city of Meriden. Specifically, the Hanging Hills formation and Mount Lamentation, both in Meriden—which are depicted, by the way, in Mr. Olver's photographs that he has presented to the Committee—offer unobstructed views of the Connecticut River and a terrain of tumbled ledges, brooks, forests, and shallow bogs.

The Metacomet Trail, which was established in 1929, follows a striking traprock ridge running north from the Hanging Hills of Meriden to the Massachusetts line for approximately 51 miles. And you heard that described further this morning. The trail continues on to Mount Monadnock in New Hampshire.

The southern end of the trail, which also begins in Meriden as the Mattabesett Trail, was established in 1932, and continues south for 55 miles.

These two trails, the Metacomet and Mattabesett, offer the finest ridge walking and cliff views in Connecticut and indeed in the eastern United States in many regards.

Combined, these two trails almost completely bisect the state. The Metacomet and Mattabesett trails not only offer vistas of Long Island Sound, agricultural land, rolling hills, and the Connecticut River, but also provide a mostly uninterrupted greenway through a portion of the state that has seen remarkable growth and urbanization in recent years.

Population density in Connecticut continues to rise, as does the demand for open recreational spaces. In fact, portions of my congressional district saw the highest level of growth in the entire state, according the latest census figures.

I have worked hard to ensure that the quality of life of Connecticut families is not adversely affected by these growth trends. The designation of these trails as part of the National Scenic Trail system would further that work and guarantee the preservation of this trail system in perpetuity.

With the common goals of protecting open space and providing recreational opportunities across America, the Federal, state, and local governments should be working together as indeed they are in this project.

With the support of the Federal Government, you will be combining Federal effort with state and local efforts already being undertaken on the Blue-Blazed trail system.

This bill is an important step to ensure that this and other opportunities like it across our country are not missed.

Lastly, I would like to emphasize, as Mr. Olver mentioned, that this legislation has the support of every Member of Congress whose district is home to a part of this trail system. This remarkable level of support indicates the importance that communities like Meriden place not only on this system of trails but also on public protection of our nation's most precious open spaces, and certainly evidences the great support for this particular piece of legislation.

Thank you for consideration of this bill, and I look forward to its favorable approval by your Committee. Thank you so much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Maloney follows:]

Statement of The Honorable James H. Maloney, a Representative in Congress from the State of Connecticut

Chairman Hefley, Ranking Member Christensen, Members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on H.R. 1814, which would authorize a feasibility study on a very important scenic trail that runs through my congressional district.

First, I would like to thank my colleague from New England, and partner on this bill, Mr. Olver for providing leadership on this issue. He has worked very hard to develop this legislation and has been a real champion in the effort to protect the scenic, historic, and cultural integrity of our natural environment.

There are approximately 700 miles of Blue–Blazed Hiking Trails in Connecticut. Recently, the entire Blue–Blazed trail system in Connecticut was designated as an official state greenway.

The center point of these trails is located in my district at the City of Meriden. Specifically, the "Hanging Hills" formation and Mt. Lamentation both in Meriden offer unobscured views of the Connecticut River and a terrain of tumbled ledges, brooks, forest and shallow bogs. The Metacomet trail, which was established in 1929, follows a striking traprock ridge running north from the "Hanging Hills" of Meriden to the Massachusetts line for approximately 51 miles. The trail continues on to Mt. Manodnock in New Hampshire. The southern end of the trail, which also

begins in Meriden as the Mattabesett Trail, was established in 1932 and continues south for 55 miles. These two trails, the Metacomet and the Mattabesett, offer the finest ridge walking and cliff views in all of Connecticut.

Combined, these two trails almost completely bisect the state. The Metacomet/Mattabesett Trails not only offers vistas of Long Island Sound, agricultural land, rolling hills, and the Connecticut River, but also provides a mostly uninterrupted greenway through a portion of the state that has seen remarkable growth and urbanization in recent years.

Population density in Connecticut continues to rise, as does the demand for open recreational spaces. In fact, portions of my Congressional District saw the highest level of growth in the entire state according to the latest census figures. I have worked hard to ensure that the quality of life of Connecticut families is not adversely affected by these recent growth trends.

The designation of these trails as part of the National Scenic Trails System would further that work.

With the common goals of protecting open space and providing recreational opportunities across America, the Federal, State and Local governments should be working together. This bill is an important step to ensure that this and other opportunities like it all across our country are not missed.

Lastly, I would like to point out that this legislation has the support of every Member of Congress whose district is home to a part of this trail system. This remarkable level of support indicates the importance that communities like Meriden place not only on this system of trails, but also on public protection of all of our nation's most precious open spaces.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Mr. HEFLEY. Thank you very much.

Mr. Neal, did you want testify?

Mr. NEAL. Just a couple of comments.

Mr. HEFLEY. Be happy for you to, if you would like.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE RICHARD E. NEAL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

Mr. NEAL. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

One of the reasons, Mr. Chairman, that Mr. Olver and I have such enthusiasm for discussing these trails, because they go to Connecticut and New Hampshire, is that, as the Massachusetts legislature currently is drawing the maps in reapportionment, we think there is an opportunity for the two of us to move into Connecticut and New Hampshire.

[Laughter.]

And for certain, they are trying hard to put Mr. Meehan in New Hampshire. I can assure you of that.

[Laughter.]

I do want to thank you. And John Olver has taken the lead on this, along with Nancy Johnson and Jim Maloney.

But I have had great luck in this process, and I want thank you and members of the Committee, over the last few years, between the Blackstone Valley with Mr. McGovern and the Quinebaug-Shetucket with former Congressman Gejdenson. Two rivers in my congressional district were designated, with considerable lobbying by myself and Mrs. Johnson and others, to be Heritage rivers, the Blackstone and the beautiful Connecticut River as well.

But the truth is that it worked very well. And I think it is to the credit of this Committee and others who have been advocates of these programs to ensure that we pay attention to what is our most, I think, precious resource, the environment.

And we extend the opportunity for people to use New England for passive and active recreation. I would argue that there is not a more beautiful place that you could ever find in the fall than New England. And I think calling attention through initiatives like this is very important.

Tracy Kidder's remarkable book a few years ago, when he wrote the best-seller, when he described what Northampton and the Pioneer Valley meant as they looked over the Mount Tom range and said that one of the reasons that people never leave that area is because they really come to believe that everything they are ever going to want is located right there. That is telling testimony, I think, about how people feel.

And the fact that Democrats and Republicans here, with Mr. Olver's leadership, have rallied around this initiative I think speaks volumes to the way we feel about our home in New England.

The last thing that I would say is that this Committee really has been very kind to me over 13 years in the House. You have really done very well by me, Democrats and Republicans, and I am indeed very grateful for the work that you have put forward. And if you have any questions, I am happy to join in.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Neal follows:]

Statement of The Honorable Richard E. Neal, a Representative in Congress from the State of Massachusetts, on H.R. 1814

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Metacomet–Monadnock Trail in Massachusetts. The legislation which I am supporting here, introduced by my Massachusetts delegation colleague, Mr. Olver, would allow the National Park Service to examine the 3 existing trails, as well as opportunities to extend the trail through the remaining 2 gaps.

National scenic trails are those that provide for maximum recreation potential and for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural or cultural qualities of the areas through which such trails may pass. This trail passes all of these requirements, as a National Park Service study will surely show.

A section of this trail in my district includes the Holyoke Mountain Range and is within an hour drive of three-quarters of a million people. Throughout the range, outcrops open up to many spectacular views of the Connecticut River valley, including the Oxbow, a circular lake formed by flooding caused by an ice jam in 1840 which changed the boundaries of the towns of Northampton and Hadley.

This section of the trail is the site of many historically significant events, including the Shays' Rebellion. Daniel Shays, warden of the town of Pelham, rounded up a group of farmers whose farms had fallen into disrepair when they fought in the Revolution. They rebelled in response to the confiscation of their lands and livestock in lieu of tax payments. Massachusetts militia were sent to quell their uprising and Shays' rebel band hid along the trail in the legendary Horse Caves. These caves can still be visited today.

The Holyoke Range was created when hardened volcanic lava was uplifted millions of years ago. The range was formed in an East–West direction, even though every other range in the valley runs North–South. This orientation has caused the forests of each side of the range to be completely different. The north side resembles the forests of northern New England with hemlock, white pine, beech and birch. The south side resembles southern New England with oak, hickory and shrubs of the heath family. One can travel the Metacomet–Monadnock trail and see the beauty of both southern and northern New England.

We in Massachusetts have had great success working with the National Park Service on conservation projects. We have strong grassroots organizations which can step in and make a National Scenic Trail successful. These groups have had success along the Connecticut River for many years and are capable of providing the necessary support to a National Scenic Trail. This legislation is formally supported by conservation groups, the Appalachian Mountain Club, local government and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of Environmental Affairs.

I appreciate your cooperation and assistance with this request and look forward to working with you on behalf of the Metacomet–Monadnock–Sunapee–Mattabesett Trail.

Mr. HEFLEY. Well, you have convinced me. This Committee is going to make a field hearing up there, as of your testimony today.

About October, would that be a good time for us?

[Laughter.]

Mr. NEAL. You can stay at my home.

[Laughter.]

Mr. HEFLEY. Well, we thank you all, for all of your testimony.

Let me just hit a few quick questions, and then we will let the Committee.

First, Virgil, this 15 acres that we are talking about here. That was part of the original farm?

Mr. GOODE. Half of it was. It is near Route 122, which is the main road in that section of Franklin County. And if the 15 acres could be acquired, it would be a buffer between the Booker T. Washington National Monument and all the growth that is occurring on Smith Mountain Lake at West Lake Corner. So it is a visible 15 acres, and half of it was in the original farm.

Mr. HEFLEY. Would it be an effective buffer? There is considerable expense to doing this, as you know. If we do this, would it be the buffer you need to protect the monument from now on?

Mr. GOODE. There will never be another opportunity. The developer is coming right down the highway toward Booker T. right now. The building-supply store that I mentioned is between the stoplight and the Booker T. Washington monument, and grading is already occurring between the building-supply store, which opened about a month ago, and the land that is for sale.

And the other witnesses can testify and also speak to that later on.

Mr. HEFLEY. All right.

On the other issue, the trail, two questions, Mr. Olver and Nancy and Jim.

How much use is there of the existing trail system that you have? And you have a considerable trail system there.

And secondly, Nancy, you particularly mentioned that only about 25 percent of it is on public land now. What problems do we face with getting private landowners either to give us an easement or sell right-of-way or whatever? How would you plan to handle the private land that is there?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Well, first of all, the study is the first and crucial step, because it is through the study that people begin to look at the larger possibilities here and how their land might be part of a preservation effort.

I would like to call this Committee's attention to the Wild and Scenic River experience that we had, because one of the real difficulties that we face, governing from Washington, is that the regions of the country are very different. And so we don't have any of the problems that a state like Nevada has, where the Federal Government owns and operates so much Federal land, because we don't have that kind of Federal presence on our lands.

