



River Raisin National Battlefield Park

Study and Boundary Assessment



Cover Painting

“Remember the River Raisin!” by Ken Riley, depicts a scene from the October 1813 Battle of the Thames, a decisive victory for the Americans in which Chief Tecumseh gave his life and Americans re-established control over the Northwest frontier. Kentucky troops were encouraged to fight this battle as revenge for an earlier massacre of Kentucky militia at the River Raisin.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
River Raisin National Battlefield / Michigan



River Raisin National Battlefield Park

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November 2009

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Region

River Raisin National Battlefield / Michigan

National Park Service / U.S. Department of the Interior

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Introduction to the study process

Study Authorization

On December 20, 2006, a law was passed requiring the National Park Service to study the potential for including the River Raisin Battlefield in the National Park System (Public Law 109-429). The process for conducting these types of studies involves assessing the national significance of the resource, researching comparable sites to determine if the resource would be a suitable addition to the National Park System, and assessing both the feasibility of managing the site as a National Park and the need for direct management by the National Park Service. When funding became available, planners in the Midwest Region of the National Park Service gathered a team of professionals to conduct the study. The study team included individuals familiar with the battlefield, with the study process, and with managing similar existing units of the National Park System.

Within the first year of the study, the team studied the national significance of the battlefield, researched comparable parks, and began assessing the feasibility of managing the battlefield as a unit of the national park system. The team also issued a newsletter to inform and engage the public in the study (see Appendix A) and, in the fall of 2008, held public meetings in Monroe. These meetings were well-attended events. Most of the meeting attendees expressed enthusiasm for a national battlefield park in Monroe. The team received feedback on specific ideas for how a park might be managed and a few concerns were raised.

Enabling legislation/Foundation for boundary assessment

While public comments on the beginnings of the Special Resource Study were being analyzed and next steps in the study were being planned in the winter of 2008/2009, Congress passed a bill to establish the River Raisin National Battlefield Park upon acquisition of a sufficient amount of appropriate land by the National Park Service (see Appendix B). The new legislation made the Special Resource Study unnecessary. However, because the legislation did not specify a boundary for the battlefield, a question remained about which lands would or should be included within the National Battlefield Park. Therefore, the National Park Service decided to conclude the Special Resource Study with a boundary assessment built upon the research done in support of the study to answer this question— which

land does the National Park Service need in order to preserve resources associated with the Battles of the River Raisin, to effectively interpret the stories of the battles, and to provide for operational needs?

Background on the River Raisin Battles

After the Revolutionary War, racial, economic, religious, ethnic, and cultural conflict between the United States and Native Americans in the Ohio Country had escalated into a total no quarter cultural war, where both sides attacked non-combatants and destroyed homes in order to drive out the larger “enemy” populations. The British, with their own agenda for the old “Northwest” (as the current states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, as well as the northeastern part of Minnesota were then known), found allies in the tribes. The battles and related action that occurred on January 18 and 22, 1813 at Frenchtown (the city that is today Monroe, Michigan) on the River Raisin in Michigan Territory together comprise an extremely costly defeat for American forces during the conflict. Approximately one of every five American soldiers killed during battles of the War of 1812 died at Frenchtown. The second battle was also the last major victory of the intertribal alliance formed by Tecumseh, the Shawnee leader, and including warriors from the Wyandot, Sac and Fox, Pottawatomi, Odawa, and Ojibwa tribes.

In January, 1813, United States forces were recovering from the disastrous attempt to invade British Canada from the Michigan Territory the previous summer—an attempt which ended in the loss of Detroit and exposed the frontiers of Ohio and Indiana Territory to attack by the British and their Native American allies. In response to pleas for assistance from Frenchtown residents fearing British and Native American reprisals, General James Winchester sent a detachment to the village. A force of around one thousand Americans attacked and captured Frenchtown on January 18, 1813.

The first Battle of the River Raisin on January 18 was a major victory for the Americans. In stark contrast, the second Battle of the River Raisin four days later was one of the most disastrous battles in terms of casualties for the American Army during the war. After the battles had ultimately ended in a victory for the British and Native allies, some of the Native American participants killed the Americans who remained in Frenchtown, too wounded to be taken by the British to Fort Malden with other prisoners of war. This incident, coupled with the failure of the British commanders to ensure the safety of

prisoners of war, inspired use of the phrase “Remember the Raisin” as a rallying cry for future engagements in the war. This cry was used to incite American forces, through a mixture of patriotism and revenge, to these and subsequent victories against the British and their Native Allies. The battle on January 22, 1813 was the last major victory for the movement lead by Tecumseh.

Special Resource Study Process: Applying the First Set of Criteria

Significance / Suitability

As mentioned above, the process for conducting Special Resource Studies involves assessing the national significance of the resource, researching comparable sites to determine if the resource would be a suitable addition to the National Park System, and assessing both the feasibility of managing the site as a National Park and the need for direct management by the National Park Service. The **significance** of this site is described in the background section above. The process of assessing **suitability** involves comparing the battlefield to similar sites that are comparably protected.

