

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

December 4, 2006

The Honorable Rob Portman  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Portman:

As you are developing the President's Fiscal Year 2008 budget request, we are writing to express our support for the inclusion of land acquisition funding in the National Park Service (NPS) budget request for the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park (NHP) in Washington State.

In conjunction with the bicentennial of Lewis and Clark's voyage of discovery, President Bush signed bipartisan legislation in 2004 to conserve three Lewis and Clark sites in Washington State, including Station Camp-Middle Village. Station Camp is where Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery voted on November 24, 1805 about the location of their encampment during the winter of 1805-1806. This vote marked a major event in the development of American democracy as Sacagawea and York, an African American, were afforded the right to vote. In addition, Station Camp was also the site of an important Clatsop Indian settlement, known as Middle Village.

We are pleased that, with the Administration's support and Congressional appropriations, the National Park Service is working to complete all of the land acquisition in Oregon and has conserved two of the three new sites in Washington state. Acquiring a conservation easement around Station Camp-Middle Village will complete the park's land acquisition program.

With the acquisition of the Clark's Dismal Nitch tract in Washington and the Ness tract in Oregon, the NPS has very little funds remaining in the Lewis and Clark NHP's land acquisition account. Despite the fact that the President's FY 2007 budget request included no funds for Lewis and Clark NHP, we understand that the NPS has identified this park among its top three priorities nationwide.

We respectfully request the Administration's support for \$2.5 million in funding in the FY 2008 budget request to acquire a conservation easement on lands surrounding Station Camp-Middle Village. If approved, these funds would allow the NPS to protect the last remaining large tract of private land within the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park.

The landowner is currently a willing seller and the State of Washington has committed \$4.1 million to acquire fee lands at Station Camp, realign the highway around the site and construct visitor facilities to interpret Lewis and Clark's stay at Station Camp and the Chinook Indians'

use of the site. Under the current plan, which will be funded in large measure by Washington state, Station Camp-Middle Village and associated park improvements would be turned over to the NPS for management. Developing Station Camp-Middle Village as envisioned by the Bush Administration and Congress will provide the American public with a park of extraordinary depth, balance and connection in a historic landscape that includes two states.

As you may be aware, President Bush's campaign highlighted this project as part of the President's commitment to the Pacific Northwest during the 2004 elections. We look forward to working with the Administration to ensure that this commitment to the Pacific Northwest is realized and that the park can be completed next year.

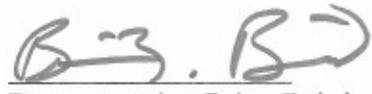
Sincerely,



Senator Maria Cantwell



Senator Patty Murray



Representative Brian Baird

cc: The Honorable James Connaughton  
The Honorable Dirk Kempthorne  
The Honorable Mary Bomar  
The Honorable Chris Gregoire