



FORT DONELSON NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Tennessee's Civil War National Parks

9

REPORT SUMMARY

By the end of 1861, it was apparent to both Union and Confederate forces that control of the South's river systems—main arteries into the Confederacy that were relied on heavily for mass transportation and shipping—was necessary for victory. To attain control of the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers, Union forces were intent on gaining control of the Confederate “trilogy of forts” (Fort Henry, Fort

Heiman, and Fort Donelson) that had been built to ensure that these rivers would remain secure from Union control.

After capturing Fort Henry and Fort Heiman on February 6, 1862, Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant advanced his Union Army cross-country 12 miles east to Fort Donelson, where on February 13, Federal troops attacked the Confederates' outer defenses. On February 14, Confederate battery

The Battle of Fort Donelson was the Union's first major victory. It forced the South to give up southern Kentucky and much of Middle and West Tennessee, and it allowed Northern forces to advance along the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers.



cannons disabled the Union flotilla of four ironclad and two timberclad gunboats during fighting on the Cumberland River. Despite the heavy damage they inflicted on the Federal fleet, Confederate forces were unable to break through Grant's lines, and on February 16, the fort's remaining 12,000-man garrison surrendered unconditionally.

The Battle of Fort Donelson was a major victory for Grant and a catastrophe for the South. It was the Union's first major victory, it forced the South to give up southern Kentucky and much of Middle and West Tennessee, and it allowed Northern forces to advance along the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers.

Established first as Fort Donelson National Military Park in 1928, the park was redesignated a national battlefield in 1985. The battlefield protects about 559 acres surrounding the

fort near Dover, Tennessee, and includes the earthen fort itself, upper and lower batteries, the Dover Hotel (site of Confederate surrender), and two miles of outer earthworks (earthen fortifications). The park is also home to the 15-acre Fort Donelson National Cemetery, final resting place for 670 Union soldiers from the Civil War and 806 others who served in the military, as well as some spouses and family members. In 2006, 164 acres at nearby Fort Heiman (Kentucky) were added to Fort Donelson National Battlefield; park staff are working to integrate Fort Heiman into interpretation at the battlefield.

In addition to its historic structures, Fort Donelson protects a topographically diverse landscape replete with plants and wildlife. While oaks and other hardwood trees cover most of the park, steep slopes, rock outcrop-

pings, ravines, and intermittent streams may be seen along 5.7 miles of hiking trails.

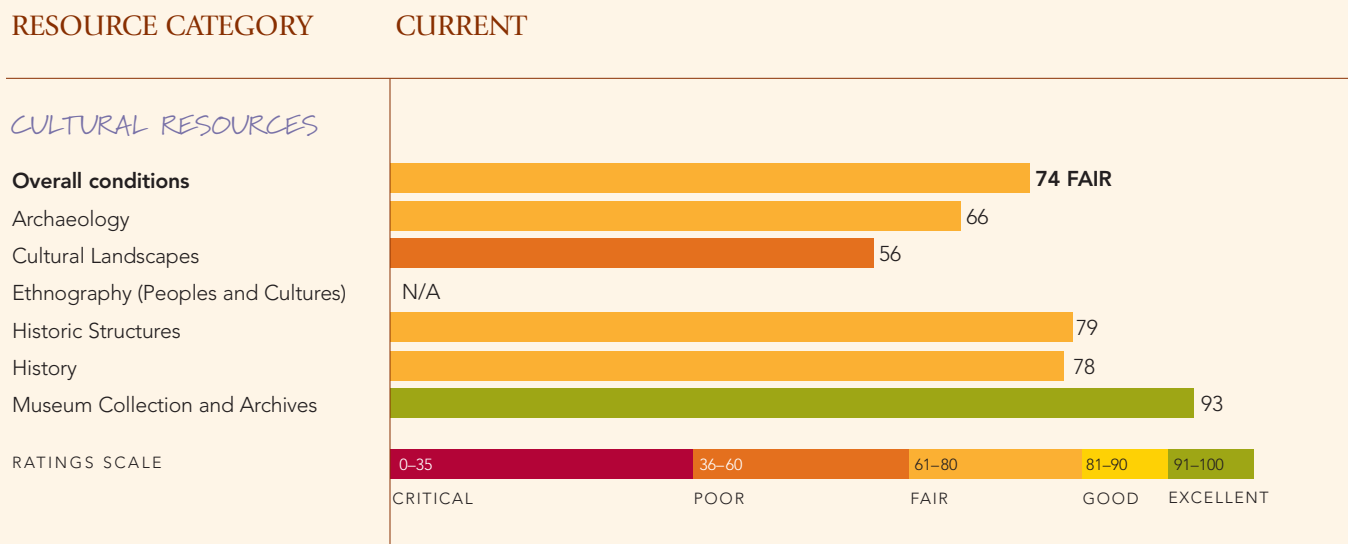
Threats to the cultural and natural resources at Fort Donelson are both natural and human-caused. According to NPCA's assessment, the spread of non-native plants is the most immediate threat to ecological systems in the park. Many non-natives, such as privet and Japanese honeysuckle, were planted around original homesteads and have become aggressive invaders that displace native communities. Erosion threatens the historic earthworks, which make up most of the battlefield at Fort Donelson. And adjacent land development, primarily residential, detracts from the 19th-century atmosphere the park strives to preserve for visitors.

RATINGS

Current overall conditions of the known **cultural resources** at Fort Donelson rated 74 out of a possible 100, indicating "fair" conditions. The scores for cultural resources are based on the results of indicator questions that reflect the National Park Service's own *Cultural Resource Management Guideline* and other policies related to cultural and historical resources.

Efforts in 2007 to reorganize the park's archives included rehabilitating a garage for reuse as an archival storage space. The space exceeds the necessary Park Service museum standards. Though the museum and archival collections in the park are well managed, other projects require attention. For example, vital reports that guide management of cultural resources remain unwritten at Fort Donelson due to budgetary shortfalls, and visitor center

Note: When interpreting the scores for resource conditions, recognize that critical information upon which the ratings are based is not always available. This limits data interpretation to some extent. For Fort Donelson, 100 percent of the cultural resources information was available and 47 percent of the natural resources information was available (insufficient for rating).



The findings in this report do not necessarily reflect past or current park management. Many factors that affect resource conditions are a result of both human and natural influences over long periods of time, in many cases before a park was established. The intent of the Center for State of the Parks is not to evaluate Park Service staff performance, but to document the present status of park resources and determine which actions can be taken to protect them into the future.



