



# **Stones River National Battlefield**

## **Long-Range Interpretive Plan**

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Prepared by

Stones River National Battlefield and  
Harpers Ferry Center Interpretive Planning

U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	1
About Interpretive Planning	1
Site Description	1
Site Background	2
Legislation	3
<b>Part I: Foundation for Planning</b>	5
Park Purpose	5
Park Significance	5
Fundamental Resources and Values	6
Interpretive Themes	8
<b>Part II: Envisioning the Future</b>	13
Management Goals	13
Desired Visitor Experiences	13
Audiences	14
Challenges and Issues Affecting Interpretation	17
<b>Part III: Recommendations</b>	21
Recommendations for Future Interpretation and Education Services and Programming	21
<b>Appendix</b>	25
Appendix 1: Action Plan 2015- 2022	25
Appendix 2: Legislation	32
Appendix 3: Interpretation Division Staffing and Volunteers	33
Appendix 4: Existing Conditions	34
Appendix 5: Accessibility	38
Appendix 6: Visitor Study Comments Related to Relevance	38
List of Participants	40



# Introduction



Connecting young visitors and diverse audiences to the park remains the most important role of interpretation.



# INTRODUCTION

## About Interpretive Planning

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) outlines recommendations for future interpretive services, facilities, media, and community relationships. In the planning process, park staff, partners, and stakeholders work together to develop a comprehensive tool that outlines visitor experiences, education, and recreation opportunities for audiences to connect to the resources and stories of a park. The goal is to promote park resource values through purposefully planned audience experiences.

This plan was built on the foundations established in development of the park's General Management Plan (GMP) (1998) and Foundation Document. In addition, participant comments from the Foundation Document workshops have been used in this Long-Range Interpretive Plan to help describe existing conditions and to form recommendations for the future interpretive program.

The interests of young people were explored in the study Youth Visitors: Focus Group Study and Program Suggestions, May 2013, Public History Program, Middle Tennessee State University (in partnership with Boys and Girls Club of Rutherford County and McGavock High School.) Insights from the study have informed this Long-Range Interpretive Plan.

The University of Idaho Visitor Studies Program completed a formal Visitor Study of the battlefield in 2013. Information and insights from this document have also been used to inform this Long-Range Interpretive Plan.

The plan recommends actions that should occur over the next several years. It identifies park themes,

describes visitor experience goals, and recommends a wide variety of personal and non-personal interpretive services and community involvement activities that will best communicate the park purpose, significance, and themes. It satisfies the requirement for an interpretive plan for the park as established in Director's Order #6. (<http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/Dorder6.html>)

An interdisciplinary team of NPS staff, stakeholders, and partners met in September, 2014 to review elements of the park's 2014 Foundation Document, including purpose, significance, fundamental resources, and interpretive themes. Visitor Experience Goals were developed to encompass the foundational elements and to identify the interests of key audience segments. A Recommendations Workshop was held in December, 2014 with staff and key partners, and an Action Plan was created from the recommendations developed at that meeting.

Recommendations about visitor experience, media, services, and programming will be updated at least annually and as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change. Further planning may be done and design documents created to implement some of the goals and recommendations in this plan.

## Site Description

Stones River National Battlefield commemorates the Battle of Stones River—an important three-day American Civil War battle which resulted in a strategic Union victory. The park occupies 650 acres just west of the city of Murfreesboro, Tennessee. A range of historical features and



viewsheds is preserved in a natural setting which visitors can explore by foot, bicycle, or vehicle. The visitor center houses an exhibit area and research facilities.

### Site Background

During the pivotal Battle of Stones River, nearly 24,000 of the 81,000 combatants died in an effort to control one of middle Tennessee's most productive agricultural areas and a critical, centrally located supply network. Confederate forces commanded by Gen. Braxton Bragg eventually relented, leaving Murfreesboro in the hands of Union forces, commanded by Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans. For the Union

army, the rate of casualties was the highest of any battle in the war. For the Confederate army, due to the massing of Union artillery, the casualty rate was second only to the Battle of Gettysburg.

The Battle of Stones River marked the commencement of the Union Army's campaign, which resulted in the "March to the Sea," and at the same time marked the end of the Confederate Army's attempt to move into Kentucky and the North. This battle was also important both psychologically and politically. The Union victory boosted morale in the North, helped President Lincoln reshape the war's objectives by supporting the Emancipation



A park ranger shares his insights with a family visiting the park in the 1950s.



Proclamation, and permitted the construction of Fortress Rosecrans, a large supply depot and base of operations that fueled the army's drive to Chattanooga and Atlanta. Remnants of the fortress exist within the current boundary.

Detailed descriptions of battlefield features may be found in the General Management Plan: <http://www.nps.gov/stri/parkmgmt/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=112263>

## Legislation

The national battlefield was established through the efforts of private individuals, the Stones River Battlefield and Park Association, the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway, and by a 1927 act of Congress authorizing a national military park under the jurisdiction of the War Department.

The site was established as Stones River National Military Park on March 2, 1927. It was transferred from the War Department to the National Park Service on August 10, 1933.

See the appendix for more details of legislative history.



1863 Photo of Battery Mitchell of  
Fortress Rosecrans



## Part I: Foundation for Planning



Living history volunteers fire cannons to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Stones River.



## Part I: THE FOUNDATION FOR PLANNING

*The foundation for planning is derived from legislation and provides basic guidance for planning and management decisions. Park purpose, significance statements, fundamental resources and values, and interpretive themes remain relatively stable over time. Together, they establish an organizational baseline for planning and management efforts.*

### Park Purpose

Park purpose statements describe why an area was set aside (by Congress or the President) and what specific purposes exist for that park. Purpose statements are derived from legislation, legislative history, public participation, and public rule-making.

The original intent of park purpose as worded in the 1998 General Management Plan has remained intact, although it was rephrased in the 2014 Foundation Document:

*Stones River National Battlefield preserves, protects, and promotes understanding of the sites and historic events associated with the Battle of Stones River, fought during the American Civil War.*

### Park Significance

These statements describe a site's national significance. They describe a National Park System unit's distinctive natural, cultural, and recreational resources and values that are the specific rationale for national recognition of the site.

The 2014 Foundation Document identifies that Stones River National Battlefield is nationally significant because:

- The Battle of Stones River secured middle Tennessee, its vital transportation network, and its rich agricultural lands for the Union, while providing a much needed strategic victory that bolstered Union morale as the American Civil War moved into 1863.
- The Union victory at Stones River reinforced the Emancipation Proclamation, which went into effect on January 1, 1863. The proclamation signaled a major shift in American Civil War goals—from a fight to preserve the Union to a struggle for freedom.
- The Hazen Brigade Monument, one of the oldest intact American Civil War monuments, was built on the Stones River battlefield in 1863 by soldiers who served under Col. William Hazen to memorialize the brigade's actions and losses.
- After the Battle of Stones River, Union forces, with the help of formerly enslaved laborers, constructed Fortress Rosecrans, one of the largest Civil War earthen fortifications, to serve as a major supply depot for both the Chattanooga and Atlanta campaigns. Stones River National Battlefield protects surviving portions of these earthworks.
- Stones River National Cemetery was one of the first national cemeteries authorized by the federal government. The national cemeteries were a response to military and civilian concerns with the way in which the nation cared for war casualties.
- The freedmen settlement known as Cemetery, established following the American Civil War on the site of the Battle of Stones River, existed until the designation of Stones River National Battlefield

in 1927, and beyond. Some park neighbors are descendants of those early community members. Many of the freedmen who lived there played an integral role in the building of Stones River National Cemetery.

- Stones River National Battlefield protects globally rare cedar glades, a specially adapted plant community, including some plants known to occur only within a few select locations within Rutherford County, Tennessee.

