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Cocoa, Florida 32922
3 May, 2009

**The Honorable Ken Salazar
Secretary of the Interior
Department of the Interior
1849 C St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20240**

Dear Mr. Secretary

I am a collateral descendant of Meriwether Lewis, private secretary to President Thomas Jefferson, Captain of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and Governor of the Louisiana Territory. Additionally, I teach American history at the University of Central Florida.

The family of Meriwether Lewis has been seeking the truth about his death (murder or suicide) through exhumation and modern forensics of his remains and then to provide him with the Christian burial which he has never been accorded. As an historian, I am also eager to see the ambiguity regarded his death clarified in the history books.

The family's 12 years of effort appeared to have overcome all policy hurdles when Assistant Secretary Lavery stated last year in his decision on this matter, that the exhumation was "appropriate and in the public interest."

However, the National Park Service has disregarded Secretary Lavery's decision and once again callously disregarded our family's desires in this matter and the exhumation has been blocked. This flies in the face of the opportunities afforded by our government to find the truth about the death circumstances of other prominent Americans such as that of President Taylor.

You will have received a letter dated March 13, 2009, from Tom McSwain on behalf of the family of Meriwether Lewis. I heartily endorse his letter and ask that you take steps forthwith to clear all policy and bureaucratic hurdles so that this scientific study can go forward to finally learn the truth of his death, to clarify the historical record, and to enable a Christian reburial of his remains at the Meriwether Lewis Monument in Tennessee.

Very truly your,



Edith L. Macdonald