

CHAPTER 3

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

CEDAR CREEK AND BELLE GROVE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK



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3.0 Affected Environment

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Park Setting

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP (NHP) was established by Congress on December 19, 2002 (Public Law 107-373) as the 387th unit in the national park system. The park is located at the northern end of the scenic Shenandoah Valley between the towns of Strasburg and Middletown, Virginia. Portions of the park are within Frederick, Shenandoah, and Warren counties.

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP is managed and operated as a partnership park as outlined in the park's enabling legislation (see Appendix A). The National Park Service (NPS) works with its Key Partners to conserve and interpret the park resources. The NPS helps promote the park and coordinate partner activities. The park's Key Partners include the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Belle Grove, Incorporated, Shenandoah County, and the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation. Local governments are also partners with the NPS at the park.

The park's legislative boundary encompasses 3,713 acres. The NPS and the Key Partners currently own about one-third of the land within the boundary. Presently the NPS owns 8.0 acres, and the Key Partners own 1,307 acres in fee and hold conservation easements on an additional 32 acres. About 2,398 acres of the park are privately owned.

The park is within the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District, established in 1996 to preserve and interpret the Shenandoah Valley's Civil War legacy and historic landscapes. George Washington National Forest and Shenandoah National Park are located just south of the park.

3.1.2 Park Significance

The park's *Foundation for Planning and Management* (NPS 2006a) includes four significance statements that express why the park's resources and values are important enough to warrant national park designation.

*The **Battle of Cedar Creek** was a principal strategic operation that had a decisive influence on the Valley Campaign of 1864 and a direct impact on the course of the Civil War. The Union victory contributed to the re-election of President Abraham Lincoln and nearly eliminated the Confederate military presence in the Shenandoah Valley. The battlefield and strategic landscapes at Cedar Creek retain a high degree of integrity, serve to memorialize the events of the battle, and contribute to greater understanding of the Civil War.*

*Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP include well-preserved cultural and natural landscape features from the **early European settlement** of the Shenandoah*

Valley when the region was a frontier, including features associated with transportation, migration, and commerce.

*Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP contains historically significant examples of the **antebellum agricultural community** that defined the northern Shenandoah Valley, its ethnic and cultural traditions, merchant milling and market systems, and farm economy that included both slave labor and family farms, as well as examples of the post-Civil War transformation of a changing labor structure. A representative example of the valley's agricultural history and culture is preserved and interpreted at the nationally significant Belle Grove Manor House.*

*The park's **natural and cultural landscapes** are nationally and regionally significant. The panoramic views of the mountains, natural areas, waterways, and pastoral surroundings convey an aesthetic and historic sense of 19th and 20th century life in the Shenandoah Valley, provide visitors with an inspiring setting of great natural beauty, and offer outstanding opportunities for quiet and solitude in an ever expanding suburban area.*

These four statements describe why the park is important within a global, national, regional, and system-wide context and are directly linked to the purpose of the park. These statements, along with the fundamental resources and values described in the *Foundation*, are referenced and expanded upon in this chapter. Fundamental resources and values are elements that define and contribute to the character of the park, and are critical to achieving the park's purpose and maintaining its significance.

3.1.3 Organization of This Chapter

Typically, the "Affected Environment" chapter of an environmental impact statement (EIS) would address only those resources and values that may potentially be affected by actions proposed in the alternatives of the plan. However, since this general management plan (GMP) is the park's first comprehensive planning document produced since the park was established, this chapter was purposely written to be more encompassing of the park's resources and values, even if they will not be directly affected by any of the alternatives. Those resources and values that may potentially be affected by one or more of the plan's alternatives are analyzed in detail in Chapter 4, Environmental Consequences. The rationale for dismissing or retaining impact topics for detailed analysis is included in Chapter 1.

This chapter describes existing conditions based on the best available information on resources and values at the time this GMP was being prepared, and is intended to serve as a baseline of information from which to move forward. The "Cultural Environment" and "Natural Environment" sections provide an overview of the park's cultural and landscape settings, as well as the resource conditions and trends. The "Visitor Use and Experience" section describes the park's visitors and the experiences that they have in the park. The "Socioeconomic Environment" section describes the socioeconomic characteristics of the local area and the region.

3.2 Cultural Environment

As noted earlier, this chapter includes information on all cultural resources and values for the park for the purpose of compiling this information for this first GMP. Cultural resources will be analyzed for potential impacts according to regulations put forth by the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation, 36 CFR 800. The following resources and values may potentially be affected by the GMP alternatives: Archeological Resources, Ethnographic Resources, Historic Structures, Cultural Landscapes, and Museum Collections. The information presented here for these topics serves as the description of the Affected Environment in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). All other topics and information included in this section are presented as background but have been dismissed from further analysis in the EIS.

3.2.1 Historical Designations

Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation National Historic Landmark, consisting of some 900 acres, was designated on August 11, 1969. The boundaries of the national historic landmark included the core area of the battlefield where fighting occurred on October 19, 1864.

In 1993 the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission designated Cedar Creek as a Class A battlefield because it had a decisive influence on Sheridan's Shenandoah Valley Campaign (August-December 1864) and a direct impact on the course of the war. Furthermore, the commission classified Cedar Creek as a Preservation I.1 (Class A) battlefield. Such battlefields were defined as those having critical preservation needs requiring nationwide action because they retained good or fair integrity and faced high or moderate threats while less than 20 percent of their core areas were protected.

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP lies within the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District, established by Congress in 1996 (Public Law 104-333) to preserve and interpret the Shenandoah Valley's Civil War legacy and historic landscapes—the places, events, and people (soldier and civilian) before, during, and after the war. The national historic district comprises 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 (one of which is Cedar Creek) and a number of historically important transportation routes.

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with 36 CFR 60.1(b)(1) and Director's Order 28: *Cultural Resource Management Guideline*, Chap. 2, Art. B, which state: "Historical parks of the

National Park System are automatically listed in the National Register upon their legal authorization. National Register nomination forms and boundary maps nevertheless must be prepared for them to document and delineate the resources contributing to their significance.”

Although national historic landmark and national register documentation for the park needs to be updated and completed, the park’s enabling legislation states that its significance incorporates existing National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark designations and “the rich story of Shenandoah Valley history from early settlement through the Civil War and beyond and the Battle of Cedar Creek and its significance in the conduct of the war in the Shenandoah Valley.” Figure 3.1 depicts these significant historic resources.

3.2.2 Historical Context

The physical landscape of the park lands has been shaped by natural and cultural forces for millennia. Geological strata, associated soil types, patterns of drainage and hydrography, and topography have combined to sculpt and shape a complex landform of scenic beauty to which American Indians, early settlers, advanced agriculturalists, and military strategists adapted their activities. The quality and productivity of the soils attracted agriculturalists, while water flow determined the placement of water-powered businesses and lumber mills. Farms were located with access to water, pasture, and fields to ensure survival and later profit. Growing prosperity brought architectural visibility with new and sometimes substantial homes being constructed on large agricultural properties or plantations that were situated and oriented to view magnificent mountain scenery and valley vistas. As settlers and entrepreneurs exploited and developed the land and its resources, road systems evolved and populations grew; towns and marketing centers formed at points of maximum local and regional access. As armies moved across the land, they followed the already existing road systems, using them as lines of movement and supply as well as points of military deployment and retreat. Open farmland became camps for small groups and massive armies, fields became battlefields and cemeteries for the dead in battle, and homes became headquarters and hospitals. While open fields facilitated military movement, deeply entrenched streams and creeks became defensive walls that hindered movement and became traps and killing fields.

Despite the threat of increasing encroachment by modern development, the park area is unique in that the historical landscape provides the nation with a vivid and continuous historical record of the region known as the Lower Shenandoah Valley, an area that extends from Winchester on the north to Middletown and Strasburg on the south, with the natural boundaries of the Blue Ridge to the east and the Allegheny Mountains to the west. The land appears much as it did a century ago.