### **Fundamental Resources and Values**

The 2014 Foundation Document identifies the park's significant physical attributes and values as "fundamental" resources. Consideration of these resources is essential to the programs and media developed for interpretation and education. The Fundamental Resources and Values of Stones River National Battlefield include:

#### **Battlefield Landscape**

Stones River National Battlefield, listed

in the National Register of Historic Places, preserves the core area of a much larger battlefield landscape. Key elements of that core battlefield landscape within the park include the historic Nashville Pike (present-day Old Nashville Highway), the historic Nashville & Chattanooga Railway (present day CSX Transportation), historic McFadden Lane, the Round Forest, the Slaughter Pen, the Pioneer Brigade earthworks, McFadden Farm, and other wartime features. Natural features that existed during the time of the battle include Stones River, cedar glades, exposed limestone, and karst topography, all of which can be found on the battlefield landscape today. These landscape features serve as tangible links to the battle of Stones River and further our understanding of the historic events that took place here. The National Park Service has identified and documented eight distinct cultural landscapes associated with the battle.

#### **Stones River National Cemetery**

Stones River National Cemetery is important for its association with the movement to establish, design

A steel soldier silhouette stands ready to help visitors imagine the terrible fighting that raged on the park's landscapes.





and administer a national system of cemeteries during and after the American Civil War. The cemetery is significant for late 19th century funerary landscape architecture and retains a high degree of integrity characteristic of the original, formal design. The monuments, limestone wall, and grave markers have characteristic style, construction, and layout distinctive to national cemeteries of the period.

### **Commemorative Landscape and Monuments**

The commemorative landscape and monuments at Stones River National Battlefield reflect efforts to honor those who fought in the conflict, document events of the battle, and understand the legacy of the American Civil War. The Hazen Brigade Monument, the Artillery Monument, 43rd Wisconsin / 180th Ohio Marker, U.S. Regulars Monument, General Bragg's Headquarters marker, General Rosecrans's Headquarters marker, the national cemetery cannonball pyramid and standing cannons, and the more recent Michigan marker are key monuments within the park and contribute to the commemorative landscape at Stones River National Battlefield. These monuments also provide opportunities to reflect on and understand the history of commemoration of the American Civil War.

### **Fortress Rosecrans**

Following the Battle of Stones River, General Rosecrans ordered the construction of a 200-acre earthen fortification at Murfreesboro, which became known as Fortress Rosecrans. The fortress served a two-fold purpose: (1) a forward supply depot for the Army of the Cumberland, and (2) providing a refuge if the army were attacked. Fortress Rosecrans was also one of the largest enclosed earthworks of the American Civil War,

protecting the river crossings of both the Nashville Pike and Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. The surviving remnants of Fortress Rosecrans and Redoubt Brannan are significant because of their association with Union occupation of Murfreesboro, representative of 19th century military fortifications and connections to the immense logistical network that allowed the Union to prevail in the American Civil War.

### **Archeological Resources**

Archeological resources have been documented throughout Stones River National Battlefield. The majority of archeological resources at the park are associated with the American Civil War battle of Stones River and its aftermath. These include the remains of historic structures, earthworks, military encampments, headquarter sites, burial locations, and other battle-related materials. Archeological investigations have revealed evidence of American Indian presence at the site. Future investigations could reveal new information and data on the freedmen's settlement. These resources provide valuable information and are fundamental to understanding and interpreting the events that took place at Stones River.

### **Museum Collections**

The museum collections at Stones River National Battlefield contain a wide variety of objects that serve as tangible links to the past. The collections are primarily focused on the American Civil War era and the Battle of Stones River. Weapons, flags, uniforms, and personal items associated with the battle and occupation are on display and in storage at the park. An extensive library, archives, and manuscript collection includes regimental records that are made available to researchers. Artifacts excavated during

archeological investigations make up another key part of the museum collections. The collections also contain numerous natural history specimens from the park.

### Appropriate Recreational Opportunities

Stones River National Battlefield offers visitors seven miles of trails. These trails provide access and connections to historic sites and landscape features that figured prominently in the Battle of Stones River. Trails also provide visitors the opportunity to view wildlife. Numerous self-guided walking tours of the sites associated with the Battle of Stones River include interpretive signs and wayside exhibits that provide information about the events that took place on the battlefield. The park trail system also connects to the Stones River Greenway, which includes 12-plus miles of paved trails along Stones River and Lytle Creek, providing access to Fortress Rosecrans, General Bragg Headquarters site, Redoubt Brannan, and the McFadden Farm site.

### Cedar Glades

Globally rare cedar glade habitat is a significant natural feature within Stones River National Battlefield. Designated as a Tennessee State Natural Area, these open areas with shallow soil, karst topography, and harsh conditions provide a home to a community of rare and endangered species like Pyne's ground plum. The relationship between the open fields, geological features, and the cedar glades on the Stones River Battlefield also played a key role in troop movements and the outcome of the battle.

### **Interpretive Themes**

Interpretive themes are organizational tools. They provide a conceptual framework for visitor experience

planning and programming. Interpretive themes are derived from and capture the essence of park purpose, park significance, resources, and values. Themes can help explain why a park story is relevant to people who may be unconnected to an event, time, or place. They go beyond simple descriptions or recitations of fact; they reflect the context and effects of events or processes in order to foster opportunities for visitors to experience and consider the meanings, concepts, and values represented by park resources.

While themes are important as a framework to help guide interpretation and management decisions, they are not necessarily intended for public use. They serve to focus the development of visitor experience, services, and programming.

An interdisciplinary team of NPS staff, stakeholders, and partners developed the following Interpretive Themes as part of the 2014 Foundation Document. The following six Interpretive Themes draw from current scholarship and are framed to convey relevance to contemporary audiences.

### **Theme 1: Stones River was one of the major Civil War battles in size, complexity, and long-term results.**

#### Subthemes:

- At Stones River, more than 81,000 men fought for three days over an area of 4,000 acres under adverse mid-winter conditions. The 23,000 casualties is comparable to the number of casualties at Antietam and Shiloh.
- Massing large numbers of artillery pieces saved the battle for Union forces.
- Stones River is representative of the strategy, organization and





The park protects rare and fragile cedar glades and the unique plants that grow in them.

tactics, logistics, technology, and communications used during the American Civil War.

**Theme 2: The Battle of Stones River significantly changed the course of the Civil War by shifting momentum from the Confederate Army to the Union Army and providing a timely boost for the Union cause.**

**Subthemes:**

- The battle stopped Confederate efforts to regain much of middle Tennessee and threaten Nashville, and gave the Union control of the productive agricultural land and the vital transportation/supply network of central Tennessee.
- The battle gave a much needed boost (psychological, political, diplomatic) to the Union cause after recent election results, defeat at Fredericksburg, and major reverses in the Vicksburg campaign.

**Theme 3: The battle profoundly affected the lives of countless people—civilian as well as military.**

**Subthemes:**

- The rate of casualties was enormous. Based on some scholarship, for the Union army, it was the highest of the war; for the Confederate army it was second only to Gettysburg.
- The sounds, music, sights, smells, “the horror” of battle left indelible impressions on the participants.
- The battle illustrated the poignancy of split loyalties that were common in the Civil War, e.g., divided families, communities, and states.
- The battle engaged people of diverse racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds.
- The battle affected civilians in states throughout the north and south.

**Theme 4: The rural landscape of Stones River battlefield – especially its terrain, vegetation, and features – notably influenced the battle.**

**Subthemes:**

- Roads, cedar woods, landforms, rock outcrops, structures, and the river disrupted and channeled troop movements.