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Efforts are under way by the Civil War Preservation Trust to donate this 173-acre property to the Park Service.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- **New land acquired.** In 2006, 164 acres at Fort Heiman were added to Fort Donelson National Battlefield. As of 2008, the Civil War Preservation Trust has acquired approximately 350 acres of core battlefield property adjacent to the park. Efforts are under way for the trust to donate land to the Park Service.
- **Archives moved to new facility.** In 2007, all of Fort Donelson's archival materials were relocated to a refurbished maintenance building that features new, climate-controlled storage and a space-saving, movable cabinet system. The new facility exceeds Park Service standards for protection of priceless historic documents, photographs, and maps.
- **New wayside exhibits installed.** Fort Donelson, in cooperation with the Park Service's Harpers Ferry Center, recently researched, designed, and installed new wayside exhibits that focus on the groundbreaking river battle; the freedmen's camp for former slaves; involvement of African Americans after the battle; Confederate prisoners of war; and related military campaigns at Forts Henry and Heiman.

exhibits are outdated and need to be replaced.

The park has no ethnography program, though the site has strong historical ties to African Americans due to the role the fort played as a refuge for newly freed slaves. The park requested and received a small grant in 2002 from the Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program to produce a freestanding exhibit interpreting the "Freedman State" and camps that grew up around the fort area during the U.S. Army occupation from 1862 to 1865. This exhibit has expanded interpretation of the park's history beyond primary themes. Additional research and interpretation could further explore African-American ties to the fort.

This assessment did not rate the overall conditions of Fort Donelson's natural resources, because only 47 percent of the information required by the Center for State of the Parks assessment methodology was available. Based on the available information, the main threats to the park's natural resources are non-native plants, which are outcompeting native plant species for sunlight, water, nutrients, and space.

LAND USE HISTORY AND PARK ESTABLISHMENT

Before the Civil War, various groups of people lived on and used the resources of the land that is now part of Fort Donelson National Battlefield. The Shawnee tribe inhabited the Fort Donelson area prior to the arrival of the first Euro-American settlers roughly 200 years ago. At the time of the Civil War battle, the Fort Donelson area was only sparsely settled. The primary historical crops grown in the area were tobacco and hay. Farming continued on lands now within the park until the 1930s, and today the Park Service pays a contractor to mow and remove hay on 12 acres, to help maintain the historical landscape.

Built in 1861, Fort Donelson was named in honor of Daniel S. Donelson, the Tennessee attorney general and the senior military advisor

to the survey team at the fort. Confederate soldiers and enslaved African Americans built the 15-acre earthen fort in seven months.

In the Battle of Fort Donelson, the Union suffered nearly 5,000 casualties. Accurate numbers of Confederate troops defending Fort Donelson have been lost, but it is believed that there were nearly 21,000 troops at the time of the battle. More than 12,000 surrendered, approximately 1,500 were killed or wounded, and the remainder escaped. Following the defeat of the Confederates, the fort became a haven for slaves seeking safety within the Union lines.

The capture of Fort Donelson gave the Union forces their first major victory in the Civil War. Congress established Fort Donelson National Military Park in 1928 to commemorate the Union's capture of the fort as well as the history of the Confederates' stand. The War Department managed the park and the adjacent Fort Donelson National Cemetery until 1933, when the National Park Service assumed management of both.

In 1960, Congress added more property to the military park, including the Dover Hotel and the landing on the Cumberland River where supplies were transported and captured Confederates were shipped off to Northern prisoner-of-war camps. The Dover Hotel, or Surrender House, is the last original standing structure in which a Civil War surrender took place. In 1966, the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

On August 16, 1985, Congress redesignated Fort Donelson as a national battlefield and in 2004, Congress increased the park's authorized boundary to 2,000 acres. The park recently acquired 164 acres at Fort Heiman, and about 350 acres near the park currently held by the Civil War Preservation Trust and may be added to the park in the future. Currently, about 20 percent of the principal fighting ground associated with the Civil War battle at Fort Donelson is protected (primarily the Confederate earthworks).

FORT DONELSON NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD AT A GLANCE

- **Trilogy of forts:** Fort Henry, Fort Donelson, and Fort Heiman were built by Confederates to defend against Federal incursions on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers. Fort Donelson was built overlooking the Cumberland River, while Fort Henry was built 12 miles to the west, on low ground on the east bank of the Tennessee River. After Confederate Brigadier General Lloyd Tilghman realized that Fort Henry was indefensible, a site on a high bluff on the west bank of the Tennessee River in Kentucky (featuring a commanding view of the river) was chosen for construction of a new fort, Fort Heiman. The new fort was still under construction when it fell to the Union during the Battle of Fort Henry. With enabling legislation passed in 2006, Fort Heiman and 164 surrounding acres are now protected as part of Fort Donelson National Battlefield. Fort Henry was fully submerged in the 1940s with the damming of the Tennessee River to create Kentucky Lake. The land where the fort was located is currently protected as part of the Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area managed by the U.S. Forest Service.
- **African-American history:** Enslaved African Americans played a major role at Fort Donelson. Indeed, African Americans were some of the fort's primary builders. The Second Confiscation Act of July 1862 provided that any slave who passed into Union territory, which included refuge within Union camps, would be emancipated. This led to the creation of a freedmen's camp near Fort Donelson in 1863, where former slaves built their own homes and planted gardens. (See the "Ethnography" section on page 24 for more information about the historical connections between African Americans and Fort Donelson.) Fort Donelson National Battlefield has also been designated as part of the Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, a diverse collection of historic sites, facilities, and programs that have a verifiable association to the Underground Railroad. Through partnerships with leaders of other local, state, and federal agencies, as well as interested organizations and individuals, the National Park Service plans to work to commemorate, preserve the resources of, and educate the public about the Underground Railroad.
- **Protected forests:** Old-growth oak forest habitat is protected at Fort Donelson. These forests, habitat for a multitude of wildlife species, are being lost throughout the Eastern United States to development, timber harvesting, and disease.