But it has meant that in order to have Federal assistance, we have had to adjust Federal law to our needs. And when I tried to get the Farmington River designated a Wild and Scenic River under President Reagan—who remember at the beginning of his term, he was all about local control and so on and so forth—I got the study. And from that, everybody, all the towns, got to understand why this was important and how it could be done in a way that was useful to them.

But the study took a while to get going because we wanted local representation on the study Committee, because our lands along the river are also either state parks or locally owned. But the majority was locally owned.

And we ended up adjusting the Wild and Scenic River law to what is now called the partnership rivers law. That is the eastern addition of the national Wild and Scenic Rivers program. It is still called a Wild and Scenic River, but it is governed through a partnership of state and local and Federal effort.

And there wasn't that sort of transference to the Federal Government of total power over the river. It took us several years to work out what would happen if the local people didn't live up to the standards of Wild and Scenic and how we would deal with that if that happened.

So out of this study may very well come a little different way of governing a trail down central Connecticut than we have in the Appalachian area. I think it is too soon to say.

But the study will help us lay the foundation of information and understanding that is essential to success. And then from that, we will see how we move to actually establish this trail and preserve it.

But one of the things that Richard and I worked on extensively was President Clinton's national Heritage rivers, because in my part of the world, we just need a river pilot who helps all of these little, tiny towns, all of whom have very strong local governments, to just know what the Federal resources are.

The configuration of our communities and the power distribution in our communities, where local government is very strong and some of us don't even have county governments, we did need that Federal assistance in coordinating access to programs that were already there.

So in those two instances, the national Heritage rivers with the river pilot concept, and these partnership rivers that are a variant of the Wild and Scenic Rivers, we have had to, in the end, have a little different adaptation of the way we achieve Federal goals in harmony with our long tradition of very strong and very powerful local government.

So I certainly wouldn't want to prejudge exactly what is going to come of this study, but I know one thing that will come of this study: preservation of this trail, because we are very preservation-oriented. And we are very committed to preserving for citizens this right to enjoy.

Just look at small towns that have very little budgets and have already begun to put money aside for acquisition.

And so, there are a lot of ways in which this could work out. But the first important step is the study, so everyone understands what the vision is and the possibilities are.

And then, we are very good at working together. And the partnership in Connecticut of the Federal, state, and local action, as my colleague Congressman Maloney pointed out to you, has always been very vital and very productive.

So I thank you for asking that question, and particularly for me to have the opportunity to focus your staff on the fact that a number of Federal laws have been adjusted when applied in the New England context of distributed Federalist power.

Mr. MALONEY. Mr. Chairman, could I just add to that just a slightly different perspective?

Unlike states in the West, the issues of Federal lands, it plays out very differently in the East. The State of Connecticut, for example, has the lowest percentage of Federally owned land of any state in the country. And the notion of the Federal Government taking an active role in open space preservation is extremely well-received in Connecticut.

The state government has also embarked on a very aggressive program of open space conservation. And many local communities and towns in Connecticut—we have no county government at all in Connecticut— have been very, very actively been involved.

One of the towns next door to me just passed a huge $30 million proposal to acquire some open space, which they are going to pay for out of their town budget. That is how important the issue of open space is in a densely populated state like Connecticut.

And the final point, Mr. Chairman, to your question, I was at the Castle Craig, which, again, is at the junction of the Mattabesett and Monadnock Trails. It shows on one of the photographs Mr. Olver presented to you.

I was up there at the top of the mountain recently on a weekday, just a weekday in the middle of the summer. And there was a steady stream of people actively traversing the ridges.

So this is a system that is very popular, very well-regarded. And the action by the Federal Government in support of this legislation would be extraordinarily well-received at home.

Mr. OLVER. If I may add also, just very briefly, most of the usage is by afficianados of day hiking or long-distance hiking. The usage of this trail with a designation as we are seeking the feasibility study for would undoubtedly increase the usage by a substantial amount. I wouldn't want to try to predict exactly how much.

I think in Massachusetts the trail that has been proposed here is more on public land than has been suggested in Connecticut. I think it is probably closer to 50 percent there, with some additional land that already has negotiated legal easements for the locus of the trail.

And generally, the support is very strong, as Mr. Maloney has pointed out, for involvement in this. There is a different kind of way of looking at the public availability of these sorts of features.

Two small sections, actually, totalling about 10 miles, have been designated as a National Recreation Trail. They have been added to the National Recreation Trail System. And those are part of the ridge, which, if this proves feasible, with your help, then would be-

come part of the Scenic trail or whatever the feasibility study were to determine. Thank you.

Mr. HEFLEY. Thank you.

Committee, questions? Mr. Kildee?

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I think both these bills are in the public interest. I appreciate the testimony and hope that the Committee would favorably report them out.

Michigan is somewhat between the far eastern states and the far west. We don't have quite as much Federal land, not near as much as the West. But we do have a little bit more Federal land than the original states.

And I, in my tenure here on this Committee, have been able to establish 100,000 acres of wildness area, beautiful land that for some reason escaped cutting. It stands just as it came from the hand of the God.

And the only way you can enter into the wilderness area is on foot. And it is just a great adventure for people, not only in Michigan, but people come from all around.

So this is similar to that experience that you would create there.

And I also was able to get a bill passed to have 1,000 miles of Wild and Scenic Rivers in Michigan, which has been an enormous success.

So I really feel that it is important that the development taking place—in my own district, there were areas 10 years ago that were really much as they came from the hand of God. Right now, you will find what I call "starter mansions" being built on tracks out there now.

And it is a shame that we didn't—thank God, when I was in the state legislature, I kept buying as much land as I could between the city of Detroit and Flint, so we keep some green area. But you have to do it when you can or your do lose it. So I commend you for what you are doing.

I also am happy to hear that all the Members of Congress through which this trail would pass are supportive of that. That is not quite as important to me as it is to Don Young, who used to be Chairman of this Committee, because Don Young, that is one of his first questions: Do all the Members of Congress support this? So I am sure Don Young would be happy to support you on that.

And I really appreciate your testimony, and I want to support both the bills. Thank you very much.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Duncan?

Mr. DUNCAN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I know that both these bills will pass overwhelmingly, but I am little curious as to what you see will be the restrictions on private property.

The background sheet we have says that this bill is going to increase the protection of these trails from encroaching development.

If a person has a vacant piece of land right now that he is planning to build let's say a small shopping center on, would this in any way stop that?

Or if a homeowner does not want to—Mr. Olver mentioned the great increases in the number of hikers that he expects. If a

private landowner doesn't want several thousand people hiking their backyard, what limitations are there?

What do you think this is going to show, Mr. Maloney?

Mr. MALONEY. Well, the process in Connecticut has been almost exclusively voluntary in terms of the acquisition of open space land.

For example, recently the State of Connecticut just completed a negotiation with a power company for the acquisition about 11,000 acres in Fairfield County.

Mr. DUNCAN. What about the two examples I had, though? Could a person build a shopping center, if it blocked part of this trail?

Mr. MALONEY. Only if it would want to be having parking lots on 45-degree slopes. I don't think, as a practical matter, this is going to occur.

These are ridgeline trails. And as a practical matter, the answer, sir, I think—

Mr. DUNCAN. There is no flat land in all the hundreds—

Mr. MALONEY. I can't say there is no flat land.

Mr. DUNCAN. What about through somebody's backyard?

Mr. MALONEY. Well, I think that is an issue and that will have to be negotiated. The feasibility study will look at that. And in terms of the response coming out of the feasibility study, as I say, the approach in Connecticut has been very much a voluntary approach, developing consensus for this kind of natural preservation.

Mr. DUNCAN. But if somebody wanted to fence in their backyard?

Mr. MALONEY. That would be an issue, just like it is anywhere else.

Mr. DUNCAN. All right. Thank you very much.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Gilchrest?

Mr. GILCHREST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just have two sort of question/comments.

One, looking at the map, as the trail goes through Connecticut and Massachusetts and New Hampshire, is there any discussion with the Vermonters to add a little side link to the Long Trail that goes from Massachusetts to Canada? The Long Trail it is called.

Mr. OLVER. The Long Trail goes the full length of the State of Connecticut, and half of it is already contiguous with the Appalachian Trail. So Vermont has a full north-south trail.

Now, there is talk about extending a trail also within the Connecticut watershed to the Connecticut lakes. There are four lakes at the very north end at the Canadian border, which the final one, the fourth Connecticut lake—I think it is fourth; it may be only the third—is the source of the Connecticut River. And there is talk of then creating a trail that would go to the Canadian border, as a further extension.

But that would use partly the Appalachian Trail. As the map shows, it turns northward just past Hanover, New Hampshire, and goes northward for awhile, and then turns eastward toward Mount Katahdin. And at its northern most point, somewhere there, you would perhaps take another 60 or 100 miles of walking trail to the Connecticut border.

But that is not the subject of this feasibility study.

Mr. GILCHREST. I see.

Mr. OLVER. This one is intended to get us from the Long Island Sound to the Appalachian Trail junction somewhere in the Hanover, New Hampshire, the Dartmouth College area.

Mr. GILCHREST. It is a great concept.

In my district in Maryland, the bulk of my district, from Virginia to Pennsylvania, is carpeted with farms and dotted with little fishing villages. And we have been working diligently, not so much with a piece of legislation—although this is a good idea, so maybe I will bring something forward, Mr. Chairman—to keep agriculture profitable. Because if agriculture goes, then there goes your open space.

But we have been working with farmers and the chamber of commerce and you name it, anybody that would listen to us, to create a habitat conservation corridor for wildlife.

This trail that you are setting up is sort of a habitat conservation corridor for hikers. What we want to do is create a habitat conservation corridor for subspecies, anything other than humans, although humans can certainly walk through it.

And in the process of doing this, create this habitat for migrating water fowl, for deer, for fox, for shorebirds, for Baltimore orioles, you name it.

We have been talking to landowners—this is always an issue—about whether or not someone can fence off their backyard, or whether or not somebody can build a shopping plaza, or whether or not somebody can build a home for their children, or whether or not somebody eventually can sell that land so they can retire.

What we found, something that Nancy said a little earlier, other than what you might find in the western states, there is virtually no public land or very, very little public land in many of the eastern states. And so people are very encouraged to have the Federal, state, or local government purchase easements on their property so that that land, like it is now, will look that way for generations to come.

So these kinds of concepts in areas that are threatened by the megalopolis from Boston to Richmond would like to preserve some of their heritage, some of their tradition.

So the panel said virtually all or most people. I haven't found anybody in our district yet that isn't encouraged by some monetary compensation stipend to preserve that land or plant trees or put it in the conservation easement or a conservation reserve program or the Swampbuster or the Sodbuster or the EQIP or the Farmland Protection Program or whatever else is out there, because we just don't have the vast stretches of pristine wilderness that they do west of the Mississippi River.

