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National Park Service Reaches Agreement with American Revolution Center for New Museum in Philly

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar and the American Revolution Center (ARC) today announced that the National Park Service has reached a historic agreement to develop a national museum dedicated to the American Revolution. The National Park Service signed a land-exchange agreement with ARC to establish this museum at Independence National Historical Park.

“This is wonderful news for both the National Park Service and the American Revolution Center,” said Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. “Visitors to our nation’s birthplace will now be able to enjoy a world-class museum dedicated to the story of the American Revolution within the shadow of Independence Hall.”

The new American Revolution Center will be located at 3rd and Chestnut Street in downtown Philadelphia, within the 55-acre park. In exchange for the site, the National Park Service will receive a 78-acre parcel of private land owned by the Center within the boundary of Valley Forge National Historical Park.

“The American Revolution Center (ARC) is a critical project for our nation, and I am extremely pleased with this latest development,” said H.F. “Gerry” Lenfest, Chairman of the Board of Directors of ARC. “We have expended extraordinary time and resources to locate the Center in Valley Forge, and I believe that our vision there could have been achieved. We now believe that it is in our best interest to begin a new chapter for ARC, and I cannot think of a more appropriate setting than at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia.”

At Independence National Historical Park, the National Park Service manages several sites associated with the American Revolution, including the Liberty Bell Center, the National Constitution Center and Independence Hall. ARC will work together with these and other institutions around the country and the world to further the understanding of the revolution.

The American Revolution Center will be the first national museum to commemorate the entire story of the American Revolution. The museum will display its distinguished collection of objects, artifacts and manuscripts from the American Revolution era and will offer educational programming, lectures, symposia, and interactive learning for teachers, students, and the general public.

“I applaud the mission of The American Revolution Center and fully support the decision to relocate,” said Governor Edward G. Rendell. “I am thrilled that Gerry Lenfest, Dr. Bruce Cole and ARC’s Board have selected Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for the new home of this national museum and I believe it will be a terrific complement to Independence National Historical Park area.”

“The National Park Service has long supported the concept of the American Revolution Center,” said Dan Wenk, acting NPS Director. “What better place than Philadelphia, the ‘cradle of liberty’ for a museum about the American Revolution.”

“This is a promising time for ARC,” said Dr. Bruce Cole, ARC’s new president and chief executive officer. “We are committed to the creation of a living memorial to the American Revolution. We look forward to developing a museum to commemorate the legacy of the American Revolution in our Nation’s birthplace.”

Representatives from the American Revolution Center and the National Park Service will work jointly on appraisals, title searches, surveys, and other matters to move the land exchange process forward as quickly as possible.

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