KEY FINDINGS

- With the addition of Fort Heiman and pending land donations by the Civil War Preservation Trust, additional staff are needed to preserve historic structures and conduct cyclical maintenance. Two permanent positions currently vacant in the park's maintenance division are for first-line supervisors, and two additional seasonal maintenance positions are also unfilled. One permanent position, retired in 2008, remains vacant in the Ranger Activities Division (includes Interpretation and Education). The park has not received increases in its base budget to offset rising costs for mandatory expenditures such as retirement plans, nor does the park have the necessary funds and staff to cover expanded operations at Fort Heiman or costs associated with natural and cultural resource management. According to the park's 2007 business plan, the park needs the following funds and staff to optimally serve visitors and protect resources: \$1.39 million increase in base funding for resource management, program development, and visitor services, as well as staff that include one law enforcement ranger, two maintenance workers, one equipment operator, one budget analyst, three park guides, and one integrated resource management specialist.
- Currently, no natural resource management program exists at Fort Donelson. The park would like to hire an integrated resource management specialist to help meet the need to understand park ecosystems, but the base budget increase needed to support this position has not been funded.
- Several important management documents require updates; some documents have not yet been written. The park's general management plan, an overarching management document, was prepared in 1983. Updating the plan is necessary to address issues that have arisen in the last 26 years, as well as the acquisition of new lands to the park. The park secured funds in fiscal year 2008 to update the general management plan, and the planning process is slated to begin in fiscal year 2009. Baseline documents such as a cultural landscape report and inventory, historic resource study, archaeological overview and assessment, ethnographic overview and assessment, and an update to the administrative history are needed to document resources and guide management of them. The park has submitted requests for funds to complete more than a dozen plans, inventories, studies, and reports, but none have been funded as of this printing.
- Falling trees and erosion threaten the historic earthworks that comprise most of the battlefield. When trees are felled by wind or disease, they leave behind holes in the earthworks that are susceptible to erosion from wind and rain. The park's staff is currently removing small trees and heavy vegetation and planting native grasses to mitigate these threats, but funds are needed to continue this work. Currently, the park requires additional, recurring funding to prune or remove hazardous trees and has requested \$67,000 for the next treatment phase.
- Due to its location within the city limits of Dover, adjacent land use is one of the largest threats to aesthetics and the landscape at Fort Donelson. Development, mostly residential, continues to occur

along the park's boundaries, marring the viewshed and compromising the 19th-century atmosphere the park is trying to replicate. Tennessee Highway 79 from Clarksville through Dover is currently being widened. Clarksville is rapidly growing (4th largest growth rate in state) and completion of the highway project will connect Clarksville to Memphis via a four-lane divided highway. Growth from Fort Campbell (101st Airborne Army Post) and Clarksville is expected to continue toward Dover.

- Fort Donelson's visitor center exhibits, installed in 1962, fall below minimum Park Service standards and require upgrades and replacement. In addition to outdated exhibits, the building itself needs to be redesigned to make it accessible to handicapped visitors. The park has requested and received funding to plan new visitor center exhibits, but requests for funds to address the building itself have not yet been received.
- Fort Donelson National Battlefield has been designated as part of the Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom and includes a freedmen's camp, but the park has not surveyed or assessed associated areas, and the park does not have an ethnography program to document and interpret ties to African Americans. The park has requested \$48,000 in funds to conduct an ethnographic overview and assessment, but monies have not been granted yet.

- Managers at Fort Donelson National Battlefield recognize the need to incorporate Forts Heiman and Henry into interpretation at the park. These forts were surrendered to the Union shortly before the Battle of Fort Donelson, and understanding the chronology of events and history of all three forts is necessary to appreciate the significance of the unconditional surrender of Fort Donelson. The park plans to work with the U.S. Forest Service, which manages the land where Fort Henry was located, to explore that fort's historical importance.
- Bald eagles, American icons that were protected under the Endangered Species Act until their recovery resulted in delisting in 2007, perch in and otherwise use trees growing on historic earthworks at the park. To restore the cultural landscape of the battlefield to resemble its 1860s appearance would require removal of some of the trees used by the eagles within the fort proper. The park has requested funding to complete an environmental assessment to provide options for cultural landscape management and earthwork preservation.
- Non-native plants threaten the ecological health of Fort Donelson National Battlefield. According to the Park Service's Cumberland Piedmont Network, 153 non-native plant species are known to occur in the park. Based on rating criteria developed by NatureServe, a nonprofit conservation organization, 25 of these species have been determined to represent a severe threat to native species and ecological communities. The park does not have the resources to eradicate these harmful species, which have the potential to displace native communities, especially in riparian areas.



Earthworks—fortifications comprised chiefly of earth—provided soldiers with shelter from attack. Falling trees and erosion threaten Fort Donelson's historic earthworks.



THE FORT DONELSON NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD ASSESSMENT



Volunteers dressed as Union soldiers fire muskets as part of a living history demonstration on the anniversary of the Battle of Fort Donelson.

CULTURAL RESOURCES—PARK PLANNING DOCUMENTS NEEDED

Fort Donelson National Battlefield scored an overall 74 out of 100 for the condition of its cultural resources, which include archaeology, cultural landscapes, history, historic structures, and museum collection and archives. This score indicates that the resources are in “fair” condition.

Cultural resources at Fort Donelson include the Confederate earthworks, the historic Dover Hotel, and an impressive museum collection and archives containing, among other items, a variety of Civil War artifacts and documents. Recent collaborative efforts with the Park Service’s Southeast Archeological Center resulted in a newly organized, state-of-the-art archival storage facility.

Threats to resources include tree falls in the

earthworks area and small-scale looting of Civil War artifacts. The park lacks important management documents for interpreting history, evaluating cultural landscapes, and protecting historic structures. And despite strong historical ties to enslaved African Americans who sought refuge at the fort, an ethnography program is not in place in the park. Research, such as an ethnographic overview and assessment, is needed in order to establish a program.

HISTORY—IMPORTANT MANAGEMENT DOCUMENTS NEEDED

Interpretation at Fort Donelson National Battlefield focuses on construction of the fort by the Confederates to protect the Cumberland River; the battle between Confederate and Union soldiers; the unconditional surrender of Fort Donelson to Union Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant by Confederate Brigadier General Simon B. Buckner at the Dover Hotel; and life at the fort after the battle, for both Union soldiers and freed slaves.

The park uses wayside exhibits, both on the park's auto tour route and along hiking trails, as a primary means to interpret history for visitors. In 2003, wayside signs were evaluated and found to rank below minimum standards for physical condition, display uniformity, and relevant content. With recent project funding, Fort Donelson, in cooperation with the Park Service's Harpers Ferry Center, researched, designed, and installed new wayside exhibits that focus on the groundbreaking river battle; the freedmen's camp for former slaves; involvement of African Americans after the battle; Confederate prisoners of war; and related military campaigns at Forts Henry and Heiman.

Fort Donelson recently added a new visitor center film detailing the campaign that also includes information on the friendship between General Grant and General Buckner, as well as facts about the fort's importance to slaves seeking freedom. The park also offers a variety of educational audio presentations on its

website, which may be listened to on a computer or downloaded and played on a personal digital audio player.

