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Join the flood of support for the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail

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Ice Age Floods Institute

Glacial Lake Missoula Chapter. Post Office Box 3244. Missoula, Montana 59806

OPINION

Aug. 30, 2005

Contact: Larry Lambert, president, (406) 370-5987; Patia Stephens, publicity chair, (406) 243-4890.

JOIN THE FLOOD OF SUPPORT FOR THE ICE AGE FLOODS NATIONAL GEOLOGIC TRAIL

By Larry Lambert

MISSOULA-

Two bills currently before the U.S. Congress aim to tell one of the Earth's greatest untold stories. The bills, both titled the "Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail Designation Act of 2005," are S. 206 in the Senate and H.B. 383 in the House. As president of the Glacial Lake Missoula Chapter of the Ice Age Floods Institute, I invite Montanans to join me in supporting creation of the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail.

Some 15,000 years ago, an ice dam created Glacial Lake Missoula, a vast inland sea that filled much of western Montana. When the ice dam broke, the resulting floods helped carve the landscape from Montana through Idaho, Washington and Oregon, all the way to the Pacific Ocean. The lake and its floodwaters left their mark across the region -- from the shorelines still visible on the mountainsides in Missoula and the gigantic ripple marks on Camas Prairie to the channeled scablands in Eastern Washington and the fertile soils and erratic boulders of Oregon's Willamette Valley. These floods were quite possibly the largest ever on Earth.

Like the Lewis and Clark and Oregon trails, the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail would create interpretive centers, signage and literature to guide people along this

-more-

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remarkable path via public roads and highways. In the process, it would bring tourism and federal dollars to communities large and small throughout the floods region. The National Park Service recommends major interpretive centers be built in each of the four trail states - including one in Missoula -- and that smaller satellite facilities be built in locations such as Polson. Under NPS management no land acquisition or new regulatory authority would be permitted.

Montana Sen. Conrad Burns has joined Sens. Maria Cantwell (D-Washington), Larry Craig (R-Idaho), Patty Murray (D-Washington) and Gordon Smith (R-Oregon) as a co-sponsor of S. 206. Montana Rep. Denny Rehberg is one of 11 representatives signed on to H.R. 383. Please join us in thanking Sen. Burns and Rep. Rehberg for their support and in encouraging Montana Sen. Max Baucus to join them in co-sponsoring the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail.

An Ice Age Floods Study of Alternatives and Environmental Assessment is online at <http://www.nps.gov/iceagefloods/>. The text of S. 206 and H.R. 383 can be found by searching <http://thomas.loc.gov>. For more information, call the Glacial Lake Missoula Chapter at (406) 370-5987 or visit <http://www.iceagefloodsinstitute.org>.

Join the flood of support for creation of the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail. Let's tell the world about Glacial Lake Missoula and the ice age floods.

The Ice Age Floods Institute is a regional, nonprofit organization of geologists, educators, business professionals and citizens. Its Glacial Lake Missoula Chapter encompasses Montana, particularly those parts of the state once covered by the ice age lake.

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