But this is a great concept, and I wish you well.

Mr. OLVER. I think your concept of a habitat corridor for hikers is an excellent one. We will have to incorporate that somewhere.

I do want to repeat, before you came in, I pointed out that all of this lies within the Silvio Conte Fish and Wildlife Refuge, so already we have tried to create a habitat there, a very creative piece of legislation that was, not quite like any other fish and wildlife refuge we have in this country. And it continues to evolve as really creative things ought to do.

Mr. GILCHREST. Thank you.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Gibbons?

Mr. GIBBONS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And certainly, I can appreciate both of these bills. However, according to Don Young, I am not qualified to speak on them, since I have never been to either one of these areas.

[Laughter.]

I have very little knowledge other than what I have heard here today, although I find them interesting and certainly an appropriate discussion item for this Committee as well.

My thought would be that, coming from a state that has nearly 90 percent of its state federally managed, which creates a whole different panoply of problems for us out there—we have a lot of taking of private property rights without compensation in these areas, due to some enthusiasm for protection of open spaces, even including private interest and private in-holdings. There is always a taking of somebody's right or use of their land when it is within these private areas.

I would ask and I presume none of you would be objectionable to the utilization of CARA dollars or moneys from that source to acquire the private in-holdings in some of these areas, if there is a willing seller/willing buyer type of arrangement to accommodate this.

And the second part would be, does the group of you support the idea of the Federal Government—and I like the idea of a study. I think the study is great, because it is going to identify the weaknesses, identify the strengths, and make this a much better idea, rather than us having a dictatorial, know-it-all, see-everything-from-Washington's-perspective and point-of-view sort of attitude.

Does the group support the idea of the Federal Government going in and actually requiring private property right holders to divest themselves either with compensation or without compensation of any rights that they may have? In other words, forcing themselves under something like an eminent domain type law?

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Gibbons, in the trail system, the National Trails System, I don't think that it has been typical—in fact, only extremely rarely used, that there have been takings in any of these, for the National Trails System, which is the designation that is being sought here.

Mr. GIBBONS. Right.

Mr. OLVER. The feasibility study—

Mr. GIBBONS. But we are worried about encroaching—

Mr. OLVER. —would define that, and that would take a couple of years to define what would be necessary, if anything. But I would anticipate that this would be totally or virtually totally by negotiation.

And if you needed—

Mr. GIBBONS. Okay. So it would be willing buyer/willing seller?

Mr. OLVER. —to around a shopping center, because it does pass through low land where there may be people, if somebody really objects, you would move the trail, probably.

Mrs. JOHNSON. I have to say that while the power of eminent domain is in the law, in working on the Appalachian Trail, which goes all up the whole northern side of Connecticut—it is a long distance—we did run into one instance in which eminent domain

negotiations began. But they resulted in an agreement with the landowner.

And there were several points where negotiations did go on with landowners. Sometimes the trail bed was moved, if there was an equally desirable place for it to go. Sometimes some other possibilities were developed to shield and make sure that the privacy issues that landowner was concerned about were addressed.

In this area, I think the study will reveal that there are some areas that have become so densely populated already that sort of the idea of any kind of original footpath can't be identified, and it will be adjusted to wherever is best, maybe through a local park or whatever.

So there is a lot of room for adjustment.

The other thing I would mention to you is that I have a bill in the Ways and Means Committee, which I so far have not been able to get through, but it speaks to this very issue.

We can't have the government buying all this land, frankly, I don't think. Even in the Farmland Preservation Program, there will never be enough resources to help protect the biggest farms.

But there are other ways of doing it, through easement agreements that affect a local tax base. Connecticut has a very good law in that regard.

And my bill will allow small landowners to, over time, recoup the lost value of their land, lost through contribution to a conservation easement or, in this case, a path easement, and to recoup the lost value through tax credits, so that actually a small landowner could gain back some of the income lost by foregoing the right to sell the property.

I do think we have to be concerned about the fact that for most people their land is their primary asset and a large part of their retirement security. So I think we have to be sure there are diverse tools and that the negotiations do bring to the table everyone's interest.

But the Federal Government coming in and mandating, that has been a real and honest problem in your part of the country. And we ought to be tougher about it as a nation, that local planning and local decisionmaking is every bit as important as national authority.

Mr. GIBBONS. Well, let me just finish up in the seconds that I have, which have already elapsed here.

You know, trail systems always pass through many states, many counties, and gather a large number of supporters whose interests are oftentimes much greater than the individual private property owners that happen to be in the path of that trail over time.

What I worry about is the long-term effect of having a large group of individuals' combined interest along the length of a trail dictate, of course, what would otherwise be local control and local input out of the picture.

Mrs. JOHNSON. Let me just remind you, though, when we did the Wild and Scenic River study in Connecticut, it goes through Connecticut and Massachusetts. And, actually, we never designated the Massachusetts segment, because the Massachusetts people in those towns didn't want it.

We did designate the Connecticut segment because the Connecticut landowners and the Connecticut towns did want it, and they worked together to satisfy themselves that their rights locally would be protected at the same time they achieved this national objective.

So just because we do a study, that doesn't preordain where we are going to end up. We are going to end up wherever we as a community in the Northeast are willing to end up.

Mr. GIBBONS. Let me just say, I support the study. I think it is a great idea. I am just concerned about private property owners losing power to bigger interests and combined political power of states outside or individual congressional districts outside of the affected area.

And when those combine, saying that it is better for us to impose on your district what we think you should do and what your private landowners should do, even though it doesn't affect us, I mean, the combined power of those political entities oftentimes dictates.

What I only wanted to mention was that I worry about combined power, political power, over individual property rights and property rights owners.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HEFLEY. Ms. Solis?

Ms. SOLIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, too, want to associate my comments with Mr. Kildee. I am very supportive of both pieces of legislation and am working on my own efforts to try to create an urban conservancy with Federal assistance.

And I can understand the issues being raised here regarding eminent domain and property rights. We are having to deal with that along our river, which encompasses over 30 communities, municipalities, many of whom—you have private owners, utility companies, and others that we have to negotiate with.

But the long and the short of it is that there is this desire, I think, on the part of the public to preserve what little open space is available.

In my district, for example, we have a larger percentage in high-density and a very low amount of available open space for people to enjoy, to recreate, and to continue to support.

So I want to associate myself with your bill, and I look forward to seeing it pass through this Committee.

Mr. HEFLEY. I think this Committee illustrates better than anything in a long time the difference in needs and desires of people in various regions of the country.

You are tinkled pink with the idea of additional Federal participation in your states. Jim and I, 90 percent in his state and about a third of my state is owned by the Federal Government, and so we say, "Oh, no. No more Federal Government in our states."

I put a great deal of confidence in you folks from the area—maybe not quite like Don Young, Dale.

But you know your area better than we do. I have been there, but Jim has not been there. We don't know your area.

I know Wayne's area a little bit. And I understand perfectly what he is wanting in a habitat type of corridor there, and it makes a lot of sense to me.

But I wish that you all from the East, when these western land issues come up, would give us the same respect that we give you in assuming that you know better than we do what is important in your area.

The ridiculousness of Mo Hinchey from New York introducing a wilderness bill for Utah, you know, it doesn't make any sense at all, except some wilderness conservation group has gotten to him and gotten him to introduce that bill. He doesn't know what that means to the school districts and the little communities out there in the West if you take what is now multiple-use land and all of a sudden you fence it off.

I don't know in Michigan about that 100,000 acres that you got designated as wilderness. I would like for you to invite me up there. I would love to go see that because I love wilderness. But I think there ought to be a balance.

But what I am trying to say is that when you are not from those areas and you don't know the ramifications, I wish you would give the nod to some of us who do live there and have to live with those situations, the same as we should give the nod to you on things like this.

I think what you are talking about, on the surface of it, sounds terrific. And I would hope that the study shows that it is terrific and it works out.

I have the same concerns that Mr. Duncan and Mr. Gibbons expressed about private landowners, and we have to work that out properly.

Conservation easements of one kind or another, I like that idea. I think that is a good idea. We don't have to own it all, if we can get the conservation easements.

But I think this is a good hearing to show the difference in desires. And in the future, maybe we can work together better on this kind of thing.

Any further questions or comments, Committee?

If not, thank you very much. And if you would like to join us, we would be happy to have you do that.

Mr. Denis Galvin, who is the deputy director of the National Park Service, will speak on both bills.

Mr. Galvin?

STATEMENT OF DENIS GALVIN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Mr. GALVIN. Mr. Chairman, I have prepared testimony on both bills that I will submit for the record. I will simply summarize the administration position on these two bills.

I have with me Rebecca Harriett, the superintendent of Booker T. Washington National Monument. She will be able to answer any more detailed questions, should it please the Chair.

We are pleased for the opportunity to give our views H.R. 1456, a bill to expand the boundary of Booker T. Washington National Monument in Franklin County, Virginia.

The department supports H.R. 1456.

It would not contribute to the National Park Service maintenance backlog because if the land is acquired, it would be added to the park's agricultural permit program. No additional facilities would be built on it, no operating funds would be required, no additional staffing would be needed.

The current owners have indicated that they would be willing to sell the property to the United States. If authorized, this acquisition would be subject to service-wide priorities and the availability of appropriations.

As Congressman Goode testified, we are talking about a parcel of approximately 15 acres abutting the northeast boundary of the park. This current landscape is consistent with the agricultural landscape inside the park, but it is in a region subject to extreme development pressures.

In fact, the next tract beyond this tract has been developed. In the photographs that I have reviewed, you can see the development from this track.

Seven of the 15 acres were part of the original Burroughs farm where Booker T. Washington grew up. The monument was authorized in April 1956 to create a public national memorial to Booker T. Washington, noted Negro educator and apostle of goodwill.

It protects the birth site and childhood home of Booker T. Washington. It provides a resource for public education and a focal point for continuing discussions about the legacy of Booker T. Washington and the evolving context of race in American society.

As I said, the park is 224 acres. It includes the Burroughs house site, not the house itself, two slave cabin sites that are 1960's reconstruction.

It was an agricultural landscape when Booker T. Washington was born there, and it remains an agricultural landscape today. In his biography, "Up from Slavery," Washington frequently referred to the rural life and the influences it had upon him.

The Park Service did a viewshed study in 1998 and identified this land as the most critical for addition to boundary based on its elevation and proximity to the birthplace site.

Acquisition of this parcel would provide the necessary intervening land between development and the agricultural scene of the park, so that visitors will be able to experience the area as it was during Booker T. Washington's occupancy.

I would be glad to answer any questions, Mr. Chairman. If it pleases you, I could go on to the second bill.

Mr. HEFLEY. Why don't you go on to the second.

Mr. GALVIN. I am pleased to present the department's views on H.R. 1814, a bill to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett trail extending through New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.

The trail extends from Mount Cube in Grafton Country, New Hampshire, to the Long Island Sound. That is, the proposed trail does.