The park's staff includes a historian who also serves as the historic weapons supervisor, front-line interpreter, and museum curator. This staff member engages in a variety of duties that include producing and presenting weapons demonstrations; developing formal interpretive programs; managing visitor center operations; and coordinating off-site programs presented to community and professional organizations. The park's historian also has law enforcement duties that include patrolling the park, writing citations, and enforcing laws and park policies. All of these additional duties and responsibilities take time away from historical research. Other park staff contribute to available historical research in the park. Interpretive ranger Susan Hawkins wrote *Forts Henry, Heiman, and Donelson: The African-American Experience*. Additionally, historians not affiliated with the park have produced extensive historical research on Forts Donelson and Heiman, which park managers reference.



The United Daughters of the Confederacy erected this monument in 1933 to commemorate fallen Confederate soldiers.

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Two documents—a historic resource study and an administrative history—are important primary tools parks use to guide management decisions. A historic resource study provides a historical overview, identifying and evaluating cultural resources within a historic context; it also identifies the need for any special studies and makes recommendations for resource management and interpretation. Fort Donelson has never conducted a historic resource study, though funding has been requested to complete one. An administrative history describes a park's conception and establishment—and its management to the present day—as well as its legislative history, planning, land acquisition, development, public relations, and ongoing management concerns. Fort Donelson's administrative history, completed in 1968, is outdated. At this time, undertaking an administrative history update would be daunting, as the park's resource management papers have not been cataloged and are not accessible through a finding aid.

ARCHAEOLOGY—OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF PARK NEEDED

The Park Service has identified ten archaeological sites at Fort Donelson: the battlefield; the Dover Hotel; historic roads; two house sites; the picnic area; the freedmen's camp; the Winds Ferry Road Community; the lock complex; and the national cemetery complex. All ten are included in the National Register of Historic Places under the umbrella designation of Fort Donelson National Battlefield. As of 2005, all sites were listed in "good" condition.

The Park Service's Southeast Archeological Center has conducted various research projects at Fort Donelson, including excavation of the upper and lower river batteries and remote sensing of the national cemetery. In 2005, the center assessed the condition of the ten known archaeological sites in the park and identified threats that warrant further monitoring. The largest and most immediate threat to earth-

works on the battlefield is tree falls (see "Caring for Historic Earthworks Is a Challenge" on page 21). In addition to falling trees, archaeological resources in the park are threatened by looters—illegal collectors of artifacts. Not only is looting illegal and punishable by fine or imprisonment, it also permanently removes the Park Service's ability to preserve history. Evidence of looters using metal detectors and digging for relics has been found in the park, but the extent of illegal collecting is unknown. In 2003, the park underwent a law enforcement needs assessment that identified the need for a total of four law enforcement commissioned rangers on staff to adequately protect the health and safety of visitors and to adequately protect park resources. The park has submitted operational funding requests to recruit and hire at least one additional law enforcement ranger.

In its 2005 report, the Southeast Archeological Center noted that archaeological surveys and testing should be conducted inside the earthworks to locate remains of the roughly 400 soldier huts that once stood there. A survey for prehistoric sites was also suggested. Finally, the center recommended that historic maps and documents be inventoried and surveyed to identify potential locations of post-Civil War residences, farmsteads, and communities. Ideally, this study would include research into the lock system that was in place around the batteries on the Cumberland River. Fort Donelson staff are aware of the locations of the lock master's house and associated cistern, the lock house, and the storage shed. All of these cultural resources would contribute to the interpretation of the park by illustrating the continued use of the land beyond the battle that occurred there.

Additional archaeological work is needed throughout the park, including newly acquired properties, to supplement work completed by the Southeast Archeological Center. Park staff would like to complete an archaeological overview and assessment to identify and docu-



The Park Service has restored part of the Dover Hotel, where Confederate surrender of Fort Donelson took place, to resemble a typical 1860s hotel lobby. Another part of the structure contains space for viewing an audio-visual program.

ment sites, but there are currently no funds to support this project. Significant archaeological resources yet to be evaluated in the park include possible mass graves of Confederate soldiers and the remains of Confederate cabins inside the fort, Underground Railroad camps, freedmen's camps near the fort, and Fort Heiman.

Fort Donelson's historian coordinates maintenance of the park's archaeological sites, but no funding exists for permanent archaeology staff at the park level. Instead, archaeologists from the U.S. Forest Service or the Southeast Archeological Center assist with research and planning. To accomplish further archaeological research, the park is considering a partnership with Murray State University in Kentucky.

HISTORIC STRUCTURES—MORE MAINTENANCE STAFF NEEDED FOR PRESERVATION

Fort Donelson National Battlefield protects 29 historic structures. Three are buildings (the Dover Hotel, the cemetery carriage house, and the cemetery lodge) and the remaining consist of earthworks, river batteries, and other specific historic features on the landscape. Of the 29 historic structures, 17 are in "good" condition, while 12 rated "fair." However, condition information for 11 of the structures is outdated (1995 or 1998), while information for the other 18 structures is recent, compiled in 2005. All of the park's historic structures are listed in the National Register of Historic Places under the umbrella designation for the park as a whole.

During the Civil War, all but four buildings burned in the town of Dover; one of the surviving buildings was the Dover Hotel. The hotel, where the fort's surrender took place, is located at a river landing where supplies were trans-



This cabin, an interpretive exhibit within the fort, represents the more than 200 cabins that housed Confederate soldiers at Fort Donelson in 1861-62.

ported and captured Confederates were shipped off to Northern prisoner-of-war camps. When Fort Donelson was still held by the Confederates, the hotel served as General Simon Buckner's headquarters; following the surrender, the Union converted the hotel to a hospital. In the 1970s, the Park Service restored the Dover Hotel for adaptive re-use. Approximately 20 percent of the structure is original, including the foundation, the chimneys, and most of the frame. While the interior layout at the time of the fort's surrender is not known, one front room is now decorated in a style typical of an 1860s hotel lobby and the other front room contains open space for public viewing of an audio-visual program. Park managers received funds in fiscal year 2009 to develop a plan for an exhibit installation at the Dover Hotel.

Park managers are interested in re-evaluating the current use of the cemetery lodge and the cemetery carriage house, two historic structures at Fort Donelson that are currently being used as

administrative offices and storage. Restoring the interior of the carriage house and interpreting the site (and the national cemetery as a whole) is part of the park's centennial strategy and is a goal for the Civil War sesquicentennial. The park's priority would be to rehabilitate the historic structures for visitor use and services, including exhibits, and to move all offices to the visitor center, if and when funding is provided to rehabilitate the building or construct a new one.

Threats to the park's historic structures include erosion, trees, humans (foot traffic, climbing on structures), animals (burrowing and nesting), and challenges associated with procuring funding to properly maintain them. As discussed in "Caring for Historic Earthworks Is a Challenge," erosion threatens the longevity of the remnant earthworks on the battlefield. Trees growing within earthworks contribute to erosion, and the trees can damage earthworks when blown down by wind. Few documents offer guidance for protection of historic structures. In fact, only the Dover Hotel and the upper and lower river batteries have been evaluated through historic structure reports.