- Most of the approximately 25 homes on the battlefield were used as field headquarters and hospitals.

**Theme 5: Stones River National Battlefield represents an important early effort in the movement toward battlefield commemoration in the United States.**

**Subthemes:**

- Veterans, the military, concerned citizens, and congressmen acted very early to commemorate the Battle of Stones River by constructing the Hazen Monument, establishing the national cemetery, building the artillery monument and marking the battlefield, and by introducing legislation to create a national military park.
- These early commemoration and preservation efforts led to legislation authorizing Stones River National Battlefield in 1927.
- Stones River National Battlefield represents only a small portion (15-20%) of the original battle area, where land use changes from rural to commercial, industrial, and residential are occurring at a rapid rate; the National Park Service cooperates with local communities in preserving the surviving integrity of the battlefield and the general appearance of the 1860s agricultural landscape.

**Theme 6: The Confederate army's withdrawal from the area after the battle allowed Union forces to build Fortress Rosecrans, a major supply/logistics/transportation base, and to affect Murfreesboro throughout the rest of the Civil War and Reconstruction.**

**Subthemes:**

- Fortress Rosecrans, with its multiple curtain walls, redoubts,

and lunettes was one of the largest Civil War earthen fortifications of its type.

- Throughout the Civil War, civilian lives were disrupted by continued military activity.
- Major Union presence from 1863 through the end of the war adversely affected the area because of raids, minor battles, and general disruption of the regional economy and the lives of resident families.
- Union presence and occupation continued well after Fortress Rosecrans was abandoned in 1866.
- The Cemetery Community emerged on battlefield lands, in which U.S. Colored Troop veterans and other freed African Americans developed a rural community structure and agricultural regime within a broader social context of hostility and resentment.





Volunteerism offers visitors a hands-on experience that creates lasting connections to the park's unique cultural and natural resources.



## Part II: Envisioning the Future



5th grade students from Laverne Lake Elementary School search for answers during a museum scavenger hunt.



# Part II: ENVISIONING THE FUTURE

*This section includes management goals, describes desired visitor experiences, identifies targeted audiences, and lists the challenges and issues that affect visitor experience. These are all things that help guide direction and are useful to take into consideration when envisioning the future.*

## Management Goals

In addition to providing visitors with opportunities to make meaningful connections to park resources, interpretation is used to meet management goals. The following are national and park goals that affect direction and decisions about visitor experience and interpretation services and programming.

## National Park Service Goals

The NPS strategy, A Call to Action: Preparing for a Second Century of Stewardship and Engagement (2014 edition) identifies a framework for management goals:

- **Connecting People to Parks:** Helping communities protect what is special to them, highlighting their history, and retaining or rebuilding their economic and environmental sustainability.
- **Advancing the Education Mission:** Strengthening the NPS role as an educational force based on core American values, historical and scientific scholarship and unbiased

translation of the complexities of the American experience.

- **Preserving America’s Special Places:** Act as a leader in extending the benefits of conservation across physical, social, political, and international boundaries in partnership with others.
- **Enhancing Professional and Organizational Excellence:** Adapting to the changing needs of visitors, communities, and partners; encouraging organizational innovation; and giving employees the chance to reach their full potential.

## Desired Visitor Experiences

Desired visitor experiences describe the physical, intellectual, and emotional experiences should be available for visitors to Stones River National Battlefield. These experiences will be available for audiences of all abilities, including those with visual, auditory, mobility, or cognitive limitations.

### Management Objectives for Interpretation

- Interpret the Battle of Stones River within the context of the Western Theater and the Civil War.
- Provide visitors the opportunity to understand the objectives, strategies, and tactics of the battle.
- Provide an atmosphere at a series of vignettes/sites that allows the visitor to visualize the rural setting at the time of the battle, to understand the battle events, and to contemplate the sacredness of the ground.

*1998 General Management Plan*



Students learn how soldiers fired cannons during the battle.

## Visitor Experience Goals

The September, 2014 workshops included discussions about the type and quality of experiences which visitors expect and want to have at the park. Additional insight was provided by the 1998 General Management Plan “Management Objectives for Interpretation,” 2013 Visitor Study, and the 2014 Foundation Document. The following list of Visitor Experience Goals describes the park’s aspirations for providing diverse audiences with meaningful experiences at Stones River National Battlefield.

1. **Immersion:** Visitors have access to range of opportunities to be physically and imaginatively engaged in the park’s historic landscapes.
2. **Resource Protection:** Audiences find value in the Battlefield’s fundamental resources and contribute to the site’s protection.
3. **Context:** Stones River National Battlefield provides a prospect by which audiences can consider the layering of multiple histories and events on the landscape.
4. **Relevance:** The critical events of Stones River National Battlefield inspire contemporary visitors to

consider the consequences of their own attitudes and actions.

The 2013 Visitor Study provided an opportunity for the park staff to learn what audiences thought about their visit to the battlefield. The many succinct comments received suggest that the Battlefield is currently very successful in addressing the fourth Visitor Experience Goal. Some of the visitor comments relating to relevance are listed in Appendix 6.

**As far as resource immersion, we don’t suspend disbelief. Living History is a visual presentation only. A window. It is only minimally immersive.**

*2014 Foundation Section of the Long-Range Interpretive Plan Workshops*

## Audiences

Factors to consider when developing interpretive and educational programs and services include the life experiences of the individual or group, level of education, learning styles, languages, cultural traditions, time available for interaction, and other factors. Current park audiences for whom interpretation and education services are provided include:

### Educational Audiences

This is a broad group that includes people across the long spectrum of learning. A significant amount of staff time is dedicated to students in grade 4 and 5, who study Tennessee history. The park’s fundamental resources provide opportunities for the investigation of multiple topics, however, and students of all ages find learning opportunities on site and through electronic platforms. Educators and district administrators



are addressed through email whenever teacher workshops and student-centered special events are conducted at the park. Stones River National Battlefield has sponsored Teacher-Ranger-Teacher positions in order to develop curricula and strengthen the partnerships between schools and the park.

### **Recreational Users**

The park's roads and trails provide access for walkers, joggers, dog walkers, and bicyclists. The rural landscape offers a respite from the battlefield's increasingly urban surroundings. Recreational users of the park may experience the historic landscape in quiet, contemplative activities, or through special events such as foot races.

### **Civil War Enthusiasts**

For many visitors, there are few places to parallel the experience at Stones River National Battlefield. The volunteers and staff who work the front desk and provide ranger-led programs are respected for their expertise. The park's website is well-stocked with primary sources, maps, and other resources, and researchers are invited to explore the park's archives, library, and museum. Groups composed of subject-matter experts, such as Civil War roundtables, collaborate with battlefield staff on symposiums and other programs. A cadre of experienced living history volunteers helps bring park history to life for other visitors.

#### **The Superintendent's Compendium discusses appropriate recreation and designates areas in the park for different recreational uses.**

- Recreation at the park is very active; locals come to the park for walking, jogging, trail running, biking, bird-watching, taking photographs, dog walking, and picnicking.
- The park is connected to the Murfreesboro Greenway System, although trails are less crowded in the park than the greenway.
- Special events take place in the park and require permits. These events include races, weddings, military retirement ceremonies, commissioning ceremonies, music videos and commercials, and paranormal investigations.
- Fishing is allowed within the park along the banks of the Stones River.
- Bikes are considered vehicles under state law so they must comply with traffic rules in the park and follow the one-way signs for the vehicles.

*2014 Foundation Document*

### **Travelers**

Stones River National Battlefield is a well-known location for vacationers, people attending conventions and state meetings, and frequent visitors of national park sites. The range of experience options and great customer service make this site a landmark tourist destination.

