

111TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 4491

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.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 21, 2010

Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mr. CLAY, Ms. LEE of California, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. BACA, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. BORDALLO, Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Ms. CLARKE, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. COSTA, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. DAVIS of Alabama, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. FARR, Mr. FATTAH, Mr. FILNER, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. HONDA, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. MATSUI, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Mr. MEEKS of New York, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. RANGEL, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. RUSH, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SESTAK, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. WATSON, and Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

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## A BILL

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.

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 “Buffalo Soldiers in  
5 the National Parks Study Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

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

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

13            (2) Based at the Presidio in San Francisco,  
14 Buffalo Soldiers were assigned to Sequoia and Yo-  
15 semite National Parks where they patrolled the  
16 backcountry, built trails, stopped poaching, and oth-  
17 erwise served in the roles later assumed by National  
18 Park rangers.

19            (3) The public would benefit from having op-  
20 portunities to learn more about the Buffalo Soldiers  
21 in the National Parks and their contributions to the  
22 management of National Parks and the legacy of Af-  
23 rican-Americans in the post-Civil War era.

24            (4) As the centennial of the National Park  
25 Service in 2016 approaches, it is an especially ap-

1       appropriate time to conduct research and increase pub-  
2       lic awareness of the stewardship role the Buffalo  
3       Soldiers played in the early years of the National  
4       Parks.

5       (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to author-  
6       ize a study to determine the most effective ways to in-  
7       crease understanding and public awareness of the critical  
8       role that the Buffalo Soldiers played in the early years  
9       of the National Parks.

10   **SEC. 3. STUDY.**

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

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

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

21               (2) an evaluation of the suitability and feasi-  
22       bility of establishing a national historic trail com-  
23       memorating the route traveled by the Buffalo Sol-  
24       diers from their post in the Presidio of San Fran-  
25       cisco to Sequoia and Yosemite National Parks and

1 to any other National Parks where they may have  
2 served;

3 (3) the identification of properties that could  
4 meet criteria for listing in the National Register of  
5 Historic Places or criteria for designation as Na-  
6 tional Historic Landmarks;

7 (4) an evaluation of appropriate ways to en-  
8 hance historical research, education, interpretation,  
9 and public awareness of the story of the Buffalo Sol-  
10 diers' stewardship role in the National Parks, in-  
11 cluding ways to link the story to the development of  
12 National Parks and the story of African-American  
13 military service following the Civil War; and

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

16 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 3 years after funds are  
17 made available for the study, the Secretary of the Interior  
18 shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of  
19 the House of Representatives and the Committee on En-  
20 ergy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report con-  
21 taining the study's findings and recommendations.

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