While the park does not employ a historical architect, staff from the Park Service's Southeast Regional Office assist the park when needed. Four maintenance positions (two permanent, two seasonal) at Fort Donelson remain vacant, limiting the work that can be done on historic structures. As the new site at Fort Heiman is developed, maintained, and opened for visitor use, the current number of park staff cannot maintain the same degree of preservation and service throughout the park as a whole. Hours of operation may be reduced, mowing and landscape maintenance will be curtailed, visitor services will be limited, masonry work on structures and walls will be reduced to respond to emergency conditions, and health and safety will take priority over programs and education.

CARING FOR HISTORIC EARTHWORKS IS A CHALLENGE

For soldiers on both sides in the American Civil War, fighting behind a parapet (a low protective wall) was naturally more desirable than fighting out in the open. Though many natural features such as boulders or outcroppings served as parapets, Civil War soldiers also became experts at building field fortifications, such as the earthworks at Fort Donelson. (Earthworks are also preserved at the other three Tennessee Civil War national parks.)

Earthwork refers to any construction—whether a temporary wall or a permanent fortification—that is used for attack or defense and made chiefly of earth. Fort Donelson itself is an earthen fort. While some military earthworks were hastily constructed in response to attacks, others such as Fort Donelson were highly engineered, carefully constructed fortifications designed for longevity.

Earthworks surviving today range from low mounds to massive, well-preserved forms with clearly defined features. The battlefield at Fort Donelson is composed primarily of the earthworks, but erosion—the wearing away of the earth's surface by any natural process—poses a threat to their permanence. At Fort Donelson, park staff manage native grasses in an effort to minimize erosion and have requested funds to create plans and develop treatments for preserving the earthworks.

Trees growing out of the historic earthworks on the battlefield threaten this resource, as they disturb soil and hasten the process of erosion. Trees in the earthworks area—which are not shielded by neighboring trees—are susceptible to being blown down by wind, and when a tree falls, the roots are generally exposed, leaving a hole in the earthwork. Staff fill the depressions

and slope their contours to match the existing landscape, but the integrity of the earthworks is nonetheless compromised.

Archaeologists from the Park Service's Southeast Archeological Center recommend monitoring all trees around the Fort Donelson earthworks and removing old or dead trees that are not significant habitats for wildlife. Complicating this suggested strategy is the fact that a pair of bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) has nested in the park since 2004. Although they have brought publicity and enthusiastic visitors to Fort Donelson, maintenance of the historic earthworks has become more complicated because eagles—which are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act—use the trees that are threatening the earthworks. And even when removing a tree is acceptable, cutting it from the earthworks is not a simple process—the trees must be felled as “lightly” as possible onto the landscape and stumps mechanically ground to soil level. The park is currently in the process of clearing woody vegetation from the park's earthworks through a small-scale project that removes a handful of hazardous trees each year. While the trees are cut at ground level to prevent holes, depressions caused by rotting stumps and roots must be filled with soil and can become an issue several years after removal.

The battlefield at Fort Donelson is comprised chiefly of earthworks, which are susceptible to being worn away by erosion.



CULTURAL LANDSCAPES—ESSENTIAL REPORT AND INVENTORY NEEDED

At Fort Donelson, interpretation of cultural landscapes focuses on the importance of the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers during the Civil War, and how the struggle for control of these rivers resulted in battles fought at Fort Heiman, Fort Henry, and Fort Donelson. Visitors gain an understanding of how the landscape was used to defend the forts, as well the Union's use of the forts and river systems as a gateway into the South.

Fort Donelson National Battlefield is composed of five cultural landscapes: the fort itself, the river batteries, the national cemetery, the Dover Hotel, and newly acquired Fort Heiman. They are interpreted for visitors through wayside exhibits, guided tours, and auto tours. Park staff are currently developing interpretive messages for the Fort Heiman cultural landscape and an updated interpretive plan for Fort Donelson to address the significance of its relationship to Forts Henry and Heiman. Future plans include developing a strategy for interpretation

and use of the Dover Hotel, and increasing thematic program offerings and interpretation near the national cemetery.

Currently, the park lacks a cultural landscape report, essential to management and planning for cultural landscapes, but phase one of this crucial project is scheduled to begin in fiscal year 2009. It will cover the area around the fort. Additional phases that have not yet been funded would cover the Dover Hotel and outer earthworks, the national cemetery, and Fort Heiman. Cultural landscape reports evaluate and define landscape characteristics and their associated features, assess threats, provide management direction, and propose treatment of cultural landscapes. They also guide decisions regarding maintenance, interpretation, and visitor services. In addition to the cultural landscape report, Fort Donelson requires a cultural landscape inventory to identify cultural landscape conditions.

While the park currently lacks a historic landscape maintenance plan, it does conduct cyclic routine maintenance of cultural landscapes. Maintenance personnel at Fort Donelson have attended specific, formal training sessions (such as cultural landscape arborist training), but the park's workforce is limited, both in size (three full-time maintenance workers) and expertise. Therefore, Fort Donelson uses outside resources to ensure the health of park landscapes, such as U.S. Forest Service archaeologists who assist in evaluating any archaeological work that would affect cultural landscapes within the park.

MUSEUM COLLECTION AND ARCHIVES—NEW STORAGE FACILITY EXCEEDS STANDARDS

A Confederate captain's coat, an original Medal of Honor won at the campaign of Fort Donelson, a Brennan cannon, a Noble Brothers twelve-pound Howitzer, a Confederate kepi, and a Union flag flown at the fort during battle—these are just a few of the notable items

Cannons in place on the battlefield help visitors understand and envision the historic Battle of Fort Donelson.



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Exhibits in the park's visitor center are outdated. This one was fabricated and installed in 1962. The park has received funds to plan new exhibits.

within the museum collection at Fort Donelson National Battlefield. In sum, the park cares for 843 archaeological artifacts, 866 historical artifacts, and 694 biological specimens. The park's archives include 103,892 items. Fort Donelson's historian also acts as museum curator.

Fort Donelson's 2005 collection management plan guides collection documentation and record keeping; planning, programming, and staffing for the collection; preservation guidelines and storage; and museum collection security and fire protection. A 2006 collections report listed 40 percent of the museum collections as cataloged. The 64,580 items that remained uncataloged are part of the park's collections held at the Southeast Archeological Center.