Figure 3.1

Cultural Resources Nominated to or Determined Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places

 Cedar Creek Battlefield and Belle Grove Plantation National Historic Landmark

 Fort Bowman (Harmony Hall)


 Long Meadow Farm (Long Meadow)

 Middletown Historic District

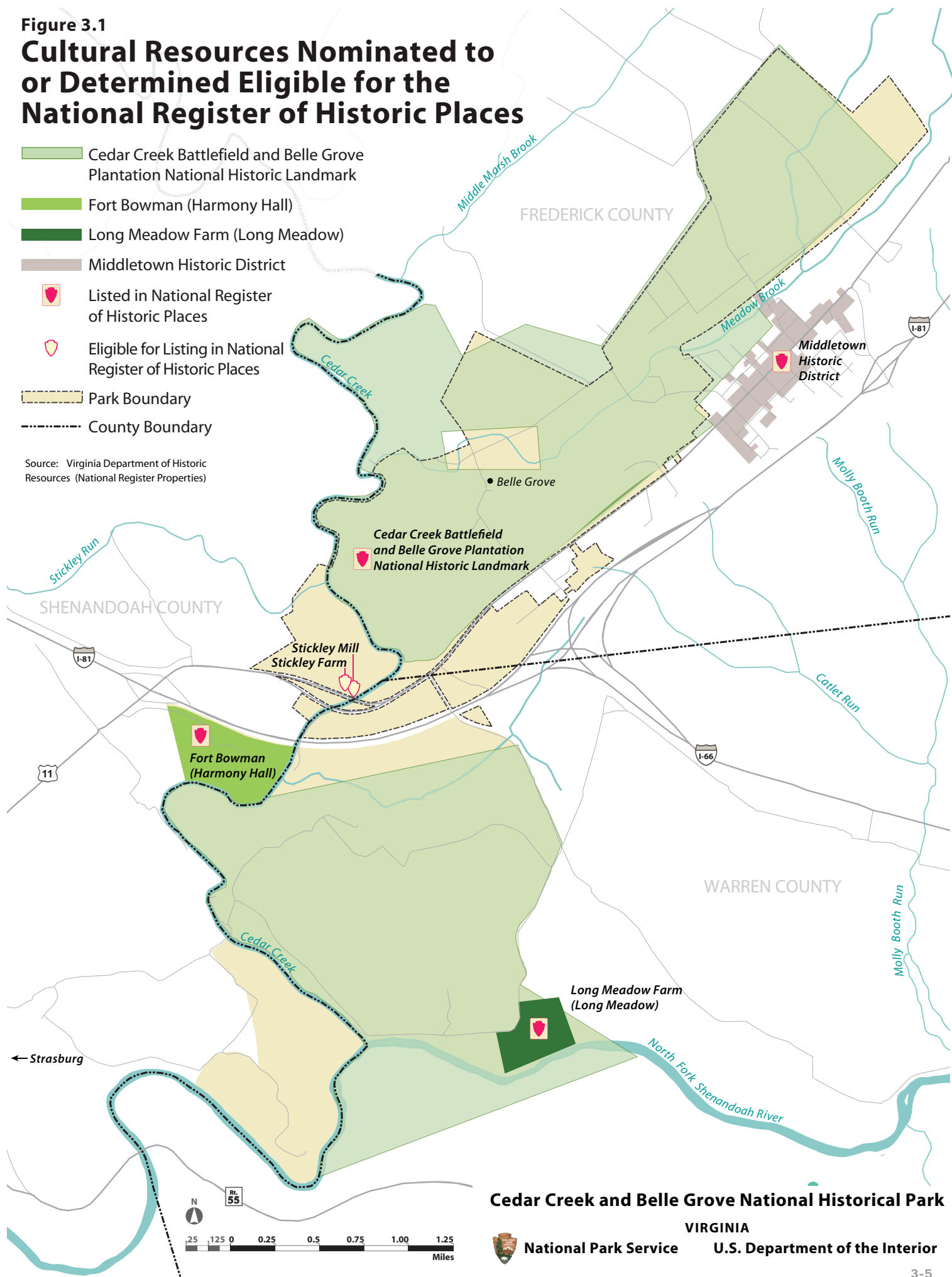
 Listed in National Register of Historic Places

 Eligible for Listing in National Register of Historic Places

 Park Boundary

 County Boundary

Source: Virginia Department of Historic Resources (National Register Properties)



Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park

VIRGINIA



National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

Patterns of settlement, historic plantations and homes, pastoral farmsteads, and transportation systems are still largely within their original rural setting. Thus, a visitor can experience a variety of diverse physical and visual landscapes that have historical significance within a relatively small geographic area.

The Lower Shenandoah Valley has a long, rich history. The area is linked by a series of historic roadways and paths, the most famous once known as the “Great Warrior Path,” which extended from New York and Pennsylvania into South Carolina. This trail, the major north-south trending route through the Shenandoah Valley, began to evolve into the “Great Wagon Road” after the 1744 Treaty of Lancaster, between representatives of the Iroquois and the colonies of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, increased safety for pioneers moving south out of Pennsylvania. On March 3, 1834, the Valley Turnpike Company was incorporated by the Virginia General Assembly, which authorized construction of a new 68-mile turnpike from Winchester to Harrisonburg funded by public-private investment. The turnpike was surfaced with macadam pavement and eventually merged with a similar road from Harrisonburg to Staunton to form the “Valley Pike.” Eventually spanning a distance of 93 miles, owners of the Valley Pike charged tolls to fund its ongoing maintenance. Later, in 1918, the Valley Pike was incorporated into the first Virginia state highway system and designated as State Route 3. In 1926, the highway was re-designated State Route 11, and three years later it was realigned and widened.

Native peoples of the eastern Woodlands region ranged extensively to the north and south along the Great Warrior Path, and from it could access east-west routes along the upper drainages of the Potomac and Susquehanna rivers. The Monacan occupied the Shenandoah and the upper James and Piedmont regions, but were under constant challenge from large tribes on all sides. To the north the powerful and dominant Susquehanna moved into the Valley at several points to travel south and hunt. To the east the Powhatan Confederacy loosely allied tribes in the upper coast plan. The section of the Great Warrior Path along the Shenandoah River was part of a larger regional network that extended southward from the Kanawha River of West Virginia toward present-day Kingsport, Tennessee. This natural travel route tied native communities to one another and enabled trade access and social interactions through vast portions of eastern North America from the Archaic Period (ca. 9500 to 1000 BC) to and beyond the arrival of European settlers during the 17th century.

During the 17th century, this great path also beckoned European traders, explorers, and adventurers, including John Smith, one of the 144 English colonists who disembarked at Jamestown on May 24, 1607, and became a noted explorer, author, and member of the colony's governing council. Smith met native people from the Shenandoah region traveling eastward along the Potomac, and heard of many others who made their home in what is now called the Shenandoah Valley. Thus, when the first white homesteaders moved into the park area during the 1720s in what would become Frederick County, they encountered a tempered landscape

already shaped by centuries of human use and occupation. At the time of European contact, American Indian groups—including Piedmont Siouans, Catawbans, Shawnee, Delaware, Northern Iroquois (Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas, and later Tuscarora), Cherokee, and Susquehannocks—are thought to have been active in the park area. Some of these groups had developed permanent and semi-sedentary villages along the broad flood plain levees where the best, most workable soils were to be found in the region. The native peoples routinely cultivated maize, beans, and squash, and also utilized the abundant natural resources of the area to sustain their communities.

After 1690, Virginia colonial government encouraged European settlement beyond the Atlantic seaboard and tidal rivers, in part to secure land against French encroachments and American Indian incursions. The first settlements near the park area were located near Opequon Creek. Using the sites and travel corridors previously used by American Indians, settlers representing a diverse mix of ethnic origins peopled the valley; the most prominent of these people were the German and Scots-Irish from Pennsylvania.

Noticeably different from the plantation culture found east of the Blue Ridge Mountains, the German and Scots-Irish immigrants established communities of yeoman freeholders who took up and developed medium-sized tracts of land. They created socially and economically integrated settlements characterized by networks of kinship, trade, and religious affiliation. Thus, the open-country area of the Lower Shenandoah became a settled landscape consisting primarily of small towns and dispersed and enclosed farms. By the mid-1750s, three counties—Hampshire, Frederick, and Augusta—were formed west of the Blue Ridge Mountains. As the region's population increased, Shenandoah and Warren counties were established in 1772 and 1836, respectively.

