

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1520

To amend the National Trails System Act to designate the historic transportation routes in the States of Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, and Ohio that led to the forks of the Ohio River in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for study for potential addition to the National Trails System.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 31, 2003

Mr. MURTHA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Resources

A BILL

To amend the National Trails System Act to designate the historic transportation routes in the States of Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, and Ohio that led to the forks of the Ohio River in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for study for potential addition to the National Trails System.

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 “Forks of the Ohio Na-
5 tional Scenic Trail Study Act of 2003”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) A key to the growth of the United States
4 as a world power was the opening of America's great
5 heartland drained by the Ohio River and continuing
6 downstream to the Mississippi River and Gulf of
7 Mexico.

8 (2) The significance of this region is evident in
9 the fact that the War for Empire was triggered by
10 claims and counter-claims to the land by both the
11 French and the British in the 1750's, and by the
12 central role that the region played in America's
13 transformation from an agrarian to an industrial so-
14 ciety.

15 (3) The Forks of the Ohio National Scenic
16 Trail traces many of these historical transportation
17 routes to the beginning of the Ohio River, including
18 the efforts of George Washington to find a primarily
19 water-based route from Wills Creek (now Cum-
20 berland, Maryland) to the Forks of the Ohio (now
21 Pittsburgh); the route used by the French from
22 Lake Erie to French Creek and down the Allegheny
23 River to the Forks; the route of the Pennsylvania
24 Mainline Canal from Harrisburg to Pittsburgh that
25 greatly improved transportation to Pittsburgh a cen-
26 tury later; and the historic railroad corridors into

1 the region, several of which followed for the most
2 part these earlier routes.

3 (4) Many of these rail corridors are now aban-
4 doned and have been or are being converted into
5 trails for hiking and bicycling.

6 (5) The designation of these trails as a national
7 scenic trail—

8 (A) would offer unique opportunities for
9 nonmotorized transportation and recreation
10 that would expose trail users to the rich history
11 of the War for Empire and development of
12 transportation, coal mining, rail building and
13 other industries that made the United States a
14 rich and powerful Nation; and

15 (B) would give appropriate recognition to
16 the frontiersmen who explored the region; the
17 French, British and Indians who fought the
18 War for Empire; the pioneers and later the im-
19 migrants who settled the region, built the trans-
20 portation systems, mined the coal, poured the
21 steel, etc.

1 **SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF FORKS OF THE OHIO HISTORIC**
2 **TRANSPORTATION ROUTES FOR STUDY FOR**
3 **POTENTIAL ADDITION TO THE NATIONAL**
4 **TRAILS SYSTEM.**

5 Section 5(c) of the National Trails System Act (16
6 U.S.C. 1244(c)) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
7 lowing new paragraph:

8 “(XX) FORKS OF THE OHIO NA-
9 TIONAL SCENIC TRAIL.—The Forks of
10 the Ohio National Scenic Trail, trac-
11 ing or approximating the historic
12 transportation routes to the forks of
13 the Ohio River in Pittsburgh, Penn-
14 sylvania, including routes used by
15 British and French military forces be-
16 fore and during the French and In-
17 dian War, the route of the Pennsyl-
18 vania Mainline Canal and subsequent
19 canal systems, and various railroad
20 corridors, including historic rail lines
21 that were used primarily for coal
22 hauling. The routes covered by the
23 study cross portions of the States of
24 Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Vir-
25 ginia, and Ohio.”.