Storage for the park's museum collection and archives has vastly improved in the last three years. According to the 2006 *Checklist for the Preservation and Protection of Museum Collections*, the conditions of Fort Donelson's visitor center exhibits and archives fell below several

minimum standards for National Park Service museum conditions. Since then, the park has requested and received project funds and assistance to address the problem. In 2007, park staff worked with curatorial staff from the Southeast Archeological Center to process remaining backlogged archival items held at Fort Donelson. All archival materials were relocated to a new, climate-controlled storage facility. The relocation process included storing oversized maps, drawings, and plans in flat-file map cabinets; placing photographic prints in acid-free archival sleeves; and inserting archival paper between acidic documents and between photographic prints.

While Fort Donelson's storage facility exceeds standards for protection, the park's visitor center exhibits are outdated. Exhibits are essential for display of museum and archival objects, and those in the visitor center were installed in 1962. The park has requested and received funding for planning of new visitor

center exhibits, but requests for funds to address the building itself have not yet been received. In fiscal year 2009, the park is scheduled to begin plans for an exhibit at the Dover Hotel.

ETHNOGRAPHY (PEOPLE AND CULTURES)—PARK LACKS PROGRAM, DESPITE POTENTIAL

Enslaved African Americans who fled to Fort Donelson after the Union victory in February 1862 played a major role in the historic significance of the area. Some were held as laborers by the Union Army, serving as cooks, hospital aides, laundresses, teamsters, and personal servants. Later in the year, with passage of the Second Confiscation Act in July 1862, the North declared that any slave who passed into Union territory would be emancipated. This led to the creation of a freedmen's camp near Fort Donelson in 1863, where former slaves built their own homes and planted gardens. Benevolent societies, such as the Western Freedmen's Aid Society, provided clothing and teachers to the camp. Also that year, several

freed slaves fought on the side of the Union Army against a Confederate assault at the Battle of Dover. In November 1863, the fort became a recruiting station for African-American soldiers. During a conflict in 1864, the 119th United States Colored Troops (U.S.C.T.) and the Fourth Colored Artillery fought against Confederates and were praised for their bravery. In 1867, Union soldiers and 14 soldiers from the U.S.C.T. were buried in what is now Fort Donelson National Cemetery.

Though African Americans played an important role at Fort Donelson, the park has not completed enough research to establish an ethnography program. Funding for an ethnographic overview and assessment has been requested but not received, so the work has not been completed. The park does have one ethnographical study, *Forts Henry, Heiman, and Donelson: the African-American Experience*, which details topics that include slaves' associations with the Union Army at Fort Donelson, freedmen's support in the war effort, and freedmen's new lives in camps around the fort. In 2002, the park requested and received a small grant from the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program to produce a freestanding exhibit interpreting the "Freedman State" and camps that grew up around the fort area during the United States Army occupation from 1862 to 1865. In addition, special events, publications, exhibits, the park's website, curriculum-based educational programming, and other educational materials assist in presenting the compelling stories of African Americans at Fort Donelson.

The park's lack of an ethnographic overview and assessment and formal ethnography program are the reasons why the condition of ethnographic resources has not been rated in this assessment. Conducting an ethnographic overview and assessment in the park is a critical first step toward developing an ethnography program.

In 2002, the park received a small grant from the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program to produce a freestanding exhibit interpreting the "Freedman State" and camps that grew up around the fort area during the United States Army occupation from 1862 to 1865.





NATURAL RESOURCES—PARK LACKS NATURAL RESOURCES PROGRAM

The assessment did not rate the overall condition of natural resources at Fort Donelson National Battlefield, because only 47 percent of the information required by the Center for State of the Parks assessment methodology was available. Sufficient information on ecosystem functions and environmental quality indicators such as air quality and water quality were lacking. Based on available information, non-native plants pose the most immediate threat to natural ecosystems in the park. In addition, the park lacks any staff allocated to natural resource

management, but has requested a base budget increase to support an integrated resource management specialist.

PLANT COMMUNITIES—OLD-GROWTH FOREST PROTECTED

The vegetation of Fort Donelson has changed dramatically since the battle in 1862. Current vegetation is much thicker than historic cover, primarily due to the lack of fire as a natural disturbance. The absence of fire has also led to the loss of forest gaps as forests have closed in, which has in turn led to the loss of species dependent on these open woodland areas.

A 2004 vascular plant inventory conducted

The Cumberland River (pictured here) and Tennessee River were strategically important transportation routes during the Civil War. The Confederates built Fort Donelson, Fort Heiman, and Fort Henry to defend the rivers from Union incursions. Cannon batteries are shown here. The rivers are still important transportation routes for moving commercial goods.

at Fort Donelson National Battlefield recorded 363 species. Significant resources in the park include a population of federally listed threatened Price's potato bean (*Apios priceana*), found on bluffs overlooking the Cumberland River. Price's potato bean, a vine-like perennial belonging to the pea family, prefers lightly disturbed areas and can be found along shoreline areas and forest edges. Like Price's potato bean, the Michigan lily (*Lilium michiganense*), a state-listed threatened species found at Fort Donelson, is disappearing as surrounding forests close in and open habitat is lost. Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolius*) is a state species of special concern found in the park. Populations of this commercially exploited, medicinal plant have declined in Tennessee, as more and more plants have been collected. According to Fort Donelson staff, ginseng is difficult to find in the park. While ginseng poaching in the park is suspected, it has not been confirmed. The status of populations of rare flora in the park is unknown; a detailed survey to locate these populations and determine their conditions, as well as ongoing monitoring, is needed.

Forests cover 80 percent of the landscape at Fort Donelson and are composed of ten different community types, including loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*), red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), tuliptree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), maple (*Acer* spp.), and oak (*Quercus* spp.) mixes. Due to more than a century of disturbance from logging, farming, and grazing, most of these forests are relatively young and in a transitional—or successional—phase. But old-growth forests—those mature ecosystems that feature old trees more or less uninfluenced by human activity—are protected in the park. Because old-growth forests are becoming rare in the Eastern United States, due to development and timber harvesting, park protection of these habitats is even more significant.

WILDLIFE—SMALL PARK HARBORS MANY SPECIES

While small in size, Fort Donelson protects habitat that supports many mammal, bird, reptile, amphibian, and fish species. Based on the results of a 2007 inventory report, the park houses 30 mammal species, including commonly seen white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and eastern cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*). Mammal predators in the park include bobcat (*Lynx rufus*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), and red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*). Tree-roosting bat species, such as the eastern red bat (*Lasiurus borealis*), depend on Fort Donelson's mature forests for roosting habitat. The Cumberland River, with its steady supply of insects, provides important foraging habitat for the federally listed endangered gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*), which is also known to use the park.

