

Landowners Speak Out Against Heritage Designation

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KFYR-TV

Landowners in a five-county area along the Missouri River in North Dakota are speaking out against a new National Heritage Area designation.

The designation by Congress of the Northern Plains Heritage Area is aimed at promoting heritage and history in Burleigh, McLean, Mercer, Morton and Oliver counties. Promoters and residents are to come up with a management plan over the next three years.

Neil Effertz of rural Bismarck says the \$15 million project was started without landowners being notified. Clint Fleckenstein says he bought a small bit of land and now feels like he has a \$15 million "baby-sitting job" keeping track of how the federal money is spent.

Tracy Potter, who headed the campaign to get the designation, said he expected some people to be upset. But he said private property cannot be acquired, developed or accessed without the landowner's permission.