To quote the National Park Service’s Management Policies, “an area is considered suitable for addition to the National Park System if it represents a natural or cultural resource type that is not already adequately represented in the national park system, or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by other federal agencies; tribal, state, or local governments; or the private sector.” (*Management Policies 2006*, section 1.3.2) Adequacy of representation is determined on a case-by-case basis by comparing the potential addition to other comparably managed areas representing the same resource type, while considering differences or similarities in the character, quality, quantity, or combination of resource values. The comparative analysis also addresses rarity of the resources, interpretive and educational potential, and similar resources already protected in the national park system or in other public or private ownership. The comparison results in a determination of whether the proposed new area would expand, enhance, or duplicate resource protection or visitor use opportunities found in other comparably managed areas.

The War of 1812 in the area of the United States that was then commonly known as “the Northwest” was a very different conflict than that fought along the eastern

seaboard and the northeastern border of the United States and British Canada. Most of the 41 War of 1812 sites identified in a recent study lead by the National Park Service’s American Battlefield Protection Program as either Class A or B battlefields¹ were not involved in the struggle over Old Northwest; only 9 of these 41 sites are in this area. As the chart below shows, of these 9, only 3 are substantially preserved for public enjoyment.

Site	Currently Preserved for Public Enjoyment?	Class
River Raisin in Michigan	Partially. 3.7 acres of the battlefield (roughly 3% of the land within the potential NHL boundary) is preserved by the Monroe County Historical Society and Commission	B
Tippecanoe in Indiana	Yes, by the Tippecanoe County Historical Association	B
Fort Mackinac	Yes, by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission	B
Fort Meigs in Ohio	Yes, by the Ohio Historical Society	B
Prairie du Chien in Wisconsin (Fort Shelby)	No	B
Lake Erie in Ohio	No, although the story of the battle is told at the NPS’ Perry’s Victory and International Peace Memorial on South Bass Island.	A
Fort Dearborn in Illinois	No	B
Monguagon in Michigan	No	B
Detroit in Michigan	No	A

Given the rarity of War of 1812 battlefields involved in the struggle for the Old Northwest which are preserved and open for public enjoyment, including the River Raisin battlefield in the National Park System would not expand, enhance, or duplicate resource protection or visitor use opportunities found in other comparably

¹National Park Service, “Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States,” American Battlefield Protection Program. 2007, Washington, D.C. “Class A” battlefields are sites of a military or naval actions with a vital objective or result that shaped the strategy, direction, outcome, or perception of the war. “Class B” battlefields are sites of a military or naval action with a significant objective or result that shaped the strategy, direction, or outcome of a campaign or other operation.

managed areas. Therefore, the Special Resource Study team concluded that the River Raisin Battlefield would be a suitable addition to the National Park System.

Feasibility

In considering the **feasibility** of the River Raisin Battlefield as a new unit of the national park system, the Special Resource Study team considered the following: an area must be (1) of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment (taking into account current and potential impacts from sources beyond proposed park boundaries), and (2) capable of efficient administration by the Service at a reasonable cost. (*NPS Management Policies 2006*, Section 1.3.3)

Factors considered in assessing feasibility include: condition of resources; public enjoyment potential and support; economic/socioeconomic impacts of designation as a unit of the national park system; ownership and use of the study area and surrounding lands; and costs associated with acquisition, development, restoration, and operation. The last two of the feasibility factors are dependent on boundary configuration and are considered in that part of this document; the first three are considered below.

Feasibility Factor #1—Condition of Resources. Both the core of the battlefield and outlying areas retain the ability to tell the story of the River Raisin Battles. None of the structures from January 1813 exist today at the core of the battlefield, largely because Frenchtown homes were burnt down during the atrocities following the second battle of the River Raisin. In this sense, rather than detracting from the integrity of the site, the absence of structures contributes to the historic scene. The overall impression of the site is that key features of the terrain appear similar to that of 1813.

Feasibility Factor #2—Public Enjoyment Potential and Support. The Monroe County Historical Society and Commission jointly operate a visitor center on a small section of the battlefield. This center is open seven days a week during the summer and weekends-only the remainder of the year. Despite these limited hours, the management staff estimates that about 5000 people annually visit the inside of the center. While this figure does not include visitors to the grounds most of the year, popular reenactment and demonstration activities every January attract about 500 to the battlefield. The city recently hosted an event related to commemorating the River Raisin Battles that attracted 10,000 visitors. The

local school system has also developed an innovative system for providing “virtual field trips” to educate children about the battles. Public scoping meetings in October of 2008 attracted roughly 200 attendees who enthusiastically spoke of these efforts as well as other activities the city, county, and local non-profit groups have engaged in to encourage preservation and interpretation of this period in history.

In public meetings and written comments, desires for both reconstructions of Frenchtown homes and for reenactments on the battlefield were expressed. The National Park Service management policies allow reconstructions only in rare, limited circumstances unlikely to be met at the River Raisin Battlefield and prohibit reenactments for reasons described in Appendix C, which contains copies of relevant sections of the *National Park Service Management Policies 2006*. The National Park Service successfully interprets the significance of many historic sites where historic structures are missing and commemorates many battles without reenactments, therefore the policy restrictions on these items will not pose a barrier to National Park Service’s ability to tell the story of the River Raisin Battles. However, the Special Resource Study team noted that including the battlefield in the National Park System might disappoint members of the public for whom reconstruction and reenactments are critically important to their personal enjoyment of the battlefield.

