

U.S. Rep. Sensenbrenner: Reintroduces Bill to Designate Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail as a Unit of the National Parks System

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner reintroduced H.R. 1424, bipartisan legislation that would make the Ice Age Trail, which spans most of the state of Wisconsin, a unit of the National Parks System.

The Ice Age Trail is one of only eleven National Scenic Trails. It is one of the Wisconsin tourism and travel industry's biggest draws. More than 1 million people from across the country use the Ice Age Trail each year, and a 2012 study by the University of Wisconsin - Whitewater quantified the economic impact of the Trail at more than \$113 annually.

If passed, this legislation would provide parity in the resources available to the trail for management and promotion, all within the existing National Park Service budget. Without unit status, the Ice Age Trail does not have equal participation in National Park Service funding.

The designation as a unit is an administrative decision made by the National Park Service that was applied inconsistently as the National Scenic Trails were established. The National Park Service has recognized that there is no significant difference between the unit and non-unit trails that would merit such distinction.

However, despite Congressional pressure, they have not resolved the disparity.

In addition to Wisconsin's Ice Age Trail, this legislation would also designate the North Country and New England National Scenic Trails as units under the National Park Service. Co-sponsors of this bill include Wisconsin Representatives Glenn Grothman, Ron Kind, and Gwen Moore.

Congressman Sensenbrenner: "The Ice Age Trail not only provides beauty and recreational opportunities for those who use it, but it also is essential to Wisconsin's economy and tourism industry. This bipartisan legislation would ensure that it is preserved and maintained under the National Parks Service at no additional cost to the taxpayers."