



August 2022

A home burned during the 1908 race riot in Springfield, Illinois

1908 Springfield Race Riot Special Resource Study Newsletter

The National Park Service (NPS) is pleased to announce the launch of a special resource study of the 1908 Springfield Race Riot site in Springfield, Illinois.

The 1908 Springfield Race Riot was an event in which African Americans were targeted and victimized by mass racial violence and which was a catalyst for the formation of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The riot occurred near Madison Street and 10th Street. The study area consists of an archeological site that preserves the remains of homes burned during the 1908 Springfield Race Riot and other sites and buildings around Springfield that played an important role in the riot and its aftermath.

The 1908 Springfield Race Riot Study Act of 2020 (Public Law 116-139) directed the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of the site.

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the property using congressionally established criteria for national significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for direct NPS management. Based on the analysis, the National Park Service will determine if the site meets the criteria for inclusion in the national park system and will prepare a study for the Secretary of Interior. The Secretary will then submit the findings and a recommendation to Congress.

We hope you will take time to let us know your thoughts and ideas through the NPS study website. More information and project updates can be found at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/springfieldsrs>.

Frequently Asked Questions

What Is a Special Resource Study?

A special resource study evaluates the eligibility of an area to be designated as a unit of the national park system. The National Park Service collects information about the quality of resources in the study area. If the resources meet the eligibility criteria, the National Park Service evaluates the potential for visitor enjoyment and efficient management and analyzes the feasibility and appropriateness of different management options. The National Park Service provides its findings to the Secretary of the Interior, who then presents a recommendation to Congress. Regardless of the outcome of the study, new units of the national park system can only be established by an Act of Congress or by presidential proclamation.



Interpretive sign and monuments commemorating the 1908 Springfield Race Riot

Frequently Asked Questions

How Will the 1908 Springfield Race Riot Site and Associated Resources Be Evaluated?

The 1998 National Parks Omnibus Management Act (54 United States Code 100507) established the process for identifying and authorizing studies of new national park units. Under the law, a study area must meet all four of the following criteria to be recommended as an addition to the national park system:

- Contain nationally significant natural and/or cultural resources.
- Represent a natural or cultural resource that is not already adequately represented in the national park system or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by another land-managing entity.
- Must be (1) of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term protection of the resources and visitor enjoyment, and (2) capable of efficient administration by the National Park Service at a reasonable cost. Important feasibility factors include landownership, acquisition costs, life cycle maintenance costs, access, threats to the resource, and staff or development requirements.
- Require direct NPS management that is clearly superior to other management approaches.

NPS personnel will evaluate the site and other resources in the area that relate to the 1908 Springfield Race Riot according to the above criteria for national significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for NPS management.

If, at any point throughout the SRS process, NPS staff determines that the site does not meet one of the criteria, the study will terminate and a document with a negative finding will be prepared for Congress.

What Are Some of the Possible Outcomes of the Study?

If the special resource study results in a positive finding and a recommendation from the Secretary of the Interior that the 1908 Springfield Race Riot site and any other resources in the area warrant addition to the national park system, then Congress may or may not act on or follow the recommendation. There is no timeframe for legislative action. If the study concludes that resources do not meet all required criteria or finds existing management, technical or financial assistance or local, state, or private initiatives are preferable to the establishment of a new national park unit, the study will conclude with a negative finding. Regardless of the study's outcome, a report is produced for the Secretary of the Interior.

When Will I Learn the Results of the Study?

The National Park Service will publicly release a study report after it has been transmitted to Congress. The National Park Service does not release preliminary findings or drafts of the study or indicate whether the study is likely to recommend inclusion in the national park system before the study's transmittal to Congress.

How to Participate

We encourage you to learn more about the special resource study process and share your ideas during the special resource study process by visiting the study web page at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/springfieldsrs>.

The National Park Service will hold an in-person public meeting to explain the study process and answer questions.

When: Wednesday, August 10, 2022

Time: 6 p.m. CT

Location: NAACP Meeting Room
801 S. 11th Street
Springfield, IL 62703

The public comment period will be open from August 3 to September 3, 2022. We encourage you to share your comments and ideas by visiting the study web page at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/springfieldsrs>.

In your comments, we are particularly interested to hear your thoughts and ideas about the following:

- What is your vision for preserving the 1908 Springfield Race Riot archeological site and how would you like to see the site managed?
- What types of activities and experiences would you want to see as part of the site into the future?
- Do you have any ideas or concerns that the National Park Service should be aware of and/or address in the study process?
- What objects, buildings, remaining features, values and stories do you believe are most important at this site (or related to the riot but not at this site) and why?
- Do you support or oppose a potential national park unit designation?
- Do you have any other ideas or comments you would like to share with us?