Feasibility Factor #3—Economic/socioeconomic Impacts of Designation as a Unit of the National Park System. Monroe could expect both economic costs and benefits of the River Raisin Battlefield being designated as a unit of the National Park System. Designating the battlefield as a unit of the national park system means that potential for property tax revenue federally-owned property would be lost over the long term. While local governments are eligible for federal payments in lieu of taxes to help offset losses in property taxes due to non-taxable federal property within their boundaries, historically these payments have not kept pace with lost potential property tax revenue. It is reasonable to expect, however, that there would also be economic benefits of restaurant and other retail spending in the area as battlefield visitation would be expected to increase with designation. A recent study of National Park Visitor Spending and Payroll Impacts reported on the value added to communities in terms of personal income, profits and rents, and indirect business taxes, from the presence of units of the National Park System in the community (Stynes, 2008). An analysis of park units that are comparable to the River Raisin Battlefield

in terms of community demographics and interpretive focus and which may appeal to a similar visitor base showed that the a River Raisin National Battlefield might be expected to enjoy between 20,000 and 100,000 visitors a year and that the value added annually to Monroe might range between one and two million dollars. Another recent study funded by the Civil War Preservation Trust, looked at the economic impacts to communities of preserving Civil War battlefields. This study concluded that “on average 956 tourist will support one full-time or full-time equivalent local job independent of the battlefield.” Combining this statistic with an estimate of visitation between 20,000 and 100,000 a year indicates that between 21 and 105 local jobs might be created as a result of battlefield designation. (Davidson Peterson Associates, 2006) While this value added needs to be considered in light of losses to property tax revenues, on balance, it is expected that the economic impacts to the community would be positive.

Based on these three criteria, the Special Resource Study team concluded that the River Raisin Battlefield would be a feasible addition to the National Park System. However, the question of what lands would be included in the battlefield still needs to be considered. This is the subject of the next section of this document.

Boundary Assessment: Applying the Second Set of Criteria

Significance

In the Special Resource Study process, there are several points at which the boundary of a potential park is considered. This boundary assessment builds from these points in the study process to develop criteria for determining the appropriate boundary for the River Raisin National Battlefield Park. The first point is related to the **significance** of the area—*It is critical that the park’s boundary include enough resource integrity to enable their preservation for the benefit of future generations.* “Integrity” in this sense means the ability of a property to convey its significance. There are places where an historic event clearly significant in our nation’s history occurred, but where all remnants of that event have been erased over the years by subsequent development, a natural disaster, or some other means. The sites of these types of historic events are typically not appropriate additions to the National Park Service because there is nothing left to preserve and interpret. Instead, the story is told through memorials and

commemorative plaques as well literature and other media. More often, locations where significant historic events occurred have mixed integrity—some resources remain, but not all. In these cases, we ask ourselves whether or not the site retains sufficient integrity to ensure meaningful preservation and interpretation. If so, then the portion of the site which retains adequate integrity is an appropriate area to begin considering a tentative park boundary.

There are seven aspects of integrity for historic properties that are considered when properties are nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. To retain historic integrity, a property will always possess several, and usually most, of these aspects:

- Location – the place where the event occurred
- Design – elements that combine to create the form and style of a property
- Setting – the physical environment of a historic property
- Materials – physical elements that form a historic property
- Workmanship – physical evidence of the crafts of a culture or people
- Feeling – a property’s expression of the sense of the period
- Association – direct link between a historic event and the property

At the River Raisin Battlefield, the extant cultural resources offer opportunities for preservation and interpretation in at least four places: at the core of the battlefield where most of the fighting occurred on French “ribbon farms” (north of the River to Telb Street, with the railroad corridor on the west and Detroit Street on the east as well as a small amount of land south of the river to retain the historic setting for this battle); along the American advance and retreat route (a 200 meter wide corridor centered on Kentucky Avenue from the River south to Cherry Street); and at two discontinuous nodes, one where retreating troops were engaged at Otter Creek (about 5 miles south of the River along historic Hulls Road) and another where the corduroy road the British used both to advance and to return with prisoners of war is still evident (about 10 miles north of the core of the battlefield, near Brownstown). Within this non-contiguous boundary, archival and archeological records define the course of the battles through the location of natural features such as the River

Raisin and Mason Run, cultural features such as the historic road network (Hull's Road) and archeological features that both locate and demonstrate the survival of key strategic locations (the puncheon fence, shot dispersal) that played such a pivotal role in the story of Frenchtown and the battles of the River Raisin.

The Battlefield retains the River Raisin channel and course of Mason Run that were integral to the progression of the battle, key components of the cultural landscape from 1813. Although covered by two feet of fill due to subsequent development, the battleground terrain is level today, as it was in 1813, extending from River Raisin northward across Mason Run. (Outlying locations relating to the approaches and retreats from both battles occur through urban and residential neighborhoods, but the action vectors are still in place along Kentucky Avenue and critical points further south such as creek crossings that provide undeveloped areas at key nodes.) Contemporary accounts reveal that the area extending from the Frenchtown houses and puncheon fence was predominantly open for over a mile, supporting farm fields and orchards. The viewshed from the river at the core of battlefield today predominantly consists of an open level expanse extending northward across Mason Run to a wood line about one mile in the distance. Intrusions are limited to a standing former industrial building owned by the Monroe County Historical Society along the north bank of the River Raisin, and residential properties east from the site. The overall sense of the site is that the terrain appears similar to that of 1813.

