

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## PURPOSE AND NEED



Virginia's Shenandoah Valley was a key theater in the Civil War. As a natural geographic highway between North and South and as a richly productive agricultural region whose bounty fed the Confederate troops, the Valley was fiercely contested during the War, playing an integral role in almost every major campaign fought in Virginia. More than 325 armed conflicts took place here with Stonewall Jackson's 1862 campaign perhaps the most famous of these. The eight counties comprising the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District (District) lay at the heart of the struggle, and, as the War dragged on, the area assumed increasing significance for the southern cause. Union forces responded by laying waste to this region, burning its fields and farms and towns in a devastating campaign of total warfare.

Today the District remains a vital yet vulnerable national historical resource, a place where the meaning of the Civil War comes to life through green battlefields and historic roadways and buildings. But development threatens the survival and integrity of these resources. This Management Plan outlines a program to preserve the District's historical character, to protect and interpret the Civil War battlefields and related resources in the District, and to increase public awareness of the War's legacy in the Valley.



**More than 325 armed  
conflicts took place here.**

## ENABLING LEGISLATION



The 1996 Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District and Commission Act (P.L. 104-333) established both the District and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District Commission (Commission). The District is comprised of Augusta, Clarke, Frederick, Highland, Page, Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Warren counties, and the independent cities of Harrisonburg, Staunton, Winchester, and Waynesboro, as well as ten battlefields and a number of historically important transportation routes.

The purpose of the District and the Commission is to preserve, conserve, and interpret the Valley's Civil War legacy—the places, the events, and the people (soldier *and* civilian) before, during, and after the War.

The Commission was charged with creating partnerships among federal, state, regional, and local governments and the private sector to develop a plan to manage and administer the District. The 19-member Commission represents landowners, local governments, preservation and history experts, and designees of the governor of Virginia and the director of the National Park Service (NPS). The legislation's broad array of mandates, which must be addressed in the plan, have been grouped into four topics:

- battlefield and resource protection
- interpretation and education
- visitor services and tourism
- management and partnerships

In accordance with the legislation, a NPS Special Resource Study was prepared concurrently to determine “whether the District or components thereof meet the criteria for designation as a unit of the National Park Service.” An Environmental Impact Statement also was required and prepared for both plans.



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## PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



The Commission’s legislation was enacted in response to public concerns about Civil War resource preservation. Designed to solicit and ultimately reflect the ideas, desires, and concerns of residents of the District and the nation, the planning process was divided into four phases:

- Phase I: Developing a vision/scoping (November 1998–March 1999)
- Phase II: Developing alternatives/data gathering (April 1999–October 1999)
- Phase III: Selecting a preferred alternative/drafting the plan (October 1999–May 2000)
- Phase IV: Developing the final plan/agency approvals (June 2000–November 2000)

Through many public meetings and presentations, extensive media coverage, Commission newsletters, and meetings with current and potential partners to the plan, the Commission sought guidance and input from the public, government, and all other interested parties, while keeping them informed of the Commission’s progress, plans, and conclusions.

The Commission ultimately identified one “no-action” and three “action” alternatives that might accomplish the legislation’s mandates, finally selecting what is termed the “Clusters” approach as its preferred alternative. Between mid-April and mid-June of 2000 the Commission presented this alternative to the public through a newsletter, public meetings and governmental briefings, and other means. Public response indicated overwhelming support for the Commission’s recommendations, which resulted in the plan outlined below.

## THE PLAN



The plan structures the District according to geographic groupings—clusters—of battlefields, nearby towns, and other visitor sites (see Map S-1). The plan creates a

new non-profit organization, the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (Foundation), to foster partnerships within the District and create incentives for communities to collaborate on interpretive sites and other preservation-oriented development opportunities. Visitor service and interpretation will be focused at five Civil War orientation centers throughout the District. Visitors will move between or within clusters along historic routes.

The plan will generate a great degree of local participation and stewardship for preservation and interpretation of the Valley's Civil War resources, while distributing valuable tourism benefits across the District. The major elements of the plan are described in the following sections.

## BATTLEFIELD AND RESOURCE PROTECTION

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Ten Civil War battlefields were identified for study in the legislation. Figure S-1 lists the battlefields, their sizes, the amount of land currently protected, and the amount of core battlefield retaining integrity. This plan includes recommendations for their protection.



**The plan supports voluntary protection of battlefield lands.**

In addition, resources beyond the battlefields are important to the Valley's history and culture. Farmlands protect battlefields and reflect the area's historically agrarian character. Historic sites tell different aspects of the District's story, and historic/scenic roads link many of the battlefields. The District also contains a wealth of natural resources and recreational opportunities.