The department supports this study. However, we will not consider requesting funding for this study in this or the next fiscal year. We are undertaking, currently, 41 authorized studies.

We caution that our support of this legislation does not necessarily mean that the department will ultimately support designation of these segments as additions to the National Trails System.

The administration is determined to eliminate the deferred maintenance backlog in national parks, but the cost of new parks or other commitments could divert funds from taking care of current possibilities.

The previous witnesses have certainly adequately discussed the concept of this trail. It is 260 miles long. It would connect the Appalachian Trail to the Long Island Sound in Connecticut.

It would largely follow existing trails. The new trail sections would need to be developed in New Hampshire to connect the Appalachian Trail at the north end, and in Connecticut, linking the Mattabesett Trail to Long Island Sound at the south end.

Other shorter gaps would also need to be filled. And the study would, obviously, look at those needed additions.

The great majority of this trail is on private land. Outside of sections of trail on state lands, the trail currently is permitted to cross private land through a variety of agreements with the landowners.

This is not a historic route, and it is not proposed to be a national historic trail. Each section was conceived and built by local trail enthusiasts, and much of the work was initiated in the late 1950's.

The partners included the Connecticut Forest and Park Association for the Connecticut trail, the Appalachian Mountain Club through its Berkshire chapter in Massachusetts, and a relatively new Monadnock-Sunapee greenway trail club, which has the primary responsibility for the trail in New Hampshire.

Organized volunteers would provide the management and maintenance for each trail section, as in the case of the Appalachian Trail, Mr. Chairman. If the trail was designated as part of the National Trails System, those existing trail clubs would continue to be given the opportunity to assume a leadership role.

The existing sections have similar scenic and recreational characteristics to the Appalachian Trail. And as I said, the concept would be to continue the role of volunteers and trail organizations as major participants in the operation, placement, and creation of the trail.

As Mr. Olver mentioned, Secretary Gale Norton in June of this year designated two sections of part of this trail as National Recreation Trails. The National Trails Act gives her that authority.

The designation of a National Scenic Trail, proposed in H.R. 1814, of course, requires an act of Congress.

We support this proposed study. As Congresswoman Johnson mentioned, such studies have been effective in New England in determining management formulas that fit the local situation, both on trails and in Heritage areas and in Wild and Scenic Rivers. And that would be our intention as we undertake this study in this three state area.

We believe the study would take 3 years to complete. It would follow the requirements set out in Section 5(b) of the National Trails System Act, which requires considerable public input. As was pointed out by the previous witnesses, we are talking about hundreds of communities here. And it would be our intention,

certainly, to get their input as we come forward with a recommendation to the Congress upon the completion of the study.

That concludes my summary, Mr. Chairman. I would be happy to answer any questions of the Subcommittee.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Galvin on H.R. 1456 follows:]

Statement of Denis Galvin, Deputy Director, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, on H.R. 1456

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on H.R.1456, a bill to expand the boundary of Booker T. Washington National Monument, Franklin County, Virginia.

The Department supports H.R.1456. The addition would not contribute to the National Park Service (NPS) maintenance backlog because the land would be added to the park agricultural permit program, and no additional facilities, operating funds or staffing will be needed. The current owners have indicated that they would be willing to sell the property to the United States. If authorized, this acquisition would be subject to NPS servicewide priorities and the availability of appropriations.

This legislation will adjust the boundary of Booker T. Washington National Monument to authorize acquiring from willing sellers a parcel of approximately 15 acres abutting the northeast boundary of the park. The addition and preservation of this 15-acre tract will ensure that park visitors may experience an agricultural landscape while inside the park, in a region that is subject to extreme development pressure. Seven of the 15 acres were part of the original Burrough's farm where Booker T. Washington grew up.

Booker T. Washington National Monument was authorized on April 2, 1956, to create a "public national memorial to Booker T. Washington, noted Negro educator and apostle of good will." Booker T. Washington National Monument preserves and protects the birth site and childhood home of Booker T. Washington while interpreting his life experiences and significance in American history as the most powerful African American between 1895 and 1915. The park provides a resource for public education and a focal point for continuing discussions about the legacy of Booker T. Washington and the evolving context of race in American society.

The park is 224 acres of rolling hills, woodlands, and agricultural fields. The primary archeological resources include the Burrough's house site, or "Big House," two slave cabin sites with a 1960's reconstructed cabin on one of the sites. The agricultural landscape plays a critical role in the park's interpretation of Washington's life as an enslaved child during the Civil War. Many of his stories and experiences are centered on this small tobacco farm. In his autobiography Up From Slavery Washington frequently refers to the "rural" life and the influences it had upon him.

A 1998 Viewshed Study conducted as a component of the park's March 2000 General Management Plan (GMP) identified this land as the most critical for addition to the boundary based on its elevation and proximity to the birthplace site. The parcel has been on and off the market for several years and is currently for sale. The land is currently used for open agricultural fields.

The park is located near the regional recreation area of Smith Mountain Lake, which has grown in population and development in the last ten years. The park lies a half-mile from a commercial crossroads called Westlake Corner. This area has become the primary hub of services for the Smith Mountain Lake community and continues to grow. Acquisition of this parcel would provide the necessary buffer between this development and the park so that the visitors will be able to experience the area as it was during Booker T. Washington's life.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. This concludes my prepared remarks. I would be glad to answer any question that you or members of the subcommittee might have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Galvin on H.R. 1814 follows:]

Statement of Denis Galvin, Deputy Director, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, on H.R. 1814

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 1814, a bill to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet–Monadnock–Sunapee–Mattabesett Trail extending through western New Hampshire, western

Massachusetts, and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System. The trail would traverse in a north-south direction from a location near Mount Cube in Grafton County, New Hampshire, and extend to the Long Island Sound east of New Haven, Connecticut. The Department supports this study.

Although the Department supports enactment of this legislation in concept, we will not consider requesting funding for this study in this or the next fiscal year. As of now, there are 41 authorized studies that are pending, and we only expect to complete a few of those this year. We caution that our support of this legislation authorizing a study does not necessarily mean that the Department will support designations of these segments as additions to the National Trails System. The Administration is determined to eliminate the deferred maintenance backlog in national parks, but the cost of new parks or other commitments could divert funds from taking care of current responsibilities.

The purpose of this bill is to conduct a study to determine the suitability for inclusion in the National Trails System of this 260-mile extended trail, which could eventually connect the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in New Hampshire with Long Island Sound in Connecticut. The Trail would largely follow existing trails linking the Monadnock–Sunapee–Greenway Trail in New Hampshire, to the Metacomet–Monadnock Trail in Massachusetts and Connecticut, to the Mattabesett Trail in Connecticut. New trail sections would need to be developed in New Hampshire connecting the Appalachian Trail to the top of Mount Sunapee, and in Connecticut linking the Mattabesett Trail to Long Island Sound. Other shorter gaps would also need to be filled. The great majority of this trail is located on private land. Outside of sections of trail on state lands, the trail currently is permitted to cross private land through a variety of agreements with the landowners. As part of this study, these agreements should be examined to ensure that the National Park Service works cooperatively with private landowners in an effort to continue public access across these private lands if the trail is designated.

Although the region was heavily traveled by Native Americans, for whom the trails have been named, it is not an historic route. Each section was conceived and built by local trail enthusiasts and much of the work was initiated in the late 1950's. The Connecticut Forest and Park Association has been the primary steward of the Mattabesett Trail and the Connecticut portion of the Metacomet Trail. The Appalachian Mountain Club, through its Berkshire Chapter, has picked up the responsibility for the Metacomet—Monadnock Trail in Massachusetts. The relatively new Monadnock–Sunapee–Greenway Trail club has the primary responsibility for the trail in New Hampshire. Organized volunteers provide the management and maintenance for each trail segment. If the trail was designated as part of the National Trails System, then existing trail clubs would be given the opportunity to assume a leadership role in working with landowners and communities to address any concerns they may have.

The existing sections of this proposed trail have similar scenic and recreational characteristics to the segments of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut. The trails provide for a rare opportunity for multi-day, overnight hiking trips in highly populated Connecticut and Massachusetts. In Connecticut and Massachusetts, the state governments and well-established trails organizations have made substantial commitments to the existing trail sections. In New Hampshire, the trail organization, which serves as steward to the trail, is relatively new and its commitment to the New Hampshire section of the trail is not as certain. Our experience with other national scenic and historic trails shows that trail clubs can and should assume a leadership role in working with landowners and communities, addressing their concerns to make their trails successful. The opportunity for good partnering exists in all three states and is worthy of further exploration.

In June 2001, Secretary Gale Norton designated two sections of the Metacomet-Monadnock Trail as a national recreation trail, recognizing the outstanding scenic features, geological formations, and natural and cultural resources along the route. There are well over 800 national recreation trails in the National Trails System. The designation of the national scenic trail proposed in H.R. 1814 would, if successful, provide more extensive Federal involvement, through the authorities of the National Trails System Act for this chain of trails.

The National Park Service supports this proposed study, as the existing trail segments possess many of the characteristics required of a national scenic trail. Only through further investigation will it be possible to determine if it is feasible and suitable for inclusion in the National Trails System. Furthermore, in order to better plan for the future of our national parks, we believe that any such studies should carefully examine the full life cycle operation and maintenance costs that would result from each alternative considered.

If H.R. 1814 is enacted and funds are available, the National Park Service would launch a study of the existing and proposed trails segments to evaluate the support for the trail, the impacts of federal involvement on the communities and private property it passes through, and the resources which would be opened for public use. The study would take approximately three years to complete and would, at a minimum, follow the requirements listed in section 5(b) of the National Trails System Act. Through this process, the National Park Service looks forward to working with and hearing the valuable input of the hundreds of communities that these trails cross in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to comment. This concludes my prepared remarks and I will be happy to answer any questions you or other committee members might have.

Mr. HEFLEY. Questions, Committee?

Ms. Solis?

Mr. Gibbons?

Mr. GIBBONS. Yes, thank you very much.

I noticed in your testimony, Mr. Galvin, you used the words experience an "agricultural landscape" while within the park. What is the significance or importance of experiencing an agricultural landscape?

Mr. GALVIN. Well, Booker T. Washington for the first 9 years of his life was a slave on a tobacco farm in this portion in Virginia. And he mentions in "Up from Slavery" how important that rural and agricultural surrounding was to him.

We also manage another great site associated with Booker T. Washington, the Tuskegee Institute. That is, it is still a private college, but we run a museum on the site there.

And his whole approach to education was very strongly influenced—and somewhat controversially, too, I might say—influenced by his agricultural experience. The buildings at Tuskegee were built by the students—

Mr. GIBBONS. Within the national monument itself, the Booker T. Washington monument, that 224-acre site, without the 15 acres that we are discussing in this bill, are there agricultural experiences within there?

Mr. GALVIN. Yes. Yes, we do agricultural leasing within the boundaries of the monument.