If a boundary were drawn to reflect only the significance considerations described here, it would include the area currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but would be significantly larger than the listed area.

Operational Considerations

There are also **operational considerations** that need to be taken into account in establishing a park's boundary. *It is critical that a park boundary be (1) of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment, and (2) capable of efficient administration by the Service at a reasonable cost.* This criterion that relates to the second two feasibility factors noted above ownership and use of the study area and surrounding lands; and costs associated with acquisition, development, restoration, and operation.

(1) Sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment. Feasible management requires that the National Park Service be able to manage land in the boundary in such a way as will protect the park's resources and provide for visitor enjoyment. This requirement does not mandate federal land ownership or the method of protection or acquisition. In the case of the River Raisin National Battlefield Park, the enabling legislation for the River Raisin National Battlefield Park limits the National Park Service to accepting donated land, so land transfers to the National Park Service would be without compensation (See Appendix B). Land ownership and use in areas related to River Raisin battles is a mix of private and public, commercial, residential, parkland and lands managed for historic preservation. Both the City of Monroe and the Monroe County Historical Society own portions of these lands and currently manage them as parklands or for historic preservation. The remainder of the lands in areas related to the River Raisin battles is owned by private individuals and businesses, or is publically-owned, but used for purposes unrelated to historic preservation or parkland.

It seems reasonable to expect that the portions of the land that are currently owned by the City of Monroe and the Monroe County Historical Society and managed as parklands or for historic preservation could readily be adapted for inclusion in the National Battlefield. In addition to these lands, the National Park Service proposes to include in the boundary roughly 30 privately owned parcels that are scattered within the core of the battlefield (See Figure 2: Proposed National Battlefield Park Boundary, detail). While it is important to note that inclusion of any of these lands within the final proposed boundary would not change their ownership status or the property rights of the current owners, it is also important that the National Park Service be able to ensure that a sufficient amount of land within the boundary is managed with the goal of protecting resources and providing for visitor enjoyment. There is great latitude on structuring an agreement or transfer for the inclusion of lands in the park's boundary and any future use of these lands would require negotiations between either the National Park Service or its partners with the individual landowner. While feasible management of the battlefield does not hinge on the willingness of these private landowners to enter into negotiations and arrive at an agreement whereby these lands could be managed by the National Park Service or its partners, this management ability would enhance future plans to protect resources and provide for enjoyment. Note that the feasibility of including the

location of the corduroy road near Brownstown in the park boundary would be contingent on the ability of public owners of the waterway under which the corduroy road remnants are submerged (Silver Creek) and the surrounding road right of way to reach an agreement that would both protect those remnants and offer visitors to ability to see them. The proposed park boundary presented in this document assumes that such an agreement could be reached.

(2) *Costs associated with acquisition, development, restoration, and operation.* Because the enabling legislation for the River Raisin National Battlefield Park limits the National Park Service to accepting donated land and does not allow for purchase of land, the issue of acquisition costs for land is not relevant in this case. However, the costs for development, restoration and operation need to be considered when establishing the boundary. For most of the 20th century, the lands within the core area of the battlefield were home to a large industrial operation. When that operation closed, Monroe City and County and the Port of Monroe worked to reclaim the battlefield. Surprisingly,

archeological deposits underneath the large industrial buildings were found to be largely intact after the buildings were removed. While most of the homes in Frenchtown—the homes on ribbon farms—were burnt after the battles, limited archeological testing beneath the fill has revealed several features related to the historic built environment. Other artifacts related to the battle are still intact underground, providing a better understanding of historic events. Given this tremendous head start in restoration provided by Monroe City and County, additional costs that the National Park Service would incur in restoring the area at the core of the battlefield are reasonable. Costs to develop and operate the River Raisin National Battlefield if it were bounded to include only the core area, plus the two small discontinuous nodes described above and shown in figure 1, would be similar to other parks of this size in the National Park System. For example, there would be costs to develop the site for visitor enjoyment (through trails, interpretive exhibits, a visitor center, etc.) and to staff the site, but they would not be prohibitive. Given the level of public engagement in this study, it seems likely that some necessary development could be financially supported at

least in part through local partnerships with private organizations and that there would be a volunteer base to support operations.

Figure 1: Proposed National Battlefield Park Map



Boundary Proposal

At this time, the National Park Service does not recommend inclusion of the majority of the lands related to the battles of the River Raisin that are either privately owned or publically-owned, but used for purposes unrelated to historic preservation or parkland. While these areas might eventually comprise appropriate additions to the boundary, the National Park Service does not recommend acquisition at this point unless:

- A. Private owners of land related to the battles of the River Raisin either described here as contributing to the significance and contiguous to lands that comprise the Proposed National Battlefield Park express an interest in either donating to the National Park Service or allowing the National Park Service to manage their lands through

Figure 2: Proposed National Battlefield Park Map (detail)



another type of agreement (e.g., an easement).

- B. Public owners of land related to the battles of the River Raisin, again either described here as contributing to the significance of the battlefield or later demonstrated to contribute to this significance, not managed for historic preservation or parkland contiguous to lands that comprise the

Proposed National Battlefield Park expresses an interest in changing the use designation for the land to accommodate historic preservation and public use as parkland.