While all people are welcome and invited to participate, some audiences are targeted for focused attention because they may be inadequately served by existing interpretation, need different strategies for engagement, or require specific methods to open communications and sustain relationships. Stones River National Battlefield has identified the following

audiences for whom specific efforts at interpretation will be focused in upcoming years:

### Conservationists

In preserving and rehabilitating the historic landscape, the battlefield has become a model of habitat restoration and sustainability. Current visitors to the park may appreciate the opportunity to be immersed in this place of natural beauty, but there is

Individual National Park Service units and non-NPS sites which share a Civil War legacy regularly coordinate their resources in order to raise public understanding and appreciation of the larger story. The battlefield has developed significant partnerships with local entities to support interpretive and educational programs to the community. There may be additional opportunities in upcoming years to establish relationships

**19% of visitor groups live within a one-hour drive of the battlefield.**

*2013 Visitor Study*

also an opportunity for the park to encourage more formal appreciation of the resources. Organized groups who may be concerned with the quality of natural environments include the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and the National Audubon Society.

### Park Neighbors

Stones River National Battlefield collaborates interpretively on several levels. Special events, commemorations, and youth programs are offered in conjunction with National Park Service initiatives.

with residents and employees of Murfreesboro through activities that are not centered on Civil War history. The area's businesses and Convention and Visitors Bureaus can serve as avenues for this outreach.

### Digital Dwellers

When the internet and social media were first used by the national park service, they were used as alternative formats in a broad range of media offered to visitors. Although the park has already incorporated electronic media into the visitor center and the grounds in a variety of ways, a stronger virtual presence may be required to meet the needs and interests of park users with high expectations of digital programs and dependence on hand-held devices. This audience may include millennials, as well as families who seek to develop family traditions with their digitally-focused youth.

### New Residents

Murfreesboro and the larger Nashville area are experiencing population growth and an increasingly diversified demographic. Residents who are new to the region will not have "grown up" with the battlefield, have little informa-

As efforts to restore the historic landscape with native plants have progressed, more visitors with an interest in nature come to the park to see the growing diversity of plants and animals.





**Three percent of visitors were Hispanic or Latino. Ninety-six percent of visitors were White.**

*2013 Visitor Study*

tion about the site's history, and are starting from scratch in finding relevance in the site. Park staff may have to conduct audience research in order to create meaningful interpretation and education opportunities for new residents. One area of relevance that may connect the battlefield story with new residents is redefining of citizenship through past and current history.

**Bus Tours**

Many tour groups visit the battlefield by coach. The tour companies are sometimes staffed with a guide who provides interpretive services to the group. Currently the park staff welcomes and gives an orientation to these visitors; in addition, however, there may be opportunities in the upcoming years to craft vignettes or small interpretive opportunities that will highlight the visit for riders of bus tours.

**Challenges and Issues Affecting Interpretation**

Issues and challenges describe such things as internal or external issues, influences, pressures, trends, initiatives, relationships, communications, or goals that may affect interpretation. They are things that may affect planning or that need to be considered when developing implementation strategies and actions. Identifying and understanding the challenges helps to develop strategies to overcome them, build on strengths, mitigate competing interests, overcome obstacles, and helps to resolve management issues.

**Challenges and issues facing Stones River National Battlefield include:**

- Greater competition for the people's time will continue to affect

**Description of Visitor Groups**

- Visitor ages ranged from 1-85 years. Forty-three percent were 51-70 years old; 25% were 31-50 years old; and 18% were ages 15 years or younger
- Fifty-two percent were male and 48% were female.
- Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups spent one or two hours in the park while 34% spent three or more hours. The average length of stay was 2.1 hours. Eight percent of visitor groups visited the park on more than one day.
- Fifty-eight percent of visitor groups consisted of one or two people and 31% were in groups of three or four. Seventy-two percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups and 15% were visiting alone.
- For 73% of visitors this was their first visit in their lifetime while 13% visit once year and 11% visit several times year.

*2013 Visitor Study*

audience decisions about making a physical (or virtual) trip to a park. Staff will continue to work with the community and partner organizations to demonstrate the value of spending leisure time at the battlefield.

- Current audiences have different expectations and needs and they expect different types of media and technology to understand and connect with park resources. Park staff will need to maintain external awareness and adapt to societal, technological, and programmatic changes.
- The park must continue to reassess its approaches and operations for operational and fiscal sustainability. This means taking a hard look and making difficult decisions such as ending some traditional services, hours, practices, and programs.
- Recreational users may not understand or follow park rules. Off-road bicycle use, Segways, geocaching and letterboxing which include the placement of objects for others to find, and social trailing are uses of the battlefield which are not approved.

Connecting young visitors with the park's stories and resources will require new interpretive tools that build upon the success of traditional efforts such as the Junior Ranger program.







Humans and pets alike enjoy a good walk or jog through the park.



## Part III: Recommendations



Young visitors crouch behind the rocks where Union soldiers hid and listen as a park ranger describes the fighting in the Slaughter Pen.



## Recommendations for Visitor Experience, Visitor Services, Interpretation, and Education

These recommendations will provide direction and focus for interpretation and education services and programming over the next few years. The recommendations are grounded in goals, connect to park themes, and are designed to be realistic, achievable, and sustainable. The recommendations were developed in collaboration with park partners.

In developing interpretive recommendations, multiple sources were reviewed, including:

- 2013 Youth Focus Group Study
- 2013 Visitor Study
- 2014 Teacher's Report
- 2014 Foundation Document and participant comments
- 2014 LRIP Foundation and Recommendation Workshops

## Recommendations Focused on Target Audiences

While all people are welcome and invited to participate in park interpretive opportunities, some audiences are targeted for focused attention because they may be inadequately served by existing interpretation, need different strategies for engagement, or require specific methods to open communications and sustain relationships.

Stones River National Battlefield has identified seven audiences for whom specific efforts at interpretation will be focused in upcoming years. An Audience Goal has been articulated for each group, to better focus the interpretive recommendations.

The specific actions needed to accomplish the recommendations appear in the Action Plan tables contained in the Appendix 1 of this report. These actions will be revisited periodically (at least annually) and prioritized based on changing circumstances, opportunities, operational need, funding, budget availability, and other factors. Actions that are not completed in the year identified will be reevaluated as future actions.

Audience	Audience Goal
Youth Under 18 Years of Age	A range of programs and media will provide opportunities for youth to engage with park resources and stories.
K-12 Students	A variety of mediums will clearly link Battlefield learning opportunities to state standards.
Young Adults, Ages 18-35	Multiple venues will encourage young people to co-create their own park experience in ways that are impactful, support sharing, improve their lives and the world around them, and continue beyond the park experience.
African Americans	Application of research findings, and collaboration with African American community, will improve opportunities for this audience to experience Battlefield resources and stories.
Park Neighbors	Interpretive mediums will be developed which encourage appreciation of the battle's geographic scope and its relevance to contemporary Murfreesboro communities.
Civil War Enthusiasts	An improved electronic presence will provide balanced and empathic conversational opportunities based on facts and primary sources.
Travelers	A range of interpretive mediums will support impactful and memorable experiences.

This section identifies the primary recommendations developed for each audience group; more specific action items are located in Appendix 1.

### **Youth Under 18 Years of Age**

Twenty-three percent of summer visitors are twenty years of age and younger (2013 Visitor Study). Recommendations have been developed to improve Battlefield experiences for youth who are not visiting with organized school groups.

*Audience Goal: A range of programs and media will provide opportunities for youth to engage with park resources and stories.*

- Enhance Junior Ranger Program
- Adopt Instagram

### **K-12 Students**

Recommendations have been developed which respond to changes in the learning content and the logistical requirements of Tennessee's educational system.

