

Public Law 107-337
107th Congress

An Act

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to study the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Buffalo Bayou National Heritage Area in west Houston, Texas.

Dec. 16, 2002

[H.R. 1776]

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

Buffalo Bayou
National
Heritage Area
Study Act.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Buffalo Bayou National Heritage Area Study Act”.

SEC. 2. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE STUDY REGARDING BUFFALO BAYOU, TEXAS.

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

(1) The area beginning at Shepherd Drive in west Houston, Texas, and extending to the Turning Basin, commonly referred to as the “Buffalo Bayou”, made a unique contribution to the cultural, political, and industrial development of the United States.

(2) The Buffalo Bayou is distinctive as the first spine of modern industrial development in Texas and one of the first along the Gulf of Mexico coast.

(3) The Buffalo Bayou played a significant role in the struggle for Texas independence.

(4) The Buffalo Bayou developed a prosperous and productive shipping industry that survives today.

(5) The Buffalo Bayou led in the development of Texas’ petrochemical industry that made Houston the center of the early oil boom in America.

(6) The Buffalo Bayou developed a sophisticated shipping system, leading to the formation of the modern day Houston Ship Channel.

(7) The Buffalo Bayou developed a significant industrial base, and served as the focal point for the new city of Houston.

(8) There is a longstanding commitment by the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, Inc., to complete the Buffalo Bayou Trail along the 12-mile segment of the Buffalo Bayou.

(9) There is a need for assistance for the preservation and promotion of the significance of the Buffalo Bayou as a system for transportation, industry, commerce, and immigration.

(10) The Department of the Interior is responsible for protecting the Nation’s cultural and historical resources. There are significant examples of such resources within the Buffalo

Bayou region to merit the involvement of the Federal Government in the development of programs and projects, in cooperation with the Buffalo Bayou Partnership, Inc., the State of Texas, and other local and governmental entities, to adequately conserve, protect, and interpret this heritage for future generations, while providing opportunities for education and revitalization.

(b) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall, in consultation with the State of Texas, the City of Houston, and other appropriate organizations, carry out a study regarding the suitability and feasibility of establishing the Buffalo Bayou National Heritage Area in Houston, Texas.

(2) CONTENTS.—The study shall include analysis and documentation regarding whether the Study Area—

(A) has an assemblage of natural, historic, and cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage worthy of recognition, conservation, interpretation, and continuing use, and are best managed through partnerships among public and private entities and by combining diverse and sometimes noncontiguous resources and active communities;

(B) reflects traditions, customs, beliefs, and folklife that are a valuable part of the national story;

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

(D) provides outstanding recreational and educational opportunities;

(E) contains resources important to the identified theme or themes of the Study Area that retain a degree of integrity capable of supporting interpretation;

(F) includes residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments that are involved in the planning, have developed a conceptual financial plan that outlines the roles for all participants, including the Federal Government, and have demonstrated support for the concept of a national heritage area;

(G) has a potential management entity to work in partnership with residents, business interests, nonprofit organizations, and local and State governments to develop a national heritage area consistent with continued local and State economic activity; and

(H) has a conceptual boundary map that is supported by the public.

(c) BOUNDARIES OF THE STUDY AREA.—The Study Area shall be comprised of sites in Houston, Texas, in an area roughly bounded by Shepherd Drive and extending to the Turning Basin, commonly referred to as the “Buffalo Bayou”.

(d) SUBMISSION OF STUDY RESULTS.—Not later than 3 years after funds are first made available for this section, the Secretary

Deadline.
Reports.

shall submit to the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report describing the results of the study.

Approved December 16, 2002.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 1776:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 107-256 (Comm. on Resources).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 107-262 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Vol. 147 (2001): Oct. 30, considered and passed House.

Vol. 148 (2002): Nov. 19, considered and passed Senate.