The plan supports voluntary protection of battlefield lands; the Foundation will not seek condemnation authority. Instead, the Foundation will encourage both public and private ownership of battlefield lands, thus maintaining the historically agricultural character of these lands, reducing negative impacts on local tax revenues, and maximizing preservation opportunities.

The Foundation will work with District partners to develop individual battlefield plans that will identify protection strategies and priorities, and maintain a list of



**FIGURE S-1  
BATTLEFIELD SIZE, INTEGRITY, AND PROTECTION, 2000**

*Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District*

| Battlefield                   | Core Area Acreage | Study Area Acreage | Core Areas Retaining Integrity | Core Acreage Protected |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| McDowell                      | 2,258             | 4,539              | 2,258                          | 261                    |
| Cross Keys                    | 2,153             | 5,450              | 2,032                          | 191                    |
| Port Republic                 | 2,145             | 4,936              | 2,110                          | 10                     |
| New Market                    | 2,261             | 5,611              | 1,527                          | 238                    |
| Tom's Brook                   | 2,018             | 6,644              | 1,672                          | 61                     |
| Fisher's Hill                 | 2,751             | 9,644              | 2,328                          | 239                    |
| Cedar Creek                   | 6,252             | 15,607             | 5,475                          | 582                    |
| Second Winchester             | 3,113             | 22,274             | 1,299                          | 7                      |
| Second Kernstown              | 2,203             | 5,861              | 770                            | 315                    |
| Opequon<br>(Third Winchester) | 4,914             | 11,670             | 1,625                          | 229                    |
| <b>Total Acreage</b>          | <b>30,068</b>     | <b>92,236</b>      | <b>21,096<br/>(70%)</b>        | <b>2,133<br/>(7%)</b>  |

*Source: Study of Civil War Sites in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, NPS 1992; updated by Commission and OCULUS, 2000.*

*Note: Study Area acreage includes Core Area acreage.*

properties to be protected. The Foundation's preservation and protection efforts within the District will be directed according to the following priorities:

- Priority 1: "core" battlefield lands where fighting occurred
- Priority 2: "study areas" surrounding the core fighting areas
- Priority 3: resources related to the battlefields

To succeed in the enormous task of protecting these battlefields and other resources, the Foundation and other partners will employ a variety of tools, listed in Figure S-2.

## INTERPRETATION

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The Foundation, in collaboration with District partners, will develop and implement a coordinated, District-wide interpretive plan that includes visitor education and appropriate living-history demonstrations and battlefield reenactments, unified through a District wayfinding system and promoted through a shared marketing program. The interpretive program will be built upon three primary themes:

**The Valley:** Geography, history, economy, and culture focused the attention of both North and South during the War.

**The campaigns:** Though with different objectives, different leaders, and different results, each played an important role in determining the War's outcome.

**The battles:** Ten different battles provide unique perspectives on Civil War combat.

Interpretive programs will be designed to appeal to audiences of all ages and levels of interest, and will be offered in a range of formats: indoor exhibits; outdoor interpretive displays along historic routes, at battlefields, and at related sites; written guides (books, maps, brochures); and audio, video, and interactive technologies.

Visitors will be encouraged to travel throughout the District. Interpretation will be provided at Civil War orientation centers, battlefields, existing sites, along historic routes, at related Civil War resources, and in towns and cities. Living-history demonstrations and battle reenactments will provide additional visitor interest as well as fund-raising opportunities.

Finally, the Foundation and District partners will stress education by developing curriculum for the battlefields and supporting a range of educational and research programs.

## VISITOR SERVICES

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The plan groups the District into five clusters associated with the District's ten designated battlefields: McDowell; Port Republic/Cross Keys; New Market; Tom's



## FIGURE S-2 SUMMARY OF TECHNIQUES FOR BATTLEFIELD AND RESOURCE PROTECTION

*Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land purchase at full value</li> <li>• Land purchase at bargain value</li> <li>• Acquisition of land via donation or bequest</li> <li>• Receipt of charitable remainder trusts</li> <li>• Acquisition of options or rights of first refusal</li> <li>• Acquisition of undivided interests or remainder interests</li> <li>• Land exchange</li> <li>• Conservation easements</li> <li>• Purchase of development rights</li> <li>• Covenants</li> <li>• Voluntary dedication or “cash in lieu”</li> <li>• Lease with option to buy</li> <li>• Leases and management agreements</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural and Forestal Districts program</li> <li>• Regulations for environmentally sensitive areas</li> <li>• Land use planning</li> <li>• Cluster zoning / planned unit development</li> <li>• Density bonuses</li> <li>• Conservation subdivisions</li> <li>• Agricultural zoning (25-40 acre, large lot)</li> <li>• Historic district zoning</li> <li>• Historic district approach corridor overlay</li> <li>• Service area limits (sewer, water, etc.)</li> <li>• Overlay zoning / design review</li> <li>• Recognition and certification programs</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

Brook/Fisher’s Hill/Cedar Creek; and Second Winchester/Second Kernstown/Opequon (Third Winchester).