Mr. GIBBONS. So you find that having an agricultural experience within a national monument or any part of the Park Service is not a detriment?

Mr. GALVIN. No. Certainly not.

Obviously, it depends on the purposes that Congress sets forth. But I was up at Minute Man National Historical Park in Massachusetts last Friday, and they have agricultural leases as well, because in the 18th century obviously it was an agricultural landscape.

Mr. GIBBONS. Going over H.R. 1814, the bill on the trail up there, do you have an estimate of the cost to the government to maintain the trail, should it become a National Scenic Trail. What would be the cost to your agency?

Mr. GALVIN. We really don't have an estimate. We would put one in the study.

But I would say that the model here is definitely the Appalachian Trail. And on the Appalachian Trail, for the entire length of the Appalachian Trail, I believe the National Park Service has

about three employees. All of the maintenance on the trail is done by private trail groups.

And I would think that that would be the experience here. We might have a coordinator, one person on the ground here, but the actual operation and maintenance of the trail would be done by trail groups.

Mr. GIBBONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Goode?

Well, thank you very much.

Mr. GALVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HEFLEY. Very helpful, and we appreciate it.

Third panel, Ann Colson, director of volunteers and trails coordinator for the Connecticut Forest and Park Association; Peg Brady, executive director, Appalachian Mountain Club, Boston; and Florella Johnson, associate superintendent of Franklin County Schools, Rocky Mount, Virginia.

Why don't we start with you, Ms. Johnson, because I assume you are going to be talking about Booker T. Washington, since you are from Virginia?

Ms. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. HEFLEY. All right, let's have that first, and then we will get to the trail.

STATEMENT OF FLORELLA JOHNSON, ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT, FRANKLIN COUNTY SCHOOLS, ROCKY MOUNT, VIRGINIA

Ms. JOHNSON. Mr. Chairman and Subcommittee members, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you today. It is a pleasure to share my feelings and the feelings shared by many of Franklin County about the services afforded us by the Booker T. Washington National Monument.

The Booker T. Washington National Monument is located in a lovely, rural mountain region of southwest Virginia. This setting lends an authentic feeling for the monument that recaptures the true atmosphere of the past.

It is one of the few National Park Service sites that is set aside where the America public can view on a smaller scale how slavery and the plantation system worked.

This site includes historical structures, archaeological sites, museum objects, and a cultural landscape that are very significant to its history. The development of surrounding land will serve to enhance or diminish the quality of the monument's natural resources.

It certainly must be our goal to keep the monument as close to its origin state as possible.

The Booker T. Washington monument is a wonderful setting for a man of stature who confessed he learned this lesson:

"I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed. Out of the hard and unusual struggle through which he is compelled to pass, he gets a strength, a confidence, that one misses whose pathway is comparatively smooth by reason of birth and race."

This lesson that Booker T. learned is an inspiration to all children. He has certainly shown that the most difficult and toughest

obstacles can be realized through perseverance and hard work. Booker T.'s life is definitely an example of the kind of people who make our country great.

As a citizen of Franklin County in Rocky Mount, Virginia, I take great pride in living in a county that has a national monument. Though all counties in the country have a history, and many have histories of a community rich in heritage, Franklin County actually has a national monument to commemorate the nationally recognized educator Booker T. Washington.

As an African-American who lives in Franklin County, I take even greater pride in living in a county that has a national monument erected for an African-American.

Though we know that national monuments don't exist in every county and city in the country, a national monument erected for an African-American is an ever more rare occurrence.

Because Franklin County has the Booker T. Washington National Monument, the people in the county can take pride in knowing that this great African-American educational leader had his roots in the county.

Just as it is important to know his legacy, it is equally important to maintain the integrity of his birthplace. Maintaining the integrity of the birthplace includes not only sustaining the upkeep and appearance of the existing land but also ensuring that surrounding land continues to provide the appearance of the scene set on the existing farm.

The purchase of surrounding land on the other side of Route 122 would ensure that this happens.

As I travel through Appomattox, Virginia, in the historical area commemorating the final battles of the Civil War, the scene on both sides of Route 24 provides a perfect setting to commemorate this great occasion.

The other aspect of the Booker T. Washington monument is the educational value it holds for the students in Franklin County.

The superintendent and staff at the Booker T. Washington National Monument have been actively involved in establishing a working relationship with the Franklin County School System and the communities surrounding the park. This is a partnership that is educationally rewarding for the school system's 7,000 students.

One objective of the Park Service has been to structure the educational program to correlate with the standards of learning, commonly called in Virginia the SOLs, for the public schools there.

Several summers ago, a workshop was held at the park where the Booker T. Washington program coordinators and Franklin County teachers worked on developing a curriculum guide for grades K-5. The guides were printed and placed in each elementary schools' main office, library, and the school board resource center.

This summer, 2001, a group of teachers will work again with the program directors to update and refine their goals.

During the summer of 2000, the Booker T. Washington National Monument service provided a historical camp for upper elementary level students.

For the past 3 years, students in the Franklin County gifted program went to the monument for a unique Christmas experience

based on the book "Christmas in the Big House, Christmas in the Quarters."

The Booker T. Washington rangers did a reenactment of what Christmas was like during the time Booker lived on the Burroughs plantation. This was a wonderful opportunity for children, their families, and community visitors to come together for a festive preseason celebration with stories, music, and refreshments.

During history month, students study the events in history that coincide with the time Booker lived on the Burroughs plantation and wrote an original interpretation of the Underground Railroad. The play was presented to family and friends on a Saturday at the park. Many gathered and witnessed a superb performance by students. They had an opportunity to share with family and citizens their understanding of an important event in history.

Farm life is vanishing fast in America. Even though our students live in a rural area, they do not have exposure to farm life as it once existed. At least this life is still addressed at the monument. Students have the wonderful opportunity to relive this life through artifacts, houses, occupations, et cetera.

I like change, but sometimes things need to remain the same. The agricultural setting across from the monument must be allowed to remain. This will only be realized if the 15-acre desired tract is obtained.

Recognition of the past is as vital to a growing institution as recognition of the future. As you take a walk through the Burroughs plantation, a site restored to it general appearance in the mid-19th century, you can feel history of the past.

I am here today asking you to obtain the 15-acre tract so the Booker T. Washington monument can be preserved and protected.

And I would like to add, if we miss the purchase of this tract for the monument, a crucial opportunity will be missed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for this opportunity.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Johnson follows:]

FRANKLIN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT
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(540) 483-5138 • FAX (540) 483-5806

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One objective of the Park Service has been to structure the educational program to correlate with the Standards of Learning (SOL's as they are commonly known) for Virginia public schools. Several summers ago, a workshop was held at the park where the Booker T. Washington program coordinators and Franklin County teachers worked on developing a curriculum guide for grades K-5. The guides were printed and placed in each elementary school's main office, library, and the school board resource center. This summer (2001) a group of teachers will work again with the program directors to update and refine their goals.

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Farmland is vanishing fast in America. Even though our students live in a rural area, they do not have exposure to farm life as it once existed. At least this life is still addressed at the Monument. Students have the wonderful opportunity to relive this life through artifacts, houses, occupations, etc.

I like change, but sometimes things need to remain the same. The agricultural setting across from the monument must be allowed to remain. This will only be realized if the 15-acre desired tract is obtained. Recognition of the past is as vital to a growing institution as recognition of the future. As you take a walk through the Burroughs Plantation - a site restored to its general appearance in the mid-19th century - you can feel history of the past.

I am here today asking you to obtain the 15-acre tract so the Booker T. Washington Monument can be preserved and protected.

Submitted by:
Florella H. Johnson
Associate Superintendent
Franklin County Public Schools

Mr. HEFLEY. Thank you.
Ms. Brady?

STATEMENT OF PEG BRADY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Ms. BRADY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to speak.

On behalf of all the AMC members, the Appalachian Mountain Club members, I am here today to speak in support of the H.R. 1814, requesting the funds to move forward on a feasibility study.

I would like to read my comments, if I could.

We commend the Committee for taking a leadership role in exploring new opportunities in New England to enhance the network of hiking trails. And I also would like to point out, I appreciate the deliberativeness with which you are approaching these comments and discussions, particularly with regard to Mr. Gibbons' comments about ownership and property rights.

Mr. Chairman, as I say, I come here to speak to you in support and offer our following recommendations.

The Appalachian Mountain Club, first of all, is the oldest nonprofit conservation and recreation organization in the United States, with a membership of over 95,000 members. We are very, very active players in the New England trail network. And many of these folks that are our members are very, very active volunteers, as Mr. Olver had mentioned earlier. Our Berkshire chapter has been the backbone for his efforts in the Massachusetts area.

AMC promotes the protection, the enjoyment, and the wise use of mountains, rivers, and trails in the Appalachian Mountain region. We service the Appalachian region from Virginia north, all the way north to Maine.

AMC provides regional and national leadership in trail corridor planning, construction, maintenance, and now we are getting very deeply involved in trail head protection efforts in the State of New Hampshire.

AMC is responsible for the management and maintenance and stewardship of over 1,400 miles of trails throughout the AMC region. And each year, over 1,000, as I mentioned, volunteers, members of AMC, are working hand in hand with partnership groups like Ann's group, working to maintain trails throughout this region.

AMC's White Mountain professional trail crew is responsible for nearly 350 miles of trails and 800-plus trail signs, which oftentimes disappear through a season.

We work cooperatively with the Federal, state, and local agencies, as well as other nonprofit organizations, to protect and care for trails, knowing that experiences they provide are invaluable to the public.

The trails identified and proposed in this study provide a unique and valuable recreation opportunity in addition to stunning vistas from key ridges and peaks along the trail network. This network passes along special streams, marshes, lakes, ponds, while taking hikers, skiers, through forests and agricultural lands that provide both solitude and a glimpse into the cultural character and history

of New England communities and play a host to these footpaths and their visitors.

We believe the mountains and the rivers have an intrinsic worth and also provide the needed—and I say desperately needed, in some cases with some of the communities that are mentioned today—desperately needed recreational opportunity, spiritual renewal, ecological and economic health for the region.

AMC encourages its members and the public to enjoy and appreciate the natural world, because we believe that that successful conservation and stewardship depends largely on that type of an experience.

The Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett trail system as it exists today is a resource that presents extensive opportunities for both long-distance backpacking, as well as local day hiking, cross-country skiing, jogging, and other fitness activities that are easily accessible to people in the surrounding communities.

Ongoing efforts since the 1920's and 1930's to secure access to and maintain these trails have been critical to the continued enjoyment of the trail and helped to preserve its landscape and a corridor of fragile habitat, reaching from Connecticut to New Hampshire.

The proposed designation as a National Scenic Trail would create the opportunity to ensure that these outdoor experiences could be enjoyed throughout this proposed corridor for generations to come.