Birds are the most visible wildlife at Fort Donelson, with 177 species recorded in a 2003–2005 inventory. Fort Donelson's protected forest habitat supports many species, such as woodpeckers (*Picoides* spp.), Acadian flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*), and wood thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*). The Cumberland River is a natural migration corridor for many avian species, and Cross Creeks National Wildlife Refuge, a large waterfowl management area, is located across the river from Fort Donelson. Bird of prey species found at Fort Donelson include barred owl (*Strix varia*), osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), broad-winged hawk (*Buteo platypterus*), and red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*). Since 2004, a year-round resident pair of bald eagles has raised more than eight chicks at Fort Donelson. Publicity surrounding the eagles has drawn bird-watchers and wildlife enthusiasts to the park, with some negative results. Visitors feed the eagles, which have become used to landing on picnic tables for handouts—or to steal meals. While the park has posted signs



Non-native species such as privet, which lines this roadway, are the primary threat to the ecological health of Fort Donelson National Battlefield.

warning visitors to refrain from feeding the bald eagles, the birds are already habituated to human food.

While the park harbors many bird species, those that depend on grassland habitat are faring poorly. Northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*), field sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*), and grasshopper sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*)—all expected at Fort Donelson—are either absent or present in very low numbers. Possible explanations for the limited numbers of some bird species within the park include noise from road and barge traffic, urban development up to park boundaries, and mowing to the river's edge (preventing weedy habitat growth). High water during migration periods is also a factor. For example, due to the damming of the Cumberland River (by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1960s), which reduces mudflat habitat, few shorebirds are found when creeks are flooded.

Fort Donelson supports 17 amphibian

species (seven salamanders, eight frogs, and two toads) and 20 reptile species (two turtles, four lizards, and 14 snakes). Only one venomous snake, copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix*), is found within the park. Indian Creek in the park supports small fish, including fringed darter (*Etheostoma crossopterus*), creek chub (*Semotilus atromaculatus*), rainbow darter (*Etheostoma caeruleum*), and largescale stoneroller (*Campestris oligolepis*).

NON-NATIVE PLANTS AND DISEASE— PRIMARY THREATS TO PARK ECOSYSTEMS

Non-native plants are a concern at Fort Donelson National Battlefield. The park has identified 153 non-native species; of these, 25 species are aggressively invasive and pose a severe or significant threat to natural communities and native plants. These species are the single largest threat to the ecological health of the park.

Many non-native plants, which have outcompeted native species at Fort Donelson, cover park fields and river banks and include crown vetch (*Coronilla varia*), Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*), nodding thistle (*Carduus nutans*), Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*), goosegrass (*Eleusine indica*), and common mullein (*Verbascum thaspus*). Other species, such as mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*), English ivy (*Hedera helix*), sweet autumn clematis (*Clematis terniflora*), and princess tree (*Paulownia tomentosa*), take advantage of any light gaps in the interior of forests, threatening to displace native species and communities. Some of the non-natives, such as privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) and Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), were planted as ornamentals around original homesteads in the area. The forested wetlands of Fort Donelson are especially susceptible to invasion by Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*) and privet.

Removing invasive species would greatly benefit the ecological health of vegetative communities within the park, but non-native plant control has been somewhat limited, in part, because the park does not have any natural resource staff and competes to receive assistance from a Park Service exotic plant management team. The park's seasonal maintenance crew currently works to eliminate approximately a half acre of privet, mimosa, and multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) each year by mechanical cutting and herbicide application. Efforts to control mimosa have been successful; this non-native is now difficult to find in the park.

In addition to invasive, non-native plants, park ecosystems may be threatened by sudden oak death, a disease caused by a fungus (*Phytophthora ramorum*), resulting in leaf spot, leaf and twig dieback, and bleeding cankers on the stems of infected trees. While it has not been officially confirmed, sudden oak death may be present at Fort Donelson, and park staff suspect it may be responsible for a recent die-off of oaks. To confirm the presence of sudden oak death at Fort Donelson, laboratory tests must be

conducted, but the park has neither the staff nor funds to conduct the tests.

AIR AND WATER QUALITY—MORE MONITORING NEEDED

Little is known of Fort Donelson's air quality, as there are no monitoring stations within the park, and stations outside the park are generally either too far away or too new for data to be useful. Fort Donelson is susceptible to pollution from a variety of sources, including coal-fired power plants. It is located within 20 miles of the largest fossil-fuel-burning, electricity-generating plant in the United States at Cumberland City, Tennessee.

Ground-level ozone, which is formed when nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds react in the presence of sunlight, is harmful to people, wildlife, and plants, and it is the primary component of smog. While ozone is not monitored in the park, two ozone-monitoring sites exist within 30 miles of Fort Donelson. According to a Park Service report, it is likely that ozone levels in the park sometimes exceed the human health-based 8-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standard. Ozone levels are also suspected to be high enough to cause foliar (leaf) injury to ozone-sensitive plants. The Cumberland Piedmont Network is scheduled to monitor leaves for ozone damage in 2009.

The Cumberland Piedmont Network began water-quality monitoring at Fort Donelson in 2003. Water quality in the park is very good; water temperatures and dissolved oxygen levels are within the range to support native aquatic life. Waters in the park are generally clear, with slight-to-moderate turbidity. Fecal coliform levels—which vary from extremely low to moderately high—reflect variation in river flow conditions; increased flows result in increased levels of fecal coliform as bacteria is washed into streams.



STEWARDSHIP CAPACITY

FUNDING AND STAFFING—ADDITIONS NEEDED TO PROTECT RESOURCES

Stewardship capacity details how well equipped the Park Service is to protect the parks. The most significant factor affecting the park's ability to protect its resources is the funding a park receives from Congress. The operational budget for Fort Donelson National Battlefield is \$1.13 million in fiscal year 2009, a decrease of nearly \$11,000 from fiscal year 2008.

Many natural and cultural resource projects are unfunded at Fort Donelson. The park's top ten unfunded projects are rehabilitating new

lands at Fort Heiman, repairing the national cemetery comfort station, installing a fire suppression system in the museum storage area, preparing the park for the 150th anniversary of the battle, restoring historic structures, straightening headstones in the national cemetery, maintaining bronze monuments, developing a structural fire plan, repairing lower river battery parapet walls, and developing a resource stewardship strategy.

In addition to project funds, Fort Donelson needs more staff to help protect its resources. Positions remain vacant at the park, due to lack of funding, including two permanent and two seasonal positions in the maintenance division.

Reenactments of important historical events are an engaging way for visitors to learn about the park's history.