Additional Considerations for the Future

It may be necessary to add more land to the River Raisin National Battlefield Park boundary after the park is

initially established within the boundary described above. Boundary adjustments are considered as part of the General Management Planning process, which will begin after the park is established to provide fundamental direction for park management. The National Park Service's Management Policies explain the conditions under which lands are recommended for addition to the park's boundary. Those conditions are:

1. The lands must be necessary in order to protect significant resources and values or to enhance opportunities for public enjoyment related to park purposes; or
2. The lands must be necessary to address operational and management issues; or
3. The lands must be necessary to otherwise protect resources that are critical to fulfilling park purposes.

It is also important that lands recommended for addition be feasible to administer given their size, configuration, costs and other factors and that other alternatives for management and resource protection are not adequate. (*NPS Management Policies 2006*, Section 3.5)

To illustrate how these boundary addition criteria will be applied, consider that, in conducting analysis in support of the General Management Plan, it could become apparent that it is not possible to accommodate operational needs like a maintenance facility or administrative offices within the established boundary without disturbing resource integrity. This is a situation under which the plan could recommend a boundary addition under the second criterion—to address operational and management issues.

Another example of how the boundary addition criteria could be applied was considered as part of the Special

Resource Study process. The study team discussed the need for additional research to definitively identify historic locations of tribal settlements in the area. Given the role of tribal members in the battles of the River Raisin, if the exact locations of these settlements can be identified, they might be considered for addition to the boundary. Since the purpose of adding tribal settlement locations to the park would be to protect resources critical to the park's purpose—that is, to comprehensively tell the story of the River Raisin Battles—the addition of these lands could be recommended under the third criterion. It is important to note that lands are only recommended for addition if other alternatives for management and resource protection are not adequate. In many cases, rather than seeking to include all related properties in the battlefield's boundary, the National Park Service would offer support and technical assistance to other entities (local government, non-profit organizations, etc) which manage historic properties related to the River Raisin Battles.

Recommendations and Conclusions

The National Park Service's recommended boundary for River Raisin National Battlefield is depicted in the maps in this assessment (Figures 1 and 2). Lands that contain significant resources and that are contiguous to land currently managed for historic preservation or parkland could also be considered appropriate for inclusion in the boundary under the conditions noted in this document. In all cases, in order to establish the initial boundary for the River Raisin National Battlefield, the National Park Service will only acquire land offered willingly by donation.

Appendix A: Scoping Newsletter from the SRS

Special Resource Study
Newsletter 1
September 2008

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



River Raisin Battlefield

RIVER RAISIN BATTLEFIELD SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY LAUNCHED



This painting by Ken Riley entitled "Remember the River Raisin!" depicts a scene from the October 1813 Battle of the Thames, a decisive victory for the Americans in which Shawnee Chief Tecumseh gave his life and Americans re-established control over the Northwest frontier. Kentucky troops were encouraged to fight this battle as revenge for an earlier massacre of Kentucky militia at the River Raisin.

Nearly 200 years ago, more than 330 Americans, British, Canadians, and Indians gave their lives in a fight over land in a town then known as Frenchtown (today Monroe) along the River Raisin in Michigan. In this fight, which played out the over four days between January 18th and 22nd 1813, the American Army suffered one of the worst defeats of the War of 1812. After the battles had ended, some of the Indian participants who were British allies killed wounded Americans, mostly members of the Kentucky volunteer militia, who had been taken prisoner. This killing, coupled with the failure of the British commanders to ensure the safety of prisoners of war, so enraged Americans that the phrase "Remember the River Raisin" became a rallying cry for future engagements in the war. The event still stands as the bloodiest conflict ever fought on Michigan soil.

The story of the Battles of the River Raisin prompted Michigan Congressman John Dingell and Senator Carl Levin to sponsor legislation requiring the National Park Service to study the battlefield for possible inclusion in the National Park System. With the help of co-sponsors Senators Debbie Stabenow, also of Michigan, and Jim Bunning of Kentucky, this legislation was signed into law on December 20, 2006 as Public Law 109-429. In response, the NPS formed a River Raisin Special Resource Study Team tasked with conducting a Special Resource Study of the battlefield. The NPS process for conducting these studies includes five steps:

- First, the national significance of the battlefield is assessed. The criteria used to determine whether or not a property is nationally significant enough for inclusion in the National Park System are the same as National Historic Landmark (NHL) criteria. While a portion of the River Raisin Battlefield was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982, until now it had not been evaluated for a higher level of recognition as an NHL. An NHL nomination is now being developed for the battlefield by a team headed by Heidelberg College's Center for Historic and Military Archeology under contract to the Monroe County Historical Society. The results of this NHL nominating process will be used to determine national significance for the Special Resource Study. (See the article on page 3 on the NHL nomination).



Region

River Raisin Battlefield

United States Department of the Interior / National Park Service
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- Second, the suitability of the battlefield for inclusion in the National Park System is assessed. The suitability assessment will involve comparing the battlefield to other areas already included in the National Park System or comparably protected by others (by park systems of other federal agencies, states, and localities or privately). If the study team finds that preserving and interpreting the River Raisin battlefield would not duplicate comparable efforts elsewhere, then it will be found suitable for inclusion in the National Park System.
- Third, the feasibility of the battlefield for inclusion in the National Park System is assessed. According to the Management Policies that govern the National Park Service, an area must be “(1) of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment, taking into account current and potential impacts from sources beyond proposed park boundaries, and (2) capable of efficient administration by the Service at a reasonable cost.”
- Fourth, the study team will determine whether or not there is a need for direct management by the National Park Service. Unless direct NPS management of the battlefield is identified as the clearly superior management alternative, the Service will recommend that another organization (for example, state, local or private entities or another federal agency) assume a lead management role.
- Lastly, a range of alternative ways to preserve and interpret the battlefield will be developed, presented to the public for feedback, and evaluated in terms of costs, benefits, and environmental impacts in order to determine how to most efficiently and effectively protect and interpret significant resources.