*Audience Goal: A variety of mediums will clearly link Battlefield learning opportunities to State Standards.*

- Modify programs to meet State Standards
- Increase awareness of STRI offerings for educators
- Provide opportunities for independent high school research/presentations
- Create outdoor space for education
- Establish demonstration garden

### **Young Adults, Aged 18-35**

Only sixteen percent of Battlefield visitors were within the 21-40 age range. Recognition of this under-represented audience parallels the National Park Service "Find Your

Park" campaign, an NPS-Centennial celebration which will focus on people under the age of 35.

*Audience Goal: Multiple venues will encourage young people to co-create their own park experience in ways that are impactful, support sharing, improve their lives and the world around them, and continue beyond the park experience.*

- Expand career development and mentorship opportunities
- Expand outreach services highlighting NPS careers
- Offer in-depth residency experiences
- Create technology-based interpretive experiences

### **African Americans**

There is a significant disparity between the percentage of Tennessee's population which is of African American heritage (17%: 2013 US census), and the percentage of visitors to the Battlefield who are African American (1%: 2013 Visitor Study). This is of special concern because of the critical involvement of African Americans in the site's history. The Battlefield staff has striven to welcome this audience and to represent their history through interpretive mediums; the recommendations below reflect a continuation of that effort.

The past relationships of African Americans with the Battlefield are part of all Americans' heritage. Twenty-eight percent of park visitors reported that they received "some, but not enough" information about the roles of African Americans in the Civil War (2013 Visitor Study). This illustrates that better representation of African Americans will better serve all visitors.

Ideally, contemporary African Americans will co-create the



interpretive messages that the Battlefield conveys.

***Audience Goal: Application of research findings, and collaboration with African American community, will encourage and improve this audience's experience with Battlefield resources and stories.***

- Gather information/comments from the African American community
- Establish a broader narrative
- Develop strategy for sustainable outreach and contact

### **Park Neighbors**

A substantial portion of Battlefield visitors travel from nearby locations: thirty-five percent of the U.S. visitors come from Tennessee; within that audience, 31% live in Rutherford County (2013 Visitor Study.) The park seeks to improve interpretation for this local audience who are already aware of the site, as well for people who are not yet acquainted with the Battlefield.

Because most of the Stones River battle took place on land which is not part of the acreage protected by the National Park Service, park neighbors are not only consumers of interpretive efforts but are potential co-presenters as well. By increasing this audience's awareness and appreciation of the site's significance, current and future generations may benefit.

The Battlefield conveys the site's National Park System status through use of the arrowhead, uniforms, phone answering, etc. Sixty-two percent of visitor groups are aware that Stones River National Battlefield is a unit of the National Park System (2013 Visitor Study.)

***Audience Goal: Interpretive mediums will be developed which encourage appreciation of the***

***battle's geographic scope and its relevance to contemporary Murfreesboro communities.***

- Develop interpretation that ties the Battlefield to the greater Murfreesboro area
- Promote status of park as a unit of the National Park Service

### **Civil War Enthusiasts**

The Battlefield has developed a strong tradition of serving this audience, and in providing opportunities for this audience to serve the broader public. The actions recommended in this plan reflect the Battlefield's increasing opportunities and responsibility to provide experiences through electronic platforms.

***Audience Goal: An improved electronic presence will provide balanced and empathic conversational opportunities based on facts and primary sources.***

- Increase electronic participation

### **Travelers**

Stones River National Battlefield is well-established as a tourist destination. The park works to maintain and improve opportunities for visitors to experience and respect the Battlefield's fundamental resources and values.

***Audience Goal: A range of interpretive mediums will support impactful and memorable experiences.***

- Upgrade electronic presence
- Develop exhibits
- Improve interpretation on trails



## Appendix



Bicycle tours allow visitors to explore history while getting a little exercise.



## Appendix 1 — Action Plan

This plan shows the actions that will be taken to implement the recommendations in the Long Range Interpretive Plan. It should be updated annually and become the basis for annual planning and accountability within the division.

YOUTH UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE ACTION PLAN					
WHAT	WHEN				WHO
Action Items	Target Date				Responsible (Lead)
	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	Future Years	
<b>Enhance Junior Ranger Program</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Increase awareness through signage	X				Backlund
Info desk personnel offer program to every child	X	X	X	X	McKay
Develop internet-based program			X		Lewis
<b>Adopt Instagram</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Design Strategy	X				Backlund, Lewis
Initiate Program	X				Backlund, Lewis
Maintain Program		X	X	X	Backlund, Lewis



Hands-on activities have proven to be one of the most effective ways to engage young visitors.

## K-12 STUDENTS

### ACTION PLAN

WHAT	WHEN				WHO
Action Items	Target Date				Responsible (Lead)
	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	Future Years	
<b>Modify Programs to Meet State Standards</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Apply standards to on-line lesson plans	X				McKay, Childs
Apply standards to traveling trunk		X			McKay, Childs
Create outreach lessons and post on website			X		McKay, Childs
<b>Additional ideas</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the visitor center's scavenger hunt more age-appropriate and designed to address state standards (for example, use blue and gray hats as clues)</li> <li>• Seek transportation funding (PMIS 159142)</li> <li>• Use the hallway outside restrooms for interactive exhibits (such as "Are you as tall as a gun?")</li> </ul>					
<b>Increase awareness of STRI offerings for educators</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Produce rack card	X				Lewis
Update email mailing list	X	X	X	X	McKay, Childs
Update website	X	X	X	X	Lewis
Establish connection with MTSU Social Studies Education department (VIP Derek Frisby)		X	X		Backlund, McKay
<b>Provide Opportunities for Independent High School Research/Presentations</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Work with McGavock High School students who are completing senior capstone projects	X	X	X	X	Lewis, McKay
<b>Title Create Outdoor Space for Education</b>					<b>Hazelwood, Backlund</b>
Purchase picnic tables		X			Backlund, Anderson
Expand mulch "floor"		X			Anderson
Explore options for overhead covering		X			Backlund
Submit PMIS request for shelter			X		Anderson
Explore options for battlefield map on shelter floor		X			Backlund, Anderson
<b>Establish Demonstration Garden</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Consult State Standards for ecosystems, grades 4, 5, and 6		X			McKay
Establish demonstration garden in conjunction with outdoor education space				X	Anderson, Adams



## YOUNG ADULTS AGES 18-35 ACTION PLAN

WHAT	WHEN				WHO
Action Items	Target Date				Responsible (Lead)
	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	Future Years	
<b>Expand Career Development and Mentorship Opportunities</b>					<b>McKay, Lewis</b>
Explore partnerships with existing programs (SCA, NCAE)	X				McKay, Lewis
Offer initial opportunity(ies)	X	X	X	X	McKay, Lewis
Assess initial opportunity results and adjust			X		McKay, Lewis
Work with park management and administration to explore year-round career development opportunities for young adults			X	X	McKay, Lewis
<b>Expand Outreach Services Highlighting NPS Careers</b>					<b>McKay, Lewis</b>
Develop prioritized list of target universities and organizations	X				McKay, Lewis
Develop outreach program with A/V and or exhibit component		X	X	X	McKay, Lewis
Present outreach programs at priority sites	X				McKay, Lewis
Expand outreach services through expanded staff or volunteers		X	X	X	McKay, Lewis
<b>Offer In-Depth Residency Experiences</b>					<b>Lewis</b>
Explore and prioritize program options	X				Lewis
Offer one residency opportunity		X	X	X	Lewis
Assess residency results and alter/expand	X				Lewis
Offer 2-3 residency experiences year-round		X	X	X	Lewis
<b>Create Technology-Based Interpretive Experiences</b>					<b>Lewis</b>
Recruit 18-35 year-old employee or VIP	X				Lewis
Create social media and app material		X	X	X	Lewis
Assess performance of technology-based experiences	X				Lewis
Revise, remove, add technology-based experiences		X	X	X	Lewis