The backbone of each stretch of this trail system consists of dedicated volunteers, including the AMC members and its chapters, that have identified trail alignments, worked with private property owners to ensure appropriate uses, published guides to inform the public and the users of the trails, and maintained the trails over the years to lessen the effects of overuse and unsafe conditions.

The proposed study and potential designation of the trail would provide the volunteers with the additional source of funding for maintenance and long-term planning.

The designation would also increase the organizational support to recruit additional volunteers and garner additional resources for ongoing maintenance needs and landowner relations.

Quite frankly, we could be leveraging considerable more resources, not only from public sources, but also from private sources. This could serve a catalyst throughout the entire region.

Based on discussions we have had with our members and partner organizations, the AMC offers its support for the feasibility study of the trail for the benefits that the designation as a National Scenic Trail could provide to recreational opportunities and the protection of the habitat corridor.

Based on past studies and the development of the National Scenic Trail systems, AMC recognizes that the issue of public land acquisition and methods used are often of great concern and may affect local support for final designation.

We understand from AMC members and partner organizations that this is a concern that will need to be addressed during the feasibility study, as you folks have all suggested, prior to the designation.

AMC hopes that this study will build on the good relations that now exist among the property owners and maintaining clubs

throughout this network. We encourage the feasibility study to be conducted in a manner that continues to involve the maintaining clubs, the associations, and the state land management agencies, as they have been in the course of discussions leading to this point.

The success of this initiative will depend largely on the communications among the private landowners, who up until now have generously allowed trail use through their properties, and as well as reaching out to other interested parties who are not currently involved.

Since designation as a National Scenic Trail could result in increased use of the trail system by long-distance hikers, particularly if it provides a connection to the Appalachian Trail, AMC recommends that the feasibility study include: an assessment of anticipated use, the adequacy of overnight facilities, and the additional maintenance and management needs that would be required to accommodate new users and avoid any potential negative impacts to the system or the surrounding areas.

AMC would be very happy to serve as a resource for information on trail usage throughout New Hampshire as well as management of backcountry facilities.

Finally, AMC understands that there will be additional discussions at the local level with the maintaining clubs and the state land management agencies. We hope that with all the input gathered through this process, will be used in developing the scope of this feasibility study.

Again, I thank you very much for the opportunity to present these comments, and I would be open to questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Brady follows:]

Statement of Peg Brady, Director of Conservation Programs, Appalachian Mountain Club, on H.R. 1814

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) appreciates the committee's invitation to attend today's hearing. I offer the following testimony for your consideration regarding the House Bill 1814, entitled "To Amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Metacomet–Monadnock–Sunapee–Mattabesett Trail extending through eastern New Hampshire, western Massachusetts, and central Connecticut for study for potential addition to the National Trails System". We commend the committee for taking a leadership role and exploring new opportunities in New England to enhance the network of hiking trails. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I come before you today to speak in support of H.R. 1814 and offer the following recommendations.

The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) is the oldest non-profit conservation and recreation organization in the United States with a membership of over 95,000. The AMC promotes the protection, enjoyment and wise use of the mountains, rivers and trails of the Appalachian Mountain region. AMC provides regional and national leadership in trail corridor planning, construction and maintenance and trailhead protection. AMC is responsible for the management, maintenance, and stewardship of over 1,400 miles of trails throughout out the AMC region and each year over 1000 volunteers contribute their time—-many of them contribute a full week—-to keeping the trail system in top condition. AMC's White Mountain Professional Trail crew is responsible for nearly 350 miles of trails and 800+ trail signs. We work cooperatively with Federal, State and Local agencies as well as other non-profit organizations to protect and care for trails knowing that the experiences they provide are invaluable to the public.

The trails identified and proposed for National Scenic Trails study in H.R. 1814 provides unique and valuable recreational opportunities in addition to stunning vistas from key ridges and peaks. This trail network pass along special streams, marshes, lakes, and ponds while taking hikers and skiers through forests and agricultural lands that provide both solitude and a glimpse into the cultural character

of the New England communities that play host to these footpaths and their visitors. We believe that the mountains and rivers have an intrinsic worth and also provide needed recreational opportunity, spiritual renewal, and ecological and economic health for the region. AMC encourages people to enjoy and appreciate the natural world because we believe that successful conservation and stewardship depends on this experience.

The Metacomet–Monadnock–Sunapee–Mattabesett trail system as it exists today is a resource that presents extensive opportunities for both long distance backpacking as well as local day hiking, cross country skiing, jogging, and other fitness activities that are easily accessible to people in the surrounding communities. Ongoing efforts since the 1920's and 1930's to secure access to and maintain these trails have been critical to the continued enjoyment of the trail and helped to preserve its landscape and a corridor of fragile habitat reaching from Connecticut to New Hampshire. Designation as a National Scenic Trail would create the opportunity to ensure that these outdoor experiences could be enjoyed throughout this proposed corridor for generations to come.

The backbone of each stretch of this trail system consists of dedicated volunteers, including AMC members and its Chapters, that have identified the trail alignments, worked with private landowners to ensure appropriate use, published guides, and maintained the trails over the years to lessen the effects from overuse and unsafe conditions. The proposed study and potential designation as a National Scenic Trail would provide the volunteers with an additional source of funding for maintenance and long-term planning. The designation would also increase the organizational support to recruit additional volunteers and garner additional resources for ongoing maintenance needs and landowner relations.

Based on discussions we have had with our members and partner organizations, the AMC offers its support for the feasibility study of the Metacomet–Monadnock–Sunapee–Mattabesett Trail for the benefits that designation as a National Scenic Trail could provide to recreational opportunities and the protection of the habitat corridor.

Based on past studies and development of National Scenic Trail systems, AMC recognized that the issue of public land acquisition and methods used are often of great concern and may affect local support for final designation. We understand from AMC members and partner organizations that this is a concern that will need to be addressed during the feasibility study prior to the designation of the Metacomet–Monadnock–Sunapee–Mattabesett trail system. AMC hopes that this study will build on the good relations that now exist among property owners and the maintaining clubs. We encourage the feasibility study to be conducted in a manner that continues to involve the maintaining clubs, associations and state land management agencies, as they have been in the course of discussions leading to this point. The success of this initiative will depend largely on the communication among the private landowners, who up until now, have generously allowed trail use through their properties and as well as reaching out to other interested parties.

Since designation as a National Scenic Trail could result in increased use of the trail system by long-distance hikers, particularly if it provides a connection to the Appalachian Trail, AMC also recommends that the feasibility study include an assessment of anticipated use, the adequacy of overnight facilities, and any additional maintenance and management needs that would be required to accommodate new users and avoid negative impacts to the trail system or the surrounding areas. AMC would be happy to serve as a resource for information on trail usage throughout New Hampshire as well as management of backcountry facilities.

Finally, AMC understands that there will be additional discussions at the local level with maintaining clubs and state land management agencies. We hope that all input gathered through the stakeholder process will be considered in developing the scope of the feasibility study.

Thank you for your consideration of AMC's comments.

Mr. HEFLEY. Ms. Colson?

STATEMENT OF ANN COLSON, DIRECTOR OF VOLUNTEERS AND TRAILS COORDINATOR, CONNECTICUT FOREST AND PARK ASSOCIATION, ROCKFALL, CONNECTICUT

Ms. COLSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to say at the outset that we at the Connecticut Forest and Park Association have been extremely gratified by the overwhelming public response in favor of the proposed feasibility study.

Letters of support from Connecticut town officials and land use agencies along the trail corridor, and from conservation organizations, trail managers, hiking groups, and individual trail users, along with the endorsement of—and I made a mistake here.

I said the entire congressional delegation from Connecticut. That is incorrect. All of those Congresspeople who have trails going through their towns have endorsed this and are in support of the bill.

They are all testimony to the support of H.R. 1814.

Connecticut Forest and Park Association, for whom I work, was founded in 1895, and it was the organization that established the first four of the Blue-Blazed hiking trails. In 1929, the Metacomet Trail was one of those.

You can see from our map over here the trail corridor runs through the State of Connecticut. The Metacomet is the northern section. The Mattabesett Trail is the southern section.

The yellow that you see are the potential towns that the trail can go through to get to Long Island Sound.

The Town of Guilford, which is the yellow town furthest to the left, has worked very hard to bring this about. They are meeting with our roving trails crew to show them where the trail can go. It is very important to them from an economic standpoint. Conservation and recreational use of trails is very important to them as part of their town character.

In 1932, the Mattabesett Trail was added to the Blue trail system, following the ridgeline south to Bluff Head in north Guilford, which is the southern most point of the trail now.

When setting up the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System, the founding fathers also recognized the need for continuing trail maintenance, and, therefore, established a corps of volunteers who would oversee the trails.

In 1929, there were 250 miles of Blue trails in Connecticut. Today, there are more 700 miles of trail.

My role at Connecticut Forest and Park Association is director of volunteers and trails coordinator. There actually are 92 trail managers for the entire 700-mile system of trails.

The growth of the trail system could not have been sustained without the dedication of a veritable army of volunteers who build, manage, and maintain the trails throughout the year.

Twelve trail managers are assigned to the combined 108 miles of the Mattabesett and Monadnock trails, which are also overseen by the CFPA trails Committee, which meets quarterly, and supported by CFP professional staff.

These two trails pass through the state's most diverse landscape, from densely populated urban centers to cool forested woodlands, streams, and ponds, past picturesque agricultural fields and atop sheer cliff faces, offering sweeping views across Connecticut's central valley.

On a clear day, hikers on the Metacomet Trail can see Long Island Sound to the south and Mount Tom in Massachusetts to the north. From Bluff Head, the 360-degree viewshed includes the

distant city buildings of Hartford, our capital city, and the shimmering blue expanse of Long Island Sound, where it meets Connecticut's southern coast.

I have been to a lot of states in this country, and I think Connecticut is probably the most diverse and one of the most beautiful. However, our population is exploding. We have 3 million acres of land in Connecticut, and we have 3 million people in Connecticut. We have 1 million dwelling units Connecticut.

We need these trails. We need the escape that they offer, and the opportunity to see the state from somewhere other than Route 95.

Unsurpassed beauty is not all that awaits the curious observer who hikes on these trails. Fragments of Connecticut's history can be found amongst the oaks and sugar maples and white pines: forgotten cemeteries, tracks of former stagecoach routes, caves used by ancient Native American tribal councils, abandoned quarries, old cellar holes, and meandering rock walls.

Off the Mattabesett Trail is a burial site marked only by a circle of large stones, where the remains of smallpox victims were laid to rest. Further north along the Metacomet Trail, a side trail brings hikers to Hospital Rock, which bears the 1792 inscriptions of 66 smallpox victims.

Scattered through the landscape are remnants of the charcoal mounds built by 19th century colliers who supplied charcoal for the state's once-thriving iron industry.

The legacy of our nation's Civilian Conservation Corps remains in the bridges, dams, ponds, and lookout towers they constructed during the depression era of the 1930's.