Public involvement is a critical part of this study process. The purpose of this newsletter is to invite you to participate by introducing you to the study process and encouraging your feedback about key issues we should consider as we proceed. See page 3 of this newsletter for information about how to be involved in this study.

RELATED EFFORTS

Cleaning up the Battlefield Site

The paper-making industry developed much of the River Raisin battlefield in the early 1900s and operated on the site until 1995, when the Jefferson Smurfit company closed down its operations in Monroe. For more than 10 years, the industrial buildings sat empty and deteriorating while decisions were made about how to clean up environmental contamination at the site and what the best use was for the land they occupied. Eventually, with the help of grants and loans from the Clean Michigan Initiative and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, plans were made to remove the buildings and clean up the site.

With knowledge from the historical record and archeological investigations that River Raisin battles were fought on this land, the decision was made to reclaim this history by returning the site as much as possible to its 1813 appearance. Archeologists were hoping that, once the buildings were taken down, the earth at the site would reveal artifacts telling more of the story of battle, but they were skeptical. It seemed that constructing such large industrial buildings would have involved extensive excavation, removing all of the dirt and the artifacts it contained. But, remarkably, this was not the case. Now that these buildings have been demolished, archeology funded by the NPS American Battlefield Protection Program is revealing information about the locations of homes in Frenchtown and how the battles were fought.



The study team visiting the battlefield in April - NPS staff (Ruth Heikkinen, Cale Phillips, Vergil Noble, Sue Judis, Kristen McMasters, Paul Hawke, and Michael Evans) and NPS partners on the study team (Jeffrey Green, Michael Pratt, Bill Rutter, and Ted Ligibel).

Preparing a National Historic Landmark Nomination

This past spring, the Monroe County Historical Society contracted with the Heidelberg College's Center for Historic and Military Archeology (CHMA) to prepare a NHL nomination for the battlefield. A team of archeologists, historians and planners from CHMA, Eastern Michigan University and the City of Monroe is undertaking this work now. Dr. G. Michael Pratt, director of the CHMA effort and SRS team member, anticipates completion of the NHL nomination by this fall. The Landmarks Committee of the National Park System Advisory Board conducts initial review of NHL nominations. Nominations recommended for listing then proceed through the Advisory Board and ultimately to the Secretary of Interior for final designation.

Designation as an NHL would place the battlefield among the places that possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. While there are roughly 80,000 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, only about 2,400 of these are NHLs. By confirming the national significance of the battlefield, designation as an NHL would ensure it meets the first criterion for inclusion in the National Park System.

Work of the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program

The National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) promotes the preservation of significant historic battlefields associated with wars on American soil. The goals of the program are 1) to protect battlefields and sites associated with armed conflicts that influenced the course of our history, 2) to encourage and assist all Americans in planning for the preservation, management, and interpretation of these sites, and 3) to raise awareness of the importance of preserving battlefields and related sites for future generations. The ABPP focuses primarily on land use, cultural resource and site management planning, and public education. Research on the River Raisin Battlefield is currently benefitting from the third in a series of grants from the ABPP. With this grant, a team headed by Heidelberg College and involving Eastern Michigan University's Historic Preservation Program is documenting areas of the battlefield currently outside the defined National Register boundary, creating detailed maps, assessing the potential of archeological resources, and identifying and evaluating threats to these resources.

The ABPP also recently completed a study on War of 1812 Battlefields. In 1996, Congress, concerned that the historical integrity of many Revolutionary War sites and War of 1812 sites were at risk, enacted legislation calling for a study of historic sites associated with the two early-American wars. With funding that became available in 1999, the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program's identified and surveyed, on a reconnaissance level, almost 1700 sites, including of course, the River Raisin Battlefield. This study is available through the ABPP website at <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/abpp/Rev1812Study.htm>

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

There are three ways to provide feedback at this early stage:

- 1 Send comments through our study website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/>. Once at this site, click on the "plans/docs" tab and then select "Special Resource Study" for the plan type and scroll down to "River Raisin Battlefield."
- 2 Send in the enclosed, postage-paid comment form
- 3 Attend a public meeting to learn more about the study and offer comments.

Meetings will be held Tuesday, October 28 and Wednesday, October 29. Both meetings will be from 6-8 PM at Monroe County Community College Main Campus, 1555 South Raisinville Road in Monroe. Meet in the La-Z-Boy Center.