## AFRICAN AMERICANS ACTION PLAN

WHAT	WHEN				WHO
Action Items	Target Date				Responsible (Lead)
	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	Future Years	
<b>Gather Information/Input from African American Community</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Partner with Friends Group, MTSU Departments and Chambers of Commerce for study		X	X		Backlund
Utilize other sites and surveys to gain information, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.pewresearch.org/">http://www.pewresearch.org/</a></li> <li>• Approaches and Trends: "What's In, What's Out" (2012) <a href="https://drive.google.com/a/nps.gov/?tab=mo#folders/0B2_RZLPdtJd7VHZzcE9DRWZVZ2s">https://drive.google.com/a/nps.gov/?tab=mo#folders/0B2_RZLPdtJd7VHZzcE9DRWZVZ2s</a></li> </ul>		X	X		Backlund
Gather input from local leaders and focus groups		X			Backlund
Form a focus group from military groups		X			Backlund
<b>Establish a Broader Narrative</b>					<b>Lewis</b>
Work with leaders and organizations within African American communities to develop interpretation which conveys respect for African Americans beyond the war/ battlefield and Chambers of Commerce for study	X	X	X		Lewis
Develop interpretation which acknowledges community contributions	X	X			Lewis
Highlight other related sites	X	X	X		Lewis
Locate images (with photo rights) of free blacks to use in media and programs	X	X			Lewis
<b>Develop Strategy for Sustainable Outreach and Contact</b>					<b>McKay</b>
Present programs for community leaders	X	X	X		Hazelwood, Backlund, McKay, Lewis
Develop an outreach strategy which reflects the organizations' and communities' preferred methods of communication	X	X	X		McKay
Educational outreach to target population	X	X	X		McKay
Speakers Bureau	X	X	X		McKay, Lewis
Additional ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confer with other NPS sites for lessons learned</li> <li>• Develop an interactive discussion space to encourage dialog about current issues</li> </ul>					



## PARK NEIGHBORS ACTION PLAN

WHAT	WHEN				WHO
Action Items	Target Date				Responsible (Lead)
	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	Future Years	
<b>Develop Interpretation That Ties the Battlefield to the Greater Murfreesboro Area</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Interpret features of the historical/cultural landscape beyond park boundaries to promote awareness of the battlefield footprint (perhaps through personal services, visitor center exhibits, wayside exhibits placed outside of park boundaries, or a program of historical markers for individual properties)	X	X	X	X	Backlund, Lewis, McKay
Develop an overlay map which illustrates Murfreesboro landscape now compared to the 1860s		X			Backlund, Lewis, Anderson
When visitors leave the park, convey a message that recommends other local sites	X	X	X	X	Backlund
<b>Promote Status of Battlefield as a Unit of the National Park System</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Sponsor a "field trip" or citizens' ranger academy for local business owners and managers		X	X		Backlund
Additional ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create/use community events to promote battlefield awareness (such as foot races)</li> <li>• Explore marketing options to increase site visibility outside the park</li> <li>• Use the old section of Murfreesboro to supplement the park story</li> <li>• Prepare for changing demographics of Rutherford County and the Nashville area</li> <li>• Produce and distribute park "invitations" in multiple languages</li> <li>• Make periodic presentations at the Convention and Visitors Bureau Hospitality Association monthly meetings</li> </ul>					

## CIVIL WAR ENTHUSIASTS ACTION PLAN

WHAT	WHEN				WHO
Action Items	Target Date				Responsible (Lead)
	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	Future Years	
<b>Increase Electronic Participation</b>					<b>Lewis</b>
Continue to increase electronic access to collections (PMIS 101572 Digitize Library and Archives)	X	X	X	X	Lewis
Promote access to digital collections		X			Lewis
Post photos from archives/museum collection periodically	X	X	X	X	Lewis
Generate social media content to prompt dialog	X	X	X	X	Lewis
Additional ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for staff rides and other in-depth tours using volunteers</li> <li>• Provide a map on which travelers can recognize and share which other Civil War sites they have visited</li> <li>• Work with partners to present scholarly programs that feature guest lecturers</li> </ul>					

Hundreds of visitors representing many of our target audience watch one of our 150th anniversary living history programs.





## TRAVELERS ACTION PLAN

WHAT	WHEN				WHO
Action Items	Target Date				Responsible (Lead)
	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	Future Years	
<b>Upgrade Electronic Presence</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Develop an App to Enhance Experience			X		Backlund, Lewis, McKay
Develop virtual tour by posting a slide show on website (PMIS 129527)		X			Backlund, Lewis, Anderson
Develop augmented reality using historic photos of the park			X		Backlund
<b>Develop Exhibits</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Develop graphics or exhibits which convey the scope of the battle in land and in lives			X		Backlund
Design the hallway space near the bathrooms to increase engagement from recreational users		X			Backlund
<b>Improve Interpretation on Trails</b>					<b>Backlund</b>
Review and update wayside plan for new sites and trails (include information on history, battle events, and nature)		X			Backlund
Update the wayside exhibits at Hazen Brigade monument		X			Backlund
Additional ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct accessible paths to outdoor program areas in accordance with accessibility assessment</li> <li>• Create "Ranger Minutes" online videos</li> <li>• Integrate conservation ideals into media and programs</li> <li>• Identify and promote "wow" places in the park</li> <li>• Provide more hands-on options within park programs, field trips, and special events</li> <li>• Create courses of various length/mileage that correspond with battle events/themes to encourage deeper understanding of park history</li> <li>• Implement sign plan for trail signs along the trails to show mileage and orientation, ecosystem features, places of historic events</li> <li>• Connect park units with the Artillery monument</li> </ul>					

## Appendix 2 — Legislation

### Appendix A: Enabling Legislation and Legislative Acts for Stones River National Battlefield

#### Summary of Legislation

- Act of July 17, 1862 established the power of the President to designate national cemeteries (12 Stat. 596)
- Act of March 3, 1927 established Stones River as a National Military Park under the jurisdiction of Secretary of War (PL 69-777, 44 Stat. 1399)
- Executive Order, June 10, 1933, ordered transfer of jurisdiction to Secretary of Interior (EO No. 6166)
- Act of April 22, 1960 redesignated area as a national battlefield (PL 86-443, 74 Stat. 82)
- Act of December 23, 1987, revised the boundary (PL 100-205, 101 Stat. 1433)
- Act of December 11, 1991, revised the boundary (PL 102-225, 105 Stat. 1682)

In 1862, Congress passed legislation creating national cemeteries, one of which was established on the battlefield at Stones River. This national cemetery would eventually serve as the nucleus for the military park and help define where land acquisition would initially occur.

In 1897, legislation was introduced that would have designated 3,100 acres as a military park at Stones River, and would have preserved the original battlefield. However, nearby Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park was created in 1890 to honor the Army of the Cumberland and the Army of Tennessee—the same two forces that fought at Stones River. Thus the

political climate was not right to create another park, and the 1897 legislation was not approved. Other legislation for boundary expansion was introduced at various times between 1897 and 1927, but also failed to pass.

Finally, on March 3, 1927, Stones River National Battlefield was established as a national military park under the control of the secretary of war (44 Stat. 1399). This legislation recognized the significance of sites throughout the original battlefield by providing for the marking of troop movements and important battle events. However, only about 350 acres of the original battlefield in the vicinity of the national cemetery were acquired and protected. This omitted numerous significant sites of the battle, including lands south of Wilkinson Pike.