In 2007, about one-third of visitors (approximately 76,000 people) took part in interpretive programs in the park, such as ranger-led tours. According to its 2007 business plan, the park needs three more guides to optimally serve visitors.



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Due to the two permanent-position vacancies—for first-line supervisors—the park's facility manager must directly supervise the other maintenance workers, effectively performing two separate jobs. Inventory and monitoring efforts currently are limited by what can be supported by the Cumberland Piedmont Network staff, because the park itself does not have any resource management staff. The park has increased in size with the addition of Fort Heiman and may increase by an additional 350 acres pending transfer of Civil War Preservation Trust properties. According to the park's 2007 business plan, the park needs the following additional staff to optimally serve visitors and protect resources: one law enforcement ranger, two maintenance workers, one equipment operator, one budget analyst, three park guides, and one integrated resource management specialist.

PLANNING—IMPORTANT PLANS OUTDATED

To guide management of diverse resources, parks depend on a variety of plans. The primary, overarching document at most parks is the general management plan (GMP). Fort Donelson National Battlefield expects to begin the process of developing a new GMP in fiscal year 2009 to replace the last plan that was written in 1983. Several other key management plans require updates, including the park's land protection plan (1987) and its resource management plan (1991). Land protection plans guide land acquisition priorities. Resource management plans provide general information on the status of natural and cultural resources in the park; they also discuss threats to the area. The Park Service has initiated a service-wide move to replace resource management plans with resource stewardship strategies. In fiscal year 2008, the park requested funds to create a resource stew-

ardship strategy, but monies have not been received for this project.

Due to funding shortfalls, key cultural resource planning documents are missing at Fort Donelson. These include an archaeological overview and assessment, a cultural landscapes report, and an ethnographic overview and assessment. Plans to guide earthworks management, integrated pest management, museum storage, and exhibit design and installation are also needed. With properly trained staff, some plans could be produced in-house, but at this time, staff do not possess the necessary expertise.

RESOURCE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH—VISITOR SERVICES RATE HIGHLY

The visitor center at Fort Donelson, an integral part of the educational experience and a starting point for most guests to the battlefield, is in need of updates. Exhibits do not reflect current scholarship, and some are deteriorating from age. The building itself requires modification. The visitor center information desk is located on the top (third) level of the facility; the museum is on the middle floor; the restrooms and ranger offices are on the first. No ramps or public elevators exist between floors. A wheelchair elevator was installed in 2006, but when it is in use, the stairways between the second and third floor cannot be used. Furthermore, there is not enough space available in the building for guest workers, meetings, or additional storage. Park staff feel that the facility requires either a complete redesign or replacement.

Despite problems with the current visitor center, visitor services at Fort Donelson are top-notch. A 2008 survey indicated that 100 percent of visitors felt satisfied with the park and 93 percent left with an appreciation of the park's resources. In 2007, about one-third of visitors (approximately 76,000 people) took part in interpretive programs in the park, which included such topics as the campaign for and battle of Fort Donelson, ironclads and innova-

tions, life at Fort Donelson, the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom at Fort Donelson, and others. New wayside exhibits have been produced for Fort Donelson that tell the stories of the groundbreaking river battle; the freedmen's camp for former slaves; involvement of African Americans after the battle; Confederate prisoners of war; and related military campaigns at Forts Henry and Heiman. And volunteers guide tours to educate the public about the nesting bald eagles in the park. The park will complete a new long-range interpretive plan in fiscal year 2009.

Fort Donelson offers a variety of ways for students to learn about the park's history. The Parks As Classrooms program is an interdisciplinary, hands-on, curriculum-based approach to learning at the park. More than 15,000 students participated in a program on-site in fiscal year 2008. Fort Donelson also offers off-site educational experiences for students. The park loans out, free of charge, "traveling trunks"—assortments of multisensory materials, activity suggestions, and reproduction clothing—offering teachers five different themes for interpretation. Traveling trunks can be shipped anywhere in the

Traveling trunks filled with educational materials focusing on various interpretive themes are available to teachers throughout the country.



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States. Local schools can schedule ranger visits. Known as Parks in Classrooms, these interactive programs are tailored for different grade levels (kindergarten through 8th grade).

In 2007, Fort Donelson installed a new visitor center film that includes information on the friendship between General Grant and General Buckner, as well as facts about the fort's importance to slaves seeking freedom. The park also has a new audiovisual program that was designed to use with the Parks As Classrooms program. The film, *Fort Donelson: A Place for Heroes*, presents the park's story through a teenage narrator. It won an Emmy in the Children's Programming Category at the 22nd annual Mid-South Regional Awards in Nashville, Tennessee, in 2006. The film also earned the National Park Service Southeast Region's 2006 Keeper of the Light Interpretive Award.

Staff at Fort Donelson maintain an excellent relationship with surrounding communities, getting involved with various organizations, such as Kiwanis and the Dover Chamber of Commerce. The park partners with the town of Dover to celebrate Eagle Fest each Memorial Day weekend, which includes the lighting of more than 1,500 luminaries in the national cemetery in remembrance of the nation's veterans.

Volunteers assist park staff with a host of resource protection projects. Here volunteers are cleaning metal tablets that provide information about battle events.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



EXTERNAL SUPPORT—VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERS PROVIDE NEEDED SERVICES

The concept of partnership is deeply embedded in the management philosophy of Fort Donelson National Battlefield. As a result, the park has developed effective partnerships with organizations in the region. The park is a member of the Middle Tennessee Tourism Council, a 13-county organization promoting unique historical buildings, artifacts, and sites in the region. The Friends of the Campaign for Fort Henry and Donelson is a nonprofit group of interested citizens, formed to support and promote the Fort Donelson National Battlefield. This friends group raises funds to preserve, restore, and enhance the park's natural and cultural resources; provides improved services and facilities for visitors; increases public awareness and support of the park; and works to enhance educational and interpretive activities.

Eastern National, the park's cooperating association, operates retail outlets in more than 130 national parks and other public trusts, including Fort Donelson, where the association administers the bookstore. Since 1947, Eastern National has donated more than \$89 million from sales to the National Park Service.

Fort Donelson benefits from a dedicated, enthusiastic volunteer workforce, which takes on a wide variety of tasks. In 2007, 275 volunteers worked independently and alongside park employees, donating approximately 2,400 hours of service. Volunteers provide visitors with a number of formal and informal interpretive programs that the park is unable to provide due to staff limitations. For example, without the support of volunteers, the Dover Hotel could not be opened seasonally on weekends. The park has also been fortunate to attract volunteers who monitor the nesting bald eagles in the park and provide information to visitors. In addition, volunteers assist in maintaining the earthworks by removing trees and planting native grasses. They also repair park trails, paths, and buildings.