When the first European settlers arrived in the Lower Shenandoah, large tracts of land bordering the Great Warrior Path were the property of Lord Fairfax, who had proprietorship of 5,282,000 acres in what is now Northumberland, Lancaster, Westmoreland, Richmond, Stafford, Rappahannock, Culpeper, Madison, Clarke, Warren, Page, Shenandoah, and Frederick counties. The celebrated first European settler of the region was Jost Hite, who was among the earliest of many German immigrants to emigrate from the Rhineland-Palatinate in 1709. After settling in the Germantown area of Philadelphia, Hite received a land grant from Virginia Governor Sir William Gooch in 1731 and led a group of 16 families to the Lower Shenandoah. Hite built a cabin and fort at Opequon Creek, near present-day Springdale along State Route 11. Eventually he settled at Long Meadow, a 900-acre tract near the North Fork of the Shenandoah River and one mile downstream from the mouth of Cedar Creek on what contemporary records suggest was an American Indian campsite and burial ground.

In 1732 German pioneers George and Mary Hite Bowman settled on land bounded by present-day I-81 and Cedar Creek about 0.8 miles southeast of State Route 11 when Mary's father, Jost Hite, began the aforementioned colonizing venture in the Lower Shenandoah. About 1755 the Bowmans constructed a home on the property, originally known as Fort Bowman but later taking the name Harmony Hall. Hite and his son-in-law George Bowman had large families, the members of which acquired extensive landholdings in the area and became important in the social and political life of the region.

Following the War for American Independence, the Lower Shenandoah experienced significant economic, political, and social change. Outside economic forces and improvements to the Virginia's transportation network resulted in the region's growing prosperity beginning in the late 18th century and continuing into the 19th century. As a result of the improved road system, the subsistence farms of the Lower Shenandoah were connected with wider regional, national, and international markets, thus enabling them to transport cash crops to outside markets. These developments had a profound impact on life in the valley as the agriculturalists responded to the market demands of the wider world by transitioning from an exchange economy to commercial wheat and livestock production. As part of this socioeconomic transformation, the number of gristmills increased, and towns became centers for trade and commerce.

In 1783, Hite's grandson, Isaac, Jr., married Nelly Conway Madison, sister of James Madison and daughter of a wealthy tobacco planter and member of the Tidewater elite. Through the Madison family, Isaac, Jr., and Nelly were linked to the foremost political leaders of their day, including Thomas Jefferson. Upon his marriage, Isaac, Jr., received a 483-acre tract along the Great Wagon Road near Middletown from his father. As the late 18th and early 19th century agricultural economy of the Lower Shenandoah prospered, Hite's holdings grew to more than 7,500 acres on which he developed Belle Grove, one of the largest plantations in the Lower Shenandoah.

Belle Grove was a product of the sweeping economic and social changes in America that turned the isolated backcountry region of the Lower Shenandoah into a unique slave society enmeshed in the national and global market economy. What emerged in the region was a diversified economy in which the majority of the Valley's inhabitants were German-American and Scots-Irish yeoman farmers, entrepreneurs, small businessmen, and merchants rather than slaves and slave owners. Thus, the Lower Shenandoah economy veered away from the tobacco-driven plantation slave society that prevailed in the Tidewater regions of Virginia. The transition from an 18th century backcountry settlement to an established "New Virginia" community in the Shenandoah Valley resulted in the creation of a unique slave society that had implications for the area's physical and cultural landscape as well as its relationship between town and countryside and racial and class relations.

Wheat production created economic opportunities for whites of all classes and allowed for broad participation in the consumer revolution that began in the late 18th century. However, the 19th century witnessed a hardening of class and racial lines in the Shenandoah Valley as the region became a mature slave society in which social and economic exchanges forged an increasingly hierarchical community composed of upper-class white slaveholders, lower-class yeoman farmers and freeholders, entrepreneurs and small businessmen, and slaves. Pre-Civil War free African American communities in the area also made important contributions to the region's economy.

After Abraham Lincoln's call for troops on April 15, 1861, residents of the Shenandoah Valley joined their fellow Virginians in supporting secession of the Southern states from the Union and establishing the Confederacy. Although individual reasons for supporting secession were varied, the consensus for disunion among white residents of the valley reveals a broad political commitment to the social and cultural values of a slave society. In going to war, the white people of the valley were largely united and remained so for much of the conflict, although wartime demands and war weariness increasingly alienated some elements in valley society. Among the dissident elements were those of German ethnicity, many of whom were members of the region's historic peace churches who conscientiously objected to participation in war.

By 1864 the civilian and military participants in the Lower Shenandoah had assumed a "hardened" view of war, exhibiting a grim resoluteness that enabled both sides to commit heinous acts toward each other while destroying the physical resources of the valley. During the early years of the war, the productive granary in the Shenandoah Valley had served as the "Breadbasket of the Confederacy," but regular conscriptions of food and livestock had slowly impoverished local landowners. Within the park area displays of Confederate support included soldier recruitment, intelligence gathering, provisioning of Southern units, and guerrilla activity against Union forces. The strategic as well as the agricultural importance of the Lower Shenandoah meant that it became the locale of many skirmishes and battles, thus devastating the landscape and leaving the area a wasteland in the war's aftermath. Additionally, the Union army's destructive ways, such as the methodical burning of barns, mills, crops, and livestock by order of Maj. Gen. Phillip H. Sheridan in October 1864, turned many ambivalent Southerners into ardent Confederates.

On October 19, 1864 the Confederates, under Lt. Gen. Jubal A. Early, surprised the federal army at Cedar Creek and routed the VIII and XIX Corps, implementing a masterfully conceived and brilliantly executed tactical plan. Sheridan arrived from Winchester to rally his troops, and in the afternoon, launched a crushing counterattack that succeeded in recovering the battlefield and control of the Shenandoah Valley to Union forces. The Battle of Cedar Creek was a crucial Union victory that nearly annihilated Early's Confederate army while helping Abraham

Lincoln secure his reelection at a time when the northern populace was divided over the war.

As a result of the large-scale destruction of farms and mills during the Civil War, grain and livestock production declined drastically in the Lower Shenandoah. Agricultural production slowly recovered during the postwar years, and during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, forested lands along the uplands, east of the Valley Pike, became increasingly fragmented as a result of extensive clearing for agricultural and pasture use. By the early 20th century, the Lower Shenandoah experienced a phenomenal rise in apple production as apples replaced wheat as the primary cash crop. Numerous facilities were developed to support apple production and processing.

The Lower Shenandoah underwent a revolution in land and labor because of the Civil War. The destruction of slavery forced whites and blacks to reconstruct social, political, and economic relations in a world of “free labor” as former slaveholders reconstituted themselves as a new ruling class in a new world in which freed people were allowed to buy and sell their labor and exercise their political rights as full citizens. During Reconstruction, African Americans made considerable social and economic progress, articulating a version of freedom that clashed with the interests of most whites who desired to create new forms of labor and social suppression. After the war, many emancipated slaves moved north and west, creating a labor shortage in the Lower Shenandoah, and bankrupting many whose fortunes had been tied to the prewar slave-based economy. A Freedmen’s Bureau facility was established in Winchester, however, and some blacks remained in the region; they joined prewar free African American communities that survived the conflict and they thrived during Reconstruction, working small farms on a sharecropping or tenant basis, or employing their skills locally. However, African American equality was challenged during the late 19th century with the codification of Jim Crow legislation and enactment of the “separate but equal” doctrine into law, thus creating a sanctioned lower class and rigid racial segregation.

The historical landscape of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP testifies to the South’s reincorporation into the United States during the post-Civil War era in two important ways. First, the “New South” movement of the late 19th century was an attempt by Southern leaders to rebuild the former Confederacy with the cooperation and capital of Northern businessmen. In accepting Northern investment Southern leaders recognized the supremacy of federal authority, and they were allowed to do so without having to eradicate the memory of the failed Confederate experiment or give up home rule over African Americans and poor whites.

