

## Flushing Remonstrance Special Resource Study

The United States Congress as part of Public Law 113-291, directed the National Park Service to conduct a special resource study to help determine whether the resources related to the history of religious freedom and the 1657 Flushing Remonstrance would meet criteria for congressional designation as a unit of the national park system. The study area will include the John Bowne House, Friends Meeting House, and “other resources in the vicinity of Flushing related to the history of religious freedom during the era of the signing of the Flushing Remonstrance.” Flushing, located in the Queens Borough of New York City, New York, has a long standing tradition of ethnic diversity and religious tolerance. Established as part the Dutch colony of New Netherland in the early 17th century, and followed closely by the arrival of English settlers, Queens continues today to serve as home to a multitude of ethnicities and religions.

The Flushing Remonstrance, written by a group of non-Quakers in 1657, was a declaration of protest against

religious persecution of Quakers by the Governor-General of the Dutch colony in an attempt to allow free practice of one’s religion in accordance with the colony’s charter. The Flushing Remonstrance is recognized as one of the first efforts to secure the free exercise of religion in what would become the United States.

The John Bowne House is located at 3701 Bowne Street, Queens, New York. Built c. 1661 with subsequent modifications, this Anglo-Dutch vernacular structure was home to John Bowne, a major figure in the era of the Flushing Remonstrance and the settlement of Flushing. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places and as a New York City Landmark, the Bowne House is operated by a not-for-profit group and has been open to the public for educational tours since 1947. The Friends Meeting House is located at 137-17 Northern Boulevard, Queens, New York. Constructed c. 1699, and designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1967, this active house of worship has been in continual use since and is open to the public for tours.

### What is a special resource study?

The National Park Service was created to conserve unimpaired outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational resources. The treasures in this system have been set aside by the American people to protect, preserve, and share our nation’s greatest stories. Usually a new unit of the national park system is established by an act of Congress. Before passing such legislation, Congress requires reliable information about the quality of resources in the area under consideration and the potential for visitor enjoyment and efficient management. The NPS collects this information and reports its findings to Congress through special resource studies. This process ensures that only those candidate sites that are most deserving of designation are included within the national park system.



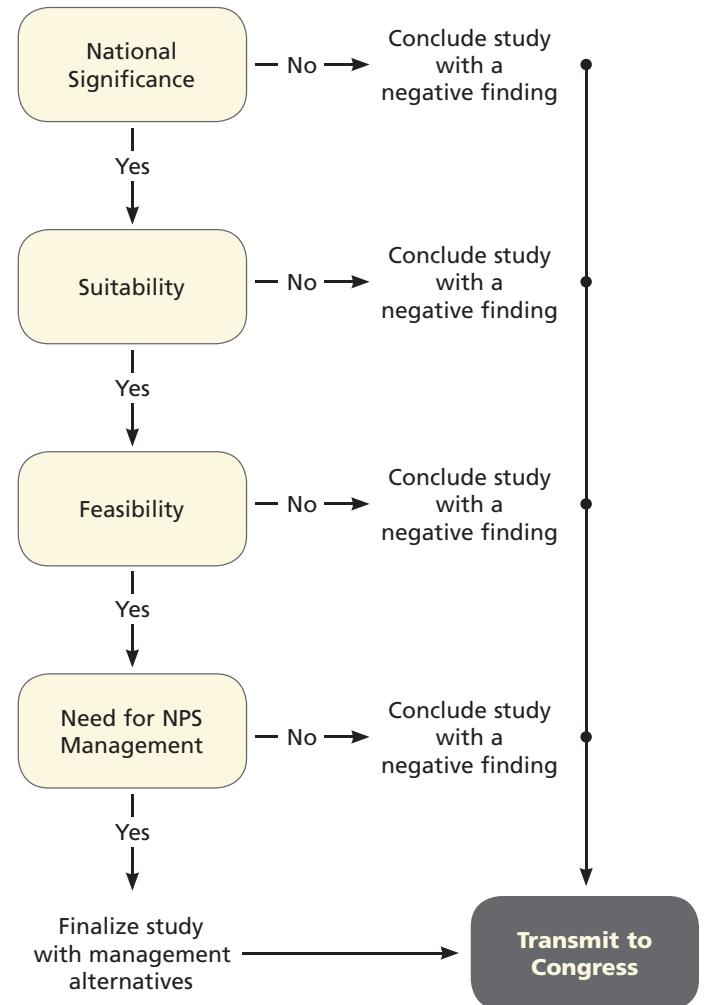
## Special Resource Study Criteria

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

- Contain **nationally significant** natural and/or cultural resources.
- Be a **suitable** addition to the national park system by representing 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 NPS 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.

## Special Resource Study Process

An National Park Service team has been assembled to prepare the Flushing Remonstrance Special Resource Study. This team will evaluate the resource within the study area to determine if they meet the four study criteria listed above. If the area is found to meet all of the criteria, then the study team will develop a range of management alternatives for the sites. If the resources do not meet all four criteria, the study will conclude with a negative finding. Upon conclusion of the study process, the findings would be submitted to the Director of the National Park Service and the Secretary of the Interior, who in turn, would transmit the report and a recommendation to Congress. It would then be up to Congress to take action on legislation establishing a new unit of the national park system.



### We look forward to hearing from you!

The National Park Service would like your help to enhance our understanding of the Flushing Reonstrance story, current efforts underway to tell the story, and potential opportunities to improve public awareness. Please share your thoughts about the following questions at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/flushing>.

1. What is significant about the Flushing Remonstrance and the history of religious freedom in Flushing?
2. Where are resources - tangible historic resources, archives, repositories - that we should look at related to the Flushing Remonstrance and the history of religious freedom?
3. Who should we be talking to?
4. What are your expectations and concerns?

