

109TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 412

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

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 26, 2005

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

---

## A BILL

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

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

12          (b) STUDY.—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

○