

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 28, 2010

The Honorable Jonathan Jarvis
Director
National Park Service
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC, 20240

Dear Director Jarvis:

When Congress authorized the North Country National Scenic Trail and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail in 1980 as part of the National Trails System, these trails were meant to be administered and managed similar to other trails in the system. However, these trails have not been given "unit" status by the National Park Service, unlike the other trails in the National Trail System. As Members of Congress privileged to host these trails in our states, we write to ask you to change this unfair treatment, and to give "unit" status for these trails.

The according of unit status would ensure equal participation in Park Service funding and programs. Currently, these trails are excluded from many opportunities and assistance, including: the lack of promotion of these trails by the Park Service; the lack of assistance in designing and printing trail brochures; and the lack of access to funding by non-profit associations such as the National Park Foundation and the National Parks Conservation Association.

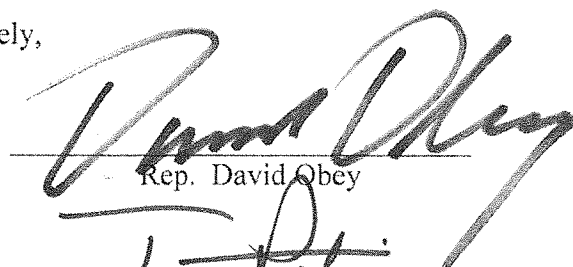
It was never the intent of Congress to treat these trails any differently from the others in the National Trails System. We request your prompt review of this matter and designation of the North Country and Ice Age National Scenic Trails as "units" of the National Park System. This will correct the long-standing unfair treatment of these trails, and will allow these trails to be managed, funded, and viewed on an equal footing with the Appalachian, Natchez Trace, and Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trails.


Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to receiving your prompt reply.