In June 1933, the park was transferred to the National Park Service under the U.S. Department of the Interior. On April 22, 1960, the park was expanded and redesignated as Stones River National Battlefield (74 Stat. 82). In addition, the secretary of the interior was directed to administer, protect, and develop the battlefield in accordance with the provisions of the National Park Service organic act of August 25, 1916.

The battlefield's authorized boundary was expanded in 1987 (Public Law 100-205) and in 1991 (Public Law 102-225). Among other provisions in the 1991 legislation, the secretary of the interior was directed to update the 1980 General Management Plan on or before March 31, 1993. However, the park and regional office staffs chose to prepare a new General Management Plan rather than update the 1980 plan. The process took longer than everyone expected and was not complete until 1998.



## Appendix 3 — Interpretation Division Staffing and Volunteers

As of 2014, the Battlefield's Chief of Operations is responsible for management, administration, and supervision of the Battlefield's interpretive and education program. One full-time Park Ranger position is assigned to interpretation.

The park's law enforcement ranger spends significant time on interpretation. In the summer, the one or more part-time or full-time seasonal staff members may be assigned to interpretive work.

Summer staff positions are sometimes filled through the Student Conservation Administration or other school/work programs.

The park also offers volunteer internships for college students in Public History, Parks and Recreation, and Museum Operations.

Visitor responses from the 2013 Visitor Study describes park staff and volunteers with such adjectives as courteous, extremely kind, extremely nice, informed, friendly, inspired, enthusiastic, great, helpful, hospitable, informative, knowledgeable, pleasant, professional, smart, very nice, welcoming, and wonderful.

### Volunteers

The park has defined the scope of a range of volunteer positions to support the interpretive operation at the park. The volunteer program has numerous long-term participants fulfilling various roles, including:

- Artificer Company – Artillery Exhibit Maintenance
- Education Program Assistant
- Interpreter
- Living History Interpreter
- Museum & Library Assistant
- Photographer



A Student Conservation Association intern presents a talk she developed to visitors.

- Skirmisher Battalion—Roving Interpreter
- Visitor Center Assistant

In addition, Stones River National Battlefield sponsors three or four major volunteer work projects every year. Employees and volunteers work together on those days to preserve and improve the cultural and natural resources of the park. These projects are often part of national volunteer events such Park Day and National Public Lands Day.

## Appendix 4 — Existing Conditions

*The following is a brief and general description of visitor experiences and interpretive services that existed in FY2014.*

Most visitors spend about two hours at the park, which is enough time to see

film titled “A Hard Earned Victory” is shown upon request in the visitor center. The theater is accessible. Visitor center staff usually recommend that visitors tour the museum and watch the film when they begin their visits to the battlefield.

### Website

The park maintains a website at [nps.gov/stri](http://nps.gov/stri). The site is maintained within the required NPS website framework, which is not smartphone-friendly.

Historic Battlefield maps depicting terrain and troop positions are featured on the park website. In addition, detailed maps showing the movement of troops on the days of battle are posted.

An alphabetical listing of soldiers and civilians buried in Stones River National Cemetery is available on the park website. A map of the cemetery is also available.

- Premier displays include newspaper articles detailing specific events leading up to and following the battle; letters and diaries from soldiers who fought at the Battle of Stones River; displays of militia uniforms and items carried by soldiers; cannon tubes that were present at the battle; the regimental flag of an Arkansas unit; and a park orientation film featuring the battle story.
- Temporary exhibit space is available in the visitor center lobby. The park has also exhibited portions of the museum collections in other locations such as the Murfreesboro Public Library.
- Cannon tubes on the battlefield are not in a protected space per museum collection guidelines.

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the museum and take the self-guiding tour of the battlefield. Audiences who are especially interested in the Civil War history spend additional time in visiting other sites such as Fortress Rosecrans.

### Visitor Facilities

### Audiovisual Media

A nine-minute open captioned park

“Web Exhibits” present information focused on specific people and stories.

The website allows access to the battlefield’s collections:

- The Stones River National Battlefield museum and archive collections contain nearly 100,000 objects and pages that tell the story



of the Battle of Stones River and the park's history.

- Stones River National Battlefield maintains files on regiments that fought in the Battle of Stones River and those that served in Murfreesboro and Rutherford County during the war. Many of these files contain detailed information about individual soldiers including their letters and diaries.

### **Social Media and Technology**

The park hosts a Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/StonesRiverNPS>. Facebook provides a standing invitation to virtual audiences to co-create the public experience of the park. Visitors can view historic and current images, learn about the people and stories of the battlefield and Murfreesboro, and keep up to date with the latest happenings at the park.

The park maintains a Twitter feed at <https://twitter.com/StonesRiverNPS> to provide visitors with the most up-to-date information about the park. Audiences can converse about their experiences at the park, ask questions, or share pictures.

The park maintains a flickr page at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/stonesriversnps>.

Stones River National Monument has recently added an Instagram page to their range of social media options.

### **Publications**

The standard park publication is the Unigrid brochure, which was reprinted in 2013. The Civil War in the Southeast and Trail of Tears Unigrid brochures include Stones River National Battlefield within a larger regional context.

The Junior Ranger booklet and "Family Fun Activities" booklet are 8½ x 11 folders.

The park produces other printed materials as required by park resources and audiences, including the following items:

### **Site Bulletins:**

- Fortress Rosecrans
- The Civil War in Rutherford County

### **Rack Cards**

- Annual Program Schedule Card
- Junior Civil War Historian

### **Outdoor Exhibits**

In addition to wayside exhibits at the tour stops and other locations, the park has strategically placed weathering steel silhouettes of soldiers and cannon which give a visual "tag" to storied areas and add an element of tension to an otherwise peaceful landscape.

### **Resources for Teachers**

Stones River National Battlefield offers teachers and students a variety of program options that allows them to explore their local and national history. Most programs include material about other subjects such as science and nature, math, and language arts.

For teacher-led programs, lesson plans are available on the park website.

- The Battle of Stones River: A Contrast in Leadership Styles, 8th grade – college undergraduate level.
- Adaptation of Plants to Cedar Glades, 5th – 9th grades.

Classrooms can borrow traveling trunks and use the same supplies and materials rangers use to present their programs.

The Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program provides an extended professional development opportunity for teachers

to learn about the resources and educational materials available through the National Park Service.

Stones River National Battlefield offers workshops for teachers to explore the park’s historic and natural resources with an eye towards connecting students to national parks while meeting curriculum goals.

**Personal Services Programming**

Ranger-led tours and talks are presented throughout the year. These programs often reflect current topics and nation-wide themes, such as Black History month. Bicycle tours add the elements of health and recreation to interpretive programs.

**Youth Programs**

Every year the park sponsors students, and their families, from two area elementary schools to visit the park on a weekend day. Special activities and programs are presented, and students are given a copy of the Passport to Your National Parks and the park’s Junior Ranger booklet.

Scout Patches: Stones River National Battlefield offers two hikes that let scouts explore their history by answering a series of questions during their visit. After completing their hike, many groups purchase a commemorative patch from the book store to remember their visit.

Junior Ranger: Children ages 6 and up can earn Junior Ranger badges and patches by completing activities that will help them learn more about park resources and stories.

**Special Events**

The Legacy of Stones River is the title of a multi-year series of symposia which commemorate the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, and are produced in partnership with Murfreesboro organizations. The presentations within

the symposia reflect a broad sweep of topics, shared by a field of experts and regional residents.

In addition, many day-long and weekend-long special events have been conducted, commemorating the anniversary of the battle and other significant local Civil War events. These events feature living history programs, ranger talks and tours.

