

NEWS RELEASE

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Utah's First Historical Park Created as State Prepares to Celebrate 150th Anniversary of Completion of Transcontinental Railroad

New Designation of Golden Spike Site Will Raise Awareness, Increase Visitation

SALT LAKE CITY – Northern Utah's Golden Spike National Historic Site is now a full-fledged National Historical Park, thanks to a re-designation included in the Natural Resources Management Act, signed into law Tuesday by President Trump.

The new designation emphasizes the importance of the site where crews joined eastbound and westbound tracks to create the nation's first transcontinental railroad. It also expands the site's national importance and context by connecting it with several related sites in the western U.S. The new name comes two months before the state pulls out all the stops to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the railroad's completion in early May.

"This is a prominent symbol of the most significant achievement of the 19th century," said Rep. Rob Bishop, Ranking Member of the Housing Committee on Natural Resources. "And it is, for transportation, as significant as landing a man on the moon would be for the 20th century. The ability of having the rail system there meant that some of my ancestors that had to walk every step across the plains taking months to get to Utah could now do it in seven days."

A National Historic Site (NHS) usually contains a single historical feature directly associated with its subject. A related but separate designation, the National Historical Park (NHP), is an area that generally extends beyond single properties or buildings, and its resources include a mix of historic and sometimes significant natural features. Golden Spike joins such other NHPs as Abraham Lincoln's birthplace in Illinois, American Revolution sites in Boston, Independence Hall in Philadelphia and the Lewis and Clark Trail in Oregon and Washington.

"We are very excited to become the newest National Historical Park within the National Park Service, and hope the name change will attract even more visitors with whom we can share this piece of our nation's amazing history," said Leslie Crossland, Superintendent of the Golden Spike National Historical Park.

The Park's new designation provides opportunities to attract additional tourists and economic benefit to Utah's rural areas, a goal of Utah's tourism-promotion and economic development efforts.

"This is a great milestone in establishing northern Utah as the Golden Spike region," said Vicki Varela, Managing Director of the Utah Office of Tourism, Film and Global Branding. "It fits

beautifully with our tourism strategy to attract visitors who want to immerse themselves in rich history and culture.”

“This role for the newly designated Golden Spike National Historical Park is a tremendous way to keep alive the can-do spirit created by the railroad and honor the lives of those who built it,” said Doug Foxley, Chair of the Spike 150 Commission created to organize the state’s 150th anniversary celebration. “This iconic event showed the world that remarkable things are possible with vision, hard work, dedication, innovation and collaboration. These are principles that still ring true today and are reflective of Utah’s culture and way of life. Knowing our history and reflecting on our past can make us better and inspire us to move forward and achieve the next great thing.”

The Spike 150 celebration includes a year-long series of events to educate, inspire and unite people by paying tribute to the heroic achievement that, quite literally, connected America and Americans. Events throughout the Utah, including the signature 150th anniversary celebration on May 10, 2019, are expected to draw more than 2.5 million people to Utah.

“We are planning to throw the biggest and best party for the 150th anniversary of the Golden Spike,” Foxley said. “We want people from all around Utah, across the United States and around the world to participate in the activities we have planned because we will have something for everyone.”

More information about Spike 150, planned events and parking passes needed for the celebration at Promontory visit spike150.org.

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Below is a link to a photo of the bill being signed

<https://twitter.com/NatResources/status/1105583765483597828>

And a signing pen.

<https://twitter.com/NatResources/status/1105549428713287681>