

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 599

To redesignate the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore as the “Indiana Dunes National Park”, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 9, 2017

Mr. DONNELLY (for himself and Mr. YOUNG) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

A BILL

To redesignate the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore as the “Indiana Dunes National Park”, 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 “Indiana Dunes Na-
5 tional Park Designation Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1) the Great Lakes form the largest freshwater
9 system on Earth;

10 (2) Lake Michigan is—

1 (A) the second largest Great Lake by vol-
2 ume; and

3 (B) the only Great Lake located wholly
4 within the United States;

5 (3) the southern shore of Lake Michigan in-
6 cludes some of the most geologically and biologically
7 diverse areas in the United States;

8 (4) the unique features that comprise the
9 southern shore of Lake Michigan, also known as the
10 “Indiana Dunes”, were formed over a period of
11 12,000 years by natural forces, including glaciers,
12 wind, and water;

13 (5) glacial melting and fluctuations in the water
14 level resulted in the formation of as many as 7
15 shorelines along the southern shore of Lake Michi-
16 gan;

17 (6) the process by which the southern shore of
18 Lake Michigan was formed resulted in the bio-
19 logically diverse beaches, sand dunes, and inter-dune
20 wetlands that can be seen in the southern shore of
21 Lake Michigan today;

22 (7) Indian tribes, including the Miami and Pot-
23 awatomi Indian tribes, inhabited the Indiana Dunes
24 region for over 10,000 years;

1 (8) local conservation efforts to preserve the In-
2 diana Dunes began as early as 1899 when Henry
3 Cowles, a botanist from the University of Chicago
4 who is known for being one of the founders of con-
5 temporary ecological study and thought, published
6 an article entitled “Ecological Relations of the Vege-
7 tation on Sand Dunes of Lake Michigan” in the Bo-
8 tanical Gazette, bringing international attention to
9 the intricate ecosystems on the Indiana Dunes;

10 (9) on October 30, 1916, 1 month after the es-
11 tablishment of the National Park Service, Stephen
12 Mather, the first Director of the National Park
13 Service, held hearings in Chicago, Illinois, to gauge
14 public sentiment on establishing a large portion of
15 the southern shore of Lake Michigan as one of the
16 first national parks in the United States, to be
17 known as the “Sand Dunes National Park”;

18 (10) over 400 people attended the hearings in
19 Chicago, Illinois, of which—

20 (A) 42 people, including Henry Cowles,
21 spoke in favor of the proposal to establish the
22 national park; and

23 (B) there were no opponents to the pro-
24 posal to establish the national park;

1 (11) plans for a Sand Dunes National Park
2 were delayed because the United States entered
3 World War I and national focus shifted away from
4 national parks to national defense;

5 (12) local conservation efforts to preserve the
6 Indiana Dunes persisted after World War I and cul-
7 minated in—

8 (A) the establishment of Indiana Dunes
9 State Park in 1925; and

10 (B) the enactment in 1966 of Public Law
11 89–761 (16 U.S.C. 460u et seq.), which estab-
12 lished the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore;

13 (13) the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
14 was subsequently expanded in 1976, 1980, 1986,
15 and 1992;

16 (14) the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
17 and the adjacent Indiana Dunes State Park are
18 comprised of over 15,000 acres of dunes, oak savan-
19 nas, swamps, bogs, marshes, prairies, rivers, and
20 forests that are preserved for public enjoyment, in-
21 cluding 15 miles of shoreline along Lake Michigan
22 that extend from Gary, Indiana, to Michigan City,
23 Indiana;

24 (15) the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
25 is—

1 (A) one of the most biologically diverse
 2 units of the National Park System, containing
 3 2,336 unique species, including 896 animal spe-
 4 cies and 1,407 plant species;

5 (B) a cherished cultural landmark that at-
 6 tracts millions of visitors each year; and

7 (C) an especially important feeding and
 8 resting area for migrating land and water birds,
 9 including 350 unique species of birds; and

10 (16) institutions such as the Dunes Learning
 11 Center—

12 (A) attract youth and other community
 13 members to the Indiana Dunes; and

14 (B) provide the youth and other commu-
 15 nity members with insight on the biodiversity
 16 and historical significance of the Indiana
 17 Dunes.

18 **SEC. 3. DESIGNATION OF INDIANA DUNES NATIONAL PARK.**

19 (a) DESIGNATION.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The first section of Public
 21 Law 89–761 (16 U.S.C. 460u) is amended—

22 (A) in the first sentence—

23 (i) by striking “National Lakeshore”
 24 and inserting “National Park”; and

1 (ii) by striking “(hereinafter referred
2 to as the ‘lakeshore’)” and inserting “(re-
3 ferred to in this Act as the ‘Park’)”; and
4 (B) in the second sentence, by striking
5 “lakeshore” and inserting “Park”.

6 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Sections 2
7 through 24 of Public Law 89–761 (16 U.S.C. 460u–
8 1 through 460u–24) are amended—

9 (A) by striking “Lakeshore” each place it
10 appears and inserting “Park”; and

11 (B) by striking “lakeshore” each place it
12 appears and inserting “Park”.

13 (b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in any law, regula-
14 tion, document, record, map, or other paper of the United
15 States to the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore shall be
16 considered to be a reference to the “Indiana Dunes Na-
17 tional Park”.

○