



**National Trust for
Historic Preservation**
Save the past. Enrich the future.



CIVIL WAR TRUST
Saving America's Civil War Battlefields
Civilwar.org

May 22, 2017

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Chair
Interior Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chair
Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Minority Member
Interior Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Murkowski, Chair Calvert, and Ranking Members Udall and McCollum:

As organizations and historians who strongly support preservation of our nation’s battlefields and monuments, we urge you to work with us to protect these hallowed grounds in the National Park System by supporting guaranteed funding for repair needs.

Last year marked the 100th birthday of the National Park Service (NPS), which oversees 417 natural and cultural areas in all 50 states and most U.S. territories. The National Park System tells the story of remarkable people and events in our nation’s rich history, including the military conflicts that help to define our nation.

NPS faces a growing challenge in adequately maintaining its sites to ensure that visitors can experience the parks’ natural beauty and learn about our nation’s history. After decades of underfunding, NPS has an infrastructure repair backlog estimated at \$12 billion (FY 2015), with historic assets comprising 47% of the backlog, and approximately \$472.5 million attributed to military fortifications.

Many Civil War battlefields and other significant historic sites related to the Revolutionary War, American Indian Wars, the War of 1812, World War II, and other military engagements within the National Park System are at risk of falling into disrepair as they face extensive infrastructure needs:

- At Gettysburg National Military Park, deferred maintenance needs total \$55.5 million. This iconic site was home to the Civil war’s bloodiest battle, the turning point for the conflict, and inspiration for President Lincoln’s “Gettysburg Address”.
- Saratoga National Historical Park—the site that marks the first time in world history that a British Army surrendered—requires more than \$16.2 million for deferred maintenance projects at a place that marked a major turning point in the American Revolution and convinced the French to ally themselves with the colonists.

- Sitka National Historical Park commemorates the Battle of Sitka, where Russian and Native Alaskans battled after a series of conflicts over trade and territory in the area, but it has nearly \$3 million in deferred maintenance needs. A visitors center used to interpret the battle and the battlefield itself both need major repairs and restoration.
- The Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument commemorates a significant engagement between the 7th Regiment of the US Cavalry and the Lakota Sioux, Northern Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes where Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer led 700 men against a force of 1,500 to 1,800 tribal warriors, only to be overwhelmed by superior numbers and firepower. The site faces nearly \$18.4 million in deferred maintenance needs.

These battlefields are testaments to our citizens' valor, our hardships, and our history, and deferred maintenance in our national parks puts these historic sites and cultural artifacts at risk of permanent damage or loss.

A reliable, dedicated federal funding source to address the deferred maintenance backlog ensures that we preserve American battlefields and monuments in safe condition, and that these historic landscapes remain open and accessible so that the public can continue to learn from and experience the stories that tell our nation's history. Our National Park System celebrates our historic and natural treasures, and we have a responsibility to ensure these parks are maintained and preserved so future generations can continue to enjoy and learn from them.

Sincerely,

Organizations:

Alaska Association for Historic Preservation (AK)
 Alliance to Preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington (D.C.)
 American Association for State and Local History (TN)
 American Civil War Museum & White House of the Confederacy (VA)
 American Cultural Resources Association (D.C.)
 American Revolution Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati (D.C.)
 Baltimore Heritage (MD)
 Belle Grove Plantation (VA)
 The Boone Society, Inc. (TX)
 Carbon County Historical Society and Museum (MT)
 Central Virginia Battlefields Trust (VA)
 Citizens Advocating Memorial Preservation (C.A.M.P.) (NY)
 The Civil War Institute (PA)
 Civil War Round Table of Fredericksburg (VA)
 Cherokee County Historical Society (GA)
 Colonel Andrew Balfour Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NC)
 Department of New York, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (NY)
 The Fort Sumter-Fort Moultrie Historical Trust (SC)
 Frederick County Landmarks Foundation, Inc. (MD)
 The French and Indian War Society, Inc. (NY)
 Friends of Cedar Mountain Battlefield, Inc. (VA)
 Friends of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park (TN)
 The Friends of Governors Island (NY)
 Friends of Minute Man National Park (MA)
 Friends of Sitka National Historical Park (AK)
 Friends of Vicksburg National Military Park & Campaign (MS)

Friends of Wilderness Battlefield (VA)
Gettysburg Foundation (PA)
Greenwood South Carolina Historical Society (SC)
Guilford Battleground Company (NC)
Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area (MD)
Historic Annapolis (MD)
Historic Charleston Foundation (SC)
Historic Hawaii Foundation (HI)
Historical Society of Michigan (MI)
Hull House Foundation (NY)
The Indianapolis Civil War Round Table (IN)
The Journey through Hallowed Ground Partnership (VA)
Lake View Cemetery Foundation (OH)
Little Big Horn Associates (AL)
Low Country Civil War Round Table (SC)
Manassas Battlefield Trust (VA)
Missouri History Museum (MO)
Missouri's Civil War Heritage Foundation (MO)
Monocacy National Battlefield Foundation (MD)
Mosby Heritage Area Association (VA)
National Museum of Civil War Medicine (MD)
The National Society of Colonial Dames in the State of New York (NY)
New Castle Historical Society (DE)
Oklahoma Historical Society (OK)
Pamplin Historical Park & The National Museum of the Civil War Soldier (VA)
The Perry Group (OH)
Petersburg Battlefield Trust (VA)
Preservation Maryland (MD)
Preservation Pennsylvania (PA)
Preservation Virginia (VA)
Preserve Louisiana (LA)
Rhode Island Civil War Round Table (RI)
Salt Creek Civil War Round Table (IL)
Santa Fe Trail Association (KS)
Saving Hallowed Ground (PA)
Sealaska Heritage (AK)
Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (VA)
Society for American Archaeology (D.C.)
Society for Historical Archaeology (MD)
Sons of Confederate Veterans (TN)
Sons of the American Revolution, Alaska (AK)
South Carolina National Heritage Corridor (SC)
South Carolina Historical Society (SC)
The Star Spangled Banner Flag House (MD)
Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association (TN)
Texas State Historical Association (TX)
Twin Cities Civil War Roundtable (MN)
Vicksburg Foundation for Historic Preservation (MS)
Washington Association for New Jersey (NJ)
Washington County Historical Society (MD)
World War I Memorial Inventory Project (D.C.)

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