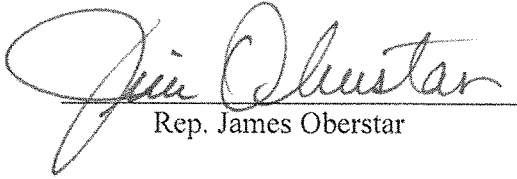
Sincerely,

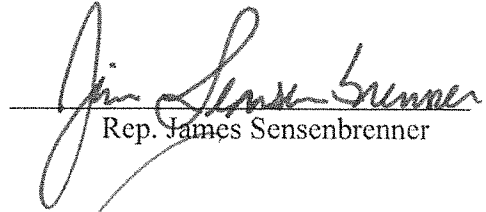

Rep. Tammy Baldwin


Rep. Collin Peterson


Rep. David Obey



Rep. Thomas Petri


Rep. James Oberstar


Rep. James Sensenbrenner

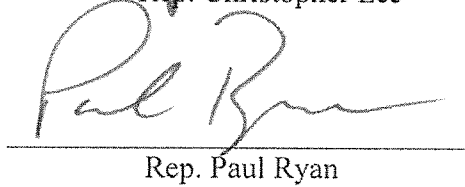

Rep. William Owens

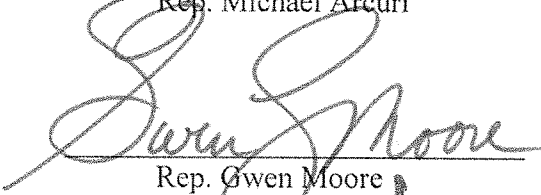

Rep. Vernon Ehlert

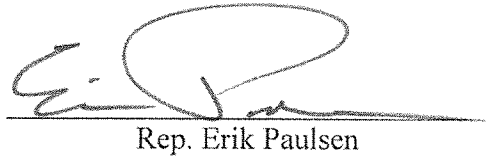

Rep. Timothy Walz

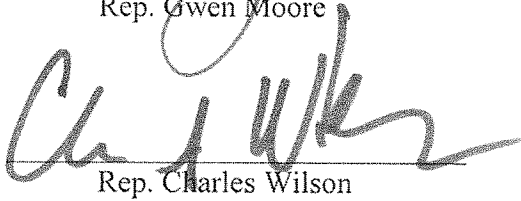

Rep. Christopher Lee

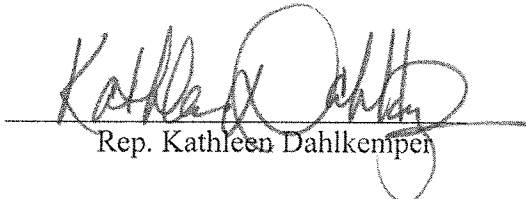

Rep. Michael Arcuri


Rep. Paul Ryan


Rep. Gwen Moore


Rep. Erik Paulsen

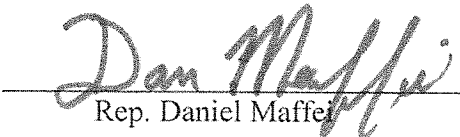

Rep. Charles Wilson

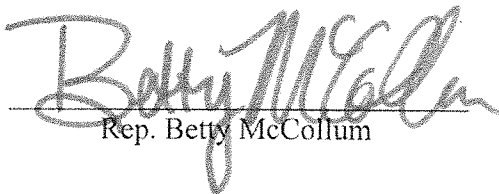

Rep. Kathleen Dahlkemper

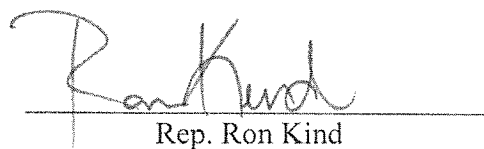

Rep. Steve Kagen

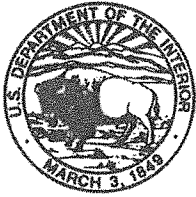

Rep. Earl Pomeroy


Rep. Keith Ellison


Rep. Daniel Maffei


Rep. Betty McCollum


Rep. Ron Kind



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

MAY 27 2010

Dear Ms. Baldwin:

Thank you for your letter to National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis inquiring about designating the North Country National Scenic Trail and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail as units of the National Park System.

The National Park System currently consists of 392 units. Three of those units are National Scenic Trails. However, the National Park Service (NPS) administers, or co-administers, more than 20 long distance trails. Each of these trails is managed as if it were a unit, receiving separate line item funding through the NPS budget process. Each trail has a Superintendent responsible for its management although some trails are grouped with, and share a Superintendent with, a nearby park or are combined with several other trails with one Superintendent and support staff serving all the trails in that group.

We are convening a work group that is looking at how our long distance trails and wild and scenic rivers are designated. Among other issues, the group is examining whether any additional trails or rivers should be recommended for unit status within the National Park System. Your support for unit designation of the North Country National Scenic Trail and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail will be discussed and considered by the work group. The work group plans to have recommendations to present to the National Leadership Council of the National Park Service this fall.

We appreciate your interest and support for the North Country and Ice Age National Scenic Trails and the National Park System.

Sincerely,

Peggy O'Dell

for Daniel N. Wenk
Deputy Director, Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 31, 2011

The Honorable Jonathan Jarvis
Director
National Park Service
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Director Jarvis:

We write to follow-up on a letter sent last year by 22 bipartisan Members of Congress regarding the North Country National Scenic Trail and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. As you know, when Congress authorized these trails in 1980 as part of the National Trail System, the trails were intended to be administered and managed similar to other trails in the system. However, unlike the other trails in the National Trail System, these trails have not been given "unit status" by the National Park Service. As such, we respectfully requested that you change this unfair treatment, and give "unit" status to the North Country and Ice Age National Scenic Trails.

In your response letter, you noted that the National Park Service was convening a work group to examine how long distance trails and wild and scenic rivers are designated. The group was to examine whether any additional trails or rivers should be recommended for "unit" status within the National Park System. At the time of your letter, you indicated that the work group planned to have recommendations to present to the National Leadership Council of the National Park Service last fall.

To our knowledge, recommendations have not yet been presented. Therefore, please provide us with a report on the efforts of the work group to-date, including a date by which we might expect the release of the National Park Service's recommendations.

It is our hope that the work group's examinations have focused on the benefits of awarding "unit" status to the North Country and Ice Age National Scenic Trails. Such status would ensure equal participation in Park Service funding and programs. Currently, these trails are excluded from opportunities and assistance, including: the lack of promotion of these trails by the Park Service; the lack of assistance in designing and printing trail brochures; and the lack of recognition and inclusion of these trails in the NPS Volunteers-In-Parks brochure despite the huge numbers of volunteer hours recorded by these trails.

Again, it was never the intent of Congress to treat these trails any differently from the others in the National Trails System. "Unit" status designation will allow the North Country and Ice Age National Scenic Trails to be managed, funded, and viewed on an equal footing with the Appalachian, Natchez Trace, and Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trails.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to receiving your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

Tammy Baldwin

Jim Keenan

Tim Peters

Gregory W. Meeks

Greg Monroe

Bill Blount

Betty McCollum

Bob D. Latta

Keith Elkin

Marci L. O'Rourke

Ron Kind

Paul Tonko