Annually, events and programs are sponsored for the following commemorative dates:

December/January	Anniversary of the Battle
February	Black History Month
March	Women’s History Month
April	Earth Day
April	National Park Week
May	Memorial Day
August	NPS Establishment Day
September	National Public Lands Day

**Interpretive Partners**

- The Stones River National Battlefield bookstore is managed by Eastern National, a non-profit cooperating association. Eastern National provides an important service to the park by procuring, distributing, and selling educational material in the bookstore. The cooperating association is also able to provide supplemental funding for artifact acquisitions, special events, educational and interpretive programs, and research grants.



- The Battlefield works closely with Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), including the Department of History, the Center for Historic Preservation, the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, the School of Agribusiness and Agriscience, the Department of Biology, and the Environmental Education center. The MTSU Center for Historic Preservation provides support for symposiums related to the Civil War.
- Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area provides leadership and support to organizations across Tennessee, creating opportunities for education, interpretation, preservation, and economic development. The Heritage Area contributes to park activities and programs.
- Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association is a statewide community of battlefield preservationists who identify and recognize the Tennessee's most important battlefield sites and raise money for their preservation.
- The Civil War Trust is America's largest non-profit organization devoted to the preservation of our nation's endangered Civil War battlefields. The Trust also promotes educational programs and heritage tourism initiatives to inform the public of the war's history and the fundamental conflicts that sparked it.

### **Trails**

Stones River National Battlefield has seven miles of trails which are interpreted with wayside exhibits.

### **Audio CD and Cell Phone Tours**

Visitors can rent an audio CD from the visitor center, and follow the narrative

as they drive to tour stops around the Battlefield. Although some of the tour stops include short walking paths, sixty percent of the historic features can be viewed from a motor vehicle.

The cell phone tour has become even more popular than rental of the audio CD. The same points of interest which are narrated on the CD are presented in a different format when a visitor reaches the six tour stops and calls on their cell phone.

The OnCell service is now capable of functioning as an app and the park has begun developing content.

## Appendix 5 — Accessibility

Parks are required to make interpretive products and programming as fully accessible as possible. Visitors who have physical, sensory, or cognitive disabilities have legally established civil rights to receive the same information and context that NPS interpretive media products provide to their fellow citizens. The park will work with the National Center for Accessibility to conduct an accessibility assessment in FY2016.

More about NPS accessibility guidelines can be found here: <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/accessibility/>

Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for National Park Service Interpretive Media:

<http://www.nps.gov/hfc/accessibility/accessibilityGuideVersion2.1.pdf>

**19% of visitor groups live within a one-hour drive of the battlefield.**

*2013 Visitor Study*

## Appendix 6: Visitor Study Comments Related to Relevance

The entries in this section are taken from input gathered from workshop participants. Misspellings have been retained.

### Our Country Divided

- The thing that worries me is the media in this country continues to emphasize the difference- for example blue state versus red state- when in fact most are similar. So could we get caught up in enough rhetoric again to have another one of these. Hope not because this time would be far worse and even more useless.

- War is started by politicians fought by many with no stake in the outcome same as today.
- The consequences of the lack of ability to achieve political compromise.
- The outcome of the Civil War can still be felt in some of the things that divide our country.
- It shows that America was as badly divided in the past as it is today.
- They fought about things we still fight about today amongst ourselves.
- That there are same or similar feelings of anger and sense of loss in the south today.
- Unfortunately we still have civil war going on today. I'm still shocked to see all the confederate flags see when travel south.

### Diversity

- ...we need to be more sympathetic and understanding of all people during hard times and bless the freedoms we have.
- Life is short- don't take others for granted, treat all as equals.
- Prejudice is stupid. We all have different lifestyles- no one is better than another.
- Tie it into the battles that continue to take place today because people do not accept diversity or recognize the value in different races and cultures.

### If the South Had Won

- If the south had continued to fight on to victory we would be better country today.
- If Lee had done anything else but what he did there would be lot more people saying y'all.



- Lincoln should have let the South secede.
- What if we just allowed the states to secede, maybe things would have been okay.
- How easily our world might be different than it is.
- Don't assume that Union victory is what the present day audience desired.
- At the cemetery many in our group realized that each cross represented someone who is now either in heaven or hell. Sobering thought.
- Learning that confederates began to sing Home Sweet Home and could hear union troops across the way also singing inspires me to keep looking for positives in any and every situation.

### **Our Country United**

- Despite great-grand being confederate it solidifies how important it is that the U.S is one nation.
- Appreciation of sacrifice for the preservation of the union.
- We have one united country today because of it.
- It is amazing how much we take being united country for granted.
- United we stand divided we fall.
- Learning about the struggle of those that fought makes me realize we all struggle.
- It should teach us that standing up for what we believe is important.
- Dedication of soldiers at this time. We need to be more loyal to what is important.
- How lucky we are to be born in this era.
- Thankful for modern medicine.

### **Peace**

### **Freedom**

- Learning about American History helps me further understand my freedom.
- Helped my daughter better understand situations abroad that our military is involved in.
- Just how tragic civil war is and greater appreciation of what the people in Syria are enduring today.
- The fight for freedom continues today involves all of us and is costly in human sacrifice.
- How connected we are- how recent this history is.
- Always work for peace.
- We should try harder to not have it happen again.
- How senseless war is. Especially this one.
- Senseless death.
- Reinforced the stupidity of war.
- So many deaths- was it all so necessary.
- Unnecessary waste of human life.

### **Personal Responsibility**

- Better understand how my own actions can affect others no matter how large an event.

## Participants

The following people contributed to this plan.

### **Stones River National Battlefield**

Gayle Hazelwood, Superintendent

Gib Backlund, Chief of Operations

Chip Bradley, Maintenance Worker

Dave Calease, Maintenance Worker

Jeremy Childs, Park Ranger

Jim Lewis, Park Ranger

John McKay, Park Ranger

David Adams, Biological Science Technician

Virginia Poole, Biological Science Technician

Michael Rhoades, Biological Science Technician

Laura Olin, Intern / Volunteer

Jim Schroeder, Volunteer

### **Contributors and Partners**

Alex Collins, Sam Davis Home, Middle Tennessee State University

Angela Jackson, Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department

Angela Sirna, Graduate Student, Middle Tennessee State University

Dina Nave, Educator, Wilson Elementary School, Murfreesboro Tennessee

Don Odom, Director of Schools, Rutherford County Schools

Ida Fadzillah, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Middle Tennessee State University

Jeff Sellers, Curator of Education, Tennessee State Museum

Jette Halladay, Professor of Child Drama, Coordinator of Theater and Dance, Middle Tennessee State University

Kathryn Sikes, Assistant Professor of Historical Archaeology, Department of History, Middle Tennessee State University

Krista Castillo, Museum Coordinator, Fort Negley Park

Lena Le, Director, Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University

Leonora “Boe” Washington, Educator, Rutherford County Schools

Mark Friedman, Friends of Stones River National Battlefield

Mel Prater, Kittrell Elementary School, Rutherford County Schools

Mike Liles, former District 49 Tennessee House Representative, President Friends of Stones River National Battlefield

Rebecca Conard, Professor, Director, Public History Program, Middle Tennessee State University

Robert Hunt, Professor, Director of Undergraduate Program, Department of History, Middle Tennessee State University

Van West, Director, Center for Historic Preservation, Middle Tennessee State University, also Director, Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area

Barbara Wolke, Rutherford County Convention and Visitor Bureau

Wendy Bryant, Rutherford County Convention and Visitor Bureau

William Leggett, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Middle Tennessee State University

### **National Park Service**

Brent Everitt, Executive Assistant, Public Affairs Officer, Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Peggy Scherbaum, Interpretive Planner, Harpers Ferry Center









Visitors see and touch history during a living history demonstration by the Seventh Tennessee Cavalry, CSA.