Each cluster will feature a Civil War orientation center, developed by the appropriate District partners in cooperation with the Foundation. These centers will serve as interpretive focal points, introducing visitors to the themes, stories, resources, and attractions in the District as a whole but particularly those specific to each cluster’s immediate community. The Foundation will work with partners to provide limited amenities at each battlefield, including parking, trails, outdoor interpretation, exhibit shelters, and directional signs.

The design of the orientation centers will serve to direct visitors towards the battlefields themselves, while also encouraging visits to the surrounding communities and nearby related sites and resources. A clearly identifiable District-wide wayfinding system—developed by the Foundation and its partners and built upon the existing

Virginia Civil War Trails program—will guide visitors to, between, and within each cluster. The Foundation and District partners will work as well with existing welcome centers and tourism promotion organizations to provide visitor information on other District attractions.

## MANAGEMENT

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The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation will oversee the District as the “lead managing partner.” Its diverse board will include state and NPS representatives, District officials, leaders from outside the region, subject experts, and representatives from each cluster area. Figure S-3 illustrates this management structure.

The Foundation will manage the District according to the Management Plan, with legal power to receive and disburse funds for preparing and implementing the management plan, acquire lands or interests in lands, and make reasonable and necessary modifications to the plan. The Foundation will also have the authority to enter into agreements with government agencies and nonprofit organizations and disburse federal funds to further the goals of the Management Plan. Other roles and responsibilities of the Foundation will include:

**Land protection:** The Foundation will work with and support public-trust groups acquiring and protecting battlefields. In appropriate and necessary circumstances, the Foundation itself could protect battlefields directly through purchase or other means.

**Information and support:** The Foundation will offer a range of resources—including information, training, technical assistance, grants, and other encouragements—to partners, private and public-trust property owners, and local jurisdictions for protecting land and encouraging long-term stewardship by individuals, groups, and communities. The Foundation also will help develop and maintain a geographic information system to aid informed decision-making about District lands and resources.

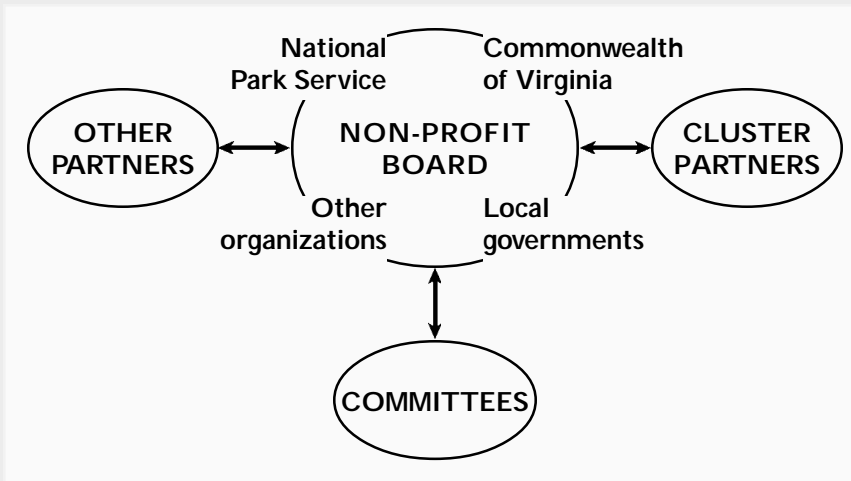
**Advocacy:** The Foundation will advocate for improved land use planning tools and decisions where public policy decisions place important resources at stake or may set precedents.

**Interpretation:** The Foundation will lead development of a collaborative, District-wide interpretive plan; participate in the development of District-partner plans for



**FIGURE S-3  
FOUNDATION MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

*Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District*



clusters, individual battlefields, and other resources; oversee design of a unified District graphic image and wayfinding system; and monitor and maintain agreed-upon standards for the interpretive system.