The development of Meadow Mills to the west of Belle Grove is a New South creation because it represents an example of the South’s attempt to rebuild after the Civil War. During Reconstruction, northern companies successfully obtained

charters and ultimately built a railroad line through the entire length of the Shenandoah Valley. In 1867, the Winchester and Strasburg Railroad connected Harpers Ferry to the rail line stretching south to Harrisonburg. The rail line, which was constructed west of the Valley Turnpike in the park area, eventually became part of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad network, and its location contributed to establishment of the Meadow Mills community and its nearby limestone quarries. Small-scale limestone quarries, including the Conner Lime Kiln, were developed near Meadow Mills during the early 20th century, but large scale quarry production and other mining operations for limestone, shale, sand, and crushed stone, would not begin until after the 1930s.

The New South campaign also complemented a national reconciliation movement that sacrificed the rights of African Americans in exchange for sectional reunion and white Southern home rule. Crucial to this process was the commemoration of Civil War battlefields as places where American brothers showed their manly spirit and bravery on behalf of ideals for which they fought rather than as killing fields where the nation engaged in massive bloodletting over slavery. At Cedar Creek, three monuments were erected as event organizers invented a new past lacking the bitterness and controversy that animated the actions of Union and Confederate soldiers in the fall of 1864. For example, former Union Col. Henry A. DuPont, then serving as a U.S. Senator from Delaware, gave a sensitive and moving rendition of Maj. Gen. Stephen D. Ramseur's death at Belle Grove during the dedication of the Ramseur Monument in 1912. In death, Ramseur was portrayed as a valiant soldier doing his duty while engaged in an apolitical cause, its goal of disunion and slavery ignored. Thus, DuPont's dedication speech reflects how the Cedar Creek battlefield was transformed into a memorial landscape where Northerners and Southerners came to commemorate their wartime actions and spread the message of sectional healing and reunification as the people in the Lower Shenandoah adjusted to the powerful racial and class changes of the post-Civil War years.

During the early 20th century, mining for limestone, shale, sand, and crushed stone became important industries in the Lower Shenandoah, resulting in development of numerous quarries. Forested lands along the uplands, south of the Valley Pike, became fragmented from extensive clearing for agricultural and pasture use. In 1918 the Valley Pike was incorporated into the first state highway system. Designated initially as State Route 3, and later changed to State Route 11 in 1926, the road, which was realigned and widened in 1929, remained the regional north-south thoroughfare throughout the mid-20th century. As a result of the expanding population of Middletown during the 1910s-1930s, increasing development occurred along State Route 11 and secondary routes that terminated at Middletown.

During the latter decades of the 20th century, agricultural production in the Lower Shenandoah continued to decline, resulting in reforestation of many areas. The growth of Middletown and Strasburg, along with highway development and

limestone mining expansion, during recent decades has resulted in the loss of open space and elements of the park area's rural character. These developments in turn have provided the backdrop for efforts to preserve the area's significant cultural landscape resources and historical legacy culminating in establishment of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP.

3.2.3 Archeological Resources

A three-volume archeological overview and assessment of Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP prepared in 2006 includes information on 105 archeological sites and site complexes within the legislated boundaries of the park based on a review of previous research and selected field visits. Although comprehensive archeological research has not been conducted on park lands, various organizations, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, Wayside Museum of American History and Arts, Chemstone, Inc., and the Shenandoah County Department of Parks and Recreation, have conducted significant cultural resource investigations on the properties they own; it is these investigations that serve as the basis for the aforementioned archeological overview and assessment.

With the exception of certain cultural features on the grounds of Belle Grove and the Solomon Heater Farm, only two of the sites within the legislated park boundaries have been archeologically tested or assessed. Both of these sites—Panther Cave and Bowman Site—have prehistoric associations and were found to have ceramic fragments in their assemblages. Panther Cave, which has been designated as a “Significant Cave” by the Virginia Cave Board because of its archeological significance, has yielded a rich assemblage of artifacts that suggest the site was used as a temporary encampment during hunting expeditions from the Middle Archaic through the Late Woodland periods. Only one military site—an 1862 Union Sibley tent encampment on the grounds of the Heater Farm—has been archeologically tested, and the line of earthwork defenses west of the XIX Corps encampment has been well documented and interpreted.

Twenty-two of the identified archeological sites in the park exhibit evidence of American Indian occupation. This number is not believed to be a true reflection of the extent of American Indian settlement, although the types of sites may be an accurate indication of the nature of occupation. Significant and broad terrace lands along the North Fork of the Shenandoah River and along Cedar Creek below Bowman's Mill remain to be investigated. These lands are particularly important because they possess a high probability for potentially significant American Indian agricultural settlements.

The sites that have been located suggest a fairly marginal level of American Indian occupation, with only one site (Bowman Site) possessing artifacts of a type or quantity indicative of a possible sedentary community. The remaining sites are

identified as sparse and widespread lithic (stone tool) scatters suggesting fairly brief episodes of encampment, although some of the sites may have been visited more than once. Most, but not all, of the sites, including the Bowman Site, have been impacted by modern agricultural activity. Site placement throughout the park appears to clearly favor lands near water, and no data show evidence of significant American Indian occupation of the upland areas away from stream flows. Only three of the 22 recorded sites have possible temporal assignments which range from the Middle Archaic (6500-2500 BC) through the Late Woodland (900-1700 AD) eras.

Seventy-one recorded archeological sites in the park are deemed to have military significance. Of these, three relate to 1862 military activities, 57 relate to the Battle of Cedar Creek in 1864, and 11 are of uncertain affiliation. Approximately 18 of the sites are associated with what are thought to have been encampments, while several may be associated with hospitals and artillery and battery emplacements. Thirty-two archeological sites consist of landscape features. While the landscape-associated sites do not necessarily contain manmade military features, they contributed to the cultural landscape within which the Battle of Cedar Creek was fought.

Twenty-six recorded archeological sites in the park are associated with residential and agricultural development beginning in the late 18th century. The cultural geography of the park lands and contiguous areas was shaped by the emergence of highly profitable plantations and family farms, enhanced in the 20th century by the development of industrial quarrying. With the exception of the rise of the late 19th-early 20th century community of Meadow Mills, which also had ties to agriculture, non-agricultural related residential patterns did not emerge in the area of the park until later in the 20th century. Sites associated with residential and agricultural development in the park that have archeological components include plantations, such as Long Meadow, Harmony Hall, and Belle Grove, and smaller family farms and farmsteads, such as those associated with Solomon Heater; Daniel Stickley; C.I Hite (Whitham); and the McInturf, Davison/Wilson, and Keister families.

Several archeological sites in the park are related to water-powered milling. These include the Bowman Mill, constructed ca. 1810-20 and utilized into the 20th century; George Bowman Mill, constructed ca. 1753 (including a saw mill); Daniel Stickley Mill, constructed during the early 19th century; Hite/Hottle Mill, a complex that included merchant and saw mills and a distillery constructed by the Hite family before the American War for Independence and which remained in use into the early 20th century; and Miller's Mill, constructed during the mid-19th century and utilized into the early 20th century.

Four archeological sites in the park are related to quarrying activities. These include quarry pits east of Cedar Creek of uncertain age; an isolated quarry pit east of

Cedar Creek of uncertain age; a line of quarry pits that extend the length of the Hite-Hottle Mill complex north of Meadow Brook; and the Connor Lime Kiln, an early 20th-century quarry site that includes pits that are believed to date to the late 18th century.

Additionally, transportation-related archeological sites in the park include fords, bridges, roads, such as the Valley Pike, and rail lines.

3.2.4 Ethnographic Resources

Although comprehensive studies have not been completed in the park area that identify specific ethnographic resources, a draft *Ethnographic Overview and Assessment*, prepared for the NPS in 2006, concluded that there are places within the park boundaries that have “great significance” for stories associated with American Indians, African-Americans, Germans and Scots-Irish, non-conformist religious practitioners, and commemorators of the Civil War. The stories that emerge from the ethno-historical study bring this long and complex history to life and demonstrate that borderlands or cross-roads areas, such as the region in which the park is located, constitute the focus of intense, multi-faceted cultural experiences. Thus, while it is not known at present if ethnographic resources are located in the park, it is likely that some will be identified in the future as a result of further research and studies.

