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For Immediate Release
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Congress/President Direct National Park Service to Undertake Study for John Smith Trail

Washington, DC: On August 2, President Bush signed into law, “The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail Study Act of 2005,” directing the National Park Service to conduct a feasibility study into the creation of a federally authorized Historic Trail along the routes of John Smith’s 1607-1609 voyages. Conducting a feasibility study is one of the actions required by the 1978 National Historic Trails Act in order to formally establish the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. If authorized, the John Smith Trail would join the fifteen currently established National Historic Trails, including the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail and the Pony Express National Historic Trail.

While feasibility studies for National Historic Trails can often take several years to conduct, there is a significant push to see that the study for the John Smith Trail be completed by the Fall of 2006 so that Congress will have an opportunity to pass the authorizing legislation for the trail prior to the four hundredth anniversary of the founding of Jamestown in 2007. Significant research into the John Smith’s voyages already conducted by several groups, including the National Geographic Society and the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, could help to speed the National Park Service study process.

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