The Foundation will rely on a wide range of District partners to plan, implement, and maintain stewardship, interpretation, and visitor services. These partners will include: operators of Civil War orientation centers, local governments, tourism and economic development interests, citizens groups, historic preservation organizations, state and federal agencies, landowners, universities, and historic sites in the District.

As principal partners, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the NPS are expected to support the Foundation’s operating costs and provide matching funds for protecting and interpreting battlefields. The Commonwealth will be expected to continue to support the Virginia Military Institute’s stewardship of New Market Battlefield State Historical Park and adapt public policies and grant funding to support and protect

District resources. The NPS will be expected to seek to establish a new national park at the Cedar Creek battlefield and provide technical assistance throughout the District.

## FUNDING AND COSTS

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**Battlefield and resource protection:** The enabling legislation authorizes up to \$2 million per year in federal matching funds for grants, technical assistance, and land protection. The legislation also authorizes the Secretary of the Interior up to \$2 million per year in federal funds for direct support of battlefield preservation in the District. Other possible funding sources include the Land and Water Conservation Fund, agricultural conservation easement programs, TEA-21, Virginia Land Conservation Fund, and other state environmental programs. The Foundation will collaborate with private Civil War and lands conservancies to help fund battlefield and resource protection programs.

**Interpretation:** Additional state, federal, and private sources will be pursued to complement the \$2 million in federal matching funds authorized for grants, technical assistance, and land acquisition.

**Visitor services:** The Civil War orientation centers will be developed by partners per the standards of the District-wide interpretive plan. Between \$2.9 and \$5.2 million will need to be secured in addition to money already planned to implement visitor services projects.

**Management:** The Foundation and partners operating the Civil War orientation centers will share operational expenses. It is expected to cost between \$600,000 and \$1.2 million per year to operate the Civil War orientation centers and between \$1.5 and \$2.3 million to support the Foundation's staff, core programs, special projects, and administrative expenses. The Foundation will be authorized up to \$500,000 annually in federal operating funds, which will be supplemented by funds from state and local sources. Contributions for special programs will be solicited from local sources and from private foundations, organizations, and corporations.

## IMPLEMENTATION

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It may take 20 years to fully implement the proposal. However, a seven-year time frame is projected for the Foundation and its partners to plan, develop, and implement

a significant portion of the Management Plan’s protection, interpretation, and visitor services components, including:


## Years One to Three:

### Battlefield and Resource Protection

- Implement voluntary battlefield protection measures as opportunities arise, working with property owners, local governments, and public-trust battlefield owners.
- Undertake battlefield planning by cluster, including protection, access, and interpretation; coordinate with District-wide interpretive plan.
- Develop partner-support programs for resource protection, working with non-profit and government agencies (e.g., county planning departments).
- Pursue designation of scenic routes, rivers, and trails; historic structures; and historic districts.
- Continue Demonstration Projects Program begun by the Commission.

### Interpretation

- Develop and begin implementation of District-wide interpretive plan. Coordinate with battlefield plans.
- Develop partner-support programs for interpretation and institute matching-grant program for existing and new sites.
- Implement interpretive plans for specific battlefields, identify funds for first round of construction, and contract for blueprints for public access and interpretive installations where land is already available.



**It may take 20 years to fully implement the proposal.**

### Visitor Services

- Develop graphic identity; develop signage and wayfinding component of interpretive plan (in collaboration with the Virginia Civil War Trails program, tourism advisors, and the Virginia Department of Transportation [VDOT] representatives); begin installation of regional directional sign system.

- Assemble tourism advisors and develop marketing plan.
- Identify and begin to address (primarily through funds from partners) needs of the District's existing visitor reception system.
- Initiate hospitality training and develop reference materials to help front-desk staff of area attractions answer questions about the District.

## Years Four to Seven:

### **Battlefield and Resource Protection**

- Continue battlefield protection through partners and through direct action by the Foundation.
- Substantially complete battlefield facilities.

### **Interpretation**

- Develop up to 30 percent of new interpretive sites identified through the District-wide interpretive plan.

### **Visitor Services**

- Complete Civil War orientation centers.
- Implement community development program for visitor reception, recreation, and additional interpretive sites.
- Implement full-scale marketing plan once critical mass of facilities is ready.
- Complete installation of regional directional sign system in cooperation with the Virginia Civil War Trails program and the VDOT.
- Initiate support for regional recreation plan to develop bicycling and plan long-term development of walking trail linking battlefields.
- Create broadly collaborative community development plans by cluster. Assemble economic development advisors and develop partner-support program. Undertake one round of modest economic development matching grants for plans and technical assistance.