Once we develop a range of management alternatives, we will issue a second newsletter asking for your specific feedback on them. In the meantime, please check our website for project updates. Questions about this study can be addressed to: Ruth Heikkinen, Project Manager, River Raisin Special Resource Study, National Park Service Midwest Regional Office, 601 Riverfront Drive, Omaha, NE 68102. 402-661-1846. Ruth_Heikkinen@nps.gov

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PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2008, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. and WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2008, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Monroe County Community College Main Campus, La-Z-Boy Center
 1555 South Raisinville Road, Monroe, Michigan

STUDY SCHEDULE

Time Frame	Planning Activity	Public Involvement
2008	Begin the Study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather the team members to visit site, become familiar with related work affecting it, and make preliminary significance, suitability, and feasibility determinations As a team and with the public, discuss issues and opportunities for the battlefield 	Attend a public meeting and let us know what you think. You can also send a note through our website or use the response form included with this newsletter
2009	Develop Alternatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze public comments and use the feedback they offer to craft potential management alternatives 	Attend a public meeting to provide comments on alternatives. You will also receive a newsletter describing the alternatives and including a comment form
2010 to early 2011	Analyze Alternatives and Produce Draft Study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using feedback from the public on the alternatives, analyze their benefits, costs, and impacts and identify the most efficient and effective alternative Produce a draft of the full study, including an Environmental Impact Statement 	Provide comments on the draft study
Summer 2011	Finalize the study and transmit to Congress	

Appendix B: Enabling Legislation

H.R.146

Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Engrossed Amendment as Agreed to by Senate)

SEC. 7003. RIVER RAISIN NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK.

(a) Establishment –

- (1) IN GENERAL – If Monroe County or Wayne County, Michigan, or other willing landowners in either County offer to donate to the United States land relating to the Battles of the River Raisin on January 18 and 22, 1813, or the aftermath of the battles, the Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the 'Secretary') shall accept the donated land.
- (2) DESIGNATION OF PARK – On the acquisition of land under paragraph (1) that is of sufficient acreage to permit efficient administration, the Secretary shall designate the acquired land as a unit of the National Park System, to be known as the 'River Raisin National Battlefield Park' (referred to in this section as the 'Park').
- (3) LEGAL DESCRIPTION–
 - (A) IN GENERAL- The Secretary shall prepare a legal description of the land and interests in land designated as the Park by paragraph (2).
 - (B) AVAILABILITY OF MAP AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION- A map with the legal description shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.

(b) Administration –

- (1) IN GENERAL – The Secretary shall manage the Park for the purpose of preserving and interpreting the Battles of the River Raisin in accordance with the National Park Service Organic Act (16 U.S.C. 1 et seq.) and the Act of August 21, 1935 (16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.).
- (2) GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN –
 - (A) IN GENERAL – Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available, the Secretary shall complete a general management plan for the Park that, among other things, defines the role and responsibility of the Secretary with regard to the interpretation and the preservation of the site.
 - (B) CONSULTATION – The Secretary shall consult with and solicit advice and recommendations from State, county, local, and civic organizations and leaders, and other interested parties in the preparation of the management plan.
 - (C) INCLUSIONS – The plan shall include—
 - (i) consideration of opportunities for involvement by and support for the Park by State, county, and local governmental entities and nonprofit organizations and other interested parties; and
 - (ii) steps for the preservation of the resources of the site and the costs associated with these efforts.
 - (D) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS – On the completion of the general management plan, the Secretary shall submit a copy of the plan to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.
- (3) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS – The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements with State, county, local, and civic organizations to carry out this section.

(c) Report – Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House a report describing the progress made with respect to acquiring real property under this section and designating the River Raisin National Battlefield Park.

(d) Authorization of Appropriations – There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.

Appendix C: National Park Service Management Policies, 2006, Selected Sections

Congress declared in the National Park System General Authorities Act of 1970 that areas comprising the national park system are cumulative expressions of a single national heritage. Potential additions to the national park system should therefore contribute in their own special way to a system that fully represents the broad spectrum of natural and cultural resources that characterize our nation. The National Park Service is responsible for conducting professional studies of potential additions to the national park system when specifically authorized by an act of Congress, and for making recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior, the President, and Congress. Several laws outline criteria for units of the national park system and for additions to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System and the National Trails System.

To receive a favorable recommendation from the Service, a proposed addition to the national park system must (1) possess nationally significant natural or cultural resources, (2) be a suitable addition to the system, (3) be a feasible addition to the system, and (4) require direct NPS management instead of protection by other public agencies or the private sector. These criteria are designed to ensure that the national park system includes only the most outstanding examples of the nation's natural and cultural resources. These criteria also recognize that there are other management alternatives for preserving the nation's outstanding resources.

1.3.1 National Significance

NPS professionals, in consultation with subject-matter experts, scholars, and scientists, will determine whether a resource is nationally significant. An area will be considered nationally significant if it meets all of the following criteria:

It is an outstanding example of a particular type of resource.

It possesses exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the natural or cultural themes of our nation's heritage.

It offers superlative opportunities for public enjoyment or for scientific study.

It retains a high degree of integrity as a true, accurate, and relatively unspoiled example of a resource.

National significance for cultural resources will be evaluated by applying the National Historic Landmarks criteria contained in 36 CFR Part 65 (*Code of Federal Regulations*).

1.3.2 Suitability

An area is considered suitable for addition to the national park system if it represents a natural or cultural resource type that is not already adequately represented in the national park system, or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by other federal agencies; tribal, state, or local governments; or the private sector.