Hikers on the Metacomet Trail in Farmington can explore Will Warren's Den, a cave of huge jumbled rocks where Warren was hidden by Indians after he was flogged for not attending church and subsequently attempted to burn down the village of Farmington.

The trail corridors also harbor relatively undisturbed, unique natural areas that provide critical habitat for a diverse range of animal and plant species. And from the state Department of Environmental Protection, I understand that some of the state-listed species along these two trails included yellow ladyslipper, goldenseal, squirrel corn, eastern box turtle, and Jefferson salamander. These are all rare or endangered species that can be found on the ridge tops.

Today, the trails themselves are threatened. In the early to mid-20th century, permission to establish these footpaths was granted on the strength of a handshake by the farmers and wood-lot owners whose land the trails crossed.

Today, fully 75 percent of the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System lies on private or quasi-public land, with only 25 percent of the trails located on state-owned lands.

Those sections of trail that are on privately held property exist only through the kind permission of the landowner. Few if any legal agreements are in place.

The heightened economy of recent years has encouraged explosive development, often on lands that were once considered marginal, such as the ridge tops. As development pressure increases,

so does the very real threat of being unable to retain the trails' continuity and integrity for future generations of hikers.

We have launched a comprehensive trails protection program that we hope will provide permanent protection for the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System. Metacomet and Mattabesett trails are the initial focus of this important initiative, which involves working in partnership with all stakeholders along the trail corridors.

Stakeholders include individual and corporate property owners, trail managers, local land trusts, municipal governing boards, and land use agencies, regional planning agencies, and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

Our own research and trail protection efforts during the past 2 years speak loudly to the need for H.R. 1814. I urge you to join with me in support of this bill.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Colson follows:]

Statement of Ann T. Colson, Director of Volunteers & Trails Coordinator, Connecticut Forest and Park Association, on H.R. 1814

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Ann Colson. I am Director of Volunteers & Trails Coordinator for Connecticut Forest & Park Association, the private, nonprofit conservation organization that manages the 700-mile Blue–Blazed Hiking Trail System in my beautiful state of Connecticut. I am here this morning to testify in favor of H.R. 1814, the Metacomet–Monadnock–Sunapee–Mattabesett Trail Study Act of 2001.

The Act specifies that a feasibility study be conducted for the potential addition to the National Trails System of the Metacomet–Monadnock–Sunapee–Mattabesett Trail extending approximately 260 miles through Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. I would like to address the Connecticut sections of this multi-state trail, and how they are an integral part of the envisioned 260-mile New England Trail.

Let me say at the outset that we have been extremely gratified by the overwhelming public response in favor of the proposed feasibility study. Letters of support from Connecticut town officials and land use agencies along the trail corridor, and from conservation organizations, trail managers, hiking groups, and individual trail users, along with the endorsement of the entire Connecticut Congressional Delegation, are all testimony to the support of H.R. 1814.

Connecticut Forest & Park Association (CFPA), founded in 1895, established the first four of the Blue–Blazed Hiking Trails in 1929, including the Metacomet Trail, which traverses the magnificent traprock ridges in the north central part of Connecticut. In 1932 the Mattabesett Trail was added, following the ridgeline south to Bluff Head in north Guilford.

When setting up the Blue–Blazed Hiking Trail System, the founding fathers also recognized the need for continuing trail maintenance and therefore established a corps of volunteers who would oversee the trails. In 1929 there were 250 miles of Blue–Blazed Trails. Today there are more than 700 miles. This growth could not have been sustained without the dedication of a veritable army of CFPA volunteers who build, manage, and maintain the trails throughout the year. Twelve trail managers are assigned to the combined 108 miles of the Mattabesett and Metacomet Trails, which are also overseen by the CFPA Trails Committee and supported by CFPA professional staff.

These two trails pass through the state's most diverse landscapes, from densely populated urban centers to cool, forested woodlands, streams and ponds, past picturesque agricultural fields, and atop sheer cliff faces offering sweeping views across Connecticut's central valley. On a clear day, hikers on the Metacomet Trail can see Long Island Sound to the south, and Mt. Tom in Massachusetts to the north. From Bluff Head, the 360-degree viewshed includes the distant city buildings of Hartford, our capitol city, and the shimmering blue expanse of Long Island Sound where it meets Connecticut's southern coast.

Unsurpassed beauty is not all that awaits the curious observer who hikes on these trails. Fragments of Connecticut's history can be found amongst the oaks and sugar maples and white pines—forgotten cemeteries, tracks of former stagecoach routes, caves used by ancient Native American tribal councils, abandoned quarries, old cel-

lar holes, and meandering rock walls. Off the Mattabesett Trail is a burial site, marked only by a circle of large stones, where the remains of smallpox victims were laid to rest. Further north, along the Metacomet Trail, a side trail brings hikers to "Hospital Rock," which bears the 1792 inscriptions of 66 smallpox victims. Scattered through the landscape are remnants of the charcoal mounds built by 19th century colliers who supplied charcoal for the state's once-thriving iron industry. The legacy of our nation's Civilian Conservation Corps remains in the bridges, dams, ponds, and lookout towers they constructed during the depression era of the 1930s, many of which are accessible along the trails. Hikers on the Metacomet Trail in Farmington can explore Will Warren's Den, a cave of huge jumbled rocks where Warren was hidden by Indians after he was flogged for not attending church and subsequently attempted to burn down the village of Farmington.

The trail corridors also harbor relatively undisturbed unique natural areas that provide critical habitat for a diverse range of animal and plant species. One of the distinguishing characteristics of Lamentation Mountain, across which the Mattabesett Trail runs, is the presence of two state threatened plant species (restricted information on file with the Natural Diversity Database of the Natural Resources Center, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection). Exhibit A, attached to this testimony, describes Lamentation Mountain's natural communities, which are typical of those found on Connecticut's traprock ridge system, the 75-mile spine that is the framework for much of the Mattabesett Trail and the Metacomet Trail.

Today the trails themselves are threatened.

In the early- to mid–20th Century, permission to establish these footpaths was granted on the strength of a handshake by the farmers and woodlot owners whose land the trails crossed. Today, fully 75% of the Blue–Blazed Hiking Trails System lies on private or quasi-public land, with only 25% of the trails located on state-owned lands. Those sections of trail that are on privately held property exist only through the kind permission of the landowner. Few, if any, legal agreements are in place. The heightened economy of recent years has encouraged explosive development, often on lands that were once considered marginal, such as the ridgetops. As development pressure increases, so does the very real threat of being unable to retain the trails' continuity and integrity for future generations of hikers.

In 1999, CFPA launched a comprehensive trails protection program aimed at providing permanent protection for the Blue–Blazed Hiking Trail System. The Metacomet and Mattabesett Trails are the initial focus of this important initiative, which involves working in partnership with all stakeholders along the trail corridors. Stakeholders include individual and corporate property owners, trail managers, local land trusts, municipal governing boards and land use agencies, regional planning agencies, and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, which has jurisdiction over the state's public forests and parks.

Our own research and trail protection efforts during the past two years speak loudly to the need for H.R. 1814, the Metacomet–Monadnock–Sunapee–Mattabesett Trail Study Act of 2001. I urge you to join with me and the entire Connecticut Congressional Delegation in support of H.R. 1814.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for recognizing me. I yield the floor to questions.

[Attachments to Ms. Colson's statement follow:]

Testimony of

Ann T. Colson
Director of Volunteers & Trails Coordinator
Connecticut Forest and Park Association

Concerning HR 1814
Metacomet-Monadnock-Sunapee-Mattabesett Trail Study Act of 2001

EXHIBIT A

Excerpted from "Lamentation Mountain Tri-Town Project Land Use Plan"
Prepared by and for:
Berlin Conservation Commission
Meriden Conservation Commission
Middletown Conservation Commission
June 1994

LAMENTATION MOUNTAIN

This ridge, running approximately 3.5 miles north to south, has a maximum elevation of 720 feet and includes Lamentation and Chauncey Peaks. It is typical of many ridges in Connecticut with its steep west-facing cliff and much more gradually sloping east side. The ridge runs on a slight southwest to northeast direction. The southeast corner of the ridge near Chauncey Peak is an active quarry, with extensive removal of the traprock material. The northern and eastern slopes are being encroached by housing developments. The remainder of the area is undisturbed, except for numerous dirt roads, trails, and selective timbering on some tracts.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of Lamentation Mountain is the presence of one state threatened plant species and the historical record of another species. Records of both of these plants are available through the efforts of the staff of the Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDB), a component of the Natural Resources Center, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. A complete discussion of these unique plant species can be found on page 10.

NATURAL COMMUNITIES - ESTABLISHMENT

Nichols (1914) described the general succession of plants and plant associations on traprock ridges, from which the following summary is derived. Traprock ridges provide severe environmental conditions that challenge the advent of vegetation. Intense solar radiation, extreme

temperature changes, scarcity of water for long time periods, and the difficulty in securing a foothold in the rock all contribute to these difficult conditions.

Pioneer species which inhabit freshly exposed trap rock are crustose lichens, which give a black or grayish color to the surface. These lichens secrete acids which help dissolve the rock. This helps create a micro-habitat that allows the establishment of the next plant pioneers, foliose and fruticose lichens and mosses.

Crevice vegetation becomes established as dust and sand collect in the numerous fissures in the traprock. Small pockets of substrate allow the establishment of xerophytic (dry-loving) grasses, such as little blue stem (*Andropogon scoparius*), ferns, and forbs, such as wild columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*). These herbaceous plants produces shade that eliminate the original pioneer species.

As vegetation takes root, there is an increase trapping of the associate sand and soil. Soil also begins to accumulate in shallow depressions which allows an increase in the amount of plant cover. As this occurs, roots, rhizomes and soil bind together to form sod. This allows shrubs such as staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*) and blueberries (*Vaccinium* sp.) to grow. Eventually trees, such as red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) and scrub oak (*Quercus ilicifolia*), take root. These species are very intolerant of shade. As these trees and shrubs arrive, their shade provides a more humid environment for more shade tolerant species such as chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*). These shade-tolerant species eventually eliminate the original trees and grow into a woodland with scattered patches of herbaceous plants. Over time, a continuous canopy develops and the ensuing forest has a very different understory of shade tolerant species.

Succession also occurs along the talus slopes. Rich soil is washed down to the bottom of the slope, where water accumulates. Here a forest can quickly develop, due to the rich mineral input and available water. Often a forested belt develops mid-slope under the overhang of the basalt outcrop, where shade provides a less harsh environment. Eventually the forested belt and bottom forest meet and the entire talus slope becomes forested. Pioneer plants in the open talus are again lichens and crevice plants, such as poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*). Shrubs (sumacs) and mesophytic (water-loving) trees such as black birch (*Betula lenta*), American basswood (*Tilia americana*), and Eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) follow.