American Indians, although presently underrepresented in the park area, played a significant role in shaping the region from the first human occupation of the Lower Shenandoah during the Paleo-Indian period (ca. 9500-10,000 BC) until the end of the 18th century. However, the authors of the aforementioned draft *Ethnographic Overview and Assessment* conclude that the “culture area, linguistic, and archaeological evidence” provide only “vague and generalized patterns” of native societies in the Lower Shenandoah during the centuries preceding European settlement. As aforementioned in the “Archeological Resources” section, numerous American Indian tribal groups inhabited or passed through this portion of the Shenandoah Valley during the 17th and 18th centuries, and their associations constitute an important component to the history and ethnographic landscape of the park. Relationships between local groups and other tribes from distant areas to the east and north involved with French, English, and possibly Dutch traders complicated the composition and political interrelationship of groups who used and occupied the Lower Shenandoah during this period. The valley served as a locale for settlement and resource harvest by American Indian groups as well as a major travel corridor along which tribal populations moved up and down the valley, and migrated through the area to and from more distant locations. Although Europeans began moving into the area and encroaching on Indian lands in the 1720s, colonial and imperial officials began promoting non-Native settlement in the region during the 1740s.

The arrival of European settlers resulted in profound changes for native cultures in the Lower Shenandoah. For those connected with the fur trade, the changes affected inter-Indian relationships and Indian-environment relationships as Indians were taken from a largely self-sufficient, bartering economy characterized by low level chiefdoms to a quasi-market situation, marked by increasing dependency on an alien and largely racist society for their very existence. Additionally, the introduction of new diseases radically altered the nature and structure of the indigenous population. Together these events sounded an effective death knell for Indians in the Lower Shenandoah and the dispersal of its native inhabitants by the end of the War for American Independence.

There is little evidence of native presence in the park area during the 19th and 20th centuries. This does not suggest, however, that the region did not continue to have significance for Indian people. Although comprehensive studies have not been conducted in the park to identify specific places of cultural significance to contemporary American Indians, it is widely known that archeological sites and ethnographic resources in the area have special significance for American Indians associated with the Lower Shenandoah. The very visible Massanutten Mountain, for example, continues to be a central feature of folk stories, and the state of Virginia-recognized Monacan tribe has many recollections about the mountain and about the valley and its inhabitants that contribute to its sense of cultural identity today.

One of the most significant characteristics of the park area is its long and continuing association with members of a variety of Protestant and Reformed denominations, including Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and the Church of the United Brethren. German and Scots-Irish settlers, the predominant ethnic groups in the area, brought their Reformed religious practices with them. Among the first important Protestant denominations to reach the Lower Shenandoah were the Quakers who arrived by the mid-18th century. In 1844, Strasburg's oldest congregation built St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

The Shenandoah Valley continues to be one of the principal centers of the Church of the Brethren in the United States. This area and Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, have the denomination's highest concentration of churches compared to other regions in the country. Brethren probably entered the valley during the mid-18th century, and during the Civil War, the denomination, a historic "peace church" that opposes participation in warfare, did not support either side, although it was opposed to slavery. Associated Brethren communities in the valley came to be known as Pennsylvania Dutch or Dunkards (or Tunkards), and later, (at least some of them) as the United Brethren. This group, although complex and internally divided, was generally known to outsiders by the term that referred to their practice of adult baptism, known as "dunking." Today Brethren churches are scattered, and typically congregations are small (100 members or less). There are no churches in

the park. The church in closest proximity to park lands is Meadow Mills Church of the Brethren, a congregation that dates from the late 19th or early 20th century when that village was a prosperous crossroads community. Today, the Quakers, Brethren, and Mennonites comprise three significant historic “peace” denominations for whom the Lower Shenandoah remains a stronghold.

Scots-Irish settlers constituted another important immigrant group that arrived in the Lower Shenandoah shortly before the American War for Independence. Many arrived in the area through the influence of Rev. Robert Strawbridge, an emigrant from Sligo, Ireland, who settled in western Maryland in 1760. Strawbridge and his followers Richard Owings, John Hagarty, and Sator Stephenson, were Methodists, and their ministry, characterized by circuit riding preaching, drew a large following. The Lower Shenandoah between Winchester and Strasburg constituted a “circuit,” an important concept in the religious practice of these communities because many rejected the notion of an established ministry. Thus, preachers and ministers drawn from the congregations were preferred, and these remained steadfastly independent throughout the history of each congregation. Ministers were expected to travel a fixed circuit and visit several churches or meetings annually. Thus, scattered religious communities were linked to one another by these preachers, who brought news along with spiritual enlightenment. Although the early Methodists often cooperated with the United Brethren, they participated actively in the various military conflicts that wracked the region, especially during the Civil War.

In contrast to the Tidewater region of Virginia, where the commonwealth’s largest slave population was concentrated, the Lower Shenandoah was home to comparatively smaller numbers of enslaved Africans who arrived with Tidewater planters recruited by Lord Fairfax and his agent Robert Carter. However, extensive slave-based plantations existed elsewhere along the course of the Shenandoah River. The Hite family’s Belle Grove Plantation, which had 103 slaves by 1820—the most in the Frederick-Shenandoah-Warren County area—represented the southernmost extension of that complex. Many middling farmers in the three counties, however, owned far fewer slaves. By 1860, the vast majority of slaveholding families in those counties owned 14 or fewer slaves.

In this borderland region of the Upper South, the African American experience, both in slavery and in freedom, was fundamentally influenced by the Lower Shenandoah’s commercial grain economy. The region had a small but important community of free blacks, some of whom may have arrived prior to establishment of the first permanent German and Scots-Irish settlers. By the early 19th century, many free black were living in the Lower Shenandoah, many employed as day laborers, while others worked as skilled artisans. Once emancipated, freed African American men and women seized the initiative in organizing their own communities just as freed blacks had done during the antebellum period. During the mid-to-late 19th century, their corporate establishment of small freeholder communities in

Frederick, Warren, and Shenandoah counties afforded a testament to African Americans' family and community cohesion. Nevertheless, as a result of increasing discrimination and Jim Crow legislation during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, African Americans in the Lower Shenandoah would participate only marginally as landowners in the region's agrarian freeholder society.

Understanding and appreciation of the culturally rich texture of African American communities in the region as they evolved around the twin institutions of church and school in the 19th and 20th centuries is just beginning among scholars and the academic community. With its diverse ethnic and racial composition, the Lower Shenandoah's rapidly changing contemporary demographic profile is writing new chapters in the region's history. Among those creating this new regional society are African Americans returning to the region, rejoining those who have deep cultural roots in the area as well as a stake in its future.

The Belle Grove Plantation has identified the names (and, in some cases, the origins) of the Hite family slaves and has developed genealogies of the slaves that were in residence during the plantation's early years, but information is lacking about existing relationships, if any, between these persons and the area's contemporary residents and groups. It is presumed that such contemporary persons, if located, may preserve important knowledge of and associations with the Belle Grove Plantation that have been passed down in family histories or oral traditions. A slave cemetery has been located on the plantation, but whether this site has ongoing cultural or religious significance to families and groups who may remember or visit the site requires further investigation.

As early as the 1880s Frederick Douglass warned against the growth of the myth that directed attention away from slavery as the principal cause of the Civil War and toward an interpretation of events strongly slanted toward romanticized notions of the Old South. This controversial subject continues to be a dominant theme among Civil War re-enactors, the largest group who currently make use of park lands. Although many believe that the re-enactor movement is of relatively recent origin, its roots at Cedar Creek and Belle Grove go back to the 1870s and 1880s when people began to visit the plantation to commemorate the battle. The first of these groups were members (or descendants) of Union forces who had participated in the decisive battle, and who were responsible for erecting the Ramseur monument presently located a few yards from the entrance to the plantation.

The Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation was established to protect and preserve the battlefield, restore the historic Solomon Heater house, and serve "as a forum for history buffs, re-enactors, and descendants of participants in the engagement." Each fall for more than a decade, thousands of men, women, and children have camped and engaged in battlefield tactics on the Cedar Creek Battlefield in commemoration of the lives and activities of those who fought in the Civil War. The

foundation continues to host major battle re-enactments each year that interpret the battle and Civil War era life. These events have become an important element of local cultural life, and many historical organizations, preservation groups, and civic sponsors have become involved in ongoing evolution of the site's meaning. They have also brought Cedar Creek Battlefield national attention, as visitors from around the nation and the world travel to see the re-enactments and learn about the Civil War. Fees paid by re-enactors to participate in the events support the foundation and have been a major funding source for acquisition and preservation of lands owned by the organization.

Belle Grove, Inc., a foundation established in 1974, funds and operates the Belle Grove plantation property, which is owned by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The foundation and the National Trust have entered into a partnership to operate the plantation, provide a range of interpretive programs open to the public, and host Hite family reunions.

Park landowners, current and former residents within the park boundaries, and park neighbors with long standing ties to the park area may have the strongest persistent cultural associations with lands in Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP. Some members of local families may have substantial knowledge about the park area and its resources because of their long associations with the land, and families whose ancestors settled the area prior to establishment of the park may have specialized knowledge about the land, farming techniques, and the area's social and cultural history. Additionally, other recreational historical and contemporary uses of park lands and immediately adjacent areas that have cultural and economic importance may include hunting, fishing, relic hunting, trapping, and non-farm harvesting of resources for use as medicinal plants and teas.

3.2.5 Sacred Sites

The draft *Ethnographic Overview and Assessment*, prepared for the park area in 2006, concluded that there are places within the park that have "great significance" for stories associated with American Indians; however, there are no known sacred sites within the park (Bragdon 2006). Comprehensive studies and consultations with Indian tribes have not been conducted in the park to identify specific places of cultural or spiritual significance to contemporary American Indians. Studies of places of potential cultural significance will be conducted in collaboration with traditionally associated tribes when funding becomes available.

3.2.6 Historic Structures

Structures found in the park are a reflection of the community's cultural and building arts heritage, as well as the individual needs and inherent qualities and specific resources of the landscape. Historic buildings in the park represent all of the important historical eras relating to the area's development and reflect a variety

of architectural styles. Some are significant as examples of certain types of architecture or construction technology; others are significant because they contribute to an understanding of park history.

Notable historic buildings within the park include residences, outbuildings, and industrial structures that have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places as well as the Virginia Landmarks Register. Belle Grove, a designated National Historic Landmark as well as a Virginia Historic Landmark, includes a variety of historic resources. The most significant of these are a manor house, overseer's house, dependency, slave quarters, springhead, stable and barn complexes, and Hite-Hottle Mill complex. The exterior of the manor house, one of the outstanding mansions in the Lower Shenandoah, shows Thomas Jefferson's influence from the Tidewater and Piedmont areas as well as Classical Revival elements, while the interior is distinguished by fine woodwork in a transitional style spanning the Georgian and Federal periods.

Other national register-listed properties in the park include Harmony Hall (Fort Bowman), Long Meadow, and portions of the Middletown Historic District, although the majority of the historic district is outside park boundaries. Harmony Hall, a two-story limestone structure, was built by George Bowman (ca.1753) and is an important example of the Pennsylvania German architectural influence in the Lower Shenandoah. Long Meadow is a noteworthy and well-preserved example of a transitional Federal-style to Greek Revival-style two-story brick plantation house. The current dwelling, constructed by George W. Bowman in 1848, is the second structure to be built on the site. The original dwelling was built during the mid-18th century by Isaac Hite. The original dwelling no longer exists above ground, but it may continue to exist as below-ground archeological evidence. The Harmony Hall plantation features a tenant house as well as several other early structures. Long Meadow is significant as an example of a prosperous working plantation, with a fairly extensive collection of outbuildings that date from both the period of the original house and the period of the current one. It is also significant as one of the initial settlement sites in the Lower Shenandoah.

The Daniel Stickley Farm, consisting of a ca. late 1840s- to early 1850s-era brick, two-story, Federal-style dwelling and six outbuildings, and the Stickley Mill, which includes two stone ruins of a mill that was burned by federal troops during the Civil War, have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Structures and potentially eligible for listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register. Although other historic properties in the park have not been formally evaluated for listing in the national register or Virginia Landmarks Register, smaller family farms or farmsteads in the park with 19th and 20th century structural components, such as houses, barns, outbuildings, and other agricultural features, include those associated with Solomon Heater; C.I. Hite (Whitham); and the McInturf, Davison/ Wilson, and Keister families.

The only property in the park that has been acquired by the U.S. Government is the 8.0-acre Whitham tract, which was part of the 1,000-acre George Bowman patent of 1732. Located at the south end of the core battlefield, the Whitham property witnessed significant events associated with the Battle of Cedar Creek, including the strategic movement of Confederate Maj. Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw's left flank and the possible treatment and care of wounded troops. A preliminary assessment of the structures on the property was conducted in June 2006 for the park's List of Classified Structures Database and a draft cultural landscape inventory (DCLI) was completed in November 2007. The conclusions of these assessments related to historic structures are the following:

- Structures considered eligible for the National Register and contributing to the significance of the national historical park
 - Road Trace (date unknown – probably early 19th century – 1937)
 - Bank Barn (date unknown – probably late 19th century – 1937) – Building warrants a structural evaluation
 - Stone-Lined Well (date unknown – probably late 19th century – 1937)
 - Meat Shed (date unknown)
 - Farm House (date unknown – probably early-mid 19th century with later additions) The interior and exterior of the core brick structure are substantially intact and later additions which obscure its visual integrity are external to it and reversible. In the future, these additions could be removed to reveal a resource with significance related to the Battle of Cedar Creek and the antebellum agricultural community in the northern Shenandoah Valley.
- Structures considered ineligible for the National Register because they either do not retain integrity or do not relate to the period of significance
 - Drilled Well (ca.1970)
 - Collapsed Outbuilding (date unknown)
 - Chicken House (ca. post-1937)
 - Driveway (date unknown) and Brick Gate Piers (ca. post-1969)
 - Manmade Pond (ca. post-1969)
 - Metal Storage Building (modern)
 - Additional Recently-Constructed Outbuildings – Chicken House, Loafing Sheds and Livestock Pen, and Wood Frame Shed
- Significance and National Register eligibility could not be evaluated due to insufficient information
 - Multiple Fence Remnants (dates unknown)

Whether vernacular or high style, these homes and structures are tangible reminders of the park community's past and the cultural heritage of their builders and users. Roads, too, are structures, and many of the primary and secondary roads in the park are historic. Other structures in the park include smaller-scale features such as historical monuments and cemeteries.

3.2.7 Cultural Landscapes

Historical settlement and development patterns and natural and cultural characteristics are important elements of the cultural landscape of the park. Landscape characteristics are the tangible evidence of the activities and habits of the people who occupied, developed, used, and shaped the landscape to serve human needs, and these characteristics may reflect the beliefs, attitudes, traditions, and values of the people. Collectively, landscape features and patterns, and their relationship over time, imprint and reflect human history and give it its character. Three land use history maps of the park area for 1864, 1937, and 2006, prepared as part of the *Land Use History for Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP*, provide useful data pertaining to cultural landscape resources—these maps are included as Figures 2, 3, and 4, respectively.

A draft cultural landscape inventory (DCLI) of the Whitham Farm was completed in November 2007. The DCLI identifies the following landscape characteristics for the Whitham farmstead: natural systems, topography, spatial organization, land use, circulation, vegetation, buildings and structures, views and vistas, small-scale features, and archeological sites. The Whitham farmstead parcel is considered significant for National Register listing for its association with the Civil War. As noted above, the farmhouse has been extensively modified, but remains in the same location. The rural character of the farmstead remains preserved and the gently sloping land, road trace, farmhouse (excluding subsequent additions), and strategic views evoke the Civil War and are present to assist in understanding the strategic role of the landscape in the historic battle.

The following sections summarize the principal landscape characteristics that contribute to the character of the park.

