

# THE CONSERVATION FUND

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **THE CONSERVATION FUND SUPPORTS SWIFT PASSAGE OF BILLS CREATING NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARKS HONORING HARRIET TUBMAN AND DELAWARE AS FIRST STATE**

**ARLINGTON, Va. (March 13, 2013)** — The Conservation Fund applauds the [United States Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources](#) for its swift action in bringing significant public lands bills to the attention of the entire Senate. The committee held a business meeting today and unanimously voted to advance two bills that establish federal protection for nationally-significant historic lands to the full Senate:

- S. 247, introduced by Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), to establish national historical parks in honor of Harriet Tubman in Western New York and Maryland’s Eastern Shore; and
- S. 347, introduced by Senator Tom Carper (D-DE), to establish the First State National Historical Park in Delaware and Pennsylvania.

“The bipartisan support already witnessed for the national recognition of these special places as new National Parks validates the rich history and powerful significance of these lands,” said **Lawrence Selzer, president and CEO of The Conservation Fund**. “We applaud the Committee for its early action on these bills and urge swift action by the Senate and the House to pass them into law, completing the National Park System by creating a park in our nation’s first state and finally honoring the heroism of Harriet Tubman.”

S.347, “The First State National Historical Park Act of 2013,” would create a national park in Delaware—the only state without a national park unit—and Pennsylvania that would preserve and interpret significant historical resources associated with early Dutch, Swedish and English settlements. One of the sites authorized for inclusion in the park is the 1,100-acre Woodlawn property in the Brandywine River Valley, which The Conservation Fund—thanks to a generous gift from the Mt. Cuba Center—has lined up for donation to the National Park Service. The bill is sponsored by U.S. Senators Carper (D-DE) and Chris Coons (D-DE), and companion legislation in the House is sponsored by U.S. Representatives John Carney, Jr. (D-DE-1) and Patrick Meehan (R-PA-7). Additionally, Senators Pat Toomey (R-PA) and Bob Casey (D-PA) and Delaware Governor Jack Markell have joined the aforementioned elected officials in calling for the Woodlawn property to be protected through either Congressional or Presidential action.

S.247, the “Harriet Tubman National Historical Parks Act,” would authorize the creation of two national parks in Auburn, New York, and Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot Counties, Maryland, that would recognize the life and lasting legacy of Harriet Tubman, the conductor of the Underground Railroad and a dedicated civil rights activist. U.S. Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), and Representatives Andy Harris (R-MD-1) and Daniel Maffei (D-NY-24), together with the State of Maryland and a broad coalition of supporters, including The Conservation Fund, have worked to advance preservation and recognition of these sites.

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President Obama can also designate these sites as part of the National Park System through his authority under the Antiquities Act of 1906. Presidents have used the Antiquities Act over 120 times to designate national monuments, including the Grand Canyon and the Statue of Liberty. Once a site has been designated a national monument, Congress still has authority to designate it into a national park. Almost half of the current national parks were first designated as national monuments.

The Conservation Fund has worked with the National Park Service on 200 projects to save historic places across America, including Civil War battlegrounds, the Lewis and Clark Trail, and lands associated with the 9/11 tragedy. “Conserving these lands, while we can, is critical because it connects us to our own history,” added **Selzer**. “By saving places like the Woodlawn property and the landscape where Harriet Tubman carried out her life’s mission, we make sure that people and families can go and experience the lands that have shaped our country.”

## **Additional Information**

[Read more about the efforts to honor Harriet Tubman’s legacy](#)

[Read more about the efforts to establish the first National Park or Monument in Delaware](#)

## **About The Conservation Fund**

At The Conservation Fund, we make conservation work for America. By creating solutions that make environmental and economic sense, we are redefining conservation to demonstrate its essential role in our future prosperity. Top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, we have worked in all 50 states to protect more than 7.5 million acres of land since 1985.

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