Adequacy of representation is determined on a case-by-case basis by comparing the potential addition to other comparably managed areas representing the same resource type, while considering differences or similarities in the character, quality, quantity, or combination of resource values. The comparative analysis also addresses rarity of the resources, interpretive and educational potential, and similar resources already protected in the national park system or in other public or private ownership. The comparison results in a determination of whether the proposed new area would expand, enhance, or duplicate resource protection or visitor use opportunities found in other comparably managed areas.

1.3.3 Feasibility

To be feasible as a new unit of the national park system, an area must be (1) of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure sustainable resource protection and visitor enjoyment (taking into account current and potential impacts from sources beyond proposed park boundaries), and (2) capable of efficient administration by the Service at a reasonable cost.

In evaluating feasibility, the Service considers a variety of factors for a study area, such as the following:

size
boundary configurations

current and potential uses of the study area and surrounding lands
landownership patterns
public enjoyment potential
costs associated with acquisition, development, restoration, and operation
access
current and potential threats to the resources
existing degradation of resources
staffing requirements
local planning and zoning
the level of local and general public support (including landowners)
the economic/socioeconomic impacts of designation as a unit of the national park system

The feasibility evaluation also considers the ability of the National Park Service to undertake new management responsibilities in light of current and projected availability of funding and personnel.

An overall evaluation of feasibility will be made after taking into account all of the above factors. However, evaluations may sometimes identify concerns or conditions, rather than simply reach a yes or no conclusion. For example, some new areas may be feasible additions to the national park system only if landowners are willing to sell, or the boundary encompasses specific areas necessary for visitor access, or state or local governments will provide appropriate assurances that adjacent land uses will remain compatible with the study area's resources and values.

1.3.4 Direct NPS Management

There are many excellent examples of the successful management of important natural and cultural resources by other public agencies, private conservation organizations, and individuals. The National Park Service applauds these accomplishments and actively encourages the expansion of conservation activities by state, local, and private entities and by other federal agencies. Unless direct NPS management of a studied area is identified as the clearly superior alternative, the Service will recommend that one or more of these other entities assume a lead management role, and that the area not receive national park system status.

Studies will evaluate an appropriate range of management alternatives and will identify which alternative or combination of alternatives would, in the professional judgment of the Director, be most effective and efficient in protecting significant resources and providing opportunities for appropriate public enjoyment. Alternatives for NPS management will not be developed for study areas that fail to meet any one of the four criteria for inclusion listed in section 1.3.

In cases where a study area's resources meet criteria for national significance but do not meet other criteria for inclusion in the national park system, the Service may instead recommend an alternative status, such as "affiliated area." To be eligible for affiliated area status, the area's resources must (1) meet the same standards for significance and suitability that apply to units of the national park system; (2) require some special recognition or technical assistance beyond what is available through existing NPS programs; (3) be managed in accordance with the policies and standards that apply to units of the national park system; and (4) be assured of sustained resource protection, as documented in a formal agreement between the Service and the nonfederal management entity. Designation as a "heritage area" is another option that may be recommended. Heritage areas have a nationally important, distinctive assemblage of resources that is best managed for conservation, recreation, education, and continued use through partnerships among public and private entities at the local or regional level. Either of these two alternatives (and others as well) would recognize an area's importance to the nation without requiring or implying management by the National Park Service.

5.3.5.2.4 Reconstruction of Obliterated Landscapes

No matter how well conceived or executed, reconstructions are contemporary interpretations of the past rather than authentic survivals from it. The National Park Service will not reconstruct an obliterated cultural landscape unless

there is no alternative that would accomplish the park's interpretive mission;
sufficient data exist to enable its accurate reconstruction, based on the duplication of historic features substantiated by
documentary or physical evidence, rather than on conjectural designs or features from other landscapes;

reconstruction will occur in the original location;
the disturbance or loss of significant archeological resources is minimized and mitigated by data recovery; and
reconstruction is approved by the Director.
A landscape will not be reconstructed to appear damaged or ruined. General representations of typical landscapes will not be attempted.

5.3.5.4 Reconstruction of Missing Structures

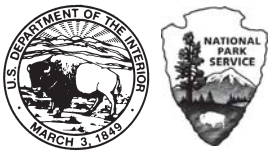
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there is no alternative that would accomplish the park's interpretive mission;
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documentary or physical evidence rather than on conjectural designs or features from other structures;
reconstruction will occur in the original location;
the disturbance or loss of significant archeological resources is minimized and mitigated by data recovery; and
reconstruction is approved by the Director.

A structure will not be reconstructed to appear damaged or ruined. Generalized representations of typical structures will not be attempted.

7.5.9 Reenactments

Battle reenactments and demonstrations of battle tactics that involve exchanges of fire between opposing lines, the taking of casualties, hand-to-hand combat, or any other form of simulated warfare are prohibited in all parks. Even the best-researched and most well-intentioned representation of combat cannot replicate the tragic complexity of real warfare. Respect for the memory of those whose lives were lost at these sites and whose unrecovered remains are often still interred in these grounds precludes the staging of inherently artificial battles at these memorial sites. Battle reenactments create an atmosphere that is inconsistent with the memorial qualities of the battlefields and other military sites placed in the Service's trust. The safety risks to participants and visitors, and the inevitable damage to the physical resource that occurs during such events are also unacceptably high when seen in light of the NPS mandate to preserve and protect park resources and values.



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has the responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
River Raisin National Battlefield / Michigan



River Raisin National Battlefield Park

Study and Boundary Assessment