NATURAL COMMUNITIES - DESCRIPTIONS

The natural communities found on Lamentation Mountain are typical of those found in the traprock system. The following descriptions of the communities are derived from unpublished documents of the Natural Resources Center, Department of Natural Resources (Metzler 1990, no date). They are delineated on the overlay entitled "Natural Resources of Lamentation Mountain." These demarkations were made through the use of aerial photographs and field observation May through September 1992. Because the bedrock at Lamentation is basalt, the communities are often termed "subacidic." This is a reflection of the pH of the rock, which tends to closer to 7.0. A general toposequence diagram of a traprock system can be found in Figure 3.

Red cedar ledges

Red cedar ledges or subacidic rock summits and outcrops are dry to xeric exposed summits and outcrops with a vegetation of low shrubs, grasses and herbs on basalt, diabase, and calcareous schists (Metzler 1990). These exposed bedrock areas may be quite extensive, with vegetation only in the cracks in the rocks. Other areas may be comprised of small exposures of rock, interspersed with vegetation. The vegetation generally is comprised of tall, perennial, warm-season grasses and small herbaceous plants, with occasional stunted shrubs or trees. Characteristic species include little bluestem (*Andropogon scoparium*), Canada bluegrass (*Poa compressa*), and red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*). Bastard toadflax (*Comandra umbellata*), scrub oak (*Quercus ilicifolia*), black huckleberry (*Gaylussacia baccata*) and blueberry (*Vaccinium* sp.) are typical components of traprock summits and outcrops.

Running north to south along the ridgeline of Lamentation and Chauncey Peaks are such areas of outcrops of the basalt. These open areas may be kept in this successional stage by human-caused fires, exposed winds, and other harsh environmental conditions. The natural role of fire is unknown in the Northeast, although similar natural communities in the mid-west have historical evidence of regular fire activity.

Subacidic cliffs, Subacidic talus, and Subacidic talus forest/woodland

These three communities are delineated on the map as a group, mainly due to their close proximity and the difficulty in differentiating among them on the aerial photos and maps.

Subacidic cliffs are dry to xeric exposed and shaded cliffs and cliff faces with sparse vegetation in cracks, crevices, and other fissures (Metzler 1990). These vertical exposures of resistant bedrock have minimal soil development, which leads to the sparse vegetation. In New York, typical plants of this community are rock polypody (*Polypodium virginianum*), marginal wood fern (*Dryopteris marginalis*), and common hairgrass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*) (Reschke 1990).

At Lamentation Mountain and Chauncey Peak, there are numerous small cliff exposures. In general, the cliffs are 60 feet or less in height. Several of these cliffs are considered examples of challenging rock climbing in Connecticut (Nichols 1982).

Subacidic talus is dry, coarse-textured colluvial deposits of rocks and boulders below cliffs and ledges with an open vegetation of vines, scattered herbs, and lichens on basalt, diabase, and calcareous schists (Metzler 1990). At Lamentation Mountain, the western and southern edge of the traprock summit is constantly fracturing into chunks of basalt that fall to the base of the western and southern slope. As this rubble accumulates, it provides a slope covered with talus material. There are still pockets of open talus on Lamentation's slopes.

Subacidic talus forest/woodland is dry to moist open woodland or forest on coarse colluvial deposits with soil and humus in pockets between the rocks (Metzler 1990). THese forets develop over time on the previously open talus. Some of the characteristic species of this type of community in New York are sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), chestnut oak (*Quercus montana*), red oak (*Quercus rubra*), and white oak (*Q. alba*), with ground layer including ferns such as bulbet fern (*Cystopteris bulbifera*), fragile fern (*Cystopteris fragilis*), and christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) (Reschke 1990). At Lamentation, the talus areas are predominantly forested, which indicates that the talus has been undisturbed for quite some time.

Sugar maple-white ash Association

Sugar maple-white ash forests are "moist to wet fertile forests that occur on lower slopes, on talus, in coves, or on the higher pars of alluvial floodplains. Sugar maple and white ash generally dominte the tree canopy.

Tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) and American basswood (*Tilia americana*) also occur in these forest types. The sugar maple-white ash forests are differentiated from other forests ... by the large number of nutrient-demanding species such as bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*), silvery spleenwort (*Diplazium acrostichoides*), blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), and wild leek (*Allium tricoccum*)" (Metzler no date). These areas are generally rich in nutrients due to the erosion by rain water from the upland slopes. The nutrients tend to accumulate at the base of the slopes, where this natural community develops.

At Lamentation Mountain, there probably are examples of this forest all along the base of the western slope; however this area was not included in the field work of this particular study. The slopes of Lamentation and Chauncey join together along the canal that feeds into Bradley Hubbard Reservoir; these slopes are good examples of this type of community.

Ash-Hickory Association/Oak-Ericaceous Shrub subassociation

The **ash-hickory association** "is a group of dry, poorly growing forests often dominated by pignut hickory (*Carya glabra*)and white ash with a mixture of other hickory species, white pine *Pinus strobus*) and oaks. Ash-hickory forest occur exclusively on dry, rocky summits where their low stature, sporadic shrub layer, and 'grass' ground cover give them a distinctive park-like appearance. Grasses and sedges often dominate the ground layer along with a number of herbaceous species indicative of dry, rocky conditions. Small ferns, such as woodsia (*Woodsia obtusa, W. ilvensis*) and ebondy spleenwort (*Asplenium platyneuron*), occur scattered on ledges and rock outcrops" (Metzler no date). The **oak-ericaceous shrub subassociation** (part of the mixed oak association) is "a dry-poorly-growing forest with a dominance of oak species. On the driest sites, scarlet and chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*) predominate. On the less droughty sites the forets canopy is a mixture of oak, hickory, and conifers. This sub-association is distinguished by the dwarf shrub layer of black huckleberry (Gaylussacia baccata*) and/or low bush blueberry (*Vaccinium vacillans, V. angustifolia*) and the presence of species such as pink lady's-sliper (*Cypripedium acaule*), bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum), spotted wintergreen (*Chimaphila maculata*), pin-cushion moss (*Leucobryum glaucum*), and hair-cap moss (*Polytrichum commune*) (Metzler no date).

At Lamentation Mountain, the vegetation east of and between the outcrops falls into these two communities. Ash and hickories are very common

along the forested edge contiguous with the outcrop. In the main portion of the forest, oaks and hickories dominate. On the accompanying overlay, this mixed community comprises the unmarked areas within 50′ of the Blue Trail along the ridge line only.

There also are large patches of Eastern hemlock along the ridge line between the outcrops. Many of these trees are infected with hemlock woolly adelgids, an insect that often kills the hemlock trees.

According to the Natural Community Classification, red cedar ledges, subacidic cliffs, subacidic talus, and subacidic talus forest/woodland are all natural communities with limited examples within Connecticut. For that reason, occurrences of these communities are tracked by the NDDB.

RARE PLANT SPECIES

Two species of plants that are on the state threatened list are known from Lamentation Mountain, based on records from NDDB. It is important to note that these species are very sensitive; information about these species is restricted and must not be distributed.

Mr. HEFLEY. Thank you.

Ms. Solis?

Ms. SOLIS. Just to thank the witnesses for coming here today. I found your testimony, all of you, quite interesting, and I look forward to working with you on these two pieces of legislation.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Goode?

Mr. GOODE. No questions, except to thank each one for being here.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Olver?

Mr. OLVER. I at this point want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your attention and patience and hopefully your support. You have already indicated that, in fact.

But I do want to say that I think you can see from the testimony here that the two organizations, the Connecticut Forest and Park Association and the Appalachian Mountain Club, represent the critical universal joints through which the cooperative effort to provide public outdoor opportunities for the general public bring together the local land trusts and municipal conservation groups, the regional and national conservation groups, and trail nonprofit organizations. And the state and Federal Governments both work through those two organizations.

They are key to outdoor recreational opportunities in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

And without them, and they of course will be and must be a part of the feasibility work that is done with National Park Service, but without them, we would be in far poorer shape, in those two states at least.

Thank you for being here.

Mr. HEFLEY. Thank you. And I thank the witnesses.

I live in Colorado, and I live on a ranch, where I can get on a horse and I can go into the trail system and the national forests from my house on horseback. And it is a terrific experience.

So I am a big supporter of trails and the meaning that trails have.

Now, I don't like it when you don't allow horses on trails, so I hope you allow horses on your trail as well.

Mr. OLVER. They wouldn't like the top of the basalt ridges.

[Laughter.]

Mr. HEFLEY. They might not. They might not.

I also am a big fan of Booker T. Washington. I think he was a national hero. I think he transcended race.

I understand your comments about how particularly for an African-American it is important, but I think most of us don't think whether he was African-American or not. He was a great American hero.

And I want to thank Mr. Goode for bringing this to our attention. Otherwise, we would not have known of the need here for this buffer zone that is there.

And your testimony, Ms. Johnson, was very eloquent, and we appreciate that.

Ms. JOHNSON. Thank you.

Mr. HEFLEY. We will consider these bills, hopefully in the foreseeable future. And this has been an excellent background for us to make hopefully a reasonable decision and hopefully a decision that you all will be pleased with.

So thank you for coming. We thank for both of our Congressmen for bringing it to our attention.

And this meeting stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:39 a.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

[A letter submitted for the record by Kevin Collins, Acting Director, Conservation Policy, National Parks Conservation Association, Washington, D.C., on H.R. 1456 follows:]

NATIONAL PARKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION

Protecting Parks for Future Generations™

July 23, 2001

The Honorable Joel Hefley
Chairman
National Parks, Public Lands, and Recreation Subcommittee
1333 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Hefley:

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) is the only national nonprofit organization dedicated solely to protecting national parks for future generations. On behalf of our more than 450,000 members nationwide, we support H.R. 1456, a bill to expand the boundary of Booker T. Washington National Monument.

Booker T. Washington National Monument was established in 1956 to commemorate the life of Booker T. Washington. He was born in 1856 into slavery on the site where the National Monument is now located which at that time was a tobacco farm. He lived there until the end of the Civil War and Emancipation. Booker T. Washington worked in a salt mine until the age of 16 when he enrolled in the Hampton Institute. He received his degree, worked as a teacher in West Virginia, and eventually moved back to Hampton, Virginia to teach. In 1881 he began development of a new school in Alabama – the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, which eventually became Tuskegee University. Through Washington's leadership, Tuskegee became one of the premier educational institutions for African Americans in the United States. In 1895 he delivered his most famous speech at the Atlanta Exposition and became one of the most influential Americans in the areas of race relations and black education until his death in 1915.

H.R. 1456 gives the National Park Service the authority to acquire the remaining land from the plantation where Booker T. Washington was born and incorporate it into the park's boundaries. These fifteen acres will help protect the full history of Booker T. Washington and enhance the visitor experience to portray the full historical significance of this individual and his contribution to our nation's history.

The National Parks Conservation Association is pleased to offer our support for H.R. 1456, and we thank you for your work to move this legislation through your Subcommittee.

Sincerely,

Kevin Collins

Kevin Collins
Acting Director, Conservation Policy

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