

THE
FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: HAFE

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Americans painfully recall the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Those events, as they unfolded hour by hour at the World Trade Center in New York City, at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and in a field near Shankstown, Pennsylvania, will never be forgotten. Each of these individual acts are forever connected in our minds as one. In the same way, previous generations of Americans connected the events of the 1862 Maryland Campaign at Harpers Ferry, South Mountain, and Antietam as one unfolding event. Seven generations of Americans have felt the tragic loss of life at Antietam as Americans do today in remembering the tragic events of September 11. Patriotic sites such as Antietam, Pearl Harbor, and Oklahoma City, and fields of valor such as Harpers Ferry are places where Americans come to seek understanding, comfort, and resolve in difficult times. The value of preserving these historic places and the importance of protecting them allows new generations the opportunity to come, see, learn, touch, and begin to understand how these special places hold the story of who we are and where we come from as Americans.

On September 3, 2004 President George W. Bush signed into law the Harpers Ferry Boundary Revision Act of 2004 authorizing preservation of nationally significant battlefield lands at Harpers Ferry--a part of General Lee's Maryland Campaign.

In September of 1862 Lee's army crossed the Potomac River beginning the first Confederate invasion of the north. The Federals had been expected to abandon Harpers Ferry however they did not. To remove the Federals at Harpers Ferry, Lee devised a bold plan to divide his army sending General Jackson and 25,000 Confederates to clear out the 14,000 Federals at Harpers Ferry. Over three days, General Jackson orchestrated his most brilliant victory forcing the surrender of 12,700 Union troops the largest capitulation of U.S. troops during the Civil War. Jackson's stunning victory at Harpers Ferry permitted Lee to make a stand at Sharpsburg, Maryland. The battle of Antietam was the bloodiest single-day battle during the Civil War. This was victory enough for President Abraham Lincoln to issue the Emancipation Proclamation three months later, changing the scope of the war.

It is the vision of the NPS leadership at Harpers Ferry that over the next ten years we will fully protect, restore, and to utilize for public educational purposes the 1862 Harpers Ferry battlefield and to make it available to the

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Donald Campbell

Site: HAFE

STEWARDSHIP

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2004 provides the framework for preserving, restoring and providing for the public use and enjoyment of the 1862 Harpers Ferry battlefield. Land acquisition is first priority and hundreds of acres of battlefield have been purchased by the NPS or donated by park partners. Plans for the battlefield have been prepared and have undergone public review. Immediate goals of the plans have been implemented to provide for initial public use of the battlefield. Long range plans call for an extensive network of trails and wayside exhibits, building stabilization, construction of historic fences, traces and treelines, removal of non-conforming buildings, vista clearings, public restrooms, parking areas and providing both NPS led and self-guided history tours of the battlefield.

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STEWARDSHIP

Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

Complete all cultural resource inventories for designated priority resources.

The Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2004 provides the framework for preserving, restoring and providing for the public use and enjoyment of the 1862 Harpers Ferry Battlefield. Performing cultural resource inventories is an integral part of preserving, protecting, and interpreting the landscapes, archeological sites and historic structures of the battlefield. Completing a cultural landscape inventory of the battlefield will provide valuable information for planners and interpreters. Documentation of architectural resources, such as the Murphy Farm House is vital for planning and preservation and use of this historic structure. A comprehensive archeological survey of the battlefield may provide details about the Civil War engagement, such as pinpointing the location of the skirmish line, artillery positions, firing zones and artillery impact zones. Based on preliminary surveys of other portions of the battlefield, the potential for discovering Native American sites is also high. The prehistory of this area is understudied and new discoveries will help us better understand and interpret this period. Comprehensive cultural landscape studies, detailed his

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STEWARDSHIP

Encourage children to be future conservationists.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

A child is a person who is going to carry on the work that the NPS has begun. He is going to sit where NPS staff are sitting today, and when they are gone, attend to the things the NPS thinks through law and policy are important. Through an expanded Junior Ranger Program, Ameri-corp, the Student Conservation Association, and volunteering opportunities over the next ten-years of battlefield restoration protecting cultural resources, creating parkland, open space, wildlife habitat, and clean air and water, we will provide hundreds of experiences encouraging children to be future conservationists and promote the next generation of national park stewards and partners.

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ENVIRONMENT

Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

Development of visitor parking and administrative access will be minimized in overall scope and placed in naturally screened areas. Existing facilities will be adaptively reused to provide operational support such as the Ott Barn to store mowing equipment and supporting supplies. Proposed developments will have no adverse effect on sub-surface water sources or natural drainages. Park vehicle and equipment fleet will continue to be upgraded with Bio-diesel fuels, hybrid, and alternate synergy technologies.

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RECREATION

Expand partnerships with schools and boys and girls associations to show how national park experiences can improve children's lives.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The education outreach program at Harpers Ferry now serves over 40,000 children annually from school districts across the United States. More than 1500 students are served locally in the Jefferson County School District. The park intends to grow these programs utilizing the restored 1862 battlefield at Harpers Ferry to discuss leadership as part of the annual Congressional Youth Leadership visits to the park and utilize the park battlefield as an outdoor classroom for the expanded teaching of the American Civil War to local teachers and students on the ground where history happened. Additionally, the park will expand its use of Americorps, and Student Conservation Association in the restoration of the battlefield giving each year, over 10 years, hundreds of positive national park experiences to youth improving their lives through work in the park.

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RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

Through the development of a network of trails and wayside exhibits on the Harpers Ferry battlefield over the next decade, we will provide the opportunity for increased numbers of visitors to attend ranger led programs and participate in NPS trained, teacher led school programs on Civil War history at Harper Ferry.

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