IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 18, 2013

Received

DECEMBER 20, 2013

Read twice and placed on the calendar

AN ACT

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early years of the National Parks, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks Study Act”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

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

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(1) In the late 19th century and early 20th century, African-American troops who came to be known as the Buffalo Soldiers served in many critical roles in the western United States, including protecting some of the first National Parks.

(2) Based at the Presidio in San Francisco, Buffalo Soldiers were assigned to Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks where they patrolled the backcountry, built trails, stopped poaching, and otherwise served in the roles later assumed by National Park rangers.

(3) The public would benefit from having opportunities to learn more about the Buffalo Soldiers in the National Parks and their contributions to the management of National Parks and the legacy of African-Americans in the post-Civil War era.

(4) As the centennial of the National Park Service in 2016 approaches, it is an especially appropriate time to conduct research and increase public awareness of the stewardship role the Buffalo Soldiers played in the early years of the National Parks.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to authorize a study to determine the most effective ways to increase understanding and public awareness of the critical
role that the Buffalo Soldiers played in the early years
of the National Parks.

SEC. 3. STUDY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall
counter a study of alternatives for commemorating and
interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers in the early
years of the National Parks.

(b) CONTENTS OF STUDY.—The study shall in-
clude—

(1) a historical assessment, based on extensive
research, of the Buffalo Soldiers who served in Na-
tional Parks in the years prior to the establishment
of the National Park Service;

(2) an evaluation of the suitability and feasi-
bility of establishing a national historic trail com-
memorating the route traveled by the Buffalo Sol-
diers from their post in the Presidio of San Fran-
cisco to Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks and
to any other National Parks where they may have
served;

(3) the identification of properties that could
meet criteria for listing in the National Register of
Historic Places or criteria for designation as Na-
tional Historic Landmarks;
(4) an evaluation of appropriate ways to enhance historical research, education, interpretation, and public awareness of the story of the Buffalo Soldiers’ stewardship role in the National Parks, including ways to link the story to the development of National Parks and the story of African-American military service following the Civil War; and

(5) any other matters that the Secretary of the Interior deems appropriate for this study.

(c) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after funds are made available for the study, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report containing the study’s findings and recommendations.

Passed the House of Representatives June 17, 2013.

Attest: KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.
AN ACT

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of alternatives for commemorating and interpreting the role of the Buffalo Soldiers and other purposes.

December 20, 2013

Passed and presented to the President the second day of December, two thousand thirteen.