■ Overall Spatial Organization/Response to the Natural Environment

By 1864 the southern portion of the present-day park area remained heavily forested, while the majority of the landscape was agricultural. A network of roads connected residential, industrial, and agricultural land uses. The Valley Pike physically divided the landscape into two halves. The road served as the major north-south transportation corridor through the Lower Shenandoah for early settlers, as well as soldiers during the Civil War (in the area of the present-day park, the Valley Pike generally traversed in a southwesterly to northeasterly direction between Strasburg and Middletown). Dispersed along the turnpike were properties,

including the Belle Grove Plantation, Solomon Heater Farm, and the Daniel Stickley Mill complex.

East of the Valley Pike, roads physically connecting settlements and mills included Long Meadow Lane, Bowman Road, and Hite Road. Settlements in the area included the J.A. Baldwin, McInturf, and C.I. Hite (Whitham) farms; the Long Meadow and Harmony Hall plantations; and Bowman's Mill. Adjoining these settlement clusters were open areas that were used for grain and livestock production. To the west of the Valley Pike, Belle Grove Lane, Hite Road, and two unnamed farm roads connected the Miller and Ridenour farms and Hottle Mill with the surrounding settlements and farmsteads.

The locations for plantations, farmsteads, and settlements within the present-day park boundaries were directly related to their proximity to the Shenandoah River and its principal tributaries, Cedar Creek and Meadow Brook. Many of the larger dwellings were constructed of limestone, thus implying the existence of quarries or natural outcroppings.

Located east of State Route 11, I-81 has become the major transportation corridor and underlying agent of suburbanization in the park area since 1971. Currently, increasing population growth from the expansion of the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area has encroached on lands within the park area, adversely affecting the historic character of the landscape.

■ Vegetation

Early accounts of the Lower Shenandoah Valley during the 18th century indicate that the majority of the valley was forested and dominated by deciduous trees interspersed with a variety of flowering shrubs. Oaks and hickories comprised the majority of the forest in more fertile soils, while pines and conifers were found scattered throughout more sandy and stony soils. Besides areas in which hardwoods thrived, the Lower Shenandoah landscape included areas of poor land, known as barrens, where nothing but pine trees would grow.

Open meadows were also found in the valley. Although the origin of these open areas requires further research, they may have been the result of American Indians clearing the land, periodic flooding, accidental fire, or severe storms. These openings in the forests were of great value to both American Indians and European settlers who used them to locate dwellings, plant and cultivate crops, and raise livestock. Both native and non-native vegetation are present in the park and equally contribute to the character of the cultural landscape.

As a result of the large-scale destruction of farms and mills during the Civil War, grain and livestock production declined drastically in the Lower Shenandoah. However, agricultural production slowly recovered during the postwar years; during

the late 19th and early 20th centuries, forested lands along the uplands, east of the Valley Pike, were fragmented as a result of extensive clearing for agricultural and pasture use. Figure 3.2 depicts the vegetation and land use character of the park for the year 1864, and Figure 3.3 depicts the vegetation and land use character of the park for the year 1937.

Agricultural activity in the Lower Shenandoah Valley declined during the late 20th century, resulting in a substantial decrease of farmland in many areas. The recent growth of towns, such as Middletown and Strasburg, along with highway development and limestone mining expansion, has resulted in the loss of open space and forested lands in the Lower Shenandoah. Figure 3.4 depicts the existing (2006) vegetative conditions and land use character of the park.

■ Land Use

In the open meadows found in the Lower Shenandoah, American Indians typically grew corn, beans, and squash, while Scots-Irish and German settlers grew wheat, rye, barley, oats, corn, flax, hemp, and tobacco. Although the emphasis in agricultural production evolved over time from a locally contained agricultural economy to regionally and nationally based markets, grain and livestock production remained integral components of the landscape throughout the 18th and 19th centuries.

Various features in the park contributed to the cultural landscape within which the Battle of Cedar Creek was fought and thus provide an understanding of how the park lands were used by military forces. In effect, the network of towns, roads, bridges, farms, plantations, mills, and quarries that shaped the mid-19th century landscape, in conjunction with the natural terrain over which those features were draped, defined the area and setting of military action. The region's rolling topography, including Pout's Hill, Hupp's Hill, Three Top Mountain, Signal Knob, and Massanutten Mountain, allowed military personnel to survey and observe the surrounding lands and strategize for battle. The existing road network, including the Valley Pike, provided an efficient means of transporting soldiers up and down the valley. While Cedar Creek and the Shenandoah River formed natural defensive walls with steep ravines and slopes, the fords and bridges previously built for industrial and residential needs served as crossing points for both armies. As a result, locations of fords influenced the construction of defensive earthworks. The Bowman's Mill, McInturff's, and Bowman fords are fundamental resources from which the general contours of one of the most complicated and daring flanking maneuvers of the war can be interpreted. While the forested areas provided opportunities for concealment, the presence of open farmlands enabled large numbers of troops to gather for battle. Many of the buildings and structures in the valley were used for military housing, headquarters, and field hospitals. A line of earthworks established by the Union VIII and XIX Corps as part of their

encampment defenses in October 1864 has been documented. Exceptions to this might be the Valley Pike Bridge that was repeatedly burned and rebuilt during the course of the war, and the Daniel Stickley Mill complex that was deliberately destroyed to prepare the Union field of fire. Figure 3.2 depicts the vegetation and land use character of the park for the year 1864.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, agricultural production slowly recovered from the large-scale destruction of farms and mills during the Civil War. Fields surrounding many previously identified settlements were enlarged and apple orchards and other farmsteads were developed in the area. By the early 20th century, the Lower Shenandoah experienced a phenomenal rise in apple production as apples replaced wheat as the primary cash crop and apple orchards dotted the landscape. Figure 3.3 depicts the vegetation and land use character of the park for the year 1937.

During the 20th century, mining for limestone, shale, sand, and crushed stone developed into an important industry in the Lower Shenandoah, resulting in the opening and operation of many quarries. Construction of the Manassas Gap Railroad to Strasburg in 1867 contributed to the later establishment of the Meadow Mills community and development of limestone quarries in its vicinity. Although small-scale quarries, including the Conner Lime Kiln, were in operation during the early 20th century, large-scale quarry activity commenced after the 1930s. Figure 3.3 depicts the vegetation and land use character of the park for the year 1937.

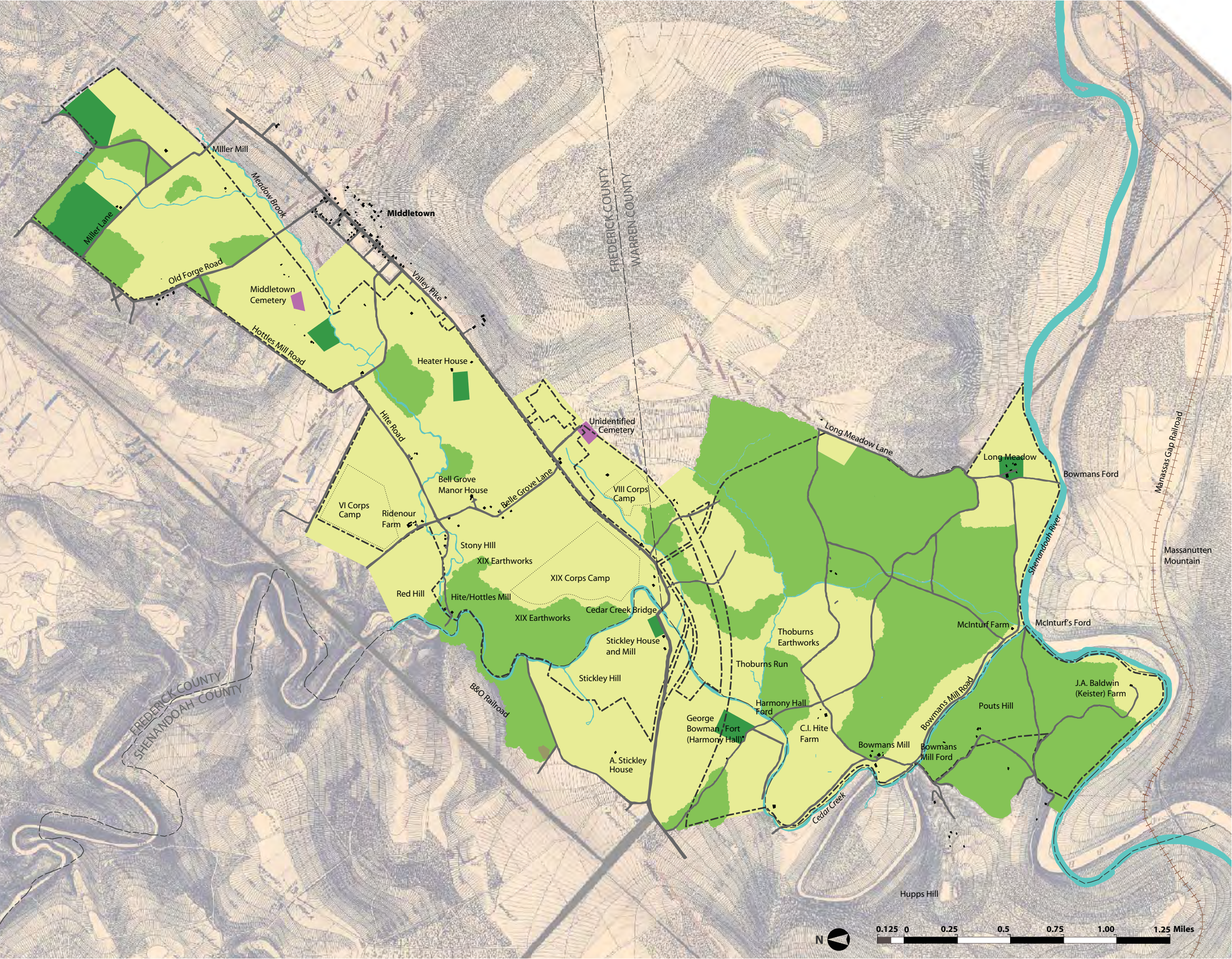
Agricultural activity in the Lower Shenandoah Valley declined during the late 20th century, resulting in a substantial decrease of farmland and a corresponding increase of reforestation in many areas. Vineyard cultivation and cattle production have become the predominant agricultural activities in recent decades. The recent growth of towns, such as Middletown and Strasburg, along with highway development and limestone mining expansion, has resulted in the loss of open space and elements of the Lower Shenandoah's rural character. Figure 3.4 depicts the existing (2006) vegetative conditions and land use character of the park.

■ Circulation

The contemporary road system through the park is largely based on historic routes and patterns. Early roads were aligned based on functional need, proximity to natural landforms, and property lines. At a smaller scale, local roads were required to link families, farms and plantations, industrial sites, and towns.

Previously used by American Indians as a migratory route and for hunting, the major north-south trending route through the Shenandoah Valley, known as the Great Warrior Path and later as the Great Wagon Road and Valley Pike, became a major transportation corridor for European settlers. Because of its importance as

Figure 3.2
1864
Land Use



- Forest/Woodland
- Field / Grassland
- Orchard
- Cemetery
- Quarry
- Building / Structure
- Road
- Railroad
- Stream / Creek / Water
- NPS Park Boundary
- County Boundary

Sources:
Background: Battlefields of Fisher's Hill and Cedar Creek [19 October 1864], Virginia. Prepared by Bvt. Lt. Col. G. L. Gillespie.
Additional Mapping by Mike Comisso, Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, January 2007

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove
National Historical Park
Virginia

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Figure 3.3
1937
Land Use

- Forest/Woodland
- Field / Grassland
- Orchard
- Cemetery
- Quarry
- Building / Structure
- Road
- Railroad
- Stream / Creek / Water
- NPS Park Boundary
- County Boundary

Sources:
Aerial: 1937 Aerial Photography, Virginia
Additional Mapping by Mike Comisso, Olmsted
Center for Landscape Preservation, January 2007

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove
National Historical Park
Virginia

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

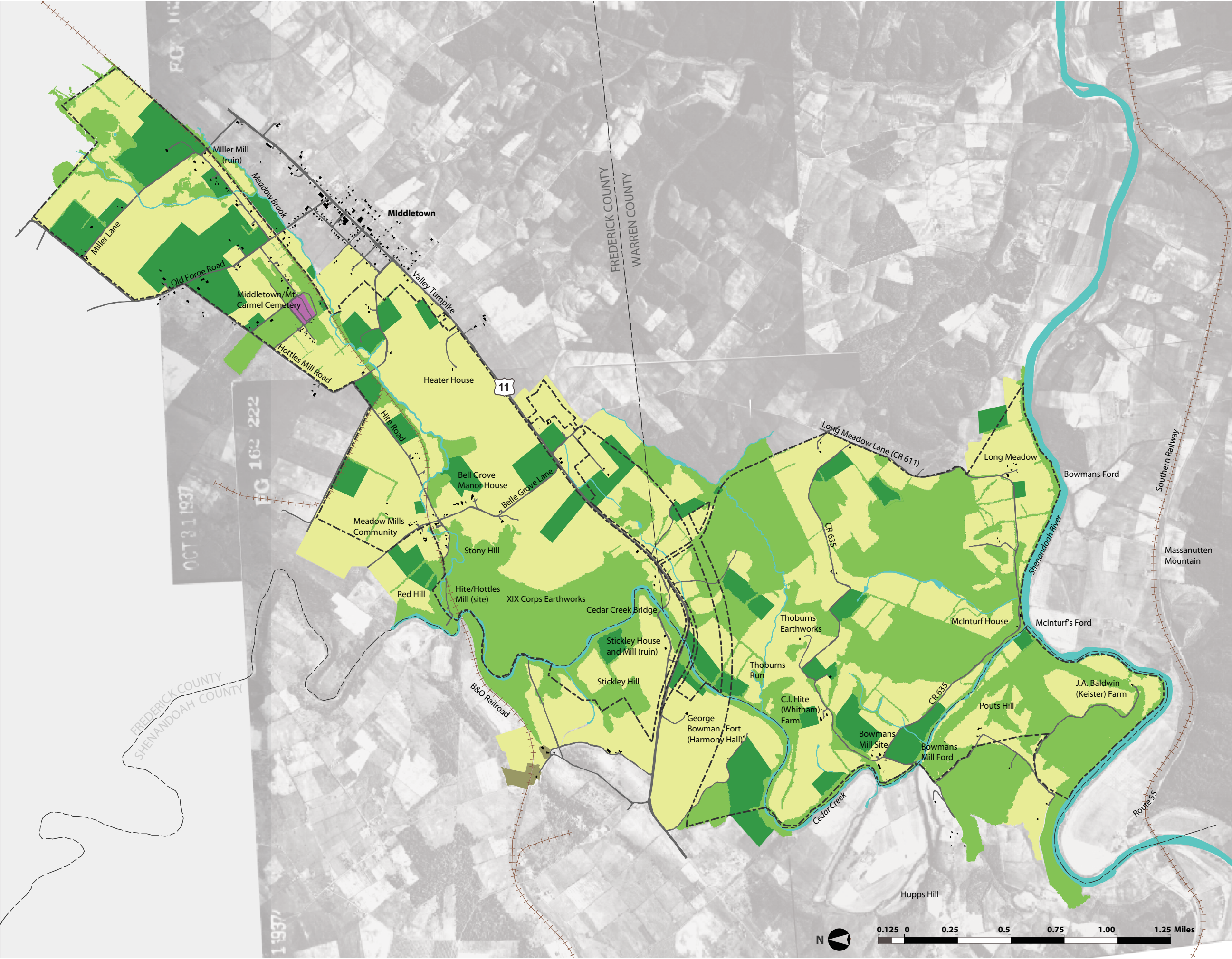


Figure 3.4
2002
Land Use

- Forest/Woodland
- Field / Grassland
- Orchard
- Cemetery
- Quarry
- Building / Structure
- Road
- Railroad
- Stream / Creek / Water
- NPS Park Boundary
- County Boundary

Sources:
Aerial: 2002 Aerial Photography, Virginia
Additional Mapping by Mike Comisso, Olmsted
Center for Landscape Preservation, January 2007
National Park Service

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove
National Historical Park
Virginia

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

